

*George A. Rawlyk*

## NEW ENGLAND ORIGINS OF THE LOUISBOURG EXPEDITION OF 1745

ON MAY 23, 1744\*, a merchantman from Glasgow arrived in Boston with intelligence that war had been declared by Britain upon France.<sup>1</sup> Governor William Shirley had long anticipated the outbreak of hostilities and had laboured diligently, after his appointment as Governor of Massachusetts in 1741, to strengthen the colony's defences. He greatly feared possible attacks by Indian allies of the French upon the exposed western, northern, and north-eastern frontiers of Massachusetts as well as French naval assaults upon the eastern seaboard. As early as October, 1743, he had issued the following orders to the militia commanders along the frontiers:

Having received advices from Great Britain that there is great danger of a rupture with France, I think it necessary and accordingly direct you forthwith to advertise the exposed towns and settlements hereof, and to take proper care that the inhabitants secure themselves and families against any sudden assault from the Indians, and that they do not expose themselves by being too far from home in this time of danger, and that the companies in your regiment that are not much exposed, be in readiness to relieve any of the neighbouring places in case there should be any occasion for it.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, Shirley adopted a conciliatory policy towards the traditionally pro-French tribes, the Penobscots, Pigwackets, Norridgewacks, St. Francis, and St. Johns. By giving them presents and by carefully regulating their trade with the English merchants, he courted their favour and support, or at least their neutrality, in case of a rupture with France. But since Shirley could not count upon the success of this policy, he encouraged the construction of small forts, especially in Maine where the French-Indian threat was greatest.<sup>3</sup>

Governor Shirley's ambition went far beyond his earnest desire to protect

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\*Throughout this paper "New Style" dates will be used even though it was not until 1752 that the British adopted the Gregorian reform of the Calendar.

Massachusetts from French aggression. He wished to see the French driven from North America and supplanted by the British, and he also coveted personal political power. Not wishing to remain a puppet in the hands of the leading members of the General Court, Shirley wanted to manipulate that body—in short, he proposed to be not only the Governor of Massachusetts, but also its “Prime Minister”. His clever plan for gaining control began with an ambitious defence policy which would result in a significant increase of patronage for him to dispense as commander-in-chief. The careful distribution of military appointments, supply contracts, and other favours, would lead to the desired control of the General Court.<sup>4</sup>

On June 11, the day after the first meeting of the General Court in Boston for the year 1744, Shirley clearly enunciated his defence policy in a speech to the members of the House of Representatives and the Council.<sup>5</sup> In this most significant address Shirley emphasized that it was imperative for Massachusetts to ensure that Annapolis Royal would remain in British hands:

As the acquisition of the Country of Nova-Scotia, and more especially of the Fortress of Port-Royal (now Annapolis Royal) has been always thought by this Government, ever since it's first settlement by the French, to be a Point of the greatest Importance to the Welfare and Safety of this Province; and many Designs have been form'd, and Expeditions fitted out for reducing that Place, and recovering it out of the Hands of the French, so I cannot but hope you will think it of equal Necessity to preserve it for his Majesty at this Juncture, from any Attempts of the Enemy; And as it appears highly probable that the French will make some Attempts upon that Place before the Garrison there can have a Reinforcement from Great-Britain, I believe you will judge it a Piece of Service that will be highly acceptable to his Majesty, and tend to secure some of the most valuable Interests of this Province, to send some Recruits for that Garrison to continue there for a few months, or 'till it be sufficiently reinforced from Great-Britain—The Expense of this will not be very great (as we may suppose the men will have both Pay and Subsistence from his Majesty).<sup>6</sup>

Throughout June the inhabitants of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, especially those living in the northern and north-eastern frontier regions, were terror-stricken, daily expecting a murderous French-Indian assault. Women and children were not permitted to stray from the relative safety of their homes and settlements, while the men and older boys kept a sharp outlook for the treacherous enemy. A Boston correspondent for the *Pennsylvania Journal*, writing on June 29, 1744, described cogently this atmosphere of fear:

On Tuesday some men who had been out upon the Scout, coming into Dover (at the Eastward) imprudently fired off their Guns, which alarmed the Town, and before the Cause could be known, the Alarm was communicated to several other Towns; upon which 700 men were raised, who marched to the Assistance of their Friends

tho' (as it happened) they stood no need of their Help. This Account of the Affair is publish'd, to prevent those Fears and false Reports which are two [sic] often raised in such Times as these. The Indians, so far as can be observed, appear desirous to live in Peace with us.<sup>7</sup>

Not unexpectedly, therefore, on June 13, the House of Representatives gave Shirley the authority to send 500 men, impressed from various militia companies, to defend the more vulnerable frontier areas. The House also decided to seek additional reinforcements from New York, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire.<sup>8</sup> But the somewhat imperious letters sent to these governments brought only negative responses. These three colonies had serious defence problems of their own, and they were in no mood to take orders from the Massachusetts House of Representatives.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, on June 24, the House of Representatives voted an additional 500 men to serve on the frontiers.<sup>10</sup>

The French in Louisbourg had first heard about the declaration of war on March 27, 1744, some two months before the news reached Boston.<sup>11</sup> As would be expected, French privateers had been quick to take full advantage of the element of surprise. From May 31 to June 12, at least ten Massachusetts fishing vessels, ranging in size from twenty-eight to fifty tons, were captured by two enterprising French privateers, armed only with muskets.<sup>12</sup> These vessels were captured on the Sable Island Bank and the Canso Bank. The ease with which the New England fishing vessels were taken persuaded the French privateers based at Louisbourg to move their operations farther south, where they could tap the busy shipping lanes to and from Boston.<sup>13</sup> The Boston merchants were first informed of the French policy in early July by some Massachusetts fishermen who had been captured by the French privateers in June. These fishermen, enjoying immensely their unexpected importance and fame, spun exaggerated yarns regarding the privateering strength of the French.<sup>14</sup> They informed the already frightened Massachusetts inhabitants that Louisbourg's port-captain Morpain, the "noted Commander, famous for his exploits on this Coast in the last War", had threatened to lead a fleet of French privateers to "take the Vessels out of Nantasket Harbour."<sup>15</sup> The fears of the Boston merchants were realized during the first week of July, when a French privateer under the command of Beaubassin captured three Massachusetts vessels within twelve leagues of Boston.<sup>16</sup> During the same week a French privateer commanded by Doloboratz, who had played an important part in the French seizure of Canso on May 24, was captured by Captain Tyng of the Massachusetts government's *Prince of Orange* approximately fifteen leagues from Cape Cod.<sup>17</sup>

In early July there were only three French privateers in New England waters,

but these privateers had almost paralyzed the commercial life of Massachusetts. The New England merchants, however, refused to be intimidated for long. Privateers were hurriedly fitted out in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire; it has been estimated that by August no fewer than eight Rhode Island privateers were under sail against the French, five from Boston<sup>18</sup> and one from New Hampshire.<sup>19</sup> During the same period six privateers sailed from New York and four from Philadelphia<sup>20</sup>; but most of these ships headed south towards the Caribbean. By early August, French privateers were no longer an immediate threat to Massachusetts. Instead, the New England privateers had boldly forced their way into the French waters about Cape Breton and by September were playing havoc with French shipping to and from Louisbourg.<sup>21</sup> Apparently dissatisfied with the lack of suitable French shipping, at least one privateering captain landed his crew on Cape Breton and "plundered some Traders, from whom he took Gunpowder and other Goods to a great Value."<sup>22</sup> Some other enterprising New England privateers began to prey upon French shipping in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The aroused Intendant of New France, Hocquart, demanded that the French Minister of Marine Maurepas send "deux frégates pour escorter les batimens de commerce de Canada et l'Isle Royale."<sup>23</sup>

The 1744 privateering war between Louisbourg and Boston was in one sense won by the French. Some thirty-six prizes were declared in Louisbourg, of which twenty-six were in all likelihood Massachusetts vessels.<sup>24</sup> The number of Cape Breton prizes taken by Massachusetts privateers and those from Rhode Island<sup>25</sup> was only a small fraction of the French number. In controlling the seas, however, New England numbers were eventually more than a match for Gallic audacity; by the autumn of 1744 French privateers had been virtually driven from North Atlantic waters into their Louisbourg nest. The element of surprise had given the tiny fleet of Louisbourg a valuable windfall of British prizes in June and July. By August, however, superior numbers had given the New England privateers a distinct advantage. In this sense, therefore, Boston had defeated Louisbourg's naval aggression.<sup>26</sup>

Though Shirley considered his various measures to protect Massachusetts from Indian and French attacks to be of great consequence, he was nevertheless convinced that the successful defence of Annapolis Royal was the keystone of his policy to resist French aggression.<sup>27</sup> He believed Annapolis Royal to have considerable symbolic and strategic importance. The fort represented British military power in Nova Scotia, whose vast expanse was often asserted to stretch from the Penobscot to Canso. If Annapolis fell to an invading French force, Shirley was sure that the



tenuous ties binding the thousands of Acadian inhabitants to the British Crown would be permanently severed. Furthermore, he feared that the fall of Annapolis Royal would immediately destroy the delicately balanced neutrality of the Indian tribes along Massachusetts frontiers and throw them into the welcoming arms of the French. To these Indians, Shirley insisted, Annapolis had become a symbol of military might, and, as such, an important reason for their succumbing to his blandishments. If the fort were captured, their respect for British military power would disappear, and they would do everything in their power to ingratiate themselves with the French. What better expression of their loyalty to the French was there than a string of Massachusetts scalps and a number of devastated frontier settlements?

Like Lieutenant-Governor Paul Mascarene, the commanding officer of Annapolis Royal, Shirley considered Annapolis Royal to be an outpost of New England. He wished to see it used to consolidate the British position in Acadia and also to serve as a stepping-stone for extending the boundaries of the British Empire to Cape Breton and eventually to New France. In French hands, however, the place would become a nest for French privateers, as in the days of Subercase forty years earlier. These ships, it was contended, would without doubt completely undermine Massachusetts' valuable cod fishery as well as the colony's thriving export of masts from "Maine". Moreover, there was always the possibility that the French military authorities might consider the time propitious for mounting an invasion from Annapolis in order to appropriate the north-eastern part of Massachusetts. Thus it is not surprising that Shirley placed so much emphasis upon the retention of Annapolis Royal.

Sometime between June 15 and June 22, news of the fall of Canso reached Boston.<sup>28</sup> Shirley was not alone in realizing that Annapolis Royal would be the next target for French aggression. In a letter to the Lords of Trade, the governor further commented on the loss of the tiny British outpost:

The late surprise of Canso will not only give the French the Advantage of the Sole Fishery there, but has also open'd a free Communication between Louisbourg and the inhabitants of Menies [Minas] and Schenecta [Chignecto], which Tract is not only the Granary of those Parts but abounds with plenty of live-Stock . . . not to mention that they thereby have freed themselves from Annoyance, which any British Ships station'd there might give to the Trade and Privateers of that Port [Louisbourg] during the Warr.<sup>29</sup>

But the economic importance of Canso had declined, and by the early 1740s its role in the Massachusetts cod fishery was insignificant. Since Massachusetts had

ceased to regard Canso as an outpost of New England, its fall was not as alarming to Massachusetts as the fall of Annapolis Royal would have been.

Fearing an attack upon Annapolis, the House of Representatives on June 23 finally decided to act upon Shirley's demand for the dispatch of reinforcements to the British stronghold in Nova Scotia. The House asserted that since the successful defence of Annapolis Royal was "an affair of great Importance to the Crown, and in particular to the respective Governments of New England", it was imperative to send "some immediate Relief." It was agreed:

That his Excellency the Captain General be desired to give orders for raising two independent Companies of Voluntiers, consisting of sixty Men each, exclusive of Officers, to be sent to Annapolis Royal, as soon as may be, at the Charge of the Province: And for Encouragement to good and effective Men to inlist in this Service, that there be and hereby is granted to be paid out of the Province Treasury to each Man that shall inlist *twenty Pounds* old Tenor . . . and that they be freed from all ordinary Impresses within this Province for the space of three Years after their Return.

The House further emphasized that after the troops had arrived at Annapolis Royal they were to receive neither wages nor supplies from the Massachusetts government. The governor was urged "to use his good offices with the Commander of that Fortress in obtaining Pay and Subsistence for the said Companies from the Crown until they return home."<sup>30</sup>

At first, few men volunteered to serve at Annapolis in spite of the offer of the seemingly attractive bounty of £20 and in spite of Shirley's promise that the British government would provide the reinforcements, once they were in Acadia, with "both Pay and Subsistence". It is interesting to note that the bounty offered to the men volunteering for the Louisbourg expedition in the following year was only £4. Realizing the strength of their bargaining position, interested Massachusetts inhabitants demanded even more bounty money before they would enlist for the Annapolis expedition. However, until July 1, the House of Representatives adamantly refused to increase the bounty money and as a result the recruiting campaign was a miserable failure.

On the last day of June, Shirley informed the House that he had just received a letter from Mascarene,<sup>32</sup> "representing the Danger they are in, of being speedily attacked by the Enemy, and the present Weakness of the Garrison there, and requesting that we would send speedy Succours to them of at least two hundred Soldiers well arm'd and victualled for some months." He appealed to the members to deal immediately with Mascarene's request so "that no Disaster may happen." On the following day the House acted, but not in the way Shirley wished it to act. It adopted the following resolution:

Ordered, That each able body'd effective Soldier on his Inlistment for Annapolis Royal receive five Pounds old Tenor, for their Encouragement, and that the Sum of twenty Pounds old Tenor be paid them on their being muster'd in the Town of Boston, or such other place as his Excellency shall appoint, under their proper Officers compleat in their Arms at their own charge.<sup>33</sup>

The House had stubbornly refused to increase the number of reinforcements to 200 men, and had also refused to provide the two companies with supplies for an indefinite period of "some months". The members of the House contended that their main concern should be the defence of the immediate boundaries of the colony; they had serious misgivings about defending inadequately armed outposts of British imperialism.

Shirley was dissatisfied with the response of the House of Representatives; he continued to apply steady pressure on the members to raise at least an additional company of reinforcements and also to provision the Massachusetts troops during their sojourn in Nova Scotia. On July 3, he stressed to the members that he was certain another company of reinforcements was needed "for rendring the Succours already voted effectual for the Preservation of the Garrison, and without such an Addition to it, what is already done may probably prove ineffectual."<sup>34</sup> He firmly implied that if the House decided to raise another company he would promise not to ask for any additional troops or funds for Mascarene. The following day, July 4, the House agreed to grant "a Bounty of twenty-five pounds old Tenor . . . for an Encouragement to one Hundred and eighty Soldiers to inlist . . . for the Defence of Annapolis Royal."<sup>35</sup> However, the House continued to refuse to supply the troops with provisions.<sup>36</sup> The members of the House had made their last concession to the governor regarding his cherished project.

The extra £5 of bounty money aided in the recruitment drive but not sufficiently to fill all available openings. On July 12, some seventy men sailed for Annapolis Royal, and their arrival four days later was perfectly timed to raise the sagging morale of Mascarene's force. The day of their disembarkation witnessed the retreat of Abbé Le Loutre's Micmacs, who had been besieging the fort. All the British regulars shared Mascarene's thoughts as he wrote to Shirley on July 18, "I can hardly find expressions to thank you for the seasonable succour you have sent us."<sup>37</sup> On July 31, a further fifty-three reinforcements, a score of whom were probably Pigwacket Indians, sailed for Annapolis.<sup>38</sup>

The sending of these Indians marked a definite change in Shirley's thinking regarding the Annapolis Royal reinforcement problem. By the closing days of July it was clear to Shirley, as it was to most government officials, that the available



supply of Massachusetts men who were willing to serve as mercenaries in Nova Scotia had completely dried up. A new source had to be found; all eyes turned to the friendly Pigwackets.

Believing that Mascarene was in no position to provision adequately the new Pigwacket recruits, Shirley resolved to have those who did not sail on July 31 remain in Massachusetts, supplied with food and other necessities by the government until they were needed in Annapolis Royal. They were not sent to Mascarene until the latter part of September, and their arrival coincided with Du Vivier's siege of the fort.<sup>39</sup> Shirley was certainly gifted with the "Nelson Touch" in timing the sending of his reinforcements to Annapolis.

Shirley's Annapolis Royal policy did not go unnoticed in Whitehall. On September 17, 1744, the Lords of Trade reported to King George II:

That your Majesty's said Governour of the Massachusetts' Bay hath acted as became a Dutifull and Zealous Servant to your Majesty in obtaining the aforementioned Succours for the assistance of your Majesty's other Province of Nova Scotia and that therefore It may be adviceable for your Majesty not only to enable him to make good the engagement he hath entered into for the pay of the said forces but also to Signify your Royal approbation of his conduct in this affair.<sup>40</sup>

Shirley's promise, made on July 11, that the British government would eventually reimburse Massachusetts for any money spent on the defence of Annapolis Royal had been fulfilled. On being informed of the favourable development, the members of the House of Representatives on October 24 heaped praise upon their governor:

nor should we be just to your Excellency, or to the present Sentiments of our own Minds, to let your Excellency's early Care and Concern for his Majesty's Honour and the Safety of his Subjects, in first leading us into this Method of raising Recruits for the Defence of that Fortress, and then of your unwearied Care and Diligence after express'd, in order to render them effectual, pass without our most publick and thankful Acknowledgements.<sup>41</sup>

The successful defence of Annapolis Royal added greatly to Shirley's reputation; he had become a much respected governor in whom the inhabitants of Massachusetts and the British Lords of Trade were willing to place great confidence.

Throughout the closing months of 1744, Governor Shirley's concern persisted for the "Preservation of his Majesty's Interest at Annapolis Royal."<sup>42</sup> In December he urged the capture of Louisbourg, primarily with the defence of Annapolis in mind. What more effective way to protect the keystone of his military policy than to eradicate the French threat in the Atlantic region?



A report of the arrival of a large *Compagnie des Indes* fleet at Louisbourg had reached Shirley sometime in September.<sup>43</sup> He feared that the enlarged French fleet would in all probability attack Annapolis before late autumn and he knew that Mascarene's fort was vulnerable, lacking the naval force so vitally necessary for its defence. As a result and almost as a last resort, Shirley felt compelled to adopt a defensive policy based almost completely upon outright guile. Therefore, he arranged matters so that the commander of the first French flag of truce arriving at Boston with New England prisoners in September returned to Louisbourg with what the latter considered to be most valuable intelligence. The commander reported that a "secret Expedition" against Louisbourg was being organized in Boston and that "a very considerable Reinforcement of men"<sup>44</sup> had been recently sent to Mascarene.

The authenticity of this report was not doubted. The Louisbourg officials were particularly concerned with the unexpected sizeable increase in Mascarene's force. Annapolis Royal would be even more capable of successfully resisting a French attack. But the French officials apparently did not anticipate any immediate threat from the so-called "secret expedition" against Louisbourg because of the reassuring presence of the *Indes* fleet, and the lateness of the season. They concluded that a joint Anglo-American land and sea assault was being planned for the spring of the following year.<sup>45</sup> There is no evidence to suggest that Shirley's ruse was responsible for the abandonment of any large-scale French naval assault upon Annapolis Royal. It must also be emphasized that there had been no consideration by those in power in Whitehall and in the New England colonies in September and October, 1744, of an attack on Louisbourg.

French fears of an Anglo-American attack in early 1745 were further confirmed by the highly respected and influential Louisbourg privateer Doloboratz.<sup>46</sup> He had been captured by the Massachusetts government's snow (small brig-like vessel) *Prince of Orange*, and had returned to his home port in early November after spending several months as a prisoner of war in Boston. He reported that the governments of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut had offered the British government no less than £800,000 if a fleet of 15 warships were sent to capture Louisbourg. Doloboratz expected the British fleet to arrive at Boston sometime in December to make final preparations for a spring attack. Moreover, the gullible privateer declared that the New England colonies had promised to raise 6,000 troops to take part in the expedition. He questioned, however, whether such a force could be raised in New England without "*des grandes promesses et récompenses*".<sup>47</sup>

Doloboratz probably received some of his information in the same way and for the same reason as the commander of the French flag of truce received his false

intelligence in September. The deliberate misleading of Doloboratz can be considered to be a further elaboration of Shirley's September policy. It must be remembered that Shirley believed that the false report carried by the French commander of the flag of truce was largely responsible for nipping in the bud a proposed large-scale French naval assault upon Annapolis Royal. Was there not an equally good chance that false intelligence concerning a planned Anglo-American attack upon Louisbourg early in 1745 would keep the French from mounting an attack upon Annapolis at least until the arrival at Annapolis in the early spring of 1745 of "one or more of his Majesty's Ships"?<sup>48</sup>

Shirley, however, was not content to rely completely upon spurious reports carefully planted in the minds of gullible French officers to protect Annapolis Royal. He also bombarded his patron, the Duke of Newcastle, and the Lords of the Admiralty with requests for warships to patrol the North Atlantic from Cape Sable to Boston. Fully aware of the vital importance of sea-power, Shirley was of the opinion that only a few British warships could easily protect Massachusetts commerce as well as Annapolis from French encroachments. On November 25, he wrote to the Lords of the Admiralty:

by [Spring 1745] . . . it is scarcely to be doubted but that the Enemy will send such a Naval force against it [Annapolis Royal], as will make 'em masters of it, if it is not protected against 'em by a Naval force from England. I need not observe to your Lordships how heavy the loss of the Garrison and Province of Nova Scotia would be on the one hand to his Majesty's northern Colonies, and how much it would affect the British Trade and Navigation to these parts.<sup>49</sup>

Shirley's persistence bore fruit; the formerly indifferent British government began to show some genuine concern for the defence of Nova Scotia. On January 14, 1745, the Duke of Newcastle wrote the following circular to the governors of the American colonies:

His Majesty having thought it necessary for the security of the Colonies in North America, and particularly the Province of Nova Scotia, (which had been already invaded by the French, and upon which there is great reason to apprehend that they will early in the Spring renew their attempts by the attack of Annapolis Royal) to employ such a strength of Ships of Warr in those Seas under the Command of Commodore Warren as may be sufficient to protect the sd Province, and the other neighbouring Collonys in North America, and the Trade and Fishery of His Majesty's Subjects in those Parts and may also as occasion shall offer, attack and distress the Enemy in their Settlements, and annoy their Fishery and Commerce.<sup>50</sup>

It was not until the latter part of November that Shirley began to consider seriously "the great consequences of the acquisition of Cape Breton".<sup>51</sup> He wanted to see Cape Breton in British hands in order to make Annapolis Royal safe from possible French attacks. Shirley's rather vague theorizing regarding the capture of Cape Breton was galvanized into definite expression on December 14, 1744. On that day he was informed by reliable witnesses, who had been prisoners in Louisbourg, that Du Vivier, who had led the successful attack upon Canso and the unsuccessful assault on Annapolis Royal, and three Louisbourg pilots intimately familiar with the coasts of Nova Scotia and Massachusetts had recently sailed for France. They were expected to return in February with "Some Ships with Stores and Recruits for the Garrison at Cape Breton and also some Ships of Force to proceed to the coasts of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia . . . With a Design . . . To make a Descent on Annapolis Royal and to cruise on the Coasts of New England."<sup>52</sup> Shirley's worst fears had apparently been realized. The aroused governor immediately sent a letter to the Lords of the Admiralty in which he enunciated the broad outlines of his plan to drive the French from Cape Breton.

Shirley simply wanted British warships to intercept the French fleet, thereby dealing "a killing blow to the Enemy". Without reinforcements and supplies, the "extremely ill mann'd" and "exceedingly discontented" Louisbourg garrison was expected to surrender without any resistance to a blockading naval force.

Shirley was not the first colonial governor to advocate the capture of Cape Breton. In 1741<sup>54</sup> and again in 1743<sup>55</sup> Lieutenant Governor Clarke of New York had urged the British navy, in time of war with France, to "block up the harbour of Louisbourg before any ships from France can arrive there" and prepare the way for a land force made up of "four or five thousand men . . . raised in New England."<sup>56</sup> It is highly unlikely, however, that in December, 1744, Shirley was even aware of Clarke's proposals.

The plan to capture Louisbourg had gradually evolved in Shirley's mind during the closing months of 1744; it was the natural outgrowth of his Annapolis policy. Four major factors appear to have influenced his thinking regarding Louisbourg during this period; first, the difficulty he had experienced in obtaining reinforcements and supplies for Annapolis Royal; second, the news about conditions in Louisbourg brought to him by returning prisoners of war; third, the views of Robert Auchmuty, Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court in Boston; and fourth, the policies advocated by Christopher Kilby, London agent of the Massachusetts government.

The vast majority of Massachusetts residents had reacted indifferently to



Shirley's urgent appeals for reinforcements to serve at Annapolis Royal. He therefore expected an even more apathetic response for volunteers to join an expedition against Louisbourg. Furthermore, the Massachusetts government, already in serious debt, was bound to oppose such a scheme if it involved the spending of any significant sum of money. Consequently, Shirley was at first of the opinion that any expedition against Louisbourg should be carried out by the British fleet.

The returning New England and Canso prisoners reported that Louisbourg was a ripe fruit ready to be plucked by any enterprising invading force.<sup>57</sup> The walls of the fortress were in disrepair; the troops, badly disciplined and inadequately supplied with arms, clothing, and foodstuffs, were on the verge of open revolt. More than any other single factor, this information supplied to the governor by the returning prisoners was responsible for his decision to advocate enthusiastically a naval assault upon Louisbourg.

In April, 1744, while acting as a special agent of the Massachusetts government in London, Judge Auchmuty presented to the British government a memoir entitled "The Importance of Cape Breton to the British Nation".<sup>58</sup> In all likelihood, Shirley was sent a copy of the memoir and carefully studied it. Auchmuty asserted that once Cape Breton was captured, Britain would immediately obtain a monopoly over the valuable North Atlantic cod fishery, "which annually will return to the English nation two millions sterling . . . and constantly employ thousands of families otherwise unserviceable to the public, and greatly increase shipping and navigation and mariners". In addition, Auchmuty argued—but not very convincingly—that the acquisition of Cape Breton would, "in the run of very little time", lead to the fall of New France.

Believing that his arguments had conclusively proved that "the expense and danger in taking this place [Cape Breton] will bear no proportion to the advantages and profits thereby resulting to the English nation, and her plantations", Auchmuty concluded the memoir by describing in some detail his plan to capture Louisbourg. He proposed that by the beginning of April, 1745, a force of 3000 men be raised in the colonies north of Virginia "under the specious pretence that [they] . . . are raised to defend the governments from invasion, or the surprise of an enemy." Not until the last possible moment were they to be told that they were to be used to attack Louisbourg. "By concealing the real design" Auchmuty hoped to take full advantage of the element of surprise and also to facilitate recruitment. Many men might be expected to volunteer to defend their own soil from the enemy but few to take part in an assault upon "the Dunkirk of North America". He further proposed:



that a squadron of six sail of the line, with two thousand regular troops, and all things necessary for a formal siege, should take departure from [Britain] the beginning of March next, so as to anchor in Gabaron [Gabus] bay, within four miles of the rampart of Louisbourg, by the middle of April following: there to be joined by the American troops under convoy of the station ships. This may be executed without loss of men, no cannon commanding the entrance of this harbour, and where the navy of England may safely ride. It may be conceived advisable there to land the troops, and from thence to march and make regular approaches to the rampart. . . . It is judged by connoisseurs that the fire of their own cannon will shake down the works, and that they will not stand a battery.<sup>59</sup>

It was not therefore necessary to equip the invading force with trumpets!

As early as 1741 Christopher Kilby had shown some interest in the capture of Cape Breton. In that year he sent a "kinsman"<sup>60</sup> to Louisbourg to investigate the strength of the French fortress. The information Kilby received<sup>61</sup> persuaded him that Louisbourg with inadequate "Fortifications and Garrison was vulnerable to a combined land-sea assault."<sup>62</sup> On April 14, 1744, only a few days after Britain had declared war upon France, Kilby submitted to the Board of Trade a detailed statement of what he considered to be the best policy for Britain to adopt immediately regarding Louisbourg.<sup>63</sup> Kilby's statement was remarkably similar in content to Auchmuty's memoir presented to the Board one week later. This similarity was no coincidence. These men were associates, and both were especially concerned not only with the general welfare of Massachusetts but also with the success of their own ambitious commercial schemes. Would not their proposed expedition mean a considerable number of supply contracts which they could profitably help to fill? *In order to protect Nova Scotia and New England commerce from French encroachments, Kilby advocated an immediate British assault upon Louisbourg. He argued that the information he had received made it abundantly clear "that the reduction of the Island is not only practicable but easy, and that in the present conjuncture which brings the war upon them in the midst of a famine, a well-conducted and vigorous attempt would entirely subdue all their possessions on the continent of North America".*<sup>64</sup>

After the British government had declined to organize a naval assault upon Louisbourg at the outbreak of hostilities, Kilby proposed in October, 1744, that in the early part of 1745 "Six Ships of the line—three or four smaller ones, and a Bomb ship, with a compleat Regiment of Experienc'd Land forces, a proper Train of Artillery, and 4000 Troops to be raised in America"<sup>65</sup> should attack Louisbourg. Kilby's proposal was sent to the Duke of Newcastle, the Earl of Winchelsea, the Earl of Harrington, as well as to Shirley.<sup>66</sup> Kilby also informed Shirley that if a colonial

force was raised it would be "Effectually supported"<sup>67</sup> by the British government. In actual fact, however, Kilby had received no official assurance of any support. He apparently hoped that, if Shirley began to organize an expedition against Louisbourg, the British government would be quickly goaded into action.

But despite Auchmuty's and Kilby's emphasis upon a joint Anglo-American assault upon Louisbourg, Shirley, in early December, stubbornly insisted that any expedition against Louisbourg should be the sole responsibility of the British government.<sup>68</sup> Shirley was doubtless reflecting the majority opinion in Massachusetts and throughout the British North American colonies at the time. Only a small but vociferous minority led by William Vaughan of Damariscotta in Maine and John Bradstreet, a returned Canso prisoner, pressed for a New England invasion of Cape Breton independent of any support from Great Britain.

Bradstreet was either born in Nova Scotia or emigrated there from Britain while still a youth.<sup>69</sup> In 1735 he had purchased an ensign's commission in General Phillip's foot regiment and was stationed at Canso, where he almost immediately became actively engaged in numerous illicit commercial ventures with the French at Louisbourg.<sup>70</sup> Captured at Canso in May, 1744, he was imprisoned at Louisbourg until his release in October of the same year. While a prisoner he had come to the conclusion that the French fortress could be easily captured by a small New England force.<sup>71</sup> The response, however, on the part of most Massachusetts inhabitants to whom he made his daring proposal was largely negative. They were not eager to prove the validity of his hypothesis. Nevertheless, Bradstreet was able to make at least one important convert, William Vaughan.

A Harvard graduate and a successful fishing and lumbering entrepreneur at Damariscotta and Matinicus in Maine, Vaughan in 1744 was dissatisfied with his lot in life.<sup>72</sup> Always a restless man, he was eagerly looking for new worlds to conquer. He coveted fame, glory, and increased riches. In Bradstreet's proposal he saw an extraordinary opportunity to achieve his desired goals. If he could only organize and participate in such an expedition, he argued, he was bound to become a popular hero. Moreover, he could be almost certain that the British government would reward him, perhaps with a colonial governorship. Had not his father been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of New Hampshire in 1715 largely because of the important role he had played in the capture of Port Royal from the French in 1710?<sup>73</sup>

Vaughan was gifted with boundless energy and "a daring, enterprising and tenacious mind".<sup>74</sup> Once decided upon a course of action, he refused to permit any obstacle to prevent him from achieving his desired goal. A contemporary described an example of his persistence and temerity thus:

[Vaughan] had equipped a number of small vessels at Portsmouth to carry on his fishery at Matinicus. On the day, appointed for sailing in the month of March, though the wind was so boisterous that experienced mariners deemed it impossible for such vessels to carry sail, he went on board of one, and ordered the others to follow. One was lost at the mouth of the river; the rest arrived with much difficulty, but in a short time, at the place of their destination.<sup>75</sup>

In December, 1744, Vaughan began to travel extensively throughout Massachusetts and New Hampshire "day and night",<sup>76</sup> enthusiastically advocating a secret New England expedition against Louisbourg. Here was a saddle preacher with a new gospel. He sought to convince his sceptical audiences that Louisbourg could be captured by a "force consisting of 1500 raw militia, some scaling ladders, and a few armed craft of New England."<sup>77</sup> The scaling ladders would not be needed, Vaughan contended, if the expedition sailed immediately. If a secret landing were made during the winter months, the invading force could easily enter the fortified town by scrambling up the snow that usually drifted up over the ramparts.<sup>78</sup> When he was not talking about his proposed expedition, Vaughan was listening to observations made by men who had recently been in Louisbourg.<sup>79</sup> Vaughan's enthusiasm, confidence, and persistence won him a surprising number of supporters, especially in eastern Massachusetts, including Maine, where he was well known and where the fishing interests had suffered most from French privateering raids.

Confident of considerable support in eastern Massachusetts, Vaughan, probably sometime in December, approached Shirley with a "regular scheme"<sup>80</sup> to surprise and capture Louisbourg. Vaughan claimed sole authorship of the plan, as did Bradstreet.<sup>81</sup> In all likelihood, the plan placed in Shirley's hands by Vaughan was originally drafted by Bradstreet and then revised by Vaughan. Vaughan realized that his plan would never be implemented unless Shirley vigorously endorsed it.<sup>82</sup>

Shirley was impressed with Vaughan's somewhat exaggerated account of "The General Spirit of the people in the eastern parts of the Province for undertaking"<sup>83</sup> the assault upon Louisbourg. He listened attentively to Vaughan's arguments of why it was essential to organize the expedition immediately without waiting for assistance from Britain. To Vaughan and to Bradstreet the timing of the expedition and the element of surprise were of far more consequence for the eventual success of the expedition than the support of the entire British fleet.

Shirley had firmly opposed the idea of an independent New England expedition largely because he had believed that it lacked the support of an appreciable number of Massachusetts residents. But on hearing Vaughan's report of the mood of the people in eastern Massachusetts and after carefully weighing the political



risks of supporting such an expedition, Shirley reluctantly decided to ask the General Court to finance and to organize the expedition. If it succeeded, and there was strong evidence to suggest that it would, Shirley's position in Massachusetts would be almost unassailable. If it failed, the governor could always argue that he had been pushed into the Vaughan-Bradstreet proposal by irresistible popular pressure. Regardless of whether it eventually failed or succeeded, Shirley would have a vast new reserve of patronage to dispense.

On January 20, 1745, in an unprecedented secret session of the General Court, Shirley stunned those present by strongly urging an expedition against Louisbourg. The audacity of the governor's proposal lay in the recommendation not that the French fortress town should be attacked, but that it should be attacked by raw New England militia. After a brief, trenchant introductory paragraph in which he commented upon Louisbourg's "utmost annoyance" of Massachusetts commerce, Shirley presented his proposed plan of action:

From the best information that can be had of the circumstances of the Town and of the number of the soldiers and Militia within it, and of the situation of the Harbour, I have good reason to think that if Two Thousand men were landed upon the Island as soon as they may be conveniently got ready (which as I am credibly informed may be done in the proper part of the Island for that purpose with little or no risque) such a number of men would, with the blessing of Divine Providence upon their Enterprize, be masters of the field at all events, and not only possess themselves of their two most important batteries with ease, break upon their Out Settlements, destroy their Cable and Magazines, ruine their Fishery Works, and lay the town in ruines, but might make themselves masters of the Town and Harbour . . . . I would earnestly recommend it to you to make a suitable provision for the Expences of such an expedition, which, if it should succeed no further than with respect to laying open the enemies Harbour and destroying their Out Settlements and Works, must greatly overpay the expence of it, by its consequences to this Province, and if it should wholly succeed, it must bring an irreparable loss to the enemy, and an invaluable acquisition for this Country.<sup>84</sup>

Shirley considered it unnecessary to discuss in "Detail . . . The manner of executing such an attempt." He was primarily concerned with winning the support of the General Court for the idea of the expedition.<sup>85</sup> Details regarding its implementation could be worked out later.

Most members, "struck with amazement at the proposal", were of the opinion that the undertaking had "no rational prospect of success."<sup>86</sup> However, in deference to Shirley's earnest plea, on the following day, January 21, a committee made up of members of the House of Representatives and of the Council was appointed to consider the governor's proposal.<sup>87</sup> For two days the committee members vigorously



debated Shirley's recommendation. His supporters argued that unless the French fortress were captured, the Massachusetts cod fishery would be destroyed, Nova Scotia would be lost, and Louisbourg "would infallibly prove the Dunkirk of New England." They asserted that the time was propitious for a successful assault. The Louisbourg garrison was openly mutinous; provisions were scarce and "the works mouldering and decayed, the governor an old man unskilled in the art of war." It was therefore necessary to launch an attack immediately, since it was believed that in "another year the place would be impregnable". A gamble had to be taken. If the expedition failed, the Massachusetts government would have "to grapple with the disappointment" of bearing the brunt of the entire cost of the expedition. However, if it succeeded,

not only the coasts of New England would be free from molestation, but so glorious an acquisition would be of the greatest importance to Great Britain and might give peace to Europe, and [the Massachusetts government] might depend upon a reimbursement of the whole charge.

On the other hand, those who opposed the scheme declared that some kind of arrangement could be made with the French whereby "both sides would be willing to leave the fishery unmolested." Had not Louisbourg's commanding officer Duquesnel made such a proposal to Shirley a few months earlier? Moreover, they argued

that the accounts given of the works and the garrison at Louisburgh could not be depended upon, and it was not credible that any part of the walls should be unguarded and exposed to surprise, that instances of disaffection rising to mutiny were rare and but few instances were to be met with in history where such expectation has not failed. The garrison at Louisburgh consisted of regular experienced troops, who, though unequal in number, would be more than a match in open field for all the raw unexperienced militia which could be sent from New England . . . . That if only one 60 gun ship should arrive from France, or the French islands, she would be more than a match for all the armed vessels [New England] could provide.

It was also pointed out that it was highly unlikely that a sufficient force of volunteers could be raised in New England, let alone supplied with arms, ammunition and provisions, and transported to Cape Breton. Furthermore, the Massachusetts government was in no position to finance such an expedition. In conclusion, those who attacked the scheme gloomily predicted that if the expedition failed, and they expected it to fail, "such a shock would be given to the province that half a century would not recover us to our present state."<sup>88</sup>

The committee members were almost unanimously opposed to Shirley's scheme.<sup>89</sup> On January 23, their report was quickly endorsed by the General Court

and sent to the governor. Shirley was informed that the members were "fully convinced that all the Sea and Land Forces that can possibly be raised [in New England] will be insufficient . . . in reducing the said French settlement."<sup>90</sup> It was further emphasized that it was solely the responsibility of the British government to organize and to finance any assault upon Louisbourg. In the last sentence of its message to the government, almost as an afterthought, the General Court vaguely promised "as far as they are able to exert themselves in conjunction with the other [colonial] Governments on such an occasion."<sup>91</sup>

Shirley had experienced a bitter rebuff, but he immediately decided to accept the Court's recommendation. On January 25 he wrote to the Duke of Newcastle and vigorously supported the Court's request for British initiative in attempting "the Reduction of Cape Breton."<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, he maintained that the General Court's promise to support any British expedition was to be taken seriously.<sup>93</sup> After finishing his letter to Newcastle, Shirley, like the members of the House of Representatives and of the Council, appeared content to sit back and to wait for the British government to make the next move. But William Vaughan had other ideas.

The irrepressible Vaughan, who regarded the Court's action as a personal affront, pledged that he would be personally responsible for the Court's reversing its decision. He swiftly executed a three-pronged campaign to achieve this end. First, he went to Marblehead and persuaded over 100 leading fishermen to send a strongly worded petition to the General Court in which they promised "to furnish Vessels in 14 Days for 3500 men"<sup>94</sup> if Vaughan's plan for a surprise assault upon Louisbourg was accepted. He also urged "more than 200 principle Gentlemen in Boston" to petition the Court to accept his scheme. Second, Vaughan assiduously fanned the dying embers of Shirley's enthusiasm for the plan. He induced the Governor to "make one push more at this time in the affair."<sup>95</sup> Third, to strengthen Shirley's position in his renewed attempt to have the plan accepted by the Court, Vaughan urged that a detailed plan of the proposed attack should be presented to the members and defended in person by Bradstreet and Captain Loring, who had returned from Cape Breton the preceding month.<sup>96</sup> Vaughan confidently expected that in such a confrontation the opponents of his scheme would be immediately placed upon the defensive and eventually routed.

The plan<sup>97</sup> that was finally presented to the Court envisaged a surprise assault upon Louisbourg early in the spring by a volunteer force of 3000 New Englanders. These troops were to sail in fishing vessels to Canso, the "place of Rendezvous"<sup>98</sup>, and from Canso the fleet was to proceed to Gabarus Bay, arriving there "by Dusk". Whale boats, each equipped with two ladders, fifteen feet long, were

to be used to land the troops by cover of darkness. Then a simultaneous assault was planned on the Grand Battery and at various strategic points along the walls of the fortress:

it will be Absolutely Necessary to appoint a time to Strike the Blow all at Once which can be done by Agreeing upon a Certain hour just before Day which is the Sleepiest time, and to the Commanding Officer of each Detachment to know the time, and when the time comes, by his Watch to begin without any further Ceremony, The Enemy finding themselves Attack'd at so many different places at Once its probable that it will breed such Confusion among them that Our Men will have time to get in Unmolested.

If for some unforeseen reason the original assault was repulsed, the attacking force was to bombard the fortress with the "12 Nine Pounders and Two Small Mortars" in order "to make Breaches in their Walls and then to Storm them." If the bombardment with such heavy artillery failed to breach the walls, the besiegers were to be satisfied with capturing the Grand Battery and with awaiting "an attack by Sea from England."<sup>99</sup>

The petition of the Marblehead fishermen which was sent to the General Court on January 30 was accompanied by a brief message from Shirley.<sup>100</sup> The governor asserted that since the Marblehead fishermen were clearly reflecting the general mood prevailing throughout the maritime regions of the colony, the Court was under an obligation to reconsider the proposal to surprise Louisbourg. A committee of both houses was therefore appointed to take another look at the matter.<sup>101</sup> Four days later, on February 3, accompanying the petition of "a great number of merchants, traders and other inhabitants of Boston . . . praying that an Expedition . . . may be undertaken",<sup>102</sup> Shirley sent another message to the General Court. After considering the main feature of the Vaughan-Bradstreet plan for the execution of the assault, Shirley emphasized that any such expedition would be supported by the neighbouring governments of New York, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island and that in all probability the British government would gladly reimburse the Massachusetts government for much of the expense involved in the expedition.<sup>103</sup>

After examining the plan of action and questioning Bradstreet and Loring and other Massachusetts residents who had been traders at Louisbourg, the committee that had been formed on January 30 presented its eagerly awaited report on February 5. It was recommended

that it is incumbent upon this Government to Embrace this favourable Opportunity to Attempt the reduction thereof; And they humbly propose that His Excellency the



Captain General be desired to give forth his Proclamation to Encourage the Enlistment of three Thousand Voluntiers under such Officers as he shall appoint; That there be delivered to Each man a Blanket, that one month's pay be Advanc'd & that they be entitul'd to all the Plunder;

That Provision be made for the furnishing of necessary Warlike Stores for the Expedition . . . That a Committee be appointed to procure & fit Vessels to serve as Transports to be ready to depart by the beginning of March . . . That Application be forthwith made to the Governments of New York, the Jerseys, Pensylvania, New Hampshire, Connecticut & Rhode Island to furnish their respective Quotas of Men & Vessels to Accompany or follow the Force of this Province.<sup>104</sup>

The Committee's resolution was hotly debated in the House of Representatives until late in the evening on February 5. When the roll was finally taken the resolution passed by the narrowest margin of one vote.<sup>105</sup> It was rumoured that the resolution passed only because "of the absence of several members who were known to be against it."<sup>106</sup> Vaughan's "mad scheme" was to be implemented. Vaughan's tenacity had been rewarded; Shirley had a vast new reservoir of patronage to dispense, and Annapolis Royal was safe. The Boston merchants had the pleasant prospect of large supply orders to fill, and the Massachusetts fishermen, driven from the cod-fishing grounds by the French, had the opportunity to transport troops and supplies to Cape Breton—of course for a price.

By the joint efforts of Vaughan and Shirley the proposal to mount a New England assault upon Louisbourg had been accepted by the General Court. Without Vaughan's enthusiasm and persistence and the governor's active support the plan would never have been accepted in February, 1745.

## NOTES

1. G. S. Kimball (ed.), *The Correspondence of the Colonial Governors of Rhode Island 1723-1775* (Boston, 1902), I, 258-9, Governor Clinton to Governor Greene, May 28, 1744.
2. V. Parsons, *The Life of Sir William Pepperrell, Bart.* (Boston, 1856), 41-2, Shirley to Pepperrell, Oct. 10, 1743.
3. G. A. Wood, *William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts, 1741-1756* (New York, 1920), 114-131.
4. For an excellent account of Shirley's successful drive for the control of patronage see J. A. Schutz, *William Shirley, King's Governor of Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill, 1961), 80-85.
5. *Journals of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, 1744-1745* (Boston, 1940), Vol. XXI, 8-11.
6. *Ibid.*, 10.



7. *Pennsylvania Journal or Weekly Advertiser*, June 28, 1744.
8. *Journals of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, 1744-5*, Vol. XXI, 15-16.
9. J. R. Bartlett (ed.), *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England, 1741 to 1756* (Providence, 1860), V, 87-94. N. Bouton (ed.), *Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New Hampshire from 1738 to 1749* (Nashua, 1871), V, 232-235.
10. *Journals of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, 1744-5*, Vol. XXI, 31: "On the Report of the Committee upon Defence, Voted, That the Captain General be desired with all possible Speed to give Order to raise five Hundred effective Men, to be disposed of for the further Defence both of the Eastern and Western Frontier Towns of the Province, in Addition to the five Hundred Men now to be raised, be continued in the Pay of the Province till the 15th day of October next, and no longer."
11. Public Archives of Canada (P.A.C.), Archives Coloniales (A.C.), C11B Vol. 26, f. 3, DuQuesnel and Bigot to Maurepas, May 9, 1744.
12. This information can be found in the valuable "Admiraute et Conseil des Prises", P.A.C. Archives Nationale (A.N.), G. 5, Vol. 253, Carton 258.
13. *Ibid.* See also the *Pennsylvania Journal or Weekly Advertiser*, June 28, 1744 to August 2, 1744 and also the *Boston Weekly News-Letter* for the same period.
14. See especially the report from Boston in the *Pennsylvania Journal or Weekly Advertiser*, July 4, 1744.
15. *Ibid.*
16. P.A.C., A.N., G 5, Vol. 253, Carton 258, "Admiraute et Conseil des Prises".
17. *Pennsylvania Journal or Weekly Advertiser*, July 11, 1744.
18. H. M. Chapin, *Rhode Island Privateers in King George's War 1739-1748* (Providence, 1926), 11.
19. *Pennsylvania Journal or Weekly Advertiser*, Nov. 1, 1744.
20. H. M. Chapin, *Rhode Island Privateers*, 11.
21. P.A.C., A.C., C11 B, Vol. 21, Du Chambon and Bigot to Maurepas, Nov. 4, 1744.
22. *Pennsylvania Journal*, Nov. 1, 1744.
23. P.A.C., A.C., C11 A, Vol. 89, Hocquart to Maurepas, Oct. 9, 1744.
24. *Ibid.*, A.N. G5, Vol. 253, Carton 258, "Admiraute et Conseil des Prises".
25. A careful reading of contemporary newspapers makes it clear that the Rhode Island privateers were especially numerous, active, and successful during the 1744 privateering war with France.
26. It should probably be pointed out that if one takes into consideration the total number and value of prizes taken by the French and British privateers in North Atlantic waters in the latter half of 1744, the British privateers were more successful. However, for the purpose of this article, only shipping directly concerned with Cape Breton and Massachusetts or New England has been considered.
27. C. H. Lincoln (ed.), *Correspondence of William Shirley* (New York, 1912), I, 126.
28. *Pennsylvania Journal*, June 14, June 21, 1744.

29. Lincoln, *Shirley Correspondence*, I, 137, Shirley to the Lords of Trade, July 25, 1744.
30. *Journals of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, 1744-1745*, Vol. XXI, 29.
31. N. Bouton (ed.), *Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New Hampshire From 1738 to 1749*, V, 235, "Establishment of the Officers' Pay in Massachusetts on the Expedition Against Louisbourg".
32. P.A.C., P.R.O. A 26, Mascarene to Shirley, June 8, 1744. "The heavy loss to His Majesty's Service has sustain'd by the Surprise of Canso and the Troops being carried to Louisbourg, where we hear they are to remain Prisoners of War for one year, whereby we are utterly deprived of all hopes of their Assistance, and as the weak Condition of this Garrison and the ill state of the Fortification make it highly probable that the Enemy will immediately make some vigorous attempts against us before the Garrison is reinforced from England, and the Works thoroughly repaired; We think it our indispensable Duty to Apply to your Excellency the Honourable Council and the Honourable Gentlemen of the Assembly for your aid and assistance in this dangerous conjuncture, and that you'll please immediately order a Body of at least 200 men well armed to be transported hither under their proper officers victuall'd for the time you'll think proper to leave them for our Security, to help us Defend this important Fort!
33. *Journals of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, 1744-1745*, Vol. XXI, 30-42.
34. *Ibid.*, 47.
35. *Ibid.*, 49.
36. *Ibid.*, 58.
37. P.A.C., P.R.O. A 26, Mascarene to Shirley, July 7, 1744.
38. Lincoln, *Shirley Correspondence*, I, 135, Shirley to the Lords of Trade, July 25, 1744.
39. T. B. Akins, *Selections from The Public Documents of the Province of Nova Scotia* (Halifax, 1869), 146, Mascarene to Shirley, Dec. 1744.
40. Lincoln, *Shirley Correspondence*, I, 143, "Royal Order Approving Conduct of William Shirley, Sept. 6, 1744".
41. *Journals of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, 1744-1745*, Vol. XXI, 85.
42. Lincoln, *Shirley Correspondence*, I, 153, Shirley to Jonathan Law, November 19, 1744.
43. P.A.C., Adm. I, 3817, Shirley to the Lords of the Admiralty, December 7, 1744.
44. Lincoln, *Shirley Correspondence*, I, 146, Shirley to the Duke of Newcastle, September 22, 1744.
45. P.A.C., C11B, 26, Du Chambon and Bigot to Maurepas, November 20, 1744.
46. *Ibid.*, Du Chambon and Bigot to Maurepas, November 23, 1744.
47. *Collection De Manuscrits Contenant Lettres, Mémoires, Et Autres Documents Historique Relatifs A la Nouvelle-France* (Quebec, 1884) III, 213-215, "Mémoire Sur La Nouvelle Angleterre Par Monsieur Doloboratz, November 19, 1744".
48. Lincoln, *Shirley Correspondence*, I, 159, Shirley to the Duke of Newcastle, January 5, 1745.

49. P.A.C., Admiralty Papers, I, 3817, Shirley to the Lords of the Admiralty, November 14, 1744.
50. Clements Library (CL), George Clinton Papers, Newcastle to Clinton, January 3, 1745. Massachusetts Historical Society (M.H.S.), Belknap Papers, Newcastle to Shirley, January 3, 1745.
51. Lincoln, *Shirley Correspondence*, I, 152, Shirley to Benning Wentworth, November 10, 1744.
52. P.A.C., Admiralty Papers I, 3817, Shirley to the Lords of the Admiralty, December 7, 1744.
53. *Ibid.*
54. E. B. O'Callaghan (ed.), *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (Albany, 1855), VI, 182-184, Lieutenant-Governor Clarke to Newcastle, April 22, 1744.
55. *Ibid.*, 229, Clarke to Newcastle, June or July, 1743.
56. *Ibid.*, 183, Clarke to Newcastle, April 22, 1744.
57. P.A.C., Admiralty Papers I, 3817, Shirley to the Lords of the Admiralty, December 4, 1744.
58. *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 1st Ser., (1798) V, 202-205, "The Importance of Cape-Breton to the Nation—Humbly Represented by Robert Auchmuty, Judge of His Majesty's Court of Vice-Admiralty for the Provinces of the Massachusetts-Bay And New-Hampshire, in New England, April 9, 1744".
59. *Ibid.*, 205.
60. P.A.C., P.R.O. A.26, Christopher Kilby to Newcastle, October 8, 1744.
61. See P.A.C., Admiralty Papers, I, 2655, for the description of Louisbourg made by Kilby's "kinsmen".
62. P.A.C., P.R.O. A.26, Kilby to Newcastle, October 8, 1744.
63. P.R.O. C.O. 5, 884, Kilby to the Board of Trade, April 3, 1744, quoted in Wood, *William Shirley*, 227.
64. *Ibid.*
65. P.A.C., P.R.O. A.26, Kilby to Newcastle, October 8, 1744.
66. P.A.C., P.R.O. C.O. 5900, Kilby to Earl of Harrington, April 22, 1745.
67. *Ibid.*
68. P.A.C., Admiralty Papers, I, 3817, Shirley to the Lords of the Admiralty, December 7, 1744.
69. *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1929), II, 578.
70. *Ibid.*
71. L. E. DeForest (ed.), *Louisbourg Journals 1745* (N.Y. 1932), 171, "Colonel John Bradstreet's Journal".
72. W. Goold, "Col. William Vaughan, Of Matinicus and Damariscotta", *Maine Historical Society Proceedings* (Portland, 1881), VIII, 295, 302. On the whole, Goold's article is unsatisfactory both in content and in style.
73. New Hampshire Historical Society (N.H.H.S.), Vaughan Papers, "The Memorial of William Vaughan of Damariscotta" sent to Newcastle in 1745.
74. J. Belknap, *The History of New Hampshire* (Boston, 1813), II, 154.



75. *Ibid.*

76. N.H.H.S., Vaughan Papers, J. T. Mason to Newcastle, October 28, 1745.

77. W. Douglass, *A Summary Historical and Political of the First Planting, Progressive Improvements, and Present State of the British Settlements in North American* (London, 1760), I, 348.

78. Belknap, *History of New Hampshire*, I, 155.

79. N.H.H.S., Vaughan Papers, J. T. Mason to Newcastle, October 28, 1745.

80. *Ibid.*, "Memorial of William Vaughan", 1745.

81. For Vaughan's claim see *Ibid.*:

"That your Memorialist's Design in thus quitting his Settlement was to travel through the Provinces of Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire to enquire into the Strength and Circumstances of Louisburgh, & the other French Settlements on, or adjoining to the Island of Cape Breton: & this he performed with infinite Fatigue & Hazard during the last Winter.

That your Memorialist met with several intelligent Men who had been Prisoners there the Summer before & were good Pilots; from whom he learnt the Strength (or rather Weakness) of the Enemy & such other Particulars as might encourage an Undertaking against them.

That your Memorialist likewise calculated the Force that might be raised to attack them, & having digested the whole into a regular Scheme, about the first of December last he waited on their Excellencies William Shirley & Benning Wentworth . . . ."

For Bradstreet's claim see DeForest, *Louisbourg Journals 1745*, 171, "Colonel John Bradstreet's Journal":

"I was an Officer in the late Lieut. General Philipps's Regiment, taken by the French at Canso in June 1744, and carry'd to Louisbourg, where I had an opportunity of informing myself of the State and Condition of the Said Place, and of Laying a Plan for the attacking thereof; which I communicated to Governor Shirley at Boston in December following."

82. As far as Shirley was concerned, Vaughan first proposed the plan to attack Louisbourg. N.H.H.S., Vaughan Papers, Shirley to Newcastle, March 23, 1745.

83. *Ibid.*

84. Lincoln, *Shirley Correspondence*, I, 160, Shirley to the General Court, Jan. 9, 1745.

85. G. W. Wood deprecated the view that Vaughan was instrumental in persuading Shirley to advocate a New England attack upon Louisbourg. Rather, Wood was of the opinion that Shirley already had the idea and cleverly "made use of [Vaughan's] proposes and his energy . . . to promote interest in and sentiment for the Louisbourg expenditure" (Wood, *William Shirley*, 245). Wood's interpretation, now widely accepted, appears to be based not only upon a misreading of Shirley's mind but also upon a misreading of contemporary documents.

86. T. Hutchison, *The History of the Province of Massachusetts Bay . . . 1691-1750* (Boston, 1767), II, 408

87. M.S.A., "Court Records for Massachusetts, January 9, 1744/5".

88. Hutchison, *History of Massachusetts Bay*, II, 408-410.

89. *Ibid.*
90. M.S.A., "Court Records for Massachusetts, January 12, 1744/5".
91. *Ibid.*
92. Lincoln, *Shirley Correspondence*, I, 163, Shirley to Newcastle, January 15, 1745.
93. *Ibid.*, 164-165.
94. N.H.H.S., Vaughan Papers, Vaughan to Shirley, January 14, 1745.
95. *Ibid.*
96. *Ibid.*
97. Rhode Island Archives (R.I.A.), "Memorandum for an Attack upon Louisbourg". Enclosed in Shirley's letter to Governor Greene, January 29, 1745; N.H.H.S., "Cape Breton Expedition—Plan of Operations—February 1, 1745". It is interesting to note that Shirley had serious reservations regarding certain features of the plan. He referred to it as "a rough, inaccurate and imperfect scheme." P.R.O., Admiralty Papers, I, 3817, quoted in Wood, *William Shirley*, 246.
98. R.I.A., "Memorandum for an Attack upon Louisbourg", and N.H.H.S., "Cape Breton Expedition—Plan of Operations".
99. *Ibid.*
100. M.S.A., "Court Records for Massachusetts", January 19, 1744/5".
101. *Ibid.*
102. *Ibid.*, "Court Records for Massachusetts, January 23, 1744/5".
103. *Ibid.*
104. *Ibid.*, "Court Records for Massachusetts, January 25, 1744/5".
105. Hutchison, *History of Massachusetts Bay*, II, 411; Douglass, *Summary of the British Settlements in North America*, I, 349; T. Price, *Sermon on the Taking of Cape Breton* (Boston, 1747), 22; Kimball, *Governors of Rhode Island Correspondence*, I, 364, Governor Wanton to Richard Partridge, July 26, 1745.  
 In his circular letter sent to the various colonial governors, Shirley maintained that the vote on the committee's report was "a cheerfull and almost unanimous resolution of the Court to undertake this Important Business". See *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society*, XI, 254, Shirley to Law, January 29, 1745, and R.I.A., Shirley to Greene, January 29, 1745. Wood unquestionably accepted Shirley's veracity and totally disregarded various contemporary accounts which clearly contradict Shirley's statement (Wood, *William Shirley*, 255). Wood's position is entirely untenable. Shirley could not expect very much support from the other colonies if they seriously doubted Massachusetts' enthusiasm for the projected expedition. Consequently he did not hesitate to distort the facts.
106. Belknap, *History of New Hampshire*, II, 155.