

## VIII THE LOYALIST OPPOSITION

### 2 The Reverend Thomas Bradbury Chandler, Flight into Exile

[Thomas Bradbury Chandler, Memorandums, St. Mark's Library, General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church.]

The Reverend Dr. Thomas Bradbury Chandler (1726-1790), rector of St. John's Anglican Church in Elizabethtown, was an object of contention in New Jersey and the surrounding colonies because of his religious as well as his political activities. Chandler, a native of Connecticut and a graduate of Yale, was a prime mover in the unsuccessful attempt by Anglican clergymen to obtain the appointment of a resident bishop; thus he incurred the bitter opposition of those Presbyterians and Congregationalists who feared that an American bishop would be but the prelude to the establishment of the Church of England in the middle and New England colonies. His *An Appeal to the Public in behalf of the Church of England in America* (New York, 1767) and subsequent treatises first sparked and then fanned a blazing pamphlet war over the emotional issue. An archconservative, he also was a chief spokesman for the Tory community in opposing the colonial challenge to British authority. With such publications as *A Friendly Address to all Reasonable Americans on the Subject of our Political Confusions* (New York, 1774) and *What Think Ye of Congress Now? Or an Enquiry How Far the Americans are Bound to Abide by and Execute the Decisions of the Late Congress* (New York, 1775), he was the most prominent Loyalist pamphleteer of the middle colonies. As an effective bearer of the royalist standard, he was roundly denounced by local Whigs (see Sec. III, Doc. 12, note 3 and Sec. IV, Doc. 11). Although the threat of violence from the radicals prompted him to quit America for Britain in May 1775, he returned to New Jersey after the war. In the diary extracts that follow, Chandler describes with a surprising lack of emotion the forced departure from his homeland.

May 15-25, 1775

Monday, May 15th.

Having been often threatened by the *Sons of Liberty*, for having been supposed to have written on the Side of Government, and having received Intimations from my Friends that I was in much personal Danger, I went to New-York, taking some Articles of necessary Apparel with me, that might serve, in Case I should not be able to return. On coming to New-Yk., I found every Thing in the utmost Confusion, and the Friends of Government under the severest Persecution; I therefore lodged at Mr. Kempe's,<sup>1</sup> the Attorney General, as a Place unsuspected, and less liable to Insults, than where I commonly used to lodge in the City.

Tuesday, May 16th.

I found that the turbulent Faction, which had assumed the Government of the City, were making Enquiries after me, and determined to pay me a Visit; I therefore ventured abroad but little, and cautiously, and it was recommended to me by my

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Friends to secure a Passage for England. In the Evening I contracted with Capt. Joseph Winder for a Passage to Bristol in the Ship *Exeter*, and staid that Night at Mr. Kempe's.

Wednesday, May 17th.

Kept close at Mr. Kempe's; but having received a polite invitation from Capt. James Montagu,<sup>2</sup> who understood my Situation, I went on board his Majesty's Ship *King-Fisher*, as the only Place of Safety near New-York, Mr. Wetherhead<sup>3</sup> assisting me in my Embarkation.

Friday, May 19th.

In Expectation of meeting the Packet from England, and with a Design to secure the Mail, Capt. Montagu sailed to Sandy-Hook, with a Post-Master General on Board besides Dr. Cooper,<sup>4</sup> and Mr. Rivington,<sup>5</sup> who, as well as myself, were proscribed for their Loyalty.

Saturday, May 20th.

Our Ship the *Exeter* came down to the Hook, and Dr. Cooper and I shifted our Lodgings to the *Exeter* to be ready for our voyage; there we were kindly received by our Friends Mr. Cook,<sup>6</sup> and Capt. Kearny,<sup>7</sup> who were to be our Fellow-Passengers.

Thursday, May 25th, (Ascension Day.)

Having waited till this Time for a proper Wind, we put to Sea in the Morning, turning out with a Head Wind, in Company with more than 20 Vessels, most of which were bound to European Ports. We saw the *Asia*, of 64 Guns, from Boston, go in to the Hook, and come to an Anchor. At Evening the Land appeared to be distant about 6 Leagues.

1. John Tabor Kempe, who subsequently also sought exile in England.
2. Captain James Montague, whose *Kingfisher* was the only British naval vessel in New York Harbor at the time.
3. English-born John Weatherhead.
4. The Reverend Dr. Myles Cooper, president of King's College (now Columbia University) and leading Tory spokesman-pamphleteer, who was a close associate of Chandler's.
5. James Rivington, Loyalist newspaper publisher.
6. Undoubtedly the Reverend Samuel Cooke, Anglican pastor from Monmouth County, who sailed to England in the spring of 1775 on personal business. Cooke later returned to America as a chaplain in the Royal Army, suffered confiscation of his property in Monmouth County, and eventually went into exile in New Brunswick, Canada.
7. Michael Kearny (1725-1797), former captain in the Royal Navy, who in 1763 retired to a sizable estate in Morris County. An outspoken royalist, he was driven from his native New Jersey by threats of violence from local committeemen.