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THE BABY FAMILY IN THE TRADE OF CANADA, 1750 - 1820

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## ABSTRACT

In 1763 the Baby family of Montreal transferred their financial assets and commercial connections from France to London with the help of their French correspondents. The two most important members of the family, Dupéron and François, established at Detroit and Quebec respectively, traded with great success and acquired conspicuous governmental appointments. They traded at a time when French-Canadian merchants were being outdistanced by Anglo-Scots and Anglo-American competitors, the most important of whom established themselves in Canada because of the American Revolution. The newcomers had engrossed the trade within thirty years by superior methods of business organization. The Babys and other French Canadians did not take full advantage of the opportunities offered them in the new British trading system.

## ABBREVIATIONS

PAC	Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa
AQ	Archives de Québec, Quebec City
OA	Ontario Archives, Toronto
ASQ	Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Quebec City
AJQ	Archives Judiciaires de Québec, Palais de Justice, Quebec City
bc	Baby Collection (PAC)
fc	Fonds Casgrain (ASQ)
MFC	"Mémoire de la Famille Baby par Mme. Casgrain", (ASQ, fc)
RAPQ	Rapports de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec

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## PREFACE

It is neither biography nor family history that is here presented to the reader, but a fragment in the economic and social history of Canada. Much can be said of our principals, the Baby family, that is not mentioned here: of their political capacity and of their record of public service. But they are here examined as members of a particular social and economic group at a particular time and place, as French-Canadian merchants during the first generation of British rule. Belief that a careful examination of the commercial endeavours of the Baby family in the latter half of the eighteenth century will illumine our understanding of changes in the economic and class structure of Canada during that period motivates the present essay. The Baby family, rather than some other, is chosen for examination because of the abundance of its family papers.

A European scholar writes, "Ce qui assure en définitive l'unité de l'histoire économique et sociale, c'est son sujet essentiel, qui est "l'homme

moyen". A l'opposé de l'individu plus ou moins exceptionnel, du grand homme à l'étude duquel s'est longtemps complus l'histoire politique, nous entendons par là le représentant d'un groupe social plus ou moins vaste, de son régime économique, de son statut juridique, de ses habitudes mentales ... Ainsi l'histoire économique et sociale apparaît essentiellement comme une science de synthèse.<sup>1</sup> A science of synthesis implies the integration of the findings of scores of theses. It is in the anticipation of synthesis that the present work finds its apology.

An example may be either typical or exceptional, and its value to us hinges on our rightly understanding which is the case. Thus without some broader knowledge of the trade of Canada our brief study of the Baby family's commerce could prove to be not only unhelpful but deceptive. A statistical examination of the financial structure of the Canadian fur trade, then the most important sector of the economy in terms of capital formation, facilitates and enlarges upon

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<sup>1</sup>Phillipe Wolff, "L'Etude des Economies et Sociétés avant l'Ere statistique", L'Histoire et ses Méthodes, ed. Charles Samarin (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, "Encyclopédie de la Pléiade", ed. Raymond Queneau, 1961), 852.



the interpretation of the case study. This inquiry should answer many of our questions concerning the nature of the Canadian bourgeoisie at the end of the French Regime, its fate under English rule and the dynamics of the Canadian economy throughout the period. Where it does not provide us with answers, it will help us to anticipate them.

## INTRODUCTION

### THE BABY FAMILY UNDER THE FRENCH REGIME

In the tiny village of Montelon in Aquitaine in 1633 the Babys de Ranville, a family of the impoverished minor nobility of southern France, busied themselves with the duties and celebrations that customarily accompanied the birth of a son. Twenty-five years later Jacques Baby de Ranville was declared of age, with nothing but a sword to win his way in the world and an honourable name to shield him from total obscurity. He was following a path well known to his class when, by enlisting in the Régiment de Carignan-Salières, the young hobereau chose to better his lot as a soldier of fortune.<sup>1</sup> This was in 1663 when, the clouds that darkened his early reign being dispelled, the radiance of the Sun King briefly penetrated the remotest corners of his empire. The Carignan-Salières were raised to rescue the French in Canada from the scourge of the Iroquois; and when they debarked at Quebec in

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<sup>1</sup>ASQ, fc, MFC.

1665, Sergeant Baby was with them.<sup>2</sup> The expedition was also an instrument of colonization. Offered free land on which to settle, many of the soldiers determined to remain in Canada.

Jacques Baby settled in the Seigneury of Champlain, where he married a Canadian girl, Jeanne Dondanneau, who had been a pupil of Marie de l'Incarnation and Mme. de la Peltrie. By the time of his death in 1688, Jacques's wife had presented him with nine children, and another was born shortly thereafter. Curiously, the Baby family was to survive in the male line only through this infant, Raymond. Jacques had prospered as a rural merchant-farmer and left an estate of 27,000 livres tournois after the payment of debts. This money served to support his large family and his wife, who outlived him by fifteen years. When young Raymond went out into the world, he could have taken little with him but the memory of his father's success in commerce.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Phillipe Baby Casgrain, Memorial des Familles Casgrain, Baby et Perrault du Canada, 40. Cited hereafter: Casgrain, Mem. des Familles.

<sup>3</sup>MFC; AJQ, "Comte de la Communauté de Jacques Babie et Jeanne Dondanneau suivant l'Inventaire passé devant Louis Demeraumont le 9 et 10 mars 1689," Greffe de Louis Chambalon, 11 avril 1711, Québec. 1 livre tournois = 1/3 Halifax = 1s sterling for most of the eighteenth century.

Raymond tired of the academic life after three years at the Quebec Seminary and at the age of fifteen joined the fur brigades going to the Northwest.<sup>4</sup> He was probably the Baby listed in the census of Detroit in 1709; and church records show that he was there in 1716, when he acted as godfather for Indian converts.<sup>5</sup> In 1721 he was back in Montreal, where on 9 June he married a girl fifteen years his junior. His young wife, Thérèse Lecompte Dupré, was of a notable seigneurial family engaged in the fur trade.<sup>6</sup>

Having begun his career as a voyageur, Raymond became an up-country fur trader on his own account and died in 1737, in terms of his function, at the apex of the fur-trade structure as a Montreal

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<sup>4</sup>MFC.

<sup>5</sup>Casgrain, Mem. des Familles, 66-7.

<sup>6</sup>MFC; P. G. Roy, La Famille Le Compte Dupré (Levis, 1947), 5, viz. "Avec les années, le commerce de M. Le Compte Dupré s'était développé considérablement, et, à sa mort, il était probablement le négociant le plus important de toute la région de Montréal."

outfitter.<sup>7</sup> He had achieved a greater prosperity than his father, but like him had left a numerous progeny and a young widow to devour his fortune.

Although we have found no inventory of his estate, we may speculate that Raymond's children received some share of material goods from their father as well as education, family connections and a strong commercial tradition. Of the six sons of Raymond Baby and Thérèse Lecompte Dupré, four lived to manhood: Louis, 1726 - 1785; Jacques Dupéron, 1731 - 1789; François, 1733 - 1820; and Antoine, 1735 - 1764. They are the subjects of our present study. The earliest documents referring to them are military dispatches from the Seven Year's War, trade permits from 1754 and correspondence with other merchants from 1757. Thus in the decade of the 1750's, all of them still young men, we pick up the thread of their careers.

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<sup>7</sup>P. G. Roy, Inventaire des Greffes des Notaires (Documents in Archives Judiciaires de Montreal) XX (J. C. Raimbault), 64, "Obligation par Paul LeDuc, 22 juin 1729"; 117, "Obligation par Jos. et Ant. Pelletier dit Antaya de Sorel à Raymond Baby, marchand de Ville Marie, pour 243 livres de marchandises fournies pour faire le voyage au poste de Ouyatonnon, 24 juin 1731"; XII (G. de Chevremont) 12, "Act de dépôt d'un procès verbal fait par les Srs. Baby & Mathieu, nég. du 14 nov. pour diverse marchandises envoyées chez M. de la Corne, 3 avril 1733."

François received an extensive academic education and remained a city-dweller all his life. His three brothers followed their father's example and joined the fur brigades going west.<sup>8</sup> There they became the friends and intimates of the Indians with whom they traded. Louis, "le Voyageur", "le Vieu Baby", interested himself in the far-western trade and was at Michilimackinac on the eve of the Seven Year's War.<sup>9</sup> Dupéron and Antoine traded in the Ohio valley,<sup>10</sup> where Louis seems to have joined them during the war, the three mixing trading with fighting. This is suggested by an order from Vaudreuil in 1758 directing the "trois sieurs Baby" to return from the Ohio to Canada for the duration of the war.<sup>11</sup> This could not have included François, for during the same period he was in Montreal exporting furs

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<sup>8</sup>MFC.

<sup>9</sup>E. Z. Massicôte, "Répertoire des Engagements pour l'ouest conservées dans les Archives Judiciaires de Montréal, 1753 - 1758", Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, 1931 - 32, 1 and 8 April 1754.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 18 Sept. 1756; 29 Sept., 1 Oct., 4 Oct., 1 Dec. 1757.

<sup>11</sup>MFC. Document transcribed in full, 27 April 1754.

and bills of exchange to France under the name of Baby Frères.<sup>12</sup> At LaRoche in France the merchant houses of Havy et Lefèvre, J. B. Dhenin l'ainé and Pascaud received these remittances, and at Bordeaux Simon Jauge was their correspondent. These merchants also sent merchandise to the Babys which was received by François in Montreal. Dupéron, Antoine and François worked in partnership, or société. Dupéron and Antoine began this société by pooling their trading resources. François seems to have been brought in at a later date, when the value of a permanent Montreal representative became apparent.<sup>13</sup> The older, independent Louis did not share in this arrangement.

The Babys' influence with the Indians was of great military value to the French.<sup>14</sup> They were mentioned in several dispatches as leading Indian

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<sup>12</sup>PAC, bc, III, "Louis Perrault à Fr. Baby, 11 août 1757"; "Dhenin l'ainé à Messrs. Baby, 28 avril 1758"; "Havy à MM. Baby frères, 12 fév. 1759"; "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 13 mars 1759".

<sup>13</sup>ASQ, fc, Lettres de Dupéron Baby, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 7 juin 1765".

<sup>14</sup>MFC. Documents transcribed in full: "Desligneris, Fort Duquesne, 3 juillet 1756"; "16 avril 1758"; "Contrecoeur, Fort Duquesne, 18 jan. 1755"; "Dumas, Fort Duquesne, 6 déc. 1755"; "4 nov. 1756".

raiding parties. François served the government as a clerk in Montreal,<sup>15</sup> yet he too shared his brothers' military glory by participation in the Battle of Ste. Foy.<sup>16</sup> The Babys' sacrifice in the French cause is best described by their native governor and commander-in-chief:

We certify and attest that the sieurs Baby, brothers, merchants of Montreal, have on all occasions given the greatest proofs of their zeal and disinterestedness in the service of the King, that they have distinguished themselves by their bravery and their talents in almost all the actions that they have undertaken against the English, that since the establishment of the Ohio there have always been some of them employed amongst the nations of this country and that in several very critical circumstances we have felt to our great advantage the credit and authority that they have amongst these people; that on ten occasions they have been given the command of detachments to go and strike the provinces of the enemy and always with success, amongst others in 1758 with thirty men, having taken in Virginia and led to Fort Duquesne twenty-nine prisoners. Last winter, 1760, the commandant of Detroit being in the necessity of sending presents to the nations of that country, and having nothing in the stores, these gentlemen who were destined to that affair, made these presents themselves.

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<sup>15</sup>MFC, passport made out to "Monr. Babbie", 22 December 1760, quoted in part.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., according to his own testimony.



Finally they have seized eagerly and without personal interest, all means of being useful. In a word, their services have been so pleasing that we can think of nothing better than to give them this present certificate.

Done at Montreal the 15th of July, 1760.  
Vaudreuil.<sup>17</sup>

As Vaudreuil wrote this certificate, the war was proceeding to its disastrous conclusion at Montreal. In September François was sent prisoner to England.<sup>18</sup> Antoine was taken to New England after the capture of Detroit.<sup>19</sup> The whereabouts of Louis remains unknown; but Dupéron, providing a point of light in the landscape of gloom, was married to Susanne de la Croix Réaume at Detroit, 23 November 1760.<sup>20</sup> Dupéron, proud and fresh from battle, refused to take the oath of allegiance to George III. He made his way from Detroit to Fort Pitt, where he petitioned General Bouquet to allow him to return to Detroit, Michilimackinac and Montreal to

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<sup>17</sup>MFC. Document transcribed in full: "Vaudreuil, 15 juillet 1760".

<sup>18</sup>Note 15.

<sup>19</sup>PAC, bc, IV, "Mme. Benoît a Fr. Baby, 22 août 1762".

<sup>20</sup>AJQ, Répertoire J. Planté, No. 2508, "Inventaire de la communauté des biens de Jacques Dupéron Baby et Suzanne Réaume Baby, 8 nov. 1800".

"recover his debts and collect his effects and pass to France".<sup>21</sup> But while this petition was under consideration, he rashly attempted to trade contrary to Bouquet's orders. Having received permission to send a bateau to a Shawnee town near Fort Pitt to pick up a shipment of skins belonging to him, he clandestinely filled the boat with merchandise supplied by two English traders. The goods were seized and a court of inquiry followed.<sup>22</sup> This conduct did not ingratiate him with General Amherst, Commander of the Forces. "I mentioned Mr. Baubie's request," Monckton wrote to Bouquet from Philadelphia, "in answer to which the General consents to his going to Montreal to recover his debts or to come down here to go to France. But as he will not take the oaths, he will not allow of his making the tour he desires and as he has attempted to trade without your leave, he deserves no indulgence."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>PAC, Bouquet Papers, A-VIII, 150, "Bouquet to Monckton, 24 Feb. 1761, Fort Pitt".

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., A-XXIII-1, "Draft of a letter from Bouquet without date or addressee"; A-VIII, 253, "Col. Vaughan to Gen. Monckton, 18 March 1761, Fort Pitt".

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., A-VIII, 260, "Monckton to Bouquet, 5 April 1761".

Dupéron remained at Fort Pitt long enough to receive his skins.<sup>24</sup> It was also long enough for him to be arrested on suspicion of encouraging an Indian uprising, to be exonerated and released. On 11 August 1761, he set out for Philadelphia, seeking permission to go to Montreal and thence to France.<sup>25</sup>

In Montreal the Babys owned a large two-story stone house where their widowed sister, Mme. Benoît, lived and, after the war, carried on a small retail trade. There Dupéron and his wife passed three months.<sup>26</sup> The only news from François was the address of a firm of London merchants, Thomas, Thomas and Son, and a letter from England addressed to Dupéron and dated December 1760.<sup>27</sup> The letter, no longer extant, must have revealed that early in 1760 François had received a letter from Simon Jauge of Bordeaux, sent by way of England. The letter had advised him to send his orders to Thomas, Thomas and Son of London and suggested, "Even if conditions

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., A-VIII, 268, "Bouquet to Monckton, 22 April 1761".

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., A-VIII, 312, "Bouquet to Monckton, 11 Aug. 1761, Fort Pitt".

<sup>26</sup>PAC, bc, IV, "Mme. Benoît à Fr. Baby, 22 août 1762".

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., IV, "Fr. Baby à D. Baby, 18 mars 1762".

don't change, you could send your furs to them and have your friends send them theirs ...."<sup>28</sup> François advised that he was going to France to examine the state of their affairs. The news of this point of contact in Europe, together with the encouraging sale of his furs at Montreal and the existence at Detroit of another large shipment, which could not be brought to Montreal until spring, suggested to Dupéron that he could most profitably employ the coming year by trading in the west.<sup>29</sup> If François could send him a large outfit of trade goods the following spring and arrange for the sale of furs in London, their commerce would be on the soundest possible footing. If François were not successful, Dupéron would lose nothing by spending another year in America. On September 22 he sent an order and two bills of exchange to François,<sup>30</sup> then departed for Detroit with his wife "in the hope of doing better there". They had scarcely left Montreal when Antoine, who had passed six months in New England, was knocking on Mme. Benoît's door. Finding that Dupéron

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., III, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 5 fév. 1760".

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., IV, "Fr. Baby à S. Jauge, 25 fév. 1762".

<sup>30</sup>Note 27.

planned to winter at Detroit, he set out after him to share in this latest trading venture.<sup>31</sup> In the unsettled Indian country, under the watchful eyes of the British garrison of Fort Detroit, they prepared for the year's trade.

Dupéron and Antoine were not at all clear about what was happening in Europe. They knew only that their brother was in France. As the English revelled in the festivities of the Christmas season in 1760, this grave-looking Canadian gentleman in his late twenties had been jogging across the countryside aboard the London to Dover stage, bound for Flushing. Among his papers was a passport dated 22 December 1760, with an explanatory note written across the back:

Monr. Babbie, a clerk employed in the service of the French King at Montreal who is permitted to return to France in consequence of the capitulation of that place, and Governor Murray's pass for that purpose. 32

Wishing he were again home in Canada, François had made his way from Flushing to Loches.<sup>33</sup> In February 1761 he was in Paris.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Note 26.

<sup>32</sup>Note 15.

<sup>33</sup>Note 26.

<sup>34</sup>PAC, bc, III, "Dhenin l'ainé à Fr. Baby, 17 fév. 1761".

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE TRANSFER OF COMMERCIAL RELATIONS, 1760 - 1775

The trade of Canada, a staple-producing country with a small population, was necessarily an export trade. Most of the amenities of life, and indeed a good part of its necessities, were imported annually from France. This trans-atlantic commerce presupposed some form of credit instrument to facilitate the transfer of buying power from one continent to another. This was provided by the bill of exchange, a written order signed by the "drawer" by which he ordered another person in a distant place, the "drawee", to pay a third party, the "payee", a certain sum specified within a given number of days after presentation. This procedure in itself was sound, but the Canadian monetary system on which it depended was not.

Because of the chronic shortage of specie, the intendant Demeulles in 1685 began the circulation of

paper money made from playing cards.<sup>1</sup> This was to be redeemed each year when a treasure ship would arrive from France. But the transportation of specie to Canada by the government and back to France by importers constituted a double risk. Therefore after 1689 Canadian paper money was redeemed with bills of exchange drawn on the Treasurers of the Marine, the intendant being the drawer. The variety of paper circulating as money in the colony proliferated, the most important addition on the part of the government being ordonnances or orders issued by the intendant's department to pay for goods or services rendered. The Company of the Indies, which monopolized the export of beaver pelts from the colony, itself issued similar orders or lettres de castor, and these circulated as the most highly valued currency of all. Thus the paper currency of New France, like that of modern nations, depended for its value upon the

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<sup>1</sup>The Canadian monetary system is described in some detail in Jean Hamelin, Economie et Société en Nouvelle France (Québec: Les Presses Universitaires Laval, 1960), 37 - 46, and in Adam Shortt, Documents Relating to Canadian Currency, Exchange and Finance During the French Period, (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1925) 2 vols., 604 - 607, note 1. Cited hereafter: Shortt.

solvency and good faith of the government. Both were to be found wanting. The various money and promissory notes and the bills of exchange used in the Canada trade, which were usually dependant upon these notes, were known collectively as Canada Paper.

Corresponding merchants in Canada and France practised double-entry accounting. Each recorded receipts from the other, whether furs, merchandise, money notes or bills of exchange, as debits to themselves and credits to the senders. They recorded their own remittances as credits to themselves and debits to the receivers. Once each year these accounts were balanced. Thus the system depended on short term credit. Further, Canadian merchants regularly sent their profits to their French correspondents to be kept at interest or to be invested in annuities on their behalf, since there were no banking institutions in Canada.

Bills of exchange were made out in triplicate, and if one were lost in transit, the next would be presented. During the Seven Years' War cargoes were divided among different ships as a safety precaution. Occasions are to be found when cargoes were divided among as many as



nine different vessels.<sup>2</sup> Thus trans-oceanic trade was hedged about with elaborate precautions. In 1759 this trade came to a standstill. Insurance rates climbed to 1000 livres tournois per ton.<sup>3</sup> Those ships willing to run the English blockade were loaded for Michel Cadet, the King's Canadian commissary.<sup>4</sup> The Bordeaux merchant Lamaletie complained that, "The risks increase every year, the English are masters of the sea, and our commerce absolutely ruined . . . ." <sup>5</sup> With the prospect of a French defeat before them, the un-nerved Atlantic merchants began to loose faith in the massive accumulation of government paper. The French government had repudiated large sums of paper in 1714 and was quite capable of doing it again. Even in January it was reported that "Treasury paper is rejected, no one wishes to take any . . . . It is payed exactly at the exchange, but trouble is feared."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>PAC, bc, III, "Paillet et Meynardie à E. Augé, 10 juin 1758"; "Pascaud à Mme. Guy, 6 mai 1757".

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., III, "Meynardie à Mme. Guy, 13 mai 1759".

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., III, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 13 mars 1759".

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., III, "Lameletie à Perrault, 1 fév. 1759".

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., III, "M. Admyrauld à M. Lanaudière, 28 jan. 1759".

In February 1759 it was losing 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ % per month at the exchange,<sup>7</sup> and Havy of LaRochelle reported that no one would buy it at any price.<sup>8</sup> The Battle of the Plains of Abraham occurred in September, and on October 15 the Royal Treasury suspended payments on colonial paper for the duration of the war.<sup>9</sup> The laboriously constructed edifice of Franco-Canadian trade collapsed in the unprecedented débâcle.

In 1760 no one who was not privy to the intentions of the French and British ministries knew whether Canada would remain a French province or be ceded to Great Britain. Should the latter occur, François Baby and his brothers would have to liquidate their French assets and transfer their commercial relations to London in order to be of consequence in the re-constituted Canadian trading system. François was therefore obliged to remain

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., III, "Lameletie et Latuilière à Perrault, 1 fév. 1759".

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., III, "Havy à Fr. Baby, 12 fév. 1759".

<sup>9</sup>Shortt, II, 929, "Suspension of Payment of Bills of Exchange, Versailles, 15 Oct. 1759".

in Europe, waiting upon events, until 1763. He had two immediate tasks. One was to assess the state of his family's assets in France and to be ready to act in accord with whatever procedure should be prescribed for the redemption of Canada Paper. The other was to ensure that Dupéron and Antoine were supplied with trade goods and that their furs were marketed by his French suppliers' English correspondents. Jauge had warned him that the innumerable, unknown London merchants who would arrive in Québec offering to buy furs for bills of exchange might not be trustworthy. The only safe way to do business would be to send furs to London on account, accompanied by orders for merchandise.<sup>10</sup>

Immediately upon his arrival in Paris François wrote to Jauge, asking him to ship wine, brandy and ecclesiastical candles to Dupéron in Montreal. Jauge decided that wine and brandy would not bear the enormous customs duties contingent upon legal entry into Canada by way of Great Britain. But candles were manufactured in England. He therefore wrote and asked Thomas, Thomas and Son to send

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<sup>10</sup>PAC, bc, III, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 5 fév. 1760".

Dupéron the requested candles.<sup>11</sup> The London merchants had in their possession thirty martin skins and ninety-three beaver skins belonging to François, either left by him during his brief visit to England or shipped there by Jauge. They soon wrote back that they had shipped 240 candles valued at £29 10/14 sterling, for which they enclosed the bill, and added that they would sell the furs for payment as soon as possible.<sup>12</sup> It was six months before Jauge could write François, then at LaRochelle, that the furs had been sold for £29 6/1 sterling, leaving François indebted to the English firm for 4/13.<sup>13</sup> The shipment of candles should have been waiting for Dupéron when he first returned to Montreal from Philadelphia in August 1761. But, ironically, it was part of the cargo of the British ship, Cecilia, captured by the French. Luckily it was insured.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., III, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 17 mars 1761".

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., III, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 26 juin 1761".

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., III, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 27 nov. 1761".

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., IV, "Fr. Baby à D. Baby, 27 nov. 1761".

Any other ventures in which François was engaged before 1763 remain unknown. After the signing of the Treaty of Paris he was forced to cut his ties with French merchants and establish English connections. In May 1763 Jauge sent him "two letters for friends in Paris who will be able to give you some for London where they have relatives able to partake of the Canada trade. I will send you at Paris letters for Thomas, Thomas and Son and for Mon. Jean Charlier. This last is sending his brother to Quebec with Mon. Levesque to work there for one or two years . . . ."<sup>15</sup> The letters for Paris were sent two days later, one for Jean Cottin et Fils and the other for Girardeau de Marigny, both banking houses.<sup>16</sup> Jauge also included the two letters for London. He informed François, "Your house is already in relation with Thomas, Thomas and Son."<sup>17</sup> If François needed money, he would be able to draw on Jauge's accounts with this London firm and with de Marigny. By means of these various letters François was introduced to several London merchants with French names, who

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., IV, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 15 mai 1763".

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., IV, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 17 mai 1763".

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., IV, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 20 mai 1763".

established connections with the Canadians. This French enclave in the City probably made the transfer of commercial relations easier than it might otherwise have been. One of these firms was the partnership of Joseph and Henry Guinaud, with whom François was soon transacting most of his business.

The suspension of payments had not enhanced the French Crown in the eyes of its beholders. But the folly of a policy that so adversely affected faith in the government, especially during a time of hostilities, was perceived by the Duc de Choiseul who, once assured of his strong position in the council, ousted the responsible Berryer, Minister of Marine and Colonies. He skillfully channelled national resentment against François Bigot and other Canadian officials by means of a greatly publicised judicial inquiry into their behaviour in office, the Commission of the Châtelet, established by an order in council of 10 December 1761. Since the government held most of its expenses in Canada to be the result of malfeasance by these officials, Choiseul was able to sweep the whole issue under the rug until

the termination of the inquiry in December 1763.<sup>18</sup> The uncertainty of the situation did nothing to increase the value of Canada Paper.

In February 1762, while the in camera investigations of the Châtelet were in progress, François received the letter, bills of exchange and order that Dupéron had sent from Montreal. His reply dispelled Dupéron's belief that the French government would deal honourably with its creditors. "I am filled with sorrow in these sad circumstances, my dear brother," he wrote, "sorrow for your lot and not my own. I contemplate your heart filled with bitterness, the sacrifice of your youth in the most barbarous of countries . . . ."<sup>19</sup> The thousands of livres tournois in government paper which the brothers had accumulated appeared to be nearly worthless.

Uncertainty, of course, goes hand in hand with the speculation, which is the prerogative of the rich and secure. British and British American merchants who either had flocked to Canada immediately after the war or who were busy sending to it shiploads of merchandise

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<sup>18</sup>Shortt, II, 956 - 959, note 1.

<sup>19</sup>Note 14.

from London disposed of loose cash by buying up prodigious quantities of Canadian paper from its Canadian owners, who found themselves in immediate need of something more negotiable. However unjust this might have been for the small shopkeeper, it was a great boon to those Canadian merchants, like the Babys, who found themselves well enough off to retain their bills and ordonnances. The English merchants constituted an impressive lobby to enjoin H.B.M.'s government to cajole or threaten H.M.C.M.'s government into redeeming the paper at a respectable rate.

On 24 December 1762 the French tested the water with a hesitant toe. For the time being all paper must be registered with the Sieur de la Rochette in Paris no later than 24 April 1763.<sup>20</sup> Lobbying was having its effect, and British pressure caused the period to be extended to August 1st.<sup>21</sup> The registration of Canadian paper proceeded apace, being accomplished by certain London merchants designated as trustees for the body of merchants and by the government in Canada so that,

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<sup>20</sup>Shortt, II, 962 - 965, "Decree of King's Council of State Ordering the owners of Canada Paper to make certain declarations respecting it".

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., II, 963, note.



as Dunk Halifax put it, they could know how much to demand of the French king.<sup>22</sup>

An appendix to the Treaty of Paris, 10 February 1763, stated that all paper held by British subjects at that time would be liquidated, care being taken to distinguish it from paper held by French subjects.<sup>23</sup> Since the appendix was attached at the insistence of the British, its intention of favouring British subjects over French subjects is evident. At later negotiations, however, this was to strike the French as a novel interpretation.

The Babys had placed money with at least three French firms, but it is impossible to determine what proportions of it were in specie, bills and notes. The continual reference to these funds as transferable balances calculated in livres tournois without qualifying adjectives suggests that a good part of them was in cash, bonds, or bills that might not have been subject to discount. In January 1763 Jauge advised François that

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., II, 991 - 992, "Halifax to Murray, 9 Dec. 1763".

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., II, 972 - 973, "Declaration of H.M.C.M.'s Plenipotentiary with regard to debts due to Canadians, 19 Feb. 1763".

there remained to his credit a balance of 6477# 16s 10d on which he could draw.<sup>24</sup> Jauge's assertion that this was the Babys' total balance raises unanswerable questions about the extent of the recoveries he was commissioned to make for them in France, for in 1767 he wrote that in the past year he had sent 10,000 livres tournois to Guinaud and Hankey, the successor firm to Joseph and Henry Guinaud, in London on account for Baby Frères.<sup>25</sup>

J. B. Dhenin l'ainé of LaRochele credited the Babys with a balance of 4121# 9s 8d in 1765.<sup>26</sup> But upon his death his estate was subject to prolonged litigation. In 1779 J. Thouron et Frères of LaRochele, agents for the Babys, informed François that an assembly of Dhenin's creditors had determined that the estate owed Baby Frères 5430# 30s. But since the liquidation was being contested in the courts and even in the parlements, they doubted

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<sup>24</sup>PAC, bc, IV, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 14 nov. 1767". What would have been the status of a bill the drawer and drawee of which were both continental merchants, but the payee a colonial, or a bill of which all three parties were continental signed over to a colonial?

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., IV, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 14 nov. 1767".

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., IV, "J. B. Dhenin l'ainé à Fr. Baby, 24 mai 1765."

that any profit would be realized.<sup>27</sup>

Another of the Babys' Rochelais correspondents, Havy, his business collapsing with the depreciating Canadian paper, hounded by the family of his dead partner Lefebvre, had long since ceased active trade. He was totally unable to provide references for London that would kindle the all-important spark of recognition. Whatever monies the Babys had deposited with that unfortunate merchant were thus in jeopardy, and Jauge was given power of attorney to deal with the affair.<sup>28</sup> In 1767 he recovered 3356# 14s 9d in bonds from Havy's widow.<sup>29</sup>

Havy's failure had compounded the Babys' difficulties with another matter. Like so many Canadian merchants, they had a large consignment of trade goods in France that had never been shipped because of the war. Their shipment, valued at 4729# 7s, was composed entirely of goods for the fur trade. It was useless to anyone in

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., VIII, "J. Thouron et Frères à Fr. Baby, 20 fév. 1779".

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., IV, "Havy à Baby Frères, 16 avril 1763"; "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 15 mai 1764".

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., IV, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 14 avril 1767".

France, but of great value in America.<sup>30</sup> At first it was believed that the British government would permit the Canadians to ship these goods to Canada, but hopes dimmed when their representations at St. James brought no answer.<sup>31</sup> There were stronger lobbies than their own. The merchant Goguet stated laconically, "The court of London does not wish to permit it."<sup>32</sup> Some merchants sold their goods on the docks, thereby sustaining losses of about 30%. François determined to leave the shipment in Havy's warehouse until he had personally conferred with Dupéron in Canada.<sup>33</sup> He returned to Canada at the end of 1763<sup>34</sup> by which time, unfortunately, the legal entanglements contingent upon Havy's failure had caused his warehouse to be closed. The goods were to remain there until 1765, and this delay was to prove costly.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., IV, "J. Thouron et Frères à Baby Frères, 15 mars 1765".

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., IV, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 25 jan. 1763".

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., IV, "D. Goguet à M. Guy, 29 fév. 1764".

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., IV, "Fr. Baby à D. Baby, 7 mai 1763".

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., IV, "D. Goguet à M. Guy, 29 fév. 1764"; "Jos. & Hen. Guinaud à Fr. Baby, 10 dec. 1763".

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., IV, "J. Thouron et Frères à Baby Frères, 15 mars 1765".

Sometime before François heard from Jauge that their merchandise was freed, he had received word from Jacques Perrault that their common relative, Louis Perrault, had established himself in Louisiana after the war, and that he had made good in business with the Spaniards.<sup>36</sup> J. Thouron et Frères, who had charge of the Babys' merchandise at LaRochelle, quickly followed instructions and shipped it to Louis just in time to avoid new prohibitions against trade with Louisiana.<sup>37</sup> Arrangements were made to send the profits to François by way of Thomas, Thomas and Son, and Perrault disposed of the goods at 25% profit.<sup>38</sup> The treasury bills in which he made his remittance arrived in France just after the perfidious monarchy had suspended payment on all bills from Louisiana.<sup>39</sup> The notes were liquidated in 1773, possibly for 1649# 7s 6d in bonds since Thouron advised that this was the Babys' balance at the end of that year.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., IV, "L. Perrault à Fr. Baby, 28 mars 1765".

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., IV, "J. Thouron et Frères à Baby Frères, 21 mars 1766".

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., IV, "J. Thouron et Frères à Baby Frères, 6 mars 1767".

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., IV, "J. Thouron et Frères à Baby Frères, 10 mars 1768".

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., IV, "J. Thouron et Frères à Baby Frères, 14 déc. 1773".

While Simon Jauge busily aided the Babys in establishing new trade relations, he was just as assiduous in suggesting new modes of trade.<sup>41</sup> From the first he was enthusiastic about the prospects for smuggling into the new British colony of Quebec. St. Pierre and Miquelon, in his opinion, were admirably suited for the smuggler. With an agent there, French wines and brandies could be shipped thence to any secluded port in Canada, thus avoiding the very high taxes imposed on the produce of France shipped in British bottoms. He held that this would have been the proper way for the Babys to handle the merchandise they eventually sent to Louisiana. He was inspired by the example of Englishmen who had been smuggling French wines to Quebec for some time according to their own ingenious schemes. "There is no nation so industrious as the English when it comes to tax-collection and tax-evasion," he observed; and concluded by asking that Baby advise him and his friends if he and his friends planned anything concrete. As far as we know François did not avail himself of the opportunities that lay that way.

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., IV, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 14 juin 1763".

There was also the matter of a number of contrats de rentes or annuities belonging to Baby Frères in France. This was money which could be used in Quebec, and in 1766 François authorized Thourons et Frères to dispose of these investments and send him the money by way of Thomas, Thomas and Son.<sup>42</sup>

Following Jauge's advice, Baby had provided his new London suppliers with samples of merchandise suitable for the Canada trade. The standard English goods would not suffice "to content the tastes and ancient usages of our colonists".<sup>43</sup> By March 1767 he was indebted to the English firm for L1270 17/7 sterling.<sup>44</sup> This is most significant as an indication that he was able to obtain credit in London, surely of great importance. But his business was prospering and that year he made remittances of 5815# 11s 6d tournois.<sup>45</sup> Bills of

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., IV, "Fr. Baby à Thomas, Thomas et Fils, 17 nov. 1766". Contrats de rente are of unspecified value.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., IV, "Fr. Baby à Jos. & Hen. Guinaud, 20 sept. 1764".

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., IV, "Guinaud & Hankey à Fr. Baby, 28 mars 1767".

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., IV, "Guinaud & Hankey à Fr. Baby, 12 dec. 1767". This sum is in shillings or livres tournois which were usually of similar value.

exchange drawn on Bordeaux for 11,666# tournois in 1768 netted him a further 6056# 2s 5d tournois after discount in 1769, and this sum was deposited with Guinaud and Hankey.<sup>46</sup>

The Babys were thus becoming well settled in the new pattern of trade by the time the Court of Versailles decided it really would have to pay some of its Canadian debts. When the French arrêt was made known on 29 June 1764 it caused an immediate outcry in London. Canadian bills of exchange of 1758 and earlier acquired by their present owners elsewhere than in Canada and registered by 1 April 1764 were to be paid in full. All bills of exchange for the same period that did not comply to these stipulations, as well as all bills of 1759 and 1760, were to be paid at one half their face value. This was designed to give a definite advantage to French merchants who had acquired their Canada bills by opening envelopes in their Rochelais and Bordelais counting houses. Ordonnances and other money notes, which were almost entirely in the hands of British subjects, were

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., V, "Guinaud & Hankey à Fr. Baby, 4 jan. 1769".



to be paid at a reduction of 75%. All bills not registered were to be null and void, and the instrument of payment was to be an issue of bonds bearing 4% interest.<sup>47</sup>

The Court of London was appalled by this cavalier proposal, and the appropriate minister assured the merchants by word of mouth that the Crown would insist on better terms and the liquidation of the paper which remained to be registered. Bills of exchange were being bought and sold for only 36% of their face value and ordonnances for 18%.<sup>48</sup> When they received a stern note in reply from the British, the French were in a quandry, their own Department of Foreign Affairs being in agreement with it. For the moment, the best course was to withhold reply until the current session of the British Parliament ended and the large numbers of paper holders attached to the Opposition could not render the government more

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<sup>47</sup> Shortt, II, 1013 - 1019, "Decree of Council of State of the King ordaining the liquidation of the Bills of Exchange and Money Notes of Canada", and footnote, p1021.

<sup>48</sup> PAC, bc, IV, "Francis Rybot a Fr. Baby, 6 sept. 1764". Note that the bills of exchange on France used in the trade by Francois in 1768 and 1769 were paid at about 50% (note 46).

intractable than they already were. This stalled proceedings until March 1765 when negotiations were set in train.<sup>49</sup>

A general meeting of merchants interested in Canada Paper, including some Canadians, was held in London, 27 December 1765. Power was delegated to Rt. Hon. Henry Seymour Conroy to negotiate for them in France. The leading merchants of this group, who were themselves agents for numerous absent merchants, including Canadians, were Brook Watson, Robert Allan, Charles Crockett, William Greenwood, Danial Vialars, Isidore Lynch, Robert Hunter, Robert Grant and Francis Rybot,<sup>50</sup> one of Francois Baby's correspondents. The result of Conroy's mission was the Convention of 29 March 1766, which somewhat improved the terms of the original French decree. The original discount of bills of exchange and ordonnances by 50% and 75% respectively was retained, but the period for registration was to continue until 1 October 1766. The interest rate on the bonds to be given in compensation was increased

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<sup>49</sup>Shortt, II, 1032 - 1037, note 1.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., II, 1037 - 1038, "Power of Attorney for securing Payment of Canada Paper, 27 Dec. 1765".

to 4½%. The bonds, however, were not payable for six years. The merchants were also granted an indemnity of 3,000,000 livres tournois in specie and 2,500,000 livres tournois in bonds. These bonds were to be paid in full in 1771, and that would have ended the affair of the Papiers du Canada.<sup>51</sup> But in 1769 the French announced that upon maturity the bonds would be converted into long term annuities.<sup>52</sup> Thereafter the bonds declined rapidly in value.

The Babys had their share in this division of spoils. In 1764 Dupéron sent 35,248# in ordonnances belonging to himself and Antoine to London.<sup>53</sup> Dhenin l'ainé in 1765 sent to Francis Rybot 25,814# 10s in cards, ordonnances, and bills of exchange belonging either to François personally or to Baby Frères.<sup>54</sup> What percentages of the Babys' paper sent to London were sold, converted into bonds and then sold, or converted and kept is not known. In a letter of 1768 Dupéron refers to an account

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., II, 1042 - 1051, "Convention of 26 March 1766".

<sup>52</sup>PAC, bc, IV; "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 14 avril 1767".

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., IV, 2158 - 2161, 20 sept. 1764".

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., IV, "J. B. Dhenin l'ainé à Fr. Baby, 24 mai 1765".

of the sale of his ordonnances which had been negotiated at 27%, netting L183 16/8 sterling.<sup>55</sup> François Baby might have decided to sell their bonds after the division of the cash subsidy had been made, for he was warned by Jauge in April 1767 that the French Crown was thinking of paying for matured bonds with contrats de rente at 4%.<sup>56</sup> What remains clear, however, is that any sale of bonds or paper by the Babys took place in the middle sixties when their value was at its highest. In view of later events, there would be more gain than loss in such transactions.

Some of the family's paper was liquidated in France. Jauge had acquired 2190# in bonds and 6# in money for 3700# in bills of exchange and 1384# in money notes. The debt owed the Babys by Havy had also been paid in bonds to the value of 3356# 14s 9d tournois.<sup>57</sup> As we have seen, in 1769 François was still paying debts in London with notes drawn on French houses; and these were honoured, although at a discount.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 19 juin 1768".

<sup>56</sup>Note 52.

<sup>57</sup>PAC, bc, IV, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 14 avril 1767".

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., V, "Guinaud & Hankey à Fr. Baby, 4 jan. 1769".

But business in France was by no means ended so quickly. It was not until late in 1773 that François, embarked for London on a political mission, took advantage of his journey to settle once and for all his family's affairs in France. Unfortunately he has left us no hint of what sort of business obliged him to spend eight to ten days in Paris with the bankers Dangiraud and Bauffe. But he wrote instructions both to Simon Jauge<sup>59</sup> and Thouron et Frères.<sup>60</sup> Thouron et Frères wrote to him in Paris, informing him that Baby Frères still had on account with them 1649# 7s 6d tournois which they would send to London.

François visited Simon Jauge in Bordeaux, then moved on to LaRochele. There he received a letter from Jauge, who had been searching his oldest and dustiest account books in an effort to find out just what he had done with the Babys' money. Only 123# 1s 3d remained in the current account, but 1050# had been invested in a contrat de rente which could be recovered from Jean Cottin et Fils in Paris.<sup>61</sup> Other sums are mentioned in Jauge's

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., VI, "Fr. Baby à S. Jauge, 21 nov. 1773".

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., VI, "Fr. Baby à Thouron et Frères, 21 nov. 1773".

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., VII, "S. Jauge à Fr. Baby, 22 juin 1774".

accounting, but they cannot be reported with any confidence. Jauge's letters were written to accompany formal account sheets, and the significance of the figures he quotes is not always apparent. The letters of other merchants all present us with the same problem. Thus there can be no final estimate of just how much money the Babys had in France or what losses they were obliged to sustain. The confidential letters which at first appear so detailed and promising present more confusion than information. There is always an unaccountable sum, a new name -- some Paris banker or Rotterdam merchant -- hinting of financial tangles we cannot hope to unravel.

François and his brothers realized no great fortune from the liquidation of their assets in France. In 1775 Dupéron, after badgering François for years to render a final accounting, referred to his surprise at the decadence of their affairs in France and even in England.<sup>62</sup> There is no doubt but that they lost a great deal of money. But there is also no doubt that the economic calamities caused by the Conquest of Canada and Pontiac's War had not destroyed them. They were financially able to withstand such difficulties. Canada Paper was the object of speculation throughout the sixties; it was never

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<sup>62</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 22 juin 1775".

worthless. As recounted above, François Baby negotiated French bills of exchange at better than 50% in 1768 and 1769. Most important, whatever capital the Babys had at their disposal was quickly transferred to London through venerable and well-used channels.

The experience of the Babys was by no means unique. Pierre Guy, who was to become one of their most important business associates, also went to France after the capitulation of Montreal. He sold his family's merchandise in LaRochele at a loss of 25% and made arrangements for registration of their treasury bills.<sup>63</sup> Denis Goguet of LaRochele sent L1073 19/ sterling to Daniel Vialars in London and provided Guy with a letter of introduction. Guy spent L781 5/ sterling buying merchandise from Vialars and invested the remainder in British government bonds.<sup>64</sup>

Another merchant, Etienne Augé, established relations with Isidore Lynch, who converted 31,700 livres tournois in bills of exchange into bonds and then sold them for L488 6/3 sterling, just before it became known they would

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<sup>63</sup>PAC, bc, IV, "P. Guy à Mme. Guy, 22 mars 1763".

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., IV, "D. Vialars à Mme. Guy, 18 juillet 1763".

not be redeemed in specie.<sup>65</sup>

Like the Guys, many Canadians had invested in French annuities or contrats de rente. But they were not all so anxious to transfer this money to London or Canada as working capital. The Lanaudières were receiving dividends on "contrats sur l'hôtel de ville de Paris" in 1783.<sup>66</sup> The Ursuline convent at Trois Rivières is another example.<sup>67</sup> This was a form of investment that defied the strictures of mercantilism. Many Canadians retained in Europe current accounts in which was gathered interest from bonds, annuities and capital remaining from before the Conquest of Canada. It was not until 1788, twenty-eight years after the Conquest, that we find the statement that, "The present difficulty of finding remittances on France results from the fact that the funds the Canadians have there are almost totally exhausted."<sup>68</sup> It was well that these funds were nearly exhausted, for within a year what

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., IV, "Isidore Lynch et Cie à E. Augé, 6 avril 1767." See also "Same to same, 24 May 1768".

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., IX, "J. Thouron et Frères à Mme. Ve. de Lanaudière, 28 mai 1783".

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., VII, "Rev. Sr. St. Antoine à Fr. Baby, 25 nov. 1776".

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., X, "Mlle. Lanouillier Boisclair à M. Perrault l'ainé, 12 fév. 1787".



remained of these bonds and notes would be swept into oblivion along with the government that endorsed it. But in those twenty-eight years several thousands of livres tournois had been transferred to London on behalf of Canadian merchants engaged, almost without interruption, in the trade of Canada.

CHAPTER TWO  
THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF  
TRADE, 1762 - 1775

Spring was harvest time for the notaries of Montreal. The streets teemed with young farmers from the district who had come to town to hire themselves out as canoemen for the summer trip on the trunk routes to and from the major western posts, and for every voyageur, or engagé, a contract was drawn up and notarized. The contract was made between the engagé and the trader, or bourgeois, who would lead the expedition. The trader wintered amongst the Indians with one or two engagés hyvernants, coureurs du bois who had permanently forsaken farm or craft for the Indian trade and could look forward to becoming guides or traders in their own right.

The trader was an independent businessman, but during the second half of the eighteenth century a number of factors were reducing him to a position of complete dependence upon Montreal outfitters. These city merchants, who were often large-scale importers themselves remaining in business by the grace of their European creditors, had always outfitted a considerable number of traders on credit.

But after the establishment of the licensing system by the British authorities in 1763, all traders were required to bond their expeditions for double the value of their trade goods. With this trebling of costs the day of the capitalist had arrived. Traders were soon seeking bonders as well as creditors, and the posting of bond inevitably gave the outfitter a stronger hold on the expedition. The trader was rapidly becoming a junior partner in a joint-stock operation and even an employee. The relative position of each man further complicated the capital structure of the trade. While a trader might undertake a large-scale operation with a wealthy Montreal merchant, he might in turn outfit a number of smaller expeditions for other traders. The bonding system was but one factor, and one rather neglected by historians, which together with keener competition and the introduction of larger corporations was changing the nature of the fur trade.

The furs, once arrived in Quebec and New York, were embarked for London to credit the accounts of colonial importers. Sold at public auction, they were transported across Europe as far as Moscow. There was no guarantee on prices at the London auction. Although costs for trade goods, wages, transportation and insurance might remain steady, the price of fur was subject to yearly

fluctuations which made the market the prey of speculators. The Canadian exporter was required to pay all of these charges and to sell on consignment. The fixed charges were paid first, and the auctioneer's fee and London correspondent's commission second. The remainder, when there was a remainder, was credited to the exporter. Such was the vicious system contrived by the London merchants.

The Baby brothers had transferred their commercial relations from France to England. They had already sold some of their furs in London in 1761 and had imported English trade goods. In 1762 they were fully engaged in the Canadian fur trade. We find only a few glimpses of the trade of that year. In the spring Antoine was again in Montreal, where he hired six engagés to carry merchandise to Detroit.<sup>1</sup> Provided with General Gage's pass, "a Monsieur Baby" traded with the Missisaugas at Toronto, where a Major Walters, apparently quite unjustly,

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<sup>1</sup>E. Z. Massicôte, "Répertoire des Engagements pour l'ouest conservés dans les Archives judiciaires de Montréal", Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, 1932-1933. See 21, 24, 27 May 1762. Cited hereafter: Massicôte.

seized his fifteen barrels of brandy.<sup>2</sup> Antoine seems to have traded to the south, for in November he wrote to Bouquet at Fort Pitt, thanking him for recommendations which had facilitated his voyage.<sup>3</sup> This routine progress of trade during 1762 masked a growing tension in the fur country. Frightened by the defeat of the French and the difficulty of procuring vital guns and ammunition from the British, a band of Ottawas fell upon a farmhouse at Detroit on 9 May 1763 and murdered the occupants. Thus began "Pontiac's War" which was to cripple the trade for a year. Dupéron Baby must have taken the oath of allegiance in Montreal in 1761 or he would never have been allowed to return to Detroit. But not until now, when most of his French neighbours were openly rebellious, was his new allegiance tested. His first decision was to supply the besieged garrison of Detroit by night without really identifying himself with the British.<sup>4</sup> But such an ambivalent position proved untenable, and on 3 July

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<sup>2</sup>P. J. Robinson, Toronto Under the French Regime, 146, quoting "Amhurst to Major Wilkins, 25 July 1762".

<sup>3</sup>PAC, Bouquet Papers, A-XVIII, II, 495, "Antoine Baby à Bouquet, 14 nov. 1762".

<sup>4</sup>H. H. Peckham, Pontiac and the Indian Uprising, 140.

he found it necessary to move into the fort for his own safety.<sup>5</sup> Gladwin, the commandant, was contemptuous of most of the Detroit French, but admitted to Amherst that "there is some honest men among them to whom I am infinitely obliged. I mean, Sir, Monsieur Navarre, the two Babys, and my interpreters, St. Martin and LaButte."<sup>6</sup> Thus Dupéron was finally reconciled to English rule. The siege of Detroit was raised and hostilities ended by the close of the year. In spite of that the Babys were writing to their friends the following spring that the Indians were no better disposed than the previous summer. Since no satisfactory arrangements had been made for the protection of goods in transit, they would send nothing to Montreal.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile François had arrived in Canada late in 1763, preceded by three shiploads of merchandise chosen for the tastes of both colonists and Indians: one hundred hogsheads of strong beer, 6,571 gallons of British corn spirits, ten pipes of cider, seventeen chests of common green glass, thirteen chests of window glass, six casks of delphware, wrought iron and brass, 230 pots with lids,

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<sup>5</sup>ASQ, fc, MFC.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., quoting "Gladwin to Amhurst, 8 July 1763".

<sup>7</sup>PAC, bc, IV, "LeCompte Dupré à Perrault l'ainé, 24 mai 1764".

casks of wrought leather and numerous bales of linen, prints and haberdashery.<sup>8</sup> He was satisfied with his liaison with Joseph and Henry Guinaud, to whom he sent two shipments of fur in September 1764; but he insisted, along with Pierre Guy, that British merchandise was more expensive than comparable French merchandise.<sup>9</sup> Home at last, François opened his magasin at Quebec, where he conducted a general wholesale business while continuing to supply his brothers at Detroit.<sup>10</sup>

Late in 1764 Antoine Baby attempted a mid-winter trek from Detroit to Montreal in order to be there at the opening of inland navigation. On 22 April 1765 Dupéron sent instructions to his younger brother. Antoine was to send two canoes or bateaux of merchandise

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<sup>8</sup>PAC, RG 4, A-3, I, "Record of Ships Landing at Quebec, 1763 - 1764".

<sup>9</sup>PAC, bc, IV, "Fr. Baby à Jos. & Hen. Guinaud, 20 sept. 1764". I am indebted to Prof. S. R. Mealing for his suggestion that this complaint, common to West Indian merchants, did not in fact arise from higher manufacturing costs of British goods, but from the favourable exchange rate on the English pound.

<sup>10</sup>AO, Collection Baby, "Cheneville à Fr. Baby, 17 oct. 1765".

to Niagara and from there to freight the goods aboard the government barque for the remainder of the trip to Detroit. He must hurry; furs would be scarce this year and it was essential to be first. François was unable to undertake these arrangements; still, he must be consulted on all matters.<sup>11</sup> Scarcely was this letter out of Dupéron's hands than he received word from Montreal that, weakened by his arduous journey, Antoine had died on December 17.<sup>12</sup> Dupéron lost no time in writing to François, who had taken over arrangements in Montreal. Because their société was burdened with debt, Antoine's estate must be liquidated immediately. The most important single debt was one of 13,000 livres tournois, which must be paid before the end of the year to their uncle, Lecompte Dupré, and a M. Cuisy. As regarded the trade, Dupéron saw two imperatives: early delivery at Detroit and merchandise of the best quality. This was to remain his formula for successful competition. He was not optimistic about the forthcoming year's trade, but remarked that, "being resident I expect that I will make my returns by force

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à A. Baby, 22 avril 1765".

<sup>12</sup>ASQ, fc, MFC, The "Lettre sur le mort d'antoine Baby, Mangan, 3 jan. 1768" in PAC, bc, IV, 2600, has been misdated, and should read 1765.



of intrigue provided that the merchandise is good."<sup>13</sup>  
 The major difficulty was that the Indian country was  
 overstocked with merchandise:

If Fortune does not destroy a lot of people to  
 save the others, all will be ruined together.  
 However I hope that perseverance will be able  
 to provide some opportunity, because the con-  
 fusion will be dispelled by the ruin of the  
 greatest number. 14

Dupéron also reminded François not to forget his  
 commission, that "since you began to work for our société",  
 it was a right holding first place.<sup>15</sup>

On his own account François was busy in the grain  
 trade<sup>16</sup> and importing from the West Indies,<sup>17</sup> nonetheless  
 he shared his brother's pessimistic view. Confirming his  
 receipt of goods, he complained to Guinaud that money was  
 scarce and business unsatisfactory. Further, a fire in  
 Montreal on May 18 had destroyed 120 houses, the greater  
 part of his family thereby sustaining losses.<sup>18</sup> As hinted

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 7 juin 1765".

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 17 juin 1765".

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 7 juin 1765"; cf. p 3,  
 note 13, François was not an original partner.

<sup>16</sup>PAC, bc, IV, "Fr. Baby à Guinaud, 23 juin 1765".

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., IV, "Perrault à Fr. Baby, 27 mai 1765".

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., IV, "Fr. Baby à H. Guinaud, 23 juin 1765".

by Dupéron's letter to Antoine described above, François was spending more and more of his time at Quebec; and it is from about this time that his permanent removal from Montreal may be dated. The Babys were thus in need of a Montreal agent, a key position in their trading system that was to be filled by Pierre Guy. From 1765 Dupéron sent his letters to François by way of Guy. If François were absent, Guy would open them and follow their instructions himself.<sup>19</sup> Although he continued to market a large part -- but not all -- of Dupéron's fur and to supply him with much of his merchandise, it becomes increasingly difficult to believe that François and his brother were business partners. In the eighteenth century such arrangements were usually temporary, often informal, and this one probably ended after the death of Antoine. Without any formal agreement, each remained the other's best customer and adviser.

François had sent seven engagés to Detroit in the spring.<sup>20</sup> He also undertook a trading venture to Michilimackinac, and his name appears on a petition

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., IV, "D. Baby à Pierre Guy, 25 juin 1765".

<sup>20</sup>Massicôte, 10, 11 and 22 April; 1, 7 and 8 May 1765.

complaining to the governor that the commandant there had let only certain favourites winter among the Indians.<sup>21</sup> Dupéron came down to Montreal in September to hire eight winterers, implying a large outlay in merchandise and wages.<sup>22</sup> On returning to the West, he purchased a house and lot on the Place d'Armes at Detroit, one of the finest commercial properties in the fort.<sup>23</sup> Thus in spite of his complaints, whether by "intrigue" or "perseverance", Dupéron Baby was achieving a position of some prosperity.

On 10 June 1766 Guy informed François that forty packs of fur had come down from Detroit<sup>24</sup> and on July 22 reported sending thirty-three packs to Quebec by goélette, or schooner.<sup>25</sup> The engagés were paid by

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<sup>21</sup>PAC, bc, XL, "Requête des Marchands de Montreal au gouverneur James Murray et au conseil de Sa Majesté, 30 mars 1766".

<sup>22</sup>Massicôte, 16, 18, 19, 26, 28, 30 and 31 août and 1 sept. 1765.

<sup>23</sup>PAC, MG 18, I, 5, Notarial records from Detroit, I, 334, "Vente d'un emplacement, 15 oct. 1765".

<sup>24</sup>PAC, bc, IV, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 19 juillet 1766".

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., IV, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 22 juillet 1766".

Dupéron's draft on François, whose account with Guy was debited.<sup>26</sup> There was also news from Louis. He had been trading at Michilimackinac under the name of Louis Baby et Cie.<sup>27</sup> and had made twenty-five packs.<sup>28</sup> In July the muddled accounts for his engagés were on Guy's desk.

The partnership of Joseph and Henry Guinaud had ended in 1765, and Henry had allied himself with Robert Hankey, a member of a wealthy and powerful London family. In the following year François Baby arranged with the new firm a compte à demi, or mutual account, by which the three shared profits and losses on merchandise which they sold in Canada. Furs exported by François were credited to his personal account; the arrangements for his other exports remain unknown.<sup>29</sup> At an earlier date, perhaps when he was in London, François had contracted some sort of business relationship with another Canadian, Chartier de Lotbinière, which was part of the arrangement he had made with Guinaud and Hankey. He was now resolved to dissolve this connection:

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., IV, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 26 juillet 1766".

<sup>27</sup> Massicôte, 26 and 30 mars; 25 avril; 3 and 10 mai 1765.

<sup>28</sup> PAC, bc, IV, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 19 juillet 1766".

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., IV, "MM Guinaud et Hankey à Fr. Baby, 6 juin 1766".

If you are not of a contrary sentiment to my own, Gentlemen, I am resolved to terminate my business relations with Mr. Lotbinière. It is not natural that this man benefit from our work without contributing in any manner to our reciprocal advantage. For some time I have been aware that his principal reason for allying himself with us was to facilitate the establishment of his lands. We have contributed more than a little to it, in spite of my caution, by the advances I have made to his employees . . . . 30

Guinaud was in complete accord that "it is time to end an alliance of which we carry all the burden". He observed, "During his sojourn in France [Lotbinière] acquired two seigneuries, and my money partly paid for them and I see no return."<sup>31</sup> At first sight there seems little reason for any of these merchants to have allied themselves with Lotbinière. But his talk of sawmills in one letter suggests that he had convinced them that, with a little investment, he would soon be realizing great profits from his new estates.<sup>32</sup> This seems to be confirmed by Guinaud and Hankey's reference to his "thousand idle fancies and projects".<sup>33</sup> François had reason to be happy about the

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., IV, "Fr. Baby à MM. Guinaud et Hankey, 28 juin 1766".

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., IV, "H. Guinaud à Fr. Baby, 31 juillet 1766".

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., IV, "Chartier de Lotbinière à Fr. Baby, 20 juillet 1766".

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., IV, "Guinaud et Hankey à Fr. Baby, 6 juin 1766".

decision to drop Lotbinière and was further gratified by Guinaud and Hankey's agreement that he take a 2½% commission on everything he sold for the compte à demi.<sup>34</sup> In 1766 François shipped both fur and wheat to England, making a profit of about 105% on the latter.<sup>35</sup> His relationship with the new firm seemed eminently promising.

Merchandise valued at L2825 4/8 sterling left London in March 1767 to be sold by François for the compte à demi. In response to complaints, which probably came from Dupéron, the linens had been chosen with greater care than in the past. According to the note enclosed with the invoice, Guinaud and Hankey would be able to market François's wheat if he could find a ship to carry it. They had two ships, the Elizabeth and the Jeanne, but would not be sending either to Canada that year.<sup>36</sup> Before the summer François had improved his arrangement with Guinaud and Hankey, who allowed him a commission of 5% on sales and 2½% for handling return cargoes. This

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., IV, "H. Guinaud à Fr. Baby, 31 juillet 1766".

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., IV, "Guinaud et Hankey à Fr. Baby, 6 déc. 1766".

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., IV, "Guinaud et Hankey à Fr. Baby, 28 mars 1767".

latter undertaking was a common one for exporters, and we find that in the Quebec Gazette of 23 July 1767, François was advertising freight and cargo space aboard the Scorpion, which he assured perspective customers was known for fast sailing. The three merchants were not yet finished with Chartier de Lotbinière. Lotbinière still owed Guinaud a considerable sum of money; thus, when he decided to pass the year in Europe, Guinaud was given the opportunity to demand it in person.<sup>37</sup> The result of that interview was that in December Guinaud requested that François collect the debt through the courts, a task that Baby commonly undertook for his London allies.<sup>38</sup>

François continued to diversify his commerce. Maidenhair ferns, then greatly prized in England as a medicine, proved a highly profitable export.<sup>39</sup> François also sold planks and boards, probably on the domestic market.<sup>40</sup> Fur, however, retained its pre-eminence; and in April François was in Montreal, seeing to his spring

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., IV, "Guinaud et Hankey à Fr. Baby, 6 juin 1767".

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., V, "Guinaud et Hankey à Fr. Baby, 12 déc. 1767".

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Note 38.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., V, "LeCompte Dupré à Fr. Baby, 10 sept. 1767".

outfits for an expedition he was sending to Michilimackinac. Louis was also in town making arrangements for his own trading.<sup>41</sup> But if the trade continued, economic conditions were still not conducive to heady optimism. François maintained a cautious attitude toward business in which Guinaud and Hankey fully concurred.<sup>42</sup> No one was interested in needless risks. In François's case there were still past debts to be paid and past losses to be made up. As he confided to Guy, "These times are so hard that I have great need to economise."<sup>43</sup>

In 1768 Dupéron was living in a new house on St. Louis Street, Detroit, for which he had traded his property on the Place d'Armes to the government.<sup>44</sup> In the spring he sent out two canoe loads and twenty-six packs of furs to Montreal. He also seized ten packs of wild cat and bear

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<sup>41</sup>Massicote, 25 avril and 6 mai 1767.

<sup>42</sup>PAC, bc, V, "Guinaud et Hankey à Fr. Baby, 10 sept. 1767".

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., V, "Fr. Baby à P. Guy, 24 oct. 1767".

<sup>44</sup>PAC, MG 18, I, 5, Notarial Records from Detroit, V, 7, "Sale of land to the Crown by Dupéron Baby, 23 Sept. 1767".



skins from one of François's debtors and passed them along. A "revolution in pelteries" in favour of the smaller luxury furs was working a great hardship on his business that year. Yet he was able to send down bills of exchange for £1241 (New York).<sup>45</sup> In September he placed an order for spring and asked to have a blacksmith and mason sent to winter at Detroit.<sup>46</sup> This, together with his order for certain windmill parts, provides us with our first glimpse of the diversification going on in his business at Detroit.<sup>47</sup>

In September François was buying fur at Montreal through his agent and cousin, St. Georges Dupré. This was apparently an unsuccessful venture, because "cepequulateurs", as St. Georges wrote it, were buying up all the fur with the financial backing of "ce petit bonhomme de la tribue de Judas".<sup>48</sup> François continued

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<sup>45</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 12 mai 1768"; "Same to same, 1 juin 1768"; "Same to same, 19 juin 1768".

<sup>46</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 24 oct. 1768".

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 19 juin 1768".

<sup>48</sup>PAC, bc, V, "St. Georges Dupré à Fr. Baby, 5 sept. 1768".

trading in wheat, peas, oats<sup>49</sup> and even apples.<sup>50</sup> From the far west there was news of "the miserable state" of "le Vieu Baby".<sup>51</sup>

In Canada the year 1769 was marked by a rash of bankruptcies. François, for whom the fault was always in ourselves, was completely without sympathy, an attitude which inspired the complete concurrence of Guinaud and Hankey:

We are entirely of your opinion concerning the commerce of your colony. We see the collapse of all the firms which, seduced by greed, have overstocked with merchandise little suited to your colony or which by ignorance have not known how to manage their business. Their fall leaves elbow room for others and we agree with you that this concurrence once removed, everyone will resume in good order and with patience will render the colony flourishing. 52

The Londoners might have been kinder, for their own business was about to dissolve. They had a considerable

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., V, "Hervieux à Fr. Baby, 15 fév. 1768".

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., V, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 16 nov. 1768".

<sup>51</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 1 juin 1768".

<sup>52</sup>PAC, bc, V, "Guinaud et Hankey à Fr. Baby, 4 jan. 1769".

amount of money invested in the Canada trade from which returns came in very slowly, probably because of the natural rhythm of the fur trade cycle. From Guinaud's point of view this constituted a dangerous overextension. But Hankey, sustained by much greater capital resources, was content and able to wait for returns.<sup>53</sup> Guinaud described how their affairs were at this critical time confounded with the bankruptcy of their debtors:

The firm of Guinaud and Hankey . . . , enveloped by the repercussions of various bankruptcies, our profits, although considerable, have scarcely sufficed to offset them and the large sums accumulated and tied up in Canada made us decide to liquidate last March. Mr. Hankey, sustained by a powerful family for his own account, has taken charge of the liquidation and I of finding my livelihood where I might. 54

Combined with the embezzlement of his bookkeeper, this reduced Guinaud to penury. Hankey, however, was able to withstand the crisis and continued to be François's supplier.

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., V, "H. Guinaud à Fr. Baby, 25 mars 1769". It does not appear that Prof. Brunet is justified in using this dissolution and Guinaud's subsequent bankruptcy to prove that Canadians were unable to establish commercial relations with the more important merchants. This event, on the contrary, demonstrates Hankey's financial strength. Nor can we overlook Fr. Baby's liaison with Thomas, Thomas and Son, which on Jauge's testimony were a large and powerful house. (Chapter 1, note 10) See M. Brunet, "La Déchéance de la Bourgeoisie Canadienne Française, La Présence Anglaise et les Canadiens, 68."

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., V, "H. Guinaud à Fr. Baby, 5 déc. 1769".

In February Dupéron sent down an additional order and advised that he expected to ship a canoe and a bateau loaded with fur in the spring.<sup>55</sup> François invested L960 (Halifax) in the Detroit trade<sup>56</sup> and also sent a trader to Michilimackinac. Guy reported that the northern fur would move quickly, but that it was becoming increasingly more difficult to sell Detroit fur.<sup>57</sup> By September, however, it was all sold to Gauder and Lacombe, merchants of Montreal.<sup>58</sup> At Michilimackinac Louis Baby continued to trade.<sup>59</sup>

There are no remarkable events to catalogue for the year 1770, only the numerous small matters which might concern a merchant. Oats, peas, and Canadian-made chairs were all bought and sold by François Baby.<sup>60</sup> He and

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<sup>55</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 1 juin 1768".

<sup>56</sup>PAC, RG 4, B28, CX, 26, Licence to trade, 24 April 1769.

<sup>57</sup>PAC, bc, V, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 17 juillet 1769".

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., V, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 6 sept. 1769".

<sup>59</sup>PAC, RG 4, B28, CX and CXI, Licence to trade, 26 April 1769.

<sup>60</sup>PAC, bc, V, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 26 juin 1770".

other co-owners also sold a schooner, probably the sixty ton La Cathérine, which had been advertised for sale the previous spring.<sup>61</sup> He lent money jointly to a Quebec merchant and a farmer at 6%<sup>62</sup> and handled exports for the Montreal merchant Adhémar, who may have sold buckskins for him at New York or Philadelphia.<sup>63</sup> The case against Lotbinière was found in favour of Guinaud, who was awarded L868 10s.<sup>64</sup> François may have ended the year in Europe. The defunct firm of Guinaud and Hankey had expected him there to regulate accounts and devise a new "system".<sup>65</sup> In October his friend Mailhot even sent him letters to carry to London, expecting him to leave any day.<sup>66</sup> But there remain no letters either to or from François in

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<sup>61</sup>AJQ, rép. J. C. Panet, "Vente par MM. Baby, Marcou, Ve. Amiot et héritiers à M. J. Cureux, 5 mai 1780"; Quebec Gazette, 30 March 1769.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., "Obligation des Sr. Kirion et Cartier, fils, à Mr. Fr. Baby, nég., 30 oct. 1770".

<sup>63</sup>PAC, bc, V, "Adhémar à Fr. Baby, 1 oct. 1770"; "same to same, 5 nov. 1770".

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., V, "Sanguinet à Keller, 14 oct. 1769".

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., V, "Guinaud et Hankey à Fr. Baby, 4 jan. 1769".

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., V, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 2 oct. 1770".

Europe. Thus it is doubtful that he made even a brief trip to arrange his compte à demi with Robert Hankey.

From Detroit came the expected complaints. Dupéron, it was said, never ceased cursing the London merchants and was always ready to fight with "the famous merchant of [that] post", probably James Sterling. From the north there was good news. "Le Vieu" had made twenty-eight packs of the finest fur to be found in the Nipigon country.<sup>67</sup>

News from Hankey came with the spring ships. The last shipment of furs had been sold. François's proposal to sell half of their merchandise this fall and half the next was accepted. His two accounts -- "one belonging to us in our own right and not the other" -- were sent for his approval.<sup>68</sup>

The first canoes from Detroit brought Dupéron's acknowledgment that he had received the account of the

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., V, "Adhémar à Fr. Baby, 23 juillet 1770".

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., V, "R. Hankey à Fr. Baby, 31 mai 1770". The first of the two accounts mentioned appears to be the compte à demi.

sale of his furs, his wish that his order had been filled and the announcement of a new policy. He had given in and was now trading in luxury furs.<sup>69</sup> He was even more pessimistic than usual about the state of the trade.

Only the great capitalists were surviving:

Never has business been so bad because no one pays and no one has anything to sell except those who, sustained by the richest firms, search for occasions to ruin others, doubtless in the hope of taking over all business, something at which they have already succeeded. A revolution is to be hoped for.<sup>70</sup>

Events were already leading to the monopolization of the trade, and the French traders, in particular, were being eliminated. "It is useless to complain to you about the bad state of business," wrote Dupéron, "especially for we poor French."<sup>71</sup> Yet he was not without money, and in July he purchased 120 arpents of land on the south side of the Detroit river for L60, New York currency.<sup>72</sup>

In Montreal St. Georges was watching the fur market for François. He passed on prices to François, who

<sup>69</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 3 avril 1771".

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 14 juillet 1771".

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 22 août 1771".

<sup>72</sup>PAC, MG 18, I, 5, Notarial Records from Detroit, I, 274, 30 juillet 1771.

reported back what he was willing to pay. Keeping the identity of buyers secret was a standard procedure to prevent price increases due to open competition between rich firms.<sup>73</sup> The best fur came from the north with Blondeau in September and Todd in October.<sup>74</sup> Prices remained high. Whether from purchase in Montreal, from his own trade, or on behalf of Dupéron, François embarked furs valued at L380 sterling to Hankey in August and October.

The poor return on furs in London was making François suspicious. He had accused the London auctioneer, Robinson, of favouritism. This was a rebuke to Hankey, who chose the fur broker. François suggested that the customers of Aymart Nairt were better served. Smarting from this stinging comment, Hankey retorted that François's furs were always of poor quality and difficult for anyone to sell. This may have been true, since François handled large quantities of Detroit fur and only seems to have bought at Montreal when prices were low. Hankey added that Robinson sold two-thirds of all Canadian fur, including that handled by Nairt. Finally, he declined François's

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., VI, "St. Georges Dupré à Fr. Baby, 11 août 1771".

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., VI, "St. Georges Dupré à Fr. Baby, 2 sept. 1771"; "Guy à Fr. Baby, 5 oct. 1771".



offer to speculate in wheat that year, but promised to see if his Spanish friends were interested. There was also the small matter of a debt he asked François to collect for him.<sup>75</sup> François had also -- either with or for Dupéron -- sold some furs to a friend then living in London, Benjamin Comte. To Comte he summed up the year's business in the following way:

"We begin in our poor Quebec to feel the boredom brought by the rigour of the season: however the good business of last summer seems to restore somewhat the joy of those who profited from it. Certain barrels of Bordeaux wine suddenly arrived have contributed not a little to it. I have heard talk for some time of sumptuous dinners attended by persons in place. 76

François left the distinct impression that he was not one of the prosperous few; and what is more, the season had ended on a note of ill will with Hankey.

The first canoes going west in May 1772 carried François's advice on furs to Dupéron, who was complaining to his friends that for the first time ever he had not

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., VI, "R. Hankey à Fr. Baby, 4 déc. 1771".

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., VI, "Fr. Baby à B. Comte, 20 nov. 1771".

made his quota of packs.<sup>77</sup> On July 8 he sent down ten packs to Guy, had twenty more on hand, and expected another one hundred to come down. But for all that, he observed, "Business gets worse instead of getting better." His troubles were compounded by the almost total loss he had sustained on the previous year's furs. Since they had arrived too late to be sent to Montreal, he sold them at Detroit and invested the profit in cattle. Over the winter the cattle died.<sup>78</sup> The venture had been a disaster, but it was motivated by a desire to diversify which would be of great importance in the future.

Usually only the finest furs were sent to Montreal. Cheaper pelts, which would not bear the cost of transport, were sold at Detroit. However, François was anxious to get as much fur as he could. According to Comte, to whom Baby was directing some of his business, fur was selling at exorbitant prices in London, because of the imprudent eagerness of a large Paris firm.<sup>79</sup> LeCompte Dupré reported from Montreal that prices were acceptable, but that the voyageurs refused to let the buyers examine the contents

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., VI, "P. Guy à Fr. Baby, 15 juin 1772".

<sup>78</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 8 juillet 1772".

<sup>79</sup>PAC, bc, VI, "B. Comte à Fr. Baby, 25 avril 1772".

of the packs before purchase. "The voyageurs do not wish to sell otherwise; it is a plank drawn for others ..."<sup>80</sup>

The last furs sent to François in September came on his own schooner.<sup>81</sup> He was always at least part owner of one of these vessels and perhaps owned smaller craft. Making an offer for 1500 minots of wheat, he mentions that he would send batiments to pick it up.<sup>82</sup> Whether these were his own or another's remains a question.

In the winter of 1771 - 1772 Louis Baby wintered on Lake Superior, having failed to reach the Nipigon country. His engagé was pillaged, and all those who had reached Nipigon were murdered by Indians. His failure was thus the best of fortune.<sup>83</sup> The next winter he would go north once more and try his luck.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., VI, "Lecomte Dupré à Fr. Baby, 27 juillet 1772". I am indebted to Prof. F. Ouellet for the information that in the context of this document the phrase "vendu sans recette" appears to mean "sold without inspection". Thus it probably means the same as the frequently encountered "vendu sous cordes" which means selling fur packs unopened, a common practise of the period.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., VI, "P. Guy à Fr. Baby, 15 sept. 1772".

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., VI, "Fr. Baby à Desbarets, 13 fév. 1772".

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., VI, "Lecomte Dupré à Fr. Baby, 27 juillet 1772".

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., VI, "A. Dupré à Fr. Baby, 30 juillet 1772".

In his last letter to Detroit François had dared to suggest that the future was not all black and that the year's furs promised a reasonable return. This had been enough to raise Dupéron's temperature; and when his furs reached François by way of Guy in July 1773 they were accompanied by a violent ad hominum denunciation of the London merchants. If somewhat unfair, it still provides us with a glimpse of the predicament of the up-country trader, faced with the vicissitudes of a world market. The French-Canadian trader was particularly alarmed and confused, being accustomed to the price supports of the French regime:

That which I have sent is not large enough to recoup the losses that these London Gentlemen have made me suffer, -- apparently since they are not well off enough to satisfy their insatiable greed. I would really like to penetrate the intentions of these gentlemen when they see thus to prostitute our furs without condescending to resist it or at least to be concerned about those who work for them.

It seems to me these gentlemen think furs grow like grass in the woods and that we have no expense or trouble but to transport them and that easily, since they often make us loose our outlay and the greater part of the hunt.

If these insatiable gobblers of packs will deign to buy for our accounts the pelts which hardly pay their customs duty, they would make us realize at least a part of it at the exportation.

If they would throw them into the sea right away, we would have the assurance of not losing everything as we do now. But no, it is not thus that one acts honestly; it is necessary to make others fall to establish fortunes. Its the fashion: 22 Louis for 33 packs! 85

To add to Dupéron's difficulties, the news of the first sales in London was not encouraging. Thomas, Thomas and Son reported that Robinson had only sold François's last shipment of low quality fur with the greatest difficulty. Prices in general were low, and it was impossible to suggest the best type of fur for the next year.<sup>86</sup>

Marketing difficulties were having a pronounced effect on the habits of traders in Montreal. The temper of the time was demonstrated by their fruitless talk of entering into some kind of agreement on sales. What transpired was the reverse. Guy was making the rounds for François, checking all the newly arrived shipments. The merchants were surprised to see him since he never

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<sup>85</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 13 juillet 1773". The peculiar construction of the opening sentence of paragraph three may raise doubts. In the original it reads as follows: "si ses insatiables couffres à paquets d'aignoient accepter pour notre compte les peltries qui ne payent, qu'a peine leurs droit's dentrees. Ils nous en feroient du moins rentrer une partie à la sortie."

<sup>86</sup>PAC, bc, VI, "Thomas, Thomas et Fils à Fr. Baby, 10 juin 1773".

dealt in fur, and not everyone believed his story that for once he would make his payments to London in pelts.<sup>87</sup> According to Guy's report, after several days it became apparent that only Richard Dobie was buying. It was rumoured that he had 12,000 Louis in guineas and portugueses.<sup>88</sup> Prices remained steady as scores of merchants came and examined the furs, joked with the traders and left for home empty-handed. It was soon the opinion of the traders that they had been hoodwinked by the buyers who had pooled their money and given it to Dobie who purchased for all.<sup>89</sup> It was an excellent example of the growing tendency for merchants to combine in the face of difficult economic conditions. Suffering from more than his share of difficulties, Louis Baby soon arrived in Montreal, penniless, unable to pay a 260 shilling debt, and looking for a new backer.<sup>90</sup>

François Baby had decided to visit Europe. He embarked in October, leaving Guy his address with Thomas, Thomas and

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., VI, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 16 août 1773".

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., VI, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 23 août 1773".

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., VI, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 30 août 1773".

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., VI, "P. Mezière, notaire, à L. Baby, 6 juillet 1773".

Son and asking that he send the grain prices by the packets of November, December and January. He would be in Europe until the following May.<sup>91</sup> There was much to be done in France with regard to his family's old accounts; and, more especially, he was needed in London where things had not been completely satisfactory since the dissolution of Guinaud and Hankey. He was also charged with presenting to the ministry the view of his class that in any new form of government for Canada French interests and French participation should be considered. New Year's Eve he was in Paris where Thomas, Thomas and Son advised him of the arrival of his furs in good order.<sup>92</sup>

The price of wheat in Spain and Portugal showed no sign of improvement for the fall of 1774. The price would be determined by the number of vessels arriving. On the other hand, prices for fish oil had risen

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid., VI, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 26 sept. 1773".

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., VI, "Thomas, Thomas et Fils à Fr. Baby, 31 déc. 1773".

considerably. So wrote François from London.<sup>93</sup> On 18 May 1774 he arrived at Québec harbour aboard the Betsey, thirty-three days from the Downs. He had instructed Thomas, Thomas and Son to insure a £1200 cargo and 200 gold Louis, both of which he expected to send to London, the insurance charges being about 8%.<sup>94</sup> On arrival at Quebec he immediately sent Dupéron the account of the sale of his furs. Prices had been good and there would be much speculating in furs. Thus it was wise to sell at Montreal, where they would get the best price with the least risk, rather than in London.<sup>95</sup>

The most important result of François's European excursion was his liaison with a new supplier, Thomas Pecholier, who replaced Robert Hankey. According to every visible sign this was a fortunate and profitable alliance. The gossip that reached Detroit prompted Dupéron to congratulate François, observing, "I have

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., VII, "Fr. Baby à Guy, 20 mars 1774".

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., VII, "Fr. Baby à Guy, 25 mai 1774"; "Thomas, Thomas et Fils à Fr. Baby, 16 juin 1774"; Quebec Gazette, 19 May 1774.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., VII, "Fr. Baby à D. Baby, 15 juillet 1774".



learned that you were well stocked and that doubtless you are allied with a good firm."<sup>96</sup> Pecholier exacted the usual commission of 2½% for filling orders. His first shipment since François's arrival home consisted of 528 bars of Russian iron, 360 pairs of women's leather shoes, and 360 additional pair made "devilishly strong". There was to be a second shipment consisting of linen and goods that François had bought while in France.<sup>97</sup> Finally, in 1774 François deposited on account L272 90/ sterling with a London merchant named Aymare. This is a commercial link of which, other than this one transaction, we know nothing.<sup>98</sup>

In July Dupéron sent down an order for goods and promised thirty or forty packs. He was finding it difficult to keep costs down. Merchants from Albany and New York were selling at Detroit for the same price as he bought at Quebec. He declared that if he could have found a buyer with enough money, he would have sold everything

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<sup>96</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 8 sept. 1774".

<sup>97</sup>PAC, bc, VII, "Thomas Pecholier à Fr. Baby, 30 avril 1774".

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., VII, "Thos. Pecholier à Fr. Baby, 4 jan. 1774".

he had at Detroit and moved to Canada.<sup>99</sup> Louis was again trading at Michilimackinac, with a modest outfit valued at only L400.<sup>100</sup>

There remained one further item of importance during the year. Before leaving London François had made Pecholier promise to watch the fish and seal oil market. In April Pecholier replied that the general opinion was that oil would be expensive because of the closing of the port of Boston. In June he was also sure that prices on flour and wheat would be low because of good harvests in Spain, Portugal and France, and because the death of Louis XV had broken up the French wheat monopoly.<sup>101</sup> He was correct in neither case. By December he reported crop failures in Spain, Portugal and even Italy. He also admitted that there was only L2 difference in the price of oil in England and Canada, "which proves that in fact the blockade of the

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<sup>99</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 6 juillet 1774"; "Same to same, 8 sept. 1774".

<sup>100</sup>PAC, RG 4, B28, CXV, Licence to trade, 6 June 1774.

<sup>101</sup>PAC, bc, VII, "Thos. Pecholier à Fr. Baby, 30 avril 1774"; "Same to same, 18 juin 1774".

port of Boston has had no sensational effect on this liquid, as you had foreseen".<sup>102</sup> Although the price of oil remained normal, François had good reason to sustain his interest in that branch of commerce.

Louis Baby had had a successful year and in 1775 he more than doubled the value of his outfit, departing for Michilimackinac in April with L950 (Halifax) worth of merchandise.<sup>103</sup> At the same time Dupéron was sending down eighty packs to François. He wanted them sold right away on pretext of a preference, because almost all of the furs would be going by way of Montreal this year if political conditions did not change in the colonies to the south. Dupéron would postpone his own planned trip to Montreal since he was going in search of his debtors. His wife's pregnancy and a new arrangement he was making with another trader also prevented such a long trip.<sup>104</sup>

François was engaged in selling goods as diverse as

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<sup>102</sup>Ibid., VII, "Thos. Pecholier à Fr. Baby, 7 déc. 1774".

<sup>103</sup>PAC, RG4, B28, CXV, Licence to trade, 15 April 1775.

<sup>104</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 1 avril 1775"; "Same to same, 22 juin 1775".

shingles and grain.<sup>105</sup> He received yet another large shipment of ladies' shoes from Pecholier, together with a report that wheat prices would rise and oil prices remain steady.<sup>106</sup> François nevertheless remained interested in oil: the troubles in the English-speaking colonies might yet work to the disadvantage of their shipping.

Moreover, the Quebec Act had returned to Canada its ancient jurisdiction over the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The fisheries were again open to Canadians. In May François's young relative, Perrault, wrote to the seigneurs of Maingan, St. Augustin, and several other posts in the gulf and demanded the right to continue the enjoyment of the lease his father had formerly held on the Post of St. Augustin.<sup>107</sup> He received a flat refusal. His father's lease was held to have continued in force during the period when St. Augustin was under Labrador's jurisdiction and

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<sup>105</sup> PAC, bc, VII, "J. Jeanison à M. Baby 8 mars 1775"; "Hervieux à Fr. Baby, 16 mars 1775".

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., VII, "Thos. Pecholier à Fr. Baby, 4 jan. 1775".

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., VII, "M. Perrault aux Héritiers Lalande et Joliet, 5 mai 1775".

had expired the previous year. Since then all the posts had been leased to Dunn and Grant of Quebec except St. Augustin. The seigneurs, Taschereau, DeLaFontaine and Cugnet, planned to exploit that post on their own account.<sup>108</sup> But the seigneurs had not told all. Gentlemen they might have been, but after ten year's exclusion from their properties they were not a wealthy trio. Behind their schemes of exploitation were the wealth and the London connections of an un-named Quebec City bourgeois, none other than François Baby.

Bankruptcy and despair had taken their toll of Canada merchants in the fifteen years since Wolfe's victory. The Canadian merchant, faced with new suppliers, markets and modes of selling, and the British merchant, engaging for the first time in a trade with its own peculiar environment and methods, were each required to make important adjustments. Because of difficult economic conditions which had prevailed since 1769, competition within the Canadian trading community and between it and the merchants of Upper New York province had grown keener. The Babys had re-established their

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<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, "F. J. Cugnet à M. Perrault, 17 mai 1775". In fact, the lease to Dunn and Grant was signed in 1771. See AJQ, rép., J. C. Panet, "Bail à ferme des Postes ... 18 oct. 1771".

trade and held their own under these adverse conditions. It is significant, both of the difficulties of the fur trade and of their success in it, that both Dupéron and François had reduced their dependance on the traditional staple. Dupéron had invested in lands and a mill; François was buying and selling anything that might turn a profit. An astute merchant who lived in a busy mercantile and political centre and who had twice visited London, the second time as the political spokesman of the Canadian bourgeoisie, he had become a man to be noticed. Capital, connections, prestige: there was every reason why penurious gentlemen adventurers should find François an attractive partner. And a sealing venture was a tempting investment prospect for him. He may even have been dimly aware that the conjuncture of political events which made 1775 seem a propitious time to expand into the Gulf would convulse the traditional trade of the West.

CHAPTER THREE  
AN EXPANDING COMMERCE,  
1775 - 1789

Late in 1775 Thomas, Thomas and Son received a long letter from François Baby.<sup>1</sup> They were informed that he was now engaged in a sealing and fur-trading venture at the post of St. Augustin on the coast of Labrador, along with the proprietors of the post. Together they had invested L1400 sterling for the first year's operations. François was obliged to supply St. Augustin from Quebec and, in fact, had already sent a schooner to the post. But he wished to engage Thomas, Thomas and Son to sell the furs and oil in London. In the middle of March they should send a ship of about 120 or 130 tons to carry the year's product, which they should insure for L1500 sterling, to England. If they would credit the return on sale to François's account, he would provide his partners with their share. Seal skins being of little value on the London market, they would be carried to Quebec by another vessel. There was enclosed a letter

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<sup>1</sup>PAC, bc, VII, "Fr. Baby à Thomas, Thomas et Fils, 12 déc. 1775".

of introduction, describing the firm of Thomas, Thomas and Son as "one of the most solid and most honest", which their captain should present to François's associate and the master of the post, Joseph Lafontaine.<sup>2</sup> They should employ their credit with the ministry to ensure the post's protection from the Navy and to prevent the Crown from authorizing any English merchants to exploit it should Quebec fall to the rebels. François's own conduct in favour of the government should earn him favour at Quebec. If the government and the rebellious colonies should reach an understanding, no ship should be sent; the letter to Lafontaine should be burned. Mr. William Grant, who was passing to England, had great interests in the lower St. Lawrence and could enlighten them on many points concerning the region. In an act which was to prove definitive, François had transferred his major trading interest from the up-country to the gulf.

The St. Augustin venture was largely a matter of capital and connections, making few demands on François's time, which was now given up almost entirely to the military. With the blockade of Quebec in the winter of 1775-76, his importing business came to a standstill.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., VII, "Fr. Baby à J. Lafontaine, 21 nov. 1775".



There was no order for merchandise in his spring letter to Thomas Pecholier, in which he gave the latest news of the war and complained that his health had suffered from the exertions of the past six months.<sup>3</sup> Between 22 May and 13 July 1776 Gabriel Tachereau, Jenkin Williams, and himself made a tour of the district of Quebec to stamp out sedition and re-establish the militia in the parishes.<sup>4</sup> He accepted the duties first of captain and then of mayor of militia.<sup>5</sup> In August he was appointed commissioner of transport for the district at ten shillings a day.<sup>6</sup>

A letter of 17 August 1776 introduces us to another of François's business ventures.<sup>7</sup> This is the first reference to his ownership of a schooner named La Coquette.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., VII, "Fr. Baby à Th. Pecholier, 14 mai 1776".

<sup>4</sup>RAPO, 1927 - 1928, 435 - 499, "Journal tenu par Messrs. Frans. Baby, Gab. Taschereau et Jenkin Williams dans la Tournée qu'ils ont fait dans le District de Québec par Ordre du General Carleton tant pour l'Establissement des Milices dans chaque Paroisse que pour l'Examen des personnes qui ont assisté ou aider Les Rebels dont nous avons pris notes".

<sup>5</sup>PAC, series "C", MDCCXIV, 1, 13, 95.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., vol 372, p 206, 1 Aug. 1776.

<sup>7</sup>PAC, bc, VII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 17 août 1776". See also "Guy à F. Baby, 15 sept. 1772" (vol. vi) which suggests François may have owned La Coquette at that date.

He may already have owned this vessel for several years, because its captain, Augustin Dusseault, was the same man Guy referred to as the master of François's schooner in a letter of 1772. Its cargoes were provided by an agent, or coureur des côtes, François's old friend Mailhot. He was a grain buyer in his own right with depots at Boucherville, Varennes and Verchères along the edge of the grain-growing Richelieu basin. Mailhot's own wheat and wheat purchased by François might form the cargo for La Coquette, but more often the agent engaged cargoes belonging to other dealers. François often found buyers for these shipments, extracting the middleman's fee.<sup>8</sup> In the letter referred to, Mailhot advised him that he had a cargo of wheat that would be sent to Quebec along with some bricks accepted by Dusseault. Two more shipments of wheat were in readiness. In October he wrote that the schooner was unloading at Montreal and would soon pick up 1200 minots of wheat at Verchères. He also proposed a trip up the Richelieu.<sup>9</sup> At the same time Pierre Guy was demanding cargo space

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., VII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 9 oct. 1777".

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., VII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 24 oct. 1776".

for the return trip from Quebec to Montreal.<sup>10</sup>

In the spring came news of a disastrous season at St. Augustin. Although good arrangements with the Indians had been made for the future, only ninety barrels of oil and a few furs had been produced. Thus it was fortunate that no ship had come from England, François's letter perhaps having been lost at sea. Both the fur and oil were placed in his vaults at Quebec.<sup>11</sup> There is little else of importance to note for the year 1776. Guy placed a small order,<sup>12</sup> and Robert Hankey complained that some merchandise for their compte à demi remained unsold and made tentative suggestions for renewed business relations.<sup>13</sup> In November François's room-mate, Randle Meredith, received some furs that François had apparently sent from Montreal and spread them in the attic of their stone merchant's house at 10, rue Sous-le-Fort.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., VII, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 10 juin 1776".

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., VII, "F. L. Cugnet à Fr. Baby, 10 juin 1776".

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., VII, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 23 sept. 1776".

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., VII, "Robert Hankey à Fr. Baby, 21 juin 1776".

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., VII, "Randle Meredith à Fr. Baby, 5 nov. 1776".

Because Dupéron was conducting his affairs independent of François in these years, his letters to Quebec reveal little about business. The only breach in this silence was a thundering complaint in December 1775 that John Stedman, who owned the turnpike at Niagara, was charging outrageous tolls.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile Louis was not allowing the war to interfere with his now-successful trade and had departed for Michilimackinac with an outfit worth 11100 (Halifax), backed by Pierre Foretier and Jean Orillat.<sup>16</sup>

At Detroit Dupéron's support of the British cause was drawing the attention of the government. For example, when he asked to be considered as one who could furnish the troops "at as reasonable a rate as any other person", he earned the approval of the Superintendent of Vincennes, who wrote to Carleton that "to do justice to Mr. Baby his spirited behavior in behalf of Crown during the late Indian war merits the recommendation of every loyal

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<sup>15</sup>ASQ, fc, "Baby à Fr. Baby, 4 déc. 1775".

<sup>16</sup>PAC, RG4, B28, CXV, "License to trade, 12 July 1776".

subject".<sup>17</sup> There is nothing to suggest that he was awarded this lucrative contract; but his appointment as Captain of Indians and interpreter for the district of Detroit, in spite of its meager salary of two dollars per day, may be taken as a mark of favour.<sup>18</sup>

François was completely indifferent to the western trade at this time and was not even maintaining a friendly correspondence with his brother. In July 1777 Dupéron complained that he had not heard a word from him in two years. He was sending his furs to Montreal with St. Martin Adhémar and Bénac, who was now his partner. Bénac was instructed to seek François's advice on market conditions.<sup>19</sup> While in August Dupéron was growing angry at still receiving no reply,<sup>20</sup> Mme. Benoît was writing to François that Bénac could wait no longer. Her first letter had not been answered either, and Bénac had made his own arrangements. The furs were sold to William Macomb of Detroit who agreed to deliver at his own risk

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<sup>17</sup>PAC, Series "Q", XIV, 46, "Lt. Gov. Abbott, Sup. of Vincennes, to Sir Guy Carleton, 15 April 1777".

<sup>18</sup>OA, Baby Collection, "Commission, 24 June 1777".

<sup>19</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 1 juillet 1777".

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 15 août 1777".

their L3600 outfit for a transportation fee of 52½%.<sup>21</sup> François's reply did not arrive until after Bénac had left Montreal, and his apologies and explanations did not reach Dupéron until October.<sup>22</sup> Before the year was out he had sent a small shipment of calumets to Detroit.<sup>23</sup>

La Coquette recommenced her wanderings in early March with trips to Chambly, Bel-oeil and St. Charles, picking up wheat for both Mailhot and Mr. Jordan.<sup>24</sup> Further trips in July<sup>25</sup> and September are recorded, this last including stops at Boucherville, Varennes, Verchères and terminating at Quebec.<sup>26</sup> While Dusseault was unloading cargo at Sorel in late October, Mailhot went by horseback to Boucherville to take charge of wheat belonging to Jordan's associate, Mr. Drummond. Mailhot estimated that he would send François two schooners carrying 6500

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<sup>21</sup>PAC, bc, VII, "Mme. Benoit à Fr. Baby, 31 août 1777".

<sup>22</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 1 juillet 1777".

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 17 oct. 1778".

<sup>24</sup>PAC, bc, VII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 14 mars 1777".

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., VII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 25 juillet 1777".

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., VII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 14 sept. 1777".

minots of wheat, "which I hope you will use for the best in conformity with circumstances".<sup>27</sup>

In the same year we find reference to another schooner, La Cathiche, in which François had a one-third interest, the remaining two-thirds belonging to one Caron. In the spring Caron was having trouble finding cargo for the schooner;<sup>28</sup> and in the fall François was offering to buy him out, his suspected intention being to resell.<sup>29</sup>

With the blockade lifted, François was able to begin importing once more. In April Pecholier sent him a modest shipment of twenty-five cases of linen and the predictable supply of shoes, together valued at L330 15/3 sterling. Some lace and braid were expected from Calais, but had not yet arrived in London.<sup>30</sup> The small size of this order demonstrates that military duties, grain handling, general freighting and the labrador seal fishery had

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., VII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 27 oct. 1777".

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., VII, "A. Caron à Fr. Baby, 27 juin 1777".

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., VII, "A. Caron à Fr. Baby, 11 août 1777".

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., VII, "Th. Pecholier à Fr. Baby, 20 mars 1777".

superceded in importance the business of importing.

In June 1778 Dupéron sold 180 arpents of land on the south shore of the Detroit river together with house, barn and stone windmill for £1000 (New York).<sup>31</sup> The sale of this valuable property may have been occasioned by sickness which prevented his attending to business. Since February he had been suffering from an "inveterate ophthalmic fluxion" which lost him an eye.<sup>32</sup> But trade was not brought to a standstill. A bill of exchange for £1600 (New York) drawn by William and Alex. Macomb on Ellice and Co., probably for the previous season's furs, was sent to François.<sup>33</sup> His only exports to Dupéron that summer were a case of tomahawk-calumets,<sup>34</sup> a trunk of merchandise and a bale.<sup>35</sup> But in the fall Dupéron sent

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<sup>31</sup>PAC, MG 18 I, 5, 1, "Vente d'une terre par D. Baby à J. Drouillard, 16 juin 1778".

<sup>32</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 3 juin 1778"; "same to same, 30 Sept. 1778"; PAC, bc, VIII, "Mme. Benoit à Fr. Baby, 24 mai 1778".

<sup>33</sup>PAC, bc, VIII, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 17 oct. 1778".

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Guy à D. Baby, 6 mai 1778".

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Guy à D. Baby, 15 août 1778".



an order for thirty to forty thirty-six foot pieces of light Indian cotton, white or ecrue with printed figures; ten pieces of chintz, three or four pieces of printed cloth with black background, four pieces of Irish linen and 500 calumets, two-thirds of them stronger than the last shipment. There was also a large order for silverware for his personal use, and it was for this last item that most of the £1600 would be used.<sup>36</sup>

Toward the end of summer Louis and his son were daily expected at Montreal. Word had been brought by other traders that they had done well in the Illinois country.<sup>37</sup>

In March Mailhot reported that "after a multitude of referrals from Caiaphas to Pilate, of debates and delays", he had finally been paid for military transport undertaken by La Coquette. She would now return to the less bureaucratic merchant traffic. Mailhot had received

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<sup>36</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 17 oct. 1778". The first reference to this order for silver "I will try to send you some money or furs for silverware, real and not falsified") is in "same to same, 22 juin 1778".

<sup>37</sup>PAC, bc, VIII, "Mme. Benoît à Fr. Baby, 25 août 1778".

Jordan's promise that the schooner would be given first preference on 100 tuns of rum he planned to ship from Quebec to Montreal; François could make the necessary arrangements with Mr. Drummond. For a return voyage Mailhot had two full cargoes of wheat in his sheds at Verchères.<sup>38</sup> La Coquette is next heard of arriving on May 1 at Montreal, from where she proceeded to Verchères to take on a shipment of 4500 minots of wheat destined for the Allsopp mills at Jacques Cartier.<sup>39</sup>

In this period a great variety of merchandise and foodstuffs were shipped in barrels, and it was essential for anyone engaged in the freighting business to have a constant supply. Thus we find Pierre Guy purchasing empty barrels for François in Montreal.<sup>40</sup> On August 10 he loaded sixty-one aboard La Coquette.<sup>41</sup> The use of these barrels is in question, because two days later

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 19 mars 1778".

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 15 mai 1778"; "same to same, 9 mai 1778".

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 8 juin 1778"; "same to same, 11 juin 1778".

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 10 août 1778".

Mailhot reported sending the schooner from Verchères to Quebec with her only cargo 4308 minots of wheat and eighteen empty tuns belonging to Drummond and Jordan.<sup>42</sup> A week later Guy sent down an additional fifty-six barrels by another vessel.<sup>43</sup> The last to be heard from La Coquette was of a late autumn voyage from Quebec to Verchères and Varennes and a return voyage to take 2000 minots of Jordan's wheat from St. Ours to Quebec and 1500 minots of Mailhot's wheat from Verchères to Allsopp's mills.<sup>44</sup> Finally François increased his imports from Thomas Pecholier to £530 4/3 sterling, a 70% increase over the previous year.<sup>45</sup>

By the end of the year 1778 François no longer reported hearing talk of sumptuous dinners. Something of a gen en place himself with suitable military rank, he was attending them. At Easter St. Georges Dupré wrote to him, "I imagine you are like a butterfly, flying from belle to belle. I would have been charmed to have taken

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 12 août 1778".

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 20 août 1778".

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 21 oct. 1778".

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Th. Pecholier à Fr. Baby, 30 mars 1779".

part in all your celebrated fêtes . . . .<sup>46</sup> So we may imagine that the cares of business and war were not unrelieved by entertainments. François dined, danced and gained favour with the governing élite of his small provincial capital while, with the coming of winter, the seal hunt began at St. Augustin.

Lace and braid ordered in France two years earlier arrived in London in 1779 and were shipped to Quebec by Thomas Pecholier. He reminded François not to forget him when he placed his next order; but, perhaps because of the high war-time insurance rates, no order was placed.<sup>47</sup> Pecholier also advised François that he had paid £400 sterling from his account to Thomas, Thomas and Son. This may have covered expenses connected with St. Augustin. Lafontaine had done well over the past year, producing 360 barrels of oil which, sold at inflated prices, were sufficient to cover almost all of the post's past liabilities. There was another matter which deserved congratulations:

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., VIII, "St. G. Dupré à Fr. Baby, lundi gras 1778".

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., VIII, "Th. Pecholier à Fr. Baby, 30 mars 1779".

François had been appointed to the Governor's council.<sup>48</sup>

In April La Coquette was in the Richelieu river. Mailhot had bought 6000 minots of wheat in the area, of which the schooner could carry 4500 minots. He had already planned three more voyages to his three depots.<sup>49</sup> But after another reference in May<sup>50</sup> the continued wanderings of La Coquette drop from sight until 1782. No doubt the pattern of voyages already described continued without interruption.

Dupéron's eldest son Jacques had been in Canada since 1773 receiving his education under François's watchful eye. Now his two youngest brothers were being sent to the college at Montreal.<sup>51</sup> Louis had also commended his eldest son to François's care. He lived in Montreal with Mme. Benoît and, at his uncle's insistence, was learning English.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Randle Meredith à Fr. Baby, 30 mars 1779".

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 12 avril 1779".

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 10 mai 1779".

<sup>51</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 14 mai 1779"; "same to same, 23 août 1773".

<sup>52</sup>PAC, bc, VIII, "Mme. Benoit à Fr. Baby, 3 mai 1779".

François continued sending Dupéron numerous small items which he must have provided more easily or at a better price than the Montreal outfitters. In April two cases of tomahawk-calumets were shipped to Detroit by way of Guy.<sup>53</sup> Before the end of the year ten more small cases passed under Dupéron's mark, including some containing silverware, silver objects for the trade (argenterie sauvage), and window panes.<sup>54</sup>

Like François, Dupéron was forced to forego trade to some extent to fulfill his duties to the government. Captain Brehm of Detroit explained his situation thus to Haldimand:

I wish your Excellency could allow Mr. Baby the now acting Indien Commissary something more than the common and lowlified interpreters, who all have like he two Dollars pr. Day when Mr. Baby now is not able to mind his own bisnis of trade being interely taken up by the maniging of Indiens, and seen to lessen a good deal the gifts formerly given to them by his knolledge having lived among them so long in his jounger days. He seem to open himself of late a good deal more, seeing that more confidence is put in him by asking his opinions . . . . 55

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., VIII, "Guy à Fr. Baby, 22 avril 1779".

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., VIII, "Guy à D. Baby, 30 juillet 1779"; "Guy à F. Baby, 30 août 1779"; "St. G. Dupré à Fr. Baby, 26 août 1779"; "Guy à D. Baby, 14 sept. 1779".

<sup>55</sup> PAC, Haldimand Papers, XCIX, 93, "Capt. Brehm to Haldimand, July 5 1779".

Hoping that François could influence Haldimand in his favour, Dupéron stated the case more bluntly to his brother. "Observe," he wrote, "that I have the same pay as before being charged with the double burden of that which is called commissary and that I call enemy of repose."<sup>56</sup> But Governor Haldimand, that oracle of economy, did not squander high salaries even on those who enjoyed the pale light of his vice-regal favour. As evidence that Dupéron was appreciated, François was soon able to offer him a judicial position; but unsure of his qualifications, Dupéron refused the appointment.<sup>57</sup>

When Louis Baby left Detroit in April 1780 his destination was the Miamis country,<sup>58</sup> yet in June he was in Montreal. There the difficulty of finding an outfitter and the hope that the arrival of new merchandise would lower prices detained him. St. Georges confided to François that, "His hope is vain unfortunately because his situation is known. Nothing remains to him but the

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<sup>56</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 24 Sept. 1779".

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, nov. 1779".

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 30 avril 1780".

desire to do better, but I cannot hide from you that he is extremely reduced."<sup>59</sup> Mme. Benoît made him promise to reveal his situation to François.<sup>60</sup> But whatever help he may have received from his younger brother was of little avail, and in September he was back in Detroit, penniless.<sup>61</sup>

In May Dupéron received a shipment from François which included two or three hundred black helmet plumes, Indian cottons, five cases of capots, two cases of silverware and a letter advising him more silver and calumets were being sent. He immediately ordered the same quantity of calumets for the following year.<sup>62</sup> If this represents his entire import for the year, Dupéron was indeed neglecting his business. The job of Indian commissary, however, was providing compensations. In July the Potawotomies ceded him a piece of land on the west bank of the Detroit river having twelve arpent of frontage from the Red River toward

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<sup>59</sup>PAC, bc, VIII, "St. G. Dupré à Fr. Baby, 22 juin 1780".

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Mme. Benoît à Fr. Baby, 10 juillet 1780".

<sup>61</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 22 sept. 1780".

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 12 mars 1780"; "Same to same, 17 mai 1780".



the fort and being 120 arpent in depth.<sup>63</sup> In October the Ojibway ceded him an immense tract of land on the northwest side of the river leading from Lake St. Claire to Lake Huron beginning at the lower point of Ile au Cerf and extending to the entrance of Lake Huron thence along the bank five leagues and thence up the Du Lure River as far as it was navigable for rafting. The concession, on which he could cut timber, extended for five leagues on both sides of the river and included Ile au Cerf.<sup>64</sup>

1780 was not a good business year for François. In the autumn of 1779 a great loss had been suffered at St. Augustin by the depredations of enemy corsairs.<sup>65</sup> An element of mystery is introduced by a March letter from Thomas, Thomas and Son advising him that they had paid over the entire balance of his account, £815 sterling,

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<sup>63</sup>PAC, MG 18, I, V-2, 8, "Concession de terres fait à D. Baby par les Pouteautamis, 26 juillet 1780".

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., II, 44, "Concession de terres à D. Baby par les Odjipiwas, 19 oct. 1780"; and VI, 124, "Grant of land to Dupéron Baby by Ojibuias". Versions differ slightly.

<sup>65</sup>PAC, bc, VIII, "Randle Meredith à Fr. Baby, 6 avril 1780".

to Rivier, Crawley and Aguiton. They suggested that if he were in London the following year, they could discuss "these subjects". Thus these associates of twenty years standing disappear from François Baby's correspondence; and Rivier, Crawley and Aguiton, for their part, never appear.<sup>66</sup> It had been an unimpressive season, marked by the recovery from losses in the seal fishery, the termination of a venerable trade link possibly related to these losses, the presumed continued wanderings of La Coquette and the expedition a very small amount of merchandise to Detroit.

Politics were another matter. François maintained a position of complete accord with the reactionary Haldimand in council. Their personal relationship was friendly and marked by favours. Celebrated in this regard were the surreptitious purchases which François made as Haldimand's agent between May 1780 and April 1781 of several farmsteads near Montmorency Falls, which the general later consolidated into a country estate.<sup>67</sup> A woman of Boucherville was only

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., VIII, "Thomas, Thomas et Fils à Fr. Baby, 31 mars 1780".

<sup>67</sup> AJQ. See numerous documents indexed in the répertoire of J. A. Planté under the following dates: 9 mai 1780; 10 mai 1780; 13 juin 1780; 29 mars 1781; 10 avril 1781.

repeating common gossip when she wrote to François that she had heard he "was all-powerful next to His Excellency the General Haldimand".<sup>68</sup>

In 1781 Dupéron found a new Montreal agent in the person of his nephew, J. F. Perrault. Perrault had been trading in the Illinois country at least since 1779,<sup>69</sup> In 1780 he had failed to reach his trading ground because of the defeat of General Ealme in the Miamis country. Thus he found himself at Detroit, where Dupéron provided him with enough money to return to Montreal and charged him to sell 150 packs of fur and to fill a large order. One of the McGills offered him bills of exchange on London, and he solicited François's advice on their reliability.<sup>70</sup> However, in October Perrault still had his uncle's furs, apparently the same ones, because the going price was not satisfactory to Dupéron, even though the last vessels of the year were leaving Montreal.<sup>71</sup> Dupéron could afford to wait.

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<sup>68</sup>PAC, bc, VIII, "Mme. DeMuy Delisle à Fr. Baby, 26 avril 1781".

<sup>69</sup>PAC, Haldimand Papers, CIV, 158, "Haldimand to Lt. Col. Bolton, 30 Aug. 1780".

<sup>70</sup>PAC, bc, VIII, "J. F. Perrault à Fr. Baby, 2 juillet 1781".

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., VIII, "J. F. Perrault à Perrault l'ainé, 8 oct. 1781".

In January Louis was in the Miamis country, his situation as distressing as the previous year. He had made no satisfactory arrangements with his creditors. Dupéron considered that his expenses and the interest on his debts would exceed his profits. Although his situation was no better when he returned to Detroit in September, his greatest worry was then his son, who was growing lazy through lack of activity. As usual Louis's whole course of action dismayed his brother, who found everything he did extraordinary. Dupéron could not understand why he had not placed the youngster with a good merchant to learn to work.<sup>72</sup> In the fall of 1782 father and son left Detroit to winter among the Indians. Mme. Baby was staying with Dupéron as he and François had both urged. St. Georges observed that at last she was able to eat her bread in peace.<sup>73</sup>

In 1782 Dupéron added to his other commercial activities the lending of money. He advanced £699 (New York) to two traders in March.<sup>74</sup> Early in the spring he was in Montreal,

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<sup>72</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 8 jan. 1781"; "Same to same, 12 sept. 1781".

<sup>73</sup>PAC, bc, IX, "St. G. Dupré à Fr. Baby, 30 sept. 1782".

<sup>74</sup>PAC, MG 18, I, V-2, 144, 14 mars 1782 and 24 mars 1782.

where for £3000 he purchased two and one-half bateau loads of rum and wine and shipped them to Carleton Island to await the King's ships. Perrault and Simon Judah posted bond.<sup>75</sup> By early summer the total lack of goods at Detroit prompted him to demand four more bateaux of merchandise and one of spirits, valued at about four or five thousand Louis. The reason for the lack of goods at Detroit was the inadequacy of the transportation system which could barely handle the King's stores. Dupéron's two and one-half bateau loads of spirits were still at Carleton Island when his new order arrived, and Perrault and St. Georges both solicited François to obtain him a privileged pass for seven bateaux.<sup>76</sup> But Dupéron changed his mind again. Because of the poor sale of his fur, he decided to limit his imports to the rum and wine at the island depot.<sup>77</sup> But a pass for even this small amount of goods was refused, and they were to remain at Carleton Island until the following year.<sup>78</sup> Many merchants were

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<sup>75</sup>PAC, RG 4, B 28, CXV, Licence to trade, 1782.

<sup>76</sup>PAC, bc, IX, "J. F. Perrault à Fr. Baby, 5 août 1782"; "St. G. Dupré à Fr. Baby, 5 août 1782".

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., IX, "J. F. Perrault à Fr. Baby, 4 sept. 1782".

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., IX, "J. F. Perrault à Fr. Baby, 18 sept. 1782".

confounded in this breakdown of the Provincial Marine, and it was to lead to even greater agitation for freedom of navigation on the Great Lakes.

François's only export to Detroit was three cases of tomahawks.<sup>79</sup> The venture at St. Augustin was continued and La Coquette continued to load cargoes wherever she could find them. At the latest she left Montreal on Sunday, October 6, carrying passengers only bound for Verchères and Quebec.<sup>80</sup> And the record of her wanderings here ends as abruptly as it had begun six years before. We are left to conjecture whether she was sold, destroyed, or yet continued to carry grain for Mailhot and François. There is no record of any commercial dealings between Pecholier and François in 1782 or 1783. In the latter year his indigent niece, Mrs. Ryves of London, wrote to François asking for money. In his negative reply he may have bent the facts to better fit the circumstances, but there was an element of truth in his explanation that, "Unfortunately I abandoned at the beginning of the troubles with America

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., IX, "St. G. Dupré à Fr. Baby, 2 juillet 1782".

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., IX, "Mailhot à Fr. Baby, 14 sept. 1782"; "Same to same, 3 oct. 1782".

that business as agreeable as advantageous to devote myself to the service of the King."<sup>81</sup>

The war with the United States of America was finally over. But the elation that should have been brought by peace was dampened by the transfer of the western posts to the fledgling republic. Perrault saw it as a loss that could not be replaced by any other branch of commerce. Agriculture was the only resource remaining. Its slow operations were not to the taste of the English merchants, who sensing the void into which they were falling, already talked of searching elsewhere to flatter their ambition.<sup>82</sup> Still the Canadian fur trade continued as before. In May Dupéron was in Montreal to select his outfit.<sup>83</sup> In July and August furs were being sold as usual in the coffee house.<sup>84</sup> The Americans would not collect their western legacy for twenty years, but the influx of loyalist

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., IX, "Fr. Baby à Mme. Ryves, 24 oct. 1783".

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., IX, "J. F. Perrault à Perrault l'ainé, 4 mai 1783".

<sup>83</sup> PAC, RG 4, B 28, CXV, License to trade, 5 May 1783.

<sup>84</sup> PAC, Lindsey Morrison Papers, "J. M. Well to Morrison, 30 July 1783"; "J. M. Well to McMullon, 10 August 1783".

refugees and the desolation of the forest by American-Indian wars would change the up-country and its trade.

Although the years 1784 - 1786 were marked by an economic recession, they were a period of intense economic activity for Dupéron Baby. In 1784 he advanced loans totalling £750 (New York) for terms ranging from one month to three years.<sup>85</sup> The year was also marked by a small sale of land.<sup>86</sup> His position as Indian commissary was threatened, however, and in June he found it necessary to visit Governor Haldimand to clear himself of charges levelled against him by a fellow merchant.<sup>87</sup> He was apparently successful, for he returned home with a commission of the peace.<sup>88</sup> He had spent the entire summer in Canada and after saying farewell to his son Jacques, who was leaving for London to learn the business of trade with the firm of Phyn and Ellice,<sup>89</sup> he left for

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<sup>85</sup>PAC, MG 18, I, V-2, 352, 26 mars 1784, and 350, 2 avril 1784.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., vol. V-2, 362, 28 May 1784.

<sup>87</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 13 juin 1784".

<sup>88</sup>OA, Baby Collection, "Commission of the Peace, 6 July 1784".

<sup>89</sup>Quebec Gazette, 28 Oct. 1784. Dupéron's letters of this period and Mme. Casgrain's Mémoire should also be consulted.



home with twenty wintering engagés.<sup>90</sup> Such a large number of men were not usually necessary for a season's fur trading, and it is more probable that they were hired for extensive building and improvements at Detroit. However, they did nothing over the winter to overcome Dupéron's chronic pessimism. The lack of specie at Detroit made it difficult for him to recover what he had invested in the country. (That was an old complaint voiced as early as 1774.) But trade was depressed as well, making him hesitate before deciding on a buying trip to Montreal.<sup>91</sup> James McGill seconded his complaints and attributed the slowdown in commerce to the late arrival of merchandise at Detroit the previous year.<sup>92</sup> Thus it was probably the opening of Lake Ontario to private bateaux and canoes that changed Dupéron's mind; for in spite of his predictions to the contrary, he visited Montreal and brought home ten bateaux loaded with a £5000 outfit for which he posted his own

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<sup>90</sup>Massicôte, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10 August 1784.

<sup>91</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 24 mai 1785."

<sup>92</sup>PAC, MG 21 F #4, "James McGill to Hugh Finlay, 5 July 1785".

bond together with J. F. Perrault.<sup>93</sup> This was the largest recorded outfit of his career.

With this large import safe in his stores, he charged the other merchants of Detroit with overstocking the country. He was also predicting that an Indian-American war would reduce all to bankruptcy.<sup>94</sup> His temper was not improved when he learned that Phyn and Ellice had dismissed his son for marrying an actress. Jacques was kept out of his father's way by William Macomb, who took him on a business trip to New York.<sup>95</sup> In September Jacques was back in Montreal with no job, no place to go, and no invitation home.<sup>96</sup>

Early in the spring Louis had arrived at Detroit ill. On May 8, after much suffering, the taciturn and unlucky eldest brother died. He had been trading in the Miamis country on the basis of an arrangement with Dupéron,

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<sup>93</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 17 sept. 1785"; PAC, RG 4, B 28, CXV, trade licence.

<sup>94</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 15 oct. 1785".

<sup>95</sup>This marriage is mentioned specifically only in Mme. Casgrain's Mémoire. Dupéron's letters allude to it, and Perrault refers to "his indiscretion" (PAC, bc, IX, "Perrault à Fr. Baby"). It was Mme. Casgrain's position that a father who in his youth had an illegitimate child by the wife of Chief Blue Jacket should have been more sympathetic to his son.

<sup>96</sup>PAC, bc, IX, "J. F. Perrault à Fr. Baby, 16 sept. 1785".

"which had not been lucrative this year like all those of this country". One of the Porliers was sent to liquidate the affair as well as another at Vincennes in which Louis had had one-fifth interest.<sup>97</sup> Mme. Baby went to Canada with Dupéron while young Louis returned to the fur trade.<sup>98</sup>

The next year open conflict flared up between Dupéron and a fellow merchant. In 1782 Delawares and Moruviens who had been taken prisoner by Detroit Indians were invited by Dupéron, as Indian commissary, to occupy a tract of land he had received from the Ojibway two years before. They now returned to their own country, selling their houses to a Major Ancrum and the merchant John Askin. This pair claimed that 2000 arpents of land were included with each of their purchases. Dupéron wrote a stormy letter to François claiming not only this land but 5000 arpents which Lt. Gov. Hamilton had promised him as Captain of the Indian Department. He predicted that, "If Mon. Askin, the instigator of this usurpation, is tolerated in this

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<sup>97</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 24 mai 1785".

<sup>98</sup>PAC, bc, IX, "Louis Baby fils à Fr. Baby, 4 juillet 1785".

maneuver, nothing will stop him in his pretensions."<sup>99</sup>

Dupéron took time out from this local dispute to return to Montreal where he purchased an outfit of £3000 value, again on security of himself and Perrault.<sup>100</sup>

His large outlays of capital since the end of the war demonstrate sufficiently that Dupéron was doing well. His complaints, however, were not all products of his imagination. He was succeeding in spite of an economic recession. In 1786 Perrault observed that, "Commerce is in total prostration in the absence of circulating specie. I see with chagrin that this profession is unable to pay household expenses."<sup>101</sup> This adverse situation was affecting other colonial economies as evidenced by the following observation from Martinique:

For a long time [business] had been generally bad everywhere. We are feeling the effects of this epidemic here by the lack of money. An untold sum has left these colonies since the peace, both by commerce with Europe and by that with the continent of America. 102

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<sup>99</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 8 mai 1786".

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, juillet 1786"; PAC, RG 4, B 28, CXV, trade licence.

<sup>101</sup>PAC, bc, X, "J. F. Perrault à Fr. Baby, 2 jan. 1786".

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., X, "J. Pitard à Perrault l'ainé, 20 fév. 1786".

François does not appear to have reacted to this post war crisis with any great vigor. In 1784 he lost 1000 Louis through a bad investment.<sup>103</sup> His only recorded order of merchandise from London was for a small amount of lace and satin.<sup>104</sup> This was probably for his wedding, for if nothing else should distinguish this drab period, on 27 February 1786, at the age of 53, he was married to Marie Anne Tarieu de Lanaudière, the aging daughter of an important seigneurial family.<sup>105</sup>

There was, however, during these years one important undertaking to which François looked forward, the farm of the King's Posts, a string of fishing and fur-trading stations along the north shore of the lower St. Lawrence. The twelve-year lease on St. Augustin would terminate in 1786. Evidently this venture had been successful enough to encourage him to further investments in the region.

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<sup>103</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 10 sept. 1784".

<sup>104</sup>PAC, bc, IX, "F. Baby à Th. Pecholier, 12 déc. 1785".

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., X, "St. G. Dupré à Fr. Baby, 27 fév. 1786".

The King's Posts were in the gift of the Crown and could constitute a reward for faithful service. There was apparently some understanding between Haldimand and his staunchest supporters in the council that their loyalty would be thus rewarded. On the 25 October 1784 Haldimand wrote at length to Lord Sydney, the Home Secretary, explaining that the posts were let to Messrs. Dunn and Grant by Governor Murray in 1762, that the lease had expired and that he recommended that the posts be leased for sixteen years to Alexander Davison, John Lees and François Baby. The first, he explained, was the government's very satisfactory supplier of Indian presents, whereas the latter two were gentlemen who served in the militia during the blockade of Quebec and were "well attached to His Majesty's Government".<sup>106</sup> Shortly thereafter Haldimand departed permanently for London where in March 1785 he was contacted by Lord Sydney's son, Townshend. Townshend wished he "would favour him with the names of such gentlemen as you think ought to be benefited by the grant, as my Father is desirous of inserting all their names in it."<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>PAC, series "Q", XXIII, 381, "Haldimand to Sydney, 25 Oct. 1784".

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., XLV, 127, "Townshend to Haldimand, 8 March 1785".

In reply Haldimand referred to his letter of October 25, describing it slightly incorrectly. He suggested the lease be granted to George and Alexander Davison, with no mention of Lees. The omission is not of great importance since Lees and the Davisons were closely connected and no matter which of their names might appear on the lease, all three would be represented. Haldimand mentions François as if his inclusion were a new idea, but this impression was probably not intended. There was one further recommendation. Since October the old lessees had not been inactive, and Mr. Dunn had made application for a share of the lease. Haldimand now suggested that, "Should your Lordship approve of it, I have no objection to Mr. Dunn's being included with Messrs. Davison taking in with Mr. Babbie (who has proved himself a very deserving servant of the Crown) for one-third part of the lease."<sup>108</sup> Sydney accepted this and sent off instructions on March 15 to Lieutenant Governor Hamilton, directing him to draw up the new lease.<sup>109</sup> The news of the lease spread through Quebec after the arrival of the Lynniade in port with

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., XXIV, pt 1, "Haldimand to Sydney, 10 March 1785".

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., XXIV, pt 1, "Sydney to Lt. Gov. Hamilton, 15 March 1785".

letters from London<sup>110</sup> on May 15. Only the day before Dunn and Grant had applied for a renewal of their old lease and by way of justification presented a memorial describing how much they had lost because of the depredations of enemy corsairs during the revolution. Attorney General Monk rendered a legal opinion in their favour, and on the 18 Hamilton secretly renewed the lease in spite of the common talk of a new lease<sup>111</sup> as well as Haldimand's written instruction that he should await orders from London.<sup>112</sup> Lees insisted that Provincial Secretary William Pownall admitted to knowing all about the new lease even as he signed the renewal of the old and assumed that every gentleman in Quebec knew about it.<sup>113</sup> Lees bided his time until on the 22 he received a letter from George Davison in London enclosing another from Sydney to Hamilton announcing the new arrangement. He immediately presented the letter to Hamilton, who handed it back to him to

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<sup>110</sup>PAC, CO 42, XLVIII, 228, "Lees to Hamilton, 26 May 1785".

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., XLVII, 259, "Hamilton to Sydney, 26 May 1785".

<sup>112</sup>PAC, bc, IX, "Fr. Baby à Gen. Haldimand, 4 juin 1785".

<sup>113</sup>PAC, CO 42, XLVIII, 228, "Lees to Hamilton, 26 May 1785".



examine. Hamilton was cordial, if non-committal. The next day the renewal of the old lease was made public. As far as Lees was concerned the whole affair had been engineered simply because Hamilton opposed every plan of General Haldimand's and "we had been protected by General Haldimand".<sup>114</sup> A series of curt, laconic notes passed between Hamilton and Lees and François terminating in Hamilton's impudent advice that, "If the answers hitherto given do not appear satisfactory, your council will I presume instruct you how to proceed."<sup>115</sup> Hamilton had placed himself in an untenable position.

Needless to say, François was soon writing to Haldimand the details of the unsavory business. Dunn's inclusion in the new lease was evidence that he and Grant were well aware of Sydney's intentions. François suspected that the renewal of their old lease was a stratagem to give them time to withdraw everything of value from the posts and to persuade the Indians to abandon them for their new establishment in the neighbouring seigneurie of Milles Vaches, which they had recently purchased. The departure of their associate, Stuart, to that neighbourhood confirmed his suspicions. If the posts had been evacuated by the old

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<sup>114</sup>Ibid., XLVIII, 237-240, "Lees to Nepean, 2 June 1785".

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., XLVIII, 230, "Hamilton to Lees, 30 May 1785".

lessees in an orderly manner, the new lessees could have sent observers to see that nothing was done to injure the posts or debauch the Indians.<sup>116</sup> With the powerful support of Haldimand, François and his associates were prepared to oppose Hamilton all the way. Their own legal counsel, Alexander Gray, gave his opinion that the renewal of the old lease was illegal, since the disposal of lands must be done under the Seal of the Province with the consent of the council. Hamilton's lease under the Seal of Arms was not binding on the Crown.<sup>117</sup> With the contrary opinions of Monk and Gray before him, Sydney referred the whole case to William Selwyn of Lincoln's Inn. Examining the original lease of 1762, Selwyn decided it held until 1 October 1786 and then for nine years more if no notice were given of its termination. Haldimand's timing had been off. No order to quit the posts had been given before June 1785 and therefore the old lessees should be given until 30 September 1786 to quit the posts. Hamilton's renewal was nevertheless

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<sup>116</sup>PAC, bc, IX, "Fr. Baby à Gen. Haldimand, 4 juin 1785".

<sup>117</sup>PAC, CO 42, XLVIII, "Legal opinion of Alex. Gray, 28 May 1785", enclosure to "The Memorial of John Lees on behalf of Alexander Davison, George Davison and Francis Baby", (p 225).

inadmissible.<sup>118</sup> On August 13 Hamilton was dismissed.<sup>119</sup> If Dunn and Grant had merely staged a stalling action as François believed, then it would appear that they had tricked Hamilton into believing that they should by right be accorded a renewal. On the other hand it should be mentioned that Lord Sydney was a man who had difficulty making up his mind. After the interview by which he succeeded in having his name inserted into the new lease, Dunn may have been convinced Sydney would give in to a firm stand. In either case Dunn and Grant played on Hamilton's own deepest prejudices for their advantage. Whatever the whole truth may have been, Hamilton's public career was at an end.

The old lease was cancelled, but while the time for supplying the posts came nearer and nearer, Sydney could make no final decision on the fate of the new lease. Grant was in London trying to influence the government through his Scottish friends. Evan Nepean persuaded Haldimand to take strong stand on behalf of his friends,<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., XLVIII, 250, "Wm Selwyn to Lord Sydney, 11 Aug. 1785".

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., XLVIII, 29, "Sydney to Hamilton, 13 Aug. 1785".

<sup>120</sup> PAC, Haldimand Papers, LXXVI, 135, "Evan Nepean to Haldimand, Dec. 1785".

and Sydney was thereby persuaded to accord them the new lease on 10 April 1786.<sup>121</sup> Dunn, of course, had forfeited any right to a portion by his scandalous behaviour, and the lease was made out two-thirds to the Davisons and one-third to François. In view of his predecessor's difficulties, the new Lieutenant Governor kept a strict record of all his actions after receiving Sydney's instructions at 9:00 a.m., June 4. Several days of negotiation were required to bring the new lessees to tentative acceptance of the old lessees' demand that they be paid for improvements they had made to the posts as well as for stock on hand and debts owed them by the Indians. At last the new lease was signed on June 21.

François busied himself trying to find staff for the posts, many of the old employees having left for Milles Vaches. A Mon. Badeau was unable to find anyone skilled in the Indian languages at Trois Rivières.<sup>122</sup> A Mon. Riverin found him one man,<sup>123</sup> and one Giasson of Montreal accepted a position as commis as did one Constant

<sup>121</sup>PAC, CO 42, XLIX, 283, "Sum of dates and references in the business of a new lease on the King's Posts".

<sup>122</sup>PAC, bc, X, "Badeau à Fr. Baby, 17 août 1786".

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., X, "Riverin à Fr. Baby, 1786".

hired by Alexander Gray.<sup>124</sup> Although its first year must have been rather chaotic, the new Société de Québec was becoming firmly established. Thus it is particularly surprising to find that on September 9 François sold his entire interest in the lease for £150 (Halifax) to be paid to him on the first of October every year for the next ten years and subsequently for each year that the lease might be continued.<sup>125</sup> This was the last large capital venture in which we find him involved. Perhaps the possibility of stiff competition from Dunn and Grant introduced too much risk for this cautious commercant, who was by no means of an age to retire from the trade. The only alternative is that, having used him because of his friendship with Haldimand, his associates forced him out. But this is unlikely. In his letters Haldimand dwells more on the Davisons than on him. François was comfortable with what he had and saw no need to tempt fortune.

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., X, "Giasson à Fr. Baby, 27 août 1786".

<sup>125</sup> AJQ, rép. P. L. Deschenaux, 9 sept. 1786, "Vente par Fr. Baby à Alex. Davison et L'Hon. George Davison...".

By the Quebec Gazette of 11 December 1788 we learn that François, by inheritance from the estate of his father-in-law, was co-seigneur of St. Valier and St. Pierre des Bequets.<sup>126</sup> Councillor, Commissioner of Transport for the District of Quebec, Lieutenant Colonel and Adjutant General of the Militia, Seigneur: François Baby was beginning to look less and less like the young bourgeois of 1760.

In 1787 Dupéron purchased an outfit valued at £1500 for which François and Thomas Forsyth of Forsyth, Richardson and Co., who by that time handled all Dupéron's furs in Montreal,<sup>127</sup> posted bond.<sup>128</sup> They again acted jointly as surety in 1788. That year's shipment was taken to Detroit by Jacques, who was again in his father's good graces.<sup>129</sup> Besides the Indian trade and retail selling, Dupéron also dealt in grain, in which he had probably been interested since he built his first mill in 1768. According to a family mémoire, Dupéron owned thirty slaves. This suggests an exploitative, commercial, or

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<sup>126</sup> Quebec Gazette, 11 Dec. 1788.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 20 fév. 1788".

<sup>128</sup> PAC, RG 4, B 28, CXV, Licence to trade, 1787.

<sup>129</sup> ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, juin 1788".

plantation, form of agriculture which existed in French Louisiana.<sup>130</sup> His account book for 1788 takes cognizance of sales and purchases of wheat, flour, oats and maize.<sup>131</sup> Now he could take pride in the large developed tract of 1440 arpents south of Fort Detroit on the American side of the river, boasting two water-powered flour mills, private water courses and roads. On the British side of the river was the "farm", 720 arpents with a house, barn and outbuildings. There were other smaller farms with buildings and the immense tract of timber land north of Lake St. Clair, which the American authorities would probably never recognize as his. When he and Suzanne were married in 1760 they had no real property between them.<sup>132</sup> Thus he might look about him with some satisfaction. He was one of the twenty most important merchants of Detroit, where he had seen hundreds fail in the past thirty years.<sup>133</sup> He still carried on trade, his investments were considerable and he was honoured by all.

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<sup>130</sup>ASQ, fc, MFC

<sup>131</sup>OA, Baby Collection, "Livre de compte de Dupéron Baby, 12 jan. 1788 - 31 sept. 1791".

<sup>132</sup>AJQ, rép. J. A. Planté, #2508, 8 nov. 1800, "Inventaire de la communauté des biens de Jacques Dupéron Baby et Suzanne Réaume Baby"; #2510, "Partage des biens entre Dame Ve. Dupéron Baby et ses Enfants".

<sup>133</sup>This we surmise from "Address to Mj. Close 6th Regt on delivering over command of the garrison, signed by the merchants and other inhabitants of Detroit", Quebec Gazette, 27 August 1789.

In 1787 Dorchester had appointed him Lieutenant Colonel of the Detroit militia.<sup>134</sup> The following year he had received a commission as judge, which neither his knowledge of the law nor his health would permit him to accept.<sup>135</sup> However, he did accept appointment to the land board of Hesse.<sup>136</sup> Yet in spite of his success, he might be alarmed at the ominous decline in the south-west trade, a trade in which he had spent all his adult life. The difficulties of the south west were noted by John Richardson as he moved westward in late September 1789, with a stock of merchandise. "Trade at Detroit very bad," he wrote, "Returns of last season are deficient beyond example -- Not 1900 packs are sent from thence this year . . . Mich'a is far preferable to Detroit, as being more out of the way of either Military or commercial interference from the States."<sup>137</sup> The region of the lower lakes was changing; the wild fur country of the old days was giving way before the insolent onslaughts of the young republic,

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<sup>134</sup>OA, Baby Collection, "Commission, 1 May 1787".

<sup>135</sup>ASQ, fc, "D. Baby à Fr. Baby, 6 sept. 1789".

<sup>136</sup>Quebec Gazette, 2 April 1789.

<sup>137</sup>PAC, MG 24, GIII, 7, Letters of John Richardson, "Richardson to Porteous, Oswego, 23 sept. 1789".



leading irrevocably to Fallen Timbers and Tippecanoe. At the sunset of the old order it was fitting that Richardson could report: "Poor Baby died at Detroit about the first of August, universally regretted -- He has not left such a Frenchman behind him."<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup>Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR  
A TIME OF REAPING,  
1789 - 1820

Dupéron had made his will in 1786, surrounded by his friends Monforton, Navarre, Perthuis, Réaume, Bonaventure and William Macomb. His debts were to be paid, and 200 gold Louis were to be given to the poor. The remainder of his estate was to be placed at the disposal of his wife, who was to be bothered by no demands from her children, nor even by the necessity of authorizing an inventory. Mme. Baby remained at Detroit until 1796 when she moved to Canada with her younger children, leaving Jacques to administer the family's trade, mills and lands.<sup>1</sup> In 1800 Mme. Baby decided to settle estates on her children and make provisions for keeping intact the family's holdings at Detroit. The estate was to be divided, one half for herself and one half for her eleven living children. Thus a number of inventories were made, revealing the size of the estate. Dupéron had been dead for twenty

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<sup>1</sup>AJQ, rép. Planté, No. 2508, "Inventaire de la communauté des biens de Jacques Dupéron Baby et Suzanne Réaume Baby, 8 nov. 1800".

years, but there had been neither financial disaster nor success sufficient to alter significantly the "classification" or "rank" of the family fortune. £23,908 7/7 (New York) had been invested with Alexander Ellice of London. Various members of the family had borrowed from the estate sums totalling £7666 1/6½ (New York). Lands and buildings were valued at £5600 (New York), and sale of movables at Detroit produced £2000 (New York). Various furnishings were valued at £52 4/6 (Halifax); the silver collection was worth £244 17/2½ (Halifax); French and Portuguese coins totalled £23 /2 (Halifax). There were debts of doubtful collection owed to the family totalling £6055 8/1 (New York). Charges against the estate were insignificant. Ignoring the debts owing mentioned above, the estate was worth £39,174 9/1½ (New York) and £346 /10¼ (Halifax), or about £24,570 sterling.<sup>2</sup>

Although the inventories provide a satisfactory picture of the size of the Dupéron Baby holdings and the proportions of them represented by cash, investments, real estate and active debts, they do not reveal whether it was Dupéron or his heirs who had begun the practice of

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<sup>2</sup>AJQ, rép., Planté, No. 2510, "Partage des biens entre Dame Ve. Baby et ses enfants".

placing profits at interest with Alexander Ellice in England rather than re-investing them in the trade. In either case, a very large portion of the family's liquid assets was collecting 5% per annum in safety rather than serving as risk capital. In a letter of 1792 Jacques advised Francois that he was leaving for New York "to retire our money . . . you would infinitely oblige me if you would write me in New York and indicate the best ways of investing this money in England . . . ." <sup>3</sup> This seems to have been the money invested with Ellice, for his payments of £13,908 7/7 and £10,000 (New York) were made by bills of exchange dated New York, 7 June 1794. Half of the £10,000 was used to pay debts owed to Forsyth, Richardson and Company, the remaining £5000 being placed with them at interest. The second bill of exchange was still in Mme. Baby's hands (collecting interest) in 1800. Thus it appears that no re-investments had, in fact, been made. <sup>4</sup>

While this large amount of money was withdrawn from the trade, Jacques cannot be said to have totally ignored

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<sup>3</sup>PAC, bc, XI, "Jacques Baby à Fr. Baby, 28 sept. 1792"; "Jacques Baby à Fr. Baby, 18 nov. 1792".

<sup>4</sup>Notes 1 and 2.

the possibilities of commerce. In 1790 he imported an outfit valued at £2000, Thomas Forsyth and François Baby posting bond.<sup>5</sup> François sent Jacques the usual shipment of tomahawks in 1792 by way of Forsyth, Richardson and Co.<sup>6</sup> Jacques's younger brother, François, was also a merchant at Detroit, but the remaining brothers chose other careers. According to the inventaire Jean Baptiste farmed family lands near Detroit. Daniel, Antoine and Louis all joined British regiments as officers. Pierre studied medicine in Edinburgh.<sup>7</sup> In 1792 Jacques was appointed to the legislative and executive councils of Upper Canada,<sup>8</sup> became lieutenant of the County of Kent and was promised by Simcoe judgeships in the Court of Common Pleas and the surrogate court. He explained to his uncle François that he was chosen as the representative of the French Canadians in his province, "who have no other

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<sup>5</sup>PAC, RG 4, B 28, CXV, Licence to trade, 1790.

<sup>6</sup>PAC, bc, XI, "Jacques Baby à Fr. Baby, 25 juin 1792".

<sup>7</sup>(Abbé Daniel) Nos Gloires Nationales, ou, Histoires des Principales Familles du Canada (Montreal: E. Sénécal, 1867), II, 46.

<sup>8</sup>PAC, bc, XI, "Jacques Baby à Fr. Baby, 25 juin 1792"; "Same to same, 18 juillet 1792", which includes the following delightful comment: "Mon petit amour propre s'est senti aiguilloné en me voyant a cote d'un Gouverneur devant tout un public; Je prendrai garde cependant que la sensation ne passe pas au dehors . . ."

support than me amongst them".<sup>9</sup> He was at Sandwich in 1797 to choose the twenty to thirty thousand acres given the family by the Crown. He feared that the American government would not recognise their Indian grants in the United States, but could find no Americans in the region rich enough to buy them.<sup>10</sup> These lands were confiscated in 1812, but by then Jacques, a wealthy man and a colonel in the militia, was already providing himself with the appropriate mythology of a charter member of the Family Compact.

At Quebec François was leaving commercial ventures behind him. He explained to Ferrault that he now consulted his wife on business affairs; and that since she would doubtless outlive him, she discouraged any undertaking that might leave her with an inadequate income for her large family.<sup>11</sup> In 1792 François advertised for sale or rent his merchant's house at 10 rue Sous-le-fort and moved into a handsome stone dwelling on the rue du Parloir

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., XI, "Jacques Baby à Fr. Baby, 12 juillet 1793".

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., XII, "Jacques Baby à Fr. Baby, 25 oct. 1797".

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., XI, "Fr. Baby à Perrault, 13 jan. 1791".

in the Upper Town.<sup>12</sup> He bought a large plot of ground on St. Louis Street in 1797 and, semi-retired, turned to gardening. "Perhaps you think it is too late for me to become a gardener," he wrote to Guy, "but you have to blame the inconstancy of human nature which finds pleasure only in novelty."<sup>13</sup> There is only his little shipment of tomahawks in 1792 to suggest that François dabbled in commerce at all after his decision to sell his share of the King's Posts. He engaged modestly in money lending. His loans, or constitutions de rente, were let at 6% interest on the original principal until fully repaid. Some twelve loans he is known to have made between 1789 and 1816 vary in size from £19 10/ to £625, currency of

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<sup>12</sup>Quebec Gazette, 8 March 1792; AJQ, rép. Deschenaux, documents relative to the purchase of a house on rue du Parloir from the Tarieu de Lanaudière estate with the following dates: 23 sept. 1790; 23 mars 1793; 26 août 1793. Mr. A. J. H. Richardson has informed me that this is not the present rue du Parloir, but another street of the same name where the archepiscopal palace is now situated. The house is illustrated in Henri Têtu, Histoire du Palais Episcopal de Quebec (Québec: Pruneau, 1896) facing 144.

<sup>13</sup>PAC, bc, XII, "Fr. Baby à Guy, 27 avril 1797".

the province.<sup>14</sup>

A decree of February 1792 announced that the new province of Lower Canada was to be divided into townships. It was later made public that François and other executive councillors would each be granted 12,000 acres of the newly surveyed land.<sup>15</sup> In 1808 François received thirty-eight lots or 7340 acres in the Township of Sherrington,

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<sup>14</sup>AJQ, rép. Deschenaux, "Const. de rente, Joseph Mounier à Fr. Baby, £194 8/ , 11 août 1789"; "Const. de rente, Ignace Aubert de Gaspé à Fr. Baby, £19 10/ , 28 juin 1790"; "Const. de rente Seminaire de Québec à Fr. Baby, £500, 10 déc. 1791"; "Const. de rente, M. Gaspé à Fr. Baby, £150, 10 juin 1794". Rép. Planté, "Const. de rente, Fr. Duval à Fr. Baby, £100, 8 juin 1795"; "Const. de rente, J. B. Hartel de Rouville à Fr. Baby, £625, 26 fév. 1788"; "Const. de rente, Ch. de Lotbinière à Fr. Baby, £100, 14 mai 1798"; "Const. de rente, Dubord à Fr. Baby, £100, 15 août 1798"; "Const. de rente, P. L. Duchesnaux à Fr. Baby, £300, 25 fév. 1797"; "Const. de rente, J. de Longueuil à Fr. Baby, £625, 15 mars 1805"; "Const. de rente, C. Brassaud Deschenaux, ptre, à Fr. Baby, £42, 26 mars 1806"; "Const. de rente, M. de Lanaudière à Fr. Baby, £19 10/ , 8 avril 1816".

<sup>15</sup>PAC, Series "S", Lower Canada Land Petitions, VIII, "Petition of Fr. Baby for land in township of Wolfestown, 15 May 1816". In this petition François mentions that the Duke of Portland instructed Milne to give him and other councillors 12,000 acres each in 1801. However, Fr. was petitioning for land on the basis of the terms of royal instructions of Feb. 1792, since that date. See "Fr. Baby and Associates petition for lands in Sherrington township, 15 May 1792".



where Babyville was established.<sup>16</sup> An additional nineteen lots or 4657 acres in Tingwick township were granted in 1818 to complete the total.<sup>17</sup> In the same years he received 1000 acres in Chester Township for having served in the Quebec militia during the blockade of 1775 - 76.<sup>18</sup> These land development projects were François's last capital ventures. They were capitalistic undertakings of a type favoured by Lower Canada's monied élite and demonstrate that François, like Dupéron, remained to the very end the entrepreneur.

Although he still held a number of offices in 1802, François was then granted a life pension of £150 per year.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Land Grant to Fr. Baby in Sherrington township, 5 Dec. 1808". See also undated and unsigned memorandum in the same place concerned with establishment of Babyville. François developed this land with associates. ARM Lower comments, "Related to . . . large individual grants were those to the "Township Associates", a type of alienation practiced mainly in Lower Canada, where an enterprising individual would suggest to a number of others that they club together and put in for a township." (Colony to Nation, Rev. Ed., 1964, 191).

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Land grant to Fr. Baby in Tingwick township, 27 April 1818".

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., VIII, "Land grant to Fr. Baby in Chester township, 3 Jan. 1819".

<sup>19</sup>PAC, bc, XIII, "Chartier de Lotbinière à Fr. Baby, 26 sept. 1802".

Age and ill health were impairing his ability. In October 1811 he resigned as adjutant-general of the militia and assumed the titular office of Grand Voyer of Lower Canada.<sup>20</sup> He remained colonel of the militia of Cap Santé.<sup>21</sup> Finally, under the stress of war, François resigned as commissioner of transport in 1812.<sup>22</sup> He had ceased to play an active role in affairs of state. He lived on, a rentier in dignified retreat, for eight more years. On 6 September 1820 he died at the age of eighty-seven. A letter of the time tells us, "Mon. Baby is very sick, it appears that this will be his last illness. He has a fever and passes the nights very cruelly without sleeping. Unhappily, one waits for the end."<sup>23</sup> He was attended by his son-in-law, Dr. Selby, to the last. That same day the abbé Demers, Superior of the Seminary of Quebec, wrote that the body of their friend and benefactor would be placed in the seminary chapel.<sup>24</sup> On September 9 a small gathering of

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<sup>20</sup>Quebec Gazette, 10 Oct. 1811; PAC, bc, XV, "Fr. Baby à P. Guy, 2 nov. 1811".

<sup>21</sup>PAC, bc, XV, "F. Vassal de Monviel à Col. Fr. Baby, 15 avril 1812".

<sup>22</sup>PAC, Series "C" Military Papers, MCLXIX, 98, 10 Dec. 1812; Quebec Gazette, 24 Dec. 1812.

<sup>23</sup>PAC, bc, XVI, "M. de Lanaudière à son amie, 6 sept. 1820".

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., XVI, "M. J. Demers, ptre., à Mlle. de Lanaudière, 6 oct. 1820".

illustrious mourners assisted at the inhumation of the prudent councillor and man of affairs in the chapel of St. Anne.<sup>25</sup>

The entrepreneurial spirit lived on in François's son, Charles François Xavier (significantly called Francis). At the age of nineteen he overextended himself in the timber trade and fled to Albany to escape his creditors. After his return he built many wharfs and lighthouses in the lower St. Lawrence.<sup>26</sup> He became a shipping magnate, and his Canadian steamers were known in a score of Atlantic ports.<sup>27</sup> In 1861 he was elected a legislative councillor, a post suitable to a man of his social station.<sup>28</sup> He was one of that crew, "Messrs. Baby, O'Farrell, Chapais, Simard, and Thibcaudeau", who were behind the plan to extend the Grand Trunk Railroad to Rivière du Loup.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>AJC, Registre de l'Etat Civil, Notre Dame de Quebec, 1820.

<sup>26</sup>PG Roy, Fils de Québec, Troisième Série, (Lévis, 1933) 60 - 61.

<sup>27</sup>Information in the concluding paragraph not otherwise cited is from Daniel, Nos Gloires Nationales, 46, 63.

<sup>28</sup>PG Roy, 60 - 61.

<sup>29</sup>From a sharp attack in the Toronto Globe (16 April 1857) quoted in F H Underhill, In Search of Canadian Liberalism (Toronto: Macmillan, 1960) 50.

He and his Upper Canadian cousin, Jacques, are the most interesting of the fourth generation of Canadian Babys and merit extensive biographies. Little is known of François's other children, although extensive documentation awaits the interested researcher.

More is known of the Upper Canadian Babys, especially because of the invaluable mémoire of Mme. Elizabeth Anne Baby Casgrain. In 1816 Jacques moved to York, the better to fulfill his duties as Inspector General (£750 p.a.).<sup>30</sup> His sisters married well, especially Monique, whose alliance with Capt. Eellingham took her to an Irish estate. Daniel, a major-general, retired to London, England, where he founded an English ~~branch~~ of the family. Antoine married a French woman while he was serving in the West Indies and settled in France at Tours. Louis was killed in a duel in 1812 or 1813 while serving at Ile Bourbon.<sup>31</sup> Jacques' brother François was merchant, landowner, legislator and militia colonial. He maintained the family influence over a wide area from the graceful

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<sup>30</sup>W.L. Baby, Souvenirs of the Past (Windsor, 1896) 242 - 266. W. L. Baby, a son of Jacques Baby, here recalls an interesting, because singularly unsuccessful, career.

<sup>31</sup>PG Roy, La Famille LeCompte Dupré, (Levis, 1941) 12 - 26.

Baby mansion at Sandwich which may still be admired. Jacques's daughter, Elizabeth-Anne, married C. E. Casgrain and became the chatelaine of the Casgrain Manoir D'Airvault at Rivière Ouelle. Finally, Louis Baby's only son and namesake is reported to have ended his obscure career in the West Indies.<sup>32</sup>

By the early nineteenth century the Baby family had attained wealth and social status that could scarcely have been anticipated in 1760. A tendency to move from trading into military and functionary positions is clearly discernable in the family's history. Alliance with seigneurial families was evident from <sup>the</sup> third generation on. The career of Francis represents quite another pattern, the move from trader to entrepreneur on a grand scale. If Francis thus appears less aristocratic than his brothers and cousins, he is the more princely. These remarks on the fourth and fifth generations are meant to be suggestive. Extensive studies might reveal that the tendencies apparent in their various careers are reflections of those larger forces shaping Canadian, indeed Atlantic, society in the century, 1750 - 1850. "We seek universal

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

traits as well as national character," one Canadian historian has recently observed, "and we will find them in seeking out more of the forgotten men of Canadian history."<sup>33</sup>

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The sons of the traders in furs did not live in the crowded streets of Detroit or in the gloomy merchants rendezvous of Quebec's Lower Town. They had followed a well-trod path from the counting house: the bourgeois had become aristocrats.

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<sup>33</sup>Alan Wilson, "Forgotten Men of Canadian History", Canadian Historical Association Annual Report, 1965, 86.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE GROWTH OF ENGLISH ASCENDANCY, 1769 - 1790

During the period in which the Babys were engaged in commerce the fur trade was falling steadily into the hands of the English-speaking merchants of Montreal. The present chapter demonstrates this movement quantitatively by means of a series of graphs. Seeing in some detail how this came about gives insight into why it came about. This limited understanding of the experience of the great majority of French-speaking merchants can be further illumined by our knowledge of the obstacles and possibilities presented to the Babys' business enterprises, providing an adequate position from which to present a general hypothesis on the fate of the French Canadian bourgeoisie.

The fur trade licence, which all traders were required to obtain between 1763 and 1790, provides the source for this study.<sup>1</sup> The licence is a four page document -- two pages in English followed by two identical pages in French

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<sup>1</sup>PAC, RG 4, B 28, CX - CXV, contain all the licences, bonds, passes, and notes from post commanders used to construct the graphs and tables in this chapter.

-- in which is recorded the name of the fur trader (bourgeois or master), his destination, the value of his merchandise in Halifax currency, a list of the quantities of spirits, guns, ammunition and dry merchandise carried, the number of canoes in the expedition and the names of the canoemen. Within each licence is usually to be found a bond posted to double the value of the merchandise, and later to the same value as the merchandise. A licence and a bond are appended to this paper for examination. In the earlier years of the period bonds were usually posted by the traders, but it became the practice, as described in Chapter Two, for them to be posted by the Montreal outfitters. This was indicative of a change in the capital structure of the trade. Most often the merchandise belonged to the bonder and was being carried west by a commissioned trader, or an independant trader had purchased it from the bonder on credit. The bonders constitute the body of investors. Thus the capital structure of the trade is most readily understood by examining the bonders, not the traders, and the value of the merchandise, not the value of the bond.

The licences and bonds do not constitute a uniform source of statistics for the whole period. 1769 is the



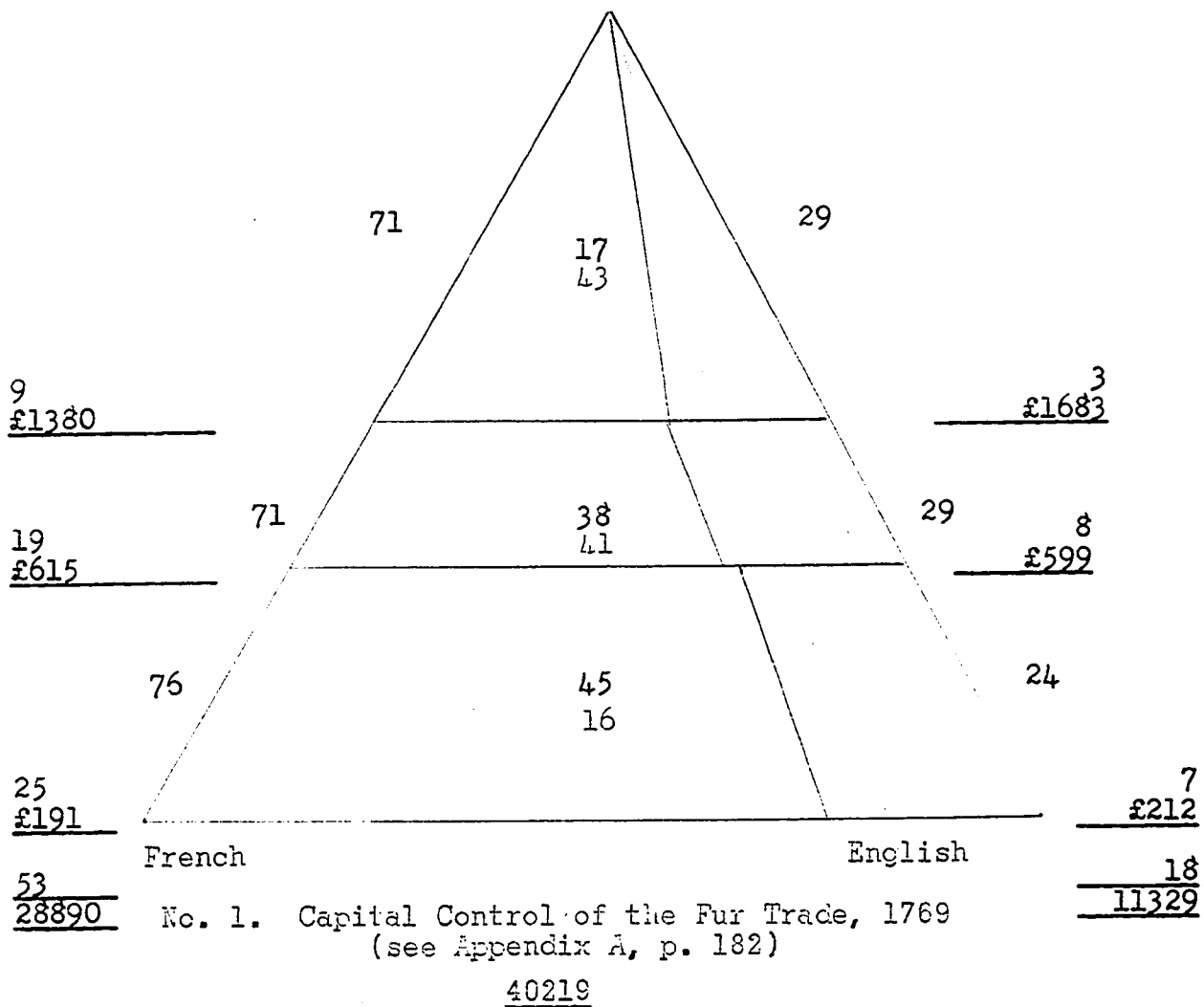
first year for which enough are extant to permit the application of quantitative methods. For the years 1772 to 1776 the major sources have been applications for licences and notes written by military commanders telling that canoes have passed the post at Oswegatchie. The name of the owner of the merchandise is frequently missing from these documents. The present examination is confined to selected years in which omissions do not seem to be numerous enough to harm the reliability of the sample. The statistics are thus treated with a certain degree of arbitrariness, which adds to the ease of using and presenting them without detracting from their value. The aim has been to calculate the investments of individual traders, but the trade was always marked by combinations, temporary and permanent. At first sight it would seem that companies should be treated as individuals. But most frequently an investor belonging to a company also backed other ventures in his own right. To facilitate the grouping of the various investments of each merchant the total investments in corporate enterprises have been divided equally amongst the members. The error most probably introduced by this practice is to underestimate the total investment of some large investors. Tables of investments thus obtained are the raw material of

this survey and have been placed in an appendix and cross-referenced with the graphs. The reader must bear in mind that while they are dependable for the purpose of establishing relationships, they are not strictly accurate in many instances.

A pyramid graph represents the body of merchants trading out of Montreal for each of the ten selected years, 1769, 1770, 1772, 1774, 1777, 1778, 1782, 1785, 1787, and 1790. The merchants for each year are divided into three groups, the aristocrats of the trade, the middling investors and the pedlars with only a small amount of capital. These divisions are not based on a standard amount of investment, or a standard share of the total investment, or a standard percentage of the number of traders; the limits of the divisions merely reflect the largest gaps shown in the pattern of investments, arranged by size, in each year. They are shown on the graphs by horizontal lines, a black figure in each sector indicating what percentage of the body of traders are included. Each sector is divided vertically into two segments, the left representing the percentage of capital in that sector that was invested by French-speaking merchants and the right representing that percentage invested by English-speaking merchants.

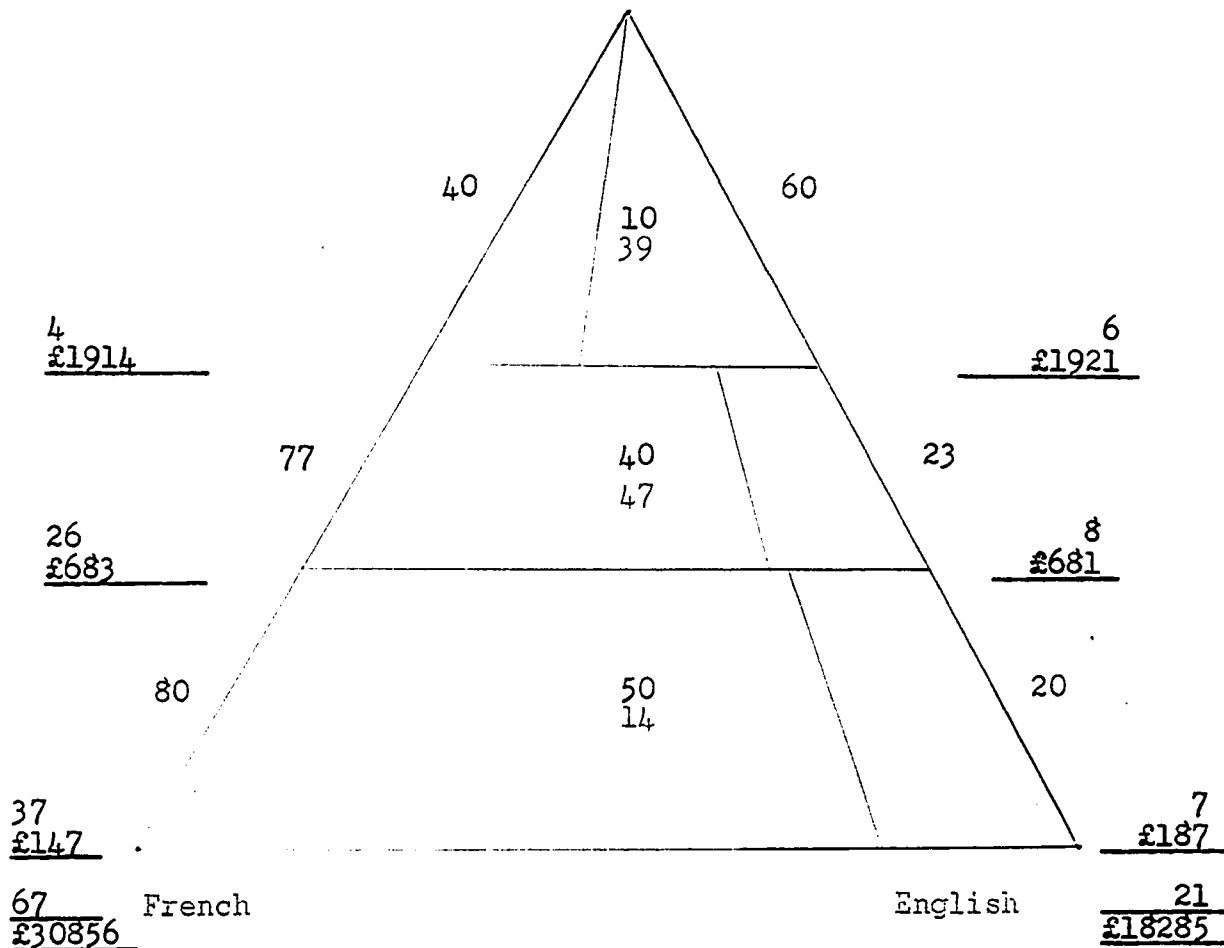
Figures designating these percentages are placed next to the appropriate segments immediately outside the pyramid. The number of merchants included in each sector is shown, on the left for the French and on the right for the English, by a plain figure; immediately below it another figure, preceded by a pounds sign, designates the average investment per investor. The numbers of investors and the total investments for each of the French and English groups are totalled beneath these figures. The total sum of investment by both groups is placed beneath the centre of the graph. These sums will of course only be correct for years in which all licences are extant. Finally, in each segment of the pyramid there is a red figure, designating what percentage of the total investment for the year was invested by that sector. All the horizontal lines of division thus refer to the size of investment; and, within them, the vertical lines of division refer to the nationality of investors. Changes in the horizontal and vertical divisions of the graphs will illustrate changes in the capital control of the fur trade. The various figures included in the graphs will be used to construct tables summarizing various trends.

The graph for 1769 shows the French dominant in all



sectors. Their superiority is principally one of numbers. English investments in the top 17% are noticeably larger than the French, but not so much so that the latter are put at a competitive disadvantage. The investments of the top three French merchants, in fact, exceed those of the top three English. The general impression is that individual investments by the two groups are of about equal size. The large number of persons in the

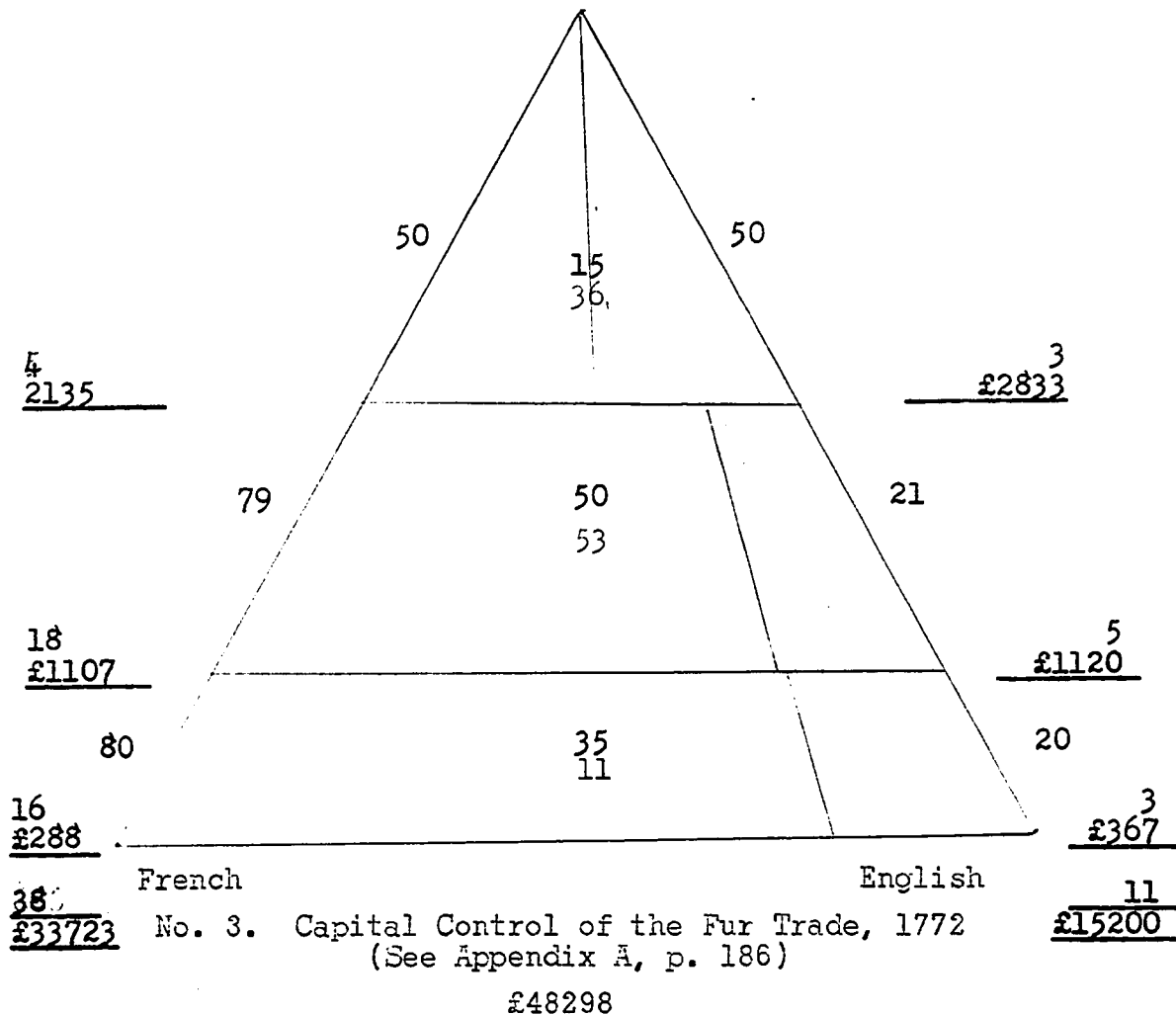
top category suggests a relatively democratic rather than a monopolistic structure.



No. 2. Capital Control of the Fur Trade, 1770  
 (See Appendix A, p. 184)  
 £49141

As shown by the graph for 1770, both the French and English have increased the size of individual investments in the top two sectors. In the bottom sector both groups have decreased the size of investments; but the French have increased their numbers by 12, raising the

size of the bottom group from 45% to 50%. The most interesting feature is the English superiority in the top sector by the doubling of their numbers while the size of their investments is almost identical with that of the French. This is the result of "foreign investment". Their Indian trade threatened by the non-importation agreements subscribed to by New York merchants, Phyn, Ellice and Porteous of Schenectady exported goods



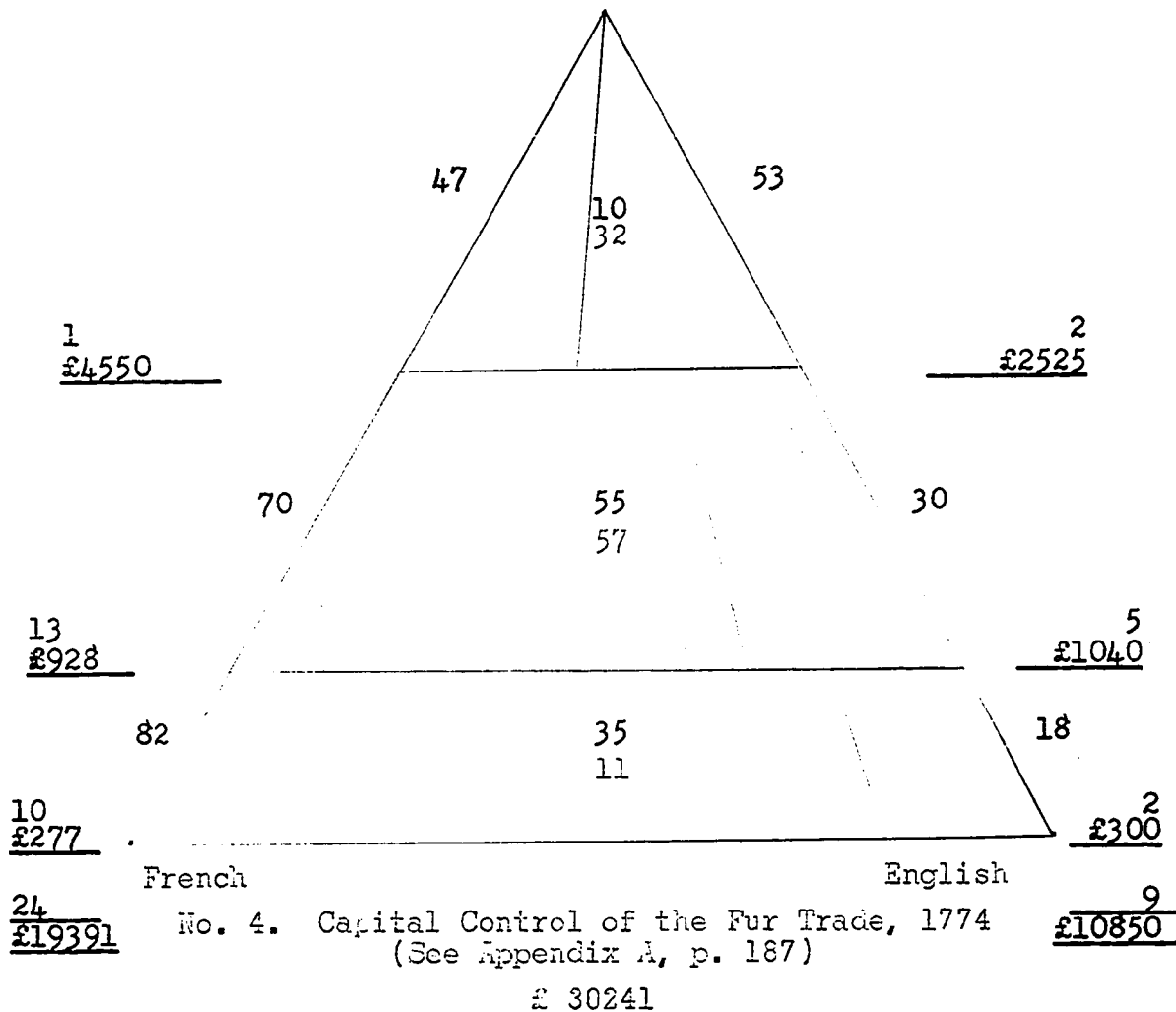
valued at £6000 to Detroit via Montreal.<sup>2</sup> This intrusion is indicative of what was to happen in the next few years.

Because of the cancellation of the non-importation agreements, Phyn, Ellice and Porteous do not appear in the lists of trade licences for 1772 or 1774. In 1772 the French thus gain in the top sector. French investments are noticeably less than the English in the top and bottom sectors, but intrinsically greater than in previous years in all sectors. The constant reduction in the numbers of merchants represented in the top sector might be read as a sign of growing monopoly, but there is still very little difference between the lowest members of the aristocracy and the top members of the middling group. The English have made more impressive increases in the size of their investments than have the French, and for the first time have larger average investments in all categories.

The French have lost ground in 1774. While all investments have decreased, except in the top sector where Pierre Foretier single-handedly maintains French

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<sup>2</sup>R. H. Fleming, "Phyn, Ellice and Company of Schenectady," Contributions to Canadian Economics, 1932, Toronto, 1932, p 18.



representation with the largest investments of any merchant for that year, French investments in the middle 55% group have declined noticeably more than have English investments. There is a very sharp division between Foretier and the next highest French investor whose investments total only £1500. 1774 was a year of contracting trade, and the most marked decline is in French investment in the middle

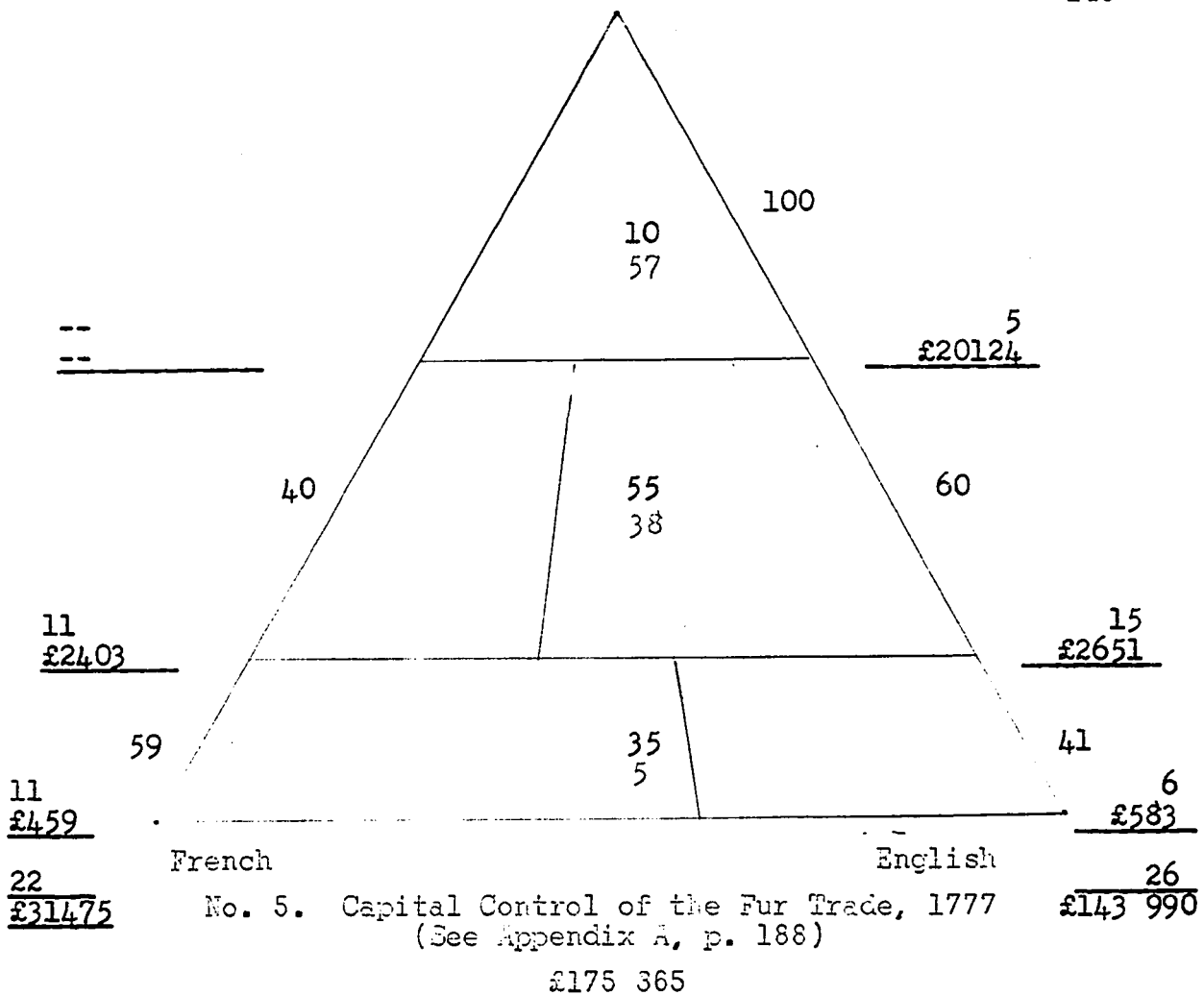


sector. Investments by all groups exceed those of 1769 and 1770, and may be regarded as having reached a peak in 1772.

1774 - 1776 is a key period in the history of the Canadian fur trade. On 20 October 1774, a new non-importation agreement was established by the American Continental Congress, and in the same year the Quebec Act placed a duty on rum and spirits imported other than by sea into the expanded province of Quebec and made St. Jean, south of Montreal, the furthest west legal port of entry. American merchants engaged in the Indian trade were thus placed in an untenable position, cut off both from London suppliers and their Indian customers. Thus in the next two years large numbers of merchants found themselves forced to migrate to Montreal from where they could freely engage in the trade. This group included Alexander Ellice, whose partner Phyn had gone to London to act as supplier, Robert and Alexander Henry, Danial Campbell, William and David Edgar, McTavish and Bannerman, and Felix Graham. Ellice brought in his train his brother Robert and an apprentice, John Richardson, who was destined to be of some importance in the Canadian trade.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>R. H. Fleming, 30 - 34.

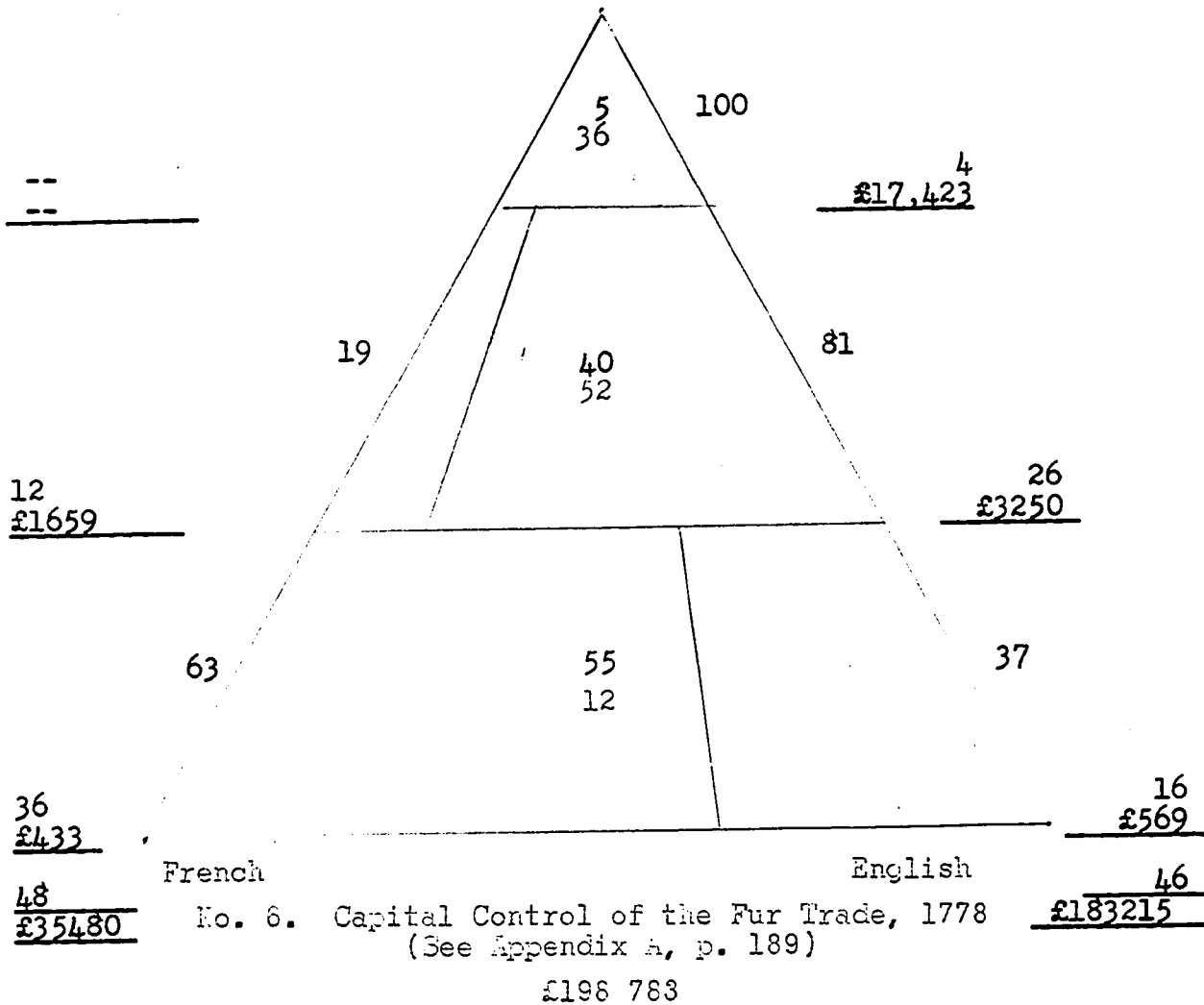


Most of these merchants could dispose of about the same amount of capital as their French counterparts, but amongst them were a few like Ellice who could invest immense fortunes in the trade. The sources for 1775 and 1776 are inadequate, for the purpose of constructing graphs, but the result of this unparalleled influx of men and money can be seen in the graph for 1777. The French have been

engulfed. They do not appear again amongst the top group, where investments in five digits become the rule, and have lost considerable ground in the middle group. This is in spite of the fact that their investments have greatly increased. Five of the French traders in the middling sector in 1777 would have qualified for the top group in any previous year. But Foretier's £5375 appears almost insignificant compared to Ellice's £42, 300.

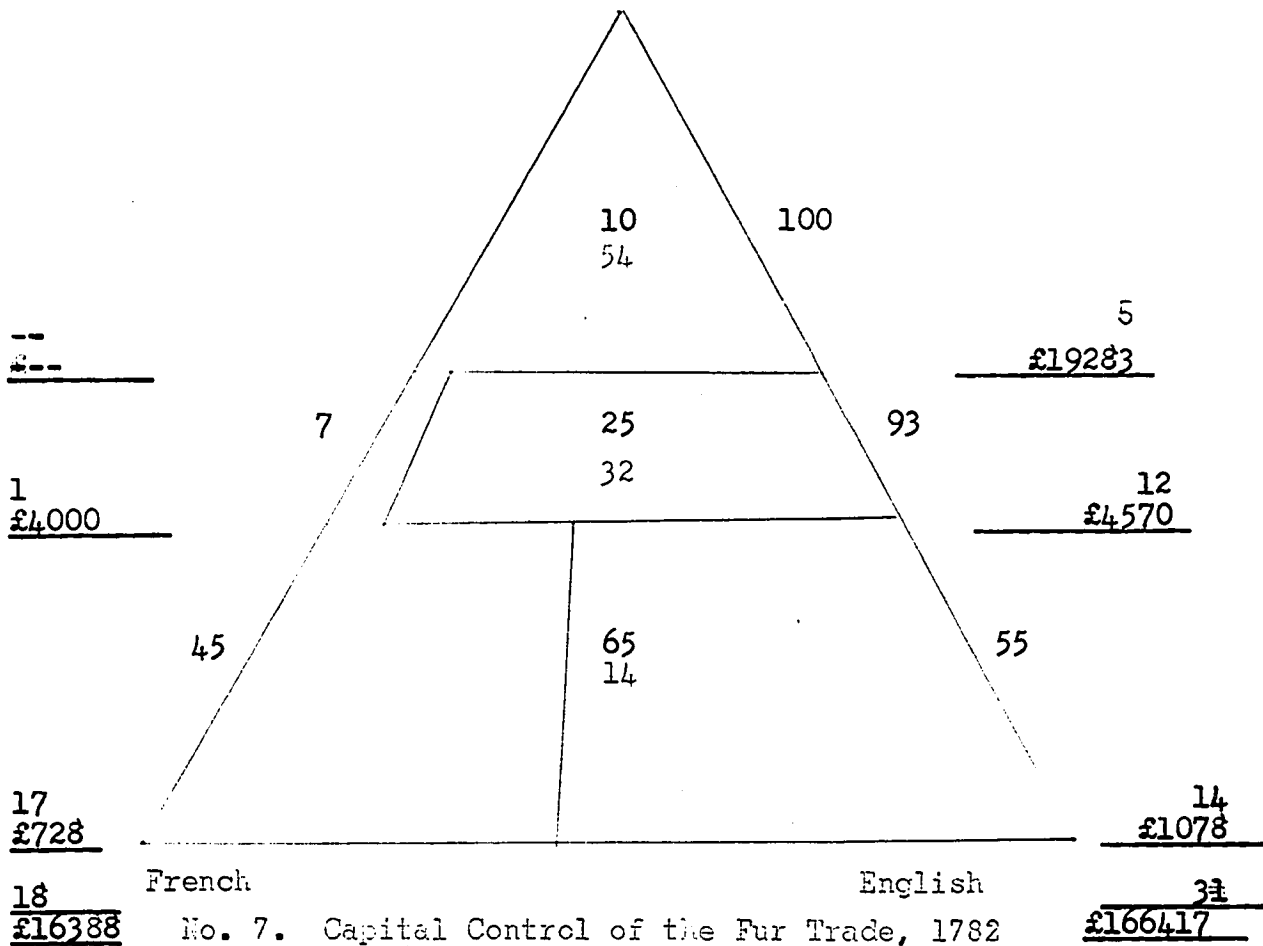
1778 appears as a continuation of what was occurring in 1777. The trend to monopoly is maintained. The French have again lost ground in the middle sector in spite of maintaining their numbers. They forestall a rout in the bottom sector only by force of numbers. Since the numbers of French and English traders are almost equal, this is a measure of French mercantile inferiority.

From 1777 there has been a growing tendency for the middle group to so broad in scope that it could possibly be broken into a middle high and a middle low group. For 1778 it contains investments ranging from £1000 to £6790. The graph for 1782 takes account of this by reducing the size of the middle, making it more uniform. The greatest spread thus occurs in the bottom group. The English tend to be grouped at the top of this sector and the French at

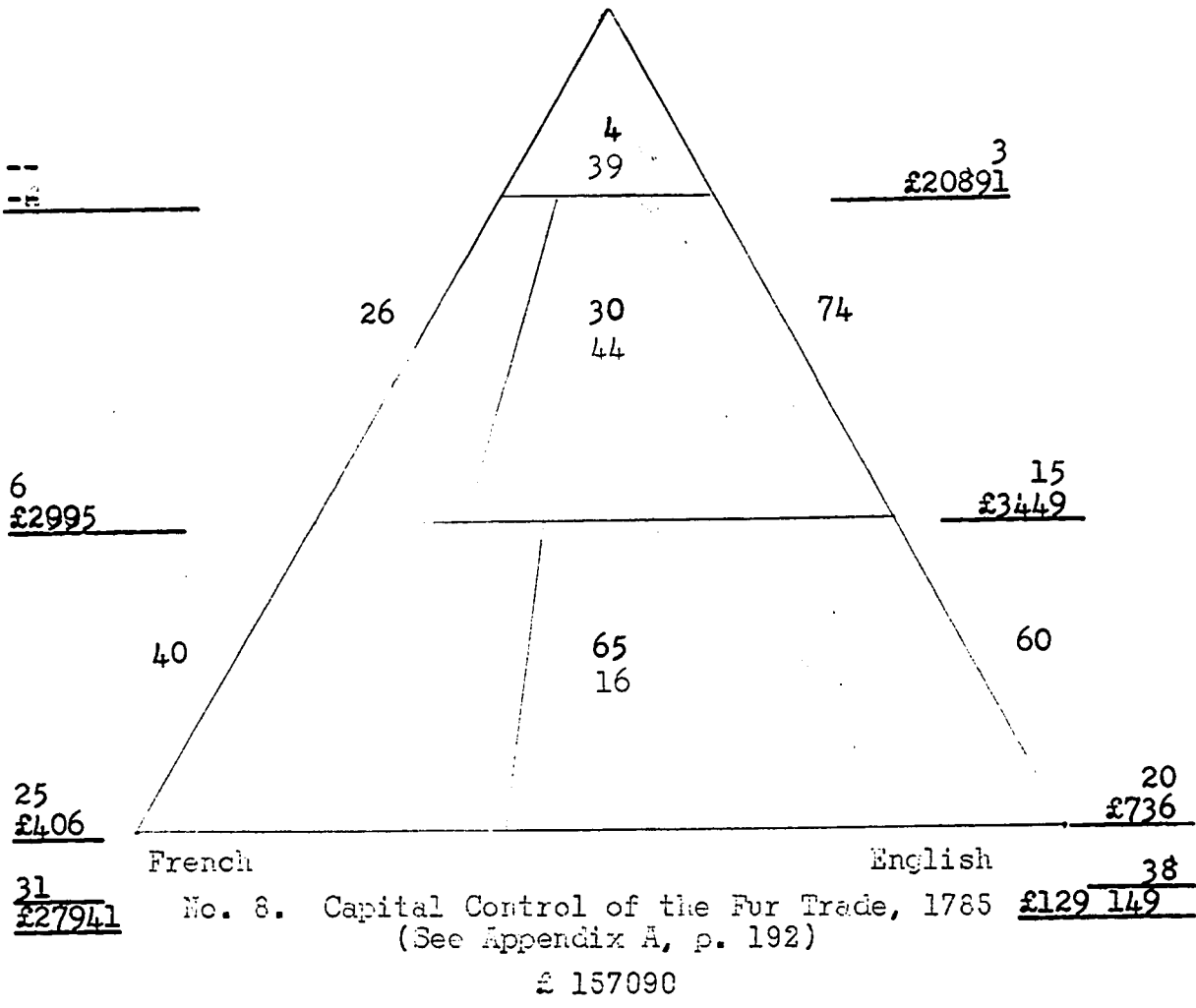


the bottom as demonstrated by the large difference between their average investments.

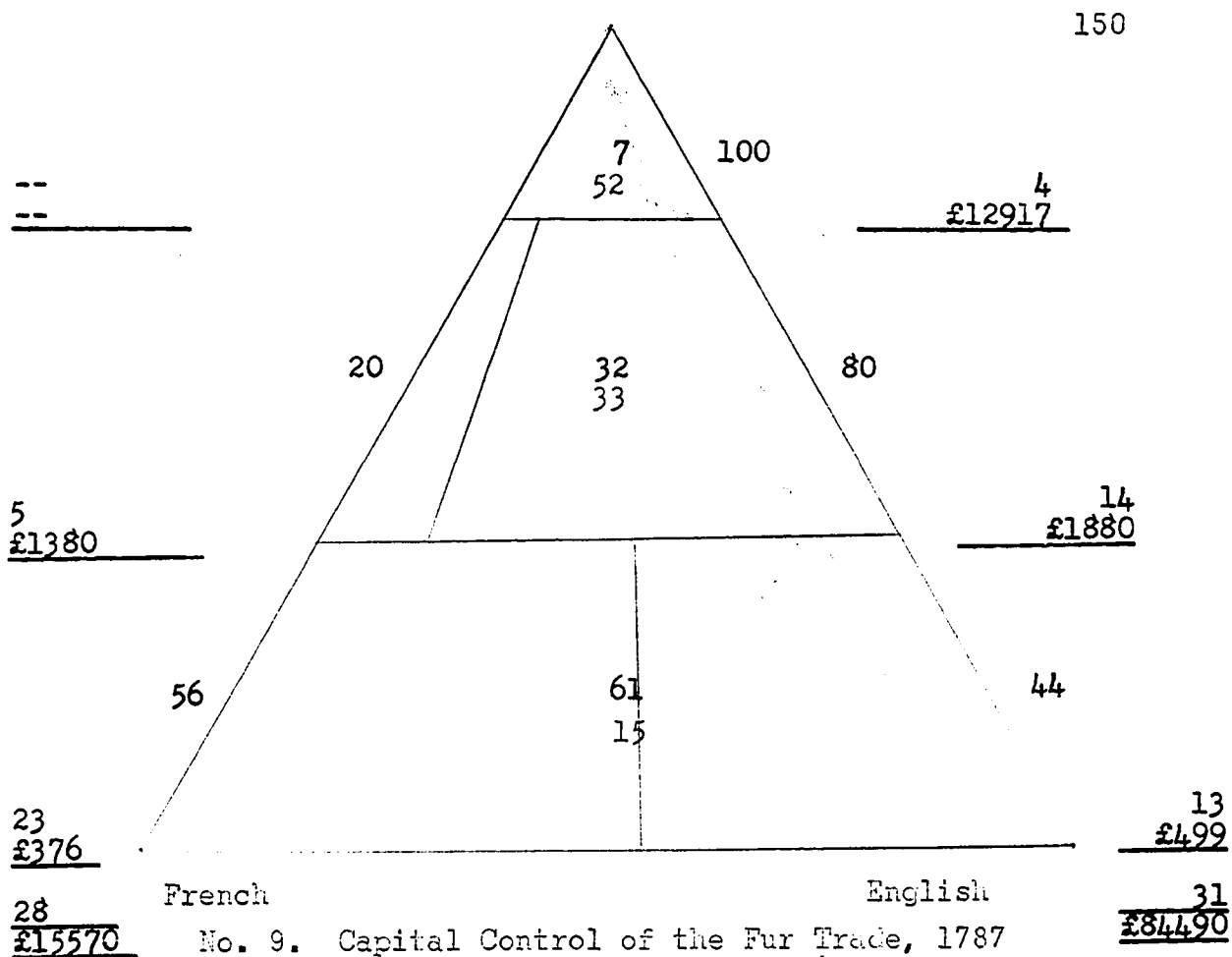
It is not only the greater numbers of investors in 1785 and the consequent better spread of investments from the highest to the lowest that makes the graph for 1785 appear more typical. French investments are intrinsically much larger in the middle sector than in 1782 and much



larger than they were to be in 1787 and 1790. However, this does not offset their numerical inferiority in that sector, where their numbers are only one half of what they were in 1777 and 1778. Their average investments are well below those of the English group in both sectors in which they are represented.



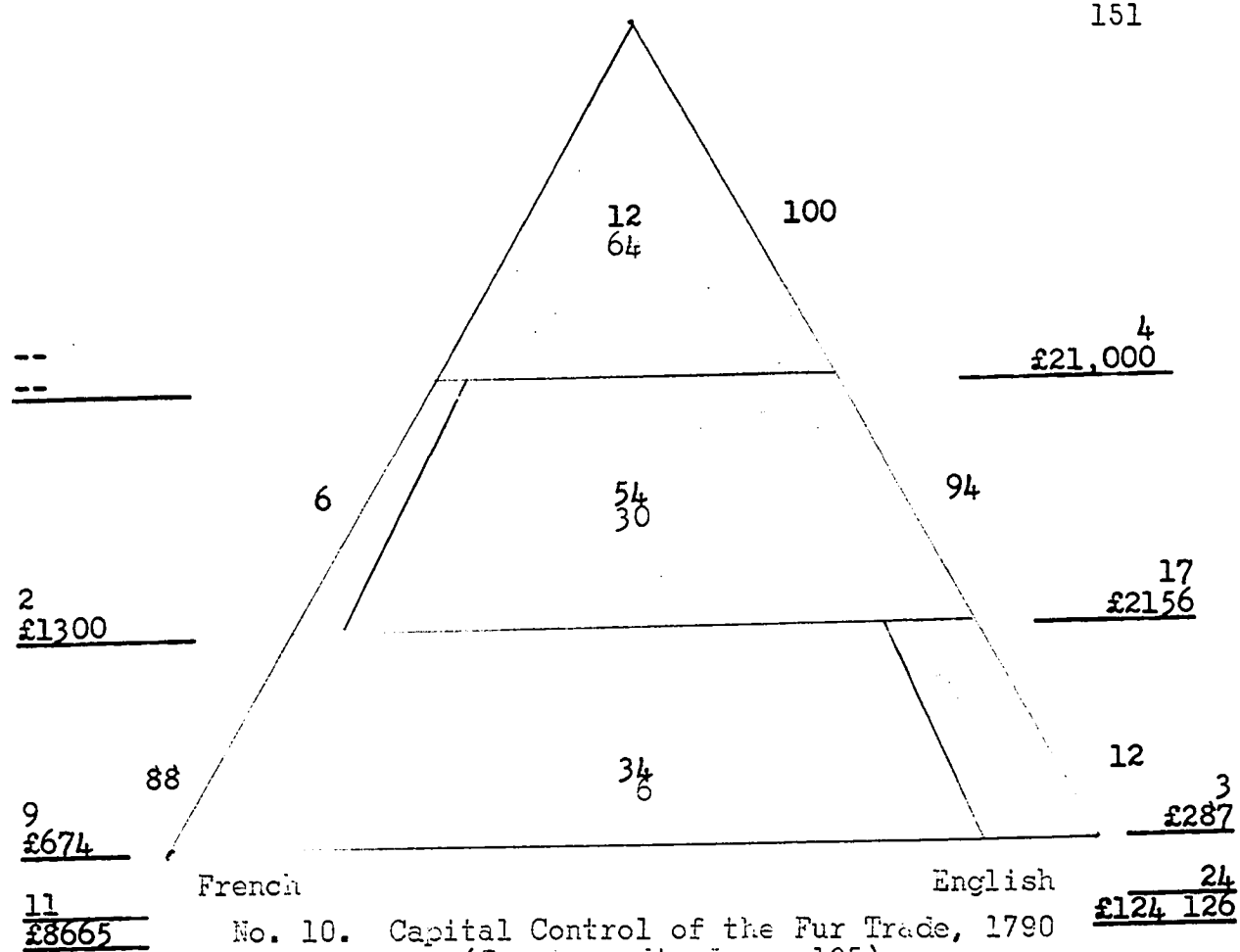
1785 was marked by a last French resurgence in the fur trade. The drama now moves inexorably toward its conclusion. The contraction of trade in 1787 affects both groups to a marked extent, but the French most severely. Again they fall back in the middle group and gain only in the bottom group which becomes less and less important.



No. 9. Capital Control of the Fur Trade, 1787  
(See Appendix A, p. 194)

£ 100,000

In 1790 investment in the trade again increased, although not to the level of 1785. The increase was due largely to the activities of the top four traders, Forsyth, Frobisher, McTavish and McGill. On the graph for 1790 the category of small investors is reduced; and the French, with increased capital, have regained it. This does not substitute for their great loss in



the middle sector. The French control only 7% of capital invested in the fur trade. The trend toward monopoly has continued. Whereas in 1782 one man in the top group controlled 11%, in 1785 and 1787 one man controlled 13%, in 1790 one man controlled 16%. In the short space of thirty years the French had been all but eliminated from the trade.



The English ascendancy in the fur trade demonstrated in the preceding graphs is summarized in the following table, which shows the amount of French-Canadian investment and the number of French-Canadian investors as percentages of the total investment and the total number of investors for each year. For four selected years the percentage of the wintering traders who were French Canadians and the percentage of each year's outfit which they carried are also included, showing that the French declined in that sphere as well. The English gained their ascendancy, not only by dominating the import and export trade of Montreal, but through direct competition in trading with the Indians. They were beating the French at their own game:

YEAR	%Fr. Capital	%Fr. Investors	%Outfit Carried by Fr.	%Traders Fr.
1769	72	75		
1770	63	76	67	80
1772	69	77		
1774	64	73	84	86
1777	17	46		
1778	18	51		

(Table continued next page)

1782	9	36	21	34
1785	18	45		
1787	16	47	23	37
1790	7	31		

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Table 1: Decline of French Investment and Participation in the Fur Trade

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The growing tendency toward monopoly was also made apparent by the graphs. The monopolies in question are those of individuals and tightly-knit corporations such as McTavish, Frobisher and Co. and R. Ellice and Co. (later Forsyth, Richardson and Co.). The graphs do not adequately reveal the further extension of monopoly by means of the several short-term agreements between the investors and traders, known as the North West Companies, which were arranged in the 1780's. The major result of these combinations was, however, to strengthen the positions of the most important investors who were importers for the companies. This result is reflected in the graphs. The growth of monopoly is summarized in the following table of ratios. The figures represent the percentage of each year's capital controlled by 1% of each of the three groups of fur traders. After each such figure a second figure designates the number of French Canadians

in each group for every English-speaking investor. The table shows how little the French Canadians were associated with the growth of monopoly:

Year	Top Group 4-17% of Investors		Middle Group 25-54% of Investors		Bottom Group 34-65% Investors	
	Cap.	F.C.	Cap.	F.C.	Cap.	F.C.
1769	2.53	3	1.08	2.4	0.35	3.6
1770	3.90	0.7	1.17	3.3	0.28	5.3
1772	2.40	1.3	1.06	3.6	0.31	5.3
1774	3.20	0.5	1.03	2.6	0.31	5.
1777	5.70	0	0.69	0.7	0.14	1.8
1778	7.20	0	1.30	0.5	0.25	2.3
1782	5.40	0	1.28	0.08	0.21	1.2
1785	9.75	0	1.46	0.4	0.25	1.3
1787	7.43	0	1.03	0.4	0.25	1.8
1790	5.33	0	0.57	0.12	0.18	3.0

Table 2: Ratios: 1% of Each Group: x% Total Capital;

1 English-speaking Investor in Each Group: x French-speaking Investors

The reader will notice that the volume of trade of the French Canadian merchants does not suffer an absolute

decline; the magnitude of their investment is simply superceded by that of their English competitors. As shown on the graphs, the English investors were also inferior in numbers until 1777 and showed no marked superiority over the French until 1790. The greater part of the traders were also French until 1777, after which date the English began to dominate. This is demonstrated in the following table:

Year:	1769	1770	1772	1774	1777	1778	1787
Fr.	63	72	42	30	62	43	23
Eng.	15	16	9	6	64	67	30

Table 3: Numbers of Trade Licences Granted to French and English Traders

It has also been noted that individual French and English investments were about equal in size up to 1774. We may thus reasonably ask if the English increased their investments at a more rapid rate than did the French. Were this the case, we would happily have arrived at a very simple explanation to the problem at hand, fitting very neatly into the Weber myth of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. In fact, our statistics will not demonstrate

this point effectively. The following table lists the percentage increases in the average investments for each of the three groups of investors we have designated. Since the intervals between years are variable, horizontal comparisons on the table are not in themselves significant.

Year	1770	1772	1774	1777	1778	1782	1785	1787	1790	
Top Group	Fr.	39	12	116						
	Eng.	14	48	-11	697	-13	11	8	-38	63
Middle Group	Fr.	11	62	-16	159	-31	141	-25	-54	-6
	Eng.	14	64	-7	154	22	41	-25	-45	-14
Bottom Group	Fr.	-24	96	-4	66	-6	68	-44	-7	79
	Eng.	-13	96	-18	94	-2	89	-46	-32	-42

Table 4: Percentage increases by interval by investors in top, middle and bottom groups

There remains one more important difference in the business methods of the French and English groups which can be brought to our aid to explain the English advantage. Professor Cuelliet has suggested that English were far more willing to combine their interests, thus dominating the trade by means of large corporations and alliances. Such organizations could more easily obtain credit than could

the individual investor; they could better withstand difficult economic conditions and could offer lower prices to their customers. It also explains why domination in Montreal and in the Northwest should coincide. This theory has been put to the test and vindicated. The following table shows the percentage of licences granted to French and English business combinations, rather than to individual traders, as well as the number of licences bonded by combinations rather than by individual investors:

		Year:	1769	1770	1772	1774	1777	1778	1787
Traders	Fr.	8	10	10	100	15	5	9	
	Eng.	27	19	33	7	34	52	47	
Bonders	Fr.	8	10	11	7	7	100	100	
	Eng.	42	15	8	11	2	100	100	

Table 5: Percentage of licences granted to or bonded by Corporations

The results in Table 5 argue persuasively that French-Canadian and English-speaking merchants did, in fact, have different points of view toward the conduct of business that could very well have affected their success in the fur trade. The material at our disposal

for this present analysis does not permit of further speculation on this point, but it does suggest that the history of mentalities is a promising area for further research. For the present, our assertions must be limited. The French Canadians dominated the Canadian fur trade until the upheaval of the American Revolution. At that time they were overwhelmed by an influx of capital and trading personnel. English investment in the top rank of investors jumped by 679% and was never significantly to decline. Even without explanations involving the difference between the French and English commercial mentalities, it is difficult to believe that any body of merchants could recover from an inundation of such size and swiftness.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

#### THE BABY FAMILY, THE TRADE OF CANADA AND THE CANADIAN BOURGEOISIE

The economy of New France, in common with all colonial economies, was sustained by the financial institutions of Europe. Profits accruing to Canadian businesses were deposited in French banks, let at interest under the instrument of contrats de rente through French bankers acting by power of attorney, invested in French bonds, or remained as cash balances deposited with the Canadian merchants' commercial correspondents in La Rochelle and Bordeaux. This accumulation of wealth was decreased by the French government's devaluation of the money notes and promissory notes it had issued in its North-American colonies. But a great part of these assets, particularly bonds, annuities, and cash balances, remained undiminished by the financial débâcle attending the conclusion of the Seven Years' War; and many Canadians continued to depend upon this capital until the French Revolution.



After the capitulation of Montreal in 1760 François Baby retired to France where he proceeded to put in order his family's business affairs. Various types of government paper in the family's possession were registered at Paris by French and English merchants acting as agents, and the Babys were thus liable for a share in the reparations made by the French government for Canada Paper according to the Convention of 1766. Cash balances and annuities proved more valuable financial assets. These were liquidated, and the profit thereof sent to London merchants on account for the Babys by several La Rochelle and Bordeaux merchants. Thus, in spite of the economic nationalism of the eighteenth century, commercial links that could be used to the advantage of the Canadians did join the states of Europe. There was no need for a Canadian merchant of standing to arrive in London, destitute and unknown. The London merchants immediately purchased the Babys' furs and filled their orders for trade goods. François Baby's connections with London continued until, because of his own lack of initiative, they were allowed to atrophy in the 1780's. The London merchants had opened their doors to the Canadians. That the Babys were not then merchants of the first rank gives special force to this point.

In Canada François Baby's commercial activities comprised importing and exporting, retail and wholesale selling, the buying, selling and freighting of grain, the financing of fur-trading expeditions and of a seal fishery, and money lending. Dupéron Baby maintained less regular commercial contacts with Europe, preferring to purchase trade goods from middlemen, including François. He engaged in fur trading and retail selling at Detroit and diversified his economic base by the establishment of lands and mills. Louis Baby was the only brother to live beyond his twenties without improving his social and economic status under the English regime. Both Dupéron and François entered the service of the Crown, to the detriment of their commerce, and their families became members of the "establishments" of the provinces of Upper Canada and Lower Canada. A happier calamity never befell a family than the conquest of Canada by the British arms. What François and Dupéron had done any Canadian merchant of equal ability could have done. If the great body of Canadian merchants, including the Babys, did not rise to the first rank in commercial circles after 1760 it was not because financial facilities were denied them, nor because their enterprises were inextricably linked to the economic system of the French Empire.

After 1760 English-speaking merchants came to Canada in small numbers, attracted by the opening of new markets and the natural advantages of the Canadian river system for the exploitation of the Indian trade. The vast area of North America formerly the preserve of French traders was now opened to competition, in particular, by the merchants of the province of New York. The Canadian merchants and their southern competitors were brought into direct collision after 1774, when political difficulties between Great Britain and the English-speaking colonies and the extension of the boundaries of Quebec destroyed the effectiveness of competition in the fur trade by the Albany route. Both groups of traders thereafter traded from Montreal. The English merchants were largely responsible for the opening of the trade of the North West, which they monopolised by means of a number of loose agreements between traders and investors. At the same time the traditional French trade of the South West was declining. In the feverish competition that marked this difficult economic juncture the Canadian traders were completely outdistanced by the English. Asking why this was so brings us into the middle of an historical controversy which it will be useful to summarize at this point:<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>These historians are treated in more detail in the Bibliographical Essay.

Professor Brunet: The Canadian merchants were members of an economic organism and were sustained by arteries extending from the fiscal heart at Paris. In 1760 these members were detached. Like cut-off fingers and toes, they could not be grafted to a new body. Hence the British Conquest, by the nature of the act, destroyed the Canadian bourgeoisie.

Professor Hamelin: Because of the absence of rich immigrants, because the commerce of Canada was in the hands of continental merchant houses and French merchants who retired to France after a few years of successful trading, because of the short-sightedness of Canadian merchants who sought short-term gains at the expense of the colony on whose well-being their own depended, as well as an inadequate monetary system and continuous wars, a strong bourgeoisie had never developed in New France.

Professor Ouellet (without disagreeing with Professor Hamelin): Excessive dependence upon one form of economic exploitation, the fur trade; attachment to individual enterprise and repugnance of capital concentration, a tendency to place his money in the safest investments, contentment with utilizing British merchants as go-betweens with London merchants and a taste for luxurious living combined to make the Canadian merchant unable to compete with the English. It was a question of mentality.

Our examination of the Baby family makes nonsense of Professor Brunet's obscurant metropolitanism. The arguments of Professors Hamelin and Ouellet, which are complementary rather than antagonistic, demand further attention. It must first be made clear that, according to the present writer's terminology, there was indeed a bourgeoisie, a body of men of the town and trade, in New France. The question asked is what were its characteristics.

That more merchants did not, like François Baby, make use of the credit facilities available in London appears as a silent testimony to the truth of Hamelin's assertions. The conclusion is permissive rather than necessary. Perhaps it is as profitable to read how contemporaries saw themselves and each other as it is to construct elaborate statistical profiles proving how they must have been. That the French regarded the English as being more commercially advanced than themselves is implicit in Simon Jauge's judgment, quoted in Chapter One, that they above all nations were masters of tax-levying and tax-evasion. General Murray, in his report of 1762, was quite pointed in insisting that the majority of wholesale merchants in Canada had been Frenchmen whereas the majority of Canadians were confined to the less remunerative retail trade. Somewhat unexpected in that regard is the following remark from an anonymous report written about 1774: "The Noblesse despise trade in general, but most of them keep little retail shops."<sup>2</sup> The same writer goes on to describe the merchant class: "The third class are the mercantile body which in faith

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<sup>2</sup>ASQ, fonds verreau, carton 19 #35, "Remarks on the Province of Quebec". This document is dated as post 1766 by the Seminary Archives. It was probably written after 1774 because it refers to a new form of government that hurt the English group, if indeed any group.

includes the foregoing class as they all trade more or less, but such only is meant as make it their sole dependance, many of whom are wealthy." There emerges the picture of a class of merchants doing well in the domestic trade and producing their own monied élite, but failing to seize the key role of importers. Their ability to play a large role in trans-Atlantic commerce was severely inhibited by the beaver monopoly of the Company of the West Indies. Nevertheless, they must be taken seriously as a self-conscious group, distinct from the rural habitants. They quoted Voltaire in their letters<sup>3</sup> and showed an interest in Rousseau;<sup>4</sup> they got on well with the English; and, except for those like François Baby who had entered government, from 1784 joined them in petitioning for an assembly.<sup>5</sup> They remained in business, they prospered and they were surpassed.

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<sup>3</sup>PAC, bc, X, "Pierre Guy à Mme. Ve. Defond, 18 fév. 1788" quotes the following stanza: "Quoi deux baisers sur la fin de ma vie! / Quel passeport vous caignez m'envoier. / Deux c'en est trop! adorable egerie; / Je serois mort de plaisir au premier."

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., VI, "Fr. Baby à B. Comte, 20 nov. 1771".

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., X, "Perrault l'ainé, du comité de Québec aux membres du comité de Montréal, 18 sept. 1788".

Seen very distinctly as bourgeois in a French context, these Canadians might appear quite differently in an English one. This distinction has presented a stumbling block to historians. J. F. Perrault's remark on the English merchants' attitude to the cession of the western posts cited in Chapter Three is evidence that he saw their point of view as being very different from that of the French. If the western trade were lost the English would not be able to accept the only alternative, the slow operations of agriculture whereas, as a Frenchman, he saw no difficulty in accepting it. He saw the English merchants' complete identification with commerce as evidence of their cupidity. This brings us to the question of mentalities.

On occasion François Baby, himself a fur buyer, even counselled selling in Montreal to avoid the risks of the overseas market. As recounted in Chapter Four, both François and his nephew Jacques placed their surplus funds safely in English banks. François timidly preferred an annuity to taking his chances in the lease of the King's Posts. Dupéron saw the gift of an exclusive trading post as the best recognition the government could grant for his services. The failure of François and Dupéron to regularize their informal relationship into a highly capitalized corporation when presented with the great

advantage of their respective positions in Detroit and Quebec seems quite inexplicable. When this is crowned with their natural preference for office-holding over commerce, the temptation is very strong to read in their careers the mark of Professor Ouellet's French mentality. Only in the wise diversification of their activities do they fail to meet its specifications. They are an excellent example for, because of their comparative success, detractors cannot claim that a pair of incompetent merchants has been chosen for examination. Their failure to take better advantage of their situation, from the point of view of commerce, cannot be attributed to lack of acumen, capital or opportunities. The only explanation remaining is inclination. The possibilities offered to a group can be determined by the examination of a single case study. This is what we have done with regard to Professor Brunet's theory. The nature of a group cannot so easily be generalized from a single instance. We can, however, assert that the Babys are typical of the sort of bourgeoisie contemplated by Ouellet and Hamelin. Further, two factors argue that they were also, in fact, typical of their social group. The first of these is the willingness of most French Canadian merchants to sell their furs in Montreal, as described in Chapter Two, and the English merchants'



willingness to buy them even at times of great risk. Secondly, as demonstrated in Chapter Five, Canadian merchants were all distinctly less inclined than were English-speaking merchants to enter into combination. The evidence examined in the present study lends strong support to the theories of Professors Ouellet and Hamelin while demolishing that of Professor Brunet.

Our attention must be directed not only toward the nature of the French-Canadian bourgeoisie, but toward the nature of the English group which replaced it. The anonymous author of the report quoted above has some very sensible things to say about this group:

The English who have become settlers in Canada since the reduction of the country have been represented as a very few in number and those of the lowest and most pernicious set of people, but the improbability of these assertions must appear when we consider Quebec after the siege nothing but a heap of rubbish, raised by the English settled there to its ancient splendor. Could this be done by a few vagabonds? Yet this is a matter of fact.

Who was it supplied the country when the inhabitants stood in need of every necessary with our manufactories, with which twenty or thirty vessels went out loaded every year? It would be folly to say twas a few vagrants without money or credit, who negotiated the bills of those who drew their wealth out of France, purchased the vast quantity of pelteries than in the country, their paper currency &ca. Can it be said a few stragglng renegades without character or property did this?

The merchants of New France had traded in a vast

inland empire of rivers and wilderness from which all competitors were excluded by military power. When Vaudreuil set his name to the Capitulation of Montreal in September, 1760, that power vanished forever. Thereafter the number of traders in the interior swiftly increased; competition stiffened. Powerful trading combinations set themselves in opposition to the poorly organized Canadian traders. They copied the trading and transportation techniques of the Canadians; the Canadians failed to respond by copying English techniques of business organization. It is problematical whether the Canadian merchants could ever have saved themselves. Key organizations which moved to Canada after 1774 were possessed of wealth greater than could be amassed by the dozen leading Canadian merchants of the time, and they had doubtless been competing with the Canadians from southerly points since the Conquest. If Francis Parkman were edited and the forces of Progress and Providence leading inevitably to the fall of Canada were replaced by Economic and Demographic necessity, one would not be far from a true reading of the history of New France. Had the wave of English and American competition come slowly, it is just possible that the Canadians might have measured the rising tide, comprehended its meaning and stemmed it. But that is not what happened. It came as a deluge and it overwhelmed.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

a. Sources of the present study, documentary and secondary, printed and unprinted. The principle source of information for the present essay is the Baby Collection gathered together by Judge L. G. Baby and presented to the University of Montreal. Transcripts of the collection deposited at the Public Archives of Canada (M.G.24 L3) have been examined. The collection is comprised of the papers of several French-Canadian bourgeois and seigneurial families, including the D'Aillebousts, Guys, Augés, Ferraults and Babys. Although the collection includes some letters of an earlier period, most date from between 1750 and the second half of the nineteenth century. They are an incredibly varied mine of information relating to commerce, politics, the militia and the general social history of the period. I have drawn principally on the first twenty volumes of the correspondence series, but wish to point out that there are other series including legal papers, genealogical data, North West Company papers and even state papers.

The very important letters of Dupéron Baby to François Baby are in the Fonds Casgrain in the possession of the Archives du Séminaire de Québec. This collection also includes a mémoire on the Baby family written by Dupéron Baby's grand-daughter, Mme. C. I. Casgrain. This document has been very useful, first, because it contains transcripts of a number of French regime documents and, second, because of its wealth of family lore which corroborates evidence found in letters. There are also small Baby collections in the provincial archives of Quebec and Ontario. The former contains very few letters dating from the eighteenth century, and the latter is comprised mostly of official documents belonging to the Upper Canadian Babys.

A great wealth of eighteenth century business history can be found in notarial papers, every legal transaction of the time being performed in the presence of a notary. Because these papers were kept by notaries as personal property and not collected at a central registry until much later, they are sometimes incomplete. Important information relating to the Babys' business affairs under the English regime has been found in six of some

twenty-one notaries' répertoires examined at the Archives judiciaires du District de Québec at the Palais de Justice in Quebec City. The Quebec Archives' multivolume publication, Inventaires des Greffes des Notaires (1943 - 1964), has been used to find notarial records from the French regime. Seven volumes of notarial records from Detroit, in which there are many references to Dupéron Baby, are to be found in the Public Archives of Canada (M.G. 18 - I). Many references to the Babys may be found in the contracts between voyageurs and bourgeois conserved at the Archives judiciaires du District de Montréal at the Palais de Justice in Montreal. I have examined brief published abstracts of these. The years 1670 - 1778 and 1788 - 1821 have been published by E. Z. Massicôte in Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, 1929 - 1933 and 1942 - 1946. J. J. Lefebvre published the missing series, 1778 - 1788, in the report for 1946 - 1947.

A number of other collections conserved in the Public Archives of Canada, all of which are calendared or indexed, shed further light on the careers of the Babys. These are the Bouquet Papers (M.G. 21 - I), the State Papers ("Q" Series or C.O. 42), the Maldimand Papers, collected and presented to the British museum by the general (M.G. 21 - 2), the Quebec Gazette, the papers of the British Armed Forces in Canada before 1871, or "C" Series, and the "Record of ships landing at Quebec, 1763 - 1764", in which shipments are identified by bale markings.

A document of great interest to social historians which concerns François Baby's militia career is the "Journal tenu par Messrs. Fr. Baby, Gab. Tashereau et Jenkin Williams dans la Tournée qu'ils ont fait dans le District de Québec par Ordre du Général Carleton tant pour l'Établissement des Milices dans chaque Paroisse que pour l'Examen des personnes qui ont assisté ou aider Les Rebels dont nous avons pris notes" printed in the Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, 1927 - 1928, 435 - 499.

The early trading activities of the Babys are mentioned in P. J. Robinson's Toronto Under the French Regime, 1615 - 1793 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965). 1

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<sup>1</sup>This book was originally published by The Ryerson Press, Toronto, and the University of Chicago Press, Chicago, in 1933.

Dupéron Baby's role in the seige of Detroit in 1763 is recounted in H. H. Peckham's Pontiac and the Indian Uprising (Chicago: Phoenix Books, University of Chicago Press, 1961). 2

Material found in several collections of documents which illuminates the economic conditions of the period has been cited. Three of these collections conserved in the Public Archives of Canada, Letter of James McGill to Hugh Finlay (M.G. 21 - F4), The Lindsay Morrison Papers (M.G. 23 - GIII, 5), and the Letters of John Richardson (M.G. 23 - GIII, 7), are all business papers of English-speaking Montreal merchants. The anonymous mémoire cited in the Conclusion is from the Fonds Verreau, Archives du Séminaire de Québec. Gov. Murray's "Report on the State of the Government of Quebec, 5 June 1762", is to be found in A. Shortt and A. G. Doughty's Documents Relating to the Constitutional History of Canada, 1759 - 1791, pt. I (Ottawa, Public Archives of Canada, 1918). The trade licences used to construct the statistical profile of the fur trade in Chapter Five, where they are discussed at length, are in the Public Archives of Canada "S" Series (R.G. 4 - B28, vols. 110 - 115).

Three published works have been cited as providing necessary background on the Canadian economy. A very valuable contribution to the economic history of the post-conquest period is R. H. Fleming's "Phyn, Ellice and Company of Schenectady," in Contributions to Canadian Economics, 1932 (Toronto, 1932). Jean Hamelin's Economie et Société en Nouvelle France (Quebec: Les Presses universitaires Laval, 1960), contains an excellent condensed economic history of Canada from 1672 - 1754 and a clear explanation of the monetary system under the French regime as well as chapters of a more controversial nature (see below). Adam Shortt's Documents Relating to Canadian Currency, Exchange and Finance During the French Period (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1925) 2 vols., has very concise and revealing footnotes and contains an informative section on the diplomatic interlude of the "Affaire des Papiers du Canada". It is a work bearing the mark of careful scholarship.

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<sup>2</sup>This book was originally published by the University of Chicago Press, Chicago, in 1947.

Shortt also wrote two brief histories of Canadian finance published in the Journal of the Canadian Banking Association and later in pamphlet form. The first of these, "Early History of Canadian Banking", contained five sections (1898 - 1899) under the subtitle "Canadian Currency and Exchange under French Rule": "1, Before the Introduction of Card Money"; "2, First Period of Card Money"; "3, Second Period of Card Money"; "4, The Closing Period of the Paper Money"; and "5, Ultimate Disposal of the Paper Money." In 1900 a second series was begun, "The History of Canadian Currency, Banking and Exchange". The first essay in this series, "Early Metallic Currency and Its Regulation", explains the monetary confusion of the post-conquest period and, as far as I know, remains the only work that does. These essays are indeed difficult to find today and are as valuable as they are rare.

Finally three genealogical works have helped to clarify a host of tangled relationships. The most important of these is François Daniel's Nos Gloires Nationales, ou, Histoire des Principales Familles du Canada (Montreal: E. Sénécal, 1862), 2 vols. Smaller in compass are Phillipe Baby Casgrain's Memorial des Familles Casgrain, Baby, et Ferrault du Canada (Quebec, 1898), and F. G. Roy's La Famille LeComte Dupré (Levis, 1947).

b. Pioneer studies. In The Fur Trade in Canada (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), 3 H. A. Innis presented the political history of Canada until the nineteenth century as a function of the fur trade. The boundaries of New France, its government, and its economy were all dictated by the needs of the fur trade. Canadian historians were brought to a lively realization that the New France which had been established in the St. Lawrence basin and which had succumbed to British arms in 1760 was an economic as well as a political and ethical entity. Donald Creighton enlarged upon Innis's work in The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1937). 4 He interpreted the period 1760 - 1850 in terms

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<sup>3</sup>This book has been republished as a Canadian University Paperback by the University of Toronto Press, Toronto, in 1962.

<sup>4</sup>This book has been republished under the title The Empire of the St. Lawrence by Macmillan and Co., Toronto, in 1956.

of a clash between that group of Montreal merchants who attempted to make of the St. Lawrence the principal transportation artery of the continent and those who opposed it. In the works of these two scholars a sound foundation was laid for an economic interpretation of Canadian history.

Joseph-Noël Fauteux had already done basic work on the economy of New France in an admirable two-volume study, Essai sur l'Industrie au Canada sous le Régime français (Québec: L.-S. A. Proulx, 1927), which remains a useful reference work. Fauteux singles out the administrations of Talon and Hocquart as periods of greatest economic activity, but the tale he tells is mainly one of disappointed hopes. Although "la plupart des familles nobles du Canada ... se sont intéressées à une ou plusieurs industries à la fois" (xii), little permanent advance was made. Want of success is attributed to the rudeness of the country, lack of man power, especially skilled manpower; difficulties of communication with Europe and the ineffectiveness of paternal direction under this handicap, inconsistent government policy, lack of money, numerous long wars, and, finally, a taste for luxury and a tendency to indolence. Fauteux provides a good narrative account of every industry attempted in New France, including a particularly good chapter on the forges at St. Maurice, derived largely from an earlier work by Benjamin Sulte.

Detailed studies on the economy of Canada in the eighteenth century have been produced, oddly enough, by three female scholars, all pupils of the late Prof. E. R. Adair. A. J. E. Lunn in "Economic Development in New France, 1713 - 1760" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis McGill University, 1942), described the Canadian economy as predominantly agricultural and severely weakened by paternalism and the unaccountable lethargy of the masses. She pointed with dismay at the monopolization of the fur trade, poor standards of agriculture, and the bad effect of the lack of capital and skilled labour on the production of naval stores, timber, ships and iron.

Lack of capital and skilled labour are also pointed out by A. G. Reid, who also emphasized the harmful effects of constant war, in "The Development and Importance of the Town of Quebec, 1608 - 1760" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, 1950). Perhaps because she placed more emphasis on the economic impact of the fur trade, Dr. Reid did not paint as black a picture as did Dr. Lunn. The thesis includes excellent chapters on commerce

and industry in the city of Quebec, including the sporadic manufacture of rope, boats, potash, and brick and tile.

Isabel Craig's "Economic Conditions in Canada, 1763 - 1783" (unpublished M. A. thesis, McGill University, 1937), is an excellent survey with good sections on the techniques of trans-Atlantic trade, fishing and on the types of currency used in the post-conquest period. She reached two conclusions: that agriculture was the basis of the economy and that 1763 - 1783 was a period of economic development because of the establishment in Canada of English-speaking merchants with European connections. She describes the Canadian merchants as "indifferent [commercial] correspondents" (p 181).

Judge Eaby, collector of the Baby papers, also wrote a brief article founded on the extensive researches of Abbé G. L. Lemoine which attempted to prove that there had been no mass exodus of Canada's leaders after 1760. Under the title "L'Exode des Classes Dirigeantes à la Cession du Canada" it was published as a pamphlet (Montreal, 1899) and as an article in The Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal, 3rd series, 2 (1899). Eaby listed 130 seigneurs, 100 "gentlemen and bourgeois", 125 "notable merchants", 25 "jurisconsults and men of law", 25-30 physicians and surgeons and 25-30 notaries who remained in Canada; and asked if 400 families did not constitute adequate civil representation. Present-day historians are asking what became of this élite which, by choice or necessity, remained in Canada.

c. Current controversy. In Innis's interpretation of Canadian history the staple trade -- the economic constant -- is the unchanging idea behind the varied and transient facade of political appearance. The stuff of history having become a non-living economic constant, history itself is endowed with the changelessness of nature. Sometimes, to redress the balance and restore the human quality of history, the constant is personified. Both these tendencies are apparent in Prof. Creighton's cited work. Because the economic factor endured, the Conquest is diminished in importance: "France could be beaten in America; but the St. Lawrence could not be beaten in Europe" (p 20). Because the underlying constant of both the French and English regimes, the "Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence", is more successfully exploited under



the English regime; Canada becomes "more real", or achieves a greater degree of self-realization: "The conquest did not change Canada. In fact, in some ways, it strengthened the dominant impulse of Canadian life" (p 21). The river, which in the end betrays the trust placed in it, is endowed with life and personality: "The St. Lawrence was a stream which dashed itself against the rocks and broke the hopes of its supporters" (p 384). There is a point where this pre-occupation with titans rather than men passes beyond history into epic, and we find its quintessence in the poetry of E. J. Pratt rather than in history.

The newer historians concern themselves less with the Canadian economy than with the men who directed its course. Guy Frégault, whose view of pre-conquest society is most accessible to English readers in Canadian Society in the French Regime (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1956), argues that when Canada is regarded as a civilization rather than an economy, the historian must admit that it was destroyed by the Conquest, which cut it off from its natural leadership, the possibility of advance through the French military and civil service, and from the roots of its culture as well as the political and economic control of Canada. Implicit in this view is the idea that Canada possessed a fully formed society of agriculturalists, artisans, bourgeois and aristocrats, differing from the New England colonies principally in size. "Rien ne ressemble plus à un Américain qu'un autre Américain," notes Frégault in La Guerre de la Conquête (Montreal and Paris: Fides, 1955), 100. In his La Civilization de la Nouvelle France (Montreal, 1944) Frégault had espoused this traditional view of the Canadians as "les enfants du sol". Frégault became convinced of this revolutionary interpretation by one of his own students, Maurice Séguin, now a professor of history at the University of Montreal. Both Frégault and his colleague Michel Brunet, in Professor Brunet's words, "subi l'influence de professeur Séguin du cours des séminaires d'histoires de 1949 à 1953 et de nos discussions presque quotidiennes." <sup>5</sup> The new interpretation was implicit in Professor Séguin's doctoral thesis, "La Nation canadienne et l'agriculture" (University of Montreal, 1947) and is summed up in his brief article without scholarly apparatus, "La Conquête et la vie économique des Canadiens", L'Action Nationale, XXVIII,

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<sup>5</sup> Michel Brunet to the author, 15 December 1965

308 - 326. According to Séguin, under "normal" conditions a nation develops the various sectors of its economy: agriculture, commerce, industry, services. A society progresses from agriculture to more complex forms of development. In a colony all development depends on a primary flow of commercial capital from the mother country, the "métropole nourricière". The conquest denied capital to the Canadians. Thus, in spite of growing numbers and pressing needs, they languished in a subsistant agriculture. The Séguin thesis gives French-Canadian history a new orientation: "Ce mal n'est pas, comme on l'a cru et comme beaucoup le croient encore, de ne pas pouvoir rester une heureuse population agricole, mais plutôt de ne pas pouvoir sortir de l'agriculture autrement qu'en prolétaires serviteurs de l'Occupant" (326). If Séguin regarded French-Canadian society before 1760 as essentially agrarian, much could be said for his thesis. A normal hardening of class lines would be accentuated by national differences, especially after 1789; and French-Canadians might find themselves a submerged society. But because all the historians of the Montreal School insist that New France had developed a more sophisticated economy and class structure, they must postulate the collapse of a bourgeoisie. Séguin says only that Canadians were engaged in "commencements au moins de développement" (209). Frégault is more emphatic. In "La Guerre de Septans et la Civilisation canadienne", Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française, September 1953, he summed up his own view and passed the torch to the post-conquest historians:

En 1760 - 1763 le Canada est défait; il reste encore les Canadiens, il ne reste plus le Canada. Les vaincus vont-ils reconstituer leur civilisation? La réponse appartient à l'historien du régime britannique (p 206).

Michel Brunet was not slow to pick up the torch. He vociferously championed the Séguin thesis in a flood of essays, the best of which, "La Conquête anglaise et la Déchéance de la Bourgeoisie canadienne (1760 - 1793)" Amérique française, June 1955, and "Trois Dominantes de la Pensée canadienne-française: L'agriculturalisme, L'anti-étatisme et le Messianisme", Ecrits du Canada Français, III, Montreal, 1957, have been republished in La Présence Anglaise et les Canadiens (Montreal, 1958), the page numbers of which are cited. Although attention is given to the strangulation of Canada's military and office-holding élite, the major implication of social decaptation is argued to have been the decline

of a Canadian commercial middle class who could not establish British trade connections. As Prof. Brunet states in a translated work, French Canada and the Early Decades of British Rule, 1760 - 1791 (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1963), "The most powerful business men understood that their enterprises would not prosper within the British commercial system" (p 5). He has recently announced that this conclusion is reached by applying the theories of Innis, Creighton and John Bartlett Erebner, who "have emphasized the functioning of metropolitanism in Canadian history", Canadian Forum, April 1964, p 6. This is a mystical metropolitanism, indeed, which, like "the most powerful business men", the believer simply understands. This interesting substitute for analysis is the product in part of some rather fuzzy classification, or rather, the lack of any classification. Brunet begins "La Déchéance" by telling us that all "realist" historians who have examined the findings of economics and sociology are unanimous in the conclusion that "La bourgeoisie capitaliste a été la classe dirigeante du monde occidental moderne" (p 49). The Canadian bourgeoisie, "occupait les postes de commande dans le commerce, dans l'industrie, dans l'armée et dans l'administration. Elle se composait de nobles et de roturiers, de Français et de Canadiens" (p 50). The difficulty of such broad grouping is the resulting confusion of causes and effects. If nobles lose their estates, the bourgeoisie is weakened; if administrators lose their jobs, the bourgeoisie is failing; if merchants bankrupt, the bourgeoisie is collapsing. The idea that there is a single ruling class controlling all sectors of a society is perhaps not a very fruitful one. There are enough examples of political affairs being conducted by one group and economic affairs being in the hands of a totally distinct group in the same society, while criteria of taste and culture are the product of outside influence, to underscore this point. Prof. Brunet's error is the common one described by J. H. Hexter in "The Myth of the Middle Class in Tudor England", Reappraisals in Modern History (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1961), of making the bourgeoisie "as fluid as water. A concept that at a distance seems solid gold turns out on closer inspection to be mere melted butter" (p 72). Prof. Brunet's great indiscretion was to do this just when everyone else was discovering that it was wrong.

European historians are achieving a lively recognition that bitterly opposed elements share the control of social groupings and that the middle class does not always ride the wave of triumph. For example, in his well-received Reformation Europe, 1517 - 1559 (London and Glasgow: Collins, Fontana Paperback, 1963), G. R. Elton writes that in the sixteenth century "the social ascendancy of the nobility eliminated the rivals, and thanks to the political consolidation of states, destroyed the independence, and therefore the influence, of merchant obligarchies" (p 308, italics added). Even more to the point is the thesis espoused by R. R. Palmer in The Age of Democratic Revolution, vol 1, "The Challenge" (Princeton, 1959), that the aristocratic or, what we might call "right wing", element in eighteenth century European society must not be portrayed as a relic of the Middle Ages, but as being as vital a grouping as was the bourgeoisie, evolving on principles of its own. It should now be clear that any analysis of the social and economic effects of the British Conquest of Canada must be one rigorous enough to separate the various elements inviting study. The Séguin thesis fails because by explaining everything it explains nothing.

Prof. Brunet has been attacked by the historians of Laval, whom, one is inclined to think, delight in quarrelling with their colleagues at the University of Montreal. In his remarkable monograph, Economie et Société en Nouvelle France (Quebec: Les Presses universitaires Laval, 1960), Jean Hamelin, an historian of the French regime, challenges the very existence of a well-developed Canadian merchant group before 1760. He contends that, far from controlling the trade of the colony, they were accorded only the crumbs from the tables of powerful marchands forains, who mulcted the colony of its wealth and returned to the continent. Had there been a true bourgeoisie in Canada, its interests would have dictated that it remain. Its absence is attributed to lack of wealthy immigration and skilled labour, a poorly administered monetary system and constant war. He concludes, "L'absence d'une vigoureuse bourgeoisie canadienne-française en 1800 apparaît ainsi comme l'aboutissement du régime français non pas comme une conséquence de la Conquête" (p 137).

Hamelin had been preceded in his attack on the Montreal school by his colleague Fernand Ouellet, an historian of the English regime. Employing the techniques of psychological analysis that had born fruit in his study of Louis-Joseph Papineau, Ouellet suggested in the usually innocuous Bulletin des Recherches Historiques (LXII, 94 - 101),

"Michel Brunet et la Problème de la Conquête", that the Canadian merchants were not true bourgeois because they were not "pénétrés des modes de pensée propres au bourgeois". This argument is expanded in his doctoral thesis, to be published in May 1966, "Histoire sociale et économique de Québec, 1760 - 1850" (Laval, 1965). Prof. Ouellet recognizes that the merchant was a typical and important member of French-Canadian society, but warns that "Le marchand aventurier n'est pas nécessairement l'ancêtre du grand capitaliste. Tout dépend de ses possibilités et des valeurs aux quelles il obéit et qu'il transmet à ses enfants" (p 9 manuscript). He contends that French-Canadian merchants succumbed to English competition in trade for five reasons: excessive dependance on one form of economic exploitation, the fur trade; attachment to individual enterprise and repugnance of capital concentration, a taste for luxurious living, a tendency to place money in assured investments, and contentment at utilizing British merchants as go-betweens with London merchants.

In sum, all parties now view the Conquest of Canada as a social as well as a political and economic phenomenon. Because of this reorientation, the modern historian can no longer say with Prof. Creighton, "The Conquest did not change Canada". The idea of social decaptation will remain, although in modified form. The image of the Canadians as "les enfants du sol" has been shattered, but the attempt to demonstrate that New France was a miniature New England has not met with success. If Professor Séguin's histoire noire is still scripture in the University of Montreal's Department of History, the nationaliste historiography "inspired by the Durham report" has come under a spirited attack from the Department of Sociology. <sup>6</sup> Professor Hamelin's work too is being roundly criticized in many quarters. Historians must now explore the implications of Fernand Ouellet's magnum opus, a task which should occupy them for some time.

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<sup>6</sup> Alfred Duhuc, "Problems in the Study of the Stratification of the Canadian Society from 1760 to 1840", Canadian Historical Association Annual Report, 1965, 13 - 29.

The most pressing need at present is for more and more monographs. We should liberate ourselves from an enchantment by the elusive bourgeoisie, which threatens to lead into a wasteland of semantical disputation. <sup>7</sup> Perhaps old fashioned in some historiographical contexts, Namierian techniques could profitably be applied to any period of Canadian history. In the pursuits and aspirations of individuals we will discover the nature of their society. We may even have to invent new words to describe what we will learn.

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<sup>7</sup> An interesting discussion of the use of bourgeoisie concept as a research tool is presented in Cameron Nish, "Une bourgeoisie coloniale en Nouvelle-France; une hypothèse de travail, L'Actualité Economique, XXIX, 240 - 265.

APPENDIX A

Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1769

(see Graph No. 1, p. 139)

<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
Adhemar, St. Martain	2500	Ermatinger, L.	2600
Baby, François	1740	Dobie, R.	1450
Janot, H.	1500	Fatterson, A.	1000
Elondeau, M.	1350		
Guillon, J. B.	1200		
Forlier, J. Bonac	1130		
DesRivières, H.	1000		
Chaboiller, C.	1000		
Chaboiller, A.	1000		
Janisse, B.	900	Todd, I.	875
Orillat, J.	937	Baxter, A.	666
Perrodot dit Lafleur, J.	900	Maire, G.	666
Chenier, B.	750	Bartie, P.	666
Ducharme, J. M.	750	Eastwick, H.	500
Serindac, A.	700	Oakes, F.	500
Verchères, L.	683	McNeal, R.	475
De La Rivière, A.	575	Frobisher, B.	450
Chaboiller, H.	575		
Berthelete, F.	510		
DuCharme, L.	500		
Baby, L.	450		
Foupart, J.	450		
Chaboiller, L.	469		
Mouton, F.	400		
Perinault, J.	400		
Godet, M.	400		
Forlier, J.	728		
Gazeau, J. B.	600		
Laselle, J.	300	Hey, W.	350
Chevalier, C.	300	Walker, T.	320
Rousseau, St. Jean	300	Grant, J.	300
Adhémar, J. B.	300	Smith, W.	150
Sanguinet, C.	300	Harrison, E.	123

(Continued next page)

Hurtebize, Z.	285	Abrams, Chapman	189
Lemoins des Pins	266	Lymburner, J.	50
Sanguinet, J.	255		
Curotte, A.	250		
Laselle, A.	250		
Prudhomme, J. E.	237		
Duroseau, R. T.	200		
Tabaux, J. E.	200		
Lafleur, R.	200		
Foretier, P.	150		
Martel, P.	139		
Paillet, G.	139		
LeDuc, P.	110		
Laforge, V.	100		
Fargues, P.	75		
Perrault, J.	127		
Pillet, I.	60		
Henault, P.	30		
Boutheiller, P.	120		
Robichaud, P.	100		



## Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1770

(see Graph No. 2, p. 140)

<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
Chaboiller, C.	2550	McNeal, R.	2050
Campion, E.	1800	Ellice, A.	2000
Serindac, A.	1800	Porteous, J.	2000
Blondeau, L.	1506	Phyn, J.	2000
		Hodge, L.	1875
		Chinn, E.	1600
Ducharme, L.	1300	Lyon, F.	1300
Janisse, B.	1200	Solomon, E.	750
Verchères,	1000	Ermatinger, L.	650
Magnan, A.	1000	Robie, R.	600
Guillon, J. E.	1000	Frobisher, E.	600
DesRivières, A.	1000	Lessey, B.	600
Forlier, J. Benac	800	Lyons, N.	450
Adhémar, J. B.	800	Howard, J.	500
Perinault, J.	750		
Cazeau, F.	660		
Henau, P.	650	McGill, John	300
Lahaye, A.	600	Maddox, C.	300
Sanguinet, C.	600	Patterson, C.	300
LaCroix, P.	500	Patterson, W.	200
LaCroix, D.	500	McCarthy, R.	100
Eernard, J. E.	500	Ross, G.	60
Cardinal, P.	500	Finlay, H.	50
Godet, M.	500		
Réaume, P.	500		
Chaboiller, L.	900		
Chaboiller, A.	450		
Huneau, G.	450		
Prejean, P.	400		
LeDuc, J. E.	400		
Irelande, B.	400		
Biron, J.	400		
Martel, P.	350		
Dumay, P.	350		
Tessie, U.	300		
Rapin, J. B.	300		

(Continued next page)

Rousseau, St. J.	300
Sanguinet, J.	300
Languedoc, E.	300
Curot, A.	275
Hurtebise, Z.	200
Laframboise, J. E.	200
Fouche, A.	200
Maugenest, G.	191
Séjourné	150
Desoulavy, D.	150
Bernier, C.	150
Langlois cit Traversi, A.	136
Eaby, P.	136
DePelteau, P.	130
L'Ecuyer, L.	103
Levesque, F.	100
Laselle, A.	100
Laselle, H.	100
Hunau, J.	100
St. Germain, A.	100
Yvon, J.	90
Laframboise, F.	75
Caron, M.	75
LeMire, A.	60
Fargues, P.	60
Eazière, J.	60
Doyon, J.	57
Laforge, V.	50
Orillat, J.	50
LeRoux, A.	40
Bourbonier, A.	40
Laselle, J.	37
Luissie, J.	25

## Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1772

(see Graph No. 3, p. 141)

<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
Pillet, I.	2540	Solomon, L.	3500
Marchesseau, M.	2200	Finlay, J.	3000
DesRivières, H.	2000	McNeal, R.	2000
Sanguinet, C.	1300		
Elondeau, M.	1642	Frobisher, B.	1500
Earsalon, E.	1600	Ermatinger, L.	1400
Hurtebise, M.	1545	Chinn, E.	1000
Cherrier, J. M.	1500	Solomons, E.	800
Perinault, J.	1500	Bertie & Chinn	900
Ducharme, J. M.	1500		
Martel,	1400		
Bouthellier, P.	1250		
Lemoine, J. A.	1200		
Janisse, E.	1200		
LaCroix, P.	1000		
Chaboillier, A.	800		
Papin, J.	750		
Cardin, C.	625		
Laframboise, J. E.	600		
Biron, J.	600		
Jeannot, H.	600		
Didier, J.	625		
Chaboillier, C.	500	Howard, Joseph	450
Waden, J. E.	500	Howard, John	450
Lormier, G.	450	Gordon, C.	200
Rocque, A.	400		
Laselle, H.	400		
Houeler, J. E.	400		
Chaboillier, L.	300		
Chaboillier, P.	300		
Sanguinet, J.	300		
Rousseau, St. J.	300		
Reihle, A.	250		
Augé, M.	200		
St. Amour, B.	150		
Baby, P.	101		
Sejourne, A.	50		
Petit, N.	20		

## Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1774

(see Graph No. 4, p. 143)

<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
Foretier, P.	4550	Solomon, L.	3000
		Solomon, E.	2050
Ferinault, J.	1500	Ermatinger, L.	1300
Achémar, J. E.	1300	Chinn, E.	1200
Blondeau, M.	1300	Henry, A.	1000
Ducharme, L.	1200	Patterson, A.	1000
Lacroix, P.	1200	Howard, J.	700
Fillet, P.	900		
Chaboiller, A.	800		
Bourassa, I.	750		
Waden, J. E.	750		
Sanguinet, J.	700		
Chaboiller, C.	610		
Chaboiller, L.	560		
Lambert St. Omer fils	500		
Borrel, J.	480	Finlay, J.	400
Rousseau, St. J.	400	McLean, J.	200
Laselle, H.	375		
Poupart, J.	375		
St. Luc Lacorne	300		
Voyer, J.	250		
Mayrand, H. G.	200		
Sanguinet, C.	150		
Baby, P.	141		
Caron, N.	100		

## Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1777

(see Graph No. 5, p. 145)

<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
		Ellice, A.	42,300
		McGill, Jas.	24,050
		Kay, W.	14,000
		Finlay, J.	11,770
		Stenhouse, J.	8500
Foretier, P.	5375	Graham, F.	5200
Orillat, J.	4555	Taylor, W.	4500
Boutheillier, P.	3600	Ermatinger, L.	4100
Durocher, J. E.	2450	McTavish, S.	3800
Forlier, J.	2050	McNeal, R.	3600
Réaume, A.	2000	Kay, J.	3270
DuMoulin, J.	1650	Dobie, R.	2500
Waden, J. E.	1200	Gregory, J.	2500
Blondeau, M.	1150	Porteous, J.	2400
Chaboiller, C.	1100	Fraser, T.	1800
Fargues, P.	1100	McGill, John	1400
		Howard, J.	1300
		Shaw, A.	1250
		Henry, A.	1100
		Clark, J.	1050
Sanguinet, J.	800	Aird, W.	850
Caville, L.	750	Wiseman, J. L.	500
Guy, P.	625	Grant, W.	250
Jobert, J. E.	550	Chinn, J.	600
St. Germain, V. L.	450	Hay, A.	200
Chaboiller, L.	420	Lyons, B.	800
Dufresne, A.	400		
Bernard, J.	400		
Dumeynicus, E.	250		
Cabot, J. E.	200		
Perinault, J.	200		

## Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1778

(see Graph No. 6, p. 147)

<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
		McGill, James	24,100
		Phyn, G.	24,090
		Ellice, A.	11,750
		Kay, W.	9750
Durocher, J. B.	5730	Gregory, J.	6790
LaCroix, P.	2350	Kay, J.	6650
Marchessaud, M.	1750	Todd, I.	6000
Orillat, J.	1600	Frobisher, J.	4825
Borrel, J.	1200	Grant, J.	4800
Campion, E.	1125	Finlay, J.	4750
Michon,	1041	McGill, J.	4500
Berthelot, M.	1041	McNeal, R.	4390
Bouthueillier, P.	1050	Taylor, W.	4200
Foretier, P.	1025	Stenhouse, J.	3790
Caville, L.	1000	Dobie, R.	3655
Fothier, J.	1000	Ermatinger, L.	3340
		McTavish, S.	3000
		China, J.	2875
		McWilliams	2800
		Porteous, J.	2350
		Williams, T.	2250
		Mildrum,	2175
		Prate, F.	2000
		Duffin, W.	1750
		Abraham, C.	1500
		Oakes, F.	1450
		Blakely, J.	1250
		Howard, J.	1217
		Solomons, E.	1200
		Grant, R.	1000
Sanguinet, J.	925	McKenzie, J.	875
Dumoulin, J.	875	McPherson, J.	875
Cotté, G.	825	McKindlay, J.	830
Laselle, A.	800	Grant, W.	825
Dubois, E.	800	McMurray, T.	750
Desrivières, H.	775	Forsyth, G.	750

(Continued next page)

Guillon, J. E.	750	Morrison, C.	675
Dumoulin, F.	625	Henry, A.	600
Réaume, A.	625	Frobisher, B.	600
Ducharme, J. M.	550	Corry, F.	600
Tabeau, J. E.	550	Calówell, J.	475
Dubois, A.	450	Wiseman, J. L.	313
Forliers, C. Vincent	425	Lilly, J.	313
Forliers, J.	425	Shaw, W.	250
Provost, F.	413	Sutherland, D.	225
Quérie	400	Brown, W.	150
Hertel	400		
Curtois, C.	375		
Chaboillier, L.	375		
Beaugrand, J.	350		
Pillet, E.	350		
Jobert, J. B.	325		
Pillet, I.	325		
Lamarche, C.	325		
St. Omer, L.	250		
Curot, A.	250		
Mayrand, H. G.	250		
Bernard, J.	250		
Rivet, F.	250		
Dufresne, A.	200		
Campion, A.	200		
Goddard, J. S.	200		
Gagnier, J.	180		
Sauvage, J.	175		
Marchand, A.	175		
Janisse, E.	150		

## Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1782

(see Graph No. 7, p. 148)

<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
		McGill, James	26300
		Ellice, R.	23750
		Morrison, C.	21500
		Gregory, J.	15805
		Cruickshanks, R.	9810
Dufresne, A.	4000	Judah, S.	7000
		Dobie, R.	7300
		Grant, J.	5650
		Forteous, J.	3000
		Paterson, C.	4500
		Eurns, T.	3750
		McTavish, S.	3500
		Auldjo, A.	3000
		Hamilton,	3000
		King, G.	2600
		King, S.	2500
		Frobisher, B.	2350
Perrault, J. F.	1500	Graham, F.	1759
Chaboillier, L.	1425	Thompson, A.	1600
Durocher, J. P.	1250	McNeal, R.	1509
Lardy, L.	1200	Fraser, T.	1500
Montigny,	1165	Laing, J.	1484
Waden, M <sup>re</sup> .	1000	Caldwell, J.	1400
Eouthillier, P.	1050	Clay, J.	1250
Morel, J. E.	790	Wiseman, J. L.	1200
Blondeau, M.	700	Finlay, J.	750
Sauvage, L. Br.	500	Corry, T.	600
Landrieve, P.	450	Sutherland, D.	500
Dubois, F.	450	Kay, W.	850
Bayrand, N.	300	Frobisher, T.	400
Duchesne, E.	250	Solomons, L.	300
Foretier, P.	250		
Pillet, I.	75		
Laroche, J.	33		



## Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1785

(see Graph No. 8, p. 149)

<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
		McGill, Jas.	21,525
		Frobisher, E.	20,650
		Sutherland, D.	20,500
Campion, E.	4000	Forsyth, T.	10,000
Elondeau, M.	3750	Kay, W.	5500
Cotté, G.	2725	Griffin, W.	4762
Eaby, Dupéron	2500	Gregory, J.	3387
Ferrault, J. F.	2500	Patterson, A.	3000
Marchesseau, N.	2500	Maitland, W.	3000
		Follard, R.	3000
		Finlay, J.	2800
		Graham, F.	2750
		Henry, A.	2750
		McCrae, D.	2400
		McLeod, N.	1850
		Patterson, C.	1500
		Frobisher, T.	1500
		Mason, W.	1500
Achémard, St. Martin,	1500	Cartwright, R.	1250
Boutheillier, P.	825	Dobie, R.	1000
Boutheillier, J.	800	Thompson, J.	1000
DesRivières, H.	800	Holt, A.	1000
Dubuc, A.	750	McGill, John	900
Tabeau, J. E.	750	Hay, A.	875
Desrivières, E.	625	Hunter, J.	850
Roy, J.	600	McDonald, A.	750
Chaboiller, L.	500	McDonnell, A.	750
Dubois, A.	300	McNeal, W. H.	750
Dubois, P.	300	Grant, J.	750
Thierry, P.	200	Todd, A.	750
L'Egall, E.	200	Macnamara, J.	500
Durand, P.	200	Symington, J.	425
Delisle, J.	200	Aird, R.	350
Bayard,	250	Howard, J.	275
LaCroix, J.	225	McKay, D.	250

(Continued next page)

Lecomte, U.	200	Bell, J.	150
Reaume, A.	175	Robertson, A.	150
Cavalier, J. B.	125	Patterson,	125
Luisignan,	125		
Sanguinet, J.	175		
Giason, C.	175		
Durocher, J.	83		
Montigny,	83		

## Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1787

(see Graph No. 9, p. 150)

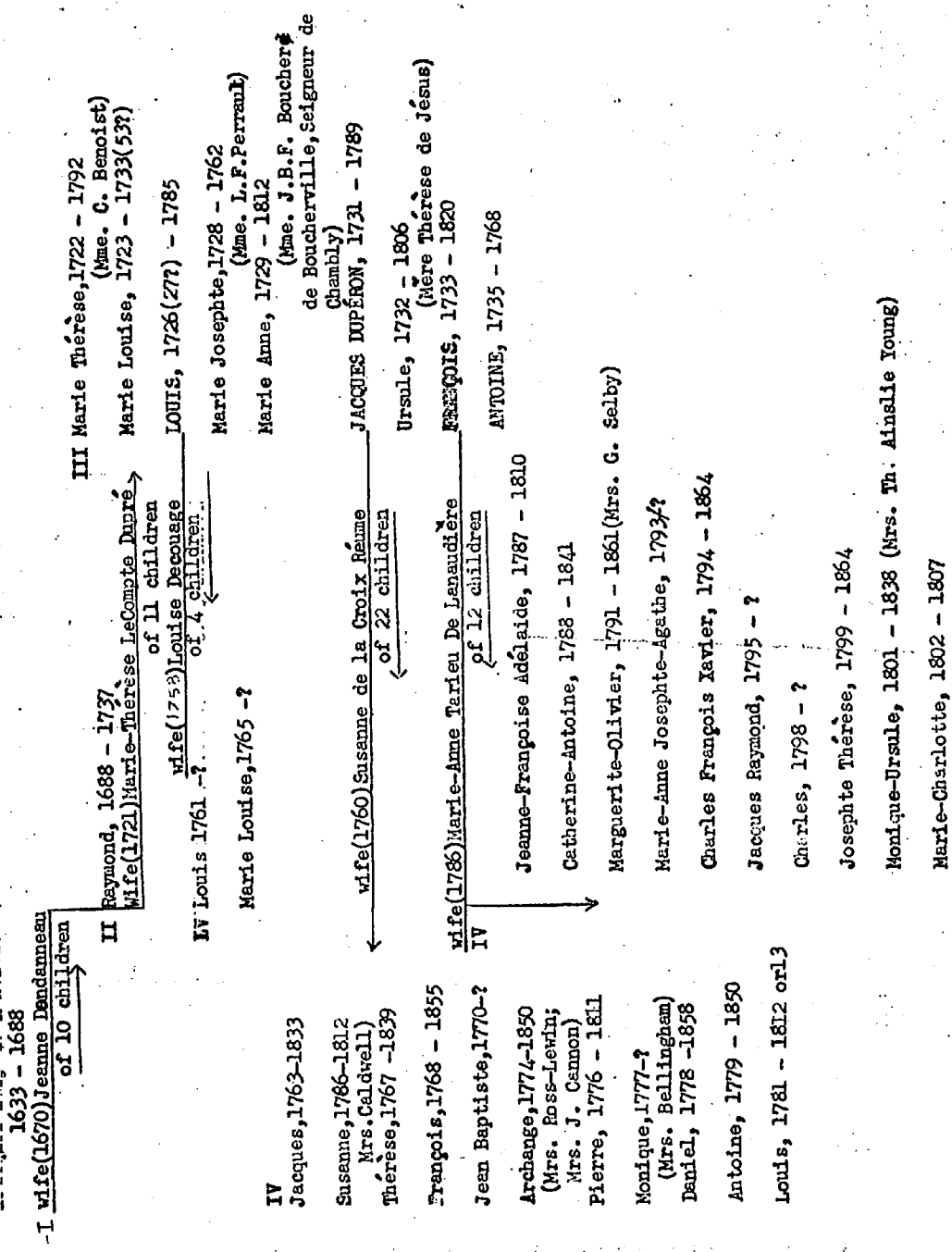
<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
		McGill, Jas.	19250
		Forsyth, T.	11860
		Frobisher, J.	11000
		Dobie, R.	9560
Chaboiller, L.	1900	McKindlay, J.	4550
Desrivières, H.	1500	Laing, J.	3300
Cerré, S.	1500	Gregory, J.	2850
Louvigny, M.	1000	Finlay, J.	2350
Eaubeien, D.	1000	Gray, J.	1500
		Hay, A.	1500
		McGill, John	1500
		Reeves, J.	1500
		Caldwell, J.	1250
		Maitland, W.	1490
		Henry, A.	1240
		Winter, T.	1000
		McBeath, G.	1000
		Howard, Jos.	1300
Baby, François	750	Bell, J.	850
Laurent, S.	665	Shaw, A.	750
Bouthellier, J.	650	Grant, W.	700
Roy, J.	600	Auldjo, A.	625
LaGuay, T.	600	Cruickshank, R.	625
LaCroix, J.	600	Macaulay, R.	500
Thibault, J.	500	Robertson, J.	500
Thiery, P.	500	Todd, A.	500
Gravier,	500	Rankin, D.	450
L'Egall, E.	500	McRae, D.	350
Bouthellier, F.	500	Hands, W.	250
Dumoulin, F.	350	Maitland, W.	240
Cotté, G.	315	McKenzie, R.	150
Bouthellier, F.	250		
Sanguinet, J.	200		
Biron, J.	200		
Languedoc, E.	200		
Chevalier, L.	200		
Beauparlant, J. B.	135		
Bautrise, J.	135		
Poirier, J.	110		
Branconnier, P.	110		
Chaboiller, C.	100		

## Investors in the Fur Trade in Order of Importance, 1790

(see Graph No. 10, p. 151)

<u>French</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>£</u>
		Forsyth, T.	42650
		Frobisher, J.	15650
		McTavish, S.	15450
		McGill, Jas.	10250
Durocher, J. E.	1400	Ellice, A.	4000
Campion, E.	1199	Todd, A.	3500
		Henry, A.	3500
		Dobie, R.	3199
		Birnie, S.	2750
		Gray, J.	2750
		Caldwell, J.	2500
		Badgeley,	2365
		Lilly, J.	1500
		McDougal, G.	1500
		McMurray, S.	1500
		Jones, R.	1500
		Cumming, J.	1500
		Howard, J.	1300
		Young, G.	1200
		White, J.	1100
		Winter, F.	1000
Dufresne, A.	900	Shaw, A.	333
Blondeau, M.	800	Reeves, J.	333
Cotté, G.	800	McGill, John	200
Tabeau, J. E.	666		
Desrivières, H.	500		
Rolland, F.	500		
Desrivières, P.	500		
Baudin, V.	500		
Laurent, S.	500		

*Descendants of Baby de Rivière*



APPENDIX B: PARTIAL FAMILY TREE  
OF BABY FAMILY IN CANADA  
(persons dying in infancy or  
childhood omitted)

*N<sup>o</sup> 50 Duplicate*

*N<sup>o</sup> 50*

By His Excellency GUY CARLETON, Captain-General and Governor in Chief, in and over the Province of Quebec, Vice-Admiral of the same, and Brigadier-General of His Majesty's Forces, &c. &c.

Battoe or Canoe-Men's Names, Occupations, and Places of abode.

*Jos. Duplessis Smith Montreal  
Antoine La Percey La Chine  
Jos. Gagney  
L. Lalonde Chambly  
Jouhn Yarnis Longueuil  
Pierre Doyon La Chine*

IN OBEDIENCE to His Majesty's Commands, this Licence is granted to *Jean Pte Deshoussel* to pass unmolested with *one Battoe* manned with *Six* Men (whose Names, Occupations and Places of Abode, and also the Quantity of Merchandize on board, are reported upon Oath and specified in the Margin) to *Detroit* and from thence to such Markets or Parts as he shall find most advantageous for the Disposal of the said Merchandize, with Liberty to dispose of any such Goods and Effects as he shall occasionally find a Market for in his Passage to *Detroit aforesaid* — he taking Care to endorse upon this Licence the Quantity and Quality of the Goods so disposed of, and shewing the same to the Commanding Officer of the next Fort,

PROVIDED ALWAYS, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to extend to give any Authority to the said *Jean Pte Deshoussel* to do any Act or Thing, or to trade to any Place, contrary to such Regulations as His Majesty may have been pleased to make, or shall hereafter think proper to make, by Himself or by the Commander in Chief, or by any Person properly authorized to give Directions concerning the Indian Trade.

PROVIDED ALSO, That he the said *Jean Pte Deshoussel* and also all and every the Master or Masters of, and all other Persons concerned in navigating the said *Battoe* shall first have taken and subscribed

the Oaths endorsed on this Licence, in the Presence of the Commanding Officer at Montreal, and shall also have given Security to observe and keep the same, and also that he the said *Jean Pte Deshoussel* will not take with him, or permit any of his People to take with them, any other Person or Persons, but such as usually have followed, or intend hereafter to follow, the Occupation of navigating Battoes or Canoes, and further, that he the said *Jean Pte Deshoussel* and all such Persons as he shall take with him, shall and will immediately, on his or their Return to the City of Montreal, present themselves to, and personally appear before, the Officer commanding at Montreal, and take a Certificate from him in writing of their having so personally appeared, Death, or any other unavoidable Accident only excepted.

These Securities being given, this Licence to be in force for *Twelve* Months, otherwise to be null and void to all Intents and Purposes.

GIVEN under my Hand and Seal at Arms, at the Castle of Saint-Lewis, in the City of QUEBEC, this *Twentieth* Day of July One Thousand Seven Hundred and *Sixty nine*

*Guy Carleton*

Quantity and Quality of Merchandize, viz.  
*Twenty Two Gallons of Rum and Brandy,  
Twenty Two Gallons of Wine,  
Fusils,  
Seven Hundred Pounds of Gun-Powder,  
Five or six Hundred Weights of Shot and Balls,  
And Forty cases of Ammunition,  
And other Merchandize,  
in all amounting to Seven Hundred and Eighty Pounds lawful Money of the said Province, or thereabouts, upon Oath of Jean Pte Deshoussel*

Sworn before me, at Montreal this twenty seventh Day of July 1769

*Josias Desaulles Agent*

By His EXCELLENCY'S Command,

*Geo. Allopp Secy*

I do sincerely promise and swear, That I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King GEORGE the Third, and him will maintain and defend, to the utmost of my Power. So help me God.

marques de  
Duplessis

I do any Thing prejudicial to the Interest of His Majesty King GEORGE the Third, directly or indirectly; and if any Matter or Thing shall come to my Knowledge, whereby the Interest of the British Government is or may be affected or injured, I will immediately give Intelligence thereof to the Governor or Commander in Chief of this Province; and also to the Commanding Officer at the Post I shall be nearest to at the Time of making such Discovery, particularly if I shall know or hear of any Practices with the Indians, that I shall conceive to be to the Prejudice of the Person by whom I am employed, I will not only do my utmost to disclose and make known such Matter to the Commanding Officer, but also I will faithfully declare and report the same to my Chief or Master; I will not directly or indirectly instigate or stir up any Strife or Mischief amongst the Indians, but as much as in me lies will promote Peace and Union amongst his Majesty's Old and New Subjects and the Savage Nations, and I will in all Things behave and demean myself as a good and faithful Subject of His Majesty King GEORGE the Third ought to do. So help me God.

McDONN

Sworn before me, at Montreal  
this 27th Day of July 1769  
Joseph + Duplessis  
Antoine + la Pensee  
Joseph + Gagné  
Louis + la Pointe  
Agent + Jousant + Varric

I Capt. Tho. Phillips of the 52. Regt. Commanding Officer  
at Montreal, do certify that the Oaths indorsed upon this Licence were administered in my Presence, this twenty seventh Day of July 1769 to the above-mentioned seven men

whose Names or Marks are thereto set and subscribed, by Jonas Desaulles Agent to George Allopp Esq. Deputy Secretary of the Province & duly authorized to administer the same and that the several Names or Marks of the said Joseph Duplessis, Antoine la Pensee, Joseph Gagné, Louis la Pointe, Jousant + Varric + Pierre Boyon and also the Name of the aforesaid Jonas Desaulles are respectively of their own proper Hand-writings, or Marks, made with their own Hands, in my Presence.

Jonas Desaulles  
Agent

Tho. Phillips Capt  
52. Regt

[Handwritten signatures and marks]

NOW all Men by these Presents, That I *Jos. Paby*  
 of the City of *Nubee*  
 Merchant, am held and firmly bound, unto our Sovereign Lord  
 the King, in the full Sum of *Fifteen hundred and Sixty*  
*Pounds* current Money of this Province, to be  
 made and levied of my Goods and Chattels, Lands and Tenements  
 respectively, to the Use of our said Sovereign Lord the King, his  
 Heirs and Successors, to the true Payment whereof, I bind my-  
 self, my Heirs, Executors and Administrators, firmly by these  
 Presents, witness my Hand and Seal, this *Twentieth*  
 Day of *July* One Thousand Seven Hundred and  
*Sixty nine* and in the *ninth* Year of the Reign  
 of His Majesty King GEORGE the Third, by the Grace of God,  
 of *Great-Britain, France and Ireland*, King, Defender of the  
 Faith, and so forth.

THE CONDITION of this Obligation is such, That whereas the  
 Above-bounded *Jean Bte Desjussel*  
 has obtained a Licence dated *this*  
*Day* to trade with the Indian Nations living  
 under His Majesty's Protection, at *Detroit* and from  
 thence to any Markets or Parts which he shall find most advantageous  
 for the Sale of his Merchandize, for the Space of *twelve* Months  
 from the Date thereof. Now if the said *Jean Bte Desjussel*  
 shall well and truly, in all Things, conform to and perform  
 the several Conditions recited in the Licence beforementioned, and shall  
 also well and truly keep and observe the Matters and Things enjoined  
 in the several Caris endorsed upon the said Licence, a duplicate of which  
 is hereunto annexed, then this Obligation to be void, or else to remain  
 in full Force and Virtue.

Sealed and delivered, taken  
 and acknowledged, before me

*J. Sully*

*Jonas DeSaulles*  
*Agent*

THE KING  
 HIS SECRETARY



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**A** Tous ceux qui ces Présentes Lettres verront, je  
de la Ville de  
déclare par icelles, que je me suis obligé et engagé formellement  
envers notre Souverain Seigneur le Roy, pour une Somme entiere  
de  
Monnoye courante de cette Province, qui sera levée et prise sur  
tous mes Biens, Meubles et Immeubles généralement quelconques,  
pour et au Profit de notre dit Souverain Seigneur le Roy, ses He-  
retiers et Successeurs, au Payement de la quelle Somme, j'oblige  
entièrement ma Personne, mes Heritiers, Executeurs, Testamen-  
taires, et Administrateurs, par ces Présentes, que j'ay signé de ma  
Main, et aux quelles j'ay apose mon Sceau ce  
Jour du Mois Mil Sept Cens  
et dans la Année du Règne de sa Majesté le Roy  
GEORGE Troisième, par la Grace de Dieu, Roy de la *Grande-  
Bretagne, de France et d'Irlande, Défenseur de la Foy, &c. &c.*

**L**A CONDITION de cette Obligation est ainsi qu'il suit, sçavoir, que  
si l'Obligé ci dessus (qui a obtenu une Permission

d'aller à faire la Traitte avec  
les Nations Sauvages, qui sont sous la Protection de Sa Majesté, et de  
cet Endroit en tous autres Postes ou Places qu'il jugera lui être plus  
avantageux pour la Vente de ses Marchandises, pendant le Tems et l'Espace  
de Mois, à compter de la Datte de la dite Permission)  
se comporte bien et de bonne Foy en toutes Choses, execute les diffé-  
rentes Conditions prescrites dans la dite Permission, et qu'il garde et  
observe bien et fidèlement les Formalités et Choses énoncées dans les dif-  
férens Serments dont les Doubles sont annexés à ces Présentes; alors cette  
Obligation deviendra nulle, et dans le Contraire elle restera dans toute sa  
Force et Vigueur.

*Scellé et Délivré, pris et  
reconnu devant moy.*

*[Handwritten marks and signatures]*

Par Son Excellence GUY CARLETON, Capitaine-Général et Gouverneur en Chef de la Province de Québec, Vice-Amiral d'Icelle, et Brigadier-Général des Armées de Sa Majesté, &c. &c.

CANOTEURS,  
Noms, Qualités, et Lieux de leur Demeure.

*Voiez les Noms des Canoteurs à la Marque de la permission cy jointe en Anglois*

EN Obéissance des Ordres de Sa Majesté, cette Permission est accordée à *Jean M<sup>e</sup> De Roussel* pour aller sans être inquiet, avec *un Canot* armés de *cinq* Hommes (dont les Noms, Qualités, et Lieux de leur Demeure, ainsi que la Quantité de Marchandises embarquées, sont déclarés sous Serment, et spécifiés en Marge) à *De Troit* et de là à tels Endroits qu'il trouvera les plus avantageux pour son Commerce, avec la Liberté de disposer de Partie de ses Marchandises et Effets, lorsqu'il trouvera Occasion de vendre dans le Cours de son Voyage, en faisant Attention d'endosser sur cette Permission la Quantité et Qualité des Marchandises dont il aura ainsi disposées, et de le faire voir à l'Officier Commandant le Fort le plus proche.

Pourvu toutefois, que rien de ce qui est contenu dans la dite Permission, puisse donner au dit *J M<sup>e</sup> De Roussel* aucune Autorité de faire quelque Chose, ou de Commercer dans aucun Endroit, contre les Reglemens qu'il a plu à Sa Majesté de faire, ou qu'elle jugera à propos de faire elle même, ou de faire faire par le Commandant en Chef, ou par quelqu'autre Personne qui sera dûment autorisée à faire des Reglemens concernant la Traitte des Sauvages.

Quantité et Qualité des Marchandises, sçavoir:  
Galons de Rum et Eau de Vie.  
- 32 Galons de Vin.  
Fusils.  
- 100 Livres de Poudre.  
3/4 Cens pèsans de Plomb et de Balles.

Pourvu aussi que le dit *J M<sup>e</sup> De Roussel* ses Maîtres, et Engagés, Conducteurs de Canots, fassent et signent les Sermens endossés sur cette Permission, en présence de l'Officier Commandant à *Montréal*, et donnent Caution de les observer et garder; et aussi que le dit *J M<sup>e</sup> De Roussel* ne prendra avec lui, ou ne permettra à aucun de ses Maîtres de Canots de prendre avec eux, d'autres Personnes que celles qui ont Coutume de conduire les Batteaux ou Canots, ou qui voudront à l'avenir suivre cette Profession; et encor que le dit *J M<sup>e</sup> De Roussel* ainsi que tous ses Engagés, se présenteront eux mêmes, et en Personne, aussitôt et immédiatement leur Retour à *Montréal*, devant l'Officier qui y commandera, et prendront de lui un Certificat qu'ils ont comparus devant lui en Personne, excepté seulement dans les Cas de Mort ou d'accidens inévitables.

Ces Suretés et Obligations remplies, cette Permission aura lieu et sera en force pour *trois* Mois, autrement elle sera entièrement de nulle Valeur.

Donné sous mon Seign et le Sceau de mes Armes, au Chateau St. Louis, dans la Ville de Québec, le *four* du Mois de *Juillet* Mil *Sept Cens Soixante et neuf*

*Signé* Guy Carleton

Par Ordre de Son EXCELLENCE,

*(Contresigné) Geo. Alloupp Sec<sup>re</sup>*

*Pour Traduction*

**J**E jure et promets sincerement, que je porterai Foy et vraie Fidelity à Sa Majesté le Roy GEORGE Troisième, et que je le soutiendray et le défendray de tout mon Pouvoir, en tout ce qui dependra de moy. Ainsi Dieu me soit en Aide.

**J**E jure et promets sincerement, que je ne diray ni ne feray jamais rien directement ni indirectement, qui puisse préjudicer aux Intérêts de Sa Majesté le Roy GEORGE Troisième, et que j'avertiray et donneray Connoissance au Gouverneur ou Commandant en Chef de cette Province, ainsi qu'à l'Officier commandant le Fort le plus voisin, de l'Endroit où je me trouveray, si j'aprens qu'il se fasse ou trame quelque Chose, contre les Intérêts du Gouvernement Britannique, ou qui puisse lui nuire ou l'offenser; et particulièrement si j'aprens ou entends quelques Complots avec les Sauvages, que je croiray être prejudiciables à la Personne pour la quelle je suis employé, que non seulement je feray tout ce qui dépendra de moy pour découvrir de tels Complots, dont je donneray Connoissance à l'Officier Commandant, mais encor que je les declareray à mon Bourgeois ou Maître; que je n'inciteray ni ne susciteray aucune Querelle et Division entre les Sauvages; que je feray tout mon Possible pour entretenir la Paix et l'Union entre les Anciens et Nouveaux Sujets de Sa Majesté et les Nations Sauvages; et que je me conduiray et me comporteray en toutes Choses, comme le doit faire un bon et fidel Sujet de Sa Majesté le Roy GEORGE Troisième. Ainsi Dieu me soit en Aide.

Juré devant moy, à  
*Montréal*  
ce Jour  
de 17

*Voiez les Noms des Sermens en Anglois*

**J**E *Montréal*, certifie que les Sermens des ci-dessus mentionnés, endossés sur cette Permission, ont été administrés en ma Présence, par *Jonas Desaulles* Agent de *George & Alphonse Levesque* *Secrétaire de cette Province* et que les differens Noms ou Marques des dits

Officier Commandant à

*Voiez les Noms dans le Certificat en Anglois*

et aussi le Nom du susdit *Jonas Desaulles* écrits, et faites de leurs propres Mains, en ma Présence, ce

ont été respectivement  
Jour du Mois de

Donné sous mon Signet et le Sceau de la Province de Québec, le 17<sup>me</sup> jour du Mois de *July* 1769.  
*(Signe)*

*John Jones*

*13<sup>th</sup> Battalion of Soldiers*  
*No 50*  
*1769 July 17<sup>th</sup>*  
*John Jones*  
*No 50*