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Thomas Hutchinson: Traitor to Freedom?

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Thomas Hutchinson: Traitor to Freedom?

Abstract

Thomas Hutchinson is perhaps one of the most controversial figures of the American Revolution. His Loyalist bent during a time when patriotism and devotion to the American cause was rampant and respected led to his being the target of raids and protests. His actions, particularly his correspondence to Britain regarding the political actions of Bostonians, caused many to question his motives and his allegiance. The following paper will examine Thomas Hutchinson's Loyalist beliefs, where they originated, and how they affected his political and everyday life. It will examine Thomas Hutchinson's role during America's bid for freedom from the Mother Country.

Keywords

Thomas Hutchinson, Loyalism, the American Revolution

Cover Page Footnote

I would like to thank my family for supporting me in my writing endeavors. I would also like to thank Dr. Roger Schultz for his critique and recommendations for this project.

Introduction

When patriotic Americans contemplate the American Revolution, they most often remember the brave acts of the Patriots. Names such as John Adams, Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, and Paul Revere and events such as the Boston Tea Party come to mind. However, there were men on the opposite side of the revolutionary cause. These men, while also desiring the best for the American colonies, viewed loyalism to Britain as the best and most godly course of action.

Thomas Hutchinson was one of the most controversial loyalists during the time of the American Revolution. His loyalism to the Mother Country ran contrary to the Patriot agenda. This loyalism left him the target of protests and raids. Many questioned his political allegiance as governor of Massachusetts. While his reasoning has been questioned and debated throughout America's history, when one studies Hutchinson's life and beliefs, it is apparent his justifications and intentions for the good of America were just as pure as the actions of those who opposed him. The following paper will explore the loyalism of Governor Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts.

In the Beginning

Absolute independence does not lead to happiness. Happiness, on the contrary, is grounded in security. Security is found in a good ruler.¹ This is the theme of a 1767 sermon delivered by the Reverend Ebenezer Bridge before Massachusetts Governor Francis Bernard and Lieutenant Governor Thomas Hutchinson. This theme reflects the beliefs of both the governor and lieutenant governor regarding loyalty to Britain.

In his *The History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay*, Thomas Hutchinson pays tribute to John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts.² He also includes in his history the story of his great-great grandmother, Anne Hutchinson, who defied the early governor and his religious teachings.³ Perhaps Thomas Hutchinson's lineage was going against the norm. In the younger Hutchinson's case, this lineage was defying the likes of Samuel Adams and James Otis, Jr.⁴ and the ideals that have come to be known as the American Revolution.

Hutchinson was educated in Boston – from grammar school through Harvard⁵ (from which he graduated at the age of twelve)⁶. He was especially interested in historical writing. However, his father was a businessman, and Hutchinson would follow in his father's footsteps.⁷

Hutchinson gained his wealth partially through his inheritance and partially through marrying a wealthy woman. His first order of business was business. He became a successful merchant, even though there were some who accused him of smuggling and dodging high taxes in real estate.⁸ He did have financial reasons to support the East India Company at this time.⁹ His interest in the East India Company may have been instrumental in the Boston Tea Party.¹⁰

¹ Ebenezer Bridge, "A Sermon Preached before His Excellency Francis Bernard, Esq; Governor, His Honor Thomas Hutchinson, Esq; Lieutenant Governor, the Honorable His Majesty's Council, and the Honorable House of Representatives, of the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay in New-England, May 27th, 1767. Being the Anniversary for the Election of His Majesty's Council for the Province. By Ebenezer Bridge, A.M. Pastor of the Church in Chelmsford," 1767, America's Historical Imprints, Series 1, No. 10569, 13-14. Accessed February 3, 2017. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/iw-search/we/Evans/?p_product=EAIX&p_theme=eai&p_nbid=Q54T52QOMTQ4ODc3MTI1OS44ODYzMzA6MToxMzoyMDguOTUuNTAuMTgz&p_action=doc&p_queryname=3&p_docref=v2:0F2B1FCB879B099B@EAIX-0F3018808E571CB0@10569-0F80BC524395E860@12.

² Thomas Hutchinson, "The History of the Colony of Massachusetts-Bay, from the First Settlement Thereof in 1628. Until its Incorporation with the Colony of Plimouth, Province of Main, &c. by the Charter of King William and Queen Mary, in 1691. [One line in Latin from Pliny] By Mr. Hutchinson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Massachusetts Province," 1764, America's Historical Imprints, Series 1, no. 9705, 12-14, 40-41. Accessed February 3, 2017. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/iw-search/we/Evans/?p_product=EAIX&p_theme=eai&p_nbid=Q54T52QOMTQ4ODc3MTI1OS44ODYzMzA6MToxMzoyMDguOTUuNTAuMTgz&p_action=doc&p_queryname=3&p_docref=v2:0F2B1FCB879B099B@EAIX-0F30154FB04AAFA8@9705-0F7A4559D8782CE8@11.

³ *Ibid*, 56-57.

⁴ Peter Shaw, "Their Kinsman, Thomas Hutchinson; Hawthorne, the Boston Patriots, and His Majesty's Royal Governor," *Early American Literature* 11, no. 2 (1976): 184.

⁵ The Life of Thomas Hutchinson," *The Athenaeum*, no. 3611 (Jan 09, 1897): 43.

⁶ John J. Waters and John A. Schutz. "Patterns of Massachusetts Colonial Politics: The Writs of Assistance and the Rivalry between the Otis and Hutchinson Families," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (1967): 547.

⁷ "The Life of Thomas Hutchinson" 1897, 43.

⁸ Malcolm Freiberg, "'Thomas Hutchinson: The First Fifty Years (1711-1761)," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1958): 38-40.

⁹ *Ibid*, 42.

¹⁰ Malcolm Freiberg, "How to Become a Colonial Governor: Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts," *The Review of Politics* 21, no. 4 (1959): 647.

Hutchinson began his career in politics in 1761. He advanced to the Massachusetts House of Representatives and would become Speaker of the House.¹¹ Politics would take him to England to gain support of the Privy Council. Back home, he would serve again in the House and as Indian commissioner.¹² In his early political career, Thomas Hutchinson negotiated with Native Americans, experimented with new forms of currency, and took on the plight of farmers.¹³ He also served as chief justice.¹⁴

With his wealth and experience, Hutchinson was a sensible choice to serve as lieutenant governor, beginning in 1758.¹⁵ He served under two governors and then became governor himself in 1771 – a position in which he would serve for three years.¹⁶ Hutchinson was the last royal governor of Massachusetts.¹⁷ It was as he served in these positions that Hutchinson came under attack, both figuratively and literally, for his Loyalist bent.

The Stamp Act Controversy

Accusations that Thomas Hutchinson supported the Stamp Act abounded during his service as chief justice and lieutenant governor.¹⁸ In reality, Hutchinson never did support the taxation as speculated. In 1765, in fact, Hutchinson had sent a manuscript to British Parliament member Richard Jackson. The manuscript detailed why the Stamp Act was both impractical and immoral. According to Hutchinson's diary entries, he wanted the manuscript to be published anonymously. Jackson, however, opted to not publish the manuscript at all.¹⁹

Jackson it turns out, sent the manuscript to British Secretary of State Henry Seymour Conway. Jackson recognized how much value the manuscript had in aiding British opponents of the Stamp Act. In fact, in that same year, Jackson wrote to Governor Bernard explaining that Hutchinson did not deserve the American criticism he had been receiving. The treatment Hutchinson had received illustrated the "blindness of the rabble."²⁰

Hutchinson did, however, assume that the best course of action for handling the Stamp Act was for the colonists to simply submit to it. He believed that refusal to submit to Parliamentary authority would lead to America completely severing from Britain. His viewpoint did not sit well with the Patriot colonists.²¹

Governor Hutchinson

If Thomas Hutchinson was controversial in his service as chief justice and lieutenant governor, he was even more disputed during his three years as royal governor. He had served as lieutenant governor under Governors Pownall and Bernard. Bernard, especially, had experienced his own difficulties as governor due to these controversies with Britain. According to Malcolm Freiberg, by 1769, Bernard was ready to leave his position and pass it on to his lieutenant

¹¹ Freiberg 1958, 42-43.

¹² Freiberg 1958, 43-44.

¹³ *Ibid*, 45-47.

¹⁴ Freiberg 1959, 648.

¹⁵ Freiberg 1958, 54.

¹⁶ Edmund S. Morgan, "Thomas Hutchinson and the Stamp Act," *The New England Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1948): 459.

¹⁷ Peter Shaw 1976, 183.

¹⁸ Morgan 1948, 459.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 460-462.

²⁰ Morgan 1948, 461-462.

²¹ Freiberg 1959, 652.

governor.²² That year, Bernard left Massachusetts, on his way to becoming a baronet. The Patriots cheered. Hutchinson acted as governor from 1769-1771.²³

One of Hutchinson's first acts as acting governor was to thank God. On October 23 of 1769, Thomas Hutchinson declared a day of public thanksgiving for God's mercies and, particularly, for the "invaluable" life of the King. He proclaimed this day one of thanksgiving for all denominations.²⁴

The first controversy faced by Hutchinson as acting governor was charges that his merchant sons, acting on his behalf in the family business, were not obeying non-importation rules. Doubtless, Hutchinson was saddened and angered when his sons were forced to obey the non-importation rules and ceased selling British products.²⁵ The next issue, however, caused the business issues to pale in comparison.

The Boston Massacre

A 1770 article entitled "'A Short Narrative of the Horrid Massacre in Boston, Perpetrated in the Evening of the Fifth Day of March, 1770. By Soldiers of the XXIXth Regiment; which with the XIVth Regiment Were Then Quartered There: with Some Observations on the State of Things Prior to that Catastrophe,'" clearly places the blame for what has come to be known as the Boston Massacre upon the actions of the British and upon the former Governor Francis Bernard and "his political schemes."²⁶ The account details the number of victims of this massacre and just how Britain and her governor are to blame.²⁷

However, the Patriots did not only blame Bernard. Malcolm Freiberg quotes Samuel Adams as saying about Hutchinson, "It was then, if Fancy deceived me not, I observ'd his knees to tremble... I thought I saw his face grow pale (and I enjoyed the Sight.)"²⁸ Obviously, Adams interpreted Hutchinson's nervousness as a sign that he knew the Patriots were winning in their fight against Britain and her Parliamentary laws.

Communication with Britain

By 1771, Thomas Hutchinson was officially governor of Massachusetts.²⁹ It was perhaps the worst time for one loyal to Britain to be in such a position. Perhaps Hutchinson should have

²² *Ibid*, 654.

²³ *Ibid*, 655.

²⁴ Thomas Hutchinson, "[Proclamation. 1769 Oct. 23] By the Honorable Thomas Hutchinson, Esq; ... A Proclamation for a Public Thanksgiving. ... Thursday the Sixteenth Day of November Next ... Given at the Council-Chamber in Boston, the Twenty-Third Day of October, 1769 ...," 1769, America's Historical Imprints, Series 1, no. 11330, accessed February 3, 2017, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/iw-search/we/Evans/?p_product=EAIX&p_theme=eai&p_nbid=W59C58JVMTQ4NjE2OTYwMS42ODE5NjQ6MToxMzoyMDguOTUuNTAuMTgz&p_action=doc&p_docnum=19&p_queryname=3&p_docref=v2:0F2B1FCB879B099B@EAIX-0F3015AD30ECF2B8@11330-@1.

²⁵ Freiberg 1959, 655.

²⁶ Town of Boston, "A Short Narrative of the Horrid Massacre in Boston, Perpetrated in the Evening of the Fifth Day of March, 1770. By Soldiers of the XXIXth Regiment; which with the XIVth Regiment Were Then Quartered There: with Some Observations on the State of Things Prior to that Catastrophe," 1770, America's Historical Imprints, Series 1, no. 11581, 6, accessed February 3, 2017, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/iw-search/we/Evans/?p_product=EAIX&p_theme=eai&p_nbid=W59C58JVMTQ4NjE2OTYwMS42ODE5NjQ6MToxMzoyMDguOTUuNTAuMTgz&p_action=doc&p_docnum=26&p_queryname=3&p_docref=v2:0F2B1FCB879B099B@EAIX-0F3015E56D624558@11581-@1.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 1-136.

²⁸ Freiberg 1959, 655.

²⁹ *Ibid*.

learned from the experiences of the previous governor. Bernard was a supporter of Parliament and their proposals such as the Townsend Acts. He deemed military action as necessary to keep the rowdy colonists in order and supported mandatory quartering of these British soldiers.³⁰

In 1769 (the year, perhaps not so coincidentally, that Bernard turned the governorship over to Hutchinson), several personal letters written by Bernard to friends in England became known to his opponents.³¹ Because Bernard's letters had mentioned goings on in Massachusetts, including the colonists' refusal to quarter British soldiers,³² the Patriots accused him of being a "tale-bearer" and blamed him for the stringent acts of Parliament toward the colonists.³³ When the letters were printed in *The Boston Gazette*, the House of Representatives petitioned the king for his removal from governorship.³⁴ The attacks only grew stronger with the publication of the letters and the king of England naming Bernard as a baronet.³⁵

Hutchinson followed Bernard in such letter controversies. His letters, written to Britain before and as he served as governor of Massachusetts, included reports of the actions of the Patriots. A 1768 letter that Hutchinson sent to a gentleman in England included information about Patriot riots and their refusal to cooperate with the proper punishment for their actions. He wrote of how those meeting in the town of Boston viewed their commissioners as a grievance. He warned that those who attend these town meetings influence all of Boston.³⁶

In another letter, he warned the British of the American plan to refuse goods from England. Bostonian merchants had decided upon this move. He awaited more developments to send to them.³⁷ Throughout his letters, he names individuals such as Hancock and Otis as being instigators of mobs and libelous statements.³⁸

An interesting letter from Thomas Hutchinson was found in 1971 in London. This letter reveals that Hutchinson may have used his own method of spying to gain information to send to Great Britain.³⁹ The recipient of the letter is believed to have been Thomas Sewell (also a British Loyalist), who served as both attorney general of Massachusetts and vice-admiralty court judge to Halifax.⁴⁰ The theme of the letter was whether or not there were plans to pay the attorney-general by salary rather than by fees, as had been the common practice. If Sewell were to be paid by salary, he may give up his position of court judge in Halifax. He could be replaced by an

³⁰ Francis G. Walett, "Governor Bernard's Undoing: An Earlier Hutchinson Letters Affair," *The New England Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (1965): 217-218.

³¹ *Ibid*, 217.

³² *Ibid*, 220.

³³ *Ibid*, 218-219.

³⁴ Walett 1965, 220-221.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 221.

³⁶ Thomas Hutchinson, "The Representations of Governor Hutchinson and Others, Contained in Certain Letters Transmitted to England, and Afterwards Returned from Thence, and Laid before the General-Assembly of the Massachusetts-Bay. Together with the Resolves of the Two Houses Thereon," 1773, America's Historical Imprints, Series 1, no. 12820, 1-5, accessed February 3, 2017, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/iw-search/we/Evans/?p_product=EAIX&p_theme=eai&p_nbid=W59C58JVMTO4NjE2OTYwMS42ODE5NjQ6MToxMzoyMDguOTUuNTAuMTgz&p_action=doc&p_docnum=33&p_queryname=3&p_docref=v2:0F2B1FCB879B099B@EAIX-0F3018B07A8E7A80@12820-@1.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 8.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 1-9.

³⁹ Mary Beth Norton, "A Recently Discovered Thomas Hutchinson Letter," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 82 (1970): 105.

⁴⁰ Norton 1970, 105.

Englishman, therefore this information would have been valuable to Britain even though Hutchinson had little interest one way or another.⁴¹

As with Bernard, in 1773, Hutchinson's letters (minus, of course, the one discovered in 1971) were brought before the Massachusetts House of Representatives.⁴² The charges were that these letters were an attempt to overthrow the Massachusetts constitution.⁴³ Hutchinson wrote a letter to the House regarding the accusations. He requested that he be presented with transcripts of the alleged letters, which the leaders of the House of Representatives honored.⁴⁴ Upon reading the letters, Hutchinson, in correspondence with the House leaders, reiterated that the purpose of his letters was not to overthrow the state Constitution, but were private letters written in confidence.⁴⁵ The leaders of the House of Representatives, upon deliberating Hutchinson's defense, determined that Hutchinson had violated the mindset of the colonies and requested that the king of England remove Hutchinson and his lieutenant governor from their positions.⁴⁶

To England

The powers of England then appointed General Thomas Gage as military governor of Massachusetts in 1774. Hutchinson retired to England. He was only supposed to give up his position temporarily, but his letters resulted in him being too unpopular to return. According to Doyle, he had become, perhaps, the most hated individual in Massachusetts.⁴⁷

British authorities considered Hutchinson on a leave of absence from his position as governor. These leaders did not, however, consult with him again on matters regarding relations with the American colonists.⁴⁸ He is described in an 1886 review of *Diary and Letters of Thomas Hutchinson – II* as simply an onlooker.⁴⁹

Hutchinson's governorship had become his shortest political experience, no doubt due to the controversy. It was, perhaps, one that Hutchinson could have done without.⁵⁰ Malcolm Freiberg writes Hutchinson's time as governor was perhaps the bitterest and shortest-lived of any other eighteenth-century, American-born office holder.⁵¹

Hutchinson and John and Samuel Adams

One of the primary rivals of Hutchinson during his political career was Samuel Adams. Of course, the feeling was mutual. In his *History*, Hutchinson referred to Adams as a character assassin.⁵² Perhaps in a spirit of revenge for the reputations ruined by Adams, Hutchinson accused

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 105-106.

⁴² Hutchinson 1773, 1.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 59.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 59-61.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 61.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 92-94.

⁴⁷ J.A. Doyle, "Diary and Letters of Thomas Hutchinson-Vol. II," *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 62, no. 1613 (Sep 25, 1886): 432.

⁴⁸ "Diary and Letters of Thomas Hutchinson-Vol. II." *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 62, no. 1613 (Sep 25, 1886): 432-433.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 433.

⁵⁰ Freiberg 1959, 656.

⁵¹ *Ibid*.

⁵² James M. O'Toole, "The Historical Interpretations of Samuel Adams," *The New England Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (1976): 82.

Adams of collecting too much in taxes when he held position of tax collector for Boston and could not resist keeping tabs on Adams' failed businesses.⁵³

It was Samuel Adams who successfully demanded after the Boston Massacre that Hutchinson remove British troops from Boston. He insisted this was the will of the people. (John Hancock commissioned a painting by John Singleton Copley of Adams confronting Hutchinson to commemorate the Patriot).⁵⁴

Samuel Adams' better-known second cousin, John, also took on the cause of opposition to Thomas Hutchinson. It is said that while Hutchinson was governor, Adams, through committees on which he sat, opposed nearly every action of Hutchinson's. At the end of his ten-year battle with Hutchinson, Adams is said to have suffered a nervous breakdown.⁵⁵

Samuel Adams, however, appeared to make Hutchinson the subject of his political vengeance. He found joy in causing anxiety in the royal governor.⁵⁶ It is no wonder, the name Adams appears in the list of Hutchinson's accusers in the House of Representatives.⁵⁷

Cause of the Backlash

Nathaniel Hawthorne writes in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" of the persecution Loyalists to Britain faced during the turbulent years of the American Revolution. He describes Hutchinson as one who "was driven from the province by the whizzing of a musketball."⁵⁸ Hawthorne's description is not too far off from the actual events. Edmund Morgan describes how suspicion against Hutchinson was so strong that the Patriots raided his home during his time as chief justice, destroying whatever was in their path, including windows, doors, and furniture. His opponents splattered his library with mud and emptied his wine cellar. The Patriots were even removing his roof when the rising sun interrupted their destruction.⁵⁹ Perhaps worst of all to Hutchinson, the rioters scattered the manuscript of volume two of his *The History of the Province of Massachusetts Bay* onto the street, purposely muddying the papers. Hutchinson must have been thankful when a neighbor was able to recover the papers the next morning.⁶⁰ Hutchinson barely escaped the mob with his own life.⁶¹

Hawthorne speculates that the loathing of Hutchinson originated in the Patriot's hatred for authority.⁶² According to his interpretation of the events, Hutchinson became a type of scapegoat. One, opponents of the Stamp Act made him a scapegoat when, in reality, Hutchinson also opposed the tax. Secondly, he was made a scapegoat by the wrath of the Patriots who needed someone to blame for the actions of the British government. Hence, they attacked the property of British servants.⁶³

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ "Samuel Adams" *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 1, no. 4 (1877): 440-441.

⁵⁵ Peter Shaw, "Their Kinsman, Thomas Hutchinson; Hawthorne, the Boston Patriots, and His Majesty's Royal Governor," *Early American Literature* 11, no. 2 (1976): 186-187.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 187.

⁵⁷ Hutchinson 1773, i.

⁵⁸ Nathaniel Hawthorne, "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," in *The Snow-Image and Other Twice-Told Tales* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1852, accessed February 3, 2017, <http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/mm.html>.

⁵⁹ Morgan 1948, 459.

⁶⁰ Shaw 1976, 183.

⁶¹ "The Life of Thomas Hutchinson" 1897, 44.

⁶² Shaw 1976, 183-184.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 184.

Historians do agree with Hawthorne's analysis. Edmund S. Morgan reports that while the citizens of Boston denied any responsibility for the raid against Hutchinson, he remained under their scrutiny and hatred.⁶⁴ In an 1897 document entitled "The Life of Thomas Hutchinson," the unknown author states his or her belief that Hutchinson's opposition to the Stamp Act was not radical enough for Samuel Adams or Patrick Henry, who wanted America separated from the Mother Country. Hutchinson, however, could not agree to revolution any more than he could agree to tyranny.⁶⁵ He held the conviction that he would not open the way to rebellion. The thoughts of the Patriots, obviously, differed.⁶⁶

Otis' Attack

There are those who believe the backlash against Hutchinson throughout his political career was nothing short of a conspiracy that had been organized by James Otis, Jr. The dispute between Hutchinson and Otis began in 1760, according to this theory, when Hutchinson was chosen for chief justice of the colony over Otis' father. Because of Hutchinson's multi-tasking in politics, Otis accused him of holding too many offices. He also accused Hutchinson of conspiring against liberty and, subsequently, organized the attacks on Hutchinson.⁶⁷

John J. Waters and John A. Shutz note Otis' "intense hatred" of Hutchinson.⁶⁸ They note that Otis was successful in convincing Bostonians of Hutchinson's conspiracy against liberty. The then-chief justice could not break free of the scrutiny.⁶⁹ Perhaps part of Otis' hatred centered on his opposition to the Writs of Assistance, which Hutchinson supported.

Hutchinson encountered Otis when Otis took his case against Governor Francis Bernard's Writs of Assistance to court. The Writs, which allowed suspected smugglers' homes and ships to be searched by proper authorities, were legal in England. Otis, however, questioned their legality in Massachusetts. Knowing as chief justice (because of their legality in England) that Hutchinson would have to allow the writs; Otis used Hutchinson's position against him and incited even more bitterness against the chief justice.⁷⁰ In reality, Hutchinson's decision *had* provided a basis for American courts upholding Parliamentary law.⁷¹

Perhaps Otis' worst attack was aimed at Hutchinson's friend William Bollan. Otis accused Bollan, who was an agent of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, of conspiring against New England's Congregational Church.⁷² Bollan, a distant relative of East Athorp, a clergyman who was accused of attempting to establish Anglicanism as the established religion of Massachusetts; became a victim of attacks by Otis and clergy that he had incited. Because he was a colonial agent, Bollan was already a target of merchants and other Bostonians.⁷³

The idea of an established, Anglican church was hotly debated in America at this time. In short, Anglicanism was often the brunt of the Patriot mindset. Because it was closely tied with the

⁶⁴ Morgan 1948, 460.

⁶⁵ "The Life of Thomas Hutchinson" 1897, 44.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Shaw 1976, 185.

⁶⁸ Waters and Schutz 1967, 543.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Waters and Schutz, 563.

⁷¹ Freiberg 1959, 651.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 564.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

establishment of Britain, it was often considered a part of what was thought to be the tyranny over the colonies.⁷⁴

Hutchinson was not allowed any say in the condemnation of Bollan and his subsequent termination as colonial agent. Governor Bernard did not support Bollan. Otis continued spreading fear and hatred of Hutchinson. Even Hutchinson admitted Otis' cleverness in his attacks.⁷⁵

Perhaps ironically, Hutchinson wrote his correspondence to Jackson, a correspondence that included his manuscript expressing his disapproval of the Stamp Act, at the same time that Otis was penning his pamphlet *Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved*. Hutchinson sent copies of Otis' pamphlets to Jackson as well as a way of illustrating the colonists' dissatisfaction with the moves of British Parliament. Hutchinson did not take a condemning tone toward the colonists in his correspondence. His reasoning was more one of exhibiting concern that Parliament had taken away some of the privileges entitled to the British colonists as Englishmen.⁷⁶

What could be even more ironic is the fact that both Otis and Hutchinson made many of the same points and shared many of the same ideals and concerns. For instance, both agreed Parliament was legally supreme. Both agreed the colonies were subject to Parliament and the laws of Parliament, thus, must be obeyed. Both agreed that Parliament, in turn, should respect the natural rights of colonists.⁷⁷ Hutchinson included in his correspondence his belief that, as Englishmen, colonists had the right to make their own laws based upon their own representatives and, thus, should be exempt from these taxes.⁷⁸

Conclusion

It is often easy for American historians, in particular, to view American Revolution history through the lens of nationalism. It seems more justified to side with a Samuel Adams or James Otis, Jr. than it does to understand the mindset of a British Loyalist. Americans love their freedom. However, just as the Patriots had their reasons for supporting the cause of revolution, so, too, men such as Thomas Hutchinson had their own logic for supporting the cause of loyalty to the Mother Country.

Mark David Hall and Daniel Dreisbach write there were generally three different types of Loyalists during the time of the American Revolution. The principled Loyalists were Loyalists because of their concern with laws. The moderate Loyalists were concerned with doing what was right by God and country. They wanted compromise. The Tories approved of Loyalism because they saw revolution as a great evil.⁷⁹ From the studies in this paper, Hutchinson fell somewhere between the second and third categories.

Thomas Hutchinson attempted to hold together a colony that was at odds with the establishment. While he did not always support the actions of British Parliament, he could not, in good conscience, rebel against the secure government he represented. While many may question his actions, his motives were probably just as pure and virtuous as those of his opponents.

⁷⁴ Mark David Hall and Daniel Dreisbach, "Religion and the Loyalists" in *Faith and the Founders of the American Republic* (Oxford Scholarship Online, 2014), 2, accessed March 7, 2017, <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199843336.001.0001/acprof-9780199843336-chapter-6>.

⁷⁵ Waters and Schutz 1967, 564-565.

⁷⁶ Morgan 1948, 463-464.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 464.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*.

⁷⁹ Hall and Dreisbach 2014, 25.

There can be no doubt that Hutchinson believed he was acting in the way that was most loyal to God and to His ambassadors on earth. His beliefs are epitomized in his April, 1770 Proclamation for a General Fast in which he proclaimed that the Massachusetts colonists should humbly confess their sins and offer petitions for blessings and, most importantly, for the life and the health of the King – “that the blessings of Civil and Religious Liberty, and of good Government and Order may be the happy Portion of the People of this Province...”⁸⁰

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