The Rev. Thomas Barton’s Authorship of
*The Conduct of the Paxton Men, Impartially Represented* (1764)

James P. Myers, Jr.
Gettysburg College

This essay discusses the identification of the Rev. Thomas Barton as the author of the anonymously published *The Conduct of the Paxton Men, Impartially Represented* ... and explores several issues raised by that attribution. Printed in Philadelphia in 1764, *The Conduct of the Paxton Men* was written partly to rebut Benjamin Franklin’s anonymously published attack on the Scots-Irish instigators of the so-called Paxton Boys’ disturbances of December, 1763, and February, 1764, *A Narrative of the Late Massacres, In Lancaster County, of a Number of Indians, Friends to this Province, by Persons Unknown.* Accordingly, *The Conduct of the Paxton Men* generally defends the actions of the Paxtonians, impugns the motives, pacifism, and inaction of the Quaker-dominated General Assembly, and thoroughly discredits the reputations of the murdered Conestoga Indians.

Because the tract is typical of the position taken by other pro-Paxton pamphlets, we need to inquire whether Thomas Barton was its author. A proprietary placeman who enjoyed cordial relations with, among others, Thomas Penn, Richard Peters, and William Smith, Barton resided in Lancaster when the massacres occurred. His correspondence records his hostility to both mob rule and overly assertive Dissenters, especially New Side Presbyterians. Why would Barton advocate the cause of the largely Scots-Irish Presbyterian vigilantes? An Anglican itinerant missionary for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (S.P.G.), committed to Christianizing and educating the Native Americans both before and after the Paxton emergency, why would Barton defend the slaughter of twenty baptized Conestogas peaceably settled on their reservation near Lancaster? Why did a writer whose numerous extant letters show us a man eager to explain his life and ideas and to record news of contemporary happenings for his correspondents in Philadelphia and England, leave no report on the massacres? If we accept that he wrote *The Conduct of the Paxton Men,* improbable as that may seem, how are we to interpret his personal evolution and his role in the political hierarchy of colonial Pennsylvania?
THE CONDUCT OF
The Paxton-Men;
Impartially represented;
The Distresses of the Frontiers, and the
Complaints and Sufferings of the People fully
stated; and the Methods recommended by the wisest
Nations, in such Cases, seriously consider'd.

WITH SOME
Remarks upon the NARRATIVE,
Of the Indian-Massacre, lately publish'd.
Interpers'd with several interesting Anecdotes, relating to the
Military Genius, and Warlike Principles of the
People call'd Quakers: Together-with proper Reflection
and Advice upon the whole.

In a Letter from a Gentleman in one of the
Back-Counties, to a Friend in Philadelphia.

--- Si tibi vera videtur,
Dede Manus; et, si falla eft, accingere contra.---
LUCRET.
The impious Man who sells his Country's Freedom,
Makes all the Guilt of Tyranny his own.---
His are her Slughters, her Oppressions His.---
MARTYN'S TIMOLEON:
hoever will pretend to govern a People without regarding them, will
soon repent it.---Such Facts of Errantry may do perhaps in Asia:---
But in Countries where the People are FREE, it is Madness to rule
them against their Wills.---They will know that Government is ap-
pointed for their Sakes, and will be fatory enough to expect some Re-
gards and some Good from their own Delegates.---Those Nations
who are govern'd in Spite of themselves, and in a Manner that bids
Defiance to their Opinions, their Interests, and their Understandings,
---are either SLAVES, or will soon cease to be SUBJECTS.
CATO'S LETTERS.

PHILADELPHIA:
Printed by A Steuart, and sold by JOHN CREAIG, Shop-
keeper in Lancaster. 1764.
Finally, if he did write so uncharacteristic an essay, what inferences can be drawn concerning the motives of the Proprietary government whose client he was and which, it appears, he served so faithfully?

***

The few known facts of Thomas Barton's early life may be summarized simply. Born about 1728 into an Anglo-Irish Ascendancy family in Carrickmacross, county Monaghan, Ireland, Barton may have attended Trinity College, Dublin. He emigrated about 1751 to the Philadelphia area, where he taught school, first in Norriton, then at the Philadelphia Academy. While in Norriton, he met David and Esther Rittenhouse, marrying the latter and becoming a very close friend with the former. In 1754, he returned to Great Britain, taking divine orders and receiving an appointment as itinerant missionary in the S.P.G. Once back in America, he located in Reading township, in York, now Adams, county. From his new homestead, he served a scattering of Anglican believers embracing three parishes in Carlisle, Huntington township, and York.

Following Major General Edward Braddock's defeat in July, 1755, Barton assumed an active lead in defending the frontier. That August, he published his popular sermon *Unanimity and Public Spirit*. Introduced to Pennsylvanians by William Smith with a prefatory letter almost as long as the sermon itself, *Unanimity* exhorted the factious backcountry settlers to unite against their common French and Indian foe. In 1758, he served as Anglican chaplain-at-large on General John Forbes's campaign to seize Fort Duquesne. With the destruction of Fort Duquesne and in response to wishes he had expressed earlier, he was transferred to a more secure living in Lancaster.

Once in Lancaster, securely removed from the back counties of York and Cumberland, Barton set about insuring the survival of his new church, St. James's, an Episcopalian shoal girdled by a sea of Presbyterians and German sectarians. From that nucleus, he attended as well to a pair of satellite parishes in Pequea and Carnarvon. Later, he extended his circuit to include churches as far east as Mill Creek in New Castle, Delaware. He also labored to establish a school in the town for Indian, black, and poor children, and participated decisively in the founding of the Lancaster Library Company, later renamed the Juliana Library, honoring its benefactor, Proprieteror Thomas Penn's wife. He also resumed plans to establish a
mission among the Indians. However, as in 1755, Barton had to adjust to reversal when Pontiac's War broke like a tidal wave over the frontier in 1763.

Not Pontiac's scalp-hunting warriors, however, but embittered, frustrated Scots-Irish settlers invaded the streets of Lancaster. On December 27, 1763, even while Barton celebrated the birth of the Prince of Peace—he had been on circuit earlier in the week—irate and alienated frontiersmen tomahawked and shot the small band of baptized Conestogas who had sought government sanctuary in the town after the Paxton Boys had murdered six of their numbers on December 14. Their numbers were swollen with additional backcountry settlers who felt betrayed by the provincial government's apathy and resented the protection extended to the reservation Indians. The rioters marched on Philadelphia itself in February, 1764, to obtain redress and to kill the Indians then harbored in that city.4

Barton left little explicit testimony of his feelings and thoughts on the atrocities enacted during the actual "rebellion" and on the pamphlet war that the Paxtonians' actions provoked. If he did choose to write on the subject, his letters have been lost. This silence is puzzling and uncharacteristic, especially because he may actually have contributed clandestinely to the paper war ignited by the Paxton Boys' vigilantism. The present essay proposes to explore this possibility.

The tract in question appeared in 1764 with a long, prolix title bidding for wide appeal. It reads:

THE CONDUCT OF THE PAXTON-MEN, Impartially represented; The DISTRESSES of the FRONTIERS, and the COMPLAINTS and SUFFERINGS of the PEOPLE fully stated; and the Methods recommended by the wisest Nations, in such Cases, seriously consider'd. WITH SOME REMARKS upon the NARRATIVE, Of the Indian-Massacre, lately publish'd. Interspers'd with several interesting Anecdotes, relating to the MILITARY GENIUS, and WARLIKE PRINCIPLES of the People call'd QUAKERS: Together-with proper Reflection and Advice upon the whole. In a LETTER from a GENTLEMAN in one of the Back-Counties, to a FRIEND in Philadelphia.

The title page also advertised that it was to be sold in Lancaster at John Creag's shop.
Like most of the many pamphlets published on the Paxton disturbances, this essay appeared anonymously. Only in 1873 did George Maurice Abbot write on the verso of the title page of the copy now in the Library Company of Philadelphia the following annotation: “The Author of this pamphlet (Paxton-Men) was the Rev. Thomas Barton of Lancaster. G. M. A. Oct. 29th 1873.” Not only was Abbot the Librarian of the Library Company, but he was also Thomas Barton’s great-great-grandson, descended through the latter’s first-born son, William. On the basis on Abbot’s scholarly credentials and familial connection, most scholars have accepted his identification. Notwithstanding Abbot’s attribution and the scholarly agreement accorded it, a careful reading of the tract, set against what can be established of Barton’s life and outlook, raises significant questions.

A few of these challenges involve relatively minor points of historical fact and probability. If George M. Abbot had known of a family tradition identifying Barton as the author, it would have derived from Abbot’s great-grandfather and Thomas’s eldest son. Yet William Barton, eight years old at the time of the December murders, never once alludes in his biography of his uncle, David Rittenhouse, to his father’s attitude toward the rioters. Furthermore, William frequently and gratuitously digresses elsewhere to offer considerable detail on his father’s life. He cites Rittenhouse’s eyewitness description of the march on Philadelphia and spends over three pages on the disturbances themselves without referring at all either to his father’s preaching in Lancaster at that very moment or to his supposed authorship of the tract. Either William Barton knew nothing of his father’s relationship to the Paxton affair, or he suppressed the information.

In fact, William Barton probably was unaware of his father’s association with the pamphlet, and perhaps of the pamphlet itself. He did know about Benjamin Franklin’s anonymously published *A Narrative of the Late Massacres*, to which *The Conduct of the Paxton Men* replied. One of the latter’s more barbed allusions, for example, refers to Franklin’s reputation as an experimenter with electricity:

I can sincerely assure the ingenious and worthy Author of the NARRATIVE, that a Shock of Electricity would have had a much more sensible Effect upon these People than all the Arguments and Quotations he has produced.
Franklin's authorship was, in fact, an open secret passed around by most of the subsequent pamphleteers. Yet William Barton silently ignores the association between Franklin's attack and the pamphlet supposedly authored by his father. Had he known of his father's rebuttal to Franklin's pamphlet, he would have said so. If Thomas Barton's authorship were indeed a family tradition known to George Abbot, then he probably did not obtain that understanding from William, unless William knew, yet publicly suppressed it.

Another factual challenge comes with the pamphleteer's teasing closing reference to his residence: "Dated from my FARM-HOUSE, March 17th, 1764." If this were not an attempt to conceal further the tract's authorship, then we must dismiss Barton's candidacy. Only after 1768 did Barton begin to cultivate what appears to have been his first and only farm in Lancaster county, ironically located on the Conestoga Manor, the former reservation of the murdered Conestogas. Before 1768 he lived in the town of Lancaster. Barton sought a house in the town and had to pasture and board his horse soon after his appointment to St. James's Church in 1759. Moreover, in November 1763, the month before the murders, he acquired a residence on the southeast corner of North Lime and East Orange Streets. In 1768, requesting assistance from Sir William Johnson in securing authorization to farm the Conestoga Manor, Barton stressed the site's convenience to Lancaster: "I live in a town, where I have no Land of my own near." Even after he acquired the Conestoga farm, he continued residing in Lancaster. In a letter of 1770 written in Lancaster to Sir William Johnson, he says of his town property (known to the townspeople as "Barton's Garden") that

I have a snug, little Garden...—My Spot is well cultivated, & yields me Variety of Vegetables, Fruit, & Flowers—I don't know whether Plato or Seneca (Diogenes, I am sure, had not) [had] as much Ground as I have.—Why then should I not be contented?—Only because my Stock of Philosophy is not as Large as theirs was.

Another argument against Barton's authorship turns on the glaring disparity, between the pamphleteer's expressed feelings toward the Paxtonians and the Indians, and Thomas Barton's attitudes. At least one other contemporary polemicist perceived that the Conduct was executed in a spirit far from the title's publicized impartiality, so shrill was its defense of the rioters and its vilification of the Indians. Indeed, following a carefully orchestrated, point-by-point rebuttal of the earlier tract, the
writer of An Answer to... "The Conduct of the Paxton Men" strips away his target's "spotted garment" to reveal nothing less than "a Stark Naked Presbyterian." 17

This exposure of the earlier pamphleteer's duplicity and political sympathies is important. In his introduction, the author of The Conduct pointedly disavows having any "political Ends to serve...[and] nothing to hope or fear from Party Connections." 18 He insists, rather, that his purpose is simply

to rescue the miserable Frontier People, who lately rose in Arms, from the Infamy and Odium thrown upon them, by those whose unfeeling Hearts have never suffered them to look beyond their own private Interest and Party. 19

Professing objectivity, he pointedly dissociates himself from any incendiary or insurrectionist impulse, unequivocally repudiating vigilantism: "Such violent Steps can never possibly be productive of any thing, but WILD UPROAR and CONFUSION." He swears "to bear his Testimony against, and to discountenance by every Means in his Power" whatever might offer "the least Insult to the LAWS and GOVERNMENT of his County." 20 His argument, however, trenchantly defends the Paxton Volunteers and criticizes all Indians and the Quaker party's political position.

That the writer's initial protests of impartiality are perfunctory, almost pro forma, soon becomes evident. After quoting at length from the remonstrance/petition submitted by the rioters, 21 he refocuses his subject, employing the same phrasing he used on the tract's first page, but now arguing that the insurgents need to be appreciated as other than "RIOTERS, REBELS, MURDERERS, WHITE SAVAGES." Rational men, he elaborates.

are sensibly concern'd that [the Paxtonians] were reduced to the Necessity of having Recourse to such Methods as might be deem'd an Insult to the Government and Laws of their King and Country. 22

"As might be deemed"—the Paxton Boys only appeared to defy the state. What has been popularly interpreted as rebellion actually laid "bare the PHARASAICAL BOSOM of QUAKERISM, by obliging the NON-RESISTING QUALITY to take up arms, and to become Proselytes to the first great Law of Nature," 23 that is, self-preservation. The Quaker instinct to defend hearth and home is the same motive
that drove the Paxtonians to kill the protected Conestogas and march on Philadelphia. Hence, according to Barton, the murder of government-protected Indians and the riotous demonstrations in the capital benefited all true Pennsylvanians by driving the Quaker hypocrites from their holes when they set aside their religious scruples to defend their city by force of arms. What detractors would label insurrection was actually an expression of natural law (self-preservation) and was directed against a hypocritical faction (the Quakers) guilty of destroying the frontiersmen by means of spurious, duplicitous pacifism.

The author's insistence upon a distinction between the legislative and the executive components of government underlies his remarkable casuistry:

the executive Part of the Government, at least, deserves [the frontiersmen's] Esteem and Affection. I trust therefore, they will never do any Thing that may bring their Obedience and Regards to the LAWS and MAGISTRACY of their Country in Question.24

The indifference of the Quaker faction to the frontiersmen and its protection of the Indians, on the other hand, invited defiance. By insisting that important political and ethical differences separated the proprietor from the assembly, the pamphleteer tries to deflect accusations of sedition.

Barton's oft-expressed support of the Proprietary, his hostility toward the Quakers, and his empathy for the backcountry settlers are consistent with the argument thus far. The anonymous writer, however, also advances a libertarian defense of rebellion alien to Barton's known beliefs. Additionally, he expresses such hostile and unfeeling attitudes toward the Christianized Conestogas that, for this reason alone, one feels uncomfortable accepting Barton's authorship.

A pivotal passage occurs on p. 13. The writer once more dissociates himself from rebellious intent: "I solemnly declare I have as great an Aversion to Mobs, and all riotous Proceedings, as any Man can have, as any Man ought to have." But this presumably straightforward affirmation of civil order permits the author to allow an exception. "At the same Time," he stipulates, "I must own, I shall never be for sacrificing the Lives and Liberties of a free People to the Caprice and Obstinacy of a destructive Faction." With this transition, he begins to justify an oppressed populace's right to rebel against tyranny. Basing his argument upon historical and Biblical antecedents, parliamentary debates, and English Whig theorists such as
Algernon Sidney, the writer argues that a government which ignores the just grievances of its people—like the frontiersmen’s complaints—incites the people to rebellion. To reinforce his position, he cites the popular journalistic collection *Cato’s Letters*:

The Author \(^{25}\) of *Cato’s Letters* very justly observes, that “It is a most wicked and absurd Position, to say, that a People can ever be in such a Situation, as not to have a Right to oppose a *Tyrant*, a *Robber*, or a *Traitor*, who, by *Violence*, *Treachery*, *Rapine*, infinite *Murders* and *Devastations*, has deprived them of Safety and Protection.” \(^{26}\)

To epitomize this principal thesis, he concludes the essay by associating his writing of the tract on St. Patrick’s Day with the Irish or Scots-Irish passion for liberty: “*Dated from my FARM-HOUSE*, March 17th, 1764.—A Day dedicated to LIBERTY and ST. PATRICK.” \(^{27}\)

The most telling argument against Barton’s authorship, however, rests upon the pamphleteer’s unmitigated hatred for all Indians. Throughout his entire missionary career, Barton distinguished between hostile and “friendly” Native Americans. Generally, he criticized those allied to the French and eager to attack the British settlers. “Barbarous Savages,” “the rude Spoiler,” “Heathens or Infidels,” “Barbarians,” “a Cruel Enemy”—these are the more common terms he uses to describe the hostiles. \(^{28}\) More typically, Barton employs the neutral term *Indians* to denote the Delaware and Shawnee warriors who were attacking the back counties. In describing Colonel John Armstrong’s destruction of the Indian stronghold of Kittanning, he even praises the enemy sachem Captain Jacobs who evoked uncommon, almost epic heroism in his death. \(^{29}\) Such esteem is inconceivable from the writer of the *Conduct*.

Barton views the proposed beneficiaries of his missionary activities with a mixture of condescension and compassion—“poor ignorant Creatures,” “tawny people,” “miserable unenlightened people,” “barbarous Nations who are immersed in the grossest Idolatry,” “those poor Heathen who ‘sit in darkness and the shadow of death,’” and “rude & barbarous creatures” \(^{30}\) When he writes of the murdered Conestogas, he once again expresses sympathy for the Indians. In his 1764 report to the S.P.G., he praises his congregation for having had no part “in the murder of
the Indians in this place and the different insurrections occasioned by this inhuman act.” 31 He also castigates the Paxton Volunteers in a letter to Sir William Johnson when he refers in passing to “the Assassination of those hapless Wretches.” 32 Here, Barton’s thoughts agree with the benevolence of his numerous proposals for improving the Indians' conditions, and that we believe a missionary so disposed would not defend, let alone derive vindictive satisfaction from, the slaughter of twenty defenseless and baptized Conestogas who were peacefully, if pathetically, settled into a life of poverty on their reservation near Lancaster.

Yet, naked hatred of the baptized Conestogas distinguishes the author of The Conduct of the Paxton Men. The following may be cited as among the more outstanding instances of his bigotry and loathing: “a Handful of Freeman and the King's Subjects, who thought it their Duty to kill a Pack of villainous, faithless Savages” (p. 12); “a Parcel of treacherous, faithless, rascally Indians, some of which can be proved to be Murderers” (p. 14); “140 idle Vagabonds” (i.e. the Indians given sanctuary in Philadelphia; ibid.); “murdering Savages” (ibid.); “a mighty Noise and Hubbub has been made about killing a few Indians” (p. 17); “they were a drunken, debauch'd, insolent, quarrelsome Crew” (ibid.); “the killing of a few treacherous Savages, who by their Perfidy, had forfeited their Lives” (p. 24) “perfidious Wretches” (p. 28); and “Shall Heathens, shall Traytors, shall Rebels and Murderers be protected?” (p. 29). In one short passage, the writer admits—the reader might suspect here that he does so in a face-saving strategy—that he wished “the Women and little Ones at least, could have been spared.” More troubling than this to the writer, however, was the Paxton Volunteers’ “Insult to the Civil Magistrates, and . . . Encroachment upon the Peace and Quiet of that Town” (p. 17).

The essay’s libertarian emphasis and its simplistic, baseless perception of the twenty pacified and Christianized Conestogas as murderous savages deserving the annihilation meted out to them echo commonplace attitudes voiced by the more radical Scots-Irish Presbyterians. 33 Virtually the only terrain the pamphlet shares with the Anglican Thomas Barton was the mutual distrust, sometimes hatred of, the pacifist faction dominating the Assembly. Considerations of content and tone, therefore, make Barton’s authorship improbable.

Complicating, indeed, strongly challenging, this rejection, however, are several other particulars. The pamphlet’s epistolary form, its patriotic appeal to an Irish
readership, its distinctive prose style, its rhetorical duplication of parts of an earlier Barton tract—all these combine with external evidence to suggest that, notwithstanding the essay's moral emphasis, Thomas Barton must in fact have authored it. *The Conduct of the Paxton Men* confronts the contemporary reader with an extremely complex, puzzling polemic, the genesis of which needs to be appreciated within the labyrinthine circumstances of Barton's life and political world. Before exploring these historical details, however, the evidence pointing to Barton's authorship requires close examination.

***

Although *The Conduct of the Paxton Men* combines an apology for the Paxtonians with a polemic against Benjamin Franklin's *Narrative*, it also relies upon the convention of the letter. Both the title page and the initial headnote claim to be: "A LETTER from a GENTLEMAN in one of the Frontier-Counties, to his Friend in Philadelphia, relating to the Paxton-Men." In August, 1755, William Smith also used the letter-polemic convention to preface Barton's *Unanimity and Public Spirit*: Smith might well have provided Barton with a convenient precedent. Certainly, Barton found the epistolary form congenial, as his many surviving letters indicate.

Furthermore, David Rittenhouse might have been the "Friend in Philadelphia" Barton addressed. Generally, the addressee is forgotten once the essay gets fully underway, but in one notable passage the author implies that his missive should correct his friend's ignorance of frontier life. The pamphleteer writes: "I am no Stranger to your Fellow-feeling and Humanity:—I well know that you have a Tear for Distress, and a Sign for Misery." He then diplomatically reminds his friend that "if it were not criminal, I should envy you your happy Lot, in being placed by Providence at some Distance from the Scenes of Destruction and Desolation, of which, I and my Neighbours have been Melancholy Eye-Witnesses." With that, he elaborates a full page of graphic description of recent atrocities.

If the apologist is to be believed, he wrote his letter on March 17, 1764, one month following Rittenhouse's epistolary condemnation of the Paxtonians' march on Philadelphia. William Barton does not quote Rittenhouse's letter in full, his purpose having been apparently to illustrate that his uncle "was zealously disposed to support the legitimate authority of the government, in order to suppress illegal and disorderly proceedings, subversive of the laws and dangerous to the public
peace and safety." 36 We do not, consequently, know what beyond the descriptions of mob behavior Rittenhouse might have said of the demonstration or the murders that preceded it. And because the actual Barton/Rittenhouse correspondence has been lost, we cannot examine whatever letters Barton may have penned to Rittenhouse. One thing about the pamphlet is nevertheless clear: it was written in part to defend the desperate actions of a people who felt that government apathy had abandoned them to the Indian threat. It was also written to exonerate the backcountry settlers from such criticism as Rittenhouse expressed in his February 16, letter.

The concluding patriotic allusion to St. Patrick raises another problem concerning Barton's presumed authorship. William Barton stresses the English contribution to his father's Irish upbringing. Thomas was "descended from an English family" which once possessed "considerable grants of land in Ireland," although the family had lost its wealth by way of some unnamed "untoward circumstances." In spite of this, the family still managed to see that Thomas received an education befitting his class "under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Folds, a respectable English clergyman" and, later, at "the university of Dublin," that is, Trinity College, Dublin, the Ascendancy institution established during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.37 Granted this emphasis upon Barton's Ascendancy identity, the pamphlet's defense of the Scots-Irish and its concluding appeal to St. Patrick and freedom might tempt us to dismiss Barton's authorship. However, that would involve overlooking too much other evidence.

The pamphleteer makes one final, rousing appeal to the Irish, or Scots-Irish, passion for freedom: "Dated from my FARM-HOUSE, March 17, 1764.—A Day dedicated to LIBERTY and ST. PATRICK." In eighteenth-century America, St. Patrick appealed as an ethnic symbol to all immigrants from Ireland, Protestant and Catholic, Scots-Irish, Anglo-Irish, and "pure" Irish alike.38 Barton, moreover, not only maintained ties with many of his countrymen and recommended recent Irish immigrants for teaching and ministerial positions,39 but he also numbered several of his countrymen among his closest friends, particularly George Croghan and Sir William Johnson. Both of these figures, the Irish Catholic who had converted to Episcopalianism and the son of Anglicized Irish gentry whose original name had been McShane ("the son of John"), were well-known for their fondness for elaborate St. Patrick's Day celebrations.40
Barton did more than champion and maintain close relationships with fellow Irishmen: he apparently defined himself as Irish. This seems remarkable in light of the extremes to which many other eighteenth-century Anglo-Irish (for example, William Congreve, Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, and Richard Sheridan) distanced themselves from their Irish origins. As late as 1779, one year before his death and while living as an exile in dire straits in New York city, Barton still discovered the resources to refer humorously to his ethnic identity. Writing to the Rev. William Frazer, he apologizes: "I have not receiv’d the Letter which you address’d to me . . . & therefore (tho’ an Irishman) cannot undertake to answer it." 41

Beyond these considerations of content and attitudes, inescapable similarities in prose style suggest Thomas Barton wrote *The Conduct of the Paxton Men.* Not unlike handwriting, style offers extremely useful evidence of identity, even in instances where an author might try to alter it.42 Style is like one's fingerprints or an emotional-intellectual-rhetorical DNA code. Trained to detect nuances of vocabulary use, patterns of phrasing and syntax, and strategies for organizing and developing ideas, literary critics can frequently identify a particular author's writing, especially when that individual produced a considerable body of work over a substantial period of time and focused upon a relatively limited number of subjects. Thomas Barton is such a writer.

Apart from his extant sermons, which share the specialized analytic and exegetical strategies of homiletic literature, the remainder of his known writings—letters, epistolary reports to the Society, war journal and the exhortation *Unanimity and Public Spirit*—all disclose distinctly similar features. Difficult to characterize in a phrase, his style might be described as journalistic rather than academic, political, or philosophical.43 Barton's prose stands out for its energetic, spirited, if at times glib, "flow"; its numerous parenthetical, interruptive, and exclamatory statements; its predilection for paired synonymous, often alliterated nouns, and for paired adjectival, over adverbial, modifiers; its frequent use of the figures of speech metonymy and synecdoche in emotionally stressful descriptions.44 Perhaps reflecting the fast pace with which his ideas move and at which he often writes, Barton also reveals a fondness for the dash or the dash combined with a period to mark a sentence's end. Any or a few of these would scarcely serve to particularize Barton's prose, but combined with one another and set forth with rhythms and cadences as distinctive as the grain patterns that define oak, cherry, maple, or walnut, his style
announces itself readily.

Space prevents extensive comparisons, but a few examples may be cited to establish recurring stylistic patterns. Two, possibly three, Barton letters describing atrocities during the summer of 1763 survive, one a report to the Society and one to Richard Peters. The other, an anonymous report written in Lancaster to the Pennsylvania Gazette, so closely reproduces phrasing, structure, and details of the Peters letter that it must have been written by Barton. If indeed his, it invaluably reveals how he tended to draw upon a ready-made stylistic repertoire from letter to letter.45

One of Barton's favorite figures of speech involves a synecdoche employing the image of blood/bleeding. It invariably occurs in his descriptions of Indian atrocities and of his reactions thereto. As early as his November 8, 1756 notitia parochialis, or annual report to his superiors, he writes: "my Heart bleeds in relating what I am an Eye witness to." 46 He tells Thomas Penn that "My Heart bleeds for the poor People." 47 The author of The Conduct expresses himself similarly: "My heart has often bled" (p. 3) and "what good Man is there, whose Heart does not bleed . . . ? (p. 30).

An analogous personification helps Barton express the magnitude of suffering sweeping the frontier: "our bleeding Country, their bleeding Country." 48 The Conduct's author rebukes the Quakers "who have so long suffer'd the Province to bleed beneath the Savage Knife" (p. 16). This extended figure also recalls the personification-metonymy Barton employed in the June 28 letter to the Society—"our Country bleeds again under the Savage knife!" 49

The image of fire offers another natural, powerful way of conveying war's destructiveness. The letter in the Pennsylvania Gazette speaks of the country's seeming "to be one general Blaze," anticipating the pamphlet's "all burnt to Ashes in one general Flame" (p. 31). In addition, this peculiar phrasing echoes similar descriptive usage elsewhere—the pamphlet's "their Country rescued from total Ruin" (p. 34) and an earlier letter's lament that all is "ready to sink together in one general Ruin!" 50

The author of The Conduct of the Paxton Men shares with Barton a fondness for doubling adjectives and descriptive nouns to produce emphasis, at times redundant. Compare the following characteristic examples from the pamphlet and Barton's earlier writings. The Conduct: "Distresses and Sufferings . . . Infamy and Odium . . . WILD UPROAR and CONFUSION" (p. 3); "Lenity and Mercy" (p.
12); “meek and peaceable . . . Protection and Security . . . Vengeance and Destruction” (p. 16); “Noise and Hubbub” (p. 17); “Vassalage and Slavery” (p. 22); “Ruin and Desolation” (p. 23); “Cruelty and Inhumanity” (p. 27); “LAWS and MAGISTRACY” (p. 32); and “LIBERTY and FREEDOM” (p. 33). Barton’s earlier works: “The general Cry & Wish is for”; “Miseries and Distresses”; “Beggary and Despair”; “Objects of Charity and Commiseration”; “Sighs and Groans”; “calamity and distress”; “dangers and trials”; “barbarous and cruel”; “Hardships or Distresses.” 51

Barton and the author of the pamphlet also like to alliterate their doubled nouns and modifiers. A sampling from Barton’s known works: “Cries & Confusion”; “the Pulpit & not the Press”; “sudden and savage Death”; “Division and Distinction”; “Advice and Assistance”; “Grand & Glorious work”; “Danger & Distress”; “an Interest with, & an Influence upon”; “all Health & Happiness.” 52 As late as 1779, his letters still reveal this predilection: “my Children & churches”; “Pilgrimage & Poverty”; and “present passions & prejudices.” 53

Even though The Conduct’s author shows a greater inclination for simple descriptive, often redundant, doublets, he also employs alliteration to achieve added emphasis: “Application and Addresses” (n., p. 8); “drunken, debauch’d” (p. 17); “Discord and Dissent” (p. 22); “Gallows or the Gibbet” (p. 23); “Honour and Hospitality” (p. 27); “Destruction and Desolation” (p. 30); “lawful and loyal Methods” (p. 33); and “QUAKERS and DON QUIXOTES” (p. 34).54

Barton’s frequent use of the verb and the verbal noun groan finds its parallel in the pamphlet. Compare “groaning under a burden”; “miseries they now sadly groan under”; “calamities under which they have groan’d”; “Signs and Groans” 55 with the pamphlet’s “Groans of the People” (p. 34).

In all of this, Barton, who consistently portrays himself as an “Eye witness,” 56 emphasizes the ultimate ineffability of the anguish and suffering he has seen: “The complicated Distresses of these poor Creatures are beyond Expression”; the inhabitants are “distressed beyond Expression or Conception”; “the Distress of the Black Inhabitants is beyond all Description”; “the Miseries and Distresses of the poor People were . . . beyond the Power of Language to describe.” 57 The pamphlet’s author closely echoes the same hyperbole: “the Miseries of the back Inhabitants are really beyond the Power of Description” (p. 30).

Stylistically, then, Thomas Barton and the writer of The Conduct of the Paxton Men favor certain recurring figures of speech, synecdoche and metonymy. Both
rely upon a specific, predictable vocabulary and rhetorical strategy for describing certain kinds of events. The two authors, moreover, show a predilection for the flexible and supple form allowed by the epistolary convention. Less open to analysis is the similar rhythm, cadence, and syntax that characterize each as journalistic at times, hortatory at others, and generally flamboyant in an almost seventeenth-century way. On a level of appreciation admittedly subjective, reading aloud certain passages from Barton and *The Conduct* produces kinesthetic ratification of the argument that we are reading the same writer.

Separated by two wars and nine years, Barton’s *Unanimity and Public Spirit* (1755) and the anonymous *Conduct of the Paxton Men* were written for different ends, the one to urge the faction-ridden frontier to unite before a common enemy, the other to justify the back-country vigilantes. Yet each pamphlet exhorts a people, abandoned to adversity by an indifferent assembly, to employ its own resources to survive. More than anywhere else perhaps we can detect in the two pamphlets’ respective conclusions the same mind urging a people betrayed to protect their natural freedom.

In the final pages of *Unanimity and Public Spirit*, Barton refocuses his sermon on the contemporary emergency that inspired it. He appeals to his readers’ terror of enslavement to a foreign, “Romish” tyrant: “who . . . would not rather die a Protestant and a Freeman than live an Idolater and a Slave.” To reinforce his call to positive action, he cites “the Author of *Cato’s Letters*” and Algernon Sidney on the ignominy of tyrannical rule: “As Mr. Sidney observes, [tyrants] use their Subjects as Asses and Mastiff-Dogs, to work and to fight, and to be oppressed and to be killed for them.” In uniting to fight the French and their Indian allies, the divided frontiersmen—“MEMBERS of the CHURCH of ENGLAND and PROTESTANT DISSENTERS of all Denominations”—will boldly give the lie to those critics who argue that we “have degenerated from [our] Virtue, or lulled ourselves into inglorious Ease to the utter Ruin of our Posterity. But where Freedom points the way, ‘whether to Life or to Death,’” he concludes, “may we dare to follow, and to our latest Breath dare to continue what we are, Protestants and Freemen!”

Left to their own devices, the settlers in Cumberland and York counties must use their freedom to defend their religion and liberty, for “once extinct in PENNSYLVANIA, whither, or into what Region, shall we flee in Search of them?”

Although focused a bit differently, the concluding argument to *The Conduct*
also invokes "the Spirit of a FREE PEOPLE ... [who] have a Right to demand, and receive Protection." 62 The French oppressor of Unanimity has become a Philadelphia Quaker, and accordingly the earlier citation from Algernon Sidney can be turned against that faction:

But it seems that there are Men in PENNSYLVANIA, who (to use the Words of the great ALGERNON SIDNEY) look upon the People "like Asses and Mastiff Dogs," who ought "to work and to fight, to be oppress'd and kill'd for them."63

As before, supportive passages from and allusions to Cato's Letters are introduced, including one prominently set forth on the title page. British subjects—i.e., a "FREE PEOPLE"—their lives and liberties jeopardized by a government which has long-ignored their grievances, need no longer "crouch beneath their Sufferings"; rather, they may draw upon "a proper Spirit of JEALOUSY, and REVENGE" to achieve the protection that is their right.

The writer of each pamphlet, then, armed with the testimony of Cato's Letters and Algernon Sidney, defends the freedom of a people to adopt extreme, even violent, measures to protect their lives and liberty when the higher civil authority fails to do so. Each relies upon similar and identical passages from Cato's Letters and Algernon Sidney to advocate a libertarian position in the face of governmental apathy or tyranny.

Reinforcing this analysis is the attribution of The Conduct of the Paxton Men to Barton by his own great-great-grandson George Maurice Abbot, Librarian of the Library Company of Philadelphia. Although we do not know what prompted Abbot to assign the tract to his distinguished ancestor, he might have possessed a piece of now-lost family history. He also might have known of a popular oral tradition that originated about the time of the Paxton affair and persisted well into the nineteenth century. In 1830 Rhoda Barber set down in a school exercise book the history of the founding of Wrightsville, Pennsylvania, a community where her family had long resided. Born three years after the Paxton Boys had stopped at her father's farm, she recalls her father's conversations with them and her brothers' seeing bloodied tomahawks lashed to their saddles. She also reports the following significant detail: "an Episcopalian minister in Lancaster wrote to vindicate them [i.e., the Paxtonians] bringing scripture to prove that it was right to destroy the heathen and
very many were of the same opinion." 64 Forty-three years before Abbot's annotation, Rhoda Barber testified to the persistence of an oral tradition which identified Barton as an apologist for the Scots-Irish vigilantes.

An oral tradition recorded in 1830, a scholarly judgment set down in 1873, parallels in style, tone and attitude, and in the use of authoritative support—these persuasively reinforce Thomas Barton's candidacy as the author of *The Conduct of the Paxton Men.* Yet that pamphlet's unabashed, *de facto* defense of Scots-Irish vigilante justice and its unmitigated loathing of the converted Conestogas profoundly contradict both Barton's long-standing sentiments and the few sympathetic remarks he offered on the affair. We therefore need to ask what might have inspired him to write such a polemic anonymously and persuaded his son William (granted he knew) to respect that anonymity.

****

The one known Barton letter dating from the same year as the publication of *The Conduct of the Paxton Men,* his November 16, 1764 report to the S.P.G., needs to be examined carefully. After some preliminaries, he notes the miniscule number of Anglicans (about 500) in a population of about 35,500 in Lancaster county, a veritable Babel of Dissenters and others: "German Lutherans, Calvinists, Mennonists, Moravians, New Born, Dunkars, Presbyterians, Seceders, New Lights, Covenanters, Mountain Men, Brownists, Independents, Papists, Quakers, Jews, &c." 65 The hotly contested county elections for the General Assembly and local office on 1 October reflected this disproportion, with not one Church member in Lancaster "elected into any of these offices." 66 At this juncture, Barton reassures the Society of his several congregations' good behavior during the recent turmoil. His observations, tone, and focus are significant enough to warrant quoting the passage in full:

I have the satisfaction to assure the Honble Society that my people have continued to give proofs of that submission and obedience to civil authority, which it is the glory of the Church of England to inculcate; and whilst faction and party strife have been rending the province to pieces, they behaved themselves as became peaceable and dutiful subjects, never intermeddling in the least. Suffer me to add, Sir, that in the murder of the Indians in this place and the different insurrections occasioned by this inhuman act, not one of them was ever concerned. Justice demands this testimony from
me in their favour; as their conduct upon this occasion has gained them much credit and honour. Upon the whole, the Church of England visibly gains ground throughout the province. The mildness and Excellency of her Constitution, her moderation and charity, even to her Enemies, and (I hope I may be indulged to say), the indefatigable labours of her Missionaries, must at length recommend her to all except those who have an hereditary prejudice and aversion to her. 67

Barton bears witness here to his people's respect for "civil authority" and their aloofness from the strife, the faction-fighting, the murders. Their discipline throughout December 1763 and the whole of 1764 earned for them "much credit and honour." His word choice, moreover, patently registers his disapproval of the rioting and atrocities—"the murder of the Indians," "insurrections," and "inhuman act."

When compared with his previous reports, what impresses us about this account is Barton's silence on his own role during the recent emergency. With this exception, his official communications describe not only conditions and attitudes among his parishioners as a threatened minority in their communities, but also his own activities among them—his riding the circuit to marry, baptize, bury, and conduct services; his building of new churches and repairing of older structures; his missionary and educational work among the Native Americans and, indeed, British Dissenters and German sectarians; his rallying his congregations against the French and Indian menace and leading them on raiding parties and work details to improve fortifications; and his attempts to survive on an insufficient income with gradually failing health. In all other respects, this notitia parochialis pointedly details his actual activities and efforts to advance Anglicanism. It is, therefore, noteworthy that had he inspired his people to obey the "civil authority, which it is the glory of the Church of England to inculcate," he would certainly have spoken of it. To obtain recognition, advancement, and reward, he needed to set down his achievements. The closest he comes to doing this, however, is in the vague, generalized, and evasive allusion to the "indefatigable labours of" the Church's missionaries.

Most noteworthy, he fails to mention writing The Conduct. Why? Did qualms of conscience override his responsibility to report to his superiors in London, an omission he compounded by publishing it anonymously? Surely he had similar
motives in 1755 for not acknowledging that he wrote the largely plagiarized tract *Unanimity and Public Spirit*. Officially, he dissociated himself from two morally dubious publishing ventures; in 1764 he employed anonymity to insure the illusion of his detachment from the turmoil.

Two other features of the 1764 S.P.G. report merit attention. Consistent with his earlier disapproval, he censures the Presbyterians more than any other dissenting sect:

- they are a people who are unsteady and much given to change, fond of Novelty, and easily led away by every kind of Doctrine. This disposition will ever be a bar to their increase. The Seceders are making great Havock among them and are proselyting them by thousands to their opinions. These last, however, are a set of Men who under a Monarchical Government I think cannot subsist long. Their interest upon their own principles must undoubtedly destroy itself.

Posing the greatest threat to the secure establishment of the Anglican Church, in the long run the Presbyterians' anarchial energies will undo them: “The Church of England then must certainly prevail at last.”

In his reproof of the Presbyterians, as in his sympathy for the murdered Conestogas, Barton continues to express feelings which as an Anglican itinerant missionary he had already voiced in his earlier reports. What is different about the November 16 letter is a major, novel point: the entire concluding section (pp. 370-2) elaborates a justification for his wanting to leave Lancaster county.

Barton begins casually by underscoring that he has always faithfully officiated at the several widely separated churches that were his charge: I “have never to my knowledge been absent once, even in the severest weather except detained by sickness, to which I was always happy enough to be a stranger till of late.” He repeats in the following paragraph that his “Itinerancy also bears heavy upon me in my present state of health.” Poor health prompted him earlier to petition the S.P.G. for removal, and because he has become more ill, he hopes the Society will assent to his relocating: “I return my most grateful acknowledgments to the Society for their kind Indulgence in giving me leave to remove to another Mission for the better preservation of my health.” As if to plant an attractive possibility in the minds of his superiors, he expends considerable effort describing an area he has visited in nearby Delaware which “would soon make a flourishing and valuable Mission” if
put into the charge of "a prudent clergyman." 74

Barton also cites extreme financial need. With "11 in [my] family, a wife, 7 children and 2 servants," his "economy and frugality" can do little to secure the necessities of life, "which must be purchased [here] at a most extravagant rate." 75 Perennially the bane of missionaries in colonial America, subsistence income continued to exact its toll on Barton, as it had in Cumberland and York counties.

Failing health, insufficient income, and poor prospects for improving either of these in Lancaster justify Barton's desire to move. Yet interspersed among these explanations are intimations of psychological or spiritual distress: "My ambition aspires at nothing more than what will purchase me a freedom from want—from low and abject dependance." 76 Dependence—"low and abject dependance"—on others he finds particularly humiliating; it circumscribes his freedom ("freedom from want"). The infelicitous circumstances of his life in Lancaster have disrupted his inner harmony: "peace of my mind, and the prospect of doing good" are "dearer to me than any other consideration." He cannot enjoy these where he resides, but is willing to gamble, even if moving from Lancaster may not bring him the relief he seeks. "Whether a removal to another mission would be of any advantage to me," he concludes, "I know not." 77 But his desperation was profound enough for him to try.

In November 1763, Barton purchased a residence convenient to St. James's and situated in a prestigious quarter, on the corner of North Lime and East Orange Streets, across from the Shippen mansion. One month before the first atrocity, therefore, Barton was planning to remain in Lancaster. The events between December, 1763 and sometime well before November, 1764, when he refers to an earlier petition to remove, affected that intention. In 1765 he visited the Mohawk River valley, where he stayed at Johnson Hall, the guest of Sir William Johnson. The earliest reference to a correspondence between Barton and Johnson occurs in a note dated August, 1763. 78 His first extant letter to Johnson, dated after his 1765 excursion, reveals that the two had become fairly close as friends, and their correspondence from this period indicates that Barton is exploring opportunities for himself in Mohawk country. 79 We also see him maneuvering for a chaplaincy in Canada, 80 letting it be known that he would gladly relocate to Maryland. 81 Clearly, the evidence points to a man doing his best to escape a locale where he no longer wished to live.
Tension and exhaustion gradually undermined Barton’s constitution. Sometime between writing his November, 1764, report and autumn, 1765, he suffered the physical collapse he anticipated. His circumstances worsened. On April 28, 1766 he wrote a richly suggestive letter to Colonel James Burd complaining of scurrilous attacks by “a notorious Disturber of the Peace.” What, if anything, had Barton done to incite the abuse? Had it any connection with his clandestine writing of *The Conduct*? And why does he bother to notify one of the principal magistrates of Lancaster, cautioning him at the same time to do nothing for the moment?

Barton’s distress did not go unheeded. The S.P.G. agreed to increase his annual allowance; Thomas Penn, never celebrated for his financial liberality, offered him a personal gift of £50. The terms for both were the same—that he promise to stay where he was, in Pennsylvania. In addition, and with an irony he would not have ignored, Barton was given permission to farm the Conestoga Manor, which had ceased to be a reservation with the extermination of its residents. Because of his established value to Church and Proprietary and perhaps because of what he had achieved in writing *The Conduct of the Paxton Men*, the S.P.G., Thomas Penn, and Sir William Johnson handsomely rewarded Barton and obtained thereby his agreement to remain in Lancaster.

It is the thesis of this essay that Thomas Barton wrote *The Conduct of the Paxton Men* anonymously under some kind of pressure, or even coercion. With William Smith in Great Britain on a fund-raising venture for the College of Philadelphia, Barton was the only experienced propagandist, “agent of influence,” as it were, readily available to the Proprietary party. Although it is improbable that the Penns and their leading supporters were pressuring him, people lower down, say, the Shippens or other officials in Lancaster, probably looked to him to respond to Franklin’s *Narrative*. If so, they would perhaps have found a man not readily disposed to betray his principles in the cause of political expediency. But Barton no longer enjoyed the high level of support he had relied upon earlier. William Smith was in Great Britain; Thomas Penn’s nephew John, who did not know Barton as well as his uncle, had taken up residence in Philadelphia in 1763; and Richard Peters had resigned the provincial secretaryship in 1762, allowing Joseph Shippen to replace him. Barton’s world was changing for the worse, and with it his network of alliances.

We do not know what compelled Barton to set aside his ideals, but it is likely
that some powerful figures discovered a way to undermine his scruples. Possibly, he yielded to dire economic need, together with the promise of immediate financial remuneration, or even to threats to divulge publicly an earlier misdeed (e.g., his 1755 plagiarism of Samuel Roberts's tract), or to both of these. In the event, Barton suppressed his conscience and oft-expressed respect for Christianized Indians and his disdain for anarchistic, intractable Scots-Irish Presbyterians to construct a virulent and effective rebuttal of Franklin's polemic and Quaker policy. Apparently, however, he had had enough of Lancaster county. Having violated his ethics, grown disgusted with regional politics, and teetering precariously on the edge of a breakdown, he desperately sought to leave Pennsylvania to obtain the peace of mind and opportunity to do good which to him "were dearer . . . than any other consideration." An easier living in Maryland, Johnson's more congenial proprietorship (possibly recalling to Barton the best of Irish "Big House" rule), or even the bleak rigors of garrison duty in Quebec all sang their Siren's song to his distraught soul.

To appreciate the full political importance of *The Conduct*, we need to understand the tract as more than a simple pro-Paxton, anti-Indian, anti-Quaker polemic. Published in March, 1764, we should regard it as an early salvo in the Proprietary Party's campaign to dislodge the Quaker faction from its domination of the General Assembly. As a number of commentators have observed, the Proprietary group sought to accomplish this in part by entering into a coalition with the numerically powerful but politically isolated and disaffected poor city dwellers and frontiersmen, who were for the most part also Scots-Irish Presbyterians. During the period when the Paxtonians continued to disrupt the civil peace, challenging both the Proprietary executive and the Quaker legislature, some of the Proprietor's friends began to perceive how the strident malcontentedness of the Scots-Irish might be exploited against the Quakers. In a masterpiece of duplicity, the Proprietary party moved in two contrary directions: on the surface and to all appearances, it continued publicly to denounce frontier vigilantism, issuing outraged proclamations against the Paxton Volunteers and general warrants for their arrests, even promising handsome financial rewards to those who would turn them in. Tacitly, the Proprietary group looked the other way. Even though most of the Paxton ringleaders were known, not one was ever arrested. Some of them even settled on the former Indian reservation. What pleasure Barton must have experienced in
deriding those squatters in his own voice: “several of the Paxton people took possession of this Farm—built Cabbins and settled upon it under the ridiculous notion of a right by Conquest.” 89 In time the Proprietary party expelled them, but otherwise did nothing. It should be no wonder, then, that its informal, tacit coalition with the Scots-Irish against the Quakers spawned rumors of collusion going back as early as the December 14 killings.90

Whether or not the Proprietary’s refusal to heed the early warnings of potential vigilantism from such respected Presbyterians as John Harris and the Rev. John Elder points to active collaboration with the Paxtonians we cannot determine.91 Clearly, however, the Church of England, as religious arm of provincial, secular power, was drawn into the plot to wrest control of the Assembly from the Quaker faction. Exemplifying a new, profane ecumenicalism, the doors of Philadelphia’s Episcopal churches were even thrown open to the local Presbyterian ministry.92 In addition, after Benjamin Franklin published his attack on the Paxtonians, the Rev. Thomas Barton, itinerant S.P.G. missionary to Lancaster, was apparently charged with neutralizing Franklin’s cogent criticisms by defending the rioters, discrediting the Conestogas, and exposing the shallow hypocrisy of the Philadelphia Quakers, many of whom actually took up arms in February, 1764, to defend their city and the Indians sheltered therein from the frontiersmen’s wrath. But lest he betray the Proprietary group’s strategy, Barton had to write as someone other than the most eloquent and literary Anglican divine then in the colony. Anonymity, of course, also assuaged his personal scruples. He succeeded in remaining unknown. So cunningly did Barton’s pamphleteering persona ape the Scots-Irish voice that the tract’s author was believed to be as we have seen, “a Stark Naked Presbyterian.” 93 Although Barton’s hand might have been suspected by some, his authorship remained secret until his own great-great-grandson identified him in 1873.

The coalition of poor city dwellers, Presbyterian back-country settlers, and Proprietary politicians proved short-lived. After the anti-Quaker groups failed to obtain control of the Assembly, the old animosities among them resurfaced. Faction-ridden Pennsylvania resumed stumbling along the path to the upheavals of the mid 1770s.94 When historical circumstances once again confronted Barton with unscrupulous politicians attempting to bend his will and coerce his allegiance, however, he refused to compromise. Locked out of his churches, accused of preaching against the new republic and of fomenting a plot to seize arsenals in Lancaster,
York, and Carlisle in 1777, he accepted separation from his children and banishment to New York City rather than forswear his earlier oath to the king.

Barton's final letters witness to his poverty, his demoralization, and his progress through final, fatal illness. Yet, they also record that he had obtained peace of mind, occasional scintillations of hope amidst the darkness. "Should the Church of England," he wrote in 1779 in his last extant letter, "at the conclusion of these troubles, be a little cherished by Government, . . . she will constantly flourish, & grow more than ever. These hopes & this Belief furnish me with the best consolation I now enjoy, & I will cherish them till I die." Thomas Barton passed to his reward during the spring of the following year.

Notes

3. Ibid., p. 112 n.
5. Dunbar, Paxton Papers, reprints 28 of these works which he feels bear directly on the Paxton affair. He rejects another 35 as insufficiently concerned with the troubles. See Paxton Papers, p. 50.

7. Although he makes a valiant attempt to explain Barton's writing of The Conduct, Marvin Russell ("Thomas Barton," pp. 326-9) ultimately tries to justify the "inconsistencies and short-comings" in
part with Barton's confusion, "his own inner turmoil."
10. Franklin's Narrative is reprinted in Dunbar, ed., Paxton Papers, pp. 55-75.
11. [Thomas Barton], Conduct of the Paxton Men, p. 17.
16. "AN ANSWER, TO THE PAMPHLET Entitled [sic] the Conduct of the Paxton Men, impartially represented: Wherein the ungenerous Spirit of the AUTHOR is Manifested, &c. And the spotted GARMENT pluckt off" (Philadelphia, 1764); reprinted in Dunbar, ed. Paxton Papers, pp. 317-37.
18. [Thomas Barton], Conduct of the Paxton Men, p. 3.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., n., p. 3.
22. [Thomas Barton], Conduct of the Paxton Men, p. 9 (author's emphasis).
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., p. 32.
26. [Thomas Barton], Conduct of the Paxton Men, p. 23.
27. Ibid., p. 34.
28. Thomas Barton to William Smith, 28 October 1755, the Hawks Manuscript Collection, in the Records of the General Convention, S.I,19-6-58 (the author expresses appreciation to the Archives of the Episcopal Church, U.S.A., Austin, Texas, for permission to cite from this collection); Barton to William Smith, 2 November 1755, William S. Perry, ed., Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church, vol. 2: Pennsylvania (Hartford, Conn., 1871), 559; Barton to Richard Peters, 5 July 1763, Peter Papers, 6:10, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (hereinafter cited as H.S.P.).
29. "I shall only observe . . . that the famous Captain Jacobs fought, & died, like a Soldier. He refus'd to surrender when the House was even on Fire over his Head; And when the Flame grew too violent for him, he rush'd out into the Body of our Men flourishing his Tomahawk, & told them he was born a Soldier, & would not die a Slave" (Thomas Barton to William Smith, 23 September 1756, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:560).
30. Thomas Barton to the Secretary [S.P.G.], 8 November 1756, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:276; Barton to the Secretary, 28 June 1763, ibid., pp. 348; Barton to the Secretary, 6 December 1760, ibid., pp. 294-5; Barton to the Secretary, 23 January 1766, ibid., p. 401.
31. Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 16 November 1764, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:367 (author's emphasis).
33. Not all Scots-Irish Presbyterian frontiersmen viewed the Conestogas so hostilely. John Harris and the Rev. John Elder, for instance, were known for their moderation. Even the acclaimed Indian fighter, the "Hero of Kittanning," and Barton's old rival.
from Carlisle, Colonel John Armstrong, expressed probably a more accurate appraisal of the victims: "I should be very sorry that ever the people of this County [i.e., Cumberland] should attempt revenging their injuries on the heads of a few inoffensive superannuated Savages, whose nature had already devoted to the dust" (John Armstrong to Gov. John Penn, 38 December 1763, Pennsylvania Archives (1st ser.), 4:152 (hereinafter cited as PA.).

34. [Thomas Barton], Conduct of the Paxton Men, headnote, p. 3.
35. Ibid., p. 30.
37. Ibid., pp. 101-2.
39. See the following wherein Barton advocates the cause of the fellow Irishmen noted within parentheses: (Rev. [Philip] Hughes) Barton to William Smith, 24 August 1755, Hawks MSS. Collection, S.I,14-6-53, Episcopal Archives; (Mr. Popham) Barton to Sir William Johnson, 2 December 1767, Johnson Papers; 5:843-8; (William Andrews) Barton to Sir William Johnson, 6 November 1769, ibid., 7:239-40. It is probable that other figures Barton recommends were Irish, though he fails to mention the fact.
40. See Crimmins, St. Patrick's Day, pp. 11, 18-19; and Murphy and Mannion, History . . . of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, pp. 11-13.
41. Thomas Barton to the Rev. Mr. [William] Frazer, 5 October 1779, SocietyCollections, H.S.P.
43. These adjectives might usefully be employed to help define William Smith's more sophisticated and varied style.
44. Metonymy denotes the figure of speech which uses the name of one thing for that of another closely associated with it, as in "fifteen guns" for "fifteen bandits." Synecdoche describes using a part for the whole, as in "hands" for, say, "cowboys."
45. Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 28 June 1763, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:347-9; Barton to Richard Peters, 5 July 1763, Peters Papers, 6:10, H.S.P.; PennsylvaniaGazette, 28 July 1763, no. 1805.
46. Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 8 November 1756, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:277.
47. Thomas Barton to Thomas Penn, 7 April 1758, Penn Papers, Official Correspondence, 9:21, H.S.P.
48. Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 8 November 1756, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:279; and Barton to Richard Peters, 5 July 1763, 6:10, Peters Papers, H.S.P.
49. Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:348. Figures of speech and patterns of alliteration link the extended passage from which this quotation is taken with parts of an anonymous letter to the PennsylvaniaGazette proclaiming the fall of Fort Duquesne in 1758. Clearly, the two are from the pen of the same author; compare these two citations. From the PennsylvaniaGazette, 14 December 1758, no. 1564: we are now "in the quiet and peaceable Possession of the finest and most fertile County of America. . . . our Back Settlements, instead of being frightful Fields of Blood, will once more smile with Peace and Plenty." From [Barton], The Conduct of
the Paxton Men, p. 16: those "who have so long suffer'd the Province to bleed beneath the Savage Knife, its fairest and most fruitful Fields to be deluged in Gore..."

50. Thomas Barton to Thomas Penn, 28 February 1757, Penn Papers, Official Correspondence, 8:239, H.S.P.

51. Thomas Barton to Richard Peters, 5 July 1763, Peters Papers, 6:10, H.S.P.; Pennsylvania Gazette, 28 July 1763, no. 1805; Barton to the Secretary, 8 November 1756, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:277; Barton to Thomas Penn, 28 February 1757, Penn Papers, Official Correspondence, 8:239, H.S.P.

52. Thomas Barton to William Smith, 2 November 1755, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:559; Barton to William Smith, 28 October 1755, Hawks MSS. Collection, S1,19-6-58, Episcopal Archives; Thomas Barton, Unanimity and Public Spirit (Philadelphia, 1755), pp. 13 and iii; Barton to the Secretary, 8 November 1756, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:281; Barton to Thomas Penn, 7 April 1758, Penn Papers, Official Correspondence, 9:21, H.S.P.; Barton to Richard Peters, 11 April 1758, PA. (1st ser.), 3:377; Barton to Richard Peters, 18 July 1758, ibid., 3:452.

53. Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 8 January 1779, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 5:131; and Barton to the Secretary, 25 October 1779, ibid., p. 134.

54. The other, more complex alliterative patterns occurring throughout The Conduct merit careful comparison with Barton's established predilection for this technique.

55. Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 8 November 1756, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:277 and 279; Barton to the Bishop of Oxford, 12 March 1757, transcription, Miscellaneous File, no. 15212, York County Historical Society, York, Pa.; and Pennsylvania Gazette, 28 July 1763, no. 1805.

56. See Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 8 November 1756, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:277; Barton to Thomas Penn, 28 February 1757, Penn Papers, Official Correspondence, 8:239, H.S.P. Compare these with The Conduct's author's speaking of himself as "I and my Neighbours have been melancholy Eye Witnesses" to "Scenes of Destruction & Desolation" (p. 30).


59. Ibid., p. 15.

60. Ibid., pp. 14-15.


62. [Thomas Barton], Conduct of the Paxton Men, p. 33.

63. Ibid.

64. Rhoda Barber, "History of the Founding of Wrightsville," 1830, MS. in H.S.P.

65. Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 16 November 1764, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:366.

66. Ibid., p. 367.

67. Ibid.

68. Soon after its publication, critics, presumably Presbyterian, discovered that Barton had extensively plagiarized a published sermon written during the Great Rebellion, Samuel Robert's Love to Our Country, and Zeal for Its Interest... Preach'd to a Congregation of Protestant Dissenters at Salisbury on Sunday, October 6, 1745 (London, 1745). Gossip and discussion of the theft were suppressed by the Proprietary faction. Barton's plagiarism is to be the subject of a yet unpublished article.

69. Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 16 November 1764, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:368.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid., p. 370.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid., p. 371.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid., p. 372.
78. A list of Johnson papers destroyed by fire includes the following note: "a letter from Thomas Barton declaring esteem and commending John Henry, gunsmith, who wishes to settle in Detroit" (Johnson Papers, 4:180). Placement of the note suggests the letter dates from about 2 August 1763. The Henrys were a prominent Lancaster family. William Henry the artificer and gunsmith for a time belonged to Barton's congregation. Another mysterious early entry involves Barton's Conduc. A later compilation of destroyed documents lists "a pamphlet called the Conduct of the Paxtoners" (Johnson Papers, 4:383). Because this last dates from 1-3 April 1764 and Barton's tract was issued sometime after 17 March 1764, it appears that Barton lost little time in sending a copy to Johnson. The only Paxton pamphlet apparently mentioned among the Johnson papers, one suspects that Barton sent Johnson, the Crown's Indian agent for the northern colonies who was renowned for his fairness and sympathy for the Indians, the copy to explain how he came to write it. The explanation, if that were the case, and Barton's dilemma might also have led to his being invited to Johnson Hall in the autumn of 1765. As the author of The Conduct, it is unlikely that Barton would have been welcomed at Johnson Hall unless Sir William possessed an understanding beyond what the pamphlet's surface allowed.

79. Thomas Barton to Sir William Johnson, 7 October 1765, Johnson Papers, 11:954-5. The letter was sent from New York City in the course of Barton's return from the Mohawk Valley.
80. In another tactic to register his impatience to leave, Barton gratuitously excerpted a letter from General Thomas Gage (12 July 1765) in which Gage's response makes clear that Barton had inquired about a chaplaincy: "Sir, There is not at present any Chaplain nominated for the Garrison of Montreal; if you should think it for your advantage to accept of that in preference to the livings you now enjoy, you will please to acquaint me" (Thomas Barton to the Secretary, Perry, ed., Historical Collections, 2:401-2).
83. Thomas Barton to James Burd, 28 April 1766, Shippen Papers, 6:147, H.S.P. One wonders if his participation in the pamphlet war were being bruited about the taverns and streets of Lancaster.
84. Thomas Penn to Thomas Barton, 17 June 1767, Records of the States, E.2b, reel 4, unit 1, pp. 132-4; Barton to James Hamilton, 9 May 1768, Penn-Bailey Collection, H.S.P.
86. William Smith did not return to Philadelphia until the spring of 1764; see Albert Frank Gegenheimer, William Smith: Educator and Churchman, 1727-1803 (Philadelphia, 1943), p. 73.
87. Although he might have been speaking as the member of a party responding to the tactics of unscrupulous-adversaries, Barton registers his distaste for dirty political campaigning in at least two letters. See Thomas Barton to Richard Peters, 28 September 1756, and 2 October 1761, Peters Papers, 4:74 and 5:103, H.S.P.

89. Thomas Barton to Edmund Physick, 18 December 1770, reprinted in *P.M.H.B.*, 4 (1880), 119.

90. See Rhoda Barber MS., H.S.P., and Robert Proud *The History of Pennsylvania in North America* . . . (Philadelphia, 1798), 2:329. Benjamin Franklin was one of the first to propose that the Proprietary party colluded with the Paxtonians: "Why will the Government, by its Conduct, strengthen the Suspicions, (groundless no doubt) that it has come to a private Understanding with those Murderers, and that Impunity for their past Crimes is to be the Reward of their future political Services?" (Preface to Galloway's Speech, 1764," in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Leonard W. Labaree, Volume. 11: January 1 through December 31, 1764 [New Haven and London, 1967], p. 305; see also pp. 107 and 378.)


92. See the satiric broadside "An Address of Thanks to the Wardens of Christ Church and St. Peters . . . in the Name of all Presbyterian Ministers in Pennsylvania" (Philadelphia, 1764).


95. See George Stevenson to William Henry, 25 September 1777, and John Carothers to William Henry, 25 September 1777, *P.A.* (1st ser.), 5:634-5, for accusations that Barton plotted to seize the arsenals; and George Bryan to General Washington, 5 March 1779, *P.A.* (1st ser.), 7:225-6, for denunciations of his Tory activities. It was the measure of William Henry's esteem for Barton and for due process that, as magistrate, he did nothing to arrest him in connection with the 1777 charges. See Francis Jordon, Jr. *The Life of William Henry of Lancaster, Pennsylvania* (Lancaster, 1910), pp. 82-90.

96. Thomas Barton to the Secretary, 25 October 1779, Perry, ed., *Historical Collections* (Hartford, 1878), Volume 5: Delaware, 134.

97. The author thanks Elwood N. Crist for his assistance.