The attempt to link voters' ethno-religious characteristics with party politics is one of the most interesting new developments in the writing of American political history. Rejecting old theories that explained party battles either as the result of policy and ideological disagreements grounded largely in economic differences or as the noisy, determined competition between largely undifferentiated aspirants for the rewards of power, historians have advanced a more complicated argument. In the process of examining numerous facets of party competition from the 1830s through the 1890s, many "new political historians" have described parties as coalitions of ethno-religious groups that banded together in peculiar ways largely because of antag-

* A former version of this paper was presented at Philadelphia, on October 16, 1982, at a Conference entitled "The Founding of Pennsylvania, 1682-1800," sponsored by The Philadelphia Center For Early American Studies. The author would like to thank the Center and its Director Richard Beeman for support and encouragement and John Butler, Steve Rosswurm, Dick Ryerson and Marianne Wokeck for helpful comments and conversation.

1 Two important books that represent these interpretations are Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., The Age of Jackson (Boston, 1945) and Richard P. McCormick, The Second American Party System: Party Formation in the Jacksonian Era (Chapel Hill, 1966).
onisms or attractions rooted in their identities. These identities shaped local and state party policy choices. Party positions on national issues were sometimes related to the collective character of the parties but were as often rationalized and imbued with symbolic significance after the fact. The adversarial character of political parties often led to ignoring similarities, imputing differences when none existed, and incorporating both small and large acts into a party ideology connected closely but frequently in obscure ways to the fundamental ethno-religious make up of each political party. The relationship between national issues and local ethno-religious antagonisms was a synergistic one. Together they produced a political atmosphere that breathed life into party activities.

The ethno-religious view of nineteenth-century American politics has been so persuasive that its advocates extend it backward into the colonial and early national years. Even a cursory glance at the heterogeneous societies of the mid-Atlantic or the backcountry South reveals that religious and ethnic groups were important in the creation of colonial and state political coalitions. To date, however, the few sustained scholarly efforts to examine the nature of ethno-religious politics in early America are confined to New York and Pennsylvania. Thomas Archdeacon has found that when New York City was divided into Leislerians and anti-Leislerians during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, ethnicity was an important determinant of voter
allegiance. Owen Ireland and Wayne Bockelman discovered politically significant ethno-religious differences among Pennsylvania legislators during the revolutionary and early national period. The implication of the Ireland-Bockelman work is that similar divisions existed among Pennsylvania's provincial and state electorate.

Among the colonies with sufficient ethnic and religious diversity to suggest the salience of ethno-religious politics, Pennsylvania is the most suitable for close examination. There are two reasons for this. First, Pennsylvania's political parties were more clearly defined than those of any other mainland British colony with the possible exception of Rhode Island. Whereas New York was apparently dominated by political factions and New Jersey by familial politics, Pennsylvania's political identity was characterized by party. To be sure, neither Quaker nor Proprietary Parties were the mass parties that nineteenth century his-

torians claim to be the only "real" American parties, but the Quaker Party in particular was a party nonetheless, with structure, policies, continuous leadership, constituencies, and longevity. More importantly, both parties were coalitions of ethno-religious groups that competed for power intermittently for over twenty-five years by speaking to the needs, beliefs, and fears of a heterogeneous electorate. The conditions of popular politics in Pennsylvania were as close to nineteenth-century party politics as one can find in colonial America.

Second, the two major interpretive frameworks which ethno-religious historians have advanced to explain the divisions between competing political groups are particularly applicable to Pennsylvania. In the first and more sophisticated hypothesis, historians argue that the most critical fissure among ethno-religious groups is the division between the powerful "core" of the English-in-America and the "outgroups" composed of such people as the Scotch-Irish, Germans, Dutch, Scots, and Irish. Longstanding "folk hostilities" between the English and outgroups were imported to America and there became the principle dynamic in determining party character. This paradigm is clearly applicable to colonial Pennsylvania. At the center of each of the Proprietary and Quaker Parties was a powerful English core; the electoral success of both these entities depended to a considerable extent on the "core group" relationships with the continually expanding non-English segment of the electorate. Moreover, the Bockelman and Ireland argument that sees the Revolution as an ethno-religious victory for the Scotch-Irish and Germans over the long-dominant English suggests the importance of ethno-religiously defined core-periphery relationship for Pennsylvania politics.

The second interpretive framework also sees politics as the expression of a dichotomous relationship. Religious denominations, it is argued,

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8 Tully, "Quaker Party and Proprietary Policies."


10 Bockelman and Ireland, "The Internal Revolution in Pennsylvania."
may be located on a continuum that runs from pietism to ritualistic. Some pietists wanted to order society tightly along lines that testified to their view of morality; ritualists, on the other hand, tended to divorce salvation from secular considerations and were more at ease with a plurality of social practices. Political differences grew out of these basic religious differences. Again Pennsylvania is the appropriate area to examine for such a pattern, for provincial society encompassed a large number of religious groups that were distributed along a pietistic-ritualistic spectrum.

In colonial Pennsylvania, important links between ethnicity and politics were first forged in the second quarter of the eighteenth century after immigrant Scotch-Irish and Germans had arrived in large numbers. In the increasingly pluralistic society of the 1730s and 1740s, each of the province's major ethnic groups occasionally demonstrated signs of internal coherence and self-awareness. Pennsylvanians of English ancestry had developed traditions of social and political cooperation by the 1730s, and they continued those in the years that followed; the English assumed their preeminence in social and political affairs while they strove to demonstrate that their colonial world was a relevant part of mainstream British culture. The Scotch-Irish, influenced by their Scottish heritage and their minority and disadvantaged status in Ireland, shaped themselves into loose communities defined by geography, religion, accent, and a host of less apparent characteristics.


The Germans created a great variety of local societies ranging from the communal to the individualistic. Whatever their differences, German communities were defined by language, religion, residency patterns, and associations.  

The mutual recognition of cultural boundaries reinforced the internal bonds of ethnicity. The English clearly distinguished themselves from the outsiders. James Logan, for example, thought there was little to choose between the “unruly” Germans and the “bold and indigent” Scotch-Irish. To the Scotch-Irish, the English were as they had been always been—different, too much the arrogant establishment, while “the Dutch” were clearly an alien people. Germans certainly recognized that they were not part of the “Englanders” world, while to many Germans, the Scotch-Irish were a distinct sub-group of the general English-speaking population. Varying measures of prejudice, of course, underlay all of these distinctions.


15 James Logan to Hanna Penn, Jan. 1, 1726, Penn Papers Official Correspondence, I, hereinafter cited as PPOC, James Logan to John Penn, Nov. 25, 1727, James Logan Letter Book, IV, hereinafter cited as JLLB Unless otherwise stated, all manuscripts cited are in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

The pressures of German and Scotch-Irish immigration into Pennsylvania created the need for political accommodation between the newcomers and the English. Practical issues of local government, land settlement, and economic exchange quickly led the English into political dealings with Scotch-Irish and Germans. Both groups were determined to seize the opportunities and responsibilities that immigration seemed to promise them. Both adopted their new home with conviction: many Germans knew that laws forbidding their return had made emigration an irrevocable act;\(^{17}\) most Scotch-Irish answered whatever alluring dreams they had of their old homeland with the cold fact that they had little to return to.\(^{18}\) Politically, then, both groups were determined to embrace their new world by accepting the Anglicization that membership in the larger colonial community involved.

Coincidental with the changing composition of Pennsylvania's population in the 1730s, competition between Quaker and Proprietary Parties superseded the factional politics that had characterized the colony's early years.\(^{19}\) Initially, both the Quaker and Proprietary Parties were composed predominantly of English, Welsh, Anglo-Irish, and a few Scots. The Quaker Party, as the name suggests, attracted the allegiance of most Quakers, along with some Anglicans and a few Presbyterians and Baptists; the Proprietary Party was led by Anglican, Presbyterians and a few Quakers. The former maintained control over the elected and some appointed government positions; the latter depended for its prominence on the corporation of Philadelphia and a variety of high executive and proprietary offices largely in or near Philadelphia.\(^{20}\)

\(^{17}\) I am indebted to Marianne Wokeck, who is currently studying German immigration, for this observation

\(^{18}\) Dickson, *Ulster Emigration*, 1-18, 18-97

\(^{19}\) For the factionalism of the early years see Nash, "Quakers and Politics"

The outbreak of King George's War in 1739 drove Quaker and Proprietary Parties apart and set the stage for an irreconcilability that lasted for thirty years. Differing opinions over what steps Pennsylvania should take to prepare for war and over whether the Governor of the colony had the right to enlist indentured servants led to a series of election battles between the two parties. In these elections the competing sides tried to recruit Scotch-Irish and German support for the first time.\textsuperscript{21}

For the Scotch-Irish, who by this time had settled heavily in portions of Lancaster and Chester Counties, there was little contest. The Irish came to Pennsylvania choking with rage against landlords, and whom should they first meet but the agents of landlord Thomas Penn. They were either thrown off or forced into leaseholds on land that was earmarked for manors; they settled land believing they had been offered one set of terms only to find these changed; they resented the pressure put on them to convert improvement or squatters' rights into regular titles; they hated paying purchase price and quitrents under any circumstances. On the other hand, the predominantly Quaker Assembly provided easy credit for them through the provincial Loan Office; a small number of Quakers, led by Deputy Surveyor and Lancaster politician Samuel Blunston, cooperated with many to place property surveys in their hands before they had settled on purchase terms with Thomas Penn; and some little known Quakers joined wholeheartedly with them in defending Pennsylvania's southwestern claims against the incursions and violence of neighboring Marylanders.\textsuperscript{22}

Politically, then, the Scotch-Irish were early predisposed to work with the Quaker Party and to accept the party's charges that proprietary men would abet executive tyranny. Proprietary Secretary Richard Peters attested to this in an epistolary lament to Thomas Penn after the October 1742 election.

Could anyone believe that Susie\textsuperscript{23} could act so unbecoming and unfemale a part as to be employed in copying such infamous stuff [a political letter sent

\textsuperscript{21} Tully, \textit{William Penn's Legacy}, 23-38

\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}, 7-15

\textsuperscript{23} The Susie, Peters here refers to, was Susanna Wright, daughter of Quaker minister, long time Assemblyman and early Lancaster resident John Wright. Susanna's two brothers, James and John, Jr, were also prominent Quaker politicians
to every Presbyterian congregation in the county] and to take her stand as she did at Lancaster in the upper room in a public house and to have a ladder erected to the window and there distribute lies and tickets all the day of the election.  

Truly remarkable (and uncharacteristic) was the role Susanna Wright played in this election. Of greater general significance was the circular letter she and her allies sent out to the Presbyterian congregations. By 1742, the Quakers were using Presbyterian meetinghouses for political purposes in the same way as Friends used their own—as strategic points in a mobilizing network.

The Germans' initial roles in Pennsylvania politics were similar to those of the Scotch-Irish. The first evidence that German political participation extended beyond the individual and occasional is from the early 1740s. In the 1740 Philadelphia County election, four hundred Germans who had not previously voted in provincial elections supported the Quaker Party ticket, and a large but unspecified number continued their support in 1742.

In both these instances, Christopher Saur joined with his Quaker and Mennonite friends to mobilize Philadelphia County German voters in support of the Quaker Party. Believing that continued Quaker political power was the best guarantee of the religious and political freedom they found in Pennsylvania, Saur and his sectarian acquaintances urged all eligible Germans to follow these convictions. Given the small number of German sectarians residing in Philadelphia and living within or near Germantown, it was imperative that this appeal extend beyond meetinghouse members. According to contemporary estimates, it did so. The Quaker Party's German support came largely from the church members and unchurched of Philadelphia County. The breadth of Saur's political constituency gave great strength to the Quaker Party.

24 Richard Peters to Proprietaries, Nov 17, 1942, Richard Peters Letterbook, 1737-1750, hereinafter cited as RPLB.
25 On the use of Presbyterian congregations in Chester see John Taylor to William Moore, Sept 30, 1738, Taylor Papers, Correspondence, 1723-1750
26 William Allen to John Penn, March 27, 1741, PPOC, III, Richard Peters to Proprietaries, Aug. 25, 1742 and Nov 17, 1742, RPLB
27 Wolf, Urban Village, 43, 208-210
Coming from a great variety of communities and principalities, the Germans who lived in the backcountry exhibited a cultural and religious diversity that made their community in any one county a heterogeneous society. Despite this, there was an initial simplicity about German politics. In Berks, Lancaster, and York counties, small pockets of English Quakers settled among Germans and were influential among them far beyond their numbers. Local Quaker connections, along with the influence of Christopher Saur's press, built strong political bridges linking German groups in support of the Quaker Party.

The political following that Quakers commanded among Germans in Lancaster and York, for example, rested on firm footings. During the violent days of the Pennsylvania-Maryland boundary dispute, Samuel Blunston and his friends pleaded the cause of those Pennsylvania Germans who settled west of the Susquehanna River. "Blunston Licenses," as the special blank warrants were called, gave many of these Germans legal claim to their improvements. And in Lancaster County, Samuel Blunston did for the Germans what he had done for the Donegal Irish. To the settlers' delight and Thomas Penn's chagrin, sharp Samuel surveyed a good deal of German-settled Hempfield Township before the terms of land purchase had been agreed upon. Among those Germans who owed so much to their Quaker champions were only a handful of sectarians; most were church-affiliated, if only nominally.

The extent of both pietistic and church German allegiance to the Quakers became clear in the elections of 1740, 1741, and 1742. In the first and third of these contests, the majority was so lopsided that it is clear that the Quaker Party attracted the support of both Scotch-Irish


30 On Quaker residence in York and Lancaster see Edmund Peckover's Journal, 1743, 18-19, 28-29, Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library On Berks see Becker, "The American Revolution as a Community Experience," 48, and James Logan to John Taylor, Sept 25, 1729, JLLB, III

and Germans. The second election, that of 1741, merits special attention because it illustrates that most German voters' view of the political issues drew them to the Quaker Party.

In 1741, Conrad Weiser, a man every historian would place high on the list of the most influential Pennsylvania Germans, threw his weight behind the proprietary cause. Here was a well-known German Lutheran and proprietary supporter who should have been able to tap the supposed pro-proprietary sentiments of the church Germans. Weiser's part in the campaign was to write a circular letter to his countrymen dressing up the proprietary cause of defense preparations in its most appealing clothes and criticizing the Quakers for their intransigence. The response was immediate. Christopher Saur and the other German spokesmen publicly urged the electorate to continue supporting the Quaker Party. The Quakers had the record, they argued, and the proprietary men were not to be trusted. If the Proprietary Party came to power, it was capable of forcing militia service, of using the militia to collect quitrents, and of forcing labour on proprietary manors. New high taxes would confiscate the profits of diligence for the causes of ostentation and place.

The election was no contest. In Philadelphia, Bucks, and Chester counties, the proprietary group did not put forward a ticket at all. In Lancaster County, the proprietary allies polled only 200 votes out of the 1150 cast. If some German churchmen from Tulpehocken and Lebanon followed Weiser's lead, the vast majority did not. Again as in Philadelphia County, the great preponderance of German churchmen in Lancaster gave their political allegiance to the Quaker Party.

Once the Scotch-Irish and Germans made these initial commitments, they were firm in their allegiance. For a year between July 1747 and June 1748, French privateers operating off the mouth of the Delaware River threatened eastern Philadelphia and Chester counties. In Philadelphia, Gilbert Tennant led a polemical attack against Quaker paci-

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32 Tully, *William Penn's Legacy*, 226-227
34 Minutes, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting 1737-1849, 55 Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College.
fism, arguing that the province should prepare to defend itself against the enemy. 35 Despite the angers and fears of the moment, there is no evidence of Presbyterian political opposition to the Quaker Party in either 1747 or 1748. The only clearly pro-defense candidate who stood for election in 1747 was not a Presbyterian, but Lutheran Conrad Weiser, who seized this moment as an opportune time to contest a seat in Lancaster. Weiser polled approximately four hundred votes, reputedly among his fellow Lutherans, but that was a small proportion of those usually cast. 36

In addition to pointing out the absence of strong Scotch-Irish and German opposition to the Quaker Party, these episodes demonstrated two important considerations. First, ministerial or lay polemics did not bring about automatic political mobilization. Ministers occasionally played an important role in defining a public issue, but merely because they spoke out did not mean that those who heard would jump to the task of organizing fellow congregation members for independent political action. Gilbert Tennent, for example, quickly learned what limited political influence he had over both Presbyterians and those of other denominations. When he published his sermons on defensive war in December, 1747, he could not dispose of many copies. They remained stored in Philadelphia to be used, ironically enough, for gun wadding by British soldiers during the occupation of Philadelphia in 1777-1778. 37 Second, although church members such as Conrad Weiser might carry votes with them beyond ethno-religious loyalty when they stood against the Quaker Party, they nonetheless reaped political failure. Concern for the issues at stake carried the election.

35 Gilbert Tennent, The Late Association for Defensive War, (Philadelphia, 1748), The Late Association for Defensive War Further Encouraged or the Consistency of Defensive War with True Christianity, (Philadelphia, 1748), and The Late Association for Defensive War Further Encouraged or Defensive War Defended and its Consistency with True Christianity Represented in a Reply .(Philadelphia, 1748), Hermann Wellenreuther, “The Political Dilemma of the Quakers in Pennsylvania, 1691-1748” PMHB, 94(1970), 165-172, Alan Tully, “Politics and Peace Testimony in Mid-Eighteenth Century Pennsylvania,” Canadian Review of American Studies 13(1982), 159-177

36 Bishop Cammerhoff to Count Zinzendorf, Nov 17, 1747, Bishop Cammerhoff’s Letters to Count Zinzendorf, 1747-1749 For some of the voting figures we do have, see Tully, William Penn’s Legacy, 93

37 Richard Webster, A History of the Presbyterian Church in America From Its Origin Until the Year 1760, (Philadelphia, 1857), 396-397
Throughout the 1740s and early 1750s, political activities took place with the English population occupying center stage. The other two major groups were incorporated into active political life shortly after their arrival. In the case of the Scotch-Irish, that incorporation took place largely in terms of religious affiliation. Just as the English, Welsh, and Anglo-Irish defined themselves for political purposes as primarily Quaker, Anglican, or Baptist, so did they articulate their relationships with the Scotch-Irish as between their own particular religion and Presbyterianism. In this the Scotch-Irish acquiesced, seeing among themselves only a greater variety of Reformed practices than many English thought important. The prominent use of religious terminology to distinguish between groups of English-speaking Pennsylvanians was a product of the important role religion had played historically at critical moments of contact between English and Scotch-Irish; a heritage of the British religious battles of the seventeenth century; a natural result of the close association of Pennsylvania with Quakerism; and a concomitance of the use of congregations and pulpits to mobilize voters.

The German case was only slightly different. While English and Scotch-Irish politicians initially referred to the Germans often as simply "the Dutch," occasionally they distinguished between sectarians, Lutherans and Reformed church people. The German-speaking Pennsylvanians were even more cognizant of variety among themselves. That variety gained public notice and some acceptance as political spokesmen representing one religious group or another became more prominent.

Thus, among English-speaking groups and to a degree among the Germans, religious groups became the focal point of ethnic interaction in politics. When politicians spoke of the electorate in ideal or didactic terms they might talk about freemen, but when they spoke about mobilizing the electorate, it was in terms of the Quaker, Presbyterian, Baptist, or German church interest; when it came time to identify a key man in the countryside who might be appealed to for political support, a

38 The most common groups in Pennsylvania were Old Lights, New Lights, Seceders and Covenanters.
39 For an example of both usages in the same context see Samuel Purviance, Jr to James Burd, Sept. 20, 1765, SP.
crucial consideration was his influence among one or more of these religious groups. Religion became the main vehicle by which ethnicity gained political representation.

Of course, many unchurched or nominal church members were important political figures. Such leaders appealed not only to the religiously committed but also to the apathetic Christians and irreligious among the electorate. Those who attended political meetings in country and city taverns were the politically interested for whom there was no noticeable congruence between political and religious zeal. Yet, aside from Philadelphia where occupational or class identity might serve, there were no durable and legitimate categories of social organization beyond the religious that produced a clear frame of reference for group political activity. Inevitably (and perhaps despite themselves), Pennsylvania’s political brokers reduced neighborhoods, townships, and county towns to the sum of their strongest religious societies.

The continual emphasis on religious identity produced a whole series of cross-cutting claims. Both Quakers and Anglicans felt they represented not just themselves, but all right-thinking Englishmen; no matter the camp of Presbyterianism, its spokesmen always claimed to represent church, Irish, and local area; and Dunkers, Lutherans, and Moravians felt they acted in the interest of the majority of the German folk. With the three major national groups each being represented by multiple religious denominations making catholic—and contradictory—claims, an environment emerged which allowed popular political alliances to cut across these groups rather than to adhere to the broad cleavages of language and culture.

The middle decades of the eighteenth century brought war to Pennsylvania and with it political change. The most important of these was the restructuring of the Quaker Party in 1756. Those Quaker Assemblymen who could not in good conscience acquiesce to wartime legislation resigned, to be replaced largely by Anglicans. The result was a Quaker Party willing to build forts on the frontiers, raise, equip, and

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40 A few of the well-known were Andrew Hamilton, Joseph Galloway, Benjamin Franklin and John Dickinson. There were others of lesser reputation.
maintain provincial troops, and lay the taxes that these wartime expenditures necessitated.\textsuperscript{41}

To many of the frontier Scotch-Irish, however, the conversion of the Quaker Party lacked conviction. In early 1757, Colonel John Armstrong of Carlisle bitterly announced that he could never forgive the Quakers for their dilatory response to the Indian depredations.\textsuperscript{42} After General James Braddock met defeat in July, 1755, the frontier lay unprotected until January, and three months of massacres antedated the first efforts to fortify the province. Just as Pennsylvania declared war on the Indians, the Quakers of the Friendly Association (a philanthropic organization founded to promote peace in the province) began to fraternize with the eastern Delaware, Shawnees, and Nanticokes. At a series of conferences held at Easton in 1756, 1757, and 1758, members of the Friendly Association appeared to offer succor to the Indians rather than meet them with hard demands. The apparent collusion of Quaker Party leaders and Friendly Association Quakers at the Easton meetings seemed to prove how uncomprehending and narrowly eastern in their interests the Quakers were, for throughout those years the Ohio Shawnees and Delawares continued their attacks on the western frontiers.\textsuperscript{43}

Scotch-Irish disenchantment with the Quakers gained fullest expression in Cumberland County in 1756 when proprietary stalwart William Allen was elected to the Assembly to represent that constituency. The residents of Cumberland shared the same motivation—the hope of establishing some effective lobby in distant Philadelphia for the defense of the hinterland—to elect Allen that prompted the Scotch-Irish and Germans of Northampton to elect William Plumsted and the proprietary supporters in Lancaster to try to tempt Lancaster voters with Philadelphians Edward Shippen, Jr., and Alexander Stedman.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{41} Tully, "Quaker Party and Proprietary Policies", Theodore Thayer, \textit{Pennsylvania Polities}, 49-76

\textsuperscript{42} John Armstrong to James Burd, Jan 28, 1757, SP

\textsuperscript{43} Theodore Thayer, \textit{Isaak Pemberton, King of the Quakers} (Philadelphia, 1943), 81-170 For a detailed account of the frontier war see C Hale Sipe, \textit{The Indian Wars of Pennsylvania} (Harrsisbury, 1929), 152-406

\textsuperscript{44} William S Hanna, \textit{Benjamin Franklin and Pennsylvania Polities}, (Stanford, 1964), 114-115, Thayer, \textit{Pennsylvania Polities}, 64, John Harris to James Burd, Sept 29, 1756, SP
With his considerable influence as a leading patronage advisor to the Proprietary and with the local support of French and Indian War hero Colonel John Armstrong, Allen created a solid base of political support.45 Cumberland was a relatively new county lacking a resident Quaker population and the attendant ties to the Quaker Party. Given that resulting vacuum, Allen, Armstrong, and their friends came to play much the same role in Cumberland as the Quakers Blunston and Wrights had played in the politics of Lancaster and York Counties, and the Parvins, Boones, and Starrs had played in the affairs of Berks. The difference was that Allen and friends were oriented away from the Quaker Party.

Presbyterians, as Allen acknowledged when he first accepted election from Cumberland, were the link between him and the majority of settlers in that county.46 But it was a cantankerous Presbyterian horse that Allen had agreed to ride. If the frontiersmen were angry at the Quakers, many nonetheless recognized that the Quaker Party stood for other goals they admired: curtailment of executive power, taxation of proprietary land, and availability of cheap credit. The Proprietary held no such attractions. What the farmers saw among proprietary circles was favouritism in the land office, Thomas Penn’s resistance to taxation of proprietary land, and the heavy hand of the Receiver-General demanding purchase money and rents during wartime.47

In order to stay astride his electoral mount, then, Allen had to twist and turn in the Assembly politics of the later 1750s and early 1760s. For an overweight, sedentary Chief Justice he did rather well—keeping muted his own wishes for a stronger executive, working with the Quaker Party on legislative committees and giving occasional expres-

45 Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Oct 2, 1756, PPOC VIII, John Penn to Thomas Penn, March 17, 1764, PPOC IX
46 William Allen to ______, Nov 5, 1756, printed in Charles R Roberts “Pennsylvania Germans in Public Life During the Colonial Period,” Lehigh County Historical Society, Proceedings, 2(1910), 56-57
sion to anti-proprietary feeling. In so doing, Allen revealed how the very fact of the Cumberland County Scotch-Irish support contributed to the fragmented, tension-ridden, and self-compromising character of the Proprietary Party.

In other frontier counties to the east and north-east of Cumberland, the political issues of the 1750s were the same—the necessity and extent of defense preparations, as well as inadequate government leadership in protecting frontier residents during wartime. Unlike the Scotch-Irish in Cumberland, however, their counterparts in York and Lancaster had a history of cooperation with the Quaker Party. Amid their bloody losses in the French and Indian War, many focused their anger on the eastern Quaker politicians and the policies of the Friendly Association. Some of those who had been commissioned officers of the Provincial forces became outspokenly critical of the Assembly’s war effort, and were drawn to the executive and proprietary view of Pennsylvania’s misfortunes. But that should not be interpreted as evidence of widespread popular sympathy for proprietary politicians.

When, in 1756 for example, the Proprietary Party set up Presbyterian Edward Shippen, Jr., and Anglican Charles Stedman as Assembly candidates in Lancaster, there was no indication of a significant defection from the Old Party. Next door in York County Assembly representation best illustrated the continuing political relationship between Quakers and Presbyterians. There throughout the 1750s and early 1760s, Quakers and Scotch-Irish Presbyterians shared between them the county’s Assembly seats. Many Scotch-Irish perceived their western Quaker neighbors as a very different kind of Quaker from those in the east.

For Pennsylvania Germans, like their Scotch-Irish counterparts, the major political concern of the 1750s and early 1760s was their government’s handling of the French and Indian War. And in the initial stages of that conflict they were none to happy with it. Approximately six weeks after the first Indian attacks had rolled up the frontier settle-

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49 Tully, “Quaker Party and Proprietary Policies.”
ments, a great crowd of Lancaster County Germans marched on Philadelphia. By displaying the bodies of some of their murdered countrymen before the State House, they tried to impress their plight on the Philadelphians. Assured that the Assembly would soon pass a tax bill to finance the province's defence and that the Proprietary would cooperate with a large gift in lieu of taxation, the so-called Hambright rioters returned home. 50 There, from time to time, they focused their attention on neighbors with close eastern connections. Both Quaker Party supporters and proprietary men drew the back-countrymen's ire. Edward Biddle of Reading reported how under the pressure of Indian attacks "the people exclaim[ed] against the Quakers and some [were] scarce restrained from burning the house of those few . . . in this town." 51 Just up the road towards Lancaster, Conrad Weiser spoke to a crowd of terrified settlers explaining that there would be no immediate bounty on Indian scalps and no regular provincial pay for those who wanted to enlist to protect their homes.

They began, some to curse the Governor; some the Assembly; called me a traitor of the country who held with the Indians. . . . [As] I sat in the house by a low window, some of my friends came to pull me away from it, telling me. . . I was in danger of being shot to death. 52

Electorally, the Germans reacted in a variety of ways. Prior to the French and Indian War, German support for the Quaker Party had held strong in all of Pennsylvania's counties despite proprietary efforts to wean them away by establishing charity schools for the education of poor German children and by pointing out that the Quaker Assembly had badly under-represented Germans in Berks and Northampton counties when the legislature created those counties in 1752. 53 In York and Lancaster, the Germans continued to stay with the Quaker Party

52 Conrad Weiser to Governor Morris, Nov. 19, 1755, Pennsylvania Archives (Harrisburg, 1874-1935, 9 ser. 119 vols.) 1st ser., II, 504-506, hereinafter cited as PA.
throughout the war years, supporting the agreed-upon tickets and accept-
ing the policies of the renewed Assembly Party. In Berks during the
critical years of 1756 and 1757, Germans elected Philadelphia mer-
chant and Anglican Thomas York to the Assembly. In so doing, they
gained a vocal advocate of defence and vented their anti-Quaker feel-
ings without abrogating political principles, for York was an Old Party
supporter. Clearly the Berks County Germans who in October, 1755,
overwhelmingly rejected candidate Jonas Seely for the office of sheriff
on the mere rumor that he was a “Governor’s man” had not changed
their minds about the Proprietary. Wartime was the worse possible
time to place one’s trust in those suspected of holding tyranny in their
hearts.

For Northampton County Germans, however, the issues were more
concrete. With their long and exposed northwestern frontier, county
residents felt they needed more money for defense; in raising questions
about the legality of the 1737 Walking Purchase, the Friendly As-
soociation Quakers threatened land titles in the area; locally, long-time
Quaker political allies, the Moravians, were discredited because of
their missionary work among the eastern Susquehanna Indians and
because wartime xenophobia identified the cloistered and liturgically
conscious Moravians as Roman Catholic agents. These circumstances
were enough to turn numerous Northampton voters towards the Pro-
prietary. In 1756 and 1757, enough Reformed, Lutheran, and un-
churched Germans joined some of their English and Scotch-Irish
neighbors to elect a well-known proprietary man, Philadelphian Wil-
liam Plumsted. The country’s choice was not as perspicacious as was
Cumberland County’s; Plumsted, whose confirmation was long delayed
because of charges of corrupt election practices, was never an effective
Assemblyman. Nonetheless, there remained in the county a broader
base of proprietary support than in any other of the heavily German
areas.

54 Conrad Weiser to Richard Peters, Oct 2, 1755, Correspondence of Conrad Weiser, Vol
I.
55 The Walking Purchase refers to a 1737 Proprietary purchase of Indian land which included
much of northern Northampton County. Some Delaware Indians maintained they had been
cheated in this transaction. See Wallace, Conrad Weiser, 95-101
56 Thayer, Pennsylvania Politics, 63-64.
Among the Scotch-Irish and Germans of the three eastern counties, little overt political change took place by the early 1760s. The number of Presbyterian critics of the Quaker Party had somewhat grown, particularly in Philadelphia, but their effect was negligible in a small urban political world already polarized between Quaker Party and Proprietary and executive supporters. In Chester County, where the majority of eastern Scotch-Irish resided, "Quakerized" Presbyterians formed one important foundation stone in the 1756 restructuring of the Old Party;\(^{57}\) that allegiance held firm throughout the war years. German support for the Quakers may have weakened marginally, but there is no indication of strong political disaffection.\(^{58}\) Whatever votes the Quakers lost among these groups was almost certainly made up by the increase in support from Anglicans. As Richard Peters grumbled, two-thirds of the Philadelphia Anglicans embraced the refurbished Quaker Party once it began to provide leadership for the war effort.\(^{59}\)

For the frontier counties, perhaps the most important long-range political result of the war was the muffled ill-feeling backcountry Scotch-Irish and Germans harbored towards both the Quaker and Proprietary Parties. Yet, while the frontiersmen believed they had suffered from eastern mismanagement of the war, nonetheless, the power and attractiveness of existing political organizations combined with the political inertia of the backcountrymen to prevent the appearance of new policial factions. In Cumberland County the Scotch-Irish appeared at the polls to support proprietary men despite the heightened distaste for proprietary land policies and political principles. In York, Lancaster, and Berks, Scotch-Irish and Germans turned out with unanimity for the October elections. By participating in the ritualized sanctioning of the Old Party ticket, they demonstrated their continuing belief that the Quaker Party was still the best alternative. Only in Northampton was there a slight indication of a shift in the loyalties of some German voters. Though disaffection appeared to be building, the formal lines of political power held secure.

\(^{57}\) Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Oct 2, 1756, PPOC, VIII
\(^{58}\) William Logan to John Smith, Dec. 1, 1756, Correspondence of John Smith, hereinafter cited as CJS.
\(^{59}\) Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Apr. 29, 1756, PPOC, VIII
Overall, the political legacy of the French and Indian War was a confusing one. Politically aware Pennsylvanians of all religious bodies looked at their provincial government's record more critically than in past years. Some, particularly those who were officers, magistrates, or supply contractors in the war, were more appreciative of the apparent need for greater executive authority. Others focused new hatred on the Proprietary for the increased vigor with which the Penn agents collected rents, precisely at the time when because of wartime suffering, countrymen were least able to pay, when provincial taxation was at its heaviest in Pennsylvania history, and when Thomas Penn was adamantly refusing to pay taxes and his vast Pennsylvania estates. Some, when they looked at the Quaker Party, associated Quakers with useful wartime measures—with the Quaker county officials who collected the provincial taxes or with the York and Lancaster County Quakers who went as far as they could to sanction the waging of war. Others took more notice of the very few Friends who refused to pay wartime levies, of the Friendly Association's enthusiastic defense of the Delaware Indians, or of the apparent collusion of Quaker Party politicians with the Friendly Association in acting as apologists for the Indians. While a few Pennsylvanians knew exactly where they stood on these issues, many floated from one position to another as fresh news washed over them. Despite such political fluidity, the allocation of legislative power between the Quaker and the Proprietary Parties changed little as a result of the French and Indian war.

Through the war and into the 1760s, the number and variety of ethnic and religious groups that comprised the colony's one truly popular political party was the most remarkable characteristic of Pennsylvania's political morphology. Under the Quaker banner were English and Welsh Quakers, Anglicans, and Baptists, along with Scotch-Irish of different denominations, as well as German Lutherans, Reformed, and a variety of German sectarians. Whatever ethno-religious antagonisms existed between German sects and German church-

60 Tully, "Quaker Party and Proprietary Policies"
61 *Ibid.*, Israel Pemberton to John Fothergill, Apr 6, 1758, Pemberton-Fothergill
62 John Churchman to Israel Pemberton, Dec 14, 1756, Pemberton Papers
63 Tully, "Quaker Party and Proprietary Policies"
folk, for example, or between English Quakers and many Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, such antagonisms rarely gained expression in electoral politics.

What allowed the Quaker Party to forge such a broad coalition were several factors that seemed to override ethno-religious considerations. With the exception of the defense issue during the French and Indian War, the Quaker Party had a virtual monopoly of popular political issues. Those issues including preserving and extending popular control over government, encouraging peaceful relationships with the Indians, assisting settlers in acquiring and protecting property rights, encouraging maritime trade, and facilitating the orderly development of local communities. These were goals Lutherans, Anglicans and Presbyterians as well as Quakers found easy to support.

The acceptance of their political rights and obligations as William Penn's heirs further encouraged political unity among Friends. Part of this birthright was the power of political influence; one of their duties was to continue to guide the "Holy Experiment" along the course that Penn had charted. Different interpretations of what that course should be appeared most notably at mid-century, when a well-known group of reformers set themselves against the Quakers in government. But the vast majority of Friends continued to believe that political participation was essential for the survival of a peaceful, prosperous, and liberty-conscious Pennsylvania.  

Non-Quakers' views differed only slightly. What the Quakers believed Penn to represent and how the early days of the "Holy Experiment" were remembered were less important to Scotch-Irish and German than what they currently perceived Pennsylvania to be. For the newcomers, the Penn colony represented freedom from the uncertainties of arbitrary political and religious power and the opportunity to participate in a prosperous provincial economy "to make an inheritance for . . . [their] children." These positive images of Pennsylvania were closely associated with the Quakers. Friends had created the colony with these benefits; surely Quakers had a right to continue running it—

64 Bauman, For the Reputation of Truth

65 Address of the Settlers in Springtown Manor to Governor Thomas, April 1744, Society Misc Collection. For an appreciative description of the advantages of life in Pennsylvania see Alexander Thomson to _______, Aug 16, 1773, printed in PMHB 8(1884), 315-327
the benefit of all. The present condition of Pennsylvania was clear evidence of the fitness of Quakers to continue their custodial role in government. Proven in the battles against religious tyranny and again in political skirmishes of provincial affairs, none were more suitably prepared for the contest against proprietary power. 66

Under the umbrella of the Quaker Party for thirty years, then, a great variety of ethno-religious groups clustered. Voting statistics from various Pennsylvania counties demonstrate that Scotch-Irish and Germans participated in politics alongside the English with equal fervor. 67 If the English and Welsh filled most political leadership roles, there were enough Scotch-Irish and Germans included in county politics to encourage political integration among all the major cultural groups during this period. Given the willingness of the English to enlist Scotch-Irish and German support and given the willingness of the Scotch-Irish and Germans to embrace Anglicization in the form of political participation, accommodation was inevitable. 68 The continuing political and social cooperation that appeared among ethnic groups in Lancaster, Berks, and at some social levels in Philadelphia demonstrated that participants came to accept and value the contributions of those who were culturally different, within a common social and political life. Ethnic and religious antagonisms notwithstanding, such integration followed naturally from the determination of English, Scotch-Irish, and German Pennsylvanians to take whatever political action they felt necessary to protect their essential interests.

The mid-1760s have often been identified as years that brought about important changes in Pennsylvania politics. The source of these changes was conflict among provincial residents over a number of important issues. In the summer and fall of 1763, Indian raiding parties devastated the western and northern Pennsylvania frontiers. With the treasury depleted after the long, expensive French and Indian War and only able to secure Governor Hamilton's signature on a type of money

bill other Assemblies had refused to pass, the current Assembly met the bloodshed of Pontiac’s Rebellion with token appropriations for defense. These were totally ineffective and by November “the country people” were becoming deeply “embittered.”

One notorious result of the bitterness occurred in the December killings at Lancaster of the Christian Conestoga Indians whom the frontiersmen apparently believed were Pontiac’s spies. Angered by the issuance of warrants for the murderers’ arrests, the posting of reward money, the attempt by some Quaker Assemblymen to remove any consequent trials from Lancaster to Philadelphia, and the continued housing of Northampton County’s Moravian Indians in Philadelphia when no neighbouring government would accept them, a mob of frontiersmen, the Paxton Boys, marched on the capital city, arriving at Germantown on February 5, 1764. Negotiations between representatives of the Pennsylvania government and the protestors did not last long. By February 8, the bulk of the rioters left for home. Two of their leaders remained to frame their demands, the most important of which was a reapportionment of the Assembly to insure that in future Indian wars provincial policy would more clearly reflect the interests of frontier inhabitants. In addition, the leaders responded on behalf of their fellow “Presbyterians...[who were] engaged at their being charged in the bulk of these facts [the Conestog killings] under the name Scotch-Irish and other alternative[s], and that the killing of the Conestoga Indians [was being]. . . compared to the Irish massacres and reckoned the most barbarous of either. . . .” Their broadside against the Quakers began a bitter polemical battle between spokesmen for Presbyterians and Quakers that had no counterpart in Pennsylvania history.


70 Hutson, Pennsylvania Politics, 84-95, Edward Shippen Sr to James Burd, Jan 25, 1764, SP.

71 John Elder to Colonel Shippen, Feb. 1, 1764, Elder Papers, Dauphin County Historical Society.

On February 1, before the Paxton Boys had actually marched and partly in response to the threat of that event, partly in answer to British demands for a Pennsylvania contribution to the Indian War, the Assemblymen angrily framed a £50,000 money bill. Out of frustration, they finally included in that bill what previous Assemblies had always avoided, a clause that proprietary quitrents should be paid in sterling rather than at the face value of Pennsylvania currency. After the Paxton Boys had drifted back home, the Quaker Party found that Governor John Penn was making an additional demand beyond those which his predecessor Hamilton had imposed. That was a construction of the bill's language which would markedly undervalue proprietary property and thus sizeably reduce Thomas Penn's contribution to the defense of the province. Still reeling from this revelation, the Quaker Party heard the echoes of new rumors from the interior—that the Paxton Boys would again march on Philadelphia if the war effort was not more expeditiously pursued.  

Clearly the Quaker Party was caught. Willing to believe that proprietary leaders had conspired with the frontier Scotch-Irish to prostrate them, the Assemblymen grasped the one policy they had always kept in reserve—a petition to the King to expropriate the Penn Proprietary and replace it with royal government. Once the Quaker Party reached that decision, as it did on March 24, reaffirming it on May 26, public opinion in the colony began to polarize. Voters would decide in the 1764 election upon vindication or repudiation of the Quakers.

The Quaker Party's decision to petition for royal government culminated ten years of skirmishes between the Assembly Party and the Penn family over proprietary instructions and the power to tax proprietary lands. While Proprietary Party adherents were not always strong in Thomas Penn's cause, on the issue of royal government the Quaker Party petition galvanized them into action. For the first time since the early 1740s, they had at hand a truly popular issue—opposition to royal government and protection of Pennsylvania's long-hallowed Charter of Rights and Privileges. In the summer of 1764, a group of proprietary supporters—led by Samuel Purviance, Jr., William Allen, William Smith, and John Dickinson—worked as they

had never done before, coordinating candidates' slates for the different counties and straining to mobilize the electorate. When the votes had been counted the Quaker Party was still in command, but it was a chastened Quaker Party, without leaders Benjamin Franklin or Joseph Galloway and four of their Philadelphia friends, all of whom had met defeat in Philadelphia City and County. Only by talking down the issue of a change of government was the Quaker Party able to regroup its forces in 1765 and quietly pursue its goal.\footnote{Newcomb, \textit{Franklin and Galloway}, 79-106, 115-125, 137-145, 149-151, 155-158
William Allen to Thomas Penn, Sept 25, 1764, PPOC, IX
William Allen to Thomas Penn, Oct 21, 1764, PPOC, IX
Muhlenberg, \textit{Journals}, II, 123
William Logan to John Smith, Oct 22, 1764, CJS Hutson, \textit{Pennsylvania Politics}, 129-130}

What do we know of ethnic group politics during these crises? Let us look first at Philadelphia, where we have two contemporary accounts of the 1764 election. The first is William Allen's. After stating the obvious that most Quakers would support the Quaker Party, Allen went on to describe the Proprietary Party's support as "composed chiefly of Presbyterians, one-half the Church of England, and most of the other societies, particularly the Lutherans and Calvinist Germans."\footnote{William Allen to Thomas Penn, Sept 25, 1764, PPOC, IX} After the election he confirmed his earlier description, adding only that the German sects had followed the Quakers, while the Presbyterians "to a man" voted for the proprietary side.\footnote{William Allen to Thomas Penn, Oct 21, 1764, PPOC, IX} The second description is that of Lutheran church leader Henry Muhlenburg. "The English and German Quakers, the Herrenhutters, the Mennonites and Schwenkfelders formed one party, and the English of the High Church and the Presbyterian Church, the German Lutheran and German Reformed joined the other party and gained the upper hand—a thing heretofore unheard of."\footnote{Muhlenberg, \textit{Journals}, II, 123}

Although Muhlenburg emphasized the novelty of the election results, it is clear that the political split among the English, Anglo-Irish, and Welsh had changed only in degree in 1764, not in kind. However much Quakers disagreed privately about the wisdom of the petition for royal government (and there is evidence of strong dissension between Philadelphia City and County residents),\footnote{William Logan to John Smith, Oct 22, 1764, CJS Hutson, \textit{Pennsylvania Politics}, 129-130} most closed ranks during the election. A small minority of sober Quakers, those who saw them-
selves as the conscience of the Society of Friends, boycotted the ballot box as some had done since 1756.80 And it is doubtful that the sprinkling of Quakers who had remained friends of the Proprietary over the years chose this moment to defect.

Among members of the Church of England, there was little change as well. During the second quarter of the eighteenth century, Anglicans were split in unknown proportions between Quaker and Proprietary Parties. In 1756 Richard Peters estimated that two-thirds of Philadelphia City’s Anglicans supported the restructured Quaker Party. Given the events of the intervening years, it is probable that they were divided almost equally in 1764, possibly as Muhlenburg suggested, with those tending toward high church principles clustering about the proprietary camp.81

The Presbyterians offer a more difficult case. In the 1740s and 1750s, the city’s Scotch-Irish had divided between the Quaker and Proprietary Parties, not simply because of the Old-New Light antagonism, but because of what Quaker and Proprietary Parties represented. But even after the differences between Quakers and Presbyterians over wartime preparations became issues for public debate and after the French and Indian war generated extreme pressure against Quaker pacifism, what Richard Peters called “Quakerized” Presbyterians were part of the coalition that restructured and revitalized the Quaker Party.82

The confrontation between the Scotch-Irish Paxton Boys and the Quaker Assembly and the ensuing pamphlet war in which Quaker Party partisans and Presbyterians blackened each other with vituperation is the one classic example of politically focused, religious specific, ethnic-group antagonism that we have in colonial Pennsylvania. The central difference concerned frontier defense, but as tempers heated up, spokesmen for each group appealed to the ethno-religious consciousness of Quakers and Presbyterians. These appeals stressed traditions that set Quakers and Presbyterians apart, the historic battles they had fought,

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80 Israel Pembertonto David Barclay, Sr., Nov. 6, 1764, Pemberton Papers.
81 Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Apr. 29 and June 1, 1756, PPOC, VIII.
82 Isaac Norris to Robert Charles, Aug. 29, 1755, INLB; Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, June 1 and Aug. 29, 1756, PPOC, VIII.
and the ache of old wounds. Fired by renewed antipathy to the Quakers and distrustful of royal government, the Presbyterians found it easy to support the proprietary championing of the Old Charter "to a man."

Or did they? As befit their stations, Allen and Muhlenburg took their cues from the influential and highly visible. The fact that a sizeable but indeterminate number of lower class Philadelphia Presbyterians stayed with the Quaker Party illustrates that the concept of ethno-religious antagonism as a primary basis for political allegiance had serious limitations in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania political culture. Even in a highly polarized and easily informed urban society, many Presbyterians were not the religiously motivated political partisans that the pamphlet literature suggests. Yes, they sympathized with their frontier co-religionists, but city men's lives were not on the line; and no, they would not abandon the broadly based Quaker Party with its traditions and its policy in order to bell Thomas Penn. From the Presbyterian perspective, the Quakers were still the best choice.

The Germans, however, were of a different mind. The disenchantment of German churchfold with the Quaker Party had grown unevenly from place to place in the backcountry areas during the French and Indian War. Philadelphia Germans had sympathized with the plight of their frontier counterparts. That sympathy grew during the grim summer and fall of 1763. By that date in the Lancaster County townships of Paxton, Hanover, and Lebanon, there lived many Germans who shared the "prejudices of their Scotch-Irish neighbors. Among the frontiersmen who slew the Conestoga Indians were Germans as well as Scotch-Irish. When the "Hickory Boys," as the Paxton Boys designated themselves, gathered for their march on Philadelphia

83 Dunbar, Paxton Papers. Most of the pamphlets attacking the Presbyterians were issued pseudonymously. But none of those identified as authors was a member of the Society of Friends. The literature was produced for the benefit of the Quaker Party.

84 William Allen to Thomas Penn, Oct. 21, 1764, PPOC, IX

85 Samuel Wharton to William Franklin Sept 29, 1763, in Hutson Pennsylvania Politics, 171, see also ibid., 195-196, 198, 230-236, Samuel Purviance, Jr., to James Burd, Sept 20, 1765. SP. Despite all of the attention paid to Proprietary Party gains, it is clear that the Quaker Party retained a broad sweep of support. Franklin Papers, XI, 394.
in January and early February, approximately one-half were German.\textsuperscript{86} Why most of these dropped out on the way east from Lancaster is unclear; Reverend John Elder's remarks on the charges against the rioters in February, 1764, suggests that the cause had already become a Scotch-Irish/Presbyterian one\textsuperscript{87}—and that may have made a difference to the participants. In any event, there were still enough Germans among the Paxton Boys when they reached Philadelphia to call for a German-speaking negotiator to work with the spokesmen for the provincial government.\textsuperscript{88} As Muhlenberg reported it, the Philadelphia Germans sympathized with the frontiersmen—German and Scotch-Irish. They would not "wage war against their own suffering fellow-citizens for the sake of the Quakers and Herrenhutters and their creatures or instruments the double-dealing Indians."\textsuperscript{89}

The most important cause for German church and Quaker disagreement, however, had yet to come. Henry Muhlenburg's diary reports a post-election meeting with Quaker Party stalwart John Hughes and recent Party convert Henry Pawling. Hughes put the question directly: "Why. . . were the German Lutherans so active at the last election. . . to elect. . . [Assembly] members who [were] fighting for the old regime of the Proprietors?" Muhlenburg's answer was simple—the Quaker Party had petitioned for royal government. For decades the Quakers had trumpeted the virtues of the Charter of Privileges and guarded it with care. Germans had agreed with them. The Charter guaranteed their rights, not the political leadership of any one sect or political group. Thus, it was the Quakers who had become the apostates; the Germans were simply upholding the old faith.\textsuperscript{90}

By the end of May, 1764, then, the Quaker Party had taken the turn that the German churchfolk would not follow. They stayed their own course with encouragement from such German spokesmen as Christo-

\textsuperscript{86} William Logan to John Smith, Jan 21, 1764, CJS, Muhlenberg, \textit{Journals}, II, 19, Thayer, \textit{Pennsylvania Politics}, 86-87, George W Franz, "Paxton A Study of Community Structure and Mobility in the Colonial Pennsylvania Backcountry," (Rutgers University, Ph D diss, 1974), 271-273 For a general statement about easterners' sympathy for the Paxton Boys see William Logan to John Smith, Jan 28, 1764, CJS

\textsuperscript{87} See note 83

\textsuperscript{88} Hutson, \textit{Pennsylvania Politics}, 94

\textsuperscript{89} Muhlenberg, \textit{Journals}, II, 21-23

\textsuperscript{90} \textit{Ibid.}, II, 190-191
pher Saur, Jr. Having taken over his father’s Germantown business upon his death in 1758, the younger Saur continued his father’s message—to encourage Germans to act in political support of those who would best protect their Pennsylvania freedoms. Until 1764 that group had been Quakers, but Quakers no longer held that place. Nor was Saur above the kind of character assassination that inspired the Quaker-Presbyterian pamphlet war. When some enterprising proprietary politician supplied him with Franklin’s 1750 treatise, Observations on the Increase of Mankind, which described the Pennsylvania Germans as “Palatine Boors herding together,” Saur put it in print. Franklin singled this out as the major reason for this defeat. Although it is unclear how many fellow sectarians followed Saur’s advice and turned against the Quaker Party (not many, if we are to believe Allen and Muhlenburg), his encouragement was probably the single most important reason why so many church Germans felt that they could change their votes. What appeared to be breaking with tradition from one point of view was merely affirming it from another.\(^91\)

While Saur provided verbal encouragement, the proprietary politicians provided a more visible kind. The Proprietary Party, including two German churchmen, Henry Keppel and Frederick Antis, on the Philadelphia County ticket, distributed money to pay the naturalization fee of prospective German voters and promised that more German-speaking justices of the peace would be appointed and that German churches would be granted incorporation. When election day arrived, the seven or eight hundred German votes assembled in Germantown made the difference.\(^92\) As Franklin put it, explaining his defeat one week after the fact, “they [the Proprietary Party men] carried (would you think it!) about one thousand Dutch from me.”\(^93\)

The divisions that occurred among voters in eastern Pennsylvania in 1764 lasted through the next election, when the Quaker Party only narrowly regained the seats it had lost in Philadelphia City and County.

\(^91\) Newcomb, Franklin and Galloway, 94-97
\(^93\) Benjamin Franklin to Richard Jackson, Oct. 11, 1764, Franklin Papers, XI, 397
By the election of 1766, the bulk of German churchfolk had returned to the Quaker fold and gave that party significant support throughout the late colonial years. Until the Revolution, the Old Party controlled the assembly through its virtual monopoly of legislative seats in the three eastern counties.

The elections of 1764-1765 demonstrated that the Quaker Party had the stamina to withstand significant challenge. When groups of "Germans, Baptists, and Presbyterians" put together slates of candidates as alternates to the Quaker Party ticket in Bucks and Chester counties for the 1754 and 1765 elections, the largely Quaker electorate would not vote for them, even though most county Quakers overwhelmingly opposed their representatives' decision to petition for royal government. Since the 1730s, politically active Quakers in the old counties had committed themselves above all else to the retention of legislative power in colonial Pennsylvania by the Quaker Party. In order to achieve this end, they counselled unity whenever non-Quakers challenged them electorally. Once the battle had been won, they reasoned, then their representative could sit in camera, reconsider the issue, take the sense of their constituents, and decide what was politically feasible.

But election results do not tell the complete story. While the solid block of passive support shored up the Quaker Party's political dominance through the mid 1770s, the dissent and factionalism of Philadelphia City politics swirled and eddied about the foundation with increasing turbulence. Some English Anglicans, who had always been pro-Proprietary and anti-Quaker, continued their shrill criticism of the Old Party. Others, more sensitive to the changing tenor of Quaker Party politics, joined hands with fellow Anglicans who had long worked with the Quakers. Of the non-English groups, the Scotch-Irish were the most dynamic, if the most factionalized, of all those in Philadelphia. Some Presbyterians who were proprietary placemen tried to continue in their provincial roles yet voice criticism of British imperial policy. Others thought they should join with the Quakers in opposition to British policy and High Church hopes for an American

94 For a different view see Hutson, Pennsylvania Politics, 213
95 Samual Purviance, Jr., to James Burd, Sept 20, 1765, SP, Israel Pemberton to David Barclay, Sr., Nov. 6, 1764, Pemberton Papers.
episcopate. Still others, antagonistic to Quakers, Proprietary, Anglicans, and British policy, became an important element in the so-called Presbyterian or Whig Party, which took a leading role in the pre-Revolutionary politics of protest. As for the Germans, they were divided as never before. While the sectarians stayed with the Quakers, a few German Lutherans and Reformed stayed close to their proprietary allies of 1764-1765. Most, however, drifted back to the Quaker Party, either to stay through the mid 70's or for a brief rest on their way to support the Whig Party after 1770.96

Philadelphia, of course, was only one small part of Pennsylvania society, but there are indications that the city experience was not unique. In the Quaker stronghold of Chester and Bucks Counties, a small number of Baptists, German churchfolk and Presbyterians challenged the "old ticket" in the 1764 and 1765 elections.97 As one might expect, the runaways were soon encircled and defeated.

Outside of the old counties, the revolt against the Quaker Party was more serious in its implications. In Berks, for example, large numbers of German Churchmen followed the lead of their Philadelphia counterparts and chose a local Lutheran, Adam Witman, to oppose the mad scheme for royal government.98 In Northampton, the German churchfolk and their Presbyterian friends had learned their lesson during the French and Indian War. This time they did not turn to a Philadelphia partisan; rather they elected George Taylor, a man whose independence did not preclude his working with the Proprietary Party.99

Lancaster County, however, best illustrates the turn provincial politics were taking. There, prior to 1764, Quaker Party adherents had largely controlled popular politics. Electoral competition took place among those who considered themselves within that alliance. Twice that we know of, in 1756 and 1761, men who were closely tied to the proprietary interest unsuccessfully challenged one or two of the Quaker

96 Hutson, Pennsylvania Politics, 203-243
97 Samuel Purviance, Jr., to James Burd, Sept 20, 1765, SP
98 Although there was some suggestion that Witman's predecessor, John Ross, had raised the ire of his constituents by his acquiescence to the 1764 tax bill. John Penn to Thomas Penn, Oct. 19, 1764, PPOC, IX.
99 Mildred Rowe Trexler "George Taylor, Esquire," Lehigh County Historical Society, Proceedings, 27(1968), 5-63
slates of candidates. In 1764 the situation changed. Responding to encouragement from Proprietary Party leaders in Philadelphia, a federation of Lancaster men determined to organize as they had never done before. The ensuing battle was referred to as a contest between the “New Side” and the “Old Side.” The party names are important because they accurately describe what happened—a new organization challenged the old. Equally important, the competition did not end in 1764-1765, but continued through the mid-1770s.\footnote{John Harris to James Burd, Sept. 29, 1756, SP, Edward Shippen, Sr. to William Allen, Sept. 15, 1761, Edward Shippen Letterbooks, American Philosophical Society. For a different construction of the evidence on Lancaster, see Wayne L. Bockelman, “Local Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Lancaster County,” \textit{PMHB}, 97(1973), 45-74.}

In their initial foray against the Quaker party in 1764, the New Side concentrated on the election for assemblymen rather than on the contests for other county offices. Determined to elect Isaac Saunders, one of the few representatives who had taken a strong stand against the petition for royal government, New Side tacticians drew up a four-man ticket coupling Saunders with moderate Quaker Party man Emmanuel Carpenter and offered to include two non-Quakers whom the Quaker Party might nominate. When the Old Side refused to cooperate and announced an initial selection of Saunders (despite his very vocal opposition to royal government), Carpenter and Quakers James Wright and James Webb, the Proprietary group came up with two men (probably one Scotch-Irish and one German) to run with Saunders and Carpenter against Wright and Webb. But the Quaker Party countered immediately before the election—by dropping Saunders at the last minute and replacing him with Anglican George Ross who at that time had a good deal of popularity among the New and Old Side followers.\footnote{Samuel Purviance, Jr., to James Burd, Sept. 10, 1764, James Burd to Samuel Purviance, Jr., Sept. 17, 1764, SP.}

The New Side had to move quickly to save Saunders. Because the New Side had not nominated its own candidates for sheriff, county commissioner, and assessor in this election, it was able to offer a plan for reciprocal support to one set of candidates for sheriff. German churchmen John Barr and Matthias Slough agreed to this maneuver. Although both Barr and Slough had been regular Quaker Party supporters for some time and although in the heat of the battle they “acted a political [i.e., partisan] part in the election, that they might succeed
themselves, . . . they privately pushed Saunders in the tickets of many of their friends, by which means alone he [Saunders] was kept in." The New Side had at least achieved its initial, limited goal.  

In many respects, the Lancaster election was very different from the one in Philadelphia. In Philadelphia there was no mobilization of church Germans against the Old Side, and there was no great charge of Presbyterians against the Quaker-tinged Old Side. The one discernable connection between the issues as Philadelphians construed them was the division over Isaac Saunders. More importantly, the inclusion of Old Sider Emmanual Carpenter in the New Side ticket suggests that many backcountry Assemblymen continued to take a very ambivalent position on the change of government petition. That allowed continued support of the Quaker Party to override the widespread grassroots disapproval of the change of government petition. And as for the issue of Quaker concern for Indians and unconcern for backcountry farmers that the Paxton Boys had dramatized, did the majority of Lancaster residents blame that on their own James Wright? Of course not. They focused what anger they felt on the eastern Quakers and re-elected Friend Wright to his assembly seat, even though it was public knowledge that he had been involved in protecting the Conestoga Indians. Issues were not seen in quite the same way as the Philadelphia partisans and polemicists interpreted them.  

The battle between Old Side and New Side as part of the colony-wide contest over the Assembly lasted only two more years. After the Old Side succeeded in dumping Isaac Saunders in 1765, and beating back his effort to return in 1766, the two groups began to cooperate more closely in the composition of Assembly tickets. In 1768, for example, when James Wright voluntarily retired, both groups agreed to back churchman George Ross for the vacant seat. The focus of their competition, then, began to shift elsewhere. Through the late 1760s and 1770s, the real battles occurred over the offices of county commissioners, assessors, and sheriffs. The major goal was the power, patronage and prestige that went with control of the board of county commissioners. In these contests, the New Side won its share of vic-

102 Joseph Shippen, Jr., to James Burd, Oct. 6, 1764, SP.  
103 Penn Manuscripts, Autograph Petitions, 66, Votes, VII, 5690, 5691, 5791, Susanna Wright to Isaac Whitelock, Jan. 16, 1764, Parrish Collection, Pemberton Papers.
tories (in fact, the two contenders seemed well-matched), but the nature of the contests are as important as the outcome.\(^{104}\)

As both sides discovered, there were two principle considerations in Lancaster politics. Aside from the obvious necessity of selecting reputable men as candidates, one of the most important considerations in putting together a successful county ticket was geography. The Old Side’s most committed following lived in what was referred to as the “the lower parts” to the south, southeast, and east of Lancaster Borough; the New Side was strong to the north of Lancaster and the upper parts of the county to the northwest. Both sides had difficulty framing tickets that gave due representation to their strength yet included the rest of the county. The New Side, for example, had problems overcoming their affinity for areas north of Lancaster.\(^{105}\) In 1769, a series of vocal protests from the “upper parts” of the county against this bias forced a broadening of their ticket and demonstrated, as Lancaster lawyer Jasper Yates reported with some satisfaction, that they had shown that they were “of some consequence, and not to be pissed on.”\(^{106}\) Again in 1773, the New Side tried to favor the Lebanon area by replacing Assemblyman Isaac Whitelock with Curtis Grubb. That move destroyed their ticket. The most successful campaigns occurred, as both sides began to realize, when tickets were framed with the advice of men from every township in the county. That produced consensus or the “broad bottom” as contemporaries called it and insured that voters from all areas would show up in support on election day.\(^{107}\)

The second major consideration in Lancaster politics was religion and ethnicity. The multitude of religious and ethnic groups in the county demanded careful balancing of interests. Such balance was very difficult to achieve because there were important social divisions among the major ethno-religious groups. In the 1760s New Light preachers John Roan and John Woodhull came to the county to exacerbate and

\(^{104}\) *Votes*, VII, 5789, Election Returns, Papers of Benjamin Franklin, Vol. 69, p 196, American Philosophical Society, Samuel Purviance, Jr, to James Burd, Sept 20, 1765, Jasper Yeates to James Burd, Sept. 8, 1768, Edward Shippen to James Burd, Sept 16, 1768, William Atlee to James Burd, Sept. 26, 1768, SP.

\(^{105}\) Jasper Yeates to James Burd, Sept. 17 and Sept. 19, 1769, SP

\(^{106}\) Jasper Yeates to James Burd, Sept. 19, 1769, SP.

\(^{107}\) Jasper Yeates to James Burd, Sept. 17, 1769 and Oct. 3, 1773, James Burd to Samuel Purviance, Jr., Sept. 17, 1764 SP.
formalize, through the splitting of congregations, awakening-inspired divisions. Church Germans were subject to their own internal disputes. Such differences could gain political expression but there was never any regular, clearly observable carryover into political affairs. Relationships between the different ethno-religious groups were equally confusing. Despite conflict with Presbyterians that went back to the French and Indian war, Old Side partisan and Church of England clergyman Thomas Barton, for example, wrote a pamphlet defending the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians during the Paxton Boys uproar. As for the New Side, which historians often tie closely to the Scotch-Irish, the evidence tells a different tale. After the first New Side election meeting of 1769, Jasper Yates pointed out that “the current objections against the ticket are, that no leading men among the Presbyterians are introduced therein, which might be a lure to others of the same persuasion to join the party.”

At the heart of the competition between the two Lancaster political groups were the party managers. In each case, the most influential men were Germans; on the Old Side, they were Mennonite Christian Hare and churchman Emmanuel Carpenter; on the New, German churchmen Peter Baughman and Martin Myer. None of the four apparently aspired to office; they were the back-room boys who excelled at horse-trading and conciliating. Each partnership tried to put together a coalition with appeal to a large enough variety of Lancaster voters to win the day. The Old Side, perhaps, had a slight advantage because it continued to carry the old Quaker Party alliance of a few Quakers and numerous German Mennonites. But that certainly did not mean that it could neglect those elements of their constituency or ignore others. The New Side—Old Side contests proved again and again that the electorate was fluid and did not like to be “dictate[d] to.”

111 Jasper Yeates to James Burd, Sept. 17, 1769, SP.
112 On the parties and their managers see the correspondence cited in notes 101–102, 104–107.
113 Samuel Purviance, Jr., to James Burd, Sept. 20, 1765, SP.
114 Jasper Yeates to James Burd, Sept. 17, 1769, SP.
religious balancing, geographic considerations, qualities of the candidates, the fairness of party managers to both incumbents and candidates, and the issues—however, these were interpreted—all influenced the Lancastrian electorate. The parties and party managers had to earn their way.

The mid-1760s brought important structural changes to Pennsylvania politics. Foremost among these was the weakening of ties between the Quaker Party and its former supporters. Having questioned the political wisdom of the Old Party's leadership and then broken openly with the Party establishment, voters could not easily drift back into the old trusting relationship. This was especially true because the Quaker Party seemed incapable of effectively addressing the increasingly important issues of imperial politics.\footnote{Richard A. Ryerson, \textit{The Revolution Has Now Begun. The Radical Committees of Philadelphia, 1765-1776.} (Philadelphia, 1978), 7-38}

The Proprietary Party failed, however, to provide a continuing alternative for members of the electorate. Of the two issues of defense and royal government that brought the proprietary men into the electoral field, the former was dead even before the 1764 election and the latter no longer threatened once the British had demonstrated their initial hostile reaction to the Quaker Party's request in November, 1765. Although opposition to the Stamp Act (a piece of legislation which the Quaker Party had refused to protest) might have served as a substitute issue, most proprietary men were incapable of spouting popular whig rhetoric even in the broad context of imperial affairs. Organizationally, the Proprietary Party was equally sterile, providing nothing in the way of a permanent inter-county network comparable to that of the Quakers. After giving momentary leadership, the Proprietary Party leaders simply retired from the electoral scene. As a result, various blocks of disaffected voters were left without direction.\footnote{Hutson, \textit{Pennsylvania Politics}, 207-243}

Alienation of the electorate from the established parties was most obvious outside the three old counties. In the backcountry areas changes and obvious tensions in the ethno-religious divisions of politics clearly pointed it out. In Lancaster, German politicians rather than Englishmen emerged as the most influential power brokers in the two new parties. In Northampton, Germans pushed for Assemblymen, (wheth-
er they be German, Scotch-Irish or English) who were more county men than party men. In York, where a small number of Quakers had long exercised great influence with the Scotch-Irish, roles came to be reversed. York Quakers quickly turned their backs on eastern Friends after the 1764 election in order to preserve accord with their Scotch-Irish neighbors.\textsuperscript{117} Out in Cumberland, where the Scotch-Irish had always been forward and were without Quaker tutelage, there came fresh evidence of discontent—not with the Quaker Party but with the Proprietary. The politics of Justice William Allen took him far enough away from his constituents' interests that his election was no longer a forgone conclusion.\textsuperscript{118}

The shrinking of Quaker and Proprietary Party influence among the various country electorates during the 1760s and early 1770s resulted in a leadership vacuum in provincial affairs and produced a sense of loss among the body politic—a loss of meaningful connections to larger, provincially significant issues. When the counterweights of provincial orientation weakened, local groups were left increasingly with the politics of their locale; that in turn meant a more factionalized brand of county politics than Pennsylvania had known for decades.

As provincial politics were focused closer to home, as Presbyterians and Germans began to venture into the larger roles in country politics, and as the heat of Quaker, Presbyterian, and Church arguments in Philadelphia endured long enough to be noticed at large, the political climate began to favor a greater expression of ethno-religious antagonism in politics than had hitherto been the case. In October, 1764, James Pemberton ran for a Philadelphia City Assembly seat to keep an "envious Presbyterian out."\textsuperscript{119} The same year in Lancaster, the election of German John Barr as sheriff produced protest:

The Irish Presbyterians being disappointed in not having one of themselves elected to that office, refused to serve on either Grand or Petty Juries, tho' regularly summoned by the sheriff, because he was a Dutchman. So that there was a failure of justice last term in that county. The

\textsuperscript{117} Votes, VII, 5683-5684, 5687, 5791
\textsuperscript{118} Thomas Wharton To Benjamin Franklin, Sept. 21, 1767, Franklin Papers, XIV, 257, Gail S. Rowe, "The Frederick Stump Affair, 1768 and Its challenge to Legal Historians of Early Pennsylvania," \textit{PH 49} (1982), 259-288
\textsuperscript{119} James Pemberton to John Fothergill, Dec. 18, 1765, Pemberton-Fothergill.
sheriff, in endeavouring to serve a process on one of those people, was violently assaulted, had both ears of this horse cut off, and was obliged to fly to save his life.\textsuperscript{120}

Yet the increased frequency of such incidents was only a slight change, for as the knowledgeable Conrad Weiser remarked while looking back from 1756 over his own experiences, "there is always some national jealousy among the meaner sort of people."\textsuperscript{121} As James Pemberton's feelings toward the Presbyterians made clear, Weiser was wrong: the "better sort," too, dabbled in prejudice.

One must be careful not to overstate the significance of the higher political profile of Germans and Scotch-Irish in provincial politics. In Lancaster, York, Berks, and Northampton, the Quaker Party's long-standing policies of political integration inevitably led in that direction. Politicized under the Old Party, having participated meaningfully in pre-election strategy for decades, and well acquainted with the complex political business of sharing out nominations for county commissioners, assessors, sheriff and coroner, Germans and Scotch-Irish had sufficient self-confidence to venture into larger leadership roles in the late 1760s and early 1770s. Dissatisfaction with the old parties meant self-assertion and a higher political profile for the politically active.

Once the heavily contested elections of 1764 and 1765 passed and the more factionalized features of county politics began to appear, there was no indication that proportionately higher numbers of non-English ethnic communities were being mobilized. When German and Scotch-Irish came to play larger leadership roles, there was certainly a higher consciousness of the need to balance ethnic and religious representation among candidates for office. But that was only one consideration which had to be weighed along with such others as geography, issues, candidate qualification, and attitudes to the Quaker and Proprietary Parties. Nowhere was there any sign of a general political realignment of ethno-religious groups. No set of positive associations or negative antipathies galvanized Presbyterians in one county to join together in political comity or brought German Lutherans to reach out to their religious fellows in a neighboring county to make common po-

\textsuperscript{120} Joseph Galloway to Benjamin Franklin, Nov. 23, 1764, \textit{Franklin Papers}, XI, 467-468.
\textsuperscript{121} Conrad Weiser to James Burd, June 7, 1756, SP.
political cause on the provincial level. That development lay somewhere in the future.

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Ethno-religious divisions were important determinants of popular politics in the eighteenth century as well as the nineteenth. Wherever there were large religious and ethnic differences in American society and wherever politics was inclusive enough to give weight to members of different ethno-religious communities, parties or factions had to reflect the different makeup of those communities and deal with tensions that existed among them. In colonial Pennsylvania, varied and extensive early immigration, a much heralded policy of toleration, and relatively low property requirements for enfranchisement meant easy political acceptance for a large number of ethno-religious groups. In this constantly changing, heterogeneous provincial society the different communities themselves quickly became fundamental units for the organizing of electoral competition and for ensuring effective representation.

While it is important to acknowledge the salience of ethno-religious factors throughout American history, these factors operated differently in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A most conspicuous difference was the failure of Pennsylvania party divisions to follow closely and deepen along the major fault lines nineteenth-century historians have identified and stressed. One of these, of course, was the division between the English and their traditional outgroup antagonists. In Pennsylvania that conflict was represented largely by the Quakers of the Quaker Party and the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. Certainly, the Quakers acted in culturally chauvinistic fashion in the fifty years before Independence; their self-promotion for public office was obvious, es-

122 The differences between eighteenth and nineteenth century ethno-religious politics are tied to differences in social organization and political culture, including such considerations as the scope of political participation, the nature of ideologies, the character of deferential behavior, and the relationship between secularization and religiosity. The exploration of these is a subject for another paper.
especially in the 1764 election when Quakers in the old counties voted for Friends with whom they disagreed rather than for non-Quakers who shared their antipathy to the petition for royal government; their desire to impose pacifistic limitations on the province's war-making abilities came as close to religious tyranny as Pennsylvania Quakers could come. Chief among the Quakers' opponents were the Scotch-Irish, who provided a share of the Proprietary Party leadership in 1764 and whose belief in the right of self-defense and the justness of defensive wars led to confrontation over Indian policy and sectional needs.

The noisy public battles that some Quakers and Presbyterians occasionally fought has tended to obscure other aspects of their relationships. Presbyterians were prominent among those who quietly accepted Quaker primacy in political affairs, expressed sympathy with many Quaker policies, and supported the Quaker Party in various areas. Even during the times of rhetorical combat between Quaker and Presbyterian spokesmen, practical political behaviour offers a better guide to interpretation. During the French and Indian War the Presbyterians never formed an effective legislative block in the Assembly. During the conflicts of the 1760s there were as many Presbyterians congregations in each of Chester and Lancaster counties as in Cumberland; yet, in both of the former counties there was no evidence of unified Presbyterian political mobilization against the Quaker Party. In Lancaster, numerous Presbyterians continued to support the Old Side, while in Chester whatever Presbyterian opposition formed was soon smothered by its Quakerized neighbors.

One of the problems of dealing with ethno-religious interpretations of political behavior is that evidence may be handled in a lawyer-like manner always to prove the case. In this instance, for example, it is possible to stand the argument that Quaker-Presbyterian hostility illustrates ethno-religious politics on its head by emphasizing the Quakers' success in winning to their political views numerous Presbyterians. From this perspective the numerous politically "Quakerized" Presbyterians illustrate the assimilative power of Pennsylvania's Eng-

123 Hugh Williamson to Ezra Stiles, Sept. 20, 1760, Stiles Papers, Beinecke Library, Yale University, transcript at the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.
lish Quakers and thus validate the notion that ethno-religious power and identity is of primary significance in political affairs.\textsuperscript{124}

Seductive as this reasoning may be, it is ultimately unpersuasive. Despite the assimilation to English norms that did occur in Pennsylvania, most Scotch-Irish communities maintained a strong sense of ethno-religious identity precisely at the time the Quakers were asserting themselves to preserve and further develop their own separate character.\textsuperscript{125} Political cooperation between the two groups came about because of a calculated Quaker determination to keep power in their own hands, a recognition by some Scotch-Irish Presbyterians that Friends had special claims to power, and (despite their differences) a common perception that they shared important interests.

The other major ethno-religious fracture that nineteenth-century historians have placed at the center of politics is the division between pietistic and ritualistic congregations. Religious predispositions of one kind or the other tended to lead voters to different political parties. The immediate problem with this schematization is that the mid-nineteenth century split simply does not make any sense of the earlier years. The evangelical pietists that ethno-culturalists have isolated as one "type" were not at all like the pietists of eighteenth-century America, while their political opposites included not only ritualists (whose characteristics were similar to the more liturgically conscious churches of the colonial years) but also salvationist pietists, a very important category that again had no real counterpart in colonial days. The scheme simply does not apply.

Nor is there another related division that does. Although some might suggest a continuum running from pietistic to liturgical, it is clear that eighteenth-century pietism was too widely diffused among denominations to produce a meaningful division; and politically, numerous members of the most liturgically-conscious Churchmen often aligned themselves with the quietly pietistic Quakers. Another typology that has often been used in Pennsylvania politics is a straightforward division

\textsuperscript{124} For an example of a conceptual scheme that works both ways see Kelley, The Cultural Pattern in American Politics, 24-25

\textsuperscript{125} See the works cited in note 14.
between sect and church people; but as this essay demonstrates, the Quaker Party drew on many church supporters as well as the various German sectarians. If we turn to the evangelicals we find that the only sizeable body of such was the New Side Presbyterians. Because the Quakers were unsympathetic to evangelistic religion, it is easy to assume that New Side adherents were the most likely Presbyterians to stand outside the Quaker coalition. But no evidence exists to substantiate that. Moreover, the New Lights demonstrated no clear affinity for the Proprietary Party. Dichotomous ethno-religious schematizations simply have no sharp and general explanatory power in early Pennsylvanian politics.

If nineteenth-century models do little to delineate the ethno-religious content of early American politics, eighteenth-century material does suggest alternatives. The most promising way of conceptualizing eighteenth-century denominations is as a cluster of groups infused in varying degrees with such religious elements as pietism, evangelism, quietism, and ritualism. As the eighteenth century gave way to the nineteenth, the shape of denominational relationships changed as did the character, variety, and the lexicon describing the elements that infused them—and naturally enough as did the political relationships among denominations. A further important dimension of ethno-religious clustering was intra-denominational dispute. In colonial America divisions within denominations were of great importance in shaping political allegiances that cut across broad ethnic units. Religious differences among Presbyterians, among English Churchman and German Reformed and German Lutherans, and among Quakers all affected the actual and potential abilities of denominations to act in the political arena. And like relationships between denominations, intra-group dynamics changed markedly over time.

Given the immense religious changes that occurred in America by the 1830s and 1840s, a cluster model of ethno-religious dynamics is far more useful in interpreting the underpinnings of politics than any kind of linear approach. Indeed, given the truly staggering dimensions of the assumptions made in the pietistic-ritualistic explanation, it might be worth considering the possibility of a more pluralistic and tentative approach to the relationship of religion to political alignments in the
mid-nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{126}

A second way in which the eighteenth-century evidence is useful is in providing a fresh perspective for considering the relative importance of ethno-religious determinants in politics. Despite a growing and often confusing list of caveats,\textsuperscript{127} ethno-religious historians have continued to bring more of American political history under the dictum Lee Benson originally pronounced over the 1844 New York State election, that "ethnic and religious difference have tended to be relatively the most important sources of [nineteenth-century] political differences."\textsuperscript{128} It is the primacy of those determinants that the colonial Pennsylvania material questions.

The history of the Quaker Party in Pennsylvania certainly illustrates how one ethno-religious group can give tone to a political organization. The "broadbrims" of many of the Quaker Party forces struck a deeply resonant sympathy among some groups in Pennsylvania and a disharmonious chord among others. Particular issues, such as the question of pacifism, gave specificity to those feelings. Frequently there were flickers of classical ethno-religious behavior, as groups of voters came together behind one candidate or some small group of candidates out of loyalty to a common religious or ethnic bond.

Overall, however, issues as the electorate perceived them determined political loyalties. When in 1756, Philadelphia politicians led a restructuring of the Quaker Party, the new legislative coalition appealed


\textsuperscript{127} Kelley, \textit{The Cultural Pattern in American Politics}, 26, Kleppner, \textit{The Third Electoral System}, 189

\textsuperscript{128} Benson, \textit{Concept of Jacksonian Democracy}, 140-147, 165-207 The quotation is from 165
not to specific ethno-religious groups but to the "hotheads of all denomina-
tion." Again in 1764, when the issue of royal government was paramount, "several societies [denomina-
tions]...were divided in their views." During the years between highly contested elections such as these, ethno-religious electoral patterns often remained steady, but habit and ritual was accompanied by vigilance and piece-meal change. Legislative representatives were subject to retrospective evaluation because political information from the seat of government usually came after the fact. Local and county interests provided the criteria by which the politically active could judge the need for change.

Perhaps the most convincing way to make the point that ethno-religious considerations were intertwined with issues and interests rather than the reverse is to refer to the cities. Eighteenth-century electoral competition was most intense in the urban centers. But despite the high degree of political activity, despite the ethno-religious basis of many city social organizations, and despite the ethno-religious political awareness of many members of the elite, there is little evidence that ethno-religious antagonisms were the determining factors in actual electoral battles. More important, it seems, were issues and attitudes relating to class along with occupational and social group interests.

129 Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Sept. 4, 1756, PPOC, VIII.
130 Samuel Purviance, Jr., to James Burd, Sept. 20, 1765, SP.
132 Nash, "Transformation of Urban Politics" 
What makes these conclusions so important is that nineteenth-century historians have hung a good deal of weight on the cities; apparently the degree and intensity of religiously based political partisanship was considerable in the urbanized areas.¹³⁵

This dissimilarity between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century urban political behavior clearly underlines the need for a more careful, evolutionary approach to ethno-religious politics in America. Nineteenth-century historians have done an admirable job of focusing attention on the religious and ethnic conditioned aspects of political behavior that their predecessors were unwilling to address. But having made the point that ethno-religious divisions cut to the marrow of American life, historians need to look behind the era of party competition that they view as their own.¹³⁶ The foundation of nineteenth-century ethno-religious politics lies in the eighteenth century. A focus upon the phenomenon in the colonial and early national periods will provide fresh perspectives in evaluating the reputed high points of ethno-religious politics in later America.


¹³⁶ Ronald P. Formisano’s most recent book The Transformation of Political Culture, Massachusetts Parties, 1790s-1840s, is purportedly an attempt to do just that. But because of the ethnic homogeneity and religious narrowness of state residents, the book is really an end run around the problems of the relationships among religion, ethnicity and politics.