

Samuel Vetch's 'Canada Survey'd': The Formation of a Colonial Strategy, 1706-1710

James D. Alsop

Volume 12, Number 1, Autumn 1982

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/acad12_1art02

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

The Department of History of the University of New Brunswick

ISSN

0044-5851 (print)

1712-7432 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Alsop, J. D. (1982). Samuel Vetch's 'Canada Survey'd': The Formation of a Colonial Strategy, 1706-1710. *Acadiensis*, 12(1), 39–58.

JAMES D. ALSOP

Samuel Vetch's 'Canada Survey'd': The Formation of a Colonial Strategy, 1706-1710

The importance of Samuel Vetch's visionary and persuasive tract 'Canada Survey'd' has long been recognized.¹ It provided the inspiration and policy for the attempted 1709 expedition against Quebec, which in turn led to the capture of Port Royal in 1710 and Vetch's appointment as the first governor of Annapolis Royal. The author could with some justification claim to be the best informed British subject on the French settlements of continental North America. A former soldier and Scottish survivor of the ill-fated Darien colony on the Isthmus of Panama, Vetch had established himself at New York where he made an advantageous marriage to the daughter of Robert Livingstone, a leading merchant. Vetch was active in the trade to New France, and this continued after his removal to Boston during Queen Anne's War (1702-1713). Ambitious and talented, Vetch was on amicable terms with many of the colonial elite and appears to have aspired from an early period to move from commerce into public office. With the advantages of hindsight, he wrote in 1708 of his life in America: "I made it my bussiness not only to understand the Intrrest trade, Situation, and Constitution of the English empire in those parts but more particularly that of the french in Canada, and all its dependances where I was five severall times and never went but one great part of my design was to make such observations, as might render me Capable of being ane Instrument of serving My Native Sovereign and country".² This patriotic aspect of his relationship with the French was not always appreciated and in 1706 Vetch was convicted for illegal trading with the enemy at Port Royal. Returning to England for a successful appeal against the conviction, Vetch found himself with sufficient leisure to write 'Canada Survey'd' and press it upon a receptive British administration in time for its acceptance in late 1708.

Running to some 6,000 words, the tract provides a detailed description of New France and its impact on adjacent British territories. It is Vetch's most comprehensive statement of his scheme for Great Britain's expansion in the new world; the French were to be driven from the continent beginning with a com-

1 For Vetch and his project see George M. Waller, *Samuel Vetch, Colonial Enterpriser* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1960), and "Samuel Vetch", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto, 1969), II, pp. 650-2; *The Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1936), XIX, pp. 260-1; *The Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1885-1901), LVIII, pp. 293-6; Philip S. Haffenden, *New England in the English Nation, 1689-1713* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 248-50.

2 Vetch to Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, London, 15 June 1708, Additional Manuscript [Add. Ms.] 61.647, fo. 1, British Library [BL].

bined sea-borne and overland expedition against Quebec City and Montreal. The project almost deserved Vetch's enthusiastic opinion that it could be "putt in the Balance with the greatest Enterprises, that have bein projected since the revolution both with regard to the honour, and Intrest of the Brittish Empyre, both att home and abroad".³ 'Canada Survey'd' and the campaigns which it spawned constitute perhaps the most important overseas initiative of Queen Anne's War, and for an understanding of their place in British colonial strategy it is valuable to reexamine the circumstances under which 'Canada Survey'd' was composed by Vetch and adopted as official government policy.

It is generally believed that although Vetch's views had a long period of gestation, he wrote 'Canada Survey'd' entirely in the opening months of 1708 in Britain. He then presented the proposal to the ministry, first on 15 June to the Secretary of State for the Southern Department whose responsibilities included the colonies, Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, and then on 27 July to the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations. As a result of the enthusiastic patronage of either Sunderland or possibly his undersecretary Robert Pringle the scheme was eventually adopted in December 1708.⁴ However, both this date of composition and the importance attached to Sunderland or his secretary must be rejected, for the proposal was composed and approved under fundamentally different circumstances.

A number of manuscript copies of 'Canada Survey'd' survive, but the most important for this investigation are the ones sent to Sunderland on 15 June 1708 and to the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations on 27 July.⁵ The latter is well known and readily available in print,⁶ whereas the former has been almost totally ignored.⁷ The assumption has been that these two copies, presented within six weeks of each other, were virtually identical, but this is far from the

3 Vetch to Robert Hunter, Boston, 20 November 1709, *ibid.*, fo. 22.

4 Waller, *Vetch*, pp. 100, 115-16; Waller, "Vetch", p. 651; Yves F. Zoltvany, ed., *The French Tradition in America* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1969), pp. 122-3.

5 Three copies are in the Public Record Office, CO 323/6, nos. 64-5, 324/9, pp. 221-46, of which the first is printed in Cecil Headlam, ed., *The Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, America and West Indies, June 1708-1709* [CSP, 1708-1709] (London, 1922), no. 60; Sunderland's copy, included in his correspondence and papers recently transferred from Blenheim Palace to the British Library, is now Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 3-llv, BL. Another version (not used in this study) is in Vetch's letterbook in the Museum of the City of New York; Waller, *Vetch*, p. 106.

6 CSP, 1708-1709, no. 60; Zoltvany, *The French Tradition*, pp. 122-7.

7 It is first known to have been cited in Richard Bond, *Queen Anne's American Kings* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 22, 109. However, while Bond referred to Vetch's letter of 15 June which accompanied this copy of 'Canada Survey'd', he did not use the Sunderland version of the tract and quoted from the copy in CSP, 1708-1709; Bond, *American Kings*, p. 109. Waller merely referred to Bond's work; Waller, *Vetch*, p. 116. Bond may not have used the Sunderland copy of 'Canada Survey'd' because this manuscript had become detached from its covering letter and was placed separately and anonymously in a different section of the Blenheim Palace archive. During the recently completed rearrangement of the collection the manuscript was returned to its proper position with Vetch's letter of 15 June.

case. The later manuscripts of Vetch's tract uniformly speak of "British" interests, "British" trade, the "British" Empire, the Crown of "Britain", whereas the Sunderland copy refers in almost every case to the "English" or "England". In 11 instances "England" or "English" in the Sunderland manuscript appears as "Britain" or "British" in the 27 July Board of Trade copy.⁸ Vetch was a zealous supporter of his native Scotland,⁹ and in view of the 1707 union it is unlikely that he would have employed in the spring of 1708 the expressions found in the Sunderland tract, and inconceivable that having done so he would within six weeks radically alter the language before sending the project to the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations. Since Vetch thought it advisable to produce a wholly "British" tract for presentation in July 1708, the only reasonable conclusion is that the version received by Sunderland in June had in fact been composed much earlier, prior to the union with Scotland. Some support for this interpretation is provided in the text where Vetch cited a visit to Quebec City two years previously — apparently a reference to his 1705 trip.¹⁰

It is clear in other respects that the Sunderland copy represents an early form of the tract. More than 190 purposeful alterations distinguish this manuscript from the one received by the Board of Trade, ranging from changes in tense to the insertion of whole sentences and in one instance an entire paragraph. Such a comprehensive revision would not have been necessary if there had been little more than a six week interval between the production of the two copies. Vetch had been formulating his general expansionist policy for some time, and had composed a proposal in 1706 which had similarities with 'Canada Survey'd'.¹¹ It is now apparent that Vetch had essentially completed his tract by 1707 and it was this version, perhaps with a few alterations, which Sunderland received in June 1708.¹² He presumably carried out a thorough revision of the manuscript between 15 June and 27 July to give the text its final form. At this time he smoothed out the style, improved the grammar, updated references, and wherever possible provided supplementary information designed to improve the

8 In a minority of other cases "English" was retained unaltered in the later document; this usage tends to be grouped in isolated paragraphs and Vetch apparently overlooked these expressions. Conversely, "British" sometimes appears in both the Sunderland and Board of Trade manuscripts. This usage tends to appear in clusters: it is used three times in a short transitional paragraph in the text, and five times in the final two paragraphs, and it may well be that these paragraphs were later extrapolations to the original text inserted shortly before Vetch delivered this version to Sunderland.

9 Waller, *Vetch*, pp. 102-4 and *passim*.

10 *CSP, 1708-1709*, no. 60, p. 44; Add. Ms. 61,647, fo. 4v, BL.

11 Waller, *Vetch*, pp. 100-6.

12 Vetch apparently updated a few aspects of his text for Sunderland. For example, he cited the two expeditions from New England against Port Royal of "last Sumer"; Add. Ms. 61,647, fo. 3v, BL. This reference to the efforts of John March and Francis Wainwright in 1707 could not have been written before the autumn of that year.

general appeal of his plan and to emphasize the military value of the information in 'Canada Survey'd'.

Vetch's actions are explicable only through a new interpretation of the manner by which 'Canada Survey'd' became adopted as official British policy. George Waller has maintained that Vetch's scheme was supported by one influential individual, either Sunderland or his undersecretary Pringle, who in effect secured its acceptance.¹³ However, this view is based upon a mixture of circumstantial evidence and unsupported supposition. Waller placed great stress upon the close collaboration of Vetch with both Sunderland and Pringle during the course of the expedition. Yet, since Sunderland was in effect the colonial secretary, this correspondence after the plan's acceptance was only to be expected and it has no bearing upon earlier events. The accepted explanation rests largely upon a cryptic Board of Trade memorandum of September 1707: "Vetch has made a certain gentleman, as he himself termed it. I suppose not for nothing".¹⁴ Waller first mentioned this comment in connection with Vetch's appeal against his conviction for illegal trading with Acadia. In September 1707 the Board of Trade received the Order-in-Council which opened the way for Vetch's acquittal, and the memorandum almost certainly related to this matter. Waller chose to link this aspect of Vetch's earlier career with his 1708 efforts to gain acceptance for 'Canada Survey'd', and reasoned that this same "certain gentleman" was instrumental in acquiring the ministry's endorsement for the expedition to Quebec. Moreover, he identified this individual as either Sunderland or Pringle. Yet, even if any single man was behind the endorsement of Vetch's policy, this was in all probability neither Sunderland nor his undersecretary. Vetch's letter of 15 June 1708 to Sunderland was clearly an introduction of both himself and his scheme to the Secretary of State. He began by rehearsing his career since the failure of the Darien colony, stressed his knowledge of North America in detail, and related how he had been frequently pressed to lay his views before Parliament but thought this too public a course of action. Nothing in the letter suggested that Sunderland had any prior knowledge of Vetch. Finally, Waller's suggestion that Robert Pringle was the key supporter for 'Canada Survey'd' can be dismissed out of hand. It is based entirely upon the collaboration between Vetch and Pringle after the policy was adopted, for Pringle was not appointed Undersecretary of State until January 1709, after Vetch's scheme had been approved. No evidence has been uncovered to connect Pringle with Vetch apart from their common Scottish birth.

An alternative explanation of the movement of Vetch's plan through the

13 Waller, *Vetch*, pp. 115-16. Sunderland's importance has been accepted by Haffenden, *New England*, p. 250, and, with important reservations, by I.K. Steele, *Politics of Colonial Policy: The Board of Trade in Colonial Administration, 1696-1720* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 116, 132. I am grateful to Dr. Steele for his initial encouragement and advice with this study.

14 Waller, *Vetch*, pp. 95-6, 115-16.

British administrative machinery during 1708 seems necessary. Vetch first approached Sunderland on 15 June 1708 with a somewhat outdated copy of 'Canada Survey'd'. Apparently no action at all was taken: Sunderland's surviving office papers do not reveal any response, and the logical step — a referral to the Board of Trade — was not made.¹⁵ Vetch then engaged upon a hasty and thorough revision of the proposal and submitted this text to the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations on 27 July. Apparently Vetch acted with the knowledge he was getting nowhere with the Secretary of State's office and that he had to make a determined effort in his appeal to the Board of Trade. This explains the stylistic improvements and inclusion of supplementary material. In fact, all that the commissioners did was to refer the matter back to the Secretary of State for his opinion.¹⁶ However, Sunderland was at this point absent from his post and the referral went to his colleague, Secretary of State for the North, Henry Boyle. On 11 August Boyle replied to the commissioners that the Queen was uncertain of the merits of the proposal and desired their assessment. After determining that Vetch was willing to remain in Britain until the matter was concluded, the commissioners effectively put off the consideration of 'Canada Survey'd' until 15 November. There followed a series of discussions with Vetch during the remainder of the month; significantly on 25 and 29 November Vetch was joined by Colonel Francis Nicholson, the previous lieutenant-governor of both the Dominion of New England and Virginia, and former governor of Maryland and Virginia.¹⁷ In 1709 Nicholson was to accompany Vetch's expedition as the unofficial second-in-command, and the two men worked in a close partnership until the following year when Nicholson was placed in charge of the enterprise against Port Royal. Nicholson had a wealth of experience in colonial America, and his inclusion in the scheme at this stage can be viewed as an attempt by Vetch to improve the chances of having his policy accepted. On 1 December the Board signified its approval; shortly afterwards, with Sunderland's return to his post, the ministry agreed to the expedition against New France and preparations began in earnest.

The role of Sunderland in this activity was minimal. Indeed, Vetch may well have profited by the Secretary of State's absence, which brought Henry Boyle into the proceedings. In June 1709 Vetch wrote to Boyle mentioning "the many obligations I ly under to you" and "I doubt not but your Lordship remembers that after your Lordship had agreed to the putting my schem in practice for re-

15 A search of the Sunderland manuscripts in the British Library has failed to turn up any relevant information and no marginal notations were made on either the letter or the copy of the tract, although Sunderland and his secretariate frequently annotated papers which interested them. Also, no notice is contained in *The Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations from April 1704, to February 1708-9* (London, 1920).

16 *Ibid.*, pp. 530-2; *CSP, 1708-1709*, no. 71.

17 *CSP, 1708-1709*, no. 85; *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1708-1709*, pp. 534-5, 547, 555-9.

ducing Canada and Newfoundland".¹⁸ Before speculation begins that Boyle may have been Vetch's mysterious "certain gentleman", it should be pointed out that Boyle became Secretary of State only in February 1708, well after the cryptic memorandum was written. Nevertheless, Boyle was apparently a supporter of 'Canada Survey'd', and it is also notable that approval of the Quebec expedition was one of the few policy initiatives undertaken by the Board of Trade and Plantations in this period.¹⁹ This support was qualified, but it formed the basis for a decision and the Crown's agreement followed almost instantaneously. In contrast, Sunderland demonstrated no particular enthusiasm for Vetch's scheme.

Such behaviour by Sunderland is hardly surprising. He was considered by contemporaries to be the archetypal Whig, and his activity in office consistently reaffirmed the Whig emphasis upon the European theatre of the war. Until the autumn of 1707 English strategy had reflected Marlborough's own priority of direct pressure upon France's frontiers. Sunderland had been brought into the government in 1706 to sustain this policy.²⁰ In the campaigns of 1702-1707 the colonies had been left almost entirely to their own devices. Not only were overseas expeditions considered useless diversions of manpower and finance from the main struggle in Europe, but inadequate attention was paid to defence. In particular, the resources of the British navy were concentrated upon the European theatre with serious consequences for the defence of the seaboard colonies, the Newfoundland fishery, and merchant shipping.²¹ The diversion of naval resources from the Atlantic region to the Mediterranean was particularly noticeable in 1707 for the full-scale sea-borne attack on Toulon. The failure of this expedition, accompanied as it was by heavy loss of British shipping and general dissatisfaction with the progress of the war, produced sustained criticism of the government in the autumn 1707 Parliament. The ministry supported a convoy act for trade protection and agreed to shift the focus of hostilities away from France towards the conquest of Spain and its colonies for the Austrian claimant. However, much of this was subterfuge and Marlborough especially had not altered his priorities.²² An indication of British policy at this stage is available in *The Present State of the War* written by Joseph Addison in November 1707.

18 *CSP, 1708-1709*, no. 602. Waller, *Vetch*, p. 116, briefly mentions Boyle's general assistance.

19 Steele, *Colonial Policy*, p. 116.

20 Little is at present available on Sunderland, but the impression from a thorough reading of his papers as Secretary of State supports this conclusion; Add. Mss. 61,491-665, BL. See also Winston S. Churchill, *Marlborough. His Life and Times* (London, 1967), III, pp. 182-98, 306; Haffenden, *New England*, pp. 252-3, 283.

21 Steele, *Colonial Policy*, pp. xiv, 93, 100-6; Churchill, *Marlborough*, III, p. 277; Patrick Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade, 1689-1815* (Folkestone, 1977), *passim*.

22 Churchill, *Marlborough*, III, pp. 277-87; David Chandler, *Marlborough as Military Commander* (London, 1979), pp. 200-3; William L. Sachse, *Lord Somers* (Manchester, 1975), pp. 255-7.

Addison was then Sunderland's Undersecretary of State, responsible for a good proportion of colonial administration throughout the period when Vetch's plan was under consideration. His pamphlet reiterated the classic Whig argument that England's best option was the direct defeat of France. Addison was openly critical of overseas expeditions; replying to suggestions for an attack on the Spanish West Indies, he maintained that this was of secondary importance. The fixation with Europe is obvious in his comment that the fate of Europe should not depend upon "the uncertainty of winds and waves".²³ The subordination of the colonies to the main struggle can be seen as well in the attempt at this time to provision the army in Portugal from Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania.²⁴ In 1709 Vetch complained that this policy had produced a dearth of bread and flour at Boston to the detriment of his own enterprise.²⁵ On the whole the British administration was sympathetic to colonial problems, but was preoccupied with the war in Europe and was unwilling, and in its view unable, to provide serious attention or assistance.²⁶

Nevertheless, an increasing interest in overseas aspects of the conflict is noticeable within certain quarters of the British public and government from at least 1707. While leading members of the ministry were unsympathetic to this development, they had to recognize its political and pragmatic appeal. Virtual stalemate on the European battlefields, accompanied by seemingly never-ending heavy depletions of manpower and money, encouraged the search for alternative locations where rapid and relatively effortless conquests could be made. Latent aspirations for British expansion in the West Indies were given impetus by the attention devoted to Spain and its territories in late 1707.²⁷ The influence of interested mercantile pressure groups, including the Newfoundland fishery and the North Atlantic trading concerns, was important.²⁸ So too was the support offered by politicians from both the Whig and Tory groupings who either recognized the merits of a colonial strategy, or who merely wished to match or sur-

23 *The Present State of the War and the Necessity of an Augmentation, Considered*, in A.C. Guthkelch, ed., *The Miscellaneous Works of Joseph Addison* (London, 1914), II, pp. 236-63. See Peter Smithers, *The Life of Joseph Addison* (Oxford, 1968), p. 128.

24 Sunderland to Board of Trade, 5 October 1709; Add. Ms. 61,652, fos. 177-v, BL. See also an undated memorandum on this subject extant among Sunderland's papers; Add. Ms. 61,517, fo. 106, BL. Both documents considered the proposal to be an innovation which would prove unpopular in the colonies. For New England trade to the Iberian peninsula in this period see Haffenden, *New England*, p. 154 and *passim*.

25 CSP, 1708-1709, no. 666.

26 W.T. Morgan, "Some Attempts at Imperial Co-operation during the Reign of Queen Anne", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th series, X (1927), p. 177 and *passim*.

27 Glyndwr Williams, "'The Inexhaustable Fountain of Gold': English Projects and Ventures in the South Seas, 1670-1750", in John E. Flint and Glyndwr Williams, eds., *Perspectives of Empire* (London, 1973), pp. 34-5 and *passim*.

28 Crowhurst, *British Trade*, pp. 112-3, 104-20.

pass the European achievements of Marlborough.²⁹ It is also significant that by 1710 Marlborough was so out of tune with the changing climate of opinion that he refused to voice publicly his disagreement with the administration's proposed expedition to the West Indies. In the preceding year he had identified the earls of Halifax and Somers as the principal promoters of the venture and suggested that behind them lay influential commercial interests. Lord Treasurer Godolphin's attitude was probably crucial. Although his correspondence with Marlborough suggests that he always remained in fundamental agreement with Marlborough's European strategy, he was capable of independent thought and was, moreover, the head of a disparate administration. By the summer of 1708 he was willing to use the resources of the treasury to underwrite at least one overseas expedition.³⁰

Without this development it is clear that 'Canada Survey'd' would not have been accepted by the British ministry. Yet, if Vetch's proposal was essentially complete by early 1707, then the composition of the tract predates the government's willingness to undertake an Atlantic initiative. In assessing the background to Vetch's scheme it is advantageous to compare 'Canada Survey'd' to his earlier proposal submitted to the earls of Halifax and Somers on 27 February 1706 through John Chamberlayne, a London agent for Vetch's supporter Governor Dudley of Massachusetts.³¹ This document has been referred to as a prototype for 'Canada Survey'd'.³² However, such a statement suggests too great a degree of cohesion in Vetch's thinking, for in spite of similarities between the proposals, they represented different colonial initiatives. The 1706 submission comprised three distinct ideas, each only briefly sketched. The first bore the greatest similarity to Vetch's later aims: in 44 lines Vetch outlined the advantages of Canada along with the current danger to England's American territories, and suggested that if the French could be removed it would be profitable to allow a colony of Scots to settle on the St. Lawrence. He went on to devote 72 lines to a separate description of Nova Scotia and the advantages of reestablishing English control as a safeguard for the southern settlements and as a base for naval supplies. Finally, he cited the usefulness of New England and proposed that the area be enlarged with the creation of a new colony near the Bay of Fundy between the Kennebec and St. George's rivers, which would serve as a barrier against the French, and supply England with

29 Steele, *Colonial Policy*, p. 93; G.S. Graham, "Sir Hovenden Walker", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, II, p. 659.

30 Henry L. Snyder, ed., *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 1484-5, 1355, 1093-5, 1471.

31 Egerton Ms. 929, fos. 90-4, BL. Chamberlayne's letter was addressed merely "Honoured Lord", but it, and the enclosed proposal in Vetch's handwriting, reside among this collection of the papers of Charles, Earl of Halifax. According to Chamberlayne, Vetch had instructed him to deliver the plan to the recipient and Lord Somers.

32 Waller, *Vetch*, pp. 102-3.

abundant naval stores and fish.³³

Thus, in early 1706 Vetch as yet had no single policy or objective. The indications are that he desired personal advancement through colonial expansion, but was willing to consider any scheme within his field of expertise in northern mainland America. Vetch's closing comments demonstrate that, while committed to the advantages of removing the French from Canada and Acadia, he was as yet indifferent whether this would be accomplished by conquest or treaty. Writing from Boston Vetch was unaware of which, if any, of his ideas would interest the central government, but he always stressed the advantages to England and its empire. This realistic attitude accorded with the administration's own assessment of the submission, for a brief notation describes it simply as a project for the supply of naval stores from America.³⁴ 'Canada Survey'd', on the other hand, is an extensive, well-argued tract focused on Canada and outlining a specific method of acquiring it through force. The idea of a colony by the Bay of Fundy was dropped. So too was most of the information on Acadia. In the later work Vetch referred only briefly to Acadia, improving his earlier comments on its military strength but omitting interesting information on its geography and natural resources.³⁵

The new focus upon Quebec reflected alterations in Vetch's perspective during 1706 and 1707. The emphasis in the first submission on expansion along the north Atlantic coast was what one would expect from an ambitious, well-connected Massachusetts trader.³⁶ But by the time Vetch composed 'Canada Survey'd' his life had changed radically. His conviction in New England for illegal trading with Port Royal restricted possibilities for advancement within the colony and perhaps also introduced a degree of alienation. More important, Vetch's removal to London in 1706 added a new element to his interests. His 'Canada Survey'd' shows how Vetch discussed in London the decline in the New York fur trade with merchants formerly resident in that province,³⁷ and when the Board of Trade expressed interest in his scheme in July 1708 Vetch was on the point of departing for New York in the entourage of the newly-appointed governor, Lord Lovelace.³⁸ A reassessment of Vetch's ambitions which took into account his experience in both New York and Massachusetts would naturally point to an attempt on Canada, rather than to efforts directed towards the Atlantic fringe. In envisioning in his tract a pincer attack on Canada — over-

33 Egerton Ms. 929, fos. 90-4, BL.

34 *Ibid.*, fo. 94v.

35 Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 3v-4, BL.

36 For Boston's commercial expansion in this area see George A. Rawlyk, *Nova Scotia's Massachusetts: A Study of Massachusetts-Nova Scotia Relations, 1630 to 1784* (Montreal, 1973), and Jean Daigle, "Nos amis les ennemis: Relations commerciales de l'Acadie avec le Massachusetts, 1670-1711", PhD thesis, University of Maine, 1975.

37 CSP, 1708-1709, no. 60, p. 47.

38 *Ibid.*, no. 71; *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1704-1709*, p. 531.

land from New York to Montreal and by sea from Boston to Quebec City — Vetch was able to incorporate knowledge of both regions. Indeed his preparations for the stillborn 1709 campaign demonstrated how he depended upon friends, relations, and contacts in both colonies.³⁹

Although Vetch wrote 'Canada Survey'd' before pressure on the British ministry encouraged an overseas expedition, he was astute enough to realize that an ambitious proposal, properly presented, was more likely to interest the government than one in which the potential influence upon the European struggle was limited. The removal of the French from continental America would be a notable achievement, particularly if it could be accomplished with a British contribution of merely two battalions of regular soldiers and the normal men-of-war employed in North Atlantic convoys.⁴⁰ It would also be a suitable endeavour for an ambitious man, and Vetch offered his advice, as was the custom in this era, with the expectation that he would have a central role to play in its execution. The governorship of Quebec was a far more important prize than that of Nova Scotia, or of a new settlement on the Bay of Fundy, and it was worth pursuing if any chance of success existed.⁴¹ Furthermore, in formulating his strategy in 1707 Vetch was ahead of government policy, but probably not in advance of popular opinion within the London mercantile community, among whom he spent at least a portion of his time in these years.

By early 1707 'Canada Survey'd' was essentially complete, yet it was not submitted to the government until June 1708. Vetch may, of course, have made an earlier approach which has not come to light, but if so, it is not surprising that it would be ignored by a ministry still preoccupied with the direct subjection of France. Vetch's submission of February 1706 had been unsuccessful, and it appears never to have left the possession of the Earl of Halifax. Apparently throughout 1707 and early 1708 the British government never devoted serious consideration to any plans for substantial colonial expansion. The limited success of August 1707 against the French Newfoundland fishery was largely a local initiative by Major Lloyd, commander of the St. John's garrison, and Captain Underdown, commodore of the Newfoundland convoy. The administration failed to provide adequate support for proposals to secure all of Newfoundland by taking Placentia, though Major Lloyd had recommended this in a submission of October 1706.⁴² The same aim was urged by Michel de Monsegur, a Huguenot refugee from Bayonne who during 1706 and 1707 pressed for a British expedition against Placentia. In establishing his case, de

39 Waller, *Vetch*, *passim*.

40 CSP, 1708-1709, no. 60, p. 50; Add. Ms. 61,647, fo. 9v, BL.

41 CSP, 1708-1709, no. 60, pp. 50-1; Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 13, 14v, BL. The governorship was what Vetch requested for his services and this, subject to the successful completion of the campaign, was granted by the Queen; Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 13, 22, BL.

42 *Journal of Trade and Plantations*, 1704-1709, pp. 419, 442, 311-12; CSP, 1706-1708, no. 1109. See also Major Lloyd's earlier advice, CSP, 1706-1708, nos. 419, 446.

Monsegur stressed the significance of Newfoundland for French interests in Acadia, Quebec, and Hudson's Bay, and the harm which Placentia did to all Britain's American colonies. Although Sunderland in October 1707 requested that de Monsegur be given an allowance by the commissioners of the royal bounty in consideration of his usefulness to the government, and support was forthcoming from the Commissioners of the Navy and the administration advisor the Marquis de Guiscard, the project remained inactive.⁴³ Although the Board of Trade usually viewed colonial initiatives in a more favourable light, the ministry was slow to follow up its lead. In October 1706 Governor Dudley of Massachusetts Bay sent to the Board his ambitious plan entailing the capture of Quebec and Acadia in 1707 and the establishment of a Scottish settlement. This was read by the Board in February 1707 and after further considerations in March the decision was taken to send the proposal to the Earl of Sunderland. That ended the matter until the following year when Dudley once again wrote to the Board pressing the argument for an expedition in 1708.⁴⁴ Even very limited proposals in 1707-8, such as the resettlement of the Bahama Islands devastated at the beginning of the war, the capture of the Havana silver fleet, or the subjection of French pirates at Martinique and Guadeloupe, were either ignored or rejected in spite of support from the Board of Trade, merchants, and local Crown officials.⁴⁵

However, by the summer of 1708 the British administration was willing to devote serious consideration to an overseas initiative which could influence the European struggle or quell domestic criticism. Thus, 'Canada Survey'd' was only one of three elaborate imperial schemes submitted to Sunderland within a remarkably short two-week period in June 1708. On 6 June the Secretary of State's office received a detailed 13-page presentation from one Simon Clement designed to drive the French out of the Americas and secure a proportion of the Spanish West Indian trade. Emphasis was placed on Britain's historic claim to all of Newfoundland, and on the damage inflicted upon the colonies by Canada. In Clement's view the French encroachment in Newfoundland was as injurious as would be a French settlement in Ireland, and was in itself a sufficient reason for a declaration of war. He recommended the formation of a single expedition to reduce both Placentia and Quebec with the assistance of New England, or, as an alternative, a concentrated attack upon the French West Indies.⁴⁶ Newfound-

43 Add. Ms. 61,648, fos. 6-16, 28-29, Add. Ms. 61,652, fo. 34, BL.

44 *CSP, 1706-1708*, nos. 801, 1186; *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1704-1709*, pp. 328, 333.

45 *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1704-1709*, pp. 371, 373-4, 387-9, 390-1, 394-6, 399, 400, 408-9, 414-5, 478-9, 504, 529.

46 "Some considerations on ye present condition of French affairs..."; this document (previously Blenheim Palace file C1/41) was not included among Clement's remaining correspondence with the Secretary of State's office (Add. Ms. 61,645, fos. 162-81, BL) when this archive was rearranged, and its present location amongst Sunderland's papers in the British Library (Add. Ms. 61,491-61,665) is unknown.

land and New France were of particular interest to Clement, and he was to return to the same theme in his 21 June 1709 tract: "Considerations upon y^e present State of our Fishery at Newfoundland: Shewing that we can never recover that proffitable Trade 'til y^e French shall be forc'd to quit all their Settlem^{ts} in those parts, as well upon y^e Continent as upon the Island of Newfoundland". Clement's objective was to secure the entire Grand Banks fishing trade for Britain, and for this reason it was essential that the French be removed from Acadia and Quebec as well as Newfoundland. If this could not be accomplished by conquest, then it should be insisted upon in the current preliminary peace negotiations, and would be supported by Britain's allies "since we have neglected to pursue our own Interests in those parts, and apply'd our whol power to push on y^e War on this side [of the Atlantic] in order to procure to them infinitely more valuable Restitutions & Concessions".⁴⁷

On 17 June, only two days after Vetch delivered his proposal to Sunderland, the Secretary of State was sent another comprehensive, if somewhat ill-considered, plan from Captain Thomas Ekines, a retired naval officer who devoted considerable energy up to at least 1724 to the presentation of a series of colonial ventures before the British government in the ultimately forlorn hope of advancement. In 1707 he had sought the command of a fourth-rate man-of-war in the proposed attack on the pirates at Martinique and Guadeloupe. Now his intention was to lead a large contingent against Spanish America to capture the silver fleet, destroy French influence, and force the region to trade with the British. In a supplementary letter of 8 September, Ekines explained that after succeeding in the Spanish territories he hoped to take the expedition to Placentia during the winter and remove the French from Newfoundland. Ekines was in the following year to present a more limited scheme whereby he would be appointed governor of Newfoundland with sufficient permanent naval forces to drive the French from the Grand Banks.⁴⁸

Vetch was obviously not the only contender for the limited amount of British assistance available for colonial ventures. Indeed, he may well have sent his somewhat outdated copy of 'Canada Survey'd' to Sunderland in some haste in June 1708 so as not to be excluded from consideration. The evidence demonstrates that Vetch attempted around this time to broaden the appeal of his scheme. In particular it was expanded to encompass Newfoundland. The Newfoundland fishery constituted a considerable English commercial block. Raids on settlements on the island, losses at sea, and the uncertain state of affairs had created a substantial decline in the trade, with consequent economic depression in west country seaports and political dissatisfaction in the spring of 1708.⁴⁹

47 Add. Ms. 61,645, fos. 174-7, BL.

48 Stowe Ms. 246, fos. 73-4, Sloane Mss., 4,046, fo. 354, 4,047, fo. 169, BL; *CSP, 1706-1708*, no. 1025; *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1704-1709*, p. 398; Add. Ms. 61,644, fos. 34-7, 42-6, Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 207-v, BL.

49 Crowhurst, *British Trade*, pp. 112-13; Glanville J. Davis, "Military Leadership at Newfound-

Although 'Canada Survey'd' was originally limited to "the French Dominions upon the Continent of America" and the manuscript received by Sunderland contained no reference to Newfoundland, the same was not true of the accompanying one and one-half page summary. Vetch presumably composed this abstract immediately before he dispatched the document to the Secretary of State and it reflected a revised view; Newfoundland now figured prominently in the general benefits of the expedition.⁵⁰ Moreover, Vetch subsequently altered the introductory statement in the 27 July version of 'Canada Survey'd' to include the subjection of Placentia. The change was essentially cosmetic, for the text of the tract was never expanded to provide information on Newfoundland and no military effort in this area was envisaged — Placentia would fall as a natural consequence of the capture of Quebec. Thereafter Vetch repeatedly included Newfoundland in his general comments on the campaign.⁵¹ Yet his interest in this region was minimal and he was one of the colonial leaders who subsequently rejected John Moody's request in October 1709 to use a portion of the then idle expeditionary force for an immediate attack on Placentia.⁵²

Amplification along another line was also evident in the abstract which accompanied Vetch's June letter to Sunderland. It was here that he first brought Spanish America into his plan; once again Vetch was presumably seeking to outdo the rival schemes of his competitors through a demonstration of the full advantages inherent in the conquest of Canada. When all North America was in British possession the colonies "haveing no Enemy to fear at home would render her subjects upon that part of the Continent able to assist her Majesty, upon any great designe against the Spanish West Indies with five or six thousand men fitter for that Enterprise then any Europe Could afford".⁵³ Likewise in 1702 Governor Dudley had argued that the subjection of Port Royal would free Massachusetts to assist in the West Indies. Throughout the war, regional priorities determined the way individuals portrayed the inter-relation of Caribbean and Canadian problems to the British government.⁵⁴

land Before 1729", *Journal of the Society of Army Historical Research*, LIX (1981), p. 199; *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1704-1709*, pp. 312-17, 449, 461, 468-9, 471, 476, 487, 496.

50 "Abstract, Proposals for reduceing Canada", Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 11-v, BL. Similar abstracts accompany the copies in the Public Record Office, but are not printed in *CSP, 1708-1709*, no. 60.

51 *CSP 1708-1709*, no. 60, p. 42; Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 11, 13, 16, BL; *CSP, 1708-1709*, no. 602.

52 Enclosure, Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 66-7, BL. See also *CSP, 1708-1709*, no. 922. This was in spite of an anonymous memorandum of this period which stated that if the British contingent arrived too late in the year to attempt Canada efforts should be made to secure Placentia; Add. Ms. 61,647, fo. 180, BL.

53 *Ibid.*, fo. 11.

54 Haffenden, *New England*, p. 234. Vincent T. Harlow, *Christopher Codrington, 1668-1710* (Oxford, 1928), pp. 64, 151; Morgan, "Imperial Co-operation", p. 174; Waller, *Vetch*, pp. 160, 169-70. Waller's comment that Vetch's similar strategy in 1709 was "hardly realistic" is an uncritical acceptance of his comments at their face value.

Vetch's modest reference to the Spanish colonies was pushed to the extreme limit in March 1709 when, on the eve of his departure for America, he rehearsed his intended plan of action following the conquest of New France.⁵⁵ Reinforcements would be acquired from Maryland and Virginia for an attack upon St. Augustine in Florida, supported by a land force from the Carolinas. The expedition would then move on to resettle Providence in the Bahamas. In the new year Vetch would acquire fresh recruits from Virginia or New York and a further supply of regular British troops for an assault on Cartagena or Porto Bello to put the finishing stroke to the war. Vetch was either extremely overconfident in the spring of 1709 or else desirous to preempt any other colonial enterprise. Subsequent events revealed that he had good cause to continue to stress, and even exaggerate, the attractions of his policy. After Vetch's departure the ministry, and in particular Secretary of State Sunderland, demonstrated little durable support for the agreed aims in the face of competing pressures.

The administration was inundated with proposals for overseas projects in 1709. De Monsegur renewed his efforts in March and May with detailed memorials on Placentia.⁵⁶ In general, the French destruction of St. John's in December 1708 focused attention on the Newfoundland crisis. During 1709-1710 Captain John Moody, formerly acting commander of the St. John's garrison, sought to improve defences on the island. He was supported by James Campbell, a prominent London merchant who had extensive financial interests in Newfoundland and had long been associated with Moody.⁵⁷ In May 1709 Moody was sent with a quantity of military supplies to St. John's and effected emergency relief, but he continued to press for a full-scale expedition to restore British strength and take Placentia.⁵⁸ At least as much attention was devoted by the ministry to elaborate negotiations in 1707-1710 to repatriate the British pirates — and their wealth — from Madagascar, and leading members of the government were offered lucrative shares in the proceeds in return for their support.⁵⁹ The rising level of concern over French and Spanish incursions in the Bahamas had more important consequences. Widespread mercantile support appeared to exist for a British initiative, the Board of Trade gave a favourable recommendation, and by February 1709 even the Privy Council wished to pro-

55 Vetch and Francis Nicholson to Sunderland, 11 March 1709, Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 16-17v, BL. Although signed in conjunction with Nicholson, it is entirely in Vetch's handwriting and presumably represents his views.

56 "Quelques réflexions Sur L'entreprise du Port de Plaisance", London, 13 March 1709, and de Monsegur to Mr. [Addison?], 12 May 1709, Add. Ms. 61,648, fos. 17-27, BL. See also his undated letter to Addison, *ibid.*, fo. 33.

57 Campbell to Sunderland, London, 26 March 1709, Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 121-3, BL. See also his undated 1709 petition to Queen Anne, Add. Ms. 61,623, fos. 4-5v, BL.

58 *Ibid.*, fos. 60-88; CSP, 1708-1709, nos. 486, 922i.

59 *Commons Journals*, XV, pp. 382-4; CSP, 1708-1709, nos. 557, 575, 620, 622, 908, etc.; *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1709-1715*, pp. 43-5, 49-51, 106, 118; Add. Mss. 61,613-24, BL.

ceed "with all convenient speed".⁶⁰

Although 'Canada Survey'd' had gained the approval of the British government by the end of 1708, and Samuel Vetch had returned to North America to make extensive preparations for the conquest of New France, the entire initiative had to be abandoned without any achievement when the British contingent failed to arrive. Vetch's plan had called for the British regiments and men-of-war to be at Boston by late April or early May 1709, but administrative delays were commonplace in this era. Moreover, before the expedition was ready the preliminary peace discussions at The Hague further complicated the situation. The pressing concern with Newfoundland had led England to insist in May upon the complete withdrawal of the French from the island.⁶¹ France responded in turn with a clause for mutual restitution of all American wartime acquisitions, and under these circumstances no purpose would be served in sending the expeditionary force. Even though the peace initiative had failed by the end of May, the ministry decided that it was too late in the year to continue with the Quebec campaign and diverted the force to Spain. Vetch and the colonial leaders were not informed of this until 11 October when they finally received Sunderland's letters of July.⁶² Moreover, in accordance with the ministry's new emphasis upon the security of the Bahamas, Sunderland now sought to use the idle colonial contingent in the West Indies. Understandably, in view of the expectations raised in 1709 and perhaps the bitter experience in the Jamaica expedition of 1702-1703,⁶³ support for this attempt was derisory. But it did prevent Vetch from turning the force against Port Royal.⁶⁴ Fortunately for him, Whitehall underwent yet another change of heart over the course of the winter. The Canadian campaign was renewed and, although the British regiments were once again diverted to Spain, the New England attack on Port Royal in October 1710 proved successful.⁶⁵

Surprise has been voiced at the curtailment of the Canadian expedition in 1709 because it showed "a lack of appreciation and understanding of the colonial situation".⁶⁶ This was in fact nothing new, and is surprising only if it is believed that Sunderland and the administration were totally committed to 'Canada Survey'd'. The ministry was concerned with the state of the empire,

60 *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1704-1709*, pp. 387-9, 414-15, 478-9, 504, 573, 583-5; *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1709-15*, pp. 48, 95; *CSP, 1708-1709*, nos. 448, 606; Add. Ms. 61,623, fos. 6, 14-17, Add. Ms. 61,599, fos. 1-7, BL.

61 *Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, pp. 1197, 1250, 1255, 1262, 1341.

62 *Ibid.*, pp. 1269n, 1270, 1274, 1467-8; *CSP, 1708-1709*, nos. 612, 658, 660, 794.

63 Haffenden, *New England*, pp. 233-4.

64 *CSP, 1708-1709*, no. 794; Vetch to Robert Hunter, Boston, 20 November 1709 (copy), Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 22-v, BL; Waller, *Vetch*, p. 163.

65 *Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, pp. 1467-8, 1471, 1564; Morgan, "Imperial Co-operation", p. 190.

66 Waller, *Vetch*, p. 160.

but this was a secondary priority and its appreciation and knowledge depended almost entirely upon submissions from diverse and competing commercial and political pressure groups. Explanation of the action of 1709 in terms that it "doubtless reflected rising Tory influence in the government's counsels" is a fundamental misunderstanding of the character of British colonial administration and policy at this juncture. Nor is it "curious" that the government continued to vacillate during the campaign of 1710.⁶⁷ It was, indeed, a logical consequence of the subordinate position of the colonies in British policy considerations.⁶⁸

Government actions throughout the years 1707 to 1710 were consistent in the broad sense that two of the ministry's basic aims were to win the war and minimize political discontent. The schemes of Vetch and others must be viewed in this perspective. It was extremely difficult for any substantial colonial project to succeed in this era. Strategy, even when it was not limited to Europe, was directed to the successful completion of the war as a whole. Britain's basic aim was to limit France within Europe, not to embark upon imperial expansion. The only overseas goal of any significance was the desire to prevent France from monopolizing the Spanish American trade; and even here the strategy until the closing stages of the war lay in the acquisition of Spain for the Austrian claimant. Furthermore, although the ultimate authority for British policy formation or evaluation lay with the Queen and cabinet, they depended upon advice from the overlapping jurisdictions of the Board of Trade, the Secretary of State, the Admiralty and the Treasury. Effective, rapid action at the centre was rare, and even then the colonies were by no means united in a single military strategy or constant in their support of the war. The intricacies of British party and faction politics added another dimension. It was difficult to get a project to the planning stage, let alone carry it through to a successful conclusion, even without considerations of enemy action.⁶⁹

In explaining the acceptance of Vetch's proposal as official policy in 1708, stress has been laid on the breadth and vision of 'Canada Survey'd'.⁷⁰ This provides only a part of the answer in a political system where influence often counted for more than logic.⁷¹ The precise role which political patronage played in the acceptance of the policy is difficult to assess since nothing is known apart from the interest and eventual support provided by the Board of Trade, Secretary of State Boyle, and a few others. The British authorities were probably less interested in the visionary aspect of the scheme than in its effec-

67 *Ibid.*, p. 160; Morgan, "Imperial Co-operation", p. 190.

68 Haffenden, *New England*, pp. 252-3.

69 Gerald S. Graham, *Empire of the North Atlantic* (Toronto, 1958), p. 83; Haffenden, *New England*, pp. 232, 251, 254, and *passim.*; Steele, *Colonial Policy*, pp. 85-6, 132-3, and *passim.*

70 Waller, *Vetch*, pp. 114, 169-70, "Vetch", p. 651.

71 Steele, *Colonial Policy*, p. xiii.

tiveness. The evidence does not indicate that Vetch's plan instilled a new imperial consciousness in the government. Rather, 'Canada Survey'd' was accepted because it suited existing political and military aims, and it was later abandoned for the same reason.

Given that in 1708 the ministry was willing to consider an overseas expedition, the effective choice lay between a campaign in Latin America or French Canada. British commercial interests in the Spanish colonies were very substantial and an initiative in this area would have been in keeping with ministry commitments in 1707 to devote more attention to Spain and its empire.⁷² Initially, in June 1708 Thomas Ekines had greater success with his scheme than did Vetch. The ministry, however, preferred to limit its own commitment by having the West Indian expedition administered and financed by a mercantile consortium. Ekines was less than happy with this prospect and by September he believed he was being edged out by other parties. Thereafter his personal involvement waned.⁷³ The transformation of Ekines' military expedition into a commercial proposition highlighted one of the principal difficulties with a Latin American initiative. The British colonies could provide relatively little assistance, particularly if the campaign was centered on South America. The military and financial burden necessarily fell upon Britain at a time when the ministry wanted the maximum political and strategic benefit from the minimum use of scarce resources. Yet, a mercantile enterprise was, as Marlborough pointed out in 1709, likely to be intent only on plunder.⁷⁴ The incentive for territorial expansion in the region was in any case limited since Britain was committed to supporting the Austrian Hapsburg claim to both Spain and its colonial empire.

An attack against New France did not suffer from these disadvantages. For the subjection of Canada the government could rely upon the considerable military assistance of its northern settlements, especially New York and New England. In themselves, Newfoundland and Acadia were relatively insignificant as primary objectives. They had limited strategic importance and could command the wholehearted support merely of the fishing industry, and Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire, respectively. The capture of Placentia or Port Royal would not make the impact on the war which, realistically or not, the ministry desired and expected. But each could be brought into the Quebec proposal to widen its appeal. The Queen's instructions to Vetch of 28 February 1709, for example, specifically referred to the plan as the enterprise against

72 Churchill, *Marlborough*, III, pp. 277-87; Sachse, *Lord Somers*, pp. 255-7; Curtis Nettels, "England and the Spanish American Trade, 1680-1715", *Journal of Modern History*, III (1931), pp. 1-32.

73 Add. Ms. 61,644, fos. 42-4, BL. For other memorials received by Sunderland's office relating to the Spanish West Indies see the one dated at London, 27 August 1708, and "A Proposal For Carrying On the War with more Vigour in America" (endorsed 1708), Add. Mss. 61,596, fos. 130-v, 61,644, fos. 54-9, BL.

74 *Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, p. 1355.

Canada and Newfoundland.⁷⁵ Vetch argued that the capture of Canada would lead to the fall of Acadia, Placentia, and the Mississippi settlement, producing a considerable permanent benefit for Britain and its empire. Hence, in 1708 the proposal held considerable appeal.

Given the complexity of the British administrative structure and the secondary importance of the colonies, delay and procrastination invariably followed submissions for overseas initiatives. Vetch demonstrated the singleminded devotion to 'Canada Survey'd' necessary to pursue the issue from his first representation in June 1708 until the agreement of the ministry six months later and the formal grant of his commission on the last day of February 1709. Moreover, in 1710 and 1711 he was to continue to labour for the resurrection of the expeditionary force. Ekines, on the other hand, lost interest in his proposal. By 1709 the arrival in England of large numbers of German refugees from the Palatinate inspired him to devote more than eight months to a scheme to settle 150 Palatine families on the Isles of Scilly.⁷⁶ Simon Clement was simply casting about for any project which would interest the ministry: in June 1708 he was undecided on whether to press for a campaign against Placentia and Quebec or one directed towards the French West Indies, but pursued neither topic because of his greater initial success with a scheme for importing naval stores. In the following year he advanced a different proposal for Newfoundland, but dropped it in favour of promoting a New England colony for the Palatine refugees.⁷⁷ While Vetch had modified 'Canada Survey'd' to broaden its appeal, he remained consistent in pressing his central policy and ultimately settled for the subjection of Port Royal alone as a last resort.

Furthermore, it was to Vetch's advantage that he was able to exploit his links with the leaders in British North America as none of his rivals could. The key colonies were aggressively in favour of the initiative. Governor Dudley of Massachusetts had for years pressed for the capture of Quebec, and had a long-standing relationship with Vetch.⁷⁸ On 19 July 1708 his composite letter of 10 November 1707/16 February 1708 was read by the Board of Trade, which immediately decided to use it as the basis for a representation to the Queen on the advantages of attacking New France. Vetch was presumably capitalizing on this interest when he submitted 'Canada Survey'd' to the Board on 27 July. Two days later Sunderland inadvertently kept the focus of attention on Canada when he transmitted to the Board documents relating to New Hampshire's request for

75 Sunderland to Vetch in the name of Queen Anne (15 pages), RG1, Vol. 5, no. 16, Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

76 Sunderland to Marlborough, 11 November 1709, Add. Ms. 61,652, fo. 184, BL; SP 35/77, fo. 228, Public Record Office.

77 Add. Ms. 61,645, fos. 162-81, BL.

78 Waller, *Vetch, passim*; Haffenden, *New England, passim*; CSP, 1708-1709, no. 58; *Journal of Trade and Plantation, 1704-1709*, pp. 528-30.

military supplies.⁷⁹ At this time the selection of Lord Lovelace in March as governor of New York raised expectations that the colony would play a more active role in the war. Vetch's contacts here were numerous, including his father-in-law Robert Livingstone, who had urged England to annex Canada as early as 1703.⁸⁰ By July 1708 Vetch was apparently on good terms with Lovelace himself.⁸¹ The significance of New York for the success of the expedition was later stressed in the official instructions to Vetch.⁸² Also, by November he had been able to draw the former colonial governor Francis Nicholson into his project.

Circumstances in Britain, then, favoured Vetch in 1708, just as they were to work against the subjection of New France in 1709. The arguments were not so compelling or the advantages so obvious that the ministry could be depended upon to carry the initiative to completion. The Board of Trade in 1709 was as supportive of efforts for the resettlement and security of Newfoundland and the Bahamas as it had been in the preceding year for the conquest of New France. These aims need not have conflicted, but the ministry found it difficult to support more than one overseas project at any time. In 1709 Vetch could exert little influence over the British government from North America. With the collapse of the peace talks the cabinet wished to renew the Canadian expedition in 1710,⁸³ yet ministry concern during the winter of 1709-1710 was, once again, a product of individual personalities and events. Nicholson returned to London late in 1709 to press for a new effort, but his own preference at this stage was for a direct attack on Port Royal, and he was specifically appointed by Massachusetts to represent the colony's particular interests.⁸⁴ Interestingly, Vetch himself, while remaining hopeful that an attempt would be made on Quebec, also directed his attention to the capture of Port Royal.⁸⁵ Meanwhile Robert Hunter, the newly-appointed governor of New York, wished to renew the two-pronged movement against Quebec and Montreal. Hunter was in London following his release from detention in France as a prisoner of war, and, high in the ministry's favour, he had rendered a report which favoured Vetch's original strategy. Although New France might be better prepared in 1710, Hunter's own experi-

79 Sunderland to the Board, Whitehall, 29 July 1708, Add. Ms. 61,652, fo. 78v, BL.

80 G.M. Waller, "New York's Role in Queen Anne's War, 1702-1713", *New York History*, XXXIII (1952), pp. 40-53; Lawrence H. Leder, *Robert Livingstone, 1654-1728, and the Politics of Colonial New York* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1961), pp. 204, 186.

81 *Journal of Trade and Plantations, 1704-1709*, p. 531. For Vetch's connections in New York see Waller, *Vetch*, *passim*.

82 RGI, Vol. 5, no. 16, Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

83 *Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, pp. 1467-8, 1471.

84 Nicholson to the ministry, 21 December 1709, and to Sunderland, 3 January 1710, Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 26-30, BL.

85 Vetch to Robert Hunter, Boston, 20 November 1709, and to Sunderland, Piscataqua, 3 December 1709, *ibid.*, fos. 22-5.

ence in France led him to minimize the danger from that quarter: "I have some reason to believe that they [the French] would not be at a very considerable charge to relieve Canada haveing heard some of good sense and Interest at that Court [Versailles] say that Canada was no otherways worth their care then that it was a thorn in our side being it cost their King 500000 livres yearly and brought him Nothing".⁸⁶ Some independent support was derived from Massachusetts' colonial agent, Jeremiah Drummer, and Governor Dudley.⁸⁷ More noticeable was the propaganda appeal of the visit to England of the Indian representatives from the Five Nations, who understandably favoured the Quebec expedition.⁸⁸

In the end the British contingent was never sent and the capture of Port Royal in 1710 was primarily a New England achievement. Vetch became the first governor of Annapolis Royal and was to take part in the renewed Canadian campaign of 1711, the last effort of Queen Anne's War. The relationship between colonial initiatives and the prevailing political and military policies within the central administration remained a complex one, and Quebec was not to fall to the British for another half-century. Samuel Vetch's "glorious enterprise" failed to achieve its principal goal. 'Canada Survey'd' remained an unachieved dream, relegated — in triplicate — to the bulky files of the British colonial administration.

86 Hunter to Sunderland, 24 December 1709, Add. Ms. 61,645, fos. 86-7, BL.

87 Haffenden, *New England*, p. 254. For Dudley's letter of 31 January 1710 to the Board of Trade see Add. Ms. 61,599, fos. 151-v, BL. Drummer's effort appears to have been directed in part towards territorial gains from an eventual peace treaty; Egerton Ms. 929, fos. 119-20, BL.

88 See Bond, *American Kings*, *passim*; Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 192-4, 200, BL.