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P A P E R S

RELATING TO

An ACT of the ASSEMBLY

OF THE

Province of New-York,

*For Encouragement of the Indian Trade, &c. and
for Prohibiting the Selling of Indian Goods to the French,
viz. of CANADA.*

I. A PETITION of the Merchants of *London* to *His Majesty*,
against the said Act.

II. HIS MAJESTY's Order in Council, Referring the said
Petition to the Lords Commissioners for *Trade & Plantation*.

III. EXTRACT of the Minutes of the said Lords, con-
cerning some Allegations of the Merchants before Them.

IV. The REPORT of the said Lords to *His Majesty* on the
Merchants Petition; and other Allegations.

V. The REPORT of the Committee of Council of the
Province of *New-York*, in Answer to the said Petition.

VI. A MEMORIAL concerning the *Furr-Trade* of *New-York*;
by *C. Colden*, Esq;

With a M A P.

Published by Authority.

RELATING TO
AN ACT OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
Province of New-York

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...to the French,
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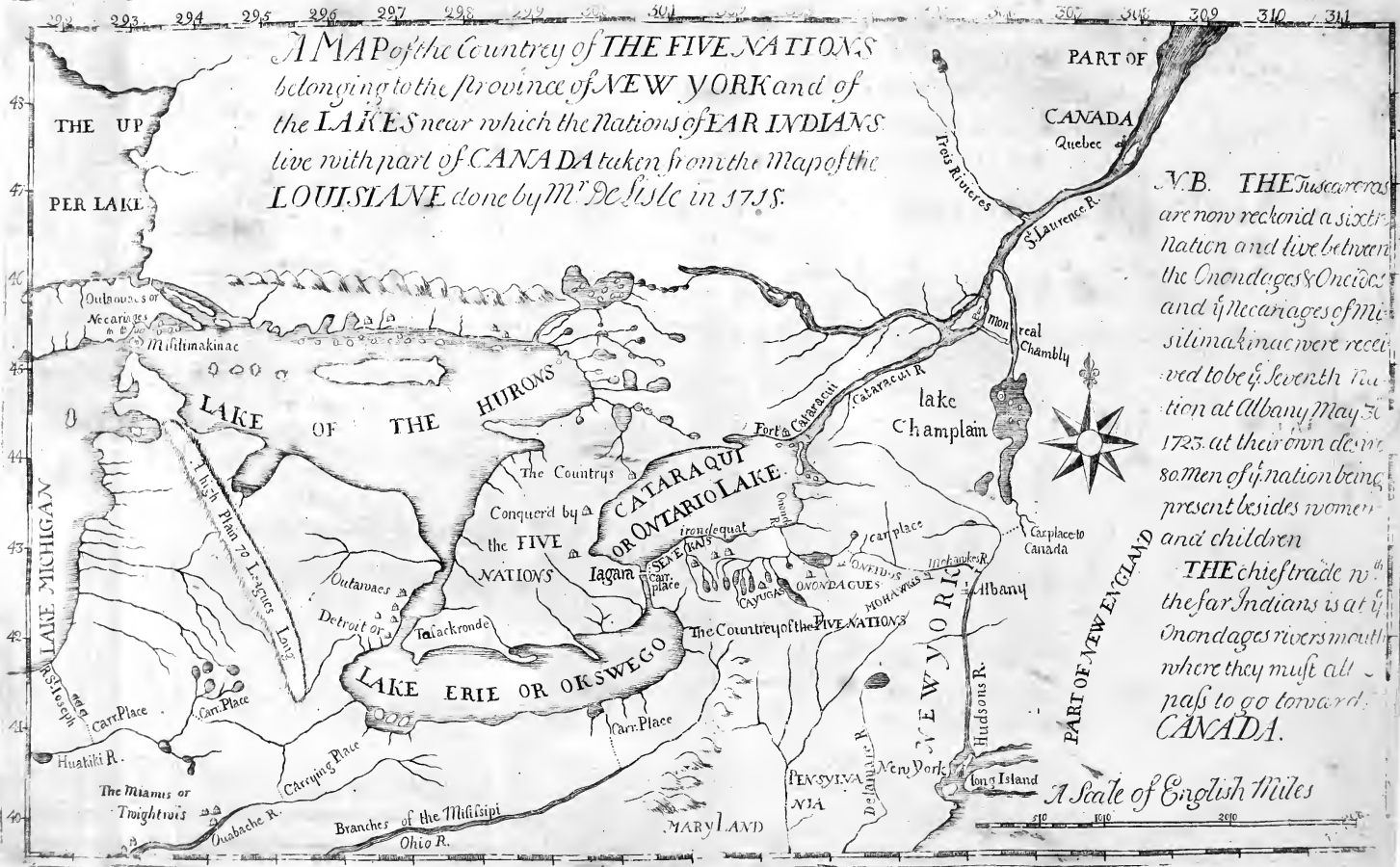
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W. M. R.

Printed by ...

A MAP of the Country of THE FIVE NATIONS
 belonging to the Province of NEW YORK and of
 the LAKES near which the Nations of IAR INDIANS
 live with part of CANADA taken from the Map of the
 LOUISIANE done by M^r De Sisle in 1715.



V.B. THE Tuscaroras
 are now reckon'd a sixth
 Nation and live between
 the Onondages & Onicides
 and if the Carriages of Mi-
 silimakinac were recei-
 ved to be 6th seventh Na-
 tion at Albany May 30th
 1725. at their own de-
 sire some of y^e nation being
 present besides women
 and children

THE chief trade wth
 the Iar Indians is at y^e
 Onondages rivers mouth
 where they must all
 pass to go toward
 CANADA.

A Scale of English Miles





T O

The KING's Most Excellent Majesty in Council,

The Humble Petition and Representation of *Samuel Baker, Samuel Storke, John Bayeux, Richard Feneway, Robert Hackshaw, Joseph Low, Joseph Paice, George Streatfield, William Parkin and John Evered, Merchants of London, Trading to New-York,* in behalf of Themselves and the rest of the Persons concern'd in the *New-York Trade.*

SHEWETH;



THAT by an Act passed in *New-York* the 19th of *November, 1720.* Entituled, *An Act for Encouragement of the Indian Trade, and rendring of it more Beneficial to the Inhabitants of this Province, and for Prohibiting the Selling of Indian Goods to the French,* All Trade whatsoever is Prohibited in the strictest manner, and under the severest Penalties, between the Inhabitants of *New-York* Government and the *French of Canada,* or any Subjects of the *French King,* or any Person whatsoever, for or on the behalf of any such Subjects; and which Act was to continue in Force for Three years.

That the Reasons assigned in the Preamble of this Act, for the Passing thereof, are, For that the *French at Canada,* by means of Indian Goods purchas'd from the Inhabitants of *New-York,* had not only almost wholly engross'd the *Indian Trade* to themselves, but had, in great measure, withdrawn the Affections of the *Five Nations of Indians* from the Inhabitants of *New-York,* and render'd them wavering in their Faith and Allegiance to Your Majesty, and wou'd, if such Trade was not prevented, wholly Alienate the Minds of the said *Indians,* which might prove of dangerous Consequence to the *English Interest in America.*

That this Act was sent Home for your Majesty's Royal Consideration; but your Petitioners do not find that Your Majesty ever signified Your Allowance or Disallowance thereof; from whence, and from the Act's being to Continue but for Three years, Your Petitioners humbly conceive the same was suffer'd to lie by Probationary; to see whether the said Act, in its Effects, was really Advantagious or Prejudicial to the *British Trade and Interest in America.*

That Your Petitioners have received Advice, That the Government of *New-York* either have or are about passing an Act to Revive and Continue the said Act for Prohibiting all Trade between *New-York* and *Canada.*

Upon

Upon which Occasion, Your Petitioners humbly beg leave to Represent to your Majesty, That the said Act, tho' in the first Intention of it, it might be well designed, yet, in its Effects, it has proved very Pernicious to the *British Trade* in general, and to the Interest of *New-York* in particular: For, besides the Nations of *Indians* that are in the *English Interest*, there are very many Nations of *Indians*, who are, at present, in the Interest of the *French*, and who lie between *New-York* and the Nations of *Indians* in the *English Interest*; and this Act Prohibiting all Trade between *New-York* and the *French* of *Canada*, or any of the Subjects of *France*, the *French* and their *Indians* wou'd not permit the *English Indians* to pass over by their Forts, so as to carry on a free Trade with *New-York*, but prevented their Passages, as much as possible, whereby that most Considerable and Only Valuable Branch of Trade from *New-York*, hath, ever since the passing the said Act, very much lessened, from the great Difficulties of carrying on any Trade with the *English Indians*, and the Prohibition of all Trade with the *French*; and all the *Indian Goods* have, by this Act, been raised in their Price 25 l. to 30 l. per Cent.

Whereas, on the other hand, this Branch of the *New-York Trade*, by the Discouragements brought upon it by this Act, is almost wholly engrossed by the *French*, who have already, by this Act, been encouraged to send proper *European Goods* to *Canada*, to carry on this Trade; so that shou'd this Act be Continued, the *New-York Trade*, which is very Considerable, must be wholly lost to Us, and center in the *French*.

And Your Petitioners further beg leave humbly to Represent, That as they conceive nothing can tend more to the with-drawing the Affections of the *Five Nations of Indians* from the *English Interest* than the Continuance of the said Act, which, in its Effects, Restrains them from a free Commerce with the Inhabitants of *New-York*, and may, too probably, Estrange them from the *English Interest*: Whereas by a Freedom of Commerce, and an encourag'd Intercourse of Trade with the *French* and their *Indians*, the *English Interest* might, in time, be greatly improved and strengthened among the *Indians* in general, who, by such Latitude of Trade might be link't to Our Friendship in the strongest Tyes of their own Interest as well as Inclinations.

That therefore, and as the said Act was, in its Effects, so plainly Destructive and Prejudicial to the Trade and Interest of these Kingdoms, and so much for the Interest of the *French*, and greatly promoted that Mischief which it was intended to prevent,

Your Petitioners most humbly pray Your Majesty, That You would be graciously pleased to give the necessary Directions to your Governour of *New-York*, Not to pass any new Act for the Reviving or Continuing the said Act Prohibiting Trade with the *French* of *Canada*, and that if any such Act, or any Act of the like Tendency, be already Passed, That the same may be Repealed, And Your Petitioners shall ever Pray, &c.

Samuel Baker,	Sam. Fitch,	J. Bull,	Rich. Mico,
Rob. Hackshaw,	Rich. Feneway,	Fra. Wilks,	Jo. Miranda,
Jo. Lloyd,	Jos. Lowe,	Wm. Parkin,	Geo. Streetfield,
Sam. Storke,	Asher Levy,	John Gilbert,	John Everet,
J. Bayeux,	John Paine,	Jos. Paice, jun.	Thompson Hayne.

At the Court at St. James's the 30th Day of
April, 1724.

P R E S E N T

The KING's Most Excellent Majesty
in Council.

UPON Reading this Day at the Board the Humble Petition and Representation of *Samuel Baker, Samuel Storke*, and several others, Merchants of *London*, Trading to *New-York*, in behalf of themselves and the rest of the Persons concern'd in the *New-York Trade*, Which *Petition* sets forth, That great Discouragemets have been brought upon the *British Trade* by an Act passed in the said Colony of *New-York*, the 19th of *November*, 1720. Entituled, *An Act for the Encouragement of the Indian Trade, and rendering of it more Beneficial to the Inhabitants of this Province, and for Prohibiting the Selling of Indian Goods to the French.* And that as the said Act was to continue in Force only for Three years, they are inform'd the Government of *New-York* either have, or are about passing an Act to Revive and Continue the same; Wherefore they humbly pray, That the Governour of that Colony may be ordered, Not to pass any new Act for that purpose, and if any such Act be already pass'd, that it may be Repealed.

It is Ordered by His Majesty in Council, That the said Petition (A Copy whereof is hereunto annexed) be, and it is hereby Referred to the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, to Examine into the same, and Report to His Majesty, at this Board, what they conceive fit to be done therein.

Signed,

James Vernon.

Extract of the Minutes of the Right Honourable
the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, the
7th of July, 1724.

MR. Sharp Attending, as he had been desired, with several *New-York* Merchants, their Lordships took again into Consideration the Order of Council of the 30th of *April*, mentioned in the Minutes of the first of *May* last, Referring to the Board their Petition against the Renewing an Act passed in *New-York*, in *November*, 1720. Entituled, *An Act for the Encouragement of the Indian Trade, and rendring of it more Effectual to the Inhabitants of this Province, and for Prohibiting the Selling of Indian Goods to the French*; And Mr. Sharp, in behalf of the several Merchants, acquainted their Lordships, That he conceived this Act, tho' its intention of gaining the Indians to the English Interest, might be good, would have quite a Contrary Effect, because, if the Trade with the French was prevented, and the Merchants should Discontinue that with the Indians, (as he was informed they would) the French might lay hold of this opportunity to furnish themselves with Goods from *Europe*, and Supply the Five Nations of *Indians*, and thereby gain them to their Interest: And this, by reason of their Scituation, would not be in the power of the *English* to prevent: That they were two or three Hundred Leagues distant from *Albany*, and that they could not come to Trade with the *English* but by going down the River *St. Lawrence*, and from thence through a Lake, which brought them within Eighteen Leagues of *Albany*.

And that the *French* having made Settlements along the said River, it wou'd be in their Power, whenever they pleased, to cut off that Communication.

That this Act had been so great a Discouragement to the *British Trade*, in general, that there had not been, by far, so great a Quantity of Beaver, and other Furs, imported into *Great Britain* since the passing the said Act, as there was before; nor half the Quantity of *European Goods* Exported.

That several Merchants who had sent over to *New-York* considerable Quantities of *European Goods*, had received Advice from their Correspondents, That should another Act of the like nature be passed, they could not find a vent for them, and desired they would send no more.

Upon the whole, Mr. Sharp desired, in behalf of the Merchants, that Mr. Burnet might be directed, Not to pass any Act of the like nature for the future.

To the KING's Most Excellent Majesty.

May It Please Your Majesty ;

IN Obedience to Your Majesty's Commands, signified to Us by Your Order in Council of the 30th of April last, Referring to Us the Petition of several Merchants of *London*, Trading to *New-York*, setting forth "The great Discouragements that have been brought upon the *British Trade* by an Act passed in *New-York* the 19th of November 1720. Entituled, *An Act for the Encouragement of the Indian Trade, and rendering of it more Beneficial to the Inhabitants of this Province, and for Prohibiting the Selling of Indian Goods to the French.* And that as the said Act is now Expir'd, the said Merchants are informed, the Govern-ment of *New-York* either have, or are about passing an Act to Revive and Continue the same; and therefore pray, That a stop may be put thereto." We humbly take leave to Represent to Your Majesty,

That We have been attended by the Petitioners, who informed Us, That they have found this Act, by Experience, to be so great a Discouragement to the *British Trade*, that there has not been, by far, so considerable a Quantity of Beaver, and other Furs, imported into *Great Britain*, from *New-York*; since the passing the said Act, as here-to-fore, nor half the Quantity of *European Goods* Exported thither; in Consequence whereof the Price of Furs is raised *Five and Twenty and Thirty per Cent.* to the great Prejudice of several *British Manufactures.*

They likewise affirmed, That it was Impracticable to hinder the *French* from supplying the *Indians* with *European Goods*; For tho' *New-York* should not furnish them, the *French* would find another way to be supplied there-with, either from some other of his Majesty's Plantations, or, it might be, directly from *Europe.* That it was of dangerous Consequence to force this Trade into a new Channel, many of the Goods which the *Indians* want being as easy to be had directly from *France* or *Holland* as from *Great Britain.*

They further added, That it was not likely the Act, in question, should produce the Effects expected from it, more particularly that of Securing the *Five Indian Nations* firmly to the *British Interest*, because if the *French* should once get a Supply of the Goods necessary for the *Indian Trade*, from any other place, as the *Five Indian Nations* are settled upon the Banks of the River of *St. Lawrence*, directly opposite to *Quebeck*, two or three Hundred Leagues distant from the nearest *British Settlement* in *New-York*, the Vicinity of the *French* would furnish them with the means of Supplying even the *Five Nations* with these Goods, and consequently of alienating their Affections from the *British Interest.* And that there was no Prospect of obtaining a Trade with the *French Indians* by

this means, because the French would always be able to prevent their Passage cross the Lakes and River of *St. Lawrence* to our Settlements.

These were the most material Objections made by the Merchants against the Bill.

On the other hand, the Preamble of the Act sets forth, That it was found by Experience, that the *French of Canada*, by means of Indian Goods bought from that Province, had not only almost wholly Engrossed the Indian Trade, but had, in great measure, with-drawn the Affections of the *Five Nations of Indians* from the Inhabitants of that Province, and rendered them Wavering in their Allegiance to your Majesty, and would, if such Trade were not prevented, altogether Alienate the Minds of the said Indians, which would prove of dangerous Consequence to the English Interest in *America*.

And Mr. *Burnet*, Your Majesty's Governour of *New-York*, informs us, That, since the passing of this Act, several of the far Indians had come to *Albany* to Trade; That some of them came above One Thousand Miles, and are now Incorporated with the Five Nations: That he had likewise Intelligence of more far Indians that design'd to come to *Albany*, which he conceives to have been a good Effect proceeding from this Act: And likewise adds, That he did not doubt but the Cheapness of Goods in *Albany* would induce the Indians to Trade there, rather than with the *French* at *Montreal*; And that the Traders of *Albany* began to be sensible of their Error in sharing a Trade with the French, which they now perceive they can keep wholly to themselves.

Upon the Whole, Being doubtful of some of the Facts alledged by the Merchants, and considering how far the *British Trade* may be affected by this Act, on the one hand; and how much the Security and Interest of Your Majesty's Colonies in *America* may be concerned, on the Other, We are humbly of Opinion, That no Directions should be sent to *New-York*, upon the subject Matter of this Act, till Mr. *Burnet* shall have been acquainted with the Objections of the Merchants thereto, and his Answers and Observations received thereupon. For which end, if your Majesty shall be graciously pleased to Approve of this our Proposal, We shall forth-with send him Copies both of the Merchants Memorial, and of what Objections they have made before Us to the subject matter of this Bill.

Which is most Humbly Submitted. Signed

Whitehall, July 14.
1724.

J. Chetwind,
T. Pelham,
M. Bladen,
R. Plummer,
Ed. Ashe.

The Report of a Committee of the Council held at
New-York, November the 6th, 1724.

May it Please your Excellency,

IN Obedience to your Excellency's Commands in Council, the 29th of October, Referring to Us a Petition of several Merchants in London, presented to the King's most Excellent Majesty, against Renewing an Act passed in this Province, Entitled, *An Act for Encouragement of the Indian Trade, and rendering it more Effectual to the Inhabitants of this Province; and for Prohibiting the Selling of Indian Goods to the French*; as likewise the several Allegations of the said Merchants before the Right Honourable the Lords of Trade and Plantations, We beg leave to make the following Remarks:

And in order to make our Observations the more Distinct and Clear, We shall gather together the several Assertions of the said Merchants, both in their Petition, and Verbally before the Lords of Trade, as to the Scituation of this Province, with respect to the *French and Indian Nations*, and observe on them, in the first place, they being the Foundation on which all their other Allegations are grounded. Afterwards, we shall lay before your Excellency what we think necessary to Observe on the other parts of the said Petition, in the Order they are in the Petition, or in the Report of the Lords of Trade.

In their Geographical Accounts, they say, "Besides the Nations of
"Indians that are in the *English Interest*, there are very many Nations of
"Indians who are, at present, in the Interest of the *French*, and who lie
"between New-York and the Nations of Indians in the *English Interest*-----
"The *French* and their *Indians* would not permit the *English* Indians to
"pass over by their Forts.

The said Act "Restrains them (*the Five Nations*) from a free Commerce with the Inhabitants of New-York.

"The *Five Indian Nations* are settled upon the Banks of the River *St. Lawrence*, directly Opposite to *Quebeck*, two or three Hundred Leagues distant from the nearest British Settlements in *New-York*.

"They (*the Five Nations of Indians*) were Two or Three Hundred Leagues distant from *Albany*; and that they could not come to Trade with the *English* but by going down the River *St. Lawrence*, and from thence through a Lake, which brought them within Eighteen Leagues of *Albany*.

These Things the Merchants have thought it safe for them, and consistent with their Duty to His Sacred Majesty, to say in his Majesty's Presence, and to Repeat them afterwards before the Right Honourable the Lords of Trade, tho' nothing can be more directly Contrary to the Truth. For there are NO Nations of Indians between *New-York* and the Nations of Indians in the *English Interest*, who are now Six in Number,

by

by the addition of the *Tuscaroras*. The *Mohawks* (called *Amies* by the *French*) one of the Five Nations, live on the South side of a Branch of *Hudsons River*, (not on the North side, as they are placed in the *French Maps*) and but Forty Miles directly West from *Albany*, and within the English Settlements, some of the English Farms upon the same River being Thirty Miles further West.

The *Oneidas* (the next of the Five Nations) lie likewise West from *Albany*, near the Head of the *Mohawks River*, about one Hundred Miles from *Albany*.

The *Onondagas* lie about One Hundred and Thirty Miles West from *Albany*. And the *Tuscaroras* live partly with the *Oneidas* and partly with the *Onondagas*.

The *Cayugas* are about One Hundred and Sixty Miles from *Albany*.

And the *Sennekas* (the furthest of all these Nations) are not above Two Hundred and Forty Miles from *Albany*, as may appear by Mr. *De L'Isle's* Map of *Louisiane*, who lays down the Five Nations under the Name of *Troquois*.

And Goods are daily carried from this Province to the *Sennekas*, as well as to those Nations that lie nearer, by Water all the way, except three Miles, (or, in the dry Seasons, five Miles) where the Traders carry over Land between the *Mohawks River* and the *Wood Creek*, which runs into the *Oneida Lake*, without going near either *St. Lawrence River* or any of the *Lakes* upon which the *French* pass, which are entirely out of their way.

The nearest French Forts or Settlements to *Albany* are *Chambly* and *Monreal*, both of them lying about North and by East from *Albany*, and are near Two Hundred Miles distant from it. *Quebeck* lies about Three Hundred and Eighty Miles North East from *Albany*. So far is it from being true, that the Five Nations are situated upon the Banks of the *River St. Lawrence*, opposite to *Quebec*, that *Albany* lies almost directly between *Quebec* and the *Five Nations*. And to say that these Indians cannot come to Trade at *Albany* but by going down the *River St. Lawrence*, and then into a *Lake*, Eighteen Leagues from *Albany* (we suppose they mean *Lake Champlain*) passing by the French Forts, is to the same purpose as if they should say, That one cannot go from *London* to *Bristol* but by way of *Edenburgh*.

Before we go on to Observe other Particulars, we beg leave further to Remark; That it is so far from being True, That the Indians in the French Interest lie between *New-York* and our *Five Nations of Indians*, that some of Our Nations of Indians lie between the French and the Indians from whence the French bring the far greatest Quantity of their Furs: For the *Sennekas* (whom the French call *Sonontouons*) are situated between *Lake Erie* and *Cataragui Lake* (called by the French *Ontario*) near the great Fall of *Jagara*, by which all the Indians that live Round *Lake Erie*, Round the *Lake of the Hurons*, Round the *Lake of the Illinois* or *Michigan*, and Round the great *Upper Lake*, generally pass in their way to *Canada*. All the Indians situated upon the Branches of the *Mississipi* must likewise pass by the same place, if they go to *Canada*. And all of them likewise in their way to *Canada*, pass by Our Trading-place upon the *Cataragui Lake*, at the Mouth of the *Onondaga River*. The nearest and safest Way of Carrying Goods upon the *Cataragui Lake*, towards *Canada*, being along the

the South side of that Lake, (near where Our Indians are settled, and Our Trade, of late, is fixed) and not by the North side and *Cataraqu* or *Frontinac Fort*, where the French are settled.

Now that we have Represented to your Excellency, That not one word of the Geography of these Merchants is True, upon which all their Reasoning is founded, it might seem needless to trouble your Excellency with any further Remarks, were it not to shew with what Earnestness they are promoting the *French Interest*, to the Prejudice of all his Majesty's Colonies in *North America*, and that they are not ashamed of asserting any thing for that end, ev'n in the Royal Presence.

First, They say, "That by the Act passed in this Province, Entituled; *An Act for Encouragement of the Indian Trade, &c.* All Trade whatsoever is Prohibited in the strictest Manner and under the severest Penalties, between the Inhabitants of *New-York* Government and the *French of Canada*."

This is not True; for only carrying Goods to the *French*, which are proper for the *Indian Trade*, is Prohibited. The Trade, as to other things, is left in the same state it was before that Act was made, as it will appear to any Person that shall read it: And there are yearly large Quantities of other Goods openly carried to *Canada*, without any hindrance from the Government of *New-York*. Whatever may be said of the Severity and Penalties in that Act, they are found insufficient to deter some from carrying Goods clandestinely to the *French*; and the Legislature of this Province are convinced that no Penalties can be too severe to prevent a Trade which puts the Safety of all his Majesty's Subjects of *North America* in the greatest Danger.

Their next Assertion is, *All the Indian Goods have, by this Act, been raised 25 l. to 30 l. per Cent.* This is the only Allegation in the whole Petition that there is any ground for. Nevertheless, tho' the common Channel of Trade cannot be alter'd without some detriment to it in the beginning, we are assured from the Custom-house Books, That there has been, every year, since the passing of this Act; more Furs Exported from *New-York*, than in the year immediately before the passing of this Act. It is not probable that the greatest Difference between the Exportation any year before this Act, and any year since, could so much alter the Price of Beaver, as it is found to be this last year. Beaver is carried to *Britain* from other parts besides *New-York*, and it is certain that the Price of Beaver is not so much alter'd here by the Quantity in our Market, as by the Demand for it in *Britain*. But as we cannot be so well inform'd here what occasions Beaver to be in greater Demand in *Britain*, we must leave that to be enquir'd after in *England*. However, we are fully satisfied that it will be found to be for very different Reasons from what the Merchants alledge.

The Merchants go on, and say, *Whereas on the other hand, this Branch of the New-York Trade, by the Discouragements brought upon it by this Act, is almost wholly engrossed by the French, who have already, by this Act, been encouraged to send proper European Goods to Canada, to carry on this Trade, so that should this Act be continued, the New-York Trade, which is very considerable, must be wholly lost to Us, and center in the French.-----Tho' New-York should not furnish them, the French would find another way to be supplied there-with, either from some other of his Majesty's Plantations,*

or it might be, directly from Europe.-----Many of the Goods which the Indians want being as easy to be had directly from France or Holland as from Great Britain.

This is easily answered, by informing your Excellency, That the Principal of the Goods proper for the *Indian Market* are Only of the Manufacture of *Great Britain*, or of the *British Plantations*, viz. Strouds or Stroud-Waters, and other Woollens, and Rum. The *French* must be obliged to buy all their Woollens (the Strouds especially) in *England*, and thence carry them to *France*, in order to their Transportation to *Canada*. The Voyage to *Quebec*, through the Bay of *St. Lawrence*, is well known to be the most Dangerous of any in the World, and only Practicable in the Summer Months. The *French* have no Commodities in *Canada*, by reason of the Cold and Barrenness of the Soil, proper for the *West India* Markets, and therefore have no Rum but by Vessels from *France*, that touch at their Islands in the *West Indies*. *New-York* has, by reason of its Scituation; both as to the Sea and the Indians, every way the Advantage of *Canada*. The *New-York* Vessels make always two Voyages in the year from *England*, one in Summer and another in Winter, and several Voyages in a year to the *West Indies*. It is manifest, therefore, that it is not in the Power of the *French* to import any goods near so Cheap to *Canada* as they are imported to *New-York*.

But to put this out of all Controversie, we need only observe to your Excellency, That Strouds (without which no considerable Trade can be carried on with the *Indians*) are sold at *Albany* for Ten Pounds a Piece: They were sold at *Monreal*, before this Act took place, at Thirteen Pounds Two Shillings and Six Pence, and now they are sold there for Twenty Five Pounds and upwards: Which is an evident Proof, that the *French* have not, in these four years time (during the continuance of this Act) found out any other way to supply themselves with Strouds, and likewise that they cannot Trade without them, seeing they buy them at so Extravagant a Price.

It likewise appears, That none of the neighbouring Colonies have been able to supply the *French* with these Goods; and those that know the Geography of the Country, know it is impracticable to do it at any tollerable Rare, because they must carry their goods ten times further by Land than We need to do.

We are likewise assured, That the Merchants of *Monreal* lately told Mr. *Vaudreuil*, their Governour, That if the Trade from *Albany* be not, by some means or other encouraged, they must abandon that Settlement. We have reason therefore to suspect, That these Merchants (at least some of them) have been practised upon by the *French* Agents in *London*; for, no doubt, the *French* will leave no Method Untried to Defeat the present Designs of this Government, seeing they are more afraid of the Consequences of this Trade between *New-York* and the *Indians*, than of all the War-like Expeditions that ever were attempted against *Canada*.

But to Return to the Petitioners, They conceive nothing can tend more to the with-drawing the Affections of the Five Nations of *Indians* from the English Interest, than the Continuance of the said Act, which, in its Effects, Restrains them from a free Commerce with the Inhabitants of *New-York*, and may, too probably, Estrange them from the English Interest, whereas by

a freedom of Commerce, and an encourag'd Intercourse of Trade with the French and their Indians, the English Interest might, in time, be greatly improved and strengthened.

It seems to us a strange Argument, to say, That an Act, the whole purport of which is to encourage our own People to go among the *Indians*, and to draw the far *Indians* through Our *Indian Country* to *Albany* (and which has truly produced these Effects) would, on the contrary, Restrain them from a free Commerce with the Inhabitants of *New-York*, and may, too probably Estrange them from the *English Interest*, and therefore that it would be much wiser in us to make use of the *French* to promote the *English Interest*; and for which end we ought to encourage a free Intercourse between Them and Our *Indians*. The Reverse of this is exactly True, in the Opinion of our *Five Nations*, who, in all their publick Treaties with this Government, have Represented against this Trade, as *The Building the French Forts with English Strouds*: That the encouraging a freedom of Commerce with Our *Indians* and the *Indians* round them, who must pass through their Country to *Albany*, would certainly increase both the *English Interest* and Theirs among all the Nations to the Westward of them, and That the carrying the *Indian Market* to *Monreal* in *Canada*, draws all the far *Indians* thither.

The last thing we have to take Notice, is what the Merchants asserted before the Lords of Trade, viz. *That there has not been half the Quantity of European Goods exported since the passing of this Act, that us'd to be.*

We are well assured, that this is no better grounded than the other Facts they assert with the same Positiveness. For it is well known almost to every Person in *New-York*, That there has not been a less, but rather a greater Quantity of *European Goods* Imported into this place, since the passing of this Act, than was at any time before it, in the same space of time. As this appears by the Manifests in the Custom-house here, the same may likewise be easily proved by the Custom-house Books in *London*.

As all the Arguments of the Merchants run upon the Ill Effects this Act has had upon the Trade and the Minds of the *Indians*, every one of which we have shewn to be asserted without the least Foundation to support them, There nothing now remains but to shew the good Effects this Act has produced, which are so notorious in this Province, that we know not one Person that now opens his Mouth against the Act.

Before this Act passed, none of the People of this Province travell'd into the *Indian Countries* to Trade: We have now above Forty young Men who have been several times as far as the Lakes a Trading, and thereby become well acquainted not only with the Trade of the *Indians*, but likewise with their Manners and Languages; and these have Returned with such large Quantities of Furs, that greater Numbers are Resolved to follow their Example. So that we have good Reason to hope, that in a little time the English will draw the whole *Indian Trade* of the Inland Countries to *Albany*, and into the Country of the *Five Nations*. This Government has built a publick Trading-house upon *Cataragui Lake* at *Irondequat* in the *Sennekäs Land*, and another is to be built next Spring; at the Mouth of the *Onondagas River*. All the far *Indians* pass by these
Places

Places in their way to *Canada*, and they are not above half so far from the *English* Settlements as they are from the *French*.

So far is it from being True what the Merchants say, *That the French Forts interrupt all Communication between the Indians and the English*, that if these Places be well supported, as they easily can be from our Settlements, in case of a Rupture with the French, it will be in the Power of this Province to intercept the greatest part of the Trade between *Canada* and the *Indians* round the Lakes and the Branches of the *Mississipi*.

Since this Act pass'd, many Nations have come to *Albany* to Trade, and settle Peace and Friendship, whose Names had not so much as been heard of among us.

In the beginning of *May*, 1723. a Nation of Indians came to *Albany* Singing and Dancing, with their Calumets before them, as they always do when they come to any Place where they have not been before. We do not find that the Commissioners of Indian Affairs were able to inform themselves what Nation this was.

Towards the End of the same Month, Eighty Men, besides Women and Children, came to *Albany* in the same manner. These had one of our Five Nations with them, for an Interpreter, by whom they informed the Commissioners, That they were of a great Nation, called *Nebkereages*, consisting of six Castles and Tribes, and that they liv'd near a Place called by the French *Missilimakmak*, between the Upper Lake and the Lake of the *Hurons*. These Indians not only desired a free Commerce, but likewise to enter into a strict League of Friendship with Us and Our *Six Nations*, that they might be accounted the *Seventh Nation* in the League; and being receiv'd accordingly; they left their Calumet as a Pledge of their Fidelity.

In *June* another Nation arrived, but from what part of the Continent we have not learn't.

In *July* the *Twightwies* arrived, and brought an Indian Interpreter, of our Nations with them, who told, That they were called by the French *Miamies*, and that they live upon one of the Branches of the River *Mississipi*.

At the same time some of the *Tahsagrondie* Indians, who live between *Lake Erie* and the Lake of the *Hurons*, near a French Settlement, did come and Renew their League with the English; nor durst the French hinder them.

In *July*, this year, another Nation came, whose Scituation and Name we know not. And in *August* and *September* several Parties of the same Indians that had been here last year. But the greatest Numbers of these far Indians have been met, this year, in the Indian Country by our Traders, every one of them endeavouring to get before another, in order to reap the Profits of so advantageous a Trade, which has, all this Summer long, kept about Forty Traders constantly employ'd in going between our Trading-places in our Indian Country and *Albany*.

All these Nations of Indians who came to *Albany*, said, That the *French* had told them many strange Stories of the *English*, and did what they could to hinder their coming to *Albany*, but that they had Resolv'd to break thro' by force. The Difference on this score, between the *Tahsagrondie* Indians and the *French* (who have a Fort and Settlement there, called by them, *Le Detroit*) rose to that height this Summer, that Mr. *Tonti*, who commanded

manded there, thought it proper to Retire, and Return to *Canada* with many of his Men.

We are, for these Reasons, well assured, That this year there will be more Beaver Exported for *Great Britain*, than ever was from this Province in one year; and that if the Custom-house Books, at *London*, be look't into, it will be found, that there will be a far greater Quantity of Goods for the *Indians*, (Strouds especially) sent over next Spring, than ever was at any one time to this Province; for the Merchants here tell us, That they have, at this time, order'd more of these Goods than ever was done at any one time before.

These Matters of Fact prove, beyond Contradiction, That this Act has been of the greatest Service to *New-York*, in making us acquainted with many Nations of *Indians* formerly entirely Unknown and Strangers to us, in with-drawing them from their Dependance upon the *French*, and in Uniting them to *Us* and *Our Indians*, by means of Trade and mutual Offices of Friendship. Of what great Consequence this may be to the *British Interest* in general, as to Trade, is apparent to any body. It is no less apparent likewise, That it is of the greatest Consequence to the Safety of all the *British Colonies* in *North-America*. We feel, too sensibly, the ill Effects of the *French Interest* in the present War betwixt *New-England* and only one Nation of *Indians* supported by the *French*. Of what dismal Consequences then might it be, if the *French* should be able to Influence, in the same manner, so many and such Numerous Nations as lie to the Westward of *this Province, Pennsylvania* and *Maryland*? On the other hand, if all these Nations (who assert their own Freedom, and declare themselves Friends to those that supply them best with what they want) be brought to have a Dependance upon the *English* (as we have good reason to hope, in a short time they will) the *French* of *Canada*, in case of a War, must be at the Mercy of the *English*.

To these Advantages must be added, That many of our young Men having been induced by this Act to Travel among the *Indians*, they learn their Manners, their Languages, and the Situation of all their Countries, and become enured to all manner of Fatigues and Hardships, and a great many more being Resolv'd to follow their Example; these young Men (in case of a War) with *Indians*, will be of ten times the Service that the same number of the common Militia can be of.

The Effects of this Act have likewise so much quieted the Minds of the People, with respect to the Security of the Frontiers, that our Settlements are now extended above thirty Miles further West towards the *Indian Countries*, than they were before it passed.

The only thing that now remains to answer is an Objection, which we suppose may be made, *What can induce the Merchants of London to Petition against an Act which will be really so much for their Interest in the End?* The Reason is, in all probability, because they only consider their present Gain, and that they are not at all concern'd for the Safety of this Country in encouraging the most necessary Undertaking, if they apprehend their Profit, for two or three years, may be lessen'd by it. This Inclination of the Merchants has been so notorious, that few Nations at War with

four their Neighbours have been able to Restrain them from supplying their Enemies with Ammunition and Arms. The Count *D' Estrade* in his Letters in 1638. says, That when the Dutch were besieging *Antwerp*, one *Belland*, who had loaded ~~four~~ Flyboats with Arms and Powder for *Antwerp*, being taken up by the Prince of *Orange's* Order, and Examined at *Amsterdam*, said boldly, That the Burghers of *Amsterdam* had a Right to Trade every where: That he could name a Hundred that were Factors for the Merchants at *Antwerp*; and that he was One. That Trade cannot be Interrupted; And that for his part he was very free to own, That if to get any thing by Trade it were necessary to pass through Hell, he would venture to burn his Sails. When this Principle, so common to Merchants, is considered, and that some in this Place have got Estates by Trading many years to *Canada*, it is not to be wonder'd that they have acted as Factors for *Canada* in this Affair, and that they have Transmitted such Accounts to their Correspondents in *London* as are consistent with the Trust reposed in them by the Merchants of *Canada*.

In the last Place, We are humbly of Opinion, That it may be proper to Print the Petition of the Merchants of *London*, and their Allegations before the Lords of Trade, together with the Answers your Committee has made thereto, in Vindication of the Legislature of this Province, of which we have the Honour to be a part, if your Excellency shall approve of our Answers, That what we have said may be Exposed to the Examination of every one in this Place, where the Truth of the Matters of Fact is best known, and that the Correspondents of these Merchants may have the most Publick Notice, to Reply, if they shall think it proper, or to Disown, in a Publick Manner, That they are the Authors of such groundless Informations.

All which is Unanimously and Humbly Submitted by

Your Excellency's

Most Obedient Humble Servants,

R. Walter,
Rip Van Dam,
John Barberie,
Fr. Harrison,
Cadwallader Colden,
Ja. Alexander,
Abraham van Horn.

A Memorial concerning the Furr-Trade of the Province of *New-York*.

Presented to his Excellency *William Burnet*, Esq; Captain
General and Governor, &c. by *Cadwallader Colden*, Surveyor
General of the said Province, the 10th of *November*, 1724.

IT has of late been generally believ'd that the Inhabitants of the Province of *New-York* are so advantagiously scituated, with respect to the *Indian Trade*, and enjoy so many Advantages as to Trade in general, that it is in their Power not only to Rival the *French* of *Canada*, who have almost entirely engrossed the Furr-Trade of *America*, but that it is impossible for the *French* to carry on that Trade in Competition with the People of this Province. The Enquiring into the Truth of this Proposition, may not only be of some Consequence, as to the Riches and Honour of the *British Nation*, (for it is well known how Valuable the Furr-Trade of *America* is) but likewise as to the Safety of all the *British Colonies* in *North-America*. *New-France* (as the *French* now Claim) extends from the Mouth of the River *Mississipi*, to the Mouth of the River *St. Lawrence*, by which the *French* plainly show their Intention of Enclosing the *British Settlements*, and cutting Us off from all Commerce with the numerous Nations of *Indians* that are every where settled over the vast Continent of *North-America*. The *English* in *America* have too good reason to apprehend such a Design, when they see the *French King's* Geographer publish a Map, by which he has set Bounds to the *British Empire* in *America*, and has taken in many of the *English Settlements* both in *South-Carolina* and *New-York*, within these Boundaries of *New-France*. And the good Services they intend Us, with the *Indians*, but too plainly appears at this Day, by the *Indian War* now carried on against *New-England*.

I have therefore, for some time past, endeavour'd to inform my self, from the Writings of the *French*, and from others who have Travell'd in *Canada* or among the *Indians*, how far the People of this Province may carry on the *Indian Trade* with more Advantage than the *French* can, or what Disadvantages they labour under, more than the *French* do. As all Endeavours for the good of ones Country, are Excusable, I do not doubt but my Intention, in this, will be acceptable to your Excellency, tho' I be not capable of Treating the Subject as it deserves.

I shall begin with *Canada*, and consider what Advantages they have either by their Scituation, or otherwise. *Canada* is scituated upon the River
of

of *St. Lawrence*, by which the five great Lakes (which may properly be call'd, *The five Inland Seas of North-America*) empty themselves into the Ocean. The Mouth of this great River is in the Lat. of 50 degrees, over against the Body of *Newfound-Land*. It rises from the *Cataracui Lake*, (the Eastermost of the five great Lakes) about the Lat. of 44 degr. and runs from thence about North East, to the Ocean, and is about nine Hundred Miles in length, from that Lake to the Ocean. The five great Lakes which communicate with each other, and with this River, extend about ~~Five~~ *Five* Thousand Miles, Westward, further into the Continent. So far the *French* have already discovered, and their Discoveries make it probable, that an In-land Passage may be found to the *South-Sea* by the Rivers which run into these Lakes, and Rivers which run into the *South-Sea*.

The Method of carrying Goods upon the Rivers of *North-America*, into all the small Branches, and over Land, from the Branches of one River to the Branches of another, was learned from the *Indians*, and is the only Method practicable through such large Forests and Deserts as the Traders pass through, in carrying from one Nation to another, it is this, The *Indians* make a long narrow Boat, made of the Bark of the Birch-Tree, the parts of which they joyn very neatly. One of these Canoes that can carry a dozen Men, can it self be easily carried upon two Mens Shoulders, so that when they have gone as far by Water as they can (which is further than is easily to be imagin'd, because their loaded Canoes don't sink six Inches into the Water) they unload their Canoes, and carry both Goods and Canoes upon their Shoulders over Land, into the nearest Branch of the River they intend to follow. Thus, the *French* have an easie Communication with all the Countries bordering upon the River of *St. Lawrence* and its Branches, with all the Countries bordering upon these In-land Seas, and the Rivers which empty themselves into these Seas, and can thereby carry their Burdens of Merchandize through all these large Countries, which could not by any other means than Water-carriage, be carried thro' so vast a Tract of Land.

This, however, but half finishes the View the *French* have, as to their Commerce in *North-America*. Many of the Branches of the River *Mississipi* come so near to the Branches of several of the Rivers which empty themselves into the great Lakes, that in several places there is but a short Land Carriage from the one to the other. As soon as they have got into the River of *Mississipi* they open to themselves as large a Field for Traffick in the Southern parts of *North-America*, as was before mentioned with respect to the Northern parts. If one considers the Length of this River, and its numerous Branches, he must say, *That by means of this River and the Lakes there is opened to his View such a Scene of Inland Navigation as cannot be Parallel'd in any other part of the World.*

The *French* have, with much Industry, settled small Colonies, and built stockaded Forts at all the considerable Passes between the Lakes, except between *Cataracui Lake* (called by the *French* *Ontario*) and *Lake Erie*, one of Our Five Nations of *Indians*, whom we call *Sennekas* (and the *French* *Sonontouans*) having hitherto refused them leave to erect any Buildings there.

The *French* have been Indefatigable in making Discoveries and carrying on their Commerce with Nations, of whom the *English* know nothing but what

The enclosure of the foregoing paper may
be found, with the papers here published,
annexed to Colcler's History of the Five
Nations; Part II. printed in London in
1747. The first part only of that history
was published in French in 1727 by Beau-
fron, and was reprinted as above with
a second part and these papers, with a
second copy of the map.





