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[See table of contents](#)

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The Lyon and Bordeaux Connections of Émmanuel Le Borgne (c.1605-1681)

IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF NEW FRANCE the activities of Émmanuel Le Borgne (c. 1605-1681) were an interesting episode which has been described with care in the writings of M.A. MacDonald, George A. Rawlyk, John G. Reid, Mason Wade and others.¹ Le Borgne was a merchant at La Rochelle who in 1642 was drawn into the Acadian enterprises of a famous colonist, Charles Menou d'Aulnay (c.1604-1650). Calling himself governor of Acadia, d'Aulnay was engaged in a struggle for the mastery of the colony, sometimes in guerilla and naval warfare with his rivals. From 1642 until his death in 1650 he depended on Le Borgne to send ships across the Atlantic with supplies and passengers, to receive and sell his return cargoes of furs and in general to act as a business agent at La Rochelle. D'Aulnay died deeply in debt to Le Borgne who consequently laid claim to Acadia in order to recover his investments. One thing led to another, and Le Borgne was soon waging the same struggle for the colony that d'Aulnay had waged in his time. When Le Borgne died in 1681, his sons went on trying to make good their patrimonial claim to Acadia. All these conflicts and the politics that accompanied them are a fascinating story, but one that has already been told. Still largely unknown, however, is the business life of Émmanuel Le Borgne which was — as usual in that age — closely bound up with his family life. What was his standing at La Rochelle that Menou d'Aulnay would turn to him? Who were his partners, if any, and how was he able to meet the heavy demands that d'Aulnay made upon him and to bear the great costs of his own Acadian enterprises later on? What is revealed by an investigation *autour de Le Borgne* (to borrow an approach common in French history)?

Patterns of kinship are keys to the business connections, and so also to what may be described as the “politics”, of trans-Atlantic traders. Le Borgne formed a clan or circle that was in competition with others, such as the Denys clan and the Saint-Étienne de La Tour clan. Of course such clans evolved and occasionally merged or intersected. They resembled political factions more than disciplined armies; but they are the stuff of business history in an age when merchants lived and traded in groups drawn together by ties of kinship and religion. Only in a network of relatives and

1 M.A. MacDonald, *Fortune & La Tour: The Civil War in Acadia* (Toronto, 1983), pp. 94, 98, 178-9, 197; George A. Rawlyk, *Nova Scotia's Massachusetts: A Study of Massachusetts-Nova Scotia Relations, 1630 to 1784* (Montreal and London, 1973), pp. 19-22, 24, 28-34; John G. Reid, *Acadia, Maine and New Scotland: Marginal Colonies in the Seventeenth Century* (Toronto, 1981), see index entries, p. 286; Mason Wade, “Le Borgne, Emmanuel”, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* [DCB], vol. I (Toronto, 1966), pp. 433-5. In this otherwise excellent article, Le Borgne's death is mistakenly given as 1675: in fact, he died on 20 July 1681 aged 76 and it was one of his sons, Émmanuel Le Borgne du Coudray, who died on 5 August 1675.

fellow Roman Catholics, fellow Protestants or fellow Jews did a merchant normally feel that his contracts and funds, ships and merchandise were in good hands. Trust and the credit that depended upon trust were collective in their very nature.² When Le Borgne married two of his daughters to merchants from Lyon and Bordeaux and a third to a La Rochelle notary, all three Catholic, he was enlarging his business circle as well as his family circle. For the 20th-century historian it is difficult to overcome a misleading habit of seeing each merchant as an individual and imagining that family and faith were only personal matters.

Misleading, too, is the inclination to assume that the mind of a 17th-century businessman was formed by a society with ideals much like our own: secular, sceptical, practical, liberal, individualist but with many safety nets, largely egalitarian even though beset by a well-meaning cant which sometimes hides cruel realities. Le Borgne — whose name means “the one-eyed man” — lived in a society accustomed to routinely torturing criminal suspects, enslaving or imprisoning heretics, punishing entire families for the misdeeds of one person, seeking and burning witches, watching half of the population die in childhood and many others in the streets, despising the low-born, struggling to climb a social ladder of unimaginable steepness and coping with hierarchies of patronage in which officials wielded all the arbitrary power of a divine-right monarchy that knew nothing about the rule of law. Merchants ranked low in Bourbon France and so were widely despised, especially in the 17th century before the large-scale shipping merchant, the *négociant*, had been distinguished from the mere shopkeeper, the *marchand*.³ In such a society, family and church offered a certain collective security which a merchant could seldom forego. Tracing Le Borgne’s relationships, therefore, is a way of gaining some understanding of his business life, about which so little has been learned in any other way. So far as is known, only scattered references to Le Borgne survive, and in the absence of a collection of business or personal papers historical knowledge can advance only by modest steps, taking advantage of whatever records have come down to us.

Menou d’Aulnay made heavy demands upon Le Borgne from early in 1642, but had been borrowing from him since 1634, if not earlier. On 1 April 1634 the firm of Le Borgne & Dussault met d’Aulnay in La Rochelle at the Trois Rois Inn, rue du Minage, and lent him 900 *livres* [liv.] in the form of a bottomry loan at 25 per cent premium for the purchase of trading goods to be shipped to Acadia on *Le Petit Saint-Luc* of Brouage, 90 *tonneaux* [tx.], owned by Louys Girard and commanded by Captain Jehan Berthaud of Arvert.⁴ Other such loans of which we have no record

2 J.F. Boshier, “Success and Failure in the Trade with New France, 1660-1760”, *French Historical Studies*, vol. XV (Spring 1988), pp. 444-61.

3 These theme are discussed at greater length in J.F. Boshier, *The Canada Merchants, 1713-1763* (Oxford, 1987).

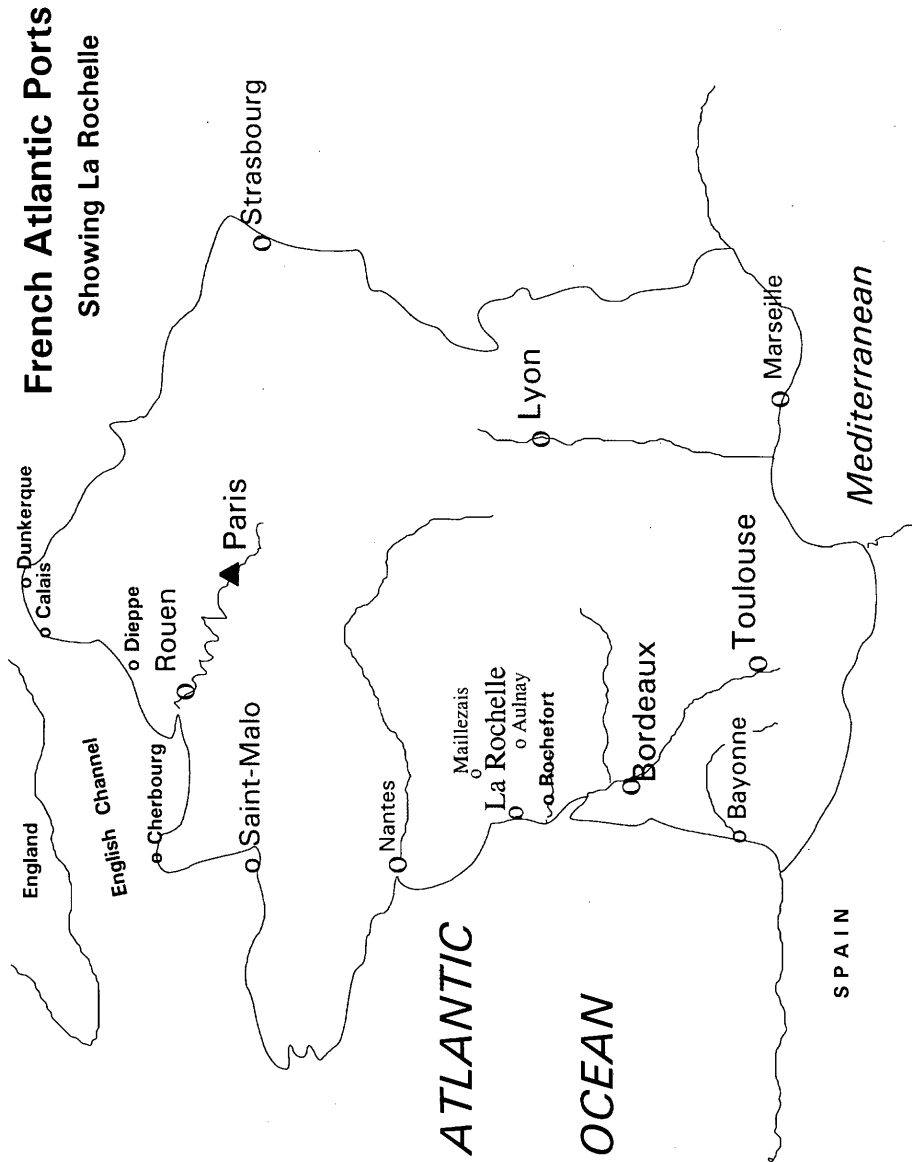
4 Archives départementales de la Charente-Maritime [ADCM] at La Rochelle [LR], a minute of the notary *maître* Juppín of LR dated 12 February 1642, folio [fo.] 15. All references such as this are hereafter abbreviated as, for example, Juppín (LR), 1 April 1634, it being understood that the minutes of all of the La Rochelle notaries are at the ADCM, except *maître* Moreau’s which are at the municipal library of La Rochelle. A general description of the manuscript sources for this article may be found in the introduction to J.F. Boshier, *Men and Ships in the Canada Trade, 1660-1760: A*

almost certainly followed, but it appears that Le Borgne became deeply involved in d'Aulnay's Acadian ventures in 1642. A dozen surviving notarial minutes which Le Borgne signed during that year committed him to enormous expenses on d'Aulnay's behalf, and there were probably others now lost. On 12 February 1642 he chartered *La Marguerite* of La Rochelle, a vessel of 50 tx. burden, for a voyage to Acadia and back for 1,100 liv.⁵ On 16 May he chartered his ship, *Saint-Hélie* of La Rochelle, 150 tx., to d'Aulnay for a voyage to Port-Royal, Acadia, for 5,600 liv., and on the same day Le Borgne lent d'Aulnay 15,989 liv. at 12 1/2 per cent interest, making a total loan of 17,892 liv., for victuals and trading goods to be loaded on the ship.⁶ At the same time, he undertook to manage all of d'Aulnay's affairs at La Rochelle on a commission basis, taking three per cent for cargoes bought and sent out to Acadia, and two per cent for return cargoes of furs received and sold. A few weeks later, on 5 August, Le Borgne sold d'Aulnay a half-share in a ship, *The George* (alias *Le Georges*) of Dover, 180 tx., Captain Francis Ramsay, for 3,000 liv., acting in this transaction for himself as owner of one-sixth and for the owner of the other two-sixths, a certain Charles Berliquet of Calais.⁷ In September Le Borgne signed up several men to serve in Acadia as indentured servants such as, for instance, a stonemason named Jean Garnier.⁸ On 21 September he chartered *La Vierge* of La Rochelle, 120 tx., for a voyage to Port-Royal, a stay there of at least a month, and the return journey, all for 3,600 liv., and loaded her with goods worth 13,579 liv., a sum he counted as a bottomry loan to d'Aulnay at a premium of 12 1/2 per cent.⁹ On the return journey Le Borgne expected a cargo of furs worth 15,000 liv. and reckoned to charge d'Aulnay 12 per cent on that sum also. These were the commitments of only one year. By the time they drew up their accounts on 14 July 1644, d'Aulnay had sent some cargoes of fur to Le Borgne but notwithstanding these he admitted a debt to him of 52,707 liv. which he undertook to repay in six months, this debt to be secured in the meantime against the return cargo expected on Le Borgne's ship, *Le Grand Cardinal* of La Rochelle, 200 tx., which Le Borgne chartered to him two days later for another 20,000 liv.¹⁰ Little wonder that d'Aulnay's debt had grown to some 260,000 liv. by the time of his death in 1650.¹¹

Biographical Dictionary (Ottawa, 1992). The bottomry loan (*prêt à la grosse aventure*) carried a high interest, or premium, because the principal was not recoverable if the ship or cargo were lost. It was thus a kind of insurance as well as a loan.

- 5 The vessel's owners were Jean Massé and the captain, Jacques Boeuf, who was to sail her across the Atlantic: Teuleron (LR), 12 February 1642, fo. 15. For the earlier years see Robert Le Blant, "La Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France et la restitution de l'Acadie (1627-1636)", *Revue d'Histoire des Colonies*, no. 126 (1955), pp. 71-93.
- 6 Teuleron (LR), 16 May 1642, fo. 70-76.
- 7 Teuleron (LR), 5 August 1642, fo. 43. I find no record of who owned the other half-share in her.
- 8 Teuleron (LR), 3 September 1642, fo. 116, *convention*.
- 9 Teuleron (LR), 21 September 1642, fo. 127. She was to be sailed by Captain Hypollite Bourget.
- 10 Teuleron (LR), 14 and 16 July 1644, fo. 304-306.
- 11 René Baudry, "Menou D'Aulnay, Charles de", *DCB*, vol. I, p. 505.

Figure One
French Atlantic Ports
in the 17th Century



The wonder is that Le Borgne's credit in France was good enough to sustain lending on such a scale. He was evidently one of the leading merchants at La Rochelle in these years: one sign of prosperity and sound credit is that he held offices in the principal civic institutions of the town. In 1634 he was already a *conseiller* in the *Juridiction consulaire* (Commercial tribunal), and during the next two years, and again in 1641, he held the higher office of *consul* therein. By 1644 he had risen to the even higher office of *juge* which he held again in 1647. Meanwhile, in 1645 he had served on the municipal government as a *conseiller*.¹² Another sign of prosperity and high social standing, for a port merchant, was that in April 1641 Le Borgne and his wife bought the noble property of Festilly at Laleu near La Rochelle; then, shortly before Menou d'Aulnay's death, he contrived to have the seigneurie of Aulnay, some 60 kilometres east of La Rochelle on the borders of Saintonge and Poitou, seized for himself; this being a noble fief, he began to be described as "noble homme".¹³ Certainly some such qualifications were needed in Bourbon France to win a commission as the royal governor, even of a minor colony such as Acadia, and Le Borgne did so in 1657, though it did not prove to be an uncontested or permanent commission. How good a start in life came to him from his family in Calais, where he was born, is not entirely clear, but he had at least one family of influential relatives in that of Charles Bazire (1624-77) from Rouen whose mother was Jeanne Le Borgne and who emigrated to New France about 1660 as receiver general of duties and of the king's domain.¹⁴

Another of Le Borgne's evident advantages was in migrating to La Rochelle soon after the siege of 1627-28 when the authorities of church and state, having crushed the Protestants there so firmly that more than half of them had died, forbade Protestants from elsewhere to settle at La Rochelle.¹⁵ In a deliberate and sustained effort to catholicize the town, church and state encouraged Roman Catholics to migrate to it and Le Borgne was one of those who came at that time, probably in

12 Kevin C. Robbins, "The Families and Politics of La Rochelle, 1550-1650", Ph.D. thesis, The Johns Hopkins University, 1990, pp. 282-3, 285-7.

13 Teuleron (LR), 28 April 1641, *déclaration*; Saint-Barthélemy (LR), 19 March 1669, *mariage*; Baudry, "Menou d'Aulnay", *DCB*, vol. I, p. 505. Aulnay survives today as an historic attraction and is discussed briefly as a seigneurie in Robert Colle, *Châteaux, manoirs et forteresses d'Aunis et de Saintonge* (La Rochelle, 1984), tome I, p. 53 and in P.D. Abbott, *Provinces, Pays and Seigneuries of France* (Myrtleford, Australia, 1981), pp. 405-6. The complexities of fiefs and seigneuries are discussed in Roland E. Mousnier, *The Institutions of France under the Absolute Monarchy, 1598-1789: Society and the State* (Chicago, 1979), pp. 477-550.

14 Fernand Grenier, "Bazire, Charles", *DCB*, vol. I, pp. 84-85; Archange Godbout, *Origine des familles canadiennes françaises* (Lille, 1925), p. 43.

15 Louis Pérouas, "Sur la démographie rochelaise", *Annales: E.S.C.* (1961), p. 113; Katherine Louise Faust, "A Beleaguered Society: Protestant Families in La Rochelle, 1628-1685", Ph.D. thesis, Northwestern University, 1980, pp. 1-388; David Parker, *La Rochelle and the French Monarchy: Conflict and Order in Seventeenth-Century France* (London, 1980), ch. 1; François Moisy, *Le rétablissement des structures catholiques après le siège de La Rochelle (1628-1648)* (Fontenay-le-Comte, 1973); Philip Benedict, "The Huguenot Population of France, 1600-1685: The Demographic Fate and Customs of a Religious Minority", *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 81, part 5 (1991), pp. 55-6.

1632. He and his family were firmly Catholic: one son Nicolas became a priest and a canon at the cathedral of Saint-Barthélemy in La Rochelle where he had been baptized on 11 May 1643.¹⁶ Soon after arriving at La Rochelle, Émmanuel Le Borgne signed a partnership on 16 August 1632 with Geoffroy Dussault for four years of trading between La Rochelle and such northern ports as Rouen, Calais (whence he had just come) and Dunkirk.¹⁷ As this partnership proves, he must have come with some wealth and social standing. He continued to prosper. Very soon, on 19 February 1635, he married the daughter of "Noble Homme Jacques François, receveur triennal des rentes des diverses de Maillezays", a financier managing affairs for the venerable Benedictine abbey of Maillezais in Poitou, some 40 kilometres northeast of La Rochelle.¹⁸ Then, like any French merchant in his position at that time, Le Borgne began to build up a network of business relationships which added to his means and his stature. Research in French archives turns up evidence that he developed particularly strong links with the city of Lyon and, later, the port of Bordeaux.

These were links which he forged himself: he appears to have inherited no connections in either Lyon or Bordeaux. His origins being at Calais, nearly as far away from Lyon as it is possible to be in France, he had relatives only in the north. Even such close relations as the Basire family must have assisted Le Borgne in Normandy and elsewhere north of the Loire, and if they had influence in Lyon or Bordeaux it is nowhere apparent. The family of his wife, Jeanne François, was established in the region of La Rochelle; her brother and two sisters married locally, and the only one of their spouses known to have come from outside the region, Antoine Lucas, was a merchant born at Abbeville in the north.¹⁹ Le Borgne was in partnership with this brother-in-law for some of his trade with Acadia, and on 8 March 1654 they each owned a one-quarter share in *Le Château Fort*, 200 tx., which they were sending with a cargo, including up to 80 tx. for d'Aulnay's children, to Port-Royal in Acadia.²⁰ In 1656 Lucas sailed to Québec to trade as *surnuméraire* in partnership with Léonard Compain, Jean Roy and Jean Chanjon, but no signs have been found of business with Lyon or Bordeaux either through Lucas or through an earlier partner, Geoffroy Dussault.²¹

It was about 20 years later, in 1655, that the first and principal connection with Lyon was made. By then, Le Borgne had invested heavily in trade and colonizing in

16 Saint-Barthélemy parish registers at the Municipal Library, La Rochelle, record the baptisms of Le Borgne's children as follows: Émmanuel 3 February 1636, Catherine 13 June 1639, Françoise 8 September 1639, Alexandre 11 March 1640, Jacques 13 March 1641, Nicolas 11 May 1643, Charles 8 July 1644, Élizabéth 27 September 1645, Antoine 9 February 1648, André 4 December 1649, Joseph 6 April 1653 and Simon 29 August 1655.

17 Chesneau (LR), 24 January 1637, fo. 8-10, *accord*. On this day they wound up their partnership and settled accounts. Dussault then sold his share in the firm to Le Borgne for 7,456 *livres*. The minutes of *maître* Chesneau in the four intervening years record this firm's busy trade with northern ports.

18 Saint-Barthélemy church registers, 19 February 1635, *mariage*.

19 Archange Godbout, *Émigration rochelaise en Nouvelle-France* (Montréal, 1970), p. 100.

20 Cherbonnier (LR), liasses 8 March 1654, *charte-partie*: the other half-share was held by one Pierre Pollard.

21 Teuleron (LR), 4 February 1656, fos. 15-16, *association*.

Acadia and was claiming large sums due to him from Menou d'Aulnay. In 1649 Le Borgne had employed a La Rochelle merchant, Jacques Bonniton, to visit d'Aulnay in Acadia to collect up to 30,000 liv. from him and if necessary to take him to court and sell up his property.²² But this sum, large though it was in this branch of French trade, amounted to only a small fraction of the 260,000 liv. which he reckoned d'Aulnay owed him. To recover his investments Le Borgne needed fresh capital or new partners willing to share in his enterprises. His first new partner was Pierre Garbusat (c.1630-1705), a merchant from Lyon with Italian roots in an earlier generation it seems, who married his daughter, Françoise Le Borgne, in 1655 and offered Le Borgne the collaboration he needed.²³

Garbusat's connection with Le Borgne was new, but not his connection with La Rochelle. His father, Dominique Garbusat, had done business there in the 1630s and 1640s in association with a certain Paul Massonneau, and in 1648 he had rented a house at La Rochelle "couverte d'ardoizes" with a shop on the ground floor.²⁴ From the middle 1650s, however, Pierre Garbusat became his family's representative at La Rochelle working in a partnership not only with his father-in-law, Le Borgne, but with his own family in Lyon. There his father, Dominique Garbusat, was assisted by another son, Claude Garbusat, Pierre's brother, who carried on the family business in Lyon after the father's death.²⁵ Meanwhile, in August 1668 another brother, Augustin Garbusat, sailed away with a partner also from Lyon, Simeon Gombault, to the island of Guadeloupe (occupied by France not long before) with two vessels, *Le Saint-Jean* of Bayonne and *La Vierge* of La Rochelle, an expedition in which the family invested.²⁶ Augustin settled at Guadeloupe in trade with his family at La Rochelle and Lyon, and by the year 1701, probably earlier, was reported to be a councillor in the *Conseil souverain* of the colony.²⁷ By then his business connections had grown by, for example, the marriage of his daughter, Marie-Anne Garbusat, into a French family of Guadeloupe, that of Claude de Gaalon. During the intervening years all members of the Garbusat family had been in business together, as usual in that age, and ready to extend their network by advantageous marriages or partnerships. For example, in 1662 Pierre Garbusat had formed a three-year partnership with a member of his mother-in-law's family, Simon François, for the purpose of buying "laynes de Sargose Noires", starting with joint capital of 9,000 liv.²⁸

The family business at Lyon, which was mainly in textiles, including silk for which the city was famous, seems to have been prosperous. When Claude Garbusat

22 Teuleron (LR), 15 May 1649, *procuration*.

23 St Barthélemy (LR), 8 December 1655, *mariage*.

24 Lefebvre (LR), 18 July 1643, *arrêté de comptes*; Cherbonnier (LR), 8 January 1648, *arrentement*.

25 Savin (LR), 9 August 1668.

26 Savin (LR), 9 August 1668.

27 Gariteau (LR), 1701 (3 E 2074). As early as 1674 Augustin Garbusat declared a debt to his brothers of nearly 1,467 *livres* for goods shipped to him: Savin (LR), 12 November 1674.

28 A third partner was a certain François Roy of Niort, a town known for its fur and leather trade. Part of their joint capital was the sum of 4,300 *livres* which they borrowed from Jean Berauldrin, *écuyer*. Teuleron (LR), 18 November 1662, fo. 109, *association*.

died in 1722, he was described as a *bourgeois* of the city, a title and honour which usually had to be earned in that age, sometimes by philanthropic spending, and an inventory of his property and papers showed signs of some wealth and an extensive business life.²⁹ A cousin, Anne Garbusat, who in 1647 had married another Lyon merchant, Gabriel de Glatigny, carried on trading as a widow in the 1670s and 1680s with many French cities and also with Nuremburg, Amsterdam, Livorno, Rome, Genoa and Madrid. There were fur merchants in the family established at Lyon, and it is clear that Pierre Garbusat and Le Borgne working at La Rochelle sold furs from Acadia and Canada in Lyon as well as in Paris, Limoges, Niort and other cities. Some of his interests in ships bound for New France are listed in Table One.

Table One
Some Vessels Sent to New France by Pierre Garbusat, 1666-1695

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- * *Neptune*, of La Rochelle, 100 tx.; owned by Pierre Garbusat, Émmanuel Le Borgne, Jean Bouchel and Simon François who sent her to Acadia and then fishing in 1666: Teuleron (LR), 9 April 1666, *charte partie*.
 - * *Paix*, of St Martin de Ré, 200 tx.; in January 1662 Pierre Garbusat bought a half-interest in her from Jean Jamain for 3,825 liv. She sailed to Québec in 1666: Teuleron (LR), 7 January 1662.
 - * *Éléphant*, 100 tx.; in 1677 Pierre Garbusat sent her fishing to Newfoundland under Captain Hélie Naudin: Nicolas (LR), 27 March 1677, *charte partie*.
 - * *Sainte Anne*, 300 tx.; on 7 August 1684 Pierre Garbusat and two partners, Antoine Lacoste and Antoine De Massiac, bought her for 8,400 liv.: Grozé (LR), 7 August 1684. Pierre Harouard then acquired a share in her and on 21 May 1687 Pierre Garbusat bought him out, including the returns on her since 1684; she had been sailing to Canada and the West Indies under Captain Jacques Chaviteau: Grozé (LR), 21 May 1687. In 1689 he and Guillaume Jung dispatched her to Canada under Captain Chaviteau. In July 1690 he arranged for her to be demolished where she lay in "la petite rivière de cette ville": Micheau (LR), 31 July 1690, *marché*.
 - * *Sauvage*, 130 tx., chartered in 1688 at Bordeaux with *Saint Philippe* for Garbusat and François Viennay Pachot by Guillaume Jung who also bought 195 tx. of wine for the cargo: Cazenove (Bordeaux), 24 February 1688, fol. 93. They were to pay the owners 35 liv. per tx. of freight: Loste (Bordeaux), 31 January 1688).
 - * *Saint Philippe*, chartered in 1688 at Bordeaux with *Sauvage*.

29 A[rchives] D[épartementales] du Rhône et Loire, 3 E 7464, Ravat (Lyon), 69. I owe this reference to Monsieur Pierre Reynard.

* *Bien Aymé*, 160 tx.; on 12 May 1695 Pierre Garbusat ordered his agent, Michel Jolly, to sell his one-eighth interest in her, her cargo and equipment to a Bordeaux merchant, Jean Saige, for 1,000 liv. in cash. She was then on the high seas bound for the West Indies: Marchand (LR), 18 May 1695, “*vante*”.

All the signs are, however, that the trade with New France was not always prosperous. For instance, early in 1670, the year in which the English government was to return Acadia to France after 16 years of English occupation, Garbusat asked his clerk, François Carreson, to borrow 900 liv. from anyone who would lend to him, to cover the cost and the insurance of goods “qui auront été chargées dans ung ou deux vaisseaux” which Garbusat himself planned to take to “la Coste de la Cadie”, and also of the furs and other merchandise to be brought back to France in the return cargo.³⁰ In general, merchants did not seek such bottomry loans, *prêts à la grosse aventure* as the French then described them, unless they had insufficient funds of their own. Much worse, as a crisis in the fur trade worsened in the years before and after 1700, Garbusat in July 1695 had to ask the authorities, in particular the *Jurisdiction consulaire*, to give him legal protection against his creditors to whom he owed, he admitted, nearly 44,832 liv. He argued that such protection was his due because his debtors owed him the far greater sum of nearly 103,349 liv.³¹ And finally, in the will he drew up shortly before his death in 1705 he reflected sadly, “J’ay travaillé toute ma vie mais non pas utilement pour moi et pour mes enfants”.³² In an eight-page *Estat de mes créances* which he attached to this will, his claims outstanding in New France were few and relatively small:

Monsieur Duprat de présent à Quebecq doit suyvent ses billets, 487 livres, Monsieur Ramezay, à Quebecq, 400 livres, Monsieur Boudort qui est à Quebecq me doit bien 1,000 livres et reste mes papiers sont es mains de Mr. Pasquaud pour en tirer le paiement, 1000 livres. L’hérédité de Mr. Grignon m’est débitrice sans la perte de poid de 200 livres de castor que j’ay trouvé à Paris de la partye qu’il me vendit et que je ne vis pas pezé ne l’ayant pezé tout humide, je luy écris de Paris, 350 livres. Anciennes debts de Québecq entre les mains de Sr. Martel et de Mr. Pasquaud.³³

Pierre Garbusat broke off his business links with Claude Garbusat of Lyon just after Émmanuel Le Borgne’s death in 1681. In the notarized act by which these

30 Teuleron (LR), 12 February 1670, *procuration*.

31 Hirvoix (LR), 2 July 1695, *procuration*.

32 Gariteau (LR), *liasses* 21 April 1705, *dépôt de testament olographe: et estat des créances*.

33 The people named in this rather hastily written list were probably Gabriel Duprat of Québec, his Huguenot fur-trading uncle, François Duprat, having emigrated by 1705; Claude de Ramezay, a captain in the regular troops and then governor of Trois-Rivières who had married into the Denys family; either Jean Boudor of Québec or his father, Pierre Boudor of Limoges and La Rochelle, both of whom were in the fur trade; and either Jean Grignon *fils* (1670-1702) who had died on 2 September 1702 or his father, Jean Grignon (1639-1703), who had died on 29 October 1703.

brothers settled accounts, they declared “que ayant tousjours esté liés d'affaires ensemble depuis le décès de deffunct Sieur Dominique Garbusat leur père, tant comme bénéficiaires par moitié que comme associés”, they now wished to carry on separately. Their settlement was that each would keep and sell the firm's assets in his own town and pay claims laid there. But as this division was unequal, Pierre was to pay Claude 45,000 liv. in four equal payments, 11,250 liv. at the *fête des Rois*, and the same at Easter, in August and at the Toussaint, all in 1682. Among the other merchants with whom they had to settle accounts were their late father's partner and relative, Claude Dandel of Lyon, their own brother Augustin at Guadeloupe and a certain Penicault of Limoges for whose debts they dealt with another Limoges merchant, Philippe Michel.³⁴

But these events of 1681 — Le Borgne's death and the dissolution of the Garbusat family partnership — did not end the Le Borgne claims in Acadia. At least three of the Le Borgne sons went out to Acadia: Émmanuel Le Borgne sieur du Coudray (1636-75) who went in 1657 but died in 1675; Alexandre Le Borgne (1640-1693), who married Marie de Saint-Étienne, daughter of the settler Charles de Saint-Étienne sieur de La Tour; and André Le Borgne sieur du Coudray (1649-?). Of these, the latter made great efforts for 16 years or more to recover the family's territory in Acadia or to win reimbursement for its loss, the Crown having taken it back. He summarized these efforts in April 1698 in a notarized memorandum to his brothers and sisters, telling how he had journeyed to Paris several times at considerable cost and now wanted them to contribute to his expenses.³⁵ He had evidently been in financial difficulties having, for instance, borrowed 334 liv. in January 1683 from Pierre Garbusat and other sums at other times which, with 11 years' interest, totalled nearly 1042 liv. by the time the *Présidial* court at Rochefort sentenced him to pay Garbusat in August 1694.³⁶ There are signs, too, that Garbusat had been involved in Émmanuel Le Borgne's earlier efforts to recover debts from Menou d'Aulnay: by a lease signed in Paris on 24 July 1675 he had become “fermier judiciaire de la terre et seigneurie d'Aulnay”.³⁷ A quarter of a century later Pierre Garbusat was still working with Le Borgne's sons in shipping to Acadia: when André Le Borgne fitted out *Royale Paix*, of La Rochelle, 100 tx., for a voyage to Acadia in 1699 under Captain Pierre Hurtin, Pierre Garbusat was one of two witnesses who swore that Le Borgne's statements about the ship were true.³⁸

Nor did the events of 1681 put a permanent end to the collaboration of the brothers Garbusat and their involvement in the fur trade of New France. At some

34 Nicolas (LR), 21 November 1681, *compte*.

35 Micheau (LR), 19 April 1698, *somation*. See also Guillemot (LR), *répertoire* for 1679-1758 mentioning an act of 1699, fo. 60, entitled, “Concession de terrain à l'Acadie par le sieur Le Borgne”.

36 ADCM, 4 J 31 (9 August 1694), a six-page judgement of the court on parchment citing Micheau (LR), 2 January 1688, as the official record of the original loan.

37 Drouynneau (LR), 17 September 1675, *procuration*.

38 She sailed from La Rochelle on 20 August 1699 with the Sieur Dièreville aboard and returned on 9 November 1700: Rivière & Soulard (LR), registers, 25 June 1699; ADCM, B 5695, 18 July 1699; *Relation of the Voyage to Port Royal in Acadia or New France*, Champlain Society Publication XX, ([1933], New York, 1968, pp. 3-4, 39 [originally published in Rouen in 1708].

time not long before April 1695 Pierre Garbusat sold his brother Claude his half-interest in the frigate, *Le Saint Laurent*, 100 tx.³⁹ But four years earlier, in 1691, they had joined in a larger partnership with five other merchants to buy Canadian furs and to sell them in Paris, Lyon and elsewhere. This partnership continued at least until August 1695, and when they settled their accounts the previous September, Pierre Garbusat's partners granted him "les pelletries quy sont ès mains du Sieur Claude Garbusat, bourgeois et banquier de la ville de Lyon, son frère, estant de ladite société, et quy restent à vendre aud. Lyon, montant suivant le compte signé de tous les dessus nommés, datté de ce jourd'huy, à la somme de 10,530 liv."⁴⁰ Any furs Garbusat received in the current year he was to send to one of the partners in Paris, Jean-François Chalmette, who was present at La Rochelle when these arrangements were made.

To introduce Chalmette is to reveal another link with Lyon and another with New France. Jean-François Chalmette was described in the above-mentioned settlement as "banquier de Paris, rue des Vieilles Estuves, paroisse Saint-Nicolas" and uncle of another of the partners, Nicolas Chalmette. In 1693, during the course of the fur-trading partnership mentioned above, Jean-François Chalmette held the lease of the Tadoussac trading post.⁴¹ Furthermore, two of his relatives were also in the fur trade, one at Lyon and the other in Canada. The Canadian relative was Mathieu-François Martin De Lino (1657-1731) who had been born at Lyon and whose mother was Antoinette Chalmette.⁴² Any scholar working in the field of trans-Atlantic trade in the French empire will immediately assume that De Lino was probably trading with his Chalmette relatives, and this would be a sound assumption. But proof positive lies in a bill of exchange endorsed on 11 November 1691 by De Lino at Québec to Jean-François Chalmette of Paris, a bill drawn to De Lino's order, also at Québec, by Pachot & Gobin. Furthermore, the money was drawn (as Pachot & Gobin put it), "sur les fonds quy reste entre vos mains [i.e. De Lino's hands] du provient des castors et pelletries que vous avez reçu par notre navire, *Les Armes de la Compagnie*".⁴³ But Pachot & Gobin were directors of the *Compagnie du Nord du Canada*, sometimes referred to as *La Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson* (or variants thereof). It is clear that De Lino at Québec was receiving the furs in question from Hudson Bay on the ship, *Les Armes de la Compagnie*, and was in trade with Chalmette, Garbusat and their partners. It should be added, with respect to the Chalmettes, that they were a large, distinguished family of Lyon, but scattered and with members in high places, able therefore to win advantages such as the concession of the fur-trading post at Tadoussac. A certain Philippe Chalmette was an archdeacon (*archidiacre*), and then a *grand vicaire* in the diocese of La Rochelle

39 Gariteau (LR), *liasses* 4 April 1695, *ratification*. The other half interest in this vessel was owned by one "Laurent De Ville, banquier de Bayonne".

40 Gariteau (LR), 19 September 1694, *arrêté de comptes*.

41 DCB, vol. II (Toronto, 1969), p. 276.

42 DCB, vol. II, p. 464.

43 Grenot (LR), 26 April 1692, *protêt*.

during the first two decades of the 18th century.⁴⁴ Even more imposing, a certain Louis-Joseph Chalmette (1656-1740), son of a Paris merchant, Blaise Chalmette, rose to be an *avocat au Parlement de Paris*, *trésorier du duc de Vendôme* and *secrétaire du Roi* (1694).⁴⁵ In the Chalmette family, Martin De Lino had some powerful relatives.

Jean-François Chalmette's other relative in the fur trade, possibly a brother or an uncle, was Pierre Chalmette (died 1671), a *marchand pelletier* from Lyon who had moved to La Rochelle in 1664. There he had married Louise Guillebaud, the daughter of another *marchand pelletier*, Moïse Guillebaud, with whose son (of the same name) he had formed a partnership in June 1666 for "le négoce, achapt et traficq des peaux de chevreuil et agneaux en poil" for three years in the provinces of Aunis, Poitou and Saintonge, the provinces closest to La Rochelle.⁴⁶ This partnership was renewed several times and still in existence in 1675. In its founding document there is no mention of trade with New France, but we know that the Guillebauds, father and son, were already in that trade because Moïse Guillebaud père was one of the partners with Émmanuel Le Borgne and others sending a vessel under Captain Pierre Savin to Acadia by an agreement of 21 October 1657.⁴⁷ Eleven years later, in May 1668 Moïse Guillebaud père had been taken prisoner in Acadia by English forces from Massachusetts while he was loading furs for Émmanuel Le Borgne on *Le Moÿse*. The ship's captain, Pierre Jamain, had escaped with his ship and reported this event in France.⁴⁸ Moïse Guillebaud père was no mere servant of Le Borgne but a *marchand pelletier* in his own right who had been trading at La Rochelle for many years: we find him as early as 1638, for example, selling hides to George Hanmer of Bastable, England.⁴⁹

44 Louis Pérouas, *Le diocèse de La Rochelle de 1648 à 1724: sociologie et pastorale* (Paris, 1964), pp. 369, 374, 422, 458.

45 Christine Favre-Lejeune, *Les secrétaires du roi de la Grande Chancellerie de France: Dictionnaire biographique et généalogique (1672-1789)* (Paris, 1986), p. 332.

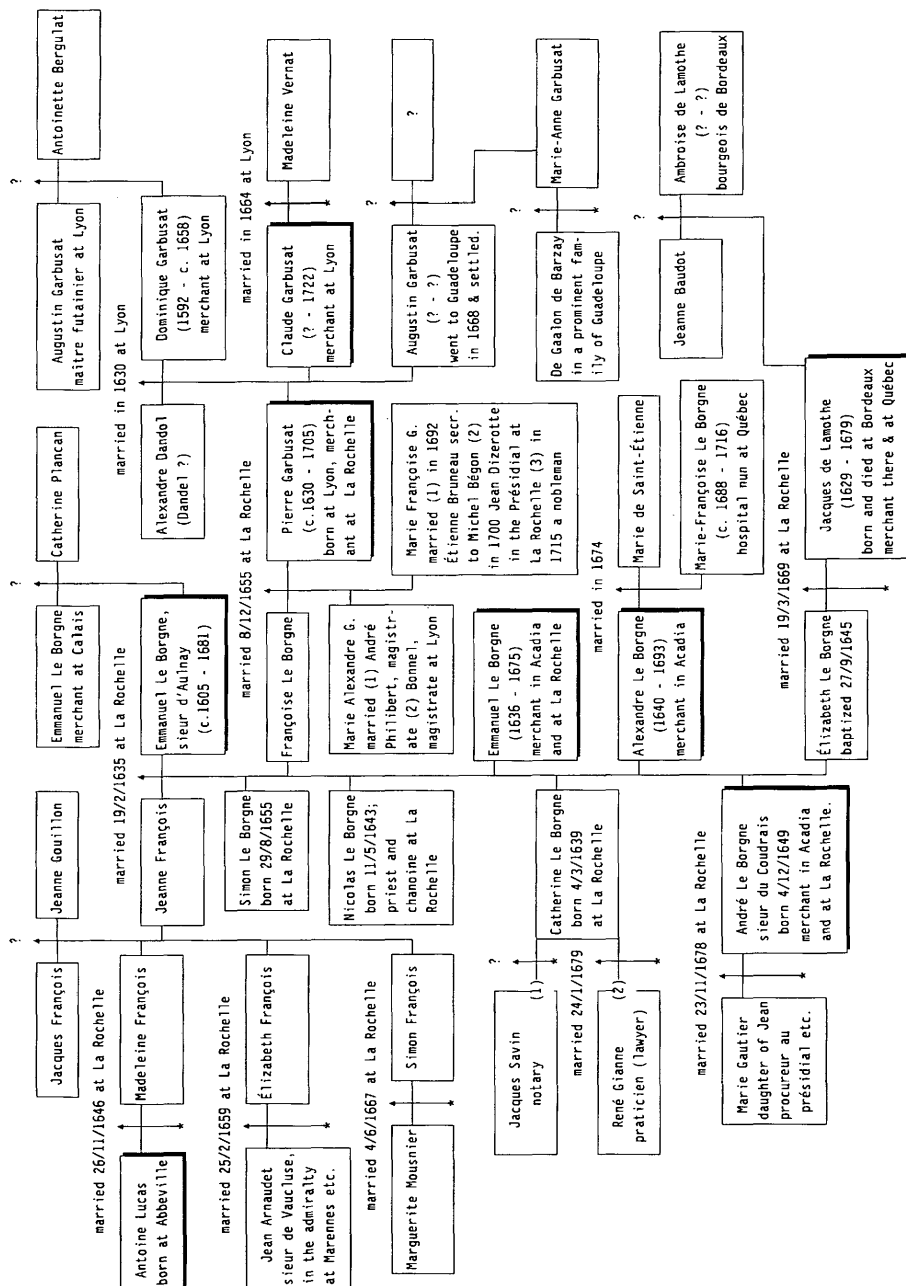
46 Cherbonnier (LR), 19 June 1666, *société*, and 18 September 1675, *procès-verbal*; Saint-Sauveur (LR), 20 April 1668, *mariage*, and 18 September 1675, *enterrement*.

47 Moreau (LR), reg. 21 October 1657, *accord*: the agreement included passage for Émmanuel Le Borgne fils (or jeune) and ten other men together with 1,500 or 2,000 liv. worth of trading goods. These goods were to be insured at 20 per cent premium. Captain Pierre Savin was to have 5 or 6 tx. of cargo space for his own *pacotille*. But the ship was not named in this notarial minute.

48 Savin (LR), 12 September 1658; Rawlyk, *Nova Scotia's Massachusetts*, pp. 28-9; Reid, *Acadia, Maine and New Scotland*, p. 139. Another member of this family, Pierre Guillebaud, was the captain of *Le Saint-Jean*, sent from Bordeaux to Québec by members of the Le Borgne clan in 1671 (see Table Two below).

49 Chesneau (LR), 8 April 1638, *vente de peaux*.

Figure Two
The Le Borgne, Garbusat and Lamothe Families



Pierre Garbusat had other business connections with Lyon, besides his relatives and the Chalmette family, during the last two decades of his life. Among them was a Lyon merchant named Michel Jolly who worked at La Rochelle in the 1690s as his principal assistant and partner.⁵⁰ Jolly sold ships, collected debts, presented bills of exchange and did various other tasks for Garbusat, but in the years 1699-1701 they were named together as a partnership, *Garbusat et Jolly*. Another of Garbusat's connections was with Pierre Chabbert, born in Lyon but established as a merchant and banker (*marchand-banquier*) in Paris and involved in the fur trade of New France. We know that he and Garbusat had business with each other in the 1690s because on one occasion Garbusat advised a group of merchants who were trying to collect money from him to apply for payment to "Monsieur Chabbert, banquier, rue Saint Medric, Paris".⁵¹ What they were trying to make Garbusat pay on this occasion was a bill of exchange for the large sum of 1,500 liv. which Aubert de la Chesnaye had drawn at Québec on 7 November 1695 "sur Monsieur Aubert chez Monsieur Garbusat". On further inquiry, it turns out that the Aubert mentioned in this bill was none other than Louis-François Aubert (1669-1712), a French merchant at Amsterdam who was dealing in Canadian furs on a large scale in these years, selling them in Russia and perhaps elsewhere in the Baltic region.⁵² Furthermore, these two were related, Chabbert having married Aubert's older sister at Amsterdam in 1680.⁵³ We get a further glimpse of this trading network in transactions over another bill of exchange, this one drawn at Plaisance, Newfoundland, on 29 October 1696 to the order of Louis-François Aubert, because Aubert's banker in Paris, Pierre Chabbert, wishing to collect the money at La Rochelle, called upon Garbusat to act as his agent in the matter.⁵⁴ Evidently the three of them, Garbusat at La Rochelle, Aubert at Amsterdam and Chabbert in Paris, were in the habit of doing business with one another in connection with the trade in New France, in which they were all interested.

To complicate matters even further, Louis-François Aubert was a nephew of Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye, the merchant who drew the above-mentioned bill of 7 November 1695, and Aubert de la Chesnaye was one of the great trans-Atlantic fur traders in the reign of Louis XIV. It was he who had taken the initiative in forming the *Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson* in 1682, mainly with partners at La Rochelle.⁵⁵ Furthermore, his brother, Louis Aubert, father of Louis-François Aubert, had been a

50 Jolly was the son of Pierre Jolly, also a Lyon merchant, and of Marguerite Laline. ADCM 4 J 31, Simon Tayeau (LR), 9 August 1694; Gariteau (LR), 9 May 1701, *testament*, 8 August 1695 and 27 February 1696, *procurations*, 15 April 1702, *engagement*, 10 June 1702, *protêt*; Marchand (LR), 18 May 1695, *vante* [sic].

51 Hirvoix (LR), *liasses* 6 April 1696, *protêt*.

52 Bosher, *Men and Ships*, p. 34.

53 Jan Kupp, ed., "Dutch Documents", vol. 10, C347-368, vol. 2, C373, etc., unpublished manuscript, University of Victoria, B.C.

54 Gariteau (LR), 28 December 1696, *protêt*.

55 Edward H. Borins, "La compagnie du nord, 1682-1700", M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1968, 248 fols., fol. 26.

close friend of Jacques de Lamothe (c.1629-79), a merchant who had married Émmanuel Le Borgne's daughter Élisabeth at La Rochelle on 19 March 1669. Louis Aubert had signed the parish register of St. Barthélemy on the occasion of this Le Borgne-Lamothe marriage, as had Pierre Garbusat.⁵⁶ These two sons-in-law of Émmanuel Le Borgne, Jacques de Lamothe and Pierre Garbusat, must have been closely acquainted, and both engaged in the family trading system, as would be normal in that society. There is no record of trade between them, but when Lamothe died in 1679 his widow borrowed money from Garbusat to meet her immediate needs.⁵⁷

In Jacques de Lamothe, Émmanuel Le Borgne found a strong partner who succeeded in expanding the family business in at least two directions: to Bordeaux, about 180 kilometres south of La Rochelle, and to Québec. No doubt there had been a certain amount of trade with Québec earlier through Garbusat and perhaps other members of the clan, but as Table Two shows, the first regular shipping from Bordeaux to Canada began in 1671 as a result, in part at least, of Lamothe's efforts. The penetration of the Le Borgne clan into Bordeaux, if not into Canada, was entirely new. Since Jean Tuffet had taken refuge at Bordeaux during the siege of La Rochelle in 1627-8, Bordeaux merchants had dispatched few if any vessels to the ports of North America.⁵⁸ For some reason that is not entirely clear, Bordeaux had not been trading with New France even though it had been trading with West Indian colonies ever since France had gained control of them in the 1630s and 1640s, mainly Martinique, Guadeloupe and Saint-Domingue. For the Le Borgne clan, therefore, this great port offered fresh possibilities for disposing of furs, for buying supplies, especially the wine that was shipped across to the colonies in huge quantities, and for chartering ships. Bordeaux was a much larger city, with a growing population of 40,000 to 45,000 in the 17th century, whereas La Rochelle's population was shrinking in that century from 23,000 to 14,000 because of religious persecution.⁵⁹

In the great port of Bordeaux Jacques de Lamothe settled in 1669, the year of his marriage with Élisabeth Le Borgne at La Rochelle, after many years away in Canada and elsewhere abroad. As Bordeaux was where he had been born 40 years earlier, he was quickly at home there.⁶⁰ But his trading ventures to Québec were remarkably cosmopolitan, drawing as they did upon the resources of many people outside the city. Most of the capital funds were supplied in the form of bottomry loans by merchants of Dutch, English, German or small-town Huguenot origin.⁶¹ None of the

56 St Barthélemy (LR), 19 March 1669, *mariage*.

57 Ferrand (Bx), 20 October 1679, *inventaire après décès*.

58 Claude Massé, "Jean Tuffet et ses activités en faveur de la Nouvelle-France (1626-1634)", *Cahiers de la Société Historique Acadienne*, vol. 18 (jan.-mars. 1987), pp. 5-34.

59 Paul Bairoch, Jean Batou and Pierre Chèvre, *La population des villes européennes de 800 à 1850: Banque de données et analyse sommaire des résultats* (Geneva, 1988), pp. 24-6.

60 Lamothe's origins are revealed in his marriage entry in the registers of Saint-Barthélemy cathedral, La Rochelle, dated 19 March 1669.

61 J.F. Boshier, "Les origines cosmopolites du commerce canadien à Bordeaux, 1671 à 1684", *Études canadiennes* (Bordeaux), no. 17 (Dec. 1984), pp. 29-36.

ships' captains was a Bordeaux man. Here, nevertheless, began the first regular traffic between Bordeaux and New France. Beginning with *Le Saint-Jean* which Lamothe and his partners dispatched to Canada in 1671, shipping from Bordeaux to the colonies of New France increased over the years until the middle of the 18th century when it even surpassed the shipping from La Rochelle. Of course other merchant families of La Rochelle and Bordeaux soon joined in the new trade between Bordeaux and New France, notably Guillaume Jung and the Jean Gitton clan, but Jacques de Lamothe seems to have pioneered this trade in collaboration with his in-laws of the Le Borgne clan and with Aubert de la Chesnaye.⁶² Between 1669 and his death in 1679 Lamothe was manager or part-owner of eight of the ten first ships fitted out at Bordeaux for New France. These are listed in Table Two.⁶³

What conclusions can be reached by tracing all these relationships? First, it is clear that Émmanuel Le Borgne was at the centre of a growing commercial system in France, a network of partnerships in business and in marriage based upon imports of furs from New France and exports of French textiles, hardware and other goods. Secondly, for Le Borgne at least, La Rochelle served as a kind of entrepôt or distribution centre in trans-Atlantic trade, a point of shipment where he gathered French merchandise for sending overseas to New France and imported furs for sending on to manufacturers elsewhere. From 1669 they brought Bordeaux into their business, for ten years at least, through the agency of Jacques de Lamothe. Le Borgne and Garbusat managed an enterprise which depended upon markets in inland cities, especially Paris, Lyon and later Amsterdam. Such markets were large in the 17th century, and it would not be safe to suppose that the Le Borgne circle included all of the businessmen at Lyon who engaged in trade with New France. Two examples apparently involved in other trans-Atlantic trading networks are Claude Guestion, a Paris banker from a prosperous Lyon family, who lent money to various shipping merchants at La Rochelle in the 1660s, including Le Borgne's circle; and Martin Desgarinières who, with a partner in October 1699, paid 32,000 liv. to the Le Moyne brothers, Joseph Le Moyne de Serigny and Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, for a monopoly of the fur trade at Fort Bourbon (Fort York) on Hudson's Bay.⁶⁴ It may turn out on further research that Martin Desgarinières was a relative of Martin De Lino, both being members of a Martin family of Lyon and both interested in the fur trade.

62 J.F. Boshier, "Une famille de Fleurance dans le commerce canadien à Bordeaux, (1683-1753): les Jung", *Annales du Midi*, vol. 95 (1983), pp. 159-84.

63 See Table Two. For the sources, see each vessel by name in Boshier, *Men and Ships*. For Lamothe's career in general see *inter alia* Lionel La Berge, *Rouen et le commerce du Canada de 1650 à 1670* (L'Ange-Gardien, 1972), pp. 59, 68, 83, 101 and J.F. Boshier, "Les origines cosmopolites du commerce canadien à Bordeaux", pp. 29-36.

64 Gariteau (LR), 18 October 1699, *marché*. The Le Moyne brothers undertook to provide two ships a year for this trade.

Table Two
Ships Leaving Bordeaux for New France, 1671-1679

Year	Ship	Tonnage & Port of Origin	Captain	Owners or Managers	Remarks
1671	<i>Saint-Jean</i>	295 tx. Amsterdam & Bordeaux	Pierre Guillebaud	Lamothe, D'Harriette & Guillebaud	reached Québec & returned
1671	<i>Sagesse</i>	130 tx. Bordeaux	André Chaviteau	Petit, Saige & Lostau	wrecked at Nantes
1671	<i>Plume d'Or</i>	180 tx. La Rochelle	Jean Goislin	Petit & Grignon	replaced Sagesse, but sailed from La Rochelle
1672	<i>Saint-Simon</i>	80 tx. Bordeaux	Jacques Arnaud	Lamothe & Saige	reached Québec
1673	<i>Saint-Simon</i>	80 tx. Bordeaux	Jacques Arnaud	Lamothe & Saige	for Québec & W. Indies
1674	<i>Nativité</i>	130 tx. Québec	Bourdon d'Hombourg	Lamothe, Chesnaye & the captain	for Québec
1675	<i>Nativité</i>	130 tx Québec	Bourdon d'Hombourg	Lamothe, Chesnaye & the captain	for Québec & W. Indies
1676	<i>Grand Saint-Joseph</i>	260-280 tx. La Rochelle	Jean Grignon	Lamothe & Chesnaye	for Québec
1677	<i>Grand Saint-Joseph</i>	260-280 tx. La Rochelle	Bourdon d'Hombourg	Lamothe & Chesnaye	for Québec
1679	<i>Aymable</i>	70 tx. Chaillevette	Jean Javeleau	Lamothe (armateur)	chartered for Canada

Émmanuel Le Borgne's trading circle eventually reached out far beyond La Rochelle, but it did not encompass all of the French merchants in the Acadian and Canada trades, not even all of those at La Rochelle. Its limits might be established by distinguishing it in detail from other circles in these trans-Atlantic trades. In the notarial minutes of the 17th century are many traces of Nicolas Denys' family and business circle on which capable scholars have already worked.⁶⁵ The several Miscou and Cape Breton companies, too, were largely separate from the Le Borgne

65 René Baudry, "Documents sur Nicolas Denys [1654-64]", *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* [RHAF], vol. 9 (1955-56), pp. 14-30; Roger Comeau, "Nicolas Denys, pionnier acadien", *RHAF*, vol. 9 (1955-56), pp. 31-45.

circle, and each of them has a history to be compiled.⁶⁶ More long-lived than any of these and truly the leading clans in the 17th-century colonial trade with New France were the Tuffet-Gaigneur clan, with its many ramifications, and the Gitton clan, whose histories might offer another comparison with Émmanuel Le Borgne and his circle.⁶⁷ So might a history of those Huguenot merchant clans who never ceased to send ships and goods across the Atlantic, even after 1685 when they had been forced to abjure or to disguise themselves as *nouveaux convertis* or *nouveaux Catholiques*. Once identified, their names crop up frequently in the 17th-century notarial and admiralty records.⁶⁸ Such histories as these may, in time, illuminate one another, and they offer a hope of throwing light upon the business life behind trans-Atlantic trade.

J.F. BOSHER

66 Robert Le Blant, "La première compagnie de Miscou (1635-1645)", *RHAF*, tome XVII, no. 3 (1963), pp. 363-70; Le Blant, "Les compagnies du Cap-Breton (1629-1647)", *RHAF*, tome XVI, no. 1 (1962), pp. 81-94.

67 The author has already gathered much material for the histories of these two great trading clans.

68 J.F. Boshier, "Identifying Huguenots in the Canada Trade, 1663-1763", in Michael Harrison, ed., *Canada's Huguenot Heritage, 1685-1985* (Toronto [The Huguenot Society of Canada], 1987), pp. 177-88; Boshier, "The Imperial Environment of French Trade with Canada, 1660-1685", *The English Historical Review*, vol. CVIII (January 1993), pp. 50-82.