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CANADIAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

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

Nous nous souvenons

NEW SERIES
NUMBER FIFTEEN

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

ISSUE DEDICATED TO SAUL HAYES (1904-1980)

ON THE EARLY HARTS

Part 1

Compiled by
DAVID ROME

With a Preface by
RABBI JONATHAN V. PLAUT, D.H.L.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES
CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

MONTREAL CANADA
1980

ISSN 0576-5528



Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec



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[David Shertzer Tor]

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Part I

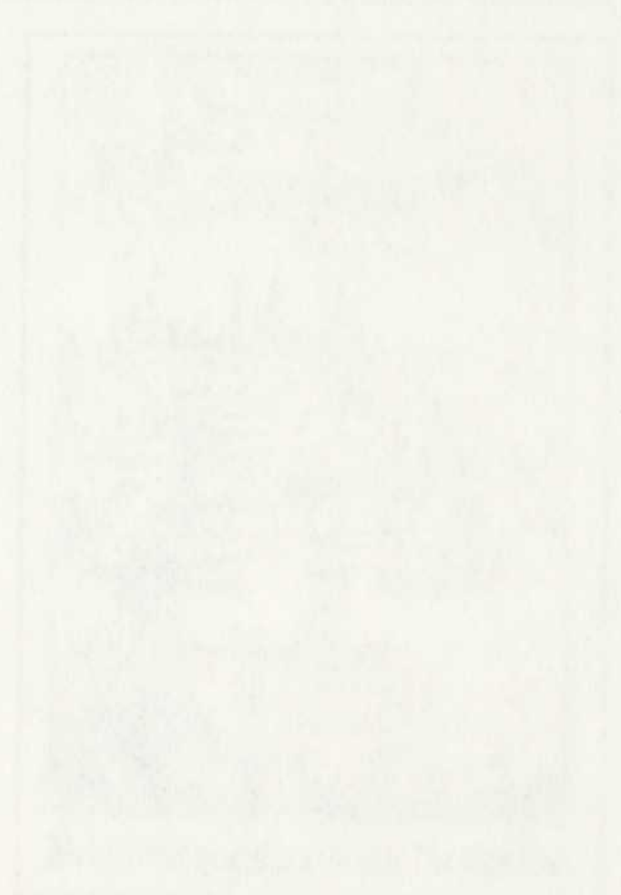
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FIRST EDITOR LEON ROSENBERG, F.R.S.M., F.S.S.



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ISSUE DEDICATED TO PAUL HAYES (1904-1980)

ON THE EARLY HARTS Part I

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DAVID HOME

With a Preface by
RABBI JONATHAN V. PLANT, D.D.

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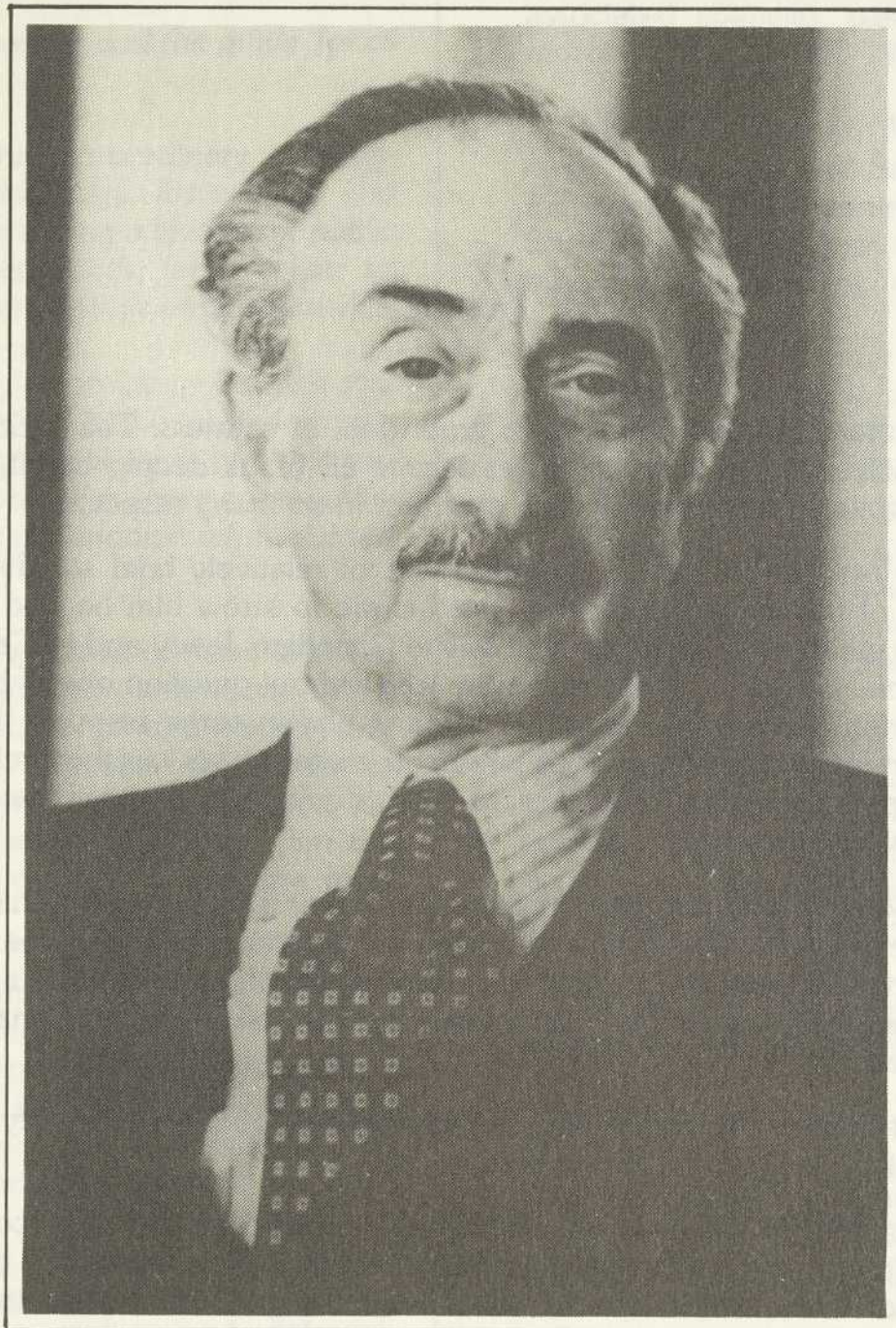
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REMEMBERING SAUL HAYES
1906-1980

THE TRIBUTE OF ALAN ROSE

Executive Vice President
Canadian Jewish Congress



Saul Hayes, 1906 - 1980

**DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF
SAUL HAYES, O.C., Q.C., LL.D., F.R.S.A.,**

former Executive Vice-President of Canadian Jewish Congress,
who devoted much energy to the preservation and
development of the archives of Canadian Jewry.

Saul Hayes, O.C., Q.C., LL.D., F.R.S.A., distinguished
member of Canadian Jewry and for many years past
Member of the Canadian Jewish Congress and of its
Executive Council, died suddenly on Saturday

at 25, 1936, in Montreal, P.Q. He was
the Honorary Fellow, Imperial
and Portuguese Commissions
his early Jewish education in the

work. "I first met Saul Hayes
the summer of the year 1936 and I saw
him many times, fully aware
that a great deal of his work was
done by the Canadian Jewish
Congress and that he was
a very important member of the
Executive Council.

He had the gift of a
clear and logical mind. He was
affable and warm. He was
friendly and charming. He had
a great deal of the spirit of
a leader.

He was elected to the
Executive Council of the
Canadian Jewish Congress


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Saul Hayes 

I write these few lines with a great deal of sadness. The sudden and untimely passing of Saul Hayes leaves all of us deeply bereft, doubly conscious of the great debt we owe him in so many respects.

My association with Saul Hayes was of relatively brief standing - just short of twenty years. By the time I came to know him he had already made great and lasting contributions to Canadian Jewry and to Canada as a whole. For a whole generation he was without question one of the most important Jewish figures in the country, and in some respects the most important. He was the rock on whom others relied; his was the intellect and the spirit that gave substance to their strivings and consolidated their achievements.

Much of the composition of Canadian Jewry is bound up with his efforts, for he helped to break the anti-Jewish immigration patterns of the country and made it possible for many thousands of people to come here and build this land. It is here that his contribution to the fabric of Canada was peerless.

But there are so many ways in which his devotion, his capacity and his integrity helped to build our community.

Saul Hayes was one of those rare human beings who combined intelligence with compassion, a sense of urgency with a sense of timing, a love for Jews with a love for all human beings, a dedication to Israel's future with a dedication to Canada's welfare. He was a pragmatic idealist and a man of total integrity. Because of him, Canadian Jewish Congress was an instrument of high caliber. He had a sense for history and was himself a maker of history. Honouring him, we honour ourselves.

W. Gunther Plaut
National President, Canadian Jewish Congress

THE TRIBUTE OF ALAN ROSE

**Executive Vice President
Canadian Jewish Congress**

Saul was the friend, the mentor and the guide for all of us.

At an appropriate time his extraordinary contribution to Canadian and world Jewry, his country and those with whom he worked during a lifetime of public service will be chronicled at length, for a career so distinguished extending over forty years requires this.

There was not a facet of Jewish life in Canada that was not perfected and enriched by his achievements. His erudition, wit and fundamental sense of righteousness earned him the affection of the entire community. He was recognized as a great Canadian who yearned for a better society for all.

He was the father in a real sense of those who are privileged to serve the Jewish community in a professional capacity. He was a friend, a mentor, and our inspiration, for he achieved standards of excellence to which all of us aspire. His erudition, wit and unerring sense of righteousness earned him the affection of the entire community. He was the most civilized of men.

Saul was a great Canadian whose life was devoted to the advancement of human rights of all his fellow citizens. He espoused the right as he understood the right, without fear or favour. Indeed, his statesmanship was sought and respected by those responsible for the governance of this nation and this province.

The late Yaacov Herzog, formerly Israel Ambassador to Canada, himself a great public figure, said of Saul Hayes that he was the most distinguished Jewish public servant in the Diaspora.

In the 1930's, against the threatening clouds of Hitlerism and renascent antisemitism, the Canadian Jewish Congress, under the leadership of Samuel Bronfman, surrounded with strong laymen, complemented by the professional expertise of Saul Hayes, were forced to deal with life and death issues for the entire Jewish people — the refugee problem, discrimination, the internment of Jewish "enemy aliens" who were sent to this country by the British government, war orphans, relief for those who had survived the concentration camps, restitution for the victims of Nazi oppression, and a host of problems arising out of the tragedy in Europe.

In the post-war constellation of world Jewry, our community became a powerful voice in dealing with the Canadian government which, in the immediate post-war era, had significant influence at the United Nations. Approaches to the Canadian government in the pre-State years, representations to the late Mr. Justice Ivan Rand of UNSCOP were critical in obtaining UN and Canadian recognition of Israel.

REMEMBERING SAUL HAYES

1906 - 1980

Saul Hayes, O.C., Q.C., LL.D., F.R.S.A., distinguished statesman of Canadian Jewry and for many years executive director of the Canadian Jewish Congress and of its associated agencies, passed away suddenly on Saturday morning, January 12, 1980.

Saul Hayes was born May 28, 1906, in Montreal, the son of Benjamin Joel and Sadie (Kaplansky) Hayes, long-time members of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation Shearith Israel. He received his early Jewish education in the school of that Synagogue.

Rabbi Charles Bender recalls, "I first met Saul fifty-two years ago when I became the Minister of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation on Stanley Street and I saw before me a young man, a shy young man, softly spoken, self-effacing, very quiet; he was a student in his senior years at that time, taking up law. He distinguished himself academically, and yet this young man, so diffident, so quiet, was destined to become an outstanding citizen of this country and an illustrious son of his people.

"Saul Hayes was rich in talent. He had the gift of remarkably well-constructed, analytical mind. An able administrator. A leader. He had all these gifts. He was blessed with personality. He had charm. He had graciousness. And all these were placed at the disposal of the welfare of other people."

It was in that Synagogue that he was married in 1934 by its minister, Rabbi Charles Bender, to Beatrice Rosenbaum.

Mr. Hayes was educated at McGill University (B.A. 1927, M.A. 1929, B.C.L. 1932). After graduating in law in 1932 he lectured at the McGill School of Social Work before entering the law firm of Sperber, Marcus and Godine. He was named Queen's Counsel in 1958.

*From Prime Minister Joe Clark to the Hayes family:
"... There is not much consolation one can offer at a time like this. Our thoughts are with you."*

When the Canadian Jewish Congress was reestablished in 1934 Saul Hayes became active in its Youth Committee as was Mrs. Hayes, and even more in its Bureau of Social and Economic Research, where he participated in a number of social research projects and helped plan Louis Rosenberg's classic study of *Canada's Jews* (Montreal, Canadian Jewish Congress, 1939). Mr. and Mrs. Hayes led the movement to establish a Vocational Guidance Service in the community and carefully planned its program for years ahead.

The growing need to rescue and to resettle the Jewish victims of Hitler's persecution by 1938, led to the organization of the Jewish Refugee Committee. When the late Samuel Bronfman assumed leadership of this work he invited Saul Hayes to its direction. The date of 1938 marked the beginning of Saul Hayes' professional leadership in Canadian Jewry through the United Jewish Refugee Committee and later through the United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies, and to a considerable measure in cooperation with the American Jewish Joint Distribution

It is fortuitous that the community was able to produce a leadership equal to the task bearing on these critical issues of Jewish existence. This development marked the emergence of Canadian Jewry as a factor on the international Jewish scene, just as Canada had become a force in world affairs. The community had need to deal with the St. Laurent, Pearson, Diefenbaker and Trudeau governments on the mid-East crises of 1945-1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973.

He had a profound faith in the future of Canada. He believed as deeply in the future of Quebec. He was convinced that Quebec will live at peace with itself once its legitimate aspirations are attained. He loved his native city and always revealed a deep understanding of the particular qualities of this province.

He was never slow in the face of duty or conviction. He never failed personally to defend the rights of the majority or the rights of the minority within the province. He consecrated his full life to raising the veils of solitude in which Quebecers lived by extending harmony within the land.

His door was always open, his time freely available, his energies completely at the disposal of men and women of all walks of life, irrespective of origin. Throughout his career he was an advocate of those in distress. He exemplified in his own way the fulfilment of mitzvah which is so sanctified and imbued in the Jewish tradition.

His Jewish perspectives were enhanced and illuminated by a wide horizon grounded on his profound understanding of the history of our people and of all humanity.

A key role in the successful advocacy of the Jewish community's concern for Israel and the mobilization of public opinion for the new State was his urbane professional presence on Parliament Hill, recalled by participants and witnesses to this day. Mr. Hayes comprehended the Canadian ethos and mechanics of government so precisely that his presence among parliamentarians, senior civil servants and those who make up the Ottawa establishment set standards to which all Jewish professionals aspire. Mr. Hayes' activities earned acceptance of that Canadian Jewry's coming of age in respect to Canadian polity.

He never lost the common touch; his door, his mind and his energies were available to all.

Following his retirement, he became a true elder statesman, counselling the leadership of the Jewish community on innumerable issues. He was unique in that his Jewish perspectives were but a part of a wider horizon. This was based on his profound understanding of history. He was the most civilized of men.

Committee. Through these institutions the Jewish community fought desperately to save threatened Jews from Germany and Austria, and other victims of European antisemitism and to resettle them in Canada.

When, in 1942, Saul Hayes was named Executive Director of the Canadian Jewish Congress (since 1959, Executive Vice President) he worked for many years in close conjunction with H.M. Caiserman, General Secretary, and one of the founders of the Congress.

Mr. Hayes' biography since that date is virtually the history of the Congress and of the community for thirty years.

As J.B. Salsberg formulated it, "The centre of power was, of course, in the office of the executive director. The new era was well under way. A new, professional Jewish civil servant was called upon to handle the new and very complex situations. Saul Hayes became the model for this new corps of professional leaders and he was also its developer and guide.

From Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau:

"Saul Hayes will long be remembered as a great Canadian. His work with the Canadian Jewish Congress was of vast importance; his contribution to the Canadian community was invaluable."

"The transition from the old-world type of community leadership, with its strong reliance on the voluntary execution of decisions, required a growing cadre of full-time professionals. Though not opposing the change, they nevertheless felt that much of Jewish traditionalism was being lost. The mitzvah of doing was being lost, they felt.

"The new realities called for new tactics, new methods and new expertise. The new, tragic reality meant that raising of vast sums of relief and resettlement of refugees, here and abroad, required specialists in fund-raising; that financial and political help to Eretz Yisroel and later to the new state, Israel, called for an ongoing relationship with the press, with governments and with shapers of public opinion in all walks of life. The Canadian Jewish community was becoming an important member of the coordinated, world Jewish leadership that dealt with all international issues that affected the life, freedom and well-being of Jews around the world.

"The Bronfman-Hayes combination was a fruitful one. It was our response to the new tasks and new responsibilities in the war and post-war era."

The Jewish Chronicle of London wrote, "A gifted speaker and administrator, a finely-honed diplomat with a talent for sharp word-play and repartee, he was the ambassador-at-large for the Canadian Jewish community and was so described by the late Samuel Bronfman whose communal career ran parallel to his in time."

An erudite who never ceased reading and studying, his joy was in learned banter which left him more finely informed and with a keener sensibility for word and for logic. Even his assistants remember the intense pleasure, and even gratitude, he freely showed when he was introduced to a new area in philosophy, in Judaism or new perceived lines in history.

He had become a legend in his lifetime. We give thanks that he was spared for 74 years to serve humanity in the way he knew best.

The Congress family will mourn his days until the end of ours. ■

A fuller appreciation of the impact of his appointment to the executive leadership in the community derives from a comparative analysis of his background and training with those of the earlier generations of communal civil servants in Canada.

As Manuel Batshaw, Executive Vice-President of Allied Jewish Community Services, put it, "I first came to Montreal in the profession of communal service when it was really an unknown and untried profession. It was Saul who really established a standard and the confidence of the community as a professional of the Jewish community of Montreal. He was indeed the dean.

"But in the early days, he was really the teacher, because all of us looked up to Saul and we literally tried to emulate his wonderful character and characteristics. He renewed the source of inspiration and the source of teaching.

"Saul taught us how to deal with differences. The community has many conflicts — there are many differences among people, among groups. He was not only able to listen to differences, but he left the feeling that he was listening to them and that he was a just person, a righteous person, and he would inject his sharp wit, his warm personality. These were literally inspirational characteristics for all of us in the Jewish civil service. His contributions to the local Jewish community, to the general society in Montreal, Quebec and Canada and particularly the influence he had in welding together the unity of Canadian Jewry, represented a singular contribution which none of us can come close to having attained. He lived a very full life and contributed very, very fully. In Allied Jewish Community Services, he was our mentor. We felt privileged to have his guidance and we shall always remember him. I can only think of Saul as a living person and just as we respected him in life, we will always respect his memory in death."

From the beginning of his career Saul Hayes displayed great talent, skill and erudition in formulating the position of the Jewish community of Canada before pertinent authorities and government and in winning their sympathy and support. His appearances before government and royal commissions on amendments to the Immigration Act, for a federal statute on fair employment practices and for amendments to the Criminal Code have entered the annals of Canada. There was not a single deputation to Ottawa that dealt with a serious matter affecting Jewry at home or abroad that did not include Mr. Hayes, whether it dealt with refugees, humane slaughter regulations, human rights, the C.B.C., kashrut, immigration, the German Statute of Limitations or war criminals. He was truly the ambassador-at-large of Canadian Jewry. His appearance before the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences was recalled years later by its chairman, The Rt. Hon. Mr. Vincent Massey, P.C., C.H., who referred to

Saul Hayes as one of the outstanding public servants of the Canadian people.

During the war years Saul Hayes guided the activities of the Jewish community in its patriotic and recruiting efforts, in combatting the residual antisemitism which continued to plague the country, and in bringing what rescue and relief was possible, in cooperation with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, to the threatened and uprooted Jewish victims of war.

The activities of the Congress during that period were historic. In spite of the fact that Canada was in a desperate war against nazism on the many battlefields around the world, the pernicious antisemitism which was deeply planted in the country persisted. The arson in the Synagogue of Quebec City was one of the painful cases with which the Jewish community had to deal. In Ottawa the exclusionist attitude in Canadian immigration persisted, and the Jewish community had to fight, paragraph by paragraph and clause by clause, to open the doors for its kinsmen desperately seeking escape from the looming holocaust. It was only through very great efforts that a number of refugees from Japan and several hundred from Iberia and Tangiers were brought into Canada. Mr. Hayes' presentations before the parliamentary committees on immigration on behalf of the rescue and admission of Jewish victims of persecution shook the nation with their vivid evidence of the cost, in terms of human lives, of Canada's refusal.

The great turn in the Canadian immigration attitudes came after the war, when the representations of the Jewish community were heard and Canada opened its doors wide to Jewish displaced persons as well as to other immigrants. The Canadian Jewish Congress sponsored and carefully supervised the admission of over 40,000 Jewish immigrants in the decade after the war, through the United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies. Canada thus became one of the more important countries of resettlement for the displaced survivors of the holocaust. The coming of these immigrants, who thus added another quarter numerically to the established community, was a challenge to the receptive facilities of Canadian Jewry and, furthermore, altered the social and cultural physiognomy of the community. These were profound and far-reaching processes which the Canadian Jewish Congress, together with all other social work and cultural agencies, sought to guide.

From the Consul General of Israel:

"Saul Hayes will be remembered in Israel's annals for his great contribution to the State from its inception and throughout the years." . . . Zvi Caspi.

In the course of these activities, Mr. Hayes displayed a precious talent in unifying the far-flung Canadian community and mobilizing its manpower for the vital causes at stake. In particular, he advanced the professional cadre of the community who applied the skills of scientific social and case work. Himself a model servant of the community, he inspired a generation of leaders and professional staff across the country.

In this context Saul Hayes became spokesman for all the Jewish institutions interested in the aid of the victims of the war. Thus he spoke for world Jewry before the Second Conference of the United Nations Refugee and Relief Administration when it met in Montreal in 1944. Together with Samuel Bronfman he attended the San Francisco Conference on International Security in 1945, at which the United Nations Organization was established. He was the Canadian Jewish representative at the Paris Conference on the Post-War Peace Treaties in 1946.

He visited various European and Israeli centres on many occasions in the interests of the Jewish community, attending assemblies of the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the German Claims Conference, the World Jewish Congress and the Conference of Jewish Organizations.

Saul Hayes also directed the program of education and legislative activity which resulted in the passage of equal rights legislation in various areas, including housing and employment, by the federal government and the respective provincial Legislatures. The Wartime Federal Order-in-Council issued in 1942 banning discrimination in employment on racial or religious grounds was among his first triumphs in this area. It was a far-reaching program against various forms of antisemitism which persisted during and after World War II, such as the exclusion of Jews from hotels and resorts, restrictive covenants and other evil practices which existed at this time.

When the federal government established a Royal Commission on Hate Propaganda under the chairmanship of Prof. Maxwell Cohen, Saul Hayes was named a member by Minister of Justice Guy Favreau. The recommendations of this Commission, arrived at after very lengthy deliberations, were instituted into Canadian law.

From the Honorable Steve Paproski, Minister of State for Multiculturalism:

"Saul's spirit of humanitarianism and selfless devotion to many community causes will long be remembered, as will his greatly valued contribution to the furtherance of the multicultural concept. May God give you strength during this most difficult time."

Saul Hayes was an enlightened Canadian patriot, taking the most profound pride in the country's freedom traditions. This concern was translated into activity in the Council of Human Rights, promotion of human rights, principles and legislation, and membership in the Canadian Institute of International Affairs and the International Commission of Jurists. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

His services to the United Nations program on behalf of disadvantaged children was acknowledged in a citation by Trygve Lie, UN Secretary General.

Mr. Hayes' dedication to the fullest rights of Canadian citizens and of the Jewish community led to his

championship of the multicultural conception of the Canadian nation. It is in this context that, together with the late president of the Congress, Mr. Michael Garber, K.C., he fought for the recognition of the Jewish element in the proceedings of the Dunton-Laurendeau Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Later he participated in the federal program of multiculturalism carried out by the office of the Secretary of State, and was named Quebec Regional President of the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism in 1973.

Under Mr. Hayes' leadership the Congress directed and intensified Jewish education in Canada to its present state, among the most effective in all the lands of the diaspora. This program included research in Jewish schooling, placement of Jewish teachers and the establishment of two teachers' seminaries (subsequently merged).

In particular the Congress' attention in the field of education was directed at ensuring the stability and financial resources of the Jewish school system in the province of Quebec, where a denominational system is established by constitution; unlike the unitary public school system existing in the other provinces. These Congress initiatives, together with the united efforts of the school organizations, have won recognition of the importance of the Jewish educational system.

Significantly, the Congress issued a number of A.M. Klein's poems in chapbook form to give wider circulation to the poet's interpretation of the culture of French Canada. The Congress sent Klein to Europe and to Israel to investigate the condition of post-war Jewry as only a man of his literary sensibility could do. The outcome was Klein's masterpiece, *The Second Scroll*.

In other cultural areas the Congress has sponsored the research program which Mr. Hayes helped establish in the early 1930's. The fundamental studies of its Research Bureau, under Louis Rosenberg, F.R.Econ.S., F.S.S., and later by J. Yam, remain fundamental documents of Jewish Canadiana.

In this program the Congress has also published B.G. Sack's *History of the Jews in Canada* and collaborated in the issuance of S. Belkin's *Through Narrow Gates* and D. Rome's *Selected Bibliography of Jewish Canadiana* and his *Jews in Canadian Literature*.

One of the founders of the Canadian Jewish Historical Society, Mr. Hayes served as its honorary president. He participated in the Quebec City sessions of the society at the annual assembly of the Learned Societies of Canada.

Mr. Hayes was meticulous in his supervision on the considerable corpus of Congress literature and its important official briefs on a wide variety of social and communal themes. When these documents are collected and issued they will be recognized as major documentation of Canada; among these, *Les Cahiers du Cercle Juif de la Langue Française*, *Canadian Jews in World War II*, B. Lappin's *The Redeemed Children* and a score of books by S. Dunsky, Rachel Korn, M. Husid, J. I. Segal, S. Petrushko, M. Ravitch and other Canadian Jewish authors. The *Congress Bulletin* and the thousands of issues of the *Inter-Office Information Bulletin*.

Scarcely a Jewish book of merit has been issued in Canada for thirty years, in English or in Yiddish, without the carefully considered substantial support of the Congress. The shelf of such books acknowledging Congress support constitutes a veritable library of Jewish Canadiana.

The dedication of Canadian Jewry to the Zion ideal was reflected in the intense involvement of the Canadian government in the transition of the Palestine yishuv into the Jewish State. The achievements of Lester B. Pearson, later prime minister, and other Canadian cabinet ministers, are important Jewish history. Saul Hayes guided Jewish support of the young State, including procurement, trade, aliyah, funding, investment and other important efforts.

He directed the National Conference for Israel and Jewish Rehabilitation (1951), the Canadian Israel Securities Ltd., (1952), and the Canadian Israel Corporation (1953). He was chairman of the Jerusalem Emergency Conference in 1953, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and Austria, 1952, and the United Restitution Organization of 1953. On behalf of the Jewish community he negotiated and signed the agreement for the sale of State of Israel Bonds in Canada.

He visited Israel in 1951, 1957, 1958 and in 1960 on the affairs of Canadian Jewry and the international organizations on Jewish claims against Germany. He led the first official mission of the Canadian Jewish community to Israel in 1953 and the Canadian group at the Jerusalem Conference.

In more recent years, Mr. Hayes was the eloquent champion of the linguistic and cultural rights of the minorities in Quebec. He fought for recognition and state support for the Jewish Day Schools in Quebec, an effort which culminated in the Jewish school system of the province being supported to a very large extent by the provincial government. He wrote many briefs to educational, linguistic, cultural and other authorities and inquiry commissions in defence of the interests and the institutions of the Jewish community.

In 1953 Mr. Hayes was awarded the Coronation Medal; in 1967 the Centennial Medal and in 1977 the Jubilee Medal.

He was named Officer of the Order of Canada in 1974.

A very devoted citizen of Canada, Saul Hayes was active in civic affairs, particularly those aimed at the advancement of Canadian learning and liberties. He was chairman of the Harry Bronfman Fund for Social Work Education. He was Honorary Vice-President of the Canadian Association for

Adult Education, director of the National Film Society, active in the International Conference on Social Work the Canadian Welfare Council and the Canadian Foundation. He received the Coronation Medal and was cited by the United Nations for advancing the cause of children's welfare.

In 1970 Mr. Hayes was awarded an Honorary LL.D. degree by Sir George Williams University (now Concordia University). This was followed by a parallel honour by McGill University in 1974.

In 1974 Saul Hayes retired from the executive leadership of the community but remained as legal counsel of the Canadian Jewish Congress and to other community institutions. He continued as director of the archival program and a valuable advisor.

From the enlarged perspective of his active "retirement" Saul Hayes saw the lasting importance of the community's historic record as an instrument of continuing action and as a buttress of identity, dignity and self respect for the Jewish citizen and for his institutions. He nurtured the National Archives of the Congress as the central institute to this end, and to his last hours he sought partners and support for this vision. His prefaces to the issues of *Canadian Jewish Archives* constitute both a history and a call to civilized awareness of the community's past.

Deeply concerned with all aspects of community life, Mr. Hayes was closely informed on all its problems and activities, frequently serving as arbiter in disputes and presiding over intra-institutional projects. All who engaged in creative efforts never failed to find encouragement, advice and assistance from him.

He inspired the reorganization of *Viewpoints* as a Congress publication, maintaining a very watchful eye over its intellectual level.

During his last years he was deeply engaged in ensuring the future of *Viewpoints*, the quarterly of Canadian Jewish opinion, which he revived a year ago, and in advancing the Institute of Canadian Jewish Studies being established by Jewish academicians of Montreal.

He is survived by his wife Beatrice Hayes, former president of the National Council of Jewish Women in Canada, their daughter Marilyn Plotnick, and grandchildren Laurie and Philip.

- D.R.

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HIS WRITINGS

Saul Hayes published a large number of articles, reports and summaries on various aspects of Canadian Jewish interest, including community organization, immigrant integration, etc.

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PREFACE

ON THE EARLY HARTS

RABBI JONATHAN V. PLAUT, D.H.L.

Chairman, National Archives Committee

Canadian - Part I Congress

It is difficult to structure a pattern of the early history of the Jewish community in Canada. There were so many beginnings. **Compiled by** **DAVID ROME** -- and although the strands often touch, almost at random, they seldom connect and the grand lines do not even reach all the important centres of Jewish force.

With a Preface by

RABBI JONATHAN V. PLAUT, D.H.L.

our survey of the major recorded facts and our visits to the truly remarkable personalities of our first half century, we are forced back to one premier family, the early Harts, even while we must affirm our recognition of a dozen or more vigorous pioneers of Jewish existence who are less than marginal to the Hart family saga and whom the Harts ignored -- when they did not marry them.

Indeed, the first fifty years or more of our history may be said to consist of three centres of Jewish activity standing quite apart from each other -- the Harts of Trois-Rivières, the Harts of Montreal, and the other Jews of Montreal -- not to speak of other Jews in Berthier, St. Denis and Quebec City. It is significant that it was the third group that established the first cemetery and the first synagogue in Montreal.

With this intellectual caveat, we center our attention upon the pioneer of Trois-Rivières, a formidable

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It is difficult to structure a pattern of the early history of the Jewish community in Canada. There were so many beginnings -- Nova Scotia, Quebec City, Berthier, Trois-Rivières, Montreal -- and although the strands often touch, almost at random, they seldom connect; and the grand lines do not even reach all the important centres of Jewish force.

If only for the purposes of conceptualizing our survey of the major recorded facts and our visits to the truly remarkable personalities of our first half century, we are forced back to our premier family, the early Harts, even while we must affirm our recognition of a dozen or more vigorous pioneers of Jewish existence who are less than marginal to the Hart family saga and whom the Harts ignored -- when they did not marry them.

Indeed, the first fifty years or more of our history may be said to consist of three centres of Jewish activity standing quite apart from each other -- the Harts of Trois-Rivières, the Harts of Montreal, and the other Jews of Montreal -- not to speak of other Jews in Berthier, St. Denis and Quebec City. It is significant that it was the third group that established the first cemetery and the first synagogue in Montreal.

With this intellectual caveat, we center our attention upon the pioneer of Trois-Rivières, a formidable

man, of almost mythic proportions. His wealth dissipates somewhat, but his sense of economics, his sense of Lower Canadian reality, his perception of his neighbours, his evaluation and creativity of family, his observance of the traditional rites of Judaism, even his weaknesses and deliberate political indifference left a durable mark upon the future. Not the least influential element in his heritage has been the memory of the man -- faithful or distorted. For a number of reasons, he has been best remembered by Catholic Canadians, respectful historians and poisoned and poisonous antisemites alike. Indeed the memory of Aaron Hart is another persona in the drama of this history.

The history of this Canadian pioneer, while often referred to, has not yet been told. The hostile skit by Douville does not pretend to be biography or history, and the several score pages in this survey of the literature only draw attention to some characteristics in his life. When the ambitious preparations by the Quebec archival and historical institutions are completed, Jewish historians will have a better basis for a reading of his life.

The Hart saga only begins with his death. It was a formally unrecorded passing for a fundamental reason: in 1800 there was no record of Jews' births, marriages and deaths in Lower Canada, and half a century of meaning-laden activity, led by his sons, went into normalizing this pre-medieval condition.

For an understanding of these events, which are intertwined in the history of British and Colonial freedoms no less than in the French movements, we are brought all the way back to the terms of conditions of the Conquest, and even earlier to the little known English liberties promulgated for the advancement of the colonies. It is an extended history, with many skirmishes ranging from Windsor to Halifax. In this campaign the internal English dichotomy of liberalism and conservatism became complicated by world war with the French Revolution and later with Napoleon, not to mention the conflict with the American colonists. The maelstrom brought forth many self-respecting battlers for rights and for equality, among them the Hart of Nova Scotia who did sit in the Assembly of his colony -- a small Jewish corner in the Canadian pantheon of dignity and justice.

Here, again, readers of Jewish history await the Canadian researchers, not least those of the Maritimes.

One surprising figure who may emerge among these serious freedom fighters is the self-besmirched, scandalous son of Aaron Hart. The father seems to have known his son, and had urged him to stay out of public life; it was no activity for a Jew, he argued. Two centuries later it seems a preposterous and defeatist stand, but this is to read history unhistorically and even myopically. But this attitude must be examined in the context of that time. Moses Hart was more nearly our own man. If we put aside the unacceptable in his personal record, which stands as an affront to womanhood, to manhood and to childhood, we note that he was a militant for justice, for social equality, for the oppressed classes. His ideas on religion and church to this day offend those who will allow differences of opinion only on some subjects. His very tactlessness, cynicism and primitiveness of approach to the most elevated authorities was a corrosive denial of false values, incendiary of the stage properties which were the setting of crown, of state and of power.

As we note his hopeless candidacies for elected office and as we read his ridiculous claims -- even demands -- for high honours and real powers, we are forced to a second thought: And really, why not? Who were, in fact, sitting in these seats of majesty and of government?

It was a profound frustration which drove him to the indecency, immorality and ruthlessness which alone has engaged his biographers. It was the quieter, gentler, less pretentious son Ezekiel, encouraged by the second son Benjamin, who was fated to be the gladiator of the Jewish combat for equal rights.

The saga of 1807-9 is familiar, but cannot be said to be well known. Indeed there are any number of mysteries about the case; some of these are on the surface, others appear only when we begin to examine the characters and the forces more carefully. Who, if anyone, supported Ezekiel Hart? What of the others? Why? What forces broke party lines, in his disfavour? Why did profound, political Catholics support and strengthen the law which deprived Catholics of privileges?

It was an unusual political incident in the colony's history, as evidenced by the broken lines of partisan divisions. It evoked intense and learned debates, as well as the involvement of the judiciary and the crown, the electorate and legislatures. Again, Canada awaits the historian of the Laurentian colony's politics of the period, particularly the historian of French Canadian enfranchisement, to clarify their condition in 1807, which was so diametrical to their 1832 stand. What of Papineau himself, villain of 1809, hero of 1832?

From the records of this drama we have a lively image of the life of the Harts in their Trois-Rivières habitat. The Ezekiel Hart story is played out against a more vivid background than that of his father or of his brother Moses. Thanks to appreciative trifluvien historians, we are almost able to walk the streets of the town as Ezekiel lived out the years of his political defeat in dignity and in social peace.

His older brother, Benjamin bestrides the decades, one of the important men of the colony from youth to old age, armed as he was by his father with the dignity, moral solidity, religious piety and discipline, will and fervour to serve his fellow citizens. Two years after his brother, he, too, was defeated by the religious prejudice still rampant in the colony. Characteristically, in the course of his time, he transformed the rejection of a commission at a peaceful Trois-Rivières into leadership of the Montreal soldiers during the stormy years of 1837.

His removal to Montreal opened new chapters in his colourful and varied career. He became the embodiment of the community, and his home became the synagogue, now that the structure erected forty years earlier had become ruined, alienated and desolated. Brother Moses' quarrels with him, as with nearly everyone else, in time resulted progressively in his ordering the religious affairs of his native town and then of Montreal. The results -- even the documents -- are monumental. His call for Judaic revival addressed to the dozen Jews of Montreal ranks among the fervid documents of early Jewry on the continent. It resulted in legislative action whose import is even today not fully appreciated. The

bill of the colonial parliament -- considered at London for a year before approval -- established the constitutional foundation of the community so firmly and tightly that in due course it came to hamper the growth of other synagogues; it was an act that proved an important milestone in the histories of Canada's Catholic and Protestant churches as well. Yet it was passed in a spirit of goodwill, breadth and unanimity, so different from the atmosphere of 1808 and 1809 as to revive the questions in regard to the events two decades earlier.

In the generous atmosphere of the time it seemed natural for Benjamin Hart to be offered a commission as justice of the peace; it seemed natural in the light of his position in Lower Canada society. It was equally natural for the community to request from the government that the acceptance of the Jewish citizenry that was so evident be formalized in law.

The legislature also saw it in this light and within months they passed the second law in favour of Jews. Without debate or dissent, without press comment, Lower Canada placed itself in the very forefront of the empire in the ranks of the free western world by sweepingly removing all disabilities which had been shackling Jews for seventeen hundred years. Like the first measure, it took London a year to ponder and to accept the bill. Indeed, even with royal assent, the establishment of the government's officers failed to take it literally, and rejected it so harshly that, for once, Benjamin Hart retreated in the face of rejection; especially since his lawyer-son agreed that the threats inherent in taking advantage of the law which granted the rights were real.

With far-ranging pride, bordering on arrogance, Hart scorned the entire colonial government and rejected the favours offered by friendly legislators and nullified by the officious servants paid by the government. He would accept his commission only at the hands of the sovereign -- and so he did, even though the battle was won locally at a special parliamentary commission which was convened to study the conflict instigated by law officers and secretaries. These got their uppance on the initiative of a son of Ezekiel Hart who bore the historically resounding name of Samuel Becancour Hart.

These sensational events concluded, Benjamin Hart set to organizing the community -- in law and in spirit -- erecting for it a House of Worship, providing it with a minister and other officers, and ensuring that the God of Israel was served there in dignity, strictly in accord with the traditions of the London Sephardi tradition which this Ashkenazi Jew revered -- and which he felt was being menaced by the new arrivals in Montreal. Few as they were, he felt they were but forerunners. So Hart planned endlessly and fought over the years, even with the instruments of civil law, to ensure that Shearith Israel Congregation retain all the minutiae of the Mediterranean rite. It was London that was called on to provide its ministers and its guidance. It must have been profoundly reassuring for him, when London called its clergyman, Mr. Piza, from Montreal for a higher post in the capital, and sent as replacement the son of its senior Reader, Abraham de Sola. Both Piza and de Sola were probably the only Sephardi-born Jews in Canada in the first century of its history. And the de Solas remained leaders of Canadian Jews for over eighty years.

Remarkably, even in the early 1830's, he forefelt the threat of the mob, a fear of Montreal's popular turbulence which he was to encounter and deal with forcefully in the years ahead. He had the plans of the synagogue changed so that it removed from an exposed street corner, behind a wall and beyond the reach of stones. Seldom in history are a community and a synagogue so truly the creation of one dedicated pioneer as in the Montreal condition of the 1820's and 1830's.

His feeling for his time and his civic environment was proven justified. Indeed, the first years of the constructed synagogues were the stormiest years in the centuries of Montreal, and Benjamin Hart, by now premier justice of the peace, was central in the uprising in the city, as other Jews were prominent on the fields of the battles, and still others were siding with the Canadian patriots. Apparently other Montreal justices, who were anglophone for more generations and centuries than Benjamin Hart, were prepared to leave it to him to declare the riots, to quell them, to lead the troops in restoring quiet, to inquire into the guilt of the detained and to pursue the formal procedures which ended in executions. As we study

the documents of Louis Marchand, né Levy Kaufman, participant in the rebellion, the full role of Benjamin Hart on the other side becomes vivid. No wonder Mr. Hart excused his absence from a congregation meeting because of his responsibilities in the public area that day!

It may well be that his directness and effectiveness -- all quite fully documented -- had won him few friendships, not to speak of less appreciative attitudes, and this may account for what his son, at least, felt was a failure of full recognition from the colonial and imperial government he so bravely served. But in this questioning many of the highest issues of policy are involved.

His political involvement continued unabated and passionate, particularly when, as a matter of conciliatory policy, the government decided to relieve the many citizens who had suffered losses in the course of the rebellion and to treat the victims alike, regardless of where they had stood in the course of the unrest. For the purposes of biography this event needs to be seen not as a political act, but as an emotional impact upon a man exposed to many sensitivities; all of which are summarized in one word: Treason. He and his men had just risked their lives in the conviction of the primacy of the legitimate English government of the colony and the flag of the English homeland. He had pursued to the foot of the gallows those who had revolted against this. Now the government he had fought to maintain was rewarding the rebels, and treating them equally with those who had fought for the government.

Hart was furious, and he was not alone. There were riots in the streets of Anglophone Montreal, and the building where parliament sat -- incidentally the property of Hart's friend, Moses Judah Hays -- was burned. Hart organized other leading pro-English Montreal citizens to agitate for Canada to leave the Crown and to seek annexation with the U.S.!

There were other treasons in Hart's life at this time. His congregation, long an institution of the extended Hart family, was being overwhelmed by non-Harts, by Ashkenazim who knew not and probably cared not for London rites. Their irreverence for him, carefully restrained, was expressed by their ill-bred "shamas"

Mendell who actually insulted him at that traditional altar of Jewish indignity, the butcher shop. For months Hart had no kosher meat, not the last Jew driven to "treifah" by the institutions of Kashrut.

There were other problems in his life for which he was not prepared. As the years had come and gone his business affairs did not prosper. Within his family, relations had become complicated, even resulting in legal problems with Mrs. Hart. The annexationist movement had angered the government which chastised Hart. He was not the man to accept this quietly. This Hart, of a family ninety years Canadian, left for New York, where he died in 1855.

It is a positive, stormy biography of a man of integrity who touched, in his lifetime, many elements of the history of his time -- never for gain, always for the public good, both non-Jewish and Jewish. He had touched these intelligently, consistently, sensitively, at the points of lasting creativity. It is entirely appropriate that the National Archives of the Canadian Jewish Congress note the documents of these first Harts as central to its collection for this period.

As the Benjamin Hart story concludes in an alien state we note that it is only the record of the early Harts that ends thus. The family, with its correlatives, continues in Canada, at the centre or near it, for many decades. The history to which Benjamin Hart and his father and brothers gave such a dramatic élan continues with social significance and with personal drama. He would have been grouchily gratified at his end to know that his immediate successor on centre stage was to be Dr. Abraham de Sola, that his right hand man for many years was a medical man, a Dr. David, whose given first names were Aaron Hart, and that the Josephs were to continue in influential leadership, at least in Shearith Israel.

It is stretching historic credulity to seek to imagine how Benjamin Hart would have reacted to the arrival two decades after his death, of the Lithuanian forerunners of the overwhelming Yiddish immigration of the 1880's and the 1890's.

THE FAMILY

In considering the events which began in 1807 we need to bear in mind that we are not dealing with a Jewish community or a substantial number of people. One editor marked the enemies of Ezekiel Hart as working to deprive two families of their rights. He was exaggerating only a little. Our count indicates that there were seven Jewish families in Lower Canada, almost all of them in the colony since 1770; in other words, all native of the colony by 1807.

Earlier they had constituted themselves into a congregation; they had been more numerous before. But by 1807 the synagogue was moribund, and not to be revived for another score of years.

Shall we name them? The Harts, Davids, Josephs, Solomons, Judahs, and Levys. That was what all the fuss was about.

But feeling in Lower Canada at the beginning of the nineteenth century was different.

The family we know most about is the Harts, to a large extent because of Moses Hart's manner of writing easily and because, fortuitously, these and some of his father's papers have survived more completely than those of the Jacobs, the Judahs, the Solomons, etc.

"One cannot attempt to write on the History of Jews in Canada during the first few decades of British Dominion without making it, perforce, a chronicle, as it were, of the Hart family.

"That becomes evident, to begin with, as soon as one starts to delve into the history of Canadian commerce; and, that is also evident when one ventures upon a study of political life in British Canada during its early days." As Raymond Douville wrote in the first volume of the Canadian Jewish Year Book, 1939-40, edited by Vladimir Grossman. (P. 149)

In his earlier years Moses had been a student and innovator in ideas of universal interest. He had thought wild ideas, had lanced at institutions, had acted impulsively. But one day he settled down to the work of the house, with the concentration his father had shown him. From that date the story of Moses Hart continues the family story, at least in Three Rivers.

He suddenly puts aside all concern for universal truth, for communion with the single force underlying the cosmos, for human conduct in harmony with this ultimate reality -- concern which can be the basis for knowledge, justice and happiness.

Instead he fixed on another cynosure: his concern fixed on the acquisition of maximum wealth in accord with the ancient laws and mechanisms of strength which dictate relations between men and objects. It was another profound concentration, valid and therefore heedless of neighbours' approval or condemnation. The devotion to altruism gave way to devotion to the treasure room and to the liturgy of the civil court room. In this Mamonic church there was also no place for family, friendship or charity. Joy was limited to triumph and to counting. Its chancery is reverently reflected in the Hart Archives.

It may well be that other stores of documents may turn up; but for the time being we are the grateful beneficiaries of these circumstances.

In those days without telephone, all movements, intentions and transactions had to be committed to paper, and the means of message transport were of central pre-occupation. From our documents we reconstruct a hard-working family -- mainly industrious Moses -- arduously and painstakingly recording each transaction with meticulous and legal care, spelling out, ensuring, protecting, maintaining interests, properties and claims -- and retaining close contact with the extended family in all its far-flung movements.

"A first glance reveals the great importance of this collection.... These dusty parchments, letters, drafts, invoices, cover half a century of Trifluvien life, and revive a passing parade of people before whom Hart bent his knees or held his head high.... The collection has many documents from parish priests, including loans, recommendations and complaints. He had lent much to parishes. These were not acts of charity. The curés and parish officials remembered him.

"Moses Hart was interested in deistic movements launched in the United States, among others by Thomas Paine and by Andrew Dane. He was even more interested in combatting the antisemitism which was raging at the time among the most powerful English. We find here long pamphlets of his own views on Christianity, which permit us to study the thinking of Canadian Jews of the last century. We find evidence of Moses Hart's effort to found a universal religion. Our Messiah published a collection of prayers in New York in 1815. His purpose, he told us, is to harmonize the sentiments of humanity, to soothe the plagues infected by religious intolerance, persecution, fanaticism, bigotry and tyranny; to base religion on truth, virtue and brotherly love. He instituted a series of monthly and quarterly festivals relating to each of the seasons....

"He was terribly litigious. He must have instituted several thousand court actions. Papers of this nature indicate that he had business with at least 83 legal offices and 30 notaries." Among his most frequent contestants, his brother Benjamin.

This large number of professional advisors is broadly eloquent, and not only on the subject of the Harts. In their work on Patronage et pouvoir dans le Bas Canada (1794-1812), un essai d'économie historique, Gilles Paquet and Jean-Pierre Wallot point to this as indication of "the demographic expansion of this period, the restructuring and diversification of the economy, the multiplication of laws and the rise of urban criminality." (Les Presses de l'Université de Québec, 1973, P. 120)

As Hervé Biron put it in Le Nouvelliste, "The Harts were great builders. They contributed to the greatness of Canada, and of Trois-Rivières in particular." (May 18, 1953)

Moses Hart has fascinated readers of Canadian history even if not all have loved him in all his phases. But loved or not, he was always consistent and extreme in each of his human ages. Jacob Rader Marcus lists him among the political liberals and deists in early America. Influenced by the religious radicals of the French Revolution, he consorted with American deists. (Early American Jewry, The Jews of Pennsylvania and the South, 1655-1790, vol. 2. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1953, P. 490)

His 1,000 business papers of foreign trade involve 30 English trading firms, and shed a precious light on importation from Britain during the last century. (Recherches historiques, vol. 51, 1945. Pp. 47-50)

These many pages of Hart papers preserved in 3,000 files in the Séminaire des Trois-Rivières are one of the important collections of Quebec history, and have proven of profound interest to students of various phases of Canadian life. Hervé Biron, who has inventorized these documents meticulously, recalls that Edouard Bureau, son of Senator Jacques Bureau, presented these papers following an appeal for documentation by Abbé Tessier.

Archives en tête, the information bulletin of the Archives nationales de Québec, notes that the Hart papers reflect the private as well as the public activities of this family, which exerted its influence in the Trois-Rivières region, no more than the entire St. Lawrence valley. During the régime of Gov. Craig it gave the parliament of Lower Canada the first Jewish Member in the British Empire. We also find them associated with national and international trade, and the family dominated the economy of the Trois-Rivières region after the end of the eighteenth century....

"The family papers shed a new light on Laurentian society under the British régime. They are simultaneously of regional, national and international importance. In fact, it is the most extensive collection of historical documents in North America illustrating the life of a Jewish family...." (vol. 2, no. 4, July 1979, Pp. 4-5)

The Hon. Denis Vaugeois, Minister for Cultural Affairs, declared the collection of Hart Papers at the

Séminaire St. Joseph at Trois-Rivières a cultural treasure on April 27, 1979 by virtue of the Law on Cultural Treasures.

In the light of their fundamental and far-flung commercial activities, it is not surprising that the Hart documents are not confined to the family archives but may also be found in a host of other primary Canadian concerns, including the Baby Collection at the Université de Montréal, McGill's McCord Museum, etc.

The presence of the French Canadian centre of this hoard of colorful local and Quebec archival material, and in church hands at that, has inevitably led young historians to devote years of their training and experience to all the ramifications of the Hart saga. Some of them, become authorities on Quebec history, were simultaneously the authorities on Jewish history in the country -- and not all were friendly. So the historiography of Canadian Jewry is unique among national communities in that its authorities have been Benjamin Sulte, Denis Vaugeois, Gérard Malchelosse, Hervé Biron and Albert Tessier; not a Jew in the lot. So B.K. Sandwell properly explains how a French Canadian, Raymond Douville, came to be the author of the first biography of a Canadian Jew, Aaron Hart, Récit historique. Trois-Rivières, Edition du Bien publique, 1938. ("The First Jew in Canada," in Saturday Night, Feb. 11, 1939)

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AARON HART

By far the most interesting man in the family was the father, Aaron Hart. But of him we know less which is documented than of the others. He was too busy in his business life ever to record that consuming activity. In fact, he was continually warning his family against excessive communication.

We know mostly about his concentration and care in matters of business and family. Only through his homey and familiar letters, from a phrase or from a joke, do we capture the tone of his moments with wife and children at the dinner table.

Aaron Hart is usually said to have been born Moshe Uri ben Yehezkel in London in 1724 of German background, and to have been 76 years old at the time of his passing, but one family record gives his birth place as Hesse Cassel and the date as 1703.

Sidney Lee, in the entry on Aaron Hart in the British Dictionary of National Biography, gives his birth date as 1722.

Aaron Hart has been conventionally considered as the first Jew to settle in Canada. Audet and Surveyer give his birthplace as the neighbourhood of the Haardt Mountains which name he bore until his coming to England where he adopted the orthography of Hart as conforming to English pronunciation. (Les Députés des Trois-Rivières, 1792-1808. Trois-Rivières, Editions du Bien public, 1933, P. 79; also repeated by Sulte; based upon statement in European Magazine, March 1801))

One source of information as to Aaron Hart's birthplace and early development has hitherto been neglected. His use of the English language when, systematically analysed, especially in the context of oral and written records of other English Jews of the time and of migrants from central Europe, will do more than place his cradle in one country or another. It will also place it exactly on the social map. Whatever the educational system in effect among London Jews in the early eighteenth century, it will be revealing to know, if young Aaron Hart was there; how English and Yiddish were spoken there. His language and his mode of speech reasoning bring to vivid life the linguistics of a Baalai Batish, bourgeois Jewish businessman, his tonality, his moment-by-moment values, distinct from longer range policies and actions.

It is tantalizing to note the transmission of much of this linguistic behaviour to his son Benjamin, more than to his other children, and down, at least vestigially, to Gerald E. Hart.

But Louis Rosenberg notes, "It is unlikely that the assumption that the Hart family name was originally Hartz is correct. It is much more likely that the family's name was originally Hirsch," (meaning a stag or hart in English. which is the German translation of the Hebrew name Zvi.")

The family device shows a hart running, with a motto in German "Schnell, Fussen und Frei," (Fleet, gracious and free). Malchelosse notes that it is an error to cite this motto as evidence of his German origin. It is not a rare phrase in English and German heraldry, he states.

Nothing about him or his Yiddish background is really known prior to his coming to Lower Canada from New York. In the absence of records traditions have grown profusely on various soils.

Family genealogist Gustavus Noel Hart of Haddonfield, N.J., and Raymond Douville both write that "Aaron Hart first came from Jamaica to New York before going to Canada, and in that city helped organise in 1756 the historic 60th Regiment, otherwise known as the King's Royal Rifles of Royal Americans.

It is said that Aaron Hart gave the flag to this regiment that served in all the English wars up to several years ago, when the British government presented it to the chapel at Governors Island N.Y. where it was received with great ceremony by Emile Hart, a great-grandson of Aaron Hart, Commissary General under Lord Amherst." (Apr. 9, 1941). C.I. Freed places him in New York in 1752 as a lieutenant. (Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia)

We have Aaron Hart's "autobiography" in a not unusual form, his Hebrew and Yiddish inscription in his prayer book. It notes in Hebrew chronology "My Birth -- Monday 12 Iyar, 5474 (1724).

"For remembrance, my departure from London on Monday, 21 Shebat in the evening, to Jamaica, 5502 (1742).

"My wedding with Treinlah, daughter of Abraham, 15 Shebat, 5528 (Feb. 2, 1768)."

He proceeds to give the birth dates of seven of his children, "born to good luck" -- the youngest, Elizabeth, 1783, probably the date of the prayerbook inscription. (Copied and translated by Percy David and Gustavus Levin).

When Hart came to New York he was already preceded by relatives there, and was soon joined by his brothers Harmon and Bernard, states Gérard Malchelosse, citing Munsey's Magazine of January 1894. Their brother Lemman remained in London, where he established the Red Heart Distillery. (Le Bien public, Apr. 20 and March 9, 1939)

Aaron Hart (1724-1800) was probably not the first Jew to come to Quebec; certainly he was nowhere near the first to settle in Canada. Nor did Hart come alone.

Hervé Biron reminds us that in Oct. 1761 Samuel Jacobs, then in Quebec, sent 200 pairs of mittens to Aaron Hart in Trois-Rivières. The merchandise had been shipped by Elazar Levy in New York. Within a few months Jacobs sent Hart 500 barrels of flour, and other merchandise shipped from Hyam Moses, then of New York.

Jacobs and Levy together with Hart had accompanied General Amherst to Montreal at the time of the conquest. Levy settled in New York; Jacobs at first in Quebec, then at St.-Denis; Hart in Trois-Rivières. ("Aaron Hart, le premier Juif des Trois-Rivières" in Le Nouvelliste, May 16, 1953.)

Francis J. Audet claims that Aaron Hart, being of Jewish nationality, could not, according to English law, obtain permission to raise a regiment and rise to such military rank. At most he could recruit his compatriots acceptable to fill some obscure needs.

Douville accepts as evident that Aaron came to Montreal with Amherst's army at the head of a regiment, and that this regiment was obtained at the expense of the Hart family which gives Emilie Sulte's claim a semblance of truth.

Aaron Hart's proud descendant, historian and family genealogist, Gerald E. Hart, is a reliable though opinionated recorder of the Hart origins.

".....Upon his joining General Amherst's invading Army of Canada as Commissary General and Aide-de-Camp, which he accompanied, arriving at Montreal the 8th September, upon which the French Army surrendered to Amherst and gave up all Canada, which has remained the possession of Great Britain ever since.

"Having nothing further to conquer, the British forces disbanded and Commissary General Aaron Hart decided to remain in Montreal, establishing himself there and in Three Rivers, where he entered the fur trading business with the Indians, which he exported to London, and adding thereto grain. He thus became one of the earliest, if not actually the earliest, Canadian private exporter and British permanent settler in Canada when it came under British rule. He was then, 36 years of age, a bachelor.

"Eight years later in 1768, he married a cousin, living in London, Miss Dorothea Catharine Judah, and upon their return to Canada, some of her relatives followed, and were the progenitors of the Judah families of Canada and New York. The United States has recently appointed a member of the family as their first Ambassador in Cuba. W.I.

"Other relatives of Com. Gen. Aaron Hart followed him to Canada and the U.S. viz: the Josephs, Davids and the Solomons. In the U.S. his only brother Henry established himself at Albany, and his cousins Ephraim and Barnard Hart, the two signers of the charter of the New York Stock Exchange, at Philadelphia and subsequently New York." (McCord Museum)

Emilie Sulte, sister of Benjamin Sulte, gives the following account of the Hart family's origin which she claims to have heard from one of Aaron Hart's descendants.

"In 1670 Col. James Hart settled on an island near New York as an army sutler. This island was named Hart Island after him. The Colonel's ancestors settled in England during the reign of William of Orange. Finding himself attacked on Hart Island by savages, he obtained permission from the Government to form a regiment, which was called 'Hart's New York Rangers', and obtained the right that a Hart would always be Colonel of the Rangers.

"In 1759 Aaron Hart was Colonel, when General Amherst came to inspect the Regiment which found itself in the neighbourhood of Albany. Amherst suggested that Aaron join him in the siege of Quebec, promising to recommend him for appointment as Brigadier General. Aaron accepted. After the conquest the King of England refused to ratify Amherst's promise, whereupon Hart resigned and established himself at Trois Rivières."

Historians have cast doubt on the truth of this assertion which, they say, has been spread by descendants ambitious above all in tracing in their common ancestry their descent from the nobility. Malchelosse calls it "more pretension than knowledge." (Le Bien public, March 9, 1939)

Denis Vaugeois does not consider the question of Hart's officer status as closed by Audet's reading.

"Even if we treat the opinion of Mr. Audet seriously, the matter is not definitively closed. What shall we say, for instance, of the portrait of Aaron Hart in officer's uniform preserved in the McCord Museum? What shall we think of the tradition brought down by Emilie Sulte according to which the Harts were responsible for a special regiment, the Hart New York Rangers?"

Without giving credence to the regiment legend, Vaugeois admits that it is not impossible that Amherst invited Hart to join his personal regiment in the invasion army. This would explain the absence of Jews from the official correspondence. But this regiment must have been well effaced, not ever to have merited the slightest mention.

"Would it not be more reasonable to believe that Hart and the others followed the invasion armies as suppliers of provisions, or in more pedantic terms, as provisions officers?"

He agrees with Malchelosse who wonders whether the term Commissary Officer is not used like a customs officer or revenue officer without any reference to the military. (Les Juifs et la Nouvelle France. Trois-Rivières, Editions Boréal Express, 1968, Pp. 115-16)

He dismisses the version of Hart riding through the gates of Montreal in the victory parade of September 8, 1760 which Edgar Andrew Collard accepted. (Gazette, Dec. 28, 1963)

"We can then conclude that if Jewish officers were few, if any, at the moment of the invasion of Canada, the Jewish merchants occupied a more important place and played an essential role as provisioners, sutlers and army contractors.

"However, their true contribution was at the level of the occupation of territory. To be effective the military conquest had to be followed by political, commercial and economic conquests. It is here that the Jews played an unobtrusive but a terribly effective role," Vaugeois wrote. (P. 134)

Gérard Malchelosse speaks of Aaron Hart as accompanying General Amherst as a commissary officer as the British army penetrated the colony through Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River in 1760. Amherst also had with him Hanniel Garcia, Immanuel de Cordova, Isaac de Miranda, Welshman Lazarus David, Uriel Moresco, Manuel Gomez, Abraham Franks, Simon Levy, Fernandez de Fonseca and Jacob de Maurera.

The figure of London-born Aaron Phillip Hart has gathered about a body of myths -- in the true sense, not necessarily falsehoods -- we hear that he assembled a battalion to help the English conquer Canada. His battalion, part of the 60th Royal American Regiment of New York, counted in its ranks several other Jews who had come over with Amherst.

"Some have spoken of them, or of some of them, as being English army officers. In reality they were employees attached to the commissariat of provisions, simple suppliers. The army commissariat was considered a branch of the civil service, and these functionaries do not appear in the Army List. They were said to be commissary officers just as we still speak of customs officers, without these functionaries being military. In any case these terms lend themselves to misunderstanding, and our forefathers could easily thus have been trapped. ("Les Juifs dans l'histoire canadienne," in Les Cahiers des dix, vol. 4, 1939, Pp. 167-95)

But Malchelosse notes that Jews could not at this time secure army commissions and the Canadian militia maintained the same reservations (excluding Jews from the officer rank for half a century). It was not, in fact, until just before the War of 1812-14 that we see Harts, Josephs and Davids as militia officers.

There may be a record of Moses Hart's service in the muster roll of the British Legion in 1778-79.

Hervé Biron cites a much later document, in the Moses Hart papers, sent by J. Hale, secretary to Governor Dalhousie, in 1826 refusing Areli Blake Hart a commission in the Sainte-Anne de la Pérade militia detachment because such an honour was not open to a Jew. ("Les Archives du Séminaire des Trois-Rivières," in Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec pour 1944, Pp. 47-50)

The legal position of the Jews was ambiguous, and was recalled only occasionally, when there was an external reason for pulling it out of the drawer. When Ariel Blake Hart applied for a military position and those who made the decision felt that he was not a desirable candidate, they evoked his Jewish origin as the excuse.

Moses Hart in Three Rivers was giving thought to his second son Areli Blake and decided he wanted a commission for him in the militia. According to his usage he addressed several letters to officials from the Governor down to regiment lieutenant colonels with no

success, most often being referred in turn to other officers. Finally Mr. A.W. Cochran wrote Moses Hart on behalf of the Governor that his religion was an impediment to such a commission (Dec. 2, 1826), and when Lieut.-Col. De Courval included Hart's name in his proposed list for his battalion, the Governor himself excepted that name with a notation, "Areli Hart; is he not of the family Hart of the Jew religion? If so he cannot hold a commission." (June 11, 1827)

In all likelihood the consideration of a commission for Areli Blake Hart was made on the basis of personal judgment of his candidacy. There were grounds for a negative decision quite apart from his religion and ancestry. But in order to formulate the rejection, they probably found it more discreet to base it on religion and on questionable law; probably they were unaware that the father was as sensitive to the legal question as he would have been to a reflection on his son's character. Certainly they were unaware of how it would read a century and a half later.

Areli Blake reacted in a letter to the Earl of Melbourne of Dalhousie (March 10, 1828), which begins,

"Being absent this summer in the United States where Jews sit in their councils, and command in their militia, and where religious tyranny is not known, on my return I was not a little surprised when I obtained a sight of your Secretary Mr. Cochran's letter, to my Father, wherein he states that your Lordship objects to grant me a commission in the militia for two reasons, first, because I am of the Jewish faith, and secondly, on account of my incapacity.

"If my Father thought this communication too invidious to merit a reply, I consider it my duty not to permit it to pass in silence. With respect to my own moral or religious faith, I believe it as free from error, superstition, mockery and hypocrisy as that of any man's, and I would not hesitate to allow it to stand the ordeal with that of your Lordship's."

He then proceeds to point out the excessive cruelty of the law "in the province, where criminal

punishment is admitted to be keenly cruel; for while our enlightened neighbours sit more safely at their firesides, with a criminal code of only three, we have upwards of 200 capital inflictions of death....

were I placed in the eminent station which your Lordship fills.... I would then consider it, as my first religious or moral duty, to cause death to be inflicted, with a reluctant hand, and that only for the higher grades of crime, and on the most clear, positive undoubtful proof given on the tryal. I need not tell your Lordship how my feelings would be rent with anguish, were I to learn that a poor wretched fellow being, was dragged to the gallows, and deprived of the richest gift of the Creator, while firmly asserting his innocence. That such scenes have transpired, since your Lordship's administration, has excited my deepest regret, and I beg to assure your Lordship, that this remark is not offered thro' any vindictive motive, or as a retort for the freedom your Lordship has taken with my moral faith, but merely from dictates emanating in the cause of suffering humanity, and that your Lordship may seek out to what sources these cruelties are to be attributed and prevent a recurrence. That your Lordship, whose duty it is to preside and hold the beam of justice, in the first Court in the country, and whose presence is the more indispensable from the reiterated complaints of the judgments issuing from the Lower Courts, should be ignorant that the wisdom of the British Statutes have placed religion on coeval rights, not only on the Canadian soil, but that upon all her vast dominions, and that, by the naturalization act of 13 George II, cap. 7, even a foreign Jew, after seven years' residence, in any British colony, and taking the oath therein prescribed, is eligible to any place in such colony, and which statute is brought into force here, if such was necessary.

"A departure from this system, partly led to the ruin of Carthage, and several other states...." (Hart Papers H-B-8)

The father, tireless letter-writer, did not let the attack pass without a defence. There was no more foundation or authority for the ban than there had been at the time of Ezekiel Hart's case. In the meantime Jews had held military commissions and

other offices. The ban on Jews was invoked as a convenient means of refusing him because he was not seen on other grounds -- physical condition, personality, etc. Eventually Moses Hart was told there was no ban on Jews, but that there was no vacancy open that Areli Blake could fill.

A.B.Hart pursued his ambitions for public service. In 1837 he was candidate for the Buckinghamshire seat (Nicolet) in the Legislative Assembly. (Hart Papers. E-F)

MERCHANT

The Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal commented in 1887,

"Aaron Hart settled in Three Rivers and.... acquired a vast amount of property, bequeathing no fewer than seven seigneuries. Had his foresight led him to settle in Montreal his estate would have been among the largest and wealthiest in the country." (Catalogue Raisonné of a Loan Exhibition of Canadian Historical Portraits.)

Imaginative journalist Jacques Coulon ventures a guess,

"He did not know exactly why he decided on Trois Rivières while other English merchants chose Quebec and Montreal. At the time this village of some hundred houses on land cleared to the forest edge was an unreasonable gamble. The disorders of the conquest reduced the little economic activity of the village at the convergence of the St. Maurice and the St. Lawrence to nothing. Daily existence was miserable.

"Very quickly Aaron Hart understood that small trading and great business would be carried on in this vast territory known as the Government of Trois-Rivières, on both banks of the two rivers. And then, the field was free in this particularly neglected region of the colony. With an accountant's logic he concluded that a capable industrious man, with some capital to begin with, could easily supplant his competitors and become a most powerful financier between Montreal and Quebec." ("Aaron Hart devient le plus important prêteur d'argent du Bas-Canada," in Perspective du Nouvelliste, vol. 7, no. 7, Feb. 13, 1965, Pp. 1-2, 30)

His obituary in the European Magazine in 1801 also notes that "He was the first British merchant who settled at Three Rivers, after that place was taken by his friend, General Haldimand in 1760," (cited in Catalogue Raisonné of Loan Exhibition of Canadian Historical Portraits, of Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal, 1887).

Hart opened a store in Trois Rivières in 1761 on rue des Forges, but the following year he was burned out.

Haldimand's Reports to Gen. Amherst of July 15 and 20, 1762 discuss the cause of the blaze. "There are those who believe that some Canadiens who spent the evening in the house where the fire began dropped some sparks from their pipes as they left. Others are convinced that the host himself, not having put out the candle before falling asleep, it set fire to a paper tapisserie which set the room aflame in an instant.

"The damage was not great. Apparently the merchant Hart, an English Jew suffered most. He might have lost £4 - 500. The others much less. But as they are very poor, the losses are considerable for them, and even more for the house owners. In order to assuage them, I felt it proper to place this situation before the different parishes in the government to have them promise lumber to rebuild the houses.

"I intended to make a collection for them but, as I was told that it would bring in very little, I planned to permit a lottery which might bring in some £100." (P.A.C. Haldimand Papers, MG 21, vol. 131, Pp.661, 207, 211)

In Recherches historiques Douville notes that "Hart is mentioned for the first time as of Three Rivers in a lease signed before Notary Dielle on July 7, 1762 whereby Hart rented a dwelling from Théodore Panneton, Jr.

"At the time of the cession Hart was paymaster for the English soldiery stationed at Trois-Rivières. He lived in this city and profited from Haldimand's friendship to establish a business which within a few years made him one of the richest citizens of Canada." ("En quelle année Aaron Hart vint-il s'établir ici?" in vol. 42, 1936, P. 617)

Having arrived in Lower Canada with the troops, he became paymaster, "whether through the actions of Haldimand or Murray, for the soldiers who manned the forts of the upper St. Lawrence, such as Frontenac (Kingston), but he made Trois-Rivières the centre of his concerns." (B. Sulte. "Les Miettes de l'histoire," in Revue canadienne, Pp. 426-443)

Hart was one of the first two English merchants to settle in Trois Rivières, in 1761; the other was John Bondfield. (Le Régime militaire dans le gouvernement des Trois Rivières. Trois Rivières, Editions du Bien publique, 1952. P. 75)

He seems to have led the body of British merchants of Trois Rivières described by Haldimand as "consisting of a Jew and a sergeant and a reformed Irish soldier...My syndic does not cease from his confused motions of a certain Magna Charta, in which he establishes unlimited privileges, such as ideas which can favor license to spread easily; my Jew loses no occasion to remind me of rights as a British subject, and I admit he often angers me. But I have always kept him to his duties quietly." (P.A.C., Letter to Gage, July 29, 1764; also cited by Trudel, Pp. 76-77)

There is significance in Haldimand's tone in referring to Hart, particularly in the light of the influence Hart was supposed to have exerted on the authorities, which was supposed to explain his success. The wording of this letter does not support this theory.

Also, without pressing what may be informal humour too far, the references to "my Jew" and "my syndic" do not indicate great respect for Jews. For these interested in group relations in early Canada, this slighting condescension towards one of the few British merchants in the town is somewhat eloquent. We shall find in the course of time that the children and grandchildren of "my Jew" stood on their dignity and insisted on decent attitudes.

We might note that, possibly just by chance, we have no record of such a reference to Jews in the French language documentation for half a century.

Indeed, this letter indicates that the founder of the Canadian Jewish family, as yet unmarried at this time, was already quite annoying in reminding the officers of rights which all British subjects were guaranteed; a reminder possibly quite salutary for the military man. In the perspective of centuries, Hart's reminders may be seen as the first of a great historic effort that helped shape the society of the continent.

As Hervé Biron put it, "Aaron Hart's success came slowly. Having arrived in 1759 or 1760 with the army of Gen. Amherst, it was not until 1761 that he was able to open a store at Trois-Rivières.... In 1778 he built his own home, so that he could leave the dark rooms in which his family lived above the store. Trade was his life." ("Aaron Hart, le premier Juif des Trois-Rivières," in Le Nouvelliste, May 18, 1953, P. 13)

He lived modestly and quietly in a stone house on Platon Street which also sheltered his large store. In the imagery of Canadian Judaism the home back of the store, whether on Augusta Street in Toronto or in single-street Stephenville in Newfoundland, is a constant element. In this comfortable house, an island of Jewish culture in a universe quite alien, more familiar to the European pattern than to American suburbia, dwelt Aaron Hart. (B. Sulte. Trois-Rivières d'Autrefois. Montreal, 1932. P. 53)

In Sept. 1764 Hart bought what might have been his first Lower Canada property from Chs. Petit de Levillier, widow of Noyelle, a house valued at £4,200, with Perrault as intermediary. (Rapport des Archives nationales de Québec, 1970, vol. 48, P.45)

Not until 1778 was he "able to build his own home and to move out of the dark rooms on the second floor of his shop where he had lived for many years. Throughout his career the store had been the hub of his business life and success. The fur trade had helped; the commission business and shipping had contributed to his wealth." (J.R. Marcus. Early American Jewry, vol. 1, Pp. 284-85)

The Canadian Archives preserve Hart's 1775 application for a liquor license.

Hart seems to have dealt with everything, and on a scale ranging from pennies to thousands of pounds. Brody notes his applications for shop and liquor licences in 1769, 1774 and 1775, "In the latter petition for the shop licence several citizens signed as to his credit and reputation. In the liquor licence petition it states that the applicant has personally appeared before deputy secretary of the Province and paid £10 as a recognizance for keeping a common ale house and victual house for one year, and for keeping order." (Archives of the Province of Quebec. Correspondence to Alsopp)

As J.R.Marcus put it, "he engaged in the fur trade, acquired large tracts of land, operated a general store and turned his hand to small scale merchant shipping."

Between seasons in the fur trade he was engaged in house repairs, timber cutting, import, wholesaling.

So we have a bill from Hart to Col. Livingston "before Quebec" for £345 for the cost of "mending your guns" in December, 1775. The document has one of the first examples of Canadian Jewish iconography. He writes: "Marke of my goods," followed by A and H and a primitive arrow pointing upwards between the letters.

Characteristic of his daily occupations: On October 27, 1783 he and two other Trifluviens were instructed by Gen. Haldimand, governor of the colony, to "survey a quantity of damaged pork and beef now lying in the King's store house." They reported in December that "there is 47,130 lbs of pork damaged and unfit for use... There is 3628 lbs. of beef damaged and unfit for use."

On October 5, 1795 Aaron Hart & Sons wrote to S. McTavish about bark work he sold him, including a canoe with savages (original in Baby Collection, Université de Montréal).

In 1796 he organized a brewery and malt house as the joint venture of the brothers Moses, Benjamin and Ezekiel. Witnesses to the document (NBl in the Hart Papers) were Aaron and Alexander. They promoted the sale of the fluid by accepting his coupons which he also sought to introduce into the community as a local currency. (Coulon)

Like other Canadians, Aaron Hart was in possession of slaves at one time or another. Marcel Trudel records Phoebe purchased in 1779 and Jane in 1786. (L'Esclavage au Canada français, Histoire et conditions de l'esclavage. Québec, Presses Universitaires Laval, 1960. Pp. 114-15)

James Finlay sold "a Negro woman named Phoebe, with all her wearing apparel, which the said Negro wench had.... sound and free of all sickness and disorders whatsoever," for the sum of 45£, on September 7, 1779. The document of sale was witnessed by Uriah Judah and Andrew Hays. (Archives of Seminary of Trois-Rivières, I-A-1 and 2)

"In the summer of 1763, a post office was opened in the house of Mr. Hart, merchant," writes D. Vaugeois (P.118). The circumstances are clear today, particularly after the investigations of Marcel Trudel.

This was a responsibility going far beyond the sale of postage stamps. Dating back to the French régime, it was part of general public transportation, including travel facilities, mail and dispatches, delivery, horses, couriers, passports, even immigration and travel control.

"Following an act of parliament in 9 Queen Anne, a general post office was established for the lands of the British empire, and the superintendent of this office, judging it proper in the interests of commerce, and particularly for the commerce of this province, to establish a post office at Quebec, and naming Mr. Hugh Finlay (as the first) to direct it; in conformity with this act, who has opened a secondary post office in this city of Trois-Rivières in the house of Mr. Hart, merchant, we order that..." (Trudel. Le Régime militaire dans le Gouvernement des Trois-Rivières, 1760-64. Trois-Rivières, Editions du Bien public, 1952. Pp.92-94, 144-45)

It was managed by one Duvert. (Trudel, Pp. 93-94) This appointment was a consequence of the efforts of Benjamin Franklin, then for a decade deputy of the postmaster general of England. "Owing to Franklin's promptness, the post office was the first of the institutions of government which was placed on a settled footing after Canada became a British province." Montreal post offices were subordinate to the Quebec office he established during a visit there.

(History of the Post Office in British North America.
Cambridge, 1920, cited by Gerald E. Hart)

Gerald Hart, writing years before Trudel, was surprised that historian William Smith, did not name the person appointed by Finlay.

"He states that during the period between the establishment of the post office in Canada in 1763 and the outbreak of the war of the Revolution in 1775, the post office pursued on the whole an even, uneventful course. Whether Aaron Hart retained the position during this period is doubtful, as he went to England in 1768 to be married and remained there for two years."
(McCord Museum)

A Canadian postage stamp commemorates the 1763 opening of the Trois-Rivières post office.

The accounting of expenses at the office of the secretary of Col. Haldimand, October 1763 - October 1764, shows £3.18.16 paid to Mr. Hart for postage of letters.
(Haldimand Papers, vol. B21-1, P. 14)

Douville suggests that Hart gave up the post office as unprofitable in 1770. (Pp. 53-54)

He was no blushing hidden flower in Trois Rivières. Robert Tessier refers to him as a German Jew who quickly assumed control of all business in the district. He grabbed the fur trade of the area to his enrichment and opened the first store which imported merchandise directly from the city. The absence of competition and a very keen business sense enabled him quickly to amass a considerable fortune."
(Trois-Rivières, 1935. P. 141) and "The Harts soon controlled the entire commerce of the region." (Les Trois-Rivières, Quatre siècles d'histoire, 1535-1935. Trois-Rivières, Le Nouvelliste, 1934. P.94)

Coulon credits Gov. Haldimand with reviving the economy of the region which had run down disastrously. "He secured for Trois Rivières the monopoly of the fur trade, and was the first governor to permit the Indians to come to the town and to offer their skins themselves. The Town crier announced their coming on trading days; those evenings you could find them dead drunk all along the river and on the town streets.

"Aaron Hart understood quickly what this rebirth of the fur trade could do for a capable man. He gave up his trade as supplier for the English posts which forced him to take frequent trips.

"Besides, his ambition did not stop here. After a long and laborious correspondence he interested several large London and Liverpool merchants in buying all the furs he could secure, and in selling him cheaply the needs of the local and Indian trade: arms, furniture, clothing, household items, cloth, drapery, jewels, lace.

"He knew how to satisfy people; give small advances on furs still to be taken; to satisfy the Indians with an extra bottle of rum or a toy, to outfit a hunting expedition that had drunk up the proceeds of the last hunt. But he always made them sign innocent receipts. He seemed to be the only man who remembered his arithmetic."

Douville may be right in placing Hart's contract with armourer Joseph Chevalier of April 20, 1768 as the beginning of his important fur business. It called for "an expedition in distant areas where the Indians were accustomed to deal with the factors of the Hudson's Bay Co. Hart supplied the equipment and the canoes, the weapons, provisions, tobacco and liquor, but he had all this on notarized contracts which guaranteed reimbursement and his share from the sale of the furs. The expedition was successful, and consecrated his hold on the Trois-Rivières fur trade which lasted sixty years," in the words of Coulon.

Douville's treatment of the transaction is a characteristic mélange of admiration for Hart's astuteness, an idealization of Chevalier's attachment to the forest adventure, and dislike of and contempt for the Jewish merchant. His narrative of the affair is complicated by a version of Chevalier's shrewdness in planting some projects in Hart's mind and letting Hart believe they were his own -- all to Hart's material benefit. He adds another element -- the treachery of the Indians, and how Chevalier circumvented them and the traders of the great fur companies by canny contracts.

Coulon in Perspectives gives a romantic treatment to the durable Hart-Chevalier relationship.

Another writer who dealt with the Hart-Chevalier arrangements at length years later drew a totally different, a political conclusion.

Louis D. Durand, K.C., (1888-1965) author, director of L'Eveil, organizer of the 1934 Fêtes des Trois-Rivières, was one of the important contributors to Groulx' Action française, notably on "The Cross Roads" in its symposium on Our Political Future (vols. 7-8) and on French Canadians and the National Spirit in the issue on Sixty Years Confederation, which he saw fatally threatened by the continued injustices committed under its constitution. He spoke on the Czech Renaissance under the auspices of the Journal. In 1955 he published Paresseux ignorants arriérés? with a preface by Jesuit Father Alexandre Dugré, (Trois-Rivières, Editions du Bien public) in which he describes the relations between Chevalier and Aaron (and brother Moses) Hart. Durand finds the 1768 contract so generous that he concludes, sarcastically, that Hart may have entered into the arrangements in order to learn the river, to meet the Indian chiefs, so as to deal with them directly in the future. Durant sees loopholes that Hart may inadequate booking records. "It would be of no consequence, after 200 years to inquire which of the two got the advantage," he suddenly leaves his sarcasm. "It is nevertheless amusing to turn the old papers." (Pp. 218-20)

Douville lists some of the overseas firms which found new outlets for their merchandise thanks to the Harts: Bainbridge & Brown of London, Robert and George Benn of Liverpool, Thomas Brass & Son of London, William Briscoe of Wolverhampton, George Briscoe of Stansbridge, William Buck Cripps of Liverpool, Elan, Granger & Co. of Leeds. ("Années de jeunesse et vie familiale de Moses Hart," in Cahiers des dix, no. 23, 1958, Pp. 195-216)

"The fur trade of the St. Maurice area drew his attention. During the disarray that followed the war, this important area of commerce was practically unexploited. He quickly succeeded in making it his monopoly, and involving the natives of the territory in it by giving them advances in money and in goods."

Hart quickly diversified his activities beyond the fur resource and established the first direct importing house in Trois-Rivières. But it was not in the Hart tradition to leave a sound economic asset or activity just because he entered another area. Each was built upon the solid foundation of the earlier initiative.

So, long after his death, his children continued to buy "nearly all the furs brought down by small groups of Indians each year from the upper country to Trois Rivières. This traffic had at one time been the sole foundation of the town's economy, now it has been diverted to a large extent by the agents which the North West Company had sent to meet the hunters. Nevertheless, some of them always preferred to sell to the Harts so they could touch hard cash and choose their own purchases."

Audet and Surveyer state that he was named commissary for provisions for the garrison on the upper St. Lawrence, above Montreal, but he continued to live at Trois-Rivières where he traded in furs with the natives and established the first store which sold merchandise imported directly to the city.

Hart seems to have served also as a sort of magistrate and sheriff.

Aaron Hart was one of some 750 Trifluviens who appeared in 1764, in accordance with the law, to report ownership of £2340 in letters of exchange, a moderate amount in the Lower Canada inventory.

Gerald E. Hart quotes Abbé Verreau's "The American Invasion of Canada, 1775, P. 181, as does Molchelosse in his "La Dette des Etats-Unis" in Cahiers des dix, no. 22, 1957. P. 145,

"It would appear that Aaron Hart, acted under authority or was regarded, probably from being the Senior British resident, as a Magistrate, for the Author and Notary Jean Baptiste Badeaux states in The American Invasion of Canada, 1775 by Abbé Verreau, p. 181: The 4th December 1775, I learned that M. Gugy was arrested by the intrigues of the Sieur La Rose of Rivière du Loup. Mr. Gugy, the next morning asked me to accompany him to Mr. Hart's, that Mr. La Rose would be there, to prove what he

had against me; which I did, accompanied by Mr. Baucin, Mr. Levingston, Colonel of the Canadians, asked Mr. La Rose what were the grievances he had against Mr. Guky, to which he replied, showing a bundle of papers, claiming that Mr. Guky forced the Canadians to march against the Bostonians (the Americans), that he would have them whipped if they refused; that the Bostonians were a band of beggars; that Colonel Levingston was a bankrupt, and other similar statements; to which Mr. Guky replied, that the statements were untrue, for he did not know M. Levingston well enough to say anything about him. Mr. Levingston replied, that the Sieur La Rose can dispense from entering in his records, what he had said about him, as his statements were beneath his notice, and that as regards the arrest of Mr. Guky, he could not see any justification for it; thus Mr. Guky was discharged from the false imputations brought against him. While it is not clear in what capacity these parties acted in this trial, from the context it would seem that 'Aaron Hart was the Judge (Magistrate' and the trial was held in his house in Three Rivers), that Mr. Guky was the accused and also Colonel Levingston, Sieur La Rose seems to be the accuser. (The Colonel Levingston here mentioned was a self styled Colonel of 150 Canadians he had formed into a company of militia and to which he appointed Jerry Dugan as Major -- both were Provincials, and were acting in the interest of the American invaders, P. 347 and 351).

"Mr. Hart is again mentioned at p. 204, as having just arrived (26 April 1776) from Montreal. He brings verification that General Howe has retired from Boston, and says that the Bostonians have sent ships to discover the route he takes, and that if he is coming to Canada that General Washington is ready with 10,000 men to come into this Province (Quebec)."

It appears that only two persons qualified to be sheriffs lived in Three Rivers at the time, according to the record. Gerald E. Hart records,

"Names of the two officers at Three Rivers are not given, but they are admitted to be, Commissary General Aaron Hart, and Lieutenant Conrad Guky both officers in General Amherst's Army at the capitulation of Montreal in 1760, who retired from it and

settled permanently in Canada, selecting Three Rivers, which at that time was the chief commercial mart for furs and wheat, and their ready shipment to London, in which both these gentlemen engaged, as did many other of the pioneer British merchants who settled in Quebec and Montreal after the Fontainebleau Paris Peace of 1763.

"Hart's residence in Three Rivers is mentioned in the History of the Ursulines' Monastery (Vol. 1, P. 342).....

"The Historian 'Bibaud' (Canadian) in 'Les Institutions de l'Histoire du Canada' (Montreal 1855) P. 141, says:- (translated) 'The Ordinance of the year 1764 offers another remarkable event. It suppresses temporarily, Three Rivers Jurisdiction, for a peremptory reason in the eyes of the English Government of that day, that there are not enough Protestant subjects qualified to be Magistrates for the Government of the District.'

"The version in the Histoire de la Monastère des Ursulines des Trois Rivières is somewhat different and reads: 'Mr. Burton returned among us on the 11th March 1763; it is during his first administration that the first Post Office was established in Three Rivers in the house of the Sieur Hart, merchant of this town.' They then add what apparently Bibaud copied as above given, omitting the Nuns' reference to Hart. In fact he never mentions this earliest English citizen of Three Rivers in any of his works. Why? We would like to know! Was it his religion that disqualified him? Three Rivers remained in this state until the 12th April 1790.

"This shows that Aaron Hart was already established there as a Merchant prior to 1763 (probably about 1761) and the mention of him by the Nuns, which is the earliest record we have seen, as the 'Sieur' Hart, proves that he was regarded by them as socially of high standing, as that title was only given to their highest French officials, scions of nobility and military officers...

"After 1763 Aaron Hart became the chief owner by purchase, from the French Proprietors who returned to France. It is stated he was offered the entire town for

£1,000. On Platon Street at the Fish Market landing, he had his commercial entrepôt. He was a large buyer and shipper to England of Wheat and Furs.

"In a memo-book of his in the writer's possession, he had on hand of wheat alone, at the end of each of several months, which he had bought, over Eleven thousand pounds sterling worth, at three shillings a bushel, for shipment. The book is very carefully kept, and extends over a number of years, giving expenses of two of his trips to England.

"In this Entrepôt, Three-Rivers had its first Post-Office, of which he was appointed Post-Master, in 1763. This Entrepôt was several times consumed in Conflagrations and rebuilt."

When a registration took place of holdings of French currency and obligations in 1765, Aaron Hart reported having 2340 livres, probably moneys he accepted from survivors of the earlier régime in exchange for goods. (Trudel, P. 173)

the North American British colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," wrote J.R. Marou in his Early American Jewry, 1653-1790. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1953. - vol. 1, p. 217, vol. 2, pp. 420-21.

"Obviously, from all that we know and say later about him, he was a person of charm, energy, and unusual capacity, who won an important place for himself in the hierarchy of Canadian merchants."

Aaron Hart was an extraordinary man if not a genius at a time when Canada was born in English domination," wrote Gérard Malchoules in Les Trois-Rivières Le Bien public (Feb. 23, 1939, p. 16)

Like a good businessman, Aaron Hart had a sense of the multifaceted value of money. It was more than a medium of exchange, more than an object of acquisition, more than an index of success, more than an instrument for expenditure and for hoarding. It was a prime article of commerce, to be bought and sold, to be hoarded or used for the daily needs of the community. It was a means of control and of power.

MAN OF BUSINESS

"In the broadest sense it may be said of the Jewish merchants -- whether it was an Aaron Hart in Canada or an Abraham Minis shuttling supplies to Oglethorpe in Frederica, Georgia -- that they participated in the contribution which the commercial and merchant class made to American well-being. In a predominantly agricultural country, on the outskirts of civilization and culture, they were, on the whole, competent and progressive merchants. They helped raise the standard of living by exporting the native products and by importing manufactures, necessities, and luxuries. Doing their jobs as purveyors of goods, they helped develop the trade, commerce, and civilization of the North American British colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," wrote J.R. Marcus in his Early American Jewry, 1655-1790. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1953, vol. 1, P. 213, vol. 2, Pp.420-21.

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Like a good businessman, Aaron Hart had a sense of the multifaceted values of money. It was more than a medium of Exchange, more than an object of acquisition, more than an index of success, more than an instrument for expenditure and for hedonism. It was a prime article of merchandise -- to sell, to rent out, to establish even flimsy threads of ownership that can become liens and cords of control and possession. Hence lending to those

who seek to spend in anticipation of having; lending to those who held an image of themselves as the great creditors of society whose cash flow did not accord with this private image; notably to those whose immediate income, and therefore facility of expenditure, did not harmonize with their profoundly true assets as conceived by them or by society -- it was a discord that led them to Aaron Hart.

His success has been legendary, in several senses of the word. Eloquent and even dramatic evidence of the Hart activity remains in the 100,000 family documents classified in 3,800 dossiers in the Séminaire des Trois-Rivières, touching a remarkably large proportion of the properties of the province and many of its citizens -- thus constituting an invaluable archive of the economic and social history of Quebec.

As Coulon put it, "He came to possess land, houses, warehouses in the parishes on both banks of Lac St. Pierre and far beyond, and there were few who could boast of owing him nothing, and of never having borrowed some money from him. His nine room house, warm and comfortable with glittering silver and precious dishes, helped him to forget easily the filthy shanty on rue des Forges where he had begun...."

"As he turned the pages of his carefully maintained ledger he recalled all that the region could count of tradesmen and artisans, notaries, parish priests, coureurs des bois and farmers, together with the fine flower of Trifluvian society: M. de Lanaudière, M. de Lamirande, the Grand Vicar Noiseux, Louis Poulin de Courval, the Chevalier de Tonnancourt, Joseph Boucher and many others.... They all came to him one day or another to obtain some money, and the more incorrigible ran lightly to their ruin, mortgaging their incomes, their lands, their homes...."

"The finely scripted writing of de Tonnancourt, elegantly worded, 'Having to meet some payments today, I would be most grateful to you if you could let me have fifteen guineas tonight which I will repay with the others.'

"Hart liked the man. One can be a usurer and yet appreciate fine manners, and the chevalier was one

of the rare men of Trois-Rivières who did not despise the Jewish merchant."

Among them, as listed by Hervé Biron, Judges Vallières de Saint-Real Descheneaux and Foucher, as well as James Cuthbert, René Kimber, Joseph Badeaux and others.

This led Vallières to write to his creditor,

"My answer to your very sudden demand of money is that I cannot pay you now.

"If you will wait till September you shall be paid every farthing as it is not my intention to quarrel about trifles; but if I am pressed I shall defend myself and you know as well as I do that your obligation and your notes are usurious and not worth a pin. You may therefore act as you please and I shall govern myself accordingly, being fully prepared."

The outcome was inevitable, not a consequence of the relative strengths of the two men now in confrontation. Of course Vallières was brought before a judge. Of course he lost. Of course it was not the last time.

Among his other courtroom adversaries: K.C. Chandler, seigneur of Nicolet, François Denault Jérémie and his brother Benjamin. (Biron, Pp. 49-50)

Aaron Hart did have some business transactions with the few Jewish merchants in the colony, such as Simon Lazarus of Berthier, and Samuel Jacobs (see Marcus. Early American Jews, vol. 1, P.211). The latter entertained very complex feelings about the seigneur of Trois-Rivières; if only because he, too, had worked to establish a Jewish home and a Jewish family at St. Denis, as Hart had done on the St. Maurice. But marrying a French Canadian girl was not a promising first step in emulation, and his children were no Ezekiel or Moses or Benjamin as sources of satisfaction for father.

In addition Hart was the more precise and meticulous executive, and the Jacobs transactions did not always proceed smoothly and profitably, especially not for Jacobs, in spite of Hart's obvious good will and patience.

The accounts of Chapman Abrams, Isaac Judah, Ezekiel Solomons, Samuel Judah and Benjamin Lyons & Co. appear in Aaron Hart's account book.

Vaugeois notes the relationship between the half-dozen Jewish businessmen in the colony.

It was inevitable that they trade with each other, and that an ethic of some mutual protection arise in the hazardous frontier conditions with poor communications; vast distances and the absence of the institutions of commerce which we now take for granted and which existed at this time in the metropolis, at least, in rudimentary form.

Was the mutuality greater in Lower Canada in mid-century? Vaugeois speaks of the form of mutual aid among the Jews. In fact, "'help' does not make personal effort less essential. We must also observe that, if there are numerous Jews in the wake of Samuel Jacobs, there is also room for 'Gentiles' of the temper of his partner Alexander Mackenzie and of his agent Charles Curtius." (P. 125)

Marcus explains,

The relations between Hart and other Jewish businessmen in the colony, "and in general attitudes of the merchants to one another, were not as peaceful as one might think. The obvious and logical fact was that all businessmen in a frontier civilization were very dependent on one another, particularly so the Jews. They were few in number, were frequently linked through marriage, had common problems and a common 'guild' spirit, and, consequently, had no obvious choice but to hang together and help one another. This was true, but only to a limited extent.

"Business rivalries and personal affronts, real or imagined, tended to magnify and make bitter the difficulties in personal relations. The result was that quarreling was common, litigation frequent, and mutual hatreds were quick to flare up, even among the dozen or more Jewish merchants." (1.218)

If one can clear the semantics of Jewish

cooperation from ugly and dangerous overgrowths, it is possible to speak of a long cultural tradition among errant Jewish businessmen seeking to establish trade channels and traditions, not for the first time, in an environment which was overwhelming, economically and otherwise, primitive, savagely hostile, with a rudimentary sense of commercial values. Reading the fragments of their business papers we can almost distinguish among these Jewish businessmen the varying indices of their Jewish and business traditions; they are almost indices of success.

As Hervé Biron put it, "Those who knew him respected him; in spite of his seigneurial success, his life was free from scandal. He observed the precepts of his ancestral faith as closely as possible for two or three Jewish families lost in a non-Jewish environment. By dint of heroic effort he succeeded in bringing his children up as fervent Jews." (Le Nouvelliste, May 18, 1953. P. 13)

During the American invasion of Lower Canada, Trois Rivières was in the hands of the "Bostonians." Hart was one of the residents of the "liberated" town. As he was a possessor of supplies the occupants needed, or he was one of the businessmen eager to trade with any army, whichever, he finished off with one of the less successful transactions of his career.

Coulon notes that in the cold months he kept the Americans warm. He sold Benedict Arnold and Col. Livingstone 811 gallons of rum and the sleds to transport them. Montgomery bought stoves and cord wood as well as blankets, drapery and food. Audet and Surveyer suggest that it was against his will, for they paid him with paper money which the Congress later refused to honor.

Suddenly defeat and retreat.

Raymond Douville repeatedly emphasizes Hart's relations with the Americans and notes that he was more discreet than his Trois-Rivières competitor, Christophe Pélissier, Director of the Forges St. Maurice, who was forced to flee the colonies after the American revolutionaries retreated. ("La Dette des Etats-Unis," in Cahiers des dix, no. 22, 1957. Pp. 146-47, and in his Aaron Hart, Récit historique. Trois Rivières, Editions Bien public, 1938)

Historian Abbé Albert Tessier tells it his way,

"Aaron Hart, protégé of governors, supplier of the English troops, had no scruples about serving the occupants. There is such a thing as accommodation with loyalism! The Hebrew merchant sold much to the royal troops for hard cash. At the same time he trafficked with the Americans who paid him with the cardboard money of the republic. But republics being created are poor payers. Hart learned this at his own high cost! In spite of all his efforts, he never secured repayment of a total charge of \$1,600. Our neighbour republic still owes it to him -- with compound interest from 1775 to 1949.

"Hart's business with the Americans was not inspired by any democratic ideology. He was only doing business; that's all." ("Des Anglais prennent les forges au sérieux," in Les Cahiers des dix, no. 14, 1949. P. 172)

Hervé Biron put it differently.

"English financiers and merchants contributed greatly to the advance of the enemy troops. It would suffice to name Aaron Hart of Trois-Rivières and James Bell of Chambly." ("Les Archives du Séminaire des Trois-Rivières," in Recherches historiques, vol. 51, 1945. P. 47)

It was an incident in the business career of Aaron Hart which has grown big in the imagination because of the colour and drama of the circumstances, big beyond its mathematics, especially when related to the importance of other transactions of his career. The volume of surviving paper in this connection helped to magnify its mythical character.

Gerald E. Hart's version is always colourful,

"We still show to these days in Three Rivers American treasury bills with which the troops paid for their living; they were never worth the paper upon which they were printed.

"I well remember seeing in the possession of my ancestors in Three Rivers, barrels full of these notes, which were given to Aaron Hart for goods which the Bostonians took from his stores forcibly, and which were never redeemed. Letters of Aaron Hart, in my possession at present, speak frequently of efforts made to get them redeemed, but ineffectually."

The amounts claimed, although not precise, were not colossal by Hart's measure at the time. Douville speaks of \$1100 - 1300, but by 1831 it grew, what with interest or other swelling, to a claim of \$60,000. President Jackson may have offered \$15,000, which may have been refused. (R. Douville, in Cahiers des dix)

A document preserved in the Séminaire des Trois-Rivières attests,

"Know all Men by these presents that I, Aaron Hart of the Town of Three Rivers in the province of Lower Canada, Merchant, for divers Causes and good considerations me hereunto moving, have made, ordained, constituted, and appointed, and by these presents to make, ordain, constitute and appoint my Son Moses Hart of the said Place, my true and lawful attorney for me and in my name to ask, demand, recover and receive the payment or settlement of One Thousand and Two Hundred Seventy Two Dollars of Continental paper Money with the Interest due thereon from the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Six -- To make purchase and follow such legal courses for the recovering, receiving and obtaining of the same, as I myself might or could do were I personally present, and upon receipt of the same, acquittances and other sufficient Discharges for me and in my name and to make sign, seal and deliver, as also one or more Attorney or Attorneys under him to substitute or

and again to revoke at his pleasure; and further to do, perform and execute for me and in my name all and singular Thing or Things which shall be necessary, touching and concerning the premises as fully, thoroughly and entirely as I the said Aaron Hart in my own person ought and could do in and about the same -- ratifying, allowing and confirming whatever my said Attorney shall lawfully do or cause to be done in and about the execution of the premisses by virtue of these presents -- In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal

this Twenty First Day of December in the year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Six.

"Aaron Hart.

"Signed, Sealed and delivered in the presence of Daillebout, A. Badeaux." (Archives, Seminary of Trois-Rivières. F-A-4)

Benjamin Hart, together with his brothers Ezekiel and Alexander, made some efforts to collect from the government of the United States what was due to their father's estate for merchandise the elder Hart had given to the revolutionary army more than half a century ago; but their efforts apparently met with but little success.

Abbé Groulx, historian of the local Ursulines, refers to the Americans pillaging his warehouses in 1775-76.

One of the English officers in command at the battle on the commons of Trois-Rivières, which sent the Americans fleeing in June 1776 was James Craig, later to be governor general of the province, and stout friend of the Harts. (Sulte, P. 429) A historian's note records that Craig was well received in the Hart home.

"Aaron Hart was an extraordinary man, if not a genius at a time when Canada was born in English mercantilism," wrote Gérard Malchelosse in the Trois-Rivières Le Bien public (Feb. 23, 1939, P.16).

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THE HONOURS OF LAND

Hart was early attracted to the acquisition of real estate in his Mauricie.

As early as February 7, 1764 he bought the Fafard Laframboise land, and May 6, 1765 the fief Bruyère for £500 from Simon Drouet. (Raymond Douville, P. 37)

In a more hostile mood Douville looked at the eleven pages of inventory of the Hart estate which listed debtors.

Apparently Mr. Douville had not looked at parallel records of Canadien money lenders who were not Jews, of banks and of financiers in lands where there were no Jews. So Douville seems shocked that "these debts ranged from several shillings to bills of £300-400, the former as carefully listed as the larger amounts. There was no parish from Deschambault to l'Assomption and from Gentilly to Sorel whose habitants did not owe something to the Trifluvien merchant! Jean Maclure of 'Maska', Antoine Saint-Louis of 'Machiche', Louis Gouin of de la Baie, Antoine Gagnon of Rivière-du-Loup, Luke Chambre of Deschambault and, also Curé Brassard of Nicolet -- all of them came, one day or another to Mr. Hart to borrow some money at a moment of temporary embarrassment.

"Nearly all of them had forgotten the little notes they had ingenuously signed. But Mr. Hart had kept them, and now his sons would garner these debtors, with no regard to the friendship that their father had shown so well in order to retain his clients. For these loans were backed by fertile lands or flourishing businesses that only the agile and precise glance of Aaron Hart appreciated. (Pp. 166-67)

As Raymond Douville told the Historical Society, "The Hart family owned more seigneuries and lands throughout Lower Canada during the last century than anyone else. Their holdings included not only seigneuries in the Trois-Rivières and Nicolet areas, but also in the Quebec region, in the Eastern Townships and, at a given moment they were interested in acquiring the Mungan seigneurie; they were prepared to pay £2,500 cash for a half interest."

On October 6, 1791 Aaron Hart was able to purchase, by act of sale and of adjudication by Sheriff Thomas Coffin, half the share of the undivided Seigneurie de la Rivière-Puante ou de Bécancour, established in 1647 on the south shore of the St. Lawrence opposite Trois-Rivières, between la Petite Rivière and la Rivière Puante. This share of the seigneurie had been held by Mme. de Montesson, but had been seized from her heirs by Shoolbred and D. Barclay, Quebec merchants. Hart acquired nearly all the other shares on April 11, 1795 from Reine Pommereau.

Thomas Guérin describes the Bécancour seigneurie on the St. Lawrence,

"Its neighbours were the seigniory of Dutort on the east, and that of Godefroi on the west. In size it was square, two and a half leagues, and had the Bécancour River running through it, as well as a little stream known as the Saint Charles. The grant also contained all the islands and islets in the Saint Lawrence in front of this fief." (Feudal Canada, the Story of the Seigniories of New France. Montreal, 1926. P. 203)

Sulte notes that the title of Baron de Bécancour is one of only a score of legitimate honours, granted by

the French court, carried by seigneurs in Canada. The many others were mere expressions of politeness. However, that title does not descend with the land. Otherwise, notes Gerald E. Hart, he would be legitimately bearing it.

The registry records of the province are seeded with evidence of the Hart presence:

September 28, 1801, Act of faith and homage of P.-E. Desbarats in the name of Ezekiel Hart for part of the fief and seigneurie of Bécancour.

A register of the survey of lands of that seigneurie possessed in January 1861 by the heirs of Samuel Bécancour Hart was prepared by Henry Judah, Commissioner.

Eventually Ezekiel inherited the seigneurie from his father, and immediately purchased another part of this fief and seigneurie.

Upon his death, son Samuel Bécancour inherited the seigneurie. (G. Malchelosse. "La Famille Pommereau et ses alliances," in Cahiers des dix. No. 29, 1964. P. 220)

By 1858 it was the estate of S.B.Hart that had possession of the cadastre of the seigneurie prepared by Commissioner Henry Judah in 1861. (Pierre-Georges Roy. Inventaire des concessions en fief et seigneurie fois et hommages et aveux et dénombremens conservés aux Archives de la Province de Québec. tome 1er. Beauceville, l'Eclaireur, 1927. Pp. 251-57) The Commissioner evaluated it at \$400, but the Cadastres abrégés des Seigneuries du District des Trois-Rivières, published by the Commissioners in 1863, gives its 1857 value as \$13,088.

Douville traces the story of Chevalier Joseph Boucher de Niverville and his progressive indebtedness to Hart and to others through his high living which accorded with military honours and local dignity, but not at all with his revenues. In the course of years father and son lost their lands, including the Fief Sainte-Marguerite.

In the course of time the fief came to be owned by Julia Seaton, widow of A.B.Hart. It was valued in 1857 and 1863 at \$7,500. The 1863 report assigned lot 123 of the seigneurie, 210 arpents in area, to Dame Mary McCarthy, wife of Moses Hart; another lot, 229, of equal area, was still registered in the name of Moses Hart.

Mme. A.B.Hart also owned Vieux Pont, valued at \$1,400.

On September 4, 1800, months before his death, Aaron Hart purchased for £21 from the husband of Josephte Boucher de Niverville all his rights to the Fief de la Poterie and Niverville, also known as the Fief Champfleur.

In 1811 Aaron Hart's universal heirs - Moses, Ezekiel, Benjamin and Alexander - sold a twentieth share of the fief to Joseph Boucher de Niverville. (Roy. Inventaire, tome 2, Pp. 71-75, and Gérard Malchelosse in Cahiers des dix, No. 18, 1935. P. 224)

Aaron Hart acquired the Marquisate of Sablé from Col. Joseph Boucher de Niverville at auction for 21 louis in 1800, just before he died. This marquisate, granted in 1638, was one of only two in New France, it consisted of six arpents now in the city of Trois-Rivières. ("Les Marquisats, comtés, baronries et chatellenies dans la Nouvelle France," by P.G.Roy, in Recherches historiques, vol. 21, 1915. Pp. 46-48)

Thomas Guérin records that Jacques de la Poterie "removed to Trois-Rivières and received there a grant of new lands. In a deed of sale by his son to Charles Aubert de la Chesnay, this seigniory is described as the 'marquisat de Sablé'. This fact is unexplained and is not borne out in any contemporary deed, nor is there any mention of the 'Marquis de Sablé' in the history of the colony at this time." (Feudal Canada. P. 113-14)

In March 1801 Moses Hart wrote to P.E.Desbarats,

"My father has left me the Marquisat du Sablé, situated in this town, along the Coteau St. Louis, belonging to the Jesuits. I am not certain whether I can exact lods e rents or not, also where it begins. As you are in a situation where I can get information, I will

therefore thank you to send me a copy of the concession of 3 acres of land, commonly called fief Robineau, situated at the water side in this town. It was conceded in return 20th February 1657, to Jacques Le Neuf, Sieur de la Potherie, who held the fief Niverville, in this town of 40 acres, in return got the same altered en fief sous justice the 7th April, 1660, as he then held 10 more acres which was the Marquisat du Sable belonging to me. I will, therefore, thank you to examine the same if he got the ten acres likewise altered, en fief sous justice, 7th Avril, 1660, by some mistrument of writing."

And again, on March 31, "I will be much obliged to you to let me know the following for self-information, viz:- How much land the Jesuits hold in this town and vicinity, and if possible, the date of their title as I join them.

"I also hold the Marquisat de Sablé to ten superficial acres in this town along the Coteau St. Louis. I do not know if I can exact lods and rents. Mr. Gilifel, governor of Three Rivers, conceded it as if he held it in fiefs. The original title of Jacques le Neuf in 1649 says about ten acres appears to be in roture. I suspect him or some other of the proprietors got it changed en fief, and I would be much obliged to you if you would make search in your office for any paper making it en fief, or amongst the Loys and Hommages..... as the same Jacques de Neuf, sieur de la Potherie, held at the time the ten acres or abouts of mine, now called the Marquisat de Sablé, very probably they were changed en fief in the same brevet."

Joseph Claude de Boucher de Niverville had sold the fief to Aaron Hart in the first place. (Gerald Hart; and copy from Archives de Québec in McCord Museum; Benjamin Sulte. Histoire des Canadiens français. Vol. 5. P. 102)

Two years after Aaron Hart died his sons wrote to a London firm that it came to their attention that the Jesuit estates in Canada had been given to Gen. Amherst and that his heirs were prepared to dispose of them. They authorized their London agents to offer £8,800 cash. (R. Douville, "Les Années de jeunesse

et la vie familiale de Moses Hart," in Cahiers des dix. P. 196)

Readers of Jewish history will be pleased that the transaction was not consummated.

Biron notes, "Moses Hart owned several seigneuries and held interests in many others. We have established substantial files on the Seigneuries of Bélair, Courval, Gaspé, the marquisat du Sablé, the baronnie of Longueuil, the fiefs to Ste. Marguerite, Sainte-Marie, Saint-Maurice, Carufel, Dorvilliers, Dutort, and others, on a score of cantons and two score parishes where Moses Hart did business."

The Bélair seignury was willed by Moses Hart to Reuben Moses Hart. (Douville, P. 187)

The May 1809 inventory of the Seignury of Cap de la Madeleine gives Ezekiel Hart as the owner.

Moses and Ezekiel Hart purchased the rights of Louis Poulin de Courval in the fief and seignury of Nicolet on March 28, 1802. But in 1808 Moses sold his share in the seignury back to de Courval, and the same year Ezekiel sold to Father de Courval part (an eighth or a third) of the seignury. (Roy. Inventoire des Concessions. P.241)

The 1863 report of the Commissioners lists Miriam Hart and the heirs of A.T.Hart as owners of the valuable Seignury de Courval, appraised at \$35,062.

Douville notes that Moses Hart willed the Courval seignury to Alexander Thomas Hart.

Albert Tessier states that the seignury Grondines belonged to Moses Hart. ("Le Visage humain du Canada au début de XIXe siècle," in Cahiers des dix. Vol. 9, P. 109)

The Grondines brought Hart 80 louis annually from lods et ventes alone. In an effort to develop agriculture in the area as an industry, Aaron and Ezekiel cleared much of the land for corn growing and put up

mills, but the enterprise was not successful according to the son. ("Juifs et Chrétiens," in Revue canadienne, vol. 7, P. 407)

The fief of Ile St.- Christophe was owned by Ira James Henry Craig Hart, the son of Ezekiel Hart (named so significantly in honour of the Governor who fought in behalf of Ezekiel Hart in his battle for the seat). His nephew, Gerald E. Hart, recalls visiting the Ile aux Cochons several times with him and collecting rents or payments for wood cuts. (Gerald Hart papers in McCord Museum)

A glance at the seigneurial holdings of the third and later generations of Harts, barely glanced at by Gerald Hart, and only by him, expands the view of such activities by Aaron and his sons, for it is unlikely that it was the third generation that initiated much expansion.

The 1863 report lists E.M.Hart as owner of the Seigneurie de Boucher, valued at \$280.

The fief Godefroy was willed to two of Moses Hart's "natural daughters," Sarah Dorothy Hart and Charlotte.

The Seigneuries of Dutord and of Hertel et Marsollette were owned by the heirs of Moses Hart, valued at \$6,588. They also owned 216 arpents lot (229) in the Seigneurie de Ste. Marie.

The Seigneurie de Rocquetail on the Grande Rivière, valued at \$6,285, was owned by Charlotte Matilda Hart, wife of C.-E.Belle, and by Sarah Dorothée Hart, widow of N.H.Desilets.

Not to speak of other considerable land holdings in the area.

Of Theodore Hart, second son of Benjamin, his nephew Gerald E.Hart wrote, "he was then known as the handsomest man of Montreal, whom both men and women, looked back at him as he walked along. He died, leaving over 200 houses in Montreal to his children; several of his grand-children married Montrealers and are living here at the present day. He also owned several Fiefs, including Du Closse, per which he did homage to the St. Sulpiciens the Seignors."

Bertrand notes that Theodore, who died in 1887, "rendait foi et homage" for the fief Closse. (II. P. 253)

We might note parenthetically that these registry records shed a clear light on the extent of intermarriage with Christians that occurred soon after the second generation of Canadian Harts.

Typical of his school of Quebec historians, Douville and Malchelosse write of Aaron Hart as the unaccommodating lender who dispossessed the original French and French Canadian gentlemen of quality of lands which bore their names and gave a title to their membership in the gentry class. Malchelosse writes that Hart is thus remembered by his contemporaries and their children, as late as 1860. ("La Famille Pommereau et ses alliances," in Cahiers des Dix, no. 29, 1964. Pp. 220-21)

Malchelosse was not alone at this time in his anti-Jewish bitterness. Before him Abbé A. Chouinard Despres blamed the English clique and the Jews, of whom there are at most 300 in the colony, for the false accusations leveled against the French Canadian "nobility". These, he charged, want to constitute themselves the masters of the 60,000 men of the colony and keep them in slavery. (La Noblesse de France et du Canada. Montreal, 1916, Chap. 7)

Gerald E. Hart fumed.

"We venture to assert that he cannot prove that there were three Jews amongst the 300 English fanatics; but no priest's book would be complete without a misstatement and falsehood about the professors of the religion of the man they worship as their God."

But an examination of at least some of the transactions indicates, remarkably, that the Harts did not acquire all their estates from the "original" owners whose names are attached to the land and vice-versa, but that these properties had been alienated to others, often Anglophone business men. It was from them that the Harts often acquired the lands in question. Not, we hasten to

add, that there would be any taint upon the Jewish merchants if they had entered the transfers and transactions a stage or two earlier.

Indeed, it is Malchelosse who places the responsibility for the economic and social destruction of this class of Canadiens upon France. The metropolis suppressed the pensions which military and other servants of France had won. Above all, France repudiated the considerable amount of paper redeemable by the French treasury, papers held by practically every Canadien family of means. The London government sought to intercede on their behalf, out of motives not difficult to divine. The Paris response can as easily be guessed.

These transfers and acquisitions are accompanied in the social history of the province with complex transactions involving a particular class of citizenry which have profound roots in the psyche and in the myth of Canada and in its substantive history. Indeed, the voluminous surviving financial records of the first Hart century constitute a wellspring of emotion-laden memorabilia for old Quebec which is not without relevance for new Quebec.

It was unusual for Jewish wealth in those times to be so largely in the form of property, and not just real estate, but land in seigneuries and in the form of seigneurial rights. Rather late in the day of economic history, the Jew Aaron Hart found himself the classic seigneur.

Not that Hart sought to become a landed gentleman in the English style or to ape the French seigneurs, as Marcus notes. Hart bought what he felt had economic value and was nearly oblivious of its very real symbolic, emotional value. It is as if he had purchased maces and crowns for their gold content.

Yet certainly none of this was out of historic or social ignorance. It was his historic wisdom as a Jew and as a businessman. It had been this confusion in levels of meaning and evaluation which had brought many of the vendors to this ruin and that was to cost their ideological descendants much in the generations ahead.

Malchelosse, no apologist for the Harts, recalled,

"The Bouchettes, the Creviers, the Godefroys de Tonnancour, the Bouchers de Niverville, the Poulin-Cressés, the Pommereaux, even the curés, invited Aaron Hart to lend them money they needed to lead their 'big life.' What made the lot of these poor people worse was that they could not pay the interest which accrued for five years, ten years, fifteen years. Hart was patient. He knew how to snuff out these debtors when the cup overflowed."

The Hart interest in property, often land organized in fiefs and bearing social, even aristocratic, implications not enjoyed by infinitely more valuable properties today, continued after the passing of the patriarch. So the fief of Bruyères, detached from Bécancour, was acquired by the family as late as 1817.

Unlike founders of other Canadian fortunes of the time, there is no evidence that Hart's success was related to his place in the post-conquest anglophone society. The Hart transactions for a century were largely with the earlier inhabitants of Lower Canada, of all classes.

Marcus notes that, "Obviously, he was a person of charm, energy, and unusual capacity, who won an important place for himself in the hierarchy of Canadian merchants.

"It is quite probably that Hart's success is to be ascribed not merely to his native ability, but also to his influence and friendship with Col. Haldimand, who by 1762 was in command at Three Rivers, where Hart lived till his death in the year 1800. He had good friends in the army and a wide acquaintance in the commercial world. The people who knew him respected him; despite his seigneurial opportunities, his life was free of scandal." ("Early American Jewry." Vol.1, P. 213)

An informed appraisal of the Hart heritage by Marcus places it at roughly \$100,000.

A spot map of the lands which he owned, on which he held mortgages or on which he had lent money, might tell as much as an accountant's statement.

At his death Aaron Hart owned good land at Nicolet, St. Grégoire, Verchères, Sorel, Yamachiche, even in the Eastern Townships.

Marcus notes that Hart "owned several choice pieces of property in Three Rivers, and he had gradually acquired thousands of acres of farm land over a period of four decades. Much of this land must have come to him in payment of goods and old debts secured by promissory notes and mortgages."

The generations of the Harts were not unaware of the weight of tradition and of social import of these transactions and always acted with due historic responsibility.

It is therefore not surprising that family, and notably its founder Aaron, so deeply rooted in la Mauricie for so many decades, became the centre of a true myth. It has been the more difficult to extricate factual history from the mythopoetical elements, particularly since later historians of the province have for a long time vied in colouring the Hart history in tints that seemed to them to be useful as well as appropriate.

It is not without significance that Aaron Hart is the first French language book in Jewish Canadiana, and the récit historique does not pretend to be all history. (Raymond Douville. Trois-Rivières, Editions du Bien public, 1938. 194 p.) The author, born 1905, was for thirty years a journalist with the Trifluvien Bien public. In 1959 he became provincial undersecretary, and in 1970 chief curator of the National Archives of Quebec.

Gérard Malchelosse calls the book "slightly romanticized."

Douville himself defines his own work thus,

"If some characters accommodate themselves readily to statistics, if the strict observance of documentation applies to them, there are others, jucily

anecdotal, who invite the imagination to picturesque vagrancy.

"Is this not so with this curious figure whom legend, rather than grave history, has fashioned in the course of time, according to the caprice of its instinct? It is appropriate that I recognize its rights in this story which has only one aim: to restore life to Aaron Hart.

"A curious man, indeed. To-day's memory still speaks of him, even if it injects hazy imprecisions, the overripe fruit of the years. What remains of his name is the memory of a fortune which became a legend.

"That, in effect, is what the name of Hart means to-day. But above all, it is the ancestor, the point of departure, solid enough to found a dynasty which is not yet extinct, which nevertheless did not reach the power of the Rothschild dynasty which Aaron dreamed of equalling. When there is, we can hope for anything. By and large Aaron did his part. It was not his fault if his children did not realize his dream.

"He laid solid foundations for the edifice, knowing full well that the life of one man alone is insufficient to raise it. But he did his part fully, proudly, with assurance, with genius." (Pp.7-9)

Douville puts into De Tonnancourt's mind his own analysis of Hart's role in the history of this phase of New France:

"He thought of the little Jewish merchant who had so rapidly outdistanced him in prestige in the eyes of the Trifluviens. He reviewed again the prodigious existence of this man who seems to have been put in this city by Britain to grasp everything, as it had designated others in other places. And the great seigneur, who judged everything methodically and concisely, saw the world slide ever more in the economic realm towards the English conquerors.

Hart was only a wheel in the great grasping machine, but a necessary wheel which worked unconsciously for the prestige of the conquerors. Hart may not have

appreciated this. Before all else, he worked for himself; he became rich and wanted nothing else. But the chevalier followed the grand political sweep which shaped behind the movements of simple people who, as they enriched themselves at the expense of the old citizens of the country, were above all enriching their mother land, England." (Pp. 135-36)

But the myth is as important for the social historian as are the bare facts. As weighty as anything in the active life of Aaron Hart is the "chronicle" by André Laurendeau in Action nationale at the peak of Arcand-Groulx influence:

"This little Jew, whose slanting gait and verbose gestures we can imagine, had a genius for commerce. Not content with despoiling upper class Trifluviens of their savings, gained their esteem into the bargain. The Ursuline sisters notably never spoke but with respect of the good Mr. Hart. And all this time endless schemes formed in his head; he had the foresight, the flair, the cobweb slowness -- then often a knowing sweep, the brilliant blow, like the confident adversary sure of having worn out his enemy, encircles him and delivers the mortal coup.

"He is a text book for the perfect usurer, but even more a lean paean to tenacity, to agile and industrious intelligence. Douville portrays in this a rude chap, a silent cult of the will and the riches of an interior life centred on ambition." (vol. 13, 1939, Pp. 271-72)

Twenty-five years later, when Laurendeau and practically all of Quebec had purged the antisemitic heritage of Mgr. Paquet and of Adrien Arcand, Gérard Malchelosse still wrote such history. Quoting Raymond Douville's,

"Aaron Hart, usurer who encouraged others to borrow but refused to imitate them," Malchelosse writes, he left the memory of a man who was not very accommodating. Even in 1860 he was spoken of with bitterness and disgust. For Hart and his children put many people 'on the road' at a time when foreign merchants made fortunes by getting their hands on the seigneuries.

Malchelosse was a surprisingly vigorous defender of Aaron Hart,

"But we should not be angrier at the Harts than at others who have appropriated the lands which our ancestors have measured out at great sacrifice from the Canadian forest, then, generation after generation, have cleared it. Many have done as the Harts did.

"After the conquest trade passed from the paralysed hands of the Canadiens into the experienced hands of the English merchants. Ships began to arrive from France, Spain, Portugal, and the Antilles loaded with wines and liquors of all types. The Canadiens wanted to imitate the English. They got to drinking like them. The visit of young prince William Henry in 1785 was only a series of endless revels. The youth of the period became spoiled. In 1790 came the Duke of Kent who intensified the process. The seigneurs and the habitants wallowed during the entire autumn and winter. At first the seigneurs sought small loans, then mortgaged their lands. The Bouchettes, the Creviers, the Godfroy de Tonnancourts, the Boucher de Nivervilles, the Poulin de Courvals, the Poulin-Cressés ruined themselves as a man. Strangers like the Harts, and the sons of poor farmers who were in trade like the Montours, bought the fiefs by giving the emptied out seigneur a slice of bread, and men of extraordinary talent, like de Bonne, Vallières, J.-F. Cuguet, Bédard and others slipped into the abyss.... At Chambly and on the Richelieu, the granary of Lower Canada, lived the most remarkable families of the province by their origin or by their talent. The abundance of their continuous festivities led them into famine and then to bankruptcy. There was reason to abolish the parish festivals and the celebrations of the guilds as there was need for the crusade of the 1840's against drink. What was sorely needed was a public press like our own." ("La Decadence des seigneurs canadiens," in Le Bien public, March 16, 1939, Pp. 1, 16)

But the readers of the anti-Jewish Le Devoir, of which Laurendeau was editor some time after he wrote on Hart, and which was under the direction of the unfriendly Georges Pelletier in 1939, read a differing version, "The Canadian Rothschild," from the pen of Pierre Mille (reprinted from the Paris Le Temps of July 30, 1939).

Noting the condition of the Jews in the Hitler world of the day and the nations' refusal to admit Jewish refugees, he writes, "Canada does the same. The country seems to have forgotten that its evolution from a purely agricultural condition to commercial and industrial was begun, in part, in the eighteenth century by a Jew. His biography appeared in Trois-Rivières, become a large city in French Canada, largely because of a Jew who was a sort of small scale Rothschild."

Douville's temper was restrained, informed by a certain human sympathy that becomes inevitable when a biographer, even in a story based on history, involves himself with a subject; by a certain superior humour, by a recognition that Hart was not the world's wealthiest man and that not all wealthy men have always been Jews. He claimed that he had attempted to paint Aaron Hart as humanly as possible. His own manuscript testifies that his prejudice had compelled his failure.

Towards the end of his "récit historic," dated we must remember in 1939, in Hitler's decade, the real Douville emerges, in the event at the inventory of Hart's store,

"The old filthy store, filled with frippery, scrap iron and furpieces in which Aaron spent his life, is sifted from basement to attic and delivers up its antiquated riches to the indiscreet search of the investigators. It is a shapeless bazaar, smelling of Jew and rapine, as they always have under the surface of the earth, in all cities which grow and prosper. For always the Jews came, at the opportune moment, to gather up the savings of sedentary citizens who labor and sweat to fill the pouches of Israel.

"Here the pivot of Trois-Rivières commerce turned for forty years. In this miserable fortress the old Hart brooded over his ideas which spread far beyond his dusty windows. Here sprouted all of the gold that Trois-Rivières produced from 1760 to 1800. While his fellow-citizens dreamed only of sleeping, Hart was the only man awake during the long night, the only man to work methodically, to make trade progress. He monopolized all the commercial exchanges which enabled him to gobble up the dollars into his coffers, and the essence of this trade

was contained within these old walls of ancient stone into which the Hart genius alone infused a soul."
(Pp. 168-69)

B.K.Sandwell wished that the Douville biography of Aaron Hart had not appeared, in French, "at this precise moment of Canadian and world history. The attack upon the Jews, that easiest and most unscrupulous of all methods of undermining the fundamental concept of democracy, that the rights of human beings are not dependent upon race, creed or color, is so widespread and so successful at the moment, that those who wish democracy to survive will beware of adding to the weapons of the attackers. And Mr. Douville, possibly without intending it, has certainly added to the antisemitic armory in French Canada. Yet it is very doubtful whether the events for which his Aaron Hart will be hated by all French-Canadians who read the book are due to the character of Hart himself, or even to his racial origin; they may well be explained as part of the inevitable process of the decay of a mediaeval manorial economy, out of date even before the taking of Quebec by the British.....

"The great grievance of French Canada against Aaron Hart will be the part that he played in the economic downfall of sundry landed proprietors of the Three Rivers district, and in particular of two or three grands seigneurs of the Old Régime who had stayed with the country after the fall of New France and who found themselves unable, in the new conditions, to raise the revenues which they needed to keep up their seigneurial state.... There is a pathetic letter from the son of the aged Chevalier de Niverville, imploring Hart not to proceed to sell up the family estate; thanking him for 'the advances that you have had the goodness to make for the support of our house,' offering a new scheme of payment, and concluding: 'If, Monsieur, you will have the goodness to accept this offer you will restore tranquillity of mind to my father and to your very humble and obedient servant, J. Niverville (son).'....

"That there is real tragedy in these events cannot be denied. But the transition from one economy to another was inevitable and, on the whole, beneficial. It was a transition from an economy in which money and

credit were unimportant, and a feudal relationship existed between the tillers of the soil and the lords of the manor, to an economy in which everything was regulated by market price. The lords had no skill in this sort of economy and were speedily worsted by the 'business men' -- among whom the few Jews then in America were preeminent for their exceptional energy, judgment and cash resources." (Saturday Night, Feb. 11, 1939)

As hostile Maisette Olier put it, "The truly human side of this man dedicated to gold is his cult of the family. It comes translated into an immense desire to build his line on a solid base. Being aware that a name weighted by gold is entitled to universal consideration, he multiplied his initiatives and piled up millions so that his sons and descendents will be surrounded by this esteem which he valued beyond all, yet which is no often refused to his race." (Le Bien public, Apr. 20, 1939)

In Trois-Rivières Jacques Renaud was surprised at the reservation in Sandwell's magnificent article, the first to appear, about the propriety of the Hart biography coming into print now, and in French.

"Sacred democracy, it is becoming stupid. If we need to hesitate at this moment as to possible repercussions before writing on fascism, communism or on the universal franchise in our parliamentary system, life will no longer be tenable for readers, and even less for writers.

"Mr. Sandwell will concede that it is no great compliment to the Jews to forbid any historical study which touches Jews because it may injure democracy. Nor is it a compliment to democracy....

"Something tells me that Mr. Sandwell is more impressed by anti-Nazi and anti-fascist propaganda than by the anti-Stalinist."

Sandwell insisted on the danger that Douville's work might feed French Canadian antisemitism, while Renaud accused him of turning Hart into a symbol of Jewry, which was not Douville's intent.

At this point Renaud passes into the world of forgeries and goes on to establish the antisemitic conclusions deriving from the life of Hart upon the myth of the Rabbi Eichhorn who was a contemporary of the unicorn and upon the anti-Jewish diatribes falsely ascribed to Benjamin Franklin. (Le Bien public, Feb. 16 and Apr. 13, 1939)

The confusions of levels of reality were all too common at this Canadian period, when discussions that began rationally dribbled off into space fantasies disseminated by Hitler.

As so often, an understanding of the unlikeable son Moses is necessary for an appreciation of the father and the brothers. So in regard to the appreciation of -- and lust for -- land, Moses inherited the millenia-long hunger that was in the father's blood. He even exceeded Aaron Hart's acquisitions; after all, he began from a different Quebec point of departure.

By 1810 he secured title to the seigneurie des Grondines with its 130,000 arpents, mile and three-quarters of waterfront and ten miles of depth; followed the seigneurie of Gaspé and of Ecureuils and vast lands to the south. He willed the Gaspé seigneurie to Samuel Judah Hart. Moses Hart also possessed lands at Warwick, Drummondville, Grand Saint-Esprit, Saint-Célestine, Brompton and Kingsey. His 1823 circular listed lots in fourteen municipalities on the south shore. (Douville, P. 185)

A CITIZEN AND MAN OF FAMILIES

Well established by 1768, Aaron Hart sailed for England, where he married his cousin, London-born Dorothy Catherine Judah (he called her by the Yiddish Treinleh) on February 2 and brought her back with him to Lower Canada. Douville suggests that her brother, Uriah Judah, who had accompanied Aaron Hart all the way from New York and had also settled in Trois-Rivières, had Hart's promise to marry his sister. (P. 16) The wedding took place at Portsmouth. A McCord Museum document gives her birth as late as 1757 (corrected to 1747) and the date of her death as August 15, 1827. She was the daughter of Aaron Hart's maternal uncle Abraham Judah. Aaron Hart's father Ezekiel had married her aunt, the sister of Abraham Judah.

The relation between the Harts and Judahs became close. Dorothy Judah's father Abraham Judah, was in Breslau, Germany. His sons Uriah Judah and Samuel, brother of Dorothy Hart and cousins of Aaron Hart, joined him at Trois-Rivières after a stay at Montreal in 1768.

Malchelosse speaks of Uriah Judah, Aaron Hart's cousin, as an English buccaneer from India whose adventures could well fill a novel. He came to Canada first in 1760 and lived in Laviolette, Montreal and Vercheres. He was thirty-three years older than his sister. He died in 1782.

Like Aaron Hart, Samuel Judah lent a considerable sum to the American independence cause which was never repaid. (Fabian Linden in Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia)

A son of Samuel Judah, Bernard Samuel, married Aaron Hart's daughter Catherine at Trois-Rivières on August 30, 1797.

Hart's and Judah's aversion to intermarriage contributed to constant, and even confusing, intertwining of the Hart and Judah family branches, keeping mixed marriages to a minimum for a good many generations -- during all these years always strengthening the family tradition, religion and the institution of the synagogue and the community. Indeed, the Judahs continued as an important branch of the Canadian Jewish family for nearly a century, but by 1850 they faded out by emigration, conversion and intermarriage, this even though earlier they had married into the Hart and Solomons families. But, just when they loomed less important in the Jewish community, they became very distinguished in the political, banking and legal life of the colony.

According to Malchelosse, his descendant, Henry Hague Judah was not Jewish by the time he became a member of the Legislative Assembly of the United Colony of Canada in 1843. The City and District Savings Bank he founded for many years made annual contributions to Jewish philanthropies, but he "also" donated to the Grey Nuns the huge property on Dorchester Street between Gui and St. Mathieu Streets. ("La Famille Judah," in Le Bien public, March 23, 1939)

Aaron Hart's own brother Moses had joined him at Trois-Rivières by 1767.

Three nephews, Judah, Abraham and Henry Joseph, the sons of Aaron Hart's sister and of Naphthali Joseph, came from London to Lower Canada to settle at Berthier. Of these Josephs, Judah, married Catherine Lazare. Their only son Jacob-Marie was born at Berthier in 1812. At the age of thirty, an employee of a Trois-Rivières merchant, he married an Irish girl in the presence of the Grand Vicair Thomas Cooke. The line of this Catholic family continued for more than a century, according to E.Z. Massicotte. (Recherches historiques, vol. 40, 1934, Pp. 7541-55)

Abraham Joseph probably also separated from the Jewish fold.

The other brother, Henry Joseph (1775-1832), came to Lower Canada at the age of thirteen to live with Aaron Hart and subsequently settled at Berthier, half way to Montreal. He became one of the important financiers of the colony, making an impressive contribution to water-borne transportation.

Thus the collateral Canadian Judah and Joseph families were founded, to become inextricably linked, and to constitute for half a century virtually the entire continuing Jewish community.

If Three Rivers was the home of Jewish continuity, Berthier was apparently also the seat of Jewish piety.

A remarkable document survives attesting to "the marriage ceremony according the Law of Moses and Israel " which bound Henry Joseph and Rachel, daughter of Levy and Rebecca Solomon, in the presence of nine witnesses (four of them Josephs, three Solomons, the others a Benjamin and a Lyons) on the 12th of Tishrei (October 9, 1803, Louisville), officiating: Barnet Lyon, merchant, of Rivière du Loup.

This long history of a family tradition needs to be noted for an understanding of the founders of the Canadian continuity.

We have subsequent documentation on the House in Israel that was founded at that sanctification ceremony. It comes in the difficult form of a sermon more than five decades later. Such writings are dubious evidence, but there is sufficient external indication of continuing orthodox piety in the family to make us read seriously de Sola's funeral oration upon the passing of his mother-in-law, the matriarch who had been married that day in 1803 by the Jewish merchant from down the river:

"And God having blessed them in their worldly circumstances, they spared not their means in meeting all the requirements of their faith, isolated as they were. For what though but one other family of their coreligionists resided near them? They yet as earnestly devoted themselves to their Maker's service, and as fervently proclaimed His unity in that higher spot, as if they were in a large assembly of His people. A calendar which the husband carefully and admirably completed showed them when Israel's most sacred days would arrive, and at the happy family board, prepared and superintended by her as a

Jewish matron should, were the Sabbaths and Festival eves duly consecrated, and the days duly hallowed by them in the presence of the offspring with which God had blessed them. Then taught she these children, as only a mother can teach, how they should adore their Maker and love their father; how they should affectionately regard each other and the good and the pious of all creeds; how they might mix, yet that they must never be mixed in unlawful communion with those around them; how they should heartfully join in their father's prayers, and attentively listen to his instructions when, as on the Passover eve, he spoke to them of the testimonies, statutes and judgments which God gave unto Israel." (Published as "Weep Not for the Dead, a Discourse on the Completion of the Shivah Period" in Occident, vol. 13, Jan. 1856, Pp. 469-76) Anyone with a general impression of the complexity of Jewish chronology will appreciate the audacity of Mr. Joseph in proposing to maintain such a calendar and his learning as a Shochet of cattle as well as of fowl, as was noted later by the great savant Alexander Harkavi. (Hatzefirah 1888)

Fortuitously, the documentation is continuous. There survives a pale document signed by John (?) Hart, M.D., and that "is to certify that on the eighth day of July, 1816, corresponding with the 12th day of the Hebrew month of Tamuz 5576, I performed the Covenant of Circumcision on Abraham, the son of Henry and Rachel Joseph, born in Berthier in the Province of Lower Canada on the 14th day of November, 1815. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal in the place above named the 12th day of July, 1816."

Why the interval between the circumcision and the certificate? Where was the doctor these four days? Was his continued presence necessary in Berthier?

Who was Dr. John Hart? He was clearly Jewish from the wording of the certificate. Was he an American who came north for the rite? Was he a resident of Canada, and, therefore, the first Jew to practise medicine in Canada to our knowledge?

Is he identical with the John Hart who signed the October 3, 1838 petition of Quebec City residents supporting Lord Durham in his policies of reconciliation after the rebellion and regretting the "premature criticism of his actions voiced in the House of Commons? Among the 4250 residents who also signed the petition

were four other Harts: William W., A.M.Hart, J.C.Hart and Edward, as well as Michael Solomon and Simon and Alexander Levy. (Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, 1955-56)

Annette Wolff has told the Jewish Historical Society of Montreal in 1965 that her ancestor Abraham Joseph of Quebec City recorded in his diary that on Friday evenings he would neither play cards nor go to parties -- "no matter how pressing the invite -- because it is Friday night..." He always says his prayers -- not only on the Sabbath eve but every night. On Saturdays he always goes to the barber to be shaved -- after he has said prayers and breakfasted! He mentions his daily prayers frequently. On June 1st 1840 we read "Rose at 5 -- shaved -- washed -- dressed -- had said morning prayers and eaten breakfast at 6..." or, "Will now say my night prayers & turn in -- 12.30 a.m...." Sometimes, in winter it reads "...candle just finished so must say my prayers and to bed."

He followed the Hebrew calendar carefully by this entry -- "Sunday, 9 August, 1840, Being Tish Abeab, I had no breakfast -- prayed, then dressed -- at ½ past 12 I made lunch on bread and 3 Rs (Three Rivers) sweetmeats & apples."

On another occasion he notes that he is invited to an "oyster and champagne" party by some of the Harts. He goes but only partakes of the "champagne" and is horrified to find his cousins eating oysters!

The scattered Jewish families had home prayers on all occasions and, when Ira Craig Hart and his sister lived in Quebec, it was not unusual for Abraham to join them for Friday night prayers as well as Sabbath morning. Otherwise he read his prayers alone.

When he was in Montreal, Abraham attended every service -- evening, morning and afternoon, as well as choir practice, (at Synagogue) when the "young ladies" were rehearsing. In Three Rivers he would join his sister's family for their regular devotions.

Invited for "a drive to meet a pretty girl (November 4, 1845) on Saturday afternoon, he courteously begged for a postponement of several days. "I never drive and never have driven or ridden on Saturday, &

therefore I preferred declining the pleasure of driv'g the young ladies in toto to taking my nags out this day..."

For the High Holy Days and Passover, Abraham joined his family, usually in his mother's home in Montreal, but sometimes he had only time to get to Three Rivers where he stayed with his sister, Catherine, and her husband, Dr. A.H. David and family.

Yom Kippur in Montreal in 1842: "At 6 went to Synagogue being the eve of the Day of Atonement (Kipur) -- prayers were over at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 -- walked home with the family -- Myer Levi slept at the house. Bed at 10. After prayers a large number of the congregation came up and shook hands -- Amongst them Theo Hart -- Hort -- Valentine -- Piza -- Benjamins, etc. etc. (altho some of the congregation have had quarrels & disputes among themselves, I can boast of being friends with all) --

"This day -- 'Kipur' -- is the Day of Atonement -- is of all days the most strictly kept by all Israelites as a day of humiliation -- fasting & prayer -- it has always been remarked that, no matter how badly an Israelite behaves during the year, he is certain to reach a place where there is a synagogue for Kipur -- where he may spend that day in prayer to the Almighty. Today there were upwards of 100 Israelites in the synagogue. I was rather late in my attendance but went thru' all my prayers without stirring out of the Synagogue during the day. Rev'd Mr. Piza and Myer Levi read the services -- I never fasted better, & when I reached the supper table at 7, was not at all hungry. After 8 I walked with Mamma to see Mrs. Solomon..."

Succoth: "This evening -- Eve of the Feast of Tabernacles -- I kept by walking down to my rooms after dinner -- saying prayers, & returning to Upper Town for a walk... After dinner to my room -- said Prayers being Eve of 8th day Tabernacles..."

Travelling from Quebec to Montreal for Passover was a most hazardous and often dangerous undertaking. The ice would begin to break up, creating a very precarious situation. "...Reached Berthier 3 p.m. -- my business occupied me till 10 o'clock -- Left Berthier next morning for Sorel... was to have gone up the Richelieu to Chambly, but could not on account of badness of ice. After transacting my business left Sorel for Montreal.

"Much water on the ice prevented the driver from seeing the air holes; into one of them we were very near being sent, having come within 2 ft of the edge. Notwithstanding 2 or 3 accidents -- narrow escapes from a watery grave, etc. -- I reached Montreal at 5 p.m. (27th) -- Friday 29th... evening at Mother's -- a holiday.... Sat. 30th, Synagogue 9 -- minister expected from Home (England) -- I visited David's today -- Second night -- Sunday 2nd Day -- Synagogue at 9 out 10½...."

On the "first night of Pentecost Craig Hart and A. Taschereau came in. Said our prayers, had tea. Taschereau and C. Hart left half past one." So a kin of a Quebec cardinal listened respectfully to his Jewish friends at their prayers.

A personal document, the very "Private Notes and Memoranda of A. Joseph, His 'Doings!' with a few Notes of the Doings and Sayings of his Friends" opens with a diary entry for Friday, February 4,

"I was up this morning a little after 8. Dressed and said my prayers as usual... at 10 (P.M.) a rubber was played while I read the evening paper. I never play cards on Friday nights."

Living as he was, not in the "large community" of Montreal, but in distant Quebec City, he was glad to receive early in April of 1844 from Montreal "a package of 8" Matzas -- a cake with Manna."

On Montreal visits, his diary recalls, "evening in synagogue" and time spent "talking on various subjects -- marriage -- family affairs -- New York business with the Harts -- Davids", his distant relatives and fellow Jews.

Another Montreal visit was probably arranged because, "Wednesday, September 23 was a day of solemn assembly -- a fast day -- a day of humiliation and prayer -- one that is kept holy by the worst of Jews -- offices, stores, factory are always closed on Kipur -- I was up at 10 -- did not leave the synagogue all day. In the evening after supper I wished to leave. Called on Davids."

On a visit to New York on Saturday, December 28, he noted that he did not go to Shool this morning but "I said my usual prayers on my own."

The following Passover he was in Montreal again for the festival. He attended "Shool" (note the Yiddish term) on Friday and Saturday before the Passover. "Attendance at the synagogue was very good on the evening" of Monday, April 21, the commencement of the festival, and "also on Tuesday morning. Service out at 11. Afternoon service at 2:30 when Rev. Mr. Piza gave us a sermon. Dinner at mother's at 3:30. The Davids dined there. Service again in the evening at 7."

On the morrow "I attended synagogue this morning... Being Passover I could not dine with the Governor and avoided being invited by saying that I would have to leave the city to-morrow."

On the Passover Sabbath he was again in synagogue Friday evening and Saturday morning. In the afternoon he visited elderly Benjamin Hart, one of the important men in the annals of the congregation. Hospitality was mingled with resentment, for a lawsuit was pending between them. The minister of the synagogue, predecessor of Rev. Abraham de Sola, "Mr. and Mrs. Piza, dined at mother's."

Most of his friends were aware that he was an Israelite. "Sunday 18 Sept. '42... Lavincourt told me of a long conversation he had with Mrs. (Capt.) Fraser about me. Mrs. F -- it appears -- would not believe I was an Israelite -- When convinced by L: I was a real one, she expressed a great wish of becoming intimately acquainted with me -- to hear my views and sentiments."

When he was initiated into advanced degrees of the Order of Oddfellows he was "more than ever pleased with the high degrees of the Lodge, particularly from the fact of the whole being founded on the Old Testament, & moreover being so much in accordance with my belief as an Israelite. A good Jew must be an Odd Fellow".

It was appropriate that Rev. Abraham de Sola

should have married the youngest daughter of the Berthier pioneer, adding elect London Sephardi traditions to the vigor of Lower Canadian business and piety.

The advocate Gershom Joseph laid the cornerstone of the third edifice of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation on Stanley Street, the institution of Canadian Jewish beginnings, and incorporated the Young Men's Hebrew Benevolent Society, the agency which presided over the growth of the coming of the many immigrants who became the community of the twentieth century.

Very far into the century a direct descendant of that couple requested permission from Principal Dawson of McGill for dispensation from writing his A.A. examinations on a May 1880, Saturday.

For decades financier Jesse Joseph dominated the older community and its congregational life.

Today, two centuries after the arrival of the Joseph brothers, direct descendants, some of them alumni of Israeli schools, are vigorous participants in the central institutions of Montreal Jewry.

Clearly there is evidence of transmission of adherence and of loyalty, even of Hebraic knowledge.

These pioneer families and their early community persisted long enough to see new arrivals take up the flame. There was continuity and growth in the exercise of the Judaism initially established quite firmly 200 years ago in Canada.

Family loyalties were very strong, in spite of serious differences which at times were to be settled by the reasoning and the sanctions of the law.

When possible they dealt with one another, even during the strains of looming litigation. They lent each other money, followed each other's health, business and political progress, and never let their own down.

Josephs willed their house to McGill University which for many years sheltered the McCord Museum.

Aaron Hart's family life was uneventful. He was watchful over his children, endowing them with the best education he could give them in the Canadian colony. He sought out for them the finest which the nuns' school or the New York Cheder could offer. Once he considered medicine for one of his children, but in the event they all entered business. The continent was wide open to them. They needed not remain in Three Rivers. Montreal was a promising centre. There were contacts with business men all over. Aaron Hart was anxious that too much should not be known of his own affairs; he warned his son Moses not to reveal family affairs while in New York. He had no desire to let the world know how well he was doing.

This posture included religion and civic responsibility, limited philanthropy and decent, if reserved, relations with neighbours.

It was part of his civic tradition to be generous and considerate of the institutions of charity, a generosity which was long remembered. But like men of means of all time, wealth was simultaneously an instrument for doing good through philanthropy and a tool for achieving other ends for the philanthropist's own good. The Ursuline sisters of Trois-Rivières can illustrate this even as they thank him and pray for him.

Abbé Groulx wrote a century later, in his Les Ursulines des Trois-Rivières depuis leur Etablissement jusqu'à nos Jours, vol. 1. Trois-Rivières, P.V. Ayotte, 1888, that,

"The name of Aaron Hart has remained beloved in the house, the elder mothers still tell of the warm dinners that he sent to the community, and they always conclude their story, 'This gentleman had truly helped the community.'" (P. 414)

The unfriendly Douville says that the naive sisters were not aware that "Hart showed such courtesy and deference to the owners of all properties which he coveted. It mattered not to them as they opened their doors wide on festival days to the boxes of gifts and food which Mr. Hart sent them. The sisters prayed

for him and he, in return, thought of them and of their land where he proposed to put up a brewery; a long cherished dream, for the Trifluviens' loved drink."
(P. 108)

But, "whether the antisemites like it or not," write Audet and Surveyer, "this Aaron Hart was a very good man. The Ursulines considered him an outstanding benefactor."

There was probably no contradiction between his disinterested charity towards them and the important transactions with them, some without interest, in 1795 to the extent of £8,000 for some time; at this date half had been paid off.

Long after his death a grandson donated the land on which stands the city's cathedral (Biron).

A Catholic historian records that during the Procession of St. Sacrement, the Harts swept the streets in front of their properties and put up lights like the richest of Catholic householders.

Hart discreetly joined other Lower Canada businessmen in joint expressions of views on public affairs. So his name appears on a 1770 petition for a colonial assembly, on a similar document of 1774 and on a firmer plea for a constitution based on free and liberal principles. (Sack, Pp. 65-66)

Such signatures are indicative of very little, and the longer the list of petitioners, the less significant the occurrence of a familiar name.

But the 1770 signature is on a very short list of 31, in the company of James McGill, Ermatinger, Todd, Fraser, McCord and Lees -- who style themselves as carrying on some three fourths of the colony's trade.

Furthermore, their petition for an assembly was displeasing to Governor Carleton, indicating again that the signatures were not perfunctory. (W.D. Lighthall, "English Settlement in Quebec," in Canada and its Provinces, vol. 15. P. 140)

Marcus notes,

"The furtherance of government was close to the heart of Aaron. When the provincial Committee of Council for Commerce and Police wrote to the merchants of Three Rivers asking for suggestions to improve the province in the post-war world, Aaron Hart's name headed the list of the four who answered. The other three were a Frenchman, a Scotsman, and an Englishman. He and his friends believed that they had the solution to this problem: If trade and commerce were to flourish, it was imperative that there be a larger measure of local autonomy. In their reply they advocated establishment of public schools and public markets, the regulation of coinage, measures, and weights, the proper registration and preservation of deeds and mortgages, and adequate bankruptcy laws. Also proposed were new local courts that would meet weekly and have the power to recover petty debts.

"Aaron's interest in good government was not associated with any desire for political preferment."
(1.274)

He had been assiduous enough to reach the third degree in the craft of freemasonry by 1760. He cherished the certificate, but showed no continued participation in the work.

But the document is of interest if only for the traditional language of the craft,

"And the Darkness Comprehended it not. --

"In the East a place Full of Light, where reigns
Silence & Peace,

"We the Master & Wardens of the Worshipfull Trinity, Lodge No. 4 of the Registry of New York, Adorn'd with all our Honours, & Assembled in Due Form, Do Hereby Declare, Certify, & Attest, unto all Men Enlightened & Spread on Face of the Earth, That the Bearer Hereof Aaron Hart, hath been Received an Entred Apprentice, & Fellow Craft, and after Tryall & Due Proof, have Given him The Sublime Degree of a Master Mason, & he lawfully and safely may, Without any Demurr, be accepted of right into any Society To Whom these Presents may Come. Given

under our Hands, & the Seal of our Lodge in City of New York, in North America, this Tenth Day of June, in the Year of our Lord 1760, & in Year of Masonry 5760."

Gerald Hart who owned the document had "shown it to many Grand and other Lodges, and has been pronounced by all as the oldest Masonic Certificate bearing upon America now known. The very Lodge, Trinity No. 4, is unrecorded and unknown except by this document. The opinion of the Curator of the Grand Lodge of London is that it was an Officers Lodge established by some Military Regiment."

Aaron Hart's signature exists on a 1786-90 document regarding the Forges of Trois-Rivières. (Séminaire des Trois Rivières. Hart Papers. NC2)

His intense Jewish loyalism was concentrated on his home and family: he could serve Jewish eternity by being a Jew and bringing his children up as Jews. Denis Vaugeois put it,

"Let us remember that the father was a faithful observant of the law of his creed. During his entire life he was attentive -- in spite of his many business affairs -- to the organization of the Jewish community of Trois-Rivières. We know, also, that he was deeply engaged in the upbringing and the religious education of his four sons: Moses, Ezekiel, Benjamin and Alexander. Only the latter was to marry a Christian. The other three and the three daughters, to our knowledge, were married to Jews. All were highly regarded citizens and played an important part, in particular, in the Jewish society." ("Les Positions religieuses de Moses Hart," in Sessions d'études, 1966, of the Société canadienne d'histoire de l'Eglise catholique, P.41)

Among the fascinating papers in the Trois-Rivières hoard are two undated covers (envelopes) each with the names of those addressed, in English and in Hebrew.

These must be from Aaron Hart, but they are of such a character that they could be from an educated immigrant who arrived a century and a half later.

The English addresses are To the Priest of the Portuguese Congregation, New York and To the Priest of the German Congregation, New York. We can accept the jarring term Priest by assuming Rabbi had not yet entered the language of the courier services of the time.

But the Hebrew is in a beautiful Hebrew calligraphy of the time. They are addressed to the Rabbi the Great Gaon the Father of the House of Judgment of the Germans in the Sacred Community of New York; in the other case, of the Portuguese. In both cases the proper initials for the Father of the House of Judgment and of the Sacred Community. The tradition of writing is faithful (though not perfect as it might be from a professional scholar).

Time has been kind to the ink, and the calligraphy is remarkably even, beautiful and practised. It is difficult to imagine it coming from a man who seldom used the Hebrew alphabet and, indeed, whose accustomed English script is anything but beautiful.

Rosenberg tilts at a falsehood-myth based on ridiculous snobbery two centuries old, the alleged "predominance of Jews of Spanish and Portuguese descent in colonial North America, while as a matter of fact, as early as 1730 the majority of the Jews in New York, Philadelphia, Rhode Island, and other parts of the British North American colonies which subsequently became the United States of America, were Jews of Ashkenazic descent.

"Edwin Wolff 2nd and Maxwell Whiteman in their History of the Jews of Philadelphia, after detailed study of the early history of Jewish settlement in colonial North America, came to the conclusion that the 'English and Dutch Jews who settled in America in the eighteenth century were the sons or grandsons of Polish Jews'.....

"There were no Ashkenazic synagogues in America prior to 1802, when the first Ashkenazic congregation, Rodeph Shalom, was founded in Philadelphia, followed by the founding of the first Ashkenazic congregation B'nai Jeshurun in New York in 1825, and there was only one synagogue in each of the cities of New York, Philadelphia, Newport, Savannah and Charleston, which was attended by all Jews in the community, whether

of Sephardic or Ashkenazic origin. While all of these congregations followed the Sephardic form of religious service, most of their founders and early members were Ashkenazim.

"The Jews who first settled in Montreal had all lived for some time previously in New York, and had been members of, or had attended religious services at, the only synagogue in New York in 1760, which was that of Shearith Israel (Spanish and Portuguese) Congregation, and it was therefore quite natural that the congregation which they founded in Montreal followed the Sephardic form of religious service, and was subsequently named after its New York counterpart."

Gerald Hart's description of the founder of his Canadian family, if read judiciously, is interesting for its own sake and for the light it casts on the chronicler and on his time, a century after Aaron Hart. If read judiciously, it does throw some light on the subject.

"He was very religious and moral (inherited probably from the Rabbi Ben Phoebus) as his letters to his children, whom he sent to New York to be educated, fully prove. His composition and that of his wife, is excellent, both showing they were well educated in England, and often mentions items of historical interest, and his Memorandum Book back to 1781 shows he was very methodical and accurate in money matters, summing up, every month a balance sheet dealing with large figures showing the large business he carried on.

"While a devout Jew, as were all his relatives both in Canada and the United States, he was, not like our Christian friends, the Papist French Canadians, fanatical and intolerant of other religions, as is fully shown by his donations and help to them, their churches and charities. The nuns' history states the fact, for which they show their gratitude. All his descendants participate this same characteristic, to the extent of their means.

"His social standing and mode of living and that of his relatives in England is proven by his sterling silver table ware and the table decorations; some of which, upon being sold at a descendants' sale of effects, was bought by Lord Mount-Stephen, and is said to have been given by him to King Edward. All these bore monograms, specimens of which are to be seen in many museums and in the hands of collectors.

"He presented to his bride, in 1768, a customary Marriage Fan, given in aristocratic weddings, specially made to order, of filagree ivory, which contains her monogram "D.C." inside of a Heart shaped shield, which London and Paris museums have asserted they have nothing its equal in fan workmanship of ivory, and a New York collector of fans asserts its rarity and high value.

"The oldest heir-loom that I have is a solid gold double seal of Queen Anne's period, which tradition states was presented by her to one of his ancestors, but which one, or for what, is now not known. There is also a pair of solid ivory cuff-buttons, carved with the monogram D.C., ornate letters, his wife's, which was no doubt another marriage present to her in 1768, as they were certainly made abroad and both for workmanship and rarity are very valuable. All these go to prove conclusively their high social standing and respectability in London before coming to America. Presents such as these were not bridal gifts to those in middle class society, nor the table decorations in ordinary use by that class.

"There is still another conjectural proof of high ancestry, if not actual ennoblement, but I mention it, as merely confirmatory of a tradition in the family, that the original ancestor of the Hart family was knighted. I allude to the family arms and motto which was in use by Aaron Hart, in the form of paper stickers apparently to be pasted on documents. There were quite a large quantity of them among the family papers in the possession of his descendants. It is this family arms which has given rise to the statement of many writers, where the family is mentioned, that Aaron Hart was born in Germany, because the motto is in that language.

"The tradition is that the Emperor Charlemagne, in one of his battles, gave a message to be delivered and answered; and it was done so quickly, upon receiving the answer, he knighted the messenger and accorded him the arms and crest of a Stag or Hart with the motto in German of "Fleet footed and free", probably from the surname of the messenger. This is not at all improbable, as a similar arms founded upon the family name seems to have been a German custom.....

"As some of the 'Harts' came from Breslau (Ephraim and probably Barnard, cousins of Aaron, were born there) it is possible that Aaron's ancestors moved

to Spain and finally settled in England to avoid the Inquisition, in the reign of King Henry the Seventh, who was one of England's most enlightened and liberal-minded monarchs, and that his ancestors were originally, in Charlemagne's time, residents of Breslau or thereabouts. Emerging from the dark ages Jew baiting, pillaging and, to avoid it, emigrating of the higher order took place.

"Any way, sufficient is shown, if not actually proven, to establish the fact that any one belonging to this family has every reason to be proud of the connexion and provenance which is so much above the large majority of social families of other origins; in fact, few are their peers in ancestry living in Canada or the United States. In one feature alone are the Harts excelled, and that is in plutocracy, as titles are given in return for money or politics, not ancestry of birth which alone constitutes true aristocracy. None of the family from Aaron's time ever tried to be money gatherers, which unfortunately is the world's greatest bane and God worshipped. It is true it can buy almost anything and gain admittance to the highest ranks of society and purchase titles; but withal, it cannot buy ancestry and heaven endowed aristocracy of birth which are possessed by the family of Harts. We challenge contradiction. Religion does not constitute it, but even in that the Harts excel, Judaism is admitted to be the oldest and truest form of religion known, so much so, that it is said the Royal House of England claims to descend from King David and are proud of the ancestry."

One of the few artifacts of the Jewish past is a set of phylacteries worn by Aaron Hart, a reminder of the ancient tradition whereby no Jew ever moved from his home without carrying his prayer shawl and tphilin. They were required before breakfast.

In the first of his concerns, the family, his realization was remarkable. The young bachelor who chose Trois-Rivières, who married Dorothea, who bore him ten children, several of whom made great names in Canadian history; the progeny still form part of Montreal Jewish citizenry, more than two hundred years after Aaron's coming.

When young Moses went south on business in 1786 his father armed him with a calendar showing the dates of the Jewish festivals of March and April to ensure that he would spend the sacred days in a community environment, and he was to be certain to be home for Passover. Under any conditions "you must remain Pesah in a Jues house." While in New York the youth attended the synagogue ("shool" in the Askenazic tradition), made an offering, and gave something to both the Hazan and the beadle. (Jacob Rader Marcus. Early American Jewry, vol. 1, The Jews of New York, New England and Canada, 1649-1794. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1951. P.276, 278-79)

One phrase in a 1790 letter from Aaron Hart to 22-year old son Moses indicates the standard of fidelity to observance, maintained by the second Canadian generation.

In his instructions to his son about returning home from Sorel (then William Henry) for the Passover the father writes, "than you neat not due anything to your house to git the Hamez out of your house." The family was observing Biur Hamez, the ritual removal of all leaven food before the Passover. (Séminaire des Trois-Rivières; Reprinted in J.R.Marcus. American Jewry, Cincinnatti, Hebrew Union College Press, 1959. P. 48)

It is therefore not surprising that B.G.Sack virtually opens his History of the Jew in Canada,

"Like most Englishmen who settled in Canada after the war, he engaged in commerce, to which by training and inclination he was well suited. As his commercial operations in the fur trade and in other fields expanded, so did Three Rivers; his business became in effect the economic nerve centre of that city. More than any other individual, Hart was responsible for the development of Three Rivers as an important centre. For over a century the Hart family was closely associated with this city where traces of the family remain to the present day. Three Rivers may well be grateful to the Harts. No event of any importance occurred there during the period indicated without their close participation, as the thick volumes of municipal and private archives attest....

"So popular was he that his home was frequently the gathering place for the aristocracy of the country. When Edward, Duke of Kent, and father of Queen Victoria, came to Canada in 1791 to assume command of the 60th Regiment -- the same regiment for which Hart had organized a battalion several years earlier -- he called on Hart; more than a personal tribute, this visit was an indication of the high regard in which Jews were then held.

"From numerous papers and private letters, some of which have been preserved in the British Museum's collection of manuscripts, it may be seen that Hart was closely associated with the leaders of the political, social and economic life of the country..... He was especially revered by the people of Three Rivers among whom he distributed large sums in charity. His generosity to the poor and needy, even to the Catholic monastery, won him the title of 'Pope of Canada' among French-Canadians.

"At the same time, Hart did not permit the hard core of his Jewish consciousness to be dented by his environment. Although mixed marriages were inordinately prevalent at the time, Hart solved his marital problem in quite a different manner; he sailed for London where he married his cousin, Dorothea Judah, a sister of Samuel Judah and of Uriah Judah, who was the Prothonotary of Three Rivers." (Montreal, Canadian Jewish Congress, 1945, Pp. 57-58)

Significantly, even as the remarkable historian Sack continued his assiduous and difficult research over the years, he came to modify some of his assertions, as can be seen from an examination of his 1926 version of his history, in A.D.Hart's The Jew in Canada, and his 1945 edition published by the Canadian Jewish Congress.

It is all the more difficult to separate out the mythical from the statistical because so many of the large objective facts are so surprising.

Sulte places the synagogue of the Harts on the map of Trois-Rivières, "on the square which is now along St. Antoine Street as you reach Badeau Street, and the Jewish cemetery which still exists," he wrote, "on the south side."

Marcus wrote,

"A family like that of Aaron Hart was exceptional. Although his was the only Jewish family for many years in Three Rivers, he succeeded in maintaining the old traditions, and reared sons and daughters who remained in the fold. In general, the village Jew, exposed to the full blast of an overwhelmingly non-Jewish environment, did not survive religiously.... The people who knew him respected him; despite his seigneurial opportunities, his life was free of scandal. He observed the precepts of his ancestral faith as far as this was possible with only two or three Jewish families in the midst of a non-Jewish community, and made heroic and successful efforts to rear his children as faithful Jews." (1.506; 2. 213,506)

His reluctance to have outsiders learn too much about his private affairs may have been the cause for his distancing himself from the Montreal congregation.

Louis Rosenberg states that Aaron Hart and his wife "throughout their lives endeavoured to maintain a Jewish home and practise Jewish religious precepts in so far as possible. They observed the Jewish holy days, sent their children Moses, Ezekiel, Benjamin and Alexander to Philadelphia and New York to stay with Jewish friends, and obtain a Jewish as well as a general education; and held occasional religious services in Three Rivers when there were sufficient male members of their relatives and friends present to form a 'minyan'.

"Although he lived only ninety miles from Montreal for forty years from 1760 until his death in 1800, there is no record extant that he ever became a member of the Shearith Israel congregation in Montreal, or contributed to its maintenance or attended its services; yet Chapman Abraham (Abraham Kauffman) who lived for the greater part of the year near Detroit, and Benjamin Lyon, who lived as far away as Michilmackinac, an island between Lakes Michigan and Huron, were members of the Montreal congregation." ("The Earliest Jewish Settlers in Canada.")

The Jewish community, growing and eventful, in Montreal drew minimum interest from this observant man; he was a community unto himself -- synagogue, cemetery, etc., included.

This lends itself to a closer analysis of the Jewish community of Canada in its first century.

By the beginning of the century, with Aaron Hart deceased, the community consisted of a) the Hart heirs in Three Rivers, b) the continuing Harts of Montreal, and c) a new group of other Jews in Montreal. The groups were distinct, organized as such and with limited intercourse with the other Jews in Canada.

Hence the virtual absence of Aaron and his Trois-Rivières sons from the Montreal congregation.

Sack remembers that "Montreal was not the only place that could boast of a Jewish house of worship, for a synagogue was maintained in Three Rivers by a number of families residing there. This synagogue appears to have been founded by Aaron Hart shortly before his death, possibly around 1800. After him the synagogue was sustained by Ezekiel Hart and other members of the Hart family. Between 1820 and 1835 Isaac Valentine acted as spiritual leader of the Jews of Three Rivers and conducted their religious services. That the synagogue actually existed is confirmed by the municipal plan of the City of Three Rivers for the year 1815. It was destroyed by fire in 1860." (P. 141)

Indeed, for nearly a century the Harts were at the centre of activity of Lower Canadian Jewry, and their biographies constitute the history of the community for that period. Ezekiel, Benjamin, Samuel Bécancour, Phillip, A. Mordecai, Gerald, Lewis A. -- these are the Harts who are the web of Canadian Jewish history. Their collaterals, the Davids, Judahs, Hays, almost complete the history.

In all of them there is an almost tangible and treasured touch of the Aaron Hart tradition. Aaron would have wanted it so. Insofar as one can strain to achieve this type of immortality, we can almost see him at the task, directly in influencing and educating his children.

The paternal influence was very powerful.

Aaron Hart did not content himself with his own teachings. Several of the boys spent some time in New York learning something from the Jews there. Friends of the father kept an eye upon them somewhat. It is easy to exxagerate what New York had to offer them. But it clearly was not wasted.

The whole question of their education is puzzling. Where were the boys educated? Where did they acquire their Jewish knowledge, their peculiar Jewish semantics and the Jewish intonations and sentence structure that come through in the scraps of paper in their archives?

Marcus notes that when he sent his 18-year-old Moses to New York, he provided him with a calendar of the Jewish holy days which would occur during his voyage. It was intended he would return for Passover.

On March 8, 1786 he wrote to Moses,

"Am sorry to find that you had not warm cloths enofe with you, and that the lakes are bad. Thear for I hope you will not risk in any danger if you find that you cane not be hear Pesah. You will acarding to my instrucktions go to New Yark and keep Pesah. Should you want any clothes to apper in... you will git a good suit made in New Yark. Shoud you be shart in money, you take up as much as you want frome my brother Harry.

"I hope you are safe arrived some time before you receive this, and have settled all to my instrucktions with my brother to your satisfaction. Should you want any pints (points) consarning what is due me, he hase letters frome me which pints out every thing you will, are cane (or can) want.

"You will say as lettle as passeble about your bussiniss to any of the Jues in New Yark nore to your Unkils to (too). You most remain Pesah in a Jues house. Pray take care of your self and God bless you." (Marcus, 1.279)

Being a Jew included the quite scrupulous observance of the traditional commandments, to baking Matzoh and to purging even the Sorel (then Henry William) house where son Moses was living in March 1790. (Benjamin,

age 11, and Alexander, 8, were probably in school in Philadelphia with their uncle Uriah Judah, brothers of Mrs. Hart.)

At the end of the month he wrote to "Dear Mo,

"I se no way for you to keep Pesah at William Henry thear fore you had batter come over hear the Sunday before than you neat not due any thing to your house to git the hamez out of your house. It will be attanted with no lass as its all holy days that pople boy noting.

"I have wrote to H. Judah and to Ben and Alex to sett of for New Yark the 1st of May next as I am determent to have tham hear. If you cane at any rate go across the lakes for tham I will pay all expence you may be at. As I hope you well not faile being hear Pesah, than shall say more to you on that jurny. It well save you truble and expence of baking of mazot to come heur." (Trois-Rivières. Séminaire du St. Joseph. Hart Papers, cited by Marcus. American Jewry. P. 49)

This pioneer of Canadian Jewry was so remarkable a figure, and his progeny has so long and so constantly maintained stalwartness and leadership in society, that it is not surprising that a powerful picture of the family and of its Quebec founder has gone down the ages.

It required very little heightening of colour to become the inspiring myth of Canadian Jewish historiography, and it was not Jews alone who gave dimensions to the portrait. Other Québécois chroniclers have used their brushes on his character, sometimes folklorically, sometimes politically. The enrichment was advanced by a considerable documentation on the Harts that has survived in various archives in the province and by a long continuity of personal and institutional defenders -- or offenders -- of the family name.

Relations with other Jews were at a minimum. Most of them were in Montreal or in very distant New York. But when a lone Jewish trader died at Yamachiche it was his responsibility as a fellow Jew to collect the assets, prepare the inventory, settle the estate and send the proceeds to the rabbi in London.

In 1793 David Levy of London translated "into the language of England" The Form of Prayers for the Fast Days according to the Custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews, from the edition prepared by Samuel Rodriguez Mendes, "the sweet singer of Israel in Amsterdam." His London edition "in type beautiful, as you see, such as had never been printed before, so that the entire community of God may know and understand, in clear language, what they are praying to Him who reposes on high and, as their reward, they will live to ascend to the House of the God of Jacob, the dwelling place of justice, the Holy Mountain."

The book was printed for the author by W. Justins of Shoemaker Row at Blackfriars, and was sold by Johnson at St. Paul's Church yard.

As was the custom in those days, publication was made possible by subscribers from England. In their roster: the Harts (Aaron, Ezekiel, Benjamin and Moses), Isaac Phineas also of Three Rivers, and Judah Joseph of Berthier, as well as Benjamin's father-in-law, Ephraim Hart of New York.

These children who grew up so far from Jerusalem somehow inherited Jewish awareness, pride and even knowledge.

A remarkable illustration may be found in the many writings of Moses Hart before he began to devote his pen largely to figures. Aside from his unusual ideas on religion, he displays a considerable knowledge about religion, about popular mysticism, about festivals, about Biblical principles and injunctions, festivals, rites, etc., which is not of the usual Christian currency of his time.

Moses Hart remembered to present Adolphus M. Hart with a book as a Hanukah morning gift in 1824.

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His other concern, money, was equally successful. But, paradoxically, it is more difficult to count.

Business was more than a full time occupation. Social affairs and relations with his non-Jewish affairs came last. Reputation could take care of itself if one dealt honestly. It did not justify a deliberate effort to secure a good name. This would develop automatically as a function of a man's dealings. So he counselled his children against outside activities; they would be hampered there as Jews in any case in the final analysis. The institution of government is fundamentally a law for the citizen to obey, not an area for political action or for ambition.

Hart spent more than three decades in this concentration in distant Three Rivers. He succeeded there and died wealthy. Historians, and possibly contemporaries, exaggerated his riches. They were not fantastic, and those who speak of him as one of the wealthy men of the empire are surely wrong. The detailed inventory of his estate survives. It is difficult to appraise it today in exact terms, in the light of the changing values of moneys and of coveted objects, and in relation to other estates at the time. But clearly, although he was quite wealthy, it was not one of the great Canadian fortunes of his time.

The immense riches that he left evoked much envy and many serious thoughts, until it came to the counting. The weavers of extensive tales found themselves short of golden threads. No matter how they counted and tallied, there was too little.

An interesting exchange exists between Douville, the Hart biographer, and Valdombre of Les Pamphlets, reader of the récit about Aaron Hart.

It was easy to write, "Our people like to drink, to dress well. The Jew is there to meet all their desires. The kike becomes rich and the Canayen is in debt." But it doesn't add up. All the money sacks and iron chests add up to £3,568.17.6.

"I wasn't satisfied. I knew that my Israelite Hart whom I adore (as a hero in a novel) left a much greater fortune." So he inquired of the biographer, who replied,

"I did not give an approximate or real figure for Aaron's wealth because it seems to me incalculable, and I did not wish to enter into a discussion with serious archivists who deal with dry figures and dates, after my book appeared. After its publication, I do not want to think about it anymore; I had other things to do, and I know that if I had indicated \$210,199 as the total value of the fortune, there would certainly appear some shuffler of hundreds of documents to tell me that my work is worthless because Hart's fortune was really worth \$211,099.

"I consulted supposedly expert scholars in the matter of louis, pounds, shillings, etc., and no two colleagues arrived at similar figures.

"I have serious reasons to suppose that his total capital at the time of his death reached \$200,000, including cash, seigneuries, lands, houses, etc. Malchelosse, the historian who has studied this period best, tends to accept this as well, and I have made laborious efforts, with Abbé Tessier and arrived at about the same figure.

"Let us say that Father Aaron slept in Jehovah with a vision of \$250,000 gained by his own hands and by his own head. It is already not bad.

"But in my book I would put in no approximations in the way of figures about his wealth. It is an important detail, I know, but I certainly did not want to make any such figure central in my book, even though I know it is extraordinary. I did not want to insinuate that he was a millionaire at his passing. But in fact he was." (Les Pamphlets de Valdombre, vol. 3, Apr. 1939, Pp. 225-26)

He drew up his will on November 16, 1793.

"I, Aaron Hart of Three Rivers, Marchant, do make and ordain this my Last will and Testament:

"That is to say, afther all my Debts are Payed, I give bequeath to my wife the interest of tow towsent Pounds five Hundred Hallefax Currincy wich is to be well securid; that My wife Dorothy may receive the interest of said sum Quarterly During hir Life, and afther hir Death the said sum of two thosend Pounds five Hundred to be Devided among my under Mention Children,

"But shoud she Marry again she is to Receive on the Day of hir Marrige the Sum of four Hundred and fifty Pounds Currincy, and of said sum of the two Thosend five Hundred Pounds above mention, and the Remaner sum of two thosend and fifty Pounds to Be Devided among my under Mention Childrin. That to be fulfilld in three months afther my death.

"I allso give and bequeath to My sone Moses Hart of William Henry the sum of five Hundred Pounds and to my sone Ezekel Hart the sum of four Hundred Pounds.

"And to my son Benjamin Hart my lands, well knowing near the Paysage, with my Part of the Senory of Backancure to have and to hould.

"I give to my son Alexander Hart my House and Lands i now am in, in said Town of Three Rivers for to have and hold. Insurance to be made on the House for

four Hundred Pounds Starling. If his Brother Ezekiel will rend the said House he is to have it to Pay the Insuranc Repares and ten Pounds only per year that year 1903. I also give and Bequeath to my Daughter Kitty Hart", and to his other daughters, Charlotte, Betsy, Sally £800 each.

"I further Give and Bequeath to My wife Dorothy the with Bed furniture and Sheat and Drawer in hir Bed Rum.

"All the Remaner of My Stock in Busines Book, Debts, Mortgages, Bank notes and Stock in the funds of the United States and all Housell furneture, Plate Pictur and all that Belonges to me to be Equely Posted and Divided among my Sons Moses, Ezekiel, Benjamin and Alexander Hart.

"For the Due Performent of the forgoing will and testament i do appoint my Son Moses Ezekiel and Benjamin Hart with Judah Joseph to be my Lawfull Executer of Said will." (McGill University, McCord Museum)

A fortnight before his death on December 28, 1800, at the age of 76 he made another will before Notary Badeaux. Two weeks after they were bereaved, on January 14, 1801, the four sons made arrangements for their mother. The four - Ezekiel, Moses, Benjamin and Alexander -- shared the estate. Alexander settled in Montreal, but the others remained at Trois-Rivières. A sister Charlotte married Moses David of Sandwich (now Windsor) in Upper Canada.

Aaron Hart, in Trois-Rivières, followed the ancient Jewish tradition of family plots, and the cemetery or cemeteries - that he thus established in the heart of French Canada are of great interest.

The tradition of family plot burial was long maintained. The pious Joseph family of Berthier set aside a plot of land off their property and consecrated it. On a sad day in June 1832 Henry Joseph and his eldest son both died of the cholera in Berthier. They were laid to rest in their own garden. (Annette Wolff before Canadian Jewish Historical Society, June 1965; Jewish Messenger, vol. 72, no. 1, July 1, 1892)

But on November 3, 1856 Jesse Joseph requested permission from the Montreal congregation to inter the remains of his father from Berthier in the lot in the new Montreal cemetery belonging to his late mother.

The Harts considered themselves more than a family and even more than a local community. They were autarchic in their Jewish needs, and had little dealings with the congregation in Montreal.

Even when the larger city had a Jewish cemetery, the Harts retained their own, and members of the family who died in Montreal were laid to rest in Three Rivers.

Being the constructive man of practical affairs, he also had the family (Moses, Ezekiel, Alexander H., and himself, as well as Samuel Becancour Hart) set the property on St. Alexander Street apart, and deeded it as a cemetery for the Jews in the province. He also arranged for the care of the plot, fencing and -- remarkably -- to secure legislation from parliament.

As Dr. Abraham de Sola described it in his brief history of Lower Canada Jewry in his 1854 Calendar, the first history of the community:

"In the town of Three Rivers, a piece of land was appropriated by the Hart family for a Beth Haim, one half retained by the Hart family, the other for the use of all Israelites. The ground, which is in Alexander, off Hart Street, is still used."

One such occasion for Jewish collegiality arose soon after Aaron Hart's arrival.

It came to his attention that a lone Jewish merchant at Yamachiche had passed away suddenly. Hart immediately left for that place, arranged for the removal of the body so that it might be interred in a Grave of Israel; he inventoried and liquidated the assets which had been left by the deceased, and sent the proceeds to London, to the Chief Rabbi, to be dispensed for the poor.

That plot was known to the family as the Alexander Street cemetery. The earliest interment took place in 176 when 7-months old Julia, daughter of Ezekiel and Frances Hart, passed away.

Soon after his death the brothers agreed that "Ezekiel Hart is to procure a small marble plate with the following inscription.

"The Burial Ground of the Family of Harts, founded by Aaron Hart Esquire in 1770"

"To cost Ten or Twelve Dollars, to be placed in the wall or over the door.

"He will get a neat marble Tomb with the following inscription.

"Here lieth the Remains of Aaron Hart Esquire, obit 28 Dec. 1800 AE 76 --

"He, who supported the Aged and Infirm, who alleviated the wants, and lightened the miseries of the Poor -- The man possessed of these Virtues, requires no other Testimony of his departed worth, to be engraven on this Stone, placed over his Tomb, by his four sons, Moses, Ezekiel, Benjamin and Alexander Hart."

The small plot was utilized until mid-century, when it became full. At that time Ezekiel gave a further plot of land on Prison Street for the purpose.

The Hart family had preserved the cost records of a funeral in 1843. The £24.0.0 accounting lists a carter to Maskinonge, and one for the coffin, three men to make the coffin, for digging, a fee for Mr. Piza, the reader of the Montreal congregation, and another for the synagogue, cape and gloves. (McCord Museum)

There is a dramatic story about these plots early in the nineteenth century, a drama that may have started Jewish constitutional equality in Canada. After Aaron Hart died, the care of the Three Rivers ménage devolved upon Moses, brother to Benjamin, who settled in Montreal. Moses was not as traditional as his father, heedless of general opinion, far from orthodox -- scarcely the type a Sacred Community would have entrusted with its sanctities. Very soon he proceeded to act in violation of the traditions governing plots hallowed for sacred purposes, by burying a child there in a manner contrary to ancient law.

It is remarkable that some forty years earlier a similar unusual problem had arisen in Montreal, the burial of an uncircumcised infant on of an early settler in Montreal. At a meeting of "the Israelites of the Town of Montreal.... to have the voice of the congregation.... to know whether he was to be buried according to the rules and customs of Jews.... several circumstances favourable (to the father) appeared to us, for which reason we allow his being buried, but at the same time we do hereby unanimously agree and declare that no man or boy whomsoever shall be.... buried in the burying place of this congregation unless circumcised."

Benjamin reacted in Sophoclean anger against this desecration of the final resting place of his parents. "Let the God of Israel judge between you and me," he wrote to his brother in 1827, vowing he would never visit this scene of such violence against the most sacred.

Incidentally, in this letter Benjamin Hart displays a knowledge of halachah and of obscure Jewish tradition remarkable for one born in Three Rivers with a few years of minimum Jewish training in eighteenth century New York. He was a very special person in many ways.

This might have been for all we know, the beginning of the legislative process which resulted in the 1831 act to establish the Jewish community, its house of worship, its ministry and its cemeteries. A year later, to clarify and extend it, as we shall see, came the 1832 act removing all disabilities from Jews in Lower Canada.

One of the most painful experiences of the Jewish community occurred as the century opened when the resting places of the first pioneers of Canadian Jewry at Trois-Rivières came under attack.

In July 1901 the City of Three Rivers acted to expropriate one of the Jewish cemeteries, located next to the Quebec Bank. The owner of the adjoining property had wished to purchase this lot and action was taken to enable transfer of the property to this would-be purchaser.

As the Yiddish Gazetten of New York told it in its issue of November 15, 1901, the land set aside as a family plot by Aaron Hart was transformed by his heirs in 1827 as a cemetery for all the Jews of Quebec, and was used as such for many years.

In the course of time some of the Harts intermarried; some of them moved to Montreal, among them Louis Hart, notary. For the last forty years of the century the cemetery was not used, but was deeply venerated.

Recently Notary Hart learned that the municipality wished to remove the graves because they constituted a menace to health. They had been persuaded in this by one Page, the owner of adjacent lots, who had bought the Jewish cemetery plot from William Hart, a Christian, a member of the family, promising Mr. Hart to remove the graves in accordance with Jewish rites.

Mr. Page obtained a court order and subsequently moved the graves without any reference to Jewish law or custom.

The Portuguese group in Montreal was deeply aroused, according to the Yiddish Gazetten of New York, and was resolved to defend the honour of Jewry, thus deeply impugned.

In 1909 the scandalous condition of the cemetery near the Academy of the Christian Brothers was brought to the attention of the "Chief Rabbi of Montreal, Rabbi S. Glazer" by the rector of the St. James Church. He reported that the cemetery was neglected, the wall about it broken down, and the score of fine tombstones of coloured granite were lying about.

The solicitor of Shearith Israel had failed to appear in court to argue against the expropriation when, unexpectedly, Mr. Hart, a descendant of the original owners, sold it to Mr. Page, who had been seeking it all along. The City of Three Rivers forgot its expropriation plan.

In a document in the records of the Superior Court of Trois-Rivières district, of October 18, 1909 Mrs. Miriam Hadley Hart, wife of Alfred Belasco, whose ancestors and kin have been resting in the Prison Street cemetery (Lot 2137 of the cadastre of registration), since

1895, said that the cemetery had just been sold to the Trois-Rivières school commission; another small private cemetery in Coteau St. Louis had also contained remains of her kin, and that there had been buried there after having been exhumed from the Alexander Street cemetery about five years earlier; the remaining members of the family wish to exhume the mortal remains which are in these two cemeteries in order to transport them to Montreal, to be placed on land consecrated according to the custom of the Jewish faith.

Judge R.S. Cooke noted the following day that since there was no rabbi of a Jewish congregation in Trois-Rivières, and since the Montreal Corporation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews Shearith Israel and the family had both given their consent, and because of the need to remove the remains of those buried in these cemeteries, he gave permission for exhumation and removal of these remains.

There was little piety to be expected in this case:

"The vandalism which has destroyed so many historical mementos of early times in this province has attacked the old Jewish cemetery at Three Rivers. Sanitary reasons is the only plea advanced in the application to court for permission to expropriate the ground; although, we are credibly informed, there has not been an internment there for about forty-five years. At the present time there is no Jewish community in Three Rivers. However, we are informed that the court has granted the order, and notice has been given to all persons claiming relationship to remove the remains before a given time. Meantime opposition has been entered for a stay of proceedings, on behalf of the Jewish families concerned; but we have little hope of a favourable result. Everybody knows with what commanding fervor the Roman Catholic authorities in this province insist on the 'sacred rite of Christian buria.' and with what supreme indifference they dispose of their graveyards after such are filled up with the dead. We have seen cemeteries in this city turned over to secular uses, the coffins, bones, cerements dug up, thrown into carts like so much garbage, and dumped among the refuse. Respect for the dead forgotten, the 'sacred

rite of Christian burial' treated with contempt. Is it to be expected that a Jewish cemetery will receive more consideration from those people than their own cemeteries have been given?" (Jewish Times, Aug. 16, 1901, P. 296)

In the words of Rev. de Sola, "The fiercest persecution of our people in Russia or Rumania has not been blackened by anything so infamous as this desecration of the graves in the old Jewish cemetery of Three Rivers."

In the atmosphere of the Dreyfus case, the Jewish Harts residing in Montreal and the leaders of the community were unable to prevent the attentat against the dead, the alienation of this historic site. Contrary to promises made by the purchasers, the exhumation of the old remains, their reinterment and the relocation of the ancient tombstones were not carried out in accordance with Jewish law or in the presence of a Jewish minister.

In a new age strangers to the faith and to the traditions of those resting there for nearly a century dug up the graves and reburied the ancient bones in the other, larger Jewish cemetery there.

There was no rest for these bones. The House of Life, to quote the correspondent of the London Jewish Chronicle, (Dec. 31, 1909),

"was situated in the heart of the city, and was surrounded on three sides by a school for boys, managed by the Catholic Brothers. These liberal and enlightened moulders of the thoughts of the coming generation permitted, if indeed they did not encourage, the use of the cemetery as a playground and general rubbish heap for their scholars. All sorts of rubbish was flung on the graves of men and women who had been foremost in the history of Canada, and whom the forefathers of these self-same young vandals had delighted to honour.

"Here also were buried all the Harts, who for nearly one hundred years were seigneurs of Three Rivers and the surrounding parishes. In those days (some seventy years ago) so great was the power of a seigneur, in his

own parish, that he could refuse to allow any man to address his parishioners. This right was exercised by one of the Harts, who told the Attorney-General of Canada not to speak in his parish. He said, 'Sir, this is my parish, I forbid you to speak.' This took place one Sunday morning in the parish church, where there were assembled all the farmers of the surrounding country, all of whom were Catholics. So great was the esteem in which the members of the Hart family were held in Three Rivers, that when, in 1840, the distinguished Catholic prelate known as the Bishop of Nancy (he was really a Cardinal and a Prince of the House of Bourbon) visited Three Rivers while travelling through Canada, the City Council of Three Rivers thought that the greatest honour that they could do to their distinguished visitor was to ask, Mr. Adolph, a Jew, to read the address of welcome they presented to him.

"How sad a change has come over the people of this once enlightened city when one reflects on the fact that the remains of those self-same persons, who in the past had been so honoured by the city, had to be removed to save them from desecration at the hands of the descendants of their old friends."

The Montreal Daily Jewish Eagle reported that "students break down the stone fence at the cemetery even as the bodies are exhumed. That fence had just been put up." (Nov. 10, 1909)

We have the contemporary testimony of a most distinguished Canadianized Jew, historian Gerald Ephraim Hart. He expressed the rage and resentment of the community in the face of this morbid horror. In a manuscript now in the McCord Museum at McGill he records:

"We owe to the corrupt and venal man beneath the cassock, the 'Holy Inquisition' of persecution of the Jews to extort their money and property, and in my youth the 'Mortara' case supplemented by the annual cry of another Christian child stolen and murdered by Jews, so as to drive to frenzy their ignorant co-religionists that they may be justified in retaliating the false and malicious lie by stealing their goods and murdering them, concocted with that sole object in view:- the desecration and destruction of the Jews' Cemetery in Three-Rivers,

that they might enlarge their play-ground for the rising generation to whom they were teaching 'good morals' in the name of their Saviour, himself asserted to be of a Jewish family as well as some of their principal apostles and disciples, and in beloved France the celebrated 'Dreyfus' case."

Gerald Hart continues his recollections about Bishop Laflèche who presided over Trois-Rivières from 1870 to 1898. "He told his Catholic audience from the pulpit in a sermon that it is no sin to rob a heretic; and upon one family enquiring from these servants whether he referred to them the servants both said, 'Oh no, you are Jews, not heretics.' I was present and heard the servants state this."

In an atmosphere of intensely hostile agitation, with the police called on for protection, the old bones of the pioneering families of Canadian Jewry were removed with their ancient stone markers to the hallowed ground of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation Shearith Israel in Montreal. It is still one of the remarkable sights of the Canadian metropolis, gravestones indicating burial in Three Rivers standing in Montreal.

But this is to look a century ahead. In 1800 even dying was no simple matter for a Jew in Trois-Rivières. Not for him the consolation and absolution of a priest, with an entry to his proper place in heaven, and a church register which formalized and regularized his demise, as it had done for his birth and for his marriage. There were no such arrangements for Jews in Lower Canada for another three decades.

No register of death meant no legal proof of death. For all the law knows he is still alive, a healthy 255 years old, and still the owner of many properties which he has willed to his children. They are dead these two hundred years, but they could not inherit or sell them until he dies.

His son Benjamin was an old man on January 29, 1846, half a century after he helped lay his father to his rest, when he had occasion to complain to the courts.

"On or about the 28th day of December, one thousand, eight hundred, the said Aaron Hart departed this life in the town of Three Rivers, and being of the Jewish faith, he was duly interred without any record or register existing establishing the same."

This was in connection with his suit against his brother Moses for £113 out of the sale by Benjamin and A.P.Hart in September 1832 of a property on Notre Dame Street in Trois-Rivières, with a two-storey building, for £250. It had been willed by Aaron Hart to Benjamin for his lifetime, reserved upon his death to his eldest son.

This lawsuit was but one of the litigations in which the family squandered some of their energies, if only as assertions of relative status.

Aaron Hart had left £1000 to his daughter Elizabeth, invested at 6%, until her marriage. At that time the money reverted to her brothers. By 1845 Moses Hart was the only surviving executor.

Benjamin claimed that there was no accounting of the estate, and petitioned the court on February 5, 1845 for clarification.

It might have helped in this case that L. Vezina swore on September 19, 1846 that, "I attest by these presents that Aaron Hart, father of the plaintiff and of the defendant in this case, died in the City of Trois-Rivières, was interred there on or about December 28, 1800, and was of the Judaic belief, for which reason no record exists."

The mechanics of death did their ghoulis duty -- the notary in inventory like the rabbi in requiem.

Notary Joseph Badeau, under watchful eyes of heirs -- the widow, a daughter, three sons and an executor -- inventoried in detail the physical remnants in the general store, the counting house, the accumulation of a collector in a world where nothing was valueless, outmoded or discarded, the hoard of the miser who could not then put in a single credit line in a bank balance.

When Abbé Albert Tessier, sworn to poverty by

profession, copies out this inventory for the Cahiers des dix ("Deux enrichis: Aaron Hart et Nicolas Montour," in vol. 3, Pp. 217-33) and notes, "The investigators must have felt they were in fabled lands, chests and bags of silver money that would have astounded the most hardened pirate.... Fine voluptuous moments for a miser, to be able to finger these ringing hard cash." We wonder whether it was the riches of Hart, the wonder of those listing the inventory, or the cupidity and jealousy of the Trois-Rivières clergyman-historian experiencing and spreading myth.

"The Harts alone constitute nearly the entire commercial class of the city. Their head, Aaron Hart, who passed away in 1800, had arrived with the English troops in 1760. With a single Hebrew glance he had seen all that a clever and enterprising man could benefit from in this county commanding the territory on this 50 mile frontage. Within a few years he had put his hand on the trade and industry of the district. Fur, building lumber, pearl ash manufacture, brewery, grain trade, British imports -- he monopolised them all for the greatest good of his treasury! The inventory of his assets, drawn up in 1801, covers 180 pages. There we learn that he held the seigneuries of Grondines, Gaspé, Bécancour, Vieux-Pont, Sainte-Marguerite, Ile de la Trinité. In his chests the accountants found some \$15,000 in hard silver -- doubloons, Portuguese florins, Spanish and French piastres, guineas, half-guineas, shillings, etc., and the lists of creditors cover pages and pages: nearly all the inhabitants had borrowed from this banker avant la lettre!" ("La Vie urbaine vers 1800," in Cahiers des dix, Pp.171-72)

Douville estimates Aaron Hart's fortune at the time of his death at \$200,000 (in letter to "Valdombre"; Pamphlets de Valdombre, vol. 3, no. 5, Apr. 1939, P.226)

Such assets had never been heard of before in Lower Canada.

A complication which arose out of Aaron Hart's will reached the colonial House of Assembly on December 19, 1820.

He had willed to his wife "during her natural lifetime a tract of land situated on Notre Dame Street and Rue des forges in the town of Three Rivers; after her demise it was to revert" to their son Alexander Hart, by this time of Montreal. The widow abandoned the tract of land to her son on February 9, 1807. But "the land in its present state does not rent for a sufficient sum to enable him to pay for keeping in repair the fences and roads in front of it." Therefore he informed the Assembly that the legacy, instead of being a profit, is actually a burden. He therefore petitioned for an act "authorizing him to open streets on the property, and to concede the same out in lots à constitution de rentes."

On the motion of Charles Richard Ogden and Joseph Badeaux, members for the Borough of Trois-Rivières, the petition was referred to a committee of five to examine the matter. The committee included these legislators as well as the ubiquitous Joseph Remi Vallières, Pierre Bureau and Louis Picotte, members for St. Maurice County.

The matter never returned to the Assembly.

THE HEIRS

He wanted to leave a long Jewish dynasty. He did, even more extensive than he could foresee, because some decades after his demise the centre of the many and enduring Harts shifted to Montreal, which Aaron Hart had tended to disregard, and the Harts inter-married with the Davids, Judahs, Hays and the several other Jews who remained in Canada at the opening of the nineteenth century, to become one complex and sturdy genealogy.

Mrs. Aaron Hart removed to Montreal, where she resided in dignity for many years.

Sulte notes that Mrs. Hart received John Jacob Astor, the McTavishes and the Reids in her St. Gabriel Street home.

Vaugeois notes the measure of Aaron's initial success. Of his ten children, all but one, Alexander, married within the faith. (P. 133)

His sons were socially more extrovert than he might have intended. They were careful to win the friendship of the citizenry. They left a strong mark

on the Canadian record and his descendants are still members of the community. For an understanding of this chapter of Canadian history we would do well to familiarize ourselves somewhat with some of the Harts.

As the spirit of Aaron Hart contemplates his family tree in Malcolm H. Stern's compendium of genealogy, Americans of Jewish Descent, (N.Y., Ktav, 1971) he is certainly satisfied with the outcome of his cherished efforts to establish a family in Lower Canada -- and in the House of Israel.

His progeny was numerous, and so were theirs. For some eighty years the Harts were Canadian Jewry, and they were a very active Canadian Jewry.

But the devoted patriarch loved his daughters as deeply as his sons, and these extended the family beyond the family patronymic.

The Judahs were his own family. His mother was a Judah, and he had married his first cousin, a Judah. He had naturally brought his cousin Judah to Canada when he brought his wife to Three Rivers; and his daughter Chavah (Catherine) married Barnebas Samuel Judah, son of another cousin, on August 30, 1793 at Trois-Rivières. At the time the mother of the bride sent a written invitation to Ezekiel and Fanny "to the ceremony tomorrow morning. I expect you will both be here early to spend the day." (McCord Museum)

Her son, born a year after Aaron Hart died, was named Aaron Hart Judah. Her daughter, Miriam, married a son of Moses Hart.

Two daughters of Aaron Hart married two David brothers, sons of Lazarus David, one of the pillars of early Montreal Jewry. Sarah (1784-1831) married Samuel David, whose children include Col. Eleazar David (whose sword whetted in 1837 was a family treasure) Dr. Aaron Hart David, Mrs. Sophia (Abraham) Joseph and Mrs. Phoebe (Aaron Ezekiel) Hart.

The other daughters Sheina (Charlotte, born in 1777, married another son of Lazarus David, Ontario-born Moses David.

The Davids married Hays, and Valentines and Josephs, who were his wife's family, and so to de Solas and Solomons. The entire Montreal congregation -- led by son Benjamin, strove for a lifetime to keep the congregation for his father's family.

In his prayer book Aaron Hart also listed his daughter Elizabeth, born March 27, 1783, whom another document, in the McCord Museum, calls Bilhah, who died unmarried, ca. 1800 at Kingston on the Thames.

The spirit of Aaron smiled upon his son, but with a little tolerance for the stranger Jews of the 1830's and 1840's. Unlike his son, he would have welcomed the overwhelming migration of the 1870's and 1880's that flooded and drowned out the Harts. Probably unlike Benjamin, he would have been admirably friendly with Lazarus Cohen and with the younger Sam Jacobs and with his father. He looked comfortably upon each new age.

But his warmest pleasure would be from his sons:

Moses (1768-1852), for all his scandalous ways, turned from inventing modern religions to careful attention to business, and continued a Three Rivers family, even if he did not follow his father's way with a family. But even there there was grandson Alexander Thomas and great-grandson Prof. Lewis Alexander.

It was probably Moses' and Benjamin's progeny who were most durably Hart for a century.

Beloved son Ezekiel surprisingly became a champion of the political equality of Canadian Jewry, encouraged and followed by stormy Benjamin, in due time one of the great figures of Canadian Jewry.

Alexander Hart (1782-1835), businessman, married Mary Anne Douglas, who survived him. In 1870 she was one of the owners of the Domaine de Matane (Recherches historiques, vol. 17, 1911. P.362) He passed away in England, leaving two sons.

Uriah (1771-) left one child who died young.

His children Elizabeth (1770-1843), Miriam (1772-ca.1800) and Samuel (1774-ca.1800). Bilhah (1783-ca.1800) died unmarried.

On another level of social acknowledgment of death:

From a later president of the congregation in Montreal,

"Mr. Hart's father (Aaron) and many of his family have, after their death, a perpetuate 'Escaba' (a prayer in the Sefardi rite; the Hebrew word means lying in repose) for the rest of their souls always said to the synagogue."

Ironically, this letter from William Benjamin was sent many years later, when Aaron's son Moses passed away. He added, "which, if you think necessary, the fee will be \$100." It was addressed to Mrs. McCarthy.



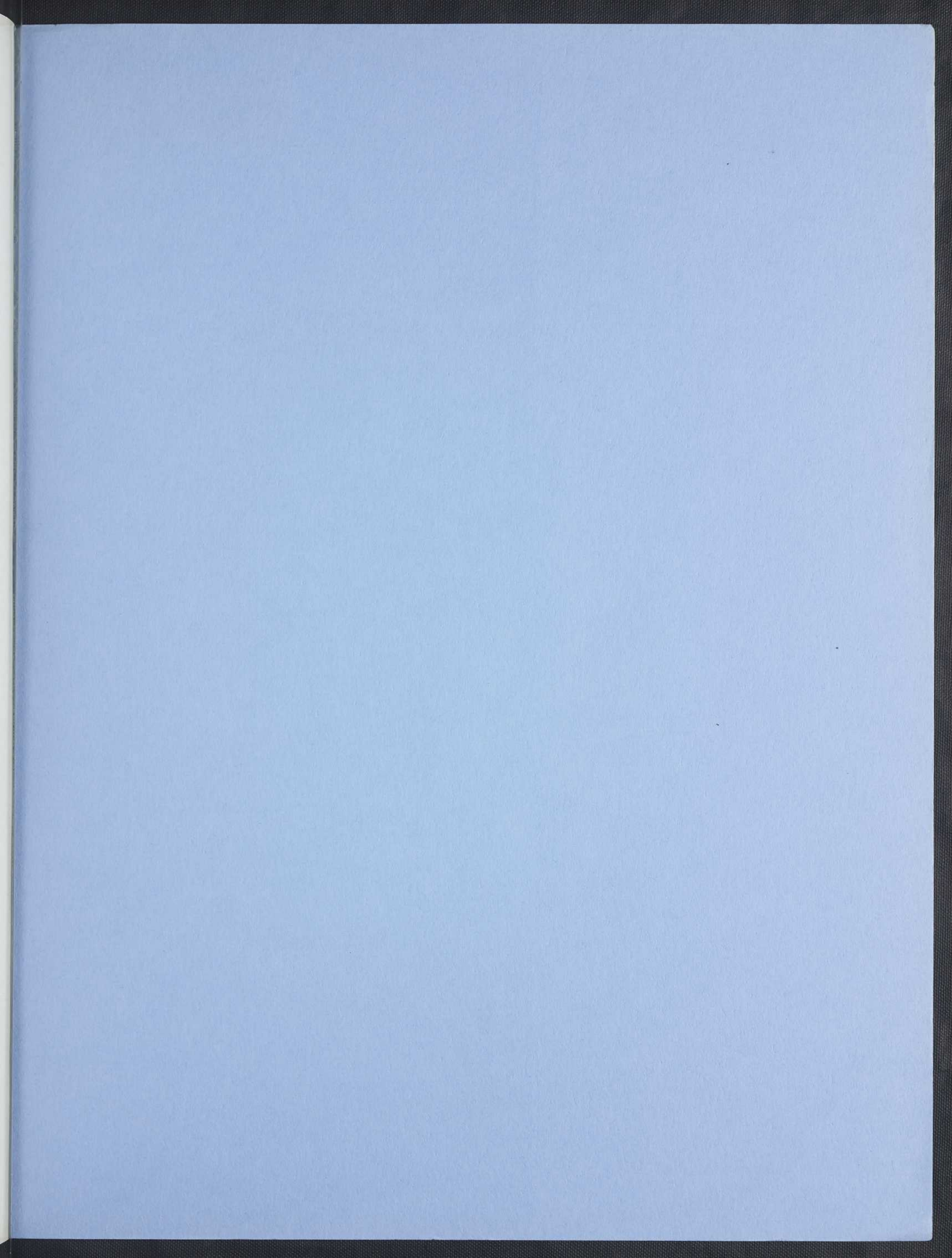


... (1881-1882) ...
... (1883-1884) ...
... (1885-1886) ...

... of death ...
... in ...
... Montreal ...

"Mr. Herz's father (Israel) and many of his
family have, after their death, a perpetual 'Kaddish'
is pronounced a number of times each day in
prayer in the Synagogue and the Hebrew word means
lying in repose for the rest of their souls always
said to the synagogue."

Incidentally, this letter from William Benjamin
was sent many years ago, when Aaron's son Moses
passed away. He asked \$1000, if you think necessary.
The fee will be \$100. It was addressed to Mrs.
McCarthy.



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