MASTERS AND SERVANTS:

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AND ITS PERSONNEL, 1668-1782

By

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EDITORIAL NOTE

I consider the language used by the HBC Committee and their servants to be of central importance in this study. Therefore, every effort has been made to preserve the spelling and punctuation of the archival sources quoted here, although the limitations of WordPerfect (or perhaps the limitations of my skills with WordPerfect) have required me to expand some abbreviations. Where I have quoted from published editions of primary sources which have modernized the text, I have not tried to undo those changes.

Wages are quoted per annum: thus, a man engaged at £10 was paid £10 per annum. A man engaged at £3-4-5-6-8 was paid £3 in his first year, £4 in his second, and so on.

All dates are given New Style: thus, 11 February 1681/2 is here written as 11 February 1682.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DCB	Hayne, David M. and Francess G. Halpenny, gen. eds. *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press,1966-1983), vols. I-V.
Letters	Davies, K.G. and Johnson, A.M., eds. *Letters from Hudson Bay 1703-40*, introduction by Richard Glover. London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1965.
L.O. 1680-1687	Rich, E.E. and A.M. Johnson, eds. *Copy-Book of Letters Outward &c, Begins 29th May, 1680; Ends 5 July, 1687*. Introduction by E.G.R. Taylor. Toronto: Champlain Society for the Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1948.
L.O. 1688-1696	Rich, E.E. and A.M. Johnson, eds. *Hudson's Bay Copy Booke of Letters Commissions Instructions Outward 1688-1696*. Introduction by K.G. Davies. London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1957.
Minutes	Rich, E.E., ed. *Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1671-1674*, with introduction by Sir John Clapham. Toronto: Champlain Society for the Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1942.
Minutes, First Part	----------. *Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1679-1684: First Part, 1679-1682*, with introduction by G.N. Clark. Toronto: Champlain Society for the Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1945.
Minutes, Second Part	----------. *Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1679-1684: Second Part, 1682-1684*, with introduction by G.N. Clark. Toronto: Champlain Society for the Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1946.
Nixon	"Report to the Governor and Committee by John Nixon, 1682," Royal Society, The Boyle Papers (Misc.), XL; printed as Appendix A in E.E. Rich & Alice M. Johnson, eds., *Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company 1679-1684: First Part, 1679-82* (Toronto: Champlain Society for the Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1945), 239-304.

Abstract

During its long first century (1670-1782), the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) developed personnel practices not on the basis of abstract policy but by patching together experiments and expedients. Its initial vulnerability increased the value of loyal and experienced servants, and frequent shortfalls in wartime recruitment allowed old hands to demand and receive higher wages and gratuities. Peace after the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 allowed the Company to prune its payroll and to resume the carefully optimistic expansion that French attacks had interrupted in 1686. This required a larger labour force, but recruitment processes remained relatively unchanged from previous years (although Orkneymen became increasingly prominent). Expanding operations in the mid-eighteenth century imposed greater regularity on existing *ad hoc* methods of recruiting and retaining personnel, but labour needs did not expand rapidly enough to unduly strain those methods.

Increasing inland travel and trade after 1743 placed new demands on servants by requiring that 'extraordinary' labour become 'ordinary'. The Committee discovered that this could only be done with 'encouragement', the slow pace of which hampered inland ventures into the 1780s. Inland operations changed the nature of HBC service and influenced the way master, factor, and servant interacted; they also illuminated the practices and assumptions which had been prevalent since Utrecht and probably before.

The HBC drew its labour force from the competitive labour 'market' of early modern Britain: the movement of men to and from the Bay was an aspect of domestic labour mobility. The relationship between the Committee and their employees was that

of master and servants, heavily influenced by the circumstances of trading in Hudson Bay. Labour relations within HBC posts were framed by the dominant social construct of early modern Britain, the patriarchal household-family, made up of a master (the patriarch) and a family of kin, apprentices, and servants.

Men at all levels of the Company hierarchy could try to shape the reality of their HBC experiences, but did so in terms of commonly accepted ideals. Deferential behaviours and strong vertical ties existed alongside tension and negotiation: the Committee and their servants all understood the nature of ideal master-servant relationships, but they also had experience of the realities of life in various kinds of households. The Company's servants internalized and practised the expected values of deference and submission, but did so without abandoning or deferring their own self-interest; indeed, they could use their mastery of the language to advance their own interests. The household-factory was the fundamental social unit of HBC establishments. Although membership changed, the institution maintained continuity over time. Furthermore, each household-factory was internally held together, and bound to other household-factories and to the London Committee by ties of patronage, brokerage, and friendship, that mediated the network of horizontal and vertical relationships.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION: EARLY MODERN CONTEXTS AND RECENT SCHOLARSHIP

> Governor Geyer, we have considered your faithfully Services & indefatigable paines in our Interest, as well as your cheerfull compliance wth. our request to stay an other yeare in this Extraordinary time of danger; & the Consideration on which you doe it, hopeing (as you say) the Warre may be by that time ended, that you may Leave our Concerns there in a peaceable & florishing Condition & that you would not willingly Leave your Post before you saw them soe setled, is so ingenious & honourable in you, & kind towards us, that we assure you it hath a great influence upon us that know the value of your meritts & how happily Our affaires there have prospered under your Conduct: To Shew our Just sense therefore of your Service & due regards for your Person, after having cleared wth. Mr. Kingston your acctt. upon your Sallary, We have moreover unanimously voted & paid him allso for you a Gratuity of One Hundred Pounds, Resolving soe allwaies to discharge Our selves that the Character of a meritorious Servant & Gratefull masters may be reciprocall between us.[1]

The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) came into being on 2 May 1670 as a small, under-capitalised, high-risk overseas trading venture with well-placed shareholders but no guarantee of success. It was heavily dependent on loans from friendly creditors (including Committee members and lesser shareholders) and seriously threatened by interlopers, warfare, and shifting European markets.[2] Initially, the Company's survival was the paramount concern, underlying some ambitious attempts at expanding its operations.

The Treaty of Utrecht (1713) ushered in a period of relative stability in which the Company could rebuild its operations after three decades of conflict with the French in

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[1]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 139.

[2]Twenty years after its foundation, the HBC controlled only one factory (Port Nelson) and employed no more than 70 men in the Bay. In contrast, the East India Company, twenty years after its foundation in 1600, controlled more than a dozen trading stations, employed upwards of 200 factors, had constructed two shipyards on the Thames (which had produced 76 ships during those 20 years), and had become one of the largest employers in the London area: K.N. Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company: The Study of an Early Joint-Stock Company 1600-1640* (London: Frank Cass, 1965), 21.

Hudson Bay, and eventually expand its trade. That the HBC survived its first hundred years – indeed, that it survived its first twenty or thirty – was due to many factors, some of them outside the Company's control. One of the factors under its control was the selection and retention of satisfactory personnel.

What was the Company's definition of a 'good' employee? How did it go about finding and retaining such men? Were such men hard to find? Were they hard to keep? What made the relationship between employer and employee work, and what threatened that relationship? These and other questions are crucial to understanding how the HBC constructed a labour force that saw it through difficult times, through war and economic depression, to times of prosperity and expansion.

This study seeks patterns and policies in the HBC's approach to recruiting, retaining, and dismissing workers for its trading stations. The development of strong vertical relationships was an important element in encouraging particular kinds of behaviour. The construction of such relationships evokes not only the servants' willingness to identify with a dominant ideology of work, but also the HBC Committee's recognition that paternalistic personnel strategies could reap benefits, particularly the ability to retain socialized and experienced workers in the face of a competitive early modern labour 'market'.[3]

Efforts to analyse these paternalistic strategies reflect broader debates among historians of early modern Britain. Concepts of industrial class conflict seem not to apply

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[3]See Richard Whipp, "Labour markets and communities: an historical view," *Sociological Review* 33/4 (1985), 777-778.

to this 'pre-industrial' society: instead, the early modern period has been characterized as exhibiting consensus based on paternalism. Instead of class consciousness, historians emphasized vertical consciousness linking the mutual interests of masters and men; horizontal divisions within trades were explained as arising from a failure by one party (usually masters) to live up to reciprocal obligations.[4] Master-servant relationships in this society may have been unequal, but imbalances of power were mitigated by the development of an emotional bond, and by the tendency of servants to identify (consciously and unconsciously) with their father-figure masters.[5]

The transition from this hypothesized consensual society to one dominated by industrial class relations has also drawn much discussion. Keith Wrightson has suggested that the two models of social relations were co-existing in England through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[6] There is considerable debate over the nature of the consensus

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[4]John Rule, *The Experience of Labour in Eighteenth-Century English Industry* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1981), 208-209, 211.

[5]J. Jean Hecht, *The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), 74-75, 77, 80, 206; Peter Laslett, *The World We Have Lost: Further Explored*, 3rd ed. (London: Methuen, 1983), 51. An early modern master was expected by contemporaries to act *in loco parentis* to the servants and apprentices in his household. Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994), 85, suggests that this aspect of the service agreement has been over-emphasized in the historiography, which has generally considered the master-servant dynamic as a family relationship rather than as a labour relationship; similarly, Margaret Pelling, "Apprenticeship, Health and Social Cohesion in Early Modern London," *History Workshop* 37 (Spring 1994), 41, cautions against confusing the ideal master-apprentice relationship with the reality of such relationships. However, Ben-Amos also (173-174) found evidence that some servants did develop emotional attachments with their master; also see Paul Griffiths, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England 1560-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 294. Glen Makahonuk, "Wage-labour in the Northwest Fur Trade Economy, 1760-1849," *Saskatchewan History* 41/1 (Winter 1988), 2, called this the "ultimate significance" of early modern paternalism, "undermining the collectivity of the oppressed by linking them with their 'social superiors'."

[6]Keith Wrightson, "The Social Order of Early Modern England: Three Approaches," in Lloyd Bonfield, Richard M. Smith, and Keith Wrightson (eds.), *The World We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structures* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 198.

(or of the value system itself) which underpinned 'pre-industrial' society. For example, Richard Price (paraphrasing E.P. Thompson) differentiates "formal subordination" from "real subordination," and argues that all social relationships involving authority and obedience are characterized by a constant struggle for authority and control. Patrick Joyce suggests that Price has over-emphasized workers' combativeness, and calls the worker-employer relationship reciprocal but ambivalent.[7]

Central to most conceptions of early modern society as essentially consensual is the 'moral economy,'[8] an often vaguely-defined set of customary expectations which could be used to mitigate the harsher aspects of market forces (for instance, by regulating the price of food after a bad harvest). This concept, and particularly E.P. Thompson's formulation of it, has been an important part of the intellectual baggage of social historians (even those who disagree with Thompson) for over thirty years.[9] Explanations

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[7]Richard Price, "The labour process and labour history," *Social History* 8/1 (January 1983), 62, 64; Patrick Joyce, "Labour, capital and compromise: a response to Richard Price," *Social History* 9/1 (January 1984), 70, 73. Also see Richard Price, "Conflict and co-operation: a reply to Patrick Joyce," *Social History* 9/2 (May 1984), 217-224; Patrick Joyce, "Languages of reciprocity and conflict: a further response to Richard Price," *Social History* 9/2 (May 1984), 225-231; E.P. Thompson, "The Patricians and the Plebs," in E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common: Studies in Traditional Popular Culture* (New York: The New Press, 1993), 71-72. Very little of this ongoing debate has been incorporated into the work of Canadian scholars. For instance, Robert C. H. Sweeny's thoughtful critique of Edith Burley, *Servants of the Honourable Company: Work, Discipline, and Conflict in the Hudson's Bay Company, 1770-1870* (Don Mills ON: Oxford University Press, 1997) was marred by some unfair criticisms which he might not have made had he been more familiar with the secondary literature from Britain : Robert C.H. Sweeny, "Understanding Work Historically: A reflection prompted by two recent studies of the fur trade." *Labour/Le Travail* 41 (Spring 1997), 246-247.

[8]For example, Pelling, 33, refers to a 'moral economy' governing the institution of apprenticeship.

[9]This influential concept first appeared in E.P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 50 (1971), 76-136. When Thompson sought to revise the article for his volume *Customs in Common* (New York: New Press, 1993), he abandoned the effort. "The thesis has been much discussed, criticised and developed, and at some points overtaken by subsequent research....I found that I was modifying a text upon which much commentary by other scholars had been hung." (*Customs in Common*, ix-x) Instead, he republished the original essay (pp. 185-258) and wrote a new article ("The Moral Economy Reviewed," pp. 259-351) "in which I respond to some critics and reflect

of 'moral economy' often rely on the equally nebulous concept of 'custom,' which Donald Woodward has disparaged as "that great stand-by of the social historian and frequently invoked explanation for all that is difficult to understand."[10] These two concepts are invoked to characterize the periods preceding the development of a capitalist market economy and the rational or impersonal labour relationships which came to prevail over the 'moral economy' and the influence of 'custom'.[11]

The issues raised in this ongoing discussion can help our exploration of the role of labour and labour relations in the early survival and later success of the HBC. The experiences of HBC employees need to be placed in their larger contexts. Although the men of Hudson Bay were working in a very different environment from that of their contemporaries in Britain, they nonetheless came from and returned to the same British labour 'market', one that was generally characterized by a high degree of unemployment and under-employment.[12] Until widespread recruitment in Canada and Rupert's Land

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upon the issues raised by others." *Customs in Common*, x. Also see John Stevenson, "The 'Moral Economy' of the English Crowd: Myth and Reality," in Anthony Fletcher & John Stevenson (eds.), *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 218-238; Patrick Joyce, "The historical meanings of work: an introduction," in Patrick Joyce (ed.), *The Historical Meanings of Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 26.

[10]Donald Woodward, *Men at Work: Labourers and Building Craftsmen in the Towns of Northern England, 1450-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 181, also 205-207. Also see Stephen D. White & Richard T. Vann, "The invention of English individualism: Alan Macfarlane and the modernization of pre-modern England," *Social History* 8/3 (October 1983), 361.

[11]This juxtaposition has been challenged recently: see, for instance, Maxine Berg, "Women's work, mechanisation and the early phases of industrialisation in England," in Patrick Joyce (ed.), *The Historical Meanings of Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 64-98.

[12]T.S. Ashton, *Economic Fluctuations in England 1700-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 173-174; Robert W. Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England 1700-1780* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 37;Woodward, *Men at Work*, 4, 12, 13, 133, 135; John Burnett, *A History of the Cost of Living* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), 181; L.D. Schwarz, *London in the Age of Industrialization: Entrepreneurs, Labour Force and Living Conditions, 1700-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

began in the nineteenth century, Hudson Bay was one of many extensions of the British labour market – one that expanded to fill Britain's global empire – and the movement of men to and from the Bay was just one aspect of domestic labour mobility.[13] HBC servants before the nineteenth century were not emigrants seeking a permanent home on Hudson Bay, nor would the Company have allowed them to settle there. Rather, they were sojourners who may have seen the Bay as a stepping stone to better things at home or elsewhere.[14]

Philip Goldring argued that "[e]xtreme isolation, technological backwardness and distance from centres of marketing and administration all contributed to the uniqueness of the [HBC] working environment," setting fur trade employees apart from other workers in British North America.[15] While there is some strength to this point – particularly in the

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1992), 49. In this respect, H. Clare Pentland's discussion of fur trade labour did not fit well within his description of pre-industrial labour relations: he characterized the pre-industrial pattern of personal labour relationships as being the result of responses from both labour and capital to the absence of an abundant labour supply. H. Clare Pentland, *Labour and Capital in Canada 1650-1850* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1981), 24. However, British historians are almost unanimous in characterizing the labour supply of early modern Britain as abundant.

[13]See Bernard Bailyn, "Introduction: Europeans on the Move, 1500-1800," in Nicholas Canny (ed.), *Europeans on the Move: Studies on European Migration, 1500-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 1. Michael Bliss, *Northern Enterprise: Five Centuries of Canadian Business* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1987), 101, places the HBC within the larger context of British commerce.

[14]Circular mobility – individuals moving away from and later returning to their point of origin – had been a common pattern in England and Scotland from the fifteenth century and probably before. Peter Clark & David Souden, "Introduction," in Clark & Souden (eds.), *Migration and Society in Early Modern England* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987), 26; Peter Clark, "Migrants in the city: the process of social adaptation in English towns 1500-1800," in Clark & Souden, 267-268; Peter Clark, "Migration in England During the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries," *Past & Present* 83 (May 1979), 59. Social traditions in the Orkney islands also encouraged circular mobility, arising from the Viking pattern of being at home when there was work to be done on the farm (*i.e.* sowing or harvesting) and going to sea in between times: William P.L. Thomson, *History of Orkney* (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 1987), 207.

[15]Philip Goldring, "Labour Records of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1821-1870," *Archivaria* 11 (Winter 1980/81), 85.

context of the nineteenth century, to which Goldring was referring – I am inclined to see the whole Atlantic labour market as a collection or conglomeration of unique working environments, especially in the context of long-distance trading, whaling, and other short- or long-term migratory work. Within this early modern Atlantic world, cheap labour was usually far more in demand than quality or specialized labour.[16]

Two "intractable" scholarly problems identified by Goldring are "the placing of Canadian workers in the social context of the whole Atlantic community, and the treatment of men...who worked in resource-based industry not as a career, but as a transitory stage towards longer-term objectives."[17] In the labour history of the Hudson's Bay Company, these problems are intimately related, but so are their partial solutions. It was the transitory nature of most men's employment in the fur trade – Hudson Bay as a life stage rather than as a career – which effectively placed the Company's labour force within the larger context of the Atlantic market. Most men who worked for the Company had other employment in their lifetimes, before and/or after their HBC service, either in Britain or in other parts of the empire. Unfortunately, I have found it almost impossible to trace most of these men's previous and succeeding working lives: they are visible only while working in Hudson Bay, and their lives elsewhere are a collective mystery.

The status of most men as sojourners makes it seem unlikely that they saw Hudson Bay as a source of life-long employment. For different reasons, their employers

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[16]Richard S. Dunn, "Servants and Slaves: The Recruitment and Employment of Labor," in Jack P. Greene & J.R. Pole (eds.), *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 161.

[17]Goldring, "Labour Records," 54.

were not necessarily looking for life-long employees. Changing circumstances meant changing expectations were placed on servants: at certain moments in the Company's history, each individual might be considered a vital element of survival, while at other moments a high payroll might be seen as an unnecessary or even hazardous expense. As circumstances changed, so did the relationship between the Company and its men, between masters and servants.

Throughout the period of this study, the relationship between the Committee and its employees was primarily that of a master and his servants. The early-modern master-servant relationship was a complex one, and in this case it was heavily influenced by the circumstances of trading on Hudson Bay. Though often expanding and occasionally clinging to survival, the HBC was essentially a coastal concern before the 1770s, and labour relations within the Company were framed by the physical and social constraints (and possibilities) of permanent coastal trading stations in a land of hunter-gatherers, as well as by the threats (real and perceived) from English interlopers and French competitors.

Labour relations within those trading stations were framed by the dominant social construct of early modern Britain, the patriarchal household-family, made up of a master (the patriarch) and a family of kin, apprentices, and servants. Because the HBC organized its factories along social as well as economic lines, labour relations within them could appear to resemble family relations and the clearly visible vertical ties binding the workplace community together may seem pre-eminent. Although men at all levels of the Company's hierarchy appeared to actively cultivate such ties, the Company's

personnel were diverse individuals whose own interests interacted with those of their masters in complex ways.

Periodization

The shifting circumstances of the Company's first century (1670-ca. 1770) are the main focus of this study. The decade following the end of that hundred years brought a watershed change that marks the end-point of this study. Competition from traders based in Montreal, Canada, increased sharply, and the HBC's response included the establishment of inland trading posts beginning in 1774. The move inland and the increasingly face-to-face competition with the Canadian 'pedlars' created a working environment fundamentally different from that experienced by men before 1770. The resulting changes to the Company's demands on its servants, and to servants' demands on their employer, foreshadowed some of the issues of its later trans-continental operations, and thus lie beyond the scope of this study.

Within the HBC's first century of operations, some periodization is both possible and necessary. The major turning point was the period immediately after the Treaty of Utrecht, signed in 1713. In 1714, the Company re-occupied its former posts which had been in French hands and in 1717, even established a new post, at Churchill River: the scope of operations increased substantially from what they had been since the mid-1680s. The removal of the French presence from Hudson Bay allowed the HBC a period of stability in its trade that allowed for greater and more consistent profits than before. At the same time, the increasing French presence in the interior helped encourage the HBC

to undertake various initiatives to protect and expand its trade.

The post-Utrecht period also differs from the preceding half-century in the availability of records. Though no new kinds of records were created, the increased number of posts resulted in an increased volume of paperwork, and the survival rate for documents of all kinds is much better after 1720 than before. Most of the post journals and all of the officers' and servants' ledgers that have survived date from after 1715. Bayside men's attitudes to labour in and for the HBC are more visible (to the extent that they felt comfortable expressing their opinions) and a more complete picture emerges of the complex flow of information back and forth across the Atlantic.

The Company's first 45 or 50 years, from its founders' first voyage in 1668 until the Utrecht transition, was a 'foundational period' that can be sub-divided into an initial time of optimism and expansion, and a subsequent period of drastically curtailed operations after the French attacks in 1686. In general, survival was the primary concern of the foundational period, particularly the establishment of trade and administrative mechanisms which could somewhat reduce the risks faced by the fledgling company. These early years represent the most crucial but most under-documented period of the Company's history.

The decades after the Utrecht transition were a period of stability, compared to the Company's tenuous existence prior to Utrecht and to the volatile competition of the late 1700s. This period can also be sub-divided into two distinct phases. The first was a rebuilding process, in which the Company re-occupied posts vacated by the French, recovered its position in the Bay, and (with the re-establishment of Moose in 1730) began

a slow process of cautious expansion, often overlooked thanks to Joseph Robson's 1752 accusation that the HBC was sleeping by the edge of a frozen sea.[18] The second phase began in 1743 with the establishment of the inland outpost of Henley House, 180 miles up the Albany River; and also saw men sent inland to winter with Native groups for the purposes of encouraging trade. Both of these phases were marked by cautious optimism. The London Committee members were buoyed by the possibilities of the post-Utrecht era but they remembered the troubles before 1713. They also knew that the French had been removed only from the shores of the Bay, and that French traders were spreading in even greater numbers into a poorly-understood interior.

Stability was seriously challenged in the late 1760s, as the Montreal-based fur trade came into the hands of vigorous new partnerships. The Company's 1772 decision to build trading posts inland from Hudson Bay clearly marked the end of that stability, even though that decision was not executed until 1774. The Montreal 'pedlars' came west in greater numbers than the pre-1760 French traders had been able to, a fact that fundamentally changed both the nature of their competition with the HBC and the nature and variety of personnel issues within the HBC. Some of the problems of conflicting expectations faced at Henley House and with the Company's inland winterers foreshadowed the changes of the 1770s. The transitional period which was clearly emerging after 1774 was interrupted by the sudden brief return of French warships to Hudson Bay in 1782 and the smallpox epidemic of 1781/82. These major events

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[18]Joseph Robson, *An Account of Six Years Residence in Hudson's Bay* (Johnson Reprint, 1965; originally published London, 1752), 6.

disrupted the Company's trade significantly and thus provide this study with a natural closure to the long first century of HBC activities.[19]

Comparisons to Contemporary Long-Distance Trading Companies

The Hudson's Bay Company was relatively small and insignificant when compared to its long-distance trading contemporaries, although it has enjoyed greater longevity than any of them. There was some overlap among the directors of these companies in the late seventeenth century,[20] but the HBC's ability to draw upon these contemporaries for precedents in handling personnel issues was hampered by the many differences between them. The English East India Company (EIC), the Royal African Company (RAC),[21] the Muscovy Company, the Levant Company, and other chartered

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[19]Richard Glover, introduction to E.E. Rich & A.M. Johnson (eds.), *Cumberland House Journals and Inland Journal 1775-82: First Series, 1775-79* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1951), xiii, called the destruction of York and Fort Prince of Wales in 1782 "a catastrophe from which the Hudson's Bay Company took three years to recover. As such it provides a natural break in the story of the fur trade."

[20]Gentlemen serving on the HBC Committee and on the Royal African Company's Court of Assistants (the name for its board of directors) in the late seventeenth century included Sir Peter Colleton, the Earl of Shaftesbury (who was Sub-Governor of the RAC in 1672-74), Sir Stephen Evance, Lord George Berkeley of Berkeley (who was an Assistant of the RAC in 1674-77, 1679-82, and 1684-87, as well as being Director of the East India Company for 37 years and active in the HBC throughout this period), James, Duke of York (who was Governor of the RAC in 1672-88), Stephen Pitts, and Sir Robert Vyner. For more details, see K.G. Davies, *The Royal African Company* (London: Longmans, Green, & Company, 1957), 163n, 378-381, 383, 386, 390.

Ann M. Carlos & Stephen Nicholas, "'Giants of an Earlier Capitalism': The Chartered Trading Companies as Modern Multinationals," in Douglas A. Irwin (ed.), *Trade in the Pre-Modern Era, 1400-1700* (Cheltenham: Elgar, 1996), I, 128, are doubtless correct that "joint directorships in the English chartered companies provided a mechanism for the transfer of managerial expertise between firms," but tracing such transfers through surviving documents is difficult.

[21]The Royal African Company was chartered in 1672 but lost its monopoly on English trade in western Africa in 1698; it had effectively ceased operating as a trading concern by the 1720s, but continued to manage English possessions on the west coast of Africa until 1752, when it was replaced by a new regulated company (open to all traders willing to pay an entry fee) called the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa. Robin Law, *The English in West Africa 1681-1683: The Local Correspondence of the Royal African Company of England 1681-1699, Part 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for The British

companies were too different in both size and structure, and the environments of their operations too divergent from Hudson Bay, to offer meaningful precedents that could be easily borrowed.

One of the major differences between the HBC and its corporate contemporaries was the number of men employed. The Royal African Company at its height in 1688-89 employed over 300 European men in its African factories, as well as an unknown number of black slaves. As the company declined in the early eighteenth century, it was not able to find recruits to keep up those numbers, nor could it afford their upkeep, but it still had over 200 men in Africa in 1709.[22] The East India Company maintained close to 1,000 men in India before 1756 and increased its presence after its military defeat at Plassey that year; the EIC shipped 6,500 officers and men to India during the single decade 1762-72.[23] In contrast, the Hudson's Bay Company's overseas workforce did not exceed 100 until the 1730s, and numbered only 180 in 1772. Inland expansion required a major increase, but the HBC's 530 servants in 1799 were still a relatively minor extension of the British labour supply.[24]

Academy, 1997), vii; also see Davies, *RAC*.

[22]In 1688-89, the RAC had 188 men on the Gold Coast, 64 in the Gambia country, 45 in the Sherbro, and 34 in Sierra Leone. Davies, *RAC*, 252.

[23]Nicholas Canny, "In Search of a Better Home? European Overseas Migration, 1500-1800," in Nicholas Canny (ed.), *Europeans on the Move: Studies on European Migration, 1500-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 274.

[24]The Committee's initial orders for 1672 called for 25 men to stay "in the Country," but this was changed to 20 because a smaller ship was being sent: *Minutes*, liv-lv, 19, 22. In 1675/76 only four men were left in Hudson Bay: *Minutes, First Part*, xviii. By 1685-86, at the height of the HBC's early expansion, there were 89 men serving at five establishments: E.E. Rich, *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1958, 1959), I, 183. In the early years of the eighteenth century, when Albany was the only English post in the Bay, its complement was as small as 27

The factories and establishments of most early modern trading companies were also much more cosmopolitan than the HBC, in whose service it was rare to find non-British subjects. The RAC recruited Irish, Dutch, French, and Portuguese men to fill gaps left by Englishmen who died, retired, or deserted: in 1692, perhaps as little as one-quarter of the RAC's complement at Cape Coast (their headquarters on the Gold Coast) were British subjects.[25] The EIC's various theatres of operation also attracted Europeans of different nationalities, some of whom served the English company as traders, some as servants, and some as mercenaries.

The European labour forces of other companies were more top-heavy than that of the HBC: Europeans were concentrated in the higher ranks, while labourers tended to be drawn from the local populations and local craftsmen were contracted as needed. The RAC's principal factory, Cape Coast Castle on the Gold Coast, was garrisoned by 80 Europeans and 200 blacks in 1679, and 100 Europeans and 150 blacks in the early

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"men and Boys...which God knows is but a fuew to defend your Countrey": Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 July 1706 , Hudson's Bay Company Archives (Manitoba Archives), A. 11/2, fo.15; also see Richard Staunton & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 17 August 1739, *Letters*, 301. The growth of Churchill (because of the construction of Fort Prince of Wales, Richard Norton's complement in 1733 was 64) and the establishment of Moose (with a complement of about 25) in 1730 pushed the Company's workforce over 100 for the first time, but the complements of older posts shrank slightly (Albany's complement dropped from 34 in 1723 to 16 in 1743). Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1733, *Letters*, 186; William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 26 August 1736, *Letters*, 217-218; Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 48; Joseph Isbister (Albany) to HBC (London), 18 August 1743, A. 11/2, fo. 116d. For the size of the Company's workforce in 1772 and 1799, see E.E. Rich & A.M. Johnson (eds.), *Cumberland House Journals and Inland Journal 1775-82: Second Series, 1779-82* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1952), xxxvin.

[25]Much of this 'foreign' recruitment was done by the company's officers in the field, filling vacancies from "the human driftwood of many nationalities that found its way to western Africa." Davies, *RAC*, 254.

1690s.[26] Europeans in lower ranks were primarily soldiers, who were not found in the HBC at any time. The EIC's factories in the Persian Gulf were staffed by small numbers of Europeans (usually fewer than ten) employed as merchants, factors, writers, and a surgeon, as well as one or two linguists or interpreters (who were usually Armenians or Jews). There were also small garrisons of mercenaries, the crew of a guardship, and servants drawn from the local population to attend the private and work requirements of the Europeans.[27] Thus, HBC factories – relatively isolated outposts that needed to import their own labourers and tradesmen, but did not employ military garrisons – were very different workplaces than those found in contemporary stations established by the English in pre-existing trading centres on the coasts of Asia and Africa, where groups of white merchants supported by local servants and protected by European mercenaries were part of large and diverse trading communities. As well, neither the HBC nor its long-distance trading contemporaries in Asia or Africa were creating colonial settlements, which set them apart from New France and from British traders in New England and New York.

Another difference was the relative lack of possibilities for private wealth in Hudson Bay. Men entering the service of long-distance trading companies generally hoped to make their fortunes, even if only in a small way. When James Phipps sailed for

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[26]P.E.H. Hair, Adam Jones, & Robin Law (eds.), *Barbot on Guinea: The Writings of Jean Barbot on West Africa, 1678-1712* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1992), 405n14.

[27]For instance, in the 1750s the staff of the Bandar Abbass factory numbered 11 (including a Persian scribe) and the garrison was made up of one sergeant, one corporal, 24 Portugese mercenaries, 22 Sepoys, and the Guardship. In the 1770s, the Basra Agency had at least nine staff and 17 servants. Louise E. Sweet, "Political Tactics of the Peaceful Traders (1616-1853): How the British Came to Control the Persian Gulf," in Jim Freedman & Jerome H. Barkow (eds.), *Proceedings of the Second Congress, Canadian Ethnology Society*, vol. 2 (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, Mercury Series, 1975), 546, 552n6.

Africa in the RAC's service in 1703, his father Thomas reminded him that he was not going "merely to see the country and take the air, but to raise yourself in the world that you may come home and enjoy your friends in much better air in your own country....[I]t is probable that your stay may not be above three years."[28] Phipps stayed in Africa for 19 years, passing up opportunities to return home because he still hoped to make his fortune. He had heard stories of Edmund Searle and Gerrard Gore, who had become very wealthy serving the RAC on the Gold Coast at the end of the seventeenth century; but Phipps was rising in the RAC at the same time as the company itself was in significant decline. The wealth he sought eluded him, even though he left "no stone unturned to get money honestly and as I could answer it to my own conscience."[29]

India in the eighteenth century still offered many opportunities for wealth and advancement, and it was primarily those opportunities which attracted young men to those distant lands.[30] Prior to the second half of the eighteenth century, their attempts to serve both the Company's interests and their own were not always successful but at least

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[28]David Henige, "'Companies are Always Ungrateful': James Phipps of Cape Coast, A Victim of the African Trade," *African Economic History* 9 (1980), 31. James wrote to his mother in 1710 that "I am abroad to make my fortune at once rather than make a second voyage." Henige, 30.

[29]Henige, 32. James' father told him that Searle had accumulated £10,000 in five years at Accra, but after 19 years in Africa James' estate valued slightly less than £3,200: Henige, 37, 42n30. Henige, 36, suggested that Phipps' willingness to remain in the RAC's service despite ill-treatment – even his 1719 appointment as Agent-General in sole charge of the Gold Coast was demeaning, as he was offered significantly poorer terms than his two less-qualified predecessors, and the following year the most profitable English post on the Gold Coast (Whydah) was removed from his jurisdiction – may also have been because his "personal commitments" in Africa had come to outweigh his remaining connections in England.

Phipps often complained that honesty met with no reward in Africa (Henige, 32, 39, 43n34). Similar complaints from India can be seen in a 1618 letter from three factors in Bantam to the EIC's Court of Committees. "At home men are famous for doing nothing; here they are infamous for their honest endeavours." Chaudhuri, 77.

[30]See Chaudhuri, 77.

did not cause serious disruption in commerce. After the 1750s, however, unsuccessful men were trying to hide their private debts by cheating the Company and supplementing their private trade with smuggling or even piracy; all these activities contributed to a serious decline in Indo-European trade relations. Nevertheless, in Britain the image of the East Indies as a source of great wealth was perpetuated by the 'nabobs', EIC servants who returned home with significant fortunes and became notorious for their financial excesses.[31] No such reputation was acquired by former HBC servants, except in a very modest way in the Orkney Islands, where some ministers in the 1790s complained about men returning from the Bay with enough money to buy or rent land for themselves.[32] In this, as in most things, the HBC was not in the same league as its contemporaries.

A Note on Terminology

The vocabulary of this study intersects with both early modern terminology and the vocabulary of current scholarly discourse. The language used in the HBC's early records provides significant insight into the perceptions and understandings behind the words: for this reason, I have rather liberally quoted the primary sources. My own choice of language stems primarily from these sources, but is also drawn from the larger contexts of ongoing scholarly debates.

Some men in the Company's service, and many in the seventeenth century, were

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[31]Philip Lawson, *The East India Company: A History* (London: Longman, 1993), 73. 'Nabob' was a corruption of the Mogul term *nawab*, meaning 'governor': Lawson, 88.

[32]See, for instance, Thomson, *Orkney*, 219-220.

not given occupational labels in the records. This is remarkable because seventeenth-century English society was very conscious of rank and status, and a status or occupational term (formally known as an 'addition') was typically appended to a person's name for legal purposes. However, American historian David Galenson encountered a similar situation in his study of indentured servants in colonial America: he found that three-fifths of the male servants recorded in the Middlesex registrations of 1683-84 and more than one-third in the London registrations of 1718-59 were not identified by trade or occupation. He suggested that the absence of an addition indicated the lack of an occupation, and thus that those without additions were lower in occupational and economic status than those with recorded trades; they also tended to be younger and less literate. Some of these men could have been apprentices who had not yet completed their indentures (and thus had not yet gained the additions of their trade); some could have been vagrants unattached to either a household or an occupation; and some could have been servants in husbandry without specialized skills.[33] The same general hypotheses probably apply to HBC men without additions.

Occupational labels in the Hudson's Bay Company were sometimes vague if they did occur, especially in the late seventeenth century. The dividing lines between carpenter/ship carpenter/shipwright, blacksmith/gunsmith/edge-tool maker, and mason/bricklayer were not always clear; generally, the HBC seemed to be less exact with its occupational labels than was common for tradesmen in Britain. The shortage of

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[33]David W. Galenson, *White Servitude in Colonial America: An Economic Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 39, 45-47, 51-54.

labels in the records may reflect the men's incomplete training in a specific skill, or simply the fact that some recruits were journeymen who had not served an apprenticeship in a trade.[34] There is very little evidence on which to base an evaluation of the skill and experience of tradesmen in Company service, just as it is almost impossible to make such judgements about most contemporary craftsmen in Britain.[35]

Most men in HBC service were clearly identified by occupational labels, but the significance of those labels is not always clear to modern readers. For instance, seventeenth-century surgeons (who were often barbers as well) were characterized by their emphasis on manual skill rather than medical theory, and were not held in particularly high regard.[36] Surgeons separated from the barbers' guild in London only in 1746, a fact which highlights the manual nature of most surgeons' work. Internal medicine was the field of physicians and pharmacy was in the hands of apothecaries; only

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[34]Woodward, *Men at Work*, 64-65, argued that many journeymen employed in northern towns were not drawn from the ranks of town apprentices.

[35]Elizabeth W. Gilboy, *Wages in Eighteenth Century England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934), 224; Woodward, *Men at Work*, 40; Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 40; Patrick Joyce, "Work," in F.M.L. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950, volume 2: People and their Environment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 143. Schwarz, 48-49, observed that multiple occupations were both common and necessary given the high unemployment of the early modern period, and has even suggested that "below the level of the most skilled members of a trade...[was] a world where very many people, perhaps the majority, no longer had distinct occupations."

Although 'tradesman,' 'craftsman,' and 'artisan' are used interchangeably in this study, it should be noted that none of these terms is unproblematic: see John Rule, "The property of skill in the period of manufacture," in Patrick Joyce (ed.), *The Historical Meanings of Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 102; also Joyce, "Work," 143.

[36]Joan Lane, *Apprenticeship in England, 1600-1914* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1996), 12, 131-132.

the Royal Navy seems to have expected its surgeons to have knowledge of pharmacy.[37] It would be reasonable to expect the HBC to make similar demands, given that Company surgeons were the only source of European medical care in the Bayside factories.

In terms of social status, blacksmiths were among the upper ranks of Britain's skilled artisans at the end of the seventeenth century, but their status seems to have declined through the eighteenth century.[38] R. Campbell's *The London Tradesman*, a detailed guide to various occupations for parents and guardians looking to apprentice their children, characterized the specialized craft of edge-tool making as a "country" trade, but whether he was referring to rural areas or to provincial tool-making centres like Sheffield and Birmingham is unclear. He also described a gunsmith as both a joiner and a smith, but cast doubt on how much of the latter skill was required by mentioning that the ironwork (especially the barrel) was often bought pre-made.[39] 'Armourer' had by the eighteenth century become a relatively meaningless label[40] and in the HBC records appears to have been used more or less as a synonym for 'gunsmith.'

House carpenters and bricklayers were lower status occupations than blacksmithing, primarily because few of these artisans were able to become relatively

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[37]R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman*, originally published 1747 (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969), 47, described a surgeon as "only employed in the Cure of Wounds, Bruises, Contusions, Ulcers, and Eruptions in the outward Parts, in Trepanning, Cutting, or Scarifying, and Amputations....He applies only topical Medicines...but is rarely concerned in any inward Applications; nor is supposed conversant with Pharmacy of any sort." For surgeons in the Royal Navy, see Campbell, 53.

[38]Lane, 149.

[39]Campbell, 240, 242. He informed his readers that a boy required "no extraordinary Strength or Education" to become apprenticed to a gunsmith.

[40]Campbell, 241, mentioned that the armourers' guild in London included brasiers, founders, copper-smiths, and many other kinds of metal-workers.

large-scale independent masters (in 1696 there were only 21 master bricklayers in London).[41] Masons – who before the nineteenth century also acted as architects – enjoyed status equal to or surpassing that of blacksmiths. Their superiority to bricklayers was reflected in the higher premiums parents and guardians were willing to pay to apprentice their sons to master masons (between £10 and £20 in London, compared to between £6 and £10 for an apprenticeship as a bricklayer).[42] The relationship between masons and bricklayers was similar to that between carpenters and sawyers, where the Carpenters' Company (*i.e.* guild) of London characterized sawyers as mere labourers and successfully maintained the social and economic distance between them until at least the middle of the eighteenth century.[43] Highly specialized woodworkers such as ship carpenters and coopers commanded higher wages than house carpenters, but the social distance between them was less obvious.[44]

Tailors had the lowest status of the skilled tradesmen employed by the HBC, and this was reflected in their lower wages compared to blacksmiths and carpenters. Tailoring was a highly traditional craft, but one that was overstocked and subject to great seasonal fluctuations. In the mid-eighteenth century, Campbell distinguished master

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[41]Lane, 141. According to Campbell, 159-160, it was not uncommon for master bricklayers to ruin themselves by embarking on their own building projects. For a discussion of carpenters and joiners, see Campbell, 160-161.

[42]Lane, 141, 144-145. A stonemason required knowledge of geometry, designing, drawing, architecture and was "among the first Rank of Tradesmen," while bricklayers had less training, less knowledge, and less status: Campbell, 158-159.

[43]B.W.E. Alford & T.C. Barker, *A History of the Carpenters Company* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1968), 116.

[44]Campbell, 244, 299. On the other hand, Schwarz, 58, places coopers alongside tailors and (surprisingly) masons just above the social and economic status of labourers.

tailors from "the mere working Taylor": most of the latter were employed "only to sew the Seam, to cast the Button Holes, and prepare the Work for the Finisher." He claimed that "not one in ten of them know how to cut out a Pair of Breeches."[45] HBC tailors presumably possessed a greater degree of skill than that (although they were almost certainly not master tailors). Little is known about the precise roles played by Homeguard Cree women in preparing clothes for the Company's servants; possibly they collaborated to an extent with the factories' tailors. A tailor's employment prospects in Britain were generally not good in the 1700s – Campbell called them "as numerous as Locusts...and generally as poor as Rats" – and by the middle of the century pauper boys made up the majority of boys apprenticed to the trade in England.[46]

Labels applied to men employed afloat are sometimes confusing. The term 'sailor' was often used for the crew members of Bayside sloop and trans-Atlantic supply ship alike. It was not uncommon for men to shift between the two types of vessels as need dictated, and the sloops themselves made occasional trans-Atlantic voyages. Where such distinctions can be made, this study refers to men on the supply ships as 'sailors' and those on the sloops as 'mariners'.

It is particularly difficult to discern the qualities and skills encompassed by the

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[45]Campbell, 192-193.

[46]Campbell, 192-193; Lane, 120-121. At least one former Bayside tailor was able to profit from his connection with the Company. Anthony Dowridge served in the Bay 1678-82 (at £12 per annum) and 1683-86 (at £15 per annum) before being captured by the French while in temporary charge of Moose in 1686. He was back in England by February 1688, when he collected the wages due to him (A. 15/3, fo. 104), but like most men he did not re-enter the service after being a prisoner of war. However, the Company paid him £52 for "Slopselers wares" in October 1692, £27 for "Beeds Rugs &ca" in May 1695, and another £30 for slops in February 1697: A. 15/4, fos. 16, 98, 121). Slops were cheap ready-made clothes, but in a maritime context could also include bedding. Dowridge also sold Anthony Beale (then a landsman at Albany) £3.19.8 of "Clothes Shirts &ca" in July 1694: A. 15/4, fo. 71.

term 'labourer.' The *Farmer's Magazine* in 1779 defined 'labourer' as "a man hired to work by the day or week, or employed by the acre, rod, pole, etc:" this was the sense in which it was used in most wage assessments and other British sources from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries.[47] During this period, 'labour' was perceived as a general and fairly abstract social activity. Labourers worked in gangs, large and small, on myriad tasks which did not require specialized skills.[48] Only in the nineteenth century did 'labour' become a measurable component in discussions of political economy, as an element of production and as a pool of workers available to be hired, appearing also as an adjective in phrases like 'labour costs,' 'labour market,' and 'labour relations.' These phrases have an anachronistic ring when applied to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[49]

In Hudson Bay, however, 'labourer' was used as a fairly general label. Men given no occupational label, or described simply as 'hands,' can probably be considered in the same category as labourers. However, 'hand' was also used more generally. This study uses it to refer – along with 'servants' – to all Company employees not in possession of

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[47]Ann Kussmaul, *Servants in Husbandry in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 6, 135, also 136-142, Table A1.1, "The usage of 'servant' and 'labourer,' 1360-1850."

[48]Woodward, *Men at Work*, 93, quoted an unnamed early-eighteenth-century dictionary defining a labourer as being engaged in "drudgery work". However, he cautioned against the common assumption that labourers were unskilled, observing that "even the use of a spade or shovel involves some skill." Also see Woodward, *Men at Work*, 1, 94, 96; Galenson, 60-61.

[49]Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 145-148. Alan Macfarlane argued for the existence of a labour market in England as early as the later middle ages, but this contention has not been widely accepted: see White & Vann, 357-359.

command over others ('officers').[50]

'Officers' in the HBC were not military ranks but positions of responsibility within a corporate hierarchy. 'Officers' included the factors (or 'Chiefs') of the major posts (which were thus called 'factories'),[51] the masters of smaller outposts or 'outhouses' (referred to here as 'houses'), and men serving as a 'Second' or 'Deputy'. Some factors were granted or used the term 'Governor', sometimes referring to a specific factory but usually encompassing several posts in a region such as the 'Bottom of the Bay' (James Bay). The term 'factor' is preferable to 'manager,' although the word 'management' will not be specifically avoided here. The verb 'manage' originally referred to the handling of horses and men in a military context, but by the end of the seventeenth century 'manager' could mean a trainer and director, or a careful housekeeper.[52] Both of these senses could apply to HBC factors. Contemporary documents, however, never referred to 'managers,' and only rarely to 'management.' Although some recent scholars (particularly Ann M. Carlos and Stephen Nicholas) have convincingly portrayed the factors of long-distance trading companies as managers in modern business enterprises, this emphasis on modernity risks obscuring older elements

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[50]The word employee is slightly anachronistic, being a nineteenth-century American word, but 'employer' (or 'imployer') and 'employ' (or 'imploy') were current in eighteenth-century Britain: Williams, *Keywords*, 274-275.

[51]Factories in this sense were not places of manufacture: they were trading establishments in the charge of a 'factor', used in the older sense of one who buys and sells for another.

[52]Williams, *Keywords*, 156-157. Sidney Pollard, *The Genesis of Modern Management: A Study of the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain* (London: Edward Arnold, 1965), 104, claimed that 'manager' had no fixed meaning in the eighteenth century. A 'factor' was an agent or representative, particularly one who bought and/or sold for another (perhaps working on commission), or one who has the charge and manages the affairs of an estate (thus a bailiff or land-steward).

of HBC factors' roles and workplace relationships. They resembled both estate stewards and waged foreman in contemporary Britain – two groups that have not been sufficiently investigated by scholars – and played complex roles as heads of workplace households ('household-factories').

Likewise, the Company's employees were servants in household-factories. Partly for this reason, I prefer the term 'service' over 'career' to describe the timespan of a man's employment. Men in Hudson Bay would not have thought of their time with the Company as a 'career:' the predominant seventeenth and eighteenth century sense of that word was of rapid, unrestrained activity. Only in the mid-nineteenth century did it lose its derogatory implication and indicate progress in a vocation.[53] Even in the modern sense, the word 'career' does not apply to most of the Company's employees, as their times in Hudson Bay were not as long-term as the word usually implies.

A more complex issue of terminology involves the label 'pre-industrial', often applied to the period of English history between ca. 1500 and ca. 1800. Most historians using this term have not defined it, which in turn has made other historians suspicious of its usefulness. Peter Laslett considered it problematic, while Patrick Joyce called it misleading and "largely meaningless."[54] Joyce was particularly concerned about scholars

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[53]Williams, *Keywords*, 44-45.

[54]Peter Laslett, "Mean household size in England since the sixteenth century," in Laslett & Richard Wall (eds.), *Household and Family in Past Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 127. Joyce, "Work," 132, 144. Joyce also called 'industrialisation' an unsatisfactory term and warned against simplistic "before and after" models such as pre-industrial/industrial, custom/market, or traditional/modern: Joyce, "historical meanings of work," 5, 10, 25. Also see E.P. Thompson, "Eighteenth-century English society: class struggle without class?" *Social History* 3/2 (1978), 133; E.P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," in Thompson, *Customs in Common* (New York: New Press, 1993), 382. Keith Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2000), 20, complained that the economic history of early modern

contrasting modern work values "with a romantic vision of 'pre-industrial' times in which the holistic virtues of self-reliance and co-operation were practised within the charmed circle of free household production." Such contrast has often been the result of assumptions about the inherent antagonism of capitalist social relations. However, more attention has been paid recently to the roles of consent, worker agency, and consensus.[55] As our understandings of industrialisation and of capitalism change, so too must our definition of 'pre-industrial' (if we have one).[56]

The hallmark of the 'pre-industrial' workplace was said to be the prevalence of personal labour relationships, determined principally by social and moral obligations inherited from the Middle Ages rather than by contractual obligations negotiated on an open and individualistic labour market. 'Pre-industrial' is most obviously opposed to 'industrial', but this juxtaposition is also connected with assumptions about differences between rural and urban settings, and with the dominant dichotomy of early modern British social history, 'community' versus 'society'. This dichotomy makes a distinction between the personal, direct, and sentimental relationships of 'community' and the formal, abstract, and instrumental relationships of 'society.' The transition from

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England "had contracted in range and diminished in significance" in the second half of the twentieth century. "The fashionable use of the term 'pre-industrial' to characterise the period encapsulated this reduced significance, and compounded it by substituting chronological vagueness where once there had been a sharp sense of the distinctiveness of the times."

[55]Joyce, "historical meanings of work," 4, 6-7.

[56]Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, 20, was concerned that post-war studies of early modern England portrayed the period simply as a prelude to late eighteenth century industrialisation, "less a dividing range in historical experience than a landscape of gently rising foothills." White & Vann, 345, felt that empirical research by social historians in the late 1970s and early 1980s was outrunning scholars' ability to fit that research into a comprehensive conceptual scheme.

'community' to 'society' is generally associated with the process of industrialization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and is now burdened with so many connotations specific to that historical context that some scholars are seeking alternative conceptual models.[57] For these reasons, this study employs the term 'early modern', which still implies an undefined modernity but is in most respects less problematic than 'pre-industrial'.

Although elements of the Hudson's Bay Company's approach to personnel can be described as 'modern,' labour relations within the Company were dominated by deep-rooted understandings of master-servant relationships within household settings at least until the late eighteenth century. Of course, both the unique circumstances of life and trade in Hudson Bay and the military and economic threat posed by the French influenced the social and economic structures of the HBC's establishments. However, aside from those factors, the Committee's assumptions about the social structures of its posts were similar to those made by its employees, resulting in the natural (though not inevitable) development of 'household-factories.' Within those households, officers and servants could serve both the Company and themselves.

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[57]Williams, *Keywords*, 66, 76; Phil Withington & Alexandra Shepard, "Introduction: communities in early modern England," in Shepard & Withington (eds.), *Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 3-4; John Rule, *The Labouring Classes in Early Industrial England, 1750-1850* (London: Longman, 1986), 155-156. For a critical analysis of developing perceptions of 'community' and some of the connotations which they carry, see C.J. Calhoun, "Community: toward a variable conceptualization for comparative research," *Social History* 5/1 (Jan 1980), 105-110.

The Hudson's Bay Company as Enterprise and Employer: A Brief Survey of the Secondary Literature

Though often criticized for being slothful and overly conservative during its first century of operation, the HBC profited from the innovations and rational decision-making of the Committee and the Bayside factors. In part, the Company's long-term survival depended on the development of a commercial and administrative structure capable of operating effectively at a great distance from the board of directors. The most complete discussion of this structure is in E.E. Rich's two-volume *History of the Hudson's Bay Company*. In his work as General Editor of the Hudson's Bay Record Society in the 1940s and 1950s, he construed HBC history more broadly than most other scholars have. Although some aspects of his work have been superseded, his comprehensive study of the Company's first 200 years remains the most reliable such work in the canon (despite its frustrating lack of footnotes) . Other scholars have generally confined themselves to more detailed examinations of certain periods or issues, and lack his historical scope.

Rich viewed the Company's personnel (especially the officers) as an important element in its survival and profitability. According to Rich, the Committee sought men who required no disciplining.[58] Londoners proved unsuitable,[59] and Rich described the

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[58]Rich, *History*, I, 498.

[59]For instance, he described the Londoners at Albany in the 1720s as "so well acquainted with the debaucheries of town life" that their commander, Joseph Myatt, "despaired of ever reclaiming them." Rich, *History*, I 497. Rich later commented that many of the Company's artisans and labourers "were town-bred" without mentioning debauchery (I, 542).

Company recruiting in Scotland from the 1680s onward.[60] Mainland Scotland ultimately proved undesirable on account of "the difficulties involved by distance" and perhaps also, Rich theorized, "the latent Jacobitism of the Highlanders at this time." In the 1720s, the Company sought "crofters and fishermen in the far north, used to the cold and hunger of their own homesteads, and with their native hardihood unimpaired by evil living in the slums of England's towns": Orkneymen (or Orcadians) made "admirable servants" for the Bay.[61]

Rich inserted a valuable note of caution, observing that the employment of Orkneymen "developed to such importance in the history of the Company that it would

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[60]Rich, *History*, I, 146, 157. Makahonuk, 5, claimed that the HBC "had established regular recruiting policies as early as the 1680s."

[61]Rich, *History*, I, 499; also see J.A. Troup & F. Eunson, *Stromness: 150 Years a Burgh 1817-1967* (1967), 5-6, quoted in Alexander Fenton, *The Northern Isles: Orkney and Shetland* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1978), 596. Rich did not clarify why the Orkneys were not also disqualified on account of "the difficulties involved by distance," despite the fact that they were farther away from London than Scotland was. Had the Committee desired it, the annual supply ships could probably have easily put in at Aberdeen or another port on Scotland's eastern seaboard. Jacobitism has also clouded interpretations of Scottish emigration before the 1770s, because scholars explain that emigration in terms of Highlanders' Jacobite sympathies (and the consequences of those sympathies) when in fact Lowland emigrants outnumbered those from the Highlands: T.C. Smout, N.C. Landsman, & T.M. Devine, "Scottish Emigration in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in Nicholas Canny (ed.), *Europeans on the Move: Studies on European Migration, 1500-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 95.

John Nicks, "Orkneymen in the HBC 1780-1821," in Carol M. Judd and Arthur J. Ray (eds.), *Old Trails and New Directions: Selected Papers of the Third North American Fur Trade Conference* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 102, cited a 1726 recommendation by Joseph Myatt (at Albany) as the apparent beginning of the policy of hiring Orkneymen: see Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fo. 57; also Rich, *History*, I 499. More commonly, its origins are often traced back to John Nixon: Sylvia Van Kirk, *'Many Tender Ties': Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1980), 11, described Nixon's recommendation for hiring Scots as presaging the policy of hiring Orkneymen. Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980), 23, 24, did not explicitly credit Nixon, but cited the early 1680s as the period during which the Company "first began to establish regular recruiting procedures and personnel and wage policies" and noted that Nixon's recommendations "appear to have influenced subsequent practices." In contrast, Ann M. Carlos & Stephen Nicholas, "Agency Problems in Early Chartered Companies: The Case of the Hudson's Bay Company," *Journal of Economic History* 50/4 (December 1990), 861, claimed that the HBC began recruiting in Scotland in the 1670s ("the view being that Scots would be more used to the cold") and in Orkney by 1700.

be easy to exaggerate the conviction and purpose with which the system was started. In practice...[it] seemed to have sprung simply from expediency, from the fact that if the ships sailed from London before the necessary complement of men had been recruited, then the Orkneys were the best port of call at which the deficiency might be made good."[62] At the same time, though, Rich wrote that by the 1720s, "their reputation stood so well, and the system had so far become common practice, that in the following year the ships' captains were simply told that the Company had been disappointed at the last moment by several servants who had contracted to sail; the ships were therefore to call at the Orkneys and to recruit the necessary number."[63] This sounds more like an *ad hoc* response to a particular situation than any kind of 'system,' and like just the sort of misinterpretation against which Rich was cautioning.

For Rich, the retention and promotion of personnel were at least as important as recruitment. In the 1670s, "posts were so few in number, and they needed so small a complement of 'officers' that no special care was taken to supply them."[64] This had to change, however, as the quality of the officers was poor, and they proved unwilling to serve for long engagements: Rich described this as "a great handicap in the early years," and suggested that the uncertain future of the Company and its trade was the major

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[62]He also commented that "Local connections...supplemented this reason for using Orkneymen," but did not clarify what those connections were. Rich, *History*, I, 499.

[63]Rich, *History*, I, 499. Daniel Francis & Toby Morantz, *Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay 1600-1870* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983), 90, observed that "it became usual for the supply ship on its way to the bay to pause at the islands and take on a complement of men hired by a local recruiter commissioned by the company." They did not, however, indicate what time period they were referring to, and there is no evidence of a formal commissioned recruiter in the Orkneys before the 1770s.

[64]Rich, *History*, I, 295.

deterrent when officers considered whether or not to re-engage.[65] He praised the calibre of the officers in the 1720s and 1730s, particularly those who had begun their careers as apprentices, tradesmen, or ordinary servants (and who thus had longer experience of life and trade in Hudson Bay).[66] The insecurities of the pre-Utrecht years probably discouraged men of any rank from considering the fur trade as a life-long employment. Even when the trade and the posts were more securely established, Rich argued that the Committee often had troubles finding appropriate men for the book-keeping and managerial aspects of their business.[67]

The long-term influence of Rich's work can be seen in the generations that succeeded him. The priorities of fur trade scholars began to change in the 1970s, as graduate students Arthur J. Ray, John E. Foster, Jennifer S.H. Brown, and Sylvia Van Kirk shifted their focus to previously neglected groups such as Natives and women. For Brown and Van Kirk, in particular, their studies of families and of women in the fur trade necessitated an examination of the Company's personnel and their origins: they relied on the foundation laid by Rich, but made important revisions to some of Rich's general statements. For instance, Brown observed that the urban backgrounds of many late seventeenth century HBC servants "contributed to difficulties with them. The London committee, hiring men as they were needed, naturally tended to draw upon inhabitants of

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[65]Rich, *History*, I, 295.

[66]Rich, *History*, I, 491, also see 542, 608.

[67]The prospective trader or manager "had to be adequate in accountancy, able to read and understand the instructions sent out, to conduct the Indian trade and to maintain command over his servants, and perhaps to defend his post against the French." Rich, *History*, I, 295.

the London area....But such city men...had access to other employment if they became displeased with company terms and were given to suing for higher salaries."[68]

Scholars have taken the comments of high-ranking servants as evidence that the Company frequently had difficulties finding suitable employees. Governor John Nixon's 1682 report to the Committee, for instance, is consistently portrayed as the origin of an apprenticeship policy: Nixon allegedly saw apprenticeship of "country lads" as one solution to his problems with men recruited from London.[69] Van Kirk's observation that "[o]ccupational mobility was prevalent within the Company largely because it was continually plagued by a lack of experienced men"[70] suggests a broader focus on the Company's inability to find and keep suitable employees, a focus which has often brought Orkneymen to the foreground of scholarly discussions.

Those discussions often emphasize the poverty, isolation, and harsh environment of the Orkney Islands, conditions which apparently prepared men well for life on Hudson Bay. For instance, Van Kirk echoed Rich's earlier comment about Orkneymen, explaining that the "difficulties of eking out a living on their northern isles attracted the Orkneymen to the Company's service," where, "on the whole, they proved themselves to be reliable servants. Hard-working, extremely thrifty, and usually sober, the Orkneymen were seldom criticized, except for their closeness and a tendency to conspire to protect

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[68]Brown, 24. Also see Van Kirk, 10.

[69]See, for example, Van Kirk, 10; Brown, 24-25. Francis & Morantz, 90, more particularly saw apprenticeship as a response to a shortage of suitable manpower caused by England's European wars.

[70]Van Kirk, 11.

their interests."[71] Brown observed that Orkney had lower standards of wages and of living than London, and also noted that the islands seem to have shared Scotland's relatively high rates of literacy and numeracy.[72] Before the 1770s, however, this was a recognizable asset in very few cases.

Historians have generally seen Orkneymen as dominating the non-managerial levels of the Company before the early nineteenth century. For instance, Van Kirk characterized the "servant class" as being dominated by Orkneymen, while "factors and subordinate officers were usually English," although she denied the existence of a "rigid class and ethnic stratification" within the Company at this time.[73] Brown was more cautious, saying instead that Scots and "apprenticed 'country lads'" came to outnumber Londoners in the service, without mentioning Orkneymen specifically.[74] She suggested that internal mobility "was in some respects restricted, particularly from the late 1700s on, and with regard to one ethnic group....[A]lthough the English servants may have been favoured for promotion by the dominantly English London committee, there were no

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[71]Van Kirk, 11. Also see Francis and Morantz, 90.

[72]Brown, 27. Also see Heather Rollason Driscoll, "'A Most Important Chain of Connection': Marriage in the Hudson's Bay Company," in T. Binnema, G.J. Ens, and R.C. Macleod (eds.), *From Rupert's Land to Canada: Essays in Honour of John E. Foster* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001), 85.

[73]Van Kirk, 11; her only example of mobility from one "class" to another is William Tomison, who entered the service in 1760 and spent the better part of his career in the fierce post-1770 competition period. Concepts of 'class' have been almost entirely absent from discussions of the eighteenth-century HBC and probably rightfully so: the archival documents provide no clear evidence of class-based conflicts or rhetoric in the period studied here. Makahonuk, 11, 14, admitted that "the concept of class struggle" in the Canadian fur trade "is subject to debate," but suggested that the concept may still be useful in examining the transition from paternalist to capitalist labour relations that (he claimed) took place after 1760. The current discourse of class in British history is extremely complex and any application of it to any period of the HBC's history would need to be a research project in and of itself.

[74]Brown, 24-25.

expressions of prejudice against Scots in general." Lowland Scots were not clearly viewed as distinct from Englishmen but, she argued, "the Orkneymen acquired considerable visibility as a separate group, both in their own view and that of others."[75] Other historians have made similar statements about ethnicity in the HBC,[76] some taking their lead from John Nicks' detailed study of Orkney servants: Nicks observed that by the second half of the eighteenth century, "English labourers were becoming a rarity," although Englishmen "were still hired as tradesmen" and "continued to retain a virtual monopoly on positions as apprentices, writers, and officers."[77]

John Nicks' work remains the most detailed study of Orkneymen in the Hudson's Bay Company. Though his focus is on the post-1770 period – on account of the oft-cited scarcity of evidence for the earlier period[78] – he, like most other scholars, made some introductory remarks about the pre-1770 HBC. Such remarks were limited, though, and his article was dominated by his excellent examination of the backgrounds of individual employees (as grouped into cohorts for statistical purposes). Of 121 Company servants from the parish of Orphir on the main island (Mainland) of Orkney (1780-1821), Nicks was able to link 95 with their baptismal entries, a success rate impossible for any earlier period. Though directly relevant only for the late eighteenth and early nineteenth

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[75]Brown, 30-31.

[76]See, for instance, Francis & Morantz, 90; Burley, 2-3; Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 861.

[77]Nicks, 102.

[78]See Nicks, 105. He also noted gaps and deficiencies in some Orkney parish records prior to the late eighteenth century: see 109-110, 124-25.

centuries, Nicks' findings suggest some earlier trends as well. However, the fact that his work and the works of others on Orkneymen in the fur trade only begin at 1770 highlights both the gap in the secondary literature and the relatively limited archival evidence on which that gap can be partly blamed.

The 1990s saw another shift in scholarly focus, as economic and business historians began to look at the HBC as a corporate entity. This approach had more in common with the much earlier work of Harold Innis, K.G. Davies, and Richard Glover than with Brown and Van Kirk: Edith Burley observed that "in drawing much needed attention to the social and cultural aspects of the fur trade in Canada and emphasizing that it was *more* than a business, historians have neglected the fact that the HBC *was* a business."[79] Elizabeth Mancke (like Rich) saw in the Company's success "the development of a managerial and administrative structure capable of coordinating the disparate spheres of its trade, separated one from the other by time, space, and culture." This development, she felt, "must account, in part, for the transition of the Hudson's Bay Company from a highly speculative seventeenth-century venture with colonial intentions to an eighteenth-century gilt-edged trading company."[80] Though Mancke focussed on other aspects of the Company's early history, the recruitment and retention of 'good' personnel must be considered an integral part of that development.

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[79]Burley, 1.

[80]Elizabeth Mancke, *A Company of Businessmen: The Hudson's Bay Company and Long-Distance Trade, 1670-1730* (Winnipeg: Rupert's Land Research Center, 1988), 10. Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, rev. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 142, made a similar argument, praising the HBC for having "built and elaborated an organization remarkably adapted to control of the trade" in Hudson Bay.

Ann M. Carlos has examined this issue in greater detail than Mancke, often attempting to place the HBC in the context of its business contemporaries. With Stephen Nicholas, she argued for the advent of a "managerial class" by the end of the eighteenth century,[81] although they did not define or describe such a "class." The basis of this development was the apprenticeship "system", which was part of the Company's attempts to create a managerial class with a set of shared (but undefined) values and which they claimed provided most of the Company's managers by the end of the eighteenth century.[82]

In her articles, Carlos has consistently presented the HBC as an example of an early modern trading company successfully addressing the problem of controlling the behaviour of its agents from a distance.[83] The almost exclusive employment of Orkeymen formed a "homogeneous social group" in the Bayside factories and "may have...reduced the tensions that could have arisen" when small groups of individuals live

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[81]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 864.

[82]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 873-74. There may have been a misprint, as they gave Henry Kelsey and Richard Norton as examples of former apprentices achieving managerial rank by the end of the eighteenth century (873): both Kelsey and Norton served in the first half of the eighteenth century. In a later article which largely repeated the arguments put forward in Carlos & Nicholas, Carlos placed the formation of a managerial class rooted in an apprenticeship system at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but identified the Blue Coat boys as the core of that apprentice managerial group: Ann M. Carlos, "Principal-Agent Problems in Early Trading Companies: A Tale of Two Firms," *American Economic Review* 82/2 (May 1992), 143-44. In fact, no known Blue Coat boys achieved managerial rank. Also see Ann M. Carlos, "Agent Opportunism and the Role of Company Culture: The Hudson's Bay and Royal African Companies Compared," *Business and Economic History* 20 (1991), 149.

[83]Carlos and Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 855-56, observed that "there has been very little archival work done to ascertain whether the directors [of trading companies] understood the nature of the agency problem and what steps, if any, they took to control the problem," but their own bibliography included no archival sources, only published primary documents.

together in crowded circumstances for long periods of time.[84] Carlos and Nicholas shared the assumption implicitly made by other scholars, that Scots in general and Orkneymen in particular were "particularly suited" to life and labour on Hudson Bay, but approached the ethnic make-up of the HBC's labour force in managerial terms. Initially, they argued, factors blamed indiscipline and poor performance on the unsuitability of the men under their command, and the Committee was not certain whether to believe them; because Londoners had a reputation for rowdy and drunken behaviour, the Committee gave the factors the benefit of the doubt and sought a "more ideally suited" labour force. Once such ideal servants had been found (in Orkney), "the committee was better able to judge the performance of its manager" and blamed him for future disciplinary problems.[85]

Although Carlos' work is important – among other things, she (with Nicholas) provided the only detailed discussion of the use of bonds to ensure managerial loyalty in the seventeenth-century HBC[86] – some important ideas remain incomplete. For instance, she and Stephen Nicholas implied the existence of "a social hierarchy and unique 'culture'" within the HBC and other trading companies, noting that such an "internal social system which instills values directly into managers is a powerful instrument used in a company's attempts to reduce private trade, to attenuate opportunism, and to encourage high levels of effort on the part of managers."[87] However, they provided

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[84]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 861n, 873.

[85]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 861.

[86]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 864.

[87]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 858, 873; also see Carlos, "Agent Opportunism," 145, 148-149.

neither examples of such a system in action nor evidence of its existence in the HBC or its contemporaries, beyond observing that correspondence from London "is replete with positive encouragement to the men and managers."[88]

Edith Burley offered the most comprehensive re-evaluation of the Company's workforce, borrowing from English social and labour historians like E.P. Thompson and Marcus Rediker. Looking at discipline and conflict in the Company's second century (1770-1870), Burley observed that "finding suitable labour was an ever-present concern in the company's history."[89] She concluded that the HBC's "recruitment policy" never produced "a perfectly satisfactory labour force," and that "its employees frequently failed to behave as loyal servants were supposed to."[90] However, her only description of a recruitment "policy" was a statement "that men from pre-industrial societies [like Orkney] were the most desirable."[91] She repeated the usual comments about these men's thriftiness and hard work, but focused primarily on the nature of Orkney society rather than the harsh life experience of the individual crofter.

> The Orkneys were isolated, poor, and underdeveloped and their society was traditional and hierarchical. Orcadians were therefore willing to work for low wages and eager to save as much as they could. They were also supposed to be accustomed to subordination, uncorrupted by city life, and, because of the harsh climate of their homeland, well suited to the rigours

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[88]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 873. They referred to Brown, *Strangers in Blood* (no page number given) as confirming that the HBC "actively pursued a policy directed toward creating a set of shared values and apparently was successful in this." (873) Brown's work does not demonstrate such a process in the eighteenth century.

[89]Burley, 2.

[90]Burley, 2, 10.

[91]Burley, 2.

of life in the fur trade.[92]

The structure of society in the northern islands supposedly made Orkneymen deferential and submissive – men requiring no discipline, as mentioned by Rich. However, the connection she drew between an allegedly traditional and hierarchical society and a willingness to work for low wages is not directly supported by archival evidence or secondary literature: acceptance of low wages in Orkney was more likely related to the islands' distance from major urban centres.[93]

Burley highlighted the fact that many of the alleged ethnic characteristics of Orkneymen were assumptions made by the London Committee. "It never occurred to the London committee that Orkneymen had appeared so reliable" prior to 1770 because the Company's operations had been small and the men's activities directed primarily towards their own subsistence: "profits depended more on the diligence of the Native hunters and trappers than on that of the company's labourers. It was not until Orcadians were asked to emulate their more energetic Canadian counterparts and carry out duties that would enable the HBC to expand into the interior that their disobedience became so noticeable and costly."[94] Orkneymen were members of the "lower orders," which the social elite (including the HBC Committee) wrongly assumed to be passive and docile: "[w]hen its employees were not perfectly obedient, therefore, the committee blamed it on their bad

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[92]Burley, 2-3.

[93]Nor did Burley explain why an eagerness to save their wages made Orkneymen more suitable for life in the Bay. The description of the Orkneys as traditional and hierarchical is also problematic, as it does not define either term and implies that London was neither traditional nor hierarchical.

[94]Burley, 8-10.

character or their ethnicity."[95] In some respects, scholars have made the same mistake in evaluating the Orkneymen – and perhaps the Londoners as well.

Burley criticized the Committee for misunderstanding the nature of 'pre-industrial' societies. "They were not rigid hierarchies foisted from the top on a stolid, sheeplike peasantry but rather complex systems that ordinary people invested with considerable meaning. Pre-industrial social and economic relations were conducted within a 'contractual framework' in which the elite accepted certain responsibilities towards their inferiors in return for the latter's recognition of their superiority."[96] It was a social contract, she explained, in which the lower orders behaved according to a sense of 'moral economy' – "a consistent traditional view of the social norms and obligations, of the proper economic functions of several parties within the community."[97] The distance between the nineteenth-century Company (which was Burley's focus) and the earlier Company being considered here is highlighted by the fact that the assumptions that the London Committee allegedly made about pre-industrial societies are not demonstrable in this period. The applicability of E.P. Thompson's concept of the 'moral economy of the crowd' is also suspect, not least because collective expressions of community dissatisfaction (such as the bread riots with which Thompson was primarily concerned) are almost entirely absent in pre-1770 Rupert's Land.

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[95]Burley, 10-11.

[96]Burley, 10-11.

[97]Burley, 10-11. "HBC servants, like other pre-industrial workers, behaved according to customary attitudes towards work and leisure." Burley, 121.

Household Models in the Secondary Literature

Ann Carlos and Stephen Nicholas referred to commercial firms as "social systems." Although they did not define or describe the social system of the HBC, they pointed to that system as an important mechanism for encouraging appropriate behaviour and discouraging inappropriate behaviour.[98] It was not an explicitly constructed mechanism, but rather was intrinsic to the nature of early modern business. The social system of the early-modern English patriarchal family household has dominated recent understandings of the HBC. Jennifer S.H. Brown and John E. Foster independently introduced the household model to fur trade studies during their graduate work in the 1970s. They borrowed the concept from English social historians of the 1960s, particularly Peter Laslett, and applied it to the Canadian fur trade, just as scholars of colonial America were applying Laslett's work to their own research.[99]

The unit of the 'household' was basic to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English society and formed the primary organizational model for most early modern domestic economic life. Workers were integrated into small households that were both familial units and units of production; 'family' included apprentices and servants as well

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[98]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 858.

[99]John E. Foster, "The Indian-Trader in the Hudson Bay Fur Trade Tradition," in Jim Freedman & Jerome H. Barkow (eds.), *Proceedings of the Second Congress, Canadian Ethnology Society*, vol. 2 (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, Mercury Series, 1975), 574, warned that "for many North American scholars, unfamiliar with English society in this period, the historical narrative [outlined by British historians like Rich, Keith Davies, and Glyndwr Williams] tends to take place in a cultural void." For Laslett's influence on the historiography of colonial America, see Nicholas Canny, "The British Atlantic World: Working Towards a Definition," *The Historical Journal* 33/2 (1990), 480. In HBC historiography, his influence – particularly of *The World We Have Lost* – can be seen in Foster (1976), Frits Pannekoek (1979), Brown (1980), Van Kirk (1980), Gerhard Ens (1987), and Edith Burley (1997).

as kin, and the head of the household was a father figure as well as employer to them.[100] However, the concept of trading posts as households was never articulated by the Committee. Their approach to the occupation of their chartered territory was based on implicit assumptions about the organizational norms of their times, and modified by trial and error. Brown has outlined and characterized the main stages of this process. She called the Committee's early preference for building only temporary posts "a kind of 'maritime' transhumance."[101] This was followed by a short-lived experiment in "company familism"[102] (1683-87), in which they allowed their Bayside Governor, Henry Sergeant, to take his family to Hudson Bay.[103] The Committee finally settled on what Brown (and Foster) called "military monasticism," in which employees were posted to permanent posts for relatively long periods of time, and were expected to carry out their duties without distraction from families, settlers, or (theoretically) Native women. The constant threat of French attack before Utrecht meant that a quasi-military order was to be kept.[104] It was within this context that the patriarchal family household model began to emerge in trading posts in the eighteenth century.

Of course, the implementation of anything like military discipline or a military

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[100]See Brown, 20; Foster, 'Indian-Trader," 576-578.

[101]Brown, 9-10.

[102]Brown, 10.

[103]In April 1684, Elinor Verner asked for the Committee's permission to join her husband, Hugh, at Rupert River (where he was master). This was granted, provided he paid for her passage plus £12 per annum "for her Diett." However, for unknown reasons this decision was rescinded later in the month: "upon divers good Considerations...She Shall not goe this expedition nor any other woman." *Minutes, Second Part*, 224, 230.

[104]Brown, 11.

chain of command was greatly hampered by the physical distance between the Committee and their servants, which gave the latter greater autonomy than the Committee would have liked them to have. By the 1720s, two processes were taking place on Hudson Bay. First, the sense of isolation was being enhanced (as it had been since the 1670s) by the impression among Bayside men that the London Committee did not and could not fully understand the conditions and circumstances of living and working in the Bay. Second, the elimination of an overt military threat from the French eliminated the perceived need for military order and discipline. Increased security meant that men were not going to have their service interrupted by war, as happened in the 1680s and 1690s, and the trading posts came to be seen less as military establishments and more as places of business and residence.[105] Given that the monastic element of Bayside life had never been very enforceable, the elimination of the military imperative left the posts as social and economic entities of a sort never envisioned by the Committee.

In these social and economic entities, the Company's officers and servants digested orders from London in the context of their own experience and local knowledge. Brown characterized this process as implicit, not governed by "conscious planning or goal-oriented business decisions." "[T]he operative process more closely resembled institutionalization in [Frederick] Barth's sense – the 'complex aggregation of numerous micro-events of behaviour' over a considerable period. Such a process is difficult to

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[105]Brown, 16-19; also Howard Robert Baker II, "Law Transplanted, Justice Invented: Sources of Law for the Hudson's Bay Company in Rupert's Land, 1670-1870" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Interdisciplinary Studies (Law, History, Sociology), University of Manitoba, 1996), 59. Michael B. Payne, "Daily Life on Western Hudson Bay 1714 to 1870: A Social History of York Factory and Churchill" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, History, Carleton University, 1989), 28, described these processes as "revealing an interesting tension between metropolis and hinterland."

reconstruct," she admitted, but evidence "suggests that the Bay posts developed semi-independently over the years following an older British organizational form that was neither military nor monastic."[106] This older organizational form was the patriarchal family household.

Although the model of the patriarchal household has generally been accepted by historians since Brown and Foster, understandings of how that model was applied have shown great diversity. Heather Rollason Driscoll, for instance, denied that the resemblance between patterns of life in Hudson Bay and British domestic life was unconscious or accidental: "rather, right from the early stages of the company's existence, the London Committee intended its employees to recognize these similarities and behave accordingly."[107] She pointed to the British army and the merchant marine as examples of other institutions which chose to model their organizations upon "this family style."[108] Whereas Brown had presented the household model as a natural and almost organic development in the trading posts, Rollason Driscoll presented it as a management technique imposed from London to control employee behaviour.

Rollason Driscoll's primary focus was on marriage and marriage patterns, and thus she did not explain in detail how the household model provided for social control.[109] She claimed, "The company's directors hoped that employing the patriarchal family as

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[106]Brown, 19-20.

[107]Rollason Driscoll, 83.

[108]Rollason Driscoll, 83-84.

[109]Rollason Driscoll, 84.

the model for social relations at its trading posts would solve all of the problems posed by the circumstances of the bay."[110] The post's patriarch could supervise the servants, who would be familiar with the idea of a patriarch as an authority figure. More importantly, she argued, the organization of employees into small 'family' units placed every employee under the close supervision of someone of higher rank: this not only encouraged the vertical relationships on which Brown placed such importance, but "limited employees' ability to rise up against the company or to quit it all together."[111]

Rollason Driscoll's arguments on labour relations were not essential to her main thesis, and thus were general in nature and lacked concrete examples. One example she did provide was that of Henry Sergeant, who was allowed to bring his wife and family to the Bay in 1683. Rollason Driscoll placed that firmly in the context of emphasizing patriarchal authority: by allowing their overseas Governor to have his family with him, the Committee was positioning him as the patriarch of Rupert's Land (the patriarch customarily being the only male member of a household allowed to be married). Rollason Driscoll also portrayed the arrival of Reverend John French in the Bay as an indication by Sergeant of his patriarchal obligation to care for the spiritual well-being of the men under his command (although there is no evidence that French was engaged on

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[110]Rollason Driscoll, 85.

[111]Rollason Driscoll, 85. She quoted a memo or minute from the directors of the Massachusetts Bay Company in the mid-1600s, recommending the organization of that Company's servants into small 'families,' but there is no indication that the HBC purposely followed such a policy: the size of post complements were determined by the needs of the post, and tended to be larger than Rollason Driscoll seemed to be implying in her comments about close supervision. She may have been referring to the practice of dividing the men into messes of six or eight men, but there is little evidence that such groupings were applied to anything other than the distribution of provisions.

Sergeant's recommendation).[112]

Although Rollason Driscoll did not cite Ann M. Carlos and Stephen Nicholas, their approach to the household model as a management tool was similar to hers. They argued that an ethical or social system within a business can lessen the need for close monitoring of personnel: in a family firm, such a system could be created by the placement of family members as partners and managers. The HBC, though not a family firm, attempted to create such a social system (they argued) "in which the managers and workers were made to feel part of a family."[113] They portrayed the apprenticeship 'system' (which they regarded as an incipient managerial class) and the alleged creation of a homogeneous social group within the ranks of common men by hiring Orkneymen as indications that the Company was attempting to impose or encourage a moral code and a set of shared values.[114] However, they did not define those shared values or the moral code involved.

A more complete discussion of the patriarchal family household model, and one on which Rollason Driscoll relied, is found in Edith Burley's work. Burley described the HBC as "a conservative, paternalistic organization based on the relations of authority characteristic of pre-industrial society." The household-family was an important element of those relations, which were naturally recreated by British traders abroad. Certain

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[112]Rollason Driscoll, 86-87. Sergeant stood security for French's wage advance, but the London minute books make no other connection between the two men: *Minutes, Second Part*, 108. She also suggested that James Knight was similarly privileged when he was allowed to bring his brother, Richard, as his man-servant. "Only the patriarch would have the company's permission for such a luxury" (87).

[113]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 873.

[114]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 873-74.

aspects of the household system – particularly the prevalence of vertical rather than horizontal ties – were emphasized by the isolation of the Bayside factories, and as a result (historians have assumed) Company servants "were quite subsumed in the company."[115]

Burley denied, however, that the social system of the household resulted in servants identifying with their employer. She portrayed the Committee as trying to create master-servant relationships through long-term contracts and assuming that servants "could have no interests other than the company's," while the servants were in fact a working class and, "despite their cultural differences, their interests as workers determined how they would behave." The nature of their work – doing labour "that no gentleman would be required to do" – prevented the formation of strong ties with their officers or the company.[116] In this context, men who demanded higher wages or refused to re-engage were not being disloyal, but were engaging in a normal part of the worker-employer relationship.[117] Burley sought to liberate the 'working class' of the fur trade from older assumptions of passive deference. Although her characterization of HBC labour relations as a 'partnership in furs' (a description she borrowed from Daniel Francis and Toby Morantz's work on Natives in the fur trade of eastern James Bay) seems slightly incongruous with her portrayal of every workplace as "contested terrain," she used both concepts to demonstrate that the relationship between the Company and its

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[115]Burley, 1-2.

[116]Burley, 2, 12-13, 15, 121-122. Sweeny's discussion of Burley's work did not mention her problematic identification of HBC servants as a working class, dwelling instead (perhaps unfairly) on the centrality of the master-servant relationship: Sweeny, 244, 246-47, 251.

[117]She assumed that they sought "a fair price for their labour" rather than "exorbitant wages." Burley, 15, also 247-48.

employees was a negotiated one.[118]

Although many details of Burley's arguments are more applicable to the nineteenth-century Hudson's Bay Company than to the eighteenth, her basic conclusion – that workplace relationships within the Company were negotiated – holds true from the Company's beginnings. Early modern labour relationships were economic, social, and moral relationships; but they were not straightforward. The appearance of deferential behaviours and the existence of strong vertical ties should not obscure the presence of tension and negotiation: the Committee and their servants all understood the nature of ideal master-servant relationships, but they also had experience of the realities of life in various kinds of households. Men at all levels of the Company hierarchy could try to shape the reality of their HBC experiences, but did so in terms of commonly accepted ideals.

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[118]Burley, 15-16, 110-111. Makahonuk, 5-14, provides a brief but interesting discussion of the late eighteenth century as "a transition period in which the fur trade labour disputes were being carried out in both the cultural tradition of plebeian struggles and the new class relations created by capitalism." (11) However, although he suggested (14) that fur trade workers were starting to operate under a capitalistic labour relations system in the 1760s, his arguments (like Burley's) seem better suited to the period after 1782.

CHAPTER 2

"NO CERTAIN METHOD FOR ANYTHING"[119]: EARLY DAYS, 1668-1686

The beginnings of the Hudson's Bay Company were marked primarily by trial and error. Like most metropolitan merchants, the London Committee had no experience administering on a large scale or over such long distances. Although some early HBC directors were also active in other trading companies, generally after they had first become involved in the HBC, Hudson Bay was a novel trading environment for them all. Therefore, the HBC had to develop practices not on the basis of abstract policy but by patching together experiments and expedients.[120] The development of permanent and substantial factories was slow, hampered by limited capital and a lack of resources. Except in wartime, manpower seems to have been plentiful, as was usually the case for early modern business enterprises. However, the ability to organize and utilize the available manpower was adversely affected by the unique conditions of the Company's

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[119]John Nixon,"Report to the Governor and Committee by John Nixon, 1682," Royal Society, The Boyle Papers (Misc.), XL; printed as Appendix A in E.E. Rich & Alice M. Johnson, eds., *Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company 1679-1684: First Part, 1679-82* (Toronto: Champlain Society for the Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1945), 249. Its significance to scholarly discussions of early HBC personnel issues and its nature differing from the minutes included in the rest of the volume, justifies its being referred to as a separate source for this study.

[120]See E.L.J. Coornaert, "European Economic Institutions and the New World; the Chartered Companies," in E.E. Rich & C.H. Wilson (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe, volume IV: The Economy of Expanding Europe in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 240. This commercial experimentation may be compared to colonial endeavours, where similar experimentation and "eclectic borrowing" from other nations' experiences produced very diverse settlements. "No other colonial empire employed so wide a range of legal devices in establishing settlements, or allowed so many diverse forms of social, religious, and economic organization." J.H. Parry, "Introduction: the English in the New World," in K.R. Andrews, N.P. Canny, & P.E.H. Hair (eds.), *The Westward Enterprise: English Activities in Ireland, the Atlantic, and America 1480-1650* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1978), 5.

trans-Atlantic operations, and was drastically curtailed by French military intervention in 1686.

Uncertain Beginnings: The First Hudson's Bay Company Posts

The first English trading posts on Hudson Bay were humble concerns, often little more than seasonal camps for the ships' crews to live in while they traded with local Lowland Cree. Charles Fort, a wooden house on the left bank of Rupert River, near its mouth, was the winter home built by the *Nonsuch* crew in 1668/69 on their initial voyage to test the trading waters of Hudson Bay.[121] Some men who served the Company in the 1670s were part of that first crew – including sailors John Hawkins and James Tatnum, surgeon Pierre Romieux, and trader Medard Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers[122] – as well as

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[121]Rich, *History*, I, 62; Francis & Morantz, 23. Lytwyn (126) suggested that the choice of location may have been guided by Groseilliers' familiarity with the Native trade route between Tadoussac and James Bay.

Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World 1492-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 18, observed that building houses was an important way in which the English constructed their right to occupy the 'New' World: it assumed a model of fixed settlement based on the importance and stability of villages in English geography that had lasted centuries. S.R.H. Jones & Simon P. Ville, "Efficient Transactors or Rent-Seeking Monopolists? The Rationale for Early Chartered Trading Companies," *Journal of Economic History* 56/4 (December 1996), 910, argued that trading from fortified posts was inefficient and unnecessary, and that the HBC's forts were poorly located for trade; also see Ann M. Carlos and Stephen Nicholas' response in "Theory and History: Seventeenth-Century Joint-Stock Chartered Trading Companies," *Journal of Economic History* 56/4 (December 1996), 917-918.

[122]Hawkins remained in the service, apparently as a mariner, until at least 1677 (*Minutes*, 87). Tottenham later served on the *Wivenhoe* and commanded "the Shallop in the countrey" (*Minutes*, 34); he was still listed as one of "the men of the Factory" in 1676 (A. 14/3, fo. 66d). Romieux was referred to in the Grand Ledger as Peter Romulus "ye French Chirurgion [surgeon]" (A. 14/1, fo. 79d) and he remained in the service until 1672 (*Minutes*, 41-42); Grace Lee Nute identified him as Pierre Romieux of Trois Rivieres (see *Minutes*, 41n). For a biographical sketch of Groseilliers, see *Minutes*, 231-36.

Thomas Gorst and Pierre Esprit Radisson on the *Eaglet*,[123] which was forced by weather to turn back in 1668. However, very few details are known about that first expedition. Governor Charles Bayly and between ten and twenty men wintered at Charles Fort in 1670/71 and built a new and more substantial house (two storeys with a brick chimney). Early in 1671, Radisson travelled from Charles Fort to Moose River, where he sowed garden seeds and assembled a small shallop for coastal use. In July 1671, however, unable to get enough volunteers to stay in the country, Bayly led the entire expedition home.[124] When he returned in 1672, he re-occupied Charles Fort (which continued to be occupied by the English year-round until captured and burned by the French in 1686[125])

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[123]Although Gorst sailed on the *Eaglet* in 1668 and on the *Wivenhoe* in 1669, he did not winter in Hudson Bay until 1670/71 (his journal from that winter is in Grace Lee Nute, *Caesars of the Wilderness*); he was Charles Bayly's secretary in 1672, William Lydall's storekeeper in 1674/75, and purser of the *Prince Rupert* in 1676. It is not known when he left the service, but in 1680 his application for re-employment was refused because his wage demands (50s per month plus one year's wages in advance) were too high: *Minutes, First Part*, 50, 52. He is probably the same Thomas Gorst who was entertained in 1685 for four years "without Wages or advance money, but only what the Compa[ny] will please to give him at the End of those yeares," was captured by the French in James Bay in 1686, was released in 1687, and possibly died at Port Nelson that year: HBC (London) to Henry Sergeant (Albany), 22 May 1685, *L.O. 1680-87*, 143, 143n; A. 1/8, fo. 32. Also see Alice M. Johnson, "Gorst, Thomas," *DCB* I, 343; *Minutes*, 230. For a biographical sketch of Radisson, see *Minutes*, 243-49.

[124]Rich, *History*, I, 67; Francis & Morantz, 24. According to John Oldmixon's *The History of Hudson's-Bay* (1708), "10 or 20 Men" sailed from England in 1670 "to stay on the Place": J.B. Tyrrell (ed.), *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1931), 383. Oldmixon also indicated that Bayly and his men were fed up with Hudson Bay, "so long had these poor Men liv'd in this Desart, holding a precarious Being by their Guns and Fishing Tackle. Their Patience was at last spent." Tyrrell, 394.

Seed, 18-19, 27-31, 37, also noted the importance of gardens as symbols of possession: "the garden represented the entire colonial ambition to possess the land by establishing a part of the project in a central and visible way." Seed, 29.

[125]The French destroyed the post because they felt they had insufficient men to hold it, but almost immediately built their own smaller Fort St Jacques on the same site. After the French withdrawal from Hudson Bay in 1714, the English did not re-occupy that site until 1776, when Thomas Moore, master at Eastmain House, built Rupert House near the former site of Charles Fort: the new establishment was initially intended as a goose tent, a provisioning site for Cree travelling down the Rupert and Nottaway Rivers to Eastmain House. Francis & Morantz, 101-102.

and spent the summer of 1674 trading with Lowland Cree at the mouth of the Albany River.[126]

Sometimes, Cree seasonal movements discouraged the establishment of more permanent posts. For instance, expeditions to Nelson River on the west coast of Hudson Bay in the summers of 1670 and 1673 encountered none of the local Lowland Cree, most of whom had probably followed the caribou herds eastward to the main calving grounds southeast of the Severn River, near Cape Henrietta Maria.[127] In May 1674, on the other hand, when Groseilliers led a summer trading expedition to Moose River, he met a group of 'Shechittawams,' or Albany River Lowland Cree, who traded about 1500 skins, and some upland Abitibi Indians, who traded about 250 skins and promised to bring more if the HBC settled permanently at the mouth of the Moose River.[128] Some kind of house was built there in 1673, but it does not appear to have been continuously occupied until Bayly took up residence during the winter of 1674/75.[129]

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[126]Francis & Morantz, 25. As well, a Severn River Lowland Cree guided Bayly to Akimiski Island, where he met a small group of people, who in turn guided him to the mouth of the Ekwan River. See Victor Lytwyn, *Muskekowuck Athinuwick: Original People of the Great Swampy Land* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2002), 127.

[127]Lytwyn, 96-97. However, given that on both occasions the HBC men reported seeing the remains of recent camps, some of the Hayes River Lowland Cree may have still been in the area to hunt white whales: Lytwyn, 100-101, 127. It is also possible that the Cree were avoiding contact with the English.

[128]Lytwyn, 126, 239n36. Rich *(History*, I, 77) claimed that no Lowland Cree came downriver to trade because of Groseillier's reputation for hard dealing, and that he sailed for Charles Fort empty-handed.

[129]In 1672, the Committee sent bricks and mortar for building at Moose, and about half of the 30 or 40 men had contracted to stay in the country: Rich, *History*, I, 70. An anonymous French account of the capture of the James Bay posts in 1686 described Moose as "built in stone with four bastions lined with earth in the middle of which was a house forty feet square and just as high." Cornelius J. Jaenen (ed.), *The French Regime in the Upper Country of Canada During the Seventeenth Century* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1996), 229. Oldmixon reported that Bayly, des Groseilliers, and sailor Samuel Cole debated the role of Moose in 1674: Bayly wanted to close Charles Fort and move to Moose, Cole considered it

A permanent structure does not appear to have been built at Albany until 1679.[130] A second attempt to settle at Nelson River (Port Nelson) in 1682 was initially unsuccessful – Radisson, temporarily back in French employ, destroyed the house in 1683 after taking its Chief, John Bridgar, and his men prisoner – but a new fort was built in late 1683, and a post on Severn River (built in 1685) strengthened the Company's presence in western Hudson Bay.[131] However, the Company's focus on James Bay was reinforced by the development (1680-1686) of a central depot on Charlton Island.[132]

Company servants also investigated the eastern shores of James Bay – the eastern mainland, or East Main (Eastmain) – for the valuable mineral deposits (particularly mica, or isinglass) believed to exist there.[133] Trading stations on the Eastmain (or Slude) River were wintering camps, crewed by the men of the sloop attached to Albany and

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dangerous, and des Groseilliers advocated regular maritime trading journeys to Moose. *L.O. 1680-1687*, 358-9.

[130]The post was relocated in 1684 and 1719, and was held by the French from 1686 through 1693.

[131]The establishment at Port Nelson (later called York Fort) was occupied mostly by the French (1694-96 and 1697-1714) and was replaced by new buildings beginning in 1714. For Radisson's account of his 1682/83 voyage to Port Nelson for the Compagnie du Nord, see Arthur T. Adams (ed.), *The Explorations of Pierre Esprit Radisson*, Loren Kallsen, modernizer (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1961), 161-205; Jaenen, 133-141. There is no comprehensive study of French activities on Hudson Bay, but for a brief discussion and excerpts from archival sources, see Jaenen, 192-274.

Thomas Walsh burned down the house at Severn River in 1690 to prevent it falling into French hands. It was not rebuilt until 1759.

[132]The Charlton Island depot, twenty feet square and two-and-a-half storeys tall, was built by Governor John Nixon during the 1680/81 trading season: Rich, *History*, I, 97. The French burned it down in 1686, fearing that the English would fortify it as a base for the reoccupation of James Bay: Jaenen, 247.

[133]The Committee was not always clear what kinds of minerals might exist in their territories or which might be most profitable. In 1691, they recommended to George Geyer at Port Nelson "the searching out & discovery of all maner of drugs, Dying Commodities whether in Roote or floure Likewise all mineralls hopeing at last in that vast tract of ground, You may find by the Indians or your owne industry, something that may turne to accompt": HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 115.

commanded by the sloopmaster. The sloop was often accompanied by a few other servants, but only sometimes by a miner. A permanent building on the Eastmain was not constructed until 1719: before that, the men probably lived on the sloop or in tents.[134]

The Company's earliest operations were characterized by a mix of caution and curiosity: resources were limited and no dividends were paid to shareholders until 1684. While the 1670s were a settling-in period, the 1680s were years of expansion until the Company's trade was violently interrupted by the French. As both the Committee and their employees became more aware of the limitations and possibilities of Hudson Bay, they used the proceeds of good trading years to try new things, such as building new posts and exploring the coastline. George Geyer (later Governor at Port Nelson) was first mentioned in the Company's surviving records as assisting Governor Charles Bayly in exploring the coasts of Hudson and James Bays between 1672 and 1678.[135]

The Committee and its factors also considered inland operations. Governor Charles Bayly was worried by French competition upriver from Charles Fort in 1673/74,[136] but it is unclear who made the initial suggestion that trading expeditions to the headwaters of major rivers like the Rupert or the Albany would be necessary to

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[134]The house was strengthened in 1723 and 1724, but the site (on the north shore of the Eastmain River, near the mouth of Fishing River) was not occupied year-round until 1770: Francis & Morantz, 35, 79.

[135]Charles Bayly (Moose) to HBC (London), September 1678, quoted in Robson, appendix, p. 15.

[136]The Rupert River was a major focus of *Canadien* overland expeditions to Hudson Bay in the seventeenth century: see Jaenen, 78-79, 192-194.

combat French traders based in the St Lawrence valley.[137] Bayly could not find any men willing to undertake such an expedition, and neither could his successors in command.[138] Radisson and other French traders employed during the 1670s and 1680s, such as Groseilliers' nephew Jean-Baptiste Chouart, did not venture far from the factories. E.E. Rich probably overstated the case when he claimed that "there were no Englishmen who were competent, either as 'Linguisters' or as canoemen, for such a journey."[139] There was indeed little reason for Englishmen to handle canoes at the factories, but they had opportunities to learn Cree from Upland and Lowland Cree traders, and from the emerging Homeguard bands. Some men seem to have acquired at least a working knowledge of the language: seaman John Hawkins recommended himself for re-engagement in 1674 by claiming that he "Speakes the Language of that countrey very well."[140]

Rich's concern about Englishmen's lack of familiarity with canoes does not reflect the concerns of the seventeenth-century Committee: the only skill they explicitly sought for inland service was a familiarity with the Cree language. In 1683, the London

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[137]French merchants also believed that the headwaters of major rivers were key areas in the trade of the Northwest. In 1684, for instance, Daniel Greysolon Dulhut built a post on Lake Nipigon and reported some success in preventing Cree and other traders from travelling down the Albany River to Hudson Bay: Victor Lytwyn, *The Fur Trade of the Little North: Indians, Pedlars, and Englishmen East of Lake Winnipeg, 1760-1821* (Winnipeg: Rupert's Land Research Centre, 1986), 4.

[138]Rich, *History*, I, 295.

[139]Rich, *History*, I, 295.

[140]*Minutes*, 87. For a brief discussion of the problematic question of Englishmen's competence in Cree in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, see David H. Pentland, "Henry Kelsey's Christmas Message, 1696," in H.C. Wolfart (ed.), *Linguistic Studies Presented to John L. Finlay* (Winnipeg: Memoir 8, Algonquian and Iroquoian Linguistics, University of Manitoba, 1991), 134-136.

Committee encouraged Governor Henry Sergeant at Albany to send men inland, recommending "such as are best quallified wth. strength of body and the Country Language to travaile & to penetrate into the Countrey to Draw downe the Indians by fayre & gentle meanes to trade wth. us." Sergeant replied that he would comply "as soon as I find any Man capable and willing," and recommended that "your Honours should give good Encouragement to those who undertake such extraordinary Service, or else I fear there will be but few that will embrace such Employment."[141] In 1685, the Committee suggested Robert Sandford (trader and assistant at Albany) as a proper person for inland travel, "haveing the Lingua, and understanding the Trade of the Countrey." Former apprentices William Arrington and John Vincent, both of whom had just re-engaged after a year in England, were also proposed, presumably on the grounds of similar qualifications. The Committee dismissed fears about the danger of such journeys (which "we Judge is not more now then formerly") and promised to reward men who brought down Natives to the factories to trade, but it was not enough. Sandford refused the Committee's terms, choosing instead to go home: "neither he, nor any of your servants, will travel up the country, altho' your honours have greatly desired it, and I pressed it upon those proposals you have hinted."[142] Not for the last time, the Company's servants

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[141]HBC (London) to Henry Sergeant (Charlton Island), 27 April 1683, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 75; also Robson, appendix, 16-17. Henry Sergeant (Charlton Island) to HBC (London), 13 September 1683, is no longer extant, though it was extracted in the proceedings of the 1749 Parliamentary inquiry and in Robson (appendix, 16) and quoted in *L.O. 1680-1687*, 75n.

[142]HBC (London) to Henry Sergeant (Charlton Island), 22 May 1685, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 141; also Robson, appendix, 17. Henry Sergeant (Charlton Island) to HBC (London), 24 August 1685, is no longer extant, though it was extracted in the proceedings of the 1749 Parliamentary inquiry and in Robson (appendix, 17), and quoted in *L.O. 1680-1687*, 141n.

identified inland service as "extraordinary," not to be undertaken as part of their contractual obligations but only with added "Encouragement."

Such recalcitrance on the part of a few servants could seriously limit or abort new schemes because the Company's labour force during this period was small. In 1682, only 30 men were left in the country,[143] although Governor John Nixon argued that there ought to be at least 50 in permanent residence (including 23 at Albany and 22 at Moose).[144] In 1685-86, at the height of the HBC's early expansion, 89 men were serving at five establishments. Governor James Knight, however, recommended that those 89 men be reduced to 36 in James Bay (18 at Albany, 12 at Moose, and six at Rupert River) and an unspecified (though probably smaller) number for Port Nelson and Severn; he omitted the depot on Charlton Island because he believed it weakened the other posts and caused unnecessary danger and inconvenience.[145] Expansion was tempered with a concern for limiting the costs of wages and provisions.

However, cost-reduction had to be balanced with security. The cautious optimism

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[143]Rich, *History,* I, 113. In 1679, Charles Bayly told Louis Jolliet (who traveled overland from Canada to Charles Fort) that he had 60 men in Hudson Bay (Rich, *History*, I, 119-120), but this was probably an exaggeration meant to mislead a potential enemy.

[144]Nixon accounted for 45 of the 50 men he said should be wintering in the Bay. Albany needed 23: a factor, a surgeon, two tailors, "one man that hath been ane ould souldier, whose office shall be to to [sic] keep the men in order," "one that can look after the guns" (*i.e.* a gunner), an armourer, a caulker, and 15 labourers. "Ruports west river" (Moose) needed 22: the Governor, a warehousekeeper/Deputy Governor, two tailors, a smith, a carpenter, two sawyers, a sergeant, a gunner, a secretary, a cooper, a sloop-master, three mariners, and seven labourers and boys. He did not indicate where the other five men would be posted: it is unlikely that he meant for them to winter on Charlton Island (a depot of which he disapproved), nor is it likely that he meant to post only five men to Charles Fort or Port Nelson. Nixon, 250.

[145]Rich, *History*, I, 183. Rich (184) then referred to 56 men actually employed on the Bay at that time, which the Committee agreed to reduce to 36.

of the Company's first years was tempered by incidents at Port Nelson in 1682. There, an HBC expedition led by John Bridgar was to establish a trading post, but had to compete with similar expeditions from the Canada-based Compagnie du Nord (established earlier that year and led in the field by Pierre Esprit Radisson) and from a group of New England merchants: Radisson captured both rival groups over the winter of 1682/83, but returned to HBC service in 1684 (bringing with him the French fort and the five men garrisoning it).[146]

A more serious threat to the HBC's operations (indeed, to its survival) came in 1686 when the new Governor of New France, the Marquis de Denonville, sent a military expedition overland to impose a French presence on Hudson Bay.[147] With 30 regular soldiers and about 70 Canadian militiamen, the French commander (Pierre de Troyes, commonly known as the Chevalier de Troyes) captured all three HBC posts in James Bay (Charles, Moose, and Albany) without losing a single man.[148] The English put up little

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[146]See Adams, *Radisson*, 161-205; Jaenen, 133-141, 197-207. The Frenchmen who followed Radisson into HBC service were Jean Baptiste Chouart (nephew of the Sieur des Groseilliers), Elias Grimard, Claude Durvall dit Bouchoir, Nicholas Eyron dit Lamottoo, and Anthony Doyon. Chouart and Grimard engaged for four years in 1685 and left the service in 1689. *L.O. 1680-87*, 147n; see A. 1/8, fo. 35; A. 15/3, fos. 155-156. Doyon engaged for four years, but the Committee could not convince him to take the Oath of Fidelity. A. 1/8, fos. 19d, 25d, 27. Durvall and Eyron engaged for four years, but no wages were recorded as being paid, so they may have been aboard the *Perpetuana Merchant* when she was captured en route to Port Nelson in 1685. *L.O. 1680-87*, 147n; A. 1/8, fos. 18d-19, 35.

[147]Denonville expected that control of Hudson Bay would allow France to control the entire trade of the *pays d'en haut*, or Upper Country (*i.e.* upriver from Canada). The Compagnie du Nord probably financed much of the expedition: Jaenen, 221-222. England and France were not at war, but tensions between the two powers in North America were escalating.

[148]News of these victories had reached France but not Britain by November 1686, when the two countries signed the Treaty of Whitehall, which was intended to resolve various points of contention in North America and which allowed each to retain possession of territories and posts in its control at the time of the treaty: thus, without knowing it, Britain relinquished James Bay to the French: Jaenen, 222. For more detailed discussion of the de Troyes expedition, see W.A. Kenyon and J.R. Turnbull, *The Battle for James Bay 1686* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1971).

resistance, and French accounts depicted the English as taken by surprise in all instances. The French chaplain, Father Antoine Silvy, described the men of Moose being awakened by the sound of the battering ram at their gates. One of the Moose servants, "bolder than the others," rushed for one of the fort's cannons, "but he was killed on the spot, he paying for the others." The French captured Charles Fort (Rupert River) without difficulty, but the crew of the *Craven* sloop tried to defend themselves, resulting in two English dead and at least three wounded.[149] When de Troyes demanded the surrender of Albany, Governor Henry Sergeant responded "in general terms which decided nothing." The reply (according to de Troyes) "made no mention of surrendering...nor did it mention fighting. This led me to believe that the governor was a man of propriety, and that he required a few cannon-balls to enable him to surrender with honour." After a brief French bombardment, and "some poorly aimed cannon and musket shots" from the fort, Sergeant surrendered Albany.[150]

When the French became masters of James Bay, with an ease that startled both them and the HBC's Committee, the establishments which they captured were considerably more substantial than they would have found even ten years earlier. Where once the Company had maintained small or seasonal posts, the factories described by the

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[149]Jaenen, 231. Kenyon and Turnbull's translation of de Troyes' journal also portrayed the English at Moose as unprepared ("in their nightshirts") but described the gunner's death differently: the French had taken the outer walls and the English were in the central "redoubt" asking for quarter. "One of them sent the [French] interpreter packing in very insolent terms, saying that he wished to fight. He actually tried to lay a gun on us. This attempt forced him to reveal a bit too much of himself, so that he received a shot in the head which stretched him out dead on the spot." Kenyon & Turnbull, 69. Father Silvy's account of the attack on the *Craven* (Jaenen, 231) differs from that of de Troyes (Kenyon & Turnbull, 76), but neither actually witnessed the altercation: Silvy was still at Moose, while de Troyes was attacking Charles Fort.

[150]Kenyon & Turnbull, 81-82.

French in 1686 were well-fortified and well-manned, and would have been defensible if garrisoned by trained soldiers. The relatively elaborate preparations made by de Troyes and his officers for each assault seem ludicrous in light of the speed and ease of their victories, but that reflected an imbalance in the levels of military skill and training between the two sides: de Troyes recognized this, observing (with some national prejudice) that the Englishmen's "negligence, together with the lack of resistance which we met, shows the lack of valour from which the English suffer when they are not trained for war."[151]

Seamen and Landsmen: Uneasy Relations

The Company's maritime service was both the lifeline upon which the Bayside factors depended and one of the greatest obstacles to peace, order, and good government in the Bay. 'Shiptime' (the arrival of the supply ship from England) in late summer was a joyous time, but it was also nerve-wracking for factors, who knew that amid the bustle of unloading goods and supplies, loading furs, and dealing with Natives eager to trade and return inland, they would have to deal with drunkenness, conflict, private trade, and other disruptions. The ships' seamen set a bad example for post servants, both by their behaviour and by the high wages they received.

There were two branches of the Company's maritime service: the annual supply ships crossing the Atlantic with goods, supplies, and furs; and the smaller sloops stationed in the Bay for coastal work. Both ships' captains (when they were Company

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[151]Kenyon & Turnbull, 70.

employees) and sloop masters were usually members of post councils when they were present at the factories. Initially, most supply ships were chartered or borrowed rather than owned by the Company, and this in itself could cause problems. At least some of the conflict between Captain Nehemiah Walker of the *Dilligence* and Governor John Nixon (as recorded by the latter in 1682) was due to the fact that a damaged rudder and the lateness of the season required Walker and his ship to winter with Nixon on Charlton Island, creating a situation (or rather, a series of situations) not covered by the charter party (the agreement which defined the relationship between the ship and the Company). Even in the eighteenth century, when most of the supply ships were Company-owned and their crews Company employees, conflict could arise between ship and trading post.[152]

In contrast, sloop-men were always Company employees.[153] The sloop-master had command of his vessel and crew, but all were under a factor's jurisdiction. Generally, each factory had a sloop attached to it (occasionally more than one) for use in exploration, coastal trading voyages, communication between posts, transportation of 'country produce' (hay, wood, stones, provisions, etc.), or the lightering of goods from

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[152]Perhaps the most extreme example of such conflict was the power struggle at Moose in the early 1740s between Chief James Duffield and Captain William Coats: see Gerhard Ens, "The Political Economy of the 'Private Trade' on the Hudson Bay: The Example of Moose Factory, 1741-1744," in Bruce G. Trigger, Toby Morantz, and Louise Dechene (eds.), *'Le Castor Fait Tout': Selected Papers of the Fifth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1985* (Monteal: Lake St Louis Historical Society, 1987), 385, 392, 398, 405. This was representative of the same conflicts of which Nixon complained (except the charter party), but was remarkable in that it drew in most of the other Bayside factors on Duffield's side (only James Isham at Churchill remained aloof).

[153]The policy of owning smaller ships and hiring larger ones was not uncommon among long-distance trading companies. In the Royal African Company, for instance, African coastal trade and communication between posts was carried out by Company-owned ships, but the England/Africa/England and England/Africa/West Indies routes were plied by chartered vessels: Ann M. Carlos & Jamie Brown Kruse, "The decline of the Royal African Company: fringe firms and the role of the charter," *Economic History Review* 49/2 (1996), 298.

and furs to the supply ship.[154]

In some respects, the supply ships disrupted post life by their mere presence. The sailors were invariably better-paid than most landsmen, and had different habits of food and drink consumption, and of conduct. The ships' beer and brandy significantly increased the availability of alcohol at the very time when the Governor most needed his men to remain sober and industrious. This already worrisome situation could be exacerbated if the captains or crews chose to behave in an actively disruptive manner.

Governor John Nixon had much to say on the negative role played by the supply ships. In complaining of widespread private trade, he blamed the ships' captains and crews for conspiring with the landsmen to defraud the Company. In these and other ways, he claimed that the sailors tried to undermine his authority. "I am no more looked upon at that time [ship-time] then a cipher," he wrote in 1682, "especially when they are in their drink, so that if I command them [the landsmen] about their bussiness presently they will hit me in the teeth of their times being out, and that they will goe home, the master, and sea-men seeng this, and finding it is best fishing in moodie [*i.e.* muddy] waters, doe as I feare more furder these dissentions then by any meens hinder them."[155] He complained that while wintering on Charlton Island (1681/82), some of Captain Walker's men picked fights with Nixon's men.[156] In the late spring of 1682, when Nixon

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[154]Rich (*History*, I, 437) added that "the full-time crews and captains of the sloops...tended to become a professional class, upon whom the trade depended – often in vain." Such a development would have been anachronistic in the early HBC and there is no evidence of class development or of chronic unreliability in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries.

[155]Nixon, 244; also Rich, *History*, I, 567.

[156]Nixon, 268.

was able to get to the mainland – only to find "the mens times all expiered. and all of them fully resolved to goe home" – he persuaded Walker to let some of his sailors engage to take the place of some of Nixon's homeward-bound mariners. Walker then seemed to renege on this promise, making unreasonable demands on the former Bayside men and encouraging his sailors to demand extravagant wages for staying in the Bay.[157]

The men of the supply ships were also conduits for private trade, a problem which the Committee was anxious to control. Anybody trading on his own account in the Bay relied (in one way or another) on the supply ships to transport the illicit furs to England for sale: there was no other way of transporting them across the Atlantic. Although captains may have demanded a share of the profits, their cooperation made both the undetected transport and the successful sale of those furs possible. As well, captains could provide the Bayside men with more goods to trade on their own account.[158]

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[157]Nixon, 286, 287, 292. Captain Nehemiah Walker received the full brunt of Nixon's ire: see, in particular, Nixon, 258-270. Nixon also complained about chartered supply ships in general, arguing that their captains and crews were impossible to control and had unreasonable expectations of the Governor (Nixon, 264, 274-75). See also Rich, *History*, I, 567.

Walker, despite (or perhaps because of) being the son of a Committee member (William Walker Sr), rarely treated Bayside Governors with the respect they thought they deserved. Nixon reported that Walker's abusive behaviour towards Charles Bayly in the 1670s had brought Bayly to tears on several occasions: Nixon, 262. He also mentioned Walker "impeaching" (*i.e.* discrediting) Bayly, apparently to cover up his own private trade: Nixon, 270. Nor was Walker's behaviour an anomaly. Nixon witnessed an unpleasant incident upon his first arrival in Hudson Bay on the *John and Alexander*: the outgoing Governor, Charles Bayly, came on board and Captain Richard Power and his ship's surgeon, Dr Rainer, "both of them so drunk as beasts...abused him after such a gross maner, that I was ashamed to see their cariage towards their ould governor, and of their impudence before me, but my commission was not read, or otherways I would have chastised them for their insolence." Considering that the Bayside Governors had no jurisdiction over the men of the supply ships, it is doubtful if Nixon's intervention would have rectified the situation, even if his commission had been read. Nixon, 244-245, made certain to contrast this abuse with his own very civil treatment of Bayly. Rainer also served as surgeon on Capt. Walker's ships, and Nixon (258-70) depicted them as a drunken and insolent pair of rogues.

[158]See, for example, the Committee's concerns about Captain William Bond ("this young blade"): HBC (London) to John Nixon (Charlton Island), 29 May 1682, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 53-54. Also see Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 865.

More important than the captains' role as carriers of illicit furs, was their role as carriers of information. The London Committee compensated for its lack of direct knowledge of Bayside conditions by relying on the accounts of servants and others who had acquired such knowledge. The ships' captains could be formidable personages, as they had regular opportunities to speak directly with the London Committee regarding Bayside matters. While they could provide useful insights and advice, returning employees could also criticize (sometimes unfairly) their colleagues remaining 'in the Country'. John Nixon, for instance, bemoaned the "advantage all my adversaries have above me, that they come first home, who by fraud and flatterie, can have their tale first tould, and they can be heard by you."[159] Referring particularly to Captain Nehemiah Walker, he complained, "If I doe all things well he will rob me of the credit of it, and if badly I am sure to have all the disgrace heaped upon my back."[160] In particular, he was certain that Captain Walker, John Abraham (Walker's first mate), and Thomas Garland (pilot of the *Diligence* and master of the *Hayes* sloop) were going to blame him for the loss of the *Dilligence*'s rudder in 1681, a charge that he flatly denied.[161] He claimed to put his faith in the Committee members' ability to detect treachery and falsehood:

I am confidant at last that your honours will finde, that those who goe

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[159]Nixon, 275; Brown, 14. The captains were not the only intermediaries of information: the Committee frequently debriefed returning servants. In 1682, the Committee reported to John Nixon that they had received several complaints about him from returning servants: HBC (London) to John Nixon (Bottom of the Bay), 15 May 1682, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 38-39. In 1685, they told Henry Sergeant that "we are informed there are great Quantetyes of Ermynes" about Albany: at least one returning servant had presumably cast doubt on Sergeant's efforts to diversify the Company's trade: HBC (London) to Henry Sergeant (Albany), 22 May 1685, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 144.

[160]Nixon, 275; Brown, 14.

[161]Nixon, 263-64.

> about to put jealousies into your heads, it is for no other end but to cover their oune knaveries, or to bring their purposes to pass, or at leest to be revanged, for they hate to be looked into, I say those that are enemies to me, yow will find them to be yours first, and I pray God grant that it be not too late befor yow have found them out.[162]

Sloop masters enjoyed some autonomy, especially when serving away from the factories, but were subordinate to the factors under whom they served. Factors and ship captains were equals, each theoretically supreme in their different spheres but often at odds where those spheres overlapped. The independence and (in some cases at least) self-interest of the captains may have made smooth relations unlikely, but the factors had to be somewhat conciliatory: captains could be disruptive elements in the Bay, and could also cause trouble for the factors at home.

Recruitment Issues: 'no certain method for any thing'

The Hudson's Bay Company faced a number of complications in both finding and keeping personnel in its early years. The Committee never expressed a desire or intention to follow a particular model of recruitment, but often noted how constrained it was by particular circumstances. Seeing itself as a victim of circumstances beyond its control, it often responded to various complaints from Bayside factors by tacitly accepting their criticism and placing blame on someone or something else. The Committee was primarily concerned with immediate personnel issues and showed little inclination or need to develop what might be termed a personnel policy.

The predominantly maritime approach to Bayside trade allowed the Company to

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[162]Nixon, 274.

rely heavily on the crews of the supply ships to man seasonal posts in the early 1670s. However, the maintenance of year-round posts required a new approach. The kinds of men required were not significantly different from a ship's crew, but in order for a permanent post to be secure it required a complement equivalent in number to that of a ship. Only by the mid-1680s had any of the factories or houses been given garrisons larger than twenty men; usually, there were a few officers, a few skilled tradesmen, and enough 'hands' to man the watch and perform various tasks. Acquiring the numbers of men needed was not a problem: some prospective servants evidently approached the Company of their own free will, and as early as 1671 the Company's ship at Gravesend was being "pestered" by men wanting to go to Hudson Bay.[163]

In response, the Committee resolved in April 1672 that "no persons hereafter bee imployed to Stay in the Countrey or otherwise but by consente of the Committee...to the ende the Ships bee not hereafter pestered as they were the Last voyage."[164] A clearer statement of efforts to centralize recruitment came in February 1674, when the Committee ordered "that it bee referred to the Committee for the choise of a governour & other officers & men to goe the voyage or to Stay in the Countrey there in the Companies Service, & to agree with them...as they Shall judge best for the Companyes advantage."[165] A Tuesday evening in April of that year was appointed "to treate" with the men engaged

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[163]*Minutes*, 34.

[164]*Minutes*, 34. Ship's captains were allowed to recruit crews for their ships, but such men still had to be approved by the Committee: see minutes of 17 May 1672, *Minutes*, 39.

[165]*Minutes*, 81.

for the ships and for the Bayside posts.[166] In 1684, all men wishing to go to Hudson Bay were directed to the office of notary public and long-time Committee member Nicholas Hayward, where "any two of the Committe have Power to agree with them and give report thereof to the Committe."[167] Recruitment venues could be in more public places as well, such as the Amsterdam coffee house in London in the early 1690s.[168]

Little documentation of early recruitment has survived. What is known supports E.E. Rich's observation that the Company was "working on so small and tenuous a scale that it took its servants as it could find them, and had no system for training up its own men for the peculiar tasks which they would have to perform."[169] Governor John Nixon's 1682 report from the Bay criticized the lack of system: "To think how this country hath been served would greive any man that hath a charge in it, for sometyms we have coalls, and no iron, sometyms iron, and steel, but no smith, otherwhiles no grind-stones, sometyms much of on[e] thing, and want of aneother, so that there hath been no certain method for any thing."[170]

Nixon also drew attention to problems of communication. In 1680, the Committee's annual letter to the Bay instructed him to send home yearly "a punctuall & particular Account of all our Servants in the Country, and how they are imployed in the

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[166]*Minutes*, 100.

[167]*Minutes, Second Part*, 213-14; also *Minutes, First Part*, 338.

[168]Rich, *History*, I, 310.

[169]Rich, *History*, I, 295.

[170]Nixon, 249.

severall Factories & Vessells," partly to let the Committee know "whether wee are over or understocked wth. men for our impl[o]yment."[171] This became common practice and helped alleviate problems, although the Committee sometimes felt that its factors were asking for too many men.[172] On the other hand, Nixon complained that he was not given enough information to reasonably predict his labour needs: "one of the greatest plagues that I have...[is when] the men doe pretend their tymes are out, the trooth of which I am ignorant in, for yow doe not wryt to me how longe they have served, or are to serve, but yow send order for their comeing home, and sendeth me non to supply their places, (instance), yow sent for your smith, but sent me non in his roome."[173] In this passage, Nixon also defended himself against being blamed for rising costs: lack of information allowed his men to surprise him with wage demands, which he usually had to meet to avoid being short-handed. Problems also arose if supply ships failed to reach Hudson Bay or were obliged to winter over in the Bay: in either case, men whose contracts had expired could not go home.

The Committee's surviving Minute Books provide only glimpses of the decision-

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[171]HBC (London) to John Nixon (Moose), 29 May 1680, *L.O. 1680-87*, 8. Unfortunately, none of these lists have survived.

[172]See, for example, Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 21d; Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 16 July 1716, A. 11/s, fo. 28; Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1722, A. 11/2, fos. 43d, 44d; Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fo. 57.

[173]Nixon, 249. The smith to whom Nixon referred was probably gunsmith Samuel Oake, whom the Committee called home from Albany in 1680 after his sister had assured the Committee in March "that hee desired it." *Minutes, First Part*, 53; HBC (London) to John Nixon (Albany), 29 May 1680, *L.O. 1680-87*, 11. However, Oake did not return to England until 1681 (see A. 15/2, fo. 11), perhaps because Nixon could not spare him. Alternatively, Nixon could have meant gunsmith and edge-tool maker Thomas Wilkinson, who also returned from the Bay in 1681 (see *Minutes, First Part*, 151, 152; A. 15/2, fo. 7d).

making processes involved in recruitment. As with all aspects of the Company's London operations at that time, the daily business was carried out by members of the Committee, along with a few permanent or casual employees (primarily a secretary and a warehousekeeper).[174] On 8 February 1672, the Committee ordered its clerk, Thomas Rastell, to record the names and addresses of men "who Shall offer themselves to Serve the Company eyther at Sea or to Stay in the Countrey...& presente the Same from time to time to the Comittee."[175] On 21 May 1672, for instance, Mr. John Palmer offered to serve in Hudson Bay and was engaged as Governor Bayly's Second; on 19 March 1674, Walter Farr successfully petitioned to go to the Bay as surgeon and apothecary; and on 25 February 1680, Mr Conyers Fairfax offered himself as warehousekeeper in the Bay and was accepted.[176] Men also sought employment for lesser positions in this way: on 7 May 1680, Henry George offered his services as an edge tool maker at £20 per annum.[177]

Most men were engaged without any indication of the process followed. On 16 May 1674, the minutes recorded the names, occupations, and wages of men who had engaged on three-year contracts to stay in Hudson Bay: Robert Wilkinson (smith, £20/a), Henry Rainsborough (cooper, £20/a), Francis Moseley (tailor, £15/a), John Whitfield (cook, £20/a), Richard Noldridge (bricklayer, £20/a), Walter Farr (surgeon, £48/a),

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[174]Carlos & Nicholas, "Giants," 128, suggest that "from the beginning" the HBC had a system of sub-committees "staffed by salaried managers from the home office," but that was a mid-eighteenth-century development: the Company's early sub-committees were in fact primarily staffed by Committee members.

[175]*Minutes*, 24.

[176]*Minutes*, 42, 88; *Minutes, First Part*, 42.

[177]*Minutes, First Part*, 62.

Michell [Michael?] Millington (sawyer, £15/a), John Malyn (£20/a), Charles Elmore (£15/a), Henry Dickinson (£12/a), and Robert Palmer ("the governours Servant", £12/a). Only Walter Farr was referred to elsewhere as having been engaged.[178] The minutes of 27 October 1683 included an order "that in future all Servants that are taken into the Compa. Service, those that doe recommend them be incerted in the Minute booke," but it is unclear whether the absence of such references after this date represent clerical omissions or the fact that men were being engaged without recommendations.[179]

A few recruits were close relatives of Committee members. Thomas Phipps Jr, who entered the service in 1678 as warehousekeeper at Moose for three years, was the cousin of Thomas Phipps Sr;[180] and in 1683, James Walker, son of William Walker Sr, was engaged as warehousekeeper at Port Nelson for five years.[181] More commonly, however, Committee members brought forward nominees whose relationships to them were unclear. In 1671, Sir John Kirke recommended a gentleman named Manning, though he mentioned no specific position; in 1672, Sir John Robinson recommended edge-tool maker Thomas Wilkinson; and in 1674, Sir John Griffith recommended William Lydall and Sir James Hayes recommended Thomas Copley, both for the post of

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[178]*Minutes*, 108-09. No occupations were specified for Malyn, Elmore, or Dickinson: presumably they went as labourers or 'hands'.

[179]*Minutes, Second Part*, 144.

[180]A. 15/2, fo. 13d; Rich, *History*, I, 95; *Minutes, First Part*, 165, 174; *L.O. 1680-1687*, 385; Maud M. Hutcheson, "Phipps, Thomas," *DCB,* I, 543-544.

[181]*Minutes, Second Part*, 83. Two of James' brothers were also employed by the Company at this time: William Jr was the Company's attorney and Nehemiah was a ship captain. *Minutes, Second Part*, 83n. James Walker was sent home from Port Nelson in 1684 for being "Quarrelsome etc" but the following spring received a "Free Gift" of £10 from the Committee in response to his father's request "for some Considerable kindness to be shewed to his sonne." *Minutes, Second Part*, 83n; A. 1/8, fo. 32.

Governor in Hudson Bay (Lydall was appointed, Copley was disappointed).[182] In 1684, Nicholas Hayward offered the services of Benjamin Mesnard of Paris, "formerly a Soldier there": Mesnard was engaged for four years, but his occupation was unspecified.[183] Occasionally, Company servants also appeared to act as 'patrons'. In April 1684, long-time HBC mariner Michael Grymington recommended apprentices Samuel Martin and John Allen, shipwright William Benson of Limehouse, and mariner and gunner Edward Adams of Poplar (a riverside London parish).[184] However, the roles of shareholders or servants in recruiting are seldom clear. In May 1685, the Committee's secretary, Onesipherous Albin, was ordered at the last minute (the ships were due to sail for Hudson Bay in a week or so) to "hire a Bricklayer for the Bottom of the Bay at Gravesend as reasonable as he can."[185] Albin was thus actively involved in recruitment, but cannot be said to have acted as a patron.

Even the process by which the first Governor in Rupert's Land was recruited is opaque. The Quaker Charles Bayly was released from the Tower of London in 1669 specifically to enter the Company's service, but there is no consensus regarding why.[186] Bayly's biographer, Alice M. Johnson, thought that King Charles II might have had a

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[182]*Minutes*, 30, 42, 74; also 100 and *Minutes, First Part*, 48.

[183]*Minutes, Second Part*, 243.

[184]*Minutes, Second Part*, 223. Martin may have been related to later HBC apprentice John Martin, who served at York (1688-1691) and Albany (1692-1696): B. 239/d/1-3; B. 3/d/1-2, 5, 7.

[185]A. 1/8, fo. 34d.

[186]For a more complete discussion of Bayly's life before and during his service in Hudson Bay, see Alice M. Johnson, "Bayly, Charles," *DCB* I 81-84. Also see *Minutes*, li-lvii; Rich, *History*, I, 65; Mancke, 16.

hand in the appointment, either as a way of "ridding himself of an obstinate prisoner" or of "helping an old acquaintance by making the conditions of release those of exile with dignity and remuneration."[187] Sir John Robinson, one of the original shareholders and Lieutenant of the Tower of London, may also have been at least partly responsible, knowing Bayly to be (in Johnson's words) "a travelled, fearless, and honest man, as well as a stubborn one."[188] John E. Foster suggested that Prince Rupert (the Company's first Governor in London) was instrumental in Bayly's appointment.[189]

Bayly exhibited little or no business skill.[190] Elizabeth Mancke suggested that Bayly was chosen with a view to governing a colony rather than managing trade.[191] The Committee themselves may have been unclear about what particular role Bayly was to play: though he was first engaged in 1669 (before the Company was chartered), the first specific mention of his rank was in 1674.[192] Foster offered the most probable explanation

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[187]Johnson, "Bayly," 82.

[188]Johnson, 82.

[189]Foster, 574.

[190]E.E. Rich (*History*, I, 76-77) described Bayly as "capable of serious mismanagement," observing that he misapplied over £800 worth of Company goods during his tenure: also see *Minutes*, 81. Rich summed up Bayly's ten years in Hudson Bay by saying, "the old Quaker did much to establish the Company's posts and practices, but...he did so in a slipshod and unbusiness-like way, with much kindliness but without any great driving force of personality or conviction to make up for his lack of attention to detail." Rich, *History*, I, 80-81. Bayly's successor, John Nixon, told the Committee in 1682 that "I desire not to stay longer in the countrie then to settle things in a good order and method, and to leave a better precident to him that shall come after me, then I found my selfe" Nixon, 277-78. In 1683, Nixon chose a new site for Albany based on Bayly's recommendation, but James Knight recalled that when Nixon finally saw the site for himself "he was ready to Runn Madd, & calld Govr Bayly all the Blockheads & fools as he could think on." James Knight (Churchill) to Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany), 11 August 1717, James F. Kenney (ed.), *The Founding of Churchill* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1932), 157.

[191]Mancke, 16.

[192]*Minutes*, lvi, 81.

when he suggested that Bayly's chief qualification for his new post was that he was a gentleman. As such, he would have possessed the necessary standing to act as the patriarch of the large household about to be established in James Bay, and would be accepted in that role by the officers and servants under him.[193]

Connections (where they can be demonstrated) were important, but not paramount. The Committee's 1680 instructions to Governor Nixon expressed a hope that "you will not be the lesse diligent, though the Earl of Shaftesbury and Sr. Peter Colleton, who first brought you into the Compa's. service, have sold themselves out [*i.e.* sold their stock], and some of us who are unknown to you do supply their places."[194] Nixon's connection to Shaftesbury seems to have been uninterrupted by the latter's departure from the ranks of shareholders, as he sent Shaftesbury the skin of a young beaver ("a Papouce Skin") as a present in 1682.[195] However, Nixon did not suffer from either his continuing connection with Shaftesbury (who had lost a power struggle within the Company) or from his lack of personal connections with the current Committee.[196] The Committee's comment suggested that a servant's most important connection was with the Committee

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[193]"In later years the failure of the Company to find officers of Bayly's stature would contribute to difficulties experienced in Rupert's Land." Foster, 576.

[194]HBC (London) to John Nixon (Moose), 29 May 1680, *L.O. 1680-87*, 10.

[195]*Minutes, Second Part*, 59.

[196]In contrast, in 1692 former Committee member William Younge wrote in support of Pierre Esprit Radisson, who had previously been recommended to the Company's favour by the former London Governor, the Earl of Marlborough: "I am verry sory your Benevolence to Mr. Radison moves soe slowley, dureing his great necessity...I presume the onely Reason is, because the Majority of the Present Committee are Strangers to him & his former Concerns with the Compa. I hold myselfe obleiged, therefore to doe him Right, by giveing you his Caracter." William Younge to Committee, 20 December 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 167. However, Radisson's service to the Company had been more chequered than Nixon's and Younge perhaps misunderstood the reasons for the present Committee's reluctance to bestow its "Benevolence".

as a whole, or with the Company as a corporate entity, a perception encouraged by the paucity of correspondence between Bayside servants and individual Committee members.

On the other hand, connections did not always guarantee security. Henry Sergeant entered the service in 1683 described as "a very worthey & well quallified gentleman," "a person very well approved of by his Royall Highness the Duke of Yorke [the HBC's London Governor]," and "allso Interested in the stock with us."[197] He was allowed the unprecedented privilege of bringing his wife and his son (Henry Jr) to Hudson Bay, along with his wife's companion (Mrs Maurice) and a maidservant.[198] However, the Committee was dissatisfied with his handling of the trade, and recalled him from Albany in 1686 (although the orders were lost when the *Happy Return* sank en route to the Bay); his connections were less important than the Committee's perception of him as a poor husband of Company goods, a perception supported by reports from returning servants.[199]

Other connections may have been useful, though records on them are often opaque. John Bridgar (Deputy Governor in James Bay, 1685-86) may have been related to John Bridgar of Rotherhithe, who was one of two coopers supplying the HBC in 1683, and/or to Charles Bridgar, who made and repaired sails for the Company's ships at the same time.[200] However, there is no indication that Bridgar's entry into the Company's service in 1678 was due to his connection with either or both of these London tradesmen,

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[197]HBC (London) to James Knight (Albany), 27 April 1683, *L.O. 1680-87*, 82, 83. No evidence has been found that he actually held HBC stock: *L.O. 1680-1687*, 388.

[198]A. 1/7, fos. 35, 37; *L.O. 1680-1687*, 388-9; G.E. Thorman, "Sergeant, Henry," *DCB,* I, 605.

[199]HBC (London) to Henry Sergeant (Albany), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-87*, 184-187.

[200]See *Minutes, Second Part*, 63, 68, 114, 134, 135, 255.

or that their connection with him helped procure their contracts with the Company. Henry Chambray (engaged in 1684, no position specified) was recommended by Stephen Evance, one of the Company's bankers.[201] Brassier Daniel Kingston, who frequently supplied the Company with kettles in the 1680s, was attorney for Bayside governors George Geyer (in 1688) and James Knight (1683 and 1694).[202] James Blaymire, engaged in 1682 (no occupation specified), was the son of Henry Blaymire, a gunsmith who had done work for the Company earlier in the year.[203]

Even where possible kin relationships can be inferred or demonstrated, there is usually no clear evidence of what role they played in recruitment. In the late 1670s, Charles, Patrick, and Thomas Savage all served the Company, both as landsmen and as seamen; Thomas Savage appears to have entered the service before Charles and Patrick; and the Committee paid Patrick (newly engaged) £1 for recruiting four men of unspecified occupations in 1678, the same year as Charles entered the service. In the mid-1690s, Albany's complement included John Fullartine and Dr George Fullartine.[204] None of these men was mentioned as playing a role in recruiting the others, but their roles may not have been formal or even known to the Committee. For instance, John

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[201]*Minutes, Second Part*, 242.

[202]For Geyer, see HBC (London) to George Geyer (Pt Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 21. For Knight, see *Minutes, Second Part*, 3, 98, 168, 176, 180, 208, 228; HBC (London) to James Knight (Albany), 30 May 1694, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 241.

[203]For James' engagement, see *Minutes, First Part*, 211-12; for Henry, see *Minutes, First Part*, 184, and *Second Part*, 2.

[204]For the Savages, see A. 14/2, fo. 86d; A. 14/3, fos. 82d-83, 106d-107, 108d-109; A. 15/1, fos. 12d, 13d, 15d, 27-27d; *Minutes, First Part*, 26-7. For the payment to Patrick Savage for recruiting men, see A. 15/1, fo. 13d. For the Fullartines, see B. 3/d/5, Albany account book 1694-95, fos. 7d-8; B. 3/d/7, fos. 6d-7.

Fullartine may have recommended the Company to George rather than recommending George to the Company; likewise, Charles and Patrick Savage may have sought employment with the HBC because they knew that Thomas was doing well in the service. Such informal participation in recruitment is highly unlikely to appear in Company records, but it probably played a more important role in the process than surviving documents indicate.

In a few cases, non-kin may have played a greater role than kin: John Allen (apprenticed in 1684) was a relative (probably a brother) of Albany book-keeper Joshua Allen, but John was recommended to the Company by mariner Michael Grimington.[205] Recruitment through non-kin connections could have included recommendations from neighbours, drinking companions, shopkeepers, and fellow churchgoers.[206] London's alehouses or public houses may have been particularly significant, as Peter Clark has argued that they played an important role providing poor migrants with (among other services) contacts and news of jobs; and by the end of the seventeenth century some were functioning as houses of call for certain trades.[207] The Committee may also have utilized one of a growing number of registry offices, employment agencies helping to place

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[205]*Minutes, Second Part*, 223n, 228. Joshua Allen was book-keeper at Albany 1682-85; for family connection, see A. 15/3, fo. 152. Joshua was actually a pewterer from London (*Minutes, First Part*, 219) and may have been related to London blacksmith Christopher Allen, who engaged for four years in 1684 (*Minutes, Second Part*, 245).

[206]See Woodward, *Men at Work*, 116; Lane, 10; Ben-Amos, 158-160. The Committee may also have attended Statute (or Petty) Sessions in and around London, in which local justices of the peace supervised the signing of new service contracts. However, the Statute Sessions only recorded a minority of service agreements, and their role declined along with the official regulation of wages by justices of the peace in the early eighteenth century; their successors, hiring fairs, were more informal and left no official records. See Kussmaul, 59-61.

[207]Clark, "Migrants in the city," 280-281.

servants and other workers.[208] The Committee could also have advertised in newspapers, put up posters, or distributed handbills.

The Company's senior employees may have taken an active role in recruitment, particularly as they took more frequent journeys back to England in the 1670s and 1680s than was usually the case in the eighteenth century. Bayly, Radisson, and Groseilliers were entrusted with important tasks like procuring trade goods,[209] but they do not seem to have been actively involved in recruitment.[210] Only in rare circumstances did Bayside factors play a clear role recruiting servants, as in 1681, when Gregory Archer – a castaway from the *Prudent Mary*, an English trading vessel that sought to intrude upon the HBC's monopoly but was wrecked in Hudson Bay – was granted £4 upon Governor Nixon's "having certified he was usefull as a Carpenter in the Country."[211] Two other probable castaways from that expedition were William Austin, who in the same year was granted (upon receipt of a "Certificate" from Nixon) a £2 gratuity for services rendered in the Bay, and Ezekell Ellis. Ellis had no certificate, and his wife Grace had to petition the Committee for her husband "to have some recompence for service done in the

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[208]By about 1698, the Office for Servants in Fleet Street was publishing a weekly *Servants' Guide* listing vacant situations: Clark, "Migrants in the city," 285.

[209]See, for example, the minutes for 4 March 1672, when the Committee authorized them to "treate with Such persons as they thinke fitt for Such goods as may bee needfull" for the coming year's trade: *Minutes*, 27.

[210]On 12 April 1672, the Committee instructed them to find a ship for hire or purchase, but no mention was made of finding a crew. Two days earlier, the Committee had authorized any three of its members to hire ships and men to crew them. *Minutes*, 32, 33. In 1685, on Radisson's recommendation, the Committee hired the five Frenchmen (Jean Baptiste Chouart, Elias Grimard, Claude Durvall, Nicholas Eyron, and Anthony Doyon) manning his Compagnie du Nord post at Port Nelson, but that was under peculiar circumstances. A. 1/8, fos. 18d-19d.

[211]*Minutes, First Part*, 151.

Factory."[212] Governor William Lydall seems to have been unique in being ordered (shortly after his own engagement in 1674) "to procure tenn men fitt for the Companyes Service to Stay in the Countrey," and in being given £30 for paying wage advances to new recruits and to men staying in the country.[213] The Committee apparently had great expectations for this former naval man who had some experience in the Russian fur trade (but as yet none in Hudson Bay).[214]

There is no evidence that early Company managers were sent into various parts of England and Scotland for the specific purpose of recruiting. However, men who themselves came from outside of London had opportunities to recruit new men while visiting family or running errands for the Committee, but direct evidence of this is rare. Hugh Verner (factor at Charles Fort in the 1680s) was involved in recruiting at least four and possibly ten men for the 1683 voyage. In April 1683, the Committee reimbursed him for advance money paid to James Muddy (a cooper from Leith), John Driver (a tailor

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[212]*Minutes, First Part*, 159, 161.

[213]*Minutes*, 107, 110.

[214]Lydall only spent one winter in Hudson Bay. He took possession of Charles Fort on 18 September 1674 and almost immediately had to deal with the fact that the supply ship *Shaftesbury* would not be able to get home that year and that a total of 30 men would have to winter at Rupert River. The warehouse-keeper Thomas Gorst (whose journal John Oldmixon used for his account of that winter) shortened the men's rations to husband the provisions, "but the Men murmer'd; and Mr. *Lydall* order'd they should have full Allowance, saying, *If we starve, we'll starve altogether*." Tyrrell, 396. To this declaration, Rich (*History*, I, 79) added, "by the lavish use of provisions in the early days [he] brought them all very near to doing so." Lydall then decided to relinquish his post, and Morgan Lodge (sometime agent for the HBC in Kent) reported his return in 1675, "he finding that afaires thare, did not pleas him: he is retorned Home Againe & Left the old governor [Bayly] there." Morgan Lodge (Deal, Kent) to Sir Joseph Williamson, Principal Sec. of State (London), 24 September 1675, quoted in *Minutes*, 74n. When John Nixon became Governor in 1679, he tried to mark out a path for his successor, "leest he break his shins as Lydall did." Lydall re-entered the Navy in 1678, despite being over 50 years old (he was born around 1625 and had served in the Navy 1665-1673). In 1692, he applied for a naval pension (although he was two years short of the stipulated superannuation period), as he was in ill health and burdened by debt, but the pension was still not granted by 1695. Maud M. Hutcheson, "Lydall, William," *DCB,* I, 477.

from Ipswich), John Fullerton (an unspecified tradesman from Edinburgh), and James Sinclare (a mariner "of Scouros in Scotland"); he was also reimbursed for 50s which he had paid to get Driver out of prison. Later that month, he stood security for advance money paid to James Harrison and Calvin Oliphant (seamen of Burntisland, Fifeshire), Magnus Browne (seaman), John Couter (tradesman of Edinburgh), and George Forrest and Thomas Ballenden (seamen).[215] He also recommended three men for the 1684 voyage: James Swan, David Cleney, and John Crooks (it is unclear if all were from Prestonpans in Scotland, or only Crooks).[216] Verner again recruited men while purchasing "Scotch plaids" in Scotland in 1691.[217]

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[215]For the reimbursement, see *Minutes, Second Part*, 93, 106. For Verner standing security, see *Minutes, Second Part*, 102, 104. The £1 advance paid to James St. Clare (Sinclare) was deducted from Verner's account when Sinclare deserted in May before sailing for Hudson Bay: *Minutes, Second Part*, 109. Oliphant died in the Bay (the circumstances are unknown) before autumn 1684, as on 16 January 1685, the London minutes referred to him as deceased. On that day, Katherine Robertson demanded his wages and effects: these amounted to £6.4.11, which was paid to Oliphant's executor, James Robinson, a week later. A. 1/8, fos. 11d, 12d.

It is unknown why Driver was in prison – although debt may be a reasonable speculation – or why the Company was willing to pay 50s to get him out. In 1691, the Company paid 5s to get John Bringhurst out of prison so he could go to Hudson Bay: A. 15/3, fo. 185. In 1705, the Company paid £12 to get shipwright Alexander Thoyts out of prison – a minute for 23 May 1705 recorded that "being in Custody for Debt & his Creditors being willing to Release him upon ye Compies Advanceing some moneys the Comtte doe agree to pay him ye Sume of twelve pounds provided he goe ye voyage this present yeare. Which is to be deducted out of his wages" – but Thoyts was an old hand, having served at Port Nelson from 1689 through 1693: A. 1/27, fo. 17d; A. 14/5, fo. 200; Williams, *Miscellany*, 15n. For potentially comparable cases, see two seventeenth-century examples of Lincoln Cathedral paying to get tradesmen out of prison to work on the church: Woodward, *Men at Work*, 146.

In 1683, the Committee began requiring security for advance money paid out to recruits before sailing time. Without corroborating evidence, however, it is impossible to know whether a Bayside officer's act of standing security (as in Verner's case) indicated involvement in recruiting the man concerned or any previous connection with him. Similarly, we cannot know the nature of the relationship between the Parsons family and William Haynes, M.P. for Dartmouth, even though in 1693 Haynes and Edward Parsons together posted a £500 security for Edward's son, Phillip, who had been engaged as Deputy Governor for Port Nelson: see A. 1/15, fo. 9d.

[216]*Minutes, Second Part*, 203.

[217]A.15/3, fo. 184; see also A. 1/13, fo. 10d. On 3 March 1693, Captain Simpson, who had previously commanded the Company's ships, paid his respects to the Committee before making a short trip to Scotland for personal reasons. Although it is unclear which party took the initiative, Simpson assured

The earliest direct evidence regarding active external recruitment of servants is a letter to Mr. Morgan Lodge, Postmaster of Deal (Kent), dated 16 May 1684.[218] Lodge acted as the Company's agent inspecting homeward ships for evidence of private trade through much of the 1680s,[219] and in 1684 the Committee asked him to find ten or fifteen men to serve the Company as either seamen or landmen for three or four years. His instructions were vague, specifying the wages to be offered sailors ("£18 p. yeare at highest") and unskilled labourers ("though they have noe trade... £6 the first £8 the second £10 the third & £12 the 4th yeare besides their Accomodation"), but not indicating how many of each sort were required or any other details. This letter to Lodge was not the start of a new policy, but a necessary response to a recruitment shortfall: the supply ships were ready to sail, but needed ten or fifteen more men for Bayside service.[220]

Sources of Recruitment: Londoners, Scotsmen, and "Country Lads"

For its earliest expeditions, the HBC relied almost exclusively on Londoners to man its ships and staff its posts, avoiding the expense and inconvenience of recruiting

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the Committee that in Scotland he could find men to serve the Company "at Cheape wages," and at a subsequent meeting on 8 March the Committee instructed Simpson to bring back 10 or 12 thick Scottish plaids as possible trade-goods and to recruit "10 or 12 Able young men Twixt 20 and 30 yeares of age...or any person yt [*i.e.* that] has worked in ye mines who may be a Usefull hand in those parts." A. 1/15, fos. 11d, 12d; also Rich, *History*, I, 146, 157. Simpson does not appear to have recruited anyone, and in June was dismissed from the service for delaying the supply ships' departure from Gravesend for no apparent reason: A. 1/15, fo. 23d.

[218]HBC (London) to Morgan Lodge (Gravesend), 16 May 1684, *L.O. 1680-87*, 110.

[219]*L.O. 1680-1687*, 66, 98, 102, 110, 153, 203, 303.

[220]This was also the case in January 1708, when the Committee wrote to a Mr Grimsay in the Orkney Islands, instructing him to recruit twelve or fourteen servants, lusty young men between twenty and thirty years of age, of whom two were to be tailors: Rich, *History*, I, 499.

elsewhere. That choice was understandable. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, London was the best and most obvious place to look for men to serve on long-distance trading voyages. London contained "what was probably the largest seafaring community in the world": by the beginning of the eighteenth century, more than 12,000 Londoners worked in the international trades and several thousand more worked in the English coastal trades.[221] These men would not necessarily have baulked at spending a few years in Hudson Bay at decent pay. However, the Committee began to recognize that while sufficient numbers of men were available, the finding of suitable men presented problems. London recruits brought inconveniences which eventually prompted the Committee to cast its net more widely.

Londoners were expensive to hire: Jeremy Boulton has described the metropolis as "the high wage area *par excellence* in early modern England."[222] Labourers there received money wages as much as twice those of their counterparts in northern towns throughout the seventeenth century; regional differences decreased during the eighteenth century, but Londoners were still paid significantly more than provincial workers by 1800.[223] This was the essence of Governor John Nixon's criticism of "London borne childring," particularly their habit of demanding higher wages with each new contract.[224]

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[221]Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 24.

[222]Jeremy Boulton, "Wage labour in seventeenth-century London," *Economic History Review* 49/2 (1996), 269. In the 1750s, some London shoe retailers began getting their shoes from Northampton to take advantage of lower labour costs, and in 1764 a House of Commons committee learned that several London hat-makers had relocated their workshops to the north of England for the same reason: Schwarz, 34.

[223]Boulton, 287; Gilboy, 222-24; Woodward, *Men at Work*, 177.

[224]Nixon, 280, also 256, 278.

Of course, men from all parts of Britain demanded higher wages, but a man from a low-wage area began with lower wage expectations than a greenhorn from London.

Nixon also blamed men's urban backgrounds for licentiousness and other disciplinary problems. He asked the Committee to "send me Some country lads, that are not acquainted, with stronge drink, that will woorke hard, and faire hard, and are not debauched with the voluptwousness of the city."[225] His concerns echo contemporary criticisms of the behaviour of London labourers. Elizabeth Gilboy, in her classic work on eighteenth century English wages, observed that the image of such a man working three or four days and getting drunk for the rest of the week on his earnings was frequently used by eighteenth century opponents of higher wages.[226] There was ample opportunity for work, at least in the London building trades on which she focussed, but contemporary evidence indicated that workers were not necessarily quick to take advantage of those opportunities. "The habits of the populace intensified this irregularity of employment. The vast number of clubs, ale-houses, gin-shops, gambling-dives, amusements of all kinds were certainly no incentive to continuous work. On the other hand, they were the only resort of a population, frequently out of work, which lived largely in furnished rooms."[227]

The geographic origins of most Company servants are difficult to trace prior to the nineteenth century. The London Minute Books offer more such information than

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[225]Nixon, 251.

[226]Gilboy, 21.

[227]Gilboy, 5.

other documents, but even these are inconsistent. For instance, only seven of 21 recruits in 1682 can be connected with a parish of origin, while 18 of 37 recruits in 1683 and 28 of 37 recruits in 1684 can be so identified. About half of the identifiable Englishmen were Londoners and many of the men whose abodes were not recorded probably lived in London or its environs, given the attraction of the metropolis and the lack of significant recruiting outside the London area at this time. All four of the Londoners recruited in 1683 and six of the 15 recruited in 1684 were from the East End parishes of Wapping, Deptford, Rotherhithe, or Limehouse – all notable for their high concentrations of sailors.[228] Other recruits may also have been from those or neighbouring parishes, such as John Newbury (engaged as a mariner in 1684) who was simply described as being from London.

Without considerable genealogical research, however, it is impossible to determine whether the given parish of origin reflected long-term residence or the temporary abode of a man on the move. Improvements in roads and transport services in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries made travel in early modern Britain less dangerous and less time-consuming than medieval travel had been: scheduled stagecoach services to London more than doubled in the last decades of the seventeenth century, including connections to smaller towns and villages which had previously lacked direct links to the metropolis, and by 1700 a man departing overland from Newcastle could be

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[228]Other parishes directly on the riverside or directly involved with the Port of London included St Katherine Tower, St George's-in-the-East, St John Horsleydown, Ratcliffe, Bermondsey, Shadwell, and Poplar and Blackwall: Schwarz, 9n.

in London within a week.[229]

If Londoners were volatile in their behaviour – and many contemporary sources agreed that they were[230] – they may have reflected the volatility of London itself. The city's population was increasing rapidly, growing from approximately 375,000 in 1650 to approximately 700,000 by 1770.[231] Much of this growth was the result of immigration, so the metropolis contained a substantial number of people who had removed themselves (or had been removed) from their home community but were not yet accustomed to London traditions.[232] These newcomers were drawn from an extensive migration field that included all of England and Wales; although most came from less than 200 km away, small numbers came from Ireland, Scotland, continental Europe, and occasionally from the American colonies.[233] As well, some migration studies have suggested that the

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[229]Ben-Amos, 97.

[230]Domestic servants in London were chiefly supplied from the surrounding rural areas because London servants acquired such ill-repute: "London servants were....said to be wanton in habit and unscrupulous in practice. Moreover, urban living was supposed to have given them a sophistication characterized by a highly insubordinate spirit and an exceptionally self-interested attitude." Hecht, 9, 11.

[231]Peter Burke, "Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century London," in Barry Reay (ed.), *Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 33; Mark S.R Jenner & Paul Griffiths, "Introduction," in Griffiths & Jenner (eds.), *Londinopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 2; Roy Porter, *England in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Folio Society, 1998), 40. Maxine Berg, *The Age of Manufactures: Industry, Innovation and Work in Britain 1700-1820* (London: Fontana, 1985), 94 estimated that London's population grew by 70% between 1650 and 1750

[232]Burke, "Popular Culture," 38, 53. Though referring to early industrial towns of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, John Rule's caution against assuming "that even the first generation of an urban industrial proletariat was completely uprooted from anything which carried traditional community norms and values" (*Labouring Classes*, 156-157) may be useful here. Jenner & Griffiths, "Introduction," 2-3, observe that scholars now offer "a less cataclysmic account of how far London may have changed early modern mentalities" than they did in the 1960s and 1970s.

[233]John Wareing, "Changes in the geographical distribution of the recruitment of apprentices to the London companies 1486-1750," *Journal of Historical Geography* 6/3 (July 1980), 242-246.

substantial inflow was accompanied by a considerable outflow of people, and that London thus acted as a "revolving door" for mobile Englishmen and women, as well as foreigners.[234] Given that London was a community – or, rather, a community of communities – in flux, then perhaps Londoners were not good choices for isolated trading posts on Hudson Bay. On the other hand, they might have been more flexible and thus more suitable than other recruits, although none of the Company's factors recorded such an opinion. Either way, considering that so many seventeenth-century Londoners were first-generation townspeople, blaming 'Londoners' may be mis-stating the problem.[235]

Nixon did not entirely blame his troubles on the effects of city life. He also attributed his men's insolence towards him to the power they had over him: at shiptime, they would claim that their contracts had expired (Nixon did not know how many were telling the truth) and threaten to go home, knowing that Nixon could not replace them until the following year.[236] Even if Nixon had known whose terms were up, he had no enforceable law, martial or civil: knowing he could not punish them, men who wanted to go home early could simply misbehave enough to get sent home, where they would have the opportunity to clear themselves and accuse the governor.[237]

Londoners may have been undisciplined, but the Committee's failure to empower their factors with necessary information and an enforceable authority allowed latitude for

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[234]Jeremy Boulton, "Neighbourhood migration in early modern London," in Clark & Souden, 113.

[235]Burke, "Popular Culture," 37; also see Bailyn, "Introduction," 2.

[236]Nixon, 244, 245, 249, 256.

[237]Nixon, 272. Despite Nixon's fears, there is no clear evidence that anyone took that approach.

these men to misbehave as Nixon claimed they did. Insufficient flow of information led to

> bad husbandry...when you send men of great wages, and are not sensible what they can doe for their wages, (one may goe to a faire and buy a ragged horse for 40s., that will prove better then a horse of 20 pound)....Therefore my advice is that yow would send over yearly 5 lykly country lads of 17 or 18 years of age, and let their tyms be 7 years, so that before their tymes be out they will be lusty younge-men, and fit for your service both at sea, and land, and at small wages.[238]

He assured the Committee that "good order and method" could not be established in Hudson Bay

> untill yow purge your country of most of the ould men, (and there is great need of it) for they ar most seek of the ould disease, of licentiousness, and will corrupt others with the same distemper, yea besides that most of them have greate wages....if England can not furnish yow with men, Scotland can, for that countrie is a hard country to live in, and poore-mens wages is cheap, they are hardy people both to endure hunger, and could, and are subject to obediance, and I am sure that they will serve for 6 pound pr. yeare, and be better content, with their dyet then Englishmen will be, so that yow may better afford to allow some better sellery to petty officers, to traine the men, and see them doe their deutie."[239]

Nixon's solution of seeking out men from rural areas, including Scotland, was logical because wages generally decreased with distance from major urban centres, particularly London. In recommending surgeon John Ker to the Committee, Nixon commented that "he can informe youre honoures how yow may get men out of Scotland, who will both faire harder, and serve at cheaper rates, then our London borne childring: they goe to france for small wages and seek their fortounes up and doun the world, and doeth good

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[238]Nixon, 251.

[239]Nixon, 277-78.

service where they are, and why may not yow imploy them for youre profit."[240]

Nixon's reference to the need for "petty officers" – he advocated two sergeants and three corporals – suggested that he felt a military organisational model might be necessary for discipline. His goal was not to find men more suitable for life in the Bay: although he referred to Scots as "hardy people both to endure hunger, and could,"[241] neither he nor his contemporaries emphasised the harsh Hudson Bay climate as requiring a certain kind of man. Rather, he felt that the Company, like any employer, should seek hard-working men at low wages as one of the basic ingredients to corporate success. Nixon, who was probably Scottish himself, knew that such men and such wages could be found in Scotland, but it is impossible to document his role in the creation of any kind of recruitment system or policy, as the London Committee never linked its decisions with his recommendations.

A few of the Company's early employees can be identified as Scotsmen.[242] Trader Hugh Verner, who entered the service in 1678, was probably Scottish although his birthplace remains unknown; and in 1682 mariners John Anderson and Alexander Baine,

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[240]Nixon, 280. Ker was engaged but there is no evidence of his involvement in recruitment. As Nixon suggested, early modern Scotland was highly oriented towards out-migration: Smout, Landsman, & Devine, 76, 111-112. However, considerably less research has been done on internal and outward population movements in Scotland than in England: Ian D. Whyte, "Migration in early-modern Scotland and England: A comparative perspective," in Colin G. Pooley & Ian D. Whyte (eds.), *Migrants, Emigrants and Immigrants: A Social History of Migration* (London: Routledge, 1991), 87.

In describing the Londoners as "childring," Nixon was referring to his earlier complaint about men demanding higher wages during the hustle and bustle of shiptime, "I can not send them home for want of men in their places, so...I must humor them lyke childrine, which makes them still the more insolent." Nixon, 256.

[241]Nixon, 277-78.

[242]"Among so mobile a population [as the Scots], it is difficult not only to trace Scots, but even to define who they were." Smout, Landsman, & Devine, 99.

both of "Borresenex" in Scotland, contracted for three years' service.[243] The earliest suggestion of the Committee deliberately seeking to hire Scotsmen was in 1683. The London minute books recorded the engagement of eight Scots out of 37 men engaged that year: a man "bred up at sea" (James Sinclare of "Scouros," who deserted with his advance money before the ships sailed), two Edinburgh tradesmen (John Fullartine and John Coalter), three seamen from Fifeshire (James Harrison, Calvin Oliphant, and David Reidie), a cooper from Leith (James Moody), and a Highland gentleman who does not appear to have made the voyage (Archibald MacArthur).[244] Although, as mentioned above, there is strong reason to believe that Hugh Verner was at least partially responsible for some of these men being engaged, this was not the beginning of a deliberate policy. Of the 37 men recruited the following year, only one can be definitely identified as Scottish, while three others were probably from Scotland.[245] In contrast, nine of the 1683 recruits and 23 of the 1684 recruits can be identified as Englishmen.

Although Verner recruited in Scotland itself, the Committee could easily find Scotsmen in the capital. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century London and other large towns, many inns, taverns, and alehouses had regional connections, as did certain neighbourhoods. A Committee member looking for Scotsmen for Hudson Bay would

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[243]For Verner, see Alice M. Johnson, "Verner, Hugh." *DCB,* I, 657. For Anderson and Baine, who were assigned to the *Craven* (Capt. William Bond), see *Minutes, First Part*, 203. Baine died in the service, and in December 1683 his wages were paid to his administrator, Samuel Nordon: *Minutes, Second Part*, 166, 173.

[244]Brown, 26; *Minutes, Second Part*, 86, 88, 90-91, 109.

[245]John Crooks was from Prestonpans, while James Swan and David Cleney may have been from there as well (the entry in the minute book is vague); John Pearson was from "Feith" [Leith?]. *Minutes, Second Part*, 203, 234.

have looked in the western suburbs near the old city walls, the neighbourhoods of St Martin's, the Strand, Bedfordbury, and Holborn.[246]

Conclusion

In the Company's early days, recruitment needs were limited. The overseas labour force generally numbered only about thirty, and even in the heady days of the mid-1680s the land service was little more than twice that size. The Company needed more men stationed in the Bay than could be regularly spared from a ship's crew, but not so many men as to demand a structured recruitment policy, or even a clearly-defined occupational hierarchy or salary structure. Surviving documents from this period are uninformative about recruitment, and the processes by which men were recruited remain opaque. The Committee's minutes and account books were intended to record the basic details of what actually happened rather than any preconceived ideals that may have been circulating around the meeting table.

In general, staffing of trading posts could be managed through a combination of volunteered applications, patronage, and other informal methods (such as by engaging a few men from the supply ships for Bayside service). The pubs, inns, and taverns through which London's news flowed probably did much of the Committee's work by circulating information on Company ships departing for Hudson Bay and on employment opportunities as seamen and/or landsmen.[247] The Committee's 1672 complaint that their

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[246]Clark, "Migrants in the city," 273-274.

[247]See Rediker, 82.

ships were being "pestered" by men looking for work on the ships or in the Bay[248] indicates that potential employees were seeking out the Company as well as the reverse, but the fitting of needs to available hands (and determining the needs in the first place) presented ongoing challenges.

[248] *Minutes*, 34.

CHAPTER 3

DARK DAYS, 1686-1714: CONFLICT AND UNCERTAINTY

Much of the HBC's first four decades unfolded against a backdrop of major conflict, including the third English war against the Dutch (1672-74), the War of the League of Augsburg (King William's War, 1689-97), and the War of the Spanish Succession (Queen Anne's War, 1702-13). Wartime conditions raised prices and wages, made labour scarcer, put merchant shipping at risk, and complicated the acquisition of suitable or even sufficient new employees.[249] The impact of war on the HBC intensified in 1686, with the arrival of French warships in Hudson Bay. For almost thirty years thereafter, the French presence in Hudson Bay and the insecurity of wartime conditions were the principal factors affecting HBC personnel issues.

For most of this period, the Company controlled only one factory in Hudson Bay (Port Nelson in 1686-93 and Albany in 1694-96 and 1697-1714).[250] Labour needs were more limited than they had been before 1686, although in the interest of defense both Port Nelson and Albany in turn supported larger staffs than in peacetime. The Company's vulnerability created an emphasis on loyal and experienced servants, and the Committee was willing to generously bestow both monetary and non-monetary favours in order to retain such men. By 1714, when the Treaty of Utrecht ended the French presence in the

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[249]See Schwarz, 95. The Royal African Company experienced similar problems: Davies, *RAC*, 252-253, noted that efforts at economizing by reducing the size of the labour force were mostly offset by the high wages needed to attract skilled men from England to Africa in a time of war.

[250]Port Nelson had a house at Severn River 1685-90 and Albany maintained regular winter camps on the Eastmain from 1693 onward.

Bay, the HBC had accumulated a much larger overhead than it considered healthy.

"Constant Perill from the French"

After the French captured the James Bay posts in 1686, the conflict between French and English (specifically between the Compagnie du Nord and the HBC) dominated each side's activities in the Bay area. Economic competition was occasionally supplemented by military action, as in 1688 when two HBC vessels, the *Churchill* and the *Yonge,* were sent to attack the French posts but were captured themselves,[251] or when the English recovered Albany in 1693 only to lose Port Nelson (with its complement of more than 40 men) to the French the following year.[252]

The military incursions of the later 1680s and the 1690s quashed much of the HBC's early optimism, turning the Committee's priority from expansion to survival. This mentality persisted until 1714, when the French vacated their Bayside posts according to the Treaty of Utrecht (signed the previous year). However, some entrepreneurial spirit survived: despite French dominance in Hudson Bay, the Company considered and attempted some expansion of its activities. In 1691, for example, they expressed the hope that young men from Port Nelson would volunteer to travel inland as Henry Kelsey had done the previous year; they gave the Port Nelson Council permission

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[251]Jaenen, 250, 272-274.

[252]Later that year, Jesuit Father Marest gave his account of the capture in a letter to Father de Lamberville, overseer or the Jesuit missions in Canada. Father Marest described the English garrison as 53 in number, "all fairly lusty, able men." Tyrrell, 120-121. About twenty years later, De la Potherie mentioned that York's complement in 1694 was 56: Tyrrell, 257. However, the HBC's Grand Journal listed only 42 men as being captured at Port Nelson that year: see A. 15/3, fos. 106-111, 122.

to re-establish New Severn (which Thomas Walsh had burnt down rather than surrender to the French in 1690) and/or to build a new post upriver from Port Nelson at their discretion (although they did neither); and they sent out two coopers to make casks for whale oil, and two shallops ("in frames") for the new summer fishery at Churchill. They also assured the Council that "what with the fullnesse and encrease of our trade from year to year & the severall new Settlements which you see we designe (and may have our old ones Wee hope in time Restor'd) Wee doe not doubt but there will bee Imployment Enough to gratifie all Our Faithfull and Industrious Servants."[253]

The Company's major arena for expansion remained coastal, focused particularly on the mouths of rivers. The Committee chose carpenter/bricklayer/mariner Thomas Savage to oversee the building of a permanent trading post at the mouth of the Churchill River in 1688: he led an overland party from Port Nelson, including Henry Kelsey, Elias Grimard (formerly of the Compagnie du Nord), and a Chipewyan man.[254] The *Dering* (Capt. James Young) delivered house carpenter John Mackenny and sawyer William Folder to help with construction, and harpooner Edward Mills to start a whaling operation, as well as accountant Richard Liddiard and three seamen (William Kirkewood and two crew members from the *Dering*).[255] In 1689, Henry Kelsey was set ashore north

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[253]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 115, 116, 119, 120-121, 125.

[254]HBC (London) to George Geyer (York), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 9-10, 18; also Kenney, 20-22. The Chipewyan man had been with the Company at Port Nelson for some time, but his relationship with the HBC is unclear: Kenney, 20.

[255]If Geyer had not yet sent people from Port Nelson to begin construction, Mills was to be in charge until Geyer sent someone (presumably Savage) to take over. HBC (London) to Captain James Young (Gravesend), 1 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 26.

of Churchill River with a Cree boy to make contact with potential Chipewyan traders. They could find none, however, and returned to the Churchill River late in the year to find the house burned down and its complement withdrawn to Port Nelson.[256] A seasonal whale fishery was continued from Port Nelson, but a new trading house was not built until 1717.

The Committee maintained its interest in trading voyages to the headwaters of major rivers as a way of combating French competition inland.[257] It hoped such expeditions could be undertaken by William Dolbey, George Holstead, Matthew Vicary, and Nicholas Weeden – all apprenticed to the Company in 1689 from Christ's Hospital, London (the Blue Coat charity school) – provided they were able to learn some Cree.[258]

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[256]Henry Kelsey's "Memorandum of my abode in hudsons bay from 1683 to 1722," in Henry Epp (ed.), *Three Hundred Prairie Years: Henry Kelsey's 'Inland Country of Good Report'* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1993), 232; also Kenney, 20-22. When James Knight arrived to re-establish Churchill in 1717, he remarked that "a fitting place to build a house" could not be found; "but at one place...where formerly the English had built one wch they found so badd that After they had built it I believe they was so Disscouraged that they sett it a fire to Run away by the light of it." Kenney, 119-120. Renee Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled: Inuit of the Central Arctic, 1550 to 1940* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2001), 63, argued that in the late seventeenth century the area north of Churchill River – perhaps as far up the western shores of Hudson Bay as Chesterfield Inlet – was indeed Chipewyan territory. Presumably they were inland when Kelsey and his companion passed by.

[257]In 1701 or 1702, a large group of upland Natives (including two or three canoes of Ottawa) visited Albany: Governor John Fullartine described them as "so much Frenchified yt they ask'd for ye Goods wch: they traded in French." John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 4d.

[258]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 79. Charity apprenticeships, whether handled through a charity school like Christ's Hospital or through some other kind of endowed charity, were different from pauper apprenticeships. Charities were usually selective: many charity apprentices were orphans (which could just mean fatherless) but not paupers, and many of these children were the sons of traders or craftsmen in the local community, and thus lacked the stigma of poverty which often made it difficult for parish authorities to find desirable masters for their pauper children. Children who attended charity schools acquired an education denied to poorer children, making them even more acceptable as apprentices. Lane, 89-90; Richard I. Ruggles, "Hospital Boys of the Bay," *The Beaver* 308/2 (Autumn 1977), 5, 7-10. Blue Coat schools were initially small, but their strict standards of behaviour and religious instruction helped fit their boys for respectable professions. Local voluntary support made them even more attractive as apprentices by allowing the schools to offer fairly

However, none of them remained in Hudson Bay long enough.[259] Former apprentice Henry Kelsey was the first Englishman to travel inland from the Bay in 1690. The Committee included him in Thomas Savage's 1688 Churchill River expedition because "he is a very active lad, delighting much in Indians company, being never better pleased than when he is travelling amongst them."[260] In 1690, the Committee renewed its search for servants who would go inland: "If any two or three of our servants shall shew their forwardness to go upon new discoveries, we require you to encourage the undertaking, and upon their good success, to allow them such advance of wages or gratuity for their pains, as you in your discretion shall find convenient, which we will, upon your

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high premiums. Lane, 68-69; Ruggles, 4, 6.

[259]Dolbey, Holstead, Vicary and Weedon were apprenticed in 1689 for eight years, but a French attack on the Company's ships that year delayed their journey to the Bay until 1690: HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-96*, 79; HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 93. Dolbey returned to England in 1693 or 1694 and was employed in the Company's office, later serving as warehouse-keeper until his death in 1717 (for reference to his death and to his widow, Margaret, see A. 1/143, fo. 3). Holstead returned in 1692 and nothing more is known about him, although the Committee chastised Geyer for sending him home before his time had expired, being "a Stout Fellow & hardy lad else Would not have grown soe much since he went hence." Vicary died at York on 8 November 1696. Weedon returned to England in 1691, was pressed into the Royal Navy at Deptford in April 1692, and no reference to his release from the Navy has been found. See *L.O. 1688-1696*, 79n; Rich, *History*, I, 79n, 192; A. 1/14, fo. 15; HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 192.

Assuming that Dolbey completed his apprenticeship in the London warehouse, only two of the five Blue Coat boys apprenticed as landsmen during this period completed their indentures (Dolbey and Samuel Hopkins, who was apprenticed to the HBC in 1714). Drop-out rates among apprentices in England were high, although quantifying that rate has proved problematic. One study of London apprenticeship indicated a drop-out rate of around 50 per cent, although London evidence might be misleading due to the uncharted growth of apprenticeship in the suburbs, where most industrial and artisan work was being done by 1700: see Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship, and Patronage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 57n58; also Griffiths, *Youth and Authority*, 330-332. Donald Woodward found much lower drop-out rates in the incorporated towns of northern England: Woodward, *Men at Work*, 57.

[260]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, Robson, appendix, 18.

intimation of it to us, allow and approve of."[261] Although the Committee appears to have expected their servants to take the initiative, Geyer's response implied that he made the first move: "This summer I sent up Henry Kelsey (who chearfully undertook the journey) up into the country of the Assinae-poets, with the captain of that nation."[262]

The Committee was pleased to hear that an inland journey was underway, and hoped that "the encouragement you have given him, in the advance of his salary, will instigate other young men in the factory to follow his example." Kelsey's wages were doubled (from £15 to £30) for the time he spent inland, and he afterwards received a £30 gratuity. Geyer promised that "for other young men qualified to undertake such a journey, when I see their willingness, and find it convenient, I will not fail to give them by his example all suitable encouragement."[263] However, Port Nelson was captured by

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[261]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, Robson, appendix, 19.

[262]George Geyer (Port Nelson) to HBC (London), 8 September 1690, Robson, appendix, 19. The "Assinae-poets" are usually identified as Assiniboine, but see Barbara Belyea, "Indians, Asinepoets and Archithinues," in Belyea (ed.), *A Year Inland: The Journal of a Hudson's Bay Company Winterer* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2000), 343-368. Kelsey ("Memorandum," in Epp, 232) later criticized two Frenchmen in the Company's employ, Jean Baptiste Chouart ("Gooseberry," *i.e.* des Groseilliers) and Elias Grimard ("Grammair"), who he claimed had been engaged at high wages "to go amongst ye natives to draw ym to a trade": their failure to do so, he indicated, prompted Geyer to send Kelsey. The London minute books do not state that inland travel was an expected part of Chouart or Grimard's service, but in a letter to former Committee-man William Younge, the Committee complained that Chouart, Grimard, and two other Frenchmen had been engaged in 1684 "at verry high wages...the meanest £30 p. Ann. in expectation that they should doe some extraordinary service, which they all promised, by Travelling & bringing downe new Nations of Indians to Trade with us....But...our Governr. there [at Port Nelson] found not that they did any better service then our owne men, at 10 or £12 p. Ann. for they never would Travell." HBC Committee (London) to William Younge (London?), 8 March 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 177-178. Chouart certainly had some experience living with Natives: while in French employ, he had spent the winter of 1682/83 with Lowland Cree near Port Nelson: Lytwyn, 128.

[263]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 115; Robson, appendix, 20. George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson) to HBC (London), 12 September 1691, Robson, appendix, 20-21. Sixty years later, Joseph Robson called the encouragement "very trifling" and caustically observed that "nothing was to be given the men before they went, and nothing when they returned, unless they were successful, and then it was left in the power of the governor." Robson, appendix, 19. For a discussion of Kelsey's wages during this period in his service, see *L.O. 1688-1696*, 382.

the French in 1694, and the English at Albany were too aware of French traders inland from their factory to venture very far upriver. No other inland journeys were undertaken before the Utrecht restoration.

For King and Company

War with France focused attention on the dual role played by HBC factors. The Governors of the Bottom of the Bay (James Bay) and of Port Nelson were Company employees, but most also received commissions from the Crown during this period: thus, they represented the interests of the nation as well as those of the Company, and the Committee consistently (and purposely) blurred the lines of division. George Geyer at Port Nelson and John Marsh at the Bottom of the Bay were the first factors to receive royal commissions: in 1688, the Committee wrote to Geyer, "to excite your Courage & Sence of our Nations Honour the more Wee have Honoured you in a way which was never before practiced by obtaineing the Gratious favour from his Matie. to Constitute you Governor by his owne Royall Commission."[264] In 1691, when only Port Nelson

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[264]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 6. Copies of Geyer's and Marsh's commissions were included in the outward correspondence: *L.O. 1688-1696*, 30-31, 31-32. Both men also received commissions from the Company: *L.O. 1688-1696*, 23-24, 33. All Governors and Deputy Governors received commissions from the Company, but these mostly marked out jurisdiction: see, for example, the commissions to George Geyer and his Deputy, Thomas Walsh, in 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 23-24, 24-25. On rare occasions, other officers were given Company commissions, as in the 1693 expedition that recovered Albany: Mr Thomas Mathew was commissioned as "Second Leftenant under Capt. Philip Persons in the Independend [*sic*] Company of foot to be imployed in Hudsons Bay for the Defence of the same." *L.O. 1688-1696*, 215.

Some later factors also received royal commissions, usually during times of war. In 1703, John Fullartine referred to the recent death of King William, and hoped for a "happy and Sucsessfull Reign" for Queen Mary, "whos Cimmission You have Sent me over, wch God willing I will Stand by & defend Yr Interest to ye utmost of my power." John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 3. Also see Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 July 1706, A. 11/2, fo. 14.

remained in Company hands, the Committee reminded Geyer of his special status when trying to prevail upon him not to leave the Company's service: they invoked the name of King William, "to whom your Honour & Reputation will be accountable for that Last Possession of his Territories in that Part of America, and this alone wee know would be Sufficient to Invigorate your Resolution & Courage."[265] Governor John Marsh and his Deputy Governor, Andrew Hamilton, also received royal commissions in 1688[266] – Hamilton was encouraged in 1689 to be "an example, of Bravery and Resolucion to others for the Honour, of the Nation and the Benefitt of the Company"[267] – but Geyer's Deputy, Thomas Walsh, did not. Walsh was, however, confirmed as master of New Severn and Deputy Governor at Port Nelson, and told, "wee hope you will in discharge of your Duty expresse an extraordinary Care & Zeale for the Honour of the Nation and the Good and benefit of the Company."[268] In 1690, the Committee assured him that they did not doubt "your Resolute Bravery in defence of the place [New Severn] whenever attackt, Like a gallant man, Truely sensible of his owne Reputation his employers Interest & his Countries Honour."[269]

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[265]HBC (London) to George Geyer (Port Nelson), private, 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 126. In 1688, the Committee sent John Marsh to recover Albany with an exhortation to "give such proofes of your prudence fidelity and Courage...That Wee shall have reason to bee well pleased, that Wee have given you the Conduct of such a Designe, and you may reap the Honour and thanks from his Ma[jes]tie. for your Gallant p[er]formances as well as the due acknowledgemt. & reward from us." HBC (London) to John Marsh (location unspecified), 18 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 40.

[266]*L.O. 1688-1696*, 37-38.

[267]HBC (London) to Andrew Hamilton (location unspecified), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 55.

[268]HBC (London) to Thomas Walsh (Severn), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 63-64.

[269]HBC (London) to Thomas Walsh (Severn), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 105.

Those who did not possess royal commissions were also exhorted by the Committee to remember their duty as subjects of the king. The Committee expected all its servants to stand firm against the French in war and in trade. In 1689, the Committee ordered Marsh: "in this condition of constant perill from the French, you are the rather now to traine and marshall your men...and make them expert in their Armes, and inspire Courage, and a noble indignation, into them, against that perfidious nation."[270] However, Marsh had died of illness at Albany on 30 January 1689 and his men were later captured by the French, "to the perpetuall shame of the nation."[271] In 1692, James Knight's orders to re-establish an English presence in James Bay (which he accomplished by capturing Albany the following spring) instructed him to maintain a "martiall Discipline" among his men and assured him that "wee shall not be wanting in our kindness to reward every one tho in the Meanest station...that by any extorordinary Service shall merit att our hands, & doubt not of your Justice in your recommendation of them to us in your Letters when they returne."[272]

The Committee's 1690 letter to Geyer and his council at Port Nelson beseeched

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[270]HBC (London) to John Marsh & Council (Albany), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 53-54. There were also occasional appeals to the men's masculinity (implicit in Marsh's orders), as in 1690 when the Committee instructed Thomas Walsh at Severn River to "asshure the Rest under your Command that wee will not bee unmindfull of those who performe their duties, especially of such as in times of hazard behave themselves Manfully." HBC (London) to Thomas Walsh (Severn), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 105.

[271]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 94. For an account of the events of the winter of 1688/89 at Albany – including Marsh's death in January after a fortnight's illness, the capture of 20 Englishmen out cutting wood in the late winter, and the French siege and capture of Albany in March – see the affidavit of gunsmith Solomon Nichols, 10 February 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 82.

[272]HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 201. See also HBC (London) to Stephen Sinclair (Albany), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 211.

"God Almighty to bless our other Factories, and hope in case of any attack, that all in generall & each Individuall in perticular will behave themselves with such courage Resolution & Bravery as becomes Trew English men, tenderly sencible of their owne and their Native Countries honour."[273] Those who were wounded or killed in defending the Company's property and interests – which were identified with England's interests – were promised pensions for themselves or relatives.[274] The Company paid a gratuity of £4 to Elizabeth Seneter, the mother of Richard Seneter (a crewman of the *Churchill* frigate who was killed by the French at Albany River in autumn 1688), and £2 for charity to Elizabeth Lashley, the wife of Robert Lashley (a crewman of the *Churchill* who was wounded by the French in autumn 1688).[275] In 1691, the men taken prisoner in James Bay in 1689 (some of whom were still prisoners in France) each received a gratuity of £2.[276] Even Marsh's widow was given his full wages for 1688/89 (£100, not prorated to the day he died, as was the usual practice) plus a £20 gratuity "in Consideration of the

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[273]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 94-95. The Committee's reference to "our other Factories" is somewhat misleading: since Marsh's attempt to recover the James Bay posts had failed in 1688/89, Port Nelson was the only factory in English hands in 1690. The Committee may have been referring to the house at New Severn (to which Thomas Walsh and Richard Liddiard set fire when a French warship appeared offshore in August of that year) and Dering River north of Churchill (which Geyer had been strongly urged to settle, but never did).

James Knight's 1692 orders to re-establish an English presence in James Bay expressed the Committee's confidence that "all & every one in their Station will act with that Courage & faithfullness as becomes the Honour of Our Nation, & the trust reposed in you for the Interest & Benefitt of this Company." HBC (London) to James Knight (London?), 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 148.

[274]HBC (London) to John Marsh & Council (Albany), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 51; HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 60..

[275]*L.O. 1688-1696*, 82n.

[276]Rich, *History*, I, 280.

Loss of her husband."[277]

Similar awards had been made before the warfare in Hudson Bay began. In 1684, the Committee granted Ann Austin a £6 gratuity after her husband, blacksmith William Austin, was "Killed by the Indians" at Port Nelson the year before.[278] John Brownson, chief mate on the *Colleton* yacht (1680-84), requested "some adition to his former service" when he returned home in 1684: the Committee, "considering he has lost his Right hand by some accident Ordered he shall have a gratuety in lieu of all sattisfaction of £5."[279] However, this was not a consistent policy and the Company's servants did not take it for granted. Oldmixon recorded that the men of Albany in 1686 doubted whether the Company would take care of them or of their widows and children in the event of injury or death: they told Henry Sergeant that "they had heard that One Thomas Colborne haveing lost his Arme at Port Nelson in the Companyes Service they refused afterwards to entertaine him or give him the least recompence for his said losse which was a great Discouragemt. to them."[280]

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[277]A. 15/3, fo. 158.

[278]A. 15/2, fo. 108d; A. 1/8, fo. 7. William Austin, a blacksmith who had initially gone to Hudson Bay on the interloper, *Prudent Mary* (see above), engaged for three years at £10-10-12 in 1682 (*Minutes, First Part*, 215). Nothing is known about his death.

[279]A. 1/8, fo. 11d. Brownson began his HBC service in 1676 as a seaman aboard the *Shaftesbury* (A. 14/2, fo. 89d) and served as Walsall Cobby's chief mate on the *Colleton* from 1680 through 1684 (HBC (London) to Captain Walsall Cobby (Gravesend), 21 May 1680, *L. O. 1680-87*, 18; HBC (London) to Henry Sergeant (Albany), 16 May 1684, *L. O. 1680-87*, 125). In March 1685, the Committee directed Brownson to advise Charles Bridgar on the size of sails to be made for the *Colleton* (A. 1/8, fo. 20). Also in March 1685, Brownson re-engaged for 3 yrs at £36 (A. 1/8, fo. 22); he was captured by French in July 1686 (A. 15/3, fo. 101).

[280]Tyrrell, 403; Henry Sergeant's description of the French attacks, given before the Committee 4 November 1687, *L.O. 1680-87*, 316. They had, in fact, been misinformed. Thomas Golburne (Colborne, Golman) was one of John Bridgar's men at Port Nelson during the winter of 1682/3 (his 1683 deposition regarding Radisson's activities that winter is in *L.O. 1680-87*, 103): in November 1683 he "humbly

Also at issue were the accounts of men who died in Hudson Bay or in French custody. In 1693, the Committee instructed George Geyer at Port Nelson to send home an account of the effects and belongings of the late John Bennett,[281] whose friends in Britain were making enquiries: "in deed if we did not take care of these things how [*i.e.* who] would goe into our service if they thought in case of death his frinds Should not have what he left." In future, when men died in Hudson Bay, the factor should inventory their possessions in the post's account book, publicly sell the goods in the factory, and record the results of the sale, "in order that the relations of the Decesed may receve theire due."[282] This practice, known to sailors as 'auction before the mast,' was an opportunity for the deceased's coworkers to honour him and to help provide for his widow (or other surviving family) by purchasing his effects at inflated prices.[283]

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petitioned" the Committee "for some Supporte and releife," having lost a hand on the *Prince Rupert*, and was granted 40s. *Minutes, Second Part*, 159.

[281]John Bennett, a gentleman of St. Martins in the Fields (London), was engaged in 1687 for 4 yrs at £20 (A. 1/9, fo. 17), possibly as a writer or clerk. In 1688, the Committee recommended him as a replacement for John Lawson as warehousekeeper at Port Nelson should Lawson return home (HBC (London) to George Geyer (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 14), but Lawson did not return to England. Bennett died at Port Nelson on 19 November 1691 (A. 15/4, fo. 25; *L.O. 1688-1696*, 14n).

[282]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council, York, 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 191. Also see HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 17 June 1693: "if it should happen any of your men be dead (which God forbid) by accident or otherwise that that [sic] you Returne to us there names & the time of theire death, & Cause all theire Cloathes & efects to be sould publickly keeping acctts. there of a Coppy of wch. transmitt to us that we may be Exact in paying what shall be due to theire Executors & this we would have done for the encoragement of all persons that are or shall be in our service," *L.O. 1688-1696*, 207. The Committee was probably aware that the Royal African Company's recruitment efforts were hampered by reports that their arrangements for sending home the effects of men who died in Africa were unsatisfactory: Davies, *RAC*, 253-254; Henige, 35.

[283]Rediker, 197. Rediker called this "[o]ne of the most touching rituals of death" in seafaring experience: "Their [sailors'] actions suggest both a consciousness of kind and an understanding of the struggles of poor families frequently dependent upon a male wage earner. The ritual also indicates something of the sense of responsibility that seamen felt toward each other....The ritual of redistribution [of wealth to help dead men's families] expressed in yet another, particularly poignant, way the incipient collectivism of seafaring culture." Rediker, 198. This statement can probably be applied to HBC servants

While French attacks gave ample opportunity for extraordinary service, the only HBC post successfully defended against the French during this period was Albany in 1709, when John Fullartine and 26 men and boys fended off an overland assault by 70 French militia and 30 Mohawk warriors: a local Lowland Cree hunter warned the factory of the approaching force, and in the ensuing battle 16 Mohawk and two HBC servants were killed.[284] De Troyes described the men of Moose putting up some resistance to his forces in 1686, but mentioned that the fort's cannon were not loaded (and no cannon-balls were nearby) and that the English only posted guards in the mornings. Charles Fort surrendered without attempting to return fire; and Albany offered only token resistance (according to one French account, most of the Englishmen were hiding in a cellar).[285] Richard Staunton later recalled how, when he was a green hand at Port Nelson in 1694, "we had two gunners in the fort at £50 and £60 per annum, and over a bowl of punch and a long pipe in their mouths it was a thing impossible for the place to be taken; but as soon as an enemy came to attack it they did not only take it but found a way to carry a ship of

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as well.

[284]Francis & Morantz, 36. Thirty years later, Richard Staunton (a young cooper at the time of the attack) remembered Albany in 1709 having either four or eight cannon (his reference is unclear), but the English used only muskets and "not one great gun [was] fired in the whole attack." Reflecting on his wartime experiences, Staunton boldly declared that any Company factory could only be successfully defended with small arms rather than cannon. Richard Staunton & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 17 August 1739, *Letters*, 300-301. That the men of Albany did not employ their cannon on that occasion should not reflect badly on the factory's gunners. Staunton recalled George Barley as "an expert gunner" (*Letters*, 300-301), and Thomas McCliesh Jr (then serving as carpenter and sloopman), later remembered that Albany's other gunner, Joseph Myatt (who commanded Albany in the 1720s), showed "spirit in [the] face of his enemy...when at the same time...old servants hid themselves in amongst old ropes till the enemy was beat and gone off." Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 96.

[285]"Sentinels [at Moose] were unnecessary in their opinion because the Indians passed there day and night and the dogs barked all the time." Kenyon & Turnbull, 68-69 (Moose), 75 (Charles Fort), 82 (Albany). De Troyes referred to the "negligence" of the men of Moose and the "cowardice" of the Albany men: Kenyon & Turnbull, 69, 82.

thirty guns up the South Channel with all sails standing about a mile above the factory and there to winter."[286]

Defeat prompted the Committee to apportion blame while their servants tried to deflect it. After the French captured the James Bay posts in 1686, Governor Henry Sergeant came under close scrutiny. Appearing before the Committee in November 1687, he accused John Bridgar at Moose of negligence and of leaving his post unnecessarily (he went to the Eastmain "on what errant I know not haveing noe such orders from me takeing with him all the Officers in the Country"), accused Moose's acting Chief Anthony Dowridge (a tailor by trade) and carpenter John Fortnam of harbouring Native women in their quarters, and accused some of his own men (labourers William Arrington and Frederick Johnson, sawyers William Folder and John Meacham, shipwrights Edward Coles and Phillip Scovell, tailor Hugh Mitchell, gunsmith and edge-tool maker John Stevens, and surgeon Edward Evans) of "Mutinous Caballs amongst themselves" and of being unwilling to defend Albany.[287] Cooper James Moodie, Thomas Bannatine, and apprentice Anthony Beale also appeared before the Committee that month: they challenged Sergeant's claims against the men of Albany and added, "There is severall Remarkeable faileings in Governor Sergeant which is too tedious here to insert but wee are Willing when Demanded to Declare especially James Muddie...whoe was

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[286]Richard Staunton & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 17 August 1739, *Letters*, 300. Staunton may have been referring to Andrew Johnson and Christopher Spencer, but he was not remembering their wages correctly: both men were earning £36 and, of the 42 men listed as captured at Port Nelson in 1694, only Captain Phillip Parsons was earning as much as £50. See A. 15/3, fos. 106-111, 122.

[287]*L.O. 1680-1687*, 313-316. Father Antoine Silvy, chaplain of the de Troyes expedition in 1686, also mentioned at least one woman being present with the sloopmen from Moose: Jaenen, 231.

privy to some of his Concernes."[288]

The Committee was inclined to lay much of the blame at Sergeant's door, prompting him in 1687 or 1688 to write "The Answere of Henry Sergeant...to the Charge against him by the Hon[oura]ble. Hudson's Bay Company," in which he repeated his earlier claim that mutiny among his men forced him to surrender Albany to the French.[289] Coles, Mitchell, Meacham, Stevens, Folder, and Arrington replied to Sergeant's accusations in two documents, in which they claimed that

> Wee urged the Governor that Wee might fire upon them to prevent their proceedeing further against us, but hee utterly denyed us yett neverthelesse soe zealously affected wee were to your honors interest that some of us fired 3 Gun's against the French, at which Governor Sergeant was soe displeased that hee threatened to punish us for it that were Concerned in it, this Caused much dissatisfaccion amongst us (tho noe mutiny as hee hath Declar'd.) for it was observed that after that Factory was beseiged all animosityes Ceased amongst us and Wee united firmely against the Enemy, and remained every man in his respective quarter's untill such tyme as the Governor Comanded us to Surrendr. by which it may appeare to your honors how Willing wee were to maintaine your rights, and Mr. Sergeant was pleased to say that wee behaved our Selves like men and

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[288] *L.O. 1680-1687*, 317.

[289] *L.O. 1680-1687*, 321-324. This is also how John Oldmixon portrayed the siege of Albany, although his source is unclear. According to Oldmixon, once the Englishmen had noticed the French presence, "part of the Company's Servants declar'd, they would not venture their Lives unless they might be assur'd of Pay." Two representatives of this group, labourer John Pearson ("Parsons") and John Garret (who is not listed among those captured in the account books), relayed their resolution to Sergeant, who responded by making promises and giving them clothes "and other Necessaries" until they returned to duty. "But in a Day or two they mutiny'd again, and *Elias Turner* the Gunner, possess'd the People with an Apprehension, that it was impossible to hold out the Place." Turner asked Sergeant's permission to surrender himself to the French, but Sergeant threatened to shoot him and replaced him as gunner with Frederick Johnson. Sergeant then sent labourer Francis Cave and sawyer John Meacham to reconnoitre the French positions, but their report "so disheartened the People" that they demanded that Sergeant surrender immediately. Tyrrell, 403. John Garret and Elias Turner were not listed in the London account books among those captured by the French that year; neither is Frederick Johnson (although Sergeant also mentioned him) but a John Johnson (labourer) is.

thanked us for it and told us hee would report the same to your honors.[290]

These men, whom Oldmixon described as "the most considerable among" Albany's hands and who described themselves as "your Honors humble Servants," were among the 22 men left by the French to winter in the Albany hinterland[291] while Sergeant and the rest of the men (including most or all of the officers) wintered more comfortably at either Port Nelson or New Severn. As evidence of Sergeant's maliciousness, Coles and his companions observed that "hee alledges nothing against the men that were at Albany River with us, and Came home with him, but onely reflects upon us whoe hee Supposed Dead among the French."[292] Much was at stake: the Committee's legal counsel argued that Sergeant's wages (£200 per annum since 1683) were forfeit if it could be proven that he had been at fault "either by neglect or cowardize." The Company brought legal action against Sergeant in the Court of King's Bench for £20,000 in 1688, but the case was

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[290]Edward Coles et al (location unspecified) to HBC (London), n.d. [1688], *L.O. 1680-1687*, 331-332. See also "John Mechen, Edward Coles, Hugh Mitchell, and Wm. Folder, make Oath...", 4 February 1687, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 332-333.

[291]Tyrrell, 403. Twelve men opted to spend the winter with Lowland Cree families and four of them appear to have died before spring, while ten men (apparently including Coles et al) stayed in the vicinity of Albany and eked out a very meager existence for themselves. In the spring, they were all taken as prisoners to Canada and then to France, from whence they made their way back to England as best they could. See Edward Coles et al (location unspecified) to HBC (London), 17 January 1688, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 324-327.

[292]Edward Coles et al (location unspecified) to HBC (London), n.d. [1688], *L.O. 1680-1687*, 331. It is unclear whether their phrase "Dead among the French" meant dead at French hands, dead in the wilderness (due to French neglect), or dead in a French prison. Surgeon Edward Evans (whom Sergeant had also accused of mutiny) had died in Hudson Bay sometime during the hard winter of 1686/87: his effects were auctioned before the mast for £6.8.10 in April 1687. A. 15/3, fo. 99. Phillip Scovell and Frederick Johnson may also have died that winter or subsequently (in Canada or in France), as they did not respond to Sergeant's charges and do not appear in later Company records; John Garret and Elias Turner, mentioned by Oldmixon but not by HBC account books, may have suffered a similar fate.

settled out of court and Sergeant received his full wages up until his capture.[293]

Men probably did not expect to be battling the French in so remote a theatre as Hudson Bay,[294] but avoiding battle may have been a motive for some to enter the Company's employ.[295] Although on a few occasions during this period HBC servants proved themselves willing to take up arms to defend themselves and their factories, their lack of military training and isolation from reinforcements put them at a serious disadvantage against French attackers. To bolster their fortitude in such a vulnerable situation, the Committee tried to appeal to their sense of duty both as servants defending their master's property and interests, and as Englishmen resisting foreign aggression. In the end, however, the Company's position in Hudson Bay would be secured only by the Treaty of Utrecht and not by servants' "extorordinary Service."

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[293]*L.O. 1680-1687*, 390-391. The Company's dispute with Sergeant stands out as almost unique in HBC history. This is in stark contrast to the HBC's trading contemporaries, particularly the Royal African and East India companies, whose relations with their overseas factors and merchants were characterized by an almost continuous series of suits and prosecutions. See Chaudhuri, 18, 74; Davies, *RAC*, 255-256; Henige, 29, 33-35, 37, 39-40, 43n34. Such frequent legal confrontation prompted Thomas Phipps Sr to remark to his son, James, in Africa in 1712, "Companies are always ungrateful": Henige, 27.

[294]In 1692, some HBC sailors refused to board their ships at Gravesend, demanding greater compensation for "Lying by in obscurity for the service of the Company." Rich, *History*, I, 280-21, 287, 334. In the 1790s, the minister at Orphir (on Mainland island in Orkney) expressed the same sentiment, condemning the men of his parish who sailed for Hudson Bay during war with France: "Fy be on the man, who would rather be the slave of a Company of private merchants than...bravely fight for his King & country, our religion, our liberties & our laws." James A. Troup, "Orphir 1821: Attractions of Hudson's Bay Company Service," in Ian MacLaren, Michael Payne, & Heather Rollason (eds.), *Papers of the 1994 Rupert's Land Colloquium* (Winnipeg: Centre for Rupert's Land Studies, 1997), 53.

[295]In 1691, the Committee instructed George Geyer to convince John Jones (commander of the *Albemarle*) to serve one more year by reminding Jones that "he will not find soe quiet & profitable Imployments here in England." HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 123.

Recruitment in the Shadow of War

Against a backdrop of uncertainty, highlighted by brief moments of optimism and long periods of war, the HBC's London Committee sought to find the proper balance in its personnel. Too many men would be too expensive but too few men would be vulnerable; bold men might take foolish risks while timid men might not offer the enemy any resistance at all.[296] Each year brought fresh dangers, but also more experience with which to address these obstacles. Although the Committee continued to find its servants wherever it could, by the time of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 it had figured out what was possible and what was desirable in its choices of personnel.

Recruiters - whether officially connected with the Company or not – become visible in the records because of the premiums they were paid for the men they procured. In 1696, the Committee promised Christopher Spencer, a gunner who served the Company on land and at sea from 1688 until his capture by the French at Port Nelson in 1694, was back in England in 1696; the Committee re-engaged him for three years if his services were required, and "he being now goeing into Whales" they promised him 20s

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[296]In 1686, the Committee criticized their Governor at Port Nelson, John Abraham, declaring that "we hope there may come a time of Retaliation [against the French], when our affaires shall be in the hands & managery of honester or at least Wiser men [than Abraham]. We have therefore tooke speciall care this yeare to put our concernes every where into the hands of the most prudent & discreet persons that we can pitch upon & whose courage as well as fidelity we have good reason to confide in." HBC (London) to John Bridgar (Moose), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 176-177. In 1689, the Committee urged John Marsh at Albany to set an example for his men by showing "Courage, and a noble indignation" towards the French "when a just occasion offers but not needlessly [to] expose your Selfe and our Factory, for prudence is as necessary and as Laudable as Courage." HBC (London) to John Marsh & Council (Albany), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 53-54.

The Royal African Company faced a similar but more serious problem around this time, when its trade was declining significantly. It could not afford to maintain large garrisons in its African factories, but neither could it give them up: the strategic value of RAC forts for the defence of English interests against the French was the RAC's best hope for a favourable settlement of the trade when peace came. Davies, *RAC*, 253.

for every servant he could recruit there.[297] In 1705, Captain Michael Grimington put the Committee in touch with a crimp who was ready to procure servants at the rate of £1 per man.[298] None of these examples, however, offer any more details on recruitment than the 1684 letter to Morgan Lodge.

There is no indication that the early HBC employed recruiters in the same way as they did in Stromness and other places in the nineteenth century.[299] Rather, these occasional improvised searches for likely young men in various parts of Britain supplemented the largely informal approach to recruitment evident in the 1670s. The Committee took the process seriously enough to make some financial investment in it, but no recruitment policy was apparent. The Committee contemplated a regular approach to apprenticeship in 1689, when it apprenticed four boys from Christ's Hospital in London and told George Geyer that "wee have thoughts yearely or every other yeare to take the like or a greater number from the said Hospital";[300] but only six boys were

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[297]A. 1/18, fo. 15d. Spencer does not appear to have found anyone in Wales, as no payments are recorded to him that spring. His services as a gunner were not required that year and he did not return to Hudson Bay until 1698, serving at Albany and on the *Hudson's Bay* until 1706. In 1693, a Captain Bennet "promised to procure servants for ye Compa[ny] at Reasonable wages"; the Committee asked him "to Raise 30 or 40 men" (whether landsmen or seamen was not specified) and promised to reward him, but did not mention a particular amount. Captain Bennet does not appear to have successfully recruited anyone for the HBC. See A. 1/15, fos. 9-10d. In the same year, the Committee reimbursed Captain Phillip Parsons (newly engaged as Deputy Governor of Port Nelson) £7.0.6 for "what he shall Lay out in procureing of men," and a Colonel Thomas Eaden received £39.12.0 "for ye Raising of 12 men for Comp[an]y service." A. 1/15, fos. 17d, 21, 22. Rich, *History*, I, 336, 370, mentioned that in 1698 the Committee paid an agent £10 for recruiting men. In none of these examples is a distinction made between landsmen and seamen.

[298]Rich, *History*, I, 381. Crimps were agents who traded in recruits for the armed forces or merchant vessels: Rediker, 81, called them "crucial to the maritime labor market."

[299]The first regular recruiting agent employed by the HBC in Stromness was merchant David Geddes in 1791: Fenton, 596. For a discussion of HBC recruiting agents, see Burley, 80-88.

[300]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-96*, 79.

apprenticed to the Company between 1690 and 1713, and none of them can be shown to have come from the Blue Coat or any other charity school.[301] The actual procedures involved in recruiting apprentices remain opaque: for instance, the Company's Deputy Governor Captain John Nicholson was involved in the 1705 indenture of Joseph Adams, a five-year-old pauper from Woodford (Essex), but his specific connection with the family or the parish is unclear.[302]

Englishmen remained prominent in the labour force, and were particularly well-represented among the ranks of apprentices. However, northern Britain became a visible source of manpower in the early eighteenth century, as Orcadian names begin to appear in the Company's account books. Although some Orkneymen probably served on HBC or chartered ships in the late seventeenth century, the first known to have been employed on land service was Adam Isbister, a sailor on the *Pery* frigate who wintered at Eastmain in 1699/1700 with Captain Henry Baley, and who in 1701 agreed (along with his crewmates Samuel Sanders and Simon Simpson) to winter there again as part of the crew of the *Knight* sloop.[303] Though primarily a sailor on the supply ships, Isbister served at Albany and Eastmain on several occasions between 1699 and 1714. He was presumably an

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[301]The Company's limited labour needs during that period probably tempered its enthusiasm for apprentices. As well, the failure of all but one of the 1689 apprentices to complete their indentures may have suggested that Blue Coat boys were not necessarily better choices as apprentices: unfortunately, the surviving records give very few details about the experiences of those four boys.

[302]*Letters*, 33n. Nicholson (on the Company's behalf) may have been responding to an advertisement, perhaps placed in a London newspaper by the Woodford overseers of the poor seeking masters for their pauper children: see Lane, 10, 13.

[303]For his service at Eastmain in 1699/1700, see B. 3/d/11, fo. 14d. For his service there in 1701/02, see "A Coppy of a Counsel Hold at Albany Fort Sepbr ye 1st 1701," A. 11/2, fo. 1. Nicks, 123-124, cited Isbister as the first Orkneyman to winter in Hudson Bay, but was unaware that he had wintered at Eastmain in 1699/1700. Also see Fenton, 596.

acceptable servant, as in 1702 the Company ship was ordered to engage 10 or 12 stout young men in the Orkneys.[304] In 1714, eight of the 44 men at Albany had Orcadian names, and all eight of them went home that year: Gunn, Flatt, Isbister (three men shared this name), Groundwater, Lisk, and Slater.[305]

Lusty and able young men were difficult to get for Bayside service at any price in wartime Britain, prompting the Committee to cast its recruiting net as widely as possible. In 1712, Anthony Beale at Albany received orders to "Entertain two young Indians" (probably Cree to act as interpreters).[306] In the 1680s, the Committee discussed a plan for sending a Russian to direct the proposed isinglass mining operation at Slude River on the Eastmain,[307] and between 1701 and 1712 the Saxon miner Gottlieb Augustus Lichtenberger was in charge of that venture.[308]

A major obstacle to recruitment was competition from the armed forces, particularly the Royal Navy. E.E. Rich observed, "[p]ress-gangs and prize-money between them made service in the Navy both difficult to evade and more attractive than

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[304]Rich, *History*, I, 377. Isbister was the first of at least fourteen Isbisters who served the Company between 1700 and 1770, most of them sailors or mariners. I know of no attempts to determine whether some (or even all) of them were related. Heather Rollason Driscoll presumably had the 1702 order in mind when she claimed 1702 as the beginning of HBC recruitment in the Orkneys; it may also account for Ann Carlos and Stephen Nicholas' claim that after 1700 Orkney "quickly became the sole source of labour." Rollason Driscoll, 85; Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 861.

[305]B. 3/d/21, fos. 55d-58; Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1714, A. 11/2, fos. 23d-24.

[306]Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 20d. Also see Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1714, A. 11/2, fo. 22d.

[307]Rich, *History*, I, 181.

[308]Francis & Morantz, 35; also Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 August 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 19.

in peacetime. Recruitment for the Company was bound to suffer, and both officers and men declined in quality."[309] Marcus Rediker disputed the attractiveness of wartime naval service, arguing that "low pay and mean working conditions in the king's service made seamen none too willing to serve" in the Royal Navy.[310] However, the fact that the Company was accepting pauper children as apprentices (in particular, Essex pauper boys Joseph Adams in 1705 and John Henson in 1708) suggests that Hudson Bay was a still less attractive destination: paupers were usually apprenticed to undesirable or unprofitable trades and professions.[311]

Regardless of how attractive naval service was, it was certainly difficult to avoid. Even when sufficient numbers signed on with the Company, some of them might not make it to the Bay: in 1691, the list of new servants sent to George Geyer at Port Nelson was accompanied by the report, "wee wish they had been more, but we have spared noe Cost nor paines to get them & after all our trouble some we have lost pressed away after they have entred into Contract with us, soe difficult it is in these times to gett them or keep them."[312] The Committee attempted to secure protection from press gangs – including petitioning that in view of the importance of its trade the Company itself might

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[309]Rich, *History*, I, 542. Van Kirk, 12, made much the same point in regard to labour shortages during the wars of the late eighteenth century. Also see Francis & Morantz, 90.

[310]Rediker, 31.

[311]Joseph Adams was a "pensioner" in Woodford (Essex) before being apprenticed to the Company in 1705 at the age of five: Brown, 25; *Letters*, 33n. John Henson (or Hinson) was born in a barn in the same parish ca. 1699 and apprenticed to the Company by the Woodford churchwardens in 1708: Brown, 25. For the restriction of pauper apprenticeships, see Lane, 83, 88-89; Kussmaul, 166-167; Pelling, 35-36.

[312]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 123.

be granted powers of impressment – with limited success. Sometimes, the time and effort involved in procuring convoys for their ships and protection for their sailors interfered with other necessary preparations: in 1692, when James Knight's expedition to re-establish HBC trade in James Bay absorbed all available recruits, the Committee explained to George Geyer at Port Nelson that "this Expedition [to James Bay] will require many Hands, & we have been hinderd by perpetuall daily attendance here in getting Protections for our Shipps & Seamen from procuring soe many Land men as otherwise we should have done."[313] Given the HBC's limited personnel needs during this period, their difficulty finding sufficient recruits is a significant example of how much of the available labour supply was absorbed by the military and related services while England was at war.

Marcus Rediker's observation that whether England (and its colonies) were at war "was the single most powerful determinant of the seaman's life in the early modern era,"[314] can be applied to almost anyone working in long-distance trade.

> Wartime offered the seaman substantially higher wages, prize money, greater choice of destination and captain, and looser, less violent discipline. But it also created grave perils that threatened at any moment to annihilate the benefits ....Seamen felt a deep ambivalence about the gambles of wartime.[315]

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[313]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 141. In 1696, the Committee assured James Knight that "wee have at greate charg[e]s endeavored to furnish you...with able hands" for Albany: HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 30 May 1696, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 273.

[314]Rediker, 32.

[315]Rediker, 32.

For some men, service in Hudson Bay could have been a way of avoiding at least some of those perils and keeping themselves out of reach of press gangs, while reaping at least some of those benefits in the form of higher wages (though not of looser discipline).[316]

Wartime conditions drove up wages at home and abroad. In 1689, for instance, the Committee observed that "the charge of Seamen, is neare double wt. it used to be."[317] In 1717, four years after the Treaty of Utrecht, Thomas McCleish Jr at Albany was still waiting for wages and the labour supply to return to normal levels: he asked the Committee for an armourer and a cooper for the following year, "[b]y which time wages may be fallen: and Men Plenty."[318] The economic pressures of wartime also exacerbated the impact of subsistence crises in Britain, as in 1693 when "unseasonable weather" hampered the sowing of summer corn (wheat), threatened "a dearth in Europe," and

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[316]Baker, 46, argued, "The need for strict discipline during the English wars with France in the 1690s created much more austere forts than appeared after the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713." He compared wartime HBC discipline to military discipline (47-48) and distinguished between trials conducted by James Knight during wartime, in which he proceeded "along court-martial procedural lines," and one conducted by Knight after the peace of Utrecht, in which he clearly tried to portray his proceedings "as in accord with common law principles." (60) However, Baker (59) stressed that the social order of HBC posts, "despite its military cloak during the war with France before the Treaty of Utrecht, remained fundamentally a social order modelled after the English household."

[317]HBC (London) to John Marsh & Council (Albany), 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 54. For examples of factors complaining about exorbitant wages, see "A Coppy of a Counsel Hold at Albany Fort Sepbr ye 1st 1701," A. 11/2, fos. 1-1d; John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fos. 3-3d; "A Councell Call'd [at Albany] this 11th of Sepr 1705," A. 11/2, fo. 9; "A Councell Called the 20th of July 1706," A. 11/2, fo. 12; Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 July 1706, A. 11/2, fo. 15.

[318]Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 20 August 1717, A. 11/2, fo. 37. In 1705, mariner George Lisk was earning £20 after only three years of service. He went home (probably to Orkney) in 1714 and re-engaged the following year, but his wages in his second period of Company service never exceeded £14. See "A Councell Call'd this 11th of Sepr 1705" (Albany), A. 11/2, fo. 9; Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1714, A. 11/2, fo. 23d-24; Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 39d.

doubled the price of "all manner of provisions."[319]

War also increased the already considerable risks involved in the North Atlantic trade. In 1690, the Committee explained to George Geyer at Port Nelson that the sloop he had requested had not been sent because "in these times of warr, men are not to be gotten almost at any Rates; who will adventure in soe small a vessell, which by woefull experience wee find to be too easy prey to an enemie"[320] The combination of higher wages, reluctant recruits, and the higher cost of trading goods and provisions all hampered the Committee's ability to staff its overseas factories precisely when it was most important not to leave those posts undermanned and vulnerable.[321]

Bayside officers in the 1690s drew a clear distinction between those suitable for the service in such times and those unsuitable for it.[322] Responding to complaints from James Knight at Albany, the Committee expressed its hope that the 1693 recruits "might

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[319]HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 203-204. Due in part to the climatic conditions of the Little Ice Age, the 1690s were a harsh decade for much of Britain. In Orkney (which was not as badly hit as parts of Scotland) the harvests of 1693-95 were extremely poor and in the worst year (1696) "the harvest was said to have yielded not one twentieth of the normal crop." Hundreds of people died in the resulting famine and much land went out of cultivation. Thomson, *Orkney*, 186.

[320]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 97. The Committee was referring to the capture of their new frigate, the *Northwest Fox* (Capt. John Ford), by the French in 1689: see *L.O. 1688-1696*, 16n. In general, men contemplating an Atlantic crossing may have been more concerned about privateers than warships: French privateers were plundering places in Orkney and Shetland in the 1690s. Thomson, *Orkney*, 186.

[321]See, for example, the complaint in HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 17 June 1693: "First that the warr in Europe makes every thing deare both for trading goods & provisions Next the Warr occasions us to come with greater ships & three times the number of men" (*L.O. 1688-1696*, 205). Also see HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688: "Wee are afraid least New Severne should bee too Slenderly manned or ill fortifyed" (*L.O. 1688-1696*, 16).

[322]This distinction appears to be new at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but almost no inward correspondence from the late seventeenth century has survived for comparison.

in some measure attone for those that went with you [in 1692]," and described the 1694 recruits as "one & twenty stout able fellows wch. wee hope with a Little of your management & discipline will prove very serviceable hands."[323] From Albany, John Fullartine chastised the Committee in 1703 for sending him "poor, Sorry, helpless Souls & no ways fitting for the Country at this juncture," and in 1705 he described the few recruits he received as "for the most part very helpless"; Anthony Beale expressed similar concerns in 1712.[324] Issues of suitability appeared less clearly defined in the minds of the Committee members, who were generally focusing on obtaining a sufficient number of men, than in the minds of Bayside factors, who clearly believed that recruits acceptable for peacetime service were not necessarily good enough "for the Country at this juncture."

The Committee and their factors wanted to strengthen their trading posts as much as possible during peace as well as war. Not only was piracy or privateering a constant threat on the open sea,[325] but peace with France did not necessarily preclude conflict with New France in Hudson Bay: Canadians captured Port Nelson in 1683 and Albany in 1688 during periods of official peace between England and France. Furthermore,

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[323]HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 30 May 1694, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 230; the same letter later referred to these young men as "stout lusty hands" (232). Knight apparently approved of the 1694 recruits: see HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 30 May 1696, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 273.

[324]A. 11/2, fos. 3-3d, John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703; A. 11/2, fo. 9, "A Councell Call'd this 11th of Sepr 1705"; A. 11/2, fo. 21, Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1712.

[325]In May 1681, the Committee sought a Royal Navy convoy for the Company's supply ships: England was not at war, but pirates from the Mediterranean were a palpable threat. *Minutes, First Part*, 80n, 120, 120n.

correspondence between London and Hudson Bay was annual at best, so war could break out between England and France without the men in the Bay learning about it until the Committee's next letter – or until French warships appeared on the horizon.[326] The Company wanted to keep expenses as low as possible, but the defence of the factories was not to be compromised. In 1690, the Committee wrote to Geyer and his council at Port Nelson, "Wee would have you spare for noe Cost & paines to secure your selves & to make our Forts strong against all opposition whatsoever, for that end in this dangerous Juncture Wee Cannot Judg that you can bee with Lesse then fifty good hands in your Factory, & Twenty at Least or five & Twenty at New Severne."[327]

Shortfalls in recruitment put pressure on the Bayside factors to procure men from the supply ships' crews and/or to convince landsmen whose contracts were expiring to re-engage. A postscript to the Committee's 1690 letter informed Geyer:

> for the more peaceable & orderly Government of our Factories in this time of Publick troubles, our express order is, that none shall Remove their posts or station wherein they are dureing this warr (unless such whose times are expired, & Cannot be prevailed upon to stay Longer or for the better service of the Compa. are Removed by the Governor) but acquiesce Cheerfully and obediently in their Respective places & Imployments...for wee Cannot but thinke emulation Ambition & discontent must bee a great

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[326]In 1687, not yet aware that the French had made themselves masters of James Bay, the Committee recalled Henry Sergeant ("with the whole parcell of Women appertaineing to him") from Albany, John Bridgar from Moose, and Pierre Esprit Radisson from Port Nelson, "but such other of our men as you may have Occasion for, you must deteyne them another yeare the uncertainety of our affaires at present for want of advices from the Bottome of the Bay putting us to a Non plus how to Supply their places" HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 3 June 1687, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 235.

[327]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 100. Port Nelson had between fifty and sixty men at this time (*L.O. 1688-1696*, xvii), but New Severn probably had no more than a dozen men. The Committee felt that John Ford and Thomas Walsh were the only men "of Sence or reason" at New Severn and worried about the post's "Naked Condicion" should they both go to Port Nelson at shiptime: HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 16.

> prejudice to our affaires & to the Common Benefitt of the Company, at this Juncture[328]

Only three new men came to Hudson Bay that year – labourers Anthony Henchman and Philip Buffery, and tailor George Newton – and the Committee hoped that "there will be found soe many supernumerary men out of our shipps [crews] to be left in the Countrey & yet our shipps to Returne strong enough."[329]

The following year brought more recruits, but Geyer was again authorised to engage seamen for land service if he thought it necessary. The Committee had even sent Captain Edgcombe's ship with six or seven extra seamen, whom "wee were unwilling to discharge...by reason severall of them or some of the others wee believe will be willing to stay in the Country with you."[330] All of the 1692 recruits for land service were attached to James Knight's James Bay expedition and the Committee again instructed Geyer not to allow any servants to come home, "though wee desire you to recommend it to them in milde tearmes...& that for such whose times are Expired we shall take it kindly of them who stay chearfully & willingly in Our Service & not faile to remember them: In the meane time wee require them to be contented with such wages as you or Governour Knight shall thinke reasonable to give them.[331]

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[328]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 102-103.

[329]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L. O. 1688-1696*, 100, 103.

[330]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 119-120, 125.

[331]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council, Port Nelson, 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 141-42. By the following year, the Committee apparently felt that circumstances had improved enough to instruct Geyer not to allow seamen to engage as landsmen without the Committee's approval, on the

In 1701 and 1705, John Fullartine complained about too few men being sent out for service at Albany and the Eastmain.[332] Two of the seven new men in 1701 (Chris Jackson and Edward Williams) were former servants re-engaging, but one (Robert Perkins) went home early in 1703 because "Sickness & indisposition has for ye most part of ye time since he has been here, rendred him a very useless & helpless hand."[333] The eight new men in 1705 also included two former servants but were "for the most part very helpless."[334] In 1703, though sympathising with the Committee on the difficulties of getting recruits, he described the eleven men he had been sent as "poor, Sorey, helpless fouls [*i.e.* fools], and no ways fitting for the Countrey at this juncture," although he noted

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grounds of the exorbitantly high wages such fellows demanded: HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council, York, 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 191.

[332]"A Coppy of a Counsel Hold at Albany Fort Sepbr ye 1st 1701," A. 11/2, fo. 1; "A Councell Call'd this 11th of Sepbr 1705" (Albany), A. 11/2, fo. 9

[333]The new hands arriving at Albany in 1701 were George Becking (who went home in 1706, but was back at Albany in 1714-19), Tobias Dolbey (who also went home in 1706, but was back at Albany in 1709-14), surgeon Belthasar Emrich (who went home in 1706 and did not return to the Bay), Chris Jackson (who had previously served the Company in 1693-96 and 1698-1700, and went on to serve 1701-08 and 1711-14), miner Gottlieb Augustus Lichtenagger (who served at Albany and the Eastmain until his death in 1712), Robert Perkins (who was sent home early), and Edward Williams (who had served at Albany at least since 1698, went home in 1700, came back in 1701 and remained until 1712). This Edward Williams was identified as a gardener to distinguish him from Edward Williams the grocer, who served at Albany around the same time. For Perkins' dismissal by mutual consent, see John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 6.

[334]"A Councell Call'd this 11th of Sepbr 1705" (Albany), A. 11/2, fo. 9. The new hands that year were Joseph Adams (a pauper apprentice who later commanded Albany); Roger Howard, Paul Johnson, Andrew Purcell, and smith Robert Randall (all of whom went home in 1708); Stephen Pitt (who had entered the service in 1693, had gone home early in 1694, and who now served as Albany's accountant until he went home in 1708); carpenter Alexander Thoyts (who had served the Company previously in 1689-93, and who went on to serve 1705-12 and from 1720 until his death at Albany in 1729); and mariner James Toppey (who went home in 1712, and may have been at Port Nelson in 1696/97).

one or two (unnamed) exceptions.[335] In all three years, Fullartine felt compelled to offer several old hands exorbitant wages to renew their contracts, and in 1701 and 1705 he also engaged a few men from the crews of the *Pery* and the *Hudson's Bay* respectively.[336]

In 1703, Fullartine engaged the *Hudson's Bay*'s gunner, Christopher Spencer, for land service at Albany, even though Spencer demanded the same monthly wages as he had on board ship (which would have amounted to £51 a year). Fullartine could only negotiate him down to £48 a year in wages plus "40s to be given him in Brandy or some other thing here in ye Country, which is very extravigant wages, but was forced to comply with it by reason there was no man in ye Country yt could officiate in that poste & ye Fort could not be without a Gunner."[337] When Spencer decided to go home in 1705, Fullartine was obliged to engage gunner Peter Farredon off the *Hudson's Bay* at £48 to replace him. However, the *Hudson's Bay* was forced to winter in Hudson Bay that year, so Spencer could not go home until the following summer: during the winter of 1705/6 Albany

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[335]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fos. 3-3d. Rich, *History*, I, 378, appeared to misdate the latter comment as 1702: he probably meant that these men were sent out in 1702, although they had to winter at Gilpin's Island and did not arrive at Albany until 1703 (see *Letters*, 335). The most likely of these eleven men to have been the exceptions Fullartine had in mind were mariner Ambrose Yates (who had previously been with the Company in 1694-1700, went on to serve 1702-06, and was part of the Eastmain crew in 1717), smith Thomas Routen (who served 1702-08 and again 1711-19), and/or mariner George Lisk (who served until 1720).

[336]In 1701 Fullartine persuaded seven old hands (including three former apprentices and three future factors) to stay on and engaged four men and a boy from the *Pery*; in 1703 he retained one old hand and engaged no one from the ship; in 1705 he retained 14 old hands (including Dolbey and Lichtenagger, who had been green hands in 1701) and engaged four men from the *Hudson's Bay* (including Thomas Archard, who had served the Company on land in 1678-85, 1691-92, 1699-1700). The apparently amicable relations Captain Michael Grimington (who commanded the *Pery* and the *Hudson's Bay* in turn) had with Fullartine in the winter of 1702/3 and with Fullartine's successor Anthony Beale in the winter of 1705/6 contrast markedly with the confrontations between John Nixon and Captain Nehemiah Walker in similar circumstances twenty years earlier.

[337]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 5d.

supported two gunners at very high wages instead of just one.[338]

Fullartine's successor, Anthony Beale, reported that the recruits of 1710 were simple fools (though he felt they could be taught). No men could be recruited in 1711, and Beale described those sent out in 1712 as "verry helpless but thay are growing."[339] The first clearly positive comment on recruits did not come until after the Treaty of Utrecht; in 1719, Thomas McCliesh Jr praised the new hands at Albany as "lusty able young men And hope will answer expectation."[340] While Britain was at war, however, the Company took what men it could find.

Retention of Personnel

The limited staffing requirements between 1686 and 1714 – a period during which the Company usually controlled only one factory – neither required large-scale recruitment in specific areas nor allowed any significant injection of non-Londoners into the labour force. In fact, during the tense and tenuous years in which the HBC and the *Compagnie du Nord* shared the Bay, the English company was more concerned with retaining old personnel than with recruiting new men, despite the higher wages they commanded. Given the difficulties and expenses of wartime recruiting, it seemed more expedient to re-engage the devils they knew.

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[338]"A Councell Call'd this 11th of Sepr 1705," A/ 11/2, fo. 9. Fullartine also engaged James Toppey, Thomas Archard, and John Throughgood from the *Hudsons Bay* that year. Spencer spent the winter of 1705/06 at Eastmain: B. 3/d/15, fo. 7.

[339]Rich, *History*, I, 389-90; Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 21.

[340]Thomas McCliesh (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 39d.

Men with some experience of Hudson Bay were valuable assets, particularly during times of war when danger always seemed to lurk just beyond the horizon. The French attacks interrupted many men's contracts, and most who were carried away from Hudson Bay as prisoners of war chose not to return (some never even made it back to Britain). In 1691, the Committee observed that "wee have need of an encrease of Faithfull & Experienced Servants, & of Double assistance in this hazardous Juncture."[341] Anthony Beale in 1712 described the men who had chosen to stay in the Bay as "persons which are very Serviceable in your Countrey and Persons whom I Could not well be without."[342]

Perhaps some of the earlier recruits of whom Beale and Fullartine had disapproved matured into useful hands; or perhaps the factors' poor opinion of new recruits raised their estimation of the men whose times were out. Although experienced landsmen could take advantage of recruitment problems to obtain significant wage increases – John Fullartine complained in 1703 that "Yor: old Servants...knowing that ye Country is at Such a pinch, stand upon very high & unreasonable tearms & the worst of them blow'd att 20 lb a year"[343] – they were still cheaper than seamen engaged for land duty. The latter never stayed in the Bay at less than their sea wages, which were usually considerably higher than a labourer's land wages. In 1693, the Committee instructed Geyer not to "suffeour Seamen to chang births with any land men without our Leave;

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[341]HBC (London) to Thomas Walsh (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 130. The Committee were asking Walsh to help them persuade George Geyer to stay on as Governor of Port Nelson.

[342]Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 August 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 19.

[343]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fos. 3-3d.

they taking the advantage to stay there upon most Intollerable high Wages and doe noe more service then those that have a 3d soe much."[344]

Likewise, the Committee valued experienced factors in times of trouble. In 1691, it urged George Geyer to stay on at Port Nelson: "in a time of Warre & distraction Wee have Cause to feare what Effects an Innovation & Change of Government may have amongst our Owne Servants, whilst a continuance of the same in such a Juncture is allwaies most safe & prudent."[345] Continuity in 'Government' was one way that officers could set a good example for the common men: in 1693, the Committee declared that French competition could be undermined "by nothing more then giveing our peple due Encoragement & shewing good Example to them by theire superiours & Comanders."[346] Unfortunately, John Fullartine felt pressured to remain longer than he wanted. In 1702 and 1703, he was "Sadly tortur'd with ye Gravel and Stone in my Kidneys," and would have gone home that year "but [for] the fear of some unhandsome Reflections which might have past upon me if I had left ye Country at this juncture."[347] However, he did not indicate whose "unhandsome Reflections" he feared.

Retaining personnel necessitated determining who was worth keeping and coming to an agreement on wages, but neither of these processes was simple. The Committee in London had only the annual correspondence and word of mouth on which to evaluate

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[344]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 191.

[345]HBC (London) to George Geyer (Port Nelson) (private), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 127.

[346]HBC (London) to Stephen Sinclair (Albany), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 211.

[347]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 6.

personnel in the Bay. Incomplete information sometimes prompted the Committee to delegate to Bayside factors the authority to negotiate wages with men seeking to re-engage. In 1691, for instance, the Committee gave the Council at Port Nelson permission to negotiate a new contract with John Bennett: "because you can best Judge what hee is most capable of & the oppertunities that there will be to preferre him, Wee doe Leave it to you to dispose of him to his Content in our Service & to make such new agreement with him as you shall thinke reasonable or otherwise to referre himselfe to Our Favour & Pleasure if he thinks fitt."[348]

Non-monetary issues were important in convincing old hands to remain in the country. John Fullartine's experience in 1703 illustrated social historian Ann Kussmaul's contention that there was "no way better calculated to encourage servants to renew their contracts than to feed them well."[349] Fullartine informed the Committee that shortage of provisions was "the only thing that Yor: Servants complain of & not a man of them but would abate 4 or 5 lbs of their wages, if they were Sure of haveing a Reasonable quantity of good Flower." That year he "gott Some [men] to condescend to tarry wth: great difficulty, but was forc'd at ye Same time to prommiss them 5 lb of Flower or Meal each man a week without wch: not one of them would have tarried this year & how I shall be able to perform my prommiss God knows for I have it not in the Country for 40 men wch: is ye number I desire to keep if I can possibly procure so many." Fullartine added that the continual disappointments in the cargoes sent out "makes all men Seik of Yor:

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[348]HBC to Geyer & Council (Pt Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 120.

[349]Kussmaul, 40.

Country."[350]

Anthony Beale echoed these sentiments in 1706 and observed that "the men in the Countrey whose times was out not one would stay in a long time by reason there is no sertainty of Ships comeing." No ships had been sent to Albany in 1700, 1703 or 1704, and the 1702 and 1705 ships were forced to winter in the Bay; Beale added that he himself would come home if the Company could not guarantee regular shipments, decent cargoes, a sloopmaster, and sufficient "men to defend the Factory."[351] Sufficient personnel was also an issue in 1712, after a winter of sickness in which Albany lost smith and gunner Andrew Johnson, miner Gottlieb Augustus Lichtenberger, labourer John Spence, and surgeons David Bell and John Read: Beale urgently requested a new surgeon, observing that it was "a Great Disincurigsment to you[r] Servants In Case of any misfortune for Such a man to be Wanting here."[352]

Sometimes, men based their decisions for staying or going home on personal considerations over which neither the Committee nor the factors had control. In 1703,

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[350]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fos. 3d, 4. That year Fullartine also added payment in kind to money wages to persuade gunner Christopher Spencer to winter in Hudson Bay (£48 plus £2 "in Brandy or some other thing here in ye Country": see above). In 1706, the Albany Council granted Thomas Dutton and Edward Williams each £30 plus the value of £3 in goods from the warehouse: "A Councell Called [at Albany] the 20th of July 1706," A. 11/2, fo. 12.

[351]Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 July 1706, A. 11/2, fo. 14d, 15. Beale left the service in 1708 (although he re-engaged in 1711), and it may be reasonable to assume that his decision was partly prompted by the fact that no supply ship was sent to the Bay in 1707. Ships sailed to Albany in only five of the ten years 1700-09: *Letters*, 335-336.

[352]Beale also requested "a man fitting for to affisciate Divine Service," but it is unclear whether he considered the absence of such a man to be as great a discouragement as the lack of a surgeon. Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 August 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 19. The deaths of Bell, Spence, Read, and Johnson were recorded in the Albany account book: "A Mamorandum / Albany Fort, 1711/12," B. 3/d/20, fo. 85. The previous year, Albany had buried tailor and accountant James Norcutt, and landsmen James Fidler, Oliver Stricklar, and John Sharpe: for the account of the auctions of their effects, see B. 3/d/19, fos. 5-5d.

accountant Samuel Goodale's personal affairs called him home, and both Henry Kelsey and John Fullartine asked to come home the following year for the recovery of their health.[353] Sometimes, men's relationships became troublesome, and the factories could have acted as hothouses for germinating personal conflicts. Such conflicts were best handled by one or more parties finding another situation. In 1703, Fullartine reported that he could not prevail upon James Lynier "by reason of a foolish oath wch: he had taken not to stay in ye Country if Andw: Johnson tarried, & under 40 lb a year."[354]

Conclusion

Under the pressures of wartime, HBC personnel issues were both complicated and clarified. On one hand, obtaining sufficient and suitable recruits became more problematic, and the Company often faced what it saw as exorbitant demands from experienced servants. On the other hand, the Committee became somewhat more explicit about what it expected of its employees. By 1714, a basic framework of practice and

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[353]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fos. 5d, 6. Thomas McCliesh Jr wanted to come home in 1720 because he was "very Desireous of haveing the Happiness to see my wife & children." Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 40d. He may also have wanted to come home to defend himself against accusations being made against him: in the same letter, he denied engaging in private trade (fo. 40) and privately selling goods and provisions to his men (fo. 39d).

[354]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 5d. Fullartine added that he "could not prevail wth: Andw: either so was forced to comply" with Johnson. Lynier went home in 1703 but re-engaged in 1710 and served as a landsman at Albany until 1717, when he became "sore afflicted with Lameness" in February and, "haveing no hopes of his Recovery here", the Albany council granted his request to go home "for the Recovery of his health." Thomas McCleish (Albany) to HBC (London), 20 August 1717, A. 11/2, fo. 37. Andrew Johnson was a smith who entered the Company's service in 1691, was captured by the French at Port Nelson in 1694, re-engaged in 1696, left the service in 1706, re-engaged again in 1710 (he sailed to Albany with Lynier on the *Hudson's Bay* [II]) and died at Albany (where he was apparently serving as gunner) in July 1712. A. 15/4, fo. 107; A. 1/26, fo. 8d; A. 15/5, fo. 110; A. 1/29, fo. 7; A. 15/5, fo. 139; A. 1/33, fo. 113d; Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 August 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 19; Davies, *Letters*, 10n, 355.

expectation had been built, on which they could expand in the more peaceful times that followed the Treaty of Utrecht.

The Company and its servants during this period were always aware of the threat (both real and perceived) from the French. The Committee felt vulnerable, but tried to use that threat to bolster the courage and fidelity of their Bayside employees. Servants were willing to face the threat, but invocations of duty could not replace regular deliveries of supplies or ample provisions. The Committee sought recruits wherever they could, but frequently fell short of what they and their factors considered sufficient numbers or quality. This opened the door for old hands to benefit from their masters' situation, particularly by demanding higher wages. The coming of peace in 1713, however, closed that door and shifted the balance of power back towards the London Committee.

CHAPTER 4

REBUILDING, 1714-1743

Whereas most of the thirty years before the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) had been a time of warfare and tension, most of the three decades after Utrecht saw relative peace and stability. The peace agreement removed the French presence from and claim to Hudson Bay, although the HBC never succeeded in collecting the massive sum it sought in damages. The country upriver from the Bayside factories gradually became a new haven for French traders from Montreal, but security in the Bay allowed the Company to resume the carefully optimistic expansion that the French attacks had interrupted in 1686. Port Nelson was re-occupied, rebuilt, and renamed York Fort in 1714; trading posts at Churchill and Moose were re-established in 1717 and 1730 respectively; and the Company embarked on its first long-term inland experiment, at Henley House in 1743.

An increasing scale of operations required a larger and somewhat more diverse labour force, but recruitment processes remained relatively unchanged from previous years. The most conspicuous difference was a greater variety in the geographical sources of recruits, particularly the increasing number of Orkneymen. The construction of a stone fort on Churchill River (Fort Prince of Wales) after 1730 called for a large complement of men,[355] but the staff of most post-Utrecht factories and houses differed from earlier periods only in the increasing laxity of former military-style discipline. In general, the

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[355]Ironically, the fortification of Fort Prince of Wales meant that the trade had to carry a higher burden of defence costs after 1730 than it had before 1714. *Letters*, ix-x.

patterns apparent after 1714 were not innovations (although they may sometimes appear to be, due to the greater number and variety of Company documents surviving from the 1720s onward). Rather, they continued trends that had emerged in earlier decades.

Churchill River Ventures

The Company's priority after the Treaty of Utrecht was regaining and maintaining a stable trading position. This involved re-establishing earlier posts and renewing former practices like sending men inland to winter with Native groups. At York Fort in 1715, James Knight persuaded former apprentice William Stuart to travel into Dene territory with a Chipewyan known as "the Slave woman" to facilitate trade by helping make peace between the Chipewyan and the Lowland Cree, and to search for copper and gold.[356] Knight followed up his interest in the Chipewyan trade by building a new trading house at Churchill River in 1717.[357]

Later that year, Knight sent apprentice Richard Norton (then in the third year of

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[356]Stuart does not appear to have kept a journal during his travels. He must have shown the same dogged perseverance as his Lowland Cree companions in their difficult crossing of the Barren Grounds, but his scanty reports of the journey depict Thanadelthur (as she is named in other sources) as the dominant character, with him in a supporting role. For discussions of Stuart, Thanadelthur, and their journey, see Glyndwr Williams, "Stuart, William," *DCB* II, 614-616; Sylvia Van Kirk, "Thanadelthur," *The Beaver* (Spring 1974), 40-45; Patricia A. McCormack, "The Many Faces of Thanadelthur: Documents, Stories, and Images," in Jennifer S.H. Brown & Elizabeth Vibert (eds.), *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History*, 2nd ed. (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2003), 329-364. Lytwyn, 71-72, assigned the leading role to the leader of the Lowland Cree of the lower Hayes River (known in HBC documents simply as 'the Captain of the River'): although Knight chose this man to head the expedition, he has largely been overlooked or downplayed in most scholarly discussions.

[357]In June 1717, surgeon John Carruthers and William Stuart led an advance party from York to Churchill River in a shallop: Carruthers was in command but Stuart was responsible for any trading that took place. They chose a site for a fort, and in July Knight came up with the sloops *Success* (David Vaughan, master) and *Prosperous* (Michael Grimington Jr, master). Knight returned to England in 1718, leaving Churchill in the charge of his deputy, Richard Staunton. *Letters*, 64n; Kenney, 71.

his seven-year indenture) to find a group of Chipewyan traders who had already come to the mouth of the river and turned back inland before the Englishmen had arrived. Travelling with a Chipewyan man and woman, he caught up with about twelve or more traders, and they arrived back at Churchill during the winter of 1717/18 in a starving condition.[358] In 1718, Richard Staunton (whom Knight had left in charge of Churchill) sent Norton north to Seal River to keep the peace between a local Chipewyan band and a hunting party of Hayes River Lowland Cree.[359] The following year, the Committee wrote to Staunton about Norton, "whom we are informed by captain Knight has endured great hardship in travelling with the Indians, and has been very active and diligent in endeavouring to make peace amongst them, we being always desirous to encourage diligent and faithful servants, upon application of his mother in his behalf, have ordered him a gratuity of fifteen pounds."[360]

Apart from these journeys made by Stuart and Norton, expansion and exploration remained coastal until the building of Henley House in 1743. From the new post at Churchill (named Fort Prince of Wales in 1719), regular sloop voyages were made up the coast to trade with Chipewyan and Inuit groups. Northwestern Hudson Bay was also the focus of James Knight's final venture, his ill-fated search for Arctic gold which ended in

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[358]One of the Chipewyan traders was later rewarded for caring for "the Boy Norton...when he was froze." Exactly where and how far Norton travelled is unknown. In the 1740s, Captain William Coats (who, like Norton, married a daughter of long-time Bayside factor, Thomas McCliesh Jr) recorded that, having questioned Norton about his journey, "I did not find anything remained on his memory, but the danger and terrour he underwent." *Letters*, li-liv; A.M. Johnson, "Norton, Richard," *DCB* III, 489.

[359]Norton made another short inland journey in 1721, and also went on slooping expeditions up the northwest coast of Hudson Bay with Henry Kelsey in 1721 and with John Scroggs in 1722: Johnson, "Norton," 489.

[360]HBC (London) to Richard Staunton (Fort Prince of Wales), 4 June 1719, Robson, appendix, 26.

starvation and death on Marble Island in 1719. However, even service at Churchill River itself was considered more onerous than service at more southerly posts,[361] and the advance party in 1717 included four labourers (James Miller, John Wateridge, James Callant, and Nicholas Coxworthy) who had negotiated higher wages for special service at Churchill.[362]

The major construction project of Fort Prince of Wales was a prominent feature of the period after 1730. The manpower necessary for building this unique stone fort made it the primary consumer of labour: in 1733, Richard Norton's complement was 64, and he recommended that 109 men were necessary to complete the building in six or seven years.[363] In comparison, at the new Moose River house in 1734, William Bevan asked that his complement be increased from 26 to 30, observing that Moose was the factory closest to the French and therefore required a strong garrison.[364] When the men of Albany were preparing to settle Henley House in 1743, Joseph Isbister declared that he needed a total of 28 men to properly man Albany and Henley together, not including the

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[361]Knight found deer, fish, and fowl scarce, and blamed Henry Kelsey for deceiving him about the availability of provisions: Kenney, 137. Kenney, 137n, commented, "This may have been a bad season, or perhaps Knight's men had not yet learned the best localities; in later years games and fish were not so scarce at Churchill."

[362]Besides Carruthers, Stuart, and these four men, the advance party included apprentice Richard Norton, an unnamed Chipewyan man, and labourers John Richardson, George Clark, Rowland Waggoner, George Heminster, and John Butler: Kenney, 69-70, 70n.

[363]Norton recommended four masons, 33 mason's labourers, six men "To manage two clay vessels," six "To manage two draught [of] cattle," 30 "To draw stone etc," and 30 "to make proper provisions for men and cattle for the winter;" if the factory were provided with four teams of cattle, this total could be reduced to 84 men. Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1733, *Letters*, 186.

[364]William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 20 August 1734, *Letters*, 197-198.

Eastmain expeditions, but he only had 14 men and two boys.[365]

Chief Factor Richard Norton devoted much of his time and energy to the construction at Fort Prince of Wales, and increasingly discussed his personnel in the context of that project. In 1732, for instance, he sent home mason Thomas Heyling, describing him as "very feeble and sickly and of little service to us in our building," and praised labourer Magnus Sinclair as "a very serviceable man, and is very handy in our masonry work for which he's well deserving your honours' consideration."[366] Norton promised the Committee that "as I cannot but be sensible that your honours' expense must...be very great to carry on such a building I do positively assure your honours that nothing shall be wanting in me promoting the same with the greatest expedition we possible [*sic*] can and shall be sure not to suffer any person to neglect his duty therein."[367]

Some aspects of the building placed unusual demands on the workmen. During the 1735/36 season, labourer Robert Gawdie and carpenter Thomas Smith were injured while blowing up rocks with gunpowder, a task that Norton described as dangerous but necessary. These accidents "struck such a terror upon all our men that none will undertake to perform the same." Only Smith, though twice "grievously wounded," was willing to do the job, which he had done since 1734 "and has had ten gallons [of] brandy yearly for his encouragement therein. His time being out next year [1737] he is willing to

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[365]Joseph Isbister (Albany) to HBC (London), 18 August 1743, A. 11/2, fo. 116d.

[366]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1732, *Letters*, 178. Norton's appraisals of the two men may also have been influenced by their wages: Heyling engaged in 1731 at £20, while Sinclair engaged in 1730 at £6-8-10-12-14 (although he was advanced to £18 in 1735). A. 16/9, fos. 26, 31.

[367]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1733, *Letters*, 186.

continue longer in your honours' service and execute the said office in blowing up rocks as well as other duties provided your honours will please to raise his salary £5 per annum...for that dangerous undertaking."[368] This was the most extreme example of how service at Fort Prince of Wales was fundamentally different from service at other factories or houses at this time.

"A sufficient number of labouring hands":[369] Recruiting for Rebuilding

The post-Utrecht rebuilding process necessitated a slow but steady change in the focus of recruitment to accompany the pace of expansion. Costs remained a principal concern, as exemplified in 1738 when Thomas Bird at Albany allowed Charles Stewart (then earning £14 per annum) to leave the service and replaced him as tailor with labourer

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[368]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 17 August 1736, *Letters*, 213-214. Smith went home in 1738 with a £5 gratuity for his dangerous work; no man was willing to take over that job for less than £5 extra per annum, except Vincent Norton – whose apprenticeship had just expired and who had just been engaged by the Prince of Wales Council as bricklayer and mason for one year at £20 – who agreed to do it for £4 extra per annum: minutes of a Council at Fort Prince of Wales, 6 August 1738, *Letters*, 253n, 254n.

Another unusual feature of Fort Prince of Wales during the construction was the presence of cattle and horses. John Killby, described by Norton in 1737 as smith's mate and farrier but serving at labourer's wages, was "extraordinary serviceable in managing our horses when hurt or distempered, he being bred a farrier and capable of performing smith's duties," and Norton appointed him to succeed Evan Edwards as blacksmith that year; "in consideration of such service," Killby asked for "the same encouragement" that Edwards had (£18 per annum). The Committee called Killby home in 1739 but Norton sent home William Stevens instead: Killby "is so useful a man in bleeding our cattle and shoeing, and making both shoes and nails that we use for the horses, such a man can in noways be wanted." Also in 1739, Norton ignored the Committee's order to send labourer Thomas Richards to York, arguing that he was "the only man we have to cut and manage our hay and fodder for the horses and cattle and other particular services at this place that is noways practised at this time at the other fort," and kept another labourer whom the Committee had ordered sent to York and four labourers who had been called home because they were employed "slinging and hoisting up...vast large stones." Norton did send two men to York and four men home, but not the men chosen by the Committee. Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 23 August 1737, *Letters*, 238, 241; Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1739, *Letters*, 294.

[369]See Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 17 August 1738, *Letters*, 250.

John Whooley (then earning £4 per annum).[370] The Orkney Islands became an important source of labour from the 1720s onward, principally because the low wages accepted by Orkneymen helped control the costs of the Company's expansion.[371]

Even in peacetime, the Committee did not always find it easy to staff the Bayside posts. In 1724, the Committee was unable to procure a bricklayer for York and instead engaged 19-year-old John Hughes, who had "worked with some Bricklayers."[372] In 1738, Captain George Spurrell was unable to engage enough mariners to serve at Fort Prince of Wales, so the Council there re-engaged mariner Thomas Lovel at £18, although Chief Factor Richard Norton was more concerned with the fort's lack of a cooper and

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[370]Bird described Stewart as "infirm, and in years [*i.e.* old], being of very little use to us." He implied that Whooley was either underpaid or underemployed: he "has but small Wages notwithstanding he was regularly bred up unto ye Taylors Trade and is as good a Workman as any in this Countrey." Thomas Bird & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), n.d. [1738], A. 11/2, fos. 92d-93. Stewart had entered the service in 1732 on a five-year contract at £8-10-12-12-14, and stayed an extra year at £14 before going home in 1738: A. 16/2, fo. 63; A. 16/3, fo. 2; Joseph Adames & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 17 August 1737, A. 11/2, fo. 89. Whooley had just arrived in Hudson Bay in 1737 on a five-year contract at £4-4-6-6-10: A. 16/2, fo. 100; A. 16/3, fo. 17.

Another example of such personnel shuffling involved Evan Edwards, who entered the service as a labourer in 1731 at £3-4-5-8-10, but was actually "a very good smith by profession." When smith James Manson went home from Fort Prince of Wales in 1732, Edwards took his place at the forge. Although Edwards' wages were increased to £18 in 1732/33 (instead of the £4 called for in his original contract), he was still cheaper than Manson, who had just completed a five-year contract at £21-22-23-23-23. Richard Norton (Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1731, *Letters*, 163; Richard Norton (Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1732, *Letters*, 178; A. 16/9, fos. 21, 29.

[371]Thomson, *Orkney*, 218, attributed HBC reliance on Orkneymen to their character as "an adaptable and hardy people, used to turning their hands to a variety of trades; they were good seamen (although less good on rivers) and they could withstand the rigours of the climate." The attractiveness of their adaptability is not mentioned in surviving records, although Thomson's surmise seems reasonable.

[372]*Letters*, 99n, 151n; A. 1/120, fo. 62. A real bricklayer, James Averill, was sent out to York in 1725: see Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 26 August 1725, *Letters*, 109. Hughes was later described as being "very serviceable to us in attending and making our nets:" Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 17 August 1732, *Letters*, 169.

convinced Lovel to act in that capacity at only £16.4.0.[373] The *Whalebone* sloop was launched in England in 1721 and sent to York to replace the *Prosperous* hoy, but the crew refused to winter in Hudson Bay. Her master, John Scroggs, stayed on, but the rest of the crew were replaced by volunteers from York and from the frigate *Hannah*.[374] The overall labour supply in Britain was increased by approximately 157,000 men discharged from the armed forces in 1713-14,[375] but Hudson Bay appears to have been a relatively unattractive destination.

The Committee sometimes had to cope with unforeseeable developments. The trading season of 1725/26 was a difficult one at Albany: between the departure of the ships in 1725 (with the annual letter to London and its indication of labour requirements) and their return in 1726, former apprentice John Henson, smith Thomas Routen, and labourers John Hughs and John Elgar died, and a fifth man (mariner John Nelson) became an invalid. The council engaged three men – labourer John Kirkland, and sailors Berry Spencer and John Dore – off the ships to help make up for the unexpected

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[373]Council minutes, Fort Prince of Wales, 6 August 1738, *Letters*, 253n; Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 17 August 1738, *Letters*, 258. Norton called Lovel "a very handy man that way [*i.e.* coopering] as well as an able sailor." Lovel only stayed for one year, however, because in 1739 Norton again entertained a mariner who could also act as cooper (James Irvin of Stromness): Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1739, *Letters*, 293.

[374]The replacement crew, which sailed the *Whalebone* from York to Churchill that year, consisted of Christopher Middleton (second mate of the *Hannah*), carpenter Thomas Gregory, mariners Robert Coates and William Kirk, and landsmen Thomas Burrows, Alexander Robinson, James Miller, George Ilmister, Rowland Waggoner, John Wateridge, and Richard Griffiths (described as a boy): *Letters*, 83n.

[375]Schwarz, 95.

shortage.[376]

Many men were still hired in and around London, which served as a catchment basin for labour throughout Britain (especially southern England).[377] Chief Joseph Myatt's complaints about unruly Londoners at Albany in 1727 echoed some of John Nixon's concerns 45 years earlier:

> Some of the Servants now think it the greatest Mortification in the World by Reason I Endavour to Keep them as Sober as I can, & in short ye Londoners are so well Acquainted with the Ways and Debaucheries of the Town yt I Even Despaire Ever of Reclaiming them, for there is not one Labouring man yt Came Over the Last Year, but what are Sotts to a man, but However So Long as your Honrs take care that no Person brings Large Quantities of Brandy in the Country, I can manage them well Enough for they Can goe to no Other Shop[378]

During the recent wars, the HBC had turned to the Orkney Islands (off the north coast of Scotland) as a source of manpower, though not always with success.[379] After the Treaty of Utrecht, the Company returned to the southern areas from which it was more

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[376]Chief Factor Joseph Myatt called Spencer "a very Deserving Man." Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fos. 56, 57. Myatt later attributed three of the deaths in 1725/26 to "Excessive hard Drinking John Henson in Perticular, by the Little time he Lay Ill, Complained his Bowels was burned within him:" Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1727, A. 11/2, fos. 59-59d.

[377]During the first half of the eighteenth century, London began to lose the predominance it had previously enjoyed in British commerce. Whereas in 1702 the metropolis had handled 43 per cent of English trade, by 1751 its share had declined to 28 per cent: Rediker, 41-42. London was as vibrant and mercantile a city as it had ever been, but was facing stiff competition from burgeoning commercial and industrial centres like Bristol, Liverpool, and Glasgow.

[378]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1727, A. 11/2, fos. 59-59d. The new labourers arriving at Albany in 1726 were Matthew Sargent, Randall Butler, Richard Holmes, and John Murrell (who had venereal disease and was sent home in 1727): A. 16/2, fos. 25-28.

[379]In 1711, Captain Richard Ward of the *Pery* frigate carried no new servants out of Gravesend (only Anthony Beale, returning to Company service to command Albany); he had orders to engage four or five men in the Orkneys, but had insufficient time in port there to procure any men. Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 August 1712, *Letters*, 22. Rich, *History*, I, 392, erroneously dated this incident to 1713 and implied that Beale had been expected to procure the recruits.

accustomed to recruit. In 1714, all eight of the Orcadians at Albany were sent home,[380] and in 1723 only one of that factory's 36 men appeared to be from Orkney.[381] Many (if not all) of these men could have been recruited in London or elsewhere in Britain: although the islands' economy at that time focussed primarily on agriculture and sheep-raising, many young Orkneymen served in the Royal Navy, or in the Greenland and Iceland fisheries, and thus could be found in many different British ports.[382] The few recruits who can be identified as coming directly from Orkney (as in 1708 and 1712), do not seem to have impressed their officers and were not part of any clearly emerging pattern.[383]

Regular recruitment in Orkney began more than a decade after Utrecht. In 1726, Joseph Myatt told the Committee, "it is my opinion if your Honrs thinks fitt to Entertain a few of the Orkney men, they would Be much fitter for your Service, when I was In the Orkneys there was severall Stout men that ofered to Serve you at 6£ p Ann, and Mr Baily Grimes Says he will procure any Number of men for you that you may have Ocation for."

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[380]B. 3/d/21, fos. 55d-58; Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1714, A. 11/2, fos. 23d-24.

[381]Nicks, 123-124. It is unclear which man he meant. for the list of men, see Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 48.

[382]Brown, 27. Though geographically removed from the industrial and commercial centres of early modern Britain, Orkney was not necessarily remote. Orkney trade was strongly geared to exporting agricultural surpluses, and Kirkwall merchants had ties with Scotland, Northumberland, Norway, Germany, and Holland. Thomson, *Orkney*, 187; Fenton, 2-9; Frances J. Shaw, *The Northern and Western Islands of Scotland: Their Economy and Society in the Seventeenth Century* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1980), 165-166, 169-171. For a less flattering description of the eighteenth-century Orcadian economy, see Glover, introduction to *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xlv-xlvii. For Orkneymen in whaling and fishing, see Thomson, *Orkney*, 216-219.

[383]For 1708, see Rich, *History*, I, 499. For 1712, see Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 21.

The following year, when Myatt complained about debauched Londoners, he added, "I am Glad you have Entertained a few of the Orkney men."[384] However, the Committee chose to recruit in Orkney that year only because they could find no servants in London: they ordered Thomas McCliesh Jr (returning to York Fort after wintering in England) to entertain three men in the Orkneys and gave him £6 to pay advances, including 6s per man as "customary allowance for bedding." McCliesh found three men for York – labourer Michael Loggin and tailor Edmund Hay (both for four years at £6-8-9-10) and James Lutitt (engaged as steward at £10-10-11-13, "being an old servant") – but "I lost three shillings by three fellows that run away, and one shilling given to a man for going six miles to acquaint James Lutit of going into your honours' service."[385]

The recruitment of Orkneymen appears to have become fairly regular (if not systematic) after this date.[386] The numbers of men taken up at Stromness were still not large, however: in 1732, Captain Christopher Middleton engaged five servants in Orkney,

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[384]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fo. 57; also Nicks, 102, 123-124. Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1727, A. 11/2, fo. 59d.

[385]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1727, *Letters*, 129. Loutit was a labourer at Albany in 1710/11 and 1715-18: B. 3/d/19, fo. 14d; B. 3/d/24, fo. 17; B. 3/d/25, fo. 86; B. 3/d/26, fo. 14d.

[386]Fenton, 596, felt that the "steady" flow of Orkneymen to Hudson Bay only began after the engagement of Stromness merchant David Geddes as the Company's recruiting agent in 1791. Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, lvii, suggested that Geddes paid out between £2,000 and £3,000 in wages annually in the late 1790s (when the HBC's workforce numbered several hundred men). Patrick Bailey, *Orkney* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971), 200, claimed that by about 1750 the HBC agent in Stromness "was paying out up to £3,000 in wages annually." Not only did the Company not have an official agent in Stromness at that date, there were not yet enough Orkneymen in the service to account for that figure.

and Captain Jonathon Fowler brought six Orkney labourers to Albany in 1748.[387] The major construction project at Fort Prince of Wales was the biggest consumer of labour, Orcadian and non-Orcadian. In 1731 Richard Norton, on his return voyage to Hudson Bay after a winter in England, engaged "according to your honours' orders" 16 servants at Stromness (all "able men" at £3-4-5-8-10); all but one were bound for Churchill River.[388] This appears to have been a relatively large number. Captain William Coats engaged nine Orkney labourers for Fort Prince of Wales in 1733, but in 1735 was unable to get four Orkney hands for York.[389]

Myatt drew the Committee's attention to the relatively low wages Orkney servants demanded: £6 per annum for a labourer when wages of English hands were ranging from £6 to £12 in their first year.[390] Yet, for the Company, recruiting in Orkney was almost as

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[387]Joseph Adames (Albany) to HBC (London), 14 August 1732, A. 11/2, fo. 72d. Adams did not name the five men, but four of them can be identified: labourers Hugh Slater, Henry Flett, William Spence, and Robert Corrigall (see A. 16/2, fos. 63-69). George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1748, A. 11/2, fo. 137d. The six labourers brought out in 1748 were Thomas Sclater, James Short, George Isbister, James Leask, and William Miller (all of whom came out on five-year contracts at £6 per annum); and labourer/tailor Edward Gerick (Garrioch?), who had signed a five-year contract at £4-4-6-6-10, but hanged himself on 24 June 1752. See A. 16/3, fos. 68-70. The one non-Orcadian labourer brought to Albany that year, Thomas Austin, was receiving £10 per annum for five years (A. 16/3, fo. 65), but his higher wages may have been in recognition of some degree of skill as a bricklayer: see George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 4 August 1752, A. 11/2, fo. 151.

[388]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1731, *Letters*, 162.

[389]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1733, *Letters*, 185. Thomas White (York) to HBC (London), 6 August 1735, *Letters*, 199: Coats only engaged three men (all labourers at £4-4-6-6-10) and White was obliged to re-engage labourer William Dalton for another year at £14 (his last year's wages), "he being a very good working hand, and Captain Coats being disappointed in getting one man in the Orkneys to supply his place."

[390]Tailor Edmund Hay was engaged in the Orkneys in 1727 for four years at £6-8-9-10, considerably less than other Company tailors received in the 1720s: John Long entered the service at £12 in 1722, and James Brown engaged as mariner and tailor at £12 in 1725. For Hay, see Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1727, *Letters*, 128. For Long and Brown, see A. 16/1, fo. 21; A. 16/2, fo. 22.

convenient as recruiting in London: the hazards of the English Channel during the long wars with France had prompted the HBC's ship captains generally (though not always) to go around the north end of Britain, and Stromness (on the main island of the Orkneys) was their last stop before Hudson Bay.[391]

Convenient, cheap, and willing they might have been, but Orkneymen did not always fulfill expectations. Joseph Myatt, for example, welcomed those sent to Albany in 1727, but observed that those engaged as mariners seemed to know very little of the matter.[392] Elizabeth Gilboy, in her study of eighteenth-century English building trades, observed that London labourers and craftsmen, for all their faults (real or perceived), "possessed a distinctly higher grade of skill than those in country towns."[393] No place in Orkney (except perhaps Kirkwall) had a surplus of tradesmen to share with the HBC: in 1694-96, nine men were listed as carpenters in the Stromness poll tax lists, but the parish of Birsay (in the northwest corner of Mainland) and the island of North Ronaldsay had none.[394] In 1727, Captain Christopher Middleton could not find an Orkney cooper for York.[395] Tradesmen in Orkney often practised their skills alongside small-scale farming,

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[391]Brown, 27; *Minutes, First Part*, 80n, 120n.

[392]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1727, A. 11/2, fo. 61; Rich, *History*, I, 499. The mariners to whom Myatt referred were probably Patrick Sinclair and Robert Erving, and may also have included Thomas Ingleden and/or James Trumble: see A. 16/2, fos. 31-37. Their shortcomings as mariners must have surprised Myatt, because Orkneymen had a reputation as good seamen: see Thomson, *Orkney*, 218.

[393]Gilboy, 40.

[394]Shaw, 133.

[395]Instead, the Fort Prince of Wales council agreed with their current cooper, James Worrall, for one year at his current salary (£22). Richard Norton (Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 6 August 1728 [1727], *Letters*, 120.

although those in Kirkwall (especially smiths and carpenters) achieved wealth and prestige on par with the lower ranks of gentry through the employment of their skills (and some occasional small trading).[396] And, of course, there was no guarantee that all Orkneymen would behave better than Londoners.[397]

Orkneymen could find advantages in working in the Bay. Labourers could rise through the ranks and earn very high wages by Orkney standards. Even one who remained a labourer throughout his service could negotiate wage increases and – if frugal – could save a large portion of his wages and retire a relatively wealthy man after ten or twenty years, as several scholars have noted. While the examples usually cited come from after 1770,[398] pre-1770 Officers' and Servants' Ledgers also indicate that debt in the

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[396]Shaw, 185, 189-190.

[397]Edith Burley observed, "Behaviour that conflicted with prevailing notions of Orcadian sobriety has been ascribed to isolation and boredom, without consideration of the drinking habits that might have been common in Britain at the same time or of the possibility that early Scottish writers were correct when they accused Orcadians of heavy drinking." Burley, 11. She did not specify to which writers she was referring. See also Thomson, *Orkney*, 5-6.

[398]See, for example, Brown, 27; Nicks, 119. Orkney ministers in the 1790s complained about former HBC servants who returned home after eight or ten years of "exile" with uncivilized manners and broken constitutions, but enough money to buy or rent land; this reputation probably predated these earliest written references to it. Troup, 53-54; Thomson, *Orkney*, 219-220. Also, labour was in short supply in eighteenth-century Orkney, and men going to Hudson Bay or to the fisheries not only removed themselves from the labour supply physically, but could use their savings to buy or rent enough land to subsist entirely on agriculture and thus remove themselves from the potential labour supply for kelp-making, linen-making, or other local industries. See Thomson, *Orkney*, 214, 220-221. Fenton, 596, observed that former Bay men could outbid local farmers for rents (which probably caused some jealousy and conflict) and that this sometimes led to inflation and the over-renting of land. However, the Orkney land market was quite active before the HBC started recruiting there and this, along with opportunities for even humble farmers to engage in some sort of general trade, created a greater degree of social mobility than was present in northern Scotland or the Hebrides at this time: Shaw, 189. Thus, HBC service did not necessarily create new opportunities at home, but rather enabled men to take better advantage of opportunities which had existed for some time.

Troup, 58, concluded that land hunger was the primary force driving young men out of Orkney into the HBC or other non-local employments. If this was indeed the case, then HBC service may have seemed less attractive in the early decades of the eighteenth century because Orkney was slow to recover from the famines of the 1690s and much land lay uncultivated. On the other hand, more people were

service was the exception rather than the rule,[399] and that men of all ethnic and occupational backgrounds seem to have been able to save significant portions of their earnings. Early Orkney examples include Robert Groundwater, a labourer at Moose in the early 1730s, who appears not to have purchased any goods from the Company store between 1731 and 1736.[400] Another Orcadian, William Hay, began his career in 1745 as a labourer at Albany earning £4; when he left the service in 1762, he was listed as a labourer and sailor at £20 per annum and had a final account balance of £169.4.11.[401] Although these were extreme examples of men's ability to save, and men's HBC accounts almost certainly did not represent the full extent of their savings or debts, Groundwater and Hay illustrate what was possible in the Company's service. Given that traditional agriculture in Orkney focused on grain crops but produced no saleable surplus in one year out of three, families who had a son in HBC service – or in the new kelp-making industry, or in linen-making or straw-plaiting, or on board an English fishing or

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renting than owning land during this period: between 1660 and 1750 the number of small owner-occupiers decreased from 776 to 245. Those who owned 'odal' land (land held in unwritten freehold) were particularly vulnerable, as the 'odal' system of tenure came under increasing attack from Scottish lawyers and as the tradition of dividing property among all children led to intense fragmentation. Norse law had placed various restrictions on odal land to keep it within families and to counteract these dispersive tendencies, but Scotland abolished Norse law in the northern islands in 1611 and it had probably ceased to be effective well before then. Thomson, *Orkney*, 186-189. For a discussion of agriculture and land tenure in early modern Orkney, see Thomson, *Orkney*, 190-200, 205-206; Shaw, 21-40, 70-74.

[399]In 1716, Thomas McCleish Jr at Albany complained that "most of the yong men Run outt more then therr wages:" Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 16 July 1716, A. 11/2, fo. 26d. However, this statement pre-dates the earliest surviving Officers' and Servants' Ledgers, and is thus very difficult to corroborate or quantify.

[400]A. 16/2, fo. 54.

[401]A. 16/3, fos. 54, 59; A. 16/4, fo. 5.

whaling boat – gained a valuable supplement to their income.[402]

Insufficient evidence exists for as detailed an examination of the demographics of early Orkney recruitment as John Nicks undertook for the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but some of his statistics suggest older patterns. For instance, Nicks' figures for 1788 showed three-quarters of Orcadian servants coming from the parish of Stromness and adjoining parishes in the western portion of Mainland (the largest island), a local concentration that later decreased. Such geographical concentration makes sense, as Stromness was the Orkney port of call for Company ships, as well as one of only two sizable towns on the islands (Kirkwall was the other). The decrease in this concentration suggested to Nicks either "a gradual depletion of the traditional labour pool or the expansion of interest in employment with the company – probably both."[403] Since recruitment in the Orkneys had been fairly consistent since the 1720s, the depletion of the labour pool in and around Stromness may seem the stronger argument, but the increasingly diverse parish origins of Orkneymen appears to have coincided with the period of competition and expansion after1782, when the Company's labour force was expanding more rapidly than ever before: perhaps the expansion of interest in Company service was at least partially the result of increasingly intensive recruitment.

Nicks' figures for recruitment levels as a percentage of population indicated to him that employment opportunities on the Bay "held a greater attraction to rural residents

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[402]Thomson, *Orkney*, 206, places HBC service firmly in this context, although he observed (216) a cultural element as well: 'it was a way of life which combined farming, travel, comradeship, and adventure in much the same proportions as had once sent their forebears on their Viking voyages." Also see Burley, 71-72.

[403]Nicks, 105-08.

than to urban dwellers."[404] In an Orkney context, however, 'urban' and 'rural' were relative terms. Kirkwall's population had peaked at around 3,000 in 1661, but that fell sharply during a devastating famine in the 1690s.[405] There were only thirteen houses in Stromness in 1670, and although the village expanded greatly with the growth of trans-Atlantic trade in the eighteenth century, its population only temporarily surpassed Kirkwall's.[406] Outside of those two towns on Mainland, however, the Orkneys were an archipelago of dispersed farms and houses, with only small and loose clusters of people and services at crossroads and other strategic points; even churches tended to stand by themselves in the countryside.[407]

Although the northern parts of the British Isles became a greater source of recruitment in the eighteenth century, they were never an exclusive labour pool for the Company. In particular, specialized work sometimes required more specialized workers than Orkney could provide. Richard Norton at Fort Prince of Wales in 1732 requested (and in due course received) "four masons that is brought up to rough laying which must

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[404]Nicks, 107-08.

[405]Thomson, *Orkney*, 185-187; also Robert A. Dodghson, *Land and Society in Early Scotland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 304.

[406]Bailey, 197; Thomson, *Orkney*, 219; Shaw, 137, 171. Much of the booming trade of eighteenth-century Orkney bypassed Kirkwall: W.P.L. Thomson compared the relationship of the two towns to the relationship of the eastern and western ports of Scotland, "where older centres looked eastwards to the North Sea, whereas the new and developing ports lay on the west coast and engaged in Atlantic trade." Thomson, *Orkney*, 219. By 1742, Stromness merchants were legally challenging Kirkwall's economic dominance of Orkney, a struggle they eventually won in 1758: see Thomson, *Orkney*, 219; Bailey, 196-197.

[407]Bailey, 22. The third largest trading centre in Orkney during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was at St Margaret's Hope on the north coast of South Ronaldsay: there were three merchants living there in 1682, but in 1695 the total population of the settlement and neighbouring Ronaldsvoe was only 23 families. Shaw, 171.

be had in the country, particular near Oxford. The masons that is here are brought up to mallet and tool [*i.e.* more ornamental work], so are altogether strangers to the aforesaid rough laying." The one exception was John Tutty, "who is well aversed in a quarry and our sort of masonry work, he having had a great deal of experience therein and is very sufficient to supply the place of Mr Keyly."[408]

The Inuit or Chipewyan captives of Lowland Cree war parties, occasionally purchased by or given to Bayside factors, could also be considered specialized labour of a sort. Although the factors generally portrayed the selling of such captives as the result of Native entrepreneurship (or greed), and their own purchasing of such captives as motivated by compassion, Victor Lytwyn has suggested that the Lowland Cree might have given captives as gifts to strengthen their alliance with the English traders.[409] Sloopmasters in charge of trading voyages to the Churchill River and farther north were often accompanied by Inuit boys placed in their care for one or two years to facilitate trade relations (Renée Fossett described them as 'apprentices'), but these boys were only temporary wards of the Company and not slaves. The Company wanted such boys to learn English and something of European trading customs, so that they could act as linguistic and cultural interpreters after they returned to their communities. Inuit motives

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[408]New head mason Thomas Keyly died shortly after coming ashore in 1731: Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1731, *Letters*, 161-162. Tutty requested an increase of salary to £20 per annum "for his encouragement to act in such a station." Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1732, *Letters*, 175-176. Rich, *History*, I, 533, claimed that ornamental work "was the only craft known to many English masons by the eighteenth century," but he underestimated the diverse experiences of early modern English tradesmen: see Woodward, *Men at Work*, ch. 1 and 2. On the other hand, Schwarz, 34, seems to support Rich's claim.

[409]Lytwyn, 61.

were probably very similar, hoping that the boys would bring back useful information on English language, customs, and technology.[410]

Although all 'slaves' appear to have been young, and most were probably intended for general work – in the 1693/4 season, James Knight at Albany traded a gun, blanket, kettle, one pound of tobacco, and a woman's shroud [stroud?] for an Inuit "slave boy for the use of ye factory"[411] – some may have been valued for their linguistic skills and/or local knowledge. James Knight rescued the Chipewyan captive, Thanadelthur, for a peace mission to her people (see above). Jack "Eskemay" may have been purchased by Joseph Adams as early as 1736, and worked at Albany and Eastmain for at least five years (1741-46); he received no wages (nor was he given an occupational label), but the Company paid for goods he took up at the factory.[412] Trolio, an Inuit, served at Moose from 1757 until his death by drowning in 1780; he appears to have been a labourer or general hand, but in the summer of 1779 was in charge of Moose's upriver outpost Wapiscogamy House.[413] At Richmond in the 1750s, the "Duke of Richmond" (1752-59);

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[410]Fossett, 93-94, 108-109.

[411]B. 3/d/2, fo. 12d, quoted in Lytwyn, 64. In comparison, in 1736 Joseph Adams at Albany traded one pound of tobacco, one gallon of brandy, and one and one-half yards of blue cloth for an Inuit boy brought back by a party of Albany River Lowland Cree: Lytwyn, 65.

[412]See his account in A. 16/3, fo. 32. Lytwyn, 65-66, suggested that he was the unnamed Inuit boy purchased by Adams in 1736.

[413]A list of servants at Moose in 1769-70 described him as a labourer (Moose Account Book 1769/70, B. 135/d/39, fo. 9) but earlier such lists only described him as an "Esquimaux Man" (Moose Account Book 1767/68, B. 135/d/37, fo. 9; Moose Account Book 1768/69, B. 135/d/38, fo. 9). Some idea of his age may be gleaned from references to him as an "Eusquemay Boy" until 1760 (Moose Account Book 1757/58, B. 135/d/27, fo. 8; Moose Account Book 1759/60, B. 135/d/29, fo. 8d). His account was combined with that of English apprentice William Wood until 1759 (Moose Account Book 1757/58, B. 135/d/27, fo. 8; Moose Account Book 1758/59, B. 135/d/28, fo. 8d) and the name Trolio was not used until 1762 (Moose Account Book 1761/62, B. 135/d/31, fo. 9). Also Lytwyn, 66. For Trolio in charge of Wapiscogamy House, see E.E. Rich & A.M. Johnson (eds.), *Moose Fort Journals 1783-85* (London:

"ye Boy Hector," later Hector Northumberland (1752-58); Caesar Northumberland (1757-58); and Dolly Northumberland (1757-59) were probably Inuit 'slaves' as well.[414]

While Inuit and Chipewyan captives were purchased by Bayside factors, or sometimes by sloopmasters, and the Committee continued to recruit men in the London area,[415] the increasing intake of Orkneymen gave captains of the Company's ships a larger role in hiring men than they probably had in earlier periods. Ship captains had acted as recruiters before the 1730s, but their role is better documented after that date: for instance, some servants' accounts (which cannot be reconstructed in their entirety before the 1720s) mention cash advanced them by ship captains upon engagement.[416] Bayside officers returning from a season in England could also serve as recruiters on the outward voyage, as Thomas Macklish Jr did in 1735, when he was paid £12.12.0 "to Entert[ai]n Servants" and was reimbursed for cash which he advanced them "at Orkneys."[417]

The specific mechanisms of recruitment in the Orkneys are even less clearly understood than is the case for London. John Nicks suggested some possible methods of

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Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1954), 333. For a discussion of both Jack and Trolio, see Francois Trudel, "Trolio et Jack: Deux Inuit au Service de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson au XVIIIe Siecle," *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 7/1 (1987), 79-93.

[414]See Richmond Fort Account Books, 1752-59, B. 135/d/3-9. Henry Pollexfen referred to he "Duke of Richmond" as a "boy" in 1754: Henry Pollexfen (Richmond) to HBC (London), 4 September 1754, A. 11/57, fo. 22. "Duke Richmond" died of a fever at York in June 1761: Andrew Graham (York) to Ferdinand Jacobs (Fort Prince of Wales), 11 July 1761, B. 239/b/21, fo. 11d.

[415]The Company's London employees may have also played some role in recruitment. In 1732, Thomas McCliesh Jr at York engaged mariner David Allen from the *Mary* frigate for three years at 27s 6d per month, "being what Mr [Thomas] Bird your secretary agreed upon at London:" Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 17 August 1732, *Letters*, 169.

[416]See, for example, Andrew Anderson in 1742: A. 16/3, fo. 33.

[417]A. 16/2, fo. 87.

local recruitment in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which may be applicable to earlier periods. Finding that Company recruits from the parish of Orphir came mostly from the townships closest to the church and the parish school, he suggested "that the minister, and possibly the school-master may have played an important role in the recruitment process."[418] Schoolmasters would not have played a significant role in earlier recruitment, as very few schools existed outside Kirkwall before the nineteenth century.[419] E.E. Rich briefly sketched recruitment in the Orkneys as a collaborative effort, involving the ship captains and outgoing officers, working with local agents "who received instructions to get the men ready in expectation of the ships' arrival."[420] However, he provided no concrete evidence of such collaboration, and the evidence of participation in recruitment by each of these groups remains separate rather than linked. Such geographic concentration as Nicks observed cannot be traced for earlier periods, but if it did exist it could have been associated with other factors, such as the mobility of individuals, the distribution of occupational groups, or even rates of literacy.

Nicks also observed a tendency for a limited number of families to monopolize available positions.[421] Apparent geographic concentration of recruitment may have been related to extended familial residence patterns. There is some evidence for this before

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[418]Nicks, 113.

[419]An "explosion" of educational provision occurred in the early nineteenth century, including schools endowed by former HBC servants Magnus Twatt and James Tait in Orphir, and William Tomison in South Ronaldsay. Thomson, *Orkney*, 238-239; Shaw, 144-146.

[420]Rich, *History*, I, 499.

[421]Nicks, 113-115.

1770, though many examples only represent possible family connections (the suggestively large number of Isbisters serving in Hudson Bay between 1700 and 1770 has already been mentioned). Some recruits had family connections through marriage. Two Irvins (Irvines, Ervins, Irwins) served in James Bay – Robert Irvin was a sailor at Albany in the early 1750s and John Ervin served at Moose in the early 1760s – and three labourers serving at Moose between 1756 and 1769 (John Ward, George Sinclair, and Thomas Halcro) were married to Isobel (Isabella) Ervin (Irvine), Jennett Irvin (Irwin), and Isabel Irwin respectively.[422] Unfortunately, the patchy survival of many eighteenth-century Orkney parish records presents a formidable obstacle to the tracing of family connections. Even relationships that may appear straightforward at first glance may prove unclear, as in the case of Peter Isbester Sr and Peter Isbester Jr, who both engaged as labourers in 1735. To the modern ear, 'Senior' and 'Junior' imply a father-son relationship, but the terms specify only that one is older than the other: for example, Thomas McCliesh Sr was the uncle of Thomas McCliesh Jr.

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[422]Identifying men's wives from account books is only possible if (a) a man sent home a bill for money to be paid to his wife or to a third party for her subsistence, and (b) the entry of the bill in the account book clearly identifies the woman as his wife. For John Ward, see Moose account books, B. 135/d/26, fo. 83 (1756/57); B. 135/d/27, fo. 83 (1757/58); B. 135/d/32, fo. 82 (1762/63); B. 135/d/33, fo. 86 (1763/64); B. 135/d/34, fo. 80d (1764/65); B. 135/d/35, fo. 84d (1765/66); B. 135/d/37, fo. 90 (1767/68). For George Sinclair, see B. 135/d/33, fo. 86 (1763/64); B. 135/d/35, fo. 84d (1765/66); B. 135/d/36, fo. 85d (1766/67); B. 135/d/37, fo. 90 (1767/68). For Thomas Halcro, see B. 135/d/36, fo. 85d (1766/67). In 1763, 1764, and 1766, Thomas Halcro's wife was listed as Marjory Gadus (B. 135/d/32, fo. 82; B. 135/d/33, fo. 86d; B. 135/d/35, fo. 84d), but Isabel Irwin was listed as his wife in 1767 and in 1768 William Cooley (armourer at Moose) ordered £2 of his salary to be paid to Captain John Horner for the subsistence of Margery Gadus, wife of Thomas Halcro (B. 135/d/37, fo. 90).

"Though all names and eaters, they are not all workers":[423] Considerations of Recruitment and Retention

The easing of wartime conditions made the recruitment and retention of personnel somewhat less problematic. After the last French attack in 1694, there was greater continuity in post complements, but numbers of men still returned home for a year or two and then re-entered the service. This coincided with patterns of agricultural and domestic service in Britain at that time,[424] but the motives are not always clear. Health, family emergencies, and other personal factors may have led to their return: for instance, Eastmain trader Joseph Adams in 1723 and netmaker Anthony Henday in 1755 went home ostensibly for the recovery of their health, but each immediately re-engaged.[425] Augustine Frost came home from Fort Prince of Wales in 1729 because his father had died and "he has some effects left him which he is afraid he may lose if he does not go home"; whether or not he sorted out his father's estate, Frost re-engaged in 1730.[426]

There was still an obvious preference for experienced men, or 'old hands'. In 1716, James Knight encouraged the Committee "to send as many old Norwesters over as

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[423]James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 19 September 1714, *Letters*, 37. At Albany in 1703, John Fullartine gave in to the 'fervent' requests of Samuel Thomas Langley to be sent home, though his time was not yet out (he had only arrived the year before): Fullartine explained that Langley "can do me little or no Servis &...I've better be without than keep him, for whereas he will at home be counted to me for a man, here he can only eat a mans allowance." John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 6; also B. 3/d/13, encl.

[424]Kussmaul, 73; Ben-Amos, 70-71, 83.

[425]For Adams, see Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 48; for Henday, see James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 4 August 1756, A. 11/114, fos. 197-197d.

[426]Anthony Beale (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 26 July 1729, *Letters*, 140.

you can" for the proposed new trading post at Churchill River.[427] In 1742, Joseph Isbister at Albany offered increased wages to sawyer Richard Drover and labourers Peter Isbister Sr and John Greenwood; he later justified his action to the Committee by explaining that "we [the Albany Council] found them usefull Men, and could not do the Business of this Factory without such Hands, for one of them being as good as two green hands."[428] In the 1730s, Richard Norton warned the Committee against high turnover of personnel, preferring to have "men inured to their several stations," and James Isham urged his masters not to call "too many old hands home in one year in so small a number of men."[429] However, many men who had been kept on at high wages became superfluous, as they could be replaced more easily and more cheaply than before. Anthony Beale had 44 men on the Albany books in 1713-14, but sent 28 of them home in 1714 on the

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[427]James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 17 September 1716, *Letters*, 66. In the same letter, Knight specifically requested former Albany cooper Richard Staunton (who had just gone home) to take the third place in the York chain of command (which was to include Churchill): "I do not know any other servant that you have at home but him that is fit to come in any such post." (66)

[428]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 9 August 1742; Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 18 August 1743, A. 11/2, fo. 116. Drover had served at £28 per annum since 1735 and Isbister increased his wages to £30: A. 16/2, fo. 79; A. 16/3, fo. 27. Peter Isbister Sr, who also engaged in 1735, had been receiving old hand's wages (£12) since 1740 but was raised to £14 for the 1742/43 season: A. 16/2, fo. 84; A. 16/3, fo. 22. The largest increase went to Greenwood, who engaged in 1735 at £3 and had only risen to £6 by 1742, but was given £14 in 1742/43: A. 16/2, fo. 80; A. 16/3, fo. 8. All three men went home in 1743.

In 1725, Richard Staunton described Albany labourers John Hughes and John (or Johann) McCoare as "very good handes for the Country." Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 24 August 1725, A. 11/2, fo. 52d. Hughes and McCoare had asked for wage increases in 1723: they were entering the final year of their five-year initial contracts (£6-8-10-12-14) and requested new two-year contracts at £16-18. Staunton felt that they both deserved encouragement, but the Committee kept them on at £14: Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 48d; A. 16/1, fos. 10, 13; A. 16/2, fos. 4, 6.

[429]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 23 August 1737, *Letters*, 237; also Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 17 August 1736, *Letters*, 215; Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1739, *Letters*, 298. James Isham (York) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 262.

Committee's order: he made no complaints against any of the men, only remarking that "it was not in my power for to do it Before."[430] Ten of those 28 men sent home in 1714 re-entered the Company's service – four of them as early as the following year – although some returned at lower wages.

The Company's attempts at limiting wages could only succeed when sufficient new recruits were forthcoming from Britain: at Fort Prince of Wales, Richard Norton recommended in 1727 that the Committee "provide a sailor for the sloop by agreeing with him in England; otherwise the sailors will at all times take the advantage of our necessities."[431] Commercial competition from French traders inland made some factors feel as vulnerable as they had before the peace of Utrecht. In 1716, Thomas McCleish Jr at Albany complained that a rumoured French post on the Severn River put him at the mercy of the Englishmen whose contracts were expiring: they "would by no means Contract for Longer then 2 years & some for one year, I was Oblidged to Comply with their Demands, Knowing what Treacherous next door neighbours we have to deal with."[432]

In general, though, peacetime service in Hudson Bay was less hazardous and less demanding than wartime service. Although courage seemed a less necessary attribute than in wartime, the Committee continued to emphasize sobriety and industriousness, as well as encouraging the men to be neighbourly and to live together as peacefully as

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[430]Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1714, A. 11/2, fos. 23d-24.

[431]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 6 August 1728 [1727], *Letters*, 120.

[432]Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 16 July 1716, A. 11/2, fo. 27.

possible.[433] Thus, descriptions of both 'good' and 'bad' servants remained much the same as before 1714. At Albany, Anthony Beale in 1714 called gunner Joseph Myatt "a Carefull young man,"[434] and in 1722 Myatt (then in charge of Albany) called Joseph Adams "a brisk Sober industrious man."[435] The new men of 1719 appeared to Thomas McCleish Jr to be "lusty able young men."[436] In 1722, Joseph Myatt wrote from Albany:

> It being your Honrs pleasure when any of your Servants are discharg'd out of your Service, that a Charector may be given of them, how they have behav'd themselves, in their Respective Stations. All persons that are Discharg'd at this time have been very dilligent in the Discharge of their duty, & Obedient to Command. Except John Upton the Armourer, whose behaviour hath been very Monstrous, which I have not fail'd to punish him

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[433]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 861n, felt that such regulations reduced the problems which can arise in small crowded communities like the Bayside posts, but did not clarify how. For a discussion of neighbourly behaviour and expectations in an early modern English parish, see Keith Wrightson, "The Politics of the Parish in Early Modern England," in Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox, & Steve Hindle (eds.), *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (New York: St Martin's Pres, 1996), 18-22. Also see Steve Hindle, "The Keeping of the Public Peace," in Griffiths *et al*, 213.

When servants failed to live up to these expectations, their factors usually blamed the men themselves, either collectively (as in the case of Londoners) or individually (which was much more common). The Committee then had to determine whether the criticisms were correct, or if the factors themselves were in some way to blame. Carlos & Nicholas, 861, argued that "managers... claimed that they were unable to control the labor force because the workers were unsuitable for their jobs. The committee then had to use the information flows to determine to what extent its managers were to blame or its work force was unsuitable. Since most servants had been hired in London and were used to a life that countervened the requirements of prayer, sobriety, and peacefulness, the London Committee chose to give its managers the benefit of the doubt." It is unclear how making assumptions based on men's geographical origins can be described as using "the information flows."

[434]Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1714, A. 11/2, fo. 24. In 1723, Thomas McCliesh Jr remarked, "I know Mr Myatt to be honest and careful, and knows the method of trade with those Indians [of Albany River] perfectly, and a man of spirit in face of his enemy:" Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 96.

[435]This compliment was prompted by the Committee's order to place Joseph Henson (whose apprenticeship expired in 1723) in charge of the Eastmain: Myatt complied, but expressed his preference for retaining Adams "in yt Station." Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1722, A. 11/2, fo. 42. The following year, Myatt's successor, Richard Staunton, reported that the surgeon Charles Napper "according to Mr Myats character of him is a very sober & Carefull man, as by me observed since my arival." Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 46d. Also see Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 24 August 1725, A. 11/2, fo. 53d.

[436]Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 39d.

for.[437]

Myatt and his successor, Richard Staunton, gave Eastmain trader John Henson "a good character" and sloopmaster George Gunn "a good character to be a sober and carefull man," but gave armourer Farmery Kirke "but a very Indiferent Character."[438] Staunton in 1724 wrote that he had "great hopes" that Henson "will soe be have himselfe, to be deserveinge of more of Yr Honrs favours, by beinge faithfull and dillegent, in Quallefyeinge himself for the same."[439]

More commonly, factors praised servants in vague or general terms. In 1735, Thomas McCliesh Jr referred to labourer Thomas Low as "a Serviceable man."[440] In 1737, Richard Norton mentioned five labourers willing to sign new contracts the following year, describing three of them (William Mackcullock, Andrew Forsythe, and Magnus Brown) as "able men for your honours' service" and two (John Elpheston and James Bartleman) as "stout able hands for many particular services"; he added that three

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[437]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1722, A. 11/2, fo. 43.

[438]Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fos. 46d, 47, 47d. Staunton (fo. 27) felt that Kirke was good only for repairing old guns, not making new ones, and sent home for refitting 50 guns that Kirke had fitted. Kirke wanted to go home in 1725 (after only three years' service) and was allowed to do so, "beinge very lazy." Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1724, A. 11/2, fo.51d.

[439]Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1724, A. 11/2, fo. 50d. Staunton reported that Myatt had spoken highly of Henson for the young man's management of the Eastmain trade in 1722/23: Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 46d. However, he died at Albany in 1726 : see Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fo. 56. For a suggestion that heavy drinking was a factor, see Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1727, A. 11/2, fo. 59.

[440]Thomas McCliesh Jr & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 19 August 1735, A. 11/2, fo. 83. Low had just signed a new contract, but unfortunately was one of five men drowned on 12 June 1736 when their boat overturned: Thomas McCliesh Jr & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 September 1736, A. 11/2, fo. 86.

other labourers (Alexander Garrioch, James Stinson, and John Clouston) who had signed new contracts that year were "very good and serviceable hands."[441] At Moose in 1739, labourer James Hourston was "a good hand," sawyer Richard Drover was "a very laborious servant and a good workman," and labourer Peter Isbister Sr was "a good hand and worthy of encouragement."[442]

In 1740, James Isham at York listed "each man's qualifications and behaviour" (not just those whose times were out) in the body of his annual letter, rather than on a separate piece of paper to be enclosed with the packet (and subsequently lost). Of his 22 men, Isham commented on the sobriety of 11, including all of the officers and all but one of the tradesmen. Six men were mentioned for their diverse skills, four for their honesty, two for their positive attitudes, and two for their diligence or industriousness. Isham remarked that "they do all in general behave themselves very well in the duty to my great satisfaction."[443] This echoed Thomas McCliesh Jr's 1723 praise for his men at York

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[441]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 23 August 1737, *Letters*, 241, 242. Only Mackcullock was retained in 1738: *Letters*, 241n.

[442]Richard Staunton & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 17 August 1739, *Letters*, 306. In 1738, Staunton called Drover "an indifferent [*i.e.* moderately] honest man and a very good hand," but noted that eight homeward-bound marten skins were his: three he claimed sloopmaster William Bevan had given him and five he had trapped himself over the last two winters. Richard Staunton & George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 269.

[443]John Bricker was "a sober man and very fit for your honours' service in trading with Indians etc." Surgeon John Potts was "a very sober, honest and industrious young man, and I believe very capable of the station he is...in." Warehouse-keeper Samuel Skrimshire (probably Isham's cousin) was "a sober lad and I hope will merit your honours' favours." Armourer John Russell was "a sober man, a good workman at his business, and handy in some cases about the factory." Shipwright John Spurrel was "handy in his trade but not extraordinary handy in house carpenter's work, he is a willing man in anything to be done." Blacksmith Evan Edwards was "a sober, honest man and a good workman." Tailor Robert Inksetter (Inkster) "has sobriety and good honesty, a good workman for this country, and very handy in anything that is to be done." Steward Michael Loggin (Logan) was "a sober, honest, good-natured man and one that is fit or that can turn his hand to anything in the country." Mariners Arnold Cosshe and Charles Pulley were "sober men, performs their business as required and handy in several cases." Blacksmith's mate William

being "obedient and cheerful in the discharge of their duties."[444]

Sobriety – both of habits and of demeanour – was seen as a positive asset. James Knight defended sloopmaster David Vaughan (who lost the *Eastmain* sloop in bad weather between Albany and York in 1714) as serious and sensible: "you cannot have a soberer or a brisker man than he is" to command the new sloop *Success*.[445] Knight also recognized the need for temperance, remarking to Thomas McCliesh Jr in 1717 that he almost never drank any more, "so that no Man can brann[d] me to ye Compy, to Say they have [a] Drunken Governr here."[446] In 1728, McCliesh lamented armourer Christopher Bannister's impending return to England, "which I am sorry for by reason [he is] a quiet, sober man and a prime workman, and wish heartily [I] could say as much of [Nicholas]

Miller was "very good for that purpose and an able man in labouring work." Labourer John Hughes was "a sober man and very diligent in his duty." Labourers James Luittit, James Manson, Thomas Sclater, John Luittit, James Virtue, Robert Moode (Moodie?), and William Alson (Oldson?) were "all able strong men, and fit to carry a log or any other labouring work." Labourer Robert Edison was "an indifferent good hand in labouring work." Labourer Henry Inksetter (Inkster) was "a good hand in labouring work, and one we employ as fisherman." John Dymock was "a sober man, a good hand in squaring and sawing timber." James Isham & Council (York) to HBC (London), 27 July 1740, *Letters*, 312-313.

Later in the letter (316-317), Isham mentioned that he had agreed with Russell (two years at £30), Hughes (three years at £12), James Luittit (three years at £12), and Manson (two years at £12); that Potts wanted to come home when his time was out next year; that Sclator was willing to stay two years longer at £12; that Dymock was willing to stay as a sawyer for three years at £12; and that Edison wanted to come home early. Dymock was engaged as a labourer (at £4-4-6-6-10) and served in that capacity at Fort Prince of Wales for three years. In 1739 Isham entertained him to replace homeward-bound bricklayer Richard Mincyn: James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 29 August 1739, *Letters*, 308.

[444]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 93.

[445]Knight also pointed out that Vaughan was a ship carpenter as well as a capable mariner. James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 17 September 1716, *Letters*, 69. Vaughan entered the Company's service as a carpenter, engaging in 1713 for four years at £36-40-40-40, but before sailing was named mate of the *Prosperous* hoy. During his five years in Hudson Bay (1713-18), Vaughan commanded the *Eastmain* and the *Success*, led woodcutting expeditions at Churchill River, and in 1719 commanded the new sloop *Discovery* on Knight's fatal Arctic voyage: *Letters*, 63n; Kenney, 122, 126-127, 133-134.

[446]Knight made this comment in the context of thanking McCliesh for the wine and brandy he had sent Knight as a "Token." James Knight (Churchill) to Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany), 11 August 1717, Kenney, 158.

Revilian; for when here formerly [1722-27], never sober when he could get liquor."[447]

Knowledge of Cree (either the Lowland or Eastmain dialects)[448] was frequently mentioned as an asset. In 1728, Joseph Myatt felt that carpenter and shipwright Alexander Thoyts would not be as useful an assistant as Joseph Adams, "for a man that hath Less Language then my self, will be of but Little Service to me."[449] In 1730, Adams (then Chief at Albany) gave sloopmaster Thomas Render the initial charge of Moose partly because "he has more of the Language then any I can think on, which can be conveniently parted with."[450] At Albany in 1738, Thomas Bird promised to encourage apprentices William Clowes and John Dingley to learn Cree.[451]

General usefulness seemed to have been valued at least as much as specific skills, and diversity of ability often served men (and the Company) better than specialization. Thomas McCliesh Jr at York seemed uncertain about John Wateridge's qualifications as a gunner – "we presume him to be qualified for gunner of the factory" – but in 1723 spoke of him as "a very serviceable man both in winter and summer in getting of

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[447]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 8 August 1728, *Letters*, 135. Ravilian may have had a drinking problem, but he was not incompetent. McCliesh sent him to Fort Prince of Wales, where Anthony Beale in 1729 called him "very serviceable not only in fitting up old guns for factory use but also several new guns that has lain for a long time not fit for trade, for want of an armourer here to rectify them, which he has repaired:" Anthony Beale (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 26 July 1729, *Letters*, 139.

[448]While the Lowland Cree dialect was intelligible to other Cree speakers throughout the western woodlands and northern plains, the Eastmain Cree dialect was noticeably different: linguist Truman Michelson classified it as a Montagnais-Nascapi dialect and not Cree at all. See Lytwyn, 12, 57. For differences among Eastmain speakers, see Lytwyn, 57; Francis & Morantz, 13, 67.

[449]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 5 August 1728, A. 11/2, fo. 63.

[450]Joseph Adames (Albany) to HBC (London), 28 August 1730, A. 11/2, fo. 68d.

[451]Thomas Bird & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), n.d. [1738], A. 11/2, fo. 93.

provisions."[452] Richard Staunton praised surgeon Charles Napper for also acting as Albany's accountant, and recommended mason Samuel Wolfe as "a very good man for yr Honrs Service and Handy at any thinge."[453] A later Albany surgeon, George Spence, also "very seasonably offer'd his Service to take upon him ye Business of the Accomptant" in 1739.[454]

Some men were able to turn their hand to many different tasks. James Irvin served as cooper, carpenter, sawyer, and sloopmate at various stations in Hudson Bay before going home from Albany in 1744 because of a dispute with one of the sloopmasters.[455] Rowland Waggoner was equally diverse. In 1728, Myatt reported,

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[452]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 94-95; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1724, *Letters*, 97.

[453]Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fos. 46d, 48d. Albany's accountant, former apprentice Samuel Hopkins, left Albany "without Leave" on 2 October 1722: A. 16/1, p. 5. In 1724, Staunton described Napper as "very capeable to discharge both offices [*i.e.* surgeon and accountant], attendinge them with care and dillegence." Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1724, A. 11/2, fo. 50.

[454]Albany was short of officers in the late 1730s: Thomas McCleish's health had prevented him from resuming his command in 1735 and in 1736; sloopmaster George Gunn went home in 1736; Chief Factor Joseph Adames went home in 1737; surgeon James Dudgeon went home in 1738; and Chief Factor Thomas Bird died on 21 June 1739. After Bird's death, veteran sawyer and jack-of-all-trades Rowland Waggoner took command (though his own health was fragile and he followed Bird to the grave on 23 April 1740), but his Council only consisted of Spence, Captain William Coats of the supply ship *Mary*, and sloopmaster Joseph Isbister (in charge of Eastmain).

Waggoner needed a gentleman like Spence at his right hand at Albany, partly because Waggoner was old and frail, and partly because he was illiterate. Waggoner and his Council recommended Spence to the Committee not only because "we think him very capable," but also because "he hath met with an ugly accident, having lost ye Thumb of his left hand and 2 fingers." Rowland Waggoner & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 15 August 1739, A. 11/2, fo. 99. Isbister took command after Waggoner's death and in his first letter to the Committee he had "no doubt of his [Spence's] meritting your future favours that you are so kind as to promise to him:" Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 24 August 1740, A. 11/2, fo. 102.

[455]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1744, A. 11/2, fo. 121d. The Council's letter called Irvin "an able Man, and hath been of infinite Service in carrying on the Building of the Flankers this Year," but "not agreeing with his Master." It is unclear whether "his Master" was Thomas Mitchell of the *Eastmain* or John Longland of the *Pheonix*.

"Rowley Waggoners Time being Expired the Next Year, is willing to Continue in your Honrs Service if you are pleased to advance his Wagges, Justice Oblidges me to give him that Just Carractor of one of the Best Servts that I Ever Saw in his Station, he Being a Good Sa[w]yer & as handy with a broad Ax as Some Carpenters, & Shoots as Well as most of the Ind[ian]s, and he will Supply the place of a Cooper if your Honrs think well of it."[456] Although officially categorised as a sawyer for most of his career (he entered the service in 1714), Waggoner became Second to Thomas Bird at Albany in 1737 and succeeded Bird as Chief when the latter died in 1739.[457]

Diverse skills were valued in specialized tradesmen as well. Richard Norton praised cooper James Worrall as "a very handy man in the country for any manner of business as well as at his trade."[458] Thomas McCliesh Jr recommended York Fort smith Francis Cheeseman to the Committee as "a very good workman and very serviceable in getting provisions, and peradventure as stout [a] man as ever came into your country."[459]

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[456]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 5 August 1728, A. 11/2, fo. 63. In 1733, Joseph Adams also described Waggoner as "being very usefull in many Cases": Joseph Adames & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 July 1733, A. 11/2, fo. 76d.

[457]Waggoner never learned to write – on the official 1739 letter from Albany, he clearly took a pen and traced over his signature written by someone else (probably George Spence) in pencil – supporting Donald Woodward's contention (*Men at Work*, 81-82) that "literacy was not essential for commercial success in early-modern England." Likewise, in 1722, the Committee encouraged pauper apprentice Joseph Adams (indentured to the Company in 1705 at the age of five) to learn to write, "whereby you may be capable of Preferment," although Adams had already served the winter of 1721/22 as trader on the Eastmain; he was later Chief Factor at Albany from 1730 to 1737. Brown, 25; *Letters*, 33n. For reference to Adams at Eastmain, see Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1722, A. 11/2, fo. 42.

[458]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), n.d. [1725], *Letters*, 113.

[459]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 7 August 1731, *Letters*, 158. Cheeseman also went on woodcutting expeditions, but his activities beyond the factory walls did not detract from his skill at the forge, "he being one of the best of his employ as ever served your honours." Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 17 August 1733, *Letters*, 189.

Not all tradesmen were willingly so versatile. Bricklayer James Norton (probably a brother of Richard Norton) almost consistently refused to work at anything but his trade after his transfer from Fort Prince of Wales to Moose in 1734, and was seen as a bad influence on other men: William Bevan remarked in his journal that he would "whip and pickle him if it was not on his brothers & Govr. Macklishes Families Acct."[460]

Of course, competence in one's trade was also expected. Shipwright David Peters was engaged from the *Hudson's Bay* for land service at Albany in 1727, but seems not to have been worth the £36 he received per annum. In 1729, Joseph Myatt requested that Peters be recalled upon the expiration of his contract in 1730, "he being a very Weakly man" and unable to do his job properly. Peters did go home in 1730, accompanied by Joseph Adams' description of him as "Deficient in his Buisness [*sic*] and not fit for your Honours Service."[461] Thomas McCliesh Jr complained in 1732 that his carpenter, John Taylor, "understands but little of the carpenter's trade."[462] Richard Norton requested a new shipwright for Fort Prince of Wales in 1737 because John Spurle, "[t]he person now come over is not only a weakly person but...ignorant and unqualified for...the...repairs of our craft."[463]

Negative comments, like positive ones, more often focussed on attitude or

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[460]*Letters*, 210n; also see Thomas McCliesh Jr, William Bevan, & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 24 August 1735, *Letters*, 209-210. Richard Norton was married to McCliesh's daughter: Brown, 33. James Norton was sent home in 1735.

[461]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1729, A. 11/2, fo. 64d; Joseph Adames (Albany) to HBC (London), 28 August 1730, A. 11/2, fo. 69.

[462]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 17 August 1732, *Letters*, 169.

[463]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 23 August 1737, *Letters*, 240.

behaviour rather than skill or ability. In 1717, James Knight complained that his work at Churchill was being hampered "by the folly & Neglect of Men for want of Doeing thare Duty."[464] Armourer Farmery Kirke was "very lazy" in 1724, and in 1725 Richard Staunton described homeward-bound labourers Richard Millechamp, William Gutteridge, Henry Doughty, John Cox, and John Page as "not wourthy to come any More into your Country."[465] In 1726, Myatt asked the Committee to call home mariner James Miller for being "Monsterous Wiked and Disobediant to Comm[an]ds."[466] In 1729, Myatt complained about the "Monstrouse" behaviour of former apprentice Allen Fox at Eastmain: "its Certain he was as Stout Strong man as any we had in the Country, but to take him Otherways, a Surly, Sottish, Ill Natured Fellow."[467]

Unsuitable and undesirable men had also been a problem in wartime, but the Committee and its factors felt more at liberty to cull them from the labour force after 1713. Richard Staunton blamed criticisms of Joseph Myatt's management of Albany on "Envey, from men of an uneasie temper and turbulant Spirit wch will not be Easy under any command, here being some of the same temper still Remaining wch your Honrs will

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[464]Kenney, 112.

[465]Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1724, A. 11/2, fo. 51d. Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 24 August 1725, A. 11/2, fo. 53. In 1723, Staunton referred to Cox as a "Barber" (Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 48d), but the Officers' and Servants' Ledger listed Cox as a labourer (A. 16/1, p. 9).

[466]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fo. 57.

[467]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1729, A. 11/2, fo. 66. In this passage, Myatt also defended William Bevan (sloopmaster in charge of Eastmain) against charges of "Unhansome" behaviour which Myatt expected Fox to make when he got back to London.

be pleased to Remove In Due time."[468] Factors wanted to rid themselves of troublemakers and malcontents, but they did not want to be left short-handed. In 1728, for example, Thomas McCliesh Jr asked the Committee to replace labourers Robert Chambers and Robert Blackburn – "I am persuaded that many honester men than the said Chambers and Blackbun [*sic*] has been hanged at Tyburn" – and explained that he would have sent them home that year but there was so much work to be done he needed all the hands he could get.[469] In 1736, mariner John Evans was engaged for the northern slooping voyages, but as he was "discontented, and we apprehend may prove a seditious, troublesome fellow," Richard Norton sent him home from Fort Prince of Wales in the same year.[470] Sometimes, men once considered desirable came to be seen as troublemakers: in 1726, Myatt and Staunton sent home four men who "are noways fitt for yr Service being turbelent Sottish Men," including Charles Napper and Samuel Wolfe, both of whom Myatt and Staunton had earlier praised for their usefulness.[471]

While 'unfit' men could be removed from the labour force before their contracts were complete, Bayside factors cautioned the Committee against using this tactic too

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[468]Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 46.

[469]Chambers and Blackburn had "run out more than their wages by changing and trafficking amongst themselves unknown to me" and, along with fellow labourer James Broadbent, "has been guilty of trading with the natives, likewise stealing furs out of the warehouse." Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 8 August 1728, *Letters*, 133, 134.

[470]Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 17 August 1736, *Letters*, 215.

[471]The other two men were cooper Thomas Horn and mariner James Miller. Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fo. 57. Only the year before, Staunton had reaffirmed his belief that Napper was a "Sober & Carefull Man": Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 24 August 1725, A. 11/2, fo. 53d.

often. Joseph Myatt did not complain when Allen Fox was recalled after only two years of his contract, but he feared that it might "Encourage other Sorry fellows to to [*sic*] persue the Same Measures."[472] He may have been remembering tailor William Mackay, whose entreaties to go home in 1726 grew so troublesome that York Governor Thomas McCliesh Jr sent him home in 1727.[473]

Another reason for the Committee to hesitate before recalling men was the incomplete information at their disposal. As in earlier periods, the paths along which information flowed back and forth across the Atlantic could be used to misrepresent men for good or for ill. James Knight complained from York in 1716 that the Committee "have had some misinformation against me, or have conceived some groundless opinion of my extravagancy."[474] Throughout the 1720s, Joseph Myatt at Albany tried to defend himself against charges of harshness made against him in London: despite the support of senior officers like Richard Staunton, complaints about his behaviour seem to have dogged him to the end of his days.[475] Myatt's own experiences probably influenced his

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[472]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1729, A. 11/2, fo. 66. Fox completed his apprenticeship in 1727 and signed a contract that year at £14 per annum, but it is unclear whether the contract was for three or five years: see A. 16/2, p. 9.

[473]MacKay offered to pay £10 for his passage (twice what servants were usually charged for their passages to and from the Bay in such cases): Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1727, *Letters*, 128.

[474]The Committee had asked for a weekly account of York's expenditure of provisions. Knight replied, "I beg the favour of you to recall me rather than to let me lie under any suspicion to make you uneasy, for the little insignificant things you have put upon me is enough to employ me to take me off all other business. And if I do not do it then I lie liable to be charged hereafter for a breach of your orders." James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 17 September 1716, *Letters*, 60.

[475]In his last letter to London, Myatt assured the Committee that the new recruits "Shall find nothing but Civil Usage from me, it being Contrary to my Nature to Treat any man with Morrossness or Ill manners." Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1729, A. 11/2, fo. 65.

sympathy for former carpenter and shipwright Walter Long, who left Albany in 1721 after seven years of service: Myatt observed in 1729 that James Bay had not seen a better workman than Long, "and who Ever he was that Callumnized [Long]...did him Great Injustice, for I Know him to be a very Sober Honest Man and Scorns to be Guilty of those Little Pittifull Actions which he was Charged with."[476] Likewise, Joseph Isbister complained to the Committee in 1742 of "false Informations you have received, charging us with detestable Crimes, which we do abhor and shall never be guilty of, and doubt not but that all such scandalous and malicious Informations, which arise from their being keept strickt to their Work."[477] The following year, Isbister and his Council defended themselves against an accusation that they had murdered a Cree woman whom Albany had been supporting for several years "as an Object of Charity." They declared that "we are extremely concerned, Yr Honrs should receive Impressions, so unnatural and cruel, so inconsistent with our former Characters, from Persons so avowed, so discontented att our Conduct, as make it very difficult to serve Yr Honrs with that Ardour & Integrity that we had prescribed to ourselves as a Rule."[478]

Conclusion

Stability and security removed the need for the military discipline of wartime.

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[476]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1729, A. 11/2, fo. 64d.

[477]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 9 August 1742, A. 11/2, fos. 110-110d.

[478]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 18 August 1743, A. 11/2, fos. 114-114d. The following year, Isbister accused Alexander Light (sloopmaster and trader at the Eastmain, who had gone home in 1743) of purposely making errors in the packing of the Eastmain returns "in order to prejudice us." Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1744, A. 11/2, fo. 120.

Although the Committee and their factors had always exhorted servants to get along, this was now expressed in terms of neighbourliness rather than duty. Like householders in Britain, Bayside factors and the London Committee sought to maintain sobriety, industry and decorum. Even as Fort Prince of Wales was being built as a defensive fortification, the Company's establishments were becoming more recognisable as household-workplaces.

The post-Utrecht period of stability was marked by small but important changes in recruitment practice – particularly the more regular engagement of Orkneymen from the late 1720s onward – without any apparent formation of an explicit recruitment policy. Although the slow but steady expansion of Company operations imposed greater regularity on existing *ad hoc* methods, the Company's labour needs did not expand rapidly enough to place undue strain on those methods. Recruitment after 1714 remained very much a combination of what was actual, what was possible, and what was necessary.

This period of cautious consolidation and rebuilding, so reminiscent of the Company's early days, can be said to have ended in 1743. That year, Joseph Isbister at Albany established Henley House at the junction of the Albany and Kenogami Rivers, about 180 miles upriver from the factory. He envisioned it as "a garison on ye fruntter," which would drive French competitors out of Albany's hinterland, and would act as a rest station for Natives travelling to and from the Bay.[479] The Committee restricted trade at Henley to guns, powder, shot, cloth, and tobacco, and that only when the river was

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[479]Quoted in John A. Alwin, "The Uncelebrated Boats of the Albany," *The Beaver* 305/4 (Spring 1975), 48; also see Alwin, 51.

frozen; trade during seasons of open water was permissible only when it was clear that the Natives would trade with the French rather than go down to Albany.[480]

Henley's first master, mariner William Isbister (Joseph's brother), asked to be on the same footing as sloopmasters, presumably equating Henley with Albany's other seasonal outpost, Eastmain (where William had served before this move inland).[481] However, service inland was fundamentally different from service at Eastmain or anywhere else in Hudson Bay. The new demands placed on servants – particularly the transport of goods and furs up and down the Albany River in wooden boats,[482] and the long periods spent away from the familiar shores of the Bay – required that 'extraordinary' labour become 'ordinary'. The Committee discovered that this could only be done with 'encouragement', the slow pace of which hampered the Company's inland ventures into the 1780s.

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[480]"A Book of Instructions with the Standard of Trade for Henly House in the Year of our Lord 1751 William Lamb Master," A. 11/3, fo. 12; also see Alwin, 51.

[481]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1744, A. 11/2, fo. 121 Most of his service before he took charge of Henley was on the *Eastmain* sloop. He settled for a three-year contract at £30 (rather than the £40 or £50 usually paid to sloopmasters): Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1745, A. 11/2, fo. 124d. Also see G.E. Thorman, "Isbister, William," *DCB* III, 301.

[482]Albany boats (the first of which was designed by Joseph Isbister in 1745 and launched the following year) were intended to reduce the Company's reliance on birchbark canoes and on the Native labour required to build and maintain them. Albany boats differed from the later York boats in being of a simpler design and in having a flat bottom instead of a keel. Alwin, 49.

CHAPTER 5

EXPERIMENTATION, 1743-1782

French traders based in the St Lawrence valley expanded deep into the western interior during the 1730s, particularly under the leadership of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Verendrye. Joseph Isbister took the struggle against French competition into Albany's hinterland by building Henley House in 1743. This inland venture was not entirely novel, of course, as it drew upon contemporary experiences of coastal trade expansion along both the western and the eastern shores of Hudson Bay, and the older voyages of Henry Kelsey and William Stuart. However, Henley marked the beginning of the HBC's increasing involvement in the interior. This placed new demands on a small number of its servants, although those numbers began to grow after 1754 as the Company began sending men inland to winter with Native groups (thus regularizing what had previously been practised only sporadically). The problems created by these new conditions of inland travel and trade foreshadowed developments after the construction of the Company's first inland trading post in 1774, but the expanding horizons of HBC operations in the 1750s also raised immediate obstacles to the maintenance of a sufficient and effective workforce.

Henley House was the earliest and clearest indication that the Company was taking innovative approaches to defending and expanding its trade, but it was not the only one in this period. The construction of Flamborough House on the lower Nelson River in 1749 was meant to fend off renewed interest from English interlopers. Fort Richmond,

established on Richmond Gulf in 1750 (with a mining operation proposed for nearby Little Whale River) was an extension of a long-standing commitment to expanding and diversifying the Company's trade on the eastern shores of Hudson Bay.[483] From 1771, Company servants began occupying Eastmain House year-round for the first time – although the sloop's crew still made up two thirds of the 12-man complement – and in 1776 a small house was built at the mouth of Rupert River after 90 years of HBC absence from that site.[484] Although Richmond and Flamborough both closed in 1759, outposts like these required HBC servants to spend more time away from the main factories, an experience that became increasingly common after 1774.

The Company's labour force also expanded in size towards the end of this period. This was due primarily to the construction of new trading posts, as most of the Bayside posts were augmented only slightly. York, which had fewer than 30 men in the mid-eighteenth century, had (including its dependencies) a complement of 100 in 1782: 34

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[483]The miners were primarily looking for copper or lead, but explored the area around the mine for any kind of ore: see Richard Beech, Richard Parry, & Humphrey Parry (Richmond) to HBC (London), 28 August 1749, A. 11/57, fo. 4. There may, in fact, have been more than one active mine in the Little Whale River area: see John Potts & Council (Richmond) to HBC (London), 3 September 1750, A. 11/57, fo. 7d. Potts sent the three miners home in 1751 because the venture was not meeting expectations: John Potts & Council (Richmond) to HBC (London), 15 August 1751, A. 11/57, fos. 10, 12. The most complete discussion of Richmond House is Francis & Morantz, 65-78.

[484]This expansion of Albany's operations alarmed both the Moose Fort Council (who feared that the Rupert River post in particular would draw traders and hunters away from Moose) and the Albany Council themselves (who feared that the Committee was not assigning sufficient numbers of hands to man and supply all of their outposts). In 1779, the Committee made Eastmain and Rupert River dependencies of Moose, leaving Albany to concentrate on its inland houses, Henley and Gloucester. In 1781, the Committee increased Eastmain's complement to 16 because the new sloop being used on James Bay was larger and required a crew of ten (the old one had needed eight). See *Moose Fort Journals*, 334-337. Also see Francis & Morantz, 79-81, 101-102. For a brief history of Rupert House, see *Moose Fort Journals*, 344-346.

men at the factory itself, 16 at Severn, and 50 men inland.[485] Fort Prince of Wales, however, was greatly reduced after construction work subsided in the 1750s, its complement of 39 in 1782 almost half of what it had been during the 1730s.[486]

This period of expansion ended with the capture and destruction of Fort Prince of Wales and York Fort by French warships in August 1782: neither factory put up any resistance, and there is no record of casualties.[487] However, the attacks cost the Company considerably in the loss of goods and furs, and left the men inland from York reliant on their Canadian competitors for survival under 1784. The attacks also coincided with the arrival of smallpox in the western interior: the Company received the first reports of the approaching epidemic at Hudson House on 22 October 1781.[488] Although the Englishmen did not suffer much from "that Devouring Disorder"[489] directly, the high

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[485]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, lxxx. For a more detailed analysis of the steadily growing size of York's complement, from 23 in 1725 to 60 in 1775, see Payne, 46.

[486]Construction on Fort Prince of Wales began in 1731, slowed down in the 1750s, was resumed with some energy in the 1760s, and was officially completed in 1771: for the changing size of the factory's complement during this period, see Payne, 48. The black whale fishery at the mouth of the Churchill River temporarily increased the size of Fort Prince of Wales' garrison – in 1766, the Committee fixed the factory's complement at 66 – but that venture did not answer expectations and was abandoned in 1772. See A. 1/42, fos. 167-167d.

[487]For a discussion of the French attacks, see Glyndwr Williams (ed.), *Hudson's Bay Miscellany 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1975), 77-80; also see "Remarks Betwixt Churchill Fort and York Fort on their being Taken by the French A.D. 1782 by An Officer," *Miscellany*, 81-94. These were not the only Company posts lost in 1782: on the night of 12/13 January, Henley House was destroyed by an accidental fire. John Luitit, James Rowland, and Robert Cromartie died in the blaze, and three other nearly froze to death, having escaped from the house with only minimal clothing. In reporting the accident to Matthew Cocking at York, Thomas Hutchins at Albany called Henley "the most unfortunate place in the Country": see Williams, *Miscellany*, 87n.

[488]Hudson House journal, 22 October 1781, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 262.

[489]William Tomison "received the Disagreeable News of that Devouring Disorder the small pox rageing amongst the Natives, & is carrying all off before It, wherever it Comes & God knowes what will be the End thereof." Cumberland journal, 17 December 1781, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 225.

death toll among the Natives seriously disrupted trade and deprived both the Englishmen and the Canadians of provisioners: by February 1782, William Tomison at Cumberland House could only feed his men fish and flour, while William Walker at Hudson House lacked even those basic foodstuffs.[490]

Henley House

The Company's experiences with Henley House illuminate some of the assumptions and expectations held by the Committee, factors, and servants. Attacks on the post in 1754 and in 1759, as well as the aftermath of those attacks, set Henley apart from other HBC establishments of its period. The destruction of Henley and the Company's attempts to re-establish it generated two divergent responses on the part of the servants at Albany. While some men declared their devotion to the Company and its interests, others took the occasion to openly place their own interests ahead of the Company's. The resulting jockeying for position, favour, and advancement was complex and not always clear, but the records of it reveal much more than most Bayside documents about what Company servants believed was appropriate behaviour towards their master.

In 1743, Joseph Isbister established Henley House at the junction of the Albany

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[490]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, lxi. In the same month, Tomison sent seven men from Cumberland to Hudson House because he could not feed them, and complained that smallpox had taken all the Natives who built canoes for him as well as all those who were in debt to his post. William Tomison (Cumberland) to William Walker (Hudson House), 19 February 1782, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 237-239. Walker observed that the epidemic was proving "very detrimental to Our Affairs" and suggested that "this will give the Canadian Traders a trial and let us know whether they be Substantial Men or No." Hudson House journal, 29 November 1781, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 268.

and Kenogami Rivers (about 180 miles upriver from the factory), intending it to discourage French traders from settling in the area and as a rest station for Natives travelling to and from the Bay. His experiment seemed to have met a tragic end in December 1754, when a band of Lowland Cree attacked and killed the five men stationed at Henley – Master William Lamb, and labourers Robert Ash, Daniel Bowland, George Gun, and James Short.[491] Isbister (encouraged by the suspicions of the Lowland Cree who brought the first reports to Albany in March 1755) initially blamed the French rather than the Natives, who he felt had been either "Seduced and Corrupted...or employd."[492]

In fact, the primary instigator of the attack was Wappesiss (or Woudby), a long-time Upland Cree trading 'captain' at Albany. He had enjoyed many privileges at Albany under George Spence (1747-53), including largely unrestricted access to the factory and its provisions, but when Isbister returned to command he greatly curtailed those privileges and thus alienated Wappesiss. At Henley, William Lamb similarly denied Wapesiss easy access to the house and its food supply, even though Lamb (like Isbister at Albany) kept two Cree women in the house as his companions. These women were Wapesiss' daughter and daughter-in-law, yet Lamb failed to recognize the social obligations that these relationships put him under. After suffering what he viewed as grave insults for more than a year, Wapessis and his extended family visited Henley in December 1754, were given one night's food and lodging by Lamb, and then were told to

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[491]The most complete discussion of the 1754 attack and its consequences is Charles A. Bishop, "The Henley House Massacres," *The Beaver* 307/2 (Autumn 1976), 36-41.

[492]B. 3/a/47, fos. 25-25d, meeting of Albany council recorded in Albany journal, 8 March 1755; Baker, 62.

pitch a tent outside the walls of Henley. The next day, they killed Lamb and the four men under his command.

In June 1755, Wappesiss and his sons, Shenap and Snuff the Blanket, were examined at Albany by a makeshift tribunal – Isbister and his council, surgeon George Rushworth and shipwright John Fairfowl – in the presence of Albany's entire complement of twenty-one men. The Albany council passed a sentence of death on the three men in custody and (in absentia) on three others implicated by Wappesiss during the 'trial': the sentence was signed by every man at Albany, twenty-four signatures and marks in all.[493] Isbister then waited to hear the opinion of the council at Moose, who replied that "it must be very displeasing to one of a tender & compassionate nature, but Blood requires Blood."[494] Isbister received their approval of his decision on 21 June and proceeded with the execution the same day.[495]

The deaths at Henley were a real shock to the men of Albany, and to all Bayside servants. The fact that Lamb's behaviour had precipitated this violence was not lost on

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[493]"The Examination and Confession of Wappasiss Alias Woudby and his two sons Shanap and Young Snuff ye Blanket when taken by Mr Joseph Isbister Mr Geo Rushworth John Fairfould [Fairfowl] and in the presence of Twenty One Men belonging to Albany Fort June ye 7th Anno 1755..." A. 11/2, fos. 165-166. Albany Council, 12 June 1755, A. 11/2, fos. 167-167d. This appears to have been part of Isbister's management 'style.' In 1742, he explained to the Committee that he and the warehousekeeper handled the packing of each year's furs "in the presence of all the People in the Factory:" Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 9 August 1742, A. 11/2, fo. 110.

[494]Henry Pollexfen (Moose) to Joseph Isbister (Albany), 18 June 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 171.

[495]Despite the precautions Isbister took in trying to distribute responsibility, his judicial experiment (particularly the application of capital punishment) was an important factor in his recall to Britain in 1756: the Committee expressed regret at the loss of Henley (for which they blamed Lamb) and concern for Isbister's safety, "As we find the Indians are greatly exasperated at the Execution of the Assassins, for which reason we have thought it necessary to Recall you, especially as your Contracted time will be expired and you seemed Desirous to return." HBC (London) to Joseph Isbister (Albany), 12 May 1756, A. 5/1, fo. 13d.

other factors. At York, James Isham instructed Joseph Smith and Joseph Waggoner (who departed in 1756 to winter inland with a band of "Sturgeon" Upland Cree) to "take particular Care not to be too Busy with the Indians Wives, so as to Create a misunderstanding, the contrary may be Your Own Ruin, and a great detriment to the Design You'r sent upon."[496] Not since the French attacks of the late seventeenth century had so many (five) HBC servants met so violent a death at the hands of other men: for the first time in living memory, the Company's employees as a group felt at risk. For some, the risk was too great, and in 1755 five Albany men – described by Isbister and his council as "disorderly resolute persons" – chose to abandon their contracts and return home immediately, despite being charged £5 each for the passage.[497] Of these five, three (labourer John Meyrick, smith Patrick Mulvey, and cooper James Cutmore) had only engaged the year before, while two (labourer Thomas Stephens and sawyer Thomas Eldridge Seddon) had engaged in 1753; for Stephens and Meyrick, the £5 charge for their passage home represented half a year's wages.

In the autumn of 1755, Albany surgeon George Rushworth wrote directly to the London Committee, explaining what had led to the destruction of Henley using the rhetoric of a humble servant convinced of his moral superiority over many of his fellow servants. He spoke very ill of Wappesiss, calling him a pirate (as Isbister had done), but

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[496]"Orders to Joseph Smith and Joseph Wagoner," 20 August 1756, A. 11/115, fo. 2d. It is unclear who the Sturgeon Indians were, but Isham's orders to Smith and Waggoner stated (fo. 2) that their "Head Captain... (Washiabutt by Name)...formerly brought 75 Cannoes, but of Late Years has dwindled away to Nothing and even this Year but 13 Cannoes." Also see Jean Baptiste de Larlee (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 22 August 1761, A. 11/3, fo. 51.

[497]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 13 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 179. Also see Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1756, A. 11/3, fo. 7d.

also chastised William Lamb for incautiously keeping two Native women in his quarters. Rushworth reported that he had recommended to Lamb casual rather than long-term relations with Native women, and then advised Lamb "to consider he was in a Enemies country, and not to set his door open to every Bunter [*i.e.* low, vulgar woman] but do justly in his dealings, Love Mercy and call upon his god. these things Wou'd inable him to Make a good Servant to the Company." Lamb (as reported by Rushworth) had excused his behaviour by observing that Isbister kept two women at Albany. Lamb's justification echoed that of surgeon and former Albany Chief George Spence, who said (according to Rushworth) that the Committee would not mind so long as trade remained strong. Rushworth also implicated sloopmaster John Yarrow and other unnamed men in this disregard for Company expectations of chastity.

Isbister fared no better in the letter: Rushworth used Lamb to mention Isbister's two female companions as providing a justification for lower-ranking men eschewing the chastity ideally expected of servants in early modern households. Rushworth presented himself as defending Isbister, while doing the Chief more harm than good by saying that he could not explain why Isbister was so unpopular with Natives as he was always very kind to them. Rushworth then forestalled possible criticisms of his own behaviour by saying, "I hope for the future All Englishmen will take this for a warning; And that your Honours will put a Total Stop to that Way of Proseedings [harbouring women] how can I, or aney Man Chastise aney person for a folt When at the same time I am Guilty of that Error My Self." He concluded by urging the Committee to send him to rebuild Henley – having cast aspersions on most of the other men who might have been considered for

such an assignment – and promising to protect both the Company's and the nation's interests by driving the French from the field.[498]

The Committee had every intention of re-establishing Henley House. The following year, 1756, they responded directly to Rushworth, offering him the command of the new Henley (once he had rebuilt it) but also mentioning that "we saw plainly you were not very Conversant" in keeping accounts.[499] Rushworth thanked his employers by promising to attack any French trading posts that might be built on the Albany River: "give Me a power I will not leave one french dog upon this River as fur [far], above Henley, as to it."[500] The Albany council remarked sourly that Isbister had been the only man at Albany to propose re-occupying Henley,[501] implying that Rushworth had deliberately by-passed his commanding officer in an effort to advance his own prospects and/or that Isbister was trying to protect his own prospects at the expense of Rushworth's. Albany's complement was increased from 24 to 40 to allow for the resettlement of Henley, but the supply ship was late that year and the essential provisions had not been prepared.

In 1757, a new expedition was prepared but encountered almost universal resistance from the servants. Robert Temple, who succeeded Isbister in command of

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[498]George Rushworth (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 8 September 1755, A. 11/2, fos. 173-174d.

[499]"It was not owing to an Ill Opinion we had of your Conduct that we sent over another Accountant to relieve you, but from an Apprehension that Officiating as Second, Surgeon and Accountant might be too much for you to go through especially as we saw plainly you were not very Conversant in the latter." HBC (London) to George Rushworth (Albany), private, 12 May 1756, A. 5/1, fo. 14.

[500]George Rushworth (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 8 September 1756, A. 11/3, fo. 3.

[501]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1756, A. 11/3, fo. 7d.

Albany, had in 1756 anticipated that men would be reluctant to resettle Henley,[502] and this was precisely what he found. Because he recorded in great detail each servant's response to his orders to go upriver, it is possible to compare those responses and what they reveal about the men's expectations. He also recorded the steps he took to try to overcome their reluctance.

Temple's official efforts at persuading his men began on 30 May 1757, when he "thought it necessary to call them up one by one" before himself, John Fairfowl, and carpenter George Clark to find out which men had resolved not to go to Henley "and what reasons they can give for such denial of Duty."

> The men was called one by one & we proceeded, first of all I read part of the fourteenth Paragraph of your General Letter beginning at that part; And we strictly order that ten or twelve men under the Command of Mr Rushworth & so on, then they told their Resolutions for or against & their reasons which you have below, Then I took the Contract & read to them beginning at I do oblige my Self to Stay according to the aforesaid limited time & so on[503]

Seventeen of the twenty-four men questioned refused to go to Henley, all but one of them citing fear of being killed as their primary motivation (labourer George Taylor simply said he would not go on any account). The most remarkable of these responses was that of labourer and bricklayer Thomas Austin, who "Says he will not Serve under Mr Rushworth & that Mr Rushworth has said that Annussett one of the Murderers [convicted in absentia in 1755] lay fourteen nights in ambush with intention to shoot the aforesaid

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[502]Robert Temple (Albany) to HBC (London), 7 September 1756, A. 11/3, fos. 1-1d.

[503]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 17.

Thos Austin, this was before that unfortunate affair att Henley."[504] No reason was given why Annussett would have wanted to kill Austin.

Of the eight men who expressed a willingness to go upriver, three (labourer Thomas Halcro, writer John Favell, and John Butler) said that they would comply with the Company's orders, possibly implying a reluctance to do so but a greater reluctance to disobey. This may also have been the former apprentice Guy Warwick's motivation in agreeing only to help with the boats to and from Henley. One man (mariner John Banks) simply said he was willing to go; one (labourer Thomas Joplin) was willing to go but would not serve under Rushworth; and one (labourer James Stinson) ostentatiously declared that "he will do any thing for the Company's Interest."[505]

Another council was called on 6 June, at which each man was asked again if he would comply with the Company's orders to resettle Henley. At least some of the men had evidently spent the intervening week discussing their options. This time, only labourer George Ballentine still refused to go under any conditions, claiming that he had served at Henley under Lamb and "was very nigh loosing his life by the late ill Management at Henley and is afraid it will be the Same."[506] Several other men's responses remained largely unchanged: Banks, Butler, Favell, and Stinson were still willing to go; Joplin still had no objection to Henley but refused to serve under

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[504]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 18.

[505]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 17d.

[506]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 18d.

Rushworth; and Warwick was still interested only in helping with the boats.

Most men, however, were now willing to go upriver under certain conditions. Six men besides Joplin were willing to serve at Henley but not under Rushworth, while labourer Thomas Clouston was willing to serve for £20 per annum under Rushworth or for £10 per annum under any other master. Four men demanded at least £20 per annum and eight demanded at least £20 per annum plus a pension of some kind for their families in case they were killed. Thomas Halcro agreed to go if at least five hands were assigned to Henley.[507]

The men's dislike of Rushworth was much more noticeable on 6 June than it had been a week earlier. The men's responses suggest that Rushworth sabotaged his own chances for command with some ill-judged comments to several servants. Three men reported that Rushworth had expressed the opinion that any man going to Henley for less than £20 per annum "ought to be hang'd;" three reported that Rushworth had claimed that Temple planned to turn any men refusing to go to Henley out of the factory without provisions; and two reported that Rushworth declared his willingness to shoot a man for cowardice.[508] Why Rushworth made such comments is unknown but the results were clear: they discouraged men who were already reluctant to go to Henley (especially if under his command), and they undermined his own prospects for advancement. Temple decided to pass over Rushworth in favour of George Clark, to whom the men assented,

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[507]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fos. 18-19d.

[508]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fos. 18-19d..

though without reducing their demands. However, Temple had no authority to agree to wage increases or pensions, so the resettlement of Henley was postponed again.[509]

Little changed after the council of 6 June. A third council, held on 15 August, recommended that the men with wage and/or pension demands go to Henley and trust the Committee to consider their conditions and possibly offer them gratuities: Temple assured them that "when it Was left in Such a Manner...Your Honours had allways Considered, & rewarded handsomely." The suggestion was not well received, however, and two men (Butler and Joplin, both of whom had previously expressed a willingness to go to Henley) announced their intentions of going home at the expiration of their contracts the following year.[510] A fourth council three days later reported that labourer/sawyer Joseph Downs[511] and labourer/netmaker John Farrant from the sloop and three men from the supply ship (both of which had just arrived at Albany) were willing to go to Henley, but the council's plan to send them upriver with Banks, Favell, Halcro and Stinson (who had never objected to going to Henley) under Rushworth's command was unfeasible because the river was too low to accommodate the boats so late in the summer.

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[509]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 19d. Clark was no stranger to service in isolated and vulnerable outposts: he had been serving at Whale River House in February 1754 when Inuit raided the house: see John Potts (Richmond) to Thomas White (Moose) and Joseph Isbister (Albany), 15 March 1754, A. 11/2, fos. 152-156d.

[510]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 20. The Albany Council were not unhappy to see Joplin depart: "he has this Ship time lay'd one night out of the Factory we think him an improper Person to be Continued." Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 25.

[511]Although assigned to the sloop, the council minutes described Downs as a good sawyer: Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 21. Downs had been apprenticed to the Company 1750-57 and served as a labourer from 1757 until his death on 29 August 1764: A. 16/3, fos. 75, 112; A. 16/4, fo. 18.

It is unclear when or why Clark was dropped from consideration, but he had made it clear at the fourth council that he refused to serve under Rushworth. A weary council postponed the resettlement of Henley until the following year and recommended that the Company hire men specifically for inland service.[512]

If Temple's aim in recording his efforts in so detailed a manner had been to demonstrate to his employers that he had done his utmost in trying to carry out their instructions, he was not very successful. The 1758 letter from London expressed the Committee's disappointment that he had not been able to re-occupy Henley "notwithstanding the full and positive Orders we gave on that head in 1756 which we think you ought to have Compelled a thorough Compliance with the danger pretended...is not real but imaginary...and whomsoever shall refuse to obey your Orders on this head or shall instigate any of our Servants there to, will incur Our highest displeasure and most certainly be punished for so Notorious a breach of their Contract."[513] Four men (labourers Robert Lisk, William Linklater, and Peter Knight; and tailor Nichol Spence) had indeed been sent home in 1757 for refusal of duty in refusing to go to Henley, while three others (Butler, Joplin, and George Ballentine) chose not to renew their contracts.[514]

Henley House was not re-established until May 1759, when George Clark, mariner William Ward, thirteen other servants and two Homeguard Cree set off upriver

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[512]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 21.

[513]HBC (London) to Robert Temple (Albany), 23 May 1758, A. 5/1, fo. 23d.

[514]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 25.

from Albany.[515] The summer went smoothly, but in September came news of fresh disaster. Two "Henly Boats" set out with supplies for the outpost, but returned the next day, "having met with James Inkster, and John Cromartie who told them that Mr Clark was Shot Dead and John Spence wounded in the Thigh, who they had left at a place called the fishing Creek about half way to Henly."[516] The house had been attacked by as many as 40 unidentified Natives (probably allied with the French), intent on plunder.[517] In early October, two Homeguard Cree ("Chubby" and "old Capucheen") brought Clark's body back to Albany, and he was buried with ceremony: "hoisted the Colours; Read the funeral Service, and fired five Guns over the Grave."[518] Henley was not re-established until 1766.

The negotiations of 1757 were repeated in 1764, when Humphrey Marten (newly installed at Albany) was instructed to resettle Henley. Again, most of the men refused to

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[515]Albany journal, 24 May 1759, B. 3/a/51, fo. 51; John S. Long, "In Search of Mr. Bundin: Henley House 1759 Revisited," in David H. Pentland (ed.), *Papers of the Twenty-Sixth Algonquian Conference* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1995), 205. Ward was listed in the Albany Officers' and Servants' Ledger as a sailor between 1756 and 1759 (A. 16/3, fo. 111; A. 16/4, fo. 17), but Temple described him in 1758 as "a Boat Builder by Trade and a very handy Young fellow": Robert Temple and Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 25 September 1758, A. 11/3, fo. 30d. He returned home in the summer of 1759, when Temple called him "A young Man that has behaved well, and been very usefull to Us." Robert Temple and Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 September 1759, A. 11/3, fo. 35.

[516]B. 3/a/52, fo. 2d, Albany journal, 23 September 1759; Long, "Mr. Bundin," 207. An unsigned letter to HBC (London), 17 September 1759, A. 11/3, fo. 41, detailed the attack on that house, including the death of George Clark, the wounding and bravery of John Spence, the brave defending by James Inkster and John Cromartie, and Inkster bravely leading the escape. Cromartie was later "render'd unfit for your Honours Service" by a ruptured hernia and had to go home in 1765: Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 15 August 1765, A. 11/3, fo. 80d.

[517]Bishop, 41; Lytwyn, *Little North*, 8. Jean Baptiste de Larlee (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 22 August 1761, A. 11/3, fo. 51, blamed the French for this attack on Henley, particularly three men named Boije, Alen Lequout, & Cadotete. Long, "Mr. Bundin," 203-225, discusses the 1759 attack in detail, incorporating some Cree oral history.

[518]Albany journal, 8 October 1759, B. 3/a/52, fo. 4; Long, "Mr. Bundin," 207.

go, but this time there were no wage demands or complaints about who was going to be in charge. Of the 23 men asked by Marten and members of his council (outgoing Chief Factor Robert Temple and supply ship Captain John Horner), eight refused to go and ten declared that they would never go to Henley under any circumstances. Labourer (and former apprentice) William Allen and sloopman John Farrant agreed to assist with the boats but refused to stay at Henley (Farrant had been willing to stay inland in 1757 but, in 1765, he was willing to sign a three-year contract at his current wages if he could serve at Moose); carpenter Thomas Pope was prepared to help construct a new building "to oblige your Honors" but would not remain inland; labourer John Stone (who had just arrived in Hudson Bay) would go if ordered; labourer David Ross only agreed to go "after much Perswation & threatning." The only unreservedly positive response was that of sawyer John Reeves, who "Says tho' he is Fifty Eight Years of age he will Venture his Life, to saw the Wood."[519]

Robert Temple probably informed Marten of his own experiences in 1757 and the chastisement he had received in 1758. The 1764 Albany mail packet included a brief letter from the Albany council, including Temple, Captain John Horner, and surgeon William Richards: "We whose Names are under written do declare that Mr Humphrey Marten, in Our hearing, has endeavoured by Perswation, by Entreaty, and by Threats, to get a sufficient Number of Hands to go to Henly...but notwithstanding his utmost Efforts

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[519]"The Honble Hudsons Bay Companys Servants having refused to go to build a House at Henly the following are their answares on that head" (Albany), n.d. [summer 1764], A. 11/3, fos. 65-66. For Farrant, see Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 15 August 1765, A. 11/3, fo. 80d.

could not prevail."[520] Marten's own letter to the Committee also lamented their failure to gather enough men for Henley.

> I tould them the disobeying orders, was a breach of Contract...I tould them it was Your Honours firm intention to reward each Man according to his Merrit by rewarding the Obedient, and punishing the disobedient I tould them it was now greatly in their Power to continue me in Your Honours Esteem, and that in case my well being had any sway with them, it would raise my Gratitude to such a pitch as would induce me rather to pinch my self rather than they s[h]ould want for any thing, I promised each Man that would go to Henly a Blanket, a pair of Cloth Stockings and a Leather Toggee [*i.e.* winter coat]...and now Gentlemen permit me humbly to throw my self on your Humanity and permit me to hope You will not be angry with me for the Falts of others[521]

Here in one paragraph was the whole range of managerial approaches to personnel issues: enforcing the legal and moral authority of the service contract; promising both monetary and non-monetary rewards; threatening punishment for misbehaviour; emphasizing reciprocal obligations; and ultimately appealing to the employer as a client appeals to a patron or a child to a father.

It is not clear whether some or all of the men who refused to go upriver at the first council in 1757 did so to seek better terms, or if the second council prompted some of the men to make the most of an unpleasant opportunity. Demands for higher wages and for pensions indicated that the men viewed service at Henley, an isolated and clearly vulnerable outpost,[522] as extraordinary, *i.e.* as going beyond the accepted terms of their engagement. Service there was seen as fundamentally different from service in a Bayside

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[520]Albany Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 15 August 1764, A. 11/3, fo. 67.

[521]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), 17 August 1764, A. 11/3, fos. 68-68d.

[522]Native traders told the English rumours that French traders were offering 30 MB (Made Beaver, or prime winter skins) for the scalp of an HBC trader. Long, "Mr. Bundin," 209; also see Bishop, 37.

factory, and the men required a guarantee of extra compensation for this, rather than trusting the Company to make it worth their while.

Although river transport was onerous,[523] the most significant difference between Henley and Albany was the element of danger. Only after the first incident at Henley did service there become a major issue between the Chief Factor and the servants. In 1764, after another death had increased the perceived danger (danger which the Committee insisted in 1758 was only perceived and not real), the strength of men's determination not to go inland seemed to have increased. In 1757, tailor George Harvey had said "he will not go up to Henley on any account Whatsoever by reason of the five mens death & does not know but he may meet with the Same Fate" and labourer Robert Miller and others refused, "being afraid of being killed by the Indians."[524] In 1764, labourer Charles Sinclear (who had been at Henley when Clark was killed in 1759) "Positively will not go, to Henly to run his head into the hands of the Enemy," (it was unclear whether "the Enemy" was Native or French, or perhaps both) and labourer James Thomson Sr "Says Positively he will not go, that you may as well tye him to a post and Shoot him."[525]

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[523]The dangers of transport to and from Henley were emphasised on 15 September 1766 when labourers John Stone and Daniel Bryan drowned while tracking the boats up to Henley (which had just been re-established). Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 September 1767, A. 11/3, fo. 106d; A. 16/4, fo. 46. It did, however, remove men from the watchful eyes of their factors more frequently than in earlier periods, and gave the men of Albany greater opportunities to appropriate Company goods for their own purposes. See, for instance, Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, September 1767, A. 11/3, fo. 111d; Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 25 August 1769, A. 11/3, fos. 126-127; Thomas Hopkins & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 28 August 1769, A. 11/3, fo. 130; Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 2 September 1770, A. 11/3, fo. 142d.

[524]Robert Temple and Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fos. 17-17d.

[525]"The Honble Hudsons Bay Companys Servants having refused to go to build a House at Henly the following are their answares on that head" (Albany), n.d. [summer 1764], A. 11/3, fo. 65.

The attitudes of labourer James Sabiston and others who in 1757 refused to go upriver for less than £20 per annum and a pension for their widows were probably not much different from men who took advantage of recruitment shortfalls or wartime conditions to re-engage for higher salaries. In 1764, the workers' statements were stronger. Labourer John Cromartie's declaration that "his Life is dearer to him than all the Money in the Country" (he had been at Henley in 1759) was echoed by others. Labourer William Shurie Jr and mariner/sawyer (and former apprentice) Joseph Downs knew firsthand the hardships to be endured at Henley; labourer John Spence had been wounded in the attack on Clark in 1759 and proclaimed that "no Money in England should cause him to go to Henly." Carpenter William Isbister "Says positively he will not go, he says had he known that he was to go to Henly, he would not have come to the Country"; labourer Thomas Tate claimed that the sight of Clark's body being brought home had frightened him too severely; labourer Robert Gaudy described Henley as having a bad character; tailor George Corner and labourer James Angusson pleaded age and infirmity; and labourer James Thomson Jr refused "because the Old hands are afraid to go."[526]

In both 1757 and 1764, the Albany servants clearly recognised the vulnerability of their master and of the factors who were dependent on the Committee's good opinion. Marten acknowledged their bargaining power when he complained in 1765 that his

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[526]"The Honble Hudsons Bay Companys Servants having refused to go to build a House at Henly the following are their answares on that head" (Albany), n.d. [summer 1764], A. 11/3, fos. 65-66. Of the six men whose times were out the following year, only mariner George Lisk – who appears to have served primarily on the Eastmain – was willing to sign a new contract, and Thomas Tate refused to sign the new contract he had been offered " for fere he should be sent to Henly." Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 18 August 1764, A. 11/3, fo. 73d.

further entreaties for men to go to Henley met with no greater success than before and indeed made him the target of unspecified abuse by some of his men (particularly Andrew Atkins).[527] This abuse counterbalanced the threats which Marten and his council admitted they had used to try to persuade men the previous summer. However, it also indicated that the men could probably have made the same kinds of demands which had been made in 1757 if they had wanted to (none of the 1764 men had been at Albany during the first two councils of 1757).

By the 1760s, the perceived demands of service at Henley had moved beyond the limits of what was generally considered appropriate by the men of Albany. None of the customary tools of negotiation used by the factors or by the Committee could change their minds. The attempts in 1757 and 1764 to re-establish Henley generated the most detailed evidence that we have for this period, concerning negotiations between the Company and its servants on the terms and issues of employment. Although the circumstances were obviously atypical, especially in the men's opportunity to negotiate more or less as a single group, the assumptions and expectations which they brought to those negotiations were representative of those prevalent in this period; they were the same assumptions and expectations that were challenged again after 1774.

Inland Wintering

Although ventures such as Henley, Flamborough, and Richmond may seem in

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[527]Humphrey Marten and Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 15 August 1765, A. 11/3, fo. 81d. Atkins – described by Marten as "a bad man" – went home in 1765: Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 15 August 1765, A. 11/3, fo. 80d.

hindsight to mark major shifts in policy regarding exploration and expansion, the Company's records at the time did not represent them as such. In particular, these outposts were never intended as distinct inland trading posts, as Cumberland House was in 1774. Of greater importance for the Company's trade was Anthony Henday's 1754/55 journey to the Saskatchewan River valley with a band of Upland Cree. This revived the Company's late-seventeenth-century efforts to send servants (singly or in pairs) to winter in the interior with bands of upland traders, and to encourage all Natives they met to trap furs (and to trade at the Bay) and not to go to war.

James Isham, whose *Observations on Hudson's Bay* (written at Fort Prince of Wales in 1743) helped revive interest in inland travel and expansion,[528] sent labourer and netmaker Anthony Henday inland from York to winter on the northern prairies in 1754/55 and again in 1759/60. Henday was the first of a series of trader-explorers, wintering in different areas and with different groups of Cree and Assiniboine. Although these men had a fundamentally different experience of Rupert's Land than did their

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[528]For Isham's thoughts on inland trading houses (at the head of Nelson River or on the lower Saskatchewan River), see E.E. Rich & A.M. Johnson (eds.), *James Isham's Observations on Hudsons Bay, 1743 and Notes and Observations on a Book Entitled A Voyage to Hudsons Bay in the Dobbs Galley, 1749* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1949), 67-69. He hoped that such outposts might dislodge the French from the Lake Winnipeg basin, but by the end of the decade, he had become less optimistic and more defensive in the face of public criticism of the HBC, and argued that the French could not be dislodged from Lake Winnipeg while Canada was still in their possession: *Isham's Observations*, 207, 209. Ironically, the French fur traders in the 1750s complained that their western posts could never flourish while the English were on the Bay: Rich, *History*, I, 525.

In 1755, Anthony Henday suggested to Isham that a settlement could be built on a lake up the Hayes River (B.239/a/40, fo. 43), but it is uncertain which lake Henday had in mind. Isham was intrigued, but the Committee was unconvinced: James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 2 September 1755, A.11.114, fos. 190-190d; HBC (London) to James Isham (York), 12 May 1756, A. 6/9, fos. 33d-34; HBC (London) to James Isham (York), 24 May 1756, A.5/1, fo. 15; James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 4 August 1756, A.11/114, fo. 194. Also see Humphrey Marten, "Journal of Our proceedings in Relation to A french Man [Jean Baptiste de Larlee] Who Came to York Fort June the 20th 1759," 21 June 1759, A.11/115, fo. 36d.

Bayside colleagues, they were as yet no more than an influential minority. Only fourteen men embarked on inland expeditions during the sixteen-year period 1754-1770 and no more than six were in the interior at the same time.[529]

The Bayside factors and the London Committee were pleased with the new inland policy.[530] James Isham emphasized (among other things) Anthony Henday's devotion to his employer's interests and his ability to promote those interests effectively.[531] In doing so, Isham could portray Henday's success as representative of his own efforts to advance the Company's interests. For instance, Henday attempted to return to the Earchithinue country in 1755 but returned when his English companion, apprentice William Grover, became "Jaded": Isham called this "a great disappointment in our proceedings, Captn Hendey being no Less Concerned than Myself being disappointed of an Undertaking he had so Good a prospect of success in."[532] Just as Isham's disappointment probably had as

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[529]In contrast to the post-1770 winterers, who included literate writers Matthew Cocking, Samuel Hearne and Peter Fidler, the early winterers were almost all labourers, who left behind few journals or other records, and who were more significant because of the Natives who accompanied them down to the Bay in the spring to trade than for anything they did at the factories.

[530]See, for example, HBC (London) to James Isham (York), 15 May 1760, A.6/9, fos. 128d-129. Isham was happy to take the credit, particularly as all of the early winterers were York Fort men: see James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 5 September 1760, A.11/115, fo.50d.

[531]Isham praised Anthony Henday for undergoing "not a little hardship...yet he proceeded on his Journey with a Resolution suitable to ye design he was Sent upon." James Isham's "Remarks" on Anthony Henday's inland journal, 1754-1755, B.239/a/40, fo. 38. Isham observed that Henday had been well received inland and that "he does Really believe if English were to go in Land for 2 or 3 years" they could bring many inland groups down to trade: B.239/a/40, fos. 40, 40d. Glyndwr Williams, "The Puzzle of Anthony Henday's Journal, 1754-5" *The Beaver* (Winter 1978), 56, has suggested that Henday deliberately suppressed and distorted some aspects of his journal, particularly regarding the willingness of the Earchithinues to come down to Hudson Bay. For the possible identity of the Earchithinues, see Belyea, 343-350.

[532]B.239/a/40, fo. 41. For Grover, see York Fort journal, 28 June and 2 July 1755, B. 239/a/39, fos. 32d-33.

much to do with the setback to his own ambitious plans as to the potential consequences for trade, Henday's disappointment may have been multi-faceted. He may have been upset about what it would mean for the Company's trade; he may have been upset about what his failure to return inland would mean for his own ambitions; and/or he may have regretted not getting to see friends or even a Cree wife. Overlapping interests and motivations made men's behaviour difficult to interpret.

The efforts of Henday and his fellows coincided with the beginning of the Seven Years' War (1756-63), which interrupted the Montreal-based fur trade for several years: although a few French traders remained in the western interior, they received no shipments of goods and supplies from Montreal after the fall of New France in 1760. British traders followed British troops into Montreal, and the trade of Albany and York fell dramatically in 1768, but Ferdinand Jacobs hesitated to send his men inland from York that year. He doubted their influence with inland Native groups (doubts reinforced by their own reports);[533] and he felt that he had been deceived in 1767, when both the Natives and his own men had told him there were no pedlars inland from York, although they had probably been telling the truth.[534]

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[533]Ferdinand Jacobs (York) to Moses Norton (Fort Prince of Wales), 25 July 1768, B.239/b/29, fo.9d. Andrew Graham believed that the Indians considered servants as slaves and gentlemen as "very knowing and great men." "Therefore," he explained, "when they have our men inland, [the natives] never mind what they say." Glyndwr Williams (ed.), *Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay 1767-91* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1969), 262-263.

[534]Rich, *History*, II, 19. Andrew Graham at Severn echoed these concerns the following year, calling most of the inland travellers "poor ignorant fellow[s] of no abilities, unacquainted with honour and honesty, as they have seen the Canadian pilferers these three years past and on their return yearly to York Fort never told the Factor." *Graham's Observations*, 262. As Graham later expressed his belief that Louis Primeau and Isaac Batt had been "assiduous" in their service to the Company (*Graham's Observations*, 290), he was evidently referring to William Pink, James Dearing, James Allen and Edward Loutit. Jacobs' and Graham's criticisms were unfair, however, as the Canadians had not penetrated beyond Rainy Lake

Jacobs and his Second, Andrew Graham, suggested that most men went inland to serve their own interests rather than the Company's; the servants' reputations and prospects suffered without any officers defending them against such charges. Graham called the winterers of the 1760s "ignorant poor labouring men of no abilities, who likes to go for no other reason but to lead an idle and vagrant life amongst the natives, and to get a few furs for themselves....I sent most of those men myself," he admitted, "but what can I or any Factor do otherwise?" He complained that officers were unwilling to go inland, while labourers were petitioning to go.[535] The "few furs" to which Graham referred were probably a major motivation for going inland, as they could significantly add to men's incomes: for instance, Anthony Henday (earning £10 per annum) received £8.18.5 for the furs he brought back from his 1754/55 journey.[536]

When clerk Matthew Cocking went inland in 1772, he believed that he both benefitted and suffered from the precedents set by those who had gone before him. He reported,

> I find the Natives consider an Englishman's going with them, as a Person sent to Collect Furrs, and not as an encouragement to them to trap &c. from the Company's Servants who came with them Inland trading the chief part of the Goods they were furnished with at the Forts [to give as gifts]: and notwithstanding all I can say to the contrary, will hardly believe

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until 1767: they had been trying since 1765, but were blocked by antagonism from local Natives (probably Ojibwa). Canadian pedlars first reached Lake Winnipeg in the summer or autumn of 1767, after the HBC winterers and Muskego Cree traders had departed the lakeshore for York Fort. Lytwyn, *Little North*, 9.

[535] *Graham's Observations*, 262. For an example of a servant petitioning to go inland, see the case of Hugh Jones in York Fort journal, 2 April 1762, B.239/a/49, fos. 33d-35.

[536] A. 16/31, fos. 77d-78.

> but I shall also collect Furrs in their Season.[537]
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> As to sending Servants Inland, in the manner that has been already pursued, to encourage Trade. I am of Opinion it will Answer no end; For the Persons who have been upon this Service, only like to continue as it skreened them from Duty at the Fort: And they were most of them disliked; as they never endeavoured to gain the Affections of the Natives, and converted the Goods they were furnished with to the Purpose of Collecting Furrs for their own private Emolument.[538]

Ferdinand Jacobs complained that some or all of the men he was sending inland in the late 1760s were using Company goods for private trade, and the Committee in 1771 instructed him to reduce the amount of goods issued to those men (particularly Louis Primeau).[539] In the winterers' defense, the Natives whom they met inland were probably familiar with the itinerant (*en derouine*) style of trading employed by Montreal-based traders, and HBC men probably felt great pressure to trade the goods they took with them. The winterers probably also had difficulty convincing the Natives of the interior to spend more time and effort trapping furs when they could demonstrate no particular benefit, and when increased trapping took time and effort away from other things they wanted or needed to do. As well, the Englishmen's Native companions saw hosting a winterer as an opportunity for various benefits. Jacobs objected to the Committee's 1769 suggestion of

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[537]Matthew Cocking's journal, 23 August 1772, B.239/a/69, fo.11d.

[538]Matthew Cocking, "Thoughts on making a Settlement Inland," 1773, B.239/a/69, fo.53. When in charge of Cumberland House in the winter of 1776/77, Cocking reported that men whom he sent to live with Native families (principally to save on the house's provisions) complained of being neglected or mistreated by their hosts, but blamed his men for "not being affable and otherwise endeavouring to make themselves agreable, seeming frequently displeased and unwilling to render little Assistances....[S]ome of them like very well to go off at first with the Indians, as they are removed from under the Eye of a Master and expect to have nothing to do." Cumberland journal, 24 January 1777, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 109-110.

[539]HBC (London) to Ferdinand Jacobs (York), 28 May 1771, A. 5/1, fo. 129.

discontinuing the practice of wintering, on the grounds that the Native families with whom these men traveled took great pride from that fact and would feel offended if they ceased suddenly;[540] he could have also mentioned gifts from the factors and other benefits which they derived for acting as hosts and guides.[541]

Inland Expansion: Taking the Fight to "the Cursed Pedlars up Country"[542]

The HBC presence in the western interior waned during the 1760s, but in 1766 and 1767 six Company servants wintered with Cree and Assiniboine groups in the interior.[543] In 1767, Montreal-based British traders began to re-occupy former French posts in the western interior that had been largely abandoned around 1760. The resulting precipitous decline in the Company's trade, Ferdinand Jacobs informed the Committee in 1768, "has affected me more than anything that ever happened to me;" he recommended sending winterers inland "in a body with a careful prudent man to command them, and to build a house or houses on the most convenient places to stop the pedlars from robbing

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[540]Rich, *History*, II, 23.

[541]For instance, William Pink reported that "i had Got me a horse to Cary my thinges, thinking that i Should Get it alonge without being Troblesome to the Indaines for the[y] think a Great deal of Carriing aney thing for an English man un less he pay them well for it." William Pink's journal, 7 August 1767, B.239/a/58, fo.6d.

[542]See Thomas Hopkins & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 28 August 1769, A. 11/3, fo. 128.

[543]Veteran winterers Joseph Smith and Isaac Batt went inland in 1763, but Henry Pressick (of whom much had been expected) returned home in ill health, as had Anthony Henday the year before. Smith and Batt went inland again in 1764, as did John Taylor, but Smith died on his return journey and Taylor refused to go inland again. Another experienced inland traveler, Joseph Waggoner (son of Rowland Waggoner), drowned in 1766. Rich, *History*, II, 16. In 1766/67, HBC men wintered on the Churchill River (Louis Primeau), the Red Deer River (James Dearing), the North Saskatchewan River (Edward Loutit and James Allen), the South Saskatchewan River (William Pink), and the Sturgeon River (Isaac Batt).

you of your trade."[544] He vowed "to remove those thieves off your Land," and suggested that force might be needed to dislodge the interlopers.[545] However, the Committee feared the expense of an inland trading post, and in 1769 proposed an outpost in the style of Henley.[546]

Jacobs' inland proposals were strongly opposed by his Second at York and Master of Severn, Andrew Graham.[547] He argued that by "lay[ing] aside fruitless undertakings about the Forts, such as building Out houses...and look[ing] sharp after the furr trade in all its branches," the Bayside factors would be able to "overturn all the schemes of the Canadian pilferers without applying to birch rind canoes, and such like wild schemes that is impracticable, and I am positive would be attended with all bad consequences to the Company."[548] Graham's opinions were probably reinforced by his dislike and distrust of

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[544]Ferdinand Jacobs (York) to HBC (London), 20 August 1768, A.11/115, fos.116-116d. See also Richard Glover, introduction to *Graham's Observations*, lxiv-lxv; *Graham's Observations*, 268n.

[545]Glover, introduction to *Graham's Observations*, lxv.

[546]They baulked at Jacobs' request for 15 to 25 men "until we see the probability of success to arise from such an inland establishment;" they voiced concern over sending a large quantity of trade goods "where they may be liable to various accidents;" and they preferred to see a seasonal post, where the men would return to York for the winter. HBC (London) to Ferdinand Jacobs (York), A.6/11, fo. 58d. Also see Rich, *History*, II, 22; Glover, introduction to *Graham's Observations*, lxv-lxvi. In any event, Jacobs had no man fit to command such an undertaking in 1770.

[547]A post on Lake Winnipeg or Red River, Graham argued, would drive off interlopers but would drain away the trade from the Bayside factories and would be difficult to supply; a post on the Saskatchewan River might bring in the trade of the Assiniboine and Earchithinues, but problems of transport would make it impractical. *Graham's Observations*, 260-261, 266. Graham's discussions of inland settlement (both for and against) were often reminiscent of those of his mentor, Isham.

[548]Andrew Graham, *Observations on Hudson's Bay*, 1768-1769, E. 2/5, fos. 16-16d. He used the same words in his accusations that (unnamed) factors were hindering York's white whale fishery enterprise and putting the Company to needless expense: *Graham's Observations*, 260. Before 1772, Graham appears to have underestimated the threat posed by the Canadian traders. He attributed the decline of trade at York to Cree traders "harbouring and strolling" among the Earchithinue and Assiniboine "for the sake of good living," and to "this game they call going to war." E. 2/5, fo. 16d. As late as 1771, Graham declared, "I am certain that the pilfering trade carried on [at] this present time within the limits of the Company's Charter by the English Canadians is neither with the spirit, experience, nor profit, with which it was carried

Jacobs, but they were convincing because they were reasonable and carried the weight of almost twenty years of service: "[t]he long knowledge I have of the affairs in Hudson's Bay makes me affirm, that however advantageous it may be to two or three poor pedlars from Canada to drive a wretched and vagabond life after a few furs, I do not think it is, and am certain it would not be, worth the notice of an Honourable Company of Gentlemen to follow such pitiful game."[549] However, William Tomison brought Graham depressing reports of his winters inland from Severn in 1769/70 and 1771/72.[550] Then, in 1772, New Englander John Cole deserted Canadian service and went to York, where he gave Andrew Graham (temporarily in charge) information and advice that convinced him to discard all his previous arguments against inland posts.[551]

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on by the French before the conquest of Canada" (*Graham's Observations*, 270) and assured himself that, "let we Factors exert ourselves to gain the confidence of the natives, and I am certain the trade in total will not only be kept up, but may be increased" (*Graham's Observations*, 269).

[549]*Graham's Observations*, 264. This illustrated a shift in attitude. When the HBC's main competition came from French traders, Company servants defined themselves as 'Englishmen'; after Anglo-American merchants took control of the St. Lawrence fur trade in the 1760s, HBC employees placed less emphasis on national distinctions (although most of the Canadians' labour force continued to be French) and began distinguishing themselves as servants of an 'Honourable Company' rather than 'pedlars'.

[550]Rich, *History*, II, 33.

[551]Graham engaged Cole for three years at £12 and sent him inland to bring down a fellow servant named Bove (or Beauvais), "a Canadian, a good able Man who resides amongst the Natives." Graham proposed to establish an inland post with a complement of 14 young and able-bodied new men under a master who "must be a Young lively Person, that will continue some Years in your Service" (he recommended either Samuel Hearne or Thomas Hutchins). Andrew Graham (York) to HBC (London), 26 August 1772, quoted in *Graham's Observations*, 290-291. See also Rich, *History*, II, 27-29; Glover, introduction to *Graham's Observations*, lxii; *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, xxi-xxii. From his post at Cedar Lake, Cole's former master Thomas Corry wrote to York, warning that Bove and Cole were deserters and thieves, and asking that the Company ship them to England for trial (for which they would be reimbursed by Corry). Graham ignored this letter. He was impressed by Cole: "[h]e is a tall, able man, speaks English, French and Indian languages, was formerly one of the batteau men under Sir William Johnston, and has travelled from Albany Town and all over French and British Canada, talks very sensibly, and can write a little, and is much regarded by the Indians." Andrew Graham (York) to HBC (London), 26 August 1772, quoted in *Graham's Observations*, 288. Cole returned to York in 1773, without Bove or the two large cargo canoes he had promised; Graham sent him inland again, but Cole returned to Corry's service that year. *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, xxiii-xxiv. Cole subsequently remained in Canadian

In the spring of 1774, Samuel Hearne and seven men went upriver from York to establish Cumberland House.[552] Company men also moved inland south and east from James Bay. Surgeon Thomas Atkinson with four hands and two Cree families established Wapiscogamy House about 120 miles up Moose River (on its western branch, the Missinaibi River, half a mile above the mouth of Wapiscogami Creek) in 1776; this was rebuilt and renamed Brunswick House in 1781.[553] Labourer James Robertson went inland from Eastmain House in 1778 and 1779, wintering in a log tent on or near Lake Mistassini. However, inland trading from Eastmain ceased after Thomas Buchan "died from real want of Victuals in crossing a Lake" (possibly Mistassini) in January 1781.[554]

York's inland operations were expanded in 1779, when William Tomison sent Robert Longmoor with 15 hands to build Hudson House up the Saskatchewan River.[555] The new outpost, strategically placed on the edge of the "buffalo country", was intended

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employ on the upper Saskatchewan until he was killed on 22 April 1779, in an argument between some Canadians and some Cree over a horse: E.E. Rich, "Cole, John," *DCB* IV, 160.

[552]They traveled in the canoes of upland traders: Hearne, Robert Longmoor, and Andrew Garrett with one group; and William Flatt, Magnus Sclater, James Banks, and Robert Davey with other groups.

[553]For a brief history of Wapiscogamy/Brunswick House (1776-1806), see Rich & Johnson (eds.), *Moose Fort Journals*, 331-333.

[554]Robertson had been appointed master of Rupert House, and Buchan's death left George Atkinson at Eastmain without anyone experienced in inland travel: Francis & Morantz, 102-103.

[555]Longmoor's men included Charles Isham (whose father, James, was English and whose mother was Cree), and two Englishmen (Isaac Batt and William Gray), but the rest of his hands were Orkneymen: James Spence Jr, Magnus Twatt, Malchom Ross, Nichol Wishart, Edward Wishart, James Tate, William Copeland, James Sanderson, William Oman, Mitchell Oman, and William Lutit. The last member of the expedition, Robert Davey, may have been Welsh. Cumberland journal, 20 September 1779, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 15. Tomison took command of Hudson House that autumn and reported that "I never see better Servant[s] in Hudson's Bay then what is here at present nor better behaved men." William Tomison (Hudson) to William Walker (Cumberland), 12 December 1779, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 27.

to procure provisions as well as furs,[556] but this provoked the local Cree: in 1780, they used prairie fires to drive the bison out of the Englishmen's reach, hoping to keep them reliant on the Cree for the bulk of their meat. Longmoor's warehouse was ill-equipped to trade for both furs and meat, so he sent five men back to Cumberland and put the remaining 17 (including himself) on half-rations. This provoked his men: 15 of them wrote a letter to Tomison in May 1781, in which they blamed Longmoor for the shortage of provisions, accused him of drunkenness, and refused to serve inland under him again (only writer James Elphinstone appears to have supported Longmoor).[557]

The petition against Longmoor (which came to nothing) was one example of a general dissatisfaction among inland servants. In 1775, Samuel Hearne reported from Cumberland House that "the People have not got the prosperity of the Expedition at heart....[M]any of them will rather be sent home then [*sic*] continue to go inland at their present wages and...only move in Proportion as they think they are payd."[558] In 1776,

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[556]During the winter of 1776/77, Matthew Cocking had a complement of 15 at Cumberland House, but suggested that the area's food resources could support no more than 12: a settlement "towards the Buffelo Country" could help provision Cumberland and other inland posts. Cumberland journal, 24 January 1777, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 110-112.

[557]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, xxxiii. Robert Davey *et. al.* (Hudson House) to William Tomison (Cumberland), 23 May 1781, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 183n. Tomison investigated the men's claims of "Starving" under Longmoor's command, but considered them ill founded: A. 11/116, fo. 83. He did not respond to the charge that Longmoor was habitually drunk at trading time. Humphrey Marten and the York Council defended Longmoor to the Committee, although they admitted that the petition was one reason they decided to send Longmoor to build a new post among the Northern Ojibwa and put William Walker in charge of Hudson House: Humphrey Marten & Council (York) to HBC (London), 1 September 1781, A. 11/116, fo. 92, quoted in *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 217n.

[558]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xlix-l; also Tyrrell, 191. Matthew Cocking, who succeeded Hearne in charge of Cumberland, reported in 1776 that the previous spring Hearne had only been able to find three volunteers to stay inland for the summer while most of the men took the winter's returns down to York. Cocking took seven men with him to York in 1776 (including Magnus Sclater and William Flatt "on Account of their having been here the Year before") and left William Walker in charge of three men (carpenter Andrew Garret and labourers James Batt and James Spence, the latter two chosen by drawing lots). Cumberland journal, 30 May 1776, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 51-53.

Humphrey Marten repeated that hands sent inland felt themselves inadequately rewarded for the hardships they endured, and mentioned Orkneymen in particular as "very remiss in protecting your [Honours'] Goods, or in making themselves acquainted with the management of a Canoe; by which means they hope to be kept at the Fort, as unfit for inland duties."[559] In order to persuade his men to go inland "Cheerfully and have your [Honours'] Interest at heart," Marten promised each man an advance or gratuity of £2 (three months' wages for most of the hands employed inland): he was told that his predecessor, Ferdinand Jacobs, had made a similar promise that the Committee had not honoured, so Marten gave each man "my note of hand" for £2 if London did not honour his promise.[560]

In 1777, however, Marten became aware of "a kind of Combination" among some of York's Orkney servants: sawyer William Taylor, who had come down to York in July, "absolutely refused to return Inland, and gave several broad hints" that he and his fellows planned to "stick up for" £15 per annum (Taylor was currently on £6). Marten asked him

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Labourer John Driver was strongly suspected by the York Council in 1775 of feigning illness to avoid being sent inland that year. Although he did go inland in 1776 and even expressed a willingness to re-engage for inland service at £10 per annum, at Cumberland House in May 1777 Matthew Cocking strongly suspected him of feigning illness again to avoid being sent farther up the Saskatchewan River. However, Cocking admitted that he had no proof of Driver's alleged deception, and so "treated him with Tenderness and indulged him," although he refused to allow Driver to go down to York. Cumberland journal, 12 May 1777, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 145-146, also 97n. Driver was again suspected of feigning or exaggerating illness at Cumberland in the spring of 1782, when William Tomison called him "a Deceitful Villain." Cumberland journal, 2 May 1782, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 249.

[559]Humphrey Marten (York) to HBC (London), 20 August 1776, A. 11/116, fo. 5, quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxvi fn; also see Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, xxxvii. Hearne complained in 1775 that "scarce one of [his men at Cumberland] endeavours to make himself acquainted with the management of a Cannoe, or any other thing that is likely to forward the Expedition." He did not single out Orkneymen as especially culpable, but most of his men were from there. Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xlix-l.

[560]York Fort journal, 13 July 1776, B. 239/a/73, quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxvi.

a second time to go inland as ordered, but "he said he would not, 'till he had conferred with his country Men;" Marten relieved Taylor of his duties, put him on one pound of bread a day, and threatened him with forfeiture of wages, until Taylor relented and agreed to go inland.[561] Marten instructed William Tomison at Cumberland to inform his men of the Committee's resolve not to advance inland hands above £10 per annum, and that servants refusing to go inland (or anywhere else they were ordered to go) would forfeit any gratuities or wage advances that he had promised them.[562] Some of the surviving contracts signed in 1777-79 contained the handwritten clause, "I will be ready to Travel from the Factory to any parts inland for the better Discovery of the Country and improving the Trade of the said Company whenever I shall be commanded so to do by the Governor or Chief Factor there without claiming any additional Wages or Gratification for the same."[563]

The Committee initially offered a 40s. gratuity per annum for servants who went inland in 1774 and 1775 and whose wages did not exceed £6.[564] They only approved Marten's promised gratuity retroactively in 1779 – by which time Marten's men inland

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[561]Marten also refused to send Taylor to winter with a band of Assiniboine (with whom Edward Loutit had spent three years), calling him "too great a Coward, to manage Indians of this stamp." Humphrey Marten (York) to HBC (London), 25 August 1777, A. 11/116, fo. 22, quoted in *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 142n, 181n.

[562]Humphrey Marten (York) to William Tomison (Cumberland), 11 September 1777, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 226.

[563]This quotation is from the 1777 contract of James Sutherland, aged about 26, of St. Martin in the Fields, who engaged as a tailor for five years at £12 and was posted to Albany: A. 32/3, fo. 14. In 1780, the surviving contracts began specifically mentioning extra wages of 40s per annum for men serving inland: see contract of John Cromartie of South Ronaldsay, who engaged as a labourer for five years at £6: A. 32/1, fo. 10.

[564]"Copy of Instructions given by Mr. Humphrey Marten to Mr Matthew Cocking on his going to Cumberland House," n.d. [September 1776], *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 347.

were demanding even more 'encouragement' – and at the same time instituted a schedule of premiums: for each score of furs traded at an inland house, the master received 1s., his assistant 6d., and each labourer 3d.[565] However, in 1780 Marten again warned the Committee that "Not one of your Inland Servants think they are properly encouraged...they say that the wages you offer them is not proportionate to the Services they render to the Company."[566] The servants were not complaining about hardship, but rather about not being adequately compensated for enduring more hardship than was normal at the Bayside factories and houses. As Hearne explained in 1775, "their whole complaint is for want of encouragement."[567]

Expansion and experimentation were nothing new, but the construction of permanent trading posts in the interior was the beginning of a gradual reorientation of the Company's focus away from Hudson and James Bays. Such posts also reoriented the Committee's expectations of their officers and servants, placing new demands on them. Humphrey Marten summarized inland conditions in 1780: servants' "lives frequently threat[e]ned by the Canadians who's numbers are as 15 to 1; Frequent hungry bellys; wet and cold lodgings are amongst the many other hardships they undergo."[568] The men's

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[565]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, xxxvii. For the men's demands (as anxiously recorded by Marten in the York Fort journal), see Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxvii.

[566]Humphrey Marten (York) to HBC (London), 4 September 1780, A. 11/116, fo. 67, quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxxii.

[567]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, l.

[568]Humphrey Marten (York) to HBC (London), 4 September 1780, A. 11/116, fo. 67, quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxxii. Also see William Walker (Cumberland) to HBC (London), 25 July 1777, A. 11/116, fo. 19, quoted in *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 175n. In 1781, William Tomison complained vigorously that Marten had not sent any incoming mail up from York the previous autumn: "Indeed Sir it is no wonder the Company's Servants in general is unwilling to come Inland, their usage in many particulars, not being equal to their Servitude. I am certain there is many [mail]

responses to those demands were foreshadowed in the case of Henley House, and were developed more fully later in the century.

Recruitment

In general, the Company's expanding operations in this period did not lead to changes in its previous methods of finding servants. The London Committee continued to play an active role in recruiting personnel. Even when men were being engaged outside London, the Committee attempted to control the process as much as possible. In 1765, the Company's secretary wrote to former HBC sloopmaster Thomas Law, now agent for London businessman Chauncy Townsend, requesting Townsend's recommendation of "Some Artificers and Labourers" in Yorkshire (where he had business interests) for service in Hudson Bay. The occupations required and the wages and other terms of employment to be offered were strictly specified, as they were in similar letters to former Albany surgeon William Richards (in Glamorganshire, Wales) and Albany's former Chief Robert Temple (in Sussex) in the same year.[569] Temple

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packets sent to & again along the Bay, which is of no Consequence & this place is neglected." William Tomison (Cumberland) to Humphrey Marten (York), 5 June 1781, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 154.

[569]HBC to William Richards (Neath), 28 February 1765, A.5/1, fo. 62; HBC to Richards (no address), 21 March 1765, A. 5/1, fos. 63-63d. HBC to Robert Temple [(Berwick)], 5 March 1765, A. 5/1, fos. 62d-63; HBC to Thomas Law (at Chauncy Townsends Esqr), 16 April 1765, A. 5/1, fos. 63d-64.

In the late 1760s and early 1770s, another former officer, Henry Pollexfen Jr (formerly Chief at Moose) was in Kirkwall (Orkney), acting as an agent for several current and former servants, and recommending prospective servants to the Committee. However, Pollexfen's activities seem to have been based on his own initiative rather than orders from London. For Pollexfen acting on behalf of Peter Knight, see HBC to Henry Pollexfen Jr, 28 February 1767, A. 5/1, fo. 76d. For Pollexfen acting as agent for father of Andrew Gerrett, see HBC to Pollexfen (Kirkwall), 17 November 1774, A. 5/1, fo. 162; HBC (London) to Pollexfen (Kirkwall), 28 January 1775, A. 5/1, fo. 163; and HBC (London) to Pollexfen (Kirkwall), 4 March 1775, A. 5/1, fos. 163d-164. In 1775, the Committee agreed to hire a cooper recommended by Pollexfen: HBC (London) to Pollexfen (Kirkwall), 4 March 1775, A. 5/1, fos. 163d-164.

(though not Richards) was ordered not to engage anyone without consulting the London Secretary.[570]

The 1765 correspondence with Temple, Richards, and Law offers a unique snapshot of HBC recruitment: three men of different backgrounds were being asked to recruit in different parts of Britain at the same time. Richards was initially instructed to procure a house carpenter, a sawyer, a smith, a bricklayer, and seven labourers at specified wages (or lower wages, if possible). A month later, he had procured six men (at least one of whom was a house carpenter) and was requested to find another thirteen. At the same time, Temple was to find five tradesmen and three labourers, and Thomas Law was to obtain Townsend's recommendation for six tradesmen and seven labourers.[571]

Relying on former servants to recruit new servants was sensible, as their knowledge of living and working conditions by the Bay would presumably have allowed them to select prospective young men best suited for the service. However, the only reference to Richards' particular knowledge of Bayside conditions was, "As You are well acquainted with Hudsons Bay, You will inform the Persons You treat with, of their being supplied with Provisions of all kinds over and above their Wages."[572] The letters to Law and Temple made no reference to their previous service or experience.

Ship captains continued to recruit in Orkney, particularly when recruiting in England fell short. Writing to Moses Norton at Fort Prince of Wales in 1767, the

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[570]HBC (London) to Robert Temple [(Berwick)], 5 March 1765, A. 5/1, fos. 62d-63.

[571]HBC (London) to William Richards (Neath), 28 February 1765, A. 5/1, fo. 62; HBC to Richards, 21 March 1765, A. 5/1, fos. 63-63d; HBC to Robert Temple (Berwick), 5 March 1765, A. 5/1, fos. 62d-63; HBC to Thomas Law (at Chauncy Townsends Esqr), 16 April 1765, A. 5/1, fos. 63d-64.

[572]HBC (London) to William Richards (Neath), 28 February 1765, A. 5/1, fo. 62.

Committee assured him that "if We can possibly procure a Brick layer We will send You one this Year, otherwise We shall direct Captain Richards to engage such a person in his Voyage Outwards."[573] The principal appeal of Orkney servants continued to be their acceptance of low wages. In 1755, Joseph Isbister asked the Committee to engage a cooper for Albany, but advised them that a London cooper would demand £25 per annum "when you may have a Cooper from Orkney for 8 or 10£ p Annum sufficient to do the work of this Factory."[574] It may seem surprising that the Committee needed to be reminded of the economic virtues of Orkneymen, particularly considering the increasing number of them in the Company's service,[575] but tradesmen had not previously been readily available for export. The HBC was also competing for Orkney labour with local employers, the northern fisheries, the merchant marine, and in times of war the armed forces (especially the Royal Navy): this helped maintain an important degree of geographic diversity in recruitment.[576]

New recruits always received advances on their wages (usually two months'

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[573]HBC (London) to Moses Norton (Fort Prince of Wales), 13 May 1767, A. 5/1, fo. 81.

[574]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 13 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 182.

[575]Fenton, 596, observed an increase in the number of islanders being recruited for the HBC and for the northern fisheries (Greenland and Iceland) from the 1740s onward. By 1799, 416 of the Company's 530 servants (about three-quarters) were Orkneymen. Thomson, *Orkney*, 218; Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxxvii fn.

[576]Of the 37 surviving contracts signed in 1776 through 1779, 16 recruits were from London and its environs, while three were from adjacent counties, seven were from the northeast of England (Durham and Yorkshire), and only three were from Orkney. The geographic imbalance, so apparently out of balance with a labour force made up mostly of Orcadians, can be explained partly by the accident of survival, partly by the restrictions of a wartime labour market, and partly by the specialized nature of the contracts: only two of these 37 contracts were for men engaging as labourers. Also note that 11 of these 37 men did not make the voyage to Hudson Bay, and that an interesting pattern emerges in these 11 cases: on three occasions, a pair of men of the same occupation and from the same parish (two labourers from Suffolk, two carpenters from St. Paul Shadwell in London, and two coopers from Limehouse) signed up together, accepted their advance money, and then absconded together. See A. 32/3, fos. 10-49.

pay),[577] and the issuing of money to future employees raised issues of control. Men signed their contracts in London whenever possible, allowing the Committee to handle the disbursement of advance money as well as the negotiation of wages. The 1765 letter to Robert Temple mentioned an allowance of one guinea (21s.) for recruits' travelling expenses to London, "but no Money is to be paid Them in part thereof until they have Signed their Contracts in London, where They are to arrive by the first of May." Not only was Temple not authorized to advance any cash, he was not even to offer anyone employment without first consulting London.[578] The letter to William Richards also mentioned men signing contracts in London, at which point they would be paid their travel allowance.[579] Unlike Temple, Richards was allowed to offer employment without prior consultation, and a second letter indicated that "The Committee consents to your paying each Person half a Guinea upon his Signing a Contract (which will be sent you...) and the remaining Half Guinea will be paid them on their arrival [in London]."[580] Ship captains recruiting in Orkney did not face the same restrictions, as Stromness was their last stop before Hudson Bay and so sending prospective recruits to London first was

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[577]These cash advances went by a variety of names over the years ('impress money' was probably the most common, though initially it seemed to be reserved for sailors) and sometimes took non-monetary forms. For example, in 1723, John Churchill and John Helleker engaged as labourers and were advanced £3 each in clothes (this was fully one-half of their yearly salaries): A. 16/1, fos. 24, 25. The practice was generally more common at sea than on land, but Woodward (*Men at Work*, 146) noted that craftsmen often received a small sum, or 'Godspenny,' to seal the bargain when they agreed to do a particular job. Also see Kussmaul, 31-32. On some of the earliest surviving HBC contracts, the new man signed for his advance money on the reverse side of his contract: see, for example, the contract of John Cromartie, 1780, A. 32/1, fo. 10d.

[578]HBC (London) to Robert Temple (Berwick), 5 March 1765, A. 5/1, fos. 62d-63.

[579]HBC (London) to William Richards (Neath), 28 February 1765, A. 5/1, fo. 62. Orkneymen were allowed to avoid the trip to London, taking ship at Stromness or Kirkwall.

[580]HBC (London) to William Richards (Neath), 21 March 1765, A. 5/1, fo. 63.

impossible. However, the Committee sometimes limited captains' power when they could. In 1735, for instance, they ordered Captain William Coats to engage 13 labourers at Orkney (he only found 12), but the money for advances and other (unspecified) disbursements was entrusted to Thomas McCleish Jr (returning to Albany as Governor after a ten-year absence).[581]

As in earlier periods, some prospective servants were proactive and communicated their desire for employment directly to the Committee or its Secretary. In 1755, for instance, John Stephenson wrote from Stockton (Durham), inquiring about the terms offered to the Company's sloopmasters. The Company's Secretary informed him that £40 per annum was usual, plus £10 per annum for a servant, "[o]n which terms the Committee will at your Request, Appoint you Master of their new Sloop now Building for three Years from your Arrival at the Factory Appointed, if you Agree thereto, Please send an Answer by the return of the Post."[582] Stephenson agreed to the terms, and commanded the Albany sloop from 1757 to 1763, with John Stephenson Jr as his servant.[583] In the late 1750s and early 1760s, John Garbut (probably from Yorkshire), William Lockey, and Consett Wilson (from Stokesley, near North Allerton, Yorkshire)

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[581]For Coats' role, see Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1733, *Letters*, 185; and Thomas White (York) to HBC (London), 6 August 1735, *Letters*, 199. For McCleish's role, see A. 16/2, fo. 87.

[582]HBC (London) to John Stephenson (Stockton, Durham), 20 February 1755, A. 5/1, fo. 5d.

[583]Stephenson's salary was increased to £50 in 1758, and he supplemented this with the skins sent home as his private trappings: £8.15.5 (1758), £25.10.8 (1759), £26.13.1 (1760), £7.8.6 (1761), £14.4.0 (1762), £34.14.8 (1763). The balance of his account, paid out to his attorney in 1763, was £229.15.9, an impressive sum considering that he had paid out £200 to Captain Jonathon Fowler in 1761. John Jr was his servant throughout his time at Albany – at £10 per annum (1757-60), then £20 (1760-62) and £30 (1762/63) – but no debits were recorded in the young man's account: his final balance (also paid out in 1763) was £120.10.6. A. 16/4, fo. 22.

also entered the service as sloop mates or sloopmasters in this way.[584] This highlights a preponderance of north-easterners on the Bayside sloops at this time, partly due to recruitment by Captain William Coats (who had commanded HBC supply ships since 1727) in Yorkshire, Northumberland, and his native Durham. In 1741, James Duffield at Moose observed that the entire crew of the factory's sloop had been recruited by Coats, and complained that soon all of the factories would be manned by Coats' "Stockton Clowns."[585]

The possibility of hiring sons of HBC fathers and Native mothers was openly discussed for the first time late in this period. Humphrey Marten, in successfully petitioning for his half-Cree son, John America Marten, to be allowed to go to England for an education, suggested to the Committee in 1770 that "the Time may not be very farr off when Americans Born with English education may prove very usefull to the

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[584]HBC (London) to John Garbut (no address), 17 January 1765, A. 5/1, fo. 61d; HBC (London) to William Lockey (no address), 7 March 1767, A. 5/1, fo. 76d; HBC (London) to Consett Wilson (Stokesley near North Allerton, Yorkshire), 28 January 1769, A. 5/1, fo. 93. Wilson had applied to be Master of the Severn River sloop and was offered a position as her mate.

[585]Moose journal, 14 September 1741, and 5 January 1742, B. 135/a/11, fos. 3d, 27d, quoted in Ens, "Moose," 402; also see Frits Pannekoek, "'Corruption' at Moose," *The Beaver* 309/4 (Spring 1979), 9; Pollard, 155. Coats usually recruited in Orkney, but at least some of these men could have come up from the northeast of England (there was a fairly regular commerce between Stromness and Newcastle, for instance); alternatively, Duffield may have meant that only Coats, and not all of his men, were from Stockton (Durham). Augustine Frost appears to have benefited from Coats' patronage, but there is no evidence that Frost was from Durham. The Company's maritime service attracted many men from northeast England even after Coats' death. Seven of the 37 surviving contracts signed in 1776 through 1779 engaged men from that region, including four from Stockton: mariner William Renton, harpooner Robert Robinson, and shipwrights Matthew Colling and John Claxton. See A. 32/3, fos. 12, 16, 18, 32.

Applications by post help diversify our understanding of Bayside servants' geographical origins. Men from the London area could apply to the Committee in person, while men in Orkney could apply directly to the ship's captain or an outgoing officer without any part of the application process appearing in writing. Men close to neither London nor Orkney were most likely to apply by letter, making their applications more likely to appear in the correspondence books (rather than the minute books), but those are clearly incomplete prior to the 1750s and possibly even after.

Company."[586] Jennifer S.H. Brown cited James Isham's son, Charles Price – apprenticed to the Company in 1766 after receiving some education in England, and considered one of the best canoemen in 1776 – as "the first certain case of a native-born company son achieving a fur trade career of any note."[587] Earlier men (such as Joseph Waggoner and George Potts) had fur trade fathers and may have had Native mothers, but such men were not actively sought after for their particular backgrounds during this period.

Also towards the end of this period, Canadians entered the Company's service, apparently for the first time since the late seventeenth century. Jean Baptiste "de Larlee" [Desjarlais?], formerly master of the French house at Basquiea (The Pas), arrived at York in the early summer of 1759 seeking employment.[588] Humphrey Marten (temporarily in charge at York) sent him with Anthony Henday and Joseph Smith to winter on the northern plains, and in 1760 sent 'de Larlee' to Albany. There, he asked to be engaged at 1200 livres per annum (about £50) and "promised to be greatly serviceable," but was instead taken on trial, "having no Appointment nor Salary" but "to be rewarded according to Merit."[589] Although he appeared to win the friendship of Albany Chief Robert Temple

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[586]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 September 1770, A. 11/3, fo. 145.

[587]Brown, 156. For Isham's value as a canoeman, see Cumberland journal, 30 May 1776, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 52.

[588]Humphrey Marten (York) to Robert Temple (Albany), 26 October 1759, B. 198/b/1, fo. 3; see also York journal, 28 June 1759, B. 239/a/46, fo. 37; Humphrey Marten (York) to Ferdinand Jacobs (Fort Prince of Wales), 3 July 1759, B. 239/b/18, fo. 3; James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 24 August 1759, A. 11/114, fo. 23d; Rich, *History*, II, 1-2.

[589]Jean Baptiste de Larlee (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 21 August 1761, A. 11/3, fo. 47; Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 8 September 1760, A. 11/3, fo. 43d. Temple (fo. 43d) described de Larlee as "an Allowed Chief" among the Natives, but it is unclear to which Natives he was referring: if 'de Larlee' was master at Basquiea as he claimed, he would presumably have been most familiar with the Woodland Cree groups of the upper Nelson and lower Saskatchewan Rivers (and perhaps with some of the lower Nelson and Hayes River bands as well), yet the Company sent him to Albany and

and was given some responsibility for conducting trade, de Larlee's harsh treatment of the Upland Cree caused the trade at that fort to decline and he was dismissed in 1762 with £100 for his two years of service.[590]

Matthew Cocking in 1776 and Robert Longmoor in 1777 both suggested recruiting Canadians, but the Committee felt that such men were unreliable. Their complaints of Canadian infidelity probably referred to their experience with Louis Primeau, a former French trader who had remained in the western interior after the fall of New France and was engaged at York for inland service in 1765, but who deserted to the pedlars in 1773.[591] Cocking also considered most Canadian *voyageurs* to be unfit for

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'de Larlee' himself requested to be sent to Moose: Jean Baptiste de Larlee (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1761, A. 11/3, fo. 49.

Not all Canadians who offered their services were accepted. One unnamed Canadian deserted Peter Pangman's service in 1776 and twice sought employment with the HBC at Cumberland House: William Tomison in the autumn of 1776 and Matthew Cocking in February 1777 both turned him away, although Cocking offered to trade for any good canoe he might bring. Cumberland journal, 7-8 February 1777, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 118-121.

[590]De Larlee also received a total of £50.0.2 for his private trappings (£48.8.9 of that was from his inland journey): A. 16/4, fo. 32. Temple commented in 1762, "As to Mr Larlee I am sorry for and shou'd been gladd cou'd I have wrote twice as much in his favour:" Robert Temple (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1762, A. 11/3, fo. 55. For his part, de Larlee wrote of Temple in 1761, "Mr Temple is too good humour'd for many people of this place for myself I love him very much he is an amicable Man and deserves all the praise imaginable and has everything much at heart:" Jean Baptiste de Larlee (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1761, A. 11/3, fo. 51d. For Upland Cree reports of de Larlee's cruelty towards them, and for the impact on Albany's trade, see Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 24 August 1763, A. 11/3, fo. 57; Robert Temple (Albany) to HBC (London), private, August 1763, A. 11/3, fos. 63-63d; Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 26 August 1763, A. 11/3, fo. 59.

[591]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, lxxviii. Matthew Cocking (a friend of Primeau's) also feared that Canadians could prove "very improper Persons, for they would be continually running off to the Pedlers and laying open all they know." Matthew Cocking, "Thoughts on making a Settlement Inland," 1773, B. 239/a/69, fo. 52d. Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, lxxviii, unfairly described Louis Primeau as "a lost piece of human flotsam" who had been "stranded" in the west after the fall of New France. Born at Quebec, Primeau probably first came west to the Lake Nipigon area in 1749. He served on the Saskatchewan River in the 1750s and remained in the west after the fall of New France: he lived with a band of Cree (probably either Muskego or Woods Cree), who called him Nick'a'thu'tin, and he appears to have gained some influence with them. In 1765, he went to York Fort and applied to Ferdinand Jacobs for a situation. Jacobs doubted Primeau's trustworthiness, but engaged him for inland wintering on the basis of his knowledge of Native languages and his experience in wilderness travel. Between 1765 and 1772, Primeau wintered inland every season except 1768/69, when venereal disease forced him to stay at York.

HBC service, but blamed their bad characters on the pedlars' habit of hiring reckless and improvident men who could be relied on to spend all or most of their wages in their master's store: he suggested recruiting a few specialized men (particularly canoe builders) from among those *voyageurs* who had fallen afoul of the pedlars for not spending enough.[592] However, there were other arguments against recruiting in Canada, particularly the problem of getting men from Montreal to Hudson Bay. By the 1770s, recruiting Canadians was no longer suggested, as the Company's British-born servants were improving their skills with canoes.

One of the potential appeals of mixed-blood or Canadian servants was their 'wilderness' skill, particularly the construction and/or use of birchbark canoes. On the Bay, sloops could ferry goods and personnel between factories, or between the factory and the supply ship; but any settlement as far upriver as Henley or Cumberland was out of reach of the sloops. The French inland traders had adopted birchbark canoes from their Native trading partners, but Captain Christopher Middleton reported in the 1740s

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In 1772, Cocking observed that Primeau "hath a secret kindness for his old Masters," but Primeau's desertion the following spring seems to have had more to do with a desire or need to return to Quebec. Primeau returned to the west in the autumn of 1773 as chief pilot and trader for Joseph Frobisher and appears to have served the North West Company until as late as 1800 (although nothing is known about him in the 1780s or early 1790s). Sylvia Van Kirk, "Primeau (Primault, Primo), Louis (Lewis) (Nick'a'thu'tin)," *DCB* IV, 647.

Similar suspicions were laid on any man who switched sides in this era of competition. Englishman Isaac Batt (who first entered the service in 1754 and became one of the HBC's most reliable and influential inland winterers in the 1760s) deserted to Joseph Frobisher's service in 1775, but returned to HBC employ in 1777: beside the Cumberland House journal entry mentioning this was a marginal comment (in a contemporary but different hand, perhaps the London secretary) wondering if Frobisher had allowed Batt to re-engage with the HBC "with a view to benefit himself by his information of our affairs whenever He shall again entice Isaac Batt into his service." Cumberland journal, 23 May 1777, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 149n. Although Batt gave the HBC good service both before and after this period in Frobisher's employ, and although several Company officers thought highly of him and had exerted themselves in 1776 and 1777 to lure him back into the service, doubts about Batt's loyalty remained and limited his potential for advancement after 1777: see Jennifer S.H. Brown, "Batt, Isaac," *DCB* IV, 47.

[592]Cumberland journal, 2 July 1776, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 68, also lxxix-lxxx.

that only five of the Company's more than 100 men could effectively handle a canoe.[593] Thus, Richard Glover emphasized the value of the Company's inland winterers, "British-born *coureurs de bois*...who were familiar with wilderness life, spoke the Indian languages, could handle canoes and live upon the country." Glover underestimated these men's reliance on their Native guides and traveling companions, but he rightly emphasized the importance of such 'wilderness' skills to the success of any inland expansion.[594]

The demands of expansion also prompted a more systematic approach towards apprenticeship. Between 1766 and 1799, 11 boys were indentured from the Grey Coat Hospital (known for its mathematical school), and seven of them were put into the land service as clerks or writers: George Charles, John Charles, George Donald, Joseph

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[593]Rich, *History*, I, 573. Although the men of James Bay had some familiarity with canoes, the Canoe Birch (*Betula papyrifera*) does not grow as far north as York Fort or Churchill River: men serving there would only have seen canoes brought by upland traders, who needed their craft for the return journey. Glover, introduction to *Letters*, xlv. Samuel Hearne told the Committee in 1775 that there was no point sending large numbers of men obviously needed to contest with the pedlars for the trade of the interior until problems of supply and transport had been resolved. At Hearne's suggestion, in 1777 the Committee sent out some light timber skiffs. However, the inland servants refused to use them, arguing that there were insufficient men to operate them and that there was no shipwright inland to repair them. Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, lxxii-lxxiii, lxvii-lxviii; Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xiv. In 1780, Humphrey Marten suggested assigning an Orkney boatbuilder to Cumberland House (where he could build boats with a much greater carrying capacity than birchbark canoes), but informed the Committee that no less than 100 men were needed inland to support the increased trade and transport: York Fort journal, 4 August 1780, B. 239/a/78, quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxxi. In 1781, writer James Elphinstone at Hudson House also suggested posting an Orkney boatbuilder inland to reduce the Company's reliance on Native canoebuilders: Hudson House journal, 24 April 1781, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 189.

[594]For instance, he observed that the "raw Orkneymen" sent inland were led by experienced inland travellers who "were personally able to carry out any duty their subordinates might have to perform." Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, xxvii-xxviii. In 1780, after inland surveyor Philip Turnor had warned that York's inland settlements were short of officers, Humphrey Marten sent George Hudson and James Elphinstone inland in order "to raise a succession of officers capable of transacting your [Honours'] Inland Affairs": Humphrey Marten & Council (York) to HBC (London), 13 September 1780, A. 11/116, fo. 75d, quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxxiii. This contrasts markedly with Burley's observation that in the nineteenth century HBC servants performed tasks no officer would ever do: Burley, 12-13, 15.

Hansom, John Hodgson, George Hudson, and David Thompson.[595] Although the Company had been taking apprentices since the 1670s, the Grey Coat boys represented a more focussed approach to apprenticeship than had been common in the preceding century: they had specific sets of skills meant to fill specific roles within the Company. These boys had received navigational and cartographical training, with a view to naval or maritime employment,[596] and their map-making and journal-keeping skills were expected to make up for the perceived deficiencies of early inland winterers like Anthony Henday, Joseph Smith, and William Pink. The new 'system' was not a training system, for the Company sought boys who could already read, write, and (hopefully) cast accounts – and were cheaper than adult clerks. As the Company's workforce grew in the nineteenth century, apprentices became a more prominent focus of attention within that workforce, but only the beginnings of a new approach can be seen prior to 1782.

Difficulties in Recruitment

The difficulties faced in finding sufficient and suitable men for service in Hudson Bay continued through the 1750s and 1760s. The primary obstacle remained the conditions of the wartime labour market, which prevailed in most of the period after 1739.[597] The problem became particularly acute in the late 1770s and early 1780s, when the HBC was developing an inland system of transport and supply but lacked the

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[595]Ruggles, 10.

[596]Ruggles, 7, 10.

[597]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, lxxii, criticized (but did not name) fur trade historians who fail to recognize how large-scale warfare affected the British labour market, severely limiting the supply of men that the HBC needed to meet the pedlars' challenge.

manpower to operate it effectively: in 1780, Humphrey Marten wrote to the Committee, "Men we want Sirs, Furrs You want Gentlemen, should you please to send us the former We are confident of returning the latter."[598] However, in 1779, Spain had joined France in supporting the Thirteen Colonies against Britain, and the Royal Navy expanded from around 16,000 men in 1775 to almost 100,000 in 1781.[599]

As in earlier years, wartime conditions – making good men hard to come by and driving up wages at home and abroad – shifted the balance of power towards the Company's servants in contract negotiations. In 1762, late in the Seven Years War, the Committee informed John Favell at Moose, "The scarcity of Armourers and Bricklayers is at this time so exceeding great that notwithstanding our utmost Efforts we have not been able to get either." They instructed Favell to persuade John Fleming to re-engage, with a raise or a promise of a gratuity if necessary, but "You must treat with him as from your self least he endeavour to make an Advantage of our Distress if he previously know our Wants."[600]

However, employees who tried to use wartime conditions to obtain or maintain

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[598]Humphrey Marten (York) to HBC (London), 13 September 1780, A. 11/116, fo. 75d; quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, lxxiii. Also see Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xiv. That spring, William Tomison had complained that he had insufficient hands to bring down all the returns from Cumberland and Hudson Houses and that he was too reliant on Native canoemen to bring down what furs he could ("what Indians do Consent to go down, I am under the greatest obligations immaginable by being obliged to give them what they ask for"); he lamented "their Honours neglect of not sending men to do the Business." William Tomison (Cumberland) to Humphrey Marten (York), 29 May 1780, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 50-51; also see William Tomison (Cumberland) to Humphrey Marten (York), 7 June 1780, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 54.

[599]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, lxxiv-lxxv.

[600]HBC (London) to John Favell (Moose), 25 May 1762, A. 5/1, fos. 46d-47. The same year, however, the Committee wrote directly to carpenter William Grey asking him to re-engage, as they had not been able to replace him: HBC (London) to William Grey (location unspecified), 26 May 1762, A. 5/1, fos. 47-47d.

high wages were still handicapped by the irregular flow of information to Hudson Bay: in 1764, Albany surgeon William Richards' request to renew his contract for two years at £48 a year was refused. Unbeknownst to him, the Seven Years War had ended, and "the General Peace has lowered the price of Wages in every Instance." He was replaced by Eusebius Bacchus Kitchen at £36.[601]

The Committee consistently sought to keep labour costs as low as possible. When they felt that certain factories had too many men, they chastised their factors. In 1756, for instance, James Isham was criticised for not sending some of his men home from York after failing to settle a post at Severn River.[602] Factors were sometimes asked to share expensive tradesmen. In 1764, the Committee instructed Moses Norton at Fort Prince of Wales, when repairs to the fort were complete, to "send Your Masons, or one of them at least, to York Fort or any Other of Our Factories that are out of repair, as it is so extremely difficult for us to procure Tradesmen of that sort at home. And We shall be very ready to make them a reasonable Gratuity in proportion as they shall exert themselves for Our Service."[603] Recruitment could be equally problematic in peace or war.

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[601]HBC (London) to William Richards (Albany), 23 May 1764, A. 5/1, fo. 56d. In the same year, surgeon John Potts was allowed to continue at £48, but he had served longer than Richards and was formerly master of Richmond Fort: HBC (London) to John Potts (Fort Prince of Wales), 23 May 1764, A. 5/1, fo. 59d.

[602]HBC (London) to James Isham (York), 12 May 1756, A. 5/1, fo. 15.

[603]HBC (London) to Moses Norton (Fort Prince of Wales), 23 May 1764, A. 5/1, fo. 59. Also see William Coats *et al* (Richmond) to HBC (London), 28 August 1749, A. 11/57, fo. 3.

Conclusion

The interplay of corporate agendas and personal priorities was certainly not new to the mid-eighteenth century: throughout the Company's history, its employees had made decisions based on the balance or imbalance of those two forces. What set the 1750s, 1760s, and 1770s apart from earlier decades was that changing circumstances in the Company's operations were upsetting the balance in an unfamiliar way. An employee of 1690 or 1720 was able to count on a relatively stable and predictable relationship with his factor and with his London masters. Ventures such as Henley House and inland wintering directly affected a minority of employees, but introduced a new series of possible demands which influenced the experiences and perceptions of all employees.

When the Committee turned their eyes towards the interior of the continent, although they kept their feet planted firmly on the shoreline, they abandoned (in a sense) the established patterns of movement and labour which had prevailed for almost seventy-five years. Travelling up the Albany or Hayes River was fundamentally different from slooping along the coast of James Bay; spending eleven or twelve months at a time in the unfamiliar interior (whether 'alone' with a group of Natives or in a small house with a handful of fellows) was fundamentally different from living in the Bachelors' Hall at York with a few dozen Englishmen and Orkneymen; and any kind of life or work away from the relatively comfortable factories nestled by the Bay was fundamentally different from being able to look out the window of even the smallest and most isolated coastal outpost upon the icy waters of an inland sea that represented a real connection with the world these men came from.

Of course, fear of isolation and fear of the unknown were not characteristic of men willing to sign multi-year contracts with a long-distance trading company. The reports of men petitioning to winter inland suggest that isolation of a sort – particularly isolation from managerial authority – could even be quite desirable; also, inland wintering offered different opportunities for adventure, companionship, and personal profit. However, the proceedings at Albany in 1757 and 1764 – which highlighted customary expectations and attitudes as much as they challenged them – clearly demonstrated that every man had his limits. The inland experiments before 1774 were beginning to change the nature of Company employment, its demands, its risks, and its opportunities. They were also changing the way servants were responding to those demands, risks, and opportunities. The establishment of Cumberland House and other inland trading posts exposed more men to the changing circumstances of the HBC working environment. These changes became more drastic as competition intensified in the late 1780s and beyond. But even before that, they influenced the way master, factor, and servant interacted, and illuminated the practices and assumptions which had been prevalent since Utrecht and probably before.

The Company's operations had expanded and diversified considerably since 1714. As labour needs became greater and more diverse, sources of recruitment became more diverse as well. Although more systematic methods of recruitment seemed to be called for, there was no great change in the Committee's approaches to personnel issues, and no recognisable policies emerged. The Bayside factors and the masters of inland houses in 1782 – trying their best to compete with Canadian traders in spite of insufficient men and

supplies, and trying to build a workable inland transport system – probably would have agreed with John Nixon's complaint a century earlier, that "there hath been no certain method for any thing."[604]

[604]Nixon, 249.

CHAPTER 6

COVENANTS AND CONTRACTS IN HUDSON BAY

Understanding the nature and status of Hudson's Bay Company servants as workers in an early modern context is problematic. Because of the necessarily long terms of service in Hudson Bay, they may seem to resemble industrial-era wage-earners more closely than did most early modern workers: they sold their labour for cash, and were provided with most of the tools and raw materials with which they worked.[605] On the other hand, their long terms of service also invite comparisons to domestic servants or servants in husbandry (agriculture), though such comparisons are complicated by the differing nature of the work involved. Bayside servants' relationship with their employer was based not entirely on contract, but contractual obligations were the most visible aspects of that relationship.[606]

Signing On: Covenants and Contracts

An examination of the HBC's contract and wage structures will help to situate HBC employees within the larger context of early modern labour patterns. Early modern employment contracts were economic, social, and even moral covenants. The term 'covenant' was rarely used in the HBC, but examples can be found both in the

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[605]See Woodward, *Men at Work*, 1.

[606]Joyce, "Work," 159, observed that most workers in early modern Britain were dependent on waged labour at some point in their working lives, and that very few workers were completely independent of capitalist markets for labour and commodities. "Wage and non-wage characteristics of labour were deeply embedded in each other, and capitalist wage work rarely took a pure form."

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[607]

In general, the document set out what the employee and employer could expect from one another both in terms of remuneration and behaviour. This usually included (either explicitly or implicitly) binding the servant to serve the master for the specified period of time and to obey his reasonable commands, while binding the master to maintain the servant for the duration of the contract and to pay the agreed wages (whether or not there was daily work, and whether or not the servant remained fit for work). However, the contract was more rigid in law than in practice, and could be broken with cause and/or with mutual consent.[608] Referring to domestic servants in England, J. Jean Hecht suggested that the eighteenth-century conception of the master-servant relationship was somewhat contradictory: while still seeing the relationship as a family one – a view inherited from the later Middle Ages – it acknowledged the mutual obligations involved as basically contractual. E.P. Thompson considered this to be the result of masters seeking the best of old and new labour relationships, clinging to the image of servants as unfree while profiting from an increasingly free and mobile population of wage workers. John Rule (paraphrasing Otto Kahn-Freund) suggested that the servant's unfree status was often more than just an image, and that the early modern employment contract was "an

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[607]The Committee's minutes of 27 February 1684 referred to "9 of the Covenant Servants" at Port Nelson: *Minutes, Second Part*, 204. Mariner Daniel Lane's testimony in the case of the interloper *Expectation* (12 March 1684) described Lane as "a Covenant Servant of the Hudsons Bay Company": *Minutes, Second Part*, 272. A 1688 letter to Port Nelson mentioned a new form of contract, and a marginal note summarized this paragraph of the letter as "new Covenants for Servants Sent": HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 20. The example of a servant's contract which Andrew Graham included in his *Observations on Hudson's Bay* (246) began, "I...do hereby covenant and agree to and with the Governor and Company of Adventurers."

[608]Kussmaul, 32-33; J.T. Cliffe, *The World of the Country House in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 90.

act of submission at inception and a condition of subordination in operation."[609] Evidence of men's experiences of these relationships in Hudson Bay appear to support Patrick Joyce's argument that both workers and employers made sense of new values and circumstances in terms of older notions, and thus that new market ideologies operated within the context of older paternalistic language.[610]

The earliest surviving contracts were signed in 1776.[611] The exact content of earlier contracts is not certain, although a set form certainly existed. In 1688, a postscript to the Committee's instructions to Governor Geyer and his Council at Port Nelson mentioned "a New forme of Contracts for our Servants," but gave no details.[612] That appears to be the earliest explicit reference to written contracts, but such probably existed from the Company's earliest days.[613] In 1757, when Robert Temple's men were resisting his attempts to re-establish Henley House, he made a point of reminding them of their contractual obligations: "I took the Contract & read to them beginning at I do oblige my Self to Stay according to the aforesaid limited time & so on."[614] Andrew Graham

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[609]Hecht, 71; Thompson, "Patricians and Plebs," 36; John Rule, "Employment and Authority: Masters and Men in Eighteenth-Century Manufacturing," in Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox, & Steve Hindle (eds.), *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996), 287. H. Clare Pentland's discussion of 'pre-industrial' labour relations is similar to Thompson's, but assumes a relative scarcity of labour in a Canadian context: Pentland, 25.

[610]Joyce, "historical meanings of work," 8.

[611]See A. 32/3, fos. 10-13.

[612]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 20.

[613]With the exception of apprenticeship indentures, most contemporary labour contracts in Britain were probably oral: Kussmaul, 31-32. Oral contracts relied heavily on local and/or craft customs, and thus would probably have been unfeasible for Hudson Bay.

[614]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 May, 6 June, 15 August, 18 August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 17.

provided a sample contract in the last volume of his *Observations on Hudson's Bay* in the 1780s:

> I A. B. of C. aged __ years do hereby covenant and agree to and with the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay and their successors to serve them for the term of __ years to commence from the time I shall arrive at Hudson's Bay at __ pounds per annum until I shall be discharged from the Factory, and if I intend to return at the limited time to give notice to the said Committee unless sooner recalled by them, and to ship myself upon the first vessel or ship that the Committee shall order me to embark in that shall go or is bound for Hudson's Bay, where I oblige myself to stay according to the aforesaid limited time, and to do and perform such labour and work and obey such commands as the Governor in Hudson's Bay or Chief Factor shall impose upon me. During my being in the said service I will with the utmost hazard and peril of my life in my station with courage and fidelity maintain and defend the said Company's Factory or Factories, territories, rights, privileges, goods and properties against all enemies whatsoever, either foreign or of our own country, and to the utmost of my power will cause the same to be maintained and defended by all others according to the duty of my service. And I will in all things submit myself to the commands and discipline of the Governor or Commander in Chief for the said Company and all other my superior officers by his directions. And during my abode there I will not directly or indirectly trade to or from any place within the limits of this Company's Charter for myself or for any other person or persons save only for the said Company in any furs, skins or other commodities whatsoever with the Indians or with any other nation inhabiting or trading in or about Hudson's Bay. And that whatsoever commodities I shall trade for there or get into my possession shall be only in trust and for the sole use and benefit of the said Governor and Company and their successors. Any person that shall drive any private trade I will endeavour to hinder, their names I will detect, the commodities so traded for I will discover as much as in me lies to the Governor in the Bay and the Committee of the said Company for the time being. And in case I the said A.B. shall make any breach or default of or in performance of all or any the aforesaid covenants, agreements or things then I and my executors and administrators will not only forfeit and lose all wages, salary and monies as by virtue of this contract or otherwise shall be due to me or them from the said Governor and Company of their successors which I do hereby enable them to detain to their own use and benefit, but also I and my executors and administrators will for every such breach or default also forfeit and pay to the said Governor and Company the sum of ___ of lawful money of England over and above all damages that may arise or

> happen to them by reason or means of such breach or default. In witness whereof I have here unto set my hand and seal this ___ day of ____ in the year of our Lord God ____.
>
> A. B.[615]

There is also evidence from the early years that special conditions could be negotiated orally. For instance, in May 1680, smith and armourer Thomas Coleman engaged for Hudson Bay for three years at 30s per month "and his wife to have halfe his Wages in his absence."[616] In 1690, the Committee granted George Geyer £10 "you say was formerly promised by Sir James Hayes whereof though no mention can be found in our Bookes yet that is allowed you."[617]

One striking aspect of HBC contracts is their temporal length. Contracts of three to five years were the norm, which was much longer than other early modern workers usually spent in the employ of a single master.[618] Most workmen on building projects, for

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[615]*Graham's Observations*, 246-247.

[616]*Minutes, First Part*, 65. It was not necessary for a servant to specify beforehand that he wanted certain portions of his wages remitted to friends or family members: he could send a letter of attorney or notice of his wishes to the Committee with the annual homeward correspondence packet. The Committee complied with their wishes whenever possible. In 1764, they instructed Ferdinand Jacobs at York to inform Isaac Batt (who was wintering inland) that they could not comply with Batt's written request to pay his wife £5 because the balance of his account was less than £5. Instead, they paid her £4 (the balance of his account) and advised him in future to be more frugal at the factory if he intended to provide for his wife in England. HBC (London) to Ferdinand Jacobs (York), 23 May 1764, A. 5/1, fo. 58. Without instructions, however, the Committee would not touch their servants' money. In January 1682, Eleanor Verner applied for some of her husband Hugh's wages, but the Committee denied her request because she had no letter of attorney and Hugh Verner had sent them no instructions: Rich, *Minutes, First Part*, 100. Also see the case of Edward Stacey, who served at Port Nelson 1688-94 but who was still indentured to a Mr Hurluck (or Captain Hurloce) when he engaged for Hudson Bay, and thus owed some of his wages to his former master: HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 138; HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 194.

[617]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 95.

[618]Pentland, 31, claimed that the HBC "was bound to hire on a long-term basis" in order to get men in the first place, but the evidence clearly indicates that long-term contracts were preferred by the Company and not by most of its servants.

instance, were paid by the day and employed either by the day, by the piece, or by the project.[619] Servants in husbandry worked alongside day labourers and usually took leave of their masters after one year.[620] Donald Woodward has found evidence that the town council in Hull (and probably elsewhere in northern England) employed labourers and/or craftsmen on retainer: he identified 16 "trusted labourers" at Hull between 1652 and 1679 who served the council for four or more years, but such long-term servants seldom worked more than 150 days a year for the council.[621] Uncertain and irregular employment was a pattern in almost all trades: in 1747, for instance, R. Campbell's *The London Tradesman* described stonemasons as "idle" four months of the year, bricklayers five or six months, and jobbing tailors three or four months.[622]

Three or four year terms were the norm in the late seventeenth century HBC; five year contracts were rare in the early days. In 1684, the Committee asked Morgan Lodge to engage men to "tarry in the Countrey three or foure yeares."[623] Twelve of the 13 men engaged in 1674, eight of the 14 engaged in 1680, and 19 of the 22 engaged in 1682

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[619]Gilboy, 8-17, 41-56, 80-97; Woodward, *Men at Work*, 12, 35, 45, 51-52, 65-69, 96, 116; Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 35.

[620]Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 71. Kussmaul, 51-52, looked at 809 settlement examinations from eight counties in the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, and found 75.8 per cent of people's service lasted one year and 15.3 per cent lasted two years, while only 1.3 per cent lasted six or more years. Mary Abbott, *Life Cycles in England 1560-1720* (London: Routledge, 1996), 85, argued for a growing tendency to hire by the day or by the task, rather than from one harvest to the next.

[621]Woodward, *Men at Work*, 35-37, 102-105.

[622]Rule, *Experience of Labour*, 49-57; Campbell, 159, 160, 192-193.

[623]HBC (London) to Morgan Lodge (Gravesend), 16 May 1684, *L.O. 1680-87*, 110.

signed on for three years;[624] 24 of the 37 men engaged in 1683 and 23 of the 37 engaged in 1684 signed on for four years.[625] After the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, five-year contracts became the norm, particularly for labourers. Twelve of the 16 men sent to Albany in 1719 had engaged for five years: all 12 were labourers.[626] Exceptions included apprentices, who were usually indentured for seven or eight years; surgeons, who almost invariably engaged for three years; and mariners, who generally served three- or four-year terms. Even there, however, the Company sought longer contracts: in 1767, William Lockey was appointed master of the *Whale* sloop for three years, "though Five Years would have been more agreeable" to the Committee.[627]

Part of the reasoning behind long-term contracts was logistical: given the expense and trouble of transporting men to and from Hudson Bay, the Company did not wish to ferry them back and forth any more than necessary. Longer terms also reduced the need for constant efforts at recruitment and increased the proportion of reasonably experienced servants who (presumably) knew what they were doing. Most importantly, long-term contracts were an important way to maintain wage stability. The expiration of a man's contract was the only point at which he could negotiate for higher wages, so the Committee was eager to limit those opportunities. For instance, the Committee chastised

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[624]*Minutes*, 97, 107-109, 114-115; *Minutes, First Part*, 27-74, 184-227. Rollason Driscoll, 103, cited three years as the norm, but did not mention five year contracts; it is unclear to what time period she was referring. At the same time, she referred to three year renewals, but in fact subsequent contracts were extremely flexible. G.N. Clark observed that three year contracts were usual in the late seventeenth century; he appeared to connect these long-term contracts with some difficulty in recruitment, but did not elaborate: *Minutes, First Part*, xxxiv.

[625]*Minutes, Second Part*, 83-106, 203-246.

[626]A. 16/1, fos. 2-15.

[627]HBC (London) to William Lockey (no address), 7 March 1767, A. 5/1, fo. 76d.

John Favell at Moose in 1764 for offering newly-recruited blacksmith John Pittway an extra £10 per annum for acting as armourer in addition to his regular duties: "We highly disapprove of any Servants requering an Advance of Wages for doing business which his Station necessarily qualified him for – especially until his first Contract is expired and his Merit is known."[628] Keeping labour costs as low as possible was critical: if the concern was going to survive, particularly in the years before the Treaty of Utrecht, the Committee needed to find the most economical sources of everything, including labour and its accompanying overhead.[629]

"Their times being out"[630]: Choosing to Leave the Service or to Stay in the Bay

While men whose contracts had expired were almost never prevented from leaving the Bay[631] – and were required to leave if they did not renew their service – men wishing to come home before their contracts had expired were usually only allowed to do so in cases of seriously poor health, domestic concerns at home, or chronic misbehaviour in the Bay.[632] Men without such excuses were told that granting their requests would set a

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[628]HBC (London) to John Favell (Moose), 23 May 1764, A. 5/1, fo. 57.

[629]See Burley, 4. In 1692, landsmen's wages totalled £1,222.14.6 and landsmen's provisions totalled £450 for each of the posts: Rich, *History*, I, 188. Joseph Robson estimated the maintenance costs of personnel at Fort Prince of Wales in the 1730s and 1740s to be 5s per week (£13 per annum) plus £5 for their passage to and from Hudson Bay: Robson, appendix, p. 69.

[630]See "A Councell Called the 20th of July 1706 [Albany]," A. 11/2, fo. 12.

[631]See, for example, HBC (London) to Henry Pollexfen Sr (Moose), 15 May 1760, A. 5/1, fos. 34d-35. The Royal African Company occasionally tried to detain men beyond the terms of their contracts, news of which hampered the company's recruitment efforts in England: Davies, *RAC*, 253-254.

[632]HBC (London) to Thomas White (Moose), 22 May 1754, A. 5/1, fos. 2d-3; HBC to White, 12 May 1756, A. 5/1, fos. 14-14d; HBC to Henry Pollexfen Sr (Moose), 23 May 1758, A. 5/1, fo. 24d; HBC to Humphrey Marten (Albany), 13 May 1767, A. 5/1, fo. 77d.

dangerous precedent.[633] The men who insisted on coming home early from Albany in 1755 (after the first deaths at Henley) had to pay £5 for their passage to and from the Bay: for labourer Thomas Stephens, this represented half a year's salary.[634] In earlier cases of men coming home before their contracts had expired, the charge was based on the time involved in the passages. In 1685, shipwright William Benson and mariner Ralph Preston came home early from Port Nelson, although both men had only completed one of their contracted four years: they each paid £2.16.0 for their initial passages to Port Nelson, calculated at the rate of 20s per month.[635]

Sometimes, servants and/or factors were uncertain whether or not a man's time was out. First contracts, and any subsequent contracts signed in Britain, were in the Committee's hands in London, while contracts signed in Orkney were brought back to London by the supply ships after visiting the Bay;[636] however, contracts signed in the Bay seem to have remained there. Thus, terms of engagement were not always clear to all parties, especially in Hudson Bay. John Nixon's 1682 complaint about not knowing

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[633]HBC (London) to William Richards (Henley House), 13 May 1767, A. 5/1, fos. 78-78d; HBC to Edward Lawton (Fort Prince of Wales), 25 May 1768, A. 5/1, fo. 91.

[634]A. 16/3, fo. 89. Farley Grubb, "Does Bound Labour Have To Be Coerced Labour? The Case of Colonial Immigrant Servitude Versus Craft Apprenticeship and Life-Cycle Servitude-in-Husbandry," *Itinerario* 21/1 (1997), 41, found that masters charged indentured servants bound for the American colonies between £6 and £12 for passage, including all necessities.

[635]A. 15/3, fos. 40, 48. Also in 1685, Henry Chambre (Chambray) was allowed to come home at the request of his wife. In January 1686, the Committee paid him his wages (£15), less £2.12.8 for the voyage to Port Nelson in 1684 and £1.12.8 for the voyage home in 1685 (calculated at the rate of 20s per month), for a total charge of £4.5.4: A. 1/8, fo. 28; A. 15/3, fo. 47. There is no indication of why Chambre had to pay for his passage both ways while Benson and Preston only paid for their passage out.

[636]See, for example, Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1733, *Letters*, 185.

whose contracts were expiring has already been mentioned;[637] Thomas McCliesh Jr (commanding York in 1723 and 1731), James Isham (commanding York in 1737) and Richard Norton (at Fort Prince of Wales in 1737) made similar complaints.[638] In 1719, Joseph Adams and John Henson were "Disconsolate" when they were told that they both had several years left in their apprenticeships, and asked for copies of their indentures to be sent to them at Albany.[639] In 1722, Joseph Myatt asked that men's contracts be sent over, "for I am inform'd that it is whispered about by some of them that they can return home when they please."[640]

The expiration of old contracts and the negotiation of new ones often produced tension. Like servants in England, Company servants expected to improve themselves and their position as they grew older, achieving more responsibility and/or higher pay.[641] For some, the hope of such improvement may have prompted them to leave their former

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[637]Nixon, 249. See Chapter 2.

[638]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 95; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 7 August 1731, *Letters*, 159; James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 6 August 1737, *Letters*, 230; Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 23 August 1737, *Letters*, 240. Also in 1737, Joseph Adams (then in charge of Albany) alerted the Committee to some confusion over the contract of labourer Patrick Sinclair, "who was removed hither from Moose fort....We have had no Acct from Moose fort of his time or Wages but by his own Account his time is expired next Year & further Says he Agreed with Captain Middleton at the Orkneys for Quantum Merit [*i.e.* 'quantum meruit', a reasonable but unspecified amount of money to be paid for services rendered] & so yr Honrs pleasure in this Affair we Desire; And he is Willing to Continue one Year Longer in your Honrs Service at your Pleasure": Joseph Adams & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 17 August 1737, A. 11/2, fo. 89d. In fact, Sinclair's time was not out until 1739 (A. 16/2, fo. 77), but he had come to Hudson Bay in 1733 without signing a contract: William Bevan at Moose reported that Sinclair "leaves it to your honours' discretion to allot him what you think proper." See Thomas McCliesh Jr, William Bevan, & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 24 August 1735, *Letters*, 210.

[639]Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 40.

[640]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1722, A. 11/2, fo. 44d.

[641]Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 72.

masters and enter the Company's service in the first place. As with other masters, however, the Company was not always able to offer young men the advancement they sought: in such cases, men would usually seek a better position with another master. In this sense, servants constituted an unusually mobile group within English and Scottish society,[642] and the physical distance between Britain and Hudson Bay was unusual only in its geographical extent.[643]

The Committee tried to minimize such seeking of opportunities for improvement with long-term contracts. In 1723, the Committee took the unusual step of directing that servants whose contracts were expiring, and who refused to re-engage for at least two years, were to come home. Thomas McCliesh Jr at York considered this "the only method" of preventing "our being put to difficulty with the men whose times are expired,

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[642]Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 71-73; Kussmaul, 49, 55, 66-67; K.D.M. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England, 1660-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 334-337. Although migration for a variety of reasons was commonplace in early modern England, it was usually over short distances. "Mobility was for the most part local, or at most regional, and many people who moved numerous times in the course of their lives never lived more than a day's walk from the parish of their childhood." Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 74; also Kussmaul, 56-60; Clark, "Migration in England," 66-73; David Eastwood, *Governing Rural England: Tradition and Transformation in Local Government 1780-1840* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 25-28. Abbott, 85, suggested that both employers and hired hands preferred to make agreements with people they knew (either personally or by reputation).

Studies of mobility in early modern Scotland have shown patterns similar to England (*i.e.* high levels of movement, primarily over short distances), but no detailed work has been done to ascertain whether turnover rates of population were as high as in some English communities: Whyte, 92. It should be noted, however, that the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in England and Scotland have been relatively neglected in migration studies, partly because the sources from that period are "more intractable and less reliable" than those of both the preceding and succeeding periods: Clark, "Migration in England," 60.

[643]Because the distance to Hudson Bay makes it difficult to meaningfully compare it to internal labour mobility within Britain, it may also render unhelpful the frequent juxtaposition of 'betterment' migrants and 'subsistence' migrants. Peter Clark and other scholars differentiate between broad streams of people moving relatively long distances in search of basic subsistence and more localized short-distance movements by more respectable people in search of better prospects for advancement: Clark & Souden, "Introduction," 31; Clark, "Migration in England," 59. The distinction is not clear-cut (as Clark and Souden observe) and service in Hudson Bay could fit either classification.

by endeavouring to impose upon us by demanding extravagent [*sic*] wages," but also complained that the Committee had called 11 men home and sent only nine to replace them.[644]

Not everyone who went home did so because of dissatisfaction. Most men left the service without comment, and there is no more evidence of why they left than there is for why they came. No doubt many simply desired a change. There was nothing to inhibit their mobility; they had few possessions to carry, and their skills could be put to use in many different settings. A Bayside factory was just one of many workplaces through which they would pass during their lives.

Bargaining to Stay – or to Go Home

Servants consistently preferred short-term contracts, which created more frequent opportunities for negotiating better terms. When John Fullartine "entertain'd some of the best hands" whose times were out in 1701, they signed one-year contracts, he "not being able to get them to Sign for any longer term."[645] In 1716, Thomas McCliesh Jr reported that "Those men whoos time was Expired would by no means Contract for Longer then 2 yeares & some for one year."[646] Of the 11 Albany men whose times were out in 1740, three (mariners Robert Crystal and John Harrison, and joiner Martin Andrews) were resolved to go home; three (labourers Thomas Miller and Peter Robinson, and tailor

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[644]McCliesh mentioned that he and his council made the Committee's order "public in the factory," but did not comment on the men's reactions: Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1724, *Letters*, 98, 99.

[645]"A Coppy of a Counsell Hold at Albany Fort Sepbr ye 1st 1701," A. 11/2, fo. 1.

[646]Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 16 July 1716, A. 11/2, fo. 27.

William Macklin) requested one-year contracts, four (labourers Peter Isbister Sr and Will Scott, armourer John Greenaway, and cooper/steward William Sinclair) requested two-year contracts; and sloopmaster Joseph Isbister was willing to stay for an unspecified length of time, "asking only that his wages be brought in line with those of other sloopmasters."[647] Sloopmaster Thomas Mitchell asked for one year at £50 in 1747, and the following year rejected the Committee's offer of a three-year contract; in 1752, sloop mate Charles Cromartie (who had been apprenticed to Mitchell in 1743) signed a one-year contract at £20 and was reportedly willing to sign a two-year contract if his wages were advanced to £24.[648] An unusual year was 1757, when four of the 11 Albany servants whose times were expiring asked for contracts of three years and one (labourer Thomas Halcro) asked for a four-year contract.[649]

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[647]Rowland Waggoner & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 15 August 1739, A. 11/2, fos. 100d-101. Most of these men got what they wanted: Greenaway two years at £30 (up from £25), Sinclair two years at £20 (up from £10), Macklin *two* years at £14, Peter Isbister Sr two years at £12 (up from £10). A. 16/3, fos. 7, 9, 10, 22. Joseph Isbister's wages were raised from £40 to £50: A. 16/3, fo. 9. Miller and Robinson received one-year contracts at £12 (up from £10, but they had asked for £14): A. 16/3, fos. 10, 23. Scott asked for two years at £14 (up from £10), but accepted one year at £12 and a second year at £14: A. 16/3, fo. 11. Crystal, though resolved to go home, actually stayed at Albany until 1741: A. 16/3, fo. 21.

[648]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 18 August 1747, A. 11/2, fo. 133; George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1748, A. 11/2, fo. 136d; George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 4 August 1752, A. 11/2, fo. 151. For details of Cromartie's service, see A. 16/3, fos. 49, 84.

[649]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 25. Halcro (£6 per annum) left his wages to the Committee's consideration, but he died at Albany on 15 November 1757: A. 16/3, fo. 88; A. 16/4, fo. 6. Three-year contracts were requested by and granted to labourer William Allen (who was described in the Officers' and Servants' Ledgers as a labourer at £10 per annum and Joseph Isbister's apprentice between 1753 and 1758, and who now asked to be engaged as a mariner at £20), while labourer Robert Isbister (at £6) left his wages to the Committee's pleasure and was disappointed: A. 16/3, fos. 92, 93; A. 16/4, fos. 7, 8. Shipwright John Fairfowl asked for a one-year contract but left his wages to the Committee's discretion, and continued at his current salary (£36): A. 16/3, fo. 89; A. 16/4, fo. 19. Sloop mate Robert Ingledew asked for two years at £30 (up from £25) but only got one year at that wage: A. 16/3, fo. 103; A. 16/4, fo. 12. Labourer and former apprentice Guy Warwick and writer John Favell both asked for £15 (up from £10) for three and two years respectively but accepted £12: A. 16/3, fos. 64, 96; A. 16/4, fos. 8, 20. Mariner Hugh Slater, formerly the servant of the late sloopmaster John Longland (d. 16 June 1757) asked for three years at £15 (up from £10) and accepted another year at

Of course, demands for short-term contracts were not always just bargaining tools for better wages. In 1706, for instance, Anthony Beale reported from Albany that "the men in the Countrey whose times was out not one would stay in a long time by reason there is no sertainty of Ships comeing and at last when I got a fuew to Stay I was forced to give them extravigant Wages."[650] Some men did not want to stay away from home for too long, lest some misfortune befall their family or friends in their absence: in 1770, for instance, Humphrey Marten warned the Committee, "Your Servants think it very hard to give two Years Notice, as in such a length of time many things may happen which may lay them under great difficulties."[651] Also, men may have wanted means of escape if tensions within the factory became more than they wished to deal with.[652]

The process of re-engaging men could involve much negotiation and conflict, although the Company's correspondence and other documents reveal less than they conceal. On one hand, the employee – whether old hand, skilled tradesman, or veteran officer – hoped or expected that the value of his services would be recognized with a new contract and higher pay, though he could never be sure if he was pushing his wage demands too far. On the other hand, the Committee – eager to reward merit but loath to

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his current wages, but was advanced to £20 in 1759: A. 16/3, fo. 97; A. 16/4, fo. 9. Labourer Thomas Austin asked for two years at £25 (up from £20) and got it by virtue of being a bricklayer as well: A. 16/3, fos. 65, 98; A. 16/4, fo. 10.

[650]Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 July 1706, A. 11/2, fo. 15. For the irregularity of shipping to and from Albany between 1701 and 1712, see *Letters*, 335-336.

[651]Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 3 September 1770, A. 11/3, fos. 147d-148.

[652]Vilhelm Aubert, *The Hidden Society* (Totowa NJ: Bedminster Press, 1965), 261, 275, suggested that high turnover among ships' crews may have been "an answer to tensions created by the fact that those who work in the same place also reside and spend their leisure time together."

encourage bad habits – hoped or expected that good men would want to remain in their service and be happy with the wages offered them, though they could never be sure if they were striking the proper balance between the cost and efficiency of their personnel. The Bayside factors were intermediaries in this struggle, in some ways representing one side or the other, and sometimes pursuing their own agendas.[653] They relayed the men's demands to London and in turn relayed the Committee's replies to the men. The men trusted that their governor portrayed them in a favourable light in his correspondence with London, while the Committee trusted that their governors' accusations of misbehaviour were warranted and that commendations for good behaviour were not self-serving. Meanwhile, the factors themselves worried that bitter homeward-bound servants might tell malicious tales to any Committee member who would listen. This geographic distance dimension of communication set the HBC apart from contemporary labour relations in Britain.[654]

Circumstances sometimes stymied the Company's attempts to keep its servants on long-term contracts. During the early years, for instance, servants were not required (as they were in the eighteenth century) to give one or even two years' notice of their

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[653]The range of influence available to high-ranking servants (like factors, stewards, and foremen) in early modern Britain was summed up by William Marshall, a West Indies merchant who in 1774 acquired a 300-acre farm in Surrey and kept a diary of his experiences. He was completely dissatisfied with his servants, and complained that his foreman "all along—has been *siding* with the men; instead of assisting me to manage them, he has been assisting them to manage me." Quoted in Kussmaul, 46.

[654]Nevertheless, servants' efforts to push for new and better terms of employment fit well within some scholarly conceptions of early modern labour relations. See Richard Price, "The labour process and labour history," *Social History* 8/1 (January 1983), 62. Patrick Joyce suggested that Price overemphasized workers' combativeness, and characterized worker-employer relationships as reciprocal and ambivalent: Patrick Joyce, "Labour, capital and compromise: a response to Richard Price," *Social History* 9/1 (January 1984), 70, 73. Also see Price, "Conflict and co-operation: a reply to Patrick Joyce," *Social History* 9/2 (May 1984), 217-224; Joyce, "Languages of reciprocity and conflict: a further response to Richard Price," *Social History* 9/2 (May 1984), 225-231.

intention to either re-engage or go home.[655] This placed more power in the men's hands and pressure on the factors. In 1682, John Nixon complained that at ship-time "I am no more looked upon...then a cipher, especially when they are in their drink, so that if I command them about their bussiness presently they will hit me in the teeth of their times being out, and that they will goe home."[656]

A more orderly but (from the Committee's point of view) no more satisfactory picture emerged from Albany in the early 1700s. On 11 September 1705, the Albany council met to discuss the issue of which servants were to go home on the *Hudson's Bay*, which was preparing to depart. Governor John Fullartine reported, "Whereas ye Comp[any] haveing sent so few hands from England this Year & them for the most part very helpless, most of the Old Servants that were in the Country their time being out they stood upon very extravagant Termes & not a Man of them that were good for any thing would condescend to tarry under Seamans Wages which of necessitye we were forced to complye to."[657] Indeed, of the 18 men listed as re-engaging, not one agreed to less than £24 per annum, more than twice most labourers' starting wages. Unfortunately, the *Hudson's Bay* was unable to leave the Bay that year and had to winter on Gilpin Island, about 30 miles north of Eastmain House: nobody went home in 1705. In July 1706, Fullartine's successor, Anthony Beale, called the council together again to see which men

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[655]The earliest instruction that men must give notice appears to be in 1686, but as late as 1722 some men at Albany "whispered...that they can return home when they please." HBC (London) to John Bridgar (Moose), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-87*, 181; Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1722, A. 11/2, fo. 44d.

[656]Nixon, 244.

[657]"A Councell Call'd this 11th of Sepr 1705" (Albany), A. 11/2, fo. 9.

would stay on and which go home. Like Fullartine, Beale found that "most of the best men, their times being out where [*sic*] for going Home and would not stay unless they had extraordinary Wages, which of necessity we where forced to agre[e] to."[658] Of the 17 men he listed as re-engaging, 11 had re-engaged the previous year and three of them negotiated another raise in salary.

There is no evidence from this period of modern-style collective bargaining, but the fact that contracts were negotiated only once a year imposed a sort of collectivity on the bargaining process. Even though men's terms were staggered, they expired in clusters, and short-term contracts increased the size of these clusters. For instance, if a factor had most of his men on three-year terms, he knew that every year about one third of the men would need to be dealt with, whereas five-year terms reduced the number of contracts likely to expire simultaneously. Men knew when a lot of contracts were expiring at once, and when the supply ships arrived they could see how many new men there were, and so could effectively gauge how much leverage they would have in negotiating new contracts for themselves. In 1703, Fullartine lamented that "those of Yor old Servants that are here knowing that ye Country is at Such a pitch, stand upon very high & unreasonable tearms & the worst of them blow'd att 20 lb a year"; he convinced some "to condescend to tarry" by promising them extra provisions ("5 lb of Flower or Meal each man a week"), "without wch not one of them would have tarried this year."[659]

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[658]"A Councell Called the 20th of July 1706" (Albany), A. 11/2, fo. 12.

[659]"[H]ow I shall be able to perform my prommiss God knows for I have it not in the Country for 40 men wch is ye number I desire to keep if I can possibly procure so many." John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fos. 3-3d.

Fullartine was determined to maintain a certain level of staffing for the maintenance and defence of his employers' interests and property; but he was powerless to stop the men under his command from exploiting their employer's vulnerable position to improve the terms of their employment, and thereby increasing the cost of maintaining and defending the Company's interests and property.

The Albany men may have decided among themselves to demand extra rations before they put their wage demands before Fullartine. Indeed, the men's room and board – whether considered as a non-monetary wage or as a moral and contractual obligation on the part of their employer – were an integral part of their wage demands, and any reduction in the quality or quantity of provisions could be interpreted as a devaluation of their wages (and, perhaps, of their labour).[660] However, whether they put those demands forward individually, as a whole, or in smaller groups is impossible to tell: Fullartine's report focused mainly on proclaiming his loyalty and value to the Company while dodging responsibility for rising costs, rather than on the process of wage negotiation. Despite his concessions, Fullartine was unable to maintain his desired complement: 14 men went home that year, leaving 35 men and boys.[661] The wage concessions made by Fullartine in 1705 and by Anthony Beale in 1706 could not prevent Albany's complement

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[660]See Aubert, 265. E.P. Thompson, "The Patricians and the Plebs," in *Customs in Common,* 38, saw non-monetary perquisites as an important feature of pre-industrial relationships: "they appeared simultaneously as economic and social relations, as relations between persons not as payments for services or things," and thus the loss of such perquisites was an important feature of the decline of pre-industrial relationships. Ben-Amos, 171, observed that the lack of clear boundaries between the moral and the contractual aspects of service agreements could easily lead to tension between master and servant.

In the HBC, officers also reacted to what they perceived as insufficient room and/or board. In the late 1760s, Andrew Graham, *Graham's Observations*, 244, claimed that "the officers' apartments [at Fort Prince of Wales] are so small, and amongst the men's, [that it] often causes discontents between the Chief and them, so that few of them stays after the expiration of their first contract, if not sooner returns home."

[661]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 7d.

from falling to 27 by 1706.[662]

Bayside hands took risks, however, when they tried to exploit the Company's weakness. For example, they lacked information about changing circumstances at home that affected prospects for higher wages or more benefits. Wartime conditions enabled men to use recruitment difficulties to demand higher wages, but the arrival of peace could take them by surprise and lessen their bargaining power. For instance, although Fullartine and Beale felt that they were at the mercy of their men in this regard at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Beale's 1714 letter from Albany – written on the very day he learned of the end of Queen Anne's War – mentioned 28 men whom he was sending home and only two men (Richard Staunton and Joseph Myatt, both future governors of Albany) whom he was engaging or re-engaging.[663] Beale was lowering Albany's wage bill and trimming his garrison to reflect the perceived security of peacetime. Only two years later, however, the new factor at Albany, Thomas McCliesh Jr (who had been among those sent home in 1714), complained about a rumoured French trading post at the mouth of the Severn River and reported, "Those men whoos time was Expired would by no means Contract for Longer then 2 years & some for one year, I was Oblidged to Comply with their Demands, Knowing what Treacherous next door neighbours we have to deal with."[664]

The renewal of contracts could also be an opportunity for employees to

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[662]Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 July 1706, A. 11/2, fo. 15.

[663]Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1714, A. 11/2, fos. 23d-24.

[664]Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 16 July 1716, A. 11/2, fo. 27. The French had constructed a trading post at or near the mouth of the Severn in 1702, but when they abandoned it is unknown.

demonstrate their 'devotion' to the Company by not taking advantage of crises with demands for higher wages; such 'devotion' could then be rewarded at a later date. The Committee made this explicit in 1690, when they instructed George Geyer not to let any man come home from Port Nelson who could be persuaded to stay:

> for the more peaceable & orderly Government of our Factories in this time of Publick troubles [*i.e.* war with France], our express order is, that none shall Remove their posts or station wherein they are dureing this warr...but acquiesce Cheerfully and obediently in their Respective places & Imployments dureing there [these?] troubles or our further pleasure signified, as they Expect our favor or tender our displeasure...ashureing all persons that shall behave themselves modestly & peaceably in their severall places, they shall be sure to find the Companies favor & agreable Rewards according to their merrits.[665]

When informing John Bridgar of his appointment to the command of Moose Fort in 1686, the Committee admitted that "your resting satisfied in our Determination & pleasure will lay some sort of obligation upon us," and promised to reward merit, diligence, and industry.[666] Likewise, the 1692 order that no men were to be allowed to come home was accompanied by the assurance that "for such whose times are Expired we shall take it kindly of them who stay chearfully & willingly in Our Service & not faile to remember them."[667]

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[665]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 102-103. Also see HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 123.

[666]HBC (London) to John Bridgar (Moose), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 178-179. The Committee's understanding of such 'obligations' is illustrative of Marshall Sahlins' concept of "generalized reciprocity," wherein the material aspect of a transaction is outweighed by the social and the counter-obligation is indefinite (*i.e.* not stipulated by time, quantity, or quality). See Robert Paine, "A Theory of Patronage and Brokerage," in Paine (ed.), *Patrons and Brokers in the East Arctic*, Newfoundland Social & Economic Papers no. 2 (St John's: Institute of Social & Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1971), 13.

[667]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 141-142.

Some servants placed their trust in the Committee's future largesse. In 1722, the Committee ordered Thomas McCliesh Jr at York to retain mariner John Wateridge for one more year on reasonable terms: McCliesh reported that Wateridge "has freely consented to tarry at his former wages [30s per month, or £18 per annum]...and has left it to your honours' generosity to advance his wages next year, in hopes to appoint him gunner." With McCliesh's support, Wateridge was appointed gunner at £24 in 1725.[668] However, having achieved the position he sought, Wateridge proved reluctant to commit to a long-term contract. In 1727, the Committee expressed their willingness to retain Wateridge as gunner at York: when asked to sign a contract for three years, he refused, although he was "willing to continue longer in your service from year to year." The Committee disapproved of this attitude and, when he again refused to sign a long-term contract in 1728, recalled him. By this time, too, Wateridge had lost McCliesh's patronage: the Governor commented that "it was high time" the gunner was sent home, "having been very unmannerly by reason I seized some [illicit] brandy that came from on board the *Mary*."[669] At Fort Prince of Wales in 1740, Richard Norton appears to have had some difficulty persuading chief mason Thomas Kingston to tarry for one year ("that your honours might not be put to a nonplus") and to rely on the Committee's promise of "a suitable gratuity to his desert." However, once Norton came to an agreement with him, it

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[668]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 94-95; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1724, *Letters*, 97; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 26 August 1725, *Letters*, 109. In 1723, Thomas White and Thomas Tutty, "both good men and very serviceable," and whose times were out in 1724, also offered (*Letters*, 95) to serve one year longer and "left it to your generosity to advance their wages," but did not mention any specific ambitions.

[669]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1727, *Letters*, 128; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 8 August 1728, *Letters*, 134.

was Kingston who persuaded two other masons to stay on similar terms.[670]

Such a tactic was not always rewarded, however. In 1723, Richard Staunton – who had just taken over as Chief at Albany – reported that surgeon Charles Napper "makes noe Dem[an]d but leaves [his wages] to your Honrs Pleasure" and that John Henson, whose apprenticeship expired that year, was "willeing of Leaveing it to your Honrs Curticy wt wages he shall have." Staunton gave both men a good character, and they may have refrained from making wage demands in order to reinforce that recommendation and to separate themselves from the "men of an uneasie temper and turbulant Spirit" against whom Staunton railed in the same letter.[671] Napper received a gratuity of ten guineas (£10.10.0) but no advance on his wages, and Henson cheerfully accepted a three-year contract at £16.[672] In 1726, William Bevan was appointed to succeed George Gunn as master of the *Beaver* sloop the following year: "as to his Sallery...he says he Desires no more then what Mr [George] Gunn hath," and the Committee accordingly raised his wages from £27 to £40.[673]

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[670]Roger Sweetman could not be persuaded to agree, and thus went home that year. Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 9 August 1740, *Letters*, 320. Gratuities were also used to encourage workers on construction projects in Britain: see Woodward, *Men at Work*, 146.

[671]Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 46d.

[672]For Napper, who remained at the standard surgeon's salary of £36, see A. 16/1, fo. 22. For Henson, see A. 16/1, fo. 6; Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1724, A. 11/2, fo. 50d. Henson's wages remained at £16 until his death in 1725, despite the fact that he served as trader at Eastmain in 1722-23 and 1725. Henson's fellow Woodford parish apprentice, Joseph Adams, also received £16 when in charge of Eastmain in 1721-22, although Adams received retroactive pay for serving as trader before the expiration of his indenture; Henson also served as trader while still an apprentice but did not receive retroactive pay. Joseph Myatt received £50 when in charge of Eastmain in 1720-21 and £60 when in charge there in 1723-25. A. 16/1, fo. 17; A. 16/2, fo. 10.

[673]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fo. 56d. The Committee gave Bevan the charge of the Eastmain trade in 1727 as well, but only after consideration of former Company servant George Sanders: Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1727, A. 11/2, fo. 59. For Bevan's wages, see A. 16/2, fo. 17; for Gunn's wages, see A. 16/1, fo. 20.

The Committee might accede to men's demands – or even offer them higher wages and/or more benefits without being asked – in the expectation that this would produce greater fidelity and industry in the future. In 1740, the Albany Council responded to such encouragement by declaring that "Your Addition to Mr [Joseph] Isbister's Sallary [*i.e.* raising it from £40 to £50] is a fresh mark of Your Indulgence to all dilligent Servts and will excite in us a zeal for the future of meriting Your favours."[674] Sometimes, the Committee tried to entice their senior employees into signing on for long terms. In 1770, James Nicholson at Moose was offered £40 a year on condition he engaged for at least three years and Isaac Leask was offered £50 a year as Second at Fort Prince of Wales, in expectation that he would sign a long-term contract.[675]

Of course, this method of encouragement could be misplaced. In 1684, James Walker (who had only been in the service one year but whose father, William, was on the Committee) was named Second at Port Nelson "to shew our readiness to reward the good services which any of those implied [*i.e.* employed] by us shall doe for the Compa. and although he is but young in our service we doubt not but he will by his courage, activity &

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[674]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 24 August 1740, A. 11/2, fo. 102. There seems to be something disingenuous about the inward correspondence from Albany during Isbister's tenure: more than other factors, Isbister sometimes gave the impression of using the voice of his Council to make statements to the Committee about himself. See, for example, Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1744, A. 11/2, fo. 121: "Wee cannot but be concerned to part with our Chief Mr Joseph Isbister, nor can we in Reason offer to detain him longer on account of the bad Indisposition of his Health, which he hath been afflicted with these 2 Years last, and do believe he would have willingly stayed longer to serve Yr Honrs had not his long and continued Illness prevented." For a case where Isbister appeared to refer to himself as "we," see his comment regarding the death of a Homeguard Cree woman: Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 18 August 1743, A. 11/2, fos. 114-114d.

[675]HBC (London) to James Nicholson (Moose), 17 May 1770, A. 5/1, fo. 112d; HBC (London) to Isaac Leask (Fort Prince of Wales), 17 May 1770, A. 5/1, fo. 121d. In the same year, Moses Norton (in charge at Fort Prince of Wales) was sent a contract with a blank space for him to fill in the number of years, the Committee expressing their hope that Norton would sign for at least four years: HBC (London) to Moses Norton (Fort Prince of Wales), 17 May 1770, A. 5/1, fos. 120-120d.

Dilligence answer the good opinion we have conceived of him."[676] However, Governor John Abraham sent Walker home from Port Nelson on the same ship that brought news of his promotion, charging the young man with being "Quarrelsome etc."[677]

A more complex example is that of Thomas Phipps Jr, cousin of Committee member Thomas Phipps Sr. In 1682, when the younger Phipps was warehousekeeper at Moose, the Committee raised his salary to £70 and advanced his position in the hierarchy to third in command: the Committee had "received a good Charact[e]r of you" and improved the terms of his employment "to encourage your fidelity & diligence in our Service."[678] A few weeks after this offer was made, however, Phipps came under grave suspicion of being connected with an interloping expedition planned by the elder Phipps (who subsequently lost his place on the Committee). Another letter was written, ordering him to be removed from his post and sent home.[679] However, the second letter never reached Hudson Bay, as the ship which carried it was lost at sea, and in any case favourable references from returning servants soon persuaded the Committee that he might be trusted. In 1685, he succeeded John Abraham in command of Port Nelson, "which we [the Committee] designed as a particular marke of our Favour to him," but he offended the Committee by demanding £200 per annum – twice the wages he was offered

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[676]HBC (London) to John Abraham (Port Nelson), 14 May 1684, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 111. Two of James' brothers were also employed by the Company at this time: William Jr was the Company's attorney and Nehemiah was a ship captain. *Minutes, Second Part*, 83n.

[677]A. 1/8, fo. 26d; *Minutes, Second Part*, 83n.

[678]HBC (London) to Thomas Phipps Jr (Moose), 23 May 1682, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 52; also see HBC (London) to John Nixon (Moose), 15 May 1682, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 45.

[679]HBC (London) to John Nixon (Moose), 24 July 1682, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 58-59.

and twice the wages John Bridgar was receiving at the Bottom of the Bay.[680] The Committee's response contrasted his demand with his former good service,

> which we looked upon to deserve an Encouragement & advancement to an higher Imply, & since it must needs have bene [*sic*] unexpected to you, we promissed our selves not only a gratefull acceptance & full sattisfaction from you in it, but also a very hapy [*sic*] success & Improvement of our Trade & affaires at Port Nellson by yr Industrey & prudent conduct....But it seemes very strange to us, that for so signall a marke of our Favour and respect which we designed to you, you should have no other gratefull sense then to endeavor to introduce a new president [*i.e.* precedent] & a new charge upon us by rayseing our Sallerey there which all your Predecessors have bin content & thankfull for.[681]

As well, the Committee expressed their displeasure with Phipps in letters to other Bayside factors, perhaps to deter similar behaviour on their parts.[682] Phipps returned home in 1686 and, despite his 'ingratitude,' in February 1687 was negotiating terms on which he would return to the Bay: those negotiations dragged on through the spring until finally collapsing under the weight of Phipps' constant bargaining. The Committee had been willing to give him another chance, but they had not found him "soe Candid and Ingenious" as past and present servants had led them to expect.[683]

The most conspicuous example of the Committee using benefits and wage increases to strengthen the loyalty (or the perceived loyalty) of its servants was in the aftermath of the loss of James Bay to the French in 1686. Beginning in 1688, Governor

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[680]HBC (London) to John Bridgar (Moose), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 177.

[681]HBC (London) to Thomas Phipps Jr (Port Nelson), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 191-192.

[682]HBC (London) to John Bridgar (Moose), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 177; HBC (London) to Henry Sergeant (Albany), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 187.

[683]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 3 June 1687, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 236; A. 1/9, fo. 7d.

George Geyer at Port Nelson received a series of letters from his employers that sometimes verged on the obsequious. On Geyer's shoulders rested all of the Company's trade and interests during this anxious period in its history.

> Wee look upon your prudence and resolution amidst such disorders & in soe Tempestious a time to bee the Chiefe meanes that Wee received, a Tollerable Trade the last yeare, and that Wee have our Factory Preserved....These Considerations as well as our particular esteeme for you And the Opinion Wee have of your Fidelity & experience, in promoteing the best wayes to Secure our places & encrease our Trade, hath Caused us to repose a great Trust in you in Continueing you our Governor, And to excite your Courage & Sence of our Nations Honour the more Wee have Honoured you in a way which was never before practiced by obtaineing the Gratious favour from his Ma[jes]tie to Constitute you Governor by his owne Royall Commission....We have appointed you noe Deputy Governor at Port Nelson relyeing entirely on your Conduct & experience, and tho wee recd many Complaints against you here by some, whoe came home the Last yeare of the Great Quantity of Beavor that you have Concealed to Ship home for your owne use at private Opertunityes....yett Wee have overlook't all, and are resolved to lay such an Obligation of kindness & Confidence upon you, as shall engage your Fidelity as well as utmost industry, And that it shalbe noe bodyes fault but yours if Wee have not a Thriveing & Flourishing Trade.[684]

Also placed upon Geyer's shoulders were the gratitude and good will of his employers, the defence of his nation's interests, the obligations felt by a man whose sins had been overlooked (if not forgiven), and the full responsibility for any future failures. He was also given a three-year contract, ostensibly because "Wee think it not Convenient, that the Cheife men whoe Governe our affaires...should bee at an uncertainety, of being every yeare Called home, which prevents them of prosecuteing those measures, for our Security & Advantage, which otherwise they may take" – but probably also because the Committee did not want to have to replace him with a less experienced factor sooner than

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[684]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 6-7.

they had to.[685]

The Committee's apparent willingness to overlook Geyer's private trade may seem puzzling, but was a ploy sometimes used by masters with servants "of a better Rank." The moralist William Fleetwood observed that "the Reputation of Servants is so dear and valuable" that many masters were reluctant to accuse them of "false dealing." He recommended hinting at knowledge of servants' sins, as the Committee sometimes did, because "a light Suspition, may promote that Industry and Vigour, and give new Life, to make indeed amends for what is past." While "a prudent connivance and concealment of their faults of this kind" might reclaim them, "the divulging of them, is likely enough to ruine them for ever, either by hardning them in Sin, or taking away their Credit, so that they never can be trusted or employed by any other."[686] The Committee presumably felt that Geyer's indiscretions were outweighed by his past, present, and future service to the Company.

Each year's letter from London brought new encouragement for Geyer, including gratuities of £100 in 1690, 1691, and 1692. Throughout this period, however, Geyer actually wanted to go home. He first asked permission in 1687, but the Committee refused it in 1688:

> You See Wee make you the Cheife usefull man, to us and Wee are of [the] opinion that you haveing been soe many yeares in our Service and are soe well experienced in all our affaires and in our true interest that you will never desert our imploymt as long as wee think fitt to Continue you in it, And therefore Wee doe not Answere your request of Comeing home this

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[685]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 8.

[686]William Fleetwood, *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants* (New York: Garland, 1985; originally published London: C. Harper, 1705), 377-379.

> yeare, but approve of your Modesty that it was with a Submission & Resignation to our pleasure & Service.[687]

In 1690, they told him,

> In Regard...of the present warr here with France...& that wee have soe much experience of your good services & your usefullnesse to us now more especially at this Juncture, wee must & doe earnestly intreate you not to thinke of Removeing or Returneing home at this time of a Publick warr, & when wee are Besett with soe much Trouble & soe many difficulties, & that wee have need of your good Conduct & faithfull Resolution to maintaine & defend our Interest...And therefore wee entreate you with patience & Courage to abide by it, & to Inspire the Like Resolutions into your Deputy Mr. Walsh at New Severn, that soe God sending a happy end to this warr, Wee may have Cause to thanke & to Reward you both.[688]

In 1691, he was told, "we cannot possibly dispence with your coming home this year...Wee doe not doubt but you will cheerfully continue there one year more, affaires here in Europe (as to the Warre) being at A greater Crisis for this Summer then ever and God alone knowing on which side he shall please to cast the advantage of the scale, Soe that both as to the safety of our Factory & as to the improvement & enlargeing our trade in this Juncture Wee have neede of double help and United force."[689] The Company used its vulnerability to strengthen its negotiations with Geyer, appealing for his help and calling upon a sense of unity which was seldom emphasized in peacetime.

In a private letter, the Committee described their relationship with Geyer in more personal terms than was possible in the official correspondence. The "Preservation of Port Nelson in this dangerous time" was "a very tender point to us" in 1691, and was

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[687]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 13.

[688]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 98.

[689]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 117-118.

wholly dependent "upon your Conduct & Courage." This was quite true, as Severn River had been abandoned the previous year and the Churchill River venture of 1688/89 had come to naught. The letter reminded Geyer of "the Obligations you will putt upon us" by agreeing to stay in the country, hoping that "your owne Zeale & wishes to the Welfare of this Company is such that in a time of apparent danger you would not desert our Service When your owne Honour as well as the Oblidging us doth call for your stay & you will scorne to leave that Government environd with dangers which you enterd upon in Peace & Tranquility." It painted a picture of a world consumed by war, where England's enemies lurked behind every rock or bush, and "when you consider it you will find it as dangerous to come home as to stay there; But much more dishonourable." He was reminded of his duty to his sovereign – for he held a royal commission and commanded the last English possession in Hudson Bay – and his duty to the men under his command, who would be as demoralized by his departing as they would be encouraged by his remaining. Finally, the Committee (perhaps rather disingenuously) concluded, "not doubting your hearty & ready Concurrence with our desires, which Wee have Chosen to request & make a kindnesse to Our Selve[s] rather then to Command, Wee Commend you heartily & all your affaires to the Protection of the Allmighty & remaine / Your very Loving Friends."[690]

Geyer agreed to stay one more year, and for this the Committee praised and thanked him: "hopeing (as you say) the Warre may be by that time ended, that you may Leave our Concerns there in a peaceable & florishing Condition & that you would not

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[690]HBC (London) to George Geyer (Port Nelson), private, 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 125-127.

willingly Leave your Post before you saw them soe setled, is so ingenious & honourable in you, & kind towards us, that we assure you it hath a great influence upon us that know the value of your meritts & how happily Our affaires there have prospered under your Conduct." They then asked him to stay one more year, "when probably you will have the honour & satisfaction you seeke, of Leaving that Trade which you have enlarged, that Building which you have erected, that Vineyard which you have Planted, in a Peaceable & florishing Condition, & out of danger of being undermined by the Foxes, or destroyed by the Wild Boares of the Forrest."[691] Geyer's personal relationship with the Company and its interests was vividly coloured by the image of Geyer as the careful husbandman. Such agricultural metaphors were rarely used in HBC correspondence, but here the Committee may have been trying to reinforce Geyer's attachment by painting him as the governor of a colony rather than just the manager of an isolated trading post. Geyer's royal commission and the emphasis placed on it in the Committee's private letter of 1691 could also have helped reorient Geyer's perceptions of his role and importance. However, the Committee's strenuous efforts to retain him in their service notwithstanding, Geyer returned home in 1693 – a year before the French captured Port Nelson – and when he sought to re-engage in 1697, the Committee told him that there were no suitable vacancies.[692]

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[691]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 139, 140.

[692]Alice M. Johnson, "Geyer, George," *DCB* I, 328-329.

Conclusion

HBC servants came to Hudson Bay from a competitive labour market in early modern Britain: even in the Orkneys, men had several different work options to choose from and employers had a relatively large pool of unskilled and semi-skilled labour from which to recruit. Although the demands of physical distance made HBC service unique in some respects (such as the length of service), HBC contracts were typical of early modern employment agreements. They stipulated a basic economic transaction, monetary and non-monetary wages in return for services rendered over a specified period of time; but they also acted as social and moral covenants, binding master and servant in a network of reciprocal (but often undefined) obligations.

The renewal of contracts provided opportunities to emphasize those obligations, by both workers (through deferential behaviour) and by the Committee (through paternalistic behaviour). However, opportunities for conflict and tension also existed, and servants seeking better terms risked being seen as ungrateful or disingenuous. In wartime, or at other moments when the Company seemed vulnerable, deferential and paternalistic behaviours could be reinforced by the invocation of courage and national duty, but they could also be undermined if servants were perceived as putting their own interests ahead of the Company's. In fact, deferential behaviour can also be perceived as pursuing individual rather than corporate interests: the short-term deferment of the former, allegedly in favour of the latter, could potentially reap more long-term benefits than more straightforward wage demands. Being a significant expense for the Company, wages were the most common point of negotiation between masters and servants.

CHAPTER 7

WAGES, PERQUISITES, AND GRATUITIES

The Committee's dealings with George Geyer, Thomas Phipps Jr, and James Walker suggest that the Company's directors saw – or expected to see – a connection between remuneration and effort, even (or especially?) when the servant was the kinsman of a Committee member. Such a connection was not commonly made in contemporary Britain, where elites consistently portrayed labourers as producing less work when offered more pay.[693] In long-distance trade, high salaries were expected to attract skilled or talented men to positions of responsibility far from home,[694] but their productivity was usually encouraged by perquisites, particularly the privilege of trading privately.

The HBC Committee used wages and gratuities to encourage effort among the lower ranks as well, and not just in the Company's uncertain early years. When mariner John Wateridge was named York's gunner in 1725, Thomas McCliesh Jr assured the Committee that "he will discharge his duty suitable to encouragement given him."[695] Of course, higher wages did not necessarily increase productivity. Jean Baptiste Chouart and the other Frenchmen engaged in 1685 received wages several times higher than the Englishmen at Port Nelson (£30-80, compared to £10-12), yet in 1687 the Committee

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[693]See Peter Mathias, "Leisure and Wages in Theory and Practice," in Peter Mathias, *The Transformation of England: Essays in the Economic and Social History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 150-153, 165. However, despite the flourishing activities in labour studies in the last forty years, we still know surprisingly little about the history of work and of wages in the early modern period: Joyce, "Work," 161-163, 172. Joyce, "Work," 161, urged the writing of "a social history of the wage."

[694]Jean Barbot, a Frenchman who traded in western Africa in the late 1670s and early 1680s, felt certain that "few who can live well at home, will venture to repair to the Guinea coast, to mend their circumstances, unless incouraged by large salaries." *Barbot on Guinea*, 394.

[695]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 26 August 1725, *Letters*, 109.

complained that the Frenchmen refused to travel inland or to do anything more than the other hands.[696] However, such high wages were rare, as were the large gratuities given to Geyer. In general, men filling particular occupations could expect to be paid within a particular range of salary. Starting wages remained fairly consistent from the late seventeenth to the late eighteenth centuries; so, too, did the extent to which men could increase those wages, although the pressures of wartime could raise that limit.

Nixon emphasized "one great cause of the mens discontent, that is when they see other men have 20, or 30 *lib.* pr. ann., who can doe no more for it then one of 6 pound pr. annum, oure men are lyke the Laborers in the gospell, that gruges the one to have more then the other indeed I can not blame them much considdering how confusedly they have been served." He called it "bad husbandry...when you send men of great wages, and are not sensible what they can doe for their wages, (one may goe to a faire and buy a ragged horse for 40s., that will prove better then a horse of 20 pound)."[697] The Statute of Artificers (1563) prescribed that maximum wage rates in England be determined locally by justices of the peace: since Hudson Bay was not an organized parish, however, and had no justices of the peace, it presumably fell outside of any English jurisdiction.[698]

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[696]Rich, *History*, I, 206.

[697]Nixon, 251, 256. At any given time in early modern Britain, most adult male labourers in most towns were hired for the same wages: Woodward, *Men at Work*, 107-108. Therefore, most labourers in Hudson Bay would probably object to different wages being paid for the same work. That Orkneymen were usually willing to accept such differentials illustrates how removed they were from such urban wage patterns.

[698]See Woodward, *Men at Work*, 41. Even if Hudson Bay had fallen within the jurisdiction of a justice of the peace who could set maximum wage rates, there is much scholarly debate over how effective or realistic those maxima were. See W.E. Minchinton (ed.), *Wage Regulation in Pre-Industrial England* (Newton Abbot, Devon: David & Charles, 1972); Woodward, *Men at Work*, 13, 190-191; Kussmaul, 35-36.

In his introduction to the Hudson's Bay Record Society's edition of the Company's earliest surviving London minute books (1671-74), Sir John Clapham identified a "complete scale of pay" for the 1670s, based primarily on evidence from the minute books themselves.[699] He was overly sanguine, both about the regularity of wages at so early a date, and about the problem of identifying landsmen and their occupations. John Nixon's complaints notwithstanding, however, a fairly regular wage structure was developing in the 1670s. In 1674, the Committee set £4.10.0 per month as the maximum wage for carpenters; in 1680, they engaged Mr Conyers Fairfax for three years as warehouse-keeper in Hudson Bay at £7-9-12, "that being the Establishment wee have made upon others goeing in the same quality;" and in 1682, the Committee referred to £36 per annum as the standard wage to be paid their surgeons.[700] There is a 1682 reference to May 1678 as "the time of Establishing the Officers and serveants wages at Hudsons Bay,"[701] but only in the 1680s and 1690s did the Committee successfully address the discrepancies of which Nixon complained.

It would be futile to compare the annual (or even monthly) wages paid by the Company to the daily or weekly wages paid to workers in contemporary Britain, who largely worked on a casual or short-term basis. To translate the former into daily or

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[699] *Minutes*, lxiii-lxiv. Clapham's scale of pay relied primarily on the men engaged in 1674, especially those mentioned in the minutes of 16 May 1674 (*Minutes*, 107-109). With a sample of only 13 men, any variation in wages throws off any suggestion of regularity. For instance, Clapham gave £48 as a surgeon's wage, based on Walter Farr, but the Committee engaged another (unnamed) surgeon at £36 less than two months after engaging Farr at £48: *Minutes*, lxiii, 89, 102, 108. Likewise, Clapham listed a cook's wage as £20, based on the engagement of John Whitfield in 1674, but Henry Dickinson engaged as a cook in the same year at £12: *Minutes,* lxiv, 108-109, 114.

[700] *Minutes*, 102; *Minutes, First Part*, 42; *Minutes, Second Part*, 30.

[701] *Minutes, Second Part*, 55. The London minute books from 1678 are not extant.

weekly rates would require placing a monetary value on room, board, and other non-monetary remunerations (such as winter clothing made from local furs) in Hudson Bay. To translate the latter into annual or monthly rates would require a great deal of approximation, and would risk obscuring the fact that many early modern workers (by choice or by necessity) spent indeterminate periods of the working year either unemployed or underemployed. Generally, HBC wages were probably reasonable, particularly considering that room and board and some other perquisites were included.[702]

Few men cited low wages as a reason for leaving the Company's service. Some who did appear to have been skilled or 'semi-skilled' tradesmen engaged as labourers. Labourer Richard Willman, for instance, was determined to come home from Fort Prince of Wales when his contract expired in 1738, "his discontent proceeding from his small wages," but at the last minute Richard Norton entertained him as a sawyer for one year at £20, "this man being brought up a sawyer in the King's Yards as well as a good hewer of timber."[703] Robert Inkster, however, had the opposite problem: he was engaged as a tailor at York, but tailors did not have the same clearly recognized ladder of wage increments enjoyed by labourers. His contract expired in 1738, and he was willing to stay four or five years more "at your honours' discretion." The Committee offered him a five-year

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[702]See Gilboy, 21, 220-222; W.E. Minchinton, "Wage Regulation in Pre-Industrial England," in W.E. Minchinton (ed.), *Wage Regulation in Pre-Industrial England* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1972), 24-25; Woodward, *Men at Work*, 12, 116; Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 37. Burnett, 121, described the relatively low money wages of seventeenth-century English servants receiving room, board, and livery as "more like pocket money." Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 862, suggested that men's readiness to renew their contracts was evidence that wages were generous and perhaps that opportunistic behaviour was not a problem.

[703]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 17 August 1738, *Letters*, 257. Less than two weeks earlier, Willman was included in a list of men coming home that year: Council minutes, Fort Prince of Wales, 6 August 1738, *Letters*, 253n. The Committee confirmed Willman's wages at £20 in 1739: Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1739, *Letters*, 298.

contract but no wage increase, and Inkster baulked. However, Chief Factor James Isham considered Inkster "a very useful person in other respects and a diligent sober man," and engaged him for one year as tailor and steward at £16. In 1739, the Committee offered – and Inkster accepted – a three-year contract at £14.[704]

The lack of evidence of general dissatisfaction with wage levels in Hudson Bay contrasts with the experiences of many contemporary workplaces in Britain, where conflicts within trades and in particular localities often revolved around what Robert W. Malcolmson has called "the almost universal desire for wages (and other conditions of employment) *to be regulated* in the interest of preserving certain minimum standards of subsistence....a level determined by customary expectations and 'normal' human needs."[705] In Hudson Bay, men serving long-term contracts including room and board were relatively insulated from the problems of low wages and/or high prices which frequently provoked protest by their contemporaries in Britain (although friends and family back home might be affected).

Clapham observed (correctly) that HBC wages in the 1670s were "comparable not with the skilled mason's 15s. 0d. a week, say £35 a year, for a mason cannot count on fifty-two full weeks' work, but with those of people 'in service' who are housed and

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[704]James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 6 August 1737, *Letters*, 231; James Isham (York) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 261; James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 29 August 1739, *Letters*, 308.

[705]Robert W. Malcolmson, "Workers' Combinations in Eighteenth-Century England," in Margaret Jacob & James Jacob (eds.), *The Origins of Anglo-American Radicalism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), 149-150. Also see Rule, *Labouring Classes*, 119-120.

fed."[706] G.N. Clark, looking at the London minute books of the late 1670s and early 1680s, echoed Clapham's caution and added that "much depended on the skill and experience of the individual."[707] Differences in skill and experience probably explain some or many wage variations in the eighteenth century as well.

The Company's salary structure tended to correlate wage levels with experience. Graduated salaries were common for new employees, especially labourers, from the 1680s through the early 1750s. A new recruit began with a relatively low salary and received regular increments each year, as he presumably became more useful in his new surroundings.[708] This contract structure also encouraged good behaviour, increasing the cost (in terms of potential wages lost) of being sent home early for misconduct.[709] After the first contract, men who remained in Hudson Bay could usually expect increases to a maximum of £14 or £16 per annum for most labourers. This contrasted with

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[706]*Minutes*, lxiii. Clapham's reference to masons highlights the fact that all discussions of wages in early modern England deal specifically with the building trades, including carpenters, masons, bricklayers, and general labourers – all of whom were required by the HBC for such tasks as constructing trading posts. The building trades provide almost the only evidence for such discussions: Woodward, *Men at Work*, 3-4, remarked that his research "has uncovered information relating to the payments made for many scores of thousands of man-days completed by labourers and building craftsmen, but there are only four references to the wages paid to other types of craftsmen." Most social and economic historians of medieval and early modern England consider the building trades to be representative of manual labour in general – or, at least, as representative as the available evidence will allow. See Boulton, "Wage labour," 269; Gilboy, 19. For a dissenting view, see Jeffrey G. Williamson, "The Structure of Pay in Britain, 1710-1911," in Paul Uselding (ed.), *Research in Economic History: A Research Annual*, vol. 7 (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press, 1982), 6.

[707]*Minutes, First Part*, xxxiv.

[708]Graduated salaries may also reflect the hiring of boys rather than men: a boy in his middle or late teens would not expect to receive full wages, but his earnings would have increased as he approached adulthood.

[709]Carlos, "Agent Opportunism," 145, observed such graduated salaries in the "managerial class" of both the HBC and RAC, but her HBC examples are early ones (Charles Bayly and John Nixon) from a time when the Company was still sorting out its pay structure; by the eighteenth century, the wages of factors and masters were fairly standardized and were never graduated.

contemporary practice in Britain, where wage differentials based on levels of skill and responsibility were common among specialized craftsmen, but where labourers were the occupational group least likely to receive any pay increases under one master.[710]

For labourers, there appears to have been a recognised level of remuneration which 'old hands' could expect in recognition of their age and experience. In 1730 steward James Loutit and labourer Michael Loggin were willing to sign on for another year if they could have "old servants' wages." Their superior at York, Thomas McCliesh Jr, called them "extraordinary common men, and...deserving as much as any old common servant." In 1731, they and tailor Edmund Hay signed two-year contracts at £14, "being what your honours allows to good old servants;" henceforth, however, "they would contract for no time but from year to year."[711] Although Loutit had served the Company between 1710 and 1718, Loggin and Hay had only entered the service in 1727. Other examples of old hands re-engaging at £14 include Albany labourers Joseph Adams (1724-26), John Bricker (1731-34), Thomas Low (1734-36), William Macklin (1740-42), John Greenwood (1742/43), Andrew Anderson (1747/48), and Joseph Downs (1763-65).[712]

A few men who remained in Hudson Bay for a very long time saw their wages

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[710]Kussmaul, 38, gave two isolated examples from Lincolnshire of pay increases (17 and 18 per cent per year) for servants in husbandry. Cliffe, 114, observed that pay increases were also rare for stewards of country estates. For wage differentials among building craftsmen, see Woodward, *Men at Work*, 40-41, 44.

[711]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1730, *Letters*, 151; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 7 August 1731, *Letters*, 158; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 17 August 1732, *Letters*, 170.

[712]Adams had returned to England for the recovery of his health after the expiration of his apprenticeship in 1723; although he later became Chief at Albany (1730-37), he initially re-engaged in 1724 as a labourer at £14. See A. 16/2, fo. 2. For other examples, see A. 16/2, fos. 27 (Bricker), 44 (Low); A. 16/3, fos. 8 (Greenwood), 10 (Macklin), 33 (Anderson); A. 16/4, fo. 18 (Downs). Bricker also served at £16 in 1734-36. Low drowned at Albany on 12 June 1736 and Downs died at Albany in 1765.

begin to decline in the later period of their service. In Britain, labourers reached their maximum earning potential at a relatively early age,[713] and this pattern sometimes carried over to Hudson Bay. Labourer Charles Cronnell, previously mentioned as a remarkable example of longevity in the Company's service, served almost continuously from 1696 through 1742 (with brief gaps in 1714/15, 1720/21, 1727/28, and 1735/36). His wages peaked at £30 per annum in 1705, but were down to £14 in 1719/20 and during his third period of service (1721-27), and he began his fourth term at £12 (1728-32); he finished his fourth term back up at £14 (1732-35), but his final term was at £4-4-6-6-10-10 (1736-42). In the years immediately after the Treaty of Utrecht, Cronnell's wages were limited by his employer's need (and opportunity) to economize, but his declining wages in the 1730s suggest that his usefulness declined in his later years, as he was "old and Decreped" by the end of his service.[714] He returned to Hudson Bay in 1736 at the same wages as new recruits: labourer Michael White made his first trip to Hudson Bay in 1736 at £4-4-6-6-10, and in fact was advanced to £14 for the 1741/42 season.[715] Carpenter and shipwright Alexander Thoyts' wages followed a similar (though less drastic) trajectory: they peaked at £44 in 1691-93 but had fallen to £36 by 1720, £24 in 1724, and £20 in

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[713]Woodward, *Men at Work*, 93-94. The low point in the family cycle also came relatively early. The average age of marriage for working men in early modern Britain was around 27 or 28, and the arrival of two or three children (who added to expenses but were too young to add extra revenue) made men most liable to become chargeable to the parish around 34 years old: Snell, 358; Laslett, 112.

[714]A. 16/1, fo. 4; A. 16/2, fos. 1, 32, 89; A. 16/3, fo. 12; "A Councell Call'd [at Albany] this 11th of Sepr 1705," A. 11/2, fo. 9; "A Councell Called [at Albany] the 20th of July 1706," A. 11/2, fo. 12; Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 39d; Williams, *Miscellany*, 29n; *Letters*, 31n.

[715]White died at Albany in April 1742. A. 16/3, p. 14.

1728.[716]

Effort was sometimes encouraged by gratuities, and in this the HBC was often more generous than its long-distance trading contemporaries.[717] In 1691, John Bennett – a gentleman of St Martin-in-the-Fields parish, London, serving at Port Nelson – had reached the end of his contract but wished to continue in the service. The Committee was "very glad to see the good Character & recommendation" given to him by George Geyer, and "for his readiness to continue longer in our Service, wee must confesse he deserves Encouragement:" they granted Bennett a £20 gratuity.[718] In December 1683, smith and armourer Thomas Coleman had just completed a three-year contract at £18 and received a £6 gratuity "for his good Service att Hudsons Bay as p. Governr. Nixons certificate."[719]

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[716]Thoyts entered the service as a carpenter at £36 in 1689; he was described as a ship carpenter in the early 1720s and as a shipwright from 1724 onward. For his early wages, see A. 15/3, fos. 179, 203; A. 15/4, fos. 37, 56. For his later wages, see A. 16/1, fo. 16; A. 16/2, fos. 8, 32. There is some confusion regarding the contract he signed in 1720. The principal entry under his name in the Albany Officers' and Servants' Ledger (A. 16/1, p. 16) indicated that he had signed a three-year contract for £36-36-40, but a marginal note on the same page indicated a four-year contract for £36-36-36-40; also, A. 16/1, fo. 16 indicates that Thoyts was paid wages of £40 for the 1723/24 season, but A. 16/2, fo. 8 indicates he was paid £36 that year.

Comparison of Thoyts' wages with those contemporary shipwrights at Albany is somewhat problematic. David Peters served as shipwright between 1727 and 1730 at £36, but he was engaged off the *Hudson's Bay* and his wage may have been inflated in the same way as sailors usually earned more than labourers: A. 16/2, fo. 31. William McCleish served between 1730 and his drowning in 1736 first at £33 (1730-34) and then at £36 (1734-36), but he may have been the same William McCleish who served as shipwright at Churchill at £36 in 1724-27: A. 16/2, fo. 41; A. 16/9, fo. 12. William Pratt served at Moose (1703-33) and Albany (1733-36), first at £16.4.0 (1730-34) and then at £30 (1734-36), but he too may have been at Churchill (and possibly York) in the mid-1720s: A. 16/2, fo. 42; B. 42/d/4, fo. 4d; B. 42/d/5, fo. 5; B. 239/d/15, fo. 4d.

[717]Carlos, "Agent Opportunism," 146.

[718]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 120.

[719]*Minutes, Second Part*, 168. In October 1682, Isaac Reed received a £10 gratuity "for his good service" over the previous five years: *Minutes, Second Part*, 30-31, 58. In November 1683, the Committee granted Jacob Robinson a gratuity of 40s "for his Good Service in the Bay:" *Minutes, Second Part*, 156. Comb-maker William White – who served intermittently in Hudson Bay during the 1670s, sold combs to the Company in 1674, and recommended a gunsmith to them in the same year – in February 1677 received £30 wages (£3 per month since the previous April) plus a £35 "Reward for his good Service" (A. 14/2, fo.

George Geyer also came home in 1683, and when he re-engaged the following year he received a gratuity of £10 "for his attendance Since his arrivall from the Bay."[720] In 1690, "being well satisfied of his Carraidg and Care" in his station, the Committee granted Port Nelson warehouse-keeper John Lawson a £20 gratuity and (as per his "humble Request") increased his salary to £40.[721]

Such encouragement more commonly came after a particular service. When William Stuart returned from his journey inland, James Knight reported to the Committee that Stuart "did endure a world of hardship."

> I promised William Stewart when I sent him upon the design that I would recommend him to you if he succeeded. His time is out this year, therefore you would do very well either to give him a gratuity or else to advance his wages that men may not be discouraged. He insisted very much upon it before he went away but I told him I had no power to do any such thing but I would do it by recommendation to the Company if he succeeded, which I do think he does well deserve some consideration[722]

In 1719, the Committee informed Richard Staunton at Churchill River that apprentice Richard Norton, "whom we are informed by captain Knight has endured great hardship in travelling with the Indians, and has been very active and diligent in endeavouring to make peace amongst them, we being always desirous to encourage diligent and faithful servants, upon application of his mother in his behalf, have ordered him a gratuity of

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76). He used the gratuity plus the balance of his account (£15) to purchase £50 of HBC stock, which he held until March 1678: *Minutes*, 31n.

[720]*Minutes, Second Part*, 229.

[721]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 103.

[722]James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 17 September 1716, *Letters*, 63.

fifteen pounds"[723] Anthony Henday's 1754/55 inland journey earned him a £20 gratuity and an offer of a three-year contract for £20 per annum.[724] The Committee sought to maintain control over the distribution of 'favour' and 'encouragement' of all kinds, and consistently warned employees that they should take nothing for granted.[725] In 1682, John Nixon reported that the Albany men were unsatisfied with their pay and uneasy that some to whom he had previously promised increases had been refused by the Committee.[726] In 1754, the Committee informed Henry Pollexfen at Moose that "we very well remember what we promised you, which was that if you behaved to our Satisfaction during your Contracted time, you should meet with proper Encouragement... therefore it entirely rests with you to Behave in such manner as to make your self deserving of our further Regard."[727]

Occasionally, gratuities were part of the written contract. Henday initially entered the service as a labourer in 1750 for five years at £10 per annum, with a £10 gratuity at the end "in Consideration of his being a Net Maker;" after going home in 1756, he re-engaged in 1757 as a labourer and netmaker for five years at £20 per annum, plus a £20

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[723]HBC (London) to Richard Staunton (Churchill River), 4 June 1719, Robson, appendix, p. 26.

[724]HBC (London) to James Isham (York), 12 May 1756, A. 6/9, fos. 33d-34.

[725]Consider, for instance, the Committee's reluctance to approve the £2 gratuity promised to all inland servants by Humphrey Marten in 1776 (retroactively approved by London in 1779) and the handwritten clause in contracts from the late 1770s: "I will be ready to Travel from the Factory to any parts inland for the better Discovery of the Country and improving the Trade of the said Company whenever I shall be commanded so to do by the Governor or Chief Factor there without claiming any additional Wages or Gratification for the same." A. 32/3, fo. 14; also see chapter 5.

[726]Rich, *History*, I, 112.

[727]HBC (London) to Henry Pollexfen, 22 May 1754, A. 5/1, fo. 2.

gratuity at the expiration of his contract "if he Behaves to the Company's satisfaction."[728] Albany armourer Peter Stephens engaged in 1754 for five years at £20 with a £10 gratuity at the end of his contract, and cooper Benjamin Holmes signed on in 1761 for three years at £20 plus £15 at the end.[729] Surgeon George Spence's second three-year contract (£36 per annum for 1741-44) granted him a £50 gratuity at the end.[730] Robert Temple received an extra £50 in 1753 while book-keeper and Second at Albany, and gratuities of £100 in 1761 and £60 in 1764 while Chief there.[731] In 1764, labourer and former apprentice Guy Warwick finally received a £6 gratuity that had been due at the end of a three-year contract in 1761, "agreed to by the Company but omitted in the said Contract."[732]

Such arrangements were probably the result of negotiations, in which the Committee offered these gratuities in lieu of higher wages. Of course, placing the gratuity at the end of the contract ensured that a man did not receive extra remuneration for skills which he had not yet demonstrated, while encouraging him to complete his

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[728]A. 1/38, p. 193; HBC (London) to James Isham (York), 21 May 1750, A. 6/8, fo. 47; A. 1/40, p. 220; A. 15/11, p. 165; A. 16/31, fo. 107d. Joseph Myatt told Joseph Adams in 1726 "that if he behaved himself soberly, and Dillegently, in the Discharge of his Duty he will not faill of Receiving a Suiteable Reward at the Expiration of his Contract, he Returns your Honrs many Thanks and seems to be very well pleased." Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fo. 56d. Adams received a raise (from £14 to £16 in 1726, and up to £25 in 1727) as well as a gratuity of £10.10.0 (ten guineas) in 1727: A. 16/2, fo. 2.

[729]A. 16/3, fo. 94; A. 16/4, fo. 41. House carpenter Robert Webb signed a three-year contract on the same terms (£20 per annum plus £15 at the end) in 1760: A. 16/4, fo. 31.

[730]A. 16/3, fo. 19.

[731]A. 16/3, fos. 63, 106; A. 16/4, fos. 13, 43.

[732]A. 16/4, fo. 20.

contract with diligence and sobriety, lest he be sent home early and lose the gratuity.[733] The gratuity would not be forfeited by an early death, however. Writer William King's second contract (signed in 1770) was for three years at £20 with a £15 gratuity at the end: after King's death at Albany on 20 March 1772, his gratuity was prorated to £7.11.7 and credited to his account.[734]

The written contract was more commonly supplemented by customary (usually non-monetary) perquisites than by monetary gratuities. Like most early modern workers, HBC servants were not strictly wage-earners, but supplemented their cash wages with non-cash 'income' as much as possible.[735] However, the question of workers' rights to such perquisites does not appear to have been as much a source of friction between employer and employee in the HBC as it was in other areas of the early modern English economy.[736]

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[733]The contracts of indentured servants bound for the American colonies typically included a lump sum payment of goods and/or cash (called 'freedom dues') at the end of the contract. Some scholars have interpreted freedom dues as a deterrent against servants running away before completing their contract, but Grubb, 43, argues that adding compensation to the end of a contract only deters the workers from breaking that contract if there is no initial payment in the contract. Richard B. Morris has suggested that freedom dues were a form of enforced savings, so that the servant would not become a public charge when his contract was completed: quoted in Grubb, 50n48.

[734]A. 16/4, fo. 50.

[735]See Woodward, *Men at Work*, 1, 12-14; Gilboy, 19-20.

[736]Woodward, *Men at Work*, 142-143, remarked, "There is some confusion, both in dictionary definitions and in common usage, as to whether perquisites, or 'perks,' were regular and expected payments, or irregular and unexpected....The whole question of perquisites has assumed enormous significance for social historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who have conducted an exhaustive search for the origins of true proletarians or wage-slaves. It is widely believed that true wage-earners solely dependent for survival, or very largely so, on their money wages only emerged in the nineteenth century." In earlier periods, "many historians have assumed that non-food perquisites were an important part of the remuneration of wage-earners, and they turn to a small number of frequently repeated examples to support their claims," such as waste cloth taken by tailors, or small offcuts of wood by carpenters and shipwrights. Woodward (143) suggested that the scarcity of concrete examples could indicate either "that the practice of taking perquisites was so commonplace that it was normally ignored by...officials," or "that the receipt of perquisites was less common than has often been supposed."

The distribution of brandy and provisions by factors, recorded in the account books monthly or quarterly, was the commonest example of extra non-monetary remuneration for servants. In 1682, John Nixon asked for more liquor and other provisions than the Committee had sent him, explaining that the men would need to be "encouraged with drams:"

> the men keep grumbeling and tells me that yow promised them a quart [of "malt," or ale] a day, but I can find but litle above halfe a pinte a day of it, and much of it damnified besides...let them have a pinte a day a man...and yow aught to send us a litle more liquors for indeed the couldness requereth it, which would cause your business to goe one chearfully that the men might have a dram now and then, when occasion serveth, for if it be well applyed it is a soveraigne remedy to all their melancholik distempers.[737]

At York in 1716, James Knight reported that "sometimes when work lies very hard upon us I allow a pound [of flour] more for a pudding a week."[738] In 1733, Richard Norton requested more strong beer for Fort Prince of Wales, "it being a great encouragement to hard labour," and in 1734, the Albany Council asked the Committee to "make an Addition to our Strong Beer wch will be a great Encouragement in forwarding ye Work

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Woodward, *Men at Work*, 12, 146-149, concluded that non-food perquisites were not offered to most workmen (although embezzlement may have been common), that food perquisites were generally limited to a drink allowance (at most), and that the argument for the ubiquity of perquisites is unconvincing. For an interesting and fairly representative discussion of shipyard perquisites, see H. E. Richardson, "Wages of shipwrights in H.M. dockyards, 1496-1788," *The Mariner's Mirror* 33/4 (October 1947), 266-269; also see Schwarz, 162-163; Peter D'Sena, "Perquisites and Casual Labour on the London Wharfside in the Eighteenth Century," *London Journal* 14/2 (1989), 133-141. For an example of perquisites being discussed within the context of the proletarianization of workers, see Nicholas Rogers, "Vagrancy, Impressment and the Regulation of Labour in Eighteenth-Century Britain," *Slavery and Abolition* 15/2 (August 1994), 103.

[737]Nixon, 257; Rich, *History*, I, 113. Drams could be used to mollify as well as encourage. Joseph Robson had just arrived at Fort Prince of Wales in 1733 when "I ventured to interfere in the direction" of the construction. "But upon the governor's [Richard Norton's] first visit...He shook his horsewhip at me, and asked, Who made me a director over these men?....The next time the governor came, he offered me a dram, and told me I must do nothing without first acquainting him." Robson, 10.

[738]James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 17 September 1716, *Letters*, 57.

here."[739]

Perquisites and gratuities were particularly important to the black whale fishery near Churchill River. In 1769, the Committee approved a plan recommended by Moses Norton, Chief Factor of Fort Prince of Wales. The plan lowered harpooners' wages but allowed bounties of 10s 6d for each whale killed; the master of the *Charlotte* sloop (John Sneyd) was allowed £3.3.0 per whale. Whale oil was esteemed "a joint Concern" and all hands received 5s per ton. This was in addition to the crew receiving five per cent, and Norton two and a half per cent, of the profits from the whaling. These allowances applied only to the black whale fishery and not the white whale, "that business being done while Our Servants are at the Factory they would be otherwise employed if they were not engaged on that particular occasion." However, the Committee left it to Norton's discretion "to give Such moderate Refreshment of Liquor upon a White Whale being hereafter killed and properly boiled as You shall find reasonable."[740]

Just as the factors distributed encouragement to their men in this way, they themselves often received such encouragement from the Committee. In 1680, the Committee sent Governor Nixon a quarter cask of canary (a light wine made in the

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[739]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1733, *Letters*, 187; Joseph Adams & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1734, A. 11/2, fo. 80. In 1734, Joseph Robson made some corrections in the construction of Fort Prince of Wales (altering the pickets and re-digging the foundation), and reported (12-13) that Norton "seemed pleased, and secretly offered me such trifling favours as they bestow upon the Indians." Woodward, *Men at Work*, 150, commented that "[a]ny extraordinary effort could induce a liquid response" from an employer.

[740]HBC (London) to Moses Norton (Fort Prince of Wales), private, 25 May 1769, A. 5/1, fos. 100-100d. Treats, usually in the form of drink, were often provided by employers to mark important staging-points in large building projects in England: Woodward, *Men at Work*, 148. For similar profit-sharing in English fisheries after 1690, see A. R. Michell, "The European Fisheries in Early Modern History," in E.E. Rich & C.H. Wilson (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe, Volume V: The Economic Organization of Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 183.

Canary Islands) as a present.[741] In 1703, John Fullartine offered the Committee "hearty thanks for ye watch, the 2 Cases of 'Usquebaugh' [scotch whisky] & ye Chest of Sherry You were pleased to Send me."[742] In 1770, "[a]s a farther encouragement...to be the more assiduous in preventing Private Trade and detecting every kind of Imposition that may be attempted to be practiced," the Committee increased the amount of French brandy they sent out for the gentlemen's mess.[743] In 1774, the Committee presented hangers (*i.e.* cutlasses) to Eusebius Bacchus Kitchen at Moose, Matthew Cocking and Samuel Hearne at York, and Isaac Leask at Fort Prince of Wales "in hopes that such a particular Mark of Our Esteem for you" would impress Native traders.[744] Perhaps the most unusual 'perquisite' bestowed by the Committee (or, rather, through their efforts) was English citizenship: in 1687, Pierre Esprit Radisson and two of the men he brought with him from the service of the Compagnie du Nord, Jean Baptiste Chouart des Groseilliers(his nephew) and Elias Grimard, became "Free denizens and to enjoy all Libertyes and priviledges as absolutely and Freely as any Englishman."[745]

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[741]*Minutes, First Part*, 76.

[742]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 7. Perhaps as a reciprocal gesture, "I have Sent a Couple of Curious Darke Grizle foxes an he & a she, & doubt not but by presenting them to Some person of quallity or other, You may thereby Make You a freind at Court" (fo. 7d). In 1714, Anthony Beale offered the Committee "Thanks for your preasant," but did not clarify the nature of the present: Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 21d.

[743]See, for example, HBC (London) to Humphrey Marten (Albany), private, 8 May 1770, A. 5/1, fo. 108d.

[744]HBC (London) to E.B. Kitchen (Moose), private, 11 May 1774, A. 5/1, fo. 157d; HBC (London) to Matthew Cocking (York), private, 11 May 1774, A. 5/1, fo. 159; HBC (London) to Samuel Hearne (York), private, 11 May 1774, A. 5/1, fo. 160; HBC (London) to Isaac Leask (Fort Prince of Wales), private, 11 May 1774, A. 5/1, fo. 160d.

[745]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 3 June 1687, *L.O. 1680-87*, 238; also HBC to George Geyer (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 16. Under seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English law, aliens suffered from many political and economic restrictions (*e.g.* they

Some non-monetary perquisites could be transformed into monetary profit. In 1723, Richard Norton and Thomas Bird mentioned that the men of Churchill killed "a great many" geese and "expects the feathers of the geese they kill"; in 1738, Norton referred to the long-standing custom that "what geese the servants killed, for encouragement they had the feathers thereof."[746] Men could keep the feathers (to stuff their bedding, for instance) or send them home to be sold. For most of the Company's first century, men could also send home furs and skins that they had hunted or trapped themselves, but this was more problematic than the feathers: servants could – and did – take advantage of this perquisite to disguise their trading on private account.

The Issue of Private Trade

Although private trade came to be perceived as a serious threat to the Company, the Committee was initially uncertain whether it presented a problem or not.[747] In May 1672, the Committee ordered that "all persons to be imployed Shall enter into articles or

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could own no real property in England, nor could they inherit property in England), but there was no cheap or convenient way of acquiring the rights of native-born Englishmen (except under a short-lived act of general naturalization passed in 1709 and repealed in 1712). The only ways of changing an alien's status were by private act of naturalization by parliament, or by grant of letters patent of denization from the Crown: the HBC apparently pursued the latter course for Radisson and his fellows. Contrary to the Committee's statement to Geyer, denization did not remove all the disabilities of alien status – for instance, the recipient was not exempted from alien customs and duties – but at a cost of about £25 it was much cheaper and more convenient than naturalization, which bestowed all the rights of a native-born Englishman but cost upwards of £65 and could involve numerous procedural delays and uncertainties during its progress through parliament. Daniel Statt, "The City of London and the Controversy Over Immigration, 1660-1722," *The Historical Journal* 33/1 (1990), 45-46.

[746]Richard Norton & Thomas Bird (Churchill) to HBC (London), 3 August 1723, *Letters*, 86; Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 17 August 1738, *Letters*, 254.

[747]This uncertainty seems to be shared by many historians, who consider private trade to have been potentially debilitating for trading companies (see, for instance, Lawson, 71) but also a means of attracting ambitious and talented men (see, for instance, Davies, *RAC*, 110-111, 258, 297).

otherwise oblige themselves not to trade in beaver upon forfeiture of theyr goods & wages."[748] In 1674, the Committee was quite active in dealing with private trade: James Tottenham's wages were withheld until his wife delivered up 34 beaver skins that he had traded privately. More of Tottenham's illicit trade was subsequently discovered, and carpenter Solomon Soles' account was charged with 19 private skins.[749] However, Tottenham did not feel that he had done anything wrong, and in February 1674 tried to secure the arrest of the man (a Mr Powers) who had impounded his furs; in turn, the Committee ordered that if he succeeded, they would post bail for Powers and pay the costs of his suit.[750]

The Committee itself showed some conflicting attitudes on private trade. Also in early 1674, seamen Thomas Wakefield and Nicholas Adams were each charged for illicit skins (£5 and £8 respectively), but in each case "the rest of his trade [was] allowed [to] him." Surgeon Walter Farr successfully petitioned to go to Hudson Bay "as Chirurgeon & Apothecary" for three years and to be allowed some private trade; and newly-engaged Governor William Lydall was allowed to trade privately in all things except beaver skins (provided it was done openly) and was given an advance of £100 "for fitteing himselfe for the voyage."[751] The Committee seemed to clarify its position in May 1674, when it

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[748]*Minutes*, 38.

[749]*Minutes*, 72, 75, 77. The Company's sailors appear to have been instrumental in revealing these cases of private trade, just as they were probably instrumental in facilitating those cases which the Committee did not discover: the Committee received their information about Soles from seaman Mathew Trim and about Tottenham from Tottenham's accomplice, seaman Cuthbert Winter: *Minutes*, 77, 83.

[750]*Minutes*, 83.

[751]*Minutes*, 82, 88, 97.

directed that "no private trade bee allowed in any kinde of furres, &...all other private trade which may be allowed in any other comodityes, Shall bee by publicke License & brought into the Companyes warehouse to the ende that they may have cognisance thereof."[752] Elizabeth Mancke concluded that the energy with which restrictions on private trade were enforced "varied from year to year, largely depending on how it [the HBC] and its challengers chose to interpret the charter."[753]

By 1680, the Committee was taking a stricter attitude. In that year, they reluctantly agreed to "the application of severall persons" to send necessaries to their friends in Hudson Bay, but directed that such packages be inspected and approved by the Sub-Committee for Shipping; they also ordered that all private letters to men in the Bay "shall be publickly communicated to the Committee before they are sent."[754] In 1682, the Committee commissioned Mr Morgan Lodge, postmaster of Deal (Kent), to put three waiters (*i.e.* customs officers) upon the *Diligence* when it arrived at Gravesend.[755] Jean Baptiste Chouart and the other Frenchmen engaged in 1685 were reluctant to take the Oath of Fidelity, apparently because of its prohibition on private trade.[756] A 1685 plan for

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[752]*Minutes*, 103.

[753]Mancke, 26. At times, even defining private trade could be a problem. In 1681, when trade goods ran low, John Nixon allowed his men to trade their blankets and clothes to the Natives rather than turn away the furs being offered. The Committee initially intended to keep the furs thus acquired, arguing that the men had been trading as agents and servants of the Company, though the men would be compensated. Eventually, the Committee changed its collective mind and allowed some of the men to reclaim at least some of their furs. Mancke, 26-27.

[754]*Minutes, First Part*, 64, 72, 77. In 1681, the Committee "viewed" private chests being sent out to Walter Farr and Brian Norbury: *Minutes, First Part*, 123. Similar tactics were also employed by the Royal African and Muscovy companies to combat private trade: Carlos & Nicholas, "Giants," 135.

[755]*Minutes, Second Part*, 20; also see pp. 21, 28, 111, 129, 132, 134, 143, 245, 249.

[756]A. 1/8, fos. 25d, 27.

allowing servants to trap and to trade, provided they declared their takings and shipped them home openly,[757] was discontinued the following year, when the Committee declared that "what ever comes to our servants hands, whither by the one way or the other, it ought to be esteemed as our owne, for we are at great and vast charges there."[758]

Although frowned upon in domestic commerce,[759] private trade was common in early-modern long-distance commerce and, in some cases, was considered a justified perquisite.[760] K.G. Davies suggested that the Royal African Company used opportunities

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[757]"The pelts were then to be sold by the Company at its open sales, so that there would be no rivalry in price or quality for the London furriers' custom, and the servants were given 'so much money as the Company shall think fitt'." Rich, *History*, I, 182.

[758]Rich, *History*, I, 184. Samuel Richardson, *The Apprentice's Vade Mecum: or, Young Man's Pocket-Companion* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, UCLA, 1975), 6-7, considered it "very reasonable" that a servant or apprentice "should be restrained from trading or dealing for himself," arguing that "an Apprentice has no Time that he can properly call his own."

[759]Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, 6-7, argued against private trade by a servant or apprentice because his master might "be robbed of the Profits of his Business, and a clandestine Trade be carry'd on in his Name, and at his Expence," and because of "the Damage that may accrue to him by Loss of Time, and by that want of Attention to his Master's Business which *Self-Love* and *Self-Interest* must beget in the Servant, when he has one of *his own* to mind."

[760]See, for instance, Chaudhuri, 74. E.G.R. Taylor believed that HBC wages were generally satisfactory, but suggested, "It was perhaps a mistaken policy not to allow at least a limited private trade, for without it there was little inducement to take able and ambitious men out to the North-West." *L.O. 1680-1687*, xxxvii.

Geographic and logistical considerations made private trade less of a problem for the HBC than it was for its contemporaries. The Royal African Company, for instance, was in a poor position to monitor its ships' captains, as the coast of Africa and the islands of the West Indies offered far more locations suitable for illegal activities than Hudson Bay. The RAC, like the HBC, used oaths of loyalty in conjunction with direct incentives, direct monitoring (when possible), substantial bonds, and rewards for good conduct to control private trade. Carlos & Kruse, 298-299, concluded that "[o]verall the ability of a captain to cheat the [Royal African] Company on the England/Africa/England route does not seem to have been too serious. Ships leaving or entering the port of London were easily searched and the Company knew that it had the backing of the port authorities." Also see Carlos, "Agent Opportunism," 150.

Although much the same could be said of the HBC, in 1736 the Committee expressed concern at the quantities of illicit brandy which (they were informed) were being landed at the factories and distributed among the servants. They felt that such quantities, added to the large amount of liquor they sent out each year, were more than was good for their servants' health; they were also aware that excess liquor could be used to trade privately with the Natives. They instructed their servants to keep a watch for illicit liquor, defined as that being landed without written permission from at least one Committee member. Illicit goods were to be confiscated and a report sent to London (so that guilty parties could be prosecuted), and informers were promised a 2s 6d reward for every illicit gallon they discovered. See *Letters*, 215n.

for private trade along with high remuneration to attract talented men to serve as their agents in the West Indies, and that similar possibilities for making their fortunes attracted men to serve in the East India Company.[761] "There was plenty of trade to be had" in both the West and East Indies, Davies believed, so that private trade did not necessarily damage corporate profitability. Such was not the case in Africa, where the RAC initially allowed a modest scale of private trade – ranging from £300 of goods for the Agent-General down to £30 for a junior factor – but discontinued this in 1680, offering higher salaries instead. Davies saw the RAC's inability to share the African trade with its servants as a great disincentive for them.[762]

To compensate for the prohibition against private trade, the Committee allowed servants to trap their own furs and send them home with the Company's furs for sale: the men received one half of the proceeds from the sale of their skins. This scheme was introduced in 1700 to increase the harvest of small furs (which in England at the time were selling much better than beaver), hopefully at no cost to the Company. Private furs

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William Bevan and the Moose Council promised to obey this directive, while "wondering at your honours being informed that any such practice being carried on here, it being unknown to us and almost impossible": William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 26 August 1736, *Letters*, 218. Their response seems disingenuous in light of later comments made by Richard Staunton, especially as it appeared in the same letter which informed the Committee of the Boxing Day fire. Staunton reported in 1738 that "according to the best information I have had there has been some hundreds of gallons [of illicit brandy] landed at this place [Moose] as well as at others in one year contrary to your punctual orders," and warned the Committee that "so long as there is any one person permitted or winked at, it will be... impossible for any one man in your country to quite abolish underhand dealings." Richard Staunton & George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 267, 271.

[761]Davies, *RAC*, 110-111, 258, 297; also see Carlos & Nicholas, "Giants," 135.

[762]Davies, *RAC*, 111. As a result of this re-organization of the RAC's pay structure, the remuneration received by the Agent-General rose from £400 per annum to £1,100 per annum plus a £200 gratuity after three years' service in lieu of private trade: Davies, *RAC*, 252; also Carlos, "Agent Opportunism," 145. Carlos & Nicholas, "Giants," 134, gave the base salary in 1680 as £600 per annum.

had to be handed in to the warehouse by the end of February, before the men were needed for the serious work of the trading season. At Albany in 1715, Thomas McCleish Jr sent eight men marten hunting and "Likewise gave Liberty to all the men Att home to goe Att times a Marten Catching" when winter set in, "being A safe time of the Year;" when the men returned from hunting, McCleish searched them for concealed furs before they entered the gates.[763] Of course, private trappings could disguise or encourage private trade or even theft. In 1721, Yprk's warehousekeeper was accused of taking the best of the Company's furs and replacing them with the worst of his own private trappings.[764] Those who concealed their furs and tried to sell them clandestinely forfeited both the furs and their wages. In 1751, the Albany Council promised to "putt an entire Stop to lying out a Trapping, in Order to prevent the Abuses Made thereof," but nothing much seems to have come from that.[765] In 1701, the scheme was modified so that they could keep feathers (from hunting waterfowl) for their own bedding.[766]

In 1715, and again in the 1720s, the Committee authorized factors to purchase the servants' furs on the spot, offering a bottle of brandy and ½ pound of sugar for each marten skin.[767] In general, though, the men took cash or credit rather than payment in

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[763]Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 16 July 1716, A. 11/2, fos. 26d-27.

[764]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 866.

[765]George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 August 1751, A. 11/2, fo. 148d.

[766]Rich, *History*, I, 374. Rich, *History*, I, 486, also claimed that "the idea was even carried so far that on occasions the Committee gave an extra gratuity because a man had been so 'tied to Company's business that he cannot get out trapping'." However, I have been unable to confirm this gratuity in the account books.

[767]For example, see James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 17 September 1716, *Letters*, 58, 58n; Richard Norton (Churchill) to HBC (London), 6 August 1728 [1727], *Letters*, 120, 120n; Francis & Morantz, 91-92; Rich, *History*, I, 486.

kind – in February 1716, for instance, 11 Albany men traded 65 marten skins for brandy and sugar, and sent 881 marten skins home as private trappings – and the account books indicate that this policy allowed many of them to substantially supplement their wages.[768] Although the common hands tended to earn less from their furs in absolute terms than their superiors did, the value of the furs relative to their respective salaries was significant. In 1725, for instance, Albany factor Richard Staunton received £75.13.7 for the skins he sent home (75 per cent of his annual salary of £100), while shipwright Alexander Thoyts received £8.8.4 (34 per cent of his annual salary of £24). Of course, some (or even most) of the men's furs may actually have been trapped by Native wives or companions. Also, women would presumably have done the cleaning, stretching, drying, etc to make the furs saleable.

The line between private trapping and private trading was never clear. The earliest surviving contracts (late 1770s) included a clause by which a servant guilty of private trade forfeited two years' wages.[769] Earlier contracts may have included harsher penalties, because a bye-law from 1739 stated that "every Member Agent Factor Officer or Servant" trading privately would forfeit their wages, their stock and dividends (if any), and a fine of three times the value of the goods traded, as well as the possibility of further penalties being imposed by the Company's General Court of stockholders.[770] Servants

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[768]For a list of furs sent home by these 11 men, see Albany journal, 27 February 1716, B. 3/a/9, fo. 7d. Servants' accounts offer many exceptions to Francis & Morantz's statement (87) that profit from the sale of these private trappings "was usually minimal"; however, the profit was certainly unbalanced, as higher-ranking men tended to send home more skins and many men sent home no skins at all.

[769]For example, see contract of John Cromartie, signed 20 June 1780, A. 32/1, fo. 10.

[770]HBC Bye-Laws, A. 37/41, fo. 81d.

and ship captains were dismissed for private trade.[771]

Perhaps the greatest concern was that factors were trading privately or facilitating such illicit activity by their men (for instance, by allowing them to take up large quantities of goods from the store). At Moose in 1738, for instance, a bundle of uninvoiced fox skins, labelled as the property of former factor William Bevan, was found in a cask of small furs.[772] In 1770, the Committee acidly remarked to Humphrey Marten at Albany, "We think it very extraordinary that there Should be any hiding places in Our Factory, wherein Our Servants could conceal any Furrs from the Knowledge of Our Chief, as in the case of Newman last year." They ordered him to immediately search the entire establishment ("as privately as possible to prevent Clamour"), "especially...the South Shed up Stairs, where it is apprehended a Box lies concealed wherein are 200 Otters and Catts besides, Beaver Coats."[773]

Company servants on land and at sea also exchanged furs among themselves. In 1738, James Isham referred to "an old custom of [factors] giving to the captains and officers a present of furs," but assured the Committee that it "is much more sparingly now than formerly."[774] The following year, Richard Norton tried to persuade the Committee that the information they had received on this issue was "in a great measure

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[771]Labourer Benjamin Harding was sent home early from York in 1727 for private trade, as were labourers James Broadbent in 1728, and Robert Chambers and Robert Blackburn in 1729: Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1727, *Letters*, 128; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 8 August 1728, *Letters*, 133; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 1 August 1729, *Letters*, 144.

[772]See *Letters*, 265n.

[773]HBC (London) to Humphrey Marten (Albany), 8 May 1770, A. 5/1, fo. 105d.

[774]James Isham (York) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 263.

groundless."[775] In 1771, Andrew Graham described an elaborate system of exchange, by which factors distributed furs to the men under their command – at York and Prince of Wales' Forts, these gifts ranged from 80 martens and two beaver coats for the Second, to one beaver skin and one moose skin for each common hand – and also to the captain and crew of the supply ships; the factors and their men then sold these and other private furs to the ship captains for resale in Europe.[776]

Graham mentioned these practices in the context of a new wage structure for officers, instituted in 1770. The Committee eliminated payments for private trappings, but increased officers' salaries and offered commissions on the value of Company furs sent home.[777] This form of remuneration was extended to lower ranks in 1779, when the Committee initiated a schedule of premiums (mentioned above) whereby, for every score of furs traded at a post, its master received 1s, his assistant 6d, and the hands 3d.[778]

Graham estimated that the new system promised to almost double factors' incomes: he suggested that any man who complained (as Ferdinand Jacobs did) must have been involved with significant private trade.[779] Humphrey Marten at Albany declared to Graham that "I am heartily glad that we now have it in our power to save a little money,

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[775]Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 16 August 1739, *Letters*, 296.

[776]*Graham's Observations*, 282-284. Graham observed that this practice had been going on for some time, and was probably partly what Joseph Robson was referring to in 1752 when he complained of factors giving "bribes to skreen their faults and continue them in their command." Robson, 40.

[777]HBC (London) to Humphrey Marten (Albany), 8 May 1770, A. 5/1, fos. 105d-107; HBC (London) to Ferdinand Jacobs (York), 10 May 1770, A. 51/, fos. 113d, 116-116d.

[778]Glover, introduction to *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, xxxvii.

[779]*Graham's Observations*, 282-283.

without either being obliged to impose on others, or be imposed on ourselves."[780] Marten also took this opportunity to profit from his past behaviour in a non-monetary way.

> And Now let me own somewhat in regard to my self (for I want not to make my Self appear more Righteous than I am,) Be it known therefore to Your Honors that it was my Constant Custom to put by from 250 to 300 Marten skins every Year many of which Skins were my trappings according to the Plenty or Scarcity of such Goods; Part of those Skins went to purchase a little French Brandy, to Eke out 7 ½ Gallons for 12 Months, for four Persons (for the Cag [*i.e.* keg] seldom ran more) and the remainder was a lift to my then low Wages....But as Your Honors generosity hath rendered us capable of doing very well without any Sinister help, the above said 300, are packed up with those found in the Box [*i.e.* they are being sent back as private tradings].[781]

He also mentioned that he had made up a little parcel of marten skins for each Committee member "as a small token of my Gratitude," but was sending those back with the rest.[782]

The Committee's re-organization of its officers' pay in 1770 was similar to the Royal African Company's pay re-structuring in 1680: as profits declined in the face of increasing competition, the directors had to clamp down on private trade: there was no longer enough trade to 'share' with its servants. The two companies responded the same

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[780]Quoted in *Graham's Observations*, 283.

[781]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 2 September 1770, A. 11/3, fo. 142d. Marten's tactic was particularly audacious, considering that later in the same letter (fo. 145) he asked permission to bring his half-Cree son to England. That Marten was able to turn his past misconduct to serve his future prospects in this way, by baring his conscience to his employers and praising their generosity, was partly due to the contrast between his gratitude (and platitudes) and the complaints of his colleague at Fort Prince of Wales, Moses Norton, whose entire service was overshadowed by concerns over his private trade. To reinforce Marten's promise of future honesty, the Albany Council that year assured the Committee, "What impositions were carried on with regard to Trappings last Winter We know not, But this some of Us know, that Mr Marten hath frequently thrown into Your Trade more than half the Marten Skins he might justly have sent home as his Trappings, Contenting himself with the Number that Mr Temple Constantly sent home." Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 3 September 1770, A. 11/3, fo. 149d. Although Marten did maintain a trapline to keep himself physically active, it seems unlikely that a chief factor would have had enough time to do as much trapping as he claimed: presumably at least some of his furs were trapped by his Cree wife, Pawpitch.

[782]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 September 1770, A. 11/3, fos. 142d-143.

way, by increasing salaries and perquisites to compensate officers for the loss of their illicit gains. As late-seventeenth-century French trader Jean Barbot had advised all European companies trading in Africa, "grant them [*i.e.* officers] such competent salaries, and perquisites, as may content them, and they may not be tempted to commit perpetual breaches of trust, and contrary to their most solemn oaths, and all the ties of conscience, *to make hay, while the sun shines*; as is too notoriously and generally practised."[783]

A significant implicit assumption made by historians of the HBC but not necessarily made by historians of other long-distance trading companies is that private trade was an indication of private interest being placed ahead of the company's interest. Those other companies were generally less concerned with eliminating private trade, and in fact often allowed it to take place within reasonable limits; historians of those companies do not suggest that the private interests of the servants were subsumed in the interests of the company; and until recently, historians had little faith in the companies' abilities to control private trade. K.G. Davies, who was very familiar with the early modern HBC, believed that the Royal African Company's servants in Africa, "while looking to their own interests, could at the same time have discharged their obligations to the company," had there been enough trade to be shared between the two parties. It was only the instability and uncertainty of the trade in Africa which dictated that servants' private interests could only be served at their masters' expense.[784] Davies suggested that

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[783]*Barbot on Guinea*, 351.

[784]Davies, *RAC*, 111, 258. Part of the instability resulted from the variety of European and African traders operating along the west coast of that continent: not only was cheating easy because of the number of different groups with whom one could trade privately, but a factor did not necessarily need to worry about his long-term future with the RAC because he could find ample opportunity in Africa outside the RAC. Carlos, "Agent Opportunism," 150. Jean Barbot, a contemporary French trader with experience

servants' inability to identify their own interests with those of the company was one of the fatal structural defects in early modern long-distance trading enterprises, and identified this as a significant factor in the demise of the RAC, but then attributed the success of the East India Company to the fact that private and public interests in India were compatible though far from identical.[785]

In fact, the India trade presented many opportunities for private trade that, while being strictly forbidden, was not necessarily at the East India Company's expense.[786] At first, the EIC officially prohibited private trade and compensated its factors for this loss of privilege by granting them a sort of commission, based on the profits of a certain share of each voyage's (or year's) trade. In practice, however, they were officially allowed a specific amount of private trade each year, not to include spices or drugs.[787] Like the RAC, the EIC began raising factors' salaries in order to discourage them from illicit trade, and by 1633 a new President (the highest grade of factor) received £500 per annum.[788] Private trade continued, despite the company's efforts to restrain it: Chaudhuri claimed

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in the African trade, blamed "want of virtue enough to withstand the temptations of opportunity and importunity of bad example" for the RAC's servants breaking their oaths against private trade: *Barbot on Guinea*, 393.

[785]Davies, *RAC*, 347-348.

[786]Chaudhuri, 74.

[787]For instance, a factor of the first grade received £100 plus the profits on £200 worth of "adventure," while a factor of fourth (lowest) grade received £20 plus the profits on £40 worth of "adventure." Chaudhuri, 83.

[788]Chaudhuri, 84. Gary M. Anderson, Robert E. McCormick, & Robert D. Tollison, "The Economic Organization of the English East India Company," in Douglas A. Irwin (ed.), *Trade in the Pre-Modern Era, 1400-1700* (Cheltenham: Elgar, 1996), 473, looking primarily at the eighteenth century, claimed that the EIC "never pursued" a policy of reducing opportunistic behaviour by paying high salaries, arguing instead that "shirking" was constrained by the risk of the loss of income through dismissal.

that almost all of the EIC's seventeenth-century factors were accused of private trade. The directors in London often tried to use legal proceedings against offenders, but were just as often thwarted in such legal action by factors' influential patrons. In 1620, the Council of Surat factors warned London against stern punishment for private trade, arguing that "if some tolleration for private trade be not permitted none but desperate men will sail our ships."[789] By the eighteenth century, most restrictions on private trade had been lifted, and the granting of this freedom became an important attraction of serving in the East.[790]

Gary Anderson, Robert McCormick, and Robert Tollison argued that private trade in India represented "a system of decentralized property rights," wherein the company explicitly connected private opportunities with corporate opportunities. Because shipping and trading capital was allocated by the central office on the basis of rates of return, a high rate of return meant more such resources and in turn meant more opportunities for both the company and the private individual to expand their trade. Private cargo space on the company's ships was also allocated on the basis of performance, so that factors who had exerted themselves on the company's behalf were able to bring out more goods with which to trade on their private accounts.[791] The HBC's factors might have agreed with this argument, but the Committee almost certainly would have demurred.

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[789]Chaudhuri, 87-88. The Presidency (or trading district) of Surat had supreme authority over the EIC's trade in India and Persia.

[790]Anderson, McCormick, & Tollison, 471, 474.

[791]Anderson, McCormick, & Tollison, 474. Carlos & Nicholas, "Giants," 135-136, make a similar (though less legalistic) argument for both the English and the Dutch East India Companies, observing that chief factors were "responsible...for ensuring that private trade did not dominate official trade."

'Pensions' and 'Charity'

Pensions were rare, and consisted of a final one-time gratuity paid at the end of a man's service (or life) as reward for extraordinary performance or as compensation for extraordinary loss (of limb or life) in the line of duty. This was unusual in the early modern period: few British workers injured on the job could expect much (if any) financial assistance from their employers.[792] The Committee gave a "bounty" of £2.8.7 to George Newton, who "hath lost the use of some of his fingers" and came home in 1679.[793] John Bridgar was captured by Radisson at Port Nelson in 1683 and taken to Quebec, where he was released; in 1684, Bridgar arrived back in England and appeared before the Committee, who paid him £41.19.0 to cover expenses while at Quebec and in New England, and offered him a gratuity of £69.3.7 for his sufferings in the Company's service.[794] In January 1685, John Brownson (formerly chief mate on the *Colleton* yacht) asked "to have some adition to his former service": the Committee, "considering he has lost his Right hand by some accident Ordered he shall have a gratuety in lieu of all sattisfaction of £5."[795] In 1690, Elizabeth Marsh received a £20 gratuity "in Consideration of the Loss of her husband," John (Governor of James Bay, 1688/89).[796] In

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[792]Woodward, *Men at Work*, 12, 161; Cliffe, 105.

[793]*Minutes, First Part*, 26-27.

[794]*L.O. 1680-87*, 378.

[795]A. 1/8, fo. 11d. In March 1685, the Committee directed Brownson to advise Charles Bridgar on the size of sails to be made for the *Colleton*: A. 1/8, fo. 20. Also in March 1685, Brownson re-engaged for three years at £36 (A. 1/8, fo. 22), but he was captured by the French in July 1686: A. 15/3, fo. 101.

[796]A. 15/3, fo. 158. Settling the account of Charles Bayly's widow took considerable time (from February 1680 through December 1683: see *Minutes, First Part*, 36, 60, 82-3, 107, 117, 125, 126, 184, 185; *Second Part*, 52, 55, 110-11, 169-70), but the final settlement was £224.12.8 (his wages from September 1677 until his death) plus a gratuity of £175.7.4 "in consideration of her husbands Good

1755, the Committee ordered the accounts of each Henley hand killed the previous winter credited with a gratuity of £20, a significant amount considering that James Shoart and George Gunn were earning £6 per annum, and Robert Ash and Daniel Bowland were at £10 per annum. The administratrix of their late master, William Lamb, received £30 (one year's salary).[797]

Perhaps more commonly, men maimed or injured in the Company's service were retained longer than their practical usefulness may have warranted. George Mace entered the service in 1714 and at York during the winter of 1714/15 suffered frostbite from exposure and had all of his fingers and toes amputated in March 1715. However, he did not return to England until 1720 and was then re-engaged in 1721 for four years at £10: he was to be "Imploy'd in what he is capable of" at Albany, the Committee "considering him as an Object of our Charity." His superior at Albany, Richard Staunton, appeared to think poorly of Mace – he described him in 1724 as "of noe manner of service," and in 1725 as "goode for notheinge at all" and "not wourthy to come any More into your Country" – but the Committee was willing to keep Mace on had he not earnestly wished to go home in 1725.[798] At York in 1738, James Isham disobeyed the Committee's order to send home sawyer Henry Sacheveral Eastwick, "who as before we [the York Council] recommend as a very useful hand in every respect as well as that he is maimed in your

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service," to add up to £400: *Minutes, Second Part*, 169-70.

[797]A. 16/3, fos. 68, 78, 85, 91, 93. Ash's gratuity was ordered by the Committee in 1755 (A. 16/3, fo. 78), but his account was still open in 1762, when the only item listed was the gratuity "intended for a Lawful Heir": A. 16/4, fo. 2. Lamb's administratrix may have been his mother: see A. 16/3, fos. 47, 60, 85.

[798]Mace went home in 1725 and died in England sometime between October and December 1725. *Letters*, 70n; A. 16/1, fo. 19; A. 16/2, fo. 11; Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1724, A. 11/2, fo. 51d; Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 24 August 1725, A. 11/2, fo. 52d, 53.

honours' service."[799]

There was a consistent and (apparently) shared expectation that 'old hands' deserved encouragement and even charity. In 1703, John Fullartine praised his Second, former apprentice Anthony Beale, as "a very carefull honest man & knows ye affairs of this Country as well as moste men yt ever were in it & deserves encouragement as being an old Servant & one yt has been allways faithfull to his masters."[800] Former apprentice and book-keeper Samuel Hopkins, who ran away from Albany in 1722 and was dismissed the following year, was re-engaged "out of Charity" in 1724.[801] Hopkins' contemporary, Richard Norton, was relieved of his command at Churchill in 1727 and sent to York to improve his knowledge and understanding of the Company's trading and accounting methods. In 1730, his mentor (and future father-in-law) at York, Thomas McCliesh Jr, told the Committee that Norton "has behaved himself with honesty and fidelity to the best of my knowledge since he has been here, and is deserving of your honours' favour."[802]

Conclusion

Although the HBC's corporate structure was far from egalitarian, it had no identifiable class structure in the seventeenth or eighteenth century.[803] All Company

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[799]James Isham (York) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 262.

[800]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 6.

[801]G.E. Thorman, "Hopkins, Samuel," *DCB* II, 291; *Letters*, 99n.

[802]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1730, *Letters*, 150.

[803]Philip Goldring, "Labour Records," 55, described the nineteenth-century HBC as "a hierarchical structure in which incomes and prescribed privileges, not ownership of the means of production, maintained social ranking between gentlemen (or 'officers') and servants or 'men'." This statement could also be applied to the eighteenth century, although wages were a less important dividing

employees were Company servants, and access to privileges, perquisites, gratuities and high wages was determined primarily (though not exclusively) by service to the Company.[804] Thus, the expiration of an old contract and the negotiation of a new one were moments of uncertainty. Employees worried that they would push their demands too far and find themselves out of a job. The Committee worried that they might be too inflexible and lose a good servant. Factors worried that good men might be lost, that bad men might be kept on, that costs might get too high, that staffing levels might get too low, and that everything might be blamed on them. All parties involved had an opportunity to use the moment to their own advantage, but could also use it to demonstrate their attachment to one of the other parties – and, in so doing, raise the expectation of reciprocal rewards later. Those who subscribed to such reciprocities did not necessarily subsume their interests under those of their master, but could serve their own ends within a familiar framework of master-servant relationships.

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line during the earlier period. Also see Mancke, 66.

[804]As Aubert, 284, remarked of ships, "[p]romotion is above all an increased responsibility, and the ability to take more responsibility comes as a result of a gradual growth into the ship's community."

CHAPTER 8

HOUSEHOLD-FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLD-FACTORIES

The Hudson's Bay Company was a business but, like all firms, it was also much more. A good many social elements of fur trade life have been well documented by recent scholars, but how did those elements affect employees' patterns of service? The social ramifications of personnel issues were the most intangible and the most unintended, but also the most significant. HBC factories were households and communities as well as workplaces.[805]

Company servants worked within a hierarchy based primarily not on class or connections,[806] but on service. A well-placed patron, whether within or outside the Company, could be an advantage but was not a prerequisite, nor was he a guarantor of long-term success in the service.[807] Access to the upper ranks of the HBC hierarchy was

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[805]Fur trade historians have generally followed Sylvia Van Kirk in using the term 'society' to describe the social and cultural complex which grew out of economic exchange (see *Many Tender Ties*, 3), although Jennifer S.H. Brown (in *Strangers in Blood*, xvii) conceived of the fur trade as "a partial or incomplete social sphere," and has suggested that "we might examine more closely what we mean by the term 'fur trade society,' and to consider [to] what extent and in what senses such an entity ever existed." Jennifer S.H. Brown, "The Blind Men and the Elephant: Fur Trade History Revisited," in Patricia A. McCormack & R. Geoffrey Ironside (eds.), *Proceedings of the Fort Chipewyan and Fort Vermilion Bicentennial Conference* (Edmonton: Boreal Institute for Northern Studies, 1990), 16. On the other hand, scholars of eighteenth and nineteenth century Britain use the term 'community' as "a convenient hold-all for those aspects of working-class life which in part at least transcend the workplace." Rule, *Labouring Classes*, 155.

[806]Payne, 66, 68, argued that status and occupation were not inextricably linked in the mid-eighteenth century HBC. "The income and wage structure...reveals a strongly hierarchical community, but one without rigid social distinctions."

[807]In his history of the East India Company, Lawson, 72, quoted from the diary of Lord Egmont, who tried to get his cousin a situation with the EIC in 1733 but was told by one of the directors that "there are so many noblemen's relations already in the service that it could not be." However, Lawson, 72, characterized the main body of EIC servants as coming from mercantile (especially Scottish) families. Neither nobility nor prominent mercantile families were well represented in the HBC at this time.

directly connected to a man's willingness and ability to behave according to expected standards.[808]

To a certain extent, behaviour (or expected behaviour) was linked to position or occupation: the Committee expected more of tradesmen and officers than of labourers and mariners (the 'common men'), and in turn factors relied on tradesmen and 'old hands' to provide them with information and advice, and to set good examples for the 'green hands.'[809] When Richard Staunton took charge of Albany in 1723, he "Examined Several of the most sober men and Espitially the traides men in private," to ascertain the character of his predecessor, Joseph Myatt.[810] In the spring of 1762, Humphrey Marten (in charge of York following James Isham's death) experienced some disciplinary problems with a few of his men, but wrote to the Committee that "this in Justice I must declare that [sloop master] Christopher Atkinson has behaved in the best manner, his whole study as well as [labourer and netmaker] Anthony Hendays being to keep peace below Stairs."[811]

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[808]In contrast, Lawson, 72, felt that patience and perseverance were the keys to success within the EIC's hierarchy. He described a "rigid and deliberate process" of promotion based largely (though not entirely) on seniority, which could see a boy enter the service at age 16 as a writer and achieve the high rank of senior merchant by 27.

[809]In the rural estates of many of the gentry, there were a few long-serving retainers but a steady turnover among the bulk of the domestic and agricultural servants: Cliffe, 91-92. Likewise, naval shipwrights preferred a mix of young and old, good and less good labourers in their work-teams: Rule, "property of skill," 110.

[810]Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 47d.

[811]York Fort journal, 2 March 1762, B. 239/a/49, fo. 28d. Hugh Jones was the principal thorn in Marten's side: in a letter dated 2 April 1762, he demanded that Marten send him inland to winter with an unidentified group of Natives. Upon receipt of this letter, Marten recorded in the post journal, "I called up Stairs, Christopher Atkinson, Anthony Henday and George Richardson, that they might hear his (Hugh Jones's) reasons for sending me the above Letter, they being the properest Men I could think of." Marten interviewed Jones in their presence: Jones was less than cooperative, and Marten threatened to hold him in chains until the supply ship arrived if he did not sign a document agreeing not to leave the factory without Marten's permission. The agreement was copied into the post journal and witnessed by Henday and Richardson, along with a statement that Jones had signed the agreement of his own will and had not been

Nevertheless, there are many examples of men attaining high rank and/or enjoying long service despite frequent bickering with their employers over a variety of issues; the Committee even overlooked private trading by factors George Geyer, James Knight, Robert Pilgrim, Humphrey Marten, Ferdinand Jacobs, Moses Norton, and others who had charge of the Company's trading posts. Thus, an analysis of behaviour and misbehaviour cannot entirely explain men's experiences within the Company. Other less visible factors were also playing a critical role in shaping HBC service.

Although there is no evidence that the London Committee sought to make their business anything more than just a business, in early modern Europe even 'just a business' had social dimensions. Ann Carlos and Stephen Nicholas referred to commercial firms as "social systems." Although they did not define or describe the social system of the HBC, they pointed to that system as an important mechanism for encouraging appropriate behaviour and discouraging inappropriate behaviour.[812] It was not an explicitly constructed mechanism, but rather was intrinsic to the nature of early modern business and to the broader cultural and social values of the times.

Patronage, Brokerage, and Friendship

One of the most recognizable manifestations of the social system inherent in the Company's corporate structure was the exercise of patronage. The patron-client relationship was found in all facets of English society in the seventeenth and eighteenth

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coerced in any way. York Fort journal, 2 April 1762, B. 239/a/49, fos. 34-35.

[812]Carlos & Nicholas, "Agency Problems," 858.

centuries, particularly in business and politics. In the HBC, patronage was exercised both by the factors and by the London Committee, and was probably exercised by tradesmen and 'old hands' in ways largely invisible in the written record.[813] However, the scope of their influence was limited, as the absentee Committee consistently portrayed London as the sole reliable source of patronage.

The patron is distinguished from his client as the one who has the values of his own choosing affirmed by others.[814] The Bayside factors played dual roles, acting as patrons to the men under their command while themselves relying on the patronage of the London Committee. Being both masters and servants, factors had an "amphibious" relationship to authority, "at once its conduits and receptacles."[815] This chain of relationships was complicated by several variables. Servants' ability to correspond privately with the Committee, or to appear before the Committee in person upon their return to Britain, meant that factors were not mere links in a chain but rather brokers in a triad of workers/managers/employers.

Whereas the patron is perceived as the source of the values that his client affirms, the broker may purvey values that are not his own (although he may be changing their emphasis or even their content). As a middleman, the broker does not dispense favours

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[813]Pannekoek, 6, illustrated the patronage which could be exercised by an 'old hand' when he credited Augustine Frost with "the 'corruption' of a whole generation of servants" at Moose in the 1730s and 1740s. He also claimed (9) that Frost dominated the council at Moose. Another example of influence was tradesman Joseph Robinson, who rose to prominence among the discontented men of Moose for "his capacity to ferret out the legal niceties which supported the men's demands:" Pannekoek, 9.

[814]Paine, 8, 15.

[815]Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox, & Steve Hindle, "Introduction," in Griffiths, Fox, & Hindle (eds.), *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 3; Joyce, "Work," 158.

himself, but attracts followers by convincing them that he can influence the patron who does dispense favours.[816] The fact that captains of the Company's ships could usually travel to Hudson Bay and back in a single year allowed them to act as purveyors of information while remaining outside the central servant-factor-Committee relationship. Native people also had roles to play in this complex of relationships: factors acted as brokers between upland traders and factory servants, factory servants connected with the Homeguard Cree acted as brokers between them and the factors, and Cree and Assiniboine trading captains acted as brokers between the Natives of the interior (and, to a lesser extent, the French inland traders) and the English in general. Factors probably had the most power – particularly as they were purveyors of both information and corporate values – but their power was seriously limited by the fact that they were not the exclusive conduits of transmission.[817]

The Committee consistently portrayed themselves as the principal patron within the Company's organisation. They probably feared that allowing factors to act as patrons would both weaken their own authority and tempt the factors to place their own interests ahead of the Company's. On the other hand, the Committee valued and relied upon the factors' role as brokers in transmitting the Committee's expectations, praise and censure. That the Committee was seldom able to control the patronage or brokerage roles adopted by their officers, and even by their servants, is attributable to the complexity of relationships at play in their factories as well as to their remoteness.

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[816]Paine, 8, 19-21.

[817]Brown, xvii-xviii.

The Company's posts represented webs of social relationships based primarily on the common experience of living and working in Hudson Bay. A man's social contacts were the same men with whom he had a defined work relationship.[818] Upland traders and Homeguard Cree individuals could also be defined in terms of work relationships, usually as customers and/or as service providers: for instance, Humphrey Marten described his Cree wife, Pawpitch, as "Daughter to the Captain of the [Albany] Goose Hunters."[819] Scholarly understanding of workers' relationships, both among themselves and with their superiors, has been greatly enlarged in the last two generations.[820] However, the more informal and routine of these relationships were too mundane to leave much evidence in the documentary record, except when serious conflict or crisis entered the workplace.

Given the size and make-up of trading post complements – even labourers seldom made up a majority of any post's complement – it was likely that any individual's relationships would cross some boundaries of occupation and rank. Boundaries of ethnicity and culture (and sometimes gender) were also crossed when men formed relationships with Homeguard Cree. Even within an occupational group, relationships crossed boundaries of age, seniority, and ethnicity. Thus, newly-arrived young men and boys could benefit greatly from the tutelage and advice of senior men;[821] such senior men

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[818]See Aubert, 261.

[819]Albany post journal, 24 January 1771, B. 3/a/63, fo. 18d; Brown, 56.

[820]Malcolmson, "Workers' Combinations," 149.

[821]Rollason Driscoll, 87, made a similar comment, claiming that the Committee actively encouraged senior men "to take responsibility for the apprenticeship and training of their subordinates." However, the only example given was a 1710 letter praising Henry Kelsey for teaching his men Cree. In contrast, Pannekoek, 7, suggested, "There was inevitably a faction comprised of the new servants and the sailors, who preached discontent and insurrection."

might even act as surrogate fathers. Although explicit evidence of this is very rare, it is not unexpected given the paternal nature of the master-servant (or master-apprentice) relationship. Writing in England in 1747, R. Campbell advised the prospective apprentice to "look upon his Master as his Parent," significant advice considering that some boys (perhaps as many as one in four in London) were fatherless by the time they entered service or apprenticeship.[822] Humphrey Marten lamented the "Shocking news of the Death of my beloved Friend and I may truly say Father," James Isham, in 1761.[823] Jennifer S.H. Brown considered such relationships to be of "considerable importance in strengthening the vertical social integration of the posts, and probably in reinforcing the attachment of their participants to company service as the locus of their strongest personal ties."[824]

Of course, quasi-parental status could also give rise to quasi-parental conflicts, and may have been part of some men's reasons for leaving the service. This may have been an important element of the tension between James Isham and Samuel Skrimshire at York. Skrimshire, apprenticed to the Company in 1733, was probably a nephew of Isham, whose mother's maiden name was Skrimshire and who acted as the young man's patron in the 1740s. Skrimshire was recalled in 1750 on the basis of unfavourable reports from

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[822]Campbell, 313; Pelling, 41-42.

[823]*Isham's Observations*, 325; also Brown, 33. Tadmor, 157-158, observed that the many usages of 'father' all drew on "a certain moral understanding of the quality of 'fatherhood,' which included attributes such as authority, seniority, care, and tenderness." Ben-Amos, 174, found that emotional attachments between master and servant were more likely to resemble those between brothers than those between father and son.

[824]Brown, 32-33. Kussmaul, 55, suggested that this prompted some servants in husbandry to change situations frequently: "frequent mobility ensured that the master was a stranger."

John Newton (under whom Skrimshire was serving as Second at York) and, although he returned to Hudson Bay the following year, his relationship with Isham had soured noticeably: their correspondence between 1751 and 1755 (during which time Isham was Chief at York and Skrimshire Master of nearby Flamborough House) was frequently bitter, sarcastic, and confrontational.[825]

The sentimental and practical value of such relationships, when positive, was enhanced by the possibility of vertical mobility, but they also extended horizontally. Just as a master could become a surrogate father, so could workmates become surrogate brothers.[826] Not only were Marten and Andrew Graham deeply attached to Isham, they

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[825]For examples of Isham recommending Skrimshire to "your honours' favours," see James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 29 August 1739, *Letters*, 308; James Isham & Council (York) to HBC (London), 27 July 1740, *Letters*, 312. Newton called Skrimshire "a very Unfit Man for forwarding any Business....I at first thought his Remissness and Inactivity to proceed from a Sullenness on Acctt of my being advanced to a place he might think himself better Qualified for, but I have been convinced since it is meerly Lazy Habit or Nwt Disposition." John Newton (York) to HBC (London), 12 August 1749, A. 11/114, fo. 134. Newton may have been correct in his original assumption: Skrimshire had served as Second at York under Thomas White (1744-46) and James Isham (1746-48), and certainly expected promotion. However, the Committee took Newton's criticisms at face value and recalled Skrimshire because "his Lazyness & Inactivity or it may be Wilfulness is a very bad example to others." HBC (London) to John Newton (York), 24 May 1750, A. 6/7, fos. 161d-162. During Skrimshire's absence, Isham wrote to Joseph Isbister at Fort Prince of Wales, expressing surprise that Skrimshire did not know the Company's business better: when Isbister wrote back defending Skrimshire and emphasising his good conduct while temporarily in charge of York after Newton's death early in 1750, Isham petulantly replied, "As to ye Person You mention in your second Paragraph I cannot see that Wee have any reason to Concern Our Selves with Him or any one Else that is absent, I know of no Crimes Hee has been guilty of far from it (but the Company are ye Properest Judges for what they Punctually Ordered Mr Skrimshire home for." Isbister suggested that Isham was offended that Skrimshire had sought advice from a senior officer other than himself, "but in My Oppinion...[it is] much to his Credit, & plainly show that His thoughts were Serious concearning His charge & dont doubt but his Sentiments were Foreign & quite different from those Hee entertained when in an Inferiorr Station." Joseph Isbister (Fort Prince of Wales) to James Isham (York), 17 January 1751, B. 239/b/6, fos. 18-18d. James Isham (York) to Joseph Isbister (Fort Prince of Wales), 24 Febuary 1751, B. 239/b/6, fo. 21d. Joseph Isbister (Fort Prince of Wales) to James Isham (York), 17 January 1751, B. 239/b/6, fos. 18-18d. For examples of discord in the York-Flamborough correspondence, see James Isham (York) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), n.d. [August 1752], B. 68/b/2, fo. 2d; Skrimshire to Isham, 17 September 1752, B. 68/b/2, fo.3d; Skrimshire to Isham, 22 September 1752, B. 68/b/2, fo. 4d; Isham to Skrimshire, n.d. [September 1752], B. 68/b/2, fo. 5; Skrimshire to Isham, 2 October 1752, B. 68/b/2, fos. 5d-6; Isham to Skrimshire, 5 October 1752, B. 68/b/2, fo. 6d; Isham to Skrimshire, 20 March 1753, B. 68/b/2, fo. 14.

[826]See Abbott, 113-114.

were attached to each other: they usually began and concluded their letters to each other with "Dear Friend," but in 1761 Marten called Graham "My Brother."[827] Contemporaries and scholars have described a "fraternity" of men in James Bay (especially Moose) in the 1730s, bound together by their common origin in and around Stockton-on-Tees (County Durham), although the extent of this "fraternity" is difficult to measure.[828]

Equally difficult to measure is factors' success in acting as patrons. During his time in charge of Albany, former apprentice Joseph Adams actively recommended his accountant Richard White. Adams may have given White some share of his command after Joseph Myatt's death on 9 June 1730 – Thomas McCliesh Jr (at York) seemed to believe that Adams and White were jointly in charge at Albany – and certainly recommended White to be his Second. In autumn 1731, Adams left White in charge of Albany while he went to Moose, and reported that "at my return I found that he had Acted with a Great Deal of prudence & Delligence both in Treating the Natives well and Carr[y]ing a Good Decorum." White was a member of the Albany Council in 1733, but in 1734 was passed over for the position of Second at Albany; Adams responded to the Committee, "I am Sorry Mr White has any ways disoblidg'd you." White later served at Fort Prince of Wales and was named to the Council there in 1736, but he came home in 1740 without ever achieving a position of command.[829] Adams also patronised Moose

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[827]Humphrey Marten (Severn) to Andrew Graham (York), 8 July 1761, B. 239/b/22, fo. 8d. Marten also called Graham "my dear brother" in 1770: *Graham's Observations*, 283.

[828]Pannekoek, 9.

[829]Joseph Adams (Albany) to HBC (London), 28 August 1730, A. 11/2, fo. 69d; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 7 August 1731, *Letters*, 159; Joseph Adams (Albany) to HBC (London), 14 August 1732, A. 11/2, fo. 73d; Joseph Adames & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 July 1733, A. 11/2, fo. 77d; Joseph Adames & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1734, A.

accountant Samuel Maidman. William Bevan added a postscript to the 1732 letter from Moose, saying "I humbly take the liberty being desired by Mr Adames to acquaint your honours that one Samuel Maidman is a very useful man at anything." Although Maidman never achieved a position of command, he received a substantial salary increase in 1735 (from £14 to £20).[830]

Occasionally, the Committee unintentionally fostered emotional relationships when providing for the training of their factors. Richard Norton, the former apprentice whose performance as Chief Factor at Fort Prince of Wales was causing concern, was transferred to York in 1727 to act as Thomas McCleish Jr's Second and learn the Company's trading and accounting methods better. That working relationship became a personal one: not only did the two men become good friends, but Norton married one of McCleish's daughters while on furlough in Britain in 1730-31.[831] This mentoring arrangement was an example, better documented than most, of a long-standing custom in the country, that of senior officers offering advice and guidance to younger men.

The Committee benefited from increased ties among their factors, which could result in better working relations between posts: William Bevan at Moose promised in 1732 to correspond regularly with Joseph Adams and his Council at Albany "in order to

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11/2, fo. 80d. Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 17 August 1736, *Letters*, 216; Richard Norton & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 9 August 1740, *Letters*, 320.

[830]William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 23 August 1732, *Letters*, 173; A. 16/2, fo. 40.

[831]Brown, 33.

maintain your honours' interest and trade as much as lays in my power."[832] Ties between officers also facilitated friendship and camaraderie, and perhaps also resulted in a greater willingness to stay in the country. In 1692, the Committee informed Stephen Sinclair of his appointment as James Knight's deputy at Albany (at Knight's request) and expressed pleasure "that the old freindshipp bettwixt Governr. Knight & your selfe Continueth soe harty & that you are soe Ready to accompany him in this desinge [the re-occupation of Albany]."[833] In 1706 Anthony Beale declared that "I ever had and have still a great respect" for his former superior John Fullertine: "I had the happiness of his conversation every day and I be very well satisfied we parted good freinds."[834] Samuel Richardson's 1734 advice manual for apprentices called friendship "a glorious Thing....Its noble Influences...sweeten the Ills of Life, double our Comforts, divide our Cares, and ennoble human Nature."[835]

In the eighteenth century, the term 'friend' could encompass kinship ties, sentimental relationships, economic ties, occupational connections, social networks, and other attachments.[836] Friendship was a multi-faceted moral relationship.

> The moral duty of 'friends' was to stand by each other, and, if necessary, 'serve' each other as best they could, and in as many ways as possible (including ways that may seem to us now to crisscross hopelessly the

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[832]William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 23 August 1732, *Letters*, 172.

[833]HBC (London) to Stephen Sinclair (Albany), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 211.

[834]Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 July 1706, A. 11/2, fos. 16-16d.

[835]Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, 42.

[836]Tadmor, 167; Leonore Davidoff, "The family in Britain," in F.M.L. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950, Volume 2: People and Their Environment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 72-73, 78.

> boundaries of 'private' and 'public,' such as personal relationships in business and civil service)....Requests for 'favours' and 'services' were therefore seen as positive opportunities for proving 'friendship:' these were opportunities for displaying 'acts of friendship,' presenting 'marks' and 'tokens' of friendship, and obliging the 'friend' in further reciprocal exchanges....[R]elationships of patronage and dependence were also understood in terms of 'friendship.'[837]

The Company's correspondence is replete with examples of such rhetoric. The language of friendship helped introduce a sentimental element into the unequal and utilitarian relationship between the Committee and their servants, and emphasized the reciprocal nature of that relationship.[838] It also helped highlight the relationships, both vertical and horizontal, that tied the factories to each other as well as to London.[839]

This network of relationships was focussed primarily on Hudson Bay: most men's operative social ties originated in the social universe of the factories. The appearance thus created is that long-term Company servants were 'Company men,' defining themselves in terms of these relationships centred on their common experience of living and working for the Company in Rupert's Land, and isolating themselves from their

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[837]Tadmor, 213, 214-215. Paine, 12, cited Marshall Sahlins' warning against the "popular tendency to view reciprocity as balance, as unconditional one-for-one exchange." Instead, Paine suggested that reciprocity was "a process whose 'balance' rests in a series of mutual expectations, rather than in the fact, at any single point of time, of a one-for-one exchange."

[838]See Tadmor's discussion (216-236) of "Political friends"; also Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, 42. Tadmor, 279, also observed, "Labour relations ...were often mediated among 'friends,' linked closely to patronage, and negotiated in terms of the household-family and its roles and relationships."

[839]Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, 44, recommended "that the young Man at first chusing his Friends and Intimates do generally converse with his *Betters*, and particularly have an Eye to the Acquaintance of such Persons, as may *promote* him in his Business when he begins for himself."

original homes in Britain.[840] However, the frequent turnover of personnel and the consistently large proportion of 'green' hands suggest that only a minority of men adapted to their Bayside environment in such a permanent way. Most servants maintained their ties with Britain, and throughout the period studied more than three-quarters returned there after less than ten years in the country: the factories were permanent institutions characterized by a largely temporary membership.

Patriarchal Household-Families

Real or fictive kinship ties between servants of any rank were usually rare, or at least rarely articulated. However, the concept of the early modern patriarchal household-family has played a significant role in recent discussions of HBC establishments. Heather Rollason Driscoll has suggested that the Committee intended its servants to recognize the factories as patriarchal households and to behave accordingly.[841] This might be expected, as early modern elites often sought to supplement political and economic with cultural authority.[842] There is no evidence that the London Committee explicitly envisaged their overseas posts as households but, as the central social institution in British domestic and economic life, the household was the obvious template for the organization of the

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[840]See, for example, Jennifer S.H. Brown, "Two Companies in Search of Traders: Personnel and Promotion Patterns in Canada's Early British Fur Trade," in Jim Freedman & Jerome H. Barkow (eds.), *Proceedings of the Second Congress, Canadian Ethnology Society*, vol. 2 (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, Mercury Series, 1975), 639; Payne, 34, 41-42.

[841]Rollason Driscoll, 83.

[842]Elites perceived the need "to invest social relationships with meanings supportive of the legitimacy of structures of hierarchy and subordination." Wrightson, "Politics of the Parish," 32.

posts.[843] Although most people in Britain were rooted in their locality and its concerns, the high degree of labour mobility within Britain (especially within England) was possible partly because people who moved to new localities could expect to find similar customs, economic structures, and parish institutions.[844] Although Hudson Bay presented no such familiar points of reference, the new trading posts did offer the opportunity to transplant at least some of the most important ones. Thus, the social regulation of the Company's factories closely resembled the social structure of the household-family without any party involved having to consciously construct the factories along such lines.[845]

The early modern term 'household' referred to the co-residential domestic group.[846] The meanings of 'family' could be very flexible and often overlapped with that

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[843]See Tadmor, 41, 63; Laslett, 76. Davidoff, "family," 71, called the household-family "the template for most other organisations and [it] was seen as the foundation of society." Also see Foster, "Indian-Trader," 574-575.

[844]Eastwood, *Governing Rural England*, 24. Also see Anthony Fletcher & John Stevenson, "Introduction," in Fletcher & Stevenson (eds.), *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 9-10; K.D.M. Snell, "Gravestones, Belonging and Local Attachment in England 1700-2000," *Past & Present* 179 (May 2003), 100-101, 131-132.

[845]On the other hand, Pannekoek, 5, saw the environment of the Bayside factories as "unnatural" and "radically different" from the social setting of "pre-industrial England," and considered this the central problem faced by "staple communities." However, Pannekoek was unfamiliar with the cultural context of "pre-industrial England." As Foster observed (in "Indian-Trader," 577-578), "The ludicrous social structure of the trading post becomes comprehensible only when viewed in the cultural context of the homeland....[Men's] acceptance of the social structure of the trading post rested upon the fact that, to their minds, it mirrored the social structure of the homeland, albeit in somewhat peculiar circumstances."

For a discussion of social patterns and popular culture being transplanted from Britain to the American colonies through processes of retention, storage, recovery, and borrowing, see Alfred F. Young, "English Plebeian Culture and Eighteenth-Century American Radicalism," in Margaret Jacob & James Jacob (eds.), *The Origins of Anglo-American Radicalism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), 185-212.

[846]Richard Wall, "Introduction," in Richard Wall, Jean Robin, & Peter Laslett (eds.), *Family Forms in Historic Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 6-7.

of 'household'.[847] Modern scholarly consensus generally defines the early modern 'household-family' as including parents, children, and any resident kin, journeymen, servants, and/or apprentices. The precise membership of the household-family was flexible, changing over time as children grew up and moved out, as apprentices completed their indentures and moved on (perhaps being replaced by new apprentices), as journeymen took other masters or became masters in their own right, and as old servants sought new situations. Patterns of authority and dependence are key to understanding the household-family: the boundaries of membership were defined by who lived and/or worked under the authority of the (usually male) householder.[848] Kinship ties were common but not necessary: Naomi Tadmor considered 'single men's families,' in which there were no kinship relations between the head of the family and any of the members of his household, "an extreme, though by no means a rare formation of the household-

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[847]See, for instance, Tadmor, 25; Peter Laslett, "Mean household size in England since the sixteenth century," in Peter Laslett & Richard Wall (eds.), *Household and Family in Past Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 127; Naomi Tadmor, "The Concept of the Household-Family in Eighteenth-Century England," *Past & Present* 151 (May 1996), 112. Peter Laslett, "Family and household as work group and kin group: areas of traditional Europe compared," in Richard Wall, Jean Robin, & Peter Laslett (eds.), *Family Forms in Historic Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 514, offered an alternative group, a 'houseful,' which comprised all individuals residing in a defined set of premises. "Residents in a houseful may make up a single household, and usually do, but they may make up more than one household, or as individuals or as 'families' they may be inmates, not belonging within any particular household but attached to one. A domestic group which is a work group can, then, be either a household or a houseful, and may or may not be composed of the family members of either of these unities." Subsequent scholars have not paid nearly as much attention to Laslett's discussion of housefuls as to his very influential discussions of households.

[848]Tadmor, "Concept," 112, 119-120; Davidoff, "family," 71; Abbott, 115-117; Snell, 321; Ann Kussmaul, "The pattern of work as the eighteenth century began," in Roderick Floud & Donald McCloskey (eds.), *The Economic History of Britain since 1700*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 2. Woodward, *Men at Work*, 65, casts some doubt on whether journeymen were included in early modern households by pointing out that the "extent to which they were housed and fed by their masters is unknown." For a discussion of household and family from the point of view of feminist historians, see Berg, "Women's work," 64-98. For alternative (but related) ways of defining household membership, see Wall, "Introduction," 7-9; also Laslett, "Family and household as work group and kin group," 514-515, 535-539.

family."[849]

Tadmor identified four facets of household-family relationships. First, entry into the family was usually contractual, that is, on the basis of some kind of agreement (from marriage to an oral service contract) setting the terms for inclusion and participation. Second, many of these contracts involved the exchange of work and material benefits. Tadmor suggested that concepts of family are better understood in terms of instrumentality than sentimentality; but she cautioned against opposing the two (as scholars have usually done), arguing instead that an increase in affection often led to an increase in instrumentality. Third, many relationships within the household-family were both domestic and occupational: that is, various members had specific tasks. Finally, the importance of contractual, instrumental, and occupational relationships did not eclipse relationships of blood, marriage, and friendship. Such ties were often useful in gaining access to a household, and both kinship and non-kinship ties were strongly linked with patronage.[850]

The role of the householder, or patriarch, was social, economic, and religious. Tadmor's discussions of household-families drew heavily on the diaries of East Hoathly (Sussex) mercer Thomas Turner between 1754 and 1765. As evidence of Turner's

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[849]Tadmor, "Concept," 117-118; Tadmor, 22-24. Foster, 25 years earlier, had described the Bayside household-factories as a "distortion" of the patriarchal household model because they (officially) included no women or children: Foster, "Indian-Trader," 578.

[850]Tadmor, 27-29; Tadmor, "Concept," 123-126; Kussmaul, 31; Paine, 12. Aubert, 264, also suggested a sentimental aspect to instrumentality: he noted a relative absence of personal friendships on modern Norwegian vessels, which were characterized by "general comradeship." It appeared "that to be a good shipmate was more important, and perhaps more legitimate, than to have strictly personal ties of friendship. We may possibly assume that when work and leisure are mixed ecologically, the social relationships in work and leisure tend to become of a similar type." Pelling, 42, suggested some affinity between apprenticeship indentures and marriage contracts.

concept of his role as a householder, she observed that his diaries contained two types of regular entries: near-weekly entries about his household's attendance at church and near-daily entries about his household's consumption of food.[851] In HBC journals and accounts, the weekly accounts of provisions expended documented factors' roles as administrators and providers, while the regular mention of divine service on Sundays in the post journals suggests a consciousness of religious duty to their men. The extent to which these attitudes were imposed from London and merely documented to satisfy the Committee is unclear, but such responsibilities were probably part of factors' perception of their multiple roles. For instance, in 1778, Humphrey Marten prefaced a warning about the Canadian traders by observing that for "Twenty eight Years have I eat[en] your bread; Duty, and gratitude engage me Strongly in your Interest."[852] By acting in a particular role, factors could seek to define the nature of their relationships with their superiors and with the men under their command. All the parties involved certainly would have been influenced by strong contemporary social, cultural, and religious norms promoting notions of household governance.[853]

Bayside servants of all ranks would have needed no prompting to think about their work environments in such a way: between 80 and 90 per cent of Englishmen who survived to adulthood married, and even single men (though rarely single women) could

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[851]Tadmor, 25.

[852]Humphrey Marten (York) to HBC (London), 28 August 1778, A. 11/116, fo. 42, quoted in *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 309n; also Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxiv-xxv.

[853]See Tadmor, 35; Davidoff, "family," 128; Michael J. Braddick, "Administrative performance: the representation of political authority in early modern England," in Michael J. Braddick & John Walter (eds.), *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy and Subordination in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 171-173

become the head of a household, "thus householding was the normal condition of mature men and women."[854] Explicit references to such a mental connection are very rare, however. In 1737, Richard Norton complained of being forced to reduce his complement at Fort Prince of Wales (from about 65 to 58) for want of provisions, "a consequence so great in our situation with so great a family."[855] Norton himself had been an apprentice, and both the concept and the practice of apprenticeship in early modern England were deeply embedded in the patriarchal household.[856]

The position of householder was achieved only after serving in subordinate positions in other people's households. In this way, service and apprenticeship were integral parts of the household model, and service in the Company's factories would have been understood in terms of service within a household. Almost half of all English households and perhaps as many as two-thirds of Orkney households contained servants: in many English parishes, servants made up between 15 and 20 per cent of the local population, and may have comprised around 13 or 14 per cent of the national population.[857] Naomi Tadmor estimated that as many as two thirds of young English men and women had left home and entered service by their late teens and the proportion in Scotland was probably comparable.[858] Service in households was "the fundamental

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[854]Abbott, 111.

[855]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 23 August 1737, *Letters*, 237-238.

[856]See, for instance, Woodward, *Men at Work*, 59-60.

[857]Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 65; Ben-Amos, 69; Shaw, 191.

[858]Tadmor, 35; Kussmaul, 3. The percentage may have been even higher. In a sample of 2,201 settlement examinations in 11 counties in southern and eastern England, 81 per cent of those being examined had been servants at one time: Kussmaul, 19. For Scotland, see Whyte, 92.

source of social training" in early modern Britain.[859]

Although the term 'servant' had a broad range of meanings in early modern England, it specifically referred to men and women who worked for and were maintained by a single master.[860] Their status as wage-earners was secondary to their status as dependents within a household. In this sense, Ann Kussmaul argued that servants did not conceive of themselves – nor were they conceived of by others – as part of a larger labouring or proletarian class. Their freedom and independence were limited not because they had been reduced to selling their labour, but because they were unmarried dependents, children in someone else's family.[861]

Significantly for assumptions that HBC recruits may have brought with them, household service was associated with a particular phase of life, adolescence and young adulthood, and was rarely a lifelong employment. Ann Kussmaul's examination of parish listings found that a constant proportion (75 per cent) of servants in husbandry were aged 15-24.[862] It was expected that service and apprenticeship would be followed by marriage

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[859]Fletcher & Stevenson, 32-33; also see Ben-Amos, 85; Kussmaul, "pattern of work," 2; Griffiths, *Youth and Authority*, 299-300; Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 66. Pelling, 33, called apprenticeship one of the most important institutions connecting the family with the state and with other families. Fletcher & Stevenson, 31-32, included family, household, and apprenticeship among the foundations of order in early modern English communities. However, Griffiths, *Youth and Authority*, 330, reminds us that "the high drop-out rate of apprentices in most English towns [for instance, as high as 75 per cent in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Norwich]...should make us pause before we elevate the early modern household to the pedestal of order and stability."

[860]Kussmaul, 5-6.

[861]Kussmaul, 8-9; Campbell, 313; Davidoff, "family," 88.

[862]Kussmaul, 78. Only a few remained unmarried servants for life. Some late-eighteenth-century agricultural societies gave prizes for long service to the same master: one such society found, "to their great astonishment," some servants who had served their master for more than 50 years. Kussmaul, 79.

and the creation of a household of one's own.[863] Taking the household-family not only as a social institution but as an agent of socialization, a successful period of service should come to an end: "the servants should leave the family and hopefully form a family of their own."[864] Craft apprentices, journeymen, domestic servants, and servants in husbandry all expected to become their own masters one day.[865]

The association between businesses and household-families would have been obvious to early modern Englishmen and Scotsmen. Most businesses were not identifiably separate from the households with which they were connected, and those firms that were separate were generally small. For example, few building firms permanently employed more than one or two men; large-scale productive enterprises – like the Tyneside coal pits, the naval shipyards, and Sir Ambrose Crowley's ironworks – were rare.[866] Thus, HBC factories, and even the smaller outposts, were anomalous as

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[863]The great majority of servants were unmarried and less than 27 or 28 years old. Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 65-67; Tadmor, 35, 61-62; Kussmaul, 79-80, 83-84. Peter Laslett's examination of turnover in the servant population in two English towns led him to conclude "that servants must not be regarded as permanent members of the households where they worked, even if some of them stayed so long that they became the family retainers of literature and sentiment:" quoted in Tadmor, 38n71. Ben-Amos, 70-71, cautioned against drawing a straightforward trajectory from childhood through household service to householder status, noting that young people sometimes worked as seasonal or day labourers between periods of employment as annual servants. Davidoff, "family," 87, observed that "subordinate status remained the probable fate of a substantial minority" of working people, for between 1/6 and 1/4 never married; also see Laslett, 4.

[864]Tadmor, 63; Griffiths, *Youth and Authority*, 324. Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, 51, summed up his advice to apprentices as "some of the necessary Rules that ought to be observed by every young Man who is put out to learn a Trade, if he intends to make a good *Servant*, or hopes to make a good *Man*."

[865]Kussmaul, 31; Laslett, 4. Although Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, v, lamented the "Depravity of Servants," he assured his readers that "it is not any Part of our present Design to find Faults in the Master, but to endeavour to prevent or reform them in the Servant, who when he comes to be Master, in his Turn, may contribute to amend the Age."

[866]Woodward, *Men at Work*, 12, 25, 51-52; Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 23; Davidoff, "family," 78. This is partly what Peter Laslett had in mind when he referred to "the minute scale of life, the small size of human groups, before the coming of industry:" Laslett, 51.

large-scale workplaces. Most men would have been familiar with households containing two, three, or four servants.[867] Jennifer S.H. Brown likened chief factors to the aristocracy of the fur trade, at the head of households comparable in size (forty or fifty servants) to those of the English aristocracy.[868] Factors' roles may have been more comparable to those of estate stewards, who were at the top of the servants' hierarchy but were still expected to show their masters proper deference and respect.[869]

Tensions within the Household Model

Much recent historiography has emphasized vertical consciousness connecting masters and men rather than horizontal class consciousness separating them. Conflicts between masters and men have been thought of as 'family' quarrels, arising because one group or another failed to live up to reciprocal expectations.[870] However, men could recognize the concept of the patriarchal family household, and even use it as a social and cultural construct, without necessarily approving of it or of their place within it. Subordinate members of the family could adopt a number of different postures, from

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[867]Laslett, "Mean household size," 126, found that mean household size in England remained fairly constant at 4.75 or a little under, from the sixteenth century until as late as 1901." Also see Kussmaul, 11. English households (averaging two or three servants) were slightly smaller than contemporary Orkney households (which averaged three or four servants): Shaw, 191.

[868]Brown, 21, 59; also see Foster, "Indian-Trader," 579. In comparison, Ann Kussmaul found that although almost half of the farming households in the 55 local censuses she examined contained servants, 59 per cent of those households contained no more than two servants: Kussmaul, 11.

[869]Cliffe, 116-117. Estate stewards remain relatively unstudied. Even less scholarly attention has been paid to waged foremen in the workplace: their control of production and personnel functions, and their equivocal positions between employers and employees, also bears many similarities to the roles played by HBC factors. See Joyce, "Work," 158.

[870]Rule, *Experience of Labour*, 208-209.

opposition to conformity, in their relations with the master of the household.[871] In the Company's factories, the chief source of tension within the implicit household structure focussed on sexual relations and marriage.

The ideal model of the early modern household-family called upon all members of that household except the patriarch and his wife to be celibate. While premarital sexual relations undoubtedly took place, getting married was associated with starting a household of one's own, and thus incompatible with a state of subservience in the household of another.[872] Samuel Richardson's 1734 advice manual for apprentices explained that marriage, "tho' a lawful Engagement, in a Person who is his own Master, and has a Right to dispose of himself, is often of very fatal Consequence to a young Man, who is an Apprentice."[873] For Company servants, wives in Britain were not usually a concern in this regard, as the physical distance between husband and wife (if there was one) created a sort of 'false' bachelorhood. However, forming long-term connections with Native women challenged the implicit structure of the household-factory.

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[871]Tadmor, 42-43; Griffiths, *Youth and Authority*, 291.

[872]Laslett, 99; Wall, "Introduction," 13. In late-seventeenth century Newcastle, an apprentice joiner and three bricklayers were each fined £2 for marrying while apprentices, and two of them were fined for having children while apprentices (at the rate of £2 per child); in comparison, the bricklayers' guild in Newcastle in the late seventeenth century charged £2 for entry into the membership. Woodward, *Men at Work*, 59-60.

[873]Richardson was concerned that the young man would acquire a family before he was able to support them (at least by lawful means), and would lose the chance to marry for money later in life. "As a natural Consequence of his Indiscretion, he would, very probably, be forced to drudge on in the lowest Part of his Business, a *Servant* to Servants; and, what is still worse, his innocent Children would be involved in all the Misfortunes of their imprudent Parents; they would be forced, as they grew up, to be let out, at a poor and despicable Pittance, perhaps for their Food only, as Shop-boys, or Errand-Boys, or Livery-Servants; or at best be obliged to an Hospital, or a Parish, or to the Charity of some well-disposed Persons, to be educated for some inferior Business, and so are inrolled among the Scum of the People." Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, 3-5.

The Committee seems to have preferred bachelors, as suggested by their 1682 order "that the Secretary indeavor to gett 10 honest and able Fellows batchelors not under 20 nor above 30 yeares old."[874] There is no evidence, however, that married men were excluded from Company service, and many men who entered the service as bachelors married while home on leave or between contracts.[875] It was not uncommon for early modern couples to separate (temporarily or permanently) in order to find work.[876] There are several instances in the early London minute books of wives petitioning the Company to allow their husbands to return home. Such requests were habitually granted "if hee desire it,"[877] presumably (Brown suggested) "to avoid both the lowering of morale among Bay employees and the responsibility for aggravating their domestic problems."[878]

Having a wife in Britain could affect a man's service in Hudson Bay in other ways. In 1723, tailor James Fettus was "crazy" to come home from York Fort before his

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[874]*Minutes, First Part*, 199. Considering that the Committee here was referring to tradesmen, they may have meant 'bachelor' in the older sense of a junior member of a trade guild. For the apparent preference for bachelors, also see, for instance, *Minutes, First Part*, xxxiv; Rollason Driscoll, 87-88.

[875]It is impossible to know exactly how many men had wives back home, nor is it easy to determine how many married men were already married when they first entered the Company's service and how many married while in Britain between periods of service. An employee's spouse (or other family) usually only appeared in the Company's records when she requested permission for him to come home early or when she received money paid out from his account. References in men's accounts to women sharing their surname may refer to wives but might equally refer to mothers, unmarried sisters, or maiden aunts. The available evidence only allows the statement that a significant minority of Company employees had wives in Britain, without allowing any quantification of how much of a minority they were.

[876]Clark, "Migrants in the city," 271.

[877]Brown, 11. The quotation is from the Committee's reply to Mary Dalton's 1680 petition (*Minutes, First Part*, 55) but the same wording (with slight variations) can be found in other petitions of that period: see, for example, the petitions of Rebecca Kildale, Mrs Brownstone, Mrs Verner, and Mrs Garland in 1682, *Minutes, First Part*, 170, 212, 217, 218. In 1728, Thomas McCliesh Jr complained about the "importunities" of Mrs Christopher Bannister, the wife of York's armourer, clamouring for her husband to come home, and observed that Bannister never mentioned to him any plans of going home: Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 8 August 1728, *Letters*, 135.

[878]Brown, 11.

time was out because his wife had broken her leg; he did go home in 1724 (one year early) but re-engaged in 1725 and served for another 12 years.[879] In 1730, York cooper Henry Lewins requested (and received) permission to come home the following year: his time was not yet out, but his wife had died the previous winter and he had been informed "that he shall be utterly ruined in case he does not come home next year."[880] For Thomas McCliesh Jr, the presence of a large family in England may have been an incentive to stay in the Company's service. Although he had come home from Albany in 1721, being "very Desireous of haveing the Happiness to see my wife & children," he returned to Hudson Bay the following year; in 1724, he asked the Committee "to pay this last year's wages by giving my wife a bond for a [*sic*] £150 and to pay her the other fifty pounds this ensuing March. The interest of the above mentioned £150 will be a great help to my family, having no less than eight in number, whose daily maintenance depends upon my industry." However, in 1733 he again expressed a desire to come home, "that I may have the happiness of seeing my family."[881]

Domestic problems may have been a motivation for some men to enter the service in the first place. English parishes – or, at least, rate-paying parishioners – were often

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[879]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 93. Fettus served at Churchill (1725-30) and at Albany/Moose (1731-37). He may have gone home in 1730: this might explain why his wages dropped from £14 in 1728-30 back down to his original £10 per annum in 1731-33 (he was back up to £14 in 1735-37). He made payments to his wife in 1727 (£3), 1731 (£2.5.0), 1733 (£3), and 1737 (£6). A. 16/2, fo. 51; A. 16/9, fo. 13.

[880]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1730, *Letters*, 150.

[881]Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 40d; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1724, *Letters*, 100; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 17 August 1733, *Letters*, 188. McCliesh's family probably consisted mainly of servants and relatives other than offspring: between his entry into the service in 1698 and counting his family in 1724, he had only spent the winters of 1707/08, 1714/15, and 1721/22 in England.

concerned when a man left town or the country in search of employment, as they could not be certain he would return: the wife and children a man left behind might become a charge on the parish.[882] Alternatively, the long absence in the Bay may have strained marital relationships. In November 1681, Elizabeth Noldridge applied to the Committee for her husband Richard's wages, but was denied (despite having a letter of attorney) on the grounds of a report from Thomas Wilkinson. Wilkinson, a gunsmith and edge-tool maker recently returned from Albany, told the Committee that Mrs Noldridge "hath had several Bastards since her said Husband went away" and that Mr Noldridge (a bricklayer at Albany) had instructed Wilkinson to request the Committee not to pay her any of his wages.[883] Noldridge came home in 1682 but re-engaged in 1684. The Noldridges may have reached some kind of reconciliation, because she later received his wages and the proceeds from the sale of his effects after his death in 1686.[884]

Noldridge's case highlights an important way in which service in Hudson Bay could challenge and even reshape a man's identity. A man's definition of himself involved his occupation and his position within the household-family, both of which (but especially the latter) could be strained by the physical distance between Britain and the Bay. Noldridge was a husband, and possibly a father, but for eight years (1674-82) his Company service removed him from the daily affirmation of being a householder. His wife apparently felt his absence during this time and sought another man to fill at least

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[882]Abbott, 131, found that the term 'widow' in parish accounts was sometimes used as a "courtesy title" for a deserted wife. Also see Snell, 360-364.

[883]*Minutes, First Part*, 151; cited in Brown, 11-12.

[884]A. 15/3, fos. 39, 99, 102.

some of the roles which her husband was unable to fill (Noldridge was still providing for Elizabeth to at least some extent: the Company's secretary paid her money from Richard's account in 1676, 1679, and 1680). When Noldridge returned to England in 1682, he probably found that his household-family had successfully adapted to his absence, and that he was no longer the important link he once had been. As a bricklayer, his contacts with former workmates and customers may have suffered as much from his long absence as his marriage had. His re-engagement with the Company in 1684 may have represented his desire to return to a place where his occupation and household position was less problematic than it had become in England.[885]

Of course, hiring bachelors did not necessarily remove the possibility that family concerns might bring a man home before his contracted time was up or might prevent him from signing a second or third contract. In 1680, Samuel Oakes' return was requested by his sister, Samuel Huxford's by his mother, and John Dew's by his father.[886] Of course, the granting of such requests by the Committee did not oblige the man in question to leave the Bay: in 1696, John Todd at Albany was informed that the Committee had granted his mother's request for him to be allowed to come home, "his Mother alleadging he hath a right to an Estate wch. is in Controvercey, his father being dead." For reasons not explained in the correspondence, Todd did not return to England until the following

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[885]Aubert, 268-269.

[886]*Minutes, First Part*, 53, 56, 71; Thomas Walsh's 1682 return was requested by Thomas and Alice Walsh, who might have been his parents (170-71). In 1682, Jacob Robinson's mother successfully petitioned for a raise in her son's salary (210).

year.[887]

Potentially more problematic were family connections formed in the Bay. From the first days of the Company through the early nineteenth century, the Committee strongly discouraged their servants and officers from fraternizing with Native women.[888] Nevertheless, Jennifer S.H. Brown has documented at least fifteen instances of Company men taking Native companions prior to 1770, although she observed that none of these women were apparently designated by their European companions as 'wives' in the European sense.[889] Although this kind of socialization contravened Company expectations of celibacy, few men were disciplined for such behaviour. A greater deterrent (at least against promiscuity) may have been the custom of a man paying the surgeon a month's wages for curing venereal disease, "as an encouragement to the surgeon, and to make men more careful that they avoid such vice for the future." When the Committee ordered factors to discontinue that custom in 1738, the Councils at Fort Prince of Wales and York urged them to rescind the order: James Isham actually refused to publish the order at York, explaining "with submission to your honours we humbly conceive this will be in some measure opening a door for licentiousness and

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[887]HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 30 May 1696, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 274, 274n; A. 15/5, fo. 12.

[888]Brown, 12-13, 52, 76; Van Kirk, 14-15.

[889]Joseph Robson referred to Henry Kelsey's Native companion as his "wife" (Robson, 72), but his account was recorded at least 11 years after Kelsey left Hudson Bay: though the account is certainly plausible, there is only circumstantial evidence to corroborate it: Pentland, "Henry Kelsey's Christmas Message, 1696," 128-131. Also see Brown, 52-53. Van Kirk, 64, seemed to accept Robson's account at face value.

debauchery."[890]

What we know of patterns of who married in the country (as opposed to having wives in Britain) followed the expectations suggested by the household model. An early experiment allowing officers to bring their wives from Britain was soon ended. In 1683, newly-appointed Governor Henry Sergeant sailed for James Bay with his son (Henry Jr), his wife, her companion (Mrs. Maurice), a maidservant, and a clergyman (John French).[891] The following year, Elinor Verner received permission to join her husband Hugh at Rupert's River (where he was Chief Factor), on the understanding that he would pay her passage and £12 per annum for provisions, but permission was rescinded before she sailed. The minute books recorded no reason for this decision, only mentioning that "upon divers good Considerations it is the opinion of this Committee She Shall not goe this expedition nor any other woman."[892] The advisability of sending women into an area which could be vulnerable to French attack was probably foremost in the directors' minds. The Committee recalled Sergeant and "all your Family" (referred to elsewhere as the "whole parcell of women appertaining to him") in 1687, and no more white women

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[890]Captain George Spurrell called these payments "a very ancient custom" and "a thing in all shipping in Christendom allowed," usually amounting to "a month's pay from a foremast man:" George Spurrell & Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1 August 1738, *Letters*, 247. James Isham (York) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 261. Also see Thomas Bird & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), n.d. [1738], A. 11/2, fos. 93-93d.

[891]Articles agreed upon for the surrender of Albany, 16 July 1686, *L.O. 1680-87*, 319; see also *L.O. 1680-87*, 388-389. G.E Thorman's biography of Sergeant (*DCB* I, 605-606) did not mention Sergeant's son.

Charles Bayly was married, but there is no evidence of any suggestion that his wife join him in the Bay. The contemporary Royal African Company did not object to officers taking their wives from England to Africa, and even mildly encouraged it, but few took advantage of the opportunity. Davies, *RAC*, 257.

[892]*Minutes, Second Part*, 224, 230; Brown, 10.

were allowed passage to Hudson Bay until the nineteenth century.[893]

Despite Company expectations to the contrary, factors (as surrogate patriarchs) could justify to themselves selecting long-term partners from the Homeguard Cree, and were under pressure from the Cree to do so.[894] Joseph Adams had a relationship with a Cree woman of "ye blood Royal" and returned to England in 1737 with a half-Cree daughter, Mary, who received most of his estate in trust when he died later that year.[895] Rowland Waggoner's will instructed his executor, James Duffield, to take Waggoner's son (perhaps future Company servant Joseph Waggoner) back to England.[896] When Robert Pilgrim retired from his command at Moose in 1750, he brought his son to England, along with a Cree woman named Ruehegan (Thu a higon) who returned to Hudson Bay (probably the Churchill River area) after Pilgrim's death.[897] Richard Norton and his son, Moses, both kept Native companions while in charge of Fort Prince of Wales (although Richard appears to have formed attachments in his youth); James Isham, Joseph

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[893]HBC (London) to Henry Sergeant (Albany), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-87*, 186; HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 3 June 1687, *L.O. 1680-87*, 235; Brown, 10-11.

[894]It is not always clear whether relationships were casual or long-term. In 1686, for instance, the French who captured Moose found a Cree woman in the apartment of tailor Anthony Dowridge (who was in charge during John Bridgar's absence) and another in the apartment of carpenter John Fortnam, but there is no way of knowing the status or nature of these relationships: see Henry Sergeant's description of the French attacks, given before the Committee 4 November 1687, *L.O. 1680-87*, 313.

[895]*Letters*, 33n, 233n; Brown, 53; Van Kirk, 29.

[896]In return for this service, Duffield was to receive all of Waggoner's "other goods and effects," which Gerhard Ens suggested were related to private trade. Captain William Coats appears to have had a dispute with Duffield over Waggoner's will and claimed that he (Coats) had been cheated of some property. See Moose Fort journal, 1742/43, B. 135/a/12, fo. 11; Ens, "Political Economy," 395n. Waggoner's will is in PRO, Order Group Probate II, Piece no. 706, fo. 334.

[897]Although Pilgrim's attachment to Ruehegan dated from sometime before 1748 until his death in 1750, it was not exclusive: in 1747, he was apparently keeping two Native women and their children in his apartments at Fort Prince of Wales. Brown, 53-54; Van Kirk, 48-49.

Isbister, Humphrey Marten, and Ferdinand Jacobs also had Native companions while serving as chief factors,[898] as did inland officers of the late eighteenth century like William Tomison, Robert Longmoor, Malchom Ross, and William Walker.[899] As well, Isham, Isbister, Pilgrim, and possibly Moses Norton were polygamous, keeping more than one Native wife – a practice outside the privileges of a British householder, but quite acceptable within Native concepts of marriage.[900]

The Committee deplored such breaches of decorum by men in positions of responsibility, but took few steps to actively restrain them. James Isham returned to his command at York in 1750 on the understanding "that you do not harbour or Entertain any Indian Woman or Women in our Factory or permit others under you so to do," but his successor Ferdinand Jacobs later described York under Isham as worse than "the worst Brothel House in London."[901] Richard Norton clashed with the Committee over his choice of companionship, and the Committee eventually backed down: in 1739, they admitted to him that, "As to your own Conscience in Relation to the Indian Woman and Family, we agree with you that we have no power over that but Certainly the Company ought not to be put to any Charge, or their affairs be Damaged thereby."[902]

Humphrey Marten successfully forestalled the Committee's criticism of his Native

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[898]Brown, 54-56.

[899]Van Kirk, 64.

[900]Van Kirk, 37-38.

[901]*Isham's Observations*, 322; Brown, 55.

[902]*Letters*, 292n.

attachments – his wife was Pawpitch, daughter of the "Captain of the Goose Hunters"[903] – by calling upon the same Christian concepts which they expected him to demonstrate in his management of their business affairs. In 1770 – in the same letter in which he admitted to private trade – Marten made a personal request of the Committee.

> And now Gentlemen I hope to have your Pardon for what I am going to say, You have taken the Wisest and most generous methods to have a set of Honest Men in your employe, but I cannot be good by halves, Your regulations have easied my Conscience greatly, but yet there is a Load hangs on it that it is in Your Honors Power to remove, We are told by God and Nature that it is Our Duty to take care of Our Offspring, and that we shall be severely punished if we do not. If so how can I forbear to Petition Your Honors once more that my Son, John America Marten may be permitted his passage to England, where he may have a Christian and European education and become an usefull member of Society, I will gladly pay for his Passage, and make a Deposite of 50 Pounds as a Security to the Honble Company against any Expence...the Time may not be very farr off when Americans Born with English education may prove very usefull to the Company.[904]

Marten used his duty to God to justify challenging the Company's regulations forbidding servants from bringing their country-born children home.

Jacobs' complaints about Isham notwithstanding, lower-ranking men were not allowed the same conjugal privileges which their superiors allowed themselves. Andrew Graham explained in his *Observations* that "the Factors keeps a bedfellow within the Fort at all times," but junior officers were only allowed to entertain their companions in their apartments "at proper times" (and never overnight) and common men could only fraternize outside the factory walls.[905] Isham's men were allowed to keep women in their

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[903]For Marten's touching account of her death, see Albany post journal, 24 January 1771, B. 3/a/63, fo. 18d.

[904]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 2 September 1770, A. 11/3, fo. 145.

[905]*Graham's Observations*, 248; Foster, "Indian-Trader," 579.

apartments, but they were the exception:[906] more commonly, men had to socialize during hunting trips or go "over the Works in the Night."[907] Thus, servants who formed long-term attachments in the country were pushed towards the edge of the household-factory. As the Committee forbade men from settling in the country, these servants could not leave the old household and form a new one of their own in Hudson Bay as they could in Britain. They could only form what John Foster and Gerhard Ens called a 'sub-household,' which was both unstable in itself (as the man was unable to fully adopt the patriarchal role) and an unstable element within the principal household-factory. A man who wished to maintain a serious attachment with a Homeguard Cree woman thus tended to create tension within the household-factory.[908]

One of the clearest examples of such tensions involved Augustine Frost at Moose in the 1730s and early 1740s. In 1742, Chief Factor James Duffield stated that Frost had several wives and numerous family among the Moose River Homeguard Cree, and that Frost was considered "so much an Indian himself that he has no concern for either his

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[906]However, Van Kirk, 41, believed that Isham's example was more commonly followed than Graham's comments suggested; also see Pannekoek, 6, 9.

[907]George Rushworth (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 8 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 174; also see Van Kirk, 260n58. Pannekoek, 5, suggested that the few men who found life "even tolerable" in Hudson Bay were those ("more adaptable" than their fellows) who "lived a careful compromise between the heavily regulated life of the Company fort and the freedom offered by the camps of the 'Home Guard' Indians."

[908]See Foster, "Indian-Trader," 579; Ens, "Political Economy," 397. Assuming that country marriages were more common among servants than the available evidence clearly indicates, Pannekoek, 9, argued that "the society at Moose, by the 1730s, had evolved its own unhappy structure....in which one's position in the Company's hierarchy was only useful if accepted by the old Indian hands whose families controlled the post's trade."

native country or the Company's interest."[909] This was perhaps an exaggeration, and probably more representative of Duffield's opinion than of the Lowland Cree's. However, Frost had served at Moose since 1730 and had been a member of Council there since 1736: thus, although classified only as a bricklayer, he had a clear social standing within the factory which could have made him a desirable marriage partner. He was certainly a son-in-law of both Old Muccatoon (father of Rabbit Skin Guard) and Old Nimitihige, and his brothers-in-law included Pasqueyo and Messhaeopway.[910] Frequent hunting trips away from the factory allowed Frost to maintain a presence in his Native family.

Duffield also criticized Frost for being the vital link in the local network of private trade, connecting supply ship Captain William Coats and the crew of Moose's sloop (who had all been recruited by Coats) with the Moose River Homeguard Cree.[911] Frost's connections with the Homeguard were based on marital ties, and so his involvement in private trade was an expression of his conflicting loyalties: he was bound by contract to

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[909]Moose Fort journal, 12 February 1742, B. 135/a/11, fos. 35d-36, quoted in Ens, "Political Economy," 400. Pannekoek, 5, agreed with Duffield that men like Frost considered the Company only as "a supplier of the goods that remained essential to their survival."

[910]Ens, "Political Economy," 385. In contrast to Frost's long service on land (he had entered the service in 1719), Duffield had served as steward on various HBC ships since 1731: the command of Moose was his first posting on land. Pannekoek, 6, emphasized Frost's power and entrepreneurship, describing him as "knowledgeable in all the Indian ways and connected to a number of Indian women who ran his traplines."

[911]Gerhard Ens ("Political Economy," 392) characterized Duffield's Moose Fort journals as "an almost daily record of his attempt to reform the illegal trade, the insubordination of his men, and the corrupting influence of the ships' captains. Duffield's distrust of the post's servants, his harsh regime, and his constant complaints of conspiracy might at first glance seem symptoms of paranoia, but his position as governor of a factory at war with illegal traders and smugglers – a war he eventually loses – invests his actions with a rationality and sanity not apparent at first view." Unfortunately, Duffield's short tenure at Moose (1741-44) has never been placed within the larger context of the management of Moose after the Boxing Day Fire, and the efforts of Duffield's predecessor (Richard Staunton) and of his successor (George Howy) remain largely neglected.

protect the interests of his Company household, but socially obligated by marriage to advance the interests of his Native household. His attempts to act as a father and a husband strained the stability of the household-factory.[912] However, his 'sub-household' was itself unstable because Frost's ability to function as patron and patriarch in a British sense was limited by his reliance on Coats (in providing the link with Britain necessary for private trade) and by Duffield's ability to send him home; he could not act as a Lowland Cree 'patriarch' because his fathers-in-law were still alive and active.[913]

Homeguard Cree – especially those of mixed descent – also came to see themselves as components of the household-factory.[914] Although their understanding of the household and of the role of the 'patriarch' was different from the English understanding, they clearly felt an attachment to the English establishments. One former servant told a Parliamentary Select Committee in 1749 that "the Indians near the Factories Consider their Factories as their Home. The Company relieves their distresses, keep their Families for several Months together."[915] The Homeguard played instrumental roles as hunters, fishermen, guides, and messengers for the household-factory, and in return Company officers were generally willing to act in a paternal role towards the Cree: in the autumn of 1769, for instance, a Cree man left his "exceeding Ill" wife and three children at Albany for the winter, and by the spring they were "hearty and well" thanks to the care

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[912]Ens, "Political Economy," 397.

[913]This inhibited the development of a *metis* identity among these communities during this period. See Ens, "Political Economy," 410.

[914]Foster, "Bay Tradition," 579; Ens, "Political Economy," 397.

[915]Quoted in Van Kirk, 17. Also see Lytwyn, 15-17.

of surgeon E.B. Kitchen and "the nourishment afforded them from Your Honors Fort."[916] This may partly explain why factors frequently identified Natives by possessive phrases (like 'our Indians' or 'Albany Indians'): such phrases expressed expectations of where certain families and bands were to trade and hunt by identifying to which household-factory they were connected.

The Committee demanded celibacy, but both the Homeguard Cree and upland traders would have found such an attitude anti-social: Natives consistently encouraged the formation of marriage alliances between their women and HBC men, in order to create reciprocal social connections between the two groups.[917] When Thomas McCliesh Jr took command at York in 1722, he "had sufficient trouble with some of our home Indians by reason I turned them all out of the factory."[918] Augustine Frost warned James Duffield that denying the Homeguard regular access to the factory would antagonize them, but Duffield believed the warning to be a ruse to reunite Frost with his Native kin and make Moose "an Indian Factory, with his own wives & Numerous family both in & about it as was ye Custom before."[919] The killings at Henley House in 1754/55 illustrated the consequences of violating Native expectations of social behaviour. James Isham was told about a similar incident at the French post of Fort Philepeaux (Severn River) in the early eighteenth century. The French had forced some Cree women into the post against their will, but the women were liberated by their husbands one night after the women had

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[916]B. 3/a/63, fo. 14, quoted in Van Kirk, 17.

[917]Van Kirk, 28-29.

[918]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1724, *Letters*, 98.

[919]Van Kirk, 43; B. 135/a/11, fos. 46-47, 64-66.

urinated on the French gunpowder: according to Isham's account, eight Frenchmen were killed.[920]

Restrictions on women could also arouse the resentment of the men who were being deprived of their companions. At York in 1761, Jacobs expelled servants' wives from the factory and several men responded by feigning illness and refusing to work.[921] In 1753, armourer Joseph Statton (who had spent over £30 on his Cree wife) threatened to run away from Albany when Joseph Isbister barred his "Mistress" from the factory.[922] In Isbister's case, such actions were particularly resented because he and George Spence (his Second and surgeon, who also commanded Albany in 1747-53) kept their own wives in the factory.[923] More importantly, Statton (like many other servants) found himself in an impossible situation. Company regulations prevented him from fully expressing his sentimental and familial attachment: he could neither bring his "sweetheart" to Britain nor could he live independently with her in Hudson Bay (although he apparently contemplated the attempt), and his efforts to protect his privilege of cohabitation only got

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[920]*Isham's Observations*, 95.

[921]Van Kirk, 42; B. 239/a/50, fos. 5-5d.

[922]Albany journal, 7 January 1754, B. 3/a/46, fo. 17; Van Kirk, 42. Statton's wages in 1753/4 were £25. He went home in 1754 at the expiration of his contract: A. 16/3, fo. 71; Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 19 September 1754, A. 11/2, fo. 160d. The dispute between Isbister and Statton was also work-related. On 10 September 1753, Statton stopped work at 4 p.m. because his wife "wanted his Company": seeing Statton cross the courtyard in his greatcoat, Isbister angrily inquired "where he was going & why he had left work before other men or before he was Cal'd off from work....[Statton] replied & said if they have a mind to be made Neagors of, that was no reason he should be so, & plainly told me that he would work no longer nor would he be confined to hours." Isbister took Statton by the collar into his shop (to avoid a public confrontation) and pointed out "ye Ill Consequence of Such his ill behaviour & Example, he rud[e]ly Ansured & said he did not Care." Albany journal, 10 September 1753, B. 3/a/46, fos. 4d-5.

[923]See, for example, George Rushworth (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 8 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 173d; Albany journal, 7 January 1754, B. 3/a/46, fo. 17.

him sent home (and thus separated forever from his "sweetheart").

Conclusion

As the basic unit of social and political life in early modern Britain, the household was a fundamental influence on how men viewed their workplaces. The constraints of geography, historical precedent, and Company regulations created HBC establishments in the image of the household-family. The 'patriarch' of the household-factory (like the household-family) may or may not have been married, but the dependent members of the household were expected to be celibate. Those with wives in Britain could look forward to returning to their positions as householders in their own right, although the long separation may have strained those relationships beyond repair. Servants who became husbands and fathers in Hudson Bay, however, had no option of becoming independent householders: they had to either restrict their relationships with Native women to casual or intermittent contact, or they had to strain the relationships with their employers by trying to act as dependents in one household and as husband-fathers in another.

Despite these strains, the household-factory was the fundamental social unit on the shores of Hudson Bay. Although membership changed, the institution maintained continuity over time. Furthermore, each household-factory was internally held together, and bound to other household-factories and to the London Committee by ties of patronage, brokerage, and friendship, that mediated the network of horizontal and vertical relationships. These ties helped inject an element of sentimentality to soften the instrumental nature of labour relationships.

CHAPTER 9
MASTER-SERVANT RELATIONSHIPS

Much of the rhetoric employed by the Bayside factors and by the Committee reflected contemporary understandings of the proper relationship between master and servant. Advice manuals – abundant and inexpensive – emphasized the proper behaviours and attitudes to adopt towards one's superiors and inferiors. Servants and apprentices were expected to have regard for their master's profit and reputation,[924] as well as for their own future prospects, while masters were expected to behave with paternal firmness and condescension.[925]

Master-Servant Rhetoric in the HBC

Both inward and outward correspondence was consistently couched in the terms of the master-servant relationship. James Knight – himself a shareholder and former Committee member as well as a long-time servant – signed his 1714 letter to the Committee, "I rest your honours' most faithful and obedient servant to command."[926] Thomas McCliesh Jr concluded a 1723 letter, "wishing your honours health and prosperity both at home and abroad is the earnest desire of your honours' most humble

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[924]Tadmor, 57.

[925]'Condescension' is used here in its older sense of graciousness and affability to one's inferiors.

[926]James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 19 September 1714, *Letters*, 37. Law, *English in West Africa*, xiv, observed the presence of such rhetorical endings in RAC correspondence, but called them "purely formulaic" and omitted them in his edition of late-seventeenth-century correspondence between English factories in Africa.

and obedient servant."[927] James Isham concluded a 1739 letter by promising to "use my uttermost endeavours in the performance of all such orders I have received from your honours to the uttermost of my power which is the eternal desire of, Honourable Sirs, your honours' most dutiful and obedient humble servant to command."[928] Even the Canadian Jean Baptiste de Larlee described himself in 1761 as "Vortes [*sic*] humble et votres avbeisat [obeissant] Serviteur Larlée."[929]

Deference was the predominant tone. Knight expressed the hope that his handling of the transfer of power at York in 1714 was satisfactory: "Sir, if I have done anything amiss as may not be taken well by you and the rest of the Committee, pray pardon me....I beg the favour of a little correction rather than to be far condemned."[930] Although complaining about the poor physical condition of York Fort in 1723, Thomas McCliesh Jr assured the Committee, "I am mighty well satisfied in all respects, this being a place of greater profit to your honours."[931] When Richard Staunton was trying to reform Moose in

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[927]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 96.

[928]James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 29 August 1739, *Letters*, 310.

[929]Jean Baptiste de Larlee (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 21 August 1761, A. 11/3, fo. 47.

[930]James Knight (York) to Sir Bibye Lake (London), private, 19 September 1714, *Letters*, 37. John Potts may have been angry at having to defend himself and his men at Richmond against the Committee's charges of "inactivity," but his tone was apologetic: "We are heartily Sorry for the Expence Your Honours has been att in building and Supplying this Fort, and that we can't make a Sutable Return or give Your Honours Satisfaction....As to Furrs we do humbly and with Sincere and Sorry Hearts declare, that we Realy think (haveing now had Experience) that it Never will turn Out to Your Honours Satisfaction." John Potts & Council (Richmond) to HBC (London), A. 11/57, fos, 14, 15.

Samuel Richardson recommended an apprentice who "falls into some *casual Lapse*" to "disburthen his Mind of it, and confess it frankly, and resolve to avoid those Occasions for the future that shall lead him into the like Snares....For he that knows his Duty, and will not do it, shews nothing less than an abandon'd Mind:" Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, 37-38. He also strongly urged (49) "that you shew no Impatience of being told of your Faults; but that you think every one your Friend who informs you of any thing for your Good."

[931]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 94.

the late 1730s, he hoped that the Committee "will cast a favourable construction upon my endeavours, and if I have erred from your honours' expectation I faithfully promise an amendment when in my power."[932] McCliesh responded to the Committee's disapproval of a suggestion he made in 1723 by assuring them that "what I have done was out of a real concern I had for a public interest without the least regard to a private one."[933]

Even complaints could be expressed in deferential terms. In 1728, McCliesh concluded a long paragraph about the poor quality of recent trade goods and supplies, "I hope what I have above written will give offence to none of your honours, having no other meaning nor ends than a hearty goodwill towards your honours' interest, and be

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[932]Richard Staunton & George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 269. The following year, however, Staunton was feeling his age a bit more (he had entered the service in 1694, so he was probably at least in his late 60s in 1739): "I humbly beg pardon if I have acted or said anything contrary to your honours' interest and intentions that I have used my utmost endeavours and skill, and if it does not please your honours I shall be glad that your honours can have one to manage your affairs with more prudence and advantage for I am advanced in years." Richard Staunton & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 17 August 1739, *Letters*, 301, 305-306.

[933]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1724, *Letters*, 97. McCliesh had suggested that Fort Prince of Wales' returns be sent to York for loading onto the Company's supply ship rather than sending a ship to Churchill River. More generally, he had expressed his opinion that Churchill's trade would never justify its expense, "by reason most of the fur trade is only a robbing of this place;" he also doubted the presence of copper north of the Churchill River and cast aspersions on the men prosecuting the white whale fishery near the river's mouth: Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 94. The Committee's 1724 censure may have been in McCliesh's mind in 1727 when he refused to speculate on why York's trade was not answering expectations: Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1727, *Letters*, 127. In 1733, William Bevan made a similar suggestion – that it would be safer for Company ships to anchor at Moose and let two sloops carry cargo to Albany – but couched it in very deferential terms: "I must beg leave to acquaint your honours that we in Council have judged proper to inform you..." William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 15 August 1733, *Letters*, 183.

McCliesh knew that the Committee would use the level of trade at York as an indicator of his performance. When at Albany after 1715, McCliesh had worried about the extent to which York (back in English hands) would draw trade away from Albany: A.M. Johnson, "McCliesh, Thomas," *DCB* III, 414. McCliesh's protege, Richard Norton, took a different view: after the Committee suggested that Fort Prince of Wales' large trade in 1736/37 was due to a lack of trade goods at York, Norton replied that "it all goes to one home [*i.e.* the Company in London]." Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 17 August 1738, *Letters*, 251.

assured of my best endeavours towards the same."[934] James Isham's 1739 letter from York was a litany of complaints about, and recommendations for, goods and supplies of all sorts. He explained that he and his council "thought [it] our duty" to mention these things, "and am heartily sorry to trouble your honours with such a long petition. But I do humbly assure your honours I have gave your honours a true and exact account of every particular aforementioned to the best of my knowledge, hoping your honours' pardon for the same if anyways taken amiss."[935]

Men of all ranks were generally careful not to criticise the Committee directly, blaming other parties instead. In 1733, for instance, William Bevan complained about the quality of meat sent out that year but claimed to be certain "that our being served in so shameful a manner by your butcher has escaped your observation hitherto."[936] Richard Norton declared that "I shall make it my whole care and study to find by what means I may promote your honours' interest," and promised to "entertain none but such as are diligent in your honours' business."[937]

Factors and other servants employed deference and accompanying expressions of

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[934]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 8 August 1728, *Letters*, 137.

[935]Among many other things, Isham mentioned that the men were dissatisfied with the quality of sugar ("they thinking it very hard to pay twelvepence a pound for it"), that the coal sent out was so full of stones and dirt that it was dangerous to use in the forge, and that the fort's surgical instruments were dangerously out of repair. James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 20 July 1739, *Letters*, 281-284.

[936]William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 15 August 1733, *Letters*, 182.

[937]Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 14 August 1726, *Letters*, 117. Anthony Beale, who succeeded Norton at Churchill in 1727, expressed himself in similar terms in 1729: "Your honours will find this year by the trade that whilst I serve you it is my whole study and endeavours to increase the trade for your honours' interest and always shall during the continuance of my staying here." Anthony Beale (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 26 July 1729, *Letters*, 139.

loyalty to gain the Committee's friendship.[938] That friendship would be valuable in protecting a servant from attacks on his reputation or position from rivals, and could result in advancement within the Company. These expectations were consistently encouraged by the Committee, who signed their letters "Your loving Friends" and promised gratitude and favours to those who served 'your honours' interest' well.

Relationships within early modern households, even relationships of submission and duty, were commonly expressed in terms of 'love,' and that was also illustrated in HBC correspondence. In 1682, the Committee offered John Nixon much advice on "meanes to draw our Servants to Love & obey you."[939] In 1761, Jean Baptiste de Larlee declared that he loved Robert Temple (Chief Factor at Albany) and the men at Severn River sent "Love to [their] Factory Mates" at York.[940] Humphrey Marten in 1763 spoke of gaining "the Love of the Natives,"[941] and in 1779 told his old friend Thomas Hutchins at Albany, "I love and esteem the Men [of York], and in return they love and revere me."[942] The Committee consistently signed their correspondence to their servants "Your

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[938]See Davidoff, "family," 72-73.

[939]HBC (London) to John Nixon (Charlton Island), 15 May 1682, *L.O. 1680-87*, 39.

[940]Jean Baptiste de Larlee (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1761, A. 11/3, fo. 51d; Humphrey Marten (Severn) to James Isham (York), 1 January 1761, B. 239/b/22, fo. 3d.

[941]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), 24 August 1763, A. 11/3, fo. 57.

[942]Marten had been badly scalded the previous autumn while helping two of his men carry a tub of boiling wort in York's brewery and he suffered from this (as well as an earlier injury to his left kidney) for several months afterward. The care and concern of his men prompted Marten to wax affectionate in his letter to Hutchins: "to see the poor Fellows when I am in great pain, with deep sorrow in their faces, and to be inform[ed] of the heart felt prayers offer'd up for my recovery melts me in the tenderest manner, and makes me desire not to be parted from them." Humphrey Marten (York) to Thomas Hutchins (Albany), 4 February 1779, B. 239/b/39, fo. 9d; quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xx.

Loveing Friends."[943]

Naomi Tadmor suggests that such usages of 'love' are probably best understood as formal or even ritualized expressions of sentiment.[944] She contrasts 'love' with 'affection,' characterizing the latter as the more spontaneous and emotive relationship.[945] However, in HBC correspondence 'affection' appears to have been used in much the same way as 'love.' In 1682, the Committee informed Nixon that Captain William Bond's "last ill carriage hath begott So great a Reputation amongst us, that there is nothing but your recomendation can resettle him firme in our affections."[946] In 1686, they appointed John Bridgar Governor at Albany, "knowing well your Direction and moderation & how well you are affectioned to our service and Interest."[947] In the same year, they assured Pierre Esprit Radisson "that your particuler Interest is fixed & safe here at home. And...you must doe your Faith great violence if you beleeve that there is any

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[943]See, for example, Instructions to Captain John Ford, 6 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-96*, 66; HBC (London) to "the Seamen at Gravesend", 15 June 1689, *L.O. 1688-96*, 77; HBC (London) to George Geyer (Port Nelson), private, 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-96*, 127; HBC (London) to James Isham (London), 21 May 1750, A. 6/7, fo. 163d; HBC (London) to John Potts (Richmond), 22 May 1754, A. 5/1, fo. 2; HBC (London) to Henry Pollexfen (Richmond), 27 May 1755, A. 5/1, fo. 8; HBC (London) to Samuel Skrimshire (Flamborough), A. 5/1, fo. 10; HBC (London) to William Grover (Fort Prince of Wales), 23 May 1758, A. 5/1, fo. 25.

[944]Tadmor, 59-60. This sentiment was an important part of Peter Laslett's conception of the difference between industrial and pre-industrial society, particularly as regards the role of 'family' in social cohesion. He considered the roles allotted to family members to be "emotionally, all highly symbolic and highly satisfying," and referred to "the extraordinarily cohesive influence which familial relationships carry with them, that power of reconciling the frustrated and the discontented by emotional means." In pre-industrial society, "everyone belonged in a group, a family group. Everyone had his or her circle of affection: every relationship could be seen as a love relationship." Laslett, 5; also see Hecht, 74. On the other hand, Thompson, "Patricians and Plebs," 64, downplayed the sentimental aspects of early modern relationships, arguing that such warmth concealed "a studied technique of rule" expressed through theatre and gesture as much as through effective responsibility.

[945]Tadmor, 59-60.

[946]HBC (London) to John Nixon (Charlton Island), 29 May 1682, *L.O. 1680-87*, 53-54.

[947]HBC (London) to John Bridgar (Moose), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-87*, 178.

one [on the Committee] but who is intirely your friend & will in all occations be ready upon your good Success in our affaires to embrace you with all respect, affection & gratitude."[948] Reporting on the French siege of Albany in 1686, several men claimed that they had "urged the Governor that Wee might fire upon them to prevent their proceedeing further against us, but hee utterly denyed us yett neverthelesse soe zealously affected wee were to your honors interest that some of us fired 3 Gun's against the French."[949] In 1756, the Albany Council described their Chief, Joseph Isbister, as "a man so well affected to your Honrs Interests that no fatigue nor hazard wou'd deter him from Serving you to the Utmost peril."[950]

Servants' deference did not necessarily indicate that they subsumed their own interests in the Company's interests: Robert W. Malcolmson called deference "a very conditional and sometimes calculating disposition."[951] Servants understood that they could serve their own interests by serving the Company's interests. Conversely, what threatened the Company's interests also threatened their own. In 1717 James Knight advised William Stuart (newly-appointed Second to Kelsey at York) "to behave Your Self as You ought to doe, to be Dilligent & Carefull in Whatsoever You are Intrusted with or

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[948]HBC (London) to Pierre Esprit Radisson (Port Nelson), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-87*, 199-200.

[949]Edward Coles, Hugh Mitchell, John Mechin, John Stephens, William Folder, & William Arrington (London) to HBC (London), n.d. [1688], *L.O. 1680-87*, 331-332.

[950]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1756, A. 11/3, fo. 7.

[951]Malcolmson, *Life and Labour*, 107; also see Griffiths, *Youth and Authority*, 392; Thompson, "The Patricians and the Plebs," 33. On the other hand, Hecht, 206, argued, "Consciously and unconsciously the servant tended to identify with his master;" also see Abbott, 113. Laslett, 213-214, referred to "that unquestioning subordination which marked relationships then," but added that servants and other subordinates had motives "to dissemble, to conceal resentment, to exaggerate or to feign affection and respect."

Employd in." Knight concluded his instructions by reminding Stuart of the several obligations which he had to consider: "So hopeing you will be Mindfull of the Trust & Confidence as is Reposed in You, for Your own Creditt, the Compys profitt, & to my Satisfaction – This Dureing Pleasure – I Rest Yo[u]r Loveing Friend & Govern[o]r to Serve, James Knight."[952] Stuart was expected to advance his own interests (his own "Creditt" or reputation) and those of his master (the Company), while satisfying his patron (Knight). Knight also clarified his relationship to Stuart in both sentimental and instrumental terms, and portrayed his role as Governor in terms of sentimentality ('love') and reciprocity (the ambiguous phrase "Governor to Serve").[953] At the same time, Stuart was reminded that his worldly success depended on the "Pleasure" of his patron(s), although Knight was ambiguous about whether Stuart's principal patron was his immediate master (Knight as Governor-in-Chief) or his corporate master (the Company).

In 1719, Thomas McCliesh Jr wrote from Albany to assure the Committee that "I can take a safe Oath that I never sold to the Value of apenny [*sic*] either in Stores, Tradeing goods, or Provissions; Haveing more value for my Reason then to forfeit it to the prejudice of your Honrs: my Wife and Children."[954] At York in 1723, he promised "my best endeavours in promoting of your interest to the best of my knowledge," and in

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[952]James Knight (Churchill) to William Stuart (York), 23 August 1717, Kenney, 172.

[953]Knight concluded a letter to Kelsey (written the same day as the one to Stuart), "So Wishing You health & Prosperity, with my kind Love to You, I Rest Yo[u]r Loveing Friend & Govern[o]r to Serve, James Knight." James Knight (Churchill) to Henry Kelsey (York), 23 August 1717, Kenney, 175.

[954]Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 39d. A few years earlier, the aging James Knight, upset at what he perceived as suspicion and interference from the Committee, declared, "I thank God he has given me more sense and I know my duty too well to do anything that may be prejudicial to the Company, I would sooner die first." James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 17 September 1716, *Letters*, 61.

1732 declared, "I hope without offence no man as ever served your honours has your interest more at heart."[955] In 1722, Joseph Myatt praised the "Generosity" of the Committee in raising his salary and appointing him Chief of Albany and its dependencies, "for all which Manifold favours I Return your Honrs my hearty & Unfeigned thanks," and promised to "promote your Interest to the Utmost of my Power & Ability, in every thing that is just and honest." At the same time, he defended himself against complaints which he expected homeward bound armourer John Upton to make, "[a]ssuring you that I ever had a greater Value for my Reputation then to forfeit it to the Disprejudice of your Honours."[956] Myatt's successor, Richard Staunton, found Albany and its trade in good condition in 1723, "at wch I am glad, hopeing it will prove very Sattisfactory to your Honrs Proffit and his [Myatt's] credit & Interest."[957]

Joseph Isbister and his Council wrote from Albany in 1741, "We humbly assure Yr Honrs we are very sensible of ye great Trust and Confidence Yr Honrs have reposed in us, and we shall make use of all Opportunities, to give Yr Honrs proof of our Diligence &

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[955]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 23 August 1723, *Letters*, 92; Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 17 August 1732, *Letters*, 169.

[956]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1722, A. 11/2, fos. 42, 43. Humphrey Marten's gratitude for being confirmed as Chief of Albany in 1766 was expressed in more sensational terms: "Mr Marten Humbly begs leave to return Your Honours the Sincere thanks of a Heart glowing with the warmest Gratitude for the Honour You have confer'd on him, by Your Appointing him Your Chief at Albany Fort, and Mr Marten doth Promise, He will on all Occasions at the Utmost hazard and Perrill of his Life, defend Your rights, and will use every means in his Power to advance Your Trade." Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1766, A. 11/3, fo. 92d.

[957]Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 46. Staunton later connected the Company's "interest" with a factor's "credit" in discussing his own management. He denied the Committee's charge that he was neglecting gardening at Moose, explaining that all their gardens were within the palisades because late May was both the time for sowing and the time for trading: "for your honours' servants to be out and at work in the plantation at such times as that will neither be for your honours' interest nor my credit," as he expected that his men would take the opportunity to trade privately with the Natives. Richard Staunton & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 17 August 1739, *Letters*, 305.

Care, and we shall always exert our utmost Endeavours to promote ye true Interest of ye Compy."[958] Andrew Graham, having taken charge of York after the death of Chief Factor James Isham in 1761, promised to faithfully discharge "this valuable trust that is now unhappily fallen upon me for the company's Interest, & mine own honour." Ferdinand Jacobs at Fort Prince of Wales (now the senior officer in Hudson Bay) replied, "The Trust that has fallen upon you is valuable Indeed, & ought to be Discharged with the greatest prudence, care, and frugality."[959]

In 1767, Humphrey Marten and his Council (Captain John Horner and surgeons William Richards and Eusebius Kitchen) rather ostentatiously outlined their understanding of their duties:

> Lastly We Promise a dutifull observance and Performance of all the Orders and Instructions now Given us, as well as in Your Honors former General Letters, we will endeavour to Extend the Company's Trade by all Lawfull means, all Necessary assistance shall be given to Henley House, we will avoid making it a place of trade, We will Continue to treat the Natives with Civility and deal Justly with them, we will Harbour them as little as possible in the Factory, Virtue, Diligence & Sobriety is, and shall be Encouraged in Your Servants, and the Contrary is Discountenanced to the Utmost of our power, and in all things we will Endeavour to behave, so to merit Your Esteem, To Conclude We Sincerely wish Your Honours Health and Happiness, and that Success may attend You both at Home and Abroad, is the Hearty Prayers of / Honrble Gentlemen Your most Obliged and Obedient Servants.[960]

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[958]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 6 September 1741, A. 11/2, fo. 108.

[959]Andrew Graham (York) to Ferdinand Jacobs (Fort Prince of Wales), 15 April 1761, B. 239/b/21, fo. 7; Ferdinand Jacobs (Fort Prince of Wales) to Andrew Graham (York), 25 April 1761, B. 239/b/21, fo. 8d.

[960]Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 September 1767, A. 11/3, fo. 107d. Such rhetorical flourishes were part of Marten's prose style, often expressed through the voice of his Council. For instance, also see Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 August 1768, A. 11/3, fo. 118d.

Thomas White employed a more personal, but no less showy, rhetoric in 1736. The Committee had offered him a two-year contract in charge of York at £50, with a retroactive wage increase (from £30 to £50 for the last two years) and a 50 guinea (£52.10.0) gratuity at the end of the new contract.

> Your honours' proposals for my continuance in the management of your honours' affairs at York Fort seems to have so much respect to my weak endeavours that, had your honours made no advances on account of wages, I must and should have thought myself a very ungrateful wretch to [have] left your affairs at such an unfortunate crisis as this, notwithstanding my very earnest inclinations to have seen my native country; and as your honours has been pleased to lay a conditional obligation on me for a term of two years, which notwithstanding the sweetness of a gratuity seems to me after so long a vacation from even the innocent and necessary pleasures of life, an age, I cannot determine with myself really what to say, but wholly leave it to your honours' pleasure whether to suffer me to come home the next year or stay your conditional time, my life and service being wholly devoted to your honours' interest to the uttermost of my capacity.[961]

White came home in 1737.

Joseph Isbister informed the Committee in 1755 that he intended to come home unless Henley House was re-established: "I shall be Extremely Concerned to leave Your affairs in a bad way, but be pleased to permit me to say, I have this for my Comfort – that I have Keept up to the rules of Justice and integrity, fidelity without breach of Trust."[962] In 1768, Humphrey Marten spoke highly of his "Old Factory Mate," Thomas Hopkins,

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[961]Thomas White (York) to HBC (London), 27 August 1736, *Letters*, 221. The "unfortunate crisis" to which White referred was probably the loss of the *Hudson's Bay* frigate and all her cargo in the ice of Hudson Strait on her way to York (p. 220).

[962]Joseph Isbister (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 14 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 176. In the official letter to London that year, Isbister and his council declared, "We are determined to defend your Factory rights and property to the utmost of our power and make your Orders Sobriety and Virtue the rule of our Conduct:" Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 13 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 185. The following year, the Albany Council defended Isbister against the Committee's suggestion that he was at least partly to blame for the violence at Henley House: "we believe [him] to be a man so well affected to your Honrs Interests that no fatigue nor hazard wou'd deter him from Serving you to the Utmost peril." Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1756, A. 11/3, fo. 7.

"knowing him to be a Worthy Man, and doubt not of his performing the dutys of his Station, with success to Your Honours; and consequently Honour to himself."[963] Company servants recognized what contemporary advice manuals and conduct books preached, that good conduct in service was often linked to future prosperity: men "subsist by Credit and good Fame, and nothing gives it, or secures it, like the being Diligent and Careful, Industrious and Laborious in their Service."[964]

The Committee emphasized gratitude as an important part of their relationship with their servants. In 1690, the Committee referred to Captain John Ford (who was captured by the French in 1689 and defected to their service) and servants-turned-interlopers John Abraham and Captain John Outlaw as "ungratefull perfidious men, who have eate of our Bread & turne Renegadoes, towards us afterwards."[965] In turn, HBC servants incorporated the expected gratitude into their rhetoric. For example, William Bevan at Moose wrote in 1734, "I humbly beg leave to return your honours my most hearty thanks for all your favours which so fully calls for my utmost care and attention for

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[963]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 27 August 1768, A. 11/3, fo. 115. Hopkins took command at Albany while Marten was on leave in 1768/69. He assured the Committee that he would be willing to stay another year if Marten did not recover his health or otherwise proved unable to return to his charge, but added, "I hope Your Honours will not think that I want to Supplant Mr Marten, far from it, for I have the highest opinion of him, and know him to be Capable of managing any of Your Honours affairs in this Country – and none more so." He also asked the Committee, "I hope that you'll be so kind as not to mention to any Body that I want to stay a year longer, for in case Mrs Hopkins was to know that I wanted to stay another year it wod make her very unhappy." Thomas Hopkins (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 30 August 1768, A. 11/3, fo. 124.

[964]Fleetwood, 362-363, 376; also Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, vi, 21, 24; Tadmor, 60-62. Such advice was also found outside of conduct books. Tadmor, 62n78, quoted Sussex mercer Thomas Turner's 1789 advice to his son Philip, who was a servant at Brighton: "do be always careful to perform to the very utmost of your Power that is to be a good Servant, as it is not only a duty you owe your Employers but your own Interest will likewise result from it, for a prudent Sober, industrious Servant is a Character valuable and will always recommend itself to the esteem of worthy & sensible people."

[965]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 99-100.

your interest."[966] Gratitude was offered not just for specific favours or encouragement, but for the Committee's general treatment of the men in Hudson Bay: in the same 1734 letter, Bevan and his Council wrote, "We return your honours thanks for your care of all your servants in sending us a good supply of provisions as well as other goods."[967]

No eighteenth-century factor offered more words of gratitude than Humphrey Marten. In 1766, he offered "the Sincere thanks of a Heart glowing with the warmest Gratitude" for his confirmation as Chief Factor at Albany; and in 1768, when the Committee granted him leave to come home for a year to recover his health, the Council replied that "this fresh mark of Your Goodness to him doth in some measure distress Him as he hath it not in his power to shew his Gratitude according to the full extent of his wishes." In 1771 Marten promised that "Inclination, Duty and Gratitude, all strongly prompt me to exert my self in suppressing the Evils of Private Trade."[968]

Marten also portrayed gratitude as part of other relationships. In 1764 he wrote to London that he had told the Albany hands (whom he was trying to persuade to go to Henley) "that in case my well being had any sway with them, it would raise my Gratitude to such a pitch as would induce me rather to pinch my self rather than they should want for any thing." In 1767, he told the Committee that "Justice and Gratitude Force me most humbly to recommend...to Your Notice" surgeon Eusebius Bacchus Kitchen, who "has

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[966]William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 20 August 1734, *Letters*, 198.

[967]William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 20 August 1734, *Letters*, 196. Also see Richard Staunton & George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 265.

[968]Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1766, A. 11/3, fo. 92d. Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 August 1768, A. 11/3, fo. 118d. Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), 3 September 1771, A. 11/3, fo. 169.

Assisted me three Years in the Trading Room and has behaved himself in such a manner as to Shew that he has Your Honours Interest greatly at heart." And in 1768 he wrote, "We are fully Convinced by the tender Concern Your Honors shew for the loss of Your Servants how much You have their Preservation at Heart, such Goodness we hope will meet with a sutible return of Gratitude, by a Diligent and Faithfull Discharge of the Dutys of each of us in our Several Stations."[969]

Although neither God nor religion were strongly invoked, they were never absent from the rhetoric of HBC correspondence. In 1692, the Committee asked for God's "Blessings upon the diligent care and prudence" of James Knight and his council at Albany.[970] Thomas McCliesh Jr refuted allegations of private trade in 1719 by declaring, "As God is my Sole Judge I never Defrauded your Honrs In Skin nor Skins directly or Indirectly by Converting them to my own use, or to the use of any person or persons."[971] Thomas White concluded a letter to Joseph Isbister by "heartily wishing you health and that God may be your Guide & conduct you in all your proceedings for the benefit of the Company & your own Safety."[972] George Rushworth claimed that he told William Lamb at Henley to "do justly in his dealings, Love Mercy and call upon his god. [T]hese things Wou'd inable him to Make a good Servant to the Company and that he Might Expect the

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[969]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), 17 August 1764, A. 11/3, fos. 68-68d. Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), September 1767, A. 11/3, fo. 111d. Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 August 1768, A. 11/3, fo. 121. Marten's reference to "the loss of Your Servants" probably referred to the drowning deaths of John Stone and Daniel Bryan on 15 September 1766.

[970]HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 201.

[971]Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 39d.

[972]Thomas White (Moose) to Joseph Isbister (Albany), 18 June 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 170.

Smiles of Mr Merry [Deputy Governor in London] at all times."[973] Joseph Isbister claimed that performing divine service was "our Greatest delight; otherwise should not have put You to the Expence of those Sermons now sent out."[974]

In many cases, the injunctions of God or religion were implicit in the rhetoric of Company correspondence. Many of the adjectives consistently used to characterize 'good' servants – faithful, diligent, honest, sober – appeared in contemporary advice manuals in more overtly spiritual contexts. In *The Apprentice's Vade Mecum* (1734), Samuel Richardson urged application, industry, and diligence:

> you will reap the Benefit of [good performance as an apprentice] ...to the End of your Life, and, in all Probability, to the End of Time, and for ever: for 'tis a very great Chance, if the same Motives which influence you to do your Duty in one Part of Life, will not have due Weight with you in all the rest; since to do your Duty to Man is a fair Step in the Way of doing what is required of you by God Almighty[975]

While advising apprentices of the earthly rewards of good service and good behaviour, Richardson declared that "*Your Duty to God*" was of paramount importance.[976] Earlier in the century, William Fleetwood assured his readers, "The Service and Obedience of Servants, shall not go unrewarded in the *other* World, however it fare with them in *this*." He considered the promise of heavenly reward "sufficient encouragement" for their

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[973]George Rushworth (Albany) to HBC (London), 8 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 173d.

[974]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 13 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 178. Divine service was supposed to be a regular part of life at all HBC posts from the earliest years onward. For instance, in the instructions issued to William Lamb when he became master of Henley House in 1751, the first item directed that divine service was to be publicly performed every Sunday. "A Book of Instructions with the Standard of Trade for Henly House in the Year of our Lord 1751 William Lamb Master," A. 11/3, fo. 12.

[975]Richardson, 24.

[976]Richardson, 50.

faithfulness, diligence, and honesty.[977] To become a servant was not a sign of God's displeasure: "He only commands them, that whilst they continue so, they should behave themselves as becomes their Condition, with all Submission and Humility, with all Obedience, Diligence, and Industry, with Truth, and Justice, Faithfulness and Honesty; which will make their Condition easie to themselves, and cause them to be well serv'd by others, when-ever they emerge and get above it."[978]

The Committee's rhetoric kept before its servants the idea that they were all valuable to the Company and its activities. Factors had regular opportunities to communicate with the Committee, but any literate servant could write directly to the Committee and receive a response.[979] Theoretically, this allowed men to by-pass their superior officer as intermediary, although it was probably possible for factors to read any private correspondence included in the official packet. Unfortunately, little of this sort of correspondence has survived in the archives, and we can only guess at the contents of many of the private letters referred to in the official correspondence. In 1727, for instance, former apprentice Samuel Hopkins was promoted from steward to book-keeper, but signed a contract "for one year only for he designs to write to your honours of his

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[977]Fleetwood, 340-341. These comments were part of two sermons on St Paul's first letter to the Colossians: "Servants, obey, in all things, your Masters according to the Flesh; not with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart fearing God: And whatsoever you do, do it heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto Men: Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the Inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ." (1 Colossians 3: 22-24; see Fleetwood, 339, 365) He interpreted St Paul's words as instructions to "*obey your Masters in all things, according to your Contract and Agreement, behave your selves as diligently and faithfully, as you have promised them to do*:" Fleetwood, 347, also 349-350, 356-359.

[978]Fleetwood, 387.

[979]An illiterate servant could perhaps ask a friend in the factory or at home to write to the Committee on his behalf, or to write a letter to which he could put his mark (in lieu of a signature), but there is no evidence of such letters surviving in the Company's records in the period examined here.

further intentions;" in 1730, Churchill book-keeper Thomas Bird also wrote to the Committee about his intentions.[980] In 1735, Mitchell Logan (recently appointed steward at York) wrote to the Committee concerning his future.[981] In 1752, labourer Joseph Roach and mariner William Trinaway both went home from Albany after only two years of their five-year contracts for reasons explained in private letters to the Committee, and sailor Robert Irwin sent a similar "Petition" to come home the following year.[982] On the other hand, labourer John Hughes "wrote to his mother last year [1731] to acquaint your honours that he designed to continue longer in your service."[983]

In September 1755, Albany surgeon George Rushworth wrote privately to the Committee after the first Henley House incident as a means of advancing himself in the service ahead of his peers. In doing so, he employed many of the tropes expected from a humble and loyal servant, wrapping his words in deference and piety. He portrayed himself as deeply attached to his employers' interests, particularly in the case of Henley, and apologised for the strength of his opinions: "Please Honble Gentlemen to forgive these, as I have a feeling Compassion for Those our fellow Servants, and the Loss of

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[980]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1727, *Letters*, 128. Anthony Beale (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1730, *Letters*, 156.

[981]Logan's contract expired the following year; Thomas White called him "a very honest, sober, diligent person, and one very deserving your honours' favour." Thomas White (York) to HBC (London), 6 August 1735, *Letters*, 200. Logan was favoured with a two-year contract at £16: Thomas White (York) to HBC (London), 27 August 1736, *Letters*, 221. Labourer William Mackcullock wrote to the Committee from Fort Prince of Wales in 1737, but the Committee does not appear to have replied, so the Council took it upon themselves to re-engage him for two years at his last year's wages (£10, which was what he had asked for). Council minutes, Fort Prince of Wales, 6 August 1738, *Letters*, 253n.

[982]George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 4 August 1752, A. 11/2, fos. 150-151.

[983]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 17 August 1732, *Letters*, 169.

Your Honours Trade has given me inexpressible Concern."[984] Surgeon William Richards also tried to profit from other men's reluctance to serve at Henley, but the Committee was less receptive to his overtures. He applied to his superior, Humphrey Marten, several times in 1765 and 1766 for permission to return to England, but was refused: Marten believed Richards was anxious because he had not received a private letter from the Committee.[985]

The opportunity to correspond (or if in London, to speak) directly with the Committee was open to all servants, but that avenue seems to have been particularly valuable to ambitious younger men seeking avenues of advancement. In 1724, Thomas McCliesh Jr advised mariner John Wateridge to write directly to the Committee about his aspirations to become York's gunner.[986] In 1732, Albany accountant Richard White – who felt that he was being held back at Albany, despite enjoying the friendship/patronage of his superior, Joseph Adams – refused to sign a four-year contract because of what he perceived to be small wages (£25) and wrote to the Committee on that account.[987] Rushworth and Richards each saw Henley House as a place to be master of one's own house; that is probably how Albany's sloopmasters saw Eastmain House, and certainly how Samuel Skrimshire saw Flamborough House. Upon his return to Hudson Bay in

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[984]George Rushworth (Albany) to HBC (London), 8 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 173d.

[985]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 22 August 1766, A. 11/3, fo. 103d; Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, September 1767, A. 11/3, fo. 111.

[986]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1724, *Letters*, 97.

[987]Joseph Adams (Albany) to HBC (London), 14 August 1732, A. 11/2, fo. 72d. White's wages were not in fact small. He entered the service at £12 in 1726 and was up to £25 in 1731/32 and £30 in 1732/33. He also sent home private trappings in most years, ranging in value from £3.1.7 in 1729 to £9.7.3 in 1730: A. 16/2, fo. 24. Churchill accountant Thomas Bird, who had served the Company for considerably longer than White had, was receiving £30 in 1731/32: A. 16/9, fo. 17.

1751, Skrimshire wrote to the Committee:

> Hon'ble Sirs
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> I make bould to trouble Your Honours with these few lines thinking it a duty becoming all Such persons Your Honours may think proper to Nominate as master of wone of your out Houses as well as wone of Your Cheif factory's, to acquaint Your Honours we Arriv'd with in heiring [*i.e.* hearing] of the factory Guns on the 24th of July and on the 25th I went oup to the Fort ware I found every body well and was Receiv'd with a Great deal of Joy and hope that my Conduck will all way be Deserving of Your Honours preferment.
>
> Gentellmen I cant but Say I was Very much Surprised at the opening of Your Honours Packquait in not Receiving Sum orders how to prosead when at flamboury House, but more in perticular on in Quiry I was tould Your Honours did Never desine I Should Carray on Eney Trade their only for Provisions allways under Standing Your Hon's I was Sent on the Same Acc'tt as Mr Isham Came over the Last Year wht I under Stoud at that time was to have bean Supploy'd from YF with Such Quantity's of Goods as mite be Requasite to Supploy Such Ind's as freaquantly Come Down that Riv'r as well with Goods as Provisions Everay Summer that thay mite not have the trouble and feateague yt Sum times attends them in Going Round the Point of Marsh or Carrying their Goods &c [*i.e.* etc.] across the Island having freaquantly none [*i.e.* known?] their Goods so much Damaged that they could not trade them for Sum time or at Least be four we could Pack them their four incase [*sic*] enay thing of that Natour Should happen I hope Your Honours will not Eneway's Sencer my Condouck for I do a Shour Your Honours nothing Shall be wanting on my Side in promoting Your Honours Interest as far as my orders may Run.
>
> Gentellmen I humble ask Your Honours parden in Case You Should think I have enay ways bean too frea in Expresing my Self in the manner I have, being nothing more then the Reall trouth. I'm to prosead to the North Riv'r as Sune as posable the Sloop Can be spar'd Having not to inlarge but wishing Your Honours ahappey [*sic*] Site of all Your Ships with a Good Trade from their Respective forts and am Gentellmen Your Honours most Obedient
>
> And Humble Servt
> At Command
> Saml Skrimsher[988]

Skrimshire's humble rhetoric clearly expressed his hope and expectation that the

[988]Samuel Skrimshire (York) to HBC (London), private, 8 August 1751, A. 11/114, fos. 144-145.

command of Flamborough House would place him on the same footing as James Isham, despite its being an 'out House' rather than a 'Cheif factory.' His deferential tone could not hide his frustration; his references to promoting the Company's interests and facilitating trade were also references to the ways in which an independent command could promote his own interests and facilitate future favours from the Committee. He probably feared that Flamborough would fail and that he would be blamed; he had already been recalled once – and as a result apparently lost the friendship/patronage of Isham, his cousin and superior – and now he sought to avoid future censure.

Only rarely did servants address themselves to individual Committee members. Humphrey Marten did so in 1765, humbly offering each member a "Nest of Roggins" (birch-bark baskets, probably made by his Cree wife, Pawpitch) and commenting, "had I not been fearful of apearing too Free I should have Addressed a Letter to each of the Gentlemen to crave his Protection."[989] Significantly, Marten offered gifts to all Committeemen equally, seeking the "Protection" of all rather than the patronage of any one in particular. James Knight wrote private letters to Governor Sir Bibye Lake and Deputy Governor Captain John Merry after taking possession of York in 1714, but Knight had sat on the Committee before he returned to Hudson Bay and knew both men personally. The letters were deferential, offering "my most due respects" to both men and promising Lake that "I never shall be wanting in my duty to serve you to the utmost of my power," but he also promised Merry that "I will make it my business to serve the

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[989]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 15 September 1765, A. 11/3, fo. 90. He sent the same gift in 1767: Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, September 1767, A. 11/3, fo. 112.

Company in every respect" and "I will take all the care I can for the Company's interest."[990] In his next letter home, however, Knight "chose rather to write by way of journal all the information I have had of the northern country for fear I should write in a letter to one Committee man more than another and so give a disgust."[991]

In turn, the Committee always portrayed themselves as a collective entity or individual when addressing their servants. Servants owed their loyalty, deference, and gratitude to 'your honours' rather than to any particular Committee member: the Committee as a whole was their master. In 1692, the Committee promised George Geyer that they were resolved "allwaies to discharge Our selves [so] that the Character of a meritorious Servant & Gratefull masters may be reciprocall between us."[992] In theory, this prevented Committee members from competing with each other for influence and patronage. Whether it did limit such competition is difficult to judge, given the abbreviated and impersonal tone of the Committee's minute books, but the surviving correspondence certainly gives no indication of it. Even those who did owe their initial employment to a particular Committee member (or members) were assured that they could rely on the friendship of all Committee members.[993]

Servants could not take that friendship for granted, however. In 1688, the

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[990]James Knight (York) to Sir Bibye Lake (London), private, 19 September 1714, *Letters*, 37-38; James Knight (York) to Captain John Merry (London), private, 19 September 1714, *Letters*, 38-39.

[991]James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 17 September 1716, *Letters*, 61. The "northern country" to which Knight referred was the lower Churchill River valley and the coastline north of the river's mouth.

[992]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 139.

[993]See HBC (London) to John Nixon (Moose), 29 May 1680, *L.O. 1680-87*, 10; HBC (London) to Pierre Esprit Radisson (Port Nelson), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-87*, 199-200.

Committee called Governor George Geyer (at Port Nelson) its "Cheife usefull man...haveing been soe many yeares in our Service and are soe well experienced in all our affaires and in our true interest." They denied Geyer's request to come home that year, claiming to know "that you will never desert our imploymt. as long as wee think fitt to Continue you in it," but approved of "your Modesty" in making the request "with a Submission & Resignation to our pleasure & Service." They assured him that "as Wee see our Trade increase and a larger Cargoe Come home every yeare, soe you shall find our Favour & kindnesse increase towards you."[994] The implied threat – that failure to increase trade would result in the loss of the Committee's favour – picked up on a similarly double-edged promise made earlier in the letter, assuring Geyer of "our Continued Favour unlesse Wee should see extraordinary Miscarriages Committeed by you."[995]

"Diligent men" and "Idle Fellowes": Sorting the wheat from the chaff in the Bay

The surviving correspondence clearly illustrates the factors' frequent need to retain useful old hands to compensate for a lack of sufficient or suitable recruits, but it does not reveal how they determined who was worth keeping. These decisions were the factors' prerogative within broad guidelines, as indicated by the Committee's 1688 letter to George Geyer and his Council at Port Nelson: "in Generall as to men that are to Come

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[994]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 13.

[995]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 8. The Committee made a similar (though slightly more explicit) threat to Pierre Esprit Radisson when he was in charge of the trade at Port Nelson in the mid-1680s: "as we will have none to blame if we faile of a glorious trade but your selfe, so in the happey success of it, you will not only finde your owne account & advantage together with us, but we shall alwaies enlarge our selves towards you in such waies of acknowlidgment as shall be fitting & Due to your prudence & Industrey." HBC (London) to Pierre Esprit Radisson (Port Nelson) 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 199.

home Wee must leave it to you, whoe can best Judge there whoe are usefull Diligent men for us, and whoe are Drones uselesse and Idle fellowes, Send home if any bee ingenious honest and Diligent, you must retaine them by faire meanes and according to their Deserts, till Wee can better Supply their places."[996] Here, as elsewhere, the adjectives used to describe desirable personnel were taken from contemporary households in Britain and were not specific to the fur trade. The emphasis, not surprisingly, was on usefulness: idleness, or wasting one's employment time, was sometimes characterized in contemporary England as an act of robbery.[997]

Of course, the question of what skills or abilities were necessary for service in Hudson Bay was one that the London Committee was ill-suited to answer, as almost no Committee members had any experience of life and labour in the Bay.[998] Most of the

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[996]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 14. They repeated these instructions in 1693: "As for any men you have there that are Slothfull Drones or from home [*i.e.* whom] you can expect noe service Pray send them home for England & others that are vigorous nimble and willing & will doe what they are bid may continue there." HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 189. In the same letter (p. 191), the Committee censured Geyer for sending home apprentice George Holstead early without reason., and instructed him not to allow able-bodied men "to depart the Countery till their times be expired but those that are sickly and weak you may send home." Despite the Committee's apparent good opinion of Holstead and his indenture not being expired, he does not appear to have returned to Hudson Bay: see *L.O. 1688-1696*, 79n2.

[997]Tadmor, 64. Campbell, 313, called it "a Crime against Moral Honesty." When Robert Temple denied responsibility for the "Extravagance" of servants' wages at Albany in 1763, he assured the Committee that his men did not "Eat the Bread of Idleness." Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 26 August 1763, A. 11/3, fos. 59d, 61; Robert Temple (Albany) to HBC (London), private, August 1763, A. 11/3, fo. 63.

[998]Former and future Governor James Knight was one of only a few active employees to hold shares in the Company (1692-1714) and the first former employee to sit on the Committee (1700-1714). The first active or former employee known to own Company shares was William White, a comb-maker by trade who was employed (perhaps intermittently) in the Bay from 1670 until at least 1677 in an unspecified capacity. He was earning good wages – £21 per annum in 1672/73 and £36 in 1676/77 – and in February 1677 he received a £35 "Reward for his good Service" (A. 14/2, fo. 76). He used the gratuity plus the balance of his account (£15) to purchase £50 stock, which he held until March 1678, when he transferred it to a Captain Joseph Thompson: *Minutes*, 31n. John Fullartine served on the Committee after retiring from the command of Albany in 1711: Williams, *Miscellany*, 10n.

Company's workforce – those not directly involved in trade, accounting, and/or management – required few special skills. [999] Thus, William Lydall was ordered in 1674 "to procure tenn men fitt for the Companyes Service to Stay in the Countrey," even though he himself had not yet been to Hudson Bay.[1000]

That the London Committee left little evidence of their selection criteria does not mean, however, that there were no selection criteria at all. The earliest guidelines to the recruitment process can be found in the Committee's March 1682 order "that the Secretary indeavor to gett 10 honest and able Fellows batchelors not under 20 nor above 30 years old to be either Bricklayers, Carpenters, Quarriers or such like and present them to the Compa. not exceeding 6. 9 or 12 *li.* p. Ann."[1001] Throughout the period studied here, the Company sought fit young men willing to work for particular wages. For the most part, Company recruiters (including Committee members) probably screened applicants in much the same way as any other employer would have done. The primary difference between recruiting for the HBC and recruiting for similar kinds of employment in Britain was the need to find men willing to work overseas for a period of several

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[999]Rich, *History*, I, 295, believed the Company primarily required "labourers and hands, men mature in bodily strength and with little to learn save the precautions necessary if they were to survive an arctic winter." This appears to be supported by the Committee's minutes and letters.

[1000]*Minutes*, 107. The Committee may have given this duty to Lydall, who had some unspecified experience in the Russian trade, on the assumption that service in Hudson Bay was not unlike service in northern Russia. Chaudhuri, 77, observed that the East India Company in its early years probably drew on the experience of the Russia Company to build up its own commercial organization in Asia: the Russia Company had employed resident factors in their Russian trading stations and travelling factors in the Persian trade. Lydall is the only example of the HBC drawing on the Muscovy merchants' experience.

[1001]*Minutes, First Part*, 199.

years.[1002]

In Hudson Bay, utility was usually expressed in vague or general terms. John Fullartine in 1701 referred simply to "some of the best hands"; Beale in 1706 tried to re-engage "most of the best men," and in 1712 referred to "persons which are very Serviceable in your Country and Persons whom I Could not well be without."[1003] In 1752 the Albany Council described labourers James Lisk and James Short as "good labouring hands and very usefull Men for the Country."[1004] Labourer and bricklayer Thomas Austin was "a good Labouring hand and a very oblidging Servant" (1752) and "a verry usefull Man" (1754); sailor William Ward was "A young Man that has behaved well, and been very usefull to Us" (1759); and writer John Favell was "a good hand and behaves well" (1759).[1005] The moralist William Fleetwood declared in a 1705 sermon that servants "are to be every way as useful to them [their masters] as possible, this is the end and intention

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[1002]In 1696, surgeon Edward Tanner's application for employment was denied because he was unwilling to stay in Hudson Bay more than two years: A. 1/18, fo. 13d.

[1003]"A Coppy of a Counsel Hold at Albany Fort Sepbr ye 1st 1701," A. 11/2, fo. 1; "A Councell Call'd [at Albany] this 11th of Sepbr 1705," A. 11/2, fo. 9; "A Councell Called [at Albany] the 20th of July 1706," A. 11/2, fo. 12; Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 August 1712, A. 11/2, fo. 19. In 1703, on the other hand, Fullartine sent home Robert Perkins by mutual consent before the end of his contract because "Sickness & indisposition has...rendred him a very useless & helpless hand." That year, Fullartine also sent home Thomas Langley, "who requested it with ye Same fervency & can do me little or no Service....I've better be without [Langley] than keep him, for whereas he will at home be counted to me for a man, here he can only eat a mans allowance." John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 6.

[1004]George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 4 August 1752, A. 11/2, fo. 151.

[1005]George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 4 August 1752, A. 11/2, fo. 151; Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 19 September 1754, A. 11/2, fo. 161; Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 September 1759, A. 11/3, fo. 35, 35d. Even Thomas White's unusually emotional eulogy for Moose's sawyer William Barrow lacked detail: "With a good deal of Grief I have the unhappiness to tell you, that we have... buried one of the best & ablest Men we had William Barrow Sawyer who died on the 17th of April [1755] of a Cancer in his Mouth & Throat." Thomas White (Moose) to Joseph Isbister (Albany), 18 June 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 169d.

of all Masters, in entertaining Servants."[1006] In many cases, general usefulness may have been more valued than specific skills. This would have been especially true for labourers: relatively few of them could offer a specific skill as evidence of their value to the Company.

Praise for servants often referred to their moral characteristics as much as their competence or occupation: the primary characteristics of utility were diligence, ingenuity, honesty, and (especially in wartime) courage. In 1688, for instance, the Committee described Thomas Savage as "a Stout & an honest fellow," James Bay Governor John Marsh as "a Worthy person," and Captain James Young (master of the *Dering*) as "a man whome Wee believe you will finde Stout & Couragious and very usefull to you on any Occation."[1007] James Knight (Marsh's successor as Governor of the Bottom of the Bay) was described to Geyer in 1692 as honest, discrete, and prudent;[1008] in a letter to Knight himself, the Committee claimed that they selected him for his integrity, courage, prudence, and "Continuall faithfullness...to the [Company's] welfare & interest."[1009] Fleetwood remarked that "Masters will bear with many defects of Skill and Diligence,

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[1006]Fleetwood, 366-367.

[1007]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 9-10, 11, 16. In other letters that year, the Committee told Marsh and Thomas Walsh (master at Severn River) that they expected "proofes of your prudence fidelity & Courage." HBC (London) to Thomas Walsh (Severn), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 22. The same wording was used in HBC (London) to Captain John Marsh (location unspecified), 18 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 40.

[1008]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 135. Knight had entered the service as a shipwright and mariner in 1676, and was appointed Chief at Albany and Deputy Governor of the Bottom of the Bay in 1682, but lost his position in 1685 to Henry Sergeant, who accused Knight of private trade. Little is known of Knight's activities between 1685 and 1692, but when he re-entered the service he was described as "of London, Merchant," and acquired £200 of Company stock. Kenney, 23-33.

[1009]HBC (London) to James Knight (London?), 17 June 1692, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 144-145.

where they are sure the Servants are exactly just and honest," adding that honest men were trusted more than skilful or insightful men.[1010]

Sobriety and industry were highly valued characteristics, as in the Albany Council's 1757 promise to "take particular care to encourage Virtue, Diligence and Sobriety in the Servants and discountenance the Contrary."[1011] In 1758, they described sailor William Allen as "a Sober deserving young Man," labourer James Inkster as "a Sober young fellow and a good Pitman [bottom man on a two-man pitsaw team], who will be very useful at Henley," and sailor Hugh Slater as "a Sober Industrious young Man;" in 1760 they eulogized carpenter George Clark as "a Sober discrete Man and a good workman, and no doubt if he had lived...he wou'd [have] given Satisfaction."[1012] Conversely, in 1752 George Spence sent home sailor Daniel Mackoler (a former servant who had just re-engaged for three years), "on Account of his intolerable bad Behaviour while in the Country before being both a Drunkard & a Thief."[1013]

[1010]Fleetwood, 375-376, 384.

[1011]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), August 1757, A. 11/3, fo. 25.

[1012]Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 25 September 1758, A. 11/3, fo. 31. Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 8 September 1760, A. 11/3, fo. 43d. One who did have the opportunity to give satisfaction was William Tomison, whose "good Behaviour, Diligence and Industry" Humphrey Marten praised in 1776: "Copy of Instructions given by Mr. Humphrey Marten to Mr Matthew Cocking on his going to Cumberland House," n.d. [September 1776], *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 347.

In 1756, the Council recommended for "your Honours Consideration" tailor George Harvey ("he is Usefull as Taylor and Mason, and is a Sober Man") and labourer George Ballentine ("He is a good hand as a Labourer and Sober"). Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1756, A. 11/3, fo. 9. Harvey got the raise he wanted (from £12 to £14, though only for one year) but Ballentine did not and went home in 1757 (he had asked for two or three years at £12, up from £6): A. 16/3, fos. 86, 97; A. 16/4, fo. 9.

[1013]George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 4 August 1752, A. 11/2, fo. 151. Mackoler died on the passage back to England: A. 16/3, fo. 82. Humphrey Marten considered "immoderate Drinking" to be as "Pernicious...to your honours Interest" as private trade: Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 15 August 1765, A. 11/3, fo. 81.

Whereas a man unwilling to be useful was as much censured as a man unable to be useful,[1014] adding to one's inventory of skills was rewarded. The Committee praised Samuel Missenden (warehouse-keeper at Port Nelson) in 1686 for trying to learn the Lowland Cree language, "whereby you will render your selfe the more capable to serve us & we upon all occasions shall be mindfull of the merits of such Persons."[1015] In 1703, Fullartine reported that Samuel Goodale (his "affairs calling him home" early) had taught tailor James Norcutt how to keep the account books: Fullartine described Norcutt as "a very honest man" who "would not have Staid under ye Same wages he has now, but as it falls out it will be so much money Sav'd for I could not have been without him & now he can serve me in a double Capasity."[1016]

[1014]In 1693, the Committee instructed George Geyer, "if any [servants are] Quarrilous or Unruly given to Faction or the like above all returne them home, tho never soe good hands for we will not Indure any factions or Grumbling p[er]sons there; Apprehending the evill Consequences that may happen by Discord & Divisions amongst you & know likewise the good frut of a good harmony & Concord." HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 189. In the same year, the Committee instructed James Knight and his Council at Albany to "sett a marke upon all that are slothfull quarelous & cause divisions amongst you, & to Returne home their names." HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 201.

[1015]HBC (London) to Samuel Missenden (Port Nelson), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 202.

[1016]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 6. Norcutt kept the Albany accounts in 1703-05 (B. 3/d/14, fo. 52). He may have also kept the Eastmain accounts in 1705-06 (see B. 3/d/15, fo. 7d), but those have not survived: as the house was only seasonal, the accounts probably consisted of rough day books, which would probably not have been preserved after the information was transferred to the Albany accounts.

Diversity of skill was not always rewarded. The Albany Council recommended labourer George Taylor to London in 1756 as "a handy Man...who can do all our Cooper work very well and is worthy of Notice, he acts in Several Capacitys and is a Sober Man;" but he remained at £6 per annum until his contract expired in 1760. They supported his request for a two-year contract at £18, adding that he was also "a good Sawyer," but the Committee refused. He came home in 1760 with the Council's recommendation as "a very usefull Servant" deserving a gratuity, but none was forthcoming. Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1756, A. 11/3, fo. 9.A. 16/3, fo. 105; A. 16/4, fo. 13; Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 1 September 1759, A. 11/3, fo. 35d; Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 8 September 1760, A. 11/3, fo. 43.

The cases of George Taylor and of other labourers who were later employed as tradesmen may suggest that such men were initially under-employed by the Company. William Ward, for instance, was engaged as a sailor for three years in 1756 but was in fact "a Boat Builder by Trade." A. 16/3, fo. 111; A.

After the establishment of Cumberland House in 1774, the surest means for any man to endear himself to his superiors was to familiarize himself with the use and construction of birchbark canoes. Humphrey Marten instructed William Tomison at Cumberland House in 1776 to promise a 10s gratuity "for every good large Canoe built by Englishmen."[1017] Scottish labourer Robert Longmoor offered to learn how to build such craft in 1776, and by the following spring had produced two, for which he received 20s worth of goods from the York Fort warehouse. Humphrey Marten called Longmoor "the first Canoe Man in your Service" and "very deserving" of encouragement for having thus improved himself and advanced the Company's interest.[1018] As the HBC moved inland, however, few men were as apparently straightforward in their commitment to their master's interests as Longmoor.

Specialised tradesmen were also expected to pitch in whenever and wherever

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16/4, fo. 17; Robert Temple & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 25 September 1758, A. 11/3, fo. 30d. Evan Edwards, "a very good smith by profession," initially served as a labourer at Fort Prince of Wales: Richard Norton (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1731, *Letters*, 163. John Whooley engaged as a labourer in 1737 at £4-4-6-6-10, but was described by Thomas Bird in 1738 as "regularly bred up unto ye Taylors Trade and is as good a Workman as any in this Countrey:" Thomas Bird & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), n.d. [1738], A. 11/2, fos. 92d-93; A. 16/3, fo. 17. John Chapman engaged as a labourer at £4-4-6-6-10, but the Albany Officers' and Servants' Ledger mentioned that he was a coach joiner: A. 16/2, fo. 101; A. 16/3, fo. 17.

In other cases, however, labourers may have sufficiently learned the basics of a trade by working alongside craftsmen in Britain and found that they possessed skills sufficient for the needs of the factory: in 1724, for instance, the Committee were unable to procure a bricklayer for York and instead engaged 19-year-old John Hughes, who had "worked with some Bricklayers." *Letters*, 99n, 151n; A. 1/120, fo. 62. A real bricklayer, James Averill, was sent out to York in 1725: see Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 26 August 1725, *Letters*, 109.

[1017]Humphrey Marten (York) to William Tomison (Cumberland), 1 August 1776, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 87.

[1018]Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, lxviii-lxix. Humphrey Marten (York) to HBC (London), n.d. [1776], A. 11/116, fo. 13d, quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 14n. In 1778, the York Council offered him a new contract at high wages (£30) "in Consideration of his known abilities, Fidelity and Courage." Humphrey Marten & Council (York) to William Tomison (Cumberland), 4 August 1778, *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 262.

necessary, particularly at outposts with relatively small complements: when William Lamb took over the charge of Henley in 1751, the Committee instructed him "that ye Handicraft men & others with you are not to be Confin'd to theire own perticuler trades, but to be absolutely under your Command & to do all other affaires as you shall think proper...& be sure not to let them be Idle & lazy but keep them Constantly at work."[1019] Carpenter John Halcro was sent home from Albany in 1752 before his contract had expired "for denying to assist loading & unloading the Sloop, getting of Firewood on Condition he doth not wet himself, & doing Labouring work." His truculence contrasted with that of armourer Joseph Staton: "its true he is no Extraordinary Workman but he is Sober and capable of doing the Business of the Country and is always willing to do any other work when required."[1020]

These descriptions evaluate servants (collectively and individually) in terms of their general usefulness to their masters rather than on the basis of skills specific to Hudson Bay. In 1703, John Fullartine recommended former apprentice Anthony Beale (then his Deputy) to the Committee, calling him "a very carefull honest man" who knew the Company's affairs well and who "deserves encouragement as being an old Servant & one yt has been allways faithfull to his masters."[1021] In 1714, Beale (then in charge of

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[1019]"A Book of Instructions with the Standard of Trade for Henly House in the Year of our Lord 1751 William Lamb Master," A. 11/3, fo. 14. It is not clear who wrote these instructions: they were originally signed by George Spence (who was in command at Albany in 1751), but his signature was crossed out in copy and signed by Joseph Isbister; a marginal note says that this document was a copy made by Lamb in his own handwriting. Bishop, 39, believed that Albany surgeon George Rushworth compiled these instructions.

[1020]George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 4 August 1752, A. 11/2, fos. 150-150d.

[1021]John Fullartine (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1703, A. 11/2, fo. 6. In 1706, Beale (then in command at Albany) praised his deputy, Nathaniel Bishop, in similar terms: "I like [him] very well for I really beleave he is very Honest and Carefull and dose his business very well." Anthony Beale

Albany) informed the Committee that he hoped to maintain discipline and prevent "Clandestine Dooings" by "incurageing those I finde faithfull and Just to your Honours."[1022] In 1764, Humphrey Marten suggested writer George Humble for the charge of Henley House (if it could be re-established), observing that he "is diligent and obliging."[1023] In 1767, Marten recommended surgeon Eusebius Bacchus Kitchen to the Committee: "he has Assisted me three Years in the Trading Room and has behaved himself in such a manner as to Shew that he has Your Honours Interest greatly at heart."[1024]

(Albany) to HBC (London), 23 July 1706, A. 11/2, fo. 16d. Bishop (who served the Company almost continuously from 1686 until his death) had the charge of the Eastmain trade in 1715/16 and 1718-20, and Thomas McCliesh Jr unsuccessfully recommended Bishop to succeed him at Albany: Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 August 1719, A. 11/2, fo. 40d. The Committee appointed Bishop to succeed Richard Staunton at Churchill in 1721, but wind and weather prevented Staunton from leaving that year: *Letters*, 66n. Bishop did not take charge until 1722, but by then his health had deteriorated – he suffered from gout and in 1716 had been confined to his room for four months with "a Lameness" – and died on 30 June 1723, "after a long and lingering fit of sickness:" Thomas McCliesh Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 20 August 1717, A. 11/2, fo. 36d; Richard Norton & Thomas Bird (Churchill) to HBC (London), 3 August 1723, *Letters*, 84.

[1022]He promised to combine positive reinforcement with "Sever Punishment besides all other Damiges for those that shall be found Fallty." Anthony Beale (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 August 1714, A. 11/2, fo. 23d.

[1023]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 17 August 1764, A. 11/3, fo. 69. Humble was not given the charge of Henley, apparently because of his inability to speak Upland Cree. See Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, September 1767, A. 11/3, fo. 112. In 1768, Humble signed a three-year contract, thanked the Committee for continuing him in their service, and promised "to make himself acquainted with the Indian Language so as to be of more service to Your Honours in future:" Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 August 1768, A. 11/3, fo. 119d. The importance of knowing a Native language increased in the 1770s. Labourer Edward Loutit in 1777 was at £18 (high wages, even for an old hand) because for three years (1766-69) he had wintered with an Assiniboine trader named Ka'na'put'a'po'e'tuck: explaining Loutit's high wages, Marten informed the Committee that "he is known by most of them [the Assiniboine], and understands their language, better than any Man in your Service." Humphrey Marten (York) to HBC (London), 25 August 1777, A. 11/116, fo. 22, quoted in *Cumberland Journals, First Series*, 181n.

[1024]Kitchen's assistance was particularly appreciated because Marten was suffering from very ill health, including "a Cancer of the Uvula" which nearly killed him: Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 September 1767, A. 11/3, fos. 105, 106; Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, September 1767, A. 11/3, fos. 110d-111; Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London),

The Committee promised "encouragement" to servants they perceived as "faithfull." For instance, in 1688, they assured George Geyer of their resolution "to Stand by and encourage our Old & Faithfull Servants And...Wee shall never Send New Raw & unexperienced men to put over the heads of such as have Served us Longe & faithfully."[1025] The Committee demonstrated their commitment to those who had served the Company well in 1691, when Stephen Sinclair (formerly warehousekeeper at Albany) and Hugh Verner (formerly factor at Rupert's River) returned to Hudson Bay; they had been members of John Marsh's ill-fated Albany expedition (1688) and only returned to England from their French captivity in 1691. The Committee immediately re-engaged them and sent them to Port Nelson: "being both well experienced in our affaires & trade, tho' we could not assigne them a particular Post yet we know they will be of a great advantage to our Interest & help to you, & we doe accordingly recommend them to your favour & Care to make them as usefull to Our Service as you can, & wee doe appoynt them both to be admitted of your Councell."[1026]

Also in 1691, the Committee rewarded Thomas Walsh's "fidelity as well as ability in our Service" by continuing him as Geyer's Second after burning down his post at Severn River to keep it out of French hands.[1027] Walsh's case illustrates how troubled

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private, 27 August 1768, A. 11/3, fo. 115. Marten would have replaced Richards at Henley with Kitchen had Kitchen's constitution been strong enough for the journey: Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, September 1767, A. 11/3, fo. 112.

[1025]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 2 June 1688, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 8.

[1026]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 120.

[1027]HBC (London) to George Geyer & Council (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 117. The previous year, the Committee had assured Walsh of its resolution "to Leave noe merritt unrewarded" and granted him a £50 gratuity "for your further encouragement in the Preservation of our Rights and Encrease of the trade." HBC (London) to Thomas Walsh (Severn), 22 May 1690, *L.O. 1688-96*, 105.

times gave servants opportunities to demonstrate their loyalty and fidelity. The Committee approved of Walsh's choice to destroy his house rather than attempt a futile defence of such a vulnerable outpost, and they assured him,

> we have a Just sense & value of your fidelity in having discharged your Trust as well as any man could have done in those Circumstances...& considering the Trade Wee received thence the last year by your managemt. & the good conduct you Showed in the utmost extremity, together with the hazard you did runn in Our Service, & private Losses which must necessarily have ensued to you, Wee would not be wanting in a due encouragement & to Consider you as much as if you were still in that Station.

They maintained his current wages (£50 per annum, a master's salary) and granted him a £60 gratuity.[1028]

Notwithstanding the Committee's consistent rhetoric about rewarding valuable servants of any rank, and their evident willingness to do so, wages represented a significant expense at a time when profits were uncertain and the Company vulnerable. Just as the Committee encouraged its factors to economize on such things as provisions,[1029] they also encouraged them to economize on wages when circumstances

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Carlos, "Agent Opportunism," 146, contrasts this letter with one written to James Nightingale by the Royal African Company's Court of Assistants around the same time. Nightingale requested a promotion, which prompted the Court to investigate the security (*i.e.* bond) he had offered for his current position; it did not feel that Nightingale would be able to put up the greater security needed for a higher position and informed him that it could not "preffer any Man to the greatest trust without a suitable Security and if you gett Friends here to strengthen you[r] Security...we shall be ready to bid you welcome." Quoted in Carlos, "Agent Opportunism," 146. Carlos observed that "not only do the choice of tools used by these two companies differ...but the language used in the letters to express the company's relationship with its managers differs as well. Carlos, "Agent Opportunism," 146. Carlos did not date the letter she quoted from, but Nightingale was active on the Gold Coast in the early 1680s and was made the factor at James Fort in Accra in the spring of 1681: Law, 23, 27, 33-34, 158-160, 168, 170-171.

[1028]HBC (London) to Thomas Walsh (Port Nelson), 21 May 1691, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 130.

[1029]See, for example, HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 17 June 1693, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 204-204. That year, they sent Albany grain and garden seeds, a book on cultivation, and Stephen Pitts, recommended for his "great Knowledge In all manner of Tillage & agriculture he haveing bin used to itt from his Childhood." HBC (London) to Stephen Sinclair (Albany), 17 June 1693, *L.O.*

permitted. In 1694, when Knight had established himself at Albany, the Committee instructed him to "send home as many as you can spare of the men with you at the highest wages that soe the Comp[an]ies. charge may be eased, still Regarding the safety of the Factory."[1030] This appears to have been the same motive behind recalling nineteen men (including the experienced trader Hugh Verner) from Port Nelson that year, for no complaints were registered against any of them.[1031] Even the multi-faceted James Irvin, who acted as cooper, carpenter, sawyer, and sloopmate at various periods of his service, was sent home in 1744 "both on account of his great Wages, and att his own Request": he was earning £27 and was replaced by cooper and labourer John Dikes at £10.[1032] Factors themselves were included in the general desire for economy. Thomas Phipps had replaced John Abraham as Governor of Port Nelson in 1685, but in 1686 the Committee complained that he had taken up his new position "with so much unsteadiness & irresolution" that he demanded £200 per annum (twice the salary which other Governors had received there), "wch. we doe not take well from him," as the Company's payroll "is

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1688-1696, 211-212.

[1030]HBC (London) to James Knight & Council (Albany), 30 May 1694, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 232.

[1031]HBC (London) to Thomas Walsh & Council (Port Nelson), 20 May 1694, *L.O. 1688-1696*, 237-238. Of these nineteen, four did not go home as ordered (for reasons unknown) and were taken prisoner when the French captured Port Nelson later that year (*L.O. 1688-1696*, 237n). Of the fifteen that did go home, two later returned to Hudson Bay: Daniel Hardy was at Port Nelson during its brief reoccupation by the English in 1696/97 (B. 239/d/6, fos. 60d, 67) and Robert Moore was a landman at Albany in 1700-01 (B. 3/d/12, fo. 7d). Verner offered his services to the Company in 1697, but no position was available for him: Alice M. Johnson, "Verner, Hugh," *DCB* I, 657.

[1032]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1744, A. 11/2, fo. 121d; A 16/3, fos. 39, 42. By 1748, Dikes' wages were up to £14 (A. 16/3, fo. 42) and he was eager to go home. Labourer William Murray, whom the Albany Council described as "a Handy Man and able to do the Business of a Cooper," took his place: George Spence & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1748, A. 11/2, fos. 137-137d. Murray's wages were advanced from £10 to £14 (and in 1751 to £16), but the Albany Officers' and Servants' Ledger continued to list him as a labourer until 1752: A. 16/3, fos. 46, 84.

already to[o] great." They resolved "to retrench what we can possibley of it, & the necessity of our affaires obligeth us to it."[1033] This was particularly important when wartime pressures on recruitment left the Company vulnerable to its servants' demands.

Although new recruits were cheaper to employ than experienced men, retention of personnel was very important to the Committee and the Bayside factors. New recruits were somewhat unknown quantities; veterans who had demonstrated their value were necessary for both security and expansion. While the Committee still used occasional high turnovers to jettison servants with high wages, green hands needed at least a few old hands to teach them the ropes. Joseph Isbister assured the Committee in 1743 that the servants who he had promised higher wages were "usefull Men, and [I] could not do the Business of this Factory without such Hands, one of them being as good as two green hands"[1034]

"Evil Examples" and "Good Examples"[1035]

Both servants and officers were concerned with the ways they were being portrayed to their masters. It is often difficult for scholars (as it was for the Committee) to judge the extent to which complaints and criticisms about individuals were valid, and to evaluate the reputations certain posts occasionally acquired as dens of various iniquities.

[1033]HBC (London) to John Bridgar (Moose), 20 May 1686, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 177.

[1034]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 18 August 1743, A. 11/2, fo. 116.

[1035]In 1738, Richard Staunton at Moose referred to showing "good examples and precepts" to his men by getting what country provisions he could and condemned the "evil examples" set by labourer Thomas Carr and mariner John Smith, whom he accused of "evil practices" (perhaps homosexuality): Richard Staunton and George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 265, 266.

Factors usually tried to deflect blame for "irregularities and debaucheries," commonly (and perhaps conveniently) condemning their predecessors.[1036] At Albany, for instance, Thomas McCleish in 1716 and Joseph Myatt in 1727 both attributed servants' complaints about their management to the fact that men had been able to do as they pleased under Richard Staunton (who had been in charge in 1714/15 and again in 1723-26).[1037]

McCliesh and Myatt may have been less concerned with challenging Staunton's favourable reports of his own behaviour than with emphasizing their own strengths in maintaining order and promoting the company's interests. They were certainly defending themselves against complaints made to the Committee by the men of Albany. McCleish referred in 1716 to a petition sent to London by "severall of our men...Concerning my being severe, & som'what Tyrannical as they term'd it."

> At first I was Oblidged to be somewhat severe; for the men was grown to yt Degree of ill Manners; that they Did what they pleas'd with Mr Staunton; & thought to have used me with ye same so yt I took 5 of the greatest Transgressors & Whipt them; Ever since they have been Obedient and willing In ye Discharge of their Duty; neither have I beat, a man since: nor have I had any Occassion, for it is not in my Nature to use any man with Morossness; or ill manners and by yt same rule, I will be treated[1038]

[1036]A noteworthy exception was the aging and ailing James Knight, who returned to England in 1718 with accusations of unspecified misconduct against his successor in Hudson Bay, Henry Kelsey: see Kenney, 81. For similar cases of excuses and counter-accusations in the Royal African Company, see Davies, *RAC*, 255-256.

[1037]Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 September 1716, A. 11/2, fo. 34d; Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1727, A. 11/2, fo. 60d. Despite these earlier complaints, the Committee chose Staunton to clean up Moose after the Boxing Day fire of 1735. In 1741, however, James Duffield (Staunton's successor at Moose) claimed that the local Cree controlled both Staunton and Moose before his (Duffield's) arrival: see Moose journal, 8 September 1741, B. 135/a/11, fo. 3.

[1038]He did not name the "transgressors," but referred the Committee to Captain George Berley of the *Albany* for further information, "haveing Calld my Informers before him; and the rest of the Councell." Thomas McCleish Jr (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 September 1716, A. 11/2, fo. 34d.

Myatt's defence eleven years later was expressed in much the same words:

> I am Informed there is Some Complaints a comeing home against me, but I Do ashure your Honrs it is not in my Nature to treat any man with Morrossness or Ill manners, and I think it is but Reasonable I Should be Treated with the Same, Some of the Men are grown to such a Pitch of Ill manners yt they Did what they pleased wth Mr Staunton & they thought to a Served me after the same manner, but I Punished 3 or four of ye Greatest Trancegressors & they have ben very Obidiant to Commd Ever Since.[1039]

Myatt's criticism of Staunton contrasted with Staunton's defence of Myatt in 1723. Staunton had replaced Myatt that year (Myatt was demoted to the charge of the Eastmain) following complaints from some of Myatt's men.[1040] Staunton, however, reported that Myatt's management had been very prudent and conducive "to your Honrs Proffit and [to] his credit & Interest." He assured the Committee that "w[ha]t Ever hath been Represented as pejuditiall to him hath been out of Envey, from men of an uneasie temper and turbulant Spirit wch will not be Easy under any command."[1041]

Alcohol was a frequent point of contention between masters and men, both in Britain and in Hudson Bay. Drink played an important role in the early modern workplace, in the context of both work and leisure, but employers often drew a

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[1039]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 12 August 1727, A. 11/2, fo. 60d. Richardson, *Vade Mecum*, 29, advised apprentices "in your Business, to be serious, grave, even-temper'd, and respectful to every Body; and this you may be, and yet be chearful and pleasant: For there is a proper Medium between *Moroseness* and *Melancholy* on one Hand, and *Flippancy* and *Pertness* on the other."

[1040]In 1722, Myatt complained to the Committee about his homeward-bound armourer, John Upton, "whose behaviour hath been very Monstrous, which I have not fail'd to punish him for. Therefore if the said Upton should Endeavour to disprejudice my Name, I hope Your Honrs will be pleas'd to cast a favourable Construction upon it." Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 22 August 1722, A. 11/2, fo. 43.

[1041]Richard Staunton (Albany) to HBC (London), 21 August 1723, A. 11/2, fo. 46.

connection between drink and idleness.[1042] Alcohol was a factor in the 1735 Boxing Day fire that almost completely destroyed Moose,[1043] and this focused the Committee's attention on the issue of drunk and disorderly behaviour in their factories; it also forced their factors to defend themselves and their men. In 1738, James Isham assured the Committee, "No Gang of men Can behave soberer, than has been here [at York Fort], and which your honours may be assured we shall discourage anything to the contrary: the consequence is so dreadful."[1044] The Fort Prince of Wales Council suggested that reports of drunkenness at their factory were false, and "asserted for an undoubted truth that our people have behaved in a very sober and orderly manner, there being a particular regard

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[1042]Alcohol was used to encourage workplace conviviality, harmony and fellowship: Rule, *Experience of Labour*, 201. For the connection between drink and idleness in eighteenth-century Britain, see Sarah Jordan, "From Grotesque Bodies to Useful Hands: Idleness, Industry, and the Labouring Class," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 25 (Autumn 2001), 63-65. At Albany in 1732, Joseph Adams chose Jeremiah Coppage as Thomas Render's mate on the *Moose River* sloop (recently renamed the *Churchill*) over Martin Fowler, "by reason yt Fowler is not capable to Effeciate in that station, he being a man Inclineable to Liquor." Joseph Adams (Albany) to HBC (London), 14 August 1732, A. 11/2, fo. 72d. The following year, Adams called accountant and assistant trader John Walker "as helpless as a Child and very much Adicted to Liquor which Gives me a Great uneasiness and may prove very Prejudicial to your Interest in Case of my Decease." Joseph Adams & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 31 July 1733, A. 11/2, fo. 77d. The Committee sent Thomas Bird to serve as Adames' Second instead of Walker.

[1043]Sloopmaster William Bevan, formerly master on the Eastmain, took charge of Moose in 1732, but apparently did little to hinder his men's drinking (of which he may have been too fond himself). Davies, *Letters*, xlvi; also see Joseph Adams (Albany) to HBC (London), 14 August 1732, A. 11/2, fo. 73d. Bevan and his Council reported "the melancholy news" of the Boxing Day fire to the Committee in William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 26 August 1736: "The great loss to your honours and the extreme hardships we endured, with the particular circumstances [of the fire]...we beg leave to refer to our journal." They emphasised that since the fire, "we have with heart and hand applied ourselves to rebuild our factory." *Letters*, 217, 218. Bevan's replacement, the veteran Richard Staunton, reported to the Committee in 1738 that "drunkenness and debauchery have been the causes of all your honours' misfortunes, for if there had been but one discreet person [the fire could have been prevented]....But I may with justice say they were all stupefied or else some one man would a [*i.e.* have] endeavoured before the flames broke out to a found from whence that smoke should proceed for so many hours together." Richard Staunton and George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 265.

[1044]James Isham (York) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 260-262.

had to suppress all indecencies."[1045] Likewise, Thomas Bird promised vigilance in keeping Albany's men from drunkenness, although he himself was posthumously accused of "that vice."[1046]

These factors – particularly Isham – were implicitly juxtaposing the alleged sobriety prevailing at their posts against the disorder at Moose, where Richard Staunton in that year declared that "drunkenness and debauchery have been the causes of all your honours' misfortunes"[1047] and condemned the men of Moose altogether.

> if there was any one that had any spark of honesty or modesty remaining in them, it was become a custom here, and I am afraid in other parts of your country, to abolish those principles of honesty and virtue, and to endeavour to get them into the same scrape with themselves, that there should not be any one to accuse the guilty...or...left to impeach them, nor boy not so much as the very Company's apprentices but what have been debauched, insomuch in a few years more your honours would a had no occasion neither for a warehouse nor any trading room, only for your honours to a provided a ship, trading goods and provisions, to a paid your servants wages, and I may with justice say that every servant here in your country would a been very officious and double diligent to a taken vigilant care your honours should not a been overburdened with too much profit if any.[1048]

[1045]Council (Fort Prince of Wales) to HBC (London), 1 August 1738, *Letters*, 243.

[1046]Thomas Bird & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), [1738], *Letters*, 273. In 1740, the Albany Council informed the Committee, "As we are of Opinion that Mr Birds Death might be hastened by an immoderate use of Liquors, we shall take particular care to prevent all your Servants from being guilty of that vice, the Thought of the Calamities of our Neighbouring Factory at the Late dreadful fire being continually before our Eyes." Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 24 August 1740, A. 11/2, fo. 102d.

[1047]Richard Staunton (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 266.

[1048]Richard Staunton (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 270; also Richard Staunton and George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 267. Staunton claimed that Thomas Render (Moose's first Chief) "as I have been informed was an honest man which was one as they termed it would neither eat oats himself nor suffer any other within his knowledge, which I take to be the same as if they had said if he would not be a rogue himself nor suffer any other within his knowledge to be so, for they soon worked him out of his place and got another [*i.e.* John Jewer] which they brought into the crimes with themselves and then they made a tool of him." Richard Staunton and George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 271.

Staunton referred to the servants' diligence, vigilance, and care for "your honours," but turned those desirable qualities on their heads by using them to describe the servants working for their own interests rather than for the Company's. His vivid portrayal of Moose as "a dismal ruinated place" began with alcohol and ended in vaguely-defined "vice" and "ignorance."[1049] He singled out labourer Thomas Carr as "one that is so corrupted with evil examples that he is not at all fit for your honours' service" and sailor John Smith, "his brother...as he calls him...[who] has twice as I am informed been sent home for misdemeanours, once from Churchill and once from hence, he being a vile man and...any one that shall speak in his behalf must have had a feeling [*sic*] in some of his evil practices."[1050]

Factors strongly believed that a 'wicked' man could 'corrupt' those around him. In 1739, James Isham sent home bricklayer Richard Mincyn, "not thinking it convenient to keep him with sober men, he being continually drunk and corrupting other men from doing their duty."[1051] In 1726, Albany Chief Joseph Myatt complained that mariner James

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[1049]Staunton (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 270. By 'ignorance' Staunton was referring to offences or sins caused by ignorance.

[1050]Staunton (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 266. Staunton predicted that Carr and Smith would meet a bad end ("I wish they do not both go up Holbourn Hill in a cart").

Although a number of incidents occurred in Hudson Bay which could have been prosecuted in England, there is no evidence that crimes or misdemeanours in the service were followed up in criminal or civil court. Joseph Robson commented on this in the 1740s – "If a servant is guilty of theft, or any act that would be deemed gross felony by the laws of England, and subject to capital punishment, the governor only whips him, and afterwards sends him home to be prosecuted by the Company: but from a mistaken lenity, or for some secret reasons, they proceed no farther than a quiet dismission from their service" – and concluded that "the Company are unwilling to try the issue of a legal process, lest by any accidental mention of their transactions in the Bay, their whole conduct should be too nicely scrutinized." Robson, 17.

[1051]James Isham (York) to HBC (London), 29 August 1739, *Letters*, 308.

Miller was "So Monsterous Wiked and Disobediant to Commds, that I Desire he may be recall'd home the next year for I fear he will Currupt all ye young Men in ye factory"[1052] Richard Staunton sent carpenter John Booth home from Moose in 1737 for "being a very fractious man and one that is enough to corrupt the whole country."[1053] In 1738, Richard Staunton and accountant George Howy (the only man at Moose Staunton trusted enough to have on his Council) suggested that this moral corruption affected their colleague's health:

> And now I do not at all wonder at Mr Macklish [Thomas McCliesh Jr] return home the second time [in 1736], he having the first time found how your honours' affairs was managed amongst the natives in the country. I am of the opinion it then made him sick which made him return, but coming a second time and finding the factory quite demolished and the state of affairs in all respects worse and worse, it then made him bad indeed if not right down ill, for to think he had so much encumbrances to manage or such a sea of difficulties to go through that he rather chose to return and quit your honours' service than to plunge himself into so many difficulties in his old days, where he was sure he should get no credit.[1054]

Moose Fort itself seemed to be tainted by the evil men within it: "For some time after my arrival I was really ashamed to find such a dismal ruinated place as I did then find it to be

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[1052]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 August 1726, A. 11/2, fo. 57.

[1053]Richard Staunton & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 20 August 1737, *Letters*, 236. Staunton was astonished the following year when Captain Christopher Middleton allowed Booth, then serving as carpenter on the *Hudson's Bay* [V], to come ashore at Moose: Richard Staunton & George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 269.

[1054]Richard Staunton and George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 270-271. McCliesh had re-engaged in 1735 as 'Governor in Hudson Bay' and sailed to Albany, where he was to have succeeded chief factor Joseph Adams and to have supervised business at Moose, but severe illness ("A Violent pain in his breast with A Difficulty of breathing ever Since his Arrival in Hudsons Straights") forced him to return home: Thomas McCleish & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 19 August 1735, A. 11/2, fo. 82. He went out again the following year, but again returned home due to ill-health: Thomas McCleish & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 2 September 1736, A. 11/2, fo. 86. He again re-engaged in 1737, but his contract was cancelled before the ships sailed. McCliesh was at least in his late 50s, having first entered the Company's service in 1698. A.M. Johnson, "McCliesh, Thomas," *DCB* III, 414-415.

and so very much corrupted."[1055]

Although most miscreants left the Company's service, some found mercy and forgiveness. Former Blue Coat boy Samuel Hopkins was apprenticed for seven years in 1714 and was keeping, or at least copying, the accounts in his second season at Albany; however, he was unhappy under Myatt's management and, on 3 October 1722, he left Albany without warning or explanation.[1056] He wintered away from the factory (precisely where is unknown) with an unnamed Home Guard Cree and returned to Albany on 1 May 1723; he left again on 17 May, but the Upland Cree whom he followed upriver did not want him and he was quickly apprehended by two of his factory mates.[1057] Hopkins went home in disgrace that year, but the Committee re-engaged him in 1724 "out of charity": he served at York, first as steward (1724-27) and then as book-keeper (1727-31), before returning home with Thomas McCliesh Jr's praise in 1731.[1058] In 1734, when surgeon

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[1055]Richard Staunton and George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 270.

[1056]Joseph Myatt left Hopkins temporarily in charge of Albany while he went upriver to set some fishing nets; and when Myatt returned later that day, Hopkins was gone: the sentry reported seeing Hopkins walking westward from the factory carrying his gun. Albany journal, 3 October 1722, B. 3/a/11, fo. 7. The Committee stopped Hopkins' wages (£20 per annum) on the day "he Run from ye Factory without Leave." A. 16/1, fo. 5; Brown, 25.

[1057]The sentry who failed to notice Hopkins' second "Escape" received "corporal Punishment for his Neglectt of Duty." When Myatt asked Hopkins to explain his "Obominable and foolish Proceedings," Hopkins replied that Myatt's command was too confining, "soe farr as...not to Suffer him out of the Gate without my Liberty." Albany journal, 1, 17 May 1723, B. 3/a/11, fos. 22d, 24-24d.

[1058]G.E. Thorman, "Hopkins, Samuel," *DCB* II, 291. At York, Hopkins was once again under the command of Thomas McCliesh Jr (as he had been through almost all of his apprenticeship, 1715-21), who reported in 1725 that "Samuel Hopkins has behaved himself very handsomely, and have made him steward this year, by reason believe he is naturally honest." Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 26 August 1725, *Letters*, 109. In 1731, McCliesh observed that "he has been very diligent and honest in the discharge of his duty, and is deserving of your honours' favour." Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 7 August 1731, *Letters*, 158. McCliesh considered Hopkins's "misbehaviour" as representative of the general state of affairs at Albany after his own departure from thence in 1721: "I think that most of them turned fools and madmen. I must confess that I never knew Samuel Hopkins guilty in defrauding of the Company all the six years he served under me, and very obliging, and appears now to be mighty sorry for his former misbehaviour." Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 16 August 1724, *Letters*, 99.

John Edwards went home from Moose, his superior, William Bevan, commented that he "is wonderfully reformed and has behaved in a very dutiful and obedient manner this last year, his whole deportment being the reverse to his former conduct."[1059] In 1739, the Albany Council mentioned that labourer William Macklin and mariner William Fosset "were called before ye Councill and examined, who both made their Submission, and begg'd Mercy, wherefore we thought it not necessary to continue their Punishment."[1060] In general, themes of reconciliation were less apparent in HBC documents than they often were in the resolution of master-servant conflicts in contemporary Britain.[1061] When employed, however, they were powerful because they exhibited the best aspects of paternalism, namely the rhetorical figures of the compassionate master and the obedient servant.

Factors claimed to set a good example for their men to follow. In 1741 Joseph Isbister and his Council referred to the many "Vices" of which the men of Albany were guilty: "we have not only promised to rectify [such behaviour], but shall be carefull to

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[1059]William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 20 August 1734, *Letters*, 197.

[1060]Rowland Waggoner & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 15 August 1739, A. 11/2, fo. 97d. Although Fosset appears to have gone home in 1738 (A. 16/3, fo. 13), Macklin served at Albany as a labourer and a tailor until 1742 and in 1740 his wages were increased from £10 to £14 (A. 16/2, fo. 83; A. 16/3, fo. 10).

John Potts chose not to send Richard Mincyer home from Richmond in 1753 because "his behaviour has been som[e]thing better than formerly": John Potts & Council (Richmond) to HBC (London), 31 August 1753, A. 11/57, fo. 19d. Mincyen remained in the service until his death ("being quite wore out") at York in April 1761: Andrew Graham (York) to Humphrey Marten (Severn), 12 May 1761, B. 239/b/22, fo. 7d.

[1061]Griffiths, *Youth and Authority*, 342-344, found that "authorities were especially concerned with 'example' and public display to communicate their interpretation of upright youth." They used the language of friendship, submission, amendment, and forgiveness to preserve the relationship which 'disorderly' servants challenged. "A suitably chastened youth was expected to submit to authority, ask forgiveness, and promise future amendment....The theme of reconciliation touched even the very worst cases."

show a virtuous Example in ourselves."[1062] The value placed on good and proper behaviour was highlighted by references to 'decorum.' In 1728, Joseph Myatt recommended engaging a mate for sloopmaster William Bevan, "by Reason Mr Bevan is Oblidged to be on Shore as Soon as he Arrives at his Winter Quarters [Eastmain], In order to trade with the Indians, and his men Standing all upon a Footing, there is no Decorum kept on Board the S[ai]d Vessell when Ever his Back is turn'd."[1063] In 1732, Joseph Adames praised his Second, Thomas White, who was acting Chief in autumn 1731 while Adames was at Moose: "at my return I found that he had Acted with a Great Deal of prudence & Delligence both in Treating the Natives well and Carr[y]ing a Good Decorum."[1064] Richard Staunton promised "to keep a good decorum in your factory" at Moose in 1739, and in 1750 John Potts promised to severely punish any "breach of Decorum" at Richmond.[1065] Whereas in wartime factors were expected to maintain a military-style discipline, in peacetime they focused instead on decorum, which was more appropriate to the households which their factories increasingly resembled.

[1062]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 6 September 1741, A. 11/2, fo. 106d. In 1738, Richard Staunton promised to get country provisions, "although I must say I cannot do as formerly show both good examples and precepts, only now good precepts and dictate, for I cannot go abroad as formerly, age hindering my speed." Richard Staunton and George Howy (Moose) to HBC (London), August 1738, *Letters*, 265. He and Howy also (271) hoped to "reclaim" the Captain of the Moose River Lowland Cree (who had learned from the English "so much villainy, which neither he nor any other Indian whatsoever never ought to have known.") "if possible...by showing him good examples and kind usage."

[1063]Joseph Myatt (Albany) to HBC (London), 5 August 1728, A. 11/2, fo. 62d.

[1064]Joseph Adames (Albany) to HBC (London), 14 August 1732, A. 11/2, fo. 73d.

[1065]Richard Staunton & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 17 August 1739, *Letters*, 306. John Potts & Council (Richmond) to HBC (London), 3 September 1750, A. 11/57, fo. 9; also John Potts & Council (Richmond) to HBC (London), 10 August 1752, A. 11/57, fo. 15d.

Public and Hidden Transcripts in Hudson Bay

Early modern power relations are the subject of an extensive secondary literature. The consensus that has emerged from recent work is that such relations were more multi-faceted than they may at first appear, and thus our understanding of them may be problematic. Most social historians now argue that the relatively weak were able to manipulate for their own purposes "the texts, languages, and performances which were intended to explain, demonstrate, and justify the power of their superiors."[1066] Investigations of such agency, however, generally presume a dichotomy between deference and confrontation, especially in the common emphasis on riots as moments when those normally rendered silent were given historical voice.[1067]

Seeking an alternative to this dichotomy, some scholars have borrowed from James C. Scott's fieldwork among the peasantry of southeast Asia. Particularly useful has been Scott's distinction between the 'public transcript' – "the repertoire of acceptable public behaviour between superior and subordinate in face-to-face contexts" – and the

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[1066]Micheal J. Braddick & John Walter, "Introduction: Grids of power: order, hierarchy and subordination in early modern society," in Braddick & Walter (eds.), *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy and Subordination in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 5.

[1067]Braddick & Walter, "Grids of power," 5, call this dichotomy "constraining." John Walter, "Public transcripts, popular agency and the politics of subsistence in early modern England," in Braddick & Walter (eds.), *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy and Subordination in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 146-147, complains that "reconstructing popular politics from riot and rebellion has produced what we might label a 'stepping stone' history, in which periods of subordination are punctuated by moments of agency, and a popular politics is seen as spasmodic and reactive." This was also the problem facing Edith Burley in her recent study of discipline in the HBC, in which she cautioned (247-248) against the perception that disobedience and dissension were the norm.

'hidden transcript' – "what each side may say or think when they are off-stage."[1068] The deference expressed in the public transcript gives the impression (to both participants and observers) that the existing social order is a consensual one. This adds an important conceptual element to the existing discussion of deference and subordination by scholars of early modern Britain – some of whom found, as Scott did, that the content and boundaries of the public transcript were not simply constructed by dominant elites, but were to some extent the result of ongoing negotiations/struggles between dominant and subordinate groups.[1069] The different processes of negotiation which took place at different times and in different places help account for the overall flexibility of relationships between superiors and subordinates.[1070]

The use of dominant discourses (such as the rhetoric of master-servant relationships or the socio-economic model of the patriarchal household-family) by subordinates does not necessarily indicate a complete commitment to the social relations expressed in those discourses, nor does it preclude conflict between the two groups.[1071] Deference in master-servant relationships, and indeed in most power relations, depends

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[1068]Braddick & Walter, "Grids of power," 5; also Laslett, 213-220. The concept of a 'public transcript' is similar to the "implicit contracts between employer and employed" which Patrick Joyce and others argue "provide the basis for authority in work and outside it": Whipp, 776.

[1069]Braddick & Walter, "Grids of power," 5-6; Whipp, 775-776; Woodward, *Men at Work*, 207; Price, "The labour process and labour history," 62, 64. Also see Patrick Joyce's discussion of the "terrain of compromise" ("Work," 162-163). Withington & Shepard, 6, referring to David Sabean's study of popular culture in early modern Germany, suggest that communities are characterized "not [by] shared values or common understanding so much as [by] the fact that members of a community are engaged in the same argument...in which alternative strategies, misunderstandings, conflicting goals and values are thrashed out."

[1070]Wrightson, "Social Order," 194-195, 199.

[1071]See Braddick & Walter, "Grids of power," 6; Wrightson, "Social Order," 193-194.

on the inclusion in the public transcript of implicit promises of benefits for subordinate groups. These promised benefits, at least some of which must be realized, give subordinate groups their own stake in the prevailing order.[1072] Thus, the patently imbalanced power relations of a position in service were made relatively palatable by the realistic promise of someday moving out of service to become a householder and quite possibly a master with servants of one's own.[1073] In the HBC, that promise could take two forms, either rising through the Company's ranks to become the master of a small post or the factor of a major one; or using the savings and skills (and perhaps the connections) acquired in Hudson Bay to launch a more independent life upon return to Britain.

These conceptual models, emphasizing negotiation and confrontation between horizontally defined (and sometimes vague) groups such as 'superiors' and 'subordinates,' may appear to refute the existence of vertical ties between those groups – the existence of which have been taken as one of the defining aspects of 'community' since the nineteenth century. It is not necessary, however, to think of social relations entirely in terms of a dichotomy between the sentimental (represented by vertical ties) and the instrumental (represented by horizontal ties). Keith Wrightson has found evidence of both models at work throughout early modern England. Rather than focus on the dichotomy, he suggests that social relations in a particular time and place represented the

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[1072]Walter, "Public transcripts," 124, adds that having a stake in the prevailing social order allows subordinate groups the opportunity to legitimately criticize the public transcript in its own terms. Also see Withington & Shepard, 6. Also see Griffiths, Fox, & Hindle, "Introduction," 2: "A reciprocal element lies at the heart of almost all power relations."

[1073]Laslett, 51, considered that "the head of the poorest family was at least the head of something."

particular accommodation "between the forces of social *identification* – as kinsmen, friends, neighbours, patron and client, co-religionists, fellow countrymen – and the forces of social *differentiation* – as landlord and tenant, master and man, governor and governed, rich and poor." Everyday life contained both vertical and horizontal ties, although the balance between them could change.[1074] Public transcripts in the early modern period emphasized vertical ties, probably partly to guard against horizontal divisions becoming social fissures, while hidden transcripts emphasized horizontal ties as a counter-balance to the hegemony of a dominant elite.

A Bayside factory was bound together by vertical ties based primarily on an organizational hierarchy which was contractual but which reflected older understandings of the mutual obligations involved in master-servant agreements; on patron-client connections (which were occasionally expressed through fictive kinship); and on the familiarity which must arise in a small face-to-face setting within clearly-defined physical limits (the factory and its surrounding area, or 'plantation'). Each factory was also bound together, and to other factories, by horizontal ties based on friendship, workplace camaraderie, and (again) familiarity. These communal bonds[1075] extended beyond the factory walls, connecting the factories vertically with London through contractual obligations and (ideally) the overarching patron-client relationship in which the Committee was the patron and servants of all ranks were the clients. Homeguard Cree

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[1074]Wrightson, "Social Order," 198-199; Fletcher & Stevenson, 2.

[1075]This argument borrows C. J. Calhoun's three "orders" of communal bonds, "those based on familiarity, specific obligations and diffuse obligations": Calhoun, 117. Also see Whipp, 773; Wrightson, "Politics of the parish," 32; Payne, 42.

individuals and bands also formed part of these fur trade communities, linked by the familiarity of close association, by the horizontal ties of friendship, by the vertical ties implied in the trading relationship (particularly in the naming of trade captains and lieutenants), and by ties of kinship which could operate both vertically and horizontally.

The public transcript employed in these factories and in their correspondence with London was based principally upon a long-established rhetorical understanding of the master-servant relationship that had its roots in the later Middle Ages and prevailed at least until the end of the eighteenth century in most parts of Britain. Although the social relationships in HBC workplaces were ideally straightforward, focussing on deference and the acceptance of a corporate hierarchy expressed in terms of wages and of status, the public transcript was made problematic by certain organizational aspects of the Company. Bayside factors were both representatives and servants of the master (the Company), while acting as masters of the posts in their charge. This clouded lower servants' perceptions of whom they were expected to show ultimate deference to: running afoul of a factor did not necessarily mean expulsion from the service, particularly given that men could correspond with or speak to the Committee directly and win forgiveness with a suitably penitent and deferential performance. By the same token, having a factor for a patron did not guarantee favour or advancement, and might leave the client vulnerable when the patron died or left the service. The role of ship captains was even more problematic: they arrived every summer to serve as members of factors' Councils in factories of which they were not residents; and soon sailed home again carrying illicit furs, expired (and perhaps disgruntled) servants, and tales and rumours which could

damage some men's reputations and chances for advancement.

In these respects, there were multiple hidden transcripts cutting vertically and horizontally across the Bayside trading communities. Some are certainly lost to us, but others can be perceived (if only dimly). There was a general frustration, sometimes expressed by factors and probably shared by others, that a board of directors in London sent orders, bestowed praise, and issued reprimands without having any direct knowledge of life and labour in Hudson Bay. This frustration represented a fundamental horizontal division between the men of all ranks in "the Country" and their masters in England, a division which only James Knight and John Fullartine were able to bridge by becoming Committee members after leaving the service. However, it was only expressed when a particular element of the public transcript was neglected by the Committee: the servants' deference to the Committee was expected to be reciprocated by the Committee's acknowledgement of the Bayside men's superior knowledge of local conditions.

Perhaps the most eloquent outburst on this subject came from the pen of James Knight in 1716. Knight had left his seat on the Committee two years earlier to re-enter the Company's service, and so felt more provoked than some of his contemporaries might have been at what he perceived as the unreasonable constraints that the Committee sought to place on his command of York. He assured them that he would follow orders as much as possible, "but it cannot be thought that you that are at that distance can see or know altogether how things goes here so well as I do that am upon the spot." He warned that "to tie me up too close to follow your instructions I think it will not be for your advantage; but if you please, to give me a little latitude or else it will be a hindrance to

your interest." "You have not many men, neither is there but few, that knows how to manage your country....[but] there is no man fit to serve you that must be told his business."[1076]

Hidden transcripts can also be glimpsed when factors attempted to exert too much control over their men's activities. For instance, when Joseph Isbister denied his tradesmen at Albany the right to manage their own materials and supplies, he was threatening a defining characteristic of artisan independence. Men resisted factors' attempts to control or prevent trapping or trading on private account because among themselves they believed that not all the produce of their labours necessarily belonged to the Company. Likewise, they sometimes resisted factors' attempts to dictate the pace of their work or their enjoyment of some leisure. One of Henry Pollexfen's hands informed him that it was not a man's job to come and ask for work, while Joseph Isbister at Albany and James Duffield at Moose both encountered problems over their men's bedtimes;[1077] some drunken behaviour may also be explained this way.[1078] In these instances, the vertical ties within household-factories could be cut by horizontal divisions. Given the transitory nature of most men's residence in the Bay, the easiest response in many cases was probably to send the man home rather than try to reconnect the severed ties.

[1076]James Knight (York) to HBC (London), 17 September 1716, *Letters*, 56, 60. Bliss, 87, called this letter "a classic declaration of independence within an organization."

[1077]Duffield tried to combat private trade at Moose by curtailing men's freedom of movement and regulating their time more strictly than was the norm on Hudson Bay: see Ens, 404. Ens, 392-393, characterized this "rigid time-work discipline" as part of new management practices developed during the Industrial Revolution. Actually, Duffield's actions were not innovative: they were merely a particularly strenuous implementation of long-established expectations regarding a master's right to control the time and activities of the servants in his household.

[1078]Burley, 110, 131, 139, argued that drunkenness expressed indifference to authority, and that it demonstrated "how incomplete the [HBC] men's identification with the company actually was."

Conclusion

Men arrived in Hudson Bay with preconceptions about the proper relationships between masters and servants: many probably had previously spent time in service (domestic, craft, or agricultural) or apprenticeship, and their personal experiences would have been reinforced by the conduct manuals so prevalent in the contemporary popular literature. Humphrey Marten's 1771 assurance that "Inclination, Duty and Gratitude, all strongly prompt me to exert my self in suppressing the Evils of Private Trade"[1079] summed up the major elements of the contemporary ideal of a servant's relationship to his master. Marten's predecessor, Robert Temple, adopted a more personal tone, assuring the Committee that "nothing gives me so much pleasure as giving satisfaction to those that employ me."[1080] These men internalized and practised the expected values of deference and submission, but they could do so without abandoning or deferring their own self-interest; indeed, they could use their mastery of the language to advance their own interests.

[1079]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 3 September 1771, A. 11/3, fo. 169.

[1080]Robert Temple (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 31 August 1762, A. 11/3, fo. 55. Marten used similar words in 1781 to inform the Committee of his intention to leave the service (which he had entered in 1750) due to ill health: "the return of an inviterate billious disorder hath too often deprived me of the use of my Limbs, and, what is worse, at particular periods deprived me of that Vigour of mind, that is really necessary to the well conducting your [of] your affairs; on this Account Gentlemen I must decline the honour of being employed by you any longer; why should I fill a station I find myself unfit for?" Humphrey Marten (York) to HBC (London), 28 August 1781, A. 11/116, fo. 87; quoted in Glover, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, xxi fn.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

This study approaches early modern personnel issues in a more systematic way than contemporaries approached the same issues. Even the specialized commercial academies in Britain by the end of the eighteenth century did not teach concepts of labour management or even how to handle labour sensibly in terms of long-term low cost.[1081] Nevertheless, cost reduction was a principal determinant in the HBC London Committee's general approach to personnel issues. Throughout the first century of their operations, and particularly when faced with competitive and costly wartime labour markets in Britain, they demonstrably preferred cheap labour for their overseas trading posts.

In general, pre-1782 evidence indicates that the HBC selected recruits on the basis of their competence at a particular occupation and their willingness to serve overseas at a specific wage for a specific period of time, rather than trying to predict their suitability for Bayside service. The Committee did not believe that no significant or unusual skills were needed for Bayside service: they apparently felt that such skills were needed but could not be learned or acquired anywhere other than the Bay. Thus, it was useless to concoct a series of selection criteria for recruitment in Britain because it was impossible to pre-determine suitability for the service. The only way of knowing whether a man would do well in the Bay was to send him there and watch his progress.

'Good' personnel were defined and described in terms drawn from contemporary

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[1081] Pollard, 121, 160.

ideals of master-servant relationships in British households. Sobriety, industry, diligence, honesty, and diversity were valued characteristics for men in all ranks of the corporate hierarchy; indeed, higher-ranking men – not only officers, but skilled tradesmen and 'old hands' as well – had a responsibility to lead by example. Failure to live up to these expectations could significantly hamper a man's prospects: although a capable servant was worth hanging on to, in the long run a 'stable' servant was more valuable to the Company.[1082]

Jockeying for favour was common among the Company's servants, particularly the factors and those who aspired to become factors. This usually took the form of criticising peers or predecessors. Joseph Isbister complained that Albany had been dangerously low on supplies and provisions in 1754, for which he blamed "the artful Cuning" of the Previous Chief, George Spence, "who with false glosses, to ingratiate him self into Your Honours favour, made Small Indents to the risk of distressing Your Factory and prejudice of his Successor."[1083] In 1765, Humphrey Marten complained about "the light that [William] Richards and [Guy] Warwick set me in to the Indians." The conflict between Marten and Richards escalated: in 1766, Marten referred to "some bickerings between Mr Richards and my Self on account of the Trading Indians and Guy Warwick has not been alltogether Idle on the same score," and in 1768 to "a kind of Paper Warr

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[1082]Pollard, 161, made this point about labour in the early industrial factories.

[1083]Joseph Isbister (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 14 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 175. In the same letter (fo. 175), Isbister apologised for allowing the supply ship to leave for Moose before unloading all of the cargo, "but must remark that when your Captains are In these parts [they] will hardly admit of any Controll but do as they themselves think fit."

between me and Mr Richards."[1084]

In most cases, men were content to be on the same footing as their peers, especially in their wages. The former sloopman in charge of Henley House, William Isbister, considered his position not unlike that of the sloopmasters in charge of the Eastmain trade and thus asked to be given the same wages as a sloopmaster.[1085] Albany armourer Peter Stephens requested a raise (from £20 to £30) in 1755 to put him on the same footing as Moose's armourer.[1086] Ferdinand Jacobs' 1754 request for a wage increase surprised the Committee, who responded, "We Expected the fixing [of] your Salary at £70 p Annum would have been fully Satisfactory, especially as it exceeds the Allowance we ever gave Mr Pilgrim."[1087]

However, extraordinary service demanded extraordinary compensation, whether in the form of increased wages or gratuities. In the vulnerable decades after 1686, in which the Company often controlled only one factory, the Committee used gratuities lavishly to encourage their small and anxious workforce. The threat of capture and

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[1084]Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 15 September 1765, A. 11/3, fo. 88d; Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 22 August 1766, A. 11/3, fo. 102d; Humphrey Marten (Albany) to HBC (London), private, 27 August 1768, A. 11/3, fo. 114. Also see Humphrey Marten & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 30 August 1768, A. 11/3, fos. 121-122.

[1085]Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 23 August 1744, A. 11/2, fo. 121.

[1086]Stephens, "a good workman (and tolerable Sober)," also acted as blacksmith after Patrick Mulvey went home early in 1755: Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 13 September 1755, A. 11/2, fo. 182. In 1754 Stephens had signed a five-year contract at £20 per annum with a £10 gratuity at the end: A. 16/3, fo. 94. The Committee offered him a £20 gratuity for his extra efforts, but Stephens rejected that offer and demanded £30 per annum. Isbister chose to send him home on account of "his ill behaviour this Last Year, as to the first he behaved so tolerable well that he deceived us all, but this last Action of his the 5th September at Night has for the peace and Safety of this Place induced us to send him home, tho we shall be in want of an Armourer." Joseph Isbister & Council (Albany) to HBC (London), 10 September 1756, A. 11/3, fo. 8d.

[1087]HBC (London) to Ferdinand Jacobs (Fort Prince of Wales), 22 May 1754, A. 5/1, fo.4.

imprisonment affected all men equally, and the appearance of a French warship on the horizon tended to both concentrate the mind and blur the dividing line between corporate and personal interests: preserving your own life and personal property was suddenly not so far removed from defending the Company's property.[1088] When no warships marred the view of Hudson Bay, the most tangible practical consequences of wartime conditions were the curtailment of Company operations and the enjoyment of predictably inflated salaries.

After the Treaty of Utrecht, slow but steady expansion provided opportunities for men of all ranks to demonstrate their value to the Company. For instance, labourer and bricklayer Augustine Frost (HBC 1719-29, 1730-42, 1746-59) sheds much light on both the ideal and the reality of the Company service in this period. As a labourer at Fort Prince of Wales in the early 1720s, Frost distinguished himself as "a very good hand for the country" and very useful as a bricklayer; his wages rose from £10 to £16 in 1724. He was to go home in 1725, but in light of the deaths of mariner William Manning (d. 30 November 1724) and labourer George Hicks (d. 27 May 1725), Frost agreed with Chief Factor Richard Norton (who described him as "a very serviceable hand for the country as fishing, fowling or any other employ") "to tarry in the country for the same wages as George Hicks had [£14]." He was again set to go home in 1726, when newly-engaged bricklayer Thomas Haws, "being a very sickly man," returned home after only one year in

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[1088]The same situation applied when men posted to inland posts felt threatened. In 1781, Robert Longmoor pre-empted a Cree attack on Hudson House (for which he gave no explanation except that the Natives were drunk) and assured the Committee that "I am all ready...and every man here the same, for to defend our Masters property and our own Lives." Hudson House journal, 4 March 1781, *Cumberland Journals, Second Series*, 182.

the Bay: in his place, the Council re-engaged Frost for one year at £20.[1089] The Committee wanted to move Frost to York in 1729, but Frost preferred to return home, "having been in the country ten years and his father being deceased this last year, he has some effects left him which he is afraid he may lose if he does not go home."[1090]

Frost apparently sorted out his affairs in England, although it is not known whether he was able to secure his portion of his father's estate. He re-engaged in 1730, this time being sent to Moose as a bricklayer at £16. In 1733, William Bevan reported that Frost was no longer able to undertake bricklayer's work, but in 1735 Bevan re-engaged him for two years at £20, "he being a very useful man and we having no bricklayer."[1091] Frost married into a local Homeguard Cree family and became a member of the Council at Moose in 1736,[1092] although Chief Factor James Duffield sent him home in 1742 as "incompatable to the Company's interest."[1093] However, he re-entered the

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[1089]Richard Norton & Thomas Bird (Churchill) to HBC (London), 3 August 1723, *Letters*, 86; Richard Norton (Churchill) to HBC (London), n.d. [1725], *Letters*, 112; Richard Norton (Churchill) to HBC (London), 14 August 1726, *Letters*, 117-118; A. 16/9, fo. 3. Hawes had been engaged at £26: A. 16/9, fo. 15.

[1090]Anthony Beale (Churchill) to HBC (London), 26 July 1729, *Letters*, 140. Thomas McCliesh Jr would have welcomed Frost's transfer, "for a man that understands bricklayer's business is much wanted at this place," but he doubted that Frost would be willing to come to York. Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 1 August 1729, *Letters*, 143, 144.

[1091]William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 15 August 1733, *Letters*, 182; Thomas McCliesh Jr & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 24 August 1735, *Letters*, 209; A. 16/2, fo. 41.

[1092]William Bevan & Council (Moose) to HBC (London), 26 August 1736, *Letters*, 219.

[1093]By 1742, James Duffield believed that Frost had become "so much an Indian himself that he has no concern for either his native country or the Company's interest." Moose journal, 12 February 1742, B. 135/a/11, fos. 35d-36, quoted in Ens, 400. Frost was actively involved in a network of private trade which connected Captain William Coats and the crew of the supply ship with local Lowland Cree: Duffield complained that Frost had "corrupted all the Englishmen" since 1730, and made him the focus of his struggle against private trade. Quoted in Ens, 400. Pannekoek, 7, claimed that "the 'country' or 'corrupted' faction [led by Frost] ...exercised power [at Moose] with confidence and little opposition." However, Pannekoek's discussion of 'corruption' at Moose was very generalized and overly sensational; bold statements like this are not substantiated by clear evidence in the surviving Moose Fort journals or

service in 1746 and served at York, where he was a member of Council from 1748 and where he died in 1759.[1094]

Frost's 35 years in Hudson Bay were unusual, but otherwise his service illustrates the trends among his contemporaries, as well as among men who came before and after him. He was consistently described as 'serviceable' and 'useful' (except by Duffield), and his utility was clearly enhanced by his versatility. In 1729, Thomas McCliesh Jr commented that "the good character given of Augustin Frost is what I have been informed by all that is competent judges."[1095] The language used by factors to describe Frost was the language used throughout the Company's long first century to describe the 'best' and most valued servants.

Like many HBC servants, Frost maintained ties with home, and like him, some men briefly interrupted their Company service to attend to personal or family matters in Britain. Even after ten years away, Frost maintained contact with friends and/or family in England, although those ties may have weakened after his father's death. There is no indication that he had abandoned England for Hudson Bay; indeed, there is a hint of fatigue in Beale's comment that Frost had been ten years in the Bay and was ready to see home again. He had been about to leave the Bay on at least two occasions (1725, 1726, and probably 1735), but re-engaged when opportunity presented itself.

The opportunities which presented themselves in 1725, 1726, and 1735 – and

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other documents.

[1094]Ens, "Political Economy," 400n.

[1095]Thomas McCliesh Jr (York) to HBC (London), 1 August 1729, *Letters*, 143, 144.

which in general helped keep Frost in the service for so long – were twofold. On the one hand, he had opportunities to serve his corporate master, to step up in a time of need, in the way that all 'good' early modern servants were expected to do; this may have been the case in 1725 when he took a pay cut to remain in the country in George Hicks' place. On the other hand, he had opportunities to advance his own interests, particularly in 1726 when his reward was a significant wage increase. These two motivations were probably so intertwined in Frost's mind (and his contemporaries') that scholars two-and-a-half centuries away could never disentangle them.

Long service represented at least a certain degree of accommodation between master and servant, but it does not necessarily indicate that the servant had subsumed his interests in his master's interests. Even if we do not take Duffield's accusations at face value, there is no doubt that Frost's Native family connections must have caused some friction within the household-factory of Moose. Although Frost was trying to do what most servants wanted to do – become a householder in his own right – the restrictions of Bayside life did not allow him the luxury of acting both as a servant and as a husband. Those restrictions probably discouraged men from spending more than a small portion of their working lives in Hudson Bay: before 1782, HBC service offered limited opportunities to move away from subordination in the household of another towards becoming a master of one's own household.

Issues of social mobility (and of monetary encouragement) again became paramount when expansion reached into the interior of the largely unknown continent. The inland winterers of the 1750s and 1760s were mostly labourers or mariners: high rank

in the Company was certainly not an impossible dream for them, and some showed promise before illness or death cut their service short. Anthony Henday was Second at Severn before ill health and wage disputes forced him to return home; Joseph Smith was Second at York and at Severn before he died while inland in 1764; and even the illiterate mariner Joseph Waggoner (possibly the half-Cree son of former Albany Chief Rowland Waggoner) was given the command of a sloop and the charge of York's white whale fishery before he drowned in 1766. Isaac Batt, William Pink, and Edward Loutit, in the mid- to late-1760s, were not as upwardly mobile (although Batt's travelling and canoeing skills became much valued after 1774) and most of them did not receive gratuities for their services as Henday had.[1096] The most tangible benefits for them were the proceeds from the furs which they brought back with them and declared as their personal trappings: amounts such as the £8.18.5 Henday received for his personal trappings in 1755[1097] would have been extremely tempting to labourers earning as little as £6 per annum.

However, the monetary rewards offered to Henry Kelsey in the 1690s did not tempt others to follow his lead. One of the considerations mentioned in the 1680s as discouraging men from going inland was the danger, presumably from Natives and/or the 'wilderness' itself.[1098] In the 1750s, in contrast, the French in the interior were seen as the

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[1096]Henday was granted a £20 gratuity for his 1754/55 journey: HBC (London) to James Isham & Council (York), 12 May 1756, A. 6/9, fos. 33d-34. In 1761, Batt was offered fourteen guineas for his past efforts, but that may have been meant to tempt him back into the Company's service: he had left the service in 1760 but re-engaged in 1762. HBC (London) to Isaac Batt (Stansted near Ware, Hertfordshire), 18 April 1761, A. 5/1, fo. 40. In 1768, Ferdinand Jacobs was reminded "not to allow the Persons who go Inland, any other gratuity than their personal Trappings, as they amounted last year to upwards of £80 among the 6 Servants...which if continued will necessarily prevent Us from agreeing to any increase of Wages." HBC (London) to Ferdinand Jacobs (York), 19 May 1768, A. 5/1, fo. 87.

[1097]A. 16/31, fos. 77d-78.

[1098]HBC (London) to Henry Sergeant (Charlton Island), 22 May 1685, *L.O. 1680-1687*, 141.

primary threat.[1099] Although the French were generally very civil to Englishmen inland, this was not taken for granted at the Bay: when French trader Jean Baptiste de Larlee arrived at York seeking employment in 1759, Humphrey Marten reported that "the Gentlemen of the Council as well as myself thought it prudent (for the safety of our men who are now Inland, as also those who are to go by Mr Isham's Order) to give him a Kind Reception."[1100] The French were friendly, however, partly out of concern for their own safety. During the winter of 1756/57, Joseph Smith and Joseph Waggoner were in the company of a French trader, who "always told us, he would Certainly kill us but, the Inds Said if they did or offer'd to do any harm to us, they would kill them all."[1101] Presumably the Natives felt that English-French competition was too valuable an economic opportunity for themselves to allow the Europeans to start killing each other.

The HBC winterers, based primarily at York, clearly perceived the danger from Natives differently than their contemporaries stationed at Albany,[1102] where many men

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[1099]For instance, James Isham called the French "Slie Sutle and artfull to perfaction" and viewed them "as Enemyes to the Company peace or warr." Rich and Johnson, ci; see also A. 11/114, fo. 137. Isham warned Henday about the French, and Henday apparently took these warnings to heart. His second (and, ominously, his last) letter to York while inland in 1754 focused on his imminent arrival at a French post: "the Indians last Night inform'd Me that we should see a French Factory in 3 Days more, and that We must go by it, before We can go [to] their Country I don't very well like it, having nothing to Satisfye Them on what account I am going up the Country, and Very possably they may suspect Me to be a Spy, but I will Face them with a good Countenance let it be how it will, for as I am gone thus Farr, if it please God, Will see the Farthest end of all Their Country, as I can if the French do not stop Me....I wish Your Hon[our]s Health, and if the French should shoot me, I have nothing to lay to Your Hons Charge." Anthony Henday (Minishco River) to James Isham (York), 9 July 1754, A.11/114, fos. 180d-181. In fact, Henday had no difficulties with the French traders.

[1100]Humphrey Marten, "Journal of Our proceedings in Relation to A french Man Who Came to York Fort. June the 20th 1759," A.11/115, fo.36.

[1101]Joseph Smith's journal, 9 February 1757, B.239/a/43, fo. 13.

[1102]See, for example, William Pink's journal, 22 October 1768, B.239/a/61, fo. 9; Anthony Henday's journal, 27 December 1754 and 30 March 1755, B.239/a/40, fos.24, 31.

refused to go to Henley House after 1755 for fear of being killed. The only serious threat mentioned in the winterers' journals was that of the French, and they were encouraged to form relatively close relations with their Cree or Assiniboine parties.[1103] This would improve their knowledge of the languages and, perhaps more importantly, those Cree or Assiniboine groups who had the charge of an Englishman were expected to defend him against the French by force of arms if necessary In general, while relationships must have varied with individuals, the available evidence suggests that these Englishmen could embark on their inland journeys with a reasonable expectation of safety and relative friendliness.

The Company's mid-eighteenth-century servants were apparently not discouraged from inland travel by fear for their lives, even though several of them made their journeys during war with France and all of them were aware of the events at Henley House. Why were so many men in the 1750s and 1760s willing to go inland when so few were reported willing in the 1680s and 1690s? Early slooping expeditions and trading voyages (even in wartime) attested to the bravery of those who served the Company in its early years. The Committee and their factors expected that the Company's trade would benefit, but such considerations were not enough in the seventeenth century and were probably insufficient in the 1750s and 1760s as well.

Allegations of dishonesty among the winterers suggest that at least some of the men had personal motivations, although possibilities for personal aggrandizement existed in the early decades as well. Factors had no certain way of proving that winterers were

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[1103]See, for example, "A Copie of orders and Instructions to Anthy: Hendey, upon a Journey in Land, Dated att York Fort, June 26 1754," A.11/114, fos. 173d.

using Company goods to trade on private account, so the winterers could claim a large amount of furs as their own trappings and receive good market value for them without appearing to cheat the Company (an option not officially available to the earlier men). That was probably an important motivation for such men, suggesting how important personal considerations were in determining worker behaviour on (and away from) the shores of Hudson Bay.

Probably the greatest difference between the men of Henday's generation and those of Henry Kelsey's was their familiarity with Hudson Bay. When Kelsey went inland from York, the English presence there was less than a decade old. By Henday's time, relationships with both Lowland and Upland Cree were more established and probably more intimate. Although Henday himself had only been in Hudson Bay for four years when he embarked on his inland journey, he benefitted from long-standing relationships that the household-factory of York Fort had with various Native households (bands). Once inland, he and other winterers could build their own relationships, including marriage with Native women – which the Englishmen would have seen as an important step towards forming households of their own.

This also explains why wintering inland seemed to have been more popular with servants than employment at an inland outpost. At Henley or Cumberland, men were still under the command of another, whereas wintering with a Native group (even for a few weeks or months, to save on the house's provisions) removed them from managerial supervision. Many men had difficulty integrating even temporarily into Native bands, perhaps because they relished the prospect of independence and objected to trading a

subordinate role in an HBC household for an equally subordinate role in a Native one. However, those who did make the transition could potentially begin building households of their own, although clear evidence of this was unlikely to appear in HBC records. This, of course, is where inland journeys could stray from the Company's expectations: the objections to wintering made by Andrew Graham and Ferdinand Jacobs in the late 1760s were reactions against the interests of Native 'households' and of the HBC's 'private' men impinging on those of the factors and of the Committee.

However, there was not necessarily a conflict between 'private' and 'public' interests in Hudson Bay. Although vertical ties within household-factories seemed to subordinate individual men into the community, deferential words and behaviours could advance servants' interests as well as their masters'. As argued earlier, deference was based on a reasonable expectation of future benefits, implicitly promised in the negotiated public transcript. A subordinate position in a household was tolerable partly because there existed a real possibility of social mobility, even to the point of becoming a householder oneself.

Social mobility carried a few men to the upper ranks of the Company's hierarchy: they achieved householder status through the charge of a factory or house. However, before the rapid expansion of operations after 1782,[1104] Hudson Bay offered only a handful of such opportunities. Marriage to a Cree woman risked threatening the stability of the household-factory because servants in the British household-family were expected to be celibate. The Company's regulations in this period did not allow men to move out

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[1104]Between 1782 and 1821, the HBC built more than 200 trading posts (although most lasted no more than five years) and its labour force grew from under 200 to over 900 men. See Burley, 5.

of the household-factory and remain in Hudson Bay: only regular inland winterers like Joseph Smith and Isaac Batt had the opportunity to (temporarily) establish themselves beyond the factory walls, and even their freedom was still confined by the orders of the Committee and their factors.

For most men in Company service, their options for social mobility were similar to those in contemporary British households. The specific reasons men departed service in Britain and in Hudson Bay are as opaque as the reasons for entering service in the first place, but the public transcripts prevailing in early modern Britain were constructed upon a framework of reciprocal expectations and obligations. Men were willing to remain in a subordinate position as long as they felt they had access to the social and/or economic benefits implicit in the publicly accepted hierarchy of paternalism and deference – such as increasing wages and status, the accumulation of savings, or perhaps simply a sense of community and security. If they perceived that those benefits were being placed beyond their reach, they were more likely to strain or even abandon the behaviours expected of them by their superiors.

Those superiors, including the HBC Committee, sought to maintain orderly and effective households by recruiting and retaining servants who were sober, honest, and diligent. Frequent turnover among those servants was common – and, for the Committee, was a useful way of controlling the wage bill – and was not a cause for concern so long as good servants could be found to replace them. Household-factories, like household-families in contemporary Britain, were flexible institutions predicated on long-established conceptions of master-servant relationships. This foundation was not static, however.

While, in Britain, those conceptions were becoming more clearly contractual in the late eighteenth century, in Hudson Bay those relationship were changing under pressure from the new demands of inland activity after 1743. By 1782, both the Committee and their servants were revising their expectations of each other in the context of a changing working environment on the shores of Hudson Bay and in the interior of Rupert's Land. This study suggests that the long first century of HBC existence needs to be treated as distinct from its later periods, with fuller attention being paid to its social dynamics and contexts, both in England and in Rupert's Land.

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