

Appendix: Was There A Crisis? Living Standards in Lower Canada, 1760 to 1848

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In this appendix, which appends the main article covering the topic of the agricultural crisis in Lower Canada (covering from circa 1800 to 1850) by measuring the Human Development Index (HDI) for the colony during the period (and some years before), we extend our measure backwards and forwards in time. This is done so as to produce additional data for economic historians to use even though it does not serve the purpose of the main article. It is also because the marginal cost of extending was low.

The appendix is broken in two sections. The first explains how we extended from the 1760-1850 series discussed in the paper back to 1688. The second explains how we extended it forward to 1911.

1 Extending Backward to 1688

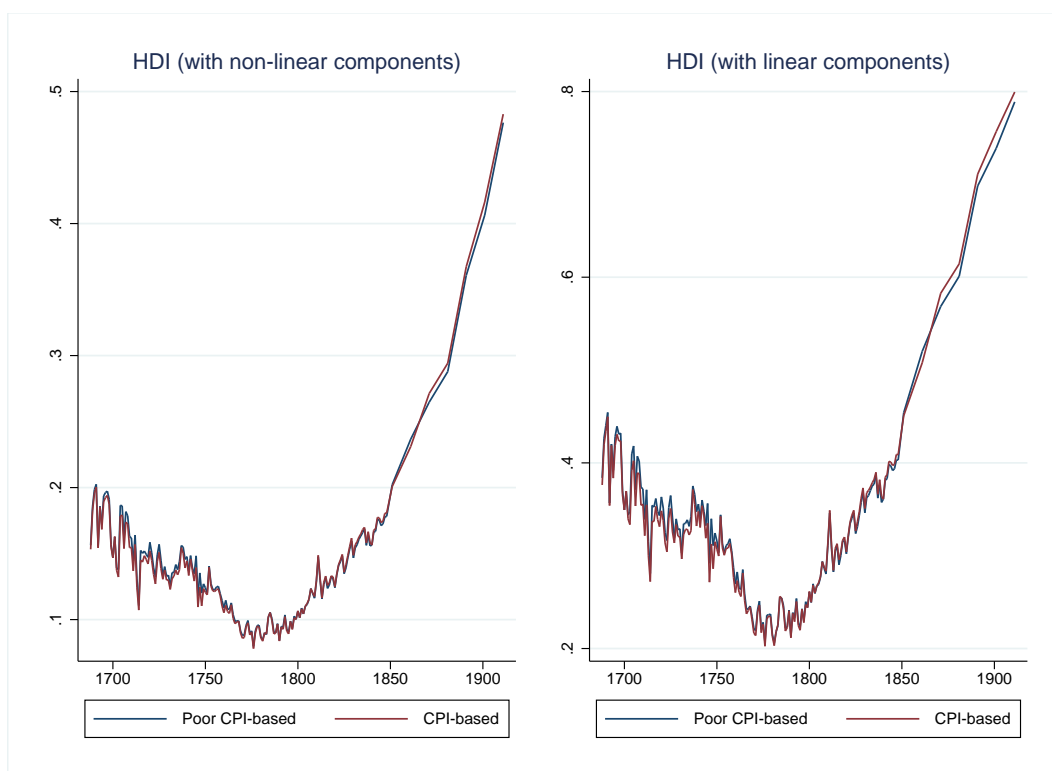
The extension backwards to 1688 was the simplest of the two extensions. The mortality and literacy data rely on the same source as in the main article (IMPQ, 2020). The only difference is with respect to wages. Geloso (2019) used the same source for 1688 to 1775 as (Geloso and Lindert, 2020) for 1775 to 1913. This is why the latter connected the two works together to produce a continuous wage series for Quebec covering 1688 to 1860 from the same sources (i.e., the account books of religious congregations with large estates and *Journals* of the House of Assembly).

2 Extending Forward to 1911

As we explained in the main article, the data for infant mortality from IMPQ (2020) ends at 1848. However, the literacy data from that source can be used as late as 1919 and the wage data from Geloso and Lindert (2020) covers until 1913. As such, extending forward to 1911 requires only switching to a new infant mortality variable. To do so, we used the decadal estimates provided in Haines et al. (2000, p. 697). The estimates reported there start at 1851 and they differ in level at 1851 relative to our series which ends at 1848. To splice the two series, we assume that the inter-decadal changes are accurate so that we can assign to our 1848 value the movements of the estimates in Haines et al. (2000). We assume that 1848 has the same value in 1851 (i.e., no changes during this three-year period).

The results from the extensions are illustrated in figure 1 below. The left panel is with non-linear components. The right panel is with linear components.

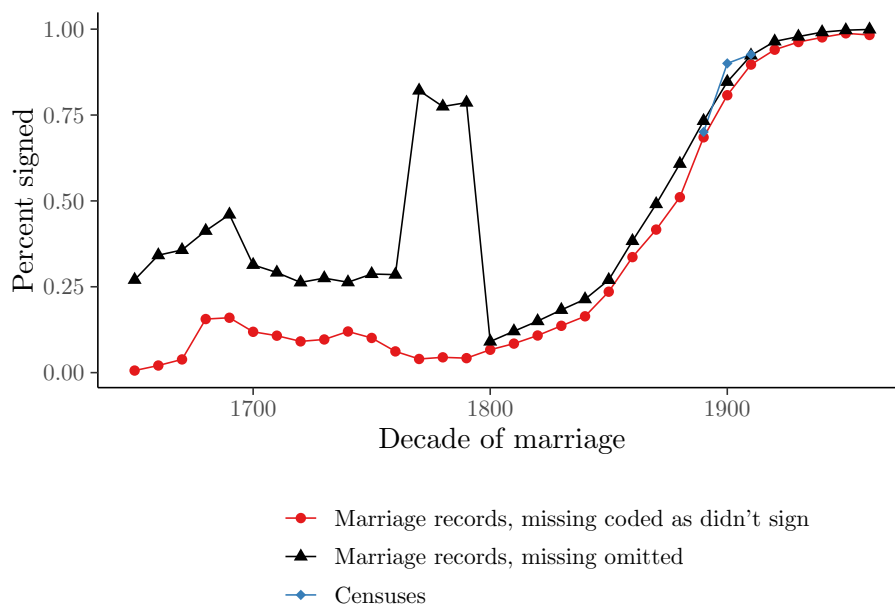
Figure 1: HDI for Quebec, 1688 to 1911



3 Signature literacy

Figure 2 below shows two different ways of measuring signature literacy from marriage records. As discussed in the main text, interpreting missing signatures as illiterate is necessary before 1800 due to inconsistent reporting of the inability to sign. The figure also shows literacy estimated from the self-reported ability to write from three census extracts.¹ All three measures vary somewhat in levels, but the overall trends are extremely similar.

Figure 2: Signature literacy measures



¹The 5% 1891 sample (Inwood and Jack 2011), the 5% 1901 sample and 1901 oversample (Canadian Families Project 2002), and the 5% 1911 sample (Gaffield et al. 2009). Data provided by the Minnesota Population Center (2019).

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