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JONATHAN EDWARDS, PASTOR:
MINISTER AND CONGREGATION
IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CONNECTICUT VALLEY

A Dissertation Presented
by
PATRICIA JUNEAU TRACY

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
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ABSTRACT

Jonathan Edwards, Pastor:
Minister and Congregation in the Eighteenth-Century Connecticut Valley

(September, 1977)

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Although renowned as a theologian, Jonathan Edwards was nevertheless a failure in the most essential task of the ministry--persuading his congregation to share his vision. That failure illuminates the social history of the man, the community he served, and the problems of many eighteenth-century New England clergymen. Edwards was ill prepared for pastoral responsibilities by his training in philosophy and by the example of his father's vain life-long struggle for ministerial power. Succeeding his eminent grandfather in the Northampton pulpit, Edwards found that Solomon Stoddard's reputation as an evangelist and disciplinarian made his own achievement of success more difficult--especially since the social evolution of the community was eroding the traditional role of the church. As Northampton outgrew its frontier abundance of land, simplicity, and harmony, it also abandoned submissiveness to the will of the minister. Symbolic of social decay were rebellious adolescents, who became Edwards' special concern. To restore piety and old-fashioned communitarian behavior, Edwards in the early 1730s preached
to the "young people" about the practical benefits of holiness. Even more successful were the 1734-1735 sermons on "justification by faith alone," which offered salvation as an escape from temporal dilemmas. For a brief period Edwards met the psychological needs of his flock and they met his, but the revivals of 1735 and 1741 did not provide Edwards with a permanent satisfactory role in the community. He fought declension with a new emphasis on behavior over emotion as the criterion for conversion. Unable any longer to lead the town through charisma, after 1742 Edwards battled his congregation for power—over money, discipline, and church admissions. By 1750 the community clearly rejected the central role for church and minister which was demanded by Edwards' vision of holiness, and he was forced to leave Northampton.
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PROLOGUE

Shortly after Jonathan Edwards arrived in Northampton, Solomon Stoddard wrote the name of his grandson and colleague in the list of church members as, simply, "Jonathan Edwards." When Stoddard died two year later, Edwards added the word "Pastor" next to his own name. Stoddard's shaky hand reflected his eighty-three years, and his inscription of the name without a specific category of membership was a symbol of what he had accomplished in almost six decades as a minister. Edwards was twenty-five when he wrote "Pastor," his hand was vigorous and assertive, and the word that he inscribed symbolized all that he hoped to be--and all that he would fail to become.

Edwards seems more interesting to me for his failure as a pastor than for his success as a philosopher--in part, because the philosopher has already been studied so extensively. At least since Van Wyck Brooks' influential essay on "highbrow" (intellectual) Edwards and "lowbrow" (pragmatic) Ben Franklin was published in America's Coming of Age in 1915, historians have tended to dismiss Edwards' "practical" life as unimportant and dull. That stance, however, is uncomfortably reminiscent of Charles Chauncy's position that the "higher" faculties must rule the "lower" ones, a position that Edwards himself rejected. In his full-length biography, Perry Miller wrote that "so absorbed was [Edwards] in this interior logic that it may truthfully be said that his external biography was virtually an adjunct to his subjective." But that is only part of the truth, for the practical and professional problems faced by Edwards were the building materials of his theology. We can follow
the "external" biography in the "subjective," as well as vice versa. Jonathan Edwards was a pastor--not just a professional "thinker" but a man whose vocation was to persuade others to share his own vision of divine glory and justice. How he conceptualized that spiritual insight is not more interesting than how he communicated it to his congregation, or how he failed to do so.

The pastoral aspect of Edwards' ministerial career raises questions unanswered by the traditional analyses of his systematic theology. Why were his congregation "awakened" when he preached on "Justification by Faith Alone"? What is the significance of his special concern with the "young people" and his particular following among them? Why did his congregation approve his doctrines during the Great Awakening but refuse to do so just a few years later? These questions, moreover, reflect more than the particular circumstances of one life: they illuminate the eighteenth-century evolution of the relation between a minister and his flock in the Congregational churches of New England. When Jonathan Edwards is seen as a pastor, his career can serve as a lens through which to examine the society in which he lived. Ola Elizabeth Winslow's excellent biography of Edwards began the task of a rounded portrait. This dissertation aims to make it even rounder, and it is in large part an attempt to synthesize a wide range of clues offered by recent community studies, demographic analyses, and explorations of the history of childhood in western society.

My preoccupation with the community context of the ministry reflects a fundamental interest in the social changes in New England in the first half of the eighteenth century, which is still a "glacial age"
to historians. I had at first intended to write another "little community" study using Northampton as an example of a frontier town evolving into a commercial center. Something of that preliminary ambition remains evident in the present work, although much of the quantitative information has been left out because the numbers just did not answer most of the questions that seemed important. In my search for help in interpreting the numbers, I sought contemporary evaluations of life in eighteenth-century Northampton. Few letters and diaries from the community survive, and so I turned to a source whose obvious biases had once rendered it unreliable in my eyes.

In Jonathan Edwards' *Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* I found traces of the direction of change in the community, and the perceptions of the author became objects of interest in themselves. From the Northampton church records and genealogies I was able to identify groups who joined Edwards' church during the revival, and Edwards' own sermons and personal documents provided the other components necessary for a study of the interplay between leader and followers. The ministerial careers of Edwards' grandfather Stoddard and his father, Timothy Edwards, provided parallels to Edwards' problems that pushed me further towards considering broader changes in the role of the ministry in the Connecticut Valley. The insights offered by ego psychology enhanced my understanding of Edwards' personal/professional problems and of the young people who were his special constituency in Northampton and who led the Awakening movement in most Valley communities. I have come to see the history of Northampton as part of a more complex story of three generations of ministers, and the professional problems of the clergy
as part of the demographic, economic, and psychological history of the region.

While this dissertation falls short of being a full-scale social history of two colonies over a century, it also eschews pretending to synthesize all the many possible approaches to the character of Jonathan Edwards. It is intended to serve as a complement to the traditional appreciation of Edwards as a major figure in the "life of the mind in America." I leave to others the pursuit of philosophy removed from its human context. My interest in Edwards' theology focuses on its homiletic qualities, and I trust that my non-theologian's understanding of Edwards' doctrines can suggest the "message" that his congregation of laymen received from the pulpit. At least as important to Edwards himself as the pursuit of accuracy of idea was the struggle to persuade his flock of the experiential truth of Calvinist doctrine. He was, in his own word, a pastor.

The first three chapters of this dissertation contain separate but parallel narratives leading up to 1729, the year that Jonathan Edwards assumed the full responsibilities of the Northampton pastorate. They will establish the personal and professional predispositions that Edwards brought with him to Northampton, the model provided by the pastorate of Solomon Stoddard, and the challenge Edwards faced in the particular social circumstances of the community in that era. The last five chapters are a chronological account of Edwards' career in Northampton with a special focus on his evolving techniques for meeting the challenges outlined. Chapter Four will describe his pastoral strategy
of the early 1730s, and Chapter Five will explore the ambiguous nature of Edwards' "success" in the revival of 1735. Chapter Six will outline the evolution of Edwards' thought on the revival and the pastoral role, in counterpoint to the evolution of the community that undercut the possibility for Edwards to act out the ideal he was articulating, as described in Chapter Seven. The eighth and last chapter will examine the eventual failure of Edwards as a pastor, a failure that was in part dependent on his very success in constructing a theology which suited his psychological, intellectual, and professional needs.

There are a number of persons who deserve my sincere thanks for their special help with this project. The staffs of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and the Sterling Memorial Library at Yale University, the Connecticut Historical Society, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Andover Newton Theological School Library, and the Forbes Library in Northampton all provided access to manuscripts and useful advice. Conversations with William A. Davis, David D. Hall, Christopher Jedrey, Gerald Platt, Tiziana Rota, Kevin Sweeney, and Robert John Wilson III provided ideas and encouragement. For years of constructive criticism and emotional support, I give my greatest thanks to R. Jackson Wilson and especially to Stephen Nissenbaum.
CHAPTER 1

JONATHAN EDWARDS: PREPARATION FOR THE MINISTRY, 1703-1729

In 1725 Solomon Stoddard entered the eighty-third year of his life and the fifty-sixth year of his pastorate in Northampton, Massachusetts. That spring he began to grow infirm, and the town voted in April to find him an assistant and successor. The position was one of the best opportunities in New England for a young minister, because the pulpit was given distinction by its present occupant. For decades, Stoddard had been a major intellectual figure among the New England clergy and an undisputed ruler of the Connecticut Valley. In the former capacity, he had challenged the definitions of church polity and sacraments held by the eastern "establishment," led by the redoubtable Increase Mather; in the latter capacity, he had developed evangelical techniques that were popular among his fellow ministers and that brought renowned good behavior and experiential piety among his own congregation. Economically as well as spiritually, Stoddard's community dominated the upper Connecticut Valley and the western Massachusetts frontier that were gradually being settled. In every way, the Northampton pulpit was a splendid opportunity for any aspirant to the ministry.

The church and town of Northampton took over a year to find a successor to Stoddard. The presidents of Harvard and Yale were probably consulted about their students' aptitudes, and one of the Northampton deacons spent eight days in Hartford conferring with the clergy there about possible candidates. In August 1726 a decision was finally made. Stoddard's grandson, Jonathan Edwards, was the lucky young man chosen.
After a trial period of only six months, Edwards was ordained early in 1727, and he became sole pastor when Stoddard died two years later. Clearly, Edwards was Stoddard's choice. But there is no evidence that the two had ever been particularly close, and there were a number of other Stoddard grandsons as possible competition, so family connection alone cannot account for Edwards' good fortune. He must have been the best candidate available. In the words of his early biographer, Sereno Dwight, Jonathan Edwards "had passed through the successive periods of childhood, youth, and early manhood, not only without reproach, but in such a manner, as to secure the high esteem and approbation of all who knew him." He was "a young man of uncommon promise."

The story of Jonathan's youth is already quite familiar. Born in 1703, he was the fifth of eleven children and only son of Stoddard's daughter Esther, who had married the pastor of East Windsor, Connecticut. Timothy Edwards had turned away from the wealth of his merchant family to become a poor country parson. His alliance with Esther Stoddard brought him into a prominent ministerial clan, for her mother was the daughter of the Reverend John Warham, founder of Windsor, and had been the widow of Eleazar Mather, brother of Increase and Northampton's first pastor. There could have been no doubt that the only son of Timothy and Esther Edwards was destined for the ministry.

Family heritage was supplemented by Jonathan's own intellectual gifts and rigorous training. His father, known as an erudite man, trained many Connecticut boys for college and gave his best efforts to preparing his son. When away from home in Jonathan's seventh summer, Timothy Edwards wrote to his wife to carry on his program: "Jonathan was
to learn "above two sides of propria quae moribus by heart" in addition to his regular reading and writing. Esther was also to "take special care of Jonathan that he dont learn to be rude &c of which thee and I have lately discoursed." By his eleventh or twelfth year the precocious Jonathan had been reading Newton's Optics and was writing short scientific treatises on the rainbow and flying spiders to demonstrate Nature's revelation of the "goodness" and "wisdom" of the Creator. Shortly before his thirteenth birthday, Jonathan began collegiate studies in formal preparation for the ministry. Through the turbulent early years of Yale's history he studied with his cousin, Tutor Elisha Williams, at Wethersfield and then with president Timothy Cutler when the college finally settled in New Haven. He earned Cutler's praise for his "promising abilitys and advances in learning" and graduated at the top of his class in September 1720. He stayed at Yale for two years more to read theology and in 1723 took his M.A. degree. Temporary preaching engagements in New York and in Bolton, Connecticut, were succeeded by an honorific Yale Tutorship from 1724 to August 1726. Jonathan then accepted the call from Northampton and went there immediately to preach on a trial basis.

The town voted a generous settlement to this excellent candidate, and Edwards was ordained the following February 22. That summer he bought a homestead and was married to Sarah Pierrepont, daughter of New Haven's leading minister. For two years Jonathan shared pastoral responsibilities with his grandfather; when the aged Solomon Stoddard died suddenly on February 11, 1729, he left a hand-picked successor to carry on his principles. By heritage and training and all the
achievements possible to so young a man, Jonathan Edwards apparently stood on the threshold of a distinguished career as a minister.

Then, abruptly, the pattern seemed to go awry. Within a few weeks of his grandfather's death, Edwards suffered an apparent collapse which rendered him unable to fulfill his official duties from the early spring until the fall. He was forced to leave Northampton to recover his health. The nature of his disease is obscure, because no autobiographical comment survives; but the fact that Edwards was physically well enough to travel around New England all summer on horseback with his wife and infant daughter suggests that the illness which kept him from preaching was partly emotional. Absence from Northampton produced a recovery, but it was October before the happy news circulated among the Edwards family that Jonathan was again able to preach. If this "illness" indeed was an emotional breakdown, it boded ill for Edwards' pastorate. At the onset of his career, in apparently favorable conditions, he proved unable to fulfill his responsibilities. How would he deal with apathy, and later real hostility, among the congregation he had inherited?

What had gone wrong? Edwards' preparation and his professional opportunity both appeared to be almost perfect--or so it would seem from the biography given in the preceding paragraphs, the story told so often by historians that it could be called the "official" version. Most biographers of Edwards, concerned with the early years of his life only insofar as they foreshadow his later greatness as a philosopher, have seen only unquestionable benefit in his family background, his intelligence and education, and his adolescent religious conversion. But when
we recognize that Edwards' vocation was the pastorate, not just philosophy for its own sake, and when we admit that his career was filled with trouble and even failure, equally clear portents of that future can be seen in Edwards' "preparation" for the ministry.

Because the first thing usually said about Jonathan Edwards is that he was, in some unspecified way, fortunate to be the son of a minister, it is worthwhile to ask of what real benefit was it to him to be the son of Timothy Edwards. Any other father might have encouraged his son to be a clergyman and might have provided the necessary liberal education. The particular lesson that Jonathan learned in the East Windsor parsonage was that although the ministry was the most honorable of professions, it could easily be a martyr's vocation. From his father's career, Jonathan might have taken the lesson that a minister must wage constant warfare with his congregation for the minimum of respect and authority that God had intended him to hold.

Timothy Edwards, born in 1669, was the eldest son of a prosperous Hartford merchant-cooper. His Harvard education was interrupted by a dismissal for some now-obscure misbehavior, and in the spring of 1694 he was teaching school in Northampton. The following September he finally took his Harvard degrees; two months later he married Stoddard's daughter and immediately began a trial as a preacher in what was then the second church in Windsor. The original Windsor township grant straddled the Connecticut River, and although the east-side lands had been farmed since the 1640s and a village had grown up gradually, Timothy Edwards was the first preacher hired by East Windsor.
community gave no evidence of particular religiosity. Symbolically, there was not even a meetinghouse there until the spring of 1698, when Timothy was ordained.\textsuperscript{18} For the rest of his eighty-nine years he devoted himself to an ideal of the Christian community, with the church at its center of consciousness and the minister as the chief guardian of moral order. His career was marked with some successes: although his surviving sermons are painfully boring expositions of Old Testament texts about obedience, his congregation did share in the religious revivals which periodically spread through the Connecticut Valley in the first half of the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{19}

In his everyday relations with his congregation, however, Timothy Edwards endured chronic frustration. He was obsessed with pastoral authority--or, rather, his lack of it. There was frequent open conflict in East Windsor over the pastor's salary--a matter of practical importance and a symbol of respect that bedeviled many clergymen--and over the pastor's right to absolute control within the church.

Compared with ministers in other rural towns, Edwards received a stipend that was about average.\textsuperscript{20} Around 1717, however, he felt so underpaid that he threatened to leave East Windsor, and the quarrels over money persisted for at least another thirty years.\textsuperscript{21} Compulsively seeking comparisons, Edwards filled his memorandum books with the figures that were rumored for other ministers' salaries, and they were always larger than his own.\textsuperscript{22} His father-in-law Stoddard was wealthy, and his own father and brothers and many of his friends were rich merchants, and so unhappy comparisons came to mind frequently. A characteristic diary entry reads, in part, "Major Talcott ye Dep Gov'r
told me that he spent above £200 a year in his family [and was] very
sensible that ministers could never live on their salaries &c."23
Edwards also recorded detailed analyses of the rising cost of living and
the demeaning uncertainties of the "country pay" in which he received
his wages: amid the bushels of grain and odd squashes and firkins of
butter, all given to suit the donor's surplus and not Edwards' need,
were occasional bad bills of credit or green corn which quickly shrank
by one-sixth of its volume.24 Somehow, he managed to feed his family
and to send his only son to college and to endure even more symbolic
insults.25 He had more serious challenges to ponder, and in matters of
ministerial prerogative within the church he was even less passive.

For the first decade of his tenure, Timothy Edwards and his con-
gregation seem to have agreed at least on the fundamentals of religion.
The fight which was to last through the rest of his career became open
in 1708, when Edwards enthusiastically endorsed the "Saybrook Platform."
The East Windsor church, like many others, refused to accept this new
Presbyterian form of church government with powerful regional councils
overriding local autonomy and pervasive ministerial authoritarianism.26
Over the next three decades there were a number of clashes in East Wind-
sor over the minister's prerogatives; in the open warfare of 1735-1741
between pastor and flock, Edwards demanded that the church acknowledge
his right to an absolute veto on admission and discipline and even com-
plete control over the choice of issues to be discussed by the church at
their meetings! The church, of course, refused. Three councils of
neighboring ministers and laymen failed to effect a compromise, and so
bitter was the fight that the Lord's Supper was suspended for three
years. The last entry in the narrative of these troubles written by the leader of the anti-Edwards party (by then, all but two of the church members), shows that mood of both sides was still angry in 1741.  

As recent studies have shown, Timothy Edwards was not the only early-eighteenth century minister to suffer a subjectively inadequate salary nor the only one to fight his church over clerical perquisites. But in his case, as presumably in others, the question of temperament was important, for each pastor allowed certain types of incidents to trigger the ventilation of underlying tensions. Timothy Edwards was especially sensitive about the discipline of young people (young women who married without parental consent were the catalysts for the two major episodes of intrachurch war), and he demanded the power to use a veto on church admission as a personal disciplinary tool. He displayed a need for deference that had no chance for fulfillment in his parish; he demanded powers far exceeding those of most Congregational ministers; and he absolutely refused to compromise. These aspects of his personality might be attributed to an emotionally turbulent adolescence (his father divorced his mother for adultery, and she was violent and probably insane), or to the disappointment of ambitions to hold a more "important" pulpit in a more urbane community where ministers were treated as gentlemen, or to attempted emulation of his father-in-law Stoddard, who was known to wield absolute authority over his own church. Whatever the causes, Timothy's demands exacerbated the anti-clerical prejudices of his congregation, and their assertiveness only fueled his obstinacy.

This was the atmosphere in which Jonathan Edwards grew up; this
was the most personal model for the pastor-church relationship that was in his mind as he studied for the ministry. Later in his own career there would be echoes of his father's concerns with salary, immoral young people, and ministerial control of church admission and discipline. This family background, as well as the more obvious gifts of inclination to the ministry and formal education that he received from his father, was an important part of Jonathan Edwards' preparation for his pastorate.

Despite Timothy Edwards' unhappy experiences as a pastor, there could be no question that his only son would follow him in the Lord's work. The ministry was still the most prestigious of occupations in colonial New England and the only profession for an intellectually ambitious man.30 Even as a child, Jonathan showed great intelligence, which his father carefully nurtured; perhaps it occurred to him that the life of the mind might be compensation for whatever frustrations Jonathan would encounter in the pastoral side of his ministry.31 The elder Edwards has left us no evidence of any real interest in theological speculation or science, but his son's precocious essays testify to Timothy's encouragement.32 While he was at Yale, Jonathan's interest in contemporary philosophy flowered, and some historians have regarded his attempts to reinterpret Calvinist dogma in light of current science as the most important aspect of his life.33

But those leanings toward philosophy were not really very good preparation for the pastoral side of the career Edwards undertook. It cannot be said that a love of abstraction materially interfered with his more mundane encounters with ministerial duty, but the satisfactions of
intellectual excitement shown to him in his early years perhaps made more intense the frustrations of pastoral endeavor--progress could be made so much more quickly with difficult ideas than with stubborn human beings. Even at the time of his college graduation in the early 1720s, however, he had no real alternative to the ministry as a "proper" career. Edwards, who later confessed to being "by nature very unfit for secular business," was cut out to be a thinker; but the social role of professional "intellectual," as separate from the pastorate, was impossible for a man with no private income. Even college teachers were usually young men in transition from their own post-graduate studies to the ministry. Edwards' return to Yale as Tutor in 1724 indicates that he preferred the cloistered life to that of pastor, as he had tried the latter in New York and Bolton, but his role in the college was not permanent. Tutors were transient and were primarily disciplinarians, responsible only for elementary instruction; even college presidents, who guided more sophisticated studies, were recruited not from among the tutors but from among distinguished clergymen (as Princeton would call Edwards himself in 1758).

The residue of Edwards' academic preparation was, therefore, not only sound instruction in the classic curriculum, but also an ambiguous portent for the pastorate in two areas. The stimulation of his purely philosophical interests was perhaps psychologically a disservice to a man who would have to commit his life to a country congregation like the one in which Jonathan had grown up. On the other hand, there was no positive contribution to the practical skills a pastor would need. The standard curriculum included no courses on homiletics (beyond study of
the early Puritan divines), nor any instruction in pastoral politics.37 (These were the things to be learned by the apprentice as he lived with a mature minister, before or after his college training; the lessons Jonathan Edwards might have learned in East Windsor have been indicated.) The experience at Yale, therefore, was not such an unqualified advantage for the future minister at Northampton as the "conventional" biography of Jonathan Edwards would suggest.

A classical education and intellectual encouragement were not the only products of Jonathan Edwards' youth in New Haven. Equally important for his later life was the other desirable side of preparation for the ministry—a personal religious conversion. Because so much of his later effort as a pastor and theologian was bound up in encouraging and defining real conversion experiences, Edwards' own conversion is a matter of great historical importance. Once again, surviving evidence suggests a more complicated and less purely positive experience than is part of the usual narrative of Edwards' early years.

Most biographical accounts have followed Edwards' own version written about 1740, commonly known as the "Personal Narrative."38 In this short autobiography, Edwards states that his religious growth had begun in childhood during the small revivals that frequently swept through the Connecticut Valley.39 But not until the time of his graduation from Yale, when he underwent the first of the physical/emotional collapses that came throughout his life after periods of extreme stress, was he able to abandon "all ways of known outward sin" and, more importantly, to overcome his inner objections to the "horrible" doctrine
of God's absolute sovereignty. When his "reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it," at last, his "mind rested in it." Jonathan found his soul "diffused" with a "sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from anything I ever experienced before." During the next year he was filled with a "sweet . . . sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God" and would "sing forth my contemplations." There were some ups and downs of his spirit thereafter; but after he settled at Northampton in 1726, he found his sense of the "glorious and lovely Being" growing stronger. Or so he remembered his conversion, and so he described it in an elegant essay, around 1740.

Although a number of documents survive from the years described—a diary, a set of resolutions, as well as many family letters—there is, strangely, no confirmation of this retrospective view. Letters from and about Jonathan discuss his physical health but not his spiritual state. Despite the attribution in the "Personal Narrative" of the turning-point to the year after his graduation, Jonathan's "Resolutions" begun in the fall of 1722 imply no feeling of being "saved." The surviving part of Edwards' diary begins in December of that year with a questioning of his "preparatory work" as being not sufficiently "inward"—a question that would have been impossible had he really felt the esthetic raptures described in the Personal Narrative. The following August he was worried that his experience did not follow the "particular steps" outlined in English and New England models for conversion.

Both diary and resolutions for 1722 and 1723 record a mood of depression alternating with rather desperate-sounding resolves to control his behavior and try harder to focus his attention on things
spiritual. It is difficult to imagine the man who penned those diary entries being able to "sing forth his contemplations," as—twenty years later—he remembered doing. Although as early as January 1723 he had recognized that the Calvinist cliché of man's inability to take any actions for his own salvation did apply also to his own particular case, he was not at the time able to "rest" in the "sweet sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God" but was overcome with a compulsion to take some steps (even if ultimately ineffective ones) toward an appearance of holiness, to perform rituals that would ease his mind. Although he had suffered from serious bouts of illness and frequent periods of weakness, Edwards recorded an ascetic course of physical self-denial with which he tried to create psychological stability.

On January 12, 1723, Edwards wrote in his diary that he was formally dedicating himself to God. This entry has often been interpreted as contemporary confirmation of the conversion later described in the "Personal Narrative," but the emotional tone of the complete entry argues against any such nice resolution of the spiritual torments Edwards was experiencing.

Three days later he was "decaying," he wrote, and two days after that he was "overwhelmed with melancholy." In less than a month he was ill again: "I think that I stretched myself farther than I could bear, and so broke." But again he stretched himself beyond physical endurance. If he felt himself to be regenerated, why did he still need to struggle for the "comfort" he said that he found only "after the greatest mortifications"? As late as May 1725 Edwards confessed that "whether I am now converted or not," he was unable to do more for his own condition, and in September 1726 he wrote
that he had been in a "low, sunk estate" for about three years.46

There is, therefore, strong reason to believe that the conversion as described by Edwards in his 1740 "Personal Narrative" did not really proceed so smoothly. He did perhaps have some sort of mystical experience at this time, but only later did he have the confidence to call it saving grace--only after the passage of time had supplied a new perspective on those emotional torments, after he had observed the conversions of many other persons during the revival of 1735, and after he had found his professional role of encourager to the spiritual experiences of others--and perhaps also found the use of autobiography in such encouragement.47

Indeed, the strongest link between the crafted autobiography and the contemporary documents is actually provided by Jonathan's description of Sarah Pierrepont, his future wife, written in 1723.48 She was a child (only thirteen years old) obviously "beloved of that Great Being"; she cared for little "except to meditate on Him. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness and universal benevolence of mind. . . . She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have someone invisible always conversing with her." Sarah was a vivid model for Jonathan of the enveloping sweetness of true piety, and her blissful state was something to be envied. Her spiritual peace was a condition he did not record that he shared at the time, but that he later attributed to his younger self. It is even possible that Sarah's manifest holiness contributed to his self-doubts in the early 1720s.49

Questions remain about the nature and timing of Jonathan Edwards' conversion experience that cannot be erased by the common biographical
practice of extracting the positive elements from the fragments of contemporary record to support the glossy retrospective narrative of two decades later. Acknowledging the uncertainties and ambiguities of Edwards' conversion enables us to confront the more important question of the relationship between his own conversion and the norm he later prescribed for his flock and the readers of his treatises. Of equal interest is the relationship between his conversion and his vocation. Richard Bushman has aptly described the suitability of the ministry for the "religious identity formed in conversion" out of the many-faceted psychological dilemma experienced by young Jonathan. "His office permitted him to talk freely of God's wrath, of human defilement, and of the exquisite joys of grace. . . . Even the disposition to chide and rebuke was dignified to a duty," and "the whole was sanctified and purged of pride because done for God and not for self." But if commitment to the ministry might ultimately help to lessen the guilt Edwards felt when intellectual ambitions were so much at cross purposes with both the humility prescribed by Calvinist doctrine and the potentially frustrating career destined by family tradition, achieving that professional engagement was no easy task. The ministry is not, after all, just a job: a minister must believe that he fully understands a complex and subtle Truth (and for one with Edwards' intellect, in the era of the Enlightenment that truth was not simple to grasp), and his divine mission is to persuade others to share his vision. To a great degree, the tension between intellect, emotion, and received doctrine had to be resolved before the formal role of minister could become an "identity" for Jonathan Edwards. This tension, including an emotionally
problematic conversion, was as much a part of Edwards' preparation for the ministry as was the formal education he received.

Besides family background, education, and conversion, there was one more apparent step in Jonathan Edwards' training for the pastorate—a pair of short preaching trials. But Edwards' first experiences with actual ministerial responsibilities, rather than being good "practice" for his engagement in Northampton, were apparently mostly negative in emotional result. His first preaching call was to a small congregation which had split off from a Presbyterian church in New York. We know frustratingly little about his short tenure (September 1722 to April 1723) in that city: Jonathan did not even record the invitation or the reason why he left. It is possible that a friend of Timothy Edwards arranged his son's employment, and there is strong evidence of Timothy's pressure on Jonathan to leave. Although historians have assumed that Edwards could not stay because the church was insolvent, a letter from a member of that congregation to a friend followed a comment on their sorrow to lose the "much respected Mr. Edwards" with a description of the extremely accomplished candidate they were hoping to hire. It appears that by late 1722, Timothy Edwards had decided that Bolton, Connecticut, was a better place for his son than was New York.

By early December Jonathan was reluctantly negotiating with the church committee at Bolton: he wrote to them that his present "circumstances" and his "father's inclination" indicated that he would probably leave New York the following spring, but he refused to promise anything and postponed final consideration of the Bolton offer. His
tone was negative, almost rude, and the flowery compliments which close the letter sound insincere. Timothy Edwards nevertheless wrote to Bolton in a letter covering his son's that he found nothing "discouraging to the motion [to invite Jonathan] you have made." Although his reasons for wanting Jonathan to go to Bolton remain a mystery, Timothy's plans were very clear.

In his diary, Jonathan described his "parting from New York" as "melancholy" and reported that whenever he was in a new "state of life" he found the "troubles and difficulties of that state were greater than those of any other state that I proposed to be in . . . [or] those that I left last." He prayed to be cured of worldly attachments. Early in May, after he had been at home in East Windsor only a few days, he wrote in his diary that he had somewhat "subdued a disposition to chide and fret" but was still too quick "to manifest my own dislike and scorn." There is no direct reference to the source of his discomfort within the Edwards parsonage, but the next day he resolved "never to allow the least measure of any fretting or uneasiness at my father and mother" to effect "the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye; and to be especially careful of it with respect to any of our family." But two weeks later he again had to remind himself of "what great obligations I am under to love and honour my parents." Many resolutions to replace his "air of dislike, anger and fretfulness" with an "appearance of love, cheerfulness and benignity" had to be repeated in July. But by August he had again "sinned in not being careful enough to please my parents."

"To please his parents" probably meant accepting the call to
Bolton, and he clearly did not want to go. Did he hope eventually to succeed his grandfather and therefore fear making a contract with another church? (Was he unhappy at the current rumor that Northampton had offered the assistantship and a large salary to Solomon Williams, another of Solomon Stoddard's grandsons? Jonathan's diary entry for January 10, 1723, was a long reproof to himself for envying others and concluded "always to rejoice in everyone's prosperity . . . and to expect no happiness of that nature, as long as I live."61) Was he reluctant to locate himself so close to his father's parish and thereby render himself a perpetual junior in the local circle of clergymen? Was he unenthusiastic about the pastorate of such a country backwater, where he would have so little encouragement to exercise his intellectual prowess? Whatever the cause of his unhappiness, in the fall he at last gave in and went to Bolton to preach on trial, signed a settlement agreement in their town record book on November 11--and sometime shortly thereafter left Bolton.62 Significantly, he never mentioned Bolton at all in his diary or later correspondence, and the whole event might be easy to overlook were it not for that signed contract. After some months of waiting at home, in May 1724 Jonathan was invited to be a Tutor at Yale. He unhesitatingly turned his back on the pastoral role he had tried in favor of the greater stimulation of the academic milieu.

Ironically, there was also a pastoral aspect to that role--the discipline as well as the instruction of rowdy undergraduates--and it caused Jonathan "despondencies, fears, perplexities," and "distraction of mind."63 Even while he was a student himself, he had felt only disgust at the normal student pranks, and he had once found it
important enough to write to his father that "no new quarrels [have] broke out between me and any of the scholars." He was, simply, not good at getting along with people in everyday relations. And his position as Tutor in a college without a president (since Rector Timothy Cutler had defected to Anglicanism) demanded an effective authoritarianism not backed by full official sanction. The physical, intellectual, and emotional burdens on Jonathan, not long since a mere student himself, were very great. By September 1725 he had been serving for about a year; then, just as some of the responsibility was lifted from his shoulders by the appointment of his former mentor, Elisha Williams, as Rector, Edwards suffered a total collapse. Gravely ill, he lay at the home of a friend for almost three months before he could travel to East Windsor for a long convalescence. Although he did not officially resign his office for another year, it is not certain that he ever returned to his duties at Yale before leaving Connecticut entirely for the position in Northampton. When he arrived to take up this permanent post, he must have had mixed feelings about his abilities to perform pastoral duties with greater success than he had heretofore known.

We cannot doubt that Jonathan Edwards was happy and honored to be chosen to succeed his grandfather Stoddard in the Northampton pulpit. And he was as well fitted for that position as he could have been, under the circumstances. He had gone through all the motions of a successful preparation for a distinguished career--but without finding any lasting emotional satisfaction at any stage and without building a coherent and practical set of skills with which to meet the challenge. With the
pleasures of the "ivory-tower" intellectual life as a clear contrast, he had learned vicariously and personally that the pastoral life could be intensely frustrating. There were, however, no alternatives. After a six-month pause in his progress, Jonathan Edwards did take up his duties as the pastor of the Church of Christ in Northampton.

But the events of 1729, and those of the rest of Edwards' career as a pastor in Northampton, are not to be explained solely by his own personality and preparation. When he took over the Northampton pulpit, he faced a community that had its own "personality" and a unique history that included six decades of domination by the patriarchal Solomon Stoddard. Historians have seen only benefits accruing to Edwards from the inheritance of his grandfather's mantle. But were these traditional warm relations between pastor and flock something that could be transferred to a new generation? Was there, perhaps, something about Solomon Stoddard and his great successes that made his grandson feel insecure, uncomfortable with the responsibility of being an heir, temporarily unable to carry on? If we are to understand Edwards' Northampton ministry more fully, we must understand that of his illustrious predecessor. Since Stoddard's story is not well known, we must go backward in time once again before resuming the narrative of Jonathan Edwards' pastorate.
CHAPTER II

SOLOMON STODDARD: A FRONTIER MINISTRY, 1669-1729

During the two and one-half years of Jonathan Edwards' trial as colleague pastor, Solomon Stoddard and the town of Northampton had ample opportunity to discern any reluctance in his grandson to continue the doctrines, practices and pastoral style that Stoddard had made the "Northampton way" during his sixty-year ministry. When Stoddard died in 1729, no one could have foreseen that the designated heir would not be part of a smooth continuum from past to future or that his pastorate would end in the tragedy of dismissal. Twenty-two years later, Edwards blamed his failure to maintain the town's affection on "Mr. Stoddard's memory, . . . such that many looked on him almost as a sort of deity."  

Ironically, Edwards' alienation from his flock was an outgrowth of his attempts to live up to Stoddard's reputation.

Solomon Stoddard had been famous in his lifetime for both the large number and the good behavior of his converts. In his sixty years in the pulpit, during which almost every other church in the Connecticut Valley was torn by dissent at least once, there was no disorder in the Northampton church great enough to reach the official records. Edwards himself was the most effective advertiser of the myth of Northampton's golden Stoddar dean age. When he wrote A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God to describe the revival of 1735, Edwards began by listing the excellencies of the town during his grandfather's era. The people were "sober, and orderly, and good," free from "error and variety of sects and opinions," because they were at a "distance from seaports"
and therefore uncorrupted by the mainstream of civilization. Besides geographical luck, a positive force for maintaining "purity of doctrine," and for keeping Northampton "the freest of any part of the land from unhappy divisions and quarrels in our ecclesiastical and religious affairs," was Edwards' venerable grandfather. Stoddard had been a man of "great abilities and eminent piety." Under his care the congregation had grown "rational and understanding," and many were "remarkable for their distinct knowledge of things that relate to heart religion and Christian experience, and their great regards thereto." Stoddard had been "blessed, from the beginning, with extraordinary success in his ministry in the conversion of many souls," especially in five seasons of revival, called "harvests." In his sermon at Stoddard's funeral, William Williams (pastor at Hatfield and Stoddard's most distinguished son-in-law) preached that Stoddard's death was a lesson for his flock not to "idolize" even men to whom God had given "so much of his Wisdom and Grace, that under God they are accounted as Shields of the Earth, the Strength and Glory of the Places where they live." In his grandfather's obituary notice Edwards wrote that "scarce any minister was more reverenced and beloved by his people" than Stoddard, and "his being our pastor gave a name and reputation to the town."

That reputation had a profound influence on Stoddard's grandson. Edwards had spent little if any time in Northampton before he arrived as a pulpit candidate, and he knew his grandfather primarily as a distant figure of great renown. The larger-than-life image of Stoddard's power which Edwards held all his life was the impression of a boy whose grandsire was called the "Congregational Pope" of the Connecticut Valley and
was widely admired for his evangelical success in Northampton. It was because of Stoddard's reputation that Edwards felt such surprise when he arrived in 1726. His shock at finding the community less than utopian is reflected in his little history of Northampton in the Faithful Narrative, where after four paragraphs on the saintliness of the town, Edwards abruptly begins an indictment of their degeneracy in the late 1720s. But he reinforced the image of Stoddard's power by attributing the decline into spiritual apathy and political contention to the inevitable relaxing of discipline in Stoddard's ninth decade of life.

Edwards would spend the next twenty years trying (and ultimately failing) to recreate the powers of the Patriarch. In response to Edwards' demands for authority, the town countered his image of Stoddard with one of their own choosing. They regarded him as an "oracle," referred to him as "the great Stoddard," and regarded any change in his church practices as a "horrid profaneness." They enshrined the memory of the Stoddard who opened church membership to all and widened, rather than narrowed, the means to Grace; they forgot how harsh a judge Stoddard had also been. Edwards, on the other hand, remembered the Stoddard who had thundered the Law and harvested saints; he lost sight of the essential humility of this patriarch. Twenty-one years after his death, the image of Solomon Stoddard was so powerful and so many-sided that it drove Edwards and his flock apart.

Stoddard had worked hard for his reputation. The town to which he had come in November 1669 had been settled for economic rather than religious reasons and for its first fifteen years had shown no great
love for men of God. The land-hungry men from Hartford, Windsor, and Springfield downriver who had settled the broad alluvial meadows at "Nonotuck" in 1654 neglected hiring a preacher until 1658. Their first minister, Eleazar Mather (son of the Reverend Richard Mather of Dorchester), preached three years on trial before he was ordained, and a church officially gathered, in June 1661. During the next eight years, the church members represented only about half the households in town. Mather's influence with even full members was minimal: over his bitter opposition the church endorsed the Result of the Synod of 1662 (the "Half-Way Covenant") in October 1668.

When Mather died in early 1669, some unknown persons recommended Solomon Stoddard as his successor. Stoddard came to the Valley immediately; the following March he was given a generous settlement, and two weeks later he married Esther Warham Mather, his predecessor's widow. Stoddard was ordained on September 11, 1672.

The new pastor had exemplary social credentials. His father was a wealthy Boston merchant and pillar of First Church; his mother was a niece of Governor Winthrop. Stoddard had degrees from Harvard and had been the college's first librarian. All of his life, even when Northampton was no longer "frontier," he would be the most educated and cosmopolitan man in the community, as well as one of the richest.

But Stoddard and the plain farmers in his congregation agreed on matters essential to the contracted relationship. By the time of his ordination in 1672, they were in full accord on going beyond the literal recommendations of the "Half-Way Covenant." And although the trend they followed was the "liberal" position of the era, the direction of change
was clearly toward enhanced ministerial power. When the Northampton church endorsed the Half-Way Covenant in 1668, it echoed the Synod by insisting that those who merely "owned the covenant" (formally submitted themselves to church discipline in order to have their children baptized but without pretending to experiential faith themselves) were not to "essay the breaking in upon the privileges of the Lord's Supper" and voting in church affairs. Four years later, two months after Stoddard's ordination, the church moved a step further by resolving that those who would "own the covenant" would be considered in a new category of membership called a "state of education." They voted that "from year to year such as grow up to adult age in the church shall present themselves to the Elders, and if they be found to understand and assent unto the doctrine of faith, not to be scandalous in life, and willing to subject themselves to the government of Christ in this church, [they] shall publickly own the Covenant and be acknowledged members of this church." Presumably, the test for admission to full membership was still the relation of an "experimental work of faith," and the judges were "the Elders," the pastor (or "preaching elder") and the one lay (or "ruling") elder elected by the church.

These reforms in church polity are significant in their implication of a dynamic continuum from baptism through "owning the covenant" to full membership and in their consignment of control of this process to the elders. In reality, however, hopes for spiritual growth were not rewarded. Although 105 persons owned the covenant in 1672 and 6 more did so by 1679, only 14 of them had become full members of the church by the latter year. Thereafter the presence of certain records and the
absence of others indicates clearly the further shift of power to the pastor as a result of this apathy. After 1677 Stoddard stopped distinguishing in his records between degrees of membership and kept only a running list of members "in full communion."¹⁹ This was done, however, without any formal enactment by the church, which presumably adhered at least nominally to its previous gradations of members. But Stoddard's records, the only official ones, were a de facto elimination of categories. In 1690 the church officially agreed to the position Stoddard had been advocating from the pulpit for over a decade, that the Lord's Supper was rightfully available to all those with "a knowledge of principles of religion and not scandalous by open sinful living."²⁰ Significantly, the approval of "open communion" was not recorded in the Northampton church book: a neighboring clergyman was shocked enough to record the event in his diary for posterity to read, but Stoddard himself deemed it to be of little importance, since it merely ratified the position he had already espoused. What he did record was a list of names of those who were in "full communion" because satisfactory to him in their understanding of the "principles" of Christianity and in their behavior. (According to Jonathan Edwards, Stoddard had exercised a veto on church admissions.²¹) During the rest of his ministry almost every adult in Northampton was entered on Stoddard's list and therefore gathered into the fold of church discipline, in which the most effective authority was that of the pastor.

As he neglected his church record book, Solomon Stoddard turned to a different audience: to his ministerial colleagues he announced and
argued his positions on church polity and discipline, and to them he presented a coherent doctrinal platform for these innovations. His tracts on ecclesiology between 1687 and 1709 grew in acerbity of tone and in depth of critique of the "New England way" as it had evolved, but his position remained the same from first to last. Stoddard's message was simple: Christ's righteousness was perfect and sufficient for the salvation of all men, who only have to believe in the truth of the Gospel promises. Good works might earn a saint "additional glory" in Heaven, but entrance to that realm was gained only through faith. Men must try their utmost to behave morally and to fulfill all God's ordinances, but only to maintain good order in a Christian community and to teach themselves that human efforts could not, ultimately, earn them salvation.

This doctrine was completely orthodox and should have provoked no anger in the eastern-Massachusetts religious "establishment," led by Increase Mather and his son Cotton, who answered each Stoddard treatise with increasing venom. Perhaps this doctrine was too orthodox—for Stoddard's "radicalism" lay essentially in making institutions mirror the stringencies of Reformed theology. Salvation, he insisted, came through the experience of saving grace. Earthly ecclesiastical arrangements, even the sacraments and ordinances that Jesus had prescribed, were another matter. Only God could read hearts; men, even ministers, could only judge the appearances of holiness in moral behavior and doctrinal knowledge. When hard pressed, even the Mathers would admit this was true; but they were willing to pretend they could judge hearts and willing to assert that the sacraments were "seals" to the Kingdom
of Heaven for those whom ministers approved. Those holding to this position, the majority of New England clergymen, were offended when Stoddard charged them with sacerdotalism and hypocrisy.

Stoddard's opponents clearly feared that giving up the ministerial power of judging souls would lead to anarchy, but Stoddard was as authoritarian as any of his colleagues and had other ways of exercising his power. Although the sacraments must be opened to all who, in charitable judgment, might be saved, Stoddard insisted that those who behaved immorally were certainly unregenerate and could therefore be barred from church privileges. And no man was a sterner judge of behavior. He was tireless in denouncing the immoralities (drunkenness, riots, wigs, and hoopskirts) that were fashionable, especially in Boston, the home of "orthodoxy." Such disgraces were not encouraged in Stoddard's own domain.

More important to Stoddard, however, and even more effectively controlled in his own church than were wigs and feminine fripperies, was the sinful arrogance of church members. Some men were obviously able to cajole their ministers into certifying hypocrisy as evidence of saving grace; but these men also wanted to judge each other, to erect little exclusive and "democratic" churches to keep other men outside the pale. The remedy proposed by Stoddard for this kind of sin was a Presbyterian, authoritarian and hierarchical church. In his 1700 Doctrine of Instituted Churches, Stoddard denied the Scriptural validity of particular church covenants and advocated a "national" church. Perhaps, ironically, because other clergymen feared that Stoddard himself would rule even such a system of powerful synods, Stoddard found little support for
this position. He never repeated the suggestion, but his 1718 Examination of the Power of the Fraternity expressed a contempt for the assertive "brethren" that was probably widely shared. (His son-in-law Timothy Edwards would certainly have agreed that "we have no reason to think that Christ would intrust the government of his church with men so uncapable to govern." Church officers, although chosen by the congregation, should be unchallenged rulers. Since most churches had abandoned the lay eldership by 1700, this was, in effect, rule by the minister.

But ecclesiastical power, however indispensible for maintaining community order, was nevertheless only part of the ambition of the Reverend Mr. Stoddard. His real goal was to win men's souls for Christ, and he was doubly successful as an evangelist. First of all, with his eighteenth-century tracts on the workings of grace and the counseling of potential converts, Stoddard won a great influence with his professional colleagues. Ministers who had been unwilling or unable to assert Stoddardean disciplinary powers in their own churches were able to endorse Stoddard's evangelistic message wholeheartedly. Secondly, on the local level, Stoddard's expertise and sensitivity as a spiritual guide supposedly won many true converts within his "open" church.

Stoddard's techniques were most clearly described in his Guide to Christ (1714) and the Treatise Concerning Conversion (1719). They resolved into a two-stage process. First was the preaching of "terror," to make the consciences of sinners "tender." Effective ministers, wrote Stoddard, were "Sons of Thunder: men had need have storms in their hearts, before they will betake themselves to Christ for refuge."
Word is an hammer and we should use it to break the Rocky Hearts of Men."32 Recent scholarly evaluations of Puritan rhetoric have credited Stoddard with "the most powerful--up to that time--preaching of the stark terror of inscrutable judgments and of hell's torments" and development of the traditional sermon form into "a meticulously prepared instrument of psychological manipulation."33 The master of this technique had many imitators in the Connecticut Valley, and it is largely through Stoddard's influence that the region was peppered with religious revivals in the early eighteenth century. Stoddard's own church at Northampton became known as the home of "heart religion."

Once terror-preaching had broken through man's defenses of intellectual pride and complacency, however, the "wounded"conscience required skillful encouragement so that it would be receptive to grace. Increasingly intense in Stoddard's writings is a loving sympathy for human beings suffering spiritual anxiety and emotional pain, and he wrote pages and pages of advice to other ministers about dealing gently and properly with doubts and distresses in converts.34 He was an expert in the varieties of religious experience, and his writings reflect an intense personal piety that shone as an example. Although he assumed no divine power to read a heart, Solomon Stoddard possessed a rare ability to encourage the distressed to keep striving and hoping for God's mercy.

There is an apparent paradox between these Stoddardean roles of stern behavioral judge and gentle emotional supporter, but they combine in the role of a father. And it is the title "Patriarch" that has always seemed most apt for Stoddard. Sereno Dwight, writing in the early
nineteenth century, called Stoddard "a loved and venerated parent" to Northampton; and a recent analyst of ministerial problems in the Connecticut Valley has written that "of all the ministers of the time, he came closest to recreating the aura of the first generation." His congregation were his children--relatively unfit to govern, of course, but beloved and tenderly comforted when obedient. Historians arguing over whether the "real" Stoddard was more concerned with piety or discipline have missed Stoddard's real point, that the two were inextricable. He intended to have both, although he recognized that piety most often followed from good order.

Stoddard never explicitly confessed that his doctrines were the codification of his experience, that his practices were perhaps the only way to maintain ministerial authority in his community, but the Stoddardean system worked well in the context of social and economic reality in Northampton. The town's history during Stoddard's reign was an evolution from frontier outpost to settled village of subsistence farmers into prosperous and incipiently commercialized "county town" surrounded by newer villages. There was surprisingly little conflict as the town grew, until the turn of the eighteenth century, when Northampton began obviously to lose its "frontier" characteristics of abundant land, relative equality, and political egalitarianism. After that time, many families could no longer provide their sons with sufficient farmland, the distance in both property and life-style between richer and poorer grew, and town government came to be dominated by a handful of men with great discretionary powers. Stoddard countered these social
changes with ever-stronger statements of his radical ecclesiology. He planted the seeds of good order and experiential piety and "harvested" the results in church members who submitted to his rule.

Although his contributions to trans-Atlantic Reformed thought have recently been noted, the dominant interpretation of Stoddard by historians is an as innovator of pragmatic responses to the "frontier" environment. Perry Miller labeled Stoddard a "realist" extending the compromises of the essentially medieval Puritans until the logic of doctrine fit the "facts" of the West; countering potential views of Stoddard as a frontier democrat, Miller insisted that Stoddard sided with the "aristocrats" against the "leveling tendencies of the frontier."

Stoddard was indeed a pragmatist, and his treatises were ecclesiology and psychology rather than theology; there is no doubt that he defended the traditional power of church and clergy against the social trend toward secularization. But Stoddard's enemy has been wrongly identified and the "frontier" environment mistakenly assessed. The only scholar to address the question of the popularity of Stoddard's doctrines with the laity (which the "Stoddard-as-anti-democrat" school has to avoid) has reasserted the causative "frontier" theory by describing the usefulness of open communion in the "isolated" Connecticut Valley settlements which "strongly felt the need to cohere around the church" because they lacked other forms of association. All of these "frontier" theories, however, ignore the tendency of true frontier churches in the Valley to be "purist" about the Lord's Supper (as eastern Massachusetts churches had usually been), and they mistakenly assume that "open" communion was enacted in the early years of the
Northampton settlement.

The timing of the changes in Northampton church practices and Stoddard's announcement of his own views indicates a connection between doctrine and social environment different from that usually suggested. Northampton was founded in 1654, and it was no longer "frontier" when communion was opened in 1690 and Stoddard spoke out against Congregationalism in 1700 and 1718. The changes that took place in Stoddard's thought and practice around 1690-1700 seem to have been a response not to any "levelling" tendency or need to cohere in the wilderness, but the opposite--the transition from a relatively egalitarian society into one in which marked differences in income and property effected important differences in political power and style of life. The older church members resisted the innovation, and it was the younger ones who would have had less faith in the efficacy of the old communitarian ideals to regulate group life. Perhaps the distinctions between "full" and "half-way" church members no longer paralleled the perceived distinctions between better and lesser citizens, but it is much more likely that the distinctions in church and state were becoming too closely interlocked for a people who had once known greater social fluidity. Stoddard's bitter invectives against the hubris of the "fraternity" suggest unpleasant experiences with men who assumed both spiritual and temporal superiority over their neighbors. "Open" communion rewarded those who met the minister's standards of correct behavior, but it gave no spiritual certification to those who already had too much fuel for self-pride. Stoddard was an aristocrat by temperament and he wanted near-absolute power in his church, but to make him an anti-democrat in social
policy is to mistake the character of those he opposed. When Stoddard railed against "democracy" in the church, he condemned rule by the "brethren," and in most communities the brethren who would take the lead in church affairs would be the plutocrats, the true anti-democratic faction, if such parties existed. Stoddard, secure in his aristocratic self-image, would have had no patience with social climbers. He could not really halt the social changes he saw and denounced, but he did keep personal piety from becoming a political weapon and he cleverly enhanced the role of the minister as a moral force in the community. His new basis for this moral policing was a splendid way to keep the disciplinary role of the pastor separate from the evangelical role, which was of equal concern to Stoddard; the real importance of his doctrine lay in the fact that it preserved discipline regardless of a possible lack of evangelical success. No challenges to Stoddard's authority were ever recorded, and that can be said of few ministers in the Connecticut Valley. He fit, not coincidentally, a certain stage in the evolution of the community, and he exemplified a certain transition in the relation of a minister to his congregation.

The raw power of discipline was not, however, the only way in which Stoddard dominated the community of Northampton, and it may have been rather less important than Stoddard's standing at the top of almost any ladder of deference that could have been imagined. He clearly took the lead in almost all aspects of everyday life in Northampton. He was, of course, the chief spokesman for the values of the community; but he took a great interest in their secular welfare, as well as their moral state.
In the frontier days when he was the only educated man in town, he wrote blistering letters to the colonial authorities who slighted the defense of the small village in order to facilitate broader strategies. Later, he was active in promoting the improvement of a road to Boston. It was characteristic that he recommended establishing a certain church on the nearby frontier not only because it would promote religion, but also because it would attract settlers who would aid in defense and the economic growth of the region. But equally important was the fact that Stoddard had available to him more cosmopolitan "culture," money, and political influence than any other man in Northampton—and he used them for moral purposes.

Despite his choice of a backwoods home, Stoddard was a leader of the intellectual life of the colony. His obituary notice in the Boston Weekly News-Letter described him as a "divine of the first rank." He wrote powerful treatises that were "best-sellers" in their day. Until he was near eighty, the honor of giving the important public lecture in Boston on the day after Harvard's Commencement was his every year. He fit in, intellectually and socially, with his sophisticated Boston colleagues and maintained his ties with his aristocratic merchant family.

Although he lived and dressed modestly in Northampton, Stoddard had wealth beyond the aspirations of most frontier farmers. An inventory of his estate in 1729 included 78 acres of farm land and at least that much more in commons (not valued), £1126 in personal property plus "several hundred pounds due on bonds lodged in Boston," besides his apparel and books (462 volumes and 491 pamphlets). He had been well paid by his congregation, and there is no record of any fighting over
his salary, although he took care to remind New Englanders to "sow more liberally of your earthly things . . . in hope of reaping more plenti-
fully of [your minister's] good things."49 The town gave him extra land in 1681; but in the hard times of the 1690s they were always behind in his salary payments, and after he had persuaded them to pay him £80 annually in money rather than £100 in "country pay," he habitually acknowledged as payment in full a smaller sum than that specified.50 Because of his inherited wealth, Stoddard appears never to have asked the town of Northampton for more than they were willing to give. In this area, as well as in his success at persuading his congregation to accept the pastoral role as he defined it, Stoddard's career is in sharp contrast to that of his son-in-law Edwards.

During the last third of his career, when the people of Northampton showed less inclination to be governed by reminders of Christian communi-
tarian ethics and greater inclination to form themselves into parties to fight for their share of town resources, Stoddard maintained his posi-
tion as Patriarch of public affairs by beating them at their own game. He controlled the leader of the most powerful faction: that leader was Stoddard's second son, "Colonel John." A Harvard graduate with no interest in the learned professions (his older brother was sent into the ministry), John's vocation was primarily that of soldier (colonel by 1721 and commander-in-chief of the western frontier by 1744). Military prominence brought civil honors: he was a judge, Northampton's representa-
tive to the General Court almost continuously from 1716 to 1748, and member of the Governor's Council in the 1720s.51 In the midst of this Provincial service he found time to dominate Northampton's local
politics: he was the most often elected selectman and most often chosen Moderator of the town meeting in the first half of the eighteenth century. Temperamentally aristocratic like his father, he was the undoubted leader of the "Court" party in the "Court and Country" dichotomy used by Jonathan Edwards to describe Northampton politics, although Colonel John and his allies were so thorough in monopolizing town offices that it is hard to discern another "party" in the town records.

John Stoddard's influence on his father's parishioners cannot be measured only in terms of official positions, however. The Colonel was one of the richest men in Massachusetts, and his life-style was luxurious. His income derived from the vast amount of speculative land he acquired through government connections. When he died in 1748, Stoddard's real estate alone (much of it frontier land rated at the purchase price, not the sums hundreds of times higher at which his widow would sell acreage after his death) was worth £17,184 Old Tenor; a way to measure that sum is to consider it as about 78 times Jonathan Edwards' yearly salary of £220. Even more important than his scattered land holdings as a buttress to his majesty in the local community was his lavish display of personal property. In and around the elegant gambrel-roofed mansion that he built next to his father's house on the hill overlooking the town, there was by 1748 more than £18,000 worth of personal property, including many bonds, thirty-five shirts, and Northampton's first gold watch (alone worth £150). He did not marry until his fiftieth year, and then he chose the daughter of a man much like himself, Major John Chester of Wethersfield, Connecticut. Prudence Chester was known thereafter as "Madam" Stoddard, a title usually
reserved for the wives of ministers as the first ladies of their communities in rural areas. She sat with Madam Edwards in the best pew of the meetinghouse. She entertained guests with the first tea set in Northampton and paraded in the latest feminine fashions from Europe (including the hoop-skirts that her father-in-law had denounced). She would perhaps have been happier living in Boston, and her daughters were sent there for "finishing," but she was in all respects a proper consort for the "de facto warden of the western marches." Colonel John Stoddard was, indeed ironically, in his later years an exemplar of all that luxurious living that Solomon Stoddard railed against in Boston. But his display of wealth actually began with his marriage, which took place (perhaps coincidentally) the year after his father's death. Before that time, he was a powerful but austere man, a military and political leader who eschewed the ostentatious social life he could have afforded. Under his father's tutelage, he gave every evidence of properly valuing the works of the Spirit above his many worldly attainments, and in later years his opinion on religious matters was valued by his nephew, Jonathan Edwards.

The presence of a son such as Colonel John was a great advantage in the secular side of Solomon Stoddard's life. John's power in the political arena may explain why, although everyone agreed that the Patriarch controlled the townspeople of Northampton, no record survives of his actually interfering in any local civic affairs. Such meddling was probably beneath his dignity, and a timely suggestion to Colonel John would have served as well. In a generally deferential society, he and Colonel John were the chief Northampton "gentry."
In secular and religious affairs Stoddard had a potential power-base throughout New England in his family connections among leading merchants and ministers. The merchants included Solomon's brothers Anthony and Simeon of Boston, his son-in-law Joseph Hawley of Northampton, and the father and brothers of his son-in-law Timothy Edwards. Colonel John knew every important man in trade and government in New England and Albany; Solomon's step-son Warham Mather was a judge in New Haven. Solomon's step-daughter and his own daughters married the pastors at Deerfield, Hatfield, and Weston, Massachusetts, and Wethersfield, East Windsor, and Farmington, Connecticut. His oldest son, Anthony, was pastor at Woodbury, Connecticut. In the next generation the network grew even bigger. This connection alone would justify his great-great-grandson Timothy Dwight's comment that Solomon Stoddard "possessed probably more influence than any other clergyman in the province during a period of thirty years." 60

Solomon Stoddard's power, actual and potential, was great. But it was limited by the gradual erosion of the authority of any minister over any congregation in New England. Sensitive to this professional problem, Stoddard led the clerical counter-attack. His 1700 proposal of a "national church" with a full complement of synods was too radical a step for popularity, but Stoddard was undoubtedly pleased to see Connecticut encourage a presbyterian form of church government with its Saybrook Platform in 1708. Closer to home, Stoddard was able to convince his neighboring colleagues to form a ministerial association in 1714. The Hampshire Association proposed to "rectify maladministration,"
"redress grievances," and offer advice to heal intracongregational problems of all sorts. The six founding churches were soon joined by most of those in western Massachusetts, but they had no official power to enforce decisions and could only use persuasiveness and withdrawal from fellowship. Unfortunately the founding enactment is the only record of the Association until 1731, so the actual early functioning of the group is unknown. It is safe to assume that Stoddard was not satisfied, since the sins that ministerial power was supposed to prevail against continued to multiply.

Even within his own congregation, as the early eighteenth century progressed, Solomon Stoddard faced implicit, if not explicit, challenges to the role that he had designed for himself as all-powerful patriarch. A seventy-year-old community of prosperous farmers and growing numbers of tradesmen and professionals, filled with a sense of temporal security, was quite different from the small band of men and women who braved the wilderness. Eighteenth century men seemed to feel less need for an oracular figure to interpret their emotions and their surroundings for them, although from the minister's point of view they were much more in need of pious exhortation and discipline than their Puritan grandfathers had been. As communal enterprises designed for basic survival evolved into clan- and family-centered units of production and consumption, men were less willing to have their economic lives directed by a central figure who judged from an ideal ethic. Men and women still joined the church, and Stoddard's evangelism enjoyed the reputation of striking success in the context of a regional decline in religiosity, but joining the church by assenting to the truth of Christian doctrine was an
experience probably less central to everyday life than any minister would wish.

Northampton's respect and even love for Stoddard was something that greatly impressed his grandson, Jonathan Edwards, our only literary witness to Stoddard's last years. Edwards, who had grown up in a parsonage pervaded by the anxieties of a minister who fought his church over many issues and never won, was especially sensitive to problems of church discipline; he found Northampton in the mid-1720s respecting Stoddard but not obeying him. The townspeople seemed "very insensible of the things of religion," though Stoddard had hopes that a handful might be "savingly converted." The young people even had the effrontery to be "indecent in their carriage at meeting" under the less-sharp eyes of the aged pastor. Even more appalling to the young assistant minister, and dismaying to his grandfather, was the failure of the adult church members to control their children, who persisted in "licentiousness... without regard to any order in the families they belonged to." Edwards mourned the failure of "family government," but it was even clearer that ministerial government was failing in Northampton.

If Solomon Stoddard prepared for death by assessing the fruits of his sixty years in the Northampton pulpit, the accounting must have been sad. Perhaps in his memory the five great revivals of 1679, 1683, 1690, 1712, and 1718 outweighed the subsequent decline in piety and good order—but his lifelong emphasis on the need for proper discipline as part of God's worship and as true evidence of the "humiliation" that must precede regeneration suggests that he could have been quite cynical about those peaks of emotional fervor. Neither he nor his grandson
recorded the words that passed between them as the responsibility for ruling this challenging congregation was transferred to a new generation. One wonders if Stoddard predicted difficulties for his successor.

When he inherited his grandfather's pulpit, Jonathan Edwards was not optimistic about his chances to live up to the majestic reputation of "Pope" Stoddard. His preparation for his responsibilities had been as negative as positive, and he was especially sensitive to the issues of church discipline that showed signs of becoming a problem in Northampton. His Faithful Narrative indicated both a preoccupation with the rebelliousness of the town's "young people" against "family government" and a determination to use the classic Stoddarlean techniques of discipline and evangelism to combat the social decay. The rest of Edwards' career continued these themes, to a tragic end. Before examining in detail the implementation and effectiveness of Edwards' pastoral techniques, it will be useful to back-track chronologically one last time. The career of Solomon Stoddard was the challenge of the past to Edwards, but there was another challenge operating, that of the present and future. Those "young people" were the key to Edwards' future success and failure in Northampton. They had special needs, which provoked Edwards' changing pastoral "tactics" in the years 1730 to 1750. Those needs can best be illustrated by an examination of the demographic and economic meaning of being a "young person" in Northampton.
CHAPTER III
NORTHAMPTON: THE RISING GENERATION, 1700-1740

When Jonathan Edwards was forced to leave Northampton in 1750, he delivered a farewell sermon that reiterated the emphases of his two decades in the pulpit. "I have ever had a peculiar concern for the souls of the young people," he reminded his congregation, "and a desire that religion might flourish among them; and have especially exerted myself in order to it. . . . This is what I longed for; and it has been exceedingly grievous to me, when I have heard of vice, vanity and disorder, among our youth."\(^1\) Edwards' career did show a particularly important connection between his own success and the lives of the "young people" in Northampton, although from another perspective his emphasis on their conversion was merely the continuation of a venerable tradition. Edwards' grandfather Stoddard himself had in 1705 voiced the frustrations of two generations of ministers by citing the failure to convert the young people as a chief cause of New England's decline in godliness.\(^2\) Many sermons and treatises published in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries reflected the clergy's preoccupation with the role of the "rising generation" in the perceptible declension from a stable, hierarchical and godly society.\(^3\)

The "young people," generally those between fourteen and twenty-six (approximately the ages of puberty and marriage), were the focus of the ministers' concern because their behavior was so obvious a symptom of social change from a romanticized "Puritan" past.\(^4\) On the brink of adulthood, but not yet established in the social functions of maturity,
adolescents were the people most affected by the social and economic changes that were generating a widening array of career choices, opportunities for wealth, and dangers of poverty. Being free from most adult responsibilities also meant that they were more free to act out the tensions that they shared with their parents. In Northampton this acting-out behavior was recorded by the censorious Jonathan Edwards as tavern-frequenting, night-walking (unsupervised courtship), and boisterousness during religious services. Their "frolicking" can be summarized as an unwillingness to obey the authority of their parents and a lack of proper deference to the authority of the minister as an agent of God and family. From the clerical viewpoint the youthful misbehavior was an exaggeration of the more general community disinclination to fashion all its conduct on the Biblical model of primitive Christians so much extolled in the earliest years of New England and periodically revived as an object of comparison with "declension." That model had worked well in the early, "Puritan" years--or had seemed to because the patterns of behavior found appropriate for practical reasons were closely parallel to the conduct prescribed for the "city upon a hill." But as a scheme of social organization, Puritan communitarianism rarely survived the transition from frontier conditions to stable agricultural subsistence.

Northampton, founded in 1654 and no longer "frontier" in socio-economic character or attitudes by 1700, was probably typical of the inland Massachusetts community as it evolved. Most of the changes that came in its first century appeared to be "prosperity." The townspeople enjoyed more and better houses, more "consumer" goods and luxuries, and
had enough "extra" income to make their minister the best-paid clergymen outside Boston. Underneath these displays of prosperity on a public level, however, "Progress" brought social changes that were less welcome and the potential for serious social tensions that were not easily resolved. Even if we avoid idealizing "traditional" society, we must acknowledge an important testimony to the satisfactions of life organized around a simple and communal enterprise: on the level of articulated values, the formerly "Puritan" colonies of Connecticut and Massachusetts clung to the communitarian model of social life until the mid-eighteenth century, even while the behavior of most people was much more "modern" and individualistic and their ambitions much more materialistic. Not until the Revolutionary era would an ideology arise that effectively legitimated the behavior of a man out to grasp the best worldly opportunities for himself. In the meantime, the young people coming to maturity were caught in a dilemma. By the time that a fourth Northampton generation was entering the state of adulthood, in the years of Jonathan Edwards' pastorate, economic circumstances had changed in many important ways, but the ideals of behavior invoked were still those of the "Puritan" frontier community. Lessons that could be learned from authority figures--parents and ministers--were becoming inappropriate guides to the many available life-choices. Young people faced a different world than that mastered--or endured--by their grandparents.

The gradual changes were the accretion of small adjustments in behavior and attitude that are hard to measure. Jonathan Edwards has left us some clues, however, for seeing this social evolution in terms
of the changing relation of the individual to the community. Edwards' Faithful Narrative emphasizes the decline in harmony in "public affairs" and the failure of "family government," although in retrospect it is impossible to discern any real change in the structure of community and familial institutions. The public affairs still centered on a town meeting that governed land grants, roads, public buildings, and the care of the few local poor; a few men represented the town at the county and province levels where disputes were adjudicated, taxes demanded, and military decisions made. The family was still dominantly the husband-wife-unmarried-children "nuclear" unit in its own household but surrounded by a complex network of kin. Both sets of institutions, however, depended for their functional style on the character of Northampton as a simple agricultural village. Institutionally as well as physically, land underlay the social arrangements of the community. As the population grew and pressures on the available land increased, the functions of political and familial structures changed. The town meeting ceased to be the almost-automatic provider of the means of sustenance and became an arena of competition for scarce resources. The family unit, often living at greater geographical distance from its kin and neighbors, had to adapt itself to declining agricultural opportunities by preparing the young to endure prolonged dependence or to grab at new kinds of opportunities in a very individualistic fashion.9

These changes, so small compared to the dramatic changes between the colonies at 1650 and America at 1850, can be retrieved by the historian only through alterations in a few important symbolic events such as marriage, homestead-acquisition, choice of occupation, or
emigration. But even a less-than-complete narrative of social change is worth telling, especially since Northampton's story forms another piece of the puzzle of New England's social evolution to which a number of recently published studies of other communities have contributed. Information from other towns suggests that young people in many early-eighteenth century communities may have been troubled and troublesome. Northampton was not unique, but it was to show a special conjunction between the sensitivities of its youth and those of its pastor. His particular talents were of great use at a certain stage in the community's growth, as his grandfather's had been two generations earlier.

Frontier to Town: Population Growth and the Distribution of Land

When Northampton was a true frontier outpost, in the mid-seventeenth century, its two distinguishing characteristics were a small population and a plentiful supply of excellent farming land. In 1653 the broad alluvial meadows along the Connecticut River at "Nonotuck" lured land-hungry settlers and ambitious Indian traders from Springfield, Windsor, and Hartford, to the south. They received a grant from the Massachusetts General Court for all the territory from the falls of the river (now at Holyoke) northward to the southern boundary of present Hatfield and westward from the river for nine miles, approximately 64,000 acres. By 1660 a small village had been formed near the river in the north-eastern part of the tract. The treed, hilly western and southern parts of the grant remained sparsely populated until the mid-eighteenth century, when the Indian threat declined and population pressures on the
old village became severe. The Indian trade died out quickly, but the farmers stayed on and prospered. They were healthy, confident of the future, and fruitful. From the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century there was a six-fold multiplication of Northampton's population, most of it by natural increase rather than immigration. There were 55 resident families in 1660 and a total population of about 300, about 500 people in approximately 100 houses by 1675, and about 200 families in 1736. By 1776 the original grant (with some very small additions) contained two separate towns with a combined population of 2,530. The importance of this increase lies not in the numbers of people but in the mounting pressures on the available land in an agricultural town.

The earliest settlers, Northampton's legal "Proprietors," had agreed to limit the settlement to eighty families. They had assumed collective title to all the land within the original grant and divided among themselves in generous shares most of the flood-plain land, which was conveniently already cleared by the Indians and was among the best sites for tillage in New England. They also divided up a part of the hillier treed land to be used for wood and rough pasture. They were a relatively small band of men, and although they produced many sons and grandsons, they were confident that there would be enough land for future generations. The principles of division gave most land to those most able, by means of capital and available labor, to use it: each head of a family received 15 acres, with 3 acres more for each son and twenty acres more for each £100 of personal estate. In early 1661 the first recorded division of meadow was made and 2284.5 acres divided among 58 men in shares from 120 acres to 6 acres and averaging just over
39 acres per man. The second and third divisions, in 1684 and 1700, would be allotted in the same proportions, to heirs of the founders.

Within this inequality of meadow-holdings, however, there was established a relative equality, and perhaps a sense of commonality, by the method of distributing homelots. Each household received approximately four acres of its share as a home lot (a basic amount in many New England towns, perhaps because it was customary in England). The homelots granted for the first two generations were clustered in a village less than a mile wide by a mile and a half long. Only after 1700 did the homelots begin to scatter away from the nucleated village. (See Map C in Appendix.)

Out in the meadows with names such as "Barkwigwam," "Walnut Trees," and "Old Rainbow," the inequalities of holdings were somewhat disguised by common-field farming. To ensure spread of both good and poorer quality land among the farmers, each man would receive his allotment in small pieces in various fields. Each field would then be plowed, planted, harvested, and opened to grazing by common decision and common labor. This pattern of a central village and surrounding common fields was an importation from the English homeland of the Northampton settlers and was suited to "frontier" conditions when there were broad areas of tillable land, as there were in the Connecticut Valley. Until well into the eighteenth century, although the specific date of change is unknown, Northampton fields seem to have been farmed in common. The spirit of "improvement" and competitive individual gain was not reflected in the Northampton land records until the very end of the seventeenth century, when four divisions of about-to-be cleared
woodland were combined into two, by request of the grantees, so "men might be in better capacity to improve their land."¹⁻⁸ Men were at that time beginning to put their houses on this land, long used only for wood, away from the nucleated village. Only in the 1730s, however, do the deeds filed with the county court begin to show deliberate consolidation of holdings into "farms."

The sense of commonality implied by open-field farming was paralleled throughout the activities of the frontier village. All men shared the labor of clearing and farming the land; almost all men served as town officers. Initiating a settlement involved so much hard work and common danger, and the economy was so undifferentiated, that there were really no rich and no poor, no gentlemen and no laborers. In rural New England there were even relatively few indentured servants, or at least very few persons who can be identified as such. A recent study of a Connecticut frontier town corroborates the existence of relative "democracy" among the first generation of settlers that was observed in the Connecticut Valley by its leading nineteenth-century historian.¹⁹ This sense of shared work and shared fate is the origin of the communitarian ideology, buttressed by the group-orientation of Puritan congregationalism, that is apparent in many early New England communities.²⁰

As the frontier became an agricultural village, whatever the degree to which the inhabitants felt "equality," for about fifty years there were no protests against the justice of the system, and the amount and productivity of the land seemed to satisfy the ambitions of almost everyone. Most young men coming to adulthood in the community were heirs of original Proprietors and therefore received free homelot grants
and shares in the meadow and woodland divisions of 1684 and 1700, as well as inheritance parcels of the rich alluvial lands divided in 1661. Individuals and a few small groups of men left Northampton to found towns further north in the Connecticut Valley (and usually retreated back "home" when Indian wars wiped out those pioneer villages) or to join new towns on the eastern-Connecticut frontier, but the records of this movement reveal no pronounced discontent with the community left behind.  

The total emigration from Northampton was extremely small, as it was in other communities during the first three generations of settlement (roughly fifty to seventy-five years). Those who stayed behind found ample opportunity to achieve a "competency" in the land controlled by the town of Northampton.

Until at least 1700, all adult men in Northampton seem to have had some land by their late twenties. Besides the existence of laws for "warning out" those who were not assimilated into economically competent households (no one was warned out of Northampton until 1742), and the opportunities on the frontier for the desperate or adventurous few, the most important inhibition on the rise of a landless group in Northampton was the practice of the town until about 1704 of granting a homelot to every resident young man in his mid-twenties, or to Proprietors in trust for their sons. These lots remained at the standard four-acre size, although they were located increasingly farther from the village center. No recorded petition for a homelot was refused by the town in this era, although such refusals became common later. Four acres was not really enough land to support a family, but it was a minimal "stake" in the economic life of the community and the symbolic beginning of civic
adulthood. But what of the future implicitly promised in that start?

There is strong evidence that after about 1700 land became a problem in Northampton for the community as a corporate entity and for individuals. The problem had two related dimensions, soil depletion and insufficiency of acreage. The soil of the Valley was as fertile as any land in New England, and the Valley's production of wheat was an important contribution to the Boston market (for food and for export) during the last third of the seventeenth century. But by the end of the century a fungus called the "blast" had caused a serious decline in wheat production, and the soil was already "considerably" depleted. Not for a century, however, would the "scientific" agriculture using legumes, crop rotation, and systematic manuring be used to combat the infertility. The eighteenth century therefore brought a change in the focus of agriculture in the upper Connecticut Valley. Although a variety of grains and vegetables were still produced for home consumption and the local barter-based market, the Northampton-Hadley area began around 1700 to specialize in fattening cattle as a source of profit. Grass-fed cattle and stall-fed oxen were usually sold to a local merchant in return for credit in goods, then driven overland to Boston, where the "victuallers" were eager to buy. This switch to cattle-production was an adequate adaptation to the declining fertility of tilled land, for grass grew well in fields too barren for wheat. But the scale of production of cattle was directly related to the acreage that could be used, and even the clearing of formerly waste areas of Northampton land did not provide enough acreage to satisfy the entire
community in the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, the extent of this problem is difficult to measure directly, since there are no surviving documents dated before the Revolution which give the acreage holdings for the entire community at any one moment. Nevertheless, a growing land shortage is clearly reflected in two extremely symbolic actions taken by the community. Both these events reveal that the result of population growth in Northampton was a change in the function of the community itself and a transfer of economic control of men's lives from the collectivity to the clan and nuclear family.

A sign of the recognition of the increasing scarcity of land was the appearance of the hereditary "Proprietors" as a formal group, distinguishing themselves from the Town, in 1701. Since the 1660s this group had lain dormant by allowing the town meeting and selectmen to perform its land-granting functions, but in 1701 the Proprietors reserved to themselves the use of the valuable pine trees on the commons (all men could still cut other wood, within narrow limits for household use only, but the trade in pitch and turpentine was too profitable to share), and in March 1703 the Proprietors formally recorded their confirmation of all previous land grants made by the Town—-as though to preface their assumption of this prerogative. There was, nevertheless, so little land left that was worth granting that the Proprietors never recovered their seventeenth-century powers. In 1715 a group of men, whose names have not survived in the records, tried but failed to get a legal disallowance for all previous land divisions, which were based on the shares granted in the first division of 1661. Until the mid-1750s there remained a constant tension between the Proprietors and those
excluded from hereditary shares, although there was no serious challenge to the extant system, and the only common land left to fight about was some woodland. Most of the tillable land had long been apportioned—all that "within three miles compasse of the town [center]" in 1684—and in 1700 all the hilly woodland within a seven-mile radius had also been divided. This was the last distribution of really usable land for many years in Northampton. (Small parcels of woodland were carved up in 1743 and 1749.)

A major turning point in the town's economic and political history came in March, 1703, when the last large-scale granting of homelots was made. As far as can be determined, most of the adult males in town by this time had been given at least a homelot (usually four acres). A few more homelots were given to young men after that date, but only to the sons of the more politically powerful and already land-rich Proprietors. The last two homelot grants were in 1731 (four acres on the steep shoulder of Mt. Tom, land few men would want) and 1738 (two acres upon which the grantee's impoverished family had "squatted" for decades). Two requests for homelots in March 1739 were refused, even though one petitioner was the son of a Proprietor. All of the usable meadow lands convenient to the village had long been parceled out. After 1705, therefore, the town essentially stopped giving out free land—because it had none to give. This was accompanied by no self-conscious declaration of purpose in the town records, but in retrospect it was a major change.

The town also relinquished almost all of its other economic functions in the early eighteenth century. In the "frontier" phase the town had deliberately attracted men with specific needed skills (a tanner, a
blacksmith, a cooper) and encouraged capital investments such as mill-building by giving bounties of land out of the common holdings, but it stopped doing this after the turn of the eighteenth century. Thereafter occupations and capital investments were determined by individual families. An illustration of this transfer of responsibility can be found in the history of the Pomeroy family, who were blacksmiths. In the 1660s the town lured Medad Pomeroy from Windsor, Connecticut, with the gift of a set of blacksmith tools and a promise of all the "Town's work," as well as a large parcel of land. Medad's son Ebenezer succeeded his father as the town blacksmith and gunsmith, and he in turn was succeeded by his sons Seth and Ebenezer. When Seth's second son was born in 1739, the baby was named "Quartus," presumably because he was intended to be the fourth blacksmith in a direct line (or so declared his father's will). The family and the market (and the Pomeroy still controlled most of the local metal trade), not any communal decision of the town, determined that Quartus would be a smith. And he was. The Pomeroy were also among the richest families in Northampton in real estate, because the initial advantage of Medad's generous Proprietor's grants was increased by judicious buying and consolidation of holdings, in turn facilitated by the free capital for investment available to successful tradesmen. Their success was determined in the eighteenth century by their own initiative and "what the market would bear."

The year 1713 saw the last action of the town to protect the communal interest by setting rates for enterprises such as mills. The town still cared for the indigent, but by paying the cost of their lodging with individual families. The town had once been able to rescue
men from accidental disaster, as it had in 1676 when it had given extra land to those whose homes were destroyed by the Indians; but never again would this be done. By the time that Jonathan Edwards came to Northampton in the late 1720s, therefore, men were forced back upon their own resources in areas of life where the community as a group had once provided important actual and symbolic support. This change in the function of the town would affect the functions of politics, the family, and the church.

As the town ceased to be an active agent in the economy, the family as a nuclear unit and clan took on greater importance. After the last major division of land in 1700, distribution was subject to the control of family and market. Men acquired land through inheritance or purchase. Young men coming to maturity after 1705 found that adulthood in Northampton no longer brought what had amounted to a guaranteed minimal maintenance out of public resources. Those four-acre homelots were not a whole farm, but they were a sign of the individual's inclusion in a communal enterprise also symbolized by a clustering of houses and the common fields. They were also a kind of pretense that all men had an equal "start" in life. Such equality had never really existed, for the men with more and better land even in the earliest days of the community were able to leave more valuable inheritances to their sons. But in the early eighteenth century, as the lack of enough land to "go around" became more evident, so also did a young man's reliance on his family for his start in life and for a major contribution to his future success.

By the early 1730s the growing shortage of land had not produced any chronic poverty in Northampton; but for the first time in the town's
history, there was obvious pressure for emigration. The nearby frontier seems not to have acted as a constant drain for the population of the upper Connecticut Valley towns: almost all of the Northamptonites who emigrated before 1740, for example, went to more developed communities or as groups in obviously well-planned moves to selected frontier areas. A few individuals moved to new townships up-river, but not one known Northamptonite moved to the wilderness and staked a claim to vacant land, as the myth of the rugged pioneer would indicate was common. There were vast (if hilly) tracts lying to the west, but good land was already owned by speculators (so some cash in hand was necessary for purchase), and there were serious Indian threats until the mid-1740s. People wanted land, but they seemed to want family and neighbors more: in 1736 Colonel John Stoddard petitioned the county court for an addition to his land grant in the Berkshires because, he said, people would not settle there unless they could be sure that they would be part of a sizable group. New Englanders in this period thought of themselves as members of communities, for living in a town meant not only safety but the opportunity to continue traditional social and economic patterns of life that remained highly valued even after they ceased to be practical.

It was in accordance with its traditions, therefore, that in 1730 the Northampton community responded to the shortage of land in town by exercising its communal will and engineering an orderly march to the closest part of the frontier for a selected group of its sons. (Significantly, this action was almost the last statement of communal policy to be made without recorded controversy.) In that year the Northampton Proprietors, with the concurrence of the Town, agreed to divide the
mountainous southwestern corner of the original Northampton land-grant, about 14,000 acres in all. They thereby created a new town, about eight miles from the center of Northampton, for the rising generation, who found land difficult to obtain in Northampton itself. The new village--soon named "Southampton"--was given only to owners by inheritance of Proprietors' shares, and of them only to those "who shall undertake to bring forward a speedy settlement." The emphasis was on founding a community and alleviating a problem, not on promoting individualism and opportunism; there would be no speculation allowed, and substitutes were found for those who would not move their homes. Thirty shares, of up to ninety acres each (including twenty-acre homelots) were laid out. A few men had already used lands in the Southampton tract, and by 1735 there were about twenty households established. Southampton organized its own church in 1743 and became a district (a separate town with all rights except separate representation in the too-populous General Court) in 1753. Both stages of separation were accomplished with Northampton's complete blessing; probably because of the poor quality of the land, Southampton did not become prosperous enough for its loss to have a major effect on Northampton revenues. The new community was settled by relatively young men (the residents who petitioned for their own church in 1741 averaged only 33.5 years old then), and they were all descended from original Northampton Proprietors. They were taking advantage of a "safety-valve" that had been arranged for them by their powerful fathers and grandfathers. The significant facts are that they were already an elite group in the community, they were given decidedly inferior farmland, and it was the last open land
available. After 1730 there was no hope that the town as a communal enterprise could provide adequate land for those coming of age.

For those unwilling to risk the dangers of the frontier, or unwilling to start from scratch in another established town, there were two primary ways of acquiring land. One was inheritance. A major disadvantage of this course was the decreasing productivity of the land received: those acquiring land in the 1730s and 1740s were the third or fourth or even fifth generation to use Northampton's good tilling plots, and complaints about its depletion had been heard since 1715. Another disadvantage of acquisition by inheritance was the further subdivision of parcels, perhaps into smaller-than-useful lots, or the necessity of joint ownership with brothers or cousins. A third disadvantage was the problem of timing: not all fathers could be counted on to distribute their property (by deed or death) at the time when the son or sons first became eager to own land.

The other major way of acquiring land was by purchase. But few men in the area could afford to extend credit, especially to young men just starting out, and cash was always in short supply. Purchase was also growing very expensive in relative terms: in the 1730s a laborer earned two to five shillings (Old Tenor) a day, and the best land in town (the river plains) cost 400 to 800 days' labor per acre and inferior land cost 40 to 80 days' work per acre. Since the local economy was still rather primitive, the young man in Northampton before mid-century would find few opportunities to hire out his labor for very many days a year; he would be rather old before he could save enough to buy an adequate farm.
There was, however another option for a young man: that of supporting himself and his family through activity as an artisan or merchant. After the 1740s, as Northampton became a trading center for villages springing up to the north and west (because it was just north of the end of navigability for barges on the Connecticut River), and as the economy within Northampton itself developed, there came to be a group of merchants and craftsmen who achieved wealth and political power, in spite of the survival of mistrust of commercial activity as being harmful to society. Through the 1730s, nevertheless, the local economy generated a small market for such specialized services, and only a few men can be identified whose primary activity was not farming. Most young men coming of age in the pre-revival era could neither have amassed the capital necessary to set up shop nor expected to earn a sufficient amount of money by non-agricultural labor.

Throughout the eighteenth century, most Northampton men were farmers, and through the 1750s, at least, most men worked on land owned by themselves or their families rather than hiring out their labor to others. The kinds of change that happened in this period were much less dramatic than those after the Revolution and therefore are difficult to measure. But the world of 1760 appears much different from that of 1660 to one who reads through the miscellaneous documents that survive. Demonstrating this difference requires a focus on rather subtle alterations in the style of life and an explication of important symbolic changes.

One useful illustration of differences between the generations is the change in the process of household-formation. For a young adult in
the early eighteenth century, the time of marriage and moving into a house separate from parents was the primary coming-of-age ritual, since few people went through the formal education and trade-apprenticeship that establish other, intermediate rituals. S. N. Eisenstadt's classic work, *From Generation to Generation: Age Groups and Social Structure*, points out that among all age-gradations, most societies especially emphasize "the right to establish a family." Peter Laslett has pointed out that of the demographic variables important in the modeling of the history of the family, the "most important seems to be age at the time of succession to headship of household." In a rural, agricultural community, this process of becoming an adult, undertaking economic and political responsibilities, was almost wholly dependent on the timing of land-acquisition. In County Clare, Ireland, for example, even in the twentieth century a man who might himself be a grandfather was still referred to as a "boy" until his father, "the old fellow," surrendered control of his farm. Northampton in the eighteenth century was hardly so extreme a case, and yet there can be no doubt that a man without land of his own and a wife was regarded as less than a full and independent member of society.

To some extent, changes in this highly symbolic rite of passage can be measured quantitatively. Documents available for mid-eighteenth century Northampton make it possible to determine when most men acquired their homesteads, how they did so, and when they married. The sample chosen for study was self-selected: they are the men who joined the church during the ministerial tenure of Jonathan Edwards, and it is our broader interest in their lives that underlies this exercise in economic
history. Most of them were in their late teens or early twenties when they joined the church between 1727 and 1746. They are not a random sample, but actually include almost all the young men who can be located in the community during the Edwards years, and so their lives provide an aggregate picture of the rituals of coming-of-age in Northampton from 1730 to 1750, which in turn serves as an index of broader changes in the community.

Three Generations: Coming of Age in Northampton

Two hundred and sixty-eight men joined the Northampton church between 1727 and 1746. All possible information has been gathered on these men, who will be referred to hereafter as the "Edwards cohort." Eighty-eight percent were "natives" to the town, born of parents who resided in Northampton, and most were descendants of families who settled in the town's early years. Information on their fathers and paternal grandfathers has also been collected, although economic data for the seventeenth century are extremely limited. In comparing the lives of these three generations, the degree of economic change in Northampton is apparent and the direction of change is unmistakable.

Of the total 268 men in the Edwards cohort, 226 shared 68 paternal grandfathers who were Northampton residents. Since most of these grandfathers had been adults eligible for town land-grants in the "frontier" years before 1700, it is not surprising that 64 of the 68 received town grants (many of them were original Proprietors and so shared in a number of land divisions). (See Table A, page 63.) The crucial change in
TABLE A: TOWN LAND-GRANTS TO THREE GENERATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Received N</th>
<th>Grant: %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Grandfathers&quot;</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>94.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Fathers&quot;</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>58**</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Edwards cohort&quot;</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*"Native" to Northampton out of an unknown total of grandfathers, an estimated 148 total fathers, and 268 total church-joiners in the "Edwards cohort."

**Includes three Proprietors.

TABLE B: FATHERS WHO RECEIVED TOWN GRANTS

N= 55 non-Proprietors, 3 Proprietors.

Age at grant (N=51*):
- Range: 14 to 57 (only 2 under 21)
- Average: 30.4 years
- Median: 27.0 years
- Under 30: 60.8%
- 30-39 years old: 25.5%
- 40 and older: 15.7%

Known to be married before grant: 34, or 61.8%.

Ages at marriage:
- Fathers with grants (N=49):
  - Average: 26.4 years
  - Median: 25 years
- All fathers (N=107 of 148 are known):
  - Average: 28.7 years
  - Median: 27 years

*One grant-date and three birth-dates unknown, only non-Proprietors counted. Four men, aged 14, 20, 21, and 27, had grants given to their fathers for them.
Northampton land policies, discussed earlier, is evident in the contrast between these grandfathers and their own sons, the fathers of the Edwards cohort. The "fathers" who lived in Northampton numbered 121, and only 58 of them (48 percent) received Northampton land grants. Of these 58, 3 were Proprietors, 4 had homelots granted to their fathers for them, and the rest received a "homelot" or specified acreage in their own names. Most of the grants were made in the 1690s. The ages-at-grant are known for 51 "fathers": the average is 30.4 years, the median, 27 years. (See Table B, page 63). Because the age at grant was roughly four years after the average age of marriage, the "homelot" grants were obviously intended for residential purposes, and they were so used. (There is no evidence of any speculation in homelots in Northampton, and most of the grants to older men may have been intended for their teenaged sons.) About three-fifths of these "fathers" are known to have been married when they received the homelot grant, but most had been married only a few years or less.60

From the perspective of the men in the Edwards cohort, their families' history of land-acquisition shows a dramatic pattern. Although 94 percent of the eligible grandfathers had received land-grants, and 48 percent of the eligible fathers did so, only 1.3 percent (3 of 236) of the "native" sons were given land by the town. (See Table A, page 63.) Almost all of the young men who joined the church in the Edwards era, therefore, went through a coming-of-age ritual that was quite different from Northampton's traditional pattern of household-formation. Rather than receiving a symbolic "stake" in the community out of communal resources, these young men had to await inheritance from their
long-lived fathers, find ways to buy their own homesteads, or emigrate in search of greater opportunities.

An attempt has been made to determine the method by which each of the 268 Edwards-cohort men obtained his homestead. Information has been drawn from deeds, wills, tax lists, and miscellaneous Northampton antiquarian lore. The 161 cases about which the best information is available (68 percent of the 236 "natives") are summarized in Table C, page 66. Six were proprietors of the Southampton tract and moved there; three received homelot grants in Northampton itself. Eight men were educated at Yale and became merchants or ministers in other towns. Fourteen men seem to have purchased their homesteads; and since only the young man was named in the deed, we cannot know if his father or a money-lender was supplying the purchase price. About 55 percent of the "native" young men, 130 of 236, are known to have acquired their homesteads through gift or inheritance from their fathers. As Table C shows, this transfer of property often came when the son was well past age thirty.

The variety of ways in which property could be transferred from father to son is shown in Table C, but what this table also suggests is the prolonged dependence of adult sons. Illustrative, if not typical, was the plight of the Clark "boys," Eben Jr. and Ezra: when their father, Lt. Ebenezer, died and relinquished his title to the homesteads his sons had inhabited, they were 67 and 65 years old, respectively. Unfortunately, the Hampshire County court records lack almost completely the kind of family-controversy documents which Philip J. Greven, Jr., has used so effectively to illuminate the qualitative aspects of similar
### TABLE C: HOW THE EDWARDS-COHORT YOUNG MEN ACQUIRED THEIR HOMESTEADS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Homestead</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Ave. age at acquisition (N)</th>
<th>Ave. age at marriage (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town grant in Northampton</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26.0 (2)</td>
<td>26.5 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town grant in Southampton</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.3 (6)</td>
<td>23.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educated and left town (ministers and merchants)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>27.5 (6)a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own purchase</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28.6 (14)</td>
<td>25.2 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherit from grandfather</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>26.0 (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift of land father purchased explicitly for son</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31.7c (3)</td>
<td>24.5 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherit land father purchased for son</td>
<td>2d</td>
<td>42.0 (2)</td>
<td>29.0 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift or purchase of land only from father or grandfather</td>
<td>8e</td>
<td>29.1 (8)</td>
<td>28.8 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift or purchase from father of father's own house</td>
<td>6f</td>
<td>38.8 (6)</td>
<td>29.8 (4)a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift or purchase from father of another house</td>
<td>15g</td>
<td>32.4 (15)</td>
<td>25.5 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherit part of father's land, house unknown</td>
<td>29h</td>
<td>30.5 (29)</td>
<td>30.1 (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherit with brother(s) of father's own homestead</td>
<td>19h</td>
<td>34.2 (19)</td>
<td>30.9 (13)i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherit alone father's own homestead</td>
<td>23h,j</td>
<td>31.1 (23)</td>
<td>28.3 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherit a homestead, already lived in, from father (not his own)</td>
<td>24h,k</td>
<td>44.6 (24)</td>
<td>27.9 (21)a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
--- Total known, of 268 | 161 |

**Note:** on all inheritances, with no previous deed recorded, father's death-date is considered effective date of transfer.

a. One never married, the rest (if any) are unknown.
b. Father dead; house already built on property.
c. Ages: by 38 years, 24, by 33 years; land at Coventry, Ct., Hadley, Southampton.
d. Two brothers; land out of town; purchase date unknown.
e. Three are purchases.
f. All are purchases: 1 for 1d.; 1 for 1s; 1 for maintenance; 1 for £40 per year; 1 for £140 lawful; 1 for £200 lawful (the last two approach fair market value; not known if money actually paid or price remitted by father).
g. Four are purchases: £120, £40, £5 and £40/year, £700.
h. On all inheritances, effective ages raised to 21.
i. Two never married, rest unknown.
j. Sisters not counted.
k. Two of these are brothers who share one homestead.
dependency in Essex County. The Northampton statistics do, nevertheless, suggest a number of observations.

Lacking evidence to the contrary, we must assume that the father had the initiative in the timing of any transfer before death. I am also assuming that young men wanted to have their own homes by their mid-twenties, and there is some contemporary support for such an assumption. Eliakim Clark, who joined the church shortly after Edwards became pastor, in his will gave a special reward to his eldest son, Hadiah, "for living with me two or three years after he arrived to the age of 21." The category of homestead-acquisition by "own purchase" provides a significant index to the desirability of prolonged co-residence with parents: although the accumulation of the purchase price would rarely have been easy, the men who were able to buy their own homesteads did so at an average age younger than the average for any category of acquisition by gift or inheritance from father. If the father actually financed the purchase, as may often have happened, then the son showed his willingness to be in debt rather than to remain in the parental home.

Dependence of a young-adult son on his father was certainly nothing new in the eighteenth century, and the short "frontier" period was almost unique in providing an opportunity for a young man to acquire property with only his muscles (and perhaps his piety) for capital. In the perception of eighteenth-century Northamptonites, however, the period could be taken as a norm from which change was measured. One measure available to historians, and often used as an index to economic conditions, is age at first marriage. As Jared Eliot wrote in Essays upon Field Husbandry in the 1750s, "when people have a clear prospect of
support for a family, they will marry young.66 Men in Northampton married almost three years later in the eighteenth century than they had in the last half of the seventeenth. (See Appendix I.) The Edwards-cohort men married at an average age of 28.6 years, almost exactly three years later than their fathers.67 (There is not enough data on the grandfathers for their inclusion in the comparison.) Furthermore, when the marriage-ages of land-grant recipients and the men in the various categories of homestead-acquisition are examined, tentative conclusions about dependence are reinforced. The men who achieved independence earliest, by grant in Southampton, married at an age significantly younger than that for any other group; the other group acquiring their homesteads relatively early, those who purchased, also married at a comparatively young age. (See Table C, page 66.) The "fit" between land-acquisition and marriage-age is not perfect, for the statistics given are only the barest outline of a complicated process. But a parallel example is provided at the other end of the spectrum, by the men who inherited only a part of their fathers' homesteads. These men, most of whom seem to have shared the parental house with married siblings for some years after inheriting their share, perhaps had long expected to have little real privacy even after they married and their parents died. They married latest of all the groups arrayed in Table C, more than two years later than the average for the Edwards cohort as a whole (in which average they are included).68 If sexual desire began in the mid-teen years for most young men, and since premarital sexual gratification was strongly punished by the community, it is difficult to believe that ten to twenty years of celibacy was completely voluntary.69
Strains in the family bonds would have resulted from any severe disability of parents to provide for their children, for in pre-industrial society the family was the most important agent for placing a child in the occupational structure of his community. The real problem with the dependence of eighteenth-century New England adult sons on their fathers was that the rewards were usually so small. Most fathers, those who were not rich in fertile land, could ultimately deliver to their sons only small lots with rapidly declining productivity. Only those fathers who had advanced beyond the subsistence level had the capital to buy farms for their sons in Northampton or less crowded communities or even on the frontier. Most families could hold back but not push forward. The sons who had to "wait" for their adulthood with so little expectation for real success later may have chafed under the restraint. Studies of Andover and Salem Village have indicated the frequency of intrafamily conflict over economic resources. There are some scattered similar testimonies from Northampton.

Of the approximately 300 wills read as part of this study, only a very few break out of the formalized legal jargon to express any individualized attitudes toward the testator's family; but all those which express hope, or design legacies to enforce, that children will live in peace with each other and their widowed mother were written after 1730. By then, many children in Northampton may have felt themselves to be in competition with their siblings. When Jonathan Alvord's sons filed an agreement about real-estate distribution in 1738, to replace the one filed by their mother in 1729 which some of them had disputed, they stated that the need to divide the homestead and meadows into distinct
shares was due to their "desire to live in love and peace," qualities hitherto unachieved while they shared a home. Lieutenant Joseph King's will of 1734 "charged" his children to maintain "love and peace" toward each other when dividing the estate. Deacon Stephen Wright of Southampton, father of two of the boys who joined the Northampton church during the 1741-1742 revival, left his estate to his wife and children "desiring they may live in unity with one another in the enjoyment of what I shall devise to them." Ebenezer Miller advised his children in his will "to live in love and peace among themselves and with all men, that the God of Peace may be with them."72

These instructions were not a matter of convention; evidently, they were needed. Love and peace seem to have been increasingly elusive qualities in family relationships when provision for the younger generation became difficult. Wealthy families with few sons perhaps found "peace" easier to maintain, although the small size of the group of those who explicitly reveal their lack of harmony does not permit emphasis of class differences.73 There is no evidence from Northampton that families of greater or lesser economic standing used the supposed Puritan custom of sending their adolescent children to live with other families, which could have been a way of reducing intrafamily tension.74 Many of the internal family problems were probably relieved, although other strains substituted, when in the 1750s a sizable number of Northampton's young men joined the groups forming new towns in the Berkshire hills of western Massachusetts. Simply removing the "excess" population, moreover, would not return the town to its simple frontier peace, since all of the community institutions were adjusting themselves--in
fits and starts, and with a great deal of apparent friction—to the "modern" era.

The Community Matures

The subtle but important changes in agricultural life that pervaded Northampton in the first half of the eighteenth century cannot be completely measured by "coming-of-age" rituals alone, for even after maturity, economic life also became increasingly non-traditional. Once a farmer was established, he found himself with either depleted soil or newly-cleared and stony terrain. Through the eighteenth century he was increasingly likely to work consolidated holdings, not common fields. With individuated "farms" the disparities in land-holding were no longer disguised, and each man could easily measure his neighbor's real estate. He could also measure its productivity in the life-style it supported, as an increase in availability of consumer goods enabled men to display their wealth tangibly and symbolically. As the town grew more populous and agriculture more market-oriented, and especially as Northampton became ringed to the north and west with frontier villages, full-time craftsmen prospered and provided the town with goods, services, and a different style of life as a model for the young. Hat-manufacturer Ebenezer Hunt, miller and tavern-owner Jonathan Clapp, and lawyer-merchant Joseph Hawley were aggressive entrepreneurs and became rich; in the process, they illustrated a possible way out of the dilemma of an overpopulated agricultural village. But they had all started as the sons of rich fathers, and those who would follow their example needed to
learn the traits of energetic selfishness which had not been fostered by the village of common fields and Puritan communalism. The diversity of economic function that resulted when an innovative few tried to "get ahead" produced prosperity for the town as a whole, which in turn fostered further diversification. The distance between rich and poor grew larger and harder to traverse for the average man. (All of the richest men in town in 1759, the year of best wealth estimates, had fathers who were relatively well off or had come to town with capital to invest.) The network of reciprocity that structured this still-small market (the husbandman's produce paid for the tanner's leather or as installment on the gentleman's money at interest) was still far different from the "cash nexus" that would overtake the village in the nineteenth century, but the change from the society designed by Northampton "founding fathers" was too great to ignore. What the community gained in a better standard of living, and a more entertaining variety of life, it lost in a sense of common purpose and "Puritan" control over the behavior of its people.

Other community institutions besides personal economic activity reflected the change, and the tensions resulting from confrontations with the new and unexpected were increasingly acted out in the town's public affairs in the eighteenth century. As economic life became more a setting for competition than cooperation, so the harmony of community government was transformed into the factional contention of town politics. The Southampton land division of 1730 was the last major community policy adopted without a struggle among competing interest-groups. Disagreement was of course not new, but it had not been quite
legitimate in the system of communitarian values. All of the Northampton town meeting records from the first settlement through 1754 have been examined for evidence of open dissension, and the results show a distinct pattern. The first meetings, around 1660, were often "tumultuous." In 1679 there was "much discourse and agitation" about the town's grant of working capital to men trying to start a lead mine. (The mine quickly fizzled, and the problem died down.) Men without young children dissented in 1692 when the majority voted that the school-master be paid from common funds. The most instructive example of the meaning of dissent in the seventeenth century is the only other indication of contention in these official records before 1735 (except the anonymous 1715 challenge to the land-divisions, mentioned earlier, which received only a surprisingly oblique mention.) In February 1690 the town recorded the following acknowledgement of the tension between traditional communitarian values and the newer behavior of self-interest:

Whereas the concurrence and agreement as one of any Society in public concerns is the strength and (under God) the Safety and Preservation of the same and that the consideration that a descending spirit one to another in matters of public affairs wherein both the Honor of God and our own safety is advanced, we therefore do agree and bind ourselves to this viz. that the major[ity] vote of the town shall determine in or to making of fortification for our defence against the [Indian] enemy that though we as to our own apprehensions [and] judgments are of another persuasion, yet notwithstanding we will acquiesce and rest satisfied with the determination of the major vote of the town and readily to the utmost of our power do and perform each of us our parts of the same. Voted unanimously or very fully. . . .78

Some historians would read this statement as simply an expression of the consensus that was so highly prized in early New England communities; but
it also reveals the struggle by which consensus was reached, the hesitancy with which some men would finally agree with the majority. The very identification of a "majority" was unusual in this period, and there would have been no need for such a formal agreement except as a way to force the cooperation of a grudgingly "acquiescent" minority. The self-conscious "condescending spirit" apparently so valued was a transition between real commonality of aims and means and a recognition of the effective power of mere majoritarianism. Condescension was noticeably absent from the mid-1730s onward in Northampton politics.

In the second third of the eighteenth century, the building and seating of a new meetinghouse, repairs on town highways and bridges, and other public matters frequently caused "considerable debate." Those who are familiar with the manuscript records of New England towns know that conflict occurred which was never officially recorded, and that the town record books themselves were frequently edited. Evidences of discord that do come to the surface of laconic Yankee records, therefore, can be interpreted as serious breaches of the village peace. In Northampton, for example, starting in 1736, one major indication of trouble is the frequent use of adjournments, probably as devices to cool off a meeting or to allow time for arm-twisting: a series of negative votes would be followed by an adjournment, and the returning voters would suddenly favor the policy proposed--or would adjourn again, if necessary, until the issue was settled. Strenuous efforts toward consensus are clearly evidences of disharmony.

There are a number of other ways in which the style of town government changed in Northampton, and almost all of the alterations were
indications of a decline in communalism. Among them were institution of payments to persons for services once performed out of civic duty, such as reporting law-breakers (in January 1699 "informers" were judged to be deserving of half the fines imposed on the guilty) and serving as constable (payment was first mentioned in 1714). As late as 1699, each man had to work a few days per year repairing roads, but in 1722 it was voted to hire laborers with town taxes. The 1730s saw the greatest changes, for after 1733 a special committee was chosen annually to audit town accounts, and after 1734 a moderator was chosen for every town meeting (since 1700 there had been one for the annual election meeting in March). Town meetings grew more frequent and the agenda for each grew longer, as the assembled citizens pulled back more and more issues from the grasp of the selectmen, whose discretionary powers had grown large since the end of the seventeenth century. Actually, as measured by the number of meetings per year besides the obligatory March election, the periods of intensity of popular concern with politics came at roughly generational intervals. After the flurry of issues to be settled in the first decade of the community's history, greater-than-normal activity came in the 1670s (partly caused by King Philip's War), 1696-1706, and the late 1730s. Indeed, in politics as well as in agriculture and religion, the late 1730s were a time of turmoil. (See Appendix III.)

By the mid-1730s it was apparent to the people of Northampton that broad changes were underway in many aspects of community life, and they may have sensed an acceleration in the rate of change. Most affected were those who were coming to adulthood in that period. For them,
traditions that had governed the community for sixty years were not a usable guide to planning a future—a future that would include important changes in agriculture, perhaps taking up a trade, perhaps emigration, and probably participation in town politics which functioned as a brokerage among competing interests. We know that adolescents often find adjustment to their adult roles difficult, and their unwillingness to be properly submissive to their parents has been commented upon in all cultures in almost all periods of history. But the 1730s in Northampton were a particularly bad time to be an adolescent, and the "young people" were acting out their tensions in significant ways. Their chief sin, according to Jonathan Edwards, was in staying away from home in late-night "frolics" of boys and girls together. What an interesting mirror-image this behavior forms with the desired pattern of "good" conduct!—seemingly endless work under parental supervision, with independence and legitimate relations with the opposite sex far in the future. The children were obviously not very responsive to their parents' demands for traditional deference when traditional rewards were fading from sight.

The nightly gatherings in taverns or other unsupervised spots illustrate a decline of tradition in an interesting way, for they may have been one of the few opportunities the young people had for recreation with peers. The end of common-field agriculture probably decreased sharply the number of times and places in which young people could get together. Did the prosperity of the town erode the customs of barnraisings and corn-huskings which had been important social occasions on the frontier? Simple daily contact with friends would have been less common for families living on individuated "farms," as more were doing.
Agricultural societies often have special tasks done by groups of children or teenagers, but the recreational gatherings described in Edwards' *Faithful Narrative* resemble much more the "age-groups" which, according to Eisenstadt, appear in "modern" societies in which the transition from childhood to adulthood is difficult and prolonged. One might even interpret the "frolics" as a sign that the socio-psychological stage of "adolescence" was emerging in rural New England. An interesting parallel to the frolics is offered by the notoriously destructive "play" of colonial college students, who have been called "the only adolescents in a culture that did not know adolescence." The students underwent a prolonged preparation for adulthood that differed only in degree from that suffered even by the sons of agrarian families in an overpopulated village. In Northampton and in other towns, the 1730s were an era which made adolescence a "problem" for families and for the community.

Even if the teenagers' "frolicking" differed little in degree from the misbehavior universally attributed to youth, it is clear that from one perspective, at least, the adolescents were a serious problem. Jonathan Edwards had condemned the carousing of Yale undergraduates, and to him the behavior of the young people of Northampton was even more alarming. It was but a symptom of a profound disturbance in the proper organization of society. Edwards' point of view was more than personal, for he was a conscious "Puritan" and the spokesman for the communal ideal of the past--when adolescents had no leisure or spare energy for frolicking after their work was done, when they had no spare cash to spend in
taverns, and when the adults were so united in conceptions of good conduct that such frolicking would simply not have been allowed. Edwards had a firm criterion for judging the various aspects of his age: "If they be things that come with a decay of religion," he preached in 1738, "that creep in as [piety] decays, we may determine they are things of no good tendency. . . . What is it but darkness that comes in as light withdraws?"90 The "darkness" was not only the anti-authoritarian behavior, but also the failure of the community to control it. The authority that had been implicit in the "Puritan" and frontier period of the town's history, and which might have been effective if parents could still offer impressive rewards for filial obedience, proved inadequate to deal with the circumstances of Northampton in the 1730s.

It was at this stage of Northampton's evolution, when the pressures on families were becoming severe and the release (the frontier, ideological individualism) had not yet been found, that Jonathan Edwards came to Northampton. In the vacuum of authority that he described as a failure of "family government," he attempted to assert the authority of the pastor as the one survival among the old centralizing institutions in the community. Aiming to recreate the success of "Pope" Stoddard, he directed his best efforts to the young people; and for a time the roles of leader and follower were mutually satisfactory. Edwards' triumph would be eloquent testimony to the nostalgic appeal of a simpler life in a harmonious "Puritan" society.
In 1729, young Jonathan Edwards faced a congregation clearly in need of both the threats and the consolations of Gospel doctrine. "Just after my grandfather's death, Edwards wrote in his Faithful Narrative, "it seemed to be a time of extraordinary dullness in religion; licentiousness for some years greatly prevailed among the youth of the town. . . . There had also long prevailed in the town a spirit of contention between two parties, into which they had for many years been divided . . . they were prepared to oppose one another in all public affairs." As any other minister would have done, Edwards interpreted both types of misbehavior as arising from the same source, a lack of piety. After recovering from the emotional prostration that made him unable to deal with his congregation for several months in 1729, Jonathan Edwards began his real work in Northampton. The challenges he faced, described in the previous two chapters, are strongly reflected in the course of action that he took in the years 1730-1735. What might be termed Edwards' "strategies" as a pastor showed the impact of the model provided by Stoddard's successful evangelism as well as the need to address the community's most obvious problem, the disrespect for authority shown by its young people.

As Edwards continued the family line in the Northampton pulpit, he had many reasons to continue the theology and pastoral practice of his grandfather. He had been reared right in the Connecticut Valley, the "Presbyterianism" of which was a logical extension of Stoddardean practices; his father supported that system as embodied in the Saybrook
Platform and tried to force it upon his own congregation. Jonathan's Yale tutor, and his experience as a tutor himself, encouraged him to fight the "liberalism" which Stoddard had denounced. And he had had little practical experience in which to develop new techniques to command piety and morality. He therefore took on the system and the methods along with the pulpit. Decades were to pass before the patriarchalism underlying that system was itself openly questioned, and Edwards later confessed that he had been too young and inexperienced to foresee "ill consequences" in the Stoddardeanism he embraced in the late 1720s.

To appreciate Edwards' later "innovations" and his eventual failure as a pastor, it is necessary to comprehend that his initial positions on church sacraments and conversion were thoroughly Stoddardean. For Edwards, as for Stoddard, the key to the entire system was the doctrine of "open communion," the admission of those without saving grace to the Lord's Supper and full privileges. In hind-sight Edwards came to regard that as the most pernicious of church practices, but in the early 1730s he wrote a number of sermons which showed full approval. In January 1733 he described the Supper as a "most solemn renewal of the covenant" between God and man. This covenant, however, was made at baptism, not at the time of adult conversion; and the invitation to the Supper was "universal," without any "hard terms." To those who showed "contempt" for the Supper and "pretended" to stay away because unfit, Edwards admitted that all men were unworthy of the Sacrament or God's mercy, but "if your unworthiness be what you acknowledge and lament and deplore you are one that is evangelically fit." This notion of "evangelical fitness" is essentially the same as Stoddard's doctrine that a minister could not
deny the Sacrament to those with hope but without assurance, because the minister's knowledge of another's heart was imperfect.

About one year later Edwards preached a series of sermons on the works of preparation for conversion which man might undertake with only God's "common assistance." Man lacking saving grace could not fully control the sinful "inclinations" of his heart, but he could control the "outward gratifications of his lusts." Man must use the means available to him (good behavior, prayer, attendance on all church ordinances) although "there is no natural efficacy in them"--simply because God so commanded. And it seemed no paradox to Edwards to preach also that men were largely at fault for their own unconverted state: "if you had done what you could for your salvation[,] in all probability you might have been converted long ago." The people of Northampton were obviously not seizing every opportunity, for a sermon on the Lord's Supper preached in June 1733 accused the congregation of ignoring Christ's invitation to dine at his table: "you are so in love with sin and with the world that rather than part with those you will reject this glorious privilege and happiness." This appeal to a calculation of true self-interest was followed a year later with an explanation of the "unreasonableness" of being "unresolved" in religious duties. Man could resolve the question of the truth of religious doctrines, wrote Edwards, and God had provided many aids to the clear choice between sin and God. "Those who live under the Gospel and thus continue undetermined about religion, are more abominable to God than the heathen," and it would be entirely just for God to give man no further chances to prepare himself.

This emphasis on preparation was clearly in the tradition of
Stoddard's doctrine that man had to try to do what he could in order to know that his efforts were truly in vain; Edwards once preached that human exertions were God's "ordinary means" of acquainting men with their own "helplessness." Usually, however, the usefulness of activity was treated more vaguely, and men who did not keep the basic tenets of Calvinism clearly in mind might have received the impression that they could help themselves to heaven. This was more than merely a borrowed convention, for it was also one logical response to the dwindling piety of the Northampton congregation, a response no less appropriate because used by many other ministers faced with similar "declension" over the previous fifty years. A little semi-intentional confusion in preaching Reformed doctrine was, in essence, a pastoral strategy suited to the circumstances of the early eighteenth century. When men ceased to respond to the challenging requirements of experiential piety for church membership, to preach about steps they could take was a tactic to encourage piety and a way of enforcing at least a minimum of community morality.

Edwards' sermons prepared for more learned audiences, on the other hand, were quite different. When he lectured in Boston during Harvard's Commencement Week in July 1731, and when he wrote a sermon for publication in 1734, Edwards was much less equivocal about the powers of natural man to take any action towards his own salvation. Rather, he emphasized the absolute power of God. The 1731 lecture, published almost immediately as God Glorified in the Work of Redemption, by the Greatness of Man's Dependence upon Him in the Whole of It, contained a repeated insistence that Faith (not man's merit) was the only true means to salvation. "Faith is a sensibleness of what is real in the work of
redemption," and that is the "absolute and universal" dependence of fallen man on God. In the face of Boston's increasingly liberal divines, Edwards asserted that "those doctrines and schemes of divinity that are in any respect opposite to such an absolute and universal dependence on God . . . thwart the design of our redemption." In his 1734 tract, entitled A Divine and Supernatural Light, Immediately Imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of God, Shown to be both a Scriptural and Rational Doctrine, Edwards restated God's power and defined the conversion experience as the reception of divine light from the Holy Spirit. Man's role in salvation was not earning merit through his activities, but preparing himself through humiliation for a new sensibility. The result was a "true sense of the divine excellency of the things revealed in the Word of God, and a conviction of the truth and reality of them thence arising. . . . a sense of the loveliness of God's holiness. . . . not a speculative thing, but . . . [a] sense of the heart. . . . above all others sweet and joyful." Only this divine light "will bring the soul to a saving close with Christ" and bear fruit in "an universal holiness of life."

Although Edwards as a professional theologian could develop for a learned audience an elegant fusion of the old Calvinist doctrines of man's absolute dependence on God with the new language of sensibility so appealing to "enlightened" thinkers, as a country pastor he needed to stress a different aspect of his theory--the observable end-product, a "holiness of life," more than the subtle sensations that he might not be able to discern in his flock. The tension between Edwards' doctrine of the absolute power of God and his parallel emphasis on man's doing all within his capability was not a contradiction but a different stress on
two parts of one argument depending on the role which Edwards played. He was suited by nature and trained by years of study to be a thinker, and his mind explored paths of ideas which he did not yet know how to synthesize with the apparent pastoral responsibility to enforce discipline. The work of the Spirit in actual conversion, which Edwards described so beautifully for those who could appreciate the art of theological writing, was something that he nevertheless could not effect. He could only preach obedience and striving towards God.

Most of Edwards' early sermons which survive in manuscript are conventional exhortations to reform behavior while there is still time. Sinners were reminded not to expect God to perform miracles to awaken them. Life was likened to a pilgrimage towards heaven: "how ill do they improve their lives, that spend them in traveling towards hell!" None of the sermons from this period contain the new images or the impressive logical constructions of the published works; they were dull, thoroughly predictable, much like others preached to spiritually sluggish congregations. Equally conventional were Edwards' complaints that his advice was not received enthusiastically. The doctrine of one sermon read, "if the business of ministers was the further gratification of men's lusts, they would be much better received by men than they are now." It is easy to imagine the Northampton congregation drowsing through still another sermon explaining why "time is precious" and perhaps stirring only to watch their neighbors' faces when Edwards charged that there were persons so guilty of corrupting others that "it would have been better for the town where they live, to have been at the charge of maintaining them in doing nothing," if that would have kept them in a
state of inactivity.\textsuperscript{16} (The spectre of "public charge" was probably the scariest part of that sermon!) Even when Edwards tried to instill the common ethics of charity and honesty in business and politics, to persuade Northampton men that seeking self-interest in disregard of the needs of others was "of the same nature as theft or robbery,"\textsuperscript{17} he met with little response from the congregation. It was, as he wrote in the Faithful Narrative, a time when his people were "very insensible of the things of religion."\textsuperscript{18}

Through 1733 Edwards seems to have followed the Stoddradean pastoral tradition, to have kept the practice of open communion and tried to discipline public behavior. He met with little success. During that year, however, Edwards began developing a technique that would lead to his success as a shepherd to his flock. The technique, which would eventually encompass a variety of tones of voice, was sermons and advice directed specifically at the adolescents in the community. (Stoddard had recorded his concern for this group, but there is no evidence that he dealt with them separately.) Appeals to the parents to save their children from damnation had produced no appreciable results,\textsuperscript{19} so Edwards spoke directly to the young people in terms they would understand clearly.

In this first phase of this new technique, Edwards portrayed the advantages of salvation in terms calculated to interest the youngsters. He maintained that God gave extra help to "early seekers" by giving them leisure and impressibility of heart.\textsuperscript{20} In a sermon in May 1734 the doctrine used was "the directest way that young people can take to spend their youth pleasantly is to walk in the ways of virtue and piety."
The "Application" of this sermon shows clearly the tone that Edwards was taking with the young people, who had begun to be tractable. "Let me intreat you to continue in that reformation which I hope many of you have begun in these particulars. I hope you are generally convinced of the reasonableness of it and that experience has or will convince you that there is no great difficulty in it and that there is no danger of your sustaining any loss by it or that your youth will be the less pleasant for it." In August 1734 he exhorted the young people to "consider how exceedingly it will be for the comfort and pleasure of your life, if you are converted. . . . you will gain unspeakably by it, while in this world." On the other hand, Edwards maintained in a sermon on the "ruinous pleasure" of "sinful mirth," young people who sinned and neglected opportunities for religious strivings would find their later lives filled with "bitterness" and guilt and the consciousness of a hardened heart. The evolution of Edwards' rhetoric in this period is illustrated by the contrast between this sermon and one preached just eighteen months earlier "to the young people at a private meeting." Then, on the doctrine, "many persons never get rid of the guilt of the sins of their youth," Edwards had stressed the eternal punishment for these sins, and "guilt" was still the objective condition of deserving punishment. In the later sermon on "sinful mirth," however, "guilt" was a psychological condition, an inner shame that made men unhappy. The newer style of sermon was probably more successful, for Edwards continued the emphasis on internalized guilt and unhappiness in this life. Such repeated stress on pleasure and pain in this world was apparently effective with the young people, since according to Edwards' Faithful
Narrative, it was at the time he preached these sermons that the adolescents began to lead the town in "religious concern." They showed a "thorough reformation" of their former scandalous behavior. 26

But if Edwards was pleased by the increased religiosity of a part of his congregation, forces from the outside world intruded to alarm "the friends of vital piety" in Northampton and to remind Edwards that promising earthly rewards and the consciousness of conversion (the corollary of internalized guilt for sin) was dangerously close to the Arminian tendency to emphasize God's dealings with man in terms of human capabilities. In late 1734 and 1735 Hampshire County was filled with a "great noise" about the suspected Arminianism of ministers William Rand of Sunderland and Robert Breck of Springfield. The anti-Arminian forces were led by Jonathan Edwards' uncle, William Williams of Hatfield, the patriarch of the Hampshire clergy after Stoddard's death, and Edwards was active within the Hampshire Association of Ministers as it coaxed Rand back to orthodoxy and stood firm in opposing Breck. 27 Although he was concerned about the invasion of the Valley by dangerous liberal ideas, even more upsetting to Edwards was the doctrinal confusion aroused in his own congregation. 28 Chagrined that they should be unsure of the correct views after six years of his ministry, Edwards responded with his best weapon, pulpit oratory. In this head-on confrontation with Arminianism, the doctrines of Edwards the theologian and the advice of Edwards the pastor fused into a powerful statement of religious principle that appeared to have enormous effect on the town of Northampton.

In the winter of 1734-1735 Edwards preached a series of discourses on "Justification by Faith Alone," which he later felt "was most
evidently attended with a very remarkable blessing of heaven to the souls of the people in this town," and which was shortly followed by the descent of the Spirit in the full-scale revival described in the Faithful Narrative.29 What made these sermons so effective was their clarity. In contrast to Edwards' own earlier assertions of both man's dependence on God and the necessity for man to be active in pursuing his own conversion, the doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone was explicated with a luminous logic that left no room for doubt about the activities of man and God in the scheme of salvation. Since Edwards' aim was primarily to show that any works of man were insufficient to merit salvation, but that faith in Christ was sufficient, he did not attempt to define Faith more "precisely" than simply "the soul's active uniting with Christ." Man had no claim to heaven except as united to Christ--because "the evil and demerit of sin is infinitely great," only union with Christ enabled man to fulfill the condition of perfect obedience to God, man's sufficiency would derogate from the glory of free grace and the honor of its giver, and it would detract from "the honor of the Mediator."30 The acts of a Christian life were necessary after conversion only as "expressions" of faith, not as means to salvation. Those accepted as "heirs of glory" were thereafter commanded by God to perform certain acts as preparation for their heavenly rewards as "vessels of different sizes."31 The need for these post-conversion exercises, as obedience to the still-applicable Law, was the answer to those who charged that the doctrine of justification by faith alone tended toward licentiousness. On the contrary, Edwards insisted, any other idea of salvation was "fatal to the soul."32
Once Edwards had enlightened his congregation about the lack of logical and Scriptural bases for Arminian doctrines, and after he had so clearly outlined "the true and only way" to heaven, he received a reward far beyond his expectations: "then it was, in the latter part of December [1734], that the Spirit of God began extraordinarily to set in, and wonderfully to work amongst us." Soon "a great and earnest concern about the great things of religion and the eternal world became universal in all parts of the town, and among persons of all degrees and all ages."33

During the following spring Edwards preached a number of sermons which amplified the doctrine of justification by faith alone and developed a style of exhortation suitable to an ongoing revival. There are a few sermons continuing the pre-revival theme of the sweet reasonableness of religious truth, with statements such as "God doth not require us to submit contrary to reason, but to submit as seeing the reason and ground of submission."34 Appeals to man's pride in his rationality, however, receded in importance during the revival. The predominant style of Edwards' pulpit oratory, as evidenced by the surviving manuscripts, came to be more emotional, direct, and frightening. After the absolute power of God had been sufficiently described, the corollary of man's infinite sinfulness invited the full play of Edwards' dramatic skills. In a sermon on "The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners," Edwards described his congregation in an indictment so harsh and multi-faceted that a great number of persons in his audience must have seen at last that trust in their own righteousness was indeed "fatal to the soul." The "Application" section of this sermon is worth quoting at length because it is the weight of the attack which best illustrates the power of Edwards' preaching.
Let eternal damnation be never so dreadful, yet it is just. . . .

Look over your past life. . . . How manifold have been the abomina-
tions of your life! . . . After what manner have many of you kept
God's holy day. . . . How have you not only not attended to the
worship, but have in the mean time been feasting your lusts, and
wallowing yourself in abominable uncleanness! . . . When you on
sabbath-days have got along with your wicked companions, how has
holy time been treated among you? What kind of conversation has
there been! Yea, how have some of you, by a very indecent carriage,
openly dishonoured and cast contempt on the sacred services of God's
house, and holy day! And what a trade have many of you made of
absenting yourselves from the worship of the families you belong to,
for the sake of vain company! . . . What wicked carriage have some
of you been guilty of towards your parents! . . . Have you not even
harboured ill-will and malice towards them? And when they have dis-
pleased you, have [you] wished evil to them? Have not some of you
often disobeyed your parents, yea, and refused to be subject to
them? . . . What revenge and malice have you been guilty of towards
your neighbours! . . . For the world you have envied and hated your
neighbour; for the world you have cast God, and Christ, and heaven,
behind your back; for the world you have sold your own soul . . .

How much of a spirit of pride has appeared in you, which is in a
peculiar manner the spirit and condemnation of the devil! How have
some of you vaunted yourselves in your apparel! Others in their
riches! Others in their knowledge and abilities! . . . How sensual
have you been! Are there not some here that have debased themselves
below the dignity of human nature, by wallowing in sensual filthi-
ness, as swine in the mire, or as filthy vermin feeding with delight
on rotten carrion? What intemperance have some of you been guilty
of! How much of your precious time have you spent away at the
tavern, and in drinking companies, when you ought to have been at
home seeking God and your salvation in your families and closets!

. . . And what abominable lasciviousness have some of you been guilty
of! How have you indulged yourself from day to day, and from night
to night, in all manner of unclean imaginations! Has not your soul
been filled with them, till it has become a hold of foul spirits,
and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird? What foul-mouthed
persons have some of you been, often in lewd and lascivious talk and
unclean songs, wherein were things not fit to be spoken! . . . God
and your own consciences know what abominable lasciviousness you
have practised in things not fit to be named, when you have been
alone; when you ought to have been reading, or meditating, or on
your knees before God in secret prayer. And how have you corrupted
others, as well as polluted yourselves! . . . What lying have some
of you been guilty of, especially in your childhood! . . . And how
have some of you behaved yourselves in your family relations! . . .

How have some of you attended that sacred ordinance of the Lord's
Supper without any manner of serious preparation, and in a careless
slightly frame of spirits, and chiefly to comply with custom! . . .
What stupidity and sottishness has attended your course of wicked-
ness; which has appeared in your obstinacy. . . .
Surely there was no unconverted person in the congregation who had not at least once behaved badly during religious services, or in his or her family, or envied a neighbor or indulged in pride, or allowed "unclean" imaginings--or worse. This was a direct indictment unclouded by Biblical similes, unencumbered with parables that the guilty could deliberately misinterpret. This was not a traditional "jeremiad" in which the Scriptural motif dominated the contemporary application. The combination of specificity of sins with the universality of probable guilt was the technique which seemed to bring the Northampton congregation to a pitch of fervor in striving after salvation in that spring of 1735. When Edwards continued the sermon quoted above by asking the congregation, "Now, can you think when you have thus behaved yourself, that God is obliged to show you mercy?," few in his audience could have answered affirmatively. Rather, they had to assent to Edwards' direction "to consider, if God should eternally reject and destroy you, what an agreeableness and exact mutual answerableness there would be between God so dealing with you, and your spirit and behavior." 

From the printed page, it is difficult to reconstruct the emotional impact which Edwards' revival sermons had on his flock. His delivery was supposedly "easy, natural, and very solemn," and his voice was low and very distinct. "His words often discovered a great degree of inward fervor, without much noise of external emotion, and fell with great weight on the minds of his hearers. He made but little motion of his head or hands in the desk." Although he has the reputation for staring at the bell-rope at the back of the meetinghouse while he preached, it is hard
to imagine Edwards not fixing his eyes on the faces of his congregation while he read the accusation quoted above. If delivered as printed, the whole passage from which the excerpt was taken must have lasted at least half an hour, perhaps more; if it was delivered in a solemn tone with dramatic pauses, it must have been terrifying. A Northampton man later recalled that when he was ten years old and heard Edwards give some similar sermons, he had been deeply disappointed when the "awful scene" of judgment Edwards described did not, in fact, take place outside the Northampton meetinghouse on that very day.\(^3\) But the revival sermons in themselves could not have produced such a great reaction in Edwards' flock without the atmosphere that was induced by the cumulative effects of twice-weekly indictments, prayer meetings, children's deaths and conversions, and constant reminders that God was about to punish the whole world for its sins—an atmosphere of building tensions that Edwards carefully cultivated from the fall of 1734 through the spring of 1735.\(^4\)

Although Edwards manipulated the fears of his flock, he stopped short of the extremes of terror. He closed the sermon on "The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners" by cautioning his flock "not to improve the doctrine to discouragement. For though it would be righteous in God for ever to cast you off, and destroy you, yet it would also be just in God to save you, in and through Christ."\(^4\) And one major way of fighting depression, implied Edwards' sermons, was Christian activity. In a February 1735 sermon titled "Pressing into the Kingdom of God," Edwards recommended "an engagedness and earnestness, that is directly about that business of getting into the kingdom of God."\(^4\) Such exertions would
lead to "humiliation," as Stoddard had told his flock long ago and as his grandson now reminded them; and this humiliation was the antithesis of despair. To despair was to assume that because man could not save himself, God could or would not rescue him; humiliation was seeing one's own inability as it contrasted with the unlimited power and mercy of God.

There were two reasons why Edwards preached active seeking as an antidote to despair. One was that the responsiveness of his audience, starting among the young people and spreading to the whole congregation by the spring of 1735, was a sign of visitation from the Holy Spirit. Trusting that his flock would remember the whole argument as put forth in the sermons on "Justification by Faith Alone," Edwards fanned the flames of revival by preaching that it was a time of exceptional opportunity for the community to escape from the damnation of the temporal world. It was God's "most extraordinary" appearance ever in New England, and man's "persevering" was perhaps to be rewarded under the special dispensation being granted to Northampton. In the excitement of the moment, Edwards preached that men could "take" heaven almost "as it were by violence." The sense of urgency was also increased by his constant reminders that the extraordinary times might portend encroaching doom. "It has been God's manner before he casts off a visible people, or brings some great and destroying judgments upon them, first to gather in his elect, that they may be secure." Especially great punishments might follow such unusual opportunities to seek salvation, if they were not taken. Those who heeded the Gospel message in time would, however, be safe for all eternity.

The other impetus behind Edwards' particular style of preaching
strenuous activity within an atmosphere of impending disaster was his intimate experience with the emotions he tried to arouse in his audience. When he spoke from the pulpit of the inability of man to earn salvation by his own merits, he drew on the personal experience of finding that all human exercises did indeed serve only for "humiliation." When he taught that man must nevertheless be active to the limits of his ability, he spoke in echo of his own Resolutions to do better and to live more ascetically, which were the urgent gropings of a depressed man toward some sense of emotional stability. When he spoke of the beauty of God's majesty, of the joyful psychological relief that could come from submission to that divine power, was he sharing with his audience an experience that he was then having? Was Jonathan Edwards perhaps being "converted" himself before the eyes of his congregation? And did that, much more than any merely intellectual logic, account for the appeal of Edwards' doctrines to those who could identify with him?

The appeal of Edwards' definition of faith, nevertheless, had to have a broader foundation than the "charisma" of the preacher. His doctrines were essentially a devaluation of the world, especially human attachments to things or persons or pride in one's abilities. In this sense, "justification by faith alone" was a psychological as well as an intellectual antithesis of Arminianism, which commended the profitable use of the human faculties and worldly goods which God had given. Something in Edwards' Calvinist vision answered the emotional needs of the Northamptonites in the 1730s more fully than did the Arminianism which was gradually becoming the dominant religious style in New England.
Edwards' Calvinism appealed to insecurities in the community that could be expressed in pulpit rhetoric as a discovery that worldly ambitions were mere delusions and that worldly success brought no lasting satisfaction. Too few communities have yet had their own revivals dissected to permit more than conjecture, but the location of the most intense Awakening--the Connecticut Valley and eastern Connecticut--suggests that an important social component of the response was the stage of development which distinguished the region, as well as the town of Northampton. 

Many communities in the area were making the difficult adjustments from the plentiful resources of frontier settlements to the scarcities and competition of established agricultural towns, and from the overwhelming agrarian emphasis of seventeenth-century Valley society to a more elaborated social and economic diversity. 

"Progress," population growth and economic development, had eroded the obvious pertinence of the old "Puritan" norms of behavior without providing any suitable replacement. To men still inclined, as most were, to see at least the shadow of God's hand in temporal events, the earthquake of late 1727 and the epidemic of "throat distemper" which killed thousands of children in New England in the mid-1730s were signs that God was displeased with his people. Even for those of more secular outlook, these disasters were reminders that there were strict limits to man's ability to control his world or to gain real security from it.

Those most responsive to Awakening doctrines in Northampton and in other communities were young people, especially young men aged eighteen to twenty-six. In Northampton, at least, the psychological usefulness
of Calvinism and conversion faded as the young people found adult ways to deal with economic and social problems; Edwards' early followers quickly lapsed back into "sinful" behavior and would eventually reject their once-beloved pastor entirely. But for a few years, for young people and their parents, emotional and publicly assertive "sainthood" provided a sense of security to those experiencing the transition between the old social order established by a Puritan God and a chaotic new world that was less obviously designed by a wise hand.

Edwards' use of the language of "sensibility" to describe conversion facilitated the escapist potential of his doctrines. What was a "sense," after all, but an idea that was not a matter of the "understanding's" rational judgment or the merely "animal" emotions of fear or satisfaction? Conversion was a "sense" of being well and secure—-independent of the unfortunate circumstances of everyday life. Edwards' audience might have inferred from his sophisticated theology that since all men are powerless before God, a relative lack of power among men is unimportant; since the "sense" of the truths of religion in conversion is not based on man's rationality, any rational judgment of one's situation was no barrier to God's arbitrary election and the reborn sensibility that would follow from being "chosen." For those who had no "common sense" basis for confidence in their own abilities, the promised sense of being approved by God despite worldly failings was extremely attractive. For those who had real doubts about what future the world had to offer them, the promised sense of eternal security was irresistible.

As Edwards helped his congregation to deal with the psychological
pains of practical uncertainties, their response was in turn an assurance to Edwards that he was an effective minister of the Gospel. All his diary vows of disregard for worldly success notwithstanding, the achievement of authority over his congregation was necessary to Edwards' mission to preach the Word of God and be heard. Upon the fulfillment of this pastoral role, to which he had solemnly dedicated himself and in which he carried on a proud family tradition, depended his psychological equilibrium. If he was converting himself in the very act of converting others, the ability to resign himself to the will of God was enhanced by his knowledge that it was God's design that Jonathan Edwards be an instrument of grace. And how could he resist the apparent testimony of the Holy Spirit that his preaching was producing conversions in others? He measured his own success in numbers of converts and public morality—those distinguishing marks of his grandfather's renowned ministry—and in the spring of 1735 Jonathan Edwards could count himself a success, a true heir to the great Stoddard.
CHAPTER V
SURPRISING CONVERSIONS, 1735

Revivals had occurred before at random intervals in scattered parishes in the Connecticut Valley, but the Awakening of 1735 was "extraordinary" in its effect on all kinds of persons and in the swiftness of its spread from Northampton through the Valley in western Massachusetts and Connecticut. It was also unusual in the amount of publicity it received. Seeking to counter misrepresentations of the events in Northampton, Jonathan Edwards wrote a vividly detailed account of the converts in his congregation which was published in 1737 as A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God.

This treatise gave Edwards an international reputation as an evangelist and became a popular handbook for the second tide of revivalism that spread over the northern American colonies in 1741-1742. Especially useful for our purposes are its descriptions of community behavior, for the Narrative is practically the only first-hand account of the Northampton revival. It is also an intriguing autobiographical document.

The title of the Narrative is somewhat ironic, because the conversions were not altogether "surprising." Edwards had worked strenuously to revitalize the faith of his flock. He wrote his narrative to convince the world that the Spirit was behind the revival and that he had acted with propriety in encouraging it. Most of the text is description of the conversions he had witnessed, to show that they were genuine and not filled with the manic delusions and widespread hysteria that were being gossiped about among cynics.

Edwards' flock were, it seems, acting out
the very doctrinal soundness and new sensibilities that he had prescribed in earlier sermons. Although conversion was a matter of the emotions, the process in Northampton in 1735 was well under the minister's control; and the Narrative strives to express a delicate balance between his responsibility and his surprise at the degree of his success. Lying not far beneath this surface story of happy accomplishment, however, is a narrative of quite different tone. In many ways the intended self-vindication became a confession of uncertainty, even failure. In historical perspective, the Narrative illuminates some of the negative implications—for his own future career and for the broader issues of ministerial position in an eighteenth-century community—of the great "success" Edwards enjoyed in fighting Arminianism and sin during the 1734-1735 revival.

Edwards' first accomplishment had been to effect a reform in the hitherto scandalous behavior of the adolescents of Northampton. By the end of 1733 they had showed "a very unusual flexibleness, and yielding to advice." They conceded to the minister a point he regarded as critically important, the special "frolics" that had become customary in the evening after the Sabbath lecture. Edwards had admonished local parents to "keep their children home"; he even tried to shame them into action by citing their "advantage of the honour and his esteem of their children[,] except they are greatly neglected or mismanaged by their parents[,] ordinarily have." But as if to reinforce with irony their lack of deference to their parents, the young people responded directly to the minister instead of to his advice passed through the
parents. When heads of families at last met in neighborhood groups to discuss their plan of action against the teenagers, they "found little or no occasion for the exercise of government in the case: the young people declared themselves convinced by what they had heard from the pulpit, and were willing of themselves to comply with the counsel that had been given . . . and there was a thorough reformation of these disorders thenceforward."5

Edwards' account of this success in the Narrative implicitly claims that only his new technique of appealing directly to Northampton's adolescents turned the tide of immorality. However exaggerated this description of ministerial effectiveness may have been, it indicates a new kind of relationship between a Congregational pastor and the young people in his flock, one that extracted the children and adolescents from their "proper" place in the natural hierarchical social order of the traditional community. The problem in Northampton, as Edwards himself defined it in the Narrative, was the failure of "family government." But while decrying the decline of parental authority, Edwards ironically perhaps eroded part of what was left of it by appealing directly to the adolescents and intervening between child and parent in significant ways.

Part of Edwards' success in reforming the young people was undoubtedly due to the pre-1734 technique of advertising the temporal rewards of holiness, and part was due to the calculated emotional impact of the "Calvinist" sermons, to which the young people may have been initially more susceptible than their parents. (Many of the sins Edwards described so clearly in the long passage quoted in Chapter IV were the special temptations of youth: rebellion against family discipline, "unclean"
imaginations, masturbation.) There was flattery involved in treating the adolescents as adults fully responsible for their own behavior. In fact, the church was the only institution in the community where teen-aged boys or girls were entitled to the same privileges and punishments as their elders. In 1734-1735 they were more than equal to their parents in importance in Northampton.

Edwards further undermined the deference of his special constituents to their parents by gathering them into age-graded groups for prayer and study under his own supervision. To persuade the youngsters "to spend the evenings after lectures in social religion" in neighborhood groups, which the minister visited in rotation, was not the same thing as returning the children to the immediate supervision of their parents.6 Essentially, the evening frolics became legitimized as "social religion." Thomas Shepard had once commented on the unfortunate link between the urge to worship in company and the urge for mere social contact: "so many young people will go abroad to hear sermons. What is the end of it? It is, that ye may get wives and husbands, many of you."7 James Axtell has pointed out that the evenings of social religion were "one of the rare occasions for young people to get together without their ubiquitous elders standing over them," and that many adults did not favor these groups of mixed sexes.8

Edwards also drew children away from their parents to catechise them in his study. In many towns this was a tradition,9 but there is no evidence that Stoddard did not instruct his people in family groups. The Hampshire Association of Ministers did vote in 1731 that although "personal [pastoral] visitation may in some cases be very expedient or beneficial," it was better to have families catechise their own young.10
Edwards went against the Association, and probably Valley custom, on both counts: not only did he insist on catechising the children and young people himself, but he never visited the homes of his parishioners except in emergencies. He could not and would not make "small talk," but he was always ready to receive a child or adult in his study and to give private counsel. He was comfortable only in his own domain. Certainly, he taught the children nothing their parents would disapprove, but he also did little to return them to the parental hearth for instruction and discipline—the traditional components of the "family government" whose decline Edwards lamented.

Edwards may have enlarged another wedge between parents and children by strenuously advocating singing in worship. Ola Elizabeth Winslow has described the great "Singing Quarrel" of 1715-1730 in New England as dividing conservative and ritual-fearing parents against their children, who liked this novelty of singing hymns with tunes from books. The children may especially have liked the evening meetings for learning the tunes, or so suggested a contemporary observer. Winslow says that the controversy was over in most places by 1730, but it seems to have been alive in Northampton half a dozen years later. Edwards preached sermons in 1734 and 1736 that endorsed singing, against the apparent resistance of the parents, who needed to be told at least twice that it was their Christian duty to allow their children to learn to sing.

When the adolescent "reformation" blossomed into a full-scale revival in Northampton, it also became the duty of the parents to follow their children's example. The model of the young people's prayer meetings was soon "imitated by elder people," and this was only one symbol of
a reversal of the old-fashioned parent-child instructional relationship that pervaded Northampton in the spring of 1735. It was not a coincidence that when he later wrote about the "little awakening" in the Faithful Narrative, the models of piety that Edwards presented were a four-year-old girl and a young unmarried woman. In the true Christian community, those usually "last" in social importance would be "first."

Four-year-old Phebe Bartlett, now one of the most famous converts in evangelical literature, illustrates in an only slightly extreme form many of the characteristics of the revival as seen through the pastor's eyes. Phebe had a dramatic, emotional conversion that completely upset normal patterns of deference and discipline in the Bartlett household. This child exhorted her siblings and parents to greater concern for their souls, lectured them on the virtue of charity, and was "exceeding importunate" with her parents for neglecting their responsibilities. Her family seem to have been perfectly docile while being bullied by Phebe, even though her mother's constant questioning of what was "the matter" with her and frequent attempts to ignore the child do suggest that the Bartletts did not altogether empathize with Phebe's ecstatic piety. One person who did, obviously, was her pastor. When he returned from a journey, Phebe joyfully announced to all within hearing, "'Mr. Edwards is come home! Mr. Edwards is come home!" Because of her conversion, the sympathetic link between Edwards and Phebe appears to have replaced the normal domination of parent over child.

Jonathan Edwards took great pride in receiving the love of his converts. He could not resist bragging in the Narrative that "this work of God [the revival] had also a good effect to unite the people's affections
much to their minister." The congregation was "eager to drink in the words of the minister as they came from his mouth" and were often "in tears while the Word was preached."18 Perhaps most symbolic of the total change in the temper of the town was the replacement of the tavern by the minister's house as the favorite gathering-place.19 Edwards was proud of the numbers of converts he had made: he confessed a hope that he had brought "300 souls . . . to Christ in this town in the space of half a year (how many more I don't guess)."20 (These numbers are perhaps exaggerated, since he recorded less than half that many names in the church membership rolls during that time.) Although the converts included both the very old and the very young, the following that Edwards created among the adolescents was clearly the most important to him psychologically.21 It was their behavior that he returned to again and again in the Narrative as an index of the state of the community. They were his special constituency. In the difficult years when he had worked so hard to emulate the patriarchal figure of his grandfather, the community had shown no sign of according him that power until he had touched the hearts of the young people. He had neither the years nor the impressiveness of figure to imitate Stoddard; but perhaps because he was young, almost young enough to seem to empathize sincerely with their problems, the adolescents had responded to his words.

There is another way in which the children were the epitome of the Northampton revival experience: their conversions became the prescribed norm for others. The classic Puritan morphology of conversion had emphasized its rationalistic elements, and most converts were adults; children,
on the other hand, tended to have more emotional religious experiences, if they were converted at all, because they were not capable or not assumed to be capable of the more intellectual form of "experimental" religion. Conversion as described in the Faithful Narrative, however, was almost entirely centered in the emotions.

The first stage of conversion, which came gradually or suddenly and through various means, was a new and ever more distressing awareness of one's sinful state. Some suffered for "but a few days, and others for months or years." The varieties of distress were many and sometimes included a "disturbance to animal nature." Some were in terror of sleeping, lest they die in an unconverted state. A common first reaction to these "legal awakenings," repentance for specific sins and resolutions for better behavior, gave way under the influence of true grace to a full conviction of the insufficiency of moral obedience and man's absolute dependence on God's freely-given Saving Grace. This new conviction was followed "most frequently, though not always," by a "before-unexpected quietness and composure," then "gracious discoveries" of the sufficiency and mercy of God and Christ, and other comforting apprehensions. Although most knew it not, this "sweet complacence" and "holy repose of soul" was indeed "evidence" of their conversion. The result of this experience was "an inward firm persuasion of the reality of divine things, such as they don't use to have before their conversion." Saints had "seen and tasted," and "intuitively beheld, and immediately felt" the "divine excellency and glory of the things of Christianity."

Conversion, as witnessed by Jonathan Edwards in Northampton in 1735 (and as he maintained in all his sermons and treatises) was therefore a
matter of sensibility. He had expressed this definition epigrammatically in a 1733 sermon as the "difference between having a rational judgment that honey is sweet, and having a sense of its sweetness." This sense came only from the Holy Spirit. The strivings recommended to natural man served only to wean his affections from temporal things so that he would be receptive to the experience of God's grace and the Spirit's cultivation of the saint's enhanced senses. The conversion process was really one of developing consciousness of these senses—that is, sensibility, an awareness that one tasted and felt. The minister's role, beyond the exhortations to the strivings for humiliation, was to guide and encourage this self-awareness. Edwards wrote that his special duty was to the "many" persons who were unaware of their own conversion, to be "a guide to lead them to an understanding of what we are taught in the Word of God of the nature of grace, and to help them to apply it to themselves."

Edwards was acutely conscious that in this important role a minister was especially vulnerable to criticism, and in mid-Narrative his tone becomes openly defensive. He knew that his definition of the self-awareness he encouraged in converts sounded dangerously close to the kind of assurance that a Calvinist could never rightfully have. He had been "much blamed and censured by many," he wrote (not revealing whether his critics were townspeople or other ministers), that he had "signified" to persons his satisfaction about their "good estate." But, he insisted, "[I] have been far from doing this concerning all that I have had some hopes of; and I believe have used much more caution than many have supposed. . . ." He was "sensible the practice would have been safer in
the hands of one of a riper judgment and greater experience" (such as his grandfather Stoddard, respected by townspeople and fellow clergy alike). But he had "often" warned his people that no man could see into another's heart, had found them extremely cautious in judging themselves, and therefore had found it an "absolute necessity" to use assurances to restrain some who tended to dangerous despair.33

The existence of this despair among the people of Northampton seems to provide a clue to Edwards' defensiveness in the Faithful Narrative. More dangerous than any accusation that he gave his congregation too much assurance about the state of their souls was the very opposite charge, that his doctrines of men's total depravity drove some of them to self-destruction. Edwards therefore asserted that despair was the work of the Devil, and he confessed in the Narrative that Satan had begun to appear in Northampton at the height of the revival.

In March 1735 "a poor weak man . . . in great spiritual trouble" cut his throat but lived to recover from his melancholy and confess the sin of "yielding to temptation."34 By the end of May, Edwards wrote further, it became very obvious that "the Spirit of God was gradually withdrawing from us" as Satan "raged in a dreadful manner."35 He was referring to a case of suicide among his flock. One of Northampton's leading citizens, Edwards' uncle Joseph Hawley (who had married Solomon Stoddard's daughter Rebecca), became so "discouraged" over the state of his soul that he cut his throat and died on June 1, a Sabbath morning.36 "He was a gentleman of more than common understanding, of strict morals, religious in his behavior, and an useful honorable person in the town."
All of these attributes, of course, were as nothing in the scheme of salvation that Hawley's nephew Edwards had outlined so dramatically from the pulpit. This wealthy merchant and Justice of the Peace felt himself to be without saving grace, and "the Devil took advantage, and drove him into despairing thoughts. He was kept awake anights, meditating terror; so that he had scarce any sleep at all, for a long time together. And it was observed at last, that he was scarcely well capable of managing his ordinary business, and was judged delirious by the coroner's inquest."

The point that Edwards was really trying to make in his lengthy description of Hawley's mental condition was that this tragedy was beyond ministerial control. The Hawley family was supposedly "exceeding prone to the disease of melancholy, and [Joseph's] mother was killed with it."

This "disease" became so "overpowering" that Hawley "was in great measure past a capacity of receiving advice, or being reasoned with to any purpose." The implication is that Edwards did try in vain to reason with his uncle. He was extremely alarmed when "multitudes in this and other towns" thereafter "seemed to have it strongly suggested to 'em, and pressed upon 'em, to do as this person had done." But even though most were saved from self-destruction, through the summer of 1735 there was a "gradual decline of that general, engaged, lively spirit in religion, which had been before." The Devil had ended the revival.

In his need to vindicate himself of suspicions of inadvertently aiding the Devil to drive out the Holy Spirit, Edwards made one subtle but important deviation from his generally faithful chronology in the Narrative--a deviation which may be testimony to his guilt over the Hawley suicide. That artistic "liberty" is the particular placement in
the narrative of its most dramatic section, the detailed account of the conversions of Abigail Hutchinson and Phebe Bartlett. These experiences are used as examples of the wondrous work of the Spirit at its height, intended as full contrast to the work of the Devil in Hawley—and yet both actually occurred after Hawley's suicide on June 1, 1735. Abigail's conversion had begun the previous winter, but it reached a peak only shortly before her death on June 27. Phebe's religious experiences began in early May but she did not "find" God until late July, and her spiritual crisis continued into the following winter. Edwards is subtle in rearranging the revival's chronology: the dates mentioned above are all given in the text, but they become submerged in the great mass of detail. And the strongest impression is left by the fact that immediately following Phebe's story, Edwards introduces the rise of Satan with these words: "In the former part of this great work of God amongst us, till it got to its height, we seemed to be wonderfully smiled upon and blessed in all respects. Satan . . . seemed to be unusually restrained. . . . In the latter part of May, it began to be very sensible that the Spirit of God was gradually withdrawing from us . . . ." The effect is to locate the experiences of Abigail and Phebe in the "former part" of the work, since there is no suspicion that they were influenced by Satan, and to place the Hawley suicide in the later stage, when God and Edwards lost control of Northampton to the Devil. Edwards may not have deliberately rearranged his information merely to preserve the reputation of the revival—he was as concerned with explaining the truth to himself as to his readers—and he might simply have remembered things in the order that he wrote them. Whatever the impetus to its artistry, Edwards' Narrative
conveys the subjective as well as the objective pastoral view of the awakening. When Hawley committed suicide, the happy confidence in the revival was over for Edwards. He was very uncomfortable with the mix of good and evil that had come to the Northampton community after the emotions of his flock had been let loose.

The structure of the Narrative leaves the reader with the impression that the Devil himself finally lost ground, not to the Spirit, but to the resurgence of worldly concerns. Among the "several things" that "diverted people's minds" from the important business of their salvation were the visit to nearby Deerfield of the Governor and his Council, to conclude an Indian treaty; the "quarrel" among Hampshire clergy and gentry over the Springfield ordination of Robert Breck, a suspected Arminian; and the building of a new meetinghouse in Northampton, which was the occasion of some uncharitable wrangling about seating and taxes. The minister who had promoted the revival did not himself stay aloof from these mundane matters; he watched closely the meetinghouse contention, played host for a week to at least one distinguished Boston official, and took an active role in the Breck controversy. As he turned his attention to fighting Arminianism on a broader scale, Edwards saw the people of Northampton return to what had been "normal" before the great excitement of the preceding year. Public affairs produced factional bickering and the church again produced occasional, self-doubting and private conversions. In Edwards' eyes, or rather in his published words, the situation was somewhat better than it had been in those turbulent years preceding the revival, for now at least the "young people," still his special concern,
remained docile. He wrote that he knew of "no one young person in the town that has returned to former ways of looseness and extravagancy in any respect." As if to renege a bit on this rather unbelievable assertion, he continued in a more cautious tone that although he was not "so vain as to imagine that we han't been mistaken" about some converts or that there were no "wolves in sheep's clothing" among his communicants, he nevertheless had hopes that "we still remain a reformed people."44

There is a wistfulness in that hope, and Edwards would hardly have wished only for "reform" at the revival's height, when he had had expectations that the whole community would be completely transformed by the universal effects of saving grace. There is also an irony in his most basic defense of the revival. After writing that his converts had been "overthrown in many of their former conceits" about the nature of conversion45--notions formed under Stoddard's instruction--Edwards went on to describe the revival as "evidently the same that was wrought in my venerable predecessor's days" and that none who had been converted under Stoddard "in the least doubts of its being the same spirit and the same work."46 The Spirit may have been consistent, but the method of operation showed such variation that Edwards' assertion of continuity between Stoddard's revivals and his own deserves special attention. There is little apparent similarity between the image of patient nurturing and gathering at maturity of the Stoddardec "harvests" and the dramatic Edwardsean conversions which became suspect for excessive emotion. On the other hand, the resulting community behavior, which was crucially important to both ministers, was similar. The congregation reformed, joined the church, and gave Edwards the public adulation that he imagined
to have been accorded to his grandfather at the height of his powers. By the late spring of 1735 Edwards had achieved the kind of control over Northampton that had brought renown to Solomon Stoddard. But by the time he wrote the *Faithful Narrative* eighteen months later, his cautious, defensive tone showed that his confidence in himself and his congregation was already slipping.

Edwards had made a great emotional investment in the "awakening" of his flock. In the fall of 1735, after the revival had ended and dullness of spirit and contentious behavior resumed, Edwards was forced to take a "long journey" to recover his "health." Like his 1729 "weakness," this illness may have been emotional—exhaustion, depression—since again he could not fulfill his pastoral duties even though he could travel very long distances. At the close of the *Narrative* he also mentions an illness in the fall of 1736. His dejection about what he described four years later as still "a sorrowfully dull and dead time with us" is understandable.

Contributing to Edwards' discouragement was the knowledge that although he had won a local battle with Arminian temptations in his own congregation, the conservative Calvinists seemed to be losing the war in the Valley, and the unpleasant odor of heterodox opinions would remain perceptible in Northampton. The Hampshire Association of Ministers had fought valiantly since late 1734 to keep Robert Breck from being ordained by Springfield's First Church, because the Reverend Thomas Clap and others from Connecticut had presented evidence that Breck had preached and privately defended Arminian principles. Through the winter of 1735
the Association, led by its senior member, William Williams of Hatfield, refused to approve Breck as orthodox. They even encouraged a minority within the Springfield church to fight the planned ordination. When Breck went to Boston ministers and obtained a certificate of orthodoxy, the local controversy became an open fight between the Hampshire conservatives and the more liberal Boston group (whose definition of "orthodoxy" was unacceptable in the Valley). A proposed ordination council gathered both sides to Springfield in early October 1735, and argument turned into near-riot when the anti-Breck faction in Springfield persuaded the Northampton Justices of the Peace (including Col. John Stoddard) to have Breck arrested and sent back to Connecticut to answer trumped-up charges there. That arrest came to nothing—except disgrace for the cause of clerical and magisterial dignity in the Valley. Breck had himself ordained at last by the Boston ministers in January 1736, and in the following summer successfully fought a court challenge to his orthodoxy. But the breach between himself and the Hampshire ministers was not healed for some years: he was not admitted to the local Association until October 1741, the first meeting after the implacable William Williams had died.

Although no member of the Hampshire Association was openly Arminian after William Rand's temporary lapse in 1734 (and even Breck himself was only suspect), there was a subtle cleavage within the group. The majority, however, were conservative, and it is significant that Jonathan Edwards was one of them. He was away from home in the fall of 1735, recovering his health, and so was not present for the spectacle at Springfield. But he was the author of the two tracts that constituted the Hampshire side in the bitter pamphlet war that followed Breck's
ordination. He and Samuel Hopkins of West Springfield (who had married Edwards' sister) wrote a Narrative of the Proceedings in 1736, which was answered by an anonymous letter defending Breck and his Boston allies; Edwards alone wrote a rejoinder to this pamphlet in 1737. The evolution of the charges and counter-charges shows the Hampshire Association, with Edwards as its spokesman, moving beyond its concern with Breck's position on theological fine points toward a conscious defense of their professional status. The crux of the matter, for which Breck himself had been only a catalyst, was the question of control over an individual congregations' affairs by a regional ministerial association--at heart, the question of lay versus clerical authority. By law and custom, the Springfield church had a right to choose its minister, and the majority clearly favored Breck. The Hampshire Association, on the other hand, was keeping the autocratic spirit of Solomon Stoddard alive, although it was on the shakiest ground when it interfered. (The Breck case was indeed the last time, to the end of the surviving records in 1748, when the Association voted against the majority of a church whose problems were submitted for arbitration.) But Edwards and Hopkins had defended the Association's opposition to Springfield's exercise of its rights by asserting that "a heterodox minister settled amongst us" would "destroy the peace of the ministry of the county and the comfort and benefit of mutual society, and to poison our flocks, and to bring our religious state into confusion." There could hardly be a more bald statement of threatened professional interest. The orthodox Hampshire clergy very much needed their "peace" and "comfort and benefit of mutual society," for most of them were fighting religious dullness in their congregations with
the same lack of success that bedeviled Edwards. The problems Edwards faced in trying to create a permanent, active role for the ministry in the community were also encountered by his fellow clergymen. Like him, they tended to turn to their clerical peers for emotional support as the aftermath of the revival brought increasing tensions between pastor and flock all over the Connecticut Valley.53

In the trying times of "declension" between 1735 and 1740, Jonathan Edwards might have found consolation in his new prestige as an author. The simple communication of proud and wondrous excitement that had occasioned Edwards' first letter to Benjamin Colman in 1735 had led to the publication in London (1737) and Boston (1738) of the Faithful Narrative. That tract, which seems to have been a "best-seller" among Scots Presbyterian and English Dissenting clergymen, was followed in 1738 by Edwards' Five Discourses on Important Subjects, which cemented the author's international reputation as an evangelist. Such recognition must have been pleasing to Edwards--but was it not also a painful reminder of how fleeting his pastoral success had been in reality? Now he was famous for being something he no longer was, and now any future successes would be measured against an exalted standard.

With the Spirit gone from the Connecticut Valley, Edwards the pastor was essentially faced with the conditions of the pre-revival days he described so sadly at the beginning of the Faithful Narrative. Until 1742 he would continue to exhort his people to repent and turn from the world to God; but when a resurgence of piety finally did come, the effect on
the community was to be quite different from the love and harmony and deference that Edwards had seen in 1735. Although the vision of a pious society that Edwards had offered his people in 1734-1735 had had a temporary appeal to the community, it did not result in a permanent restructuring of Northampton life into patterns of morality among the youth, non-partisanship in town politics, and continual and complete deference to the will of the minister as the will of God. The story of Edwards' last fifteen years in Northampton might be summed up as his own holding fast to an ideal of community life and ministerial influence, once just a vision but seemingly a reality in 1734-1735, while the community continued to grow economically and socially away from the ability or the desire to participate in such a mode of life.
CHAPTER VI
RE-AWAKENING AND REASSESSMENT, 1736-1746

For a decade after the 1735 revival in Northampton, Jonathan Edwards was continuously preoccupied with resolving problems that had been raised by his moment of triumph. Appalled to find a serious declension following the piety of 1734-1735, he fought again to assert the authority of the pastor against the forces of worldliness and sin— but always in the shadow of Northampton as a former "city on a hill" that had identified the will of the minister with the will of God. Sin was also becoming more difficult to conquer, for in addition to its old forms of apathy and lust and contention, it took on a new and insidious guise. Masquerading as zealous piety, pride showed itself to be man's greatest inherent sin and threatened to overwhelm the true work of the Spirit. After 1741, when his prayers were answered and another revival did finally come to Northampton, Edwards was forced to admit that the conversions he had long sought could be instruments to destroy the communal holiness that was the most important fruit of genuine piety. Just as the "Arminian scare" in Hampshire County in 1734 had reminded Edwards of the dangers of preaching too strongly the earthly rewards of conversion, so the extreme, individualistic piety of the Great Awakening in New England illuminated the dangers of the subjectivist definition of conversion he had promulgated in the Faithful Narrative. Therefore, the preacher who had emphasized an interior religion of sensibility was forced to emphasize the need to act out true holiness in Christian behavior.
In the late 1730s Edwards wrote a pair of letters to the Reverend Benjamin Colman of Boston that poignantly revealed the division of his professional life into two parts, a successful "career" as a propagandist for the revival and a not-so-rewarding position as a country pastor trying to keep that revival alive among his own people. Both letters were primarily concerned with discussing the details of the publication of Edwards' Faithful Narrative of the Northampton revival, but at the same time Edwards confessed the depths to which his flock had fallen spiritually after their great heights of piety three years earlier. "The work that went on so swiftly and wonderfully while God appear'd in might & irresistible power to carry it on, has seemed to be very much at a stop in these [Valley] towns for a long time, and we are sensibly by little and little, more and more declining," he wrote. The fall from grace was marked not so much by a return to "lewdness and sensuality," which Edwards felt signified an extreme level of depravity, as by a resurgence of "eagerness after the possessions of this life, and undue heats of spirit among persons of different judgments in publick affairs. Contention and a party spirit has been the old iniquity of this town; and ... has of late manifestly revived." Such unchristian behavior did not yet dominate the whole town, as it once had done, but Edwards was nevertheless "ready to blush, to speak or think of such an appearance of strife and division of the people into parties as there has been, after such great and wonderfull things as God has wrought for us, which others afar off are rejoicing in, and praising God for, & expecting (as justly they may) to hear better things of us." Although Northampton had recently escaped the worst effects of an epidemic of disease (probably the "throat
distemper"), a seemingly milder form of which had carried off many children two years previously, God was manifesting his anger with the impious Valley by sending extremely harsh winters and summer droughts to decimate crops and livestock. In sad contrast to the enlivening of worldly and spiritual affairs in the days of revival, the later 1730s were "a dying time" for Northampton in both agriculture and religion. The town was no longer a "city on a hill" with all eyes focused on God.

The less than pious temper of the times was clearly displayed in the building of a new meetinghouse between 1736 and 1738. The need for a larger edifice had been discussed in town meeting as early as March 1733, but construction was delayed until the summer of 1736 by disagreements over cost and location. The spire was finally raised in July 1737. In March of that year a "remarkable providence" had underscored the need for a new structure: while Edwards preached in the old building during a Sabbath service, the back gallery collapsed. Hundreds of people were tangled among fallen beams and splintered seats, but miraculously only a few were even slightly injured.

The new meetinghouse promised physical safety but it also brought on a quarrel, basically political in nature, that had no precedent in the town records. The partisan strife that Edwards described to Colman in the letter quoted above was most distressingly displayed in contention over "seating" the meetinghouse. Almost all New England Congregationalists before the Revolution assigned meetinghouse seats to all adults on the basis of age and social rank, and in many towns the process of determining the correct order of precedence occasioned significant disturbances of the Christian community. Northampton escaped these
troubles until the 1730s. Ever since the seating of the second meeting-
house in 1664, a standing committee of church officers (after 1700
including the pastor) and leading laymen had assigned the seats according
to persons' age, estate, and "some regard to men's usefulness" (community
service, military rank, or other secular distinctions). Full disci-

dionary powers had always been given to the committee, but in the 1730s
the town placed little trust in its leaders. In November 1737 three
leading citizens were proposed as a seating committee; the town meeting
enlarged the group to five by adding two more ordinary men. The minister
was not a member: after Solomon Stoddard's death no action was taken to
place Jonathan Edwards on the standing committee, and he was not included
in 1737. The new committee was bound closely by town instructions and
told at two separate meetings that the plan it drew up would have to be
presented to a "legally assembled" town meeting "to be by them approved
or disapproved of as they think fit." The most serious departure from
custom, however, was the enactment of a new set of criteria for the
ranking of persons. The committee was to "have respect principally to
men's estate," and only secondarily "to have regard to men's age"; a
distinct third in priority was "some regard and respect ... to men's
usefulness." Age had always previously taken precedence over wealth,
but a majority of Northampton's voters implied that property was more
"respectable" than old age, that worldly achievement was more laudable
than experience as a humble Christian.

The new emphasis on wealth in the prestige-ranking of the congrega-
tion was linked to the emergence of family clusterings in the seating
arrangements. The old meetinghouse had had benches on either side of a
central passage, with adult men on one side and their wives on corresponding seats across the aisle. Younger people, by definition less honorable, sat in the gallery that was also divided by sex. The 1737 meetinghouse, on the other hand, had pews all around the perimeter of the space and along the side and back aisles, as shown in the diagram on page 122. Seated in these pews were the town's richest men. And they took the further privilege of sitting with their wives and sometimes their daughters in family groups. The town's second-richest man even had in his pew his twenty-eight-year-old unmarried son, the youngest man on the ground floor of the meetinghouse by a decade.

This clustering of families was presumably the desire of the men who had led the town to make "estate" the primary criterion for privilege in seating. At the beginning of the December 1737 town meeting which effected this innovation in the church's prestige-scale, a proposal to seat men and their wives together was defeated; but towards the end of that same meeting, there was a negative vote on forbidding the committee "to seat men and their wives together especially such as incline to sit together." The desire of the rich to assert the importance of the family group in the context of divine worship could no longer be denied. Seating would mirror the grouping by families in other, secular aspects of community life: especially for the rich, family was a determinant of wealth and occupation. Brothers sat together more commonly when estate was the criterion than when age was considered first. After the quarreling over seating the meetinghouse was finished, after the town as a whole had approved the work of the committee that could not be trusted with traditional discretionary powers, the result was an affirmation of
Roman numerals are ranked half-deciles (I=highest, through XX) of total property on 1739 tax-assessment list. Each numeral (or question mark) stands for one man.

"Wives" = wives of men listed as numerals.
"Wives of" = wives of three to six men in tax-range given; their husbands sat upstairs, in the gallery.

In central seats, ranking by estate shows no obvious pattern. Men range from two in top 10% to many in lowest 25%, but only 6 of 40 were in top 25%. 9 of the 40 were not listed in 1739.

In central seats, men in first two seats average 74.3 years old.
In last two seats, men average 50.8 years old.
family and a public parade of economic rank.

Significantly absent from these proceedings was the town's pastor. The feelings of Jonathan Edwards about the new system of arranging persons were neither consulted formally nor recorded officially. It is difficult not to suspect, however, that he would distrust the configuration of the pews, for pews put barriers between the preacher and his audience. Within the pews, people sat on benches around the edges on two or more sides of the box shape; and since the Northampton pews contained up to eight people, at least half may have been seated facing away from the pulpit. Families faced each other, and some children were closeted within a wall of protective adults. The pews were cosier in winter, and drowsing was facilitated. It is likely that the Reverend Mr. Edwards would have felt more certain of their full attention if they sat on the less-comfortable benches in rows according to the categories by which he divided them when he preached: children, young men, young women, middle-aged, and aged persons. All through the 1730s he preached "family government," but he also warned against too-sentimental love of parents for their children, which would interfere with proper discipline and lead to valuation of the child's worldly well-being over its spiritual health. The family unit was the foundation of secular society and was at times an arm of church discipline and evangelism; but within the meetinghouse, where God's minister superseded the role of any other agent, each heart was supposed to be unprotected against the thunder of the Gospel.

Edwards preached at least two sermons about the evils attending the reorganization of the meetinghouse. In May 1737 he took as his text
II Samuel 20:19, from which he drew the doctrine, "when a spirit of strife has been prevailing among a visible people of God, and they have been divided into parties, a person may well rejoice, if he can say, he is one, who has been peaceable and faithful among them."16 Insisting that to be on the winning side is no proof of the righteousness of one's cause, Edwards pointed out that among persons not "peaceable and faithful" were those who condemn others for being contentious and "those who seem peaceable after they have obtained their wills, or after they see there is no hope of it." The private slander and abuse of others was the worst sin of all, perfectly visible to God even if hidden from men. "Contention and a party spirit" were Northampton's "old iniquity." "It has been a remarkably contentious town. I suppose for these thirty years people have not known how to manage scarcely any public business without dividing into parties. . . . of late, time after time that old party spirit has appeared again, and particularly this spring [1737]. Some persons may be ready to think that I make too much of things. . . .[but] I do not know but I have trusted too much in men, and put too much confidence in the goodness and piety of the town. . . . It is very likely there are men in this town, who have zealously engaged in every public strife, which has existed for these twenty years, or ever since they have been capable of acting in public affairs. . . ." Edwards closed by asking those (few) who had avoided partisanship to pray for their sinful neighbors.

On "the Sabbath after seating the new meetinghouse," December 25, 1737, Edwards preached from John 14:2, "in my father's house are many mansions."17 His real purpose was a description of the rewards of
heaven, but in passing he made some acerbic comments on the congregation arrayed before him in their economic order. "You that are pleased with your seats in this house because you are seated high in a place that is looked upon hungrily by those that sit round about [ , ]... consider it is but a very little while before it will [be] all one to you whether you have sat high or low here." The same message of eternal equity was also intended as consolation for those who had been seated lower than they felt was appropriate. Nevertheless, Edwards' use of the materials of everyday political life to illustrate his doctrines about eternal rewards, with a specificity that he usually eschewed, reveals that heavenly consolations were not so important to the Northampton congregation. If one takes Edwards' Faithful Narrative as an accurate picture of the community in 1735--pious and harmonious--one must believe that they would then have cared little about where they sat in the meetinghouse. Then, Edwards ruefully believed for the rest of his life, they had only been anxious "to drink in the words of the minister as they came from his mouth." Now, it was more important to watch each other.

An even stronger blow against the power of the pulpit than the erection of family pews in the new meetinghouse was the decision of March 1738 to build a separate "town house" for secular meetings. For eighty years the business of the community, religious and worldly, had been organized within the walls of the same chamber. The pulpit was not used during secular gatherings but it stood as a mute reminder of the position of the minister above the community. After the new town-house was finished in 1739, however, the minister's "proper" sphere was more clearly marked off as separate from the business of everyday life.
But Jonathan Edwards would never abandon his ambitions to rule the entire town in all aspects of its life. He continued to thunder from the pulpit against the sins of the marketplace; any economic practice less than charitable he defined as theft. In a sermon of July 1740 he catalogued as many kinds of sly deceits as the human imagination could dream up, including many that were not illegal and may well have been admired as "sharp trading." As always, he took care to point out the varieties of the sin under discussion which were the special temptations of children— in this case, stealing fruit from a neighbor's trees. More importantly, he continued his periodic attacks on the sexual sins of young people and the heinous indulgence of their parents. In a sermon on the temptation of Joseph to adultery with Potiphar's wife, Edwards emphasized that Joseph was "in his youth, a season of life when persons are most liable to be overcome by temptations of this nature." Exhorting his youthful audience to avoid "all degrees of lasciviousness, both in talking and acting," Edwards discussed many varieties of sensual sin but came finally to a custom he considered a great abomination. He did not use the term "bundling," now famous in New England folklore, but he spoke of "young people of different sexes lying in bed together. However light is made of it, and however ready persons may be to laugh at its being condemned, . . . this custom of this country (to which it seems to be peculiar, among people that pretend to uphold their credit) has been one main thing that has led to that growth of uncleanness that has been in the land." Another deplorable custom was one Edwards had worked tirelessly to eradicate in 1734, "young people of both sexes getting together
in the night, in those companies for mirth and jollity, that they call frolics; so spending the time together till late in the night, in their jollity." The pernicious effects of "frolicking" were clearly seen: in those towns where such "jollity" ran free, there were also the most "gross sins, fornication in particular." Proof that the practice was sinful could be derived from its eradication from Northampton "for several years" in the late outpouring of God's Spirit. But "frolics" had again become popular. Edwards revealed that he was fighting not only youthful sexuality, but also parental overpermissiveness. Among the hypothetical cavils he answered was, "if we avoid all such things, it will be the way for our young people to be ignorant how to behave themselves in company." To this, Edwards returned a scornful answer: would his opponents argue that the Spirit that ended frolicking "tends to banish all good conduct, good breeding, and decent behavior from among them; and to sink them down into clownishness and barbarity[?]"22 The pastor was trying to persuade the Northampton parents that he and they shared similar standards of youthful behavior. His use of the story of Joseph, who eventually became head of Pharaoh's government, might also have been a way to suggest that these problem children would come out "all right" in the long run--if they remained morally upright. Edwards was trying to enlist the aid of the hitherto-ineffective force of "family government" in another crusade against youthful vice. But the "frolicking" was to continue, and even to get worse, before the ultimate test of the pastor's standards was made.

In response to the apathy and sin that distinguished Northampton in
the late 1730s, Jonathan Edwards again altered his rhetorical techniques, or so it appears from the surviving sermons of the period. In contrast to the "sweet reasonableness" of religion that he preached in the early 1730s, and the beautifully pure doctrines of God's justice and loveliness that filled his sermons in 1734 and 1735, by late 1735 Edwards was preaching unmitigated terror. Really hardened hearts would not be reached by sweet reason or abstract esthetics, and Edwards' use of the tools recommended by Stoddard to "break the stony hearts of men" revealed the end of his optimism about even the children of Northampton.

A sermon of November 1735 captures the new tone in its doctrine: "indignation, wrath, misery, and anguish of soul, are the portion that God has allotted to wicked men." Unlike most of Edwards' earlier sermons, this work was not an elaboration of a point of doctrine but simply an indictment of the audience, a description of the punishment they would suffer for having rejected the Gospel doctrines of justice and hope that Edwards had previously taken such pains to present. Like the best of his revival sermons, this imprecation used the second-person pronoun extensively; the difference was that the primary intent was to describe the future and not the past, and Edwards barely mentioned that there was still time to repent. "This misery is the misery into which you are every day in danger of dropping, you are not safe from it one hour. How soon it may come upon you, you know not: you hang over it by a thread, that is continually growing more and more feeble. . . . How just would it be in God to cut you off, and put an end to your life! . . . You have many and many a time provoked God to do his worst. . . ."

Another sermon, directed particularly at the young people, dwelt at
great length on youthful sin. That was, of course, one of the most familiar themes in Northampton by the late 1730s; but whereas the earlier sermons dwelt on the sins that youngsters might commit, the later sermons meditated on the inherent corruption of the human being. From Psalms 71:5--"For thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth"--Edwards preached that "it behooves young persons to seek [so] that they may be converted while they are young." So familiar was this doctrine that he could just outline the exposition in his manuscript; but Edwards wrote out the "Application" fully, for the message was new, at least in tone. "Consider the miserable state you are in and have been in ever since you was born. You came into the world a child of wrath under guilt," Edwards reminded the children of Northampton. His pessimism was fueled by memories of the piety that a few years before had seemed to portend redemption from that inherently corrupt human condition. He charged his flock to "consider that those unconverted persons that have been at the top of the visible Church in point of privilege in this world will be at the bottom of hell in another world. . . . the inhabitants of this town had the greatest advantage for salvation of perhaps any town in the world." But these children in Edwards' congregation were "not only in danger of hell but . . . in danger of being cast into the bottom of hell."

The sensible dangers of hell, and the precariousness of men's condition in being suspended over it "by a thread" were elements of Edwards' rhetoric that reached a high plane of elaboration in a sermon delivered on the Connecticut Valley revival circuit in the summer of 1741 and published with the title *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. Not
only is Sinners Edwards' most famous sermon, but it has been used historically as an index to evaluating Edwards—as a mere hellfire preacher, a temporary participant in the excesses that characterized the Great Awakening in New England in 1741-1742, or a consistent Calvinist who captured timeless truth when he said that men should be warned of their probable eternal fate with as much vigor as they would be warned that their houses were burning. This often-cited sermon, however, deserves further exploration as a _pastoral_ document, for it was first preached at Northampton and it suggests a major change in Edwards' attitude toward his own congregation.

No record was left of the effects of Sinners in Northampton, but in the atmosphere of barely controlled hysteria that pervaded the Valley in the summer of 1741, the bleak rhetoric proved terrifying in Enfield. The horror derived not from an especially affecting description of hell (Edwards had preached more vividly about the eternal flames on other occasions), but from the emotional tone of the sermon. With an artistry unsurpassed in his other writings, Edwards harmonized the style of the rhetoric with the essence of the message. The most striking aspect of the sermon is the _indifference_ expressed and described. Although it conveys the reek of brimstone, the sermon does not say that God will hurl man into the everlasting fires—on the contrary, real doom will come from God's indifference. God is as wrathful at living sinners as at those already consigned to hell, but His activity is in restraining the punishment that man has incurred. He holds man above the pit as by a spider's thread, and should He become weary of protecting worthless man, that abominable insect will _drop of his own weight_. Man's preservation lay in
God's whim of mercy, and the terror of this message derived from the insecurity of being temporarily protected by an all-powerful being who had an infinite anger. (Was the control of such strong feelings something that Edwards' audience found difficult to understand or to trust?) Inevitably, God's anger would be unleashed—in the momentary lapse of His protection, man would plummet to his doom.30

No other Edwards sermon bespoke such despair when describing such a horrifying situation. In contrast to the sermons of earlier years, when Edwards had had hopes to save a significant portion of the souls in his charge, the thrust of Sinners is completely pessimistic. Although he frequently used the conditional construction, "if one is unconverted," and although the first sentence of the Application section was "the use may be of awakening to unconverted persons," the sermon ends with only a tepid exhortation to men to exert themselves for salvation. Edwards really seemed to feel no hope for those around him.

The God that Edwards described in Sinners showed a rather macabre passivity. Was this attribute a projection of Edwards' own state of mind? During this period he again suffered from the bouts of "illness" that seemed to afflict him whenever his pastoral labors were unsuccessful. In the autumn of 1735 and again a year later, he had had to travel to regain enough strength to resume his preaching.31 In mid-1738 he described himself as almost too ill to work; and in 1739 another minister described him as unlikely to live more than another two or three years.32 From about 1740, after he had spent five years trying in vain to whip his flock back into the pitch of piety they had shown in the "little
awakening," Edwards showed a strange kind of professional passivity. The steady and well-planned psychological campaign that he had conducted in the mid-1730s was never repeated. Instead, while his private correspondence confessed despair over his inability to keep his congregation on the path of righteousness, his public life was marked by sporadic bursts of activism that were clearly doomed to failure. The early-1740s revivals that have come to be known as the Great Awakening marked a turning point in Edwards' career as important as the upsurge of piety five years earlier. The larger awakening was in many obvious ways a successor to the Valley revivals of 1734-1735, but beneath the surface likeness was a critical difference in the pastoral role of Jonathan Edwards.

When the Spirit of God descended on Northampton for the second time in Edwards' ministry, there was no special pride in the revival for either congregation or pastor. Other communities were touched first by the Spirit before it came to Northampton, and even in his own town visiting preachers thundered more effectively than Edwards to arouse the sinful to repentance. In fact, it was depression over his own ineffectiveness that caused Edwards to invite the most famous of all evangelists to Northampton. In February 1740 Edwards wrote to the Reverend George Whitefield to ask that his "intended journey through New England the next summer" include a visit to Northampton. The famous Anglican itinerant was sorely needed in Northampton, confessed pastor Edwards: "we who have dwelt in a land that has been distinguished with Light, and have long enjoyed the Gospel, and have been glutted with it, and have despised it, are I fear more hardened than most of those places where you have preached hitherto." Even Whitefield's efforts might be in vain.
But neither Whitefield nor his host was disappointed, and the visit of the "grand itinerant" to Northampton catalyzed a revival that lasted (with ups and downs) for almost two years. After a month of triumph in Boston and eastern Massachusetts, Whitefield arrived at the home of Jonathan Edwards on October 17 and stayed for four days. He preached five times in Northampton and once in Hatfield, in meetings that were as "gracious" as any he had experienced in New England. Edwards later recalled that when Whitefield preached, "almost the whole assembly [were] in tears for a great part of sermon time." After Whitefield had left Northampton to bring his message of salvation to sinners in the lower Connecticut Valley, pastor Edwards found that the spark of piety had been rekindled in his own flock.

At first among "professors" who had previously gained hope of their election, and then among the unconverted and especially "those that were very young," religion again became the overwhelming concern of life. The second great revival in Northampton was probably much like the first in its general effects on the community; but this time, Edwards (our best witness) chose to describe primarily the "bodily effects" on persons in his congregation. Children left their evening meetings of "social religion" to go home "crying aloud through the streets." By mid-summer, "it was a very frequent thing to see an house full of outcries, faintings, convulsions and such like, both with distress, and also with admiration and joy." Often persons "were so affected, and their bodies so overcome, that they could not go home." The influence of the Spirit was strongest among children who had "not come to years of discretion" in 1735 and it "far exceeded" the earlier revival. The full wave of awakening,
among both hitherto untouched children and formerly converted adults, did not abate until the fall of 1742. The two-year second revival in Northampton was "great" in its local effects; but its paramount historical significance, of course, lies in its linkage to the revivals of those years in other New England communities and in the Middle Colonies. The connection was symbolized by the Edwards letter quoted above: it was written for The Christian History, which appeared weekly in Boston from March 5, 1743, through February, 1744--America's first religious periodical and an intended archive of descriptions of the Awakening.\(^40\)

For pastor Edwards, the second revival--so long prayed for and worked for--was a season of triumph, but one that contained many disquieting undertones. Most importantly, the work of the Spirit was not so directly controlled by Edwards as the earlier revival had been. Preachers who were strangers were far more effective in arousing the congregation's emotions, in Northampton as elsewhere, than were the local pastors whose doctrines and rhetorical styles were overly familiar. (Edwards himself found great success as an itinerant, as when he gave his Sinners sermon in Enfield.\(^41\)) It was Whitefield's visit in October 1740 that brought the great change in Northampton. In a lull that followed, the next spring, Edwards asked his friend Eleazar Wheelock to come with Benjamin Pomeroy from Connecticut to preach in Northampton. "There has been a reviving of religion among us of late," wrote Edwards, "but your labours have been much more remarkably blessed than mine.... and may your coming be a means to humble me, for my barrenness and unprofitableness, and a means of my instruction and enlivening."\(^42\)

It was the preaching of Samuel Buell in the early spring of 1742
that overcame another long "abatement" of the Spirit's work and brought the congregation to a new pitch of fervor. 43 Buell, a 1741 Yale graduate, supplied the pulpit during Edwards' absence for a fortnight on a preaching tour and stayed for two or three weeks after Edwards returned. He preached publicly every day and spent almost all of his other waking hours in religious exercises with smaller groups of people, who were "continually thronging him." 44 So successful was Buell that he may have aroused jealousy in pastor Edwards' loyal wife. 45 He certainly inspired her to new heights of piety, and the effects on other people were equally dramatic. "Almost the whole town seemed to be in a great and continual commotion, day and night," Edwards later wrote. Many persons had more extreme "religious affections" than ever before; some even lay in trances for twenty-four hours "with their senses locked up" but enjoying visions of heaven. When Edwards returned to Northampton he found that "a great deal of caution and pains were ... necessary to keep the people, many of them, from running wild." 46 Indeed, Edwards' role in the latter phase of the second awakening was much less one of exhortation to heights of piety, as it had been in 1735, than it was one of restraint on the excesses to which that piety had led.

Edwards deplored the hysteria which touched the revival in Northampton and dominated it in some other towns. By the time the wildness peaked in Northampton, other communities were being torn apart by zealots who would make emotion the sole evidence of holiness, and influential ministerial voices were being raised to indict the entire revival as the work of the Devil because such hysteria could not be produced by God. In
1743 two conservative Hampshire ministers, William Rand of Sunderland and Benjamin Doolittle of Northfield, each published a tract against the recent "upheavals," and from 1743 through 1745 a number of prominent clergymen published condemnations of the revivals.47 Because Edwards steadfastly believed that the hysterics were just the incidental effects of circumstance upon weak constitutions, and not anything to compromise the holy essence of the work of God's Spirit, he found himself in the awkward position of having to defend the revival from its attackers by saving it from its friends. From 1741 to 1746 Edwards published three treatises of increasingly fine-tuned analysis which were regarded by his contemporaries as the definitive statement of the judicious pro-revival position. In these works he struggled to find a way to express the proper role of emotion in religion—as he had experienced it as a pastor and as a convert himself. He also walked the tightrope of trying to preserve ministerial prerogative without denying the New Light position on which his public career and local success were based.

Edwards' first statement, The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God . . . , was expanded from a sermon he had delivered at the Yale Commencement in September 1741 and published in Boston later that autumn under the patronage of a number of moderate clergymen.48 In The Distinguishing Marks Edwards painstakingly analyzed the disturbances of traditional church services, of people's bodies, and of their imaginations; he showed that these things indicated neither that the revival was the product of the Spirit, nor that it was the work of Satan.49 A true work of the Spirit would establish the truth of Jesus as Saviour, turn men away from "worldly lusts," increase regard for Scripture, "lead
persons to truth" and "sound doctrine," and foster humility rather than pride.  

Testing the present revival by these signs, Edwards concluded that it was "undoubtedly, in the general, from the Spirit of God." But he did end his treatise by warning his fellow clergymen to exercise charity and to avoid unnecessary "innovations."  

By the fall of 1742, extravagant zealots had stolen the spotlight and the clerical community was divided into "Old Light" and "New Light" camps. The discord was far more serious in Connecticut than in Massachusetts, for government repressions made enthusiasts more bold; but even in the northern Connecticut Valley, churches were splintering and men were taking sides over the revival. Northampton was blessedly free from this kind of contention, probably because Edwards was moderately New Light and the most flamboyant itinerants (such as James Davenport) did not invade the region. Edwards remained a friend of the revival.

In the second of his three major treatises, Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England, written in late 1742, Edwards repeated the essence of the argument put forth in The Distinguishing Marks. He denounced extremists of all kinds, pronounced the revival genuine, and even suggested that it might be "the dawning, or at least a prelude" to the millennium, which would begin in America. Edwards began this treatise with a definition of true piety that was the foundation of his attitude toward the revival; it was never understood by his Old Light opponents and formed the real difference between both camps of extremists in the clerical dialogue about the Awakening. "All will allow," Edwards wrote, "that true virtue or holiness has its seat chiefly in the heart, rather than in the head: it therefore
follows...that it consists chiefly in holy affections." He was not quite ready to argue that point philosophically (that would come in 1746), but he followed his statement with an impressive illustration of how high emotions could function properly within a mentally healthy person who adhered with the utmost propriety to all of the classic doctrines of New England Calvinism. We now know that the "instance" he cited was his own wife, Sarah. So great were her religious affections that her "soul dwelt on high, and was lost in God, and seemed almost to leave the body." She frequently lost "all ability to stand or speak" and sometimes leapt involuntarily, although there was no trance. This was no "distemper caught from Mr. Whitefield" or childish "giddiness," for this was a woman whose grace had been growing for decades and manifested itself in a "spirit of humility and meekness" as well as the soundest doctrine.

Edwards ended his description of Sarah's remarkable holiness with a compliment that was also a moving confession. "Now if such things are enthusiasm, and the fruits of a distempered brain, let my brain be ever-more possessed of that happy distemper! If this be distraction, I pray God that the world of mankind may be all seized with this benign, meek, benificent, beatifical, glorious distraction!" Edwards never confessed that he himself enjoyed such transports, although when he wrote his "Personal Narrative" of his own conversion about this time, he attributed to himself a blissful resignation to God's will that was unlike his older autobiographical accounts and much like the state of Sarah's spirit.

The real importance of Edwards' Thoughts on the Revival, when it is seen as a companion-piece to the "Personal Narrative," is in its definitive statement about true conversion. We have too few personal documents from
these critical years to untangle the strands of experience--Jonathan's, Sarah's, those he observed in his flock--that contributed to this certainty about the nature of conversion. But as we will see, Edwards' success at fitting together experience and doctrine, emotion and idea, would have profound implications for his future as a pastor.

The most complete statement of Edwards' mature thought on conversion came in 1746, when his *Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* was published in Boston. His focus was on the critical line between common and saving grace, a distinction every Christian would have to make in self-examination, and a distinction that captured the essence of the task of the pastor as both speculative theologian and community moral officer. Insisting again that "true religion, in great part, consists in holy affections," Edwards maintained that the "degree of religion" is only to be determined by the "fixedness and strength of the habit" and not "by the degree of the present exercise." True religious affection was not passion, unleashed emotion, for there must also be judgment and control: "where there is heat without light, there can be nothing divine or heavenly in that heart." This insistence on mental and emotional balance was the hallmark of Edwards' position.

After discussing some signs that could not be definitive of grace, one way or the other, Edwards gave twelve signs that provided a reasonable certainty of the presence of saving grace. The first eleven required that the affections proceed from a holy source, turn toward holy things and gospel truths, and be manifest in a spirit of humility. As practical tests of the difference between mere imagination and divine inspiration, they were vague; but Edwards did clearly rule out personal
revelations. The twelfth sign was the most critical: it was "Christian practice. . . . universally conformed to, and directed by Christian rules" as the "business of life." 66

Edwards gave these signs for use in self-examination to root out complacency as well as "enthusiasm." He made no bald statement that a person could not be sure of his election; but his implicit position was like Stoddard's, that whatever assurance was possible would come only from the experience of a habit of holiness in all its psychological and behavioral dimensions. 67 One would know oneself to be saved by looking back on one's life and seeing a harmony of feeling and action—as Edwards could look back on his own life when he wrote the "Personal Narrative." If we recall Edwards' early struggles to keep his "sense" of holiness, and how he preached in the mid-1730s that conversion was a new "sensibility," we can see how, in the wake of the second revival, he was distancing himself from the potential antinomianism of that sensibility. Sarah Edwards' transports were approved, but only because they were always controlled by sound doctrine and conspicuous humility. Edwards' twelve signs of spiritual affections codified what he had felt and observed. Besides working on both the psychological and doctrinal levels, they also met pastoral exigencies: the criterion of subjective and objective Christian life—each part valid only in conjunction with the other—provided an opportunity for a minister to restrain both worldliness and spiritual pride in his congregation.

Equally important as a rein on arrogance was Edwards' series of unequivocal statements about the inability of one man to judge another's heart. This was the most basic and radical of all Stoddard's own
doctrines, and Edwards quoted his grandfather's *Treatise on Conversion;* but the old warning certainly needed repeating in the new circumstances of such a large and emotional revival as the Great Awakening. There is no evidence that the Northampton congregation was torn by accusations of impiety hurled by those who had experienced violent "affections" against others who had followed a less extravagant road to faith, but Edwards was well aware that many other communities had divided on this very issue. Therefore he warned that even "true saints have not such a spirit of discerning that they can certainly determine who are godly, and who are not. . . . they can neither feel, nor see, in[to] the heart of another." 68 And pastor Edwards pretended to give no absolute criteria for distinguishing spiritual sheep from goats, lest he "be guilty of that arrogance which I have been condemning." 69 For purposes in this world, which included admission to church fellowship, men must judge others with hearts full of charity and not pride. 70

The man or woman who claimed assurance of salvation, however, would not therefore slip easily into public recognition as a saint. Although Edwards followed Stoddard in recognizing the inviolable privacy of the experience of grace, he nevertheless insisted in the *Religious Affections* on a voluntary submission by the converted individual to the community of Christians. A "profession of Christianity" was necessary, and it should include all the essentials—acknowledgment of sinfulness, repentance, and belief in the doctrines of Jesus as Saviour. It could be "express or implicit." 71 Not essential was "an account of the particular steps and method, by which the Holy Spirit, sensibly to them," changed their hearts; but some account of the nature of the experience must be given,
since "for persons to profess those things wherein the essence of Christianity lies, is the same thing as to profess that they experience those things." 72 Christianity was, in essence, heart religion.

But wasn't judgment of such a profession implicit in this requirement? Professions could, of course, be faked. All of these cautions against spiritual pride among the brethren force the overall "message" of Edwards' treatises on grace into a serious ambiguity. The "signs" seemed so clear in his mind, but could they not be used to keep hypocrites out of the church? Were church members to abandon discrimination entirely in their use of "charity" with their neighbors? If so, why was it so important to Edwards to promulgate rules for distinguishing grace in the living person? This was a serious practical problem in the Great Awakening and its aftermath, for piety was now a public stance, as it had not been since the early days of the Puritan commonwealth. In many communities church membership was a more voluntary and particular association than ever before. Ironically, the emphasis on emotional conversion--essentially a more private matter than the outward morality that had grown fashionable as a mark of holiness--led to the necessity for a converted person to make a choice, to join a church as a convert, not just as the child or grandchild of saints. But then he must be judged worthy by his neighbors. Edwards, so certain of the true signs of holiness, nevertheless warned men that they must not judge.

Ultimately, it was impossible to restrain laymen from pretending spiritual powers not legitimized by Scripture without asserting the domination of the minister over his congregation. The combination of abilities that made a good minister--doctrinal expertise and
"experimental" understanding of "the inward operations of the Spirit"—gave him an insight into others' souls that was more sophisticated and more sensitive than that possessed by the ordinary lay church member. The only possible solution allowed by Edwards' advice to a "revived" Congregational church infected by hypocrites and yet persuaded by Edwards' logic that there were signs of salvation but not reliable ones for mere mortals, would be reliance on the minister in matters of judgment.

Enhanced ministerial power was really the direction in which these treatises on grace and conversion were leading. When Edwards in his *Thoughts on the Revival* listed the most pernicious sins then current, the three he mentioned all concerned the infringement of ministerial prerogatives by laymen. The first was censuring "professing Christians, in good standing in the visible church, as unconverted"; worst of all was daring to censure ministers as graceless. The second abomination was exhorting, or preaching, by laymen; only ministers had the right to assume the authority of speaking in Christ's name or of teaching and exhorting as a calling or full-time occupation. Third among the most dangerous revival practices that Edwards could think of was the attempt of laymen to introduce new practices into the rites of the church without prior consent of "the governing part of the worshiping society"; the pastor "especially ought to be consulted, and his voice taken, as long as he is owned for their minister." That Jonathan Edwards was the professional heir of his grandfather Stoddard was never shown more clearly than in these statements about proper church procedures. In spite of his broad and sensitive view of the revival and the good it contained, Edwards focused on anti-clericalism as the major sign that evil was mixed in with the good.
It was this impure character of even a glorious work of the Holy Spirit that forced the dialectic interaction of theology and pastoral practice in the career of Jonathan Edwards. There is no doubt that he was, as an intellectual, perpetually fascinated by the search for pure doctrinal "truth." But if he had not worked so hard to bring about a revival in his own congregation, and if he had not then seen the resulting heights of piety come close to being unrestrained passion and pride, his concern to find true "distinguishing marks" of sincere "religious affections" would have been less pressing and perhaps less fruitful.

The second great awakening in Northampton had posed a problem which Edwards answered in the mid-1740s with his impressive intellectual and rhetorical skills, in three treatises that became the definitive works on the subject of grace. He managed to harmonize the emotions he had felt, and those he had seen in others, with the Calvinist dogma that he acknowledged as Truth. But while he was reconciling--theoretically--psychology and behavior, personal piety and community responsibilities, Edwards' "real" life as a pastor provided a melancholy counterpart to these elegant doctrinal certainties.
CHAPTER VII
CHALLENGES, 1743-1749

Although Jonathan Edwards was brilliant at the doctrinal level in defending the revival and identifying its dangers, his accomplishment did not make the solution of the problems he faced in Northampton any easier. In part because he was so confident of the experiential reality and the analytical precision of his doctrine of true faith, Edwards' definition of conversion gradually became in his own mind a norm by which others could be measured and controlled. As he became so certain intellectually, he became insecure professionally. The second awakening in Northampton had threatened Edwards' identity as a pastor; and as the revival waned, Edwards faced again the old challenges to church discipline and ministerial authority. He never gave up trying to recreate the joyous success of the revival of 1735, but by now his once-terrifying doctrines were boringly familiar, and his young people were grown up. He was no longer young himself; his charisma faded. As he aged, and as evangelism failed, Edwards tried to assert the disciplinary powers that he assumed had been enjoyed by Solomon Stoddard. Through the mid-1740s, Edwards' identification with his grandfather became more apparent--and more hopeless.

By the 1740s, despite the briefly spiritualizing effects of the latest revival, Northampton was a community of worldliness and contention--a perfectly normal eighteenth-century town. Amid the inexorable but almost silent social changes, we can retrieve a few illuminating symbols of the fragmentation of a once-integrated body into a mere geographical
collection of competitive individuals. Previously public resources were forever committed into private hands, the body politic was divided into active and passive segments, and the once strongly interwoven structures of church and state were separated. In the loss of a unity once imposed by hardship and ideology there came also the separation of morality, and especially piety, into an isolated corner of "everyday" life.

The most important symbolic change in Northampton was the end of common fields. The last mention of common tillage was in 1743, when the fence around those fields was apportioned for the last time.1 Later that year a compromise was finally reached over the traditional rights of the town to cut wood on land that had been allocated to individuals but not yet improved. Dispute over these rights had simmered since 1715, when previous land-divisions were confirmed without mention of public rights to wood. Jonathan Edwards described this controversy as "above any other particular thing, a source of mutual prejudices, jealousies, and debates, for fifteen or sixteen years past."2 The problem was not trivial, for these uncleared lands were the only source of firewood within a ten-mile radius. The compromise of 1743 allowed the inhabitants of Northampton to cut wood on a certain strip of Proprietors' lands for ten years; after another bitter fight, the agreement was extended for ten more years in 1754.3 After that, private ownership was absolute, and competition was not hindered by remnants of communalism.

Almost equally "private" was the control of local political offices in this era. The growth of town population was not mirrored by any widening of the pool of office-holders, and the powerful posts of
selectman and General Court representative were still held almost exclusively by the same families who had controlled the town since the late seventeenth century. At about generational intervals, in the 1660s, 1690s, and 1730s, the number of newcomers to the list of officers reached peaks (see Appendix III); but the men serving in the 1740s were "old-timers." And most men who held important office were heirs of other leaders. Between 1740 and 1749, seven out of nine first-term selectmen were sons of selectmen, and the fathers of these seven had served an average of more than nine terms each. The respectability that led to election was clearly more easily inherited than earned by an individual. A growing elitism was also reflected in the number of selectman's terms, out of the total served, held by men with military or courtesy titles (Deacon, Doctor, or Mister): eighty-four percent of the terms in 1740-1749 were held by titled gentlemen, almost twice as many as had been taken by such men in 1700-1709. There were more of these men in town than there had been earlier, of course, but there were even more citizens without any mark of special status. Although no man in Northampton except Colonel John Stoddard made government service at any level his sole career, by mid-century there were a dozen men who were called on constantly for service, "professional" politicians in a limited sense. Their sons were also assured of careful consideration for office when other young men were ignored.

Jonathan Edwards gave sermons on explicitly political themes in 1730 and 1748 that indicated approval of the hierarchical aspects of this process of political evolution and condemnation of the "democratic" side of the scramble for office. He had frequently inveighed against the
contention that distinguished Northampton public affairs—the contention that earns the name "politics" for town government when "consensus" has clearly faded with the communitarian visions of the founders. He often pointed out that Northampton could "manage scarcely any public business without dividing into parties." He felt that a political system that was deferential was a great improvement, but his basis for approval was the old-fashioned ideal of a stable, unified community with "natural" leaders, rather than the faction-oriented politics of the mid-eighteenth century. In an early 1730s sermon on the current "unsettled" state of public affairs as a sign of sinfulness, Edwards asserted, "'Tis no part of publick prudence to be often changing the persons in whose hands is the administration of government and 'tis a calamity to have them often changed. . . . The long continuance of the same persons in power if they are fit for their places tends most to the strength and stability of a community." Some men were natural leaders, and their right to govern transcended the petty squabbling of ordinary politics.

Such a man was Edwards' uncle, Colonel John Stoddard, who died in 1748. His nephew's memorial sermon was explicit in removing any stain of mere "partisan" self-seeking from this man who had led the "court" party in Northampton. Stoddard was distinguished by "a genius for government. . . . improved by study, learning, observation and experience. . . . largeness of heart, and a greatness and nobleness of disposition. . . . [and] honorable descent." A "man of estate," he had been "long in authority, so that it is become as it were natural for the people to pay him deference." Rulers like Stoddard restrained ordinary people from their natural inclination to "make a prey of one another" and indulge in
"intestine discord, mutual injustice and violence." (Note Edwards' distinction between "government"--by those commanding "natural" deference--and "intestine discord," or ordinary politics.) In all of the virtues fitting a man to rule, John Stoddard left no "superior in these respects, in these parts of the world." (This was a bold statement, for seated among Edwards' audience were at least two contenders for Stoddard's role as leading squire of the upper Connecticut Valley.) Most clearly marking Stoddard off from his competitors for rank was his piety and his connection to men whose vocation was moral government. He had been frequently consulted on religious questions by his nephew Edwards, who found him to be "a wise casuist. . . . I scarce knew the Divine that I ever found more able to help and enlighten the mind in such cases than he." (There were also a number of local clergymen in attendance on this occasion.) Stoddard had been unfailingly accurate in doctrine and "intimately and feelingly acquainted" with "experimental religion" and "vital piety." Such a paragon was not to be met with again in Northampton, and Edwards was left sadly alone in defense of religious truth when his powerful uncle went to his eternal reward.

The dual role of exceptional civil leader and patron of religious orthodoxy, reminiscent of John Winthrop, was claimed by few men in the mid-eighteenth century. Governors and divines still respected each other in New England, but their areas of power and strategies of dominance had been growing apart for at least half a century. On the local level, at least or perhaps especially in Northampton, the harmony of civil and religious rule was maintained into the eighteenth century by an overlap of personnel. John Stoddard--son of one minister and uncle and patron of
the other--was the most visible figure, but there had been others of dual influence in the community. The three Elders of the Northampton church, the last of whom died on the same day as did Solomon Stoddard, were important men in the secular life of the town: the first and third in order of service, father and son, held a monopoly on the tanning trade in Northampton, and the man who served between them was a commander of the local troops during the Indian wars around the turn of the century. The Deacons tended to be wealthy farmers and tradesmen, although by 1740 they clustered more in the second quartile of taxpayers than at the top of the list. As the community matured these church officers were much less likely to participate formally in secular town government. Between 1670 and 1699, for example, Elders and Deacons served over thirty-seven percent of all the selectman terms possible in Northampton; the corresponding figure for 1700-1729 was just under twenty-seven percent, and for 1730-1754 it was only ten percent. Two of the three Deacons chosen in 1739 were the first church officers who never served as selectmen. This withdrawal of the Deacons, or the unwillingness of the town to elect them, was a significant indication of the secularization of the community. Solomon Stoddard had enjoyed a full complement of such formal and informal assistants in his fight to mold the community along the lines of a truly Christian enterprise, but Stoddard's grandson saw the rapid decline of this institution of Christian magistracy or magistral theocracy.

On the other hand, the secular community intruded itself into the church in the 1740s in a way that would have been unthinkable in Stoddard's day. In June 1740 the church chose a fifteen-member committee to "assist" the pastor in judging "causes and matters of difficulty,"
although Edwards never recorded a request for help. The group included the five current Deacons, Colonel Stoddard, six men with militia rank of lieutenant or above, a doctor, and one untitled man (who was, however, the son of Northampton's last Elder). No record of this committee's work has survived, and there is no mention of a renewal of their appointment until 1748, but the precedent for lay government in the church had been set firmly. Solomon Stoddard, who preached so bitterly against the arrogance of the brethren, would never have allowed this infringement of his own prerogatives. His grandson, who preached just as bitterly but in more guarded language about the pride of laymen and their interference in the church, seems to have had no choice but to accept this committee, at least for a year. But the "assistants" elected by the town did not much ease the burdens on Edwards. As he continued to fight sin, apathy, and pride, he fought alone.

No one in Northampton had any right to expect that the Reverend Mr. Edwards would bow to the inevitable forces of secularization. While he was fighting the emotional excesses of the awakening on both local and theoretical levels, he gave some attention to a practical step towards moral reform. In March 1742, as the incendiary effects of Buell's preaching were beginning to wear off, Edwards persuaded the congregation to renew ceremonially their covenant with God. Carefully drafted by the pastor, the covenant was so completely oriented toward external morality that the most dedicated Arminian could not have scrupled to sign; Edwards was obviously fighting unethical behavior as well as emotional extremism in that troublesome year. The first nine paragraphs of the new covenant were promises to deal honestly with one's neighbor in
financial matters and public affairs and not to seek private gain or revenge. The next two promises were for the young people, who were to vow that their behavior in company would always be consistent with "the devoutest and most engaged spirit in religion." The last specific vow was to perform family duties by "Christian rules." The covenant closed with a supplication to God to assist the brethren "solemnly to devote our whole lives to be laboriously spent in the business of religion." Whatever good this covenant might have done temporarily— and even the sketchy outlines of Edwards' 1740s sermons show that he still had many sins to catalogue—the people of Northampton were never again to be as concerned with the "business of religion" as they had been in 1734-1735 and 1741-1742. They turned away from their pastor's message, and he knew that winning the small battles was not equal to winning the war.

From about the time of the covenant-renewal in 1742 there is some speculative evidence that Jonathan Edwards was rapidly losing the confidence of the community that he served and that he was aware of that loss. Suggesting the psychological atmosphere in the parsonage in that period, Sarah Edwards' narrative of her conversion keeps repeating that she worried about "the esteem and just treatment of the people of this town." She dreamed of "being driven from my home into the cold and snow, of being chased from the town with the utmost contempt and malice." She imagined being "surrounded by enemies, who were venting their malice and cruelty upon me, in tormenting me." She worried that "if our house and all our property in it should be burnt up, and we should that night be turned out naked; whether I could cheerfully resign
all to God." Edwards published his wife's narrative to illustrate Christian triumph over temporal hardship, but Sarah's fears were strangely persistent. Jonathan's account of his own conversion, written about the same time as Sarah's, may reveal parallel tension. He confessed that he was "greatly afflicted with a proud and selfrighteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see the serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, everywhere, all around me." He was unlikely to be sinfully proud with his small children, or his saintly wife; the objects of his self-assertion must have been his neighbors, his congregation. Now that he was converted, was he less charitable in judging the souls in his care, less patient with the people of Northampton?

About the same time that he published Sarah's dreams of freezing and burning and enduring the "contempt" of the town, Jonathan Edwards publicly identified himself with Christ the martyr. In an ordination sermon in June 1743, Edwards dwelt on the doctrine that ministers must suffer—even as Christ did, if necessary—to bring the Gospel to the pharisees. This sermon is one of the most revealing documents in Edwards' pastoral career, not only because it was given in the period between the second revival and the first serious outbreak of hostilities between Edwards and his church, but especially because it was given at the installation of Jonathan Judd, the first minister in Southampton, a village recently established on the edge of Northampton itself by men who were Edwards' own converted "young people" in 1734-1735. Therefore, what he said at Judd's ordination was sure to be communicated to his own flock, and his immediate audience were his former disciples who had turned their backs on him to pursue greater worldly advantages. As a commentary on Edwards'
influence that he could not have ignored, the Southampton settlers had passed over the many young New Light clergymen whom Edwards had befriended (Samuel Buell, for example) and hired a minister who was at best neutral about the past revivals. Edwards recorded no dislike of Judd, but he warned that "those people are like to sink the deepest into hell hereafter, that go to hell from under the care of the most faithful ministers." In a fashion uncharacteristic of the ordination sermons he frequently preached, moreover, Edwards spent most of his time not on Scriptural prefigurations of the minister's role, but on practical matters of immediate local import.

To get the benefit of a man's ministry, Edwards told the new church at Southampton, they must support it well. "Christ would not have ministers' time and thoughts taken up about providing temporal good things for their own support, but would have them wholly provided for by their people." God would punish even men who gave reluctantly. "And here let me warn you in particular, that you don't only do well by your minister for a while at first, while the relation between you and him is a new thing, and then afterwards, when your minister's necessities are increased, begin to fail, as it too frequently happens." (It was happening, some in the audience knew, even in the first parish of Northampton.) Edwards admitted that some men might say that ministers "love to harp upon this string," because it is to their worldly benefit. "I have not been much in insisting on this duty in my own pulpit, where it would especially concern my temporal interest; and blessed be God that I have had no more occasion." (A month later, if not earlier, Edwards did preach in an uncompromising tone about the necessity of tithes.)
whatever any may judge of the secrets of my heart," he continued, "it is enough for you to whom I have spoke it, that I have demonstrated that what I have delivered is the mind of God." And money was not the only cross that ministers had to bear: equally "wounding" to pastor and flock were "contention" about "temporal affairs" and "quarreling with your minister in matters of church discipline."25 He also alluded to the presence of "anti-ministerial men" among even the "professors, in some of our towns": "it seems to be as it were natural to 'em to be unfriendly and unkind towards their own ministers, and to make difficulty for them."26

The existence of a number of "anti-ministerial men" in a town, therefore, would be good evidence that it was not truly pious and moral, however many emotional revivals it had experienced. And such was the case in Northampton. It took some years before Edwards' persistent challenges forced these reprobates to declare themselves openly, but Edwards knew they were lying in wait, and between 1743 and 1749 he provoked a number of incidents to bring their hypocrisy into open light. Even the full members of Edwards' own church were tried and found wanting in that ultimate requirement of "Christian practice." As he had done at Judd's ordination, Edwards preached "the mind of God" at Northampton; but his flock refused to identify their pastor's voice with the will of their heavenly Father.

The first and clearest manifestation of the Northampton congregation's unwillingness to give its pastor what he regarded as proper homage was in the matter of salary, that traditional battle-ground between
ministers and laymen in eighteenth-century New England. To be sure, Edwards was well paid: in 1749 he even bragged that he was the highest-paid minister in New England outside the city of Boston. His salary started in 1726 at £100 per year, and from 1730 through 1738 he was given that much again as an extra gift each year. Increments to the total sum in 1739 and 1742, however, did not quite keep up with the depreciation of Massachusetts currency from inflation. By 1748 Edwards was being paid £700 per year and was ahead of the inflation rate. That year, too, he was given an extra £170 "to support his family and buy books." But the amounts themselves were not the real problem.

As early as 1734, Edwards had trouble collecting his salary and complained to the town that he had "been put to considerable inconvenience already for want." A scrap of sermon notes, seven years later, preserves a draft of Edwards' response to the "uneasiness" of the town over his family's spending habits, as an introduction to an attempt to justify his various expenses. Tradition has it that the Edwards family displayed tastes for luxuries that could only be purchased in Boston, such as fancy clothes and jewelry (a bill of £11 for "a gold locket and chane" for "Mrs. Edwards" was used for sermon notes in March 1743). So parsonage expenses were carefully observed, and even the money that was voted was often paid hesitantly. Sarah Edwards had to write in March 1744 to beg for her husband's past-due salary, for "Mr. Edwards is under such obligations that he can't possibly due without it." The Edwardses would have agreed with Solomon Stoddard, who wrote in one of his most famous published sermons that a minister might find "his abilities are clouded, his spirit is sunk and low by refractory persons of his flock,
or by his low maintenance for himself and his family."34

That the problem was not the amount of salary, but the embarrassing bickering that accompanied the annual grant, is the testimony of a letter Edwards wrote in November 1744 to the first precinct (the civil unit of government for church affairs after the separate parish of Southampton was established). It was to be but the first of many requests he made for a fixed salary and is worth quoting at length because it reveals the tone Edwards took as his difficulties with the town reached a level of permanent bitterness. He used words of condescension, expressed concern for their peace and welfare, and clearly indicated that their inquiries into his family budget were impertinent.

Dear Brethren, What I have to propose to you is not from any uneasiness with my maintenance, or any fault I find with the salary you have given me from year to year; but from a desire that I have, not only of my own, but also of the town's comfort and benefit hereafter. The thing that I would propose is ... you would settle a certain salary upon me. ... I look upon it very likely that there will be no great difficulty in our agreeing upon the summ. ... you will have no further trouble or concern about it. The affair of your minister's support, and the consideration of his families circumstances, won't come over every year, to exercise your minds, & to occasion various opinions & speeches, & to be a constant temptation to persons to look into the way in which the minister spends his money; all occasion for such difficulties will be cut off, which must needs be greatly for the comfort and benefit of the publick society.

I have no aim at leading you into any trap. ... In the agreement that is now subsisting between me and the people, the people have obliged themselves, in a general clause, to make my support as shall be suitable ... ; but there is nothing in that agreement that determines what the support is, nor is it said who shall be the judge. ... It can't be expected in so large a society as this is, but that, under these circumstances, there will be some that will be unjustifiably meddling with a minister's affairs: & it may be a temptation even to rational, good sort of men, to look more into a minister's affairs, and his way of spending his money, than is convenient. ...

I hope that what I propose will not appear to any, a frightfull thing. ... But however I don't pretend to oblige you to it; but
only to request it of you. . . .

If this which I now request of you be done, I hope it may be a means of establishing an Happy Agreement & Peace between me and you, that henceforward we may walk together in Christian Harmony & love engaged with one Heart & Soul to seek & serve the Lord, all traveling the same road towards the Heavenly Canaan, without falling out by the way.

I am, dear Brethren, your affectionate Pastor, being myself, with what I have, devoted to your service, for Jesus sake.

Jonathan Edwards.  

Edwards was willing to settle for a fixed wage, which might not be adjusted to keep up with inflation, in return for an end to the embarrassing inquiries into his spending—a method of harassment which did not fool him.

Edwards' 1744 letter was never recorded in the official deliberations of the first precinct. Only a few months before, Edwards had written to a friend that his congregation were hard-pressed financially: "it is a time of the greatest scarcity of money amongst them, and they have of late been in the most unhappy frame that I have known them to be in." In December 1746, if not earlier, he again pressed for a fixed salary; after "considerable debate: the precinct voted not to give in even if they were able to find a way to correct any fixed amount for inflation. A year later Edwards again petitioned for "the reasonableness and expediency" of fixing his salary; but not until March 1748, after many more long and bitter debates, did a majority of the taxpayers agree to settle £700 Old Tenor per year on their pastor, the sum to rise or fall proportionally to the value of certain staples. Edwards would still have to negotiate these values annually, but he had won in principle.

One reason for the town's sudden acquiescence may be implied by Edwards' formal letter of acceptance of its terms. In May 1748 he agreed
to abide by the rates "so long as I continue in the work of the ministry among them"--this qualification was repeated a number of times in slightly different words. Did the town agree to give him a fixed and high salary because it saw only a short duration to this financial drain?

Edwards may have anticipated leaving Northampton as early as 1744, when he first insisted on a fixed salary. Since he knew the town was hard pressed for money, he may even have been seeking to provoke an open split. But he did not leave until six years later, after more important aspects of his pastoral relationship with the town had soured. The issues that precipitated the ultimate confrontation were Edwards' perennial concerns--discipline of young people and piety in the church--and they exposed the most fundamental problem faced by ministers and congregations in eighteenth-century New England, the unresolved ambiguities of the authority of the minister within the Congregational system.

In the 1740s there arose, as there had in the early 1730s, a problem with the young people of Northampton. Once again it seemed to Edwards that the behavior of this group was so bad as to require a concentrated attack, and once again the youngsters were symbols for the sins of the whole community. This time, however, the results were not reformation and revival but a stalemate in the relationship between pastor and flock.

Edwards continued to preach sermons to the "children" and "young people" for moral reform, as well as exhortations to their parents, with apparently little positive result. And then there arose, in the spring of 1744, the incident of the "bad books," now a notorious part of local folklore. According to testimony preserved in Edwards' notes, in early
1744 some girls reported that a group of boys had been reading a midwifery book, and about two dozen young people had been known to laugh and joke over the explicit descriptions and diagrams of the female anatomy. The book may have been filched from a local doctor or obtained from a peddler, although one witness heard it described as belonging to a man whose wife had just borne her first child. The reading and laughter were bad enough, but the boys' sin was compounded by their using the information to taunt the girls about what "nasty creatures" they were. The worst miscreant of all, Oliver Warner, not only offered to show the book to other boys for "10 shillings money" (an apprentice to Deacon Hunt, a hatter, Oliver was already learning to strike a good bargain), but ran up to girls in the street and teased them, "when will the moon change, girls, come I'll look on you and see whether there be a blue circle round your eyes."42

Oliver Warner, at least, clearly crossed the line between private sin and public lewdness, and when pastor Edwards heard what was going on, he began an inquiry. According to the tradition begun by Samuel Hopkins' biography of Edwards in 1765 and perpetuated by Sereno Dwight and others, Edwards preached against the sin, got the church to appoint an investigative committee, and then angered some of the "considerable families in town" by reading a list of accused persons and witnesses without identifying which was which. Influential parents then determined "that their children should not be called to account in such a way for such things," and "the town was suddenly all in a blaze." By this process, Hopkins concluded, Edwards "greatly lost his influence" with the young people and the town as a whole.43
Edwards' notes do not quite support the narrative given by Hopkins. First of all, the list of names that Edwards supposedly read from the pulpit contains, from top to bottom, ten boys' names, then two doctors, then nine girls and one boy. There should not have been any confusion, since all the boys named but none of the girls were accused. In addition to Deacon Pomeroy's son, only one boy was from a "leading family," and his uncle sat with the Deacon on the investigating committee. Whatever the parents' reaction, the committee met at least once; Edwards' notes show that Colonel Stoddard and at least three other leading citizens (the Deacon, a Captain, and a Lieutenant) took formal testimony from the witnesses and examined the suspects. While they deliberated, the young men accused of lewdness waited in an anteroom and there compounded their offenses by speaking disrespectfully to and of the committee, playing leapfrog, getting a ladder to peek at the girls waiting upstairs, and finally leaving the parsonage entirely to go to Joseph Lyman's tavern to drink "flip." Ultimately, at least three young men were convicted of serious crimes: cousins Simeon and Timothy Root confessed to "contemptuous behavior toward the authority of this church," and Oliver Warner was charged with "public lewdness."

Edwards' success in pushing the case to such an end not only casts doubt on Hopkins' tale of the obstructiveness of influential citizens, but it may also shed some light on the underlying problem between Edwards and the community. As he had done in 1734-1735, Edwards was dealing again with a clear failure of "family government"; and so flagrant was the lack of parental discipline that he overcame scruples about whether the offenses were public or private by asking himself, "shall the master
of a ship not enquire when he hears the ship be running on the rocks?" His analogy was inappropriate, however—he was not the captain of that crew of young men nor, would it seem, was anyone else. Their parents were strangely absent from the proceedings, never mentioned after the vote to have an inquiry. The only witnesses to the reading of bad books or the lascivious talk on the street were other young people, or so the recorded testimony indicates. In spite of their childish behavior, the offenders were not children: Warner was twenty-one, the Root cousins were each twenty-six, and the whole group of accused males had an average age of twenty-four! These were young adults who seemed to do as they pleased without much adult supervision.

Edwards gathered these young people together away from their families, in his parsonage, as he had done with his converts a decade before; but this time his tactics backfired. Instead of producing a tractable group of disciples flattered by the attention, eager to maintain their special status, Edwards' inquiry produced a rowdy group of adolescents sharing a self-conscious "us-versus-them" camaraderie. Timothy Root was quoted by two witnesses as swearing that he would not "worship a wig" and that he didn't "care a turd" or "care a fart" for the gentlemen of the committee. This hostility was directed as much at Colonel Stoddard and Captain Clapp as it was at pastor Edwards. The "boys" were ultimately convicted not of reading bad books but of lese majesté. By implication, the sins they committed at home, and the parental supervision that should have been exercised there, had come to seem less important than ever. Edwards' mistake in this case was not in trying to punish the children of "considerable families," but in pointing out to the whole community that
their young people were completely out of control, and in giving the young men of Northampton a chance to proclaim publicly their lack of respect for traditional authority.

Even more significantly, Edwards advertised in 1744 that he had lost the allegiance of the constituents who had always been most important to him. All but three of the accused young men were church members; they were the product of Edwards' revivals, and their current behavior showed how bankrupt were his hopes for a permanent reformation of the community through grace. The Gospel as taught by Edwards no longer had much appeal to these young people. If Edwards' preaching had ever implied any promise of worldly betterment, or escape from social problems, that promise had not been fulfilled. For the young men who scorned the authoritarianism of ministers and squires, life was full of uncertainties that over-used rhetoric could not make easier. The culprits of 1744 were acting like boys, and they were in a kind of limbo of protracted adolescence between the security of being a child and the satisfactions of being an adult. They were not married and they owned no property, but most of them were on the verge of making those critical choices of mate, occupation, and residence that would control the rest of their lives. The lack of parental supervision that they showed in their "crimes" may indicate strained relations with their families. It is not possible to confirm Hopkins' account of parental disapproval of Edwards' attempt to discipline these "children," but such protectiveness would be plausible in a community of smaller families and family pews, and would not be incompatible with greater dependence and anti-authoritarian feelings among the young people. The very difficulties of transferring
traditional customs to the rising generation may have produced both intensity of concern in the parents and resistance in the children. The youngsters had turned once from their parents to the minister as a friend and guide, but when his message failed them, they in turn failed him. Edwards was able to get three confessions of wrongdoing, but his harsh authoritarianism forfeited the last vestige of trust and reliance that existed between him and the "boys" he had converted. It was no wonder that he wrote treatises about how untrustworthy were the ephemeral manifestations of pious zeal. In 1746 he gave a quarterly lecture to the "young people" with the text, "I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me."

If the Hopkins story about an aborted campaign of discipline has any truth in it at all, it is surprising that after the "bad books" episode, Edwards grew even bolder in his attacks on the kind of sin that laymen wanted to handle privately. Or was it desperation to assert his own authority that made him create another "case" of discipline? Like the earlier incident, this second episode is not recorded officially; only private records remain. It started in 1747, when unmarried Martha Root claimed that her illegitimate child was sired by a dashing young military officer. The "father" was wealthy Lieutenant Elisha Hawley, a grandson of Solomon Stoddard and the younger son of the Joseph Hawley who had cut his throat in religious despair in 1735. By mid-1748 the Hawley and Root families had settled the matter privately: Martha received a large sum of money and in return gave up all future claim to support for herself or the child by Elisha. But soon thereafter, Jonathan Edwards interfered. In December 1748 Elisha Hawley, on duty at Fort Massachusetts in the
Berkshires, received a letter from his brother, Joseph Hawley III, who was just beginning to practice law in Northampton. This letter contained the news that the church (i.e., Edwards) was trying to force Elisha to marry Martha but probably would not succeed because Scriptural precedent depended on her proving "absolute virginity" and enticement by Hawley—and because she and her parents did not want the marriage anyway! An undated fragment of notes in Edwards' hand reveals that his reading of Scripture taught that a payment of money in lieu of marriage did not end the moral obligation. The main concern, Edwards wrote, was not just repairing the "outward injury" but also preserving "the order, decency and health of human society in general." He was prepared to claim, in essence, that civilization itself depended on Elisha Hawley's being forced to marry Martha Root, even if against her will.

In preparation for a church hearing, Edwards made further notes in which he outlined the legal issues: each principal would have to prove the other was lascivious and had used force. Elisha could only defend himself, therefore, by proving that he had been seduced. Despite the lack of church records, we must assume that the hearing vindicated Hawley, for the next document surviving is the record of a ministerial council that Edwards called in June 1749 "to hear a matter of grievance between ye Church and Lt. Elisha Hawley." Edwards hoped for support from his professional brethren, but he was disappointed. The ministers of Hampshire voted that it was not Elisha's "duty" to marry Martha, and they remanded the decision to his own conscience. They also advised that he be received back into the church if he confessed to fornication. No record exists of such a confession, and the only inclusion of Hawley in
records is his original but undated admission. He did not marry the mother of his bastard. His conscience, supported by his brother Joseph's skills as a lawyer, was clearly in conflict with the opinion of the pastor who had tutored and converted both Hawley boys. From Edwards' perspective the two were traitors. They had been "disciples" of a sort, and they were his own cousins; but they were not ashamed to display just how limited, by the late 1740s, was the pastor's authority. If Edwards could not even count on the morality and the deference of his own converts, there was little hope that he would ever regain spiritual control of the whole community.

Jonathan Edwards kept pushing in the 1740s towards confrontations with his congregation that he had no chance to win. What brought about this insensitivity in a man who had once so completely captured the spirits of the young people in his flock? What was different in 1744 from 1734? One can only speculate. For one thing, Edwards himself had resolved most of the doubts that had remained in the early 1730s about the nature of true faith and conversion; and from so long a period of observing others as well as his own experiences he had formulated a measurement of genuine faith that he could apply to the souls in his charge. Moreover, the young men and women who had been converted in the first large revival in Northampton or thereafter had obviously not been truly converted into a life of consistent "Christian practice" and were undoubtedly deserving of discipline. Given a continuum of problems, Edwards' internal changes may have been very important in dictating the variation in pastoral tactics that he displayed in Northampton.
But the source of his response to these challenges was much more complicated. The second season of awakening in Northampton had renewed Edwards' professional insecurity, and although Northampton itself was not touched by schism, the many contentions and separations in the upper Connecticut Valley had taught Edwards the desirability of keeping a firm hand on his congregation. Furthermore, it was just before this period that Edwards' father's battles with his congregation in East Windsor had come to a climax, a defeat for the pastor. In the mid-1720s Timothy Edwards had sided with a wealthy member of his flock who tried (in vain) to have his daughter's marriage to an "unsuitable" man annulled; when the young woman deserted her husband a decade later because he could not support her, pastor Edwards tried (again in vain) to shield her from a church censure. In the late 1730s Timothy Edwards also took an active role in another parentally disapproved marriage by denying baptism to the child of the couple unless the young father, Joseph Diggens, would confess that he had committed "scandalous sin" by marrying his wife against her father's will. Diggens refused, all but two church members sided with him, and the battle was joined. Timothy Edwards demanded an absolute veto in church discipline and church admissions. He was then formally charged with maladministration by Diggens. In consequence, Edwards suspended the Lord's Supper in his church for almost three years. The real problem was, of course, the imprecision of ministerial authority in the Congregational system. Even after three ministerial councils considered the question, stalemate continued. Diggens finally gave up. The best primary source on the whole affair ends in 1741 with the confrontation still going on, but Edwards clearly never won the powers he
claimed. East Windsor's historian did find some evidence that superficial peace returned with the Great Awakening.  

Timothy and Jonathan Edwards were clearly preoccupied with the same issues—young people and their sexual sins, the failed control of parents, and the need for the pastor to have a decisive vote in matters of church discipline as the ultimate control on community behavior—and their pastoral stance was similar even though Jonathan was never forced to the extreme positions that his father took so eagerly. If Jonathan was ever tempted to accept the worldliness and sin of his own congregation, here was an example of a minister who fought valiantly for right principles.

From the experience of the two Edwardses, it appears that revivals were the best opportunity to harmonize the demands of a pastor with the needs of his congregation. It was perhaps the emotional satisfactions offered by publicly praised conversions that made moral obedience easier in times of awakening, and minister and flock engaged in a common endeavor that obscured the underlying problems between them. Unfortunately, revivals were not events that could be created at will. But ministers who had seen the multi-faceted betterment of their communities brought by an awakening were bound to strive to recreate that experience.

Jonathan Edwards was such a pastor. The revival of 1735 grew more successful as his memories aged, and the 1741 awakening had had many positive elements mixed in with the newly apparent dangers. The revivals, however, would not come again to Northampton. The now-familiar doctrines of justification by faith alone no longer packed any emotional punch. By the late 1740s Edwards seemed to be left without means to turn
his people's attention towards God again. He had tried inspiring them to piety, and he had tried bald discipline; both had failed. But now, just as he seemed to be losing the war against sin and losing the allegiance of his "young people," Edwards was able to draw on his newly refined understanding of true holiness to buttress his waning authority in the church. The logic of his theology dictated that if conversion were real, sensible, and demonstrable—and he had proved that it was in Religious Affections and other works—then there was no need to maintain Solomon Stoddard's humble refusal to draw lines between sheep and goats because it was too hard to be accurate. His pastoral logic suggested that if the church privileges were not open to all men on demand, if full membership and especially the right to have one's children baptized were reserved for those who had been converted and would testify to being so, these privileges would be more eagerly sought. Restricted sacraments had the beautiful advantage of combining an emphasis on genuine piety with an effective tool of moral discipline.

In February 1749 Jonathan Edwards officially announced to the church committee, fifteen of Northampton's leading citizens, what had been rumored for some time—that he had decided that his long continuance of Stoddard's "open" communion was wrong. He could not in good conscience admit any more members to the church who would not make a profession of the "essentials" of Christian faith, essentials which included evidence of an "experiential" work of grace as well as sound doctrinal knowledge. Sixteen months later the Northampton congregation would formally and completely reject Jonathan Edwards—his doctrine, his discipline, and his twenty-three years of struggle to make them see the light.
CHAPTER VIII
THE FAILURE OF THE NORTHAMPTON PASTORATE, 1749-1750

According to the journal that Jonathan Edwards kept during the "communion controversy" with his church, he had had "difficulties" for some years before 1749 in accepting the lax method of admission to full communion in the Northampton church. When he wrote his treatise on the subject, An Humble Inquiry into the Rules of the Word of God Concerning the Qualifications Requisite to a Complete Standing and Full Communion in the Visible Christian Church, he confessed that it pained him to go against the principles and practice of his revered grandfather, Solomon Stoddard.

I have formerly been of his opinion, which I inbibed from his books, even from my childhood, and have in my proceedings conformed to his practice . . . deference to the authority of so venerable a man, the seeming strength of some of his arguments, together with the success he had in his ministry, and his great reputation and influence, prevailed for a long time to bear down my scruples . . . It is far from a pleasing circumstance of this publication, that it is against what my honored grandfather strenuously maintained, both from the pulpit and press. I can truly say, on account of this and some other considerations, it is what I engage in with the greatest reluctance, that ever I undertook any public service in my life.

But Edwards had found that the "open" communion that had evolved from Stoddard's principles had to be an error, for it produced a church that seemed impervious to the truths of Gospel doctrine. Men and women who had been recognized as "visible saints" in Northampton still wallowed in clandestine immorality and flagrant pride. The apparent conversions during the revivals of 1734-1735 and 1741-1742 were commonly proving to be frauds. Fifteen years earlier, when Edwards wrote his Faithful
Narrative, he had attributed good order and true piety to the inhabitants of Northampton under his grandfather's dominion; he never publicly revised that opinion of the past, but Stoddard's church practices were obviously inappropriate for the people with whom Edwards had to deal in the late 1740s.

Edwards therefore resolved about 1744 not to admit any applicant to full membership in the church unless that person would make a profession of true Godliness by reporting an experience of saving grace as well as sound doctrinal knowledge. He told "some" people of his change of heart and strongly hinted at his new principles in the Religious Affections, but public controversy was avoided because no new applicants for membership appeared until December 1748. When a man sought admission that winter, he was given a number of sample professions to consider and was informed that Mr. Edwards would not quibble over specific words. Able in conscience to profess a true faith, the man nevertheless declined to do so because it was not necessary by the rules of admission in the Northampton church. Once this gauntlet had been thrown down, Edwards had no choice but to make a formal announcement to the church committee that he had altered his principles regarding qualifications for the sacraments. In February 1749 he asked permission to explain his ideas from the pulpit --not because the committee had a right to say no, but because he wanted to forestall dissension. His request was denied. He then began to prepare a treatise, the Humble Inquiry, which was finished that spring but did not appear in print until August 1749.

In this work Edwards denied any interest in problematic but peripheral issues such as the degree of membership of baptized infants or the
precise definition of conversion. He wanted to focus on finding a proper
definition for the "visible sainthood" that was the usual criterion for
church membership in New England. He assumed, as almost all Christians
did, that such a person would have to be an adult and not a flagrant sinner. The real question could be phrased in two ways: was "visibility"
something different from what was genuine; or, could a person rightfully
profess a faith that he did not hold through the experience of conver-
sion? Edwards answered from Scripture that there were not two kinds of
saints, just converted persons and sinners liable to damnation; visibility was only the temporal manifestation of the condition of being saved.
Furthermore, a man could not profess a faith that was not living in his
heart, for the essence of Christianity was piety and not just obedience
to the Law. The sacraments were "seals" of the covenant made between God
and man at the moment of conversion.

Edwards took great pains to point out the inconsistencies of Stoddard's claim that the Lord's Supper was a converting ordinance: if
unconverted men can be admitted with hopes of being then converted,
Edwards argued, why strive at all to distinguish those who have had grace
at work in their hearts? This whole argument was really an attack on a
straw man: Stoddard would have answered that men need to search for
grace in themselves, and only those who have some hope of salvation
(which is all mortal man, not reading God's mind, can have) should come
to the Lord's Supper. Edwards was taking essentially the same position
when he described reliable signs of grace in the Religious Affections but
also warned men not to presume to judge each other's hearts. Although he
chose to use the vocabulary of theological debate, the ground on which
Edwards really fought Stoddard was the practical side of pastoral responsibilities. Stoddard had been willing to let all well-behaved men come to the Table, if they chose to do so, and thereby to surrender the useful disciplinary tool of identifying more particularly the truly "gracious"; he had found more informal means of enforcing his will, and God's moral Law, on the town of Northampton. But Jonathan Edwards had tried for twenty years to make Stoddard's methods "work" for him, and he had failed. He could marshall endless Scriptural evidence for the necessity to distinguish between spiritual sheep and goats in this world. Only those who had been converted in heart, he wrote, could profess a true faith. Only those who so professed should be admitted to full church membership, which included the privileges of the Lord's Supper and baptism for their children.

Edwards was throwing out the Half-Way Covenant, which almost all of the churches in New England used: under this system, adults who had been baptized but not converted could have their own children baptized. Many churches in western Massachusetts and Connecticut were "Stoddardean" and even more generous: persons baptized even in their adult years (because their parents had neglected their responsibilities) could then have their offspring baptized and could also attend the Lord's Supper and vote in all church affairs. In the Humble Inquiry Edwards spent most of his words on the general question of defining proper church "members," and only in passing, in an answer to a hypothetical objection that the larger part of the world would then be ignored by the church, did he speak precisely about the consequences of his new definition of "visible sainthood." But he was well aware that the clause about baptism was the part
of his new system that would be most objectionable. He admitted to a sympathetic colleague, "I am not sure but that my people, in length of time, and with great difficulty, might be brought to yield the point as to the qualifications for the Lord's Supper (tho' that is very uncertain); but with respect to the other sacraments there is scarce any hope of it. And this will be very likely to overthrow me, not only with regard to my usefulness in the work of the ministry here, but everywhere. . . ."6 Nevertheless, he would not give in on any part of his new scheme.

The Humbler Inquiry was very explicit about the pragmatic uses of a restriction on church membership.7 Three main benefits were predicted. One was the usefulness of officially recognized saints as models for the unconverted; Edwards had often observed community jealousy at work, and well-publicized conversions were the "chief means" to convert others. Moreover, thorough examination of the supposed saint's conversion would also inhibit the self-advertisement in private conversation that had grown common under the "open" admission system; Edwards' "late experience" had shown this self-selection to be of great "mischief" in fostering spiritual pride and keeping the communicant unresponsive to "skilful guides" who could keep him from mistaking mere imagination for true experience of grace. (But had Edwards not been adamant in Religious Affections that no man could see into another's heart?) The third and most important benefit of all to be derived from restrictions on membership would be the necessity for adults to be converted in order to have their children baptized. The parental responsibility of "instructing, praying for, and governing their children, and setting them good examples" could no longer be ignored; and people could no longer be
complacent about their own state without the risk of sending their small children straight to hell if they died.

Edwards was gambling on his understanding of two aspects of community psychology. He was assuming that church membership could be made into a component of secular status, and that his people would be jealous of those who were "certified" saints and therefore would strive to join the select group. He turned out to be wrong: in a community where status distinctions were becoming stronger all the time but were resolving themselves into a pattern of wealth and occupations that was at least clear and understandable, the introduction of a new element of status that was independent of all the others would intolerably and unnecessarily complicate the process of mutual ranking. Edwards was also assuming that parents so loved their children that they would manage to convert themselves in order to have their offspring included in the covenant under the seals. But what if they loved them so much, and worried about them so much, that the introduction of another responsibility in which parents might fail their young people was too unpleasant to tolerate?

What Edwards was essentially trying to do, it would seem, was to start another revival. In the early 1730s he had preached doctrines of the narrowness of the gate to heaven that were far harsher than anything his congregation had ever heard. The more he seemed to condemn his people to perdition, while still encouraging them to strive against the odds, the greater grew his list of converts. By now, of course, he knew that most of those conversions had not been genuine. But if he could arouse the community to the same concern for piety again, with his greater experience with both revivals and converts, he could channel the
energy of their emotions into true graciousness. Even though he seemed to be losing his former disciples, the "young people" of 1734-1735, to the Devil, perhaps he could draw them back by arousing their concern for the children they had recently brought into the world. Exclusive sacraments would help to bind their piety to morality, for the communicant would be so conspicuous that he would have to maintain "visible saint-hood." All the parts of this new plan of church organization fit together so smoothly.

What was missing in Edwards' proposals, nevertheless, was an answer to the obvious and most critical question--who would judge? The major obstacle to community acceptance of the new rules was the strong suspicion that Mr. Edwards himself was going to be the judge of their spiritual experiences. He wrote only about self-judgment, but then what was the basis for his claims of differing from Stoddard? When a prospective church member made his profession, who would point out brazen hypocrisy?

Unfortunately, the statements made by the town in answer to Edwards' proposals and in the town's charges against him before the two advisory councils have not survived, so it is impossible to produce any explicit testimony of popular aversion to this ambiguity in Edwards' plan. But both of the ministers whom the town asked to prepare a theological answer to Edwards indicated that the strongest objection to Edwards' scheme was the implication that a person could make an absolutely certain judgment about another's spiritual condition and that the chief judge would be the minister. The "official" answer to Edwards' Humble Inquiry was published in 1751 by the Reverend Solomon Williams of Lebanon, Connecticut, son of the late Reverend William Williams of Hatfield and member of the Williams
clan that was conspicuous in ministerial politics in the Connecticut Valley. Williams wrote that he assumed from Edwards' argument that the Northampton pastor would insist on judging men's "experiences" in order to decide on admission, and Williams meant "experiences" in the sense of the emotions and processes of the conversion moment itself, as the word had come to be used with great significance during the Awakening. The Reverend Peter Clark of Salem Village, Massachusetts, the other minister to whom the town sent a messenger pleading for an anti-Edwards treatise, had a similar impression. Actually, Clark had not yet read Edwards' book when he wrote to Deacon Ebenezer Pomeroy, the manager of the anti-Edwards crusade in Northampton, that Edwards' plan for exclusive sacraments depended on the possibility of his being a final judge of "sainthood"--and Clark knew that such a clerical prerogative would not be allowed in most Congregational churches. And so it is very clear that the hearsay testimony about Edwards' plan, undoubtedly spread by Northampton residents to their friends and allies, was that Mr. Edwards was going to judge souls--exactly the role that Solomon Stoddard had given up so dramatically, and one which few ministers would dare to assume.

Both Williams and Clark, however, were technically wrong. In the Humble Inquiry and in his letters to his opponents, Edwards explicitly denied any special skill in judging hearts. He would rely, he said, on the person's own profession of faith as the criterion for membership. He was, of course, begging the fundamental question of distinguishing sincerity from hypocrisy. In Misrepresentations Corrected, his public answer to Williams, Edwards insisted he would not demand "certainty" in judging a "visible saint" and that the "experience" he intended to
examine was simply the quality of living faith in an applicant—not just intellectual understanding of classic doctrine. Edwards wrote to Peter Clark and disclaimed any unusual powers of judging souls and any ambition to have a totally pure church. In essence, he was forced to defend himself against charges of being a Separatist.

The fact that Edwards' stance in the proposals for a new organization of the church was not as authoritarian as others believed was much less important than the town's readiness to believe the worst. The community which once had followed Edwards in two revivals had come to doubt his motives completely. According to Edwards, few people even read his book when it appeared in August 1749. Williams' rebuttal was not fuel for local hostility to Edwards, since it did not appear until mid-1751. The anger against Edwards had little to do with theology. It was based on hearsay and on the expectation that whatever he wrote or preached, he would take an unacceptably authoritarian stance in the church if he could. And it is possible that their suspicions were actually based on firmer ground than their memory of Edwards' assertiveness about salary and discipline in the previous five years.

In his statement before the ministerial council that met in December 1749 to advise the town what to do, Edwards admitted that he wanted a "veto" over church membership—a claim he did not mention in any other known statement of his plan or principles and that he had actually consistently denied. In this demand Edwards perfectly illustrated the reasons why he was not trusted—having announced his principles in the Religious Affections, as he thought, he merely worked out the "administrative" details in a cavalier fashion as he went along. He discussed
restrictions on baptism and ministerial vetoes as though they were easily-assumed corollaries of his revival doctrines. But to his church they were revolutionary, unnecessary, and completely unacceptable. To the council of 1749 Edwards announced that it was not he but the church itself that had defected from the Stoddardean principles to which they pretended to cling so zealously. As he recorded his statement in his journal, it read in part:

I had as much reason given me by the church in my settlement, to depend upon it, that they would allow me the same power in church government, which I yielded to Mr. Stoddard; as they had to depend on it, that I would allow them the same open door to the Lord’s Table. The church allowed Mr. Stoddard a negative; and never, so far as I have heard of, disputed it, at least never in the then existing generation. Now they greatly find fault with me for claiming it, and have departed to the length of Brownism.14

If Stoddard had had a veto—and that is entirely believable, although Edwards' is the only direct testimony to the fact—it was surely moral behavior that he would have claimed to judge. Jonathan Edwards, Northampton believed, would be a judge of hearts. And that is why there was no possibility of reconciliation once Edwards had announced his change of mind about the sacraments.

In the six months that followed Edwards' announcement, "several persons" asked to be admitted to the church and even agreed to make a profession, but they were forbidden to do so by the church committee. And until the council of neighboring ministers recommended otherwise in December 1749, Edwards was even denied the right to lecture on the subject of contention. The pastor and his church argued every step of the way—
about his preaching, about whether to call a council to advise if he should preach, about who should be members of that council, about the precinct's assuming management of the affair (the precinct was the civil body of all voters, and Edwards insisted that this was a church matter, although the church/town distinction had lost its meaning with Northampton's hitherto "open" communion), and about the proper time to invite a council to decide the final outcome of the controversy. A vocal group within the town opposed calling even the preliminary council, for fear it would recommend admitting the voluntary professors or that it would require that Edwards be given a fair hearing. One of the subsidiary issues became whether the church would be subject to a council. The Northampton church had been one of the founders of the advisory Hampshire Association, and the Stoddard it revered had been an outright Presbyterian in ecclesiology, but in these circumstances (and worrying that other clergymen might back Edwards) the church fought to defend "Congregational" principles.15

Edwards sought to maintain a logical position even on these procedural questions, and in many letters to various committess he pointed out in great detail the inconsistencies of his opponents.16 Logic was, after all, his strong point. But regardless of logic or properly deferential methods, the town was determined to get rid of Edwards, and by late 1749 they were charging him with causing too much trouble and delay. Everyone involved knew he would have to leave. In April of 1749 he had offered to resign if the church so wished, but only after they had read his forthcoming book and if a council "mutually chosen" by the parties should so advise and should outline proper steps.17 The next month,
Edwards confessed to a friend his despair over achieving a favorable settlement: "I know not but this affair will issue in a separation between me and my people." In December he told the council that he had not intended to cause a great furor in the town, but that he had simply followed his conscience and been candid with his flock—"with the fullest expectation of being driven from my ministerial office, and stripped of a maintenance for my numerous family." Whether or not Sarah was still dreaming of being turned out into the snow to freeze, her husband was determined not to be dismissed by the town like some sort of lackey. He would go, if he must, with due ceremony. And he still had his most potent weapon, oratory.

But when Jonathan Edwards finally preached a series of lectures about his principles in February and March 1750, very few of his own congregation even attended. Among those who did attend were a large number of strangers, including on one occasion the justices of the county court then sitting at Northampton. One of the March sermons expounded the doctrine that a minister who obeys his own conscience but differs from his church is not breaking his bond with them but rather is fulfilling his responsibility to show them the light. This was not a persuasive argument in Northampton. The previous November a majority of the church members had voted their refusal to abide by Edwards' new doctrines, and there is a tradition that only nineteen persons out of hundreds voted for the minister.

Edwards was convinced that almost all of the Valley ministers would side against him on the substance of the controversy; and he later wrote that because the town was surrounded by Stoddardian churches, the narrow-
visioned Northamptonites assumed that all the world was against their pastor.23 During the spring of 1750 the major controversy was whether Edwards would be allowed to get any representatives from outside Hampshire County for the decisive council. The town finally agreed that two out of a total of ten churches represented could be "outsiders." A minister and a layman would sit for each church invited. When the final council was convened on June 19, 1750, Edwards' "side" was one short, because the church at Cold Spring had refused to send a messenger, but their pastor, Edward Billings, came to Northampton on his own and took a seat on the council.24 The sides had been carefully chosen: the votes were ten to nine against Edwards.25

The council found that the views of Edwards and his church were "diametrically opposed," since Edwards insisted on a "profession of sanctifying grace" for full communion and the church wanted only "competency of knowledge" and a "blameless life." It also decided that a separation between pastor and flock was necessary, and that it should be implemented without delay. But at the same time, the council took care to exonerate Edwards personally: stories about his insincerity were judged "false and groundless," he was truly following his conscience, and he was "eminently qualified" to lead a church that shared his sentiments. A minority of the council (four ministers and three laymen) published a protests against the majority decision in which they asserted that Edwards' new principles were the correct ones (an issue which had not been debated but of course determined each delegate's vote); that in any case the differences between him and his church were insufficient grounds for a separation; and that the anti-Edwards forces had not allowed
themselves to be reasoned with about the fundamental issue.  

But Edwards' firing was inevitable. His dismissal from office took place officially on June 22, 1750. This was essentially the end of Jonathan Edwards' pastoral career. He stayed on in Northampton for almost a year and was even hired from week to week as a preacher until November, for a church that had fired its pastor over an issue of conscience was not attractive to young candidates for the ministry. Edwards also owned some property in the town which could not be sold quickly. In the midst of his professional tragedy, two of his daughters were married, and their "setting-out" was a large drain on his financial resources. He had to find another job immediately. Of the various offers he received, the best was the position of missionary to the Indian settlement and small white congregation at Stockbridge, in the Berkshires. His adherents had made valiant efforts to keep him in Northampton by organizing another church, but that group was very small and finally gave in to the advice of a council which recommended that Edwards take the position in Stockbridge. The bitterness between Edwards' friends and the majority of the church and town remained alive for at least two years, during which time the Edwards faction refused to participate in the Lord's Supper with the others. Edwards was kept well informed of the proceedings by his friends, but he was spared the need to face the disruption he had caused in the community.  

The move to Stockbridge, completed by the autumn of 1751, brought Edwards material hardship, but it also gave him the luxury of time to think and write without serious pastoral distractions. During the next seven years he wrote the great volumes of anti-Arminian theology for
which he has become famous. Having lost his twenty-three-year battle against sin and apathy in ordinary human beings, Edwards turned his attention to the fundamental issues underlying the clerical and intellectual opposition he had encountered. From the study at Stockbridge came forth masterful expositions of the Calvinist point of view on the freedom of the will, original sin, the end for which God created the world, and the nature of true virtue. His last project, left unfinished at his death, was the reworking of some late-1730s sermons into a millenialist statement published posthumously as A History of the Work of Redemption. In the last years of his life, Edwards was able to see more clearly than ever that the world as he had experienced it in both joy and pain was running along in a perfectly controlled divine design.

How neatly the doctrines could be arrayed in treatises when the practical implications for ordinary laymen did not have to be considered! The Calvinist emphasis on the free quality of God's grace, and the unfree quality of man, could be described so unambiguously when there was no need to preach that men must strive to "take heaven by force" as the best alternative to letting them languish in complacency. In Stockbridge Edwards' pastoral responsibilities, as reflected in the sermon manuscripts, consisted mainly of preaching against the drunkenness and theft to which his Indian congregation seemed prone. He was now free to return to the intellectual adventures he had loved in his youth and to become—at last—a philosopher. In 1757 he was invited to become president of the College of New Jersey (later renamed Princeton), and he reluctantly accepted this honor. He died of a smallpox inoculation just as he was about to take on these new "pastoral" duties in 1758.
Historians have always sided with Edwards against his "enemies," although most thoughtful biographers have admitted that he did show a lack of sensitivity to the practical problems of implementing his ideas in Northampton. There have been two major interpretations of the firing, and both find real "villains" in the anti-Edwards crusade. The older and more popular of the two cites the personal and ideological enmity of the Williams clan, a large family of ministers and government officials in the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts and Connecticut. The more recent interpretation blames Edwards' troubles on his opposition to a rising tide of "democracy" in the parish. But both interpretations oversimplify the relationship between Edwards and his congregation.

Edwards himself complained about the hostility of the Williamses, and his biographer Dwight elaborated on every reference that Edwards made to their activity in all his troubles. Two facts are certain: Elisha and Solomon Williams wrote the theological answer to Edwards' Humble Inquiry, and there was a Williams "connection," by blood and marriage, among the Hampshire ministers. 32 (But so also was there a "Stoddard" connection, of which Edwards and the Williamses were both part.) The rest of the case for the Williamses' villainy is derived from either Edwards' accusations or Dwight's unsupported assertions. Edwards wrote in 1753 that the Williams family had been prejudiced against him ever since the revival of 1734-1735; Dwight embroidered this statement to a declaration (undocumented in Edwards' manuscripts) that Israel Williams, later called "monarch of Hampshire" but then only twenty-four years old, had ridden into Northampton and "forbidden" his cousin Edwards to preach on
justification by faith alone. Edwards also wrote to friends that both
Israel Williams and his brother-in-law Jonathan Ashley, pastor at Deer-
field, had visited Northampton frequently between 1735 and 1750 and yet
never showed the courtesy of calling on the Edwardses. When the commu-
ion controversy arose, Edwards wrote, "this family deeply engaged them-
selves in this controversy on the side of my opposers, who were primarily
upheld, directed, and animated by them." Israel Williams, he insisted,
had been the chief family agent and was the behind-the-scenes leader of
the anti-Edwards party in Northampton. Not satisfied to have routed
him from Northampton, the Williams clan also harassed him at Stockbridge,
although there Edwards triumphed.

Such was Edwards' version, written mostly while he fought with some
Williamses at Stockbridge for control of the Indian school there, and as
repeated and elaborated by Dwight. Perry Miller used this information in
his biography of Edwards; he stressed the Williams clan's ideological
Arminianism and asserted that the emotional vehemence behind the battle
derived from a feud between Jonathan Edwards' mother and her sister
Christian, second wife of William Williams of Hatfield and mother to
Israel. There is some evidence of a competition between Jonathan and
his cousin Solomon Williams in their earlier years, and the trace of a
further rivalry between Israel Williams and Timothy Dwight, Edwards'
chief supporter in Northampton, over inheritance of the powers of Colonel
John Stoddard. Beyond this the personal aspects of the "feud" cannot
be documented. The Arminianism of the Williamses is also hard to prove.
It is true that many clerical members of the family were opposed to the
Great Awakening in its late and peace-breaking stages; but Edwards
himself had taken a position that was essentially against those same disturbances and on the same "professional" grounds. On the other hand, Elisha Williams had been Edwards' own tutor in the precepts of Calvinism and was a leader in the fight against quasi-Arminian Robert Breck in 1735. In his True State of the Question, Solomon Williams avowed undying adherence to the doctrines of Solomon Stoddard, who was as staunch a Calvinist as his grandson Edwards, even though the two eventually differed in ecclesiology. One could be, and most of Edwards' opponents were, Stoddardian in church practice and Calvinist in theology. In fact, it was Edwards who really turned against the common position of the clan.

A corollary to the position that the Williamses were the evil spirits behind the Northampton rebellion against Jonathan Edwards is the attribution to them of a controlling influence over the man who was clearly the intellectual leader of the opposition within Edwards' own church, Joseph Hawley III. Hawley had graduated from Yale in 1742, perhaps with thought of becoming a minister, but he had gone to study law in Suffield. He returned to Northampton about 1748 and became a Justice of the Peace in 1749. He was not active in the anti-Edwards fight in the church, although he was a full member, until late in 1749. (He had, of course, engaged in a fight with Edwards over the duty of his brother Elisha to marry Martha Root.) From late 1749 through the final council in 1751, Hawley was the chief spokesman for the church, precinct, and town against the pastor, although older men who showed real venom against Edwards personally took the lead within the precinct meetings. Most biographers of Edwards have claimed that Hawley was the tool of Israel Williams, but there is little evidence for that connection except their association ten
years later in the county judiciary and military services. Hawley confessed to Edwards in 1754 that he had assumed his role in the communion out of "vanity and ambition," and he repeated these self-accusations in a public letter to pro-Edwards minister David Hall in 1760. He mentioned no outside influence. Hawley seems merely to have seized his chance to begin his later-illustrious career as a popular leader by adding his educated voice to the general outcry. He was, in many ways, one of Edwards' most notable once-converted "young people" gone astray.

Although he did not mention any particular ideological stance in his letters to Edwards and Hall, Hawley may have been an Arminian. Among his manuscripts there is an undated fragmentary "confession" of Arminianism, which he says began in 1744 while he lived at Cambridge and was incited by the reading of an eloquent Arminian tract. It is doubtful that his Northampton neighbors shared this ideology--although they were rightfully accused of being lax in practice and apathetic in piety, which is a condition quite independent from belief that man could earn his way into heaven by good works. If Arminianism had crept into Northampton, there would hardly have been revivals as a result of Edwards' doctrines in 1735 and 1741; and Edwards himself would certainly have attacked it head-on, as he did in 1734, instead of just accusing Solomon Williams of being a closet Arminian. In his Humble Inquiry Edwards made it very clear that his local enemy was apathy, not Arminianism, though in his Farewell Sermon and in a letter of July 1750 he did mention, among many sins of his congregation, a "temptation" to Arminianism among the younger people.

The other theory of Edwards' firing, hinted at by Dwight and Miller
but most openly espoused by Ola Elizabeth Winslow, represents Edwards as being hounded out of Northampton by the forces of "democracy." In Winslow's words, "the church member of 1750 was a democrat, although as yet he did not know it; and a good many of the 'Boys of '76' were already born." Based upon Edwards' association with the undoubted Tories Col. John Stoddard and Timothy Dwight, Winslow makes a dramatic case for a "protest against an aristocratic minority. Jonathan Edwards had always had the wrong friends... Besides he lived with too much elegance himself..." And so, concludes Winslow, the town united against Edwards. But that is just the point--the town was united against him.

Colonel John Stoddard had never been the subject of public dislike (except perhaps by young Timothy Root); indeed, he was regularly entrusted by the town with the management of their local and provincial public affairs. He won his position by deference, not by force. Timothy Dwight, Edwards' leading ally in 1750, was a similar "professional" in government. But although Dwight was quite rich, other identifiable "pro-Edwards" men were much poorer. The anti-Edwards leaders, on the other hand, included three of the four richest men in town. They were not newcomers, potentially arrayed against "old families." They were neither significantly younger nor older than the pro-Edwards group. Although Northampton possessed in the 1750s some very rich men whose property was almost all in land, and some equally rich men whose estate was largely commercial, even this dichotomy does not permit us to distinguish between Edwards' supporters and attackers. It is quite easy to believe that wealthy commercial men would find Arminianism congenial and fear the introduction of Edwards' new policies, but Timothy Dwight was as much of a "business man" and
speculator as Israel Williams, so ideological/occupational cleavages are doubtful. And by the 1770s, Williams proved to be as much of a Tory as the Dwights or Stoddards! To further simplify the lack of clear social divisions in Northampton in 1750, all of the men active in the fight, on both sides, were already officially full church members. Whatever tests Edwards wanted to impose on future joiners, he would hardly have dared to try to reorganize his church from scratch and so kick out old members! And this was not even a church/town fight: a clear majority of the church itself voted against Edwards as early as November 1749. Edwards wrote in 1751 that only about twenty heads of families had spoken out against the town's proceedings, which might have been faulted for harshness even by someone opposed to Edwards himself. Northampton in 1750 was becoming divided politically on social and economic lines, but one point of unity was opposition to Jonathan Edwards. He must have presented a threat to something very basic in the community, something that transcended the surface differences of wealth and age among the people.

In a letter of 1751 to a Scottish friend, in which he attempted a full analysis of his professional disaster, Jonathan Edwards testified to the unity of the town and the lack of ideological character to his opposition. He identified no particular group within the town as leaders of the movement (although he was convinced that the Williams clan controlled the ministers who had opposed him), and he made no charges of Arminianism. The people, he wrote, had always been contentious--they had once even come to blows during a church dispute in Stoddard's time--and were a proud, sinfully proud people. Behind their current outburst of pride
was Solomon Stoddard himself. It was almost all his fault: so strong had been his personality that his spirit remained in the town for thirty years after his death. "Mr. Stoddard," wrote his grandson, "though an eminently holy man, was naturally of a dogmatical temper, and the people being brought up under him, were naturally led to imitate him." He filled their heads with wrong notions, allowed his flock too much reliance on the method of timing of their conversions as ground for assurance and far too much self-advertisement of their experiences. These were faults that Edwards "could never beat them out of." Stoddard was regarded even three decades after his death with a "vast veneration . . . almost as a sort of deity," and even the younger generation were determined "to esteem his sayings all as oracles." 53

Ultimately, Jonathan Edwards was fighting the memory of Solomon Stoddard much more than he was fighting Arminianism or democracy in Northampton in 1750. And yet he was so similar to Stoddard--such a staunch Calvinist, and so inclined to authoritarianism when disillusioned with his flock. He tried so hard to achieve the evangelistic and disciplinary success of his grandfather. He tried too hard--the memory of Stoddard was his "enemy" within himself as well as in the town. Edwards' real problem was that he was much more like Stoddard than the Northampton of 1750 was like the Northampton of 1700.

Northampton was no longer as centralized and unified as it had been when Stoddard thundered from the pulpit. It was hardly "modern" by the criteria of an economic historian, but it was well on its way toward commercial development and popular acceptance of an ideology of individualism. (It was approaching the War for Independence, although--or
because—it was hardly "democratic.") Edwards was doing battle with the centrifugal forces of secularism and trying to use the church as a new centralizing power, as it had been one of the primary old centralizing institutions. But the church would have no meaning, and no authority, if it was open to all who could keep up good behavior for a little while—if it was just another temporal institution which could be ignored, manipulated for social ends, or used as a political arena. What Edwards could not see, but what was perhaps apparent to the citizens of Northampton, was that an exclusive church would be disruptive to those ordinary social patterns to which men were now accustomed. It would divide, not unify. To be a member, one would have to become a new person and voluntarily render submission to the ideal of visible sainthood (real sainthood visible to others, in Edwards' terms). Backsliding would mean excommunication. And so many ordinary activities could be judged sinful, especially if the minister were the chief judge! Saints would be bound together by a tie of brotherhood that would demand consensus in a world that obviously fostered "honest" differences and necessitated competition. That was exactly what the Reverend Mr. Edwards wanted. That was precisely what the Northampton congregation did not want. "Getting ahead" was hard enough already.

And what would happen to the children? Those whose parents did not have the requisite spiritual experiences, or the self-denial to give up a chance at temporal advantages, would be damned forever by the stain of original sin. They might grow to adulthood, completely shut out of the church unless they had conversion experiences of their own, and the problems of parental government would be increased many times. Those not
visited by the Spirit might reproach their parents for their neglect. But those who were converted would become church members and find their parents clearly labeled as "unfit." What kind of "communion" would a converted child have with its heathen parents? In a world of accelerating change--of land that was used up, and new land on the frontier unsafe and then suddenly available, of many occupations to choose from, and the need for a "stake" even to begin in the good ones--the relationships between parents and children were too complex already to bear the intrusion of the minister and the additional complication of conversion as a social experience. Did anyone want to live in a community dominated by arrogant little Phebe Bartletts?

Jonathan Edwards summed up the entire pastoral side of his career in the Farewell Sermon he gave to his flock on June 22, 1750. After some lengthy and unveiled threats about the day of judgment, at which pastor and flock would at last have their controversy settled by God himself, Edwards proceeded to address his people in the same categories he had traditionally used. He had special words of encouragement for "professors" and those "under some awakenings," and bitter words of leave-taking to those still in a "graceless condition" after all his efforts. His most poignant passage was to the young people:

Since I have been settled in the work of the ministry, in this place, I have ever had a peculiar concern for the souls of the young people, and a desire that religion might flourish among them; and have especially exerted myself in order to it. . . . This is what I have longed for; and it has been exceedingly grievous to me, when I have heard of vice, vanity and disorder, among our youth. And so far as I know my heart, it was from hence that I formerly led this church to some measures, for the suppressing of vice among our
young people, which gave so great offence, and by which I became so obnoxious. I have sought the good and not the hurt of your young people. I have desired their truest honour and happiness. . . .

Edwards then included a warning against frolicking and "other liberties." He concluded the sermon with specific warnings to the congregation to maintain family order, avoid contention, and guard against Arminianism.

Here lay the triumph and tragedy, and above all the irony, of Jonathan Edwards' pastoral career in Northampton. Arminianism he had fought valiantly--and, almost to the end, successfully. Contention had also been his enemy, but as he battled the politics that were the growing-pains of the community, he became the object of contention himself. And what of "family government"? That had been his greatest pastoral concern and his greatest challenge. It was the failure of family government, and his role as a substitute for parental discipline and parental reassurances, that brought his greatest triumph, the revival of 1735. And it was his new system of "family" government in the church--dominance of the community by the covenanted "brethren" and the new dependence of children on the conversions of their parents--that brought his final downfall. 

In Edwards' mind and heart, as a product of his intellect and his conversion, his system appeared ever so logical and appropriate to his pastoral task. He aimed to be another Stoddard, with new means to the old end of ministerial authority. But he underestimated the reluctance of his congregation to be captured again by nostalgia for a simpler age and a more cohesive community.
NOTES

PROLOGUE


CHAPTER I


4. The ordination was recorded in the church book as the last entry in Stoddard's wavering hand. First Church of Christ, Congregational, Northampton, First Record Book, 23 (hereafter cited as Church Records--unless otherwise noted, all citations will be to the second section of the book, church votes and business, numbered separately from the first section, a list of members and baptisms). Stoddard died on Feb. 11, 1729.


7. TE was chaplain to a military expedition to Canada. TE to wife, Aug. 3 and Aug. 7, 1711, Edwards MSS, Andover Newton Theological School (whole collection cited hereafter as ANTS MSS). The Aug. 7 letter is printed in Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 40-42.

8. There are two versions of the essay on spiders; an early draft

9. The story of Yale's early years is well told in Richard March, School of the Prophets: Yale College 1701-1740 (New Haven, 1973), 1-95. Elisha Williams was the son of the Rev. William Williams of Hatfield and his first wife; his second wife was Christian Stoddard, Esther Edwards' sister. Sibley, Harvard Graduates, V, 588-598. Edwards described Yale's upheavals in two surviving letters to his family: JE to sister Mary, March 26, 1719, and JE to TE, July 24, 1719, ANTS MSS. Both letters are printed in Dwight, Life, 29-32; the July 24 letter is in Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 60. See also TE to "daughter," Jan. 24, 1717/18, ANTS MSS.

10. Cutler to TE, June 30, 1719, ANTS MSS; printed in Dwight, Life, 30-31. By 1739 Cutler, appalled by the Northampton revival, had altered his view of Edwards. He wrote to Bishop Gibson in London that "Mr. Edwards was brought up under my care at Yale College, a person of good abilities, diligence, and proficiency in learning... He was critical, subtle and peculiar, but I think not very solid in disputations." Douglas C. Stenerson, An Anglican Critique of the Early Phase of the Great Awakening in New England: A Letter by Timothy Cutler,
11. JE's New York and Bolton experiences will be discussed more fully later in this chapter. He was chosen Tutor on May 21, 1724.


12. The settlement voted "by a very great majority" included fifty acres of meadow, £300 for a homelot and house (or more if that would not buy a "suitable habitation"), and £100 salary each year (more if the value of money fell or JE's family increased). Town Records, 232. In April 1727 JE requested more money for the purchase of a homestead, and he was given an extra £80. Town Records, 236.

13. Trumbull, Northampton, II, 47-48, says that in May JE bought a three-acre lot and house, in which he was already living, and that Town Treasurer Ebenezer Pomeroy paid £330 for it; no such deed was ever recorded in Hampshire County. Edwards married Sarah at New Haven on July 20, according to his manuscript genealogy in the Edwards MSS, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University (collection hereafter cited as Beinecke).

14. A surviving booklet of auditor's notes from 1727 suggests that Stoddard and Edwards sometimes alternated Sabbaths and sometimes preached half the day each; notebook (perhaps in hand of Joseph Hawley, SS's son-in-law) in ANTS MSS.

15. Dwight, Life, 115. This is the only record of JE's illness, except the letters listed in note 16, below.

16. TE to daughter Anne, Oct. 6, 1729, ANTS MSS. On Sept. 12 TE had reported to her that Jonathan was "still mending"; ANTS MSS.

17. TE had been registered with the Harvard class of 1690, but in early 1688 he was marked in the college record for "severe punishments." He went to Springfield to study with the Rev. Pelatiah Glover (about whom, see Sibley, Harvard Graduates, I, 558-559). Glover, who died in 1692, conducted and won a twenty-year battle with his congregation over title to his house and land. Mason A. Green, Springfield 1636-1886 (Springfield, 1888), 180-182. In April 1694 TE was paid by Northampton for teaching for an unspecified period. Town Records, 143. TE's taking of two degrees on the same day was noted by earlier biographers as an intellectual distinction; but the M.A. was earned largely by a three-year wait, and the B.A. was just four years late. He has since been listed as a member of the class of 1691.

18. The early history of East Windsor and TE's career are depicted in John A. Stoughton, "Windsor Farmes": A Glimpse of an Old Parish (Hartford, 1883), passim. TE's settlement and ordination are recorded in the South (then East) Windsor Parish Records, 2 (hereafter cited as S. Windsor Records).

20. For his salary, see S. Windsor Records, 1-99. Mary Catherine Foster, "Hampshire County, Massachusetts, 1729-1754: A Covenant Society in Transition" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1967), 299, presents an average for Hampshire County and TE is above it until the 1740s and then slightly below it. TE received about the same salary that Hadley paid its ministers 1720-1748. Sylvester Judd, History of Hadley (New York, 1863), 54, 327, 330.

21. S. Windsor Records, 20, 69. Stoughton, "Windsor Farms", 59, reports that in a blank space in some sermon notes (MS lost), TE inscribed the question of whether a minister could leave his post if not paid sufficiently well.

22. Jonathan was explicitly cited in 1735, in the first page of a notebook at CHS of "Some things concerning my . . . father. . . ." In 1731 E. Windsor paid 14% less than did Northampton, and the difference escalated to 35.7% by 1741 and 100% by 1746. In 1749 JE wrote that he had the highest salary outside Boston. JE to Thomas Foxcroft, May 24, 1749, Beinecke.


24. See TE's 1711-1724 notebook, 38-47, Beinecke; Stoughton,
25. From a now-lost MS, Stoughton cites a sermon in which TE openly rebuked his congregation for insufficient deference to himself exemplified by their neglect to "remove their hats when they meet their betters upon the street." "Windsor Farms", 71. See also ibid., 54.

26. On the Saybrook Platform, see Williston Walker, Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism (New York, 1893), 502-514. There is no record of the fight over the Saybrook Platform in the extant parish records, although from 1710 to 1714 there was a bitter fight about the location of a new meetinghouse. S. Windsor Records, 14-18. Adoption of the Platform would have been a church matter (E. Windsor kept the Half-Way Covenant until 1808, and only full church members would have been allowed to vote), and church records are lost. Roger Wolcott, "A Narrative of the Troubles in the Second Church in Windsor from the Year 1735 to the Year 1741 . . .," MS at CHS; see especially pp. 94-96.

27. Wolcott, "Narrative of the Troubles," passim.


29. In 1689 Richard Edwards asked a Hartford Court for a divorce from his wife of 22 years, Elizabeth Tuttle, on grounds of repeated adultery. Shortly after their marriage, he testified, she had borne another man's child and "most of the country" knew of the shame. (The baby was taken and raised by the Tuttles in New Haven; in 1718 RE left "Mary, the eldest child of my first wife," two shillings in his will. RE had perhaps not sought divorce earlier because adultery was a capital crime in Connecticut until 1671.) Elizabeth had been forgiven by her husband's "compassionate and pitiful disposition" that overruled his judgment, he later wrote, and they lived together in "some measure of comfort about eight or nine years." But then she suddenly refused all "conjugal communion" with him and three or four years later boldly confessed her habitual adultery. RE therefore asked to be relieved of the "intricate
heart breaking miseries" of his marriage, but his petition was denied. For a second petition, Oct. 1690, RE wrote another statement, in which he cited Elizabeth's threats upon his life, answered objections that she was insane (insanity ran in her family but was not grounds for divorce) by saying that her adultery had preceded and probably "forwarded if not occasioned" her "distractions," and pleaded that by lack of a real wife he was "exposed to some of the greatest temptations that our nature is capable of, neither is my strength the strength of stones."

A group of ministers favored the divorce, and in Oct. 1691 RE was released from his "conjugal tie" (though not from his financial obligations) to Elizabeth. Shortly thereafter he married Mary Talcott, sister of a future Governor. Documents on the divorce can be found in the Conn. Archives, Crimes & Misdemeanors & Divorces, III, 235-239, and Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, IV, 37, 52-53, 59.

Timothy was a small child when the trouble became overt in his family, and he was twenty when the divorce proceedings began. If "most of the country" had known of his mother's flagrant scandal, his embarrassment must have been extreme. His mysterious "crime" at Harvard in 1688 may have been connected to the escalation of tension at home. The boy was brought into the case at that time, for in March 1688 he and his sister Abigail made an official deposition against their mother. The unpleasantness of TE's involvement in the case is further suggested by the nature of the biography he wrote of his father when Richard died in 1718. "Some things written for my own use and comfort, concerning the life and death of my very dear and ever honoured father . . . ," original in ANTS MSS; copy of first few pp. in notebook at CHS; excerpts (style "improved") in Dwight, Life, 654-661. The portrait is of a rigid Puritan, a man never "frightened or scared out of his duty," a hater of "vice and wickedness wherever he saw it" who "abhorred to plead for, justify, or make light of sin, because committed by them that were nearly related to him . . . ." Timothy seemed to side with the righteous, for Elizabeth Tuttle was never mentioned in the biography of her honorable husband, although the divorce was the perfect illustration of his principles. There is no record of his mother in any of the extant manuscripts of Timothy Edwards, and no record that he ever saw her after the divorce. The impact of this divorce on TE is also suggested by the fact that the two major fights in his church were both precipitated by cases of sexually errant women (one was TE's niece).

30. There was some decline of the prestige of the ministry, compared to other professions such as the law, in part because of hardships like those endured by TE. Schmoter, "Ministerial Careers," Journal of Social History, IX (1975), 249-267.

pointed out the prominence of oedipal problems in the Puritan consciousness and argued that Calvinist doctrines of "divine sovereignty, original sin, and free grace all stressed man's lowliness, God's power, and the necessity of submission. Those doctrines were bound to select from the legacy of childhood the patterns surrounding the Oedipal crisis and give them standing in the adult world" (pp. 394-395). Bushman further outlined the dominant theme of Edwards' religious conversion (as Edwards described it) as submission to a father-like God and subsequent peace: "only when utterly humble was he confident of divine approval" (p.393).

In the later article on Edwards as a "Great Man," Bushman elaborates his idea of the oedipal crisis in Edwards' life and the theme of its resolution in the submission of conversion. Using Erik Erikson's model of identity and his suggestions on the role of leaders as put forth in Young Man Luther, Bushman stresses the crucial part of Esther Stoddard Edwards in Jonathan's developmental drama: perhaps in competition with her sisters to produce the most fitting heir to their famous father's mantle, Esther prized learning and encouraged her son to compete unconsciously with his father (pp. 17-24). Timothy also valued scholarship, pushed his son, and implanted a relentless perfectionist conscience.

(Bushman doesn't mention that TE was a theological conservative who used mostly Old Testament texts, but that information slides easily into Bushman's formulation.) Until his conversion, Jonathan found his urges toward prideful exercise of intellect in competition with his Calvinist sense of guilt for pride (pp. 25-30, 34); conversion reestablished harmony through submission (pp. 31-35; exactly how this happens is ultimately as inexplicable in the psychoanalytic idiom as in the theological). Bushman's further discussion of the relevance of Edwards' own conversion to his revival preaching and the response he generated in his congregation will be considered in Chapter IV, note 48.

32. The "spider" essay is especially interesting, because the more polished version has long been assumed to be part of a letter to an English correspondent of TE. But there is no other evidence that TE ever corresponded with any foreign person, and the essay might well have been written as an exercise, as if to an English gentleman.

33. This emphasis, begun by Perry Miller's Jonathan Edwards, remains the most prolific strain in Edwards studies. Continuing interest is reflected in John Opie, ed., Jonathan Edwards and the Enlightenment (Lexington, Mass., 1969). Extremely useful is Thomas H. Johnson, "Jonathan Edwards' Background of Reading," Col. Soc. Mass. Publ., XXXVIII (1931), 193-222. Samuel Hopkins, The Life and Character of the Late Reverend, Learned and Pious Mr. Jonathan Edwards ... (Boston, 1765), 3, quotes JE as saying late in life that he had "'had more satisfaction and pleasure in studying [Locke's Essay upon the Human Understanding, read during his Wethersfield years] than the most greedy miser in gathering up handfuls of silver and gold from some new discovered treasure.'" JE's philosophical notebooks on "The Mind" and "Natural Science" have been printed in Dwight, Life, 44-48, 664-761; and Harvey G. Townsend, ed., The Philosophy of Jonathan Edwards from his Private Notebooks (Eugene, Oregon, 1955). The "Notes on Scripture" are printed
in Vol. IX of Edwards' Works (New York, 1829). The "Miscellanies" (8 Vols. in MS, Beinecke) have never been printed in full; selections are to be found in Townsend, Philosophy of JE, 74-268. There exist a number of other MS notebooks on theology, described well in Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 373-378.

34. Law, medicine, commerce, and government service were only slowly being recognized as "professions." March, School of the Prophets, 250-277, has counted the 321 known career-choices of the 386 men who took Yale A.B. degrees from 1702 through 1739: 179 (46% of all graduates) were ministers. That 83% of them were from non-clerical families suggests that the ministry was still an avenue of social advancement for the boy of intellectual talent. Of the 321 men, 28 (7% of all graduates) became merchants, 23 were lawyers, and 24 were doctors. Similar figures for Harvard graduates can be found in Samuel Eliot Morison, Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), 557-563.

35. Quotation from JE to Thomas Foxcroft, May 24, 1749, Beinecke. A self-consciousness about his intellectual ambitions is revealed in JE's directions to himself in shorthand on the inside of the "cover" to his "Notes on Natural Science," as decoded by William P. Upham, MHS Proc., 2nd Ser., XV (1902), 514-521. Especially interesting is No. 17, "Before I venture to publish in London to make some experiment in my own country[,] to play at small games first."

36. Morison, Harvard in the 17th Century, describes the tutors of that era as being treated as little more than senior students and being relatively powerless, low-paid, and transient: a two- to three-year tenure was common; see pp. 15, 51-53, 122-124, 329, 455-456, 463-465 for descriptions of the often tormented life of tutors.

37. The Yale curriculum before 1740 is described in March, School of the Prophets, 186-249.

38. The "Personal Narrative" was first printed in Hopkins, Life of Edwards, 23-39; the MS is lost. It was reprinted in Dwight, Life, 58-67, and Faust and Johnson, Selections, 57-72.

39. One revival, in May 1716, JE had described to his sister Mary as a "remarkable stirring." JE to ME, May 10, 1716, ANTS MSS; printed in Dwight, Life, 21-22, and Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 49-50.

40. JE's Resolutions and Diary, MSS now lost, are printed in Dwight, Life, 99-106.

41. Dwight, Life, 93. Edwards was living at home at the time, between preaching jobs, and his anxiety might have grown under implicit pressure from his father, who probably preached a conventional model of conversion and watched his son carefully for signs of regeneration.
42. Ibid., 77.

43. The diary entry reads in part: "I have this day, solemnly renewed my baptismal covenant and self-dedication, which I renewed, when I was taken into the communion of the church." This sentence is followed by a rambling statement of the submission of self to God that morning. Later on in the same entry, JE records continuing his compulsive asceticism. Dwight, Life, 78. The event seems to have been a private commitment. Biographer Hopkins, a close friend of JE, mentions no church-joining in his account; Dwight (p. 58) confirms the lack of record of formal membership before JE went to Northampton. It is of interest that JE would have had to testify to his conversion experience if he joined the E.W. church but not when he joined the Northampton church, which had abandoned "relations." JE's diary reference to "the communion of the church" does not necessarily indicate full membership. If he had renewed his baptismal covenant at that time, his joining was surely only for "half-way" membership; full membership would have required testimony of a conversion experience and the acceptance of a new covenant. Baptismal-covenant renewal as a community ritual, not implying regeneration, grew in popularity in the eighteenth century. See James W. Jones, The Shattered Synthesis (New Haven, 1973), 47-49, 86; and Lucas, Valley of Discord, 93-94.

44. Dwight, Life, 80-82.

45. Ibid., 81.

46. Ibid., 105-106.

47. We know from internal evidence that the "Narrative" was written after January 1739. In a letter of March 1741 to Edwards, his future son-in-law, the Rev. Aaron Burr of Newark, New Jersey, thanked JE for his letter of Dec. 14, in which JE had described his "experiences"; Burr was much affected and responded with a description of his own conversion. Burr letter, incomplete, in ANTS MSS; JE to Burr, Dec. 12, 1740, not found. It seems possible that the "Narrative" was a draft of a letter to Burr, and the desire to encourage the conversion of others may have colored JE's remembrances. It is significant that Burr was himself then a young man just beginning his professional career.

In his study of JE's theology, Harold P. Simonson asserts that the "Personal Narrative" is totally accurate: "Were we to suspect that Edwards, writing this document in his middle years, was consciously creating a mere persona that represented in dramatic terms the universality of his experience, a simple collation with both the Diary and Resolutions indicates that he was in fact honestly recalling his adolescence as a time of titanic inner turmoil, terribly private and subjective." Simonson, Theologian of the Heart, 19. Although I do not believe Edwards was "consciously creating a persona" in the "Narrative," I see neither "titanic inner turmoil" clearly represented nor "subjective" emotion dominating the retrospective view. The painful emotion of the diary--the struggle to focus his attention and fight off despair--
is translated in the "Narrative" to an object-oriented emotion, delight in the beauty of God's sovereignty.

Bushman, "Jonathan Edwards as a Great Man," *Soundings*, LII (1969), 33, asserts that the two accounts, "Narrative" and diary, "are easily reconciled, for they have in common a submission to God." But in the diary, Edwards clearly does not feel he has achieved that submission, although in the "Narrative" he attributes a "peace" to his younger self. I do not mean to imply that Edwards "made up" his conversion experience for polemic effect, I do think that the different interpretations of the real event are too diverse to be "easily reconciled." To use JE's own criteria of conversion as developed in the revivals, which amount to a definition by sensibility--man knows he is converted when he feels through his whole being that he is--Edwards was not really converted until he saw his experience of doubt and humiliation corroborated in others during the revival. Then he wrote the "Narrative." Having done this, he could then demand such testimonies from others. This argument will be elaborated in Chapters VII and VIII.

The college-graduation timing of Edwards' conversion is remarkably similar to that reported by John Winthrop and Thomas Shepard. See "John Winthrop's Christian Experience," *MHS, Winthrop Papers*, I (Boston, 1929), 154-159; and Michael McGiffert, *God's Plot: The Paradoxes of Puritan Piety*, *Being the Autobiography and Journal* of Thomas Shepard (Amherst, Mass., 1972), 40-41. Daniel B. Shea, Jr., has commented that "Puritan autobiographers also suffered chronically from an adolescent disease that masqueraded as true conviction until it disappeared and left good health and a heart more depraved than ever." *Spiritual Autobiography in Early America* (Princeton, 1968), 106.

48. Usually called the "Apostrophe to Sarah Pierrepont," this description was first printed in Dwight, *Life*, 114-115; reprinted in Faust and Johnson, *Selections*, 56; MS lost.

49. One analyst, who labels the description of Sarah a "confession," has pointed out that its "crux" is "its opposition to the formal statements of God's sovereignty. Sarah Pierrepont is a refuge from the harshness, the terror, and the abject feeling of inconsequence which came to Edwards every time he pondered that awesome question of God's infinite majesty." Also, "that he should have put his dream of wonder in the person of a young girl might suggest his unwilling awareness bordering on shame that he was seldom, if ever, in his own life and being, capable of such ecstasy." Edward H. Davidson, *Jonathan Edwards: The Narrative of a Puritan Mind* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), 24, 26.


51. Connecticut's Congregationalism was very close to Presbyterianism by this time, and personal and professional ties across that vague denominational line, within the colonies and with Britain, were numerous.

52. In a 1719 note, TE mentioned a loan to a "John Smith" of 12d.
"which he gave into his contribution to the people at New York." 1711-1724 account book, Beinecke. While in New York, JE boarded with a John Smith and his mother; see his diary entries for May 1 and May 18, 1723, in Dwight, Life, 84-85; also the "Personal Narrative" in Faust and Johnson, Selections, 64-65.

53. See Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 87-88; and Thomas Grant to Timothy Woodbridge, Connecticut Historical Society Collections, XXI (1924), 404-405.

54. The two letters, JE's of Dec. 10, 1722, and TE's of Jan. 16, 1723, at CHS.

55. Dwight, Life, 84.

56. Ibid., 84-85.

57. Ibid., 71.

58. Ibid., 86.

59. Ibid., 72-73.

60. Ibid., 93.

61. Solomon Williams was the son of the Rev. William Williams of Hatfield and his second wife, Christian Stoddard; he was half-brother to Yale Tutor Elisha Williams and would be Edwards' opponent on the issue of qualifications for communion in 1750. Sibley, Harvard Graduates, VI, 352-361. Their rivalry may have been long-standing: in Dec. 1721 JE wrote to his sister Mary, who was staying with the Williams family, and asked for "particular information concerning cousin Solo. whether he is like to settle or no." ANTS MSS. Early in 1723 TE recorded that "Lt. Hunt" told him Northampton had made an offer to Solomon Williams. 1711-1724 account book, 112, Beinecke. There is no record of that offer in Northampton church or town records, and Williams had been ordained in Lebanon, Conn., Dec. 1722, after preaching there ten months. Jonathan's renunciatory diary entry is in Dwight, Life, 78.

62. Settlement agreement, Bolton town records, photostat in Edwards MSS, Beinecke. Other Bolton records are printed in Stoughton, "Windsor Farmers", 81-82. There is no record of his leaving. He was probably still there in early December, for his diary entry of the twelfth is a resolution to spend more time in the duties of pastoral visiting. Dwight, Life, 100.

63. Diary entry for June 6, 1724, in Dwight, Life, 103.

64. Describing the aftermath of a speedily-quashed student "in-surrection" against the college food, Jonathan cited "monstrous impieties, and acts of immorality . . . particularly stealing of hens,
geese, turkies, piggs, meat, wood &c.--unseasonable nightwalking, breaking people's windows, playing at cards, cursing, swearing... He thanked God that he was "perfectly free of all their janglings." JE to TE, March 1, 1721, ANTS MSS; printed in Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 70-72. The general quality of student behavior at Yale is indicated by March's calculation that from 1720 to 1740 about one-third of the students annually paid punishment fines, and in the summer of 1732, 69 of 82 students paid for breaking windows. School of the Prophets, 154. The Yale carousing was mirrored at Harvard. Josiah Quincy, The History of Harvard University (Boston, 1860), I, 319. Rector Cutler later remembered JE as "a sober person, but withal pretty recluse, austere and rigid." Stenerson, "Anglican Critique," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXX (1973), 482.

About the time of his letter to Timothy, cited above, JE was engaged in a protracted battle with his cousin and chambermate, Elisha Mix, which may have reflected long-standing disharmony between their families. Freshman Elisha was the son of the Rev. Stephen Mix of Wethersfield and Mary Stoddard, Solomon's oldest daughter. Mix had persuaded Jonathan to share his chamber with Elisha and keep the boy "steady"; Elisha in turn was obligated to help Jonathan in his duties as college butler by dispensing cider in the buttery. But the boy proved unstudious, caroused until "unseasonable" hours, and obstinately refused to fetch cider upon command. JE therefore asked his uncle to "free me of my obligation" and TE wrote to Mix demanding that Elisha be forced to do his duty. TE also alluded to a more serious alienation between the families, exacerbated by "sister Mix" when she talked against Jonathan in public "to diminish and blemish his name." JE to Mix, n.d. (fall 1720), and TE to Mix, n.d. (same time), ANTS MSS.

65. JE's illness is described in his "Personal Narrative," Faust and Johnson, Selections, 66, and in letters from TE to his wife Oct. 11, Oct. 20, and Nov. 10, 1725, ANTS MSS. He was so ill that his mother was with him for at least two months.

Interesting parallels to JE's physical/emotional collapses at times of great stress can be found in the careers of Elisha Williams (see March, School of the Prophets, 183), and Rector Thomas Clap, Williams' successor (see Louis L. Tucker, Puritan Protagonist: President Thomas Clap of Yale College [Chapel Hill, N.C., 1962], 29).

CHAPTER II

1. JE to Rev. Thomas Gillespie of Carnock, Scotland, July 1, 1751, ANTS MSS; printed in Dwight, Life, 466.

2. Lucas, Valley of Discord, passim; Northampton Church and Town Records, passim.

3. Faithful Narrative, in Goen, Great Awakening, 144-146.

4. Williams, The Death of a Prophet... (Boston, 1729), 10.

6. Among the large number of family letters surviving, there is not
one to JE at Northampton before 1726 nor any mention of his being there.
In his funeral sermon of Feb. 10, 1736, for his grandmother Stoddard, he
wrote that he would not "pretend" to describe her character, for "many
of you that knew her are more capable of informing me than I am of
informing you." Revelations 14:13, Beinecke.

7. Lucas, *Valley of Discord*, 182, 200-201. The nickname "Congrega-
tional Pope" was originally an epithet flung at Stoddard by Increase
Mather in his Preface to John Quick, *The Young Man's Claim* (Boston,
1700), 28-29. In 1739 Timothy Cutler described Stoddard as "narrow and
odd in his sentiments, self-opinion'd, haughty, assuming, and impatient
of contradiction. . . . he was many years the Oracle of the Country,
especially in those parts where he lived long, had a numerous family,
and where a great number [of t]he ministers were related to him by blood
or affinity." Stenerson, "Anglican Critique," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXX (1973),
480.


9. JE to Gillespie, July 1, 1751, ANTS MSS; printed in Dwight,
*Life*, 466. Northampton Church Committee Report on the "Aggrieved
Brethren" (March 5, 1752), ANTS MSS.

10. On the economic motivation for settlement, see Trumbull,
Northampton, I, 4-5.

I, 405-409.

12. Church Records, First part, 6-35, compared with Trumbull's
Northampton Genealogy (unpublished Vol. III of his History of Northamp-
ton, typescript at Forbes Library, hereafter cited as Trumbull, Geneal-
ogy). This may not have been an unusual percentage, but it was certainly
less than Mather wanted. Lucas, *Valley of Discord*, 84 and 234n, and
different proportions of church members to town population, but I can
reconcile neither figure with my own count.

238-339; Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province*
(Cambridge, Mass., 1953), 93-104; and especially Pope, *Half-Way Covenant*,
passim. Pope cites Joseph Bellamy's 1769 *The Half-Way Covenant* as the
first use of the derogatory term.

Pope delineates a pattern of early lay resistance and ministerial
favor (although the fight against the HWC was led by Increase Mather
until 1671); but by 1690 most Mass. and Conn. churches had some form of
enlarged baptism. In this context the 1668 adoption of the Covenant by
the Northampton congregation (see *Half-Way Covenant*, 147-150) would be a
liberalism. The Northampton representatives to the General Court also voted in favor of the "liberal" Third Church of Boston in its late-1660s fight with the conservative faction of First Church (led by Anthony Stoddard, Solomon's father); see Hall, Faithful Shepherd, 234, 236; Trumbull, Northampton, I, 215-217; Hamilton A. Hill, History of the Old South Church (Boston, 1890), I, 96, 111n.; and Richard C. Simmons, "The Founding of the Third Church in Boston," HWO, 3rd Ser., XXVI (1969), 241-252.

Pope's interpretation has been challenged by Lucas, Valley of Discord. Lucas sees the HWC, at least in the Conn. Valley, as a tool in the growth of "lay congregationalism" in the late 17th century. Lucas posits the alternatives of ministerial supremacy exercised through spiritual criteria for strict admission to sacraments, versus power of the brethren exercised through behavioral criteria for "half-way" membership and a lessened importance of full membership. The crucial assumption underlying Lucas's theory is that only ministers could judge the spirit, and only the brethren were interested in stringent behavioral control. But Lucas himself cites examples that contradict this dichotomy. Any such theory would need much more documentary evidence about actual processes of admission than has yet been brought to light.

Lucas cites Northampton as a model of the adoption of the HWC as an anti-ministerial tactic, a "victory for the town over the Mather [exclusivist] faction in the church" (Valley, 84-85). But his theory is jeopardized by his misstatement of every aspect of the Northampton case except Mather's personal opposition to the HWC. Lucas states that Mather was "engulfed" when he arrived in 1658 in a controversy long subsisting between rival factions; but all but two or three heads of household in Northampton signified their approval of Mather by donating some of their best land to him and to a group of six men he brought with him from Dorchester. These men are, presumably, Lucas's "Mather faction," over whom the town "triumphed" in 1668. There is evidence neither that they were a political group nor that there was "constant bickering" between an exclusivist church and a covenant-minded town through the 1660s; the vow to avoid "strife" written into the 1668 covenant is merely a commonplace. Lucas further states that when the church was formally gathered in 1661, "few more than the Dorchester people joined the church"; but of the 70 persons who actually signed the church covenant within the first month, only 17 (including Mather and his wife) were "Dorchester people." Church officers were chosen from among both "Dorchester" and "local" men. The 1661 covenant contained no description of desired forms of church government. The 1668 enactments gave all powers of judgment in admissions for all categories to "the Elders," who were the pastor and the one Ruling Elder chosen in 1663, who was a Dorchester man. So these votes hardly constitute any victory for the laity or local faction over the clergy or "Dorchester faction."


15. Church Records, 8: Propositions 5 and 7.
16. Church Records, 23. Lucas, Valley of Discord, 136, interprets this enactment as an automatic and examination-free transition to full membership; it seems impossible to read this process, however, as anything but an examination for half-way membership. Pope, Half-Way Covenant, 147-150, emphasizes the innovation of this "state of education." The quoted resolution was followed by two "forms of words," one for admitting members "unto full communion" and the other for entry into a "state of education." The differences in words were small, but the distinction between states of membership was still explicit.

17. Lucas, Valley of Discord, implies that the Valley pattern was becoming one of judgment by the brethren, but he does not enumerate the churches where any given practice was followed. He also asserts (p.131) that when Stoddard arrived in 1669, he asked the church to give up the "conversion experience" test for membership and asked to be the sole judge but was refused both. The story is entirely plausible but there is no evidence in either the Northampton records or any Stoddard MSS.

18. Church Records, first part, 6-35. Only 16 other persons joined the church in full communion between 1670 and 1679, inclusive.

19. Church Records, first part, 1-4. The list begins July 30, 1677, and is begun again Sept. 11, 1706 (with names of survivors from the first list repeated); why these dates were chosen is unknown.

The intellectual origins for Stoddard's innovations have been discussed by all his biographers. His father, Anthony Stoddard, led the opposition to "liberalism" in Boston. See "The Diaries of John Hull," American Antiquarian Society Transactions and Collections, III (1857), 198. President Chauncy of Harvard was equally conservative. Miller, Colony to Province, 90-104. But pastor Jonathan Mitchell of Cambridge was a liberal; and in a 1660-1664 notebook kept by Stoddard while at Harvard, 33 of 72 sermons on which notes were taken were by Mitchell. MS at Union Theological Seminary, New York; microfilm copy in Harvard Univ. Archives. But when he announced his even more radical ideas later in his career, Stoddard cited no sources for his basic theories, so his intellectual debts are hard to trace.

20. Stoddard was probably preaching "open communion" by 1677, when he changed the format of his church records. That May, Increase Mather's Election Sermon inveighed against allowing those with only "historical" and not "experiential" faith to participate in the Sacrament. Discourse Concerning the Danger of Apostasy (Boston, 1679), 116-117. In 1679 SS debated the qualifications for communion with Mather at the Synod in Boston, and he persuaded the Synod to leave out of its "Result" an explicit statement (demanded by Mather) of the necessity of the profession of an actual work of saving grace for admission to the Lord's Supper; instead the requirement was made "a personal and public profession of their faith and repentance," and "faith" was left open to local interpretation. The "Result" is in Walker, Creeds and Platforms, 423-433; see also SS's An Appeal to the Learned (Boston, 1709), 93-94. Mather answered Stoddard in 1680 in a tract never published and only recently discovered. See
Everett Emerson and Mason I. Lowance, "Increase Mather's Confutation of Solomon Stoddard's Observations Respecting the Lord's Supper 1680," AAS Proc., N.S., LXXXIII (1973), 29-65. See also the note by William L. Joyce, ibid., 343-344. John Russell, minister at Hadley, wrote to Mather on March 28, 1681, that "our good brother Stoddard hath been strenuously promoting his position concerning that right which persons sound in the doctrine of faith & of (as he calls it) a holy conversation, have to full communion." NMS Collections, 4th Ser., VIII (1868), 83.

Two letters and a memorandum copied into the notebook of Edward Taylor, pastor at Westfield, give the probable date for the opening of communion in Northampton and some interesting gossip as to the process by which Stoddard persuaded his congregation. On Feb. 13, 1688, Taylor wrote to Stoddard that he had heard SS was "about to cast off relations and to bring all above 14 years of age that live morally having catechistical knowledge of the principles of religion to the Lord's Supper, and for that end he hath held one day of debate with his church and hath fixed upon another"; Taylor argued against this innovation. Stoddard's reply of June 4 read in part: "I have been abundantly satisfied these many years that we did not offend the Will of God in this matter and that our neglect therein is the occasion of the great profaneness and corruption that hath overspread the land and therefore [I] thought it both necessary for myself, that I might be found doing the will of God, and necessary for the country, that we might not go on further to forsake God [, to take this course]. If I cannot carry it in a way of peace and according to a rule, I am willing to submit to the will of God, but shall look upon it a frown on the land." The next page in the Taylor notebook reads: "Mr. Stoddard having preached up from Gal. 3:1 that the Lord's Supper was a converting ordinance ... and urged [it], till on an occasion of the Ruling Elder's absence by reason of sickness and many if not all the ancient members of the church were dead, then he and all his church so new covenanting and among other articles presented giving a major part to this article to bring all to the Lord's Supper that had a knowledge of Principles of Religion and not scandalous by open sinful living[. T]his done in the winter 1690." Taylor notebook, NMS, unpaged. Another Taylor memorandum book, at the Boston Public Library, contains notes from a Stoddard sermon on Galatians 3:1, given at Northampton on Oct. 5, 1690, perhaps the sermon to which Taylor referred. The Doctrine is "The Lords Supper is appointed by Jesus Christ for ye begetting of Grace as well as for ye strengthening of Grace." On the Taylor-Stoddard debate, see the many works on Taylor by Norman Grabo, especially "The Poet to the Pope: Edward Taylor to Solomon Stoddard," American Literature, XXXII (1960), 197-201.


22. The major Stoddard treatises on the sacraments and church government are the following: The Safety of Appearing at the Day of Judgment in the Righteousness of Christ (London, 1687; Boston, 1729); The Doctrine of Instituted Churches (London, 1700); The Inexcusableness of Neglecting the Worship of God, Under a Pretence of Being in an Unconverted Condition (Boston, 1708); An Appeal to the Learned (Boston, 1709);
and An Examination of the Power of the Fraternity (Boston, 1718). The major published responses by Increase Mather were: The Order of the Gospel (Boston, 1700) and A Dissertation Wherein the Strange Doctrine... is Examined and Confuted (Boston, 1708). The best discussions of Stoddard's views are Perry Miller, "Solomon Stoddard, 1643-1729," Harvard Theological Review, XXXIV (1941), 277-320; Miller, Colony to Province, 226-287; and especially Thomas A. Schafer, "Solomon Stoddard and the Theology of the Revival," in Stuart C. Henry, ed., A Miscellany of American Christianity (Durham, N.C., 1963), 328-351.

23. According to Edward Taylor's notes on a SS sermon of Oct. 5, 1690, Stoddard was by that time preaching that the Supper was a converting ordinance. Taylor notebook Boston Public Library. In 1700 Stoddard announced this view openly in his Doctrine of Instituted Churches, p.22. But he made the important distinction there between "conversion" and "regeneration": one was "converted to" the "Christian religion," and this was the didactic function of the Lord's Supper; but one was "regenerated" in soul only by God's saving grace, although God might choose the Supper as the occasion. Unfortunately, Stoddard did not always maintain this clarity of argument, and so his doctrine of the Supper as a "converting ordinance" was open to misinterpretation. Stoddard's position is discussed in R. L. Stuart, "Mr. Stoddard's Way! Church and Sacraments in Northampton," American Quarterly, XXIV (1972), 243-253; and E. Brooks Holifield, The Covenant Sealed (New Haven, 1974), 206-219.

There exists a tradition that Stoddard himself received saving grace while administering the sacrament in Northampton early in his career. See William Leavitt Stoddard, "Solomon Stoddard: A Liberal Among the Puritans," (unpub. MS, Forbes Library), 41-42. There is no real evidence one way or the other; but Stoddard joined the Northampton church in full communion in April 1672, when the testimony of experience was still required, and yet he could not have dispensed the Sacrament until his ordination the following Sept. There is no record of his being a communicant in any church before his arrival in Northampton.

24. See, especially, Stoddard's The Tryal of Assurance (Boston, 1698), passim.

25. The Necessity of Acknowledgment of Offences... (Boston, 1701), The Way for a People to Live Long... (Boston, 1703), The Danger of Speedy Degeneracy (Boston, 1705), and Answer to Cases of Conscience (Boston, 1722). See also Stoddard's letters to Increase Mather: Sept. 15, 1675, quoted in Trumbull, Northampton, I, 289; and Nov. 29, 1677, in the Mather Papers, MHS Coll., 4th Ser., VIII (1868), 586-587.

26. Lucas, Valley of Discord, 182-183, says that only one New England minister, Connecticut's radical Presbyterian Gurdan Saltonstall, publicly endorsed Stoddard's plan. Saltonstall left the ministry to become Governor of Conn. and fostered the Saybrook Platform.

27. Power of the Fraternity, 11.
28. Mather wrote in his 1700 Order of the Gospel, p. 25, that "there are very few churches in New England that have more than one Elder" (i.e., the minister). The last Northampton lay Elder died in 1729. See also I. N. Tarbox, "Ruling Elders in the Early New England Churches," Congregational Quarterly, XIV (1872), 401-416.

29. With his evangelistic writings, Stoddard achieved a tacit reconciliation with the Mathers. Increase Mather wrote a preface to SS's Guide to Christ in 1714 and acknowledged that he differed only in "some points (not Fundamentals in Religion)" from "this beloved author."


34. See, especially, Guide to Christ, 10-24. Stoddard wrote in 1708 that ministers need not be truly converted themselves for their preaching to have effect, but by 1713 he emphasized that "experience best fits men to teach others," and "there is a need of experimental knowledge in a minister," although men might be converted after they had been ordained. Those who had undergone regeneration would be the most sensitive guides, and would especially be aware of the dangers of despair. See The Falseness of the Hopes of Many Professors (Boston, 1708), 16; Defects of Preachers, 9; Guide to Christ, 8-9; Presence of Christ, 13.


36. James Walsh, "Solomon Stoddard's Open Communion," NEQ, XLIII (1970), 92-114, argues that facing the traditional New England church dilemma of authority vs. purity, SS chose authority. In terms of the church, this is true. Lucas, "'An Appeal to the Learned': The Mind of Solomon Stoddard," WMEQ, 3rd Ser., XXX (1973), 257-292, argues that the "real" Stoddard was an evangelical and that The Doctrine of Instituted Churches was a temporary aberration. The either/or dilemma comes only when evangelism is seen as tied to membership--and although it was traditionally so considered in New England, Stoddard's ultimate point was to break that tie. He would discipline the church as a temporal group, and, quite separately in theory, try to win souls for Christ.

38. The newest treatment of Stoddard in an intellectual-history context, and one of the best, is Holifield, Covenant Sealed, 159-222.


40. See also Walsh, "Stoddard's Open Communion, NEQ, XLIII (1970), 92-114; and Lucas, Valley of Discord, passim.

41. Larzer Ziff, Puritanism in America (New York, 1974), 256.

42. Lucas, Valley of Discord, Chapters 1-5. Westfield, for example, retained extremely strict standards for admission to the Lord's Supper until 1728, the last year of Edward Taylor's pastorate. See Norman S. Grabo, Edward Taylor (New York, 1961), 38-39.

43. Town Records, passim; Trumbull, Northampton, I, 318-319.

44. Quoted in W. L. Stoddard, "Liberal Among the Puritans," 54.

45. February 20, 1729, undoubtedly written by Jonathan Edwards.

46. Perry Miller wrote that Safety of Appearing "was one of the most widely read books in all New England for sixty years" and it "comes closer than any other work in seventeenth century New England to being 'original.'" "Solomon Stoddard," Harvard Theol. Rev., XXXIV (1941), 284-285. Because he theorizes the dominance of the laity in the Conn. Valley by the late 17th century and therefore must explain SS's importance in terms of his popularity with the rustic farmers whom he openly scorned, Lucas paints a curious picture of Stoddard as an escapee from civilization. "Intellectual life proved painful and the contemplative life of some ministers frightened him. He had little interest in the finer things of civilization," especially Boston's commercial bustle, and he was "left cold" by the idea of presiding over a sophisticated urban congregation. From the fact that Stoddard did not produce a manuscript for publication until 1685, Lucas romanticizes a hardy outdoorsman uncomfortable with the fruits of his years of training: "Stoddard forced himself to write, shutting his massive frame into a cubicle in his small home to address himself to the problems of the churches. . . ." On the contrary, we know that Stoddard wrote tracts of power and argumentative elegance, fought the learned Mather at least to a draw, and wrote reams on the psychology of religion; he scorned the sins of Boston but showed no inclination for economic primitivism; he was a bit taller than average (so says his obituary), but his home was large (it still exists in Northampton, as the ell to his son's splendid manse). And he sat down to write often enough so that it is unfair to conclude he did so with pain. Lucas's theological Paul Bunyan, in other words, bears little resemblance to the Stoddard of record. Valley of Discord, 147-149.
47. See The Diary of Samuel Sewall 1674-1729, ed. M. Halsey Thomas (New York, 1973), 525, 597, 639, 720, 762, 837, 924. Benjamin Colman, The Faithful Ministers of Christ Mindful of their own Death (1729), 2, says that SS was greeted as "a Peter here among the Disciples"; see also Colman's Appendix. In March 1721, when he was 78 years old, SS wrote to his friend Judge Sewall that he never expected to see his Boston friends again. Samuel Sewall's Letter-Book, MHS Coll., 6th Ser., II (1888), 131.

48. SS's estate, Hampshire County Probate Records; also in Sylvester Judd MSS (Forbes Library), II, 254-255.

49. Defects of Preachers, ii.

50. Land grant in Town Records, 104; salary records in ibid., 147-149, 159-160.

51. Sibley, Harvard Graduates, V, 96-119. See also J. R. Trumbull, "John Stoddard" (unpub. essay, 1893, Forbes Library); Judd MSS, II, 255-258; Timothy Dwight, Travels in New-England and New York, ed. Barbara Miller Solomon, I (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), 241-242; Thomas Hutchinson, History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts-Bay, ed. L. S. Mayo, II (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), 329-330n. John Stoddard was a conservative, a "prerogative" man in Mass. politics; see Hutchinson, History, 329-330n, and Robert Zemsky, Merchants, Farmers and River Gods (Boston, 1971), 224. Stoddard's sons were later Tories. Robert J. Taylor, Western Massachusetts in the Revolution (Providence, 1954), 11-12. No personal non-military papers have come to light (the Trumbull essay confirms their loss). A common soldier in 1704 and a Major by 1712, he marked himself as a leader by his success as Commissary to Quebec in 1713 to negotiate the return of captives taken in the Indian wars. He was first appointed judge in 1725 and declined an appointment to the Superior Court in 1736 because he realized his politics were extremely unpopular with the mass of citizens and would cause disturbances.

52. Town Records, passim.


54. For example, in 1716 he bought a share of the "equivalent lands" given to Conn. by Mass. as part of a border settlement; in 1739 he was selling for 2s. 7d. per acre what had cost him 1 1/2d. per acre, a profit of over 3000%. Mass. Archives, II, 276-283; Hampshire County Deeds C-139, L-220. His total holdings in the "Equivalent," in common with his nephew Elisha Williams, were 1/16 of the total, or 3306a. See Sibley, Harvard Graduates, V, 96-119, for an account of some of his other land transactions.

55. Estate inventory in Hampshire Probate Records. According to Sibley, Harvard Graduates, V, 118, when JS died in 1748 his funeral costs
"equalled a year's salary for Parson Edwards." See also Trumbull, Northampton, II, 177.

56. See Robert E. Chester-Waters, Genealogical Notes of the Families of Chester . . . (privately printed, 1886), 13-20. Prudence's brother John was "one of the most important men" in Connecticut, according to Chester-Waters. JS may have met her through his Edwards connection, for JE boarded with "Madam Chester" in Weathersfield in 1718-1719 (TE account book, 1711-1724, Beinecke), and Elisha Williams, JE's tutor, was married to Prudence's aunt.


59. In April 1742 JE communicated to the Hampshire Assoc. an essay by John Stoddard on the revivals; MS not found; Hamp. Assoc. Records, 1731-1747, MS at Forbes Library, 38. In his "Journal" of the communion controversy in Northampton, JE wrote that when he first had doubts about the current mode of admission, he resolved to ask Col. Stoddard's advice the next time an applicant appeared. (The next one appeared after JS's death in June 1748.) Dwight, Life, 314; see also ibid., 207-208.


61. Walker, Creeds and Platforms, 282n, says that at the time of JE's dismissal, 23 of 27 towns in the Hampshire Assoc. were firmly "Stoddardean"; but it was only this consensus on principle that made the Association at all effective. The powers of the Assoc. were not much greater than what the Mathers achieved in their 1692-1705 attempt to strengthen the powers of informal ministerial associations, to preserve orthodoxy--against Stoddard! Emil Oberholzer, Delinquent Saints (New York, 1956), 25, points out that the 1714 enactment of the Hamp. Assoc. that every baptized person be accountable to discipline by the church "in the place in which he lives," was contrary to the usual N.E. practice of disciplining only formal members.

62. The Assoc. did try and fail to effect a reconciliation between the Enfield, Conn., pastor and his church. Lucas, Valley of Discord, 194.

63. Faithful Narrative, in Goen, Great Awakening, 146. Stoddard continued to preach both lecture-day and Sabbath through the winter before his death. Sewall Letter-Book, MHS Coll., 6th Ser., II (1888), 259.

64. Faithful Narrative, in Goen, Great Awakening, 146.
CHAPTER III

1. Edwards' Farewell Sermon, text II Cor. 1:14, MS at Beinecke, was first published in Boston in 1751. It is printed in Dwight, Life, 630-651, and ("Application" only) in Faust and Johnson, Selections, 186-202; quotation from p.646 or p.194, respectively.

2. The Danger of Speedy Degeneracy, 6-7/...


5. Faithful Narrative, in Goen, Great Awakening, 146.


8. See Zuckerman, Peaceable Kingdoms; E. A. J. Johnson, American Economic Thought in the Seventeenth Century (London, 1932); and J. E. Crowley, This Sheba, Self: The Conceptualization of Economic Life in Eighteenth Century America (Baltimore, 1974), for descriptions of the ideal. Zuckerman found the reality in the communities he studied to be much like the ideal, well into the 18th century. Northampton men, and probably those in most towns past the frontier stage, behaved much more
like the "Yankees" whom Richard L. Bushman found in Conn. by the end of the 17th century. See Bushman, From Puritan to Yankee: Character and the Social Order in Connecticut, 1690-1765 (Cambridge, Mass., 1967).

9. These changes are largely inferred from changes in the children's behavior, and some testimony to intrafamilial disharmony from scattered sources. The suggestions made in this essay about family life obviously lead toward a consideration of the history of childhood in New England, but that is too large a project to be dealt with properly within the scope of this dissertation. It does seem logical, however, that from the different "personalities" of the mid-18th century Yankee frontier entrepreneur and the mid-17th century Puritan community-oriented saint-in-exile, one might deduce different experiences in early childhood. But substantial information on child-rearing practices in the colonies is lacking. Extremely small samples of data have contributed to the varied interpretations offered by John Demos and Joseph E. Illick. See Demos, "Developmental Perspectives on the History of Childhood," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, II (1971), 315-327; and A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony (New York, 1970), especially Chapter 9; Illick, "Child-Rearing in Seventeenth-Century England and America," in Lloyd deMause, ed., The History of Childhood (New York, 1974), 303-350. Important documents have been published by Philip J. Greven, Jr., Child-Rearing Concepts, 1628-1861: Historical Sources (Itasca, Illinois, 1973).

Underlying most attempts to discern the history of childhood is the personality-development theory of Erik H. Erikson, as stated in Identity and the Life Cycle: Selected Papers, Monograph No. 1 of Psychological Issues (1959); Childhood and Society (New York, 1950); and Identity: Youth and Crisis (New York, 1968). Erikson's formulations provide many intriguing possibilities for the history of the family, although the degree to which his categories of development transcend historical circumstance must be questioned.

The importance of family life as cause or effect of "Puritanism" or "Calvinism" has been emphasized by many analyses of that religious movement. See, for example, Michael Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 47-50, 183-191; and Christopher Hill, Society and Puritanism, 2nd ed. (New York, 1967), 443-481. Hill explicitly, and Walzer and many others implicitly, look upon the Puritan "little church" family as a transition between modern individualism and a hypothesized extended medieval manorial family—which we now know, from the work of Peter Laslett and others, probably never existed with any numerical significance in pre-modern England. See Laslett's Introduction to Laslett and Richard Wall, eds., Household and Family in Past Time (Cambridge, 1972). Even if it was not new in form, many modern historians would still insist that the Puritan family fostered notions of individual worth (through its emphasis on personal conversion) that inadvertently contributed to the rise of "democracy" and "liberal" thought. See, for example, James A. Henretta, The Evolution of American Society, 1700-1815 (Lexington, Mass., 1973), 30-31; and Robert H. Bremner et al., eds., Children and Youth in America: A Documentary History (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), I, passim.

The sentimentalization of childhood, the growth of children as
objects of affection as persons (not just economic pawns), has been commented upon in passing by at least two recent studies of the early New England community (which attribute different timing to the process): James Axtell, The School Upon a Hill: Education and Society in Colonial New England (New Haven, 1974), 92-93, repeats de Jouqueville's suggestion that partible inheritance (which Axtell and deT. assume was the universal pattern in America) brought the growth of parent-child affection with the absence of competition for scarce resources; Henretta, Evolution of American Society, 39, suggests that it was only when (by the late 18th century in many areas) the father could no longer provide automatically for all his sons by partitioning his own land, and therefore had to seek actively other means to give his sons a "start" in life, that there grew "a new and different type of family life, one characterized by solicitude and sentimentality toward children." The latter view is much more plausible, if only because it was those stern Puritan patriarchs of the first two generations in most towns who had land enough to indulge in partition among all their sons. Unless the sources entirely mislead us, the sentimentalization of childhood grew in the eighteenth century, when partition was becoming much more difficult and often very unequal.


13. Judd, Hadley, 105-106. Evidence that all the good land was divided very early comes from the 1658 attempt to lure some Dorchester men and a minister to Northampton with grants of land, which had to be donated by individuals out of their own allotments. Town Records, 3; Trumbull, Northampton, I, 77-78. For a general discussion of the New England proprietorship and typical patterns of land distribution, see Roy H. Akagi, The Town Proprietors of the New England Colonies (1924;
14. Town Records, 44.

15. These 58 included one absentee proprietor, John Pynchon of Springfield, who had obtained the grant from the General Court; his 120 acres was the largest portion, and if he is excluded as atypical, the average grant becomes 37.97 acres for 57 men. The 1661 division list is in the Northampton Proprietors' Record Book, p.1.


17. Joan Thirsk, "The Farming Regions of England," ibid., 8-14, shows clearly that it was the amount of tillable land in a contiguous area that determined the manner of farming, for "lowland" social patterns associated with common-field farming existed in pockets of fertile land within rugged regions dominated by "highland" systems. The "lowland" pattern of nucleated villages and common fields, farming as a full-time occupation, and frequent primogeniture is similar to that of early Northampton except that partible inheritance was almost universal. (In New England, eldest sons customarily received a double share of the estate, other children divided the rest equally, and girls took their share in "moveables.".) The "highland" pattern described by Thirsk consists of individuated farmsteads, "pasture farming" with some supplementary domestic or extractive industries, and partible inheritance; this pattern corresponds more closely to the organization of 18th-century Northampton, when hillier land was being used, except that partible inheritance was becoming slightly less common. (On Northampton inheritance patterns, see note 64, below.) See also Thirsk, "The Common Fields," Past & Present, No. 29 (Dec. 1964), 3-25. For an excellent description of the communalitarian aspects of open field farming, see George C. Homans, English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century (Cambridge, Mass., 1941; New York, 1970), 83-106. The long fight between advocates of open-field farming and those accustomed in England to closed-field farming which took place in Sudbury did not occur in Northampton, perhaps because few Conn. Valley settlers originally came from the closed-field areas of East Anglia and Kent. See Summer Chilton Powell, Puritan Village (Middletown, Conn., 1963).


20. The strongest statement of this ideology, and its survival in some isolated towns until the mid-18th century, is Zuckerman, Peaceable
The agrarian aspect of life in early New England has not been ade-
quately studied. Older works on general agriculture and social life--
such as Percy W. Bidwell and John I. Falconer, History of Agriculture in
the Northern United States 1620-1860 (Washington, 1925); and William B.
Weeden, Economic and Social History of New England 1620-1789, 2 Vols.
(1890; New York, 1963)--are only partially reliable. Both the Bidwell-
Falconer and Weeden studies appear to draw most of their Connecticut
Valley information from Judd, Hadley, which used many documents now lost.
Some useful information on 17th-century agriculture is contained in
Robert Walcott, "Husbandry in Colonial New England," NEQ, IX (1936), 218-
252. The best secondary source, which combines a sophisticated interpre-
tation of current research, a mass of statistical information, and even
some fascinating illustrations from contemporary woodcuts, is Henretta,

21. Among the new towns founded were Deerfield and Northfield, both
abandoned in King Philip's War and resettled near the end of the 17th
century. See George Sheldon, A History of Deerfield, Massachusetts .
, 2 Vols. (Deerfield, 1895-1896); and Josiah H. Temple and George
Sheldon, A History of the Town of Northfield (Albany, 1875). Some
Northampton men also went to Windham County, Connecticut.

22. I intend to study emigration from Northampton more fully in the
future. For information from other towns, see Grant, Kent, 101-102;
Phil J. Greven, Jr., Four Generations: Population, Land and Family in
Colonial Andover, Massachusetts (Ithaca, N.Y., 1979), 39, 123, 162-166,
211; Kenneth A. Lockridge, "The Population of Dedham, Massachusetts,
1636-1736," Economic History Review, 2nd Ser., XIX (1966), 322-324; and
Lockridge, New England Town, 64, 139-140, 143n.

23. Hampshire County Court of General Sessions of the Peace and
Inferior Court of Common Pleas, IV (1741-1745), 70, 84, 101 (microfilm
copy at Forbes Library; hereafter cited as Hampshire County Common
Pleas.) In March 1741 the town had "refused to admit" a man as an in-
habitant. Town Records, 273. The standard secondary work is Josiah H.
Benton, Warning Out in New England (Boston, 1911). The custom derived
from Tudor England, and its purpose was to ensure that poor persons did
not become public charges; a person "warned out" did not have to move
away but was legally ineligible for support out of town funds.

24. The homelot grants are recorded in the Town Records and Pro-
prietors' Records, passim.

26. Schumacher, Northern Farmer, 14, estimates the yield of new land at 20-30 bushels of wheat per acre, and that of long-used land at a mere 6 bushels per acre.


28. The Valley was a major supplier of beef and pork to the entire western-hemisphere colonial area by the time of the Revolution. Bidwell and Falconer, History of Agriculture, 109; Judd, Hadley, 363; Joseph Hawley account book quoted in Judd MSS, I, 96, 99.

29. A description and analysis of the useful of the several "economic" documents that do survive from pre-Revolutionary Northampton will be found in Appendix II. Valuation of real estate alone on tax assessment lists of 1739 (the earliest after 1676, which just records tax paid) and 1759 show a curve of distribution surprisingly unchanged from that for wealth-distribution in the 17th century; but it is impossible to extrapolate the number of acres of land of different qualities from these aggregate valuations. Some idea of what was considered desirable can be obtained by noting that the first division of land in Northampton averaged about 40 acres per man of cleared, fertile tilling land, besides a homelot, in 1661; and in the 1730 division of Southampton land, homelots were set at twenty acres and the maximum meadow at seventy more, of hilly and rocky treed land. These were both probably considered generous allotments in their day.

Average farm sizes have been reported by other authors. See Grant, Kent, 36-37; Lemon, Best Poor Man's Country, 91; Greven, Four Generations, 59, 224; Lockridge, "Land, Population and the Evolution of New England Society 1630-1790," Past & Present, No. 39 (1968), 66, 68; Rutman, Husbandmen of Plymouth, 61; Henretta, Evolution of American Society, 15. The most useful indication of the size of Northampton farms are the statistics collected by Judd for Hadley, South Hadley, Amherst, and Granby in 1771. These towns, similar geographically to Northampton, averaged almost 13a. per house tillage, almost 4a. mowing, just over 8a. meadow and pasture. The average amount of land reported utilized, 26a., produced 82.5 bushels of grain and 8.8 tons of hay. Hadley, 385-386.

30. Town Records, 158, 167-168. No official list of the Proprietors survives, and the subdivision of shares in the 18th century is too complicated to follow through the thousands of deeds recorded. The Proprietors' Record Book shows that by 1665, between 50 and 58 men were made Proprietors; one man more was admitted--the Reverend Solomon Stoddard, in 1672.

32. In the 1750s all the lands within the legal bounds of Northampton were divided among private owners, with small parcels kept specifically as Town lands, for support of the schools and the ministry. Town Records, 353-354.

33. Town Records, 37, 121. The 1700 "Long Division," with lots 6 to 70 rods wide and 2 to 4 miles long, was not used for houses and tilling until the Revolutionary era. By then, most of it had been bought up by Timothy Dwight, who sold farms in what became the village of Westhampton.

34. Town Records, 278, 281-283, 313-315; Trumbull, Northampton, I, 465-466; II, 93-95, 183-190. These grants made no significant changes in real-estate valuations at the time.

35. Town Records, 137.

36. Town Records, 264.

37. Town Records, 23, 51, 60, 69, 79, 94; Trumbull, Northampton, I, 103. Morgan, Puritan Family, 71, quotes 17th-century Puritan writers on the importance of one's "calling" being of service to the community.

38. Town Records, 23, 60.

39. Seth Pomeroy's will, written 1755, probated 1777, Hampshire County Probate Records, Box 116, No. 33.

40. Town Records, 199. The 1713 sawmill grant to Benjamin Stebbins required him to sell boards to Northampton men for a fixed low price for four years, or he would forfeit the grant.

41. Town Records, 96-97; Proprietors' Records, 21, 60, 113, 130, 139; Trumbull, Northampton, I, 312.

42. The relative functions of family and community have been discussed by a number of social historians since Bernard Bailyn's thought-provoking Education in the Forming of American Society (New York, 1960) suggested that "the Puritans quite deliberately transferred the maimed functions of the family to formal instructional institutions" (p.27). Bailyn described changes from the base-point of the "family familiar to the early colonists ... a patrilineal group of extended kinship gathered into a single household" (p.15) which shared with the "local community" and church the moral and occupational training deemed necessary (pp.16-19). By the mid-18th century, asserts Bailyn, a more "modern" family of isolated conjugal units and partible inheritances had emerged; and as family and community experienced less "interpenetration," more formal institutions of education were necessary (pp.24-25). Although
most of Bailyn's assumptions about the structure of colonial families have been invalidated by more recent research, the process of change is still usually described in generalized terms as a release of family control over its children to the wider community. Axtell, School upon a Hill, 286, describes the Puritan family, which had gathered into itself many education and religious functions in hostility to English society, as "sloughing off" these functions to church and school in New England after the 1660s. Frequently cited as part of this argument, by Larzer Ziff, Puritanism in America, among others, are the 1675 and 1679 enactments of the Mass. General Court empowering tithing-men to enforce proper behavior even within families. The family/community dichotomy seems to have been overstressed at both ends of the spectrum by this argument, however. Even "Puritan" families rarely conducted their complete religious lives within the home, without participation in some informal group, if not a gathered church; and the family task of catechizing the young was more than balanced by the child's experience with minister and community in worship services and rituals of communion and admission. When English Puritans withdrew from the wider society, moreover, they interacted with other Puritan families to make a surrogate, if not geographical, community. In the later period, on the other hand, formal schooling or apprenticeship with strangers in non-familial settings were events that rarely touched the lives of most farmers in rural communities--i.e., most families--in pre-Revolutionary New England. The few days a year, for a few years at most, that most children went to school were hardly a serious threat to the family's dominance of their young. As far as the frontier in colonial Mass. is concerned, I would agree with Henretta that "the decline in community was paralleled and to some extent offset by the rise of the family." "The Morphology of New England Society in the Colonial Period," Jo. Interdisc. Hist., II (1971), 397. At issue, of course, is the definition of "family."

43. Windham County, in northeastern Conn., was a common destination.

44. As late as 1748, Southampton had to be abandoned for the winter because of Indian raids. See the diary of the Rev. Jonathan Judd, Southampton Historical Society. The last attack on Northampton was in 1724.


47. The relative poverty of the land is shown in the 1771 tax-assessment lists that survive for Southampton and part of Northampton. Mass. Archives, Vols. 133 and 134, in alphabetical order of towns. Also testimony to the expectations of poor quality is the large scale of the portions granted in 1730. The land did not become really productive until the nineteenth century.

49. See Nathaniel Phelps' account book, Historic Deerfield Library; Main, Social Structure of Revolutionary America, 70.

50. These costs were estimated from prices in a sample of deeds; see Map C in the Appendix for a topographic map with prices indicated; compare Lemon, Best Poor Man's Country, 67-68; and Greven, Four Generations, 128-129.

51. Margaret E. Martin, Merchants and Trade of the Connecticut River Valley 1750-1820, Vol. XXIV, Nos. 1-4 of Smith College Studies in History (Northampton, 1939), 7-8, 17. See also the 1750 tax-assessment lists, Town Papers, Forbes Library. For attitudes toward commercial men, see Crowley, This Sheba, Self, passim.

52. I have found no official records of apprenticeship for Northampton in the period under study, although two craftsmen's account books found do indicate the presence of a few apprentices. The extent of formal schooling is not known; there were schools, mentioned at great intervals in the town records, but no pupil count was ever taken.


56. See Darrett B. Rutman, American Puritanism: Faith and Practice (Philadelphia, 1970), 54-55. Zuckerman, Peaceable Kingdoms, 194, asserts that men without property of their own were excluded from voting in local matters because they were assumed susceptible to "improper" influence by those on whom they were economically dependent. No evidence for this practice has been found in Northampton records.

57. The church-membership list kept by Stoddard in the front part of the church record book is arranged in four columns, (left to right) male-female-male-female. "Jonathan Edwards" is at the top of the left-most column on page 5, so the date 1727 is assigned to that entry and all subsequent ones on that page and page 43 (no church members on intervening pages) are assumed to be later. The change from Stoddard's hand to Edwards' occurs about one-third of the way down the left-hand two columns. The right-hand two columns on page 5 are each enclosed in a hand-drawn box, and the curvature of the columns indicates that columns three and four were written after one and two. An exhaustive attempt was made to identify genealogically every church member (including all Stoddard's entries); by personal information, such as marriage for women or deaths, individual entries can be identified as necessarily recorded before or
after certain dates. By this process the columns in the boxes are dated as January-to-July 1735. The first two columns are therefore 1727-1735, and the names on page 43 were entered between mid-1735 and 1746 (JE himself provides the terminal date on the list). The 1735 males averaged 21 years old in mid-1735, and the 1727-1735 group were about five years older at that time. The 1735-1746 group averaged just over eighteen years old in 1740. As far as can be determined from the Trumbull genealogy and Vital Statistics, almost every male in town by 1746 did join the church, although after 1740 there were probably more newcomers and transients who were not recorded in now-extant sources.

It should be noted that 6 men joined the church in the Edwards era along with one or more sons each, so they are listed as both "fathers" and "sons" in the statistical analyses.

58. Of the 236 born to Northampton parents, one was of the second generation (born in 1674, he was the oldest member of the cohort), 41 were of the third, 140 of the fourth, and 54 of the fifth generation. Actually, the generations are "in colony" and are the numbers assigned in the Trumbull genealogy; for most persons, it was the same number in town.

59. This measure is similar to that used by Greven, but backwards in time because the cohort of church-joiners in the 1730s is the real focus of this inquiry. Jonathan Edwards himself is included in the group, as a "non-native."

60. They had married at ages slightly under the community average at that time; see Appendix I.

61. Of the total 268 men, for 47 there is no information, 15 were only temporary residents in Northampton, 9 others left town before adulthood, 22 died between ages 17 and 46 without forming their own households, and 12 others were eliminated because they are too complicated to categorize. Among the temporary residents were Pelatiah Holbrook, a hatter's apprentice who died in 1738, and Daniel Buckingham, a Yale graduate who was probably studying theology with Jonathan Edwards. Of those who died young, all were still living in their father's house or in a separate house on the father's land; of the 22, no more than 9 were married. Among the 12 remaining uncategorized were two who were perhaps invalids and lived dependent on brothers, four who owned land in Northampton but who moved between Northampton and other towns frequently, and others involved in complicated multiple transfers of land and houses among family members.

62. One inheritance was from a grandfather; the father was dead.

63. Hampshire County Probate Records, Box 31, No. 10; Trumbull, Genealogy, 106, 114.

64. See Four Generations, which contains a superb study of inheritance patterns in Andover. Although I have not systematically analyzed patterns of inheritance in Northampton (I intend to do so in the future),
in the course of examining approximately 500 sets of estate documents for other purposes I gained the impression that by the mid-18th century, fathers tended more to leave their land to only one son and to provide for others through money or apprenticeships. Healthy fathers bought farms for their sons in other communities. Greven, Four Generations, 227, found that estates of the third generation were much less divided among sons than those of previous generations.

65. Hampshire Probate Records, Box 31, No. 17.


67. 188 known sons, born 1674-1729, married at an average age of 28.63 years; 106 known fathers, born pre-1650 to 1704, married at an average age of 25.65 years. Of the sons, 58 married at an unknown age or perhaps never married, and 22 certainly never married. Of the fathers, 42 married at an unknown age.

68. The sharing of homes has been deduced from deeds, wills, and tax-assessment lists. Of the 19 men, 8 resided with a brother for 10 or more years after inheritance, 2 for an indefinite time, 2 for 6 years or more, 1 for at least 3 years, and the other 6 either sell to or buy out their siblings quickly or leave no evidence. John Demos has written that "married siblings never resided in the same household" ("Demography and psychology in the historical study of family life: a personal report," in Laslett and Wall, eds., Household and Family, 563); but this obviously undesired practice was sometimes a necessity by the mid-18th century. In 1764 Northampton had 203 families in 186 houses, but without the lost enumeration schedules one can't separate households shared by siblings from those with multiple generations (the latter probably more common). The earliest list of houses in Northampton is the census-like 1771 property list, but only one page for Northampton survives. Mass. Archives, Vol. 133, p.239. Greven, Four Generations, 220, reports 438 families in 360 houses in Andover in 1764. Lockridge, "Population of Dedham," Ec. Hist. Rev., 2nd Ser., XIX (1966), 343n, announces that before 1736, "no less than 80 percent of adult, married men had their own homes." In this context, the 1764 Northampton figure for co-residence is low; by then, of course, large numbers of men were moving to the frontier.

69. There were very few fornication punishments in Northampton or Hampshire County, and very few "too-early" babies in Northampton. The Hampshire Common Pleas records contain only 12 cases of fornication before 1755; the most in one year was 5, in 1743. The Northampton church disciplined only one person for fornication in the same period, a man, in 1743 (Church Records, 25)--or at least no more were recorded. Tiziana Rota, "Marriage and Family Life in Northampton, Massachusetts: A Demographic Study 1690-1750" (M.A. thesis, Mt. Holyoke College, 1975), 78-80, reports the following rates of births recorded within 8 months of marriage: 1691-1710: 6% of marriages; 1711-1730: 10%; 1731-1750: 4.7%. These figures are very low compared to those reported by Daniel Scott Smith and Michael S. Hindus, "Premarital Pregnancy in America 1640-1971:
An Overview and Interpretation," Jo. Interdisc. Hist., IV (1975), 537-570, esp. 561. Based on data from a number of New England towns (reported separately pp.561-564), Smith and Hindus give the following percentage of marriages in which a child was born within 8-1/2 months: 1681-1720, 14.1%; 1721-1760, 21.2%. Greven, Four Generations, 113, found that 11.3% of first births 1700-1729 occurred less than 9 months after the marriage. John Demos, "Families in Colonial Bristol, Rhode Island: An Exercise in Historical Demography," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXV (1968), 56, reports 10% of couples marrying 1720-1740, and 49% of those marrying 1740-1760, had their first child within 8 months of the wedding. Since none of these authors measures births within more than one interval, it cannot be determined how much difference the month or half-month would make. There is no reason to believe that the ministers, magistrates, and parents of the Northampton young people were any less opposed to premarital intercourse than those elsewhere. On the other hand, there is also no reason to believe that the Northampton young adults behaved so much differently from their peers to the east. There seems to be no easy way, therefore, to reconcile the statistical differences.

Daniel Scott Smith, "Parental Power and Marriage Patterns: An Analysis of Historical Trends in Hingham, Massachusetts," Journal of Marriage and the Family, XXXV (1973), 419-428, offers statistical evidence of parental control of marriage (children marrying in birth-order) that declined after 1740. No similar data for Northampton has been obtained.


72. Hampshire Probate Records: Alvord, Box 4, No. 9; King, Box 83, No. 48; Wright, Box 165, No. 50; Miller, Box 97, No. 53.

73. Statistics on wealth before 1740 are too few and too unreliable to permit analysis of different patterns of family organization based on economic standing. See Appendix II, "Measuring Wealth."

74. A few references to children living with other families have been found in the Northampton documents, but all cases have proved to be situations of the widowhood of a childless elderly relative, the childlessness of a well-to-do farmer or craftsman whose intended heir went to live close to the property he would inherit, or the orphaning of the child. Morgan, Puritan Family, popularized the notion of children living away from home as an intended corrective for parents' affection and resulting lax discipline toward their offspring (pp.76-78). A plausible inference from the laws and advice literature, the custom has never been measured in actual extent of practice. Ziff, Puritanism in America, 43-45, quotes Cotton Mather's injunctions against excessive parental affection ("Indianizing") and attributes the putting-out system to the difficulties of enforcing discipline among mixed groups of one's own children and servants. As can be determined from Hampshire County
records, however, servants were as rare as put-out children till the mid-eighteenth century.

75. An attempt to trace land-holdings in Northampton over three generations, in order to measure such processes as consolidation, foundered on the infrequency of specific site and size information in many deeds. The deeds studied do, however, reveal that a number of men were by mid-century buying up small contiguous parcels, especially in the best tilling fields.

76. The difference in mental attitude and actual behavior between agrarian "peasants" and "entrepreneurial" craftsmen and merchants has been a common assumption of recent social history; see, for example, Boyer and Nissenbaum, Salem Possessed, 105-107. So few personal documents survive from early Northampton that this issue of attitude cannot really be discussed here. Tax data from Northampton does support the conclusion of Main that craftsmen, merchants, and professionals had the best chance to become rich in any region. Social Structure of Revolutionary America, 182, 196. They also had, it would seem, the best opportunity to display their wealth in things.

77. Town Records, 27, 101, 141.

78. Town Records, 133.


80. This scepticism about the completeness of any New England record is, of course, the main criticism of Zuckerman's Peaceable Kingdoms. My work with the original documents used by Boyer and Nissenbaum in Salem Possessed revealed that the Salem Village record books was edited more than once; the Northampton town records contain references to earlier enactments that are not in the extant book, which is a copy made in the 1750s of the actual original manuscript.

81. See, for example, Town Records, 266-267, 299, 304-305, 308, 309-310, 313.

82. Town Records, 149-150, 200.

83. Town Records, 156, 225.

84. Town Records, 245ff.

85. The change was quite similar to that described by Kenneth A. Lockridge and Alan Kreider, "The Evolution of Massachusetts Town Government, 1640 to 1740," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXIII (1966), 549-574; in Northampton the change occurred ten to twenty years later than in eastern Mass., probably because it was ten to twenty years younger than eastern towns.


CHAPTER IV


2. Elisha Williams was uncompromisingly orthodox in his theology; his 1728 Election Sermon, *Divine Grace Illustrious in the Salvation of Sinners*, insisted that grace was "wholly free and unearned." In the aftermath of the Cutler-Johnson-Browne defection to Anglicanism, Williams had to take an oath against "Arminian and Prelatical Principles" at Yale in 1725. Sibley, *Harvard Graduates*, V, 590. JE probably had to take a similar oath to become a tutor in 1724.


4. I Cor. 11:29, dated Jan. 1732/33, and Ps. 139:23-24, dated Sept. 1733, MSS at Beinecke; the latter printed in 1844 *Works*, IV, 502-528, see esp. p.515. Unless otherwise noted, all sermons hereafter identified by
Biblical text without mention of location in any other collection are at Beinecke, filed by text. Unless otherwise noted, all references hereafter to Works of Edwards are to this New York 1844 edition.

5. 3 MS on Ecc. 9:10, Beinecke; one is not dated but is probably from 1733, one is dated Dec. 1733, and one is dated Jan. 1733/34. The latter two are incomplete. A sermon on Ecc. 4:5, dated Feb. 1733, ANTS MSS, repeats the same charge of men's "negligence."

Edwards began in 1733 to date all his sermons; undated ones are called pre-1734 for this reason and because the maturing of the handwriting is very obvious. Until 1740, most sermons were fully written out, most carefully in the earliest ones. After 1740, most sermons are just outlines and are written in an increasingly careless hand that is often illegible. Practice in pulpit rhetoric permitted Edwards to preach more fluently from merely suggestive outlines; but as Wilson S. Kimmach has pointed out, critical occasions still called forth fully written-out sermons. See Kimmach's remarks in Angoff, ed., Jonathan Edwards: His Life and Influence, 51-52.


9. See Norman Pettit, The Heart Prepared: Grace and Conversion in Puritan Spiritual Life (New Haven, 1966), passim. The evidence left by other ministers is of preaching active preparation; their theoretical distinction between the works of man and those of God is not always as clear as Stoddard's was—but then we only have Stoddard's own printed works and not his preaching manuscripts.


12. Stoddard and Edwards both used the "light" metaphor for grace, with a slight yet important difference in terminology. Stoddard's saint would be filled with light and "know God's glory," whereas Edwards' saint would have a "sense" of the loveliness of God's holiness. Much has been made of Edwards' language as an indication of his (Lockean) "modernity," but there really seems to be little difference between them as Calvinists. Both saw grace as working through the "heart" to the "understanding." Stoddard's strongest use of the "light" metaphor is in the Treatise Concerning Conversion, 30-35. My interpretation of SS's doctrine contradicts that put forth by James G. Blight in "Solomon Stoddard's Safety of Appearing and the Dissolution of the Puritan Faculty Psychology," Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences, X (1974), 238-250. Blight mistakenly interprets Stoddard's distrust of the
rational faculties of *unconverted* men as an indictment of rationality altogether.


19. See the two sermons on Job 1:5, not dated by pre-1734.


23. Ecc. 7:6, dated Nov. 1734, "lecture day night meeting."


25. The later usage was closer to the modern, psychologists' distinction between guilt and shame, although Edwards was hardly precise.


29. *Ibid.*, 149. The "Justification" sermons were printed, as one, with four others preached thereafter on the same theme, as *Five Discourses on Important Subjects* (Boston, 1738); reprinted in *Works*, IV,


31. Ibid., 102-128.

32. Ibid., 128-132.

33. Faithful Narrative, in Goen, Great Awakening, 149.


36. Compare the sermon on Ps. 139:23-24, dated Sept. 1733; printed in Works, IV, 502-528. It is a catalogue of many sins, but done with a wordiness and elaboration of the circumstances of sin that contrasts with the rapid-fire trenchancy of the later sermon. The frequent use of "we" and "there are many persons who," rather than the inquisitorial consistent "you" used later, dissipates the emotional punch.

37. Works, IV, 235.

38. Hopkins, Life of Edwards, 52. See also Dwight, Travels, IV, 230.


40. Cedric B. Cowing, "Sex and Preaching in the Great Awakening," American Quarterly, XX (1968), 624-644, among other (and less plausible) suggestions for the popularity of revival doctrines, points out that anger at the apparent injustice of God's requirements, as measured by common sense, may have served to heighten the susceptibility of emotionally stable men to the ultimate appeal of fear. William Sargant's Battle for the Mind (London, 1957) cites the usefulness of anger as a wedge into the mind in classic brainwashing techniques.

41. Works, IV, 251.


43. I Thess. 2:16, dated May 1735; in Works, IV, 280-286. The theme was the flight from Sodom, a favorite with Puritan preachers.

44. "Pressing into the Kingdom," Works, IV, 392.

45. Ibid., 396.

46. Ibid., 397. See also I Thess. 2:16, ibid., 280-286.
47. See Chapter I, above. Harold P. Simonson has commented, aptly, that "it was not Edwards' intrepid defense of Calvinism per se that made his leadership during the Awakening most notable; it was rather his profound conviction that Calvinist theology was experientially true." Theologian of the Heart, 12-13.

48. Richard Bushman's psychoanalytic interpretations of JE's conversion ("Jonathan Edwards and Puritan Consciousness," Jo. Sci. St. Rel., V [1966], 383-396; "Jonathan Edwards as a Great Man," Soundings, LII [1969], 15-46) seem to stop short of a resolution by one step. Bushman plausibly reconstructs the elements of Oedipal drama in JE's conversion and points out that the climax was submission to a father-figure God. But Edwards can only do this, according to his retrospective "Personal Narrative," when he sees the beauty of God's power. (See note 1-31.) This is as far as Bushman takes us. What is that vision of beauty, however, but an abstraction from a personalized God/Father to a less anthropomorphized God/Force? Throughout Edwards' mature writings there seems to be a progressive abstracting of the image of God, until in True Virtue (written in the mid-1750s), God is defined as "Being in general." Submission to an abstraction--beauty or Being--would be exempt from the oedipal fears surrounding submission to a father-figure, who might punish. As I will argue in Chapter VI, the famous sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" seems to mark a major transition in JE's description of God: in "Sinners," the deity is passive, and man's punishment will be to fall into hell of his own weight.

49. I realize that I am oversimplifying and exaggerating the Arminian doctrine that man had preserved some virtue in spite of Adam's fall, but I am dealing with the possible "popular" reception of that theological subtlety as well as Edwards' own doctrines.

50. For an argument that the New England theological mainstream was consciously and genuinely Calvinist and not crypto-Arminian before the Awakening, see Gerald J. Goodwin, "The Myth of 'Arminian-Calvinism' in Eighteenth Century New England," NEQ, XLIV (1968), 213-237. Goodwin, like so many scholars of theology, only contributes to a circular argument by trying to put philosophical labels on what may have been merely circumstantial differences in stress when doctrine was preached to the masses.

51. Among the studies of the local history of the Awakening are J. M. Bumsted, "Revivalism and Separatism in New England: The First Society of Norwich, Connecticut, as a Case Study," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXIV (1967), 588-612; and those listed in note 55, below.


53. In his influential study of changes in "character and the
social order" in 18th-century Connecticut, Richard L. Bushman placed
great emphasis on the guilt engendered by the ambitions of Puritans who
took advantage of a rapidly expanding economy. See Bushman, From Puritan
to Yankee (New York, 1970), 187-195. The eastern part of the state was
the most recently developed; there the resulting guilt was perhaps
strongest, and there the revivals of 1740-1743 were most intense.
Although one might question the degree to which "Puritan" anti-commercial
values were still powerful in men who had behaved in a more "entrepre-
neurial" manner for at least half a century, and although Bushman does not
attempt to integrate the "resolution" found in conversion with the sub-
sequent resumption of entrepreneurial activities, his theory of "guilt"
remains the most satisfactory published attempt to deal with the Awaken-
ing as a socio-psychological phenomenon. Bushman did not, however,
report on the lives of particular converts. The rather young average age
for converts in Northampton and other communities (see note 55, below)
suggests another psychological drama at work in those "awakened." Young
men in their late teens and early twenties, although too young to have
had many clashes with legal authorities or to be guilty for economic
success, did face problems of incipient rebellion against authority. At
that stage in their lives, any remaining "Puritan" moral economic values
would have been focused through their parents, and the tensions a young
man might have felt in deciding to be a farmer or an entrepreneur, a
stay-at-home or a pioneer, a "Puritan" or a "Yankee," would have trans-
lated easily into conflict with parents.

54. For a medical analysis of the throat distemper, see Ernest
Caulfield, A True History of . . . the Throat Distemper . . . (New Haven,
Institute Historical Collections, CVIII (1972), 120-130, points out the
rise in church-joining in Andover during the years of earthquake and
epidemic, although there was no Calvinist "revival" in those churches.

55. The Northampton ages at church-joining (see Chapter III, note
57, page 224) are not far out of line with average ages reported by in-
vestigators of other communities. In a study of the Awakening in the
northern Connecticut Valley, Kevin Sweeney found that men joining the
churches of Longmeadow, Suffield, Northampton, Deerfield, and Springfield
First Parish averaged twenty-one to twenty-six years old during the
revivals of 1735 and 1741-1742; joiners in non-revival years were seven
to ten years older. Sweeney, "Unruly Saints: Religion and Society in the
River Towns of Massachusetts, 1700-1750" (Honors thesis, Williams College,
1972), 136. In Andover, which did not have a revival during the Great
Awakening, males joined the two local churches in full communion in their
mid-thirties between 1711 and 1729 and about ten years younger in 1730-
1749; the average age of those "owning the covenant" was about twelve and
four years younger, respectively. Greven, "Youth, Maturity, and Relig-
the Awakening the average age at full-communion church-joining was 39.7
years for men; it fell to 29.9 years during 1741-1742. J. M. Bumsted,
"Religion, Finance, and Democracy in Massachusetts: The Town of Norton as
Norwich, Conn., the average age of male church joiners was 30.3 in the years 1718-1740, and 25.2 years in the Awakening of 1741-1744. Gerald F. Moran, "Conditions of Religious Conversion in the First Society of Norwich, Connecticut, 1718-1744," Jo. Soc. Hist., V (1971-1972), 331-343. In the Second Church of Windham, Conn., formed by Andover men (see Greven, Four Generations) and other immigrants, men who joined the church during the Awakening averaged 20.9 years old; their fathers had averaged almost eleven years older when they had joined the church in the seventeen years preceding the revival. William F. Willingham, "Religious conversion in the Second Society of Windham, Connecticut, 1723-1743: a case study," Societas--A Review of Social History, VI (1976), 199-119. In Woodbury, Conn., the mean age for men admitted to the church during the revival years 1739-1742 ranged between 21.2 and 22.9 years, whereas the lowest mean for males admitted in previous periods was 28.3 years old. James Walsh, "The Great Awakening in the First Congregational Church of Woodbury, Connecticut," WMO, 3rd Ser., XXVIII (1971), 543-562.

CHAPTER V

1. JE wrote his first description of the revival to Benjamin Colman of Boston on May 30, 1735, with a postscript dated June 3. JE's copy of this letter, the only original extant, is in ANTS MSS and is printed in full in Goen, Great Awakening, 99-110. For the further history of the Narrative, see ibid., 32-46. No other eye-witness account of events in Northampton survives except some memories quoted in Timothy Dwight's Travels, cited in the previous chapter, and the diary of Deacon Ebenezer Hunt of Northampton, which contains information corroborating Edwards' account, including a fascinating list of persons supposed to be converted that parallels Edwards' church-member list. The original diary MS has not been found; extracts are in the Judd MSS, I, 23-28.

2. An interesting example of cynicism is quoted in Stenerson, "Anglican Critique," WMO, 3rd Ser., XXX (1973), 484-485: Cutler repeated to Gibson a story from Samuel Johnson of Greenwich about the disturbance in his parish in 1735, during which "the Humor... took with" a love-crazed old maid and four or five young women, two of whom married shortly thereafter and gave birth within six or seven months.

3. Sabbath-night carousing was a perennial worry to religious leaders of Mass. In 1712 they got the General Court to order special fines and punishments for those "disporting, playing," or otherwise "making a disturbance" on the "evening following the Lord's day." Acts and Resolves, I, 681. In 1716 Cotton Mather preached a special sermon on the issue, in which he commented that Sunday nights were notorious as times of great revelry; see his A Good Evening Accommodated with a Good Employment. Or, Some Directions how the Lord's-day Evening may be spent Religiousy and Advantageously. With Perswasive to spend it So (Boston, 1716), 10. In Oct. 1733 Edwards and two others were appointed by the Hampshire Assoc. to draw up an address to the county court to ask for suppression of the
"growing vice and immorality, and particularly tavern-haunting, and disorderly night-walking, especially night-walking and company-keeping on the night after the Sabbath." Hamp. Assoc. Records, 12. The clergy had also discussed a number of fornication cases earlier that day. Their petition never appeared in the county court records.


5. Faithful Narrative, 147.

6. Ibid., 148.

7. Quoted in Ziff, Puritanism in America, 114.

8. Axtell, School upon a Hill, 45-46. By the time he wrote Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival in 1742, JE felt that evening religious meetings of boys and girls together should be avoided, since even after scrupulous supervision during the meetings, youngsters would "naturally consort together in couples for other than religious purposes" on the way home--and would go to the meetings for the sake of the "company-keeping" that followed. JE's Thoughts were published in 1743, reprinted in Goen, Great Awakening, 289-303, quotation 463-469.


13. Revelations 14:2, dated Nov. 7, 1734, printed in London 1839 Works, 1, 913-917; Col. 3:16, dated June 17, 1736, Beinecke. See also Faithful Narrative, 151 and note. Suspicion that JE was siding with the young people against their parents is reflected in Cutler's gossip to Gibson in 1739, in which he repeats a story that JE took the part of a young man who would not obey his father's commands to cut wood for the family, by saying the boy had to "get through" the "extraordinary influence of the Spirit" before he could do his normal chores. Stenerson, "Anglican Critique," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXX (1973), 487.


15. Although the stories of Abigail Hutchinson and Phebe Bartlett will be treated in this essay as though they were literally true, suspicions about the "artistic license" possibly taken in the descriptions of their conversions is encouraged by two sources. The first is the apparent convention of dramatic childhood conversion, usually ending in death, created or promoted by James Janeway's A Token for Children (London,

16. Faithful Narrative, 199-205. William J. Scheick, The Writings of Jonathan Edwards: Theme, Motif, and Style (College Station, Texas, 1975), 43, cites the Bartlett family as a potential example of the failure of "family government" when Phebe takes charge--except that the proper family hierarchy is restored and Phebe's mother becomes "a prominent figure." I see no evidence for such a "happy" ending for the Bartletts in the Narrative.

17. Of course, to Puritans, the bond between church members, modeled on that between Christ and the saint, was always theoretically stronger than mere "natural" ties. For examples of practice, see Larzer Ziff, "The Social Bond of the Church Covenant," American Quarterly, X (1958), 454-462.

18. Faithful Narrative, 149-151.

19. Ibid., 161. That the congregation was not unanimous is shown by a court case from the following spring, in which Bernard Bartlett, a temporary resident of Northampton frequently charged with vagrancy (and no known relation to Phebe), pleaded guilty to publishing "a libel tending to the defamation of [JE] by saying that the said Edwards was as great an Instrument as the Devil had on this side [of] hell to bring souls to hell." Hampshire Common Pleas, III, 57.

20. Faithful Narrative, 158.

21. Emory Elliott, Power and the Pulpit in Puritan New England (Princeton, 1975), esp. 7, 14, 24-61, sees the widespread concern with young people--their exclusion from the church until the Half-Way Covenant was accepted, their inability to achieve the high emotional pitch of conversion experiences so dramatic that they could be displayed to a congregation of suspicious judges--as a reflection on the psycho-social dilemma of the second generation of ministers in New England. Their fathers had been pioneering giants and "resisting" patriarchs, as had many lay fathers, but they also provided a definition of ministerial success in gathering converts that their sons strove in vain to imitate in the changed religious climate of the late 17th century. Elliott cites (p.194) Cotton Mather's striking success with the young people of Boston, including his organizing youth-groups, after his own terrible struggle against the paternal image. If Edwards had a paternal image to fight against, it was Solomon Stoddard rather than his biological father.
22. Faithful Narrative, 160.
23. Ibid., 167.
24. Ibid., 161.
26. Ibid., 169-171.
27. Ibid., 173.
28. Ibid., 180.
29. Ibid., 179.
30. See especially A Divine and Supernatural Light. Roland Andre Delattre, Beauty and Sensibility in the Thought of Jonathan Edwards: An Essay in Aesthetics and Theological Ethics (New Haven, 1968), argues that the objective is more important than the subjective in the thought of Jonathan Edwards. Edwards himself would probably have said the same; but those persuaded at all by Perry Miller's view of the Lockean influence on Edwards would have to say that the essence of Edwards' psychology was that the objective was defined subjectively. Delattre ignores, as do most other scholars, the pastoral aspect of Edwards' thought; and what distinguishes JE as a pastor was the degree to which his 1730s definition of conversion emphasized a very self-consciously subjective state of mind. To point out that Edwards defined God and His attributes as objective things is hardly a useful insight into any religious leader (or believer).
32. Faithful Narrative, 175.
33. Ibid., 175-176.
34. Ibid., 205-206. The name, Thomas Stebbins, and date, March 25, are given in Deacon Hunt's journal, quoted in Judd HSS, I, 24. Stebbins became deranged about 15 years later and at last drowned himself after at least one more unsuccessful suicide attempt. Trumbull, Genealogy, 450.
35. Faithful Narrative, 206.
36. Ibid. Deacon Hunt's journal says that Hawley lived for half an hour but did not speak. Northampton tradition is that his wife was turning cheeses (on the Sabbath?) and would not come till she had finished.
37. She was Lydia Marshall from Windsor. There is no other evidence of mental disorder in her family.
38. Faithful Narrative, 206.
39. Ibid., 207.

40. Ibid., 191, 198, 199, 200, 203.

41. Ibid., 205-206.

42. Ibid., 208, 211. The Breck controversy will be discussed later in this chapter; the meetinghouse controversy will be discussed in Ch. VI.

43. JE to Thomas Foxcroft, May 24, 1753, Beinecke.

44. Faithful Narrative, 209.

45. Ibid., 174.

46. Ibid., 190. Timothy Cutler commented in 1739 that Stoddard's "sense of the operations of grace, very much resembles what we find in his grandson's book [the Faithful Narrative]." Stenerson, "Anglican Critique," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXX (1973), 481.

47. Faithful Narrative, 155-156, 205.

48. Ibid., 210.

49. JE to Rev. Eleazar Wheelock of Lebanon, Conn., Oct. 9, 1740, MS at Forbes Library.

50. The Hampshire JPs were censured by the General Court for interfering with a proper ecclesiastical council. See Mass. Bay House of Representatives, Journals 1735-1736, XIII (Boston, 1932), 114-115, 145-146, 151-152, 184, 185, 187.

51. The major sources on the Breck affair are the following: Hamp. Assoc. Records, 5, 14, 17; Common Pleas, III, 80, 133; Sibley, Harvard Graduates, VIII, 661-680, on Breck; and the following tracts:
   (Samuel Hopkins and JE) A Narrative of the Proceedings of those Ministers of the County of Hampshire &c. That have disapproved of the late Measures taken in order to the Settlement of Mr. Robert Breck, in the Pastoral Office in the first Church in Springfield, With a Defence of their Conduct in that Affair. Written by Themselves (Boston, 1736).
   (Breck?) An Examination of and some Answer to a Pamphlet, intituled, A Narrative and Defence of the Proceedings of the Ministers of Hampshire, who Disapproved of Mr. Breck's Settlement at Springfield. With a Vindication of those Ministers and Churches that approv'd of and acted in the Settlement of said Mr. Breck (Boston, 1736).
   (JE) A Letter to the Author of the Pamphlet Called an Answer to the Hampshire Narrative (Boston, 1737).

The best secondary account is Foster, "Hampshire County," 55-77. There are also accounts in Green, Springfield, and Dwight, Life, 125-126.

52. The Hampshire Narrative, 78-79.


54. Goer., Great Awakening, Introduction, 35, quotes a Colman letter which asserts a belief that JE wrote the November 1736 expanded account of the revival expressly for the international audience.

CHAPTER VI

1. JE to Benjamin Colman, May 19, 1737, Colman Papers, MHS.

2. JE to Benjamin Colman, May 2, 1738, Stoddard Collection, MHS.


4. Deacon Ebenezer Hunt Diary, Judd MSS, I, 27.

5. Described by JE to an unidentified recipient, March 19, 1737, in Dwight, Life, 139-140, MS not found.


8. Town Records, 257, 258.


10. After the comments in Chapters IV and V about the importance of the young people in the revival, and their new role as leaders of community manners and morals, I cannot resist pointing out the symbolism of the gallery collapse of 1737, in which the young people came crashing down on the heads of their parents. In other Valley towns, including East Windsor, couples seem not to have sat together until mid-century or later. See Judd, Hadley, 319-320; John Montague Smith, History of Sunderland (Greenfield, 1899), 53-54; S. Windsor Records, 29; Stoughton, "Windsor Farmes", 100.

11. The 1737 seating plan is printed as an insert in Trumbull,
Northampton, II, following p. 75. The 1739 tax list has been used to calculate the estates of all men seated on the ground floor. Pews were more honorific than seats, and even the pews were apparently divided into more and less prestigious ranges. Some pews, farther from the pulpit and therefore less desirable, held only women; their husbands sat in the gallery. 57 men sat in the pews and 1739 estates are known for 53: all are in the top 75% of taxpayers, 92.5% are in the top half, 71.7% are in the top quarter, and 26.4% are in the top tenth. To look at the divisions from another perspective, the 18 richest men in town, and 31 of the richest 35 men, sat in pews.

12. All 7 of the men who had daughters sitting with them were in the top quarter of taxpayers, and 5 of them were in the top tenth. Two women, one a widow, the other married to a man who sat in another pew, also had daughters sitting with them; the married woman's husband was ranked in category III out of XX. The daughters in question were 11 in number and ranged in age from 16 to 43 with an average age of 25.


14. The control of family over wealth and trade was mentioned in Chapter III. There was, of course, a tradition among English gentry to sit in family pews in the village church; but the rest of the seats seem not to have been divided on the basis of sex, age, or rank. Philippe Ariès and other writers have pointed out that in the 17th and 18th centuries it was the upper-middle or middle class who were the first to be oriented symbolically into a "family" as we know it today.

15. Job 1:5, n.d. but early, Beinecke; Luke 17:34, n.d., ANTS MSS. When in Oct. 1737 and April 1738 the Hampshire Assoc. discussed the current sickness among children in the Valley as a punishment from God, they decided that their sin was "immoderate love" to their children and "indulgence" by parents, as well as showing greed by "hoarding up" material wealth for their children. Hamp. Assoc. Records, 22-27.

16. MS at Beinecke; copy (19th century?) in ANTS MSS.


18. Most of Edwards' sermons, unfortunately, contain no statements that have any obvious reference to the circumstances of his congregation. Somewhere along the line of increasing veneration as America's first great philosopher, Edwards acquired the reputation of being oblivious to the temporal world except as it illustrated Holy Writ. The major contribution to this school of thought was Van Wyck Brooks' essay on Edwards in America's Coming of Age. Perry Miller put up a pallid argument against this reputation in "Jonathan Edwards' Sociology of the Great Awakening," NEQ, XXI (1948), 50-77, but then went on to say in his full-length biography that "the real life of Jonathan Edwards was the life of the mind." Jonathan Edwards, xi. Gerhard T. Alexis, "Jonathan Edwards
and the Theocratic Ideal," Church History, XXXV (1966), 328-343, asserts that JE's pre-millennialist outlook worked against social considerations. I hope that this dissertation reveals a greater mutual involvement between JE and the "real" world than previous biographers have perceived.


20. Town Records, 262.


22. Genesis 39:12, Beinecke, marked March 1738 and March 1757; in Works, IV, 585-600.

23. The essence of JE's mid-1730s style seems caught in the doctrine from a June 1735 sermon: "the bare consideration, that God is God, may well be sufficient to still all objections and opposition against the divine sovereign dispensations." Psalms 46:10, Beinecke, in London 1839 Works, II, 107-110.


25. Beinecke, n.d., probably from late 1730s because partly outlined and containing internal references to previous revival in Northampton. Another sermon explicit in its attempts to terrify is on Psalms 34:11, Beinecke, for a "private meeting of children, July 1741."

26. The text was Deuteronomy 32:33. Two other sermons on the same text, undated and probably early, lack the dramatic impact of the later version. The publication of 1741 was expanded from a MS labeled June and July 1741, Northampton and Enfield, respectively. All MSS at Beinecke. The differences between the MS and published versions, showing the attempt to heighten the image of God's wrath and control, are discussed in Franklin B. Dexter, "The Manuscripts of Jonathan Edwards," MHS Proc., 2nd Ser., XV (1902), 6; and in Ralph G. Turnbull, Jonathan Edwards the Preacher (Grand Rapids, 1958), 100-101.

27. JE defended his use of terror most straightforwardly in The Distinguishing Marks (Boston, 1741), in Goen, Great Awakening, 248. Early 20th-century historians saw JE as the last American Puritan, whose hellfire preaching was the key to his anachronism in an era of enlightenment. Vernon L. Parrington found JE's own conversion to be an un-Puritan "transcendental" experience of the "inner light," which nevertheless did not keep him from turning his great intellect to the "ignoble ends" of traditional theology. But JE unwittingly doomed the Calvinism that "lay like a heavy weight upon the soul of New England": the "brutal grotesqueries of those dogmas" had only to be exposed to the "common view" to be discredited forever. See Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, Vol. I: The Colonial Mind, 1620-1800 (New York, 1927), 158-159. In the same vein, Henry Bamford Parkes applied a "psychological"


29. See, for example, Ezek. 22:14, "The Future Punishment of the Wicked Unavoidable and Intolerable," MS at Beinecke labeled April 1741; in Works, IV, 234-265, esp. 260. In discussing the lack of interest in either heaven or hell shown by 17th-century English minister Ralph Josselin, Alan Macfarlane draws from R. W. Firth, Elements of Social Organization (London, 1964), p.209, the idea that concepts of the afterlife tend to be undetailed about punishment for sinners when society has effective social controls--"among them the belief, shared by Josselin, that sin and physical misfortune are somehow linked." Alan Macfarlane, The Family Life of Ralph Josselin, a Seventeenth-Century Clergyman: An Essay in Historical Anthropology (Cambridge, 1970), 167-168. New England in the 18th century was rapidly losing traditional social controls in many areas, economic development undercut man's belief in his own depravity, and the popularity of terror preaching grew apace.

30. An interesting reflection on the psychological impact of Sinners can be found in Scheick, The Writings of Jonathan Edwards, 76-78: "Edwards wanted the congregation to feel as well as to understand that the unregenerate self lacks any stabilizing context for identity. The wicked walk amid shadows, as if in a dream, where even the apparent solidity of the earth beneath their feet would dissolve upon their waking. They are out of touch with God, Who is reality. . . . nature fails to provide man with any reality by means of which he can attain genuine self-identity. . . . Subjectivity is all man has. . . ."


33. JE's letter to Whitefield was found in the Methodist Archive and Research Center, London, by Henry Abelove and published in UWO, 3rd Ser., XXIX (1972), 487-489. In a letter of Oct. 9, 1740 to the Rev. Eleazar Wheelock of Lebanon, Conn., JE spoke of his hopes for Whitefield's success in Northampton; MS in Forbes Library.
34. The only immediate account of the visit is in Whitefield's diary, published as A Continuation of the Reverend Mr. Whitefield's Journal (London, 1741); it can be found in George Whitefield's Journals (London, 1960), 476-477. JE described the visit briefly in his letter of Dec. 12, 1743, to Thomas Prince, published in The Christian History (Boston, 1744), 367-381; reprinted in Dwight, Life, 160-170; and in Goen, Great Awakening, 544-557. The effects of Whitefield upon the "common people" can be seen in the Journal of Nathan Cole, MS at CHS, excerpts published under the title "Spiritual Travels" in Alan Heimert and Perry Miller, eds., The Great Awakening: Documents Illustrating the Crisis and Its Consequences (Indianapolis and New York, 1967), 183-186; and in Richard L. Bushman, ed., The Great Awakening: Documents on the Revival of Religion, 1740-1745 (New York, 1970), 66-71.

35. JE to Prince, in Goen, Great Awakening, 545.

36. JE rode with him to East Windsor, to the home of Timothy Edwards. George Whitefield's Journals, 478-479. GW's diary contains no mention of a supposed conversation with JE that became the ground for a long, bitter debate between JE and Rector Thomas Clap of Yale about whether or not GW had told JE that he intended to bring young men from England to supplant New England parsons who were "unconverted." The story is told in Dwight, Life, 209-210. According to Perry Miller, this quarrel completely severed JE's connection with Yale. Jonathan Edwards, 197.

37. JE to Prince, in Goen, Great Awakening, 545.

38. Ibid., 546-547.

39. Ibid., 548. See also JE to Joseph Bellamy, Jan. 21, 1742, MS at Princeton Univ. Library. In a March 9, 1741, letter to Colman (MS in Colman Papers, MHS), JE wrote that "all our children that are capable of religious reflections have been under remarkable impressions, and I can't but think that Salvation is come into my house, in several instances: I hope that my four eldest children (the youngest of them between six & seven years of age) have been savingly wrought upon, the eldest some years ago."

The youngest persons listed on Edwards' church-membership list were perhaps about twelve. The list is not dated, except marked "i746" at its end by JE; part of it can be attributed to the period between late 1735 and April 1739 (one man is known to have been recorded by that date, for he then left town)--the youngest known person entered by early 1739 was born in Oct. 1730. For the entire list of members between 1736 and 1746, known birthdates for males are as follows: 4 born 1700 or earlier, 10 between 1701 and 1714, 19 in 1715 through 1719, 50 in 1720 through 1724, 3 in 1725, 8 in 1726, 3 in 1727, 1 each in 1728 and 1730.

Many testimonies printed in The Christian History mention the particular involvement of young people in other towns, and the use of Edwards' Faithful Narrative as a model for these reports is common. For examples, see The Christian History, pp. 188, 191, 200, 242, 253, 255, 260, 395, 432.

41. Edwards was on tour in the Connecticut Valley with a number of other ministers; Stephen Williams' diary gives names and places. JE went to Leicester, Mass., for two weeks in the early spring of 1742: see Sarah Edwards' narrative of her own awakening during that time, in Dwight, Life, 171-186 (MS lost). While JE was absent, there seem to have been religious meetings almost every day in Northampton, with a half-dozen ministers participating at one time or another.

The threat presented by the awakening to the power and self-confidence of established ministers is outlined in Youngs, God's Messengers, 120-141. Youngs concludes that ministers ultimately resolved their problem of legitimacy by coming to see themselves as drawing power from their services to the people—from the "consent of the governed."

42. JE to Wheelock, June 9, 1741; in Dwight, Life, 148.

43. JE to Joseph Bellamy, Jan. 21, 1742 (MS at Princeton), describes religion as then "decaying" and himself as praying to God to "improve me as an instrument to revive his work."

44. JE to Prince, in Goen, Great Awakening, 549. See also Dwight, Life, 171-186, passim. When Buell was installed at East Hampton, Long Island, in 1746, Edwards preached the main sermon, published as The Church's Marriage to her Sons, and to her God . . . (Boston, 1746).

45. Sarah's jealousy of Buell and the other ministers visiting Northampton in JE's absence in shown clearly in her conversion narrative in Dwight, Life, 174-175, 178-179.

46. JE to Prince, in Goen, Great Awakening, 550. He also noted (p.555) that an influx of visitors from other communities, where there was greater "visible commotion," inspired Northamptonites to imitate their "vehement zeal."

47. Doolittle wrote An Enquiry into Enthusiasm (Boston, 1743); The Late Religious Commotions in New England Considered (Boston, 1743) is attributed to Rand by Edwin S. Gaustad in "Charles Chauncy and the Great Awakening," Bibliographical Society of America Papers, XLV (1951), 125-135. Rand was probably also the author of a hostile address to
Whitefield from a group of Hampshire Ministers in 1745: see The Testimony of the North Association [of Hartford County] ... And An Address from Some of the Ministers in the County of Hampshire ... (Boston, 1745). The ministerial debate over the Awakening was conducted largely in group statements, of which these four are the most important: The Testimony of the Pastors of the Churches ... May 25, 1743, Against Several Errors in Doctrine, and Disorders in Practice ... (Boston, 1743); The Testimony and Advice of an Assembly of Pastors ... at a Meeting in Boston July 7, 1743, Occasioned by the late Happy Revival of Religion in many Parts of the Land (Boston, 1743; also printed in The Christian History, pp. 159ff.); The Testimony and Advice of a Number of Laymen Respecting Religion ... September 12, 1743 (Boston, 1743); and The Testimony and Advice of a Number of New England Ministers met at Boston Sept. 25, 1745. Professing the ancient Faith of these Churches ... (Boston, 1745). Both Harvard and Yale issued manifestoes against Whitefield in 1745.

48. The Distinguishing Marks is reprinted in Goen, Great Awakening, 214-288. It was with this Commencement address that JE solidified his leadership of the pro-revival group in Hampshire County. Eight days earlier, he had preached the funeral sermon for his uncle, William Williams of Hatfield, formal leader of the Hampshire clergy since Stoddard's death. The Resort and Remedy of those that are Bercaved by the Death of an Eminent Minister (Boston, 1741).

49. Distinguishing Marks, in Goen, Great Awakening, 226-248.

50. Ibid., 249-258.

51. Ibid., 260-269, quotation 260.

52. Ibid., 287-288.

53. According to the count of Separatist churches published by Goen in Revivalism and Separatism (map following p.114), there were schisms in the neighborhood of Northampton only at Sunderland (1749), Westfield (1748)--both Baptists groups who moved to Vermont in the early 1760s--and Suffield, Enfield, Somers, and Stafford (all in Conn.) Three Valley ministers had trouble with their congregations when they differed from the local majority opinion on the revivals. Benjamin Doolittle of Northfield was accused of Arminianism about 1738 but kept his pulpit until his death in 1749. Dexter, Yale Graduates, I, 151-154; Hamp. Assoc. Records, 29-32. Conservative Grindall Rawson of South Hadley was forced out in 1744. Sibley, Harvard Graduates, VIII, 476-480. William Rand of Sunderland, the staunchest Old Light in the upper Valley, was ejected from his pulpit in 1745. Smith, History of Sunderland, 60-62.

Most of the ministers in the upper Valley were friendly toward the revival although they shared Edwards' caution. In May 1742 ministers and lay representatives of 17 churches in the region gathered to pronounce a favorable verdict on the revival. A Copy of the Resolves of a Council of Churches, Met at Northampton, May 11, 1742, to Consider what may be done
to promote religion, and good order in the Churches (Boston, 1742). An interesting comment on the "radicalism" of this document in the minds of more conservative men is in Thomas Clap's letter to Solomon Williams, June 8, 1742, in Nissenbaum, ed., Great Awakening at Yale College, 170. The Old Lights assumed the Resolves were Edwards' work, and he was "scarce allowed to be a good man."

Edwards actively sought a rapprochement between the parties. See, for example, "is letter to the Rev. Elnathan Whitman of Hartford, Feb. 9, 1744, in Dwight, Life, 204-209; and Thomas Clap's letter to Jonathan Dickinson, in Nissenbaum, ed., Great Awakening at Yale College, 117-118. JE befriended a number of young men whose New Light sympathies brought them into open conflict with Rector Clap of Yale, the most famous of whom was David Brainerd. Brainerd was expelled from Yale in 1741 for saying that Tutor Whittlesey had no more grace than a particular chair; he became an Indian missionary and died of tuberculosis in Edwards' house in 1748. Edwards preached Brainerd's funeral sermon, True Saints... are Present with the Lord (Boston, 1747), and edited Brainerd's memoirs, An Account of the Life of the Late Reverend Mr. David Brainerd... (Boston, 1749).

54. Some Thoughts... was first published in Boston in early 1743 and is reprinted in Goen, Great Awakening, 290-530. See also Goen's p. 65, n.9, for important information on the dates of writing and publication.


56. Edwards' Thoughts were answered by Boston Old Light Charles Chauncy's Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New-England... (Boston, 1743). Chauncy charged the awakening with descent from the Antinomianism of the 1630s and wrote at great length against itinerancy and emotional extremism; his major point, on pp. 323-329, was that "passion" must be governed by the "understanding." JE's moderate position between extremisms is outlined in Conrad Cherry, The Theology of Jonathan Edwards: A Reappraisal (Garden City, N.Y., 1966), 164-176. JE's contribution to the development of religious psychology in America is discussed in John E. Smith's introduction to the Yale edition of The Religious Affections, Vol. II of Edwards' Works (New Haven, 1959).

57. Some Thoughts, in Goen, Great Awakening, 297-298. See also pp. 386-387.

58. Ibid., 332-335.

59. Ibid., 335.

60. The "problem" of the relationship of the "Personal Narrative"
to Edwards' more contemporary accounts of his conversion was discussed in Chapter I. The "Narrative" is in Faust and Johnson, Selections, 57-72.

61. The definitive modern edition is that edited by John E. Smith for Yale University Press in 1959, hereafter cited as Religious Affections. The treatise was expanded from sermons preached in 1742 and 1743.

62. Dividing the soul into two traditional "faculties," the "understanding" ("perception and speculation") and the "inclination" (called "will" where governing actions and called "heart" when expressed through the mind), Edwards asserted that vigorous (sometimes physically sensible) exercises of the inclination are "affections." Religious Affections, 95-97.

63. Ibid., 118.

64. Ibid., 120.

65. Ibid., Part III, 197-450.

66. JE very clearly insisted that Christian life was a sign of spiritual merit, not the price of it, so his doctrines were not Arminian; see ibid., 455-459.


68. Religious Affections, 181. This passage contains the reference to Stoddard's treatise on Conversion (p. 78 of 1735 ed.); see also p. 460.

69. Ibid., 182, 193. Among the qualities evidencing true conversion in the "case study" of a person (Sarah) in Thoughts on the Revival was "a peculiar sensible aversion to a judging others that were professing Christians of good standing in the visible church. . . . though before, under smaller discoveries and feeble exercises of divine affection, there had been felt a disposition to censure and condemn others." Some Thoughts, in Goen, Great Awakening, 335.

70. Religious Affections, 420.

71. Ibid., 412-413.

72. Ibid., 416-417.

73. Edwards described the ministerial qualifications in his 1744 ordination sermon for Robert Abercrombie at Pelham, The True Excellency of a Minister of the Gospel (Boston, 1744), 12; and in his unpublished 1747 sermon at the ordination of Joseph Ashley in Sunderland, on
Zech 4:12-14, MS at Beinecke.

74. Some Thoughts, in Goen, Great Awakening, 474-483. This sin was also discussed in The Distinguishing Marks and unequivocally outlawed in Religious Affections.

75. Some Thoughts, in Goen, Great Awakening, 483-493. The professional bias of even so "radical" an itinerant as Gilbert Tennent is shown in a letter from Tennent to JE in 1741, printed in Dwight, Life, 153.

76. Some Thoughts, in Goen, Great Awakening, 493-495.

CHAPTER VII


2. JE to Thomas Prince, Dec. 12, 1743, in Goen, Great Awakening, 557.


4. 7 of 11 selectmen in 1700-1709, and 7 of 8 in 1720-1729, were sons of selectmen; average numbers of terms served by fathers of these 7 were 6.8 terms in 1700-1709, 8.1 terms in 1720-1729, and 9.2 terms in 1740-1749.

5. Titled men held 22 of 50 terms in 1700-1709, 25 of 50 in 1720-1729, and 42 of 50 in 1740-1749.

6. Sermon of May 1737 on II Samuel 20:19, MS at Beinecke. This sermon is quoted more fully in Chapter VI, page 124.

7. MS at Beinecke, n.d. but early.

8. A Strong Rod Broken and Withered (Boston, 1748). On the wider significance of "court" and "country" viewpoints, see T. H. Breen, The Character of the Good Ruler: A Study of Puritan Political Ideas in New England, 1630-1730 (New Haven, 1970), 205ff. In "Jonathan Edwards and the Great Awakening," Perry Miller points out that JE's description of the practical skills of Stoddard that fit him to rule signals a recognition of a new kind of authority structure that was evolving in America, a legitimacy based on service to the people and judged by the people. Miller's essay is printed in Stanley N. Katz, ed., Colonial America: Essays in Politics and Social Development (Boston, 1971), 283-297. Stoddard was nevertheless given a chance to use his "modern" skills only because of his connections among the magisterial-ministerial elite of Mass. A letter to Governor Dummer in 1724, referring to his local contest for the Representative's seat, appears to indicate his scorn for political promises to the hoi-polloi. This letter is quoted in Trumbull,
Northampton, II, 35. Edwards himself was no democrat, of course. In his last sermon notebook for Northampton (MS at Beinecke) there are notes for a quarterly lecture in Feb. 1747 on the doctrine that "a levelling spirit is a very evil and unchristian spirit."

9. The economic rank of then-serving elders and deacons on three surviving tax-assessment lists is as follows, with Roman numerals indicating half-deciles (I [highest] through XX):
   1676: I, III, X.
   1739: II, III, III, V, and X; one died that year who would have ranked about II or III.
   1759: I, VI, VII, IX, XII; one moved to Southampton (was poor).

10. The figures were actually 37.2%, 26.7%, and 10.4%, respectively. If the figures are corrected to show service as selectmen by elders and deacons while holding church office, the figures are 19.2% for 1670-1699, 18.7% for 1700-1729, and 9.6% for 1730-1754.

11. Church Records, 23.

12. The covenant was included in JE's letter of Dec. 12, 1743, to Thomas Prince, printed in The Christian History and reprinted in Goen, Great Awakening, 550-554.


15. Ibid., 183.

16. Ibid., 184-185.

17. "Personal Narrative," in Faust and Johnson, Selections, 57-72, quotation 71. In a letter of counsel to Deborah Hatheway of Suffield, JE wrote, "Remember that pride is the worst viper that is in the heart... and often creeps insensibly into the midst of religion and sometimes under the disguise of humility." JE to DH, June 3, 1741, MS at Beinecke.

18. The Great Concern of the Watchmen for Souls... A Sermon Preach'd at the Ordination of the Reverend Mr. Jonathan Judd... in the new precinct of Northampton, June 8, 1743 (Boston, 1743).

19. Of the 31 men who signed the Southampton church covenant in 1743, 22 or 71% were listed as JE's own church-members and 6 of them were in the group recorded in early 1735, the products of the first great revival in Northampton. The rest of the Southampton covenaneters were earlier joiners of the Northampton church, 1706-1727.

20. Judd was a member of the Yale class of 1741 but not a participant in the evangelical upheavals that swept through the student body. See Dexter, Yale Graduates, I, 677-678.

22. Ibid., 34.

23. Ibid., 37.

24. Malachi 3:10-11, July 1743, MS at Beinecke.


26. Ibid., 39-40.

27. Clifford K. Shipton has reported that of the 400 clergy whose careers between 1680 and 1740 can be documented, 12% had serious financial troubles with their congregations. Shipton, "The New England Clergy of the 'Glacial Age,'" Col. Soc. Mass. Publ., XXXII (1937), 50. James W. Schmotter has found that around 1700 and after 1730, salary was the single greatest cause of dispute between pastor and flock. "Ministerial Careers in 18th Century New England," Jo. Soc. Hist., IX (1975), 257.

28. JE to Thomas Foxcroft, May 24, 1749, MS at Beinecke.

29. For Edwards' salary amounts and debates, see Town Records, 232, 236, 237, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 249, 253, 259, 264, 267, 270, 271, 283; First Precinct Records, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12; Judd MSS, III, 71. In Mass. an ounce of silver was worth approximately 8 shillings in 1710 (that price had long been stable), 12s by 1720, about 18s in 1730, 30s. in 1740, about 36s. in 1745, and 60s. by 1750. These figures are compiled from the following: William B. Weeden, Economic and Social History of New England, 1620-1789 (1890; New York, 1963), II, 473, 677; Andrew McFarland Davis, Currency and Banking in the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay (New York, 1900, 1901), I, 90, 367, 378; Judd, Hadley, 331; Judd MSS, I, 490.

30. A draft, ending with the words quoted, is on the back of notes for a sermon on Ephesians 2:5-7, Dec. 1734, MS at Beinecke.

31. Sermon notes on Romans 12:10, March 1742/43, filed at Beinecke as a letter (Folder 39, Item 5).

32. Sermon on Hebrews 2:7-8, MS at Beinecke. In 1747 JE bought a "Negro girl named Venus" for £80 (portion of bill at Beinecke), but keeping a slave would not have been considered extravagant; most ministers, including the "impovertised" Timothy Edwards, did so, as did half a dozen of Northampton's leading men.

33. MS at Beinecke.

34. Defects of Preachers Reproved, ii.

35. ALS in Hawley Papers, New York Public Library, Calendar #32.

37. First Precinct Records, 6.

38. Ibid., 8-11.

39. A letter from JE's daughter Sarah to a friend implies this contemplation of removal; quoted in Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 203, 328n.

40. Among these sermons were the following: Ephesians 4:29, July 1740; Psalms 144:12, Nov. 1744; Isaiah 30:20-21, Nov. 1746; and Job 36:14, Nov. 1748—all to the "children," all MSS at Beinecke. Among the sermons to the parents were those on Luke 1:17, Aug. 1741, and Joshua 24:15, Feb. 1746—all MSS at Beinecke. These later sermons are mostly outline, with only a few sections fully written out in some.

41. There is no record of this case in the church book. The information on the "bad books" episode comes from JE's notes in the ANTS MSS, Box 1, Folder "no date #1." There is a bit of information in the Judd MSS, I, 491. Thomas H. Johnson has printed most of these documents in "Jonathan Edwards and the 'Young Folks' Bible," NEQ, V (1932), 37-54.

42. Testimony of Joanna Clark, in JE notes, ANTS MSS. Oliver was telling the girls that he could tell when they were menstruating, and they seem to have been as reluctant as modern girls to have this "show." No mention was made in the proceedings as recorded about Oliver's family in Northampton, but Deacon Hunt's journal (Judd MSS, I, 25) identifies him as an apprentice in 1738. Oliver, born in 1723, was the son of a Hadley man and did not settle in Northampton. Oliver's position as an apprentice suggests that he was freer of "family" social controls than many "boys" his age. In early modern cities, apprentices were the avatars of "rebellious youth." See Steven R. Smith, "The London Apprentices as Seventeenth-Century Adolescents," Past & Present, No. 61 (November, 1973), 149-161.

43. Hopkins, Life of Edwards, 53-55. The same account, with language somewhat altered, is in Dwight, Life, 299-300.

44. This list is reproduced in Johnson, "JE and the 'Young Folks' Bible," NEQ, V (1932), 42-43. There are some unexplained marks next to the names in the MS, which Johnson also prints, that may have been JE's signs for degrees of involvement.

45. The confessions are in JE's hand; Warner's was not signed.

46. Fragment of notes, ANTS MSS, Box 1, Folder "no date #1," Item 11, 2 sheets. In Oct. 1731 the Hampshire Assoc. had decided that private admonition was to be used first, and only thereafter should offenses be made matters of public church discipline. Hamp. Assoc. Records, 1. We do not know if JE used private counsel in this case; other clergymen might
have agreed with his apparent position that a sin so widespread that it reached the minister's attention thereby became by definition a public scandal. David H. Flaherty has written in Privacy in Colonial New England (Charlottesville, Va., 1967), 155, that "when the church at Leicester removed their pastor from office in 1729, one of the charges against him was 'bringing cases of private offense before the church.'"

47. Of the 18 known ages for the 20 boys accused of some use of the bad books, 4 were 21, 2 were 22, 2 were 23, 1 each was 24 and 25, 5 were 26, and 1 each was 27, 28, and 29. Only 2 were married, and they were only marginally involved in the episode. In one of her few mistakes, Ola Winslow has written that these were "boys and girls in their teens." Jonathan Edwards, 204.

48. Of the three non-members, one was from out of town and of unknown age, probably an apprentice in Northampton, and the other two were aged 26 and 21. Of the church members, one had joined before 1735, one in early 1735, and fifteen since 1736.

N. Ray Hiner has suggested that because awakening preachers had concentrated so much on the conversion of the "rising generation," "an enormous amount of psychological power" had been given to youth. "Only young people, it seemed, had the ability to save their communities from corruption." They could, therefore, assert their independence by being bad. "Adolescence in Eighteenth-Century America," Hist. Child. Q., III (1975), 253-280, quotation 256.

49. See Appendix I, Demographic Measurements, for data on smaller families. In the literature on the history of families and childhood, it is commonly assumed that limiting the number of children born is an indication of greater "love" for them as persons, both as cause and effect.


51. Isaiah 1:2, MS at Beinecke.

52. There are, in fact, rather few cases of discipline listed in the church records: from 1697 to 1743 only 4 men and 2 women were excommunicated, and 1 man was just admonished; their sins were drunkenness, lying, vilifying their neighbors, and refusing to be examined by the church about accusations of fornication. There are no cases listed for 1744-1765. Church Records, 25. Three cases of discipline were appealed to the Hamp. Assoc. in Oct. 1741, only one of which is mentioned in the Northampton church records. The clergy sided with the church in all three cases; JE was not present. Hamp. Assoc. Records, 36.

53. See the Joseph Hawley Papers, NYPL, Calendar Nos. 6 and 7.

54. Ibid., Calendar No. 12.
55. ANTS MSS, Box 1, Folder "no date #2," Item 15, 6pp.

56. ANTS MSS, Box 1, Folder "no date #1," Item 11.

57. A copy of the Result of the Council is in the Hawley Papers, NYPL, Calendar No. 8. At the Council, Joseph Hawley must have testified that he had seen Martha Root loitering near the Hawley home to entice innocent Elisha, for he apologized for doing so in an Aug. 1750 letter to Martha; Calendar No. 11.

58. Both Elisha and Joseph Hawley are entered in the latter part of the church-membership list that ends with the date 1746 inscribed by Edwards. In 1751 Elisha married Elizabeth Pomeroy, daughter of Deacon Ebenezer and niece of Seth Pomeroy, both leaders of the anti-Edwards men.

59. The best account of this disturbance in the churches is Goen, Revivalism and Separatism.

60. The "Moore case" can be reconstructed from the following: Stoughton, "Windsor Farms", 71-73; Windsor Vital Records, II, 176-177; Conn. Archives, "Crimes, Misdemeanors, etc.," IV, 12-20; Timothy Edwards notebook, ANTS MSS.

61. There is a brief account of this case in Sibley, Harvard Graduates, IV, 97-98; see also Stoughton, "Windsor Farms", 73-74. The major source of information is Roger Wolcott's MS "Narrative of the Troubles," at CHS.

62. In a 1732 ordination sermon, The Greatness and Difficulty of the Work of the Ministry, Thomas Clap assessed the discipline problem as fundamental. When clergymen tried to discipline their people, Satan stirred up the congregations against their pastors, "so that church discipline is under an apparent decay" (p.13). The Edwardses, father and son, showed no such desire to avoid trouble.

63. See Stoughton, "Windsor Farms", 74-75.

CHAPTER VIII

1. JE's journal, the MS of which is lost, is printed in Dwight, Life, 313-398. The following narrative, except where otherwise noted, is taken from that journal or Dwight's own parallel account, pp. 305-427, which is drawn largely from Hopkins' Life of Edwards. Other useful sources are JE's letters to Samuel Hopkins, April 3, 174? [1750]; to Thomas Foxcroft, May 24 and Nov. 21, 1749, and Feb. 19, 1750; all MSS at Beinecke. Also, JE to Joseph Bellamy, Dec. 6, 1749, printed in Stanley T. Williams, "Six Letters of JE to Joseph Bellamy," NEQ, I (1928), 237-250; JE to Rev. Peter Clark of Salem Village, May 7, 1750, printed in George Peirce Clark, "An Unpublished Letter by Jonathan Edwards," NEQ, XXIX
(1956), 228-233; and JE to the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, July 1, 1751, in Dwight, Life, 462-468, an abridged version printed in Goen, Great Awakening, 561-566. The JE MSS at Beinecke also include a copy of the Results of the Dec. 1749 Council and the June 1750 Council with the minority protest to the latter. There is also an account of the firing in Trumbull, Northampton, II, 202ff.

JE's concerns, or his Religious Affections, may have influenced the Hampshire Assoc. to discuss "whether an unregenerate person has a right in the sight of God to the Lord's Supper" in April 1746 and Oct. 1747 (question proposed at meetings of Oct. 1745 and Oct. 1746). Unfortunately, no record of their thoughts on the subject survives. Hamp. Assoc. Records, 47, 49.

2. The Humble Inquiry is reprinted in the New York 1844 edition of JE's Works, I, 83-192, quotation p.86. All further citations of this work will be to this edition.

3. In June 1750 two men testified that in 1746-1747 they heard JE announce his new ideas publicly and that the news was spread throughout the town. See letter from John Searl to JE, June 4, 1750, incomplete MS at Hartford Seminary Foundation; and statement of Noah Parsons, June 13, 1750, MS in JE MSS at Beinecke. Both the Searl and Parsons letters refer in passing to a contemporary suspicion that JE had kept his change of mind a secret from his uncle, Col. John Stoddard, because Stoddard would have disapproved. There is no other indication that JE was secretive.

4. One of the sample professions has survived in the Edwards MSS at Beinecke; two others are quoted by JE in Misrepresentations Corrected, and Truth Vindicated, in a Reply to the Rev. Solomon Williams' Book... (Boston, 1752), in New York 1844 ed., Works, I, 193-292, esp. 201-202. One is over 500 words long, and the other two are about 60 words long each, but the essence is totally similar—a belief in the standard Christian doctrines (in the longer form), and a commitment of self to obedience to the moral law (in all three). The closest approach to an indication of experience in the professions is in the long version, in the phrase "having been made sensible of His divine supreme glory...."

5. James P. Walsh, "The Pure Church in Eighteenth Century Connecticut," (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia Univ., 1967), 43-44, reports that by the late 1730s there were about 26 "pure" churches (requiring experience of Grace for full communion) and 21 Stoddardian churches, out of those in Conn. whose records survive in sufficient form for such categorization. Walsh is not clear about the use of the Half-Way Covenant in the churches he labels "pure." The East Windsor church, which was "old-fashioned" in all its policies and opposed the Saybrook Platform, always kept the HWC and required relations of experience for admission to full privileges. See S. Windsor Church Manual, 1867, p.3, Conn. State Library. One of these testimonies has survived among the Timothy Edwards MSS at ANTS; it was from Samuel Grant but is not dated. The essence of the statement is that "God has made [Grant] see his sins and God's glory," and there is no mention of the actual moment or events of conversion itself.
6. JE to Thomas Foxcroft, May 24, 1749, MS at Beinecke.

7. *Humble Inquiry*, 184-191, answer to Objection XIX.

8. This loss is confirmed in Trumbull, *Northampton*, II, 215. At a Hamp. Assoc. 1752 meeting (the first recorded after the missing pages for 1748-1751), one question posed for consideration was, "whether ministers have an exclusive sole right to determine the proper subjects of baptism." Quoted in Winslow, *Jonathan Edwards*, 240.

9. Solomon Williams, *The True State of the Question*... (Boston, 1751), 141-142. The answer to JE was begun by Elisha Williams of Wethersfield, Edwards' former tutor and later Rector of Yale, who had left the ministry for a political career. When he had to leave for England on colony affairs, Williams turned the responsibility and his notes over to his brother Solomon, minister at Lebanon. Edwards had been very worried that Elisha Williams would write the treatise. In his May 24, 1749, letter to Foxcroft, he asked him to dissuade Williams, because "its only being said that Rector Williams has written an answer to me, will do me great hurt with my people."

10. Peter Clark to Deacon Pomeroy, April 4, 1750, MS at Beinecke.


13. JE to Clark, May 7, 1750, printed in NEQ, XXIX (1956), 228-233. Clark finally decided that he and Edwards were in accord; see Clark to JE, May 21, 1750, MS at Beinecke. In the spring of 1750 JE preached the ordination sermon at Portsmouth, N.H., for Northampton native Job Strong, Christ the Great Example of Ministers (Boston, 1751), in which he defensively and explicitly warned against the sin of separatism.

14. Dwight, *Life*, 363, emphasis added. Brownism was democracy in the church, the minister having an equal vote with any full member. Joseph Hawley testified to JE's claim of a veto in a statement he prepared for the town to the 1751 Northampton Council. Hawley Papers, NYPL.


17. Autograph draft, Beinecke.


20. See JE to Thomas Foxcroft, Feb. 19, 1750, MS at Beinecke.

21. Isaiah 30:20-21, Beinecke, one of the most fully written out of the late sermons.


23. JE to Thomas Gillespie, July 1, 1751, in Dwight, Life, 467.

24. See letter of Billings to JE, June 11, 1750, Beinecke. In a 1752 letter to Erskine, JE wrote that Billings had been dismissed from his church at Cold Spring (later named Belchertown), many members of which were originally from Northampton, "on the same account that I was dismissed from Northampton." Dwight, Life, 499. There is no evidence from before JE's trial that Billings shared his views. He was settled over the new church at Greenfield, which split from the Deerfield church, a majority of whose members and whose pastor were anti-Edwards.

25. The following were the ministers on the 1750 council:

**Pro-Edwards:**

Robert Abercrombie of Pelham -- Scottish, settled 1744; dismissed about ten years later after long salary dispute. See C.O. Parmeuter, History of Pelham, Massachusetts (Amherst, 1898), 294-319.

Edward Billings of Cold Spring -- Harvard 1731; ordained 1746 at C.S., their first minister; pro-revival; much beloved till he defied the church and sat at JE's council; dismissed, settled at Greenfield. See Sibley, Harvard Graduates, IX, 22-28.

David Hall of Sutton -- Harvard 1724; ordained 1729; long "cold war" between him and his church, salary troubles; pro-revival after meeting JE, but troubled by radical separatists. See Sibley, Harvard Graduates, VII, 345-356.

William Hobby of Reading -- Harvard 1725; ordained 1733; won over to revival by Whitefield, was New Light but exceptionally tolerant of Arminians. See Sibley, Harvard Graduates, VII, 530-537.


**Anti-Edwards:**

Joseph Ashley of Sunderland -- Yale 1730; ordained 1747 at Sund. after they had dismissed Old Light William Rand, but not pro-revival. See Dexter, Yale Graduates, I, 408-409.

Robert Breck of Springfield -- Harvard 1730; see information on him in Chapter V. See, also, Sibley, Harvard Graduates, VIII, 661-680.

Jonathan Hubbard of Sheffield -- Yale 1724; ordained 1735; from Hatfield, little else known of him. See Dexter, Yale Graduates, I, 304-305.

Timothy Woodbridge of Hatfield -- Yale 1732; ordained 1740 as colleague to William Williams. See Dexter, Yale Graduates, I, 469.

Chester Williams of Hadley -- Yale 1735; ordained 1741; from Conn., maybe nephew by marriage of Col. John Stoddard; married daughter of Hadley's richest man; not one of Hatfield Williamses; little else known, but church was Stoddardean. See Judd, Hadley, 331; and
Dexter, Yale Graduates, I, 546-547. (Note: Chester Williams and Robert Breck were on the list of subscribers to Chauncy's Seasonable Thoughts.)

26. The council Result is printed in Dwight, Life, 399-403. A small pamphlet war among the council's factions ensued. See ibid., 453.

27. See JE to John Erskine, Nov. 15, 1750, in Dwight, Life, 415-416. Also JE to Thomas Foxcroft, July 31, 1750, MS at Beinecke. The Judd MSS, II, 91, records that JE preached twelve times in Northampton after his dismissal. In addition, as indicated by some notations on some late-1750 sermons at Beinecke, JE preached at the houses of some supporters.

28. He also had offers from Canaan, Conn., Lunenber, Va., and a tentative offer from Scotland. See Miller, Jonathan Edwards, 232.

29. Dwight, Life, 420-421. There are a number of surviving documents which pertain to this issue of a possible "splinter" church in the ANTS MSS; see also in the Dwight Papers, Sterling Library, Yale, 3 letters from Timothy Dwight to Thomas Foxcroft of October 1750 to Dec. 1751. See also Hawley's statement to the 1751 Council, Hawley Papers.

30. Edwards did fight for about three years with some of the Williams clan over the running of the Indian school, and he won. For a much fuller narrative of JE's later years than will be provided here, see Dwight, Life, 449-583, and Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 241-301. In a letter to his father in Jan. 1752, JE confessed to being about £2000 in debt. Dwight, Life, 486. In some of JE's later correspondence with Timothy Dwight there are passing references to a number of loans from TD.

31. A Careful and Strict Enquiry into ... Freedom of the Will ... was begun in 1753 and published in 1754. The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended appeared in 1758. Posthumously published were Two Dissertations: I, Concerning the End for which God Created the World; II, The Nature of True Virtue (Boston, 1765); A History of the Work of Redemption (Edinburgh, 1774); and a treatise on Grace was included in Alexander B. Grosart, ed., Selections from the Unpublished Writings of Jonathan Edwards of America (Edinburgh, 1865). Jonathan Edwards, Jr., subsequently published many selections and sermons from the MSS.


32. Part of the network can be seen through the marriages of William Williams' children; see Sibley, Harvard Graduates, III, 263-269.
33. JE to Sir William Pepperell, Jan. 30, 1753, ANTS MSS; JE to William Hogg, Nov. 25, 1752, Beinecke; JE to Thomas Foxcroft, Feb. 19, 1750, Beinecke. Dwight, Life, 122n, 433-434. Henry Bamford Parkes also repeats this story and embellishes it further by saying that Israel Williams forbade Whitefield to enter Hatfield in 1740; there is no confirming evidence. Parkes even has an extra piece of information for the conspiracy theory, about Sarah Pierrepont Edwards' brother Benjamin being kept from employment as a minister by William Williams. Jonathan Edwards: The Fiery Puritan, 193-194.

34. JE to Pepperell, Jan. 30, 1753, ANTS MSS; Dwight, Life, 434.

35. See Miller, Jonathan Edwards, 101-105, 125-126, 218 (on Williamses); 15, 104 (on the feud between Christian and Esther).

36. See, especially, JE to "Dear Sister" [Mary], Dec. 12, 1721, ANTS MSS, and discussion in Chapter I.

37. See George Henry Merriam, "Israel Williams, Monarch of Hampshire, 1709-1788" (Ph.D. dissertation, Clark Univ., 1961), 74-75; and TD to Thomas Foxcroft, Feb. 17, 1751, MS at Sterling Library, Yale. Merriam includes in his dissertation (pp. 152-158) an appendix which attempts to exonerate IW from culpability in the JE dismissal. The evidence is simply too thin to permit certainty either way.


39. He seems to have been quite friendly with Edwards, and probably studied with him, before going to college in 1738--although his father had committed suicide under JE's terror preaching in 1735.

40. The only biography of Hawley is E. Francis Brown, Joseph Hawley: Colonial Radical (New York, 1931), which contains most of this information; see especially pp. 26-38. Edwards described Hawley and his role in the controversy in a letter to John Erskine of July 5, 1750: "The people, in managing this affair on their side, have made chief use of a young gentleman of liberal education and notable abilities, and a fluent speaker, of about seven or eight and twenty years of age, my grandfather Stoddard's grandson, being my mother's sister's son, a man of lax principles in religion, falling in, in some essential things, with Arminians, and is very open and bold in it. He was improved as one of the agents for the church, and was their chief spokesman before the Council. He very strenuously urged . . . the necessity of an immediate separation. . . ." Letter quoted in Dwight, Life, 410.

41. See Merriam, "Israel Williams," 78; IW to Joseph Hawley, Aug. 10, 1759, Hawley Papers, NYPL, Calendar #74; Brown, Joseph Hawley, 76-78. Brown concedes (p.26) that Williams "may have had some influence" on Hawley but offers no evidence; he prefers the theory that Hawley was a disinterested spokesman for democracy in Northampton.
42. The first Hawley letter to JE, dated Aug. 11, 1754, is lost, but its general content can be inferred from JE's answer, Nov. 18, 1754, in the Hawley Papers, NYPL, Calendar #35. #36 is Hawley's second and last letter to JE, Jan. 21, 1755. The MS of Hawley's letter to David Hall of Sutton, May 9, 1760, is also lost; but that letter was printed in the Boston Evening Post, May 19, 1760; and in Hopkins' Life of Edwards, 66-72; and (with grammar "corrected") in Dwight, Life, 421-427.

43. In undated items, Hawley Papers, NYPL. JE, on the other hand, wrote in his Nov. 18 letter to Hawley (p.6) that a major aggravation of Hawley's fault was that he agreed with JE on the basic issue! Hawley never confirmed this. The "confession" says that Hawley gave up his Arminian views in 1754.

44. JE to John Erskine, July 5, 1750, in Dwight, Life, 411.


46. Ibid., 232.

47. The list of "pro" people is easier to determine, because they were fewer in number. Drawing on the Judd MSS and some other documents now lost, Trumbull, Northampton, II, 205-206, 234, gives a list of "pro" and "anti" men, on which the descriptions in the text are based. In 1749 a very reliable tax list was made; on this list the reliably identified partisans are ranked as follows (in half-deciles, I the highest; arabic numerals indicate the rank out of 259 persons listed):

"Pro": II-#17, II-#19, II-#22, III, V, VIII, IX, XII. (Two of these men married JE's daughters in 1750.)

"Anti": I-#1, I-#3, I-#4, II-#14, II-#15, II-#18, II-#23, III, IV, VII, VII, IX*, XI. (One of these men was accused of reading "bad" books in 1744, but was not a major culprit.) *(Joseph Hawley; if his estate joined with that of his widowed mother, total would be a IV.)

48. Miller, Jonathan Edwards, 218, says that Dwight and Dr. Mather were a "remnant of the old gentry." They were really the opposite: Dwight had come to town as a child in 1711, and was the son of a merchant. Mather was the son of the minister at Windsor, but had come to town in the 1730s. If there were "gentry" in Northampton apart from Col. John Stoddard's family, they were more prominent among Edwards' opponents.

49. This division is suggested, without any evidence except the assumed businessman-Arminian link, by Miller, Jonathan Edwards, 122-123, 210, 218; also by Alfred O. Aldridge, Jonathan Edwards (New York, 1966), 38-40.

50. In early 1750 he had supposedly called Edwards a "tyrant" for preaching his doctrines; JE to Thomas Foxcroft, Dec. 19, 1751, Beinecke. But in the Revolution he was a Tory. Merriam, "Israel Williams," 96-140. See also Taylor, Western Massachusetts in the Revolution, 66-67. Elderly
Seth Pomeroy was a Patriot in the Revolution, but most of the other identifiable "activists" in 1750 were too old to be participants in the war except as officers, and most officers were chosen from the richer men, so the firing-revolutionary-democracy link is obscure at best. Joseph Hawley was an intellectual leader of the Whigs until 1766, when he succumbed to the melancholia that marked most of the males in his family.

51. JE to Thomas Gillespie, July 1, 1751; in Dwight, Life, 462-468, and in Goen, Great Awakening, 561-566.

52. Ibid. There is no supporting evidence for this story.

53. Ibid.

54. First printed in Boston, 1751; in Dwight, Life, 630-651. Dwight (p.404) described this sermon as showing a "calm and excellent spirit. Instead of indicating anger under a sense of multiplied injuries, it appears in every sentence, to have been dictated by meekness and forgiveness." Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 330-331n, echoes this assessment. She points out that the MS sermon book (Beinecke) indicates that JE first tried out a text from Jeremiah (25:3), that the prophet labored twenty-three years and was not heard. (This text is now a subsidiary one within the sermon, so it was not discarded entirely, as Winslow implies.) Of the text finally chosen, Winslow writes, "In his rejection of the more spectacular text, he revealed his own attitude toward the whole affair. An accusing sermon would have been out of line with his conduct throughout the crucial months." On the contrary, it seems to me, that the Corinthians text finally chosen (II Cor. 1:14, "As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus") is a thinly veiled threat, made explicit in the exposition. The scene set is the day of judgment, and pastor and flock will meet face to face, in full mutual understanding at last, to give an account of their behavior to each other. "Then it shall appear what our ends are, which we have aimed at. . . . whether I acted uprightly. . . . whether the doctrine which I have preached and published . . . be Christ's own doctrine. . . . whether my people have done their duty to their pastor. . . ." (Dwight, Life, 642.) Only if one believes that Edwards was confessing that he would be found guilty on the day of judgment, can one believe that this sermon shows "meekness and forgiveness."

Edwards took a similarly harsh tone in a letter of "forgiveness" to Joseph Hawley four years later. "Expositors and divines often observe," he wrote, "that abuse of God's messengers, has commonly been the last sin of an offending, backsliding people, which has filled up the measure of their sin, put an end to God's patience with them, and brought on their ruin. And 'tis also commonly observed that the heads and leaders of such a people have been remarkably distinguished in the fruits of God's vengeance in such cases. And as you, sir, distinguished yourself as a head and leader to that people in those affairs, at least the main of them, so I think the guilt that lies on you in the sight of God is distinguishing, and that you may expect to be distinguished by God's frown, unless there be true repentance, and properly expressed and manifested, with endeavors
to be a leader of the people in the affair of repentance, as in their transgression." Hawley Papers, NYPL.

55. Dwight, Life, 646.

56. In the ANTS MSS (Folder "no date #1," Item 9), there is an undated fragment of a note from JE to Timothy Dwight that indicates JE was urging on the group that caused such bitter dissension in the town by agitating for a splinter church. The fragment begins in mid-sentence: "there, yours may be the smallest at first; but if you are steadfast, and act prudently, I believe at last they will be the biggest and will get the meetinghouse." He goes on to say that he hopes to have his answer to Mr. W-------- [sic] in print that summer.

57. Scheick, Writings of Jonathan Edwards, 114 and 177, has noted the importance of the family metaphor in Edwards' Farewell Sermon and puts forth an interpretation quite different from mine. "Although the family motif was in every way as vital to Edwards in his later work as it was in his earlier writings, we can seriously doubt that it much affected mid-eighteenth-century Puritan parishers. Here, I think, lies an important element in the tragedy of his career. Whereas for Edwards this image, revelatory of a fundamental design of Providence, was still vibrant with meaning and emotion, for his parishers it remained merely a part of a dead rhetorical convention stripped of the emotional overtones it once conveyed to earlier Puritans." Contrary to Scheick's view, I would find "Puritan" an inappropriate description for Northamtonites in 1751, and I feel that the image or metaphor of "family" was coming to have even more emotional weight than ever before. For the early Puritans "family" was just a metaphor for church, the more dominant symbol; by the mid-18th century, family was separate from—and in some circumstances opposite to—images of church and community. It could carry an emotional freight that was no longer invested in either church or community. This is what Edwards did not understand in his efforts to merge all three institutions into a unified whole with himself at the center of authority.
APPENDIX I
DEMOGRAPHIC MEASUREMENTS

Two major demographic trends in Northampton were cited in the text as indicators of social change, an increasing age at marriage (especially important for males) and a decrease in the number of children born to each family. The rising age at marriage indicates economic stresses that make it more difficult to establish a household in the mid-eighteenth century than it had been fifty or a hundred years earlier; the smaller number of children can be interpreted as either a contribution to or a result of an increased and "sentimental" regard for each child as an individual personality and a concern for the difficulties of establishing each child as an economically independent adult. Data on the marriage ages of specific cohorts of early-eighteenth century young men and their fathers has already been presented. The unpublished work of three other researchers provides confirmation and a wider chronological context for my conclusions about marriage-age changes and provides the data from which I drew my suggestions about the decreasing size of families as Northampton left its "frontier" stage. Published and unpublished data on other early New England communities shows parallel trends in both marriage age and family size throughout the region, although differences in technique of measurement and periodization render these statistics merely suggestive.
A. Northampton Data

1. Average Age at First Marriage

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<th>a) Date married</th>
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<th>Males</th>
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<tr>
<td>Before 1700</td>
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<tr>
<td>1700-1729</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1730-1749</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>28.6</td>
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<td>Third</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
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2. Number of Children Born per Completed Family (in which husband and wife survive to end of wife's fertility, about age 45)

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<th>Sample size</th>
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<td>1691-1720</td>
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<tr>
<td>1721-1750</td>
<td>35.0</td>
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</tr>
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Sources:


d) Levy, p.18.

e) Rota, pp. 71-72.
B. Data from Other Communities

1. Average Age at First Marriage

f) Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts

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<th>Males</th>
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<td>20.2</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1650-1675</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1675-1700</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>24.6</td>
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g) Dedham, Massachusetts

| Years | (N="about 200") | 25.5 |
|h) Hingham, Massachusetts

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<th>Males (N)</th>
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<td>27.4 (77)</td>
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<td>1691-1715</td>
<td>24.7 (84)</td>
<td>28.4 (76)</td>
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<td>1716-1740</td>
<td>23.8 (157)</td>
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<td>1741-1760</td>
<td>22.8 (135)</td>
<td>26.0 (117)</td>
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<td>1761-1780</td>
<td>23.5 (155)</td>
<td>24.6 (126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781-1800</td>
<td>23.7 (188)</td>
<td>26.4 (159)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

i) Eighteen Mass. and Conn. Towns

| Years | 20.5--22.0 | 24.0 |

Sources:

i) Robert Higgs and H. Louis Stettler, III, "Colonial New England Demography: A Sampling Approach," WMQ, 3rd ser., XXVII (1970), 282-294. Northampton was not one of the towns sampled. The major point made in this article is the wide variation between towns, so the aggregate figure reported above is somewhat misleading.
### j) Andover, Massachusetts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generations</th>
<th>Females (N)</th>
<th>Males (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>22.3 (81)</td>
<td>26.7 (104)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldest sons</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.2 (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second sons</td>
<td></td>
<td>28.6 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngest sons</td>
<td></td>
<td>27.3 (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldest sons</td>
<td></td>
<td>27.3 (72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second sons</td>
<td></td>
<td>27.8 (56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngest sons</td>
<td></td>
<td>27.4 (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldest sons</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second sons</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngest sons</td>
<td></td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Average Number of Children per Completed Family

### k) Hingham

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents married</th>
<th>No. births</th>
<th>(Sample size)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1691</td>
<td>7.59</td>
<td>(69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1691-1715</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>(52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1716-1740</td>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>(91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1741-1760</td>
<td>7.16</td>
<td>(94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761-1780</td>
<td>6.39</td>
<td>(104)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781-1800</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>(109)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Eighteen Mass. and Conn. Towns, 1720-1760

Average no. of births per family: 7
Families with 3 or fewer children: 10%

### m) Andover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generations</th>
<th>Births</th>
<th>Children living to age 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84 2nd-gen.</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sources:


k) Smith, 177.

l) Higgs and Stettler, 292.

m) Greven, 111, 200.
APPENDIX II
MEASURING WEALTH

Data for the economic history of colonial communities is generally scarce, and historians have usually placed great emphasis on the distribution of property, a statistic easily obtained for those towns whose tax lists have survived.¹ We generally assume that this property is equal to the "wealth" of the citizens, although the richest men were probably somewhat under-rated because of social deference or the ease of hiding some property among so much. Assessment principles were set by law in Massachusetts and practices probably varied little from town to town, so the distribution profiles of different towns can be compared.² This appendix includes a number of calculations of property-distribution in Northampton and lists comparable studies of other towns.

Source materials surviving from early Northampton are quite limited, and they will be described in detail below. Two obvious patterns nevertheless do emerge from the available data. The curve of property distribution steepens markedly between 1739 and 1759 (the rich were getting richer and the poor were poorer), although the change and the inequality of distribution were both small when compared to similar statistics that have been reported for a city such as Boston. The ratio of personal estate to real estate, the categories into which the two most useful lists are divided, grows much larger in that same period. The latter change can be seen as an index to the growth of money and personal possessions in the town as a whole (in the "frontier" era few men had any wealth except land); it also shows the rise of men who had most of their property
in money and trade-goods into the top rungs of the economic ladder. Other
town records show that their financial standing was paralleled or rewarded
by political prominence. Because these changes were really just beginning
in the last years under study in this dissertation, the investigation was
not carried beyond a simple notice of their political presence. And
because of either lack of data or lack of interest, very few published
studies of other communities mention changes in forms of property, so
comparative statistics are unfortunately not available.

More serious, however, than the lack of quantifiable data is the
problem of interpretation, which is often blithely overlooked. Once we
measure what we can measure, what do the numbers mean? We assume, pro-
bably correctly, that even in a society whose "Puritan" heritage included
a suspicion of wealth and especially of commercial activity, wealth meant
power. But we know little about the actual exercise of whatever power
derived from high standing on a tax list. Another, perhaps more serious,
problem with available data is that the numbers do not tell us enough
about the relationship of an individual to his own property. For example,
 isn't there an important difference in the real "wealth" of two men
ranked equally on a tax list when one is the only son of a still-living
rich father and part of a rich clan in the community, and the other is a
man without a kinship network who has reached the peak of his own
property-acquisition? A thorough knowledge of the individuals involved
is the only way to make the tax lists truly useful, and acquiring such
knowledge is tedious at best and often impossible. The research done for
this dissertation is a case in point. For all of the men who joined the
church during Edwards' tenure in Northampton, and all their fathers and a
large sample of paternal grandfathers and brothers, a compilation of all available documents was made. A few useful conclusions permitted by the data have been reported in the text. Attempts to construct a profile of land-holdings, showing how much of what kind of land was owned by whom (and especially what kind of life-cycle patterns there were in acquisition), were defeated by the lack of specificity of acreage and value in many of the thousands of deeds checked. Although a number of scholars have reported great confidence in probate materials for use in community studies, I found the Hampshire records to be short on inventories (most men left wills and forbade inventories as too expensive) and rarely complete about acres and value. Attempts to compile detailed portraits of Northampton men as economic beings yielded samples too small to be reliable. The following data, static profiles of the community at various periods, is offered therefore as the best information currently available with acknowledgment of its limitations.

NOTES

1. The only published guide to extant manuscript tax lists for Mass. towns is Ruth Crandall, Tax and Valuation Lists of Massachusetts Towns Before 1776: Finding List for the Microfilm Edition (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), which deals only with the few lists preserved in the Mass. Archives (mostly 1771 lists). Some tax lists were published in the old town histories; the others must be searched for through the dust and cobwebs.

2. 17th-century assessment acts can be found in The General Laws and Liberties of the Massachusetts Colony... (Cambridge, Mass., 1672), 22-25. Rules from the 18th century can be found in The Acts and Resolves Public and Private, of the Province of Massachusetts-Bay, 21 Vols. (Boston, 1869-1922).

3. See, for example, Gloria L. Main, "Probate Records as a Source for Early American History," and Daniel Scott Smith, "Underregistration and Bias in Probate Records: An Analysis of Data from Eighteenth-Century Hingham, Massachusetts," WMQ, 3rd ser., XXXII (1975), 89-110.
The Economic History of Northampton: The Manuscript Sources.

1661 - list of holdings in first land division, Proprietors' Records, 1-2. All adult males then resident are listed.

1676 - list of property assessed, no polls, assumed complete, 97 entries, in Judd MSS, I, 223-224.

1700 - list of land holdings on which to base reorganization of commons, Proprietors' Records, 306-307. All but 52 males over 21 known to be in town are listed; 51 of the missing average 26.55 years old.

1739 - complete assessment list, real and personal estate, 214 entries, 305 polls; manuscript in town papers, Forbes Library.

1749 - complete valuation list; in Judd MSS, I, 350-353.

1759 - complete assessment list, real and personal estate, 266 entries, 296 polls, manuscript in town papers, Forbes Library.

Fragments of assessment lists for 1741 and later in town papers; fragment (83 entries) of taxes paid 1712 in Judd MSS, II, 219-220.

1713 and 1743 - lists of commons acres owned (total 2470a., 132 men in 1713; 2505a., 153 m3n in 1743), Town Records, 187-193, 286-288. No correlation with total holdings determined from deeds and estates.

Random fragments of itemized lists of taxable estate, broken down into kinds of land and livestock, are in the town papers. But the earliest is 1743 and there are few before the mid-1750s. A large set for 1756 permits a sample of 3 neighborhoods, with 203 polls, with these averages per poll: Houselot = 2.56a (range 1/6a. to 13a.); Meadow = 8.36a. (range 0 to 30a.); Outland = 2.56a. (0 to 52a.).

Studies of other communities giving comparable economic statistics:

Linda A. Bissell, "From One Generation to Another: Mobility in Seventeenth-Century Windsor, Conn.," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXI (1974), 79-110.


Jackson Turner Main, The Social Structure of Revolutionary America (Princeton, 1965).
A. Distribution of Land-holdings in 1661, 1700, 1739, and 1759.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decile</th>
<th>1661 (N=58)</th>
<th>1700 (N=70)</th>
<th>1739 (N=214)**</th>
<th>1759 (N=266)**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>26.16</td>
<td>23.53</td>
<td>29.83</td>
<td>27.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>18.52</td>
<td>15.54</td>
<td>16.29</td>
<td>18.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>10.29</td>
<td>11.17</td>
<td>10.55</td>
<td>11.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>8.73</td>
<td>9.48</td>
<td>8.70</td>
<td>9.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>8.83</td>
<td>7.65</td>
<td>7.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>5.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From sources listed on page 270. In 1661, only, acres were given: the average was 39.39a. plus homelot per head of household.

**In 1739, 11 of 214 entries were landless men; in 1759, 30 of 266 entries were men without land.
B. Distribution of Total Taxable Wealth in 1739, 1749, 1759.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decile</th>
<th>1739</th>
<th>1749</th>
<th>1759</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>28.78</td>
<td>29.81</td>
<td>34.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>16.56</td>
<td>17.68</td>
<td>16.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>13.43</td>
<td>13.98</td>
<td>12.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>10.87</td>
<td>11.17</td>
<td>10.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>8.34</td>
<td>8.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>7.13</td>
<td>6.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>5.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From sources listed on page 270. Note that Southampton, very poor until the 19th century, was included with Northampton in 1739 and 1749 but not in 1759. The effect of its removal is to lower the top range of the 1759 list and make the distribution less steep than it would be otherwise.
C. Distribution of Personal Estate in 1739 and 1759.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decile</th>
<th>Percentage of Total P.E. Listed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>40.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>15.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>11.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>9.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>7.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>6.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From sources listed on page 270.
APPENDIX III
MEASURING POLITICAL POWER

In the text and notes, some data was given on the increase of the consolidation of political power into certain father-son lines between the late seventeenth and the mid-eighteenth centuries in Northampton. The following statistics provide a context for this exclusivity of office-holding. The period studied was the first hundred years of Northampton's history. Except as illustrated in Chapter VI, the period was not subdivided because counting selectman terms within only a ten-year period, or even a quarter-century, for example, yielded numbers in which the variation was so large that any averages were not meaningful. Furthermore, because a large number of men did service in office, each division into periods cut across many continuities of officeholding.

The best source of comparative data is Edward M. Cook, Jr., The Fathers of the Towns: Leadership and Community Structure in Eighteenth-Century New England (Baltimore, 1976). Cook took a wide sample of towns (not including Northampton) for statistical analysis. The community studied here would have conformed in the mid-eighteenth century to Cook's category of a "major county town," a local market and service center with the top ten percent of taxpayers controlling 35-50% of the wealth, some landless poor, office-holding dominated by a dozen or so leading families who also supplied personnel for county and provincial offices. (This type of town is described in Cook's pp. 174-177.)

All the men holding major office during Northampton's first hundred
years--General Court Representatives, selectmen, town clerks, treasurers, constables, and meetinghouse-committeemen--shared only 58 surnames. Those serving as selectmen for more than two terms or in higher office shared only 24 surnames; those who served more than the average number of selectman terms (5) shared only 19 surnames. About half of the family names ever mentioned in Northampton vital, tax, or land records were never included among important office-holders except as one-term selectmen. A family was honored, of course, when one of its men served even a single term as town executive. But because twenty men served ten or more terms during Northampton's first century, the effectiveness of an isolated period of service was minimized. The best index of power was clearly the ability to stay in office long enough to effect policies.

Between 1654 and 1754 102 men served 501 selectman terms. A single term was held by 34 men, one third of the servers. More than half, 53 men, served two or fewer terms; at the other end of the spectrum, six men served more than fifteen terms. (Population figures for Northampton were given in Chapter III.) Most selectmen were in their late forties or fifties, mature men who had not yet "retired" from productive work. During the period 1675-1754 (when ages are best known), the average age of selectmen sitting was 51 years (ranging from about 47 to about 64 for any five-year period); age at first term averaged 43.86 years. From 1745 to 1754, the average age of all selectmen drops to about 46.8 years, although it had fallen below 52 years only twice since 1700 (about 48 years in 1705-1709 and 1720-1724). Ages have not been calculated for the later period of Northampton history, but the influx of young men may have reflected a change in the overall character of the community from stable
agricultural village to prosperous commercial center.

Changes in the average number of "new" individuals taking office in particular periods were discussed in the text. The graph below gives the full information as calculated. The large dots and connecting lines indicate five-year averages; the shaded area indicates ten-year averages and shows a "generational" pattern. There were 90 new names in 1660-1754, and an average of 4.6 new names per five-year period overall.

Number of "new" selectmen in five- and ten-year periods.
The chart below shows the frequency of Northampton town meetings, referred to in the text as an indication of political unrest in the community and also of the degree to which public affairs were handled in a more open fashion at meetings rather than through the executive and discretionary powers of the selectmen. In years measured from early March to the end of February, the number of meetings besides the obligatory annual March election meeting has been counted. If adjournments are to a separate day, each extra day is counted as a meeting in itself; adjournments are noted by the numbers in parentheses (which are included in the total meetings. Note the rise in the number of meetings around 1698-1705, a period of agitation over the common lands, and from the mid-1730s to 1753, when a number of issues aroused public concern.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Number of meetings</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Number of meetings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1690-1691</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1722-1723</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1692-1693</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1724-1725</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1694-1695</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1726-1727</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1696-1697</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1728-1729</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1698-1699</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1730-1731</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700-1701</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1732-1733</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1702-1703</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1734-1735</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1704-1705</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1736-1737</td>
<td>11 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1706-1707</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1738-1739</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1708-1709</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1740-1741</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1710-1711</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1742-1743</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1712-1713</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1744-1745</td>
<td>6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1714-1715</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1746-1747</td>
<td>8 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1716-1717</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1748-1749</td>
<td>8 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1718-1719</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1750-1751</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720-1721</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1752-1753</td>
<td>6 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. Northampton in the Connecticut Valley.

B. The Western Massachusetts Frontier.
(Cross indicates church founding, if much later than settlement.)
C. Northampton 1654-1750s

(see explanation on next page)
MAP C:

Compiled from old maps in collection at Forbes Library, Northampton, and antiquarian lore from various sources.

Shaded area indicates extent of residential settlement before 1670s. Meetinghouse location indicated (now intersection of Routes 9 and 5, still the center of town). Solomon Stoddard lived on the east slope of Round Hill (house still standing, on Prospect Street): Jonathan Edwards lived on King Street, marked "*" (house gone).

Swampy and hilly areas are indicated. The fields along the river are very little above the water level in normal times and are frequently flooded. They were the first used, divided as a common field by 1661, were extremely fertile, and remained the most expensive lands in Northampton. The areas marked "inner commons" and the land in what became Southampton and Easthampton were probably not intensively farmed until the mid-nineteenth century. The varying qualities of the land were reflected in the prices registered in deeds, from which the following chart has been drawn. (All prices are in Old Tenor currency.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Old Rainbow</th>
<th>Prices per acre</th>
<th>Long Div.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1706-1712</td>
<td>£6 to £9</td>
<td>£0.13.0</td>
<td>£0.5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1720</td>
<td></td>
<td>£22.4.5</td>
<td>£0.5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1730-1736</td>
<td>£30 to £36</td>
<td>£70</td>
<td>£10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1741</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0.16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1745</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1749-1750</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Included below are the manuscripts and publications that were of major importance in this dissertation. An exhaustive guide to the Edwards manuscripts can be found in the bibliography to Ola Elizabeth Winslow, Jonathan Edwards. For a complete list of Edwards' published works, see the Winslow bibliography and Thomas H. Johnson, The Printed Writings of Jonathan Edwards, 1703-1758: A Bibliography (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1940). Many of Edwards' major works, with some pertinent letters, are being published in a new edition by Yale University Press (specific volumes cited below). Most eighteenth-century works mentioned are available on microcards, catalogued in Clifford K. Shipton and James E. Mooney, eds., National Index of American Imprints through 1800: The Short-Title Evans (American Antiquarian Society, 1969).

Manuscripts


Edwards, Jonathan. Major manuscript collections:
Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Mass. The largest collection of family papers and letters.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven. Many letters, theological notebooks, MS of published treatises, and over 1200 hundred sermons (filed by Biblical text used for doctrine; index available).

Edwards, Timothy. Major manuscript collections:
Andover Newton Theological School. Many letters, three small study and sermon notebooks, notebook of "some things concerning my father."
Beinecke Library, Yale. 1711-1724 account book, a few sermon notes.
Hawley family. New York Public Library: large collection of letters; microfilm copy at Forbes Library. Forbes Library: set of shopkeeper's account books, probably by Joseph II and Joseph III.


Hampshire County.
Deeds before 1786: Registry of Deeds, Springfield.

Judd, Sylvester. MSS on Valley history, including copies of many documents now lost; multiple volumes at Forbes Library.

Massachusetts Archives. State House, Boston.

Northampton Records.
First Church of Christ, Congregational. First Record Book.
Original at church, microfilm at Forbes Library.
First Precinct Records, 1741-1753. Microfilm at Forbes Library.
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