

## LA COMPAGNIE DU NORD, 1682-1700

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### ABSTRACT

In 1682 the leading merchants in New France formed the Compagnie du Nord to exploit the choice furs in the Hudson Bay area and to challenge the English Hudson's Bay Company. The Compagnie du Nord's initial lack of success convinced its directors that a charter was essential for effective competition against the English. This charter was granted by the French Crown in 1685, and the following year the Compagnie du Nord embarked on a policy of military aggression, which reached its climax in 1690, when the English holdings were reduced to only one post. However, by 1694, after several unsuccessful efforts to capture this post, the Compagnie du Nord, whose finances were exhausted and whose organization was torn by internal dispute, ceased to be effectively involved in the Hudson Bay fur trade. In 1700, after all attempts to revive the Compagnie du Nord had failed, its charter was revoked by the French Crown.

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**by**

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## INTRODUCTION

To date there has been no single study devoted to the history of the Compagnie du Nord, often referred to as the Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson. The most comprehensive treatment of this Company is found in two works, to which I am greatly indebted. Professor E. E. Rich's thorough study, the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1763, Vol. I, contains valuable information on the Compagnie du Nord, although this work is occasionally marred by some errors, which are referred to in the footnotes of this thesis. Guy Frégault's Iberville le conquérant, also gives an account of the Compagnie du Nord, but information on the Company's early years is scarce. Of all the general histories on New France, Professor W. J. Eccles' Canada under Louis XIV, by far, contains the most perceptive treatment of the Company. Other works, such as the late Harold A. Innis' The Fur Trade in Canada, which states in a footnote on page 50 that documents relating to the Company are exceedingly rare, reveal a lack of understanding concerning the Compagnie du Nord. None of the works consulted has satisfactorily explained the Company's mechanics of operation, its directorship, its finances, or the role played by its



French directors.

In view of the fact that no study of the Compagnie du Nord exists, it is the purpose of this thesis to present a comprehensive history of the Company, from the early events leading to its formation in 1682, until its demise in 1700, which can be attributed to the following three causes: the lack of royal support for the Company; the remote location of Hudson Bay; and the Company's weak organization.

It is my pleasure to thank the following people and institutions for their help, which enabled the completion of this thesis: Professor Fernand Ouellet of Carleton University, who was kind enough to give me his advice on some of the Compagnie du Nord's financial problems; Mr. A. Clevan of the Hudson's Bay Company in Montreal, who permitted me to examine the pelts of various Canadian animals and provided a practical explanation of Canada's present-day fur trade; the Department of Transport in Fort Churchill Manitoba and Moosonee Ontario, which supplied me with climatological information on these respective areas; Mr. Douglas G. Pope, M.R.A.I.C., Miss Diane Le Moing, and Mr. William Studnicki of the Sir George Williams University Department of Geography, who aided in the preparation of the tables and maps; and the staffs of the Redpath Library

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I am, of course, deeply indebted to my director of studies, Professor Yves F. Zoltvany for so generously giving his time and learned advice, which has spared me numerous errors of omission and commission. Needless to say, I accept full responsibility for any errors which still exist. My most sincere thanks are also due to Mrs. R. de la Ronde for her exceptional care and interest in the preparation of this typescript. Above all, I wish to thank my wife, Eva, not only for bearing with an overdose of the Compagnie du Nord in conversation for the first two years of our marriage, but also, for her encouragement, understanding, and help in so many ways.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE ORIGINS OF LA COMPAGNIE DU NORD

In 1670 a group of English associates received a royal charter incorporating them under the title of the "Governor and Company of Adventurers of England tradeing into Hudson's Bay."<sup>1</sup> The English were now free to establish posts in an area that was a breeding ground of the world's finest beaver pelts. Before long, the fur trade of New France began to suffer as a result of the English presence at the Bay. To counter this presence, a group of Canadian merchants formed the Compagnie du Nord in 1682. The examination of the events leading up to the formation of this Company is the purpose of this chapter.

Linked to the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes by an intricate system of lakes and rivers, Hudson Bay can be reached in a number of ways.<sup>2</sup> Vessels from

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<sup>1</sup>The Publications of the Hudson's Bay Record Society (henceforth HBRS), ed. E. E. Rich ("Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1671-1674," Vol. V; 1942), p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>See Map I, Appendix B, infra, p. 225.

Europe could sail into either the Upper or Lower Bay,<sup>1</sup> although problems of navigation made sailing in the Lower Bay a risky affair. Therefore, most vessels sailed only as far as the western coast of Hudson Bay, while the Bottom of the Bay, today designated as James Bay, was reached by means of the numerous rivers flowing into it. The two most common routes were as follows: from Tadoussac via the Saguenay River to Lake Nemisco, and down Rupert River to the Bay; this way was believed to be the easier of the two;<sup>2</sup> the other course was from Montreal, up the Ottawa River to Lake Temiskaming, on to Lake Abitibi, down the Abitibi River to the Moose River, and on to the Bay. Another less frequent route to James Bay utilized the Albany River, which could be reached via Lake Superior. Since the Rupert, Moose, and Albany Rivers were the three major waterways leading to James Bay, trading posts were eventually established at the junction of these rivers and the Bay. Three important

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<sup>1</sup>The Upper Bay is equivalent to what is today Hudson Bay, and the Lower Bay, to James Bay. In this thesis, the term Hudson Bay is used in its Seventeenth Century context, meaning both Hudson and James Bay.

<sup>2</sup>Harold A. Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History (2nd ed. rev.; Toronto, 1962), p. 48.

rivers flowing into Hudson Bay, the Nelson, Hayes, and Severn, were used by the Indians to bring their furs to the English and French posts situated at the mouths of these rivers. By far the most important two rivers of the Hudson and James Bay system were the Nelson and the Hayes, both of which drained a hinterland extending as far west as Lake Winnipeg. The mouths of these two rivers, which were divided by a narrow strip of land, were ideally suited for fur trading posts, and this entire area came to be known as the Port Nelson region,<sup>1</sup> where several principal posts were established.<sup>2</sup>

The severe climatic conditions prevailing at the Bay as well as the physical hardships involved in reaching it, acted as a strong deterrent to those interested in establishing permanent posts in this "most dreadful country in the world."<sup>3</sup> The trials endured

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<sup>1</sup>Nicolas Jérémie, Twenty Years of York Factory, 1694-1714; Jérémie's Account of Hudson Strait and Bay, translated from the French edition of 1720 with notes and introduction by R. Douglas and J. N. Wallace (Ottawa, 1926), "Introduction," p. 7. The French came to call the Nelson River, La Rivière Bourbon, but often, the name Bourbon was used to refer to the entire Port Nelson region.

<sup>2</sup>See Map II. Appendix B, infra, p. 226.

<sup>3</sup>Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay, ed. J. B. Tyrrell ("The Publications of the Champlain Society," Vol. XVIII; Toronto, 1931), "Letters of La Potherie," trans. David B. Keys, "Letter I," p. 227.

while travelling to this remote area were excruciatingly difficult, whether the traveller used the overland route "crossing streams and little rivers up to his waste in those severe seasons,"<sup>1</sup> or voyaged by sea, a trip which took him so close to the North Pole that in early October the sun was no longer visible and the fierce, icy winds already prevailed.<sup>2</sup> Such voyages were made only at the greatest risk, "through almost insurmountable toils and dangers," and the ships that managed to return to Europe, after losing most of their men through scurvy, were often corroded and battered by ice.<sup>3</sup>

Life at the Bay was extremely difficult, if not intolerable, even to the Seventeenth Century European, who was used to privation, hardship, and the ever-present threat of death. For those who were good hunters or fishermen, there were abundant supplies of partridge, hare, caribou, deer, geese, ducks, and fish of all kind,<sup>4</sup> "but the unbearable cold which most of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., "Letter IV," p. 220.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., "Letter VIII," pp. 268-69.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., "Letter VIII," p. 227. See the entire "Letter VIII," pp. 268-77, for La Potherie's vivid description of scurvy suffered in the northern regions.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., "Letter IV," p. 221; Jérémie, Twenty Years of York Factory, pp. 37-38.

the time hollows the cheeks and freezes the noses and ears of those who expose themselves too long to the open air . . . ,"<sup>1</sup> made it necessary for inhabitants to stock up at an early date on supplies that could last the entire winter. Once winter came, there was little a man could do to alleviate the severe cold and boredom. Although "the Indians were a sensible People, [agreeing] their Women should be made use of," and although the Indian women were "very frisky when Young, [with] Maidens Very rare to be found at 13 or 14 Years,"<sup>2</sup> these "Maidens" seldom came into contact with the European men during the winter. Thus, the unhappy adventurers were forced to endure the cold and each other's company without the help of the female sex. In the summer, as the following description points out, life was only slightly more bearable:

There is no mean between the cold and the heat at this season, when heat is excessive and the cold is piercing. The winds from the North, which come from the sea, dispense the heat, and you perspire with the heat in the morning and are frozen in the evening.<sup>3</sup>

In view of these hindrances, it is an astonishing fact that Western Europeans dared to venture forth to this

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<sup>1</sup>Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "La Potherie, Letter IV," p. 221.

<sup>2</sup>E. E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1763 (Toronto, 1960), I, 604.

<sup>3</sup>Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "La Potherie, Letter IV," pp. 219-20.



desolate country.

The Europeans' desire to procur beaver from the Hudson Bay area accounts for their willingness to endure such hardships, for it was an undisputed fact that the waterways running into the Bay were the source of the best beaver furs in the world.<sup>1</sup> The beavers of this area, owing to the severe northern climate, grew a heavier fur than those of the more southerly parts of the North American Continent.<sup>2</sup> These furs were known as castor gras, for the body sweat of the Indians who wore them as protection against the cold loosened the first coat of course guard hairs. Thus, the traders were left with the second coat of short underfur, "the finest Down in the world,"<sup>3</sup> whose strands contained tiny invisible barbs that caused them to stick together when matted into felt.<sup>4</sup> This castor gras came into

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., "Introduction," p. 7; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 402; Archives Nationales, Archives des Colonies (Henceforth AN, Col.), series C11A, XIII, 198-99, "Memoire pour le castor de Champigny," Que., 26 Oct. 1694.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 202, "Sur le mémoire de M. de Champigny touchant le castor," n.d.

<sup>3</sup>Louis Armand de Lom d'Arce, baron de Lahontan, New Voyages to North America, ed. R. G. Thwaites (2 vols.; Chicago, 1905), I, 173.

<sup>4</sup>W. J. Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV, 1663-1701 ("The Canadian Centenary Series," Vol. III; Toronto, 1964), p. 59; J. F. Crean, "Hats and the Fur Trade," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, XXVIII (August, 1962), 375.

great demand during the Thirty Year's War, when the wide-brimmed felt hat worn by the Swedes became the vogue for men's hat styles on the Continent.<sup>1</sup> The most common proportion of beaver used by the hat makers consisted of three castor gras to one castor sec, or beaver not worn by the Indians.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, throughout the second half of the Seventeenth Century the type of beaver that commanded the highest prices on the European market was castor gras. But, until almost the end of the Century the French market was flooded by castor sec, while the highly sought castor gras remained at a premium.<sup>3</sup> For this reason, the Hudson Bay area played a vital role in the history of Canada's fur trade.

Despite the choice furs in the Hudson Bay region the entire area remained free of trading posts for almost sixty years after the Bay's discovery in 1610 by Henry Hudson. In 1613, Thomas Button took possession

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 378-79.

<sup>2</sup>Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "La Potherie, Letter V," p. 236; AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 415-17, "Congés et permissions pour la traite, commerce, reception, et prix du Castor," 4 June 1695; Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, p. 64. See Jacques Savary des Bruslons, The Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce, trans. Malachy Postlethwayt (2 vols.; 2nd ed.; London, 1757), I, 942, for the method of producing beaver hats.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 198-99, "Memoire pour le castor de Champigny," Que., 26 Oct. 1694.

of Hudson Bay at the mouth of the Nelson River, and in 1632, Thomas James claimed the bay that now bears his name, but for many years no further British attempts were made to reinforce these claims.<sup>1</sup> By the 1640's the French had begun to discuss the prospects for an overland journey to the Bay, but the general feeling was that this called for a superhuman feat, by which a "poor man would have lost fifty lives."<sup>2</sup> On an expedition lasting from 1654 to 1656, the legendary French explorer, Médard Chouart, more commonly known as Groseilliers, along with an unknown companion, succeeded in penetrating the northern Lake Superior area, but they did not reach the Bay.<sup>3</sup> In 1660, Groseilliers, this time accompanied by his brother-in-law Pierre Esprit de Radisson, returned to the colony from a successful trading expedition in the area northwest of Lake Superior, and although they had not reached the baye du nord, they were able to relate enticing Indian tales of abundant furs in the Hudson Bay area.<sup>4</sup> In 1661, the Jesuit

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<sup>1</sup>Jean Delanglez, Life and Voyages of Louis Jolliet, 1645-1700 ("Institute of Jesuit History Publications;" Chicago, 1948), p. 156.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 150.

<sup>3</sup>Grace Lee Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness: Médard Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers and Pierre Esprit Radisson, 1618-1710 (New York, 1943), pp. 23-24, 27-31.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 65-6. Radisson claimed to have travelled to the Bay on his 1659-60 expedition, but Miss Nute proves that this claim was impossible.

Fathers Dablon and Druillettes started out from Tadoussac up the Saguenay River for Hudson Bay. Their goal was to investigate Radisson and Groseilliers' claim that a Northwest Passage existed,<sup>1</sup> but when the Jesuits reached Lake Nemisco, they were forced to turn back. This was the first of two unsuccessful overland French expeditions intended for the Bay, the other occurring two years later under the leadership of Guillaume Couture.<sup>2</sup> Two unsuccessful sea voyages were also attempted by the French; in 1657-8 Jean Bourdon, after reaching a point off the Labrador coast, returned to New France;<sup>3</sup> and in 1670, the Dutch explorer, Lawrence Van Heemskerk, who sailed from France on the orders of Louis XIV to discover the Northwest Passage, failed to reach Hudson Bay.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, Radisson and Groseilliers, whose knowledge made them indispensable to further explorations of the Hudson Bay region,<sup>5</sup> were in New England,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>2</sup>Delanglez, Life and Voyages of Louis Jolliet, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 125-28; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 73.

<sup>5</sup>Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 10.

soliciting support for the most important goal of their lives. They realized that the great fur centre of the North American Continent lay to the northwest of Lake Superior, and that the easiest route was not the difficult overland trip from New France, but rather, by ship to Hudson Bay and then by canoe up either the Hayes or Albany Rivers.<sup>1</sup> Some Boston merchants agreed to sponsor this very plan by outfitting a ship. However, after reaching the straits leading to Hudson Bay, the vessel was forced back because "the season of the yeare was spent by ye indiscretion of our [Radisson and Groseilliers'] master."<sup>2</sup> In the summer of 1664, shortly after the renegade Frenchmen's return from their unsuccessful expedition, "the Commissioners of the King of Great Britain" arrived in Boston and succeeded in persuading the two adventurers to sail to England.<sup>3</sup> In 1665, Radisson and Groseilliers found themselves at the English Court, explaining their plans to an enthusiastic group of select London businessmen, influential courtiers, and members of the Royal Society, who arranged for the employment of the two explorers.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 88; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 29.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 29-31; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 96-104.

By early June, 1668, they were en route to the Bay in two vessels, the Eaglet and the Nonsuch. The Eaglet, carrying Radisson, was forced back, but the Nonsuch reached the Bay, and Groseilliers helped to establish the first trading post, Fort Charles, on the mouth of the Rupert River.<sup>1</sup> Groseilliers' return to England in the autumn of 1669 with a cargo of prime furs provided the proof of the two adventurers' claims.<sup>2</sup> On May 2, 1670, King Charles II granted the eighteen associates of the Hudson's Bay Company their charter, establishing a monopoly of trade in the entire Hudson Bay area known as Rupert's land.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, the Intendant Jean Talon, after hearing of the English presence in the "Baye du Nord"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 117-18, 135; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 61.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 36-38.

<sup>3</sup>HBRS ("Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1671-1674," Vol. V), pp. 131-32. The French had a copy of the Company's charter shortly after its founding, see Bibliothèque Nationale (henceforth BN), Colbert, Vol. XL; and AN, Col., C11A, V, 240-52, "Charte des Privileges de la Compagnie de la Baye de Hudson," 1680.

<sup>4</sup>Mémoires et documents pour servir à l'histoire des origines françaises des pays d'outre mer: Découvertes et établissements des Français dans l'ouest et dans le sud de l'Amérique septentrionale: 1614-1694, I, ed. Pierre Margry (Paris, 1879), 84, "Premier extrait d'une lettre de Jean Talon à Colbert," Que., 10 Nov. 1670; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 74.

commissioned the Jesuit priest, Father Albanel, along with several other explorers to establish communications with Hudson Bay in order to carry on trade with the Indians in that region.<sup>1</sup> Talon felt that the need for French explorers to reach the rich fur country was pressing, since the Indians had reported seeing two British ships and three barques, which had supposedly done a good trade in that area.<sup>2</sup> He ordered the expedition, which departed from Quebec on August 6, 1671, to take possession of the territories in the name of the King of France, and to reconnoitre the English posts.<sup>3</sup> After having been forced to winter en route, Albanel arrived on June 28, 1672 to find Charles Fort empty, for the Hudson's Bay Company employees had already returned to England.<sup>4</sup> Albanel took possession of the country in the name of the King, baptized some Indians, explored the shores of the Bay for some

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., series F3, Moreau de St. M<sup>é</sup>ry, II, 22, "Extrait du m<sup>é</sup>moire au Roy, envoy<sup>é</sup> par Talon," 2 Nov. 1671.

<sup>2</sup>M<sup>é</sup>moires et documents, ed. Margry, I, 84, "Premier extrait d'une lettre de Jean Talon  $\grave$  Colbert," Que., 10 Nov. 1670.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. M<sup>é</sup>ry, II, 22, "Extrait du m<sup>é</sup>moire du Roy, envoy<sup>é</sup> par Talon," 2 Nov. 1671.

<sup>4</sup>Delanglez, Life and Voyages of Louis Jolliet, p. 162; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 138.

distance, and then returned to New France. Although little was made of this prise de possession for the time being, Albanel's expedition was important, because it marked the first successful journey by the French to Hudson Bay,<sup>1</sup> as well as their first challenge to the English Company's claims.

In 1674, Father Albanel was again sent to Hudson Bay, this time by the Governor of New France, Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac. The Governor's prime motive for commissioning Albanel was to have him seek out Groseilliers and "essayer de voir s'il [Albanel] pourra le [Groseilliers] faire entrer dans nos intérêts."<sup>2</sup> Frontenac was concerned that Groseilliers "nous débauchait tous les sauvages et leur faisait des présents pour les attirer à la Baie de Hudson, où il s'est établi."<sup>3</sup> Therefore, he instructed Albanel to found a mission in order to persuade the Indians to stay away from the English heretics.<sup>4</sup> However, relations between Louis XIV of France and his cousin, Charles II of England, were still quite cordial

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<sup>1</sup>Delanglez, Life and Voyages of Louis Jolliet, pp. 149, 162.

<sup>2</sup>Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, 1926-27 (henceforth RAFQ), (Québec, 1927), p. 50, "Lettre du Gouverneur de Frontenac au Ministre Colbert," 13 Nov. 1673.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



as a result of the Treaty of Dover of 1670, which formed the Anglo-French alliance against the Dutch, and Frontenac had no choice but to adopt a moderate attitude towards the English at the Bay. The Governor therefore gave Albanel a letter, which he was to deliver to Charles Bayly, the Hudson's Bay Company Governor at the Moose River post, assuring him of the French desire to maintain "la bonne correspondance" with the English.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately for Albanel, Governor Bayly apparently regarded Frontenac's note with a good deal of scepticism, for when the priest arrived at Fort Charles in the late autumn of 1674, Bayly had him imprisoned, and in the spring of 1675, Albanel was shipped to England.<sup>2</sup> On the same vessel bound for England was Groseilliers, whom Albanel convinced to return to the French cause.<sup>3</sup> Shortly after his arrival in England,

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<sup>1</sup>HBRS, ed. E. E. Rich and A. M. Johnson ("Copy-book of Letters Outward etc.; Begins 29 May, 1680, Ends 2 July, 1687," Vol. XI; 1948), pp. 71-72, "Frontenac à Monsieur Commandant pour le Roy de Grande Bretagne à la Baye d'Hudson," Quebec, 8 Oct. 1673.

<sup>2</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 78-79, 118; Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV, p. 112; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 152.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 152-53; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 116, 120-21; Pierre Esprit Radisson, Voyages of Peter Esprit Radisson, Being an Account of his Travels and Experiences Among the North American Indians, from 1652 to 1684, ed. Gideon D. Scull (2nd ed.; New York, 1943), p. 252.

Albanel was released by the English and allowed to go to France, where he immediately began formulating serious plans with Radisson and Groseilliers as well as with Colbert for the exploitation of furs in the Hudson Bay territory.<sup>1</sup> By then the French authorities, whose relations with England had begun to deteriorate after the separate British peace with Holland in 1674, were showing more interest in Canada's North and less fear of violating the Hudson's Bay Company's claims. In fact, the growing impression that the French Government would support Albanel's moves led the Hudson's Bay Company to plead for diplomatic intervention requiring the French Government to forbid its subjects to encroach upon English territory.<sup>2</sup> These wishes were ignored, and Colbert, who immediately upon Radisson's arrival to France had pardoned him for his previous treachery,<sup>3</sup> now keenly listened to his proposals, stressing the importance of Hudson Bay to the entire French fur trade.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 252-53; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 116-23; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 167-69.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 167; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 120.

<sup>3</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 252.

<sup>4</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 120-21. Unfortunately, the exact nature of Radisson's proposals cannot be determined, for they are found only in the following memorandum on the French fur trade in Canada, compiled by Radisson, BN, Fonds Français, Nouvelles Acquisitions (henceforth NA), Collection Margry, Vol. 9,284. See Bibliography, infra, p. 230. From what appears in Rich, there can be no doubt

After some delay, Colbert agreed to send Radisson and Groseilliers to Canada in order "to advise with the Governour what was best ther to bee done."<sup>1</sup>

Much to Radisson's surprise, he and Groseilliers received a cool reception from Frontenac who was far more inclined to foster the southern and western expansion of Canada's fur trade than he was to indulge in northern ventures. After Radisson and Groseilliers had met with Frontenac and the leading fur traders of the colony on October 19, 1676, they realized that two rival factions had developed in New France and for the time being they would receive no official support for their plans.<sup>2</sup> Radisson wrote:

. . . being arrived at Quebeck, wee found that jalousy and interest which some Persons had over those that had the absolute command, at that time of the Trade in Canada, and whos Creatures were Imploy'd for new Discoverys, ordered things so that the Counte De Frontinac, the Governor, took no care to perform what wee had ben promis'd hee should have don for us;<sup>3</sup>

Thus Radisson, feeling "slighted," sailed for France, while Groseilliers went to live with his family at

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that Radisson's plan to close Hudson Bay to the English commerce was the one followed in later years by the Compagnie du Nord.

<sup>1</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 167-69; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 122.

<sup>3</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 253.

### Three Rivers.<sup>1</sup>

The principal cause of the political friction described by Radisson was the manner in which Frontenac conducted the western expansion of the Canadian fur trade, which he was determined to exploit in the hope of amassing quick profits. In the summer of 1673, Frontenac established Fort Frontenac, a fur trading post on Lake Ontario, which was to serve as an anchor point for other posts to be built further West.<sup>2</sup> René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, Frontenac's protégé and chief associate, was granted Fort Frontenac through the influence of the Governor, who obviously was using his full authority to further La Salle's fur trading ventures.<sup>3</sup> In 1676, Frontenac, La Salle, and associates established a post at Niagara, another link in what was to become a chain of posts through the Great Lakes. This policy of western expansion seriously interfered with the interests of a group of Montreal merchants, headed by Jacques Le Ber and his brother-in-law, Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Châteauguay.<sup>4</sup> These men were quick to see that a series of posts through the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV, p. 82.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 103-104.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

Great Lakes could easily drain the fur trade that normally flowed from the West by way of the Ottawa River to their Montreal warehouses.<sup>1</sup> It was clear that Frontenac's posts were serving as a base for trade with the Indian tribes of the West, who formerly had provided the furs that came into Montreal. Frontenac and his group were monopolizing the entire western fur trade to the detriment of the Montreal merchants who had formerly enjoyed it.

The political tension was further heightened in 1678 when La Salle received official sanction from the Court to explore the Mississippi Valley, to build forts wherever necessary in the new lands, and to trade furs in the entire area south and west of the Great Lakes.<sup>2</sup> Frontenac and his associates were now in a position to monopolize the fur trade of half the Continent. This was especially disconcerting to the Montreal merchants, who, along with some Quebec associates had expressed their interest in the Mississippi Valley fur trade. In 1677, Louis Jolliet, the explorer, had petitioned the French Court for precisely the same rights as those later granted to La Salle, but despite the fact that the Quebec merchant

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 106.

Charles Aubert de La Chesnaye, an associate of Jolliet, who was then in Paris, had offered the French Court to defray the costs of Jolliet's project, the petition was refused.<sup>1</sup> Frontenac's Paris agents, who were able to exert more influence on Colbert than La Chesnaye could, were instrumental in obtaining for La Salle what had been denied to Jolliet.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the rivalry between the two factions had taken on a new dimension, and Jolliet, the first explorer of the Mississippi Valley region found himself cut off from this area because his friends and protectors happened to be Frontenac's political opponents.<sup>3</sup> The Montreal merchants and their associates were now being squeezed out of the Mississippi Valley region as well as from the Great Lakes area; in order to survive they had to turn northward.

In 1679, after La Chesnaye had returned from France, plans were laid for a northern expedition to be led by Louis Jolliet. La Chesnaye hired eight men, including Louis Jolliet and his brother, Zacharie, who left Quebec in May 1679 and travelled via the Saguenay River to the English post at Fort Charles.<sup>4</sup> Louis

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<sup>1</sup>Delanglez, Life and Voyages of Louis Jolliet, pp. 135-37.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., footnote, p. 170; Rich, Hudson's Bay

Jolliet returned to the colony in the autumn of 1679,<sup>1</sup> but apparently, his brother Zacharie wintered in the North, where he engaged in some trading with Governor Charles Bayly of the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>2</sup> When Zacharie Jolliet returned to the colony in March 1680, he and Jacques La Lande, a half-brother of La Chesnaye, were convicted of having traded furs with the English.<sup>3</sup>

The Jolliet expedition was significant for two reasons, both of which were important to the Compagnie du Nord's formation. On Louis Jolliet's return to the colony he pointed out that many Indian tribes that formerly had traded with the Canadians were now bringing

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Company, I, 119, 127. Some of the details concerning this expedition are not clear. Rich, (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 127, and "Which Jolliet," The Beaver, Outfit 287 [Fall, 1956], pp. 18-21), suggests that two expeditions were sent out; one led by Jolliet, of which Frontenac was aware; and the other, which was not approved, led by Zacharie Jolliet. In any case, the important point for the purposes of this thesis, is that La Chesnaye was involved.

<sup>1</sup>Delanglez, The Life and Voyages of Louis Jolliet, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 127.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, V, 360, "Memoire et preuves de la cause du désordre des coureurs de bois," 1681. If this document was not written by Frontenac himself, it was certainly inspired by him; P.-G. Roy, "La Famille Gaultier de Comporté," Bulletin des Recherches Historiques (henceforth BRH), XL (June, 1934), 341; Delanglez, Life and Voyages of Louis Jolliet, pp. 185-86.

their furs to the English at the Bay.<sup>1</sup> He therefore urged the immediate expulsion of the English from the entire Bay area, claiming that if they were allowed to remain, they would become masters of the Northern fur trade within ten years.<sup>2</sup> Some form of Canadian action in the North was clearly required. The other significant aspect of Jolliet's expedition was the deepening of the rift that it caused between the two rival factions in the colony.<sup>3</sup> It is probable that the conviction of Zacharie Jolliet and La Lande precipitated Frontenac's subsequent allegations against La Chesnaye, Le Moyne, Le Ber, and a Quebec merchant named Philippe Gaultier de Comporté, and caused them to unite in opposition to the Governor.<sup>4</sup> From this closely-knit association of merchants the Compagnie du Nord emerged in 1682.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 175-76.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 175; Rich, "Which Jolliet," Beaver, Outfit 287 (Fall, 1956), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, V, 299, "Du Chesneau & Monseigneur," Que., 13 Nov. 1681.

<sup>4</sup>The following sources provide indirect support of this conclusion: Ibid., 360, "Memoire et preuves du désordre des coureurs de bois," 1681; Delanglez, Life and Voyages of Louis Jolliet, pp. 180-87.

<sup>5</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 66-67, "La Barre au Roy," 1682.



La Chesnaye took the lead in the endeavour to found this company when he sailed to France in 1680. Much to the Quebec merchant's good fortune, Radisson, whose arguments in favour of a maritime approach to Hudson Bay were the very ones that La Chesnaye had come to France to propose, had also recently arrived in Paris. Radisson and La Chesnaye were soon brought together by Father Francois Bellinzani, Colbert's director of trade, who instructed them of Colbert's desire that:

. . . some mesures should bee taken to make the best advantage of our Discoveries and intreagues in the Northern parts of Canada, to advance the Beaver Trade, and as much as possible . . . to hinder all strangers from driving that trade to the prejudice of the French Collonies.<sup>1</sup>

La Chesnaye and Radisson "discours'd a long time together," whereupon it was agreed that La Chesnaye "would furnish [Radisson] in Cannada with all things necessary for executing what dessignes we should conclude upon together to this intent."<sup>2</sup> The French officials and La Chesnaye then made a tentative agreement to hire Radisson for an expedition to the Bay, but before he was allowed to sail to Canada, he was requested to cross the Channel in order to learn the British Company's Hudson Bay projects.<sup>3</sup> By the time Radisson returned to Paris,

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<sup>1</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 256.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

La Chesnaye had departed for Canada; and so, Radisson resolved to follow him there to execute their Paris agreement. Before setting out, he went to the Jesuits in Paris, who, "as being also concerned with La Chesnaye in the Beaver Trade,"<sup>1</sup> gave Radisson 200 livres for the voyage,<sup>2</sup> enabling him to sail for Quebec, where he arrived in September of 1681.<sup>3</sup>

Upon his arrival at Quebec, Radisson was met by La Chesnaye, who took him to Governor Frontenac "to demand his assistance . . . for the carrying on [their] Desseigne," which hinged on the Governor's granting La Chesnaye an exit permit to allow his vessel to sail to the Bay.<sup>4</sup> However, Frontenac's attitude regarding fur trading expeditions to the Hudson Bay area had changed very little since his rejection of Radisson's plans in 1676.<sup>5</sup> Now that La Chesnaye, whom Frontenac disliked

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>2</sup>Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Lettres, Carton N, no. 52, M., p. 9, "Dudouyt à Mgr. de Laval," Paris, 9 March 1681.

<sup>3</sup>Although Radisson in his journal (Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 257), mentioned that he arrived September 25, 1682, this cannot be correct, for the chronology of his subsequent actions would then be impossible. It appears that Radisson confused the years 1681 and 1682.

<sup>4</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, pp. 257-58; AN, Col., C11A, VI, 196, "De Maules au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683; Ibid., V, 273, "Frontenac au Ministre," Que., 2 Nov. 1681.

<sup>5</sup>Supra, p. 16.

intensely,<sup>1</sup> was involved as a central figure in this scheme, it stood even less chance of receiving the Governor's sanction. La Chesnaye seemed to have expected a refusal, for he had an alternate proposal ready for the Governor, which suggested that Radisson should be given a passport to return to France via New England in a boat then ready to sail from Quebec.<sup>2</sup>

Frontenac agreed to this alternate plan and supplied a detailed explanation to the Minister as to why he had not accepted La Chesnaye's original proposal. He wrote that he could not allow La Chesnaye's vessel to sail to the Bay because "si on les poussoit plus vers la baie d'Hudson, on y pourroit trouver les Anglois ce qui causeroit peut etre des demelez ou contestations."<sup>3</sup> He also claimed that the expedition might draw away Indians who were accustomed to trade at the Company of the Farm's store at Tadoussac.<sup>4</sup> This Company had been founded in 1675 when a group of French financiers acting

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, V, 288, "Memoire du Chesneau," Que., 13 Nov. 1681.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 273, "Frontenac au Ministre," Que., 2 Nov. 1681; Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 258.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, V, 273, "Frontenac au Ministre," Que., 2 Nov. 1681.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

under the name of Jean Oudiette acquired a seven year monopoly on the Canadian Farm. The farm consisted of the tax of twenty-five per cent, known as the droit du quart, on beaver pelts and ten per cent, called the dixième, on moose hides; the ten per cent tax on wine, tobacco, and brandy entering Canada; and the monopoly of the Tadoussac fur trade, a vast area on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River extending from Isle aux Coudres to the Seven Islands.<sup>1</sup> For these rights the Company paid 119,000 livres annually<sup>2</sup> and also undertook to purchase all beaver brought into its stores. The revenue obtained from these rights was used by the Company of the Farm to defray the colony's administrative expenses.<sup>3</sup> In view of the Company's financial importance to the colony it is not surprising that Frontenac gave it preferential treatment over the demands of a group of Montreal and Quebec merchants.

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<sup>1</sup>Guy Frégault, "La Compagnie de la colonie," Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, XXX (Jan.-March, 1960), 5-6; AN, Col., series B, XI, 30-31, "Ordonnance du Roy," Versailles, 10 April 1684; AN, Col., C11A, X, 271-79, "Mémoire sur la ferme de Canada," n.d., unsigned, as cited in Select Documents in Canadian Economic History, 1497-1783, ed. Harold A. Innis (Toronto, 1929), pp. 337-40.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., B, XI, 12-13, "Lettre du Roy à La Barre," Versailles, 10 April 1684.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 35-37, "Estat de la depense que le Roy veut en Nouvelle France pour l'année dernière 1683," Versailles, 10 April 1684.

After Frontenac's refusal to sanction La Chesnaye's plans for the Hudson Bay expedition, his only alternative was to resort to an illegal scheme, involving Radisson and Groseilliers. Radisson, who now had Frontenac's permission to leave the colony, sailed on November 26, 1681, not for New England, but for Acadia, where he wintered. Before leaving Quebec, he had finalized his arrangements with La Chesnaye for an expedition to the Bay.<sup>1</sup> In May of 1682, La Chesnaye gathered together four merchants, who agreed to finance this venture.<sup>2</sup> Their names were Joseph Petit Bruneau, Pierre de Saurel, Guillaume Chanjon, and Jean Gitton filz; and all of them, except Saurel who died shortly after their agreement was made,<sup>3</sup> later became directors in the Compagnie du Nord.<sup>4</sup> This association of merchants obtained permission from Frontenac to outfit two vessels,

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<sup>1</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, pp. 258-9.

<sup>2</sup>E. Z. Massicotte, "La Traite des Pelleteries à la Baie d'Hudson au 17<sup>e</sup> Siècle," BRH, XXXIV (March, 1928), 190, "Déclaration faite par le Sr Bruneau pour raison de la traite de l'abbaye d'Hudson au Sieur Chalon ageant général de Mess les intéressés," 5 Aug. 1683.

<sup>3</sup>Jean-Guy Pelletier, "Saurel, Pierre de," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, I (henceforth DCB), ed. George W. Brown (Toronto, 1966), 602.

<sup>4</sup>See Chapter II dealing with the Company's directors.

ostensibly to fish off the coast of Anticosti.<sup>1</sup> In reality, the merchants' project enormously exceeded their permit, for their plan was to send these ships loaded with trade goods, with Groseilliers and crew, to Percée Rock, where they would meet Radisson and take him to the Bay.<sup>2</sup> These vessels were then to return, loaded with furs, not to Quebec but to Percée Rock, where another ship was to meet them and carry the cargo of furs directly to Europe.<sup>3</sup> Through this plan La Chesnaye and his group could at last profit from the magnificent furs of the Hudson Bay region, and in so doing, they could "frustrer les droits du quart" levied by the Company of the Farm.<sup>4</sup>

In July of 1682, Governor Frontenac received his recall to France. A serious obstacle to La Chesnaye's plans for the exploitation of furs from the

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 196, "De Meules au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683; AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, VI, 45-46, "Ordonnance de M. de Meulles relative aux prétentions des Srs intéressés en la Société de la ferme et commerce de Canada sur un armement fait par Sr de La Chesnaye et Compagnie," 24 Sept. 1683.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*; AN, Col., C11A, VI, 196, "De Meules au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, VI, 45-46, "Ordonnance de M. de Meulles . . .," 24 Sept. 1683.

<sup>4</sup>E. Z. Massicotte, "La Traite . . .," BRH, XXXIV (March, 1928), 190, "Déclaration . . .," 5 Aug. 1683. For the results of this scheme, see Chapter III, *infra*, pp. 64-66.

Hudson Bay area was thus removed. The arrival in early October of the new Governor, Le Febvre de La Barre, who was far more interested in the northern fur trade than his predecessor, provided the final impetus for the formation of the Compagnie du Nord.

One of the men responsible for arousing this interest was Daniel Greysolon, Sieur Dulhut, who sailed to Canada with La Barre, after having unsuccessfully pleaded at the French Court for a seigneurial grant to the lands he had discovered northwest of Lake Superior.<sup>1</sup> In 1679, by establishing a system of alliances with the tribes of this area, Dulhut had temporarily succeeded in preventing many of the Indians from taking their furs to the English posts at the Bay.<sup>2</sup> But, by the autumn of 1682, the situation in the North had deteriorated so badly that the reinforcement of the colony's system of Indian alliances, as advocated by Dulhut, was essential. The English presence at Hudson

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<sup>1</sup>Antoine d'Eschambault, "La vie aventureuse de Daniel Greysolon, Sieur Dulhut," Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française (henceforth RHAF), V (Dec. 1951-2), 329.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 320-22; Mémoires et documents, VI, ed. Margry (Paris, 1888), 26-34, "Lettre du Sieur Du Lhut à M. le comte de Frontenac," 15 April 1679.

Bay was drawing the Crees and the Assiniboines, tribes located northwest of Lake Superior, away from the Ottawas, who had previously acted as French middlemen.<sup>1</sup> The French, no longer able to rely on the Ottawas for their furs, were forced to seek direct trade with the Crees and Assiniboines. This task, however, was becoming increasingly difficult, for superior English merchandise at lower prices had attracted these tribes to the Hudson's Bay Company posts.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, in the hope of intercepting the Crees and the Assiniboines en route to the Bay and deterring them from trading with the English, La Barre granted congés to Dulhut and his men,<sup>3</sup> an act which soon led some traders in the colony to inform the Minister that La Barre had a financial interest in the trade.<sup>4</sup> La Barre, however, denied

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, V, 313, "Memoire de Duchesneau pour faire connoistre à Monseigneur les nations sauvages desquelles nous tirons nos pelleteries," Que., 13 Nov. 1681; Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "La Potherie, Letter VII," pp. 262-65; Delanglez, Life and Voyages of Louis Jolliet, p. 175.

<sup>2</sup>Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "Letter from Father Marest, Missionary of the Company of Jesus, to Father de Lamberville of the Company of Jesus, Overseer of the Missions of Canada," trans. Agatha Leonard, pp. 123-24; Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, pp. 46-51.

<sup>3</sup>d'Eschambault, "La vie aventureuse," RHAF, V (Dec. 1951-2), 333; Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV, p. 124.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., VI, 216-26, "Memoire à Messieurs les Interessez en la societté en commandite de la ferme et commerce de Canada," 1683.



these accusations, claiming that he was merely striving to prevent the English from further entrenching themselves at the Bay.<sup>1</sup>

The welfare of New France, however, was not the only reason for the Governor's interest in the northern fur trade, for an economic alliance definitely did exist between La Chesnaye and La Barre, who was eager to enjoy a profitable sojourn in New France.<sup>2</sup> He therefore threw his support on the side of the Montreal and Quebec merchants, led by La Chesnaye, Le Moyne, and Le Ber, in their struggle against Frontenac's old group of traders, led by La Salle.<sup>3</sup> By the time of the Compagnie du Nord's founding, some of the colony's most prominent men, including La Barre, were lined up against this rival faction of traders.<sup>4</sup> La Barre's involvement with La Chesnaye's group meant that for the

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<sup>1</sup>Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., VI, 221, "Memoire à Messieurs les Interesseez en la societté en commandite de la ferme et commerce de Canada," 1683; Ibid., pp. 177-78, "De Meulles au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 216, "Mémoire à Messieurs les Interesseez en la societté en commandite de la ferme et commerce de Canada," 1683; Céline Dupré, "Cavelier de La Salle, René-Robert," DCB, I, 602; d'Eschambault, "La vie aventureuse," RHAF, V (Dec. 1951-2), 330.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, V, 315, "Mémoire de Duchesneau," Que., 13 Nov. 1681.

first time, these merchants could rely on the Governor to support their Hudson Bay projects.

Therefore, from the outset of his career as Governor, La Barre was involved with and committed to La Chesnaye's group. In view of this group's desire to trade in the Hudson Bay area, La Barre had little choice but to sanction the expansion of the northern fur trade. Now that La Barre was embarked on this policy of northern expansion, he was obliged to support it by directly challenging the English trading posts.<sup>1</sup> The establishment of a fur trading company that could present this challenge to the Hudson's Bay Company was the solution adopted by La Barre. He therefore persuaded several of the colony's leading merchants to join La Chesnaye and his associates in the formation of the Compagnie du Nord:

au mois d'octobre 1682, M. de la Barre excita les intéressez de prendre part avec le dit de la Chesnaye et associez et de former une compagnie tous ensemble. Ce qu'ils firent pour conserver au Roy la possession de cette Baye et empescher les Anglois de profiter de la plus belle pelleterie de la nouvelle france et détruire dans la suite le commerce de cette colonie.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., VII, 208, "Mémoire des intéressez en la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson," Oct. 1685. Unfortunately, the document establishing the Compagnie du Nord in 1682 does not appear to have survived, and therefore, there

Thus, in 1682, a Company was formed, whose policy was committed to the exploitation of the high quality furs prevalent in the Hudson Bay area and to the prevention of the Hudson's Bay Company's profitting from these furs. From the moment Canadians first became aware of the abundance of castor gras in the Bay area, their desire to trade there had steadily increased. This desire was strengthened by the following circumstances, all of which led to the Compagnie du Nord's formation: the development of two rival factions within the colony as a result of the Canadian fur

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has been some controversy as to the exact date of the Company's founding. AN, Col., C11A, VII, 260-61, "Memoire que presentent a Monseigneur les Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson," Paris, 6 Feb. 1685, signed Comporté, stated that the Company was formed in October, 1683. However, it appears to be the only document stating that 1683 was the founding year, and therefore, it must be erroneous. Innis (The Fur Trade in Canada, p. 50) erroneously stated that the Company was granted its charter on May 20, 1682, and Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 128), based the following statement on Innis: "In France de la Chesnaye managed to secure a charter for the Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson in 1682." The French authorities played no direct role in the Company's founding in 1682. As Chapter III, infra, p. 92 shows, it was not until 1685 that the Company received its charter from the Crown. Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 199), appears to contradict himself by stating that La Chesnaye prevailed on La Barre to establish the Compagnie du Nord in March, 1684. Conclusive evidence proving that the Company was established in 1682 is provided in AN, Col., series C11E, I, 117, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d.

trade's western expansion; the elimination of the Montreal-Quebec merchant faction from the Southwestern fur trade by Frontenac's group; the necessity of the Montreal-Quebec merchants to expand their trading interests northward; and their desire to escape the crippling droit du quart imposed by the Company of the Farm. Finally, the grave situation that menaced the colony's system of Indian alliances, as well as the arrival of a Governor who was sympathetic to the northern expansion of the fur trade and to the group willing to carry it out, precipitated the Compagnie du Nord's formation in October of 1682.

## CHAPTER II

### THE COMPANY'S DIRECTORS

The establishment of the Compagnie du Nord in 1682 involved some of the colony's leading citizens as its directors. By the end of 1686 the Company's directorship also included several merchants who resided in France. Table 1 of Appendix A provides information concerning the amounts invested by the directors of the Compagnie du Nord, and Tables 2 to 4 supply pertinent data on the associates' lives and business interests.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this chapter is twofold: to clarify the Compagnie du Nord's mechanics of operation in order to appreciate the manner in which it functioned; and to analyze the information on the directors contained in the tables in order to see how it relates to the Company's history.

Since the Compagnie du Nord was a partnership rather than a corporation, no shares were issued.<sup>2</sup> In

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<sup>1</sup>Tables 1 to 4 are located in Appendix A, infra, pp. 190-216.

<sup>2</sup>See Frégault, "La Compagnie de la colonie," Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, XXX, 5-29, 127-49, for

contrast to the Hudson's Bay Company, which required each of its seven Committee members to hold at least 200 pounds worth of shares,<sup>1</sup> only an investment in the Compagnie du Nord was needed to become a director. Thus, the directorship of the Compagnie du Nord consisted of a group of merchants who held an interest in the Company, ranging from 1,792 livres to approximately 90,000 livres.<sup>2</sup> These investors, referred to as directeurs or intéressez, who made the decisions regarding Company policy, and whose names appeared on Company documents, are as follows:<sup>3</sup> Charles Aubert de La Chesnaye, the Compagnie Jean Oudiette,<sup>4</sup> Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil et de

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an excellent description of the Compagnie de la Colonie, which was a corporation and did issue shares.

<sup>1</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 64, 89.

<sup>2</sup>See Table 1, Appendix A, infra, pp. 190-93.

<sup>3</sup>The directors' full names are as they appear in Table 2, Appendix A, infra, pp. 194-201.

<sup>4</sup>This Company went under the collective corporate name of Jean Oudiette, who represented a syndicate of financiers residing in France. George T. Matthews, The Royal General Farms in Eighteenth Century France (New York, 1958), pp. 41-42, 49-50. Unfortunately, very little information is available on Oudiette, or the unknown number of financiers in his Company, who are never referred to by name. To comply with the legal definition of a corporation (Ruben C. Bellan, Principles of Economics and the Canadian Economy [Toronto, 1960], p. 20), Oudiette's Company will be treated as one person and one director in the Compagnie du Nord, and will henceforth be referred to simply as Oudiette.

Châteauguay, Jacques Le Ber dit Larose, François Hazeur, Joseph Petit dit Bruneau, Charles Catignan, Charles Patu, François Viennay-Pachot, Guillaume Chanjon, Philippe Gaultier de Comporté, Jean Lepicart, Jean-Baptiste Migeon de Branssat, Charles Macart, Louis Marnot, Jean Gitton fils, François Duprat, Guillaume Bouthier, Pierre Soumande Delorme, Mathurin-François Martin de Lino, Démonic (first name unknown), and Jean Gobin.

No document defining the Compagnie du Nord's terms of operation appears to exist today. Since the Company was only a partnership between several merchants, it is doubtful that any document, such as the Compagnie de la Colonie's Règlement pour la Compagnie du Canada, clarifying the mechanics of management, ever existed.<sup>1</sup> It is far more likely that the operation of the Compagnie du Nord depended on agreements made between its directors at various times.<sup>2</sup> Although it is possible that many of

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<sup>1</sup>Edits, ordonnances royaux, déclarations et arrêts du Conseil d'état du Roy concernant le Canada: revus et corrigés d'après les pièces originales déposées aux archives provinciales, I, ed. E. R. Fréchette (Québec, 1854), 280-84, "Règlement pour la Compagnie du Canada," 15 Oct. 1700.

<sup>2</sup>For example, see in the Quebec Judicial Archives (henceforth Jud. Arch. Que.), greffe Rageot, 31 Oct. 1684, "Procès verbal de Délibération de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson nommant deux de ses membres pour la

the Compagnie du Nord's documents have not survived, it is more probable that the Company was simply not organized in a manner requiring the careful recording of its meetings, as was the Hudson's Bay Company, which began its Minute Books in 1671.<sup>1</sup> As far as the hiring of the Compagnie du Nord's employees was concerned, these records usually appeared in the name of one of the directors, rather than in the Company's.<sup>2</sup>

Funds for the financing of the Compagnie du Nord's ventures were derived primarily from the capital invested by its directors and the returns from expeditions to the Bay. However, since these returns were offset by the enormous cost of the expeditions, which sometimes failed to reach the Bay, the Company remained solvent only until the end of 1691, when its capital was finally exhausted.<sup>3</sup> After this year the Company enjoyed neither returns from expeditions nor

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représenter en France"; AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 99-101, "Procès verbal sur l'entreprise du Sr d'Iberville," Que., 26 Oct. 1694; Ibid., XV 86-88, "Les Intéressez en la Compagnie du Nord concernant le fort Bourbon," Que., 13 Oct. 1697.

<sup>1</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 64.

<sup>2</sup>For example, see Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Rageot for the month of January 1687.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 167 "Memoire des Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord," 1692. See Table 5, Appendix A, infra, pp. 217-24.



any significant influx of capital from new investors.<sup>1</sup> Two assessments of 3 1/2 per cent and 13 per cent on each director's total investment were levied in 1690 and 1691 respectively, but this scheme brought only a fraction of the amounts needed to remain solvent.<sup>2</sup> It was therefore clear that the Compagnie du Nord was

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<sup>1</sup>Frégault ("La Compagnie de la colonie," Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, XXX, 14), bases his claim that there were thirty-three investors in the Compagnie du Nord on AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 368-70, "Liste générale des Intéressez en la Compagnie de la Colonie du Canada et des actions qu'ils y ont pris," Raudot, 1708. This document, in fact, under the heading "Intéressez en la compagnie du nord unie à celle de la colonie," lists forty-nine "intéressez," the vast majority of whose names have appeared on no other documents concerning the Compagnie du Nord. As Table 5, Appendix A, infra, pp. 217-24 demonstrates, the Compagnie du Nord relied primarily on the approximate sum 195,000 livres invested by its twenty-two directors. The fact that in 1692 the Company's directors claimed this capital had been consumed and that the figures bear this out provides added proof that there were no new investors other than the twenty-two directors. Unless these "intéressez" entered the Company sometime between 1697 and 1700, an occurrence which is highly doubtful, the Compagnie du Nord received no significant influx of capital from new investors.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 88-89, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 10 Nov. 1692; Ibid., CXXV, 88-89, "Estat de la contribution faite par Messieurs les Intéressez en la Compagnie du Nord de Canada sur le pied de 13% le 29 mars 1691 suivant le resultat de l'assemblée de la dite compagnie dudit jour à Quebec."

relying only on its paid up capital to defray its costs of operation. This was in sharp contrast to the Hudson's Bay Company, which was able to borrow money on the security of its Charter and common seal when the need arose.<sup>1</sup> It is doubtful that the English Company could have survived otherwise, for it was free from the pressing need of selling furs in order to raise cash for its immediate necessities, and was thus in a strong position to compete with its rivals.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, the Hudson's Bay Company was able to issue dividends of 50 per cent in 1684 and 1688, and 25 per cent in 1689 and 1690,<sup>3</sup> while the Compagnie du Nord's directors never enjoyed a personal profit from their investment.

If the Compagnie du Nord kept a record of its transfer of interests from one director to another, it has apparently not survived. However, it is known that at least seven such transactions occurred during the period before 1686 to 1697.<sup>4</sup> Of these seven

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<sup>1</sup>HBRS, ed. E. E. Rich and A. M. Johnson ("Hudson's Bay Copy Booke of Letters Commissions Instructions Outward, 1688-1696," Vol. XX; 1957), "Introduction," p. lviii.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; E. E. Rich, "Russia and the Colonial Fur Trade," The Economic History Review, Second Series, VII, No. 3 (1955), 310-11.

<sup>3</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 155-57, 238-41, 258-61, 272-75.

<sup>4</sup>See Table 1, Appendix A, infra, p. 190. The footnotes to this table show that information concerning the transfer of interests was obtained primarily from various notarial documents.

transactions, only one, Oudiette's acquisition of La Chesnaye's investment is significant to the history of the Compagnie du Nord. The event leading to this occurred in 1681, when, for the amount of 410,000 livres, La Chesnaye purchased the right to collect all debts that a large number of Quebec residents as well as several Indians owed Oudiette's Company of the Farm.<sup>1</sup> On August 4, 1682, fire broke out in Quebec's Lower Town destroying two-thirds of the homes and warehouses, along with much of their contents.<sup>2</sup> This was a bad blow to La Chesnaye, as it was now impossible for him to collect these debts for the next several years.<sup>3</sup> In 1686, Oudiette, whose lease to the Company of the Farm had been taken over by the consolidated ferme-générale des domaines in 1685,<sup>4</sup> was hounding La Chesnaye to pay the balance of 213,000 livres which he still owed. Finally,

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<sup>1</sup>Jugements et délibérations du Conseil souverain de la Nouvelle-France [1663-1716] (6 vols.; Québec, 1885-91), V, 776-77; P.-G. Roy, La Famille Aubert de Gaspé (Lévis, 1907), pp. 31-32, 44.

<sup>2</sup>Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV, p. 121.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 153-54, "La Barre au ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686; Roy, La Famille Aubert, pp. 31-32, 44-45.

<sup>4</sup>Matthews, The Royal General Farms, pp. 49-50. Oudiette's lease was supposed to have lasted only seven years. See Chapter I, supra, pp. 24-25.

the Quebec merchant was forced to come to terms and pay Oudiette a consignment of corn worth 23,000 livres, as well as his canoes and furs valued at 100,000 livres.<sup>1</sup> Most important of all, La Chesnaye transferred his interest in the Compagnie du Nord of approximately 90,000 livres to Oudiette.<sup>2</sup> Now, almost one-half of the Compagnie du Nord belonged to a group of merchants residing in France.

The transaction between La Chesnaye and Oudiette had an adverse effect on the Compagnie du Nord's organization. Later events demonstrated that it was impossible to manage the Company effectively with one powerful group of directors residing in France and the other, in Canada.<sup>3</sup> Despite the fact that Oudiette tried to maintain a representative in Quebec,<sup>4</sup> messages from France often failed to arrive in time, resulting in misunderstandings between the directors on both sides of

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 247-48, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., F2A, 13, Pièce 75, p. 59, "Copie d'un mémoire envoyé de Quebec par les intéressés dudit lieu en la Compagnie de la Baye du Nord ou d'Hudson," n.d.

<sup>3</sup>See Chapter V, infra, pp. 137-41, 179.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., XIII, 99-101, "Procès verbal sur l'entreprise du Sieur d'Iberville," Que., 26 Oct. 1694.

the Atlantic.<sup>1</sup> The French directors' demand that Company headquarters be transferred from Quebec to La Rochelle ultimately led to a serious impasse between the two groups.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, if Oudiette had still held the lease to the Company of the Farm in 1686, his entry into the Compagnie du Nord could well have proved to be beneficial, for the same group of French merchants who once had an interest in the Canadian Farm, would also have owned almost one-half of the Compagnie du Nord. Had this been the case, it is highly improbable that the French merchants would have continued to levy the burdensome droit du quart on the Compagnie du Nord.<sup>3</sup>

In 1691, Oudiette was the Compagnie du Nord's leading director with an investment of 73,193 livres.<sup>4</sup> La Chesnaye, who by 1691 had managed to acquire an interest of 22,268 livres through the purchase of other directors' holdings,<sup>5</sup> was the leading Canadian investor.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter V, infra, p. 140.

<sup>3</sup>See Chapter IV, infra, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup>This paragraph, as well as the following two, are based on the facts presented in Table 1.

<sup>5</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 247-48, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686.

The other three top Canadian directors were Le Ber, with an investment of 21,379 livres; Hazeur, with 17,521 livres; and Pachot, with 10,373 livres. The combined interests of these four Canadians came to 71,541 livres, an amount only slightly lower than the 73,193 livres held by Oudiette. In 1691 the remaining 49,239 livres invested in the Company were distributed between ten other directors, who held interests ranging from 7,340 livres to 1,792 livres. Therefore, out of a total of 120,780 livres invested by directors other than Oudiette, the four leading Canadians, La Chesnaye, Le Ber, Hazeur, and Pachot, held the combined amount of 71,541 livres, or approximately 60 per cent. In 1691 the Compagnie du Nord was clearly dominated by Oudiette and four Canadian directors.

The absence of Le Ber's 21,357 livres<sup>1</sup> interest marks the most significant difference in the Compagnie du Nord's list of 1697. Two other directors, Catignan, who had died by 1697,<sup>1</sup> and Chanjon, who withdrew from the Company, also had their respective interests of 5,471 livres and 7,340 livres liquidated. La Chesnaye had 42 livres liquidated, reducing his total holdings to

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<sup>1</sup>See Table 2, Appendix A, infra, pp. 194-201 for biographical information.

22,226 livres. Therefore, the total value of liquidated interests amounted to 34,210 livres. Only one new director, a French merchant named Démonic, entered the Company between 1691 and 1697, with an investment of 2,419 livres, which he purchased from the liquidated capital of 34,210 livres. Therefore, between 1691 and 1697, the total amount invested in the Compagnie du Nord showed a reduction of 31,791 livres.

Of the twenty-two directors listed in Table 1, a total of fifteen had invested in the Compagnie du Nord before 1686. Only five of them, La Chesnaye, Hazeur, Pachot, Lepicart, and Gobin, remained as directors in 1697; four, Le Moyne, Comporté, Catignan, and Branssat had died; and the remaining six, Le Ber, Chanjon, Gitton fils, Bouthier, Delorme, and Bruneau, had liquidated their interests. In 1697, in addition to the five original directors, there were seven others who had entered the Company between 1686 and 1697. From these figures it is evident that a substantial change in Company directorship occurred from the period before 1686 to 1697. Although 27 per cent of the original fifteen directors were eliminated by death, and 33 per cent of them remained in 1697, it is significant that 40 per cent withdrew from the enterprise. It is also worth noting that all but one of the seven directors who

entered the Company between 1686 and 1697, did so before 1691. Only the French merchant Demonie purchased a very small interest after 1691. By that year it was obvious that potential investors considered the Compagnie du Nord a bad risk.<sup>1</sup>

Tables 1 and 2 reveal some important facts concerning the composition of the Compagnie du Nord's directorship. During the period from before 1686 to 1697 a total of twenty-two directors were involved in the Compagnie du Nord. The permanent residence for sixteen or 73 per cent of these twenty-two directors was Canada, with twelve living in Quebec, three in Montreal, and one in Three Rivers. By 1697, however, after the deaths of Le Moyne in 1685 and Branssat in 1693, as well as the withdrawals of Bruneau in 1687 and Le Ber in 1694, Quebec was the only place of residence for the remaining Canadian directors. Twenty-seven per cent or six out of the Company's twenty-two directors are classified as permanent residents of France. Of these six merchants, two, Oudiette and Marnot, lived in Paris; and three, Chanjon, Gitton  fils, and Duprat, resided in La Rochelle. Demonie's city of residence in France is unknown.

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<sup>1</sup>This was with good reason. See Table 5, Appendix A, infra, p. 219.



Tables 1 and 2 also show that from the period before 1686 to 1697 the composition of the Compagnie du Nord's directorship underwent a considerable change, both in terms of the percentage of Canadian and French directors in the Company, and the amount invested by the two groups. Although the amount of capital invested by each of the directors in the period before 1686 is not clear, it is known that fifteen out of a total of seventeen associates, or 88 per cent of them were Canadian, leaving only 12 per cent or two French investors. The amount invested by the French directors before 1686 cannot be determined exactly, but it is probable that their interest was little more than 12,000 livres or 6 per cent of the Company's total capital of approximately 195,000 livres. The number of investors reached its peak of nineteen during the 1686 to 1690 period. By then, two directors, Comporté and Le Moyne were already dead, and only one Démonic, had not yet entered the Company. Of these nineteen directors, 74 per cent or fourteen were Canadian and 26 per cent or five were French. Thus, the percentage of French directors in the Company had risen by fourteen since before 1686. Even more significant, the French directors now owned approximately 50 per cent of the Company -- an increase of 44 per cent since before 1686. By 1691 the

withdrawals of Gitton fiis, Delorme, Bouthier, and Bruneau, had reduced the Company's directorship to fifteen, of whom four, or 27 per cent were French. The holdings also remained quite stable with the percentage of Canadian capital rising slightly to 53 per cent of the total, and the French, falling off to 47 per cent. The withdrawals of Chanjon and Le Ber, the deaths of Branssat and Catignan, as well as the entry of Demonic, put the total number of directors at twelve in 1697. The French membership of four directors was now 33.5 per cent of the total, whereas the Canadian associates, numbering only eight, composed 66.5 per cent of the Company's directorship. Most significant of all, was the fact that the French capital in the Company had risen to fifty-three per cent of the total. Therefore, from the period before 1686 to 1697, the French directors in the Company had increased from 12 per cent to 33.5 per cent, and the amount invested from 6 per cent to 53 per cent of the total. A Company which had begun as an almost purely Canadian venture, in 1697 was controlled by French investors, despite the fact that they were a minority of the total directorship.

Table 2 discloses that of the sixteen directors whose permanent residence was Canada, three, Lepicart, Macart, and Delorme, were native Canadians, born in New

France. The approximate dates of arrival to Canada are known for twelve of the remaining thirteen Canadian directors. Fifty per cent of these twelve directors were well-established Canadians, having arrived in New France before 1670. Charles Le Moyne, who reached Canada in 1641, was the first to arrive. He was followed by La Chesnaye, who came to Canada in 1655. After Le Moyne's death in 1685, La Chesnaye, who was fifty years of age at the Company's formation in 1682, became its oldest director. Thus, including the three native Canadians, nine of the Company's sixteen Canadian directors appeared to have a thorough experience in the Canadian fur trade.

According to Table 2, family ties among the Company's directors were strong. Fifty per cent of the sixteen Canadian directors were related. Four of these eight directors, Le Moyne, Le Ber, Hazeur, and Delorme, were brothers-in-law. Comporté and Macart were linked by La Chesnaye's close business associate, Charles Bazire, who was a brother-in-law to both of them. The families of the other directors were related through marriages of their children, although these unions occurred after the Compagnie du Nord's demise. La Chesnaye's daughter was married to one of Le Moyne's sons, and Hazeur's son, to de Lino's daughter.

A large percentage of the Company's Canadian directors enjoyed a very high social status in the colony. Table 3<sup>1</sup> reveals that twelve of the sixteen Canadian directors, or 75% of them, were either nobles, Sovereign Councillors, or enjoyed some other important position of authority. Five of these directors were nobles, including Comporté and Bouthier, who were born of noble families. La Chesnaye and Le Moyne were granted their titles, whereas Le Ber purchased his. Four of the directors, La Chesnaye, Hazeur, Macart, and de Lino, were Sovereign Councillors; although La Chesnaye was the only director to hold this position while the Compagnie du Nord was in operation. Eleven directors, four of whom were neither nobles nor sovereign councillors, enjoyed other important positions of authority. The three leading directors, La Chesnaye, Le Ber, and Hazeur, can be classified in at least two of the three categories listed in Table 3; but La Chesnaye was the only one who was a noble, a Sovereign Councillor, and who held another important position of authority. Therefore, many of the Compagnie du Nord's directors, especially the leading ones, were among the social élite of New France.

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<sup>1</sup>See Table 3, Appendix A, infra, pp. 202-204.

Table 4<sup>1</sup> shows that many of the Company's directors were also members of the colony's commercial élite by virtue of the numerous economic interests they held. Since little information is available on the six French directors, who, with the exception of Oudiette and Chanjon, apparently had no interests in Canada, Table 4 is primarily concerned with the sixteen Canadians. All of these directors, except Lepicart and Macart, held at least one seigneurie. Although these seigneuries were not always held for an extended length of time,<sup>2</sup> the combined seigneurial holdings of the Company's leading directors, La Chesnaye, Le Ber, Hazeur and Pachot, amounted to a substantial proportion of all the seigneuries then available in New France.<sup>3</sup> La Chesnaye, who by far owned the most property of all the Company's directors, controlled more seigneuries than anyone else in the history of New France.<sup>4</sup> Often,

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<sup>1</sup>See Table 4, Appendix A, infra, pp. 205-216.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Colebrook Harris, The Seigneurial System in Early Canada: a Geographical Study (Madison and Quebec, 1966), p. 57.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 56, 201-202.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

these seigneurial grants enabled the directors to participate in other ventures, such as fishing, in which 50 per cent of the associates were engaged. Two directors, Hazeur and Delorme, used their seigneurie of Malbaie as a base for an important lumbering project. Hazeur also established a slate quarry in his seigneurie of Anse de L'Etang.

Table 4 also reveals that 56 per cent, or nine out of sixteen Canadian directors were involved in various activities other than fishing or fur trading. These included the ownership of stores by four merchants; a tannery and brickyard by two; mills by another two; and shipbuilding and lumbering, projects in which another four directors were engaged. La Chesnaye also owned a bakery, and Hazeur, a slate quarry.

Despite the directors' various interests that have been mentioned thus far, Table 4 discloses that first and foremost, the Compagnie du Nord's Canadian associates were fur traders. Thirteen out of sixteen, or 87 per cent of the directors were engaged at some time in fur trading projects other than the Compagnie du Nord. Therefore, during its period of operation, the Compagnie du Nord was by no means the exclusive fur trading interest of its directors, who were very much involved in the exploitation of the entire northwestern

fur trading area in addition to the particular Hudson Bay region. Fur trading was obviously the dominant force in these directors' lives, for the Compagnie du Nord's collapse in 1700 in no way deterred seven out of the nine directors who were still alive from transferring their interests to the newly established Compagnie de la Colonie<sup>1</sup> and acquiring shares, which were worth 50 livres each.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, seven former Compagnie du Nord directors held interests ranging from 1,000 to 19,000 livres in the new Company. Because these seven associates all owned twenty shares or more, they were given a vote at the Compagnie de la Colonie's general meetings, and five of them were elected to the organization's directorship, consisting of seven directors.<sup>3</sup> Four former Compagnie du Nord directors ranked among the top eleven shareholders in the new Company,<sup>4</sup> including La Chesnaye, with an investment of

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<sup>1</sup>Frégault, "La Compagnie de la Colonie," Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, XXX, 14. Delorme died in the early part of 1700, and therefore, he is excluded from this group of nine surviving directors.

<sup>2</sup>Edits, ordonnances royaux, ed. Fréchette, I, 280-81, "Règlement pour la Compagnie du Canada," 15 Oct. 1700.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>4</sup>Frégault, "La Compagnie de la colonie," Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, XXX, 14.

19,000 livres and Le Ber, with 12,000 livres, the two greatest interests; and Hazeur, with 8,000 livres, and de Lino, with 6,000 livres. With the exception of de Lino, the leading investors in the Compagnie du Nord were also the top shareholders in the Compagnie de la Colonie.

Table 4, in addition to showing that the Compagnie du Nord was not its directors' exclusive fur trading interest, also reveals that the Company was not their only mutual partnership. All told, a total of thirteen other separate partnerships existed between fourteen of the Company's sixteen Canadian directors.<sup>1</sup> This includes three separate fishing partnerships, seven separate fur trading agreements including the Compagnie de la Colonie, and three associations involving interests other than fur trading and fishing. Therefore, the Compagnie du Nord's Canadian directors were a closely-knit economic group, with 87 per cent of them involved in separate partnerships with one another.

Table 4 also discloses a fascinating relationship between the Compagnie du Nord's leading Canadian directors, the number of outside interests they held, and their fortune at the time of death. The four

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<sup>1</sup>Table 4 lists only the names of the Compagnie du Nord's directors involved in these partnerships. Often, merchants who held no interest in the Company were also involved in partnerships with the Compagnie du Nord's directors.



Canadian directors, who in 1691 had invested over 10,000 livres, La Chesnaye, Le Ber, Hazeur, and Pachot, also held the greatest number of other interests. However, the only director of this group to die solvent was Le Ber. Obviously, the other three directors' substantial investments in the Compagnie du Nord were not the sole cause of their insolvency, but it is worth noting that Le Ber was the only director of the four, who withdrew his interest from the Company. Information concerning the fortune of only five other Company directors at the time of their death is available. Four of them, Le Moyne, Lepicart, Branssat, and Macart, died solvent, but they all held relatively small interests in the Compagnie du Nord. Only Gobin, who also held a small interest in the Company, died insolvent, but he was involved in more outside investments than Lepicart, Branssat, and Macart. Of the five directors to die solvent, only Le Moyne and Le Ber had numerous interests outside the Compagnie du Nord. Therefore, on the basis of the available information, it can be concluded that the majority of those directors with large investments in the Compagnie du Nord and with numerous other interests, died insolvent, while most of those with fewer investments, both in and out of the Company, were solvent at the time of death.

The study of the Compagnie du Nord's directors leads to a brief comparison between them and the associates of the English Hudson's Bay Company. Several of the Hudson's Bay Company's early members, such as the King's cousin, Prince Rupert; his private secretary, James Hayes; James, the Duke of York and heir to the British throne; Anthony Ashley Cooper, later the first Earl of Shaftesbury; and Henry Bennet, the Earl of Arlington, were closely connected with the Royal Society, the Government, and its imperial policy.<sup>1</sup> Some of the Hudson's Bay Company shareholders also served on the Councils of Trade and Plantations, and were influential forces in the British colonization of the New World, having invested funds in Carolina, in the development of the Bahamas, Providence Island, and other lands in the West Indies.<sup>2</sup> By 1680, the list of Hudson's Bay Company associates had undergone a considerable change with the entry of a group of "City financiers," which included the versatile Christopher Wren; Colonel Henry Meese, a former settler and administrator of Virginia;

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<sup>1</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 29-34.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

and Sir Robert Clayton, Lord Mayor of London. The weight and competence of this new group proved invaluable to the English Company's further growth.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to the Hudson's Bay Company's associates, the French directors of the Compagnie du Nord and especially the Canadians wielded little power with their monarch.<sup>2</sup> Although in its later years the Compagnie du Nord was dominated by French capital, the Company's future still depended on its Canadian directors,<sup>3</sup> who, despite their strength and prestige in New France, could do little to exert their influence on the French authorities. Thus, the Canadian directors' strength in the colony was inconsequential in comparison to that of the Hudson's Bay Company's members in England. This fact certainly contributed to the downfall of the Compagnie du Nord, which in comparison to the "compagnie puissante" of the English, was nothing more than a "poignée de marchands."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 84-89.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Woolsey Cole, Colbert and a Century of French Mercantilism (2 vols; Morningside Heights, 1939), II, 553.

<sup>3</sup>See Chapter V, infra, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VII, 211, "Memoire de ce qui s'est passé dans le dernier voyage de la Baye d'Hudson," De Meulles, 4 Oct. 1685.

Moreover, as Table 4 has shown, the Canadian directors were, above all, professional fur traders, who depended on short-term profits for their economic survival. They could not afford to take the more detached attitude of the wealthy and diversified group of English bankers, financiers, courtiers, and statesmen, whose mixed motives for supporting their Company were much broader and far more concerned with long-term results rather than immediate financial success.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the members of the Hudson's Bay Company were able to endure difficult times far more easily than the Compagnie du Nord directors, who found it impossible to survive a financial crisis.

The discussion of the Compagnie du Nord's directorship has revealed that the Company was basically a weak organization, especially in comparison to its English counterpart. The sparse documentation concerning the Company's mechanics of management suggests that it was nothing more than a loosely organized partnership between a group of merchants, whose investments provided the enterprise with its principal source of capital. Unlike the Hudson's Bay Company, the Compagnie du Nord could neither borrow funds on credit nor raise money

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<sup>1</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 64.

through the sale of shares. The Compagnie du Nord began as an almost exclusively Canadian venture, but by its later years, it was dominated by French capital, a fact which reduced the efficiency of the Company's management. Although several of the Company's directors died insolvent, especially its leading ones, this does not necessarily mean that they were failures, for many of them were able to fulfill their desire to become involved in numerous diversified economic interests. The Canadian directors, despite their lack of influence in France, in their own sphere were a closely-knit and powerful group of enterprising businessmen, who were primarily fur traders, but whose combined activities covered every phase of colonial life in the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Centuries.

## CHAPTER III

### THE COMPANY'S EARLY HISTORY, 1682-1685

The period 1682 to 1685 marked the Compagnie du Nord's transformation from a private trading association into a royally sanctioned company, protected by letters patent issued by the French Crown. The Company's early history demonstrated that a royal charter was essential, for without it, the Compagnie du Nord was powerless to compete with the Hudson's Bay Company, which enjoyed the full recognition of the English Crown through its charter of 1670. Between 1682 and 1685, the Compagnie du Nord sent two costly trading expeditions to the Bay, but because of lack of royal support and superior English competition had nothing to show for its efforts except heavy losses by the latter date. It was therefore clear that a royal charter was essential for the Compagnie du Nord's survival, since it would enable the Canadians to organize military expeditions rather than mere trading ventures. On May 20, 1685, this charter was finally obtained. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the events of the Compagnie du Nord's early

history that led to the granting of its letters patent in 1685.

Several months before the Compagnie du Nord was established, La Chesnaye, Bruneau, Saurel, Chanjon, and Gitton files had joined together to put into effect the plans formulated by La Chesnaye himself and Radisson.<sup>1</sup> In July of 1682,<sup>2</sup> Radisson and Groseilliers, along with a crew of nearly thirty men<sup>3</sup> that included Groseilliers' son, Jean Baptiste Chouart; the well known pilot and cartographer, Pierre Allemand; and the able trader and interpreter, Jean Baptiste Godefroy, set sail for the

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter I, supra, pp. 26-27.

<sup>2</sup>The account of this expedition is based on the following sources: Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 133-43; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 186-97, "Appendix 7," pp. 322-24, "Des Groseilliers' Petition [January, 1684];" Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, pp. 258-314; AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, II, 54, "Relation du voyage de 2 barques franaises au golfe d'Hudson," 1682; AN, Col., C11A, VI, 196, "De Meules au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683; Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1681-85 (henceforth CSP), XI, ed. J. W. Fortescue (London, 1898), 565, "Memorial for the French Ambassador," 12 Dec. 1683. Many variations occur in these sources, but only the significant ones will be pointed out.

<sup>3</sup>Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 135), and Guy Frgault (Iberville le conqurant [Montral, 1944], p. 86), basing their statements on AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, II, 54, "Relation . . .," 1682, claim that La Chesnaye accompanied this expedition. This claim is impossible, because in Sept. 1683, a full month before the expedition returned, La Chesnaye was in Quebec. See infra, p. 65.

Bay in two poorly equipped vessels, the Ste. Anne and the St. Pierre. After many mishaps, including mutinies, dangers of ice and flood, and hairbreadth escapes, they reached the mouth of the Hayes River on August 19, 1682.<sup>1</sup>

Now that Radisson and Groseilliers were at last in a position to carry out La Chesnaye's dream of establishing a trading post in the Port Nelson region, two other parties arrived, all within a few days of each other. An interloping expedition from New England, led by Benjamin Gillam, who commanded the Bachelor's Delight with a crew of "14 men all . . . very resolute Fellowes,"<sup>2</sup> established the Bachelors' Fort on an island off the north shore of the Nelson River at approximately the same time as the French constructed a post on the south bank of the Hayes River.<sup>3</sup> About a week later, came a third expedition sent by the Hudson's Bay Company, which by

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, II, 54, "Relation . . .," 1682, gives Aug. 20 as the date of arrival. Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 135-36), points out the uncertainty as to the correct date.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 136. The author states this settlement was on the south bank, while Nute (Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 190), claims it was on the north. Both authors (Rich, pp. 135, 140-41, and Nute, p. 189), explain that the correct sequence of events concerning the arrivals and the establishment of posts by the Radisson and the Gillam expeditions is impossible to determine. The English and French accounts, for obvious reasons, claimed prior possession of the Port Nelson region.



1682 possessed three posts on James Bay, but was determined to establish a fort in the Port Nelson region. This expedition, led by John Bridgar, who had received a regular commission as Governor at Nelson, soon proceeded to establish Port Nelson, also on the North shore of the Nelson River, but far enough removed from the Bachelors' Fort so that the two English parties temporarily remained unaware of each other's presence. Radisson, however, who under pretence of great friendship had informed both Benjamin Gillam and John Bridgar of the French expedition's presence, easily hoodwinked both men and soon gained control of the Port Nelson region. After wintering at the Bay and burning both the Gillam and Bridgar posts, Radisson and Groseilliers left Jean Baptiste Chouart along with seven men in charge of the French post, and since the St. Pierre and Ste. Anne were no longer safe, they sailed for Quebec in the Bachelor's Delight. On October 20, 1683, the vessel arrived carrying the prisoners Gillam, Bridgar and their crews, as well as a cargo of 2,000 furs<sup>1</sup> traded during the winter.

Despite the fact that Radisson and Groseilliers had succeeded in establishing the first trading post in

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 153, "La Barre au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683.

the Port Nelson region,<sup>1</sup> in eliminating English competition there, and in challenging the Hudson's Bay Company's basic titles, the financial success of the French expedition was limited. Since this expedition was sent out before the Compagnie du Nord's establishment in October, 1682, it was financed only by La Chesnaye and his four associates, and no mention of it is made in the Company's accounts, which do not begin until 1684.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the only comments concerning its financial success were made in a rather garbled report, issued in June, 1684 by the Company's directors, who by then were calling this the Compagnie du Nord's first expedition.<sup>3</sup> The directors wrote that although a great river was discovered where beaver was extremely plentiful, only a

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<sup>1</sup>Jérémie, Twenty Years of York Factory, "Introduction," p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 85-87 "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., VII, 258-59, "Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson au Ministre," Que., 5 June 1684; Ibid., VI, 263-64, "Lettre de quelques habitants de la colonie touchant le commerce qu'ils ont entrepris à la Baie d'Hudson," Que., 5 June 1684. Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 199), claims La Barre sent this expedition in 1683 and that it never reached the "Nelson River." There appears to be no record in Canada of any French expedition intended for the Bay in 1683.

small number of pelts were brought to Quebec, because the natives of the Port Nelson region, never before having seen white fur traders, ate the beaver flesh and merely burned the pelts. Consequently, the few furs brought to Quebec in October of 1683 were not sufficient to allow the Company to pay its crew.

To add to the Compagnie du Nord's financial problems, its directors became involved with the Company of the Farm in a dispute that threatened to deprive them of their expedition's modest returns. After the Company of the Farm, in early August 1683, had learned the true purpose of Radisson's expedition,<sup>1</sup> it sent its agents to Percée Rock, where they discovered the Aigle noir, a vessel sent from France, which was awaiting Radisson and Groseilliers' return from Hudson Bay.<sup>2</sup> This vessel, according to the plans adopted by La Chesnaye and his four associates in May, 1682, was to receive the furs brought from the Bay and carry them directly to Europe in order to avoid the droit du quart.<sup>3</sup> The Company of the Farm therefore presented a petition to the Intendant Jacques de Meulles, Sieur de La Source,

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<sup>1</sup>E. Z. Massicotte, "La traite . . .," BRH, XXXIV (March, 1928), 190, "Déclaration . . .," 5 Aug. 1683.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, VI, 45-46, "Ordonnance de M. de Meulles . . .," 24 Sept. 1683.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

demanding that these furs be brought to its Quebec Office and that the droit du quart be paid, "a peine de confiscation des dites barques et pelleteries, [et] de 3,000 l. d'amende."<sup>1</sup> La Chesnaye and Chanjon appeared before the Intendant and agreed to have the furs brought to Quebec in order to receive letters of exchange from the Company of the Farm, but they argued that the Farm was not entitled to the quart, for the Bay was beyond its jurisdiction.<sup>2</sup> This argument apparently annoyed the fermier, and soon after the Bachelor's Delight had arrived at Quebec, despite Governor La Barre's "deffense de bouche . . . de se mesler des affaires de la Baye d'Hudson," the Farm confiscated the cargo of 2,000 beaver pelts.<sup>3</sup> This action prompted La Barre, much to the criticism of the Farm,<sup>4</sup> to come to the Compagnie du Nord's aid with an ordinance dated November 5, forbidding the Farmer's

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 55, "Ordonnance de la Barre portant defenses aux fermiers de poursuivre la confiscation des pelleteries provenus de la traite faite à la Baye d'Hudson," 5 Nov. 1683.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 219-20 "Memoire à Messieurs les Interesseez en la société en commandite de la ferme et commerce de Canada," 1683.

confiscation of the furs.<sup>1</sup> The Governor also felt it was unfair to require these "malheureux" to pay the quart at all, in view of the fact that they had run extreme risks, suffered severe losses, and come from a greater distance than the shores of France.<sup>2</sup> The issue was temporarily resolved on November 8 when the Farmers were ordered to give letters of exchange for the full value of the Bachelor's cargo.<sup>3</sup> But, the letters of exchange covering the amount due for the quart were not to be negotiated until the royal authorities had reviewed the entire matter.<sup>4</sup>

Although Governor La Barre supported the Compagnie du Nord's directors in their dispute with the Farm, he disappointed them by his policy regarding the capture of the Bachelor's Delight. As soon as Radisson had arrived at Quebec, he went to La Barre to report on the expedition's accomplishments.<sup>5</sup> Needless to say, La Barre

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, VI, 55, "Ordonnance de la Barre . . .," 5 Nov. 1683.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 153-54, "La Barre au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, VI, 56, "Ordonnance de M. de Meulles qui ordonne par les fermiers le paiement des castors provenant de la traite du Sieur de la Chesnaye et la Compagnie à la Baye d'Hudson et renvoie les fermiers à se pourvoir au Conseil de Sa Majesté," 8 Nov. 1683.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 312.

was generally pleased with Radisson's account, but the Governor was concerned with the capture of the New England ship, for he felt that Radisson had "aucun droit pour la prise de ce navire,"<sup>1</sup> even though this "forban" had ventured into Hudson Bay to trade furs with nothing more than a fishing permit obtained from the New England authorities.<sup>2</sup> The Governor feared that the Bachelor's capture "auroit pu exciter une querelle avec ses voisins,"<sup>3</sup> and in view of "l'union des deux couronnes de France et d'Angleterre, et de leurs Roys,"<sup>4</sup> any action that could lead to war between the two countries should be avoided. La Barre therefore ordered the release of the Bachelor's Delight, its crew, Benjamin Gillam, and John Bridgar, as well as the payment of 1,000 livres in damages to Gillam.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 357-58, "Copie d'une lettre de M. de la Barre au Ministre," 14 Nov. 1684.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, II, 54, "Relation . . .," 1682; Ibid., VI, 50, "Ordonnance de la Barre qui accorde à Benjamin Gillim la main levée du navire le Garçon quoque pris sans congé ni passeport des Amiraux du Roy d'Angleterre," 25 Oct. 1683.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., II, 54, "Relation . . .," 1682.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., VI, 50 "Ordonnance de la Barre . . .," 25 Oct. 1683.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., AN, Col., C11A, VI, 357-58, "Copie d'une lettre de M. de la Barre au Ministre," 14 Nov. 1684.

This decision by the Governor of New France did little to appease the English authorities, whose hostility towards the French had already been aroused by La Barre's northern policy adopted soon after his arrival to Canada. In a letter to the King warning that the Hudson's Bay Company was establishing posts in French territory, La Barre declared that although he would do nothing to disturb the English commerce by sea, if the Company advanced inland and diverted the Indians from the French, he would be forced to expel the English, "ce qui me sera ais  [ils] estants fort foibles."<sup>1</sup> When Louis XIV received this dispatch he ordered the French Ambassador to relate La Barre's threat to the English Court,<sup>2</sup> whose authorities replied that by virtue of its letters patent and prior possession the Hudson's Bay Company claimed the right to penetrate further inland and establish posts.<sup>3</sup> In December, 1683,

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<sup>1</sup>HBS ("Letters Outward, 1680-87," Vol. XI), pp. 68-69, "Extrait d'une lettre de Mr. de Labarre Gouverneur de Canada du 11 November 1682;" CSP, 1685-88, XII, ed. J. W. Fortescue (London, 1899), 641-42, "Governor de la Barre of Canada to [?]," 11 Nov. 1682.

<sup>2</sup>Archives du Minist re des Affaires Etrang res, Correspondance politique, Angleterre, CXLIX, 244, 13 March 1683.

<sup>3</sup>CSP, 1681-85, XI, 422-23, "Draft of a memorial in answer to Monsieur de la Barre, Governor of Canada," April 1683; HBS ("Letters Outward, 1680-87," Vol. XI), pp. 69-71, "The Answer prepared by Sr. James Hayes to the above memoriall," the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company.

when word of Radisson's expedition reached the English Court, which by then was fearing "the jaws of this French Leviathan," Radisson's exemplary punishment was urged.<sup>1</sup> The Hudson's Bay Company's officials reacted strongly to his "Piraticall expedition" and demanded that the King of France require "La Chesnaye and accomplices" to pay them £10,000 for their losses and order La Barre "not to suffer any shippes from thence to sayle into Hudsons Straits for the future to violate or Disturbe the Rights and Possessions of his Majestyes Subjects in those parts."<sup>2</sup> The Hudson's Bay Company clearly felt that the Bay area was not a "Dependance of Canada,"<sup>3</sup> whereas La Barre and the Compagnie du Nord's directors considered it an integral part of the colony. As long as the French and English held these divergent views this conflict between the two Companies and their nations was bound to continue.

Nevertheless, the authorities in Quebec were by no means agreed with the French officials, who, being considerably more disposed than La Barre to placate the

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<sup>1</sup>CSP, 1685-88, XII, 644-45, "Sir James Hayes to Sir John Werden," 27 Dec. 1683.

<sup>2</sup>HBRS ("Letters Outward, 1680-87," Vol. XI), p. 314, "To King from Governor and Company, presented 21 November 1684."

<sup>3</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 143.



English, adopted an inconsistent, confused, and contradictory Hudson Bay policy. This policy, characterized by the French authorities' desire to remain on good terms with the English while trying to satisfy the Canadian wish for the northern expansion of the fur trade at the Hudson's Bay Company's expense, led to much misunderstanding. Although the French authorities, having taken heed of La Barre's warnings, were well aware of the dangers lurking in Canada's North, they offered no positive advice to the Governor as to how he should cope with the English menace. In 1683, the Hudson's Bay problem was treated in only one very brief royal dispatch, which far from affirmed the full support that La Barre had hoped for.<sup>1</sup> This dispatch, in fact, left the Quebec officials in such doubt concerning "l'intention de sa majesté touchant cette Baye d'hudson,"<sup>2</sup> that in the autumn of 1683, after the return of Radisson's expedition, La Barre found it necessary to write the minister:

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, X, 5, "Lettre du Roy à La Barre," Fontainebleau, 5 Aug. 1683.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 196, "De Meules au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683.

Il est apropos que vous me fassiez scavoir de  
bonne heure si le Roy desire que l'on  
soustienne ce poste affin qu'on le fasse, ou  
que l'on retire les françois qui y sont  
restez.<sup>1</sup>

The Intendant de Meulles added, "il faut abandonner ce  
commerce aux Anglois ou les chasser entierement de la  
baye d'hudson, c'est surquoy nous attendons les ordres  
de Sa Majesté."<sup>2</sup>

But no such definite orders came. Instead, La  
Barre, in the summer of 1684, received a sharp reprimand  
from the Minister for having released the Bachelor's  
Delight.<sup>3</sup> This memoir stated that whether the vessel  
had been captured justly or unjustly, it should have  
been kept, for its release would be construed by the  
English as a French admission of guilt and of prior  
English possession of the Port Nelson region. At the  
same time, however, the King issued an ambiguous dispatch  
to La Barre cautioning him not to give a "sujet de  
plainte au Roy d'angleterre," and informing him that  
while no new French posts should be established in the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 146, "Extrait de la lettre escrite à  
Monseigneur le marquis de Seignelay par M. de la Barre  
à Québec le 4 novembre 1683."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 196, "De Meules au Ministre," Que.,  
4 Nov. 1683.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 242, "Lettre du Ministre à la Barre,"  
Versailles, 10 April 1684.

Port Nelson region, the English must not be allowed to entrench themselves there.<sup>1</sup> The absence of a consistent French policy is further shown by the fact that the English Ambassador, Lord Preston, who had been pursuing the Hudson's Bay Company's claims for damages caused by Radisson's 1682-83 expedition, found that the French officials, rather than denying the Company's case, were merely stalling for time.<sup>2</sup> At the end of April, Preston learned that the French authorities had been ordered by the King to advise La Barre to "restore the possession of Port Nelson, and of all which they had violently taken, to the English."<sup>3</sup> Although nothing definite came of this order, it clearly indicates the contradictory royal policy regarding Hudson Bay.

On another matter, however, the King left no doubt as to his intent. After reviewing the dispute between the Compagnie du Nord and the Company of the Farm concerning its right to deduct the quart on the furs

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XI, 11 "Lettre du Roy a La Barre," Versailles, 10 April 1684.

<sup>2</sup>HBRs, ed. E. E. Rich ("Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1679-84: Second Part, 1682-84," Vol. IX, 1946), footnote, pp. 160-61; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 160; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 210-11. Both authors cite documents that are not available in Canada, such as BN, Fonds Français, NA, Margry, Vol. 9284.

<sup>3</sup>The only source for this statement is Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 211, which refers to Graham MSS, "Preston to the Earl of Sunderland," 30 April 1684.

the Bachelor's Delight had brought to Quebec, the Crown decided in favour of the Farmers.<sup>1</sup> An edict was issued on April 10 stating that:

tous marchands et habitants de la Nouvelle France qui traiteront des castors, orignaux et Pelleteries dans la Baye d'Hudson, Isle percée et autres lieux de la Nouvelle France a l'exception de l'Acadie, seront tenus d'apporter les castors et orignaux a Quebec pour leur estre payés le quart retenu par les fermiers . . . a peine de 500 livres d'amende et de tous despens dommages et Interests.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the Compagnie du Nord's directors saw their future hopes for substantial profits disappear in the droit du quart. They had hoped that the Minister would appreciate the enormous cost of outfitting an expedition to Hudson Bay as well as the great distance from which the furs came and would therefore exempt them from the quart,<sup>3</sup> but this was not the case. Vested interests in France had prevented the King from declaring Hudson Bay beyond the Farm's jurisdiction. The Crown stated that the exemption of Hudson Bay furs from the quart:

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Rich, (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 161), refers to Miss Nute's work. No verification for this information can be found in documents available in Canada. It is therefore likely that La Barre never received this order.

<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XI, 30-31, "Ordonnance du Roy," Versailles, 10 April 1684.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VII, 259, "Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson au Ministre," Que., 5 June 1684.

seroit non seulement prejudiciable aux droits de Sa Majesté et au bien de la colonie dont les habitants subsistent en partie de la traite des pelleteries mais mesmes leur donneroit lieu de s'establir dans les lieux exempts de droits.<sup>1</sup>

In answer to La Barre's complaints concerning the Farm's demands on the Company of the North,<sup>2</sup> the King ordered the Governor to give the fermier "tous les secours justes et raisonnables qu'il vous demandera pour faciliter aux fermiers la perception des droits de leur ferme," because the Farm greatly relied on the revenues earned from the quart to pay the colony's administrative costs.<sup>3</sup> The King added that the Farm must be treated with great respect, for it was advantageous to the colony that "tous les castors soient en une seule main," because this assured the fur traders of a ready market and a fixed price for their furs.<sup>4</sup> It was clear then, that the Company of the Farm, administered by a group of well established French financiers, exercised far greater influence in the French Court than did La Barre, or the fledgling Company of Canadian merchants that

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XI, 30-31, "Ordonnance du Roy," Versailles, 10 April 1684.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 151-54, "La Barre au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., B, XI, 12-13, "Lettre du Roy à La Barre," Versailles, 10 April 1684.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

he supported.

The edict of April 10, 1684, ultimately caused the Compagnie du Nord even greater losses, for it cost the Company the services of its most valuable employee, Radisson, who had made the trip to Hudson Bay on the pledge of the Canadian merchants to pay him and his brother-in-law a quarter of the furs obtained there.<sup>1</sup> When Radisson and Groseilliers learned, upon their return from the Bay, that the Company of the Farm, rather than they, might well receive this quart, they set sail for France on November 11 to give an account of their expedition to Colbert,<sup>2</sup> "pour y estre fait droit."<sup>3</sup> On December 18, 1683, they arrived at La Rochelle, where, much to their distress, they learned that Colbert had died and that his son, the Marquis de Seignelay, would meet with them.<sup>4</sup> The meeting with Seignelay in January, 1684, proved so disappointing to Radisson that he wrote, "the recompense we had reason to hope for . . . was a black ingratitude on the part of the Court, [which]

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<sup>1</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, pp. 258, 315.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 313.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, VI, 56  
"Ordonnance de M. de Meulles . . .," 8 Nov. 1683.

<sup>4</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 313; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 198.

reduced us to the necessity of seeking to serve elsewhere."<sup>1</sup> In the weeks that followed, it became even more clear to Radisson that he was of secondary importance to the French authorities, who were far more concerned with adopting policies that would be likely to appease James, Duke of York, the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and chief hope of the French for the re-introduction of Roman Catholicism as the state religion of England.<sup>2</sup> Although there is some speculation that the French authorities even encouraged Radisson to give his aid to the Hudson's Bay Company in order "to find a solution which would quiet the English without formally abandoning the French-Canadian claims,"<sup>3</sup> this is doubtful.<sup>4</sup> A far more acceptable reason for Radisson's

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<sup>1</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 327.

<sup>2</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 160-62; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 203, 216. Miss Nute (pp. 157-66, and 201-21), gives a very comprehensive treatment of the French Court intrigue and explains the effects it had on Radisson and Groseilliers' plans for establishing posts at Hudson Bay.

<sup>3</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 162.

<sup>4</sup>Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 159), and Nute (Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 213-15), refer to documents showing the French authorities instructed Radisson to support the Hudson's Bay Company. They are: Graham MSS, "Preston to Sir James Hayes," 25 May 1684; PRO, Amer. and W.I., Vol. 539, "Translation of Monsr. Callière's Direction to Mr. Radisson for restoring Port Nelson . . .";

change of allegiance was his grave disappointment when he learned of the Minister's decision concerning the quart,<sup>1</sup> for it was now clear that all the explorers would receive for their voyage to the Port Nelson region was "materialls for a very Romantique Nouvelle."<sup>2</sup>

In view of this ill-treatment by his compatriots, it is not surprising that Radisson succumbed to the inducements that the Hudson's Bay Company officials had begun to offer him shortly after Louis XIV's proclamation of the April 10 Edict.<sup>3</sup> After Radisson's departure from

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"Mr. Radisson's Affidavitt made before Sir Robt. Jeffery the 23d August 1697," cited in Nute, "Appendix 11," p. 346; and HBRS ("Letters Outward, 1680-87," Vol. XI), pp. 131-32, "A Narrative of the French Action at Port Neillon which was presented by Sr James Hayes to the King at Winchester 25 September 1684." However, no documents appear to exist in the French Archives to corroborate the above mentioned sources. Both Rich (p. 159), and Miss Nute (pp. 215, 219-20), conclude that although there was some official French connivance behind Radisson's return to England, it was not the principal reason for his change of allegiance.

<sup>1</sup>Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 212, 219; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 161.

<sup>2</sup>Graham MSS, volume entitled "Parliamentary Chamber of London The Press Hudson's Bay and New England Tangiers and Algiers," pp. 125, 126, "Sir James Hayes to Lord Preston," 22 May, 1684, cited in Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 220.

<sup>3</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, pp. 316-21; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 212-21.



the Bay in the autumn of 1683, the English Company had managed to reassert its claim to the Port Nelson region by the establishment of Fort Hayes on the south bank of the Nelson River.<sup>1</sup> At a meeting early in 1684 it decided that two additional settlements should be made in this area, one on the Nelson River, and the other on the Hayes.<sup>2</sup> Some of the Hudson's Bay Company's most prominent directors also agreed, at a series of secret meetings, to entice Radisson back to the Company's service by playing on the apparent lack of support he had received from the French Court.<sup>3</sup> After receiving many English offers,<sup>4</sup> including "Large promises that he should bee Extreemely well Received and Rewarded by the Company,"<sup>5</sup> Radisson accepted, "with the greatest pleasure in the world,"<sup>6</sup> a commission to sail to the

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<sup>1</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 148-49.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 160-62; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 217.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 207-208; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 158-59.

<sup>5</sup>"Copy of Willm Young Esqr his Letter to the Committee Dated ye 20th Decembr 1692," cited in Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, "Appendix 10," p. 333.

<sup>6</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 320.

Port Nelson region, capture the French post there, and "bring away all those of his Nation that he had left behinde."<sup>1</sup> Offers were also made to Groseilliers, but he decided to remain on the French side and returned to New France in the summer of 1684.<sup>2</sup> The directors of the Hudson's Bay Company displayed far more appreciation than Radisson had ever received from the French, for he was given a substantial salary, £200 in Company stock to be held during his life and good behaviour, and a silver tankard, valued at over £10.<sup>3</sup> On May 17,<sup>4</sup> bearing instructions to the Governor of Port Nelson that he should be treated "with all respect as one in whome we have entire confidence and trust,"<sup>5</sup> Radisson set sail for the Bay, where he arrived at the beginning of August.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>HBRS ("Letters Outward, 1680-87," Vol. XI), pp. 131-32, "A Narrative of French Action . . ."

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VII, 260-61, "Memoire que presentent a Monseigneur les Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson," Paris, 6 Feb. 1685, Comporté; *Ibid.*, p. 256, "Copie de la lettre escrite par le Sr Chouart a la dame des groseilliers sa mere," London, 11 April 1685.

<sup>3</sup>Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 220-21; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 158.

<sup>4</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, p. 321; Nute (Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 222), puts "about May 20" as the sailing date.

<sup>5</sup>Hudson's Bay Company Archives, A/6/1, f. 44, "The Committee to Captain John Abraham," 14 May 1684, cited in Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 221.

<sup>6</sup>Father Silvy (Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "Journal of Father Silvy from Belle Isle to Port Nelson," trans.

Radisson's expedition had a disastrous effect on the Compagnie du Nord, which, despite the lack of royal encouragement, was in the process of planning a second voyage to the Bay. As early as the autumn of 1683 there was talk in the colony of La Chesnaye's proposals to send aid to Jean Baptiste Chouart's band of men,<sup>1</sup> who had been forced by Captain John Abraham of the Hudson's Bay Company to relinquish their fort on the south bank of the Hayes River and to establish a post further upstream on what is today known as Rainbow Island, where they spent the winter of 1683-84 engaged in minor skirmishes with the English.<sup>2</sup> On March 19, 1684, Governor La Barre, who was unaware of the difficulties incurred by Chouart and his men, ordered the Compagnie du Nord to send an expedition immediately "pour aller porter a lad.habitation de la Rivière Nelson"<sup>3</sup>

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R. Douglas, p. 51), puts August 1st as the English date of arrival.

<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 196, "De Meules au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1683; Ibid., p. 146, "Extrait de la lettre escrete a Monseigneur le marquis de Seignelay par M. de la Barre a Quebec," 4 Nov. 1683; HBRS ("Letters Outward, 1680-87," Vol. XI), p. 132, "A Narrative of French Action . . ."

<sup>2</sup>Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 223-25; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 148-49, 165, 201. See J. B. Chouart's account to his uncle, Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, pp. 338-49.

<sup>3</sup>Although this post was situated on the Hayes River, it was often referred to as being on the Nelson; French references often confused the names of these two rivers.

le secours d'hommes, vivres, munitions de guerre et Marchandises necessaires . . . afin que [le poste] ne puisse estre insulté par les Anglois."<sup>1</sup> The following month, Claude de Bermen de La Martinière was placed in command of the expedition with a salary of 1,200 livres, paid by the Compagnie du Nord.<sup>2</sup> Since La Martinière was a Sovereign Councillor, the fact that La Barre had allowed him to be absent from the colony's affairs for an extended length of time in the employment of a commercial company later aroused strong criticism on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>3</sup> By the beginning of June, despite La Barre's urgings for a hasty departure, the expedition was still not underway.<sup>4</sup> The delay was primarily caused by the Iroquois menace, which had become so severe that La Barre had found it necessary to send the smaller of two ships built by the Compagnie

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 229, "Memoire de la Barre," Que., 19 March 1684.

<sup>2</sup>Jugements et délibérations, II, 949; AN, Col., C11A, VI, 406-407, "Long mémoire de M. de Meulles au Ministre touchant l'état présent du Canada," Que., 12 Nov. 1684.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.; AN, Col., B, XI, 45, "Lettre du Roy à La Barre," 31 July 1684; Ibid., 110, "Arrêt portant que le Sr de la Martinière Coner. du Conl. souverain de Quebec sera tenu de remettre dans 2 mois l'employ qu'il a pris dans la Compagnie de Commerce de la Baye d'Hudson," Versailles, 10 March 1685.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VI, 263, "Lettre de quelques habitants de la colonie touchant le commerce qu'ils ont entrepris à la Baie d'Hudson," Que., 5 June 1684.

du Nord, a fifty ton frigate named the St. Antoine, to France on an urgent plea for aid.<sup>1</sup> This vessel was ultimately lost on its return from La Rochelle, costing the Company 12,000 livres, for which the directors only received 2,000 livres as compensation from the French Government.<sup>2</sup> Even more serious for the Compagnie du Nord, the expedition was forced to await the arrival of another ship from France, for the Company had been left with only one vessel, the seventy ton St. Francois-Xavier.<sup>3</sup> Finally, on July 12, after a further delay of more than three weeks, the St. Francois-Xavier was joined at Isle aux Coudres by the French vessel, also named the St. Antoine,<sup>4</sup> and the expedition departed that evening.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.; Ibid., p. 280, "La Barre au Roy," Que., 5 June 1684.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., CXXV, 85-87, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d.; Ibid., VII, 73, "Denonville au Ministre," Que., 13 Nov. 1685; Ibid., 260-61, "Memoire que presentent a Monseigneur les Interesseez dans la Compagnie du Nord," Paris, 6 Feb. 1685, Comport; Ibid., 270-71, "Lettre des Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord au Ministre," 6 Nov. 1686; Ibid., X, 304, "La Compagnie du Nord au Ministre," 1689.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., VI, 263, "Lettre de quelques habitants," 5 June 1684.

<sup>4</sup>Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 200-201), implies that the St. Antoine owned by the Compagnie du Nord returned from France to accompany the St. Francois-Xavier. This would have been impossible, for the Company's records (see supra, footnote 2), prove the St. Antoine was lost in 1684. It was merely a coincidence that the vessel sent from France was also named the St. Antoine.

<sup>5</sup>Silvy (Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "Journal of

On September 22 the two vessels, under the guidance of Pierre Allemand, reached the Hayes River. Much to the Canadians' surprise and horror they found that the Compagnie du Nord had been stripped of its post, furs, and supplies, worth a total value of 200,000 livres;<sup>1</sup> that two English forts had been established: Fort Hayes on the south bank of the Nelson River and Fort York on

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Father Silvy . . .," p. 37), gave July 12 as the date of departure. AN, Col., C11A, VII, 211, "Memoire de ce qui c'est passé dans le dernier voyage de la Baye d'Hudson," De Meulles, 4 Oct. 1685, states that the expedition departed on June 19, but a delay occurred at Bay St. Paul, 15 leagues from Quebec, and the ships did not set sail until July 12. The account of the expedition is based on this document as well as Silvy's exceptionally vivid and colourful description of the events in Documents, ed. Tyrrell, pp. 37-80. Other important sources of information are: AN, Col., C11A, VII, 73, 102, "Denonville au Ministre," Que. 13 Nov. 1685; Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, pp. 321-38, 349-61 for Radisson's version, as well as pp. 338-49 for J. B. Chouart's account of events after Radisson's departure from the Bay in 1683; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 201-203; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 222-26, 235-37. The following footnotes will explain only points of controversy.

<sup>1</sup>There is some controversy as to the correct value of the Compagnie du Nord's losses. AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 85-87, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d., the most reliable document, lists the total losses, including furs, merchandise, supplies, arms, etc., at 200,000 livres. Estimates in other sources, such as AN, Col., C11A, IX, 233, "Memoire & Seignelay sur les affaires presentes de la baye du nord du Canada," 1687, tend to go as high as 400,000 livres.

the north shore of the Hayes;<sup>1</sup> and that Radisson, who had departed just eight days earlier, had succeeded in bribing Jean Baptiste Chouart and his men literally to filer à l'anglaise. It had taken little urging by Radisson to convince his nephew to serve the English Company, for the small band of Canadians who had survived two winters at the Bay without reinforcements from the Compagnie du Nord obviously felt somewhat bitter about their neglect as well as most relieved to see Radisson, despite the fact that he was now an employee of the rival company. It was an easy matter for him to turn his nephew against La Chesnaye and the Company of the North,<sup>2</sup> which, according to the explorer,

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<sup>1</sup>Rich, The Hudson's Bay Company, I, 148, 200-201; T. E. Tyler, "Early Days at York Fort," Beaver, Outfit 284 (March, 1954), 50-51. References to the English forts of this early period were also inconsistent. A reason for this was the Hudson's Bay Company policy of addressing its letters to "Yorke Fort" or "Nellson Fort" indiscriminately in order to safeguard its title to the Port Nelson area by maintaining a claim on both rivers.

<sup>2</sup>Radisson, Radisson's Voyages, pp. 313, 327-29. J. B. Chouart later defended his own actions, claiming his uncle had tricked him, but his explanation does not appear to be credible. See, AN, Col., C11A, VII, 256-57, "Copie de la lettre escrite par le Sr Chouart a la dame des groseilliers sa mere," London, 11 April 1685.

had equipped him and Chouart for their 1682 trip to the Bay with "a very bad Barke ill maned and Worse Furnished with Necessaries laden wth sorry refuge Goods that had been for the most part of them in the ware houses above 20 years which barke was Accompanied by another Barke Much Worse then the first . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Since royal policy had restricted La Martinière to an expedition of trade rather than war, he and his men had no choice but to retreat to the Gargousse River, today known as the French Creek, which runs off the south shore of the Hayes River. There they built three houses, where they spent the winter, and a log fort defended by two bastions. When spring came they moved closer to the English Fort York and engaged in some trading, but they acquired only a little more than 20,000 livres worth of furs, for the Indians preferred to deal with the English who were able to continue offering better merchandise at more suitable terms. When the prospects for any further trade began to appear dim, La Martinière proposed that he along with twelve of his men winter at the Bay in order to maintain the

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<sup>1</sup>Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, "Appendix 12," p. 349, "The Narrative of Mr Peter Espritt Radisson in Reference to the Answer of the Commrs. of France to the Right and Title of the Hudson Bay Company."



French claims there, while the others depart immediately.<sup>1</sup> However, as soon as he learned that none of his men were willing to stay for fear of receiving no further support from Quebec, La Martinière ordered his post burnt, and the expedition departed July 15. En route they encountered several Hudson's Bay Company vessels bringing reinforcements to the Company's posts and they narrowly avoided capture by a large English frigate, the Success, which was carrying John Bridgar, Radisson's former prisoner of the 1682-3 expedition. Although La Martinière missed the ship carrying the renegade Radisson, who, according to Bridgar was returning to winter in the Bay, he did succeed in taking the sixty ton Perpetuana Merchant and cargo valued at 20,000 livres.<sup>2</sup> When the expedition reached Quebec on October 1st, 1685, the Compagnie du Nord recorded returns of over 72,500 livres, "en castors et

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<sup>1</sup>There is no record of this in Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "Journal of Father Silvy . . .," pp. 70-71, but see Ibid., "La Potherie, Letter VI," p. 243, or AN, Col., C11A, VII, 73 "Denonville au Ministre," Que., 13 Nov. 1685.

<sup>2</sup>The various accounts of the expedition valued this vessel and its cargo at approximately 20,000 livres, but AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 85-87, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d., placed its worth at close to 11,000 livres.

marchandises," but this amount was far from sufficient to cover the 146,000 livres cost of outfitting the venture, which put the Company in the red by approximately 73,000 livres.<sup>1</sup> Had La Martinière's expedition arrived at the Bay before Radisson, the Compagnie du Nord's records could easily have shown a large profit, rather than the overwhelming loss of 273,000 livres.<sup>2</sup>

The bad news of the Compagnie du Nord's losses was not a surprise to its directors, for as early as the autumn of 1684, after Groseilliers had returned to New France with the news that Radisson had sailed to the Bay in the service of the English Company,<sup>3</sup> the Canadians realized that the La Martinière expedition stood little chance of success unless it reached the Port Nelson region ahead of the English.<sup>4</sup> Such a possibility was highly unlikely, in view of the delays

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., CXXV, 85-87, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d.

<sup>2</sup>The St. Anthoine's loss is not included in this amount. See Table 5, Appendix A, infra, pp. 217, 222.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VII, 260-61, "Memoire que presentent a Monseigneur les Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson," Paris, 6 February 1685, Comporté; Ibid., pp. 350-1, "Extrait du mémoire au Roy, envoyé par le Sieur de La Barre en réponse à la dépêche de Sa Majesté du 10 avril," Que., 13 Nov. 1684.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

in setting out incurred by La Martinière, and the superior English naval power.<sup>1</sup> It had therefore become painfully clear to the Compagnie du Nord's directors, who held a crucial meeting at the home of Philippe Gaultier de Comporté on October 31, 1684,<sup>2</sup> that a drastic change in Company policy was needed in order to insure the organization's survival. The Compagnie du Nord, which was nothing more than a private trading association, could not hope to compete successfully with the more powerful Hudson's Bay Company, which enjoyed full royal support through its Charter of 1670. Above all, what the Company needed was a similar type of charter to protect it, grant to it the Hudson Bay area, and give it the "droit de reprézailles . . . en Cas que les dits Anglois Eussent commencé de faire rupture de la paix qui est Entre Nous et Eux."<sup>3</sup> This grant would, in effect, allow the Compagnie du Nord to send military expeditions by land and by sea, rather than

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p147, "De Meulles au Ministre," Que. 28 Sept. 1685.

<sup>2</sup>Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Rageot, 31 Oct. 1684, "Procès verbal de Délibération de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson nommant deux de ses membres pour la représenter en France." This important document appears to be located only in the Quebec Judicial Archives.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

mere trading ventures, which thus far had been totally ineffective in checking the English at the Bay. For these reasons, the Company's directors agreed, "apres une Mure deliberature," to send Comporté along with Pierre Soumande Delorme to the authorities in France, where they would "Representer toutes choses pour le bien et advantage de lad Compagnie."<sup>1</sup> The directors decided to give Comporté 1,200 livres to cover all his expenses, but since Delorme was going to La Rochelle to negotiate his own business affairs, they consented to finance his trip only from La Rochelle to Paris.

On February 6, 1685, Comporté<sup>2</sup> presented the Company's petition.<sup>3</sup> He stated that according to rumours circulating at La Rochelle, the Compagnie du Nord had lost 60,000 beaver pelts due to Radisson's betrayal, making royal protection essential to the Company's directors, who had already spent over 120,000

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>There is no evidence that Delorme accompanied Comporté to Paris.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VII, 260-61, "Memoire que presentent a Monseigneur les Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson," Paris, 6 Feb. 1685, Comporté. There are two variations of this document: Ibid., p. 212, "Memoire abregé de celui qui a esté présenté a Monsieur par les habitans de Canada, interesseez dans la société de la Baye d'Hudson," Paris, 6 Feb. 1685; Ibid., VI, 202, "Extrait d'un mémoire de Gaultier de Comporté prévôt du Canada dans lequel il demande la propriété de la rivière de Bourbon dans la Baie d'Hudson," n.d.

livres<sup>1</sup> and "seroient ruinés s'ils faisoient une si grande perte."<sup>2</sup> He asked the King to grant the Company "la propriété de la terre de la baie d'Hudson dont il a esté pris au nom de Sa M. et de l'endroit où est leur établissement pour autant de temps qu'elle l'aura agréable."<sup>3</sup> He also submitted the Company's plans of outfitting an overland expedition consisting of twenty canoes charged with men, munitions, and merchandise, with the object of establishing posts above the English in order to prevent them from trading with the Indians. Although Comporté hoped thereby to force the English to withdraw from their posts without violence, his request for the right to use retaliatory measures against the enemy clearly revealed the Company's plans for belligerent action. Comporté realized that an overland expedition "pourroit faire de la peine aux fermiers du Roy à cause de la traite de Tadoussac,"<sup>4</sup> and he therefore suggested that the Compagnie du Nord sublet the

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<sup>1</sup>This estimate of expenditures falls short of the 146,000 livres shown in the Company's accounts, supra, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VII, 260-61, "Memoire que presentent a Monseigneur les Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson," Paris, 6 Feb. 1685, Comporté.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Tadoussac rights from the Company of the Farm, which had only recently succeeded in having an ordinance issued to protect its monopoly in this area.<sup>1</sup> Comporté also asked for royal permission to establish three posts, one on Lake Nemisco, which was within the Farmer's domain, and the other two on the Abitibi Lakes, which lay in a strategic position just outside of the Tadoussac boundary.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XI, 32-33, "Ordonnance du Roy," Versailles, 10 April 1684; Ordonnances, commissions, etc., etc., des gouverneurs et intendants de la Nouvelle-France, 1639-1706, ed. P.-G. Roy (Beauceville, 1924), II, 74-75, "Ordonnance de M. de Meulles qui ordonne de l'ordre de Sa Majesté du 10 avril dernier et, en conséquence, défend à toutes personnes de quelque qualité et condition qu'elles soient de faire aucune traite de castors, orignaux et autres pelleteries dans toute l'étendue des limites de la traite de Tadoussac ni sur les rivières du Bic et du Loup nonobstant qu'ils en aient des contrats de concessions," 24 Aug. 1684.

<sup>2</sup>The three sources for the petition all vary on this last point. AN, Col., C11A, VII, 260-61, "Memoire que presentent a Monseigneur les Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson," Paris, 6 Feb. 1685, Comporté, makes no mention of this last request; Ibid., VI, 202, "Extrait d'un mémoire . . .," n.d., states "avec permission d'establir trois postes dans les rivieres qui descendent dans la dite Baye a 70 lieues de l'endroit où les fermiers sont establis"; Ibid., VII, 212, "Memoire abregé . . .," Paris, 6 Feb. 1685, specifically mentions the location requested for each of the three posts.

The events that followed Comporté's presentation of the petition proved that the Compagnie du Nord's directors had acted wisely in sending him to Europe. Before long the French authorities instructed Jacques René de Brisay, Marquis de Denonville, who was about to be sent to Canada to replace La Barre as Governor, to give the Company his full support.<sup>1</sup> During Comporté's stay in Europe, he remained in close contact with Denonville and the French authorities in the planning of the Company's future strategy,<sup>2</sup> and although their scheme of winning Jean Baptiste Chouart over to the French side failed to materialize,<sup>3</sup> Comporté did succeed in obtaining a royal charter on May 20, 1685, which officially granted the Hudson Bay trading rights to the Compagnie du Nord.<sup>4</sup> After Comporté had made a brief

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XI, 92-93, "Instructions pour le Sr de Denonville nommé gouverneur de Canada," Versailles, 10 March 1685.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 126, "Le Ministre au Sr. de Denonville," 31 May 1685; AN, Col., C11A, VII, 9, 28, "M. de Denonville à Monseigneur," Paris, 31 March 1685.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 255, "Copie de la lettre écrite par le Sr Chouart à la dame des groseilliers sa mere," London, 11 April 1685; Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, pp. 232-35; Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 206), claims that La Chesnaye rather than Comporté tried to win Chouart over. No evidence has been found to support this claim, which appears to be erroneous.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VII, 254, "Contrat de concession pour la baye d'Hudson," 1685-86; Jugements et délibérations, II, 1037-38.

trip to England, where he unsuccessfully claimed compensation on behalf of the Compagnie du Nord for the losses suffered as a result of Radisson's betrayal,<sup>1</sup> he returned to Quebec to present the royal Edict of May 20 to the Sovereign Council.<sup>2</sup> On October 29 the Council registered the Company's letters patent, which read as follows:

Sa Maté accorde et concède aux Interesseez en la Compagnie Establie pour le commerce au Nort de ce pais la Re. Bourbon Et les terres qu'ils trouveront propres le long d'icelle pour y faire l'establissement d'une traitte de pelleteries et construire des forts, habitations Et Magasins necessaires pour leur commerce, pour en jouir pendant vingt<sup>3</sup> années consecutives, A commencer du premier du present mois d'octobre, En cas neantmoins que les dites terres n'ayant point esté concedées depuis la revocation de la Compagnie d'Occident, Et la reunion de celles qui luy apartenoient au domaine par Edit du mois de Decembre 1674. Et qu'elles ne soient actuellement possedées par aucuns des sujets de Sa Maté. Mesme sans titre, Sa dite Maté. permettant aus dits Interesseez d'establir deux postes, sur les Lacs des Abitibis, Et un sur le lac Nemiscou Avec faculté pendant le dit temps de faire dans les dits postes Et dans la Riviere de Bourbon la traitte des pelleteries à l'exclusion de tous

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<sup>1</sup>HBRS ("Letters Outward, 1680-87," Vol. XI), pp. 279-80, "The Answer of the French to Damages Sustyned by the English," n.d.; AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 196-97, "Deuxième memoire de la Compagnie française," n.d.; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 206. The following states that Comporté negotiated only in France: AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 153-54, "Denonville au Ministre," Que., 10 Nov. 1686.

<sup>2</sup>Jugements et délibérations, II, 1037-38.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VII, 254, "Contrat de concession pour la baye d'Hudson," 1685-86, states thirty years.



autres, A condition par eux d'aporter en cette ville toutes les pelleteries qu'ils auront traittées pour y acquitter en la maniere accoutumée les droits deus au domaine de sa dite Majtē. en ce dit pais, Ainsy qu'il est contenu aus dits Arrest et Commission.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, by granting the Compagnie du Nord its letters patent, the French authorities opened a new phase in the Company's history. For the first time, the Company's directors and the officials in New France could refer specifically to a royal charter.<sup>2</sup> Armed with this charter, the Compagnie du Nord was finally ready to embark upon a policy of military aggression against its English rival. However, the events that placed the Company in this position of strength had seriously damaged the Canadian enterprise. Although the Company's first venture was successful in terms of the post it had established on the Hayes River, the difficulties with the droit du quart and the Bachelor's Delight, as well as the expedition's poor returns, placed the organization in financial difficulties. The lack of response from the French Crown, and the Edict

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<sup>1</sup>Jugements et délibérations, II, 1037-38.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VII, 186, "Denonville au Ministre," Que., 12 Nov. 1685; Ibid., p. 250, "A Monsieur le Marquis de Seignelay," Dec. 1685; Ibid., VIII, 264, "Instructions pour M. de Troyes," Que., 12 Feb. 1686.

of April 10, imposing the droit du quart, were prominent causes of Radisson's betrayal. This betrayal, coupled with the fact that La Martinière's trading expedition was not prepared to recapture the Port Nelson region, were the principal reasons for the ineffective results of the Company's second venture at the Bay. The Compagnie du Nord, stripped of its only post, had suffered enormous losses. These were the reasons that called for a marked change of policy to enable the Company's survival. Now that this change had come in the form of the Compagnie du Nord's charter, the question was whether it was too late for the Company to recoup the losses it had already suffered in its early years.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANGLO-FRENCH RIVALRY, 1686-1693

The Compagnie du Nord's fortune ran full circle during the period 1686 to 1693. At the beginning of 1686, the Company was without a post in the entire Hudson Bay area. By the end of 1693, despite successful military actions that came remarkably close to destroying the Hudson's Bay Company, the Compagnie du Nord had again been reduced to its former situation. The purpose of this chapter is to trace the course of events that the Anglo-French rivalry took and to show why, by the end of 1693, the Compagnie du Nord was again in the same position of eight years earlier.

Ironically, in 1686, the year in which the Compagnie du Nord began its policy of aggression against the English at the Bay, King Louis XIV of France and the new King of England, James II, appointed commissioners to settle all conflicts arising from territorial claims in North America.<sup>1</sup> On February 7, 1686, the French

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<sup>1</sup>Collection des manuscrits contenant lettres, mémoires, et autres documents historiques relatifs à la Nouvelle-France (4 vols.; Québec, 1883-85), I, 352-62,

monarch instructed his ambassador to England, Paul Barillon, Marquis de Branges, that the dispute concerning claims to the Port Nelson region, or Bourbon, as this area had come to be known, must be settled, either by the French taking full possession of the area, or each nation establishing posts there and sharing the trade "sans aucun acte d'hostilité, chaque nation ayant la faculté de faire son commerce avec les sauvages en tout liberté."<sup>1</sup> On May 31, the King instructed Jean Bochart de Champigny, the newly appointed Intendant of New France, to support the Compagnie du Nord, but to refrain from all hostilities against the English, especially in the Port Nelson region.<sup>2</sup> However, these instructions arrived far too late, for while French and English officials were conducting their peace negotiations in London, a military expedition under the leadership of Pierre Chevalier de Troyes, headed for the English posts at the Bay.

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"Projet de Neutralité à conclure entre les sujets des roys de France et d'Angleterre," Versailles, 7 Feb. 1686.

<sup>1</sup>AN, Archives de la Marine (henceforth AM), series B2, LVII, 93-94, "Ministre à Monsieur de Barillon," Versailles, 7 Feb. 1686.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., B, XII, 16-17, "Instructions du Roy à Champigny," Versailles, 31 May 1686.

The purpose of this expedition was to regain possession of the Port Nelson region, which had been betrayed to the English in 1684.<sup>1</sup> The entire venture was coloured by the Compagnie du Nord's desire to avenge this recent act of treachery committed by Radisson, for whose capture a reward of 50 pistoles had been offered.<sup>2</sup> The Canadians knew that the loss of the Port Nelson region seriously threatened the colony's fur trade, and Denonville wrote the following:

Il est certain que la plus grande partie de la pelleterie qui viennent du coste du lac Superior passeront aux Anglois par cette Rivière Ste Therese si les on laissent tranquilles dans leurs établissements.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, Denonville informed Troyes that his recapture of the Port Nelson region would be the greatest service he could possibly render.<sup>4</sup>

The interests of the Compagnie du Nord were certainly foremost in the mind of Denonville when he

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter III, *supra*, pp. 83-84; AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 264-67, "Instructions pour M. de Troyes," Que., 12 Feb. 1686; Frégault, Iberville, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 266, "Instructions pour M. de Troyes," Que., 12 Feb. 1686.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., VII, 73, "Denonville au Ministre," Que., 13 Nov. 1686.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., VIII, 264-67, "Instructions pour M. de Troyes," Que., 12 Feb. 1686.

issued his instructions to Troyes. The Governor stressed that Troyes "ne scouroit avoir trop de soin et d'aplication a veiller sur les Interesses de la Compagnie que le Roy a concue de maintenir et de favoriser en tout ce qui concern ses Interests."<sup>1</sup> Since the royal charter of 1685 had granted the Port Nelson region to the Compagnie du Nord,<sup>2</sup> Denonville gave the Company's associates a free hand in their endeavour to recapture this area. Plans for Troyes' overland expedition were greatly facilitated by the fact that the Company's letters patent allowed for the establishment of two posts just beyond the Company of the Farm's area of jurisdiction. In preparation for the expedition, the Compagnie du Nord established Fort St. Joseph on Lake Abitibi and Fort Ste. Anne on Lake Temiskaming.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter III, supra, pp. 93-94.

<sup>3</sup>The details concerning these posts are vague, with the only information coming from the following sources: AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, VI, 249, "Ordonnance de M. de Denonville pour empêcher la Compagnie du Nord de détourner la traite que les Outaouois ont coutume de faire dans l'Isle de Montréal," 24 Feb. 1686; AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 265 "Instructions pour M. de Troyes," Que., 12 Feb. 1686; Ibid., pp. 281-82, "Estat de la depense et frais generaux faits par la Compagnie du Nord," 1686, this document mentions a third inland post, Fort Ste. Marie on Lake Abitibi, but no further word of it occurs in the other sources; Ibid., CXXV, 86, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du

Accordingly, Denonville ordered Troyes to stop at these inland posts, see to it that they were in good order, and reinforce them if necessary.<sup>1</sup> Although the establishment of these two posts soon led to disputes between the Company of the Farm and the Compagnie du Nord,<sup>2</sup> the issue was resolved when the Company of the North's directors temporarily sublet the entire Tadoussac domain from the Farmers.<sup>3</sup> The way was now clear for the Troyes expedition to pass freely "en allant et revenant de la Baye d'Hudson," without any danger of a "desmeslê" with the Company of the Farm.<sup>4</sup>

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Nord," n.d.; Pierre de Troyes, Journal de l'expédition du Chevalier de Troyes à la Baie d'Hudson en 1686, ed. Ivanhoe Caron (Beauceville, 1918), pp. 41-42.

<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 265, "Instructions pour M. de Troyes," Que., 12 Feb. 1686.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Méry, VI, 249, "Ordonnance de M. de Denonville . . .," 24 Feb. 1686; Ibid., pp. 252-53, "Ordonnance de M. de Denonville qui défend au fermier du Domaine du Commerce de prendre Connaissance du commerce de la Compagnie du Nord," 17 April, 1686.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, X, 271-79, "Mémoire sur la ferme de Canada," n.d., as cited in Select Documents in Canadian Economic History, ed. Innis, p. 339; AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 67-68, "Interessez dans la Compagnie de la baye d'Hudson au Ministre," 6 Nov. 1686; Ibid., p. 247, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686; Ibid., p. 270, "Lettre des Interessez en la Compagnie du Nord au Ministre," Que., 6 Nov. 1686; Ibid., X, 306-307, "La Compagnie du Nord au Ministre," 1689.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., VIII, 247, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686.

In their decision to launch the Troyes expedition, the directors of the Compagnie du Nord and the colony's authorities had chosen to rely on the one great advantage the Canadians had over the British -- the inherent ability to cope with the northern wilderness. It was well known that the English were not expert woodsmen, for they were sent to Canada on a short contract and were rigidly debarred from private trade.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the Hudson's Bay Company employees were extraordinarily underpaid, and consequently, they lacked the incentive to perform more service than was necessary. An example of the English Company's lethargy was the fact that by 1686 it had made no endeavour whatsoever to penetrate inland from the Bay. The deficiency in birch bark, which does not grow by the shores of Hudson Bay, but was essential for canoe-building certainly contributed to the English employees' inability to take their trade inland to the Indians.<sup>2</sup> Another explanation may simply be that the Company's "servants were Englishmen, and being English, lacked energy, drive, courage, and every

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<sup>1</sup>CSP, 1696-97, XV, ed. J. W. Fortescue (London, 1904), 134-38, "Memorial of John Nelson to the Council of Trade," 23 Sept. 1696, 134-38.

<sup>2</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 183-85.



other virtue demanded by the fur trade."<sup>1</sup> The English were "sleeping at the edge of a frozen sea,"<sup>2</sup> and the Canadians realized that the knowledge they had of the woods and of the Indians' ways placed it within their power to stifle the enemy trade.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, in 1686 the Canadians struck full force. The expedition, consisting of approximately one hundred men and thirty-five canoes,<sup>4</sup> set out on March 31.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>R. Glover, "The Difficulties of the Hudson's Bay Company's Penetration of the West," Canadian Historical Review, XXIX (Sept., 1948), 240.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Robson, An Account of Six Years Residence in Hudson's-Bay: From 1733 to 1736, and 1744 to 1747 (London, 1749), p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Rich, "Which Jolliet," Beaver, Outfit 287, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 267, "Instructions pour M. de Troyes," Que., 12 Feb. 1686.

<sup>5</sup>BN, Collection Clairambault, 1016, 409-52, "Relation et Journal du Voyage du Nort par un détachement de cent hommes commandés par le Sieur de Troyes en Mars 1686," 1686. This document has been published and may be found in Troyes, Journal de l'expédition, ed. Caron. The following paragraph, unless stated otherwise, is based on Troyes' journal. For further information on the Troyes expedition, see also: AN, Col., C11A, IX, 52, "Nouvelles de ce qui a esté fait par les français dans la Baye d'Hudson au mois de juin dernier," n.d.; and Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 212-20.

Troyes was fortunate in having as commanding officers three brothers from the Le Moyne family -- Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, Jacques Le Moyne de Sainte H  l  ne, and Paul Le Moyne de Maricourt -- who distinguished themselves in the course of the expedition. Troyes, who arrived from France in 1685, was the only officer to whom the conditions presented any novelty. Most of his men felt at home on this incredibly demanding journey, for only thirty were French regulars, the rest being Canadian voyageurs. Despite the many hardships, such as an endless number of portages, often four or five a day; severe cold and snow, as late as mid June; a forest fire, accidentally started by the men themselves; loss of supplies and drownings, caused by treacherous rapids in icy rivers, the mission managed to reach the Compagnie du Nord's Fort Ste. Anne at Temiskaming on May 18, where Troyes found fourteen Company employees. On June 19, after almost three months of agonizing travel, the expedition reached the English Moose Fort or Monsoni, and by June 21, it was in French hands. Troyes, who then decided to attack Fort Charles on the Rupert River, set out with his men by canoe, and arrived there on June 30. On July 3, by means of a simultaneous attack, Troyes and his followers captured the fort, while Iberville and thirteen men seized the Hudson's

Bay Company vessel, the Craven, which was anchored nearby. Now Troyes had the use of a ship to transport heavy cannons, which he felt were necessary for the conquest of the most important English post, Fort Albany (also known as Fort Ste. Anne or Quitchitchouan). On July 26, after a heavy barrage of cannon fire, the English capitulated, rendering the Canadians masters of the Lower Bay. On August 19 Troyes departed for Quebec by canoe, leaving Iberville as Governor in charge of the posts, with forty men under his command.

A significant aspect of the Troyes expedition is the fact that the directors of the Compagnie du Nord, who paid all the expenses amounting to 70,000 livres, were the sole sponsors.<sup>1</sup> The Crown made virtually no contribution whatsoever. A detailed list of Company expenditures has survived, which shows that the Company even paid for items of clothing worn by the French troops.<sup>2</sup> According to this document, each of the Canadian "habitans" who left from Montreal received an advance of 155 livres, 5 sols, amounting to a total of 11,502 livres, as well as various weapons, whose total

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 281-82, "Estat de la depense et frais generaux faits par la Compagnie du Nord," 1686.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 272-75, "Estat de la Depense et frais gnaux faits par la Compagnie du Nord," 1 March 1686.

cost was 3,400 livres.<sup>1</sup> The Company also planned to launch a second expedition on May 15, costing over 10,000 livres and consisting of twelve canoes and twenty-five reinforcements, who were to transport 8,000 pounds of extra supplies to Troyes and his men.<sup>2</sup> There is, however, no evidence to prove that this mission actually set out. In any case, these figures clearly indicate the enormous expense to which the directors were prepared to go in the financing of the Troyes venture.

Despite the fact that the Troyes expedition brought a profit of 20,000 livres to the Compagnie du Nord,<sup>3</sup> cost the Hudson's Bay Company 50,000 pounds in damages and losses, and reduced the English Company's holdings to only the Port Nelson region,<sup>4</sup> the Canadians were displeased. Denonville, in his report to the Minister exclaimed that Troyes had not followed his instructions, for he had been ordered to recapture Bourbon, not the English posts in the Lower Bay.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>See Table 5, Appendix A, infra, p. 217.

<sup>4</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 218.

<sup>5</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 155, "Denonville au Ministre," Que. 10 Nov. 1686.

Obviously, Denonville, who frequently complained about the lack of adequate French maps for the Hudson Bay area,<sup>1</sup> had badly misjudged the distance from Montreal to Bourbon, which was impossible to reach by land. Now that a large overland expedition had travelled to the Lower Bay, Denonville realized that the route there was a "chemin terrible," and that it would be difficult for the Compagnie du Nord to carry on an overland trade with its three newly acquired posts.<sup>2</sup> Aware that the peace negotiations were taking place in London, he added that it would be much better if the Compagnie du Nord could give up its posts on the Lower Bay in an exchange with the English for the possession of Bourbon, which could be reached by sea. The directors of the Compagnie du Nord, who were in agreement with the Governor, wrote a lengthy memoir to the Minister in the autumn of 1686, stressing that their principal desire was still to reacquire possession of the Port Nelson region.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., VII, 56, "Denonville au Ministre," Que., 20 Aug. 1685; Ibid., p. 73, "Denonville au Ministre," Que., 13 Nov. 1685.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., VIII, 155-58, "Denonville au Ministre," Que., 10 Nov. 1686.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 67-68, "Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la baye d'Hudson au Ministre," 6 Nov. 1686; Ibid., p. 270, "Lettre des Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord au Ministre," Que., 6 Nov. 1686.

Unfortunately, these suggestions were too late in reaching the French authorities. The treaty had already been concluded in London on November 16, 1686.<sup>1</sup> News of Troyes's success had apparently reached Paris in time to be sent to Barillon, who was then in London. He promptly did his part to conclude the agreement, whose Article 4 provided that each nation should maintain the status quo from the time of the treaty's ratification until January 1, 1689.<sup>2</sup> The French knowledge that a hurried ratification of this treaty would give them the possession of the Lower Bay accounted for these hasty arrangements.<sup>3</sup> The English, who had not yet heard of the loss of their three posts in James Bay unwittingly signed away the Hudson's Bay Company's possessions in that area.<sup>4</sup> It is little wonder that when the news of Troyes's success reached England, it caused a murmuring

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<sup>1</sup>Collection des manuscrits, I, 372-81, "Traité de neutralité conclu à Londres le 16 novembre 1686."

<sup>2</sup>HBRS ("Letters Outward, 1680-87," Vol. XI), pp. 229-30, "Memorial to Lord Comrs.," 13 May 1687.

<sup>3</sup>AN, AM, B2, LVIII, 809-10, "Ministre à M. de Barillon," Fontainebleau, 6 Nov. 1686.

<sup>4</sup>HBRS ("Letters Outward, 1680-87," Vol. XI), p. 346, "Memorial to the King's Most Excellent Majesty of the Governor and Compa. of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay," 15 Sept. 1694.

against King James II.<sup>1</sup> But, the shrewd negotiations, with which the French diplomats seemed to be so pleased, in effect had placed the Compagnie du Nord in the position of possessing three forts, which it did not especially wish to maintain.

Nevertheless, despite this treaty between England and France, the Canadian directors of the Compagnie du Nord were still determined to conquer Bourbon, and by the autumn of 1687, it was becoming clear that naval power was the only effective way to achieve this goal. At this time, the man most capable of effecting this power arrived at Quebec City. Iberville, the first truly Canadian hero, who combined the qualities of fierce patriotism, exceptional leadership, outstanding bravery, ruthless cruelty, and a superb sense of business, was above all, a sailor. As a sailor he brought to the Canadian fur trade his experience and his convictions that only a maritime approach to Hudson Bay could succeed. As a man who had a deep understanding of the Canadian fur trade, he urged that the authorities do everything in their power to regain the Port Nelson region. From 1687 the history of Anglo-French rivalry in Hudson Bay is really the story of Iberville's struggle to achieve this goal.

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<sup>1</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 220-21.

Iberville, who had wintered at Fort Charles, returned to Quebec by late October, 1687 and immediately stressed the hardships which the Compagnie du Nord's posts on the Lower Bay were experiencing.<sup>1</sup> The difficult overland route made it impossible to ship adequate goods to these posts, and consequently, the Indians were going to trade with the ~~English~~ at Bourbon.<sup>2</sup> It required no urging on the part of Iberville to convince the Governor that a naval approach to the Bay, supported by the Crown, was essential for the Compagnie du Nord.<sup>3</sup> Iberville's emphasis on a maritime approach only confirmed the Canadian opinion that it would be more valuable for the Company to occupy the Port Nelson region and even abandon the Lower Bay if necessary.<sup>4</sup> The Company's directors, therefore, were prompted to write the following to the Minister:

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, IX, 94-95, "Denonville au Ministre," Que., 31 Oct. 1687.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 20-22, "Denonville et Champigny à Seignelay," Que., 6 Nov. 1687.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 233, "Mémoire à Seignelay sur les affaires presentes de la Baye d'Hudson," 1687.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 213, "Les Interesses en la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson," 1687.



Si on avoit le fort de Nelson ou rivière Ste Therèse les forts qu'ils occupent sur les anglois deviendroient inutiles parce que par Nelson il y a des postes a occuper dans les terres qui coupent les passages du fonds de la baye et que d'ailleurs la navigation pour led. Nelson est plus court et plus facile.<sup>1</sup>

The associates urged the Court to grant them a ship so that they could carry out their plan to reoccupy Bourbon. They were so confident of success if given a royal vessel, that they assured the Minister the droit du quart alone would exceed the sum of 50,000 livres.<sup>2</sup> They also promised to build two frigates of their own and to do everything possible to ruin the English trade at the Bay.<sup>3</sup>

Iberville, who had been sent by Denonville to France at the end of 1687 in order to endorse the Company's ideas, was surprised to learn that the attitude of the authorities regarding Bourbon was changing. This change of heart was first revealed by the French position taken in a series of negotiations between England and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 233, "Mémoire à Seignelay sur les affaires presentes de la Baye d'Hudson," 1687.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 213, "Les Interesses en la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson," 1687.

France, which had dragged on in spite of the agreements made between the two countries at the end of 1686. In May of 1687 King Louis specifically instructed his ambassadors that it would be advisable to try to reach an agreement whereby France would regain possession of the Port Nelson region. The King issued the following dispatch:

Ces trois postes qui sont au fond de la baie ne suffissent point pour faire la traite des pelleteries avec avantage, à cause que les chemins par terre sont forts longs et difficiles, et qu'il est très périlleux de les faire par mer . . . Enfin le port de Nelson doit être considéré comme le plus important poste que la Compagnie française puisse occuper dans le nord de Canada, et sans lequel il lui est impossible de se maintenir.<sup>1</sup>

In August, the French Ambassador suggested an exchange of the three French posts in James Bay for Bourbon,<sup>2</sup> but the English rejected this proposal, stating that it would merely be a trade for "what is our own in exchange for another part of our own."<sup>3</sup> Since a settlement with England seemed remote, and open warfare against James II was out of the question, the French authorities listened

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<sup>1</sup>Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France, XXV, ed. J. J. Jusserand (Paris, 1929), 352, "Memoir pour servir d'instructions aux Sr. Barillon et de Bonrepaus," Versailles, 5 May 1687.

<sup>2</sup>CSP, 1685-88, XII, 426, "Memorial of the French Commissions on the Subject of Hudson's Bay," Aug. 1687.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 426, "Answer of the Hudson's Bay Company to the foregoing proposal," Aug. 1687.

carefully to Iberville's proposals. A compromise was reached when the Crown agreed to grant the Compagnie du Nord a three-hundred ton vessel, not for the purpose of attacking Bourbon, but rather "pour retirer les effets qu'elle [the Company] a dans les forts du fonds de la dite Baye."<sup>1</sup> Although these instructions did not give Iberville the power he would have liked, this grant marked the first material royal support the Company had received. In the spring of 1688 Iberville embarked on his return voyage to Quebec in the French navy's best sailing vessel, the Soleil d'Affrique.<sup>2</sup>

After a delay in Quebec, caused by a paternity suit in which Iberville was involved as the defendant,<sup>3</sup> he set sail in June aboard the Soleil d'Affrique, accompanied by two small Company ships, the St. François-Xavier and the Ste. Anne.<sup>4</sup> The St. François-Xavier, which was unable to keep up with the others, turned back at Labrador and was never heard from again; a loss

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XV, 23, "Memoire du Roy à Denonville et Champigny," 8 March 1688.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Jugements et délibérations, III, 233-4.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, X, 119, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 8 Aug. 1688.

that cost the Compagnie du Nord 36,000 livres, including the value of the ship's cargo and trading goods.<sup>1</sup>

Iberville, however, headed for Charlton Island in the Lower Bay, where he was to meet a Company shallop, loaded with furs, but his arrival there was so late in the season that the vessel had already returned to the Compagnie du Nord's Moose River post.<sup>2</sup> Additional problems were caused by the unexpected arrival of two Hudson's Bay Company's ships, the Churchill and Yonge which had been sent to attack the French posts in the Lower Bay,<sup>3</sup> Iberville, who easily captured these vessels,<sup>4</sup> confirmed the Compagnie du Nord's hold of its posts on the Lower Bay<sup>5</sup> and cost the Hudson's Bay Company a loss of close to £ 10,000.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., CXXV, 86, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., X, 146-7, "Lettre du Sr. d'Iberville commandant dans la Baye du Nord," 21 Sept. 1688.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 293-97, "Relation de ce qui s'est passé à la Baye du Nord envoyée par le Sr. Patu de Quebec," Que., 14 Nov. 1689.

<sup>4</sup>There is no mention of these vessels in the Compagnie du Nord's financial records.

<sup>5</sup>AN, Col., C11A, X, 298-99, "Copie d'une lettre du Sr. D'Iberville commandant à la baye du Nord en Canada à ses Associez à Paris," Que., 17 Nov. 1689.

<sup>6</sup>HBS ("Lettres Outward 1680-87," Vol. XI), pp. 169-71, "A Deduction of the Damages, Losses and Sufferings of the Hudson's Bay Company sustained by the

As it was too late in the season to return to Quebec, Iberville decided to winter at the Bay, but he ordered Pierre Soumande Delorme, a director of the Compagnie du Nord and captain of the Soleil d'Affrique, to sail this vessel directly to La Rochelle. When Delorme arrived at La Rochelle with a heavy cargo of furs valued at 108,000 livres after the deduction of the quart,<sup>1</sup> he was promptly arrested by the Company of the Farm's agents for his failure to have sailed to Quebec first in order to pay the droit du quart there.<sup>2</sup> This act aroused much bitterness among the Compagnie du Nord's directors, who also complained about the Company of the Farm's unusually large profits of between 318,285 and 451,505 livres, resulting from its sale of the furs received from Iberville's expedition.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, by

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severall Invasions and Injuries, done by the French upon their Factories and Trade at Port Nelson and other places of Hudson's Bay," n.d.

<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 110-112, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord concernant l'estat de cette compagnie de ses forts et effets, et une proposition pour la prise du Fort Nelson," n.d.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., X, 302, "Extrait de la lettre du Sieur de Lorme de La Rochelle," 28 May 1689; Ibid., p. 301, "Extrait d'une lettre des Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord du Canada," La Rochelle, 28 May 1689; Ibid., p. 292, "Proces verbal du Sieur Delorme represant du navire Soleil d'Affrique," 1689.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., CXXV, 110-12, "Memoir de la Compagnie du Nord . . .," n.d.

the autumn of 1688, word of Iberville's success had trickled back to the colony, and the Company's directors decided to send reinforcements in the following spring of fifty men, including a number of sailors, led by Iberville's brother, Ste. Hélène, on an overland expedition to the Bay.<sup>1</sup> The two brothers met at Fort Ste. Anne in August, 1689, and Iberville received orders to ship a cargo of furs to Quebec.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Iberville, who left another brother, Maricourt, in command of the thirty-six men at the Bay, sailed for Quebec, where he arrived by the end of October, with a cargo of furs worth approximately 106,000 livres after the deduction of the droit du quart.<sup>3</sup>

The returns of the 1688-89 expedition amounted to 214,000 livres,<sup>4</sup> and after the expenditures of 174,000 livres had been deducted, including the 113,000 livres cost of sending the ships to the Bay in 1688; the 36,000 livres loss of the St. François-Xavier, cargo,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., X, 297, "Relation de ce qui s'est passé à la Baye du Nord envoyé par le Sr. Patu de Quebec," Que., 14 Nov. 1689.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., CXXV, 110-12, "Memoir de la Compagnie du Nord . . .," n.d.

<sup>4</sup>See Table 5, Appendix A, infra, p. 218. The figures presented in this paragraph are contained in this table.

and trading goods, also in 1688; and the 25,000 livres cost of Ste. Hélène's overland expedition in 1689 -- the Company's records showed a profit of 40,000 livres. This profit, which was the largest ever made by the Compagnie du Nord, proved to be its last. Another significant result of this expedition is the fact that the Compagnie du Nord managed to secure its hold on the Lower Bay. Had Iberville not been sent, there is little doubt that the Hudson's Bay Company would have regained the Compagnie du Nord's posts and eliminated the French from the Bay.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, in spite of the fact that Denonville was lamenting the loss of "les meilleurs hommes des habitants qu'il m'a fallu envoyés pour soustenir la Compagnie du Nord,"<sup>2</sup> whom he would have preferred to send to fight the Iroquois, the Canadians had managed to check the English in the North.

By the time Iberville had arrived in Quebec from his Hudson Bay exploits, Anglo-French relations had deteriorated. In England, a revolution had occurred, King James II had been driven from the throne, and

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<sup>1</sup>Frégault, Iberville, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, X, 65, "Memoire instructif de l'Estat des affaires de la Nouvelle-France de Denonville à Seignelay," Que., 10 Aug. 1688.

Louis XIV's enemy, William of Orange, now controlled the country. On May 17, 1689, England declared war on France. Word of the Anglo-French hostilities soon reached the colonies, making war in North America imminent. The Iroquois, who had considered the ratification of a treaty with the French, now felt they could count on the active military support of the English colonies, and prepared for war. On August 4, the bloody Lachine massacre heralded a period of unequalled terror and suffering in New France.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the menace from the South, the colony was also threatened by an Iroquois alliance with the Western tribes, capable of cutting off the French fur trading posts in the West. To the North, "à cause de la guerre des Iroquois," by the end of 1689 the Compagnie du Nord had been forced to abandon Fort St. Joseph on Lake Abitibi and Fort Ste. Anne on Lake Temiskaming, causing the directors a loss of 12,000 livres.<sup>2</sup> In view of the change in Anglo-French relations, the English possession of the Port Nelson region now appeared more menacing than ever before.

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<sup>1</sup>Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV, pp. 163-65.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 85-86, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d.



Iberville's words expressing his desire to capture the English post, "nous viendrons à bout de nos desseins ou y périrons,"<sup>1</sup> struck an ominous note. The conquest of Bourbon was imperative.

On May 1, 1689, once the outbreak of war between England and France seemed almost certain, King Louis wrote the following to the authorities in Canada:

Les Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord ont pris les mesures necessaires pour retirer leurs effets qui y sont restez, et Sa Majesté desire que vous leur donniez forte protection pour la continuation de leur commerce et pour chasser les anglois des postes qu'ils ont occupez sur les françois sur les rivières de Bourbon et de Ste Thereze en cas de rupture ouverte avec les Anglois.<sup>2</sup>

This was the first open encouragement that Louis had given the Canadians for an attack on Bourbon. On June 7, once the war had broken out between England and France, the King advised Frontenac, who had been re-appointed as Canada's Governor, to take advantage of the chaotic situation in England and support the Compagnie du Nord in an attack on Bourbon.<sup>3</sup> However, as late as

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., X, 299, "Copie d'une lettre du Sr. d'Iberville commandant à la baye du Nord en Canada à ses Associez à Paris," Que., 17 Nov. 1689.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., B, XV, 60, "Memoire du Roy a Denonville at Champigny," Versailles, 1 May 1689.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 91, "Instructions pour le Sieur Comte de Frontenac nommé gouverneur et lieutenant général du Roi en Amérique Septentrionale," 7 June 1689.

the summer of 1690, the King was still somewhat hesitant about sending direct help from France. The following instructions to Frontenac and Champigny reveal that his Majesty preferred to use the Compagnie du Nord as a means to contest the British possessions in the Bay, rather than send an expedition directly from France.

Profiter des dispositions des intéressez en la compagnie du Nord pour le dessein qu'ils ont formé de faire attaquer le fort Nelson par le Sr. d'Iberville et les aider de son autorité dans les choses où ils en auront besoin pour les mettre en estat de chasser les Anglois de ce poste, qui est le seul qui leur reste dans la Baye d'Hudson.<sup>1</sup>

The Company's directors, as well as the colony's authorities were quite displeased by the lack of concrete support from France. The Canadians had written specifically to request a man-of-war, equipped with twenty to twenty-four cannons,<sup>2</sup> but their plea was denied. All the Minister saw fit to contribute were several sailors and a paltry number of weapons.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>RAFO 1927-28, p. 34, "Mémoire du Roi au Gouverneur de Frontenac et à l'intendant Bochart Champigny," 14 July 1690. The French authorities were apparently unaware of the English Fort Severn.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, X, 305, "La Compagnie du Nord au ministre," 1689.

<sup>3</sup>AN, AM, B2, LXXIII, 207, "Ministre à Begon," Versailles, 14 Feb. 1690; *Ibid.*, pp. 338-39, "Ministre à Begon," Versailles, 30 March 1690.

Therefore, at the end of June, 1690, Iberville and another Canadian captain, Simon-Pierre Denys de Bonaventure, set sail for Bourbon in command of a poorly equipped expedition, consisting of two Company ships, one armed with eighteen cannons and the other with twelve.<sup>1</sup> These vessels carried eighty men, as well as a cargo of trading supplies, which the Company claimed had cost a total of 180,000 livres.<sup>2</sup> When this expedition approached the Port Nelson region, it was apparent that the Canadians were not adequately outfitted in view of their ambitious goal. Three heavily armed Hudson's Bay Company ships were awaiting them.<sup>3</sup> Iberville, who realized that he was faced with defeat unless he withdrew immediately, ordered his ships to set sail for Fort Severn, also known as Nieu Savanne, the Hudson's Bay Company post located on the Severn River.<sup>4</sup> Upon

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<sup>1</sup>Troyes, Journal de l'expedition, ed. Caron, "Appendice M," pp. 130-31, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord," 15 Nov., 1690. Several important Compagnie du Nord documents are found in the Appendix of this work. Frégault (Iberville, p. 145, footnote), states that little is known about this campaign and that the above document is the only one of any importance.

<sup>2</sup>Troyes, Journal de l'expedition, ed. Caron, "Appendice M," pp. 130-31, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord," 15 Nov. 1690.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.; Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 290), states that only two Hudson's Bay Company ships had been sent that year.

<sup>4</sup>Troyes, Journal de l'expedition, ed. Caron, "Appendice M," pp. 130-31, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord," 15 Nov. 1690.

arriving there, Iberville found that this fort had already been abandoned and burned by the English.<sup>1</sup> Although the subsequent events of Iberville's expedition are not clear, it is known that no further attempts were made on English possessions in the Bay for that year.<sup>2</sup>

The 1690 expedition, which brought the Compagnie du Nord no returns, was a financial disaster.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, despite the ruinous losses the Compagnie du Nord suffered, it had managed to reduce the Hudson's Bay Company's holdings to only one post in the entire Bay. Had Iberville succeeded in his project of conquering Bourbon, it could well have marked the end of the Hudson's Bay Company. The extent of the damage inflicted by the Compagnie du Nord is shown by the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company's dividend of 1690 was the last one it was able to pay for almost twenty years, the next one not being issued until 1718.<sup>4</sup> The Compagnie

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. The Compagnie du Nord claimed that Iberville burned the fort and its contents, worth 100,000 livres; Frégault, Iberville, p. 147. However, Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 290), states that the English, who felt the fort was indefensible, burned it themselves. Since this was not an important English post, the version presented by Rich would seem more acceptable.

<sup>2</sup>Frégault, Iberville, pp. 147-51; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 290.

<sup>3</sup>See Table 5, Appendix A, infra, p. 218.

<sup>4</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 239.

du Nord had come remarkably close to eliminating its rival, without any significant help from France.

Encouraged by their near success, the Company's directors wrote an urgent memoir to the Crown, pleading for aid in another attempt to attack Bourbon.<sup>1</sup> They explained that in order to avoid the frustration encountered by Iberville in his 1690 campaign, a royal ship of thirty-six guns and a loan of 30,000 to 40,000 livres was required to enable them to carry their plans to completion. The associates added that if they received this support, the Company would send out two vessels along with the royal man-of-war and would supply all the equipment necessary for the expedition, including 1,000 pounds of gun powder. The memoir concluded by stressing that the venture could not possibly succeed, unless the Company received full royal support.

At last, on April 7, 1691, the King declared that royal support for an expedition against the English at Bourbon would be granted.<sup>2</sup> This was, indeed,

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<sup>1</sup>Troyes, Journal de l'expédition, ed. Caron, "Appendice M," pp. 129-31, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord," 15 Nov. 1690.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 35, "Memoire du Roy à Frontenac et Champigny," Au camp devant Mons, 7 April 1691.

an historic occasion, for it marked the first time that the French Crown had committed itself to give aid in an attack on the Port Nelson region. France was now actively engaged in the struggle to seize the Hudson's Bay Company's last possession.

Once his Majesty had made this decision, there is no doubt that he entered into his plans with every intention of obtaining a swift and lasting victory. To insure the best leadership possible, the King's minister immediately commissioned Iberville, promising him that if he met with success, "Sa Majesté aura esgard à un service aussy important."<sup>1</sup> In a detailed memoir to Frontenac, King Louis announced that because of the urgency to defeat the English and the pleas from the Compagnie du Nord, he was sending a heavily armed war vessel, the Hazardeux, under the command of Sieur François du Tast, a Frenchman; but Iberville was to be the commander-in-chief.<sup>2</sup> Much to the surprise of the Company's directors, the King offered to assume

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 59, "Pontchartrain à Iberville," Paris, 7 April 1691.

<sup>2</sup>RAPO 1927-28, pp. 55-56, "Lettre du Roi au Gouverneur de Frontenac touchant l'Acadie et l'attaque du fort de Nelson dans la Baye du Nord," Au camp devant Mons, 7 April 1691.

the complete cost of the expedition, on the condition that the associates reimburse the Crown for the payment of the crew only, for the part of the expedition from Quebec to the departure from the Bay.<sup>1</sup> The associates were instructed to be sure to ship adequate supplies to provide for the upkeep of the fort after its capture. In a memoir to du Tast, the King ordered him to set sail for Quebec as soon as possible, for the success of the venture depended on the ships' early arrival in Canada.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the urgency of his Majesty's instructions, the expedition got off to a late start and did not arrive at Quebec until July 13.<sup>3</sup> Du Tast then complained that it was too late to sail for Hudson Bay because his crew did not have enough heavy clothes to endure the cold, and his ship was not strong enough to resist the ice.<sup>4</sup> Frontenac decided to call a meeting of

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 41-42, "Memoire du Roy à Frontenac," Au camp devant Mons, 7 April 1691.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 42-43, "Memoire pour servir d'instructions au Sr. du Tast," Au camp devant Mons, 7 April 1691.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XI, 236-37, "Frontenac au ministre," Que., 20 Oct. 1691; BN, Collection Clairambault, 878, 288-91, "Recit que le Sieur Dutast est obligé de faire pour sa deffence et pour sa justification," Que., Oct. 1691; Ibid., pp. 292-300, "Procès-Verbal pour le Sieur Dutast," Que., 12 Oct. 1691.

<sup>4</sup>RAPO 1927-28, p. 63, "Décision prise par le Gouverneur de Frontenac et l'intendant Champigny au sujet d'une expédition du Sieur du Tast dans la Baie d'Hudson," 16 July 1691.

the Company's directors, as well as several pilots who had already been to the Bay. The general feeling was that du Tast could still safely set sail, but he adamantly refused to do so.<sup>1</sup> Finally, despite the fact that du Tast's original instructions had directed him to lead an attack on English pirates off the coast of Newfoundland on his return from Hudson Bay, Frontenac ordered him to do this immediately and to abandon all plans for the expedition to Bourbon.<sup>2</sup> The Compagnie du Nord's directors placed the entire blame for the expedition's failure on du Tast, who being jealous of the fact that Iberville was the commander-in-chief, felt he would not receive enough profit or glory from the venture and deliberately refused to set sail.<sup>3</sup> This left Frontenac with little choice, for he wrote concerning du Tast

. . . il n'y avoit pas eu de prudence à l'y vouloir contraindre, et M. M. de la Compagnie du Nord qui vous en doivent écrire et témoigner

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XI, 236-37, "Frontenac au ministre," Que., 20 Oct. 1691.

<sup>2</sup>RAFO 1927-28, p. 63, "Décision prise par le Gouverneur de Frontenac . . .," 16 July 1691; AN, AM, B2, LXXVII, 354, "Ministre à M. du Tast," Versailles, 10 March 1691.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 129-30, untitled, unsigned, Dec. 1691.



que j'ai soutenu leurs intérêts autant qu'il m'a été possible, en tombèrent d'accord aussi bien que M. l'intendant.<sup>1</sup>

Although the first royally-supported venture had failed, the French Court was still determined in its desire to drive the English from the Bay. On February 27 the Minister announced that he was sending the thirty-six gun Poly, a recently constructed man-of-war,<sup>2</sup> under the command of Iberville, as well as the Envieux, with a crew of 130 men, commanded by Bonaventure, along with a heavy supply of arms.<sup>3</sup> However, instead of sailing directly to the Bay, these royal ships were ordered to accompany a convoy of two Compagnie du Nord merchant vessels and four small merchantmen to Quebec, where they were to receive supplies for the Company's posts in the Lower Bay.<sup>4</sup> Above all, the Minister stressed that it was essential for this expedition to depart as soon as possible, for if it were delayed, failure would certainly ensue.<sup>5</sup> By

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., XI, 236-37, "Frontenac au ministre," Que., 20 Oct. 1691.

<sup>2</sup>BN, Fonds Français, Collection Dangeau, 22802, 17, "Begon à Villermont," Rochefort, 11 March 1692.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 69-70, "Ministre à Monsieur Begon," Versailles, 27 Feb. 1692.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

April 19, the royal vessels were ready to set sail, but the equipping of the merchant ships was causing a delay.<sup>1</sup> Iberville, whose instructions and plans included the attack of Bourbon by means of a blockade, a thorough exploration of the Bay area in the hope of discovering the North-West passage, as well as his troublesome convoy duties, was beginning to fear a late departure.<sup>2</sup>

At last, on May 14, the Poly, along with the other ships, set sail from La Rochelle.<sup>3</sup> The crossing proved to be more difficult than usual, for the slow merchantmen and unfavourable winds prolonged the voyage considerably.<sup>4</sup> As the squadron sailed into the mouth of the Gulf of St. Lawrence on July 29, it met a small ship belonging to the Compagnie du Nord, which was on its way from Quebec to bring supplies to the Company's posts in the Lower Bay.<sup>5</sup> Apparently, the directors had given up

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<sup>1</sup>AN, AM, B2, LXXXIV, 192, "Ministre à Begon," Paris, 19 April 1692.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 102-103, "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre," La Rochelle, 24 April 1692; AN, Col. B, XVI, 104-106, "Projet d'Instructions pour le Sieur d'Iberville," April 1692.

<sup>3</sup>BN, Fonds Français, Collection Dangeau, 22802, 225-26, "Begon à Villermont," St.-Martin de Rhé, 6 Nov. 1692.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 23, "Frontenac au Ministre," Que., 15 Sept. 1692; Ibid., pp. 106-107, "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre," Que., 22 Sept. 1692.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

hope that aid would arrive from France, and since they had already received a rebuke from the Minister for not sending out their own ships to carry reinforcements to these starving outposts,<sup>1</sup> they finally took the initiative to do so at the expense of 35,000 livres.<sup>2</sup> When Iberville saw this tiny vessel, the only one the Company had available, he realized that it could never survive the voyage to the Bay. Therefore, he promptly ordered the Ste. Anne, one of the Company's two ships in the convoy, to relieve the smaller vessel of its supplies and to sail immediately for James Bay.<sup>3</sup> Iberville, who was by then most annoyed by his convoy duties, had already thought of sending the Ste. Anne to the Bay from the Gulf of St. Lawrence, but his orders had been to accompany her to Quebec where she was to receive supplies. The meeting with the small Company ship

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 99-100, "Memoire pour Frontenac sur l'attaque du fort Nelson," April 1692.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 280, "Memoire de Monsieur de Pontchartrain," March, 1693.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 106-107, "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre," Que., 22 Sept. 1692; Ibid., p. 23, "Frontenac au Ministre," Que., 15 Sept. 1692; Ibid., pp. 104-105, "Instructions données par Frontenac à Iberville et à Bonaventure," Que., 12 Sept. 1692. Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 291), states the Ste. Anne was not sent to James Bay until the Company's directors had met in September, after Iberville's arrival at Quebec. There appears to be no evidence in Canada to support this statement.

provided him with a good excuse for having sent off the Ste. Anne, but now he lamented the fact that he could not leave the rest of the convoy and sail the Poly to attack Bourbon.<sup>1</sup> This action could well have won the post for the Canadians, had Iberville decided to carry it out. However, since his instructions left him with no choice but to stay with the other ships, he did not arrive at Quebec until August 19.<sup>2</sup> Any hope of an immediate departure from there was destroyed when Iberville learned that Frontenac, with whom he was obligated to consult, was in Montreal. By September 1, when Frontenac arrived in Quebec, it was clearly far too late to undertake the Hudson Bay expedition,<sup>3</sup> especially in view of the fact that strict orders had been issued to send the Poly to France by the beginning of 1693.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, Frontenac ordered Iberville to cruise off the coast of Boston and Manhattan and then return to France.<sup>5</sup> Another expedition had failed.

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 106-107, "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre," Que., 22 Sept. 1692.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 106, "Projet d'Instructions pour le Sieur d'Iberville," April 1692.

<sup>5</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 104-105, "Instructions données par Frontenac à Iberville et à Bonaventure,"

When Iberville arrived in France in December of 1692, he was coldly received.<sup>1</sup> The Minister was obviously grieved that this splendid opportunity for France to possess Hudson Bay had slipped by. The British fur trade at Bourbon, which had been hanging by a thread since 1689, was now being given ample time to reinforce itself because of the inexcusable delays on the part of the French war expeditions. Frontenac had written to inform the French authorities that the colony's northern fur trade was in a grave situation because of the threat exerted by the English presence at the Bay. He felt that if the English at the Port Nelson region were given the opportunity to reinforce their hold on the trade, the following results would occur:

Ils le [masters] seroient entièrement de toute la traitte des Outaouans et autres nations d'en haut par la facilité qu'ils auroient de remonter jusques chez eux par les rivières qui descendent dans la Baye d'Hudson ce qui empescheroit ces sauvages de continuer de commercer avec les françois et attiroit aux anglois toutes leurs pelleteries.<sup>2</sup>

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Que., 12 Sept. 1692; Ibid., p. 15, "Frontenac et Champigny au Ministre," Que., 15 Sept. 1692.

<sup>1</sup>Louis Le Jeune, Le Chevalier Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville (Ottawa, 1937), pp. 73-74, 78.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 49, "Frontenac au Ministre," Que., 11 Nov. 1692.

To add to the Minister's problems, the French navy had been severely weakened, when the British naval powers, "obtained the most compleat and remarkable Victory over the French Fleet that Ever was gott at Sea,"<sup>1</sup> in the battle of La Hougue, in May of 1692. It was now even more apparent that if French warships were to reach Bourbon before English help arrived, speed was of the essence.

No time was lost in planning the 1693 expedition, for on January 24, Iberville again received command of the royal vessel, the Poly.<sup>2</sup> In early February he accepted his commission with "une veritable joye" and proceeded to outline his plans, stressing that August 20 was the latest an attack should be made.<sup>3</sup> It was decided that another armed royal vessel, l'Indiscret, would accompany Iberville, as well as a ship belonging to the Compagnie du Nord.<sup>4</sup> The Company, in event of

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<sup>1</sup>HBRs, ed. E. E. Rich and A. M. Johnson ("Hudson's Bay Copy Booke of Letters Commissions Instructions Outward, 1688-1696," Vol. XX; 1957), p. 135, "A Letter to Governor Geyer and the Rest of the Counsell at York Fort in Hayes River in Hudson's Bay," London, 17 June 1692.

<sup>2</sup>AN, AM, B2, LXXXIX, 180, "Ministre à Iberville," Versailles, 24 Jan. 1693; AN, Col., B, XVI, 146, "A Monsieur Begon," Versailles, 24 June 1693.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 300, "Lettre d'Iberville," La Rochelle, 3 Feb. 1693.

<sup>4</sup>RAFO 1927-28, pp. 136-38, "Memoire du Ministre au Gouverneur de Frontenac pour l'attaque du fort Nelson," n.d.

victory, was instructed to send adequate supplies to enable its men to remain at Bourbon, which would be turned over to them "avec toutes les munitions, armes et vivres et les marchandises et effets qui s'y trouveront sans exception, pour les dédommager de leurs dépenses dans cette entreprise," on the condition that the directors maintain the fort at their own expense.<sup>1</sup>

In early April Iberville received his final instructions,<sup>2</sup> and after a long wait for several merchant ships, which were to make the voyage with the other vessels, the expedition set sail. However, calms, contrary winds, and convoy duties had delayed them to such an extent that they did not arrive at Quebec until July 23, 1693.<sup>3</sup> On July 29 Frontenac called the Company's directors together to decide whether an expedition could still be sent to the Bay in spite of the "saison avancée."<sup>4</sup> They agreed that since the Crown

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 247-49, "Memoir pour servir d'Instruction au Sieur d'Iberville," 28 March 1693.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Méry, VII, 139-41, "Lettre du Gouverneur de Frontenac et de l'intendant Champigny au Ministre," 7 Aug. 1693.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

had ordered the Poly to return to France by the winter and no Company vessel was available to accompany the Indiscret, the attack on Bourbon would have to be postponed for yet another year.

Even if the Company's directors had decided to send the expedition to the Bay, it would still have been far too late.<sup>1</sup> The failure of Iberville's 1692 mission had allowed a fleet, which the Hudson's Bay Company had sent for the purpose of recovering its posts in James Bay, to reach Bourbon in the summer of that year and to reinforce it. Since it was too late in the season to make a surprise attack on the Compagnie du Nord's posts in the Lower Bay, Captain James Knight decided to wait until the early summer of 1693.<sup>2</sup> On July 2, 1693, Knight's expedition of three ships reached Fort Ste. Anne, only to find what remained of the small Canadian garrison, which had been reduced by disease, hunger, murder, and desertion to five or six starving men.<sup>3</sup> When the Compagnie du Nord's ship, the Ste. Anne,

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 220, "Frontenac et Champigny au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693.

<sup>2</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 291-92.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 200-205, "Relation de ce qui s'est passé en Canada depuis le mois de September 1692 jusques au depart des vaisseaux en 1693." The reports of these events vary slightly. The following



which the associates had sent to reinforce the post after the vessel's apparent failure to reach the Lower Bay in 1692,<sup>1</sup> arrived later in July, she found herself engaged in action with three well-armed English vessels.<sup>2</sup> She therefore made a hasty retreat to destroy the other Canadian posts on the Moose and Rupert Rivers, since they were no longer tenable with the far more important Fort Ste. Anne in the hands of a powerful English force. The Compagnie du Nord, which had spent 50,000 livres in sending the vessel, the Ste. Anne, to the Lower Bay,<sup>3</sup> now found itself stripped of all its possessions for an additional loss of 20,000 livres.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, by the end of 1693 the directors of the Compagnie du Nord were in the same position as they were

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sources also contain information: Ibid., pp. 234-35, "Frontenac au Ministre," Que., 25 Oct. 1693; Ibid., p. 220, "Frontenac et Champigny au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693; Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "La Potherie, Letter VI," p. 256.

<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Méry, VII, 139-41, "Lettre du Gouverneur de Frontenac et de l'intendant Champigny au Ministre," 7 Aug. 1693.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 295-96, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 218-20, "Frontenac et Champigny au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693.

were at the beginning of 1686; they held no posts whatsoever on the entire Bay. Ironically, by 1693 the Company's associates had succeeded in acquiring material royal support. At the time of the Troyes expedition, in contrast to the directors' attitude, the French authorities were still endeavouring to achieve a compromise with the English concerning the Hudson Bay posts. The Compagnie du Nord, therefore, was forced to capture the English posts at the Lower Bay by relying entirely on its own resources. A change of French attitude can be detected in 1688, when the Crown supplied the Soleil d'Afrique, but this vessel was not intended to be used in an attack on Bourbon. In spite of Iberville's naval victories in 1688, the Compagnie du Nord did not acquire possession of the Port Nelson region. In 1690 events in Europe had persuaded the French authorities that an attack on Bourbon was necessary, but they made the fatal error of not sending royal warships. Had the 1690 project succeeded, it could well have marked the end of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose possessions had now been reduced to one fort. In 1691, the Crown decided to lend substantial support and sent the first of three successive expeditions in three years, all of which failed to reach the Bay. Of these three ventures, the one of

1692 certainly marked the turning point in Anglo-French rivalry, for had Iberville been able to use his man-of-war to capture Bourbon, the English would not have been able to reinforce their hold on the Bay and take Fort Ste. Anne in 1693. It is unfortunate that once the Compagnie du Nord acquired the French authorities' full support in its bid for the Port Nelson region, a combination of bad luck, foul weather, and above all, faulty planning, caused the expeditions to fail. In contrast to the English, the French, who were inferior mariners, seemed incapable of adhering to a strict timetable, which would get their ships to the Bay at the right time of the season. The principal reason for this was the French authorities' total disregard of the fact that "le plus grand retardement dans les voyages de Canada est ordinairement depuis l'entrée de la rivière jusques à Québec."<sup>1</sup> Had the French authorities realized this and allowed Iberville to sail directly to the Bay instead of obliging him to voyage to Quebec first, the English presence at Hudson Bay might well have been eliminated.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 391, "Mémoire pour servir au projet des envoys à faire," 1693.

## CHAPTER V

### THE COMPANY'S DOWNFALL, 1694-1700

In 1694 the French were to achieve their elusive goal, the conquest of Bourbon. By then, however, the Compagnie du Nord, whose funds had been exhausted and whose organization was torn by a severe dispute between the Canadian and French directors, was in no position to enjoy the Port Nelson region trading rights, which now belonged to Iberville. Therefore, from 1694 until its demise in 1700, despite several attempts to regain its strength, the Compagnie du Nord remained little more than a paper organization. The examination of the events leading to the Company's ultimate collapse in 1700 is the purpose of this chapter.

In the spring of 1693, the French directors of the Compagnie du Nord were so concerned about the failure of Iberville's two previous expeditions that they sent a memoir to the Minister, complaining of their Canadian associates' mismanagement of the Company.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 280-83, "Memoire à Monsieur de Pontchartrain," March, 1693.

This memoir was presented to the Canadian directors, whose comments concerning the French criticism were added and returned to the Minister in the autumn of 1693.<sup>1</sup> The result of this dispute was the disclosure of an irreconcilable split between the Canadian and French directors, which had an important effect on the plans for Iberville's 1694 expedition to the Bay and on the Company's future.

In their 1693 memoir, the French directors stressed that the Company should be controlled from La Rochelle, not Quebec, and that much time and money would be saved if a direct trading route from France to the Bay could be established.<sup>2</sup> They felt that the present system requiring the vessels to call at Quebec while sailing to and from the Bay was ruinous for the Company. The supplies, which the Company purchased at Quebec, cost fifty to sixty per cent more than their normal price in France, from where they were being shipped. Moreover, the French associates charged that

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 278, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693; Ibid., pp. 295-99, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 280-83, "Memoire à Monsieur de Pontchartrain," March, 1693.

several of the Company's directors in Canada were profiteering from these sales in which they and their families had an interest. The French associates claimed that the present system had caused the Company's grave financial situation, necessitating two assessments on its directors. These assessments especially angered the French directors, who asserted the following:

la premiere condition à laquelle ils ont accepté la cession à eux faite par le Sieur de la Chesnaye, et qu'ils sont entrez dans la Compagnie, a esté que le commerce se feroit du produit de la chose, et qu'ils ne seroient point obligez à y mettre de nouveaux fonds.<sup>1</sup>

In reply to the French associates' charges, the directors in Quebec stated that under no circumstances could the Company headquarters be at La Rochelle. They explained that if this plan were adopted, the Canadians would no longer be able to make the trips to the Bay, but rather, these expeditions would be manned by "hommes nouveaux venus de france," who would be "inutiles dans ce pays la . . . deux ou trois ans avant que de pouvoir rendre les services necessaires."<sup>2</sup> The replies to the rest of the memoir were weak and evasive.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 295-99, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693, article 4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 295-99.

By the autumn of 1693, the Canadian directors, who were aware of Iberville's third failure as well as the Company's loss of its James Bay posts, could do little more than stress the need for full agreement in the financing of another venture, and urge the French directors to contribute additional funds. The Canadians denied any agreement exempting the French associates from contributing to additional Company expenditures and stated that, "il est inouy que dans une société de commerce il y ait partis des associez qui ne veulent que prendre et rien fournir."<sup>1</sup>

It was apparent to the Minister when he read the Canadian directors' remarks, that a hopeless impasse had been reached. Neither the Canadian nor the French directors would give ground on the most vital issue, the centre of operations for the Company. As long as it remained in Quebec, the French directors, who had already made it clear that they expected "de recevoir et non pas de payer,"<sup>2</sup> would simply not give a sol in support of another expedition. Yet, as Champigny pointed out in summary of the arguments, although it

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., reply to articles 5 and 6.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 88-89, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 10 Nov. 1692.

might be better to send direct expeditions from France to the Bay, this was impossible because it was essential

que l'affaire s'exploit toujours de Quebec, les Canadiens estant seules propres pour aller dans les bois et entretenir les communications et relations necessaires pour le soustenir . . .<sup>1</sup>

The Minister's faith in the Compagnie du Nord was also badly shaken when he received the news of the loss of the James Bay posts. In reference to this event, Frontenac had written the following:

Ces Mrs du nord vous en manderont tout le detail, qui vous fera connoistre, que les Anglois sont plus habiles que nous pour la conservation de leurs colonies, qu'ils ne font point les choses a demy comme nos negocians, et qu'ils nepargnent pas la deffence quand ils la jugent necessaires.<sup>2</sup>

To the Minister, the solution was clear; if France were to capture Fort Bourbon, a new policy was needed -- preferably one that did not involve the Compagnie du Nord.

By mid-May, 1694, the authorities in France had decided on a new plan.<sup>3</sup> The minister announced the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 299, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693.

<sup>2</sup>BN, Clairambault, 879, 321, "Frontenac au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., B, XVII, 55-57, "Articles et conditions que le Roy accorde a Iberville capitaine de fregatte legere pour l'entreprise de la Baye d'Hudson,"



following decision:

Pour réparer ce que nous avons manqué d'exécuter les années dernières dans la Baye du Nord, Sa Maté a bien voulu accepter les offres qui ont esté faites par le Sieur d'Iberville, d'y aller . . .<sup>1</sup>

The costs of this project were to be shared by the Crown, and by Iberville, who received a 60,000 livres loan from his brother, Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny and a cousin.<sup>2</sup>

The Crown agreed to supply Iberville with two heavily armed men-of-war, the Poly and the Salamandre, which could winter in the Bay, as well as all the military equipment he needed, on the condition that Iberville pay the crew's wages and provide all supplies; an expenditure of approximately 160,000 livres. A further decision allowing Iberville to dispose of the booty as he wished was of the utmost importance, because it

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18 March 1694; BN, Clairambault, 881, 145-56, "Monsieur d'Iberville, plan pour son entreprise de la Baye du Nort," La Rochelle, 10 May 1694; AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 111-12, "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre," Que., 8 Aug. 1694; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 327-28. Rich appears to have relied quite heavily on BN, Fonds Français, NA, Margry, Vol. 9, 297 for much of his information. Unfortunately, Vol. 9, 297 is not available in Canada, and therefore further notes will simply refer to the appropriate page in Rich. Apparently, revisions to the March 18 agreement were made in mid-April. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 328.

<sup>1</sup>RAFO 1927-28, p. 184, "Lettre du Ministre au Gouverneur de Frontenac," 8 May 1694.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col. B, XVII, 55-57, "Articles et conditions . . ." 18 March 1694; AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 111-12, "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre," Que., 8 Aug. 1694; Ibid., p. 293, "Relation de l'expédition et prise du fort Nilson," La Rochelle, 13 Oct. 1695; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 328; Frégault, Iberville, p. 180.

excluded the Compagnie du Nord from any profit the expedition made.<sup>1</sup> If the value of the booty were double the cost of the venture, the King would also have a share in the gains.<sup>2</sup> The Compagnie du Nord was further excluded by the stipulation that if Iberville's profits were not at least twice the cost of the outfit, he would be allowed to retain the Port Nelson region fur trade in the form of a monopoly until July 1697.<sup>3</sup> The French authorities, however, were quite sure that after Iberville had taken Bourbon, he would acquire "assez de marchandises pour [le] dédommager par un profit du double," and that consequently, the Compagnie du Nord "renera en possession de ce commerce et luy appartiendront les forts, magasins, canons, armes, et munitions et généralement tout ce qui sera pour la deffence des dits forts."<sup>4</sup> The King, therefore, ordered Frontenac and Champigny to call a meeting of the Company's associates before the expedition's departure from Quebec to discuss whether they wished to become reinolved in

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XVII, 55-57, "Articles et conditions . . .," 18 March 1694; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 328.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.; AN, Col., B, XVII, 55-57, "Articles et conditions . . .," 18 March 1694.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

the Port Nelson region fur trade. He counselled the Canadian officials that in the event the directors were not "en vollonté ou en pouvoir" to reacquire and maintain the Bourbon trading rights, Iberville would be allowed to continue to enjoy them for an unspecified length of time.<sup>1</sup> The Compagnie du Nord, crippled by internal disputes and financial problems, was, therefore, completely overshadowed by the shrewd Iberville, whose plans seemed to assure him of success and of a substantial profit.

Iberville arrived at Quebec on July 11,<sup>2</sup> and in accordance with the King's wishes, met with the Canadian directors of the Compagnie du Nord before setting sail to the Bay.<sup>3</sup> This meeting was of crucial importance to the Company. On the last day of July and the first day of August, the directors met three times with Iberville and the colony's officials to decide the Company's role after Iberville's conquest of Bourbon. The Canadian directors immediately declared that before

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>A.C., Cl1A, XIII, 111 "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre," Que., 8 Aug. 1694.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 99-101, "Procès verbal sur l'entreprise du Sieur d'Iberville," Que., 26 Oct. 1694. Unless otherwise stated, all the information and quotations contained in this paragraph are derived from this document.

involving themselves again in the Hudson Bay trade, they had to know the intentions of their French associates. Their representative stated that since these directors had not even been informed of the plans for Iberville's expedition, he was in no position to commit them to a scheme, which would involve their support of the Port Nelson region trade. At this point, the Canadian directors declared that it would be too risky for them to become involved and that they could not commit themselves until 1697. They hoped that if Iberville were successful in his attack, he and his brother would carry on the trade until 1697, "affin d'oster l'envie aux Anglois d'y retourner." Champigny, however, refusing to accept the Company's complete withdrawal until 1697, expressed the view that the directors should associate themselves with Iberville and even help to finance his expedition in order that they might be in a more effective position to take over the trade in 1697. To this suggestion, Iberville made the following reply:

Il ne pouvoit entrer dans aucune société  
avec une compagnie a cause des embarras  
qui arrivent par le nombre des associez,  
mais que pour faire plaisir à ceux qui de lad.  
assemblée voudroient estre de son entreprise  
ils pouvoient choisir un d'eux avec lequel  
il s'accorderoit pour y entrer de quelque part.

This offer was favourably received by most of the directors, with the exception of Le Ber, who withdrew

his interest in the Company; and the French associates' representative, who after offering to finance the venture at a 12 1/2 per cent rate of interest, withdrew this bid when his plan was rejected.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the majority of the directors agreed to "entrer dans son [Iberville's] entreprise et de s'y interesser pour la somme de 15,000 livres au moins sous le nom d'un d'eux."<sup>2</sup>

The Canadian directors' decision to contribute only 15,000 livres to Iberville's expedition and to allow him a free hand in the Port Nelson region trade until 1697 reduced their organization to a paper company. Undoubtedly, the principal cause for the Company's impotence was its lack of funds.<sup>3</sup> Had the directors

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<sup>1</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 328. The author either seems to have misunderstood the discussions or to have examined documents not available in Canada. He states that Iberville offered to negotiate with a single proxy for the Company and to arrange to pay the directors 12 1/2 per cent on their investment.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Rich concluded that the Company refused Iberville support and that he received the funds he wanted from private backers, who insisted on reserving their right to the Bourbon trade in 1697. There can be no doubt that these "private backers" were the majority of the Company's directors, but Rich makes no mention of the paltry sum of 15,000 livres, which they agreed to contribute. See AN, Col., XIII, 90, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 24 Oct. 1694, which proves that the Canadian directors of the Company were involved to a limited extent in the financing of the expedition.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., XIV, 146, "Extrait des Despesches," n.d. The figures presented in this paragraph are contained in Table 5, Appendix A, infra, pp. 217-24.

realized substantial profits before 1694, the split between the French and the Canadian associates would never have occurred, and consequently, they would have been in the position to present a united front in support of the 1694 venture. However, by 1694, the Company had managed to show a profit on only two occasions, for a total of 60,000 livres, whereas the organization's total losses by the end of 1693 amounted to 658,000 livres. The following comment by the Company's directors well explains the Compagnie du Nord's unfortunate financial state:

tous les retours que la Compagnie a reçu  
jusques a present n'ont servy qu'a payer  
les fruits que cette entreprise a cousté  
et a renvoyer pour l'entretien d'jcelle et  
nous avons reçu tres peu de chose a compte du  
capital.<sup>1</sup>

By the beginning of 1694 the Company's liabilities had risen to a total of 120,000 livres, and its assets consisted of only three ships, each worth 10,000 livres. Between 1690 and 1693 the directors spent a total of 265,000 livres on three expeditions, which brought them no returns whatsoever.<sup>2</sup> The failure of this tremendous

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., CXXV, 111, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord . . .," n.d.

<sup>2</sup>The 78,000 livres paid for outstanding salaries in 1691 is not included in this amount. Apparently, the Company's directors incurred no cost for the unsuccessful expedition of 1691.

gamble, coupled with the Company's loss of its James Bay posts in 1693, rendered any hope of financial recovery impossible. The directors, therefore, had no choice but to step aside and allow Iberville to make the financial arrangements for his 1694 venture.

On August 8, Iberville and his brother Sérigny came to terms with 104 Canadians and six Iroquois concerning plans for the attack on Bourbon.<sup>1</sup> The significance of this agreement, part of which read as follows, is that no mention whatsoever of the Compagnie du Nord was made:

A la fin de la Société, les forts, maisons, et artillerie servant a la deffence des places demeureront au Roy suivant le traitté qui en a esté fait par Iberville et Cerigny avec Sa Majesté.<sup>2</sup>

Iberville and Sérigny agreed to enlist their men on a profit-sharing basis, whereby they would receive half the profits of the trade until July 1697, and half of any booty seized from the English on land or sea. They

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 111-12, "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre," Que., 8 Aug. 1694; Ibid., p. 113, "Conventions que Mess<sup>rs</sup> Iberville et Cerigny font avec les canadiens qui s'engagent à aller avec eux pour prendre les postes que les Anglois ont dans la baye du Nord," 26 Oct. 1694.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

were also allowed to trade 100 livres' worth of goods for their own account. Iberville and his brother agreed to supply the arms and necessities for the campaign; provided that each man "se fournira seulement de son fuzil, de sa corne et poudre et de ses hardes."<sup>1</sup> These terms were quite different than the fixed salaries that the Compagnie du Nord had offered for its expeditions.

Iberville, having set sail from Quebec on August 10 with the Poly and Salamandre under his command, arrived at Fort York, on the mouth of the Hayes River on September 24.<sup>2</sup> On October 14, after enduring three weeks of siege, the English "basely surrendered" Fort York to the French.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the French were again in possession of the Port Nelson region; but after so many years of trying to regain the area, Iberville found the rewards for his hardships especially disappointing.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 391, "Relation de l'expedition et prise du fort Nilson," La Rochelle, 13 Oct. 1695. See Map II, Appendix B, infra, p. 226 for the location of Fort York, which was the object of the French attack. The French referred to this post as Fort Bourbon or Fort Nilson.

<sup>3</sup>HBRS, ("Letters Outward, 1688-96," Vol. XX), pp. 220-21, "The General letter to Gov. Knight and the rest of his Counsell at Albany Fort," Gravesend, 30 May 1696.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 391, "Relation de l'expedition . . .," La Rochelle, 13 Oct. 1695.



The Hudson's Bay Company ships had previously arrived at the fort and carried off the entire stock of furs. However, these same vessels had left a year's supply of Company goods, which were now at Iberville's disposal. Since it was far too late in the season to leave the Bay without risk, Iberville was forced to winter there, his only comforting thought being the profits he hoped to receive from the spring fur trade. Although the winter was unusually severe, and several men died from scurvy, Iberville knew that his efforts had been rewarded, when the Indians began to arrive in the spring with abundant amounts of prime beaver. In September of 1695, after Iberville had left a garrison of seventy Canadians at the Bay, he set sail for Quebec, but an outbreak of scurvy forced him to change course and make directly for La Rochelle, where he arrived on October 9.<sup>1</sup> In the early part of 1696 he sold his cargo of beaver for the approximate amount of 160,000 livres.<sup>2</sup> Ironically, now that the Compagnie du Nord was

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 393.

<sup>2</sup>BN, Fonds Français, 11735, 209-10, "Contrat de vente de castors passé par devant notaires par Pierre Lemoyne d'Iberville à Pierre Pointeau fermier général à Paris," 21 Feb. 1696; Ibid., pp. 210-11, "Facteur des castors mis en deposit à La Rochelle le 17 novembre 1695 par Iberville capitaine du vaisseau le Poly venant de la Baye d'hudson."

not significantly involved in the enterprise, the authorities had decided to allow Iberville to keep his profits without contributing the usual droit du quart to the Company of the Farm.<sup>1</sup>

France did not enjoy her possession of Bourbon for long. Despite the English hold on James Bay, the Hudson's Bay Company felt that with the French in command of the Port Nelson region, "they are become in a manner sole masters of that trade and will be continually encroaching until we put a stop thereto."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the English Government agreed to come to the Company's aid by launching the most powerful war expedition that had ever been sent to the Bay.<sup>3</sup> On September 2, two royal men-of-war, the Bonaventure and Seaford, as well as three Company vessels, the Hudson's Bay, Dering, and Knight arrived at Bourbon just two hours ahead of Sérigny, who had been sent from France with two small supply ships. When Sérigny saw that the more

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<sup>1</sup>AN, AM, B2, CIX, 648, "Ministre aux officiers de l'admirauté de la Rochelle," Versailles, 14 Dec. 1695; AN, Col., B, XIX, 71-72, "Ministre à Iberville," Versailles, 18 April 1696.

<sup>2</sup>CSP, 1696-97, XV, 137, "Memorial of John Nelson to the Council of Trade," 23 Sept. 1696.

<sup>3</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 334-37.

powerful English vessels commanded the mouth of the Hayes River, he left the post to defend itself and sailed back to France.<sup>1</sup> The Canadian garrison, which was short of food and ammunition, lost all heart when it saw its potential reinforcements sail away, and consequently, it surrendered on September 6.<sup>2</sup> The directors of the Hudson's Bay Company, who wrote "we know of no footing that the French have now within our Charter except one fort, Nemiskie, about forty-five miles from Rupert's Fort,"<sup>3</sup> once again controlled the entire Bay. Superior English naval power had triumphed.

Even if Sérigny had reached Bourbon before the English fleet and had managed to hold the French post, this would not have helped the Compagnie du Nord's directors. Long before word of the loss of Bourbon had reached them, they received another piece of unfortunate news, which rendered any chances of their taking over

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<sup>1</sup>Jérémie, Twenty Years of York Factory, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 28; AN, Col., C11A, XIV, 28, "Articles de capitulation Entre Guillaume Allen Commandant en chef dans la Rivière Hayes [ou Ste Therese] et le Sieur de la Forest commandant du fort d'jurk ou bourbon."

<sup>3</sup>CSP 1696-97, XV, 308, "Deputy Governor of Hudson Bay Company to William Popple," London, 16 Jan. 1697. Although the Compagnie du Nord's charter of 1686 allowed for the establishment of a post on Lake Nemisco, there is no evidence that the Company ever took advantage of this right. Therefore, the post referred to probably belonged to the Company of the Farm.

the Bay trade in 1697 very slim indeed. On May 26, 1696, just before Iberville set sail from France for his Acadian and Newfoundland campaign, he received permission to hold his monopoly of the Port Nelson region trade until 1699, in case the Compagnie du Nord was not yet ready to exploit the furs there.<sup>1</sup> The authorities in France, who were disappointed with the Company's decision of 1694 to withdraw from the trade until 1697, ordered Frontenac and Champigny to meet with the Company's directors to see if they were willing to involve themselves immediately in the Bourbon trade. If they did not wish to do so, they were to lose all their rights to Iberville until the summer of 1699.<sup>2</sup>

When the associates met on October 18, 1696,<sup>3</sup> they were determined not to abandon their rights to Iberville.<sup>4</sup> They claimed that they had every intention

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XIX, 110-11, "Arrest du Conseil qui ordonne que faute par la Compagnie du Nord d'accepter le fort de Bourbon pris par Iberville, il y sera pourveu par Sa Majesté sur les offres d'Iberville," 26 May 1696.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; Ibid., pp. 90-91, "Memoire du Roy pour Frontenac et Champigny," Versailles, 26 May 1696.

<sup>3</sup>Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Chambalon, 30 Oct. 1696, "Protestation."

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XIV, 123-24, "Lettre de Frontenac et Champigny au Ministre," Que., 26 Oct. 1696.

of taking over the Port Nelson region trade according to the agreements made in 1694, but not until 1697. They insisted that they had given Iberville substantial support, for "il [Iberville] s'est servy pour la reussite de son entreprise et se sert actuellement de leurs deniers."<sup>1</sup> In fact, the Company had contributed only 15,000 livres to Iberville's 1694 expedition, and judging from the available evidence, they were giving him no support whatsoever by 1696. Nevertheless, the directors, after a heated discussion, decided to send Martin de Lino to France to represent their claim "de leur faire conserver l'intérest qu'ils ont avec led. Iberville jusqu'en lad. année 1699" and to argue that Iberville could only have obtained his most recent monopoly "sous de faux exposez."<sup>2</sup>

By the time of de Lino's arrival in France, Sérigny had returned, bringing word of the French loss of Bourbon. Since France now no longer enjoyed the possession of its post on the Hayes River, any suggestions that de Lino had concerning its upkeep were merely academic in their nature, and for the time being,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Chambalon, 30 Oct. 1696, "Protestation."

were ignored. The Crown was concerned with the more tangible problem of planning an expedition to recapture Bourbon as quickly as possible. De Lino, on behalf of the Company, offered to pay a part of the expedition's costs, but he made it quite clear that this capital must come from the profits he hoped the Company would make, after the Port Nelson region had been returned to it.<sup>1</sup> This offer struck such a hollow note that the authorities did not even bother to take it seriously.<sup>2</sup> In view of the Company's past record, it would have been sheer folly to involve it in any important plans. The Crown realized how accurate the following assessment by Iberville of the directors was:

Contre tous mes Memoire sur ce qu'il  
devoient faire dans se pais la ils ont  
toujours agy a leurs teste pour veue que  
les Marchandise de leurs magasins se  
consomme ils sont contans.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, the authorities in France decided to finance this important venture entirely by themselves.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XIV, 146, "Extrait des Despeches," n.d.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., B, XIX, 258, "Ministre à Champigny," Versailles, 27 April 1697.

<sup>3</sup>BN, Clairambault, 881, 169, "Iberville à Lagny," 29 Oct. 1696.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col. B, XIX, 258, "Ministre à Champigny," Versailles, 27 April 1697.

On March 9, 1697, the King dispatched orders to attack Bourbon to Iberville,<sup>1</sup> who was in Newfoundland, where he had waged a triumphant campaign during the past year. His brother Sérigny, who reached Plaisance with four royal vessels on May 18,<sup>2</sup> informed Iberville that he was to set out immediately to recapture the former French post at Bourbon and garrison it with one hundred men.<sup>3</sup> The Minister, who was determined to extend the King's glory,<sup>4</sup> was confident of Iberville's success in view of the powerful forces he had at his disposal.<sup>5</sup> Now that this was a purely royal venture, all precautions were taken to avoid the squadron's late arrival at the Bay. Therefore, there were no provisions made requiring the vessels to sail first to Quebec or to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 185-91, "Instructions pour le Sieur d'Iberville," Versailles, 9 March 1697.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XV, 212-13, "Iberville au Ministre," 5 July 1697.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., B, XIX, 185-91, "Instructions pour le Sieur d'Iberville," Versailles, 9 March 1697.

<sup>4</sup>Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "La Potherie, Letter VI," p. 257.

<sup>5</sup>AN, Col., B, XIX, 208-209, "Ministre à Sérigny," Versailles, 27 March 1697.

return there from the Bay. The supplies and sailors were sent directly from France, with the instructions that Iberville, to complete his crew, should rehire the men now with him at Plaisance.<sup>1</sup> Little time was lost, and on July 8, the expedition set sail. After suffering the most incredible hardships, including the loss of one vessel and the endurance of "waves, storms, ice, sand banks, and mountains of snow," Iberville reached the Port Nelson region on September 4 only to encounter three heavily armed English warships.<sup>2</sup> More than a week of vicious fighting on land and sea followed, until on September 13 the British surrendered Fort York. After Iberville had left a garrison at the post, he sailed to La Rochelle, where he arrived November 8, carrying a cargo of 20,000 pounds of beaver.<sup>3</sup> Since this was a royal venture, it was the Crown who received the profits from these furs, without the deduction of the droit du quart.<sup>4</sup> The Crown had proved that with careful planning,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 185-91, "Instructions pour le Sieur d'Iberville," Versailles, 9 March 1697; AN, Col., C11A, XV, 213, "Iberville au Ministre," 5 July 1697; Frégault, Iberville, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup>Documents, ed. Tyrrell, "La Potherie, Introduction," p. 145, and "Letter IV," p. 216. "Letter IV," pp. 205-222, gives a fascinating account of the naval battle that followed.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XV, 260, "Letter d'Iberville," n.d.; Ibid., pp. 182-83, "Castors de la Baye d'Hudson," n.d.; AN, Col., B, XX, 122, "Estat des castors apportez du Fort de la Baye d'Hudson puis par le Sieur d'Iberville," n.d.

<sup>4</sup>AN, AM, B2, CXXII, 390, "Ministre à Iberville,"



it could execute with relative ease a swift and successful mission to the Bay.

Now that the Sun King's rays once again shone on the bleak wilderness of Hudson Bay, his Majesty was faced with the problem of what to do with Bourbon. While the English and French expeditions had struggled for possession of this remote territory, diplomats were engaging in peace negotiations in the Dutch town of Ryswick. Several days after Iberville had retaken Bourbon, a decision was reached at Ryswick, calling for the status quo ante bellum.<sup>1</sup> Although this required the English to relinquish their possession of James Bay in exchange for the occupancy of the Port Nelson region, these terms were never adhered to.<sup>2</sup> In fact, no decision was reached on this thorny question until the French relinquished all claims to the Bay sixteen years later by the Treaty of Utrecht.<sup>3</sup> For those sixteen

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20 Nov. 1697; AN, Col., C11A, XV, 182-83, "Castors de la Baye d'Hudson," n.d.

<sup>1</sup>CSP, 1697-98, XVI, ed. J. W. Fortescue (London, 1905), 210, "Council of Trade and Plantations to the King," 12 May 1698.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 269, "Council of Trade and Plantations to Mr. Secretary Vernon," Whitehall, 7 June 1698.

<sup>3</sup>Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 353-54.

years the English remained in James Bay, while France held Bourbon. However, the problem of administering the fur trade there still faced the French authorities. It was one thing for the Crown to finance a war expedition to capture the Port Nelson region, but it was an entirely different matter when it came to exploiting the fur trade. This trade clearly had to be maintained by a private body, not by the King. If France were going to hold the Port Nelson region in defiance of the Treaty of Ryswick, an immediate decision concerning the upkeep of a fur trading post in this area was required.

The French authorities had displayed a magnificent sense of optimism by engaging in serious discussions about the upkeep of the Bourbon trade, shortly after the orders for an attack on this area had been issued in the spring of 1697. De Lino's complaints regarding Iberville's proposed monopoly of the Port Nelson region trade had apparently made an impression on the Minister, who, after attending to the plans for the war expedition, instructed Champigny on April 27 that "Sa Majesté ne s'est point esloignée du dessein de leur [the Company's directors] faire remettre ce fort, afin qu'ils puissent proffiter des avantages du commerce qu'ils y peuvent

faire."<sup>1</sup> The conditions imposed upon the Compagnie du Nord were that its directors re-establish the Port Nelson region trade by sending supplies in the spring of 1698, either from France or from Canada, and that they repay the Crown the costs of garrisoning the post there, from the time of its capture until its return to the Company.<sup>2</sup> When Iberville reached France bearing the news that the long-coveted Bourbon was once again in French hands, the King had not yet received a reply from the Compagnie du Nord's directors, whom he had ordered to consider his offer of April 27.<sup>3</sup> However, several days later, his Majesty received a detailed memoir from the Company stating that its Canadian

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XIX, 258, "Ministre à Champigny," Versailles, 27 April 1697.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Chambalon, 13 Oct. 1697, "Declaration de Mrs. Interessés en la Compagnie du Nord au Roy," The King's offer is entitled "Extrait de la lettre du Roy," 1697, and is attached to this notarial document. The original copy of the Crown's offer is contained in AN, Col., B, XIX, 238, "Memoire du Roy pour Frontenac et Champigny," Versailles, 27 April 1697. The record of the Canadian directors' meeting to consider the offer is in AN, Col., C11A, XV, 86-88, "Les Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord concernant le fort Bourbon," Que., 13 Oct. 1697.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., B, XIX, 238, "Memoire du Roy pour Frontenac et Champigny," Versailles, 27 April 1697; AN, Col., C11A, XV, 86-88, "Les Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord concernant le fort Bourbon," Que., 13 Oct. 1697.

directors<sup>1</sup> were forced to reject the King's proposal.<sup>2</sup> They maintained that since the Company's capital had been exhausted, they could not possibly hope to keep the post without royal support, especially during the war.<sup>3</sup> By way of a solution to the problem, the directors offered the following two proposals: that the King maintain the trade at Bourbon until the end of the war; or that a new company in France, in which they would take an eighth share, be formed immediately to exploit the opportunity in the Port Nelson region.<sup>4</sup> There can be little doubt that the war, which had ended by the time the King received the Company's memoir, was merely

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. This memoir states that since no orders had been received from the French directors, the Canadian associates could not reply on their behalf. However, Rich (Hudson's Bay Company, I, 352-53), states that, "the French members of the Compagnie seemed prepared to find money for the commitment," but the Canadians turned the offer down. His source for this information seems to be, BN, Fonds Français, NA, Margry 9297, 178. Nevertheless, in view of the French directors' attitude toward the entire enterprise, it is difficult to account for their sudden burst of enthusiasm.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XX, 86-88, "Les Interessez en la Compagnie du Nord concernant le fort Bourbon," Que., 13 Oct. 1697.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.; Ibid., pp. 66-67, "Frontenac et Champigny au Ministre," Que., 19 Oct. 1697; Ibid., p. 84, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 13 Oct. 1697.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 86-88, "Les Interessez en la Compagnie du Nord concernant le fort Bourbon," Que., 13 Oct. 1697.

an excuse for the directors not to become reinvolved at that time. Perhaps the directors' professed desire to re-enter the trade at a later date was legitimate, but in the autumn of 1697, it was clear to all concerned that the Company could not act, because it did not have the necessary funds. Therefore, the French authorities' scrupulous planning for the takeover of the Bourbon trade had been to no avail.

Now that it was clear that the Compagnie du Nord could not and would not support the Nelson trade, this task fell to Iberville.<sup>1</sup> Shortly after his triumphant return to France in the autumn of 1697, he had petitioned the Crown for certain favours as a reward for his services.<sup>2</sup> After this petition had been denied,<sup>3</sup> Iberville made another request; that he be allowed to carry on the fur trade at Bourbon until the summer of 1699, on the condition that he pay the Canadians recruited for its capture, but that he keep the English

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 66-67, "Frontenac et Champigny au Ministre," Que. 19 Oct. 1697.

<sup>2</sup>BN, Clairambault, 881, 157-58, "Iberville au Ministre," Rochefort, 30 Nov. 1697; Frégault, Iberville, pp. 260.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

goods taken from the post.<sup>1</sup> This request was granted, and it was also decided that Iberville sell all the furs to the Company of the Farm in France.<sup>2</sup>

No mention whatsoever was made of the Compagnie du Nord in these terms, and it was not until May 21, 1698, that the King sent a memoir to Frontenac and Champigny announcing the agreement with Iberville.<sup>3</sup> This memoir explained that despite the peace with England, no final decision concerning Bourbon had yet been reached. Until such a time, Iberville would retain the Bourbon trade, but "comme ce fort [Bourbon] ou ceux du fonds de la Baye nous resteront il est necessaire qu'ils [the Company's directors] examinent de quelle maniere il sera a propos d'y faire le commerce, soit en y etablissant l'ancienne Campagne du Nord ou en faisant une nouvelle."<sup>4</sup> In other words, Iberville's arrangements with the Crown

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., B, XX, 65-66, "Offres faites au Roy par Iberville," Versailles, 19 April 1698.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; Ibid., pp. 67-68, "Arrest du Conseil d'Estat acceptant les offres d'Iberville," Versailles, 30 April 1698; Ibid., pp. 64-65, "Ministre a Iberville," Versailles, 7 May 1698.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 72-73, "Memoire du Roy a Frontenac et Champigny," Versailles, 21 May 1698.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

were only temporary, and although the moribund Compagnie du Nord, had for the moment been excluded from the Port Nelson region trade by Iberville, the King was offering its directors what turned out to be their last reprieve. He therefore, ordered the authorities to call the Company's directors together in order to determine under what conditions they would become reinvolved in the Hudson Bay fur trade.<sup>1</sup>

In the autumn of 1698, the Canadian directors sent their reply to the Crown,<sup>2</sup> making proposals, which

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XVI, 34-35, "Frontenac au Ministre," Que., 10 Oct. 1698; RAFQ 1928-29, p. 380, "Lettre de Frontenac et Champigny au Ministre," 15 Oct. 1698. The original signed document, which the directors sent to France, may be found in AN, Col., C11E, I, 117-21, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d. This document is undated, but the statements made by Frontenac and Champigny in their letters of October 10 and 15 undoubtedly refer to this memoir, which was written at approximately the same time. Another very similar document may be found in AN, Col., C11A, XVI, 174-76, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord," 1698. A copy of the identical document may be found in AN, Col., F2A, 13, Pièce 75, pp. 59-66, "Copie d'un mémoire . . .," n.d. This document contains the French associates' comments, which were added on the left-hand side of the page, making it the most vital source of all. All facts contained in the following paragraphs are derived from it, unless a footnote indicates otherwise. Ibid., Pièce 76, p. 67, "Monseigneur," n.d., contains a brief, but useful summary of the above document.

if executed, might well have salvaged the remains of the Compagnie du Nord. However, after the French directors had added their own comments to this memoir and the impossibility of carrying out the Canadians' suggestions had become apparent, the fate of the Compagnie du Nord was permanently sealed. The Company's memoir of 1698 ended any hope for its survival.

The Canadian associates declared that under no conditions could they become reinvolved in the fur trade at Bourbon. They asserted that navigation in the Bay was far too difficult for vessels to be sent to Bourbon, especially since the pilots necessary for this operation were lacking. Moreover, the expense of sending ships to the Port Nelson region was simply too great for the associates, who "ne se sentoient pas assez forts pour soustenir une affaire de ce poids." Since the post at Bourbon was far too removed to be supplied by an overland route from Canada, the directors suggested that the authorities in France take possession of James Bay, where the associates would gladly undertake the trade for the next twenty years. In other words, the Canadian directors were advocating an overland approach to the Lower Bay, the very scheme, they had refuted years earlier.<sup>1</sup> In suggesting the exploitation of furs

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter IV, supra, p. 106.



from the James Bay region, the Canadian associates rejected the idea that the Company's headquarters be situated in France rather than Quebec. Although the Canadians realized that this proposal would be unacceptable to their French associates, they made a token offer to allow these directors to remain in the Company, provided they contributed to the new scheme. If they were unwilling to accept these new proposals, the French associates, whose presence the Canadians felt had badly harmed the Company, would simply have to forfeit all their rights and withdraw from the organization. The Canadians, however, did hope to receive substantial funds from the English as a compensation for the proposed exchange of posts. They felt that if this compensation were sufficient to enable them to carry on the Company and to pay off their French associates, they would gladly do so and administer the James Bay trade themselves. Thus, the Canadians' plan left virtually no room at all for French participation in the Compagnie du Nord.

The French directors were only too pleased to find that the Canadians preferred to carry on without their aid, provided they received adequate compensation upon their withdrawal from the Company. Although they were correct in claiming to have saved the Company by

their entry in 1686,<sup>1</sup> this was true only in the sense that their acquisition of La Chesnaye's enormous interest rescued him from bankruptcy. Their position was similar to that of an investor in modern days, who loans money at a certain rate of interest, but who takes poor property as his security and finds himself burdened with this collateral when the borrower cannot repay him. The directors of Oudiette's Company in France were not necessarily interested in becoming involved in a Canadian fur trading venture, but when they realized that La Chesnaye could not repay them the funds he owed, they had no choice but to take over his investment in the Compagnie du Nord. Since these men were rather bitter concerning their involvement in the Company, any extra expenses they incurred were especially disconcerting to them. Therefore, in their comments of 1698 they again reiterated their 1693 claims that the Company should be managed from France, not from Quebec, "ce qui estoit double voyage et double depece, ruyneux pour les interessez, et avantageux pour ceux de Quebec . . . qui ont tout gasté." But, they readily agreed that if the Company received the James Bay trade, it would be much

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter II, supra, pp. 40-41.

better to conduct it from Quebec.

Now that it was apparent the French associates no longer wished to remain in the Compagnie du Nord and the Canadians would not continue unless they received the James Bay trade, the future of the Company rested on the Crown's decision concerning the Canadian directors' proposals. Since the terms of the Treaty of Ryswick had called for French possession of the Lower Bay, the Canadian directors' suggestion was not the "bafouillage" that the historian Guy Frégault makes it out to be.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, there is every indication that the French authorities seriously considered an exchange of Bourbon against the Lower Bay.<sup>2</sup> In the spring of 1699 the Minister sent instructions to the French ambassadors in England stating that his Majesty wished them to try to arrange an exchange for "le fonds de la Baye contre

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<sup>1</sup>Frégault (Iberville, pp. 262-63), refers only to a segment of the Company's 1698 memoir, and does not state the context in which it was written. He makes no mention of the fact that the Crown seriously considered the Company's suggestion, infra, note 2. Moreover, he leads the reader to believe that Iberville's offer to take over the Bourbon trade, supra, pp. 162-63 was made after the Compagnie du Nord's 1698 proposals, when, in fact, it was made before.

<sup>2</sup>AN, AM, B2, CXXXIX, 112-13, "Ministre à Mrs. Tallard et d'herbault," 1699; Ibid., CXL, 353, "Ministre à Mrs. de Tallard et d'herbault," 1699; CSP, 1700, XVIII, ed. Cecil Headlam (London, 1910), 336-37, "Journal of Council of Trade and Plantations," 1700; AN, Col., C11A, XVII, 184, "Baye d'Hudson," 3 May 1699; Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, 409.

celle des anglois que nous occupons actuellement."<sup>1</sup>

The instructions referred specifically to the Company's 1698 memoir and urged the ambassadors to take heed of it, "quoy que sa Majt  soit persuad e que l'autre partie de la Baye [Bourbon] soit plus avantageuse pour nostre commerce."<sup>2</sup> The Minister then proceeded to draft orders for S rigny to sail at once to the post on the Hayes River, put all the French garrison and goods aboard his ship, and hand the post, intact save for its arms, over to the English.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately for the Compagnie du Nord these orders were not executed; this comment was scrawled in the margin of the same document, "Cet ordre a est  renvoy  et n'a pas est  exect ."<sup>4</sup> Apparently, the instructions to S rigny had arrived too late, for Iberville had already taken action. Assuming that his trading grants for 1699 still stood, Iberville had already sent off a small frigate with trade goods<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>AN, AM, B2, CXXXIX, 112-13, "Ministre   Mrs. de Tallard et d'herbault," 1699.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., B, XX, 262, "Ordre   Serigny de remettre aux anglois le fort de Bourbon," Versailles, 17 June 1699.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>AN, AM, B2, CXL, 353, "Ministre   Mrs. de Tallard et d'herbault," 1699.

to the Port Nelson region. Now that it was impossible to carry out any immediate plans for an exchange of posts, the Compagnie du Nord's demise was certain.

In view of the Company's frequent failures and numerous refusals of the King's offers, it is surprising that his Majesty would even have considered the exchange proposed by the Canadian associates. Nevertheless, King Louis' insistence that the French ambassadors "avoir esgard a la demande de la compagnie du nord,"<sup>1</sup> demonstrates that many of the points made by the Canadian directors in 1698 were not only well taken, but were also quite valid. Since it was clear that the Company's French directors no longer wished to be associated with the organization, Quebec was the only logical choice for its headquarters. Although the Port Nelson region trade was more valuable than that of James Bay, the French authorities faced the same problem which had plagued the Compagnie du Nord; "la difficulté de le [the Bourbon trade] faire valoir."<sup>2</sup> The return sea voyage from Quebec to Bourbon was simply too great, lasting an average of three to four months.<sup>3</sup> Severe

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., CXXXIX, 112-13, "Ministre à Mrs. de Tallard et d'herbault," 1699.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., F2A, 13, Pièce 75, "Copie d'un mémoire . . .," n.d.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 86, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d.; Ibid., XII, 102-3, "Lettre d'Iberville au Ministre," La Rochelle, 24 April 1692; Frégault, Iberville, p. 170.

climatic conditions necessitated an early departure from the Bay, for by the end of September, icy winds and long hours of darkness made sea travel almost unbearable.<sup>1</sup> As late as 1698, the lack of adequate maps and navigators for the Bay region still troubled the French.<sup>2</sup> In view of these problems, the Canadian associates suggested, "qu'il est meme Naturel de s'atacher plutôt a se conserver la propriété du fond de la Baye, que la côte du port Nelson."<sup>3</sup> They pointed out that if the exchange were carried out, the Canadians would be in an ideal position at the Lower Bay to interrupt the passage of Indians going to trade at the Port Nelson region. They explained that the Tadoussac fur trade would be jeopardized, if the English were allowed to remain at James Bay, which was far too close to Canada.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the logical solution seemed to call for the observance of the Treaty of Ryswick's terms.

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, X, 146-47, "Lettre du Sieur d'Iberville commandant dans la Baye d'Hudson," Charlton Is., 21 Sept. 1688.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 169-70, "Mémoire présenté a Monseigneur le Marquis de Seignelay pour le Canada," 1688. Ibid., XVI, 185-87, "Projet d'une relation de l'Estat des affaires de la Nouvelle France," 1698.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., F2A, 13, Pièce 75, "Copie d'un mémoire . . .," n.d.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

The Compagnie du Nord's financial records show that the exploitation of the Port Nelson region trade from Quebec was clearly impossible. The enormous cost of the Bourbon expeditions, which ranged from 100,000 to 180,000 livres was the principal cause for the Company's ruin.<sup>1</sup> Usually, at least one hundred men were needed for a sea voyage to the Port Nelson region. Their average pay for the entire trip was about 500 livres per man.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, 50,000 livres in salaries was a common expenditure, although this figure could reach up to 80,000 livres in the event that more men were needed. The other substantial expenditure was approximately 50,000 livres for supplies which included arms, costing as much as 20,000 livres, as well as trading goods, items of clothing, and personal necessities.<sup>3</sup> Food supplies, including such commodities as 150 hundredweight of "biscuit," 350 hundredweight of flour, 154 barrels of

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<sup>1</sup>See Table 5, Appendix A, infra, pp. 217-24.

<sup>2</sup>A.C., C11A, CXXV, 85-87, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d.; Ibid., XVI, 157, "Memoire de ce qu'il faut faire cette année pour la Baye d'Hudson," 1698.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., XV, 259, "Etat des marchandises necessaires pour la traite du fort de Bourbon," n.d.

wine, 339 hundredweight of vegetables and meats, all of which had to last for over a year, amounted to 20,000 to 30,000 livres,<sup>1</sup> depending on the number of men and length of the expedition. Additional insurance expenditures of 12 to 15 per cent on the total value of the fur cargo, as well as general shipping costs, usually added another 20,000 livres to the total output of funds.<sup>2</sup> Due to the limited capacity of the vessels carrying furs, approximately 100,000 livres per ship, after the deduction of the droit du quart, was the maximum the Company could receive in one year through the sale of beaver.<sup>3</sup> However, the most important consideration is that only once in its history did the Company enjoy such returns. By 1698 it was, therefore, quite clear that the risk was too great to finance such costly expeditions to the remote Port Nelson region.

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<sup>1</sup>Unfortunately, the costs of food supplies for the expeditions to Bourbon do not appear in itemized form. Therefore, this amount is an estimate. The following documents give some information concerning food costs: Ibid., XII, 306-309, "Resultat de la conférence entre Frontenac et Champigny au sujet de l'entreprise dans la Baie d'Hudson en 1693," Ibid., p. 301, "Lettre d'Iberville à Monseigneur," La Rochelle, 3 Feb. 1693; Ibid., VIII, 272-75, "Estat de la Depense et frais gnaux faits par la Compagnie du Nord," 1686.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., XIV, 282, "Memoire du Sieur Riverin sur la traite à la ferme du castor de Canada," Paris, 10 Feb. 1696; Ibid., XV, 260, "Lettre d'Iberville," n.d.

<sup>3</sup>See Table 5, Appendix A, infra, pp. 217-24.



The exploitation of furs in James Bay was the only hope for the Compagnie du Nord's survival. In 1686 the Company was able to finance the Troyes expedition to the Lower Bay at the relatively low cost of 70,000 livres and earn a small profit of 20,000 livres. The average salary received by the seventy Canadians on this campaign was 30 livres a month, which for eight months amounted to approximately 17,000 livres.<sup>1</sup> The thirty officers and French soldiers averaged about 500 livres each in pay for the entire expedition.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, approximately 32,000 livres were spent for salaries, with the remainder of the 70,000 livres' expenditure paying for food, supplies, and clothing. The Company's 1698 memoir pointed out that rather than use the difficult route taken by Troyes, from Montreal to James Bay, "on peut y [James Bay] communiquer par la Riviere de Saguenay, et par les lacs qui s'y deschargent, en peu de jours et sans beaucoup de peine."<sup>3</sup> The cost of such a trading expedition would be considerably lower than the war campaign led by Troyes, because

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<sup>1</sup>Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Rageot, Feb. and March, 1686.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 272-75, "Estat de la Depense et frais gnaux faits par la Compagnie du Nord," 1686.

<sup>3</sup>AN, Col., F2A, 13, Pièce 75, "Copie d'un mémoire . . .," n.d.

fewer men and supplies would be needed. The problem of transporting a large number of furs from the Bay to the colony still existed, but it seemed quite feasible that yearly expeditions could be sent, costing 25,000 livres, which could bring back 40,000 livres' worth of furs. Although the prospects of spectacular trading in James Bay did not exist, there were so few risks involved that the Company would be virtually certain of making a small annual profit.

However, even if the exchange of posts with the English had occurred, it is doubtful whether the Compagnie du Nord, in its lamentable financial state of 1698, could have supported the James Bay trade. Therefore, any speculation as to what might have happened had the Company carried on the trade there, takes one far into the historians' no-man's land of "if", where no absolute answers can be found. By 1699, the concrete fact which faced the authorities was that the Compagnie du Nord could not hope to exploit the fur trade in the Port Nelson region.

Both the authorities and the Canadians now realized that if the Bourbon trade were to be enjoyed at all, a totally new company had to be established. Moreover, by 1699, the entire Canadian fur trade was so

severely shaken by a glut of castor sec,<sup>1</sup> that the authorities were seriously considering a reorganization of the whole system, which had relied so heavily on the Company of the Farm.<sup>2</sup> As early as 1698 plans were being discussed for the establishment of a Canadian Company to take over the Company of the Farm's trading rights in Canada.<sup>3</sup> By 1699, when it had become apparent that the

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<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 198-99, "Memoire pour le castor de Champigny," Que., 26 Oct. 1694; *Ibid.*, pp. 415-17, "Congés et permissions pour la traite, commerce, reception et prix du castor," 4 June 1695; *Ibid.*, XVII, 236, "Memoire sur la ferme," 1699. This glut of castor sec began to reach serious proportions in the 1690's. The problem was that far more castor sec than castor gras was being sold to the Company of the Farm, when the hat makers needed more castor gras than castor sec. (See Chapter I, *supra*, p. 7). By 1698, the surplus of beaver had reached one million livres weight. This glut, however, affected the Compagnie du Nord only because it led to the formation of the Compagnie de la Colonie. Therefore, the glut was no real problem to the Compagnie du Nord, which had a sure market for all its beaver as long as the Company of the Farm existed. Also, as late as 1698, there was a large demand for castor gras, which came from the Fort Nelson region. AN, Col., C11A, XVI, 256-57, "Memoire sur l'affaire de la Baye d'Hudson," 1697.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, XVII, 205-208, "Memoire pour la colonie de Canada ou la prouve de la necessité de mettre tous les castors dans une seule main, ou la colonie offre de se charger de payer au Roy pour les anciens castors et ferme de Canada," n.d.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, XVI, 234-35, "Memoire sur l'Etat présent de la ferme des castors," Canada, 10 Oct. 1698.

Compagnie du Nord could no longer function, the obvious solution was to acquire its rights to the Port Nelson region and thereby knit this area into the rest of Canada's fur trade. This is precisely what was done, when in October, 1700, the Compagnie de la Colonie was formally established.<sup>1</sup>

A crucial step in the founding of the Compagnie de la Colonie was the revocation of the Compagnie du Nord's charter.<sup>2</sup> The representatives of the Company of the Farm had accepted the bold offer of a group of Canadian merchants, who later became shareholders in the Compagnie de la Colonie, to buy up the tremendous surplus of beaver held in stock by the Company of the Farm and to take over this Company's monopoly.<sup>3</sup> Now only the Compagnie du Nord stood in the way of the Compagnie de la Colonie's complete control of the trade.<sup>4</sup> The Compagnie du Nord's letters patent of 1685 had given

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<sup>1</sup>Frégault, "La Compagnie de la Colonie," Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, XXX, 12-13.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., B, XXII, 16-19, "Arrest qui revoque la faculté accordée aux Interessez de la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson de faire le commerce et traite en seuls et la remet aux habitants de Québec," Versailles, 10 Jan. 1700.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.; Frégault, "La Compagnie de la Colonie," Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, XXX, 9-12.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., B, XXII, 16-19, "Arrest . . .," Versailles, 10 Jan. 1700.

it a monopoly to the Hudson Bay trade for twenty years,<sup>1</sup> and although this organization was in no position to exercise its rights at the present time, legally, it could sell furs from the Bay to the Farmers and thereby compete with the Compagnie de la Colonie. Therefore, on January 10, 1700, an edict was issued, granting to the Company of the Colony, "tous les droits exercées par la Compagnie du Nord à condition que cette dernière reçoive une indemnité proportionnée à ses pertes."<sup>2</sup> This "indemnité" allowed the Compagnie du Nord's directors to transfer their interests to the Compagnie de la Colonie, but the associates also claimed the rights to a further indemnity, which they apparently never received.<sup>3</sup>

Although it was not until January 10, 1700, that the Compagnie du Nord was formally dissolved, it had ceased to play an effective role in Canadian affairs

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter III, supra, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col. B, XXII, 16-19, "Arrest . . .," Versailles, 10 Jan. 1700.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 209, "Ministre au Sr. Dolier," Versailles, 4 May 1701; Ibid., p. 267, "Ministre à Champigny," Versailles, 31 May 1701; AN, Col., CIIA, XIX, 148, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 30 Oct. 1701; AN, AM, B2, CLVIII, 58-59, "à M. des Hagnois," Versailles, 4 April 1703.

as early as 1694. The directors' decision to give only a token contribution to Iberville's 1694 expedition and to withdraw from the Nelson trade until at least 1697 was crucial, for the Company was balking from its duty of maintaining the northern fur trade. From 1694 to 1700 this trade was administered by Iberville, whose shrewd sense of business enabled him to realize substantial profits. The costs of sending naval expeditions to the Port Nelson region and exploiting its trade had simply proved to be too much for the Company, especially in view of the fact that all ships had to sail to Quebec while en route both to the Bay and to France. It was clearly impossible to try to operate a fur trading Company based in Quebec and France, when the area of exploitation was Hudson Bay. The failure of the Company's directors to come to grips with this reality and to decide either to send expeditions directly from France to Bourbon, or overland from Quebec to James Bay, brought about the organization's ruin. By the time the Canadian directors had made their ironic decision of 1698 to revert to their early policy of overland expeditions to the Lower Bay, it was too late. The French associates had already declared their strong desire to withdraw from the Company, and the French authorities, who, surprisingly, were still willing to

listen to the Compagnie du Nord's plans, had acted too slowly in adopting them. The Compagnie du Nord had failed. The revocation of its charter in 1700 was a mere formality, which allowed the Compagnie de la Colonie to extend its vast monopoly to the shores of Hudson Bay.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

The Compagnie du Nord's history can be divided into the following four periods: the years preceding the Company's formation in 1682; the 1682-85 period, which culminated in the granting of the Company's royal charter; the years 1686-93, when the Compagnie du Nord's intense military efforts almost eliminated its English rival; and the 1694 to 1700 period, when it became apparent that the Compagnie du Nord could not survive. This conclusion will summarize the important events that occurred in each of these four phases and will explain the Compagnie du Nord's failure.

A chain of inter-related events dictated the establishment of a fur trading Company in Canada, devoted to the exploitation of furs in the Hudson Bay area. The colony's economy relied heavily on the exportation of furs to Europe, where there was a great demand for beaver, especially castor gras, which was needed for the production of felt hats. Since the waterways running into Hudson Bay were the source of the best



beaver furs in the world, both the French and the English developed a keen interest in this area. With the help of the French renegades, Radisson and Grouseilliers, the English succeeded in establishing the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670. This Company, whose trading posts soon drew the Indian tribes away from New France, had a severe effect on the colony's economy. The economic interests of a group of Montreal and Quebec merchants were further damaged by Governor Frontenac's support of a rival faction of fur traders, who were carrying out his plans for the western expansion of the colony's fur trade. The Montreal-Quebec merchants, who soon found themselves cut off from the western fur trade, had no alternative but to turn northward, and La Chesnaye, the group's leader, began formulating plans for the establishment of a fur trading company. The arrival of Governor La Barre, who was aware of the Hudson's Bay Company's menace to the colony's entire fur trade and also sympathetic to the cause of La Chesnaye's group, led to the establishment of the Compagnie du Nord in 1682.

The Compagnie du Nord's goal of exploiting the high quality furs in the Bay area made conflict with the Hudson's Bay Company inevitable. From this conflict the Canadian Company soon learned that unless it possessed a royal charter granting it trading privileges to the

Hudson Bay area, it could not hope to compete with its more powerful rival. For a brief time the Compagnie du Nord enjoyed the undisputed possession of the Port Nelson region, but when Radisson betrayed this area to the English, the Company's hopes for profit were shattered. When the La Martinière expedition, which was restricted by royal policy to trade rather than war, arrived at Bourbon to find that the Company had been stripped of its possessions, it could do nothing to regain the Port Nelson region. The loss of this vital area, as well as the heavy costs of the La Martinière expedition, which had badly eaten into the Company's capital, made it evident that if the Compagnie du Nord were to survive, a marked change in policy was needed. Royal recognition would allow the Company to send out retaliatory expeditions against the English. Therefore, in 1685 the Compagnie du Nord received its letters patent from the French Crown, granting it exclusive trading privileges to the Hudson Bay area for a twenty year period.

The French authorities, despite their granting the Compagnie du Nord its charter, were still interested in finding a peaceful solution with the English to the possession of the Hudson Bay area. This fact, however, deterred neither the Compagnie du Nord's directors nor

the officials in New France from embarking on a policy of aggression against the English posts at the Bay. From 1686 to 1693 the Compagnie du Nord planned six expeditions, all for the purpose of regaining possession of Bourbon. Although this goal was not achieved, the Compagnie du Nord did succeed in stripping the Hudson's Bay Company of all its posts, with the exception of Fort York in the Port Nelson region. The Company's expedition of 1688-89 was by far the most profitable, but unfortunately, it was also the last successful one. By 1690 the events in Europe had persuaded the French authorities that an attack on Bourbon was necessary, but the expedition, which could have succeeded in wiping out the Hudson's Bay Company, failed mainly because of inadequate royal support. This venture was a financial disaster. The three abortive expeditions from 1691 to 1693, which were now fully supported by the French Crown, revealed an incredible degree of poor planning. These unsuccessful attempts, which exhausted the Compagnie du Nord's badly depleted financial resources, also gave the Hudson's Bay Company ample time to regain its strength and recover its posts on James Bay. Therefore, by 1694 the Compagnie du Nord was without a post.

From 1694 until its demise in 1700, the Compagnie du Nord was never again significantly involved

in an expedition to the Bay. The devastating cost of planning and financing a total of eight expeditions, of which only two realized a profit, had ruined the Company and caused an irreparable split between its directors in Canada and France. Ironically, in 1694, when Iberville finally recaptured Bourbon, placing it in French hands for the first time since 1684, the Compagnie du Nord was no longer in a position to carry on the fur trade. The monopoly of the Port Nelson region trade was transferred to Iberville, who, despite the attempt by the Compagnie du Nord to revive itself, managed to maintain his rights until 1700. In that year, after the Compagnie du Nord's charter had been revoked, the Port Nelson region as well as the entire Canadian fur trade was taken over by the Compagnie de la Colonie.

The Compagnie du Nord's failure can be attributed to the following three causes: the lack of royal support; the remote location of Hudson Bay; and the Company's weak organization.

The directors of the Compagnie du Nord had every reason to be bitter about the Crown's lack of financial and military support, which were prominent causes for the Company's failure. The first blow the French authorities dealt the Compagnie du Nord was the edict of April 10, 1684, enforcing the droit du quart, which had

the following three results on the Company: it severely limited the organization's opportunity to profit from its ventures; it compelled the Company to bring all its returns from the Bay to Quebec, which was farther from the Port Nelson region than France; and it ultimately led to the decision of Radisson, whose knowledge was indispensable to expeditions in the Bay area, to return to the Hudson's Bay Company. It is an ironic twist of fate that in 1694, when Iberville financed the successful venture to the Port Nelson region, he was not obliged to pay this burdensome tax. The French authorities' decision to cooperate with the Canadians in their attacks on the English posts came far too late. In the 1680's, when the Compagnie du Nord stood an excellent chance of destroying its rival, the Crown's Hudson Bay policy was ambiguous and inconsistent. In the early 1690's, once the authorities had decided that an attack on the English was necessary, the needless delays, burdensome convoy duties, and foolish restrictions requiring the expeditions to return to France for the winter, caused their failure. It was only in 1694 that the Crown ceased to impose these troublesome restraints, and the success of Iberville's expedition in that year, as well as 1697, revealed the full potential of the French forces. However, this change in French attitude

was too late to benefit the moribund Compagnie du Nord.

The success of Iberville's 1697 expedition, which sailed directly from France, reveals an important cause of the Compagnie du Nord's failure; the remote area of Hudson Bay was simply not an integral part of New France. Iberville's expedition made it clear that this area must be exploited directly from France in a manner similar to that of the Hudson's Bay Company. The problem was, however, that Canadians, not Frenchmen, had the facility to carry out the challenging task of fur trading. Moreover, the French naval ability did not compare to that of the English, and thus, the prospects of sending yearly expeditions from France to the Bay were formidable. The Canadians, who, unlike the English, were expert woodsmen, served little use to the Compagnie du Nord, unless they could be transported yearly to the Port Nelson region. However, in order to do this, the expeditions would be forced to stop at Quebec, causing a costly delay and often resulting in the postponement of these ventures. The Compagnie du Nord's fatal error proved to be its decision to compete with the English by sea. Had the Company concentrated its efforts on its posts in James Bay and contented itself with small but regular profits, it might well have survived. But, the Compagnie du Nord's directors, who seemed inclined

to take gambles, chose to invest all their capital in the expeditions of the early 1690's, which failed. Therefore, the Canadians, who were so well adapted to the rigours of the fur trade, lost to the English, who were far superior in naval skills, which proved to be the decisive factor in the exploitation of the Hudson Bay trade.

Nevertheless, despite the lack of royal support and the remoteness of Hudson Bay, the responsibility for the Compagnie du Nord's failure falls heavily on the directors themselves. The principal difference between the associates of the Hudson's Bay Company, which succeeded, and the Compagnie du Nord, which failed, was the power of one group and the impotence of the other. The Compagnie du Nord, which was a partnership, was bedevilled by a basically weak organization. One of the foremost dangers of a partnership is the failure of the partners to agree amongst themselves, and from the early 1690's on, this very fact was a main cause for the Company's collapse. The entry of the French directors in 1686, who could not exert the necessary influence on behalf of the Compagnie du Nord, led to the Company's failure. If these French directors had enjoyed a degree of authority in France comparable to that exercised by the associates of the Hudson's Bay

Company in England, the Compagnie du Nord might well have succeeded. As it was, however, the responsibility for administering the Company, fell on its Canadian directors, who despite their authority within the colony, wielded little power in France. Therefore, the Compagnie du Nord's tragedy lay in the fact that its success required a strong directorship in France, rather than in Canada, where the Company's power was concentrated.



## TABLE

AMOUNTS INVESTED IN THE COMPAGNIE

Director's name	<u>Livres invested</u> before 1686	<u>Livres inves</u> between 1686
La Chesnaye	approximately 90,000 (1)	unknown
Oudiette	not in Co.	approximatel 90,000 (7)
Le Ber and Le Moyne	Le Moyne 4,400 until Feb. 1685 (2)	Le Moyne dec sed
Hazeur	Le Ber unknown (3) unknown	unknown minimum of 12,343 after Mar. 1687 (8)
Bruneau	unknown	12,343 until 1687 (9)
Catignan and Patu	Catignan unknown Patu not in Co.	unknown
Pachot	unknown	unknown
Chanjon	unknown	unknown
Comporté	7,062 (4)	deceased Nov 1687
Lepicart	unknown	minimum of 7,062 afte April 1688

TABLE 1

IN THE COMPAGNIE DU NORD BY ITS DIRECTORS

<u>Livres invested</u> between 1686-90	<u>Livres invested</u> in 1691 (16)	<u>Livres invested</u> in 1697 (20)
unknown	22,268	22,226
approximately 90,000 (7)	73,193 (17)	73,193
Le Moyne deceased	21,357	not in Co. (21)
unknown		
minimum of 12,343 after Mar. 1687 (8)	17,521	17,521
12,343 until Mar. 1687 (9)	not in Co.	not in Co.
unknown	10,942 (18)	Catignan deceased Patu 5,471
unknown	10,373	10,373
unknown	7,340	not in Co.
deceased Nov. 1687	deceased	deceased
minimum of 7,062 after April 1688 (10)	6,049	6,049

TABLE 1 continued

Director's name	<u>Livres</u> invested before 1686	<u>Livres</u> inve between 168
Branssat	unknown	unknown
Macart Marnot Gitton <u>fils</u>	not in Co. not in Co. unknown	unknown unknown 4,936 unti Aug. 168
Duprat	not in Co.	unknown
Bouthier	unknown	4,640 unti 1687 (12
Delorme	unknown	4,640 afte 1687 (13
de Lino	not in Co.	2,468 afte Aug. 168
Demonic Gobin	not in Co. unknown (5)	not in Co. unknown
Unaccounted for	approximately 93,538	approximat 76,019
Total	approximately 195,000 (6)	approximat 195,000

Livres invested  
between 1686-90

Livres invested  
in 1691

Livres invested  
in 1697

unknown

5,459

deceased, but  
5,459 in  
wife's name

unknown

5,339

5,339

unknown

5,000

5,000

4,936 until

not in Co.

not in Co.

Aug. 1688 (11)

unknown

4,872

4,872

4,640 until Oct.  
1687 (12)

not in Co.

not in Co.

4,640 after Oct.  
1687 (13)

not in Co.

not in Co.

2,468 after

2,468

2,468

Aug. 1688 (14)

not in Co.

not in Co.

2,419 (22)

unknown

1,792

1,792

approximately  
76,019

. .

. .

approximately  
195,000 (15)

193,973 (19)

162,182

## Footnotes - Table 1

<sup>1</sup>AN, Col., F2A, 13, Pièce 75, pp. 59-66, "Copie d'un mémoire . . .," n.d.; AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 247-48, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686.

<sup>2</sup>Le Moyne left his interest of 4,400 livres to his family, Jud. Arch. Mtl., greffe Basset, 28 March, 2 and 16 April 1685, "Inventaire du Sr. Le Moyne." Apparently, on account of the "étroit union d'intérêt" between the Le Moyne and the Le Ber families, the Le Moyne family's interest was held for them by Le Ber after March 1685, AN, Col., C11A, VII, 70, "Denonville au Ministre," 13 Nov. 1685; Ibid., CXXV, 88, "Estat de la contribution . . ."

<sup>3</sup>Le Ber's signature, along with others in this column whose investment is "unknown," as well as La Chesnaye and Comporté, but with the exception of Gobin and Bruneau, first appeared in Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Rageot, 31 Oct. 1684, "Procès verbal de Délibération de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson nommant deux de ses membres pour la représenter en France."

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 24 April 1688, "Vente de Mr. Jean Gobin pour les mineurs du Sr. Philippe Gaultier de Comporté."

<sup>5</sup>Gobin's signature first appeared in AN, Col., C11A, VII, 261, "Memoire que presentent a Monseigneur les Interesseez dans la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson," Que., 10 Nov. 1685.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., VIII, 247-48, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686; AN, Col., F2A, 13, Pièce 75, pp. 59-66, "Copie d'un mémoire . . .," n.d.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.; AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 247-48, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686.

<sup>8</sup>Hazeur purchased Bruneau's interest, Jugements et délibérations, III, 114-15, 806-807.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid. After Bruneau sold his interest, he withdrew from the Company.

<sup>10</sup>Lepicart purchased Comporté's interest, Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Rageot, 24 April 1688, "Vente de Mr. Jean Gobin pour les mineurs du Sr. Philippe Gaultier de Comporté."

<sup>11</sup>Gitton sold 2,468 livres worth of his interest to de Lino and withdrew from the Comapny, Ibid., 28 Aug. 1688, "Vente d'une part de Société Mr. Gitton a Mr. de Lino." It is not known to whom Gitton had sold the remainder of his interest.

<sup>12</sup>Bouthier sold his interest to Delorme and withdrew from the Company, Ibid., 16 Oct. 1687, "Vente de Mr. Bouthier a Mr. Delorme."

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 28 Aug. 1688, "Vente d'une part de Société Mr. Gitton a Mr. de Lino."

<sup>15</sup>AN, Col., F2A, 13, Pièce 75, pp. 59-66, "Coppie d'un mémoire . . .," n.d.; AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 247-48, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., CXXV, 88, "Estat de la contribution . . ."

<sup>17</sup>The approximate difference of 17,000 livres between Oudiette's holdings in 1686 and 1691 cannot be accounted for, although it is probable that some of this amount was acquired by Marnot and Duprat.

<sup>18</sup>Catignan and Patu held their investment jointly, "par moitié," AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 88, "Estat de la contribution . . ."

<sup>19</sup>This amount does not include the two assessments levied in 1690 and 1691. Ibid.; Ibid., XII, 88-89, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 10 Nov. 1692.

<sup>20</sup>Unless otherwise stated, all information from this column is obtained from AN, Col., C11A, XV, 86, "Les Interesses en la Compagnie du Nord concernant le fort Bourbon," Que., 13 Oct. 1697.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., XIII, 99-101, "Procès verbal sur l'entreprise du Sr d'Iberville," Que., 26 Oct. 1694. Le Ber liquidated his interest as well as that of the Le Moyne family in 1694.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. Demonic was in the Company by Oct. 1694.

## TABLE

## THE DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

Full name of director and parents	Place and date of birth	Place and date of death	Date of arrival to Canada
Charles Aubert de La Chesnaye, son of Jacques Aubert and Marie Goupy (2)	Amiens, Picar- dy, 1632	Quebec, 1702	1655
Jean Oudiette, par- ents unknown	unknown	France, date unknown	. .
Jacques Le Ber dit Larose, son of Ro- bert Le Ber and Colette Cavelier (4)	Pitres dans l'Eure, Nor- mandy, 1633	Montreal, 1706	1657
Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Chât- cauguay, son of Pierre Le Moyne and Judith Du Chesne (5)	Dieppe, Nor- mandy, 1626	Montreal, 1685	1641

TABLE 2

## DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES (1)

te	Date of	Place of	Marriage	Family connections
	arrival to Canada	permanent residence	date and name of spouse	with other directors
	1655	Quebec	1664 to Catherine-Gertrude, daughter of Guillaume Couillard and Guillemette Hébert 1668 to Marie-Louise, daughter of Jean Juchereau de la Ferté and Marie Giffard 1680 to Marie-Angélique daughter of Pierre Denys de la Ronde and Catherine le Neuf	Daughter Gabrielle Françoise married to Paul Le Moyne, de Maricourt, son of Charles Le Moyne in 1704
	..	Paris (3)	unknown	unknown
06	1657	Montreal	1658 to Jeanne, daughter of Pierre Le Moyne and Judith Du Chesne	Brother-in-law to Charles Le Moyne through marriage to Le Moyne's sister, Jeanne, in 1658
35	1641	Montreal	1654 to Catherine Thierry, adopted daughter of Antoine Primot and Martine Messier	Jacques Le Ber's brother-in-law Le Moyne's son Paul, married to La Chesnaye's daughter in 1704



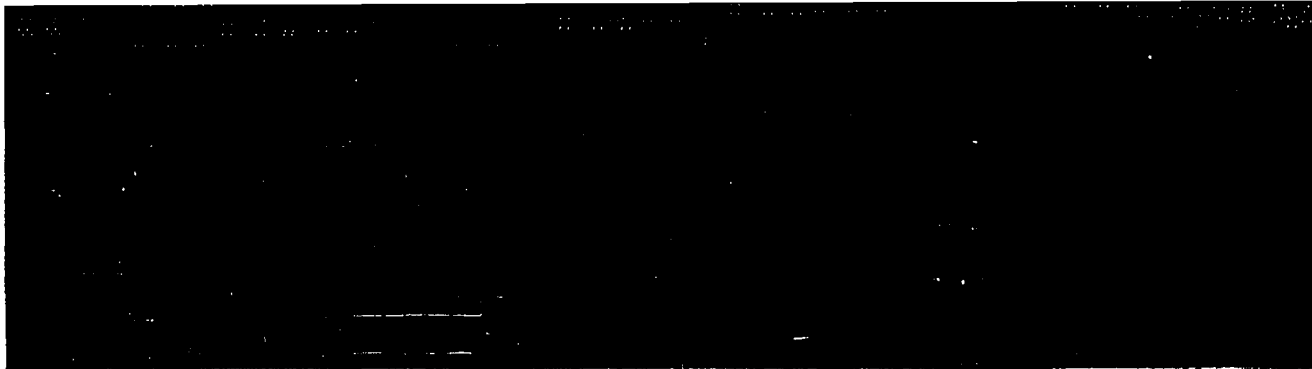
TABLE 2 continued

Full name of director and parents	Place and date of birth	Place and date of death	Date of arrival Canada
François Hazeur, son of François Hazeur and Marie Proust (6)	Tours, 1638	Quebec, 1708	<u>circa</u> 16
Joseph Petit dit Bruneau, son of Henri Petit and El- izabeth Fontaine (7)	Paris, 1645	unknown (8)	before M 1682 (9)
Charles Catignan, son of Jean Catignan and Marie Malpault (10)	Chartres, 1649	France, be- tween 1691 to 1694 (11)	before 1680 (12)
Charles Patu, par- ents unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown
François Viennay- Pachot, parents un- known (14)	Bourg-d'Oisans Dauphiné, date unknown	Quebec, 1698	before 1679

Birth date	Date of arrival to Canada	Place of permanent residence	Marriage date and name of spouse	Family connections with other directors
1708	<u>circa</u> 1668	Quebec	1672 to Anne, daughter of Pierre Soumande and Simone Côté 1696 to Elizabeth, daughter of Silvain Barbe and Jeanne Girardin	Brother-in-law to Pierre Soumande Delorme through marriage to Delorme's sister, Anne, in 1672  Son Jean-François married Catherine, daughter of Martin de Lino, in 1708
(8)	before May 1682 (9)	Three Rivers	1675 to Marie, daughter of Bertrand Chesnay and M.-Madeleine Bélanger	. .
before 1911 (11)	before 1680 (12)	Quebec	1679 to Jeanne, daughter of Thierry Delestre de Vallon and Marie Depéré	. .
	unknown	Quebec (13)	unknown	unknown
1698	before 1679	Quebec	before 1679 to Jeanne Avamy, parents unknown 1680 to Charlotte-Françoise, daughter of Nicolas Juchereau de Saint-Denis	. .

TABLE 2 continued

Full name of director and parents	Place and date of birth	Place and date of death	Date of arrival t Canada
Guillaume Chanjon, parents unknown	unknown	France, date unknown	between Apr. 1681 and May 1682 (15)
Philippe, Gaultier de Comporté, son of Philippe Gaultier and Gillette de Veron (17)	near Poitiers, 1641	Quebec, 1687	1665
Jean Lepicart, son of Pierre Picart and Renée Suronne (19)	Quebec, 1634	Quebec, 1700	. .
Jean-Baptiste Migeon de Branssat, son of Jean Migeon and Marie Desbordes (20)	Moulins in Bourbonnais, 1663	Montreal, 1693	circa 1665



ate	Date of arrival to Canada	Place of permanent residence	Marriage date and name of spouse	Family connections with other directors
e	between Apr. 1681 and May 1682 (15)	LaRochelle (16)	unknown	unknown
7	1665	Quebec	1672 to Marie, daughter of Jean Bazire and Jeanne Le Borgne	Brother-in-law to Charles Bazire, a close associate of La Chesnaye, (18) through marriage to Bazire's daughter in 1672
0	. .	Quebec	1656 to Marie, daughter of Robert Caron and Marie Cremel 1663 to M.-Madeleine, daughter of Mathurin Gagnon and Françoise Goideau 1683 to M.-Anne, daughter of Julien Fortin and Geneviève Gamache	. .
	circa 1665	Montreal	1665 to Catherine, daughter of Claude Gauchet de Belleville and Suzanne Du Feu	. .



TABLE 2 continued

Full name of director and parents	Place and date of birth	Place and date of death	Date of arrival Canada
Charles Marcart, son of Nicolas Macart and Marguerite Couillard (21)	Quebec, <u>circa</u> (1656)	Quebec, 1732	. .
Louis Marnot, par- ents unknown	unknown	France, date unknown	. .
Jean Gitton <u>fils</u> , parents unknown	unknown	France, date unknown	before 1682 (2)
François Duprat, par- ents unknown	unknown	France, date unknown	. .
Guillaume Bouthier, son of Mathieu Bou- thier and Marie Allain (26)	Evreux, Nor- mandy, 1656	Quebec, 1694	before 1681 (2)
Pierre Soumande De- lorme, son of Pierre Soumande and Simone Côté (28)	Quebec, 1659	Quebec, 1700	. .

te	Date of arrival to Canada	Place of permanent residence	Marriage date and name of spouse	Family connections with other directors
.	.	Quebec	1686 to Renée-Jeanne, daughter of Jacques Gourdeau and Elizabeth de Grandmaison	Brother-in-law to Charles Bazire, through Bazire's mar- riage to Macart's sister, Geneviève in 1666
.	.	Paris (22)	unknown	.
	before May 1682 (23)	LaRochelle (24)	unknown	.
.	.	LaRochelle (25)	unknown	.
	before 1681 (27)	Quebec	1686 to Françoise, daughter of Pierre Denys and Catherine Le Neuf	.
.	.	Quebec	unmarried	Brother-in-law to François Hazeur, through Hazeurs marri- age to Delorme's sis- ter, Anne, in 1672

TABLE 2 continued

Full name of director and parents	Place and date of birth	Place and date of death	Date o arrival Canad
Mathurin-François Martin de Lino, son of Claude Martin and Antoinette Chalmette (29)	Lyon, 1657	Quebec, 1731	1682
Demonic, first name and name of parents unknown	unknown	unknown	. .
Jean Gobin, parents unknown (31)	Tours, 1646	Quebec, 1703	early 1680's

and date death	Date of arrival to Canada	Place of permanent residence	Marriage date and name of spouse	Family connections with other directors
c, 1731	1682	Quebec	1685 to Catherine, daughter of Pierre Nolan and Catherine Houart	Daughter Catherine, married Jean-François, son of François Hazeur in 1708
wn	.	France (30)	unknown	.
c, 1703	early 1680's	Quebec	before arrival to Canada, to Gabrielle Bécasseau	.



## Footnotes - Table 2

<sup>1</sup>In addition to the sources mentioned below, the following two works were used extensively: P.-G. Roy (ed.), Inventaire des contrats de mariage du Régime français conservés aux Archives judiciaires de Québec (6 vols.; Québec, 1937-38); P.-G. Roy (ed.), Inventaire des testaments, donations et inventaires du Régime français conservés aux Archives judiciaires de Québec (3 vols.; Québec, 1941).

<sup>2</sup>Roy, La Famille Aubert, passim.

<sup>3</sup>AN, C11A, CXXV, 88, "Estat de la contribution . . ." refers to the Oudiette Company as "Messieurs les Interesseez de Paris."

<sup>4</sup>Louis Le Jeune, Dictionnaire général de biographie, histoire, littérature, agriculture, commerce, industrie et des arts, sciences, mœurs, coutumes, institutions politiques et religieuses du Canada (2 vols.; Ottawa, 1931), II, 121-22.

<sup>5</sup>Jean-Jacques Le Febvre, "Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Châteauguay, Charles," DCB, I, 463-65.

<sup>6</sup>E. Z. Massicotte, "La Famille Hazeur," BRH, XLI (June, 1935), 321-52; P.-G. Roy, "Notes sur François Hazeur," Ibid. XXXII (Dec., 1926), 705-11.

<sup>7</sup>Cyprien Tanguay, Dictionnaire généalogique des familles canadiennes depuis la fondation de la colonie jusqu'à nos jours (7 vols.; Québec, 1871-90), I, 478; Dictionnaire National des Canadiens Français, 1608-1760 (3 vols.; "Institut Généalogique Drouin," Montreal, 1965), II, 1060; Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Bequet, 15 Sept. 1675, "Contrat de mariage."

<sup>8</sup>Jugements et délibérations, VI, 23-24, show that Bruneau was alive in Canada as late as Feb. 18, 1710, but after that date, all further references to him cease.

<sup>9</sup>See Chapter I, supra, p. 26.

<sup>10</sup>P.-G. Roy, "Les garde-magasin du Roy à Québec," BRH, XXXI (June, 1925), 162-63; Philéas Gagnon, "Noms propres au Canada-Français," Ibid., XV (Jan., 1909), 29, Tanguay, Dictionnaire, I, 108; Dictionnaire National, I, 230.

<sup>11</sup>He returned to France in 1691, Roy, "garde-magasin," BRH, XXXI, 162; AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 99, "Procès verbal sur l'entreprise du Sr. d'Iberville," Que., 26 Oct. 1694, reveals Catignan had died before Oct. 1694.

<sup>12</sup>Roy, "gard-magasin," BRH, XXXI, 161-62.

<sup>13</sup>Jugements et délibérations, II, 1048.

<sup>14</sup>Jean Hamelin, "Viennay-Pachot, François," DCB, I, 661.

<sup>15</sup>In March, 1681, Chanjon was in La Rochelle, Jugements et délibérations, II, 521; but by May, 1682 he was in Quebec; see Chapter I, supra, p. 26. On Aug. 31, 1698, he was described as a merchant in La Rochelle, Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Chambalon, 31 Aug. 1698, "protêt de Monsieur Macart contre le Sieur François Pachot."

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>J. Monet, "Gaultier de Comporté," Philippe, DCB, I, 326.

<sup>18</sup>Fernand Grenier, "Charles Bazire," Ibid., pp. 84-85.

<sup>19</sup>Tanguay, Dictionnaire, I, 481-82; Dictionnaire National, II, 1066; Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Genaple, 26 April 1686, "Accord entre les Siers François Hazeur et Jean Lepicart."

<sup>20</sup>Jean-Jacques Lefebvre, "Migeon de Branssat, Jean-Baptiste," DCB, I, 508.

<sup>21</sup>Tanguay, Dictionnaire, I, 401; Dictionnaire National, I, 877; Fernand Grenier, "Charles Bazire," DCB, I, 84-85.

<sup>22</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XV, 86, "Les Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord concernant le fort Bourbon," Que., 13 Oct. 1697; Jugements et délibérations, III, 770. These two sources reveal Marnot was a Paris merchant.

<sup>23</sup>See Chapter I, supra, p. 26.

<sup>24</sup>Gitton was referred to as a La Rochelle merchant, Jugements et délibérations, III, 655; Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Rageot, 28 Aug. 1688, "Vente d'une part de société Mr. Gitton à Mr. de Lino." Apparently, he remained in New France from before May, 1682, until some time after his withdrawal from the Compagnie du Nord in Aug., 1688, and then returned to France, Jugements et délibérations, III, 183, 305.

<sup>25</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XV, 86, "Les Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord concernant le fort Bourbon," Que., 13 Oct. 1697.

<sup>26</sup>Tanguay, Dictionnaire, I, 82; Dictionnaire National, I, 174; Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Chambalon, 19 July 1694, "Inventaire du Sæur Guillaume Bouthier et François Denys."

<sup>27</sup>Jugements et délibérations, II, 441.

<sup>28</sup>P.-G. Roy, "La Famille Soumande," BRH, LI (April, 1945), 157-69.

<sup>29</sup>P.-G. Roy, "Mathurin-François de Lino," Ibid., XXI (May, 1915), 153-56; Anom., "La Famille Martin de Lino" Ibid., XLI (May, 1935), 257-93.

<sup>30</sup>All that is known about Demonic is that he was a merchant residing in France, AN, Col., C11A, XIII, 99 "Procès verbal sur l'entreprise du Sr. d'Iberville," Que., 26 Oct. 1694; Ibid., XV, 86 "Les Interesseez en la Compagnie du Nord concernant le fort Bourbon," Que., 13 Oct. 1697.

<sup>31</sup>Tanguay, Dictionnaire, I, 272; Dictionnaire National, I, 590; Jugements et délibérations, II, III, IV, passim.

TAF

THE DIRECT

Director's Name	Date of ennoblement	Date to Sc
La Chesnaye	1693 (2)	
Oudiette	..	
Le Ber	Purchased nobility for 6,000 livres in 1696 (4) 1668	
Le Moyne (6)		
Hazeur	..	
Bruneau	..	
Catignan	..	
Patu	..	
Pachot (9)	..	
Chanjon	..	
Comporté (10)	born of noble fam- ily	
Lepicart	..	

TABLE 3

## THE DIRECTORS' STATUS

Date of appointment to Sovereign Council (1)	Other important positions of authority in New France
1696	Appointed West Indian Company's Agent General for Canada in 1667. (3)
. .	Farmer General for <u>domaine d'Oc-</u> <u>cident et Canada, 1675-1685</u>
. .	Member of Council of Ville Marie in 1660 (5)
. .	Appointed Attorney General of Montreal in 1663
1703	Frontenac's first Secretary (7)
. .	. . .
. .	In 1680 was the first Quebec garde-magasin to be named dir- ectly by the King (8)
. .	. . .
. .	militia captain
. .	. . .
. .	Appointed first provost of mar- shalsea in 1677
. .	Member of Carignan - Salières regiment
. .	. . .

TABLE 3 continued

Director's name	Date of ennoblement	Date to
Branssat (11)	. .	
Macart	. .	
Marnot	. .	
Gitton <u>fils</u>	. .	
Duprat	. .	
Bouthier	born of noble family (13)	
Delorme	. .	
de Lino (15)	. .	
Demonic	. .	
Gobin	. .	

ement	Date of appointment to Sovereign Council	Other important positions of authority in New France
	..	Appointed civil and criminal judge of bailiff's court of Montreal in 1677
	1705	Appointed Attorney General of New France in 1707 (12)
	..	..
	..	..
	..	..
fam-	..	..
	..	Captain of King's vessels in the Royal Navy (14)
	1702	Appointed First Councillor in 1719
		Appointed <u>garde des sceaux de</u> <u>la Nouvelle France</u> in 1727
	..	..
	..	..

## Footnotes - Table 3

<sup>1</sup>All information concerning the Sovereign Council is from J. Edmond Roy, "Les Conseillers au Conseil Souverain de la Nouvelle France," BRH, I (Nov. and Dec., 1895), 170-71, 177-83.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 217, "Lettres de noblesse pour la Chesnaye," 24 March 1693.

<sup>3</sup>Roy, La Famille Aubert, pp. 17-18.

<sup>4</sup>AN, Col., B, XIX, 107, "Ministre à Champigny," Versailles, 26 May 1696.

<sup>5</sup>Le Jeune, Dictionnaire général, II, 121.

<sup>6</sup>Le Febvre, "Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Châteauguay," DCB, I, 463-65.

<sup>7</sup>Massicotte, "La Famille Hazeur," BRH, XLI, 330.

<sup>8</sup>Roy, "garde-magasin," BRH, XXXI, 161-62.

<sup>9</sup>Hamelin, "Viennay-Pachot," DCB, I, 661.

<sup>10</sup>Monet, "Gaultier de Comporté," Ibid., 326.

<sup>11</sup>Lefebvre, "Migeon de Branssat," DCB, I, 508.

<sup>12</sup>Ignotus [Thomas Chapais], "Procureurs-généraux de la Nouvelle-France," BRH, IX (March, 1903), 82.

<sup>13</sup>Tanguay, Dictionnaire, I, 82.

<sup>14</sup>Roy, "La Famille Soumande," BRH, LI, 166.

<sup>15</sup>Anom., "La Famille Martin de Lino," Ibid., XLI, 266-67.



TA

THE DIRECTORS' EC

Director's name	Properties and date acquired	Fishing rights and date acquired
La Chesnaye	Seigneurie of Côte de Beau- pré, purchased part in 1662 and 1664 (2) Seigneurie of Ile d'Orléans, purchased part in 1663 and 1664 Subfief of Lothainville in Seigneurie of Beaupré, ac- quired in 1664 Subfief of La Chesnaye in Seigneurie of Beaupré, gran- ted in 1667 Seigneurie of La Chesnaye (north of Mtl.), acquired in 1671 Seigneurie of Ile Percée, granted in part in 1672 Seigneurie of Rivière du Loup, granted in 1673 Subfief of Charleville in Seigneurie of Beaupré, gran- ted in part in 1677 Seigneurie of St. Jean près Québec, acquired in part in 1677 Seigneurie of Kamouraska, acquired in 1677 Seigneurie of St. Lusson,	Blanc Sablon off Nfld; granted to La Chesnaye, as w as Patu, Pachot, Lino, and Gobin i 1689 (4) Agreement with Pa to engage in cod fishing off Nfld. coast in 1692 (5)

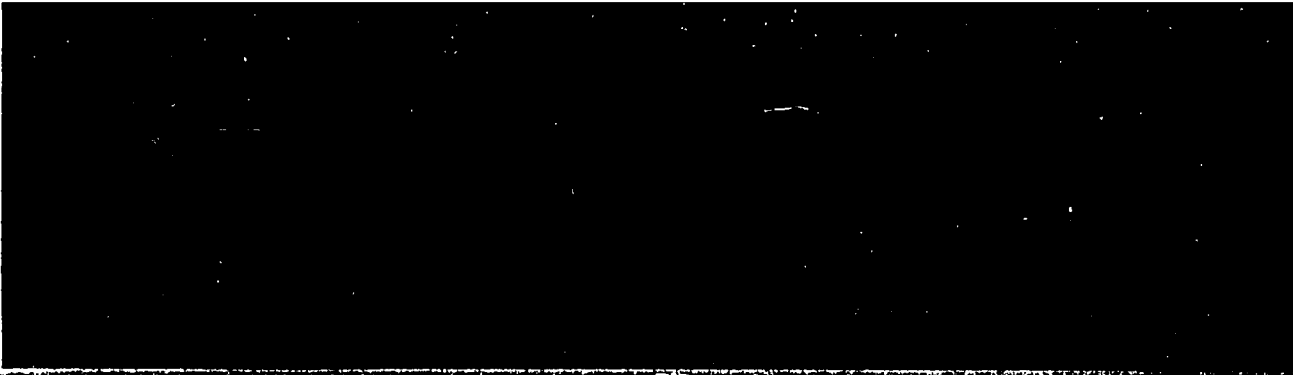
TABLE 4

## THE DIRECTORS' ECONOMIC INTERESTS (1)

	Fishing rights and date acquired	Fur trading interests and date of initial involvement	Other interests and date acquired	Fortune at death
1- 2	Blanc Sablon off Nfld; granted to La Chesnaye, as well as Patu, Pachot, de Lino, and Gobin in 1689 (4)	Rights to Tadoussac ac- quired in 1663 (6)	Tannery in 1664 (12)	insolvent with debts of 408,000 livres (18)
is, l	Agreement with Pachot to engage in cod fishing off Nfld. coast in 1692 (5)	Involved in fur trade with Le Ber, Le Moyne, and Comporté in early 1680's (7)	Owned ships by 1664 (13)	
1-		Purchased number of con- gés with Hazeur, Pachot, and Comporté to trade at Michilimackinac in early 1680's (8)	Store in Port Royal, Acadia, in early 1680's (14)	
in-		Acquired Fort Frontenac trade with Le Ber and Le Moyne in 1683 (9)	Brickyard begun with Gobin in 1689 and by 1700 the two mer- chants also owned a tannery (15)	
		Sublet trading rights at Tadoussac with Hazeur, Pachot, Lepicart, Macart, and Gobin in 1693 and 1694 (10)	Shipbuilding with Le Ber in late 1680's (16)	
in-		Leading shareholder in Compagnie de la Colonie with 19,000 livres inter- est, as well as director	Owned a bakery, and a flourmill (17)	
is n				

TABLE 4 continued

Director's name	Properties and date acquired	Fishing rights and date acquired
	<p>acquired circa 1677  Seigneurie of Madawaska,  granted in 1683  Seigneurie of Yamaska, ac-  quired in 1685  Seigneurie of Ile aux  Cochons, purchased in 1686  Seigneurie of Marquisat du  Sablé, purchased in 1686  Seigneurie of St. Jean Port  Joli, purchased in 1686  Seigneurie of Bic, purchased  in 1688  Seigneurie of Ile Verte,  granted in 1689  Seigneurie of Blanc Sablon,  Nfld., granted in part in  1689  Seigneurie of L'Islet du  Portage, granted in 1696  Seigneurie of Ile Dupas and  Chicot, date of acquisition  unknown  Seigneurie of Boyvinet or  Ste. Marguerite acquired in  part in 1700  Owned one of finest houses  in Quebec's Lower Town (3)</p>	



Fishing rights  
and date  
acquired

Fur trading interests  
and date of  
initial involvement

Other interests  
and date  
acquired

Fortune  
at  
death

with Hazeur, Macart, de  
Lino, and Gobin in 1700  
(11)



TABLE 4 continued

Director's name	Properties and date acquired	Fishing rights and date acquired
Oudiette	unknown	unknown
Le Ber	Property in Montreal, granted in 1660 (20) Property in Quebec, granted in 1688 (21) Seigneurie of Saint-Paul, granted part in 1664 and in 1676 granted full possession (22) Subfief of Saint-Pierre in Seigneurie of Ile Percée, acquired in 1677 Subfief of Boisbriand or Senneville in Seigneurie of Montreal, purchased in 1679	. .
Le Moyne	Property in Montreal, granted in 1654 (26) Seigneurie of Longueuil, granted in 1657, and augmented in 1672 Ile Sainte-Hélène and Ile Ronde, granted in 1665 Property at Saint-Louis rapids, granted in 1669 Seigneurie of Châteauguay granted in 1673	. .

hing rights  
and date  
acquired

Fur trading interests  
and date of  
initial involvement

Other interests  
and date  
acquired

Fortune  
at  
death

n

Leased the ferme des  
droits de domaine d'Occi-  
dent et Canada in 1675  
(19)

unknown

unknown

Rights to Fort Frontenac  
trade granted for brief  
period in 1674 (23)

Established mill in  
1686 (24)

Involved in fur trade  
with La Chesnaye and Le  
Moyne in early 1680's

Shipbuilding with La Chesnaye in late  
1680's wealthy (25)

Acquired Fort Frontenac  
trade with La Chesnaye  
and Le Moyne in 1683  
Owned 12,000 livres worth  
of shares in Compagnie de  
la Colonie in 1700

Partnership with Groseil-  
liers in 1660 for expedi-  
tion to Ottawa Country  
(27)

Owned 3 stores, one in  
Châteauguay, one in  
Longueuil, and most  
important one in his  
Montreal home wealthy

Involved in fur trade  
with La Chesnaye and Le  
Ber in early 1680's

Acquired Fort Frontenac  
trade with La Chesnaye  
and Le Ber in 1683

TABLE 4 continued

Director's name	Properties- and date acquired	Fishing rights and date acquired
Hazeur	<p>Ile Saint Bernard granted in 1673 Owned finest house in Montreal</p> <p>Seigneurie of Malbaie, purchased part in 1687 and remainder in 1688 and 1700 (28)</p> <p>Seigneurie of La Grande Vallée des Monts Notre-Dame, granted in 1691</p> <p>Seigneurie of L'Anse de L'Etang, granted in part in 1697</p> <p>Seigneurie of La Rivière-de-la-Madeleine, purchased in 1700</p> <p>Owned one of finest houses in Quebec's Lower Town (29)</p>	<p>Grande-Vallée des Monts, granted in 1691 (30)</p> <p>Kamouraska, Rivière Ouelle, Pointe-au-Trembles, and other places in St. Lawrence, granted in 1701 (31)</p> <p>Portachois, off Nfld. coast, acquired in 1705 (32)</p>
Bruneau	Seigneurie of Maskinongé, purchased in 1686 (36)	...
Catignan	Seigneurie of Belle Isle, Nfld., granted in part in 1689 (37)	Belle Isle granted to Catignan as well as Chanjon and Bothier, in 1689 (3)

g rights date aired	Fur trading interests and date of initial involvement	Other interests and date acquired	Fortune at death
llée des anted in  a, Rivière ointe-aux- and other St. Law- anted in  x, off st, acquired 32)	Purchased number of <u>con- gés</u> with La Chesnaye, Pachot, and Comporté to trade at Michilimackinac in early 1680's  Sublet trading rights at Tadoussac with La Ches- naye, Pachot, Lepicart, Macart, and Gobin in 1693 and 1694  Owned 8,000 <u>livres</u> worth of shares in <u>Compagnie de la Colonie</u> , and was <u>director</u> with La Ches- naye, Macart, de Lino, and Gobin in 1700	Established impor- tant saw mill and lumbering rights with Soumande De- lorme at Malbaie in late 1680's and early 1690's, and after Delorme's death in 1700, became sole owner (33)  Established slate quarry at Anse de L'Etang in 1697 (34)	insolvent (35)          unknown
e granted. an as well n and Bou- 1689 (38)	Partnership with Patu to finance expedition to Michilimackinac in 1689 (39)	Part owner of store in Montreal in 1688 (40)	unknown



TABLE 4 continued

Director's name	Properties and date acquired	Fishing rights and date acquired
Patu	Seigneurie of Blanc Sablon, Nfld., granted in part in 1689 (41)	Blanc Sablon, off Nfld., granted to Patu, as well as La Chesnaye, Pache de Lino, and Gobir in 1689
Pachot	Property in Quebec's Lower Town, granted in 1684 Second site in Quebec's Lower Town, granted in 1686 Seigneurie of Rivière-Mitis, acquired in 1689 Seigneurie of Blanc Sablon, Nfld., acquired in part in 1689	Blanc Sablon, off Nfld., granted to Pachot, as well as La Chesnaye, Patu de Lino, and Gobir in 1689  Cod and seal fish- rights off Seigne- rie off Rivière-Mit in 1689  Agreement with La Chesnaye to engage in cod fishing off Nfld. coast in 1
Chanjon	Seigneurie of Belle Isle, Nfld., granted in part in 1689 (43)	Agreement to fish Mingan Islands di- strict in 1696  Belle Isle grante to Chanjon, as we as Catignan and B thier in 1689

ing rights and date acquired	Fur trading interests and date of initial involvement	Other interests and date acquired	Fortune at death
ablon, off granted to ; well as naye, Pachot , and Gobin	Partnership with Catignan to finance expedition to Michilimackinac in 1689	..	unknown
ablon, off granted to as well as naye, Patu, , and Gobin	Purchased a number of congés with La Chesnaye, Hazeur, and Comporté to trade at Michilimackinac in early 1680's	Established store in Quebec's Lower Town in late 1670's	insolvent (42)
seal fishing off Seigneur- Rivière-Mitis	Sublet trading rights at Tadoussac with La Ches- naye, Hazeur, Lepicart, Macart, and Gobin in 1693		
nt with La e to engage fishing off coast in 1692			
nt to fish in Islands dis- n 1696			
sle granted jon, as well gnan and Bou- n 1689	..	..	unknown

TABLE 4 continued

Director's name	Properties and date acquired	Fishing rights and date acquired
Comporté (44)	Seigneurie of Comporté, granted in 1672 Seigneurie of Malbaie, granted in 1672 Seigneurie of Villiers, acquired in 1684 (45) Site in Quebec's Lower Town, acquired by family in 1688 (46)	. .
Lepicart	. .	. .
Branssat (48)	Subfief of Branssat or La Gauchetière in Seigneurie of Montreal, granted in 1665	. . .
Macart	. .	. .

Fishing rights  
and date  
acquired

Fur trading interests  
and date of  
initial involvement

Other interests  
and date  
acquired

Fortune  
at  
death

Purchased a number of  
congés with La Chesnaye  
Hazeur, and Pachot to  
trade at Michilimackinac  
in early 1680's

unknown

Involved in fur trade  
with La Chesnaye, Le Ber,  
and Le Moyne in early  
1680's

Sublet trading rights  
at Tadoussac with La-  
Chesnaye, Hazeur, Ma-  
cart and Gobin in 1693

solvent  
(47)

Owned 1,000 livres worth  
of shares in Compagnie  
de la Colonie in 1700

Engaged in fur trading  
in mid 1660's

Involved in numer-  
ous real estate  
deals in mid 1660's

solvent

Sublet trading rights at  
Tadoussac with La Ches-  
naye, Hazeur, Pachot,  
Lepicart, and Gobin in  
1693

solvent  
(49)

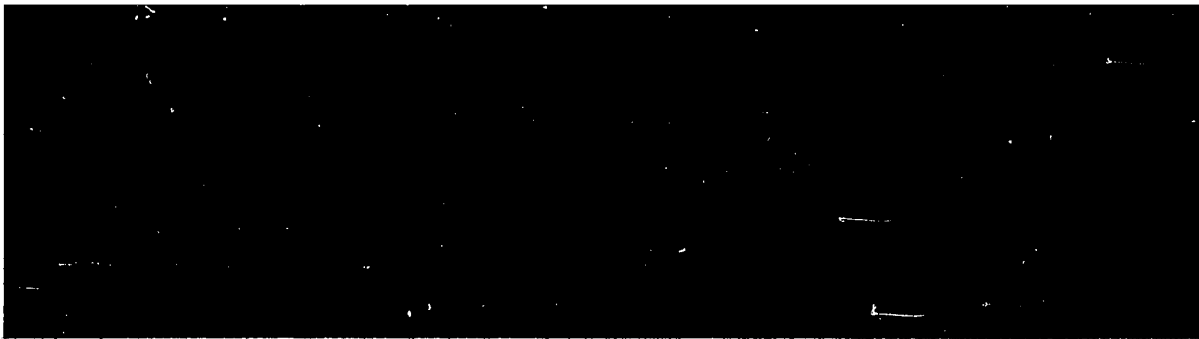
TABLE 4 continued

Director's Name	Properties and date acquired	Fishing rights and date acquired
Marnot	unknown	unknown
Gitton <u>files</u>	unknown	unknown
Duprat	unknown	unknown
Bouthier	Seigneurie of Belle Isle, Nfld., granted in part in 1689 (50)	Belle Isle granted to Bouthier, as well as Catignan and Chanjon in 16
Delorme	Seigneurie of Malbaie, pur- chased in part in 1687 and remainder in 1688 (52)	. . .
de Lino	Seigneurie of Blanc Sablon, Nfld., granted in part in 1689 (53) Seigneurie of Martin de Lino, in Acadia, granted in 1697 (54)	Blanc Sablon, of Nfld., granted to Lino, as well as Chesnaye, Patu, chot and Gobin in 1689
Demonic	unknown	unknown

thing rights and date acquired	Fur trading interests and date of initial involvement	Other interests and date acquired	Fortune at death
	Owned 1,000 <u>livres</u> worth of shares in <u>Compagnie de la Colonie</u> , and was direc- tor with La Chesnaye, Ha- zeur, de Lino and Gobin		
vn	unknown	unknown	unknown
vn	unknown	unknown	unknown
vn	unknown	unknown	unknown
Isle granted athier, as as Catignan nanjon in 1689	..	..	solvent (51)
..	..	Established impor- tant saw mill rights with Hazeur at Mal- baie in late 1680's and early 1690's	unknown
Sablon, off , granted to de as well as La aye, Patu, Pa- and Gobin in	Owned 6,000 <u>livres</u> worth of shares in <u>Compagnie de la Colonie</u> , and was director with La Chesnaye, Hazeur, Macart, and Gobin in 1700	..	unknown
wn	unknown	unknown	unknown

TABLE 4 continued

Director's name	Properties and date acquired	Fishing right and date acquired
Gobin	Site in Quebec's Lower Town, granted in 1688 (55) Seigneurie of Blanc Sablon, Nfld., granted in part in 1689 (56) Seigneurie of Gobin, in Acadia, granted in 1690 (57)	Blanc Sablon, o. Nfld., granted Gobin, as well La Chesnaye, Pa. Pachot, and de in 1689



	Fishing rights and date acquired	Fur trading interests and date of initial involvement	Other interests and date acquired	Fortune at death
town, on, n	Blanc Sablon, off Nfld., granted to Gobin, as well as La Chesnaye, Patu, Pachot, and de Lino in 1689	Sublet trading rights at Tadoussac with La Ches- naye, Hazeur, Pachot, Le- picart, and Macart in 1693 and 1694  Owned 3,000 <u>livres</u> worth of shares in <u>Compagnie de la Colonie</u> , and was director with La Chesnaye, Hazeur, Macart, and de Lino, in 1700	Brickyard begun with La Chesnaye in 1688 and by 1700 the two merchants also owned a tannery	insolvent (58)





## Footnotes - Table 4

<sup>1</sup>The scope and complexity of several directors' economic interests makes an exhaustive coverage a difficult task. Since the purpose of this table is to provide a general picture of the directors' economic interests in order to enable an analysis in Chapter II, some minor interests are omitted.

<sup>2</sup>Unless stated otherwise, all property information on La Chesnaye is obtained from P.-G. Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions en fief et seigneuries, foies et hommages et aveux et dénombremens conservés aux Archives de la Province de Québec (6 vols.; Beauceville, 1927-29), Vols. I-VI, passim.

<sup>3</sup>Roy, La Famille Aubert, p. 30.

<sup>4</sup>Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, IV, 39. Only one footnote will appear to state the source of information concerning each of the 13 partnerships.

<sup>5</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 90-91, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 10 Nov. 1692; Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV, p. 212.

<sup>6</sup>Roy, La Famille Aubert, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup>See Chapter I, supra, p. 21.

<sup>8</sup>AN, Col., F3, Moreau de St. Mery, VI, 120-21, "Ordonnance de Monsieur de La Barre," 14 April 1684.

<sup>9</sup>Le Jeune, Dictionnaire général, II, 121.

<sup>10</sup>Massicotte, "La Famille Hazeur," BRH, XLI, 328.

<sup>11</sup>Information on the amount held by all directors in the Compagnie de la Colonie is based on AN, Col., CXXV, 365-67, "Liste générale des Intéressez . . .," Raudot, 1708. Additional holdings by these directors are listed in the same document, under the heading "Intéressez en la Compagnie du nord unie à celle de la colonie," pp. 368-70. Frégault ("La Compagnie de la colonie," Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, XXX, 14), basing his statement on pp. 368-70 of the above mentioned document, claims La Chesnaye held 25,000 livres worth of

shares. However, since pp. 368-70 of this document apparently give unreliable evidence (see Chapter II, supra, p. 38, footnote 1), the information contained therein will be disregarded. Information concerning the Compagnie du la Colonie's directors is from, Anom., "La Famille Martin de Lino," BRH, XLI, 263.

<sup>12</sup>Jugements et délibérations, I, 293.

<sup>13</sup>Roy, La Famille Aubert, p. 16.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>15</sup>Jugements et délibérations, IV, 930-31; Joseph-Noël Fauteux, Essai sur l'industrie au Canada sous le régime français (2 vols.; Québec, 1927), I, 156.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 237.

<sup>17</sup>Roy, La Famille Aubert, p. 48.

<sup>18</sup>AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 365, "Liste générale des Intéressez . . .," Raudot, 1708.

<sup>19</sup>See Chapter I, supra, pp. 24-25.

<sup>20</sup>Le Jeune, Dictionnaire général, II, 121.

<sup>21</sup>AN, Col., B, XV, 12, "Brevet de confirmation de concession," Versailles, 1 March 1688.

<sup>22</sup>The remaining property information is obtained from Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, I. 96, II, 99, 100, 129.

<sup>23</sup>Le Jeune, Dictionnaire général, II, 121.

<sup>24</sup>Desiré Girouard, "Les anciens postes du Lac Saint-Louis," BRH, I (Oct., 1895), 166-67.

<sup>25</sup>AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 367-68, "Liste générale des Intéressez . . .," Raudot, 1708.

<sup>26</sup>Unless stated otherwise, all information on Le Moyne is obtained from Le Febvre, "Le Moyne de Longueuil et de Châteauguay," DCB, I, 463-65.

- <sup>27</sup>Nute, Caesars of the Wilderness, p. 68.
- <sup>28</sup>Unless stated otherwise, all property information on Hazeur is obtained from Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, III, 96-97, 208, IV, 55.
- <sup>29</sup>Massicotte, "La Famille Hazeur," BRH, XLI, 324.
- <sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 327.
- <sup>31</sup>Fauteux, Essaie sur l'industrie, II, 513.
- <sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 517.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid., I, 180-81; Massicotte, "La Famille Hazeur," BRH, XLI, 325-26; Le Jeune, Dictionnaire général, I, 741; AN, Col., C11A, XI, 139-40, "Memoire du Sr François Hazeur à Champigny," Que., 8 Nov. 1690; Ibid., XII, 86, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 3 Nov. 1692.
- <sup>34</sup>Fauteux, Essaie sur l'industrie, I, 140.
- <sup>35</sup>Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Chambalon, 3 March 1708, "Accord Cession et Donation entre Messieurs Hazeurs et fils"; Massicotte, "La Famille Hazeur," BRH, XLI, 321.
- <sup>36</sup>Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, I, 89.
- <sup>37</sup>Ibid., IV, 37-38.
- <sup>38</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>39</sup>Jud. Arch. Mtl., greffe Adh mar, 12 Sept. 1689, "Convention entre les Sieurs Patu et Catignan."
- <sup>40</sup>Ibid., greffe Basset, 8 Aug. 1688, "Traité entre les sieurs Catignan and Charron."
- <sup>41</sup>Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, IV, 39.
- <sup>42</sup>Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Chambalon, 12 Sept. 1701, "Inventaire des biens de feu le Sieur François Pachot."
- <sup>43</sup>Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, IV, 37-38.

<sup>44</sup>Unless otherwise stated, all information on Comporté is obtained from Monet, "Gaultier de Comporté," DCB, I, 326.

<sup>45</sup>Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, I, 253.

<sup>46</sup>This site was granted to Comporté in Feb. 1687, shortly before his death, AN, Col., B, XV, 12, "Brevet de confirmation de concession," Versailles, 1 March 1688.

<sup>47</sup>AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 368, "Liste générale des Intéressez . . .," Raudot, 1708.

<sup>48</sup>All information on Branssat is obtained from Lefebvre, "Migeon de Branssat," DCB, I, 508.

<sup>49</sup>Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Boisseau, 24 Dec. 1732, "Inventaire des biens et Effets laissés par le f. Macart Conslr."

<sup>50</sup>Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, IV, 37-38.

<sup>51</sup>Jud. Arch. Que., greffe Chambalon, 19 July 1694, "Inventaire des effets de feu Guillaume Bouthier."

<sup>52</sup>Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, III, 96-97.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., IV, 39.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>55</sup>AN, Col., B, XV, 13, "Brevet de confirmation de concessions," Versailles, 1 March 1688.

<sup>56</sup>Roy (ed.), Inventaire des concessions, IV, 39.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>58</sup>AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 365 "Liste générale des Intéressex . . ." Raudot, 1708.

## A FINANCIAL ANALYSIS O

<u>Year</u>	<u>Returns in livres</u>	<u>Expendi- tures in livres</u>	<u>Profits in livres</u>	<u>Total losses in livres</u>
1682	. .	. .	. .	. . .
1683 (3)	. .	. .	. .	. .
1684-85	73,000 (6)	146,000 (7)	. .	283,000 (8)
1686	90,000 (9)	70,000 (10)	20,000	. .

TABLE 5

L ANALYSIS OF LA COMPAGNIE DU NORD (1)

Total losses in <u>livres</u>	Itemized Assets		Itemized liabilities in <u>livres</u>
	Liquid assets in <u>livres</u>	Value of possessions in <u>livres</u>	
. . .	195,000 capital in- vested by directors (2)	. . .	. . .
. . .	195,000 capital in- vested	200,000 post established by Radisson in Port Nelson re- gion (4)	. . .
		20,000 ships, <u>St. Fran-</u> <u>cois-Xavier</u> and <u>St. Antoine</u> (5)	
		220,000 total	
283,000 (8)	195,000 capital in- vested	220,000 former total	. . .
	-73,000 loss due to La Marti- nière's ex- pedition	-200,000 loss of post in Port Nelson re- gion	
	122,000 total	- 10,000 loss of <u>St. An-</u> <u>toine</u>	
		10,000 total, <u>St. Fran-</u> <u>cois-Xavier</u>	
. . .	122,000 former total	10,000 <u>St. François-X-</u> <u>avier</u>	
	20,000 profit from Troyes ex- pedition	20,000 Posts on James Bay (11)	
	142,000 total	12,000 Inland posts of Fort Ste. Anne & St. Joseph (12)	
		42,000 total	

TABLE 5 continued

Year	Returns in <u>livres</u>	Expendi tures in <u>livres</u>	Profits in <u>livres</u>	Total losses in <u>livres</u>
1687 (13)	. .	. .	. .	. .
1688-89	214,000 (15)	174,000 (16)	40,000 (17)	12,000
1690	. .	180,000 (18)	. .	180,000

its vres	Total losses in livres	Itemized Assets		Itemized liabilities in livres
		Liquid assets in livres	Value of possessions in livres	
.	. .	142,000	42,000 former total 30,000 new ships, <u>Armes</u> <u>de la Compagnie,</u> <u>Ste. Anne, and</u> <u>St. Joseph</u> (14) 72,000 total	. .
(17)	12,000	142,000 former total 40,000 profit from <u>Iberville's</u> <u>expedition</u> 182,000 total	72,000 former total, in- cluding 4 ships, and 3 posts on James Bay -10,000 <u>St. François-X-</u> <u>avier</u> -12,000 inland posts 50,000 total	. . .
.	180,000	182,000 former total 6,000 assessment <u>of 3½ per</u> <u>cent</u> (19) 188,000 total -180,000 loss due to <u>Iberville's</u> <u>expedition</u> 8,000 new total	30,000 3 ships 20,000 posts at James <u>Bay</u> 50,000 total	. .



## TOTAL 5 continued

<u>Year</u>	<u>Returns in livres</u>	<u>Expendi- tures in livres</u>	<u>Profits in livres</u>	<u>Total losses in livre</u>
1691	. .	78,000 (20)	. . .	78,000
1692	. . .	35,000 (22)	. . .	35,000
1693	. . .	50,000 (23)	. . .	70,000 (2)
1694	. .	15,000 (25)	. . .	15,000

s es	Total losses in <u>livres</u>	Itemized Assets		Itemized liabilities in <u>livres</u>
		Liquid assets in <u>livres</u>	Value of possessions in <u>livres</u>	
	78,000	8,000 former total 25,000 assessment of — of 13 per cent (21) 33,000 new total -78,000 losses — see "liabilities" for total	50,000 3 ships and posts at James Bay	45,000 balance of 78,000 loss
	35,000	...	50,000 3 ships and posts at James Bay	45,000 former liabil- ities 35,000 new loss — 70,000 total
	70,000 (24)	...	50,000 former total -20,000 James Bay posts — 30,000 total	70,000 former total 50,000 new ex- pendi- tures — 120,000 total
	15,000	...	30,000 3 ships	120,000 former total 15,000 new ex- pendi- tures — 135,000 total

TABLE 5 continued

Year	Returns in <u>livres</u>	Expendi- tures in <u>livres</u>	Profits in <u>livres</u>	Total losses in <u>livres</u>
1695-96 (26)	. .	. .	. .	. .
1697 (27)	. .	. .	. .	32,000 (28)

s es	Total losses in <u>livres</u>	Itemized Assets		Itemized liabilities in <u>livres</u>
		Liquid assets in <u>livres</u>	Value of possessions in <u>livres</u>	
	...	..	30,000 3 ships	135,000
	32,000 (28)	..	30,000 3 ships	135,000 former total
				32,000 new losses
				167,000 total

## Footnotes - Table 5

<sup>1</sup>This table represents all the financial information available on the Compagnie du Nord. The two principal sources are the few financial statements issued by the Company and the remarks made in the general correspondence. Since so many financial records of the Old Regime perished in the French Revolution (Matthews, The Royal General Farms, "Preface," p. vii), it is possible that some of those belonging to the Compagnie du Nord did not survive. It should also be noted that the system of record keeping in the Seventeenth Century was extremely primitive (Louis Gottschalk, Understanding History [New York, 1966], p. 152), and, therefore, much inference and interpretation are required to give a financial analysis of the Compagnie du Nord. The figures presented in this table are only approximate in order to enable the reader to obtain at a glance a better understanding of the Company's financial structure.

<sup>2</sup>AN, Col., C11A, F2A, 13, Pièce 75, pp. 59-66, "Copie d'un mémoire . . .," n.d.; AN, Col., C11A, VIII, 247-48, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 16 Nov. 1686. The above sources and Table 1, supra, p. 190 provide indirect evidence that approximately 195,000 livres were invested in the Compagnie du Nord in 1682.

<sup>3</sup>No financial records exist for Radisson's 1682-83 expedition, the only comment being that the furs brought to Quebec in Oct. 1683 were not sufficient to allow the Company to pay its crew, AN, Col., C11A, VI, 263-64, "Lettre de quelques habitants . . .," Que., 5 June 1684.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., CXXV, 85-87, "Mémoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d. This amount is determined by the loss the Compagnie du Nord claimed to have suffered through Radisson's betrayal of the Port Nelson region.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., VI, 263-64, "Lettre de quelques habitants . . .," Que., 5 June 1684. This is the estimated value of these vessels. The cost of ship-building is included in the Company's expenditures.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., CXXV, 85, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d. All information for 1684-85 is derived from this source. The returns for any year represent the amount the Compagnie du Nord received for its furs from the Company of the Farm after the deduction of the droit du quart. The 73,000 livres represent the returns of La Martinière's expedition.

<sup>7</sup>This amount represents the cost of La Martinière's expedition.

<sup>8</sup>This amount includes the loss of 73,000 livres due to La Martinière's expedition; the 200,000 livres loss of the post, furs, and supplies in the Port Nelson region; and the loss of the St. Antoine, worth 10,000 livres.

<sup>9</sup>AN, Col., C11A, IX, 233, "Mémoire à Seignelay sur les affaires présentes de la baye du nord du Canada," 1687. This amount represents the returns of the Troyes expedition.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., VIII, 281-82, "Estat de la depense et frais generaux faits par la Compagnie du Nord," 1686; Ibid., CXXV, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d. This amount represents the cost of the Troyes expedition.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 87. This is the estimated worth of the three posts on James Bay.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 85-86. This amount is determined by the loss the Compagnie du Nord claimed to suffer when these posts were abandoned in 1689.

<sup>13</sup>No expedition was sent out in this year.

<sup>14</sup>Troyes, Journal de l'expedition, ed. Caron, "Appendice M," pp. 129-31, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord," 15 Nov. 1690; AN, Col., C11A, CXXV, 87, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d.; Ibid., p. 111, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord . . .," n.d. **This is an estimated value.**

<sup>15</sup>Ibid. This amount includes the returns of 108,000 livres worth of furs, brought to La Rochelle by the Soleil d'Affrique in 1688, and the returns of 106,000 livres, brought by Iberville to Quebec in 1689.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 85-86, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d. This amount includes the 113,000 livres' cost of sending Iberville's expedition to the Bay in 1688; the loss of the St. François-Xavier, cargo, and trading goods, worth 36,000 livres; and the 25,000 livres' cost for Ste. Hélène's overland expedition in 1689. Therefore, the total cost of the 1688-89 expedition came to 174,000 livres.

<sup>17</sup>This amount represents the Company's profit on the Iberville expedition alone. Therefore, the 12,000 livres loss (see next column), which the Company suffered through the abandonment of its two inland posts is deducted from the Company's assets rather than its profits for 1688-89.

<sup>18</sup>Troyes, Journal de l'expédition, ed. Caron, "Appendice M," pp. 130-31, "Memoire de la Compagnie du Nord," 15 Nov. 1690. This amount represents the cost of the 1690 expedition.

<sup>19</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 88-89, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 10 Nov. 1692.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., CXXV, 86, "Memoire sur les affaires de la Compagnie du Nord," n.d. This amount represents outstanding salaries the Company paid in 1691.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 88-89, "Estat de la contribution . . ."

<sup>22</sup>AN, Col., B, XVI, 280, "Memoire à Monsieur de Pontchartrain," March, 1693. This amount represents the cost of the supplies, which the Company purchased to send to its James Bay posts in 1692.

<sup>23</sup>AN, Col., C11A, XII, 295, "Champigny au Ministre," Que., 4 Nov. 1693. This amount represents the cost of sending the Ste. Anne to James Bay in 1693.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., pp. 218-20, "Frontenac et Champigny au Ministre," 4 Nov. 1693. This amount includes the loss of the posts and supplies in James Bay, worth 20,000 livres.

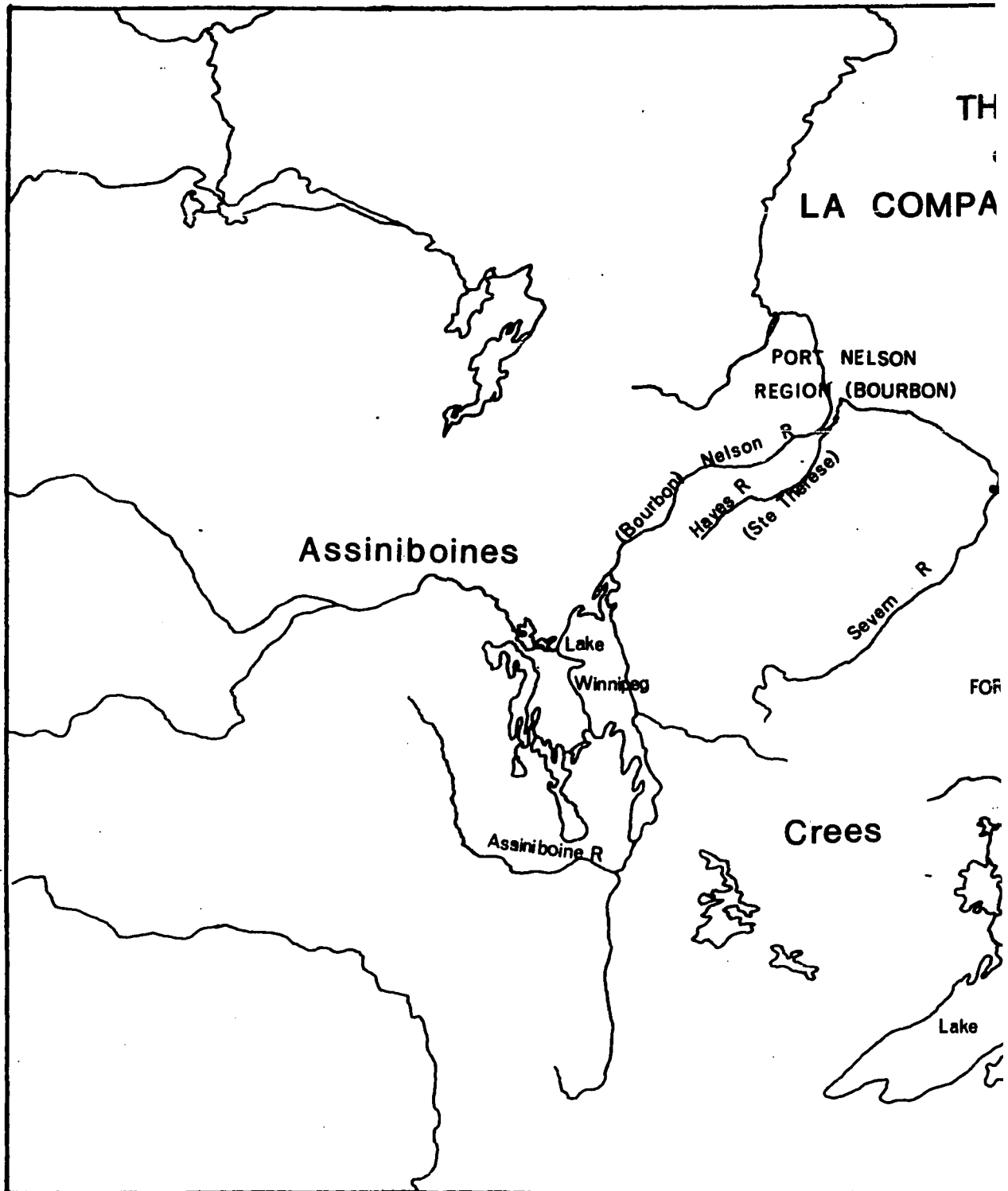
<sup>25</sup>Ibid., XIII, 99-100, "Procès verbal sur l'entreprise du Sieur d'Iberville," Que., 26 Oct. 1694. This represents the amount the Company paid to help finance Iberville's expedition of 1694. Despite the success of the expedition, the Company records show no profit, which went to Iberville.

<sup>26</sup>The Company played no part in financing any further expeditions.

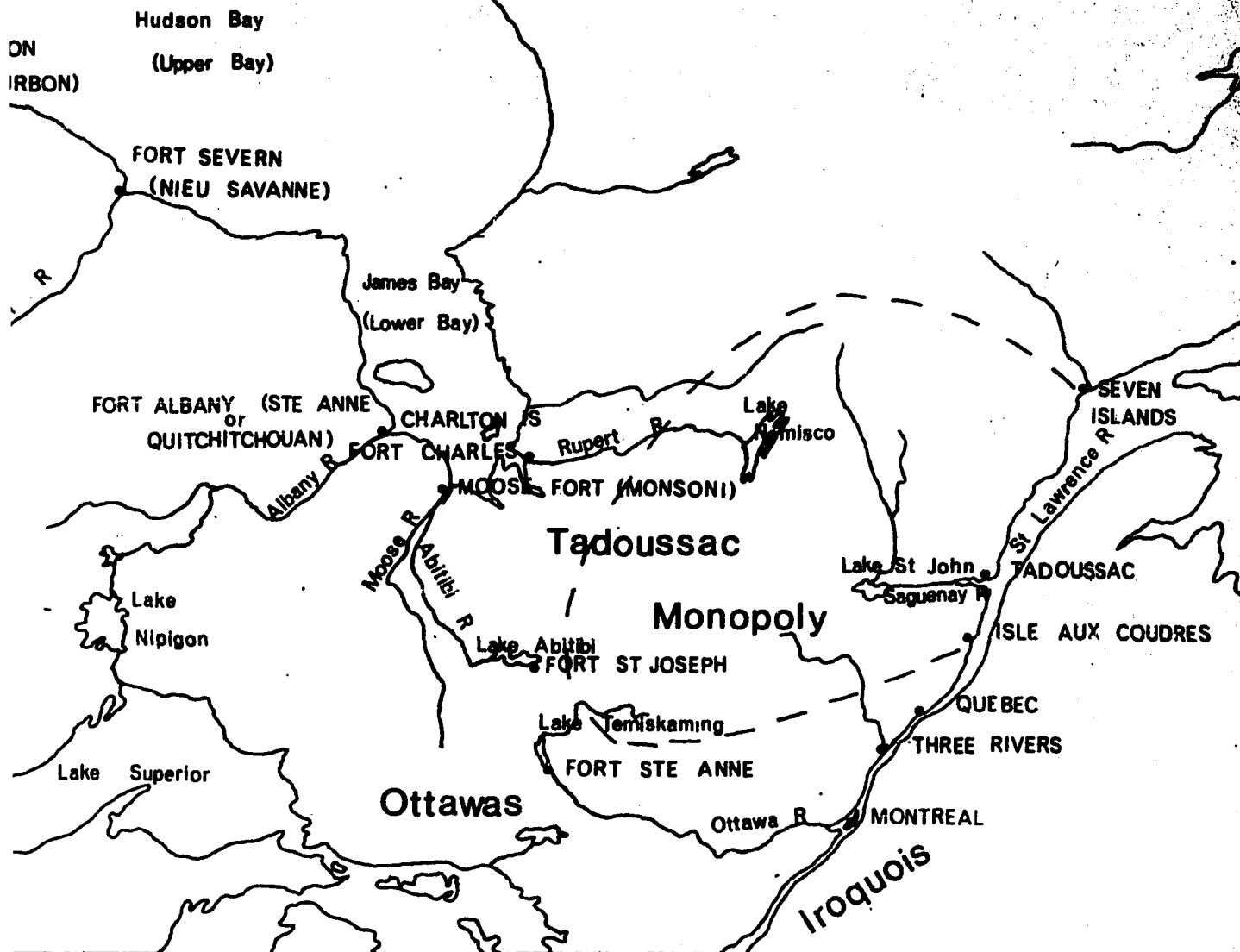
<sup>27</sup>There is no further financial information after 1697.

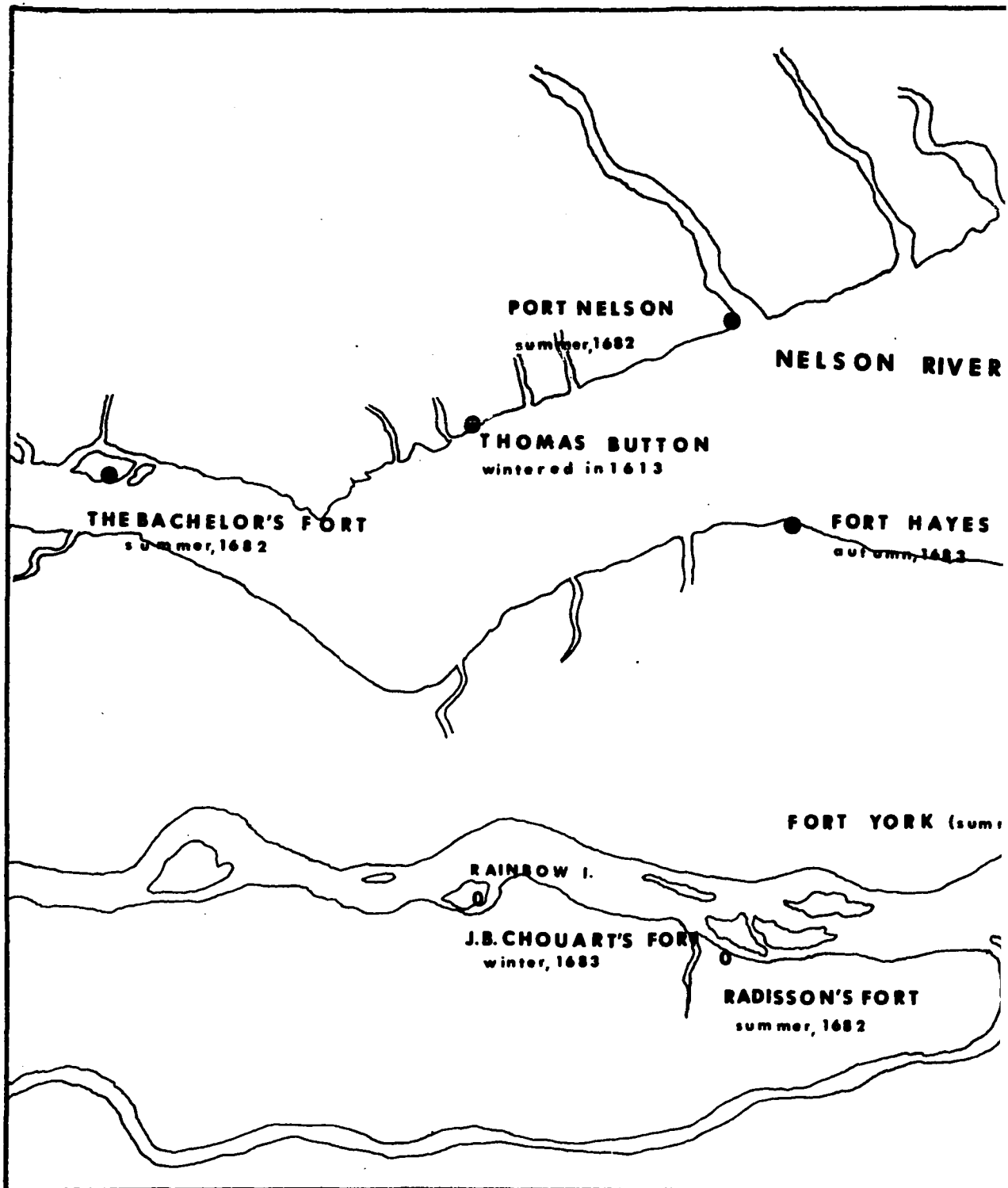
<sup>28</sup>This amount represents the sum owed by the Company to its investors, who had withdrawn their interests. See Table 1, supra, pp. 190-93.





MAP I  
THE AREA  
CONCERNING  
COMPAGNIE DU NORD





MAP II

PORT NELSON REGION (BOURBON) <sup>(1)</sup>

○ FRENCH

● ENGLISH

POSTS

N

ELSON RIVER (RIVIÈRE BOURBON)

FORT HAYES

autumn, 1683

FORT YORK (summer, 1684)

HAYES RIVER (RIVIÈRE STE. THÉRÈSE)

ON'S FORT

17, 1682

RIVIÈRE GARGOUE  
FRENCH

LA MARTINIÈRE'S FORT

autumn, 1684

## Footnote - Map II

<sup>1</sup>This map, which has been adapted for this thesis, is based on the reproduction of the Joseph Robson Map of 1752, as it appears in Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, I, between 132 and 133 and in Jérémie, Twenty Years of York Factory, p. 34; the reproduction of Thornton's Map of "Porte Nellson, 1685," Ibid., p. 14; and descriptions from various sources cited in the footnotes of this thesis.

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#### 2. Archives du Séminaire de Québec.

The following documents were consulted in their original version:

Lettres, Cartons M and N.

#### 3. Archives Judiciaires de Montréal.

The following greffes were consulted:

Antoine Adhémar.

Bénigne Basset.

#### 4. Archives Judiciaires de Québec.

The following greffes were consulted:

Claude Auber.

Romain Becquet.

Louis Chambalon.

Pierre Duquet.

François Genaple.

Gilles Rageot.

5. Archives Nationales, Paris.

Transcribed copies of the following series were consulted in the Public Archives of Canada:

Series E, Conseil d'Etat du Roi, Vol. 696.

Series G7, Contrôle Général des Finances,  
Vols. I-VI.

6. Archives Nationales, Paris, Archives des Colonies.

Most of the series listed below have been micro-filmed by the Public Archives of Canada, making it possible for the researcher to examine the documents in their original version. Transcribed copies are also located in the Public Archives of Canada. The following series, in almost all cases, were consulted on microfilm:

Series B, Lettres envoyées, Vols. IX-XIII, XV-XVII, XIX-XX, XXII-XXIII, XXV, and XXVII.

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\*The following abbreviations are used:

<u>BRH</u>	<u>Bulletin des Recherches Historiques</u>
CHA	Canadian Historical Association
<u>CHR</u>	<u>Canadian Historical Review</u>
<u>RHAF</u>	<u>Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française</u>

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