CANADIAN THESES

THÈSES CANADIENNES

NOTICE

The quality of this microfiche is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this film is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microfiche dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, examens publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de ce microfilm est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30.

THIS DISSERTATION
HAS BEEN MICROFILMED
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED

LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE
NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE

THE SIZE OF THE LABOUR FORCE IN THE MONTREAL FUR TRADE, 1675-1790: A CRITICAL EVALUATION

by
Brian D. Murphy

Submitted to
The School of Graduate Studies
University of Ottawa
in Partial Fulfilment of
the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts (History)

14 January 1986

ISBN 0-315-30967-9

CONTENTS

CONTENTS (cont'd)

Acknowledgements

Anyone interested in society knows that little of value can be done in isolation; each piece of work is dependent upon the help, encouragement, and expertise of a vast network of family, friends, and colleagues. The problem then is not whom to thank, but whom not to thank. To thank some is not, one hopes, to diminish the value of the contributions of many others. Nevertheless some people played so important a part that I would be remiss not to mention them individually here.

First and foremost is my director, Fernand Ouellet. I am immensely grateful to him for his generosity with his expertise, enormous energy, and time which he gave me so unstintingly. His contribution to this work was beyond measure.

I would not have started this thesis without the influence of the late G. Peter Browne, of Carleton University. For many years, until his death in 1983, I was a student of his, and it was from him that I first discovered my interest in Canadian and Imperial history. He shared not only his knowledge of history, but also his love of language and his sense of precision and craftsmanship. His kindness and gentleness contributed substantially to this work. And I thank Miss Judy Sorensen of Toronto who read these chapters and gave thoughtful and sensitive suggestions, in the midst of her own thesis.

I am grateful to Martha Scott for her numerous small and large contributions, many unconscious, many unacknowledged, but all valued. To Victor Grostern of Centretown Stenographic Services and all those who typed and typed, corrected, and revised this work over four years, my thanks for their patience in what turned out to be a large and lengthy project.

Abbreviations

ANQ-M	Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal
Cor. Gen.	Correspondance générale (Archives des colonies)
CHAR	Canadian Historical Association Report
CHR	Canadian Historical Review
HS/SH	Histoire sociale/Sociale History
NYCD	Documents relative to the colonial history of the state of New-York
PAC	Public Archives of Canada
RAPQ	Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec
RHAF	Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française
WSHS	Wisconsin State Historical Society

TABLES

Tables (cont'd)

Tables (cont'd)

INTRODUCTION

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the fur trade dominated the Canadian economy as few activities have since. The exchange of European manufactured goods for furs was linked to every aspect of life in the Saint Lawrence Valley. The trade was the most important source of profits for the merchants and of supplementary income for the engagés recruited from the countryside. Furs determined diplomatic and military relations with the Indian nations, and with the colonies to the south: the very security of New France was connected to the fur trade. If it is true that the wages paid by the fur traders to the farmers and their sons affected agriculture, it is equally evident that the level of these wages would have been determined by the extent of the commercialization of agriculture. Both day to day activity and long term planning had to take the fur trade into account. Every spring, for 150 years, the canoes left Montreal with European goods and went up the Ottawa and Saint Lawrence Rivers to the trade posts; and then, in autumn, they came back down to Montreal with furs. The canoemen who worked in this transportation system linked the merchants to the coureurs des bois and Indians, they were the last link of Europe to the North American interior.

Until the 1970s, most history about the fur trade was written from the point of view of the merchants, or from the perspective that the fate of the trade was tied to vast impersonal forces that caused the trade to fluctuate within a long term expansion lasting nearly two centuries. Canadian historiography has been lavish in its concern for the Canadian merchants and their problems, their future, their investments, and their well being. None of this sympathy arose from an empirical examination of the merchants as a

group or as a class. To a certain extent this concern for the merchants is not surprising: they held meetings, sent petitions, wrote letters, and kept accounts. On the other hand, the canoemen did not leave written records. To the extent that their story was told, it was wrapped in myth and legend. We have popular images of the hardy voyageurs and coureurs des bois paddling their canoes westward and overcoming all hardships while singing a song. In particular, the men of the trade's seasonal labour force - the men who did the heavy work of actually carrying the European goods up and bringing the furs back down - have traditionally been ignored. Until recently, historians assumed that the men needed in the trade were numerous enough to be a serious loss for agriculture. But this assumption flowed from a failure to make a distinction between the seasonal engagés and those men who were active in the fur trade all the year around. Nor did historians try to count these men, to establish their proportion in the population, to look at their geographical origin, or to evaluate their specific functions in the commercial system.

More recently, however, these people, and their relationship to the peasantry in the Saint Lawrence Valley, have been a subject of historical consideration. These inquiries have resulted in different understandings of the labourers who participated in the collection and transportation of fur. Basic questions have been raised in connection with these issues: the role of seasonal workers, and their relationship to the professional coureurs des bois; and the social and geographic origins of the men - rural or urban, concentrated or widespread. At the centre of these opposite views have been the questions of whether participation in the trade was a marginal or normal activity for the colonists, and of the canoemen's relationship to agriculture. The impact on agriculture of the wages paid in the fur trade - an occupation

which was based on hired labour - and the impact of agriculture on this trade raises the question of the significance of the staples economy in early Canada. Light could be shed on all these problems if the size of this labour force could be estimated and the proportion of engagés recruited from the total population could be established.

These issues have frequently attracted the attention of historians, including Louise Dechêne, Gratien Allaire, Fernand Ouellet, and Allan Greer. All who have addressed these problems have begun with the same sources. the congés de traite, the Trade Licences including the Reports on Indian Trade, and the notarial contracts. From these sources, which cover thousands of pages and extend from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries, information can be gathered on approximately 61,800 trips made by colonists labouring on the route up to the pays d'En Haut.[1] Naturally, one might expect that records in these quantities would provide a reasonably complete account of the number of canoemen who participated in the trade. However, it is precisely on this point of the completeness of the sources that disagreement has developed. Louise Dechêne writes, with particular reference to 1708-1717, that "... les répertoires des notaries peuvent être considérés comme de véritables registres d'enregistrement des allées et venues dans l'Ouest."[2] Gratien Allaire, does not completely accept this claim - at least for the years after 1716 - but he does conclude that for the period 1716-1745 "... les contrats sont suffisamment représentatifs pour permettre l'étude des conditions d'engagement...".[3] On the other hand, Fernand Ouellet, writing about 1746-1790, concludes that these sources largely understate the number of men in the fur trade, and that other sources and other methods must be used to establish the number of men engaged in the trade.[4] The different assumptions

made by those historians are responsible for the varying opinions about the value of the sources. This thesis, through a series of tests made on these three sources, not only reaches strong conclusions about the value of those documents, but also proposes a cautious estimate of the number of men who were involved as engagés, either part-time or full-time, in the fur trade.

The congés de traite were used by the French colonial system from 1681 to 1696, and then again from 1716 to 1760, with minor interruptions, to attempt to control the fur trade, and to regulate the movement of people from the Saint Lawrence Valley up to the pays d'En Haut. These documents gave a trader official permission to send an expedition of specified size to a particular trade post. From 1681 to 1696, 25 congés were issued annually, although only a handful have survived; from the years 1716 to 1760 many more were issued annually, and some 1100 congés have survived from 1717-1752. After the Conquest, the British introduced the Trade Licences, which were similar to the congés. In addition to defining the permission given to each expedition, these licences usually revealled who posted the 200% bond that each expedition required, described the goods each merchant was sending, and usually identified the engagés who had been hired. Of these licences, 475 have been preserved from 1768 to 1776, and annual summaries - the Reports on Indian Trade - provided critical details from another 914 licences in twelve of the fourteen years from 1777 to 1790. These sources of information, which were used as such by the governments in both the French and British Regimes, are now at our disposal. They have their parallel in the notarial contracts which were agreed upon between the merchants and their engagés, and then signed by both. For the 140 years from 1682 to 1821, notarized contracts have been preserved which engaged 24,210 men, which is an average of only 173 engagés

per year. These contracts defined the canoeman's work and pay, and identified him, usually including his home parish.

When the numbers of men extracted from these records are examined in relation to the quantity of furs that were traded, contradictions begin to appear. Not only are there serious gaps in the data - for example, neither the congés nor the Trade Licences from 1753-1767 now exist - but also there are enormous year to year fluctuations in the weight of furs that each canoeman would have had to have carried. These omissions and variations are not primarily reflections of changes in the trade, but rather reflections of the fundamental ineffectiveness of the forms of control that were put on the fur trade.

This failure of administrative systems was commented on by numerous officials, traders, and travellers in various reports and accounts between 1679 and 1776. The judgements of these witnesses reveal that a large unofficial and often illegal trade existed in conjunction with the official trade authorized by the congés and Trade Licences. From the scope of this irregular trade it is apparent that the official trade was substantial, but nevertheless, it was only a varying part of the total trade. Because of this other trade the tests of accuracy made on these two types of sources (the congés and the licences on one hand and the contracts on the other) through four chapters of this thesis, are considered negative. As we will see, this result does not mean that we are left without any way of making a reasonable estimate of the size of the labour force engaged in the fur trade.

In 1777 things, in effect, changed. At that time the government, with the support of the merchants, was able to successfully regulate the trade, and

so the records of that period - the Reports on Indian Trade - are to a large extent a valid indication of the scale of the trade. Consequently, in the fifth chapter, an attempt will be made to construct an estimate of the annual number of canoemen for the period 1722-1790. This estimate assumes that, all things considered, the relationship during the period 1777-1790 between furs exported and engagés is valid for the earlier periods. This ratio of 272 pelts, or 319 pounds of fur, per man is used in conjunction with the quantity of furs exported or produced before 1777 as a tool to determine the annual labour force in that half century. For example, our estimate of the fur exports in 1740 is 335,600 pelts. That number is simply divided by 272, which is the ratio of pelts per engagé, to find that 1234 engagés were needed that year (335,600 : 272 = 1234). It may be noticed here that for the same year a total of 318 engagés can be found in the congés, which is a difference of 75%; and again that 290 canoeman can be extracted from the notarial contracts, a difference of 77%.

FOOTNOTES

1. Some trips, but surprisingly few, would have been recorded twice. once in the congés or licences, and then again in the notarized contracts.

2. Louise Dechene, Habitants et merchants de Montréal au XVII^{e} siècle, Montréal (Plon), 1974. p. 217.

3. Gratien Allaire, "Les engagements pour la traite des fourrures: évaluation de la documentation", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique française, Vol. 34 (no. 1, 1980), p. 26.

4. See Fernand Ouellet, "Dualité économique et changement technologique au Québec (1760-1790)", Histoire sociale/Social History, 1976 (Vol. IX), 294-5.

Chapter I

THE CONGES DE TRAITE AS A METHOD TO CONTROL THE FUR TRADE, 1681-1715

From the founding of New France until after 1760, the fur trade dominated the commercial activity of the colony. It was the main source of both profits for the merchants and cash income for all the voyageurs, coureurs des bois, and seasonal workers who participated in it. Because of the overwhelming economic, social, strategic and political significance of this trade, it became imperative for the Governors-General and the intendants to establish controls on the activities of the traders. In the seventeenth century, and particularly from the 1660s onward, so many men were involved in the Indian trade and the production of furs grew so fast, that within a short period the market was glutted and the profits of the companies which successively held the monopoly fell One of the most important merchants of the period, Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye, claimed that the large number of men trading caused a sharp decline in beaver prices from 14 livres per pound in 1664 to 4 livres in 1670 - and so threatened the entire colony.[1] For about a generation from 1670, the beaver price remained at about 4 livres per pound. As a result the increasing costs of expansion could accordingly be met only by further expansion. By 1696, the quantity of furs which had accumulated in warehouses was so large that the government decided to stop the trade and during the next twenty years maintained regulations to prohibit it.

Overproduction was not the only problem. The illicit trade with the English colonies was equally serious, and in a sense was related to overproduction. In 1681 Governor-General Frontenac estimated that one quarter of Canada's furs were diverted to the south. This trade remained a source of

deep concern until after the American Revolution. Ideological reasons were also behind this need to control the growth of the fur economy: the officials and the clergy were convinced that the Indian trade was expanding at the expense of agriculture and other more useful and moral pursuits. Not only were too many men attracted to the west, but the most energetic men were attracted to the "course des bois".

Early attempts to control the trade culminated in the introduction in 1681 of congés de traite, which gave the holder permission to take one canoe with three men to a specific post to trade with the Indians.[2] The Governor-General was authorized to grant twenty-five congés each year to impoverished gentlemen, retired officers or their widows. They in turn could, and usually did, sell their congé to a merchant or exploit it in cooperation with a merchant. With this permission the trader could organize his expedition and hire his men. Those who traded without authority could be flogged or sent to the galleys in the Mediterranean. The congés were abolished 28 April 1696 as part of a general retreat from the west. Nevertheless, a few were still issued to carry necessary military supplies west, and in 1716 the congés were re-established.[3]

It was one thing to decide to stop or control the trade - it was another thing to enforce this policy. By 1681, when the congés were introduced, not only had the Indians become extremely dependent on European goods, they had also become an essential element in the diplomatic and military affairs of New France. Each time the officials tried to restrict the trade they had to face the resistance of the merchants, the engagés involved in the trade and, of course, the Indians. Since the officials, the military establishment, and the bureaucrats were poorly paid, they tended to look at the fur trade as the only important means to increase their incomes. These views were so widely shared

that Governor-General Frontenac, who himself was deeply involved in the fur trade for his own profit, complained that the Jesuits converted more beavers than souls.

Until recently, the congés de traite have not been used specifically by historians as a tool to measure the size of the labour force engaged in the fur trade. Those historians, from F-X. Garneau through to L. Groulx and G. Frégault who did not particularly value the agricultural character of New France, were determined to show that the fur trade prevented the development of the colony either by attracting too many men or by attracting the best men. Thus, many of them assumed that the official number of congés did not really reflect the full extent of Canadian participation in this trade. This interpretation had also been emphasized by E. Salone, who contended that in 1680 at least one-third of the married men were in the woods instead of cultivating their lands.[4] Even H. Innis seemed to have accepted this judgement about the negative impact on agriculture of the fur undertaking. However, during the last fifteen years, a number of historians who have looked at the development of the French Canadian peasantry from different perspectives, have become inclined to minimize the peasant's role in the fur economy and, consequently, both the size of the labour force that the fur economy required and the rural origins of the engagés. Although L. Dechêne[5] readily admits that the twenty-five congés (each for one canoe with a three-man crew) that were officially granted annually by the Governor-General after 1681 did not correspond to the true number of fur expeditions, she assumes that a few decades later, in the early eighteenth century, the congés had become more or less a reliable measure of the volume of trade -- in part because she assumes that the extent of the smuggling has been greatly

exaggerated. Her thesis has been further developed by G. Allaire, who accepts the congés as a reasonable instrument to measure the labour force.[6] In contrast, it is argued here that the congés are not adequate as a tool to measure the labour force; and that the weight of furs brought down to Montreal required the work of several times the number of men authorized by the congés de traite.

i. The First Experience with the Congés, 1675-1695

Even before the congés were introduced in 1681 attempts had been made to control and regulate the trade. As early as 1654 Governor Jean de Lauzon was licencing traders to leave Canada and go up for furs.[7] In 1660, when Groseilliers and Radisson returned from Lake Superior with sixty canoes of furs, they were fined, and a quarter of their furs were confiscated because they had traded without a licence. When the Iroquois war ended and the trade increased, the need for control grew. During the 1660s Colbert's policy restricted Canadians from going up and encouraged Indians to come down to Montreal.[8] Jean Talon denied the right to hunt and trade to arriving engagés who did not marry within fifteen days of the arrival of the vessels with the "filles du roi".[9] When the monopoly of the Compagnie de l'Occident ended in 1674 and the fur trade was opened to all settlers, the governors increased the use of licences to control the trade. In 1672, 1673, and 1676, various punishments were decreed for those found in the woods illegally, and in 1676 the right to trade in furs was restricted to the three markets in Montreal, Trois-Rivières and Quebec.[10]

All these measures failed. Acadia was not included in the restrictions so the fur traders obtained passes for Acadia - and went west. By 1679 the

Governor-General and the Intendant had permission to allow trading from 16 January to 15 April.[11] The trade was so lucrative that even officials were involved: the Intendant said that the Governor and Major at Montreal were trading, and in return Governor Frontenac accused the Intendant and the Jesuits of trading.[12] Finally, in May 1681, the King admitted the failure of these regulations, and offered a full pardon - including the repayment of fines that the coureurs des bois had previously paid.[13] However, at the same time as he offered to refund the fines, the King instituted the congés de traite. Although only a handful of congés have survived for the period 1681-96, it is certain that each year the Governor distributed at least twenty-five congés. As each congé was for one canoe, and each canoe had a crew of three men, the official labour force permitted for the fur trade amounted to only 75 engagés. Yet this number is so small that the repeated complaints of New France officials against "la course des bois", and its disastrous consequences for the colony, seem incomprehensible.

In fact, from 1679 to 1693, numerous senior officials of New France reported on many separate occasions that about 600 men were active in the trade each summer. In 1679 the Intendant Duchesneau wrote to the Minister that "nearly five or six hundred" men were in the woods; in 1680 that 800 or more men were off trading"; and again, in 1681, that 500 to 800 men were in the woods. He went so far as to claim that someone from every family was in the bush and that even those in authority were trading.[14] In 1685, Governor Denonville repeated that 600 men were in the interior each year.[15] In November 1690, Governor Frontenac reported that 55 canoes with 200,000 livres worth of beaver had arrived in Montreal,[16] which again was far above the limit of the 25 canoes covered by the 25 congés. (Beaver of that value must have weighed at least 48,485 pounds, an average of 882 pounds per canoe, which seems quite reasonable because at that time canoes could carry up to a 1000

pounds.) And in 1693, the Intendant wrote home that he had issued congés for only 25 canoes but that 187 canoes had come down to Montreal.[17] In other words, the Intendant was saying that instead of 75 men, at least 561 men had left Montreal in the spring to go up to the pays d'En Haut. (Again this estimate seems reasonable: assuming 882 pounds per canoe, the 187 canoes would have brought down 164,934 pounds of beaver; and in this year, 1693, a larger quantity of furs than usual was received in Montreal - the average for 1685 to 1687 had been about 140,000 pounds annually.)[18] These estimates of the number of canoemen in the trade each year are consistent with the explanation of Hubert Charbonneau et al that the greater number of females over males aged 25-29 in the 1681 census was due to the absence of a significant number of men in the woods.[19]

There are, then, two contradictory estimates of the labour force: the figures derived from the official congés which indicate about 75 men annually; and those of the officials, who assessed the attraction of the fur trade to the settlers and estimated that each summer more than 500 men were in the trade. In trying to resolve this contradiction, it is necessary to consider two sets of figures: the volume of fur exports and the average weight that the canoes and men could carry. Some information about the capacity of the fur trade canoes, the load that each man carried, and the details of their work can be found in the accounts of traders and travellers. Even though most of these accounts were written after 1735, they are reliable not only for that period, but also for earlier times. These accounts reveal that the routes up the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers came to be carefully defined; that the same river channels, the same portages, the same trails at the portages were used by canoe after canoe, year after year; and that on the Ottawa River to Michillimackinac there were, depending on the water level, about thirty-six portages. Louise Dechêne writes that the route to Michillimackinac in the seventeenth century had more than thirty portages.

All these sources after 1735 indicate that for each man who went up country about 300 to 333 pounds of fur were brought down; similar figures have been given for the 1680s and 1690s. In 1690 Gov. Frontenac (as mentioned earlier) reported that 55 canoes had returned with 200,000 livres worth of beaver. Since the value of castor gras was 4.15 livres per pound, the weight of the beaver carried in these three-man canoes was at least 882 pounds. In this case the load for each man in the canoe would have been at least 294 pounds. Louise Dechêne writes that the maximum capacity of the early canoes was about 333 pounds per man.[20] This figure of 1000 pounds per canoe is also confirmed by Baron de Lahontan, in a rather curious roundabout way. In a letter about the fur trade, he doubled all his figures: he wrote that each of the 25 congés was for two canoes, that each of these fifty canoes of European goods produced two canoes of furs, and that each of the 100 canoes (four per congé) returned with 2000 pounds of furs.[21] Lahontan's doubling was probably an attempt to protect Frontenac and other fur trading officials by suggesting that 200,000 pounds of fur could have been produced with only the 25 official congés.

Assuming a 1000-pound capacity for the canoes and 333-pound loads carried by each man (assuming also that each man, in order to carry his 333-pound load had to make at least two trips at each portage), it is possible by using figures on the exports of fur, to begin to resolve this contradiction about the size of the labour force. For each year from 1675 to 1687 the weight of beaver landed in France is known approximately - only approximately because not all fur taken in Canada got to France. Some rotted, and some was lost. (One might assume that a small part of the beaver received in France had been captured from English ships in Hudson Bay: however it was not until after 1687 that large quantities of furs from the Bay reached France. And any of that

fur could have been offset by shipments of fur from New France that were taken by the English.) These figures would have included some beaver that had been received from Indians at the fur fairs in Montreal, Trois Rivières, and Quebec. However by 1681 these fairs had declined and were relatively small. The beaver exports for 1684 appear low (one is tempted to believe that a "94" has been reversed to become the "49"), however, since part of that year's shipment could have been received in early 1685, the figure cannot, in all certainty, be discarded. In Table I below, the official number of canoes and men allowed to go west is considered in relation to the weight of beaver received in France during the 1681-1687 period.

Table I

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BEAVER IMPORTS AND THE OFFICIAL CONGES, 1681-1687

	1 Beaver Rec'd in France (pounds)*	2 Congés (number)	3 Canoes (number)	4 Engagés (number)	5 Beaver Per Canoe (pounds)	6 Beaver Per Man (pounds)
1681	82,900	25	25	75	3315	1105
1682	90,353	25	25	75	3621	1205
1683	95,489	25	25	75	3819	1273
1684	49,056	25	25	75	1962	654
1685	137,568	25	25	75	5502	1834
1686	141,200	25	25	75	5646	1882
1687	141,200	25	25	75	5646	1882
Average	105,395	25	25	75	4216	1405

* These pounds were about 8% heavier than British pounds (454 g).

Sources: For Beaver, E.B. O'Callaghan (ed.), "Return of Beaver received from Canada from 1675 to 1685", Documents relative to the colonial history of the state of New-York, Albany, N.Y., 1856, Vol. IX, p. 287, (the years 1675-1680 are not used here because the congés do not begin until 1681), and Harold Innis The Fur Trade of Canada, 1927, p. 149; for congés, Ordonnance, mai 1681, Archives des colonies, Canada, memoires, 1681-1690, fol. 17, cited in Emile Salone, La Colonisation de la Nouvelle-France, Paris, 1906, p. 260.

As the table shows, the average annual weight of beaver during the 1681-87 period was 105,395 pounds. If only 75 men carried that weight down to Montreal, each man's load at the portages would have averaged 1405 pounds of beaver, and each canoe would have had a cargo of 4200 pounds of beaver. Such loads are more than four times the load that the men and the canoes used in the fur trade actually did carry.

In contrast, if we divide the beaver imports by the 1000 pounds that was the approximate weight carried by the three-man canoes, we get a more reasonable estimate of the size of the labour force. Table II provides such an overall view of the labour force during the years 1681 to 1687.

Table II

THE LABOUR FORCE ESTIMATED FROM BEAVER IMPORTS
(One three-man canoe carried 1000 pounds)

	1 Beaver Rec'd in France (pounds)	2 Canoes (number)	3 Engagés (number)
1681	82,900	83	249
1682	90,353	91	273
1683	95,489	95	285
1684	49,056	49	147
1685	137,568	138	414
1686	141,200	141	423
1687	141,200	141	423
Average	105,395	105	315

Source: For Beaver Rec'd in France, see sources in Table I.

These figures for the number of canoes and men are actually lower than the estimates of the labour force made by the colonial officials. However, since the beaver received in France did not constitute the total fur catch of the colony, this estimate is incomplete.

Even though the beaver received in France at this time was by far the largest part of the Canadian fur production, it was not the complete beaver catch, nor was beaver the only fur brought down from the pays d'En Haut. Many furs were lost on the trip from the pays d'En Haut down to the St. Lawrence; many rotted in storage at Quebec; some were lost on the trip across the Atlantic; and others may have been landed at small ports and not included in these figures. It is not possible to establish how many furs were lost, but a figure of 15% is certainly not too high. In addition to that, it is necessary to include the beaver pelts that were smuggled to the British colonies, and the pelts from animals other than beaver. In 1681 Gov. Frontenac estimated that 25% of the beaver was smuggled to Orange by way of Chambly.[22] He explained that the English paid one third more than the French (and paid in cash) and sold their merchandise at half of what the French charged. Eight years later this price situation was the same: the relative cost of goods in beaver pelts at Albany and Montreal in 1689 is shown below.

Table III

COST OF GOODS IN BEAVER PELTS, 1689

1 Goods	2 Albany	3 Montreal
8 pounds of powder	1	4
1 gun	2	5
40 pounds of lead	1	3
blanket of red cloth	1	2
blanket of white cloth	1	2
four shirts	1	2
six pair of stockings	1	2

Source: NYCD, Vol. IX, p. 408.

Naturally, many Canadians took their beaver pelts to Albany instead of Montreal. Smuggling of beaver to the British colonies was a problem throughout the entire history of New France.

The quantity of fur other than beaver taken during the years 1681-87 is difficult to estimate. Trade in other animal pelts existed early in the seventeenth century, and by 1670 the trade in elk, otter, martin, muskrat and fox was significant.[23] Thirty-five years later, around 1720, other furs were about 45% of the value of all fur landed at La Rochelle.[24] Louise Dechêne has estimated that in the seventeenth century trans-Atlantic freights were only 80% beaver.[25] Pelts of other animals must have been at least 10% of the weight of beaver pelts. In Table IV below, the total fur catch is estimated by adding the 15% of spoiled or lost beaver, the 25% of smuggled beaver, and then the 10% of other furs to the weight of the beaver landed in France. The annual average of 105,395 pounds of beaver for 1681-1687 then becomes 177,766 pounds of furs. Since the beaver received in France is known for 1675-1687 (not just 1681-1687 when congés were issued), the estimates are extended back to 1675.

Table IV

ESTIMATES OF TOTAL FUR CATCH, 1675-1687
(All figures in pounds)

	1 Beaver Received in France	2 Estimate of Beaver Spoiled	3 Estimate of Beaver Smuggled	4 Estimate of Furs of Other Animals	5 Total Fur Catch
1675	61,000	9,150	23,383	9,353	102,886
1676	70,000	10,500	26,834	10,733	118,067
1677	92,000	13,800	35,267	14,107	155,177
1678	80,135	12,020	30,718	12,287	135,160
1679	68,080	10,212	26,097	10,439	114,828
1680	69,000	10,350	26,450	10,580	116,380
1681	82,900	12,435	31,778	12,711	139,824
1682	90,353	13,553	34,635	13,854	152,395
1683	95,489	14,323	36,604	14,642	161,058
1684	49,056	7,358	18,805	7,522	82,741
1685	137,568	20,635	52,734	21,094	232,031
1686	141,200	21,180	54,127	21,651	238,158
1687	141,200	21,180	54,127	21,651	238,158
Averages					
1675-80	73,369	11,005	28,125	11,250	123,749
1681-87	105,395	15,809	40,401	16,161	177,766

Source: For Beaver Received in France, see sources in Table I (p. 15).

If this average of 177,766 pounds was brought to Montreal (or to the British colonies) by only 75 men, each man would have carried an average of 2370 pounds at each portage. This load - well over a ton - would have required each man to have carried 26 ninety-pound pieces at each portage. In this case, each three man canoe would have carried 7110 pounds, or more than three and a half tons. Such feats belong to the realm of myth. One hundred years later the maître canoes carried such a load, but they were more than three times larger than these seventeenth century canoes, and had crews of

eight to ten men. If, on the other hand, the 177,766 pounds of fur were brought down by 500 or 600 men - as estimated by various officials - each man would have carried a load of about 323 pounds at each portage. Such loads are in complete harmony with the actual capacity of the seventeenth century canoes. From this perspective, which implies that the government failed to control the fur trade through the system of the congés, the evaluations of the colonial officials appear infinitely more valid than those figures extracted from the congés themselves.

Having established the total fur catch during 1675-1687, and knowing that the maximum capacity of each three-man canoe was about 1000 pounds, the minimum size of the labour force for each year can be estimated more precisely.

Table V

SIZE OF THE LABOUR FORCE ESTIMATED FROM FUR PRODUCTION, 1675-1687
(One three-man canoe carried 1000 pounds)

	1 Total Furs (pounds)	2 Canoes (number)	3 Men (number)
1675	102,886	103	309
1676	118,067	118	356
1677	155,177	155	465
1678	135,160	135	405
1679	114,828	115	345
1680	116,380	116	348
1681	139,824	140	420
1682	152,395	152	456
1683	161,058	161	483
1684	82,741	83	249
1685	232,031	232	696
1686	238,158	238	714
1687	238,158	238	714
Average (1681-87)	177,766	178	534

Source: For Total Furs, Table IV (p. 19).

At least 534 men were needed just to carry the furs at each and every portage. However, every man in the interior would not have been available to carry the furs down through all the portages. Many men, perhaps most, stayed in the interior for at least a year and so could not have moved both goods up and furs down during the same summer. A second group of men made five or six month (or much shorter) trips from Montreal to the Long Sault, Petite Nation, or Michillimackinac to collect the furs, either from Indians or other Canadian traders who brought the furs part way down.[26] Because of the diversity of work, it is reasonable to assume that more than 534 men were in the interior each summer.

The number of Ottawa Indians carrying fur down to Montreal had been high in the years immediately after 1667, when the war with the Iroquois had stopped. In many years 200 Ottawa canoes came down. However the Ottawas were never successful in replacing the Hurons in the carrying trade. As the coureurs des bois spread through the interior, control of the trade and of the transportation system shifted into French hands. By 1676 so few Indians were bringing furs down to Montreal to trade that the fairs at Montreal, Trois-Rivières and Quebec had declined. By 1686 only a handful of Indian canoes were coming down to Montreal each year.[27] So, all in all, the number of settlers in the trade each year, according to the overall fur production, is consistent with the claims of officials that 500 to 800 men were in the trade each year.

For the years 1688-96, the gaps in the data on fur exports make it impossible to attempt to evaluate the labour force by the method used for 1681-1687. Nevertheless it is apparent that the volume of fur was increasing, not decreasing. Indeed it had to increase. From 1670 until the turn of the century the price of castor gras remained at roughly 4 livres per pound. Yet

at the same time the costs of the trade were increasing: explorations, transportation to the receding fur frontier, the development of posts, Indian presents, and wars against Britain, the Iroquois, and other Indians all added to the expenses of the trade, and of the colony. And these expenses could be met only by an increased volume of fur exports. So production continued to grow during 1688-1696, as it had during 1675 1687, until the market was glutted. In August 1689 four days after the Battle of Lachine, the canoes from Michillimackinac arrived in Montreal with the largest shipment of beaver that had ever been received in Canada - 800,000 livres worth, probably about 190,000 pounds weight. In 1693, as noted above (on p. 13), about 165,000 pounds of beaver were received in Montreal. Naturally increased trade required an increase in the number of canoes, and in the number of canoemen.[28] Nevertheless, until 1696, only 75 men were officially authorized each year.

Like the measures used in the 1670s, the congés that were introduced in 1681 failed to reduce the number of men going west. The congés authorized only 75 men annually for the trade. However, both before and after the establishment of the system of the congés, the Governors-General and the Intendants were constant in their estimates of the number of people actually involved in the trade: between 500 or 800 men with an annual average of 600 men. In other words, the officials in Quebec City repeatedly said that the congés had failed completely to restrict participation in the fur trade. And they seem to have been right.

ii. The Suppression of the Congés, 1696 - 1715

In 1696 the congés were abolished and for the two decades 1696-1715 French authorities tried to suppress the fur trade. Theoretically, congés

were not issued for the trade except when some trade to supply the Indians was necessary for diplomatic or military reasons. The Indians had become so dependent on European goods that if they did not get them from the French, they had to go to the English. Thus the French were compelled to distribute trade goods as presents, and this practice alone was enough to guarantee the continuation of some trade. And since the only way to get men, military supplies, and presents to the posts was to allow the canoemen and merchants some trading, the movement of furs continued almost as if nothing had happened. Only seven of those special congés - four in 1708 and three in 1715 - were recorded by Massicotte. In the absence of the usual official congés, many of the coureurs des bois simply did not return to Montréal. They lived and traded as best they could in the pays d'En Haut: if Canada did not take their furs, Albany would.

The substantial weight of beaver received in Montreal during the years after 1696, by the company holding the imperial monopoly on Canadian beaver proves that the suppression of the congés neither stopped the trade, nor stopped Canadians from going up to the pays d'En Haut. Some historians have cited evidence which suggests that the annual weight of fur received in Montreal may have averaged as much as 199,311 pounds.[29] This figure is suspiciously high. Such a weight would have been even higher than that received before 1696, indeed it would have been the highest in the history of the trade. However, the extremely high quantity received in 1699 coincided with the resumption of peace with the Iroquois, which made the rivers safe, and allowed the shipment to Montreal of furs that had been held in the interior. Even without that sudden increase, which continued the year after, the market was saturated. The annual French consumption had been only 40-45,000 pounds before 1685, and in 1694 was more or less the same.

Accordingly most of the extra beaver had to be sold in other European markets, particularly Amsterdam.[30] Not all beaver could be sold and the company's stock of pelts continued to increase.

In 1706 a new company was organized, and to avoid over-production it refused to buy castor gras. The Indians, who had been encouraged by Canadian traders to get this grade of beaver, regarded this change as an act of bad faith.[31] The fur traders and their backers in Quebec City were caught between the orders of Paris to stop the trade and the insistence of the Indians to continue it - an insistence which coincided with their own needs. Since France and Holland consumed about 102,000 pounds weight of beaver annually,[32] the beaver market was international and so furs could be sold to the American colonies. Thus Canadians were able to ignore the restrictions imposed by France. After 1706 large quantities of Canadian beaver were being diverted through Albany to New York City. Some of the beaver was taken by direct trading expeditions of the Albany merchants into the Great Lakes, some beaver was delivered by the Iroquois who traded with more distant tribes, but most of it was brought to Montreal by Canadian canoemen and then smuggled from Montreal down the Richelieu Valley. Jean Lunn has estimated that during the period 1706-1717 between half and two-thirds of Canadian beaver was smuggled into New York.[33] If two-thirds was smuggled, it would have amounted to twice the official trade. If half was smuggled, Lunn's minimum estimate, it would have equalled the official trade. When the minimum of this beaver is added to that received by the company, it seems the beaver catch of 1706-1715 was almost as high as that before 1706 and that after 1715.

In addition to this beaver, the pelts of other animals such as elk, moose, deer, bear, and martin were being taken, some of which were also smuggled.[34] Louise Dechêne writes that exports of these other pelts came to

about 75% of the value of the beaver exports between 1706 and 1720.[35] This figure seems very high, but the value of beaver officially exported was very low during this period. The company's refusal to accept castor gras had cut the weight of the official trade at least in half, and since the remaining castor sec was bought at only 30-34s (20s = 1 livre), which was about a third of the old price for castor gras, the value of Canada's official beaver exports was far below what it had been before 1706. On the other hand, the trade in other pelts was constantly increasing. Some of these pelts, such as martin, were lighter and more valuable than beaver; others, such as elk and bear, had approximately the same value per pound as beaver. The official exports of these pelts probably weighed a little less than 75% of the weight of official beaver exports. A smaller percentage of these pelts were also smuggled. So, everything considered, the weight of the pelts of other animals may be estimated at 40% of the total beaver catch.

Finally an additional 5% at least can be allowed for pelts that were spoiled in transit from the pays d'En Haut to Montreal or to the British colonies. These calculations are shown in Table VI below. These figures are probably a more or less correct statement of the total Canadian fur production of this period.

Table VI

ESTIMATES OF THE CANADIAN FUR CATCH, 1706-1715
(All figures in pounds)

	1 Beaver Received by the Company	2 Estimate of Beaver Smuggled	3 Estimate of Furs of Other Animals	4 Estimate of Fur Spoiled	5 Total Fur Catch
1706	69,600	69,600	55,680	9,744	204,624
1707	69,600	69,600	55,680	9,744	204,624
1708	69,600	69,600	55,680	9,744	204,624
1709	69,600	69,600	55,680	9,744	204,624
1710	69,600	69,600	55,680	9,744	204,624
1711	69,600	69,600	55,680	9,744	204,624
1712	73,377	73,377	58,702	10,273	215,729
1713	69,600	69,600	55,680	9,744	204,624
1714	69,600	69,600	55,680	9,744	204,624
1715	108,890	108,890	87,112	15,245	320,137

Sources: For Beaver Received by the Company, Harold Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, University of Toronto, 1927, pp. 149-152, and Alice Jean Elizabeth Lunn, Economic Development in New France, 1713-1760, Montreal (McGill Ph.D. Thesis), 1942, p. 456.

The total Canadian fur catch during the period 1706-15, instead of about 70,000 pounds annually, would then have been about 217,000 pounds annually. This figure shows a reasonable increase over that of the 1680s, but also reflects the crisis of over-production experienced by the trade beginning in the last years of the seventeenth century. Total fur exports during the years 1706-1715 were more than 20% higher than the 178,000 pounds annually exported during 1681-87, and assuming the capacity of the canoes and the loads that the men carried at the portages were unchanged, the size of the labour force would also have been about 20% higher. The calculation of the labour force for these years is shown in Table VII below.

Table VII

SIZE OF THE LABOUR FORCE ESTIMATED FROM THE TOTAL FUR CATCH, 1706-1715
(One three-man canoe carried 1000 pounds)

	1 Total Fur Catch (pounds)	2 Canoes (number)	3 Men (number)
1706	204,624	205	615
1707	204,624	205	615
1708	204,624	205	615
1709	204,624	205	615
1710	204,624	205	615
1711	204,624	205	615
1712	215;729	216	648
1713	204,624	205	615
1714	204,624	205	615
1715	320,137	320	961
Average	217,286	217	651

Source: For Total Fur Catch, Table VI (p. 26).

These figures, averaging 651 men annually, constitute a reasonable increase over the period 1681-87, given the expansion of the smuggling trade. As in the 1681-87 period, this number of men was required at each portage and because some men were wintering, and others coming and going, more than 651 may have been active in the trade each summer. And few of these men were Indians: the year 1708, when sixty Indian canoes came down was exceptional. In the eight or nine years before 1710 few Indian canoes came down.[36]

This conclusion - that a labour force of hundreds of Canadians was required - was confirmed by the correspondence of the colonial officials with Paris. They wrote repeatedly that large numbers of men were constantly trading in the interior, and that they could not prevent them from doing so. In 1698, two years after the congés were abolished, the Intendant wrote to the

Minister that because the colony was open on all sides, it was easy to enter or leave with a loaded canoe without being noticed. He argued that the only way to end the beaver trade was to withdraw all Frenchmen from the interior since even the soldiers at the posts were rovers and traders. As concrete examples the Intendant reported that the commander and his men at Fort St. Louis were trading (which was permitted to a limited extent) and that a voyageur named LeSueur had taken fifty men 700-800 leagues inland from Quebec supposedly to look for mines, but actually for the purpose of fur trading.[37] LeSueur's mining story was so transparent that Frontenac and Champigny suspended his licence and reported the incident to the King, who approved the suspension.[38]

Two years later, in 1700, Governor de Callières sent the Captain of the Troop, Sieur de Tonty, to Michillimackinac with the King's orders to evacuate the post. Out of 104 men, only 20 came down; another 84 did not. Governor de Callières speculated that most of the 84 men would probably go to the Mississippi where 30 men had already gone with ten canoes of beavers that were owed to merchants in Canada. Another group of ten canoes of coureurs des bois and beaver had gone to the Mississippi and still more were expected to go. (The following spring the King wrote back that as long as the men repaid the theft from the Montreal merchants, they could have a pardon and stay in Mississippi.) In the same letter, de Callières reported that Sieur de Louvigny, who was in command of Fort Frontenac, had been trading despite being ordered not to trade. Louvigny's furs were seized at Montreal for the King and Louvigny and the other officers with him were relieved of their duty and tried. However, Louvigny was supported by various Montreal officials, including some in the court system, and eventually his furs were passed to a merchant at a low price. The Governor-General thought this type of leniency undermined the King's orders.[39]

In 1703, Gov. Vaudreuil and Intendant Beauharnois admitted that both suppressing the congés and prohibiting the trade had failed to stop the fur trade, but nevertheless they recommended that the trade be limited by again granting congés. They suggested that if fifteen congés were available the coureurs des bois would come down to Montreal to try and get them, and since fewer men would be in the pays d'En Haut, less beaver would be produced. Otherwise the coureurs des bois would ignore the Government and continue to trade anyway.[40] Vaudreuil, at least, took his own advice and sent known traders up country with merchandise, perhaps even selling them passes. In 1706, he actually sent Sieur Louvigny - who had been relieved of his command and punished for trading at Fort Frontenac - to Michillimackinac with trade goods. And Sieur Tonty, who had been able to get only 20 of more than 100 men at Michillimackinac to come down in 1700 - was put in charge of Fort Frontenac, where he began trading aggressively.[41]

Vaudreuil's support for the trade became more obvious. The son-in-law of Sieur de Lotbinière, a relative of Vaudreuil's, went to the Outaouacs with other settlers and three canoes. Other known traders such as Sieurs D'Ailleboust du Manthet and de la Découverte were sent to the interior with merchandise. Sieur de la Joncaire, whom Vaudreuil sent to the Iroquois each year, always came home with 1000 beavers. And when a man named Neveu informed that an army officer (Jean Baptiste Bissot, Sieur de Vincennes) was trading, it was Neveu who was thrown into the dungeon. Despite all this, the Minister still expressed disbelief at a report that Vaudreuil had sold eight passes. Until the King ordered Vaudreuil to end the practice, those who navigated canoes on diplomatic missions were permitted to carry 300 pounds of goods each.[42] So a three-man canoe almost fully loaded (900 pounds) was allowed to trade, if the trader could get the expedition declared diplomatic.

The trade could not be stopped. Officials in Canada came to realize it, and made the argument to Paris with increasing frankness. The trade was vital not only to a small group of merchants but to the whole population of the colony. If the Indians did not get trade goods from Canada, they would get them from Hudson Bay, where the English were trying to outbid the French to supply, and to control, the Indians. Supplies had to be sent to the Indians, and that was possible only if canoes and canoemen went up. On one occasion, six canoes and about 25 men had to be sent to Detroit to keep it supplied. The war against the Renard could be supplied only by planning to let 200 men go up in the spring of 1716. They were required to travel at their own expense and load their canoes half with provisions and half with merchandise. They, like another group of men who were permitted to winter during 1715-16 in the pays d'En Haut, would be allowed a year and a half to trade.[43]

Because so many social groups needed the trade, control of the fur traders, and in particular the professional coureurs des bois, was impossible. This last group had no other occupation, and so could not leave the pays d'En Haut. They could be useful to France, but if Canada would not trade through them, they would probably start trading with the English colonies, and would be lost to France. There were surprisingly many men in the interior. In addition to the 200 men allowed up in 1716 (to supply the war against the Renard) and those wintering in 1715-16, 40 coureurs des bois were based at Michillimackinac in 1713. In the same year, 100 voyageurs were secretly sent to Michillimackinac where they consumed the goods of the merchants who sent them and then fled to the Mississippi to join 47 other coureurs des bois. In 1714, another 100 coureurs des bois successfully petitioned to come down from Michillimackinac. The government believed that these men traded along Lake Ontario, probably at Toronto, and took trade away from Fort Frontenac. They

were able to compete with Fort Frontenac for fur from the Indians, because the Indians were always desperate for alcohol, and these traders had rum from Orange, while Fort Frontenac did not have brandy. The coureurs des bois and their trade were so well established that Montreal merchants even had warehouses at Michillimackinac.[44] This volume of trade was so large that the seven or so congés surviving from the period are irrelevant as indicators of this activity. Even judges were interested in the fur trade and so were unwilling to convict coureurs des bois.[45] The illegal fur trade, the special congés, the evasion of the King's regulations, and the large scale smuggling had all become entrenched parts of the fur trade. Under the circumstances, the congés failed as instruments to control the trade as did all attempts to regulate the trade. And any effort to derive the size of the labour force from the congés is bound to equally fail.

In summary then, after the failure of the early attempts to control the number of men in the fur trade, the system of the congés was introduced in 1681. Only 25 congés were authorized, each for one canoe with three men - a maximum of 75 men. In contrast, the officials of New France continued to claim that about 600 men were active in the trade each year. In evaluating these two contradictory estimates the weight of all the furs produced (not just the beaver received in France) and the capacities of the canoes indicate that during the 1681-87 period, an average of at least 534 canoemen were needed each year. The officials' contentions that the congés had failed were true. By 1696 the supply of beaver was so large that Paris tried to suppress the fur trade, and congés were issued only for diplomatic or military necessity. Nevertheless, the trade continued and when the Montreal company refused to buy castor gras, the fur was smuggled to New York. The calculation of the total fur production proves that the trade continued unchecked, and the

size of the labour force remained high. The official correspondence shows not only that many men were active in the trade but also that the officials of New France tolerated, and even participated in, this trade. Paris was unable to restrict the volume of the trade, or the size of the labour force engaged in it.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter I

1. See Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye, 1670, in Harold Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, 1930, reprinted University of Toronto Press, 1970, p. 406 (from Correspondance générale, Vol. III, pp. 162-6). Paul Chrisler Phillips, The Fur Trade, Oklahoma, 1961, p. 203, claims that between 1667 and 1672, the value of all furs exported to France rose from 500,000 livres to 1,500,000 livres.

2. See Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 67.

3. See Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 67, and Alice Jean Elizabeth Lunn, The Economic Development in New France, 1713-1760, Ph.D. thesis McGill University, 1942, p. 120.

4. See Emile Salone, La Colonisation de la Nouvelle France, Paris, 1906, reprinted Trois Rivières (le Boréal Express Ltée.), 1970, p. 256.

5. See Louise Dechêne, Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVII^{e} siècle, Montréal (Plon), 1974, p. 147.

6. See Gratien Allaire, "Les Engagement pour la traite des fourrures: évaluation de la documentation", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique française, Vol. 34, no. 1, juin 1980, 3-26; and his "Les engagés de la fourrures, 1701-1745: etude de leur motivation", Ph.D. thesis Concordia, 1981.

7. See W.L. Morton, The Kingdom of Canada, Toronto (McClelland and Stewart), 1963, p. 48.

8. See ibid, pp. 59-62.

9. See Salone, La Colonisation, pp. 256-7.

10. See Morton, The Kingdom, p. 64, and Salone, La Colonisation, pp. 256-7.

11. See Correspondance générale (PAC, MGI,CIIA), Vol. 5, pp. 106-7.

12. See Salone, La Colonisation, pp. 258-9, and Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 66.

13. See Salone, La Colonisation, p. 260.

14. See Duchesneau to the minister, 10 November 1679, 13 Nov. 1680 and 13 Nov. 1681, in E.B. O'Callaghan (ed.), Documents relative to the colonial history of the state of New-York, Albany, 1852, Vol. IX, pp. 133, 140, 142, 144, 152, 154. Emile Salone says (p. 256) that Patoulet gave the minister a similar figure (he gives his source as the Cor. Gen. Vol. 5, fol.320).

15. See Donnonville to the minister, 20 August 1685, Cor. Gen., PAC microfilm reel F-7.

16. See Phillips, The Fur Trade, p. 295, (Cor. Gen., 12 November 1690, Vol. 11, p. 178).

17. See E.E. Rich, Montreal and the Fur Trade, Montreal (McGill Press), 1966, p. 22.

18. See Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 70.

19. See Hubert Charbonneau, Yolande Lavoie, Jacques Legaré, "Le recensement nominatif du Canada en 1681", Histoire sociale/Social History, No. 7, 1971, pp. 82, 84, 90-1.

20. See Dechêne, Habitants et marchands, p. 130.

21. See Baron de Lahontan, 2 October 1685, New Voyages to North America, 1703, edited by R.G. Thwaites, Chicago, 1905, pp. 99-101.

22. See Frontenac to the King, 2 November 1681, NYCD, Vol. IX, pp. 145-6.

23. See de la Chesnaye, 1670, reprinted in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 407.

24. See Lunn, Economic Development, p. 464.

25. See Dechêne, Habitants et marchands, p. 140.

26. See Ducheseau to de Seignelay, 13 November 1681, NYCD, IX, pp. 152-3, and Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 67.

27. See Innis, The Fur Trade, pp. 57-58. The numbers of Ottawa canoes are usually "very small" and "...it is a large number when we see forty or fifty canoes...".

28. See, for the 1689 shipment, W.J. Eccles, The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760, Albuquerque, 1983, p. 120 and W.J. Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV 1663-1701, (Centenary Series), Toronto, 1964, p. 166. On the necessity of expansion, see Dechêne, Habitants et marchands, p. 141 and Donald Creighton, Dominion of the North, Toronto, 1940, pp. 88-89. See also Innis, The Fur Trade, pp. 70-71. Phillips, The Fur Trade, p. 298, quotes Champigny as writing, on 4 June 1695, that the beaver received in Montreal can be computed "... depuis six on sept ans à 140 milleurs pesant." (Cor. Gen., 13F, p. 491). If so the weights of beaver received in Montreal might have been something like this:

1688	-	1692	121,000
1689	190,000	1693	165,000
1690	121,000	1694	121,000
1691	121,000	1695	-

29. See Harold Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, University of Toronto, 1927 pp. 149-152; Lunn, Economic Development, p. 456; and (for 1700, 1702-1704) Phillips, The Fur Trade, pp. 298, 303. According to these three sources the weights were:

1696	-	1701	75,993
1697	204,609	1702	142,429
1698	163,000	1703	240,171
1699	296,000	1704	198,780
1700	273,509	1705	-

Some of these livres may be tournois instead of weight. But see also Dechêne, Habitants et marchands, p. 141. At this time, some, but not much, castor gras was also coming from Hudson's Bay: in 1697 - 19,487 pounds weight, and in 1701 - 40,000 pounds (see Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 69).

30. See "Return of Beaver", NYCD, IX, p. 287, and the 1694 Report on the Price and Consumption of Beaver, reprinted in Innis, The Fur Trade, pp. 408-9; on the European market, see ibid, pp. 70, 77.

31. See ibid, p. 80.

32. See Yves Zoltvany, "The Frontier Policy of Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, 1713-1725", Canadian Historical Review, 1967 (Vol. XLVIII), p. 233.

33. See Alice Jean Elizabeth Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760", Canadian Historical Association Report, 1939, p. 65.

34. See "Resources of Canada 1703", NYCD, IX, p. 757; dispatch of 14 September 1708, in ibid, pp. 819-821; and Lunn, The Illegal Fur Trade, p. 63. (See also Cor. Gen., Vol. 31 (1710), pp. 267-68.)

35. See Dechêne, Habitants et marchands, p. 147.

36. See Clairambault d'Aigremont to Pontchartrain, 18 November 1710, cited in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 59 (NYCD, Vol. IX, pp. 852-3).

37. See Intendant Jean Bochart de Champigny to the Minister, 14 October 1698, in Wisconsin State Historical Society Collections, 1902 (Vol. XVI), pp. 174-6, (from the Correspondance générale).

38. See NYCD, IX, p. 700.

39. See Gov. de Callières to Count de Pontchartrain (Min. of Marine), 16 October 1700, NYCD, IX, p. 712, and 7 November 1700, PAC,C11A, Vol. 17, pp. 68-69, reprinted in Richard A. Preston and Leopold Lamontagne (eds.), Royal Fort Frontenac (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1958, pp. 201-203; and the King to the Governor-General and Intendant, 31 May 1701, NYCD, IX, p. 721.

40. See Despatch of Vaudreuil and Beauharnois, 15 November 1703, NYCD, IX, p. 755.

41. See Count de Pontchartrain to Gov. Vaudreuil, 9 June 1706, NYCD, IX, p. 777, and Clairambault d'Aigremont to de Pontchartrain, 14 September 1708, NYCD, IX, pp. 819-821.

42. See ibid., and the King to Vaudreuil, 30 June 1707, NYCD, IX, p. 809.

43. See Ramezay and Begon to the Minister, 7 November 1715, in WSHS Collections, 1902 (Vol. XVI), pp. 327-338. See also Monsieur de Clairambault, Sieur d'Aigremont to Count de Pontchartrain, 18 November 1710, NYCD, IX, pp. 852-3.

44. See Ramezay and Begon to the Minister, 7 November 1715, in WSHS Collections, 1902 (Vol. XVI), pp. 327-338; and Memorial of Intendant Claude Michel Begon in ibid. pp. 295-7; and Proceedings of French Council of Marine, 28 March 1716, in ibid., pp. 339-340.

45. See Lunn, Economic Development, p. 135.

Chapter II

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE CONGES, 1716-1758

The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 weakened the French Empire in North America. Most of Acadia, Newfoundland, and a dominant position in the fisheries were surrendered to Britain; France gave up her claims, and her forts, on Hudson Bay; and France accepted Britain's claims that the Iroquois were British subjects. For Britain, these gains were not only commercial but also strategic: with these new advantages, and the continued control of the Hudson Valley, Britain could threaten both the French fur trade in the interior and French shipping and fishing in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. France's response was also both military and commercial: fortifications were built at the weak points and trade expanded; Louisbourg was founded in 1713 and then fortified beginning in 1718; Fort Frederick was established to block the Richelieu Valley route between Montreal and Albany; New Orleans was founded in 1718 as a base for southern trade; and in the interior, eleven posts, including Miami, St. Joseph, La Baye-des-Puants, and Niagara, were established between 1713 and 1720. From these posts the official fur trade was resumed and enlarged, more men with bigger and faster canoes traded with more Indians for more furs. Since this expansion of the fur trade was both military and economic, the alliances with the Indians again became a significant addition to New France's financial and military resources. On the other hand, these new fortifications and posts had to be paid for and the Indians supported in order to continue the fur trade, which was the major source of New France's wealth.

Beginning initially in 1717 and then without interruption on 28 January 1722, the Compagnie des Indes had the monopoly on the beaver trade. As in the past, all beaver that was brought down to Montreal had to be sold to the company at a fixed price. Unlike previous monopolies, the Compagnie des Indes bought all the beaver that it was offered, and so did not restrict the production of beaver. The company was successful in selling this beaver on the European market. By 1716, France consumed 72,000 pounds of beaver annually and sold Holland an additional 30,000 pounds. These markets remained stable until 1760. Beaver exports, while experiencing some growth, were growing slowly: in the 1720s about 145,000 pounds were received annually in Montreal; by the 1740s an annual average of 175,000 pounds were received. In the interval, annual beaver receipts were almost always between 120,000 and 180,000 pounds. Similarly, beaver prices at La Rochelle remained more or less stable but on the whole were growing moderately: castor gras was never above 100s per pound until 1727, and only occasionally below 100s after 1727; the top grade of castor sec was below 60s a pound until 1722, it was 70s in 1758, and frequently it was 80s, and twice (in 1730 and 1750) it was even higher than 80s, and never was it below 60s.[1] Naturally, modest growth in beaver production, and moderate increases in its prices meant that revenue from the beaver trade could increase only slightly.

The re-establishment of the congés in 1716 and the territorial expansion of the trade had created new costs such as new posts, longer transportation routes including the improvement of trails and portages, the search for and development of new food sources, as well as more Indian presents, and eventually more Indian wars. These costs were increasing so fast that the profits of the merchants were threatened. The additional costs could be

offset only by further expansion of the fur trade, and by changes in the transportation system. The fur trade remained trapped in a cycle of expansions that generated costs, and costs which implied further expansion. Since the revenue from the beaver alone was not expanding significantly, it was important to enlarge the trade in other pelts. And that trade did grow. As already mentioned, during the years 1675-87 other pelts had weighed about 10% of the total weight of beaver; by 1706-1715 they can be estimated at 40%. Then, from 1722 to 1734 the value of other pelts landed at La Rochelle was 82.7% of the value of the beaver, and from 1735 to 1758 the other pelts landed at La Rochelle were worth about twice what the beaver that was landed was worth.[2]

The fur trade involved the colony in the affairs of the Indian nations so extensively because the trade was an essential source of cash revenue for the whole population of New France. Consequently, the trade had a major impact on the economic and social position of all groups in the society. For these reasons it appeared vital to control the fur trade. This necessity had existed since the 1670s and remained as acute in the 1730s as it had in the past. This control was so important to the colonial system that an attempt had to be made to exercise it, even if (as must have been suspected) effective control was unlikely. The illegal fur, the evasion of regulations and the smuggling to British colonies, were so entrenched among all social groups - including those who should have enforced the regulations - that any official imperial control of the trade could not be made really efficient.

These broad factors and conditions determined the environment in which the fur traders operated, and exercised their options. Since the costs of

trade had increased faster than the revenue from beaver, the traders could increase their revenue only by taking more fur. They could either enlarge it geographically or take other types of pelts in greater quantity. And because all previous efforts to regulate the trade had failed, they had no reason to fear any new efforts by Paris to control the trade. Another possibility for them was to reduce costs. A major portion of these costs - and the one the traders could most easily control - was the transportation system, including the cost of the labour force. Beginning about 1715 (or perhaps slightly earlier), the small trading expeditions that consisted of one three-man canoe were gradually displaced. These one canoe expeditions had been organized by individual voyageurs who usually obtained their trade goods on credit, and then led the canoe to their destination. Frequently they travelled together with other voyageurs in a protective convoy. In contrast, the new type of expedition consisted of several canoes financed and organized by merchants who co-operated closely with the military, especially at the richest and strategically significant posts. This change in organization reduced many voyageurs to engagés. At the same time, the traders were able to enlarge both the crew size, and more importantly, the capacity of their canoes. Thus the working conditions of the engagés deteriorated, and the loads they carried at the portages became heavier. In assessing the actions of the traders, both to expand the trade and to modify their transportation network, the most promising source is the congés de traite.

i. The Administration of the Congés

As a result of the expansion of the fur trade after 1713 and the need to control it, the congés were re-established in 1716 and, although they were

restricted in 1720 and suppressed again in 1723, they were re-introduced in 1726. In keeping with the need for expansion, the number of congés was not limited to 25, as had been the case in the past. And, similarly, individual congés increasingly authorized more than one canoe. The hesitancy about re-introducing the congés is not surprising considering the failure of past attempts to restrict the number of men in the pays d'En Haut. Despite those poor results, the Quebec City officials thought that the congés had their advantages. The system offered at least the appearance of control - Quebec had something to show Paris that an effort to control the trade was being made, and such an appearance might even help the officials to manage the trade for their own benefit. Since the trade was an economic necessity, the congés could be used to legitimize the role of the nobility and the military in the trade. In addition, since the congés were sold, it was expected that some revenue would be raised. As well, the congés gave Quebec a tool to ban the most flagrant trouble-makers while keeping the trade in what it considered to be proper hands. For these reasons, the system of the congés was re-established and remained in use until the end of the French Regime. The congés that have survived are in the Archives nationales du Québec at Montreal. Those for 1717-1730 were hand-written on two different sizes of paper, and have subsequently been bound together. Those for some other years, including 1718, 1720 and 1731-35, are in the Registres des audiences. The congés for 1739-1752 were written on individually prepared forms.

Table VIII

CONGES DE TRAITE, THE CANOES, AND THE CREWS, 1717-1752

	1 No. of congés	2 No. of canoes	3 No. of men	4 Canoes/ congé	5 Men/ canoe
1717	4	4	12	1.0	3
1718	23	23	90	1.0	3.91
1719	21	21	83	1.0	3.95
1720	30	30	118	1.0	3.93
1721	38	49	195	1.3	3.98
1722	36	60	240	1.7	4.00
1723	33	40	178	1.2	4.45
1724	22	28	127	1.3	4.54
1725	39	64	272	1.6	4.25
1726	26	33	153	1.3	4.64
1727	19	36	184	1.9	5.11
1728	22	38	182	1.7	4.79
1729		54	264		4.89
1730	24	30	136	1.2	4.53
1731		49	242		4.94
1732		71	344		4.85
1733		80	422		5.28
1734		79	438		5.54
1735	37	69	388	1.9	5.62
1736					
1737					
1738					
1739	46	68	391	1.5	5.75
1740	33	54	318	1.6	5.89
1741					
1742					
1743	63	79	468	1.3	5.92
1744		91	551		6.05
1745	46	70	430	1.5	6.14
1746	29	40	220	1.4	5.50
1747	28	55	330	2.0	6.00
1748	33	55	348	1.7	6.33
1749	48	74	453	1.5	6.12
1750	56	80	449	1.4	5.61
1751	56	76	462	1.4	6.08
1752	25	38	226	1.5	5.95

Sources: Congés de traite, Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal, CD0601-0009; Gratien Allaire "Les engagements pour la traite des fourrures: évaluation de la documentation", Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique francaise, juin 1980, Vol. 34, no. 1; E-Z. Massicotte, Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, Vol. 2 (1921-22), pp. 189-225, and Vol. 3 (1922-23), pp. 191-265, reprinted in Canadian Passports 1681-1752, New Orleans (Polyanthos Inc.), 1975.

As can be seen in Table VIII, numerous gaps exist - sometimes even complete years are missing. For several years after 1735 the congés have completely vanished. For the seven year period 1736-1742, they exist for only 1739 and 1740. For at least one year, 1742, there is evidence that congés once existed - twenty-two were given free to those who would take corn to Michillimackinac[3] - although none of them have survived. Although the system continued to be used until the end of the French Regime - Louis-Antoine de Bougainville discusses their use in his account of the fur trade in 1758[4] - all the congés after 1752 appear to have been lost. Since congés have survived for only half of the years after 1735, it is obvious that they could, at best, be only a partial indication of the activities in the fur trade during this period. As well as gaps of entire years, the data for some years is incomplete. The most obvious example is the first year, 1717, which has a total of only four congés. The gaps in other years, such as 1746 and 1752, are less apparent. Although in other years the great majority of congés were issued in May and June, in 1746 none have survived from 13-30 May or 2-14 June, and in 1752 none dating after 8 June have survived. As a result of these gaps, the figures for these years are noticeably low.

The shortcomings of the congés as a source of information are such that it seems futile to expect to discover in these figures an accurate account of the evolution of the fur trade, or of the growth of the labour force during the last forty odd years of the French Regime. Nevertheless, by eliminating the data which appears irrelevant, such as that for 1717, and allowing for that which is incomplete, such as 1752, perhaps something can be learned by grouping this data, as in Table IX below.

Table IX

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ANNUAL AVERAGES OF THE CONGES DE TRAITE, THE CANOES, AND THE CREWS

	1 No. of congés	2 No. of canoes	3 No. of men	4 Canoes/ congé	5 Men/ canoe
1718-20	24.7	24.7	97	1.00	3.93
1721-30	28.8	43.2	193	1.46	4.52
1731-40	38.7	67.1	362	1.66	5.41
1741-50	43.3	68.0	406	1.54	5.96
1751-52	40.5	57.0	344	1.45	6.02

Source: Table VIII

As we shall see, the annual number of congés does not appear to correspond to the actual number of trade expeditions, nor does the increase of 64% in the annual average number of congés from 1718-20 to 1751-52 appear consistent with the smaller growth in fur exports. Nevertheless, many central points emerge from the analysis of these statistics. Perhaps the most important point is that, from 1718-20 to the beginning of the 1750s, the number of canoes was growing much faster than the congés themselves - 130% compared to 64%. This disparity between the expansion of the congés and the canoes implies that the fur enterprises were becoming larger and larger during the first half of the eighteenth century. This change is revealed by the growth in the number of canoes per congé: from one canoe in 1718-20 to 1.45 in 1751-52. And equally crucial, the increase in the size of the fur expeditions was greater than these figures show. Among these congés there are a few which authorized expeditions involving four to six canoes.[5] Such undertakings mobilized between 24 and 38 men (and in one exceptional case, 46 men) and carried up river ten and even twelve tons of trade goods, which was an average load per man of approximately 650 pounds. It is true that

expeditions that large might have been exceptional, but it is equally true that very often the traders equipped more canoes than the number allowed by their congés. In the preamble to a new set of regulations adopted in 1755, Governor-General Du Quesne wrote: "Etait venu à notre connoissance que plusieurs voiageurs qui obtiennent des congés multiplient le nombre de canots autant qu'il leur convient sans qu'il aient à craindre d'être recherchés sur cet abus ainsi que sur celui de l'eau de vie qu'il portent au de là de la quantité permise."[6] Du Quesne admits that the average fur enterprise was larger than might be assumed by a straight analysis of the congés. He also confirms that the distribution of the congés to the fur traders continued in the years after 1752, even though no congés have been preserved for those years.

There is no doubt that those progressive changes in the size of the fur expeditions were related to the concrete problems faced by the merchants. Given the conditions of the market, the monopoly of the Compagnie des Indes occidentales, the territorial expansion of the trade, and the demands of the labour market, the merchants were compelled to change the nature of their enterprises and to initiate changes in the technology of the canoes, in order to preserve their profits. Accordingly, between 1718-20 and 1751-52 the number of men mentioned in the congés increased much faster than the actual number of canoes and congés: 255% compared to 130% and 64%. From the years before 1717 until the 1740s, the size of the crews doubled from three to six men per canoe. Since the cargo capacity of the canoe itself increased even more than the size of the crews, this transformation was directly related to the merchants' need to save money on wages, or at least to control their growth. Perhaps it is not necessary, given the technology of the time, to emphasize that the working conditions of the engagés were progressively

deteriorating during the period. But, from these statistics, it is evident that the merchants' demands on the men in the labour force had to become heavier and heavier.

Everything in this discussion leads one to question the value of the congés as an instrument to measure the size of the labour force in the fur trade. Such a conclusion is confirmed by the judgement of well-informed contemporaries. Du Quesne was not alone in making statements supporting this interpretation. For example, in 1757 Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, who had served with officers familiar with the trade, reported that 600-700 men were employed annually on the Ottawa River alone.[7] From the production figures he gave for the various posts, it is apparent that more fur came down the St. Lawrence than the Ottawa River, and so one may assume that an even larger number of men were employed on the St. Lawrence. Therefore we are probably right in assuming that a minimum of 1400 men were annually engaged on the two rivers. Eight years earlier in 1749, Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Léry reported a plan by Abbé Picquet, to raise 3000 livres at Fort La Presentation (present day Ogdensburg) by taxing canoes on the St. Lawrence ten livres each and each canoeman one écu as they passed.[8] To raise 3000 livres in one year from the six-man canoes would have required traffic of 107 canoes with crews of 642 men. Since the trade on the St. Lawrence was slightly larger, perhaps 550 or 600 men would have been on the Ottawa River. So the implication of this project is that 1200 or more men would have gone up to the pays d'En Haut annually. This estimate is very different from the data contained in the congés for the same year, since the congés de traite of 1749 authorized only 453 men for the trade: 38% of the labour force mentioned by de Léry. In 1754 Le Chevalier de Raymond estimated the needs of the northern trade at 129 congés, and the southern trade at 198 congés. Apparently each congé was for one five-man canoe - total of 1635 men.9

In 1752, Captain Phineas Stevens came to Montreal as the representative of the Governor of Massachusetts in discussions on the exchange of prisoners and captives. From the journal he kept, he seems to have been a curious and senitive social observer. While in Montreal he met and dined with many of the city's leading citizens, including the Governor of Montreal. On 16 June 1752 (27 June 1752 by the Gregorian calendar) Stevens wrote about the fur trade in his journal saying, "Vast numbers are employed in that business." And then he added: "We are told that 200 large birch canoes and batteaux are gone up the river this spring - some five, and some six man each; so that upwards of a thousand men are already gone upon that business."[10] Allowing for the men who went up after 27 June, 1200-1400 canoemen went up country in 1752. So it is rather remarkable to observe that the congés de traite for 1752 permitted only 38 canoes and 226 men to go up to the pays d'En Haut, between 16% and 18% of the labour force mentioned in Stevens's diary. From these statements, and from our previous observations, it is not too risky to conclude again that the congés de traite failed as an instrument to control the fur trade, and that the numbers of engagés extracted from the congés represents only a portion of the labour force that was actually necessary to keep the fur trade functioning properly.

ii. The Official Response to the Failure of the Congés

This failure of the congés to regulate the trade was caused (as it had been in the past) by the inability of the officials to restrain the vast unofficial trade. In order to improve the system of the congés, or perhaps to complement it, the government established other administrative procedures. The very existence of these measures constituted an admission that the congés

were unable to cover the full spectrum of the participation in the trade. Some posts were leased out (or "farmed") as a monopoly, and still others were managed by the military commander to maintain himself and his garrison, and sometimes a combination of the two procedures were used together. Another measure was the total reservation of the trade at Niagara and Fort Frontenac for direct trade by the King. And despite the volume of fur taken there, congés were never used on Lake Ontario.

Because the Indians would be strongly influenced by whoever supplied them with the European goods on which they depended, some areas of trading, such as Lake Ontario, were too critical to the security of New France for the King to tolerate mismanagemet. As early as 1709 the trade at Fort Frontenac was managed on the King's account. As a result of Clairambault's report of 14 September 1708, the commander at Fort Frontenac (de Tonti) had been replaced, and the King's trade was entrusted to the King's agent.[11] Similarly, after Niagara was re-established in 1720, the trade there was taken over by the king, as was the trade at Toronto a generation later. But congés were not issued for these posts, and so the canoemen were not reported in the congés, and perhaps not in any single source. Nevertheless the volume of trade at these posts was rather large, and many canoemen were engaged in transporting goods to these posts.

In 1722 and 1723, 8626 pounds of beaver and 8762 pelts of other animals from Lake Ontario were sold at Quebec City. These figures were probably about 5% of the colony's total fur production, and given the nature of the fur trade, it is possible that not all the king's furs received on Lake Ontario were sold to the Compagnie des Indes occidentales and the exporters.

Subsequently, the value of the trade increased (except for 1726 and 1727, when the British began competing from Fort Oswego). As early as 1729, 22,200 pounds of beaver were received by the Compagnie des Indes in Quebec City. Most, though not all, of this beaver would have come from Niagara and Fort Frontenac. Since other furs as well as beaver were received at these posts, we may assume that Niagara and Fort Frontenac produced roughly 30,000 pounds of fur. By the 1740s, the furs taken at these posts may have been about 10% of Canada's overall fur production.[12]

In the summer of 1744 Indians brought a great number of canoes filled with beaver and other furs to Niagara and Fort Frontenac, but because of the war French goods were scarce and expensive and so the Indians took their furs to Oswego. As a result, according to one estimate in this season, Niagara lost as much as 600 packages of fur (about 54,000 pounds).[13] Since productivity was generally about 333 pounds (or 3.6 pieces) per canoeman, this amount of fur suggests that a labour force as large as 167 men might have been normal. (Indeed, these men may even have been hired in the expectation of the work.) A similar number of men was necessary three years later: at the end of September 1747 Fort Frontenac and Niagara were supplied by 24 canoes. With six men per canoe, 144 men would have been needed.[14] Yet another indication that many men were participating in the King's trade to Lake Ontario, even though not a single congé exists, is the volume and composition of the King's trade as reported by Intendant Bigot for the year 1748-49, shown below.

Table X

FURS FROM FORT FRONTENAC AND NIAGARA, 1748-49

Chats	3,590	(pelts)
Martens Communes	2,391	
Loutres	1,019	
Ours	527	
Pichoux and Renards	509	
Other Animals	1,250	
Sub Total	9,286	
Chevreuil (some unuseable)	20,964	(pounds)
Beaver - gras hiver	554/10	(pounds/ounces)
- sec hiver	10,781/12	(pounds/ounces)
- sec été	1,043/2	(pounds/ounces)
Sub Total	12,389/6	(pounds/ounces)

Source: Bigot to the Minister, 29 October 1749, Cor. Gen., PAC, MG1, C11A, Vol. 93, pp. 337-8.

If we assume these 9286 various pelts averaged 3/4 of a pound each, they would have weighed 6964 pounds. Chevreuil was usually reported in pounds, and the various categories of beaver are given in pounds here, so the total weight of all this fur would have been about 39,823 pounds. Such a weight would have equalled 442 ninety-pound pieces - and with a probable productivity of about 3.6 pieces per canoeman this amount of fur suggests a labour force of about 123 men. This figure of 123 men is consistent with the other evidence of the size of the labour force mentioned above. There are other indications that the King's Trade was large. At Fort Frontenac in 1748 enough of the King's furs had been accumulated to load a barque, which unfortunately was lost.[15] Even at Toronto furs were available: in 1750 between 20 May and 17 June an Enseign, a sargent and four soldiers traded for 79 packs worth 18,000 livres. If they had had more cloth and alcohol they could have had 150 packs.[16] Nowhere is there a single official congé to witness the existence of this large trade - a trade which required a large group of engagés to transport the goods up from Montreal and the furs back down.

Another way, already mentioned, of managing the trade was to give it completely to a merchant rather than the King, as happened on Lake Ontario. Before 1742 posts were sometimes leased or "farmed" by merchants,[17] and beginning in 1742 the posts were auctioned. These arrangements were intended to set up a monopoly at each post and so eliminate the competition that had been increasing the cost of posts and of goods, thereby driving the Indians to the English.[18] Sometimes congés were issued to the lesseés of a post; sometimes they were not issued at all. For example, on 26 March 1743 four posts were auctioned at Château St. Louis: Témiscamingue for 5600 livres, Michipicoton for 3750 livres, Wiatanons for 3000 livres, and La Baye for 8100 livres. Though congés exist for three of these posts, none appears to exist for Michipicoton.[19] Again in 1745 congés were issued for at least three posts that had been auctioned (Camanistigoya, Chagouamigon and St. Joseph); on the other hand, congés were not issued for two other posts which had been leased.[20] This system failed also because the lessees abused the system and in 1749 when prices had become too high, the congés were restored for all except five posts.[21] One of these five was Témiscamingue and in 1750 it was leased, so trade was carried on and canoemen involved. However no congés appear to have survived for it.[22] In 1755, a total of 47 congés were issued for Detroit, Michillimackinac, St. Joseph and Illinois. In addition, eight other posts were leased, and these eight posts probably produced more furs than the four exploited by congés, and so would have needed more canoemen. Nevertheless, congés were apparently not issued for the leased posts.[23] Thus, as with the King's trade on Lake Ontario, an extensive trade was administered without using congés. Naturally, the remaining congés cannot be used to establish the number of canoemen in this trade.

Yet another procedure was to supply the post by allowing the military commanders to trade. But then too there were problems. At the posts the commanders, with or without a garrison, were together with the fur traders and were isolated from official concerns. The commanding officers, as well as their soldiers, were aware of their need to maintain the Indians' military support by supplying them with trade goods. And in most cases the commander and the expense of his post were maintained by the proceeds of the trade at the post. Thus, the military commanders had a professional and a personal interest in keeping the trade going through the fur traders and the Indians, and a financial interest in enlarging the trade. Sometimes the trade goods that the officers needed were transported under somebody else's congé, sometimes not. As early as 26 August 1708, one congé required the expedition to take 300 pounds of merchandise to the commander; by 1714 every canoe going to Detroit had to carry 100 pounds for the commander's personal trade.[24] In 1738 the voyageurs or "persons in Charge of Canoes" carried 150 pounds for the commander at Detroit. It was suggested that he get 200 pounds in every canoe carrying 5000 pounds and that the Montreal voyageurs could transport the garrison's pay and uniforms for two or three free congés. At the same time, other officials seem to have been able to bring in canoes without congés. Each year the officer who was second in command had two licences, as did the missionary to the Hurons; while the missionary for the French and the interpreter each had one.[25] In 1757, Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, in his account of the fur trade, wrote that each canoe to Detroit must carry 400 pounds for the officers and other employees, while those to Michillimackinac must carry 500 pounds. The officers traded these goods in competition with other traders.[26] At Michillimackinac, in 1743, the commanders had 1000 pounds of freight and the missionaries had 1500 pounds.[27] All these measures involved the military even more deeply in the fur trade.

Trading by the officers meant that the government could not enforce or maintain any restrictions on the trade. The elimination of this trading was one purpose of auctioning posts in 1742.[28] Naturally, the officers did not support this new initiative. The commander at Detroit, for example, was getting 3000 livres annually from the trade.[29] Although the Governor and Intendant reported that this commander, S. Chevalier de Longueuil, had not done any trading, the minister in Paris suggested that the officers were unhappy at losing their profits, and that they might have been sabotaging the new arrangements.[30] The officers continued to profit from the posts, and seemed to have found the auction system to their advantage. In 1749, in an effort to stop the officers from exploiting posts, the farming system was cut back.[31]

Despite all these changes the officers continued to profit. About 1750 Governor La Jonquière and Intendant Bigot suggested giving congés to Fort Rouille at Toronto and applying "...the funds as a gratuity to the officer in command there."[32] At the posts that were leased out, the lessees were compelled to give the commanders part of the trade.[33] Some posts were not leased, they were given by the commander to his friends. Eventually all levels of the army were benefiting from the trade. The Governor-General determined the number of congés, often forty, but he accounted to the King for only twenty-two.[34] The soldier J.C.B. wrote in his journal in 1755 that of a convoy of fifty canoes with provisions that arrived at Fort Duquesne "...there were five canoes loaded for the account of a trader with whom I was associated."[35] Finally in 1757 Pierre Rigaud de Vaudreuil, the brother of the Governor-General, became the lessee of La Baye and made an arrangement with two outfitters, Jacques Giasson and his brother-in-law Ignace Hubert dit La

Croix, by which they did the work but got only a third of the profits.[36] Thus the commanders and officials benefited from the fur trade in the days of Governor Frontenac in the 1670s, in the early part of the next century when the congés were suppressed, in the 1740s and 1750s when the commanders were expected to trade to maintain their post, and during the last days of New France. Since the military, up to and including the Governor-General, were involved in it, the restrictions on the trade could not be enforced. When the posts were leased the lessees traded as they saw fit, and when small traders were given a congé for a canoe or two - they took many more canoes. Meanwhile, the officers continued their own trading operations.

As in earlier periods, a large unofficial trade existed in addition to the official one. Illegal trade through the English colonies gave the merchants a market for fur and an opportunity to get English cloth, which according to Innis, was cheaper and better than what they got from France and was popular with the Indians. In addition to this smuggling, the unofficial trade involved other acts in defiance of the regulations. Both the trade with the British colonies and the character of the traders offended Gov. La Jonquière. In 1750 he met with the traders in Montreal and then introduced new regulations to eliminate this trade and control the canoes going up to the posts. But the traders objected and tried to undermine his regulations. He considered them insubordinate and undisciplined men whose duplicity was unpardonable.[37] Once the traders got their goods to the interior they were able to use the coureurs de bois (although not legally). In May 1744 at La Baye, the farmers quickly accepted 6000 livres of beaver from eight or ten coureurs de bois, agreed to supply them in autumn, and allowed them to trade at the post. Even though these traders were acting against the King's orders, the commander of La Baye could do nothing, because he did not have any troops.

Nevertheless Beauharnois wrote to the minister that he had ordered the commander to order the farmers and engagés to seize the coureurs des bois and send them to Montreal.[38]

This inability or lack of will to enforce any regulation of the trade implied that the system of the congés could not be maintained. Neither it nor any of the other methods - the King's Trade, the leasing of posts, or entrusting the trade to the commander - could control the number of men going west, and so none of the surviving records of these methods can be used as a reliable measure of the number of Canadians participating in the fur trade. The estimates of contemporaries that 1200-1400 men went west each year might well be correct. As was the case for the periods before 1716, a valid assessment of the congés (and a true measure of the number of men in the trade) can be constructed only from the overall weight of all furs traded.

iii. An Estimate of the Weight of Furs Traded, 1717-1758

As already mentioned, during this period of more than forty years the catch of pelts other than beaver grew considerably, and the beaver catch expanded modestly. The post-1716 data on furs traded is more diversified and more exhaustive than that before 1716. Figures on the weight of the beaver, as received by the Compagnie des Indes in Montreal, became more frequent, at least until 1748. As well, precise figures on the export of beaver and of all other pelts exist for at least seven and eight years respectively from the period 1727-1739, as well as for the two years 1754-55.[39] And two sets of figures on the annual value of fur landed at La Rochelle exist for 1718-1761.[40] In one set, Jean Lunn gives separate sub-sets for the value of

castor sec, castor gras, and other pelts. In the second set, Emile Salone gives the total value of all furs for all but three of the forty-four years in the period. His totals are similar to Lunn's for all years except 1735 and perhaps 1736.

The annual weight of the beaver received in Montreal is given by Jean Lunn and Harold Innis, both of whom compiled their data from the Correspondance générale. Their two sets of figures are similar, and differ only when one has used an estimate or partial figure. These differences occur in only five of the eighteeen years during 1717-1734. This data on the beaver received in Montreal is supported by the export figures. The weight of the beaver exported in 1728 and six of the years 1732-39 is generally slightly lower than the beaver received in Montreal. Since some beaver would have spoiled, this variation is natural. The beaver received by the company in Montreal for 1717 to 1748 is shown in Table XIII (p. 66). The weight of the beaver landed at La Rochelle during 1751 to 1758 can be calculated from the value of the castor sec and castor gras landed, and their price per pound. Until 1751, the diversity of prices paid for varieties of these two categories of beaver makes such a calculation impossible. The calculation of the beaver received in La Rochelle during 1751-58 is shown below.

Table XI

BEAVER LANDED AT LA ROCHELLE, 1751-58

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Castor Gras			Castor Sec		
	Value (livres)	Price per lb.	Calculated Weight (pounds)	Value (livres)	Price per lb.	Calculated Weight (pounds)
1751-54	954,775	100s	190,955	1,644,636	80s	411,159
1756-58	937,503	70s	208,334	308,259	70s	88,074
	Total Weight (pounds)		898,522			
	Annual Average (pounds)		128,360			

Source: For the Values and the Prices, Alice Jean Elizabeth Lunn, Economic Development in New France, 1713-1760, Ph.D. thesis, McGill 1942, pp. 460-61, 465.

This annual average of 128,360 pounds would not have included any beaver that was lost or spoiled between Montreal and La Rochelle; nor would it include any landed at other French ports. Ships did land beaver elsewhere. Some of those that cleared Quebec City with fur during 1727-1739 were bound for other ports. The cargoes of any such ships during 1751-58 (and once the war started cargo ships might not have had the freedom to land where they wished) would not be included above, and so this average would be low. Nevertheless, this annual average of 128,360 pounds of beaver, even if it is perhaps low, is not very different from the pre-1749 figures. Accordingly, the figure of 128,360 pounds is used in Table XIII below, for each year during 1751-58, except for 1754-55 when the exports are known. Thus, data on the weight of beaver in the official trade exists for most years from 1717 to 1758.

In addition to these amounts of beaver traded (which might be underestimates of the actual exports), the beaver from the unofficial trade can be added. After 1716 smuggling was reduced from the levels of 1706-15, but it was far from being eliminated. Until 1738, better prices for beaver, especially castor sec, were paid in Albany than in Montreal. Luxury goods and trade goods, particularly strouds (a coarse West England cloth) which were essential for the trade, were imported in return. In 1718 at least three New Yorkers were active in smuggling Canadian beaver from Montreal to Albany. In addition to the smuggling down to Albany, beaver was shipped illegally from Quebec City to Boston and to Europe, and after Oswego was built on Lake Ontario in 1722, furs were sent there.[41] In the spring of 1736 two voyageurs, Duplessis and Denian, were arrested twelve miles from Oswego with 300 pounds of beaver. Their furs were confiscated and they were sent to Montreal, imprisoned, fined - and exonerated.[42] The most famous smugglers were the three Desauniers sisters, who opened a store at Caughnawaga in 1727 to trade with the Iroquois. As of 1739 they had not brought any beaver to the Compagnie des Indes in Montreal, but rather had sent it all to New York. In 1742 they were ordered to close the store. Nevertheless, they continued their smuggling until the Governor La Jonquière summoned them to Quebec City in 1750, and were not finally stopped until October 1752.

The colonial government made appearances of trying to control this trade by checking on fur canoes up-country, guarding the routes to New York, restricting (and even banning) the presence of Englishmen in Canada, and enacting prohibitions against English goods. In 1748 the number and identities of the coureurs des bois (as well as the voyageurs) were so well

known that a list of their names and a suggestion to send them home was sent to the officers in command at Miamis, Ouyatenons, River St. Joseph, and the Michillimackinac. However, this illegal trade was so essential and so profitable that it was rather openly tolerated.[43] Naturally it is difficult to estimate the amount of beaver and other furs that were smuggled. However its economic importance, the efforts to restrict it, and the wide-spread tolerance of it all indicate that it was a significant aspect of the trade.

After 1740, smuggling of fur to the British colonies was not as important as it had previously been, but it still continued. During the years 1744-48 the war made intercourse with the English colonies much riskier, and the Desauniers sisters (who had been unrestricted before 1741) were being gradually stopped.[44] The value of Canadian furs smuggled into New York can be estimated for 1752, when the smuggling was very low. Letterbooks of the New York merchant Robert Saunders show that in each of 1751, 1752 and 1753 he exported £ 650 of beaver (and in the year ending 11 August 1752 all of his beaver came from Canada). His exports were 10% of New York's beaver export, which was therefore about £ 6,500. About 40% of the total of New York's beaver exports (or about £ 2600) came from Montreal.[45] Accordingly, the beaver that was smuggled to Albany from Montreal was worth roughly 52,000 livres tournois (or £ 2,600), and so probably weighed 12,500 - 14,000 pounds. Since the smuggling was then down from what it had been before 1751, one can be confident that at least 10% of the official beaver was smuggled each year, and that figure is used in Table XIII for 1735 until 1758. If smuggling was 50% or more of the official beaver trade before 1716; and it was 10% after 1740; it is reasonable to assume that from 1722 to at least 1734, the smuggled beaver was at least 20% of what the company received. This figure is used in the estimate of the total fur production in Table XIII for 1722-1739.

In addition to beaver pelts (from both the official and unofficial trades), the pelts of other animals were exported, and they were becoming a larger and larger part of the total fur catch. In the years 1722-1734 the average annual value of beaver landed at La Rochelle was 551,446 livres, while that of all other pelts was 456,302 livres, or 82.7% of the beaver. It does not follow that these other pelts weighed 83% of what the beaver weighed; nevertheless it is not unreasonable to expect that the weight of these other pelts would be more or less 83% of the weight of the beaver. The exports of fur from Quebec City are shown below in Table XII.[46]

Table XII

FUR EXPORTS FROM QUEBEC, 1727-1755

	1 Beaver (pounds)	2 Beaver (pelts)	3 Other Pelts (number)	4 Ratio of Other Pelts (No./beaver pelt)	5 Total Exports (number of pelts)
1727	--	--	100,576	--	
1728	152,760	101,840	157,234	1.54	259,074
1729					
1730					
1731					
1732	160,393	106,929	176,078	1.65	283,007
1733	220,852	147,235	163,178	1.11	310,413
1734					
1735	177,529	118,353	187,035	1.58	305,388
1736	185,058	123,372	183,042	1.48	306,414
1737	123,786	82,524	273,609	3.32	356,133
1738					
1739	133,126	88,751	236,539	2.67	325,290
1754	132,451	88,301	320,327	3.63	408,628
1755	148,998	99,332	315,973	3.18	415,305

Sources: For pounds of beaver and the number of other pelts exported PAC, MG1, G1, Vol. 466, Files no. 2 and no. 3 (microfilm reel F-768); PAC, MG1, F2B, Carton 11, pp. 3-4, 6-8, 18 (microfilm reel F-1221); PAC, MG21, King's 205, pp. 193-194, or Harold Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, 1927, pp. 153-4.

This export data is available for eight of the thirteen years from 1727 to 1739, and then after a gap of fourteen years, for two more years. Still, some patterns can be seen. Most striking is the large increase in the number of other pelts from about 125,000 in the late 1720s to about 250,000 in the late 1730s, to well over 300,000 in the 1750s. Such an enlarged production was the natural result of the expansion of the trade towards the Northwest, where the fur animals were abundant. The growth of the trade in other pelts allowed the merchants - and the Indians - to continue to trade in areas where the beaver population had been largely reduced, and at the same time allowed the merchants to start developing new areas. La Vérendrye specifically told the Cree, on 9 May 1734, that he did not want their beaver, that he wanted martins and lynxes.[47] The expansion of the trade into the Northwest had increased transportation costs, which La Vérendrye was attempting to offset by a demand for small valuable furs. These attempts were successful. Anthony Henday witnessed the sorting and repacking of furs at Fort à la Corne and Fort Paskoyac (present day The Pas) in 1755, and he reported that the French were getting the lighter furs, and leaving the bulkier low value furs for the Hudson Bay Company (apparently this practise began there about 1740). At York Factory, the trade of the Hudson's Bay Company increased until about 1730 and then began to decline, and by 1750 its value had fallen about 40%. In 1747 James Isham at York Factory complained that the French got the best and lightest furs. Further west, at Fort Churchill, the value of the Company's trade declined one third between 1740 and 1755.[48] This success of Canada's traders dramatically increased the Colony's exports of other furs.

This increased export was important to the fur trade. By taking the pelts of as many types of animals as possible, not just beaver, the colony was

able to increase the economic yield of all regions in the pays d'En Haut and to strengthen its hold on the allegiance of the Indians. Thus, the increase in other pelts was directly linked to the rising costs that merchants faced as a result of territorial expansion, larger labour needs, and increased capital costs. At the same time, it was linked to the strategic and commercial problems that the Colony and Empire faced as a result of the settlement of 1713. It is then not surprising that in the long run the ratio of other pelts to beaver was growing substantially: before 1736 it was about 1.5 pelts for each beaver, but later, before the end of the French regime, the ratio more than doubled to about 3.4.

With the details of the animals that made up these exports, the weight of the exports can be estimated. Obviously, the weight of the pelts varies. Those of some animals are very light: martin and mink weigh two ounces, muskrat three ounces, and fox only five ounces. On the other hand, otter and raccoon weigh about the same as beaver - 1.5 pounds. Wolf pelts weigh only one pound but the pelt of a 400 pound bear weighs 20 to 25 pounds.[49] During the four years 1727-28 and 1732-33, beaver exports would almost certainly have weighed 625-650,000 pounds. Those for 1727 are unknown. The number of pelts from other animals was slightly less - 596,066. Of these "other pelts", 123,367 were deer which was given in pounds weight, not number of pelts. Martin pelts numbered 103,253; raccoon pelts numbered 186,119; and all remaining pelts numbered 183,327. The total weight of deer and all other pelts (allowing 3/4 pounds for each of the miscellaneous) would have been about 552,947 pounds. The weight of these "other pelts" was therefore about 13% less than the 625-650,000 pounds of beaver. We may be confident that this ratio existed in other years. The annual values of beaver and other pelts

landed at La Rochelle indicate that those four years are representative of the overall volume of fur traded in the period 1717-1734.

The same ratio can be seen in two other consignments of fur of the early 1720s. As already mentioned, in 1722-23 the fur from the King's Trade on Lake Ontario that was auctioned at Quebec City consisted of 8626 pounds of beaver and 8762 other pelts. In a shipment of unusually varied furs received by Chartier et Lespérance on 11 August 1724 from sieurs Lamarque, Mailhot, et Gamelin, the beaver weighed 1424 pounds, and other pelts numbered 1239.[50] The pelts of animals other than beaver in these two shipments probably weighed about 10-20% less than the weight of the beaver. Accordingly, an assumption that the other pelts of 1717-34 weighed at least 75% of the beaver production is surely not unreasonable or exaggerated. And if this weight is calculated using the weight of official beaver exports as a base, ignoring the beaver pelts that were smuggled, the calculation will be even more conservative. In Table XIII this estimate of 75% is used, for each year of 1717-1734 for which the beaver received in Montreal is known, to calculate the weight of the other furs.

The weight of the pelts of other animals is more difficult to estimate for 1735-1758 than it was for 1717-1734 (and particularly for the 1680s) because the other pelts increased so much. And of course as these pelts became a larger percentage of the total fur trade, they become more important to the argument that the overall fur trade was so large that the number of men in the official congés was insufficient to have transported the European goods up-country and the furs back down. In the period 1681-1687, the exports of other furs were only 10% of the beaver received in France; however, by the

period 1735-48 the other furs had dramatically increased, according to the values given by Lunn. From 1735 to 1741 the annual value of beaver dropped to 324,245 livres and the value of other pelts rose to 728,708 livres annually. The pattern of 1735-1741 seems to have continued during the war, although the data, espeically on beaver, appears to be incomplete. In 1744 and in the years 1746-1748 the import of beaver into La Rochelle averaged 257,000 livres, while that of other pelts averaged 701,000. To some extent these changes in values were caused by gaps in the sources and by the use of ports other than La Rochelle to import furs. Certainly the values of beaver for 1735-48 are inconsistent with the weights received in Montreal. However other pelts could also have been landed elsewhere, so perhaps the values for them are low, and then the ratio between the two might be more or less the same. It is certain that the absolute number of pelts other than beaver had increased, in part, because of the expansion of the trade into the Northwest. All in all, these values suggest that the other furs were about twice the beaver production.

With the export figures of 1735-37 and 1739, a more precise estimate can be made. In these four years, other furs totalled 657,888 pelts, in addition to 232,398 pounds weight of chevreuil. There were 126,406 martin pelts. Since these pelts weighed only two ounces each, the weight of the martin was 15,801 pounds. Another 298,121 pelts were raccoon, which weighed the same as beaver, 1-1/2 pounds each - a total of 447,181 pounds. In addition, the exports included another 223,391 pelts of various other animals of which perhaps half were large hooved animals, otter and bears. Even if they averaged only 3/4 of a pound each, which is a conservative estimate, they would have weighed 167,543 pounds. The total weight then would have been 862,923 pounds, or 139% of the beaver, which in those four years weighed 622,663 pounds. In

estimating the weight of the pelts other than beaver during the period 1735-48, a guess at an average of 125% of the official beaver is surely conservative. In Table XIII below, this figure of 125% is used to estimate the weight of other furs for that period. For 1754-55 the same calculations can be made. In those two years the beaver weighed an average of 140,725 pounds, other fur averaged 318,150 pelts annually. Those pelts would have weighed about 240-250,000 pounds, or 175% of the weight of the beaver. In Table XIII below the weight of the other fur is calculated for 1751-58 using this figure of 175%.

Finally, we can allow 5% for spoilage and loss of the beaver on the trip down to Montreal (or to New York), as well as of the other furs on the same trip and onward to Montreal and Quebec and their storage until they were exported. This calculation is also in Table XIII below. For the 1750s, since the existing data was recorded at La Rochelle, we must allow for the beaver that was lost between Montreal and Quebec and for all furs that were lost after leaving Quebec City, or were landed at ports other than La Rochelle, in addition to the 5% lost before the furs were exported. The beaver figures suggest 10%, which seems reasonable. Thus in Table XIII, 15% is allowed for spoiled and lost fur during 1751-58, which was the same as allowed for 1675-87, when the figures are also based on the beaver landed in France.

Table XIII

ESTIMATES OF FUR CATCH, 1717-1758

(All figures in pounds)

	1 Beaver Rec'd in Montreal	2 Beaver Smuggled	3 Other Furs	4 Spoiled Furs	5 Total Fur
1717	146,000	29,200	109,500	14,235	298,935
1722	166,000	33,200	121,500	16,035	336,735
1723	119,623	23,925	89,717	11,663	244,928
1724	--				
1725	Incomplete				
1726	135,000	27,000	101,250	13,163	276,413
1727	--				
1728	140,000	28,000	105,000	13,650	286,650
1729	127,640	25,528	95,730	12,445	261,343
1730	161,267	32,253	120,950	15,724	330,194
1731	130,000	26,000	97,500	12,675	266,175
1732	170,000	34,000	127,500	16,575	348,075
1733	227,000	45,400	170,000	22,170	464,570
1734	150,000	30,000	112,500	14,625	307,125
1735	177,649	17,765	222,061	20,874	438,349
1736	188,058	18,806	235,072	22,097	464,033
1737	123,788	12,379	154,735	14,545	305,546
1738	131,000	13,100	163,750	15,392	323,242
1739	133,168	13,317	166,460	15,647	328,592
1740	128,400	12,840	160,500	15,087	316,827
1741					
1742	157,000	15,700	196,250	18,448	387,398
1743	200,000	20,000	250,000	23,500	493,500
1744	200,000	20,000	250,000	23,500	493,500
1745	180,000	18,000	225,000	21,150	444,150
1746	188,586	18,859	235,744	22,160	465,359
1747	150,919	15,092	188,649	17,733	372,393
1748	166,172	16,617	207,715	19,525	410,029
1749					
1750					
1751*	128,360	12,836	224,630	54,874	420,700
1752	128,360	12,836	224,630	54,874	420,700
1753	128,360	12,836	224,630	54,874	420,700
1754	132,451	13,245	231,179	56,531	433,406
1755	148,998	14,900	260,746	63,697	488,341
1756	128,360	12,836	224,630	54,874	420,700
1757	128,360	12,836	224,630	54,874	420,700
1758	128,360	12,836	224,630	54,874	420,700
1722-34				Average	312,221
1735-48				Average	410,089
1751-58				Average	430,752

* Beginning in 1751, the beaver in column 1 is the weight landed at La Rochelle, as calculated in Table XI (p. 57), instead of that received in Montreal - except for 1754 and 1755 when it is the weight exported from Quebec City (see Table XII, p. 60). The fur in column 4 for the same period, includes estimates of that lost between Quebec City and France and of that landed at French ports other than La Rochelle.

Sources: For Beaver Received in Montreal, 1717-1748, see Alice Jean Elizabeth Lunn, Economic Development in New France, 1713-1760, Montreal (Ph.D. thesis McGill), 1942, p. 456; and Harold Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, 1927, pp. 149-152; for 1751-58, see Table XI, p. 57.

As can be seen the annual average fur catch during 1722 1734 was about 312,221 pounds. This figure is an increase of more than 40% over the annual average production of 217,286 pounds of fur during 1706-1714 Although beaver production was higher, most of this increase was other furs such as raccoon, martin, and deer. This overall increase is the consequence of the resumption of the official fur trade, and of the need of the French colonial system to expand the fur trade. When we examine the congés in the light of this fur production, a contradiction is immediately obvious. If this total catch was brought down to Montreal by only the small annual average of 245 men authorized by the congés during 1722-34, then each man would have carried 1273 pounds of fur through each of the 36 portages down from Michillimackinac. Such loads would have been nearly four times the average loads of about 333 pounds carried by the ordinary engagé during the periods 1681-1687 and 1706-1714. Such loads of over half a ton per man are so excessive - one would have to accept that at each of the portages each man was carrying 14 ninety pound pieces - that they discredit the congés as instruments to evaluate the labour force. Similarly, during 1735-48 an annual average of 410,089 pounds of fur was produced.[51] This figure is an increase of almost 30% over the annual production of 312,221 pounds during 1722-1734. Since beaver was increasing slowly, most of this increase was furs other than beaver. This growing volume of furs reflects the increased importance of the other pelts. If this entire fur catch was brought down to Montreal by a group that annually averaged only 387 canoemen, as authorized by the annual congés, then each man would have carried 1060 pounds (almost 12 pieces) through each of the portages. Such loads - over half a ton - have no relationship with the actual capacity of ordinary men. In Table XIV, there is a more detailed account of the problem raised by the contradiction between the overall weight of the furs traded and the congés.

Table XIV

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TOTAL FUR CATCH AND THE OFFICIAL CONGES, 1717-1752

	1 Total Fur (pounds)	2 Canoes (number)	3 Men (number)	4 Furs/Canoe (pounds)	5 Furs/Man (pounds)
1717	298,935	4	12	74,734	24,911
1722	336,735	60	240	5612	1416
1723	244,928	40	178	6123	1376
1724		28	127		
1725		64	272		
1726	276,413	33	153	8377	1807
1727		36	184		
1728	286,650	38	182	7543	1575
1729	261,343	54	264	4840	990
1730	330,194	30	136	11,006	2428
1731	266,175	49	242	5432	1100
1732	348,075	71	344	4902	1012
1733	464,570	80	422	5807	1101
1734	307,125	79	438	3888	701
1735	438,349	69	388	6353	1130
1736	464,033				
1737	305,546				
1738	323,242				
1739	328,592	68	391	4832	840
1740	316,827	54	318	5867	996
1741					
1742	387,398				
1743	493,500	79	468	6247	1054
1744	493,500	91	551	5423	896
1745	444,150	70	430	6345	1033
1746	465,359	40	220	11,633	2115
1747	372,393	55	330	6771	1128
1748	410,029	55	348	7455	1178
1749					
1750					
1751	420,700	76	462	5536	911
1752	420,700	38	226	11,071	1862

Sources: For Total Fur, Table XIII; for Canoes and Men, Table VIII.

As can be seen in the table, only occasionally were the loads that each man would have carried at the portages less than 1000 pounds, and the table never presents a plausible or realistic carrying requirement for the men. The average load per man even reaches more than a ton for some years - not only 1717, but also 1730 and 1746. Such physical effort is not believable. In addition, if the loads for each man authorized by the congés were true, then each canoe would have carried extraordinarily large cargoes. As can be seen in the table, the necessary cargo for each canoe would usually have been 6000 pounds or more, and almost never as low as 4000 pounds. In reality, the six-man canoes (which were in general use from about 1740) could not carry much more than about 4000 pounds: usually they had 3000 to 3500 pounds of freight and up to 1000 pounds of supplies when going up-country. Even the ten man maître canoes of the late eighteenth century carried only about 5800 pounds of cargo. And, in practice, the downstream loads would have been even smaller than those upward capacities: because the traders needed security for the valuable furs, they had an interest in not overloading the canoes on their way down to Montreal. Thus, in the light of the total fur production, it is apparent that it would not have been possible for those canoes officially authorized by the congés to have carried down all the fur traded from the Indians, or to have carried the heavier European goods upstream.

In contrast, if one uses the estimates made by contemporary officers, according to whom 1200-1400 men annually went up to the pays d'En Haut, then the loads of fur per man and per canoe are more realistic. As already mentioned, in 1749 Sieur de Léry assumed that 1200 men went up annually; in 1752 the visiting American, Phineas Stevens, stated that "upwards of a thousand men" had gone up by 16 June; and in 1758 Bougainville indicated that

1400 men were needed annually.[52] If, during the period 1735-1748, an average of 1200 men in 200 six man canoes were engaged annually in the trade, and an annual average of 410,089 pounds of fur were brought back down, then each canoe would have returned a cargo of 2050 pounds and each man would have carried 342 pounds through the portages. Such work is believable: in both the three-man canoes of the late 1600s and the eight to ten-man canoes of the late 1700s, the downstream loads seem to have been more or less 333 pounds of fur for each canoeman who had gone up.[53] Thus the observations of contemporaries that about 1200 men went up-country annually appear to be more in harmony with reality than do the congés.

In summary then, in 1716, imperial interests and objectives required a continuous support for the fur trade, and so the system of the congés was re-established. Although the congés have not survived for all years, for some years they have been preserved in numbers large enough to have authorized as many as 551 men for the west. However, even this labour force was too small for such a large trade, and so not surprisingly commentators and officials claimed that more than 1000 men were active in the trade annually. Nor is it surprising that the Governors-General admitted that neither the congés, nor the other measures taken to increase Quebec City's control of the fur traders, could be effectively enforced. And because all such initiatives failed, it is very difficult to use the congés (or any other source) to quantify the size of the labour force engaged in the fur trade. Instead, it appears necessary to rely on the relationship between the capacity of the means of transportation and the fur exports to establish the number of men participating in the fur trade.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter II

1. See for the monopoly, Alice Jean Elizabeth Lunn, Economic Development in New France 1713-1760, (unpublished Ph.D. thesis McGill), 1942, pp. 151-152; for consumption, Harold Innis, The Fur Trade In Canada, Yale 1930, and Toronto, 1956, p. 101; for beaver exports Lunn, Economic Development, pp. 455-8, and Harold Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, U. of Toronto Press, 1927, pp. 149-152; for prices, Lunn, Economic Development, pp. 459-463.

2. See, for 1681-7, Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 407; Lunn, Economic Development, p. 464; and Louise Dechêne, Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVIIe siècle, Montréal, 1974, p. 140, (referred to in Chapter I, pp. 10-11 above). For 1706-15 see E.B. O'Callaghan (ed), Documents relative to the colonial history of the state of New York..., Albany NY, 1857, Vol. IX, pp. 757, 819-21; and Alice Jean Elizabeth Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760", Canadian Historical Association Report, 1939, p. 63 (referred to in Chapter I, p. 24). For 1722-34 and 1735-58, see Lunn, Economic Development, pp. 464-65 (see also below, Chapter II, pp. 58-59).

3. See Beauharnois to Maurepras, 18 June 1745, NYCD, Vol. X, pp. 1-2.

4. See Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, "Memoire", in Wisconsin State Historical Society Collections, 1908 (Vol. XVIII), pp. 167-195, in passim.

5. See, for example the congés issued to Pomainville 18 juin 1743; to Saint-Ange Charly 11 juin 1745; to Clignancour, L'Echelle, et Monière 22 avril 1747 and 14 juin 1748. The exception was the congé issued to Maugras (acting for La Vérendrye) on 13 juin 1743 for six canoes and 46 men. Similarly largé quasi-military expeditions were sent into the interior by canoe. Jean-Pierre Céloron was with 143 men in the summer of 1739; and then in 1749, between 15 June and 9 November, he took 213 men through the Ohio valley in a show of force.

6. Du Quesne to the Minister, 15 July 1755, Correspondance générale (PAC, C11A) Vol. 100, p. 32.

7. See Bougainville, "Memoire", in WSHS Collections, 1908 (Vol. XVIII), pp. 167-195.

8. See enclosure with La Jonquière's letter of 31 October 1749 in NYCD, Vol. X, p. 204. The source is not definite that the money was to be raised in one year. Chaussegros de Léry's report of his trip to Detroit has been published in Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, 1926-27, pp. 334-48. However this proposal was not included with the copy of his report in the Quebec archives. De Léry passed La Presentation 15 June 1749. When Céloron passed on 7 or 8 November 1749 the post had been abandoned.

9. See Le Chevalier de Raymond, "Mémoire sur les postes du Canada adressé à M. de Surlaville, en 1754", RAPQ, 1927-28, pp. 341-3.

10. "Journal of Captain Phineas Stevens' Journey to Canada, 1752" in Newton D. Mereness (ed.), Travels in American Colonies 1690-1783, 1916 and New York (Antiquarian Press), 1961, p. 310. Stevens had made a similar trip in 1749. (The account of which is apparently in the New Hampshire Historical Society Collections, Vol. V, 1837.) He had first been to Canada in 1723 as an 18 year old Indian captive.

11. See Richard A. Preston and Leopold Lamontagne (eds.), Royal Fort Frontenac (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1958, p. 65.

12. See Lunn, Economic Development, p. 118-119; for 1709 see Preston, Royal Fort Frontenac, p. 209; for the value of the trade in twelve of the years during 1717-43 see ibid., pp. 210, 215, 218, 224, 230-1; (in NYCD, Vol. IX, p. 1049 and Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, p. 87 some of these livres currency are given as livre weight); for 1729 see Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, p. 151. See also Yves Zoltvany, "The Frontier Policy of Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, 1713-1725", Canadian Historical Review, 1967 (Vol. XLVIII), p. 248n.

13. See Beauharnois to the Minister, 9 October 1744, WSHS Collections, 1906 (Vol. XVII), p. 443, (Correspondance générale vol. 81).

14. See La Galissonière and Hocquart to the Minister, 7 October 1747, ibid., pp. 471-2, (Cor. Gen. vol. 87).

15. See Bigot to the Minister, 7 October 1748, Cor. Gen. (PAC, MG1, C11A) Vol. 92, pp. 103-4.

16. See La Jonquière to the Minister, 20 August 1750, Cor. Gen. (PAC, MG1, C11A) Vol. 95 pp. 171-172.

17. See Lunn, Economic Development, p. 122.

18. See Beauharnois to the Minister, 5 September 1742, in WSHS Collections, 1906 (XVII), pp. 409-11, (Cor. Gen. 77).

19. See Jean Victor Varin, Sieur de la Mare to the Minister, 26 June 1743 in ibid., pp. 434-5, (Cor. Gen. 79) and congés de traite in passim.

20. See Beauharnois and Hocquart to the Minister, 14 October 1744, in ibid. pp. 444-5, (Cor. Gen. 81) and Congés de traite in passim.

21. See the Minister to La Jonquière and Bigot, 4 May 1749, in WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), pp. 25-47, (Arch. Col., B, 89).

22. See La Jonquière and Bigot to the Minister, 28 September 1749, Cor. Gen. Vol. 93, p. 23, and congés de traite in passim.

23. See Du Quesne to the minister, 12 July 1755, Cor. Gen., Vol. 100, p. 18.

24. See Massicotte (ed.), "Congés", RAPQ, Vol. 2 (1921-22); and for 1714 NYCD, Vol. IX, p. 886.

25. See De Noyan to the Minister 18 October 1738, and Beauharnois and Hocquart to the Minister, 22 October 1738 in WSHS Collections, 1906 (XVII), pp. 293-295, 297-298, (Cor. Gen. 70 and 69).

26. See Bougainville, "Mémoire", WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), p. 174, 183. See also Raymond, "Mémoire", RAPQ, 1927-28, p. 340.

27. See the King to Beauharnois and Hocquart, 31 May 1743, Lettres envoyées (PAC, MG1, Series B), Vol. 76, pp. 391-393.

28. See Lunn, Economic Development, p. 122.

29. See Beauharnois to the Minister, 5 September 1742, WSHS Collections, 1906 (XVII), pp. 409-411, (Cor. Gen. 77).

30. See Beauharnois and Hocquart to the Minister, 14 October 1744, WSHS Collections, 1906 (XVII), p. 444 (Cor. Gen. 81), and the Minister to Beauharnois, 28 April 1745, WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), p. 7 (Arch. Col. B, 8).

31. See the Minister to La Jonquière and Bigot, 4 May 1749, WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), pp. 25-27, (Arch. Col. B, 89).

32. See NYCD, vol. X, p. 202.

33. See the Minister to Du Quesne, 16 June 1752, WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), pp. 123-24, (Arch. Col. B, 95).

34. See Adolph B. Benson (ed.), Peter Kalm's Travels in North America, New York, 1966, p. 541; and Bougainville, "Memoire", WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), p. 193.

35. J.C.B., Travels in New France, edited by S.K. Stevens et al, Pennsylvania Historical Survey, 1941, p. 74. For indications of the size of supply expeditions in 1756, 1757, and 1758 see pp. 79, 86, 99. (The account was apparently written about 1790. For a manuscript version see PAC, MG7, I, A3, Vol. 4156).

36. See their contract of 30 September 1757 in WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), pp. 197-99, (MS in Chicago Historical Society, O.L. Schmidt Collection, #261). Bougainville estimated Vaudreuil's gain at 312,000 livres. See his "Memoire", WSHS Collections, 1908, pp. 192-3.

37. See La Jonquière to the Minister, 29 September 1750, Cor. Gen. Vol. 95, pp. 205-212.

38. See Beauharnois to the Minister, 25 October 1744, in WSHS Collections, 1906 (XVII), pp. 445-6, (Cor. Gen. 81, folio 196).

39. See for 1727-28, PAC, MG1, G1, Vol. 466, files No. 2 and No. 3, microfilm reel F-768; for 1732-1739, PAC, MGI, F2B, Carton 11, microfilm reel F-1221 (or in the transcripts, pp. 3-4, 6-8, 18); for 1754-55, PAC, MG21, King's 205, pp. 193-194, or Innis, The Fur Trade of Canada, 1927, pp. 153-154.

40. See Lunn, Economic Development, pp. 464-465, and Emile Salone, La colonisation de la Nouvelle-France, Paris 1906, reprinted 1970, pp. 397-8.

41. See Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade", CHAR,1939, pp. 63, 64, and Thomas Elliot Norton, The Fur Trade in Colonial New York 1686-1776, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1974, p. 87. In 1719 five canoes left Montreal without congés and were given official permission only later. See Gratien Allaire, "Les engagements pour la traite des fourrures: évaluation de la documentation", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique française, Vol. 34, no. 1, Juin 1980, p. 20n.

42. See Preston, Royal Fort Frontenac, p. 224, (Beauharnois & Hocquart to the Minister, 12 October 1736, PAC, C11A, Vol. 65, pp. 17-44).

43. See Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade", pp. 69-70, 73-75, and Lunn, Economic Development, pp. 132-5; Norton, The Fur Trade in Colonial New York, pp. 121, 127. See also Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 81. For the 1748 list see NYCD, Vol. X, p. 162.

44. See Norton, The Fur Trade in Colonial New York, pp. 127, 149-150, 171.

45. See ibid., pp. 124, 171-172.

46. I am grateful to Tom Wien for pointing out to me the precise location of some of these figures.

47. See L.J. Burpee (ed.), Journals and Letters of La Vérendrye (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1927 pp. 179-180, (also cited in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 93); more generally see Innis, ibid. pp. 91, 96-97.

48. See Arthur J. Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade, University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 91 (see also pp. 51-3); Arthur J. Ray and Donald Freeman, "Give Us Good Measure", University of Toronto Press, pp. 190, 180, 176 (see also pp. 33-35, 187-191, and Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 98). More generally, see W.L. Morton, Manitoba: A History, University of Toronto Press, 1957, Chapter II "The Fur Trade of the Winnipeg Basin 1714-1763", pp. 21-36.

49. These pelt weights are the 1983 weights as given by Alex Shieff of the Ontario Trappers' Association in Sudbury in a telephone conversation on 15 July 1983. They were more or less confirmed by people in various provincial departments responsible for wild life.

50. See Louise Dechêne, Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVII^{e} siècle, Montréal (Plon), 1974, p. 149.

51. This average and that of 430,000 for 1751-58 are consistent with Bougainville's report that more than 5355 pieces of fur or about 482,000 pounds, came down annually. Similarly for 1747 the fur received in Montreal can be estimated at about 400,000 pounds, which is virtually the same as the average of 410,089. On 7 October the Governor-General and the Intendant informed the Minister in Paris that thirty-three canoes had come down from Michillimackinac, and more were expected. Three weeks earlier, on 15 September, thirty of the canoes had been described as loaded with furs. Since a full canoe load was about 4000 pounds, the thirty-three canoes had brought down 132,000 pounds of fur (4000 x 33 = 132,000). The Governor-General and Intendant also reported that "...the same applies to those from Detroit". Since Michillimackinac produced about 45% of Canada's furs and Detroit about 55%, the weight of all types of fur received in Montreal by 7 October can be calculated at about 293,333 pounds (45% of 293,333 = 132,000). The same letter reported that only "100 to 120 thousand (pounds) of beaver skins" had been received in Montreal. The total weight of beaver received by the Compagnie des Indes that year was 150,919 pounds, so about 41,000 pounds of beaver arrived after 7 October. If other furs were received in the same proportion before and after 7 October, an estimated total of 402,450 pounds of all furs would have been brought to Montreal (293,333 : 110,000 x 151,919 = 402,450). See La Galissonière and Hocquart to the Minister, 7 October 1747, WSHS Collections, 1906 (Vol. XVII), pp. 471-2 (Cor. Gen. 87); and "Journal of Occurrences", 15 September 1747, NYCD, Vol. X, p. 125.

52. See page 47 above, and footnote 10 above.

53. For the late 1600s, see above Chapter I (p. 14); for 1777-1790, see below Chapter III (pp. 105-8). In 1727, 57 canoes with 738 packs of beaver and deerskin were seen near Oswego. (See Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 87). These canoes were probably English. If they had four men to a canoe and if each of their packs weighed 90 pounds, each man's load would have been 291 pounds.

Chapter III

THE TRADE LICENCES: A NEW INSTRUMENT TO CONTROL THE FUR TRADE, 1760-1790

After 1760, British administrators, like French administrators before them, soon realized the importance of establishing some control over the fur trade. Until the 1780s the trade remained the dominant commercial activity of the colony. Although the value of wheat exports increased steadily from 1760, it was not until the last decade of the century that they approached the value of fur exports. All Canadian problems - inflation, the western Indians, imperial revenues, colonial government, and military security - were linked to the fur trade. Britian's imperial objectives were fundamentally the same as France's: both shared mercantilist theories of empire; both wanted colonies as a source of scarce and valuable raw materials, and as a market for their own manufactures. Each Empire was a closed system which tried to exclude the trade of others as much as possible. And each restricted its North Atlantic carrying trade to its own ships so as to develop a reservoir of experienced seamanship for naval power.

Since both countries shared the same general imperial objectives it is not surprising that British administrators, although partisans of open trade in the interior, tried like the French administrators before them to control the fur trade by adopting a licencing system. The British system, which had been under consideration since 1754, and was applied not just to Canada but to all colonies, had five essential features. The trade was open to all subjects; for each trade expedition a trade licence and a bond were necessary;

the actual trading was permitted only within eight posts; official exchange rates for the trade were established at each of these eight trading posts; and, in each post a deputy of the superintendent of Indian Affairs supervised the trade to ensure that the restrictions were enforced. Restricting the trade to the posts was based on the experience of New York, where Iroquois middle men got furs from hunters. In Canada, after about 1675, there were virtually no middle men and for almost a hundred years Canadian traders (or their agents) had been going to the hunters' villages to get furs. Despite the constant objection of the traders of all colonies to this new system, it remained unchanged until 1768. Then, after the Government officials realized that the traders were even refusing to report to the posts, they allowed the traders to winter with the Indians (this change began at Michillimackinac in 1767), and the regulation of the trade was transferred from the Imperial government to the colonial governments.[1]

In the past, the Canadian merchants had not been easy to regulate; and now there was no reason for them to be less hostile to control. Obviously, these Canadian traders needed British importers and agents to get their trade goods, but in this respect, they were in the same position as the British merchants who had arrived in the colony after 1760. Neither group of traders would easily accept trade regulations, and neither group would totally comply with all the demands of the licencing system. And it must be said that the existing opportunities to avoid trade regulations were there to be seized. Fur could be legally and easily taken to New York or another colony; Canadian traders could retreat to the interior and trade down the Mississippi with the French at New Orleans. Enforcement of regulations on the Great Lakes to protect the Indians - and the peace with them - was very difficult.

Eventually government control and the licencing system would be successful, but not until it had been made less rigid and until Montreal had captured the interior trade. As part of these changes, most of the small traders were eliminated, and the trade became concentrated in fewer hands. At the same time the canoes on the St. Lawrance were displaced by boats; and the canoes on the Ottawa became larger.

i. The Changes in the System of Trade Licences, 1760-1776

These sixteen years were, in a sense, unique in the history of the fur trade. It was the only period when Canada was to a certain extent politically united with the American colonies; the only period when New York and other provinces could massively participate legally, as well as illegally, in the Canadian fur trade. Naturally, at the beginning of the period both the traders and the British government were measuring their forces. As eatly as the winter of 1759-60, Gen. Gage ordered Haldimand, then at Fort Ontario, to protect the traders who had passes, and to expel troublemakers.[2] In 1760 or 1761, the Quebec Government sold trade licences for five dollars, on its own authority. Subsequently the government had to refund the money[3] since the regulation and licensing of the trade was an Imperial government responsibility. In 1761 French traders who were in the interior were allowed to return to Montreal in order to export their furs to France. Both Quebec and London wanted the trade resumed as quickly as possible. Nevertheless, in March 1761 some Quebec City merchants believed that only those British subjects, who were close to governors were permitted into the interior[4], and when Alexander Henry left Montreal 3 August 1761 he was only the second English trader to be licensed for Michillimackinac. During the early years

British traders were at the mercy of Indians, and in 1763 many were killed in Pontiac's uprising. For two years the trade was closed - at least officially; however the reality of continuing fur exports show that a vigorous unlicenced trade continued, and shows that the traders remained more or less indifferent to government edicts. In January 1765 the trade was officially re-opened.

As already noted, restricting the trade to posts was contrary to the experience of the Canadian trade. The Albany merchants had favoured this restriction for security, but also because hampering the Canadian trade allowed Albany to compete more effectively. They complained that some of them had been attacked and robbed during 1763, but that Canadians had not suffered the same fate. The Albany merchants wrote that because they were isolated in the interior, they were vulnerable, but on the other hand, the Indians, French, and Canadians could do as they wished because they could escape to the Mississippi.[5] In contrast, the Montreal merchants opposed both the prohibition against trading outside the five posts and the need to post a bond of 200% of the value of their trade goods. They found these restrictions intolerable, and they frequently petitioned for change. As a result of their complaints, in 1767 the traders based in Michillimackinac were allowed to winter with the Indians, and the next year the southern traders were permitted to trade outside the forts.[6] This change was in essence a restoration of the method that the Canadian traders had used for almost a hundred years. As a result Canadian fur exports increased more than 50%: from just 289,000 pounds annually in 1764-67 to 470,000 pounds annually in 1768-1771. At the same time the Americans were nearly eliminated from the trade. During the period 1760-67, 422 Americans had traded at Niagara and Detroit; but by 1768-1774, only 63 Americans remained in the Niagara and Detroit trade.[7]

The Trade Licences that were issued in Montreal were a four page form which stated the authority and conditions on which the trade could be conducted. The Trade Licences that have survived are preserved in the Public Archives in Ottawa.[8] The series actually consists of three subseries: the merchants', or the outfitters', applications for licences during 1769-1776; a copy of the actual licences for 1769, 1770, and 1772; and the bond certificates for the same three years. Since the licences themselves have survived for only three years most of the data for the period is derived from the applications for licences. These applications, as well as the licences and bond certificates, contain considerable data about each expedition. A tabulation of some of these data is shown in Table XV below.

Table XV

TRADE LICENCES, THE VESSELS, AND THE CREWS, 1761-1776

	1 No. of Licences	2 No. of Canoes	3 No. of Boats	4 No. of Canoemen	5 No. of Boatmen	6 Value (£) of Trade Goods
1761						
1762	—					
1763	2	2		9		
1764						
1765						
1766						
1767						
1768	9	8	2	47	12	2,860
1769	73	100	4	672	20	38,103
1770	80	109	11	657	42	48,977
1771	24	24	8	134	36	7,804
1772	66	108	4	805	20	49,559
1773	56	86	8	535	35	36,445
1774	53	90	9	659	37	44,091
1775	74	115	43	850	217	73,492
1776	40	51	20	361	86	28,750

Source: PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 110-115, pp. 1-2240.

Some gaps and inconsistencies in the data are easily and immediately apparent. With the minor exception of two licences in 1763, no licences have survived from 1760-1767. Obviously the source is no indication of the scope or volume of trade in these eight years. As well, the figures for 1768 and 1771 in all six columns are extremely low. Some of the licences that once existed have been lost: at some point each licence that has survived (as well as each application and bond certification in the entire series) was numbered in pen at the top of the first page. According to these numbers four or five licences are now missing from most years. From the year 1771 however, many more licences have been lost. Of the first sixty-six licences only ten are

still in the collection, the other fifty-six are missing. In addition to the licences that have been lost since the documents were numbered there are indications that other licences, or at least applications, were lost prior to the time when the licences were numbered. On 26 April 1773 the fur trade commissioner at Montreal reported that he was forwarding seven applications for trading licences to Quebec City that day and that previously he had sent another sixty - a total of sixty-seven applications for Trade Licences.[9] Nevertheless today only twenty-two of these sixty-seven applications remain in the series. So at least forty-five of the applications for Trade Licences in 1773 cannot be accounted for, and so are not included in the table above.

Despite these ommissions and shortcomings, some important information on the nature of the trade can be discerned from Table XV. The number of men authorized by the Trade Licences had increased over the number allowed by the congés de traite. During 1735-48 an annual average of 387 canoemen, and a high of 551, were given permission to go west; by 1768-1776 (even including 1768 and 1771, which are obviously incomplete) this average had increased 50% to 581 men, and the maximum had almost doubled to 1067 men. This change points to the increasing use of the government licencing systems. The table also shows, for the first time, the value of the trade goods. Each licenced expedition appears to have had about £600 or £700, or perhaps £1000, worth of trade goods. Such relatively low values imply that small traders could still manage to send expeditions up to the fur posts. Perhaps the most important insight from Table XV is the changing use of canoes and the introduction of boats. Boats had been used by the New York traders on their routes connecting Oswego with Albany, and their use in Montreal at this time was by men familiar with the New York trade. The tendency towards increased

use of boats was the major English contribution to the gradually changing technology of the trade. The licences indicate that the number of boats was still limited at this time, and that they were used on only the St. Lawrence route. Canoes were also used on the St. Lawrence; but on the Ottawa River, canoes remained the only vessel in the fur trade's transportation system. And they were becoming larger and larger, as can be seen in Table XVI below. This evolution in technology was part of the merchants' efforts to adopt the Canadian experience in the trade and to expand trade into new areas, especially the Northwest, while at the same time controlling their capital needs and their transportation and labour costs.

Table XVI

VESSELS PER EXPEDITION AND CREW SIZES, 1768-1776

	1 Canoes and Boats (number)	2 Men (number)	3 Trade Licences (number)	4 Vessels per Trade Licente	5 Boat Crews (Men/boat)	6 Canoes Crews (Men/canoe)
1768	10	59	9	1.1	6.0	5.88
1769	104	692	73	1.4	5.0	6.72
1770	120	699	80	1.5	3.82	6.03
1771	32	180	24	1.3	4.50	5.58
1772	112	825	66	1.8	5.00	7.45
1773	94	570	56	1.7	4.38	6.22
1774	99	696	53	1.9	4.11	7.32
1775	158	1067	74	2.1	5.05	7.39
1776	71	447	40	1.8	4.30	7.08
Total	800	5225	475	1.68	4.63	6.83

Source: For Canoes, Boats, Men, and Trade Licences, Table XV (p. 81), Trade Licences, 1761-1776 (PAC RG4, B28, Vol. 110-115, pp. 1-2240).

As can be seen, in just a few years the average number of boats and canoes per expedition increased slightly; nevertheless it remained at less than two vessels for each official expedition. This evolution was a continuation of the pattern which had emerged between 1722 and 1748. The size of the expeditions (judged by the number of official licences) grew very slowly: from 1 1/2 canoes per congé before 1748, to 1 2/3 vessels (almost all canoes) druing the period 1768-76. In the time of the French Regime, as Governor-General Du Quesne admitted in 1755, the merchants may have received authorization for an average of only 1 1/2 canoes in each congé, but they had multiplied the number of their canoes as much as they wished. It is unlikely that this practice would have stopped or that the size of the expeditions would have decreased, so this figure of 1 2/3 vessels was almost certainly incorrect. It seems too low. Since the traders had to post a bond of 200% of the value of their trade goods, it was perhaps to their advantage to understate their cargo. It is reasonable to assume that the merchants, as happened during the French Regime, were sending more canoes and boats into the interior than the numbers recorded in the Trade Licences.

Table XVI also shows that the average size of the crew in the boats fluctuated considerably. To some extent this variation is not very significant since so few boats were used during many years - in 1768 for example, only two boats are recorded in the licences. However the average size of the boat crews was higher - 4.63 men rather than the generally accepted figure of four men. These larger crews may have been a result of the lack of expertise, on the part of both merchants and engagés in the use of boats. Whatever the cause the larger crews reduced the effectiveness of the merchants' efforts to hold down their labour costs. At the same time, the size of the crews in the canoes was growing continually. They had averaged

six men as early as the 1740s, and by the years 1768-1776 they had grown to about 7 1/4 men. This average, however, obscures the difference between the size of the canoe crews on the Ottawa River and those on the St. Lawrence. In 1775 for example, the canoe crews averaged 7.39 men. Nevertheless on the Ottawa River the 99 canoes averaged 7.77 men each, while on the St. Lawrence the 16 canoes averaged only 5.06 men each. In that year the average canoe on the St. Lawrence was the same size as the average boat on the St. Lawrence. The smallness of these canoes - unchanged since before the 1740s - suggests that perhaps these merchants were not adjusting to change as were those merchants using canoes on the Ottawa, or boats on the St. Lawrence.

Another aspect of the trade that appears to have remained more or less constant was the unofficial trade. It could be said that the new traders might have been, if anything, more willing to defy the government's attempts to regulate the trade than had been the Canadian merchants before 1760. According to General Gage, who perhaps was exaggerating, the majority of the new traders throughout all colonies, not just Canada, were men who lacked character and fortunes, men as wild as Indians "and far more vicious and wicked", they were "Lawless Banditt". Gage was not alone in his opinion. Sir William Johnson described them as "the very dregs of the people, such as discharged provincial Soldiers, Batteaux men ettc." These men had become active in the fur trade after 1748 when the Dutch did not resume the trade.[10] As we have seen (p. 79), over 422 Americans were in the trade before 1767, although only 63 remained by 1768-74. Such men had little regard for government: they went where they wanted when they wanted, with or without licences; they debauched the Indians with alcohol, and robbed or cheated them of their land and furs. Since furs could be sent down the Mississippi to the French at New Orleans, these traders could ignore Quebec.[11]

Many traders had no reservations about trading without a licence. In January 1767 Sir William Johnson - the Commissioner of Indian Affairs - complained that the traders openly defied the military at the posts: a trader named Capucin told Major Smallman that he would trade where he wanted; at Miamis seven Canadian traders did not have passes; at Detroit a trader named Abbot refused a Detroit court's call for a bond in future fair trade, and flatly said he would continue to trade without a licence.[12] Johnson complained that English and French traders from Canada had been going to Toronto, Quinté, Frontenac, and other places without passes. At Miamis when five traders without passes were challenged by one of Johnson's officers, the traders replied that they would trade where they wanted regardless of Government. And they were supported by a large number of traders, some of whom had general passes to any area.[13] Johnston wrote to the Earl of Shelburne that "... many Traders, (contrary to the former practise) go without passes, and amongst them several of the Canadians who were formerly partizans ...".[14]

When in 1768 the restriction against wintering with the Indians was removed and control of the trade passed to the colonial government, the unlicenced trade did not end. In 1770 Mess. Wade and Keyzer sent a battoe with six men to trade rum and other goods at Toronto. The men were told to avoid Niagara and pass at night. One of the military men in the region - Capt. John Brown - doubted that they had a licence. Indeed there is no licence in their name in 1770. The same season Phyn, Ellice, and Porteous were turned back on Lake Ontario because they did not have a licence. The men pleaded that they were strangers in Canada, and presumably were unaware of the regulations. In 1772 one trader, Mr. Ramesy, was arrested on Lake Erie after he had killed five Indians in two incidents. Previously he had been sent back

to Quebec from the Indian country as he was a troublemaker; nevertheless he was able to get a small cargo on credit and return to Lake Erie. This defiance of government regulation was not restricted to traders; it included government officials. In 1773 the fur trade commissioner at Montreal reported that although he adhered to the regulation that only those men named in his "list" could go to the upper country, "... Colonel Templer seeing the necessity of some Indulgence is pleased to give it ...". In 1776 (after the American occupation) many traders went up to the posts without licences.[15] As during the French Regime, the lawlessness of the fur traders and the tolerance of officials combined to allow a large unofficial trade. Given the scope of this unofficial trade, the licences for the official trade cannot be an accurate measure of the size of the fur trade, or of the level of participation in the trade.

These judgements that the unofficial trade had great significance are confirmed by three contemporary accounts which all suggest that the labour force was about 1500 men in 1766 and 1767. All these estimates are in reports about the trade to Michillimackinac made by men familar with the trade. In 1766, Benjamin Frobisher judged the trade to be at least £ 36,000 and 80-90 canoes, which would have required about 680 canoemen.[16] In 1767 the commander at Michillimackinac, Major Robert Rogers, estimated that the Indians of his region needed £ 45,000 stg. of trade goods which would, he explained, require 100 canoes each manned by a crew of ten, or a total of 1000 men.[17] Canoes that size usually had eight working men, so according to Rogers's statement the labour force on the Michillimackinac route was about 800 men. The third figure can be calculated from the detailed account of the trade kept by a British officer at Michillimackinac in the summer of 1767.[18] He recorded that

121 canoes with £38,963 stg. of goods left Michillimackinac to winter with the Indians. A little over 20% of that trade was based at Albany, so about 95 of these canoes had goods that had been brought up from Montreal. The canoes in use on the lakes had crews of six men, so about 600 men were employed on this route. Thus all three of these men made similar estimates of the number of canoes, of the value of the trade goods, and of the number of men. The volume of trade at Michillimackinac alone required 600-800 men to transport the trade goods up from Montreal.

However the trade on the St. Lawrence around Detroit was bigger than the trade on the Ottawa based at Michillimackinac. At the end of the French period the St. Lawrence produced about 2835 packs of fur and the Ottawa about 2520 packs; similarly the value of the trade was estimated in 1761 at about 690,000 livres worth on the St. Lawrence and at about 520,000 livres worth on the Ottawa.[19] Thus with about 700 men engaged on the Ottawa, a total of about 1500 canoemen would have been employed on both rivers during the years 1766-68. As was the case during the French Regime, post-Conquest commentators reported a labour force considerably larger than that recorded in the official government licences.

For 1760-1776 (and afterwards) the data on fur production is somewhat different than what exists for the French Regime. For most years prior to 1760, the only information available is the official weight of beaver received in Montreal, although additional data on the number of pelts of other animals exported from Quebec City can also be found for at least ten years. Together with other evidence, including the value of both beaver and other pelts landed at La Rochelle, there is enough information to estimate the overall weight of

all furs for the other years. For the period after 1760, the sources reveal the total number of pelts for each type of animal (including beaver) that were exported to Great Britain each year. With this data the total weight of all the fur that Canada traded each year can be calculated more precisely than is possible for the pre-1760 period. Although for the period 1760-76 figures on Canadian fur exports are recorded in at least four partial series[20] (two of which are for nine or ten years), these sets of figures complement each other. Thus they can be used to establish an accurate and trustworthy account of the furs shipped from Quebec City.

In Table XVII, which follows, the number of furs annually exported from Quebec City are shown in column 1, then in column 2 the beaver pelts from column 1 are converted to weight. Beaver exports were about 100,000 pelts (150,000 pounds weight)[21] annually during these years and growing slowly. In column 3 the weight of all other furs exported to Great Britain is estimated. The other furs included small quantities of castorum and deer (which were recorded by the pound), large quantities of raccoon and otter which weigh the same as beaver (about 1 1/2 lb./pelt), and smaller amounts of two lighter pelts, martin (2 oz. each) and muskrat (3 oz.). The weights of these furs are calculated, and then the weight of the remaining furs is estimated. These remaining "other" furs included smaller quantities of both light furs such as mink (2 oz.) and fox (5 oz.) and heavier furs such as elk, deer, cat, and most significantly bear. (During 1769-83 an annual average of 9174 bear pelts were exported, an average weight of 183,486 pounds.[22]) If one assumes that these various furs in smaller quantities weighed an average of 1 1/4 pounds each it will surely be a conservative estimate. Last, as before 1760, the smuggled and spoiled furs can be estimated. Since Canada had been incorporated into

the British Empire, smuggling to New York could not exist, and there was little reason for Canadians to send their fur there. Until about 1765, some fur was sent to Albany, by merchants who had come from there to Montreal after 1760. Some of these men, such as Cornelius and Abraham Cuyler, were merchants who had been involved in smuggling furs from Montreal to Albany. However, after 1760 there was no benefit in exporting furs from Montreal to England via New York, and this trade ended within a few years.[23] Nevertheless many American merchants, especially those at Albany, became active in the fur trade after 1760, or enlarged what trade they had had before 1760. However these men sent their goods up from Albany, so Canadians did not participate to any significant extent in their transportation system. Thus, although the American role in the trade grew, their employment of Canadian engagés probably declined. However some fur was diverted down the Mississippi.[24] In contrast, changes in imperial relations did not affect the spoilage rate. During the French Regime an estimated 5% of the fur was lost before arrival in Montreal, another 5% before being exported from Quebec City, and another 5% before being received in France. Thus we may assume that at least 10% of the fur was lost or sent to New Orleans. These calculations are shown on Table XVII below.

Table XVII

THE FUR TRADE, 1760-1776

	1 Pelts of all Animals Exported to Great Britain (number)	2 Weight of Beaver Exported to Great Britain (pounds)	3 Weight of Other Furs Exported to Great Britain (pounds)	4 Furs Diverted or Spoiled (pounds)	5 Total Fur Trade (pounds)
1760	12,694				
1761	108,932	59,598	54,258	11,386	125,242
1762					
1763					
1764	214,922	136,036	109,522	24,556	270,114
1765	233,210	156,000	91,790	24,779	272,569
1766	247,155	165,558	111,887	27,744	305,189
1767	249,546	160,914	118,275	27,919	307,108
1768	299,203	173,763	150,284	32,405	356,452
1769	418,775	130,635	324,195	45,483	500,313
1770	353,375	154,380	219,832	37,421	411,633
1771	360,298	147,438	231,084	37,852	416,374
1772	379,031	162,588	258,974	42,156	463,718
1773	307,602	144,998	178,119	34,421	378,627
1774	418,774	153,179	286,462	43,964	483,605
1775	574,515	155,595	479,813	63,541	698,949
1776	441,051	138,064	337,670	47,573	523,307
Averages					
1764-67	233,708				288,745
1768-76	394,736				470,331

Sources: For Pelts Exported (column 1), 1 Shelburne Papers, PAC, MG23, A4, Vol. 31, pp.24-25; Customs Papers, PAC, MG23, GI, Vol. 10, pp.65-66; Frederick Haldimand, in Report on the Canadian Archives, 1882, pp. 60-61; British Treasury, PAC, MG15, T64, Vol. 276A, n.p., PAC microfilm reel B-2983; see also Fernand Ouellet, "Dualité économique et changement technologique au Québec (1760-1790)", Histoire sociale/Social History, 1976, (Vol. IX), pp. 259-273.

As can be seen, during the nine years 1768-76 the average annual weight of the total fur production was about 470,000 pounds. This weight was an increase of 9% over the average 431,000 pounds during the eight years 1751-58. Considering the problems of adjustment to a new Empire during the years after 1760 one would readily expect the trade to have remained depressed for some years. And as the table shows, in the four years immediately before 1768 fur averaged only 288,745 pounds annually. The complete data for 1761 suggests that the overall weight of fur in that year probably approximated this weight. The table shows that 125,242 pounds of fur were sent to Britain; in addition, other furs were sent to France. The Canadian beaver received in France was worth 22,365 French livres and the other furs were worth 510,760 French livres.[25] These furs probably weighed about 275,000 pounds, more or less the same as the furs during the years 1764-67. The average annual weight of furs traded during 1764-67, and probably during all of 1761-67, would have been 30% to 40% less than the weight of furs taken annually during 1751-58 and 1768-76. Although the fur trade had been quick to recover after the war, full recouperation to pre-war levels was delayed until the end of the decade. After 1768, when the fur trade was recovering and when the restrictions on the fur trade were removed, exports increased very quickly.

With these figures on the overall fur production it is possible to test the Trade Licences as was done for the congés de traite of the French Regime. In Table XVIII below, the fur traded (as calculated in Table XVII) and the number of vessels and engagés are restated, and then the loads per canoe and per man are calculated.

Table XVIII

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FUR AND TRADE LICENCES, 1768-1776

	1 Total Furs Traded (pounds)	2 Canoes and Boats (number)	3 Men (number)	4 Furs/ Vessels (pounds)	5 Furs/ Man (pounds)
1768	356,452	10	59	35,645	6042
1769	500,313	104	692	4811	723
1770	411,633	120	699	3430	589
1771	416,374	32	170	13,012	2449
1772	463,718	112	825	4140	562
1773	378,627	94	570	4028	664
1774	483,605	99	696	4885	695
1775	698,949	158	1067	4424	655
1776	523,307	71	447	7371	1171
Average	470,331	89	581	5285	810

Sources: For Total Fur Traded, Table XVII; for Canoes, Boats, and Men (columns 2 and 3), Table XV (PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 110-115, pp. 11-2240).

It is obvious that, if the Trade Licences are correct, the average load of pelts carried by each man in 1768, 1771, and even in 1776 would have been incredibly high - so high that it is not possible to believe that a mere 59, 170, or 447 engagés respectively could have handled the movement of goods and furs in these three years. Even the overall average load for 1768-76 of 810 pounds of fur per man appears excessive - nine 90-pound pieces for each man who had gone up. Such a load is difficult to accept since every canoeman would have to have brought this weight (as well as the canoe) back down through each of the approximately 36 portages, and in practise each man could not carry more than two pieces (180 pounds) a time at each portage. If every man who went up with the spring canoes wanted to come home, was willing to

carry fur down, and was trusted by the merchants to bring it down, then each and every canoe with its average crew of 6.5 men would have to have returned with well over 2 1/2 tons of fur each year. In contrast, if one accepts the contemporary accounts which imply that the labour force was 1500 men, then each man's load would have been about 315 pounds. Such a workload looks more reasonable. This return per canoeman is completely consistent with the returns that existed during the French Regime. As we have seen, before 1716 and apparently during 1716-1760, each canoeman brought down 300-333 pounds of fur. If one starts from the hypothesis that, everything considered, the average canoeman of the 1770s would not have been carrying more furs than the canoemen of the earlier part of the century, then the results appear more realistic than if one uncritically accepts the Trade Licences as a source.

Table XIX

SIZE OF THE LABOUR FORCE CALCULATED FROM FUR TRADED, 1764-1776
(each man returned 333 pounds of fur)

	1 Total Fur Traded (pounds)	2 Men Needed (number)	3 Average Crew (men/vessel)	4 Canoes or Boats (number)
1764	270,114	811		
1765	272,569	819		
1766	305,189	916		
1767	307,108	922		
1768	356,452	1070	5.9	181
1769	500,313	1502	6.7	224
1770	411,633	1236	5.8	213
1771	416,374	1250	5.3	236
1772	463,718	1392	7.4	188
1773	378,627	1136	6.1	186
1774	483,605	1453	7.0	208
1775	698,949	2098	6.8	309
1776	523,307	1586	6.3	252
Average 1768-76	470,331	1412	6.5	217

Sources: For Total Fur Traded, Table XVII; for Average Crew, Tables XV and XVI above (Trade Licences PAC, RG4, B28, Vol.110-115, pp.11-2240).

The average of 1412 men required by the annual trade during 1768-1776 is consistent with the judgement of contemporaries who suggested that about 1500 men were in the west each summer. As was the case for most of a century (1681-1776) the number of men officially authorized for the trade was far fewer than the fur trade's transportation would have required. And, as in all other times during the century, the actual number of men needed in the trade seems to have been generally known and to have been reported by several contemporaries. As we have seen in both the French and British Regimes, their estimates are confirmed by the total weight of fur that Canadian traders

received from the Indians. Repeatedly we have found that the number of men in the official trade was too few to have worked the transportation system, while the number of men reported by observers and participants was very close to the needs of the canoes.

During the years 1764-67, an additional problem existed in the trade. The weight of fur suggests that an average of only 867 men were needed annually during these four years, while all three contemporaries of the period 1761-1776 date from 1766 or 1767 and all three indicate that about 1500 men were engaged in the trade annually. If 1500 men were engaged in these two years, each man would have returned an average of only 204 pounds of fur - a record low. Yet at the time the Canadian traders were vigourously petitioning London, and protesting that prohibitions against wintering with the Indians and the other restrictions were ruining the trade. With a return of only 204 pounds of furs per canoeman, the trade probably would have been bankrupt. Indeed one merchant complained that the trade towards both Michillimachinac and Detroit was "in a most lamentable decay" and that the traders made such small returns to the Montreal and Quebec merchants that they owed the merchants £ 100,000.[26] The expertise of the Canadian traders, and their experience with the Indians, made this low level of return unnecessary. To increase returns some traders sent protests to London and some shipped their furs down the Mississipi to the French at New Orleans.[27] When in 1768 the old Canadian trading practice was revived the amount of fur increased dramatically.

In summary then, during the years 1761-1776 the British revived the French system of trying to regulate the trade by licences. And although

hundreds of these Trade Licences survive, the wide variations in the annual number of men in the licences, the suspiciously low average of vessels per licence, as well as the inconsistencies and gaps in the licences all suggest that more canoemen than those recorded in the Trade Licences were active in the trade. For 1760-67 the Trade Licences do not exist, although the trade continued without interruption. For the next nine years, 1768-1776, the Trade Licences account for several hundred men, barely enough to have been able to have brought down the annual furs, and then only if productivity doubled over that of the canoemen of the French Regime. Observers during 1766-67 revealled that government regulations were widely defied and that about 1500 men were in the west annually. This figure is confirmed by the fur exports. Like the congés de traite of the French Regime, the Trade Licences in this period understate the size of the fur trade, and thus are an inadequate guide to the number of canoemen engaged in the trade.

ii. The Reports on Indian Trade, 1777-1790: The Basis for Measuring the Labour Force in the Fur Trade

From about 1777, as the local merchants found fewer benefits in challenging the licencing system, the colonial government was more successful in controlling the fur trade. The consolidation of the trade, the elimination of Albany, and the American Revolution facilitated this control. Increasingly the trade was dominated by the merchants who combined with other merchants to pool their resources in larger enterprizes. During this period the North West Company, the Southwest Co., and Gregory and Co. were established. The smaller traders either joined or were eliminated; as a result the number of licences fell from 127 in 1777 to 45 in 1790. These large merchants were different men

from the so-called "lawless banditts" who had roamed the west after 1760, cheating and stealing from Indians. The new merchants were, in general, men of substance who had a stake in society and who, although they might clash with government policy, would ultimately uphold law and order.

During the American Revolution, British forces retained control of the posts in the fur country, and so rebel areas were eliminated from the trade. Albany traders such as Phyn and Ellice, Peter Pond, and Simon McTavish moved their operations to Montreal and swelled the ranks of the Montreal merchants. The Rebellion also gave the military government in Canada reason to tighten their regulation of the trade. General Haldimand constantly suspected that some Montreal merchants were shipping supplies to the rebels. He was determined to prevent this possibility, and so strove to eliminate all unauthorized transportation on the Great Lakes. One of his measures was to restrict the carrying of goods on the Great Lakes to the King's ships. The merchants protested, but as late as 1785 it was a condition of trade that on the lakes all pelts must be carried on the King's ships.[28] Haldimand enforced the requirements for Trade Licences, and tried to restrict the licences to trustworthy merchants. Not all who asked for licences got them, and some of the merchants who were refused a pass complained to Lord George Germain,[29] the Secretary of State for the Colonies. These complaints to London suggest that the merchants were unable to operate without Trade Licences.

Haldimand's success, and the difficulties of merchants who did not get a licence, can be seen in the failure of the traders to defy the trade regulations. Joseph Howard had been a trader in Montreal since 1763 and had wide connections among the Montreal merchants. However he was suspected of

having American sympathies and he had helped American prisoners-of-war to escape. Despite his stature, he was arrested in 1779, when he went up to trade without a pass.[30] Another significant trader who clashed with Haldimand's enforcement of the trade regulations was Jean-Marie Ducharme. He had traded in Illinois and Wisconsin, and in 1778 had had a licence to trade at Michillimackinac. However in 1782 when he tried to trade out of Michillimackinac without a licence, he was charged and fined 1500 bundles of wild hay.[31] About 1784 Haldimand also refused to admit trade goods into Canada from the United States. William Taylor of Montreal ordered £ 5000 stg. of Indian goods from England. They were shipped via New York and Oswego. General Haldimand thought they would threaten Canadian trade and so would not let the goods into Canada.[32] The failure of these three substantial traders to operate without licences, suggests that most traders, perhaps even all, did have Trade Licences. If this were the case the licences, more than in the past would be a valid measure of the volume of trade.

For the years 1777-1790, the individual Trade Licences have not been preserved, however the licences were statistically summarized in an annual "Report on Indian Trade". These summaries provide the same details about the volume of trade that the Trade Licences of 1768-1776 give, but the Reports do not name the canoemen. Data is lacking for only two of the fourteen years: the Report for 1784 is completely missing; that for 1779 is for only the trade up the Ottawa River. In the Reports the number of men for 1777 is incomplete and for 1780 is not given: however since the number of boats and canoes is given the labour force can be estimated. Within the nearly one hundred pages of the summaries, there are frequent mathematical errors; these have been corrected in Table XX below. Usually they are not large, except in 1788 when

the Report states a labour force of 3048 men, but the number of men listed adds up to only 1788. None of these shortcomings or gaps are nearly as large or as significant as those in the congés or the Trade Licences where all of the data for several consecutive years are often missing. The data on the volume of Trade is shown below in Table XX.

Table XX

REPORTS ON INDIAN TRADE, 1777-1790

	1 No. of Licences	2 No. of Canoes	3 No. of Boats	4 No. of Men	5 Value (£) of Trade Goods
1777	127	155	312	*2341	176,665
1778	111	152	374	2603	191,013
1779	(incomplete)				
1780	104	114	293	*2212	177,100
1781	74	103	235	1766	155,815
1782	87	120	250	2021	184,055
1783	96	126	331	2465	226,922
1784					
1785	67	141	276	2428	160,641
1786	67	163	163	2148	144,880
1787	53	116	167	1787(sic)	97,972
1788	43	113	192	1788(sic)	109,225
1789	40	103	250	1983	124,940
1790	45	117	271	2254	151,500

* estimated

Source: Reports on Indian Trade. PAC. RG4. B28. Vol. 115, pp.2250-2347.

Not only do these Reports on Indian Trade yield data for most years, but unlike both the congés de traite during the French Regime and the Trade Licences of 1760-1776, the Reports yield a series of figures that remain consistent for a period of several years. Generally somewhat over 2000 men were recorded; the smallest annual number of men (1766 in 1781) is not even a

third less than the highest (2603 in 1778). In contrast, in the periods before 1777, the recorded labour force often fluctuates by several hundred per cent within a few year period. In addition to providing this remarkable consistency the Reports show that the size of the "official" labour force had dramatically increased over that in 1776: then it was 447 men, in 1777 it was more than 500% larger - 2341 men; during 1760-76 the official labour force averaged only 581 men, after 1777 it was three of four times as large. This annual labour force of more than 2000 men appears consistent with the volume of fur exports, and considering the number of men needed annually before 1777, may have been large enough to have taken up the necessary trade goods and brought the furs back down. In addition to the labour force, the value of the annual trade goods that the canoemen carried up to the Indian country was larger in this source: it had been about £ 40,000 before 1777 and then it quadrupled, to approximately £ 160,000. Almost as striking is the large number of boats in the trade. Before 1777 only a handful appeared each year; after 1776 the boats were never fewer than the canoes, and usually were twice as numerous. Since boats and canoes, as well as the number of men in each, are given separately in the Reports, averages for the size of the canoe crews (and boat crews) can be computed.

Within these fourteen years, despite the relative stability of the value of trade goods, and of the numbers of canoes, boats, and men, there was a very large decline in the number of issued licences. This change, and others, can be seen below in Table XXI.

Table XXI

EXPEDITION AND CANOE CREW SIZES, 1777-1790

	1 Trade Licences (number)	2 Vessels (number)	3 Men (number)	4 Vessels/ Licences	5 Men/ Canoe
1777	127	467	2341	3.68	7.05
1778	111	526	2603	4.74	7.28
1779	Ottawa River only	135 (canoes)	1256	-	9.30
1780	104	407	-	-	-
1781	74	338	1766	3.91	8.02
1782	87	370	2021	4.25	8.50
1783	96	457	2465	4.76	9.55
1784					
1785	67	417	2488	6.22	9.39
1786	67	326	2148	4.87	9.34
1787	53	283	1787	5.34	9.65
1788	43	305	1788	7.09	9.03
1789	40	353	1983	8.83	9.54
1790	45	388	2254	8.62	10.00

Source: Reports on Indian Trade, PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 115, pp.2250-2347.

This table shows quite clearly the growth in the size of both the fur expeditions and the canoe crews. The number of vessels (canoes and boats) per licence, which officially had been more or less stable at between 1 1/2 and 2 for half a century before 1777, suddenly doubled to four, or a little less. Then, in just fourteen years, the number of canoes and boats per licence doubled again and more to almost nine. Similarly, the size of the canoe crews, which had been about six men as early as the 1740s had increased to only a little over seven men by 1777; but in the next thirteen years the average canoe crew increased to ten men. This growth in the average size of the canoes was caused by the displacement of the smaller six-man canoes by boats on the St. Lawrence, and by the continuing growth of the maître canoes on the Ottawa River, which had had crews of eight men even before the end of

the French Regime. Both these changes, as well as the use of boats, were the result of the merchants' efforts to find solutions to the increasing effectiveness of government control, the receeding fur frontier, and the escalating costs of labour.

As with the congés de traite and the Trade Licences, the Reports on Indian Trade can be tested by their relationship to the weight of the fur transported. The numbers of fur pelts of each animal that were exported from Quebec City are known for 1777-86 and 1788, and from these the weight of fur can be calculated by the same approach that was used for 1768-76. The results of this calculation are shown in Table XXII below. First the total number of pelts is set out in column 1, then the beaver pelts are separated out and converted to weight (column 2), next the weight of all other types of pelts is estimated. The weight of beaver exported annually averaged about 185,000 pounds, which was not a large increase over the preceeding half century. However the pelts of other animals increased dramatically. Generally, although there are fluctuations, a total of about 200-250,000 pounds of otter, raccoon, (1 1/2 lb. each) dressed deer, castorum, (1 lb each), martin (2 oz.), and muskrat (3 oz.) were exported. In addition approximately 200,000 pelts of various other animals including mink, (2 oz.) fox, (3 oz.), thousands of bear pelts (20 lb. each), and many others in very small quantities were exported. We can guess the average weight of these pelts at 1 1/4 pounds each. The sum of these calculations is the weight of the official exports from Quebec City. Last, (in column 4) one can allow 10% for the furs that were lost before being exported from Quebec City. By this time, especially during the American Revolution, smuggling into New York had virtually stopped, but the Mississippi trade and spoilage would probably not have changed. The sum of these calculations is the total weight of the fur traded from the Indians and shipped down to Montreal.

Table XXII

THE FUR TRADE, 1777-1788

	1 Pelts of all Animals Exported to Great Britain	2 Weight of Beaver Exported to Great Britain (pounds)	3 Weight of Other Furs Exported to Great Britain (pounds)	4 Furs Diverted or Spoiled (pounds)	5 Total Fur Trade (pounds)
1777	715,171	177,372	625,290	79,266	871,928
1778	620,540	156,522	562,421	71,894	790,837
1779	568,857	206,610	465,467	67,208	739,285
1780	524,367	181,920	394,668	57,659	634,247
1781	539,013	188,673	292,169	48,084	528,926
1782	401,770	165,730	290,551	45,628	501,909
1783	526,307	158,151	435,089	59,324	652,564
1784	783,151	192,930	-	-	-
1785	688,661	226,874	511,531	73,840	812,245
1786	700,064	174,934	491,014	66,604	732,642
1787	-	-	-	-	-
1788	600,148	196,137	517,472	71,361	784,970

Sources: For Pelts exported to Great Britain (column 1), see Haldimand Papers in Report on Canadian Archives, 1882, p.61 for 1777-1783; Custom Records (Quebec City), PAC, MG23, G1, Vol. 10, pp.72-73 for 1785-1788; Shelburne Papers, PAC, MG23, A4, vol. 29, p.194 for 1784. See also F. Ouellet, "Dualité économique" HS/SH, 1976, p.273.

Table XXII shows that the fur production fluctuated more than it had during 1768-76. The average annual fur catch was about 700,000 pounds, but the low was 200,000 pounds less, and the high was more than 100,000 pounds more. The most striking information in this table is the dramatic increase in total fur production. In the years just before 1777 (1768-76) an average of 470,000 pounds was produced annually; suddenly it increased 50% to just over 700,000 pounds annually. This increase was caused by a number of factors. Because the American Revolution had stopped trade between the mother country and New York (as well as other rebel colonies) many Albany merchants, including Peter Pond and Simon McTavish, had moved their operations to

Montreal. During this period trading expeditions penetrated the Northwest in large numbers for the first time and brought large rich cargoes back to Montreal. For the first time during these years large expeditions of many canoes and dozens of men were organized[32] - by the end of the period the average canoe crew was ten men and the average expedition was over eight vessels. The increased fur catch was caused by both an increase in the number of merchants (including those from Albany), and an increase in the efficiency and organization of their expeditions.

As in all previous periods during the preceding century the overall fur production is the basis on which to calculate the offical labour force recorded in the official licences. In Table XXIII below, the total fur production and the number of vessels and engagés are restated from earlier tables, and then the load per vessel and per man calculated. The weight per vessel, unfortunately, cannot be compared to canoe loads of previous years since during this period more than half the vessels were boats.

Table XXIII

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEEN FUR AND THE REPORTS ON INDIAN TRADE, 1777-1788

	1 Total Fur Trade (pounds)	2 Canoes and Boats (number)	3 Men (number)	4 Furs/ Vessel (pounds)	5 Furs/ Man (pounds)
1777	871,928	467	2341	1867	372
1778	790,837	526	2603	1503	304
1779	739,285	-	-	-	-
1780	634,247	407	2212	1558	287
1781	528,926	338	1766	1565	300
1782	501,909	370	2021	1357	248
1783	652,564	457	2465	1428	265
1784	-	-	-	-	-
1785	812,245	417	2488	1948	326
1786	732,642	326	2148	2247	341
1787	-	283	1787	-	-
1788	784,970	305	1788	2572	439
Total (of complete years)	6,310,268	3613	19,772	1747	319

Sources: For Total Fur Trade, Table XXII; for Canoes, Boats, and Men, Table XXI (PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 115, pp.2250-2347).

The table shows that in nine of the twelve years the weight of the fur load for each man can be calculated, and that for all nine years the average weight carried by each engagé is close to what accounts for the trade reveal was each man's actual load. The number of men hired was large enough to have carried down through all the portages the weight of fur that was exported in each of the nine years. The overall average weight of 319 pounds of fur for each man engaged during the period is not only plausable, it is also consistent with the findings in all earlier periods during the preceding century that 300-333 pounds of fur were produced for each canoeman (or boatman) engaged to go up-country. The number of men recorded by the "Reports

on Indian Trade" corresponds to the size of the labour force that would have been necessary to take the trade goods up country, and to bring the furs back down to Montreal. After a century the colonial government had succeeded for the first time in "controlling" the fur trade. A small unofficial trade may have remained, but it would have been very small. This control was possible because Governor-General Haldimand was determined to prevent supplies being shipped via the fur posts to the American rebels, and because the trade was passing into the hand of fewer and fewer merchants. The opportunities for small unlicenced trade expeditions had become a thing of the past.

The finding that 319 pounds of fur was produced per engagé in the official trade not only indicates that the unofficial trade was either non-existent or negligible by this period, it also tends to support the argument that the unofficial trade had been extensive during the previous century. This productivity of 319 pounds of fur per engagé came after a hundred years of evolution and improvements in the techniques of the trade, and after a recent reorganization and consolidation of the trade. It is inconceivable that these changes had come hand in hand with a dramatic decline in the productivity of the trade, as would be the case if the earlier Trade Licences and congés de traite were even remotely accurate about the size of the labour force. The productivity of the engagés shows that the congés and the Trade licences are not a reasonable measure of the size of the labour force, and proves that the Reports on the Indian Trade are the basis on which Canadian participation in the fur trade can be measured.

The table also shows, not surprisingly, that exports varied from year to year, and we may assume that the annual return per canoeman also varied. For

the various periods before 1777, only average annual fur production over many years (the equivalents of the 319 pounds for this period) have been used, and therefore these annual fluctuations have not been identified. The constant annual average return of about 300-333 pounds of fur per man seems curious since the upstream loads continued to grow until they were as high as 720 pounds per man in the eight and ten-man canoes. However because of the yearly variations in the weight of fur brought down, some flexibility in the downstream capacity was essential to the trade. In this period 439 pounds per man was returned one year and if those furs were bulkier than the goods carried up they might have needed the space of 500 or 600 pounds of European goods. At the same time, all the men who went up to the fur posts were not available to carry furs back down. Some perished, and each year some stayed at the posts or went down to the Mississippi, or disappeared into the pays d'En Haut. And of the majority who returned not all would necessarily have been trusted by the merchants or their agents to safely bring the furs down to Montreal. Thus the extra cargo capacity on the downstream canoes was useful, perhaps even necessary, for the fast and safe transport of the furs down to Montreal.

This period 1777-1790 can be summarized as the period in which the government by reducing its involvement in the fur trade was at last able to "control" the fur traders. Yet at the same time, the actual licences of the period have been lost; only the Reports on Indian Trade, which are annual summaries of the licences, still exist. These reports indicate that about 2200 men annually were authorized for the trade in this period. These thirteen years were a turning point in the trade: more and more merchants were combining their efforts together into larger fur expeditions; at the same time

they were developing the techniques of the trade by enlarging the crews in the canoes and, on the St. Lawrence, replacing the six-man canoes with boats. These changes were accelerated by the American Revolution which cut off New York (and the other rebel colonies) from the inland posts, thus forcing the Albany Traders to move to Montreal, and which also gave Governor-General Haldimand a reason to enforce the regulations requiring licences. When the total weight of the furs is calculated and compared to the number of men in the Reports on Indian Trade, it is apparent that, for the first time, all or almost all the men needed to manage the transportation system were in the official trade. The licencing system, which had existed for a hundred years, had finally become an accurate indication of the number of men engaged in the fur trade.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter III

1. See Murray G. Lawson, Fur: A Study in English Mercantilism, 1700-1775, Toronto, 1943, pp. 52-58; and R.A. Humphrey "Governor Murray's View on the Plan of 1764 for the Management of Indian Affairs", Canadian Historical Review, 1935, pp. 162-169.

2. See Jean N. McIlwraith, Sir Frederich Haldimand, (The Makers of Canada, Vol. VI), Toronto, 1906, p. 32.

3. See State Minute Books, PAC, RG1, E1, Vol 1, pp. 38, 44.

4. See Marjorie Gordon Jackson, "The Beginning of British Trade at Michillimackinac", Minnesota History, Vol. II (1930), p. 238.

5. See "Petition of Merchants of Albany to the Lords of Trade, March 1764" in E.B. O'Callaghan (ed.), Documents relative to the Colonial History of the state of New-York, Albany, 1856-57, Vol. VII, pp. 613-615.

6. See Jackson, "British Trade at Michillimackinac", pp. 231-270.

7. See Fernand Ouellet, "Dualité économique et changement technologique au Québec (1760-1790)", Histoire sociale/Social History, 1976 (Vol. IX), p. 263 (from W.S. Dunn's "Western Commerce, 1760-1774", Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1971).

8. PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 110-115. In most years one or two licences were issued to trade by sloop at Bay de Chaleur, or by sleigh in winter on the Saint John River. These licences have not been included here.

9. See note on Trade Licence No. 30, 26 April 1773, Vol. 114, p. 1832.

10. See Jackson, "British Trade at Michillimackinac", p. 253, and Thomas Elliot Norton, The Fur Trade in Colonial New York 1686-1776, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1974, pp. 213-214. Major Henry Bassett called these traders ".. the outcasts of all nations, the refuse of mankind." See Michigan Historical Collections, (Haldimand Papers), Vol. XIX, pp. 297-8, Vol. XX, p. 288.

11. See Minutes of the Council of Quebec, 3 December 1766, PAC, RGI, E1, Vol. 3, p. 287, and Gage to Shelburne, January and February 1767, PAC, MG23, A1 (Dartmouth Papers), Vol. 5, pp. 5567, 5568, 5578.

12. See Johnson to Gage, 15 January 1767, NYCD, Vol. 11, pp.484-5.

13. See Johnson to Guy Carleton, 27 January 1767, in Alexander C. Fleck et al (eds.), The Papers of Sir William Johnson, Vol. V, p. 482. For Carleton's response (including the names of the men) see ibid., p. 521.

14. See Sir William Johnston to the Earl of Shelburne, 30 June 1767, NYCD, VII, p. 929.

15. See Brown to Gage, 15 June 1770, Johnson Papers, Vol. VII, p. 717; note on Trade Licence No. 72, 1770, (PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 113); Sir William Johnson to the Earl of Hillsborough, 29 June 1772, PAC, MG23, A1 (Dartmouth Papers), Vol. 1, pp. 956-961; Trade Licence No. 37 of 1773, (PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 114, p. 1847); William Wier to Hon. George Allsopp, 15 July 1776, ibid., Vol. 115, p. 2175.

16. See Benjamin Frobisher to Shelburne, 10 November 1766, PAC, MG23, A4, Vol. 4, p. 162.

17. See Robert Rogers, PAC, MG21, Ad.Ms. 35915 (Hardwicke Papers), p. 226; or William L. Clements (ed.), "Rogers's Michillimackinac Journal", Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, 1918 (Vol. XXVIII), p. 265; and reprinted in Innis, The Fur Trade, pp. 414-416.

18. See PAC, MG23, A1 (Dartmouth Papers), Vol. 1, pp. 831-835 or Vol. 5, pp. 5629-5630. These figures are printed in Capt. Charles E. Lart (ed.), "Fur Trade Returns, 1767", Canadian Historical Review, 1922 (Vol. III), p. 358.

19. See Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, "Memoire", Wisconsin State Historical Society Collections, 1908 (Vol. XVIII), pp. 167-195. His figures, at least for the Ottawa River are supported by data in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 100. The values for the trade were sent to Murray on 10 August 1761. See Murray to Egremont, 5 June 1762, App. 5, PAC, MG23, A4 (Shelburne Papers) Vol. 16, p.48. The data seems to have been considered valuable in England, since it was widely copied, see MG21, Ad. Ms. 35915 (Hardwicke Papers), p. 173, or MG8, E1, pp. 139-140. See also Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 100.

20. See Shelburne Papers, PAC, MG23, A4, Vol. 31, pp. 24-25 (for 1760-61); Customs Papers, PAC, MG23, G1, Vol. 10, pp. 65-66 (for 1764-1773); Frederick Haldimand, in Report on the Canadian Archives, 1882, pp. 60-61 (for 1769-1783); British Treasury, PAC, MG15, T64, Vol. 276A, n.p., PAC microfilm reel B-2983 gives the pelts landed in England from Canada for 1773-1775. Another series, in Ouellet, "Dualité économique", HS/SH, pp.259, 273, seems to be compiled largely from the customs figures and Haldimand. For all but one or two years the series of figures support each other.

21. Canadian historians have generally accepted that beaver pelts weighed 1-1/2 pounds each. See, for example, Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 2. Alexander Mackenzie referred to a shipment of 13,364 of fine beaver pelts which weighed 19,283 pounds - an averge of 1.44 pounds each. See also Paul McCann, Quebec's Balance of Payments, 1768-1772: A Quantitative Model, M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1982, pp. 77-78. For the weights of other pelts see Chapter II, footnote 49.

22. See Haldimand, Report of the Canadian Archives, 1882, pp. 60-61. (Bear pelts weigh about 20 pounds each.)

23. See Norton, The Fur Trade in Colonial New York, pp. 200-1.

24. See George Croghan to Sir William Johnson, 18 October 1767, Johnson Papers, XII, 373; Gage to Shelburne, 17 January 1767, PAC, MG23, A1, Vol. 5, p. 5573, and 22 February 1767, in Newton D. Mereness (ed.), Travels in the American Colonies 1690-1783, 1961, pp. 460-1.

25. See Alice Jean Elizabeth Lunn, Economic Development in New France, 1713-1760, Ph.D. thesis, McGill, 1942, p. 464. Since during 1751-58 annual imports into France of other furs averaged about 875,000 livres in value and, as we saw in Chapter II, about 229,963 pounds in weight, it is likely that in 1761, the 510,760 livres in value probably weighed about 144,000 pounds. The 22,365 livres worth of beaver would have weighed about 5000 pounds.

26. See F. Maseres to Fowler Walker, 19 November 1767, PAC, MG21, Ad. Ms. 35915 (Hardwicke Papers), p. 247.

27. On the Mississippi Trade, see footnote No. 24 above.

28. See draft licence approved by the Executive Council, 16 April 1785, PAC, RG1, E1, Vol. 13, pp. 139-140. See also Innis, The Fur Trade, pp. 180-184.

29. See McIlwraith, Sir Frederick Haldimand, pp. 165-66. See also Haldimand to Lord George Germain, 25 October 1780, quoted in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 181.

30. See WSHS Collections, 1910 (Vol. XIX), p. 238n.

31. See WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), pp. 161-2n, and Ida Amanda Johnson, The Michigan Fur Trade, p. 65. (Both their sources are Grignon, in WSHS Collections, Vol. III (c. 1860), pp. 233-34.)

32. See letter to Shelburne, February 1785, PAC, MG23, A4, Vol. 30, p. 21.

33. One of the best known of these early large expeditions was the one Peter Pond called the "Saskatchewan group". Alexander Henry and Cadotte left Sault Ste. Marie 10 June 1775 with eight canoes; Peter Pond, with two canoes, left later but caught up with them 18 August at the month of the Winnipeg River. On the 7 September they were joined on Lake Winnipeg by Joseph and Thomas Frobisher with six canoes and Paterson with fourteen canoes. This total of 30 canoes and 130 men pooled some of their resources to eliminate competition. Innis considered this group a forerunner of the North West Company. See Harold Innis, Peter Pond: Fur Trader and Adventurer, Toronto, 1930, pp. 70-73. See also Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 194.

    The Frobishers' licence (No. 14, PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 115) was in the names of James McGill, Benjamen Frobisher, and Maurice Blondeau. Henry and Cadott licence (No. 12, ibid.) was for four canoes. (See also Henry's Travels and Adventures.)

Chapter IV

THE NOTARIAL CONTRACTS AND PRIVATE CONTRACTS, 1670-1821

At first glance one might think that the notarial contracts would be a more direct indication of the size of the labour force in the fur trade. They were the merchants' instrument to hire and control the labour force; in contrast, the congés de traite and the Trade Licences were the government's instrument to attempt to control the merchants. And if one wants to measure the labour force, is it not more reasonable to turn to the system intended to control the labour force than to the system intended to control the merchants? From 1670 to 1821, contracts engaging about 24,207 men for the fur trade were arranged before a notary. These contracts bound the canoemen to the merchants for an expedition to a particular post; often described the canoemen's function; detailed specific service or exemption from usual service, and stated his pay, which usually (at least around 1800) was a combination of money and goods.

An inventory of the fur trade engagements conserved in Montreal was published by E-Z. Massicotte between 1929 and 1947.[1] His inventory of the approximately 24,000 engagements runs across more than a thousand printed pages. Recently, Gratien Allaire has argued that Massicotte's inventory, at least for 1701-1745, is weak because some contracts were omitted, not all names on some collective contracts were included, and only those contracts in Montreal were counted.[2] Allaire compiled a table showing the number of engagements for each year from 1701-1745. His table covers almost one third of the period of Massicotte's inventory and records 5,964 engagements -- about a quarter of Massicotte's number. Despite his rejection of Massicotte's

inventory, the statistical differences between the two are not large. Allaire concedes that 98.2% of the contracts are in Montreal. For the period 1701-1715, Allaire's only significant addition to Massicotte's inventory appears to be the ninety-nine engagements recorded before Louis Chambalon in Quebec City. For the years 1739-1745 Allaire has 2117 engagements, 35.5% of his total; Massicotte's inventory adds up to 2110 - a difference of a third of one percent. So it seems that Allaire has not made large additions to Massicotte's inventories of the contracts, and that those inventories may be used to critically analyse the notarial contracts as a source to measure the size of the labour force in the fur trade. In the tables which follow, the number of engagements has been compiled from Massicotte's inventory for the years before 1701 and for 1739-1821; from 1701-1738 Allaire's own figures are used. The tables include 12,005 men for the French period and 12,205 men for the British period. For all periods the engagements during November and December are included in the following years.

The important question, however, is not related to the completeness of Massicotte's inventories. Rather, it is the extent to which the notaries were used to record the engagements of men for the fur trade. In recent years the representative character of the notarial contracts has been disputed. Louise Dechêne, who was primarily interested in the period 1708-1717, has claimed that the notarial contracts record virtually all comings and goings in the fur trade. On the other hand, Fernand Ouellet, who was primarily but not exclusively concerned with the British period, has shown very important gaps in the notarial records. He has concluded that other sources and methods must be considered either to judge the number of men in the trade or to understand their origins.[3]

Even without comparing the notarial contracts with other sources, it is apparent that they are an inadequate measure of the labour force: two significant general deficiencies in the notarial records indicate that they can not be a complete record of all engagements. Gratien Allaire cites evidence that perhaps one sixth of notarial documents have been lost.[4] If so, then approximately 5000 engagements for the fur trade are lost. Even more critically, not all engagements for the fur trade needed to be recorded before a notary. Agreements could be made privately - sous seing privé. In hiring men to go into the wilderness, beyond the niceties of legal records, merchants (and their out-fitters and guides) must have preferred men they knew and trusted. The hirings of Laurent Ermatinger may be an example: according to his engagement books he hired 104 men during 1773-75 and another 145 men in 1778 to 1781. However, Ermatinger does not appear once in the notarial records of those years.[5]

Several historians have compared the notarial contracts for the west with other records. In each case, gaps and deficiencies in the notarial records have been made apparent. These comparisons are cited in the following pages when considering the 150 years of the notarial contracts. However, for all periods the deficiencies are obvious when the engagements are considered in the light of the fur catch. Surprisingly, for most of the years, a smaller labour force is indicated in the notarial contracts than exists in the congés and Trade Licences. Obviously the merchants considered these contracts less important than government approval to trade. As we have seen the systems of control were ineffective for the century before 1777, and consequently the records of the administration of those systems can today yield information

about only a segment of the trade. If, as is the case, even fewer men are in this source, than it cannot possibly be a valid measure of the size of the labour force.

1. Limited Use of Notarial Contracts, 1670-1715

Although the first surviving contract was recorded in 1670, the second one does not occur until 1682: the source begins with a twelve year gap. Then, only 664 notarial engagements have survived from the next 34 year period (1682-1715). The number from each year is shown in Table XXIV below.

Table XXIV

DES ENGAGEMENTS POUR L'OUEST, 1670-1715
(number of men)

1670	1		
		1701	67
1682	1	1702	96
1683	2	1703	63
1684	0	1704	87
1685	16	1705	111
1686	4	1706	16
1687	1	1707	19
1688	61	1708	17
1689	8	1709	4
1690	26	1710	15
1691	19	1711	1
1692	28	1712	23
1693	37	1713	34
1694	64	1714	16
1695	36	1715	48
1696	7		
1697	2		
1698	2		
1699	1		
1700	7		
Total (1682-1700)	322	Total (1701-1715)	342
Annual average	17	Annual average	23

Sources: E-Z. Massicotte (ed.), "Répertoire des engagements pour l'Ouest conservés dans les Archives judiciaires de Montréal", Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, Vol. 10 (1929-30), pp. 195ff, and Gratien Allaire "Les engagements pour la traite des fourrures: évaluation de la documentation", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique française, Vol. 34, no. 1, juin 1980, 3-26.

One is struck by the variations: frequently very few men were engaged through the notaries, at other times many men were engaged this way. However, the figures were never high in thirteen years, less than ten men were hired annually. The contracts were most heavily used during 1701-05, when the

annual average was 85 men. In each of those five years the Compagnie de la Colonie du Canada engaged about fifty men to go to Detroit.[6] These wide fluctuations are one indication that the notarial contracts are not a reliable measure of the size of the labour force. However, the small number of contacts is an even stronger indication of the limits of the source. During the seventeenth century a yearly average of only 17 men were hired, and during 1701-1715 an average of only 23 men were hired each year. These figures are extremely low, so low that it is surprising that historians have given so much weight to these documents when they have written about the labour force.

As soon as other information on the number of men in the trade is examined, it becomes apparent that the men mentioned in the notarial contracts were just a fraction of the engagés hired for the trade. For the years 1708-1717 (a decade when, officially, the fur trade was not permitted) Louise Dechêne has identified 668 voyageurs and engagés.[7] According to the notarial contracts, the engagés in this group could not have numbered more than 282 - only 42% of the 668 men, and by her calculations were only 220 of the men. Is it not curious that the voyageurs were more numerous than the canoemen? One must also remember that during the years 1681-1696 the official congés had permitted 75 men to go west each year; yet, for the decade 1708-1717 an average of only 19 men were hired annually, according to these notarial contracts. Dechêne's data includes 1120 departures by engages and voyageurs during the decade - an average of 112 per year. And as we have seen, the colonists ignored the limit of 75 men and mobilized expeditions for the west that involved more than 500 men each year. The best way to test the value of the notarial contracts as an indicator of popular participation in the fur trade is to look at their relationship with the average weight of furs carried

by the engagés, as was done with the congés and Trade Licences. In Table XXV below the average annual weight of fur and the number of men needed (as calculated in Chapter 1) are set out, then the number of men hired by notarial contract is shown, and finally the weight of fur each man would have had to have carried, if no other men were available, is calculated.

Table XXV

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FUR AND NOTARIAL CONTRACTS, 1675 - 1715

	1 Estimated Annual Fur Trade (pounds)	2 Estimated Annual Labour Force (No. of men)	3 Men Hired by Notarial Contract (annual average)	4 Furs Traded Per Man* (pounds)
1675-80	123,749	371	0	-
1681-87	177,766	534	4	44,442
1688-95	-	-	35	-
1696-1705	-	-	44	-
1706-15	217,286	651	19	11,421
1675-1715	180,998	544	16	11,312

*Column 1 divided by Column 3.

Sources: For Fur Trade and Labour Force (columns 1 and 2), Chapter 1; for Men Hired by Notarial Contracts, Table XXIV or Massicotte (ed.), RAPQ, Vol. 10 (1929-30), pp. 195ff.

So if the notarial contracts are a valid source during these forty years, the average load of fur carried by an ordinary engagé on the rivers and at the portages would have been the equivalent of 128 ninety pound pieces! At this time, the canoes generally used had a capacity of 1000 pounds and a crew of three men. In these conditions there is no need to dwell upon the difficulties raised by the extensive use of these documents by Dechêne and Allaire in attempts to support their views about the nature of the New France peasantry.

ii. Increased Hiring By Notarial Contracts, 1716-1760

It is evident that, during the years before 1715, only a small proportion of engagés were hired through the notaries: for the period 1675-1715, less than 3% of the canoemen were recruited in this way (see Table XXV). But during the first half of the eighteenth century the merchants were changing their practices, and more and more frequently when they were preparing their fur expeditions they hired through the notaries' offices. From 1716 to 1760 the number of men engaged by notarial contracts increased enormously: 67 men annually during the period 1716-1730; 268 during 1731 to 1750; and 452 during 1751 to 1760. The number of men hired by notarial contracts increased 6.7 times while the fur production did not even double. This growth was so much larger than the growth of the labour force (according to our estimates calculated from the weight of furs) that the percentage of men hired by this method increased from 7% of the approximate number of canoemen during the years 1716-1730 to 22% during the next two decades, and then to 35% during the 1750s. In Table XXVI the annual figures showing this transformation are presented. At the same time the weight of fur traded from the Indians is given, and then the weight that each man would have had to have carried is computed.

The table shows that, as with other sources, the number of men for each year varies a great deal, practically from year to year: in 1752, 683 men are in this source; for many other years about that time fewer than half that number are indicated; for some years, such as 1746 and 1750, much less than half. These fluctuations, which exist for all of the 45 years from 1716-1760, are another indication of the weakness of the contracts as a measure of the size of the labour force in the fur trade. A new problem emerges from the data contained in Table XXVI : not only would the weight carried by the

Table XXVI

The Relationship Between Fur and Notarial Contracts, 1716 – 1760

	1. Fur Production (pounds)	2. Men Hired by Notarial Contracts	3. Pounds per Man
1716	–	58	–
1717	298,955	66	4529
1718	–	56	–
1719	–	46	–
1720	–	47	–
1721	–	75	–
1722	336,735	67	5026
1723	244,928	78	3140
1724	–	112	–
1725	–	73	–
1726	276,413	141	1960
1727	–	151	–
1728	286,650	73	3927
1729	261,343	68	3843
1730	330,194	68	4856
1731	266,175	185	1439
1732	348,075	153	2275
1733	464,570	196	2370
1734	307,125	296	1038
1735	438,349	256	1712
1736	464,033	299	1552
1737	305,546	286	1068
1738	323,242	380	851
1739	328,592	266	1235
1740	316,827	290	1093
1741	–	344	–
1742	387,398	318	1126
1743	493,500	313	1552
1744	493,500	297	1577
1745	444,150	281	1495
1746	465,359	100	4654
1747	372,393	257	1445
1748	410,029	312	1314
1749	–	343	–
1750	–	192	–
1751	420,700	497	846
1752	420,700	683	616
1753	420,700	579	727
1754	433,406	703	616
1755	488,341	472	1035
1756	420,700	369	1140
1757	420,700	713	590
1758	420,700	335	1256
1759	–	131	–
1760	–	35	–

Sources: For Fur Production (column 1), Table XIII (Chapter II); for Notarial Hirings (column II) see E-Z. Massicotte "Répertoire des engagements pour l'Ouest conservés dans les Archives judiciaires de Montréal", Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, Vol. 10 (1929-30), pp. 191-466, Vol. 11 (1930-31), pp. 353-453, Vol. 12 (1931-32), pp. 243-365; and Gratien Allaire, "Les engagements pour la traite des fourrures: évaluation de la documentation", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique française, juin 1980 (Vol. 34, No. 1), 3-26.

engagés have been enormous, but also the average load carried by each canoeman would have decreased extraordinarily during these 45 years. During the period 1716-1733 their loads averaged 3336 pounds, then they fell to an average of 1551 pounds for the next 15 years, and then dropped again to 853 pounds during 1751-58. This would have been an astonishing decline in productivity. If, in fact, the notarial contracts were complete, the average engagé's load of furs in the canoes declined 74%, despite the merchants' efforts to increase the size of the canoes and enlarge the crews, in order to save money on wages and transportation costs. This contradiction does not mean that the notarial contracts do not reveal anything valuable about the labour force; nevertheless our contention is that, perhaps surprisingly, these documents are even less useful then the congés de traite as instruments to measure the labour force engaged in the fur trade.

Knowing what we already do about the failure of the system of the congés and its incompleteness as a source, it is reasonable to expect that the size of the labour force compiled from the notarial contracts would be much larger than that derived from the congés. But such is not the case. These shortcomings in the contracts have even been pointed out by Gratien Allaire. For each year from 1716-1745 he compared the number of men in the contracts with the annual labour force authorized by the congés de traite. The number of men engaged by notarial contract was almost always smaller - usually much smaller - than the number permitted by the congés. Allaire summarizes his comparison by pointing out that, between 1716 and 1730, a labour force of 1606 men was allowed by the congés, but only 622 men (38.7% of those permitted) were hired by notarial contract. Similarly he found that from 1731 to 1745, 3753 men were allowed by the congés, but only 2348 men - 62.6% - appeared

before a notary.[8] Needless to say, since the congés themselves are incomplete and reveal only part of the actual labour force, the percent of the canoemen who were hired by these contracts was even smaller than these figures. This comparison which Allaire made between the notarial contracts and the congés from 1716 to 1745 can be extended to 1752. The result of this critical exercise (and a comparison back to 1739) can be seen in Table XXVII.

Table XXVII

MANPOWER LEVELS IN CONGES AND NOTARIAL CONTRACTS, 1739-1752

	1 Men Authorized by Congés (number)	2 Men Authorized by Notarial Contracts (number)	3 Percent in Contracts of Men Allowed by Congés
1739	391	266	68.0
1740	318	290	91.2
1741	-		-
1742	-		-
1743	468	313	66.9
1744	551	297	83.9
1745	430	281	65.3
1746	220	100	45.5
1747	330	257	77.9
1748	348	312	89.7
1749	453	343	75.7
1750	449	192	42.8
1751	462	497	107.6
1752	226	683	302.2
TOTAL	4646	3831	82.5

Sources: For Congés, Chapter II (especially Table VIII); for Notarial Contracts, Table XXVI.

As is apparent, fewer men (except for 1751 and 1752) were recorded in the notarial contracts than were permitted by the congés. Sometimes, but not always, considerably fewer. These variations do not reflect the fluctuation and the movement of trade. Rather they reflect the merchants' habits in the use of notaries in hiring men. For example, during the five years 1747-1752, François Chevalier used notaries to engage 180 men but in the next five years he engaged only 43 men this way. (However for 1747-1752 Chevalier's name appears on only one congé which was for one six-man canoe; his other 174 men are not mentioned in the congés.) Similarly, Alex Monières hired only two men by notarial contract in 1747, but then in 1753-1758 he used the notaries when hiring 320 of his men.[9] These variations in the traders' use of notarial contracts can be assessed by comparing the names of traders who had congés with the names of traders who used notaries to hire canoemen. Some traders recorded the men's names on the congés; some traders hired men by notarial contracts; but only a few traders both had congés and used notarial contracts. In Table XXVIII the total number of traders identified in both sources in selected years is shown, and then the number (and percentage) of these traders who are mentioned in each source is shown. As can be seen, out of the total number of traders mentioned in both souces, only 60% had congés, and only 63% used notarial contracts, and there is not a large co-incidence between the two groups of traders. The percent of identified traders using notaries varies from 39% to 72%. This finding is not a surprise. In some trading expeditions one merchant, perhaps an importer or a favourite of the government, held the congé and another merchant, or an outfitter, hired the canoemen. The tradition of giving congés to people who were expected to sell them to merchants was also well established. So one would perhaps expect that men

Table XXVIII

TRADERS MENTIONED IN CONGES AND NOTARIAL CONTRACTS, 1739-1751

	1 Known Traders	2 Traders Mentioned in Congés	3 Traders Mentioned in Notarial Contracts	4 Traders Mentioned in Both Both Sources
1739	89	49 (55%)	59 (66%)	19 (21%)
1743	83	48 (58%)	59 (71%)	24 (29%)
1745	57	34 (60%)	38 (66%)	15 (26%)
1748	67	39 (58%)	48 (72%)	20 (30%)
1750	88	54 (61%)	34 (39%)	18 (20%)
1751	80	55 (69%)	54 (68%)	29 (36%)
Total	464	279 (60%)	292 (63%)	125 (27%)

Sources: Congés de traite, as reprinted and indexed in E-Z. Massicotte (ed.), Canadian Passports 1681-1752, New Orleans 1975; and Notarial Contracts in E-Z. Massicotte (ed.), RAPQ, 1929-31.

different from those who held congés might hire canoemen. Undoubtly some traders neither had congés nor made use of notarial engagements. And obviously, if these men could be included in the sample, the traders who would be present in each of these two sources would be an even smaller percent of all the traders.

Comparing the names of canoemen is more difficult: they have left fewer records and there were many more of them. However one major comparison for the years before 1719 has already been made. Hubert Charbonneau et al have compared the engagés in Massicotte's inventory with those men identified as voyageurs by Archange Godbout. These researchers found that the notarial

records did not include 30% of the men whom Godbout had found. In addition they suggest that other voyageurs were not identified by Godbout, and that perhaps the shortcomings of the notarial contracts are even larger than 30%.[10]

For the decade 1743-1752, a similar comparison can be made of known canoemen. In these years, the names of the canoemen were listed at the bottom of the congés. A handful of men had been named on congés in each of 1734 and 1739, but during the nine years of this decade (excepting 1744) the names of roughly 3000 of the 3400 men authorized for the west have survived. The names of the remaining 400 men either were not listed, or were written illegibly, or have since been lost by fragmenting of the documents. The existing names can be compared with the nearly 3000 names of the men hired by notarial contract. This comparison has been facilitated by the inclusion of an index in the 1975 reprint of Massicotte's inventory of the congés. For Table XXIX below, each of the nearly 3000 names in Massicotte's inventory of the notarial records has been compared with those in the index to the congés. Because Massicotte included the merchant, the expedition's destination, and often the canoeman's parish, misspellings and variations of the men's names can frequently be identified, and so it is usually possible to avoid counting a name twice. Then the total number of different men can be established by simple arithmetic. In Table XXIX the numbers of men named in each source and in both sources are shown, and then the total number of different men.

Table XXIX

CANOEMEN NAMED IN CONGES AND NOTARIAL CONTRACTS, 1743-1752
(All figures number of men)

	1 Men Named In Congés	2 Men Named in Notarial Contracts	3 Men Named in Both Sources	4 Total of Different Canoemen Identified
1743	417	313	106	624
1744				
1745	431	281	88	624
1746	195	100	0	295
1747	292	257	59	490
1748	307	312	110	509
1749	407	343	111	639
1750	391	192	7	576
1751	387	497	151	733
1752	186	683	66	803
Total	3013	2978	698	5293

Sources: Congés de traite, as published and indexed in E-Z. Massicotte (ed.), Canadian Passports 1681-1752, New Orleans, 1975; and Notarial Contracts in E-Z. Massicotte (ed.), Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, Vol. 10 and Vol. 11, (1929-1931).

The two sources name a total of 5293 different men - an average of 588 men annually. And since 10% of the names from the congés have been lost, and so cannot be included in the sample, even this figure probably understates the number of different men. What is striking is that only 13.2% of the men mentioned in either the congés or in the contracts was named in the other source. This means that, to an extrordinary extent, the two sources reveal the existence of two labour forces. Thus neither source can include more than a fraction of all men in the fur trade. Unfortunately, except for a handful of men in 1734 and 22 in 1739, the men in the congés are named during only the decade 1743-1752. Otherwise it would be interesting to pursue this comparison from decade to decade.[11]

In Table XXX the number of identified canoemen - as established in the previous Table - is used to point out gaps in each source. In evaluating the congés, the total number of men authorized, rather than the 90% of them whose names have survived, is used.

Table XXX

THE RELATIONSHIP OF IDENTIFIED CANOEMEN TO CONGES AND NOTARIAL CONTRACTS, 1743-1752

	1 Total of Different Canoemen Identified	2 Canoemen Authorized By Congés	3 Canoemen Engaged by Notarial Contract
1743	624	468 (75%)	313 (50%)
1744	-	551	297
1745	624	430 (69%)	281 (45%)
1746	295	220 (75%)	100 (34%)
1747	490	330 (67%)	257 (52%)
1748	509	348 (68%)	312 (61%)
1749	639	453 (71%)	343 (54%)
1750	576	449 (78%)	192 (33%)
1751	733	462 (63%)	497 (68%)
1752	803	226 (28%)	683 (85%)
Total	5293	3386 (64%)	2978 (56%)

Sources: For Total Canoemen, Table XXIX, on previous page; for Canoemen in Congés, Table VIII, p. 42, or E-Z. Massicotte (ed.), Canadian Passports 1681-1752, New Orleans, 1975; for Canoemen in Contracts, Table XXVI, p. 121 or Massicotte, RAPQ, Vol. 10 and 11 (1929-31).

As can be seen, both sources suffer from large gaps. The percentage of known canoemen who were named in the congés throughout the decade (except for the year 1752) is quite consistent: 63% to 75%. In contrast, the men found in the notarial contracts varies considerably (even when 1752 is excepted) from 33% to 68%. Both sources included only a fraction of the identifiable men during the decade; and both sources included an even smaller fraction of all the canoemen that the fur trade would have needed.

iii. The Return to a Limited Use of the Notarial Contracts, 1761-1790

During these thirty years the notarial contracts were used sparingly to hire men for the west. Indeed, in some years they were almost abandoned. Their number fluctuates from year to year and only a small fraction of the number of men authorized by the Trade Licences were engaged by notarial contracts. For eighteen of the twenty-two years 1761-1782, less than 100 men were engaged by a contract before a notary. Even the highest number of annual notarial engagements - 382 in 1784 - was only 15.6% of the average labour force authorized the year before and the year after (the licences for 1784 itself are lost). The number of men engaged each year is shown in Table XXXI below and is compared with the number of men authorized by the Trade Licences. Significantly some of the heaviest use of notaries occured in the early 1760s - years for which the Trade Licences, and to a lesser extent the data on the fur exports, have been lost.

Table XXXI

MANPOWER LEVELS IN TRADE LICENCES AND NOTARIAL CONTRACTS, 1761-1790

	1 Men Authorized by Trade Licences (Number)	2 Men Authorized by Notarial Contracts (Number)	3 Percent in Contracts of Men Allowed by Congés
1761	-	215	
1762	-	84	
1763	9	128	
1764	-	9	
1765	-	227	
1766	-	24	
1767	-	91	
1768	59	73	123.7
1769	692	95	13.7
1770	699	72	10.3
1771	170	39	22.9
1772	825	67	8.1
1773	570	46	8.1
1774	696	9	1.3
1775	1067	28	2.6
1776	447	11	2.5
1777	2341	15	0.6
1778	2603	170	6.5
1779		68	
1780	2212	75	3.4
1781	1766	18	1.0
1782	2021	41	2.0
1783	2465	130	5.3
1784		382	
1785	2428	147	6.1
1786	2148	216	10.1
1787	1787 (sic)	128	7.2
1788	1788 (sic)	331	18.5
1789	1983	182	9.2
1790	2254	237	10.5

Sources: For Trade Licences, PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 110-115 (see Chapter III); for Notarial Contracts, Table XXVI.

Over the 1768-76 period, 5225 men were authorized by Trade Licence, but only 440 (8.4%) were hired by notarial contract. And, as we saw in Chapter III, the labour force in these nine years was much larger than the annual average of 581 men revealled by the Trade Licences. So, during those nine years, the 440 men hired by these contracts were an even smaller percentage of the total labour force. In 1770, 23 of the 72 men were hired by merchants with licences. Since most of the 5225 men in the licences were named, the men in these two sources could be compared, as was done for 1743-52. However, because so few men were hired by contract before a notary, the comparison would be less interesting then it was during 1743-52. Similarly, for 1777-1790, an annual average of 2150 men were authorized by the licences but an average of only 153 men (7.1%) were hired by notarial contract each year. To say that there are gaps - even to say enormous gaps - in the notarial contracts for this period would be an understatement.

iv., The Last Period, 1791-1821

These thirty years marked the final, and greatest, phase of the Montreal fur trade. The Northwest Company reached to the Pacific and Arctic Oceans - to the ends of the earth. Although these thirty years are beyond the period considered here, it seems reasonable to examine the notarial contracts of this final period together with those of the earlier periods. Since Massicotte's inventory for these years was compiled, some additional contracts have been reported. At least twenty-two from 1797 are in Sorel; a collection of seventeen from 1797-1803 (plus three from 1787-89) are in Ottawa; and some others, which may be for up-country work, are in the possession of the Wisconsin State Historical Society.[12] However these additional contracts are only a small percentage of the known notarial engagements. The number of engagés for each year in Massicotte's inventory is shown in Table XXXII below.

As for 1761-1790 and earlier, men hired in November and December are counted in the following year. Most of the men hired in October of the years 1798-1803 were probably for the following season, but are included in the totals for the calendar year. Men, such as clerks and interpreters who did not carry goods, have been excluded.

Table XXXII

ENGAGEMENTS BY NOTARIAL CONTRACT, 1791-1821
(number of men)

Year	No. of Men	Year	No. of Men
1791	187	1806	123
1792	338	1807	462
1793	324	1808	348
1794	266	1809	275
1795	287	1810	225
1796	289	1811	239
1797	522	1812	208
1798	639	1813	134
1799	750	1814	0
1800	461	1815	4
1801	511	1816	0
1802	565	1817	4
1803	802	1818	6
1804	608	1819	2
1805	265	1820	0
		1821	3

Source: E-Z. Massicotte (ed.), Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, Vol. 23-26 (1942-46).

Because the number of men never approaches the level in the Reports on Indian Trade, in the 1780s, it is certain that the notarial contracts of this period were only occasionally used to hire men. Alexander Mackenzie gave figures which also indicate that the contracts grossly understate the size of the labour force. In 1798 he estimated that the North West Company alone employed 1460 canoemen. In 1802, after some men had joined the XY Company,

the Northwest Company still had 1058 men of whom 877 were "Common Men" - canoemen As well, the company employed another 540 men annually on the Ottawa River.[13] The competition between the two companies (and with other companies) during 1798-1803 accounted for the high level of contracts. The 802 men for 1803 was the highest in the whole 150 years. The Northwest Company even hired skilled men it did not need, simply to deny them to their competition. The company tried to sign up as many experienced guides, avants, and gouvernails (the skilled men at the front and back of the canoe) as it could.[14] In this period, Indians were engaged on a large scale for the first time. From 1807 to 1813 almost all the contracts were for hiring by the Cie de Michillimackinac; during 1814-1821, only the Northwest Company used notarial contracts, and at most 19 of the 122 men it hired were canoemen. The other 103 men were skilled specialists. It is particularly significant that in 1794 a law requiring that all hirings of engagés be recorded by notarial contract was passed, but appears to have been ignored.

Another, and perhaps more compelling, indication of the inadequacy of these notarial contracts as a measure of the level of participation in the fur trade emerges from the calculation of the fur exports per man. As we have seen in earlier periods, for each man engaged to move trade goods up from Montreal into the interior, about 300-333 pounds of fur were brought back down for export. One would expect a not wildly dissimilar level of productivity in the decades immediately following 1790. The efficiency of the transportation system may have been improved, but it had not been massively improved. Since the fur exports are known for 1793-1808 they can be divided by the manpower figures from Table XXXII (previous page). As can be seen in Table XXXIII (following page), these calculations yield exports per canoemen that vary widely and in general are extremely high.

Table XXXIII

FUR EXPORTS and NOTARIAL ENGAGEMENTS, 1793-1808

	1 Fur Exports (No. Of pelts)	2 Notarial Contracts (No. of men)	3 Exports Per Canoeman (Pelts/man)
1793	543,875	324	1679
1794	456,266	266	1715
1795	542,654	287	1891
1796	544,280	289	1883
1797	707,518	522	1155
1798	589,805	639	923
1799	455,968	750	608
1800	485,879	461	1054
1801	456,503+	511	893
1802	509,486	565	902
1803	561,423	802	700
1804	651,619	608	1072
1805	506,576	265	1912
1806	517,161	123	4205
1807	387,861	462	840
1808	337,667+	348	970
Total	8,254,541	7222	1143

Sources: For Fur Exports, Gilles Paquet and Jean-Pierre Wallot, "Le Commerce internationale et les Prix domestique", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique francaise, Vol. XXI (Dec. 1967), p. 456; for Notarial Contracts, Table XXXII (E-Z. Massicotte (ed.), RAPQ, 1942-46).

A load of 1143 pelts per canoeman would probably have been about 15 ninety pound pieces. No source for any period has ever suggested that the canoeman carried that much. A larger labour force was needed. The notarial contracts of 1791-1821, like those of the French Regime and of 1761-1790, suffer very seriously from gaps and are not an adequate instrument to establish the size of the labour force. In summary, at no time for the

century and a half between 1670 and the end of the trade in 1821 were the notarial contracts used to hire more than a fraction of the engagés needed in the trade, and so at no time are they a reliable measure of the labour force in the fur trade.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter IV

1. See his "Répertoire des engagements pour l'Ouest conservés dans les Archives judiciaires de Montréal", Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, in various volumes:

   for 1670-1745, vol. 10 (1929 30) pp. 191-466;
   for 1746-1752, vol. 11 (1930-31) pp. 353-453;
   for 1753-1758, vol. 12 (1931-32) pp. 243-365;
   for 1758-1778, vol. 13 (1932-33) pp. 245-304;
   for 1778-1788, vol. 27 (1946-47) pp. 303-369;
   for 1788-1797, vol. 23 (1942-43) pp. 261-397;
   for 1798-1801, vol. 24 (1943-44) pp. 335-444;
   for 1802-1804, vol. 25 (1944-45) pp. 309-401;
   for 1805-1821, vol. 26 (1945-46) pp. 225-340.

2. See Gratien Allaire, "Les engagements pour la traite des fourrures: évaluation de la documentation", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique française, juin 1980 (Vol. 34, No. 1), p. 4.

3. See Louise Dechêne, Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVII^{e} siècle, Montréal (Plon), 1974, p. 217, and Fernand Ouellet, "Dualité économique et changement technologique au Québec (1760-1790)", Histoire sociale/Social History, 1976 (Vol. IX), pp. 294, 296.

4. See Allaire, "Les engagements", RHAF, p. 5n.

5. See Ermatinger Papers, PAC, MG19, A2, Engagement Books, Vol. 2 & Vol. 90, series 3, Vol. 109, in passim and RAPQ 1932-33 (Vol. 13), p. 301-304, 1946-47 (Vol. 27), pp. 303-317 in passim. However, he could have used an outfitter to hire men, and that outfitter might have used notarial contracts.

6. See notarial contracts for 1701-05 in Massicotte (ed.), RAPQ, 1929-30 (Vol. 10), pp. 205-210.

7. See Dechêne, Habitants et marchands, pp. 217ff, see also pp. 512-515.

8. See Allaire, "Les engagements", RHAF, juin 1980, p. 21.

9. See Ouellet, "Dualité économique", HS/SH, 1976, p. 261.

10. See Hubert Charbonneau et al, "Le comportement démographique des voyageurs sous le régime français", Historie sociale/Social History, 1978, p. 123.

11. See Allaire, "Les engagements", p. 23 for a comparison of the names for 1743-1745, which more or less confirms these results. He has a slightly higher number of names from the congés and finds a slightly higher degree of overlap of the two groups of names. For 1744 (which is not included here), he has 534 names from the congés, 288 from the notarial records, in these two groups 635 names are different. From 1750, another eighteen men, all of whom are named, could be added to the 431 men in this series of tables. They appear on three congés that Massicotte missed, which are now with the congés in the ANQ-M.

12. See Allan Greer, Habitants of the Lower Richelieu: Rural Society in Three Quebec Parishes, 1740-1840, (Ph.D. thesis, York University), 1980, pp. 266-67, or Allan Greer, "Fur-Trade Labour and Lower Canadian Agrarian Structures", Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers, 1981, p. 200; Charles N. Bell Collection, PAC, MG19, A30; and, Wisconsin State Historical Society, Collections, 1910 (Vol. XIX), pp. 292, 343, 368ff.

13. See Alexander Mackenzie, "A General History of the Fur Trade from Canada to the North-west" in W. Kaye Lamb (ed.), The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Toronto, 1970, p. 83; see enclosure of McTavish, Frobisher & Co. with Lt.-Gov. Robert S. Milnes to Lord Hobart, 30 October 1802, in Report on Canadian Archives, 1892, pp. 142-143.

14. See Greer, Habitants, p. 275. His source is the Northwest Company's letterbook, 1798-1800, in passim, (PAC, MG19, B1, Vol. 1).

Chapter V

A CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATE OF THE LABOUR FORCE

The previous four chapters have demonstrated that during the century before 1777 many more fur traders than were officially allowed by the congés de traite or by the Trade Licences were going west or were sending canoes and engagés into the pays d'En Haut. In addition, those traders who did have congés or licences sent expeditions to the West several times larger than their congés or Trade Licences authorized. Similarly, the notaries were used to register comparatively few of the contracts hiring the canoemen. This is to say that from the seventeenth century, the government's efforts to control the trade and to restrain the fur traders were unsuccessful One result of this failure - a failure that was acknowledged by each generation of officials - is that today none of these sources can be used to accurately measure the number of men who were part of the fur trade This deficiency is rather surprising considering the vast number of documents accumulated in all three sources and the esteem in which all three have been held among historians interested in the problems of labour and the nature of the peasantry in the Saint Lawrence Valley. These sources, which cover thousands of pages and supply evidence on the activities of tens of thousands of people, have been used, perhaps understandably, quite uncritically most of the time. Fernand Ouellet suggests that the weaknesses of these sources are such that only the statistics on the fur exports together with the relatively solid information on the engagés in the Reports on Indian Trade for the period 1777-1790 can lead to a plausable evaluation of the size of the labour force in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Gratien Allaire, in the conclusion of his article on these sources, has agreed, at least in principle, with Ouellet's suggestion.[1]

Allaire writes, however, that unfortunately the fur exports for the French Regime are not known, and that only the value of the furs landed at La Rochelle are known, and those he points out, would not have included all Canadian Furs. In fact, in addition to these values, the weights of beaver received in Montreal for most years from about 1706 until 1748 are known, as are the exports of pelts of other animals for at least eight years over the period 1727-1739, as well as during the two years 1754 and 1755 (see Table XII, p. 60). With these three groups of data, the total furs exported can be estimated for all but a few years from at least 1722 until the end of the French Regime. In the years before 1722 the data is largely lost and the total exports are more difficult to estimate, in part because the exports of other furs are uncertain. A more important factor was smuggling, which was extensive, especially when the trade was officially closed during 1696-1716. For the British Regime, fur exports are known each year from 1764 to 1786. And since the number of canoemen hired annually in 1777-1790 to move goods up from Montreal is known, the pelts exported per man in the trade can be easily calculated.

Then, since the average exports per engagé during 1777-88 were similar to those before 1687, the possibility exists of using that average to estimate the size of the labour force for all intervening years in which the volume of fur exports can be established. Although innovations were made in the transportation system and changes were brought to the organization of the fur enterprises, at the same time, the fur territory was constantly expanding and this one relationship remained constant for more than a century. The implication of this constant relationship is that every change made in the trade contributed to a situation where the traders were able to sufficiently

control the growth of their costs to make possible the expansion of the fur territory and the growth of the exports. To regulate these costs, the merchants were compelled to build a labour reservoir in the Great Lakes area and eventually in the Northwest, which is not apparent in the congés or Trade Licences or even in the notarial contracts. Thus, by using the average number of furs per man from the period 1777-1790, it is possible to measure the seasonal labour force, which is a difficult task in any economic structure.

1. Fur Exports per Engagé, 1777-1788

During the French Regime pelt exports are known for certain in only a handful of years. In contrast, during the British Regime the numbers of pelts exported annually are known for each year of 1764-1786 and for 1788. More importantly, for 1777-1790 - and for no other period - we have a reasonably accurate statement of the number of men hired for the fur traders' transportation systems. Thus the average number of fur pelts exported per engagé can be easily calculated. These calculations are shown below for nine of the twelve years of 1777-1788.

Table XXXIV

FUR EXPORTS PER ENGAGE, 1777-1788

	1 Fur Exports (No. of Pelts)	2 Number of Men in Labour Force	3 Exports-Pelts per man
1777	715,171	2341	305
1778	620,540	2603	238
1779	-		
1780	524,367	2212	237
1781	539,013	1766	305
1782	401,770	2021	199
1783	526,307	2465	214
1784	-		
1785	688,661	2428	284
1786	700,064	2148	327
1787		-	
1788	660,148	1788	369
Total	5,376,041	19,772	272

Sources: For Fur Exports, Table XXII (Haldimand Papers in Reports on Canadian Archives, 1882, p. 61 for 1777-1783; Customs Records (Quebec City) PAC, MG23, G1, Vol. 10, pp. 72-73 for 1785-1788); for the Number of Men, Table XIX, Reports on Indian Trade (PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 115, pp. 2250-2347).

As can be seen, for each canoeman who left Montréal, an average of 272 pelts were exported or about 300 pelts, if a 10% loss of furs is allowed between collecting the furs in the Indian territory and exporting them from Quebec City. Naturally this figure is consistent with the finding in Chapter III that for each canoeman 319 pounds of fur were received from the Indians for each canoeman, since that weight was estimated from this series of the number of pelts. However, it does not follow that each and every canoeman returned annually with 272 pelts. The table shows quite clearly that there

was some variation from year to year, as there would also have been from merchant to merchant. The annual average return of furs for each engagé hired to go up from Montreal was as low as 199 pelts and as high as 369 pelts. Indeed, since the trade was based on hunting it was inevitable that returns would fluctuate from year to year, and from merchant to merchant. And naturally, as a result, the actual loads that each individual engagé carried back down varied. As we have seen, if one assumes that the congés or early Trade Licences actually reflected the real number of men in the trade, these variations are extraordinary. But for the years 1777-88, these variations were quite reasonable: each engagé from 1777-82 would have carried down an average of 256 pelts; from 1783 to 1788 the load would have amounted to 298 pelts, a difference of only 15%. As good as these statistics are, they nevertheless understated the number of men necessary to carry the fur trade beyond the Great Lakes. For example, the congés and the Trade Licences, which are more reliable for the evaluation of the labour force than the notarial contracts, said nothing about the engagés already in the interior when the season began. These men would have included those hired for a full year, or many years, and those Canadians and Métis permanently in the interior.

The critical problem, the "bottleneck" in the transportation system, and that which created difficulty for both the merchants and the engagés, was not that of moving furs down to Montreal. The problem was one of moving ever greater quantities of European goods up to the Great Lakes, and increasingly frequently on to the Northwest. Again, the congés or the Trade Licences reveal nothing substantial about the Northwest. The weight of goods that was needed up-country was constantly growing, as more and more supplies were used as Indian presents or capital investments in the trade, or as provisions for

Europeans and Métis in the interior. Thus, the average load that the engagés moved up was constantly getting heavier, especially in the twenty-five or so years after the official resumption of the trade in 1716. One way the traders coped with the costs of this continuous expansion was to enlarge the canoes on the route between Montreal and the Great Lakes. However the canoes used between Lake Superior and the interior remained relatively small. In the 1680s and afterwards the average load was only 333 pounds per man; by 1722, in the four-man canoes, the load was about 500 pounds per canoeman.[2]

The six-man canoes, which were generally used from the late 1730s, accomodated still heavier loads. In 1757, Bougainville stated that the six-man canoes to Detroit carried 4000 pounds of goods. An officer explained, in 1738, that the canoes for Detroit carried 5000 pounds, which is a similar figure if one includes the weight of the six men. In 1747, during the war the Governor-General resupplied Michillimackinac with 30,000 pounds weight of food in ten or twelve canoes - an average of 2500-3000 pounds in each canoe. These were armed canoes carrying vital supplies and would hardly have been overloaded, although the load was not a lot less than 4000 pounds after the crews' provisions and baggage were added. A cargo of 4000 pounds, it can be seen, would have required each of the six men to have carried 667 pounds at the portages - almost 8 ninety-pound pieces. To carry such loads, the men had to make three and even four trips at each portage. Two pieces - or 180 pounds - could be carried at one time. One was suspended in a long sling from the forehead, and a second piece placed on top of the first. In 1745 and 1750 the weight of fur packs at Detroit was limited by law to 70 - 80 pounds for the protection of the canoemen.[3] This law was a response to the merchants' attempts to increase the canoemen's loads. Obviously, the technological

changes were accompanied by a progressive deterioration of the working conditions of the engagés.

In the 1750s, eight-man canoes were introduced on the Ottawa River, and the loads grew heavier. Although these large canoes were not mentioned in the congés of 1751 or 1752, Bougainville wrote in 1757 that the eighty annual canoes required 600-700 men - an average of between 7.5 and 8.75 men to each canoe. In 1761, Alexander Henry was one of the first Englishmen to go up the Ottawa River. He also described the eight-man canoes, so these canoes must have been introduced in the mid-1750s. And, as we saw in Chapter III (see pp. 83, 102), the Trade Licences reveal that canoe crews on the Ottawa River grew from eight to ten men during the British Regime. Later writers also described the growth of the size of these canoe crews, and there is almost perfect agreement on the size of the cargoes these Ottawa River canoes carried. Henry said 60 pieces, each ninety to a hundred pounds; Major Robert Rogers, the commanding officer at Michillimackinac in 1767, claimed a canoe load was 66 pieces of about ninety pounds. Another writer of the 1760s, in the Hardwicke papers, contended that the pieces of goods weighed less than hundred pounds each.[4] In 1777, John Long had two ten-man canoes; his cargo was in eighty pound bales except for the rum, powder, and shot which were in small kegs. Charles Grant reported to General Haldimand in 1780 that eight men were needed for transporting, and that wintering canoes often carried ten men; four years later, the Frobisher brothers told Haldimand that each canoe had eight to ten men. Joseph Hadfield listed the exact cargo of a canoe in 1785: 63 pieces varying from seventy to a hundred pounds each, and averaging 88 pounds. Hadfield had a working crew of eight men and one clerk who did not work. In 1798, Alexander Mackenzie wrote that each canoe had 65 pieces of ninety pounds and a crew of eight to ten men.[5] The working crew was probably eight men,

with room for two others, usually guides, clerks, merchants, or others who did not work the canoe. When eight men worked, each would have been responsible for about eight pieces - about 720 pounds. In Ermatinger's engagement books, the number of pieces that each man contracted to carry over the Grand portage was specified. Sometimes it was four, sometimes six, and sometimes eight.[6]

The loads that the canoemen carried did not increase in the British period. Consequently, the merchants had to develop other techniques to control their costs connected with territorial expansion. The principal cost was labour, especially after the export market for wheat reduced the availability of seasonal labour.[7] The solution that the merchants found was the use of boats on the St. Lawrence. The Trade Licences show that "bateaux" were increasingly used after 1777 and that they became more than twice as numerous as the canoes. The benefits of the boats, compared to the canoes, were described by Benjamin Frobisher in 1785: "... Boats of about the same burden are navigated by half the number of men, and for their service they are always to be had on more easy Terms ...".[8] So it is natural to think that the fur exports per engagé from this period when boats were used would be higher than from the periods before the introduction of boats.

Furthermore, during the same period the merchants started to use sailing vessels on the Great Lakes. They were linked to the bateaux in that goods were trans-shipped onto the vessels, usually at Kingston after 1790. A sloop was built at Detroit in 1769 and another the next year, and at least two more planned for the King in 1771.[9] By 1775 three sloops, one of sixty tons and two of thirty each, were used in the trade on Lake Ontario; and four sloops and two schooners totalling 235 tons were on Lakes Erie and Huron. Of this

355 tons, Grant owned 310 tons, McTavish and McBeath 30, and John Askin 15 tons. During the war the King had 350 tons on the Great Lakes, 140 of them on Lake Ontario.[10] Before the Conquest, Bougainville had advocated using sailing vessels on the lakes to make the trade less costly. He calculated that a boat of 40 tons could carry the weight of twenty canoes, and use five or six men, instead of 120 to 140 men.[11] These three elements - larger canoes, bateaux, and sailing boats - meant that the transportation system of 1777-88 was more efficient, or less labour intensive, than it had ever been before. Thus, any efforts to use the average fur exports per engagé of 1777-88 to estimate the number of canoemen in earlier periods would yield a conservative estimate.

Naturally, the number of pelts exported per canoeman were affected by these attempts of the merchants to control the labor market. As was said earlier, the number of canoemen used in the calculations in Table XXXIV almost completely excludes the increasing use of winterers and others in the interior. As the distance to the fur frontier increased, more and more specialized labourers were engaged in the interior. Naturally, these men appeared in the Trade Licences only when they were leaving Montreal. While winterers had been part of the trade since the earliest time (Duchesneau mentions them in the 1680s), their numbers were growing during the British Regime. The best known division was between the "porkeaters" (in fact, pork was not used until about 1785) and the men of the Northwest. As early as 1784 Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher explained to Governor-General Haldimand that:

> "Two setts of men are employed in this business, making together upwards of 500; one half of which are occupied in the transport of Goods from Montreal to the Grand Portage, in Canoes of about Four Tons Burthen, Navigated by 8 to 10 men, and the other half are employed to take such goods forward to every Post in the interior Country to the extent of 1,000 to 2,000 miles and upwards, from Lake Superior, in Canoes of about one and a-half Ton Burthen, made expressly for the inland service, and navigated by 4 to 5 men only, according to the places of their destination."[12]

So, according to the Frobishers, the company had about 250 men in each of the two groups and only those leaving Montreal would appear on the licence. In 1784 the North West Co. apparently asked for a licence for only 28 canoes[13] (the actual licences for 1784 are lost), which would have needed about 250 men. While the smaller traders and expeditions obviously did not have such a force in the interior, they too used, and had always used, men in the interior who did not always appear on the licences, and congés.

As part of the solution to the problem of labour, the traders and the government encouraged small reservoirs of labour in the interior. The most important of these communities was Detroit and its importance in the trade grew throughout the eighteenth century. Detroit was founded in 1701 as an agricultural base and supply centre for the trade. However, agriculture was less appealling to the settlers than trade, and efforts to develop substantial agricultural activities failed.[14] In 1740 about half of the hundred families were traders and, unfortunately, there were so many traders that they competed with each other in selling their goods. They sold so cheaply that they had difficulty in recovering their transportation costs up from Montreal; the Montreal merchants took over their goods and houses, and soon had mortgages worth more than all of Detroit.[15] As late as 1768, Capt. Jonathan Carver wrote that the inhabitants were "... more attentive to the Indian trade than to farming, it is but badly cultivated."[16] By this time, Detroit had become a centre for the redistribution of trading goods brought up either from Montreal or New York and Albany. In 1777, between 2 July and 15 August, Lt.-Gov. Hamilton granted twenty-four licences to trade at the outposts of Detroit.[17]

The manpower that was available at Detroit increased significantly after 1750, as can been seen below. The data for 1750, 1773, 1782, and maybe 1765 come from census, the other figures are mainly from comments by officials at the post.

Table XXXV

DETROIT POPULATION, 1710-1790

	1	2	3	4	5
	Total Population	Males age 15+	Females age 15+	Children	Slaves
1710	420	63			
1736		80			
1750	483	144	113	192	33
1765	868	276	197	335	60
1773*	1359	340	254	595	170
1782	2012	657	326	1029	179
1790	3000				

* In 1773, 84 males and 58 females between the ages of 10 and 20 were recorded. In this table they are divided equally between adults (age 15+) and children. The 170 "slaves" included 46 males, 29 females, as well as 95 servants.

Sources: For 1710, 1750, 1773, 1782, Ernest J. Lajeunesse (ed.), The Windsor Border Region (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1960, pp. xlii, 54-56, 82, 69-74; for 1710, 1736 Almon Ernest Parkins, The Historical Geography of Detroit, 1918, reprinted Port Washington, N.Y., 1970, pp. 71, 80-81, 99-100; for 1765 and 1790, Nelson V. Russell, The British Regime in Michigan and the Old Northwest 1760-1796, Northfield, Minnesota, 1939, p. 103.

In the seventeen years from 1765, the number of adult males more than doubled. Some of the slaves and servants, especially the 95 servants mentioned in 1773, may have been in some cases men who laboured in the trade. Like other groups of men in the interior, these men would appear in the Trade Licences only occasionally, or not at all. Detroit and Michillimackinac were the most important settlements, but not the only ones. During the eighteenth century, Métis settlements developed at dozens of points around the Great Lakes, including St. Joseph, Prairie-du-Chien and La Baie. At all these points, Métis came to be a valuable addition to the fur trade as labourers, and in addition as intermediaries between the European traders and the Indians.[18]

In summary then, during 1777-88, 272 furs were exported for each man engaged to carry goods up from Montreal. At that time, the transportation system was more capital and less labour-intensive than it had ever been earlier. This efficiency was a result of three changes in transportation: the largest canoes possible, boats on the St. Lawrence, and sailing vessels on the Great Lakes. Although the Trade Licences recorded the complete labour force that left Montreal during these years, the interior labour force which had always been part of the trade was becoming larger and more important. As a result of both this efficiency and the increasing interior labour force we may be confident that, despite the greater distances to the Northwest fur frontier, the figure of 272 pelts per canoeman can be safely used to propose a conservative estimate of the labour force for the periods before 1777.

ii. The Size of the Labour Force, 1722-1776

To calculate the manpower we need to know the fur exports. In the two following tables, only the figures for those furs actually shipped from Quebec

City are used. The export figures do not include any furs that were lost, spoiled, or diverted; however, neither do the export figures for 1777-88 which are used to calculate the figure of 272 pelts per engagé. If an estimate of such furs is added to the official exports of all periods, the figures for the earlier years are increased more than the figures from later years, since the smuggling and diversion of furs constantly declined from the 1720s to the 1780s. Thus, if a guess of the numbers of these furs is included, the exports per engagé during 1777-1788 would be higher than our present estimate of 272 pelts. But, at the same time, our estimates of the number of canoemen needed annually before 1777 would be higher than the estimates are without these furs. The net effect of omitting these furs is to reduce somewhat the estimate of the number of canoemen needed. At the same time, since data on spoilage and smuggling will always be uncertain, the omission avoids some uncertainty about the export figures.

a) 1760-1776

Since the fur exports are known during 1764-1776 the productivity of 272 pelts per canoeman can be used to calculate the labour force.

Table XXXVI

SIZE OF THE LABOUR FORCE, 1761 - 1776
(each 272 pelts required one canoeman)

	1 Fur Exports (number of pelts)	2 Canoemen (number)
1761	108,932+	400+
1762		
1763		
1764	214,922	790
1765	223,210	821
1766	247,155	901
1767	249,546	917
1768	299,203	1100
1769	418,775	1540
1770	353,375	1299
1771	360,298	1325
1772	379,031	1393
1773	307,602	1131
1774	418,774	1540
1775	574,515	2112
1776	441,051	1622

Sources: For Fur Exports, Chapter III, Table XVII, p. 91 (Shelburne Papers, PAC, MG23, A4, Vol. 31, pp. 24-25; Customs Papers, PAC, MG23, G1, Vol. 10, pp. 65-66; Frederick Haldimand in Report on the Canadian Archives, 1882, pp. 60-61).

The Labour force estimated here is similar to that estimated from the weight of fur in Chapter III for the same years. During 1764-67 the annual average here is 857 men, while in Chapter III it is 867 men. And as we saw there, the labour force in those years was actually larger than the weight of furs can reveal, because the trade was slow recovering and productivity was still low. For the years 1768-1776 the proposed average here is 1451 men while in Chapter III (see p. 95) the average is 1412 men. This series is consistent with the opinions of contemporary observers, who in 1766-67, as we

saw in Chapter III (see pp. 45-47), provided details of the volume of trade on the Ottawa River towards Michillimackinac.[19] The details reveal that 600-800 men were active each summer moving goods up from Montreal to Michillimackinac. Since the Saint Lawrence trade was larger than that on the Ottawa, this means that the overall manpower would have been about 1500 men. The figure calculated from the exports is considerably closer to the truth than anything that can be found in the Trade Licences or the notarial contracts.

b) 1722-1758

For the French Regime, estimating the labour force from fur exports is more difficult since the actual fur exports are not known for all years. However, as established in Chapter II, overall fur production can be estimated for most other years. The beaver received in Montreal is known or calculable for all but six of the 37 years during 1722-58; and the exports of all fur (including "other pelts") are known for ten years during that period. In Table XXXVII below, the beaver received in Montreal is converted from pounds and given as pelts in column 1, and then the numbers of other pelts, whether known or estimated, are given in column 2. Even when the actual beaver exports are known, the beaver received in Montreal is used since that series is more complete. For the years 1728-1736, exports of both beaver and other pelts are known for at least five years (see Table XII, p. 60): for each pelt exported, 1.47 other pelts were exported. That ratio is used to estimate the number of other pelts for seven other years of 1722-36. For 1727, which is the only year when the export of other pelts is known and that of beaver is not, the number of beaver pelts is estimated from the years before and after. For 1737 - 1748 the exports of other pelts are known for only 1737 and 1739. On the basis of those figures, an estimate of 250,000 pelts is used for nine

years which followed. This stability in exports is suggested by the stability of the values of fur landed at La Rochelle. If the ratio of 3.00 other pelts for each beaver pelt in 1737 and 1739 were used - the estimates would be considerably higher than 250,000 pelts annually, which might perhaps be more accurate than the estimate used here. For 1751-58, the exports of beaver and other pelts are known for 1754 and 1755, and in these years 3.40 other pelts were exported for each beaver pelt. That ratio is used to estimate the number of other pelts exported in the remaining six years of 1751-58. Then, after the exports of other pelts are estimated, the total exports for each year are added and divided by 272 to establish the size of the labour force. As can be seen, from 1722 until the 1730s the labour force was usually less than thousand men, probably because the exports of beaver were depressed by vigorous New York competition. Then, from the 1730s to the end of the French Regime, the labour force was generally 1300, 1400, or 1500 men annually. This growth was natural given the acute need to continuously expand the fur trade. However, as already mentioned, more furs were traded than were official exported. Generally speaking, more furs were lost, spoiled or diverted to New York than in later periods and obviously men would have been hired to get those furs from the Indians. Thus one could be comfortable in adding another 10% to these results.

During the 1740s and 1750s several of the men administering the trade - or others in close contact with them - indicated that 1200-1500 canoemen were needed by the fur merchants each year. In 1757 Bougainville reported 600-700 men on the Ottawa, and since the St. Lawrence trade was larger at least 1400 men would have been part of the work. Sieur de Léry (1749) and Chevalier de Raymond (1754) used data which also suggests that 1200 and 1600 men were

Table XXXVII

Size of the Labour Force, 1722-1758
(each 272 furs required one canoeman)

	1. Beaver Pelts Rec'd in Montreal	2. Other Pelts Exported	3. Total Pelts Exported	4. Men Needed
1722	110,333	162,190	272,523	1002
1723	79,749	117 231	196,980	724
1724	-	-	-	-
1725	-	-	-	-
1726	90,000	132,300	222,300	817
1727	90,000	100,567	190,576	701
1728	93,333	157,234	250,557	921
1729	85,093	125,087	210,180	773
1730	107,511	158,041	265,552	976
1731	86,667	127,400	214,067	787
1732	113,333	176,078	289,411	1064
1733	151,333	163,178	314,511	1156
1734	100,000	147,000	247,000	908
1735	118,433	187,035	305,468	1123
1736	125,372	183,042	308,414	1134
1737	82,525	274,250	356,775	1312
1738	87,333	250,000	389,333	1424
1739	88,779	236 539	325,318	1196
1740	85,600	250,000	335,600	1234
1741	-	-	-	-
1742	104,667	250,000	354,667	1304
1743	133,333	250,000	383,333	1409
1744	133,333	250,000	383,333	1409
1745	120,000	250,000	370,000	1360
1746	125,724	250,000	375,724	1381
1747	100,618	250,000	350,618	1289
1748	110,871	250,000	360,871	1327
1749	-	-	-	-
1750	-	-	-	-
1751	84,474	287,212	371,686	1366
1752	84,474	287,212	371,686	1366
1753	84,474	287,212	371,686	1366
1754	88,300	320,327	408,627	1502
1755	99,332	315,973	415,305	1527
1756	84,474	287,212	371,686	1366
1757	84,474	287,212	371,686	1366
1758	84,474	287,212	371,686	1366

Sources: For fur exports, Chapter II, Tables XI, XII, XIII (pp. 57, 60, 66).

needed in the trade each year.[20] The clearest evidence of the number of canoemen came from Captain Phineas Stevens (see Chapter II) who, as part of his official mission in 1752, met most of Montreal's leading citizens. In June he wrote that more than a thousand men had already gone up river.[21] If we allow for the men who went up in summer and autumn, it appears that 1200-1300 men were engaged in the trade. Those estimates, provided by contemporary observers, coincide with our results obtained from fur exports. In conclusion, during the half century 1722-76 the congés de traite, the Trade Licences, and the notarial contracts were not widely accepted or used, and so today cannot yield an accurate indication of the size of the labour force in the fur trade. In contrast, attempts to use the fur exports, in conjunction with solid information on the labour force during a short period, to discover the number of engagés hired by the merchants over a longer period appears to be the basis for a more successful guess. And, as has been pointed out, this guess is the result that flows from assumptions made with all due caution.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter V

1. See Fernand Ouellet, book review of Denis Monière's, "Le Development des idéologies au Québec des origins à nos jours, Histoire social/Social History, 1979, p. 221, and Gratien Allaire, "Les engagements pour la traite des fourrures: évaluation de la documentation", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique française, Vol. 34 (no. 1, juin 1980), p. 25.

2. For the 1680s, see Chapter I; for 1722, see the congé issued 3 août 1722 pour un canot portant deux mille pesant. See also Louise Dechêne, Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVIIe siècle, Montreal, 1974, p. 130.

3. See Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, "Memoire", Wisconsin State Historical Society Collections, 1908 (Vol. XVIII), p. 171; de Noyan to the Minister of Marine, 18 October 1738, ibid., 1906 (XVII), pp. 295, 297-298; Governor and Intendant to the Minister, 1747, ibid., p. 464; and on the weight limit of the packs, the Account book of the Huron mission at Detroit, 16 August 1745, 20 August 1750, Jesuit Relations, Vol. 69, pp. 49, 261.

4. See Alexander Henry, Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian territories ..., edited by James Bain, Toronto, 1901, p. 15; Major Robert Rogers reprinted in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 414; Hardwicke Papers, PAC, MG21, Additional Manuscripts, 35915, p. 165, quoted in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 207.

5. See John Long, Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader, London, 1791, reprinted Toronto, 1971, p. 39; Grant to Haldimand; 24 April 1780, in W. Steward Wallace (ed.), Documents Relating to the North West Company (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1934, p. 65; Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher to Haldimand, 4 October 1784, in ibid., p. 73; Hadfield in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 216-217n; and Alexander Mackenzie, "A General History of the Fur Trade from Canada to the North-west", in W. Kaye Lamb (ed.), The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander MacKenzie, Toronto (MacMillian), 1970, pp. 84-85. Henry (p. 15) allowed 1000 pounds for provisions and 320 pounds for the crew's baggage, he estimated the entire payload, including the eight man, at over 8000 pounds; Hadfield reported 960 pounds of provisions and 1750 pounds of crew, baggage, and equipment. Henry gave a total of about four tons, Hadfield of precisely 8250 pounds.

6. See Ermatinger Papers, PAC, MG19, A2, Engagement Books, Vol. 2 and 90, and series 3, Vol. 109 in passim.

7. See Fernand Ouellet, "Dualité économique et changement technologique au Québec (1760-1790)" Histoire sociale/Social History, 1976 (Vol. IX), 256-296.

8. Benjamin Frobisher to Hon. Henry Hamilton, 2 May 1785, Report on Canadian Archives, 1890, p. 56.

9. See Donald Creighton, The Empire of the St. Lawrence, Toronto 1937, reprinted Toronto (MacMillian), 1956, p. 71; and Ernest J. Lajeunesse (ed.), The Windsor Borden Region (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1960, pp. 65-66.

10. See Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 220. For post-1790 ships see ibid., p. 222.

11. See Bougainville, "Memoire", WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), p. 172.

12. Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher to General Haldimand, 4 October 1784, in Wallace, Documents, p. 73.

13. See Frobisher to Mabane, 19 April 1784, in ibid., p. 68.

14. See Beauharnois and Hocquart to the Minister, 22 October 1738, WSHS Collections, 1906 (XVII), p. 297 (Cor. Gen. Vol. 69, folio 63); La Galissonière to the Minister, 25 September 1748, ibid., p. 500 (Cor. Gen. Vol. 91, folio 130); the Minister to La Jonquière and Bigot, 14 May 1749, ibid., 1908, pp. 27-29 (Lettres envoyées, Vol. 89, folio 76).

15. See de Noyan to the Minister of Marine, 6 August 1740, ibid., 1906, p. 326 (Cor. Gen. Vol. 89, folio 194).

16. Capt. Jonathan Carver, Travels through the Interior Parts of North America in the Years 1766, 1767, and 1768, London 1781, reprinted Minneapolis (Ross & Haines), 1956, pp. 151-52. The same observation was made by Frances Brooke when she was in Canada 1763-64. See her The History of Emily Montague, Ottawa (Graphic Publishers Ltd.), 1931.

17. See Trade Licences, PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 115, p. 2242.

18. See Jacqueline Peterson, "Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis", Ethnohistory, 25/1 (Winter 1978), 41-67. In 1754 John Pattin, an English trader taken prisoner by the French, estimated that out of about fifty men at a fort 1 1/2 miles from Miamistown (240 miles from Detroit on a branch of Lake Erie), only nine or ten men were always there. Most of the fifty men were traders who moved around. See WSHS Collections, XVIII (1908), p. 113.

19. See Major Robert Rogers in PAC, MG21, Ad. Ms. 35915 also quoted in Innis, The Fur Trade, pp. 414-416; Benjamin Frobisher to Shelburne, 10 November 1766, PAC, MG23, A4, Vol. 10, p. 162; an unknown officer in PAC, MG23, A1 (Dartmouth Papers), Vol. 1, pp. 831-835 or Vol. 5, pp. 5629-5630. The unknown officer's figures in the Dartmouth Papers are reprinted in Capt. Charles E. Lart (ed.), "Fur Trade Returns, 1767", Canadian Historical Review, 1922 (Vol. III), p. 358.

20. The sources are given in full in Chapter II, footnotes 7-9, pp. 71-72. (See Bougainville, "Memoire", WSHS Collections, 1908 (XVIII), pp. 167-195; see enclosure with La Jonquière's letter of 31 October 1749, in E.B. O'Callaghan (ed.), Documents relative to the colonial history of the state of New-York, Albany N.Y., 1857, Vol. X, p. 204.)

21. The quote and its source are given in full in Chapter II, p. 47 and p. 72, footnote 10: (See "Journal of Captain Phineas Stevens' Journey to Canada, 1752" in Newton D. Mereness (ed.), Travels in the American Colonies 1690-1783, 1916, reprinted New York (Antiquarian Press), 1961, p. 310.)

CONCLUSION

From the mass of data accumulated for this study, and the tests applied to the congés de traite, Trade Licences, and notarial contracts, a number of conclusions can be reached which seem important in understanding the evolution of the Saint Lawrence Valley economy before 1800. The first generalization flowing from this analysis is that during the French Regime the quantity of fur annually received from the Indians can be established from 1675 onwards except for 1688-1705 and eleven later years. In particular the overall weight of fur, from both beaver and other animals, as well as the number of pelts exported either are known or can be estimated for all but five years from 1722-1758 (see pp. 65, 153). In the 1720s an average of about 223,853 pelts were exported each year; then the proportion of other pelts compared to beaver increased dramatically and by the 1740s and 50s exports had increased to more than 350,000 pelts annually. This set of figures and those from the early British period (see p. 90) can be used to evaluate the congés de traite and Trade Licences. As a result of our critical evaluation of these sources one is led to confirm the impression, which has been shared by both eighteenth century observers and modern historians, that the control imposed on the fur trade by the state during the French Regime was ineffective. When looked at as instruments to control the fur traders, the congés de traite, in our opinion, suffered from so many weaknesses that not only are they not a valid measure of the number of men in the trade, but they are not even a representation of the men who moved between the Saint Lawrence lowlands and the interior of the continent. At every level of colonial society, so many accomplices were pitted against effective control of the fur trade, that the reasons for the survival of the system of the congés would have been to

satisfy Paris, and to justify activities in which everybody's self-interest, even that of the Intendants and the Governors-General, was served.

Given the circumstances in which the fur trade operated, it is hardly surprising that the merchants did not often use the notaries when they hired their labour. They could just as easily have private agreements or understandings with the engagés. This practice was so common that the number of men hired by notarized contracts was even smaller than the number for whom the merchants had official permission by the congés to send up to the pays d'En Haut. This is an overwhelming argument against the notarial contracts as a tool to measure the labour force. After the Conquest, the British tried to develop their own control through the system of Trade Licences. At first, they failed as thoroughly as the French had before them to impose any restraints on the fur merchants. Not until 1777, when, for a variety of reasons, trade was being consolidated into fewer hands and there were fewer benefits in the unofficial trade, was it possible, to a large extent, to control the fur trade, and to effectively regulate movement up to the Great Lakes. The success of the colonial administrators in at last regulating the trade creates the opportunity of using the data of 1777-1790 to build a picture of the actual labour needs in the fur trade and, by using some elements of it to trace their evolution from the seventeenth century.

From the interplay of these elements one can also conclude that changes in technology and organization of the trade which are usually associated with the second half of the eighteenth century began in the early part of the century. From about 1700 the number of men in the crews of the canoes increased from three to six or more men by 1760, and then to ten during the British Regime. At the same time the cargo capacity of the canoes was

increasing even faster. Accordingly the loads that each man carried at the portages increased from 333 pounds in the three-man canoes to about 667 by the early 1740s and then to 720 in the eight and ten man canoes. The evolution of technology was then accompanied by a decline in working conditions. After 1760, the merchants increasingly used boats on the Saint Lawrence to carry even heavier loads at lower cost. Although boats had existed during the French Regime, their use quickly spread during the British Regime. Thus the technological changes being made in the transportation system during the early years of the eighteenth century continued, but at an accelerated rate, after the Conquest. Similarly the concentration of enterprizes, which began with the expansion of the trade after 1716, also accelerated after 1760. Until 1716 expeditions consisted of a single canoe; by the 1740s expeditions of five or more canoes were frequent; by the late 1780s licences averaged 8 1/2 to 9 vessels each, and some such as those for the North West Company were for much larger expeditions.

The significance of the labour demands of the fur traders on the overall population can be assessed by correlating them to the militia strength. In reality, many of the men in the militia, which often included all males aged 16 to 60, were either too young or too old to be part of the reservoir of possible fur trade engagés. Obviously, nobles, merchants and artisans who were in the militia have to be eliminated from this pool of potential labourers. More important, considering the hardship of the work, men could not have worked on the rivers unless they were young and strong. Probably less than half the people defined by the law as militia men were capable of this work. In the table below, the total militia strength and then the estimated half that were potential engagés are compared to the needs of the fur merchants.[1]

Table XXXVIII

DEMANDS OF THE FUR TRADE ON AVAILABLE LABOUR

	1 "Militia Strength" (no. of men)	2 Available Labour (no. of men)	3 Actual Labour Force (no. of men)	4 Percent of All Men in the Fur Trade	5 Percent of Available Labour in the Fur Trade
1683	2248	1124	471	21.0%	42.0%
1715	4484	2242	788	17.6%	35.2%
1721	6470	3235	863	13.3%	26.6%
1734	8823	4412	1062	12.0%	24.0%
1744	11,289	5644	1393	12.3%	24.6%
1750	12,909	6454	1366	10.6%	21.2%
1766	14,002+	7001	1400	10.0%	20.0%
1784	28,249	14,124	2266	8.0%	16.0%

Sources: For the 1683 Militia Strength, de la Barre to de Seignelay, 4 November 1683, NYCD, Vol. IX, p. 210; for 1715, Vaudreuil au duc d'Orléans, February 1716, RAPQ (1947-48), p. 291; for 1721 and 1734, NYCD, Vol. IX, pp. 907, 1046-47; for 1744, Beauharnois's despatch of 19 October 1744, Cor. Gen., Vol. 81, p. 238; for 1750, Cor. Gen. Vol. 95, p. 268; for 1766, Shelburne Papers (PAC, MG23, A4), Vol. 16, p. 108; for 1784 Baby to adjudent-general, 4 June 1785, PAC, MG21, Ad. Ms. 21885, p. 431. For the labour force of 1683 and 1715 see Tables V and VII in Chapter I (pp. 21, 41); for that of 1721-1784 see Tables XXXVII, XXXVI, and XXXIV in Chapter V (pp. 153, 150, and 140).

A number of points emerge from this comparison. The proportion of the society's manpower that the trade needed was beyond what the cities could provide. Perhaps it is useful to note that in 1791, the total number of labourers living in the towns did not exceed 360 people.[2] Most of the engagés had rural origins and were recruited mainly in the district of Montreal. This fact has been established by Fernand Ouellet for the period 1760 to 1790.

This conclusion also emerges from the parishes of the 805 canoemen listed on the congés for the years 1743 and 1749. Only 13% to 15% of the canoemen came from the cities; however 52.4% of the men came from rural areas of Montreal Island and the adjacent shores. At least another 8.7% were recruited from the Quebec and Trois Rivières districts. This division of the engagés between the three regions of Quebec has also been discovered by Louise Dechêne, for 1708-1717.[3] The great majority of the men came from the countryside, and the work was organized to suit family requirements on a seasonal basis. From the earliest times, the fur canoes went only as far as they could between spring and the August harvest. This is one reason that bases were developed at Michillimackinac and Detroit. The transportation system allowed flexibility in the engagés' returning date: since downstream loads were lighter, men could come down early if they wanted, or could wait for an opportunity of employment bringing furs down at the end of the season. For example, in 1771 of thirteen expeditions passing Oswegatchie while returning to Montreal, most passed either in mid-August so as to arrive at Montreal before the harvest began about 20 August, or in late October at the end of the season.[4]

The table also shows that although the number of men needed in the trade was increasing, the proportion of the available labour that it required was declining, because the population was growing faster then the fur exports. One must also notice that beginnning in 1768 the offer of labour was checked more than at any other time in the past. This pressure was caused by the development of an export market of wheat and the commercialization of agriculture. As a consequence of these increased opportunities for cash, the farmers and their sons were not as obliged as in the past to participate in the trade as engagés, and thus they were able to command higher wages for fur

trade work. Before 1768, wages had generally been about 200 - 350 livres for the various categories of canoemen. From then on wages increased, especially for the more skilled and demanding work. The wages of 1778-81 to Grand Portage, ten or thirteen years later, can be compiled from 120 agreements in Laurent Ermatinger's engagement book. The 39 milieux (the least skilled men in the middle of the canoe) were paid an average of 347 livres; the 31 skilled men at the bow and stern - the avants and gouvernails - were paid 491 and 524 livres; the 23 second avants and governails were paid only a little more than milieux, 383 livres; his twelve winterers were paid 750 livres; and the three guides an average of 900 livres.[5]

Of course, higher wages caused the merchants' costs to rise. This expense, together with other factors particularly greater distances to the fur fields, encouraged the merchants to respond by trying to reduce, or at least control, their costs. They reorganized their enterprises; and as already said, more and more they relied on boats on the St. Lawrence, and sailing vessels on the Great Lakes. As we have also seen, the boats had the same cargo capacity as the canoes, but needed only half the crew; and since the boatmen were less skilled than the canoemen, they could be paid less. So the growth of cargo costs could be significantly restricted by the merchants. With or without these changes, the merchants were employing the Métis canoemen of the Great Lakes area with growing frequency, and were developing a pool of labour in the interior which allowed them to restrain their expenses and to finance an expansion into the Northwest. The result of these changes, it need hardly be said, was that the merchants were led to increase the workload of the engagés from decade to decade.

More generally, the level of participation in the fur trade by men from the countryside points out that agriculture and fur were not isolated from each other, let alone incompatible. The state of agriculture affected labour costs in the fur trade, and these costs led to and contributed to technological changes and to concentration of the trade in fewer and fewer hands. From this perspective, it is apparent that the staple theory cannot be applied to the economy of the eighteenth century as if the fur trade and agriculture were isolated activities. And the same must be said about the use of the thesis of economic dualism when it implies that the rural and urban worlds might have evolved separately. Such are the conclusions of our research on a problem in social history which may be considered as fundamental to the understanding of the evolution in the eighteenth century of the society in the Valley of the Saint Lawrence.

FOOTNOTES

1. For most of these years the labour force, according to the fur exports, is averaged with those of the years before and after, or otherwise adjusted, to ensure that it reflects real labour needs, and not a one year fluctuation in fur exports. For 1721 and 1734, the militia strength used is actually all the male population aged 15 to 50. These figures probably inflate the available labour, and reduce the percents of labour in columns 4 and 5. In 1734, there were 8823 males between 15 and 50, so that figure is used here. However only about 8000 were capable of bearing arms. If this actual militia strength of 8000 were used, the percents in columns 4 and 5 would be one tenth higher. In contrast, for 1716 Louise Dechêne reports (pp. 514-515) 5500 men aged 15-50, and the previous year the actual militia strength was 4484.

2. See Fernand Ouellet, "Dualité économique et changement technologique au Québec (1760-1790)" Histoire sociale/Social History, 1976 (Vol. X), p. 273.

3. For the congés see E-Z. Massicotte (ed.), RAPQ, Vol. 10 and Vol. 11. For 1708-17 see Louise Dechêne, Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVII^{e} siècle, Montréal, 1974, pp. 514-515.

4. See Trade Licences, 1771, PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 13, pp. 1460, 1487, 1491-6, 1499-1500, 1508-10.

5. See PAC, MG19, A2, series 3, Vol. 109. The functions of twelve other men are not stated. Their wages averaged 362 livres. The average wage paid 300 men during 1753-58 by Alexis Monières was 240 livres, see Ouellet, "Dualité économique", p. 258. In 1767 guides were paid 300-350 livres, gouvernails and avants 300-320 livres, milieux 250 livres, and winterers 300-400 livres, see Harold Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, Toronto, 1970, pp. 239, 216. By 1768 and 1770 guides were paid about 500 livres, see Forest Oakes's Account Book, PAC, MG19, A2, series 1, Vol. 13, p. 17. Of the 102 men in Ermatinger's engagement book for 1773-1775, the four guides were paid an average of 644 livres, the 16 gouvernails 331 livres, the 16 avants 329 livres (one who was both was paid 400), three seconds were paid an average of 280 livres, the wages to the 13 milieux averaged 234 livres, the 33 winterers averaged 563 livres, another 16 men whose function was not stated were paid an average of 477 livres. In 1776 the one man - a guide - was paid 900 livres. In 1787 the two winterers in the Charles N. Bell Papers, PAC, MG19, A30 were paid 600 livres each. (Wages to Michillimackinac are given for the 1760s and for 1793 in Innis, The Fur Trade, pp. 216, 211, 223; and for 26 men during 1775-80 in the Ermatinger engagement book. He paid the one guide 600 livres, the two gouvernails an average of 470 livres, the three avants 467, the three seconds 390, the five milieux on average were paid 300 livres each.) The upward trend of wages to the Grand Portage is quite apparent. The rise was most pronounced for the skilled men. Because there were fewer of them and because they were needed in the fur expeditions, these skilled men were in a stronger position to demand higher wages when agriculture offered them an alternative source of income. Thus the effect of the commercialization of agriculture was not equal for all categories of engagés. The enhanced status of these essential men would have been another part of the merchants' problems of labour costs, consolidation, and a receding fur frontier.

Appendix

THE DIET OF THE ENGAGE

Corn was the most important food in the trade, and the staple until pork was introduced. The corn was made into a form of dried cornmeal usually described as "biscuit", and later eaten with fat. Accounts of the preparation and use of corn were given by Peter Kalm in 1749, Alexander Henry in 1761, and Alexander Mackenzie in 1798.[1] All three men agree that the corn was prepared for the trade by being washed in lye (or alkali) to remove the husk, and then carefully washed, dried, and stored. Its use on the trail was simple and varied. Henry wrote that it was mashed and then dried, so that it was soft and friable like rice. Kalm said the corn was prepared by boiling it in bear oil and perhaps some fat of the roe deer or hog's lard. According to both Henry and Mackenzie one quart of corn biscuit was boiled in water and then either one ounce (Henry) or two ounces (Mackenzie) of fat added. According to Mackenzie salt was added; according to Kalm and Henry the canoemen had nothing but corn and oil. Henry calculated a bushel of this concentrated corn (75-100 pounds) was one man's provisions for a month. Because goods had to move further and faster as the trade moved into the northwest the corn became inadequate. In 1761 Henry said the corn and fat kept the men healthy and capable of hard work; in 1798 Mackenzie - whose recipe allowed an extra ounce of fat, or 400 calories - said a man was able to live on it, but not able to work actively. The work had become more demanding during the 37 years interlude.[2]

As early as 1709-10, Indian corn and bear grease were described as the food in the canoes. And forty years later Peter Kalm wrote that it was the

food on the "difficult and tiresome journies", and thus highly regarded. In 1757 Bougainville wrote that each man on the trip had 100 livres of corn and 25 livres of lard. At some time about 1770 peas seem to have been added. Major Rogers reported that in 1767 a ten-man canoe required 7/4 of beef, pork, biscuit, peas, etc. However this report is an exception: nobody else mentioned pork until 1785.[3] There is almost perfect accord on the types and quantities of food in the large maître canoes of four expeditions from 1774 to 1798, which had averaged crews of 7.55 to 9 men. Their provisions and the change to pork can be seen below.

	1774	1775	1785	1798
"biscuit" (livres)	600	600	580	600
lard (livres)	275	200	---	---
pork or beef (livres)	---	---	280	200
peas (minot)	4	1		3

As can be seen the biscuit of corn remained constant but the lard was replaced by meat. However, whatever food was taken was gone by Michillimackinac, and new supplies had to be obtained. This change was caused by the increasing need for longer and more difficult work. This change added to the costs of the merchant.

As the work became more difficult, the development of goods supplies including agricultural bases became more important. Naturally this development added to the capital costs of the trade. In 1741 there was a famine pays d'En Haut and in the same year Beauharnois persuaded some Ottawa

Indians to settle at L'Arbre Croche (near Michillimackinac) where they would be near the French who bought their canoes, gum, Indian corn, fats, and other things. In 1747, as we have already seen (see p. 143), the Crown had to send ten or twelve canoes with 30,000 pounds weight of flour, Indian corn, peas, fat, suet, pork and salt beef because the Indians were less supportive of the French during the war and might not supply them. In the same year the lease of La Baye required the farmers to take the Commandant 1500 pounds of food and provisions. In 1752 there was again a shortage of corn. In 1761 Alexander Henry mentions L'Arbre Croche as a source for corn.[5]

As bases were developed, increasing energy and time - capital costs - were put into food gathering. John Long in 1777 wrote that "fishing is the daily employ of half the men" and Alexander Mackenzie mentioned fishing as an important wintering activity. The North West Company had a vessel on Lake Superior to get food from Michillimackinac to Grand Portage. As well wild rice, maple syrup, and pemmican (which was unknown until approximately 1778) were gathered or traded. Thus the traders ate better in winter quarters. At the annual meetings of the North West Company at the Grand Portage the guides ate together with the proprietors, clerks, and interpreters. They had "... bread, saltpork, beef, ham, fish, and venison, butter, peas, Indian corn, potatoes, tea, spirits, wine, etc., and plenty of milk for which purposes several milch cows are constantly kept". The canoemen, on the other hand, had only Indian corn and melted fat.[6] Thus the quest for food was a major part both of the problem the merchants faced of capital investments and raising labour costs, and of the canoeman's problem of increasing work and declining conditions.

FOOTNOTES

1. See Adolph Benson (ed.), Peter Kalm's Travels in North America, New York (Dover), 1966, pp. 566, 575; Alexander Henry quoted in Harold Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada, Toronto, 1970, pp. 167-168; and W. Kaye Lamb (ed.), "A General History of the Fur Trade from Canada to the North-west", The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Toronto, 1970, pp. 98-99.

2. It may be possible to work out which foods would have provided enough calories for the men to do the required work. See C.E.S. Franks, The Canoe and White Water, Toronto, 1977, p. 142.

3. See Louise Dechêne, Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVII^{e} siècle, Montréal, 1974, p. 226; Benson, Peter Kalm's Travels, Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, "Memoire", Collections of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, 1908 (Vol. XVIII), p. 171; and Maj. Robert Rogers, in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 415.

4. See, for 1774, the Licence of Augustin Chaboillez, PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 115, p. 2090; for 1775, licence #20, ibid; for 1785, Hadfield in Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 216n; for 1798, Mackenzie, A History of the Fur Trade (edited by Lamb), pp. 84-85. See also licence #30, Vol. 115, p. 2108.

5. See WSHS Collections, 1906, pp. 337, 359-60, 464 and 451-5, and NYCD, Vol. V, pp. 245-51.

6. Mackenzie, A History of the Fur Trade (edited by Lamb), pp. 93, 95, 98, 100, 130-131. See also Innis, The Fur Trade, p. 223ff.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Manuscript Sources

a. Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal (ANQ-M).

1. Congés de traite, 1723-1760. CD0601-0009.

   (See also E-Z., Massicotte, Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, Vol. 2 (1921-22) pp. 189-225 for 1681-1730 and Vol. 3 (1922-23) pp. 191-265 for 1739-1752. A few more congés were published in 1926 in the Bulletin des recherches historiques, Vol. XXXII. All of these were reprinted in Canadian Passports 1681-1752, New Orleans (Polyanthos Inc.), 1975, with an index to the traders and engagés named in the congés.)

2. Registres des audiences, Juridiction de Montréal, 1718, 1720, 1734, 1749-1760: 06-M, T1-1/Vol. 11, 17, 25, 26, 28a, 28b.

b. Public Archives of Canada (PAC).

1. Archives des Colonies transcripts, PAC, MG1.

   - Lettres envoyées, 1742-1746, 1749: Series B, Vol. 75-84, 90.

   - Correspondance générale, 1739-1742, 1748-1751: PAC, MG1, C"A, Vol. 71-74, 92-97, 121.

   - Commerce aux colonies, 1714-1790: F2.

2. Bell Collection, 1787-1859: PAC, MG19, A30.

3. Dartmouth Papers, 1688-1802: PAC, MG23, A1.

4. Ermatinger Papers, PAC, MG19, A21.
   - Engagement Books, 1773-75, 1778-81: Vol. 2 and 90, and series 3, Vol. 109.
   - Forest Oakes' Account Book, 1765-1780: series 1, Vol. 3.

5. Hardwicke Papers, 1759-1773: PAC, MG21, Additional Manuscripts 35913-5.

6. Shelbourne Papers, 1663-1795: PAC, MG23, A4.

7. State Minute Books, PAC, RG1, E1.
   - Minutes of the Council of Quebec, 1763-1774: Vol. 1-5
   - Minutes of the Legislative and Executive Councils, 1774-1786: Vol. 6-7, 1-14, 27..

8. Trade Licences, 1763-1790: PAC, RG4, B28, Vol. 110-115.

Printed Sources

Bain, James (ed.), Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian territories..., by Alexander Henry, Toronto, 1901.

Benson, Adolph B. (ed.), Peter Kalm's Travels in North America, New York (Dover), 1966.

Bougainville Louis-Antoine de, "Memoire", Collections of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, 1908 (Vol. XVIII), 167-195. (Translated from Pierre Margry, Relations et Memoires Inédits, Paris, 1867 39-84.)

Burpee, L.J. (ed.), Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye and His Sons (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1927.

Carver, Capt. Jonathan, Travels through the Interior Parts of North America in the Years 1766, 1767 and 1768, London 1781, reprinted Minneapolis (Ross & Haines), 1956.

Clements, W.L. (ed.), "Rogerss's Michillimackinac Journal", by Maj. Robert Rogers in Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, 1918 (Vol. XXVIII), 224-273.

Fleck, Alexander C., Milton W. Hamilton, et al (eds.), The Papers of Sir William Johnson, Albany, New York, Vol. 1-14, 1921-1965.

Hopewood, Victor G. (ed.), David Thompson: Travels in Western North America 1784-1812, Toronto (Macmillan), 1971.

Lajeunesse, Ernest J. (ed.), The Windsor Border Region (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1960.

Lamb, W. Kaye (ed.), "A General History of the Fur Trade from Canada to the North-west", The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Toronto (Macmillan), 1970, 63-101.

Lart, Capt. Charles E. (ed.), "Fur Trade Returns, 1767", Canadian Historical Review, 1922 (Vol. III), 351-358.

Long, John, Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader, London 1791, reprinted Toronto, 1971.

Massicotte, E-Z. (ed.), "Répertoire des engagements pour l'Ouest convervés dans les Archives judiciaires de Montréal", Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, in various volumes,
for 1670-1745, vol. 10 (1929-30) pp. 191-466;
for 1746-1752, vol. 11 (1930-31) pp. 353-453;
for 1753-1758, vol. 12 (1931-32) pp. 243-365;
for 1758-1778, vol. 13 (1932-33) pp. 245-304;
for 1778-1788, vol. 27 (1946-47) pp. 303-369;
for 1788-1797, vol. 23 (1942-43) pp. 261-397;
for 1798-1801, vol. 24 (1943-44) pp. 335-444;
for 1802-1804, vol. 25 (1944-45) pp. 309-401;
for 1805-1821, vol. 26 (1945-46) pp. 225-340.

Mereness, Newton D. (ed.), "Journal of Captain Phineas Stevens' Journey to Canada, 1752", Travels in the American Colonies 1690-1783, 1916, reprinted New York (Antiquarian Press), 1961, 299-322.

O'Callaghan, E.B. (ed.), "Paris Documents", Documents relative to the colonial history of the state of New-York, Vol. 9-10, Albany, New York, 1856-1857.

Preston, Richard A., and Leopold Lamontagne (eds.), Royal Fort Frontenac (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1958.

Shea, J.G. (trans. & ed.), History and General Description of New France, by Rev. Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix, New York, 1902. First published 1744.

Shortt, Adam and Arthur G. Doughty (eds.), Documents Relating to the Constitutional History of Canada 1759-1791, Ottawa (King's Printer), 1907.

Stevens, S.K., et al. (trans. & eds.), Travels in New France, by J.C.B., Pensylvania Historial Survey, 1941.

Thwaites, Reuben Gold (ed.), The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Vol. 60-73 (1675-1791), Cleveland, c. 1900.

Thwaites, Reuben Gold (ed.), Wisconsin State Historical Society, Collections Vol. XVI-XX, 1902-1910. (About 2000 pages of documents from French archives supplemented by documents from New York Colonial Documents, Pierre Margry, early Canadian periodicals, the Michillimackinac Register and the Askin Papers.)

Thwaites, Reuben Gold (ed.), New Voyages to North America, by Louis Armand de Lor d'Arce, baron de Lahontan, Chicago, 1905. First published 1703.

Wallace, W. Steward (ed.), Documents Relating to the North West Company (Champlain Society), Toronto, 1934.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books and Theses

Creighton, Donald G., The Empire of the St. Lawrence, Toronto (Ryerson Press) 1937, reprinted Toronto (MacMillan), 1956.

Dechêne, Louise, Habitants et marchands de Montréal au XVII^{e} siècle, Montréal (Plon), 1974.

Eccles, W.J., Canada Under Louis XIV: 1663-1701, (Centenary Series), Toronto (McClelland and Stewart), 1964.

Eccles, W.J., The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1730, second edition, Albuquerque (University of New Mexico Press), 1983.

Franks, C.E.S., The Canoe and White Water, Toronto (University of Toronto Press), 1977.

Glazebrook, G.S., A History of Transportation in Canada, Toronto (Ryerson Press), 1938.

Greer, Allan, "Habitants of the Lower Richelieu: Rural Society in Three Quebec Parishes, 1740-1840", Ph.D. thesis, York University, 1980, Chapter titled "Economic and Social Structures - Voyageurs", pp. 255-280.

Igartua, E. José, "The Merchants and Negociants of Montreal, 1750-1775: a study in socio-economic history", Ph.D. thesis, Michigan State University, 1964.

Innis, Harold A., The Fur Trade of Canada, Toronto (University of Toronto), 1927.

Innis, Harold A., The Fur Trade in Canada, Yale 1930, reprinted Toronto (University of Toronto Press), 1956 and 1970.

Innis, Harold A., Peter Pond: Fur Trader and Adventurer, Toronto (Irwin & Gordon), 1930.

Johnson, Ida Amanda, The Michigan Fur Trade, The Michigan Historical Commission 1919, reprinted Grand Rapids, Michigan (Black Letter Press), 1971.

Lawson, Murray G., Fur: A Study in English Mercantilism, 1700-1775, Toronto (University of Toronto), 1943.

Lunn, Alice Jean Elizabeth, "Economic Development in New France, 1713-1760", Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, 1942.

McCann, Paul, "Quebec's Balance of Payments, 1768-1772: A Quantitative Model", M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1982.

McIlwraith, Jean N., Sir Frederick Haldimand, (The Makers of Canada, Vol. VI), Toronto (Morang & Co. Ltd.), 1906.

Masson, L.R., Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest, 1889-90, reprinted New York, 1961.

Meyers, Gustavus, A History of Canadian Wealth, Chicago 1914, reprinted Toronto (James Lorimer & Co.), 1972.

Mitchell, Elaine Anne, Fort Timiskaming and the Fur Trade, Toronto (University of Toronto Press), 1977.

Morse, Eric W., Fur Trade Canoe Routes of Canada/Then and Now, second edition, Ottawa (Supply and Services Canada), 1979.

Morton, W.L., The Kingdom of Canada, Toronto (McClelland and Stewart), 1963.

Morton, W.L., Manitoba: A History, Toronto (University of Toronto Press), 1957.

Neatby, Hilda, Quebec: The Revolutionary Age, (Centenary Series), Toronto (McClelland and Stewart), 1966.

Norton, Thomas Elliot, The Fur Trade in Colonial New York 1686-1776, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1974.

Ouellet, Fernand, Economic and Social History of Quebec, 1760-1850, Carleton University Press, 1980.

Phillips, Paul Chrisler, The Fur Trade, Norman, Oklahoma (University of Oklahoma Press), 1961.

Ray, Arthur J., Indians in the Fur Trade: their roles as trappers, hunters, and middlemen in the lands southwest of Hudson Bay 1660-1670, Toronto (University of Toronto Press), 1974.

Ray, Arthur J. and Donald Freeman, "Give Us Good Measure": an economic analysis of relations between Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company before 1763, Toronto (University of Toronto Press), 1978.

Rich, E.E., The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857, (Centenary Series), Toronto (McClelland and Stewart), 1967.

Rich, E.E., Montreal and the Fur Trade, Montreal (McGill University Press), 1966.

Russell, Nelson Vance, The British Regime in Michigan and the Old Northwest 1760-1796, Northfield, Minnesota (Carleton College), 1939.

Ryerson, Stanley, The Founding of Canada: Beginnings to 1815, Toronto (Progress Books), 1960.

Salone, Emile, La Colonisation de la Nouvelle-France, Paris, 1906, reprinted Trois Rivières (Le Boréal Express Ltée.), 1970.

Vandiveer, Clarence A., The Fur Trade and Early Western Explorations, New York (Cooper Square Publishers Inc.), 1929, reprinted 1971.

Wallace, W. Stewart, The Pedlars from Quebec, Toronto (Ryerson), 1954.

Whitaker, John O., Jr., The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mammals, New York (Alfred A. Knopf), 1980.

Articles

Allaire, Gratien, "Les engagements pour la traite des fourrures: évaluation de la documentation", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique française, Vol. 34, no. 1, juin 1980, 3-26.

Charbonneau, Hubert, Bertrand Desjardins, et Pierre Beauchamp, "Le comportement démographique des voyageurs sous le régime français", Histoire sociale/Social History, 1978, 120-133.

Greer, Allan, "Fur Trade Labour and Lower Canadian Agrarian Structures", Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers, 1981, 197-214.

Humphreys, R.A., "Governor Murray's Views on the Plan of 1764 for the Management of Indian Affairs", Canadian Historical Review, 1935 (Vol. XVI), 162-69.

Jackson, Marjorie Gordon, "The Beginnings of British Trade at Michillimackinac", Minnesota History, Vol. II (Sept. 1930), 231-270.

Lunn, Alice Jean Elizabeth, "Agriculture and War in Canada, 1740-1760", Canadian Historical Review, 1935 (Vol. XVI), 123-136.

Lunn, Alice Jean Elizabeth, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760" Canadian Historical Association Report, 1939, 61-76.

Morton, W.L., "The North West Company: Pedlars Extraordinary", in Mrs. Rhoda R. Gilman (ed.), Aspects of the Fur Trade: Select Papers of the 1965 North American Fur Trade Conference, St. Paul Minn (Minnesota Historical Society), 1967, 9-17.

Ouellet, Fernand, "Dualité économique et changement technologique au Québec (1760-1790)", Histoire sociale/Social History, 1976 (Vol. IX), 256-296.

Ouellet, Fernand, "Officiers de milice et structure sociale au Québec (1660-1815)", Histoire sociale/Social History, 1979, 37-65.

Paquet, Gilles and Jean-Pierre Wallot, "Le Commerce international et les Prix domestique", Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique française, Vol. XXI (Dec. 1967), 447-473.

Peterson, Jacqueline, "Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis", Ethnohistory, 25/1 (Winter 1978), 41-67.

Reid, Allana G., "General Trade Between Quebec and France During the French Regime", Canadian Historical Review, 1953 (Vol. XXXIV), 18-32.

Reid, Marjorie G., "The Quebec Fur-Traders and Western Policy, 1763-1774", Canadian Historical Review, 1925 (Vol. V), 15-32.

Zoltvany, Yves, "The Frontier Policy of Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, 1713-1725", Canadian Historical Review, 1967 (Vol. XLVIII), 227-250.