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SEBASTIEN RALE VS. NEW ENGLAND: A CASE STUDY OF FRONTIER CONFLICT

By Kenneth M. Morrison

An Abstract of the Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts (in History).
June, 1970.

A study was made of the Jesuit missionary, Sebastien Rale, and his role in New England-New France relations. French and English primary and secondary materials were examined to give the broadest possible view of the man and to place him in historical context.

It was found that Sebastien Rale was not an agent of New France. The conflicting opinions surrounding the mission of Norridgewock and the border war of the 1720's were traced to the problems of Massachusetts-Abnaki relations. Rale's frequent and testy letters to the government of the Bay Colony were blunt reactions to what he viewed as religious and territorial threats against his mission.

The frontier conflict between 1713 and 1722 was not the result of French Imperial policy. The French insisted that the Abnakis were allies but refused active participation in the Indians' quarrel with New England. Policy was developed in Maine by the Jesuits. The missionaries were only secondarily interested in Quebec's desire to prevent Massachusetts' settlement of the Kennebec. With the declaration of war in July, 1722, however, the Jesuits left the Abnakis in the hands of the governor and the intendant of New France on whom the Indians relied for vital war supplies.

Finally, the controversial attack on Norridgewock was appraised. It was found that no secondary account had fully evaluated the sources. Examination led to the discovery of crucial inconsistencies in the

primary accounts of New England. The French sources were found to be based on the understandably confused impressions of the fleeing Indians. In large measure the English sources present the more valid picture: the sudden attack, the panicked confusion, and Sebastien Rale dying with gun in hand. After Rale's death the war drew to a close. Without Sebastien Rale's persuasion and determination, the Abnakis were not able to present a united front against colonial expansion.

SEBASTIEN RALE VS. NEW ENGLAND
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By
KENNETH M. MORRISON

A THESIS
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(in History)

The Graduate School
University of Maine
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June, 1970

PREFACE

Since his death at the age of seventy-two on August 23, 1724, Sebastien Rale's life has fascinated the historians of New England and New France. Both basic approaches are understandable. The French-Canadians with their historical tradition of remarkable frontier priests can hardly be censured for championing a similiar view of Rale. Then too, New England's equally fervent denunciation of the man as a ~~for~~mentor of cruel Indian wars is as comprehensible. There are, nonetheless, exceptions to this simple dichotomy. Many New England, American, and Canadian historians have insisted on a middle ground and have repudiated the emotional judgements of their countrymen.

What is unfortunate is that Rale has been too long considered apart from the tragic events for which he has been held responsible. It is futile to separate Rale from the rapidly deteriorating relations between the Abnakis and colonial Massachusetts. Effectively buffered from the French colonists by the rugged forests of northern Maine, the Abnakis' relations with them were free of conflict, but the same cannot be said of Massachusetts.

It is dangerous to judge the Abnakis by their actions after European contact. It is equally misleading to accuse the English settlers of intentional wrong-doing. In reality, no single race was responsible for the frontier conflict of the 1720's. At the same time, attitudes on the part of both red and white races can be identified as contributory causes.

European notions of superiority in confronting a native culture which was, by all standards of western progress, inferior, can be understood. Yet it was that very attitude which caused much of the subsequent cultural conflict. The Indian, existing in what soon became an archaic context-in European phraseology 'savage'-was denied absorption into the dominant culture. This left the Indian bewildered, confused and often, in the final analysis, fighting mad. Unfortunately, the colonists found that extermination, whether planned or unintentional, was an immediate, prompt, and effective solution to the Indians' opposition. The Indians themselves were not to learn complacent acceptance of their equivocal position in relation to the European colonization until it was much too late. Indian culture became a pre-eminently reactive one, conditioned not only by any given quarrel but by bitter experience. Sebastien Rale must be seen in the middle of that conflict.

For too long, Rale has been censured as being a major cause of the animosity between New England and New France without placing him in the context of Imperial relations. The fact that he was French and Catholic explains much of the tension underlying the conflict between Massachusetts and the Abnakis. It does not justify condemnation of the man as a French partisan, or for that matter, a French agent. A case can be made, in fact, that he caused severe headaches for the administrators of New France. If he relentlessly reminded the Governor and Council of Massachusetts of their roughshod treatment of the Kennebecs, he was no less tireless in badgering Vaudreuil and Begon into activating their supposed alliance with the Abnakis. Though Rale was French, his sentiments were clearly and irrevocably on

the side of the Abnakis.

My debts in researching and writing this thesis are many and varied. I have first, to thank Professor Alice R. Stewart for her helpful direction of the thesis through many drafts as well as her generous gift of her valuable time. I wish also to thank Professors Jerome J. Nadelhaft, Edward O. Schriver, and Leslie Decker, for their unfailing and excellent criticism.

I owe much to many institutions whose staffs were invariably kind and helpful. I am especially grateful to the staff of the Fogler Library of the University of Maine. The ladies of the Interlibrary Loan Office were extremely helpful in retrieving volumes of forgotten lore. Though space forbids expressing my real appreciation, I must acknowledge my debts to: Bangor Public Library; Boston Public Library; Maine Historical Society; Maine State Library; Massachusetts Historical Society; Massachusetts State Archives; McLennan Library, McGill University; Millinocket Community Library; and the Public Archives of Canada.

I wish to thank Professor Edgar McKay of the New England-Atlantic Provinces-Quebec Center at the University of Maine, and my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Percy E. Stewart for their generous grants which made it possible for me to do research at the Public Archives of Canada.

And to my roommates, who suffered much with great patience, I give my thanks.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Arch. Col.	Archives des Colonies
<u>Cal. of St. Pap.</u>	<u>Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1574-1733.</u> 40 vols. NCR Microcard Editions, 1965.
Me. His. Soc.	Maine Historical Society
Mass. Arch.	Massachusetts State Archives
Mass. His. Soc.	Massachusetts Historical Society
Min. Aff. Etr.	Ministère des Affaires Etrangères
<u>New York Colonial Documents</u>	O'Callaghan, E. B., ed. <u>Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York.</u> 15 vols. Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, 1855-61.

--NOTE--

Since England did not adopt the Gregorian calendar until 1752, the English documents used in this thesis are "Old Style." In all but one instance I have accepted the date as given on the document, though I have indicated, where appropriate, change of year: i.e. Jan. 1, 1715/16. The exception is my use of New Style dating (from the French sources) for the attack on Norridgewock in August, 1724.

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CHAPTER I

OF FRENCH AND INDIANS

In 1689 a struggle began between England and France for the control of the North American continent.¹ That contest went erratically through various phases. It began with King William's War and did not end until the surrender of Quebec in 1763. Queen Anne's War, a highly virulent outbreak of the Imperial conflict, ended in 1713 with the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht. For a time the great powers suspended their more aggressive designs and peace seemed to be a tangible reality. By the early 1720's the borders between New England and New France exploded into a bloody Indian war that threatened to fracture the delicate balance. England and France skirted the issues, however, and avoided a major confrontation.

New England was not so happily spared. Her relations with the Abnaki nation on her northern frontier had never been good. During both King William's and Queen Anne's Wars those Indians allied themselves with the French in a terrifying confederacy. After the Peace of Utrecht the Abnakis approached the Massachusetts settlers hoping to end the war. But despite the propitious peace, the wounds of the previous wars did not heal. Discussion and compromise failed and both sides finally again had recourse to war.

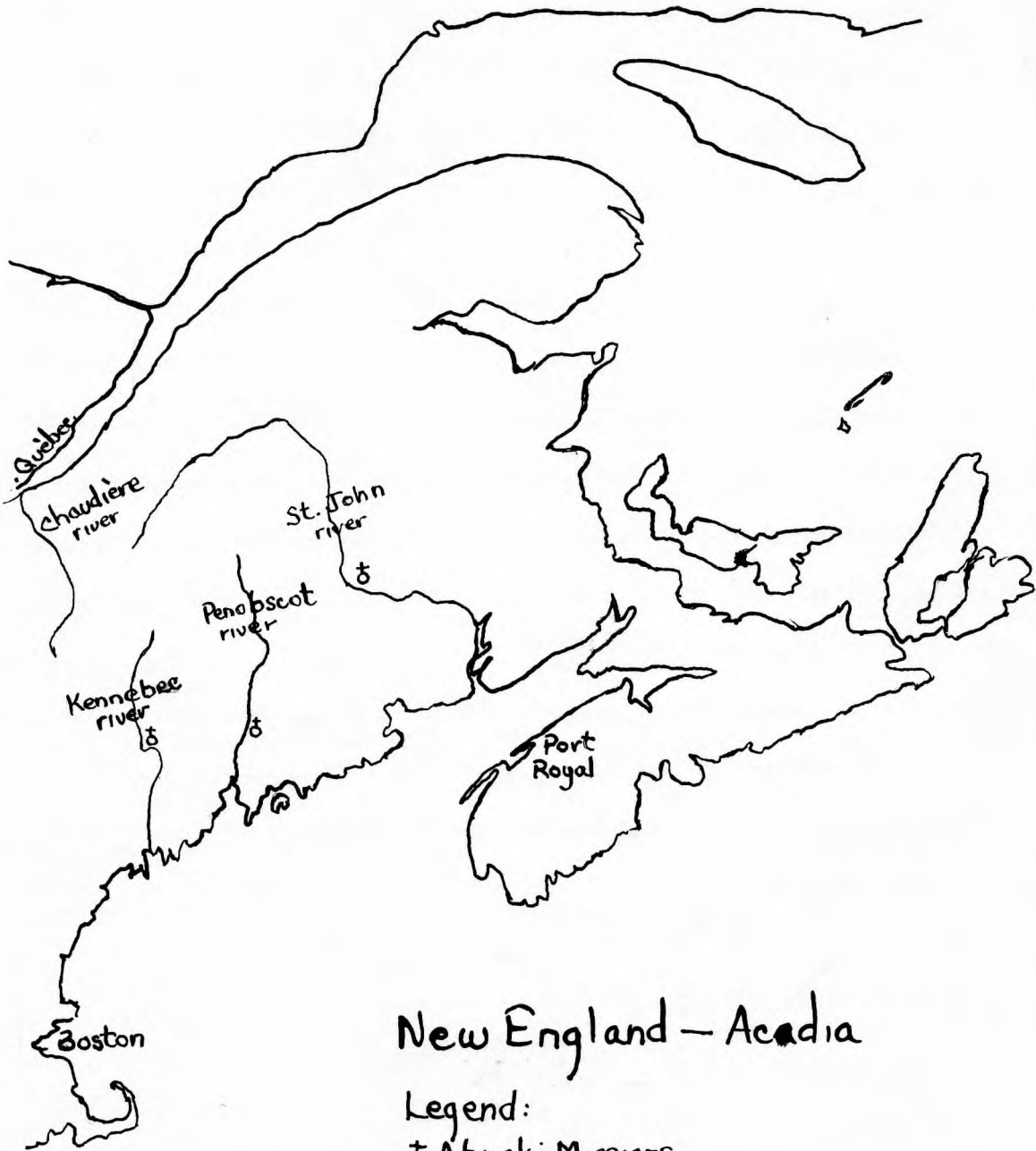
¹On the Imperial conflict see: Francis Parkman, A Half-Century of Conflict (Boston: Brown, Little and Company, 1905); Douglas E. Leach, The Northern Colonial Frontier, 1607-1763 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966); Howard H. Peckham, The Colonial Wars, 1689-1762 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

A central issue between New England and New France throughout the Imperial wars of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was the three Jesuit missions among the Abnakis on the Kennebec, Penobscot and St. John rivers. One missionary stands out among all others. Sebastien Rale, stationed on the Kennebec at Norridgewock, was not only closest to Massachusetts but her most vigorous opponent as well. Rale's role in King William's and Queen Anne's Wars remains largely undisputed because of a lack of primary materials.

As an impediment to Massachusetts-Abnaki reconciliation after Queen Anne's War, however, Rale's mission has aroused considerable controversy. There are several important, underlying issues. Did the Treaty of Utrecht cede the northern colonial frontier to Great Britain? Were the Kennebecs and later the Penobscots caught in a power struggle between England and France or was the conflict merely local? Did the Jesuits violate the terms of the peace to preserve the area for France? Although the official purpose of Rale's mission was the christianizing of the Abnakis, he was necessarily 'man on the scene' for New France. Though far removed in time, few historians have been able to approach him with more than a nominal degree of objectivity. His mission has frequently been evaluated on racial, national, or religious premises. Was he in fact an agitator of Indian warfare, or was he a holy, if not saintly, man who lived in loneliness for thirty years only to meet his death at the hands of the English while protecting his Indians?

Sebastien Rale was born in Portalier, France, on January 4, 1652. He received his early education from the Jesuit fathers and on

Source : James Truslow Adams, ed., Atlas of American History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), p. 39.



September 24, 1675, he entered that order as a novice at Dole. Eventually Rale became an instructor of grammar and humanities first at Carpentras, and later at Nîmes and Lyon.¹ Thus, Sebastien Rale was equipped for a life of luxury and intellectual attainment among the elite of Louis XIV's France. His destiny lay elsewhere, however, where he was to earn fame as a notable political intriguer.

At an age when most men have chosen their life careers, Sebastien Rale dedicated himself to the Canadian missions. Rale was thirty-seven years old when he embarked for New France on July 23, 1689. Arriving at Quebec in mid-autumn, he was assigned to the mission of the Reverend Fathers Bigots whose Indians had largely come from Maine after King Philip's War.² Here he set about acclimatizing himself-both to the weather and to the Indians. Their food disgusted him, and though he found snowshoes cumbersome, he astounded the savages with his adeptness in their use; indeed, they hardly believed

¹ Georges Goyau has discovered Rale's baptismal certificate which has corrected what has traditionally been held to be his birth-date. "Le P. Sébastien Racle," Revue d'Histoire des Missions, I (Sept., 1924), p. 163; Thomas Charland, following older views, gives the date as Jan. 4, 1657. "Rale, Sébastien," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, II, 1701-1740, David M. Hayne and André Vachon, eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), p. 542. There are many spellings of the Jesuit's name: Ralle, Rasles, Racle, and even Rawley. I have chosen Rale. It is most commonly used, and he used that form himself.

² Goyau, "Le P. Sébastien Racle," pp. 164-65; James Phinney Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England (Albany: John Munsell's Sons, 1894), p. 35; Arthur Melançon, Liste des Missionnaires-Jésuites: Nouvelle France et Louisiane, 1611-1800 (Montréal: Collège Sainte-Marie, 1929), p. 65; For a sketch of the Fathers Bigot see: Thomas Charland, "Bigot, Jacques," and "Bigot, Vincent," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, II, pp. 63-65.

that it was his first attempt.¹

It was there, in 1691, that he began his dictionary of the Abnaki language.² He spent hours in the smoky quarters of the Indians trying to master their difficult gutturals. Though his admirers assure us of his proficiency in Indian languages, the Indians laughed uproariously at his faltering efforts. These early days were undoubtedly frustrating, uncomfortable, and probably characterized by what today is called cultural shock.

Sebastien Rale's apprenticeship under the Bigots was consistent with the aims of the Society of Jesus. Realistically, the Jesuits emphasized that the Indian could not absorb Catholicism in European forms. They had learned from bitter experience that "knowing the physical, political, social and moral conditions of Indian life" was a necessary prerequisite to conversion. Typically, the Jesuits recognized the importance of their classic theological-philosophical preparation for the ministry but they coupled this with rigid study of native languages and cultures. "Their success depended," J. H. Kennedy believes, "upon their ability to transcend their natal inheritance while retaining their inspiration and then to bridge the

¹See Rale's description of his first years. "Letter from Father Sebastien Rasles, Missionary of the Society of Jesus in New France, to Monsieur his Brother, Oct. 12, 1723," Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents (New York: Pageant Book Company, 1959), LXVII, pp. 133-77.

²Rale's manuscript dictionary was taken by Captain Westbrook during his sudden attack on Norridgewock in the winter of 1721/22. It is now in the possession of Harvard University. It has been published by John Pickering, ed., Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1, New Series (Cambridge, 1833), pp. 370-574.

broad abyss between European and Indian culture."¹

This almost surprised appreciation was similar to Rale's reaction to the Indians. He believed that their oratorical abilities surpassed that of "most able Europeans."² Rale's acute observations of Indian folkways enabled him to become as expressive. He noticed that there was nothing to "equal the affection of the Savages for their children"³ and he used the image not only to explain his own relationship to them, but that of his God as well.

After being introduced to missionary life among the Abnakis, Rale was then ordered to the Illinois mission to assist Father Jacques Gravier. Having gone about half-way he was forced to winter at Michilimackinac. With the spring thaw he was again trudging through the wilds. The Illinois welcomed him with a feast of roasted dog-flesh, a tid-bit reserved for the most festive occasions. Here he remained for two years, until in 1694, he was assigned to the village of Norridgewock, the major town of the Abnakis on the Kennebec river.⁴

¹J. H. Kennedy, Jesuit and Savage in New France (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), p. 61, 91; see also George R. Healy, "The French Jesuits and the Idea of the Noble Savage," William and Mary Quarterly, XV (April, 1958), pp. 143-67.

²Rale to Brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 163.

³Ibid., p. 139, pp. 185-91. Rale impressed the Indians when he put this paternalism to practical use. The Indians had captured and adopted a young English child. Sebastien Rale took her into his care "and he taught her as did later Father Aubéry...." She ultimately became an Ursuline sister. Emma Lewis Coleman, New England Captives Carried to Canada (Portland: The Southworth Press, 1825), II, pp. 389-90.

⁴Baxter, Pioneers of New France, pp. 36-39; Rale to Brother, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 149-77; Charland, "Rale, Sébastien," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, II, p. 543.

Norridgewock was the most important of the Abnaki villages because of its strategic location rather than its size.¹ It was there, within the bounds of the present town of Madison, that the Society of Jesus maintained, in Massachusetts' estimation, a notorious outpost of New France. Prior to the 1690's, however, Massachusetts had ignored the French missionaries on the northern frontier. Soon afterward the two Bigots, and then Sebastien Rale, became embroiled in the Norridgewock Abnakis' relations with Massachusetts Bay.

Maine-Acadia had been a legitimate ground for the Jesuits since the early seventeenth century. In 1607 Henry IV assigned Fathers Biard and Masse to Port Royal. By 1613 they had begun their own mission, St. Sauveur, on Mt. Desert Island. Within months, however, Samuel Argall had destroyed the fledgling colony on an expedition patrolling Virginia's northern waters.²

¹Norridgewock was never large. In 1708 the number of warriors was given as 25. At the same time, the Penobscot village had 78 men. Census of the Indians, 1708, Acadia, Public Archives of Canada, M. G. 18, F 18, p. 26. Later, during Rale's War the number increased when the Abnakis' Indian allies came to their aid. In September, 1722, there were 160 warriors at the village. Rapport de Messieurs de Vaudreuil et Begon, Oct. 17, 1722, Collection de Manuscrits contenant lettres, Mémoires, et autres documents historiques relatifs à la Nouvelle-France (Québec: Législature de Québec, 1884), III, p. 87.

²Rev. P. F. X. de Charlevoix, History and General Description of New France, J. G. Shea, ed. (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1900), I, pp. 260-83; John Fiske, New France and New England (Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1902), pp. 74-78; J. Bartlet Brebner, New England's Outpost, Acadia before the Conquest of Canada (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927), pp. 19-20; cf. Lucien Campeau, Monumenta Novae Franciae, La Première Mission d'Acadie, (1602-1616) (Québec: Les Presses de L'Université Laval, 1967).

The Jesuits were more successful in the 1640's and their work, though well known to the English, was not contested. Gabriel Druillettes, the first missionary on the Kennebec, left Quebec in August, 1646.¹ The Indians on the river were pleased with his arrival though he demanded that they repudiate liquor, their petty jealousies, as well as their sorcerers. He returned to Quebec the following year with high praises from the Kennebecs. "This man is not like our Sorcerers and medicine men," they marveled, "they always demand something for regard, he never; they spend no time with our sick; he is with them night and day."²

Druillettes was soon to return to Norridgewock. He was on the Kennebec in 1650 and 1651. On both occasions he had another duty in addition to his missionary ones. He was sent to Boston and Plymouth to sound out the authorities on a proposed alliance between New France and New England against the Iroquois. Though his career as a diplomat was notable for its failure, his presence on the Kennebec was decisive for the future of the Abnakis. Druillettes gained the Abnakis' confidence and they remembered the Kennebec-Chaudière route to Quebec and the black-robos. Significantly, Massachusetts had not opposed Druillettes' presence on the river.

By the time of Sebastien Rale's arrival on the Kennebec in 1694, however, the Bay Colony had begun to view the missions with more

¹ John Marshall Brown, "The Mission of the Assumption on the River Kennebec, 1646-1652," *Me. His. Soc., Collections*, 2nd ser. (Portland: The Society, 1890), I, pp. 87-99; Lucien Campeau, "Druillettes, Gabriel," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, I, pp. 281-82.

² Brown, "The Mission of the Assumption on the River Kennebec, 1646-1652," pp. 92-94.

hostility. Bearing the full brunt of the colonial wars, Massachusetts consistently attempted to convince the Abnakis that they should oust the Catholic missionaries, though she was invariably unsuccessful. In 1698, for example, the Abnakis told the commissioners from Massachusetts that "the good missionaries will not be driven away."¹ On the other hand, Rale's task was made immensely more difficult because the Abnakis knew that the English despised the Jesuits. The Indians were not above using a political asset to good advantage, and, on one occasion, they told the commissioners that they wished the priests removed.²

When the Indians reversed their position, it is understandable that the English accused the Jesuits of political intrigue. "We will do nothing of the kind," the Abnakis answered on another occasion. "You may try to make us pray as you do, but you will not succeed."³ The English were determined to strike at what they saw as the cause of the Abnakis' refusal to accept their authority and passed a law in 1700 to effect the French priests removal.⁴

In the same year the Jesuits built a new chapel at Norridgewock which Massachusetts inevitably viewed as "a French encroachment."⁵ Recognizing the Abnakis' tardiness in carrying out

¹Quoted by John Gilmary Shea, The Catholic Church in Colonial Days, 1521-1763 (New York: John G. Shea, 1886), p. 596.

²Cotton Mather, "Decennium Luctuosum," in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., Narratives of the Indian Wars, 1675-1699 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), p. 273.

³Letter by Jacques Bigot, Oct. 26, 1699, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXV, pp. 93-95.

⁴Mass. Arch. 11: 148-149A.

⁵To Mr. Stoughton, Oct. 30, 1700, Mass. Arch. 28: 80.

her law against the priests, Massachusetts resolved that "Three able Learned Orthodox ministers should be sent speedily to the Eastern Indians and those of Merrimac River...."¹ But the Abnakis had accepted Catholicism and they were determined to preserve it. "I assure you," an Abnaki representative told Governor Callières, "that I wish to pray to God like the French."²

The Abnaki spokesman underscored the fact that it was the missionaries who tied the Indian so strongly to the French. Ironically, it was in the Abnakis' interest to ally themselves with the English because they depended upon them for trade and often for food.³ But the English settlers directly challenged their way of life, and coupled with the Abnakis' conversion by the Jesuits caused them to lean heavily towards the French.

Unlike the Indians of southern New England, the Abnakis were not sedentary. While they also maintained permanent villages where their agriculture centered, these were little more than base camps. In the spring and fall, they went to the sea at the mouths of the rivers where they lived on shellfish. During the long hard winters their hunters could be found in the forest around Moosehead and Mt. Katahdin

¹ Emma Lewis Coleman, New England Captives, I, pp. 60-61.

² Conférence entre les sauvages Abenakis et M. Callières, Oct. 1, 1702, Arch. Col. Série F 3, Collection Moreau St. Mery, vol. 2-2, pp. 381-83.

³ Bomazeen and Skanwenes of Norridgewock requested on one occasion, for example: "Supplies of Corne, Meale, White Blankets, white Stockin cloth, red pennistone, Shirts, Dussils, Hatchets, Kettles, Duck Shot and Powder. They also asked for some "blew Broadcloth, Tobacco, Scissors, Needles, and Thread," Message of Indians, Dec. 27, 1701, Baxter Manuscripts, Documentary History of the State of Maine (Portland: Lefavor-Tower Company, 1916), XXIII, p. 34.

where game was more plentiful.¹

The slowly advancing settlements of Massachusetts threatened to block the Abnakis' route to the sea. The fur trade also cut to the heart of Indian existence. English desire for furs led the Abnakis unwittingly to overhunt moose, deer and caribou to the point where these animals were faced with extinction and the Indian with starvation. Massachusetts added insult to unintentional injury and insisted that the Indians acknowledge the British sovereign. The Abnakis were left confused. A great deal of the interracial dialogue passed over their heads. Those points which conflicted with their interests they conveniently ignored. This behavior the Massachusetts government could not understand and refused to tolerate. And there were always the Jesuits, who, in the eyes of Massachusetts, bore the brunt of the responsibility for the Abnakis' intransigence.

Some of the English settlers, however, realized that the Abnakis had some real complaints. One settler, writing from Pemaquid in September, 1675, made observations that can be applied to the Abnakis throughout their relationship with the English. "Sir," Thomas Gardner began, "I do not find by any thing I can discern that the Indians East of us ar in the least our Ennimies...." If they fled from approaching boats or from English men generally, they had "good Reason," Gardner continued, "for thay well Know it may Cost them their

¹ James Phinney Baxter, "The Abnakis and their Ethnic Relations," Me. His. Soc., Collections, 2nd ser. (Portland: The Society, 1892), III, pp. 13-40; Fannie H. Eckstorm, "The Indians of Maine," in L. C. Hatch, ed., Maine: A History (New York: The American Historical Society, 1919), I, pp. 43-64.

Lives if the wild fisherman meet with them".¹

A more acute assessment of Massachusetts' impact on the Abnakis was made by Thomas Bannister in his testimony before the Council of Trade and Plantations In July 1715. Bannister thought the English settlers had "untaught them [the Abnakis] the genuine dictates of Nature and...simplicity wch. was verry remarkable at our arriveall, and instead thereof implanted our own vices and follies." Thus, while he believed that French machinations among the Abnakis made Massachusetts' task more difficult, he noted that the "repeated injuries and provocations" of the settlers were also responsible for bad relations. "No wonder then," he said, "that they have conceiv'd an opinion that our design is wholly to exterminate and destroy them; and to this our faithlessness in Treatys has verry much concur'd...." It was a sorry picture he sketched before the Council: "We villifie them with all manner of names, and opprobrious language, cheat abuse and beat them, sometimes to the loss of limbs, pelt them with stones and set dogs upon them."²

Contemporary English opinion was not, however, always so generous to the Indians. Samuel Penhallow said the Abnakis were "as implacable in their revenge, as they are terrible in the execution of it.... No courtesy will ever oblige them to gratitude; for their greatest benefactors have frequently fallen as victims to their fury."³

¹Letter Tho^s Gardner to Gov. Leverett, Sept. 22, 1675, Baxter, VI, pp. 92-93.

²Thomas Bannister to the Council of Trade and Plantations, July 15, 1715, Cal. of St. Pap. XXVIII, pp. 233-35.

³Samuel Penhallow, The History of the Wars of New England with the Eastern Indians (Cincinnati: J. Harpel, 1859), p. 13.

Penhallow's and Bannister's assessments differed, perhaps, because their objectives were different. Penhallow was determined to resettle Maine after Queen Anne's War; Bannister pleaded for reasonable limits to those settlements. But Penhallow correctly noted that the Abnakis pursued their wars with single-minded fervor.

Both Bannister and LaPotherie mention an incident which infuriated the Abnakis and reinforced their impressions of English treachery. During King William's War several of the Indians had gone to Pemaquid, under a flag of truce, to parlay with the English about several of their tribe being held captive in Boston. Contrary to all normal conventions of truce the Indians were arrested and four others under similiar circumstances were "pitilessly killed" at Saco. LaPotherie was sympathetic to the Abnakis but stoically noted that "in some cases misfortune is beneficial" in keeping the Abnakis attached to the French.¹

If such incidents could be discontinued as acts of war, they might be excused as insignificant. But the Abnakis' trust had been strained by similar actions long before. "These Indians are much attached to us," de Champigny assured Pontchartrain in 1691, "and irreconcilable enemies of the English in consequence of a piece of treachery the latter had perpetrated on them some years ago, killing and massacring a large number of their people who had visited them in good faith."²

¹Narrative of the most remarkable Occurences in Canada, 1694, 1695, E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York (Albany: Weed, Parson and Company, 1855), IX, pp. 613-16.

²M. de Champigny to M. de Pontchartrain, May 10, 1691, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 498.

When Rale arrived on the Kennebec these incidents had created a situation beyond his control. Norridgewock's proximity to the English was in itself responsible for much of the turmoil that marred Rale's stay among the Abnakis. Equally important was the legacy of bitterness between the Kennebecs and Massachusetts Bay. As Rale was to discover later, Massachusetts would, on the weakest of evidence, accuse him of causing that animosity. In reality, however, Rale's first years on the Kennebec were innocuous. It has traditionally been held that Norridgewock was under his sole care in 1694, but that is not correct. Rale was, as Lord, Sexton and Harrington discovered, Father Vincent Bigot's companion.¹

Their early relationship was probably excellent, for Bigot had guided Rale after his arrival in New France. But later, during the short interval of peace between King William's and Queen Anne's Wars there seems to have been some dispute between Rale and Vincent Bigot. While their differences are unclear, it may have been due to Vincent Bigot's advocacy of Abnaki-Massachusetts conferences to settle outstanding issues. The problem was resolved by removing Rale and by sending Jacques Bigot in his place.² The squabble and Rale's removal seems consistent with Governor Callières policy at that time. By 1699 he felt that an entente between the English and the Abnakis was

¹For the older view see J. P. Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 36ff; but see also Robert H. Lord, John E. Sexton and Edward T. Harrington, The History of the Archdiocese of Boston (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1944), I, p. 56.

²Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 56.

desirable.¹

Father Rale's absence was shortlived. In 1698 the Fathers Bigot established a new mission for a group of Indians who had been converted by Sebastien Rale.² By 1701, one of the Bigots was also involved in difficulties with the authorities. Brouillan, Governor of Acadia, noted that Bigot did not give the King's interests the same care as Father Gaulin had on the Penobscot. The Bigots were recalled and Father Rale was sent back to the Kennebec.³

In view of these and like altercations between the Jesuits and the King's agents, it is difficult to make meaningful generalizations about the priests prior to 1713. Parkman remarked that "before the end of the seventeenth century the functions of the Canadian Jesuit had become as much political as religious...."⁴ But individual priests had their own idiosyncrasies. The official government viewpoint is obvious, as the incident between Rale and Bigot and later the Bigots and Brouillan indicates. "If from 1690 an interest is evinced in their [the priests'] work," Shea noted of New France's administrators,

¹Lettre de Monsieur de Callières au Ministre, March 17, 1699, Collection de Manuscrits, II, p. 312; Governor Lincoln, "Mss. papers: Account of the Catholic Missions in Maine," Me. His. Soc., Collections, 1st ser. (Portland: Day, Fraser & Co., 1831), I, p. 329.

²Rale to Brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 183-93; Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 67.

³Mémoire Joint à la lettre de Monsieur du Brouillan, Oct. 6, 1701, Arch. Col., C II D, vol. 4, part I, p. 146; Abrégé d'une lettre de Monsieur de Brouillan au Ministre, Oct. 30, 1701, Collection de Manuscrits, II, pp. 385-86; Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 80.

⁴Parkman, Half-Century of Conflict, I, p. 215.

"it was rather to use them as instruments of the government to further its political, military, or commercial views...."¹ Yet it is erroneous to insist that their sole inspiration was concern for the interests of Louis XIV. The Jesuit was, it is true, subject to God, his superiors, and his king. Not surprisingly, these demands sometimes clashed. The Jesuits' concern "for the corporate goal of the mission in Canada: the conversion of the heathens" seems to have been primary, nonetheless.²

The variety of the missionaries' personal viewpoints sometimes led the priests to see things differently from their political superiors. Father Simon, missionary among the Malecites on the St. John River, was known to have upbraided his savages for their atrocities against the English. "'I have severely reprehended you many times for committing barbarities on captives' the franciscan thundered at the Indians." John Gyles, an English captive among the Malicites related that the priest continued his denunciations: "The English are better people than yourselves," and he said that "the Almighty thinks kindly of them, for He forgives the wayward who know no better. And He will remarkably punish the wretches who inflict tortures on them."³ Father Simon was harshly condemned for those words.

The king regarded another incident more seriously. Fathers Baudoin and Petit had refused absolution to the Indians who were

¹Shea, The Catholic Church in Colonial Days, p. 592.

²Kennedy, Jesuit and Savage in New France, p. 80.

³Stuart Trueman, The Ordeal of John Gyles (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Ltd., 1966), pp. 68-69; Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 33.

engaged in warfare against the English. Louis XIV became quite annoyed with the conduct of two priests. The minister wrote a strong note to the Bishop of Quebec insisting that he "stop the continuation of these disorders, that these ecclesiastiques no longer interfere in temporal affairs...." Parkman's characterization of the eighteenth century Jesuit as "half-missionary and half agent of the king"¹ requires significant modification.

More often than not, however, the Jesuit in Acadia accepted the practical implications of French colonial policy though he attempted to mold it to his views. If the colony was at war, the Jesuit was caught in an even more delicate situation than was usual. At such times the Indians worked directly with and under French soldiers. There was little that the Jesuit could do but make the best of the situation. Thus Sebastien Rale's statements as to his role in Queen Anne's War must be put into their proper context.

Just prior to the outbreak of war, Massachusetts attempted to assure the Abnakis' neutrality. According to Rale, Dudley pleaded with him not to "influence your Indians to make war upon us." When Rale suavely replied "My religion and my office of Priest were a security that I would give them only exhortations to peace,"² he was

¹Lettre du Ministre à Monsieur L'Evêque de Québec, May 8, 1694, Collection de Manuscripts, II, pp. 155-56; Parkman, A Half-Century of Conflict, I, p. 217.

²Rale to Brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 197-203. It should be noted that Rale's presence at this meeting is not substantiated by English testimony. Penhallow, who was present, fails to mention it. Rale's statement to that effect is important, nonetheless, because of his later statement to Vaudreuil. cf. Penhallow, History of the Wars of New England, pp. 16-17.

seemingly accepting the Abnakis' neutrality. Soon after, however, the Abnakis became actively engaged in war. Rale's comments to them are revealing: "I exhorted them," he later recalled, "...to observe strictly the Laws of war, to practice no cruelty, to kill no person except in the heat of combat, to treat humanely those who surrender themselves prisoners, etc."¹

Rale's insistence that "the only band which has united [the Abnakis] to us so closely is their firm attachment to the catholic Faith" underscores the nature of his influence. Not long after his memorable confrontation with Governor Dudley he assured Governor Vaudreuil that "the Abnakis would take up the hatchet whenever he pleased."² But the contradiction between Rale's statements to Dudley and his words to Vaudreuil is more apparent than real.

It is clear that Rale did not accept war as quickly as his words suggest. Rale's position on English-Abnaki relations had been radically different in 1702. Governor Brouillan reported that the Abnakis had made a treaty of neutrality with the English. More to the point, he accused Rale of being responsible for the Indians' capitulation.³

When the Minister of Marine heard this he reacted vigorously. "I was very much surprised," he wrote the Superior of the Jesuits,

¹ Rale to Brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 197.

² Beauharnois et Vaudreuil au Ministre, Nov. 15, 1703, Collection de Manuscrits, II, pp. 405-06; Arch. Col. C 11 A, vol. 21, pp. 13-16; O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 756.

³ Cited by Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 84.

"to learn that one of your fathers was mixed up in such a business, and I believe that you will judge it proper to withdraw him from there...." He preferred, he said, "some one who knows better how to manage the interests of religion and those of the King, which are inseparable."¹

Nevertheless, by June, 1703, Pontchartrain had decided to interpret the Abnakis' treaty of neutrality as beneficial to New France if the Iroquois could also be persuaded to that course. He stated tersely, however, that "His Majesty considered it wrong [mauvais] that their missionaries interfered on the side of this neutrality; and I have written in his name to Father De la Chaize to have Father Ralle [sic] recalled [retired] and to send another [priest] in his place."²

Yet Sebastien Rale was not removed. After the conference at Casco in June, 1703, some Englishmen initiated hostilities by sacking the home of Castin, an act which the Indians considered an attack upon themselves. At this juncture, Governor Vaudreuil turned the misconceived English attack to his advantage. He had learned that the minister was displeased with the Abnakis' neutrality and unlike his predecessor, Governor Callières, he believed that the Abnakis should be kept involved in warfare. "Sieur de Vaudreuil's opinion is," the minister commented, "that the English and the Abenakis must be kept irreconcilable enemies."³ To effect that purpose Vaudreuil sent

¹Quoted in Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 84.

²Quoted in ibid.

³Abstract of certain parts of a Despatch from Messrs. de Vaudreuil and Beauharnois; with Notes by the Minister, Nov. 15, 1703, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 755-56.

Frenchmen to Acadia to excite the Indians. The result was the attack on Casco and Wells in August, 1703.

Sebastien Rale was not responsible for the outbreak of hostilities. He had, it can be said, a rather notorious reputation for independence in thought. But by November, 1703, Vaudreuil had already encouraged the Abnakis to go to war. Rale understandably tried to absolve himself of the pro-English stigma. It was for this reason that he wrote Vaudreuil that "the Abnakis would take up the hatchet whenever he pleased."

Judging from the reactions of the other missionaries to the open warfare in Maine it may be safely assumed that Rale had the interests of the Abnakis in mind. Throughout the war years the missionaries carefully exchanged their views on the problems of the missions. In 1703 they seem to have decided to thwart Vaudreuil's war policy, and more significantly they convinced him of the wisdom of the change.

Fathers Gaulin and Aubry proposed to Vaudreuil and Beauharnois that they move the Abnakis to Canada. The Indians could not live on territory controlled by the English because they were dependent upon them for food and ammunition. They could not remain, the Jesuits warned, without dying of hunger. They convincingly noted that the Indians did not protect Port Royal and that in Canada they could serve as a buffer against the Iroquois.¹ That Sebastien Rale was directly

¹Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 86. Note that the authors ignore Rale's statement that he would excite the Indians to warfare. Messrs. de Vaudreuil and Beauharnois to M. de Pontchartrain, Nov. 17, 1704, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 762.

involved in the planned move is seen from the fact that the priests "and the Indians met at Norridgewock and told the Indians that they must look out for some other country, for that it was impossible for them to live there."¹

In May, 1704, the Abnakis of the Androscoggin hurried to assure Beauharnois that they would move. But not all of the Indians were so anxious to leave. In June another group told the French governor that they served French interests better in Maine and that they did not want to move elsewhere.²

It is not known who these Indians were. It is certain that Penobscots and Kennebecs were among those who went to Canada. In 1705, Colonel Church's expedition to the Penobscot carefully "made diligent search in those parts for the enemy; but could not find, or make any discovery of them...." Another group of 260 men under Captain Hilton was sent against Norridgewock in the winter of 1705. They "found that the enemy was gone and had left their rough household stuff, and corn behind them."³ Hilton's men had to be satisfied with burning the chapel and wigwams to the ground.

¹Thomas Church, The Old French and Indian Wars, from 1689 to 1704, in Benjamin Church, The History of the Great Indian War of 1675 and 1676, Commonly Called Philip's War, Samuel G. Drake, ed. (Hartford: Silas Andrus & Son, 1851), p. 283.

²Consil entre les sauvages d'Amesouquenty et Monsieur de Beauharnois, May 12, 1704, Collection de Manuscripts, II, pp. 411-13.

³Thomas Church, The Old French and Indian Wars, p. 284, Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 87. Boston News-Letter, March 5, 1705. Penhallow, History of the Wars of New England, p. 38.

Though the surviving records are highly unsatisfactory, it is significant that the Jesuits persuaded most of the Abnakis to leave Maine. The retreat dramatically underlines the peculiar problems of the Abnaki missions. To insist that these men were more politically active than their seventeenth century predecessors is not wholly correct. Unlike the earlier missions, those of the Kennebec and Penobscot were unavoidably involved in the affairs of New England. Furthermore the location of the villages made it necessary that the Abnakis look to the English, rather than to the French, for material assistance.

When involved in war, however, the Abnakis became totally dependent upon the French for food and ammunition. War simplified the Jesuits' problems. In time of conflict, the Abnakis were directed by the officials of New France. In peacetime it was the Jesuits who had to cope with the complications of English-Abnaki relations.

In Sebastian Rale's case it has been his peacetime role that has been correctly emphasized. Queen Anne's War proved to be devastating. The French lost, for all practical purposes, their whole southern coastline. With the English firmly entrenched to the south and east of the Abnaki villages the Jesuits' task became far more difficult.

It was this geographic context that caused Rale's outspokenness. In 1703 he was censured for encouraging peaceful relations between the English and the Abnakis. He never forgot the lesson so painfully learned. Caught in the struggles of New England and New France, the Jesuit was faced with a difficult decision. It is all the more remarkable that the priests kept the Abnakis' interests in mind. As Sebastien Rale had discovered, he had to offer the administrators of

New France practical policies or submit to their direction. Rale and the other Jesuits never faltered in their concern for the Abnakis. They became the constant factor which provided some stability in the turbulent post-war years. Tempered in war, Sebastien Rale's mettle would be tested by peace.

CHAPTER II

THE DAWN AND DUSK OF PEACE: 1712 - 1716

After the Treaty of Utrecht terminated Queen Anne's War in 1713, tension on the frontier grew unabated. The Jesuit priest, Sebastien Rale, soon came to symbolize to Massachusetts the duplicity of the hated French and Indians. That one name, Sebastien Rale, would by the 1720's sum up the collective frustration of thirty years of conflict with the French for the control of the continent. By 1720, the English believed that he alone prevented them from controlling the Maine frontier.

The English of Massachusetts had always viewed the French Jesuits with serious misgivings, but at first they had little direct knowledge of Rale's work among the Abnakis. By 1716, they had begun to realize what was happening on their frontier. Much to their dismay, the Abnakis opposed their efforts to assert their authority. Rale's letters to the Massachusetts' Governor and Council showed that he encouraged the Indians' opposition. His spirited defense of his and the Abnakis' interests infuriated the authorities of Massachusetts. In their view, nothing could be more malicious.

Massachusetts' reaction to Sebastien Rale was oversimplified. Close examination of the largely ignored issues of the period shows that Rale's opposition was mainly defensive. Though he viewed the Puritans with disfavor, he did not oppose them until they threatened his Kennebec mission. Seen in this light, the causes of the later war are not simple. The English as well as the French must bear their share of the responsibility for it. Peace had dawned auspiciously but

by 1716 the basic causes of the future conflict had surfaced.

There were definite reasons for Rale's opposition to the Massachusetts settlers. Their attempts to settle the Kennebec river convinced him that the survival of the Abnaki nation was seriously jeopardized. He had reason to tell "the Indians that the intruders were corrupt land-grabbers who would rob them alike of their property and their faith."¹ His initial suspicions turned to open distrust when Massachusetts ignored her treaty obligations and failed to set up satisfactory trading conditions.

When the Bay Colony turned from trade to religion, telling the Indians to accept an English minister in place of their scheming French priest, Rale was personally threatened. He did not need, and did not receive, directions from Quebec telling him that his mission rested on keeping the settlers from the Kennebec. Massachusetts recognized that her frontier policy threatened the Abnakis. Governor Dudley had no hope, he said, of keeping the Abnakis' "fidelity untill some English settlements be established...to govern them, and their priests be kept from them...."² Neither Rale nor the Abnakis were much impressed with Dudley's notions of progress.

Nor could Rale forget the basic antagonism between French and British in America. In 1710, after Francis Nicholson captured Port Royal and after the abortive expedition against Quebec, Queen Anne's

¹ George M. Wrong, The Rise and Fall of New France (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1928), II, p. 662. Wrong implies, however, that Rale did not have substantial reasons for opposing the English.

² Gov. Dudley to Council of Trade and Plantations, Dec. 2, 1712, Cal of St. Pap., XXVI, pp. 102-103.

War ground to a halt. The peace treaty made at Utrecht left the borders between New France and New England undefined; the area adjacent to each, the present State of Maine, became a bone of contention. By the Treaty of Utrecht, Louis XIV ceded to the British all of "Nova Scotia or Acadia, comprehended within its ancient boundaries...."¹ But because there were several notions about the ancient limits of Acadia, the two crowns agreed that the final settlement would be decided by a commission.²

Unlike Sebastien Rale, the French ministry did not appreciate the importance of the Maine lands. Pontchartrain, the Minister of the Marine, tried a variety of tactics to secure the best terms for France. On August 10, 1712, he told the plenipotentiaries that though Louis XIV would agree to cede Acadia to England, it was imperative that the British receive only present-day Nova Scotia. If, on the other hand, Great Britain would allow the French a toehold on the peninsula, Louis was willing to give them the land between the St. Georges and the St. John rivers.³ When the British representatives failed to take the bait, Pontchartrain tried a different course. He wrote to the plenipotentiaries that His Majesty wanted them "to insist that the

¹Francis Gardner Davenport, European Treaties on the History of the United States and its Dependencies (Washington: Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1934), III, pp. 197-98.

²Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, pp. 91-92; W. S. MacNutt, The Atlantic Provinces: The Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965), p. 12.

³Lettre de M. de Pontchartrain, August 10, 1712, Min. Aff. Etr., vol. 24, part II, pp. 173-76.

limits be regulated after the peace by the commissioners."¹

In the early negotiations the French were willing to cede the Maine lands. Having failed in his attempt to get better terms on the fisheries and on Cape Breton, Pontchartrain countered by claiming the territory as far west as the Kennebec river. In pressing his claim, Pontchartain conveniently forgot that the border between New England and New France had been defined in 1700 as the St. Georges river.² Acadia, he said, was divided into two parts, east and west. He was willing to relinquish the western part from the Kennebec to the bay of Fundy, but the eastern section was vital to the French for "their fishing and navigation towards Canada."³ Pontchartrain was not to have his way, nonetheless. With the understanding that the border was to be defined by a commission, the French relinquished all claim to Acadia in May, 1713.⁴

¹Lettre de M. de Pontchartrain aux P. P., December, 21, 1712, Ibid., pp. 138-39.

²At that time the arms of the two countries were set up to mark the boundary. "Mémoire pour servir régler les limites....", Oct. 8, 1718, Arch. Col., C 11 E, vol. 2, p. 203; and Baxter, The Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 342.

³Mémoire sur les Pays de l'Amérique que la France doit céder aux Anglois par le Paix prochaine, Jan. 13, 1713. Arch. Col., C 11 E, vol. 2, pp. 7-10; Drake thought the English should have been warned about future difficulties by France's determination to retain Acadia in the Treaty negotiations. Samuel Adams Drake, The Border Wars of New England (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), pp. 290-91.

⁴Precis de ce que s'est passé pendant la negoication du Traité d'Utrecht au sujet de l'Acadie, Juillet 1711...Mai, 1713, Arch. des Col., c 11 D, vol. 8, pp. 3-48; MacNutt, The Atlantic Provinces, p. 12.

Massachusetts, though aware of the vagueness of the Treaty, argued that all of the Maine lands were unquestionably hers.¹ The French were frantically searching for documentary evidence to hold British territory to the peninsula of Nova Scotia. Governor Vaudreuil and Intendant Begon heartily concurred in the necessity of that policy. Father Aubry, a Jesuit formerly stationed on the St. John River, wrote an extended memoir in response to a request by Pontchartrain for more information. Aubry's point was that the first map of the area, drawn by Samuel de Champlain, had called only the peninsula of Nova Scotia by the name Acadia. Champlain had referred to the mainland by other names. Thus, through Father Aubry, the officials of New France took the position that Utrecht gave the British no rights to the mainland.²

Pontchartrain's attempt to barter the Maine lands had far-reaching implications for Rale's Norridgewock mission. When Great Britain refused his various offers she said, in fact, that the French had no valid claims to the Kennebec. After Vaudreuil learned of the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht, he defined the border as the St. Georges River, which is east of the Kennebec, leaving the remainder

¹ Governor Dudley to the Council of Trade and Plantations, Jan. 31, 1710, Cal. of St. Pap., XXV, pp. 25-26; Address of the Governor and Company of Rhode Island and Plantations to the Queen, November 21, 1710, Ibid., p. 275; Jeremy Dummer jr. to Lord Dartmouth, Jan. 3, 1711, Ibid., p. 334.

² Messrs de Vaudreuil and Begon to M. de Pontchartrain, Nov. 15, 1713, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 931.

to the British.¹ Sprague thought that both England and France were confused about the "whereabouts" of the boundaries. Actually the French claim that the Kennebec belonged solely to the Indians was quite definite and Ral  acted on that assumption. In this manner the French could maintain at least nominal control of the territory because the Jesuits would keep the Abnakis in the French alliance.²

Massachusetts was not impressed with claims of an Abnaki-French alliance. Though the Governor and General Court sputtered for years about the "Eastern Rebels," the Abnakis had never had close ties with them. The fact is, Massachusetts' Indian policy had been and was inept. Unlike the French, the Boston authorities did not try to understand the Abnakis' wishes. Nor did they have the advantages of centralized administration. Indian treaties were ratified by the executive but depended upon the General Court for execution, and Massachusetts was prey to the usual feuding between Governor and provincial politicians.³ The legislators of the Bay colony were unreasonably expedient and true

¹Mrs. Le marquis de Vaudreuil et Begon A Rambouillet, June 18, 1713, Arch. des Col., S rie B, vol. N-35, p. 156; MacNutt, The Atlantic Provinces, p. 273.

²John Francis Sprague, Sebastien Ral : A Maine Tragedy of the Eighteenth Century (Boston: The Heintzemann Press, 1906), pp. 71-72. "If it is proper to maintain the Abenakis in our alliance," Father Charlevoix wrote, "the Governor of Boston must be given to understand that, if he undertakes to settle any of the lands belonging to our Indian allies, it will be impossible to refuse assistance to them...." Memoire respecting the Abenakis of Acadia, 1718, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 878.

³cf. Oliver Morton Dickerson, American Colonial Government 1696-1765 (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1962), pp. 154-58.

to form they subjected Indian policy to the fortunes of partisan politics.

The Maine frontier had been the scene of almost continuous warfare for thirty-eight years and by 1713, Rale and the Abnakis welcomed peace.¹ The savages took the initiative and approached Captain Samuel Moody² at Casco Bay saying they were willing to comply with any terms in settling their differences.³ Moody showed them a letter written to him by Father Rale. The Jesuit had told him that he would send a runner to Governor Vaudreuil to stop the Indian raids, if Moody informed him of any cessation of hostilities.⁴ The Abnakis, viewing themselves as free agents, became greatly alarmed when they heard this. They immediately declared "they would wholly renounce the French interest."⁵

But, Governor Dudley and Captain Moody failed to see the necessity of easing the Indians' fears of their intentions.

¹Parkman, A Half-Century of Conflict, I, p. 220.

²For a biographical sketch on Captain Samuel Moody (Moodey) see: Sybil Noyes, Charles T. Libby and Walter G. Davis, Genealogical Dictionary of Maine and New Hampshire (Portland Me.: The Southworth-Antheonsen Press, 1928-39), II, (Jefford-Z), p. 487.

³Letter from Capt. Samuel Moody to Gov. Dudley, Jan. 3, 1712/13, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, IX, pp. 315-16; Mass. Arch. 51: pp. 155-56. Both Penhallow and Hutchinson agree that peace negotiations were begun by the Indians. Penhallow, History of the Wars of New England, pp. 77-78; Thomas Hutchinson, The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts, Lawrence Shaw Mayo, ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), II, p. 150.

⁴Letter from Sebastien Rale to Capt. Samuel Moody, Nov. 18, 1712, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, IX, pp. 334-35; Mass. Arch. 51: p. 253.

⁵Letter from Capt. Samuel Moody to Gov. Dudley, Jan. 6, 1712/13, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, IX, pp. 317-19.

Dudley began the preliminary negotiations through Moody by telling the Abnakis that he would ignore them if they remained allies of the French. Dudley was taking no chances. He asked that they voluntarily surrender several of their chiefs as insurance for their future peaceful conduct.¹ Father Rale disliked that proposition. In fact, the very idea of hostages repelled him. "I had so often and so strongly talked about it," he reported to Governor Vaudreuil, "that they [Abnakis] agreed with me...." Evidently Captain Moody heard of Rale's opposition, for the hostages were not mentioned at the formal conference.²

This conference at Portsmouth, held in July, 1713, faltered from the start. Governor Dudley was widely respected for his ability to confer successfully with the Indians. "No man, it was said, was fit to manage Indians unless he had eaten a bushel of salt; and 'Coll. Dudley had eat more as two,' wrote one of his enthusiastic admirers."³ Dudley began on the wrong foot, nonetheless, by insisting that the Indians meet him at Portsmouth, rather than at Casco Bay as they had requested.⁴

The resulting treaty emphasized the vagueness of the Treaty of Utrecht, as well as the problems of the English and the French with

¹Letter from Gov. Joseph Dudley to Capt. Samuel Moody, Jan. 17, 1712/13, Ibid., pp. 317-19.

²Lettre de R. P. Rasle A Monsieur le Gouverneur Général, Sept. 9, 1713, Collection de Manuscrits, II, p. 562.

³Everett Kimball, The Public Life of Joseph Dudley, A Study of the Colonial Policy of the Stuarts in New England, 1660-1715 (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911), p. 129.

⁴Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts, II, p. 150.

the Abnakis. Fundamental to Dudley's position was his assertion that the savages were subjects of Queen Anne.¹ The Abnakis were told that the King of France had surrendered all their lands to Great Britain. This was incomprehensible and they remarked that the "French never said anything to us about it and wee wonder how they would give it away without asking us, God having at first placed us there...."²

The Abnakis' dismay did not impede the final settlement. By the treaty, Massachusetts was confirmed in all her "rights of land and former settlements" in the eastern parts of the provinces of Massachusetts-Bay and New Hampshire. The Abnakis agreed that the English might settle the Maine lands without "molestation or claim by us or by any other Indians...."³ They were told, moreover, that as British subjects they could have no relations with the French.

The Treaty of Portsmouth was no more enlightened than previous Indian treaties. It did not represent a mutual understanding between the English and the Indians. To an Abnaki it was, like all other treaties, so many words. It was a negative document because it bound them to refrain from action against the English settlements. Though Palfrey called it another of the Abnakis' "untrustworthy pacifications",

¹Frederic Kidder, "The Abnaki Indians and Their Treaties of 1713 and 1717," *Me. His. Soc., Collections*, 1st ser., (Portland: The Society, 1859), VI, p. 251.

²Journal of Commissioners at Portsmouth, July 13, 1713, Baxter, *Baxter Manuscripts*, XXIII, p. 49. Rale notes the Abnakis declared: "'As for me I have my own land, that the Great Spirit has given me on which to live; as long as there shall be a child of my Tribe, he will fight to retain it.'" Rale to Brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXVII, pp. 209.

³Kidder, "The Abnaki Indians and Their Treaties of 1713 and 1717," p. 251; Penhallow, *History of the Wars of New England*, p. 79.

it is clear that only the English benefited from its terms. The treaty's basic premise, that the Abnakis were British subjects, was highly questionable. Massachusetts had maintained that pretension throughout the previous war but Parkman truthfully said that "when they called themselves subjects of Queen Anne, it is safe to say that they did not know what the words meant." John Gilmary Shea contended that "no intelligent man will believe they understood" the treaty. Rale himself remarked that "there is not one savage Tribe that will patiently endure to be regarded as under subjection to any Power whatsoever...."¹

The treaty fully aroused French interest in the affairs of the Abnakis. Governor Vaudreuil had returned to Quebec with the intention of strengthening the new French stronghold in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence. The Ministry wished to move all the mainland Indians to Cape Breton Island. But Vaudreuil's plans were shattered by the Jesuits. Father LaChasse, missionary on the Penobscot, immediately expressed his disdain for the project.² Such a suggestion showed, he said, that the authorities "must be ignorant of the extreme attachment that these Indians bear their country...." He suggested it would be best to apply themselves to the settlement of the boundaries of the two

¹ John Gorham Palfrey, A Compendious History of New England (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1883), III, p. 265; Parkman, Half-Century of Conflict, I, p. 221; Sebastien Rale to Nephew, Oct. 15, 1722, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 101-103; Charlevoix, History and General Description of New France, V, fn. 2, p. 267.

² Father Joseph Pierre de la Chasse came to New France in 1700. Born in France in May, 1670, he followed the usual Jesuit practice of study, profession of vows, and teaching. Soon after his arrival he was assigned to the Penobscot until 1718 when he became superior of the Canadian missions. He held that post until 1726. He died at Quebec on Sept. 27, 1749. Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 346.

nations.¹

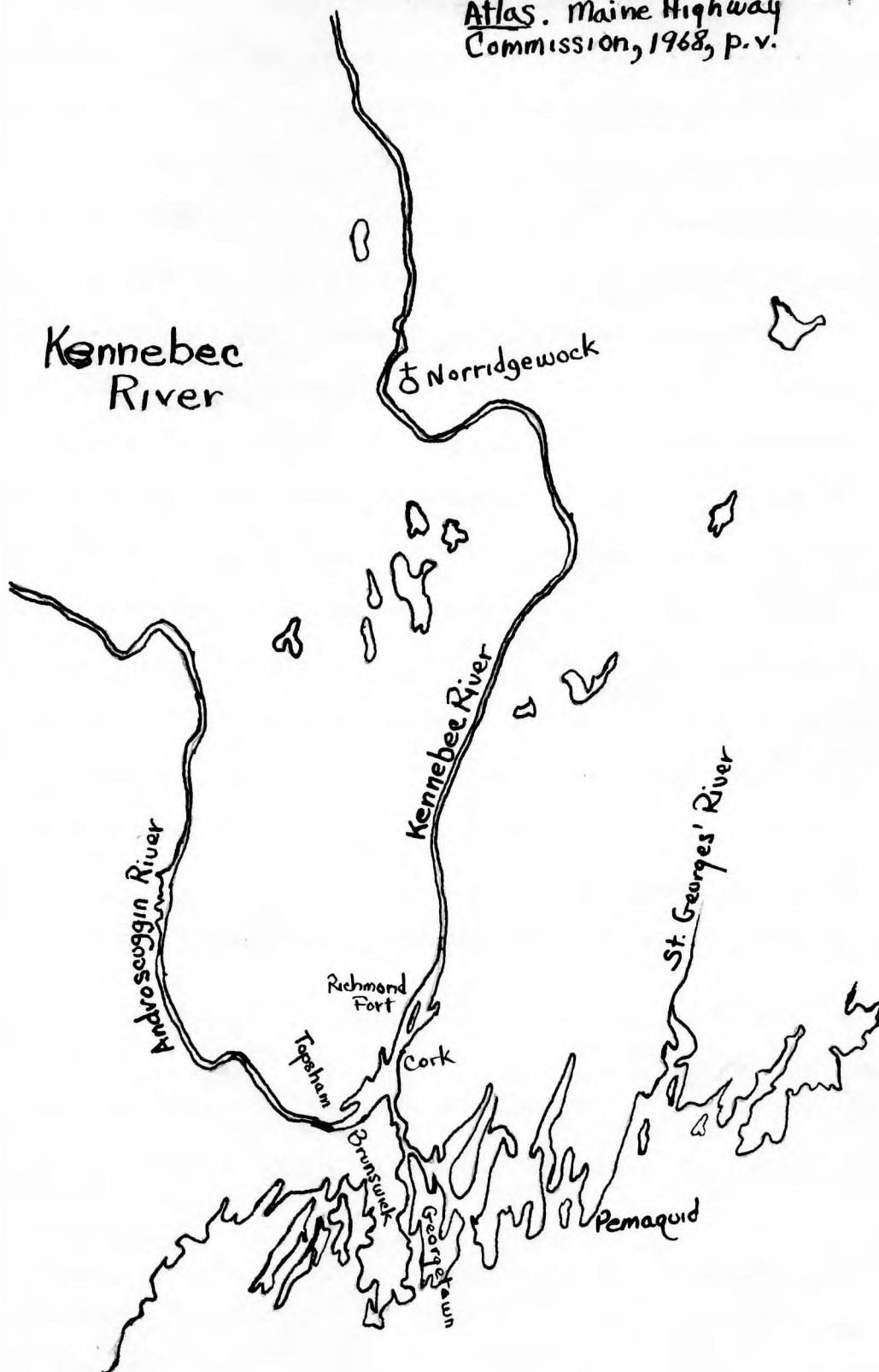
It is important that the suggestion to maintain the Abnakis on their land came from the Jesuits. When the English told the Indians that the French had ceded their land, the Abnakis demanded of the missionaries: "By what right did the King of France dispose of their country?" Had the Jesuits not appeased them, their alliance with the French might have ended immediately. But Rale and LaChasse told them that the English had been deceived by "an ambiguous expression [in the Treaty]" and that their country was not included in that which had been ceded to the English."² Father Rale's mission, unlike Father LaChasse's, was not within Vaudreuil's definition of the border as the St. Georges river. The geographic location partially explains Rale's outspoken letters in the later years. Though LaChasse was relatively unpressured by the English, he joined with Rale to convince the French authorities, both Canadian and European, of the necessity of supporting the Abnaki claim to the Kennebec.

Father LaChasse pointed out that the Kennebec was important as a route to Quebec, and suggested that New France would be jeopardized if Massachusetts possessed it. By coupling his suggestion for the immediate settlement of the boundary with the interests of New France, he was assured of getting the Ministry's attention. Vaudreuil lost no time. In November, 1713, he wrote the Ministry that he had invited the Indians to come to Quebec in the hope of offsetting the impression made

¹ Memoir respecting the Abenakis of Acadia, 1718, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 879-80.

² Ibid., p. 879.

Source: Maine General Highway
Atlas. Maine Highway
Commission, 1968, p.v.



by the English at Portsmouth.¹

The Treaty of Portsmouth represented Massachusetts' policy only until it was refined and extended in 1714. Though the English knew of the tenuousness of their position on the Kennebec, they failed to appreciate the necessity of altering their attitude towards the Indians.² They underestimated Rale's determination to keep the Indians Catholic. If Massachusetts had known how much the French feared that the Abnakis would be attracted by the superior and cheaper British goods, she might have adapted to the circumstances.³ As it was, she missed the point.

Governor Dudley was an exception. He recognized the need for a strong trade policy and suggested measures to regulate it. He wanted rigid control, and though the General Court grumbled, it empowered the Governor temporarily to license traders. This the Council immediately did in accordance with the Treaty of Portsmouth. The traders were required to present their records of costs and profits to the Governor. They were, said the Council, "to dispose of their goods so as to undersell the French."⁴

¹Vaudreuil au Ministre, Nov. 14, 1713, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 34, p. 49.

²It was reported in the Council Chamber on Jan. 1, 1714, that the Indians were becoming restless. It was suggested that measures be taken to insure that the Indians did not join with those of Canada "to comitt fresh hostilities & depredations upon Her Majesty's subjects" Massachusetts Council Records, Jan. 1, 1713/14, W. S. Jenkins, ed., Records of the States of the United States: A Microfilm Compilation.

³M. Begon au Ministre, Sept. 25, 1715, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 34, p. 49.

⁴The Council attempted to enforce these regulations. In March, 1714, one Richard Carr was arrested for loading his boat for the Penobscot trade. Mass. Council, March 22, 1714.

This was a judicious policy. It guaranteed the good will of the Indians, who wished some regulation of the trade.¹ It also protected British interests, for it represented the only effective means of estranging the Abnakis from the French alliance. However, it was ultimately to fail.

When Dudley attempted to renew the policy in May, 1714, he met severe opposition from the House. Though he pleaded that the trade would be lost to the French, the "House voted to admit the Indians to trade with anyone or in any part of the province." The trading interests in the House were opposed to the Governor's power to control it. By usurping centralized control the House made it difficult, if not impossible, to control the liquor traffic and it was not long before the traders were again plying the Abnakis with rum.²

The new policy also ignored the Abnakis' wishes. In January, 1714, five Indians appeared before the Council in Boston. Their first request was for regular trading houses. They also complained of high and irregular prices, as well as the haughtiness of the traders. Dudley could not respond adequately; his hands were tied until the General Court met in February. Meanwhile, he told the sachems that they were to ignore orders from the French Governor. Dudley also said that he expected them to convince the Abnakis settled at the Jesuit missions in Canada to return to "their Own places upon English grounds...."³

¹At a Meeting with the Delegates of the Eastern Indians, July 26, 1714, Mass. Arch.: 29, p. 42; p. 46.

²On the liquor traffic see: Gov. Nicholson to Gov. Dudley, Dec. 25, 1714, Cal. of St. Pap., XXVIII, p. 262; Kimball, The Public Life of Joseph Dudley, pp. 130-31.

³A Conference was held with Five of the Eastern Indians, Jan. 11-13, 1713/14, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, pp. 51-57.

But there was little chance that the Indians would obey the governor once they realized that trade concessions would be denied them. Thus, the recalcitrant House had stripped the province of the one ground upon which it could have been truly effective.

Sebastien Rale had some very definite ideas on Massachusetts' trade policy. At the end of the year he wrote a blistering letter to the English authorities. He deplored the "Disorders and Outrages committed among the Eastern Indians by interloping Traders selling them [Rum] and other Strong Liquors...."¹ Governor Nicholson of Nova Scotia heatedly rejected Rale's testimony: "I know no business a French Jesuit has with English subjects," he said. But Massachusetts was concerned: her authority was rapidly slipping away. Evidently Rale was able to name the culprits for the Council set about investigating the matter.² The truth was clear enough. The petty politicians in the House had sabotaged any hope for a planned, effective trading policy.

Trade policy was only one part of English bungling. Although they stood at least an outside chance of enforcing their will in economic matters, when they began talking about religion they were on very dubious ground.

The Indians had been having difficulty getting workers to rebuild their chapel which had been destroyed by the English in 1705. Father Rale needed carpenters, and he wanted his chapel, so he

¹Mass. Council, December 27, 1714.

²Governor Nicholson to Governor Dudley, December 25, 1714, Cal. of St. Pap., XXVIII, pp. 262-63; Kimball, The Public Life of Joseph Dudley, p. 132.

explained to Vaudreuil that he had decided to let the Indians try to get the workingmen from the English.¹ The Kennebec sachem, Bomazeen, asked Dudley for help, remarking that the Indians were willing to pay for the service. He was told that the governor would consider the proposal.²

But the matter did not rest there. Rale later reported that Dudley said he would build the chapel if the Abnakis would accept a Protestant minister, and he ordered the sachem to "send back to Quebec the French minister who is in your village." Rale said the Indians preferred him to an Englishman.³ His version of the entire exchange, however, must be viewed with caution. The minutes of the conference make no mention of any comment by the governor on the proposed Church. Rale's story has caused a minor controversy nonetheless. Some historians, like Connolly, have reported that Vaudreuil "sent workmen to rebuild" the chapel. Others deny the French governor's intervention after Dudley's supposed refusal and correctly point out that English workingmen constructed the church, though with French funds.⁴

If this particular event is in question, others are not. During

¹Lettre du R. P. Rasle A Monsieur Le Gouverneur Général, Sept. 9, 1713, Collection de Manuscrits, II, p. 564.

²A Conference was held with Five of the Eastern Indians, Jan. 13, 1713/14, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, p. 57.

³Rale to Brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 209-11.

⁴Rev. Arthur T. Connolly, Fr. Sebastien Rasle, Catholic Historical Society, Publication # 5 (Boston: The Society, 1906), p. 19; Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 97; Parkman, Half-Century of Conflict, I, p. 218.

the summer of 1714, Governor Dudley held a formal conference with the Indians at Portsmouth. He expressed his pleasure at the Indians' good behavior. While speaking of the responsibilities of the Christian faith, Dudley felt moved to offer ministers to the Indians to instruct them in the Protestant religion.¹ His real motive became apparent when he complained that the Jesuits attempted to keep the Abnakis hostile to the English.²

The Jesuits would have agreed with Dudley's accusation. They realized that the success of their work depended upon keeping the Abnakis allied with the French. Father LaChasse had remarked to Governor Vaudreuil that among the savages the work of God needed the cooperation of man, and that the temporal interest served as the basis for the savages' faith.³ It is for this reason that Sebastien Rale took so readily to political tools. He wrote his brother that "the only band which had united the [Abnakis] to us so closely is their firm attachment to the catholic Faith."⁴

Governor Vaudreuil worked on more earthly premises. When he wrote his annual report in September, 1714, he assured the minister that, in his opinion, war with England was more favorable to France than peace. He believed, in fact, that the Abnakis were wavering in

¹Att a Meeting with the delegates of the Eastern Indians on Tuesday the 27th July 1714, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, p. 75.

²Ibid., p. 79.

³Lettre de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Ministre, Sept. 16, 1714, Collection de Manuscripts, III, p. 5.

⁴Rale to Brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 197.

their alliance.¹

The French fear that the Abnakis would go permanently into the English camp was misplaced. Rale's outrage over the rum trade was shared by the Indians. By 1715 they realized that Governor Dudley would not fulfill the promises he had made at Portsmouth.

But it was not only trade policy and insinuations against Rale that disturbed the frontier. By 1715, the Bay Colony had begun to resettle the lower Kennebec river. At the end of May the General Court authorized the settlement of two towns, Brunswick and Topsham, one on each side of the Androscoggin river.² The settlement of the Pejeboscot purchase, as the lands were called, is a good example of how Indian policy took a poor second to the wishes of a special interest group. On November 5, 1714, the Governor's Council appointed a committee for the "regular prosecution of new Settlements." On the same day, a group of seven men purchased the Kennebec lands from the executor of the estate of Richard Wharton.³

The seven Proprietors immediately pressed to have their title validated, for the Wharton land claim was based on old seventeenth century land patents. In February, 1715, they addressed the Land

¹Lettre de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Ministre, Sept. 16, 1714, Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 5. Intendant Begon also feared the possibility of an Abnaki-English alliance. M. Begon au Ministre, Sept. 25, 1715, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 35, pp. 208-11.

²The Generall Courts Confirmation of our Purchase, May 25, 1715, Pejeboscot Records, I, in Jenkins, ed., Records of the States of the United States...., p. 31.

³Robert Earle Moody, "The Maine Frontier, 1607-1763," (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1933), p. 357; cf. also George A. Wheeler and Henry W. Wheeler, History of Brunswick, Topsham, and Harpswell Maine (Boston: Alfred Mudge & Son, 1878), pp. 21-30.

Committee and asked that their land be settled "as may make a Strong Frontier to the Eastern Parts...."¹ The Proprietors did not fear an adverse decision because three of their members, Oliver Noyes, John Winthrop and Stephen Minot, sat on the Land Committee. Further to persuade the Committee, the Proprietors went to the considerable expense of taking the members on a tour of the lower Kennebec lands. The Committee reported in the Proprietors' favor.²

The General Court and the Proprietors realized that the new settlements would provoke the Indians. The Proprietors had promised to build four or five towns, each with fifty or more families, within seven years, "if Peace continue with the Indians...."³ Colonel Nicholson commented: "If that affair is not very cautiously managed, it may make ye Eastern Indians jealous...."⁴ Then too, the Proprietors wisely noted that the new towns would "dislodge the Indians from their Principal Fishery, keep them from Chief carrying Places & be possibly a Means of removing them further from us, if another war should happen."⁵ A few English colonials recognized that war, under the circumstances, was inevitable. The Proprietors' plan said nothing about the sentiments of the Abnakis. "I essay'd," said Supreme Court Justice Samuel Sewall,

¹Proprietors Proposals to the Committee appointed by the General Court, Feb. 18, 1714/15, Pejeboscot Records, I, p. 36.

²Pejeboscot account N? 2, Pejeboscot Records, I, p. 31.

³Proprietors Proposals to the Committee appointed by the General Court, Feb. 18, 1714/15, Pejeboscot Records, I, p. 36.

⁴Col. Nicholson to Mr. Popple, Aug. 13, 1715, Cal. of St. Pap., XXVIII, p. 261.

⁵By order & in behalf of the Comittee, May 27, 1715, Pejeboscot Records, I, pp. 38-39.

"to prevent Indians and Negroes being Rated with Horses and Hogs; but could not prevail."¹

It is not surprising, then, that the Council soon took measures to put the new townships into a state of defense "upon consideration of the danger of an eruption of the Indians...."² The Proprietors petitioned in July, asking the House to appropriate 500 and the service of fifteen men to repair the old stone fort at Brunswick. They promised to bear any expense in excess of that amount and said they hoped to finish the reconstruction by winter, "if not obstructed by the Indians." The House agreed and the work went ahead.³

Arrowsic and Parker's Islands were also being resettled; the two were constituted the municipality of Georgetown in 1716. "It was a frontier," Williamson said, "more remote than any other place attempted to be resettled, and might be a barrier in the emergency of war;--therefore an object of the government's special favor."⁴ In fact, the Council thought the area so vital that it agreed to pay for the garrisons at Fort George at Brunswick and Fort Menaskoux at

¹Samuel Sewall, "Diary", Mass. His. Soc., Collections, 5th ser. (Boston: The Society, 1882), VII, p. 87.

²Mass. Council, June 28, 1715. Brunswick and Topsham were constituted townships on June 7, 1715. W. C. Ford, ed., Journals of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1919), I, p. 19.

³Petition to the House of Representatives, July 28, 1715, Pejeboscot Records, I, pp. 48-49; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, I, July 28, 1715, pp. 62-63; Mass. Council, Sept. 16, 1715, Dec. 5, 1715, Dec. 24, 1715.

⁴William Durkee Williamson, The History of the State of Maine (Hallowell: Glazier, Master & Co., 1832), II, p. 89.

Arrowsic.¹

The Abnakis reaction to the settlements was soon evident. Early in 1716 there were rumors that the Indians were arming against the English. The Council immediately ordered Colonel Partridge to put the frontiers into a state of defense. A scouting party was sent out "under pretence of hunting" to investigate the Indians' movements. At the same time the Kennebec area was reinforced with men and supplies.² It was reported in May that the savages were "assembling in great numbers...."³ As if to confirm suspicions, an Indian, John Hegin by name, told Captain Harmon at the Kennebec river that "it would not be sage for him to tarry there long."⁴

In the midst of this confusion, Bomazeen and Bamegiscog of Norridgewock, arrived in Boston. Lieutenant-Governor Vaughan did his best to find out their business but all he discovered was what they too wondered what was behind the persistent rumors of war.⁵

¹ Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, I, June 13, 1716, p. 98; Convers Francis, "Life of Sebastien Rale," in the Library of American Biography, Jared Sparks, ed. (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1848), VII, 2nd ser., p. 245; Mass. Council, Feb. 27, 1715/16; Henry E. Dunnack, Maine Forts (Augusta: Charles E. Nash & Son, 1924), p. 236.

² Mass. Council, March 10, 1715/16;

³ Mass. Council, May 28, 1716.

⁴ Indian Conference, June 6, 1716, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, p. 81; Mass. Arch. 29: 53-54; For a biographical sketch on Captain Johnson Harmon see: Noyes, Genealogical Dictionary, I, p. 311.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 80-82; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, I, p. 97; The Lieutenant-Governor decided that the Indians were restless because of "false Reports of a War likely to break out between Great Britain and France." Mass. House Journal, I, p. 82.

It was soon obvious what was happening. With the onset of English settlement, the Indians had split into two groups, one for and one against the English. Bomazeen understood what was happening but he was notorious for his pro-English sentiments. Father Rale wrote directly to the Massachusetts government, and he minced no words. He said the sachems were displeased with Bomazeen and Bamegiscog because they had not told the governor what the Abnakis wanted.¹ Bomazeen should have said that the Indians realized the English were building forts and settlements to drive them from their lands, just as the French governor had told them. Rale continued, saying that the Indians knew that no one could buy their land because they could not sell it. They had to preserve it for future generations of Abnakis.² Thus, with bluster, Sebastien Rale attempted to halt English expansion. In the Council's words, these were "very bold demands."³

There was another letter to the government before the summer was over. It left the English with no doubt as to Rale's role in the matter. Rale asserted that the English deeds to the land were illegal. The English received them, he said, by giving the Indians liquor. He said that he constantly reminded the Indians that since they had reconquered the land three times, it made no difference what their

¹Mass. Council, July 10, 1716.

²Copy of Letter from Sabastian Ralle, 1716, Nathaniel Boulton ed., New Hampshire Provincial Papers, Documents and Records relating to the Province of New Hampshire, from the earliest period of its settlement, 1623-1686 (Concord: George E. Jenks, State Printer, 1874), VIII, pp. 753-54.

³Mass. Council, July 10, 1716. cf. also Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, I, August 1, 1716, p. 125.

ancestors had done.¹ These were interesting arguments, but Rale was forgetting, in the heat of the moment, that the Indians had validated all English titles by the Treaty of Portsmouth, though perhaps he wrote the letters with that treaty in mind.

By 1716 the stage was set for the larger conflict. All the important issues had materialized, and all the participants,--the English, the French, Rale and the Abnakis,--had taken stands. Not yet materialized, though still real, was the *misunderstanding* between the English and the French, which would catch the Indians between them. The French were as sure that the English were deliberately advancing up the Kennebec valley to possess the lower shore of the St. Lawrence, as the English were that the French were unjustly attempting to bar them from their rightful possessions.

It was not English policy alone that determined Sebastien Rale's opposition to them. He wrote his brother that the English knew of his resistance to them during Queen Anne's war. "These Gentlemen," Rale said, "were rightly persuaded that I, by upholding my Savages in their attachment to the catholic Faith, was drawing more and more closely the bond which unites them to the French."²

It is important to note that the Jesuits and Rale had not fully determined their policy in regard to the English, for the period was a transitional one. In this sense, English actions were extremely

¹Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 68; Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 11. Parkman doubted the validity of the English titles. Half-Century of Conflict, I, p. 214.

²Rale to his brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 205.

significant. The Jesuits were convinced that the English had nothing to offer the Indians. Rale said, in fact that, the Bay Colony had "employed all sorts of wiles and artifices to separate the Abnakis from me."¹ LaChasse was more moderate in his statements than Rale but his mission was not directly threatened by English settlements. Rale was not entirely fair in upbraiding Massachusetts for the liquor traffic. The Governor and Council were as anxious as he to stop the practice and they took measures to do so, but the House had not agreed and the policy had failed. Rale was not convinced, however, by a mere show of good intentions.

Sebastien Rale was not, strictly speaking, an agent for the French political authorities. As McFarlane noted, "Rale's position as a priest depended on keeping...Norridgewock free from English settlement. His political activities were a prerequisite to his spiritual duties."² Because the French appreciated the importance of barring the English they gave him their moral and financial support. The Abnakis took a middle position. They said the land was theirs alone. They refused to recognize any foreign sovereign though they had no aversion to an alliance. As long as they leaned towards the French, Sebastien Rale supported their positions.

¹Rale to his brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 205.

²R. O. McFarlane, "Indian Relations in New England, 1620-1760: a study of a regulated frontier," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1933), p. 130.

CHAPTER III

THE UNCERTAIN YEARS 1717--1718

During the years from 1712 to 1716 the situation on the Kennebec became serious. Faced with danger to their Eastern settlements, the English attempted to soothe the alarmed Kennebecs with gifts and assurances of their peaceful intentions. For a time the policy seemed to work. Massachusetts misjudged, however, the persistence of Sebastien Rale. His continued outrage at English attempts to ally themselves with his Indians effectively nullified their seeming success.

Since 1715 Rale's growing purpose was to halt all English expansion on the Kennebec. The rum trade, Massachusetts' attempts to undermine his authority, and above all, the new settlements aroused his opposition. Events in 1717 and 1718 underlined the necessity of his opposition to Massachusetts. Another treaty, at Arrowsic in 1717, warned him that the English would not compromise on their land claims. A Protestant minister on the Kennebec drove him to new, frenzied efforts against them. By 1718 it seemed as if his policy would be successful. The French court, alerted by Rale's tireless efforts, proposed the immediate settlement of the boundary to ease frontier tensions.

Underlying the story of these years is an issue which has confused the evaluation of Rale's influence. The settlers on the Kennebec met many Indians who professed to be their friends and, as a result, James Phinney Baxter concluded that Rale was responsible for the Abnakis' arrogance. He and Eckstorm made no distinction, however,

between the Kennebecs and the other Abnaki villages.¹ Despite such accounts, the Kennebecs were, in the years 1717 to 1718, united in opposition to the settlers. A few notable exceptions, coupled with the indifference of the Penobscot Abnakis, has obscured the Kennebec's anger.

Central to the antagonism was the manner in which the English and the French viewed the Abnakis. French-Abnaki relations had, since 1689, represented a vital cornerstone of French Imperial policy. They were the only tribe in close proximity to the English colonies on whom the French could depend. To the administrators of New France they were, if not subjects, then trusty allies. As such, their conduct, wishes and disposition were closely heeded. The Jesuits were the natural agents of this expedient care.

The Society of Jesus had much influence in the determination of French policy. This was especially true of Sebastien Rale. Annual reports to the Ministry on the Abnakis were always based on his recommendations. The administrators went further: they usually included copies of his letters in their annual dispatches. The Ministry was in turn influenced by his reports as they were by those of Fathers LaChasse and Aubry. When Father LaChasse became Superior

¹A typical statement by Baxter illustrates the point. "Though fickle and unreliable, the savages dreaded war with the English whose power they realized; but Rale was advised by Vaudreuil to urge them to prevent English settlement." Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 92. "The more desperately the priests worked for France," Eckstorm vaguely referred to Rale and the Norridgewocks, "the more firmly did their own Indians oppose them." Fannie H. Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock, 1724," New England Quarterly, VII (Sept., 1934), p. 547.

of the Jesuits in 1718. Rale's opinions were reinforced by an influential voice.¹

Massachusetts, on the other hand, viewed the Abnakis as a problem which warranted a local solution. Thus, Massachusetts' reports to the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations were largely limited to two subjects. First, all grants of land belonged in the royal domain. As such, Massachusetts had to convince the Commissioners that the Treaty of Utrecht had ceded all the French territory below the St. Lawrence to the British crown. It had, then, to argue that the Abnakis were true subjects of the Crown, and that the petitioners for land from Massachusetts had valid deeds from the Indians. Secondly, Massachusetts wished the British government to halt what they saw as French interference in colonial matters. They realized that the French influence among the Abnakis could be forestalled only by Great Britain.

By 1716 the dissatisfaction of the Indians with the Treaty of Portsmouth was apparent. Samuel Shute replaced Joseph Dudley as Governor of Massachusetts in the tense atmosphere of an impending Indian war.² The serious situation on the Kennebec impressed him, and he soon called a conference with the Abnakis.³ The ensuing meeting was a dramatic encounter between the English and the Abnakis. Governor Shute was not nearly as sympathetic to them as Joseph Dudley had been, and the tragedy of the conference rests squarely on his shoulders. In his view, Indians were decidedly inferior to the English, and neither

¹Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 346.

²Governor Shute arrived at Boston on Oct. 4, 1716. Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 106.

³Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 68.

capable of thought or of significant sentiment. The conference was, simply, a solution to Massachusetts' alarm at the threat of an Indian war.¹ Shute would overawe the Abnakis with the superior might of the English.

The Governor and his attendents waited at Georgetown in a large tent for the Indians to arrive.² They came down the Kennebec river with the British flag the governor had sent them in the lead canoe. After the interpreters John Gyles and Samuel Jordan were sworn in by Judge Samuel Sewall, the governor addressed the assembled sachems. He told them that they were fellow subjects of King George. They should avoid all contact with the French, he said, and if they did so they would find "themselves safest under the Government of Great Britain."

He directed the interpreters to tell the Abnakis that the Bible was the only guide for their "Faith, and Worship, and Life." The English were anxious, he said, to have the Indians of the same religion as themselves. They had therefore agreed to support a Protestant missionary for them. He then introduced the Reverend Joseph Baxter,

¹The Kennebec settlers were still uneasy about the Indians. Edward Hutchinson and John Watts petitioned the House to continue the services of the soldiers on Arrowsick Island for another year. Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, 1, June 18, 1717, p. 207.

²Except as otherwise noted, the account of the conference is taken from a contemporary pamphlet entitled "Georgetown on Arrowsick Island Aug. 9th, 1717." It is printed in "Indian Treaties," Me. His. Soc., Collections, 1st ser., (Portland: The Society, 1853), III, pp. 361-75. Convers Francis called it the "original and most valuable authority concerning this transaction...." "Life of Sebastien Rale," p. 245. It was originally printed by order of the House of Representatives. Mass. House Journal, 1, Nov. 18, 1717, p. 251.

warning them to accept him "with all affection and respect."

Shute explained that the recent English settlements had been undertaken for the Indians' benefit. He told them they would profit by having the "Trade brought so near them, besides the advantage of the Neighbourhood and Conversation of the English...." Closing his remarks with an assurance that he was always at their disposal, he invited the Indians' comments.

Wiwurna, the appointed Abnaki orator, rose and expressed great pleasure in attending the governor, saying the Abnakis hoped "the Angels in Heaven rejoyce with us." But he asked to defer his answer until the following day. This had been expected and Shute gave the Indians an ox on which to feast.

The delegates reassembled the next morning, August 10. A hot exchange almost immediately ensued, for Governor Shute disregarded time-honored form and continually interrupted Wiwurna. Each time the orator begged "leave to go on."

"We have had the same Discourse from other Governors, as from your Excellency," Wiwurna started, "and we have said the same to them; Other Governours have said to us that we are under no other Government but our own." Samuel Shute awoke with a start and demanded: "How is that?" Wiwurna explained he had to be frank. "Your Excellency," he began again, "was pleased to say that we must be obedient to KING GEORGE, which we shall if we like the Offers made us." By this time the governor had gotten the Abnakis' point and was steaming: "They must be Obedient to KING GEORGE," he retorted.

And so it went, on and on. As the governor continued to interrupt Wiwurna became more defensive. "All people have a love for

their Ministers," the Abnaki explained, "and it would be strange if we should not love them that come from GOD. And as to the Bibles your Excellency mentioned, We Desire to be Excused on that Point, God has given us Teaching Already, and if we should go from that we should displease GOD." The Governor had no comment on this but again interrupted Wiwurna to bring him to the point--the land. The Abnaki backed off, temporarily delaying his answer.

The exchange that afternoon was even more vital than the morning's. The land question was a delicate one with the Abnakis. Fully realizing that they must accept the status quo, they attempted to place a limit on further expansion. "We are willing," Wiwurna said, "to cut off our Lands as far as the Mills and Coasts to Pemaquid." Wiwurna limited Massachusetts expansion, therefore, to south of Merrymeeting bay and west of the Pemaquid peninsula. "Tell them," Shute interjected, "we desire only what is our own, and that we will have. We will not wrong them, but what is our own we will be Masters of." Wiwurna pleaded that "It was said at Casco Treaty, that no more Forts should be made." Cloaking himself with all the official dignity he could muster, Samuel Shute again interrupted. "Tell them the Forts are not made for their hurt, and that I wonder they should speak against them, when they are for the security of both, we being all Subjects of King George." Expressing his official position, the governor noted that he expected "their positive Answer and Compliance in this matter, that the English may be quiet in the possession of the Lands" they had acquired. By this time the Abnakis were incensed with Shute's haughty manner and walked out "without taking leave and left behind their English Colours."

Sebastien Rale had accompanied the Indians to the conference. That evening he sent a letter to the governor, telling Shute that enquiries had been made on the cession of territory by the Treaty of Utrecht. The French king had replied, Rale said, that he had not ceded the Abnakis' land. He had said, furthermore, that he was prepared to aid the savages if the English persisted in their encroachments. Shute rejected the note outright as "not worthy of his regard."

The next morning the governor went aboard his ship and "acted as if he were going away." Shute had decided, in the Reverend Baxter's words, "not to buckle" to the Abnakis.¹ Immediately a canoe appeared with two Indians who begged the governor not to leave. Shute told them that he would confer with them again but only "if they quitted their unreasonable Pretensions to the English Lands, and Complied with what he said...."

The chieftains returned at six that evening, leaving Wiurna behind in evident disgrace. The remaining chiefs completely repudiated their spokesman and agreed to all the governor's demands. On Monday, August 12, the Indians signed a Treaty confirming all previous agreements and "they manifested a desire yt the English might peaceably enjoy all their lands, and yt they might live in friendship with ye English as long as the sun and moon endured...."² Their only positive achievement was getting the governor to promise them supplies and a good gunsmith.

¹Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph Baxter, in possession of Me. His. Soc., Portland, Me., p. 6.

²Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph Baxter, Me. His. Soc., pp. 7-8.

The General Court of Massachusetts was more than pleased with the outcome of the conference. Shute had asserted, they believed, the "just Right and Title" of the English to the Kennebec lands and the House judged it "a hopeful Prospect of Quiet and Safety to [the subjects of] His Majesty who are Resettling in those Parts."¹ Shute himself reported to the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations that the Indians had confirmed all their former treaties "and entred into some new ons." He concluded that the conference would guarantee "the quiet and peace of these Provinces."²

Despite Shute's self-congratulatory comments many historians insist that the Abnakis were unjustly used. Convers Francis thought that Shute would have done his province better service by fixing the boundary as the Indians had requested. "The Indians showed themselves so eager for peace" John Fiske commented, "that even the insults of Governor Shute...failed to produce an outbreak." Sprague found Shute "haughty in manner and not inclined to be conciliatory." Herbert Osgood, called the conference "a classic example" of typical New England-Abnaki relations and said it showed "the inferiority of the English to the French in the management of Indian relations...."³

Opinion is not unanimously anti-Shute, however. Several historians have insisted that Rale's influence on the Abnakis had much to do with the conference's ultimate failure. They have accepted the

¹Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Oct. 26, 1717, I, p. 226.

²Gov. Shute to the Council of Trade and Plantations, Nov. 9, 1717, Cal. of St. Pap., XXX, p. 101.

³Convers Francis, "Life of Sebastien Rale," p. 253; Fiske, New France and New England, p. 239; Sprague, Sebastien Rale, p. 60; Herbert L. Osgood, The American Colonies in the Eighteenth Century (New York: Columbia University Press, 1924), III, pp. 168-69.

Reverend Joseph Baxter's view that Rale's intervention by his "scurrilous Letter" was unwarranted. Buffington said that the letter constituted clear evidence that Rale was already "instigating the Indians to resist." The most hostile case was drawn up by James Phinney Baxter, who insisted the letter was "an artful method of influencing the savages against the English, and in view of the articles ceding Acadia to the English crown, was unfair in the extreme." James Phinney Baxter, it should be noted, says nothing of the unsettled condition of the boundary.¹

Samuel Shute would have been amazed at the eventual outcome of his conference. It was to form the watershed for all subsequent conflict with the Abnakis. Shute did not overawe either the Abnakis or Sebastien Rale; he did convince them, however, that communication with him was impossible. Shute had remained impervious to what were, for them, highly reasonable suggestions. And Rale now recognized that there were tractable Indians who would do anything to appease the English. Most directly threatening were the new Puritan missionary efforts.

The English had discussed the possibility of evangelizing the Abnakis as early as 1715, but they had had difficulty in finding a minister. Samuel Moody, the Minister of York, Maine, attempted informal contact, however. He suggested to Bomazeen, the Norridgewock sachem, that they exchange sons, one to learn Abnaki, the other English. According to Samuel Sewall, "Bomazeen could not find it in his heart

¹Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Joseph Baxter, Me. His. Soc., p. 7; Arthur H. Buffington, "External Relations (1689-1740)," in Albert B. Hart, ed., Commonwealth History of Massachusetts (New York: The States History Company, 1928), II, p. 87; Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 80.

to agree with that Noble Offer."¹

When confronted with the success of Rale's mission, Massachusetts was finally roused into action.² The people of the lower Kennebec had attempted to attract a minister from beginning of their settlement, but they did not succeed until August, 1716. At that time, the Reverend Hugh Adams settled at Georgetown and "began to learn the language of the Eastern Indians, with hopes to gain them over from the French Popish Idolatry by our own True Protestant Gospel."³ But Adams lasted only five weeks.⁴

Massachusetts' legislature was concerned about this consistent failure and passed positive measures encouraging the ministry among the Abnakis.⁵ In November, 1716, it voted "to provide some ordained minister to go to Fort George, Brunswick to learn the language, to visit the Indians, to work himself into their friendship, to promise them a meeting house for the worship of God, if they will attend it."⁶

¹Quoted in William Kellaway, The New England Company, 1649-1776: Missionary to the American Indians (London: Longmans, 1961), p. 258.

²William Kellaway, The New England Company, p. 258.

³Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 105.

⁴Adams was paid a visit by Sebastien Rale who was troubled by rheumatism. "Mr. Adams hoped for the Norridgewock missionary's gratitude and favor thereafter to the English." Evidently his hopes were sorely shattered. Rev. Henry O. Thayer, "Ministry on the Kennebec. Period of the Indian Wars," Me. His. Soc., Collections, 2nd ser. (Portland: The Society, 1899), X, p. 265.

⁵Massachusetts had two reasons to educate the Indians. First, it was the "Intention of our Ancestors," and secondly, it was "the surest way to fix them in our Interest." Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Nov. 15, 1716, I, p. 140.

⁶Ibid., Nov. 21, 1716, I, p. 149.

It also provided the hoped for minister with a generous salary, and an assistant.

The legislature unsuccessfully sought a willing minister for some time. Finally, in July, 1717, the Reverend Joseph Baxter received a years leave of absence from his Medfield, Massachusetts parish and accepted the call.¹

As might be expected, Rale had little charity for rivals and he scoffed at Baxter's efforts. The Jesuit reported that Baxter "went to see the children, he flattered them, he made them little presents, he urged them to come to see him; in short, he worked for two months with much useless activity, without being able to win a single child."² Baxter, however, does not mention any such activity in his journal. Likewise, English historians largely ignore Rale's accusation, though French-Canadians generally accept it.³ There is a reason for this. The French-Canadians wrote religious history and they were convinced of the correctness of Rale's position. It is open to some question, nonetheless. Rale gives the impression that the

¹Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 71-72.

²Rale to Nephew, Oct. 15, 1722, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 97.

³One exception among the English historians is Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 114, but then, that volume is religious history. Eckstorm contended that Shea cleared Baxter of the charge but Shea only noted that Baxter's journal "is silent in regard to the children." Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock, 1724," fn. 10, p. 547; Charlevoix, History of New France, V, p. 268; cf. also Goyau, Le P. Sébastien Racle," p. 177; N.-E. Dionne, Le Père Sébastien Rasles. Jésuit Missionnaire chez les Abénaquis, "Transactions of the Royal Society, 2nd ser., IX (1903), pp. 117-34; Émile Lauvrière, Les Jésuites en Acadie," Revue de l'Histoire des Colonies Françaises, XVIII (2^e Trimestre, 1925), p. 206.

minister was obsessed with the project even though Baxter spoke with the Indians only intermittently. On several occasions he preached to them but there were never more than four or five present. Baxter never left the settlements, though Rale implied that he did, and could not have met many children. It was one of his duties, however, to instruct the Indians and special sums were set aside for gifts for the "Indian Children, to encourage them to learn...."¹ While Rale clearly exaggerated Baxter's activity, there was some basis for his assertion.

Though Baxter angered Rale in attacking Catholic doctrine by telling the Indians of the necessity "of confessing our sins to God & not to men" the Indians seemed "well pleased" with his words. It is debatable, nevertheless, how much of Baxter's instructions they retained. It hardly seems possible that they understood the nuances of predestination and sanctification, and certainly Baxter's arguments against using guns on the Sabbath were not designed to appeal to the Abnaki mentality.²

In October some Indians at Fort George petitioned Governor Shute to build a chapel "for the English and us to meet in one Sabath days."³ They also asked that Baxter, who had been traveling between settlements, remain at Brunswick where there was an interpreter. Baxter wrote that these Indians were from the Androscoggin river, and not from Norridgewock.⁴ And yet Parkman would argue that the incident

¹Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Nov. 21, 1716, I, p. 149.

²Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph Baxter, Me. His. Soc., pp. 10-11.

³To the Great Gouarnar at Boston, Oct. 3, 1717, Mass. Arch. 31: p. 94; Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, pp. 82-83.

⁴Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph Baxter, Me. His. Soc., p. 14.

indicates Rale was becoming less popular.¹

Fannie Hardy Eckstorm was also surprised that Rale "was disliked by many of his own Indians." She insisted that "the more desperately the priests worked for France, the more firmly did their own Indians oppose them."² While she correctly emphasized the internal conflict among the Abnakis as a largely ignored fact, her conclusions must be considerably altered. A mis-dated document has led her to believe that the Kennebecs were seriously opposed to Rale as early as 1718, and the identification of the pro-English Indians is more complex than she supposed.³ Eckstorm does not make the basic distinction between Norridgewock and the other Abnaki villages. The evidence seems to indicate that it was the Penobscot and the St. John Indians who were more seriously pro-English. Though it cannot be denied that there were pro-English Indians at Norridgewock, their strength in 1717-18 is difficult to establish.

The issue which divided the Abnakis came to the fore at the Arrowsic conference. Even the anti-English savages feared the possibility of war. Seeing no chance for compromise, they skirted the issue. "Without talking at this time about lines and limits, we declare ourselves willing," the Abnakis said, "that the English should settle and occupy, where their fathers did; though we very much dislike

¹Parkman believed that the Indians were from Norridgewock, Half-Century of Conflict, I, p. 229.

²Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 547.

³The document Memoir respecting the Abenakis of Acadia, 1718, in O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 878-81, is misdated. The same document is found under the title Mémoire sur les Limites de l'Acadie, envoyé de Québec à Mgr le Duc d'Orleans, Régent, par le Père Charlevoix Jésuite, Oct. 19, 1720, Arch Col, C 11 E, vol. 2, pp. 76-85. It is also correctly dated in the Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 49-54. Charlevoix did not arrive in New France until September, 1720. William Kingsford, The History of Canada (Toronto: Rowse & Hutchinson, 1888), II, fn., p. 174.

their forts."¹ The Abnakis had not repudiated their stated claims or Wiwurna's contention that the English might not settle on Merrymeeting Bay. They merely deferred comment until another opportunity.

Thus it was English expansion which divided the Abnakis at the Arrowsic Conference. Father Rale and the English obviously saw the land issue differently. Rale led the Abnakis to believe that they could rely on French aid to maintain their title to the Maine lands. Grants from the French king for their support and the construction of their chapel reinforced the impression.² Father Rale had even threatened Governor Shute with the inevitability of French aid at the Arrowsic conference. And there is no doubt that the English were unwelcome. Even the Penobscots and the St. John Indians had rebuffed English agents when they suggested that they acknowledge King George. At the same time, they made it clear that English settlements would not be tolerated.³ Such emissaries never visited the Norridgewock mission. But the Kennebec made themselves equally clear at Arrowsic. Their protests were effectively gagged, however, by Governor Shute.

Soon the English were building beyond Pemaquid point, the Indians' declared eastern boundary. St. Georges Fort was constructed near the site of present-day Thomaston in 1719-20. Another fort was

¹Quoted by William Williamson, History of the State of Maine, II, p. 97.

²Mémoire du Roi aux Sieurs de Vaudreuil et Begon, June 15, 1716, and Same to Same, July 15, 1718, Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 18; 28.

³M. Begon au Ministre, Sept. 25, 1715, Arch. Col., c 11 A, vol. 35, pp. 209-11; P. Camille de Rochemonteix, Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France au XVIII^e Siècle (Paris: Alphonse Picard et sils, 1906), I, pp. 452-55; Council of Trade and Plantations to Mr. Secretary Stanhope, June 30, 1715, Cal. of St. Pap., XXVIII, p. 214.

built at Richmond, opposite Swan Island, on the western bank of the Kennebec.¹ The Island itself was being settled, as was the eastern shore, where "several hundred families" erected homesteads "in various locations."² Settlers at Cork, on the eastern shore, were Scotch-Irish "members of a company of 1500 procured by Captain Robert Temple and Edward Hutchinson."³ It is little wonder that the Kennebecs were alarmed, and Rale warned them that the English would soon be at Norridgewock itself.⁴ The Indians of the Penobscot and the St. John were not similarly outraged simply because they were not in contact with the English.

On the other side of the action, the Reverend Joseph Baxter had no idea that the Kennebecs differed in opinion from the other Indians he met. When the Indians bitterly condemned Rale, Baxter was misled into believing that Rale was solely responsible for their agitation. The mistake is understandable for it was mainly the pro-English Indians who visited him.

One incident is especially misleading and illustrates how widely the Indians were divided. After two Englishmen had killed an Indian of Father Lauverjat's mission, the Penobscots resolved to inform the English of their peaceful intentions, preferring to call the incident

¹Williamson, History of the State of Maine, II, p. 97.

²William Willis, "Scotch-Irish Immigrants to Maine..." Me. His. Soc., Collections, 1st ser. (Portland, The Society, 1859), VI, p. 15.

³Moody, "The Maine Frontier," p. 362.

⁴Rapport de Monsieur Begon, Nov. 8, 1718, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 39, pp. 144-47; Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 33.

"an accident." Lauverjat advised them to wait until they learned Shute's reaction, but they insisted that he write the Governor immediately. Vaudreuil later found it necessary to criticize the Jesuit for doing so, but the priest explained that if he had refused the Indians would have had the letter written by Joseph Baxter.¹

The Penobscots had not easily adopted this solution. In December, 1717, they held a tribal conference at Pemaquid point to discuss the issue. The young men were all for war, but they were stopped by cooler heads who warned them: "If you do so, you will do ye Devils work & the Devil will take you."² Notably, the young, hot blooded men opposed the English and "Les Anciens," as Vaudreuil called them, were willing to submit. Thomas Hutchinson said they "were afraid at this time of a new war. The old men were loath to quit their villages...where they lived at ease...."³ It is clear that Vaudreuil was more concerned with the inconstancy of the Penobscots than with that of the Kennebecs. But the young men did moderate the acquiescence of "les anciens" to some extent. The Indians asked Shute to remove "all those capable of setting them at variance...."⁴ Even the

¹Rapport de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Conseil, Oct. 31, 1718, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 39, pp. 127-34; Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 31-32; Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 118.

²Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph Baxter, Me. His. Soc., pp. 25-26.

³Hutchinson, History of the Province of Massachusetts, II, p. 166. Joseph Baxter called the old chiefs "the wise men." Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph Baxter, Me. His. Soc., p. 26. Deposition of Lewis Bane, of York, Dec. 2, 1719, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXI, pp. 365-66.

⁴Rapport de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Conseil, Oct. 31, 1718, Arch. des Col., C 11 A, vol. 39, pp. 128-29; Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 32.

Penobscots did not appreciate the "conversation" of the English.

Another incident surely convinced the English of Rale's dangerous influence. Captain Westbrook showed the Indians a letter written by Rale to the governor. The Indians listened attentively as he read it and then told him "the Jesuit Lied, and he was very wicked."¹ The incident led Eckstorm to declare that "they had come to distrust their priests and said openly that they lied."² It cannot be determined, however, that the Indians were from Norridgewock. On another occasion, when Westbrook presented the letter to the Indians, they said "Penobscot men are good men, & would not hurt the English." Westbrook was shrewd enough to point out that some Penobscot sachems had signed the letter. Then the Indians admitted that they were not present when the letter was written and when "they were asked if they desired to live in love and peace with ye English...they did not readily answer."³ Rale's English contemporaries did not make the distinction between those Indians empowered to speak for the whole tribe and those speaking only for themselves.

Apparently the establishment of Rale's popularity is more difficult than Eckstorm would have us believe. The English settlers saw only part of the action. Though they could not have fathomed Rale's reasons, their judgment that he was working against them was correct. Unfortunately, their expressed opinions have misled commentators to believe that Rale maliciously followed orders from

¹Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph Baxter, Me. His. Soc., p. 40.

²Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 546.

³Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph Baxter, Me. His. Soc., pp. 47-48.

Quebec against the Kennebecs wishes.

Sebastien Rale must have perplexed the English, for throughout the winter of 1717-18 they received reports about his superstitious mutterings. In October Baxter heard that Rale had predicted that the world would end in forty-nine days.¹ Later, in April, 1718, he was told that Rale had a vision at night and

felt as it were a hand upon his throat yt almost choaked him, & saw a great light again, and heard a voice saying it is in vain for you to take any pains with these Indians, your children, for I have got possession of them, & will keep possession of them.²

A man of Rale's education would be most unlikely to worry about an impending doomsday. It could be argued, in fact, that the Jesuit was so fully occupied with the English invasion that he had no energy for a contest with satanic powers. But it is well known that the savages were highly susceptible to rhetorical imagery. What effects these supposed apparitions had on Baxter is unknown. Perhaps he reported them to the General Court when he made his formal reports in November, 1717, and June, 1718.³

Joseph Baxter and Rale did exchange several letters which did little to increase either's understanding of the other. Father Rale was infuriated by Baxter's attack on Catholic doctrine and wrote him a long letter in defense of the Church. Baxter, who was about to return to Boston, wrote a short note in Latin. Rale immediately added more

¹Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph Baxter, Me. His. Soc., pp. 14-15.

²Ibid., pp. 30-31.

³Ibid., p. 17. Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, II, June, 4, 1718, p. 11.

remarks against Baxter's doctrinal position and made the insulting contention that Baxter's Latin was less than accurate. In April, 1719, Baxter re-entered the argument to defend himself. The Jesuit, Warrior for the Faith, must have been sorely disappointed, for the minister avoided all discussion of doctrinal matters. Certainly Rale was not pleased with Baxter's disparagement of his personality as choleric, but then he had been less than tactful himself.¹

At this point, Governor Shute entered the fray for his orthodox protégé. He delivered Rale a long homily on the duties of a missionary. He said he had not found Rale's conduct amenable to the Apostle's exhortation:

What then. Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, and I therein rejoyce, yea and I will rejoyce.

Shute thought it extremely unworthy of Rale to fault Baxter's Latin. A missionary, he said, should have better things to do. He included a copy of the law against Roman Catholic priests, which, he pointed out in a postscript, Rale would "do well to consider of."²

Rale had written Shute in August, 1718. He had warned the governor of the temper, or rather the distemper of the Abnakis and noted, in particular, their "warlike and terrible genius." The Indians were thoroughly dissatisfied with the Treaty of Arrowsic.

¹Some of these letters are preserved in the Massachusetts Historical Society Archives. They are also printed in Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 85-87; 143-53; 397-404. cf. also Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 114.

²A Letter from Gov. Shute to Rallé the Jesuit, Feb. 21, 1718/19, Mass. His. Soc., Collections, 1st ser. (Boston: The Society, 1798), V, pp. 112-19.

Shute shrugged off Rale's complaints with a remark that the English had nothing to fear as long as the Indians were used.¹

Nevertheless, the liquor traffic continued unchecked as Rale had pointed out and as Shute realized. It was, undeniably, a major irritant on the Kennebec. On May 29, 1718, Shute attempted to goad the House to action by depicting the "fatal Consequences" of the trade.² The resulting bill, "An Act in addition to the Act for preventing Abuses to the Indians," was passed on June 21, 1718.³ Later, Samuel Moody confirmed the governor's fears when he declared "that all the disorders which happen amongst them are occasioned by Strong Drink, that is sold to them by Coasters...."⁴ Even Joseph Baxter had harsh words against the itinerant coasters and trading sloops.

The Indians were in an uproar. In reaction to Rale's letter the Council sent forty men "to make discovery of [their] designs... & if need be to secure the Frontiers from danger...."⁵ Governor Shute informed the Council of Trade that "the Indians by the instigation of their Jesuits have of late been very insolent." Some of them were killing cattle on the Kennebec. When they were accosted by the English who demanded payment, they made what Governor Vaudreuil called a vigorous answer: "Complain all you want to the Governor," they said, "he is not my judge. And as for the payment for the cattle, ask

¹Ibid.

²Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, May 29, 1718, II, p. 5.

³Ibid., June 21, 1718, p. 37.

⁴Ibid., June 27, 1718, p. 48.

⁵Mass. Council, Aug. 6, 1718.

whoever told you to settle there." Shute must have cringed when he heard that remark, for he had assured the Council of Trade that he would "be able to prevent a war breaking out."¹

The situation was equally tense for the French. By the end of 1718, the administrators of New France realized that the Abnakis had nearly reached a crisis. Rale's letters and reports had become more and more frantic. The boundary was still not settled, and the English were gaining control of the contested area.

Rale advised Vaudreuil that Shute encouraged the expansion on the orders of the King of England. He reviewed all the troubles that must have haunted the French governor's sleep. The English had the advantage in times of peace and they put the occasion to good use. There was only one solution to the problem, according to Rale, and that was the prompt settlement of the boundary.²

Sebastien Rale's warning that Shute was sending 200 families to settle the Penobscot, 500 to the Sieur de St. Castin's Pentagoet post and 500 more to the St. John, startled Vaudreuil and Begon into action. Vaudreuil told the Council of Marine that he could not and would not refuse the Indians aid if they were attacked by the English. On the other hand, he softened his strong words with a plea for directions.³

¹Rapport de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Conseil, Oct. 31, 1718, Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 32; Governor Shute to the Council of Trade and Plantations, Sept. 29, 1718, Cal. of St. Pap., XXX, p. 358; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, June 12, 1718, II, p. 21; Oct. 29, 1718, p. 60.

²Rapport de M. Begon, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 39, Nov. 8, 1718, pp. 144-47; Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 33-34.

³Rapport de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Conseil, Oct. 31, 1718, Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 32.

Begon also took Rale's advice and wrote a long memoir on the boundary. Citing historical precedent, ancient maps, and expedience, he favored holding the English to the peninsula of Nova Scotia. While he admitted that the St. Georges river was the true boundary, he maintained the French claim to the Kennebec. It was best, he advised the Council of Marine, to draw a line from the source of the St. Georges to the source of the Hudson. Such a line would keep the Abnakis in the French alliance. He reminded the Council that though the Abnakis were Roman Catholics, they would not remain so for long if the English gained control of the territory. As Rale pointed out, the Jesuits would be removed, and the Abnakis once docile would become the scourge of New France. They could pillage and destroy all the French habitations from the southern coast to the St. Lawrence.¹ Rale was no French agent. Vaudreuil and Begon used his letters to convince the minister of their quandry and prayed his predictions would not come true.

Governor Vaudreuil did his best to maintain the French claim to the contested area despite an apathetic home government. He encouraged the Acadians to move to the St. John which, he said, "is not part of the English dominion."² The Acadians were not so eager as Vaudreuil. But assurance came easily to the governor's lips and he tersely replied that he would not "suffer the English to take possession" of the St. John. He named Father Loyard as his

¹Mémoire pour servir à régler les Limites, Nov. 8, 1718, Arch. Col., C 11 E, vol. 2, pp. 14-29.

²Marquis de Vaudreuil to M. Louis Allain at Port Royal, and Same to Same, Sept. 22, 1718, Cal. of St. Pap., XXX, pp. 406-07.

representative with powers to give the settlers land grants.

Meanwhile, Governor Vaudreuil had written Lieutenant Governor Doucett of Nova Scotia that he would do his utmost to maintain the new treaty of alliance between England and France. He made it clear, nonetheless, that the French considered the St. John theirs. The exchange left Doucett shaken. He pleaded with the absentee Governor Philipps to "put a stop to their proceedings, or ellce they will claim everything within cannon shot of this Fort...."¹ It was clear that New France was not going to accept British claims gracefully.

The shrill warnings of Vaudreuil and Begon must have awakened the Council of Marine, for it replied, despite the newly concluded alliance with Great Britain, that "Justice seems to require that Acadia be reduced to the peninsula."² "The English pretensions," they noted, "are exorbitant." They finally proposed to do something to ease the situation.

Louis XV communicated the good news to Vaudreuil and Begon on May 23, 1719: The ambassador to England had proposed the nomination of commissioners. He had requested that Governor Shute be prevented from sending more settlers into the disputed area. Louis XV also agreed that the English settlers already there should immediately be removed. He added that he could not give Vaudreuil specific instructions because he did not know if George I had accepted the

¹Marquis de Vaudreuil et Lt. Governor Doucett, Sept. 22, 1718, Cal. of St. Pap., XXX, pp. 405-06; Lt. Governor Doucett to Governor Philipps, Dec. 13, 1718, Ibid., p. 405.

²Council Deliberations on Vaudreuil's letter of Oct. 31, 1718, March 14, 1719, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 124, p. 100.

proposal. He noted, nonetheless, that Vaudreuil might use the Indians, or any other method he saw fit to prevent English settlement. He cautioned Vaudreuil to do nothing to jeopardize the alliance with Britain.¹

The British government was amenable to Louis XV's suggestions. They realized from the reports of Massachusetts and Nova Scotia that the French would take advantage of the unsettled condition of the frontier. By the middle of July, 1719, the British had accepted France's offer and had appointed Martin Bladen and Daniel Pulteney commissioners.² Their instructions sketched the official British position based on the commission of the last French governor of Acadia. Such a claim would give Great Britain the land east of the St. Georges.³

Vaudreuil and Begon joyfully greeted the king's decision. But they reported that George I had not stopped Governor Shute. They had learned from Rale that the governor threatened to send 500 more men to the Kennebec. They were not alarmed as Rale also sent two chiefs to Quebec. The sachems told Vaudreuil that the Abnakis were determined to oppose the English and had invited the other villages to aid them. By 1719 then, Rale, the Abnakis and Vaudreuil were confident that English expansion on the Kennebec could be thwarted.

¹Mémoire du Roy à Messieurs de Marquis de Vaudreuil et Begon, May 23, 1719, Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 40; O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 892.

²Mr. Delafaye, Secretary to the Lords Justices to the Council of Trade and Plantations, July 16, 1719, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXI, p. 162; The Boston Gazette, March 7, 1719/20.

³Lords Justices Instructions for Daniel Pulteney and Marten Bladen, Nov. 4, 1719. Cal. of St. Pap., XXXI, pp. 252-53; Mr. Vaughan and Mr. Capon to the Council of Trade and Plantations, June 10, 1719, Ibid., p. 120.

Since 1716 the Abnakis had moved from vague apprehension to open hostility to the English. Ever behind the scene was Sebastien Rale exhorting both the Indians and the French officials to immediate action. His efforts were finally bearing fruit. Diplomatic efforts were his first recourse. But he was fully prepared to inspire both the French and the Abnakis to grapple with the English to protect their mutual rights.

¹Rapport de M. Vaudreuil et Begon, Oct. 26, 1719, Arch. Col., C 11 E, vol. 2, pp. 34-36; C 11 A, vol. 41, p. 68; Collection de Manuscripts, III, pp. 41-42.

CHAPTER IV

THE IRRECONCILABLE CONFLICT 1719--1721

Historians have sought a unifying link for the causes of the conflict after 1718 in a variety of factors. James Phinney Baxter stressed the increasing malignity of the savages encouraged by Sebastien Rale. Eckstorm followed his lead, but her interpretation ignores Rale's frantic concern for his Indians.¹ Thus, the opposing view, especially that of the French-Canadian historians, has stressed the hostility of the English to the person of Father Rale.² A corollary of their hypothesis is the belief that the New Englanders were primarily motivated by a religious zeal which found Jesuits a particularly obnoxious form of popery. Closer examination qualifies but does not deny either of these views. The English did come to regard Rale as the source of their troubles and the Jesuit did nothing to placate them. One factor, however, concerned all the parties involved. Only the conflict over the land was basic, irreconcilable.

While Eckstorm had viewed the division among the Abnakis as evidence that anti-English opposition originated with Sebastien Rale, she had not noticed a similar disaffection among the English. As the

¹Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 92ff; "By his sheer personal domination and by his power of excommunication, which he threatened to use," Eckstorm noted, "Rasles held down the peace party and imposed his will upon the tribe." "The Attack on Norridgewock," pp. 559-60.

²Edouard Lecompte referred to the English as "the fanatics of New England," "L'Apotre des Abénaquis," L'Action Francaise (Juillet, 1924), p. 24; see also Dionne, "Le Père Sébastien Rasles," p. 126; Goyau, "Le P. Sébastien Racle," p. 178.

disagreement between the Abnakis and the English reached a crisis it became apparent that some English men accepted the Indians' complaints. Nor could Massachusetts' Executive Council and House of Representatives agree on a course of action in regard to the Kennebecs.

There was an obvious contradiction between what Massachusetts desired and what she asked. She insisted, in the first place, that if the Indians were wronged, they had the right, as subjects of the Crown, to petition the government for redress. Dudley and Shute assured the troubled sachems that they would be justly used. The Indians' complaints were ignored, however, when they conflicted with provincial interests.¹

Long before 1718, the Indians had lamented the grasping traders, the flagrant rum trade and the new Kennebec settlements. Both Dudley and Shute vowed to regulate the trade and to halt the liquor traffic. Their efforts were only spasmodic, however, and met the often determined opposition of the House. There was no hope for negotiation on the land, and the settlements proved to be the ultimate irritant. On that question the English had nothing to discuss. They contented themselves with asserting their rights by unearthing moldy patents to prove their case. Not surprisingly, Rale remarked: "There is no Justice

¹The material of this chapter is a contradiction of what might be called the Vaughn thesis. "What emerges from my investigation...", Vaughn remarked, "is a conviction that the New England Puritans followed a remarkably humane, considerate, and just policy in their dealings with the Indians." Alden T. Vaughn, New England Frontier, Puritans and Indians, 1620-1765 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1965), p. vii. Vaughn's book carries Indian-Puritan relations only up to 1675. His thesis does not explain Abnaki-Massachusetts relations after 1713. If anything, Massachusetts was caught between her expressed concern for Indians and the fact that the policy broke down under partisan political pressures.

among'st the English,"¹ and there was substance to the assertion.

Like many unseen, unheard minorities, Rale and the Abnakis resolved to rectify the situation. They began what was, for the eighteenth century, non-violent protest. It was extraordinary that the Indians restrained themselves in this manner. They neither scalped nor abducted English settlers. Instead, they killed cattle, for which, Rale said, the English had only themselves to blame.² As long as the English continued to ignore the Indians' real or even imaginary complaints there would be no peace on the frontier. If the English could not convince the Abnakis with words, their only recourse was to arms.

Wilcomb E. Washburn, in a particularly succinct account of Indian versus European ownership of the land, has made some general observations that are applicable. He extrapolates his view from a conception of 'right' involving natural, speculative and finally expedient rights. Washburn's argument is relevant to the conflict on the Kennebec after 1715. The clash between each of his notions of right can easily be seen.³

There was, first, the Abnakis' natural right to the land. Such possession was qualified in the eighteenth century by the Indian grants of the seventeenth. The Abnakis were caught in a peculiar situation and remarked upon it. They felt that they could not be bound

¹Rale to Moody, Feb. 7, 1720, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 102.

²Ibid., pp. 97-98.

³Wilcomb E. Washburn, "The Moral and Legal Justification for Dispossessing the Indians," in James Morton Smith, ed., Seventeenth Century America: Essays in Colonial History (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), pp. 15-32.

by deeds made by chiefs long since dead. They were supported in their argument, surprisingly, by some Englishmen. Thomas Coram of London, claimed that Massachusetts had no valid claim to the Indians' land. He contended that the deeds, received some sixty years before, were fraudulent, having been received from rum-plied Indians.¹

There was also the conflict over speculative rights. Both Great Britain and France claimed the northern colonial frontier by right of discovery and by formal treaty agreements. After 1713, that conflict focused on the settlement of a boundary and on the definition of what the Treaty of Utrecht meant by the words "Acadia or Nova Scotia."

The question of effective control, or expedient right, was more basic. Since Utrecht proved to be so vague, Massachusetts moved to assert her claims by sending settlers to the Kennebec. The French were not less active. After the missionaries warned them that French interests were in danger, they encouraged the Council of Marine to act decisively to save for New France both the land and the Abnaki alliance.

¹"General Nicholson said, he had conquered the said land from the French for her late Majesty; that no place had more controverted titles than the land now in dispute; to clear which the Assembly of Massachusetts Bay had lately examined into them; as to the unfair clandestine practices, which Mr. Coram said, were used in obtaining purchases from the Indians by debauching and making them drunk, Col. Taylor said, there had been a general treatment with the Indians by Col. Dudley late governor of the Massachusetts Bay, and to prevent such ill practices for the future, the government of that province allow no grants, without registering there." Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations from March 1714-5 to October 1718 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1924), June 6, 1717, p. 239. Debauched or no, the government of Massachusetts had accepted the old Indian titles as legal, and no opposition from Rale or from the Abnakis could convince them otherwise.

But the most important conflict over expedient right was between the English and the Abnakis. Massachusetts asserted that she would possess what was hers and built forts to insure her ability to do so. Utilizing European notions of ownership, the Indians claimed the land by conquest. The Abnakis noted that they had driven the English out three times, and said they could and would do so again.

More realistically, the Indians recognized the claims of the English to the land already settled. Thus, the Abnakis, and even Rale were willing to compromise and to allow the settlements of Brunswick, Topsham, Georgetown, and Augusta to remain. They refused to consider or to permit further expansion up the Kennebec.

Governor Shute made it clear at the Treaty of Arrowsic that he would contest the Indians' title to the Kennebec. There were two alternatives open to the governor. He could negotiate with the Abnakis or he could force them to accede to his wishes. Unfortunately for all concerned, he chose the latter course. As Washburn pointed out: "Man thinking will continue to tell us what the law ought to be; man acting will tell us what the law is."¹

The implications of Shute's decision were not immediately clear. For several years the English and the Abnakis sparred over vaguely defined issues. The government at Boston, divided politically between House and Executive Council, was equally split over hard or soft-line policy. Time and again, reason won out and the government chose to send commissioners to treat with the Abnakis. The commissioners,

¹Washburn, "The Moral and Legal Justification for Dispossessing the Indians," p. 32.

however, did not distinguish between negotiation and assertion of right. They did more demanding than discussing. The result, so familiar and so seldom avoided, was predictable.

Rale, unlike either the Abnakis or the Massachusetts government, remained inflexible. It became apparent that the Jesuit represented more his own opinions rather than those of Vaudreuil. Sebastien Rale was calling the shots, though often recklessly. With the knowledge that the French court was working towards a settlement of the boundary, he became increasingly impatient and arrogant.

When Joseph Heath and John Minot arrived at Norridgewock in April, 1719, Rale's thinly veiled threats convinced them that he was "an Incendiary of mischief."¹ Rale told them that the Canadian Indians had written the Kennebecs "that in giving away their lands, they kild themselves and them to, and that they were Obliged to assist them in case of any injustice done them by the English...." The Jesuit was convinced that letters, remonstrances, and petitions to the English were futile. Stronger measures were needed, and he believed a threatened Indian alliance would frighten Shute.

Rale repeated the Indians' position to Heath and Minot. He noted that "rum was the greatest reason of all the disturbances in the plantations." The Indians had not given the English permission, Rale

¹Unless otherwise noted the quotations are from: Joseph Heath and John Minot to Gov. Shute, May 1, 1719, Mass. Arch. 51: 316-17; Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, IX, pp. 446-47; but see also their other accounts: Deposition of Lewis Bane, Dec. 2, 1719, and Deposition of John Minot, Nov. 27, 1719, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 279-80; Gov. Shute to Council of Trade and Plantations, Dec. 7, 1719, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXI, pp. 282-83; and Depositions of Bane and Minot, ibid., pp. 365-66.

said, to settle above Arrowsic mills, and yet they had pushed on. He reminded them that the boundary between New England and France had not been settled and defiantly added that Vaudreuil had been ordered to protect the Abnakis.

The Englishmen also spoke with the Indians, who thought the disturbances insignificant. They said that the Indians who terrorized the English were not their "Bretheren." The guilty ones were "prayerless." It was Sebastien Rale, they contended, who was inciting them by "telling them that...in two years [the English] would be so strong that they would not be able to remove them."¹

Though the Englishmen never realized it, the pro-English Indians had contradicted themselves. They accused Rale of engineering the crisis and yet said the trouble-makers were "prayerless." That could not have been true. It was the pro-English Indians who opposed Rale and flattered Joseph Baxter. The others, faithful Catholics all, opposed only the English. And yet the Indians were divided and were becoming more so. Vaudreuil was beginning to realize that even the Norridgewocks leaned heavily towards the English.²

¹Deposition of Lewis Bane of York, Dec. 2, 1719, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 279.

²Most obvious among the pro-English Indians was Bomazeen. Heath and Minot found him "very inclinable" towards the English and sent their letter to the governor by him. The Council rewarded him and his companions for the service. They gave each coats and shirts of "bleu Cloath." Only Bomazeen, however, received a coat of silver thread. Later, the Council learned that Bomazeen was quarreling with the other Indians. They wondered why. The answer is obvious. Bomazeen, resplendent in his new finery, was ridiculed for what he was: pro-English. Heath and Minot to Gov. Shute, May 1, 1719, Mass. Arch. 51: p. 317; Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, IX, p. 447; Mass. Council, May 13, 1719, May 17, 1719, and Sept. 11, 1719.

The Indians' protestations of friendship to Heath and Minot barely lasted the summer. On November 4, 1719, Shute addressed the House of Representatives. He could not believe, he said, that the Indians would attempt "an open War with us, so long as the strict Alliance continues, between His Majesty and the French king...."¹ He was not gambling on good will, however. He had already written Vaudreuil to remind him of the "strict Alliance" between England and France. He also qualified his hopes with a request for legislation to halt the "Insolent and Injurious" treatment of the "Inhabitants of the New Settlements...."² His opinion was reinforced the next day when the Pejeboscot Proprietors asked to be "Protected from...the Norridgawog Indians,"³ and it was decided to send commissioners to talk with the Indians.

In January, 1720, the commissioners went to hear the Abnakis' complaints and to seek the causes of their conduct.⁴ Their report stressed the objections of the Indians to the settlements above and north-westward of Merrymeeting Bay, specifically the English on Swan Island and the town of Cork on the east side of the river. The commissioners had produced a deed to the area but the Indians insisted that "the persons Executing that Deed were all Amriscoggin Indians

¹Mass. Council, February 21, 1718/19.

²Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Nov. 4, 1719, II, pp. 174-75.

³Ibid., Nov. 5, 1719, p. 176; Dec. 2, 1719, p. 206. William Tailer and John Stoddard were chosen to represent the government. Dec. 9, 1719, p. 221.

⁴For the official minutes see: In re Conference at Falmouth, Jan., 1719/20, Mass. Arch. 29: 57-63; Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, pp. 83-87.

(except one) and never had any Right thereto...." For once, the English had been beaten at their own game. Wiwurna's objections to settlements "above the Mills" had been confirmed. The commissioners also advised the governor that the Abnakis were being encouraged by Vaudreuil and by the "Cunning Insinuations of that Incendiary the Priest...." They had no doubt that "the Priest go's on in his inveterate hatred and Malice against us."

The commissioners decided the Indians had some valid complaints. They found that they were often "overcome with Rum and Strong Drink Supplied by many of the English...." To rectify the abuse, they suggested that trading houses be built and staffed with "Truck masters under Bond and Oath for their Fidelity...." Private traders would be thus discouraged and the Indians would become "more dependent on this Government...."

It was as though Rale had the results of the commissioners' investigation before him when he wrote Captain Samuel Moody on Feb. 7, 1720. The commissioners had suggested through the faithful Bomazeen that some of the Norridgewocks go to Great Britain as guests of Massachusetts. Rale warned Moody that "if they do I shall drive them forever from the Church."¹

Rale had reached the limits of his patience. His frequent missives to the Governor, Dudley and Shute had had no effect. The English were becoming stronger on the Kennebec, and they were now

¹Rale to Moody, Feb. 7, 1719/20, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 96-104. Except as otherwise indicated the quotations that follow come from this letter. Flynt's Manuscript Commonplace Book in the Mass. His. Soc. Boston, also quotes the letter.

considering expansion towards the Penobscot. Nor had the Abnakis successfully frightened the English. Disgusted with his failure, Rale's letter was remarkable, its eloquence surviving a rough translation from the French. Rale was so bitingly sarcastic that the councillors in Boston dubbed it "the railing letter."¹

Rale tersely analyzed the Treaty of Arrowsic. He said that the Abnakis approved of nothing but what Wiwurna had said; they left only because there was no ground for further discussion. The English had made it clear that "it's vain talking" with them. The Abnakis had set limits to the settlements and the English had refused to listen. Thus, Rale said that "If the Indians kill Cattle below the Mill towards the seaside they must absolutely pay for them...." He added with great frustration that "Any treaty...particularly that of Arrowsic is Null, If I don't approve it, though the Indians have consented, for I bring them so many reasons against it that they absolutely condemn what they have done."

The Jesuit was particularly angered by Shute's attempts to observe his actions, as Heath and Minot had done. "They inquire about my words: do they intend to unite against me," he asked, "to drive me from my Mission? that would be a retirement from misery...." He added, however, that "Whatever you may think you can't move me." He called Shute a "Warrior" and warned him of the disasters of an Indian war. He suggested that the English save themselves considerable embarrassment and recall their settlers, "for assuredly, there shall not one remain there."

¹Sewall, "Diary", VIII, p. 245.

The letter bears the evident marks of Rale's personality. Confident, proud, uncompromising, Rale reacted to the English threat with single-minded purpose. James P. Baxter correctly called the letter threatening, arrogant and vain.¹ But, it was vanity born of frustration. Rale proclaimed that "a Missionary is not a Cipher like a Minister," only because the puritan divines were a conspicuous threat. He promised to write a book telling the world how "the English treat the Indians," how they answer his demands by telling him that the Jesuit "bid you say it." Rale pointed out, with some reason, that an underlying cause of the misunderstanding was the interpreters who, he claimed with characteristic relish, spoke "nothing but Gibberish."²

Rale also sketched the nature of his influence on the Abnakis. He couldn't make them declare war; he was, after all, a priest. Indeed, he declared that he could "absolutely hinder them when they haven't solid reasons for it...." But he significantly added that he wouldn't stop them if that was the only way to preserve their land. In that case, he said, "I'll tell them they may make war."

His contention that he and the Abnakis were taking a moral stand on the issue is true to character. In 1720 some of the Norridgewocks gave Shute Rale's translation of the Lord's prayer. The words we "must not think or take revenge" substituted for "we forgive those who trespass against us," stand out in bold relief.³ Rale

¹Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 104.

²Rale's judgement about the English interpreters can be accepted for theirs was only a nodding acquaintance with the language. Rale's facility came from systematic study, he could read as well as speak the language.

³"Indian Terms and Definitions," Me. His. Soc., Collections, 1st ser. (Portland: The Society, 1857), V, pp. 427-28.

clearly recognized the vengeful nature of the Abnakis, and instructed them that revenge was not the 'Christian way.' He also taught them that their duty was to protect their lands for future generations of Abnakis. He told them, moreover, that if they did not do so he "would go away from them."¹

Rale's warnings carried some weight with the Indians for in July the House received word that several families had fled and "the rest are likely soon to follow if not Protected."² Shute took the commissioners advice and decided to be conciliatory. He addressed the House and suggested that the colony set up a "few Truck-Houses," reminding the representatives that they were obliged to do so "by our several Treaties...." Rale's letter coupled with the Norridgewock's attacks against the settlers deeply impressed the governor for he asked that general boundaries be set up between the Indians and the English.³

Characteristically, the House held a more poignant view of Massachusetts' rights than those of the Indians. It did not feel that trading houses would be effective. It asserted, to the contrary, that they would arouse "Feuds and Animosities among the Indians...." The Representatives were equally adamant about the proposed boundary. In their opinion, the boundaries had already been settled "in the former Treaties." Finally, the House declared that the Indians would not be

¹Rale to Moody, Feb. 7, 1720, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 100. This was what Lord called Rale's severe test of the Abnakis. History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 122.

²Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, July 19, 1720, II, p. 249.

³Mass. Council, Mar. 3, 1719/20; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, July 13, 1720, II, p. 236.

disturbed on the lands which "of Right belong to them."¹

On July 10, the Indians threatened the people at Cork. One of the Norridgewocks told an Englishman that the Indians "had fought three times for this land &...would fight Again for it was Never Sold to ye English...."² Williamson found the contention an exhibition of "good sense and a just regard for their rights."³

The Abnakis also sent a petition to the government of Massachusetts. They asked that boundaries be determined, and that a trading house be built for them and the Council agreed. The Councillors pressed for immediate action on the request so that they might avoid all "just cause" for complaint.⁴ But again, the House rejected their motion.⁵ Barring concrete action, the Council advised the governor to assure the settlers that Capt. Moody had been ordered to protect them.⁶

In August, John Gyles made his intelligence report. As usual, the bearer of the letter was Bomazeen who, he found, was "very Desirous to Go to Boston." Gyles noted that the previously complacent Penobscots had received a shipment of gunpowder from Canada and that Thomas Thorn had been convicted by Justice Penhallow for selling the Indians rum. Gyles hoped that "such meathods will Put a stop to Lickring...."⁷

¹Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, July 19, 1720, II, p. 247.

²Belknap Papers, Mass. Hist. Soc., 61 A. pp. 89-90.

³Williamson, History of the State of Maine, II, p. 105.

⁴Ford., ed., Mass. House Journal, July 21, 1720, II, pp. 255-57.

⁵Ibid., July 22, 1720, p. 257; p. 259.

⁶Mass. Council, July 20, 1720.

⁷Letter from Capt. John Gyles to Gov. Shute, Aug. 10, 1720, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, IX, pp. 456-57.

Though the Indians had helped to convict Thorm, they were still not placated. On August 22, it was said that "the eastern Indians continue to insult the People in killing their cattle, and robbing their Houses; They are all in Garrison as far as York this way."¹ By this time the Council was almost as exasperated as the House. To calm the irate citizenry, it resolved to demand "satisfaction of ye Indians for ye damages they have done...."² They advised the governor to write to Vaudreuil about how the "Priests & others" encourage them.

Opinion within the Council was not unanimous, however. Samuel Sewall, Edmund Quincy and Jonathan Belcher broke with the majority and delivered a separate statement. They advised the settlement of a boundary not only because the Indians "have some Lands of their own," but also because they felt it was not "just for this Governmt. to encourage private persons to settle themselves,"³ unless the boundary was decided. Nor did they agree with the government's policy of constructing forts on the Maine lands.

Nevertheless, the Council went ahead in its plans to strengthen

¹The Boston Gazette, Aug. 22, 1720.

²Mass. Council, Aug. 23, 1720.

³Mass. Council, Sept. 2, 1720.

the Kennebec and to chastise the Indians.¹ In October, the Council sent Colonel Walton to have a preliminary meeting with the Indians to plan a conference for late that fall. The Indians arrived with a French flag but, when Walton refused to talk with them because of it, they left it behind. The Abnakis promised to confer with their villages and to inform Walton when they would meet the commissioners.²

When the House of Representatives read Walton's report it was displeased. It thought the Council's measures inadequate for bringing the Kennebecs to terms. The Representatives promptly resolved "That it is derogatory to His Majesties Honour and very injurious to this Province, that Monsieur Ralle a French Jesuit and Missionary should in defiance of the Law, Reside in any part of this Province...."³ The

¹The Boston Gazette, Sept. 5, 1720. Nor did Massachusetts forget the Indians. Their past relations with the Penobscots had been excellent. They sent gifts to the chiefs of that village and the policy paid off. The Penobscots assured Gyles "of their peaceful intentions...." They added that they had "been to advise our brother Narangawock Indians that hath a hunted you People, to Consider of them Selves & do so no more." Gyles had assured Shute that his "Privet informar" would warn him of "Enything Extrordenary." Mass. Council March 25, 1719/20; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, July 21, 1720, II, p. 255; Letter from the Penobscot Indians. Sept. 16, 1620, Mass. Arch. 31: pp. 65-69; Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, pp. 87-89.

²Indian Conference at Georgetown, Oct. 12, 1720, Mass. Arch. 28: pp. 64-65; Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, pp. 94-96; Flynt, Manuscript Commonplace Book, Mass. His. Soc., pp. 283-84.

³The House voted that John Leighton, Sheriff of York County, should accompany the forces to apprehend Rale. If the Indians refused to "surrender up the Jesuit" the commanding officer was to take hostages to be held until they did so. Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Nov. 4, 1720; II, pp. 270-72. Lord pointed out that this was the first time that the "anti-priest" law of 1700 was applied to the Kennebec. Prior to this time the status of the territory was in doubt. History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 125. As late as 1718 the Council of Trade was unsure if Massachusetts' claims to the lands between the Kennebec and the Penobscot should be granted. Norridgewock was situated on the east bank of the river. "Council of Trade and Plantations to the King," May 21, 1718, Cal. of St. Pap., XXX, pp. 254-55.

House asked that the governor take "effectual Methods for his Removal" and passed a resolution for two hundred and fifty men to be sent to Norridgewock to apprehend him. The Representatives decided that the Indians should make immediate restitution for their "many wrongs,"¹ and despite Walton's promises to the Abnakis, voted that they should come to Boston to do so.

The Council disagreed with the House's strong-arm measures and insisted that the commissioners be sent to confer with the Indians as planned. The Council requested that "three Gentlemen of Distinction, Ability and Integrity...be joined with Col. Walton in Seeing and Treating with the Indians...." The House refused and only military men represented the government.²

The conference opened on November 25, 1720. The Indians at once demanded "that the People may be removed from Merry Meeting" bay.³ The commissioners refused to discuss the issue until the Indians assured them they would make restitution "for ye Wrongs done us...." The Abnakis replied that they knew that their young men caused the disturbances but added that they had hindered them when they could. "Then," the commissioners retorted, "you Ought...to punish them for their insolence & If you can't restrain them you should...have deliver'd

¹Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Nov. 5, 1720, p. 272.

²Mass. House Journal, Nov. 5, 1720, II, p. 273; Nov. 7; Nov. 8, 1720, p. 275; cf. also McFarlane, "Indian Relations in New England," pp. 73-74.

³Conference with the Indians at Georgetown, Nov., 1720, Mass. Arch., 29: 65-74; Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, pp. 97-108; the conference is also mentioned in Flynt, Commonplace Book, Mass. His. Soc., pp. 285-86.

ym to us...." The chiefs tried to explain that "If all those people were removed from Merry Meeting Bay, all other Differences between us would be easily composed...."

Ignoring their statement, the Englishmen demanded: "What security will you give us...for we will take your words no longer." After a long silence, the sachems asked "How many skins are we to pay...?" Arguing to the last, the Indians agreed to pay 200 skins and to surrender four chiefs within twenty-five days.

Not surprisingly, the House refused to accept the commissioner's report. Instead of sending the Indians to Boston to answer for their behavior, they had "presumed to Enter into a Treaty" with them. The House did not approve of the innovation and insisted that it was not in "the Honour or Interest of this Government, to have Persons retained in their Pay and Service, that have no regard to the Orders of the Government...." Even though the commissioners met the Indians on orders from the Council, the House decided to withhold their pay until "the Indians duly comply with what is stipulated on their part."¹

Meanwhile, the Council capitulated and decided that ~~t~~ 200 should be offered for Rale and that the government should provide another minister for the eastern service.² A few days later a committee was named to consider the best means for "the Removal or Apprehension of Sebastian Ralle" and the Council found it opportune to send the Penobscots ~~t~~⁴³ of goods for their loyal behavior.³

¹Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Dec. 9, 1720, II, pp. 334-35.

²Ibid., pp. 338-39.

³Ibid., Dec. 12, 1720, p. 341.

The Indians had promised to surrender four chieftains to the English, and they did so. On January 13, 1721, Joseph Bean presented the hostages to the Executive Council.¹ In accepting the hostages the Council jeopardized its own "honour" and authority. The Abnakis soon regretted their moment of weakness and demanded that their chiefs be returned. Such a concession on the part of Massachusetts would have been a fatal sign of weakness. Unwittingly, a few commissioners, acting on their own authority, had created a major irritant between the English and the Abnakis.²

The conference was especially important because it was the pro-English Indians who spoke with Walton. Even they demanded that the English leave Merrymeeting Bay. To an important extent, then, opposition to the English settlements was independent of Rale. But when the English wished, at the end of the conference, to discuss the settlements, the Indians replied: "We have said all yt we were ordered to say." Though they had been directed by the whole village to oppose the settlements, their opposition was only nominal. The commissioners did not miss the opportunity, however, and reiterated English claims to the Kennebec.

The conference and the surrender of the hostages has been much remarked upon. H. C. Schuyler correctly said that the Abnakis feared "the English would use forcible means to obtain satisfaction for their

¹Mass. Council, Jan. 13, 1720/21. For a biographical sketch of Joseph Bean (Bane) see: Noyes, Genealogical Dictionary, I, p. 85.

²Lord noted that "for a moment, however, it apparently served to set aside another angry demand of the House for drastic military action." History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 126. Later, when the Indians grew angry at the government's retention of the hostages the colony had to refuse to free them or lose their argument on the eastern settlements.

recent forays...."¹ Parkman mentioned Rale's "great chagrin"² at the capitulation of the peace party. Several historians have commented on the election, sometime in the fall of 1720, at which "a well known advocate of pacific measures" won.³ They failed to notice, however, the reason for the election of the pro-English party in the first place.

Events of the previous summer had shattered French-Abnaki relations. There is no doubt that the Abnakis, and even the peace party, opposed the English settlements on Merrymeeting Bay. Some of these had the will to do something about it. They sent delegates to explain to Governor Vaudreuil "the situation in which they were placed."⁴ Vaudreuil's answer to their pleas for assistance was devastatingly inept and completed the internal rupture of Rale's mission. Vaudreuil assured the Abnakis that

he should never fail them, in time of need. But what assistance, Father, will you give us? they asked. My children, answered Mr de Vaudreuil, I shall secretly send you some hatchets, some powder and lead. Is this the way, then, the Indians retorted, that a Father aids his children, and was it

¹H. C. Schyler, "The Apostle to the Abenakis, Father Sebastien Rasles, S. J., 1657-1724," Catholic Historical Review, I (1915-16), pp. 171-72.

²Parkman, A Half-Century of Conflict, I, pp. 232-33.

³Williamson, History of the State of Maine, II, p. 105; Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 106; Lord, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, I, p. 126.

⁴This is the misdated document in O'Callaghan under the title Memoire respecting the Abenakis of Acadia. 1718, New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 878-81. It is properly entitled Mémoire sur les Limites de l'Acadie, envoyé de Québec à Mgr le Duc d'Orleans, Régent, par le Père Charlevoix, Jésuite, Oct. 19, 1720, Arch. Col. C 11 E, vol. 2, pp. 76-85; Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 49-54.

thus we assisted you? A Father, they added, when he sees his son engaged with an enemy stronger than he, comes forward, extricates his son and tells the enemy that it is with him he has to do. Well, replied M^r de Vaudreuil, I will engage the other Indian tribes to furnish you aid. At these words the deputies retorted with an ironical laugh--Know, that we all who inhabit this vast continent will, whensoever we please, as long as we exist, unite to expel all foreigners from it, by they who they may.¹

Thus, Rale's policy of supporting the Abnaki claim to the land was dangerously aborted. Vaudreuil had lost, in one slip of the tongue, much of the influence he had had with the Norridgewocks. The governor and Intendant Begon feared that the Abnakis would capitulate to Massachusetts. Begon did "not judge the Abenakis of the present day," Charlevoix said, "by the Abenakis of former times...."² The Norridgewocks were obviously divided, even to the extent that Rale's life was in danger.³ Yet the task of reuniting the village was in his hands.

Only the missionaries, Charlevoix contended, had "the power...to persuade them the Abnakis to submit to the will of the Governor-general."⁴ By that was not actually the case. As subsequent events

¹Memoir respecting the Abenakis of Acadia, 1718, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 880.

²Ibid.

³"Father Rale, Missionary at Naurantsoak, did, indeed, make some efforts to prevent this settlement, the consequences of which he foresaw, but he did not consider himself bound to make any stronger demonstrations, because it would be an useless risk of his life.... He knew that a price had been set on the head of his confrere, Father Aubry, for the same reason, at the beginning of the last war, but this Father succeeded in removing the English, and had nothing to fear from any of the Abenakis, circumstances which no longer exist." Ibid., *My italics.*

⁴Ibid., p. 879.

were to indicate, Vaudreuil clearly followed Rale's lead. The governor wished to prevent Massachusetts' settlement of the Kennebec, but it is clear from Rale's previous actions, and letters that he was motivated by what he considered Massachusetts' injustice to the Norridgewocks.

Massachusetts had made a serious error in demanding that the Indians surrender hostages. Rale used the incident to convince the Kennebecs that the English colony could not be trusted. The Jesuit was embarrassed that the Abnakis had voluntarily submitted. He tried to hide the truth about the incident by reporting that the Indians were beguiled into sending emissaries to the English who then held them against their will.¹ He obviously knew differently. Surviving letters from Begon and Vaudreuil show that he understood the true circumstances of the incident. The letters show, moreover, that he was using every means to convince the Indians of the folly of their actions.² In doing so, he was not following orders from France. The policy is entirely consistent with his action since 1713, and it is equally clear that Vaudreuil and Begon cooperated with him and not

¹Rale to Nephew, Oct. 15, 1722, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 103. Rale wrote this letter after the outbreak of the war. He hoped that it would encourage aid from France for the Abnakis. He had an obvious reason, then, for hiding the fact that the Abnakis were divided among themselves.

²Begon to Rale, June 14, 1721, and Vaudreuil to Rale, Sept. 25, 1721, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 54-65. These were printed in the Mass. House Journal, III, which also prints another letter of Vaudreuil to Rale, June 15, 1721, pp. 189-92. Oddly, Father Charlevoix, author of the document describing the incident, follows Rale rather than his own document. Nor does he mention the disruptive meeting of the Abnakis with Vaudreuil in the summer of 1720 in his history of New France. Many French-Canadian historians, following, Charlevoix, are likewise in error. Charlevoix, History and General Description of New France, V, pp. 271-72.

vice versa.

Sebastien Rale was determined to drive the English from Merry-meeting Bay. He was aware that the English had ordered the Indians to dismiss him and he resolved to use every means available to undermine the pro-English Indians in his village. The English planned to meet the Abnakis to hear their answer on Rale's dismissal. The Jesuit decided to "pack" the conference. He sent six Indians to invite the Abnakis at St. Francis and Becancourt to join the Kennebecs against the English. At his behest, Vaudreuil hastened to those villages to insure that they did so.¹

Rale was desperate; many of the Indians of Norridgewock no longer listened to his words. He sent Vaudreuil a memoir on the sentiments that the governor should impress on the Kennebecs. Vaudreuil complied, and delivered a long harangue against the English. "I think you will find," Begon reported to Rale, that the governor's speech was "in the Sense proposed by you."² Father LaChasse joined in to encourage the Kennebecs, then at Quebec. Likewise, after hearing from Rale Vaudreuil decided against writing an angry note to Shute. Instead, he accepted Rale's proposals: The Kennebecs must remain on their lands, and they must unite in "Speaking Firmly to the Englishmen."³

¹Begon to Rale, June 14, 1721, and Vaudreuil to Rale, Sept. 25, 1721, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 54-65; Vaudreuil to Rale, June 15, 1721; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, III, pp. 189-92. Williamson understood that Vaudreuil went to St. Francis and Becancourt of his own initiative and that he excited the Indians and then informed Rale. His error is a result of a garbled translation of Vaudreuil's June, 1721, letter to Rale. History of the State of Maine, II, pp. 105-06.

²Begon to Rale, June 14, 1721, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 59.

³Ibid., pp. 55-57.

Vaudreuil and Begon found it easy enough to agree with the Jesuit's plans, but his intensity worried them. The two administrators realized that nothing could be done to jeopardize the French alliance with Great Britain. Tactfully but emphatically, Begon told Rale the importance of acting judiciously. Three times he warned him about "The prudence with which we Deem ourselves obliged To act toward The English, so that we may not Commit ourselves."¹

Governor Vaudreuil decided to send Rale's superior, Father LaChasse, to the Kennebec. He would be able to enlist the aid of the Penobscots, as well as the Indians of Canada. The governor had an ulterior motive, however. LaChasse was to explain to Rale what the governor resolved to do "until the Council of Marine has Explained Whether The King's intention Is that the French should join the Savages...or whether he will Content himself with supplying Them with Munitions of War...."² Vaudreuil, it seems, was taking no chances. It may have been that he had learned that his conduct was under some censure in France.³

Though a definite gamble, Rale's program was an unqualified success. Samuel Moody, sent to Arrowsic to learn if the Indians had ousted Rale, reported instead that their "design is to bring their

¹Begon to Rale, June 14, 1721, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 57.

²Begon to Rale, June 14, 1721, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 55.

³Mémoire secret de M. Dauteuil à M. le Duc d'Orleans, Jan. 1720, Arch. Col., C 11 E, vol. 2, pp. 69-75. McFarlane mistakenly noted that the correspondence between Rale and Vaudreuil "indicated that French influence was one of the chief causes for the Indian raids made on the Maine frontiers in the years 1720-21." "Indian Relations in New England," p. 134.

Skins hither premtorily to demand their Hostages upon the Delivery of them."¹ The Abnakis had no intention of dismissing Rale. Moody said they "insolently charge the Govern^t wth Folly in makeing New Demands, before the Matter is finished referring to the skins which they are to pay."² In July, Moody added that Rale and the Indians were at Arrowsic "Inquireing dayly after their Men,"³ and worst of all, the Penobscots had joined the Kennebecs.

On the 28th of July, 200 Indians marched with Rale, LaChasse, Castin the younger and a French officer to Arrowsic Island where they accosted the English. "The Indians," in Vaudreuil's words, "then threw down two hundred beavers, which they had promised for the cattle that had been killed, and demanded at the same time, where were the four men they had conveyed to Boston as hostages for this payment."⁴

When they were told that the governor would not surrender the hostages, the Indians had Father LaChasse read their letter. The Abnakis demanded: "Is it to live in peace with me to take my land despite me?" "Consider Great Captain," the Indians addressed Shute, "that I have frequently told thee to retire off from my lands, and I repeat it to thee now for the last time...It is not thine by gift; the King of France, thou sayst has given it to me; but has he power to give

¹Letter to the Gov. from Samuel Moody, June 5, 1721, Mass. Arch. 51: 353; Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, IX, pp. 462-63.

²Letter from Moody to Gov. Shute, June 19, 1721, Ibid., pp. 463-64.

³Letter from Samuel Moody to Gov. Shute, July 8, 1721, Ibid., pp. 464-65; For the order to the Indians for Rale's dismissal see: Mass. Council, Jan. 24, 1720/21; May 6, 1721.

⁴Messrs. de Vaudreuil and Begon to Louis XV, Oct. 8, 1721, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 904.

it to thee? am I his subject? The Indians have given it to thee. Some Indians that thou has overreached by making them drink, have they the power to give it to thee to the prejudice of all their nation...?" As with most of the petitions that Rale inspired, the Indians' letter ended with a terrible threat. "I wait then," the sachems said, "thy reply within three Sabbath days; if within this time thou dost not write me, that thou hast retired from my land, I will not tell thee again...."¹

Shute was thunderstruck. He wrote Vaudreuil at once, though in tactful terms. He felt sure, he said, that the French governor intended to live faithfully by the Treaty of Utrecht. He felt justified in asking Vaudreuil to censure the French officer and to recall Sebastien Rale. He added that if a war broke out between the English and the Abnakis he expected Vaudreuil's "Friendship and Assistance therein."²

Without waiting for Vaudreuil's reply, Governor Shute and his Council immediately dispatched men to the frontier and named commissioners to meet the Indians at Arrowsic.³ The Indians' threat frightened

¹Letter of the Abnakis to Governor Shute, Arch. Col., Série F 3, Collection Moreau St. Méry, vol. 2-2, pp. 502-07; Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 111-18; Also printed in Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Sept. 1, 1721, III, pp. 109-11. cf. also Mémoire sur les Entreprises que les Anglois de Baston font sur les Terres des Abénakis sauvages allies des françois, Dec. 28, 1721, Min. Aff. Etr., vol. 339, pp. 132-36; Mass. House Journal, Aug. 24, 1721, III, p. 89; The Boston Gazette, Aug. 28, 1721.

²Gov^r Shute to the Canadian Governor, July 21, 1721, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 298-99.

³Mass. Council, July 25, 1721.

the governor and he hastened to calm them. The English settlers, much alarmed at the confrontation, fled the frontier. Shute, after much hesitation, took the Council's advice and issued a Proclamation "to Command and Require that all Persons by Law fit to bear Arms who have deserted the Frontiers immediately and without Delay return to their Habitations...."¹

Governor Phillips of Nova Scotia thought the incident was "no more than a drunken inspiration,"² but Massachusetts was more alarmed. Upon hearing that "the Indians refuse to treat with our Commissioners," the House began to consider "the best methods for securing the Eastern Settlements."³ The House not only proposed to add 150 men to the 350 already on the Kennebec, but thought it necessary to send 300 of them to Norridgewock. The representatives angrily demanded that both Rale and Castin be surrendered. If the Indians opposed the invading force, the troops were to "proceed to kill and destroy them by force of Arms...."⁴ Pains were taken to pass an act prohibiting trade with the Indian rebels. The Council quickly agreed and demanded that the Indians "under pain of being prosecuted with utmost severity, to deliver

¹The Boston Gazette, Sept. 23, 1721.

²Governor Phillipps to the Council of Trade and Plantations, Aug. 16, 1721, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXII, p. 388.

³The Boston Gazette, Aug. 28, 1721; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Aug. 28, 1721, III, p. 94.

⁴Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Sept. 7, 1721, p. 124; Sept. 8, 1721, p. 126.

up the Jesuits and other Heads and Formentors of their Rebellion at Boston by the first day of November...."¹

Governor Vaudreuil was smugly satisfied with the outcome of the march on Arrowsic. "For my part," he wrote to Rale, "I Am of opinion that, If they have taken a Sincere resolution not to allow The English On Their Land, they Must not hesitate to Drive them Therefrom as Soon as possible...."² Though he told Rale he could not give the Abnakis men, he said he would provide them with ammunition.

Vaudreuil's task was not made easier by the king and ministry. The Governor received nothing more concrete than vague orders to encourage them to oppose the English. Begon and Vaudreuil had different ideas. "M. de Vaudreuil is persuaded," they wrote the king, "that if his Majesty permit him to adjoin some French with the Abenakis, the English will be forced to abandon all their settlements on the lands belonging to these Indians...." Negatively, he warned the king that if he did not do so he feared "that they will unite with the

¹Ibid., Sept. 5, 1721, p. 117. Only crusty old Samuel Sewall objected to the Council's decision. He said that "the Indians shewed a great Reluctancy against Erecting Forts higher up the River; and against the arrival of a Multitude of New Inhabitants;.... They also desired the Running of a Line between the English, and them; and made some Proposals on their part, which were rejected; but no Proposals for fixing Boundaries, were offered to them." Samuel Sewall, "A Memorial relating to the Kennebeck Indians," Me. His. Soc., Collections, 1st ser. (Portland: The Society, 1853), III, pp. 351-53.

²Vaudreuil to Rale, Sept. 25, 1721. Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, vol. 67, p. 63; Mass. Arch. 51: 358-59.

English against us...."¹

Undoubtedly with Rale's encouragement, the Indians sent a petition to the king. They asked him to stop the English "or to enter into the war which they are resolved to make for the defense of their country."² Rale was determined to make it clear that the ministry could no longer avoid a decision on the Abnakis, and a memoir was sent the French Procurer for the Jesuit missions asking his aid.³

The English and the Abnakis could not have been closer to war. English indecision, as well as that of the Abnakis', seriously hampered mutual discussion of the issues. No black and white relationship can be drawn between Rale and the causes of the conflict. Many of the councillors, and even Shute himself, realized that Massachusetts bore her share of the guilt. From the political quarrel between the Council and House a policy inadvertently emerged. It was a product of the House's militancy and the Council's wavering hesitancy. Even more basic was the inadequate and often presumptuous treatment of the Indians. If indeed they were subjects of the British Crown, their rights were only

¹Messrs de Vaudreuil and Begon to Louis XV, Oct. 8, 1721, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 906; Arch. Col. C 11 A, vol. 43, p. 234; Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 61; Le Roy aux Sieurs de Vaudreuil et Begon, June 8, 1721: The king said, it should be noted, that he was pleased with Rale's opposition to the English. Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 54; Arch. Col., F. 3, Collection de Moreau St. Mery; vol. 10, part 1, pp. 170-72.

²Parolle des Abenakis au Roy, Oct., 1721, Arch. Col., Série F. 3, Collection Moreau St. Mery, vol. 2-2, pp. 499-501.

³Extrait de quelques lettres de Jésuites Missionnaires de Canada, au Père Davaugour Leurs Procurer en France, depuis la fin d'aoust, jusqu'au commencement de Decembre 1721, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 124, pp. 179-80.

vaguely defined.

The importance of Rale's influence is undeniable. His personal distrust of the English, and to what they symbolized for his mission is a key aspect of the conflict. Much less well-defined was the role of the government of New France. Their attention to the Abnakis and to Rale's irate missives was only cursory.

In 1716 they had assured the ministry that the construction of chapels at Norridgewock and at Meductic would cement the alliance with the Indians. Those chapels were completed in 1720 but they hardly attached the Indians to the French.¹ Had Vaudreuil and Begon been observant, the Indians would not have revolted against them and the Jesuits, Had they been attentive, they would not have had to submit to Rale's direction. Vaudreuil and Begon did not tell the ministry how they had dangerously ruptured the Abnaki alliance. Even if they had, it would not have been important. The ministry, too, was indifferent. This was Rale's cause. As time went on it became clear that he would succeed or fail, alone, with the Abnakis.

¹ Rale said his chapel was "commodious and well adorned," and Vaudreuil found it "well built." In a letter to Shute, however, Rale heatedly complained about its construction. Financed by the king and the Abnakis, Rale hired English workmen for the job. He contended that the laborers worked spasmodically and had overcharged the Indians. He claimed that the belfry was so badly done that "the two workmen that covered it, not without fear, advised not to put a bell there, asuring 'twould fall down as soon as 'twas rung." Rale to Nephew, Oct. 15, 1722, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, vol. 67, p. 87; Vaudreuil at Begon au Conseil de Marine, Oct. 26, 1720, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 42, pp. 27-28; Letter from the Indians to the Gov. Translated 1720, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, pp. 89-93; Mass. Arch. 31: pp. 97-100.

CHAPTER V

SEBASTIEN RALE'S WAR

With the declaration of war in July, 1722, the Abnaki problem took on new, specifically intercolonial overtones. What had been, essentially, a contest between Abnakis and Englishmen for control of the Kennebec lands, became obscured by what Governor Shute regarded as unwarranted French interference. Whatever legitimate claims the Abnakis may have had were submerged by Massachusetts' fear of French intervention and Governor Vaudreuil's blustering threats increased the tension.

Despite Massachusetts' conviction that Vaudreuil was, through Rale, the sole cause of the conflict, the war remained a local one. Vaudreuil did encourage the Canadian and Nova Scotian Indians to aid the Abnaki cause. He did procure guns, ammunition, and subsidies for their support. He could not, despite his personal inclinations, openly join the war effort.

Massachusetts' determination to squelch the so-called rebellion led, inevitably, to Sebastien Rale. As the most visible evidence of French influence the Jesuit was singled out as responsible for Massachusetts' frontier difficulties. After 1722, their concern was misplaced. Though Rale encouraged the Indians' resistance in the early years of the conflict, once Massachusetts had declared war, control of the situation passed out of his hands. Rale could not give the Indians guns, ammunition, or men. Naturally, the Abnakis turned to Vaudreuil and through him to the French king and ministry. Massachusetts, however, did not perceive the power shift and continued to demand Rale's

removal.

The end came tragically for Rale. With its hands tied by the delicate European situation, the Council of Marine did not give the Abnakis the aid the Jesuit had hoped for. Rale had not naively supposed that the English would willingly retire. By 1722 it was clear that house burning and cattle killing would not frighten the settlers from the Kennebec. Moved by Rale's initial persuasion the Indians decided that they must fight to retain their lands. Vaudreuil promised his unswerving support and cooperation. Though he was severely hampered by the ministry's pragmatic caution, the governor stood firm in that decision.

Fannie Hardie Eckstorm has suggested that the defeat of the Abnakis seriously embarrassed the officials of New France.¹ She has asserted that Vaudreuil and Begon invented the myth of Rale's valient death and martyrdom to hide the loss of their most important outpost. She never does explain just how such a fabrication would absolve them of the responsibility; her conclusion is unwarranted when all the facts are examined. Events before that decisive attack show that Vaudreuil had nothing to hide from his superiors. Vaudreuil did everything in his power to aid the Abnakis. Everything, that is, except involving French soldiers in the effort. He was expressly forbidden to become directly involved. If the attack on Norridgewock was a drastic blow to the security of the colony, the governor was not at fault. Events had moved independently of his control to that conclusion. He tried, unsuccessfully, to convince Massachusetts that she should leave the

¹Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 551ff.

dispute to the arbitration of an international commission but the English were determined to protect their self-declared rights.

In November, 1721, Massachusetts had still done nothing to chastise the Indians for their march on Arrowsic the previous July. When the House reassembled in the fall it quickly demanded the Council's reasons for the delay of the proposed attack on Norridgewock. Provoked by the Council's non-committal answer, the House drew up another resolve against the Indians. It named and ordered seven chieftains seized and renewed the £200 reward for Rale or any other priest found in the province. After an amendment, the Council agreed to the measure.¹

Though the Indians threatened violent retribution at Arrowsic and though they now had Vaudreuil's sympathetic support, they still made no major move against the English. Had the English appeased the Abnakis peace would have been assured. Two incidents infuriated the Abnakis. Not only did the English refuse to return the hostages, they also captured Joseph D'Abbadie de St. Castin for his role in the march on Arrowsic. Castin was invited aboard a vessel which then "set sail, and carried him to Boston."² The action completely alienated the Penobscots, for Castin was a tribal member through his mother.

¹Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, III, Nov. 9, 1721, pp. 141-42; Nov. 10, p. 143; Nov. 15, p. 150; Nov. 16, pp. 152-53; Nov. 17, pp. 156-59.

²Rale to Nephew, Oct. 15, 1722, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 109-11; Messrs de Vaudreuil and Begon to the Council of Marine, Oct. 17, 1722, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 910; Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 124, p. 143-44; Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 85; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Nov. 17, 1721, III, p. 156. Mass. Council, Oct. 19, 1721; Robert LeBlant, Une figure légendaire de l'histoire Acadienne: LeBaron de St. Castin (Dax: Editions P. Pradeu, 1934), pp. 113ff.

Equally explosive was the peacetime march on Norridgewock in the winter of 1722. Captain Westbrook's objective was simple: to seize Rale and the principal offending chiefs. He could not have chosen a better time. Except for the Jesuit and the older Indians, the village was almost deserted. The young men were scattered throughout the woods hunting. Sebastien Rale, however, was warned of Westbrook's approach by two young Indians. The old Jesuit barely had time to consume the Blessed Sacrament and to gather the sacred vessels before fleeing. He made good his escape, but the next day the English followed, hot in pursuit. Rale raced to the snow-laden forests. He could not run far for he had to leave his snow-shoes behind, and he was encumbered by his previously broken thigh and hip. Rale later said that the English came within eight steps of the tree which hid him. Miraculously, the soldiers did not discover his tracks and he escaped detection. Returning to the settlements the English again stopped at Norridgewock to plunder the Church and Rale's house. They found, much to their surprise and alarm, several letters from Vaudreuil and Begon to the Jesuit.¹

The letters startled the English. They conclusively proved Rale's connection with the administrators of Quebec. The Council immediately prepared and sent a letter to Vaudreuil castigating him for "instigating the Indians to commit hostilities against the English."²

¹Rale to his Nephew, Oct. 15, 1722, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, vol. 67, LXVII, pp. 113-14; Messrs de Vaudreuil and Begon to the Council of Marine, Oct. 17, 1722, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 910; Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 124, pp. 285-86; Collection de Manuscripts, III, pp. 85-86; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, March 6, 1721/22, III, p. 163; Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 120; The New England Courant, February 12, 1721/22.

²Mass. Council, Feb. 9, 1721/22; Feb. 19, 1721/22.

Shute despatched copies to Great Britain, reasserted Massachusetts' claim to the Kennebec and maintained his contention that the Abnakis were subjects of the British Crown.¹ But the House was not as enthusiastic as before. The representatives undoubtedly feared a confrontation with the French, for they refused to pass a resolve of the joint committee for Rale's apprehension and the enlistment of the Five Nations against the Abnakis.² Moderately, the house considered it best to name another committee to consider the problem.³

Governor Shute thought that Vaudreuil was the key to the conflict. The letters had, unfortunately for the Abnakis, convinced the English that it was the French who must be dealt with. Shute conveniently forgot the Abnakis' continual protests as well as the reasons for their forays on the frightened Kennebec settlements. He thought the protests were only a smokescreen to cloak the French influence. He did not realize that Vaudreuil had not caused the conflict and he absolutely refused to recognize the Abnakis as French allies.

Shute wrote Vaudreuil and demanded that Rale be removed from English territory without further "abusing his character and profession."⁴ "Is it thus," the governor queried, "that we follow the example

¹Gov. Shute to the Council of Trade and Plantations, March 13, 1722, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXIII, p. 27; Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 303-04.

²Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, May 30, 1722, IV, pp. 101-02.

³Ibid., June 22, 1722, p. 41.

⁴Lettre du Gouverneur Shute a Monsieur Le Marquis de Vaudreuil, March 14, 1722, Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 70-72; "Same to Same," April 3, 1722, Ibid., pp. 74-77.

of our masters who live in peace?" Self-righteousness came as easily to Vaudreuil. He suggested in his reply that the territory be considered neutral until their kings had decided its status. He reminded Shute that like it or not the boundaries had not been settled. Father Rale was not on English territory, or on French land either. He was spiritual guardian, and though Vaudreuil did not describe the role, temporal advisor to a sovereign nation. He reiterated his counter-claim that the Abnakis were French allies and were under the protection of France.¹

There was nothing new or innovative in Vaudreuil's reply. In December, 1721, the Council of Marine had responded in much the same vein to Vaudreuil's request for military aid for the Abnakis. The ministry expressed its view at the British court: the Abnakis were allies, and if the English harassed them, Louis XV could not refuse them his protection. The borders must be settled and the English settlements abandoned, the ministry had continued. The British, nonetheless, were not inclined to complacently accept the French demands or to settle the dispute. At the end of May, they had still not replied though the French had asked to be informed of their decision before March. On June 6, 1722, the British made their attitude clear. The Council of Trade wrote to Governor Burnet that "as there is at present no great prospect of settling the boundaries...you will do well to extend our settlements with proper precautions as far as you

¹Lettre de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Gouverneur Shute, June 7, 1722, Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 78-84.

can."¹

Unlike the Council of Marine, the Abnakis were not hampered by international considerations. They were infuriated by the attempt to seize Rale and by the arrest of Castin. They continued to kill cattle until they had planted their fields. That finished, they descended on the lower Kennebec where they captured sixty-five terrified Englishmen. They released them all except for five held in ransom for their chiefs in Boston. The following week six Indians attacked a fishing boat. Trying to save themselves, the English defenders killed several Indians. The House of Representatives thought the incident serious enough "to suspect that the Eastern Indians will take the first opportunity of falling upon"² the English settlements.

Despite their stand the previous winter, however, the House refused to use force against the Indians. The Council also rebuffed the joint committee's advice to send another expedition against Norridgewock. The councillors suggested that one officer with two or three soldiers be sent to demand the release of the English hostages. After deciding to mend relations with the Five Nations, the House even suggested that the Indian hostages be swapped for the English prisoners.³

¹Le Conseil à Monsieur le Cardinal DuBois, Dec. 22, 1721, Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 67-68; Pour etre porte a Monsieigneur le Duc d'Orleans, May 28, 1722, Arch. Col. C 11 A, vol. 124, p. 210; Council of Trade and Plantations to Governor Burnet, June 6, 1722, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXIII, pp. 83-84.

²Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Mar. 7, 1721/22, III, p. 68; Gov. Shute to Mr. Popple, June 18, 1722, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXIII, pp. 89-90; Mr. Cummings to Mr. Popple, June 20, 1722, Ibid., pp. 90-91; The New England Courant, June 18, 1722; Mass. House Journal, June 22, 1722, IV, p. 42.

³Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, June 28, 1722, IV, pp. 54-55; June 29, pp. 60-61; July 5, pp. 68-69; July 6, pp. 72-73; July 7, p. 78.

Unfortunately for all concerned, the House's pacifying measures were much too late. By the end of July the Kennebecs had burnt Brunswick and Johnson Harmon had killed eighteen Indians. Governor Shute could not evade the issue and, submitting to pressure, issued a declaration of war against the Eastern "rebels, Traitors and Enemies."¹ A hundred more men were sent to the frontier and when the House met, it approved the governor's policy and set a bounty on Indian scalps.²

After the English had declared war, the Abnakis were led and inspired by Governor Vaudreuil. Oddly, Sebastien Rale, after his long years of political intrigue, was left out of the picture. His efforts were limited to writing two autobiographical letters to arouse the French public against the English.³ But Vaudreuil was no longer bound

¹The war has had various names. Most popular and most misleading is 'Lovewell's War' after the colorful scalp hunter who unwittingly became the hunted. But that did not happen until 1725. Better, though still imperfect, is 'Dummer's War.' But the victorious lieutenant-governor did not declare the conflict. Quite unexpectedly he was inundated with executive responsibility when Shute fled the divisive factions of the General Court.

²The New England Courant, July 16, 1722; The Boston Gazette, July 23, 1722, and July 30, 1722; Mass. Council, July 24, 1722; The New England Courant, July 30, 1722; and August 13, 1722; Mass. Arch. 31: pp. 106-08; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, August 8, 1722, IV, p. 81; Moody, "The Maine Frontier," pp. 348-49. Hutchinson interestingly noted that the English "chose to call the proceedings against them a prosecution for rebellion but, if a view be taken of all the transactions between the English and them from the beginning, it will be difficult to say what sort of subjects they were, and it is not certain that they understood they had promised subjection at all." History of Massachusetts-Bay, II, p. 203.

³Rale to Nephew, Oct. 15, 1722, and Rale to Brother, Oct. 12, 1723, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 84-119. For the controversy on their composition see Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," pp. 541-78; and Henri Béchard, "A propos de deux lettres du Père Sébastien Rasles, S. J.," Sciences Ecclesiastiques, II (1949), pp. 191-218. Béchard's is the most trustworthy account for Eckstorm's article is marred with many serious errors of fact and interpretation.

by the Jesuit's representations, if indeed, he made any. After the summer of 1722, the Abnakis could be better served by the administrators of New France.

The Abnakis did not stop asking Vaudreuil for munitions or for French soldiers to help them. The governor could not commit himself and avoided a direct reply. Instead, he sent Father Loyard to France to plead their cause. Indeed, the implication is, that until he had explicit orders from France, he actually restrained the Abnakis from open warfare.¹ He did not do so from any concern for the English of course. His sole objective was to avoid direct involvement by New France.

Father Loyard did his best to prod the cumbersome royal bureaucracy. Through lengthy memoirs he stressed the importance of the Abnaki alliance to the future of New France. If France wished to retain Canada, Loyard warned them, they must aid the Abnakis. "...It seems at least necessary that [the Court] complain loudly of the English violations of the Treaty of Utrecht..."² the Jesuit argued. He thought it especially important to increase the annual gratuity to each Abnaki village.

The king, not surprisingly, agreed that the English were violating

¹Messrs. de Vaudreuil and Begon to the Council of Marine, Oct. 17, 1722, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 911; Lettre de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Conseil de la Marine, Oct. 22, 1722, Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 88-89.

²Mémoire sur les prétentions des Anglois dan la partie méridionale de la Nouvelle France, s. d., Arch. des Col., C 11 E, vol. 2, pp. 214-27; Mémoire de P. Loyard: Sur l'Etat Present des Abénauis, 1722, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 120-25.

the treaty of peace. Time and again the royal officials stated that the Abnakis were French allies and that their interests must be protected. Finally, their resolves resulted in inane orders to Governor Vaudreuil.

As early as June, 1723, the king had ordered Vaudreuil to protect Abnaki interests, without however, giving them men. Vaudreuil was warned to observe the keystone of French foreign policy: peace must be preserved with the British crown, regardless of cost. The ministry did not think it too dangerous to the peace to give the Abnakis a special grant to support their families while they engaged in war. Later, the Council of Marine elaborated its view. It directed Vaudreuil to explain to the Indians of New France that the British intention was to make themselves masters of the whole continent. Since the English could not attack the French, Vaudreuil was to say, they had resolved to destroy the Indian allies of France.¹

The declaration of war, and the open hostilities between the English and the Abnakis, occasioned a passionate exchange of notes between Quebec and Boston. Both Vaudreuil and Shute took uncompromising positions and neither accepted the advice of the other. On October 28, 1723, Vaudreuil wrote Shute a heated plea to leave the Abnakis in peace. He told the English governor what Shute knew only too well: the settlement of a boundary depended on an international commission. The Abnakis were allies of France and Utrecht had provided that both France

¹Copie du Mémoire du Roy à Mrs. de Vaudrail et Begon cy devant Gouverneur général et Intendant en Canada, June 9, 1723, Min. Aff. Etr., vol. 7, part 1, pp. 312-16; Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 45, pp. 75-78; La Ministre à Vaudreuil et Begon à propos de la guerre des Abénaquis, Oct. 14, 1723, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 45, pp. 5-6.

and Great Britain respect the native alliances of each nation. Unfortunately for the Abnakis Shute would not accept Vaudreuil's claim of an alliance. In fact, the English went further and asserted that the Abnakis were unquestionably subjects of the British crown, albeit rebellious ones. Nor was the situation eased by Vaudreuil's threats of open warfare in support of the Abnakis.¹

Vaudreuil's letter was called "Insolent." Governor Burnet of New York added that Vaudreuil was frightened by the declaration of war by the Iroquois.² Actually, Vaudreuil had assured the ministry that the Five Nations would maintain their neutrality. Governor Dummer also found Vaudreuil's letter preposterous. He immediately sent a return note to Quebec asserting that he and his government had lived according to the terms of Utrecht and that the war was instigated by Vaudreuil and Sebastien Rale. He closed by reiterating his request for Vaudreuil's support in getting the Abnakis to submit to English authority.³

Dummer was too crafty a politician to be deluded by hopes for French aid. He encouraged, instead, a second march on Norridgewock which was made by Captain Harmon in the winter of 1723. Harmon failed

¹Lettre de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Gouverneur de Baston, Oct. 28, 1723, Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 89-91; Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, pp. 158-59; Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 334-36; Lettre de Monsieur de Vaudreuil au Ministre, Oct. 6, 1723, Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 91-93.

²The New England Courant, Nov. 25, 1723; Gov. Burnet to Charles Delafaye, Dec. 16, 1723, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXIII, pp. 392-93.

³Governor Dummer to Vaudreuil, Dec. 20, 1723, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 337-38; Cal. of St. Pap., cf. also Address of Lt. Governor, Council and Representatives of the Massachusetts Bay, Dec. 26, 1723, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXIII, pp. 405-06.

to reach the village, for the winter was warm and the river was open. The whole campaign was badly handled because of the weather, and even the Indians were uncommonly quiet. Captain Westbrook was successful, however, in reaching and burning the Penobscots' village.¹

Massachusetts also had recourse to a further expedient against the Abnakis which seemed to promise success. Early in the fall of 1722, the Five Nations had agreed to mediate the conflict between the English and the Abnakis. Actually, Dummer did not expect to settle the conflict peacefully; he realized, nonetheless, that the Iroquois might frighten the Abnakis into their senses. The delegates sent one of their number with some Englishmen to Norridgewock. They met no Indians, however, for they had gone to Quebec for the winter. They found, instead, a note on the chapel door written by Rale. He warned the English not to burn the deserted village for if they did he could assure them violent retaliation. Though the note surprised the Iroquois by its arrogance, they refused to ask the Abnakis to dismiss Rale.²

Later, the Iroquois sent several delegations to the Abnakis in Canada. One group went to St. Francis to win the Canadian Indians by

¹The New England Courant, Feb. 11, 1722/23 and April 1, 1723; The Boston Gazette, March 4, March 11, June 3, 1723.

²Journal of the Proceedings of Delegates of the Six Nations, Oct. 10--Oct. 27, 1722, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, pp. 110-27; Mass. Arch. 29: pp. 75-98; Journal of Alexander Hamilton, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 322; The Boston Gazette, Nov. 12, 1722; Nov. 19, 1722. Baxter mistakingly reported that the letter had been left by Rale the previous winter when Norridgewock was attacked by Westbrook, On that occasion Rale had fled and had no time for a lengthy note. Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 120-23; Vaudreuil et Begon au Ministre, Oct. 14, 1723, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 45, pp. 8-9.

threats and promises. The Iroquois invited them to take their families to the lands of the Five Nations. They warned the Abnakis that if they united with the Kennebecs, "the Iroquois [would] declare equally against them...."¹

Frightened, the Indians of St. Francis replied that they were willing to make peace but only on condition that the English returned the Abnakis' land and prisoners. Those terms were repeated in the presence of Alexander Hamilton, an English prisoner, whom the Abnakis proposed to send to Boston as their messenger.²

Hamilton reported to the House of Representatives on August 13, 1723. Vaudreuil's letter which Hamilton delivered was received with hostility, for the returned hostage told them that Vaudreuil had supplied the Indians with arms. He surrendered his journal to the government as a graphic description of several instances of unneutral French conduct. The previous May, for example, the Indians had considered taking the initiative by returning their prisoners to the English. In Hamilton's words, Vaudreuil told them: "I think it a piece of Inadvertency of you to Trust the English Generosity by sending these Captives to them unless you first have yours Delivered here...." Vaudreuil realized that the Abnakis were alarmed by the Iroquois threats. He was correct in soothing their fears for by September the

¹Abstract of Messrs de Vaudreuil and Begon's Despatches, with the report of the Minister thereupon, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 934.

²Vaudreuil et Begon au Ministre, Oct. 14, 1723, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 45, pp. 9-12.

Five Nations were less eager for war.¹

With or without the Five Nations, Massachusetts stepped up her campaign against the Indians. Another expedition set out for Norridgewock in the winter of 1724. Under the command of Captain Moulton, the troops were again unsuccessful. Though the Abnakis had retired to Canada, Rale's house was ransacked and more papers and books taken. Surprisingly, Moulton did not destroy the village, though the Penobscots' village had been burned the previous winter. Williamson, following Hutchinson, suggested that Moulton was a "discreet" man who thought the Indians would treat the English with like charity. Neither commentator noticed the peculiarity of this manner of thought in a military man.²

Much more controversial was the successful attack in the summer of 1724. Characteristically, historians have divided into two camps on the question. The English have followed the sworn reports of the English attackers, or actually, the sworn testimony of Captain Harmon. Most writers have supplemented Harmon's two accounts by carefully looking at Hutchinson's History of Massachusetts Bay, which critically examines Captain Moulton's version as well. The French view rests with three men, Governor Vaudreuil and Fathers LaChasse and Charlevoix, who in turn followed the surviving Kennebecs. Fannie H. Eckstorm has

¹The New England Courant, Aug. 19, 1723, Alexander Hamilton's Journal, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 325-26; Ford, ed., Mass. House Journal, Aug. 13, 1723, V, p. 113; The New England Courant, Sept. 9, 1723.

²Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts-Bay, II, p. 231; Williamson, History of the State of Maine, II, pp. 124-25. For a biographical sketch on Col. Jeremiah Moulton see: Noyes, Genealogical Dictionary, II, p. 499.

modified these two older views.

Eckstorm reports that Rale was forewarned that the English were on the way to Norridgewock. While she attributes the warning he received to the prophetic mutterings of an Indian shaman, or witch doctor, Rale's last letter suggests otherwise.¹ Returning from their latest expedition, the Indians told the Jesuit that 200 men were coming to "drive them out of their camp...." Rale thought, with some justification, that the possibility was remote:

But I said to them, how could that be, seeing we are daily surrounding and making inroads upon them.... Besides, in all the war you have had with them, did you ever see them come to attack you in the spring, summer, or in the fall, when they knew you were in the woods.²

Rale's statement was correct, the English did avoid campaigns in the summer when the troops were susceptible to disease.³

The most serious error Eckstorm made was her claim that Rale "need not have lost the mission if he had taken a warning given him in ample time." But Sebastien Rale neither ridiculed the Indians' fear of an invasion nor convinced them to stay at Norridgewock. He told Father LaChasse that the Indians

hearken to all my reasons foregoing, but follow their own. They design to quit the village for a fortnight, and to go five or six leagues up the river, they proposed it to me, and I have given my consent.

¹Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 574.

²Father Rallé to another priest, Aug. 12/13, 1724, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXIV, p. 429; Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, p. 251.

³Hilton to Lt. Gov. Dummer, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, IX, p. 142. Hilton said: "This is what Offers upon this Expedition and I humbly conceive that the winter time is the onely time ever to march against the Indian Enemy...."

Rale wrote the letter on the afternoon the English attacked. The Indians' retreat was only hours too late.¹

Five days before, on August 19th, four companies of soldiers under Captains Harmon, Moulton, Brown and Lieutenant Bean had left Richmond Fort near the upper end of Swan Island. Arriving at Ticonic Falls on the 20th, they proceeded by land on the 21st, leaving behind Lieutenant Wright with forty men to guard the seventeen whaleboats.²

On the first evening of the two and a half day march to Norridgewock, the English surprised the old chieftain Bomazeen with his family. His daughter was killed and his wife taken captive. The event was of no small importance. The New England Courant reported Harmon's testimony that Bomazeen escaped from the troops.³ Harmon contradicts himself, however. He says that the sachem was killed on the evening of the 23rd, after the fight, at some distance from the village.⁴ Later he reported that Bomazeen's body was found among the chieftains slain that afternoon.⁵

¹My italics. Father Rallé to another Priest, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXIV, 12/23 August, 1724, pp. 429-31; Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 252- ; Mass. His. Soc., Collections, 2nd ser., VIII, pp. 245-49; Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 566.

²The Boston News-Letter, Aug. 27, 1724; Penhallow, History of the Wars of New England, p. 102.

³The New England Courant, Aug. 24, 1724; Hutchinson, following the Boston News-Letter, Aug. 27, 1724, doesn't mention Bomazeen's presence at all. Both news accounts come from Harmon. Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts Bay, II, p. 235.

⁴New England Courant, Aug. 24, 1724, said that when some of the troops left the village to gather their packs they met the sachem and killed him.

⁵Hutchinson again follows the News-Letter and says Bomazeen's body was found among the slain. History of Massachusetts Bay, II, p. 237.

To complicate matters further, another tradition says that Bomazeen was shot in the river as he attempted to ford it.¹ But none of these versions answer some of the underlying questions. If indeed he did escape, as the English documents would seem to indicate, why didn't he warn the village? The English were led, though Eckstorm denies it, to the village by Bomazeen's wife. Did she do so while hoping that her spouse had warned the defenders?²

Nearing the village around noon of the 23rd, the attackers decided to divide their forces. Captain Harmon, commander-in-chief for the expedition, oddly did not actually lead the attack but preferred to scout the corn fields, leaving the task, responsibility, but not the glory to Captain Moulton.³ The commander by default proceeded directly to the village. At this point, the ensuing attack becomes obscure. Moulton's account, as given by Hutchinson, contradicts one of Harmon's two accounts to the Boston newspapers.

At question in this conflict of the English sources is the problem of the stockade, despite the fact that Eckstorm confidently asserted its existence.

Both Governor Vaudreuil and Father LaChasse reported that the

¹Penhallow, a contemporary, reports that Bomazeen was "shot in the river, as he attempted to make an escape. They afterwards killed his daughter and took his wife captive...." History of the Wars of New England, p. 102.

²Ibid., Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," fn. 36, p. 554.

³Harmon did not explain the division to the General Court. The officials and newspapers reported that the victory was due to his leadership. cf. Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts Bay, II, p. 235.

village was not enclosed,¹ though there is still extant a map drawn by Joseph Heath in 1719 with a written description of the fort as being

Built with Round Loggs nine foot Long one end set into the Ground: is 160 foot Square with 4 Gates but no Bastions; within it are Twenty Six Houses Built much after the English manner, the Streets regular, that from west Gate to the East is 30 foot wide; their Church stands 4 perch without the East gate, and their men able to Bear Arms, are about Three Score.²

Interestingly, Harmon's accounts in two Boston newspapers and Hutchinson following Moulton make no mention of the stockade. Eckstorm states that the New-England Courant mentions the east gate. The newspaper actually said, less substantially, that the plan for the offense was to place the troops in such a way that the Indians "could in no way avoid them but by running into the River." Certainly a stockade was not essential to that stratagem. Sylvester, probably using French sources, reports that "the old stockade had disappeared."³

Even the other English version does not solve the problem. According to Harmon's other story, action immediately ensued after their "approach within Pistol Shot" of the Indian town. But Hutchinson says that the village

¹Letter from Father de la Chasse, Superior-General of the Missions in New France, to Father***, of the same Society, Oct. 29, 1724, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, p. 233; Lettre de Monsieur le Marquis de Vaudreuil au Ministre, Oct. 25, 1725, Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 109. There is nothing unusual about the date of these letters. Like all official papers, they were written in October just before the ship left for France.

²This map may be found among the papers of the Pejebscot Proprietors at the Maine Historical Society, Portland, Maine.

³New England Courant, August 24, 1724; Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," fn.75, p. 569; Herbert Milton Sylvester, Indian Wars of New England (Boston: W. B. Clarke Company, 1910), III, p. 234.

about 3 o'clock suddenly opened upon them. There was not an Indian to be seen, being all in their wigwams. Our men were ordered to advance softly and to keep a profound silence. At length, an Indian came out of one of the wigwams and, as he was making water, looked round him and discovered the English close upon him. He immediately gave the war whoop and ran in for his gun. The whole village, consisting of about 60 warriors, besides old men, women and children, took the alarm, and the warriors ran to meet the English, the rest fled to save their lives.¹

Though the two accounts are diametrically opposite, neither makes provision for the stockade in the advance. It would seem, in either case, that the Indians would have had time to close the gates. It cannot be proven that the gate was left open so that Rale might flee to safety. Eckstorm only supposed that his house was outside the "enclosure" as it was at Penobscot.² But there is no substantial evidence of that and Heath's map does not mention it. Even if we accept Moulton's account we cannot establish the stockade's existence. Eckstorm has emphasized the issue because she believed that Vaudreuil and LaChasse had much to hide in the loss of the most important Abnaki village. But they had not evaded the loss of Penobscot though it was as important as Norridgewock.³ They did not hide the fact that the Abnakis had fled to Canada at the beginning of the war. How could the ministry hold Vaudreuil responsible for a defeat in which their denial of aid had played so vital a part?

However the battle was touched off, a terrible slaughter followed. It was a warm, sultry August day. Rale was relaxing in his house

¹Boston News-Letter, Aug. 27, 1724; Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts Bay, II, p. 236.

²Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 568.

³Vaudreuil et Begon au Ministre, Oct. 14, 1723, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 45, p. 7.

writing a letter to his superior, Father LaChasse. The Indians were escaping the heat, slumbering in their cabins. The English took them by surprise. Rale rushed from his letter and the savages panicked. They fled to the river in confusion. Some took to their canoes forgetting, in their haste, their paddles. Others tried to swim the river, not much more than sixty yards wide at that time of year. The English relentlessly pursued, firing upon them. They judged that about 50 men, women and children made the opposite shore, though Vaudreuil and LaChasse report that at least 150 made good their escape.¹

The English then returned to the town, where meanwhile Rale was valiantly defending himself in his house. Lieutenant Jaques broke down the door and found the Jesuit reloading his gun. Jaques shot him when the doughty old priest shouted he would neither give nor take quarter. Moulton, who had given orders to take the man alive, always doubted Jaques' word. The suspicion is highly significant, for the erstwhile lieutenant was Moulton's son-in-law. Harmon, however, displayed no such doubt in his oath before the Executive Council.²

There was a young English boy in the cabin whom Rale shot and stabbed in his fury at being caught unprepared. Though Eckstorm's account is admittedly conjectural, and she erroneously believed that

¹Boston News-Letter, Aug. 27, 1724; The New-England Courant, Aug. 24, 1724; Boston Gazette, Aug. 24, 1724; Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts Bay, II, p. 236; Letter from Father de la Chasse, Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, vol. 67, LXVII, p. 233; Lettre de Monsieur le Marquis de Vaudreuil au Ministre, Oct. 25, 1724, Collection de Manuscripts, III, p. 109; Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 573.

²Boston Gazette, Aug. 24, 1724; Boston News-Letter, Aug. 27, 1724; New-England Courant, Aug. 24, 1724. The latter contended that both Rale and the sachem Mogg refused to surrender. Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts Bay, II, pp. 236-37.

Rale was infuriated by his holding of the Indians at the village at this of all times, it is a tenable one: "There was no deliberate malice in the act, no deep-seated moral obliquity, only the unreasoning madness of a tempest of emotions, rising cyclonic from profound calm."¹ There will always remain, nevertheless, at least some suspicion of the incident. It is asking too much of English and French alike to accept such an action of a priest. It should be said, too, that the story rests only with Harmon, who swore to its truth before the Council and who gave the story to the Boston newspapers. It could be justly asked if the man's testimony could be trusted. He did, after all, give two varying accounts of the encounter that day. He did not explain that he was not present at the action. Hutchinson only says that the story rests with Harmon, the implication being, moreover, that Moulton had been silent on the incident.²

French historians have never fully accepted the English version of the disaster.³ In the first place, the English documents have been inaccessible. The French also distrusted those secondary accounts

¹Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 575.

²Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts Bay, II, pp. 236-37.

³A few have accepted part of the narrative. Goyau, for example, said that not all of LaChasse's account was true. Lauvrière repudiated the claim that 1000 men attacked the village. Religious historians have also questioned the French story. H. C. Schuyler, in the single paragraph given the incident, said Rale "remained in a cabin defending himself." Shea is also critical. cf. Georges Goyau, "Le P. Sébastien Racle," pp. 193-95. Emile Lauvrière, "Les Jésuites en Acadie," p. 208. Schuyler, "The Apostle of the Abenakis," p. 173. Shea, History of the Catholic Missions among the Indians Tribes of the United States, 1529-1854 (New York: Charles Dunigan & Brother, 1855), p. 150; It is notable that the acceptance of the English account does not follow national ties. Kingsford, for example, rejected the French sources and accepts Hutchinson. Kingsford, History of Canada, III, pp. 190-91.

which sketch Rale as a religious bigot. Nor has there been any clear acceptance of the whole story by the English themselves. Bancroft, whom the French widely cite, accepted LaChasse's account of the attack.¹ Then too, they had their own sources to rely upon.

It is clear that the French view is no mere fabrication. Eckstorm's over-reaction to the inconsistencies in the French documents needlessly ignores the nature of the accounts. Furthermore, she fails to notice similar inconsistencies among the English accounts. Father LaChasse was not "making history" as Eckstorm declares when he wrote Rale's eulogy.² Nor, it needs be said, was he writing it either. Seen in the tradition in which the letter properly belongs, it is really quite innocuous. As Eckstorm notes, the letter was intended for publication but that fact is not extraordinary. The Jesuits had been writing chronicles of their missions for over a hundred years.³

LaChasse reported what he heard from the Indians--but he did so with embellishments. His technique was not malicious but only a literary device. Certainly a eulogy is not the place to seek a dispassionate review of the case. LaChasse's enthusiasm did not stem from a desire to conceal the facts; there was no need to do so. There was, however, a real need of inspiring support in France for the sorely

¹George Bancroft, History of the United States from the Discovery of the American Continent, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1868), III, pp. 336-37.

²Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 567.

³On the nature of the Jesuit Relations see: J. H. Kennedy, Jesuit and Savage in New France, p. 78. Also see Henri Bécharde's refutation of Eckstorm: "A Propos de deux lettres du Père Sébastien Rasles, S. J.," pp. 191-218.

beleagured Abnaki nation. Pious support for the missions in France was much less than it had been in previous years. Jesuits were not in vogue at the court and the superior-general's pleas since 1713 had fallen on deaf ears.

In Rale's death the superior-general had an issue to fire the popular imagination. He did not invent a "myth" about Rale's life. He had known, admired, and loved Rale since his arrival in New France. In diplomatic endeavours for the Abnakis the two had been comrades-in-arms.

Eckstorm asserts but does not conclusively prove that Vaudreuil and LaChasse "knew that there were not eleven hundred English and Indians involved in the fight...."¹ It is not improbable that the Indians invented the number to salve their own pride. Nor is the impression on their part necessarily infantile. The precipitate attack and chaotic retreat was obviously confusing. It is true that LaChasse knew the village had been enclosed; he was there in July, 1721. But the stockade's existence cannot be proven and LaChasse had no reason to disbelieve the Indians.

Eckstrom's claim that the English plan of attack was consistent with the plan of the village while "the French account is not"² is not wholly supportable. In the first place, it is not known how the attack occurred. Governor Vaudreuil did not romanticise the account as LaChasse did. He described the sudden attack without exaggeration. The Indians who survived the first volley tried to hold the English while the women

¹Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 551.

²Ibid., p. 552.

and children raced for the river. Without dramatic effect, he described Rale rushing from his house only to be immediately cut down by an English volley.¹ It is this account from the Abnakis that has inspired the popular view of the Jesuit's unselfish death. Eckstorm was reacting not only to the inconsistencies in the French sources but also to their uncritical acceptance.²

Vaudreuil's account is not surprising. When the Indians returned the following day they found Rale's body with the dead chieftains in the center of the village--hence, the story of the Jesuit's heroic death.³ Eckstorm thought it improbable that there were any remains left to be mourned as the village was burnt by the retreating forces.⁴ But the English slept in the village. With a hundred and twenty-eight men to bivouac, it is likely that the English removed the bodies from

¹Lettre de Monsieur le Marquis de Vaudreuil au Ministre, Oct. 25, 1724, Collection de Manuscrits, III, p. 109.

²For various versions of this popular acceptance of the French account of Rale's death see: William Allen, The History of Norridgewock (Norridgewock: Edward J. Peet, 1849), p. 40; Rufus King Sewall, Ancient Dominions of Maine (Bath: Elisha Clark and Company, 1859), p. 249; Henrietta Danforth Wood, Early Days of Norridgewock (Skowhegan: The Skowhegan Press, 1941), p. 3; Henrietta Tozier Totman, "Sebastien Rale," in Maine, My State (Lewiston: The Maine Writers Research Club, 1919), p. 150; A. J. Coolidge and J. B. Mansfield, History and Description of New England. Maine (Boston: Austin J. Coolidge, 1860), p. 233; John S. C. Abbott, The History of Maine (Boston: B. B. Russell, 1875), p. 314; Sprague, Sebastien Rale, p. 41; Charles E. Nash, "The Indians of the Kennebec," Illustrated History of Kennebec County, Maine, Henry D. Kingsbury and Simeon L. Deyo, eds. (New York: H. W. Blake & Company, 1892), p. 62.

³Ibid.; Charlevoix, History and General Description of New France, V, p. 279; Letter from Father de la Chasse. Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, vol. 67, p. 235.

⁴Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridgewock," p. 571.

the cabins into the center of the village. The returning Indians understandably concluded that Rale died surrounded by the village sachems.

New England happily learned of Norridgewock's destruction. Captain Harmon arrived in Boston to "great Shouting and Triumph." Crusty old Samuel Sewall muttered "The Lord help us to rejoice with Trembling."¹ The Reverend Colman preached that

in a special manner, the wonderful victory obtained August 12, 1724, over the bold & bloody tribes at Norridgewalk, and their sudden destruction that memorable day, was the singular work of God;--And the officers and soldiers piously put far from themselves the honor of it. The plain hand of providence and not their own conduct, facilitated and quickened their march...And he, who was the father of the war, the ghostly father of those perfidious savages, like the son of Beor, was slain among the enemy, after his vain endeavours to curse us.²

Testifying before the Council, Captain Harmon was made a Lieutenant-Colonel for the good services of Captain Moulton. The General Assembly happily resolved,

to pay unto the said Coll^o Johnson Harmon the...s^d sum of One Hundred pounds for his service in the destruction of the s^d Sebastien Ralle, the s^d sum to be divided among the Officers & Soldiers....³

In retrospect it seems incredible that Rale's death has aroused such intensity of feeling. Admirers and detractors alike agree that he was an extraordinary man. Shrouds of infamy and sanctity alike have been thrown upon him though either claim is extreme. But it is preposterous to say that he was motivated by an inveterate hatred of the English. It is equally absurd to lay at his feet the burden of war

¹Sewall, "Diary," VII, pp. 342-43.

²Penhallow, History of the Wars of New England, p. 11.

³Mass. Council, Aug. 22, 1724; Mass. Arch., 52: 34.

guilt. The record speaks for itself. He encouraged no atrocities. Not one Englishman was killed before an Abnaki was. No Englishmen were abducted until, in Abnaki eyes, four of their chieftains were. Nor were the settlements harassed until they had passed an explicitly declared line--a line of which the English were quite aware but chose to ignore.

It cannot be said that Sebastien Rale was a French agent. His nationality was incidental to the commitment he had made to the Abnakis. He feared, but willingly accepted, the Abnakis trading with the English. Though he opposed the continual English encroachments on the Kennebec he remained a realist. He accepted the existence of Brunswick, Topsham, and Georgetown but barred further expansion. He was no sly intriguer in his opposition--he described his point of view to Governor Shute who promptly rejected it, time and again. A French agent would hardly deliberately attract such attention. The causes of the war were thus complex and the "villain theory" must be discarded as simplistic. The very readiness of the English to attribute the Abnakis' mischievousness to his influence is, in itself, enough to discredit that view.

The widely divergent views of Rale stem not from any deviousness in his actions. Rather, the conflict of interpretations has come from a polarization of secondary sources. The English hastened to condemn what they saw as a mad, Jesuitical plot against their dynamic forebearers. The French were no more impartial. They supported the martyr myth because Rale had opposed the English heretics. The French view was written primarily by clerics; the English by secularists. Thus, Sebastien Rale emerged not as a man, but as a shadow of two cultural fictions.

Religion had little to do with the actual conflict. It was, truthfully, an exacerbating circumstance. But it was the conflict between the Abnakis and the English for the land that was endemic; English missionary efforts were sporadic in the extreme. Rale and the Abnakis were the tragic victims of an overly cautious Council of Marine and the unswerving determination of Massachusetts. Rale had attempted to protect the Abnakis from themselves as well as from the English settlers. He was neither a religious fanatic, nor a political schemer. Themselves victims of their accelerating expansion and contradictory view of the Indians, the English could not compromise with Rale. The conflict mushroomed and he became a marked man. Sebastien Rale was a daring man, confronting and checking every English move. He remained on the Kennebec throughout the war though the Indians pleaded that he return to Quebec. Sebastien Rale died in the way he lived: protecting his Indians and defying the English to the end.

CHAPTER VI

EPILOGUE: DEFEAT AND SUBMISSION

Rale's death resulted in another barrage of letters between Vaudreuil and Dummer. The latter made himself clear enough: "I cannot but esteem it an open Violation of the Treaty of Peace...for you to Commissionate [Sebastien Rale] to reside amounghst" the Abnakis.¹ Not to be outdone in verbal warfare the crusty French governor replied that he would leave the settlement of the "Cruelty Committed by your Order on the Person of ffather Ralle" to their respective kings.²

The Abnakis were, of course, extremely angered by the loss of Norridgewock. But they were exhausted by the war. To avert their total collapse, Vaudreuil told Dummer that he would not refuse his "Mediation to you to bring the Abenakis Indians & their Allies to Peace...."³

Eckstorm thought that Vaudreuil was in an untenable position. Surprisingly, Norridgewock's loss did not mean the immediate end of the war. The Indians did move to Canada but continued their regular forays.

¹Letter Lt. Gov. Dummer to Mons. Vaudreuil, Sept. 15, 1724, Collection de Manuscripts, III, pp. 106-07; Mass. Arch. 52: 48-49; William B. Trask, ed., Letters of Colonel Thomas Westbrook and others Relative to Indian Affairs in Maine, 1722-1726 (Boston: George E. Littlefield, 1901), pp. 74-75.

²M. de Vaudreuil to Lt. Governor Dummer, Oct. 29, 1724, Mass. Arch. 52: 77-84; Trask, ed., Letters of Colonel Thomas Westbrook, pp. 80-83.

³M. de Vaudreuil to Lt. Governor Dummer, Oct. 29, 1724, Mass. Arch. 52: 77-84; Trask, ed., Letters of Colonel Thomas Westbrook, pp. 80-83.

The English believed, as John Schuyler put it, that Vaudreuil was "very sorry and weary of that warr...." Eckstorm, following Schuyler's lead, overlooked similar English sentiments.¹

Dummer's draft instructions for the Commissioners to be sent to Vaudreuil show his quandary. With the usual demand for the return of the English captives and for Vaudreuil's neutrality, the English considered resorting to two blatantly false threats. The Commissioners were to warn Vaudreuil that their alliance with the Five Nations could prove dangerous to New France and that all the British colonies would unite to "prosecute and pursue them to the Uttermost...."²

Both the Iroquois and the other colonies refused to aid Massachusetts.³ New York, for example, denied her help in "Committing of Hostilities within the territory of the french King...."⁴ Governor Burnet even warned Dummer that Vaudreuil would discover their "feebleness" if he ignored Massachusetts' strong threats. Restrained,

¹Letter John Schuyler to Lt Gov. Dummer, Nov. 21, 1724, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, X, pp. 233-34; Eckstorm, "The Attack on Norridge-wock," p. 565.

²Instructions for the Commissioners for Canada, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 346-47.

³Governor Burnet to the Duke of Newcastle, Cal. of St. Pap., XXXIV, p. 270. Massachusetts complained to the king in June, 1725, that she had "not been able to prevail on the other gov'ts to furnish their respective quotas ...in case of a war." Address of the Lt. Governor, Council and Representatives of the Massachusetts Bay to the King, June 25, 1725, Ibid., p. 400.

⁴At a Council held at Fort George in New York, Dec. 16, 1724, Mass. Arch. 4: 90-95; Letter, Gov. W^m Burnet of N. Y. to Lt. Gov. Dummer, Dec. 16, 1723, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, X, pp. 234-35.

Massachusetts' instructions to her Commissioners contained no threats.¹

Meanwhile Dummer sent Vaudreuil a staunch defense of English rights. The Indians were subjects of the British Crown, he noted, saying that they had admitted the fact in their many treaties with Massachusetts. They had "quitted claimes to the Lands bought & possessed by the English..." in a treaty with the then governor, Sir William Phips, in 1693. Dummer claimed all territory south of the St. Lawrence, forgetting the often admitted necessity of a settlement by commissioners. Particularly remarkable was his feigned amazement at the Abnakis' "deceitfullness & self contradiction" in contesting Massachusetts' title to the Kennebec. Even a cursory examination of the tensions leading to the war points, inevitably, to the Indians' ignored claims. Finally, the Lieutenant-Governor replied with dignity: "We have alwaies treated the Indians with Sincerity...."²

Mr. William Dudley, Colonel Samuel Thaxter and Mr. Atkinson carried Dummer's letter to Governor Vaudreuil. As official Commissioners they demanded Vaudreuil's neutrality and the return of the English prisoners. If the English had hoped that Vaudreuil would be convinced by reason, they were sorely disappointed. Vaudreuil refused to concede a single point. He asserted his own innocence and encouraged the Abnakis not to compromise with the English.

¹Copie de la Commission donné par le Gouverneur de Baston aux Deputés par luy envoyés au Canada, Arch. Col., F 3, Collection Moreau St. Méry, vol. 2-2, pp. 535-36.

²Letter Lt. Gov. Dummer to Mons. Vaudreuil, Jan. 19, 1724/25, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, X, pp. 175-78; Mass. Arch. 52: 106-09; Trask, ed., Letters of Colonel Thomas Westbrook, pp. 88-91.

When the Commissioners met seven Abnaki sachems, at Vaudreuil's suggestion, they were discouraged. The Abnakis required that the English "quit their lands, restore their prisoners, rebuild their church, and indemnify them for...killing Father Rasle, and for the expense of the war." The Commissioners were displeased with the confrontation. They rightly attributed the Abnakis continued hostility to Vaudreuil and Father LaChasse.¹ Their mission was a total failure. The Abnakis would not submit and Vaudreuil was convinced that the English were exhausted by the war. He wrote the Council of Marine that though Dummer expressed "Himself with much haughtiness, M. de Vaudreuil is persuaded that he is extremely anxious for peace...."²

In the end, it was Vaudreuil's and not Dummer's fears which materialized. Despite their past promises to Vaudreuil, the tepid Penobscots submitted, to the English. Vaudreuil, close to his own death, was disgusted. The Penobscots declared themselves "subjects of the Crown of England." They agreed that all forts might remain and finally bound themselves to "make all the other Indians, even those domiciliated in Canada, parties to this peace." The new French governor, de Longueil, hoped that the Indians of Canada as well as the Kennebec might convince the Penobscots to renew the war. Longueil

¹M. Begon to Count de Maurepas, April 21, 1725, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 941-45; Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 47, pp. 203-11; Collection de Manuscrits, III, pp. 117-23; Abstract of M. de Vaudreuil's Despatch, August 7, 1725, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 947-49; Vaudreuil au Ministre, May 22, 1725, Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 47, pp. 83-88; Journal of Commissions to Canada, May 28, 1725, Baxter, Pioneers of New France in New England, pp. 350-53.

²Abstract of Letters respecting the Abenakis, April 24, 1725, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 945.

accused Father Gaulin of inducing the Penobscots and the Micmacs to "make their peace." The ministry, not surprisingly, was furious and ordered Gaulin "to stir up hostilities...against the English."¹

In their preliminary discussions with the English the Penobscots claimed that "the S^{nt} Johns, and Cape Sable Indians have agreed to abide by what the Penobscot Indians shall agree to...." But not all the Abnakis were so anxious for peace. When the Penobscots agreed to a truce in July, 1725, the area included only that "Eastward of Kennebeck River."²

In November, 1725, the Indians went to Boston to conclude the peace. The Treaty's noteworthy provisions, that the Indians were guaranteed "all their lands...not by them conveyed and sold," and that "all trade and commerce...shall be under such management and regulations as the government of Massachusetts province shall direct," was meant to correct two grievances that had caused the war.³

The English clearly recognized the true causes of the war. "It's my Oppinion," said John Minot, that "some measures should be tacken to Assure them that some Considerable part of that Country should allwayes remaine to them & their children...." "And, as I remember," he noted significantly, "at the last treaty, they had no

¹Abstract of Messrs. de Longueil and Begon's Despatches, Oct. 31, 1725, O'Callaghan, New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 955-56; Arch. Col., C 11 A, vol. 47, pp. 23-29.

²From John Stoddard & John Wainright, June 28, 1725, Trask, ed., Letters of Colonel Thomas Westbrook, p. 121; and "From Col. Westbrook," July 31, 1725, Ibid., p. 132.

³The Submission and agreement of the delegates of the eastern Indians, Dec. 15, 1725, Penhallow, The History of the Wars of New England, pp. 119-23.

assurance that their planting fields at Nerigwalk...should allways
[be] injoyed by them."¹

The confirmation of the treaty, postponed from May, was concluded in July, 1726. Dummer was pleased with the result but feared that the Kennebecs would refuse to submit to it. "We mean," the sachem Loron assured Dummer, "in case any of the tribes should rise against us, or resist us, we will take effectual means to set them down by force."² Though undoubtedly disgruntled, the Kennebecs did acquiesce. Finally, the sachem Toxas signed the document in July, 1727, and the Kennebecs resigned themselves to the situation. After thirty-nine years, peace was again a reality on the northern frontier.

Let there be no mistake about it. The conflict that Massachusetts had termed a rebellion, the opposition of the Abnakis to the pressures of an expanding frontier, was the inspiration of Sebastien Rale. The evidence stands for itself. From 1714 the moderate expressions of hostility against the new settlements were ignored. The Abnakis complaints against the colonists were not regarded as legitimate. It became evident to Rale that if discussion was unsuccessful, then force must be used to prove to the English that the Abnakis opposed their

¹To Coll. Stephan Minot from John Minot, Oct. 4, 1725, Trask, ed., Letters of Colonel Thomas Westbrook, p. 146.

²Loren's statement, as given by Penhallow, must be questioned. In December, 1725, the Penobscots agreed that if any of the tribes refused "to confirm and ratify" the treaty they would "join their young men with the English in reducing them to reason." Later, they claimed that they had been misquoted. "I told you," Loren wrote, that "we would do on our side all we could to bring them back butt I have give you notice att the same time that I did not understand that we should strike on them, or that we should joyn our forces to yours to march against them" Penhallow, The History of the Wars of New England, p. 122; Indian's Letter, Jan. 26, 1726, Baxter, Baxter Manuscripts, XXIII, p. 209.

continued presence on the Kennebec. The aftermath of Rale's death goes far to illustrate his importance to the Abnakis' enthusiastic war effort. Left without leadership, and again split into pro and anti-English factions it was inevitable that the Kennebecs would be forced to submit to Massachusetts overtures for peace. Without Sebastien Rale's persuasion and determination, the Abnakis could no longer present a united front against colonial expansion.

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