Father of the American rangers: Should Benjamin Church be credited with its title?

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Introduction

This thesis is written to question if Benjamin Church, first active during King Philip's War (1675-1678), should be credited with the title, 'father of the American rangers.' John Grenier includes Church in what he calls, America's 'First Way of War' which became the embodiment of American ranging.[1] According to Grenier, the first way of war consists of three pillars. "The pillars of that tradition - extirpative war, ranging, and scalp hunting."[2] Church became famous for the style of warfare known as ranging, in which the military units are described as ranger units and the soldiers as rangers. The ranging that Church became famous for, and the ranging that Grenier includes in his pillars can be seen as the same thing. All three pillars became essential in the evolution of ranging into the American ranger unit.

The term "ranging" was a part of the English vocabulary prior to settlement in North America. In England it could be referred to as scouting, or hunting. The etymology of the word "range" dates to 1200CE, "range (v.) c. 1200, *rengen*, move over a large area, roam with the purpose of searching or hunting."[3] Historian Alan Gallay describes the verb "to range" as to "describe a particular task that was assigned to military or law enforcement forces. Men assigned to forests whose principal mission was to range were called "rangers"."[4] In North America, in writings from New England and Virginian colonies, ranging is referred to when soldiers were in the wilderness exploring, hunting, or scouting. Writings from John Smith show how ranging was not a term used to describe soldiers, as it was second nature; ranging was an activity like patrolling that all soldiers would have undertaken as a general aspect of their soldierly duty, especially when in the wilderness. The term ranging, as a military style, must have been common among European colonists who had inhabited North America prior to Church and King Philip's War as it appears in writings in Virginia during Bacon's Rebellion which occurred at the same time. The occurrence of two ranger units being employed implies their existence before 1676. In North America by the end of the seventeenth century, the term ranging encompassed the style of warfare that the early English colonists used in conflicts with Native Americans and other European states, whilst also providing a shield in the wilderness to protect the colonies.

Although the terminology can be seen to shift slightly, I will examine if the tactics and methodology of the original soldier colonists was similar to that of Church. The terminology of the term ranging also differs between Europeans and Native Americans; this can be seen through a prism of racist ideology in the manner in which it is labelled. Colonists called it 'skulking,' a derogatory term that became associated with Native American warfare. What colonizers described as skulking is the same as that which became ranging. The style of warfare that Native Americans taught their European allies, and the style of warfare that Europeans eventually used, will be analyzed to see if there are comparisons to be found. By analyzing the terminology this

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[1] Guy Chet argues historians are perhaps too quick to give Church this title, but does not propose another person to take his place in, "The Literary and Military Career of Benjamin Church: Change or Continuity in Early American Warfare", *Historical Journal of Massachusetts*, Volume 35, No. 2 (Summer 2007); John Grenier, *The First Way of War, American War Making on the Frontier* (6th printing, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 35.
[2] Grenier, *The First Way of War, American War Making on the Frontier*, p. 19.
[3] "Range." *Online Etymology Dictionary.* 2021, Accessed 31 March 2021. https://www.etymonline.com/word/range
[4] Alan Gallay, *Colonial Wars of North America 1512-1763: An encyclopedia*. (New York: Garland, 1996), p. 620.

thesis will help situate Benjamin Church into the tradition. Church did not consider himself a ranger during King Philip's War, only thereafter, in King William's War where the terminology became widely used.

As the first ranger, Church is also generally considered the founder of ranging as a style of warfare. This thesis investigates if in the North American conflicts prior to King Philip's War, colonists used similar tactics to those of Church. The leaders of these colonial forces were veterans of wars on the European continent. The English soldiers that took part in the religious conflicts on the European continent, and their experiences, are vital to the development of the colonies in North America. Geoffrey Parker has argued that the period consisted of a 'military revolution'.[5] Armstrong Starkey stated that if a military revolution occurred in the Americas, then it occurred before King Philip's War with the introduction of firearms, steel weaponry, and bastioned fortifications.[6] Whether or not a "revolution" occurred is not of much importance to this debate. The fact of the matter is that certain English soldiers who were in North America gained invaluable experience on the European continent beforehand, that was not available in the British Isles. An important factor for this thesis, is that the knowledge gained by the early soldier colonists, Parker claims, was lost or forgotten before outbreak of King Philip's War, in which Church gained notoriety for ranging.[7] The knowledge transported across the Atlantic by the veteran soldiers, and the knowledge they adopted from their Native American allies during the Pequot War was lost due to a period of relative tranquility in New England. The lack of conflict during the forty year interval ensured that military knowledge was passed on only through militia training, which was likely conducted by men without any military experience themselves.

The concept of trophy hunting, or scalp hunting as Grenier calls his third pillar, will be addressed, and compared along with ranging to explore how the two concepts coincided. Grenier calls a colonist in New England the "mother of scalp hunting", infamous for how many scalps she took.[8] Trophy hunting became a norm in colonial North America and began with the Pequot War (1637). The normality in which it is only attributed to Native Americans has become an important part of the discussion. Andrew Lipman discusses the cultural meaning of the exchange and use of trophy hunting in the Pequot War. Lipman's explanation of the interpretation and significance to the English colonists and their Native American allies will be shown to be an important tool in understanding trophy hunting within the system of ranging.[9] Grenier discusses the use of scalping as a form of trophy hunting in which the colonists would be paid and rewarded for hunting Natives. Grenier argues the system was used as a bribe for luring colonists into ranging and in this manner defending the colonies' frontiers from encroaching attacks.[10]

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[5] Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution, Military Innovation, and the Rise of the West 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 19th printing 2016).
[6] Armstrong Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare 1675-1815*, (London: UCL Press, 2012), p. 169.
[7] Parker, *Military Revolution*, p. 119.
[8] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, p. 40.
[9] Andrew Lipman, *The Saltwater Frontier, Indians and the Contest for the American Coast* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), p. 137-139.
[10] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, p. 39.

By focusing on the conflicts from the first half of the seventeenth century, and the main combatants and the historiography surrounding them, I am expecting to find a link to ranging. Grenier acknowledges that the English soldier John Underhill was instrumental in winning the Pequot War with the military expertise he brought across the Atlantic; yet he does not connect Underhill's warfare to that of later military men such as Benjamin Church, John Lovell, John Gorham, or Robert Rogers, all established rangers in the eighteenth century. Grenier does not class the original soldier colonists as rangers, as they were not explicit in only using this style of warfare. However, the four men (Church, Lovell, Gorham, and Rogers) plus notable others used the same tactics as Underhill. These men used a melding of Native American and European warfare to wage war on Native Americans and other European states in North America. Grenier focuses on the combination of European and Native American tactics and warfare covering the total war Europeans inflicted on their enemies and how this contrasted with Native American warfare.[11]

Ranging was not adopted by the British military wholeheartedly until after the War of Independence. The reluctance by the metropole for adopting this style of warfare is also important to understanding the importance of ranging to the colonies and warfare of North America. The development of this style occurred in isolation to Eurasian warfare at the time. The conflicts of Europe during this period became textbook events. Sieges were played out to perfection and battlefields were drawn up of neatly lined units. Ranging, however, relied on individual commanders to act in the moment, far away from the governance of their commanders. The veterans of what Hugh Dunthorne terms 'the Dutch School of War' and other European religious conflicts were essential in adopting and melding the distinctive styles of warfare, which were eventually built upon by future generations.[12]

Adam J. Hirsch does discuss the collision of military cultures during the Pequot War.[13] Hirsch focuses on the cultural exchanges between the two peoples, arguing that the military exchange needs to be understood to understand the Pequot War as a whole. Hirsch discusses the Native American aims of warfare and how they were often ritualistic and quite different to the pitched battles familiar on the European continent. Hirsh's thesis is centered on cultural differences leading to great underestimation of the other side. It was only after the Pequot War that both sides in New England truly understood how the other conducted warfare.[14] According to my

[11] An interesting link can be found in Grenier's work in the ancestry or inheritance of ranging. There were many generations that followed John Gorham, who aided New England in ranging, from King Philip's War through to King George's War. Reading memoires on King Philip's War, a soldier who was shot in the eye by an arrow, was John Mason, the son of John Mason, notorious for the massacre at Mistick Fort in the Pequot War, see, N. S., *A Continuation of the State of New England 1676*, ed. J. Franklin Jameson, (American Historical Association, Published by New York: Scribner's Sons, 1913), p. 60.

[12] Hugh Dunthorne, *Britain and the Dutch Revolt, 1560–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 61–103.

[13] Adam J. Hirsch, 'The Collision of Military Cultures in Seventeenth-Century New England', *The Journal of American History,* Vol. 74, No. 4 (Oxford University Press on behalf of the Organization of American Historians, United States, Mar. 1988), pp. 1187-1212.

[14] Hirsch, 'The Collision of Military Cultures in Seventeenth-Century New England,' p. 1196.

analysis, placing the veterans in the discussion of American ranging expands Hirsch's argument into the collision of military cultures.

The agency of Native Americans has come to the forefront of the historiography. Al Carroll, a Native American historian, has written on how the American military "began with merging of Native and European ways."[15] Carroll's book covers American military history and Native involvement through to present day. Carroll dedicates an entire chapter to Robert Rogers and the ranging technique he borrowed and adapted from Native American warriors. However, he neglects the European veterans from the early seventeenth century who fought in the first conflicts between Europeans and Native Americans. Carroll argues that historians of the past have whitewashed the style of warfare as 'savage' and argues against the image of Native warfare as brutal, or more so than European. Wayne E. Lee's book *Empires and Indigenous: Intercultural Alliance, Imperial Expansion, and Warfare in the Early Modern World*,[16] is also written in a manner which gives Native Americans more agency in the narrative of colonial warfare in North America. Lee highlights more than Grenier, Hirsch or Carroll, how European warfare was adopted by Native Americans. Lee refers to European "fort and cannon" as a guarantee for European colonists in conflicts against Native attackers.[17] Lee also emphasizes Native American adoption of this combination for their defenses.

The melding of the military cultures in colonial North America has been explored from many different angles at different time periods. However, my research aims at gaps not explored or traditions not connected. The connections made draws the eye back to the beginning of the seventeenth century, the people involved highlight why historians need to view the European conflicts and the influence they had into the centuries that followed with more detail. By including the veterans into the tradition of ranging, the cultural exchange can be explored further. Therefore, providing a more complete view of how society operated in colonial North America. John Underhill and John Mason were using the techniques of Church by being accompanied by Native American allies in the Pequot War. The Native American ally who was so important in the Pequot War, Uncas, a Mohegan Sachem, was still fighting by the colonists' side in King Philip's War forty years later. The conflicts in North America between Europeans and Native Americans in the first half of the seventeenth century propelled the exchange of military ideas between the two groups.

The main question of this thesis is: Why is Benjamin Church credited as the father of American ranging when other soldiers before him used the same tactics? Throughout the chapters of this thesis, I will explore a number of subquestions. How did Benjamin Church develop his tactics? Did Native American tactics change during the early colonization period? How did the tactics the veterans used before and after their arrival in the Americas differ? Why did scalping or trophy hunting become an important aspect of the military style now considered ranging? In addition, I explore throughout the thesis the evolution of the terminology of the term ranging. These

[15] Al Carroll, *Medicine Bags and Dog Tags* (Nebraska: UNP - Nebraska, 2008), p. 37.
[16] Wayne E. Lee, *Empires and Indigenes: Intercultural Alliance, Imperial Expansion, and Warfare in the Early Modern World*. (New York: New York University Press, 2011).
[17] Lee, *Empires and Indigenes,* p. 61.

questions are essential to move the conversation of American ranging back to the beginning of the seventeenth century.

By using primary sources, predominantly the diaries or writings from the main subjects involved such as John Smith, John Mason, John Underhill, Lion Gardiner, and Benjamin Church, I plan to analyze their military tactics, experience, and interactions with Native Americans. Combined with using the historiography in the most recent and influential current debate among historians. The conclusions drawn in this research, should draw the eyes of historians back to the early military exchange and aid in viewing the importance of the veterans who were vital in the establishment and continuation of the colonies of English North America.

Terminology and identification throughout this thesis will be inclusive to give agency and respect to the peoples of North America.[18] In colonial sources, Native Americans are called "Indians" or addressed by the names or peoples they belong too, often spelled incorrectly. This is something I shall not be copying unless quoted, then the source will remain as original. When talking broadly about people native to North America, I will address them as Native Americans. When speaking specifically about a person or people, I will use their names and the names of their peoples, to clarify distinctions between the many North American groups. When referring to people born in Europe, I will refer to their country of birth. When referring to Europeans born in North America, I will refer to them as Anglo-Americans or colonists. I will make this distinction so as not to confuse them with Native Americans.

Chapter One will discuss Benjamin Church who is credited with being the father of ranging in North American history. This is predominantly because he specifically raised regiments of soldiers to partake in the Native American style of warfare. Church's memoir includes detail of his combat and the pursuit of acquiring a command of forces that would eventually be renowned as the first ranger unit. This style of warfare was also adopted by colonies as a form of defense from King Philip's War onwards through to the end of the colonial period, 1776.

Native American style of warfare will be analyzed in Chapter Two. Native American warfare is a difficult subject to establish with certainty, as all sources are second hand and told through the voice of the colonizers, in this thesis predominantly through the four English soldiers' writings. Questions must be asked as to the accuracy of the interpretation, understanding, and biases when these sources were created. However, the observations of Native American warfare by the colonists provides an insight to the development of ranging as a style of warfare.

Chapter Three will compare the styles of warfare that Church is credited with, with that of the English veterans of the European religious wars of the early seventeenth century and how they used this experience in North America. I will be using John Smith's writings of early Virginia to

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[18] Doug Domenech, "A Guide to Writing about Virginia Indians and Virginia Indian History Approved by the Virginia Council on Indians." *Commonwealth of Virginia, Virginia Council on Indians Office of the Governor.* (2012) https://web.archive.org/web/20120224023658/http://indians.vipnet.org/resources/writersGuide.pdf . *National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian*, (2021), Accessed 9 June 2021; https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/faq/did-you-know ; Peter d' Errico, *Native American Indian Studies- A Note on Names*, (legal Studies Department, University of Massachusetts, 2012), Accessed 9 June 2021, https://www.umass.edu/legal/derrico/name.html .

see how his experience prior to leaving for North America compares this with the early New England soldiers' writings of John Mason, John Underhill, and Lion Gardiner to see how the two colonies contrast. A final comparison between Church and the earlier figures in this chapter to see if there are any stark similarities or differences and how they compare with ranging by the end of the seventeenth century.

Chapter Four will analyze the aspect of trophy hunting with English colonies of North America and how the practice developed and if it changed over the course of a century. I will examine how it was used as an incentive for all peoples to engage in warfare on behalf of the colonies, and how scalp hunting has an image of Native American “savagery” that may well have come from European colonists.

Chapter One - Development of ranging tactics into the first ranger unit with Benjamin Church

Historian John Grenier describes Benjamin Church as the father of the ranger unit in North America and credits him with its inception during King Philip's War. Church's military experience, in comparison to the veterans of previous conflicts in North America, was comparatively lacking. Church was born in 1639 in the Plymouth colony in New England. Up until the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675, there was no major military conflict in the region. The military experience that Church had at the beginning of the war was likely received via militia drills from equally inexperienced men.

Church broke this cycle by using the military knowledge of Native American allies. Church asked permission to raise a unit of soldiers whose sole purpose was to "make a business of the war as the enemy did."[19] The concept of Church being the father of the ranger unit, which is accepted by many historians, and the United States Rangers themselves, is questionable because Native Americans were ranging for centuries prior to Church in the 1670s. Gallay writes of an Edward Backler, about whom unfortunately not much information exists. He was "in 1634 and 1635 [...] hired as a "rainger" for Kent Island, a Virginian settlement in the upper Chesapeake Bay". Gallay describes Backler's likely task as to "give warning of the approach of Indians and Marylanders, both of whom were raiding the settlement."[20] Church and his rangers were used in a comparable manner, in creating a buffer in the wilderness between the enemies and the settlements.

Terminology

In his explanation of why Church is the father of the rangers, Grenier adopts the same terminology as that of the colonists of the time. Grenier says that "Church took it upon himself in early 1676 to learn the Indian way of skulking."[21] Church often describes the Native Americans he handpicked for his unit as scouts.[22] This distinction itself by Church is an important one. Church did not see himself as a ranger in Grenier's terms in 1675. Church saw himself as partaking in a style of warfare that his enemies used, and ranging was the name for exploring or scouting the wilderness. Church's adoption of the Native American style of warfare professionalized over his military career.

Many historians have classed colonists' warfare as ranging and referred to Native Americans as skulking,[23] even when the majority of ranger units were made up of Native Americans. Once

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[19] Benjamin Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, eds. Thomas Church (Boston: Green, 1716), p. 20.
[20] Gallay, *Colonial Wars of North America 1512-1763,* p. 621.
[21] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, p. 33.
[22] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War,* p. 89, 96, 120.
[23] Eric. B. Schultz, and Michael J. Tougias, *King Philip's War: The History and Legacy of America's Forgotten Conflict*, (Vermont: The Countryman Press, 2017) p. 16; Grenier, *The First Way of War*, p. 32-33; Lee, *Empires and Indigenes*, p. 52, 60. For more on skulking see, "History and Etymology for *skulk* Verb: Middle English, of Scandinavian origin; akin to Norwegian dialect *skulka* to lie in wait, lurk", *Meriam Webster Online Dictionary*,

Native Americans crossed to the side of the colonists, became allies, and were employed within what are now considered ranger units, the terminology changes from "skulking" to "scouting." Only once in Church's writing does he refer to Native American enemies as "ranging."[24] This could be explained by the source written by Church's son, or by Church senior describing events to his son in 1715, at which point the term would have been second nature. What is more likely is the term ranging becoming increasingly linked with the style of warfare that Church applied. In Church's writing, ranging is mentioned nineteen times, of which only three are referenced to before the end of King Philip's War, indicating that the term became more recognized when referring to colonists engaging in Native American tactics. By showing that Church himself was unaware of the type of warfare being included in ranging until later in his life, it is possible to compare Church to the earlier colonial soldiers Mason, Underhill, Gardiner, and Smith. These soldiers from earlier conflicts used ranging in the same manner; ranging was a form of hunting-come-scouting.

Throughout the seventeenth century, ranging developed into a style of warfare of its own. The Native American "skulking" and colonial scouting combined into a form of warfare not seen in continental Europe. Ranging began to encompass Native American military tactics, combining it with European firearms and discipline. By providing the New England colonies with a ranging military unit, Church offered protection from Native American attacks that would have potentially gone unseen. Church's main advantage was using Native American allies as an asset in scouting.

Validity as a source

Using Benjamin Church's *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War* as a primary source is a complicated issue. The diary contains many firsthand events that occurred and that have been corroborated by other sources, however, it was not printed until 1715, by Church's son, Thomas. The opening pages contain a note to the reader, from Benjamin Church, informing the reader that his son, Thomas, has compiled "minutes […] and ensuing narratives of many passages" which Church senior confirms are true.[25] Benjamin Church would have been seventy-six at the time his diary was published. Furthermore, it was thirty years after the beginning of the war. One may assume that a thirty-year-old memory may not be the most accurate tool for information extrapolation. What one must bear in mind when analyzing the information given from Church, and likely his son Thomas, is the extreme bias and nature in which it would have been intended to show the elder Church in a positive light throughout the narrative. Church continued his military career throughout the rest of the seventeenth century, playing major roles in both King William's War and Queen Anne's War. So, it is possible that Church, by the time of publishing his memoires, was indeed a recognized ranger. It is likely that Church saw himself as a ranger by the time of King William's War and Queen Anne's War, as he refers to ranging in his description

Accessed 9 June 2021, Available at https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/skulk ; Rachel Corner, "More Fifteenth-Century 'Terms of Association'." *The Review of English Studies* 13, no. 51 (1962): 229-44.

[24] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 46.

[25] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War,* p. ii.

of his tactics with increasing regularity. Church did continue his practice of employing Native Americans and colonial soldiers, who were willing to live in the wilderness to combat their enemies.

Jill Lepore remarks on historians relying so heavily on Church for narratives of King Philip's War and making a comparison to present day to highlight its absurdity as a reliable source. Regarding Church's character, Lepore notes "as reasonable, and as indefensible, as writing a history of the Vietnam War that relies extensively and uncritically on an "autobiography" of John Kerry written in 2013 by Kerry's daughter Vanessa."[26] In this same vein, gifting Church the title 'father of the American rangers' could be seen as equally absurd. Therefore, further analysis of Church's writing, whether Benjamin's or Thomas', is needed to understand his claim as the founding father of the American Ranger Unit. By assessing Church's diary, it may bring into question more aspects of Church's character, truthfulness, and therefore the validity of Church as a founder of ranging as a tactical style.

In the *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, Church begins by saying:

> In the Year, *1675.* that unhappy and bloody *Indian* War broke out in *Plymouth* Colony, where I was then building, and beginning a Plantation, at a Place called by the *Indian Seconit;* and since by the *English, Little Compton.* I was the first *English Man* that built upon that Neck, which was full of *Indians.* My head and hands were full about Settling a New Plantation, where nothing was brought to; no preparation of Dwelling House, or Out-Housing or Fencing made, Horses and Cattel were to be provided, Ground to be clear'd, and broke up; and the uttermost Caution to be used, to keep my self free from offending my *Indian* Neighbours all round about me: While I was thus busily Employed, and all my Time and Strength laid out in this Laborious Undertaking; I Received a Commission from the Government to engage in their Defence.[27]

In just this opening statement it is possible to question the reliability of Church's narrative. The "Neck" in which Church was beginning a new plantation, was an important piece of Native American land. The Neck belonged to Weetamoo, leader of the Pocasset Wampanoag peoples and ally to King Philip, tied through familial links to the ancestral protector of this land: Weetamoo's sister was Metacom's wife. Metacom was known as the leader of all Wampanoag peoples and known to the colonists as King Philip. Church's intent and greed which much of the English colonial period was known for, highlights his motives and perhaps why he was so willing to adapt to any style of warfare that would see New England triumphing in the conflict. The war which Church recalls as "unhappy and bloody" was in part Church's making. This is the argument of historian Lisa Brooks whose book *Beloved Kin* is a mixture of detective work and interpretation of colonial English sources and a background in Native American customs and language.[28] Using Church's *Entertaining Passages* and colonial records, Brooks places Church at the forefront of hostilities, dealings in land deeds, and pushing for war by reading against the

[26] Jill Lepore, "Plymouth Rocked: Of Pilgrims Puritans and professors," *The New Yorker,* April 16, 2006.
[27] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. I.
[28] Lisa Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

grain and reinterpreting colonial sources.[29] This helps explain Church's opening statement, as an act of pre-emptive defense, which further highlights the unreliability of the source overall.

Using what experience they had at their disposal, the colonists exposed what was a rather European style tactic; marching head on into the known villages of Native Americans to rout them whilst the colonists' presence was known well in advance, so people were able to evacuate. Of all the tactics available in Church's narrative that do not involve Native American allies, they are all rather European in their execution, meaning front on assaults and missing their target. The use of Native Americans as guides, scouts, and an irregular fighting force is what enabled the colonists to succeed in King Philip's War.

Benjamin Church is noted by some historians as being friendly, courteous, and even admiring the Native American style of warfare.[30] Church's fortune and success certainly came through his adoption of Native American tactics. However, these tactics and techniques as I set out to argue, are also seen in previous conflicts. In King Philip's War, before Church fully adapted to the Native American style of warfare, English troops were less likely to engage with Wampanoag soldiers. The Pease Field fight, an encounter between Church and 37 of his men being pinned down on the Neck which the colonists were trying to encroach on for plantation and settlement, shows how inept colonists were in engaging with Native Americans.[31] The now famous conflict, in which Church boasts of how three hundred Pocasset Native Americans were held at bay for six hours by Church and his small band of Anglo-Americans, can perhaps be translated as a Native American success in subterfuge. Lisa Brooks describes the Native display as a shield, and purely to buy the rest of the community time to retreat to a safer location.[32] Surely three hundred Native Americans could have easily overrun the small band of men?

Origin of Church's ranging

After Church and his men were extracted from the Neck, Church met with some Native American prisoners, one of whom surrendered himself over with his family and agreed to "pilot" Church to Weetamoo's encampment.[33] This instance is the first evidence of Church embracing Native American aid and for being the main voice in advocating their employment. Credit then perhaps should be given to Church, for the treatment he exclaimed to be given to all prisoners which was not a common occurrence across the Anglo-American colonial military front. The "pilot" who offered to aid Church was called Alderman. Alderman not only led Church and his forces to Weetamoo's camp, but the following year Alderman was the person who killed Metacom, otherwise known as King Philip. Alderman is only mentioned twice in Church's writing, once when he defected to the colonists, and again when Church rewards Alderman with

[29] Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin.* p. 118.
[30] Schultz, and Tougias, *King Philip's War*; Grenier, *The First Way of War*; Guy Chet, *Conquering the American Wilderness: The Triumph of European Warfare in the Colonial Northeast.* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2003).
[31] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 10-13.
[32] Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin.* p. 154-155.
[33] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War,* p. 12.

Metacom's hands for killing the Native American leader.[34] Many other times Church refers to his "pilots" though it is never clear if Alderman is always referred to or if these could be different Native American scouts.

After Alderman's defection, and the successes it brought the colonists, Church realized that Native Americans were the key. He petitioned the Council of War to raise a force of 300 men which he would lead, of which he asked for two hundred to be Native Americans.[35] He was rebuffed due to a shortage of funds. Church had spent the winter months recovering from a gunshot wound and visiting Native American villages trying to raise forces friendly to the colonists, as well as local Anglo-Americans who were keen to join him in "under his Command in quest of the Enemy." With Church's new force, the Council of War were pressured into giving Church his commission.[36] It was specifically tasked with fighting as the Natives Americans did, the rest of the colonial forces were able to pursue Metacom and enable Church and his Native allies' space to maneuver unseen.

There is plenty of evidence in Church's own writing that he did not seek the total annihilation of the Native population and professes to be against Native Americans being forcibly removed from New England to be placed into slavery elsewhere in English domains, rather having a resource of potential allies to join his fighting force.

> Capt. *Church*, […] could say, argue, plead, or beg, some body else that had more Power in their hands improv'd it; and without any regard to the promises made them on their surrendring themselves, they were carry'd away to *Plymouth*, there sold, and transported out of the Country; being about Eight-score Persons. An action so hateful to Mr. *Church,* that he oppos'd it to the loss of the good will and Respects of some that before were his good Friends.[37]

To what extent this is believable or not, is unknown. It is however likely that Church opposed the sale of Native Americans into slavery as Church used the men as his predominant fighting force. He persuaded them that with their loyalty he could spare them from being sold.

> He took any number of Prisoners, he would pick out some that he took a fancy to, and would tell them, *He took a particular fancy to them, and had chose them for himself to make Souldiers of; and if any would behave themselves well, he would do well by them, and they should be his men and not Sold out of the Country.* […] *These my best Souldiers were a little while a go as wild and surly as you are now; by that time you have been but one day along with me, you'l love me too, and be as brisk as any of them.* And it prov'd so. For there was none of them but (after they had been a little while with him, and see his behaviour, and how chearful and successful his Men were) would be as ready to Pilot

[34] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 12, 46.
[35] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 20.
[36] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 31-32.
[37] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 14.

> him to any place where the *Indians* dwelt or haunted (tho' their own Fathers or nearest Relations should be among them) or to fight for him, as any of his own Men.[38]

Perhaps what Church should be credited with most is his ability to persuade or blackmail his enemies to switch sides in the conflict? A matter that if it had not occurred, would have had grave consequences for the colonists in the conflict, as it was the Native American "pilots" who found enemy encampments and received information on movements of the enemy.

Church's established ranging

Church's military experience in King Philip's War saw the veteran partake in four separate expeditions against the French and their Native American allies in King William's War 1688-1697. In the writings of Church, it is possible to see how the tactics he adopted from his Native American allies were now second nature to him. The forces Church used still consisted of a majority of Native American allies and were filled with colonists who were deemed hardy enough for the style of warfare. By showing patience in his combat style, Church adapted to Native American warfare and incorporated it into the ranging style of warfare. The best example of this can be found in the fourth expedition.

> Next Morning early the Major with his Forces landed to see what discovery they could make, Travel'd a cross the woods, to the old Fort or Falls at the Mouth of St. *John's* River, keeping themselves undiscovered from the Enemy; finding that there were several Men at work, and having inform'd themselves as much as they could, (the Enemy being on the other side of the River, could not come at them) Returned back, but Night coming on and dark wet Weather, with bad Travelling, was oblig'd to stop in the woods till towards day next Morning.[39]

This extract from Church's *Entertaining Passages*, whilst still nineteen years since the event, is slightly more recent than Church's recollection of King Philip's War. The extract shows patience, the foresight to observe his enemy and retreat back to his main forces and build an ambush, something that should be compared to the Pease Field fight. Knowing that Church had learned his wilderness tactics from his Native American allies, used them for information gathering, and adapted their ambush tactics into his own style of warfare, it is more unlikely that the Native American attackers back in the Pease Field fight of 1675 were the number Church told in his writings. It is more likely that events unfolded as Lisa Brooks suspects; a smaller party of Native American forces made their number seem much greater in what turned out to be a successful maneuver, to buy their people time and force the colonists to retreat across the river.

Church is lauded as a great military leader, having the intelligence and willingness to adapt to the wilderness warfare style that became ranging. He may well have been a successful commander who adapted to Native American tactics, yet Church came across the same pitfalls as his predecessors. Enforcing Native Americans to adhere to European-style discipline was a

[38] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 37-38.
[39] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 95.

continuous issue, whilst teaching his Anglo-American colonists to be patient to build the perfect ambush also proved a constant issue. Church mentions colonists firing too early, alerting entire enemy parties to an ambush, and Native American soldiers not following him when charging an enemy. Both issues give credence to the importance of veterans of the religious conflicts in continental Europe in the prior conflicts of North America. Church's predecessors used their Native American allies and colonists to their strengths. The techniques and drilling that the military leaders of early New England enforced on their colonial soldiers would have been to a much higher standard to that forty or even sixty years later. With no formal military training, Church would have gained more than likely the majority of his experience once he recruited the warriors of Native American allies and the enemies' warriors he recruited into his ranks.

Tactics adopted by Church

Church writes himself of the tactics and knowledge he gained from his "pilots" and the experience gained in fighting with the Native Americans in the "Great Swamp Fight" of 1675 in which Church himself was injured. This was Church's first mention of an ambush in the sense of his enemy lying still until the opportune moment. Unfortunately for Church, he was at the wrong end of the ambush. "He dispatch'd information to the General that the best and forwardest of his Army that hazarded their lives to enter the Fort, upon the muzzle of the Enemies Guns, were Shot in their backs, and kill'd by them that lay behind."[40] As the colonists assaulted the Native American fortification deep within the swamp, camouflaged Native American warriors lay in wait until the colonists themselves were entering the fort. When the opportune moment arose, they were shot in the back. This tactic, despite the massacre that the colonists inflicted, allowed a substantial number of peoples to escape the fort and fight another day.

Once Church had his commission in 1676 and raised his forces numbering some one hundred and thirty Native Americans, he endeared himself to them by learning their tactics and understanding how the Native Americans avoided detection and so often trapped the colonists in ambushes. Church describes:

> His manner of Marching thro' the Woods was such, as if he were discovered, they appeared to be more than they were. For the always Marched at a wide distance one from another, partly for their safety: and this was an *Indian* custom, to March thin and scatter. Capt. *Church* inquired of some of the *Indians* that were become his Souldiers, *How they got such advantage often of the English in their Marches thro' the Woods?* They told him, That the *Indians* gain'd great advantage of the *English* by two things; The *Indians* always took care in their Marches and Fights, not to come too thick together. But the *English* always kept in a heap together, that it was as easy to hit them as to hit an House. The other was, that if at any time they discovered a company of *English* Souldiers in the

[40] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 15.

> Woods, they knew that there was all, for the *English* never scattered; but the *Indians* always divided and scattered. [41]

In doing as his enemies did, Church emulated and adapted the Native American style of warfare into the European ranging. However, the veterans from the earlier North American conflicts adapted Native American allies as pilots early on, they had not had the issue of Native American enemies being armed with firearms. The veterans were better at adapting to scenarios on the spot which is a key reason they could be considered as taking part in ranging, which will be explored further in Chapter Three.

Summary

Examining Church's description of Native American tactics and how Church adopted his new allies' warfare into his own style, could then also be used against him to question his version of the Pease Field fight. The reason the Pease Field fight garners so much attention is because it was one of the first actual conflicts for Church in King Philip's War. The reason I have given it so much attention is to show where Church's writings may be credible and where they may not be. One may find it easier to believe that the information Church included on how the Native Americans ranged throughout the wilderness and evaded and set ambushes. Yet also it highlights the unlikelihood of Church and his men fending off three hundred Native warriors with so few men. Guy Chet believes Church is credited too highly in King Philip's War. The main thing Chet argues that Church enabled was to speed up the war of attrition on their enemies.[42] However, I believe that Church should well be credited with adopting the style of warfare that their Native American allies and enemies used and the ability to persuade captives to switch to his side. The narrative presented by Church's and other colonial records does highlight the technique and adaptability that Benjamin Church possessed when conducting war in North America in the late seventeenth century. It certainly aided the colonial side in their conflict. He was however not the first to do so.

[41] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 30.
[42] Chet, *Conquering the American Wilderness,* p. 63.

Chapter Two - Native American Tactics of the Seventeenth Century

By examining the ways in which Native Americans conducted their warfare, and how colonists engaged with them as allies and enemies, I hope to show how ranging as a practice became an amalgamation of Native American and European tactics before Benjamin Church appeared on the scene. Native American warfare when used by Europeans was adopted into the terminology of what the colonists of North America called ranging by the end of the seventeenth century. The methods and techniques used by native peoples of the East coast of North America was recognizably similar in Virginia and New England. This may well be because Native American peoples' borders stretched to touch both colonies. The Iroquois nation, otherwise known as the Haudenosaunee, had influence and nations from as far north as the Saint Lawrence River to as far south as the Tidewater region of the Chesapeake Bay.[43] The reach of the Iroquoian peoples gives an insight into cultural homogeneity along the East coast of North America when it comes to warfare. It is extremely plausible that the Nations belonging to the Iroquois Nation bordering New England shared many similarities with those engaging in conflicts with the Powhatan nations next to the Virginia colonies. One can therefore assume that the warfare that the colonists in both Virginia and New England experienced with Native Americans was of a similar nature.

Native American tactics pre-European contact, or as close to contact as possibly observed, highlight that what became ranging at the end of the seventeenth century has many similarities to how the colonists conducted warfare with their Native American allies in the Pequot War in the 1630s. It is in the Pequot War that the shift in the terminology for ranging begun, the terrain ensured that irregular warfare became dominant over regular standardized European warfare. Most Native American tactics that are documented are available through the lens of the colonizers. The European lens in which they are viewed must be considered when evaluating their worth and therefore need careful interpretation. The earliest writing of English North American Native warfare comes from John Smith and the Powhatan wars in Virginia.

Native American tactics through European eyes

John Smith's writings provide a broad look at Powhatan warfare. Unfortunately, not a great deal of detail is included on the actual tactics of the Powhatans. However, Smith's writings are enough to tie links to what is documented elsewhere in North America by a demeaning term, "lurking".[44] Smith also describes his own men to be "ranging" in the manner which has been shown to be accepted in the first half of the seventeenth century.[45] The distinction is again an important one to be made. The early encounters by Smith can be mistaken, perhaps even forgiven, in not understanding that the Powhatans who were "lurking", were in fact scouting the

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[43] James F. Pendergast, "The Massawomeck: Raiders and Traders into the Chesapeake Bay in the Seventeenth Century." *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 81, no. 2 (1991): I-101.

[44] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 6; Smith, et al. *The Proceedings of the English Colonie in Virginia (1612): The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631) Volume One*. Ed, Philip L. Barbour. (Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va. University of North Carolina Press, 1986.) p. 227.

[45] Smith, et al. *A True Relation (1608)*, p. 89.

colonists. Smith notes of the speed of the Powhatans "by the nimblenesse of their heeles well escaped." This refers to the manner in which the Native Americans were familiar with the surroundings and used it to the best of their ability.[46] When Smith was kidnapped, he mentioned that his men were likely also ambushed. They were supposed to "their matches light and order discharge a peece, for my retreat at the first sight of any Indian" (that is to say discharge their firearms if they saw a Native American).[47] It is therefore impressive that a soldier of Smith's experience was ambushed and taken at all and gives credit to the Powhatan 'lurking.'

The most important aspect of Smith's writing regarding Native American warfare can be seen when Smith was witness to a mock battle for the colonist's benefit. On first glance, Smith's writing may not have a link to ranging, however, there are details that link to Native American warfare that carry through to ranging by the end of the century.

> Having painted and disguised themselves in the fiercest manner they could devise. […] These as enimies took their stands a musket shot one from another; ranked themselves 15 a breast and each ranke from another 4 or 5 yards, not in fyle, but in the opening betwixt their fyles, So the Rease could shoot as conveniently as the Front. Having thus pitched the fields: from either part went a Messenger with these conditions, that whosoever were vanquished, such as escape upon their submission in 2 daies after should live, but their wives and children should be prize for the Conquerers. […] Upon first flight of arrowes they gave such horrible shouts and screechs, as though so many infernall helhounds could not have made them more terrible. When they had spent their arrowes they joined together prettily, charging, and retiring, every rank seconding the other.[48]

What must be considered is that it was a mock battle. The tactics shown may not have been wholly accurate or interpreted correctly by Smith, but nevertheless can be seen as somewhat reliable. The details that are pertinent to this discussion and that are comparable to other writings of the seventeenth century are the way the men spread themselves across the battlefield, "opening betwixt their fyles" and "leaping and singing." These details highlight what Roger Williams writes in 1643, "they fight with leaping and dancing, that seldome an arrow hits, and when a man is wounded, unlesse he that shot follows upon the wounded they soon retire and save the wounded."[49] Williams, the founder of the Rhode Island colony, shows in his writing a comparison to Smith's reports of the mock battle. Although over seven hundred and fifty kilometers separated the reports, a clear link can be seen. John Underhill writes down similar observations to Smith and Williams in his *Newes from America*,

> Wee requested our Indians for to entertaine fight with them, our end was that we might see the nature of the Indian warre: which they granted us and fell out; the Pequeats,

[46] Smith, et al. *A Map of Virginia (1612),* p. 206.
[47] Smith, et al. *A True Relation (1608),* p. 45.
[48] John Smith, et al. *A Map of Virginia (1612),* p. 166-167.
[49] Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America, Or, an Help to the Language of the Natives in that Part of America Called New-England Together with Briefe Observations of the Customes, Manners and Worships, &c. of the Aforesaid Natives, in Peace and Warre, in Life and Death: On all which are Added Spirituall Observations, Generall and Particular, by the Authour ... / by Roger Williams ...* (London: Printed by Gregory Dexter, 1643), p. 180-181.

> Narragansets, and Mohigeners changing a few arrowes together after such a manner, as I dare boldly affirme, they might fight seven yeares and not kill seven men: they came not neere one another, but shot remote, and not point blanke, as wee often doe with our bullets, but at rovers, and then they gaze up in the skie to see where the Arrow falls, and not untill it is fallen doe they shoot againe, this fight is more for pastime, then to conquer and subdue enemies.[50]

Underhill's example of Native warfare is supposed to have occurred just after the Mistick Fort massacre. Underhill's description of Mohegan and Narragansett allies engaging with the Pequots shows similarities with those of Smith and Williams, although this case was not a performance and gives more credibility to what Smith witnessed. This warfare that at times was dismissed by colonists as ineffective, has been described by historian Wayne E. Lee as "the cutting off way of war".[51] Lee argues against the trend of historians that Native American warfare was not as brutal as European warfare. The Native American style of warfare was more calculated in its human cost. Forces rarely engaged unless they had total surprise, and when head on engagements did arise, they were as described above by Smith and Williams. Although few records of Native American warfare exist, what is available shows Lee's theory of "cutting off" the enemy as effective. Lee describes these encounters Smith and Williams write about as likely failed expeditions in surprising the enemy.[52] Lee's theory, combined with the writings of Smith, Williams, and Underhill bring the importance of ambushes in Native American tactic into sharp relief, which became an important factor in ranging as a style of warfare.

Two examples of Native American attempts at surprise can be found in the northeast of North America. The first was a failed attempt by the Narragansett sachem and leader Miantonomi who amassed a force of one thousand warriors to march towards the Mohegan sachem and ally to New England, Uncas. Uncas, being alerted to the incoming enemy, sent word to his tributary villages, and raised 600 men. Rather than lie in wait in his fortified village, Uncas met Miantonomi head on, and challenged him to a one-on-one duel. It was declined, at which point Uncas sounded the charge, capturing the Narragansett leader and killing thirty or so of Miantonomi's men.[53] Despite being outnumbered, Uncas avoided defeat by being aware of the incoming threat. Had Uncas not had tributary villages, there may well have been a different outcome. It is therefore also plausible that had Miantonomi been successful in his surprise, that Uncas and the Mohegans would have been completely wiped out.

The second example has similarities to the Pequot War's Mistick massacre, in which English colonists torched an entire village killing women and children. This has often been touted as evidence of European total war. However, an example of this same tactic is reported by Jacques Cartier, a sixteenth-century French explorer, who gives written evidence of a similar event

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[50] John Underhill, *Newes from America; Or, A New and Experimentall Discoverie of New England; Containing, A Trve Relation of Their War-like Proceedings These Two Yeares Last Past, with a Figure of the Indian Fort, or Palizado (1638)*. Royster, Paul, ed. (Nebraska: UNP 2007) p. 36.
[51] Lee, *Empires and Indigenes*, p. 52.
[52] Lee, *Empires and Indigenes*, p. 54.
[53] John Winthrop, *The Journal of John Winthrop, 1630-1649*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 236-237; Lee, *Empires and Indigenes*, p. 54.

happening in the region of the Saint Lawrence River. Toudaman Native Americans effectively surprised Iroquoian peoples sleeping in a temporary palisade containing men, women, and children "set fire round about [the palisade] and slew them all as they rushed out, except for five who made their escape".[54] This therefore highlights that Native American warfare could be as bloody and devastating as European warfare was. The event played out much the same as the massacre of the Pequot peoples at Mistick. The Native Americans planned with stealth in mind and an element of surprise that was essential to a successful attack. If the upper hand was lost, as Lee puts it, the open battles were 'a kind of face-saving measure.'[55] Dutchman Adriaen van der Donck wrote in 1650:

> The principal order, authority, and structure of command of the Indians is revealed in time of war and matters pertaining to war, but it is not so firm that they can maintain platoons, companies, and regiments whenever they wish. They march in separate files and out of step, even when in their best formation. They attack furiously, are merciless in victory, and cunning in planning an assault. If it is a dangerous one, they operate by stealth, very quietly, and under cover of darkness. They will always attempt to ambush and deceive the enemy, but face to face on a plain or water they are not particularly combative and tend to flee in good time, unless they are besieged, when they fight stubbornly to the last man as long as they can stand up. [56]

Van der Donck's passage highlights and helps cement all the points thus far. Perhaps Van der Donck's "they march in separate files and out of step, even when in their best formation" could be reconciled with Smith's writing about loose formation and Williams' description of "seldom an arrow hit." This passage coupled with Smith, Williams, and Underhill, also corroborates Church's learnt Native American tactics of loose formation. Although the distinction from arrows to firearms is clear, the concept is still the same; "The *Indians* always took care in their Marches and Fights, not to come too thick together. But the *English* always kept in a heap together, that it was as easy to hit them as to hit an House."[57] Van der Donck's passage also highlights the importance of surprise. Ambushing the enemy using "stealth, very quietly, and under cover of darkness." These tactics help tie the advantages the Native American allies, the Mohegans, led by Uncas gave the New England colonists in the Mistick massacre, forty years before Church's ranger unit and the Great Swamp Massacre.

Forty years later ambushes were still the main tactic for Native American attacks. Guy Chet credits the Mohawk Iroquois peoples with turning the tide in King Philip's War. Being allied to the New York colony, the Mohawks' aid was requested by the Governor, who worried that Metacom's federation of Native American allies would spread into his territory. Although not much is written about the ambush, what is known is that up to 600 of Philip's warriors were ambushed and killed by the Mohawks in the winter of 1675/76 whilst Metacom was wintering in

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[54] Lee, *Empires and Indigenes*, p. 52; Ramsay Cook, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press ed. 1993), p. 68.
[55] Lee, *Empires and Indigenes*, p. 54.
[56] Adriaen Van der Donck, *The Representation of New Netherland, 1650, in Narratives of New Netherland 1609-1664*, J. Franklin Jameson, ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), p. 100.
[57] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 30.

Albany with allies and attempting to forge new alliances and build up more troops.[58] The ambush by the Mohawks is evidence of the continued use of surprise by Native Americans throughout the century and the devastating consequences they had when successful.

The importance of ambush and surprise, disbursing if found outnumbered, the use of travelling by night; were all tactics of Native Americans around the point of European contact in the early seventeenth century. The face-saving tactics could also be seen as a defensive maneuver to buy the retreating side time. This would help in understanding Church's encounter in the Pease Field, and Underhill's witnessing of Native combat.

Encounters with European colonists

By understanding the basic idea of Native American warfare, it is possible to see links to ranging at the end of the seventeenth century. It also highlights that the tactics that Grenier and Chet have contributed to Church as developing were in fact Native American in design. The early European colonists who had considerable military experience were quicker to adopt Native American warfare, and to adapt to it. The defensive usage of "face-saving" conflict unintentionally became the main defensive force for the New England colonies in King William's War, by disbursing multiple ranger units in the wilderness to cut off any form of enemy incursion, creating a shield around the settlements of the English colonies. The aspects of Native American warfare that did develop due to European contact were firearms, metal/steel armor and weaponry, fortifications, and disease. Each point meant that Native Americans had to adapt their style of warfare, some more so than others. Disease, which this thesis does not have the scope to explore fully, decimated the population of northeast North America. The colonists unwittingly wielded a deadly weapon, which has been estimated to have wiped out up to ninety percent of the Amerindian population. This had a domino effect which can already be seen in the Pequot War. The allies to New England were shocked and surprised at the bloodiness of the colonists' actions. "Our Indians came to us, and much rejoyced at our victories, and greatly admired the manner of English mens fight: but cried mach it, mach it; that is, it is naught, it is naught, because it is too furious, and slaies too many men".[59]

This could be interpreted, with the above information, not to be because the Native Americans wished not to see total war inflicted on their enemies, but because people were a valuable asset to a dwindling population. Women and children were often adopted into winning sides' populations, not to become slaves but to become a part of the nation. John Smith notes that the mock battle had terms agreed by both sides as such. "A Messenger with these conditions, that whosoever were vanquished, such as escape upon their submission in 2 daies after should live, but their wives and children should be prize for the Conquerers."[60] This can then help to explain the seventeenth-century Native American mindset when it came to absorbing their enemies into their populations and give reason to the frustration of the Mohegan allies in the Pequot War.

[58] Chet, *Conquering the American Wilderness,* p. 54.
[59] Underhill, *Newes from America,* p. 38.
[60] Smith, et al. *A Map of Virginia (1612),* p. 27-28.

By analyzing the multiple ambushes that Lion Gardiner and his men encountered in the beginning of the Pequot War around the fort at Saybrook it is possible to appreciate the significance of surprise to Native American warfare.[61] The ambushes Gardiner consequently prepared for in his planning of all tasks, ensuring there were look-outs and people in a position to fallback too. The manner of the ambushes that Gardiner and his men encountered was similar to that of the New England colonists in King Philip's War: small numbers of men, laying very still until the perfect ambush was available. Rarely did the ambushes that Gardiner relate, show Native Americans staying for any prolonged conflict. Nor do the Pequots pursue the colonists when they ambush them. One could presume this is comparable to the Pease Field fight; showing how small numbers of Native Americans prevented colonists from achieving their goal, whether that was ranging or gathering resources. The Pease Field fight of 1675 saw Weetamoo's Wampanoags armed with European flintlock style muskets, enabling them to prolong the encounter at distance. The Pequots of the late 1630s were not armed with European weaponry and likely relied on their own Native American styles of combat. Engaging with the well-armed soldiers that Gardiner commanded for longer periods than an ambush would have resulted in more Native American casualties. Native American populations quickly adopted steel, bronze, and copper into their armory. John Smith writes of Powhatan people stealing hatchets and the like from within the colonists' fortifications.[62] John Underhill warns in his writings that New England colonists were not to sell "Kettles or the like" to the Native Americans for they would turn them into effective arrowheads capable of piercing the European armor.[63] During the Pequot War and Kieft's War, the sale of firearms was prohibited. "Nor shall any person sell, give, or barter, directly or indirectly, any gun or guns, powder, or bullets, shot, lead, to any Indians whatsoever. […] Nor Shall any amend or repair any gun belonging to any Indian, nor shall any sell any armour or weapons."[64] However, by the time of King Philip's War, Native Americans had fully adopted the European flintlock rifle into their style of warfare using it to devastating effect.

Summary

All Native American warriors used their hunting and warfare experience as one, enabling them to prove effective rangers, or in the colonists' terms, become effective at "skulking" or "lurking" whilst using a firearm. Compared to the colonists, Native Americans became warriors once they became of age and the knowledge was passed on with each generation. The manner in which the knowledge was preserved and built upon by the Native Americans throughout the seventeenth century can be attributed to the connection between hunting and warfare. The adaption to firearms by the Native Americans shows their style of warfare evolved to match the environment that the colonists had engineered in North America and became an important evolution in the tradition of ranging. There is evidence to some Native American allies, who were trusted with

[61] Lion Gardiner, *Relation of the Pequot Warres (1660).* Carlton, W. N. Chattin, ed, (Hartford: Hartford Press on behalf of Acorn Club of Connecticut in 1901), p. 8-13.
[62] Smith, et al. *A True Relation (1608),* p. 81.
[63] John Underhill, *Newes from America,* p. 23.
[64] Arnold van Laer and Charles A. Ghering, eds. and trans., *New York Historical Manuscripts: Council Minutes, 1638-1656.* Three Volumes. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1974-83.) 4:42; N.A, *The Charters and General Laws of the Colony and Providence of Massachusetts Bay,* (Boston: Printed and published by T.B Wait and Co. 1814). p. 133.

European firearms and adopted European clothing at the beginning of the Pequot War. John Underhill writes of the likely Mohegan tracker "wee had an Indian with us that was an interpreter, being in English cloathes, and a Gunne in his hand, was spied by the Ilanders, which called out to him, what are you an Indian or an English-man."[65] The evidence suggests, Native American strategy and techniques in warfare was by the end of the seventeenth century included in ranging as a style of warfare. Ambushes and stealth were the prominent modes of attack; if the ambush failed, the face saving encounter commenced. The terminology shift was set in motion in the Pequot War when Mason and Underhill were led by Mohegan allies to the Pequot fort at Mistick. Moving silently under the cover of darkness using routes that would avoid detection to gain the element of surprise was the ultimate goal.

[65] John Underhill, *Newes from America,* p. 6.

Chapter Three - Veterans of the European religious conflicts of the early seventeenth century, and their impact on North America

The veterans of the European religious conflicts of the early seventeenth century were invaluable to the early English colonies of North America. Many English soldiers went across the Channel to fight and gain experience in Europe. The period of Parker's 'Military Revolution' saw military tactics and techniques, along with weaponry, evolve at a faster rate to that which occurred on the British Isles prior to the English Civil War in 1642.[66] Therefore, the English and Scottish soldiers who wished to gain any sense of professionalism, travelled across the Channel to give aid in the religious wars. The use of Native American tactics in the Pequot War and Kieft's War shows the value the veterans brought with them across the Atlantic through their ability to adapt quickly to new environments. It also highlights that without military experience, the generation after these first soldier colonists lost all knowledge and benefit from the European religious wars from the beginning of the seventeenth century and had to be re-learned during King Philip's War. By examining the experience and tactics of the veterans, the link in tactics to which Church absorbed from his Native allies becomes unmistakable. How the veterans gained there knowledge quicker than Church can be credited to their experience in Europe.

The Veterans of the European religious wars

John Smith provides one of the first accounts of English North America. Smith made two voyages across the Atlantic to North America, the first expedition in 1606 to what became the Virginia colony, after which he returned to England in 1609. Smith's last expedition in 1614 was to New England which provided much information for potential plantations and future colonies. However, by understanding his experience in Eurasia, it aids in understanding how he interacted with the Native Americans. Smith produced several writings about his journeys to the Americas. In *The True Travels, Adventures and Observations of Captaine John Smith*, in which Smith presents his military experience across Europe prior to his trips across the Atlantic. Smith travelled and fought in France, The Netherlands, across Europe into Hungary and what is now Serbia. Smith mastered all manner of arms, cavalry, and tactics across cultures and states he read Machiavelli's *Art of Warre*; indicating a level of education and knowledge that not all soldiers would have possessed.[67] This vast wealth of experience indicates how this knowledge would have been used in Virginia. By being quick to adapt, showing respect to the Native American population, much as Lion Gardiner would later show in his *relation,* it is easy to see the difference in Church's experiences early on in King Philip's War, and the similarities once Church embraced Native American allies.

Smith encounters enemies from many diverse cultural backgrounds and military experiences, from the Spanish Hapsburgs in the Netherlands to the Ottomans and Tatars in the Balkans. Smith also writes he was captured, imprisoned, and sold as a slave to the Ottoman Sultan, escaping across Ukraine, Muscovy, the Polish and Lithuanian State, and back across the Holy Roman

[66] Parker, *The Military Revolution.*
[67] Smith, et al. *A True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captaine John Smith (1630),* p. 156.

Empire to France and across the Channel to Britain.[68] Smith's impressive travels in the early seventeenth century highlight why he was chosen to be a leader in Virginia, and may explain why Gardiner, John Mason, and John Underhill were chosen for New England. The massacre of the Virginian colonists in 1622 likely encouraged the employment of veteran soldiers in the New England colonies. The massacre occurred in Virginia, just as the first New England colony was being planted and it is feasible that John Smith's writings were ever more appealing to potential organizers for new colonies.

The Low Countries became England's breeding ground to raise their men to a military standard to match the continual evolution of military warfare. "'The bravest nursery' for soldiers of Europe" enabled English men the opportunity to fight under the best tacticians and engineers of the time, and thus an ideal place to recruit soldiers for the new colonies in the Americas.[69] The Netherlands were in an eighty-year conflict with the Spanish Hapsburgs for control over the Low Countries, a battle between Catholic and Protestant nations. This is likely also a reason that Protestant English soldiers chose the Netherlands, as well as its proximity. The Low Countries saw a faster evolution in military tactics compared to the British Isles in which Kevin McBride comments on European regulations: The States-General in 1599 stated how all veterans from the Low Countries would have been trained to this standard. McBride states that the regulations 'claimed that muskets and calivers were designed to fire at ranges of up to 328 and 219 yards, respectively, but this likely referred to the maximum effective range of the weapons if fired at massed formation of men on an open European battlefield'.[70] Parker also talks of Dutch reforms that were introduced as a key part of the military revolution.[71] This training was vital for the development of the English colonies of North America.

The men employed directly from the Low Countries: John Mason, John Underhill, and Lion Gardiner, were to serve the colonies of New England. John Underhill was employed in 1630, the same year Smith's final writings were published and just one year before Smith died in London. Underhill, one can assume was well aware of Smith's writings, especially those ascertaining to New England. In the Low Countries Underhill served as a cadet in the guard of the Prince of Orange, Frederick Henry, which was his position and rank that was recorded in his Dutch marriage certificate of 1628. He is therefore likely to have served in siege of Bois-Le-Duc in 1629.[72] It is likely that Underhill's involvement in the Brabant campaign in the late 1620s is

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[68] Karen Kupperman notes on Smith's sale into slavery in the Ottoman empire. How the experience was a feared one by many English sailors, who had heard of the frequency of ships being stopped by Barbary pirates. Smith's escape was likely seen as a sign of his faith and courage, setting him in high regard among his colleagues and those choosing men for the Virginia colony. See, Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008) p. 43-72; Smith, et al. *A True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captaine John Smith (1630),* p. 137.

[69] Dunthorne, *Britain and the Dutch Revolt,* p. 62.

[70] Kevin McBride, *American Battlefield Protection Program Site Identification and Documentation: Siege and Battle of Saybrook Fort, Technical Report: (GA-2255-12-011).* (Connecticut: Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center 2016), p. 98.

[71] Parker, *Military Revolution,* p. 20-22.

[72] John Matthews, *Matthews' American Armoury and Blue Book* (ed. John Matthews, 93 and 94 Chancery Lane, London, England. 1907) p. 331; Len Travers, "Underhill, John (c. 1608–1672), soldier and colonist in America." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.* 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 2 Jun. 2021. https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-27999.

how he became acquainted with Lady Mary Vere, a prominent recruiter for the Saybrook colony, who may have connected him to Lion Gardiner if they were not already acquainted. In 1634/35 Underhill was tasked with returning from the Plymouth colony to the Netherlands to recruit soldiers: “I intend to send this letter by Capt. Underhill who hath sailed to see his friends in Holland” wrote Jonathon Winthrop senior to his son.[73]

Mason and Gardiner served under Sir Horace Vere in the army of Frederik Hendrik, the Prince of Orange, and would have been involved in both the Breda campaign (1625) and under Sir Thomas Fairfax in the siege of 's-Hertogenbosch (1629).[74] Their connection to Underhill is not certain and is likely that Lady Mary Vere was the person to influence their employment. Mason was held in such high esteem, that when the English Civil War broke out, Sir Thomas Fairfax wrote to Mason requesting to aid in commanding his forces for the royalists, to which Mason declined, deciding to stay in the Americas. Gardiner’s experience as a “Enginear & Master of works of fortification in the legers of the prince of Orang in the Low cuntries” provided invaluable experience for the colonies of New England.[75] Gardiner, serving in the army of Frederick Hendrik under Fairfax was at the siege of Den Bosch; the siege in which engineers including Gardiner surrounded the city with two large dykes including parapets, within three weeks.[76] Mason set sail for Massachusetts in 1632, followed by Gardiner in 1635.

Transferred experience of the veterans to the inhabitants of North America

It is logical that by providing physical examples of the most modern types of fortifications and the methods used to build them to the colonists, Gardiner also provided Native Americans in the vicinity with the same example. The fort built by the Narragansett engineer Stonewall John that was used in the Great Swamp fight of 1675 resembled European aesthetics.[77] Earthen ramparts and trenches were used in the Native Americans' bastioned European-style fort in the same style that Gardiner would have used for the two fortifications that he was involved in constructing.[78] The importance of Gardiner and the bastioned style fortification that were a part of the military revolution of continental Europe can be seen in how the Native Americans adopted the style of fortification into their defenses. After the Pequot War, the oval or round palisades of the Mistick Fort were no longer used and seen as redundant. Although many Native American fortifications did not have the same mathematic layout of the European build, they did provide cover for

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If Underhill was in Ireland, it may help to explain the ruthlessness of the Pequot massacre and why he justified the slaughter to that of doing God's work. Underhill quotes David in justification for the events at Mistick. See: James E. Doan, ""An Island in the Virginian Sea": Native Americans and the Irish in English Discourse, 1585-1640." *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua* 1, no. 1 (1997): 79-99. Accessed April 28, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20557371. p. 98; Padraig Lenihan, *Consolidating Conquest, Ireland 1603–1727*, (Published by Routledge, 2007) P. 46; Underhill, *Newes from America*, p. 35-37.

[73] Winthrop Journal cited in Alley, Ruth, *Pelliana : Pell of Pelham, Thomas Pell, first Lord of the Manor of Pelham, Westchester Co., New York*, (Montpelier, Vermont. 1962), p. 20.

[74] John Mason, *A Brief History of the Pequot War (1736)*, p. 3.

[75] Gardiner, *Relation of the Pequot Warres (1660).* p. 5.

[76] Alley, *Pelliana: Pell of Pelham*, p. 15.

[77] Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin.* p. 237.

[78] Chet, *Conquering the American Wilderness,* p. 50-51; Gardiner, *Relation of the Pequot Warres.*

riflemen along all sides of the perimeter. The use of fortifications, both bastioned forts and more traditional block houses by colonists, meant Native Americans avoided assaulting Europeans in these environments and put greater emphasis on ambushes and ranging the wilderness. The failure of the Narragansett and Wampanoag's fort in the Great Swamp massacre of December 1675, can be perhaps accredited to the unfamiliarity of how to properly defend such a position. Lisa Brooks gives credit to the swamp being frozen in the depths of the winter, allowing the colonists access to areas of the swamp which would normally be impassible. "Without prior knowledge [of the location], navigation would be impossible. However, below freezing temperatures turned the icy swamp to solid ground and packed snow allowed for foot travel."[79] This may well explain why certain positions of the fort were accessible and easily overrun when the colonists assaulted the fort. The adoption of European fortifications gives credence to Hirsch's argument of a collision of military cultures that only fully became understood by Native Americans towards the end of the Pequot War.[80] The Narragansett engineer, Stonewall John, was called so because of his education in the colonists' masonry trade. It is also likely that the bastioned style in the forty years since the Pequot War was more customary practice for the colonists and a common sight for Native Americans to encounter as Native American fortifications across the eastern seaboard had a bastion style to their design.

Not only was Gardiner responsible for the introduction of modern fortifications to New England, but he also showed his knowledge of military tactics and automatic respect for his enemy, something lacking in the common militia soldier in both the Pequot War and King Philip's War. Gardiner shows competency in his *Relation*, which aids in viewing the veteran soldiers as quicker to adapt to their new surroundings. The use of proper equipment, tactics, and use of resources was part of the training Gardiner attempted to pass onto his fellow colonists through training and instruction. Gardiner's caution with the lives of his men, how each interaction outside of the fortification should be enacted, shows a level of discipline and foresight that is missing at the beginning of King Philip's War due to the lack of military experience in the colony.

> They should ride in ye middle of ye riuer & not goe ashore vntill they had done all thr trade and yt Mr Steuen winthrop should stand in ye hould of ye boate hauing thr guns by them & swords by thr sides, the othr 4 to be 2 in the fore Cuddie & 2 in aft being armed in like maner yt so they out of the loope holes might cleare the boat if they wear by the pequits asalted, and yt they should let but one canoe cum abord at once with no more but 4 Indeans in her.[81]

This is one example of many where Gardiner instructs men to behave and act in a manner which provides the most safety for the people involved. Gardiner's instruction on how English colonists should trade in the run up to the Pequot War is evidence of his military background. The advice was not followed and resulted in the traders being threatened and chased back to their boat. The lack of military experience of the traders lead to them ignoring Gardiner's instruction, this can be

[79] Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin.* p. 242.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Gardiner, *Relation of The Pequot Warres (1660)*, p. 8.

attributed to naivety. However, it does show Gardiner's respect for his new adversaries, most colonists underestimated Native Americans, whereas Gardiner instinctively saw their potential to inflict losses onto them.

The level of detail in the instructions may also point to how military life was experienced in the Low Countries; being instructed on what to do and when to do it, and those orders being followed. The lack of discipline and advice not followed indicates a gap in experience between civilians from England and veterans from the continent. Gardiner adapted quickly and used caution in most interactions he faced with Native Americans. He was also well aware of supplies as an issue of warfare. Although he was overall overlooked when warning superiors 'Captain hunger' was the biggest threat, Gardiner shows his grasp of warfare and the importance of the simple necessities of life were before engaging in war.[82] Gardiner's warning is an example of how few lessons were learnt by the leaders and organizers of conflicts in North America at the outbreak of King Philip's War. The hunger march which Church and the militia encountered after the Great Swamp battle show the New Englanders of 1675 lacked experience and foresight. New England leaders likely viewed Native American warfare as inferior, in a similar vein to the New England leaders did in the Pequot War. Being a bred soldier, living his entire life in military culture ensured that all aspects of war were ingrained into Gardiner's actions.

European armor in the early seventeenth century

The experience of the veterans from the Low Countries shows how even trivial details were thought through. The ineffectiveness of Native American arrows without European metal is noted by Lion Gardiner. Gardiner comments on the European buff coats and the effectiveness against Native American arrows: "I was Shott with many arrowes and So I was but my buff Coate prserued (preserved) mee."[83] The buff coat was a thick tanned leather armor, normally worn under a breastplate. In Europe, this was typically worn by cavalrymen or high-ranking infantry.[84] Underhill also makes mention of his buff coat in stopping an arrow piercing his hip.[85] What is evident through combining the writings of the three Low Countries veterans is that not all Europeans had such armor. Many made do with other clothing and items. Mason also notes of two men tying their handkerchiefs around their necks for protection, the knots of the handkerchief being enough protection to stop an arrow passing any further. Mason comments on a Lieutenant Bull being preserved from an arrow by a fortunately placed piece of hard cheese, in which he jests: "a little armor would serve if a man knew where to place it."[86] The lack of armor used by English militia that fought in the Pequot Wars highlights the importance of those that did. Those that did have appear to have been veterans from the Low Countries and the Dutch School of War, although Underhill notes how he and his twenty men were fully armed including

[82] Gardiner, *Relation of The Pequot Warres (1660)*, p. 7.
[83] Gardiner, *Relation of The Pequot Warres (1660)*, p. 15.
[84] Royal Armouries Collection. *Buff Coat (1630)*. Leeds War Gallery Object Number: III.1956 A. (n.d) https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-15988.html .
[85] Underhill, *Newes from America*, p. 34.
[86] Mason, *A Brief History of the Pequot War,* p. 46.

"corslets."[87] The corslet was a metal breastplate that covered the front and back of the torso and common in European armies of the early seventeenth century. That Underhill and his twenty men were fully equipped with corslets, plus bandoliers, a pre-loaded charge for a single shot, shows both their professionalism as soldiers and the best equipment that the colony had to offer for the vanguard of their military force. The noteworthy aspect of armor being such a frequently commented on aspect of the Pequot War and less so in King Philip's War, is the fact that Native Americans had by the 1670s adopted the European firearm.

The importance of Native Americans adopting the flintlock rifle and showing exceptional competence in its usage, is a key factor into why ranger units became so important by the end of the seventeenth century. The armor that the European colonists write about being successful against Native American weaponry in the 1630s, with exception to metal headed arrows, shows the advancement and, to use Parker's phrase, the 'revolution' had already occurred in North America before the time of King Philip's War. Thus, this gives credence to Starkey's argument that the military revolution for Native Americans occurred in the beginning of the seventeenth century.[88] John Smith writes in 1608, when captured by Powhatan warriors, that he was struck in the 'right thigh, but without harme,'[89] suggesting that the weaponry the Native Americans wielded were of less risk of mortally wounding the colonists without metal or firearms.

The lack of military experience in New England at the beginning of King Philip's War led to mistakes and setbacks until the methods of the European veterans of the early conflicts of North America were stumbled upon. The writings of the first soldiers highlights the warfare they wrought on the Native Americans, and the tactics used were remarkably similar to those of Benjamin Church and the rangers who followed. From Smith's writing in 1608, it is clear that his soldiers were deployed in ranging in the sense of the activity common with the English at the time "they had taken two of our men, ranging in the woods."[90]

Total War in North America in the seventeenth century

Smith's writing does not explicitly highlight "ranging" tactics, but it does show how the English colonists used the European total war, and Grenier's first pillar, 'extirpative war', to eventually deal with Powhatan incursions. By burning the Powhatan villages and crops, the colonists under Smith brought a new kind of warfare to the American continent.[91] The New England veterans write of similar tactics before the decisive battle with the Pequots. Lion Gardiner writes of John Underhill arriving at Saybrook Fort with twenty soldiers who were to confront a Pequot village in present day Rhode Island. Gardiner notes of the total war inflicted on the village "burnt Sum wigwams and Sum heapes of corne.[92] This tactic was employed throughout the seventeenth

[87] Underhill, *Newes from America*, p. 15.
[88] Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare*, p. 169.
[89] Smith, et al. *A True Relation (1608)*, p. 45.
[90] Smith, et al. *A True Relation (1608*), p. 89.
[91] Smith, et al. *A True Relation (1608)*, p. 189.
[92] Gardiner, *Relation of The Pequot Warres, (1660)*, p.10.

century by all English colonies in wars against the Native Americans, however in King Philip's War the Wampanoags used it against the English. [93]

The use of total war against the English highlights the way military culture flowed from colonists to Native Americans, how the Wampanoags adopted the tactic into their warfare. This tactic was then later used by Church and his men against the Wampanoags and Metacom once Native Americans were used in a collaborative manner as allies. This again highlights why the original veterans were the first in North America using the tactics of rangers, the tactic of total war was first used by them, then adopted by the Wampanoag and Narragansetts in 1675, to then again being used by the colonists at the Great Swamp massacre.[94] The use of extirpative warfare by the veterans underlines their application of not only the second but also the first pillar of Grenier's way of war. Moreover, it shows why the narrative of who is the father of the American rangers needs to be brought back earlier in the century away from Church.

There are both similarities and differences in how Native Americans and colonists used fire in total warfare. There are examples of both peoples using it in two ways. The first was first exhibited by the Toudamans against the Iroquois in the sixteenth century when they surprised the latter whilst they were sleeping and burned their palisade, later followed by the English in the Pequot War and in Kieft's War. Underhill's description of the burning of the fort and peoples at Mistick during the Pequot War highlights his brutality:

> We set on our march to surround the Fort, […] placing the Indians, for wee had about three hundred of them without, side of our souldiers in a ring battalia, giving a volley of shotte upon the Fort […] My selfe set fire on the South end with a traine of Powder, the fires of both meeting in the center of the Fort blazed most terribly, and burnt all in the space of halfe an houre; many couragious fellowes were unwilling to come out, and fought most desperately through the Palisadoes, so as they were scorched and burnt with the very flame, and were deprived of their armes, in regard the fire burnt their very bowstrings, and so perished valiantly […] many were burnt in the Fort, both men, women, and children, others forced out, and came in troopes to the Indians, twentie, and thirtie at a time, which our souldiers received and entertained with the point of the sword; downe fell men, women, and children, those that scaped us, fell into the hands of the Indians, that were in the reere of us; it is reported by themselves, that there were about foure hundred soules in this Fort, and not above five of them escaped out of our hands.[95]

Although John Underhill's *Newes from America* is a clearly biased source and must be viewed from that perspective, it does highlight the ferocity in which he conducted warfare in North America. The tactics and methodology in which Underhill inflicted total war upon the Native Americans in two conflicts gives evidence to his military experience in Europe.

The second occurred at times when a large party of the enemy was abroad in search of conflict. Using the opportunity to destroy their unprotected crops and shelter, as the Virginia colonists did

[93] Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin.* p. 155, 240.
[94] Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin.* p. 243.
[95] Underhill, *Newes from America*, p. 32-35.

with Smith in 1608, continued by Native Americans through until 1675. Underhill writes of encounters before the Mistick massacre, in which the colonists enacted similar tactics to that of John Smith in Virginia.

> But wee seeing their drift was to get our Armes, we rather chose to beat up the Drum and bid them battell, […] but none would come neere us, but standing remotely off did laugh at us for our patience, wee suddenly set upon our march, and gave fire to as many as we could come neere, firing their Wigwams, spoyling their corne.'[96]

The text underlines the similarity and ruthlessness shown by Underhill and Smith in engaging in total war. Burning corn and shelter in place of combat highlights why the Native Americans of King Philip's War had adapted to a similar style of tactics. The power dynamic may well explain the use of fire and total war in North America. In the Pequot War the colonists were outnumbered, although arguably more powerful when in conflict. So, the use of fire to undermine their enemies makes sense. The Narragansetts and Wampanoags were, by King Philip's War in a similar position. The colonists in King Philip's War were likely not as quick to jump to such drastic, yet effective measures.

Underhill also notes to adapting to Native tactics before the Mistick massacre and gives reason for it.

> I would not have the world wonder at the great number of Commanders to so few men, but know that the Indians fight farre differs from the Christian practise, for they most commonly divide themselves into small bodies, so that we are forced to neglect our usuall way and to subdivide our divisions to answer theirs, and not thinking it any disparagement, to any Captaine to go forth against an Enemy with a squaldron of men taking the ground from the old & ancient practise when they chose Captaines of hundreds and Captaine of thousands, Captaines of fifties and Captaines of tens.[97]

The versatility shown by Underhill, in adapting to the new terrain and matching his new enemy's tactics highlight the importance the veterans had for the colonies whilst they were in their infancy. Underhill writes of an event after the massacre of Mistick Fort, when the English colonists were retreating to safety. A Sergeant Davis breaking ranks to suppress native attacks "stepped forth from the body with a Carbine of three foot long, and at a venture gave fire, supposing it to bee an Indians head, turning him over with his heeles upward." Regarding the accuracy from Sergeant Davis, Underhill says: "the Indians observed this, and greatly admired that a man should shoot so directly. The Pequeats were much daunted at the shot and forbore approching so neere upon us."[98] Davis, as far as any records show, had no previous military experience. It is only known he was in the Connecticut colony early on.[99] Davis likely received his training under Captain Mason, who oversaw the New England colony forces that embarked

[96] Underhill, *Newes from America*, p. 14.
[97] Underhill, *Newes from America*, p. 3.
[98] Underhill, *Newes from America*, p. 39.
[99] James Shepard, *Connecticut Soldiers in the Pequot War of 1637* (Meriden, Connecticut: The Journal Publishing Co. 1913), p. 15.

for the Pequot wars. Captain Mason's training of the inexperienced soldiers was vital. It was undoubtedly beneficial to receive the instruction from a battle-hardened veteran rather than a novice and shows the reforms that occurred in the Low Countries and the training that was demanded of soldiers was a standard which Mason enforced in New England. It can be assumed that the veteran's quick adaptation to multiple captains who commanded smaller numbers of men, combined with the tactics and military drills and training, was essential in the New England colonies in defeating the Pequot nations.

Summary

Comparing the tactics of these four veterans it is possible to see similarities to ranging at the end of the seventeenth century. The quick adaptation of the veterans, especially the likes of Underhill, shows they were rangers in all but name. By leading a force in a successful encounter to Mistick Fort, Underhill and Mason set a template for colonists; by employing large numbers of Native American allies into their force to act as guides, providing bulk in numbers, and using them to their strengths. The veterans having a knowledge of the European hierarchy of military systems and how ranging developed in isolation from the European continent, are not a coincidence. It could also be down to the terminology of ranging as understood at the time; the veterans were soldiers first and foremost, ranging was an activity anyone, soldier or otherwise could take part in. The development in North America of ranging into a type of warfare can then be seen as early as the Pequot War in 1637 with Underhill and Mason using the Narragansett and Mohegan allies to find the Pequot fort at Mistick. The military exchange that was occurring was well underway during the Pequot War, and that Native Americans and Europeans worked together on different scales; from the occasional individual to entire nations aiding in a conflict. Technology and tactics, it is fair to assume did flow both ways in the 1630s. It also highlights the Native American adoption of European firearms and adapting their warfare to suit them.

Chapter Four - Trophy hunting and the connections to ranging

John Grenier likens New England's use of trophy hunting to "state-sponsored scalp hunting".[100] The argument Grenier puts forward is that in the attempt to bolster the number of colonists ranging the wilderness, acting as a defensive wall for the English colonies, New England increased the price per trophy by the end of the seventeenth century. By increasing the value of the reward for the trophies produced to the New England governments, the numbers and practice of rangers increased, further cementing ranging as a style of warfare that was unique to North America. Seeing trophy hunting as a part of the ranger style of warfare makes sense in colonial North America in the seventeenth century. Old English *rengen* and what ranging evolved into can be linked through trophy hunting. The natural landscape which the Native Americans cultivated and used to traverse from point to point was different from that of European colonists. The colonists Europeanized the landscape, built roads for carts, and had a different idea on how warfare was to be conducted. Having to engage Native Americans in the wilderness meant ranging the land, taking different routes, and tracking through difficult terrain. The bounty hunting that developed at the end of the seventeenth century was heavily linked to ranging through the sheer need for ranging to achieve the bounty.

Interpreting and meaning of trophy hunting

The beginning of trophy hunting can be seen from the earliest point of colonization of North America. The practice of trophy hunting, however, was a point of cross-cultural understanding between the Europeans and the Native Americans. Although the Europeans and the Native Americans took different meanings from the act of trophy hunting/trophy giving, it was an action in which both recognized the symbolism of their vanquished foes' body parts as a symbol of victory. Andrew Lipman describes the exchange of body parts between Europeans and Native Americans as bringing 'the differences between English dismemberment and Indian trophy taking into sharp relief.'[101] The English used the dismemberment as a means of imposing authority and as a warning to dissenting subjects, whereas the Native Americans used trophies, normally scalps, fingers, hands, or feet, as signs of a warrior's success. In Native American culture, these trophies were passed to their sachem, and often on to allied sachems as a token of allegiance. Lipman explains that passing of trophies from one sachem to another could act as a token to resolve grievances, using the "head and hands as connective, less like periods and more like semicolons in the middle of complex sentences linking past violent actions to conditional future actions."[102] In understanding what the symbolism was for both peoples and how both peoples could extrapolate the meaningfulness which they desired, it is easy to see how trophy hunting became an important part of North American warfare. The English used the symbolism to dominate the region around them, the Native Americans at first saw the exchange of trophies as a symbol much like in their system of giving a trophy to a leading sachem. By gifting the colonizers the human body parts as trophies, it is likely they saw the exchange in the same

[100] Grenier, *The First Way of War,* p. 39.
[101] Lipman, *The Saltwater Frontier,* p. 138.
[102] Lipman, *The Saltwater Frontier,* p. 138.

system to that they were used to within their Native American tributary systems of Sachems, kinship, and alliances.

By examining trophy hunting through the eyes of the veterans, it is possible to see how the cross-cultural symbolism became a key factor in ranging in North America. In the not too recent past of English imperialism, Sir Humphrey Gilbert used beheading on the people of Munster in Ireland; a practice normally reserved for nobles and kings. In using beheadings as a warning Gilbert thrusted his authority onto the Irish peoples of Munster. Lining the path to Gilbert's tent in which he dubbed a "lane of heddes […] the heddes of their dedde fathers, brothers, children, kinsfolke, and freendes."[103] As well as legal authority and domination, this was to impose religious authority onto the Irish. In the Virginia colony, John Smith writes of witnessing what John Barbour calls the first scalping recorded in the English colonies of Virginia. Smith writes the scalps were displayed in a manner similar to how the English displayed heads in Ireland, as a symbol of domination and victory.

> The Lockes of haire with their skinnes he hanged on a line unto two trees. And thus he made ostentation of as a great triumph at Werowocomoco, shewing them to English men that then came unto him at his appointment, they expecting provision, he to betray them, supposed to halfe conquer them by this spectacle of his terrible crueltie.[104]

It is likely that Smith misinterpreted the "spectacle of terrible crueltie" as more than what it was. The display to the English was not meant as a warning, but more a display of his superiority in the region. One could perhaps liken the scalps and other bodily trophies in this Native American system to that of medals of today. The misinterpretation by the early English colonists indicates why it became an important part of North American colonial warfare. The English saw it as pure domination, the Native Americans as a form of hierarchy within a system of mutual contribution.

The use of trophy hunting by both parties prior to contact, then, helps explain the interactions at the outset of the Pequot War. When Lion Gardiner asked Uncas to present the Pequot Native Americans who had been seen close to Saybrook Fort the night prior to Uncas' arrival, it was presented as a test of loyalty.

> I cald for Uncas & hid unto him you say you will help Major Mason but I will first see it, therfore send you now 20 men to ye bass river, for there went yestr 'night 6 Indeans in a Canoe hithr, fetch them now dead or alive and then you shall goe with Major Mason els not, So he sent his men who kild 4 brought one a traytor to us alive whos name was kiiivas and one ran away and I gave him 15 yards of trading Cloath on my own charge to give unto his men acording to thr desert.[105]

This transaction that occurred between Gardiner and Uncas was likely seen as a gift or an acknowledgement of the new alliance formed to the Mohegan Sachem. Heads of their enemies would to the English have had important meaning. The New England colonizers would have used the heads in the same manner; using fear to impose the authority of the lands and the

[103] Gilbert quoted in Lipman, *The Saltwater Frontier,* p. 138.
[104] John Smith, et al. *A Map of Virginia (1612),* p. 175.
[105] Gardiner, *Relation of The Pequot Warres, (1660),* p. 19-20.

European God over that of the Native populous. Gardiner went on to make the same demand of heads of Pequots to other Native Americans who wished to become a tributary to the English colonists.

> Then 3 dayes after the fight came Waiandance […] he came to know if we were angrie with all Indeans, I answered No, but only with such as has kild Englishmen, […] if you will kill all the pequits yt come to you and send me thr heads yn I will give to you as to weakwah and you shall have trade with us, then, […] So he went away and did as I had bid and fent me 5 heads, 3. & 4. heads for wch I paid them yt brought them as I had promised.[106]

Thus began the practice of monetary rewards for human trophies in New England. After the massacre on Mistick Fort, Native Americans proved their loyalty by providing body parts in return for payment and future trading rights. The trophies were adopted by European colonists as proof of a bounty being enacted and used as a form of cross cultural understanding. The symbolism for both parties at this moment in history (1637) is important. Although the English were using local Native Americans as bounty hunters in effect, that was not necessarily needed as the Pequot War was all but over. John Mason rejoiced that "the Pequots now became a Prey to all Indians. Happy were they that could bring in their Heads to the English: Of which there came almost daily to Winsor, or Hartford."[107] The colonizers' dominance over the Pequots and becoming the main power in New England shows the use of trophy hunting to patrol the wilderness was effective, and how by the end of the seventeenth century it became an integral part of ranging.

Monetization of trophy hunting

In King Philip's War and King William's War towards the end of the seventeenth century the increasing need for trophy hunting to defend the colonies saw colonists as well as Native Americans take part in the practice. Heads, hands, and scalps were used to receive payment. Grenier states that scalping "became the third pillar of the first way of war."[108] Grenier's inclusion of scalp hunting into the American method of warfare highlights the link to ranging as vital for wilderness warfare of North America. King Philip's War saw the use of bounties in payment for scalps become an active measure employed by the governments of New England. "In King Philip's War, Plymouth placed a bounty of trucking cloth worth five shillings on each Wampanoag "head skin." For King Philip's scalp, the reward was 100 shillings, although Church and his company received only 30 shillings."[109] Benjamin Church was sent on multiple expeditions in King William's War, with his forces consisting of colonists and Native American allies. On his expeditions scalpings are also mentioned. The perpetrators are not named and often alluding to them being undertaken by the English colonists' Native allies.[110] However, the use of

[106] Gardiner, *Relation of The Pequot Warres, (1660),* p. 21.
[107] Mason, *A Brief History of the Pequot War (1736),* p. 17.
[108] Grenier, *The First Way of War,* p. 39.
[109] Grenier, *The First Way of War,* p. 39.
[110] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War,* p. 94, 115, 117.

scalps in return for payment was also used against the colonists of New England. In King William's War the French officials used the same tactic of setting their Native American Abenaki allies to scalp English colonists and Native Americans allied to the English. In Church's diary he laments "That their Fathers the Fryers and Governors encouraged their Salvages, and gave them Money to Scalp our *English".*[111] The use of scalp hunting as a defensive measure to encourage the borders to be patrolled against invading forces by parties of rangers by both European colonizers of North America adds to the evidence of the importance of ranging and how it had developed into a fundamental skill that European warfare could not match.

Grenier writes of Hannah Dustan, a colonist of Haverhill, Massachusetts, whom he names "the mother of the American tradition of scalp hunting".[112] Although Hannah Dustan was not actively patrolling the wildness as her compatriots and Native American allies were, Dustan is arguably the most famous of civilians to scalp in the seventeenth century. The story is a harrowing tale of a mother enacting revenge on her captors, and perhaps should not fit into the scalp hunting tradition. Hannah Dustan, her nurse maid, Mary Neff, and Dustan's newborn child were taken by a party of raiding French allied Abenaki Native Americans in 1697. The three were being transported to Canada to likely be adopted into a Native American family, as stated previously, dwindling populations saw women and children as welcome additions into the populations, or to be sold to French authorities. On the journey Dustan's child was killed as she was slowing down the travelling party. Neither the sale or adoption occurred as Dustan slipped her bonds, stole a hatchet from her captor one night and murdered all but one, scalping her captors before returning to Massachusetts.[113] The bereaved mother was rewarded £50.80 for the ten scalps of her captors and murderer of her child. The act Dustan performed is likely one of revenge for her daughter, it could possibly also be seen as a necessary action to be believed and accepted back into the New England community. As in King Philip's War, female captives who were returning to New England puritanical society had to justify themselves as resisting their captors. Jill Lepore writes how Mary Rowlandson, who was kidnapped and released during King Philip's War, wrote of her experience as a captive, which Lepore notes as being justification of her reintegration into Puritan society.[114] Had Dustan not returned with the scalps she may have faced an enquiry as to how she escaped or why she no longer has her child. This therefore bears into question the manner of which scalp hunting was used in colonial North America. Dustan's tale is useful with regard to ranging. Her tale indicates that the tradition was a widely adopted ritual in North American warfare. Grenier argues the reward Dustan received, coupled with her being a woman, likely encouraged the colonists to engage in the first way of war. The colonial governments, Grenier writes, "established a large-scale privatization of war within American frontier communities."[115] Armstrong Starkey adds to the debate by accusing the Europeans of taking scalping "to another level of terrorist practice."[116] By offering a reward for the scalps, the

[111] Church, *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War*, p. 94.
[112] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, p. 40.
[113] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, p. 41.
[114] Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), p. 148.
[115] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, p. 41.
[116] Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare*, p. 31.

colonial authorities had transformed the symbolism behind scalping and created a bounty system that encouraged the wholescale hunting of Native Americans in the wilderness. This system of bounties in place of structured wages to defend the colonies is what Chet argues helped in developing the rangers and the style of warfare that was unique to North America.

> Massachusetts and New Hampshire […] now offered larger rewards to irregulars-men who were not on the colony's payroll. […] By attracting civilians to military activity with scalp bounties, the colonial governments could put armed ranger units on the frontier and avoid the financial and political costs of drafting and financing large numbers of enlisted men.[117]

Summary

Viewing the decision as political and financial also helps understand why ranging became the main force of military expeditions of the seventeenth century. It also helps in understanding why by the end of the century it became a type of warfare onto its own. The financial cost that the colonies had to pay to endure any type of military conflict was negated by ensuring civilians effectively policed their borders by ranging the wilderness. Official ranger units such as Church gained military experience by learning from their Native American allies, much as Underhill and Mason had learned from Uncas in the 1630s. In King William's War for both the French colonists and their Abenaki allies, and the New England colonists and their allies, ranging was an effective way to protect the colonies whilst the main forces were out conducting the war.

[117] Chet, *Conquering the American Wilderness,* p. 90-91.

Conclusion

This thesis has provided evidence from all three pillars of Grenier's 'first way of war,' highlighting the similarities in tactics between Church and veterans. The first pillar, 'extirpative war,' one can observe via Smith, Mason, and Underhill conducting total war on their Native American enemies. The same can be said of the second pillar, 'ranging', Mason and Underhill used Uncas to guide them to the Mistick Fort. 'Scalp hunting,' the third pillar, has been proven to be equitable to the trophy hunting that was prevalent during and after the Pequot war. The veterans of the religious wars of Europe who were so important for the survival of the fledgling colonies in the beginning of the seventeenth century participated in the same tactics as Church forty years later. The key to both the veterans and Church in the American ranging tradition, is Native Americans.

John Underhill, who was instrumental in both the English colonists' Pequot War and the Dutch New Netherland Kieft's War, used ruthless tactics in surprising and scorching the Native Americans' villages and palisades he came across. Underhill observed his Native American allies, the Narragansetts and the Mohegans on their expedition to the Pequot fort at Mistick, moving at night, undetected. This was, as is shown in this thesis, a main aspect of Native American tactics. The aspect of total war and massacre on an industrial scale has often been likened with European tactics on account of the Native American allies asking for prisoners to be absorbed into their communities. What is proven, however, is that Native Americans used this tactic themselves. The Toudaman massacre a century before may well feel out of the time scope of this thesis, it does however prove that the Europeans used the Native American tactics of total war. Whether the Mohegan or Narragansett allies proposed the idea of torching the Mistick Fort to Underhill or Mason is not documented. One must also be aware that the accounts written by Mason and Underhill were self-serving. The massacre at the time was seen as a success, taking credit would not be beyond the realms of possibility. Equally the idea of torching the palisade and its inhabitants would not have been a foreign concept to the battle-hardened English veterans who would have likely seen civilians killed in wars in their time in Europe. Either way the tactic transpired, it was achieved thanks to their Native American allies who scouted ahead and provided a route through unknown terrain for the colonists; much as Benjamin Church discovered when he first employed Alderman to guide his troops to Weetamoo's encampment in the swamp nearly forty years later during King Philip's War.

When Church began employing Native American allies and persuading captives to switch sides, he did have the respect of asking his new colleagues why they were so evasive and harder to engage in combat. The lesson learned by Church, and his almost immediate adoption of Native American tactics should well be acknowledged, perhaps more so than being the father of the ranger unit.

The lack of military experience in the English colonies at the outbreak of King Philip's War, saw much of the knowledge that was gained from the veterans lost in the forty years between the major conflicts. The knowledge that remained was likely from standard drills used to train town militia, using inept commanders and European tactics in an environment that was wholeheartedly not suited to that of North America. This aspect the veterans were quickly aware of, their training

led them to adapt to the colonies soon after their arrival. Benjamin Church, however, had to learn through trial and error. Church's motives for success in the conflict are likely dubious and involve a land grab from their Native American neighbors, however, in the conflict Church did develop a knack for fighting to the tune of Native American tactics. The adoption of these tactics by Church in King Philip's War saw him deployed through the next two major conflicts for the English colonies of the northeast North America. Men who fought with Church in King Philip's War were given their own regiment of men, further increasing the style of irregular warfare that continued to be developed into the eighteenth century.

The use of introducing bounties for trophies by the local governments of New England encouraged the general populous to patrol and guard the boundaries of the colonies. The ranging of the wilderness and scouting the countryside, to the military style it became, allowed the general population to engage in what was essentially Native American military tactics. By matching the Native Americans' use of the landscape, ranging became a type of irregular warfare.

Native Americans from as far south as the Powhatans in Virginia and as far north as the Narragansetts in New England, engaged in the same style of warfare. What John Smith witnessed and what Roger Williams saw over the length of the east coast of North America have near identical patterns. Lee's cutting off way of war discussed in Chapter Two, matches the writings of the early colonists very well. Ambush and surprise were the main goal, building the perfect ambush; and when this was not a viable option due to being found out, the saving-face display of minimal combat ensued.

The dwindling population explains the saving face aspect as manpower was a valuable commodity for the Native Americans across the eastern seaboard. The cutting off way of war is what Mason and Underhill used in the Pequot War; after their burning of the palisade, they retreated before Pequot reinforcements arrived. New England used the cutting off way of war in King William's War to the same design. By using ranging to cut off their enemies in the wilderness, preventing possible attacks, this strategy could be paralleled with Lion Gardiner requesting heads to prove loyalty to Uncas at Saybrook Fort; or to the New England governments putting a bounty on Pequots at the end of the conflict.

The difference between the 1630s and the end of the century was that in the 1630s the tactic of trophy hunting was used to pull other Native American peoples to the English colonists' side. In the 1670s and later, trophy hunting became an activity that all allied with the perspective side of the conflict engaged in. The Europeans and Anglo-Americans and their Native American allies on behalf of the English colonies, and the French Canadians and their Abenaki Native American allies did the same to protect themselves.

Perhaps the widescale use of trophy hunting in North America, coupled with the need for military forces being deployed in the wilderness is why ranging became synonymous with trophy hunting? The two tactics of ranging in the sense of old English *rengen* and trophy hunting in the form of bounties became intertwined to constitute what was known as ranging, and was near identical to that of Native American warfare. The difference between Gallay's description of

ranging and what developed into the Church meaning of ranging can best be seen through the adoption of Native American tactics and the adaptation to the North American terrain. The adoption of Native American tactics by Underhill, Church, and the ranger units that followed in the eighteenth century transformed the terminology of ranging in regard to how it was thought of in military tactics. The "first way of war" which combines the English ranging, trophy hunting, and Native American tactics then should not be confined to Church. John Underhill, as shown, part-took in all aspects of Native American warfare and ranging that Church did, Underhill just had the European military experience ingrained into his soldierly mannerisms which quickly adopted the Native tactics which Church had to re-learn from his Native American allies. John Mason also was quick to befriend Uncas, the Mohegan sachem, who highly likely educated Mason in the North American landscape. Mason, like Underhill was involved in the campaigns in Brabant in the late 1620s under Sir Horace Vere and would have gained invaluable training and experience there. The experience of the veterans is important, as they were quicker to adapt, and adopt Native American techniques and tactics, quicker to use those familiar with the terrain, and quicker to act. The emergence of ranging in an early American context, then, should be traced back earlier in the timeline to those early conflicts of the seventeenth century where the veteran soldiers paved the way for Native American tactics to be included into the English terminology of ranging. The veterans likely saw ranging as a part of the soldierly experience in North America, as shown Smith had soldiers ranging the wilderness. The transformation by Church of ranging as a type of irregular warfare, away from a regular soldier's duties is then something that should be further explored. I also believe that this thesis has paved the way for further investigation into Uncas and his involvement in the tradition, although through my own research I have not found any evidence apart from connecting the dots.

Benjamin Church is recognized as the father of the ranger unit, but I believe there is enough evidence to include the veterans of the European religious wars of the early seventeenth century to that list. They may not have collectively called themselves rangers, but the actions they took, and means in which they took them were the same if not more streamline than Church. Geoffrey Parker writes how at the beginning of King Philip's War, the tactics used by Underhill, Mason and Gardiner were forgotten.[118] The forgotten tactics may well explain why Church is crowned the father of the ranger unit, but I believe historians should look back to John Mason and John Underhill to find the true fathers of the re-aligned rangers, they just were not aware of what they had created.

[118] Parker, *Military Revolution*, p. 119.

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