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Vermont's intimate relationship with the British Empire, had events not occurred as they did, might have induced a different destiny for Vermont . . .

## Vermont and the British Emporium, 1765-1865

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Measured by scholarly and popular writing, perhaps the most interesting period in Vermont history extends from 1775 to 1812. Considerable attention has been focused on those who guided Vermont's destinies through independence to statehood.<sup>1</sup> Highly competent scholarship has focused attention on what Chilton Williamson has called the "quandry" caused by Vermont's uncertain status before and immediately after admission to the Union.<sup>2</sup> We also have a growing corpus of comment on economic and social developments.<sup>3</sup> Despite all this, Vermonters' portrait of themselves has remained peculiarly provincial. Vermont's relationship to its American neighbors (except New York) has been touched on only lightly, though lately some tentative efforts to develop a regional history have appeared.<sup>4</sup>

Even more tentative has been discussion of Vermont-British North American relationships during this period. Since World War I Canadian and British historians have dealt actively with the changes in Canada's relationship to the mother country after the great British triumph over France in 1763. Britain's mercantile policies after 1783 have been restudied, her North American objectives have been thoroughly reevaluated, especially by friends and disciples of the British historian V.T. Harlow. On this side of the Atlantic Professor J. Leitch Wright has recently produced an important study on the role of the American frontier in British policy from 1783 to 1815.<sup>5</sup> Except in the field of economic history, however, no concerted effort other than Wright's book has been made to relate the scholarship of one area to that of another, to integrate parallel perspectives, and to employ common analytical tools.

The Canadian scholar W.A. Mackintosh in a seminal article on his-

torical geography a generation ago noted that Vermont's relationship to the British Empire from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century was in some respects peculiarly close.<sup>6</sup> The relationship has been treated by Vermonters largely in terms of the following themes: 1) Vermont had real alternatives as to political allegiance from 1783 to 1791; 2) once Vermont had determined its relationship to the United States, British power was almost inevitably restricted to the periphery of the continent; 3) British interest in Vermont before and after 1791 was closely identified with attempts to undermine American unity and territorial claims; and 4) the economic debate, especially the selection of trading partners, was largely a function of the Champlain basin, and this was resolved with finality by the opening of the Champlain-Hudson canal in 1823. All these points have assumed that Vermont could not find a comfortable niche in the empire and that continued contacts were strange and even treasonous.<sup>7</sup>

This paper does not attempt to rebut these traditional underpinnings of Vermont historical scholarship. But new questions, inspired by a somewhat different geographical perspective, are raised. Recent research on the British empire has prompted some historians to reevaluate British imperial objectives in North America after 1763. Some revisions suggest new perspectives about Vermont's relationship with Canada. What role, for instance, did Vermont play in British strategy during the American Revolution, as British strategy is now understood? How did Britain fit Vermont into the empire's economic system? How did Britain treat Vermont in terms of British political objectives in North America after 1783? What role did Vermont play in British policy after the War of 1812 and during Canada's formative period? Vermont's development, viewed in the context of the British empire, may suggest some important new dimensions to this North American relationship.

Some tentative hypotheses may be useful. Vermont in its period of independence was dealing with an imperial executive in London far less devious and incompetent and far more confused than has often been pictured.<sup>8</sup> Britain's imperial management was in the throes of reform. The slow and seemingly Machiavellian response to Vermont's special position was in part due to the attendant administrative chaos. Following the treaty of Paris of 1783 British strategic objectives underwent a radical transformation. First, the British had to abandon the conviction that the United States could be restricted to the seaboard and perhaps dismembered. Later, it appeared that Canada itself might not be defensible or even worth saving. Both factors affected Britain's attitude toward Vermont's role in North America. Finally, Britain's economic objectives — markets — agreed with the Allens' plans for a Champlain-Richelieu-St. Lawrence trade area. But after the United States was definitely established and trade had resumed, Britain was confident she could dictate economic terms even in the absence of a political union.

### I. British Objectives in North America: the Eighteenth Century

Up to independence Britain wanted American recognition of three basic principles; the superintending authority of the British parliament; American acceptance of a voluntary contribution to imperial defense; and a system of reciprocal trade preferences.<sup>9</sup> The first two were direct effects of the British victory over the French in 1763, the third originated earlier. Historians once maintained that Britain's decision to annex Canada rather than French sugar colonies in the West Indies meant that she had abandoned the mercantilist idea of an empire geared to provide raw materials and markets for the mother country. This is not true. Britain saw good possibilities for the development of a Canadian market and valued the region's timber and fur. Even more important, by annexing Canada, Britain could protect and exploit more effectively her markets in the older North American colonies. Annexation, for example, put an end to French border raids and to illegal fur smuggling between French and British posts.<sup>10</sup> New England and the middle provinces for their part supported annexation because they coveted exclusive possession of the North Atlantic fisheries and the great beaver trade.<sup>11</sup> Along with an early appreciation of the strategic value of the Champlain Valley and the Great Lakes, British expansion can clearly be attributed to mercantilist considerations.<sup>12</sup>

The highly controversial decisions confirmed the mercantilist theme. One, the Proclamation Line of 1763 was designed to preserve the interior St. Lawrence-Mississippi trade basin as a single economic unit. The other, the Quebec Act, was intended to prevent political fragmentation of the American colonies.<sup>13</sup> This new St. Lawrence trade area probably induced Britain, on the eve of the Revolution, to deny New York's request that Britain enforce New York's jurisdiction over the New Hampshire Grants. By so doing Britain was unintentionally making possible the later development of an independent Vermont. The Quebec Act, under which the interior of North America was joined to Canada, encouraged settlement of Vermont via the St. Lawrence rather than from Southern New England.<sup>14</sup>

British strategists, therefore had a fairly clear idea of their economic and military objectives in North America immediately after 1763. But techniques of imperial administration were decidedly defective. Shortly after 1700 constitutional conflicts in Britain had subsided into questions of office and patronage. Individuals rather than parties competed for the attention of the Crown. American politicians, when they began representing the colonies in London, discovered this was the system with which they had to cope.<sup>15</sup> Their grievances related primarily to the mercantilist system. Through the navigation acts Parliament defined the legal structure of commercial regulations, the mainspring of imperial management. But the "actual enforcement of the navigation system was left to royal administrative officers. The management of the empire lay outside the arena of parliamentary

conflict, and colonial policy was not a subject of political controversy."<sup>16</sup>

Unfortunately, this immunity from British domestic political conflict was not particularly advantageous to the colonies, which had as a result no alternative to negotiating with the Board of Trade. This venerable board drew up reports on colonial disputes and supervised colonial officials. It maintained close contacts with American colonial agents who resided in England, with British merchants and planters interested in overseas ventures, and with visiting colonials.<sup>17</sup> The Board thus had the means of formulating knowledgeable colonial policies. But it lacked responsibility for framing legislation and powers for implementing legislation formulated elsewhere. Since it was forced to compete for attention in Britain with the much more powerful secretaries of state, the Board of Trade was too weak to handle colonial grievances satisfactorily.<sup>18</sup> The Board adopted a negative, regulatory approach. As Charles Andrews has noted, the Board "had to see that royal orders were carried out, not so much for the sake of keeping colonial administration in the right path as for seeing that the colonies were doing what England expected them to do."<sup>19</sup>

English policy, as interpreted by the Board, was peculiarly pragmatic, which was fine; it was also extraordinarily vacillating, which was not. Colonial voices were heard only through a clumsy system of agents. They tried to negotiate with members of the Board of Trade, attempted to learn the ropes of political patronage, sought out countervailing forces in London so as to threaten the Board, and buttonholed members of parliament to speak on their behalf.<sup>20</sup> On rare occasions parliament would respond. But almost always the court of last resort was the Board itself. This was frustrating to the colonies.<sup>21</sup> With no agency in London combining executive control and responsibility to parliament and the crown, imperial government pursued a course at once generally tolerant and shortsighted, mercantilist and inconsistent, well-intentioned and exceedingly exasperating to the colonials. Within this system Vermont attempted to define its relationship to Britain during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

## II. Britain and Vermont during the American Revolution

The great Anglo-American crisis of the 1770's coincided with a smaller movement towards autonomy in the New Hampshire Grants. Until this date imperial interest in the region between the Connecticut and Hudson and north of the Massachusetts settlements had been largely strategic. Fort Dummer had been built by Massachusetts Bay in 1724 to protect outlying western settlements. Three or four days' march from the French stronghold at Crown Point, it had an obvious strategic value. Even after 1745, when settlement of a territorial dispute between New Hampshire and Massachusetts quadrupled

New Hampshire's territory and gave it the fort, Massachusetts continued to staff it.<sup>22</sup> Interest in Vermont had already grown. In 1749 after a trip up the river two gentlemen proclaimed that the region was the "garden of New England." More important, they confirmed enthusiastically what the Wentworths of New Hampshire wanted most ardently; the land was handsomely endowed with great white pines; these trees had made New Hampshire critical to the British Navy after 1660, and their exhaustion had threatened "to sink the colony into insignificance."<sup>23</sup>

Governor Benning Wentworth lost no time in pressing New Hampshire's claims in the "Grants." In doing so he betrayed an incredible insensitivity to New York's position.<sup>24</sup> Settlement followed and visions of greater things were seen by Ethan Allen. In 1774 Allen and Colonel Philip Skene elaborated a plan for the establishment of a royal colony to include the New Hampshire grants and the western country bounded by the Mohawk and St. Lawrence Rivers. Skene went to London to press the case but outbreak of war terminated his expedition. For a while Allen believed that the British had granted the commission, and that it had been taken from Skene by the Continental Congress, who thus destroyed one chance of resolving the Grants question and making Vermonters loyal to Britain.<sup>25</sup> In the confusion, however, Vermont had made its debut as a factor to be considered in Britain's future plans for North America.

War called for a new strategy. The Allens hoped to use the revolution to establish Vermont's autonomy, and perhaps its independence. They saw Britain as the greater danger at the moment, so they sided with the colonies in the first round and played an important role in the early years of the Revolution.<sup>26</sup> British strategy was even more subtle. On the military front Britain tried to crush the revolution by force and favor; this lay behind the Burgoyne expedition of 1777.<sup>27</sup> On the political front the British thought they detected sufficient loyalty in the Champlain basin to establish a separate province. As Williamson has noted, one project in 1775 would have attached the area to Quebec. A year later a more elaborate plan included settlement of Scots Highlanders in the Champlain Valley to keep New Englanders east of the Green Mountains. The Scots, cooperating with French Canadians and Indians, would thereby help "preserve an extensive country under the influence of the Crown."<sup>28</sup> The next several years saw conflicting policies, the result once more of that division of authority which had characterized British imperial rule during the first part of the eighteenth century. Burgoyne hoped to raise troops among Vermonters to fight New York, while the appropriate Secretary of State was convinced that because Vermonters had confiscated New Yorkers' lands, the latter were the loyalists.<sup>29</sup>

After the Continental Congress rebuffed a British peace commission in the summer of 1778, the British began to evolve a cohesive

political strategy to deal with Vermont and other questions. The Board of Trade moved out of the picture. Lord Germain, Secretary of State for the Southern Department, agreed with Lord North, the Prime Minister, that success depended either on force or on negotiations with separate bodies or individuals.<sup>30</sup> Henry Clinton in the Colonial office believed that Allen would withdraw from the Revolution if given lands appropriated from rebels and if Vermont was made a separate province.<sup>31</sup> Germain told Clinton that there was "no objection" to the idea of Vermont as a separate province. A year later he was telling Frederick Haldimand, the British Governor of Quebec, that Vermont's adherence was essential for the safety of Canada and for overawing inhabitants of the northern colonies and that Britain would bear heavy expenses to ensure it.<sup>32</sup>

Who on the British side was involved in the effort to develop a policy which would encourage the retention of Vermont within the empire in the event of a treaty conceding independence to the rebellious colonies? Certainly the most important, despite the debacle in the colonies, was the monarch George III. By virtue of his role as dispenser of royal patronage and as director of military and diplomatic strategy, he continued to play a disproportionate role in colonial matters. Brothers and some of his children also involved themselves in colonial affairs. A certain number of politicians regarded themselves more as royal agents than as members of the ministry of the day. Lord Sydney was one of these. Another was Charles Jenkinson, President of the Board of Trade. Parliament itself offered little resistance to the king's authority. Its own policies of the 1760's and early 1770's had been shaped largely under pressure from the powerful mercantile interest. These merchants pursued their narrow objectives and in doing so fostered a series of disastrous efforts to curb colonial autonomy. By 1780 they had resigned themselves to the loss of political control in America, and for the moment seemed content to leave colonial policy in the hands of the government of the day.

At the close of the revolution a small group of men in parliament emerged as self-appointed architects of a new policy. It included colleagues of William Pitt the Younger, who became prime minister in 1783 at age 24, and a collection of colonial governors and soldiers who had served in the new world. They urged Pitt, who was not himself much interested in the remnants of British possessions in America, to fashion from the various frontier problems an overall policy for the revival of Britain's imperial fortunes.<sup>33</sup>

What was this policy to be, and how did it affect Vermont? Although the directives, dispatches and memoranda are far from consistent, they seem to have accommodated Vermont's most ambitious territorial claims, including Northern New Hampshire and Northern New York. This considerable territory, incorporated into the empire as a separate province, would comprise the buffer zone Britain so

ardently wished. Vermont was to be guaranteed a liberal governmental system; the governor apparently would be chosen by the Crown again as befitted a buffer province. Two battalions, "properly officered," would be raised by Vermont, paid by the British, and devoted to the defense of the province. Vermont would enjoy free trade with Canada.<sup>35</sup> These were reasonable, indeed, almost inevitable proposals. Britain required some means by which her North American remnants might be protected and the remainder tempted, by Vermont's example, to return to the empire. Liberal concessions, therefore, stood side by side with some quite specific demands in the area of security and executive control.

What was the reaction of the fledging colony-province-republic? Britain's increasingly warm overtures to the Allens in 1779 and 1780 found the brothers initially disconcerted. Ethan went so far as to denounce his brother Levi for having treasonable correspondence with the enemy.<sup>35</sup> Ethan's distrust soon eased, however, only to be replaced by a British coolness. Whitehall's optimism that Vermont could be returned to the fold clashed with Governor Haldimand's pessimism.<sup>36</sup> He was convinced that Vermont really wanted attachment to the union, though ill-treatment by Congress was pushing it towards neutrality. London ignored the discouraging replies of its American authorities and remained certain that Vermont would be pleased to become a self-governing British province.<sup>37</sup> British agents reported Vermont's negotiations with Congress. Far from the scene, British officials treated the information with a certain fake reverence and remained unconvinced. They put more credence in projects advanced by displaced American loyalists who saw Vermont as a suitable place for settling refugees and Lake Champlain as the key to the defense of Canada.<sup>38</sup>

Even if Vermonters actively sought a British connection, Parliament would have to act because Lord North was not empowered to concede substantial provincial autonomy.<sup>39</sup> North at any rate was the soul of caution. He opposed vigorous initiatives towards Vermont which might disturb American negotiations in Paris. Finally, his tenure as prime minister was widely thought to be drawing to a close, and when news of the surrender at Yorktown reached London at the end of 1781 he resigned.

Before Yorktown cleared the air, however, Haldimand was caught between Vermonters who refused to treat British officers seriously, British ministers who treated Vermont too seriously, and an imperial parliament which remained indifferent. Ira Allen's famous (and some believe treasonous) response to Britain's plan for an autonomous Vermont was delivered to Haldimand in September 1781.<sup>40</sup> It accepted the British offer of provincial autonomy, and the Allens expected the Vermont Assembly to approve it the following month. Haldimand agreed to enter Lake Champlain with a substantial force, while the Allens browbeaten reluctant delegates to settle the issue.<sup>41</sup>



But the anticipated resolution of the Vermont question never materialized. Haldimand sent General St. Leger to Ticonderoga. He grew impatient at the Assembly's indecisiveness. British troops killed a Vermonter in an attempt to secure a courier and this exposed Allens' negotiations. When news of Yorktown arrived, St. Leger retired north.

On the other side of the Atlantic things were also confused. The creaking British executive had not yet succeeded in gaining parliament's support for those principles which alone would effect the return of Vermont. Clinton blamed the King, but in fact the North ministry was collapsing in 1781 under the weight of its own irresolution and the king could not bring himself to approve a ministry pledged to surrender in America.<sup>42</sup> After London took time to digest the news of Cornwallis' surrender, British authorities once more made plans to attach Vermont to Canada. In the spring Congress repeated its refusal to recognize Vermont as separate from New York. In London reports circulated that war between New York and Vermont was likely, even inevitable. Haldimand was enjoined not to attack Vermont but to let the rift deepen. Earl Shelburne, the prime minister in the short-lived government which was constructed on the ruins of North's ministry, studied Vermont's predicament and declared that Britain should work to make it a client state rather than a British province. Like North before him, Shelburne did not want to disrupt negotiations in Paris. His ministry was dedicated to the search for a peace settlement in North America. British officials such as Haldimand, General Carleton (still the commander of a beleaguered British garrison in New York) and loyalists urged negotiations.<sup>43</sup>

Even the decision to negotiate with the rebellious colonies did not clarify Britain's position. British leaders spent much time blaming each other for losing the war. In New York Sir Henry Clinton blamed Cornwallis and London for losing Vermont; the former for disobeying orders and the latter for refusing his naval assistance. Cornwallis' surrender still left Vermont's status in question. Despite the military collapse the British improved their bargaining position vis-à-vis Vermont because, after Congress rebuffed Ira Allen's overtures in February, 1781, the Allens were alienated from the Americans. In 1782 Congress declared Vermont could not be admitted to the Union unless she reduced her territorial ambitions. This Vermont did, only to see New York block its application anyway. Vermonters feared for the security of their property and along the Connecticut River citizens demonstrated in support for a return to British rule. Ira Allen resumed his appeals to Haldimand. Ethan wrote that he would do everything in his power "to render this state a British province" and urged Haldimand to take immediate possession of Ticonderoga.<sup>44</sup> Germain, meanwhile, informed Haldimand in January 1783 that the British force at Sorel would protect Vermont if it opted for Britain. Vermont was to be Haldimand's primary objec-

tive.<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, Germain's pledge was immediately undercut. Allen in March, 1783, asked Haldimand to ensure that Vermont was not conceded to the Americans.<sup>46</sup> But by this time the British were thoroughly tired of war and hoped to wean America from France. British merchants agitated for a resumption of trade. So the Canadian-American boundary line was drawn to put Vermont under American jurisdiction. The British had failed to gain Vermont yet Vermont still sought security.

### III. Vermont in British North American Strategy 1783-1795

The traumatic loss of the richest and most populous portion of North America forced Britain to re-evaluate its continental strategy. In 1784 the younger William Pitt became Prime Minister, and he was destined to superintend Britain's self-renewal over the next twenty years. He had doubts about trying to contain the Americans, doubts shared by his cousin and amanuensis William Grenville. Both believed that the United States was destined to be a great power. If so, Britain would suffer by antagonizing her. Yet there was strong pressure from fur trading interests, shippers, and Canadian officials to contain American expansion. The empire was treated by Pitt under three main guidelines in the wake of the American settlement. One was opposition to further annexations except perhaps in India and where naval bases or commercial entrepôts were needed.<sup>47</sup> Secondly, Britain's remaining colonies were to be fashioned into a new mercantilist system based squarely on the premise "that it was better to have no colonies at all, than not to have them subservient to the maritime strength and commercial interest of Great Britain."<sup>48</sup> Finally, all imperial development would be linked to areas the Royal Navy could defend to avoid expansion into a limitless wilderness.<sup>49</sup>

North America posed the greatest problems. Should Canada, which produced almost nothing necessary to a self-contained empire, be included in the new mercantilist system? Attempts to justify Canada's inclusion would lead, as will be seen later, to plans for a North American trade system based on the St. Lawrence. The second was Britain's embarrassing military posture in North America. Canada was extremely vulnerable, "too vulnerable to warrant the expensive use of physical pressure as a supplement to diplomacy."<sup>50</sup> Protecting what remained of British North America was a problem which Pitt could not solve, and the search for solutions was left to some lesser officials who felt strongly about curbing American expansion.<sup>51</sup> Vermont was important in this thinking.

Despite Pitt's belief to the contrary, British officials soon began to fashion a policy in North America which assumed that the new American union could not last. Britain could accelerate the process of disintegration by enticing peripheral areas into the British system.

Commercial advantages, forts along the northern frontier, Indian nation-states, and exploitation of lingering loyalist sentiment in more settled areas were means to this end. Inspiration for this policy seems to have come from Silas Deane, onetime American commissioner to France, who, when recalled on a charge of misappropriating funds, stayed in Britain. He predicted the split of the new nation into northern and southern halves, and believed the South would soon rejoin the empire.<sup>52</sup> His outlook was contagious. Soon afterwards British newspapers began deriding the work of the 1787 constitutional convention in Philadelphia: "the infinite absurdity of gravely framing laws or conventions for what never was, nor most probably ever can be, a nation."<sup>53</sup>

Many Americans agreed. Along the northern frontier there was considerable pro-British sentiment. Canadians bickered with the inhabitants of Maine as to the location of the boundary. The British flag continued to fly at Oswego and at Niagara on the frontier; the United States claimed both of these strategic locations. In Vermont the population was growing rapidly, and it remained steadfast in its opposition to annexation by Canada. In London governments rose and fell with startling rapidity until the spring of 1784. Lord Sydney, who subsequently served as colonial and foreign secretary until 1789, pursued a policy of deliberate delay. He complained of the difficulties involved in exploiting separatist sentiment and resolved to do nothing.<sup>54</sup>

In June, 1789, the Duke of Leeds as Foreign Secretary decided to measure separatist sentiment. He circulated to British consuls in the United States a questionnaire on the likelihood of American disintegration and solicited advice on Britain's role.<sup>55</sup> Several veteran observers accepted the invitation enthusiastically. Phineas Bond in Philadelphia declared that jealousy toward the seaboard was rising among settlers west of the mountains. If unity was not soon secured, the latter would "be driven to the expedient of seeking support from some other empire, more capable of contributing to its progress and protection."<sup>56</sup> Lieutenant Colonel George Beckwith saw strong separatist tendencies in the West and in Vermont. In the Southeast one agent broadcast his plan for an Indian confederacy to check American territorial ambitions and to give Britain control of the Mississippi. Americans talked openly of disunion. King George III opposed sending an emissary to the new nation because he did not expect it to survive.<sup>57</sup>

There was just enough substance in these reports to encourage British officials. In October, 1789, Grenville instructed Lord Dorchester, the Canadian governor who succeeded Haldimand, that separate governments should be encouraged for the interior settlements. No direct British interference or explicit commitments were authorized.<sup>58</sup> Later he noted that "it will be for the benefit of this



By placing Vermont in the center of the bottom part of his map of the region and depicting the long run of the St. Lawrence River and the vast expanse of Canada, Ira Allen clearly expressed his strong view of Vermont's close geographic relationship with the British colony to the north. "A Map of the State of Vermont," drawn under the direction of Ira Allen for his *Natural and political history of the State of Vermont* . . . (London, 1798).

country to prevent Vermont and Kentucky [sic] and all other settlements now forming in the interior parts of the great continent of North America from becoming dependent on the government of the United States, or on that of any other foreign country, and to preserve them on the contrary in a state of independence, and to induce them to form treaties of commerce and friendship with Great Britain."<sup>59</sup> By 1790 the outlines of a new and potentially ambitious policy were discernible. Vermont's role as an independent state seemed assured.

Even more specific was a plan for creating a buffer state between the new nation and British North America. Pitt and Grenville, unlike many of their colleagues, sought to insulate Canada from the future growth of American power rather than destroy the United States. To do this they wanted a barrier state inhabited by Indians established on

the American side of the demarcation line of 1783. British forts on the St. Lawrence would control the river and its trade. Indians would remain friendly as a result of British efforts to curb American expansion. East of Niagara this bold scheme required substantial modification. Indian claims had been largely extinguished; thus the barrier state must be rather artificial. Grenville believed, however, that Britain could gain control of the Champlain islands, either through agreement with Vermont directly, or by American recognition of British claims as compensation for losses already endured by the British as the result of American infractions of the Treaty of 1783.<sup>60</sup>

The plan depended upon major concessions by Americans. This was unlikely in 1789. But in 1790 Britain showed it had recovered its power when it staked a claim to the Canadian Pacific. Events seemed to shift the balance of power in Britain's favor. When news of the American defeat reached England early in 1792 British hopes soared. John Graves Simcoe, recently appointed lieutenant governor of Upper Canada, urged Pitt to take advantage of the nation's reviving fortunes by seizing New Orleans and appropriating the Old Northwest as a refuge for loyalists. By annexing Vermont, he observed, Britain could guarantee the safety of the entire St. Lawrence basin.<sup>61</sup> Hammond, the British minister in Washington, was instructed to press the buffer project while American frontier policy was in disarray. Hammond reported to London, however, that the "disarray" was much less evident than London thought. Prospects for a buffer state based on direct British-American negotiations faded.<sup>62</sup>

Britain was disappointed but not dismayed. Her North American projects were being pursued simultaneously in other ways, such as through direct contacts with Vermont. Recent scholarship has shown British policy with regard to Vermont to be a good deal less naive than sometimes thought. It was potentially more fruitful than direct negotiations with Washington. As Williamson had clearly shown, the Allens were not simply eager to keep Vermont out of the union until it could enter on its own terms. They in fact looked to independence under British protection as a viable and permanent settlement.<sup>63</sup> The British position, as will become clear, was not stationary either; negotiations were to be conducted with alternate enthusiasm and reluctance. Indeed, from 1782 to 1791 it was far from clear that the British saw substantial benefits in the adherence of Vermont as a province, a viewpoint not generally included in Vermont histories. It is therefore not surprising that negotiations failed; the desire for agreement was affected by outside factors which intruded periodically.

After Cornwallis' defeat at Yorktown, the British appeared more eager than Vermont for reunion. There was, however, no great element of Machiavellian intrigue in this. Britain was not, as Zadock

Thompson wrote in his history of Vermont, about ready to deploy ten thousand troops to force Vermont's acquiescence.<sup>64</sup> Haldimand disliked petty intrigue and he made it clear to suspicious Vermonters that his instructions were to promote conciliation between Britain and the United States.<sup>65</sup> More importantly Britain's ministries were unstable and greater items than Vermont demanded attention first. Even Vermont's decision to declare its independence rather than join the Union made only a slight impression in London. Vermont, in short, was a distraction for the British and Haldimand was left to deal with the situation pretty much as he saw fit.<sup>66</sup>

At first, the Treaty of 1783 seemed to end any justification for further British contact with Vermont. With the line drawn at the forty-fifth parallel, British officials initially dared not contemplate Vermont's return to the Empire.<sup>67</sup> The Allens suggested that loyalists displaced during the revolution settle in the northern part of the Champlain Valley in order to build a strong party favoring annexation of Vermont to Canada. Haldimand refused because of the approaching treaty.<sup>68</sup> Britain's rigidity bent only slightly in 1784. Assuming that Vermont was anticipating admission into the union, Canadian officials rejected Governor Chittenden's demand for the evacuation of British troops at Pointe-au-Fer and Dutchman's Point.<sup>69</sup> Two months later, in June, Haldimand confided to the British Secretary of State, Lord Sydney, that Vermont could not "separate from the American Congress without certain ruin." As an indication of future trends in British thinking, however, Haldimand did suggest that Vermont might "by proper management, be made a barrier useful to Canada."<sup>70</sup>

Until 1788 British-Vermont relations were virtually frozen. Britain continued to respect the boundary settlement of 1783. Britain accepted Ethan Allen's assessment that Vermont would lose much by joining the American Union and that it would be difficult to coerce her. But to join Britain "might occasion a war between France and the United States on the one part and Great Britain including Vermont on the other." This would destroy the usefulness of commercial understandings between Vermont and Canada.<sup>71</sup> By September, 1788, however, Vermont was ready to resume serious negotiations, and Levi Allen was subsequently sent to Britain.<sup>72</sup> Vermont's position has been studied extensively, Britain's less so. Allen's task was simply to mobilize anyone with the slightest political influence in England, and he was determined to see it through.<sup>73</sup>

After Ethan Allen died in 1789 his brothers Levi and Ira played an increasing role in guiding Vermont's destiny during the immediate future. For ideological and economic reasons they were more strongly disposed towards the British than their deceased brother. Levi was selected to journey to London in 1789 in an attempt to secure a commercial and perhaps even a political treaty.<sup>74</sup> But when he reached London, Britain was at the brink of war with Spain over

claims in the Pacific Northwest (Nootka Sound).<sup>75</sup> Until this was settled there was no desire to provoke the United States into helping Spain. So Whitehall temporized.

Settlement of the Nootka Sound crisis on Britain's terms soon followed. This favored Allen's mission. Canadian officials and their representatives in London strongly supported the idea of making Vermont an "appendage of Quebec." Simcoe finally succeeded in getting Levi Allen interviews with Grenville and others. Simcoe held that Vermont was the key to protecting the St. Lawrence. It also offered naval supplies. Simcoe believed that judicious bribes to the Vermont legislature might work.<sup>77</sup> He also held that British territories in North America needed buffer states for protection. Commercial concessions and a canal around the Richelieu were not too high a price to pay for Vermont's loyalty.<sup>78</sup>

But British officials drew their own conclusions from the Nootka Sound crisis. With Spain now chastized, Britain did not fear American intrigue as much. With Britain's confidence restored, many officials believed that buffer communities could wait, especially those which, as Allen rather indiscreetly confided to Henry Dundas at the Board of Trade, anticipated annexation of all lands between Lake Champlain and Lake Ontario.<sup>79</sup> Economic arrangements were possible but political negotiations with the "Vermontese" were inappropriate.<sup>80</sup> This indifference to political alliances exasperated Simcoe and his Canadian friends.<sup>81</sup> Simcoe was deeply impressed by Levi. Charles Jenkinson at the Board of Trade was also impressed: "we must join with Vermont cost what it may," he told Henry Clinton.<sup>82</sup> Grenville, as Foreign Secretary, refused to treat Levi as an emissary of a sovereign nation, but he did commission the peripatetic Vermonter to assure his colleagues at home that Britain was sympathetic to the self-styled republic's aspirations. Simcoe for his part may have convinced Grenville to supply Allen with gold to bribe Vermont's legislature into returning to the Empire.<sup>83</sup> Unfortunately for Allen, though perhaps to Britain's relief, Allen arrived in Vermont two days too late to stop the admission of Vermont to the Union.

By becoming the fourteenth state Vermont dealt a stunning blow to prospects for rejoining the empire. Not only did this secure the boundary settlement of 1783, but it also settled the controversy with New York, the source of Britain's leverage in these negotiations.<sup>85</sup> Jay's Treaty, which ended British involvement on the Northwest frontier, sealed Vermont's political adherence to the new republic. But it did not end the possibility of Vermont-Canadian cooperation in the St. Lawrence basin.

#### IV. Vermont and the St. Lawrence

Even Britain's enemies were surprised by her concessions in 1783. Both sides agreed to make the settlement more handsome still by es-

tablishing generous commercial reciprocity to smother the bitterness of war. Lord Shelburne observed that there remained in America two great jurisdictions; the United States and Spanish America. The British still possessed two remnants of empire which could be used to cash in on an enormous commercial opportunity. The West Indian islands would serve as an entree to Spanish America. More important yet was the role of Canada. British North America was pitifully deficient as a source of raw materials and its small population did not constitute a viable market for British goods. But it might serve, Shelburne thought, as an entrepot through which British goods might tap the rapidly extending inland markets of the new republic. Britain need not oppose America's westward expansion because in a free trade system British manufactures would follow westward. Americans, meanwhile, would trade freely with Britain, the British West Indies, and the British North America. Colonial economic relations would not only be restored but also expanded.<sup>86</sup>

Several events conspired to defeat Shelburne's visions, drive him from power, and destroy free trade in North America. The peace treaty negotiated at Paris excited widespread displeasure in Britain. Shelburne left office in January, 1783, and the country was rudderless for five weeks.<sup>87</sup> During this period the young William Pitt came forward with a free trade treaty enabling American ships to enter British ports on the same terms as British ships. The bill met strong opposition from special interests and mercantilists. There was fear that Ireland's newly-developed provision trade with the West Indies would be ruined. John Holyroyd, Earl of Sheffield, spokesman for the mercantilists, declared it was unnecessary to court American trade. The Americans possessed practically no industries; Britain boasted the best in the world. Britain could sell elsewhere; America must buy in Britain. By clinging to the navigation system Britain could make Americans pay for independence. What Britain lost in the West India trade would be gained by British North America and Ireland, and British shipping would increase at American expense.<sup>88</sup>

Sheffield's neo-mercantilism directly contradicted Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, published only seven years earlier and already recognized as the bible of free trade. Unhappy at the prospect of a choice between diametrically opposed economic systems, parliament turned instead to *ad hoc* measures.<sup>89</sup> Britain resented American successes at the conference table, but the desire to punish her was tempered by widespread recognition of her future importance. British shippers demanded complete exclusion of the American carrying trade. West Indian interests complained that without access to American markets they could not compete with French sugar colonies. The West Indians obtained their concessions. But in British North America trade with the United States was restricted to overland carriage. This would not challenge British maritime supremacy but would permit British goods to reach interior American markets.<sup>90</sup> In



time, it was hoped, an influx of loyalists and capital would permit Canada to supplant the United States as the principal West Indian supplier, and imperial leniency towards the United States would end.<sup>91</sup>

This compromise policy placed special emphasis on the St. Lawrence. Under this system Canada was described as a conduit through which goods would flow to the interior of the expanding continent. This river would supply Britain with raw materials. The St. Lawrence, if controlled by Great Britain, would make all points within its basin subservient to British imperial interests. There were political overtones to this policy, but British confidence in its revitalized economy encouraged bold thinking. Montreal and Quebec would control the continental trade, and only British ships would carry goods across the ocean.<sup>92</sup>

Vermont of course was important in this thinking. It commanded approaches to a vital subsidiary basin on the St. Lawrence and to Montreal in particular. Both Vermont and Canada perceived a mutual advantage. Williamson has noted that "in the short time at their disposal before the outbreak of the Revolution the new Vermont inhabitants were clearly benefiting from British occupation of the St. Lawrence."<sup>93</sup> In 1783 Haldimand reported to Lord North that Vermonters made "no scruple of telling me that Vermont must either be annexed to Canada or become mistress of it, as it is the only channel by which the produce of their country can be conveyed to market . . .

"<sup>94</sup> Until the opening of the Lake Champlain and Hudson Canal geography would continue to force Vermont's trade northward.<sup>95</sup> Merchants in Quebec and Montreal felt a similar pull. Quebec merchants wanted to export American raw materials. They believed that since the St. Lawrence was the natural outlet for interior North America they would surely attract American commerce. As long as the British prohibited Americans from trading directly with British colonies, Canadians would enjoy a decided advantage.<sup>96</sup>

The perception of mutual advantage produced negotiations. Vermont historians have minimized their significance by assuming that Champlain trade was bound to turn towards the Hudson. The evidence suggests strongly, however, that the British rather than the Canadians or the Vermonters intervened to destroy prospects for close economic ties. They disliked the idea of any part of the United States profiting from access to the empire. If Vermont was admitted to the union and enjoyed special access to British markets, it might force Britain to offer the same concessions to the rest of the states. Haldimand therefore insisted that Vermont pay the price for admission into the St. Lawrence system; submission to imperial navigation laws.<sup>97</sup> This was shown as early as 1784 when the Vermont Assembly empowered a delegation to seek Canadian approval for a road from the Vermont border to St. Johns and a canal around the Chambly Rapids. In London a considerable difference of opinion on

the same issue meant that Haldimand was granted wide discretion and given very little guidance. Haldimand concluded that Pitt was opposed to broad concessions if they endangered relations with the new republic. In Quebec merchants pressed for the extension of Canadian markets. Haldimand compromised by sanctioning a few concessions such as the right of Vermonters to export certain foodstuffs through Lake Champlain. He denied permission for a road and a canal.<sup>98</sup>

London's inertia was slowly eroded by recognition that a strong community of interest existed on the northern frontier. Unfortunately the British failed to see in time that Vermont could turn elsewhere if Canada was not allowed to offer incentives to attract its trade. The truly formative period on Vermont's economic development came fast on the heels of the settlement of 1783, and after a half-decade of delay Vermont was beginning to look south. In 1785 Ira Allen met in Quebec with Lt. Gov. Hamilton to discuss Vermont's trading relations with the St. Lawrence Colony. But some progress towards freer trade between Vermont and Canada was made after 1786. Quebec merchants pointed to the Anglo-French free trade agreement of 1786 and to concessions Britain had made to Ireland. Vermonters were determined to trade whether legally or not. Quebec realized that Vermont might tap the interim Canadian trade and send it south if Vermont was not encouraged to use the St. Lawrence.<sup>99</sup> Fears that Vermont would control the ocean trade seemed unfounded.<sup>100</sup>

Vermont and Britain moved independently but almost in unison to extend freer trade privileges. In 1787 Ira Allen requested freedom to trade with the British West Indies, Canada, and Britain in British ships. Meanwhile the Governor's Council in Canada, pending British sanction, opened trade on Lake Champlain with the "neighboring states?" This allowed free importation into Canada of lumber, naval stores, hemp, flax, grain, provisions, livestock and all products grown in these states. All products except furs and "peltries" might be exported from Canada without duties.<sup>101</sup>

Despite more liberal provisions, Vermont's northward trade proved far from lucrative. Timber products were too expensive to market and Vermonters turned to shipping products on rafts — especially iron, which the Board of Trade prohibited.<sup>102</sup> Without a canal at the Richelieu, trade was not likely to be conducted efficiently.<sup>103</sup> Levi Allen pressed for additional privileges when he reached London in 1789. Hawkesbury at the Board of Trade believed that Britain had already conceded much and interpreted Allen's initiatives as essentially political maneuvers. Hawkesbury, as has been seen, supported annexation but would not commit the Board of Trade to further economic concessions without progress on the political front. As a result of Allen's talks Britain conceded some points but would not

permit Vermonters to participate directly in British maritime commerce.<sup>104</sup>

During Britain's wars against Revolutionary France and Napoleon Vermont did a brisk business in the Champlain basin. Jay's Treaty in 1794 offered the chance for more liberal American-British trade, but Anglo-American animosity was so bitter that trade proved less than expected. In 1801 New York demanded that import levies be tightened, for British goods were undermining home manufactures. Canada retaliated and free trade seemed doomed.<sup>105</sup> But in 1807 Britain revitalized border commerce by placing restrictions on imports from continental Europe. The Maritimes and Montreal prospered by trans-shipping New England timber. The United States in the same year aided this by imposing an embargo on its own exports, making the border trade, albeit illegal, more attractive. Indeed, the embargo, if obeyed, would have hurt Vermont severely, and she cooperated with the British in order to take advantage of the Empire's wartime demands.<sup>106</sup>

Canadian officials encouraged Vermonters to violate the embargo, and in Canada Governor Craig reported happily in 1808 that as a result of the sea embargo the overland trade had doubled.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, the northbound trade, even though easier for American officials to suppress, decreased only twenty percent. The British North American colonies, cooperating with suppliers like Vermont, provided Britain's wartime economy with desperately needed natural products. The empire in a sense was inviting the northern states to join the British North American mart.<sup>108</sup>

All this proved to be too good to be true. The Canadian-Vermont trade from 1793 to 1815 grew as the result of fortuitous events. Britain had never evolved a policy to insure the continuation of trade through the St. Lawrence.<sup>109</sup> In 1815 the wartime demand collapsed. Embargoes were repealed, which encouraged Britain to trade with American seaports instead of through the interior. In Britain, "gradually purely economic considerations triumphed over the ancient politico-economic orthodoxies of British sea power. The United States had forced its reentry into the British mercantile empire on almost equal terms." Britain embarked on nationalism of free trade. She was determined to procure American goods as cheaply as possible in order to widen the profit margins of her unique industrial economy.<sup>110</sup> She no longer tried to route goods through her Canadian possessions. Indeed, Canada's absorption into the United States seemed imminent. Canadian interests were London's unwanted problem: "the less you write Downing Street," one Canadian official was advised, "the more thankful they will be."<sup>111</sup> News that New York had approved plans to build the Erie Canal in 1816 stirred Britain to consider Canadian demands that free shipment of raw materials be allowed across the border. The Colonial Office in London did not really care, and free trade enthusiasts won out.<sup>112</sup> In

1819 parliament established virtually a free-trade system for raw material entering Britain through Canada.<sup>113</sup> Nevertheless, so efficient was the Erie Canal system that even preferential tariff treatment could not make the St. Lawrence competitive. After 1825 the new canal drew St. Lawrence trade to New York. Vermont's own trade changed directions. The completion of subsidiary canals increased Canadian dependence on the United States, and railroads later reinforced the tendency. Indeed, had not the slavery controversy intervened, Canada might well have been annexed at mid-century. Vermont as an economic frontier had already disappeared; its role as a political border area would also have gone. This annexation did not happen; inevitably Vermont was connected in British thinking with the survival of British North America.

#### V. Vermont and Canadian Unity.

From 1783 onwards Britain often expected Canada to be annexed to the United States. The prospect was usually entertained calmly. Occasionally there appeared a strong desire to preserve Canada — whatever its apparent worthlessness, but the war of 1812 reinforced rather than relieved the fear that British North America was indefensible.<sup>114</sup> Development of direct trade with the United States seemed to remove the last reason for retaining it. Many in Britain concluded that except for the Maritime provinces Canada was worth little. One official suggested that Montreal be made an imperial free city like Hamburg; upper Canada was “quite a dead weight . . . and unlikely ever to pay its own way.”<sup>115</sup>

Canada's precarious position was not based solely on the prospect of war. Vermont, with a large population close to the northern border, posed a serious danger to Canada in these areas: rapidly expanding population in Vermont threatened to appropriate the Eastern townships; Vermont's deepening egalitarian republicanism confronted the unique system of French Canada; and the Champlain Valley remained the most likely invasion route into Canada's center.

The settlement issue made its first appearance as early as 1783. Haldimand was alarmed by the theory that Vermont must either be annexed to Canada or annex Quebec to Vermont. He foresaw a rapidly growing population with strong republican sentiments constituting “a damnable inheritance” and pushing north into vacant Canadian lands.<sup>116</sup> His fears were soon realized. By the 1790's the push north seemed imminent. Haldimand's hoped-for uninhabited buffer between Vermonters and Canadians disappeared. Officials now talked of filling the border area with French Canadians, who seemed less likely to amalgamate with Vermonters.<sup>117</sup> In 1791 Dorchester complained of Vermonters settling on the River Chazy, eight miles north of the border at Pointe-au-Fer.<sup>118</sup> Similar reports reached the British emissary at Washington in 1794. The British

raised the matter with the American Ambassador in London the same year.<sup>119</sup> The British solution, evolved between 1798 and 1812, was to plant a "loyalist" population of British supporters driven from the seaboard colonies after the Revolution. By 1812 about 20,000 persons had been situated in the Eastern townships. Almost all were former Americans and indeed many were Vermonters. The "loyalist" credentials of many were questionable and the policy was not resumed at war's end.<sup>120</sup>

The ideological problem was equally difficult for Britain. Her leaders were uncertain how to immunize Canada from republican principles. In 1783 one point seemed clear to British officials: the American rebellion was seen as resulting from too many rather than too few concessions prior to 1770. In Canada this meant legislative power must be reduced and executive power increased. Outside the empire, however, republican principles were gaining fast.<sup>121</sup> The French Revolution deeply affected Vermont. Its proximity to the only large French-speaking population outside Europe made the young state a convenient center for French republican activity. After 1795 French agents and republican committees were active in northern Vermont communities despite attempts to keep the activity at discreet levels.<sup>122</sup> In 1800 Edmond Genet, an agent of French radicalism, moved through the area, stirring Jeffersonian Democrats in Vermont and disaffected French Canadians north of the border.<sup>123</sup> Had relations with France at this stage been better and those with Britain worse, the ideological impact might have been substantial.

The military problem was to be the most enduring disruptive feature in the quest for Canadian unity. After enthusiasm for the buffer state idea faded, many British officials agreed that Canada could not remain a British colony longer than American friendship permitted.<sup>124</sup> There followed several plots to invade Canada from Vermont. Dorchester reported to Simcoe, by then governor of Upper Canada, that Lower Canada was "much more exposed to inroads since the peace by the increase of population and mutual intercourse on all sides. Lake Champlain is the great and immediate inlet into this country from New York and Vermont . . ." <sup>125</sup> For this reason, if no other, the Duke of Portland as Home Secretary in 1798 refused Ira Allen's request for construction of a canal on the Richelieu River. He was convinced that Vermonters would use it to capture Quebec.<sup>126</sup> Portland would have been even more alarmed to hear a rumor that Vermont had offered to Congress a plan to seize Lower Canada, with Vermonters being permitted to plunder it.<sup>127</sup>

The rumor was not completely naive. Genet apparently offered several hundred blank commissions to leading Vermonters in 1795. The next year France reportedly planned to finance an expedition from Vermont. They found an accomplice in none other than Ira Allen, who apparently concluded that he would punish Britain for having refused to annex Vermont by seizing Canada in turn. Ira

procured 20,000 stands of arms in France. In December, 1796, acting on a tip from a Vermonter still sympathetic to Britain, the British dispatched a warship to intercept the merchantman *Olive Branch*. Some 15,000 arms and 20 pieces of artillery were impounded and Ira was imprisoned on a charge of fomenting revolution in Quebec. Ira declared them to be his personal property and said they were intended for the Vermont militia. But if Talleyrand's memorandum of 1798 is read in context, it appears that the arms were indeed destined for Vermonters, who were to seize Montreal while the French captured Halifax. The British were to be cleared from Canada, an independent republic established, and an expedition launched to free Ireland.<sup>128</sup> In 1801 the British uncovered a secret society in Montreal allegedly masterminded by Levi Allen and connected to Irish nationalists. In 1807 Canadian authorities reported that Vermonters were so keen to invade Canada that "10,000 hardy vagabonds might be got together in three days."<sup>129</sup>

These spicy rumors, more speculative than substantial, reflected Canadian worries about Vermont's danger to British North America. Vermonters' readiness to violate trade embargoes and to deal even with the enemy after war was declared in 1812 quickly persuaded Canadians of the opposite: Vermonters were friends and potential allies. It was no accident, therefore, that General George Provost chose to invade the Lake Champlain Valley on the west side of the lake. Such tender regard for the Vermont landscape produced no rewards, however; Vermonters were dedicated to their own interests.<sup>130</sup> Later the Duke of Wellington, Britain's foremost soldier after his victory at Waterloo, drew from Britain's naval defeat in the Battle of Lake Champlain the lesson that no British army could go far without control of Lake Champlain.<sup>131</sup> Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, agreed that because of its proximity to the St. Lawrence and to Montreal, Lake Champlain was the key to Canadian security. Canada was glad to secure the Rush-Bagot agreement of 1817 limiting naval forces and fortifications on Lake Champlain, for this device with all its pitfalls was preferable to trying to entice Vermont into the Canadian system.<sup>132</sup>

Canada's security questions continued until the middle years of the nineteenth century. By 1840 Canada invited American attention because expansionist fever was high and well-watered lands were scarcer. From the 1860's to 1870 Irish sympathizers staged raids into Canada from American territory, and Britain began to think of a strategic defense system. During the Webster-Ashburton negotiations of 1842 both sides agreed that Rouses Point offered a safe base for an army moving towards Montreal.<sup>133</sup> Maine, however, insisted that the United States control the highlands overlooking Quebec. But in the end Wellington insisted that Canada control the Quebec highlands on the Maine border.

Montreal was now more exposed than ever. In 1845 the Oregon dis-

pute brought Britain and the United States close to war. One group of British officers suggested that an army of 25,000 defend Canada by occupying northern New England. These states, the thesis went, acting as sovereign powers, would sign individual treaties with Britain and this might destroy the union.<sup>135</sup> Wellington and Edward Stanley, the Foreign Secretary, looked with horror on "this very wild letter;" the project was dropped.<sup>136</sup>

When the Civil War erupted, Britain believed that Lincoln's Secretary of War Stanton might attempt to restore national unity by finding a common foreign enemy, and an invasion up the Champlain Valley was thought "inevitable" if this strategy was adopted.<sup>137</sup> Fortunately for the state of Canadian defenses on the Richelieu, nothing happened. In time the fear of invasion disintegrated with the fortifications themselves.

## VI. Conclusion

By the middle of the nineteenth century almost nothing was left of the close connections which seemed likely to govern Vermont-British relations after the American Revolution. The vitality, the dreams, and the fears of former days had disappeared. Canada's destiny took a path sharply divergent from that of Vermont and different as well from that of Britain. Ironically, Vermont, the revolutionary haven of former years, turned inward. Canada developed quietly and, after the British North America Act of 1867, did so without much attention from Britain. Britain continued a policy of free trade, but the United States threw up high protective tariffs. The St. Lawrence economic system was distracted by railroads which defied river basins: Vermont's difficulties with New York and with the union itself disappeared. Far from being a maverick, Vermont emerged as a prototype of an intense type of Americanism. Reference to Vermont disappeared from British official papers, from private correspondence of leading statesmen, and even from the *Times* of London. Canadian self-confidence gradually grew. Preoccupation with fears of an invasion from Lake Champlain faded away.

Today relations grow closer. Traders and tourists ignore the boundary. Vermont's French Canadian heritage is now recognized. With the sun set on the empire, a reassessment of Britain's achievement in every quarter of the globe has taken place. It is perhaps an appropriate occasion to recall that under different conditions Vermont's relationship with the British empire might have been much different than it was.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>C.A. Jellison's *Ethan Allen: Frontier Rebel* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1969) is the most recent.

<sup>2</sup>Especially Chilton Williamson, *Vermont in Quandary, 1763-1825* (Montpelier, Vermont: Vermont Historical Society, 1949).

<sup>3</sup>Such as H.N. Muller, "Smuggling into Canada: How the Champlain Valley Defied Jefferson's Embargo," *Vermont History*, XXXVIII (1970), 5-21.

<sup>4</sup>Frederick F. Van de Water, *The Reluctant Republic: Vermont 1724-1791* (New York: John Day Co., 1941). An interesting approach was attempted in William Brewster, *The Fourteenth Commonwealth: Vermont and the States that Failed* (Philadelphia: S.S. MacManus, 1960); unfortunately the analysis was not carried very far.

<sup>5</sup>Vincent T. Harlow, *The Founding of the Second British Empire 1763-1793* (2 vols.; London: Longmans, 1952-1964); J. Leitch Wright, *Britain and The American Frontier 1783-1815* (Aldens: University of Georgia Press, 1975).

<sup>6</sup>W.A. Mackintosh, "Canada and Vermont: A Study in Historical Geography," *Canadian Historical Review*, VII (1927), 9-35; Muller, "Smuggling," *passim*; T.D. Seymour Bassett, "An Inland Port: Burlington, Vermont in 1840," *New England Quarterly*, XLIV (December 1971), 635-49.

<sup>7</sup>The most eloquent dissenter from this last axiom of Vermont's nationalist historians is Henry S. Wardner, whose "Haldimand Negotiations" (*Vermont Historical Society Proceedings*, II, 1931) is significant. Wardner makes the point that Vermont as a province in the empire need not have meant an inferior destiny (pp 27-29).

<sup>8</sup>C.A. Jellison's recent indirect slap at British incompetence when complimenting Haldimand ("a person of considerable intelligence, experience and level-headedness — all of which marked him as something of a phenomenon among the British officers of that day") suggests the impression persists: *Ethan Allen: Frontier Rebel*, p. 252.

<sup>9</sup>Harlow, *Founding*, I, 495.

<sup>10</sup>Jean Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade out of New France, 1713-1760," *Report of the Canadian Historical Association (1939)*, pp. 61-76.

<sup>11</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup>*Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1928-1944), XIX, 260-61.

<sup>13</sup>Samuel E. Morison, ed., *Sources and Documents Illustrating the American Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 104.

<sup>14</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 38.

<sup>15</sup>Stanley N. Katz, *Newcastle's New York: Anglo-American Politics, 1721-1753*. (Boston: Belknap Press, 1968), p. 9.

<sup>16</sup>Dora Mae Clark, *The Rise of the British Treasury: Colonial Administration in the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), pp. 4-5, 143-45, 198.

<sup>17</sup>The procedures are discussed in detail in two unpublished minographs: R.A. Plath, "British Mercantilism and the British Colonial Land Policy in the Eighteenth Century" (Ph.D. Diss. Wisconsin, 1939); P.D. Marshall, "The Rise and Fall of Imperial Regulation of American Indian Affairs 1763-1774" (Ph.D. Diss. Yale, 1954).

<sup>18</sup>Katz, *Newcastle's New York*, p. 14.

<sup>19</sup>Charles M. Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History* (4 vols.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937-38), IV, 315.

<sup>20</sup>See: Jack M. Sosin, *Whitehall and the Wilderness: The Middle West in British Colonial Policy, 1760-1775* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University Press, 1961), pp. 52-78; Beverly W. Bond, "The Colonel Agent as a Popular Representative," *Political Science Quarterly* XXXV (1920); Edwin P. Tanner, "Colonial Agents in England during the Eighteenth Century," *Political Science Quarterly*, XVI (1901).

<sup>21</sup>For example see: "Proceedings of the Town of Boston, October-November 1772," in Samuel Eliot Morison, ed., *Sources and Documents Illustrating the American Revolution 1764-1778* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 96.

<sup>22</sup>Lawrence H. Gipson, *The British Isles and the American Colonies: The Northern Plantations 1748-1754* (New York: Knopf, 1960), p. 46.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 43-44, 49.

<sup>24</sup>See Matt Bushnell Jones, *Vermont in the Making 1750-1777* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939), for a detailed and well-documented analysis of the disputed claims. Also see Florence May Woodward, *The Town Proprietors in Vermont: The New England Town Proprietorship in Decline* (New York, 1936).

<sup>25</sup>Vermont Historical Society, *Collections* (2 vols.; Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1870-71), 361.



- <sup>26</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 51.
- <sup>27</sup>Wynn Underwood, "Indian and Tory Raid in the Otter Valley 1777-1782," *Vermont Quarterly*, n.s., XV (1947), 105-22.
- <sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 40.
- <sup>29</sup>Public Archives of Canada (PAC), Q XIII, 282-86; Williamson, *Quandary*, pp. 68-76. I could not locate any material supporting Mr. Jellison's assertion (the book on Allen is not footnoted) that "especially instrumental in promoting the idea [of not attaching Vermont to Britain] was the king himself, who had been a strong believer in purchasing the opposition and could not quite understand why such a policy should not work out as well in North America as elsewhere. . . . Of particular interest to King George was the area that had recently been taken to calling itself Vermont, where, according to all reports much good might result from a proper use of the right inducements." (pp. 242-43). This statement gives an inaccurate picture of the monarch and probably exaggerates his role in the formulation of colonial policy (even Lord North was not that much a cipher); references to "the king" in the correspondence Jellison consulted may be purely formal.
- <sup>30</sup>Henry Clinton, Correspondence, Box for July 1-28, 1778, Clements Library, in Williamstown, *Quandary*, p. 91.
- <sup>31</sup>Clinton to William Eden, Dec. 24, 1778, in B.F. Stevens, *Facsimilies of Manuscripts in European Archives regarding America* no. 549.
- <sup>32</sup>Germain to Clinton, March 3, 1779, PAC, B, XLIII, 135; Germain to Haldimand March 17, 1789, PAC, B, XLIV, 14.
- <sup>33</sup>Wright, *Britain*, pp. 18-19 discusses the architects of American policy in greater detail.
- <sup>34</sup>Jellison, *Allen*, pp. 279-280.
- <sup>35</sup>Ethan Allen, Jan. 9, 1779, printed in *Niles Weekly Register*, 1823, XXV, 197.
- <sup>36</sup>Germain to Haldimand, March 17, 1789, April 12, 1781, Great Britain Public Record Office (PRO), Colonial Office (C.O.) MSS 43/8.
- <sup>37</sup>Haldimand to Germain, July 8, 1781, PRO, C.O. 42/41; Germain to Haldimand, Haldimand to Germain, July 1782, PRO, C.O. 42/15, noted in Harlow, *Founding*, 11, 597. See the extensive correspondence on the subject listed in Great Britain, Historical Manuscripts Commission, *American MSS*, II, 341.
- <sup>38</sup>"Proposals of Jonas Fay, Ira Allen and Bezaleel Woodward to the Committee of Congress," enclosed in Haldimand to Clinton, Oct. 1, 1781, C.O. Canada and Quebec, 19/28, 29, and America and West Indies, 142/93, 97; "Resolutions Touching Vermont," enclosed in Haldimand to Clinton, Oct. 1, 1781, C.O. Quebec, 19/30; "Proposals by the Commissioners Ira Allen and Joseph Fay," and "Queries in Answer," enclosed in Haldimand to Clinton, Oct. 1, 1781, C.O., 19/19, 31, 32; various entries concerning negotiations between Vermont and the Commissioners of Congress from June 20 to September 30, 1781, British Museum, 21807/300; Haldimand to Clinton, Oct. 3, 1781, PRO, America and West Indies, 142/142; Haldimand to the Inhabitants of Vermont: Proclamation of Terms, Oct. 5, 1781, C.O. Canada, 19/19; Wright, *Britain*, p. 9.
- <sup>39</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, pp. 103, 106-7.
- <sup>40</sup>Jellison's argument that the Allens' actions were treasonous is based on the somewhat strange argument that Vermont's independence was recognized by no one but themselves. "Vermont was still officially part of New York State [?], which meant that it was also part of the United States of America" (Jellison, p. 249.) Most others seem to prefer the argument of Vermont's inherent American orientation: Allens' "defiance" of history was treasonous.
- <sup>41</sup>Haldimand to Germain, Oct. 23, 1781, PAC, Q, XIX, 78; Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 119.
- <sup>42</sup>Clinton to Haldimand, March 10, 1872, Clinton Papers, noted in Williamson, *Quandary*, pp. 118-19.
- <sup>43</sup>Carleton to Haldimand, June 20, 1782, PAC, B, LV, 165-70; Shelburne to Haldimand, April 22, 1782, PAC, B, XL, 40-41; Negotiations with Vermont, April-July, 1782, PRO, C.O., Quebec, 20; also British Museum, Add MSS, 21837 and 21839.
- <sup>44</sup>Allen to Haldimand, June 16, 1782 and July 22, 1782, Carleton Papers, cited in Wright, *Britain*, p. 7.
- <sup>45</sup>Germain to Haldimand, Jan. 2, 1783, PAC, B, XLIV, 118-119.
- <sup>46</sup>Allen to Haldimand, March 1783, PAC, B, CLXXCIII, 151.
- <sup>47</sup>Jerold A. Combs, *The Jay Treaty: Political Battleground of the Founding Fathers* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1970), p. 87; John B. Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), p. 88.
- <sup>48</sup>Great Britain, *Extra-Official State Papers* (London, 1789), II, 53-55.
- <sup>49</sup>Gerald S. Graham, *Sea Power and British North America: A Study in British Colonial Policy* (London: Oxford U. Press, 1941), p. 15.
- <sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, 82.
- <sup>51</sup>Combs, *Jay's Treaty*, p. 87.
- <sup>52</sup>"Observations, etc.," Silas Deane to Lord Dorchester, Oct. 25, 1785, PAC, XLIII, 683-92.
- <sup>53</sup>Combs, *Jay's Treaty*, p. 86.

- <sup>54</sup>Wright, *Britain*, p. 26.
- <sup>55</sup>William Faulkner, Joint Secretary to the Board of Trade, to the Duke of Leeds, June 18, 1789, PRO, Foreign Office, 4/7, p. 225.
- <sup>56</sup>Bond to the Duke of Leeds, Nov. 10, 1789, PRO, F.O., 4/7, pp. 481-509.
- <sup>57</sup>Samuel F. Bemis, *Jay's Treaty: A Study in Commerce and Diplomacy* (Macmillan: New York, 1924), p. 42; Combs, *Jay's Treaty*, p. 91.
- <sup>58</sup>Grenville to Dorchester, "Considerations, Political and Commercial, Relating to Canada," 1788, PRO, C.O. 47/112; Wright, *Britain*, p. 31.
- <sup>59</sup>Chatham MSS, Bundle 343, noted in F.J. Turner, "English Policy towards America 1790-1791," *American Historical Review*, I (October 1895), 70.
- <sup>60</sup>Stephen Cottrell to W.W. Grenville, April 17, 1790, in F.J. Turner, ed., "English Policy toward America in 1790-1791 (Second Installment)," *American Historical Review*, VIII (October, 1902), 78-86.
- <sup>61</sup>Simcoe to Clinton, April 23, 1790, in Wright, *Britain*, p. 56.
- <sup>62</sup>A.I. Burt, *The United States, Great Britain and British North America* (New Haven), Yale U. Press, 1946, pp. 130-31.
- <sup>63</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 164.
- <sup>64</sup>Zadock Thompson, *History of Vermont, Natural, Civil and Statistical* (Burlington, Vermont, 1838), pp. 66-67.
- <sup>65</sup>S.F. Bemis, "Relations between Vermont Separatists and Great Britain, 1789-1791," *American Historical Review*, XXL, (1916), 548.
- <sup>66</sup>Mackintosh, "Canada," p. 13.
- <sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.
- <sup>68</sup>PAC, B, CLXXVIII, 185-86, CLXXVIII, 155-58, quoted in Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 129. Also PAC CLXXIX, pt. 1, 185-86.
- <sup>69</sup>Chittenden to Haldimand, April 15, 1784, Haldimand to North, May 12, 1781, PAC, Q, 23, 181; Bemis, "Relations," p. 549.
- <sup>70</sup>Haldimand to Sydney, June 29, 1784, PAC, Q XXIV, pt. 2.
- <sup>71</sup>Ethan Allen to Dorchester, July 16, 1788, PAC, Q, XXXVI, p. 2.
- <sup>72</sup>Sydney to Dorchester, Sept. 5, 1788, PAC, Q, XXXVIII, 1.
- <sup>73</sup>Katz, *Newcastle's New York*, pp. 54-55.
- <sup>74</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 157.
- <sup>75</sup>The Nootka Sound crisis stemmed from a Spanish challenge to the British presence on the Pacific Coast north of the 42nd parallel. Britain threatened war unless Spain eased its attempts to seize British ships in the area. Spain, its ramshackle empire vulnerable to dismemberment in any war with Britain, backed down and British power, much in need of a success, seemed vindicated.
- <sup>76</sup>See: Bemis, *Jay's Treaty*, pp. 52-55; Bemis, "Relations," p. 551; Grenville to Dorchester, May 6, 1790, PRO, C.O. 43/10.
- <sup>77</sup>E.A. Cruickshank, *The Correspondence of John Graves Simcoe* (5 vols.; Toronto, 1923-31), I, 53; Simcoe to Dundas, Aug. 11, 1791, PAC, Q, VI, 278-83; Bemis, *Jay's Treaty*, p. 125.
- <sup>78</sup>PAC, "J. Ross Robertson," Simcoe Papers, I, bk. 2, 7-12, in Williamson, *Quandary*, pp. 159-62.
- <sup>79</sup>Levi Allen to Henry Dundas, Aug. 9, 1791, PAC, Q, LIV, 698, and PRO, C. O., 42/85.
- <sup>80</sup>Bemis, "Relations," p. 547, 552.
- <sup>81</sup>Bemis, *Jay's Treaty*, pp. 52-55.
- <sup>82</sup>Clinton, memorandum, Sept. 5, 1790, Clinton Papers, in Wright, *Britain*, p. 60.
- <sup>83</sup>Wright, *Britain*, p. 60; Bemis, *Jay's Treaty*, pp. 52-53.
- <sup>84</sup>"R.D." (Robert Dundas?), Nov. 4, 1790, Chatham Bundle, MSS, 343, Turner, "English Policy," p. 70.
- <sup>85</sup>Simcoe to Dundas, June 21, 1794, PAC, Q, 280-81, 178.
- <sup>86</sup>Bemis, "Relations," p. 552; Harlow, *Founding*, II, 595; Graham, *Sea Power*, p.32.
- <sup>87</sup>Burt, *United States*, p. 56.
- <sup>88</sup>Burt, *United States*, pp. 58-59; Gerald S. Graham, *British Policy and Canada; A Study in Eighteenth Century Trade Policy* (London 1930), pp. 116-32.
- <sup>89</sup>Graham, *Sea Power*, pp. 21-24.
- <sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, 89.
- <sup>91</sup>Burt, *United States*, pp. 59-60.
- <sup>92</sup>Harlow, *Founding*, II, 596, 609; Graham, *Sea Power*, p. 27; Simcoe to Dundas, June 30, 1791, *Simcoe Papers*, I, 28; Cottrell to Grenville, April 17, 1790, Chatham MSS, Bundle 343, in Turner, "English Policy (second installment)," pp. 78-86.
- <sup>93</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 34.
- <sup>94</sup>Haldimand to Lord North, Oct. 24, 1783, PAC, B, LVII, pt. 2, pp. 574-79.
- <sup>95</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, p. xiii.
- <sup>96</sup>Donald G. Creighton, *The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence, 1760-1850* (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1937), pp. 87-115.

- <sup>97</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 34.
- <sup>98</sup>Sydney to Haldimand, April 8, 1784, August 2, 1784, British Museum (BM) MSS 21705; Lt. Governor Hamilton to Sydney, April 7, 1785, PAC, Q. XXIV, Ira Allen, Report to the General Assembly, June 7, 1785, *Records of the Governor and Council*, III, 398; Pitt, April 9, 1786, PRO, C.O. 42/18; Hugh Finlay to the Board of Trade, March 7, 1785, Board of Trade, Minutes, 5/2, pp. 207-9.
- <sup>99</sup>Burt, *United States*, p. 66.
- <sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, 63-64.
- <sup>101</sup>Sydney to Dorchester, Sept. 14, 1787, PAC., Q. XXVII.
- <sup>102</sup>Burt, *United States*, pp. 68, 69; Petition of the Inhabitants, etc., to Dorchester, April 15, 1787, PAC, Q. XXVII, 992-993.
- <sup>103</sup>PAC, Q. XXIV, pt. 2, 282; Ira Allen to Sydney, April 7, 1785.
- <sup>104</sup>Bemis, "Relations," p. 550; Cottrell to Grenville, April 17, 1790, Chatham MSS, Bundle 343; Liverpool MSS, 38354/39-51.
- <sup>105</sup>Gerals S. Graham, *Sea Power*, pp. 234-38.
- <sup>106</sup>Brebner, *North Atlantic*, pp. 79-81.
- <sup>107</sup>Craig to Castlereagh, Feb. 13, 1809, PAC, Q. CIX, 10-23, quoted in Muller, "Smuggling," pp. 18-20.
- <sup>108</sup>Muller, "Smuggling," pp. 16-20.
- <sup>109</sup>Bathurst to Dalhousie, Sept. 11, 1820, PAC, L.C.B., II, 65.
- <sup>110</sup>Brebner, *North Atlantic*, p. 106.
- <sup>111</sup>Graham, *Sea Power*, p. 244.
- <sup>112</sup>Sherbrooke to Bathurst, May 20, 1817, PAC, Q Vol. CXLIV, p. 21.
- <sup>113</sup>Graham, *Sea Power*, pp. 234-44.
- <sup>114</sup>Dundas to Simcoe, Sept. 20, 1793, *Simcoe Papers*, II, 56.
- <sup>115</sup>Richard Graves, BM Add. MSS. 38258/328, cited in Graham, *Sea Power*, p. 76.
- <sup>116</sup>Haldimand to North, Oct. 24, 1783, PRO, C.O. 42/22, in Harlow, *Founding*, II, 598.
- <sup>117</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, p. 197.
- <sup>118</sup>Dorchester to the Foreign Office, June 14, 1791; Bernard Mayo, "Instructions to the British Ministers to the United States 1791-1812," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1936, III, 13.
- <sup>119</sup>Mayo, "Instructions," p. 61.
- <sup>120</sup>Burt, *United States*, pp. 173-79; also see E. Cruickshank, "Immigration from the United States into Upper Canada, 1784-1812: Its Character and Results," *Proceedings of the Thirty Ninth Annual Convention of the Ontario Educational Association*, 1940, pp. 263-83.
- <sup>121</sup>Brebner, *North Atlantic*, pp. 63, 67.
- <sup>122</sup>Burt, *United States*, p. 176.
- <sup>123</sup>A.G. Bradley, *Lord Dorchester* (Toronto, 1907), p. 288.
- <sup>124</sup>Knox to Falkener, July 5, 1804, *Board of Trade*, VI, 88.
- <sup>125</sup>Dorchester to Simcoe, PAC, Q. LXVII, 191, quoted in Burt, *United States*, p. 188.
- <sup>126</sup>Williamson, *Quandary*, pp. 225-28.
- <sup>127</sup>Burt, *United States*, p. 168.
- <sup>128</sup>Ira Allen to Portland, March 19, 1796, PRO, C.O. 42/107; Simcoe to Portland, December 11, 1796, PRO, C.O. 42/320; Burt, *United States*, pp. 170-173; Wright, *Britain*, p. 106.
- <sup>129</sup>PAC, Q. LXXXVII, 297-98, 377, 417; Matthews to Gordon, April 25, 1807, PAC, Q. CVI, 375.
- <sup>130</sup>Wright, *Britain*, p. 168.
- <sup>131</sup>Wellington to Liverpool, November 9, 1814, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, *Despatches, Correspondence and Memoranda* (9 vols.; London: Murray, 1870-78), IX, 426.
- <sup>132</sup>Liverpool to Wellington, Nov. 13, 1814, in Charles D. Yonge, *Life and Administration of Robert Banks, Second Earl of Liverpool*, (2 vols.; London: 1868), II, 60; Helen Taft Manning, *British Colonial Government After the American Revolution* (New Haven, Yale U. Press, 1933), p. 244.
- <sup>133</sup>Jessup to Spencer, Aug. 11, 1842, National Archives of the United States, RG 76, "Records of Boundaries and Claims, Commissions and Arbitrations, North East Boundary Miscellaneous Papers, 1824-1906," Envelope 3, Folder 11.
- <sup>134</sup>Kenneth Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America 1815-1908* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 104-108.
- <sup>135</sup>Metcalfe to Stanley, July 4, 1845, PRO, Home Office, 1/552.
- <sup>136</sup>Stanley to Peel, August 12, 1845 and Peel to Stanley, August 13, 1842, BM, Peel MSS, 40468; Stanley to Aberdeen, August 18, 1845, BM, Aberdeen MSS, 43072.
- <sup>137</sup>Bourne, *Balance*, pp. 223-24.