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CANADIAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

FOUNDED BY SAUL HAYES, O.C., Q.C., LL.D., F.R.S.A.
FIRST EDITOR LOUIS ROSENBERG, F.R. Econ.S., F.S.S.

Nous nous souvenons

NEW SERIES
NUMBER TWENTY-ONE

Forgetfulness leads to Holocaust;
Remembering is the root of redemption.
(Baal Shem Tov)

ON THE EARLY HARTS - THEIR CONTEMPORARIES PART 3

Compiled by
DAVID ROME

NATIONAL ARCHIVES
CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

MONTREAL CANADA
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THE PARTNERS

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THE PARTNERS: EZEKIEL SOLOMONS

The Solomons family was related to the Harts, Ezekiel Solomons' sister Esther having married Moses Hart, the brother of Aaron Hart.

These Solomons, Ezekiel and Levy, together with their Montreal partners Chapman Abraham, Benjamin Lyon and Gershon Levy, represented a Canadian saga of vast scope which had marked the annals of half a continent, a saga different from the Harts'.

They formed a minor consortium, a partnership of five experienced army purveyors, implanted deep in the roots of the history of the country. Some of them had been very close to the line of fire and of torture. They probably shared common German-English background; they teamed up to trade with the Indians over a goodly part of the continent from Montreal. They developed a large volume and suffered great and dangerous adventures often to end on equally great difficulties. But these wandering merchants left a profound mark on American and Canadian Jewish history, a respected place in the annals of the continent -- as did other less romantic, Jewish settlers on the prairies two centuries later, the farmers and storekeepers as the fathers in Fredelle Bruser Maynard's Raisins and Almonds, in Paul Kligman's It All Ended up in a Shopping Bag and in Morley Torgov's A Good Place to Come From.

The partners had come to Montreal at the same time as Aaron Hart and Samuel Jacobs, in 1760. But these latter had sought out appropriate places in the colony, settled there and struck root there; the consequences of their decisions are Canadian Jewish history.

The five partners, however, saw the map of America differently. Their vision was not that of the Harts and the Judahs; but it was a vision that has been appreciated by historians and literary artists since.

With one possible exception, they are not found in the American Jewish communities before the conquest of Canada. These men probably came directly from England with the troops,

and may well have learned their trade as supplymen in the armies of Europe. Quartermaster work was a common Jewish occupation on the Continent in the eighteenth century; it was the royal road to wealth. After the conquest of Canada the partners stuck together and branched out into the lucrative fur trade, which offered the greatest opportunities after the fall of Montreal in September, 1760. The friends and relatives back in London who had sent them supplies for the soldiers could just as well finance them in the Indian trade and help them arrange for the sale of the beaver which was sent to the English market in exchange. (Marcus, 1, pp.225-26)

Theirs was the venturesome and geo-philosophical vision of the west, a profound understanding of the westward direction in Judo-Christian civilization. In the Roman Catholic world it was formulated in the oldest Canadian document, Jacques Cartier's Premier récit. In Jewish history it dates from the birth of the world-wide Jewish post-Shtetel civilization.

In his "Jewish Beginnings in Michigan" Heineman accurately places Canadian Jewish pioneers in that history. (Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, P. 48)

"The beginnings of Michigan (then Canada) deal with the explorer, the missionary, and the trader, who found in the waterways of the Great Lakes the readiest entrance into the heart of the new world. Along these waterways convenient stations soon came to be established, not by the explorer or missionary, but by the trader who typified in crude but sturdy fashion the ancient union of commerce and civilization. Among such places on the Great Lakes none was more important than Michilimackinac, the Mackinac of our day, and in connection with this post, mention is to be found of several Jewish persons," (mostly Montrealers).

Fur was a fundamentally important commerce, strictly controlled by the government for many reasons. The Indians not less than the British governors knew that it heralded the white man's expansion into territories where they could not survive in coexistence.

They all came out from the forests, but little the worse for their experience.

They had looked far up the vast flowing St. Lawrence and saw a commercial empire to be developed, hundreds of miles up, where the river began in great lakes, where French influence at Fort Pontchartrain persisted, and British control not yet certain.

They established homes and businesses in Quebec City and in Montreal, owned property, pioneered in Ontario (Upper Canada just getting organized as a territory) and Detroit, went through the agonies of the American War of Independence which was a civil war for them, with all its challenges to loyalties, ideals, family and interests, founded the synagogue and the cemetery in Montreal, engaged a minister and then contested a law suit with him.

Then these faded away, taking their children with them, leaving the continuity of Jewish history in Canada to the extended Hart dynasty.

A century later, on the Canadian Pacific frontier, we have the saga of Victoria's congregation president, Morris Moss, in the hands of the coastal Indians, (D. Rome. "Morris Moss, A Synagogue President who Blazed Trails on Canada's Great West," in the Winnipeg Jewish Post of Sept. 11, 1947, Pp. 15-27) and that of A. Malowanski on the Bering Sea Islands.

As we read the adventures of such synagogue presidents in the hands of their Indian captors, we must see it as a not unique combination of intense Jewish religious activity and frontier venture.

Walter S. Dunn, Jr. states that the partners "had the support of English financiers and were in contact with Hayman Levy of New York who traded in furs in the Hudson River valley. With correspondents of this quality they were in a position to do business on a scale not generally possible at this period." ("Lucius Levy Solomons" in Dictionary of Canadian Biography)

There was a year's gap between the French evacuation of Michilimackinac, the principal fort north of Fort Pontchartrain, and the arrival of British troops. The abandoned fort oversaw the commerce of three lakes and served as a meeting place for the nearby Chippewa and Ottawa Indian tribes. During that year the fort was occupied by bush-ranging French traders, most of them half-breeds. The vast domain was left for businessmen of vision to contemplate and to risk.

Donald Creighton, the historian of the Empire of the St. Lawrence, provides the large frame in which this Jewish initiative stands,

"There were two occupations of Canada at the conquest, the military and the commercial; and this commercial occupation shows as well as anything could possibly do, the real meaning which the St. Lawrence had for the West-Europeans and Americans of the eighteenth century. For them the conquest was the capture of a giant river system and the transference of commercial power.

"In the north, geography directed the activities of men with a blunt sternness; and it had largely helped to create a distinct and special American system. The lower St. Lawrence was for the French, as it is for the Canadians of today, the destined focus of any conceivable northern economy; and in response to an invitation which was at least half a command, settlement became inevitably concentrated on the strip of territory between Quebec and Montreal. Here were the lowlands of the St. Lawrence; but the restricted area drew men for other reasons than for its fertile land, and northern commerce was not to be built up upon a solid foundation of agricultural production. The river and the Shield, which seemed physically to overawe the valley with their force and mass, reduced the lowlands to a position of secondary economic importance. It was the final trunk-line of the western commercial system driving past Quebec and Montreal, which gave the rock and the river city their initial economic importance... The trend of expansion from the St. Lawrence valley was towards the west, and the commercial empire of the north was inland and not oceanic...Canadian expansion drove impulsively westward, along the rivers and into the interior. It was trade which drew them all; for the Shield and its outlying fringes gave up the first and simplest of the Canadian staple products, beaver fur. Furs, a product of the Shield, obtainable by the river

system of transportation, weighted the already heavy emphasis of the Precambrian formation and the St. Lawrence. Furs impelled the northerners to win that western commercial empire which the river seemed to offer to the daring.

"Thus the society which grew up in the northern geographic province instinctively created that form of endeavour which was to dominate Canadian life until the conquest and for nearly a century thereafter. This was the northern commercial system, of which furs were the first staple; and the fur-trading organization of the French was the elementary expression of the major architectural style of Canadian business life. It was a distinct North American system, peculiar to Canada, with the immensity and simplicity which was characteristic of the landscape itself. The northern commercial organization plunged in a single trunk-line across the Atlantic and up the river to Quebec and Montreal; but beyond the river city it spread out in increasing amplitude and with infinite ramifications over the enormous bulk of the Precambrian formation and over the central lowlands of the continent. This western territory, where the goods of Europe were exchanged for the goods of America, was the inland commercial empire of the St. Lawrence. The colony, weak in agriculture, weak in industry and seaward commerce, was tied in utter bondage to France; but it revenged this subordination in the east by extravagantly ambitious pretensions in the hinterland of North America. The whole landscape annexed to the river of Canada, the lands which spread out north and south and westward of the Great Lakes were claimed and largely exploited by the commercial state which was centralized at Quebec and Montreal.

"It seemed, in the first assertive youth of the northern society, as if the St. Lawrence might take possession of inland North America, as if the western edges of the continent would be the only limits of this vast, facile, unsubstantial commercial empire. The young fur-trading colony concentrated with passionate intentness upon the fulfillment of its own peculiar destiny... It became at once the greatest ambition and the chief task of Canadians to enlarge the extent of their commercial dominion, to centralize it upon the lower reaches of the St. Lawrence and to protect it from the encroachments of rivals from the south and from the north.

"The pressure of this system was enormous. The colony grew curiously -- ungainly, misshapen, almost distorted -- stamped by tasks and ambitions which were, on the whole, too great for it. The western commercial organization, which lasted as the dominant economic form for two centuries of Canadian history, rooted certain tendencies deeply in the society of the St. Lawrence: there were virtues and weaknesses, loyalties and anti-

pathies which became fixed and almost ineradicable. It was western commerce which helped largely to determine the part which Canada would act in the affairs of European empires and the role which it would play in the politics of North America. A colony which scarcely rose above the level of feudal industry and which failed completely to develop a diversified trade, required a mature European metropolis both as a market and as a source of manufactures and supplies..

"The first British Canadians were merchants drawn northward by the promises of the river; and they came with the single, simple objective of making money by trade...The army and the civilian population which had endured a two years' blockade, constituted the first market on the shores of the St. Lawrence after the conquest. But almost at once the northern economy began to select its future servants from the ruck of these first casual traders. In Quebec and Montreal, the enormous implications of the conquest rushed over some of these nomad merchants...Gradually, during the first quarter-century of British rule, and by a slow process of arrivals and departures, there was built up a new commercial personnel, devoted to the river and dedicated to the realization of its promises.

"This commercial group acquired and maintained an enormous influence in Canadian affairs. It was the most self-conscious, purposeful and assertive of all the Canadian social classes. But its outward appearance was not particularly unusual or impressive.

"The first British-Canadian merchants came from a score of different towns and villages scattered haphazardly over the old world and the new. There were a few foreigners, Wentzel, Ermatinger and Wadden and the Jews, Solomons and Levy...

"Montreal possessed immense purpose and undivided concentration. The river city was the city of western commerce -- the grand style of Canadian commercial endeavour; and the fur trade was its first expression. Eagerly the new northerners took over the direction of this business, acquired its old technique and pushed forward towards its old objectives. In the summer of 1761 Alexander Henry was on his way to Michilimackinac. According to his account, the traders Goddard, Solomons, Bostwick and Treacy were in the west in the very early sixties, and there were others without doubt. It was, in those days, a trade for heroes. The Indians looked upon the British newcomers with resentment, irritability and malevolence. The sullen, mounting tension which filled the whole west cracked in 1763 and there came the explosive

fury of Pontiac's rising. From the window of a house in Michilimackinac, Henry helplessly watched the slaughter of his fellow subjects; and the Indians brought the 'green scalps' of British-Canadian traders to the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Severn House. For two years the west was closed for trade, until the merchants in Montreal fretted with impatience; but at last, at the beginning of 1765, Murray began to issue licenses once more." (Pp. 22-24, 29)

The westward element in the geopolitics of Canadian history is prominent in what may be fairly called the oldest Canadian document, Capt. Jacques Cartier's own Bref récit et succincte narration de la navigation faite en 1535 et 1536 aux îles de Canada, Hochelaga, Saguenay et avec particulières meurs, langaige et cérémonies des habitans d'icelles.

This significant document is preceded by a remarkable preface in which he situates his venture in the context of cosmogony and the workings of the solar system, and then in the essential history of mankind, in terms both theological and scientific; in human awareness and in the development of knowledge.

Two centuries before Ezekiel Solomons and three centuries before going west became proverbial advice for the young man, the French explorer placed his adventure in the historiographic philosophy of the westward movement of mankind and put the Jews' Holy Land as the significant point of departure.

"For first our holy faith was seeded and planted in the Holy Land which is in Asia, to the east of our Europe. And then, by the succession of time, brought and revealed unto us, and finally to the west of our said Europe, following the example of the sun which brings its warmth and light from the east to the west, as has been said. And thus also have we seen our sacred faith not eclipsed anywhere by the wicked heretics and false legislators, and since then suddenly light up again and show its clarity more openly than in the past...

"And now in the present navigation conducted by your royal command for the discovery of western lands, being in climates parallel to your lands and kingdom, not hitherto known to you or to us, can be seen and known their goodness and the fertility, the large number of peoples living there, and their virtue and peacefulness." (Paris, Librairie Tross, 1863, reprinting of the original rare edition with variant readings of manuscripts in the Bibliothèque impériale, with historical introduction by M. D'Avezac)

In this context there stands the association of these experienced Jewish traders, army purveyors, deeply implanted within the roots of the history of the country. Some of them had been very close to the line of fire and of torture. They probably shared common German-English background; they teamed up to trade with the Indians over a goodly part of the continent from Montreal. They had developed a large volume of trade and had suffered great and dangerous adventures, often to end on equally great difficulties.

But these wandering merchants left a profound mark on American and Canadian history and won a respected place in the annals of the continent.

Their story has been studied by Jacob Rader Marcus (in his Early American Jewry, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1951, vol. 1, and in his American Jewry. Documents Eighteenth Century. Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College, 1959) and by Irving I. Katz (The Beth El Story. Detroit, Wayne University Press, 1955) and in other of his publications.

Arthur Chiel relates these intruders into the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company to the more numerous independent Montreal invaders who later formed the Northwest Company. (The Jews in Manitoba, A Social History. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1961, p.5)

In their history of Quebec, Farley-Lamarche note that "after the treaty of Paris some Jews who traded in the Upper Country reached Montreal, so that the Jewish presence became quite important in the new English colony." (P. 341)

Michel Brunet notes the preponderance of English commerce at this period in the colony,

"The enterprising spirit and the good fortune of the English merchants of Montreal was not limited to the fur trade. The names of those who dominate the economic life of the future metropolis of English Canada since the last quarter of the 18th century have no French resonance: the McGill brothers, Edward Chinn, Ezekiel Solomon, Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher, Todd, Patterson, Charles Grant, Peter Pond, Jacob Jordan, Alexander Mackenzie, Simon McTavish." (La Présence anglaise et les Canadiens. Montréal, Beauchemin, 1958, P.85)

Edgar Andrew Collard tells the story of this "Daring Jewish Merchant" (in Gazette of Nov. 26, 1977),

"In the summer of 1761 Ezekiel Solomon took his life in his hands and set out for Fort Michilimackinac. It was one of the most dangerous, the most adventurous expeditions in all of Canada's commercial history. He seemed to have little chance of every coming back alive.

"If he survived the hazards, he might carry out business dealings of extraordinary profit. His decision to go was an expression of the most resolute business enterprise -- one of the earliest examples of the readiness to take chances that has marked Canadian Jewish businessmen ever since.

"Fort Michilimackinac stood on the straits between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. It was an old French fort. There the French fur traders met with the Indians in the neighborhood of the Great Lakes. That fort was one of the richest centres for the fur trade."

In his article on "Ezekiel Solomon, the First Jew in Michigan," in Michigan History, Katz describes the situation,

"Located on the sandy south side of the straits near the tip of Michigan's lower peninsula, it was the principal fort north of Detroit. It oversaw the commerce of three lakes and served as a meeting place for the nearby Chippewa and Ottawa Indian tribes.

"The French occupied the fort until the autumn of 1760, when its commandant, Captain Louis de Beaujeu, abandoned it to the victorious British. English troops did not arrive to take possession of their prize until a year later, on September 28, 1761.

"During that year, the fort was occupied by bush-ranging French traders, most of them half-breeds.

"Ezekiel Solomon and a few hardy traders came to Mackinac in the summer of 1761 in advance of the English troops, in order to pre-empt some of the rich northern fur trade. So that they might win over the Chippewa Indians to their side, the English traders distributed presents to them and succeeded in winning their friendship.

"But no sooner had they become friendly with the Chippewas than a band of nearby Ottawas presented demands and threatened destruction of the group. Fortunately Captain Henry Balfour, Lieutenant William Leslye and a garrison of English soldiers arrived in time to rescue the traders, probably including Ezekiel Solomon, from the impending peril." (Sept. 1948)

Lieut. Leslye informed Henry Bouquet (via Donald Campbell), we "arrived just in time to save the traders from the Indians who threatened to destroy them."

The 1761 court records relate a suit of Solomon & Frimson, merchants, against Ebenzar Canute. (PAC, MG 24, E4, vol. 2, P.7)

During the Pontiac Indian uprising Solomon was taken prisoner by the Indians and was one of the few Englishmen, military or civilian, to remain alive.

In the terms of Irving Katz, "Ezekiel Solomon and three of his partners went through the horrors of the general Indian uprising of 1763 known as Pontiac's Conspiracy, and shared the common experience of an Indian captivity with its imminent threat of death by torture.

"Indian resentment of English officials and unscrupulous traders was further heightened by the incitements of a bitter French population. The Indians rose in a great effort to end the influx of English settlers and soldiery. Significantly enough, Pontiac's Conspiracy was not directed against the French.

"According to Chief Pontiac's plan, a simultaneous attack was to have been launched on all the forts in the possession of the English and the garrisons annihilated in one stroke.

"At Mackinac, the scheme was to engage in a game of ball, at the exciting stage of which the ball was to be tossed, presumably by accident, within the fort, whither the warriors were to rush after it, only to seize the weapons which their squaws, by prearrangement, had taken into the fort, hidden under their blankets. The scheme was carried out successfully on June 2, 1763.

"Among the traders who witnessed the horrible massacre by the Indians of the English soldiers and traders was Ezekiel Solomon.

"This appears from his affidavit taken in Montreal for use before the Military Court of Inquiry held later by Major Henry Gladwin at Detroit. It reads as follows:

"I, Ezekiel Solomon, Resident in the Fort at Michilimackinac at the time it was surprised by the Savages, declare that on the 2nd day of June a Frenchman, Mons. Cote, entered my House several Times and carried from thence several Parcels of Goods, my Property. And also an Indian named Sanpear carried the Peltry from my House to the House of Amiable Deniviere in whose Garret I was concealed. I owed Mons. Arick a sum of money, but at the time He demanded it the payment was not become due, and I refused to pay Him till the Time I contracted for; but he told me, the Commanding Officer would prevent that, and he replied that the Commanding Officer was nothing and that he Himself was Commanding Officer. Sworn, & c., 14th Aug. 1763, before me. Danl Disney, Town Major.'" (Gladwin Manuscripts, Pp. 667, cited by Henry, Pp.90-91)

To continue with Collard,

"With the coming of British rule in 1760 the French fur traders saw their licences lapse. A vacuum opened up. The new traders, the British subjects from Montreal, could move rapidly into the area.

"They would have no competition from the French. If they went to the fort soon enough, they could do business before many other English traders would arrive. The fur trade of the area would be at the disposal of only a few merchants from Montreal, if they came at once, with a good supply of trade goods.

"The dangers were appalling. Though that area at the Great Lakes was now British territory, no British authority had as yet been established. No troops had arrived in that far wilderness. If Fort Michilimackinac was a vacuum, awaiting any traders, it was also a vacuum, without law or order.

"The Indians of the region had been the allies of the French in the long wars against the English -- wars that had only just ended. They would have no friendship for the English.

"The few French living in or near the fort would be instinctive enemies of these first English intruders from Montreal.

Henry himself describes the misunderstandings between the traders, particularly the English-speaking merchants, and the Indians,

"These first English-speaking traders, after their long canoe journey from Montreal, settled down uneasily at Fort Michilimackinac. The French at the fort said the Indians would kill them, sooner or later; they had better get out. Indians began demanding presents.

"A tribe, the Ottawas, arrived in force. They summoned Solomon, and the few other traders, to a council.

"They told the traders: 'You shall give to each of our men, young and old, merchandise and ammunition, to the amount of fifty beaver-skins, on credit, and for which I have no doubt of their paying you in the summer on their return from their wintering.'

"The traders realized their goods were being extorted from them; they would never be paid. They were determined to resist. They gathered in a house in the fort. They barricaded the entrance in the best way they could. They armed themselves, and made ready to hold out.

"An old record says that 'the night was past, as might be expected, in the greatest anxiety, being hourly in expectation of an attack, which did not happen.'

"Their prospects were grim. They were only a small band in a remote post, in the midst of enemies. The French at the fort advised them to give the Indians what they wanted. Solomon and the others were still determined to fight it out. They remained behind their barricades till night.

"Then hope came. Word reached them that English troops were on their way to the fort; they had encamped only a few miles away. In some ways, their danger was increased. The Indians might try to seize the house before the troops arrived.

"Watch was maintained through another tense night. At dawn the Indians were leaving in their canoes. Soon afterward the boats of the English were approaching the landing-place.

"One of the officers, a Lieut. Leslye, later remarked that they had 'arrived just in time to save the traders from the Indians who threatened to destroy them.'

"Once the English troops had arrived at Michilimackinac, Ezekiel Solomon and the other traders from Montreal had the security and protection they needed. As the first of the English citizens in the area, they turned energetically to making the most of their opportunities. They not only traded at the fort; they sent canoes with goods into the interior to trade with the Indians farther away.

"Their gamble in risking their lives seemed to be paying off and very handsomely. But all the while a new danger was in the making.

"The idea grew among the Indians that they should assert their independence; they should seize the west for themselves. Instead of having to submit to the white men, French or English, why should they not become again the master of their own land?

"The leader of this independence movement was Pontiac, Chief of the Ottawas. He roused his own and other tribes."

Francis Parkman, the classic historian of this period, includes Henry's story in his history of The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada, (tenth rev. ed., vol. 1, Boston, Little Brown, 1882, vol. 1, Pp. 331-32),

"Scarcely had he ceased to congratulate himself on having thus got rid of the Ojibwas, or, as he calls them, the Chippewas, when a more formidable invasion once more menaced him with destruction. Two hundred L'Arbre Croche Ottawas came in a body to the fort, and summoned Henry, together with Goddard and Solomons, two other traders, who had just arrived, to meet them in council. Here they informed their startled auditors that they must distribute their goods among the Indians, adding a worthless promise to pay them in the spring, and threatening force in case of a refusal. Being allowed until the next morning to reflect on what they had heard, the traders resolved on resistance and, accordingly, arming about thirty of their men with muskets, they barricaded themselves in the house occupied by Henry, and kept strict watch all night. The Ottawas, however, did not venture an attack. On the following day, the Canadians, with pretended sympathy, strongly advised compliance with the demand; but the three traders resolutely held out, and kept possession of their stronghold till night, when, to their surprise and joy, the news arrived that the body of troops known to be on their way towards the fort were, at that moment, encamped within a few miles of it. Another night of watching and anxiety succeeded; but at sunrise, the Ottawas launched their canoes and departed while, immediately after, the boats of the English detachment were seen to approach the landing-place. Michilimackinac received a strong garrison; and for a time, at least, the traders were safe."

Henry himself describes the misunderstandings between the traders, particularly the English-speaking merchants, and the Indians,

Alexander Henry was one of the civilians who attached themselves, as was common in those years, to Amherst's army, not as a soldier but in an early attempt to share in the fur trade of Canada directly on the conquest of the army.

Like many others, he risked fortune and life by advancing as a civilian ahead of the established line, of the authority of the advancing army to which he was loosely attached.

The English victory at Quebec had altered the character of the fur trade. Henry was among the first to obtain permission, and, as soon as the weather permitted, started for Michilimackinac, travelling by the regular route of the Ottawa River and Lake Huron. Passing across this lake he found that the Indians had not yet recognized the change of government, and that it was necessary for him to disguise himself as a Frenchman. Michilimackinac had been supplied with a small force of English soldiers from Detroit, and was, with the exception of the small post on Green Bay, the most westerly fortified position in the British Dominion." (Bain's preface to Henry. Travels and Adventures. 1901. P. XIX; also in 1969 ed. from M.G. Hurtig, Edmonton)

In Henry's own words,

"At the entrance of Lake Michigan, and at about twenty miles to the west of Fort Michilimackinac, is the village of L'Arbre Croche, inhabited by a band of Otawas, boasting of two hundred and fifty fighting men. L'Arbre Croche is the seat of the Jesuit mission of Saint Ignace de Michilimackinac, and the people are partly baptized, and partly not. The missionary resides on a farm, attached to the mission, and situated between the village and the fort, both of which are under his care. The Otawas of L'Arbre Croche, who, when compared with the Chipeways, appear to be much advanced in civilization, grow maize, for the market of Michilimackinac, where this commodity is depended upon for provisioning the canoes.

"The new dangers, which presented themselves, came from this village of Otawas. Every thing, as I have said, was in readiness, for the departure of my goods, when accounts arrived of its approach; and shortly after, two hundred warriors entered the fort, and billeted themselves in the several houses, among the Canadian inhabitants. The next morning, they assembled in the house which was built for the commandant, or governor, and ordered the attendance of myself, and of two other merchants, still later from Montréal, namely, Messrs. Stanley Goddard, and Ezekiel Solomons.

"After our entering the council-room, and taking our seats, one of the chiefs commenced an address: 'Englishmen,' said he, 'we, the Otawas, were some time since informed of your arrival in this country, and of your having brought with you the goods of which we have need. At this news, we were greatly pleased, believing that through your assistance, our wives and children would be enabled to pass another winter; but, what was our surprise, when a few days ago, we were again informed that the goods which, as we had expected, were intended for us were, on the eve of departure, for distant countries, of which some are inhabited by our enemies! These accounts being spread, our wives and children came to us, crying, and desiring that we should go to the fort.'" (Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories between the Years 1760 and 1776. New York, I. Riley, 1809. Pp. 47-51. New edition with notes by James Bain, Toronto, Morang. 1901. Pp. 49-53)

Henry narrates how the catastrophe that cost so many lives, and direly threatened his and Solomon's occurred.

"Baggatiway, called, by the Canadians, le jeu de la crosse, is played with a bat and ball. The bat is about four feet in length, curved, and terminating in a sort of racket. Two posts are planted in the ground, at a considerable distance from each other, as a mile, or more. Each party has its post, and the game consists in throwing the ball up to the post of the adversary. The ball, at the beginning, is placed in the middle of the course, and each party endeavours as well to throw the ball out of the direction of its own post, as into that of the adversary's....

"The game of baggatiway, as from the description above will have been perceived, is necessarily attended with much violence and noise. In the ardour of contest, the ball, as has been suggested, if it cannot be thrown to the goal desired, is struck in any direction by the adversary. At such a moment, therefore, nothing could be less liable to excite premature alarm, than that the ball should be tossed over the pickets of the fort nor that, having fallen there, it should be followed on the instant, by all engaged in the game, as well the one party as the other, all eager, all struggling, all shouting, all in the unrestrained pursuit of a rude athletic exercise. Nothing could be less fitted to excite premature alarm -- nothing, therefore, could be more happily devised, under the circumstances, than a stratagem like this; and this was, in fact, the stratagem which the Indians had employed, by which they had obtained possession of the fort, and by which they had been enabled to slaughter and subdue its garrison, and such of its other inhabitants as they pleased....

"The garret was separated from the room below only by a layer of single boards, at once the flooring of the one and the ceiling of the other. I could therefore hear every thing that passed; and, the Indians no sooner in, than they inquired whether or not any Englishman were in the house? M. Langlade replied, that 'He could not say -- he did not know of any;' -- answers in which he did not exceed the truth; for the Pani woman had not only hidden me by stealth, but kept my secret, and her own, M. Langlade was therefore, as I presume, as far from a wish to destroy me as he was careless about saving me, when he added to these answers, that 'They might examine for themselves, and would soon be satisfied, as to the object of their question.' Saying this, he brought them to the garret-door.

"The state of my mind will be imagined. Arrived at the door, some delay was occasioned by the absence of the key, and a few moments were thus allowed me, in which to look around for a hiding-place. In one corner of the garret was a heap of those vessels of birch-bark, used in maple-sugar making.

"The door was unlocked, and opening, and the Indians ascending the stairs before I had completely crept into a small opening which presented itself at one end of the heap. An instant after, four Indians entered the room, all armed with tomahawks, and all besmeared with blood, upon every part of their bodies.

"The die appeared to be cast. I could scarcely breathe but I thought that the throbbing of my heart occasioned a noise loud enough to betray me. The Indians walked in every direction about the garret, and one of them approached me so closely that at a particular moment, had he put his hand, he must have touched me. Still, I remained undiscovered; a circumstance to which the dark colour of my clothes, and the corner in which I was, must have contributed. In a word, after taking several turns in the room, during want of light, in a room which had no window, and in which they told M. Langlade how many they had killed, and how many scalps they had taken, they returned down stairs, and I, with sensations not to be expressed, heard the door, which was the barrier between me and my fate, locked for the second time." (1809 ed., Pp. 78-83; 1901 ed., Pp. 81-82)

Henry was taken again, but was saved by a remarkable humane Indian tradition.

"I resigned myself to the fate with which I was menaced; and regarding every attempt at concealment as vain, I arose from the bed and presented myself full in view to the Indians who were entering the room. They were all in a state of intoxication, and entirely naked, except about the middle. One of them, named Wenniway, whom I had previously known, and who was upward of six feet in height, had his entire face and body covered with charcoal and grease, only that a white spot, of two inches in diameter, encircled either eye. This man walking up to me, seized me, with one hand, by the collar of the coat, while in the other he held a large carving-knife, as if to plunge it into my breast; his eyes, meanwhile, were fixed stedfastly on mine. At length, after some seconds, of the most anxious suspense, he dropped his arm, saying, 'I won't kill you!' -- To this he added, that he had been frequently engaged in wars against the English, and had brought away many scalps; that, on a certain occasion, he had lost a brother, whose name was Musinigon, and that I should be called after him...

"Wenniway ordered me down stairs and there informing me that I was to be taken to his cabin where, and indeed every where else, the Indians were all mad with liquor, death again was threatened, and not as possible only, but as certain...

"I was called to the room below, in which was an Indian, who said I must go with him out of the fort, Wenniway having sent him to fetch me. This man, as well as Wenniway himself, I had seen before. In the preceding year, I had allowed him to take goods on credit, for which he was still in my debt; and some short time previous to the surprise of the fort he had said, upon my upbraiding him with want of honesty, that 'He would pay me before long!' -- This speech now came fresh into my memory, and led me to suspect that the fellow had formed a design against my life. I communicated the suspicion to M. Langlade; but he gave for answer, that 'I was not now my own master, and must do as I was ordered.'

"The Indian, on his part, directed, that before I left the house, I should undress myself, declaring that my coat and shirt would become him better than they did me. His pleasure, in this respect, being complied with, no other alternative was left me than either to go out naked, or to put on the clothes of the Indian, which he freely gave me in exchange. His motive, for thus stripping me of my own apparel was no other, as I afterward learned, than this, that it might not be stained with blood when he should kill me.

"I was now told to proceed; and my driver followed me close, until I had passed the gate of the fort, when I turned toward the spot where I knew the Indians to be encamped. This, however, did not suit the purpose of my enemy, who seized me by the arm, and drew me violently, in the opposite direction, to the distance of fifty yards, above the fort. Here, finding that I was approaching the bushes and sand-hills, I determined to proceed no further, but told the Indian that I believed he meant to murder me and that, if so, he might as well strike where I was, as at any greater distance. He replied, with coolness, that my suspicions were just, and that he meant to pay me, in this manner for my goods.

"The Indian produced a knife, held me in a position to receive the intended blow. Both this, and that which followed, were necessarily the affair of a moment. By some effort, too sudden and too little dependent on thought to be explained or remembered, I was enabled to arrest his arm, and give him a sudden push, by which I turned him from me, and released myself from his grasp. This was no sooner done, than I ran toward the fort, with all the swiftness in my power, the Indian following me, and I expecting every moment to feel his knife. I succeeded in my flight; and, on entering the fort, I saw Wenniway, standing in the midst of the area, and to him I hastened for protection. Wenniway desired the Indian to desist; but the latter pursued me round him, making several strokes at me with his knife, and foaming at the mouth, with rage at the repeated failure of his purpose. At length, Wenniway drew near to M. Langlade's house; and, the door being open, I ran into it. The Indian followed me; but, on my entering the house, he voluntarily abandoned the pursuit.

"Preserved so often, and so unexpectedly, as it had now been my lot to be, I returned to my garret with a strong inclination to believe, that through the will of an overruling power, no Indian enemy could do me hurt; but, new trials, as I believed, were at hand, when, at ten o'clock in the evening, I was roused from sleep, and once more desired to descend the stairs. Not less, however, to my satisfaction than surprise, I was summoned only to meet Major Etherington, Mr. Bostwick and Lieutenant Leslie, who were in the room below.

"These gentlemen had been taken prisoners, while looking at the game, without the fort, and immediately stripped of all their clothes. They were now sent into the fort, under the charge of Canadians, because, the Indians having resolved on getting drunk, the chiefs were apprehensive that they would be murdered, if they continued in the camp. -- Lieutenant Jemette and seventy soldiers had been killed; and but twenty Englishmen, including soldiers, were still alive. These were all within the fort, together with nearly three hundred Canadians.

"These being our numbers, myself and others proposed to Major Etherington, to make an effort for regaining possession of the fort, and maintaining it against the Indians. The Jesuit missionary was consulted on the project; but he discouraged us, by his representations, not only of the merciless treatment which we must expect from the Indians, should they regain their superiority, but of the little dependence which was to be placed upon our Canadian auxiliaries. Thus, the fort and prisoners remained in the hands of the Indians though, through the whole night, the prisoners and whites were in actual possession, and they were without the gates.

"That whole night, or the greater part of it, was passed in mutual condolence; and my fellow-prisoners shared my garret. In the morning, being again called down, I found my master, Wenniway, and was desired to follow him. He led me to a small house, within the fort, where, in a narrow room, and almost dark, I found Mr. Ezekiel Solomons, an Englishman from Detroit, and a soldier, all prisoners. With these, I remained in painful suspense as to the scene that was next to present itself, till ten o'clock, in the forenoon, when an Indian arrived, and presently marched us to the lakeside, where a canoe appeared ready for departure, and in which we found that we were to embark.

"Our voyage, full of doubt as it was, would have commenced immediately, but that one of the Indians, who was to be of the party, was absent. His arrival was to be waited for; and this occasioned a very long delay, during which we were exposed to a keen north-east wind. An old shirt was all that covered me; I suffered much from the cold; and, in this extremity, M. Langlade coming down to the beach, I asked him for a blanket promising, if I lived, to pay him for it, at any price he pleased; but, the answer I received was this, that he could let me have no blanket unless there were some one to be security for the payment. For myself, he observed, I had no longer any property in that country. I had no more to say to M. Langlade; but, presently seeing another Canadian named John Cuchoise, I addressed to him a similar request, and was not refused. Naked as I was, and rigorous as was the weather, but for the blanket, I must have perished. At noon, our party was all collected, the prisoners all embarked, and we steered for the Isles du Castor, in Lake Michigan...

"The soldier, who was our companion in misfortune, was made fast to a bar of the canoe, by a rope tied round his neck, as is the manner of the Indians, in transporting their prisoners. The rest were left unconfined; but a paddle was put into each of our hands, and we were made to use it. The Indians in the canoe were seven in number; the prisoners four. I had left, as it will be recollected, Major Etherington, Lieutenant Lesslie and Mr. Bostwick, at M. Langlade's and was now joined in misery with Mr. Ezekiel Solomons, the soldier, and the Englishman who had newly arrived from Detroit. This was on the sixth day of June. The fort was taken on the fourth; I surrendered myself to Wenniway on the fifth; and this was the third day of our distress.

"We were bound, as I have said, for the Isles du Castor, which lie in the mouth of Lake Michigan; and we should have crossed the lake, but that a thick fog came on, on account of which the Indians deemed it safer to keep the shore close under their lee. We therefore approached the lands of the Ottawas, and their village of L'Arbre Croche, already mentioned as lying about twenty miles to the westward of Michilimackinac, on the opposite side of the tongue of land on which the fort is built.

"Every half hour, the Indians gave their war whoops, one for every prisoner in their canoe. This is a general custom, by the aid of which all other Indians, within hearing, are apprized of the number of prisoners they are carrying.

"In this manner, we reached Wagoshense, a long point, stretching westward into the lake, and which the Ottawas make a carrying-place, to avoid going round it. It is distant eighteen miles from Michilimackinac. After the Indians had made their war-whoop, as before, an Ottawa appeared upon the beach, who made signs that we should land. In consequence, we approached. The Ottawa asked the news, and kept the Chipeways in further conversation, till we were within a few yards of the land, and in shallow water. At this moment, a hundred men rushed upon us, from among the bushes and dragged all the prisoners out of the canoes, amid a terrifying shout.

"We now believed that our last sufferings were approaching; but, no sooner were we fairly on shore, and on our legs, than the chiefs of the party advanced, and gave each of us their hands, telling us that they were our friends, and Ottawas, whom the Chipeways had insulted, by destroying the English without consulting with them on the affair. They added, that what they had done was for the purpose of saving our lives, the Chipeways having been carrying us to the Isles du Castor only to kill and devour us...

"It was not long before we were embarked again, in the canoes of the Otawas, who, the same evening, relanded us at Michilimackinac, where they marched us into the fort, in view of the Chipeways, confounded at beholding the Otawas espouse a side opposite to their own.

"The Otawas, who had accompanied us in sufficient numbers, took possession of the fort. We, who had changed masters, but were still prisoners, were lodged in the house of the commandant, and strictly guarded.

"Early the next morning, a general council was held, in which the Chipeways complained much of the conduct of the Otawas, in robbing them of their prisoners; alleging that all the Indians, the Otawas alone excepted, were at war with the English; that Pontiac had taken Detroit; that the king of France had awoke, and repossessed himself of Quebec and Montréal; and that the English were meeting destruction, not only at Michilimackinac, but in every other part of the world. From all this they inferred, that it became the Otawas to restore the prisoners, and to join in the war; and the speech was followed by large presents, being part of the plunder of the fort, and which was previously heaped in the centre of the room. The Indians rarely make their answers till the day after they have heard the arguments offered. They did not depart from their custom on this occasion; and the council therefore adjourned.

"We, the prisoners, whose fate was thus in controversy, were unacquainted, at the time, with this transaction; and therefore enjoyed a night of tolerable tranquility, not in the least suspecting the reverse which was preparing for us. Which of the arguments of the Chipeways, or whether or not all were deemed valid by the Otawas, I cannot say; but, the council was resumed at an early hour in the morning, and, after several speeches had been made in it, the prisoners were sent for, and returned to the Chipeways.

"The Otawas, who now gave us into the hands of the Chipeways, had themselves declared, that the latter designed no other than to kill us, and make broth of us. The Chipeways, as soon as we were restored to them, marched us to a village of their own, situate on the point which is below the fort, and put us into a lodge, already the prison of fourteen soldiers, tied two and two, with each a rope about his neck, and made fast to a pole which might be called the supporter of the building...

"I confess that in the canoe, with the Chipeways, I was offered bread -- but, bread with what accompaniment! -- They had a loaf, which they cut with the same knives that they had employed in the massacre -- knives still covered with blood. The blood, they moistened with spittle, and rubbing it on the bread, offered this for food to their prisoners, telling them to eat the blood of their countrymen." (1809 ed., Pp. 87-99; 1901 ed., Pp. 90-98)

"Of the English traders that fell into the hands of the Indians, at the capture of the fort, Mr. Tracy was the only one who lost his life. Mr. Ezekiel Solomons and Mr. Henry Bostwick were taken by the Otawas, and after the peace, carried down to Montréal, and there ransomed. Of ninety troops, about seventy were killed; the rest, together with those of the posts in the Bay des Puants, and at the river Saint-Joseph, were also kept in safety by the Otawas, till the peace, and then either freely restroed, or ransomed at Montréal." (Travel and Adventure in Canada and the Indian Territories, New York, 1809; and Toronto, Morang, 1901, ed. by James Bain, Pp. 90-104)

Solomon was one of the very few English prisoners in Indian hands to remain alive.

Like his associate Chapman, Ezekiel Solomons entered into American fiction. Kenneth Roberts revived this person out of Canadian Jewish history and gave him a role in his very widely read novel Northwest Passage. (Garden City, Doubleday Doran, 1937)

Midway through the novel Roberts has Maj. Roberts meet the men in the wilds, "a motley throng of traders who had assembled to meet the Major.

"There must have been two hundred men pocked into the shadowy, barn-like room that smelled of rancid pelts, gun-oil, paint and rust. Some wore broadcloth and linen; others were as roughly clothed as any backwoodsman; but the largest number, part French, part Indian and part God knows what, were sallow, slouching, bearded; if they were civilized they didn't look it.

"Before this audience stood a barrel, upended, and on its head, like a grotesque altar-piece, was a keg. When the Major came in, his eyes must have been, like mine, half-blinded; but his nose led him directly to the keg. He stooped to sniff at the spigot, 'Brandy!' he said, 'My favorite drink -- if it's genuine!'

"'It's genuine, Major,' a pleasant Scottish voice replied. 'Remembering your tastes, I picked it out myself, in your honor.'

"'That's John Askin's voice!' the Major cried. When a red-faced young man with unruly sandy hair stepped forward, the Major clapped an affectionate hand upon his shoulder. 'John Askin, the best sutler Rogers' Rangers ever had! John, I'm going to raise a company of Rangers here, just so you can suttler for 'em!'

"The Major's eyes grown used to the dimness of the warehouse, fell upon other old friends among the traders. 'Peter Bartie! I heard you'd gone over the falls at Niagara! Gregor McGregor -- John Chinn -- Aleck Baxter -- Forrest Oakes! Not a drop have we had together since we tried to drink the keg of alcohol in New York! This calls for a glass -- unless you're saving that brandy for next year!'

"The traders crowded around him, shaking his hand. A stocky little man with a hooked beak of a nose had come in from a rear room, with him an Indian woman carrying a basket of glasses. He filled a glass at the spigot of the brandy keg and gave it to the Major.

"'No need to save for next year, Major, now we got you! Next year, with your help, we have more and better brandy.'

"Rogers grinned. 'Meaning Stephen Groesbeck sticks to those that stick to him?'

"'Stephen Groesbeck and every other one of us!' Groesbeck said earnestly. He raised his glass. 'Well, gentlemen, we been waiting and waiting for the Governor, and here he is, a old friend -- knows traders, and everything about Indians, and more about North America than anybody in the world: aint never been afraid of nobody, and never wont! Here's to our new Governor, Major Robert Rogers, world-renowned Commander Rogers' Rangers, who puts a end to uncertainty and brings business back to life. Drink hearty, gentlemen!'

"The traders cheered and stamped until dust rose from the floor.

"A slender little man in clothes too big for him pushed through the crowd to stand before the Major, wringing sad hands. 'Major,' he said, 'I come here from Montreal first thing in the spring, so to go early to trade with Assiniboins...'

"What's the name?" Rogers asked.

"Ezekiel Solomon," the little man said. "Major, when I asked the Lieutenant, he says he can't give me a pass. I say 'If I don't get one, all my voyageurs, they got to be paid; and to pay 'em I must sell my goods at a sacrifice. Then there wont be no furs coming back from the Assiniboins next spring,' I told him, 'and England don't get our furs. You know who gets 'em?' I said, 'France and Spain, they---'"

"You don't have to tell me all this, Mr. Solomon," Rogers interrupted. "What I would like to hear is whether Sir Guy Carleton, as Governor of Canada, has ever attempted to discourage you or any other Montreal traders from wintering among the Indians?"

"Solomon looked bewildered; but a hundred others answered for him: 'No! No! Never! Not a damned attempt! Discourage! Hell, no!'"

"A sallow gentleman, coatless, caught Rogers' eye. 'Sir,' he drawled, 'being from Montreal myself, I can explain. Bruce is the name: William Bruce: trader to the Naudowessies near St. Anthony's Falls on the Mississippi. Sir Guy Carleton has forwarded petitions from every Western tribe to His Majesty's Ministers, asking that traders be allowed to continue going among them; and Sir Guy himself has said that if traders are prevented from going, England will lose four-fifths of the Indian trade which she now enjoys.'

"Aint that what I say?" Mr. Solomon cried. "I told the Lieutenant all that: I aint told him nothing else every day for a week, Major; and all he says is he aint got no discretionary powers!"

"The traders muttered and cursed.

"He told the truth, Mr. Solomon," Rogers said. "A lieutenant at this post isn't entitled to issue permits to traders, as you should know! I'm the only one who has the power to issue permits...."

"Now on the eastern side of the Mississippi there was an enormous stretch of territory claimed as hunting grounds by both the Chippeways, who had towns all through it, and by the River Bands who lived only along its water-front. This piece of territory extended from the Falls of St. Anthony to the Chippeway River, along the Mississippi, and also extended an equal distance inland from

the river. Roughly, it was one hundred miles square. Since it was claimed by both Chippeway and Sioux, no Sioux could hunt on it without being regarded by the Chippeways as trespassers, whereas the Chippeways who already lived on it were held by the Sioux to be intruders. Thus the Sioux and the Chippeways were perpetually going to war over this square of land, and persuading their allies to go to war over it as well....

"The first trader to reach the Falls of St. Anthony was Ezekiel Solomon, a little Jewish trader who had wintered on Lake Superior close to Michilimackinac, had returned to the fort at the earliest possible moment, and with the business energy of his race had set off at once for the Mississippi. With him, to my inexpressible relief, he had two letters for me, one from the Major and one from Ann.

"The one from the Major, he said, was a duplicate, and a copy would be sent to Lake Superior in case I had moved north. I hardly heard him, so intent was I on the thin little letter from Ann, wondering what was in it, wishing that Solomon would turn his back long enough to let me snatch a glance at its contents.

"I heard him clearly enough, however, when he said, 'She's a nice young lady, I never seen one like her.'

"'Yes,' I said, 'she is. She is indeed.' I felt I was probably speaking too enthusiastically, so I added in what I hoped was a paternal tone, 'A very well-behaved little girl. When did you see her, and was she looking well?'

"'Yes,' Solomon said, 'she looked good. If I had a daughter, that's the kind I'd like.' His beady little eyes looked me up and down. 'She'd be useful in trading business, on account her persistence.'

"'Persistence?' I asked. 'That doesn't seem quite the word to apply to Ann. She's really a quiet little girl, Mr. Solomon.'

"'Maybe you aint paid enough attention to her,' Solomon said. 'She aint so little, and she don't never stop eskin when she wants something pretty bad -- like having a letter carried to you.'

"'I don't think she realized she was bothering you,' I said.

"'Oh, no bother!' Solomon said quickly. 'But good for me you aint gone nowhere yet, odderwise I spend weeks writing letters to Miss Potter, telling what I heard about you, who seen you, what you been doing, where you gone, when you coming beck, how many paintings you got done. How much time that leave me for trading and Indian society, eh? Not none!'

"I drew a deep breath and laughed, and I know I laughed unsteadily, 'Well,' I said, 'thank you for bringing this letter. I - I --'

"'Thanks!'" Solomon cried satirically. 'No thanks to me! What if I said I don't take it, ha? Then she look at me! Something come out of her, some feeling, some ---'

"He made groping gestures before his face with a half-clenched hand. 'I never see nothing like it. She makes feelings in you without saying nothing. S'pose I tell her -- I wouldn't do it, but s'pose I did -- s'pose I tell her, No, I wont take no letter, on account having lots business! She don't do nothing, just move the eyes!'

"He clenched both fists before his face and forcefully thrust them straight toward me, 'Right away something come out and go into me -- here; here; here!' Successively he gripped his throat, clasped a hand over his eyes, smote his breast with a clenched fist, then added, 'Without no trouble I cry like little baby!'

"He seemed puzzled, then fumblingly said, 'I think she maybe got something in her -- something different, like us Jewish fellers have feelings in the fingers so we know good cloth when we touch it.'

"By some singular alchemy, Solomon's words, inept though they were, brought Ann's face and her proud, tight-lipped smile so clearly before me that my throat contracted and I couldn't speak. Nor could I wait longer before opening her letter. Regardless of Solomon, I had to have a glimpse, no matter how fleeting, of the words she had sent me.

"With clumsy fingers I broke the seal and unfolded the sheets. Solomon shifted uncertainly from one foot to the other, then turned from me. The opening words were, 'My dearest Langdon.'

"The restlessness and uncertainty that had so long oppressed me were gone as though they had never existed; never had I seen a day more beautiful; a scene more ravishing than the Falls of St. Anthony, with its thundering curtain of snowy water hung between the fresh green covering that spring had spread upon the banks of the Mississippi. The whole world was so brilliant that I laughed in sheer joy. 'Wait!' I shouted to Solomon. 'Come back!' I folded the letter and buttoned it in the pocket of my buckskin shirt, where it seemed to press against me as if there were life and warmth within it.

"'You haven't told me a word about the Major!' I protested. 'How's he getting along at Michilimackinac, and what did you hear about the Congress?'

"'Didn't hear nothing else,' Solomon said. 'Lake Michigan so full of Indians going to it, it's dangerous. In the Straits you can't hardly turn around without bumping canoes. Nothing ever seen like it before -- not nowhere.'

"'And what do the Indians think of the Major?' I asked.

"'Mister,' Solomon said, 'they think he's the greatest man in the world!'

"'Splendid!' I said. 'Splendid! He is a great man, Solomon -- a born leader with the vision of a statesman.'

"Solomon nodded, twitched at his baggy buckskin shirt, examined the sky dubiously and muttered something about unloading.

"'There's nothing wrong at Michilimackinac, is there?' I asked quickly. 'The Major's not having trouble, is he?'

"'I should be one to say anything against the Major!' Solomon protested. 'Aint he fixed it so I go wintering instead of bankrupt, the way Sir William Johnson fixed it for me to be?'

"'There is something wrong!' I said. 'What is it?'

"Solomon's big head settled back, bird-like. 'I don't know nothing,' he said, 'only what I heard once from my granfadder. A rabbi he was -- a big rabbi.' He cupped his hands at the level of his waist as if he held within them an enormous invisible ball. Evidently his grandfather was heavily bearded. 'My granfadder said, a statesman or a soldier what takes strong steps independent of every-one, wont never gain nothing by it so long as he lives, only hatred.'

"'Perhaps,' I admitted, 'but unusual circumstances make exceptions to every rule, and the Major's an unusual man.'

"Solomon turned his hands palm upward. 'My granfadder, he said that was a rule there wasn't no exception to.'

"He tramped off to unload his canoes, his scrawny neck protruding from his voluminous shirt like that of a plucked chicken..."

Later in the novel, at a moment of dénouement, Solomon's words are recalled,

"Ann looked at me. I saw her face as I had seen it in the Major's dim hall at Michilimackinac, held from me like a prisoner's by the bars of the balustrade. How right that little Jew had been, at the Falls of St. Anthony, when he clutched his throat, smote his breast and said, 'She don't do nothing, just move the eyes, and right away something come out and go into me -- here; here; here!'"

"She put her hand upon my arm, still looking into my eyes. 'Langdon,' she said, 'those were little men who kicked him when he was down before. Prisoners in the Fleet don't have many friends to help them.'

"Hadn't Ezekiel Solomon added: 'Without no trouble I cry like little baby?' Yes, Ezekiel Solomon had been right!"

"The feeling of humility was new upon me."

The old Jewish prototype of fiction, as the far-sighted prophet active in the daily life of business,

After this adventure Solomon extended his operations further in the northwest, with the collaboration of an old French Canadian with thirty years experience. (Robert Rumilly. La Compagnie du nord-ouest, une épopée montréalaise. Fides, 1980, P. 53, 70)

Marcus writes, "Our further data are in part uncertain. Two Levys appear to have been seized by the Indians that same summer. One, we know, was Levy Andrew Levy of Lancaster, who was captured probably by Wyandottes, after he left Presque Isle under safe conduct for Fort Pitt. The other Levy may well have been one of the consortium, Gershon Levy. Levy Solomons, still another partner, escaped from the Indians and reached the safety of Detroit. Two other Jews, whoever they were, coming from Sandusky, fell into the hands of the savages."

Court records in the Chambre de milice de Montréal dated August 17, 1763 shed a light on the ventures of the partners.

The case is that of Julian Rivard, merchant, acting for Jean-Baptiste Proulx, plaintiff, vs. Gershon Levy merchant of this city, appearing for his associate Solomon, defendant, in a claim of £1,200 as based on a bill dated at Missilimackinac last July 12, and costs.

Solomon recognized the bill as signed by Levy, but Levy had been forced to sign it, being at the time a prisoner of the savages, and Proulx threatening to take his furs in payment. The claim had arisen out of a voyage that Proulx was supposed to make on behalf of Solomon to the western sea according to an engagement entered into on July 10, 1762. Proulx had not earned his salary and had remained at Lac de la Playe; he had known beforehand the risks entailed in proceeding to Fort Dauphin; which rendered the deal very disadvantageous and did not return the produce of two canoes of merchandise, 22 packages of furs. Therefore Solomon pleaded to be discharged of the claim against him.

At this point, there appeared Charles Larvine, who swore that he had been engaged by Solomon to go to Fort Dauphin with Proulx. When they reached Lac de la Playe they met savages who told them not to go further because it was too dangerous to do so. They had a council, and several savages wanted to take Proulx, but he did not want to go any further, because, as they said, it was too risky, and Proulx had enough provisions to go to Fort Dauphin. The court decided to hear the men engaged in the canoes of Proulx.

Two of these men, Guillaume le Comte of Isle Jésus and Joseph Datremble of Sorel, attested that they had been engaged by Solomon to go with Proulx to Fort Dauphin. They had brought only six sacks of wheat, expecting to find wild oats at Lac de la Playe. They were deceived in this expectation for when they reached the Lac they had no more provisions and found none. The savages told them to go no further on their land or they would all perish. A Frenchman from the Bissonnet canoe was even killed.

The court found that Levy must pay the claimant the £ 1,200 as wages with expenses taxed at £ 11.5. (PAC, MG8, E6, vol.4)

But the war disrupted the complex trade, and in 1768 the partnership was bankrupt, declaring losses of £ 18,000.

As early as July 19, 1764, there was a public sale of furs "for the benefit of the creditors of Levy Solomons & Co."

Clearly the risks of this trade were on the scale of international warfare. Vaugeois notes that "rare were those Jews in the fur trade or in supplying the armies who did not suffer greatly from the deprecation of the Indians. Among those who appear in the Amherst and Haldemand Papers only Hayman Levy, an important New York fur trader and merchant, can be said to have gotten out without losses." (P. 103)

Following their catastrophic losses during these wars the Montreal Jewish merchants sought organized settlement to keep them out of debtors' prison and in the active commercial community.

The steps initiated by Levy Solomon had, as we shall see, far-reaching consequences. But, as these were not productive of concrete resolutions, the five partners petitioned Governor Carleton for a commission of bankruptcy.

The petition is in a history of the firm,

"The memorial of Isaac Levi of Quebec, merchant, and Levi Solomons, Benjamin Lyon, Gershon Levy, Ezekiel Solomon and Chapman Abraham of Quebec, late merchants and copartners, to the Honourable Guy Carleton, Esquire, Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the province of Quebec, and the Honourable Council of said province, humbly sheweth unto your Excellency and Honours:

"That your petitioners Levi Solomons, Benjamin Lyon, Gershon Levy, Ezekiel Solomon and Chapman Abraham were for many years together merchants and copartners in trade in North America, and more especially during the time of the late war with France and the subsequent Indian War in the year 1763;

"And that they were employed during part of the time of the said wars to furnish divers necessaries to his Majesty's armies in North America, in which employment they behaved with diligence and honesty and gave general satisfaction to the commanders and other officers of his Majesty's armies aforesaid, as is well known and may be easily proved to the satisfaction of your Excellency and Honours by divers respectable persons now in this province.

"And that during the aforesaid Indian War four of your five petitioners last mentioned were made prisoners by the Indians near the forts of Detroit and Michilimackinac and despoiled by them at the same time of a great quantity of goods, which they were carrying to the said forts, of the value of eighteen thousand pounds of lawful money of this province;

"And that by this and other unavoidable losses and misfortunes in the said war, no ways owing to any misconduct in your petitioners, your petitioners became utterly unable to pay their creditors the full amount of their just debts;

"And further that your said last mentioned petitioners having preserved another considerable part of their effects were and still are earnestly desirous of surrendering the same into the hands of proper persons for the general satisfaction of all their creditors in proportion to their several just debts and demands, without any undue preference of some of their said creditors above the rest, in making which surrender they conceive they should act both according to the rules of equity and good conscience, and according to the true intent and meaning of the last clause of a certain ordinance of this province dated on the ninth day of March in the year of Christ, 1765;

"And that they were at the same time in hopes of obtaining from their creditors a release and discharge from the said debts, after they should have given them all the satisfaction in their power by making the said general surrender, and that they should afterwards by such reasonable indulgence of their said creditors have been at liberty to exercise their industry in some new pursuit in order to gain a livelihood...

"And for these and other reasons, which may occur to your Excellency and Honours in this behalf, your memorialists humbly hope that your Excellency and Honours will be graciously pleased to pass a particular ordinance, in the nature of a private act of Parliament, directing that for the settling of the affairs of the said bankrupts, a commission of bankruptcy shall be passed under the public seal of the province, by his Excellency and the Lieutenant-Governor, as keeper of the public seal thereof, to such three or more wise, honest and discreet persons as his Excellency shall think fit to appoint, to execute the law and statutes of England relating to bankrupts with respect to the said bankrupts, your memorialists. Or if this method of relieving your memorialists doth not seem expedient to this Honourable Board, to give such other relief to your memorialists touching the premises, as to your Excellency and Honours shall seem meet."

The later history of the partners is their losing battle with their creditors for nearly two decades. On July 19, 1764, the Quebec Gazette had carried a notice to the public that "on the 10th of August next will be sold a large quantity of furs, consisting of beavers, otters, martins, racoons, foxes, bear skins, deer leather, and sundry other peltries, for the benefit of the creditors of Levy, Solomons and Company." The notice was posted by Welles and Wade, trustees of the said estate; the sale was to take place in Montreal. Some years later (1769) Chapman Abrahams was still trying to collect some debts in order to satisfy one of his creditors, the well-known Detroit merchant, William Edgar.

In the words of Walter Dunn, "it is not clear how the partners got out of their financial difficulties; the English authorities did not support them. Their association was broken, but each of them continued in the fur trade. When the fur trade was renewed in 1767 Gershon Levy became the guarantor for two Canadian traders at Michilimackinac; two years later Chapman Abraham received a permit to ship £ 190 of merchandise to the upper country; the following year Benjamin Lyon was awarded one for £ 1,300 and those of Ezekiel Solomon increased from £ 750 in 1770 to £ 2,000 in 1774. In 1771 the permits of Levy Solomon probably reached £ 3,000."

We find Solomon's name on the 1764 petition of the indignant citizens of Montreal who were angered at the lawlessness and brutality of a group of soldiers who broke into the home of Justice of the Peace Thomas Walker, brutally assaulted him and cut off one of his ears. (Marcus. American Jewry Documents, Pp. 215-17) The incident appears of some social significance in reflecting the anxiety of the mercantile class in a new frontier colonial situation, fearful that the very agents of law and stability -- vested with the arms of authority and largely self-policing while the political authority may just be emerging -- may become the force of brutality and lawlessness which it is intended to suppress while the new order of society is being organized. Under these conditions it may have required courage to sign this petition.

Ezekiel Solomons, his associates and others in the Jewish community, signed the Dec. 3, 1773 petition which called upon the imperial government to establish a colonial assembly. This petition carried the names of Levy Solomon, Samuel Jacobs, and J. Maurer as well as his own.

This request was repeated in the Jan. 10, 1774 petition which was also signed by Ezekiel and Levy Solomons. (An Account of the Proceedings of the British and other Protestant Inhabitants of the Province of Quebec in North America, in order to Obtain an House of Assembly in the Province. London, 1775. Pp. 10-23)

These Jewish merchants adhered to the Nov. 12, 1774 petition of "your ancient subjects settled in the province, purchasing houses and lands and carrying on extensive trade, commerce and agriculture, whereby the value of the land and wealth of its inhabitants are more than doubled. Now they are grieved to see that by the recent Act for making more effectual provision for the Governace of the Province of Quebec they are deprived of the protection of the English laws; in their stead the laws of Canada are introduced, to which we are utter strangers, disgraceful to us as Britons, and in their consequences ruinous to our properties, and we thereby lose the invaluable privilege of trial by juries. That in matters of criminal nature the habeas corpus is dissolved..."

Among the signatories: Samuel Jacobs, Joseph Bindon, Andrew Hays, David Salesbury Franks, Ezekiel Solomons, Jacob Maurer, Isaac Judah, Aaron Hart, Levy Solomons. (Proceedings, Pp. 239-40)

The parallel petition to the House of Lords was signed by most of them (Jacobs, Hays, Franks, Ezekiel Solomons, Maurer, Judah and Hart) as well as by Simon Levy and Lazarus David. (Pp. 247-53)

The petition to the House of Commons was explicit. It complained that the British Act had been passed "on the pressing instance and request of new subjects in a petition setting forth their dislike to the British laws and form of government and praying to have the French institutes in their stead, and a total abolition of trials by jury, together with a capacity of holding places of honour and in common with his Majesty's ancient subjects... The said Petition was never imparted to the inhabitants in general, that is to the freeholders, merchants and traders who are equally alarmed with us at the Canadian laws being to take place, but was in a secret manner carried about and signed by a few of the seigneurs, chevaliers, advocates and others in their confidence, at the suggestions and under the influence of their priests."

The Jewish community in Montreal did not maintain a common front when the Revolutionary War broke out. Levy Solomons was an American patriot, but Ezekiel Solomons -- probably a relative -- and Chapman Abraham were staunch supporters of the English regime. The colourful history emerges more clearly from a glance at the record of each of their pioneering partners.

It is not possible to trace all Lower Canada Jews who may have followed republican ideals to the colonies to the south or loyalist Jews from the American states who left their home to settle in colonies who remained under the English flag.

This is particularly difficult in the cases of the loyalists and demobilized soldiers who sought and received land grants outside the large cities, for they did not establish contact with their urban fellow Jews and soon disappeared from the Jewish commonalty, e.g., Calneck.

Historians have examined such records as the Nominal Returns of Disbanded Troops, but they have had to rely on the unsatisfactory evidence of Jewish-sounding names; this in a society not distant from New England and one containing substantial Germanic, Alsacian and Swiss elements. So B.G. Sack notes the names of Isaac Friedenberg, Herman Valentine, David John Jacobs -- all without issue in the history of the community. He notes Moses Hart of Rhode Island as a loyalist who applied for land in Lower Canada. "His name appears under two different numbers. He subsequently moved to Upper Canada, where a village in the Province of Ontario, in the district where he received a free land grant bears his name to the present day." (History of the Jews in Canada. Montreal, Harvest House, 1965, P.60; and "The Years of the Revolution," in Jewish Standard, Feb. 15, 1960, Pp. 9, 22)

Edgar Andrew Collard connects Ezekiel Solomon with a 1775 political incident more frequently associated with David Salesby Franks, reflecting the complex multiple loyalty tensions in the newly conquered colony neighbouring the restless settlers to the south.

Collard recalls the "Throwing a Statue down a Well," in the Gazette of Dec. 3, 1945,

"When the morning light of May 1, 1775, shone over Place d'Armes it revealed that the bust of His Majesty George III, which stood near the middle of the square, had undergone a shocking transformation. For its white marble face had been painted black, a mitre stood on its head, and a rosary of potatoes was suspended about its neck. And there was an inscription, too, which read: 'Behold the Pope of Canada and the English sot.'

"No doubt the insult offended all the more deeply the sentiments of loyal Montrealers in that His Majesty himself had donated this marble bust to the city. The grateful citizens had not only erected this gift in the centre of the fine broad square, but they had thoughtfully sought to protect it from the severities of the Canadian weather by constructing a sheltering cover, or kiosk. From his protective, if somewhat inartistic shelter, the King looked out with the composure of his marble features upon the comings and goings of his subjects in the busy Place d'Armes.

"But in those times the loyalty of his subjects in Montreal, as in every other part of his British North American colonies, was being put to a searching test. The approaching American Revolution was casting a disturbing shadow before it. In order to confirm the French Canadian subjects in their new loyalty, the British Government, with statesmanlike foresight, had secured the passage of the Quebec Act, by which French Canada was formally granted, among other fundamental rights, that of the free and legal exercise of the Roman Catholic religion.

"In the passing of the Quebec Act those who were planning revolution in North America recognized an important frustration, for security in religion would make the French Canadians far less disposed to seek a change of rule. This feeling of frustration would appear to have largely inspired the act of vandalism in Place d'Armes. It explains the symbolism of the mitre and the rosary, and the title of 'Pope of Canada.'

"After the outrage of the King's statue had been discovered, prompt measures were taken to restore the monarchical dignity and to apprehend the criminals. Early in the morning the commandant of the British garrison sent two sergeants to cleanse the marble features and to remove the trappings of impudent disloyalty. The new judges, or conservators of the peace, reported the incident in detail to the governor, Guy Carleton.

"His Excellency at once issued a proclamation. It stated that a number of wicked and ill-intentioned persons had insolently disfigured the bust of His Majesty on the night of April 30 or the 1st of May, and had affixed a defamatory and scandalous libel, tending to diminish the respect which his subjects ought to feel towards their ruler. In consequence, he was offering a reward of 200 dollars to anyone who would bring these wicked and ill-intentioned persons to justice.

"More than this, a pardon would accompany the reward in the case of anyone who had been a partner to the crime, provided, however, that he had not been the person who had actually disfigured the said bust or affixed the said libel.

"To the inducements officially offered by the Governor, others were added. At the Café the merchants by subscription raised a reward of 100 Louis sterling, while the officers of the 26th Regiment raised 50 guineas for the same purpose. Indeed, the officers made their offer all the more impressive by announcing it publicly in the street, after attracting the attention of the populace with a roll of drums.

"Divisions were already becoming more or less clearly drawn in Montreal between those who were firm in their loyalty to the Crown and those who were harboring revolutionary designs.

"Such sharp differences of opinion were bound to lead to actual clashes. On May 2, after the drums had rolled their impressive summons, and the military reward had been proclaimed, Monsieur Picotte de Bellestre, one of the new councillors, openly expressed a vehement opinion. He declared that he would like to see 'the detestable wretches whipped by the hands of the hangman and then turned out of the province.' And, for good measure, he added that this penalty 'would be too lenient, for they deserved to be hanged...'"

Collard tells of Franks' reaction to the official violence,

"A similar encounter took place between two citizens named Le Pailleur and Ezekiel Solomons. From one account it appears that Solomons had declared that some French Canadian 'scoundrel' had been responsible for the insult to the King, and Le Pailleur had retorted that it might just as likely have been a Jewish scoundrel. But according to another account it was Le Pailleur who had begun by saying that it must have been a Jewish scoundrel, and Solomons who retorted that the scoundrel in question was just as likely a French Canadian. But whoever commenced the insinuations, blows undoubtedly resulted, and Solomons knocked Le Pailleur upon the ground."

I.I. Katz records,

"From an invoice of one of his expeditions, in 1770, we are in a position to know in detail the nature of his cargo. On this particular trip he came up with two 'canoes.' There were sixteen French Canadians in his crew; he was the only literate man among them. There were in the cargo 28 bales of dry goods; blankets, cotton goods, linens and the like; 2 sacks of flour; 4 bales and 1 'role' of tobacco; 4 boxes of iron ware containing brass and copper kettles, and, no doubt, an assortment of knives, needles, axes, etc.; 24 Indian guns, 600 pounds of gunpowder and 1,000 pounds of shot and ball. So much of the solids. In addition, there were 256 gallons of rum and brandy, and 64 gallons of wine. The whole cargo, an 18 months' supply of 'sundry goods' was valued at £750.

"Before they took this load west to Mackinac, all seventeen were asked to take an oath of loyalty to King George and to promise that they would engage in no political intrigue with the Indians. Solomon was also required to post bond of almost double the value of his wares as assurance that he would scrupulously observe all prohibitions governing relations with the Indians." (Jewish Pioneers in Michigan, in Michigan Jewish History, vol. 1, no. 1, March 1960, Pp. 4-12)

That year he was one of fourteen English traders licensed to exploit the fur trade in Wisconsin.

The Daniel Morison Mackinac Journal records that "Ensign Johnstone sold Mr. Solomon the Jew ninety gallons of common Rum June 1771. The year before he sold fifty bundles of dried venison to the said Solomon at 2 sh. and 6 d., for the benefit of Capt. Turnbull, commanding officer of this Fort."

A bill from Moses Solomons dated Oct. 11, 1777 appears in the Amos Hayton and E.W. Gray records in the Canadian Public Archives. (MG 19, A 2, series 3, vol. 54)

At this time we know of Ezekiel Solomon's active accounts with trader Lawrence Ermatinger in Sept. 1771. (PAC, MG 19, A2, series 3, vol. 87) and with the "barracks" in Montreal (MG 19, A2, series 3, vol. 88)

In 1776 we find records of Ezekiel Solomon trading with Aaron Hart in the Hart account books.

His applications for trade licenses are on record: that of April 10, 1772; the applications for Michilimackinac of 1773 and 1774, and that for Lake Superior of April 14, 1775.

There are records of a license to send four canoes to Michilimackinac from Montreal with goods worth £ 2050, dated Apr. 23, 1774 and another for three canoes to Lake Superior worth £ 1,500 Apr. 14, 1775. (PAC, RG 4, B28, vol. 115, Trade licenses 1774-80)

In 1777 he went up to Mackinac with a passport from the military authorities at Quebec, which said the letter of transmittal "was granted him in consideration of his creditors."

The continental perspectives of Solomons' business become clearer as we note the nature of his trading. As Marcus describes it,

"Solomons' lines reached out to far places. Some of his furs must have come from as far west as the foothills of the Rockies, for he and his partner Grant sent a load of supplies to strategic Lake Nipigon, west of Lake Superior. There they could siphon out furs from the backyard of the Hudson's Bay Company to the east, and at the same time barter for beaver that came down the Saskatchewan from the distant west. More and more, as Solomons and his friends reached out for furs, it became patent that this could not be a simple or one-man enterprise. As early as 1761 some of the traders, dealing in Saskatchewan River furs had made an agreement to work cooperatively. They pooled their stocks and divided the profits, the furs. Cooperation was desirable and necessary because of the heavy expense of doing business, because of the dangers of competition and price-cutting, and because of the obvious advantages of monopolistic control and price-fixing. And when war broke out in 1775, the British authorities encouraged the creation of the 'general store' or cooperative centralized enterprise; it was easier to watch one company than twenty-five or thirty, and thus to cut down the smuggling of much needed supplies into the United States, then famished for English consumer goods.

"Accordingly, the commandant at Mackinac, in June and July, 1779, encouraged a group of about thirty traders and companies, operating in that area, to form a loose trading partnership, something like the usual shipping 'adventure' in which several persons were 'concerned'. Under the terms of the twenty-article agreement, which was to run for about a year, the traders created a single store, forebore to trade privately, and agreed to split the profits in proportion to the stock thrown into the common pot. The Mackinac Company of 1779 had two Jewish members, Ezekiel Solomons and Benjamin Lyon." (Early American Jewry, Pp. 261-63)

Katz refers to this venture as the first department store operation in the U.S. All participants in this venture listed "the number of canoes each person has put in, their supposed value, and the present residence of each proprietor." Solomon is put down for one canoe, with goods valued at '15,000' (ostensibly French livres), and his residence is given as Montreal.

When merchant John Askin wrote from Michilimackinac to Jean-Baptiste Barthe at Sault Ste. Marie in June 1778, he began,

"My Dear Brother, I have just learned from Mr. Solomon that my canoes have gone to your place..." (John Askin Papers, ed. by M.M. Quaife, vol. 1, Detroit. Detroit Library Commission, 1928, Pp. 138-39)

Mackinac was a French Canadian Catholic town and, in 1778, the people there wanted a missionary priest. A subscription list was sent around and some time later Ezekiel Solomon obligated himself for the sum of 50 livres, a generous amount.

A moment out of the history of the Hudson's Bay Co. situates Ezekiel Solomons in the geopolitics of the fur trade and of settlement at the end of the eighteenth century. It comes to life in the biography of company agent Maugenest.

This French-born independent fur trader (pedlar) had extended his operations into the Nipigon area of Ontario and the Mississippi Valley, but by 1779 he found himself deeply in debt to Ezekiel Solomons. He decided to flee into the wilds of Sturgeon Falls where he joined the Hudson's Bay Company.

The risks in this upper country trade were very high. Agent Germain Maugenest returned to his post on Lake Michigan one August 1779 day to find that his post had been burned down by fur traders from a Montreal company. He was at the time most deeply in debt to Ezekiel Solomon. (Biography by George Sutherland in Dictionary of Canadian Biography)

In the spring of 1782 he was ordered by the aggressive company to push further into the interior above Gloucester House on Lake Washi, Ont. The year before he had lost his gunpowder in the rapids, and this year the water was too low and his men too inexperienced for this voyage, and he refused to proceed. His biographer in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography suggests that the presence of Ezekiel Solomons in the area contributed to this decision. The company was angered at his timidity and, in fact, demoted him, by transferring him to Moose Factory, far from the Indians who trusted him, and placing him under the command of a French Canadian who could barely make himself understood in English. His superiors noted that his salary of £100 per annum had been set in consideration of the efforts he would make in the interior, in which regard the company was completely disappointed.

Solomon is mentioned in 1778 in a permit from Quebec allowing him to trade in "fuzees, gunpowder, shot and ball in Michilimackinac and places beyond" as a member of the firm of Grant and Solomon. The two are put down in the invoice of goods for five canoes of ammunition destined, after arrival in Mackinac, to be shipped to Nipigon, on the north shore of Lake Superior.

The register of permits ("engagements"), whereby Quebeckers set forth for such places as Michilimackinac on behalf of their principals, shows that Ezekiel Solomon was the sponsor of over a third (100 out of 275) of the entries for the period February 10, 1778 - June 3, 1780.

Most of these expeditions were directed to the Pays plat (63%) but a fourth went to his favorite Michilimackinac. Ten went to Nipigon and two even to the Mississippi. (Jean-Jacques Lefebvre. "Repertoire des engagements pour l'ouest, 1778-88", in Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec. 1946-47. Pp. 301-36)

Lawrence Lande has "An Account between Ezekiel Solomon and Angus Shaw of an expedition for the purchase of furs in the Indian territories in 1779. This account gives full details of costs for equipment, goods, furs, wages, etc. to the amount of 42,289 Livres, 4 Sols., 3 deniers for one year's expedition."

A ruling by court-appointed adjudicators named "to state and settle the within Account between Solomon & Shaw, after hearing the parties concerned & examining all Accounts relative thereto, find a loss on the whole of Sixty four Livres, one Sol & three deniers, one half of which is to be charged against Mr. Shaw; exclusive of which there appears to the Account of Four thousand one Hundred & eighty seven Livres, ten Sols of debts outstanding not entered in the Account, one half of which is to be accounted for to Mr. Shaw when received -- We also find that the one half of Three Thousand Four hundred & fifty six Livres at the Credit of the Adventure for freight of Packs -- micheta & Paye Plats, is already settled in a note of Hand given to Mr. Shaw, by Ezekiel Solomons & is to be deducted therefrom." (His Canadian Historical Documents and Manuscripts. Montreal. 1980, no. N 252, Pp. 322-23)

The trustees of Ezekiel Solomon sued B. and J. Frobisher in the Court of Common Pleas in Sept. 1780 for 22 packs of furs.

A letter from E.W. Gray, Montreal agent of London capitalist Amos Hay Hayton, dated March 12, 1781, describes the credit condition of Ezekiel Solomon.

"As to his balance, all I can desire of you is to receive what the other creditors do. Should there ever be a dividend, and I am told there will sooner or later be something, it is expected to be very inconsiderable, and I dare say it will prove so."

A 1781 license to ship goods to the Upper Country was issued with William Evans as security.

We find him among the Montreal landowners in 1780.

In spite of his frightful experience during the Pontiac war and earlier, Solomon decided to make Mackinac the centre of his operations and became the first Jewish settler in Michigan.

With the rather abrupt disappearance of Solomon from the Montreal record, new names suddenly come to predominate, names such as Frobisher, Winter, Dobie and Baby, who have their own very prominent place in Canadian historic economics.

In 1789, Solomon is listed as a resident of Detroit, where he was engaged in business with John Askin, one of the most important merchants at that time.

In 1798, two years after the occupation of Mackinac by the Americans, Solomon was still listed as a resident of that place.

In 1784, Solomon joined other traders in creating a committee of eight to regulate the trade of Mackinac and "dependencies." The reason for the formation of this Board of Trade was the resumption of hostilities between the Chippewa Indians of Lake Superior and the Fox and Nadowessieux Indians in the Menominee region. In wartime the Indians were restricted in hunting, and the supply of furs was reduced to the smallest proportions. The traders had, therefore, incentive enough to work in concert and promote peace.

In 1786, Solomon's name appeared among a list of "traders to the Upper Country, trading to the Grand Portage," which was located at the northwest end of Lake Superior, about thirty miles west of the Kaministiquia River.

Quaife notes that "no certain information concerning his later career has been found, but from certain papers in the Michigan Pioneers Collection it seems likely he located at St. Joseph Island in Lake Huron upon the British evacuation of Mackinac in 1796." (John Askin Papers, vol. 1, P.139)

He died about 1808 and was probably buried in the Montreal Jewish cemetery.

In the hearings on land claims in Michigan Territory, conducted in Detroit on April 13, 1808, there is presented a "claim to the widow and heirs of the late Ezekiel Solomon to a lot of ground at Michilimackinac which had been entered with the former commissioner of the land office at Detroit in Volume 1, page 464, under date of December 24, 1805."

Rabbi Arthur Chiel, historian of Winnipeg Jewry, entered the Ezekiel Solomon adventures into the golden children's épopéo of Jewish legendry by retelling it in World Over, April 8, 1960. ("The Ranson of Ezekiel")

Edgar Andrew Collard devoted an article to this "Daring Jewish Merchant" in the Montreal Gazette of Nov. 26, 1977.

In spite of living so far from the Jewish society, Ezekiel Solomons was warmly accepted by the new Montreal synagogue, the Shearith Israel.

He participated very actively in synagogal affairs in Montreal, notably in building its first home.

The first constituting meetings took place on Ellul 25 and 28, 1778.

On Simchat Torah of 1778 he was honoured as Hatan Torah. The following year he was elected president.

That fall the synagogue had to deal with the problem of the burial of his son, uncircumcised and probably baptized.

He is on record as attending all synagogue meetings on 12th of Adar and 26th of Nisan, 1779 and as contributing a guinea towards the purchase of a third Sepher Torah on the 26th of Ellul, 1779.

He participated in framing the remarkable by-laws of the congregation in 1779.

Although he was a man who took his Jewish heritage -- and even synagogue and Hebraic law -- seriously, readers of continental Jewish history will not be surprised that this man, who spent so many years of his life so far from even the frontier community of Montreal, in 1769 married out of the faith.

In the register of the Protestant Parish of Montreal for 1766-87 kept by Rev. Delisle, who had married Ezekiel Solomon and Louise Dubois, we find recorded the births and christenings of the following: Samuel Solomon (1773), Joseph Solomon (1774), Ezekiel Solomon (1775), William Solomon (1776) and Elizabeth Solomon (1778).

The church register of Michilimackinac records the baptism of Elias, son of Samuel Solomon and of Marie "de la nation Sauteuse" in July 26, 1799. (Register, P. 242, on PAC microfilm reel C-2900)

The surviving children seem to have remained in the Mackinac area.

William entered the service of the North West Company and drifted to the Sault and Mackinac. He became an expert in the Indian tongue and was engaged by the British government as Indian interpreter, a position which he is said to have held for fifty-six years. He was interpreter at Mackinac during the War of 1812 when it was occupied by the British. He married an Indian girl from the Agibicocona nation, as did his eldest brother Samuel. A son of Samuel "Soloman and Marie de la nation Siutusse" was baptized Elias, according to the church register of Mickilimackinac on July 26, 1777. (PAC. register 1695-1799, P.242, microfilm reel, C-2900)

Lewis Solomon, a grandson of Ezekiel, appears with three others in a group picture of voyageurs in the Papers and Records of the Ontario Historical Society (vol. 3, 1901, reproduced in the Beth El Story, P.41)

Solomon, a Jew, not otherwise identified, was living in Quebec in May 1798 at 23 Sous le fort. In his home, according to the parish record, there were a parishioner, a communicant and three Protestants.

THE PARTNERS: LEVY LUCIUS SOLOMON(S)

London-born Lucius Levy Solomons (or Solomon) (1730-92) was one of the partners in the loose consortium of five; one of them was Ezekiel Solomons (or Solomon) who might have been his cousin.

Canadian biographer Wallace held that he might have been a brother of Ezekiel Solomons and was no doubt born in Germany as was, according to Wallace, Ezekiel Solomons. (Dictionary of Canadian Biography)

In 1775 Lucius Levy Solomon married Rebecca Franks, the daughter of Abraham Franks and the sister of David Salisbury Franks. She gave her husband eleven children. Of their children: daughter Catherine (Kitty) (1782-1851) married William Aird of Berthier. When she passed away, she was laid to rest in Montreal by Dr. Aaron Hart David, Rev. A. De Sola officiating. The two witnesses, I. Spiro and J. Mintz, aposed their signatures in Hebrew.

The classic genealogical work of M. Stern, Americans of Jewish Descent (N.Y. Ktav, 1971) records an unusual generational chain of Levy Solomons that tends to confuse the historian.

Whatever the first name of the father of Lucius Levy Solomon, our pioneer gave his eldest son (born Dec. 23, 1771; died 1823) the name of Levy Solomon. That son named his eldest child, 1803-1830, Lucius Levy Solomon. The son of this Lucius Levy Solomon named his first son (born Dec. 23, 1824; died 1843) Levy Solomon. This might have continued to the end of time, except that the Solomon who died in 1843 had never married. This chain of nomenclature is very unusual among Jews, especially when the father was living when the child was born. Traditionally a child is named after a deceased relative. (Joseph L. Blau and Salo W. Baron, editors, The Jews of the United States, 1790-1840, a Documentary History. New York, Columbia University Press, 1963, Pp. 509, 647-48)

There is a remarkable geographic oscillation in the family. Our first Solomon was born in England and settled in Montreal. His son Levy Solomon migrated to the U.S., but his son Lucius Levy settled in Montreal where his children were born and where he died.

The genealogy of the Solomon family, is recorded by Catherine Solomon, wife of Levy Solomon and daughter-in-law of the pioneering Lucius Levy Solomon.

The births and deaths in the Solomon family, which she recorded in a 50-year Jewish calendar, note that the namesake and grandson of the pioneer "Lucius Levy Solomon had twins born to him in Montreal on Nov. 22, 1826. The boy was born first, then the daughter who is named after me in the New York Shool, by Rev. Mr. Peixota, Catherine Manuel Solomons, and named also in Montreal where the child was born, by Joshua Mendes Seixas, my nephew."

The same document records the passing of Lucius Levy Solomon in his mother's own hand.

"Our poor dear Lucius died on 5th of March 1830, in Montreal on the same day (Friday) son Levy and self got there. Samuel Seixas, son Levy and self was present at his last and all four repeated the Shamane (Shema), was sencible to the last, was buried on the Sunday afternoon. His last sweet babe, Lucius, must have been only two months old when at time of his death."

The reference to "sweet babe Lucius" is to the fifth son of Lucius Levy Solomon, who had named his first born son Levy, and his last child Lucius. This baby was ill very early and the mother changed its name to Moses in accordance with an ancient superstition whereby the names of a sick person were altered, ostensibly to divert the attention of the Angel of Death. Often names suggestive of old age, such as Alter, Zeidel, etc. were substituted.

M. Stern indicates that Lucius Levy Solomons was married twice. The identity of his first wife is not known, but they had one child whom they named Levy. He was born in Montreal in 1771,

Levy Solomons was a well-known businessman, associated with Ezekiel Solomon, Benjamin Lyon, Chapman Abraham and Gershon Levy. They had probably come to Canada together. As members of this consortium of army purveyors, they had some limited resources from financial supporters back in England, and possibly the help of Hayman Levy of New York, who may have been associated with them in business.

With one possible exception, their names are not to be found in the records of the American Jewish communities prior to the conquest of Quebec. They probably came directly from England with the troops, and may have learned their trade as suppliers in the armies of Europe. Quartermaster work was a common Jewish occupation on the Continent in the eighteenth century; it was the royal road to wealth. After the conquest of Canada the partners stuck together and branched out into the lucrative fur trade, which offered the greatest opportunities after the fall of Montreal in September, 1760. The friends and business correspondents in London who had sent them supplies for the troops could just as easily finance them in the Indian trade and help them in the sale of beaver which was sent to the English market in exchange. (J.R. Marcus, Early American Jews, The Jews of New York, New England and Canada, 1649-1794. Phila., Jewish Publication Society, 1951. Pp. 225-26) But Walter S. Dunn, Jr., suggests that Lucius Levy Solomon had been living in the colony of New York since 1755.

Vaugeois cites surviving documents from military officers reflecting these partners' activity at this time: General Amherst "ordered one Levi, a merchant of Montreal to supply money and a few things" to some seamen in distress. (PAC, Amherst Papers, W.D. 34, vol. 65, P.240); a 1761 invoice for £30 in the name of Levi & Co., and Lieut.-Col. Henry Bouquet's report of May 31, 1761 that "Levy's goods are stop at Tuscarora by the Indians." (cited by F. Parkman. The Conspiracy of Pontiac, vol. 2, P.28; Les Juifs et la Nouvelle France. Trois-Rivières, Editions Boréal express, 1968. P.97)

Solomon was active in the Indian trade before the British conquest of Quebec, and he appears to have had considerable correspondence with Sir William Johnson, who was in charge of Indian affairs. (Denis Vaugeois. Les Juifs et la Nouvelle France. Trois Rivières, Editions boréal express, 1968, P. 96, note 30)

During the Pontiac War he barely escaped the Indians to reach the safety of Detroit, more fortunate than some of his partners. The losses of that war led to near bankruptcy of the partnership and to legal difficulties for Levy Solomons & Co.

Louis Rosenberg writes of Levy Solomons as related by marriage to Henry Joseph. Gérard Malchelosse adds that Solomon was for many years the Montreal associate of the Berthier merchant ("La Famille Solomon," in Le Bien public, Apr. 13, 1939) "They collected a large fleet of canoes and sent them, under Indian and French voyageurs, to carry goods to distant trading posts, one of the most important of which was Michilimackinac, on the strait between Lake Huron and Michigan." (Congress Bulletin, May 1959, P.2)

The Gazette of Quebec carried notices of sales of furs for the benefit of the creditors of Levy & Solomon on July 10, 19 and 26, to take place on Aug. 10, 1764. (Quebec Gazette, July 19, 1764) The firm ended with bankruptcy in 1768. (Marcus I, Pp. 228-35) The case made constitutional and commercial history in the colony.

Vaugeois notes that relations with Gov. Murray were not helpful, so that appeals addressed to him went unheeded. The partners joined in the denunciation address from Lower Canada to the British authorities. (He cites documents in the Canadian Archives, Phillips Collection, vol. 1, Pp. 211-12 and 263-64)

"At first they hoped for financial compensation or privileged positions, but with the passing of years they learned to hope no longer; it was then that they sought their last recourse in the Bankruptcy Law.

"For were they not victims of the Indians while they were supplying the troops! In vain they insisted; The services they had rendered were forgotten: they were traders; they had acted from motives of gain and not to serve the motherland; they had lost; so much the worse for them.

"But if Murray proved heedless of their claims, if he treated them as adventurers, 'as damned rascals,' to cite the statement of Isaac Levy before Chief Justice William Hey on Nov. 25, 1766, other officials showed greater sympathy and wondered to what extent the British authorities were responsible for their safety." (Vaugeois, Pp. 100-2)

In 1768 the partnership was bankrupt, declaring losses of £18,000. Attorney General Francis Maseres summarized Solomon's situation in a letter to F. Walker on March 30, 1768 and in the important Maseres correspondence on Lower Canada bankruptcy procedures.

Governor Murray's attitude to the merchant colony in Montreal had profound roots in Canadian history.

He had been sent from London to institute a policy which was inimical to the interests of French Canadian survival and which was firmly committed to the interests of the British Party. But he soon found that such a policy would not further the ultimate interests of the empire and that its immediate beneficiaries, the colony's English merchants, were unworthy of these favours. The mutual hostility thus quickly developed was so bitter that the governor was recalled and tried.

In this stormy context the judicial issue was central. From the days of the Plains of Abraham the question was: which laws governed the colony, the French or the English? Each phase of judicial procedure, each legal aspect was in question, and the subject of bitter partisan and racial disputes; among them the laws and institutions of bankruptcy.

Maseres' biographer notes that the first public attack on him came "came from an element among the English civilian population which resented his attempt to introduce into the province the English bankruptcy laws. In the autumn of 1767, Maseres was consulted by a client named Solomons, a Jewish trader who had been ruined by losses sustained during the Conspiracy of Pontiac, and who wished to come to a settlement with his creditors. Maseres recommended him to get one of his creditors to apply for a commission of bankrupts; and Carleton, acting on the advice of Maseres and Hey, granted this commission." (W. Stewart Wallace, in his edition of The Maseres Letters, 1766-68. Toronto, University of Toronto Library, 1919, Pp. 18-19)

This is succinctly stated in a Maseres letter of March 30, 1768 to his London friend Fowler Walker who was the agent for the interests of the colony's merchants.

Before Carleton had yet received his commission as governor he was ordered by "the King in council to inquire in conjunction with the chief justices and attorney general into the state of public justice in this province, and set forth to the King what are the laws now in force and practice here, what were the laws in the time of the French government, what parts of those laws deserve to be continued, how far it would be convenient to blend them with the English laws, and what would be the best plan for the administration of justice in this province, and with the assistance of the council to reduce these things into the form of

ordinances of this province, but not to pass them into ordinances, but send them home to the King to be examined in council and, if approved, to be afterwards finally confirmed by authority of parliament. This I think is the right way of proceeding, though it will cut us out a great deal of work. I think it does the ministry credit, and am not ill-pleased to observe, that it is in a great degree the method that was suggested in the little pamphlet which I drew up for Lord Rockingham's ministry by Gen. Carleton's and Mr. Hey's direction."

The letter recalls,

"I have once before had the honour of being abused in public by my predecessor in office Mr. Suckling, to whom I had never done the least injury in word or deed, except it be one fairly to have succeeded him; for you know very well that I no way sought or solicited his dismissal. The occasion of this was as follows:

"One Mr. Levi Solomons, a Jew of a very good character, who in partnership with three others, Jews, had carried on a large trade in North America, and had been much concerned in furnishing provisions to the army, had been ruined by unavoidable accidents that befell him in the Indian War in 1762 and 1763. Most of their creditors had declared themselves ready to compound with them, and were willing to accept of a surrender of all their present remaining property in full satisfaction of their debts, though it did not amount to more than (if I remember right) seven shillings in the pound. But some of the creditors refused to consent to this proposal. He consulted me upon this which was the best way to come to a final settlement with all his creditors, that he might be enabled to exercise his industry again and engage in some new way of trade to get his living. I told him I thought a commission of bankrupts was the best expedient for that purpose, and that I was of opinion that the laws of England relating to bankrupts were as much introduced into this province as any other parts of the laws of England, and especially as those parts relating to the equitable jurisdiction exercised by the governour by virtue of his custody of the public seal, of which jurisdiction there was not one word either in the Governour's commission or instructions: and that I further thought that these laws relating to bankrupts would be singularly useful in this province.

"He liked the advice, and got one of his creditors (who was a creditor for £1000) to petition for a commission of bankruptcy. The Governour consulted the chief Justice upon this, who approved of the measure; and took my opinion formally in writing; and after three weeks delay granted the commission under the public Seal of the province.

"Immediately a great number of the trading people made a remonstrance to him concerning the mischiefs that would arise to trade in this province if these laws were introduced here, and amongst the rest your friend Mr. Alsop. Upon this the Governour took the Commission back out of the hands of the commissioners, and said he would wait a week before he restored it to them, in order to give the memorialists time (as they desired) to set forth their reasons against the Expediency of admitting and executing these laws. They at last did set forth their reasons, which appeared to be very weak ones, and by my clients desire I drew up a short view of the laws of England relating to bankrupts now in force in England, together with answers to the poor objections of the memorialists at the end of it for the Governour's perusal.

" He thought the answers very sufficient; Yet perceiving that many of the memorialists continued obstinately to object to the introduction of these laws, pretending that it would bring on their ruin, he said he would do nothing in it till he had consulted the Lords of trade. Mr. William Grant of London, partner to Robert and Alexander Grant, who has been in this province ever since June last, was very much of my way of thinking upon this subject, and had confirmed me in this way of thinking many months before when I had consulted him upon this subject. He is a very sensible man, and seems to have a great deal of knowledge of trade as well as many other subjects. He much approved of my short view of the bankrupt laws, and desired leave to have it printed in the gazette. He caused it to be printed, altering the title and the beginning and ending of it, which gave it the form of a representation to the governour in behalf of my client, Mr. Levi (Solomons) in support of his commission and in answer to the objections that had been made to its execution.

"This paper offended some of the principal framers of the memorial against the execution of the bankrupt laws, by showing the weakness of the reasons contained in that memorial; and drew upon me the libel you may have seen in the two next Quebec Gazettes, which I understand to have been composed by Mr. Aylwin, a justice of peace here, and Mr. Suckling, I could not have imagined that so innocent a paper as mine, without one word of abuse in it or even an indirect reflection upon any person, could have produced so virulent and malicious an answer: but I had the satisfaction to find that the generality of people expressed an high dissatisfaction and even indignation at it, though many of them differed from me in their sentiments upon the bankrupt laws and some of them had even personal prejudices against me arising from their attachment to Mr. Murray and their knowledge that I wished that he might not return to this government." (PAC Hardwick Papers, Add, MSS 35915, P. 258-61; the document on PAC microfilm reel C-2998, P. 6209 notes that the petition of Levy Solomons et al, re their commission of bankruptcy was read on Feb. 8, 1768; also reproduced in W. Stewart Wallace's edition of the correspondence of the distinguished attorney general, The De Maseres Letters, 1766-68. Toronto, University of Toronto Library, 1919. Pp. 71-73; and by Vaugeois, Pp. 78-79)

Levy Solomons led the partners in petitioning a commission of bankruptcy to deal with this situation, a procedure which was in accordance with English law and commercial practice but which had not yet been introduced into the colony. (PAC, Microfilm, reel C-2998, P. 6209)

But on Nov. 17, 1767 "sundry merchants of Quebec" of whom only Samuel Jacobs was Jewish, had submitted this representation to the contrary,

"Your memorialists have been informed the Acts of Bankruptcy are proposed to be admitted here precisely upon the same footing as they stand in England.

"Your memorialists cannot fail being alarmed thereat; and take the liberty of stating some reasons why their credit and property would be endangered as individuals; at same time doubt not to prove that such a step will be extremely detrimental to the general trade of this Province.

"1st The credit of this Province with the Mother country is now unhappily upon no very good footing, but these Acts must make it infinitely worse; for an European merchant will scarcely trust his goods to Quebec when he knows that his correspondent can at any time be made a Bankrupt if he owes to any person on the spot one Hundred pounds. The expenses of employing an attorney, together with the anxiety which the absentee must labour under as the matter will be inspected by an indifferent person, these are very material considerations and your memorialists humbly conceive it would be very injurious to subject such absentees to these dangerous difficulties.

"2nd These Acts neither take place in Scotland, Ireland or any place in the British American Dominion. It was attempted at Boston for a short time, but we believe that tho it was there soon repealed, yet that they to this day feel its bad effects.

"Business here, we are sorry to say, is not so punctually carried on as it is in England. People in general do not value their credit at so high a rate, and numbers who will avail themselves of these Acts here would find it impossible in England to obtain their Certificate.

"3rdly An immediate sale of a Bankrupt's effects in this impoverished country cannot be effected without great injury to the Debtor and Creditor, for which reason Debtors in general of good character who have failed in payment have been permitted to hold their effects and by this means have extricated themselves in time.

"4thly The consequence of these Acts would oblige those who have had any considerable trade, to attend entirely on Commissions of Bankruptcy and the management of assigneeships, neglecting all other business. Add to that a considerable tax on trade in the charges that must attend it.

"These are some of the many reasons we could give why these Acts should not be introduced into this Province; and we are persuaded every man of candour and impartiality who thoroughly understands the circumstances we are under (some of which are of too delicate a nature to be now mentioned) will be of our opinion.

"Your memorialists humbly request that your Excellency will be pleased to suspend the execution of these Acts until such time as you can receive the opinion of the Board of Trade thereon."
(PAC, Colonial Papers, Q series, MG 11, vol. 5, Pt.1, Pp.248-50)

We have the report of Lieut.-Gov. Guy Carleton to the "Earl of Shelburne, one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State", on this matter, dated Nov. 21, 1767,

"Having lately received an application for a Commission of Bankruptcy, agreeable to the British Acts of Parliament in that case made and promised, as there was no precedent of such a Commission being issued since the Establishment of Civil Government in this Province, I consulted His Majesty's Attorney General thereupon, who was clearly of opinion, the Laws relative thereto, as well as all the Laws of England, which existed upon the 17th of September 1764, were introduced here by the Ordinance of that Date, and that these therefore might be carried into execution.

"But many of the People in Trade having taken the Alarm and represented, as your Lordship will see by the inclosed Petition, that it might very much endanger the Credit of the Merchants of this Place with their correspondents in England, for whose sake, and for the Preservation of whose Rights, it was chiefly intended to put them in Execution, and the Canadians likewise, from their not understanding these Laws, having conceived apprehensions, they might subject them to many Difficulties, I have determined to let the Matter remain in suspense, agreeable to the Prayer of said Petition, until I can receive the sense of Government upon the Subject Matter thereof.

"As the Commercial Interests of this Province are intimately united with those of the Mother Country, the British Merchants concerned in the Trade thereof must be the best judge of the advantages or disadvantages likely to result to them from the Execution of these Laws, and whether there is any Foundation for the Complaint made by some of partial assignments having been the consequence of the want of such a Regulation, as well as of an Ordinance of this Province of the 9th of March, 1765, to which I take the Liberty to refer your Lordship.

"And untill I could be entirely satisfied herein, I judged, as these Laws had never yet been put in Force, a further suspension of the same for about six months, could not be attended with any manifest Inconveniency; That any Creditor, in whatever Part of the Globe situated, should equally and proportionately share in the effects of his insolvent Debtor, Honor and Justice evidently direct; How to attain this End is the Point in Question, in which the Merchants at Home are strongly interested." (Pp. 245-47)

Masères' views appeared in the Quebec Gazette of Dec. 10 and 17, 1767, not indeed over his name but as submitted by A Merchant as a document "which happened lately to come in my way. A publication of them at this time may tend to the instruction of some who may not be acquainted with these laws."

"The Short View of the laws of England now in force, relating to bankrupts" reads,

"The Statutes concerning Bankrupts relates only to Persons in Trade, or who get their Living by buying and selling. Gentlemen who live upon their Estates, and Persons that live by Professions or Employment of any Kind, such as the Clergy, the Gentlemen of the Army or the Law, Physicians, Surgeons, and the Officers of his Majesty's Revenue, and others, who do not get their living by buying and selling, are not the Objects of it; but if they become insolvent, there is no particular Provision made by the Law for settling their Affairs: And amongst Persons in Trade, those who voluntarily committed Acts of Bankruptcy by neglecting or refusing to pay the just Demands of their Creditors, with a Design to defraud them, and were suspected of secreting their Effects with that View, were originally the Objects of those Laws, though now they are extended to all Persons concerned in Trade, who through any Cause whatsoever, though without any Fault of their own, become unable to do Honour to their Affairs. However, even now the greatest Number of those Acts which make a Man a Bankrupt and intitle his Creditors to obtain a Commission against him re voluntary Acts, and such as a Man in Trade may avoid committing,

however unable he may be to pay his Debts. For example, if a Man departs privately from his usual Dwelling-House, to the End that his Creditors may not know where to find him to make their Demands upon him, he thereby becomes a Bankrupt; but if he continues in it, and plainly tells his Creditors when they make their Demands upon him, that he is absolutely unable to pay them, he does not thereby become a Bankrupt; and the only compulsive Way of becoming a Bankrupt, by which a Man may be made so against his Will, is by lying two months in Prison upon an Arrest for Debt.

"When a Man has committed an Act of Bankruptcy, every Creditor for this Sum of £100 Sterling has a Right to apply to the Lord Chancellor by Petition, and to represent to him that he is a Creditor of the Bankrupt for such a Sum exceeding £100. and that the Bankrupt has lately committed an Act of Bankruptcy, whereby there is Reason to apprehend that he is about to secret his Effects, and get out of the Reach of the legal Pursuit of his Creditors, in Order to defraud them of their just Demands, and therefore to desire his Lordship to issue a Commission under the great Seal, directed to such wise and discreet Persons as he shall think fit to appoint to execute the Laws made for the Protection of Creditors against such fraudulent Proceedings in their Debtors, by causing the Bankrupt to be apprehended, and examined before them, and required to deliver, upon Oath, a full and true Account of all his Effects, and the whole State of his Affairs, and following the otherwise Provisions prescribed by the Laws in that Behalf. And in Order to ground this Petition, the petitioning Creditor must make an Affidavit of the Truth of the Debt before a Master in Chancery: Upon this the Lord Chancellor issues the Commission. The Commissioners are usually five in Number, two or three of whom are Gentlemen of the Law. Though five Commissioners are named, yet only three of them usually sit; and these have a Fee of Twenty Shillings a Piece every Time they sit. They begin by giving Notice in the Gazette of the Commission's having issued, and requiring the Bankrupt to surrender, and the Creditors to meet and prove their Debts, sufficient Time being allowed for the most distant Creditors to do so. The Creditors who are on the Spot meet in pursuance thereof, and prove their Debts, upon Oath, before the Commissioners; the remote Creditors are allowed to prove their Debts by Oaths taken before a Magistrate in the Places where they reside, and property attested. The Bankrupt is instantly liable to be apprehended and committed to Prison till he is willing to make a full Discovery and Surrender of all his Effects, Books of Accounts, and Papers relating to his Business; and this either by the Warrant of the Commissioners themselves, or of any other Magistrate that is applied to for one, in Order to make it impossible for him to escape.

And if, when required to make this Surrender, he conceals any Part of his Effects, to the Amount of £20, he is to be proceeded against as a capital Offender, and punished with Death. The Commissioners have likewise a Power of causing the Bankrupt's Goods and Effects to be seized, in whose Hands soever they are, and by what Means soever they come to the Knowledge of them, which is of Use in Cases where the Bankrupt either has absconded and cannot be found, or where he wilfully refuses to make a Discovery of his Effects. The Effects of the Bankrupt are assigned over by the Commissioners to Persons chosen by the Majority of Creditors in Value, that is, by those of the Creditors who are Creditors for more than half of what the Bankrupt owes, to be the Receivers of them, and who from thence are called Assignees. These Assignees are usually three or four of the principal Creditors themselves, but may, as I apprehend, be any other Persons, that have never had any Dealings with the Bankrupt, that the Majority of the Creditors shall think fit to appoint: And in the Appointment of these Assignees the distant Creditors have a Vote as well as those that are present on the Spot, only they must execute a letter of Assignee to some Person on the Spot to give their Vote for them. But Creditors of less than £10 Sterling have no Vote on this Occasion.

"Further, if the Creditors are dissatisfied with the Conduct of the Assignees, they may change them whenever they think fit; and the Commissioners will order the old Assignees to transfer the Effects to the new ones.

"The Assignees are the legal Proprietors of all the Bankrupt's Debts as well as Effects, and may receive them, and give Receipts for them, and bring Actions at Law to recover them: And the Bankrupt's Debtors are obliged to pay the Debts to the Assignees and not to the Bankrupt; for if they pay them to the Bankrupt himself, after having had Notice of the issuing of the Commission, the Payment is irregular, and they must pay them over again to the Assignees. When they have received a sufficient Quantity of the Effects, they must proceed to make a Dividend of them amongst the several Creditors who shall have proved their Debts, in Proportion to their several Debts; and so from Time to Time they must distribute the Effects as fast as they can get them in.

"Thus far the Law of Bankrupts is favourable to the Creditors. It affords them powerful and ready Means of getting Possession of the Bankrupt's Estate, and thereby preventing him from fraudulently conveying it away; whereas by the common Process of the Law they could

never prevent him from doing this. For, suppose any one of them was to bring an Action against him and arrest him and throw him into Goal, how would he by this Step obtain a Discovery of his Effects, which lie perhaps dispersed in many Places, and in the Hands of several different Persons? And how would he prevent a secret and fraudulent Alienation of them, which might protect them against an Execution, when, after six or eight Months, and a good deal of Trouble in the Law, he should get a Judgment against him? But by the Laws relating to Bankrupts the Goods of the Bankrupt are immediately liable to be seized wherever they can be found, as soon as the Commission is issued, which prevents the Secretion of them; and the Bankrupt himself is induced by the strongest Motives both of Hope and Fear, to discover where they are and what they consist of. Surely these are no contemptible Advantages on the Side of the Creditors!

"On the other Hand, if the Bankrupt appears to be an honest Man, and acts, throughout the whole Proceedings upon the Commission, to the entire Satisfaction both of the Commissioners and his Creditors, so that there is not the least remaining Suspicion in their Minds that he has concealed any Part of his Effects; in that Case, and in no other, the Laws upon this Subject shew the Bankrupt himself a reasonable Degree of Indulgence. For if four fifths of his Creditors, both in Number and Value, that is, four fifths in Number of the Creditors who have proved their Debts under the Commission, being also Creditors who have proved their Debts under the Commission, being also Creditors for four Fifths of the whole Amount of the Bankrupt's Debts, will sign a Certificate that the Bankrupt has behaved himself honestly and uprightly throughout the whole Course of the Proceedings against him under the Commission, and the Commissioners have likewise the same Opinion of his good Conduct, and are willing to sign the same Certificate, such a Certificate will be a full Discharge from all his Debts, and will be a good Bar to any Action that may be brought by any of the few remaining Creditors who have not subscribed it. And thus the Discharge of four fifths of his Creditors, in Number as well as Value, will be of the same Benefit to him as the Discharge of every individual Creditor would be without this Law. This is done upon a Supposition that the few Creditors that refuse to sign the Certificate act from Motives of Passion and Revenge, and without any just Ground of Complaint against the Bankrupt's Conduct, since so great a Majority of the Creditors have thought fit to certify their Approbation of it. But it is in the Option of every individual Creditor to sign, or not sign this Certificate, as he thinks proper; and if he does not think fit to sign it he may refuse to do so without assigning any Reason for his Refusal: It is sufficient that he has a bare Suspicion, which he is unable to prove, that the Bankrupt has not acted with perfect Integrity towards his Creditors. (Quebec Gazette, Dec. 10, 1767)

"If the Bankrupt does not obtain his Certificate, all his future Goods that may come to him hereafter, by Inheritance, Gift, Legacies, his own Industry, or any other Mode of Acquisition whatsoever, are liable to be seized by the Assignees, for the Benefit of his Creditors, as fast as he becomes possessed of them, though it should be forty Years after the issuing of the Commission of Bankruptcy. The Hope of obtaining this Certificate is therefore a strong Inducement to the Bankrupt to make a full Discovery and Surrender of all his Effects, to the entire Satisfaction of his Creditors.

"This is a short View of the Laws of England upon this Subject. Some Objections have been made to the Expediency of introducing them into this Province, or rather of carrying them into Execution, since there is good Reason to think that they are already introduced. These Objections I will state and endeavour to answer.

"The first Objections seems to be this: 'The Merchants of London will not send Goods to the Merchants of Quebec when this Law is introduced, because they will be afraid that some other Creditors of their Correspondents residing at Quebec will take out Commissions of Bankruptcy against them, and thereby suddenly put a Stop to their Trade and Industry, and deprive them of the Means of becoming able to pay their Debts.'

"In answer to this Objection, it may be observed, that when a Merchant of London consigns Goods to a Merchant of Quebec, he supposes him to be a solvent Man, and likely to continue so, and therefore never thinks about the Statutes of Bankrupts, which can take Place only with Respect to insolvent Persons.

"But if the London Merchant is supposed, when he consigns Goods to Quebec, to look forward to the possible Event of his Correspondent's becoming insolvent, I apprehend he will be of Opinion that he is benefited by the Law concerning Bankrupts; for he must perceive that by the Help of a Commission of Bankruptcy he is likely to fare as well as the Creditors residing at Quebec, every one being to be paid in Proportion to his Debt; whereas, in the common Course of Things, the Quebec Creditors are likely to get very much the Start of the London Creditor in the Recovery of their Debts: For they are likely to be the soonest informed of the declining Condition of the Debtor's Affairs, and consequently will bring their Actions against him first, and get themselves paid to the full, by Executions against his Goods and Chattels, or by the Threats and Terror of such Executions, before the London Creditor has received sufficient Information to know what Conduct to pursue. And this Consideration must make the London Creditor more ready to trust his Property in Canada after the Introduction of this fair and equal Law than before.

"As to the Stopping a Man suddenly in the Course of his Trade, by taking out a Commission of Bankruptcy against him, it is what will never be done, where it is for the Benefit of the Creditors that the Debtor should continue his Trade in Order to get in his Debts and recover his Affairs. For in such a Case the Creditors will not take out a Commission of Bankruptcy against him: And it must be remembered, that the Bankrupt himself cannot by his own Request obtain a Commission; and further, if he could it would not in such a Case be his Interest to do so. And if it be supposed that one particular ill-natured or wrong-headed Creditor for £100 or more, should choose to do so, the Bankrupt, by the Assistance of his other Creditors, might easily avoid it: For the only Way of forcing a Man to become a Bankrupt is by throwing him into Gaol, and keeping him there two Months. Now suppose this ill-natured Creditor should arrest the Debtor and throw him into Gaol, would he thereupon lie in Prison for two Months? No, certainly; he would immediately find Bail to the Action amongst his other Creditors whose Interest it is supposed to be that he should continue to carry on his Trade. And if he was carried to Prison after Judgment against him; they would either furnish him the Money to pay that single Debt, or permit him to sell a sufficient Quantity of the Goods in his Possession to raise the Money to pay it, or by some other Means enable him to pay it, to the End that he might continue his Business and get in his own Debts, and with Care and Industry, and a little Time, improve the State of his Affairs to such a Degree as to be able to pay them the whole of their respective Debts. And thus the Malice of this Creditor would be defeated. If the Creditors will not take some Step of this Kind, to prevent his being made a Bankrupt, it is a Proof that they think it for their common interest that he should become so, and that his Effects should at that Time be taken out of his Hands and divided amongst them in Proportion to their several Debts; and in this Case it is very reasonable and proper that the Commission of Bankruptcy should be obtained. This I conceive to be a sufficient Answer to the first Objection.

"The second Objection seems to consist of two Parts: The first Part of it I apprehend to be this, 'That because this Law does not take Place in Scotland or Ireland, or the other American Colonies, therefore it ought not to take Place in this Province.' Now this does by no Means follow. The only Question is, whether it will be beneficial or not to this Province that it should take Place. And besides I have been informed that in Scotland there is a Proceeding which is nearly the same in Substance

with these Laws, or general Surrender of an insolvent Debtor's Effects for the Benefit of his Creditors under the Sanction of a Law. And it is said that in New York there is likewise a Law relating to Bankrupts, very much resembling the Laws above mentioned, though not precisely the same with it.

"The latter Part of the second Objection seems to be founded on a Supposition, 'That the Bankrupt himself can obtain a Commission of Bankruptcy against himself whenever he thinks fit, and likewise by making a Surrender of his Effects, obtain his Certificate, and get rid of his Debts for ever; and it insinuates that many Persons would make these Surrenders very imperfectly and falsely, so as to retain a considerable Part of their Effects to their own Use but in so secret a Manner that their Creditors shall not be able to find it out.' The Answer to this Part of the Objection is, that a Commission of Bankruptcy cannot be granted upon the Petition of the Bankrupt, but only upon that of a Creditor; and that if the Creditors have the smallest Suspicion of the Bankrupt's Dishonesty, though they are not able to prove it, they may refuse him his Certificate, and thereby disappoint him of his knavish Prospect of getting rid of his Debts at once, by paying a small Part of them.

"The third Objection is, 'That the Bankrupt's Effects will be sold to loss, by being sold too suddenly.' The answer to this Objection is that they need not be sold suddenly, unless the Assignees think fit. It will always be in the Power of the Assignees, at least with the Consent of the Creditors, to put off the Sale of them for half a Year or a Year, till a more convenient Opportunity offers for selling them to Advantage. This Objection is much stronger against the present Way of proceeding against Debtors by Execution upon their Goods and Lands, as soon as the Judgment is given. There is further in this third Objection an Intimation 'That Debtors of good Character will by these Commissions be stopped in the Course of their Trade, by which they might, with a little Indulgence, recover their Affairs.' This Part of the third Objection has been already answered in the Answer to the first Objection, by shewing that Debtors of good Character, whom their Creditors wish to see continue in Trade, in Hopes that in Time they may extricate themselves from their Difficulties, will never be made Bankrupts.

"The fourth and last Objection is, 'That the Attendance upon Assigneeships would take up too much of the Merchant's Time, and the Expense attending Commissions of Bankrupts will be too heavy a Tax up on Trade.' I believe that the Expense of a Commission of Bankrupts in this Province will not usually exceed £50. which in Bankruptcies, for large Sums, is a mere Trifle. And as to the Attendance upon Assigneeships, I do not see how it will take up more of the Merchant's Time than the Attendance upon the private Assigneeships now daily executed in this Province, upon Assignments made by insolvent Debtors of their Goods to particular Creditors for the Benefit of all the Creditors, or of all those who will consent to give them a Letter of Licence. In short, a Commission of Bankruptcy seems to me to be a convenient and regular Method of obtaining, under the Sanction and Authority of the Law, all the Ends proposed by the Creditors in making those private Assignments; and this with the additional Advantage of the strongest Inducements to the Bankrupt, that Hope and Fear, and the Regard to the Obligation of an Oath, can suggest, to make a full Discovery and Surrender of all his Effects." (Quebec Gazette, Dec. 17, 1767)

Within two days a response was written which was published in the Gazette over the signature of "A Friend to Liberty tho' not a Merchant" on Dec. 24 and 31, 1767.

It reads,

"The introduction of the Laws of England, relating to Bankrupts, into this Province, has been a Matter greatly labour'd of late by the ingenious Author of the Short View, but, unlucky for him, it has hitherto been attended with almost the same bad Success as another Novelty of his, a very curious Performance, intituled, 'A Civil Bill', met with about a Year ago. It might have been imagin'd, that the Fate of that Bill, so obnoxious to the Publick, and so dangerous to the Rights and Properties of the People here, would have deterred the Gentleman from making another Attempt equally pernicious, tho' something different from the former: But, tho' duped and disappoint'd, he has laid hold of an Opportunity which has lately offered, of renewing his former Designs, to embarrass and perplex the Merchants and People in Trade here."

At this point it becomes of particular interest to readers of Jewish history because of ill-hidden anti-Jewish prejudice, the first symptom of anti-Semitism on Canadian soil, significantly from an anglophone.

Of course, the word Jew is not mentioned. But there was no need to be brutally specific.

Maseres was related, "from a certain resemblance in his person and behaviour and some outward marks in his skin, at least a cousin once removed...to those few worthy gentlemen who intended to get themselves declared bankrupts here, with a laudable design of safely shaking hands with their creditors in another colony."

The entire document is a legal discussion, but the introduction of this personal, family and group theme gives several paragraphs a distinct historic value.

"A common error has lately prevailed that all the Laws of England have been and are in force in this Colony, since the Establishment of Civil Government here; and this Error has been strengthened by a Favorite Phrase, which the ingenious author commonly makes use of, 'That they were all imported here by the Ordinance of the 17th September 1764, and if all, consequently, the Laws against Bankrupts.' This seemed to be a lucky Crisis, and by no means to be let slip, by a few worthy Gentlemen, who intended to get themselves declared Bankrupts here, with a laudable design of safely shaking Hands with their Creditors in another Colony. The Gentleman they applied to, and on whose good advice in the matter they principally rely'd, was the author of the Short View, who, from a certain Resemblance in his Person and Behaviour, and some outward marks in his skin, denotes him to stand in some degree of relationship to those Gentlemen, at least a cousin once removed, and who, from certain assurances of a very bountiful reward (if the scheme succeeded) undertook (rather unskillfully, as it may be justly imagined) the soliciting the Business, without distinguishing that the same Rule of Law, which is very proper and applicable to cases of this kind in England, may if reduced into practice here (Even on the supposition that the laws relating to Bankrupts are in Force here) from the great and apparent Difference and Circumstance of things, become the utter Ruin of Individuals and destructive of publick credit, both in Britain and the neighboring Colonies. Notwithstanding which, the ingenious Gentleman leapt over all Difficulties to render himself acceptable to his cousins; and it must be owned he has been remarkably industrious to prevail upon the Merchants and Traders, both British and French, to a Belief that the admission of the Bankrupt Laws amongst them would be very wholesome and proper, but meeting with repeated repulses from those who are best acquainted with those Laws, and being at length quite jaded and ashamed of soliciting any further a Business in the way of his Profession, which offered him no further hopes of success that way, he therefore resolved to quit his own Profession, and solicit the same Business in a Newspaper, in the borrowed character of a merchant, by way of Instructions to those who may not be acquainted with the Bankrupt Laws. For my part, I think he merits great Credit for this ingenious Hocus Pocus Trick, in turning himself out of one Shape into another; but indeed for the benefit of his Relations only.

"The Instructor seems to be of Opinion that any other Persons may be Assignees, that have never had any Dealings with the Bankrupt. This Point will not be contended with him at present, as the Act of Parliament is clear, and seems to have left the Matter at large: But such instances (if any such there be to be met with in England) are very rare and must depend on very particular Circumstances, which, as we are not yet arrived to that Degree of Credit as the People in England, it would (upon a Supposition that the Bankrupt Laws are in Force here) be rather imprudent, if not dangerous to the Community, to adopt his Opinion in this Particular: However, his Ingenuity cannot be sufficiently applauded, in Advantage of the Silence of the Act, by thus possibly chalking out Places of Profit for some particular Friends of his: And it seems rather surprising that he did not go further, and tell us that he would endeavour to find out another Opening in the Act, to introduce a Treasurer (which must also be another lucrative Place) of all the Monies which should come into his Hands, from the Spoil and Plunder of the poor Bankrupt's Estate and Effects.

"The Instructor, in Order to gild over the Matter, and that is Opinion of a General Bankruptcy might slip down the easier, has told us, 'That the Expense of a Commission of Bankrupts in this Province will not usually exceed £50, which, for Bankruptcy for large Sums is a mere Trifle.' To this I am persuaded he is out in his Arithmetic -- for if he had said £300, instead of £50 he would have been nearer the Mark, as it is well known that Commissions of Bankrupts in England, in general cost near £400. and I have good Reason to think that, that Expense would rather be increased than lessened in this Province.

"The Instructor has put it as a Question, 'Whether it will be beneficial or not to this Province, that the Bankrupt Laws should take Place?' The Answer is, That it will be the utter Ruin and Destruction of many an honest Merchant and Trader in this Province, but very beneficial to some of his Friends, and the Gentlemen of the Law. Will it be required to give any further proof of the Instructor's leaving England, to live in the Wilds of America, for the Good and Service of his Country?

"Let it be supposed, that the Bankrupt Laws do extend to this Province, and, upon that Supposition, any Gentleman should be prevailed upon to act as a Commissioner, yet, if an Action should afterwards be brought against him by the Bankrupt, wherever he should meet with him in any other Province or Place, for illegally seizing and possessing himself of his Goods and Estate, and the

Extension of the Bankrupt Laws to this Province should become a Question in another Jurisdiction, will Mr. Instructor's singular Opinion, 'That there is good Reason to think that they are already introduced there,' be of any Weight in determining the Question? And if it should be determined against the Commissioner, will he not be in Danger of being ruined? Or, at least of being put to very great Expences. And whether the Bankrupt Laws do or do not extend here, will the Instructor's Cousins Intensions of being made Bankrupts here be answered, unless it can be proved, that a Certificate which they may claim from their Creditors here will be a sufficient Bar to the Demands of their other Creditors in another Place? which I think is impossible.

"Many particular Reasons which I omit might be urged from the Statutes against Bankrupts, to shew that those Laws are intirely local, and cannot extend here. But the main, and indeed the only material Question to be resolved is Whether those Laws do or do not extend to this Province? The Instructor has avoided giving his Solution of the Question, as he only says, 'That there is good Reason to think that they are already introduced.' I shall therefore take the Liberty of giving my Opinion. That they are not, nor cannot be introduced into this Province.

"The Position is, and which is undoubtedly clear Law, That Englishmen carry the Laws with them wheresoever they go; and that every new Colony, till it has a Legislature of its own, is in general subject to the Laws of the Country from whence it originally sprung; but that all of them (according to Mr. Instructor's opinion) without Distinction, are to be supposed binding upon the People, is neither agreeable to Law or Reason, and would effectually destroy the Settling the Colony with British Subjects. The Laws which they carry with them, and to which they are subject, are such as are absolutely necessary to answer the Intention of their coming here, such as are requisite in their present State, for the Advancement of their and the general Prosperity, such without which they will neither be protected in their Lives, Liberty, or Property; and I hope it will not be denied that the People here are and may be sufficiently protected in their Properties, without the Admission of the Bankrupt Laws. The Truth of the Matter seems to be, that the Instructor grounds his Opinion upon a wrong Principle, by insinuating that they were introduced by the Ordinance, which seems to be erroneous, for it cannot be proved (as it is clear it cannot) that they were introduced upon the Establishment of Civil Government here, in August 1764. It is then, I think, as clear,

that the Ordinance did not give them any greater Extention than they had before the making it; and upon a Supposition of there being any Weight in Mr. Instructor's Doctrine, it will follow that a thousand Laws may be introduced amongst us, inconsistent with the State of this Province, and destructive of its Inhabitants, both British and French; and I would not be in the least surprised, to find the ingenious Instructor as warmly soliciting and contending for the Payment of Tythes, the establishing Ecclesiastical Courts, and the Introduction of all their odious Tribe of Officers and Attendants among us,

"It seems strange that any one should be solicitous to lay so great a Burthen on our Shoulders, when the common Law of England is (as it seems) the only clear Rule and Direction, for the Protection of our Civil Rights and Properties, for if we wade into the Statutes we shall be in a Labyrinth and who will lead us out? For I fear no Man could then tell what the Law is. It is certain all of them can't bind, and to know which do, must yet remain a Doubt, notwithstanding Mr. Instructor had boldly ventured to cut the Knot, which, with all his Learning and Reasoning, he never could have untied. Those of the Statutes that are declarative of the common Law, serve as Evidence but whether those which do not mention the Plantations, have any binding Quality upon us as Statutes to affect our Civil Rights and Property, I must leave to able Judges to determine.

"The Instructor has fallen upon a Method of dividing and sub-dividing into Parts and Pieces some Objections(which I have not Leisure at present to answer) seem rather to confuse than illucidate the Matter.

"He observes that in Scotland they have their Cessio Bonorum and in New York that there is likewise a Law relating to Bankrupts very much resembling the English Law. It is true that in Scotland and other Countries that adopt the Civil Law, the Cessio Bonorum is of excellent use. But will it from thence follow that the Laws relating to Bankrupts in England would be of the same use there? Or can the introduction of them here be any Reason, because New York and the other Colonies, have considered those Laws as an excellent Model, and have, whenever they found it necessary to make a Law resembling the Laws against Bankrupts in England, contented themselves with borrowing a few Slips from the old Root, which, being inserted into their Laws, have proven very beneficial; but Mr. Instructor is so unreasonable that nothing less than the Root and all will content him.

"I shall take Leave of the Gentleman for the present, by concluding in the Words of the late Attorney-General Sir Dudley Rider, afterwards Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, who, on an Opinion which he gave, against the Extension of the Statute of Frauds and Perjuries to the Island of Barbados, declared, 'It would be acting the Part of an unskilful Physician,' who would prescribe the same Dose to every Patient, without distinguishing the Variety of Distempers and Constitutions."

Masères named George Suckling and Thomas Aylwin as the authors of the anonymous démarche. (Jean Lafleur, "Thomas Aylwin", in Dictionary of Canadian Biography) It is his view that the merchants' objection was not to the principle of the introduction of English commercial law in the colony; they opposed this particular procedure specifically.

At the end of January, 1768 another writer, signing his contribution with the initial A.S., spoke up against the proposal:

"I cannot help admiring the solid Judgment of those who hold it as their Opinion that, were the Statute of Bankruptcy put in Force in this Colony, the Execution of it would affect the Credit of the Merchants of Quebec and Montreal, who get their Goods from other Countries.

"One must either be very stupid or else not stand in Need of this Credit, and not have had any Experience in Trade, to talk at this Rate, or what is more likely, be desirous of enjoying the Benefit of these Statutes oneself, at the Expense of those Merchants who have had good Faith enough to trust their Fortune in a Province where the only and indeed the best Security they have for such Debts is the Bodies of their Debtor, the greatest Part of whom have a very small, if any, Capital in Trade. Would it be reasonable to deprive them of a Prerogative which they enjoy throughout the British Colonies? If these Gentlemen establish this Encrease of Credit, by thinking, that after the said Statutes were put in Force, and the greater Part of the Merchants had taken the Advantage of them, that the small Number who might have supported themselves for a few Years after would enjoy a much greater Credit, then perhaps I might come into their Way of thinking.

"Far from seeking to extend the Credit of the Colony, all we have to wish for is that the Merchants of London in particular would withhold and not trust their Fortunes in the Hands of People who are so little worthy of them, and who only make use of them to gratify their most criminal Passions, and, when called upon to render an Account, are so tedious, that by their Detention they oblige those, who were so weak as to put Confidence in them, to stop Payment; if they are prosecuted they subsist themselves upon these Effects, and their Hearts bound with Joy at being able to enjoy for several Years, with Impunity, a Capital which they have no Right to, and to treat their Friends splendidly at other People's Expense, while they themselves are at Law, and for the little they know of Priestcraft they do not want for subtle Arguments to make themselves pass for honest Folks. If you enter into Law Suits with them, you are ruined by the Expenses; if you endeavour to settle amicably with them, you are never the nearer. It is such People as those that are worse than a Plague in a Country and who ought to be banished from all Christian and Human Society. If a Merchant's Character is ever so slightly blasted, unless he has a considerable Capital, the smallest Loss on such an Occasion would be 5 or £600 Halifax, besides the accidental ones that every Man in Business is liable to. Pray how many Merchants are there here who could support it?

"Consider but how small our Profits are upon Goods, the Length of Time before the Capital re-enters, without our receiving any Interest, even for the Time they remain unpaid after due, and on which we have but a small Profit; the Dearness of all Necessaries, the great Losses we have sustained on our Returns of Peltries, the high Exchange between this Place and London, the uncommon Scarcity of Money, of which we can scarcely scramble enough together to make a few small Remittances (that our Creditors mayn't lose all Patience) and palm the Lawyers with, without which they would not carry on the Suits into which we are forced, by the Spirit of Litigiousness which is so happily spread throughout this Colony.

"If you consider all this, I say, what End will it answer to introduce this Law? The Shop-keepers who are in our Debt, so soon as their Notes are expired, for fear of being prosecuted, will immediately sell the very Goods they bought of us or anyone else, at 35 or 40 per Cent. Advance at Public Sale, 10 or 20 Per Cent, under Prime Cost at London, in Order to get in Money, and will pay their Notes first due; but when you come to settle with them they'll turn Bankrupts, ruin us, and we shall do the same by the Merchants in London, and, by our Connections being thus intermixed, we shall ruin one another, and at last we shall have a general Bankruptcy. Ah! The clever Scheme; worthy of those who are Sticklers for it.

A Golden Age for Vermin, by whom we are already too much indebted, who are worse than Blood-Suckers, for they dry up our Purses as well as our Bodies! The Scarcity of Money puts it out of our Power to be punctual in our Payments; and that Spirit of Discord and Jealousy which remains among us, is the Occasion that everyone endeavours to ruin his Neighbour, that he mayn't rival him. The foreign Merchants, who are such considerable Sums in Advance to us, as soon as this Act shall take Place (which to this present Time they have never dreamt of), will be timorous, send over their Powers of Attorney, feeling we have made so small Remittances, and that this Year they will be no better; the Crop has fell short, we shall be hard drove, we must then sell at a great Loss to make Money, we shall ruin ourselves as well as those in our Debt, by being overpressing, insomuch that, had we but been left quiet, we should at least have had some Capital remaining, and have done due Honor to our Affairs. The forced Sales we shall be obliged to make, and those we shall oblige our Debtors to make, will render Goods a mere Drug, and those who will be overstocked will be obliged to sell at Loss; and if they keep them in Store the Interest they must pay will overwhelm them, and they'll ruin others, unless their Fortune can support them under such considerable Losses; and those who have no Honesty in them, may say, Rather than let myself be ruined, I'll go to Law; I can live for several Years on my Creditors Goods, and after all I can become a Bankrupt; and, let it be which Way it will, it's quite indifferent to me, my Creditors will get nothing by it, for neither myself or my Lawyers will deliver them any more than we can't make away with ourselves. After having suffered Fire, War, the heavy Loss of our Paper Money, and still languishing under so great a Number of other Misfortunes, which, altho' well known, are not proper to be here related, nothing more is now wanted to compleat our Miseries, but to put in Execution what is planned by People who alone can reap any Advantage therefrom, either by taking Advantage of the said Statutes themselves, or by destroying us by Lawsuits, which are the inevitable Consequences thereof, or that they may be appointed Trustees.

"If this Colony, in which, of all others, are the most Disorders, is she that has the most able Heads, we should point out to the rest that they are blind to their own Interest, since they have never yet thought proper to admit the Bankrupt Laws amongst them.

"A Merchant in London, or any other Part of England, who owes two or 3000 l. Sterling to his Friends, were they to advance him a certain Sum and send him here with Recommendations, would get into Business, obtain considerable Credit, and would, in two or three Years pay off the greatest Part of what he owes his said Friends, who would in the meanwhile keep a Note of his for 100 l. Sterling, and when Matters were brought to perfection, take out a Commission against him, then his Creditors here could not molest him, after he has rendered an honest Account; and he may go into another Colony, where his same Friends may reward him, by setting him up, where he may live unknown by anyone, under a fictitious Name.

"I find that, altho' I have a great Many other good Reasons to set forth, I have already gone a great Length, and shall therefore take my leave..." (ibid., Jan. 28, 1768)

George Suckling, the predecessor of De Masères, did not share his views. When Governor Carleton appointed a commission to settle Solomons' problem, as Chief Justice Hey also recommended, there was general disquiet, even among the merchants whose interests were thus to be protected, and a great legal and political controversy ensued. (Jacques L'Heureux in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, S.V. George Suckling)

As Wallace put it, "It seemed reasonable to suppose that the laws relating to bankruptcy were as much introduced into the province as any other part of the laws of England; and it might have been expected that the British merchants, who professed themselves so jealous of their heritage of English law, would have welcomed them. But with that frank consistency which characterized them whenever they thought their interest affected, a great number of them addressed a remonstrance to Carleton against the introduction of these laws. They held the conditions of trade in Canada, and especially in western Canada to be such that these laws, if enforced, would drive into bankruptcy and idleness many who, given time, could redeem their obligations. Masères replied by drawing up for Carleton a 'short view of the laws of England relating to bankrupts', and appended answers to the objections of the memorialists. In view, however, of the opposition, Carleton withdrew the commission which he had granted, and withheld action until he should receive the instructions of the British ministry." (Pp. 18-19)

There was an immediate response to some of the allegations and insinuations to the first portion of "The Reasonable Answer" in the Gazette of Dec. 31, 1767 from XZ:

"I am sorry to see a Piece of Scurrility, very far below the Notice of the Person hinted at, and therefore I apprehend the Author is extremely safe from the keen Satire and true Eloquence of that Gentleman, who is universally admired, by those that know him, for his great Genius, Learning and Integrity. Tho' it is evident to the meanest of your Readers, that the Author deserves no other Answer than some 'Marks on his Skin', from the Beadle's Lash or the Strokes of a Stick, yet I will endeavour to put the Public right in some Facts which he has purposely misrepresented.

"First, the Story he has introduced concerning a Civil Bill, is equally false as foreign to the present Purpose, and therefore deserves no Answer.

"The second Mistake, That the Author of the Short View pretends to be a Merchant, may be cleared up by the Printers, who have Liberty to communicate the Publisher's Name (who cannot pretend to the Honor of being Author) to any Gentleman that inquires.

"The third Falsehood is, That the Assignees are seldom or never chosen in England, excepting out of the Body of the Creditors; T.A. Esq; can declare, that when last in England, he paid a small Debt to the Assignees of William Noray, one of whom had never any Dealings with the Bankrupts and it is well known, to all that are acquainted with the Practice in England, that the Case is common.

"The last Mistake I shall take Notice of at this Time is, That the Expense of a Commission of Bankruptcy in England amounts to £400. It really is from £70 to £120, and when Stamp Duties, and certain Fees, not demanded in this Colony, are taken off, there is Reason to think, that, in common Cases, it will not exceed £50. as may be easily learned, by enquiring of any impartial Person who really knows the Practice.

"This Enquiry being of the utmost Importance, merits to be fully and candidly canvassed, and the Arguments on both Sides stated in a true and full Light: Such Essays will meet with the Approbation of many of your Readers, who are deeply concerned in this Affair, and, I hope, are generally open to Conviction, from whichever Quarter it comes; but I can see no good End of making this Affair a Subject of illiberal Abuse, or private Scandal."

A reserved and subtle reaction to part of the Reasonable Answer came from Z.Z. who agreed with the general position of the author but felt that the words he used on arguing his case were immodest. The French translation on the same page of the Quebec Gazette of Dec. 31, 1767 reads "Les injures ne font rien pour la défense d'une cause, car le défaut de bienfaisance est une marque d'ignorance."

The letter from Z.Z. reads,

"On reading your last Thursday Gazette, I saw a Piece titled 'A Reasonable Answer to the Short View of the Laws of England, &c, &c.' (inserted in some of your former Papers) and by a Friend to Liberty, tho' not a Merchant, as the Author styles himself. Whether worthy or not, I look upon myself a Member of that Body, and am much against those Acts taking Place in this Province, therefore heartily wish to see the Subject handled by some able Pens, and as the Author of the Answer in Question purposes a Continuation, I sincerely wish him success, but beg leave to recommend to him the following lines,

'Immodest works admit of no defence
For want of decency is want of sense.'"

A large part of the life of the Jewish partners consisted of dealing with more or less insistent dunning letters from their merchant creditors.

To place Levy Solomon's credit problems in their context, we refer to a letter from Hayton to his Montreal agent, E.W. Gray of Oct. 11, 1777.

Of the Montreal accounts receivable by the London financier totalling some £9,000, Levy Solomon owed £4,000.

"As to Levy Solomon's account, as you are acquainted with the agreement made with him, it is unnecessary to say anything concerning it, but I hope you will keep an eye over him and see that he fulfills his agreement as far as he possibly can." (PAC, MG19, Ser. 3, vol. 54)

A year later he wrote,

"As to Levy Solomon, I am in hopes he will act with more honour than you apprehend, though I expect little more from him this year than Lessey's note, which I flatter myself will be punctually paid, and I have no doubt of your remitting me my share of it as soon as it comes into your hands. He shall never have discharge from me until he pays 15/- per £ unless he at least by his conduct shew himself an honest man and does everything that lays in his power for the benefit of his estate." (Sept. 15, 1778)

The following month Gray reported,

"I am convinced that L.S. could have remitted you something handsome this year if he had chose it, as he has made a great deal of money by transacting business for Messrs. McCombe, Phyn & Ellice, but as I observed you before, I don't believe that he will remit to you a shilling more than he is obliged to do by his agreement. I thought it more for your interest to take his bill at 60 days sight at 11% than to pay 13% for 30 days sight, and bills could not be got for less."

The letter from James Hayton of London, dated March 15, 1779 to Levy Solomon must have been typical of many. It reflects the conditions of the colonial trade and the refinements of what grossly passes for the exploitation of the colonies by the capitalists of the metropolis. It indicates, among other conditions of the trade that Levy had settled with London on a long term arrangement of his debt at 15/- on the pound.

He had just received a payment on account as previously arranged, but "...as I am told by everybody from your place that you have made a considerable sum of money last year, I doubt not but you will remit me a part of it to lessen the heavy balance that is still owing me, exclusive of the large sum I have brought to your credit, as a total loss and which you knew full well falls very heavy on me. I therefore hope and expect that you will not only receive the remd. of Levy's debt with everything else you can collect as due to your total, but that you will also appropriate a fraction at least of your present earnings, to the discharge of my debt, as a few Hundred pounds paid annually with what will arise from your old debt, would I dare say extinguish the sum now due me before the expiration of 5 years, the term of the agreement for the payment of 15/- per £. I flatter myself you will do your utmost endeavour to accomplish this much sooner than that Time, as my letter of licence expires in January before which I wish to collect and to pay to my creditors for every shilling I can possibly, as upon that will depend the further agreement I may then be able to make with them, and as my future prospects and happiness in Life depends much upon that event, I most sincerely beg & entreat of you to redeem me from as much of your debt as you possibly can, in the course of this year. I think I have some right to expect this from my present situation and the inclination I have ever shown to promote your prosperity to the utmost of my power, inso-much that the very great Lengths I went for that purpose has been one of the principal causes of my misfortune, and it surely claims or has a right to claim every return of Gratitude & recompense you can now make me. Each of your own feelings will not prompt you to do another. All I can say on the Subject will I fear be of little avail, and therefore I shall not urge any further arguments to induce you to do it, but leave you to reflect upon what I have said with that attention which the importance of the subject requires from you.

"I hope you did not meddle with fund speculations last fall, as we have had most miserable Sales this winter, which must fall heavy upon many people in your province, as I am sure the average loss upon the sales at large cannot be less than....But it will probably be attended with one Good Effect, the putting an end to that Spirit of Enterprise Speculation, which has permitted too much in your place of late years, as many will now experience to their cost."

A snatch from such commercial correspondence is equally revealing.

"In the spring Mr. Levy Solomons applied to me for Mr. Lesage note to send to the Upper Country to recover payment of it but, as I mistrusted him, I declined letting him have it, till I received a letter from Messrs. Farques requesting me to deliver it him, taking his obligation to return it or pay the amount in September, which I did and he sent it Mr... Mr. Sessey, ignorant of his note being set up, consigned a parcel of furs to Messrs. Todd and McGill, the proceeds of which were to be applied towards the discharge of that note and another to Levy Solomons for £500 which I had never heard of before, though he says that you knew of it and had agreed that they should be upon the same footing."

Again, instructions from a principal London creditor during the summer of 1781 are harsh. The Montreal agent is instructed to collect what he can from Levy Solomons.

"Should he, contrary to my expectation pay you anything you will no doubt be very glad to receive it, and I am entirely without hope; but he may, as I know he has been wrote to very pressingly on the subject by... whose remonstrances I would gladly hope may have some effect upon him. But should he turn a deaf ear, the time is not now very far distant when he will be compelled either to do me justice so far as his agreement to pay 15/- per £ goes, or to take the consequences of a refusal, and, I am resolved they shall be as severe as the law will inflict upon him, as his conduct has all along been such as entitles him no lenity or indulgence at my hands, and none shall he experience."

As late as 1770 Levy Solomons was still in financial difficulties, as we read from an unusual letter of commendation which his associate in the pioneer syndicate Benjamin Lyon wrote to Aaron Lopez, the trading magnate of Newport. Obviously seeking to have Solomon supplant Lopez' Montreal agent Isaac Werden, Lyon wrote of many unwise purchases Werden had made for Lopez; Solomon was aware of these because he had received these furs for the purchaser.

He pleaded for confidentiality for this letter, and adverted to the troubles both he and Solomon were still having.

He describes the problems the partners were having with the heritage of debt.

"As we could not perform our agreement with our creditors on account of not getting in our debts, we are obliged to carry on the business some time longer, butt if you should chuse to have any connections in this country, I would recommend to you to examine the following proposals. That is, to consign as much of your West India goods to Levy Salomons in Montreal and Hayman Myars (in case he returns again to Quebec) or Mr. Stephen Moore, merchant in Quebec, as both places will answer much better.

"Therefore I give you this for your information, being fully convinced that this letter by coming into your hands will never be made use of, as our circumstances will not permit us to be at enmity with any person, and I heartily wish you may find it otherwise for your sake.

"Levy Salomons knowing the differences of peltries and the markets for the different ports so well that it undoubtedly will answer in this manner to have your effects mostly turn'd into furs, and have all the fine furr ship'd for your correspondent in London, and such as will answer your markett (Newport) and Philadelphia to be sent to your port which will allways be equal to cash.

"I make no doubt but your remittance would yield from 20 to 30 per cent; and I am certain the profit on the furs will exceed those on your goods, and the whole profit in this country on furs depends on the receipt of them here, the greatest part of which is received by Levy Salomons, and who you may depend on will do all in his power to promote your interest. Should you consider and think well of this plan, you may flatter yourself to be able to carry on a larger trade in the West Indies than any man that ships here, and the merchants who remit in species would not be able either to buy or sell with you.

"If you should chuse to be connected in this or any other manner you shall think proper, please let me know by post. As I cannot recommend any certain articles which would at present answer this market better than others, I leave the whole to the bearer, Mr. Myers." (Commerce of Rhode Island. I, Pp. 309-11. Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, vol. 69; cited by Marcus, Early American Jewry, I, Pp. 236-38, II, P. 409.) W.S. Dunn holds that if Lyon exaggerated, Solomons was nevertheless an important figure in the fur commerce. (Dictionary of Canadian Biography, S.N. Lucius Levy Solomons)

He dealt with Lawrence Ermatinger since Aug. 1769, when he may have been connected in a venture with Forrest Oakes (PAC, RG 19, A 2, Series 3, vol. 82), again in 1771 (vol. 87, 773, v. 199), and in Dec. 1775.

The Solomons-Ermatinger transactions are continuous.

The Swiss-born businessman's transactions with Bernard Lyons in Sept. 1770 were based upon Solomon being his security. (PAC, MG 19, A 2, Ser. 3, vol. 86, and vol. 88, Page for Sept. 1772)

In Jan. 1771 Ermatinger allowed a discount to Levy on the note of Jean Ovillar, large-scale Montreal fur trader (ibid.). The records there and in vol. 88 record cash ("half-Joes") received from Solomon, who is often referred to as Solomon Levy, in May 1772, in Aug. 1773, payment of "half-Joes" to Solomon in Oct. 1772 and Sept. and Oct. 1774.

Ermatinger paid Solomons for his note in Solomons' hands in 1773. Two years later he paid him for 4000 gun flints.

The complications of cash and of credit transfers under business conditions of the time are illustrated in the Ermatinger record and describe vividly the business activities of the Jewish merchants in early Canada: Benjamin Lyons & Co. at Michilimackinac drew on Levy Solomons and on Ermatinger at Montreal to pay a draft on him by Forrest Oakes of Michilimackinac. (MG 19, A2, Ser. 3, vol. 88, pages for Jan. 1773 and Jan. and Dec. 1775)

Ermatinger also received from Ignace Bourassa a draft by Lyon on Solomon Levy. (ibid.)

From 1770 there survives an order of Solomons on Quebec City lawyer Jenkin Williams in favour of Ermatinger, fur trader of Montreal. (PAC, microfilm reel C-4556, P.10)

A document in the Hart papers at the Séminaire des Trois-Rivières (N-D-1) records Levy Solomon selling furs to Aaron Hart and bears Solomon's signature.

We find Levy Solomon among the Montreal signatories of a 1773 petition for an Assembly. (PAC. Q10, P.55, and in An Account of the Proceedings)

The signatures of Ezekiel Solomon and of Levy Solomons are appended to a petition signed again on Jan. 10, 1774 in Montreal which supplements the similar petition of Quebec English-speaking citizens of Dec. 31, 1773. (Colonial Office Records, Q Series. MG11, vol. 10, Pp. 51-52; An Account of the Proceedings)

In Nov. 1774 he joined them in petitioning the crown for relief from what they considered retrograde legislation.

Walter S. Dunn notes that in 1771 Levy Solomons received a permit for an expedition of seven canoes with merchandise value of more than £3,000. On May 8, 1774 he received a license to send five canoes with merchandise worth £3,000 to Michilimackinac from Montreal. (R.G. 4, B28, vol. 115, Trade Licenses 1774-1790) The following year he sent four canoes, and another four valued at £2,500, in company with Benjamin Lyon for whom he was surety. The records preserve his 1782 license to trade in the Upper Country. (ibid., Sept. 26, 1770; PAC, MG 19, A2, sec. 3, vol. 82, 86-88) These permits were issued in spite of the precarious state of his credit and the bankruptcy proceedings.

In May 1775 Ermatinger signed a receipt for £100 Halifax currency "for which I am to deliver him 300 beaver coming from the Grand Portage" (PAC, ibid.)

In his The Jew and the American Revolution, Marcus noted, "Since the quartermaster department of the Revolutionary Armed forces was primitive and inadequate, the government turned to civilian purveyors for badly needed supplies. Many, if not most, Jewish merchants of that day were purveyors on a large or small scale, offering the government clothing, gunpowder, and lead. Harassed for lack of funds, the authorities took their time before settling accounts; some trusting suppliers were never paid at all. One of the merchants who were never reimbursed for their advances was Levy Solomons, of Canada, a brother-in-law of the ebullient David Salisbury Franks. Solomons, a Whig, served the American

troops in Canada in 1775 and 1776, helping them establish hospitals and lending them money. (Cincinnati, American Jewish Archives, 1974. Pp. 13-14)

Levy Solomon, who had formerly lived in Albany, was a supporter of the rebelling southern colonies. Marcus points out that he made Albany his headquarters and that his second wife, Rebecca, was a sister of David Salisbury Franks. "He served as supply officer for the American hospitals in Montreal and took care of the personal needs of the wounded. This required a considerable outlay of cash, and he was expected to advance his own funds or to guarantee payment for the supplies which others provided. In addition, Benedict Arnold, who was in command of the American forces, appropriated or raided the stocks of goods which Solomon had set aside for the Indian trade.

"After the Americans had gone he still helped the sick and wounded, who were left behind, to escape.

"The English looked upon him as a rebel, and Burgoyne ordered him thrown out of his house into the street with his goods on July 4, 1776. He had to leave town. Yet he returned to become the president of the synagogue in 1778, and, until his death in 1792, a successful and highly respected Canadian merchant.

"In 1784 Solomons addressed the following memorial to the American Congress, asking for repayment for the moneys and goods he had advanced to aid the sick, the wounded, and the imprisoned.

"The memorial of Levy Solomons of Montreal, in the Province of Quebec, merchant. General Montgomery on his arrival at Montreal, in 1775, sent for your memorialist and desired him to act as purveyor to the American hospitals in Canada, for which service General Montgomery promised him two guineas p. day for himself, and five shillings sterling p. day for a clerk.

"In consequence of which your memorialist immediately procured and furnished a large house for the accommodation of the sick, and, sometime after, two other houses for smallpox hospitals. The whole expense of fitting up and furnishing the said hospitals, as well as that of providing every thing necessary for the patients (particulars of which are exhibited in accounts marked A), was supported entirely by himself.

"He likewise at the requisition of Col. Richmore, Captains Lamb, Notte, and Goeforth, furnished sundries for their men. Sundries also to General Wooster and Mr. Tucker, and to Major Nicholson sundries for the troops before Quebec, particulars of all which will appear p...the accounts marked B and E.

"After the death of General Montgomery (December 31, 1775), when American affairs in Canada began to wear an unfavorable aspect, when all the hard money your memorialist could procure was expended in the service, and his own credit (on account of the part he had taken) ruined, he applied to General Wooster, who, unable to assist, urged him to fall upon some method of still providing for the preservation of the sick.

"Your memorialist had at that time a large quantity of rum on commission from Messrs. Fargues and Vialars of Quebec, with orders not to sell it for less than a dollar a gallon. Of this rum, at General Wooster's desire, and under his promise of indemnification, your memorialist sold about 4,000 gallons at four livres, five sols, by which he sustained a loss of nearly 7,000 livres.

"During the time Gen. (Benedict) Arnold was out at LaChine, he found it necessary to appropriate sundry goods, arms, and ammunition, that your memorialist had stored there and intended for the Upper Country trade, to the use of the troops under his command, the particulars of which will appear p. account marked C.

"After the Continental forces had retired from Montreal. General Arnold sent a party from Laprairie who, without the consent or privity of your memorialist, seized and carried off from LaChine a quantity of Brazil and carrot tobacco with other Indian goods, the property of your memorialist and by him destined for Michilimackinac, for which he never obtained a receipt or any acknowledgment whatever. The particulars and amount of these articles are exhibited in the account D.

"Your memorialist continued his support of, and assistance to, the American Army till the day they left Montreal when, being pressed closely by General Carleton, and when the friends to government here had engaged or sent out of the way every cart and carriage in town, so that the sick, the hospital stores, and bedding, etc. must have inevitably fallen into the hands of the enemy, but for the extraordinary exertions of your memorialist.

"At this conjunction, he, by sending all his own carriages and procuring others from the country, happily effected the purpose of getting them off, happily for the American party; but eventually of most disagreeable consequences to himself, since this last circumstance more than any other exposed him to insults and injuries from people of every denomination in the province, of which you will allow him to mention a few instances:

"On the first of July, 1776, he received an order from General Burgoyne to quit his house in four days, a house he had rented from May to May for seven years. On the fourth day he was turned into the street by an Ensign Barker of the 29th Reg't and a party of soldiers; himself, his wife, and children, destitute of everything except the clothes on their backs, and all his goods and furniture in the house left to the management of the soldiery.

"In this situation -- without money, without friends -- he obtained permission to shelter his family in the house of a former acquaintance who, at the end of five days, informed him he must leave her house immediately, she having been made to understand it was dangerous to harbour so notorious a rebel.

"He then retreated to a small vault (room) where he continued two months in a miserable situation, almost without the means of subsistence, and being under the frowns of government, deserted by everyone. At length such part of his effects as had escaped the pillage of the soldiery were thrown upon the parade, and himself informed he might either leave them or take them as he thought proper, and that this even was too great indulgence to a rebel.

"Notwithstanding the persecution your memorialist has suffered, he has always uniformly adhered to the American side, and as the face of his affairs have taken a more favourable turn, he has been enabled from time to time to lend his assistance to such prisoners as have been brought in here, particularly Col. Campbell from Virginia, Col. Stacey of Massachusetts Bay, Captain Wood of New York State, and others to a considerable amount, a part only of which he has been reimbursed this fall; and doubtless Capt. Wood, who stands engaged for the whole, will take an early opportunity of discharging the remainder.

"In this, however, should he fail, Congress will hardly think it reasonable that their memorialist shall be the sufferer.

"On the retreat of the Continental Army from this province, your memorialist had upwards of \$1,400 of Continental paper money in his possession, part of which he had received on account from General Wooster, which have remained till this day useless in his hands, and which he herewith sends. With respect to the loss sustained on the rum sales, your memorialist cannot pretend to speak with the same precision, having irrecoverably lost his books and most of his papers at the time he was so cruelly turned out of his house. He can however truly declare that this account as above stated is not in the least exaggerated.

"Your memorialist can with confidence refer you to the Hon'ble Mess'rs Corral (Charles Carroll of Carrollton), Benjamin Franklin, and Chace (Samuel Chase), the Generals Lamb and Hazen, and every officer at that time in Canada, for an account of his conduct during the stay of the Continental Army in that province, and to almost every other gentleman whom the fortune of war has brought prisoner to Montreal since, for an account of his subsequent behaviour.

"Your memorialist therefore prays that the foregoing circumstances may be taken into consideration, not in the least doubting but his real advances will be reimbursed to him with legal interest, his services and his sufferings rewarded and compensated, and that the justice and candor of Congress will oblige him to consider it his duty to pray for the prosperity of the United States of America.'" (1783 MS Papers of the Continental Congress, no. 35, Pp. 149a-c, in Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts; Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, vol. 2, 1894, Pp. 119-22; Marcus, I. 253-60)

There are records of Solomon's extensive affairs with Alexandre Macomb of Detroit and Phyn & Ellise of London in 1778, and with Amos Hayton of London in 1778. (MG 15; A2, ser. 3, vol.35, letter from Edward William Gray to Montreal correspondent, Oct. 22, 1778)

In 1781 he stood surety for Myer Michaels who was granted a licence to send merchandise to the west. (PAC, RG 4, B 28, vol. 115, Trade Licenses, 1774-90)

In 1782 Levy Solomon acquired a lot (103D) of land, according to the records of the Seigneurie de Montréal. (Les Origines de Montréal, P. 132)

Levy Solomon also purchased another lot in the same area in 1793 and other properties on St. Paul St. (Nos. 103E and 108) (P. 133)

Solomon went surety for Joseph Mondion of Vaudreuil when the latter received a license to take three canoes of goods to the Rivière du Lièvre, near Buckingham in 1782.

He was plaintiff in an action against Phillipe Rochblanc on April 28, 1787, and again on June 10, 1789 against Thomas Sketchly.

The E.W. Gray account book in the PAC records a transaction of £739 2.6 paid to Solomon on Phynn & Ellise in 1782.

From a 1788 letter in Lawrence M. Lande's collection we gather that "Mr. Levi", whom Lande identifies with Levy Solomons, acted as an appraiser for Jacob Mountain, influential English merchant active in Montreal since the conquest, later a member of the colonial assembly. (Canadian Historical Documents and Manuscripts. Montreal, 1980, no. B440, Pp. 468-69)

The same collection preserves the hand-written complaint, dated July 4, 1787, by Solomons that Lawrence Ermatinger had defaulted payment on a promissory note. The document also includes Ermatinger's power, addressed to his attorney, to confess judgment in this suit. (no. B35, Pp. 422-23)

Reading a normal wax-sealed business letter from Thomas Sketchley to Levy Solomons in National Archives of Canadian Jewish Congress is like eavesdropping on merchants at their daily work.

"It was Monday evening before I received your letter, which surprised me not a little, when your draft favor Mr. David came to hand, and which was presented by Messrs. Fraser & Young for acceptance. I told those gentlemen I could not accept it unless they would promise to keep it one month before they demanded payment, which being promised, I put my name at the bottom, and I wrote Mr. David the terms on which I did so; as to them having demanded payment, they never did until yesterday when a Notary was sent with it, and I gave him this answer 'That I could not pay it yet, but would in the course of this month' -- therefore suppose you will have it returned by this post, if you choose to send the Bill down again I will take it up in the course of this month, but it will not be in my power to do it sooner.

"As to your coming down Post to take the Power &c. out of my hands, I have only to say I am sorry I ever saw it; I have lost more by bad debts from it than I shall gain on the Coms. of all I have sold or am likely to sell at present. This you'll say is not your fault, I know it; but it certainly is a reason for your having a little patience -- I have not yet arranged with Phillips and Lonn, but I have at last put the matter in such a train as you will in all probability get paid in full soon, if you are not your own enemy; but if you mean to force it you will not: thus, Sir, have I endeavoured to serve you as well as in the Sale of your property and because, Messrs. F. & Y. have not acted as was agreed on when I accepted your Bill, I am loaded with reproaches and threats. For what? Threaten to frighten me, I suppose. I have only now to say that the little satisfaction I have apparently given, makes me very ready to resign the business into any one's hand you please to appoint, unless you can have more confidence than you seem at present to possess -- but if we continue to do business together must beg in future you will inform me before your draw, that I may tell you at what date to make your bills."
(Dec. 11, 1788)

Levy Solomons and Samuel David were among the Montreal merchants who petitioned Gov.-Gen. Guy Dorchester on Oct. 14, 1790 to establish Montreal as a customs clearing port. (Quebec Gazette, Oct. 28, 1790.)

In 1790 Solomon was residing in Montreal. A contract survives for the purchase from Troy, N.Y. farmer Judah Williams of 200 hogs, and sale to Mr. Williams of ten horses (like the five horses now in Levy Solomons' stable and which have been seen by the said Judah Williams). (Canadian Jewish Archives, vol. 1, no.5, Aug. 1959, Pp. 9-10)

Levy Solomon headed the list of the founders of the Shearith Israel Congregation in Montreal on Ellul 25, 1778 and was its first parnass (president). In that capacity he presided over the committee that wrote the remarkable "code of laws for the better regulating this Kahal" in 1779.

There must have been a reason why a meeting was called, at the request of J. Franks and others, on Adar 12, 1779, in the absence of the president, at which it was decided that the Gaboy -- in the event that Uriah Judah -- or any other member of the executive be as much empowered to convene meetings as is the president.

For whatever reason, six weeks later, on 26th Nissan, we read in the surviving minutes of the congregation,

"Whereas Brethren of this Congregation have at Divers Times most Shamefully, Maliciously & Wickedly aspersed the Character of each other, by which means a Shame & Disgrace has fallen on the Reputation of Individuals; Proceedings contrary to our Laws and Sacred Religion and turning the Vengeance of our Almighty God on us, by which Means Destruction now threatens us and our Posterity, to prevent in future such Misconduct, and such abominable Practices,

"We have Unanimously Resolved and agreed first to take the Oath by the Laws of Moses that we will never hereafter speak against the Character, or Prejudice the persons of each other on any pretence whatsoever by which means any Disgrace may be brought on us.

"We at the same time agree, and by the above Oath bind ourselves, that we shall and will be obliged to make known & Discover to the person spoke of or injured by any Association Whatsoever. We do likewise, and by the Said Oath, bind ourselves that we will jointly and separately Detest, Abhor & Despise any Israelite belonging to the Congregation, Inhabitants of this Town that will not join with us in this our well meant Determination.

That winter, on 21st of Hesvan, Solomon was chosen to superintend the finishing of the synagogue, together with Abraham Judah.

Levi Solomon was in that office when Rev. J.R. Cohen, their first minister, sued for his salary in 1784.

He appears in the Beth Din records of the Jewish community in London as a witness in a matrimonial case. He is titled Solomon ben Isaac Halevi, a resident of Detroit in 1783.

His daughter-in-law Catherine Manuel Solomon recorded that "Levy Solomons senior of Montreal departed this life in Montreal on the 18th May 1792, about 62 or 63 years of age."

The Lawrence Montague Lande collection of Canadian Historical Documents and Manuscripts cherishes a printed funeral announcement dated at Montreal from the only printer in the city, Fleury Mesplet, in French,

"Monsieur, vous êtes prié d'assister à l'enterrement de défunct Mr. Levy Solomons, décédé en sa maison rue St. Paul, lieu où se fera l'enterrement, dimanche le 20 du courant, à une heure après midi, Montréal, le 18 mai, 1792." (Montreal, 1980, no. B 441, Pp. 469-70)

When Rachel, daughter of Levy Solomon, was married to Henry Joseph on Sept. 28, 1803 at Berthier, the ceremony was performed by Barnet Lyon, merchant at Rivière du Loup. (later Louisville, district of Three Rivers) "on Wednesday, the 12th day of Tishry, 5564, answering to the 28th Sept. 1803...according to the Laws of Moses and Israel, being agreeable to the Laws of England" (according to a parchment certificate lately in the possession of Gratz Joseph).

The certificate refers to the father of the bride as "late of Montreal". The mother of the bride, Rebecca, née Frank, was present.

Catherine Solomons, the curator of the family record, was a Judah by descent, her grandmother Miriam being one of the original Judah settlers in Lower Canada, sister of Uriah and Samuel Judah.

When Alexander Hart had occasion to leave Montreal for a period of 30 days, it was Benjamin Samuel Solomons (1786-1831), another son of Lucius Levy Solomons, who gave bond for him on Oct. 9, 1808.

A bill of M. Solomons, another son of Lucius Levy Solomons, appears in the Oct. 11, 1777 record of Amos Hayton's transactions with Edward William Gray. (PAC, MG 19, A 2, Ser.3, vol. 54)

Soon after his father died, on Sept. 13, 1793, we find Levy Solomons owing money for lots on St. Paul St. This money was paid by Jacob Jordan. (F.-J. Audet and E.-Fabre Surveyer. Les Députés au premier parlement du Bas-Canada, 1792-96. Montreal, Editions des dix, 1946, P. 278 citing Les Origines de Montréal, Mémoires de la Société historique de Montréal, 11e livraison. Montreal, Adj. Ménard, 1917, P. 133)

Levy Solomon (1771-1823) was married in 1801 to Catherine Manuel, niece of Samuel and Uriah Judah.

We have read of Levy Solomons efforts to secure land grants in Upper Canada on Oct. 23 and 30, 1797. (Canadian Jewish Archives, new series no. 17, Pp. 147-48)

The signatures of both Levy Solomon and Levy Solomon Jr. are to be found on the 1784 petition of businessmen in the colony praying for government by an elected legislature. According to our best information the junior was thirteen when he signed.

A business letter from Quebec City to Levy Solomon dated Dec. 11, 1788 may be addressed to either the father or the son.

This is also the case of a May 13, 1800 letter from Levy Solomons to Simon McTavish in regard to the tobacco manufacture. (PAC, MG 29, A5, vol. 27) This may refer to a snuff and tobacco factory on St. Paul St. which Miss Annette Wolff, who spoke to the Jewish Historical Society, states was begun by Levy Solomons and continued by Jacob and Jesse Joseph in the 1840's.

From the style of an advertisement in the Quebec Gazette of March 4, 1790 there is very slight reason to believe that the signatory is Levy Solomon Jr.

"The Subscriber, with whose inventive faculties the Public are already acquainted, has after great pains unremitting industry, much labour, and immoderate expense, erected in this Town a Snuff Manufactory, which for execution is superior to any heretofore constructed in this province -- By means of this extraordinary machine, which for its simplicity and solidity, has been justly the wonder of all who have seen it, he will not only be enabled to furnish the town, suburbs and country with snuff of the very best quality, but at the most moderate rate. He takes in payment wheat, barley, peas, oat, flax-seed and bark, for which he gives the full market price. And he sells as usual Starch and Hair-Powder at the most reduced rates."

Again, on Sept. 17, 1792 he announced,

"The Subscriber begs leave to inform his Friends, those of his late Father, and the Public in general, that he has established Tobacco and Snuff Manufactory near this City, where he proposes carrying on that business in all its various branches, and hopes that his punctuality and attention to their orders, and the superior quality of his goods, will entitle him to a preference; having engaged some of the best workmen in the country. He will warrant all articles manufactured by him for any reasonable time.

"He proposes also to establish in a short time a Starch and Hair Powder Manufactory at the same place, of which notice will be given when complete; and hopes his Friends will be good enough to recollect him in any orders they may give for those articles in the meantime.

"He has now ready for sale, Snuff, Carrot, Plug-Tail, and Spencer's Twist Tobacco, which he will sell on the most reasonable terms.

"All orders directed to Levy Solomons & Co. at the Grange, near Montreal, or at No. 4, St. Francis Street, will be faithfully and punctually executed by Levy Solomons." (ibid., Oct. 4, 1792)

In July 1817 Levy Solomons and his brother Benjamin S. Solomons signed an indenture whereby they became "joint and Equal partners together in Carrying on the manufacture and Sale of Tobacco, Snuff, Chocolate, etc. at Longueil, Montreal and elsewhere in the Province of Lower Canada." (L.M. Lande, Canadian Historical Documents and Manuscripts. Montreal, 1980, no. B543, P. 550)

He composed his will on Sept. 29, 1820 in which he named Benjamin Hart as one of the executors. Among the witnesses: Alexander Hart. (no. B.546, Pp. 551-52)

As late as the fall of 1821 we read of Levy Solomons' property being sold at sheriff's sale at the order of Samuel David. (Quebec Gazette, Sept. 27 and Oct. 25, 1821)

THE PARTNERS: CHAPMAN ABRAHAM

When the Montreal congregation composed its "Code of Laws for the better regulating this Kahal" in 1779 they made specific provision for two Jewish pioneers -- "Chapman Abraham and Benjamin Lyon who are at too great a distance." Membership would close within twenty days, except for these two. Clearly they were in an exceptional position.

Marcus calls Chapman Abraham one of the most colorful Jewish merchants of early Canada.

It is not clear whether Chapman was his name or an indication of his occupation.

The record of his marriage lists him as C. Cauffman Cohen, Kaufman ben Abrahm Cohen.

His will commences, "I Chapman Abraham of the City of Montreal" and is signed in Hebrew, "Kaufman Abram."

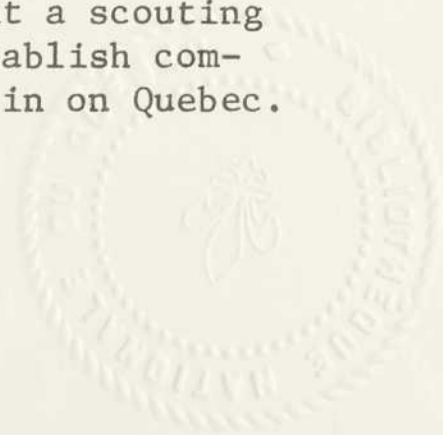
Years later another chapman also used the equivalent term Kaufman, and Levy Koopman became Louis Marchand.

Later Abraham had occasion to recall to General Haldimand that in the 1760 wars with the French and the Indians he had supplied several regiments with all necessaries under his command.

Probably a native of Germany, Abrams came to Canada from England. He mentions two brothers in Plymouth, Solomon Abraham and Hart Abraham, in his 1783 will, as well as a nephew, Isaac Abraham in Montreal.

It was probably he who figured in a 1759 adventure. As Katz tells it,

"In November, 1759, General Jeffery Amherst, Commander-in-Chief of the English forces in North America, sent a scouting party from Crown Point, New York, into Canada to establish communications with General James Wolfe, then closing in on Quebec.



It was expected that bribery would allay the enmity of any Indians encountered and that the Indians would lead them to Wolfe. Indians did appear, but their hostility made them immune to persuasion, and the entire party was taken prisoner. Among the captives was a man named Abraham, who may possibly have been Chapman A. Abraham.

"1762 Abram made British-held Detroit the base of his commercial operations.

"It was there that he was captured by the Indians during Pontiac's war on May 12, 1763. He was on his way to Niagara together with a trading brigade of 5 canoes, and was accompanied by his partner Hayman Levy. They were taken a short way below Detroit." (Beth El Story, with a History of the Jews in Michigan before 1850. Detroit, Wayne University Press, 1955. P.26)

Marcus writes, "Our further date are in part uncertain. Two Levys appear to have been seized by the Indians that same summer. One, we know, was Levy Andrew Levy of Lancaster, who was captured probably by Wyandottes, after he left Presque Isle under safe conduct for Fort Pitt. The other Levy may well have been one of the consortium, Gershon Levy. Levy Solomons, still another partner, escaped from the Indians and reached the safety of Detroit. Two other Jews, whoever they were, coming from Sandusky, fell into the hands of the savages.

"A man named Chapman, who had brought up a bateau from Albany, was captured with his cargo on the Detroit River, probably the Chapman who had been seized by the Indians on May 12, 1763 and exchanged by them for a Powatomi Chieftain. This may well have been his second capture by Indians."



But Chapman Abrams' significance in Canadian geopolitics and social history can be delineated more truthfully by the artist than by the archivist. As we read Stephen Vincent Benet's story "Jacob and the Indians" in Saturday Evening Post (May 14, 1958, Pp. 12-13, 74-78, illustrated by Harvey Dunn; also in his Tales Before Midnight and also from A Book of Americans by Rosemary & Stephen Vincent Benet, Copyright, 1933 by Rosemary & Stephen Vincent Benet, Copyright renewed (c), 1961 by Rosemary Carr Benet. Reprinted by permission of Brandt & Brandt Literary Agents Inc.) we need to remember that its facts are all documented in the historic records of the continent.

The poet imagines his story through his perspective upon the early history of the continent. He places the young immigrant in the unhappy context of European Jewish history -- pale, scholarly, ambitious. There, in mercantile Philadelphia, he met the Jewish trader, the first poet of the Quebec vision,

"An arrogant old man he was, with fierce black eyes and a beard that was whiter than snow. He lived apart, in his big house, with his granddaughter, and men said he was very learned, but also very disdainful, and that to him a Jew was not a Jew who did not come of the pure Sephardic strain.

"Jacob had seen him, in the Congregation Mikveh Israel, and to Jacob he had looked like an eagle, and fierce as an eagle. Yet now, in his need, he found himself knocking at that man's door.

"It was Raphael Sanchez himself who opened. 'And what is for sale today, peddler?' he said, looking scornfully at Jacob's jacket where the pack straps had worn it.

"'A scholar of the Law is for sale,' said Jacob in his bitterness, and he did not speak in the tongue he had learned in this country, but in Hebrew.

"The old man stared at him a moment.

"'Now am I rebuked,' he said, 'For you have the tongue. Enter, my guest,' and Jacob touched the scroll by the doorpost and went in.

"They shared the noon meal at Raphael Sanchez's table. It was made of dark, glowing mahogany, and the light sank into it as sunlight sinks into a pool. There were many precious things in that room, but Jacob had no eyes for them. When the meal was over and the blessing said, he opened his heart and spoke, and Raphael Sanchez listened, stroking his beard with one hand. When the young man had finished, he spoke.

"So, scholar,' he said, though mildly, 'you have crossed an ocean that you might live and not die.'

"Do you know why I came to this country?' he said.

"No,' said Jacob Stein.

"It was not for the trading,' said Raphael Sanchez. 'My house has lent money to kings. A little fish, a few furs -- what are they to my house? No, it was for the promise -- the promise of Penn -- that this land should be an habitation and a refuge, not only for the Gentiles. Well, we know Christian promises. But so far, it has been kept. Are you spat upon in the street here, scholar of the Law?'

"No,' said Jacob. 'They call me Jew, now and then. But the Friends, though Gentiles, are kind.'

"It is not so in all countries,' said Raphael Sanchez, with a terrible smile.

"No,' said Jacob quietly, 'it is not.'

"The old man nodded. 'Yes, one does not forget that,' he said. 'The spittle wipes off the cloth, but one does not forget. One does not forget the persecutor or the persecuted. That is why they think me mad in the Congregation Mikveh Israel, when I speak what is in my mind. For, look you' -- and he pulled a map from a drawer -- 'here is what we know of these colonies, and here and here our people make a new beginning, in another air. But here is New France -- see it? -- and down the great river come the French traders and their Indians.'

"Well?' said Jacob in puzzlement.

"Well?' said Raphael Sanchez. 'Are you blind? I do not trust the King of France -- the king before him drove out the Huguenots, and who knows what he may do? And if they hold the great rivers against us, we shall never go westward.'

"'We?' said Jacob in bewilderment.

"'We,' said Raphael Sanchez. He struck his hand on the map. 'Oh, they cannot see it in Europe -- not even their lords in parliament and their ministers of state,' he said. 'They think this is a mine, to be worked as the Spaniards worked Potosi, but it is not a mine. It is something beginning to live, and it is faceless and nameless yet. But it is our lot to be part of it -- remember that in the wilderness, my young scholar of the Law. You think you are going there for a girl's face, and that is well enough. But you may find something there you did not expect to find.'

"He paused and his eyes had a different look.

"'You see, it is the trader first,' he said. 'Always the trader, before the settled man. The Gentiles will forget that, and some of our own folk too. But one pays for the land of Canaan; one pays in blood and sweat.'

"Then he told Jacob what he would do for him and dismissed him, and Jacob went home to his room with his head buzzing strangely. For at times it seemed to him that the Congregation Mikveh Israel was right in thinking Raphael Sanchez half mad. And at other times it seemed to him that the old man's words were a veil, and behind them moved and stirred some huge and unguessed shape...

"First they left the city behind them, and then the outlying towns and, soon enough, they were in the wilderness. It was very strange to Jacob Stein. At first, he would wake at night and lie awake listening, while his heart pounded, and each rustle in the forest was the step of a wild Indian, and each screech of an owl in the forest the whoop before the attack.

"But gradually this passed. He began to learn many things that even a scholar of the Law, for all his wisdom, does not know -- the girthing of a packsaddle and the making of fires, the look of dawn in the forest and the look of evening. It was all very new to him, and sometimes he thought he would die of it, for his flesh weakened. Yet always he kept on.

"When he saw his first Indians -- in the woods, not in the town -- his knees knocked together. Then he found they were grave men, very ceremonious and silent at first, and then, when the silence had been broken, full of curiosity. They discussed him and his garments with the frankness of children, till Jacob felt naked before them, and yet not afraid. One of them pointed to the bag that hung at Jacob's neck -- the bag in which, for safety's sake, he carried his phylactery.

"Now and then he would dream back -- dream back to the quiet fields around Rettelsheim and the red-brick houses of Philadelphia, to the stuffed fish and the raisin wine, the chanting in the chedar and the white twisted loaves of calm Sabbath, under the white cloth. They would seem very close for the moment, then they would seem very far away. He was eating deer's meat in a forest and sleeping beside embers in the open night. It was so that Israel must have slept in the wilderness. He had not thought of it as so, but it was so.

"Now and then he would look at his hands -- they seemed tougher and very brown, as if they did not belong to him any more. Now and then he would catch a glimpse of his own face, as he drank at a stream. He had a beard, but it was not the beard of a scholar -- it was wild and black. Moreover, he was dressed in skins, now; it seemed strange to be dressed in skins at first, and then not strange...

"He lost track of time -- there was only his map and the trading and the journey. Now it seemed to him that they should surely turn back, for their packs were full. He spoke of it to McCampbell, but McCampbell shook his head. There was a light in the Scotchman's eyes now -- a light that seemed strange to our grandfather's grandfather -- and he would pray long at night, sometimes too loudly. So they came to the banks of the great river, brown and great, and saw it, and the country beyond it, like a view across Jordan. There was no end to that country -- it stretched to the limits of the sky and Jacob saw it with his eyes. He was almost afraid at first, and then he was not afraid...

"Then he turned back, for he had seen a Promised Land, not for his seed only, but for nations yet to come.

"Nevertheless, he was taken by the Shawnees, in a season of bitter cold, with his last horse dead. When the Shawnees took him, he no longer wept; for it seemed to him that he was no longer himself, but a man he did not know.

"He was not concerned when they tied him to the stake and piled the wood around him, for it seemed to him still that it must be happening to another man. Nevertheless he prayed, as was fitting, chanting loudly; for Zion in the wilderness he prayed. He could smell the smell of the chedar and hear the voices that he knew -- Reb Moses and Reb Nathan, and through them the curious voice of Raphael Sanchez, speaking in riddles. Then the smoke took him and he coughed. His throat was hot.

"He called for a drink, and though they could not understand his words, all men know the sign of thirst, and they brought him a bowl, filled. He put it to his lips eagerly and drank, but the stuff in the bowl was scorching hot and burned his mouth. Very angry then was our grandfather's grandfather, and without so much as a cry he took the bowl in both hands and flung it straight in the face of the man who had brought it, scalding him. Then there was a cry and a murmur from the Shawnees and, after some moments, he felt himself unbound and knew that he lived.

"It was flinging the bowl at the man while yet he stood at the stake that saved him, for there is an etiquette about such matters. One does not burn a madman, among the Indians; and to the Shawnees, Jacob's flinging the bowl proved that he was mad, for a sane man would not have done so. Or so it was explained to him later, though he was never quite sure that they had not been playing cat-and-mouse with him to test him.

"Also they were much concerned by his chanting his death song in an unknown tongue and by the phylactery that he had taken from its bag and bound upon brow and arm for his death hour, for these they thought strong medicine and uncertain.

"But in any case they released him, though they would not give him back his beaver, and that winter he passed in the lodges of the Shawnees, treated sometimes like a servant, and sometimes like a guest, but always on the edge of peril. For he was strange to them, and they could not quite make up their minds about him, though the man with the scalded face had his own opinion, as Jacob could see.

"Yet when the winter was milder and the hunting better than it had been in some seasons, it was he who got the credit of it, and the holy phylactery also; and by the end of winter he was talking to them of trade, though diffidently at first. And yet it was not all woe, for he learned much woodcraft from the Shawnees and began to speak in their tongue.

"Yet he did not trust them entirely; and when spring came and he could travel, he escaped. He was no longer a scholar then, but a hunter. Always he prayed for Zion. But when he thought of Zion, it was not as he had thought of it before -- a white city set in a hill -- but a great and open landscape, ready for nations...

"I shall not tell of the trading post he found deserted and the hundred and forty French louis in the dead man's money belt..."

It was a different Jacob at whom the Philadelphian sage peered from the door. The young man had been initiated into the universe of the Upper Country.

"And what is your business with me, frontiersman?" said the old man.

"The price of blood for a country,' said Jacob Stein. He did not raise his voice, but there was a note in it that had not been there when he first knocked at Raphael Sanchez's door.

"The old man stared at him soberly. 'Enter, my son,' he said at last, and Jacob touched the scroll by the doorpost and went in.

"He walked through the halls as a man walks in a dream. At last he was sitting by the dark mahogany table. There was nothing changed in the room -- he wondered greatly that nothing in it had changed.

"And what have you seen, my son?' said Raphael Sanchez.

"I have seen the land of Canaan, flowing with milk and honey,' said Jacob, scholar of the Law. 'I have brought back grapes from Eshcol, and other things that are terrible to behold,' he cried, and even as he cried he felt the sob rise in his throat. He choked it down. 'Also there are eighteen packs of prime beaver at the warehouse, and a boy named McGillvray, a Gentile, but trusty,' he said. 'The beaver is very good and the boy under my protection. You will not lose on the journey. And McCampbell died by the great river, but he had seen the land and I think he rests well. The map is not made as I would have it, but it shows new things. And we must trade with the Shawnees. There are three posts to be established -- I have marked thm on the map -- and later, more. And beyond the great river there is country that stretches to the end of the world. That is where my friend McCampbell lies, with his face turned west. But what is the use of talking? You would not understand.'

"He put his head on his arms, for the room was too quiet and peaceful, and he was very tired. Raphael Sanchez moved around the table and touched him on the shoulder.

"Did I not say, my son, that there was more than a girl's face to be found in the wilderness?' he said.

"'A girl's face?' said Jacob. 'Why, she is to be married and, I hope, will be happy, for she was a rose of Sharon. But what are girls' faces beside this?' and he flung something on the table. It rattled dryly on the table, like a cast snake-skin, but the hairs upon it were red.

"'It was Meyer Kappelhuise,' said Jacob childishly, 'and he was a strong man. And I am not strong, but a scholar. But I have seen what I have seen. And we must say Kaddish for him.'

"'Yes, yes,' said Raphael Sanchez. 'It will be done. I will see to it.'

"'But you do not understand,' said Jacob. 'I have eaten deer's meat in the wilderness and forgotten the month and the year. I have been a servant to the heathen and held the scalp of my enemy in my hand. I will never be the same man.'

"'Oh, you will be the same,' said Sanchez. 'And no worse a scholar, perhaps. But this is a new country.'

"'It must be for all,' said Jacob. 'For my friend McCampbell died also, and he was a Gentile.'

"'Let us hope,' said Raphael Sanchez and touched him again upon the shoulder. Then Jacob lifted his head and he saw that the light had declined and the evening was upon them. And even as he looked, Raphael Sanchez's granddaughter came in to light the candles for Sabbath. And Jacob looked upon her, and she was a dove, with dove's eyes."

For Benet had imbedded a love story in his fictional reconstruction of Chapman Abrams. But the official record witnesses that Abrams did, indeed, on July 18, 1781 marry Eliza Pessla the daughter of Abraham Ben Uri. The minister officiating was the Rev. M.J. Cohen, but recently of Montreal.

This historic record established Abrams' movements and activities.

In 1762 Abram made British-held Detroit the base of his commercial operations.

It was there that he was captured by the Indians during Pontiac's war on May 12, 1763. He was on his way to Niagara together with a trading brigade of 5 canoes, and was accompanied by his partner Hayman Levy. They were taken a short way below Detroit.

United Brethren missionary Rev. John Heckenwelder narrates Abrams' adventure.

"About the commencement of the Indian War in 1763, a trading Jew, named Chapman, who was going up the Detroit River with a batteau-load of goods which he had brought from Albany, was taken by some Indians of the Chippewa nation, and destined to be put to death.

"A Frenchman impelled by motives of friendship and humanity, found means to steal the prisoner, and kept him so concealed for some time, that although the most diligent search was made, the place of his confinement could not be discovered.

"At last, however, the unfortunate man was betrayed by some false friend, and again fell into the power of the Indians who took him across the river to be burned and tortured. Tied to the stake and the fire burning by his side, his thirst from the great heat became intolerable, and he begged that some drink might be given to him. It is a custom with the Indians, previous to a prisoner being put to death, to give him what they call his last meal; a bowl of pottage or broth was therefore brought to him for that purpose. Eager to quench his thirst, he put the bowl immediately to his lips, and the liquor being very hot, he was dreadfully scalded. Being a man of very quick temper, the moment he felt his mouth burned, he threw the bowl with its contents full in the face of the man who handed it to him.

"He is mad! He is mad!" resounded from all quarters. The bystanders considered his conduct as an act of insanity and immediately untied the cords with which he was bound, and let him go where he pleased.

"This fact was well known to all the inhabitants of Detroit from whom I first heard it, and it was afterwards confirmed to me by Mr. Chapman himself, who was established as a merchant at that place." (His "History, Manners and Customs of the Indian Nations," in Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, vol. 12, Pp. 257-58)

After two months in the hands of the Indians, Abrams and his partner Levy were released.

Francis Parkman retold Heckenwelder's story in The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada. Everyman ed. II, p. 7.

Abraham's capture by the Indians appears in his own affidavit taken before a Military Court of Inquiry held in Detroit, August 9, 1763:

"Mr. Chapman Abraham, being sworn, informs the Court that in coming up Detroit River, having put on shore at the place of Monsieur St. Lewis, he acquainted this Deponant that the Fort was beseiged by the Indians, and Capt. Robertson, Sir Robert Daviss and a great many more English were killed, and that they intended to kill all the English that would come up the Detroit River. This Deponant immediately told his men to go back with him; but the soldiers told his men if they returned they would be all killed, as the Indians were round the whole lake and at Niagara, upon which they absolutely refused to return with him.

"In consequence of which this Deponant put all his goods in said St. Lewis's house, who told him he would do his best to save them from the Indians; Then this Deponant asked him where he should go to hide himself to save his life. He and Madame Esperame (who was present) answered him he should go to her home and hide himself in her cellar; where he continued about ten minutes, and then was told by said Madame Esperame to go out of the house; which he obeyed and in going out she perceived his watch chain and told him to give it to her that she was certain the Indians would kill him; upon which this Deponant told her he would make her a present of it, if she would let him stay in the cellar to save him from the Indians. She answered he should stay no longer in the house; upon which he endeavored to gain the woods; she followed him demanding the watch a second time, which he again refused.

"By this time the Indians discovered him, took him prisoner and carried him to St. Lewis's house, where he found some of his goods were put in his canoe. This Deponant further says that one Pero Barth told him that Major Gladwin was the occasion of this Indian War; That if Capt. Campble had commanded this would not have happened; That the aforesaid Major would not give the Indians presents nor suffer their guns to be mended, as Capt. Campble did; This Deponant replied that perhaps it was the General's orders not to do so, upon which he immediately said that the General did not order the Major to call them Dogs, Hogs and bid them go out of his house.

"This Deponant one Day saw Batist Devuiere and a great many other Frenchmen going to a Council with the Indians, he asked them what was the matter, they would not tell him anything.

"This Deponant has daily seen some of the Frenchmen trading with the Indians giving them bread, tobacco and fish for English Merchants Goods that were taken from the Prisoners. That Piero and Hyacinth Reaume have traded with the Indians for his effects, some of which he had seen worn by said Hyacinth's Daughters since his arrival at the Fort. That Piero LaBute told him he bought of his effects. That Madame La Jenness, being indebted to Monsieur Labadie and knowing him to owe this Deponant upward of twelve hundred louis, asked him if he had occasion for a quarter of veal, and she would send it to him and discount it, which was proposed to said Labadie, who absolutely refused it. This Deponant says further that Batist Devuiere had bought of his effects." ("Gladwin Manuscripts," in Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, vol. 27, Pp. 642-43; see also I.I. Katz. "Chapman Abrams: An Early Jewish Settler in Detroit," in Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, vol. 40, pt. 1, Sept. 1950, Pp. 81-86; see also F.B. Hough, ed., Diary of the Siege of Detroit. Albany, 1860; "The Bouquet Papers," in Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, vol. 19, 1911, P.214; and in R. Navarre. Journal of the Conspiracy of Pontiac, 1763. Detroit, P. 220; H.H. Peckham. Pontiac and the Indian Uprising. Princeton, 1947, Pp. 141, 198))

The record of "Chapman" and "Levey" being taken prisoner during the Pontiac war appears in the Canadian Archives, Microfilm reel B-2664, Pp. 4V,7.

A leading Detroit merchant, James Sterling wrote him a familiar, jocular note on Feb. 19, 1763.

"Damned Jew, I thought you should act like a Christian since Sir Robert Baptized you; but I find you are a Jew still by your mistrusting your best friends. Do you think because you have been absent a little while that Sterling has forgot you or is unwilling to serve you? I received your several letters; I wrote you answers which, I am surprised you have not read, but be assured I will do for you everything you have demanded of me & much more if it is requisite. I'll send you Thirteen savages, (alias Canadians) as soon as the Navigation is open in the Spring with as much soap meagre as will serve them until they come back. Your assured friend, J.S."

As Katz put it,

"The reference to Abraham as a baptized Jew need not be taken literally. Abraham was addressed facetiously as damned Jew and told to start acting like a Christina now that he was baptized. Frontier wit was anything but delicate."

Chapman continued his Montreal-Detroit trade for many years. Katz summarizes the evidence of Abraham's residence and activities in Detroit:

In 1765, he was selling rum in partnership with a man by the name of Lyons (possibly Benjamin Lyon). In 1767, he owned a lot and house within the fort of Detroit, and purchased a piece of additional land adjoining his property. In the same year he did business under the firm name of Chapman, Abraham and Company, and in 1768 he purchased an additional "tract of land with house and appurtenances." In 1776, he sold a tract of land in Detroit, and the following year he purchased a parcel with a house and appurtenances within the fort of Detroit.

The local documentation and the regional history of the Michigan are full of detailed information on the economic activities of Abrams. These sources include W. Barrett. The Old Merchants of New York City, vols. 2 and 3; the Diary of the Siege of Detroit by J. Hay; the Michigan Pioneer Collections, etc. (Vide J.R. Marcus American Jewry Documents; A. Brody's 1933 thesis on Political and Civil Status of the Jews in Canada at the Jewish Institute of Religion; Irving I. Katz. "Chapman Abraham: An Early Jewish Settler in Detroit" in Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, vol. 40, pt. 1, Sept. 1950, pp. 81-86 and his Beth El Story with a History of the Jews in Michigan before 1850. Detroit, Wayne University Press, 1955, 238 p.)

Marcus tells of a 1669 trading operation:

"There were a number of formalities with which Abram first had to comply before he and his men could start moving up the St. Lawrence. His cargo, which he was required to invoice under oath, consisted of 300 gallons of liquor, 2 guns, 200 pounds of shot and balls, and 24 bales and bags of merchandise and provisions. Seven men accompanied him, although he started out to take only five. Abram was required to swear allegiance to the King and to sign a double indemnity bond that he would observe the regulations governing the Indian trade. His canoemen, none of whom could sign his name, also had to declare solemnly that they would not stir up trouble with the natives." (American Jewry, Documents. pp. 397-99)

The document issued to him reads,

"In obedience to his Majesty's commands, this license is granted to Chapman Abrams to pass unmolested with one canoe manned with five men (whose names, occupations and places of abode, and also the quantity of merchandise on board, are reported upon oath and specified in the margin), to Michilimackinac, and from thence to such markets or parts as he shall find most advantageous for the disposal of the said merchandise, with liberty to dispose of any such goods and effects as he shall occasionally find a market for in his passage to Michilimackinac aforesaid, he taking care to endorse upon this licence the quantity and quality of the goods so disposed of, and shewing the same to the commanding officer of the next fort.

"Provided always that nothing herein contained shall be construed to extend to give any authority to the said Chapman Abrams to do any act or thing or to trade to any place contrary to such regulations as his Majesty may have been pleased to make, or shall hereafter think proper to make, by himself, or by the commander in chief, or any person properly authorized to give directions concerning the Indian trade.

"Provided also that he, the said Chapman Abrams, and also all and every the master or masters of, and all other persons concerned in navigating the said one canoe, shall first have taken and subscribed the oaths endorsed on this licence in the presence of the commanding officer at Montreal, and shall also have given security to observe and keep the same; and also that he, the said Chapman Abrams, will not take with him or permit any of his people to take with them any other person or persons but such as usually have followed, or intend hereafter to follow, the occupation of navigating battoes or canoes; and further that he, the said Chapman Abrams, and all such persons as he shall take with him, shall and will immediately, on his or their return to the city of Montreal, present themselves to and personally appear before the officer commanding at Montreal, and take a certificate from him in writing of their having so personally appeared, death or any other unavoidable accidents only excepted.

"These securities being given, this licence to be in force for twelve months; otherwise to be null and void to all intents and purposes.

"Given under my hand and seal at arms, at the Castle of St. Louis, in the City of Quebec, this fifteenth day of April, one thousand seven hundred and sixty nine." (PAC. RG4, B28, vol.110)

A 1776 document of sale exists transferring a lot of ground on Ste. Anne St. in Detroit to R.M. Williams and M. Tremble for £300 New York currency. (Detroit Public Library)

That year we find Abrams transactions with Aaron Hart in the latter's account book.

When his former commanding officer Gen. Haldimand was named Governor of Quebec in 1778, Abrams wrote him,

"Permit me likewise to assure your Excellency that neither my loyalty or zeal for his Majesty's service have in the least abated; that during the present unfortunate contest, I flatter myself in having shown new testimonies of my attachment for his Majesty's service under the command of your late worthy predecessor, Sir Guy Carleton; particularly in being one of those who had the honor of repelling the rebels at Long Point (Montreal, September, 1775), who, with an effrontery only peculiar to themselves, had formed the design of taking this city, and likewise in (1775) being one of a party that was detached from Quebec to surprise a party of Mr. (Benedict) Arnold's men just before that town was invested by the rebels; and lastly having turned out a volunteer with the troops when the rebels were defeated at Three Rivers (June, 1776).

"This enumeration of my services, I assure your Excellency, proceeds not from a vain misplaced pride. It is only intended to inform your Excellency of my loyal conduct at a time when I am sorry to say that many of my fellow-citizens, unfortunately for them, gave way to those baneful insinuations which a despicable set of seditious men and tools of an unnatural rebellion endeavored to diffuse throughout the whole province.

"That having been deeply engaged in the trade of the Upper Countries for these many years past, I have unavoidably many considerable outstanding debts due to me there. Therefore, relying on your Excellency's past kindness, permit me most humbly to supplicate you: may be pleased to recommend me to the care and attention of the commandants of the respective posts, by whose kind assistance I may be enabled to carry on my business to my satisfaction and advantage."

The American Jewish Archives at Cincinnati exhibited a June 30, 1776 letter from Chapman Abrams to William Edgar referring to the "Liberty Boys" as robbers and plunderers. (Loan Exhibits of American Judaica, 1954, no. 72)

That year we find Abrams transactions with Aaron Hart in the latter's account book. They were trading regularly.

In 1769 Chapman Abrahams was still trying to collect some debts in order to satisfy one of his creditors, the well-known Detroit merchant, William Edgar.

In 1778, 1780 and 1781 Abraham was granted licences to trade at Detroit. (PAC, RG 4, B 28, vol. 165, Trade Licences 1774-90)

In 1779 he was a witness at a sale of land in Detroit.

That year he held a license to send trading goods to the west. (RG 4, B.28, vol. 115, Trade licenses, 1774-90)

His name is listed on a petition, dated January 5, 1780, of the merchants of Detroit to Governor Haldimand, which refers to "the heavy losses which they have sustained since the commencement of the present disturbances, in the transportation of merchandise, liquors, and peltries, on the communication and over the Lakes." He is also listed among the merchants of Detroit who shipped rum on December 25, 1780.

In 1781 he was still doing business as a member of the firm of Chapman Abrahams and Company. On March 28, 1781, he appears on a list of merchants of Detroit who petitioned Major Arent Schuyler De Peyster, commanding officer of Detroit, to grant relief from merchants who are able but are unwilling to pay their lawful debts. In the same year, he purchased a "tenement" (a dwelling) on St. Louis Street from William Edgar.

Under a contract dated October 23, 1781, Abraham sold to Pawling & Burrel all his goods, which included "snuff tobacco, mustard and silver works," and rented them his "house, shop, cellar and room" for a period of six months. In 1782 Abraham sold a "tenement" and lot to James May. In 1782 and 1783 he did business with Thomas Williams.

He married Elizabeth Judah (1763-1823), variously named Eliza, Besli bath Abraham ben Uri, Pesla bat Abraham, on July 18, 1781. The recorded dowry was £1500 Halifax. Simon Levy was witness. The act is entered in the record book of the officiant, the Rev. M.J. Cohen, printed in the American Jewish Historical Quarterly, vol. 59, no. 1, Sept. 1969.

On March 10, 1783 he composed a will at Montreal which includes a strange dating error -- not completely surprising since he was on his death bed and none of the three witnesses were Jewish.

It is dated "the tenth day of March in the year of the world five thousand seven hundred and eighty seven.

Even by masonic usage the year is wrong. By Jewish usage the year should have read 5543. The year 5787 corresponds to A.D. 2027.

The will is in traditional terms:

"First and principally, I commit and recommend my Soul to God, and my body to the Earth, to be decently interred in the burial ground of the Jewish Congregation near to the City of Montreal, and I request of My Executors hereinafter to be named that they would invite the Brethren of the Free Mason Lodge of which I am a Member to accompany my body to the Grave

"And as to such worldly Estate wherewith it has pleased God to entrust me I dispose of the same."

He willed £1,000 to his wife, £50 each to his nephew Isaac Abraham of Montreal and to his employee R. Macneil and the remainder to his as yet unborn child, his wife being pregnant. Macneil and Samuel Judah are named executors.

The signature is in Hebrew.

Apparently Abrahams resided at Detroit until some time before his passing. All the transactions to which he was party took place in that city. Only in 1783 did he sign a document -- in the event, his will -- "being in a weak and low state of body," did he describe himself as merchant of Montreal. Although he provided for interment in the burial ground of the Jewish congregation near to the City of Montreal, we are not even certain that he ever became a member of that congregation.

The will was formally read on April 7, 1783 by Charles Blake, surgeon of the garrison at Montreal. Three days later a remarkable, careful inventory of his goods and chattels in his St. Francis Street home was made by a notary.

Among his possessions, "Five Hebrew books." Aside from Aaron Hart's prayer book, to whose publication in London he had subscribed, this is the only mention of a Jewish book in nearly a century of Canadian Jewish history. The nature of these books is, of course, a total mystery to us, but we can presume that they, too, were prayer books. They are unlikely to have been books to read or to study. Such books were quite scarce at this period.

The young widow lived in New York with a wealthy brother. She soon married Moses Myers, son of Hyam Myers, another Jewish pioneer of Quebec.

Marcus notes in his Documents, P. 459, the young Moses, raised as he was in Montreal, had a Hebrew vocabulary which would creep into his correspondence later in life.

Moses Myers became a prominent merchant at Norfolk.

Remarkably one of his transactions was the shipment of kosher meat from the U.S. to Europe; as he described it, "beef put up on purpose for people of my profession" -- truly coal to Newcastle.

According to Irving I. Katz, Elizabeth Myers died in Montreal on Oct. 19, 1823. (Letter to Saul Hayes, Feb. 29, 1968)

Isaac Abrams of Montreal, whom Louis Rosenberg identifies as a nephew of Chapman Abrams, was one of the signatories of the Nov. 24, 1784 petition for constitutional reform. (Sack. History of the Jews in Canada. Montreal, Harvest House, 1965. P. 58)

THE PARTNERS: BENJAMIN LYON (S)

Benjamin Lyon was doing business with Lower Canada by 1761. We have a note of hand of that year involving Eleazar Levy of Quebec, Samuel Jacobs of Montreal, Gershon Levy & Co. of Montreal and Benjamin Lyon of Albany. (Public Archives of Canada, reel G-1339, p. 695)

Irving Katz believes that Lyon may have managed to escape the Indians at the massacre of Fort William Henry in 1757. He also was able to elude the Indians in 1763.

Marcus writes of him as the lucky one among the partners, "in all probability the one member of the firm who had managed to escape capture by the Indians at the time of the uprising in 1763. If, as we suspect, he was the Lyon who managed to escape massacre by Montcalm's redskin allies at Fort William Henry in 1757, then he was indeed a fortunate fellow." (Early American Jewry, vol. I, p. 235)

In the economics of that period the deprivations by the Indians and the commercial losses caused by the disruptions of the Indian massacre are a major element. By the same token a considerable effort, at the cost of money and of time, was made by the mercantile community to seek compensation for these losses.

Some officials like Frances Masères were sympathetic. Others were addressed to no avail. It was useless to insist that these merchants fell victims even as they were supplying the troops; the services they rendered were forgotten. The official attitude was that they were businessmen; they were acting not to serve their country but to earn profits; if they lost, so much the worse for them. Gov. Murray was insensitive to their claims and treated them as adventurers and "damned rascals". Vaugeois details some of these attempts which sought to mobilize the expertise and their relationships with "the men at court" such as Moses Franks in London.

Probably as a result of these losses his partnership with Levy became insolvent, and the Quebec Gazette advertised a public vendue on the 10th of August 1764 of "a large parcel of furs, consisting of beavers, raccoons, bears, deer leather and other small furs." conducted by Edward Harrison, one of the trustees, and Eleazar Levy, a trustee to the estate of Levy, Lyons & Co. (Gazette, July 19, 1764)

In 1769 Benjamin Lyon joined some five other merchants in entrusting their claims of compensation from the Crown to Moses Franks, important London trader. (Johnson Papers, vol. 27, p.190, cited by Vaugeois, p. 72, note 31)

Readers of such chapters of Canadian Jewish history -- e.g., the story of the Harts seeking to collect from the Americans for merchandise supplied to the armies of the Revolution of 1776, or the records of the Victoria Jewish sealers whose vessels were seized by U.S. ships in the Behring Sea in 1886 -- will guess what measure of success such men as Benjamin Lyon and Hyman Myers had in collecting for losses in the Indian Wars.

Lyon was in a 1765 Detroit partnership with Chapman Abraham in a rum business. (I.I. Katz, P. 28)

Mr. Levy and Messr. Lyon and Levy figure in the Montreal litigation records concerning the claims of merchant Chinn. In this case there is testimony that Chinn was inflating his losses; that Chinn had told Mr. Levy on the road from Michilimackinac to this town that he had looked over their affair and that they had not lost £ 5,000.

"I must further desire that you will examine Messrs. Lyon and Levy whether Mr. Henry Bostuk, one of Mr. Chinn's partners, did not tell them that upon settling their accounts since their arrival at this place, they did not lose £ 900." (Public Archives of Canada, Chambre de Milice de Montréal, MG 8, E6, vol. 1)

Lyons was Montreal correspondent for the important Newport merchant Aaron Lopez. We know of his efforts to have Lopez transact affairs with Levy Solomon in 1770. (Marcus. Early American Jewry, vol. 1, P. 236)

He traded with Lawrence Ermatinger in the fall of 1770 and in 1771. (P.A.C., MG 19, A 2, Ser. 3, vols. 86-87) The 1772 Ermatinger records note: "To Bernold Lyon, received of Mr. Solomon two of Mr. Oakes notes in payment of your debt." (Ibid., Page for Sept. 1772)

As late as Dec. 6, 1775 Ermatinger paid Solomon Levy on Forrest Oakes' draft in favour of Benjamin Lyon, drawn at Michilimackinac on July 27, and received from Ignace Bourassa a draft by Lyon and Solomon Levy. (Ibid., vol.88)

Lyon's name also appears in the barracks accounts Nov. - Dec. 1770, Sept. 1771, Sept. 1774 and Dec. 1775. (PAC, MG 19, A 2, Ser. 3, vol. 88) There are records of Montreal merchant Alexander Hay paying Bernold Lyon wheat storage charges in Sept. 1771. (PAC, MG 18, A 2, Ser. 3, vols. 88 and 89, Pages for Sept. 1771)

After 1776 Lyon's business centered on Michilimackinac where he settled. For a time he had as partner there, John Askin; in 1780 the firm was known as Askin, Lyon and Bostwick. A license was issued to Lyons and Barthe to send trading goods west in 1780.

He also contributed generously, £ 50, to support a missionary priest in 1778.

Like Ezekiel Solomon, he joined the British-sponsored cooperative enterprise of the Mackinac businessmen in 1779 and served on its merchandising committee.

Lyons had a permit in 1780 to send trading goods in the west. (PAC, RG 4, B 28, vol. 115, trade licenses, 1774-90)

He appears as a witness in the 1800 Mackinac register of marriage.

On May 12, 1781, Lyon witnessed the deed whereby the Indians who claimed the island of Michilimackinac sold it to the King of England. The document is of interest -- signed by Lyon and by five other white men. It reads:

"By these Presents we the following chiefs Kitchie Nagon of Grand Sable, Pouanas, Koupe and Magousseilhigan, in behalf of ourselves and all others of our Nation, the Chipiwias who have or can lay claim to the herein mentioned Island, as being their Representatives and Chiefs, by and with mutual consent, do surrender and yield up into the hands of Lieut. Governor Sinclair for the Behalf and use of His Majesty George the Third of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c. &c. &c. His Heirs, Executors, Administrators for ever the Island of Michilimackinac or, as it is called by the Canadians, La Grosse Isle (situate in that Strait which joins the Lakes Huron and Michigan) and we do hereby make for ourselves and our Posterity a Renunciation of all claims in future to said Island; We also acknowledge to have received by command of His Excellency Frederick Haldimand, Esqr., Governor of the Province of Quebec, General & Commander in Chief of all His Majesty's forces in Canada, &c. &c. &c. from the said Lieutenant Governor Sinclair, on His Majesty's behalf, the sum of Five Thousand Pounds New York Currency being the adequate & compleat value of the before mentioned

Island of Michilimackinac, and have signed two Deeds of this Tenor and Date in the presence of Mathew Lossey, John Macnamara, David Rankin, Henry Bostick, Benjamin Lyons, Etienne Campion, and P. Antoine Tabeau, the underwritten witnesses, one of which Deeds is to remain with the Governor of Canada, and the other to remain at this Post to certify the same, and we promise to preserve in our Village a Belt of Wampum of Seven feet in Length to perpetuate, secure and be a lasting memorial of the said Transaction to our Nation for ever hereafter, and that no defect in this Deed from want of Law Forms or any other shall invalidate the same. In witness whereof We the above mentioned Chiefs do set our Hands & Seals this Twelfth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand seven Hundred and Eighty one and in the twenty first year of His Majesty's Reign."

At the side of the document are the signatures of the illiterate Indians consisting of encircled X-ex and picture marks of no little graphic interest. (I.I. Katz. The Beth El Story)

Lyon was an active participant in the Jewish community just being organized at this time. He contributed a half-guinea to the purchase of a Sefer Torah for the Montreal Synagogue in 1779.

When the code of laws of the Montreal Synagogue was drawn up that year, it expressly allowed Benjamin Lyon and Chapman Abraham twenty days after their arrival in town to sign these by-laws or be permanently barred from any privilege, honour or employment in the congregation.

When the Detroit merchants presented a petition to the local commandant in 1787, Benjamin Lyon was one of the signatories.

He appears as a witness in the 1800 Mackinac register of marriage.

He passed away on Feb. 27, 1806. (Entry in diary of Samuel David)

Barnet Lyon, now merchant of Rivière du Loup, district of Lower Canada, enters Canadian Jewish history most firmly by officiating at the wedding between Henry Joseph of Berthier and Rachel Solomon, daughter of the late Levy Solomon at Berthier, on Sept. 28, 1803.

The event was important as the founding of an important Jewish family, central in the community for nearly two centuries.

But it is important in the social annals of the community by demonstrating that, in the absence of a professional minister in the colony after the departure of the Rev. Jacob Raphael Cohen, Lower Canada possessed traditional resources and was able to draw on them for one knowledgeable and able to unite a couple in accord with the Laws of Moses and Israel.

B. Lyons signed the tribute to Gov. Prescott in July, 1799 at Trois-Rivières. (Gazette de Quebec)

In 1809 we hear of "Hyman I. Lyons late of Yamachiche, shopkeeper, now absent from this province." His creditors are desired to present their accounts to Benjamin Hart, curator, as a dividend will be made of the property received. (Quebec Gazette, Dec. 14, 1809)

Nathaniel Lyons was issued a licence to trade in the Upper Country on Sept. 1, 1769.

George Lyons was given a licence to trade in the Upper Country in 1782. (PAC, RG 4, B 28, vol. 115)

THE PARTNERS: GERSHON LEVY

Our first knowledge of Gershon Levy may come from a 1762 petition of Fort Pitt (Pittsburgh, Pa.) merchant James Gillespie which indicates that he was in a trading venture in 1760 in Detroit with G. (?) Levy as partner. (PAC, MG 21, BM, Additional MSS. 21658, P. 184)

Prof. Jacob Rader Marcus was happy to find Yiddish correspondence between Gershon Levy and his brother Isaac; the latter may have lived later at Cahokia.

The two brothers were supply people during the French and Indian Wars. (J.R. Marcus letter to B.G. Sack, Oct. 14, 1953, and his Early American Jewry; the Jews of New York, New England and Canada, 1649-1794. vol. 1, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951, P. 228)

Marcus writes, "Our further data are in part uncertain. Two Levys appear to have been seized by the Indians that same summer. One, we know, was Levy Andrew Levy of Lancaster, who was captured, probably by Wyandottes, after he left Presque Isle under safe conduct for Fort Pitt. The other Levy may well have been one of the consortium, Gershon Levy. Levy Solomons, still another partner, escaped from the Indians and reached the safety of Detroit. Two other Jews, whoever they were, coming from Sandusky, fell into the hands of the savages.

"A man named Chapman, who had brought up a bateau from Albany, was captured with his cargo on the Detroit River, probably the Chapman who had been seized by the Indians on May 12, 1763 and exchanged by them for a Powatomi Chieftain. This may well have been his second capture by Indians."

Alexander Henry witnessed the losses that befell a Mr. Levy in 1763, as he was returning with Indians from a dangerous expedition.

"In the course of the day, there arrived a canoe from Detroit, with ambassadors, who endeavoured to prevail on the Indians to repair thither, to the assistance of Pontiac; but fear was now the prevailing passion. A guard was kept during the day, and a watch by night, and alarms were very frequently spread. Had an enemy appeared, all the prisoners would have been put to death; and I suspected, that as an Englishman, I should share their fate.

"Several days had now passed, when, one morning, a continued alarm prevailed, and I saw the Indians running, in a confused manner, toward the beach. In a short time, I learned that two large canoes, from Montréal were in sight.

"All the Indian canoes were immediately manned, and those from Montréal were surrounded and seized, as they turned a point, behind which the flotilla had been concealed. The goods were consigned to a Mr. Levy, and would have been saved, if the canoe-men had called them French property; but they were terrified, and disguised nothing.

"In the canoes was a large proportion of liquor, a dangerous acquisition, and which threatened disturbance among the Indians, even to the loss of their dearest friends. Wawatam, always watchful of my safety, no sooner heard the noise of drunkenness, which, in the evening, did not fail to begin, than he represented to me the danger of remaining in the village, and owned that he could not himself resist the temptation of joining his comrades in the debauch. That I might escape all mischief, he therefore requested that I would accompany him to the mountain, where I was to remain hidden, till the liquor should be drunk.
(Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories Between the Years 1760 and 1766. 1809 ed. Pp. 109-10; 1901 ed., Pp. 107-8)

In 1762 Gershon Levy figures in a continuing case regarding his right of possession of the negro slave André. (PAC Judgments en appel par le Gouvernement de Montréal) Apparently Levy had purchased André from Mr. Best in the sincere belief that the poor man was a life-long slave, a point now in dispute.

On July 20, 1762 the council considered the case. André argued that he had entered into an engagement for a term of four years only. The judges ruled that André remain in Levy's possession until he could prove his claim by witness or document.

The case came up again on Apr. 20, 1763 when the Council reconsidered.

The plaintiff did produce witnesses but the court found them insufficient and it ordered the earlier sentence executed according to usage, and André remain in the possession of Levy until he produce other proof or a baptismal record from his birthplace justifying that he was a freeman at the time of his birth.

In a 1763 case, George Knaggs vs. Joseph Howard, reference was made to vendue sales assigned to Gershom Levy. (Nov. 11, 1763; PAC, MG 8, E 5, vol. 2, Pp. 37-58)

One of the largest shipments sent from Michilimackinac in 1767 was that of Gershon Levy & Co.: 3910 lbs. of beaver. (PAC, MG 23, A 1, Ser. 1, vol. 5, Dartmouth originals, no. 267)

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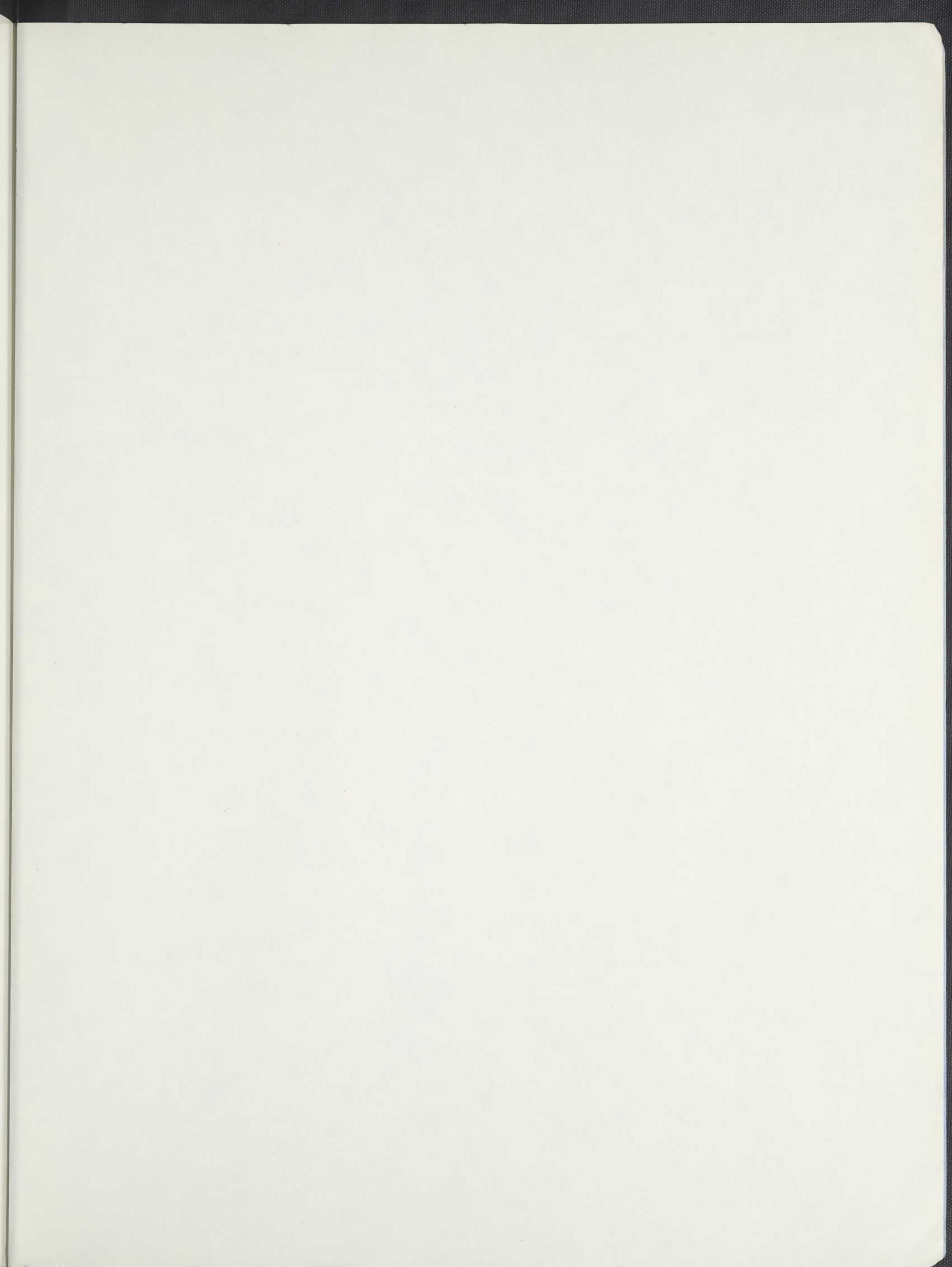
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