

Maud and Ida: The Meaning of War

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The selling of King Philip's War to the people of S.E. New England in the mid seventeenth century set a standard for selling war to Americans which is followed to this day.

Disclaimer: While events and people may resemble those of the times, literary licence has been exercised to present this picture of King Philips War and its role in setting a precedent for how Americans look at war centuries later.

HISTORY:

When the English who settled at Plymouth Colony in 1620 ("Pilgrims" of Thanksgiving fame) landed in the winter, they were helped by the local Wampanoag Natives under the leadership of their chief, Massasoit. The Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony were led by governor Bradford.

Bradford and Massasoit worked together for nearly forty years to keep the peace, and sometimes it was an uneasy endeavor. Bradford died in 1657 and Massasoit in 1660.

There were also social changes overtaking old ways of life through this period. The fur trade was dying out and more natives were selling their land or growing more of their own food, all of which brought issues of ownership to the fore. Plymouth began competing with Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay Colony for control.

In 1662, Wamsutta, the son of Massasoit, was summoned to Plymouth Colony and taken into custody for questioning. Soon thereafter he died and the Wampanoag were highly upset!

Massasoit's younger son, Metacom, also called Philip, became the new chief. Plymouth's continued hard nosed policy and the death of Sassamon, the native ambassador to Plymouth Colony, led to war in 1675.

It was the bloodiest war in American history with one in ten of all combatants killed, along with women and children on both sides. White communities took decades to recover from the wholesale destruction of towns. The Native population was dispersed and often sold into slavery. The native community has never fully recovered.

Characters:

- *Soldier 1, Soldier 2 and Soldier 3.*
- *Maud and Ida*
- *Bush, Cheney, and Frumm*
- *Saltonstal, Ingersol, Pynchon, and Foster*
- *Narrator*
- *Hubbard, Mather and Williams*

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Rev. Brian Kopke

SCENE I

All is nearly dark. . . .

Soldier 1: Oh, God, did you see that . . .

Soldier 2: They cut off his finger . . .

Soldier 3: Be quiet you two. Being able to watch this with no reaction means we are not weak. And watch your language. The Lord would like your language no less than what is happening here.

Soldier 1: But the finger . . . another one . . .

Soldier 2: . . . and the savage just sits there making no noise

Soldier 3: as we should be quiet before the others get the idea that it would be fun to cut off our fingers.

Narrator: Making a great circle, they placed him in the Middle, that all their eyes might at the same time, be pleased with the utmost Revenge upon him. . . . They first cut one of his Fingers round in the Joynt, at the Trunck of his Hand, with a sharp Knife, and then brake it off, as Men used to do with a slaughtered Beast, before they uncase him; (3)

Meditation room: bang two boards together, rustle two chairs around

Narrator: then they sut off another and another, till they has dismembered one Hand of all its Digits, the Blood sometimes spiriting out in streams a Yard from His Hand . . . (3)

Meditation room: bang two boards together, rustle two chairs around

Narrator: yet did not the Sufferer ever relent, or shew any Signs of Anguish . . . In this Frame he continued, till his Excutioners had dealt with the Toes of his Feet, as they had done with with the Fingers of his Hands; all the while making him Dance round the Circle, and Sing, till he had wearied both himslef and them. At last they brake the Bones of his legs, (3)

Meditation room: bang two boards together

Narrator: after which he was forced to sit down, which 'tis said he silently did, till they had knocked his brains out.”(3)

Meditation room: bang two boards together, rustle two chairs around

All in Meditation Room chant: Hey, Hey, Hey, Hoo, Ho, Ho, Hey (4X)

QUIET - lights out: Lights on three soldiers at left side of Chancel by Meditation Room

Soldier 1: Damn Savages. . . they didn't care at all what they did to him.

Soldier 2: Yeah . . . Well, that savage was a traitor and deserved what he got. I think they should have done it more slowly.

Soldier 1: Maybe so but could you imagine going through with nary a whimper . . . I'd be swearing at the blasted savages . . . and yelling to dull the pain . . .

Soldier 3: And they would have done it tenfold, enjoying your suffering. Why do you think they did him in so fast in the end . . . 'twas the courage of the bastard I tell youThe savages couldn't face the courage . . .

Soldier1: Why did we give one of those bastard Narragansetts to them anyway? We knew fair well what was going to happen . . .

Soldier 3: Look . . . The Mohegans have fought by our side from the start. And you know well the atrocities piled upon their dead by the Narragansetts, the cutting, the feeding to the dogs . . . un-nameable things they have done. The bastards had to take revenge . . .

Soldier 2: Sure . . . or they would have had us for dinner

Soldier 3: Doubt that . . . but I do not want to cross them who knows what they are capable of.

Soldier 2: Hrumph . . . yeah, but we stood by watching it all didn't we . . . hating it and loving it all the while . . .

Soldier 1: Yeah, got to admit that I was curious about what they were going to do. Never dreamed it would be something like that . . . and then the bastard in the centre - just talking it all without a sound, not a whimper, not a skipped breath.

Soldier 3: I've got no stomach for any of it . . . We give the savage to those bastards and then watch them! I do not think that there is any God anywhere who has stomach for such stuff.

Soldier 2: What are you. . . some blaspheming Universalist? That bastard got just what the Lord wanted him to get and you know damn well it is so . . .

Soldier 1: Yeah . . . wellI am glad we did not have to go out and shoot the traitorous bastard . . . I never liked doing that. Let the savages have him.

Soldier 3: We would never do anything like the savages did it was inhuman . . .

Soldier 2: I don't care if it is blasphemy - - - damn that bastard King Philip. He is the one responsible for all this and I hope we get him and treat him the same . . .

Soldier 3: Watch your mouth . . . they are the savages . . . don't turn us into the same thing . . .

Soldier 2: Where do you get off being such a righteous bastard . . . you watched it all just the same as we did and said nothing!

Soldier 3: I didn't enjoy it.

Lights out on soldiers.

SCENE II

Lights on women.

Soldier 3 join women on cue

Ida 1: Maud, did you hear about the attacks on the villages in the west. Mary told me about them. Something about King Philip having killed everyone in the village.

Maud: No, Ida, but this war frightens me so. I am even afraid to walk through the woods between our houses what with the Savages all around us. I don't know who is good and who is bad. You remember the Thayers and the Flanagans, they thought they were talking to a friendly Indian until he called the rest of them out of the woods. Killed all but little Jenny and she saw it all. Hasn't been right since.

Ida: Yes, what a shame. What do you tell little John about the war?

Maud: Not a lot. Jonathan listens to William talking about it when he gets home from patrol. I try to move the stories into another room - but the house is so small that we can not keep it all from William. The other day he asked me "Why are the savages hurting people?"

Ida: What did you tell him?

Maud: What could I say? They are no better than animals? They hate us? They are not even people? The savages are so brutal. We would never do what they do. I said, I do not know. I told Johnny to run if he ever saw a savage . . . run home and hide under his bed and be as quiet as the fog.

Ida: Oh . . . Here comes William now.

Maud: William - am I glad to see you. I was worried sick all week not knowing if you would return or not. Is everyone in your company alright?

Soldier 3 enters.

Soldier 3: Well, hello Ida. Maud, where is Jonathan?

Maud: He's in the barn feeding the goats.

Soldier 3: Alone?

Maud: I think so.

Soldier 3: I will surprise him.

*Soldier 3 goes to the Barn . . . There is a scream (of surprise - not horror) by John.
(Actual scream by Soldier 3)*

Maud: *(Surprised and Worried)* Oh, . . . what has happened . . .

Soldier 3: *(Laughing as he joins the women)* I really got him . . . snuck up behind him and grabbed his hair and said . . . Another Scalp for my belt!

Maud: Oh, William, I wish you wouldn't do that. Jonathan and I live with enough fear without thinking of being mutilated by the savages.

Soldier 3: You should have seen what I saw today. Three Mohegans killed a Narragansett, but only after cutting off his fingers and toes one by one. And the Savage didn't even make a sound the whole time. They finally beat his head in.

Maud: So . . . did I really need to know that? I wish you wouldn't talk about those things. Jonathan might hear you.

Ida: Well, Maud, it was good to see you. I have to get home as Roger will be returning soon too.

[Ida leaves and moves to Meditation Room side of the Chancel and stands beside Soldier 2 and Soldier 1.]

Maud: See what you did . . . Oh, William, I wish you did not have to go out on patrol.

Soldier 3: I have to take my turn, Maud. Every man has to take his turn. How would

you like to have said about me what everyone says about Jenkins since he dropped out of the patrol. They are calling him a coward and poor Chris came home from school last week. The bigger kids beat up on him because his father dropped out.

Maud: None of this is good. What do those savages want? Why must they hate us so?

Soldier 3: I don't know Maud. I just know that they are as ungodly and heathen as anyone can be. The Mohegans may help us win the war, but I don't know what to do with them after the war is over. I don't think I trust any of them, friend or foe

Lights off.

SCENE III

[Lights on Ida and two Soldiers.]

Ida: Roger, was it as bad as William said?

Soldier 2: Likely worse. William does not like to talk much about what goes on. It was bad. I don't like any of the savages. If the Mohegans didn't have the Narragansetts to kill, I think they might be coming after us?

Soldier 1: They are all savages . . . heathens . . . and they don't belong on God's land . . .

Ida: What do you tell your two children Asa? What do you tell them about the savages and this land?

Soldier 1: They get told the truth, right from the Bible . . . this is the promised land and we are the people chosen to live here. Just like the Israelites, we have to clear the land and that means not just of trees and rocks, but of heathens who do not accept our ways.

Ida: Yes . . . I have heard that said, but certainly you don't think that they are serving Satan?

Soldier 1: And who else might they be serving . . . Satan himself, aye . . . and to exterminate us because Satan wants this land . . .

Soldier 2: I don't know, Asa, the idea that the Prince of Darkness is behind all this is a bit more dramatic than I want to make it . . .

It could just be that God is unhappy with us and just as he was with the Israelites, he is punishing us through the hands of the savages. I have even heard the Savages talk to us in those words.

We have to change our ways and walk more closely with the Lord. I see no other way. I have no stomach for telling my kids that there are both Savages and Satan walking the woods at night. They have a hard enough time getting to sleep anyway . . . wide awake at the slightest noise.

Soldier 1: What you say is true, Roger, remember what happened down in Rhode Island. The English soldiers were on the march and they came across an entire village burned to the ground. Further on there were Bible pages all in tatters and torn up and the pages scattered all around. Then, even further on, there were all those things up on poles, hands, legs, heads, scalps, who knows what. (105) I talked with one of them English bastards. He was scared through. He said it was a sign that our homes would be taken from us, then our faith, and then our bodies. I tell you, this is not just Savages and us. It is worse. This is a battlefield of god and the Devil.

Ida: I do not understand all this. I just want an end to the killings and being afraid. I do not want my kids afraid to go into the woods, day or night.

It is just not right that the Savages won't share their land with us. There is enough to go around.

And as for whose land it all is, well it seems true that God gave us this land and helped us settle here and clear the land and work it and prosper as we have.

We all know that it is hard enough to raise a decent crop without worrying over a war. . . I just hate the war.

Soldier 2: Hmmmmm . . . Ida, no one likes the war. Only fools like war, even Hubbard himself said that we should not be pulling dogs by the ears.(106) But what has happened has happened.

Asa, last week I heard Wumpatug asking the Captain where our God was,

asking why wasn't he telling us more? Where was our God's strength to protect us? All these questions are not good at all.

(Silence for five seconds)

Well look . . . We aren't going to solve anything here tonight. Best we get home Ida. The kids will be worried already. Asa, you'd be better to cross over at Scott's field tonight and stay clear of the woods road. There's been trouble the past few weeks.

Lights out.

SCENE IV

[Spot on Narrator.]

Narrator: The war was on everyone's minds, especially the leaders of the colony who had to justify the war, its expense, the loss of property and life, and the brutality of it all.

In one chance meeting we found Roger Williams of Rhode Island, Reverends Mather and Hubbard at a study group together. The discussion was heated and did not end in agreement - to the surprise of no one.

[Lights out: Lights on the three speakers.]

Mather: It could be rightly expected that the nations of these wretches, whose religion is the most explicit sort of devil-worship, should be compelled by the devil to engage in some bloody action. After all, the order we bring through the plantations is God's order and the Devil will have to fight God using his own people. (101 - *actually said by the son of Increase Mather, Cotton Mather*)

Hubbard: Oh, Increase, there you go again, all that devil worship and great wars between the provinces. You are worse than John Milton in *Paradise Lost*. How can you believe all this stuff.

We have done things wrong here from the start and should not be waging a war against any savages at this time. It is not Providence that there is a war. This taking of sides helps no one. There is judgement on both sides.

(106) Both sides talk of heinous evil and murder. So who is right.

It is a bad cause, this war and it brings dishonour to the name of God when it is waged in his name.

Williams: You two have never faced the war. You live in towns which, due to their numbers, will not be sacked and burned as was my city, Providence. After the attack I went to the Indians, to whom we had never been anything but kind, and asked them why they had done this to us.

They gave three reasons, all understandable.

Hubbard: And what were those reasons, Roger . . .

Williams: The first was that they were in a Strange Way; and the second was that we had forced them into it; and the third . . . listen to this. . . . was that God was with them and had forsaken us - and they said it was easily demonstrated by the success they were having with the killing and the burning (120) and it was all done because of what we had done against them - taking their land - killing their people - hanging them.

Mather: Well, you see William, Roger, here, gives all the explanation we need. It is true that God is in this business - We claim him and these Savages claim him. But their claim of our God is simply a ruse. They say this to upset us and break our faith. Their leader is Satan himself, mark my words. We must hold fast to our faith and listen to God.

Hubbard: Do what you want, spend your energies like fools, blame gets us nowhere. You blame the Indians and they blame us. You blame Satan and they blame our God who helps them.

The fact is that we have wronged the Heathens and they are mad at us. It may mark me as a blasphemer, but I have to question the whole doctrine of Providence, ahhh not your Providencenot the city Roger . . . but this whole notion that we are chosen and better than all others. What ever happened to the idea that we might have done something wrong, not to God, but to the Indians themselves.

Williams: Well, let me tell you that I set that straight with the Indians, I told them that far from taking their side, God had prospered us so that it is we who have

driven the Wampanoags with their Damned Philip out of this countrie, and the Nahigonsiks out of their own Countrie, and had destroyed Multitudes of them in Fighting and Flying, in Hungr and Cold . . . and that God would help us to Consume them!(120)

Mather: You said that, Roger - to the Savages -

Williams: Right to their faces . . .

Mather: Well, Roger, about time someone set the Savages straight . . . and all this poppy cock against the war from you William, I am sure that if we followed your ideas all our heads would be on poles at the roadside within a year. I might not mind yours, (*speaking to Hubbard*) but I will beg off on the honour.

Hubbard: Increase, your vituperative and wrong headed arguments against me started when I published my book about the war. You said it was full of errors - just because your supposed history of the war gave different impressions. You have never found room for people who have a different opinion.

The fact is that I have the imprimatur of the Massachusetts Council and Bradstreet on my book and you do not have it on yours. You have behaved in a bombastic and pretentious way in claiming to be a historian of the war. Even at Harvard they turn up their nose at your book. For gracious sake, Increase, it may be massacres, indeed, barbarous and outrageous massacres, but it is hardly a war.

Roger, you and Increase, are myopic beyond all understanding. You have no vision for what we have done to harm others nor the literary interest to read what others write. You only defend yourselves.

What of the idea that Ben Thompson put to pen when he describes the speech Philip might have given to his warriors:

My friends, our fathers were not half so wise
As we ourselves who see with younger eyes.
They sell our land to Englishmen who teach
Our nation all so fast to pray and preach:
Of all our country they enjoy the best,
and quickly they intend to have the rest.

Mather: Oh Lord, William, that has no basis. It is fantasy. It is just foolish conjecture. The wrong is not on their side, it is on ours. The savages are pawns set against us to teach us a lesson. We have offended God and we are being punished. Why should we suppose that God is not offended with us when his displeasure is written in such visible and bloody characters?

Williams: There maybe truth in both your stories, but the fact that the Indians put their answer in terms of being in a strange way can apply to us too - right here - in this room - we hear that our relationship to God is being challenged. They too have had their relationship with their Heathen Spirits challenged by trying to accept our teaching as truth. And though I am very angry with what they say . . . it may be that we are all in strange ways - look, right in this room, at how we attack each other over this. Nothing good will come of this war. . . nothing good!

Mather: (*Pleading*) Something good does come of this . . . even now as we speak, there is a day of fast in Plymouth Colony . . . to repent their ways and get right with the Lord.. Massachusetts Bay Colony has declared a day of humiliation and Connecticut is holding weekly fasts to repent and change their ways - this war is about piety and faith. It is punishment for transgressions and not taking the Lord seriously. Boston itself has a day of humiliation for its sins. There are dozens of days set aside for fasting and humiliation.(103) I tell you there is a great revival in our midst and people are turning to the Lord Jehovah as they should. They are paying attention to his demands. We will become righteous again. We will win this war against the Savages. We will stake the head of Philip beside the road where it deserves to be.

Williams: (*Disgusted*) Lord, forgive us.

Hubbard: (*Disgusted*) Amen.

Lights Out.

SCENE V

Lights on.
Soldier 3 and Maud

Maud: William, I am worried as my thoughts do not conform with those of Rev.

Mather. He seems to want the head of Philip to be set on a stake beside the road as the Heathens did to those living in Providence. I think that such behaviour makes us as bad as them.

Soldier 3: You haven't seen what they do. It makes me so mad - their disrespect for the dead. The savages have no morality in war.

Maud: What do you think will happen when Philip is caught?

Soldier 3: Maud, for his own sake, I hope Philip is killed in battle. We have some nasty people fighting by our side and some of them are our neighbours.

Maud: Will they stake his head on a pole? It sounds so savage. I would be ashamed.

Soldier 3: I am afraid, MaudI am afraid. People are angry and out of sorts altogether. There is no telling any more what they would do to justify almost anything at all with all the name calling and arguing about the war. Hatred is brewing. There can be no good in this war.

Lights Out.

SCENE VI

Lights On.

Four men seated around a table talking

(Nathaniel Saltonstal, George Ingersol, John Pynchon and John Foster)

Narrator: A True but Brief Account of our Losses sustained since this Cruel and Mischievous War began follows:

In Narragansett, not one house left standing.

At Warwick, but one.

At Providence, not above three.

At Potuxit, none left.

Very few at Seaconicke.

At Swansey, two, at most.

Marlborough, wholly laid in Ashes, except for two or three houses.

Grantham and Nashaway, all ruined but one House or two.

Many Houses burnt at Springfield, Scituate, Lancaster, Brookfield and

Northampton.

The great part of Taunton and Rehoboth destroyed.

Great Spoil made at Hadley, Hatfield, and Chelmsford.

Deerfield wholly, and Westfield much destroyed.

At Sudbury, many houses burnt, and some at Hingham, Weymouth, and Braintree.

Besides particular Farms and Plantations, a great Number not to be reckoned up, wholly laid waste, or much damnified.

And as to Persons, it is generally thought, that of the English there hath been lost, in all, Men Women and Children, above Eight Hundred, since the War began: Of whom many have been destroyed with exquisite Torments, and most inhumane Barbarities; the Heathen rarely giving Quarter to those that they take, but if they were Women, they first forced them to satisfie their filthy Lusts and then murdered them; either cutting off their Head, ripping open the Belly, or skulping the Head of Skin and Hair, and the Strips of their Skins which they dresse for Belts. . . .

Nor have our cattle escaped the Cruelty of these worse than Brute and Savage Beasts: For What Cattle they took they seldom killed outright: or if they did, would eat but little of the Flesh, but rather cut their Bellies, and letting them go several Days, trailing their Guts after them, putting out their Eyes, or cutting off one leg . . .(71-2, Saltonstal)

Saltonstal: I just can not get over the depth of the devastation and the savagery of it all. We can not hide from it. People need to know what we are up against.

Ingersol: I'll tell you what we are up against . . . there is no safe place any more. Remember the house we came across up the river beyond the Mackworth's? It was terrible and you could see what happened right there. Young Wakley right there, shot through the head. Then it would seem that after the family took refuge in the house the savages set it on fire. The pregnant woman and the children ran out from the smoke and were killed and scalped on the spot. The older folk stayed in the house and only crawled out after they were already on fire.(74) Everyone dead . . . A terrible sight. It made me ill. Why be so vicious . . . so immoral . . . so savage . . .

Foster: That's the threat, George . . . "et domus sua cuique tutissimum refugium," its as old as common law itself.

Ingersol: O.K., John, stop showing off. We all know you are the literary star amongst us. What in Gods name does "domi su-a-titsum-refugi" or whatever mean?

Foster: It is often said that a man's home is his castle, but the original wording was, "One's home is the safest refuge for all." That is the basis of common law. It is how we define ourselves as Englishmen, through our homes. Lose the home - we lose our identity. (83) It is one of the deepest roots of our law and culture, respect for the boundaries of each other's homes . . . treat your neighbour as yourself . . . do not covet your neighbour's wife . . . it is all there.

Pynchon: My home certainly didn't feel like a castle or a suitable refuge when I returned to Springfield and saw it burnt to the ground along with all but a few others. The whole town was ashes. I felt stripped of my self, all that is who I am, naked.(79) It took that to change my mind and believe that we were really in a war. Before that it was only stories, including yours, Nathaniel.

Saltonstal: Well, John, you are a perfect example of why I had to write. There was so little accurate information that nothing was being printed. No newspapers knew what the truth was so they waited to print anything at all rather than incite fear. No one was facing the Truth. We were in a war with vicious heathens who did unthinkable things to the bodies of our people. Unthinkable. The Savage had to be countered . . .and stopped! The stories had to be told.

It has been such terrific horror that my hand trembled when I wrote about it, my heart almost fainted as I described what had happened to our women and children For a while, I could not write. (66)

But I knew the story had to be told, so I then disciplined myself to tell the

story, in the order of what happened, and that gave me distance enough to tell all of the horrors. Even now, I can't think of what I have seen without horrific fear and disgust and to tell the truth, in the dark of night, tears. The world as we know it is falling apart..

Foster: Thank goodness, for people like Mather and Hubbard and their histories of the war. They put some sense in it all and gave readers a tale they could believe, as unsavory and brutal as it is. Until their volumes were printed, there was nothing but rumour and much of it false so who could believe any of the descriptions of what went on.

Pynchon: Well that was a self serving statement by the printer - even if it is true! It is interesting how we all needed to place the war into a story to give it meaning. Both Hubbard and Mather gave it context. Hubbard and Nathaniel, here, told it as a narrative and Mather as a Historian, to the chagrin of Hubbard. So what was the whole affair, a war or a series of chapters in a narrative?

Saltonstal: Well, I did add to the telling. But I believe it was a war. It was too terrible and too long not to have been a war. It lasted way too long to be a skirmish deserving of nothing more than a narrative.

Foster: It had to be told as a war. It had to be told as a story which galvanized the people, made them feel whole again after such violations of their most sacred places and beliefs. The very economic foundation of our society was attacked . . . the home.

Their homes were violated. Then their faith was attacked by the Savages saying that the white God was on their side and it was shown by their success in burning the English villages. And then by Mather who said that God was punishing the English for a lack of faith. No matter who won the war, the English had to return to a strong faith in themselves and their God to fully win the war. Stories helped.

Ingersol: That's interesting John. For me it was trying to restore myself to the Lord

that gave me strength. It was not trying to win the war against the Savages, though that had to be the goal. At least, in the end, I had something of value - my faith. Had it just been about killing the savages, I would have lost my home, my family and my faith - It would have been too much to bear and I am not sure I would have had the energy or interest to go on.

Pynchon: Same for me, George. At least I have my God right at my side. But I will tell you, I will never forgive the Savages for what they did. Never. I don't think anyone will . . . not even God.

Lights off.

SCENE VII

[Lights on. Soldier 3 (William) standing in doorway looking out, Maud inside talking to him . . .

Maud: William, How did we get from the friendliness of Squanto and Massasoit to King Philip being so angry with us?

Soldier 3: You ask too many questions, Maud. The answers cause trouble!

Maud: Oh, William I am serious. You know the stories we were all told when we were young. The Indians were our friends. But today, everything seems upside down. Even Massasoit's son Metacomet has become angry and kills our people daily.

Soldier 3: It is no longer Metacomet. He is King Philip, attempting to reestablish the reign of the savages over this land.

Maud: Well, King Philip is not a King nor is he really Philip. Why do we call him those things?

Soldier 3: I don't know, Maud. I don't know how it all started.(7) The tragedy is that no one ever learns how these things start - even in school we only teach our children about how these wars are fought and how they end. How can we ever learn . . .I do not know . . .

Maud: Well, how do you feel about the war if we call him Metacomet, the savage, or King Philip?

Soldier 3: I'll tell you Maud. If I call him Metacomet and see all the damage he has done, I feel like we are small and stupid and weak, after all he is only a Savage. If I call him "King," I know we have a mighty war on our hands, a war somehow tied to the Provinces. There is something morally right about what we are doing . . .

Maud: Wasn't it those botched hangings in Providence that started the War, the ones where two died only after minutes of hanging in front of the crowd and the third Indian fell to the ground when the rope broke? Wasn't that what started the Indians killing?

Soldier 3: You ask too many questions, Maudtoo many questions

Maud: (demandingly) Well

Soldier 3: (plaintively) Maud . . .

Lights out.

SCENE VIII

[Lights on. Narrator speaks]

Narrator: On a sultry day in August 1676, in a swamp near Mount Hope Neck, Captain Benjamin Church triumphantly announced to his soldiers that Philip had been shot dead, “upon which the whole army gave three loud Huzzas.”

Church then ordered his men to pull the body out of the swamp to the uplands. Some Indian soldiers taking “hold of him by his stockings, and some by his small breeches, ” Philip’s body was dragged along a narrow path, out of the muddy swamp, “and a doleful, great, naked, dirty beast he looked like.”

Church announced that since “Philip had caused many an Englishman’s body to be unburied, and to rot above ground, not one of his bones should be buried.”

Church called forward an old Indian executioner who briefly eulogized over Philip, saying that “he had been a very great man, and had made many a man afraid of him.”

The executioner then beheaded Philip’s body and quartered the rest. Church had Philip’s four quarters hung from trees but gave one hand to the man who had shot him. That man preserved it in a bucket of Rum.

The biggest prize was Philip’s severed head.

Five days later at the Thanksgiving Day celebration in Plymouth Colony, Captain Benjamin Church showed up with the head of Philip and placed it on a stake for all to see.

For decades it stood there for all to see until one day, Cotton Mather, the son of Increase, visiting Plymouth Colony tore the jawbone from the skull - as if to silence Philip once and for all.

[Lights Out.]

SCENE IX

[Lights on . . . Maud and Ida sitting . . .]

Ida: How long have we known each other?

Maud: Oh . . . over thirty years. We met just at the start of King Philip's War when William and Roger were serving on the same patrol. Those were terrible times.

Ida: We have both had some good times since then, haven't we.

Maud: Sure have, remember when Johnny and your Tom left for college together. It was such an exciting Day and we both cried - mixed joy and sadness at them leaving.

Ida: And look at them now, both lawyers in Boston. Who would have believed that those two freckle faced kids would ever leave the farm, let alone become lawyers.

Maud: Do you ever think about the war?

Ida: I try not to. But the memories are always there.

Maud: I know. I was shaken by what they did to Philip. I thought we were better than that and would treat him with some dignity, strange as it may seem. Quartering him and having his head on a pole was what he did to white people and we called him savage for that.

Ida: I don't know . . . I think he got what he deserved. I don't think it reflects badly on us. He got what he gave out.

Maud: I just wonder why we do such things? Does it make us feel good? Do we expect that God wants us to do that to an enemy? I rather thought that God loved us all and cringed at war, cringed at what the Indians did, and then cringed at what we did . . . sort of like we just haven't grown up yet.

Ida: You know, that Universalist stuff you have always read really makes you think crazy sometimes . . . and Maud . . . The questions you ask . . . you know they get you into trouble.

Maud: William used to say that . . . I'm glad we have been friends for so long. That is more important than what happened so long ago.

[Ida reaches for Maud's hand and they sit together in silence for five seconds before the lights go out.]

SCENE X

[Lights on. There are three people: George Bush, President of the United States, Dick Cheney, Vice President of the United States, and David Frumm, Bush's speech writer, a Canadian, who authored the phrase "axis of evil"]

Bush: Mr. Cheney, Sir, what are the three most important things to talk about during the State of the Union Speech this year? I know we have to say something about 9/11 and Afghanistan - but what is the holder for them, you know, the barrel that holds them together? You know?

Cheney: Yes, Mr. President, We do need to use 9/11 - it gives us a platform which no one will question. We also need to associate the War on Terror with some really awful things. . . like weapons of Mass destruction . . . people are really afraid of the specter of another 9/11 only larger. We can leverage 9/11, allude to it and tie the budget to the success of the war on terror. What do you think, David?

Frumm: We know that there are three areas of major concern . . . North Korea, Iran,

and Iraq. I think we have to play the religion card here. We can talk about the three countries as an *axis of evil* and allude to God being on our side.

Cheney: Not bad, and since these are things that are in the future, we can tie them to Afghanistan where we already have success.

Frumm: We also have to make terrorists look like ungodly savages, far from our lofty ideals. They have to be evil.

Bush: Yeah, do that to Saddam. I hate him for what he did to my Daddy, do it to him.

Frumm: So let me get this straight, you want the speech wrapped in the American Flag in opposition to evil doers around the world, evil doers who threaten our way of life at its deepest roots. And then say that our faith will win out.

Cheney: Let's see the draft on my desk tonight.

Bush: That's good, so all I have to do is read it?

[Lights out.]

SCENE XI

[Lights on. Cheney and Frumm Stand. Bush shakes hands in audience as he moves to a flag bedecked podium]

My Friends:

We last met in an hour of shock and suffering. In four short months, our nation has comforted the victims, begun to rebuild New York and the Pentagon, rallied a great coalition, captured, arrested, and rid the world of

thousands of terrorists, destroyed Afghanistan's terrorist training camps, saved a people from starvation, and freed a country from brutal oppression. The American flag flies again over our embassy in Kabul.

For many Americans, these four months have brought sorrow, and pain that will never completely go away.

Every day a retired firefighter returns to Ground Zero, to feel closer to his two sons who died there.

At a memorial in New York, a little boy left his football with a note for his lost father: Dear Daddy, please take this to heaven. I don't want to play football until I can play with you again some day.

Last month, at the grave of her husband, Michael, a CIA officer and Marine who died in Mazur-e-Sharif, Shannon Spann said these words of farewell: "Semper Fi, my love."

Our cause is just, and it continues. Our discoveries in Afghanistan confirmed our worst fears, and showed us the true scope of the task ahead. We have seen the depth of our enemies' hatred in videos, where they laugh about the loss of innocent life. And the depth of their hatred is equaled by the madness of the destruction they design.

What we have found in Afghanistan confirms that, far from ending there, our war against terror is only beginning. Tens of thousands of trained terrorists are still at large. These enemies view the entire world as a battlefield, and we must pursue them wherever they are.

Our nation will continue to be steadfast and patient and persistent in the pursuit of two great objectives:

First, we will shut down terrorist camps, disrupt terrorist plans, and bring terrorists to justice.

Our second goal is to prevent regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction.

North Korea is a regime arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens.

Iran aggressively pursues these weapons and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom.

Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for over a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens -- leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections -- then kicked out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world.

States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an **axis of evil**, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.

The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons.

America will lead by defending liberty and justice because they are right and true and unchanging for all people everywhere.

America will always stand firm for the non-negotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the power of the state; respect for women; private property; free speech; equal justice; and religious tolerance.

In this moment of opportunity, a common danger is erasing old rivalries. Together with friends and allies from Europe to Asia, and Africa to Latin America, we will demonstrate that the forces of terror cannot stop the momentum of freedom.

Those of us who have lived through these challenging times have been changed by them. We've come to know truths that we will never question: evil is real, and it must be opposed. Beyond all differences of race or creed, we are one country, mourning together and facing danger together. Many have discovered again that even in tragedy -- especially in tragedy -- God is near.

In a single instant, we realized that this will be a decisive decade in the history of liberty, that we've been called to a unique role in human events. Rarely has the world faced a choice more clear or consequential.

Our enemies send other people's children on missions of suicide and murder. They embrace tyranny and death as a cause and a creed. We stand

for a different choice, made long ago, on the day of our founding. We affirm it again today. We choose freedom and the dignity of every life.

Steadfast in our purpose, we now press on. We have known freedom's price. We have shown freedom's power. And in this great conflict, my fellow Americans, we will see freedom's victory (*Selections from 2002 State of the Union Address, written by David Frumm, delivered by George Bush*)

[Light out.]

SCENE XII

[Light on Narrator.]

Narrator: In 1930's the Algonquins wrote down some of their oral history about the death of King Philip:

When Philip was killed, his faithful warriors, not being able to steal the whole body, for fear of detection, stole the head of their chief and hid it . . . until they could safely bury it, with all the sacred rituals due the mighty chief, who died for home and people. (190)

Nearly a hundred years later in a play about Metacomet, at his death, King Philip is made to say the following:

All lights out

Metacomet: My curses on you, white men! May the Great Spirit curse you when

he speaks in his war voice from the clouds! Murderers! The last of the Wampanoag's curse be on you! May your graves and the graves of your children be in the path the red man shall trace! And may the wolf and panther howl o'er your fleshless bones, fit banquet for the destroyers! Spirits of the grave, I come! But the curse of Metamora stays with the white man!(191)

END

Numbers in the text refer to pages in the following book:

Lepore, Jill, THE NAME OF WAR: King Philip's War and American Identity, (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1999)

Commentary pertinent to discussion of the play:

The final words are not by Metamora but Edwin Forest, a celebrated American actor (19th C.) who wrote *Metamora*, a fantastically popular play which debuted in New York in 1929. The words were written by a white man.

The words written by the Algonquins in 1930 does not represent the true series of events but a mythologizing story for the memory of King Philip.

The lack of women in the play, other than Maud and Ida is intentional and would reflect the makeup of genders who were responsible for the formation of the pattern for presenting war to Americans created during King Philip's War (January 1675 - August 1676 for the most part).

The hanging at Providence was the cause of more Native attacks but it is most likely that the hanging of Natives (who were close allies of King Philip) who were convicted of the killing of Johan Sassamon, a missionary to the natives, was the real instigator of the war. The Providence hanging was chosen because it reflected the bungling nature of much of what happened during the war.

The Wampanoags were not the only Natives who were on the blunt end of war with the colonists. If there is further interest, one would do well to travel to the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center in Mashantucket, Connecticut (1110 Pequot Trail, Box 3180, Mashantucket, CT 06339-3180). The museum has incredible walk through diaramas and shows a particularly poignant film about a 1636 event which saw the English attack a Pequot village, murdering the inhabitants, women and children included, and burning the site to the ground. Be prepared for tears if you watch it! The Museum and Research Center web site is a wonderfully educational and interactive location.

(<http://www.pequotmuseum.org>)