

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
IN  
FRENCH CANADA,  
1740-1760



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FRENCH CANADA,

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This thesis, which deals with the last decades of the French régime in Canada, is the first part of a further thesis, which I hope to prepare, dealing with economic and social development in Canada from 1740 to 1774, that is, the transition period from French to English rule. The object of the present account is, therefore, to give some description of just what Great Britain received when Canada was ceded to her in 1763.

The most outstanding characteristics of economic activity in French Canada were inertness and government paternalism, the former usually being attributed to the latter. An attempt has been made to correct this impression in some degree and to arrive at a balance of the various factors which conditioned the economic life of Canada. The various phases of economic activity have been described and their relative importance estimated.



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## ABBREVIATIONS.

Bull. des Rech. Hist.	Bulletin des Recherches Historiques
Can. Arch. Report	Report on Canadian Archives
Inv. des Ord.	Inventaire des Ordonnances des Intendants
Corres. Gén.	Correspondance Générale
Hist.Doc. .... (Que.Lit. and Hist.Soc.)	Historical Documents .... (Quebec Literary and Historical Society)
Ministre	Ministre de Marine
Ord. des Int.	Ordonnances des Intendants
Rapp. de l'Arch.	Rapport de l'Archiviste de Québec
Shortt, Doc.	Documents relating to Canadian Currency, etc. ed. by Adam Shortt.
Trans. Roy. Soc. Can.	Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada.



## CHAPTER 1.

## THE FORGES OF SAINT MAURICE.

The most outstanding characteristics of economic life in New France were government supervision and, with the possible exception of the fur trade, inertness. The backwardness of the colony is attributed with almost monotonous regularity to the paternalistic attitude of the French government. The assertion is in part true but it can also be demonstrated that government intervention was necessitated by the backwardness of the colony. The development of the iron industry in Canada is a particularly striking illustration of this latter argument.

The last effort to exploit the copper deposits that the French knew to exist in the Lake Superior district was made by the S. Denys de la Ronde, commandant of Chagouamigon, a trading post at the south western extremity of Lake Superior.<sup>1</sup> That attempt came to an end in 1740 when the MM. Forster, two German mining experts, reported that a large outlay would be necessary for the success of the venture.<sup>2</sup>

Veins of lead too, were found in the colony, notably at Baie St. Paul. The deposits were mentioned in the Forsters' account,<sup>3</sup> and the S. Jacrau and eight workmen were sent

1. For an account of S. de la Ronde's attempt, see J.N.Fauteux, L'Industrie au Canada, t.1, pp.10-18

2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.70(1), p.23<sup>4</sup>. Mémoire du Roy au Beauharnois et Hocquart, Marly, May 13, 1740. The Forsters' report is given in the Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.74, pp.95-97.

3. Loc. cit.

down to verify the report.<sup>1</sup> However, any hope of exploiting the mineral disappeared with the King's decision that he could not afford to invest any money in the project. <sup>2</sup>

The only mineral, therefore, that was exploited to any extent during our period was iron, found at the back of Three Rivers. The Forges of St. Maurice had been founded by private enterprise. The S. Poulin de Francheville, a Montreal business man, discovered iron deposits on his seigniory of St. Maurice, some three miles from Three Rivers, and in 1729 he set out to exploit them. By 1733 however, he had exhausted his own capital and in that year the industry entered on its second phase, that of company control.

The enterprise seems to have been conducted by incompetent men with insufficient capital with the result that, almost from its inception, the new industry was a burden to the government. The company was unable to finance the Forges from private funds and in order to complete the establishment had to make repeated application to the authorities for loans. By 1738 the King had invested 192,642 livres in the enterprise. The debt was to be paid in the product of the Forges but production fell far short of expectation and the date of payment was twice postponed. <sup>3</sup> Finally, in 1741, the whole enterprise collapsed, for in that year the partners handed in their resignations and

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 73, p. 22. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Oct. 15, 1740.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 240-241. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart, Marly, May 12, 1741.
3. For an account of this early history of the Forges, see J.N. Fauteux, L'Industrie au Canada, t. 1, pp. 56-98.



declared the company bankrupt. 1.

This was the end of the private exploitation of the mines of St. Maurice. The whole affair had been hopelessly mismanaged. Now, with the company divided against itself, the blunders came to light in angry accusation and recrimination. Ougnet, one of the partners, placed the blame on de Vezin, 2. another member of the company. Ougnet pointed out that de Vezin had decided on a practically entirely new establishment and the partners, depending on his judgment and his estimate of costs, had gone ahead. But matters had not turned out as expected. The new plant was to have produced 300,000 pounds of iron by the autumn of 1738 but the product by that date was 14,000 pounds. The total cost of the establishment was computed / <sup>originally</sup> at 40,000 livres - well over 100,000 livres had been spent by 1737 before the Forges were nearly completed. 3.

In accordance with de Vezin's plans a building large enough to contain six forges was raised on the banks of the St. Maurice. Two forges had been installed when it was discovered that the stream could provide enough power for only one of them, so that the other had to stand idle. This necessitated the construction of another building beside the stream and the installation of

1. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol. 112(1), pp. 113-161. Démissions des SS: Ougnet, 4 Oct. 1741; Simonet, 9 Oct; Gamelin, 9 Oct; de Vezin, 13 Oct; Taschereau, 14 Oct.
2. The Forges, taken over by a company in 1733, were not making satisfactory progress. In 1735, therefore, the Minister sent out Olivier de Vezin, "maître des forges", to act as technical adviser. De Vezin condemned the whole establishment. In 1736 a new company was formed which included de Vezin among the partners. (J.N. Fauteux, op.cit., t.1, pp 67, 73, 74, 81.)
3. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol. 112 (1), pp 113-131. Mémoire de Ougnet à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, Oct. 4, 1741.

more forges to provide employment for a number of workmen already engaged. 1.

When the construction was finished the troubles of the company were by no means over, for the equipment had been so badly made that it was in constant need of repair. Thus there were long periods of idleness when the workmen drew wages for doing exactly nothing at all. 2.

The fault, however, was not entirely de Vezin's. He claimed in his own defence that his colleagues had been inefficient and wasteful. The establishment was overstaffed with incompetent clerks who devoted their time and efforts to their own interests. The executives too, had evolved a scheme for diverting some of the company's funds into their own pockets. They maintained an agent at St. Maurice who carried on a brisk trade in merchandise with the company to the very considerable profit of the vendors. The workmen were paid in goods<sup>3</sup> with the result, as the Intendant pointed out, that they demanded and received a 20% to 25% higher wage than they would have done had they been paid in money. Furthermore, the men, restricted by this "truck system" of payment, were dissatisfied and insubordinate. 4.

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.74, pp.128-130. M.de Vaudreuil de Cavagnal au Ministre. Oct.23, 1740; Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.112(1) pp.113-131. Mémoire de Cugnet à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, Oct.4, 1741.
2. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.112(1), pp.113-120. Mémoire de Cugnet à Beauharnois et Hocquart, Quebec Oct.4, 1741; Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.112(1), pp.13-14. Hocquart au Ministre. Que. Oct.30, 1741.
3. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.112(1), pp.119-206. Mémoire de De Vezin à Maurepas. (1741)
4. Corres.Gén., C"A, 112(1), pp.33-37. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Oct. 30, 1741.



The result of all this was that the annual expenditure, estimated at 60,000 livres, had mounted regularly to 90,000 livres. 1.

The authorities in France must have been thoroughly disgusted with the whole fiasco. The government had been gradually led on, chiefly perhaps by the undue optimism of Hocquart, to invest a large sum of money in the industry. The Intendant had encouraged de Francheville to carry out his project in the beginning and it was at Hocquart's instance that the first loan had been made to the enterprise. 2. When the whole establishment had to be rebuilt a further loan was granted on the assurance of Beauharnois and Hocquart that they were confident of the success of the venture and of the infinite advantages that would accrue to the colony. 3.

Without the encouragement of the Intendant and the support, however unwilling, of the government in France the iron industry in Canada could not have made even such progress as it did. The failure of the private venture was the result of the ill use to which the incompetent individuals concerned put the loans they were granted. Now, in 1741, the whole unsatisfactory affair culminated in the government's being left to cope with an imperfectly equipped plant, staffed with a number of sullen and

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.112(1), pp.113-120. Mémoire de Cugnet à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, Oct. 4, 1741.
2. J.N.Fauteux, L'Industrie au Canada, t.1, p.60
3. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. (1735) quoted by J.N.Fauteux, op.cit t.1, pp.76-77.

rebellious workmen whose standing grievances were doubtless aggravated by the fact that the company, when it abandoned the Forges, owed its employees 16,000 livres in wages. 1.

The first step taken by the Intendant was to provide for the continued functioning of the Forges while some decision as to their ultimate disposal was being reached. The S. Estèbe, Royal Storekeeper at Quebec, was put in charge of the plant in 1741 and the following year its direction was taken over by the SS. Martel de Belleville, Oressé, and Perrault. 2.

In 1741, four courses were open to the government. First, the Forges might be abandoned completely. Against this proposal were the arguments that the iron produced would be useful for the shipbuilding recently undertaken at Quebec by the King and that to give up the enterprise entirely would mean the irretrievable loss of the money advanced. It was evident, therefore, that nothing remained but to continue the venture. The three possible methods of doing so were: first, to float a new company in the colony; secondly, to form a company in France; and thirdly, to carry on the business in the King's name. The first plan was impracticable because, as the authorities fully realized, it was impossible to find, in Canada, men with

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 112(1), P. 21. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct 30, 1741.

2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 112(1), pp. 2-3. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1741; Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 112(1), pp. 263-264. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Oct. 26, 1742; Inv. des Ord., Vol. 3, p. 30. August 30, 1742.

In 1749, the S. Hertel de Rouville, lieutenant-general of Three Rivers, was given the general supervision of the Forges and everything relative to them. (Inv. des Ord., Vol. 3, pp. 135-136, Oct. 15, 1749)



sufficient capital for the undertaking. With reference to this plan Hocquart wrote "On ne peut point compter qu'il puisse s'en former une (i.e. a new company) en Canada; les fortunes y sont trop bornées et dans une entreprise de cette espèce il faut des fonds considérables d'avance au moins de 80 m#.il n'y a icy aucun particulier, en état de faire ces avances".<sup>1</sup> There were plenty of capitalists in France but it was improbable that the prospect of taking over a debt-ridden and unsuccessful venture in an unprosperous colony three thousand miles away would appeal to them. In 1743, one individual, curiously enough, did offer to organize a company in France to lease the Forges from the King for twenty-five years at an annual rental of 10,000 livres.<sup>2</sup> Nothing more is heard of the proposal however; in all probability it was dropped when war broke out the following year. The government was not at all enthusiastic about carrying on the business on the King's behalf. About this time the authorities had been sharply reminded, in connection with the fur trade, that "exploitation pour le compte de Roy" had a painful habit of running into large expenditures and small profits. However, by the process of elimination, the government reached the conclusion that it could do nothing but shoulder the financial burden. Accordingly,

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.112(1), p.6. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 20, 1741.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B.Vol.76(1), pp.247-250. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 30, 1743.

the monopoly of Ougnet's company was revoked and the Forges were taken over in the King's name, in payment of the debt. 1.

Before describing the progress of the industry during our period it would perhaps be convenient to give some account of the establishment itself. The buildings were scattered irregularly on the banks of a stream that flowed through a valley and emptied into the St. Maurice River.. They comprised the buildings that housed the furnace and the forges, the houses of the directors and of the other officers, workingmen's lodgings, and a variety of storehouses, stables, and so on. Across the little river three dams had been thrown in order to provide water power for the plant. 2.

The mineral was a kind of moor ore found in a series of detached lumps in veins lying six to twelve inches beneath the surface. The ore was rich, fairly clean, and soft enough to be crushed in the fingers. When the furnace was charged with ore and fuel, gray limestone or clay marle was added as a flux to carry off the impurities. 3. The pigs were formed by plunging a large ladle into the boiling ore and emptying the liquid into gutters in the sand. 4. The molten slag, 5. floating on top

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), pp. 247-249; Ordres et Dépêches B, Vol. 76(1), pp. 255-261. Arrest du Roi, Versailles, May 1, 1743; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 78(1), pp. 265-266. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 21, 1744.
2. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, pp. 18-20. Franquet, a royal engineer sent out to Louisbourg in 1750, was charged by the government at Versailles to inspect the fortifications in New France. He toured Canada in 1752-1753.
3. Kalm, Travels into North America (London 1771. Tr. by Forster) Vol. 3, pp. 87-88.
4. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, p. 20
5. i.e. the limestone (or marle) charged with the various impure elements in the ore, for which it has an affinity.



was presumably either tapped out through an opening in the side of the furnace or, perhaps, skimmed off. The power provided by the stream was probably used to operate the bellows which forced a draught through the furnace.

Two other buildings each contained two forges, one of which in each case functioned regularly while the other was reserved in case of breakdowns. <sup>1.</sup> To procure wrought iron from pig, the high percentage of carbon which the latter contains must be eliminated. <sup>2.</sup> The records do not convey much information as to how this was done at St. Maurice. Presumably, the pig iron was heated in the chaferies, then hammered to drive out the impurities and to form the iron into more regular shapes. Water power must have been used to operate the bellows and, of course, the tilt hammer which was added in 1747. <sup>3.</sup> Up to that time the iron must have been wrought with sledges.

In 1747 the Forges undertook the manufacture of cast iron goods. <sup>4.</sup> The material for the foundry consisted, probably, of specially selected pigs. Pig iron, with its high carbon content, is in itself a kind of cast iron. For the successful production of castings however, the material must contain not only iron but also certain quantities of silicon, manganese, phosphorous, and carbon, and as little sulphur as possible. The pigs vary in their proportion of these necessary elements. Before chemical analysis replaced the rule-of-thumb method, common practice was to have the pigs inspected by a foundryman who judged their quality by their colour and closeness of grain and then selected a number which together

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 74, pp. 128-129. Vaudreuil de Cavagnial au Ministre, Oct. 23, 1740.

2. L.W. Spring, Non-Technical Chats on Iron and Steel (Sec. ed. 1927) p. 93

3. Infra, p. 13

4. Infra, p. 13

contained all the necessary constituents. <sup>1.</sup> This was perhaps, the method employed at St. Maurice. The Forges had only one furnace so that after the smelting was over, the furnace was probably cleaned out and some of the pigs remelted, this time to be used for casting. The question of a second furnace to be used exclusively for this work was raised but none was ever installed. <sup>2.</sup> The final step in the manufacture of castings was to pour the metal into moulds and allow it to harden. Franquet, on a visit to the Forges, saw stove parts being cast, with such accuracy, he declares, that the pieces fitted together perfectly. In another shed, pots, kettles, and other hollow ware were made. <sup>3.</sup>

Perhaps the best account of the progress of the Forges during our period is to be derived from an attempt to interpret such statistics as are available concerning the returns from the enterprise. The statistics are incomplete and for that reason the analysis must be dealt with in somewhat arbitrary or, at least, not strictly logical, divisions.

17<sup>41</sup>- The fortunes of the industry during the King's administration  
 17<sup>45</sup> rose and fell. From October 17<sup>41</sup> to the end of 17<sup>45</sup> the total expenditure about balanced the total receipts but the value of the stock on hand on January 1, 17<sup>46</sup>, amounted to 50,<sup>4</sup>32 livres, which the authorities declared must be regarded as the profit of the Forges up to that time. <sup>4.</sup> It was an asset that might have been

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1. L.W.Spring, Non-Technical Chats on Iron and Steel (Second edition, 1927) pp.162,167-168.
  2. Infra, pp.16-17.
  3. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, pp.20-21. Le 28 (juillet, 1752)
  4. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.85, p.53. Ministre à Hocquart, Versailles, March 6, 17<sup>47</sup>.

termed a potential profit. In any case, although the returns were not large enough to cover the government's original investment the enterprise had not fallen steadily farther behind, as it had done during the period of company control.

During the royal régime the administration was, on the whole, sounder than it had been. For example, a stop was put to the pernicious practice of paying the workmen in goods.<sup>1</sup> During this period the output increased; from October 17<sup>41</sup> to October 17<sup>42</sup> the product was 336,886 pounds,<sup>2</sup> and for the year 17<sup>42</sup>-17<sup>43</sup> the return was about 400,000 pounds.<sup>3</sup> In 17<sup>44</sup> the Forges for the first time supplied bullets for the service.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the iron shipped to Rochefort was sold at a price of 160 livres per thousand pounds whereas the prices obtained by the company had varied from 12<sup>4</sup> livres to 139 livres.<sup>5</sup> These factors explain perhaps, why the Forges had not retrogressed during these years.

On the other hand, the industry had made no exceptional progress by the end of 17<sup>45</sup>. Up to 17<sup>44</sup> when the Forges began to make bullets, only the usual kind of wrought iron was produced on which the usual criticism was passed, namely,

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, p. 271. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 12, 17<sup>47</sup>

2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>4</sup>A, Vol. 112(1): p. 275. Mémoire sur les forges de Saint Maurice. Quebec, 17<sup>42</sup>; p. 301. Extract, signed Estébe.

3. Ibid., Vol. 80, pp. 33-34. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 23, 17<sup>43</sup>

4. Ibid., Vol. 81(1) p. 59. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 17, 17<sup>44</sup>.

5. Ibid., Vol. 112(1) p. 273. Mémoire sur les forges de Saint Maurice. Quebec, 17<sup>42</sup>.

good iron poorly wrought. 1. No new equipment was acquired during this period so that the iron works had to function with the unsatisfactory apparatus installed by Ougnet and Company. 2. The furnace broke down at least as early as December 1741 3. and was not relighted until the following May. 4. In the spring of 1743 the Forges suffered another, though a shorter, interruption. 5. Finally, the workmen continued to give trouble in spite of the removal of their most outstanding grievance. An ordinance issued by Hocquart in 1745 prohibited the selling of any but very small quantities of wine and brandy to the workmen at St. Maurice, forbade the men to absent themselves from the Forges without permission, and finally, enjoined upon the directors to correct, with fines and other punishments, any scandals or public debauches that might re-occur. The Intendant, after a visit to St. Maurice in 1745, found it necessary to impose these restrictions. Discipline at the Forges was not evidently all that it should have been.

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), pp. 136-137. Ministre à Hocquart Versailles, April 11, 1743.  
Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 79, p. 358. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 2, 1743.  
Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 78(1), p. 115. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 24, 1744.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 112(1), p. 26. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 20, 1741.
3. Ibid., Vol. 76, p. 77. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Dec. 17, 1741
4. Ibid., Vol. 77, p. 340. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, June 28, 1742
5. Ibid., Vol. 79, p. 7. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Montreal, June 17, 1743.
6. Ord. des. Int., M 30, Vol. 17, pp. 409-412. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, Feb. 12, 1745.



1746- During the next period, comprising the years 17<sup>46</sup> and 17<sup>47</sup>,  
 1747 the standing profit (i.e. the profit from November 17<sup>41</sup> to January 17<sup>48</sup>) rose to 72,286 livres. <sup>1</sup>. The production of bullets was continued in 17<sup>46</sup> <sup>2</sup>. and in 17<sup>47</sup> <sup>3</sup>. and a long yearned for tilt hammer necessary for making gun barrels was established.<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, in 17<sup>46</sup>, two founders were sent out to the colony and a new product was added to the output, namely cast iron goods.<sup>5</sup>. The statement of the total product for 17<sup>47</sup> included a variety of cast articles of which the most notable are <sup>4</sup> small cannon, one-and two-pounders, 2 mortars, 267 bombs, and 201 stoves. There was also a quantity of the usual wrought iron as well as some forged iron (fer de martinet) and 27 pounds of steel.<sup>6</sup>. The making of steel was in the nature of an experiment and was not repeated.

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 89, pp. 107-108. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 18, 17<sup>49</sup>.  
 According to M. Fauteux (L'Industrie au Canada, t.1, p.117) this sum was the profit from November 17<sup>41</sup> to November 17<sup>48</sup>. The author does not quote any authority for the statement. The Minister is basing his statement on a letter received from Bigot, dated September 29, 17<sup>48</sup>. The latter date could not therefore in any case have been November 17<sup>48</sup>. (I have not found Bigot's letter in the Correspondence Générale)
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 85, p. 33. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec Sept. 26, 17<sup>46</sup>.
3. Ibid., Vol. 88, p. 93. Etat de produit des forges de Saint Maurice (1 janvier 17<sup>47</sup> - 14 octobre, 17<sup>47</sup>) Signed, Martel de Belleville. St. Maurice, Oct. 18, 17<sup>47</sup>.
4. Ibid., Vol. 88, p. 85. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 15, 17<sup>47</sup>.
5. Ibid., p. 89
6. Ibid., Vol. 88, pp. 93-94. Etat du produit des forges de Saint Maurice (1 janvier 17<sup>47</sup> - 14 octobre 17<sup>47</sup>) Signed, Martel de Belleville. St. Maurice, Oct. 18, 17<sup>47</sup>.

Most of the cast iron goods found a ready sale in the colony, The stoves in particular were in great demand, some being bespoken before they were cast. All were sold and brought in 21,000 livres. In this year, too, a large quantity of iron from St. Maurice was used in the construction of the vessel, St. Laurent, then building in the King's shipyards in Quebec. <sup>1</sup>. It was doubtless this increased output that accounted for the increased profit.

1748 By the end of 1748 however, the Forges had taken a loss which reduced the standing profit to 36,222 livres. <sup>2</sup>. Rouillé, Minister of Marine, attributed the decrease to the incompetence of those who had had the direction of the Forges during the preceding few years. <sup>3</sup>. There is, however, a more probable explanation. When peace was declared in 1748 and uninterrupted communication between France and the colony was resumed, there was an immediate and large influx of goods into Canada. From the fall of 1747, iron from St. Maurice had been selling at an increased price of 30 livres the hundredweight <sup>4</sup>. and it is possible that the local product now met a competition that it was unable to withstand.

Furthermore, the casting of artillery and munitions, begun in 1747, was continued, unwisely as it happened, during the following year. The project had been urged by the colonial

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 88, pp. 85-87. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 15, 1747.

2. Ordres et Dépêches B, Vol. 91, p. 222. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 14, 1750.

3. Ibid.

4. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 88, p. 72. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 4, 1747; From 1744, St. Maurice iron had sold at 25 livres the hundredweight. (Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 81(2) p. 339. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 8, 1744.)

authorities since 1744.<sup>1.</sup> Doubtless elated when the making of cannon was finally undertaken, governor and intendant must have been somewhat dashed when they heard the judgment passed by experts in France on the cannon cast at St.Maurice, for the guns were found to be hopelessly defective as a result of bad workmanship.<sup>2.</sup> As the Chevalier de Beauharnois later pointed out, the workmen who had made them were "mouleurs de bombes et de marmites" and lacked the technical skill necessary for larger and more accurate work.<sup>3.</sup> However, the bombs, too, were declared defective by the French artillery officers who inspected them.<sup>4.</sup>

La Galissonnière and Bigot evidently refused to be discouraged by the report from France for they proposed not only to continue the new manufacture but also to expand it. The Governor, at least, comforted himself with the thought that the cannon made in 1747 had been, after all, only a first attempt.<sup>5.</sup> He, together with the Intendant, pointed out to the Comte de Maurepas the desirability of having a skilled workman in Canada who might succeed in establishing a furnace that could produce material for the casting of large pieces of ordnance. Moreover, they suggested that the S.Mercier, Canadian artillery officer, who was going to France for further instruction in his profession, might also be

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.81(1), p.60. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.17, 1744; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.81, pp.291-292. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 12, 1745; Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.85, pp.107-108. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.30, 1746.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.87, p.220. Ministre à La Galissonnière et Hocquart. Versailles, April 25, 1748.
3. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol.90-91, p.228. Le Cher de Beauharnois au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.1, 1748.
4. Moreau St. Méry, Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.13, pp.1012-1013. Ministre à La Galissonnière et Hocquart. May 31, 1748.
5. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.90-91, p.150. La Galissonnière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.18, 1748.

given the opportunity of learning something of the manufacture of large calibre cannon so that he might help in perfecting the process in Canada. <sup>1</sup>. And in fact, Mercier visited the founderies at Metz, Douay, Parchemin, and Rancognes. <sup>2</sup>. Meanwhile, the Chevalier de Beauharnois, acting on the orders of La Galissonnière, spent six months of the year 1748 at St. Maurice and supervised the casting of some of the cannon produced that year. The total product for 1748 included 6 small cannon, 11 mortars, 2 petards, and a quantity of bombs and bullets. The ordnance was distributed to Forts Niagara, Frontenac, and St. Frédéric and two cannon were used to arm a barque. <sup>3</sup>.

One cannot help but feel, however, that all this activity represented a waste of time and money. It seems probable that better and cheaper cannon could have been obtained in France while the workmen at St. Maurice might have devoted their time to some more profitable manufacture. Laudable though the attempt was to add a new branch to the industry, the practical advantage did not justify the effort. The casting of small cannon was to have been a step towards the manufacture of larger ones. In 1748 the Minister of Marine promised to procure a Master Founder for the Forges when peace came <sup>4</sup> and added somewhat vaguely that he

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.90-91, pp.27-28. La Galissonnière et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.26, 1748
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.89, p.109. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 8, 1749; Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.96, pp.102-103. Le Mercier au Ministre. Rancognes, March 8, 1750.
3. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.90-91, pp.228-232. Le Chevalier de Beauharnois au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.1, 1748.
4. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.87, p.220. Ministre à La Galissonnière et Hocquart. Versailles, April 25, 1748.



would see then what could be done about constructing another furnace.<sup>1</sup> The plan never reached fruition however, for in 17<sup>49</sup> Maurepas informed Bigot that for the time being the establishment at St. Maurice of a foundry for casting large artillery was out of the question.<sup>2</sup> The project continued to remain "out of the question" for no large ordnance was ever cast in New France. Meanwhile the fruitless attempt to establish the manufacture in Canada had served only to divert the workmen from more profitable production and presumably, to cause in part the decline in the returns from the Forges for the year 17<sup>48</sup>.

17<sup>49</sup> By the end of the following year, the situation was very much worse for the standing profit in January 17<sup>49</sup> (some 36,000 livres)<sup>3</sup> had been completely wiped out and the Forges had a deficit of 24,940 livres. The most obvious explanation for the catastrophe was the fact that, in 17<sup>49</sup>, extensive repairs had to be made to the Forges. Moreover, it was becoming increasingly difficult to meet the competition from France. Bigot had lowered the price of Canadian iron from 30 livres the hundredweight to 25 livres, but the iron from France was selling at a still lower figure, notwithstanding the added costs of transportation and customs duty. The situation appeared so serious to the Intendant that he declared that the Forges could not be operated without loss unless the import of

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1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 87, p. 213. Ministre à La Galissonnière. Versailles, March 6, 17<sup>48</sup>.
  2. Ibid., Vol. 89, p. 108. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 18, 17<sup>49</sup>.
  3. Supra, p. 14.

French iron were entirely prohibited.<sup>1.</sup>

In that year too, the labour problem was becoming acute. Bigot realized that the most profitable output of the Forges was cast iron utensils, such as stoves, kettles, etc. and a master founder and other workmen for the foundry were badly needed.<sup>2.</sup> Skilled iron workers were evidently scarce in France; certainly none of them could be induced to go out to Canada.<sup>3.</sup> The Forges, moreover, lacked not only trained workmen but also unskilled labour for such tasks as cutting wood and hauling ore. Habitants were drawn from the surrounding parishes for the work but they complained that the cultivation of their land was being neglected and resisted the summons so strenuously that they had sometimes to be coerced, with considerable violence, into coming. The result was that many of them moved out of the district rather than submit.<sup>4.</sup> The outcome of all these difficulties is only too clearly indicated by the financial standing of the Forges at the close of the year 1749.

1750, Affairs however, took a turn for the better. By the end of  
1751,  
1752.1751 the standing balance had reached 24,604 livres<sup>5.</sup> and the following year, 1752, was the best the Forges ever had, for it closed with a standing profit of 73,531 livres.<sup>6.</sup> The reason for the sudden increase is not at all obvious. The probable

1. *Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.96, pp.58-60. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 27, 1750.*
2. *Ibid., p.62*
3. *Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.89, pp.68-69. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 11, 1749.*
4. *Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, p.113.*
5. *Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.97, p.20<sup>ll</sup>. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 30, 1753.*
6. *Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.99, pp.141-142. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 6, 1754.*

explanation is that, by this time, the rush of French goods into the colony at the close of the war, was over and the import had resumed more normal proportions. Moreover, the Forges were apparently free from delays during this period and, the scheme for casting cannon abandoned, the time was probably devoted, for the most part, to the easily sold productions of the foundry. The manufacture of wrought iron was not neglected and in 1752 some was shipped even to Santo Domingo.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the colonial authorities had, in 1750, solved the problem of supplying unskilled labour, by employing soldiers. For this purpose another company of the *Troupe de la Marine* was added to the garrison at Three Rivers.<sup>2</sup> Two or three journeyman smiths were found among the troops but these, though useful additions to the staff, knew nothing of foundry work.<sup>3</sup> In 1753 the Minister of Marine was still looking in vain for the workmen whom Bigot had requested four years earlier.<sup>4</sup> It is to be supposed that had these men been procured the Forges would have shown a still larger profit by the end of 1752.

1752- After 1752, the industry declined until by January 1, 1758 the 1758 total profit shown for the King's administration since 1741 was the insignificant sum of 3,150 livres.<sup>5</sup> In 1753, the Forges

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 95, p. 148. Ministre à Bigot. Compiègne, July 7, 1752.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 93, p. 89. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 30, 1749; Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A Vol. 93, pp. 302-304. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 7, 1749; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 91, p. 71. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 10, 1750.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 96, p. 61. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 27, 1750.
4. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 97, p. 205. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 30, 1753.
5. Ibid., Vol. 109, p. 135. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, Feb. 9, 1759.

suffered interruption as a result of the levies made for the expedition to the Ohio River. The Minister of Marine thought that this was only an "accident passager" <sup>1</sup>. but it was undoubtedly the beginning of the decline of the Forges. During the stress of the war years that followed, the colony had neither men nor provisions to spare for the establishment at St.Maurice. Had the Forges been capable of supplying munitions the industry might have received a fillip from the war. But in 1757, Le Mercier declared that there was not a workman in Canada who could make either bombs or bullets and that, in any case, the Forges were not capable of producing sufficient material. <sup>2</sup>. The Forges were still functioning in the autumn of 1759 <sup>3</sup>. but at least by the summer of 1760 they had evidently come to a complete standstill. <sup>4</sup>

Thus the King never recouped the advances he had made for the establishment of the Forges some twenty years earlier. Even if the Forges had concentrated on the production of small castings and even if no war had intervened it is doubtful whether the original investment would ever have been recovered. In my opinion, the industry must inevitably have decelerated to a stop.

The iron industry never really thrived in Canada. During our period the whole enterprise lacked any semblance of spontaneity. The government had taken it over because it could not do otherwise

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 99, pp. 141-142. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 6, 1754.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol. 102, pp. 325-326. Mémoire sur l'artillerie du Canada (Le Mercier) Quebec, Oct. 30, 1757.
3. Lettres de l'Int. Bigot, (pub. by Casgrain, Quebec 1895) p. 83. Bigot à Lévis. Montreal, Oct. 30, 1759.
4. Can. Arch. Report, 1905, Vol. 1(1), p. 33. Dumas à Vaudreuil, Three Rivers, June 11, 1760.



and it is evident that the Forges were regarded throughout as something of a white elephant. Even in 1752 and 1753 when the business was at its most profitable, the Minister of Marine was still anxious that the whole concern should be handed over to private enterprise if a company could be found to undertake it.<sup>1.</sup>

The Forges did not supply a real need in the colony or in France, for long established and privately owned concerns in the mother country could always supply a better and a cheaper product than the Canadian one. Nor did the Forges fulfill a demand for employment in Canada; as we have seen, Canadians preferred to move out of the district rather than to accept paid work at St. Maurice.<sup>2.</sup> The industry, at least after 1741, was in a sense extraneous to Canada. It was operated at the expense of the King for the profit of the King and was carried on by artisans imported from France and by soldiers recruited in France.

The labour difficulty was an insuperable obstacle to the ultimate success of the enterprise. Skilled French workmen had to be cajoled into going out to the colony and took advantage of their position to extract high wages from their employers. At the expiration of their contracts they promptly returned home or agreed to stay only on terms extremely favourable to themselves.<sup>3.</sup> Moreover, the ability of these so-called "skilled" artisans was questionable for the criticism of Canadian iron was usually, that

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 97, p. 205. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 30, 1753; Vol. 99, pp. 141-142. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 6, 1754.
2. Supra, p. 18.
3. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, p. 114.

good iron had been ruined in the making.<sup>1</sup> The best labour was therefore, scarce, costly, and not very competent.

The difficulty in obtaining unskilled labour has already been noted.<sup>2</sup> When, in order to obviate this obstacle and to decrease wages if possible, <sup>men from the Troupe de la</sup> Marine were employed, the soldiers, realizing how much they were needed at the Forges, demanded excessively high wages. When their demand was refused they dawdled through their work to the detriment of production.<sup>3</sup> One does not find a town of workingmen's houses rising at St. Maurice, their owners dependent on the Forges for a living, and the settlement growing as the industry expanded. On the contrary, all labour, French or Canadian, skilled or unskilled, was only too anxious to be anywhere but at St. Maurice.

It seems to me highly probable that the government in France, especially in view of the parlous conditions of the Treasury, would, in the course of a few years, have reached the conclusion that the lifeless industry was not worth the trouble and the expense that it cost and would have abandoned the enterprise. The one argument that might have been raised in defense of the Forges was that the production of iron in the colony might contribute to the progress of the King's shipbuilding. But that excuse for existence would not long have remained valid for, as we shall see, the odds were that by 1760, war or no war, the shipbuilding venture would have collapsed.<sup>4</sup>

1. Supra, p.12

2. Supra, p.18

3. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, p.113.

4. Infra, p.47

It seems probable that the real driving force behind the enterprise had been Hocquart. He had encouraged the individual who first undertook it and had done all he could to maintain it, even to helping with his own private funds.<sup>1</sup> When the government took it over, Hocquart was keenly interested in the venture and anxious for its success. It was undoubtedly his insistence that had caused a foundry to be added to the establishment. After his departure, the Forges were left with a much less eager champion. Bigot, with a shrewder brain, lacked Hocquart's illogical enthusiasms. It is true that the new Intendant was ready to push the undertaking of casting cannon but it is inconceivable that, at the time when the Forges had suffered their most severe reverses, Hocquart would have pointed out, as Bigot quite reasonably did, that the costs of the enterprise were bound to increase as the supply of wood in the immediate vicinity steadily diminished.<sup>2</sup>

Laudable though the attempt was to exploit Canada's resources, it was, on practical grounds, wasted effort. The colony was not ready for such a development; its main interests were unalterably farming and the fur trade. Not even the weight of the government could counterbalance the deadweight of Canadian indifference.

Paternalism did not thwart the development of the iron industry in Canada. The private enterprise undertaken by Canadians was a complete failure. Such success as the exploitation of Canadian iron had is to be attributed solely to the government.

1. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol. 112(1)p. 22. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1741. In the spring of that year (1741) the Intendant advanced the company 3,000 livres from his own pocket.
2. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol. 96, p. 59. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 27, 1750.

## CHAPTER II.

## SHIPBUILDING AND SUBSIDIARY INDUSTRIES.

## I (a) Private Shipbuilding.

In the early years of our period the building of ships by private individuals came to a stop. The industry had never been extremely vigorous. Any contretemps, such as a shortage of food or an epidemic, usually caused a complete interruption.<sup>1</sup> There was never, apparently, a company organized in Quebec to build ships to order. Probably the prospective owner employed a few carpenters and directed the work himself, or else turned over the enterprise to a master carpenter who hired an assistant or two. Occasionally, French merchants had ships built at Quebec.<sup>2</sup> Possibly some Canadian merchant undertook the construction or perhaps it was directed by the Intendant, unless, of course, the French house had an agent in the colony.

The principal reason for the failure of the enterprise during the decades with which we are concerned, is that it was a period of "contretemps". There are, however, two other factors in the situation to be considered, namely, the suppression of the royal gratuities, and the establishment of the royal shipbuilding.

From 1731 the King had given bounties for all ships over forty tons built at Quebec.<sup>3</sup> In 1739 the colonial authorities were

1. e.g. The small pox epidemic and the famine of 1733 and the dearth in 1737 each time caused a complete cessation of shipbuilding (J.N.Fauteux, L'Industrie au Canada, t.I, pp.246-249)
2. e.g. J.N.Fauteux, op.cit t.I, p.248.
3. J.N.Fauteux, op.cit. t.I, pp.243-246.



evidently satisfied with the progress that the industry was making for in that year they advised the King that the gratuities no longer seemed necessary. The King, with not the slightest demur, promptly suppressed them.<sup>1</sup> Quebec merchants did not forbear to complain of the adverse effect of the suppression on the industry<sup>2</sup> but it is not evident that the lack of gratuities really discouraged construction. In 1740, that is, the year in which the King withdrew his support, 6 ships ranging from 68 to 300 tons were built.<sup>3</sup> In 1741 there were 9 of tonnage from 30 to 177,<sup>4</sup> and the following year, 1742, 12 vessels were constructed.<sup>5</sup>

Shipbuilding for the King, which began in 1739, did constitute a drain on the local labour supply. The Quebec merchants added that to their complaints in 1741,<sup>6</sup> and Beauharnois and Hocquart themselves admitted that the King's work was, to a certain extent, hindering private undertakings.<sup>7</sup> The hindrance was not so serious, however, as to prevent ships being built in increasing numbers up to 1742.

Meanwhile the colony had been suffering a period of dearth. By 1743 the scarcity of provisions was such that private con-

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 70(1), p. 231. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 13, 1740.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 75, p. 22. Mémoire de S. Desaumers, (syndic des négoceants de Québec) à Beauharnois et Hocquart. 1741.
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, p. 235. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 12, 1741.
4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 75, p. 361. Liste des Batiments de Mer construits en Canada, pendant l'année 1741. Signed, Hocquart. Quebec, Oct. 8, 1741.
5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), p. 379. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 31, 1743.
6. Loc. cit.
7. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 75, p. 357. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre Oct. 2, 1741.

struction was completely interrupted.<sup>1</sup>. The following year war came, with the result that a number of individuals who had intended to build abandoned the idea.<sup>2</sup>. With trade seriously hindered there was little advantage in building vessels. By 17<sup>48</sup> there were, according to Bigot, only three schooners in the colony, and small coasting boats were entirely lacking.<sup>3</sup>.

In the period of peace that followed, matters did not improve. Carpenters for private shipbuilding could not be procured in the colony. All the available labour was employed in the royal shipyards, or in building boats for the service in preparation for the war that was imminent. Between 1750 and 1752 the Controller, Bréard, did build four ships at Quebec.<sup>4</sup>. These were probably built however, by labour obtained from the King's shipyards by the Intendant's influence.<sup>5</sup>. There is no record of any other ships having been built during this period. The minister, writing in 1755, suggested that the governor and Intendant should encourage private shipbuilding in the colony. He added that before the last war (i.e. before 17<sup>44</sup>) French merchants had had ships built at Quebec<sup>6</sup>. The implication is that no vessels had since been built

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 78(1), p. 154. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, March 24, 17<sup>44</sup>.
2. Ibid., Vol. 83, p. 158. Mémoire du Roy à La Jonquière et Hocquart. Versailles, April 1, 17<sup>46</sup>.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol. 92, p. 32. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 10, 17<sup>48</sup>.
4. Mémoire pour Guillaume Estèbe (Paris, 1763) pp. 132-141. Affaire du Canada, Vol. III, p. 130. Mémoire pour Bréard.
5. Infra p. 44
6. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 101, p. 110. Ministre à Vaudreuil et Bigot. Compiègne, July 15, 1755.

in the colony for merchants of France. There is one rather special case. One of the boats built by Bréard was said to be for the SS. Gradis of Bordeaux.<sup>1</sup> The boat was, however, probably built for, and certainly used by, the company of Bigot, Bréard, and the Gradis.<sup>2</sup>

The second war combined all the factors that had militated against the industry on earlier occasions within our period. The famine was worse than it had been in 17<sup>43</sup>, the colony's commerce was more completely interrupted than it had been between 17<sup>41</sup> and 17<sup>48</sup> and the supply of labour was shorter than it had ever been before; all the carpenters were engaged in building boats for the service which were needed in much larger numbers than they had been during the earlier war.

The conclusion is that private construction was destroyed by the years of famine and of war that the colony underwent during our period and, to a minor extent, by the effect of the King's shipbuilding on the labour supply. It is probable that had these decades been years of peace and plenty, the King's enterprise would not, in itself, have prohibited all other construction. It seems reasonable to suggest that some compromise would have been adopted. Certainly such was the case when ships first began to be built for the King. The storeship "Le Canada", begun in 1739, could have been finished in 1741, but its completion was delayed for a year in order not to interrupt too much the private constructions<sup>3</sup>. Had the industry

1. Affaire du Canada, Vol. III, p.137. Mémoire pour Bréard. Oct.

2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol.98, p.175. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec/26, 1752.

3. Corres.Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol.74, p.165. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Oct.11, 1740

continued to show any sign of life, it is altogether probable that the King would have continued to co-operate in this manner. After the famine of 1743, however, private shipbuilding never did give any indication of reviving.

(b) Royal Shipbuilding.

The last two decades of the French régime witnessed the rise and fall of shipbuilding for the King in Canada. Between the years 1739 and 1756 nine vessels were launched and a tenth was left in the course of construction. These were:-

1. Le Canada, a 500 ton storeship, completed in 1742. <sup>1.</sup>
2. Le Caribou, a 700 ton storeship, completed in 1744. <sup>2.</sup>
3. Le Castor, a 26-gun frigate, completed in 1745. <sup>3.</sup>
4. Le Carcasson, a 12-gun sloop, completed in 1745. <sup>4.</sup>
5. La Martre, a 22-gun frigate, completed in 1747. <sup>5.</sup>
6. Le Saint Laurent, a 60-gun vessel, completed in 1748. <sup>6.</sup>
7. L'Orignal, a 72-gun vessel - completed in 1750. <sup>7.</sup>
8. L'Algonquin, a 72-gun vessel, completed in 1753. <sup>8.</sup>
9. L'Abénakise, a 36-gun frigate - completed in 1756. <sup>9.</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 78, p.76. Le Vasseur au Ministre, Quebec, Aug. 25, 1742
2. Ibid., Vol. 81(2), pp.291-292. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, May 13, 1744.
3. Ibid., Vol. 83, p.263. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, May 19, 1745.
4. Ibid., Vol. 83, pp.264-265. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, May 19, 1745.
5. Ibid., Vol. 85, pp.11-12. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 19, 1746.
6. Ibid., Vol. 90-91, p.3. La Galissonnière et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Aug. 17, 1748.
7. Ibid., Vol. 95, pp.13-14. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 2, 1750.
8. J.N.Fauteux, L'Industrie au Canada, t.I, p.273.
9. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 101, p.387. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 1, 1756.

10. Le Québec, a 30-gun frigate, begun in 1756.<sup>1.</sup>

There is no record of its having been completed before the cession.

The royal venture was never really successful. A variety of factors affected its progress. Canada could supply very few ordinary workmen and still fewer skilled carpenters. In 1739 there were some fifty carpenters in Quebec among whom only twenty were considered really competent.<sup>2.</sup> None of these was capable of directing a large undertaking. Therefore, when the King, at the instance of Hocquart, decided to have a 500-ton storeship built at Quebec, he sent out the S. Le Vasseur to organize and inaugurate the construction.

The "Constructeur" arrived in the spring of 1739 and work was begun by the end of September. It is noteworthy that a request was promptly sent to France for twelve young and competent carpenters.<sup>3.</sup> Before these twelve arrived every available carpenter had been pressed into service in the King's shipyards.<sup>4.</sup> And it was soon discovered that labour drawn from the local supply was expensive.<sup>5.</sup> Thus, at the very beginning, the keynote of the labour problem was struck, that is, the linked difficulty of scarcity and high cost.

Even after the French workmen had arrived<sup>6.</sup> there were not enough carpenters to meet the demand. Within a few months Hocquart

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol.101, p.387. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.1, 1756; The frigate was still on the stocks in 1758. (Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.109, p.132. Ministre à Vaudreuil et Bigot. Versailles Feb.9, 1759) It is possible that the shipyard and the ship with it were destroyed during the siege.

2. J.N.Fauteux, op.cit., t.I, p.251.

3. J.N.Fauteux, op.cit., t.I, pp.250-251

4. Corres.Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol.73, p.40. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, July 5, 1740.

5. J.N.Fauteux, op.cit., t.I, p.251.

6. One of the twelve who reached Canada in the summer of 1740, died of fever. (Corres.Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol.73, p.68. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 30, 1740)



was asking for twelve or fifteen more,<sup>1</sup> but the Minister was unable to meet his request.<sup>2</sup> We have already seen that the completion of "Le Canada" had to be delayed for a year.<sup>3</sup> In 1741 Le Vasseur complained that he had to carry on the work without a foreman and with a somewhat motley collection of Canadian workmen of various callings who were being employed as carpenters.<sup>4</sup>

Canadian labour had been found to be expensive. French labour proved still more so. In 1741 the Minister declared that while he had expected wages to be a large item, he had not anticipated so staggering a sum.<sup>5</sup> Hocquart had suggested that workmen might be brought from France and paid at the rate usual in Canada, viz. 40 sous per day in winter and 50 sous in summer.<sup>6</sup> The Minister however, realized that it would be futile to attempt to persuade French artisans to come to Canada without the inducement of much increased wages.<sup>7</sup>

Attempts were made from the beginning to overcome the obstacle of the scarcity and high cost of labour by training Canadian workmen in the King's shipyards.<sup>8</sup> The Minister approved the plan of employing apprentices<sup>9</sup> and he suggested also that the

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 73, p. 113-114. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 31, 1740.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 203-204. Ministre à Hocquart. Marly, May 6, 1741.
3. Supra p. 27
4. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 76, p. 149. Le Vasseur au Ministre, Quebec, Oct. 10, 1741.
5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, p. 206. Ministre à Hocquart. Marly, May 6, 1741.
6. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 73, p. 114. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Oct. 31, 1740.
7. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 203-204. Ministre à Hocquart. Marly, May 6, 1741.
8. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 73, p. 68. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 30, 1740.
9. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74(2), p. 231. Ministre à Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 17, 1742.

French workmen should be encouraged to settle in the colony.<sup>1.</sup>

No very great success was achieved by these efforts, however. By 17<sup>44</sup> a good many of the French carpenters had returned home<sup>2.</sup> and others were anxious to do so.<sup>3.</sup> Some Canadian workmen had been trained<sup>4</sup> at considerable cost,<sup>5</sup> but the number was insufficient. In 17<sup>44</sup> Hocquart informed the Minister that more rapid construction would be impossible unless master carpenters and journeymen were sent from France.<sup>6.</sup>

In 17<sup>48</sup> "L'Orignal" was begun and the Minister evidently wanted it completed within a year. But Bigot pointed out that the ship could not possibly be launched until 1750 unless a hundred and fifty carpenters were sent from France<sup>7.</sup> The Intendant suggested that the men should bring their families and that some young men should be sent out who would marry and settle in the colony.<sup>8.</sup> It is possible that the remark was occasioned by the fact that workmen had been drifting back to France. Coming to Canada did not, evidently, appeal to the French artisan. In spite of the Minister's efforts to engage carpenters<sup>9.</sup> only twenty-three were

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74 (2), p. 227. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 17, 17<sup>42</sup>.
2. Corres. Gen., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol. 81(2), p. 399. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 8, 17<sup>44</sup>.
3. Ibid., Vol. 82, p. 13. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 29, 17<sup>44</sup>.
4. Ibid., Vol. 75, p. 357. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 2, 17<sup>41</sup>; Ibid., Vol. 79, p. 372. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 3, 17<sup>43</sup>.
5. Ibid., Vol. 76, p. 34. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 28, 17<sup>41</sup>.
6. Ibid., Vol. 81(2), p. 390. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 7, 17<sup>44</sup>.
7. Corres. Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol. 92, pp. 31-32. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 10, 17<sup>48</sup>.
8. Ibid., pp. 40-41. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 16, 17<sup>48</sup>.
9. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 89, pp. 65-66. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 11, 17<sup>49</sup>.

sent out in 1749. Bigot again declared that he must have a hundred or a hundred and fifty workmen.<sup>1</sup> The Minister promised him sixty<sup>2</sup>, but only twenty-eight arrived and their contracts were for only a year. The result was still another request for carpenters and the warning that "L'Algonquin" could not be finished until 1752 unless they were sent.<sup>3</sup> About this time the question of abandoning the King's enterprise arose so that there was no further thought of sending out additional labour.

The apprenticeship system inaugurated by Hocquart had not been really successful. In 1748, Bigot wrote "Toute espece d'ouvrier manque ici. le Canadien est naturellement de tout metier, mais il ne l'emploie que pour son usage."<sup>4</sup> The following year he declared that the number of young Canadians employed as apprentices was small and that they could not be counted on as a labour supply for the future. Some tired of the vocation and abandoned it, and others, who came into money, promptly went into business.<sup>5</sup>

The one notable exception was the Sieur Cressé. Cressé, a young man of about seventeen, the son of one of the directors of the Forges, had been taken on as an apprentice by Le Vasseur in 1745. He was given the magnificent title of "Elève Sous-Constructeur"

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 93, pp. 294-295. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 6, 1749.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 91, p. 103. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 15, 1750.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 96, p. 17. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 9, 1750.
4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 92, p. 41. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 16, 1748.
5. Ibid., Vol. 93, pp. 294-295. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 6, 1749.

and the anything but munificent salary of thirty livres a month.<sup>1.</sup> He was evidently an apt pupil. By 1747 he was ready to direct work in the yards under the general supervision of Le Vasseur.<sup>2.</sup> He had full charge of the construction of the frigate "L'Abénakise" built between the years 1753 and 1756,<sup>3.</sup> and in the winter of 1755-1756 he directed the building of two "corsaires" at Fort Frontenac.<sup>4.</sup>

The scarcity of labour was a persistent drag on the industry. The high cost of labour was a persistent irritation to the Minister. The drain on the limited funds of the French Treasury was not perhaps extremely heavy, at least when compared with other items of government expenditure, but the cost of labour was a good deal higher than the Minister had expected it to be. As we have already seen, the Minister complained of its cost for the construction of "Le Canada".<sup>5.</sup> "Le Castor", launched in 1745, cost 292,737 livres of which 138,416 livres were for wages. The Minister declared that this was excessive and that wages should be reduced.<sup>6.</sup> But reduction was impossible as long as prices remained high.<sup>7.</sup> In 1752 Bigot estimated that labour in Canada was twice as dear as that in France.<sup>8.</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.85, pp.69-70. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 9, 1749; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.85, p.91. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 13, 1747.
2. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.89, p.153. Le Vasseur au Ministre, Oct.10, 1747.
3. Ibid., Vol.99, p.465. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Versailles, Feb.25, 1754.
4. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.101, p.127. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Montreal, Oct. 18, 1756.
5. Supra. p.30.
6. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.83, pp.66-67. Ministre au Hocquart. Versailles, March 2, 1746.
7. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.85, p.65. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Oct.9, 1746.
8. Ibid., Vol.98, p.165. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 21, 1752.

The actual workmanship, however, seems on the whole to have been good. Le Vasseur was a thoroughly competent man. He was well enough versed in his trade to draw up the plans for the ships the King ordered. The plans were then submitted to France where they might be amended.<sup>1</sup> I have found only one instance where Le Vasseur's plans were completely rejected and had to be done over. This was the plan for "Le St. Laurent", a bigger ship than had ever been attempted before.<sup>2</sup> Any carving that was done was designed by Le Vasseur.<sup>3</sup> The "Constructeur" during his sojourn in Canada developed a new design for floor timbers and for knees which was approved in France.<sup>4</sup>

The work done by the carpenters was evidently of a satisfactory standard. There is only one recorded case where any fault was found in France with the construction of a vessel, viz. "Le St. Laurent",<sup>5</sup> of which the design had already given Le Vasseur trouble.<sup>6</sup> The workmanship of "Le Canada",<sup>7</sup> "Le Caribou",<sup>8</sup> "Le Castor"<sup>9</sup> and "La Martre"<sup>10</sup> was commended. "L'Orignal" never

1. e.g. Ordres et Dépêches, B; Vol. 70(1), p. 231. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 13, 1740; Vol. 85, p. 78. Ministre à Hocquart. Marly, Jan. 23, 1748 etc.
2. Ibid., Vol. 78(1), p. 155. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, March 24, 1744.
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 85, pp. 103-104. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 20, 1747.
4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>, Vol. 89, p. 157. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Oct. 10, 1747.
5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 89, p. 94. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 18, 1749.
6. Supra.
7. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76 (1), p. 135. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 11, 1743.
8. Ibid., Vol. 81, p. 251. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, May 5, 1745.
9. Ibid., Vol. 83, p. 63. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 2, 1746.
10. Ibid., Vol. 87, p. 146. Ministre à Le Vasseur. Versailles, Feb. 23, 1748.



reached France. I have found no record of criticism of "L'Algonquin" or of "L'Abénakise".

Difficulties with the men do not seem to have hindered the work seriously. Some of them did have an unfortunate habit of leaving the shipyard during working hours to smoke and drink in the nearby taverns. An ordinance was issued in 1741 to stop this practice,<sup>1</sup> but how effective it was is not clear. In any case there do not seem to have been any further complaints.

Further difficulties were caused by jealousy between French and Canadian workmen. On one occasion the Canadians were given a holiday on account of bad weather while the French carpenters were required to stay and work under shelter of the hangards. The French refused to obey orders but Hocquart effectively suppressed the "mutiny", as he called it, by putting the "rebels" in irons.<sup>2</sup> The workmen apparently continued thence forward in a state of admirable docility.

It is not evident that such difficulties were ever really serious. Hocquart always did his best to keep the peace among the employees, and to prevent, or promptly to correct, any disorders. Neither he nor anyone else, however, could remedy the scarcity and the dearness of labour.

But the labour problem was not the only source of worry to the authorities in France. From the beginning they complained bitterly of the cost and quality of Canadian lumber. For example,

1. Ord. des Int., M29, Vol. XVI, pp. 158-159. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Sept. 2, 1741.

2. Corrès. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 75, p. 356. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 2, 1741.

in 17<sup>41</sup>, they professed the greatest surprise at Hocquart's estimate for the storeship then building. Not only were the labour costs considered excessive but also the price of wood.<sup>1.</sup> The King had hoped that the cost of labour in Canada, known to be high in comparison with that in France, would be offset by a decrease in the cost of lumber..<sup>2.</sup>

Hocquart had attributed the unexpectedly high cost to waste. The carpenters had not realized the necessity of felling the trees before the heavy frosts. The cutting was therefore/<sup>not</sup>done until January and February and the trees, icy and brittle, fractured when felled. Thus a great many of what should have been the best pieces were lost.<sup>3.</sup>

There was waste in another direction, also. A good deal of wood was cut and brought all the way to Quebec only to be found worthless. The Minister, again urging economy in 17<sup>42</sup>, declared that this must be the principal reason for the excessive costs.<sup>4.</sup> Actual lumber prices in Canada were considerably less than those in France yet it had cost the King a great deal to provide the material for his yards.<sup>5.</sup>

The following year the Minister resolved to have all the lumber supplied by contractors so that the loss occasioned by the rejects would not fall upon the King.<sup>6.</sup> The plan was not

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 205-206. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 6, 17<sup>41</sup>.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 235-236. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 12, 17<sup>41</sup>.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>4</sup>A, Vol. 73, p. 65. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 30, 17<sup>40</sup>.
4. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74(2), p. 226. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 17, 17<sup>42</sup>.
5. Ibid., pp. 231-232. Ministre à Hocquart.
6. Ibid., B, Vol. 76(1), p. 123. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 11, 17<sup>43</sup>.

very successful however, for mounting prices had to be paid to the entrepreneur on account of the increased cost of food in the colony.<sup>1</sup> By 17<sup>46</sup>, Hocquart was again having most of the lumber supplied "par économie",<sup>2</sup> probably because he found it impossible to get contractors to go into the Lake Champlain district during the war. Evidently the trouble with rejects continued, for in October 1751 Bigot wrote that a third of the wood cut the previous winter was found to be rotten and had to be replaced.<sup>3</sup>

But the cost was by no means the most alarming fact to be faced. For meanwhile "Le Canada", who had made her maiden voyage to Rochefort in 17<sup>42</sup>, whence she had been despatched to Cayenne and Martinique, had again reached port in France. There an inspection of her timbers found the oak spongy although the rest of the wood seemed to be in good condition.<sup>4</sup> In 17<sup>45</sup>, the mizzen mast of "Le Caribou", completed the previous year, was found to have deteriorated to such an extent that it had to be replaced.<sup>5</sup> Four years later some of the beams and the ribs were discovered to be so badly rotted that it was proposed to break the ship up although she had had only five years of service.<sup>6</sup> In the same year, 17<sup>49</sup>, there were complaints of the condition

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.79, pp.360-361. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 2, 17<sup>43</sup>;  
Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.81(2), pp.383-384. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 7, 17<sup>44</sup>.
2. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.85, p.63. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.9, 17<sup>46</sup>.
3. Ibid., Vol.98, pp.169-170. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.21, 1752.
4. Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol.76(1), pp.135-136. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 11, 17<sup>43</sup>; Vol.78(1), pp.82-83. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 17, 17<sup>44</sup>.
5. Ibid., Vol.81, p.251. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, May 5, 17<sup>45</sup>.
6. Ibid., Vol.89, p.95. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 18, 17<sup>49</sup>.

of the timbers of "Le Saint Laurent".<sup>1.</sup> Bigot when he heard the report on the Caribou, promptly added fuel to the fire of the ministerial indignation. All those in charge maintained that nothing but the finest wood had gone into "Le Caribou" but Bigot declared that, speaking for himself, he had been amazed when he first came to Canada, at the quality of the wood that was accepted. He was assured, however, that they must either take that lumber or have none. The Intendant added that, of the lumber then on hand for "L'Orignal" and "L'Algonquin", seventy-five per cent would have been rejected at the "ports du Roy" in France. For however fair to behold much of it was cracked by frost or decayed at the centre.<sup>2.</sup> All of which was probably true but not calculated to turn away the Minister's wrath.

When Hocquart arrived at Brest<sup>3.</sup> he had a second inspection made of "Le Caribou". La Jonquière and Bigot were informed of the result by the Minister. While the side planking was sound, not a rib of any large size but had begun to rot. Decay had begun in most <sup>of</sup> the tree nails, too. It was found that the pieces of wood that decayed were those which had been taken from the centre of a tree. The experts concluded that in the big trees the heart was not as dense or as strong as the outside, whereas in young trees which were still growing the centre should be strong and compact. If this were the case some use should be found for the kind of young and small timber that Canada could supply. The

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 89, p. 66. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 11, 1749.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 93, pp. 292-294, Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 6, 1749.
3. Hocquart became Intendant at Brest after he left Canada.

King decided, therefore, that after the completion of "L'Algonquin" two small frigates should be built. On the test of the duration of their wood the decision of continuing or discontinuing the King's shipbuilding in Canada would depend. The ribs for these ships were to be made from young trees. As for the logs to be cut into side planking, a section in the middle, three inches thick, was to be discarded so that the planks would be made only of the sound outer part of the tree. If these precautions were exactly observed the Minister felt that there was hope for the continuation of the industry in Canada.<sup>1</sup> In short no more big ships were to be built in Canada and the construction of small ones remained an open question.

In 1755 the Minister stated quite conclusively that the construction in Canada of ships of high tonnage had to be abandoned after the ill-success of "Le Caribou" and "Le Saint-Laurent" of which the wood was found to be of poor quality. He had also heard the disquieting rumour that the experts at Brest had not a very high opinion of "L'Algonquin" launched two years before. If the two frigates then building proved no more satisfactory the King intended to abandon shipbuilding in Canada altogether.<sup>2</sup>

A "Conseil de Construction" including La Jonquière, Bigot, and Le Vasseur, had decided in 1750 when the frigates were ordered, that the wood ought to be left, under shelter, to season for two or three years.<sup>3</sup> A shanty was finished in 1752<sup>4</sup> but

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 91, pp. 108-111. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 15, 1750.

2. Ibid., Vol. 101, pp. 108-109. Ministre à Vaudreuil et Bigot. Compiègne, July 15, 1755.

3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 96, pp. 15-16. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 9, 1750.

4. Ibid., Vol. 98, p. 167. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 21, 1752



according to Vaudreuil was used for other purposes so that the lumber for the frigates remained exposed to the weather, which did not contribute to its soundness. The Governor feared that, as a result, the frigates would be no better than the other vessels had been.<sup>1.</sup> But the King was never called upon to make a final decision for the question was decided for him by the outcome of the war.

It is difficult to ascertain just what was at the root of the trouble. We have already looked at the theory held by the judges in France.<sup>2.</sup> An anonymous writer advances another explanation that seems plausible enough. The logs after they had been floated down to Quebec remained in the water a long time and contracted a moss which rotted them. When they were finally taken out, saturated with water, they were placed in the shipyard and exposed to all weathers. The lumber was further exposed to extremes of heat and cold for another two years while the ship was on the stocks.<sup>3.</sup> As we have seen, the "Conseil de Construction" decided that the lumber should be sheltered while it was in the yards.<sup>4.</sup> In 1757 Le Vasseur decided that he would try to shelter the frigate "Le Québec", then on the stocks, during the winter because he had come to the conclusion that the melting of the snow was the chief cause for the rotting of the wood.<sup>5.</sup>

1. Corres.Gen., C"A, Vol.101, p.388. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.1, 1756.

2. Supra. p.38.

3. Historical Documents, First Series (Que.Lit.and Hist.Soc.) Considérations sur l'Etat du Canada, (Oct.1758), p.18.

4. Supra. p. 47.

5. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.102, p.334. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.1, 1757.

The simplest explanation is, of course, that the carpenters sent out to mark the trees for cutting were unable to judge the quality of the standing timber. At one time, at least, the King seems to have held this opinion. Writing in 1742 with reference to the amount of wood cut for the Canada which had to be rejected, he added that it was to be hoped that the rejects would not be so great in future as the workmen who chose the trees should have learned something from their first experience.<sup>1</sup> The true explanation is probably to be found in all three suggestions taken together.

Other factors, too, contributed to the failure of the industry. Their influence was perhaps indirect but they, undoubtedly combined further to disgust the King with the whole enterprise. The industry had seemed to be growing. In 1743 the King, having been informed of some new discoveries of oak and fir, decided on the construction of a larger ship than ever before; this was "Le Saint Laurent" built to carry sixty guns.<sup>2</sup> The decision at once raised the question of building a new dockyard to facilitate the construction of larger ships. Accordingly, the new "Chantier du Cul de Sac" in Lower Town was begun.<sup>3</sup> As Le Vasseur pointed out, one of the advantages of the new shipyard over the old one which was on the St. Charles near the

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74(2), pp. 412-413. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 30, 1742.
2. Ibid., Vol. 76(1), p. 380. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 31, 1743.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol. 85, p. 8. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 19, 1746.

Intendant's Palace, was that the ships could be launched directly into the harbour so preventing any possibility of running aground on the way down the river.<sup>1</sup> The new shipyard was not ready in time for the building of "Le Saint Laurent". However, the ship was launched successfully from the "Chantier du Palais" and brought down the river without mishap. The first ship to be built on the "Chantier du Cul de Sac" was, therefore, the 72-gun vessel, "L'Original". On September the second, 1752, "L'Original", completely finished even to her paint, was launched. The ship started by herself, breaking the cables holding her, and leaving the slip, broke her back as she was taking the water. The shock was so violent that the pitch spouted from her seams to a distance of ten feet. Then the ship, caught by a light wind and the current, was carried along until it ran aground on a rock below Cape Diamond. The vessel could not be dislodged and in any case was so badly damaged as to be beyond repair. Accordingly such fittings as were intact were removed and the hulk abandoned.<sup>2</sup>

The King must have invested a considerable sum of money in the new shipyard. Beauharnois and Hocquart had estimated the

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.80, p.106. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1743.

2. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.95:pp.8-11. La Jonquière et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 1, 1750; pp.13-14. Bigot au Ministre Quebec, Oct. 2, 1750.

Presently the wreck worked loose and sank. Ultimately it became a hindrance to navigation by reason of the great number of anchors caught and lost in it. It was decided at last to get rid of this "anchor nest" and so in 1878-1879 all that was left of the Original was raised (F.C. Wurtele, The King's Ship L'Original. Printed in Trans.of the Roy.Soc.of Canada, Second Series, Vol.IV, Sect.2.pp.73-74)

cost at over one hundred thousand livres <sup>1</sup>. and the actual expense may well have overreached the estimate. That seems frequently to have happened in Canadian ventures. The cost of material and of two years labour had gone into "L'Orignal" and now the ship was lost owing in part, at least, to faults in the construction of the dock <sup>2</sup>. and in part perhaps to carelessness.<sup>3</sup> The accident produced an indelibly bad impression on the minds of the authorities. Rouillé's <sup>4</sup> reply to the letter informing him of the disaster is indicative of the feeling created in France. He said "La perte d'un *vau* tel que l'orignal est tres considerable par rapport à la depense, mais elle l'est encore bien d'avantage relativemen à l'etat actuel de la marine et aux efforts que l'on fait pour son retablissement. Vous devez bien penser d'ailleurs qu'un tel accident n'est pas propre à accrediter la construction des V<sup>x</sup> dans la Colonie. Je m'occupe cependant toujours de cet objet. Il seroit en effet bien facheux et pour la Colonie et pour le Service même de la marine qu'on fut obligé de l'abandonner. Il faudra pourtant bien en venir a cette extremité si l'on ne trouve pas les moyens d'y faire de bons V<sup>x</sup> et avec l'oeconomie dont la

1. Ordres et Dépêches B, Vol. 81, p. 268. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart, Versailles, May 5, 1745.
2. The slip seems to have been too short and too steep. To prevent the re-occurrence of such an accident the rock behind the shipyard was dug out and the stocks drawn back 33 feet so the ship could have a longer and more gradual run when it was being launched. Furthermore the stocks and the slip were lowered so that the water at high tide could be let in.
- (Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 95, pp. 15-16. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 2, 1750)
3. Both Governor and Intendant blamed Le Vasseur for not taking proper precautions in launching the vessel. (*Ibid.*, p. 13; *Ibid.*, pp. 188-191. La Jonquière au Ministre, Quebec, Sept. 17, 1750.
4. Ministre de Marine.

construction doit y être susceptible".<sup>1</sup>.

Rouillé went on to say that, in the confidence that La Jonquière, Bigot, and Le Vasseur would work together in harmony, he believed that the greatest obstacle in the way of the continuation of shipbuilding in Canada was the poor quality of the lumber.<sup>2</sup> But the assumption was premature as the Minister discovered within a few months' time. In the fall of the same year, 1751, Le Vasseur voiced his fears for the industry of which he was head. He declared that the construction was neglected by those who should have been interested in it. Bigot did everything without consulting either Le Vasseur or the good of the service. Favouritism was shown to individuals to such an extent that in the summer of 1751 the King's yards were without a single master carpenter while a private builder was employing thirty of them. Etienne Corbin, "contre maître", maintained by the King at a salary of 900 livres per annum, was working only for these favoured outsiders. Moreover, Corbin, acting on the Intendant's orders, had used lumber stored for "L'Algonquin". Le Vasseur, returning from a sojourn in the woods on one occasion,, found that such inroads had been made that instead of having dried and seasoned wood for the vessel, he had to use green wood fresh from the forest. The trouble went even further. Le Vasseur's statement of the wood he wanted cut to replace pieces found bad in the course of construction had been tampered with. Instead of the wood he had requested, small pieces suitable only for private construction had been cut and transported to Quebec. The "Constructeur's" final

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1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 93, p. 86. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, June 25, 1751.

2. Ibid.



complaint was that extraordinary expenses were being ascribed, quite inaccurately, to the construction of "L'Algonquin" to such an extent that Le Vasseur felt that the immense cost could not fail to disgust the Court.<sup>1</sup>

Le Vasseur at the time was decidedly embittered by what he felt to be an unfair imposition. In 1751 he had wanted to visit France but had been forbidden although "L'Algonquin" could not be completed, in any case, by the next year. Furthermore, he had just been deprived of a bonus of 300 livres which he had received for the last two years.<sup>2</sup> Finally, both Governor and Intendant had blamed Le Vasseur for the loss of "L'Orignal"<sup>3</sup>. His complaint might therefore be ascribed to a desire to vent his spleen. But it is not without significance that Bréard, as we have seen, was able to build four ships between 1750 and 1752 when, according to Bigot, the King's construction was being delayed for lack of workmen.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, Le Vasseur was not in a sufficiently influential position to afford to make groundless assertions about those in authority. Lastly, in view of what is known of Bigot's character it seems justifiable to believe that Le Vasseur's accusations were substantially true.

Bigot did not fail to strike back. In 1752, Le Vasseur was granted a brevet as "Inspecteur des Bois et Forêts en Canada" to look after the conservation of lumber. The "Constructeur's"

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 97, pp. 247-251. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 10, 1751

2. Ibid.

3. Supra. p. 43, Note 2.

4. Supra. p. 26.

promotion possibly did not please the Intendant. Bigot's hand is apparent in a joint letter from Governor and Intendant ridiculing all Le Vasseur's suggestions.<sup>1</sup>

In 1754, Le Vasseur then in France addressed another letter of complaint to the Minister. Bigot is not named but he would seem to be implied. Wood from the shipyards was still being issued to private individuals and replaced by planks that were useless for the King's ships. Le Vasseur felt quite justly that he was the best judge of what lumber could be spared and that none should be issued except on his certificate. Moreover, he objected to interference with his workmen. The choice of workmen was evidently not in his hands with the result that men absented themselves as they pleased; on other occasions they were drafted in such large numbers that the yards were swarming with incompetent workmen who increased expenses <sup>2</sup>. and could hardly have made for efficiency.

These complaints were not the major cause for the failure of the King's enterprise. But the suspicion cast on the Intendant and the very patent lack of harmony between the engineer and the heads of the colony were not conducive to peace of mind in France, nor were they a redeeming feature of the already troublesome and profitless colonial industry.

It was the war, of course, that put a final stop to the enterprise. For the building of the second frigate, "Le Québec", was abandoned in 1758 because all the carpenters had to be used to build

1. Corrés. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 98, pp. 8-12. Duquesne et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 15, 1752.

2. Ibid., Vol. 99, pp. 466-467. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Versailles, Feb. 25, 1754

boats for the service.<sup>1</sup>.

But the industry was dying anyway. Even had war not come it is probable that "Le Québec" would have been among the last ships built in the colony for the King. Canada had nothing to offer but lumber and that was rapidly proving to be only a specious advantage. Even had the colony been able to produce small ships successfully costs would have remained almost prohibitive. Labour must have continued both scarce and dear. There were no industries in New France that could supply, to any appreciable extent, the needs of the royal shipyards. Probably all the pitch that was required was produced in the colony, but the amount of rope supplied was negligible.<sup>2</sup> The Forges did provide some iron for the ships but never all that was necessary; none of the few cannons that were cast was ever used on any of the King's vessels. Practically everything but lumber had to come from France. The government must soon have tired of the cost and inconveniences attendant on the building of ships in Canada.

When the decision to build had been made there were no yards in Quebec ready to undertake the work at once. On the contrary, a great many preparations were necessary. Besides the cost of wages and material the King had to make a large capital investment.

A shipyard had first to be established on the St. Charles, not

1. Corres. Gen., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 103(2), p. 505. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1758.

2. Infra, pp. 64, 66

far from the Intendant's Palace.<sup>1.</sup> It was soon discovered that the depth of water there was not sufficient<sup>2.</sup> and the river had to be deepened before "Le Canada" was launched.<sup>3.</sup> In 1743 it was found necessary to enlarge the "Chantier du Palais". Two moles were built out from the old quays to a distance of 150 feet so that a large basin was formed. A new dry dock was built between the moles and capstans were to be placed along them so that the ship could be drawn down the slip into the water.<sup>4.</sup> As we have seen a new yard had presently to be built at the Cul de Sac.<sup>5.</sup>

A number of workshops, hitherto unnecessary, were set up around the shipyard. For example, in 1740 a blockmaker sent out from Rochefort, was settled in a house near the "Chantier",<sup>6.</sup> and a variety of other ateliers were established.<sup>7.</sup> In 1748 Bigot expressed his intention of placing forges within the new shipyard as well as the other necessary workshops.<sup>8.</sup> Accordingly five forges were built near the "Chantier du Cul de Sac", four for making knees and the fifth for the manufacture of nails. By 1750 iron knees were supplied for "L'Original". As for the making of nails, Bigot asked in 1749 that four workmen should be sent out

1. J.N.Fauteux, *op.cit.* t.I. p.245.

2. *Corres.Gén., C"A*, Vol.78, p.89. Chaussegros de Léry au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1742.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol.80, p.88. Varin au Ministre. Quebec, June 26, 1743.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol.79, pp.317-322. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Sept.15, 1743.

5. *Supra*, p.41.

6. This house was first rented from the S.Foucault and later bought. *Corres. Gén., C"A*; Vol.73, p.70. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 20, 1740; Vol.73, p.114. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 31, 1740; Vol.81(2), p.397. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 8, 1744.

7. *Ibid.*, Vol.85, p.71. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.9, 1746.

8. *Ibid.*, Vol.92, p.35. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.10, 1748.

from France as there was no one in Canada capable of doing the work.<sup>1</sup> It is not recorded whether they ever arrived.

The industry was never so firmly established as to permit of a staff of workmen being maintained continually in the colony. For example, the ships were always rigged by the crews sent out to sail them home.<sup>2</sup> These men were sometimes set to other tasks, too. In 1752, for instance, canvas was sent for "L'Algonquin" instead of the usual finished sails, made in the workshops at Brest. This was a mistake for there were no workmen in Canada capable of making up the canvas. Bigot asked, therefore, that some sailmakers should be included among the crew as well as a "Maître Voilier" to cut out the sails.<sup>3</sup> Caulkers were requested, too, on occasion, when the French workmen were too busy to do the work. Canadian workmen were not capable of doing the kind of caulking required for the King's vessels.<sup>4</sup>

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol. 93: pp. 295-296. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 6, 1749; p. 356. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 2, 1749.  
Hitherto the knees had been made from spruce roots. (Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, p. 222. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 6, 1741; Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol. 81(2), p. 382. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 7, 1744. etc) In 1748 Bigot found a smith capable of making iron knees. Le Vasseur supplied the workman with a wooden pattern and he produced a satisfactory specimen with iron from the St. Maurice Forges. (Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol. 92, p. 67. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 1, 1748)
2. e.g. Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A: Vol. 77, p. 241. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, June 28, 1742; Vol. 79, p. 368. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 3, 1743 etc.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol. 98, pp. 162-163. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 21, 1752.
4. Ibid.: Vol. 73, pp. 69-70. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Sept. 30, 1740; Vol. 98, pp. 162-163. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 21, 1752.

It is obvious that shipbuilding for the King was not an indigenous industry, not a natural development that formed an integral part of the economic life of the colony. The whole thing had been imposed from the outside. Hocquart was undoubtedly responsible for the imposition, for as early as 1731 he was urging the project and pointing out how the venture could be made possible.<sup>1</sup> It might well be asked why everything should have been brought to the lumber supply rather than vice versa. Doubtless it would have been easier to have brought Mahomet to the mountain; it usually is. The obvious answer is that the enterprise was another attempt to increase and diversify colonial industry.

But the project was one of the more sickly of Hocquart's numerous brain children. The enterprise was not in any real sense Canadian. It was directed by an engineer from France and executed, at least in its most important parts, by French workmen. In this respect it bears a certain analogy to the Forges of St. Maurice. It was doubtless intended that the industry should take root in the colony, but it never did. The attitude of the colonists is indicated by the practical failure of the apprenticeship system.

M. Fauteux, writing of the inception of the industry, says, "Tel fut le commencement d'une entreprise qui devait --- donner une vive impulsion aux établissements de la colonie"<sup>2</sup>. I cannot agree with this dictum. Shipbuilding gave only a very small fillip to other industries in the colony<sup>3</sup> and it could hardly have contributed to improving the reputation of Canadian lumber.

The royal venture was merely another attempt to hasten the

1. J.N.Fauteux, L'Industrie au Canada. t.I, pp.243-246.

2. Op.cit. t.I, pp.249-250.

3. Supra, p. 47



development of an unprogressive colony, but the point at which the authorities chose to begin was too far beyond the reach of the colony to serve as a starting point for growth. Canada merely turned a lacklustre eye on the antics of the government and was not moved to go and do likewise.

The King's shipbuilding does not fall into exactly the same category as the Forges of St. Maurice. The latter case is a pure example of how government intervention was necessitated by the backwardness of the colony. In the former case the two factors tend, to a very slight degree, to interact. As we have seen, the royal industry was one of the minor causes for the cessation of private shipbuilding in Canada. On the other hand, I am much inclined to believe that the private construction would not have survived anyway.<sup>1</sup> It is probable that without the King's industry there would have been practically no shipbuilding in Canada during the latter years of the French régime.

#### (c) Boat Building.

In Canada, dependent on its waterway communication, a great many boats were needed for the King's service. The Intendant, it was said, usually kept on hand six or seven hundred "batteaux" of six tons. A great quantity of these were lost yearly by wreck. The Intendant contracted with some one to make these boats but supplied all the material and fittings from the King's stores.<sup>2</sup>

Canoes were also required. In peace time the annual

1. cf. p.33

2. Archives Nationales, F 50, Vol.III, pp.17-18. Mémoire, unsigned.

expenditure for their construction and refitting was 6,000 livres.<sup>1</sup>. Most of the canoes were made in Montreal but, according to Franquet, the best bark variety came from Three Rivers. One which the engineer saw in the course of construction was thirty-three feet long, held eight people, and cost the King 300 livres.<sup>2</sup>. The canoemakers seem to have been genuine craftsmen and to have produced a first class article.

The most feverish activity was of course displayed in war time. The King's shipyard with its supply of workmen was a boon to the service in time of emergency and at such times the progress of the royal vessels was sacrificed to the more immediate need. For example, work on "Le St. Laurent" was delayed when most of the carpenters were employed, during the summer of 17<sup>th</sup>46, in preparing boats to transport soldiers to Acadia or in making canoes.<sup>3</sup>. We have already noted the effect of boatbuilding on the construction of "Le Québec".<sup>4</sup>.

There is an instance in 1755 of just how feverish the activity might be. In that year the Minister announced that three thousand Regulars were being sent to the colony and ordered that attention be given to the preparation of boats for use on the Lakes Ontario and Erie and canoes for the navigation of the Rivière au Boeuf and the Belle Rivière.<sup>5</sup>. It fell to Péan to

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>th</sup>A, Vol.79, p.3<sup>th</sup>3. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.29, 17<sup>th</sup>43.

2. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, p.17. July 27, 1752.

3. Corres.Gén., C<sup>th</sup>A, Vol.85, p.11. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.19, 17<sup>th</sup>46.

4. Supra, p.47.

5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.101, pp.133-13<sup>th</sup>4. Ministre à Varin. Versailles, Feb. 17, 1755.

to direct the work. He collected all the carpenters in the Montreal government and the men most skilful in using the axe, divided them into a night and day shift, and set them to work building and repairing boats. The night-shift worked by moonlight or by the light of torches. All the workmen available in town and country were pressed into service to make tools and utensils. This intensive preparation continued for eight days.<sup>1</sup>

Larger vessels, also, were built on the lakes. In 1755 the S. Oressé built at Fort Frontenac a schooner carrying ten guns<sup>2</sup>. and by the spring of 1756 had completed another "corsaire" there<sup>3</sup>. In 1756 a similar ten-gun schooner was built at Fort St. Jean<sup>4</sup> and in the following winter a 60-ton ship was being built on the Richelieu.<sup>5</sup> In 1758 two more 10-gun vessels were built on Lake Ontario and four armed xebecs on Lake Champlain.<sup>6</sup> And finally in 1759 there were built at La Présentation two or three schooners and three more xebecs for Lakes Ontario and Champlain respectively.<sup>7</sup>

## II (a) Lumber.

Even with the establishment of royal shipbuilding in Canada the forests were never really vigorously exploited. There was

1. Mémoire pour M. J-H. Péan, pp.93-95.
2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.100, p.186. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.6, 1755.
3. Ibid., Vol.101, p.127. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Montreal, Oct.18, 1756.
4. Ibid., Vol.101, p.389. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.1, 1756.
5. Ibid., Vol.102, p.334. Le Vasseur au Ministre, Quebec, Nov.1, 1757.
6. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.103(2), p.505. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.30, 1758.
7. Ibid.: Vol.104(1), pp.76-77. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Montreal, April 8, 1759; Vol.104(2), p.530. Bernier au Ministre. Montreal, April 15, 1759; Vaudreuil says two schooners were made; Bernier says three.

always a certain amount of local trade, of course. The towns were supplied with firewood by inhabitants of the vicinity who brought wood into market.<sup>1</sup> A certain amount of lumber had to be cut too, for such private shipbuilding as was carried on, and for a variety of other purposes.

Exploitation for colonial use did of course become more extensive when the King's shipyards were established. Up to 1743 practically all the wood came from the Montreal government<sup>2</sup>. but from that year a great deal of timber was brought from the Lake Champlain district as well.<sup>3</sup> At first the exploitation was mostly "par économie", that is, a master carpenter from the King's yards and a large gang of carpenters and lumbermen paid by the King, were sent into the forest in the winter to cut the required timber. For example, in 1740 we find David Corbin, master carpenter, leaving Quebec at the end of September with sixty-three men to cut wood for "Le Caribou" on the Isle Perrot, at Quinchien and in the environs.<sup>4</sup> From the beginning however, there was always a certain amount of lumber supplied "par entreprise". Up to 1744 a contract was made annually with one Baron, erstwhile house carpenter, to supply side planking and other wood.<sup>5</sup> In that year Baron died and the exploitation was

1. Répertoire des Arrêts, etc (ed. by E.Z. Massicotte), p.103. Ordonnance de M. de Monrepos. Montreal, Dec. 22, 1741; Edits et Ordonnances, Vol. II, p.397. Ordonnance de Bigot. Quebec, Sept. 20, 1748.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>A</sup>: Vol. 74, p.156. Varin au Ministre. May 27, 1740; Vol. 75, p.353. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 2, 1741 etc.
3. Ibid.: Vol. 79, p.363. Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 2, 1743; Vol. 85, p.63. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 9, 1746. etc.
4. Ibid.: Vol. 73, p.67. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 30, 1740.
5. Ibid.: Vol. 73, pp.67-68. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 30, 1740; Vol. 75, p.355. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 2, 1741; Vol. 79, p.360. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 2, 1743.

carried on by his widow.<sup>1</sup> From 1745 to 1748 the contract was passed with Baron's son.<sup>2</sup> There is no record of any exploitation by entrepreneurs after that date although there may have been some. Baron seems to have been the principal contractor but contracts were occasionally made with other individuals. For example, one Joseph Delorme, a carpenter by trade, undertook to supply all the lumber necessary for the enlargement of the "Chantier du Palais". He in turn seems to have given out contracts to habitants for various sorts of wood.<sup>3</sup> In 1746 Le Vasseur was commissioned to make bargains with the habitants of the Sorel district for the supplying of fifty pieces of red pine to be converted into side planking for "Le St. Laurent."<sup>4</sup>

As we have seen,<sup>5</sup> one attempt was made to have all the exploitation carried out "par entreprise" but the authorities soon reverted to the system which has been described.

A general supervision was maintained over the contractors. A carpenter was always sent with Baron and his men to mark the trees for cutting.<sup>6</sup> In 1743, when Baron contracted to supply practically all the wood necessary for the King's yards, Hocquart made the entrepreneur employ four good ship carpenters along

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A: Vol.81(2), pp.383-384. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.7, 1744.
2. Ibid: Vol.83, pp.339-340. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.1, 1745; Vol.92, p.31. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.10, 1748.
3. Ord.des.Int., M.30, Vol.XVII, pp38-40. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, May 24, 1743.
4. Inv. des Ord: Vol.III, p.79. Feb. 7, 1746.
5. Supra, pp.36-37
6. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.75, p.355. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct.2, 1741.

with his lumbermen.<sup>1</sup> Each winter the S. Le Vasseur himself, usually visited the lumber camps both of the entrepreneur and of the King's carpenters to inspect the work.<sup>2</sup>

These visits were made when the Constructeur was traversing the forest to find new oak and pine groves and to inspect those of which the discovery had been reported.<sup>3</sup>

The first war interfered to a certain extent with the exploitation in the Lake Champlain district.<sup>4</sup> As for the second war, by 1757 the workmen were too much afraid of the savages to go into the forests.<sup>5</sup>

The cost and quality of Canadian lumber used in the royal shipyards has already been discussed.<sup>6</sup> Although neither proved satisfactory to the authorities in France, they evidently remained convinced of the value of the forest resources of the colony. The Minister of Marine always evinced a great deal of interest in the question of conservation of timber. However genuine the interest was, nothing very much was ever done in this direction. The danger arose from an indiscriminate cutting by habitants of wood valuable for shipbuilding, and especially from forest fires. In this latter case the Indians were the worst

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 79, p. 361. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 2, 1743.

2. e.g. Ibid.: Vol. 81(2) p. 293. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, May 13, 1744; Vol. 92, p. 142. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 10, 1748. etc.

3. e.g. Ibid.: Vol. 80, p. 104. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1743; Vol. 85, p. 9. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 19, 1746; Vol. 93, pp. 297-298. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 6, 1749. etc.

4. Ibid., Vol. 89, p. 151. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Oct. 10. 1747.

5. Ibid., Vol. 102, p. 333. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 1, 1757.

6. Supra, pp. 35-41



offenders although hunters and gatherers of ginseng root were also on occasion responsible for starting disastrous fires.<sup>1.</sup>

According to Franquet, the fires often did not go out until the approach of winter after burning all summer and doing very great damage.<sup>2.</sup>

There were numerous projects for forest conservation but none of them ever came to very much.<sup>3.</sup> In 1752 Le Vasseur was appointed "Inspecteur du Bois et des Forêts" in order to attend to the matter, but none of his suggestions was ever adopted.<sup>4.</sup> The only definite step was taken in 1740 when Beauharnois and Hocquart decided to expand the clause in seigniorial title deeds reserving oak to the King, so as to include the reservation of all wood suitable for shipbuilding.<sup>5.</sup>

In addition to the supplying of the local market, there was also a certain amount of lumber exported to the West Indies and to France. At the opening of the period Canada was supplying wood to the Isles where it was in demand for making casks and for house building, but the trade was hampered by an insufficiency of ships.<sup>6.</sup>

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A: Vol. 96, p. 19. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 9, 1750; Vol. 98, p. 9. Duquesne et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 15, 1752.
2. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, p. 60. Aug. 9, 1752.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol. 75, pp. 359-360. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 2, 1741; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), pp. 379-380. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 31, 1743; Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol. 92, p. 36. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 10, 1748.
4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol. 98, pp. 8-12. Duquesne et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 15, 1752; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 97, p. 140. Ministre à Duquesne et Bigot. Versailles, June 8, 1753.
5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, p. 237. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 12, 1741.
6. Corres. Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol. 76, pp. 192-193. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada (unsigned) 1741.

During the war years, 17<sup>11</sup>4 to 17<sup>4</sup>8, interference with communications must have had an adverse effect on this trade as it did on all export trade to the Isles. The trade was being carried on in 1755 however, for in that year it was remarked that captains of vessels coming from France and returning by way of the Isles, bought wood in order to make up a cargo. But in that year this export was forbidden because lumber was becoming scarce in the colony as a result of the "movements of the war".<sup>1</sup>.

The war also killed a project to export masts to Santo Domingo. In 1757, the S.Jauge, a Bordeaux merchant, was willing to transport masts thither and the Minister was prepared to sell the merchant masts from the King's stores in Canada at cost price.<sup>2</sup>. Bigot, however, explained that the masts came from the Lake Champlain district where no workmen dared venture without a military escort. Exploitation under such conditions would make the cost prohibitive. Moreover, the carpenters were all needed for the service.<sup>3</sup>. Even had Jauge succeeded in procuring a cargo of masts his venture would have been short lived in the face of attacks from English warships and privateers.

Such trade as there was with the West Indies was, apparently, in private hands. The export trade to France, however, seems largely to have been directed by the government. Up to 1751 there is no hint of any merchant in Canada engaging in the trade

1. Ord. des Int., M33, VolXX, pp.349-350. Ordonnance de Bigot. Quebec, June 30, 1756.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.105, p.79. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 28, 1757.
3. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol.102, pp.299-300. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.22, 1757.

on his own initiative.<sup>1.</sup>

This generalization is perhaps a little sweeping. Such evidence as there is however, all points in this direction. In 1740 the Minister informed Hocquart that the Marquis de Surgères wanted three hundred boards of Canadian oak. This lumber was to be shipped on the King's ship and a statement of the total expense sent to the Minister.<sup>2.</sup> Accordingly Hocquart made a contract with Baron to supply the oak at 22 sous the cubic foot<sup>3.</sup> and Surgères in due course received his order.<sup>4.</sup> What the method of payment was is not recorded. Presumably the Marquis paid the cost of the freight to the King. It seems likely that the price of the lumber was paid into the colonial treasury from which Hocquart then paid the contractor, for it was the Intendant who had made the agreement with Baron. In that case the government may have received more than 22 sous per cubic foot, to cover the cost of making arrangements. That is to say, it is probable that the government did not merely make the contact between purchaser and vendor as a Board of Trade might do but instead handled the whole deal.

In 1749 the Minister wished to have fifty beams for the Hotel Dieu at St. Malo bought in Canada and shipped to France on the King's vessel. The order was not filled however, for the colony could not supply the kind of beams specified.<sup>5.</sup>

1. Infra, p. 60

2. Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol. 70(1), p. 249. Ministre à Hocquart. Marly, May 13, 1740; Vol. 72, p. 62. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, Feb. 25, 1741.

3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 75, p. 351. Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 1, 1741

4. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), p. 137. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 11, 1743.

5. Ibid: Vol. 89, p. 44. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, Feb 14, 1749; Vol. 89, p. 193. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 14, 1750.

In 1751 came the aforementioned private enterprise.<sup>1.</sup> In that year the S.Martin bought wood in the colony and shipped it to his business partners in Marseilles. They were satisfied with it and formed a project to extend the commerce. Accordingly they obtained permission to exploit in Canada, oak and other wood suitable for shipbuilding, which they intended to carry to France in the company's ships. Martin was evidently to manage the Canadian end of the business. He did take some steps to establish the trade but with what success it is impossible to say, for after the fall of 1752 nothing more is heard of the venture.<sup>2.</sup>

The government, in addition to handling purchases of wood for private individuals, also bought lumber for its own use. For example, between the years 1733 and 1745 lumber, supplied by the Chevalier Bégon in fulfillment of his contract with the King, was shipped to Brest and Rochefort. The wood was carried on the King's vessels.<sup>3.</sup>

The King had wood, cut by his employees, also shipped to France. This lumber seems chiefly to have been boards for making barrels and was a by-product of the timber cut for the royal

1. Supra, p. 58.

2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 95, pp. 115-116. Ministre à Dusquesne et Bigot. Versailles, June 8, 1752; Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 98 pp. 336-367. Martin au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 5, 1752.

3. J.N. Fauteux, op.cit., t. I, pp. 212-213; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 81, p. 121. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 31, 1745. In 1733 Bégon was "lieutenant du Roi" at Montreal. Ten years later he was promoted to the governorship of Three Rivers, which he held until his death in 1748.

shipbuilding.<sup>1.</sup> In 17<sup>43</sup> the Minister ordered a complete assortment of spruce for the building of a 2<sup>4</sup>-gun frigate at Brest, by way of an experiment to ascertain the value of this variety of wood for naval construction.<sup>2.</sup>

The export of masts to France for the service had ceased before our period.<sup>3.</sup> The question of their exploitation was raised again in 175<sup>4</sup><sup>4.</sup> and Le Vasseur proposed to set out in the winter of 175<sup>4</sup>-1755 to locate tracts of pine.<sup>5.</sup> But circumstances brought about by the war prevented the Constructeur's carrying out his intention.<sup>6.</sup>

It is obvious that apart from the exploitation of wood for the King's shipyards there was no flourishing lumber industry in the colony. The royal enterprise, considered in the long view, doubtless served to discredit Canadian lumber. Its immediate effect, however, was to stimulate the industry. Even so, no extraordinary progress was made. The shipyards were probably the largest single market supplied and yet there were only a few ships built.

Had the government taken no part in the industry either directly or indirectly, there would have been little wood cut beyond what was

1. e.g. *Corres.Gén., C"A*: Vol.81(2), p.292. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, May 13, 17<sup>44</sup>; Vol.88, pp.68-69. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.4, 17<sup>47</sup>.
2. *Ordres et Dépêches, B*, Vol.76(1), p.107. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, Feb.13, 17<sup>43</sup>.
3. J.N.Fauteux, *op.cit.*, pp.210-211.
4. Ministre à Bigot. June 4, 175<sup>4</sup>. Quoted by J.N.Fauteux, *op.cit.*, t.I, p.218.
5. *Corres.Gén., C"A*, Vol.99, p.474. Mémoire sur les mâtures. Enclosed with a letter from Le Vasseur to the Minister, Quebec, Oct.15, 175<sup>4</sup>.
6. *Ibid.*, Vol.100, p.186. Le Vasseur au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.6, 1755.

necessary for local needs. The lumber industry again demonstrates the fact that without the intervention of a paternalistic government, economic activity in Canada would have been even more feeble than it was.

Saw mills were, of course, a necessary adjunct to the industry. In 1734 there were fifty-two saw mills in Canada and the number increased during our period.<sup>1</sup> These mills were owned by various seigniors, lay and ecclesiastic.

Some of the owners turned their mills over to other individuals in return for a share in the profits. For example, M. de Lotbinière, dean of the chapter at Quebec, leased two of his mills for a fifty per cent share in the returns. At another of his mills he contracted with an individual to saw two thousand planks and bring them to Quebec for 60 livres.<sup>2</sup> In 1745 the Mlles. de Ramezay and de Rouville formed a partnership to build a saw mill on the Richelieu, east of the Chambly Basin. In 1751 Mlle. de Ramezay is found leasing the mill for six years to a master carpenter in return for half of the profits.<sup>3</sup>

The Intendant doubtless contracted with some of the various owners for the preparation of the lumber cut for the King's vessels or for the service.

1. J.N.Fauteux, op.cit., t.I, p.214.

2. Ord. des Int., M 30, Vol.XVII: pp.5-6. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, March 9, 1743; pp.12-13. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, March 16, 1743.

3. J.N.Fauteux, op.cit., t.I, p. 215.



## (b) Pitch, Resin and Tar.

The colony provided, of course, abundant material for the manufacture of pitch, resin and tar. The first effort to produce these commodities was made in Talon's time but the attempt came to an end in 1673. In 1705 the colonial authorities introduced the industry again and subsequently kept it alive by considerable exertion and at considerable cost. In 1729 Hocquart wrote that the efforts made by the government up to that date had benefited neither King nor colony.

The Intendant however continued to foster the industry. Up to 1730 soldiers had been employed at Baie St. Paul to make tar for the King's account. In that year Hocquart induced habitants to carry on the exploitation, contracting to buy all the produce at a fixed price. Habitants at Kamouraska, Rivière Ouelle and Chambly also undertook to make tar.<sup>1</sup>

When our period opens, Hocquart is discovered still trying to encourage the industry. In 1740, Antoine Serindac, sergeant in the Troupe de la Marine, accompanied by two soldiers was sent into the seigniories of Berthier and Dautré, in the Montreal government, to undertake there the making of pitch and resin for the King's stores at Rochefort.<sup>2</sup>

In the same year, permission was granted to one Antoine Bernonville, another sergeant in the Marine, to make tar from a quantity of dead pine trees he had found along the Richelieu River. The sergeant also proposed to remit his product to the King's stores.<sup>3</sup>

1. J.N.Fauteux, op.cit., t.II, pp.308-326.

2. Ord.des Int., M 28, Vol XV, p.327. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, April 26, 1740.

3. Ibid, pp.336-338. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, April 29, 1740.

The industry seemed at first to be making progress. In 17<sup>42</sup>, 200 barrels of tar from Baie St. Paul were sent to Rochefort and that represented only part of the total product.<sup>1</sup> In 17<sup>45</sup>, 250 barrels from Baie St. Paul and Sorel were received in the King's stores<sup>2</sup> and the following year there were 171 barrels. In that year Hocquart wrote that the industry was establishing itself little by little.<sup>3</sup>

The shipbuilding undertaken for the King does not seem to have had the effect of stimulating the industry. Doubtless, a good deal of the product was used in the shipyards; for example, 8000 pounds of pitch and resin which Serindac and some others sent to the royal stores in Quebec in 17<sup>45</sup>, were reserved for the King's shipbuilding.<sup>4</sup> But the increase in the amount consumed in the colony probably meant only a decrease in the amount shipped to Rochefort. There is no evidence that the exploitation became more extensive as a result of the increased market. M. Fauteux suggests that the industry died with the King's shipbuilding.<sup>5</sup> What its fortunes were after 17<sup>46</sup> the records do not make clear but to judge from the S. Boucault's remarks no exceptional progress had been made by 17<sup>54</sup>. He says, "il (the industry) a été depuis quelques années assez négligé, il y en a cependant encore quelques-uns qui en font vers la Rivière-Ouelle, et le

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 77, pp. 380-381. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 22, 17<sup>42</sup>.
2. Ibid., Vol. 83, pp. 378-379. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 16, 17<sup>45</sup>.
3. Ibid., Vol. 85, p. 67. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 9, 17<sup>46</sup>.
4. Ibid., Vol. 84, p. 378. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 16, 17<sup>45</sup>.
5. Op.cit. t. II, p. 331.

Kamouraska, qu'ils fournissent aux magasins du Roy".<sup>1</sup>.

(c) Rope.

The amount of rope produced in the colony, at least during our period, was practically negligible. In 17<sup>40</sup> there were three ropemakers in Quebec but their work was so poor that it was only in a pressing necessity that they were employed.<sup>2</sup> Most of the shipbuilders brought the rope they needed from France.<sup>3</sup>

Hocquart, cherishing as usual any spark of economic life in the colony, suggested that a rope maker might be sent from France to supervise the other three. His wages would be small but he would be decorated with the title of "Maitre Cordier du Port de Québec"<sup>4</sup>. doubtless by way of compensation. No such appointment was made, but in 17<sup>41</sup> the Intendant discovered that Raymond, one of the three ropemakers, had his "lettres de Maitrise". Accordingly the making of some rope for the cradle of "Le Canada" was confided to him, assisted by the other two. By dint of supervising the preparation of the material and by promising a little "entretien"<sup>5</sup>, Hocquart had the work completed satisfactorily.<sup>6</sup> In 17<sup>43</sup>, the trio supplied rope for the cradle of "Le Caribou". The quality of the product was evidently improving

1. Rapp.de l'Arch., 1920-1921, pp.21-22. Boucault, Etat Présent du Canada (1754)

2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol.73, pp.57-58. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.28, 17<sup>40</sup>.

3. Ibid., Vol.76, pp.199-200. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada. Unsigned (17<sup>41</sup>)

4. Ibid., Vol.73, pp.57-58. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.28, 17<sup>40</sup>.

5. Ibid., Vol.75, pp.370-371. Hocquart au Ministre. Oct.3, 17<sup>41</sup>.

6. Ibid., Vol.77, pp.38<sup>4</sup>. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Sept.22, 17<sup>42</sup>

a little, for in that year the Intendant reported that the ropemakers were making rope at least good enough for the needs of the habitants and for merchant vessels.<sup>1</sup>

But the industry came to a stop within a few years, for the colony had ceased to supply any rope whatever sometime before 1749.<sup>2</sup> The local craftsmen had certainly never provided all the rope that was necessary for the King's ships.<sup>3</sup> Further it is unlikely that they ever produced anything good enough to be used for rigging.

The principal objective of the authorities in their attempt to sustain the manufacture of rope in the colony was to encourage the growing of hemp and so bring more land under cultivation.<sup>4</sup> The industry might also contribute to the needs of the royal shipbuilding.<sup>5</sup> We have seen that they failed to achieve the incidental aim. They failed even more signally to attain the major end.

In 1740 hemp was being cultivated in the colony<sup>6</sup> but the production was on the decline. In 1729 Hocquart estimated the crop at 80,000 pounds. Five years later, in 1734, only 2,200 pounds were raised.<sup>7</sup> After 1740 the crop continued to dwindle<sup>8</sup>.

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.80, p.35. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.24, 1743.
2. Ibid., Vol.93, p.250. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.25, 1749.
3. Ibid., Vol.77, p.393, Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Sept.24, 1742; Vol.88, p.64. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.11, 1747. etc  
These letters acknowledge receipt of rope from France for the King's ships.
4. Ibid., Vol.73, pp.57-58. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.28, 1740.
5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.72, pp.212-213. Ministre à Hocquart. Marly, May 6, 1741.
6. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.73, pp.57-58. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.28, 1740.
7. Ivanhoe Caron, La Colonisation du Canada sous la Domination Française, op.66-67.
8. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.83, p.375. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.16, 1745.

until in 1746, the King referred to the cultivation of hemp as having been altogether abandoned.<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact hemp was raised in 1746<sup>2</sup> and in 1747<sup>3</sup> but the quantity was negligible.

The hemp produced, at least in our period, was never satisfactory. The growers regularly brought their hemp to the King's stores but a quantity of it was so badly prepared that it had to be rejected<sup>4</sup>. The loss incurred was not conducive to more extensive cultivation. Hocquart fully realized this fact. On one occasion he was about to refuse some very carelessly prepared hemp brought in by the habitants of Batiscan, but fearing to lessen their efforts, he compromised by accepting it at a 10% reduction and by issuing a warning that only well-conditioned hemp would be received in future.<sup>5</sup> The Intendant did his best to overcome the fault. For example, in 1742, he arranged with the S. Agnan, merchant at Batiscan, who knew the correct method of preparation, to encourage the cultivation in the vicinity and to maintain a general supervision.<sup>6</sup> The hemp from that district.

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 83, p. 155. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 1, 1746.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 85, p. 68. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 9, 1746.
3. Ibid., Vol. 89, p. 165. Boisclerc au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 4, 1747.
4. Ibid., Vol. 75, p. 369. Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 3, 1741;  
Vol. 77, p. 382. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 22, 1742;  
Vol. 81(2) p. 497. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 24, 1744.
5. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 75, pp. 369-370. Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 3, 1741.
6. Ibid., Vol. 77, p. 382. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 22, 1742.

was improved a little as a result.<sup>1</sup> In 17<sup>44</sup>, however, the Intendant is still talking in general terms of the rejects and of his attempts to convince the habitants of the advantage of perfecting the cultivation<sup>2</sup>. But the habitants continued on their unwitting way, determined, evidently, not to cultivate hemp at all if they could not raise it as carelessly as they did everything else on their farms. The final discouragement to the cultivation was the high price of wheat during the famine years of the early part of the <sup>first</sup> decade<sup>3</sup>. The habitants, very reasonably, preferred to put land under grain.

The cultivation did not suffer from the lack of a market for the product, notwithstanding the insignificant quantity of rope made in the colony. Hocquart always accepted any hemp of reasonably good quality that was presented, irrespective of the amount that could be made up by the three ropemakers. For example, in 17<sup>40</sup> there were 30,000 pounds of hemp in the stores, which was more than enough to keep the ropemakers busy for a year or two.<sup>4</sup> Yet Hocquart went on buying. By the following year the quantity had risen to 40,000 pounds<sup>5</sup> but still the Intendant continued to purchase hemp.

The Abbé Ivanhoë Caron attributes the decline to a reduction

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.80, pp.35-36. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.24, 17<sup>43</sup>.
2. Ibid., Vol.81(2), p.497. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.24, 17<sup>44</sup>.
3. Ibid.; Ibid., Vol.83, pp.375-376. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.16, 17<sup>45</sup>.
4. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.73, pp.57-58. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 28, 17<sup>40</sup>.
5. Ibid., Vol.75, p.370. Hocquart au Ministre. Oct.3, 17<sup>41</sup>.



in the price, effected in 1730, In that year the price set was 25 livres the hundredweight. Caron says "Evidemment le prix de 60 et 40 livres du quintal est trop encourageant, il faut le diminuer." <sup>1</sup>. The implication is that the cultivation was destroyed by a caprice of the French government. The inference is hardly just. Undoubtedly the habitants were dissatisfied with the reduced price <sup>2</sup>. but it is undeniable that the authorities were anxious to encourage the production and it seems improbable that the price was fixed at so low a figure as to make the cultivation profitless. The situation might well be interpreted as evidence that the habitants were willing only to do poor work for a large profit instead of good work for a fair profit. That, of course, is a common enough failing. The real explanation of the failure of the attempt to establish the cultivation of hemp is to be found in the vast disinclination of the colony to exert itself, for its own good, at the behest of the government.

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1. Ivanhoë Caron, La Colonisation du Canada sous la Domination Française. pp.66-67.

2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.93, pp.250-251. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 25, 1749.

### CHAPTER III.

#### AGRICULTURE AND AGRICULTURAL TRADE.

##### I. Agriculture.

Farming was the basis of the economic structure of the colony and the occupation of the large majority of Canadians. All land was held in accordance with a feudal arrangement adapted to colonial needs and known as the seigniorial system. The system of land tenure was briefly this:

All land in the colony belonged, in the first instance, to the King of France. Portions of it were granted by Governor and Intendant together, subject to royal approval, to individuals and to corporations, such as religious communities. The concessions were of whatever extent the officials might define but the shape was always rectangular, with the shorter side fronting on the water, in most cases the St. Lawrence or Richelieu Rivers. By far the largest number of grants was made to seigniors to be held "en fief et seigneurie". There were other forms in which the concessions might be made, e.g. "en franc aleu noble", "en franc aleu roturier", or "en frank almoign", but these need not concern us here.

The seignior, in possession of a block of land, then, normally, proceeded to set aside a certain amount for his own domain and to lease the rest to tenants. These small land holders were usually known as "habitants" and held their land "en censive" or "en roture".<sup>1</sup> That is to say, they paid a small rent, the "cens et rentes", to the seignior. The habitant was not a serf for he was not bound to the land. Although he did not own his land

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1. These terms are alternative.

outright, it passed to his direct heirs and no grant once given, could be revoked unless the holder (whether seignior or habitant) failed to put the land under cultivation.

The habitants, like the seigniors, wanted river frontage, so their lands, too, took the form of long, narrow, rectangular blocks. The holdings varied from one to five arpents<sup>1</sup> in width and from ten to eighty arpents in length. In accordance with the rules of succession, the direct heirs of the censitaire each had an equal share in <sup>the</sup>patrimony. As each inheritor still wanted a share of the waterfront, the holdings became progressively narrower until, as we have seen, they might be only one arpent, that is, less than 200 feet, in width.<sup>2</sup> The abuse reached such proportions that, on the complaints of Beauharnois and Hocquart, a royal edict was issued in 1745 forbidding habitants to build their houses on holdings of a smaller area than one and one-half by thirty to forty arpents, on pain of a fine of 100 livres and the demolition of the buildings.<sup>3</sup> How vigorously this regulation was enforced it is difficult to say. In 1749, Bigot commissioned the S. Hertel de Rouville to pull down some houses at l'Ange Gardien, whose owners had contravened the edict.<sup>4</sup> Again, in 1752, four houses on the island of Orleans were ordered demolished for the same reason.<sup>5</sup> Apparently, however, the rule applied only to habitants who built after 1745 and it is probable that in

1. The linear arpent is 192 feet and the superficial arpent about 5/6 of an acre.
2. This information is taken from W.B. Munro, The Seigniorial System in Canada. (Cambridge, Mass., 1907) pp. 37, 42, 43, 52, 54-56, 78, 79, 81, 83.
3. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol. I, pp. 585-586. Arrêt du Roi. Versailles, April 28, 1745.
4. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 400. Ordonnance de Bigot. Quebec, June 25, 1749.
5. Ibid., pp. 594-595. Jan. 12, 1752.

the more remote districts offenders were not punished.

Thus it is evident that in New France the land was for the most part cultivated in rather small peasant holdings which jostled one another along the banks of the navigable rivers. The most populous part was between Montreal and Quebec. At the expense of being trite one may illustrate the point with the much-quoted observation of Peter Kalm, the Swedish naturalist who visited the colony in 1749. "The country on both sides of the St. Lawrence," said he --- "could really be called a village, beginning at Montreal, and ending at Quebec, which is a distance of more than one hundred and eighty miles; for the farm houses are never above five arpents, and sometimes but three, asunder, a few places excepted".<sup>1</sup>.

The habitant cultivated his land apparently with the sole object of raising enough food for himself and his numerous family and, therefore, invariably engaged in mixed farming. On practically every farm there was a kitchen garden where various sorts of vegetables, especially onions, were grown. The garden usually included fruit bushes, too, and some of the farms had small orchards.<sup>2</sup> In the fields near the river grain was raised - maize, rye, barley, oats, and especially wheat.<sup>3</sup> Wheat was the staple crop of the colony, the more so because no potatoes were grown. In 1758, in answer to the Minister's suggestion that the

1. Kalm, Travels into North America, Vol.III, pp.80-81. (London, 1771. Tr.by Forster) It is interesting to note that an officer in Wolfe's army, Capt. John Knox, also likened the countryside along the river to a continuous village (Knox, An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America, (Toronto, Champlain Soc., 1914) Vol.II, p.612. Sept. 1760
2. Kalm, op.cit., Vol.III, pp.79, 119-120, 253.
3. Ibid., pp.158, 253, 290.

cultivation of potatoes should be introduced into Canada in order to supplement the wheat supply,<sup>1</sup>. Vaudreuil and Bigot pointed out that the habitants were accustomed to good wheaten bread and if potatoes were introduced would feed them only to their animals.<sup>2</sup>. As for stock, the habitant raised cattle, pigs, a few sheep, and poultry.

The implements in use were primitive and the methods careless. The only implements, other than hand utensils, that the habitants seem to have had were the plough and the harrow, the latter a clumsy wooden affair<sup>3</sup> that could hardly have been very effective. The plough and the harrow were drawn sometimes by oxen harnessed by the horns,<sup>4</sup> but more usually by horses.<sup>5</sup>. The habitant ploughed in the autumn but sowed only in the following spring. Garden seed was set out early in hot beds and then transplanted. The other sowing began usually in April, sometimes in May, depending on the weather. The seed was scattered on the ground and turned in by passing the harrow over it.<sup>6</sup>. The hay harvest was begun in August and the wheat was cut in September.<sup>7</sup>. Threshing was not done however until the "arrière saison",

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 107, pp. 142-143. Ministre à Vaudreuil et Bigot. Versailles, Feb. 24, 1758.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 103(1), p. 3. Vaudreuil et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Aug. 8, 1758.
3. Kalm, Travels, Vol. III, pp. 189-190.
4. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 188.
5. Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924, p. 42. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bougainville)
6. Ibid., 1920-1921, pp. 20-21. Boucault, Etat Présent du Canada. (1754) These hot beds may have been boxes from which the tops were taken when the sun shone. It is unlikely that they were glass frames, for glass was not common in the country districts. According to Kalm, windows were not glazed, but were covered with oiled paper. (op.cit., Vol. III, p. 256)
7. Kalm, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 157; Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 75, p. 349. Hocquart au Ministre. Sept. 7, 1741.

sometimes as late as the middle of December.<sup>1</sup> When the habitant had threshed his grain, <sup>presumably</sup> by flailing, he carried it to the banal mill to be ground. The hay, when it was cut and dried, was built into haystacks in the meadows.<sup>2</sup>

The fields were not drained although, according to Kalm, they seemed, sometimes, to have needed draining.<sup>3</sup> The habitant believed in letting nature take its course. Every harvest he saw that the stubble fields held more weeds than straw yet never attempted to weed his grain.<sup>4</sup> His efforts to assist the productivity of the soil stopped short with allowing the fields to lie fallow at intervals, when the land was not ploughed and weeds were allowed to flourish unrestrained.<sup>5</sup> In some places not even this effort was made to refresh the soil.<sup>6</sup> The worst contravention of good sense however, was the habitants' practice of disposing of the manure from the stables by the simple expedient of dumping it into the river.<sup>7</sup> The result must have been, on the whole, the progressive exhaustion of the soil and steadily, if slowly, dwindling crops. And in fact Franquet remarked that the land was less fertile than it had been.<sup>8</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.76, p.81. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Dec. 17, 1741; Considérations sur l'Etat Présent du Canada. (Oct.1758), p.5. Printed in Historical Documents, First Series (Que. Lit. and Hist.Soc)
2. Kalm, Travels, Vol.III, p.157.
3. Ibid., pp.157-158.
4. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.30, 1749. Printed in Documents relating to currency, etc., (ed. by Adam Shortt) Vol.II, p.793.
5. Kalm, Travels, Vol.III, p.158.
6. Ibid., pp.51-52.
7. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, p.181.
8. Ibid.

Each habitant may have employed a system of cultivation on his own farm roughly analogous to the manorial three-field system. Kalm observed that all the hay meadows had formerly been corn fields for the marks of the furrows were still visible.<sup>1</sup> The fields may therefore have been given over successively to grain and hay and then left fallow. The system, if it was employed, probably had only very little regularity. For instance, a field might have been left under hay for more than one year, and grain fields might have been left fallow without the intervening step of putting them under timothy.

Methods of stockraising were still more slipshod. The habitant had even less notion of scientific stockbreeding than he had of scientific agriculture. On some of the seigniories the cattle were pastured in common herd.<sup>2</sup> Frequently, too, they were turned out to graze on the fallow land where the growth consisted almost entirely of weeds.<sup>3</sup> In some cases all the stock seems to have been turned out to forage for itself between the end of harvesting and the first snow.<sup>4</sup> One example of the habitant's lack of management is the fact that the sheep were allowed to breed at their own discretion. The result was that a great number of lambs were born in February,

1. Kalm, Travels, Vol.III, pp.156-157.

2. Ordonnance de Bégon. Quebec, April 24, 1723. Quoted in Jodoin et Vincent, Longueuil, p.220; Ord. des Int., M 29, Vol.XVI, p.30 Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, March 15, 1741. These ordinances refer to commons provided by seigneurs for the pasturage of the habitants' cattle. It is not clear whether the provision of the field was obligatory; certainly the use of it was not.

3. Kalm, Travels, Vol.III, p.158.

4. Répertoire des Arrêts (ed. by E.Z. Massicotte): p.100. Sept. 23, 1740; p.107. May 8, 1745; p.110. May 6, 1747 (Ordonnances de de Monrepos). Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.II: pp.393-394. Quebec, Dec. 29, 1747; p.401. June 27, 1749 (Ordonnances de Hocquart).



when the ground was covered with snow, so that the greater part of them was lost and the rest had to be sheltered and provided with fodder, which was always scarce and dear.<sup>1.</sup>

The beasts must inevitably have become scrub stock. Kalm's evidence is not, therefore, surprising. He says "The cows have --- been imported from France ---. Every body agreed that the cattle, which were born of the original French breed, never grow up to the same size." And again, "The sheep degenerate here, after they are brought from France, and their progeny still more so."<sup>2.</sup> This, Kalm was told, was the result of scarcity of fodder during the winter.<sup>3.</sup> It must also have been the result of careless breeding. It was true, however, that the habitant would never grow enough food to support many cattle through the winter. He kept only a few beasts, and at the end of December slaughtered all the others, exposing the carcasses to the frost when they became "dures comme pierre".<sup>4.</sup> When the harvest failed, as it did with appalling frequency during our period, cattle died in the winter for lack of food.<sup>5.</sup> The habitant kept also a large number of horses, usually one for each male member of the family.<sup>6.</sup> With a limited amount of feed, this practice naturally militated

1. Considérations sur l'Etat Présent du Canada (Oct.1758), pp.8-9. Printed in Hist.Doc,First Series, (Que.Lit. and Hist.Soc).
2. Kalm, Travels, Vol.III, pp.188 and 189
3. Ibid.
4. Rapp. de l'Arch., 1920-1921, p.14 Boucault, Etat Présent du Canada (1754)
5. e.g. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.80, p.86. Varin au Ministre. Quebec, June 26, 1743.
6. Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924, p.42. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bouganville); Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, pp.26-28; Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.76, pp.194-195. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada (unsigned) (1741).

against the raising of stock, but nothing could induce the habitant to replace any of his horses by cattle.

The seignior in Canada probably cultivated his domain in much the same manner as the habitant worked his land and grew much the same crops.

Conditions must have varied slightly from locality to locality. There is some evidence that better conditions prevailed in the ecclesiastical seigniories than elsewhere. Dr. Munro, in his book on the "Seigniorial System in Canada" says "Not only were the ecclesiastical seigniories among the most thickly populated, but they were, as Catalogne and others noted, among the best cultivated and the best managed." <sup>1</sup>. On the whole, however, it seems safe to say that throughout our period, farming was carried on in a hopelessly slipshod and ambitionless manner. Certainly in 1762 Burton and Murray, reporting on the Three Rivers and the Quebec governments, respectively, came to the general conclusions that the land had not been cultivated as well as it should have been and that the habitants were not much skilled in husbandry. <sup>2</sup>.

It is evident that agriculture was not in a flourishing condition at the best of times. During the last twenty years of the French régime, the colony experienced a good many of the worst of times. In 1760 cultivation of the land was in a very

1. Op.cit., p.186. Gédéon de Catalogne's report is printed in Documents Relating to the Seigniorial Tenure, (ed. by W.B.Munro) pp.94-151. Dr. Munro does not divulge who the "others" are. In our period the church controlled 2,106,039 arpents of land while laymen held fewer than 6,000,000 arpents
2. Colonel Burton's Report, p.63. Three Rivers, April, 1762; General Murray's Report, p.56. Quebec, June 5, 1762. These reports are printed in Documents relating to the Constitutional History of Canada (ed. by Shortt and Doughty).

much worse state than it had been in 1740, possibly than it had ever been before. By 1760 a great deal of land had gone out of cultivation and the supply of livestock was so seriously depleted as to be practically non-existent.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Munro finds that, between the years of 1745 and 1760, "lands went out of cultivation, or were for years left without proper care; many holdings and even whole seigniories were abandoned; --- in short, the whole agricultural system became disorganized."<sup>2</sup> There is no doubt that farming in New France was in a sorry condition by the end of the French régime.

In Canada, farming suffered a variety of hinderances. One obstacle to progress was the number of saint's days that had to be observed. Early in our period some attempt was made to remedy the evil of too much religious celebration. In 1744, the Bishop, acting on the Minister's suggestion,<sup>3</sup> issued a mandement transferring some 19 saint's days to Sunday, giving as his reason the shortness of the farming season.<sup>4</sup>

In 1751, when the use of ginseng root was in vogue in France and its price had increased enormously, Canadians took to gathering the herb to the complete neglect of their farms. This interruption was short lived, however, for the habitants, over anxious for profits, sold the root improperly dried, with the consequence that it was ineffective, and presently a great deal of the stuff could not be disposed of by the merchants. The result was that 1752

1. Bougainville, Journal, pp. 308-309. Sept. 10-Sept. 22, 1757. Printed in the Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924; Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 104(1), p. 165. Montcalm à Belle Isle. Montreal, April 12, 1759; Lettres de Lévis (Montreal, 1889) Lévis à Belle Isle. July 14, 1760.

2. W.B. Munro, Seigniorial System, p. 188.

3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 78(1), p. 241. Ministre à l'Evêque. Versailles, April 17, 1744.

4. Mandements des Evêques (ed. by Tetu and Gagnon) Vol. II, pp. 40-43. Quebec, Nov. 24, 1744.

saw the complete cessation of the ginseng trade.<sup>1.</sup>

Possibly the most serious hinderance to extensive cultivation of the land was the counter attraction of the fur trade. Many young habitants disappeared into the wilderness, there to take up the lives of coureurs de bois. Others, who remained on the land, probably made occasional excursions into the up country, in contravention of government orders. Still others were quite legally employed in the trade as voyageurs. How many coureurs de bois there were it is impossible to say. Certainly there were enough to disquiet the authorities, not only because they were engaged illegally in the fur trade but also because they were not engaged in farming.<sup>2.</sup> As for the voyageurs, one document of rather dubious authenticity, states that each year the trade in the up country required at least 4,000 men.<sup>3.</sup> Bougainville, writing in 1758, estimated that there were 2,000 voyageurs

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.98, p.401. Mémoire, signed Tachet (representing the marchants) (1752); Rapp.de l'Arch., 1923-1924, p.56.. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bougainville); Hist.Doc., First Series (Que.Lit. and Hist.Soc) Considérations sur l'EtatPrésent du Canada, unsigned (Oct.1758) pp.14-15; Mémoires du S - de O - , pp.26-28. These mémoires are ascribed by M.Aegidius Fauteux, to the S.de Courville, clerk in the Marine and secretary to Vergor at Fort Beauséjour.
- 2.e.g.Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.I, pp.551-552. Declaration du Roi. April, 1737; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.85, p.37. Ministre à la Jonquière. Versailles, March 6, 1747; Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.100, pp.32-35. Règlement pour le Commerce du Poste de Missilimakinac (circular to all the posts) Issued by Duquesne. July 6, 1755.
3. Considérations sur l'Etat Présent du Canada (Oct.1758) p.2. Hist.Doc., First Series (Que.Lit. and Hist.Soc).

and engagés in the up country.<sup>1.</sup> All this meant a drain on the man power of the farming community and must have militated against the clearing and cultivation of new land.

The fur trade absorbed the enterprising element of the rural population and left a residue of habitants who were content to live an ambitionless and lethargic life on their small farms. We have already seen that the habitant, instead of branching out, preferred trying to eke out a living on his too small patrimony.<sup>2.</sup>

The government was fully aware of the importance of agriculture in the establishment of a permanent colony,<sup>3.</sup> but nothing that the authorities could do bestirred the habitants to greater efforts. We have already seen the result of the attempt to introduce the cultivation of hemp.<sup>4.</sup> A similar attempt to encourage the raising of flax met with a similar result.<sup>5.</sup> Another effort was made to have tobacco grown for export; a considerable amount had always been raised by the habitants for their own consumption. Between the years 1739 and 1744 a quantity of Canadian tobacco was shipped to France but the Farmers-General were never satisfied with its preparation and the habitants were never satisfied with the price. Neither the instructions of the Farmers-General for the correct method of preparation, nor the

1. Bougainville, *Journal*, p.361. Le 2, 3, et 4 septembre (1758, Carillon). Printed in *Rapp. de l'Arch.*, 1923-1924.

2. *Supra*, pp. 71-72.

3. e.g. *Ordres et Dépêches*, B: Vol.72, pp.98-99. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 4, 1741; Vol.83, p.155. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 1, 1746.

4. *Supra*, pp.66-69.

5. *Corres.Gén.*, C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.81(2), p.497. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.24, 1744; *Ordres et Dépêches*, B, Vol.83, pp.154-155. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart, Versailles, April 1, 1746

suggestion of Beauharnois and Hocquart that the price paid was too low, ever succeeded in producing tobacco that was fit for consumption in France, or in raising the prices to what the habitants would have considered a satisfactory level. The result was, of course, that this scheme, too, was abandoned, probably as early as 1745.<sup>1</sup> Evidently, even in the middle of the eighteenth century, none but Canadians could smoke Canadian tobacco. Knox found it "wretched, insipid stuff" with no better taste than dried cabbage leaves would have, which he attributed to the Canadians' not knowing how to cure it properly.<sup>2</sup> "Insipid" is not perhaps the adjective that we would apply to Canadian "shag".

The government met with no better success in its efforts to have the excessive number of horses replaced by cattle. Projects to export horses to the West Indies fell through, partly because Canadian merchants were not interested, but more, perhaps, on account of difficulties in transport and of the war that broke out in 1744.<sup>3</sup> This was not the fault of the habitants. However,

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.73, pp.29-30. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 25, 1740; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.74(2) pp.255-257. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April, 17, 1742; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.1(1), p.431. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, June 13, 1743; Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.80, pp.10-13. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 19, 1743; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.(1), p.194. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 30, 1744; Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.81(2) p.513. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 27, 1744; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.81, p.115. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 31, 1745.
2. Capt. John Knox, An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America, (Toronto, Champlain Soc., 1914) Vol.II, pp.613-614. Sept. 1760.
3. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.76, pp.193-194. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada, (unsigned) 1741; Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol.70(1), pp.225-226. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 13, 1740; Vol.72, p.230. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 12, 1741; Vol.74(2) pp.400-401. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 30, 1742; Vol.76(1), pp.435, 438. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, Oct. 28, 1743. Vol.87, pp.121-122. Mémoire du Roy à Bigot. Versailles, Feb. 23, 1748.

attempts to establish a trade in salt beef were equally unsuccessful, this time because the habitants could not be induced to raise enough cattle for export.<sup>1</sup> In 1750, a last essay was made to decrease the number of horses, this time by introducing the raising of donkeys, much less costly to rear and maintain. A start was made by importing six beasts,<sup>2</sup> but the plan went the way of its predecessors. The habitants continued to maintain horses to the detriment of stockraising.

Doubtless the apathetic attitude of the Canadian farmer was, to a certain extent, a natural consequence of the paternalistic attitude of the government. For example, in years of good harvest the habitant enjoyed the bounty of Providence, in years of bad he relied on the bounty of the King of France. He may have come to feel that the two remote powers were synonymous and equally beyond his control, so that he was not called upon to depend upon himself. Nevertheless, although supplies always did arrive from France ultimately, help did not always come so promptly as to save the habitants from undergoing a good deal of suffering. To cite only two instances: In October 1737, after a poor harvest, Beauharnois and Hocquart requested seven or eight thousand quintals of flour from France,<sup>3</sup> doubtless expecting it to arrive as soon as navigation opened. But the supplies did not reach New France in time to prevent a good deal of misery in the late spring of the

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol. 76(1), pp. 371-373. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 31, 1743; Vol. 89, pp. 84-85. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 11, 1749.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 95, pp. 67-68. La Jonquière et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 20, 1750.
3. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 20, 1737. Printed in Select Documents in Canadian Economic History, 1497-1783 (ed. by H.A. Innis) p. 361.



following year.<sup>1.</sup> Again, in 1751, the harvest was very scanty, and the colony subsisted through the winter only with the greatest difficulty.<sup>2.</sup> Shipments arrived from France in the middle of May, but the quantity of flour sent was insufficient<sup>3.</sup> and it was not until September that another provision ship reached Quebec.<sup>4.</sup> Thus the colony experienced a serious food shortage for almost a year. Certainly the government did not succeed in making life so comfortable for the habitant that he suffered no consequence from failure to provide adequately for himself.

The authorities probably did lessen the habitants' self reliance by the careful attention they paid to having the land sown each year. The Intendant kept himself informed of the state of the harvest and acted according to the reports received. Acting with the Governor, he bought up seed wheat, in years of crop failure, and put it in safe keeping until the spring, when it was distributed for planting to the habitants who needed it.<sup>5.</sup> The practice was necessary for the immediate good of the colony but it relieved the habitant of what should have been his own responsibility.

The backwardness of agriculture in New France is sometimes ascribed, in part, to the seigniorial system. Admittedly the system of land tenure did have its drawbacks. Dr. Munro points

1. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, May 12, 1738. Printed in Select Documents, etc (Innis) p.362.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.98, p.86. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, May 8, 1752.
3. Ibid., p.104. Quebec, May 15, 1752.
4. Ibid., p. 112. Quebec, Sept. 9, 1752.
5. e.g. Moreau St. Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.XIII: pp.72-75. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, March 27, 1742; pp.143-148. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart, Quebec, March 30, 1743. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.98, pp.86-89. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, May 8, 1752. etc.

out that the shape of the grants led to the habitants' cultivating the front of the farms and completely neglecting the remote part. He adds "In more ways than one the peculiar configuration of the farms seems to have militated against rotation of crops and to have hindered agricultural improvements in general. Furthermore, the fact that the children participated equally in inheritance to en censive lands offered a temptation for them to remain at home even after it had become apparent that their shares would be too small to support them properly".<sup>1.</sup> One cannot wholly subscribe to this view of the causes of the situation. For instance, it is not at all clear why rotation of crops should not have been practised on the "ribbon" farms as well as on any other sort. Nor would the shape of the grants or the rules of succession have presented, to a progressive people, insuperable barriers to extensive tilling of the land. The conclusion is rather that the peculiarities of the seigniorial system lent themselves to abuse by an unprogressive people.

Nor is it evident that the habitants efforts were seriously hampered by the exactions of the seignior. The "cens" was a purely nominal charge<sup>2.</sup> while the "rentes", although a real financial obligation,<sup>3.</sup> does not seem to have <sup>been</sup> so large as to be completely crushing.

According to the Custom of Paris, the seignior was entitled to a certain number of days of "corvée", or forced labour, from his censitaires, provided he had stipulated for them in the title deeds of the lands he had granted. Dr. Munro suggests that, in the

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1. Munro, Seigniorial System, pp.83-84.
  2. Munro, Seigniorial System, p.85
  3. Ibid., p.93.

eighteenth century, a number of seigniors were exacting the corvée, whether it had been stipulated for or not.<sup>1</sup> In the records between 1740 and 1760, I have found no reference to the corvée, which might indicate that the exaction of forced labour had been dropped by 1740. But, if so, it is odd that such an occurrence, even if the change were gradual, should pass without comment, or at least without comment that writers on the seigniorial system would seem to have found. It is more probable that the corvée did continue in our period but was so little burdensome that it evoked no protest from the Canadian habitant, who seems usually to have been articulate enough when he felt himself wronged. Munro, writing of a period rather earlier than ours, puts the maximum amount of corvée demanded at six days per year.<sup>2</sup>

The seignior's "right" to maintain a banal mill on his seigniorly was also something of an obligation. That is to say, it was a monopoly which he could not retain if he did not make use of it. If a seignior failed to provide a grist mill, any private individual might do so and acquire the banal right for all time.<sup>3</sup> For example, in 1731 the habitants of the seigniorly of Saint Michel de la Durantaye were granted permission to build a mill at their own expense if their seignior did not set to work to repair the one already in existence.<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Munro believes that the law was not enforced to any

1. Munro, Seigniorial System, p.128.

2. Ibid., p.132.

3. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.I, pp.255-256. Arrêt du Conseil d'Etat du Roi. Versailles, June 4, 1686. Not published in Canada until January and February, 1707.

4. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.II, pp.519-520. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, Feb.18, 1731.

appreciable extent after 1711, "for," he says, "it is certain that many seigniors neither built their mills nor were deprived of their rights". He adds that the habitants, with the consent of their seignior, used the mill of an adjoining seignior when it was convenient.<sup>1</sup> In any case, it is apparent that, in general, habitants did not suffer from lack of milling facilities. If some did, they had legal redress. The Intendant was readily accessible<sup>2</sup> and the habitants were not averse to taking their troubles to law. For example, four habitants of the Rivière du Sud, who claimed that the banal mills were in a bad state of repair and were inadequate in capacity, carried the case against their seignior from the local judge, through the courts of the Prévôté of Quebec and the Conseil Supérieur, to the Conseil d'Etat in France.<sup>3</sup>

Under the seigniorial system, the habitants were certainly as well provided with grist mills as, and probably better than, they would have been had they been left to their own devices. This banality may, on the whole, have tended to encourage agriculture. In any case, it seems unlikely that it had the opposite effect. So much for the more negative side of the argument.

1. Munro, Seigniorial System, p.108.

2. E.g. Hocquart sat twice a week for summary examination of the disputes of habitants of the government of Quebec. Michel, when he took up his duties as "Sous-Intendant" at Montreal was advised to do likewise. (Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.76(1), p.179. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 15, 1743).

3. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.II, pp.210-212. Arrêt du Conseil Supérieur. Nov.12, 1742; Corres.Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol.81(1), pp.115-119. Morin au Ministre (1743). Morin was one of the habitants concerned; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.81, p.171. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 26, 1745. The habitants finally lost the case.

On the positive side, there was one element in the seigniorial system that definitely made for increased cultivation of the land. Legally, land in Canada could not be held for speculation. All concessions, seigniorial or habitant, were liable to revocation if they were not settled and cultivated within a year from the date of the grant.<sup>1</sup> In the case of the habitants, this decree seems to have been to a large extent enforced. In 1732, Beauharnois and Hocquart reported that the re-annexation, to the seigniorial domain, of more than four hundred habitant holdings had been decreed since 1729.<sup>2</sup> Subsequent to 1732, numerous revocations were ordered, almost up to the close of the French régime.<sup>3</sup>

The regulation seems to have been less effective in the case of seigniorial grants. Apparently nothing much was done until 1741, when seventeen seigniories in the Lake Champlain district were forfeited to the Crown.<sup>4</sup> A number of these were afterwards regranted to their original owners.<sup>5</sup> Dr. Munro believes that this wholesale confiscation "encouraged the others" to give more attention to the development of their seigniories,<sup>6</sup> but on what evidence this opinion is based he does not make clear. However, if seigniors did hold land for speculative purposes, it is not evident that the seigniorial system lent itself to the practice

1. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol. I, pp. 324-326. The "Arrêts de Marly". Marly, July 6, 1711.

2. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 1, 1732. Printed in Documents Relating to the Seigniorial Tenure in Canada (ed. by W. B. Munro) (Toronto, Champlain Soc., 1908) p. 177.

3. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol. III. Between pp. 290 and 410. The last ordinance is dated March 17, 1758.

4. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol. II, pp. 555-561. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, May 10, 1741.

5. Munro, Seigniorial System, p. 50

6. Ibid.

any more than any other system would have done.

Unquestionably, the seigniorial system involved a rigid land system and a paternalistic social system, both of which must have tended to destroy initiative in the habitant. It conferred a certain number of material benefits on him but, perhaps, lessened his ambition. It was, in general, a system that was not calculated to stimulate a lethargic people.

The habitant owed certain obligations to the King as well as to the seignior. He paid no direct tax in money but he was subject to the "King's corvée". This involved building or repairing roads and bridges in summer and keeping the roads open in winter. This/<sup>impost</sup> does not seem to have been oppressive.<sup>1</sup> One other obligation which the habitant owed to the King, namely, militia service, will be discussed later.

In brief, the circumstances that accounted for the condition of agriculture in the colony in normal times were: too much religious celebration; the short-lived ginseng trade; and, above all, the fur trade. The seigniorial system did not so much discourage as fail to stimulate. The paternalistic policy of the government was in part the cause, and wholly the result, of the ambitionless attitude of the habitants. The two major factors were the absorption of the enterprising element by the fur trade, and the vegetative apathy of the rest of the rural population.

These facts, however, do not explain the very low level that farming in Canada had reached by 1760. That was the result of extraordinary circumstances. In twenty years <sup>2</sup> the colony had

1. Munro, Seigniorial System, p.133. The author points out that this "corvée" did not differ essentially from the "statute labour" imposed on the farmers in some parts of Canada, to-day.

2. i.e. 1740-1759, inclusive. The harvest of 1760 does not concern us because its effects would be felt only in 1761.



eight crop failures,<sup>1.</sup> twelve harvests which were presumably of

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1. 1741. Moreau St. Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.13, pp.72-75. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, March 27, 1742. In this year export of flour was forbidden and seed bought for distribution.
1742. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.77, pp.15-17. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 17, 1742. This harvest was worse than the preceding one as a result of the devastation wrought by caterpillars, fogs and excessive heat. In the Three Rivers government, 50 minots of seed planted by the Ursulines yielded only 80 minots of wheat. The minot is 1.072 bushels.
1743. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol.79, pp.38-40. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 14, 1743. This year the crop was still worse than it had been in 1742. The ears of wheat were so scantily filled that 15 or 20 sheaves produced only one minot of grain. A number of habitants did not get back as much as they had planted. Throughout this time the prohibition to export had remained in force.
1748. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.92: p.17. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.7, 1748; pp.23-24. Bigot au Ministre. (1748. Written some time between Sept.7 and the close of navigation.) Excessive heat in the summer of this year dried the wheat before the ears had properly formed. Vegetables, too, suffered. The result was a scanty harvest, especially in the Quebec government, but the situation was not as bad as it had been in the years 1741-1743.
1751. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.98, pp.86-89. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, May 8, 1752. This year the harvest was so bad that Bigot had the greatest difficulty in providing for Montreal and Quebec during the course of the winter. In the Montreal government many parishes did not reap enough to last them more than four months. The Intendant estimated that a fifth of the habitants in the Quebec government would not be able to sow for lack of seed.
1756. Montcalm, Journal, p.121. November, 1756. Of this harvest Montcalm says, "La récolte ayant été beaucoup plus mauvaise qu'on ne croyoit, on est embarrassé pour les subsistances.----  
A Québec, le peuple y manque, pour ainsi dire, de pain, et l'on a été obligé de mêler la farine de pois et d'avoine."
1757. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.102, p.186. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Sept. 12, 1757. As a result of a cold wet summer, the harvest was even worse than it had been the year before.
1758. Montcalm, Journal, p.492. Dec.18, 1748. "La récolte moins abondante dans la colonie et principalement dans le gouvernement de Québec, qu'on ne l'avoit cru".



average excellence, and only one bumper year.<sup>1.</sup> In years of scanty harvest the authorities did their best to save the colony from the consequences. They forbade export, sometimes even sealing the mills, and bought up seed wheat for redistribution.<sup>2.</sup> But, notwithstanding the efforts of the government, crop failure meant a disorganisation of agriculture. For example, as we have already seen, stock had to be slaughtered or died for lack of fodder during the winter.<sup>3.</sup> Again, not always enough seed could be secured to supply everyone. Land went out of cultivation in 1743 on this account.<sup>4.</sup> After the scanty harvest of 1751, the Intendant, as usual, bought up wheat by authority. Nevertheless, in the spring of 1752, he estimated that one fifth of the habitants in the government of Quebec would not be able to sow for lack of seed.<sup>5.</sup> Again, in 1757,<sup>6.</sup> and in 1758<sup>7</sup> there is evidence that land went out of cultivation for the same reason, in spite of the distributions made by Bigot.

In these last years of the French régime the condition was aggravated by the war. Increased demand coincided with a succession of bad harvests. From 1756, an average force of over three thousand Regulars had to be supported, as well as varying numbers of militia and savages, who must be supplied while on

1. 1747. *Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 89, p. 20.* Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 3, 1747.
2. *Infra* pp. 101-102, 109-110, 112-113.
3. *Supra* p. 76
4. *Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 79, p. 4.* Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre Montreal, June 17, 1743.
5. *Ibid.*, Vol. 98, pp. 86-89. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, May 8, 1752.
6. Bougainville, *Journal*, p. 263. Du 12 au 15 (mai, 1757). Printed in *Rapp.de l'Arch.*, 1923-1924.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 320. du 12 (mai, 1758).

service at least. The colony had also to provide for a number of Acadian refugees.<sup>1</sup> With communications with France obviously hampered, when they were not entirely cut off, the colony was, to a large extent, thrown back on its own limited resources.

During our period, the colony was in a state of open warfare with its English neighbours between the years 1744-1748 and 1756-1760. The intervening period, 1748-1756, was only an armed truce. Technically, New France and the American colonies were not at war. Actually, they were not at peace. This long period of hostility made serious demands on the time and energy of the habitants, for every man in the colony, between the ages of sixteen and sixty, was liable for military service.

In the first of the two wars, military activities were confined to expeditions to Acadia and descents upon the outlying English settlements. No Regulars were sent out from France and the war parties were composed of militia and Indians, mostly the latter. It is not clear how many Canadians were sent on these raiding expeditions, but certainly the absence of any part, however small, of the rural population, did not make for improvement in agriculture. However, the adverse effects do not seem to have been so serious as to have called forth comment from any of my authorities.

The succeeding years saw the blossoming of a project to hold the Belle Rivière against what the French considered to be English encroachment. It was then, if Vaudreuil's statements are

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1. Moreau St. Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.14, p.422. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 3, 1756; Vaudreuil au Ministre. July 14, 1757. Printed in the Bulletin des Recherches Historiques, Vol. XXXVI (1930), p.50.

are accurate, that the adverse effects of the militia system on the progress of agriculture began really strongly to be felt. The Governor writes in 1755, after the first detachment of Regulars has arrived from France, that the colony can feed any number of men that the King will be pleased to send, provided the lands are fully cultivated. The habitants are exhausted, however. Those who have taken up land for the last several years have not been able even to clear it, for these newcomers have been called out for service in preference to the more prosperous habitants. Vaudreuil closes with the vigorous and sweeping statement that "L'établissement de la Belle Rivière est la cause directe de la ruine des habitants, il y en est mort un plus grand nombre que nous ne pouvons en perdre pendant plusieurs années de guerre et cela (je ne puis vous le cacher) parce qu'ils ont été forcés sans aucuns des ménagements que l'humanité exige à faire le portage des ballots et autres effets qui avoient un principe très opposé au bien du service".<sup>1</sup> This may be an overstatement of the case for Vaudreuil was strongly prejudiced in favour of the Canadians; he might well exaggerate their sufferings in order to picture them as heroic martyrs to the ambitions of France. The evidence of his predecessor, Duquesne, however, supports his statement in part, and Duquesne was a hard-bitten little man, harshly critical of the militia and with no sympathy to waste on the habitants. According to a letter of this Governor, one detachment of Canadians underwent the labour of transporting supplies over two portages, of seven and three leagues respectively, while the

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1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 100, pp. 153-154. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Montreal, Oct. 30, 1755.

fifty-five horses which had been provided either died or were worn out.<sup>1</sup> Evidently the Canadians outhorsed the horses. Duquesne describes this detachment, on its return, as being "n'étant composée que de spectres" as a result of the hardship it had suffered.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, this expedition certainly coincided with the harvest, and, possibly, with sowing, too.

In 1755, Dieskau's force included 1600 Canadians. The levy of militia evidently fell most heavily on the Montreal government for 350 habitants from the governments of Quebec and Three Rivers had to be sent up to Montreal to gather the harvest.<sup>3</sup>

In 1756 war was declared. More Regulars, under the command of Montcalm, were sent out and fighting began in real earnest. Militia were pressed into service for transport and for scouting and raiding expeditions, besides being draughted for the main campaign each summer.

From 1756 to 1758, most of the militia who were used in the three principal campaigns, served only between the time of sowing and that of harvesting. But even if the planting and reaping of wheat were not interrupted, the earlier hay harvest must have suffered, and gardens and fields been neglected. Certainly the summer campaigns precluded any possibility of new land being brought under cultivation. It is also to be remembered that, although the casualties among the militia do not seem to have

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 99, pp. 40-41. Duquesne au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 2, 1753. The reference is to the detachment, commanded by Marin, dispatched to the Ohio frontier, in the spring of 1753. This party built Forts Presqu'isle and Le Boeuf. With the approach of winter 300 men were kept to garrison these forts and the rest sent home.
2. Duquesne au Ministre. Montreal, Nov. 29, 1753. Printed in the Bulletin des Recherches Historiques, Vol. XX (1914), p. 115.
3. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 100, p. 202. Bréard au Ministre. Quebec, Aug. 13, 1755.

been excessively numerous, there were <sup>always some</sup> habitants who never returned to their farms.

Some of the other activities did coincide with the two most important seasons. To give only two examples: In the spring of 1756, Vaudreuil employed a great number of Canadians to transport provisions to the posts that lay on the route to Fort Duquesne, leaving the sowing of the land of the absentees to the men who remained in the parishes.<sup>1.</sup> After Bradstreet's capture of Fort Frontenac on August 27, 1758, the panic-stricken Governor decided to garrison a camp at La Présentation with 1500 militia to protect the colony from a descent of the enemy by way of the lakes.<sup>2.</sup> All this activity was going on at a time when the harvesting of the crop should have <sup>be</sup> ~~been~~ under weigh. The opinion was expressed in some quarters that the harvest in 1758 would be very small on account of the interruptions suffered at the sowing and reaping seasons.<sup>3.</sup> And the S. de Courville writes, with reference to 1758, "Il n'étoit pas extraordinaire que la récolte n'eût pas été abondante, les habitants ne pouvant travailler à leurs terres".<sup>4.</sup>

Colonel Wood estimates that the total number of militiamen available in any emergency was scarcely 15,000 and that, except in 1759, there were never 5,000 under arms together.<sup>5.</sup> Even so,

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.101, pp.48-49. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Montreal, June 15, 1756.

2. Ibid., Vol.103(1), p.182. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Montreal, Sept. 2, 1758.

3. Ibid., Vol.103, (2), p.564. Mémoire, unsigned (1758). Evidently a résumé of a number of letters received from the colony, probably those of Vaudreuil and Doreil.

4. Mémoires du S. de Courville, p.123. Printed in Hist.Doc., First Series (Que.Lit. and Hist.Soc.)

5. W.Wood, Fight for Canada (Fourth edition. Toronto, 1906) pp.63-64.

the removal of almost a third of the most able-bodied section of the population must have entailed the serious neglect of farming. On one occasion, Vaudreuil estimated that there were not more than 8,000 militiamen left in the countryside.<sup>1</sup> And there was no one at home to replace the men absent on service, for there is little doubt that farming required the efforts of the whole family.<sup>2</sup> The situation was serious enough to cause the Bishop to authorize the curés to allow work on Sundays and Saints' days and to urge them to help with sowing and harvesting themselves.<sup>3</sup>

In 1759, the levy of habitants was greater than ever before. In July Montcalm reported that half of his militia were old men, or children who had never been to war before.<sup>4</sup> The Montreal government was so depopulated that the crop had to be gathered by a common effort. Even the townspeople were pressed into service, for the government was divided into districts, confided to inspectors drawn from the ranks of the "most honest bourgeoisie" who remained in Montreal. The parish curés were urged to exhort everyone to help, and old men and boys, women and girls, all turned out. That the work was done on a community basis is evident from the fact that the inspectors were warned that the rich must not be favoured more than the poor but everyone's crop gathered alike. Although some habitants were sent back from the

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.103(1), pp.330-331. Mémoire, signed Vaudreuil. Montreal, Nov.3, 1758.

2. For example, Kalm observed that women worked in the fields. (Travels, Vol.III, p.193).

3. Mandements des Evêques, Vol.II, p.110. Feb.15, 1759.

4. Montcalm à Bougainville. Quebec, July 15, 1759. Printed in Doughty and Parmelee Siege of Quebec (Government edition) Vol.IV, p.4.

Lac Saint Sacrement frontier to help, the work went slowly for lack of labour until Levis arrived, en route for the rapids above Montreal, and left 350 of his militia to make sure that all the harvest was gathered.<sup>1</sup> This description serves to show how great a disruption the ordinary procedure of farming suffered.

The final disastrous result of the war was the laying waste of the côtes below Quebec. Pontbriand wrote in November 1759, "Les campagnes ne fournissent point de ressources - - - -, toute la côte de Beaupré et l'isle d'Orléans ont été détruites avant la fin du siège, les granges, les maisons des habitants, les presbitaires ont été incendiés, les bestiaux qui restèrent, enlevés, ceux qui avoient été transportés au dessus de Quebec ont presque tous été pris pour la subsistance de notre armée de sorte que le pauvre habitant qui retourne sur sa terre avec sa femme et ses enfants sera obligé de se cabanner à la façon des sauvages, leur recolte qu'ils n'ont pu faire qu'en donnant la moitié sera exposée aux injures de l'air, ainsi que leurs animaux, les caches qu'on avoit fait dans les bois ont été decouvertes par l'ennemi et par là l'habitant est sans hardes, sans meubles, sans charrues et sans outils pour travailler la terre et couper le bois. - - - - -

De l'autre côté de la Rivière, au sud, il y a environ 36 lieues de pays établis qui ont été à peu près également ravagés et qui contenoient 19 paroisses dont le plus grand nombre a été détruit." <sup>2</sup>.

It might be argued that this description is exaggerated because

1. Mémoires du S.de Courville, pp.158-159. Printed in Hist.Doc., First Series (Que.Lit. and Hist.Soc); Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.104(1), pp.93-98. Rigaud de Vaudreuil au Ministre. Montreal, Sept, 13, 1759. Rigaud was Governor of the Montreal government.
2. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.104(2), pp.553-555. Description Impar faite le la Misère du Canada, par l'Evêque de Québec. Montreal, Nov.5, 1759. Enclosed with a letter/ <sup>from Pontbriand</sup> to the Minister. Montreal, Nov.9, 1759. pp.549-550.



the Bishop makes it his ground for an appeal to the charitable for assistance. The evidence, however, is substantiated by letters and journals of English officers. For example, Captain John Knox describes the burning of houses and crops on the north shore, and, later, mentions the return of two detachments with a great deal of plunder and a report of having burned eleven hundred houses and several hundred acres of corn.<sup>1</sup>

In the following year habitants began to drift back to the lands below Quebec and the numerous deserters from the army at Montreal presumably returned to the côtes. But the war was not over and a great many militia remained under arms at least until Levis' retreat from Quebec in May, 1760. Demands were still being made on whatever small resources of cattle and wheat the habitants had left.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, 1759 did not see the last of the devastation of the countryside. For example, in August, 1760, Murray, coming up the river with his fleet, made a descent on Sorel and laid waste the greater part of the parish.<sup>3</sup>

We have seen that, during our period, 40% of the harvests were meagre; that a much increased demand was made on the produce

1. Knox, Historical Journal (Toronto, Champlain Soc., 1914) Vol. II: p. 56. Sept. 1, 1759; p. 136. Sept. 20, 1759. See also The Montresor Journals, (Ed. by G.D. Scull. New York Historical Society Collections, 1881) pp. 229-231. Capt. John Montresor to Col. James Montresor. Quebec, Oct. 5, 1759. One of the letters, written in journal form, which together make up Montresor's journal of the siege.
2. Pièces Militaires, p. 213. Mémoire, signed Vaudreuil. April 16, 1760; Lettres de Vaudreuil, p. 195. Vaudreuil à Lévis. May 19, 1760; Lettres de Lévis, p. 324, Lévis à Vaudreuil. May 25, 1760; Lévis. Journal, p. 303. Sept. 6, 1760; Can. Arch. Report, 1905, Vol. I(4): p. 6. Vaudreuil à Dumas. Montreal, March 16, 1760; p. 14. Dumas à Vaudreuil. March 13, 1760; p. 19 Dumas à Vaudreuil. March 24, 1760; p. 27. Dumas à Vaudreuil. April 18, 1760.
3. Knox, Historical Journal (Toronto, Champlain Soc., 1914) Vol. II, p. 504. Aug. 21 and 22, 1760.

of the farms; that, from 1745, habitants were almost constantly required for militia service; and finally, that a considerable part of the countryside was ravaged. It is not surprising, therefore, that agriculture in New France, unprogressive at the best of times, had sunk to an exceptionally low level by the close of the French régime.

## II. Agricultural Trade.

In years of normal abundance, the habitant disposed of his surplus produce by carrying it into the market place of the town or by selling it to local shopkeepers or to the agents of some dealer in foodstuffs.

The local authorities tried, not always successfully, to restrict this trade to the market places. For example, in 1745 complaints were made that habitants, bringing their goods into Quebec, were met by a crowd of townspeople before they reached the square. Then a wild scramble ensued until the carts were empty. This the authorities felt to be regrettable, since it deprived the less agile of a chance to buy what they needed, and they ordered that the goods should be sold only on the market.<sup>1</sup> The object of this ordinance was only to restore order but another ordinance, issued in 1746, gives evidence of forestalling and regrating. Certain individuals met the habitants coming into town on market day, /<sup>or</sup>even went into the côtes, and bought up the

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1. Moreau St. Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol. 13, pp. 245-247. Ordonnance du Lieutenant Général de la Prévôté de Québec. Québec, May 19, 1745.

supplies, which they then resold in the towns at a much higher price.<sup>1</sup> However, in spite of these abuses, it seems probable that most of the selling was done in a normal fashion on the market places. An ordinance of Monrepos gives some details of how the marketing was arranged in Montreal. The sleighs, loaded with wood, hay, and straw were to be left on the "place de la paroisse", while the carts were to be ranged around the four sides of the market square, at a distance of two feet from one another and leaving a space of twelve feet for the passage of pedestrians and vehicles.<sup>2</sup>

Meat was sometimes sold on the market place by the habitants and at other times its sale was limited to a number of butchers who went into the country to buy their supplies.<sup>3</sup>

The habitant might also dispose of his produce to the shopkeepers who set up in some of the rural parishes. These merchants evidently did a thriving trade to judge from the vigor of the complaints of the "négociants" of Quebec. One of their grievances was that the country merchants bought up food stuffs which would otherwise have been sold at a reasonable price on the market place and then exploited the needs of the townspeople.<sup>4</sup> This complaint was voiced by the syndic of the Quebec merchants in 1741

1. Moreau St.Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.13, pp.285-286. Quebec, April 13, 1746
2. Répertoire des Arrêts, etc. (ed. by E.Z. Massicotte) p.112. Jan.11, 1748.
3. Ord.des Int:M31, Vol. XVIII, pp.93-95. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Dec.22, 1745; M33, Vol. XX, pp.177-178. Ordonnance de Bigot. Sept.18, 1756; Répertoire des Arrêts etc. p.108. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et La Rouvillière (Sous - Intendant de Montréal). June 4, 1745; p.110. Ordonnance de Monrepos. June 1, 1747.
4. Corres.Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol.75, pp.4-15, 23-25, Mémoire, S.Desauniers, syndic des négoceants de Québec, à Beauharnois et Hocquart. 1741.

and was repeated by Franquet some twelve years later.<sup>1.</sup>

A considerable quantity of wheat and <sup>of</sup> other commodities was also bought locally for the King's service. The authorities <sup>2.</sup> arranged with contractors to supply the necessary provisions, flour, meat, and vegetables, for the Stores at prices that were fixed each year. The contracts were not given on the basis of the lowest tender but were bestowed upon some individual. Hocquart, evidently in answer to some ministerial criticism, maintained that the method of public adjudication would not be satisfactory and implied that he favoured only the most deserving. <sup>3.</sup> This practice obviously lay open to abuse and it seems highly probable that monopoly existed from the beginning of our period.

When Bigot came to Canada in 1748 he found that the storekeeper at Three Rivers had always had the furnishing of provisions for the Stores in that government and that the office had been handed down in his family from father to son for eighty years. A similar practice had long existed in Montreal and Quebec.<sup>4.</sup>

Some complaints of monopoly had been made in Hocquart's régime; after 1748 they continued to be made while the Minister continued to urge Bigot to adopt the method of public adjudication.<sup>5.</sup>

1. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, p.154

2. i.e. The Intendant and Controller, acting together, in Quebec, and the "Sous Intendant" in Montreal.

3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 76, pp. 58-59, Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1741. The Minister, in reply, acquiesced although he was not convinced of the soundness of the arrangement. (Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74(2), p. 143. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, Feb. 27, 1742).

4. Mémoire pour Bigot t. II, p. 11. Similar evidence with reference to Montreal is given in the Mémoire pour le Sieur Martel, pp. 25-26.

5. Ordres et Dépêches, B; Vol. 89, p. 74. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 11, 1749. Vol. 93, pp. 43-44. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, May, 7, 1751; Vol. 95, pp. 110-112. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, May 19, 1752; Vol. 97, pp. 186-189. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 18, 1753; Vol. 99, pp. 116-117. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 1, 1754.

There is no doubt that the contracts for supplying the King's Stores were in the hands of Bigot's favourites. Monopoly existed sub rosa until 1757. In that year it emerged into the open when Cadet, one of the Intendant's clique, contracted to supply all the provisions for the service and was given the title of "Munitionnaire - Général". Although Cadet's name alone appears, the SS.Péan, Morin, Corperon, and Pénissault were associated with him.<sup>1</sup> It was, of course, the contractors and not the habitants who pocketed most of the profits.

The factors that governed the extent of this local trade were simply the laws of supply and demand and, in the latter years of our period, the depreciation of the colonial currency.

During the first few years, when the harvest failed three times in succession, voluntary trade practically ceased. But "trade" was forced upon the reluctant habitants by the hand of authority. For example, in the fall of 1742, after the second crop failure, very little wheat or flour was coming into Quebec, and Beauharnois and Hocquart, describing the situation to the Minister, declared that they would take steps to bring as much into the markets as possible "using there a just authority".<sup>2</sup> And, in fact, agents were sent into the côtes to have two or three thousand minots of wheat threshed for the subsistence of the town and for the furnishing of the King's

1. Mémoire pour M.J-H.Péan, pp.125-136; Mémoires du S.de Courville, pp.62, 64-69. Printed in Hist.Doc., First Series (Que.Lit. and Hist.Soc.); Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.93, p.43. Ministre au Bigot. Versailles, May 7, 1751.
2. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.77, pp.46-47. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.26, 1742.

stores.<sup>1.</sup> The following year similar measures were taken, this time to buy up three to four thousand minots.<sup>2.</sup>

As Hocquart pointed out, it was a delicate business to take from the habitants part of the grain which they needed for their own subsistence.<sup>3.</sup> However, in order to see that no one should escape contributing, Boisclerc, "Grand Voyer", who had been sent to collect wheat, drew up a statement, in conjunction with the militia captain and the curé in each parish which he visited, of exactly how much could be taken justly from each habitant. These "etats de répartition" were to be executed by the local captain.<sup>4.</sup> In 1744, the S.Estèbe, who was sent to buy flour in the côtes of Beaupré and of the Ile d'Orléans, was authorized to have the militia captains inspect the granaries of those who refused to contribute, and he himself was to seize any wheat he would find in mills, situated in those districts, that were owned by various inhabitants of Quebec.<sup>5.</sup>

The return of better times coincided with an increased demand for provisions as a result of the war (1744-1748), and the royal purchases and prices increased together.<sup>6.</sup> After 1748 prices

1. Inv.des Ord., Vol.III, pp.31-32. Oct.30, 1742; Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.77, p.53. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Québec, Nov.6, 1742.
2. Procès verbal de Lanouillier de Boisclerc, Grand Voyer. (Oct. 1743) Printed in the Bulletin des Recherches Historiques, Vol.XXXVI(1930)p.190.
3. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.80, p.3. Hocquart au Ministre. Québec, Oct.14, 1743.
4. Ord.des Int., M30, Vol.XVII, pp.168-169. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Québec, Oct.11, 1743.
5. Inv.des Ord., Vol.III, pp.59-60. July 3, 1744.
6. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.88, p.10. Hocquart au Ministre. Québec, Sept. 24, 1747.

remained high and the habitant was anxious to sell.<sup>1.</sup> There is no evidence that any new land was brought under cultivation as a result of the larger demand but probably most of the land already cleared was given over to wheat.<sup>2.</sup> Apparently the habitants deprived themselves for the sake of the high prices their produce would fetch.. Kalm, writing in 1749, declared that the country people were "content with meals of dry bread and water, bringing all other provisions, such as butter, cheese, flesh, poultry, eggs, &c. to town, in order to get money for them!"<sup>3.</sup>

The crop failure of 1751 put an end to this flourishing trade and the authorities had once more to resort to their customary means of buying provisions by authority.<sup>4.</sup> The preparations made for the Regulars who were sent out in 1755,<sup>5.</sup> must have revived the trade a little but the subsequent years of shortage again ended any voluntary attempt to supply the market. During this second war period the demand was probably greater than it had ever been before and the colony was not in a condition to supply it. The result was that the habitants were subjected to repeated levies of foodstuffs that they could ill afford to spare.<sup>6.</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.92, p.98. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.7, 1748; Vol.97, p.219. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.5, 1751.

2. Cf. supra p. 68.

3. Kalm, Travels Vol.III, p.192

4. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.98, pp.86-89. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, May 8, 1752.

5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.101, p.132. Ministre à Varin. Versailles, Feb. 17, 1755.

6. e.g. Montcalm, Journal: p.222. June 24-28, 1757; p.330. Jan.21, 1758; Lévis, Journal, pp.172-173. Feb.9 - March 12, 1759; see also supra, p.97 Etc.



The situation was made more difficult by the habitants' very just suspicions of the paper money. There is little doubt that habitants hid cattle and grain rather than sell it for the depreciated paper. This was the opinion both of Montcalm<sup>1</sup> and of Bigot.<sup>2</sup> In the summer of 1759 the Montreal government produced, in return for specie, over six thousand minots of grain, although the district had been thought to be quite exhausted.<sup>3</sup> Again, in 1760, the levies of food were unsatisfactory until Levis promised to be personally responsible for the payment of the notes; then enough food was forthcoming to maintain the army for a month.<sup>4</sup>

Export and import trade in comestibles was under the close supervision, and largely under the direction, of the government. Canada exported foodstuffs to Ile Royale, Martinique, and Santo Domingo, chiefly for consumption by the King's Service there. Governor and Intendant were required to report the state of the crop each year so that the Minister would know whether or not Canada would be able to supply the other colonies.<sup>5</sup> On receipt of a statement of the quantity of supplies needed<sup>6</sup> the

1. Montcalm, Journal, p.607. Sept. 9, 1759
2. Malartic, Journal, p.242. In June 1759, Bigot asked that anyone who had coin would remit it to him in return for bills of exchange drawn on the Royal Treasury or on his own banker, because he had to have specie to buy wheat.
3. Montcalm, Journal, p.572. July 12, 1759.
4. Lettres de Lévis, p.375. Lévis à Belle Isle. Aug.7, 1760.
5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.70(1), p.225. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 13, 1740.
6. e.g. Ibid: Vol.74(2), pp.122-123. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, Feb. 14, 1742; Vol.81, p.90. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 10, 1745.

Intendant elected some merchant to fulfil the requirements.<sup>1.</sup> He chose him in the same manner as he chose a contractor to supply the needs of the local service and in spite of the same ex-postulation from the Minister.<sup>2.</sup> Thus a few merchants derived the lion's share of the profit from the export trade.

The contractor<sup>3.</sup> bought up wheat in the countryside, probably mostly from seigniors and from rural storekeepers and had it ground at some of the mills in the vicinity of Quebec.<sup>3.</sup> At least some of these mills were the property of residents of the town;<sup>4.</sup> perhaps on occasion the contractor himself owned one or more of them. Apparently the Intendant, and not the contractor, arranged for the shipping of the flour. The cargoes were carried on the King's ships, on French vessels that happened to be in port, or on Canadian-owned vessels.<sup>5.</sup> Both the provision of the flour and the carrying trade were monopolised by Bigot's clique during the first few years of that Intendant's régime while the colony was still exporting foodstuffs.

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.73, pp.123-124. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.2, 1740.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol.70(1), pp.73-74. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 2, 1740; Vol.74(2), p.124. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, Feb.14, 1742; Vol.95, p.112. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, May 19, 1752.
3. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.II, pp.352-353. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, Sept.29, 1732. This ordinance deals with the distribution of six sieves that the King had sent to the Colony in an effort to improve the quality of the flour exported. These six were not enough to provide for all "les moulins où les marchands envoient ordinairement moudre leurs bleds, pour leur commerce", and were given therefore to the principal mills, viz those at Sault-à-la-Puce, Petit-Pré, Beauport, Pointe-de-Lévy, Saint Nicolas, and Saint-Famille (on the island of Orleans).
4. Supra, p. 102
5. e.g. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A: Vol.74, p.160. Varin au Ministre. May 27, 1740; Vol.77, pp.314, 326, 328. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, June 11, 1742; Vol.88, p.136. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.31, 1747.

There was also a certain amount of trade carried on privately. Some Canadian merchants dealt in farm produce, exporting flour, biscuit, and vegetables but apparently little or no trade was done in meat. On one occasion Hocquart had a Quebec merchant export 30 head of cattle and 150 sheep to Ile Royale<sup>1</sup> but this seems to have been an exceptional case. It was doubtless difficult to transport livestock and efforts to produce salt meat in the colony were never successful.<sup>2</sup> There was a market for meat<sup>3</sup> and probably an extensive one also for hides but, as we have seen, the Canadians rarely raised a surplus of livestock.<sup>4</sup>

Canadian dealers found markets in Ile Royale and in the French West Indies and also did a trade in supplying provisions for the crews of ships in port.<sup>5</sup> A large part of the carrying trade was done by French and West Indian ships that had brought goods to Canada. It was a common practice for these ships, after discharging their cargoes at Quebec, to load with foodstuffs which they carried down to Ile Royale. The Canadian products were there disposed of to the inhabitants or to the crews of fishing and trading vessels, and a cargo of cod taken on for the return voyage.<sup>6</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A., Vol.81(2), pp.359-360. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.7, 1744.
2. Ibid., Vol.89, pp.21,23. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.3, 1747; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.89, pp.84-89. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 11, 1749.
3. e.g. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A., Vol.76, pp.195-196. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada. (1741); Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.76(1), p.370. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 31, 1743.
4. Supra, p. 75-77, 81-82,
5. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A., Vol.75, p.14. Mémoire du S.Desautiers à Beauharnois et Hocquart. 1741.
6. Ibid.: Vol.76, p.184. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada. (1741); Vol.79, p.377. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.8, 1743.

The government, in the hope of stimulating agriculture in the colony, pursued a policy of encouraging this trade. For example, in 1732, the King, in an effort to improve the quality of the flour exported, sent six sieves to the colony to be distributed among the principal mills around Quebec.<sup>1.</sup> Two years later four more sieves were sent, this time for the Montreal government.<sup>2.</sup> In a further effort to increase the export of Canadian flour, the King, in 1740 and in 1741, gave "the most exact orders" to prevent the importation of foreign flour into Ile Royale, so as to leave the market free for the Canadian article.<sup>3.</sup>

However, New France had never maintained any thing like a steady export trade; foodstuffs were shipped out only when the colony happened to have a surplus. Throughout our period, the trade was, for obvious reasons, particularly spasmodic. On occasion the commerce flowed in the opposite direction and foodstuffs were imported into the colony. This import was rather more the sending of relief to a famine - stricken area than "trade" properly so-called. When there was a dearth in the colony, the Intendant sent to the Minister of Marine a statement of the amount of flour the colony needed for subsistence until the next harvest.<sup>4.</sup> The

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1. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.II, pp.352-353. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, Sept. 29, 1732.
  2. Ibid., p.363. Quebec, Feb.8, 1734.
  3. Ordres et Dépêches et Vol.70(1), pp.222-223. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 13, 1740; Vol.72, p.229. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 12, 1741.
  4. e.g. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.80. p.3. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.14, 1743.

Minister then arranged with merchants in the ports to make shipments to Canada and these envoys were paid for by the government.<sup>1</sup> If the colony were in immediate need, the Intendant might send to Ile Royale for flour from the King's stores there.<sup>2</sup> When the flour arrived at Quebec it was placed in the royal storehouses whence it seems usually to have been sold to the bakers.<sup>3</sup> Thus the import trade was solely in the hands of the government. Colonial exporters did not turn about and become importers when the occasion demanded. Apparently residents in Canada had nothing to do with the trade, save in exceptional cases. For example, one one occasion, the SS. Havy and Lefebvre, agents of Dugard et Compagnie of Rouen, arranged with Hocquart, subject to the Minister's pleasure, to have 1,000 quarts<sup>4</sup> of flour sent from Rouen to the King's Stores in Quebec.<sup>5</sup> The SS. Gradis of Bordeaux who shipped flour to Canada in 1752<sup>6</sup> were in partnership with the two colonial officials, Bréard and Bigot. After 1757, of course, the Munitionnaire-Général imported provisions for the Stores.

1. e.g. Ordres et Dépêches, B; Vol. 76(1), p. 103-104. Ministre au Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, Feb. 13, 1743; Vol. 78(1), p. 74. Ministre au Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, March 13, 1744.
2. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol. 77, pp. 57-58. Beauharnois et Hocquart à Duquesne et Bigot. Nov. 6, 1742. Copy enclosed with a letter from Beauharnois and Hocquart to the Minister, Nov. 6, 1742.
3. e.g. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol. 80, p. 52. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1743.
4. The quart is a small barrel containing about 100 kilogrammes (or about 200 pounds) of flour.
5. Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol. 80, pp. 3-4. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 14, 1743.
6. Ibid., Vol. 98, p. 112. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 9, 1752.

With the impulse of circumstances, trade swung back and forth between export and import, now swelling, now shrinking, in volume.

In the course of the year 1740, Canada exported to Martinique 600 quintals of flour, and to Ile Royale 700 quintals of flour and 530 quintals of vegetables, for the use of the Service.<sup>1.</sup>

There is no evidence of how extensive the private trade was in that year. The harvest gathered in the fall of 1740 was apparently of average excellence and in 1741, 2200 quintals of flour were set aside for the official export to the other colonies.<sup>2.</sup>

By the spring of 1742, however, owing to the scanty return of the previous harvest, export was forbidden.<sup>3.</sup> But the authorities evidently believed in rising above their own regulations, for the prohibition did not apply to the government. Between the fall of 1741 and June of the following year, 483 quintals of flour were sent to Ile Royale in part fulfillment of an "approvisionnement extraordinaire" of 1380 quintals which Bigot<sup>4</sup> had requested in order to provide for an increase in the number of tropps stationed on the island. Subsequently, the extraordinary requirement was completed together with an additional 700 quintals of flour and 853 quintals of vegetables.<sup>5.</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.73, p.123. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.2, 1740.

2. Ibid., Vol.75, p.358. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 2, 1741.

3. Moreau St. Méry Coll. F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.13, pp.72-75. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, March 27, 1742.

4. Bigot was Intendant at Ile Royale before he came to Canada.

5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.74(2), pp.122-123. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, Feb.14, 1742; Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.77: pp.323-329. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, June 11, 1742; pp.335-336. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, June 28, 1742.

From the fall of 17<sup>42</sup> to the fall of 17<sup>44</sup>, not even the government, with all its authority, could make way against the desperate situation in which the colony found itself. The prohibition to export was repeated in October 17<sup>42</sup><sup>1.</sup> and again in March 17<sup>43</sup>,<sup>2.</sup> and shipments to Ile Royale came to a complete stop, with the exception of one of 360 quintals of pease in June 17<sup>43</sup>; Bigot had asked for 650 quintals.<sup>3.</sup> On the other hand, in the autumn of 17<sup>42</sup> urgent requests were made to France to send 2000 quarts of flour<sup>4</sup> and to Ile Royale for an envoy of 400 quarts,<sup>5.</sup> all of which arrived in due course in the following summer,<sup>6.</sup> together with an additional 400 quarts from Ile Royale that had been asked for in July 17<sup>43</sup>.<sup>7.</sup> In the fall of that year, after another extremely bad harvest, 3000 quarts of flour were requested from France and 1000 quarts from Ile Royale<sup>8.</sup> and the colony endured many months of suffering,<sup>9.</sup> until the shipments began to arrive in the following September(17<sup>44</sup>).<sup>10.</sup>

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1. Moreau St.Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.13, pp.331-333. Ordonnance du Conseil Supérieur. Quebec, Oct.25, 17<sup>42</sup>.
  2. Ibid., pp.143-148. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, March 30, 17<sup>43</sup>.
  3. Corres.Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol.80, p.88. Varin au Ministre. Quebec, June 26, 17<sup>43</sup>.
  4. Ibid., Vol.77: p.16. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 17, 17<sup>42</sup>; pp.60-61. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.13, 17<sup>42</sup>.
  5. Ibid., p.57. Beauharnois et Hocquart à Duquesnel et Bigot. Nov.6, 17<sup>42</sup>. Copy enclosed with a letter from Beauharnois and Hocquart to the Minister of the same date.
  6. Ibid., Vol.79: p.3. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Montreal, June 17, 17<sup>43</sup>. (Shipment from Ile Royale, arrived May 29); p.291. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, July 14, 17<sup>43</sup>. (Shipment from France, arrived July 5); p.311. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Aug.9, 17<sup>43</sup>. (Shipment from France, arrived Aug.9.)
  7. Ibid.: pp.294-301. Hocquart à Duquesnel et Bigot. July 19, 17<sup>43</sup>. (Copy); p.42. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.14, 17<sup>43</sup>. (This shipment arrived on Aug.26).
  8. Ibid., pp.39-40. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.14, 17<sup>43</sup>.
  9. Ibid., Vol.81(2), p.341. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, July 22, 17<sup>44</sup>.
  10. Ibid., pp.357-358. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Sept.7, 17<sup>44</sup>.



In the succeeding period of more abundant harvests, import of foodstuffs ceased except for an amount of bacon and of salt beef.<sup>1</sup> Export to Ile Royale was resumed in September 17<sup>44</sup>, after Canada had received supplies from France and after it had become apparent that the harvest was going to be normal. By the twenty-first of that month Hocquart had shipped to Ile Royale something over 1100 quarts of the flour received from France and 177 quarts of Canadian pease. He proposed also to have some 600 quarts of the worst of the French flour converted into biscuit for Louisbourg, and, by the end of October, expected to have 7000 - 8000 minots of newly harvested wheat ground into flour, some of which he would send to the neighbouring colony.<sup>2</sup> In the early summer of 17<sup>45</sup> further shipments were made to Ile Royale<sup>3</sup> but the trade came to an abrupt stop with the capture of Louisburg at the end of June. I have found no record of export to the West Indies during the period; it is possible that little or none was attempted. However there was an outlet for Canadian foodstuffs in Acadia where supplies were required by the troops on service and by the Micmacs, allies of the French.<sup>4</sup>

In the summer of 17<sup>48</sup> it was apparent that the harvest was going to be meagre and La Galissonnière and Hocquart determined to limit export. However, Martinique was so much in need that a

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol.81(2), p.505. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Octé 2<sup>4</sup>, 17<sup>44</sup>; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.81, p88. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 10, 17<sup>45</sup>.
2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol.81(2), pp.372-373. Hocquart à Bigot. Quebec, Sept.21, 17<sup>44</sup> (Copy)
3. Ibid., Vol.83, pp.282-283. Hocquart au Ministre. June 18, 17<sup>45</sup>.
4. Ibid., Vol.88, pp.136-137. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 31, 17<sup>47</sup>.

considerable number of shipments during the course of the summer had to be allowed.<sup>1</sup> The crop, while anything but good, permitted the sending of a certain amount of provisions to Ile Royale.<sup>2</sup>

Shipments of supplies to Louisbourg and to Acadia continued until the autumn of 1750.<sup>3</sup> In the spring of the following year export was forbidden by La Jonquière and Bigot who gave as their reason the fact that <sup>the</sup> large purchases of supplies which the King had been making in the colony had occasioned a sort of dearth; Canada had been sending more supplies than she could spare to the Acadian frontier.<sup>4</sup>

1751 was another year of disastrous crop failure and once more the flow of trade was reversed. Again export was forbidden and food had to be imported into Canada.<sup>5</sup> A certain amount of provisions was received from France in May<sup>6</sup> but the bulk of them did not arrive until the following autumn<sup>7</sup>. The quantity promised by the Minister was 5000 quintals of flour and 6000 quintals of wheat.<sup>8</sup> There is no record of how much actually arrived, but the import must have approximated to this figure.

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.90-91, p.221. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Aug.16, 1748.
2. Ibid., Vol.92, p.103. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.7, 1748.
3. Ibid.: Vol.93, p.262. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.26, 1749; Vol.93, pp.313-315. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.11, 1749; Vol.96, p.50. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.25, 1750.
4. Ord.des Int., M 32, Vol.XIX, pp.426-427. Ordonnance de La Jonquière et Bigot. Quebec, March 19, 1751; Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.97, pp.27-28. La. Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, May 5, 1751.
5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.95, pp.40-41. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, Feb. 28, 1752.
6. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.98, p.104. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, May 15, 1752.
7. Ibid.: p.112. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.9, 1752; p.175. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.26, 1752.
8. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 95, pp.40-41. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, Feb.28, 1752.

From 1751 the prohibition to export was renewed every year.<sup>1.</sup> The explanation is, of course, that in these years of preparation for war and of war, all the food that the colony could raise, and more, was required for the service. In 1755, when the first Regulars were sent out from France, instructions were given that all export of foodstuffs must be forbidden—the colony was not even to be allowed to provision ships from France which arrived in Port; these vessels were to carry enough supplies for the return voyage.<sup>2.</sup> By way of enforcing the law, Bigot had the sieves sealed in all the mills in the côte du Sud from Pointe-de-Lévy to Kamouraska and in Beupré and on the island of Orleans.<sup>3.</sup> The mills in the Quebec government were sealed again from the beginning of January 1758 but the object this time was to force the habitants to conserve enough grain for the next sowing rather than to prevent export.<sup>4.</sup> According to Péan, the issuing of the ordinance was to be followed by an appraisal of the amount of wheat in the colony, in order to judge how much grain might be ground.<sup>5.</sup>

In the fevered years that followed after the declaration of war, only one factor determined the extent of the import trade, namely the amount that the colony could get. The demand was insatiable.

1. Inv.des Ord., Vol.III; pp.174-175. Oct.6, 1752; p.181. Sept.29, 1753; pp.189-190. Nov.26, 1754; p.193. Oct.1, 1755; p.200. Oct.26, 1756; p.206. Sept.15, 1757; p.210. June 28, 1758.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.101, pp.132-133. Ministre à Varin. Vaudreuil, Feb.17, 1755.
3. Ord. des Int., M 33, Vol.XX, pp.317-330. Ordonnance de Bigot. Quebec, Oct. 8, 1755.
4. Récher (curé of Quebec), Journal, p.304. Dec.24, 1757. Printed in the Bulletin des Recherches Historiques, Vol,IX; Montcalm, Journal, p. 327, Dec.25, 1757; Lettres de Montcalm, p.110. Montcalm à Lévis. Dec.30, 1757.
5. Mémoire pour M. J-H.Péan, pp.306-307.

From 1756 on, the colony was never satisfied. The people were placed on short rations and there are repeated references to the suffering they endured.<sup>1</sup> Large shipments did arrive, in spite of the English blockade, but they were not adequate.<sup>2</sup> It is rather curious to note that in spite of the contract made with Cadet, the King also sent supplies.<sup>3</sup> After 1758 however, France, nearing exhaustion, could give very little help.<sup>4</sup> The last assistance that reached the colony was that brought by the S. Kanon for the Munitionnaire's account in May 1759. Kanon's fleet which consisted of some twenty merchant ships, escorted by five or six frigates,<sup>5</sup> was almost laid by the heels when it met the English fleet in the Gulf. However, it escaped with the loss of only two ships.<sup>6</sup>

1. e.g. Bougainville, Journal, p.244. Nov.22, 1756. Printed in the Rapp.de L'Arch., 1923-1924; Lettres de Montcalm, p. 63. Montcalm à Lévis. Quebec, Sept.26, 1757; Montcalm, Journal, p.351. May 16, 1758, Etc.
2. Moreau St Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol. 14, p.421. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 3, 1756; Pontbriand à ses soeurs. Quebec, June 17, 1758. Printed in the Bulletin des Recherches Historiques, Vol. XX. p.389. Etc.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol.102, pp. 370-373. Résumé de la situation du Canada, porte au Roy, Oct. 7, 1757. (Synopsis of letters received from the colonial officials); Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 107, p.121. Ministre au Bigot. Versailles, Feb. 10, 1758.
4. Lévis, Journal, p. 176. May 9, 1759. Levis received his information from Bougainville, just returned from France.
5. Jean Claude Panet (ancien notaire de Quebec), Journal, pp. 3-4. Printed in Hist.Doc. Second Series. (Que.Lit. and Hist. Soc.)
6. Moreau St. Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol. 15, pp.359-360. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Quebec, May 28, 1759.

The vicissitudes of the trade were of course reflected in the fluctuations in wheat prices. In Canada there were two sets of prices, one regulated by the government and one which prevailed in spite of the government, and the discrepancy between the two might be wide. For example, from March 17<sup>42</sup> to October 17<sup>42</sup> the official price was 60 sous the minot,<sup>1</sup> but in June of that year the current price was 70 - 80 sous,<sup>2</sup> in September 90 sous,<sup>3</sup> and in October 100 sous.<sup>4</sup> In that month the authorities recognized the actual rise in price to the extent of increasing the official price to 65 sous.<sup>5</sup> The current price of 100 sous prevailed throughout the winter however, and in March 17<sup>43</sup> the government was again forced to take cognizance of the facts and the official price was advanced to 80 sous.<sup>6</sup>

When the authorities levied wheat in the côtes, they proclaimed a price, imposed a fine for disobeying the regulation, and then set out to buy wheat at the fixed price.<sup>7</sup> On occasion however, even the government was constrained to pay the current price, irrespective of what the declared price might be. For example, in spite of the fact that the official price had been set at 65 sous in October 17<sup>42</sup>, in that autumn and in the course of the winter the government had to pay the prevailing price of 100 sous

1. Ord.des Int., M29, Vol.XVI, pp.289. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, March 27, 17<sup>42</sup>; Moreau St.Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.13 pp.131-133. Ordonnance du Conseil Supérieur. Quebec, Oct.25, 17<sup>42</sup>.
2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol.77, p.327. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, June 11, 17<sup>42</sup>.
3. Ibid., p.15. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 17, 17<sup>42</sup>.
4. Ibid., pp.46, 48. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.26, 17<sup>42</sup>.
5. Moreau St.Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.13, p.133. Ordonnance du Conseil Supérieur. Quebec, Oct.25, 17<sup>42</sup>.
6. Ord.des Int., M 30, Vol.XVII, p.15. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, March 30, 17<sup>43</sup>.
7. e.g. Ibid; Inv.des Ord., Vol.III, p.62. Sept.20, 17<sup>44</sup>.

for the considerable quantity of wheat it bought. It probably felt justified in contravening its own regulations further by distributing the wheat at 70 sous the minot.<sup>1</sup>

The authorities sometimes used their power to tamper with prices to bring pressure to bear on the habitants. For example, on September 27, 1757 an ordinance was issued fixing the price of wheat at 7 livres the minot until October 15 and 6 livres thereafter. The object was to induce the habitants to thresh at once.<sup>2</sup>

I have tabulated<sup>3</sup> such figures as I have been able to collect but they are too discreto to be of much value. I append also a graph,<sup>4</sup> showing wheat prices from 1729 to 1757, taken from a list compiled by the Rev. M. Comte.<sup>5</sup> The compiler would seem to have based his statistics, in most cases, on the official, rather than on the actual price. The latter is of course the truer index. However, whether accurate in detail or not, the curé gives some indication of the direction which prices took, for, in general, the official price followed the trend of the current price, on a different level.

The mounting prices up to the fall of 1744 and the advanced price in the spring of 1752 reflect, of course, the condition of the trade after crop failure. The drop after 1745 was doubtless the outcome of the cessation of export to Ile Royale. The spectacular rise in the last few years was the result of the

1. Ord. des Int., M 30, Vol. XVII, p. 15. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, March 30, 1743.

2. Bougainville, Journal, p. 310. Sept. 27, 1757. Printed in Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924. As I have already pointed out, threshing was not usually begun until much later than this.

3. Infra, p. 119.

4. Infra, p. 120

5. Printed in W.B. Munro, Seigniorial System, p. 94.

increased demand, the decreased supply, and, especially, of the depreciation of the colonial currency.

With the agricultural situation as it was in the last two decades of the French régime, it was inevitable that trade would not be well established. Trade was not a factor in determining the progress of agriculture but vice versa. There was always a larger market for Canadian wheat than the colony could supply but there is no evidence that any individual ever went into the extensive raising of grain for export. The system of land tenure did not, of course, lend itself to large scale farming. Seigniors might have set aside extensive domains for the purpose but it seems possible that the authorities would have frowned on anything that approximated to "enclosure".

In a colony as isolated as Canada was in the eighteenth century the matter of food supply required serious attention. The authorities were fully cognisant of the fact as the care taken by the Intendant to obtain exact information as to the condition of the crop, the aid lent to farmers in famine years, the attempt to control wheat prices, and the regulation of the amount of export, all serve to show.

The condition of agriculture probably set the pace in Canada as no other branch of economic activity did. Consider, for example, the effect of the succession of crop failures in the early years of the period. By 1743, the construction of ships



by private individuals had ceased largely on account of the dearth in the colony. In the same year Hocquart wrote that the production of iron at St. Maurice would have been greater had provisions been more plentiful.<sup>1</sup> Again, as a result of the shortage of provisions, the attempt to establish settlers in the vicinity of Fort St. Frédéric was to a certain extent hindered.<sup>2</sup> We have seen the effect a short harvest might have on the export trade;<sup>3</sup> it also lessened the amount of provisions sent to the fishing stations on the Labrador coast,<sup>4</sup> which must have determined the number of men who could be employed. A rise in the cost of food inevitably affected other prices in the colony. For example, increased prices had to be paid for lumber for the King's shipyards during this first period of scarcity.<sup>5</sup>

Farming, while not the most profitable, was undoubtedly the most important activity in Canada. Not only on account of the number of people engaged, but also because of its widespread influence, agriculture can justly be described as the economic basis of the colony.

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 30, p. 3<sup>h</sup>. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 23, 17<sup>h</sup>3.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), pp. 381-382. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 31, 17<sup>h</sup>3.
3. Cf. also infra, p. 201.
4. Ord. des Int., M<sup>3</sup>C, Vol. XVII, p. 26-27. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, April 30, 17<sup>h</sup>3.
5. Supra, p. 36-37.

# WHEAT PRICES

OFFICIAL PRICE		CURRENT PRICE	
Date	Price per minot	Date	Price per minot
		Dec.17 <sup>41</sup> .....	50 S. - 3 L. 1.
March 27,17 <sup>42</sup> -Oct.25,17 <sup>42</sup> .....	3 L. 2.		
		June 17 <sup>42</sup> .....	3 L.10 S.- 4 L. 3.
		Sept. 17 <sup>42</sup> .....	4 L.10 S. 4.
Oct.25,17 <sup>42</sup> -March 30, 17 <sup>43</sup> .....	3 L.5 S. 5.	Oct. 17 <sup>42</sup> -March, 17 <sup>43</sup> .....	5 L. 6.
March 30,17 <sup>43</sup> -Oct.17 <sup>44</sup> .....	4 L. 7.		
		17 <sup>46</sup> - Nov. 17 <sup>47</sup> .....	3 L.10 S.- 4 L. 8.
		Jan. 1751 .....	4 L.15 S. 9.
May 1752 .....	5 L. 10.	May 1752 .....	7 L. 11.
		Jan. 1755 .....	5 L.15 S. 12.
Nov. 1756 - Jan. 1757 .....	4 L.15 S. 13.		
After Feb. 1, 1757 .....	4 L.5 S. 14.		
Sept.27,1757-Oct.15,1757 .....	6 L. 15.		
After Oct.15,1757 .....	7 L. 16.		
		Jan. 1758 .....	18 L. 17.
		Jan. 1759 .....	24 L. 18.
		1760 .....	30 L. - 40 L. 19.

1. S.- sous, L. - livres.  
Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.76, p.80. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Dec. 17, 1741.
2. Supra, p. 115.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.: Inv. des Ord., Vol.III, p. 62. Sept.20, 1744; Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.81(2)p.517.  
Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.28, 1744.
8. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.89, p.30. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.4, 1747.
9. Shortt, Documents, Vol.II, p.905. List of prices enclosed with Bernier to the Minister, April 19, 1759. This list gives prices current in Jan.1751, Jan.1755, Jan.1758 and Jan. 1759. The quintal of flour is quoted at 12 L., 14 L., 45 L., and 60 L., The relation between the price of the quintal of flour and the minot of wheat seems usually to have been about 5:2. The figures given above have been worked out in round numbers, using this arbitrary ratio.
10. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.98, pp.86-87. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, May 8, 1752.
11. Ibid.
12. Loc.cit
13. Inv. des Ord., Vol.III, p.200. Nov. 16, 1756. Old wheat, 5 L.; new wheat, 4 L.10 S.
14. Ibid. Old wheat 4 L. 10 S.; new wheat 4 L.
15. Supra, p. 116
16. Ibid.
17. Loc.cit
18. Loc.cit
19. Mémoires du S. de Courville, p.180. Printed in Hist.Doc. First Series (Que.Lit. and Hist. Soc.)

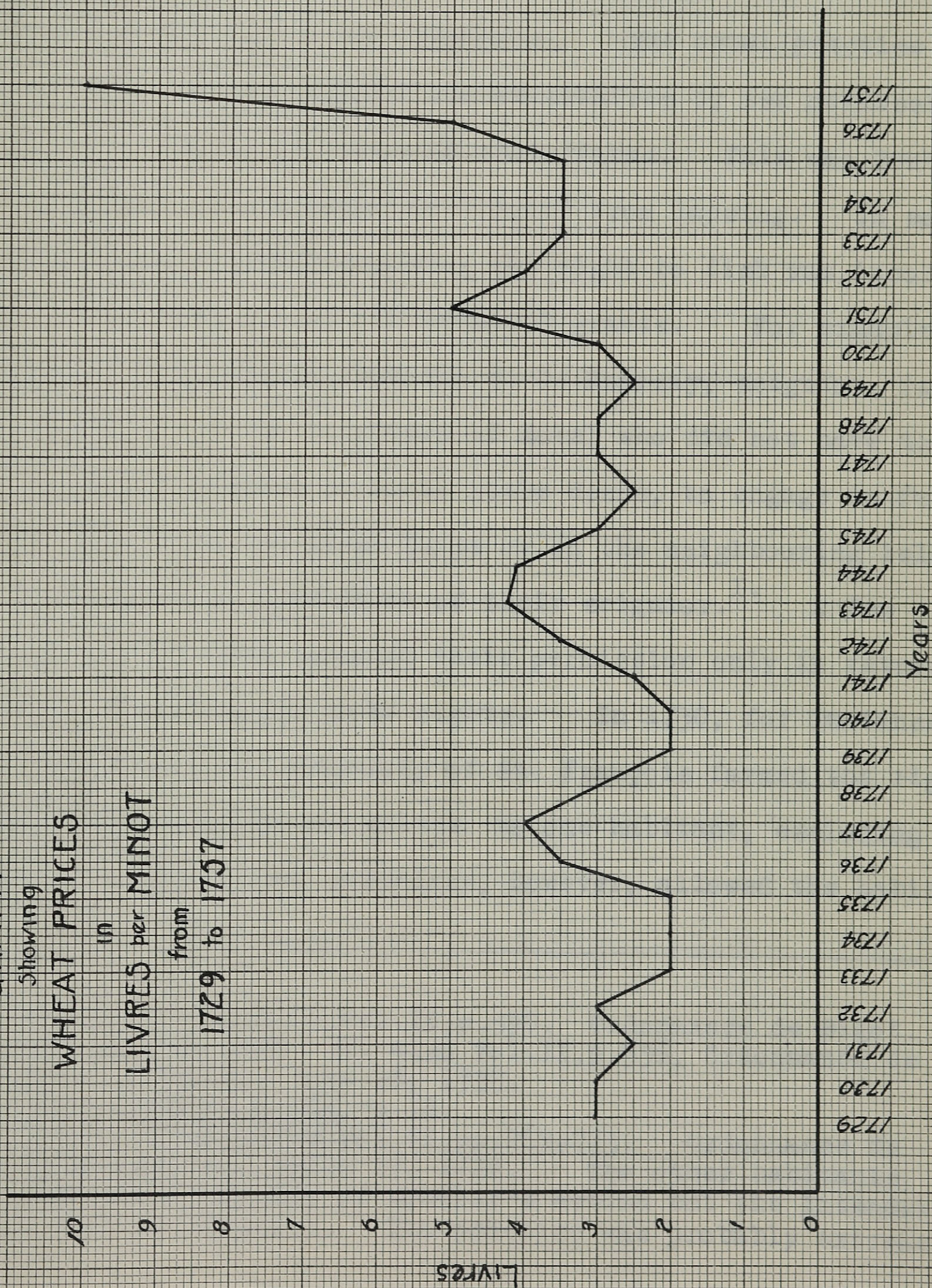


IF SHEET IS READ THIS WAY (HORIZONTALLY), THIS MUST BE TOP.

IF SHEET IS READ THE OTHER WAY (VERTICALLY), THIS MUST BE LEFT-HAND SIDE.

THIS MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING.

GRAPH  
showing  
WHEAT PRICES  
in  
LIVRES per MINOT  
from  
1729 to 1757





## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FISHERIES.

In Canada fishing was carried on on a comparatively small scale by the habitants and on a larger scale by the lessees of fishing stations on the Labrador coast. Fishing rights in the colony proper were reserved to the seigniors. The usual practice seems to have been to require the censitaires to ask permission to fish in the river in front of their farms. This was doubtless only a formality to prevent the "right" from lapsing. In some cases, however, a clause granting the right to fish was incorporated in the title deeds of the "en censive" grants. For example, in 1750 Bigot, on an appeal from the S. de Ramezay, seignior, forbade those habitants of the seigniory of Sorel who did not have the right to fish specified in their title deeds, to engage in future in fishing in front of their farms or on the neighbouring islands without the written permission of their seignior.<sup>1</sup> A few seigniors, it is said, granted their permission only in return for a fee<sup>2</sup> and others leased their rights. In 1730, for instance, the S. Orevier of the seigniory of St. François farmed the right to fish in the seigniorial waters to one habitant, excluding all others.<sup>3</sup> Most of the seigniors, however, allowed the habitants

1. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol. II, p. 590. Ordonnance de Bigot. Quebec, Feb. 18, 1750. Cf. also Vol. II, p. 536, Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, June 18, 1735.
2. Guérin, Feudal Canada, p. 78.
3. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol. II, pp. 269, 273. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, March 27, 1732. The other habitants, protested the legality of Orevier's action but the Intendant supported the seignior. The practice was probably extremely rare.

to fish freely retaining only the "droit de pêche", that is, the right to one fish in every eleven caught. It is generally stated that when the habitants were fishing for their own use, nothing was exacted. When, however, the fish were for market the seignior claimed his due.<sup>1</sup>

The habitants, in addition to providing for their own needs, carried on a business in supplying the towns.<sup>2</sup> On the river between Three Rivers and Quebec Kalm noted what he terms "a very peculiar method of catching fish". A series of boxes were set in the river near the shore with hedges of ozers leading out from them which served to head the fish into the traps.<sup>3</sup> The method is a familiar one to anyone who has visited the lower St. Lawrence. Knox gives an inimitable description of how fishing was carried on in the winter. He says "The manner by which the people supply themselves with fish at this season is deserving of notice. A hole or well is made in the ice, about eight or ten inches diameter; there the fish gather, in great numbers, for air, as some conceive; and others are of the opinion it is for light. The person then amuses them by throwing down crumbs of bread, entrails of fowl, &c. and while the fish are greedily employed in feeding, he slips down a black hair gin, tied to a short stick; and, guiding it round one at a time, he draws it out of its element with a sudden jirk, and thus repeats it, as long as his frigid situation will permit him to

1. Munro, Seigniorial System, p.140; Heneker, Seigniorial Régime in Canada; pp.135-136; Guerin, Feudal Canada, pp.77-78. The seignior sometimes commuted his "droit" for one hogshead of fish per season.
2. Infra, p. 123
3. Kalm, op.cit. Vol.III, pp.92-93.

continue on the ice; before his departure, he lays a broad stone over the well, to render the air or light less familiar to the inhabitants/<sup>of these</sup> aqueous regions, of which there are an inconceivable variety, of different sizes, from that of a sprat to a herring, of divers colours, and most delicious to eat fried or stewed." <sup>1</sup>. Boucault writing on the same subject says "--le poisson qu'ils en tirent meurt presque à l'instant, ils le laissent sur la glace où il gèle en peu de tems à devenir dur comme pierre, et lors qu'ils en ont de quoy remplir une carriole, autrement traîneau, en chargent une traîne comme de bois de corde ils apportent dans les marchés des villès, pour le vendre, ceux qui en font leurs provisions, se servent de la scie ou de la hache lorsque le poisson est trop gros et trop long pour n'en prendre qu'à leur besoin,---" <sup>2</sup>

Eels were caught in large quantities not only for home consumption but also for export. They were salted down in hogs-heads and shipped to Europe and the West Indies. <sup>3</sup>.

Habitants on the downriver seigniories, such as Isle Verte, Baie St. Paul, Rivière Ouelle, and Kamouraska, engaged in porpoise fishing also. Both the oil and the skins <sup>4</sup> were saleable. Habitants evidently formed partnerships to exploit the "marsouin", for a judgment of 1736 deals with one "Quimper et ---- ses associés habitants of the seignior of La Pocatière, whom the S. Dauteuil, seignior, had allowed to establish a porpoise fishing in front of

1. Knox, Historical Journal (Toronto, Champlain Soc., 1914) Vol. II, pp. 311-312. Dec. 22 - Dec. 31, 1759

2. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1920-1921. p. 15. Etat Présent du Canada, par le S. Boucault. 1754.

3. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, p. 9. July 24, 1752.

4. According to Charlevoix, the skins, scraped and tanned, were used for "vestes and hauts de chausses". The priest maintains that the leather was so strong that it was bullet-proof.

Charlevoix, Journal, p. 217. In Charlevoix, Histoire de la Nouvelle France (Paris, 1744) Vol. V.



the seigniority in return for 10% of the product.<sup>1.</sup>

The authorities in France were very anxious, at least at the beginning of our period, to develop the industry. Every royal mémoire addressed to Governor and Intendant between the years 1740 and 1745 urges them to neglect nothing to encourage the habitants to continue and expand the fishing.<sup>2.</sup> But the industry had been declining since 1721.<sup>3.</sup> By 1726 Governor and Intendant reported that it had become "une pêche fort casuelle et fort difficile".<sup>4.</sup> Certainly the "pesche de marsouins" was not making much headway in our period to judge from the royal bemoanings of the "langueur" that had fallen upon the trade and from the royal injunctions to the colonial officials not to allow the exploitations to come to a stop.<sup>5.</sup> The general impression that one gathers from references to the industry between 1740 and 1745 is that the fishing was carried on in a desultory and unenthusiastic fashion by a few habitants. After 1745 nothing more is heard of the porpoise fisheries until 1754 when the S. Boucault mentions that porpoise were fished in the lower St. Lawrence.<sup>6.</sup>

1. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol. II, pp. 541-542. Judgment de La Rouvillière (acting for Hocquart who was absent in France) Quebec, Nov. 10, 1736. Cf. also Vol. II, pp. 297-298. Ordonnance de Bégon. Quebec, July 5, 1722.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol. 70(1), pp. 226-227. Marly May 13, 1740; Vol. 72, pp. 230-231. Marly, May 12, 1741; Vol. 74(2), p. 402. Fontainebleau, April, 30, 1742; Vol. 76(1), p. 375. Versailles, May 31, 1743; Vol. 78(1), p. 144. Versailles, March 24, 1744; Vol. 81, p. 227. Versailles, April 28, 1745.
3. Fauteux, op.cit. t. II, pp. 534-537.
4. Ibid. p. 537.
5. Authorities quoted supra, note 2
6. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1920-1921, p. 22. l'Etat Présent du Canada, par le Sieur Boucault. 1754.

A memoire of 1758 refers to the porpoise fisheries as being "tres peu considerables"<sup>1</sup>. Any fisheries that still existed in 1759 were doubtless abandoned before the approach of the English fleet.

The large scale fisheries were found on the lower St. Lawrence and on the Labrador coast. These posts were described as "pêcheries" although they were founded to exploit the fur resources of the district and for seal "fishing" which could as well have been termed hunting.<sup>2</sup>

The largest of these posts, Tadoussac, belonged to the King's domain. Throughout our period this post was farmed. Up to 1749 it was leased by the S. Ougnet, Director of the Domaine for an annual sum of 4,500 livres.<sup>3</sup> The value of the farm is indicated by the fact that in 1740, an offer of a rental of 10,000 livres was made.<sup>4</sup> Ougnet's lease expired in 1745 but owing to war conditions new léssees could not at once be found.<sup>5</sup> By 1749, however, the value of the post had again become evident and in that year Bigot closed with the Veuve Fornel and her associates the SS. Havy et Lefebvre for a sum of 7,000 livres per annum.<sup>6</sup> The widow is said to have retained the post throughout

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 103(2), p. 626. Mémoire sur le Canada. (158)

2. Infra, p. 133.

3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 109-111. Ministre au Hocquart, Versailles, April 16, 1741.

4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 74, p. 68. Déclaration, signed De La Fontaine et Comp<sup>ie</sup>. The Minister for some unrevealed reason did not feel that a change would be desirable. (Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 109-111. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 16, 1741.)

5. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 83, p. 387. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 26, 1745; Vol. 85, p. 357. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 18, 1746; Vol. 88, p. 60. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 2, 1747.

6. Ibid: Vol. 92, p. 105. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 8, 1748; Vol. 93, p. 259. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 25, 1749.

the French régime and for some years after that.<sup>1.</sup>

The Domain stretched along the north shore of the St. Lawrence from the end of the "seigneurie des Eboulemens" at a point opposite Isle-aux-Coudres to Cape Cormorant below Sept Isles, a distance of some 240 miles. The territory stretched north to the headwaters of the river draining into the St. Lawrence.<sup>2.</sup>

As the Minister once pointed out to Bigot, peltry was the principal item in the trade of Tadoussac.<sup>3.</sup> Peltry included both furs bought from the Indians and sealskins. The "Traite de Tadoussac" was not of course confined to the post at the mouth of the Saguenay. A number of posts were established at various points in the Domain<sup>4.</sup> all dependent on Tadoussac as the central entrepot. Of the posts set up to tap the fur resources that lay inland, the most important was Chicoutimi, on the upper Saguenay, 30 leagues from Tadoussac. The annual product was ordinarily 3,000 pounds of beaver and 2,000 marten skins, besides bear, lynx, and otter. The post was said to have returned, at times, furs to the value of 40,000 livres.<sup>5.</sup>

1. Rapp. de l'Arch., 1920-1921, p.63. Preamble to a document printed here. The document is a description by the S.Fornel of his discovery of the Baie des Eskimaux.
2. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.II, pp.361-362. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, May 23, 1733.
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.91, p.226. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, June 14, 1750.
4. Infra, p. 144.
5. Jesuit Relations (Thwaites) Vol.LXIX, p.110. Mémoire par le P.Olaude Godefroi Coquart sur les Postes du Domaine du Roi.(1750) Coquart was assigned to the Saguenay Mission in 1746 and remained there until 1757 when he returned to Quebec. (op.cit. p.290, note 15)

Trade was carried on also at a number of other posts established on the lakes and rivers,<sup>1</sup> whither agents were sent to barter with the Indians of the district, chiefly for marten and caribou. Three of these lesser posts<sup>2</sup> were dependent on Chicoutimi;<sup>3</sup> possibly all the others depended directly on Tadoussac. It is probable that agents were in continual residence only in these entrepôts.

Along the St. Lawrence, eight posts were established,<sup>4</sup> of which the most important seem to have been Tadoussac, Sept Isles, and the Ile Jérémie. Tadoussac produced only 100 to 120 marten skins, 30 lynx, and some fox, and a few pounds of castoreum. The main occupation was seal fishing, of which the return was usually 80 to 90 casks of oil and 500 to 600 sealskins. The product of Sept Isles was, as a rule, over 35 casks of oil, some beaver, a great many caribou hides, and sometimes as many as 800 marten. The Ile Jérémie returned 35 to 40 hogsheads of oil, 400 to 500 beaver pelts, and 800 or more marten, as well as caribou, sealskin, and sometimes fox.<sup>5</sup> It is evident that "Tadoussac" was an extensive and a profitable post.

To the east of the Domain lay the seigniory of Mingan extending to the Vermilion River opposite the lower end of Anticosti, a distance of 90 leagues and, according to the seigniors, stretched back from the river to a depth of 10 miles. The seigniory included a number of posts.<sup>6</sup> In 1736, François Bissot,

1. Infra, P. 144.

2. viz, Lake St. John, Mistassini, and Ashuapmouchouan.

3. Jesuit Relations, (Thwaites) Vol. LXIX, p. 110. Coquart, Mémoire. April, 5, 1750.

4. Infra, p. 144.

5. Jesuit Relations (Thwaites) Vol. LXIX, pp. 94, 108, 110, 120. Coquart, Mémoire. April 5, 1750.

6. Infra, p. 144.

seignior, leased the concessions to the S. Volant for twenty-one years.<sup>1.</sup>

From the eastern extremity of the seigniory of Mingan to the entrance to the Strait of Belle Isle, a succession of fishing stations were established.<sup>2.</sup> These posts were exploited by various individuals who held their concessions by royal brevet for a stated length of time. Enterprises of this nature required a comparatively large amount of capital and were, therefore, frequently carried on in partnership. As M. Fauteux points out the association was usually formed between the "concessionnaire" and one or more merchants in Quebec who undertook to supply the necessary provisions and sometimes the vessels to transport them.<sup>3.</sup> For example, in 1732, the S. François Martel de Brouague, incumbent of the Baye Phélypeaux, entered into partnership with the S. Pierre Trottiers Desauniers, Quebec merchant. Desauniers supplied all the provisions for the post, and looked after the loading and unloading of Brouague's ships, had them refitted when necessary, hired and paid the crew and so on. Brouague on the other hand turned over the whole product of his post to Desauniers at a certain fixed profit.<sup>4.</sup>

In 1736, the S. Bazile, a Quebec merchant, was granted the post at Baye des Châteaux. Unable to finance the undertaking

1. E. Voorhis, *Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French régime and of the English Fur Trading Companies*, pp.114-115. An annotated list compiled in 1930 and issued in the form of a brochure by the Dept. of the Interior, Ottawa. Mimeographed.
2. *Infra*, pp. 144-145.
3. J.N.Fauteux, *op.cit.*, i.II, p.540.
4. *Rapp. de l'Arch.* 1922-1923. pp.356-357. François Martel de Berhouage. (Spelled also Brouague or Brouage)

himself, Bazile took into partnership the SS.Fornel, Havy, and Lefebvre, all merchants.<sup>1.</sup> The next partnership that took over the post included the S. Gautier, King's Physician at Quebec, and the S. Bréard, Comptroller of the Marine.<sup>2.</sup> We find the S. Constantin, "Habitant et capitaine de la côte de Saint Augustin près de Québec", holding the posts of Petit St. Modet, Baye Rouge, and Rivière des Français. One of his posts jostled the concession Grand St. Modet, held in common by the SS.Foucault, member of the Conseil Supérieur and Boucault lieutenant-general of the Admiralty of Quebec.<sup>3.</sup> In 1753, after Constantin's death, the post of Petit St. Modet was granted for life to Hocquart, now Intendant at Brest.<sup>4.</sup>

Women, too, entered into the business. In 1745, the post of Gros Mécatina was being exploited by the Veuve Pommereau<sup>5.</sup> and the Veuve Fornel's possession of the farm of Tadoussac has already been noted.<sup>6.</sup>

Some of these posts were sublet. . For example, the S. Constantin leased his concession of Petit St. Modet to the S.Rotot, Quebec merchant, for an annual rental of 200 livres,<sup>7.</sup> and during

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol.81, p.82. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct.25, 1744.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.89, p.147, Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 30, 1749. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, p.186. Mémoire pour Bréard.
3. Inv.des Ord: Vol.II, pp.242-243. April 18, 1738. Vol.III, p.112, Oct.8, 1748.
4. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.97, p.225. Brevet de Concession. July 20, 1753. Hocquart later changed this post for that of Gros Mécatina. (Inv.des Ord. Vol.III, pp.197-198. May 25, 1756)
5. Corres.Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol.83, p.358. Etat des huiles---provenant des postes du bas du fleuve---1745.
6. Supra, p.125
7. Corres.Gén., C<sup>"</sup>A, Vol.109, p.297. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 1737.

Hocquart's proprietorship of the post it was farmed to the S. Volant de Haudebourg.<sup>1.</sup>

We have seen something of the extent of the trade in the Domaine. The S. Raymond in his *mémoire* on the posts, written in 1754, estimated the average annual product of the fisheries, evidently exclusive of Tadoussac and possibly Mingan, to be about 1400 - 1500 casks of oil and 3000 - 4000 sealskins, which <sup>together</sup> brought in a return of from 50,000 - 80,000 livres.<sup>2.</sup> The return of oil in 1745 from nine posts, including Tadoussac, was 1620 casks.<sup>3.</sup> That year oil was fetching 51 livres the cask, a price which was considered low,<sup>4.</sup> so that the financial return for oil alone would have been 82,260 livres. A *mémoire* written a few years after Raymond's calculates the average yield of oil from the eleven posts, Tadoussac and Ile Jérémie included, at 1840 - 2690 casks.<sup>5.</sup> The return, estimated at the low price of 1745 (for lack of record of any other) was, therefore, worth 93,840 - 137,190 livres. At the same time the writer puts the number sealskins at 19,140 - 23,300 for nine posts exclusive of the Domaine.<sup>6.</sup> Raymond's estimate would seem, therefore, to be rather low.

1. Inv. Des Ord., Vol. III, pp. 197-198. May 25m 1756.
2. Raymond, Postes du Canada p. 29. (published by Aegidius Fauteux)
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 83, p. 358. *Estat des Huiles de loup marins* provenant des postes du bas du fleuve St. Laurent pendant l'année 1745, signed Hocquart. Quebec, Oct. 8, 1745.
4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 83, p. 387. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 26, 1745.
5. Bulletin des Recherches Historiques Vol. XXXVII (1931) pp. 408-410. *Mémoire sur les forts de la Nouvelle France*. This *mémoire* bears a close resemblance to the *Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France* (1757) (Rapp de l'Arch., 1923-1924) which was one of the documents that Bougainville took to France in 1758. One is obviously based on the other.
6. Ibid.



In their brevets, the lessees were always granted the exclusive right to sealfishing, trade, and hunting, within the limits of their concessions but the right to fish for cod was given only concurrently with the fishing vessels from France.<sup>1</sup> Baye Phélypeaux is the only post mentioned as engaging to any considerable extent in cod fishing.<sup>2</sup> In the early years of the period at least, usually about fifteen ships arrived each year to fish for cod off the coast of Labrador.<sup>3</sup> Presumably this number included some Canadian-owned vessels for, it is said, that Quebec merchants sent ships to engage in cod fishing around Newfoundland and in the lower St. Lawrence.<sup>4</sup> Evidently some sort of congé was required, for an ordinance issued in 1743 commissions the militia captain of the Ste. Anne de Beaupré to seize the "chaloupe" owned by individuals in the parish who were preparing to go cod fishing without a licence.<sup>5</sup>

Salmon and herring fishing were carried on in a desultory fashion in the posts. In 1739 a number of concessionaires undertook to fish for salmon in the rivers that emptied into the St. Lawrence. The effort was made at the instigation of a

1. e.g. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 93, pp. 107-108. Brevet de ratification pour le S. Martel. Versailles, June 24, 1751.
2. Rapp. de l'Arch 1920-1921, p. 28. Etat Présent du Canada, par le S. Boucault. 1754.
3. Ibid. 1922-1923: p. 401. Liste des navires qui ont fait leur pêche à la cote de Labrador cette année 1739. signed De Brouague, Labrador, Aug. 23, 1739; p. 404, Liste des navires etc. De Brouague. Baye Phélypeaux, Sept. 2, 1742; p. 405. Ministre à Brouague. Versailles, Feb. 7, 1743; pp. 405-406. Liste des navires etc. De Brouague, Baye Phélypeaux, Sept. 8, 1743; p. 406. Ministre à Brouague. Versailles, Feb. 8, 1744.
4. Ibid. 1920-1921, p. 22. Etat Présent du Canada, par le S. Boucault. 1754.
5. Ord. des Int., M 30, Vol. XVII, pp. 27-28. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, May 1, 1743.

captain from Dunkirk who promised to buy the entire catch. No more was heard of the captain, however, and the proprietors had considerable difficulty in disposing of the 1000 casks of fish they had as a result of their efforts.<sup>1</sup> This fiasco evidently disgusted the concessionaires with the enterprise for, in spite of the annual urgings of the King,<sup>2</sup> there is no suggestion of any large scale undertaking of salmon fishing until 1753. In that year the S. Oova et Cie, merchants, again of Dunkirk, sent out one of their members to make arrangements for the establishment of a salmon fishery on the lower St. Lawrence,<sup>3</sup> but no more is heard of the project. In 1755, two Quebec merchants proposed to go rather far afield to Chaleur Bay and the Restigouche River respectively, where they had obtained concessions with the exclusive privilege of fishing for salmon.<sup>4</sup> The enterprises were probably stopped by the war.

As for herring fishing some individuals had wanted to make an attempt at the Isles aux Pellerins in 1743 but the S. Landron, who claimed to be proprietor of the islands, would not allow it. Beauharnois and Hocquart were ordered to revoke his concession and to grant it afresh to the would-be herring fishers.<sup>5</sup> The

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.76, p.162. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada (unsigned, 1741)
2. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol.74(2), p.402. Fontainebleau, April 30, 1742; Vol.76(1), pp.373-4. Versailles, May 31, 1743; Vol.78(1), p.44. Versailles, March 24, 1744; Vol.81, pp.225-6. Versailles, April 28, 1745. The King was anxious to establish an export trade to the West Indies in salt fish. He even offered to distribute salt from the royal stores if lack of it were the only obstacle.
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.97, pp.91-92. Ministre à Duquesne et Bigot. Versailles, May 2, 1753.
4. Inv des Ord. Vol.III: p.190. Jan.15, 1755; p.191. April 2, 1755.
5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.78(1), pp.145-146. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, March 24, 1744.

fate of this project also, is hidden in the special limbo reserved for lost records. In 1754, the S.<sup>t</sup>.Boucault said that from the mouth of the river to a point 20 or 30 leagues from Quebec a considerable amount of fishing was done for herrings and sardines, while salmon and other fish were caught in the tributary rivers.<sup>1</sup> This was probably only for local consumption.

There is no record, at least during our period, of any whaling carried on by Canadians. In 1735 the frères Darragorry of St. Jean de Luz undertook to catch whales in the gulf and river St. Lawrence, but owing to repeated losses they abandoned the enterprise in 1744. Three years later they returned to attempt fishing with nets. In 1754 they obtained the exclusive privilege of whaling in the St. Lawrence and formed a company in Paris for the enterprise. Evidently, however, the war put a stop to the whole scheme and the undertaking was abandoned.<sup>2</sup>

Seal fishing, therefore, remained the chief pursuit of the fisheries. During the winter, seals were hunted on the ice with guns, and when the ice melted they were captured in the water.<sup>3</sup> In the stations on the Labrador coast the seal was hunted from the first ice until Twelfth Day and from the middle of March until the ice went out. During the intervening period the seals went up as far as Tadoussac where they were hunted until they went down river again in the spring on their return northward.<sup>4</sup>

1. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1920-1921. op.cit., p.22
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.101, p.51. Ministre à Duquesne et Bigot. Versailles, March 2, 1755. See also, J.N.Fauteux, op.cit., t.II, pp.541-543.
3. Corres.Gén., C<sup>o</sup>A, Vol.76, pp.158-159. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada (1741).
4. Bulletin des Recherches Historiques Vol.XXXVII, pp.408-409. Mémoire sur les Forts de la Nouvelle France (unsigned) written probably in 1757) Jesuit Relations (Thwaites) Vol.LXIX, pp.94, 106. Coquart, Mémoire. April 5, 1750.

The records of our period contain no evidence of how the oil was extracted. In Charlevoix's time the blubber was tried over a fire or on "charniers". These were simply large plank platforms on which the blubber from several seals was spread to melt in the sun and the oil was drained off through a hole cut for the purpose.<sup>1.</sup>

Most of the product seems to have been exported although, no doubt, a certain amount was used in the colony for illumination purposes. The wealthier classes probably used candles however, and for a good many of the poorer, such as the rural habitants, the light of the hearth probably sufficed. Bougainville complained that candles were burned in nearly all the posts (at the King's expense of course) while oil, which was cheap, was not provided.<sup>2.</sup>

The skins were tanned with an extract of hemlock bark and dyed with a mixture containing a powder taken from certain stones found beside the river and known as "Thunder Rock" or "Narcassites de Mines".<sup>3.</sup>

In 1741, Hocquart conceived the idea of having glue manufactured at the fishing posts. Ougnet, farmer of Tadoussac, produced a few pounds of excellent glue<sup>4.</sup> and plans were made to found an export trade in the commodity.<sup>5.</sup> The following year

1. Charlevoix, Journal, p. 214. In Charlevoix, Histoire de la Nouvelle France, Vol. V. (Paris, 1744)

2. Bougainville, Journal, p. 236. (Carillon) Oct. 16 (1756). Printed in Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924.

3. Charlevoix, op. cit pp. 214-215.

4. Corres. Gén., O<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 76, pp. 27-28. Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 28, 1741.

5. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74(2): pp. 235-236. Ministre à Hocquart, Fontainebleau, April 17, 1742; p. 456. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, June 18, 1742; Corres. Gén., O<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 77, p. 360. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 16, 1742.

however, a hundred pounds made by the S. Foucault proved to be worthless and the only satisfactory glue produced was five or six pounds at Tadoussac.<sup>1</sup> But owing to its cost, Ougnet's method was not practicable<sup>2</sup> and after 1744 no more is heard of the fish glue industry.

Owners of fishing posts sent, or had sent, one or more supply ships to their concessions each year and these ships doubtless brought the produce back to Quebec whence it was shipped to a further destination. Sometimes a ship outward bound, called at a post, loaded with oil, and continued on her voyage.<sup>3</sup>

The Labrador posts caused nothing like the drain on the manpower of the colony that the up country posts did. In 1758 there were 2000 men estimated to be in the up country<sup>4</sup>, whereas for the exploitation of ten of the fishing posts<sup>5</sup> the maximum number of men required was placed at 170.<sup>6</sup> At Sept Isles the "engagés" made their contract for only one year,<sup>7</sup> the practice at the other posts may have been similar.

The government kept a controlling hand on the fisheries as it did, or attempted to do, on all colonial life. Concessions on

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.80, p.35. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.24, 1743.
2. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.81(2), pp.496-497. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.24, 1744.
3. e.g. In 1743, the "La Gratieuse" of Bayonne arranged to call at Baye Phélypeaux after it left Quebec, take on oil there, and proceed back to Bayonne. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.80, p.291. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, July 14, 1743.
4. Supra, pp.79-80
5. viz. Cap Charles, Baye des Chateaux, St.Modet, Baye Rouge, Anse-au-Loup, La Forteau, Baye Phélypeaux, Chicataka, Rivière St.Augustin, and Gros/Mécatina.
6. Bulletin des Recherches Historiques Vol.XXXVII, (1931) pp.408-409. Mémoire sur les forts de la Nouvelle France. (Unsigned, written probably in 1757).
7. Jesuit Relations (Thwaites) Vol.LXIX, p.122. P.Coquart, Mémoire. April 5, 1750.

the Labrador coast had to be held from the Crown, as we have seen. In 1754 the Minister set forth the obligations which devolved upon Governor and Intendant in connection with the posts. Posts were to be granted only to those who were in a condition to exploit them (les faire valoir) and, in most cases,<sup>1</sup> were to be held only for a certain number of years. Concessions had to be so located that they did not interfere with, or injure the trade of, one another. In that year, for example, the colonial authorities were ordered to ascertain whether two posts, granted in 1748 and in 1750 respectively, were damaging the trade of the Baye Phélypeaux and to revoke another concession, granted in 1751, which was known to be injuring the Baye.<sup>2</sup>

The incumbent of the post at Baye Phélypeaux, the S. François Martel de Brouague was also "commandant pour le roi à la côte de Labrador". His duties were the supervision of affairs in that district with an eye to enforcing the law, and reporting to the minister on general conditions.<sup>3</sup>

The object of the government in thus superintending the exploitation of the resources of Labrador was simply to ensure the success of the undertaking. Unlike the farming of the up country posts, the granting of fishing concessions brought no money into the Treasury. The holders paid only a nominal rent

1. Of. supra, p.150. Some others besides Hocquart had life tenures, e.g. Brouague at the Baye Phélypeaux and Constantin, Hocquart's predecessor at St. Modet.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.99, pp.61-62. Ministre à Duquesne et Bigot. Versailles, May 30, 1754.
3. Rapp. de l'Arch, 1922-1923. pp.356,357. François Martel de Berhouage.

of say two beaver skins or 4 livres per annum.<sup>1</sup> The motive was not therefore, one of gain. The authorities wanted merely to ensure fair conditions for all the concessionaires, and to prevent undue monopoly and the holding of blocks of territory for speculation.

A variety of factors influenced the fortunes of the concessionaires. A considerable amount of capital, compared with the amount of wealth in the colony, was necessary to establish a post, and returns were not always certain. The abundance of seal and fur bearing animals seems to have varied considerably from year to year, weather conditions might have an adverse effect, and one had always to contend with the hostility of the Eskimo.

For example, the proprietors of the Baye des Chateaux claimed to have sunk more than 100,000 livres in the post between 1736 when it was founded, and 1744, and by the latter date had taken a loss of 36,000 livres. The establishment had required a fort equipped with four cannon, stocked with forty muskets and munitions, and garrisoned with twenty men, to safeguard the concession against the ravages of the Eskimos.<sup>2</sup>

The S. Marsal, a Quebec merchant who had been granted a concession at Cap Charles in 1735, also claimed to have made a considerable outlay and to have received practically no return. The yield had not been as great as he had expected, his first cargo of

1. e.g. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 99, pp. 75-77. Brevet de ratification pour le S. Phillipe d'Aillebout de Cery (R. St. Augustin). Id. pour le S. Marsal (Cap Charles) Versailles, May 1, 1754.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 81, p. 88. Placet de Fornel (enclosed with, Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct. 25, 1744).



supplies was lost when the ship was wrecked, and finally, he was put to the very considerable expense of replacing all the buildings on his concession when the first lot were destroyed by the savages.<sup>1.</sup>

Weather was a factor which could not be left out in the calculation of profits. The success of the hunting depended to a certain extent on the amount of ice for when there was not too much of it and the wind was not too violent, the yield was much greater.<sup>2.</sup> Not only the hunting was affected by weather conditions. In 1750 the proprietors of the Baye des Eskimaux took a loss of 12,000 to 15,000 livres because the supply ship could not get in on account of the ice.<sup>3.</sup>

The Eskimos were a constant menace although they did sometimes trade peaceably with the French. In 1741, for instance, seven Eskimo "chaloupes" appeared at the Baye des Chateaux and the savages traded eight quintals of "barbe de baleine" for French goods. They returned again the following year.<sup>4.</sup>

The savages required careful handling, however, The destruction of Marsal's buildings at Cap Charles was the vengeance wreaked by a band of Eskimos after some one had imprudently fired on the savages when they took up their abode in a nearby island. They returned next spring, burned the buildings, and caught and killed two of the three men who were in the post.<sup>5.</sup>

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), pp. 206-208. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 20, 1743. The Minister is referring to a letter written to him by Marsal.
2. Jesuit Relations (Thwaites) Vol. LXIX p. 121. P. Coquart, Mémoire. April 5, 1750.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 96, pp. 77-84. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1750.
4. Ibid., Vol. 109, pp. 416-417. Fornel au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 27, 1742.
5. Ibid. p. 418.

It was said that every year these savages committed murders and robberies in the harbours of the north.<sup>1.</sup> We have already noted the precautions taken at the Baye des Chateaux against the Eskimos. The post was abandoned in 1745 and not exploited again until the end of the war. Sometime between 1745 and 1748 the Eskimos seized the opportunity completely to destroy the establishment so that it had all to be replaced by the new tenant.<sup>2.</sup>

The French tried to prevent such descents by forbidding fishing vessels from France to trade any arms, munitions, or iron tools to the Eskimos. It was part of Brouague's duty to report any violations of the law and on his statement/<sup>punishment</sup> was meted out. In 1758, however, some cod fishermen of St. Malo did trade guns to the Eskimos with the result that they attacked and destroyed the posts of St. Modet and Baye des Chateaux, killing a number of men and forcing the French to abandon these two stations.<sup>3.</sup>

Such were the difficulties in normal times. The two periods of warfare were not, it is needless to say, helpful to the industry. From 1740 to 1744 the success of the posts seems to have varied little.<sup>4.</sup> In 1745 the first intimation of the difficulties to come was that Ougnet, in the fall of that year, was unable to get the powder he needed for his trade, and the colonial officials first realized that it was going to be impossible

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), pp. 206-208. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 30, 1743.
2. Corres. Gém., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 90-91, p. 53. La. Galissonnière et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 22, 1748.
3. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1923-1924, p. 8. Note sur les Eskimaux (remise au Ministre en 1758) Mission de Bougainville; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 109, pp. 98-99. Ministre à Vaudreuil et Bigot. Versailles, Jan. 26, 1759.
4. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec et Dépêches B: Vol. 74(2) p. 403. Fontainebleau, April 30, 1742; Vol. 76(1), pp. 374-5. Versailles, May 31, 1743; Vol. 78 (1) p. 144. Versailles, March 24, 1744; Vol. 81, pp. 226-7. Versailles, April 28, 1745.

to get new tenants for posts that fell vacant.<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1746 all vessels destined for the fishing posts were forbidden to clear <sup>2</sup>with the result that in that year the return of furs, for which of course trade goods were needed, was very small.<sup>3</sup> The yield of oil was about the same as it had been the previous year<sup>4</sup> in spite of the fact that in 1746 the post of Sept Isles was pillaged by an English ship.<sup>5</sup> In 1747 the prohibition concerning ships for Labrador was repeated except for one bound for the Baye Phélypeaux, Brouague's post.<sup>6</sup> In the same year five of the eight concessionaires were said to have abandoned their posts.<sup>7</sup>

At the close of the war the situation probably soon righted itself. Farmers were promptly found for the Domaine<sup>8</sup> and a new tenant for the Baye des Chateaux.<sup>9</sup> In 1749 goods from France, long dammed up, poured into the colony and 1748 and 1749 were as it happened particularly abundant years in all the posts.<sup>10</sup>

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 83, p. 387. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 26, 1745.
2. Ibid., Vol. 92, p. 190. Representations -- de la Delle Fornel et les SS. Havy et Lefebvre à Maurepas (1748)
3. Ibid., Vol. 85, p. 358. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 18, 1746.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., Vol. 88, pp. 160-161. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 2, 1747.
6. Ibid., Vol. 92, p. 191. Representations et de la Dlle Fornel et des SS. Havy et La Febvre.
7. Ibid. Vol. 87(1), p. 323. Petition addressed to Maurepas by the owners of Gros Mécatina (1747)
8. Supra p. 125
9. Supra, p. 139
10. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 96, pp. 77-84. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1750.

The next war must have had similar and doubtless more severe results than the first one had. The records are almost devoid of information on the subject, however. In 1758 Bougainville wrote: "Nos pêches du Nord ont rapporté un grand profit!"<sup>1</sup>. The returns may have been abundant but it is doubtful if the profit was great. Bougainville himself had pointed out two years earlier that the oil was practically worthless because there was no market for it on account of the war,<sup>2</sup> that is, the export market was cut off by the blockade.<sup>3</sup> It is not clear how much destruction was done by the English. According to Voorhis the English fleet destroyed the post of Mingan on that seigniory in 1759.<sup>4</sup>

Competition does not seem to have been an extremely important factor. Some was doubtless offered by the English on the Hudson Bay and it was claimed that the Domaine lost a considerable amount of trade to Timiscaminque, Batiscan, and Three Rivers.<sup>5</sup> Franquet observed that Three Rivers was the rendez-vous of the wandering tribes of the Têtes de Boule and the Montagnais who came down to trade their furs in the town. Some of the savages disposed of their furs at the posts on the St. Lawrence but for the most part they came to Three Rivers. The trade with these

1. Bougainville, Journal. p.32<sup>4</sup>. Carillon, June 3, 1758. Printed in Rapp. de l'Arch 1923-1924.
2. Ibid. p.236. Carillon, Oct. 16, 1756.
3. This is further proof that most of the oil was usually exported. Cf. Supra p. 13<sup>4</sup>
4. E. Voorhis, Historic Forts and Trading Posts. p.115.
5. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.96, p.91. Mémoire, La Veuve Fornel et Cie à Bigot (1750).

Indians was practically entirely in the hands of the S. de Tonnancourt, Storekeeper, Sub-Intendant, and local seignior.<sup>1</sup> The only record of contraband that seems to be extant is the case of the habitants of Baie St. Paul who were discovered to have been supplying Indians with hunting equipment and collecting furs which would otherwise have been carried to Tadoussac.<sup>2</sup> On the whole however, to judge from the lack of complaints, neither competition nor contraband were serious hinderances to the success of the fisheries.

Government supervision had no discernable effect on the progress of the fisheries, either good or bad. Lessees of the posts never increased their efforts as a result of the exhortations of the authorities/<sup>except</sup> in one rather feeble and completely futile attempt to produce glue for export. Herring and salmon fishing were never undertaken extensively. On the other hand, it is not evident that governmental control was a hinderance to the industry. Even had the government not intervened before establishments were made it would have had to play as large a part in the industry ultimately as it did in the beginning; if it had not interfered first it would have had to interfere last. Had the authorities not tried to forestall difficulties, they would have been forced to arbitrate in more cases of conflicting claims than they did.

Care must be taken not to overestimate the part played by the fisheries in the economic life of the colony; the industry does not rank in importance either with agriculture or/<sup>with</sup> the fur trade.

1. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, pp.23-24.

2. Inv. des Ord. Vol.III, p.175. Oct. 12, 1752.

Reference has already been made to the "eight concessionaires" on the Labrador coast.<sup>1</sup> These held some seventeen concessions along the St. Lawrence<sup>2</sup> so that the whole industry was in the hands of eight individuals or partnerships, some of which overlapped; for example, we find the names of the SS Havy and Lefebvre, associated with the Baye des Chateaux, recurring in connection with the Traite de Tadoussac.<sup>3</sup> We have noticed, too, that comparatively few men were employed in the posts.<sup>4</sup> Of the 55,000 individuals who comprised the population of Canada<sup>5</sup> only an insignificant number gained a livelihood from the fisheries. The industry was, however, essentially Canadian and did have a spark of life, which is more than can be said for the various phases of economic activity which have been considered so far. In spite of setbacks, individuals always returned finally to carry on the exploitation of Labrador. The industry was not decelerating as the Forges and shipbuilding were and it seems to have been less static than agriculture.

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1. Supra, p. 140
  2. Infra, pp. 168-169.
  3. Supra, pp. 125, 129.
  4. Supra, p. 135
  5. Censuses of Canada, Vol. IV, p. 61. Recensement de 1754.

FISHING STATIONS AND TRADING POSTS IN THE LABRADOR DISTRICT.<sup>1</sup>

## Domaine du Roy (Traite de Tadoussac):

On the river	Inland.
(Malbaye - a farm rather than a post)	Nemiseau
Tadoussac	Mistassini
Bondesir	Nikabau
Ile Jérémie	Ashuapmouchouan
Bersimis	Piékougami
Papinachois	Lake St. John
Manicouagan (2)	Chicoutimi
Godbout	Manicouagan (1)
Sept Isles	Nichicun
Moisie	Naskapis

## Seigneurie de Mingan:

Cormorans  
 Mingan  
 Nepiochibou  
 Natashquan  
 Musquarro

Itamiou

Montagamiou

Petit Mécatina

Gros Mécatina

Rivière St. Augustin

Chicataka (Apétepy)

## Baye Phélypeaux:

Baye Phélypeaux

Anse-St.Claire.

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1. For location, see map at end.



## FISHING STATIONS AND TRADING POSTS IN THE LABRADOR DISTRICT (cont'd)

Anse - au - Loup

St. Modet

Rivière des Français

Baye Rouge

Baye des Chateaux

Cap Charles

Baye des Esquimeaux (not located)

## CHAPTER V.

## THE FUR TRADE.

The fur trade has already been quoted as the possible exception to the generalization that one of the chief characteristics of economic life in French Canada was inertness. The trade undoubtedly showed well marked indication of vigour. I did not suggest, it may be noted, that the fur trade was also an exception to the general rule of governmental supervision. But while the government had its ubiquitous finger in this particular colonial pie, too, the finger had a somewhat different function. The object of the authorities was rather to control and to direct than to stimulate. This was, to a certain extent, the part played by the government in the case of the fisheries. It was true to a far greater extent of the fur trade.

By the "fur trade" is meant the exploitation of the district described vaguely as the "pays d'en haut" or the "up country". The term is an arbitrary one for we have already seen that a trade in peltries was carried on at the Labrador posts. The principal fur resources of the colony were to be found, however, in the wilderness that lay to the west of Montreal.

Some of the peltry was carried directly to Montreal by Indians who brought their fur laden canoes down the Ottawa at the end of May or early in June to barter with the Montreal merchants. There is practically no evidence of how this trade was carried on during our period. An edict of the King, issued in May 1741, refers to the "(fur) fairs established at Montreal."<sup>1</sup> In

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1. Documents Relatifs à l'Histoire de la Nouvelle France, Vol III, p.193. Edit du Roy. May, 1741.

earlier years merchants had set up booths in the market place or along the wall to barter with the Indians who came down every spring.<sup>1.</sup> Something of this sort may still have been carried on even as late as 1740. Indians domiciled at Sault St.Louis and at the Lake of Two Mountains returned from their hunting each year with a considerable number of pelts but these were probably disposed of to merchants established in the villages, rather than carried into the town.<sup>2.</sup>

Most of the furs, however, were collected at posts set up on the waterways of the up country at points advantageously situated for trade. The posts consisted usually of the commandant's house and some other buildings, storehouses, possibly a dwelling for the agent, sometimes even a smithy,<sup>3.</sup> the whole enclosed by a palisade of wooden stakes.<sup>4.</sup> If a missionary were attached to a post he too might have had a house within the stockade. Posts, such as Niagara, for example, strategically situated from a military viewpoint, were more strongly fortified and had a garrison. These were dignified with the name of fort, but for our purposes the distinction between post and fort need not be made.

To these factories Indians brought their furs whenever they had collected a sufficient quantity, usually in May or June. The

1. E.R.Adair, The Evolution of Montreal during the French Régime. A paper read before the History Association of Montreal, March 20, 1934.
2. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, pp.45-47; Of. infra p.167-168
3. At Michilimackinac, the missionary maintained a smithy and a blacksmith. (Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.77, p.133. Beauharnois au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.1, 1742)
4. Rapp. de l'Arch, 1923-1924, p.54. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bougainville)

savage, when he entered the storehouse, threw down his pack of skins, lay down on the top of it, and there smoked his pipe while he surveyed the goods offered for exchange. His decision made, he indicated by signs the articles he wanted.<sup>1</sup>

Although, as I have said, the fur trade had become a definitely organized business, the method of exploiting the posts had not obligingly crystallised into a tidily arranged system, without any inconvenient loose ends calculated to exasperate the mind of the student of history.

All the posts were owned by the King. Up to 1743 the method of utilizing them seems to have been this:

Some posts, namely Niagara and Frontenac, were exploited "par oeconomie", that is, merchandise was sent up from the King's stores, the trade was conducted by the storekeeper of the posts, and the furs were sold at Quebec every fall for the profit of the King.<sup>2</sup>

At certain other posts, notably Detroit and Michilimackinac, the trade was carried on by voyageurs.<sup>3</sup> For this trade congés were issued. A congé was a license giving permission to take or send one or more canoes carrying merchandise, to the weight of 6000 pounds each it was said,<sup>4</sup> to a specified post. These permits were signed by the Governor, viséd by the Intendant and deposited in the record office (greffe) of the jurisdiction of Montreal.

1. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, pp.152-153. Mémoire pour Bréard. Bréard is writing with reference to the King's posts, Niagara, Frontenac, and Toronto. It seems safe to generalize.
2. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1920-1921, p.34. Etat Présent du Canada, par le S. Boucault (1754)
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.74(2), pp.431-432. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 30, 1742.
4. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1923-1924. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) Mission de Bougainville.

To the congés were attached the "Rôles des Engagés" that is, the lists of names of the paddlers, usually six in number, employed to work the canoes.<sup>1.</sup>

Most of the congés seem to have been granted directly to the voyageur "de partir de Montréal avec un canot".<sup>2.</sup> In the strict sense "voyageur" meant the conductor of the canoe and distinguished him from the rest of the paddlers who were described as "engagés". The term "voyageur" was also used loosely to indicate any canoeman. According to La Jonquière, "marchands équipieurs" sold merchandise to the voyageurs and arranged to buy the furs they brought back.<sup>3.</sup>

Some of the congés were taken out by the Montreal merchants, however, "de faire partir de Montréal un canot", <sup>4.</sup> This may imply a somewhat different arrangement with the voyageur. He might have been merely hired by the merchant or perhaps the profits arising from the furs, deduction made for the price of the congé and the cost of merchandise supplied, were shared by merchant and voyageur. Farmers of posts had also to take out permits to send up canoe loads of goods.<sup>1.</sup> In this case the congé was probably always taken out in the lessee's name and the voyageur remained only an employee. The contracts drawn up between the individuals concerned should cast some light on the subject but the calendar

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.89, pp.74:75. Convention pour l'exploitation du Poste de la Baie des Puants. Made by Boisberthelot de Beaucours, Governor of Montreal and Michel, Sub-Intendant, with SS. Clignancourt, Monière, and de l'Echelle. Montreal, April 10, 1747.
2. Rapp. de l'Arch., 1922-1923, pp.192-265. Calendar of "congés de traite" conserved in the Archives of the Province of Quebec. 1739-1752. The report for 1921-1922 (pp.190-223) gives those conserved in the Judicial Archives in Montreal. 1681-1737.
3. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.95, p.209. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.29, 1750.
4. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.89, p.74. Convention pour l'exploitation du Poste de la Baie des Puants. April 10, 1747. It is not clear whether farmers of posts had to pay an additional fee for congés.

of "engagements"<sup>1</sup> which I have consulted does not make clear exactly what the arrangements were. Some of the contracts are apparently between merchant and voyageur, using the term in its strict sense. Others, to judge from the number that occur together, are evidently between merchant and engagés, again in the strict sense. Still others may be between voyageur and engagés, although I have found no case of a voyageur contracting with a merchant on the one hand and with engagés on the other. However, even if the engagés were hired and paid by the merchant, the arrangement described by La Jonquière might still have stood, inconsistent though it would have been for the merchant to supply engagés for the voyageur rather than to allow the voyageur to hire on his own employees.

In the period prior to 1743 the rest of the posts were farmed to the officers in command.<sup>2</sup> This was not an exclusive monopoly, for other individuals were evidently allowed to trade at or near these posts. The Minister writing in 1752, said, with reference to this period, that one of the reasons for changing the method of exploitation was to remove the officers from the trade and thus prevent the abuses of which the traders and the savages were always complaining.<sup>3</sup> "Traders" might have been used to mean merchants who supplied goods for the trade but there is further evidence to suggest that the term indicated persons actually trading at the posts. Beauharnois, in a despatch written in 1741, pointed out that the commandants formed a liaison between the colony and the voyageur. If, for example, a merchant

1. Lists of the "engagements pour l'ouest" conserved in the Judicial Archives of Montreal are published in Rapp. de l'Arch: 1929-1930, pp.195-456; 1930-1931, pp.353-453; 1931-1932, pp.243-365. (1670-1758)
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74(2), p.434. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 30, 1742; Corres.Gén., O"A, Vol.90-91, p.181. La Galissonnière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.23, 1748.
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.95, p.117. Ministre à Duquesne. Versailles, June 16, 1752.

(marchand equipieur) claimed that a voyageur owed him a sum of money, the Governor ordered the commandant to send the packets of fur down to Montreal so as to prevent the voyageur diverting any of them. When the furs arrived, they were held until creditor and debtor settled their dispute.<sup>1</sup> This clearly indicates that voyageurs traded at the posts, notwithstanding the fact that they were farmed to the commandants.

In the case of the Poste de la Mer d'Ouest the commandant, La Vérendrye, who established the post, was given a monopoly of the trade. In 1735 however, in order to free La Vérendrye to carry on further exploitation, traders were permitted to enter the district on payment of a fee to the commandant for trading in his command.<sup>2</sup> This, of course, is a special case but a similar arrangement may have been made in the other posts.

Between 1743 and 1747 the system of exploitation becomes more methodical. In 1742 the King ordered that all the posts should be farmed to merchants except Detroit and Michilimaekinac for which congés were to be given as usual to voyageurs. Twelve congés for each of these two posts were to be sold at 600 livres a piece, a lower price than that which had obtained; the other posts were to be farmed to the highest bidder at a public adjudication; and officers in the posts were to take no part whatever in the trade.<sup>3</sup>

The King decided on this step because the commandants had been abusing their privileges with consequent complaints from traders

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.75, pp.280-281. Beauharnois au Ministre. Sept. 25, 1741; Cf. also, the congés for this period calendared in the Rapp.de l'Arch, 1922-1923, p. 192 et seq.
2. A.S.Morton La Vérendrye p.294. Printed in the Canadian Historical Review, Vol.IX.
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.74, (2), pp.431-434. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 30, 1742.



and savages, and in order to bring more money into the royal treasury.<sup>1</sup> Niagara and Frontenac, hitherto exploited "par oeconomie", were also to be leased. According to the statement of the King, the trade in these posts had been rapidly diminishing for several years.<sup>2</sup> In 1739 it was discovered that the S. Laforce, storekeeper at Niagara, was short in his accounts to the extent of one third of what the total returns for his administration since 1729 should have been.<sup>3</sup> The King, doubtless quite correctly, attributed the falling off in receipts to this cause.<sup>4</sup> It was probably this malversation that finally convinced the King that a change in the whole method for all the posts would be desirable.

Accordingly, Niagara and Frontenac were farmed to the S. Chalet who took over the posts on the first of January 1743.<sup>5</sup> Detroit and Michilimackinac were exploited by voyageurs,<sup>6</sup> and the rest of the posts were farmed.<sup>7</sup> The Poste de la Mer d'Ouest was the only exception to the new arrangement. That post evidently continued to be farmed by its commandant.<sup>8</sup>

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 95, p. 117. Ministre au Duquesne. Versailles, June 16, 1752.
2. Ibid. Vol. 70(1), p. 241. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 13, 1740.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 73, p. 100. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 26, 1740; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 128-130. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 16, 1741.
4. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 70(1), p. 241. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Marly, May 13, 1740.
5. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 79, p. 8. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 29, 1743.
6. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 81, p. 235. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 28, 1745; Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol. 85, pp. 17-18. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 22, 1746.
7. Corres. Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A: Vol. 79, pp. 87-88. Beauharnois au Ministre. Montreal, June 6, 1743; Vol. 85, p. 17. Beauharnois au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 22, 1746.
8. Ibid., Vol. 97, pp. 147-148. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 19, 1751.

The posts were normally farmed to the highest bidder but not without exception. For instance, in 1744 the Veuve de la Ronde was allowed to continue for three years the exploitation of Ohagouamigon which had been held by her husband, who was attempting to exploit the copper deposits in that district.<sup>1</sup> Again, in 1744 the King disposed the post of Alepimigon in favour of M. de la Laune, "Commissionnaire de la Marine" serving in the Bureau des Colonies in France, as a reward for his services.<sup>2</sup>

The conditions on which the various farmers held their posts were not perhaps identical but the variation from place to place was probably not very great. The convention made in 1747 with the SS. Clignancourt, Monière, and l'Echelle, farmers of La Baye des Puants is perhaps typical. According to this agreement:

1. The farmers were given the exclusive privilege of trading with the French established within the extent of the post, and with the Indians who came thither.
2. They were to send thither the number of canoes and the amount of merchandise they would judge necessary and for each canoe they must have, as usual, a congé, issued by the Governor.
3. The commandant of the post was forbidden to engage directly or indirectly in any trade whatsoever. He was ordered to do all in his power to protect the interests of the farmers using his authority to expel all coureurs de bois and other trespassers.
4. The farmers, on the other hand, were to provide the officer with lodging and firewood and supply him with a moderate number

1. Ordres et Dépêches; B, Vol. 78(1) p. 250. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, April 17, 1744; cf. p. 1  
 2. Ibid. pp. 260-261.

of presents for the Indians, apart from any presents they themselves might make to the savages. All gifts of furs received by the commandant were to go to the farmers.

5. The farmers had to maintain an interpreter at the post.<sup>1.</sup>

The posts were farmed usually for three years which was the length of time calculated to allow the farmer to recover his investment and to make a profit.<sup>2.</sup> Some posts were leased for longer intervals, of course.<sup>3.</sup>

Thus the fur trade was to be delivered into private hands under the supervision of the government. A certain limited number of congés were to be issued, the other posts to be farmed to the highest bidder at a public adjudication where no personal preference might enter in, and the officers engaged only in securing the interests of the farmers and in keeping order in the wilderness. Thus there could be no cause for complaint, the officers could no longer abuse the King's trust, the posts would still be under government supervision and withal the King would no longer lose money on them. The arrangement was admirable except that it did not work.

The friendly spirit of co-operation was not always evident between officer and farmer. To cite only one instance, there was bitter hostility between these two at Niagara. Oéloron, commandant, complained constantly that Chalet did not send up enough goods to

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.89, pp.73-80. Convention pour l'exploitation du Poste de la Baye des Puants. Montreal, April 10, 1747.

2. Considérations sur l'Etat Présent du Canada (Oct.1758)p.10. Hist.Doc. First Series, (Que.Lit. and Hist.Soc.)

3. Chalet, for example, was given a lease of Niagara for 6 years. (Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.78, p.20. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 15, 1742.)

meet the demands of all the Indians who came to the posts. Chalet was not satisfied with Oéloron's efforts to protect his trade and wanted a say in the choice of the commandant.<sup>1</sup> Ultimately Oéloron had to be replaced by another officer.<sup>2</sup>

In 1747 Chalet refused to continue his farm of Frontenac and Niagara any longer, owing to war conditions, and the exploitation had to be undertaken once more by the King.<sup>3</sup>

In 1748, it was decided that thence forward only the posts of Timiscamingue, Nipigon, Camanistigoyan, Michipicoton, and Ohagouamigon were to be farmed, while the rest were to be exploited by congés.<sup>4</sup>

Thus from 1748 the trade nominally falls into three distinct divisions: exploitation by the King; exploitation by farmers; and exploitation by voyageurs, holders of licenses. Officers, with the exception of the Commandant of the Poste de la Mer d'Ouest<sup>5</sup> were still excluded from the trade.<sup>6</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 81(2), pp. 471-473. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 23, 1744.
2. Ibid. Vol. 85, p. 16. et Hocquart Beauharnois/au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 22, 1746.
3. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 87(1), p. 263. La Galissonnière et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 26, 1747.
4. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 90-91, p. 183. La Galissonnière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 23, 1748; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 89, p. 237. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Marly, May 4, 1749.
5. Supra, p. 152.
6. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 89, p. 237. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Marly, May 4, 1749.

In this last period, 1748 - 1760, there was, however, wide deviation from the three-fold plan. Some of these divergencies remained on the right side of the law. For example, the S. de Repentigny, ensign in the Marine and officer of the garrison at Michilimackinac and the S. de Bonne, half pay officer, undertook to clear the land and build a post at Sault Ste. Marie at their own expense for which they received the grant "en fief et seigneurie" of the land, 6 leagues by 6 leagues, which surrounded the fort.<sup>1</sup> In 1751, another ensign in the Marine, the S. Rimbault de Simblin, built a fort, at his own expense, at Lac à la Carpe and was given the command of the post and a monopoly of its trade for six years.<sup>2</sup>

But plenty of officers trafficked in furs without official sanction. According to Bigot, writing in 1749, not a commandant failed to engage in trade. The farmers and holders of congés tolerated this encroachment on their monopoly for the sake of peace and of not arousing opposition which might lessen their profits. Several of them were even in collusion with the officers.<sup>3</sup> The tone of moral righteousness in Bigot's letter is pure hypocrisy in the light of later events. In 1750 the S. Marin was given the command of the post, Baye des Puants.<sup>4</sup> In the same year an association was formed among Bigot, La

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.95: pp.178-181. La Jonquière au Ministre. Québec, Aug. 20, 1750. p.88. La Jonquière et Bigot au Ministre. Québec, Oct. 30, 1750; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.93, pp.111-112. Brevet de Ratification. Versailles, June 24, 1751.
2. Moreau St. Méry Coll., F3, Vol.14 (supplement) pp.8-10. Ordonnance de La Jonquière. Feb. 27, 1751; Corres. Gén., C"A, Vol.97, pp.84-92. La Jonquière au Ministre. Québec, Oct. 4, 1751.
3. Bigot au Ministre. Oct.31, 1749. Quoted in Mémoire pour Bigot, t.II, pp.14-15.
4. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.93, p.98. La Jonquière au Ministre. Québec, Sept.20, 1749.

Jonquière, Bréard, and Marin to exploit the post for three years.<sup>1</sup> They carried on the enterprise with such gusto that, it was said, they gained a net profit of 150,000 livres every year.<sup>2</sup> The company was in a peculiarly favourable position to help down its costs and there is some evidence to suggest the means which they might have employed to do so. The accusation was made that large canoes, valued at 300 or 350 livres, were taken from the King's Stores for the use of the company and replaced with old ones. Further, it was charged that La Jonquière at the instigation of Bigot, had taken a large amount of merchandise from the Stores to distribute to the Indians at the posts in which these officials were interested.<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note that in 1751, just when he was busy abusing his trust, the Governor, writing to the Minister, declared with a specious air of innocence that as far as he knew no officer in the up country, except of course the commandant of the Mer d'Ouest, had any interest, direct or indirect, in the fur trade.<sup>4</sup>

In 1753 the command of the Baye was passed on to Marin's son<sup>5</sup> and the post was granted to Rigaud de Vaudreuil, Governor of Three

1. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, p.76. Mémoire pour Bréard.

2. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1923-1924, p.54. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bougainville).

3. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, pp.148, 150. Mémoire pour Bréard. The accusations had reference both to the Baye des Puants and to the Mer d'Ouest (infra p.159) Bréard neither admitted nor denied them.

4. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.97, pp.147-148. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 19, 1751.

5. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1923-1924, p.54. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757). (Mission de Bougainville).

Rivers.<sup>1</sup> These two formed another illegal association and in the first few years at least, profited to the extent of 312,000 livres annually.<sup>2</sup> Rigaud retained the post throughout the rest of the period<sup>3</sup> and doubtless continued to connive with the commandant.

To cite another example, we find Péan, on his own admission, sharing for a time the post of Nipigon with its commandant, the S. de Simblin.<sup>4</sup>

The system by which the posts were supposed to be exploited was twisted out of shape in still another way. Certain posts were supposed to be exploited by congés, chiefly in order to keep down the price of merchandise by competition among the several voyageurs, were in effect, farmed. For example, on one occasion, all the congés usually granted for Detroit were turned over to Marin and the exploitation of the post was shared by Marin, Péan, Despins, and Landrief. This society increased its profits by loading their "marchandise de traite" on the King's batteaux and having it transported at the King's expense.<sup>5</sup>

One more example of monopoly may be quoted. The same officials, La Jonquière, Bigot, and Bréard, who were associated with Marin in the exploitation of the Baye des Puants, also shared

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 97, p. 201. Ministre à Duquesne. Versailles, June 30, 1753.

2. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1923-1924, p. 54. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bougainville).

3. Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol. 101, p. 111. Ministre à Vaudreuil. Compiègne, July 15, 1755; Vol. 109, p. 85. Ministre à Vaudreuil. Versailles, Jan. 26, 1759. In 1759, Rigaud was granted the post for life. The life tenure was short-lived.

4. Mémoire pour M. J-H. Péan. p. 223.

5. Ibid. pp. 300-302.



the Poste de la Mer d'Ouest with its commandant, Legardeur de St. Pierre<sup>1</sup> and, it was said, employed the same means of reducing costs.<sup>2</sup> This association was not illegal<sup>3</sup> but it was part of the monopoly which evoked bitter complaints from Canadian merchants.<sup>4</sup>

But not only the officers engaged in trade without the benefit of legality. It was practically impossible to police the wilderness and it inevitably happened that people employed in the up country did a little trading on their own account. For example, in 1743 it was discovered that soldiers and "engagés" at Niagara regularly brought up to the post merchandise of small bulk for trading purposes with consequent damage to the returns of the farmers.<sup>5</sup>

Voyageurs did not obey the letter of their licences. They carried more liquor and merchandise than they had permission to do and traded in territory other than that specified in their congés<sup>6</sup>. No number of ordinances was ever effective in putting a stop to these abuses, of course.

These individuals had some right to be in the up country; they were part of the organization designed to exploit the wilderness.

1. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, p.76. Mémoire pour Bréard.
2. Ibid., pp.148,150. Vide pp.183-184.
3. The commandant of the Mer d'Ouest was of course permitted to trade and it was legal for officials to engage in business. Vaudreuil himself, with the full approval of the Minister of Marine, intended to exploit a post. However, the loss of a part of the merchandise he had ordered from France, disgusted the new governor and caused him to abandon the project. (Affaire du Canada, Vol.IV, pp.172-173. Précis pour M.de Vaudreuil).
4. e.g. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.93, p.43. Ministre au Bigot. Versailles, May 7, 1751.
5. Ord.des Int. M30, Vol.XVII, p.92. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Montreal, July 16, 1743.
6. Moreau St.Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.14 (supplement) p.5. Ordonnance de La Jonquière. May 29, 1751; Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.100, pp.32-35. Règlement pour le Commerce (des Postes) issued by Duquesne. July 6, 1755.

Entirely outside the organization were the coureurs de bois, who hunted and traded through the up country in defiance of the law. Some young Canadians adopted the life of the Indians and never returned to the colony. It is probably, however, that other habitants were part-time "coureurs" and part-time farmers. Not only did the coureurs hunt and trade on their own account but they were employed by the farmer of one post to encroach on the trade of another territory.<sup>1</sup> A specific case of connivance between farmers and coureurs de bois is that of the Poste de La Baye des Puants. It was said that the lessees of this post struck a bargain with eight or ten coureurs by which they supplied them with merchandise for the sum of 6000 livres in beaver.<sup>2</sup> The authorities were very much exercised about the disposition of the Canadians to "courir les bois", not so much because the habitants were trading without permission and interfering with the monopolies, as because they were not cultivating the land. The practice was forbidden on pain of sentence to the lash and to the galleys;<sup>3</sup> La Galissonnière suggested that offenders should be transported to the French West Indies.<sup>4</sup> But further penalties would have been no more effective than the ones already in force were. From time

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 85, pp. 37. Ministre à La Jonquière. Versailles, March 6, 1747.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol. 81(2), p. 260. Beauharnois au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 25, 1744. This was the complaint of Lusignan, commandant of the post. The farmers at the same time were complaining of the "peu de secours" that Lusignan afforded them for their exploitation. (Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 81, pp. 236-237. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles. April 28, 1745.
3. Edits et Ordonnances. Vol. I, p. 551. Déclaration du Roi. April, 1737.
4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol. 87(2) pp. 188-189. La Galissonnière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 21, 1747.

to time a year's amnesty was declared during which period coureurs might return home with impunity<sup>1</sup> but the scheme met with scant success.

So much for the collection of the peltry in the wilderness. What of its disposal after it reached Montreal? All the beaver had to/<sup>be</sup>turned over to the Compagnie des Indes which had a monopoly on the export of this fur.<sup>2</sup> The company maintained receiving offices in Montreal and Quebec and, up to 17<sup>49</sup>, one in Three Rivers also.<sup>3</sup> The representatives of the company in the colony were a controller and an inspector, in addition to the agents in charge of the offices.<sup>4</sup> For the beaver turned in to the bureaux, "recépissés" or receipts were given which could be changed into bills of exchange drawn on the treasury of the company in Paris.<sup>5</sup> Fixed prices were paid for beaver by the Company but presumably the trader was at liberty to strike what bargain he could with the savages. The head office of the company in Paris doubtless attended to the disposal of the beaver in France.

The returns from the King's posts were sent down to Montreal where the pelts needed for the Service were taken. The rest of the furs were then carried to Quebec where they were supposed to be sold to the highest bidder. According to Estèbe, Keeper of

1. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.I, pp.551-552. Déclaration du Roi. April 1737.
2. Rapp. de l'Arch 1920-1921, p.18. Boucault, Etat Présent du Canada (1754).
3. Inv. des Ord., Vol.III, p.131. June 16, 17<sup>49</sup>.
4. Rapp. de l'Arch. 1923-1924, p.64. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bougainville).
5. Considerations sur l'Etat Présent du Canada (Oct.1758), pp.12,13. Printed in Hist.Doc. First Series (Que.Lit and Hist.Soc.)

Stores in Quebec, he was purchaser every year from the last few years of Hocquart's administration until 1758 when he left Canada.<sup>1.</sup> As early as 1749, Bigot had abandoned the public auction<sup>2.</sup> and thenceforward turned over all the furs to Estèbe at an estimate. Bigot and Bréard were both interested with Estèbe in this trade, the Intendant to the extent of 50%.<sup>3.</sup>

The rest of the furs, which were in the hands of the merchants in Montreal, were sold to Quebec merchants for export.<sup>4.</sup> Possibly some of the Montreal merchants dealt directly with France. The S. Pénnissault who came to Canada in 1747 and set up in business in Montreal, was in partnership with the S. Brouillet, Receiver-General of Finances in Paris, and with the SS. Freté, merchants, who sent him goods from France and to whom he sent fur and other Canadian products.<sup>5.</sup>

However, such associations were rare. The marketing of furs in France was handled for the most part by agents.<sup>6.</sup> According to Bigot, the S. Goguet (at La Rochelle) was "correspondant presque universel" for Canadian fur, handling more than 75% of the export (exclusive of beaver, of course). Goguet made up the pelts into lots so that he got rid of the bad along with the good and he controlled the market, keeping back furs until there was a scarcity, then selling when the price was high.<sup>7.</sup>

1. Mémoire pour G. Estèbe, pp.167-171.

2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.93, p.284. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.4, 1749.

3. Jugement Rendu -- dans l'Affaire du Canada, p.62; Mémoire pour Bigot, t,II,p.102.

4. Mémoire pour G. Estèbe, p.176.

5. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, pp.325-326. Précis pour Pennissault (Pénnissault)

6. Rapp.de L'Arch., 1920-1921, p.19. Boucault, L'Etat Présent du Canada (1754)/

7. Mémoire pour Bigot, t,II, pp.109-110.

Merchandise for the trade was for the most part imported by Quebec merchants and resold to their confrères in Montreal.<sup>1</sup> Some of the latter possibly maintained agents in Quebec. The Compagnie des Indes also imported powder and merchandise, some of which it sold to the traders,<sup>2</sup> and the King, too, did a business in supplying powder from the Stores to the trade.<sup>3</sup>

A diagram of the organization of the fur trade would place Montreal at the centre, with lines radiating out from it to the west, and on the east a line stretching through Quebec to France. Merchandise came up to Montreal, canoes set out from Montreal, and the furs came back to Montreal. The situation in Detroit is an example of how the town might stretch a tentacle out into the wilderness. Fur traders resident in the frontier settlement were said to have owed so much to the "marchands équipeurs" of Montreal that Detroit was mortgaged for more than it was worth.<sup>4</sup>

The long lists of congés issued and of contracts made<sup>5</sup> give some idea of the activity that must have gone on in the town. It is not surprising that Franquet observed that most of the townspeople were engaged in business, especially in connection with the

1. Mémoire pour G. Estèbe, p.176.
2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.76, p.73. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.31, 1741; Considérations sur l'Etat Présent du Canada (Oct. 1758) p.13. Printed in Hist.Doc., First Series, (Que.Lit.and Hist.Soc.).
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.76(1), pp.195-161. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 20, 1743.
4. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.89, p.136. Noyan au Ministre. Detroit, Aug.6, 1747.
5. Rapp.de l'Arch: 1921-1922, pp.190-223; 1922-1923, pp.192-265; 1929-1930, pp.194-456; 1930-1931, pp.353-453; 1931-1932, pp.243-365.

up country.<sup>1.</sup> Montreal, by the end of the French régime had "emerged into the position of a distributing centre, a warehouse, to a certain degree a financial headquarters, an entrepôt in the modern sense of the term".<sup>2.</sup>

The constant difficulty with which the French had to deal was the counter attraction of the English trade. The French had the advantage of their competitors in guns,<sup>3.</sup> powder,<sup>4.</sup> and, especially, brandy which the Indians preferred to the English rum.<sup>5.</sup> The French probably depended more on their liquor than on anything else to maintain their trade with the savages, a fact which the authorities realized. The Church opposed the brandy trade on the grounds of Christianity but the government took a more practical view. On one occasion when the Bishop wrote to the Minister that he could not absolve those who engaged in the liquor traffic,<sup>6.</sup> he was briskly advised to reconcile religion with the interests of the colony and of commerce.<sup>7.</sup>

1. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, pp.114-115.

2. E.R.Adair, The Evolution of Montreal during the French Régime. A paper read before the History Association of Montreal, March 20, 1934.

3. Rapp.de l'Arch. 1923-1924, p.63. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757). (Mission de Bougainville).

4. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.90-91, p.153. La Galissonnière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 18, 1748.

5. Ibid., Vol.73, p.127. Hocquart aux Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes. Nov.3, 1740.

6. Ibid., Vol.78, p.131. L'Evêque au Ministre. Aug.22, 1742.

7. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.76(1), pp.343-344. Ministre à l'Evêque. Versailles, May, 21, 1743.

As the French knew and admitted, the real trouble was that the English offered better cloth at lower prices than could be obtained in the French posts.<sup>1</sup> The French were so fully aware of this fact that the Compagnie des Indes was allowed to buy each year a number of pièces of English cloth which it sent to the colony for its own trade.<sup>2</sup> Attempts to manufacture satisfactory scarlets in France were a failure.<sup>3</sup> It was said that the manufactures of Languedoc could imitate the English goods but could not supply them as cheaply as the company could get them from England.<sup>4</sup>

The French were faced with the double problem of stamping out the contraband trade and of meeting competition. In neither direction were their efforts very successful.

From 1727, the authorities had pursued a policy of turning out of the colony all resident foreigners, even naturalised ones, who were engaged in trade.<sup>5</sup> Evidently English traders also visited Montreal. An ordinance of 1738 declared that henceforth all Englishmen would be turned back at the Pointe à la Chevelure no matter what reasons they gave for entering the colony.<sup>6</sup> By 1740 the French seem to have been successful in removing the English from immediate contact with the Canadian merchants.<sup>7</sup> Moreover,

1. e.g. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A: Vol.78, p.130. L'Evêque au Ministre. Quebec, Aug.22, 1742; Vol.90-91, p.47. La Galissonnière et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.20, 1748, etc.
2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.103(2), pp.542-543. Mémoires des Syndics et Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes au Ministre.(1758).
3. Ibid., p.543.
4. Ibid., Vol.98, p.369. Martin au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.5, 1752.
5. Ibid., Vol.51, p.7. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct.6, 1740.
6. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.II, pp.374-376. Ordonnance de Hocquart. April 25, 1738.
7. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.74, p.29. Beauharnois au Ministre. Oct.6, 1740. After 1740 there seems to have been no further reference to the matter.



it was said that the penalties imposed for carrying furs to the English were sufficiently severe to prevent the French from engaging directly in the traffic.<sup>1.</sup>

That however, did not put a stop to the contraband trade. Canadian furs continued to reach the English at Chouaguen and at Orange, chiefly by way of the domiciled Indians. A certain John Henry Lidius, a native of Orange, had established himself in Montreal in 1725. There he gained a great deal of credit with the Iroquois converts. He knew their language and his wife was the grand niece of an Iroquois who had married a French woman.<sup>2.</sup> In 1730 he was convicted of carrying on an illegal trade with New England and was banished from Canada.<sup>3.</sup> Lidius returned to Orange, set up a post, and attracted his Indian friends thither. This store loomed so large in the eyes of the French that on one occasion, the Minister described it without modification as the outlet through which Canadian beaver found its way to the English. He urged the destruction of the post and recommended that the leader of any expedition sent against it should pay particular attention to the capture of Lidius himself, who would then be transported to France and permanently removed as a source of trouble. This violent suggestion was made in 1745 when the colonies were at war on behalf of their respective mother countries.<sup>4.</sup> However, Lidius continued unmolested and Canadian furs continued to reach Orange.

1. *Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.76, pp.178-179. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada.* (1741)

2. *Ibid., Vol.51, pp.7-8. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Québec, Oct.25, 1729.*

3. *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques, Vol.XXXV, pp.28-30. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Oct.15, 1730.*

4. *Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.81, p.212. Ministre au Beauharnois. Versailles, April 28, 1745.*

The most flagrant though not the only case of contrabanding that I have found was the trade carried on by the three Demoiselles Desauniers. This trio, daughters of a Montreal merchant, set up a store in the Sault St. Louis mission in 1727<sup>1</sup> to sell provisions to the Indians; presently they were selling dry goods too, and then supplying equipment for expeditions to the up country. By 1740 the agents of the Compagnie des Indes were inquiring why none of the beaver which the Demoiselles must have received from their Savage customers ever found its way to the offices of the Company.<sup>2</sup> Further complaints followed<sup>3</sup> and in 1742 the store was ordered suppressed.<sup>4</sup>

The Demoiselles however, continued to live in the Indian village in spite of the fact that they had a very fine house in Montreal.<sup>5</sup> They were obviously still proceeding on their devious way and in 1745 they were ordered by the King to take up their residence elsewhere.<sup>6</sup> The order was not executed however, for fear of antagonizing the Indians,<sup>7</sup> an undesirable event especially in time of war, and the sisters continued to make use of their opportunities.

By 1750 the governor, La Jonquière, had definite proof that the

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 97, p. 277. Les D<sup>l</sup>les. Desauniers au Ministre. 1751.
2. Ibid., Vol. 77, pp. 403-404. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 29, 1740.
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74(2), p. 334. Ministre au P. de Lauzon (Provincial des Jésuites). Fontainebleau, April 20, 1742.
4. Ibid., Vol. 74(2), p. 445. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 30, 1742.
5. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 79, p. 189. Beauharnois au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 13, 1743; Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol. 81(1), pp. 226-227. Beauharnois au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 11, 1744.
6. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 81, p. 218. Ordre du Roi. Versailles, April 28, 1745.
7. Ibid., Vol. 85, pp. 43-44. Ministre à La Jonquière. Versailles, March 6, 1747.

Demoiselles, aided and abetted by the Révérend Père Tournois, priest of the mission, regularly despatched considerable quantities of beaver to Orange and Chouaguen by way of the domiciled Indians. The English goods which the partners received in return were sold to voyageurs bound for the up country.<sup>1</sup> In 1751 the Governor decided that the time had come for action. Accordingly he ordered Tournois to leave the mission and he sent an officer with a detachment of eight soldiers with an order for the Demoiselles to vacate within twenty-four hours and to come to Quebec. The result of the action was the precipitous departure of the Mlles. Marie Magdelaine, Marie Anne, and Marguerite from the Sault. The ladies, armed with testimonials from a variety of prominent members of the colony, and accompanied by Tournois, then repaired to France to lay their case before the King.<sup>2</sup> They returned however, without having received much satisfaction. In February 1752, their enemy, La Jonquière, died. The irrepressible Demoiselles promptly got permission from acting-governor Longueuil to return to the Sault for twenty-four hours to wind up their affairs. When Duquesne arrived in July they were still there and had once more to be forcibly removed.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile Tournois had returned to France<sup>4</sup> and the affair came to an end at last in 1752. The honours go to the sophisticated Demoiselles who had for twelve years carried on an illegal trade under the very noses of the exasperated officials.

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1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.95, pp.132-144. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, July 25, 1750.

2. Ibid., pp.138-139; Ibid., Vol.97, pp.277-291. Les Delles Desauniers au Ministre. 1751.

3. Ibid., Vol.98, p.36. Duquesne au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.28, 1752.

4. Ibid., Vol.97, pp.193-194. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.1, 1751.

In 1752 the authorities had not even succeeded in putting a stop to the Indians journeys to Orange. Repeated harangues to the Iroquois of the mission had been entirely ineffective in turning them from what all right thinking Frenchmen considered their evil ways.<sup>1</sup> On one occasion the Savages had declared that they would rather be dead than forego their commerce with the English.<sup>2</sup> Finally the Governor was reduced to recognizing the trade to a limited extent, for in 1751 La Jonquière ordered the commandant at Sault St. Louis to draw up a statement of the furs the Indians brought back from hunting and to regulate the amount they carried to New England in accordance with their needs. On this basis the officer was to issue permits and, to enforce the limits imposed, La Jonquière sent two officers with small detachments of troops to Soulanges and the Long Sault respectively, where all canoes going to the English had to pass. The officers were given orders to inspect the canoes and to seize whatever furs exceeded the amount stated in the permit.<sup>3</sup> It is not unreasonable to suppose that means were found to evade the regulation.

If the law could be broken with impunity at Sault St. Louis, within a few miles of Montreal, law must scarcely have existed in the wilderness of the up country.

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1. e.g. *Corres.Gén., C"A*: Vol.93, p.169. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 22, 1749; Vol.97, pp.138-139. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.19, 1751.
  2. *Corres.Gén., C"A*, Vol.97, pp.138-139. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.19, 1751.
  3. *Ibid.*, pp.139-141.

The colonial authorities did their ineffectual best to keep a check on the amount of beaver collected in the posts and to ensure its reaching the agents of the Compagnie des Indes. Voyageurs were required to have a statement of the kind and quantity of their cargo of beaver signed by the commandant of the post at which they had been trading and viséd by the officer at every post en route to Montreal. If they had to trade any pelts for supplies a statement of the amount left was signed and viséd. On their arrival in the town the voyageurs were supposed to present the statement at the Company's office. Montreal merchants, when they received their canoe loads of furs, were forbidden to barter the beaver pelts but must use instead the notes given by the receivers of the company<sup>1</sup>. In 1741 Beauharnois wrote that every year he renewed his orders to the commandants to allow no canoe to leave without sending him a statement of its cargo.<sup>2</sup>

It was ridiculously easy however for a voyageur to suppress part of his cargo so that the commandant never saw it and have the pelts carried to the English by Indians. As La Jonquière pointed out, it would have been futile to have placed barriers in the shape of posts across the routes that the savages usually took for they would have known still other paths through the forest.<sup>3</sup> The Governor might also have realized that ordinances merely forbidding trade with the English<sup>4</sup> were not worth the paper they were written

1. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.II, pp.374-376. Ordonnance de Hocquart. April 25, 1738.
2. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.75, p.257. Beauharnois au Ministre. Sept.22, 1741.
3. Ibid., Vol.93, pp.170-171. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.22, 1749.
4. e.g. Moreau St.Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.13, pp.449-451. Ordonnance de La Jonquière. Montreal, May 29, 1749.

on.

In addition to trying to prevent beaver going out of the colony, the authorities tried also to make the sale of foreign goods in the colony impossible. In 17<sup>41</sup> Beauharnois and Hocquart together issued an ordinance authorizing the Compagnie des Indes to send its agents into every house and store. These officials were to mark with a seal bearing the arms of the Company any foreign cloth they discovered, such as that, for example, which had been used to cover furniture. The ordinance forbade the further use of any foreign stuffs illegally imported and declared that henceforth any unmarked goods found were liable to confiscation.<sup>1</sup> That is, the possession of any foreign merchandise by the people in 17<sup>41</sup> was legalised but they were to be prevented from acquiring any more. The ordinance was carried out<sup>2</sup> but there is no record of any later inspection, so that the result of the action was probably nil.

Besides the contraband trade the authorities had also to contend with English competition. The difference between contraband and competition is little more than a distinction in terms. In the one case, furs were sent to the English posts by Canadians, in the other, savages carried thither, on their own account, furs which they themselves had caught.

Efforts were made to counteract the attraction of the English but the government never laid out a systematic plan of procedure to deal with the problem. The back-and-forth movement of the trade

1. Répertoire des Arrêts, etc (E.Z.Massicotte) p.101. May 12, 17<sup>41</sup>; Inv. des Ord. Vol.III, p.9. May 12, 17<sup>41</sup>.
2. E.Z.Massicotte, Un Recensement Inédit de Montréal en 17<sup>41</sup>. Printed in Trans.Roy.Soc.Can., Third Series, Vol.XV, Sect.1., pp. 1-2.

from one market to the other was more the result of circumstances over which the authorities had no immediate control than of anything the French did to outwit their neighbours. On the whole, the authorities merely attempted to deal with each situation as it arose. Nevertheless, in the course of the two decades with which we are concerned, the activities of the government in this respect tend to fall into four broad categories. In general, their efforts took the form of: bringing pressure to bear on the Compagnie des Indes to increase the price given for beaver; attempting to keep the posts in operation in spite of adverse circumstances; trying to prevent the exploitation of the Indians; and, to a certain extent, establishing new posts to forestall the English trade.

In the early and comparatively untroubled years of the period practically nothing was done, although there are frequent references to the English competition in the official correspondence. In 1744, however, war came with the result that merchandise became both scarce and dear.

As early as the fall of 1744, Beauharnois and Hocquart complained that goods from France had risen 40% in price. The Indians could not comprehend the vagaries of prices. They could see no reason why they should receive one quantity of merchandise for their beaver one year and a much smaller quantity the next year when neither fur or goods had changed in kind or amount. In 1744 the colonial officials suggested an increase in the prices given for beaver for which the Company could indemnify itself by raising the price in France and the whole transaction would hit only the rich.<sup>1</sup> The last remark has a peculiarly modern ring.

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1. Corrès. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 81(1), pp. 52-53. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 15, 1744.



The result was that the prices were immediately raised from 55 sous, 20 sous, and 55 sous the pound for winter beaver, summer beaver, and "castor gras"<sup>1</sup>. respectively, to 3 livres 15 sous, 30 sous, and 4 livres,<sup>2</sup>. that is, an average rise of 42.3% which neatly offset the rise in the price of merchandise.

During this period there was for obvious reasons a general disinclination among the traders to carry on the exploitation of the posts. The colonial authorities did their utmost to prevent the cessation of the trade. In 1744, for example, seven of the ten congés that were issued for Detroit, were given free.<sup>3</sup>. In 1746, eleven of the twelve congés for Detroit and all the congés for Michilimackinac were granted without fee. In the same year the leases of the posts of Michipicoton, Ouatonons, Rivière St. Joseph, and the Baye des Puants, expired. The lessee of the first of these posts was induced to continue for another year at

1. The English equivalent "beaver robe" lacks the descriptive succulence of "castor gras". According to Boucault, to make "castor gras", "il faut que les Sauvages passent plusieurs peaux de castor qu'ils en fassent des couvertes, qu'ils portent ces couvertes pendant deux ou trois ans du côté du poil et du côté de la peau pour en faire tomber le grand poil et les engraisser en y faisant pénétrer par leur sueur les huiles dont ils se frottent; il n'y reste après ce temps que le poil fin ou duvet lequel étant gras, sert à faire des chapeaux de pur castor parce qu'il est liant et qu'il lie le poil du castor Sec" (i.e. The ordinary beaver pelt as it comes off the animal) (Rapp. de l'Arch., 1920-1921. Boucault, Etat Présent du Canada. p. 19)
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 81, p. 91. Ministre au Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, March 16, 1745.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol. 83, pp. 188-189. Beauharnois au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 28. 1744.

a rent reduced from 3750 livres to 1000 livres. No farmer could be found for the Baye and in order to provide for this post two individuals were allowed to equip themselves at Michilimackinac for the post on payment of 1000 livres each. The farmers of the other two posts continued on condition of making no payment at all.<sup>1</sup> Similar provision for the up country posts was made again the following year.<sup>2</sup>

In 1749 beaver prices were again lowered to a general price of 3 livres 10 sous the pound and the following year were to be reduced to 3 livres, 5 sous,<sup>3</sup> notwithstanding the opposition of the colonial authorities.<sup>4</sup> However the officials made other attempts to repair the damage done by the war. The Governor believed that the farmers of posts had been exploiting the Indians by charging excessive prices, the object being to make hay during the three sunny years while they held the posts. Accordingly all but five of the posts (other than those operated by the King) were given over to exploitation by congés<sup>5</sup> in the hope that competition among several voyageurs would bring down prices.<sup>6</sup> Further it was decreed that prices in all the posts were to be fixed at 30% above the cost prices in Montreal.<sup>7</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.85, pp.17-19. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.22, 1746.

2. Ibid. Vol.87(1) pp.279-280. La Galissonnière et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.7, 1747.

3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.89, p.140. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 30, 1749.

4. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.93, p.5. La Jonquière et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 1, 1749.

5. Supra, p. 155.

6. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.90-91. La Galissonnière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.23, 1748. Bigot did not agree with La Galissonnière either as to the cause of the excessive prices or of the plan to remedy it. (Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.92: pp.45-46. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 22, 1748; p.73. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.2, 1748; cf. p

7. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.89. pp.77-78. Ministre à Bigot. Versailles, April 11, 1749.

In this "inter war" period a number of new posts were established. In 1749 one was set up in the country of the Scioux.<sup>1.</sup> Another, Fort Rouillé dependent on Niagara, was erected across a path which the Indians took to Ohouaguen<sup>2.</sup> and a small stockaded fort known as the Petit Portage was built on the river opposite Niagara to intercept Indians who were passing around that post.<sup>3.</sup> Indians made their way to Ohouaguen by way of the Sault Ste. Marie also; accordingly in 1750 the S. de Repentigny from Mickilimackinac and a few soldiers were sent thither with four canoes to intercept the Savages en route to the English and to raise a fort.<sup>4.</sup> During this period a new establishment was begun at Lac à la Carpe, as we have seen<sup>5.</sup> and a Jesuit mission was established at La Présentation.<sup>6.</sup> The first was to intercept the Indians going to Hudson Bay and it was hoped that the second would interfere with the trade at Ohouaguen. Both these however, were sanctioned rather than undertaken by the authorities.

In 1749, Oéloron de Blainville with a detachment of 200 men was sent down the Ohio to try to detach the Indians from the English traders who visited the district.<sup>7.</sup> In 1753 began Duquesne's attempt to hold the Belle Rivière and in that year Forts Presqu-Isle, Machault and Le Boeuf were built.. This was preparation for war rather than an ordinary attempt to meet English competition.

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 93, pp. 45-46. La Jonquière et Bigot au Ministre. Québec, Oct. 9, 1749.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., Vol. 95, p. 83. La Jonquière et Bigot au Ministre. Québec, Oct. 24, 1750.

4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 95, pp. 178-179. La Jonquière au Ministre. Québec, Aug. 20, 1750; cf. p.

5. Supra, p. 156

6. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 93, pp. 52-53. La Jonquière et Bigot au Ministre. Québec, Oct. 31, 1749.

7. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 93, pp. 139-140. La Galissonnière au Ministre. Québec, June 26, 1749.

## Beaver received in the Company's Offices in:

1740	147,000 - 148,000 pounds. <sup>1.</sup>
1742	157,000 pounds. <sup>2.</sup>
1743	200,000 pounds. <sup>3.</sup>
1744	200,000 pounds. <sup>4.</sup>
1745	180,000 pounds. <sup>5.</sup>
1746	180,000 pounds. <sup>6.</sup> (anticipated)
1747	100,000 - 120,000 pounds. <sup>7.</sup> (anticipated)
1748	50,000 - 60,000 pounds. <sup>8.</sup>

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1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>o</sup>A, Vol.73, p.126. Hocquart aux Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes. Nov. 3, 1740. (copy)
  2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.78(1), p.158. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 31, 1744.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>o</sup>A, Vol.81(1), p.55. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.15, 1744.
  5. Ibid., Vol.83, p.88. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.23, 1745.
  6. Ibid., Vol.85, p.359. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 18, 1746.
  7. Ibid., Vol.87(1), pp.279 - 281. La Galissonnière et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.7, 1747.
  8. Ibid., Vol.92, p.105. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov.8, 1748.
- The receipt is stated as 166,172 livres 3 sous. The above figures have been calculated roughly, on the basis of the average price prevailing for beaver (supra p. 173)

During our period the amount of the returns from the fur trade was regulated chiefly by the strength of the English attraction and by the two wars. There were of course a variety of incidental factors as well. For example, in 1740 the Baye des Puants returned only 110 packets of furs instead of the usual 300 to 400 because there had evidently been a disruption between the Indians of the district and the neighbouring Scioux, and the local Savages were afraid to go into the district of their enemies where beaver was plentiful. Hunting had been further interrupted by the fact that other Indians who frequented the post had marched against the Chicatas in the south and had wintered in Louisiana.<sup>1.</sup> The most sustained influences however were the two already mentioned.

The amount of beaver received each year by the Company is an index of the general state of the trade. The increasing returns of the first few years were the result of the fact that England was at war with Spain and merchandise in the English posts had gone up in price.<sup>2.</sup> Moreover, in the spring of 1744 Chouaguen was temporarily abandoned with consequent benefit to the French posts.<sup>3.</sup> The same year, however, marks the beginning of war between France and England.

As early as October 1744, French goods had increased 40% in cost as a result of the high purchase price in France, the increased cost of freight and insurance, and the loss, or at least the non-

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.73, p.126. Hocquart aux Directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes (copy) Nov.3, 1740.
2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.76(1), pp.384-385. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 31, 1743.
3. Corres.Gén., C<sup>a</sup>A, Vol.81(2), p.472. Hocquart au Ministre. Québec, Oct.23, 1744.

appearance, of three ships destined for Canada.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the war complaints follow<sup>of</sup> the loss of ships and the scarcity and cost of merchandise. For example, in 1745 it was said that there was not a piece of scarlet in the bureaux of the Compagnie des Indes and there was no powder to spare, either for the Company or for the farmers of the posts.<sup>2</sup> The following year scarlet and other cloth were said to have been entirely lacking in the colony and prices had increased to 120% or 130%.<sup>3</sup> In 1747, three ships arrived bringing practically the only merchandise that had reached the colony in two years.<sup>4</sup> In that year an additional factor was introduced into the situation. In order to lessen the demands on the French treasury the dates of maturity of the bills of exchange drawn in the colony were extended as long as possible, with the result that merchants in France had to take a considerable loss if they had these bills discounted.<sup>5</sup> The effect was of course to raise prices still higher. Bigot writing in 1748 said that traders in Montreal had to pay at least 150% more for their merchandise than they did in peace time.<sup>6</sup>

We have already seen something of the effect of the situation on the exploitation of the up country posts.<sup>7</sup> In spite of the

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.81(1)pp.52-53. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.15, 1744.

2. Ibid., Vol.83, pp.87-88. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.23, 1745.

3. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.85, pp.393-394. Hocquart au Duc d'Anville. Quebec, Oct.22, 1746.

4. Ibid., Vol.88, pp.22-23. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.24, 1747.

5. Shortt, Documents, Vol.II: pp.752-754. Hocquart to the Minister. Quebec, Oct.27, 1747; pp.757-761. Mémoire from the merchants of Quebec to Maurepas. Quebec, Nov. 1747.

6. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.92, p.46. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.22, 1748.

7. Supra, p. 173

efforts of the colonial authorities many fewer congés than usual were issued.<sup>1.</sup> Furthermore, as Hocquart pointed out in 1746, a great many Indians, constantly engaged in war, were prevented from hunting.<sup>2.</sup>

The English, being the stronger naval power, were not as seriously hindered as the French by shortage and dearness of merchandise. The Indians must have been turned away by the conditions they found in the French posts and the commandant of Chouaguen seized the opportunity to "rub it in". In 1745 he assembled all the nations in the vicinity and presented a large barrel of brandy for each village, doubtless to put the Savages in a receptive frame of mind. He then told them that henceforth they must come to the English for their supplies, for the French had only enough for that year and what was more, Canada was going to be taken as a result of an attack by sea. This information was carried to Longueuil at Detroit by the neighbouring Hurons and to the French officer's harangue they returned the very practical answer that they could not do without brandy, cloth, and wampum, and all these commodities were too dear at Niagara and Detroit.<sup>3.</sup>

The whole situation is, of course, reflected in the decline in the beaver returns. The fact that the receipts were moderately well sustained in 1745 and in 1746 was possibly the result of the increase in the Company's prices. By 1747 and 1748 the 40% rise

1. e.g. *Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A*: Vol.83, p.188. Beauharnois au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.28, 1744; Vol.83, p.161. Beauharnois au Ministre. Montreal, June 19, 1745; Vol.85, p.358. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.18, 1746.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol.85, p.393. Hocquart au Duc d'Anville. Quebec, Oct.22, 1746.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol.83, pp.89-90. Longueuil (commandant à Detroit) à Beauharnois. July 28, 1745.



in beaver prices could no longer offset the 120% to 150% rise in merchandise prices nor could it make up for the want of actual goods.

For the succeeding period I have found no record of beaver returns to indicate the condition of the trade. However, to judge from a number of general statements, the commerce flourished in the years of truce, notwithstanding the decrease in beaver prices. In 1749, Bigot reported that the quantity of pelts received at Frontenac and Niagara was greater than it had ever been before.<sup>1</sup> The following year a decrease was made in the prices of goods at the King's posts with good effect on the fur receipts.<sup>2</sup> The new post at Toronto also succeeded in turning away an amount of trade from Chouaguen.<sup>3</sup>

Conditions had evidently improved in the other posts, too. For example, in 1754, 13 congés at 500 livres each were issued for Detroit and 18 at 600 livres for Michilimackinac, whereas in 1747 there had been only 9 for the first post and they had to be given free, and 10 for the second, granted at reduced prices.<sup>4</sup> In the same year, 1754, the posts of Rivière St. Joseph and Illinois were also being exploited by congés and those of La Baye, Mer d'Ouest, Timiscamingue, Chagouamigon, Nepigon and Lac à la Carpe, Camanistigoyan, Michipicoton, Des Miamis, and Ouatanon were all farmed at good prices and evidently had been for some time.<sup>5</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.93, p.335. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 27, 1749.

2. Ibid., Vol.95, p.201. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.23, 1750; Mémoire pour Bigot, t.I, p.68.

3. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.95, pp.171-172. La Jonquière au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.20, 1750; La Jonquière au Ministre. Oct.6, 1751.

Printed in the Bulletin des Recherches Historiques, Vol.V, pp.138-140.

4. Supra, p.173

5. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.100, pp.18-20. Compte de la recette et dépenses des postes des pays d'entrant (1754). Enclosed with Duquesne au Ministre. July 12, 1755.

Profits must have been considerable to judge from the price obtained for Timiscamingue, for in 1754 the farm of the post which had been at 7000 livres rose to 14,100 livres.<sup>1</sup> In spite of the fact that La Galissonnière's plan to have the posts exploited by congés had not remained in operation long,<sup>2</sup> the prices remained sufficiently low to evoke no complaints from the Savages; on the contrary they declared themselves satisfied with the conditions they found in the up country posts.<sup>3</sup> In 1752 Duquesne and Bigot declared that commerce in general had never been in a more flourishing condition. The returns to France in furs and bills of exchange were nearly double what they had been before the war.<sup>4</sup>

The next war must inevitably have had a more detrimental effect on the up country trade than the preceding war had had. Ohouaguen had long been a thorn in the side of the French government to judge from their urgings in war time to attack the fort<sup>5</sup> and their suggestion in peace time to induce the Indians to attack it.<sup>6</sup> Its destruction was accomplished at last in 1756, among the first

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 99, pp. 296-297. Duquesne au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 1754.
2. Supra, p. 156-158, 179
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 99, p. 74. Duquesne au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 26, 1753.
4. Duquesne au Bigot au Ministre. Nov. 4, 1752. Quoted in Mémoire pour Bigot t. I. p. 122.
5. Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol. 78 (1), pp. 197-198. Ministre à Beauharnois. Versailles, March 30, 1744; Vol. 83, p. 146. Mémoire du Roy à La Jonquière. Versailles, April 1, 1746; Vol. 87, pp. 73-74. Ministre à La Galissonnière. Marly, Jan. 23, 1748.
6. Ibid., Vol. 91, pp. 86-87. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 15, 1750.

operations of the war. But it was a disastrous victory, for the French could not fill the gap left by the removal of the English fort and the Indians, unable to satisfy their needs, bemoaned its loss.<sup>1</sup> In 1757, Bigot wrote "Les Sauvages sont furieux à Niagara, à ce que me mande M. Pouchot; ils n'y trouvent ni vivres ni marchandises".<sup>2</sup>

The old difficulty of scarcity and high cost of merchandise prevailed. A mémoire addressed to the Minister by the Compagnie des Indes indicates the obstacles in the way of trade. For example, the English scarlets which the Company was allowed to buy had, in war time, to be brought to France via Holland in neutral ships. The greatest difficulty, however, was to get the cloth to Canada. In 1755 the total shipment consisting of 1200 pieces was lost, in 1756, 300 out of 1160 pieces were taken, and the following year, 1757, 370 pieces from a total of 660.<sup>3</sup> Freight and insurance rates increased enormously, of course, and with the depreciation of the paper money combined with all the other factors, prices reached incredible heights.

Meanwhile the English were not neglecting their opportunities. They spread the news abroad of the capture of French vessels, and Colonel Johnson, Indian agent, displayed the plunder to the

1. Bougainville, Journal, p.307. Sept.1-10, 1757. Printed in Rapp de l'Arch., 1923-1924.
2. Moreau St. Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol.15, p.97. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Aug. 24, 1757.
3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>11</sup>A, Vol.103(2) pp.542-543. Mémoire des syndics et directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes au Ministre. 1758.

Iroquois and heaped them with presents of French brandy and other supplies. Johnson was said to have had twenty tailors busy making "habits" from French cloth for the Savages.<sup>1.</sup>

Expeditions to the up country were still being made in the spring of 1758<sup>2.</sup> but by then, if not earlier, the Savages were turning against the French. In May 1758 Bougainville reported a great ferment among the up country Indians; the Folles-Avoines had besieged the post of La Baye for three days, and destroyed a French family on the Wisconsin, and other nations were ill-disposed to the French.<sup>3.</sup> In the late summer of that year, Frontenac was destroyed and with it a quantity of merchandise for the up country posts.<sup>4.</sup> The following year Nigara was taken. Possibly the fur trade never came to a complete stop but the returns in the last few years must have been almost negligible.

The fur trade seems to have been comparatively free from the blight of inertness which affected the colony. There can be no doubt of the eagerness of the inhabitants to engage in the trade, legally or illegally. It would have flourished as much, possibly even more, without government intervention.

The government's supervision of the fur trade appears to be of a piece with its activities in other connections. The motive, however, was different. The up country trade was of double

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.103(1), p.80. Vaudreuil au Ministre. Montreal, July 28, 1758.

2. Rapp. de l'Arch., 1931-1932, pp.361-365. Répertoire des Engagements pour l'Ouest.

3. Bougainville, Journal, p.320. May 12-20, 1758. Printed in Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924.

4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.103(2), p.562. Mémoire. Unsigned (1758). Evidently based on despatches received from the colony, chiefly those of Vaudreuil and Doreil.

significance for it meant not only profits but also defence. The authorities in France saw only the military aspect; they were interested in maintaining the Indians in their allegiance to the French rather than in the progress of the trade itself. It is not without point that in 1746 and in 1747 ships were forbidden to clear for the Labrador posts, with a consequent falling off in the peltry returns from that district,<sup>1</sup> when, at the same time, the authorities were making desperate efforts to supply the posts in the up country, where relations with the Indians were of military importance.

The King was not at all anxious to see expansion only for the sake of increased profits, a fact which the Minister of Marine made clear to the colonial officials. In 1750 he pointed out to La Jonquière that new posts were undesirable, for their establishment was costly to the King and they would serve only to divide the forces of the colony. One might be established on the Belle Rivière to forestall English occupation of the territory and to strengthen communication with Louisiana; lastly, it was suggested that such a post would be advantageously situated for trade.<sup>2</sup> Obviously, the military aspect of the situation was uppermost in the Minister's mind.

Niagara, Frontenac, and, later, Presqu'Isle, Le Boeuf, Machault and Duquesne were all operated by the King at a loss, simply to retain the good will of the Indians.<sup>3</sup> New posts were established

1. Supra, p. 140

2. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 91, pp. 98-99. Ministre à La Jonquière. Versailles, April 15, 1750.

3. Rapp de l'Arch., 1923-1924, p. 54. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bougainville).

not so much to increase the profits to the French as to break the relations of the Savages with the English. An example of how expansion was governed by military factors is the establishment, in 1758, of traders and gunsmiths in the villages of the Five Nations. as part of a plan to attach these neutral Indians to the French.<sup>1</sup>

The fur trade is usually regarded as the sine qua non for the existence of New France and undoubtedly it was the reason for the establishment of the colony. Certainly it was both the most profitable and the most vigorous branch of economic activity in Canada. Possibly it tended to hinder other enterprises. We have seen that it proved an obstacle to agriculture and individuals were probably unwilling to invest in new projects when they could get greater returns from the up country posts. On the other hand, without the fur trade there would have been even less wealth in the colony than there was.

But, however important the fur trade was it had less to do with determining the general condition of the colony than agriculture had. By 1740 at least, the fur trade, no matter what it might have been earlier, was not the economic basis of the colony. A great many more people were gaining a livelihood from farming than there were from the fur trade, large as the number of individuals engaged in the exploitation of the up country was. We have seen the effect on the colony of a poor harvest. A falling off in peltry returns had no such widespread result.

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1. Affaire du Canada, Vol. IV, pp. 56, 162-169. Mémoire pour Daniel de Joncaire Chabert,

FUR TRADING POSTS.<sup>1.</sup>Average annual product.<sup>2.</sup>

## King's Posts:

La Présentation (Iroquois mission)	30 - 40 packs. <sup>3.</sup>
Niagara	250 - 300 packs
Le Petit Portage	
Frontenac	20 - 30 packs
Rouillé (Toronto)	150 packs
Presqu'Isle	
Le Boeuf	
Machault	
Duquesne	200 - 250 packs
Bécancourt (Village of domiciled Indians)	
St. François " " " "	
Sault St. Louis " " " "	
Lake of Two Mountains	150 - packs
Le Long Sault	
Carillon (1)	150 packs
Des Miamis	250 - 300 packs
Miami	
Ouatanon	400 - 450 packs
Rivière St. Joseph. (main post)	400 packs
(Rivière St. Joseph) (subsidiary post)	

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1. For location, see map at end.

2. These returns are given in the *Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France* (1757), pp. 46-50. In the *Rapp. de l'Arch.* 1923-1924. (Mission de Bougainville)

3. *Ibid.*, p. 63. "On appelle paquet de pelletererie quatre-vingt-cinq francs".



## FUR TRADING POSTS (cont'd)

Baye des Puants	500 - 600 packs
Des Scioux (not located) Included in the limits of the Baye des Puants	
Des Illinois This post was dependent on Louisiana but a number of voyageurs from Canada also were allowed to trade there.	
Detroit	800 - 1000 packs
Chagouamigon	250 packs
Michipicoton	50 - 60 packs
Oamanistigoyan	60 - 70 packs
Nepigon (not located in the vicinity of Lake Nipigon)	
Lac à la Carpe (not located) In the limits of Nepigon	80 - 100 packs
Michilimackinac	600 - 700 packs
Sault Ste. Marie	100 packs
Timiscamingue	
Abitibi Dependent on Timiscamingue	120 packs
Mer d'Ouest:	300 - 400 packs
St. Pierre	
St. Charles	
Bourbon	
De la Reine	
Dauphin	
Des Prairies	
A la Corne	
Rouge (Fort Rouge was abandoned in 1737. Legardeur de St. Pierre built another fort on approximately the same site in 1751)	
Maurepas (1)	
Maurepas (2)	
La Jonquière.	

## CHAPTER VI.

### TRADE AND INDUSTRY.

In a colony where manufactures were practically non-existent, there was wide scope for traders who merely bought and sold. These were, of course, for the most part concentrated in the towns but as we have already seen, there were some who carried on their business in the rural districts. Various individuals, sometimes domestics, salt smugglers who had been transported to the colony, or indentured servants at the end of their contracts, who had collected a small sum of money, invested in a stock of goods and went from parish to parish and from house to house peddling their wares. Others who had more capital took a house in a village and set up as country shopkeepers. These traders fulfilled a useful function by establishing themselves in outlying districts and making contact between the towns and the more remote parts of the colony. They were doing a sufficiently extensive business to evoke complaint from the Quebec merchants.<sup>1</sup> Franquet was quite shocked at the luxury he found in the home of one of their number, Madame Lamothe, shopkeeper at Lachenaye, where <sup>he</sup> and his party slept in beds "propres de facon à la duchesse".<sup>2</sup>

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 75, pp. 4-15, 23-25. Copie du Mémoire du S. Desautiers, syndic des négociants de Québec, à Beauharnois et Hocquart. 1741. This document includes the comments of Beauharnois and Hocquart on the merchants' complaints. Signed, Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, Sept. 8, 1741; Mémoire pour Bigot, t. I, pp. 121-122; Ordres et Dépêches, B: Vol. 97, p. 166. Ministre à Duquesne et Bigot. Versailles, June 8, 1753; Vol. 99, pp. 65-66. Ministre à Duquesne et Bigot. Versailles, May 30, 1754.
2. Franquet, Mémoires et Voyages, pp. 157-158. Le 8 (mars 1753)

In spite of the increasingly important class of country merchants most of the business men were, as I have said, to be found in the towns.<sup>1</sup> There a certain amount of organization existed among them. A royal arrêt of 1717 permitted the merchants of Quebec and Montreal to elect a syndic and a number of assistant syndics to represent their interests before the authorities and to assemble daily at any place they might chose to discuss their affairs.<sup>2</sup> For example, on Oct.6, 1740, the principal merchants of Quebec assembled at the Intendant's Palace and chose, by ballot, the S. Desauniers as their representative.<sup>3</sup> Desauniers was performing one of the functions of his office when he directed a diatribe against the country shopkeepers.<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note that although there were over a hundred shops in Quebec<sup>5</sup> the "principal merchants" who chose the syndic numbered only sixteen. There is extant also a record of a meeting of Montreal merchants called by their syndic, the S. Charles Héry, on Sept.29, 1754, to discuss a proposition made in Paris that year by a new company which wished to obtain a monopoly of the beaver and the ginseng trades,<sup>6</sup>

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1. Montreal and Quebec. Three Rivers was described as an "Espèce de bourg décoré du nom de ville--" (Mémoire sur les forts de la Nouvelle France (1757c.) In the Bulletin des Recherches Hist. Vol.XXXVII, p.411)
  2. E.Z.Massicotte, Une Chambre de Commerce à Montréal sous le Régime Français. In the Bull. des Rech. Hist. Vol.XXXII, pp.121-124.
  3. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.II, pp.554-555. Approbation d'une Assemblée des Marchands etc. Signed, Hocquart. Quebec, Oct.6, 1740.
  4. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.75, pp.1-25. Mémoire, S.Desauniers à Beauharnois et Hocquart. 1741.
  5. Ibid., p.11
  6. E.Z.Massicotte, Une Chambre de Commerce, etc. In the Bull. des Rech. Hist. Vol.XXXII, pp.121-124.

In addition to Canadian houses, a number of branches of French firms were established in Quebec. One of the most active was that managed by the SS. Havy and Lefebvre, representatives of S. Dugard et Compagnie of Rouen.<sup>1.</sup>

Economic activity was not sufficiently extensive in the colony to permit of specialization in any one branch of commerce. Merchants apparently traded in anything that came their way, exporting the products of the country and importing various sorts of merchandise. One finds their names recurring in many connections. For example, the brothers Etienne and Joseph Charest, Quebec merchants and seigniors of Lauzon, collected rents from their seigniory and profits from their grist mill at which flour was ground for export. On the Pointe de Lévy they had a tannery, too, which brought them a return. They carried on a shop, established in Quebec by their father and at which everything from knitting needles to anchors had been sold, they owned houses in the town which they rented, and finally, they were interested in the exploitation of a Labrador post.<sup>2.</sup>

Trade, consisting as it did chiefly in the export of raw materials and food stuffs, was very seasonal and once winter set in, it came almost to a stop. Bougainville, in November 1756, remarked that all the merchants were busy making their final shipments and in general winding up their affairs before navigation closed. Once the last ship had sailed they had practically nothing more to

1. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 80, p. 8. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 15, 1743.

2. J.E. Roy, Lauzon, t, II, pp. 88-89, 129-130, 175-181.

do for there was not sufficient business in the colony to occupy them all winter.<sup>1</sup>

Government regulation touched colonial commerce in three ways, viz. by imposition of customs duties, by assistance in the collection of debts, and by inspection of weights and measures.

Customs duties were not at first very onerous. Up to 17<sup>47</sup>, liquor and elk hides alone were taxed. The tax on brandy, 16 sous 8 deniers the velte <sup>2</sup>. dated back to 1687. On every hogshead of light wine 9 livres were levied and rum was taxed at 15 livres the cask. In 17<sup>43</sup> some further regulations were issued imposing small duties on bottled wines and liqueurs.<sup>3</sup> Four years later, in 17<sup>47</sup>, the duties on liquor were raised, from 9 livres to 12 livres on wine, from 16 sous 8 deniers to 1 livres <sup>4</sup> sous on brandy and from 15 livres to 2<sup>4</sup> livres on rum.<sup>4</sup> The following year the King, in order to help defray the expenses of the war, imposed a general 3% duty on all goods imported into, and exported from, the colony with the exception of those already taxed. There were certain other large exemptions. All foodstuffs, horses, ships, shingles, hemp, and wood for shipbuilding, exported from Canada, and all cordage and salt imported, were duty free.<sup>5</sup> The products imported from the Windward Islands had been exempt from before 17<sup>40</sup>

1. Bougainville, Journal, p.242. Quebec, Nov.10-13, 1756. Printed in Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924.
2. A wine measure, varying from place to place. At Paris it was 7.45 litres.
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.7<sup>4</sup>(2), pp.439-441. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 30, 17<sup>42</sup>; Moreau St. Méry Coll., F<sup>2</sup>, Vol.13, p.105. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, May 2, 17<sup>42</sup>.
4. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.I, p.589. Arrêt du Conseil d'Etat. Versailles, Jan.23, 17<sup>47</sup>.
5. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.I, pp.591-604. Edit du Roy. Versailles, Feb. 17<sup>48</sup>.

and continued to enter free throughout the period. In 17<sup>43</sup>, imports from Santo Domingo also were added to the free list.<sup>1.</sup>

The merchants did not allow this new tax on business to pass unremarked but their objections met with scant sympathy from the authorities either in France or in Canada.<sup>2.</sup>

Up to 1753, a year's grace had been allowed for payment of duties but in that year immediate payment was ordered. Thus when the plan first went into effect, the King would receive two years' taxes together.<sup>3.</sup> The Treasury was evidently particularly low at that time for it was in the same year, 1753, that the King ordered that the dates of maturity of bills of exchange should be extended over a three year period.<sup>4.</sup> The new injunction must have borne heavily on some of the merchants, especially in the first year. Capital was small and as one anonymous writer pointed out it was difficult for an importer to pay a large sum for duty on, say, a shipment of liquor, long before he could dispose of the commodity and re-imburse himself.<sup>5.</sup>

When a ship arrived in port the director of the Domain at once sent officials on board, evidently to prevent evasions of the law.

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), p. 134. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, July 31, 17<sup>43</sup>; Affaires Etrangères, Mémoires et Documents. Amérique, Vol. II, pp. 58-60. Arrest du Conseil d'Etat. Paris, Feb. 24, 1750.
2. Corres. Gén., C<sup>A</sup>, Vol. 90-91: pp. 67-70. Placet to Gamelin, Perthuis et Taché à La Galissonnière et Bigot. Quebec, Nov. 2, 17<sup>48</sup>; p. 65. La Galissonnière et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 6, 17<sup>48</sup>; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 89, p. 166. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, April 30, 17<sup>49</sup>.
3. Considérations sur l'Etat Présent du Canada (Oct. 1758), p. 26. Hist. Doc., First Series (Que. Lit. and Hist. Soc.)
4. Infra, p. 218
5. Considérations sur l'Etat Présent du Canada (Oct. 1758) p. 26. Hist. Doc., First Series (Que. Lit. and Hist. Soc.)

Within 24 hours of docking a captain had to declare his cargo at the Bureau du Domaine and merchants declared whatever part of the shipment they owned. When the declarations had been checked, the directors allowed the goods to be disembarked but only at specified wharves.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that customs were frequently evaded as customs always are. Many of the merchants residences and warehouses were on the waterfront, with small wharves of their own only too conveniently situated for the covert discharging of cargoes. Bigot evidently believed in neglecting no opportunities for he had the Storekeeper declare on oath that the various ships in which he and his clique were interested all carried cargoes for the King and hence were exempt from paying customs duty.<sup>2</sup>

To collect a debt in the colony one enlisted the help of the Intendant, who issued an ordinance ordering the debtor to pay,<sup>3</sup> but French creditors found it more difficult to extract payment from Canadian debtors. The methods employed are illustrated by two cases in point. In 1741, the S. Gendron, a Paris merchant, sent an agent to Canada to collect a debt of 22,354 livres. The agent bore a letter from the Minister of Marine to Governor and Intendant evidently requesting them to lend their assistance. Gendron's representative decided to prosecute and Beauharnois and Hocquart promised to see that he was rendered justice.<sup>4</sup> On another occasion, a La Rochelle merchant, the S. Vivier, appointed someone

1. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, Mémoire pour Bréard, p.125; Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.I, pp.591-594. Edit du Roy. Versailles, Feb. 1748.

2. Jugement Rendu -- dans l'Affaire du Canada, pp.61,64; Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, p.125. Mémoire pour Bréard.

3. See for example, Inv. des Ord., Vol.III, p.4. March 11, 1741.

4. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.75, p.97. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Nov. 2, 1741.



in the colony to act for him in recovering a debt. The Minister required Duquesne and Bigot to assist Vivier's agent as far as lay in their power and to secure prompt justice should the creditor have recourse to law.<sup>1</sup>

Weights and measures were a vexed question in eighteenth century France. They varied from place to place with resultant confusion in the transaction of business.<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to say how far the conditions in France were duplicated in Canada. Certainly there is some evidence of abuses in connection with the colony. For example, the tax on brandy was placed on the velte. In 1687 all the brandy was exported from La Rochelle where the cask held 27 veltes, with the result that the tax had come to be collected at the rate of 22 livres 10 sous the cask. Then some perspicacious merchants hit upon the plan of shipping the liquor in "barriques de Bordeaux" which held 32 veltes, thereby evading more than 4 livres of the duty on each cask. The abuse was corrected in 1742 by the King's order to collect the tax on the velte.<sup>3</sup> The following year Louis Paquet, master cooper in Quebec was commissioned to "velter et jauger" in the presence of an inspector from the Bureau du Domaine all the brandy entering Canada.<sup>4</sup>

In 1748 Bigot asked for a set of measures from France to enable him to introduce a little order where, according to the fault-

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 97, p. 63. Ministre à Duquesne et Bigot., Versailles, March 14, 1753.
2. H.E. Sée, La France économique et sociale au 18e. siècle. (Paris, 1925) pp. 16-17.
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74(2), pp. 440-441. Mémoire du Roy à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 30, 1742.
4. Ord. des Int., M30, Vol. XVIII, pp. 36-37. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, May 10, 1743.

finding new Intendant, none had existed before.<sup>1</sup> Certainly attempts were made by the colonial authorities to prevent abuses. For example, in 1752, when the trade in meat in Quebec was thrown open, the rule was laid down that all butchers must have their weights and balances verified by the registrar of the provostship.<sup>2</sup> Monrepos in Montreal fixed the weight as well as the price of bread and ordered the bakers to stamp their loaves.<sup>3</sup>

So much for the background. There remains to be considered the course of trade and the various factors which affected its rise and fall.

Canada dealt with the other colonies, Ile Royale and the French West Indies and with France. Some French exporters carried on a three-cornered trade by shipping merchandise to Canada, taking on anything they could find there and usually completing their cargoes with salt fish obtained at Ile Royale, then returning by way of the West Indies where they discharged their cargoes and took on products from the tropical colonies.<sup>4</sup> For example, of 22 French ships which docked at Quebec in 1748, 15 took on a cargo of lumber, flour, please, oil and fish for the West Indies.<sup>5</sup> Some Canadian-owned vessels, it was said, also made the triangular voyage.<sup>6</sup> The brigantin "l'Entreprenant" owned by Bréard,

1. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.92, p.62. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.27, 1748.
2. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.III, pp.472-473. Ordonnance de Bigot. Quebec, May 15, 1752.
3. Répertoire des Arrêts, etc. p.134. March 6, 1747.
4. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.76, p.189. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada. (1741)
5. Ibid., Vol.121(1), pp.194-195. Liste des Vaisseaux venus à Québec --- 1748.
6. Corres.Gén., C"A, Vol.76, pp.196-197. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada. (1741).

De Lanaudière, Varin, and Olaverie made the round trip sailing from Quebec to Martinique and thence to La Rochelle.<sup>1</sup>

There was also a good deal of direct trade carried on. For instance, furs were carried directly to France and there must have been a "shuttle" traffic between Canada and the West Indies, for Canadian products could be sold more readily in the Isles than they could in France. A Canadian ship carrying goods to the Islands might of course proceed to France, as we have seen, but it seems probable that most of the carrying trade was in other than Canadian hands, for Canada suffered from a lack of ships.<sup>2</sup>

The objection to trading with Canada was the difficulty of obtaining a profitable return cargo. There was little that could be carried to France except oil and fur and the bulky products of the northern colony were costly to transport. It was estimated that a 200-ton vessel could carry a cargo of tropical commodities amounting in value to 40,000 or 50,000 livres whereas the same boat could embark only some 15,000 livres worth of Canadian goods.

From France, Canada imported a variety of manufactured articles and, especially, liquor.<sup>3</sup> Hocquart estimated that the colony purchased each year an average of 2500 hogsheads of wine, 25000-30,000 veltes of brandy, and 1500 - 1800 casks of rum.<sup>4</sup> The last named came from Martinique and Santo Domingo where Canada

1. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, pp.181-182. Mémoire pour Bréard.

2. Supra, pp. 26

3. Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924, p.57. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bougainville).

4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.85, p.370. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept. 18, 1746.

also obtained olive oil, soap, cotton, coffee, dried fruits, brown sugar, syrups, and molasses.<sup>1</sup> Molasses was one of the ingredients of spruce beer of which a considerable quantity was made in the colony. It was also much appreciated by the Indians who ate it on bread.<sup>2</sup> Of twelve ships which docked at Quebec between May 23 and June 25, 1743, four carried wine and brandy alone, a fifth brought dry-goods as well as liquor, and four others, from the West Indies, carried rum as part of their cargo. Of the other two, one was bringing flour from Ile Royale and the other oil from Labrador. It must be added that at the time the list was drawn up there were five other ships in the river, two of which at least were carrying flour.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the list gives some indication of the proportion of the Canadian import trade that was devoted to liquor.

Canadian merchants apparently specialized no more in their imports than they did in their exports but ordered from France an assortment of goods suitable for the colonial market.<sup>4</sup> There is evidence, too, that French exporters sometimes sent cargoes of goods to Canada on speculation, ordering the captain of the vessel to negotiate a sale on arrival.<sup>5</sup>

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A: Vol.76, p.189. Mémoire sur le Commerce de Canada (1741); Vol.121(1), pp.194-195. Liste des Vaisseaux venues à Québec --- 1748; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.72, p.127. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 16, 1741; Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, pp.181-182. Mémoire pour Bréard; Rapp de l'Arch. 1923-1924, p.58. Mém.sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757)

2. Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924. p.58. Mém.sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757)

3. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.80, pp.89-90. Liste des batiments arrivés devant Québec, etc. Enclosed with Varin au Ministre. June 26, 1743.

4. e.g. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.98, p.91. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, May 8, 1752.

5. e.g. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.93, p.52. Ministre à La Jonquière et Bigot. Versailles, May 25, 1751; Bougainville, Journal, p.369. Sept. 2, 3, 4, 1758. Printed in Rapp de l'Arch. 1923-1924.

In general, commerce reflected the situation in the colony. The point is well illustrated by the fact that Canada had a favourable balance of trade apparently only once<sup>1</sup> in the course of the two decades with which we are concerned. The maintenance of the colony was a financial burden to France for the discrepancy between the export and import figures must have been made up by salaries given and purchases made in the colony by the King. New France was quite obviously not paying its own way.

In particular, trade ebbed and flowed in accordance with the waxing and waning of the colony's fortunes. In the first year or two commerce was in a comparatively sound condition for in 1741 Canada exported over 230,000 livres more than it imported and the volume of trade was over 4,000,000 livres.<sup>2</sup> In the subsequent years of short harvests the balance of trade again turned against the colony although the volume was sustained.<sup>3</sup>

Enough has been said in connection with agriculture and with the fur trade to make it unnecessary to describe what the effect of the two war periods was on Canadian export and import.

The best years were undoubtedly those which intervened between the wars. Shipping was practically unhindered and a demand was created in the colony by the preparations which were being made for the second struggle. In 1748, twenty-four ships docked at Quebec,<sup>4</sup> and in 1749 Bigot reported that the amount collected

1. Viz. in 1741. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), pp. 331-336. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1743.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.: Vol. 78(1), p. 246. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 17, 1744; Vol. 81, p. 142. Ministre au Hocquart. Versailles, April 12, 1745.

4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 121(1), pp. 194-195. Liste des Vaisseaux venus à Québec la presente année. 1748.

in customs duties was considerable owing to the number of ships which had visited Canada in that year.<sup>1</sup> Three years later Duquesne and Bigot testified that commerce had never been in a more flourishing condition<sup>2</sup> and Bigot added that eighteen more ships had arrived in 1752 than in the previous year.<sup>3</sup>

A great deal of the goods imported was used to supply the up country posts and, to a lesser extent, those in the Labrador district, and an amount was, of course, retailed to the colonists. There was also a somewhat desultory trade carried on in supplying the King's Stores. Merchandise for Indian presents was bought regularly enough for Varin to suggest in 1742 that to buy only at Quebec, where prices were lower than at Montreal, would effect a worthwhile saving to the King.<sup>4</sup> In 1749, Bigot declared that supplies for the Stores shipped from France were nearly always of so poor a quality and so much damaged in transport that part at least had always to be replaced by purchases in the colony.<sup>5</sup> The Intendant may, of course, have been attempting only to provide a cloak for his own dealings which were such, as we shall see, as did not bear a too close scrutiny. The authorities in France were averse to this purveyance, for prices were high in Canada, but

1. Corres.Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 93, p. 365. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 4, 1749.
2. Duquesne et Bigot au Ministre. Nov. 4, 1752. Quoted in Mémoire pour Bigot, t. I, p. 122.
3. Bigot au Ministre. Nov. 1, 1752. Ibid., p. 121.
4. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 76(1), pp. 282-283. Ministre à Varin. Versailles, May 8, 1743.
5. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 93, p. 367. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 9, 1749.

could not prevent its continuing, especially in war time.<sup>1.</sup>

Trade with the King had one serious drawback, however, and that was that the merchant had sometimes to part with his goods regardless of what his own wishes might be. In 1747 Hocquart declared what he deemed to be a fair price, which was, incidentally, some 30% lower than the current price, and then proceeded to take by authority from the merchants the goods he needed for the maintenance of the Service.<sup>2.</sup> In 1760, when prevailing prices were 300% - 1000% above the cost price in France, Bigot announced a price of 400% over cost, then levied from private individuals, willing or unwilling, all the cloth, kettles, and so on which they had.<sup>3.</sup> Doubtless the Intendant did not find many "willing" individuals who really wanted to part with their merchandise, which had an intrinsic value, for the almost worthless paper money.

Throughout the period monopoly existed in connection with this purveyance to the King. The officials who have already been quoted as having had a good deal of control over the supplying of foodstuffs for the Service, also sold merchandise to the King.<sup>4.</sup> It seems probable, however, that during Hocquart's régime Canadians who were primarily merchants got some share in the trade. With the advent of Bigot however, matters changed. Throughout the best years of the colony's trade, and subsequently up to 1760,

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 81, p. 276. Ministre à Varin, Versailles, May 5, 1745; Vol. 85, p. 151. Ministre à Hocquart. Paris, Sept. 18, 1747; Corrès. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 88, pp. 128-129. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 31, 1747.

2. Corrès. Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol. 88, pp. 3-4. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, July 9, 1747.

3. Moreau St. Méry Coll., F<sup>3</sup>, Vol. 16, (1), p. 90. Bigot au Ministre. Montreal, June 20, 1760.

4. Supra, p. 105.



purveyance to the King was monopolized by a close circle of dishonest officials whom Bougainville christened "La Grande Société."<sup>1.</sup>

The finding of the Commission de Chatelet<sup>2.</sup> was that goods for the King's Stores had been regularly bought by preference from certain firms in which officials had an interest notably from the association formed by Bigot, Bréard,<sup>3.</sup> and the SS. Gradis, Bordeaux merchants, from "La Friponne", the S. Claverie's warehouse in which Bigot, Bréard and Estèbe<sup>4.</sup> were interested, from the house of Lemoine Despins with whom Martel,<sup>5.</sup> Varin,<sup>6.</sup> Péan,<sup>7.</sup> Bigot and Bréard were in partnership, and others.<sup>8.</sup>

Canadian merchants did sell some of their merchandise indirectly to the King but the middlemen, members of the Intendants'

1. Bougainville, Journal. p.369. Sept.2,3,4, (1758). Printed in Rapp. de l'Arch., 1923-1924.
2. The special court appointed to investigate the conduct of Canadian officials suspected of gross malversation during the last years of the French régime in Canada.
3. Controller of Marine.
4. Storekeeper at Quebec
5. Storekeeper at Montreal
6. Commissaire-Ordonnateur in Montreal.
7. Péan was an officer. His chief recommendation to Bigot is said to have been Mde. Péan.
8. Jugement Rendu - - dans l'Affaire du Canada, pp.68-73.

clique, pocketed most of the profits. Bigot was convicted of having bought from Quebec merchants at prices fixed by himself, goods which were then entered with the Stores under names other than those of the original vendors and at much higher prices.<sup>1.</sup>

A large amount of supplies, however, were imported by the Grande Société for re-sale to the King. Bigot and Bréard regularly received shipments from the Gradis, of course.<sup>2.</sup> In 1755, Varin, together with Bigot and Péan, bought supplies from Bordeaux and La Rochelle merchants and sold them to the Stores.<sup>3.</sup> Bréard, in partnership with a number of other officials controlled some fourteen ships some of which carried from France goods which were disposed of to the King.<sup>4.</sup>

There is some evidence that private commerce also, was to a certain extent controlled by the monopolists. According to Bougainville the Grande Société sent agents out to sea to buy up the cargoes of vessels bound for Quebec and of course sold the goods in the colony at any price they chose to fix.<sup>5.</sup> Montcalm said/<sup>that</sup>

1. Jugement Rendu---dans l'Affaire du Canada, pp.60-61; Cf.also Considérations sur l'Etat Présent du Canada, (Oct.1758) p.28. In Hist.Doc., First Series (Que.Lit.and Hist.Soc.)
2. Bibliothèque Nationale 22253. Fragment d'un mémoire concernant le commerce fait en Canada par les Srs.Gradis, Bigot et Bréard (1762). This manuscript was received in the Dominion Archives on Jan.17, 1930. It is not paged but the folio numbers are 168 bis-168 ter.
3. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, Requête de Varin, pp.40-42; Jugement Rendu, p.66.
4. Mémoire pour G. Estèbe, pp.132, 144-146, 149-154; Affaire du Canada, Vol.III. Mémoire pour Bréard, pp.179-184; Mémoire pour M.-J.H.Péan, pp.199-202.
5. Bougainville, Journal, p.369. Sept.2,3,4, (1758) Printed in Rapp. de l'Arch. 1923-1924.

some twenty favoured individuals bought up all supplies on arrival so that commerce became "quasi-exclusive".<sup>1.</sup> In 1763, the merchants of Montreal in a petition to His Britannic Majesty declared that during the war powerful and avaricious companies had been formed which had captured all the commerce of the colony.<sup>2.</sup> These general statements are probably exaggerated but officials undoubtedly did engage in private trade. Three of the vessels controlled by Bréard did a coasting trade with Martinique in goods which were not at all suitable for the Stores and three more of his ships cruised up and down the St. Lawrence touching at Montreal, Three Rivers, and Quebec.<sup>3.</sup>

Canadian trade was usually only a rather casual dealing in available commodities. Merchants seem to have had a sufficient number of other interests not to depend on a mere buying and selling. In a colony as undeveloped as New France, commerce could not be very well established.

In addition to the enterprises which have already been described there were a variety of other ways of earning a living in the colony. The habitants living on the seigniories were probably fairly self sufficient but the townspeople required numerous services.

Some individuals depended for their livelihood on serving the

1. Shortt, Documents Vol.II, pp.889-891. Montcalm to Le Normand. Montreal, April 12, 1759.
2. Ibid., Vol.II, p.969. Feb. 1763.
3. Loc. cit.

wealthier section of society. For example, in Montreal we find a dancing master, a perfumer; a "tabletier en nacres de perles", a lace maker, and a tapestry maker, who probably repaired rather than manufactured hangings. Montreal had, too, several chefs and maîtres d'hôtel and boasted at least one pastry-cook's shop<sup>1</sup>.

In the capital there must have been a larger number of people practising "luxury" trades. The only reference I have found to such individuals, however, is that made to a hairdresser or wig maker (perruquier) who is discovered trying to collect a debt of 9 livres 10 sous, doubtless from one of his customers.<sup>2</sup>

Jewelry and plate were practically all imported from France but, in 1757, there were three or four workers in precious metals in the colony, who, for lack of material, were having a difficult time to live. There was of course, very little gold or silver available in Canada. Some people however, did get their hoarded écus melted down and made into porringers and goblets.<sup>3</sup> Besides the silversmiths, there is mention of a number of clockmakers in the colony. The finer clocks and watches at least, were brought from France<sup>4</sup> and these "horlogers" may merely have been repairers.

Butchers and bakers were of course to be found in the towns. The business carried on by these small shopkeepers was subject to

1. E.Z.Massicotte, *Les Métiers Rares d'Autrefois*, pp.611-613. Printed in the *Bull. de Rech.Historiques*, Vol.XXXVI.
2. *Inv. des Ord.* Vol.III, p.<sup>4</sup>. March 11, 1741.
3. *Rapp.de l'Arch.* 1923-1924, p.57. Mémoire sur l'Etat de la Nouvelle France (1757) (Mission de Bougainville)
4. Antoine Roy, *Les Lettres, les Sciences, et les Arts au Canada sous le Régime Français*, p.279.

particularly vigilant supervision by the authorities. For example, in 17<sup>43</sup>, butchers were forbidden to salt any meat because the Intendant had learned that the product was to be sold for the crews of merchant ships in port and feared that the export would drive up meat prices in the colony.<sup>1</sup> A similar prohibition was made in 17<sup>44</sup> <sup>2</sup>. and again in 1751.<sup>3</sup> Obviously, short harvests had been having an adverse effect on the meat supply.

Permission had to be obtained from the Conseil Supérieur before a butcher could set up a shop but, apart from that, trade seems to have been open to anyone up to 17<sup>48</sup>. In that year, however, two butchers, the MM. Romilliard and Chapeau were given the exclusive right to maintain butcher shops in Quebec. Prices were fixed by the Intendant and the butchers were ordered to sell twice a week in summer and once in winter.<sup>4</sup> By the end of 17<sup>49</sup> the monopoly had passed into the hands of Joseph Cadet who was to become Munitionnaire-Général in 1757. He was ordered to maintain two stalls in Upper Town and two in Lower.<sup>5</sup> In September 1751 the trade was once more thrown open because the butcher had been unable to supply the demands of the town. All trade was <sup>to be</sup> carried on in the market places in Upper and Lower Town where the butchers would have their stalls.<sup>6</sup> Five years later, in 1756, the trade was

1. Ord. des Int., M30, Vol. XVII, pp. 169-170. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Oct. 12, 17<sup>43</sup>.

2. Ibid., pp. 367-369. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, Nov. 28. 17<sup>44</sup>.

3. Inv. des Ord., Vol. III, p. 164. Dec. 16, 1751.

4. Ord. des Int., M31, Vol. XVIII, pp. 372-376. Ordonnance de Hocquart Quebec, Feb. 3, 17<sup>48</sup>.

5. Inv. des Ord., Vol. III, p. 137. Dec. 20, 17<sup>49</sup>.

6. Inv. des Ord., Vol. III, p. 160. July 3, 1751; Edits et Ordonnances Vol. III, pp. 472-473. May 15, 1752.

once more given over to one individual<sup>1</sup>. but his privilege was revoked within a few weeks.<sup>2</sup> Habitants presumably carried meat into the market places except when monopoly was in force.

The object of this periodic inforcement was evidently to enable the Intendant to maintain a strict supervision over the trade, at times when such control appeared to be necessary. For example, the preamble to the ordinance of 1756 stated that the aim was to ensure a supply of meat to the town all year around, in bad seasons as well as good. As it was, butchers sold only when it was most to their profit to do so, falsely alleging at other times that they could obtain no animals in the country side.<sup>3</sup> Evidently the remedy was not much better than the evil, for the monopolies did not last long.

The extraordinary feature of the situation is the apparent insouciance with which the Intendant disrupted business. What the butchers who had to shut up shop during the intervals of monopoly were to do for a living did not apparently concern the Intendant.

In Montreal prices were fixed by Monrepos, Lieutenant-General of the jurisdiction, and butchers were under his supervision. The stalls were concentrated in the market place where habitants from the country side also, sold meat.<sup>4</sup> I have found no evidence of exclusive privileges being given in Montreal as they were in Quebec.

1. Ord.des Int., M33, Vol.XX, pp.369-371. Ordonnance de Bigot. Quebec, Dec.9, 1756.

2. Inv.des Ord., Vol.III, pp.203-204. Jan.15, 1757.

3. Loc.cit.

4. Répertoire des Arrêts: p.112. Jan.11, 1748; p.132. June 12, 1756. etc.

Many regulations were made for the bakers, too. Baking was subject to prohibition similar to that which the butcher trade underwent. For example, in the same year, 1743, in which the production of salt meat was forbidden, the making of biscuit was not allowed without the written permission of the Intendant, the object being to control export.<sup>1.</sup>

In 1743 seven bakers in Montreal were given the exclusive privilege of providing bread for the town<sup>2.</sup> and in 1756 Bigot accorded to three bakers the sole right to make and sell bread to the people of Quebec.<sup>3.</sup> How long these monopolies remained in force is not clear. The explanation which the Intendant offered for his action was the fact that he had been unable to coerce Quebec bakers into providing bread for the months of October, November, and December for they used their entire supply of flour during the summer in making bread for provisioning ships. The new flour would not come in of course until after the threshing late in the fall. Bigot felt that an improvement would be effected by confiding baking to three trustworthy men.

Bread prices were regulated by the Intendant in Quebec and by the Lieutenant-General in Montreal, in accordance with the current price of flour.<sup>4.</sup>

The trade doubtless received a fillip in 1745 when the decision was made to have bread for the Service supplied by local bakers

1. Ord. des Int., M30, Vol. XVII, pp. 26-27. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Quebec, April 30, 1743.

2. Répertoire des Arrêts, p. 105 July 20, 1743.

3. Ord. des Int., M33, Vol. XX, pp. 367-369. Ordonnance de Bigot. Quebec, Nov. 30, 1756.

4. e.g. Ord. des Int. M33, Vol. XX, pp. 185-186. Quebec, July 26, 1753; Inv. des Ord., Vol. III, pp. 195-196. March 13, 1756; Répertoire des Arrêts: p. 118. Dec. 13, 1749; p. 120. Feb. 20, 1751; Etc.



instead of baking it in one of the royal warehouses. Contracts for the purveyance were given out in the three towns.<sup>1</sup>

The question of food supply was, as we have seen, of vital importance to the colony. The attempt to maintain control over butchers and bakers was of a piece with the rest of the government's activity in this respect.

The attitude of these tradesmen must appear curious to anyone accustomed to living in an age of large scale advertising and high pressure salesmanship. Butchers and bakers were content to let their business lapse for months at a time, satisfying themselves with returns they received in the most profitable seasons, which were also those in which trade could be carried on with the least effort. This indifferent, "take it or leave it" attitude was typical of the eighteenth century Canadian, a fact which has perhaps already become obvious in the course of the discussion up to this point.

The towns also provided occupation for carters, especially perhaps Quebec, the port of Canada, where many men were required to transport goods between wharf and warehouse. In 17<sup>th</sup>9, a dispute arose between the Quebec carters and the merchants of the town with the result that some record is left of their activities. In that year the Intendant received complaints that the carters were still exacting the high rates they had received during the war while the carters declared that merchants and others kept horses, which they used not only in their own business but also in connection with the loading and unloading of ships and for other

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1. Corres.Gen, C<sup>th</sup>A: Vol.83, pp.379-380. Hocquart au Ministre, Quebec, Oct.16, 17<sup>th</sup>45; Vol.85, p.389. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 24, 17<sup>th</sup>46.

public carrying; moreover, country people were leaving their land, some only for a time, some permanently, and coming into the town where they became carters. The established carriers, who seemed to have considered themselves "charter members" of the calling, felt this to be an unjust usurpation of their trade.

Bigot settled the difficulty by issuing a table of rates and a series of regulations: the number of carters was fixed at ninety, and these were given a monopoly on public carrying - other owners of horses could carry only their own effects; vacancies could be filled by townspeople only and not by habitants from the country; tin tags numbered from one to ninety were to be issued and each carter was to fix his number to the collar of his horse. These apparently were only identification tags and not licences, for apparently no fee was exacted.<sup>1.</sup>

Doubtless the volume of the export and import trade had most to do with determining the annual profits of these carriers.

In an account of the vocations followed by Canadians, the innkeeper must not be overlooked. In a country with a consuming thirst such as Canada had, taverns could not help but abound, both in town and country. Some inns provided lodgings but for the most part travellers put up at pensions or in private houses. For example between 1740 and 1760, a certain Nicolas Morant kept a very select boarding house in Montreal where lawyers, merchants, and even members of the nobility lodged.<sup>2.</sup> According to Franquet, rural habitants were obliged to take in any travellers who chose

1. Ord. des Int., M32, Vol. XIX, pp. 156-169. April 21, 1749.

2. E.Z. Massicotte, Auberges et Cabarets d'Autrefois, p. 109.

to descend on them.<sup>1.</sup>

The most thriving trade in the inns was done in liquor. Drinking was done to excess in the colony, to judge from the efforts that were made to control it. Attempts were made to limit the number of taverns; <sup>2.</sup> the closing hour was fixed at ten o'clock; <sup>3.</sup> from time to time regulations were issued designed to prevent drinking on the premises. <sup>4.</sup> Religious festivals, especially parochial saint's days, seem to have been occasions for particularly riotous celebration. On such days the authorities tried to control the amount of liquor consumed by ordering some of the taverns closed. <sup>5.</sup> These regulations were not merely a priori attempts to anticipate and prevent possible abuses but efforts to check abuses which had already occurred.

In addition to the permanent residents there was always, of course, a floating population in Montreal and Quebec consisting of Indians, voyageurs, sailors from ships in port and a variety of other individuals. All this meant a profitable trade for the inns.

The introduction into Canada of some 3000 soldiers in 1755-1756 must have been a boon to the innkeepers and during the war Montreal was even more frequently thronged with Savages than it usually was. In the latter years of the war, the trade was doubtless seriously affected by the difficulty of obtaining supplies. In 1759,

1. Inv. des Ord., Vol.II, pp287. March 8, 1740; Ord. des Int., M29, Vol.XVI, pp.191-193. Ordonnance de Hocquart. Nov.16, 1741.
2. Edits et Ordonnances, Vol.III, pp.446-449. Ordonnance de Dupuy. Quebec, Nov.22, 1726.
3. e.g. Répertoire des Arrêts: pp.114. July 13, 1748; p.115. Nov.12, 1748; p.119. May 9, 1750. etc.
4. Ibid: p.102. July 23, 1741; p.105. July 25, 1743. etc.

Monrepos ordered all the public houses in Montreal closed with no intimation of their being opened again, presently or ever,<sup>1.</sup> possibly to conserve the limited supply of liquor in the colony, perhaps to prevent further disorder in the town in which rioting had already occurred.

The colony also supported a variety of craftsmen. For example, there were a number of leather workers, for in June 1759 all the saddlers in Quebec were busy making saddles for a cavalry corps of two hundred men which was being formed.<sup>2.</sup> The making of saddles and harness must have been a profitable calling in a country where so many horses were used. There is reference, too, to other leatherworkers, shoemakers, and tanners. During the last war boots were furnished for the soldiers by Despins and Co., by the Demoiselle de Ramezay, and by the S. Barsalou, a tanner established at Côte des Neiges.<sup>3.</sup>

Coopers and other woodworkers were found in the colony.<sup>4.</sup> Among these craftsmen, wood carvers found a place and the work, chiefly in connection with churches and other religious buildings, represents, as Professor Adair points out, probably the best in French Canadian art.<sup>5.</sup> The craft seems to have been well

1. Répertoire des Arrêts, p.138. June 9, 1759.

2. Rapp.de l'Arch., 1920-1921, p.145. Vienne, Journal du Siège de Québec, June 5, 1759.

3. Affaire du Canada, Vol.III, p.54. Requête de Varin.

4. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.101, p.133. Ministre à Varin. Versailles, Feb.17, 1755. The Minister required Varin to employ coopers in Montreal to make barrels for the transport of flour and liquor for the Service.

5. E.R.Adair, French Canadian Art, p.101. In the Report of the Canadian Historical Association, 1929.

established in the colony for there were some families who traditionally followed the calling. For example, the Le Vasseurs, who came to Canada in the first part of the seventeenth century, produced wood carvers and carpenters in each generation.<sup>1</sup>.

There must have been considerable scope for farriers in Canada and there were a number of smiths besides those<sup>employed</sup> at St. Maurice, most of them evidently not of very great ability. When the making of iron knees for the King's ships was undertaken at Quebec the Intendant asked for a workman from France, but unable to obtain one he had had to use a Canadian. By 1750 this artisan had tired of his employment for, as Bigot said, "---comme il est Canadien, il préfère Sa Liberté a estre assujéti a une Cloche---". The Intendant declared himself at a loss to replace him and asked, therefore, that a smith should be sent from France, for the only alternative was to have the ironwork made in the town and that was evidently undesirable.<sup>2</sup>. Gunsmiths also, were to be found in the colony. In 1747 a gunsmith from Rochefort was set up in a workshop in Quebec along with four apprentices to whom he was to teach his trade.<sup>3</sup>. We have seen also that gunsmiths were sent into the Iroquois villages.<sup>4</sup>. Undoubtedly these

1. A genealogical table of the Le Vasseur family is printed in Les Lettres, les Sciences, et les Arts, by Antoine Roy. p.231

2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.96, p.21. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.9, 1750.

3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.85, p.69. Ministre à La Jonquière et Hocquart. Versailles, March 31, 1747; Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A: Vol.87 (1), p.274. La Galissonnière et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.2, 1747; Vol.88, p.99. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.25, 1747.

4. Supra, p. 184.

workmen were employed only in repairing muskets, for it is practically certain that no firearms were made in New France.

The building trade required joiners, carpenters, masons, roofers and tinworkers. According to M. Massicotte there were not fewer than fourteen masons and stonecutters in Montreal in 1741 and at least seventeen in 1754. Quebec, the larger town, must have had a greater number of stoneworkers. When an individual wanted a house built, he might either engage some helpers and set about the construction himself or, more probably, turn the enterprise over as a contract to a master mason who hired on assistants. For example, Paul Tessier Lavigne, mason, stonecutter, and entrepreneur, was well known in the trade. His most important contract was one drawn up before a notary on Oct. 7, 1740, wherein Lavigne agreed to build a house on the rue Notre-Dame for M. de Ramezay. The contractor's first step was to engage François Chastel, carpenter of Lanoraie to square, during the winter, all the timber necessary for the framework of the house.<sup>1</sup> There were no building contractors in Canada as we know them. The enterprise seems merely to have been trusted to the chief workman, usually a mason rather than a carpenter, for most of the houses were built of stone.

The King must have employed a considerable number of these craftsmen for his constructions, which were chiefly in the nature of fortifications. Both fortifications and other structures were built by entrepreneurs to whom contracts were adjudged by the Intendant in the presence of the Engineer and the Controller of

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1. E.Z. Massicotte, *Maçons, Entrepreneurs et Architectes*, pp. 132-142. Printed in the Bull. des Rech. Hist., Vol. XXXV.

Marine. Payment was made by order of the Intendant on the report of the Engineer of the amount of work done.<sup>1</sup> For example, in 1745, when it was decided to build a wall around Quebec, Hocquart made a contract with S. Desauniers who undertook to have all the masonry made, <sup>the</sup> earth transported, ~~the~~ excavation dug, and <sup>the</sup> necessary tools and scaffolding supplied. Desauniers took the S. Parent into partnership and brought masons down from Montreal to expedite the work. Unlike contractors for private buildings, neither Parent nor Desauniers was a workman. Desauniers was one of the leading merchants of Quebec, and Parent was probably also a business man. However, Dominique La Palme who undertook to supply the gates, was himself a mason and stonecutter.<sup>2</sup>

There was no organization in Canada which suggested a gild, although the apprenticeship system was employed. Articles dated 1745, exist by which Noel Le Vasseur, "maître menuisier" of Quebec engaged his son René Michel, aged twenty-two, to another master joiner of Montreal, the S. Dubois, for a term of four years. Dubois was to instruct the young man in his trade, treat him humanely, provide him with board and lodging, arrange for his mending and laundry and pay him thirty-six livres per annum. The apprentice could not live elsewhere but at Dubois' home and must obey his master both inside and outside the house.<sup>3</sup>

1. Mémoire pour Bigot, t.I, pp.34-35.

2. Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A: Vol.83, pp.322-325. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Sept.24, 1745; Vol.86, pp.170-174. Desauniers au Ministre Quebec, Nov.11, 1746. The work was stopped in 1746 by order of the King (Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol.33, pp.92-93. Ministre à Beauharnois. Versailles, March 7, 1746) but was resumed the following year, Pierre Belanger replacing Desauniers as contractor (Corres.Gén., C<sup>h</sup>A, Vol.94(1), pp.7-8. DeLéry au Ministre. Quebec, Oct.3, 1749.

3. Apprentissage de René Michel Le Vasseur à François Filiau Dubois. Montreal, Sept.8, 1745. Document printed in the Bull.de Rech. Hist. Vol.LXXVII. pp.497-498.



A certain amount of organization did exist in Canadian trade and industry. We have already seen that the merchants were permitted to band themselves together<sup>1</sup> and the ninety carters of Quebec were united in so far as they joined to choose a representative or syndic.<sup>2</sup>

No association existed apparently among any but these capitalists. In any case there was very little labour in Canada to organize. The largest supply was provided by the colonial regulars/<sup>recruited</sup> in France, that is, the Troupe de la Marine, wherein workmen of all callings might also be found. In 17<sup>49</sup>, the heads of the colony suggested that an increased number of troops would be useful to provide "journaliers et ouvriers". Labourers were very scarce at the time with the result that wages were exorbitant and work was not undertaken which might otherwise have been. <sup>3</sup>.

It is perhaps needless to point out that industry would not be extremely flourishing in Canada with its small and unprogressive population, living for the most part on the land.<sup>4</sup> However there is proof to be found in the fact that a number of craftsmen, whose trade was seasonal, had to eke out their incomes by keeping little shops.<sup>5</sup>

The effect of the last war on all these crafts and small

1. Supra, p. 186

2. Ord. des Int., M32, Vol. XIX, pp. 157-160. Ordonnance de Bigot. April 21, 17<sup>49</sup>. The Intendant herein approves the individual elected by the carters.

3. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 93, pp. 36-37. La Jonquière et Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 6, 17<sup>49</sup>.

4. Out of a population of 55,000, over 12,000 lived in the côtes.

5. Mémoire pour Bigot. t. I, p. 121 and t. II, pp. 16.

enterprises was probably beneficial, at least during the early years. Not only was the King expending large sums in the colony but three thousand soldiers, notoriously thirsty, hungry, and free with their money, had to be supplied.

More space has been devoted to this account of Canadian trade and industry than the subject perhaps deserves. Certainly, neither was very important as a phase of economic activity in Canada. Both were concentrated for the most part in Montreal and Quebec whose populations together numbered about twelve thousand. Merchants and small shopkeepers seemed on the whole to take a rather casual interest in business. Canadian canoe builders and wood carvers were able craftsmen, but craftsmanship, in general, did not reach a very high level. As we have seen in connection with the Forges and with shipbuilding, skilled workmen had always to be brought from France. The Canadian was neither trader nor artisan, he was essentially a farmer.

## CHAPTER VII.

FINANCE.<sup>1.</sup>

The currency circulating in Canada in 1740 consisted for the most part of paper. There was also a quantity of small copper coins, "sols marquez" which were used for making change and which were not accepted for bills of exchange.<sup>2.</sup> Such gold and silver as there was in the colony was for the most part stowed away in private hoards and little of it ever came to light.<sup>3.</sup>

The paper consisted first of cards backed by the government of France, and, secondly, of notes issued by the Treasury in Canada. At the opening of our period there were 600,000 livres in cards in the colony.<sup>4.</sup> The King had supposed that the number turned into the colonial treasury each fall would be sufficient to meet the expenses of the government for the ensuing year.<sup>5.</sup> They proved hopelessly inadequate however, and the authorities in Canada hit upon a plan of overcoming the difficulty by issuing notes of its own. While their credit was, at first, good, that of the cards was still better and these, too, began to be hoarded until, it was said, only 200,000 livres remained in circulation

1. Only a brief sketch of the financial situation in the colony has been attempted. An account of colonial finance has been given by the late Professor Adam Shortt, an authority on the subject, in his introduction to Documents relating to Currency, Exchange and Finance and in a series of papers printed in the Journal of the Canadian Bankers' Association, Vols. V and VI.
2. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, p. 723. Ordonnance de Beauharnois et Hocquart. Quebec, Oct. 5, 17<sup>th</sup> 3.
3. Ibid, p. 712. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 20, 17<sup>th</sup> 2.
4. Ibid: pp. 589-595. Ordonnance du Roy. March 2, 1729; pp. 641-645. Ordonnance du Roy. May 12, 1733.
5. Ibid., p. 587. Mémoire du Roi à Beauharnois et Hocquart. March 22, 1729.

by the end of 1740.<sup>1</sup>

In the fall of 1741, only some 15,000 livres remained in the Treasury in Quebec to meet the current expenses of the Service during the following year.<sup>2</sup> The colonial Treasury obviously had real need of an increased issue of cards. Meanwhile, the Minister was in an extremely uncomfortable position midway between the devil of his fear of inflation and the deep sea of his confused ideas concerning colonial currency. He was fearful of the amount of unregulated paper in circulation but he disliked the idea of another issue of cards because he thought that the credit of the existing ones might be undermined. He regretted, very foolishly, that specie could not be remitted to Canada to replace the paper.<sup>3</sup> The mental fogginess of the authorities in France on the currency question was to be a matter of consequence in the financial situation in the colony. Their fear of inflation prevented their issuing an adequate number of cards, but while they failed to place definite restrictions on the amount of expenditure they were powerless to suppress the Treasury paper which was to increase beyond all bounds and to fall into discredit, bringing the cards down with it. Their fallacious belief in the efficacy of silver to reduce government expenses was to accelerate the downfall of the paper.

In 1742, however, the colonial authorities were authorized to issue an additional 120,000 livres in cards.<sup>4</sup> The Minister

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 92-93. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, April 4, 1741.

2. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, pp. 691-693. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 25, 1741.

3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 72, pp. 89-96. Ministre au Hocquart. Versailles, April 4, 1741.

4. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, pp. 707-711. Ordonnance du Roy. Versailles, Feb. 27, 1742.

expected this entirely inadequate sum to replace the notes and to facilitate the course of trade in the colony.<sup>1</sup> The new cards of course made no appreciable difference to the amount of paper issued nor did it lend any discernible assistance to colonial commerce. In 17<sup>41</sup>, there had been 464,000 livres of notes deposited in the Treasury for bills of exchange and 176,000 livres of cards,<sup>2</sup> indicative of the extent to which Treasury paper was replacing cards as a circulating medium. In 17<sup>42</sup>, the year in which the new cards began to be issued the discrepancy was still greater, for 491,000 livres of notes were returned to the Treasury, as against 142,000 livres of cards, and when immediate obligations had been met 20,000 - 25,000 livres of cards remained for current expenses.<sup>3</sup> The following year the difference was less marked, 438,000 livres of notes and 213,400 livres of cards being returned.<sup>4</sup> This was doubtless the result of the fact that the new issue of cards had been completed in the meantime. However, the 82,000 livres of cards left was still insufficient to provide for the needs of the service.<sup>5</sup>

The effect of the war with its concomitant of multiplied expenditure was rapidly to widen the distance between the two sets of returns. For example, in 17<sup>47</sup> nearly 2,700,000 livres of notes were deposited whereas the cards received amounted only to

1. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 74(2), pp. 260-261. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Fontainebleau, April 17, 17<sup>42</sup>; Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, p. 717. Ministre à Beauharnois et Hocquart. Versailles, May 8, 17<sup>42</sup>.

2. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, p. 693. Beauharnois at Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 25, 17<sup>41</sup>.

3. Ibid., pp. 713-715. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 30, 17<sup>42</sup>.

4. Corres. Gén., C<sup>1</sup>A, Vol. 80, p. 99. Extrait des opérations des finances faites en Canada, 1<sup>er</sup> Automne 17<sup>43</sup>. Enclosed with, Varin au Ministre, Quebec, Nov. 3, 17<sup>43</sup>. Given on pp. 96-98.

5. Ibid.

55,000 and some odd livres.<sup>1.</sup>

Meanwhile Versailles had remained deaf to suggestions that more cards be issued.<sup>2.</sup> The authorities in France while allowing the heads of the colony to undertake enterprises and incur obligations in the King's name, refused to provide the colonial treasury with any regular means of payment. The Minister was so intent on preventing the slightest suspicion of inflation of the cards, that he completely overlooked the fact that without a sufficient number of them the quantity of unregulated paper must multiply.

By the end of the war there were some signs of the depreciation of notes which was to work havoc with the colonial currency in the war to come. The credit of both cards and notes depended on the confidence that they were redeemable in France. Any tampering with the bills of exchange must, therefore, inevitably result in discredit. By 17<sup>47</sup>, the French Treasury was feeling the increased number of drafts made on it as a result of the unusual expenditures of the war and in that year the Minister ordered Hocquart to distribute the dates of maturity of bills of exchange over several months, placing them as far on as possible.<sup>3.</sup> The result of the execution of the Minister's orders was that a number of merchants came to the conclusion that

1. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, pp. 750-751. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 27, 17<sup>47</sup>.

2. Ibid: p. 713. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 20, 17<sup>42</sup>; pp. 725-727. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 29, 17<sup>43</sup>; Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 78(1), pp. 101-106. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 24, 17<sup>44</sup>.  
3. Ordres et Dépêches, B, Vol. 35, pp. 81-82, 85-86. Ministre à Hocquart. Versailles, March 13, 17<sup>47</sup>.

bills drawn on the Compagnie des Indes were more to be trusted than ordinary bills of exchange and made usurious bargains to obtain them, others bought furs with the bills of exchange, paying 15% to 20% more for peltries than their usual value. The already high price of merchandise imported from France again rose.<sup>1</sup> The merchants voiced their fears that the rate of discount of bills in France would increase but La Galissonnière and Hocquart declared that they were concealing their real anxiety that the bills would not be met promptly when they did fall due.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, at the close of Hocquart's administration, the colony was suffering more than ever from lack of a sufficient number of cards, whose place was being taken by abnormal issues of secondary paper already tainted with discredit.

Matters improved in the next few years. Bills of exchange were evidently issued in the usual fashion and, moreover, Bigot effected some improvements. With considerable difficulty he extracted from the Minister a number of printed forms to replace the handwritten notes which were easily defaced and could be counterfeited without much difficulty.<sup>3</sup> The result was that this currency gained in credit; there was even some indication that the habitants would hoard the printed notes along with the cards.<sup>4</sup> The French government with its usual myopic view of the financial situation in the colony had been unable, in the

1. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, p. 753. Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 27, 1747.
2. Ibid.: pp. 757-761. Petition addressed to Maurepas, signed by Perthuis, syndic, Tachet, secretary, and forty one other individuals; p. 755. La Galissonnière et Hocquart au Ministre. Quebec, Nov. 6, 1747.
3. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II: pp. 763-765. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 25, 1748; p. 793. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 25, 1749.
4. Ibid., pp. 797-798. Bigot au Ministre. Quebec, Oct. 15, 1752.



beginning, to see the value of enhancing the credit of the Treasury notes in relation to drafts on the Royal Treasury.

In addition to the printed forms, an additional issue of 280,000 livres of cards had been obtained in 1749,<sup>1</sup> raising the total quantity to 1,000,000 livres.

The prospect seemed very fair for the future soundness of colonial finance but even before the arrival of the stormy days of the second war, a smaller tempest gathered and broke. During the period of preparation for war, government expenditure in the colony increased very considerably. An unsigned document <sup>2</sup> gives the annual disbursement as:

1750	2,131,305 livres
1751	2,725,959 "
1752	4,099,028 "
1753	5,313,424 "

At this point, 1753, the Minister announced that henceforth bills of exchange must be made payable over three years.<sup>3</sup> Moreover no distinction was made between cards and notes. Hitherto in times of crises limitations had fallen only on notes. Now cards and notes began to depreciate together.<sup>4</sup> In 1755 the colony's currency received another blow for in that year the Minister sent a fund of specie to the colony for payment to the

1. Shortt, Doc., Vol.II:pp.775-783. Ordonnance du Roy. Versailles, April 18, 1749.

2. Affaires Etrangères: Mémoires et Documents. Amérique, Vol.II, p.121. Tableau des Dépenses faites en Canada depuis 1750 jusques et compris l'année, 1760.

3. Considérations sur l'Etat du Canada (Oct.1758),pp.22-23. In Hist. Doc., First Series (Que.Lit. and Hist. Soc.)

4. Ibid. Part printed in Shortt, Doc., Vol.II, p.873.

troops<sup>1</sup> with the result, of course, that the value of paper dropped still lower. Merchants began to sell their goods from 10% to 20% cheaper for specie and an écu of 6 francs was said to be worth 7 livres of paper.<sup>2</sup> Another writer placed the ratio at 3 to 2<sup>3</sup> and a third dealer declared that a brace of fowl which could be had for 15 to 20 livres for specie, cost 30 to 35 livres in paper.<sup>4</sup> Montcalm, writing in 1759, put the ratio at 3 to 2.<sup>5</sup>

The depths were reached when the King, in October 1759, finally suspended all payment on bills of exchange.<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile floods of paper money were being released annually on the colony as government expenditure rose, partly as a result of the needs of the war, partly of the gross malversations of Bigot and his clique, and partly of the depreciation of the paper, which was both cause and effect.

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1. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, pp. 847, 851. Unsigned mémoire.
  2. Ibid., p. 875.
  3. Archives Nationale, F<sup>50</sup>, Vol. III, p. 28. Mémoire, unsigned.
  4. Réflexions Sommaires sur le Commerce --- en Canada. (unsigned) p. 4. Hist. Doc., First Series (Que. Lit. and Hist. Soc.)
  5. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, p. 891. Montcalm à Le Normand. Montreal, April 12, 1759.
  6. Ibid., pp. 929-933. Ordonnance du Roy. Versailles, Oct. 15, 1759.

The annual expenditure was estimated variously as:

	Anonymous. <sup>1.</sup>	Murray <sup>2.</sup>	Bernier <sup>3.</sup>
1754	4,466,021 livres	6,000,000 livres	790,000-800,000 livres
1755	6,101,838 "	5,500,000 "	"
1756	11,343,020 "	8,000,000 "	"
1757	19,269,967 "	12,000,000 "	"
1758	27,945,774 "	24,000,000 "	"
1759	30,168,430 "	30,000,000 "	"
1760	20,727,739 "	1,300,000 "	"

The result of all these factors, taken together with the increased demand and the decreased supply was that prices rose, and rose again. In 1755 the current price of merchandise in the colony 40% to 50% over that asked in France, in 1756, 80% to 100% and in 1758 it had reached 200%.<sup>4.</sup> According to Bigot the overplus was 800% to 1000% by 1760.<sup>5.</sup> The price of wine, one of the largest imports from France is perhaps an index to other commodities. During the last war its cost per hogshead is said to have climbed from 70 francs to 100 francs, then to 200 francs and by 1759 had reached the incredible figure of 1200 francs.<sup>6.</sup> The rise in wheat prices indicates the effect of conditions on the

1. Affaires Etrangères: Mémoires et Documents. Amérique, Vol. II, p.121. Tableau des Dépenses faites en Canada depuis 1750 jusques et compris l'Année 1760.
2. Murray's Report, p.49. June 5, 1762. Printed in Documents Relating to the Constitutional History of Canada (ed. by Shortt and Doughty).
3. Shortt, Doc., Vol. II, p.909. Report, enclosed with Bernier au Ministre. April 19, 1759.
4. Affaire du Canada, Vol. V, pp.11-13. Statement signed by nine men apparently merchants, at La Rochelle, Aug.10, 1762. Endorsed by the Intendant of La Rochelle, Aug.16, 1762.
5. Moreau St. Méry Coll., F<sup>2</sup>, Vol.16(1), p.90. Bigot au Ministre. Montreal, June 20, 1760.
6. E.Z. Massicotte, Auberges et Cabarets, p.111. Printed in Trans. Roy. Soc. Can., Third Series. Vol. XXI.

products of the country.<sup>1.</sup>

Finance in Canada did not exist apart from the government. There was neither banking house nor stock market to exert influence. The vicissitudes of the financial situation are less a reflection of influences at work inside the colony than they are an index of external factors which had a reaction in Canada. The beginning of depreciation in 17<sup>th</sup> and the complete collapse during the last years were the result of the wars waged by France, of the parlous condition of the French Treasury, and of the obtuseness of the government at Versailles in the matter of regulation of colonial currency.

War was one of the major influences in Canadian life during the last two decades of the French régime and the effect which war had on the colony is to a large extent indicated by the condition of the currency and of prices. The first war which was not so drastic in its effects as the last is marked by the beginning of depreciation and by a considerable rise in prices.<sup>2.</sup> Discredit set in again in the period of armed truce and during the last war the same results as we have seen in the previous conflict are evident in a much exaggerated form. Price rise indicates not only depreciation of course, but also interruption of communications. While it is true that crop failure brought about a general increase in prices the rise was nothing like as large as that consequent upon war. Increased prices did not accrue to the colony's good, based as they were on extraordinary circumstances.

The financial condition of the colony was not primarily

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1. Supra, p.119

2. Supra, p.177

the result of economic factors. It represents an effect rather than a cause and the cause is to be found in France rather than in Canada.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## CONCLUSION.

In the course of this discussion more stress has perhaps been laid on the deleterious effects of Canadian inertness than on the influence of government paternalism. If so, it is a result of the fact that the period considered is comparatively short, and that it comes at the very end of the French Régime. Which of the two factors was the primary cause of Canada's backwardness it is impossible to decide. One cannot say simply that the colony's condition was the result of the temper of its settlers or that it was only the consequence of government policy. Considered over a long period of time the factors were probably interacting cause and effect. By 1740 however, it is quite clear that so heavy a lethargy had descended on French Canada that without the government's numerous pinpricks, many of which never penetrated of course, the colony would have gone almost completely to sleep, retaining only enough consciousness to engage in the fur trade. It may be noticed that the first five chapters are so arranged as to proceed from the least vigorous to the most vigorous branches of economic activity, and from the most paternalistic to the least paternalistic period. But to ascribe the first to the second of these characteristics this is to confuse posthoc with propterhoc. Without government intervention in our period economic life would have been even less active than it was. Undoubtedly however, the government was forcing the pace. Much of the attempted stimulation was due to Hocquart who was apt to be carried away by his own enthusiasm and to attempt too ambitious undertakings. The leaven was not sufficient to move the mass.

Writers on various branches of the whole subject of economic development see in their own topic the sine qua non of the Colony. In my opinion the whole structure, such as it was, rested on agriculture. The most outstanding single influence that wrought a change in the course of our period, was obviously conflict with the English. The colony could not withstand the double shock of crop failures and war. The results were such that one must inevitably come to the conclusion that this thesis has been ill-named. The years from 1740 to 1760 were not a period of economic development, they were a period of economic retrogression.



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## MAP

- The map is based on the two maps which accompany "Historic Forts and Trading Posts" by E. Voorhis, viz:
- (a) Map of Mississippi and Ohio Valleys showing chain of Historic French Forts.
  - (b) Map of Canada showing Historic Forts and Trading Posts.











