

# Benjamin Franklin, Patriot, and William Franklin, Loyalist

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In June, 1789, less than one year before his death, an aging Benjamin Franklin made an addition to his will, effectively disinheriting his only living son. “The part he acted against me in the late War,” Franklin bitterly explained, “which is of *public* Notoriety, will account for my leaving him no more of an Estate he endeavored to deprive me of.”<sup>1</sup> In his father’s eyes, William had committed not one act of disloyalty when he chose to support the English side during the American Revolution. He had committed two. He had abandoned the American colonies, his own country. And he had rejected the “*Natural Duties*” a son owed to a loving a devoted father, duties that preceded any political allegiance William might have felt.<sup>2</sup> If blood was thicker than water, William should have stayed with his father no matter what his personal views or interests might have been.

Stung by this unmistakable rejection of his both his person and his politics, hurt because Benjamin refused to accept his own attempts at reconciliation, William declared that the “Shameful Injustice of my Father’s Will [has] in a manner dissolved all my Connexions in that Part of the World of a private as well as publick Nature.”<sup>3</sup> Thus the long, mutually rewarding relationship between Benjamin and William Franklin was finally and irrevocably broken.

It had not always been so. William Franklin was born sometime between September, 1730 and March 1731 to a woman whose identity even today remains a mystery. He was, in otherwords, illegitimate.

The best evidence argues that he was the product of “that hard-to-be-govern’d Passion of Youth” that led Benjamin into “Intrigues with low Women” in the days before he married hard-working, faithful Deborah Read.<sup>4</sup> Instead of abandoning his son, Benjamin voluntarily brought him into his home and, with Deborah’s grudging support, accorded him all the advantages of a legitimate heir.<sup>5</sup>

Benjamin was probably, as he proudly proclaimed, an “indulgent” father.<sup>6</sup> He bought William a pony, brought a tutor into the home when the lad was only four, sent him off to study with one of Philadelphia’s finest teachers, four years later. He then hired young Joseph Galloway to introduce William to the mysteries of the legal profession, using his influence to secure political plums for his son. William became the clerk for the Pennsylvania Assembly and the comptroller of the North American postal system.<sup>7</sup>

When Benjamin traveled to England in 1757 to negotiate with the Pennsylvania proprietors on behalf of the colony’s legislature, William was at

his side. In London, William managed, again with his father's help, to secure an appointment as royal governor of the colony of New Jersey. These were heady times, indeed, for the son of a Boston candlemaker and the illegitimate son of a Philadelphia printer. William was unabashedly grateful to a father to whose tender care he owed his own good fortune. I am, he wrote, "extremely oblig'd to you for your Care in supplying me with Money, and shall ever have a grateful Sense of that with the other numberless Indulgences I have receiv'd from your paternal Affection."<sup>8</sup>

Benjamin was not merely his son's greatest benefactor. He was, said London printer William Strahan, "his friend, his brother, his intimate, and easy companion."<sup>9</sup> As William matured, the relationship between father and son became at one and the same time stronger and more equal. William, at the age of 21 was Benjamin's sole confidant as he set about making the secret preparations for his famous kite experiment, an experiment that brought the elder Franklin instant renown and international adulation. The two men were partners in Benjamin's political battles in Pennsylvania and in a series of speculative enterprises designed to exploit the promise of the untapped resources of the American West.

In large ways and small, Benjamin and William Franklin remained friends and partners throughout the pre-war years. When the elder Franklin returned to England in 1764, he left his son in charge of the family's personal and business affairs; indeed, William's assumption of the role of substitute patriarch for the extended Franklin family enabled his father to remain in England for over a decade. In return, Benjamin accepted parental responsibilities for William's son, William Temple, born, like his father, to a woman of unknown origins sometime after 1759.

Father and son were also political allies. Benjamin lobbied for William's interests throughout the pre-war years, never hesitating to put in a word for his son at Whitehall at every opportunity. William defended his father's reputation from all the aspersions of his political enemies at home, firing off letters to the Philadelphia papers to defend Benjamin's good name.

Indeed, it is in the realm of politics that the relationship between Benjamin and William Franklin becomes most intriguing, and the unbreachable rift between the two men most puzzling. The Franklins were in many respects ideological soul mates.<sup>10</sup> William had learned his first and most enduring political lessons at his father's knee. Nothing that happened to him was designed to make him question the usefulness of those lessons.

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What did William Franklin learn from his father? Simply put, for most of his life, Benjamin Franklin loved England and loved the empire and he taught his son to do the same. He had always been proud of his English heritage. His goal throughout much of his life, had been to bring England

and America closer together, to create an Anglo-American empire, a “consolidating Union” that would redound to the benefit and glory of Englishmen on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>11</sup>

Benjamin’s admiration of the mother country was reflected in the various public projects in which he engaged with his son. William’s stint in the army was designed to promote the King’s interest. At the beginning of the War, father and son actively promoted imperial interests, coming to the aid of British General Edward Braddock and his ill-fated mission in the American hinterland. And in 1762, of course, Benjamin helped his son secure the royal governorship of New Jersey.

The elder Franklin worked to insure his own position in the empire, as well. Those in the know assumed—with good reason—that Benjamin hoped to be the first royal governor of Pennsylvania once his elusive dream of making Pennsylvania a royal colony had been achieved. He clung tenaciously to his royal appointment as head of the American postal system until 1774. As late as 1771, some of Franklin’s enemies accused him of serving as a spy in the pay of the King’s ministers, and many radical leaders continued to view him with undisguised suspicion when, in 1775, he first took his seat as Pennsylvania’s newest delegate to the Second Continental Congress.<sup>12</sup>

Franklin’s attempts to secure royal patronage for himself and his son were not the actions of a self-seeking hypocrite who talked a radical line while tending to his own interests. “No American,” argues historian Jack Greene, “had a greater or deeper affection for Britain or had worked harder to preserve its connections with the colonies” in the decade before independence.<sup>13</sup> Benjamin Franklin harbored a profound, almost spiritual sense of the importance of the historical connection that bound England and America together.<sup>14</sup> His veneration of the monarchy knew no bounds. Of George III he claimed that he could “scarcely conceive a King of better Dispositions, of more exemplary Virtues, or more truly desirous of promoting the Welfare of his Subjects.”<sup>15</sup> Even after the Boston Tea Party, Benjamin continued to hope that an Anglo-American union would “long be continued,” as he urged America’s radical leaders to exhibit patience under what were admittedly trying circumstances. “A little Time,” he insisted, “must infallibly bring us all we demand or desire, and bring it us in Peace and Safety.”<sup>16</sup> Benjamin Franklin’s admiration of all things English often takes today’s Americans by surprise. They cannot imagine that this most American of our founders, one of a handful of men who were present at the signing of the Declaration of Independence and at the Constitutional Convention, was ever loyal to the Crown.

Loyalists, unlike the great Franklin, have never been treated kindly in America. A loyalist, went the old saying, was someone whose head was in England, whose body was in America, and whose neck ought to be stretched. And until relatively recently, most historians have tended to agree with this

judgment. They would agree with Benjamin Franklin's assessment of his son's loyalism, his rejection of both father and country, as somehow unnatural, as something needing to be explained. But the complete story of Benjamin and William Franklin calls that view into question. For if Benjamin Franklin was a loyal British subject almost until the very end, William's decision to *remain* loyal, to continue to follow the path his father had asked him to follow for so many years, somehow does not seem so strange after all.

Indeed, what needs to be explained, is not why William—or any loyalist—remained the same, but why Benjamin—or any patriot—changed. A decision to declare independence from a country that, at least until 1763, virtually all colonists loved, and admired, is a curious phenomenon. To make a leap into the great unknown, to declare war against the most powerful army and navy in the western world, and to attempt to create a country from scratch—especially when Americans were doing fine economically, were not being persecuted or tortured or thrown into the Bastille, required considerable courage—and imagination. Indeed, to contemplate creating a country with no King, no aristocracy, no sense of order or tradition—and for that matter no army, no navy, no currency—could be considered an act of downright insanity. The loyalist position—that King and Parliament had made some mistakes but that surely it was possible to work things out, to reach an amicable compromise—seems perfectly reasonable.

Moreover, and this is a point that most of us don't realize or that we conveniently forget, loyalists like William Franklin did not make their decision because they wanted to do America harm, but because they loved America. They truly thought that remaining in the empire was in America's best interest. They thought the patriots were plunging the colonies into a chaos from which they would never recover. "Depend upon it," said William Franklin, "you can never place yourself in a happier situation than in your ancient constitutional dependency on Great Britain. No Independent State ever was or ever can be so happy as we have been, and might still be, under that government." Loyalists were proud to be English. They were proud to be American. They did not see a contradiction.

As William Franklin put it, in his last letter to his Assembly, "No Office or Honour in the Power of the Crown to bestow, will ever influence me to forget or neglect the Duty I owe my Country [meaning the colony of New Jersey], nor the most furious Rage of the most intemperate Zealots induce me to swerve from the Duty I owe His Majesty."<sup>17</sup>

Interestingly enough, up until almost the bitter end, Benjamin Franklin would have applauded his son's statements. Indeed they were the kind of thing he had once said himself. Benjamin Franklin was surely no colonial rabble rouser. He was a pragmatist who always preferred amicable compromise to ideological purity. "Every affront," he said in 1773, "is not worth a Duel .

. . . every Injury not worth a War.” Most importantly, “every Mistake in Government, every Incroachment on Rights is not worth a Rebellion.”<sup>18</sup>

In the end, of course, Benjamin Franklin decided to join with those Americans who believed that the chasm dividing England and America was unbreachable. His son, the royal governor of New Jersey, remained loyal to King and empire, and to an effort to devise practical ways to resolve the differences between England and America. In this sense, William remained true to the principles and practices that he had learned so very well from a once kind and “indulgent” father. Benjamin changed. He did not.

That Benjamin Franklin should have been disappointed at his son’s decision is not surprising. No father likes to see his advice ignored. Because the two men had been bound by such strong ties of mutual affection and shared interests, Benjamin had every reason to regret, even to deplore his son’s decision. Still, Benjamin should have understood, even if he did not condone, his son’s opposition to American independence, for he was himself a reluctant, if in the end a dedicated, revolutionary. A Samuel Adams may have found it difficult to comprehend a loyal son. But not a Benjamin Franklin.

Were the political differences that divided father and son sufficient to turn the two men into life-long enemies? William Franklin did not think so. In 1784, after the signing of the Peace of Paris, he contacted his father, trying to “revive that affectionate Intercourse and Connexion which till the Commencement of the late Troubles had been the Pride and happiness of my Life.” He did not, even in defeat, admit that his course had been a dishonorable one. “If I have been mistaken,” he said, “I cannot help it. It is an Error of Judgment that the maturest reflection I am capable of cannot rectify, and I verily believe were the same Circumstances to occur Tomorrow, my Conduct would be exactly similar to what it was heretofore.”<sup>19</sup> It was the sort of stance Benjamin Franklin might have appreciated, but Benjamin could not, would not forgive his son. He saw William only once after the Revolution, and that was primarily to tend to a few financial loose ends left over from the pre-war days. That business done, he sailed for home.

Why was Benjamin Franklin so unforgiving? Why could he not accept the fact that even Civil Wars—for that’s what this war was at least in part—had to come to an end, and that once ended, old enemies might reach an accomodation? Why was he determined to turn the son he had loved so long into an enemy?

The popular image of Franklin is a man known for his sunny disposition. His admirers like to emphasize his sense of humor, his charm, his willingness to search for a compromise. But there is another side of Benjamin Franklin, a more human—some would say a darker—side. While he may have avoided controversy, once he became angry, he was an unrelenting and tenacious foe.

Franklin was known by his ability to carry grudge. Look at his past—as he described it in his own *Autobiography*: He could never quite disguise his pleasure when he succeeded as a printer where his “tyrannical” brother James had failed.<sup>20</sup> His hatred of the Penns—the proprietors of Pennsylvania—was personal, single-minded, obsessive. Indeed, Franklin’s life is littered with the remains of men whose failures he celebrated and sometimes engineered. William Smith, Lords Grenville, Hillsborough and North, and, ultimately George III—Benjamin Franklin designated all of these men as his personal as well as his political enemies.

There is, in fact, reason to believe that Franklin’s decision to embrace independence when and how he did was as much the product of private fury as it was of public principle. Moreover, the circumstances surrounding that decision go a long way toward explaining Benjamin’s inability to forgive his son’s loyalism. As late as January of 1774, Franklin pursued his usual middle-of-the-road path, encouraging Americans to stand firm against the Tea Act, while at the same time advocating “decent Behaviour” on the part of his more radical countrymen.<sup>21</sup> But on January 29, his position abruptly changed. On that day, Massachusetts agent Benjamin Franklin entered a section of Whitehall aptly known as the “Cockpit,” supposedly to answer the government’s questions concerning the colony’s petition to remove Governor Hutchinson and Secretary Andrew Oliver from office. One look at the crowded room must have told him that this would be no ordinary hearing. Thirty-four Privy Counsellors, including Lord North himself, filed into the room, happy to take time from their busy schedules to observe the “entertainment.”<sup>22</sup> Even a few members of the public managed to shove their way into the packed assembly, laughing and pointing, lending a circus atmosphere to the proceedings.

Unfortunately for Franklin, word of the Boston Tea Party had reached London on January 20, just nine days before his appearance. The news struck a chord. Angry, frustrated, feeling increasingly ill-used and bewildered, the members of the administration lashed out at their most convenient scapegoat. They already blamed Franklin for the Massachusetts Governor’s troubles. They were embarrassed by Franklin’s increasingly pointed attacks in the press, pieces that even Benjamin admitted were a little “saucy.”<sup>23</sup> And they were furious at the latest example of colonial disloyalty. The ministry was out for revenge. Benjamin Franklin was their designated victim.

Hutchinson and Oliver were represented by Scottish lawyer Alexander Wedderburn who clearly relished his day in the sun. He spoke for less than an hour, but in that short time he managed to turn a loyal Briton into an American patriot. As the delighted audience laughed uproariously at the “torrent of virulent abuse” the attorney heaped upon him, Benjamin Franklin stood silently, a faint smile frozen on his face. He was, said one sympathetic onlooker, a perfect picture of “philosophic Tranquility and sovereign Contempt.”<sup>24</sup>

Wedderburn accused Franklin of engineering a grand conspiracy to dupe the people of Boston into near treasonous activity. He was the “actor and secret spring by which all the Assembly’s motives were directed.” It was because of his “treachery” that England faced a “whole province set in flame.” Franklin was a “true incendiary,” whose lies and machinations had single-handedly destroyed a relationship that had once been the pride of the British empire.<sup>25</sup>

The King’s men won a pyrrhic victory at the Cockpit; their momentary satisfaction came at a very high price. They had succeeded in alienating one of England’s most influential American friends. Until 1774, despite his quarrels with the government, his disillusionment with the King’s men, even his disappointment with the King himself, Franklin had continued to believe that the British government was the best government on earth. It needed reforming, to be sure, but he remained proud of being an Englishman. Now he was not so sure.

Two days after the hearing at the Cockpit, Franklin was stunned when the King removed him from his job at the Post Office. Publically, he pretended that even this last indignity did not faze him. “Intending to disgrace me,” he explained to his beloved sister Jane, “they have rather done me Honour.” His dismissal was “a Testimony of my being uncorrupted.”<sup>26</sup> But while he remained outwardly cool, he seethed in private. Two years later, he could not refer to the event without admitting his anger. Indeed, he never forgot the public, almost ritual humiliation he suffered at the hands of the ministry.

There was one person, above all, whom he expected to understand and sympathize with his pain. That person was William Franklin. When he wrote to his son just two days after he had been relieved of his government job, Franklin was unable to talk about his experience in any detail. Nevertheless, his expectations were clear. He assumed that William would resign his position as Governor of New Jersey as a protest of his father’s treatment.<sup>27</sup>

Benjamin Franklin’s assumptions were mistaken. William did not resign. He had no intention of leaving a position that endowed him with his sole source of income, purpose, and identity. Benjamin was especially upset because his son seemed strangely indifferent to his own very real anguish. William made light of the loss of the post office job—it was bound to happen sooner or later, he said. The humiliation at the Cockpit was an unpleasant but minor incident. Your usefulness in England is over, he wrote his father. Why not retire to the comfort of home and family, and enjoy your last years on this earth in peace?<sup>28</sup>

When Benjamin replied to William’s letters, he exploded. Deeply hurt by William’s obvious lack of concern for his own suffering, pained by the implication that he had outlived his usefulness in London, he lashed out. Calling his son a “thorough Courtier,” he accused him of being a mere syncophant who had lost any ability he may once have had to evaluate imperial

matters independently. You see everything, he thundered, through “Government Eyes.”<sup>29</sup>

For all practical purposes, the political relationship between Benjamin and William Franklin ended in 1774. After that, while the two men continued to nourish what was left of their personal ties, they avoided political topics. To be sure, both of them continued to harbor some hopes for a reconciliation until the middle of 1775.<sup>30</sup> But in the end they chose opposite sides in a war that both would no doubt have preferred to avoid.

To make some sense of Benjamin Franklin’s reaction to the Cockpit incident, and to what he perceived as his son’s “disloyalty,” it is essential to understand why this incident, above all others, led to his alienation from the British government. Benjamin Franklin was a self-made man, who had made his way in a fluid, relatively “classless” society. He operated in a world where no one really knew his or her place. In such a world, everyone watched everyone else to find out where he or she stood in a society where the old standards no longer applied. Consequently, appearances, “face,” reputation meant everything. Indeed, one’s reputation was one’s most valuable possession. To lose face was to lose power and status.

Perhaps no eighteenth century American understood the importance of reputation better than Benjamin Franklin. His *Autobiography* is filled with examples of his obsession with creating and preserving his image. Throughout his life, his anger at those who tried to destroy his carefully crafted reputation knew no bounds. Consider his final quarrel with printer Samuel Keimer. The two men never really got along, but Franklin was willing to tolerate his employer until the day Keimer caught Benjamin gazing out the window of the print shop, and began to berate him in a “loud Voice” for his inattention to business. Keimer’s “reproachful Words,” admitted Benjamin, “nettled me the more for their Publicity, all the Neighbors who were looking out on the same Occasion being Witnesses how I was treated.” Keimer and Franklin exchanged “high Words” before Benjamin stalked out of the room vowing to quit immediately. He never forgave Keimer for his public humiliation. He began plotting in earnest to leave the printer’s employ and to start a rival establishment that would leave his former boss in ruins. And indeed, Franklin obtained his revenge. His own star rose in the following years, while Keimer’s fortunes—thanks at least in part to Benjamin’s successes—plummeted. Keimer ended his life in Barbadoes, said Franklin with unseemly satisfaction, in “very poor Circumstances.”<sup>31</sup>

Throughout his life, Franklin carefully guarded his image, his most important possession. When he first entered seriously into business, he “took care not only to be in *Reality* Industrious and frugal, but to avoid all *appearances* of the Contrary.” He “drest plainly,” was “seen at no Places of idle Diversion,” and “thus being esteem’d an industrious thriving young Man,” he “went on



swimmingly.”<sup>32</sup> Once in London, however, he altered his habits to suit his new environment. There, he hired a “Chariot,” for London hackneys were “miserable dirty broken shabby Things, unfit to go into when dress’d clean, and such as one would be asham’d to get out of at any Gentleman’s Door.”<sup>33</sup> The frugal American became a free spender, buying wigs, shoes, linens, and shirts for himself and his son in an effort to live in a “Fashion and Expence suitable to the Publick Character [he] sustain’d.”<sup>34</sup>

Franklin knew only too well the importance of his reputation. And he knew that his humiliation at the Cockpit, an event about which all London was buzzing, spelled an end to his influence in England. For a man whose power was based in large measure on his good name, the public destruction of his character was traumatic; indeed it amounted to political death. William’s failure to appreciate the magnitude of the event was incomprehensible and unforgivable. It was a personal, as well as a political, sin.

William was, of course, to sin again. The nature of his “sin,” as well as Benjamin’s reaction to it, is illuminating. William Franklin chose to support the King, a decision that his father may have been able to understand, if not to condone. His own reluctance to support independence, as well as the ties of affection that bound him to his son, might well have allowed him to overlook William’s errors at the end of the war, and to allow his prodigal son to return to his good graces. Unfortunately, William had chosen not simply to support King and empire, but to do so actively and publicly. He spent nearly two years in a colonial prison for his “rebellion” against the rebel cause. Once he was released from prison, he became president of the New York-based Board of Associated Loyalists, a terrorist organization composed of loyal Americans that was credited—or blamed—for the cold-blooded murder of more than one patriot. At war’s end, William used his influence to support exiled Loyalists in London.

William’s position as a leading Loyalist was a constant embarrassment, a convenient target for Benjamin’s enemies, a public reminder of the elder Franklin’s past ties to King and empire. Consequently, Benjamin did all he could to distance himself from his son, doing nothing throughout the war to ease William’s way, and not a little to make his life more difficult. Benjamin did not lift a finger to secure his son’s release from his Connecticut prison. When he took part in the peace negotiations at the war’s end, he was one of the Loyalists’ most implacable foes. Franklin, said one observer, “is and has been every way [his son’s] misfortune.”<sup>35</sup>

It was the public nature of William’s defection that Benjamin could not forgive. “Nothing,” he cried, “has hurt me so much and affected me with such keen Sensations as to find myself deserted in my old Age by my only Son; and not only deserted, but to find him taking up Arms against me, in a Cause wherein my good Fame, Fortune and Life were at Stake.”<sup>36</sup> Benjamin Franklin

saw his son's actions in personal terms. He could not concede that the New Jersey governor might have rational, legitimate, even honorable reasons for supporting the King. Rather, he insisted that William had engaged in an attack on his own "good Fame, Fortune and Life." His will made Benjamin's position clear. It was the "*public* Notoriety of William's efforts to "deprive" him of his "Estate" that gave Benjamin the excuse to humiliate his son for the last time.

Ironically, William never did see himself as his father's enemy. Throughout the war, he continued to inquire about his father's well being, although Benjamin never returned the favor. William's letters were always dotted with flattering references to Benjamin Franklin.<sup>37</sup> He refused to criticize his father, even when friends invited him to do so. And he was almost obsessed with efforts to remind himself of his once-proud connection to the great Benjamin Franklin. He even toyed with the idea of writing his father's biography so that the world would see "the Turn of [Benjamin's] Mind and the Variety of his knowledge."<sup>38</sup> If he was, as Benjamin Franklin insisted, his father's enemy, he was an unnatural—and loyal—enemy, indeed.

## Notes

1. Benjamin Franklin (hereafter BF), Will, Codcil, 23 June 1789, Franklin Papers, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia (hereafter APS).
2. William Franklin to Benjamin Franklin, 22 July 1784, Benjamin Franklin MSS, American Philosophical Society (APS).
3. William Franklin (hereafter WF) to Jonathan Williams, Jr., 11 May 1791, Franklin Papers, Sterling Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut (hereafter Sterling Library).
4. Leonard W. Labaree, et al., ed., *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (New Haven, 1964), 128 (hereafter *ABF*).
5. See "Extracts from the Diary of Daniel Fisher, 1755," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 7(1893): 276ff (hereafter *PMHB*), for evidence of Deborah Franklin's (DF) hostility toward her stepson.
6. BF to Jane Mecom, [? June] 1748, Leonard Labaree, et al., eds. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* (New Haven, 1959—), 3: 303 (hereafter *PBF*).
7. See *PBF* 4:155n, 513n; 7:191.
8. WF to BF, 3 Sept. 1758, *PBF* 8: 132.
9. William Strahan to DF, 13 Dec. 1757, *PBF* 7: 297.
10. Sheila Skemp, "William Franklin: His Father's Son," *PMHB* 109 (1985): 145-178.
11. BF to Lord Kames, 25 Feb. 1767, *PBF* 14: 65.
12. Arthur Lee to Samuel Adams, 10 June 1771, *ibid.*, 18: 128.
13. Jack P. Greene, "The Alienation of Ben Franklin, British American," *Journal of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce*, 124(1976), 53. See also, Greene, "Pride, Prejudice, and Jealousy: Benjamin Franklin's Explanation for the American Revolution," in J.A. Leo Lemay, ed., *Reappraising Benjamin Franklin: A Bicentennial Perspective* (Newark, Del., 1993): 119-142.
14. See Yehoshua Areli, *Individualism and Nationalism in American Ideology* (Cambridge, 1964), 46.
15. BF to Samuel Cooper, 27 April 1769, *PBF* 16: 118.
16. BF to Massachusetts House of Representatives, 7 July 1773, *ibid.*, 20: 283.
17. Both quotes come from WF's letter to his assembly, 17 June 1776, found in *New Jersey Archives* 10: 719-32.
18. BF to John Winthrop, 27 July 1773, *ibid.*, 20: 330.
19. WF to BF, 22 July 1784, Franklin Papers, APS.
20. *ABF*, 69, 81, 82.
21. BF to the Massachusetts House of Representatives, 7 July 1773, *PBF* 20: 283.
22. BF to Thomas Cushing, 15 [-19] Feb. 1774, *ibid.*, 21: 92.
23. BF to Jane Mecom, 1 Nov. 1773, *ibid.*, 20: 457.
24. William Bollan to the Massachusetts Council, n.d. quoted in *ibid.*, 21: 40n.
25. Wedderburn's Speech Before the Privy Council, 29 Jan. 1774, *ibid.*, 21: 58, 60. The best account of the significance of BF's humiliation at the Cockpit is Greene, "Alienation," 52-73.
26. BF to Jane Mecom, 17 Feb. 1774, *PBF* 21: 103.
27. BF to WF, 18 Feb. 1774, *ibid.*, 108.
28. WF to BF, [3 July 1774], *ibid.*, 21: 237, 238.
29. BF to WF, 7 Sept. [1774], *ibid.*, 21: 287.
30. See Skemp, *William Franklin: Son of a Patriot, Servant of a King* (New York, 1990), chapter 10; WF to BF, 6 Sept. 1775, *PBF* 22: 191; William A. Whitehead, "A Biographical Sketch of William Franklin," *N.J. Hist. Soc. Proc.* ser 1, 3: 144.
31. *ABF*, 110, 111, 126.
32. *Ibid.*, 125, 126.
33. BF to DF, 19 Feb. 1758, *PBF* 7: 380.
34. BF to Isaac Norris, 9 Feb. 1763, *Ibid.*, 10: 194.
35. Ambrose Serle, *The American Journal of Ambrose Serle, 1776-1778*, E.H. Tatum Jr., ed. (San Marino, Calif., 1940), 49.
36. BF to WF, 16 Aug. 1784, Franklin Papers 32: 91, APS.
37. WF to Jonathan Williams, 11 May 1791, Franklin Papers, Sterling Library.
38. WF to Jonathan Williams, 28 Oct. 1811, Jonathan Williams Collection, microfilm at APS.