

THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRADES  
AND MANUFACTURING IN ST. JOHN'S, 1870-1914

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRADES AND MANUFACTURING  
IN ST. JOHN'S, 1870-1914

by

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A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
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## ABSTRACT

The growth of industrial production is a major hallmark in the development of most economies and the chief source of this growth is import substitution. While practically all income in Newfoundland was derived from the primary sector prior to 1870, the country made considerable efforts between 1870 and 1914 to stimulate an industrial transformation. By 1914, however, the higher production, employment and income levels enjoyed in other countries with vibrant manufacturing sectors had not been achieved. While trades and manufacturing industries experienced some growth during this period, the rate of expansion was slow. In 1870 small shops produced all of the locally-made goods, but by 1914 a small number of larger mechanized factories dominated the market, and most of the small businesses either disappeared or retailed and repaired imported or local factory-made products. The capital for the larger St. John's factories came chiefly from the retained earnings of the fish merchants. The major city merchants invested moderate sums in a number of incorporated companies protecting their export-import business through limited liability and spreading the risk over a number of different enterprises. Inter-industry linkages within the trades and manufacturing sector and between it and other parts of the Newfoundland economy were rare and most machines and raw materials were imported. While the number of employees grew over the period, unemployment, poor wages and working conditions were common. The trades and manufacturing industries usually produced common and widely



used products leaving specialized items to foreign suppliers. The St. John's trades and manufacturing industries were import substitution factories designed to serve the national market. While many of these firms succeeded in capturing the Newfoundland market with the help of the tariff, locational advantages and the nature of some of the products, the market was not large enough to support continued growth. The import substitution model was not suitable for Newfoundland because of the size of the domestic market, the unbalanced availability of resources and raw materials and the inability of the country to prosper as a closed economy. The factories needed large and growing markets for single items in order to reach profitable economies of scale, while consumers demanded a wide variety of products and styles. Practically all inputs used by St. John's trades and manufacturing industries were imported because they were simply not available in Newfoundland. Finally, the country's reliance on the export of fishery and other primary products and its dependence on imported raw materials and finished products established that Newfoundland was not, and was not likely to become, a closed economy capable of generating most of its natural resource and capital requirements, and capable of producing most of its intermediate, capital and consumer goods at a rate comparable to other Western market economies. Import substitution, therefore, was not an appropriate strategy for Newfoundland. The trades and manufacturing sector needed export markets in order to contribute significantly to the transformation of the economy and to achieve the higher levels of production, employment and income characteristic of countries with dynamic secondary manufacturing. Newfoundland should have concentrated on a manu-

facturing field where her resource and locational advantages were greatest and where her skills and entrepreneurship were keenest. The vast bulk of Newfoundland's capital, expertise, entrepreneurial potential and locational advantages were centered in the fishing industry. The logical place to attempt to break into international markets was in the maritime trades and manufacturing industries.

In conclusion, the potential for development of secondary manufacturing in Newfoundland was at best marginal given the small size of the domestic market, the dearth of managerial and labour skills in this field, the limited investment resources, the unbalanced availability of resources and raw materials, locational disadvantages, transportation costs and the need to develop foreign markets for manufacturing.



### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

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J.L.J.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the period 1870-1914, the St. John's trades and manufacturing sector, in terms of size, organization and technology, resembled its counterparts in other preindustrial societies. A wide array of trades and manufacturing industries, operating out of small shops, manufactured and retailed consumer perishable and durable goods for the local market. Similarly, trades and industries making producer goods in small unmechanized shops catered to the needs of Newfoundland export industries. By 1914, a number of large factories dominated the local consumer goods market and small craft shops were either driven out of business or were reduced to retailing and, in the case of the clothing and footwear industry, repairing local and imported goods. In the producer goods' trades and industries, the transformation to large mechanized factory units was complete by 1914 with one major exception -- the cooperages. In heavy industry, a number of foundries dominated local production of stoves, winches, windlasses, nails and other metal products, while the ship repair business gradually came under the control of two engine and boiler works which eventually sold out to the railway. Some small blacksmith shops survived but their work was limited to small repair jobs throughout the city. Other trades and industries in the producer goods sector, such as pump and block factories and saillofts, were technologically eclipsed and faded away or were reduced to retailing local

and foreign fishery and marine supplies. Although a number of attempts were made to mechanize the large cooperage industry, none succeeded and the cooperage business was the only major craft industry surviving to 1914. By that year, it can be said, a number of mass production industries operated in St. John's, capturing the small national market with the help of tariff protection but unable to expand any further. These industries did not contribute significantly to the transformation of the economy because, by any industrial standard, they were still very small, and were tied to a small national market with little opportunity for expansion locally or for entry into foreign markets.

# I

The trades and manufacturing industries formed only a small portion of the Newfoundland economy. Throughout Newfoundland's history, primary industry has led all other sectors by every measure of economic performance, and the period 1870-1914 was no exception. During that time, 99 percent of total exports were primary products.<sup>1</sup> While export figures are not a perfect measure of total domestic production, even the most superficial examination of the Newfoundland economy reveals that primary industry was the greatest single source of market income. A compiler of a speculative calculation of the importance of Newfoundland primary production, estimated that in 1884 primary products formed approximately 80 percent of the realized national income, with secondary manufacturing, transportation and construction income contributing at best

<sup>1</sup>R.A. MacKay (ed), Newfoundland: Economic, Diplomatic and Strategic Studies (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946), Appendix, Table 3.

around 15 percent of realized national income.<sup>2</sup> In 1869, 90 percent of the total work force was engaged either in agriculture, fishing, lumbering or mining, declining to 70 percent by 1891 and 63 percent by 1911. The secondary sector, on the other hand, accounted for nine percent of the work force in 1869, increasing its share to 22 percent by 1891 and to 27 percent by 1911. Most of this increase, however, was caused by growth in transportation and construction employment. Secondary manufacturing proper accounted for a mere four percent of the work force in 1869, and rose to only seven percent by 1891 and nine percent by 1911.<sup>3</sup>

St. John's, throughout the period 1870-1914, was by far the most important center for secondary manufacturing in Newfoundland. Over 80 percent of the larger factories were located in the capital city in 1869, and by 1911 two-thirds of the Island's larger plants were in St. John's.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Appendix II, Table 5. In Canada in 1880, 22.7 percent of the national income came from secondary industry (including construction), O.J. Firestone, Canada's Economic Development, 1867-1953 (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1958), Table 68, p. 189.

<sup>3</sup>Appendix II, Table 1. A comparison with Canadian figures can be made by reference to Appendix II, Table 2. In Canada the primary sector's share of the labour force fell from 51.2 percent in 1881 to 39.5 percent by 1911. Secondary industry's share of the work force (including construction) diminished as well from 29.4 percent in 1881 to 27.1 percent in 1911. An interesting point to note about the Canadian manufacturing sector is that manufacturing, excluding construction, increased its share of the work force from 13.8 percent in 1881 to 19.9 percent in 1911, while construction's share fell from 15.6 percent in 1881 to 7.2 percent in 1911. In Newfoundland the major increases in the share of secondary sector employees came from construction and transportation industries. Manufacturing on its own made only very modest gains.

<sup>4</sup>While the estimate for these six census period shows acrobatic fluctuations (1869 - 80 percent; 1874 - 92 percent; 1884 - 52 percent; 1891 - 92 percent; 1901 - 75 percent; 1911 - 62 percent), St. John's domination of secondary manufacturing during this period cannot seriously be doubted. These percentages are based on calculations made from Appendix III, Table 1.

Between 1869 and 1901, the factories in St. John's employed over 60 percent of the Island's mechanics and factory workers and in 1911 over 50 percent.<sup>5</sup> With such a large percentage of Newfoundland's mechanics and factory workers living in St. John's, it follows that trades and manufacturing was an important contributor to the city's economy. In 1869, 25 percent of the St. John's occupied labour force were mechanics and factory workers, rising to 34 percent in 1874, but with expansion in transportation and construction industries the share of trades and manufacturing industries fell to 31 percent by 1884 and to 24 percent of the labour force by 1911.<sup>6</sup> The trades and manufacturing sector, nevertheless, still maintained its position as one of the largest employers in the city.

In absolute terms, the number of employees and firms in this sector grew fairly rapidly between the early 1870s and the mid-1880s, perhaps slowed almost to a standstill from the mid-1880s to 1900, and experienced only moderate growth from 1900 to 1914. Between 1874 and 1884 the total number of tradesmen and factory workers in St. John's increased by 72.4 percent from 1,328 to 2,289, but according to the census for the next 17 years, the aggregate number of workers rose only very slowly,<sup>7</sup> while from 1901 to 1911 the work force increased by 43.3

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<sup>5</sup>Appendix III, Table 2.

<sup>6</sup>Appendix III, Table 3.

<sup>7</sup>The 1891 census figure, which was 2,249, was only 98.3 percent of the 1884 total. This census was undoubtedly inaccurate because even a private business directory listed 2,441 workers by name in this sector in St. John's in 1890. The 1901 census total was only 104.9 percent of the 1891 census total and was probably a low estimate as well. Appendix III, Table 4-A.



percent from 2,359 to 3,380.<sup>8</sup> According to the census and Blue Books, which include only the larger firms, the total number of major shops and factories increased by 167 percent between 1874 and 1884 from 24 to 64. From 1884 to 1901, this total increased by 21.9 percent from 64 to 78.<sup>9</sup> While the census and Blue Books total for 1911 appear unreliable,<sup>10</sup> Newfoundland business directories show an increase between 1890 and 1913 of 15.4 percent in firms employing five or more persons, rising from 104 firms to 120.<sup>11</sup> The large firms were, however, only a fraction of the total number of St. John's trades and manufacturing. Indeed, according to the Newfoundland business directories for 1890 and 1913, the number of shops and factories employing five or more persons formed just over 25 percent of the total number of businesses active in this sector.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the large firms employed by far the majority of workers.

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<sup>8</sup>Appendix III, Table 4-A. This figure was probably a little low but certainly not out of line because the total for the Newfoundland Directory, 1913, which was 3,494, was 43.1 percent greater than the Newfoundland Directory, 1890 total which was 2,441.

<sup>9</sup>The total count of firms in the census and Blue Books for 1891 must be discounted altogether. The census counted only the larger firms in a very broad and vague sense. The 1891 census figure of 39 is ridiculously low for the Newfoundland Directory, 1890, enumerated 104 firms employing five or more persons. Appendix III, Table 4-B.

<sup>10</sup>The 1911 census and the Blue Books figure was 91 percent of the 1901 figure, falling from 78 to 71. Given the very vague definition for a factory used by these sources, this decrease is probably a function of the growth in the size of certain large firms and the myopia of census collectors to see beyond those factories in the immediate forefront.

<sup>11</sup>Appendix III, Table 7. The total number of small and large firms, according to the directories, rose by 11.5 percent between 1890 and 1913, from 400 to 446.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

In 1890, 70.1 percent of those employed in this sector drew salaries from firms with five or more on the payroll, and by 1913 the share of the larger firms had increased to 80.0 percent.<sup>13</sup>

Between 1870 and 1913 a steady shift occurred in the structure of trades and manufacturing away from producer goods industries towards consumer goods. In 1871, 53.6 percent of the trades and manufacturing work force was employed in producer goods industries. By 1890 that percentage fell to 41.9 percent and continued to fall until 1913 when only 35.1 percent worked in this field. Fishery trades experienced the most dramatic decline. In 1871, 35.4 percent of trades and manufacturing workers were coopers, sailmakers, blockmakers and cordage workers. By 1890, 19.1 percent of all tradesmen and factory workers were in fishery-related trades, and at the end of the period a mere 14.4 percent were so occupied. While heavy industry, which includes dry docks, engine and boiler works, foundries, blacksmith shops, gas works, tinsmiths' and plumbers' shops, made certain gains in the early part of the period, increasing its share from 18.2 percent in 1871 to 22.8 percent in 1890, by 1913 heavy industry's share in the trades and manufacturing work force fell to 20.7 percent. On the other hand, the proportion of St. John's trades and manufacturing workers employed in consumer industries rose from 46.4 percent to 58.1

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<sup>13</sup>Appendix III, Table 8. The source on which this table is based does not give the employers of a certain number of workers. In 1890, 624 entries were without this information (25.6 percent of the total). In 1913, 576 entries did not name the worker's employer (16.5 percent of the total). The figures in the text were calculated on the assumption that these "unattached" workers were distributed between large and small firms in the same proportion as those whose employers were listed. However, if one assumes that these "unattached" workers were unemployed or working in small shops, 52.2 percent were still employed in large firms in 1890 and this percentage increased to 66.8 percent by 1913.

percent between 1871 and 1890 and continued to rise to 64.9 percent by 1913. For the first part of the period, 1870-1890, the momentum of this increase came from consumer industries producing durable products (notably clothing and footwear factories) which accounted for 11 percentage points of the 11.7 percent total increase. For the second part of the period, 1890 to 1913, consumer industries producing perishable items (especially bakeries, confectioneries and the tobacco factory) were the principal sources of the increased share of the work force employed in consumer trades and factories, making up 4.4 percentage points of the total 6.8 percent increase between those dates.<sup>14</sup>

The number of firms in consumer trades and manufacturing far exceeded the total number of firms in producer goods industries. While there are no figures for the 1870s, by 1890 72.0 percent of the total number of businesses active in the trades and manufacturing sector produced consumer goods. This share, however, fell by 1913 to 68.2 percent. On the surface, this appears to contradict what has already been said about the expansion of consumer trades and manufacturing; but, a closer examination indicated not that the importance of consumer industries was declining, but that the average size of the firms in consumer goods trades and manufacturing was increasing relative to the size of firms in the producer trades and manufacturing industries. In 1890, 68.3 percent of all firms in St. John's trades and manufacturing employing five or more persons, produced consumer goods. By 1913 that percentage rose to 72.5 percent. In 1890, 73.3 percent of all the firms employing less than five persons were also consumer industries, but by 1913 that percentage fell

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<sup>14</sup>Appendix III, Table 5.

to 66.6 percent of the total number of small firms. On the other hand, the proportion of large firms in producer industries compared to the total number of large firms fell from 31.7 percent to 27.5 percent between 1890 and 1913; and the number of small firms in producer trades and manufacturing increased from 26.7 percent to 33.4 percent between these same dates.<sup>15</sup>

In summary, the growth of trades and manufacturing in Newfoundland, and particularly St. John's, between 1870 and 1914 was slow. The period was characterized by relatively rapid growth from the early 1870s to the mid-1880s. From 1885 to 1900, however, this sector experienced very minor advances and only moderate growth from 1901 to 1914. By every indicator -- the number of firms, the number of workers, its share of the Newfoundland occupied work force and its contribution to the national income -- the trades and manufacturing sector of Newfoundland and St. John's failed to achieve the growth and development experienced in Canada and other countries.<sup>16</sup> Given the small local market, the narrow ad hoc financial market, the economies of scale required for consumer and particularly producer goods industries,<sup>17</sup> the difficulties of establishing inter-

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<sup>15</sup>Appendix III, Tables 6 and 7.

<sup>16</sup>O.J. Firestone, Canada's Economic Development, 1867-1957, pp. 186-206; Gordon W. Bertram, "Historical Statistics on Growth and Structure of Manufacturing in Canada, 1870-1957", Canadian Political Science Association, Conference on Statistics, Papers, 1962-1963; Simon Kuznets, Modern Economic Growth: Rate, Structure and Spread (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), Chapter 3.

<sup>17</sup>For example, a number of local entrepreneurs considered establishing a rubber manufacturing industry around 1910 but abandoned the idea when they realized that the smallest economic plant they could build would produce enough goods in four or five weeks to supply the entire market. Daily News, January 16, 17, February 5, 1912, first cited in David Alexander, "A New Newfoundland: The Traditional Economy and Development to 1934", presented to the Canadian Historical Association, Kingston, Ontario, June 1973, pp. 40-41.

industry links and the inability of local manufacturers to enter international markets, it is not surprising that the growth and development of trades and manufacturing was disappointing.<sup>18</sup>

## II

Considering the obvious difficulties of establishing manufacturing industry in Newfoundland, why did entrepreneurs and politicians devote so much time and energy to its development? The roots of these efforts lay in the last 30 years of the 19th century. During that period seamen, migrants to and from Newfoundland, the travelling elite and general word-of-mouth communications contributed to the publicity for the new industrial age.<sup>19</sup> Local and foreign newspapers, books and factory-made goods themselves were all advertisements for industrial progress. For example, newspapers rang with praises for captains of industry whenever a rumour of a new factory arose. Details of the size of the building, how much it cost to construct, the number of workers to be employed and even the owner's projected dates for expansion were enthusiastically calculated before the factory doors were opened. Not even the production of a single

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<sup>18</sup>William G. Demas, The Economics of Development of Small Countries (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1965), pp. 37-38, 90-91.

<sup>19</sup>The mobility of native Newfoundlanders is generally assumed to be only as emigrants from their home island. The passenger returns for 1903-1913 suggest that while a net emigration of native Newfoundlanders took place, many returned and a significant number were transients. Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence taken in Newfoundland in 1914 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Ltd., 1915) from the testimony of Henry William LeMessurier, J.P., Deputy Minister of Customs, p. 1.

wooden bicycle by a local carriage maker escaped "the treatment".<sup>20</sup> Also, the limitations were apparent of an economy based, for all practical purposes, entirely on the fishery. By the 1880s, the inshore fishery was technologically stagnant and labour productivity was low and falling. In addition, prices for dried codfish, Newfoundland's most important product, began to decline in the mid-1870s and continued on a downward trend until the end of the century.<sup>21</sup> Newfoundland was therefore faced with two challenges: to broaden the industrial base of the country so that the extreme fluctuations characteristic of a one-industry export economy might be avoided in future; and to transform the traditional fishery into a modern industry exploiting and contributing to international changes in technology, production organization and marketing.<sup>22</sup>

Many people, however, thought that the fishery could not be relied on to provide employment for Newfoundland's growing population, and they pointed to the Island's "dormant" mineral, timber and agricultural wealth and manufacturing potential to light the way to economic development.<sup>23</sup> Whether or not the population generally held this view is a matter of

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<sup>20</sup>The Daily Colonist, July 9, 1887. I am indebted to Bobbie Robertson, the Secretary of The Newfoundland Historical Society, for this newspaper reference and many others used in this thesis.

<sup>21</sup>David Alexander, "A New Newfoundland", Table 3, p. 19 and Table 5, p. 26.

<sup>22</sup>On Newfoundland's lagging response to these challenges in the fishery, see Shannon Ryan, "The Newfoundland Cod Fishery in the Nineteenth Century" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1971), Chapter 2.

<sup>23</sup>For example, see The Joint Committee Report on the Proposed Railway, 1880, JHA 1880, pp. 125-129; Alexander, "A New Newfoundland", pp. 30-31.



speculation, but successive governments certainly acted as if that was the case. With agriculture, the government added one development scheme to another to appeal to an ever-widening range of people from land companies to small homesteaders. The government established a Board of Agriculture and a model farm for research and development, and became directly involved as a farmland developer.<sup>24</sup> Mining regulations were made increasingly liberal through the period 1870-1900; for instance, minimum investment quotas for concessions were lowered stage by stage from \$20,000 over 10 years to nil, and at no time during these years were mineral royalties imposed. Between 1900 and 1914 the Newfoundland government, while tightening up the general regulations, introduced production subsidies, capital subsidies, tax and duty exemptions and negotiated directly with prospective entrepreneurs.<sup>25</sup> Lumber regulations, too, while not following such a direct line of liberalization as those dealing with minerals, were gradually made increasingly attractive to developers. As interest grew in pulp and paper, the government negotiated directly with firms like The Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company and Newfoundland Pulp and Paper Company, granting them huge tracts of Crown land, water rights and tax and duty exemptions.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Statutes of Newfoundland, 29 Vic., cap. 5; 36 Vic., cap. 7; 38 Vic., cap. 18; 42 Vic., cap. 10; 43 Vic., cap. 3; 47 Vic., cap. 2; 49 Vic., cap. 3; 52 Vic., cap. 8; 54 Vic., cap. 20; 53 Vic., cap. 23; 61 Vic., cap. 20, 32, 33; 62 and 63 Vic., cap. 33; 8 Edward VII, cap. 10.

<sup>25</sup>35 Vic., cap. 3; 47 Vic., cap. 2; 61 Vic., cap. 20, 34; 63 Vic., cap. 5; 1 Edward VII, cap. 3; 3 Edward VII, cap. 6, 7; 6 Edward VII, cap. 27; 5 Edward VII, cap. 18; 10 Edward VII, cap. 19, 22-27; 1 George V, cap. 20, 22; 3 George V, cap. 9.

<sup>26</sup>38 Vic., cap. 3; 47 Vic., cap. 2; 54 Vic., cap. 20; 60 Vic., cap. 5; 61 Vic., cap. 20; 63 Vic., cap. 5; 1 Edward VII, cap. 3; 5 Edward, cap. 10; 1 George V, cap. 15.

Railway development was thought by many to be the key that would open the flood-gates to economic development. The Railway Contract of 1881 was expected to spark exploitation of mineral, agricultural, and timber resources by connecting them to the larger marketing centers and export ports of eastern Newfoundland. By the time the railway was completed in 1898, one contractor had gone bankrupt, the government was embroiled in tremendous political scandals and the public debt had increased by millions of dollars with no appreciable economic benefit to the country outside of the wages earned during its construction.<sup>27</sup> Agricultural acreage only increased from 0.28 acres per capita in 1874 to 0.46 acres in 1911.<sup>28</sup> The per capita value of lumber production, one of the more successful areas of development, rose from \$0.60 in 1884 to only \$2.73 per capita.<sup>29</sup> The figures on mineral production, while controversial,<sup>30</sup> at the very best show an increase from \$2.81 per capita in

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<sup>27</sup>Frank Cramm, "The Construction of the Newfoundland Railway, 1875-1898", (unpublished M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1961).

<sup>28</sup>Alexander, "A New Newfoundland", p. 36, Table 7.

<sup>29</sup>Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1884, 1891, 1901, 1911. The Canadian per capita output of forest products rose from \$11.98 in 1870 to \$12.09 in 1910. O.J. Firestone, Canada's Economic Development, 1867-1953, calculated from p. 57, Table 5 and p. 189, Table 68.

<sup>30</sup>Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1891, 1901, 1911. By consulting the Blue Books for the mid-1870s, however, the per capita value of extracted minerals was as high as \$7.84. If this figure is compared with the 1911 census figures of \$5.21 per capita, the mining industry did not improve as suggested by the figures in the above text; indeed, mining suffered a per capita decline.

1891 to \$5.20 per capita in 1911.<sup>31</sup>

The encouragement offered secondary manufacturing was a combination of special legislation and tariff protection. In 1873 C.F. Bennett's government (1869-1874) allocated \$3,000 in its budget for the promotion of home industries. This money was not used, however, until F.B.T. Carter's administration (1874-1878) when most of it was given to the newly formed Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company. At that time four members of the House of Assembly were stockholders in this company and three of them, Charles R. Ayre, James J. Rogerson and Charles Bowring, were company directors.<sup>32</sup> That same year, 1877, the government offered a five percent premium to local manufacturers "on all hemp, flax, raw cotton and wool for the purpose of manufacturing fishing tackle or wearing apparel".<sup>33</sup> In 1879, during the first administration of William V. Whiteway, \$17,000 was budgeted and spent to encourage ship-building, and in 1880 an act was passed providing for a subsidy of \$3 per ton on newly-built vessels of 30 tons and over, and an additional \$2 per ton should these newly-built vessels prosecute the Bank Fishery.<sup>34</sup> The subsidy on raw materials for the clothing and cordage industries was renewed in 1882 and the premium on hemp was increased to 7.5 percent.<sup>35</sup> Robert Thorburn and his Conserv-

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<sup>31</sup>Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1891, 1901, 1911. The per capita value of Canadian mineral output rose from \$2.28 in 1890 to \$8.28 in 1910. Firestone, Canada's Economic Development, 1867-1953, calculated from p. 57, Table 5 and p. 189, Table 68.

<sup>32</sup>Financial Secretary's Consolidated Statement of Expenditure, JHA, 1875-1883.

<sup>33</sup>Statutes of Newfoundland, 40 Vic., cap. 10.

<sup>34</sup>43 Vic., cap. 18.

<sup>35</sup>44 Vic., cap. 18.

ative party, who were in office from 1885-1889, renewed the premiums on raw materials used in clothing and cordage factories for a period of 10 years.<sup>36</sup> This administration also raised the bounty on shipbuilding from \$3 per ton to \$4 per ton and made the regulations concerning the dimensions and quality of the vessels more exacting. In 1888 an additional \$2 per ton for vessels over 50 tons burthen was offered if the vessel was completed between November 10 and December 31, 1888, a rather peculiar amendment, the operative dates of which marked the last days of Thorburn's administration.<sup>37</sup> Following Whiteway's return to power in 1889, companies producing fish glue, isinglass and gelatine were granted a drawback on pure alcohol used in their production process.<sup>38</sup> Cordage manufacturing was indirectly encouraged when farmers growing flax and hemp became eligible for subsidies of \$100 and \$80 per ton respectively. This legislation was an attempt to stimulate and integrate agricultural production with secondary manufacturing, and more specifically The Colonial Cordage Company.<sup>39</sup> In 1891 shipbuilding bounties were increased and a commission of ten persons was appointed to prepare an Industrial Exhibition for the autumn of 1892 "for the encouragement of natural and mechanical products

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<sup>36</sup> 49 Vic., cap. 8. After 1895 the premiums were cancelled and not reinstituted until 1910.

<sup>37</sup> 50 Vic., cap. 24; 52 Vic., cap. 14

<sup>38</sup> 53 Vic., cap. 24. In 1893 the drawback on pure alcohol was renewed and extended to the importation of glass bottles used to package these products for a further three years. These drawbacks expired in 1896 and were not introduced in this form again.

<sup>39</sup> 53 Vic., cap. 23. The act was ratified for three years and following that time no further provision was made for the subsidy.

of the Colony".<sup>40</sup> Apart from tariff alterations, the government concentrated for the rest of the period on the development of primary products and industries, chiefly by negotiating directly with individual foreign companies. In 1908, however, Sir Robert Bond's administration (1900-1909) once again increased the bounties on shipbuilding with the result that as much as \$10 per ton was paid on the construction of a ship depending on its size and Lloyd's classification.<sup>41</sup> In 1910 "An Act Respecting the Encouragement of Woolen Manufacturers", passed by Sir Edward Morris' government (1909-1917), provided a five percent premium on wool to local manufacturers and permitted all machinery which could not be made in Newfoundland to be imported duty-free.<sup>42</sup> Finally, in 1911 the government negotiated an agreement with the British-Canadian Explosives Company of London, England, in which the government agreed to grant the company Crown land for its buildings and water power free of charge, and allowed all machinery for the factory and all materials not available in Newfoundland to enter the country free of duty. Once the company was operating efficiently and producing a quality product "equal in every respect to the article imported", the Morris administration promised adequate tariff protection from foreign competition.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> 54 Vic., cap. 5. The bounties were set at \$4, \$5 and \$6 per ton burthen according to classifications made by Lloyd's of London with the larger vessels receiving the best subsidies. 54 Vic., cap. 10.

<sup>41</sup> 8 Edward VII, cap. 8.

<sup>42</sup> 10 Edward VII, cap. 19.

<sup>43</sup> 1 George V, cap. 11. That same year the government had to pass regulations to oversee the production of such a dangerous product and adopted the British act on the matter which was originally passed in 1875. 1 George V, cap. 12.

While special acts of the legislature providing drawbacks, bounties, subsidies, premiums and tax exemptions were important, one major technique used in most countries to stimulate the growth of secondary manufacturing was through manipulation of the tariff. In a small country like Newfoundland, the government was faced with a dilemma; on the one hand, it wanted to encourage economic growth and on the other hand, it needed the revenue generated by the tariff. In the end a compromise was reached, whereby most imported items, whether they be finished manufactured goods or raw materials for local industries, were taxed; but, a margin of between five and ten percent was maintained between these two groups. Therefore, local industries had the advantage of being taxed only on some of their raw materials, while importers of foreign manufactured goods paid a higher tariff against the imported finished product, each item of which included the cost of materials, labour and capital together with the manufacturers' profit. The general trend of the tariff between 1870 and 1914, as with most taxes, was upward; however, in Newfoundland this upward movement came in a series of plateaus. In the first period or plateau, 1870-1885, the ratio of duties to dutiable imports and the ratio of duties to total imports were always within two percentage points of one another with the former (the higher of the two) always below 15.0 percent. For example, in 1870 the ratio of duties to dutiable imports was 13.0 percent and the ratio of duties to total imports was 12.6 percent, and by 1885 these ratios were 14.5 and 13.4 percent respectively. In 1870 imports of leather and woolen materials used in the clothing and footwear industries bore a tariff of 13 percent, while finished leatherware and readymade clothing paid 20 percent. For



the next period, 1886-1898, both the ratio of duties to dutiable imports and the ratio of duties to total imports rose within the first three years by an average five percentage points and slowly continued to rise by approximately another five points until 1898-1899. In 1887 the ratios climbed to 21.6 and 20.2 percent respectively, and in the year 1898-1899 to 27.0 and 24.4 percent. In 1887 yarns, woolen and cotton materials paid between 10 and 20 percent, while imported readymade clothing paid 25 percent. In 1898, however, the Winter government examined customs duties in detail and called on local manufacturers and businessmen for information and suggestions for reform.<sup>44</sup> A major result of this consultation was a significant increase in rates. In 1900-1901 the ratio of duties to dutiable imports rose to 30.5 percent and the ratio of duties to total imports increased to 25.5 percent. By the end of the period these ratios were 33.8 and 17.8 percent respectively. The large spread between these two figures was caused by a tremendous expansion of the free list during these years. While a few raw materials for local manufacturing were added to the free list, most industries continued as before with a small margin between duties on their raw materials and duties on competing imported manufactures. For instance, sole leather for boot and shoe factories was charged 20 percent, while imported footwear paid 40 percent. Likewise, many fabrics for clothing factories were charged 35 percent, while imported readymades paid 45 percent. There were, however, more extreme examples. A 20 percent tariff was levied against broom handles in 1914, but the imported finished product paid

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<sup>44</sup>Evidence as to a Revision of the Tariff taken before the Hon. The Receiver General, January, 1898.

50 percent. While certain raw and semi-finished materials for the carriage factories paid between 20 and 35 percent duty, imported carriages, waggon and buggies were taxed up to 50 percent and wheelbarrows, trollies, samsons and the like 75 percent.<sup>45</sup> In the final analysis, despite some of these extreme examples, the Newfoundland tariff was primarily a revenue instrument which, at the same time, provided local manufacturers with incidental protection by the particular manner in which the tariff was constructed. Nevertheless, per capita output of manufactures rose from only \$7.28 to \$11.61 between 1884 and 1911. By comparison, the per capita value of production of Canadian secondary manufacturing rose from \$23.69 to \$71.39 between 1870 and 1910.<sup>46</sup>

The encouragement of secondary manufacturing in Newfoundland was an attempt to foster import substitution. Politicians, businessmen and workers alike hoped to capture the employment and high returns on investment characteristic of this sector, and prevent income leakages caused by the domination of the local market by foreign manufacturers. In order to achieve this end the Newfoundland government chiefly relied on manipulation of the tariff but supplemented this action with premiums on raw materials, production bounties in shipbuilding and outright subsidies, tax and duty exemptions to specific industries. Implicit in this strategy was a belief that the Island's population would expand appreciably in the ensuing years with development of the country's "dormant resources",

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<sup>45</sup>Appendix I, Table 3; Customs Returns, 1870-1914, JHA 1870-1914.

<sup>46</sup>Appendix II, Tables 3 and 4.

expanding industrialization and increases in the standard of living. Instead, the Newfoundland manufacturing sector throughout the period 1870-1914 operated in a small national market with a narrow ad hoc financial market and was unable to achieve the economies of scale needed for profitable production of consumer and especially producer goods. These factories were very much enclave industries which were unable to establish interindustry linkages with the rest of the Newfoundland economy and incapable of expanding into foreign markets.

## CHAPTER II

## THE BAKERY AND CONFECTIONERY INDUSTRY

Introduction

The bakery and confectionery industry, between 1870 and 1914, was the largest employer among St. John's industries producing perishable consumer goods which included breweries, bakeries, butcher shops, butterine and tobacco factories. Over the entire period these trades steadily increased their share of the city's trade and manufacturing work force.<sup>1</sup> While many small firms entered and left, St. John's merchants and their families financially controlled most of the larger factories. Practically no interindustry links derived out of these trades because all the machinery and raw materials were imported. The diversification of smaller shops into retailing crockery and novelties, and the expansion of demand for new products like soft bread, sweet biscuits, cakes, pastries and confectionery, countered the effect of the inevitable saturation of such a small market as Newfoundland for ship biscuit -- originally the staple product for large bakeries. Given the perishable nature of the trade's products and the protection provided by the tariff, the St. John's bakeries and confectioneries had no trouble controlling the Newfoundland market.

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<sup>1</sup>Appendix III, Table 5.

## Major Firms

In the 1870s there were about six major bakeries and confectioneries. Vail's Joint Stock Company was the only incorporated company. Four firms were partnerships -- Gilbert Browning and Son, Alexander Harvey and Company, J. and G. Lash and John and G. Ayre -- while one was wholly owned by Thomas Mitchell.<sup>2</sup>

Vail's Bakery was established in the early 1850s on a small scale by an American, Robert Vail. In 1863 Vail sold out to a local syndicate and returned to the United States,<sup>3</sup> and the syndicate, which originally included Stephen Rendell, John Bowring, Robert Thorburn and R.L. Muir, all local merchants, incorporated the company with a paid-up capital stock of \$120,000 (£30,000) under the name Vail's Joint Stock Company.<sup>4</sup> From that time until the end of 1868 the company ran smoothly paying a steady five percent annual dividend.<sup>5</sup> In 1870 and 1871 the company, however,

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<sup>2</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1871 (Montreal: John Lovell, 1871). Throughout this thesis the Newfoundland Directory, 1871, together with the Newfoundland Directory, 1890 (Montreal: Might & Co., 1890) and the Newfoundland Directory, 1913 (St. John's: Newfoundland Directory Company, 1913) are used extensively to identify firms, their owners and employees and gauging the changes that occurred in trades and manufacturing in St. John's. Because these Directories are organized alphabetically and because many references in the text are combinations of many listings, the footnotes referring to the Business Directories do not contain page numbers.

<sup>3</sup>P.K. Devine, Ye Olde St. John's, 1750-1936 (St. John's, 1936), p. 92.

<sup>4</sup>Colonial Secretary's Papers, List of Incorporated Companies until 1899; Annual Statement of Vail's Joint Stock 1864-65, JHA 1865-1866. Another important shareholder between 1863 and 1870 was Edwin Duder, major St. John's merchant; Annual Statement of Vail's Joint Stock Company, 1867, JHA 1868.

<sup>5</sup>Annual Statement of Vail's Joint Stock Company, 1865, 1867, 1868, JHA 1866, 1868, 1869.

underwent some important organizational and financial changes. A special meeting of the shareholders was held on May 4, 1870, to discuss the "propriety of reducing the capital stock" and thereby writing off losses.<sup>6</sup> The shareholders agreed and the paid-up capital was reduced from \$120,000 (£30,000) to \$72,000 (£18,000).<sup>7</sup> In 1870 the Vail Joint Stock Company was re-incorporated, probably because of dramatic changes in the share list and the reduction of capital that spring.<sup>8</sup> The major shareholders of the company following these changes were Edwin Duder, A.W. Harvey, Charles Bowring and W.H. Mare, all of whom were major St. John's merchants.

The performance of the bakery from 1869-1873 was not very encouraging. At the end of the company's financial year, July 1, 1869 to June 30, 1870, the shareholders received a dividend of three percent. In 1870-1871 the dividend was four percent and fell to two and a half percent in 1871-1872, while no dividend was issued for 1872-1873.<sup>9</sup> At this point Gilbert Browning & Son, who already owned a small bakery, purchased the Company and expanded production.<sup>10</sup> Disaster, however, hit the bakery on Saturday, June 22, 1879, when "Vail's Mill", as Browning's bakery was popularly called, was completely destroyed by fire. Insurance was carried, however, and the re-building of the bakery began almost at once.<sup>11</sup> On

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<sup>6</sup>Royal Gazette, April 12, 1870.

<sup>7</sup>Annual Statement of the Vail Joint Stock Company for 1870, JHA 1871, p. 886.

<sup>8</sup>Colonial Secretary's Papers, List of Incorporated Companies until 1899; Royal Gazette, June 20, 1871.

<sup>9</sup>Annual Statement of Vail's Joint Stock Company, 1870-1873, JHA 1871-1874.

<sup>10</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, pp. 92-93.

<sup>11</sup>Evening Telegram, June 23, 1879.

October 24, 1914, Browning's operation was once again levelled by fire but was rebuilt once more.<sup>12</sup>

Alexander Harvey and Company, a family partnership, owned a bakery located on the corner of Water Street and Maggotty Cove in the early 1870s.<sup>13</sup> This bakery was seriously damaged by fire on Thursday, November 27, 1879,<sup>14</sup> but it was restored and by 1890 Alexander Harvey and Company's bakery was one of the largest in the city. Two years later, however, on Sunday, November 13, 1892, Harvey's bakery, along with their tobacco factory, once again burned to the ground. The property was insured and was soon rebuilt.<sup>15</sup> The firm survived to the end of the period as a major bakery and as a family partnership.<sup>16</sup> J. and G. Lash was another partnership which had an important bakery in St. John's in the early 1870s. This business was probably established by Jeffrey Lash some time before the 1846 fire. Indeed, the whole block between Adelaide and Holdsworth Streets was known as "Lash's" in the sixties. The business included not only a bakery and confectionery but also a liquor and wine business which was reputed to attract some of the "best men in town".<sup>17</sup> In June of 1878 Jeffrey Lash, Sr. retired from the business leaving it to his two sons, Jeffrey Frederick

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<sup>12</sup>H.M. Mosdell, When Was That?: A Chronological Dictionary of Important Events in Newfoundland Down to and Including the Year 1922 (St. John's: Trade Printers and Publishers, Ltd., 1923), p. 15.

<sup>13</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 93.

<sup>14</sup>Evening Telegram, November 27, 1879; Mosdell, When Was That?, p. 57.

<sup>15</sup>Royal Gazette, November 15, 1892.

<sup>16</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>17</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, pp. 50-51.



and Mortimer George Lash.<sup>18</sup> Beginning in the middle of June, 1880, J. & G. Lash began selling ice door-to-door on a daily delivery basis, and the following year even sold a few hind quarters of venison that had been sent from Green Bay.<sup>19</sup> By 1890 it appears that only Mortimer G. Lash owned the business,<sup>20</sup> and by the end of the period the firm had disappeared.

John and George Ayre opened a bakery in 1871. In their "American Bakery" at 46 New Gower Street they manufactured and packaged fancy biscuits and crackers.<sup>21</sup> By 1890 it employed over a dozen workers manufacturing a wide variety of bread and confectionery and retailing imported crockery.<sup>22</sup> By 1900 the business was under the sole control of John B. Ayre,<sup>23</sup> and it prospered and grew under his management for the rest of the period.<sup>24</sup> Thomas Mitchell also owned and operated a bakery in the early 1870s.<sup>25</sup> His premises, described as "extensive" in one newspaper report, were completely destroyed by fire on September 14, 1877, along with several adjoining houses. The bakery was partially insured, but it was

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<sup>18</sup>Royal Gazette, July 2, 1878.

<sup>19</sup>Evening Telegram, June 16, 1880, November 12, 1881.

<sup>20</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>21</sup>Public Ledger, September 2, 1871.

<sup>22</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>23</sup>George T. Oliver and John Burke, The People's Songster, Buyers' Guide, and Gems of Poetry and Prose (St. John's, 1900), p. 91

<sup>24</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>25</sup>The Times, January 4, 1871.

reported that Mitchell sustained a net loss of almost \$4,000 (£1,000).<sup>26</sup> Despite this setback, Mitchell was back in business by February of 1880.<sup>27</sup> The next year Mitchell's Terra Nova Bakery was incorporated with a paid-up capital of \$24,000. Apparently, Mitchell sold out to a group of local merchants and opened another bakery in a family partnership, for in three annual statements of the affairs of the Terra Nova Bakery from 1889 to 1891, Mitchell is not included in the list of company officers. The Terra Nova Bakery's new owners included James Baird, A.F. Goodridge, George Skelton, Moses Monroe and George T. Rendell, all major St. John's merchants.<sup>28</sup> This bakery was still in business in 1890 under the management of Thomas C. Cooke, who was also manager of the St. John's Electric Light Company,<sup>29</sup> but it did not survive to 1913. Following the sale of the Terra Nova Bakery, Thomas Mitchell, together with one of his relatives, formed the partnership of B. and T. Mitchell and opened a fancy bakery and grocery shop. By 1890 Thomas Mitchell was the only listed owner of the

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<sup>26</sup> Mosdell, When Was That?, p. 85; Royal Gazette, September 18, 1877.

<sup>27</sup> Evening Telegram, February 16, 1880. There was an interesting relationship between the early Terra Nova Bakery and the Anglo-American Bakery established in 1871. In that year the partnership of Avery and Vickers opened a bakery on the corner of Duckworth Street and King's Road for the manufacture of fancy biscuits. Vickers, however, had been the foreman of the Terra Nova Bakery for two years previous and this new enterprise was his attempt to strike out on his own. Public Ledger, December 1, 1871. This bakery was taken over by John B. Ayre sometime before 1890. Newfoundland Directory, 1890; Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 91.

<sup>28</sup> Colonial Secretary's Papers, List of Incorporated Companies until 1899; Annual Statements of the Terra Nova Bakery, 1889-1891, JHA 1890-1892.

<sup>29</sup> Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

firm B. and T. Mitchell.<sup>30</sup> This family business was no longer operating in St. John's in 1913.

The major bakeries operating in the 1890s all had their beginnings in the early 1870s. In 1890 John B. and G. Ayre, G. Browning and Son, Alexander Harvey and Company, J. and G. Lash, B. and T. Mitchell and the Terra Nova Bakery Company Limited were all still in business.<sup>31</sup> Of the major bakery and confectionery businesses in 1890, however, only three were still open in 1913. John B. Ayre ran a bakery on his own, while G. Browning and Son and A. Harvey and Company still operated their businesses. There were, however, four major new firms in the bakery and confectionery trade in 1913. Three of these, Rennie's Baking Company, F.B. Wood Company Limited and The Royal Biscuit Company Limited, were limited companies, and one was a sole-trading firm, McGuire's Bakery.<sup>32</sup>

The largest of these new major bakeries and confectioneries was F.B. Wood Company Limited. This company, incorporated in 1906, was the result of the amalgamation of two major companies, the F.B. Wood business and Crown Manufacturing Company Limited.<sup>33</sup> F.B. Wood had been in business since some time in the 1890s and at the time of the formation of the incorporated company manufactured, imported, wholesaled and retailed jams

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913. McGuire manufactured bread, cakes, pastries, etc. There is no other information about this company except what can be derived from this source.

<sup>33</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 118, #791, Memorandum of Association, May 4, 1906.

and jellies, baked bread, cakes and pastries.<sup>34</sup> He also imported and sold fresh fruit and nuts and maintained three restaurants. Wood's total assets were estimated at approximately \$63,000 and his total liabilities were about \$32,000. The limited company, F.B. Wood Company Limited, took over the debt of Mr. F.B. Wood's business, issued him \$30,000 worth of shares and hired him as manager of the new company at a salary of \$1,250 per year.<sup>35</sup> The Crown Manufacturing Company, the other business acquired by F.B. Wood Company Limited, had been in operation three years earlier, and manufactured and sold a wide variety of goods including confectionery, syrups, aerated waters and spices. The total assets of the company in the spring of 1906 were \$24,543 with liabilities of \$12,483. As in the previous case, the new company, F.B. Wood Company Limited, assumed the debt of the company and paid the difference to the shareholders of the Crown Manufacturing Company Limited in shares to a value of \$12,000.<sup>36</sup> As a result of the acquisition of the assets of these companies and the resulting payment in shares and cash to the previous owners and creditors, F.B. Wood Company Limited was left singularly short of operating capital. Most of its money was tied up in the acquired plant and stock purchases. On April 3, 1907, therefore, the company arranged a \$30,000 mortgage using all its property as collateral. A year later a second mortgage

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<sup>34</sup>Evidence as to a Revision of the Tariff taken before the Hon. The Receiver General, January 1898, p. 79.

<sup>35</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 118, #791, Memorandum of Association, May 4, 1906; #2604, Agreement between F.B. Wood and F.B. Wood Company Limited, May 4, 1906.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., #2605, Agreement between F.B. Wood Company Limited and The Crown Manufacturing Company Limited.

was negotiated for \$17,000. While both charges were still outstanding against the company in its 1914 financial statement, the smaller mortgage was satisfied shortly thereafter.<sup>37</sup> The ownership of the new company, F.B. Wood Company Limited, was highly concentrated with less than 10 percent of the shareholders owning 56.9 percent of the \$58,300 paid-up stock. The largest of these shareholders was F.B. Wood who owned \$21,000 worth of stock or 36.0 percent of the total. Between 1906 and 1914 the concentration of ownership changed very little. The proportions of the company owned by the controlling shareholders, however, shifted significantly by the end of the company's financial year for 1914. By that time F.B. Wood's share in the company had dwindled to \$7,500 worth of shares or 12.2 percent of the then \$61,400 paid-up capital. On the other hand, Marmaduke G. Winter, a major St. John's merchant, who controlled \$2,400 or 4.1 percent of the stock in 1907, owned \$17,200 or 27.9 percent of the company by the end of 1914.<sup>38</sup>

Rennie was a name connected with the bakery industry in St. John's from the mid-1830s. J. and W. Rennie built a factory in 1835 for grinding wheat into flour and baking bread.<sup>39</sup> Neither the directory for 1871 nor the one for 1890, however, mention any Rennies even remotely connected

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, #946, Mortgage, April 3, 1907; #2607, A Mortgage, June 11, 1908; #2606, Sharelist to March 13, 1915; #2633, Memorandum of Satisfaction of Mortgage, April 17, 1915.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, #945, Sharelist to March 14, 1907; #2606, Sharelist to March 13, 1915.

<sup>39</sup> The census for 1857 mentions a grist mill in St. John's West valued at \$4,000 (£1,000) and another one in St. John's East operated by one man; however, after that date there does not appear to be any factory in St. John's which was in the flour grinding business.

with the bakery business, and none of the newspapers before the mid-1890s carried advertisements for the "Rennie Bakery".<sup>40</sup> In 1896 a private partnership including R.J. Rennie, the managing partner and former accountant with Rothwell and Bowring, a St. John's merchant firm,<sup>41</sup> established the Rennie Baking Company. The company manufactured mainly fancy and plain biscuits,<sup>42</sup> and by 1900 had entered the tea wholesaling business.<sup>43</sup> In June of 1911 the owners of the Rennie Baking Company incorporated the business. The partners at that time were Robert J. Rennie, William Hoyles Rennie, a clerk with the St. John's Gas Light Company, and John William Withers, the King's printer.<sup>44</sup> Rennie owned \$20,200 of the company's \$40,000 paid-up stock. His 50.5 percent of the paid-up stock gave him effective ownership of the company. By the time of incorporation the company operated as provision merchants and owners of substantial freehold property, in addition to being bakers and confectioners. The next year on March 22, 1912, the company took a \$15,000 mortgage, using the east-

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<sup>40</sup>Mosdell, When Was That?, p. 109. Mosdell connects this firm with the one established in the mid-1890s and considers them to be one and the same. Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 163. It is possible that the Rennies went out of the gristing business and remained bakers, but there is no sign of them until the end of the nineteenth century.

<sup>41</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>42</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 12.

<sup>43</sup>Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 17.

<sup>44</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

side of Rennie's Mill Road known as 'Rennie's Mill Property' as collateral.<sup>45</sup> By the end of 1914, the ownership of the company was exactly the same and the \$15,000 mortgage was still outstanding.<sup>46</sup>

One final company which came into existence at the end of the period was The Royal Biscuit Company Limited. This company was established in November of 1913 for the purpose of manufacturing both plain and fancy baked goods. The company, with a paid-up capital of \$18,950, was owned by a total of 50 shareholders, but ownership was not as highly concentrated as with the other limited companies. Thirty percent of the shareholders owned 55.4 percent of the company's stock. The largest shareholder in the company, Robert Freeman, a St. John's merchant, owned only \$2,000 worth of stock, representing just over 10 percent of the total amount of the \$18,950 worth of shares taken up and paid into the company.<sup>47</sup>

### Characteristics of the Trade

#### (i) Plant, Machinery and Materials

All the machinery and materials for the manufacture of bakery products and confectionery was imported. Flour, lard, sugar, yeast,

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<sup>45</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 206, #1847, Sharelist to September 15, 1911. John William Withers owned \$12,800 worth of stock or 32.0 percent of the company and William Hoyles Rennie owned the remaining \$7,000 or 17.5 percent of the stock; #2355, Indenture between Robert J. Rennie, Wm. H. Rennie and John W. Withers and Rennie and Company, Limited, June 1, 1911; #2337, A Mortgage, March 22, 1912.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., #2592, Sharelist to April 14, 1915.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., No. 271, #2109, Memorandum of Association, November 12, 1913; #2562, Sharelist to March 25, 1915. Three other men, James T. Haw, Kalleem Noah and George Neal invested \$1,000 each in the company and thereby each controlled 5.3 percent of the company.

colourings, chocolate, flavour extracts and dried fruit among other goods were purchased principally from Canadian and American companies.<sup>48</sup> These raw materials were stocked in large quantities both for the purpose of mill discounts and because of the problems of obtaining supplies on short notice.<sup>49</sup> The only items not brought in were barrels, casks and boxes used to package the finished products. The Rennie Baking Company in the late 1890s, spent about \$1,000 a year on local lumber for manufacturing boxes in their packaging department alone.<sup>50</sup>

(ii) Employment, Wages and Working Conditions

Employment in the larger bakeries and confectioneries grew steadily between 1870 and 1914. According to the 1874 census, 33 men were employed in the largest biscuit bakeries in the city. By 1890, 84 persons operated the largest bakeries and confectionery factories and by 1913, 224 workers were employed in large firms. In firms employing less than five persons, the number of workers remained about the same in 1890 and 1913, when 70 and 74 workers respectively were so employed.<sup>51</sup> Employees were mainly men, although some women and children were also employed. For instance, in John B. and G. Ayre's bakery in 1890, a third of his employees were women, and by 1913 almost 50 percent were women, one of whom was the

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<sup>48</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, pp. 12, 56.

<sup>49</sup>When Browning's bakery burned down in 1879, the company lost almost 1,000 barrels of flour, a rather large inventory for a firm of its size. Evening Telegram, June 23, 1879.

<sup>50</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 12.

<sup>51</sup>Appendix III, Table 8.



manager, Minnie Adams. In G. Browning and Son's bakery, one of the proprietors in 1890 was a woman, Mrs. E. Browning. By 1913, 34 of 74 persons employed at F.B. Wood Company Limited were women.<sup>52</sup> Children were employed in at least one major bakery in St. John's. The Rennie Baking Company in the 1890s regularly employed seven boys in addition to 21 men. The boys mainly built wooden boxes and packed biscuits.<sup>53</sup>

The wages earned by bakery workers are only available for the larger bakeries in 1911. At that time, 155 workers earned a total of \$57,644 or approximately \$7.15 each per week. When this figure is broken down into the different wards in St. John's East and St. John's West, the weekly salaries range from a low of \$6.23 a week to a high of \$10.00 a week. The difference in wage rates as suggested by these figures was probably more apparent than real. The bakery workers likely received about \$7.00 or \$8.00 for a 55-60 hour week. The difference in the estimated average weekly wage was probably the result of variations in down-time, with some bakeries operating on a half-day or part-day production schedule because of a small clientele, and few large customers like restaurants, hotels or hospitals which would provide a steady and secure market. Also, the highest wages appear in the smallest bakeries which suggests that management salaries were included in these figures.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890 and Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>53</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, pp. 12-13. The making of biscuit and berry boxes was fairly common employment for boys in the manufacturing sector.

<sup>54</sup>Census of Newfoundland, 1911. The Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 12 states that the Rennie Baking Company employed 21 men and seven boys with an annual wage bill of \$5,000. If one assumes that the men made twice what the boys did, then each man averaged \$3.92 a week and each boy \$1.96 a week. The bakery probably operated only on a half-day or part-day basis because the wages seem to be too low when compared to the 1911 figures to be explained simply by variations in the wages rates from one bakery to another over such a short period of time.

In 1897 the bakery workers formed a union. Apparently it did not survive for any length of time, for in June of 1904 another attempt was made to establish a bakers' union. The United Bread and Cake Bakers' Union was organized for soft bread bakers, but in the Fall of 1904 hard biscuit bakers were permitted to join. About 50 bakers were members of this union shortly after its founding, and it survived at least through the decade if not longer.<sup>55</sup> The major weakness of the union was the small number of workers employed in the trade, despite the fact that the bakeries were one of the city's largest employers.

(iii) Products, Markets, and Business Style

The products manufactured in the bakeries and confectioneries changed significantly over the period. When Vail came to St. John's from the United States in the early 1850s, he concentrated on soft bread, but by the mid-1850s he realized that the market for soft bread was very limited as most people made their own. The ship biscuit business, however, represented a much larger market, which at that time was cornered by imported Hamburg hard bread. In 1857 Vail switched to hard biscuit, and while the quality of his product was said to be inferior to the imported article, he charged a lower price. Within 10 years he had driven three-quarters of the imported Hamburg bread from the local market and had made enough money to retire and return to a comfortable life in the United

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<sup>55</sup>R. Hattenhauer, "A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland" (unpublished report prepared for the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador, Summer, 1970), p. 145.

States.<sup>56</sup> With Vail's example, the manufacture of ship biscuit became an important part of the St. John's bakery business. From 1874-1901 the census always referred to the large bakeries in St. John's as biscuit bakeries; but from 1884 to 1901 the production of hard bread gradually declined. In 1884, according to the census, 120,013 hundredweight of biscuit was manufactured in St. John's, but by 1891 only 90,586 hundredweight was produced, and by 1901 this figure had fallen to 81,000 hundredweight. The problem that Vail encountered trying to find a market for soft bread was not overcome until well into the 1890s. Practically all of the soft bread baking was done at home, although some soft bread was made in small bakeries and confectioneries scattered throughout the city. The St. John's Bakery before 1870, for example, was reputed to be the place "where half of the East End bought their soft bread including, at this time, the military".<sup>57</sup> The garrison, which was withdrawn in 1870, was probably the main customer for this bakery together with some of the wealthier people in town.<sup>58</sup> G. Browning and Son expanded production of soft bread after he took over the Vail premises in the 1870s,<sup>59</sup> but this end of his business never seemed to amount to very much. In 1881 Francis H. Viguers, owner of the Variety Bread Bakery, invited the general public to leave orders at his shop for one and two pound loaves of "the best

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<sup>56</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 92.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>58</sup>G.S. Graham, "Britain's Defence of Newfoundland: A Survey from Discovery to the Present Day", Canadian Historical Review (September, 1942), pp. 260-279.

<sup>59</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 92.

quality" Graham Bread.<sup>60</sup> By 1890 John B. and G. Ayre described themselves as soft bread bakers as well as manufacturers of other lines of bakery products.<sup>61</sup> It was, in fact, only from the 1890s that the market for soft bread began to expand significantly, and then many more firms began advertising the product. Whereas previous to the 1911 census the production of the bakeries was measured in hundredweights of biscuits, in 1911 production was measured by the number of loaves of soft bread manufactured. At that time over a million loaves of soft bread were manufactured by half of the major bakeries in St. John's. The change in production away from hard bread and toward soft bread was probably the result of two factors. The exodus of fishermen, in the face of economic depression at home, between 1884 and 1891 was crushing because they were the major market for hard bread outside of St. John's. Secondly, employment created by the Reid railway contract, the opening of the Bell Island mines and the construction boom following the 1892 fire raised incomes and generated a market for baker's bread, cakes, cookies and other confectionery goods.

'Fancy' biscuits were manufactured in large quantities in St. John's bakeries, especially towards the end of the period. In September, 1871, John B. and G. Ayre's American Bakery began making fancy biscuits and crackers packed in both boxes and barrels.<sup>62</sup> By 1900 they had expanded their production in this line to include soda, butter, coffee,

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<sup>60</sup>Evening Telegram, June 22, 1881.

<sup>61</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>62</sup>Public Ledger, September 2, 1871.

wine, tea, fruit, pilot, juble and lemon biscuits and ginger snaps.<sup>63</sup> Avery and Vickers, in their Anglo-American Bakery, began a business in December, 1871, in fancy biscuits, including wine biscuits.<sup>64</sup> In the late 1890s the Rennie Baking Company manufactured large quantities of soda and pilot biscuits, and the demand for these biscuits was increasing rapidly.<sup>65</sup> In 1913 A. Harvey and Company specialized in three brands of biscuits, "Tip-Top", "Three X" and "Lunch" Biscuits.<sup>66</sup> The fancy biscuit trade was very strong by the end of the period, with most of the major bakeries manufacturing them.

In the early 1870s local bakeries did some business making specialty products like Christmas cakes for lotteries and sweet buns and cakes on special orders.<sup>67</sup> Several bakeries around 1880 made penny buns,<sup>68</sup> but not until the turn of the century did bakers widely advertise that they manufactured cakes and pastries. R.J. Callanan, the "Fancy Cake and Pastry Baker", proudly stated in 1900 that he sold cakes and pastry "fresh every day". The West End Bakery, John B. Ayre, McGuire's Bakery, and The Rennie Baking Company also specifically mentioned these goods in their advertisements.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 91.

<sup>64</sup>Public Ledger, December 1, 1871; The Times, January 4, 1871; Evening Telegram, April 23, 1879.

<sup>65</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 12.

<sup>66</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>67</sup>Public Ledger, December 12, 1871; Evening Telegram, December 20, 1880; Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 50.

<sup>68</sup>Evening Telegram, July 26, 1880.

<sup>69</sup>Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, pp. 35, 37, 91.

Much of the candy, jam and other confectionery not made at home was made up by small confectioners around the city and sold together with imported confectionery. J.W. Foran announced in 1880 that during the summer season ice cream would be available at his store.<sup>70</sup> In 1888 William H. Davidson and a Mr. Fletcher began bottling local fruit and manufacturing jams and jellies. They even applied to become the Queen's Purveyors.<sup>71</sup> Not until the late 1890s, however, was there a major company in St. John's which was devoted mainly to the manufacture of confectionery. Frederick B. Wood, some time in the 1890s, began manufacturing cheap candy. He employed from 12 to 20 people in his factory on Henry Street in the late 1890s<sup>72</sup> and gradually the business grew until in 1913 he employed 74 people making a wide assortment of candy, jams, jellies and other confectionery, in addition to operating a full-scale bakery, an importing business and a number of restaurants.<sup>73</sup> John Eagan, owner of the West End Bakery, manufactured and wholesaled his own jams, jellies, preserves and sweets, in addition to a regular line of bakery goods which he sold to an impressive number of major local merchants.<sup>74</sup>

The bakeries and confectioneries in St. John's frequently had at least one other line of business, in addition to the manufacture of

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<sup>70</sup>Evening Telegram, June 19, 1880.

<sup>71</sup>Local Governor's Correspondence, G3/1888, letter from Davidson and Fletcher, November 9, 1888; letter from Thorburn, Colonial Secretary, to A.D.C., March 19, 1889; Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>72</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 26.

<sup>73</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 118, #791, Memorandum of Association, May 4, 1906.

<sup>74</sup>Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 37.

bread, biscuits and confectionery. J. and G. Lash, for example, in the early 1870s, not only sold their bakery products but also had a wide selection of novelty and variety goods. In this line, during the Christmas season, they had on display crackers, magic fans, drawing-room fireworks, satin and paper flags and even cigars with night caps on the end of them.<sup>75</sup> By the 1890s, although there is no mention of the novelty business, the company imported fruit and wine and ran a catering service.<sup>76</sup> Another bakery and confectionery, Millary and Company, sold home-made sausages.<sup>77</sup> John B. Ayre, at least by 1890, was selling crockery besides running the bakery.<sup>78</sup> G. Browning and Son advertised the company business as bakery and provision merchant in 1890, as did B. and T. Mitchell.<sup>79</sup> The Rennie Baking Company, in 1900, imported and sold wholesale oyoywattee tea ("Unequalled in Strength. Matchless in Flavour. Best Value for Money"), and by 1913 they were also wholesale merchants for imported flour, provisions, groceries, oats, hay and feed.<sup>80</sup> F.B. Wood, just before reorganizing into F.B. Wood Company Limited, ran not only a bakery but also imported and sold fresh fruit and nuts and operated three

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<sup>75</sup>Newfoundlander, December 12, 1871; Public Ledger, December 12, 1871; Daily Chronicle, December 14, 1871.

<sup>76</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>77</sup>Evening Telegram, May 4, 1880.

<sup>78</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890; Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 91; Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>79</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>80</sup>Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 17; Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

restaurants. When the company was incorporated, aerated waters were added to its inventory with the take-over of The Crown Manufacturing Company.<sup>81</sup>

Foreign competition in the baking industry, ever since Vail established his bakery, took over three-quarters of the Hamburg ship biscuit marker, was not a major threat to the local manufacturers, since apart from ship biscuit the product was highly perishable. In 1897, for example, the total imports of biscuits was only 20,000 boxes valued at \$16,700. The testimony of local bakers and confectioneries in a Tariff Commission in 1898 clearly establishes that the local industry was adequately protected by the tariff.<sup>82</sup>

### Conclusion

The bakery and confectionery trade was the largest employer among the St. John's perishable consumer goods industries. Over the entire period 1870-1914, its share of the total trades and manufacturing work force increased from 5.5 percent in 1871 to 6.8 percent in 1890 and 9.0 percent in 1913.<sup>83</sup> The majority of the firms, however, employed less than five people. Even the larger firms employed only between 15 and 30 people each.<sup>84</sup> The capital and technical requirements of the trade did

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<sup>81</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 118, #791, Memorandum of Association, May 4, 1906.

<sup>82</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 12.

<sup>83</sup>See Appendix III, Table 5.

<sup>84</sup>See Appendix III, Table 7.



not present major barriers to the entry of small firms, but important St. John's merchants and their families had significant investment in, and control over the larger concerns. Practically all the machinery and raw materials for the trade were imported and, therefore, interindustry links were few. Smaller shops supplemented the demand for bakery goods by retailing crockery, novelties and imported confectionery. Changes in demand and product lines away from ship biscuit and toward soft bread, cakes, pastries and confectionery helped to offset the inevitable saturation of the small market; and the tariff and the extreme perishability of many of the products protected the trade from foreign competition.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY

#### Introduction

The clothing industry, including woolen mills, clothing factories, dye works, tailoring, dressmaking and millinery shops, was one of the most important trades in St. John's between 1870 and 1914. In 1871 it was the largest employer among all consumer goods trades, and second only to cooperages among all trades in St. John's. While the number of people employed in the clothing industry in 1890 was only marginally greater than any other single trade, by 1913 it had outstripped all other trades in the city except heavy industry. Small shops, employing less than five people, outnumbered larger firms by two to one; but by far the majority of workers were employed with the larger companies. The rate of entry and exit of firms in the clothing industry was extremely high, which was probably a function of the low capital and technical requirements of entry and the marginal nature of many of the small shops. Tradesmen owned most of the small shops, but major St. John's merchants, either as shareholders or silent partners, financed many of the larger shops and factories. Apart from insurance, shipping, and wholesale services, interindustry links did not exist; for, practically all machinery and materials were imported. Because the work force included such a large percentage of women, the wages in the clothing trade (especially in the smaller dressmaking and millinery shops) were significantly lower than in other St. John's trades. Despite

a number of indications of worker dissatisfaction, unions failed to take permanent root because of small numbers, high unemployment in the city and the hostile reaction of factory owners. Between 1870 and 1914 custom tailoring and dressmaking shops were gradually pushed out of the manufacturing business by local and foreign clothing factories. At first, the small shops aggressively sought outport business and advertised modern stylings; but eventually, those which survived were reduced to pressing and repairing clothes and retailing ready-made clothing, cloth, millinery and haberdashery.

#### Major Firms

In 1871 eight major businesses existed in the clothing industry. There were two partnerships, Sillars, Cairns and Company and Beer and Dodd. Before 1871 Sillars, Cairns and Company was a partnership between Archibald Sillars, Thomas R. Cairns, C.R. Ayre and A. Marshall, the latter two being major St. John's merchants. In that year the partnership was dissolved and Archibald Sillars and Thomas R. Cairns continued the business on their own.<sup>1</sup> By 1890, however, that partnership had also dissolved and what remained of the firm was owned and operated by Mrs. Amelia Cairns. This business disappeared before 1913. The remaining six major shops existing in 1871 were sole-trading businesses owned and operated respectively by Cornelius Denehy, Michael Hickey, Ann Marshall, John Patrick, Patrick Usher (all in the tailoring business) and John Rowe (owner of a dye works). None of these, however, was in existence in 1890.

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<sup>1</sup>Royal Gazette, January 31, 1871.

By 1890 the most important companies included four partnerships, O'Flaherty and Macgregor, Gibb and Calvert, P. Jordan and Sons, and Brown and Milley; and, eight large sole-trading businesses, owned respectively by Patrick Kelly, Mark Chaplin, John Maunder, E.M. Jackman, John Adrian, A.W. Martin, Dennis Galway and S.O. Steele.<sup>2</sup> O'Flaherty and Macgregor probably began some time in the 1880s because neither name appears in the early 1871 directory nor in any newspaper examined for the 1870s. This cloth and tailoring business, although the second largest in St. John's in 1890, disappeared before 1913. Gibb and Calvert, the largest tailoring business in the city in 1890, however, had a longer history, for it can be traced back at least to the 1870s. In 1878 the partnership, H.M. Gibb and Company, was dissolved and Gibb continued the business on his own. A peculiar feature of this partnership was that two silent partners, C.R. Ayre and A. Marshall, had also been in partnership with Sillars, Cairns and Company until 1871.<sup>3</sup> It appears, therefore, that merchants like Marshall and Ayre owned significant portions of the tailoring trade in St. John's. It is likely that tradesmen like Gibb, Sillars and Cairns went to local merchants soliciting financial backing to establish their shops, and once their businesses were operating satisfactorily and the debts repaid to the merchant investors, partnerships were dissolved. H.M. Gibb, following the dissolution of the partnership, for a number of years continued to run a large and aggressive tailoring business. In 1884 he retired from the business leaving it to Archibald

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<sup>2</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>3</sup>Royal Gazette, January 22, 1878.

G. Gibb, who shortly thereafter formed a partnership with James A. Calvert. By 1913, however, this business was not operating and Archibald G. Gibb became a floor-walker with Ayre and Sons.<sup>4</sup> P. Jordan and Sons, while not mentioned in the 1871 directory, was in business from the beginning of that year.<sup>5</sup> By 1890 the business was operated by his son, James, but under the same company name. The company, however, did not survive to the beginning of World War I, probably closing down after the death of two members of the family, Andrew and William Jordan, in a house fire in 1895.<sup>6</sup> George R. Brown and Samuel Milley established a dry goods and millinery firm in 1890.<sup>7</sup> But the company was burned out in 1892 and the partnership dissolved. Milley then joined a Mr. McIntosh in 1893 whom he bought out in 1897, continuing and expanding the business as sole proprietor until the beginning of World War I.<sup>8</sup>

The sole trading companies were more numerous and generally smaller than the partnerships. Patrick Kelly was only a journeyman tailor in 1871, but by 1890 he ran one of the largest firms in town, although it had disappeared by 1913.<sup>9</sup> Mark Chaplin, beginning in the mid-1870s, was operating

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<sup>4</sup>P.K. Devine, Ye Olde St. John's, 1750-1936 (St. John's, 1936), p. 110.

<sup>5</sup>They advertised like a firm that had been in business for some time as in The Newfoundlander, January 3, 1871.

<sup>6</sup>Mosdell, When Was That?: A Chronological Dictionary of Important Events in Newfoundland Down to and Including the Year 1922 (St. John's: Trade Printers and Publishers, Ltd., 1923), pp. 12, 89.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>8</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 19.

<sup>9</sup>There was a Kelly operating a tailor shop in St. John's in 1913 according to the Newfoundland Directory for that year; however, his name was James J. Kelly and his shop was located elsewhere. No connection can be made between the two.

a small tailoring firm and by 1890 ran a substantial business which, between 1890 and 1913, almost doubled its number of employees.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, John Maunder's tailoring business had tripled its 1890 work force from 14 to 49 employees by 1913. Edward M. Jackman, proprietor of 'Jackman the Tailor' probably opened his shop in the 1880s, for by 1890 he was well established. In 1912 the firm was incorporated and by 1913 had more than doubled its 1890 work force of 10 people. Although the company was authorized for a nominal capital of \$25,000, only \$400 was ever paid into the company. This \$400 was in four shares of \$100 each, two of which were held by Jackman's estate, and the others by his son and James J. Ryan, a cutter with the firm.<sup>11</sup> According to the agreement between H.R. Brookes, Assignee of the Estate and the new company, Jackman the Tailor Limited, the company agreed to pay the estate \$7,250 for the business. The incorporated company then issued seven percent debentures to the sum of \$4,400 and took out a \$5,000 mortgage against the property and stock of the company securing the issue of the debentures.<sup>12</sup> Within the first nine months of incorporation the company not only met the seven percent on the debentures, but also publically advertised a ten percent dividend on the common stock of the company.<sup>13</sup> But by early 1914 the

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<sup>10</sup>Evening Telegram, April 3, 1879; Newfoundland Directory, 1890 and Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>11</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 233, #1836, Memorandum of Association, June 7, 1912; #1882, Sharelist to June 21, 1912.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., #1837, Articles of Association, June 7, 1912; #1883, Mortgage Securing the Issue of Debentures, June 21, 1912; also a note regarding the debentures, June 24, 1912.

<sup>13</sup>Royal Gazette, March 11, 1913. This may just be an advertising hoax. After all, very few companies publicized their dividends and, in effect, this particular dividend only concerned a total of \$40.

mortgages and charges against the company had increased to \$20,900, and one year later the firm was insolvent and wound up.<sup>14</sup>

John Adrian, formerly the cutter with H.M. Gibb and Company, opened his own tailor shop on March 22, 1881,<sup>15</sup> and apparently did well right from the start. In 1890 he employed nine workers and by 1913 had increased his staff to 14. A.W. Martin and Dennis Galway, both tailors, and S.O. Steele, a milliner, all ran large clothing businesses in 1890. Dennis Galway was a tailor in St. John's in 1871, but there is no evidence to suggest that he operated his own shop. By 1913 Galway still ran a tailoring business, but Martin had faded from view and S.O. Steele had turned to the crockery business.

There were a large number of incorporated companies in the clothing trades in 1913 including Jackman the Tailor, The Newfoundland Clothing Company, The British Clothing Factory, The Royal Stores, The Royal Fur Company, James Baird Ltd., The British Woolen Manufacturing Company and The Newfoundland Knitting Mills. The first successful attempt to organize a limited company took place in 1898,<sup>16</sup> when the Royal Clothing Company

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<sup>14</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 233, #2308, Sharelist to February 4, 1914; #2569, Resolution, January 2, 1913.

<sup>15</sup>Evening Telegram, March 1, 22, 1881.

<sup>16</sup>There was at least one earlier attempt. On March 28, 1881, The Newfoundland Pioneer Woolen Company Limited was incorporated. Some of the major people behind this business were Stephen Rendell, Moses Monroe, James Baird, Alexander M. Mackay, Charles Bowring, John McDougall and James Stott, mostly St. John's merchants. The company was originally permitted to raise a capital stock of \$25,000. Colonial Secretary's Papers, List of Incorporated Companies until 1899; Original Certificates of Incorporation of Local Firms; Evening Telegram, May 16, July 22, 1881. On Saturday, February 10, 1883, less than two years after the beginning of the company, the woolen factory was destroyed by fire. While some \$20,000 (£5,000) insurance was carried, a meeting of the shareholders was held in the middle of March of that year to discuss the winding-up of the company. Royal Gazette, February 13, March 13, 1883.

was established.<sup>17</sup> The Royal Clothing Company, The Royal Fur Company and The Royal Stores Limited were formed to divide the operations of the Job family into separate and independent units, so that should one of the smaller parts of the business fail then the assets of the main part of the Job business -- the importing and exporting trade -- would not be liable for the debts of any other branch. While the owners of The Royal Stores were not the sole owners of these other subsidiary companies, they nevertheless held a controlling interest. The details of the financial structure and ownership of The Royal Clothing Company Limited are not known,<sup>18</sup> but those of The Royal Fur Company are. It was incorporated in 1911 with a paid-up capital of \$25,000 to manufacture furs, skins, fur coats and the like. There were four shareholders; Adolph Landau of New York, Royal Stores Limited, and William C. and Robert B. Job. A.S. Landau was the largest shareholder with 40 percent of the shares which he received in return for the patent rights to his inventions and for agreeing to serve as manager until a local man was trained to take over the business. Nevertheless, The Royal Stores Limited and its owners, the Jobs, controlled the fur factory, holding altogether 60 percent of the stock.<sup>19</sup>

The largest clothing factory in 1913 was The Newfoundland Clothing

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<sup>17</sup>Colonial Secretary's Papers, List of Incorporated Companies until 1899.

<sup>18</sup>Mosdell, When Was That?, p. 11. The clothing factory was destroyed by fire April 19, 1916. The loss was estimated at \$70,000.

<sup>19</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 225, #1767, Memorandum of Association, December 29, 1911; #1805, Sharelist to January 14, 1912; #2617, Agreement between Adolph S. Landau and The Royal Fur Company, Limited, August 6, 1912.



Company Limited,<sup>20</sup> established in 1895 by Joseph Mayers.<sup>21</sup> By 1898 he employed at least 25 people,<sup>22</sup> and within the next 15 years the business grew until there were at least 112 factory hands.<sup>23</sup> The business was incorporated in 1904 with paid-up capital of \$45,000. It was effectively controlled by Moses Mayers, owner of 44.4 percent of the stock, and Robert K. Bishop, who controlled 11 percent of the stock. In 1908 the company increased its nominal capital from \$75,000 to \$100,000, and in 1912 to \$150,000, when a new factory was constructed.<sup>24</sup> By 1914 the entire \$150,000 had been called up and paid into the company, but the ownership was even more concentrated than before. By January 1915 less than 10 percent of the shareholders (Robert K. Bishop, Moses Mayers and J. Charles Marshall) controlled 52.7 percent of the company. Robert K. Bishop, a local merchant and the largest shareholder, increased his investment in the company from \$15,000 to \$45,000 or 30.1 percent of the entire paid-up capital of the company. J. Charles Marshall, also a major St. John's merchant, more than tripled his investment in the company from

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<sup>20</sup>When this company was originally incorporated, it was called The Newfoundland Clothing Factory Limited. The name was changed January 29, 1912. Registry of Company, No. 79, #1776.

<sup>21</sup>Mosdell, When Was That?, p. 89.

<sup>22</sup>Evidence as to a Revision of the Tariff Taken Before the Hon. The Receiver General, January, 1898, p. 40.

<sup>23</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>24</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 79, #543, Memorandum of Association, January 16, 1904. Three other men, J. Charles Marshall, Frederick W. Ayre and Edgar R. Bowring, all St. John's merchants also controlled 11 percent of the company each in 1905; however, later events show that R.K. Bishop warranted singular attention because of his increased investment and management role in the company; Ibid., #826, Sharelist to January 11, 1905; #1058, Resolution to Increase the Nominal Capital of the Company, January 25, 1908.

\$5,000 to \$17,700, but with the increased paid-up capital his share of the stock was unchanged.<sup>25</sup>

A third important clothing factory, The British Clothing Company Limited, was incorporated in 1913 with a nominal capital of \$30,000. In 1914 this was increased to \$100,000, of which some \$25,000 was paid-up by early 1915.<sup>26</sup> The ownership of this company was not as concentrated as the other companies, with a third of the shareholders, namely George A. Davey, a major construction contractor, Thomas Hallett,<sup>27</sup> Marmaduke Winter, Bowring Brothers and Arthur S. Rendell, all major St. John's merchants, controlling 55.5 percent of the company.<sup>28</sup>

The limited companies discussed above were primarily manufacturing ready-made clothes, especially men's and boys' clothing. Two other incorporated companies were woolen mills, producing mainly underwear. The

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., #2756, Sharelist to January 29, 1915. Frederick W. Ayre (see footnote 24) was still a very important investor in the company in 1915. He increased his investment from \$5,000 to \$13,000. His share in the company, because of the large increase in the paid-up capital, nevertheless, declined from 11.1 percent to 8.6 percent.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., No. 256, #2033, Memorandum of Association, May 10, 1913; #2540, Sharelist to June 1, 1913; #2324, Alteration to Memorandum of Association, March 23, 1914.

<sup>27</sup>Five other people had invested as much as Thomas Hallett, but because he appears as one of the three initial investors and is mentioned along with George A. Davey in one of the initial business deals of the company, he was included and the others not.

<sup>28</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 256, #2542, Sharelist to February 11, 1915. George A. Davey, the largest of these shareholders, owned \$3,200 worth of stock or 12.5 percent of the company's shares. Marmaduke Winter, Bowring Brothers and Arthur S. Rendell each controlled 11.7 percent of the company shares at the beginning of 1915.

British Woolen Company Limited<sup>29</sup> was incorporated in 1911 with a nominal capital of \$100,000, of which \$66,000 had been paid into the company by March 1912. Robert K. Bishop, Daniel Monroe, James S. Pitts, James Ryan, Marmaduke Winter, all leading members of major St. John's merchant families, and Reid Newfoundland Company, together represented over 30 percent of the shareholders, and owned 54.5 percent of the company shares.<sup>30</sup> Despite adequate capital and new plant and machinery, the company failed for want of experienced management,<sup>31</sup> and in 1913 its assets were taken over by The Newfoundland Knitting Mills Limited. The nominal capital of the company was increased to \$250,000 divided into \$100,000 in preference shares, yielding seven percent annually, and \$150,000 common stock. By January 30, 1914, \$203,000 worth of shares

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<sup>29</sup>There were two major woolen companies prior to The British Woolen Company. The Newfoundland Pioneer Woolen Company Limited (see p. 46, footnote 16) and Our Own Woolen Mills Limited which was incorporated on October 19, 1906. While the latter company was located in Mackinsons outside St. John's, the company's business address was Job's Cove in St. John's and the company received considerable attention in the St. John's press. More important, the owners of the woolen mill were prominent St. John's merchants. The company was largely controlled by the Macphersons and Jobs. Other prominent investors in the company were Edgar Bowring, John Henderson, John Browning, W.A. Mathieson, the manager of the plant, and Robert K. Bishop, who was later to become the most important investor in both the Newfoundland Knitting Mills Limited and The Newfoundland Clothing Factory Limited. Registry of Companies, No. 126, #845, Memorandum of Association, October 19, 1906; #1037, name changed to "The Woolen Mills, Limited", November 19, 1907; #1047, location, December 11, 1907. This company, although much was expected from it (Daily News, October 22, 1907, May 21, 1907), did not succeed and was wound up on January 30, 1913. Registry of Companies, No. 126, #1966, Notice of Winding-Up, January 30, 1913.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., No. 201, #1562, Memorandum of Association, March 21, 1911; #1846, Sharelist to March 1, 1912; Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Newfoundland in 1914 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Limited, 1915), p. 107.

<sup>31</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 107.

was held by investors, \$100,000 in preference shares and \$100,300 in common stock. A unique characteristic of this company's financing was the use of preference shares, and how almost 25 percent of them were sold. The Nova Scotia Trust Company was hired as broker on September 30, 1913, to find buyers for 240 preference shares before December 31, 1913. The preference shares were sold at par and 240 common shares were set aside as bonuses for buyers. Each buyer was permitted an allocation of common stock not exceeding the number of preference shares purchased. The actual number of common shares granted to buyers was negotiated by the trust company. In return, the Nova Scotia Trust Company received a five percent commission and the remaining common stock, provided that the residue did not exceed 60 shares. Also, after the sale of the preference stock, the trust company agreed to buy 100 preference shares itself, and the knitting mill agreed to grant the trust company a bonus of 100 common shares. Therefore, for the sale of 240 preference shares and the purchase of 100 preference shares, the Nova Scotia Trust Company gained \$5,000 plus a maximum of 160 common shares. In the other deal arranged by the company, the take-over of The British Woolen Company Limited, the Newfoundland Knitting Mills agreed to issue 330 preference shares and 330 common shares to the shareholders of that company after it was wound up.<sup>32</sup>

The ownership of The Newfoundland Knitting Mills at the end of its first year was concentrated in the hands of seven shareholders. Less than 20 percent of the shareholders controlled over 50 percent of the

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<sup>32</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 265, #2272, Sharelist to January 30, 1914; Agreement between Newfoundland Knitting Mills and Nova Scotia Trust Company, September 30, 1913; #2513, Agreement between The British Woolen Company Limited and The Newfoundland Knitting Mills Limited, September 25, 1913.

common (voting) shares of the company, these being Nova Scotia Trust, Reid Newfoundland and five prominent merchants, Marmaduke G. Winter, Robert K. Bishop, Daniel Monroe, James S. Pitts, and James Ryan. Nova Scotia Trust was the largest single shareholder owning \$16,300 in common shares or 16.3 percent of the company. The other six each controlled, by virtue of their investment in The British Woolen Company Limited, \$6,000<sup>33</sup> or six percent of the company.<sup>34</sup> Within the next year the number of shareholders increased from 39 to 53 but the concentration of ownership remained roughly the same. The Nova Scotia Trust sold more than half of its common stock but was still the largest single shareholder.

The largest and most important partnerships in 1913 were the Spurrell Brothers and W.H. Jackman and Company. Neither of these partnerships existed in 1890 and very little is known about them except that both operated tailoring, cleaning and pressing businesses. Of 11 important sole trading companies, five -- John Maunder, Mark Chaplin, Samuel Milley, John Adrian and Dennis Galway -- have already been discussed. Of the remainder, three - William Shortall, E.J. Malone and Agnes Mitchell -- can be traced back to 1890, while the other three -- C.J. Ellis, Belle Crocker and I.F. Perlin -- do not appear to have lived in St. John's at that time. In 1890 Agnes Mitchell had a very small millinery, mantle and dressmaking business in which she was both sole owner and sole employee, but in 1913 she employed 10 people. E.J. Malone was a cutter for P. Jordan and Son in 1890, but by 1913 had established his own shop

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<sup>33</sup>The exception was Marmaduke G. Winter who held \$6,100 worth of stock.

<sup>34</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 265, #2272, Sharelist to January 30, 1914.

with 10 employees. William Shortall, in 1890, worked as a tailor for Gibb and Calvert and sometime after that established his own shop, which by 1913 employed almost 20 people.

### Characteristics of the Trade

#### (i) Plant, Machinery and Materials

It is clear that until the establishment of the incorporated companies producing ready-made clothing and woolen goods, very small amounts of fixed capital investment characterized this industry. The only machinery employed in tailor shops was heavy duty sewing machines. F.W. Bowden, one supplier throughout the period, called the attention of local tailors and shoemakers to "the best and cheapest machine ever offered ... only £12.10s",<sup>35</sup> selling the new ones on installment but requiring cash for second-hand models.<sup>36</sup> Machines could be picked up from persons retiring from the clothing business or forced to sell their assets because of insolvency. J.J. Finn, a prominent merchant tailor in the 1870s, retired from the clothing business in July 1880 and shortly thereafter advertised the sale of a second-hand No. 2 Singer sewing machine "in thorough good order. Price -- \$25.00". At about the same time, a knitting machine, from the insolvent estate of John H. Somerville, was sold at a public auction.<sup>37</sup> The larger companies faced much

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<sup>35</sup>Public Ledger, January 6, 1871.

<sup>36</sup>Daily Chronicle, July 12, 1871; Newfoundland Directory, 1890. He was sole agent for Raymond machines but was interested in obtaining the exclusive agency for other brands as well.

<sup>37</sup>Evening Telegram, June 26, July 7, July 29, 1880.

heavier capital requirements. For example, at Our Own Wool Company the main building, 165 feet by 45 feet, was constructed of concrete and wood and reinforced to accommodate approximately 100,000 pounds of machinery. The plant included two mechanical carding machines, one spinning machine, one warping machine, three single-width and two double-width looms, a fetting machine, a gig, a 12-ton drier, a shearing machine, a pressing machine, a machine to measure the thickness of the cloth and a folding and winding machine.<sup>38</sup>

The materials used in the manufacture of clothing in St. John's were for the most part imported from Britain and the United States. In the early 1870s the newspapers were filled with advertisements about the arrival by the latest steamer of cloth and millinery goods from Liverpool and the West of England. P. Jordan, in early January 1871, announced that he had received "a supply of British Manufactured Pilot Cloths and a fine assortment of Doeskins and Tweeds, suitable for winter and spring...."<sup>39</sup> In 1879, under the sign of the "Golden Unicorn", H.M. Gibb sold West of England broad cloth and doeskins, black and blue worsted coating, black and blue linings and English and Scottish tweeds.<sup>40</sup> He also had a considerable amount of drapery goods and eight bales of "their now celebrated American calicoes" on display.<sup>41</sup> In that year P. Jordan and Sons imported their regular lines of English black and blue broadcloths, matalasse coatings, black and blue doeskins and tweeds and

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<sup>38</sup>Daily News, October 22, 1906, May 21, 1907.

<sup>39</sup>Newfoundlander, January 3, 1871.

<sup>40</sup>Evening Telegram, April 8, May 19, July 24, 1879.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., May 7, 1879.

and Boston Calicoes. J.J. Finn also imported a large stock of English and Scotch tweeds, diagonals, basket cloths, broad cloths and doeskins.<sup>42</sup> Some German cloths became popular toward the beginning of World War I because they were cheap and pleasing to the eye, but they had a reputation for not wearing well.<sup>43</sup> Millinery goods were mainly British. Mrs. J. Haviland advertised a high-classed selection of millinery for the carriage trade: "Entire Stock specially selected in London". Fashion plates and styles were also imported, originating largely from London and New York distributors.<sup>44</sup>

Local manufacturers had much the same problems with their materials as merchants with finished goods. The materials had to be imported in large quantities to gain valuable discounts and to overcome poor communications and transportation. With long supply lines disputes were inevitable. One such case, which came before the Newfoundland Supreme Court in 1911, involved Hugh Spencer and Company, an English textile firm which sued the Newfoundland Clothing Company for \$606.98 due them for the sale of a quantity of venetian lining. The Newfoundland Clothing Company stated that when Moses Mayers was in England in 1908 he made an oral agreement with Hugh Spencer and Company to purchase "venetian linings of the first quality and equal in quality to sample then shown". When Mayers discovered, on his return to Newfoundland, that the goods the company supplied him were "tender", that is defective, he refused to pay the

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., April 8, April 26, 1879, April 19, 1880.

<sup>43</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 106.

<sup>44</sup>Evening Telegram, April 8, September 3, 1879, August 28, September 17, 1880, March 25, 1881.



English company. Hugh Spencer and Company claimed that the goods were of the best quality; however, on the testimony of several local tailors and drapers and the testimony of Alfred Hardy, general manager of Charles Simon and Company of Bradford, England, "who happened to be in St. John's", the court found for the Newfoundland Clothing Company.<sup>45</sup>

Some of the raw materials did originate in Newfoundland. Whenever a woolen factory was built, considerable enthusiasm ensued concerning the potential for sheep farming. For instance, during the construction of Our Own Woolen Mills at Mackinsons in 1906 one newspaper commented:

The opening of this industry will be a boon for the residents of Brigus, Clarke's Beach, Salmon River, Whitbourne and more distant places as well. That part of the country is particularly adapted to sheep raising and it is the intention of the company to use local wool as far as possible. Already the people are going into the raising of sheep, and several of a good stock will be imported shortly. His Excellency the Governor in his speech at the opening of the Agricultural Exhibition the other day spoke most encouragingly of the possibilities of the Colony in this line and this should be an incentive for our people to pay greater attention to sheep than heretofore. The company will purchase all the wool available and our farmers and others will soon realize that rearing sheep is a paying venture.<sup>46</sup>

Our Own Woolen Mills apparently manufactured most of their goods from pure wool rather than woolen rags and stockings,<sup>47</sup> According to R.K. Bishop of the Newfoundland Knitting Mills, his company had the capacity to use 100,000 pounds of good quality raw wool annually,<sup>48</sup> and he

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<sup>45</sup>Royal Gazette, March 5, 1911.

<sup>46</sup>Daily News, October 22, 1906.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., May 21, 1907.

<sup>48</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 107.

advertised heavily for local wool:

We want  
MORE  
WOOL  
If there is wool to be had in  
Newfoundland, we want it. We  
will buy no other, if we can get  
the home grown article.  
The demand for  
New-Knit  
unshrinkable underwear  
cannot be supplied unless we get the pure fine  
WOOL<sup>49</sup>

Nevertheless, the local production of wool did not rise quickly enough to take advantage of this new market, probably because of the prices offered by the company and high production costs.

(ii) Employment, Wages and Working Conditions

The most striking characteristic about the work force in the clothing industry, besides its size, was that it was dominated by women. While this is not evident from the 1871 directory, the Newfoundland Directory, 1890 and the Newfoundland Directory, 1913 leave no doubt that women formed the majority of the work force. In 1890, 265 of a total labour force of 388 or 68.3 percent were women,<sup>50</sup> and job advertisements were largely for women. In 1881 Peters, Roche and company announced that "Respectable young women desirous of learning Dress and Mantle Making, &c., can do so on easy terms."<sup>51</sup> Mrs. Sharpe was looking for "a young lady capable of conducting millinery and dressmaking for an outport". Michael McGrath,

<sup>49</sup>The Fisherman's Advocate, December 20, 1913.

<sup>50</sup>Appendix III, Table 4.

<sup>51</sup>Evening Telegram, January 6, 1881.

in October, 1881, wanted "Six Smart Girls, to work at the Tailoring Business". On November 1, 1881, another advertisement appeared inviting applications for four good tailoresses.<sup>52</sup> In 1914 the managing director of the Newfoundland Clothing Company estimated that 80 percent of the 300 workers<sup>53</sup> employed in that factory were women.<sup>54</sup>

In the larger clothing firms, at least, the better jobs were frequently held by foreigners. In 1881 H.M. Gibb and Company heavily advertised the skills of their English cutter and claimed that their tailoring shop was,

now under the Superintendence of a High Class Cutter, whose large experience in first class city houses in England, warrants us in confidently seeking a continuance of public patronage."<sup>55</sup>

Our Own Knitting Mills hired two people from Nova Scotia to direct the factory. W.A. Mathieson was the manager and Mrs. Scott was the superintendent, who took care of such tasks as instructing employees working the looms.<sup>56</sup> The Newfoundland Knitting Mills employed three foreigners from Canada who held management or superintending positions with the company.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., October 19, October 21, November 1, 1881.

<sup>53</sup>This is different from the count in the directory. The directory lists less than half that number. This discrepancy may have been caused by the inclusion of out-workers. Otherwise, it is simply an exaggeration.

<sup>54</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 107.

<sup>55</sup>Evening Telegram, March 21, 1881.

<sup>56</sup>Daily News, October 22, 1906, May 21, 1907; Mosdell, When Was That?, p. 92.

<sup>57</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 107.

The working conditions in some of the larger plants were considered ideal -- at least by management. R.K. Bishop spoke very highly of the newly constructed Newfoundland Knitting Mills:

The buildings are so well arranged, so conveniently situated, and so bright and sanitary, that the whole staff find themselves working under the best conditions.<sup>58</sup>

Bishop also claimed wages were high in his factory, 50 and 60 percent above those in British industry. Referring to the large woolen works the same man spoke highly of the wage rate: "They are making good wages, which, of course, increase their efficiency." Like other workers in St. John's, those in the clothing industry were paid for piece work, and since most of the workers were women, wages were undoubtedly lower than in other trades. While working conditions may have been relatively good in the large factories, sweated labour and poor working conditions were endemic to smaller shops in the clothing industry.

Despite the good wages and working conditions claimed by some of the large factory owners, some of them experienced worker dissatisfaction which, at least in one situation, was met with severe measures. In 1911 The Newfoundland Clothing Company, to quote the managing director, "had some labour difficulties". The factory was closed down, and the manager sent to Leeds to establish a clothing factory or to effect a liaison with an existing mill, and then export the product back to Newfoundland. This practice continued for two years. R.K. Bishop said that this solved the problem: "We overcame the labour difficulty and ceased to bring manufactured clothing into the country."<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., pp. 106, 107.

A journeymen tailors' union was established in 1896 in St. John's but apparently only survived for two years. Another union was formed in 1904 which was more successful, and in 1910 was considering affiliation with an international union.<sup>60</sup> This occurred when the "labour difficulties" arose with The Newfoundland Clothing Company, for the union was shortly thereafter broken.

(iii) Products, Markets and Business Style

The production of clothing changed in both quantity and kind between 1870 and 1914. From the 1870s to the 1890s the tailoring, dress-making and millinery shops did largely a custom trade and a few shops did some ready-made work. J.N. Finlay did "Millinery, Dress and Mantle making to order, at lowest prices". A specialty of the shop was the custom made "New Waterproof Costume".<sup>61</sup> Later, in 1879, Finlay gave a good idea of his manner of business and the kind and quantity of produce he manufactured in the following advertisement: "Ladies requiring early autumn mantles or costumes are recommended to place orders at once to secure them in time, as orders are now booking fast."<sup>62</sup> P. Jordan and Son advertised custom clothing to order from their stock of English cloths, doeskins and tweeds, but they also manufactured men's and boys' ready-made clothing.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>R. Hattenhauer, "A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland", (unpublished report prepared for the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador, Summer, 1970), p. 141.

<sup>61</sup>Newfoundlander, April 11, 1871; Public Ledger, October 31, 1871.

<sup>62</sup>Evening Telegram, September 16, 1879.

<sup>63</sup>Daily Chronicle, April 15, September 16, 1871; Evening Telegram, April 8, April 26, 1879, December 28, 1880, February 7, April 24, July 2, 1881.

H.M. Gibb and Company had a custom trade "under the superintendence of a first-class cutter".<sup>64</sup> Peters, Badcock and Company manufactured costumes, mantles and millinery to order.<sup>65</sup> In 1890 James Black had a considerable stock of "Under clothing, Pinafores and Aprons of Our Own Make. Superior in Quality and Finish. Much Lower in Price than any that can be imported".<sup>66</sup> From the mid-1890s, the larger clothing factories and imports completely took over the ready-made market; and, custom-made dresses, suits and millinery were the only products manufactured by the tailoring, dressmaking and millinery shops.<sup>67</sup>

The production of the custom trade, throughout the period, however, was not large enough to supply the local market nor was its prices cheap enough for the working men. In the late 1890s one large clothing manufacturer, Joseph Mayers, estimated that "the custom trade of the tailors is only two months of the year".<sup>68</sup> Although the dressmakers, milliners and tailors always claimed they sold their goods for low prices, only on rare occasions were prices actually quoted, and invariably ready-made prices were much cheaper. In the spring of 1881 H.M. Gibb and Company ran a "Grand Clearing Sale" selling custom-made suits for \$12-\$13 each.

<sup>64</sup>Evening Telegram, April 8, May 19, July 24, September 3, 1879; March 21, 24, April 25, August 16, 1881.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., September 2, 1879; April 25, September 24, 1881.

<sup>66</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>67</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>68</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 41.

For the Million! Our New Tweed Suitings Made up to Measure at 60s. and 65s. per Suit! The Cheapest Range of Goods ever offered in this City. Style, Fit and Workmanship guaranteed.... Terms during the Sale -- Cash.<sup>69</sup>

While this was a good price for a custom suit, Mayers was quick to point out that "the outport people pay \$8 for a suit of clothes ready made, but a custom tailor making the same suit would charge \$12, but it would not be so good as the \$8 one."<sup>70</sup>

The production of ready-made clothes was the domain of the large incorporated factories beginning in the mid-1890s with the establishment of The Newfoundland Clothing Company. Over the next few years The British Clothing Company, Our Own Woolen Mills Limited, The British Woolen Company and The Newfoundland Knitting Mills were established to manufacture ready-made clothing and woolen underwear. By 1911 some \$267,000 worth of ready-made clothing was produced in St. John's.<sup>71</sup> By 1914 five factories with an aggregate capital investment of about \$300,000 produced approximately \$400,000 worth of clothing every year. The St. John's ready-made clothing industry was said to control 90 percent of the Island's business by 1914. Michael P. Cashin, the Minister of Finance and Customs, pointed out in his general testimony before the Dominions Royal Commission on July 28, 1914, the tremendous growth that had occurred in these lines of production: "It should be noted, moreover, that ... there has ... been an enormous production locally, absorbing ... much of the tweeds and other articles

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<sup>69</sup>Evening Telegram, April 25, 1881. The price \$12 or \$13 was arrived at using the conversion of 5s. to the dollar.

<sup>70</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 41.

<sup>71</sup>Census of Newfoundland, 1911.

imported as raw material."<sup>72</sup>

The clothing trade, like so many others in St. John's, was not exclusively a manufacturing business. As can be learned from the previous sections on materials and production, tailor, dressmaking and millinery shops were, for the most part, both cloth retailers and custom clothing manufacturers. Some shops carried additional lines of goods besides cloth. P. Jordan and Son in 1879, for instance, also sold felt and straw hats, leatherwear, and ready-made goods imported from Liverpool and the West of England including ladies ulsters, woolen squares, corsets, gloves, hosiery, mufflers and even "a few nicely lined Buffalo Robes, of a good kind". H.M. Gibb and Company sold "Boots & Shoes in great variety" in addition to the stock of cloth. Kelly and Macpherson sold imported boots besides operating an extensive dressmaking and millinery work room. By 1890 Dennis Galway had added crockery to his merchant tailoring business.<sup>73</sup> As time passed, however, clothing shops provided even more services and sold greater amounts of ready-made clothing and other goods. By 1900, for example, E.J. Malone sold "readymade clothing, hats and caps, ties and braces, machintoshes, boots, top shirts, dress shirts, collars and cuffs".<sup>74</sup> Patrick Kennedy had his line of goods committed to verse:

Please, harken, all brave fishermen,  
And read this column down,  
And hear of Kennedy's clothing store,  
The cheapest place in town.

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<sup>72</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, pp. 97, 106-107.

<sup>73</sup>Evening Telegram, April 26, May 7, 1879, September 4, December 28, 1880; Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>74</sup>George T. Oliver and John Burke, The People's Songster, Buyers' Guide, and Gems of Poetry and Prose (St. John's: 1900), p. 41.



To buy your stock when you return  
     This spring, boys, from the ice;  
 He keeps the best of readymades,  
     Sold at the lowest price.

He has imported from abroad  
     The best of English tweed,  
 Shirts, collars, hats and handkerchiefs  
     And all the goods you need.  
 Pants, vests, and every style of coat  
     That's sure to take your eye;  
 You'll find for sale at Kennedy's,  
     When you're prepared to buy.<sup>75</sup>

By 1913 the practice of selling readymades seems to have been even more widespread.<sup>76</sup> Cleaning and pressing and the general rehabilitating of clothes was a service which was becoming increasingly more popular in the clothing industry in St. John's, probably because of a decline in the custom tailoring market. W.H. Jackman, the Spurrell Brothers, and C.M. Hall had all taken up this line of business by 1913.<sup>77</sup>

The market for the goods produced by the St. John's tailor, dress-making and millinery shops was largely confined to the city trade at the beginning of the period, and little effort was made to attract outport business. Within that market, however, individual firms gained reputations for dealing with one class of the public or another. In his day, John Curran was known as the clergyman's tailor, and was reputed to stock only the highest quality black English cloth aiming "to keep the dignity of his avocation up to the highest standard, jealously guarding as well the dignity of the professional men with their beaver hats, white vests,

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>76</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

black socks and Prince Albert Coats".<sup>78</sup> Cornelius Denehy's clientelle, at least until the early 1870s, was mainly army and navy officers. Denehy apparently was a tailor of the old school, and "lost no time over fashion plates and scientific cutting" and other advances of the day.<sup>79</sup> Patrick Kennedy's success in the tailoring business, on the other hand, came from the patronage of the working class, including the outport fishermen.

He never regarded anything as too much trouble in helping them in any way he could. He made a good bit of money and lived to a ripe old age.<sup>80</sup>

By 1890, however, a few of the clothing firms solicited business from the outports. At the bottom of some advertisements special mention was made of the services of the outport: "Outport orders receive prompt attention", and "Both City & Outport Orders Receive my Personal Supervision".<sup>81</sup> This singling out of outport service was exhibited by a few firms, but did not become widespread.<sup>82</sup> By the beginning of the First World War, however, the local custom tailors, dressmakers and milliners who solicited outport orders did so in a more subtle manner. One tailor, T.J. Barron, announced the 'Mail Orders Receive Best Attention'. Others simply gave the number of their post office box in St. John's.<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, by 1913 the large

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<sup>78</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 98.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., pp. 115-116. Denehy was a fairly rich man before he died. Shortly after his death, a brother appeared from Australia and inherited all the money and other assets that Denehy had earned during his lifetime.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>81</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>82</sup>Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 41.

<sup>83</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

incorporated clothing and woolen factories wholesaled their products to major merchant firms, especially those represented on the company share-list and directorate, and ready-made clothing was included in the merchants' Island-wide distribution system.

Competition in the St. John's clothing industry, from the early 1870s to the mid-1890s, was largely between one St. John's custom tailor and another, and between the custom tailors and the importers of ready-made clothing. While the custom tailors were very handy with "the perfect fit", they could match the imports neither in price, quantity, nor style. In the mid-1890s some local factories began to produce men's and boys' ready-made clothing and later woolen underwear, and made rapid inroads into the foreign ready-made market in Newfoundland. During that time the threat of the ready-made imports for the custom shops was replaced by the local ready-made production in certain lines.

In the local market the different custom shops tried to out-class one another in terms of the size, newness and variety of their stock, the ability and Britishness of their craftsmen and, certainly by the 1880s, the fashion and style of the clothing they manufactured. At times the bitterness between firms was extreme. A classic case was the competition between H.M. Gibb and Company and John Adrian beginning in 1881. Adrian, who was previously a cutter and superintendent of H.M. Gibb and Company's tailoring department, announced in the middle of February that he was opening a custom tailor shop on March 22. The day before Adrian's establishment was to open, H.M. Gibb placed an advertisement in the same paper for his tailoring department which stated that his work rooms were now "under the management of an efficient and thoroughly qualified cutter!"

The next advertisement by H.M. Gibb and Company, two days after John Adrian opened his shop was neither so subtle nor so detached. In this brief statement he slandered the professional ability of his previous employee and suggested that he was not only inept in his craft, but an inefficient and unimaginative oaf. In response to this insult John Adrian tried to retain what was left of his professional reputation with a mild attack on his former employer:

John Adrian feels assured that the unprecedented success which attended his exertion to please his patrons in the past, will be greatly increased because of his New Establishment being entirely under his own control, thus enabling him, in all branches in the making-up department, to successfully accomplish all that his customers can desire.

From then on, however, the controversy died down and was, apart from subtle rejoinders, taken out of public view.<sup>84</sup>

The fight between local and foreign readymades for the local market, which largely dates from the mid-1890s, was a success story for the home industry and the tariff. In 1898 Joseph Mayers of The Newfoundland Clothing Company noted that about 40,000 suits of clothes were imported annually. He also said that the merchants would benefit from more home production because they could make orders on short notice instead of gambling their whole season's stock on one trip to the markets. Mayers also contended that the suits which he could make locally were as good as those manufactured in the United States, and were cheaper.<sup>85</sup> By 1914 it was said that 90 percent of men's and boys' clothing was manufactured in Newfoundland. Imported readymades, however, continued to

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<sup>84</sup>Evening Telegram, March 1, March 21, March 25, 1881.

<sup>85</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 41.

increase in other lines like women's clothing and millinery, for the demand for style and variety, together with the small local market, made these products uneconomic for local industry.<sup>86</sup> One of the major reasons for the success against foreign competition was the protection provided by the tariff. Imported ready-made clothing paid 35 percent duty around 1898.<sup>87</sup>

### Conclusion

In terms of physical growth the St. John's clothing industry was the most dynamic trade in the city. In 1871, 87 workers, or 13.3 percent of the total St. John's trades and manufacturing work force, were employed in tailoring, dressmaking and millinery shops. The trade grew to 388, or 15.9 percent of the sector's work force in 1890 and continued to expand until, by 1913, 622 people, or 17.8 percent of the manufacturing work force was engaged in the clothing industry.<sup>88</sup> As with the bakery and confectionery business, by far the majority of the shops employed less than five people. Nevertheless, most of the tradesmen worked in larger firms which usually employed between five and thirty people.<sup>89</sup> While most of the small firms were owned by tradesmen, prominent St. John's merchants invested heavily in larger shops and factories. The machinery and materials for the trade, apart from some local wool production, were all

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<sup>86</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, pp. 107-108.

<sup>87</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 52.

<sup>88</sup>See Appendix III, Table 5.

<sup>89</sup>See Appendix III, Tables 7 and 8.

imported; therefore, interindustry linkages were simply not present. Wages in the clothing industry were considerably lower than those in other trades, chiefly because the work force was predominantly female. While unions were organized, they experienced little success because of the small work force, the chronic unemployment in the city and the severe reprisals wrought by the local factory owners as indicated by the events at The Newfoundland Clothing Company between 1911 and 1913. Over the period the custom tailoring and dressmaking shops overcame a gradual decline in manufacturing work by increasing the retail part of their business in imported cloth, millinery, ready-made clothing, boots and shoes and even crockery. As time passed, styling was emphasized increasingly and shops solicited outport orders and made special efforts to attract repairing and pressing work. The cheaper ready-made clothing from the local factories and abroad gradually pushed many of them out of the manufacturing end of their business and transformed them into retail shopkeepers.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LEATHER AND FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY

#### Introduction

The St. John's leather and footwear industry, which included tanneries, cobbler shops and boot and shoe factories, was the second largest industry in total employment manufacturing consumer goods. It was also the sector where the most concerted effort was made to develop interindustry linkages involving hide producers, tanners and boot and shoe factories. While tradesmen owned most of the boot and shoe shops, local merchants controlled the larger factories which eventually dominated the industry. Many of these same people were also financially interested in the tanneries, which often operated in tandem with boot and shoe factories. Although the processing of hides and undressed leather seemed a natural and logical course to pursue, the local market was not large enough to achieve economies of scale. Consequently, by the end of the period most raw materials and machinery needed for footwear production were imported. The work force grew rapidly from the beginning of the period until the 1890s but declined thereafter because a large number of cobbler shops were driven out of the trade by competition from major local and foreign factories. Wages in the larger factories were low compared to those in other manufacturing sectors, especially considering the profit margins of some of these firms; but when one considers the high unemployment rate in the city and that the work force included a significant number of women and children, then the low wages levels are not

surprising. Unions were fairly active in this trade compared with other consumer industries but proved ineffective in dramatically improving their members' wages and working conditions. At the beginning of the period 1870-1914, most of the shops manufactured custom-made boots and shoes and small quantities of ready-made goods and also did repair work. As large local and foreign boot and shoe factories gradually cornered the market, however, many small cobblers went out of business and the rest were reduced to repair work and retailing footwear. Meanwhile, the large St. John's boot and shoe factories with the help of the tariff, wrestled control of the market for the most popular kinds of boots and shoes from foreign competitors, and also became agents for many types of footwear which they could not economically produce.

### Tanneries

#### Major Firms

In the early 1870s the tanning industry hardly existed in St. John's. A Mr. O'Regan operated a small works in his backyard,<sup>1</sup> and James Browning owned a small tannery on Gower Street.<sup>2</sup> In 1881 Messrs. R. Campbell and Sons of Pictou, Nova Scotia, built a tannery in the East End of the city.<sup>3</sup> By 1890 none of these firms was in business; but, three small tanneries -- Henry Coffin's,<sup>4</sup> Patrick Aylward's and A.

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<sup>1</sup>P.K. Devine, Ye Olde St. John's, 1750-1936 (St. John's: 1936), p. 116.

<sup>2</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1871.

<sup>3</sup>Evening Telegram, August 16, November 2, 1881; Devine, Olde St. St. John's, p. 132.

<sup>4</sup>Evening Telegram, December 22, 1891.



Mackeen's -- were active. In addition, The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company owned and operated The Newfoundland Tannery, the largest factory in the trade.<sup>5</sup> By 1913, however, all these businesses, with the exception of A. Mackeen's shop,<sup>6</sup> had disappeared. There were still two sole-trading tanneries in St. John's, one owned by Thomas Hellyer, a grocer and tanner on Duckworth Street,<sup>7</sup> and the other was owned by Edmund M. MacLean. The three remaining tanneries were larger concerns. The West End Tannery was owned by a partnership which included Anderson Mackeen, who had run the tannery by himself in 1890. The Rennie's River Tannery was owned by the partnership McCaffrey and Johnston. The largest firm, however, was The Sudbury Seal and Leather Manufacturing Company which was built in 1910.<sup>8</sup> This company was organized with a nominal capital of \$100,000, almost three-quarters of which was paid into the company by the end of 1910. Over 50 percent of the company's stock was owned by less than a quarter of the shareholders including Charles R. Thompson, Arthur R. Thompson, The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company (all of whom were closely connected), and three prominent St. John's merchants, Robert K. Bishop, James S. Pitts and James Baird.

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<sup>5</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>6</sup>Strictly speaking, the shop was no longer Mackeen's alone because he was only a partner in the firm in 1913. Probably he was the major partner but partner nonetheless.

<sup>7</sup>It may be that Hellyer did not operate a tannery and only used the occupation to supplement his earnings as a grocer, because if there are two trades which do not mix well on the same property, largely because of the obnoxious smells that emanate from tanneries, it is tanneries and grocery shops. So if he was both grocer and tanner, he was probably a very good grocer and a terrible tanner, or a good tanner and a poor grocer.

<sup>8</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

The largest shareholders were the two Thompsons who each held \$10,000 of stock and who, together with the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company controlled 34 percent of the Sudbury Tannery.<sup>9</sup> By 1914, the year when the tannery was shut down, the ownership of this company was a little more concentrated but essentially unchanged.<sup>10</sup>

### Characteristics of the Trade

#### (i) Plant, Machinery and Materials

Most of the machinery and raw materials for the tanneries were imported, but local hides and items like butcher's oil were used when available.<sup>11</sup> The Sudbury Tannery, for instance, ran the following advertisement in 1913: "Highest Prices Paid for Hides, Calf and Sheep Skins."<sup>12</sup> By far the majority of hides, skins, dyes and other raw materials, however, were purchased from foreign suppliers. Between 1903 and 1913 imports of hides, largely from the United States and Canada, rose from just under \$9,000 for the year 1903-1904 to \$67,000 in 1912-1913.

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<sup>9</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 172, #1589, Sharelist to February 17, 1911. James Ryan, a Bonavista merchant with major investments in St. John's, invested the same amount in the company as Pitts, Bishop, Baird and the shoe factory (\$5,000). His exclusion, therefore, was purely arbitrary.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., #2869, Sharelist to February 18, 1915. Just over 20 percent of those shareholders owned 54 percent of the company. The share of those immediately involved in the shoe factory, however, fell to 28.7 percent of the total. This decrease was caused by an increase in the total paid-up capital and not by a withdrawal of money on their part.

<sup>11</sup>Evidence as to a Revision of the Tariff Taken Before the Hon. The Receiver General, January, 1898, p. 39.

<sup>12</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

A significant amount of undressed leather, a semi-manufactured product, was also imported and finished by local tanneries. In 1903-1904, \$26,000 worth of these goods were imported from Canada, Newfoundland's only large supplier of this item. By 1914, however, only \$17,000 worth of imported undressed leather was used by local tanneries. The manager of the Sudbury Tannery suggested that ships carrying fish to South America, Brazil and Argentina in particular, should be able to return with hides for sole leather and goat and kid skins for manufacturing fine leathers. This idea never materialized either because it was not followed up, prices were not satisfactory, or there was not enough local business to make an adequate cargo. The tanneries, therefore, imported from Canada and the United States where they could make smaller and more convenient orders which suited the scale of their operation.<sup>13</sup>

(ii) Employment, Wages and Working Conditions

The tanning industry employed 46 men in 1884,<sup>14</sup> some 33 persons by 1890, and by 1911 that figure was as high as 74.<sup>15</sup> By 1913 some 66 workers were still employed in the trade.<sup>16</sup> Employment, therefore, grew fairly rapidly between 1870 and 1884, tapered off until the 1890s, peaked again during the few years that the Sudbury Tannery was opened and then declined after it closed down.

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<sup>13</sup> Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions Minutes of Evidence taken in Newfoundland in 1914 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Limited, 1915), p. 107.

<sup>14</sup> Appendix III, Table 5; Census of Newfoundland, 1884.

<sup>15</sup> Appendix III, Table 5; Census of Newfoundland, 1891.

<sup>16</sup> Appendix III, Table 5.

In 1911 the ten workers at the Rennie's River Tannery earned a total of \$5,200 or \$10 a week,<sup>17</sup> and a dozen men working at the West End Tannery (A. McKeen and Company's) made \$4,000 or \$6.41 each a week. Finally, the 52 workers employed at the MacLean's Tannery and the Sudbury Tannery earned a total of \$19,616 that year or an average of \$7.25 a week.<sup>18</sup> The wage rate differences among tanneries were undoubtedly the result of short time and plant shut-downs during the year, rather than major wage discrepancies among the factories. The only thing that can be said about the working conditions is that a tannery was one of the most unpleasant smelling places to work in St. John's, second only to the cod liver oil and seal oil refineries on the South Side.<sup>19</sup> The tanners were unionized in late October of 1896 but little else is known at present about the longevity of the union or the struggles for improved

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<sup>17</sup>This estimate seems based on a statement that the Rennie's River Tannery paid \$100 a week to its employees. This figure was then multiplied by 52 weeks to make the total presented above. This wage account probably overestimated the total annual wages paid at this tannery.

<sup>18</sup>Census of Newfoundland, 1911. One estimate for the wages earned at the Sudbury Tannery seems to be way out of line. In 1914 C.R. Thompson, the manager, estimated that because of the closing of the tannery some \$50,000 to \$60,000 in wages was lost. Royal Commission, 1914, p. 114. This would mean that the workers made between \$1,250 and \$1,500 a year or between \$24.04 and \$28.85 a week which was more than most foremen made and even more than some managers received at this time. Thompson may have been referring to the multiplier effect of the closure of this industry on other trades and businesses in the city. For examples of wages earned by managers and foremen, see Horwood Lumber Company, Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Directors, 1902-1929, April 2, 1902, first meeting of the shareholders; Minute Book of The Bennett Brewing Company Limited from January 2, 1910, January 25, 1910, first annual meeting of the shareholders; Original Minutes of the Standard Manufacturing Company Limited from June 17, 1902 to February 7, 1903, December 10, 1902.

<sup>19</sup>Evening Telegram, August 18, 1881.

wages and working conditions.<sup>20</sup>

(iii) Products, Markets and Style of Business

The St. John's tanneries manufactured mainly rough leather, especially sole leather.<sup>21</sup> The Sudbury Tannery manufactured sole and upper leather, harness, calf, sheep and sealskin leather. They specialized, however, in sole leather and "'Ice Grain': The Leading Waterproof Leather in Newfoundland".<sup>22</sup> Most of the other rough leather that was produced in St. John's came under the general description of barked tan leather which included goat, boot grain, polished pebble, glove grain, waxed calf, harness leather, oil grain, splits and buff leather.<sup>23</sup>

The value of output at the tanneries was very small in the early 1870s but grew rapidly sometime between then and 1884 when \$168,000 worth of finished product was manufactured. The total value of production in St. John's dropped off considerably between 1884 and 1891 to \$65,000 -- less than 40 percent of the former figure. Following 1891 the total value of production recovered a little, reaching \$98,200 in 1901 and \$162,000 by 1911.<sup>24</sup>

A substantial slice of the leather market, however, was controlled

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<sup>20</sup>R. Hattenhauer, "A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland" (unpublished report prepared for the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador, Summer, 1970).

<sup>21</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 115.

<sup>22</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913, p. 416.

<sup>23</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 38.

<sup>24</sup>Census of Newfoundland, 1874, 1884, 1891, 1901, 1911.

by foreign companies. For instance, between 1903-1904 and 1913-1914 the total value of imported sole leather from Canada and the United States increased from \$111,000 to \$153,000, which probably represented more than half of the local market. The rougher grain, buff and pebbled leathers made by the local tanneries were also imported in large quantities. The Newfoundland tanneries, nevertheless, made considerable headway into this market between 1903 and 1913. In 1903, \$29,600 worth of this kind of leather was imported from Canada and the United States and by 1912-1913 this figure had fallen to \$10,600. Besides these rough leathers, foreign suppliers, principally from the United States, had a monopoly on the fine leathers -- uppers, chrome tanned, japanned and patent leather -- for in 1903 approximately \$9,000 worth was imported and in 1913 that figure had risen to \$48,000.<sup>25</sup>

### The Boot and Shoe Industry

#### Major Firms

At the beginning of the period, 1870-1914, Richard Mainwaring was among the more prominent footwear firms. He manufactured hand-made boots and shoes and had a reputation all over town and in some nearby outports for making long-lasting footwear. He was so successful that a popular rumour circulated in St. John's that Mr. Mainwaring had discovered a "crock of gold" or treasure trove in his backyard when he was building the foundation of his premises.<sup>26</sup> He retired from the business in the

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<sup>25</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 115.

<sup>26</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 114.

1880s and James Mainwaring took over and was still operating in 1890. There is, however, no sign of Mainwarings in the boot and shoe trade in 1913. John and Nicholas Wadden both had their own shoemaking shops in St. John's in the 1870s. John Wadden had migrated to the United States with his family, and when the time came to take a trade, he learned the latest Boston shoemaking techniques and returned to St. John's. He established a shop in the late 1860s and did very well. Nicholas Wadden also had a good reputation, especially among fishermen in St. John's where the word "Waddens" was synonymous for a pair of long boots.<sup>27</sup> The Waddens were still in the shoe business in 1890 with Michael and Joseph Wadden both operating shops, but they did not survive the general amalgamation that took place after 1890 and were not in business in 1913.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps the largest boot and shoe operation in St. John's in the early 1870s was Browning's Homeville Boot and Shoe Factory, which employed at the outset 27 workers at some 20 machines. A tannery was attached to the main building and a full range of men's, women's, and children's footwear was produced.<sup>29</sup> This plant probably failed, or was absorbed by another company between 1871 and 1875, when the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company was established and began its long domination of the industry.

The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company was incorporated on May 4, 1875, with a paid-up capital of \$40,000 which was raised to \$60,000 in

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>28</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>29</sup>Public Ledger, May 19, 1871.

1883.<sup>30</sup> The major shareholders were prominent St. John's merchants Charles R. Ayre, James J. Rogerson, James Baird, James S. Pitts, Charles Bowring, Moses Monroe, John Syme, Alexander Duder and James Murray.<sup>31</sup> In 1884 and 1885 the owners of Campbell's Tannery, at least one of whom was a director of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory, tried to sell a major portion of their interest in the tannery to the boot and shoe factory. Probably because of an open debate in the local newspapers among shareholders of the boot and shoe factory, the deal did not go through.<sup>32</sup> In 1889, however, the directors felt compelled to buy out The St. John's Tannery in order to fend off the possibility of another entrepreneur, rumoured to be one of the owners of the tannery, using it as a stepping stone to establish a substantial boot and shoe industry. They negotiated a deal whereby the boot and shoe factory paid \$20,000 for the tannery's plant, machinery and leasehold land, excluding the inventory of the company. In order to take over and operate the tannery, the company transferred \$30,000 of undivided dividends that had accumulated since 1883, to the capital account and made an additional call on the shareholders for \$30,000. In aggregate the paid-up capital of the company was raised from \$60,000 to \$120,000. The ownership of the company in 1890 was much

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<sup>30</sup>Report of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory, 1876-1883, JHA 1877-1884.

<sup>31</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 18, #139, Certificate of Former Incorporation; Report of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory, 1879-1883, JHA 1880-1884.

<sup>32</sup>Evening Telegram, January 17, 19, 31, February 4, 1885. These references are four citations to a series of at least seven letters sent to the editor of the Evening Telegram from "Shareholder" arguing against the take-over of the tannery by his company, the boot and shoe factory.



the same with the addition of a few new faces.<sup>33</sup> In late October, 1892, however, the company was obligated to write off losses by decreasing its capital to \$72,000.<sup>34</sup> By 1900 less than 20 percent of the shareholders, mostly St. John's merchants, owned over 50 percent of the stock.<sup>35</sup> The most important was James Baird who personally controlled 5.8 percent of the company. On January 24, 1910, the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company again found itself with a large sum of money in their reserve fund and resolved to transfer \$72,000 to capital account, increasing it to \$144,000. By 1914 the ownership of the company was even more concentrated than in 1900 with less than 20 percent of the shareholders controlling 60 percent of the company. The largest shareholders were now James S. Pitts, a major St. John's merchant, and his wife Mary, who controlled \$17,160 worth of stock or 12 percent of the total. James, Hugh and David Baird, all belonging to a major merchanting family, also controlled \$16,400 worth of stock, almost as much as the Pitts.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> John B. Ayre replaced C.R. Ayre in 1889 and Edwin J. Duder replaced A.E. Duder in 1887. Other people not previously known to be connected with the company included William Frew, James Angel, J. Southcott, R. Neyle, Sir William Whiteway, A. Marshall, W. White, W.P. Walsh, Jas. Stott, E.G. Hunter, R. White and E. White. Registry of Companies, No. 18, #139, Certificate of Former Incorporation, June 2, 1890.

<sup>34</sup> Evening Telegram, October 24, 1892; Colonial Secretary's Papers, List of Incorporated Companies until 1899.

<sup>35</sup> These fifteen controlling shareholders included James Baird, James Gordon, James S. Pitts, R.K. Bishop, William P. Walsh (all major merchants), Alexander Taylor, the John Skeoch Estate, Richard Neyle, John Angel (all involved in heavy industry), the John McNeil Estate, Sir William V. Whiteway, John A. McLeod (manager in trust) and John B. Ayre (trustee). Registry of Companies, No. 18, #140, Sharelist to December 30, 1900.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., #2508, Sharelist to February 3, 1915.

One of the most interesting points about the ownership and organization of The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company was the way it financed increases in its capital stock in 1883, 1890 and 1910. The net profits derived from this business were high; for, as one shareholder estimated in 1885, the boot and shoe factory yielded annual dividends of 20-25 per cent.<sup>37</sup> The shareholders, however, usually withdrew only half their dividends and left the rest in an undivided dividend account, where it was kept until needed for capital investment.<sup>38</sup>

An important partnership in the St. John's footwear industry was Parker and Monroe, which began in January of 1881 when James F. Parker and Daniel Monroe bought The Archibald Boot and Shoe Company.<sup>39</sup> This partnership proved remunerative and, although it was constantly in the shadow of The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company, it expanded considerably over the years and remains today as a major retail chain. In the Spring of 1909 Parker and Monroe planned to build a new factory on Alexander Street in the West End of the city,<sup>40</sup> and the following year the company was incorporated with a paid-up capital of \$120,000. Three

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<sup>37</sup>Evening Telegram, February 4, 1885.

<sup>38</sup>The amount that accumulated in the reserve fund of undivided dividends for the period 1876-1882 totalled \$24,715. On average therefore the company put aside almost nine percent a year for those first seven years. Between 1883 and 1889 over \$60,000 was accumulated averaging over 14 percent a year. Between 1892 and 1909 over \$72,000 went into this reserve fund averaging six percent for each of these 18 years. Some years the dividend was extremely high as in 1889 when the figure was 40 percent -- an astounding annual return on investment. Daily Colonist, February 28, 1889 as cited in The Times, March 2, 1889.

<sup>39</sup>Evening Telegram, January 15, 1881.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., October 24, 1908.

people made up the total sharelist of the company with James F. Parker holding a 50 percent interest in the company, John J. Parker owning 25 percent of the shares and David M. Baird, who was also a shareholder in The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company, controlling the remainder.<sup>41</sup> At the end of the period 1870-1914 Parker and Monroe was the third largest boot and shoe company in the city.<sup>42</sup>

The most important sole trader in the boot and shoe industry was David Smallwood, a native of Prince Edward Island who emigrated to Newfoundland in 1861. After working as a carpenter and building contractor in St. John's, owning a lumber business in Gambo and a merchanting business in Greenspond, he returned to St. John's looking for a remunerative investment opportunity. Prior to the sale of Archibald's Boot and Shoe Factory to Parker and Monroe, Smallwood held a two-week option to purchase the enterprise, during which time he approached for financial assistance Moses Monroe, a prominent St. John's merchant and major promoter of several manufacturing and service industries. Monroe delayed and eventually established the partnership Parker and Monroe which purchased Archibald's business.<sup>43</sup> David Smallwood had been bamboozled out of a reportedly prosperous boot and shoe factory; but not to be outdone, less than two months later he formed a partnership with a Mr. Avery who had

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<sup>41</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 178, #1389, Memorandum of Association, March 21, 1910; #1397, Agreement between James F. Parker, John J. Parker and David M. Baird and Parker and Monroe, March 21, 1910; #1632, Sharelist to July 25, 1911.

<sup>42</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>43</sup>Joseph Smallwood, I Chose Canada (Toronto: Macmillan and Company, 1973), Chapter 2.

considerable experience in the boot and shoe industry, probably as superintendent or foreman of Archibald's factory.<sup>44</sup> Sometime before 1890 the partnership was dissolved and by that date D. Smallwood and Sons, as it was then called, operated the third largest boot and shoe factory in St. John's.<sup>45</sup> Sometime after 1890 David's son, Frederick, took over the business and built it by 1913 into the second largest boot and shoe factory in the city, passing the family rival, Parker and Monroe. In the process he built a new premises on Duckworth Street and operated two large retail shops on Water Street. When he died, around 1916, he left a considerable estate estimated to be worth \$200,000.<sup>46</sup>

By 1913 a considerable change had occurred in the character and organization of the St. John's boot and shoe industry. Since 1890 the number of firms had fallen from 55 to 43 and the number of employees from 343 to 297. There were two incorporated companies, The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company and Parker and Monroe Company. Frederick Smallwood ran the only significant sole trading company and only one of the remaining 39 sole-trading businesses -- John Thistle's -- employed more than five people.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Evening Telegram, March 10, 1881.

<sup>45</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>46</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913; Smallwood, I Chose Canada, Chapter 3.

<sup>47</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

## Characteristics of the Trade

### (i) Plant, Machinery and Materials

It was characteristic of St. John's manufacturing that the vast bulk of machinery and raw materials for the boot and shoe industry was imported. The small boot and shoe shops usually purchased a few heavy-duty sewing machines and other tools and machinery from agents like F.W. Bowden. The larger factories, while they were in the market for industrial machinery, required a more elaborate plant. The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory, when established in 1875 for instance, paid \$10,000 for heavy machinery and a further \$1,636 for "all the light machinery, utensils and appliances, of the most modern construction, for manufacturing the immense variety of boots and shoes demanded by the trade".<sup>48</sup>

Although the boot and shoe trade absorbed all the leather tanned in St. John's, the leather produced in the city was not sufficient either in terms of quantity or variety to hold the entire market.<sup>49</sup> The shops and factories, therefore, had to rely on imported goods to satisfy their needs. Raw materials were bought with the intention of lasting at least one season. When The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company was established, the owners purchased a three-month stock of leather and other necessary materials, worth about \$19,500.<sup>50</sup> The relatively heavy

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<sup>48</sup>Report of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory for 1876, JHA 1877; Daily Colonist, June 4, 1889; Evening Telegram, October 24, 1908; Public Ledger, May 19, 1871.

<sup>49</sup>For a more complete discussion of the local tanning industry see pp. 71-77 above.

<sup>50</sup>Statement respecting the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company, JHA 1877, Appendix pp. 1115-1116.

demand of the large boot and shoe factories probably led to their importing their own raw materials directly from the tanner, by-passing the local wholesaling merchants with whom the small cobblers had to deal.<sup>51</sup>

(ii) Employment, Wages and Working Conditions

The work force of the large boot and shoe factories was characteristically a mixture of men, women and children, while the smaller shops were almost entirely operated by men. When The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company was opened in 1876, 13 men, one woman and two boys worked there; and at its peak in that year the factory employed 90 men, 33 women and 15 boys for a total of 138 workers.<sup>52</sup> Employment at this factory seemed to fluctuate wildly, because in another report issued by the company in mid-February, 1877, only 61 people, excluding the manager and accountant, worked in the plant. Forty of these were men, six were boys and 15 were women and girls.<sup>53</sup> In the mid-1890s the peak number of employees was about the same as 1876 -- 60 men, 40 boys and 40 girls for a total of 140 employees. Still, absence of steady work was a problem. In 1897, for example, while the factory employed as many as 140 people, it operated only on half-time.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid. The owners of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company estimated that when the company was producing at capacity, about \$110,400 worth of raw materials would be made into manufactured goods each year.

<sup>52</sup>Report of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory, 1876, 1889, JHA 1877, 1890; Daily Colonist, June 4, 1889.

<sup>53</sup>Statement respecting the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company, JHA 1877, Appendix p. 1115.

<sup>54</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 38.

The employers in the boot and shoe industry complained that they had trouble finding skilled labour, that their work force turned over too rapidly, and that labour was too expensive. While most of the workers used in these factories were Newfoundlanders trained in the local factories, the owners, especially those of the larger factories, frequently imported skilled people from the United States as foremen and superintendents "to help us out in the finer lines". The local factories had considerable trouble attracting and keeping their workers because wages in the United States were better.<sup>55</sup> The shoe factory owners also considered the local labour more apt to emigrate when compared to certain competitor plants in Canada, especially Quebec.<sup>56</sup> They also had to be trained from "entire ignorance to efficiency" as one company official indelicately put it. The owners complained about their women workers; for, while there was no shortage of women willing to work in the St. John's boot and shoe factories, the manager of the largest factory commented that "they do not stay long, they get married and so on".<sup>57</sup>

The piece-work wages paid to the workers in some of the larger boot and shoe factories<sup>58</sup> were lower than those earned by other manufact-

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<sup>55</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 116.

<sup>56</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 37.

<sup>57</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 116. This is not universally the case for the manager admitted that some women in the factory had been there for 25 years or more.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid. Piece-work, including deductions for tacks, fittings and other materials, was the common method of payment in the factories. One manager said "we find it more satisfactory especially in the departments where we have experts". Factory hours were generally from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

uring workers in the city. During the first year The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory was in operation, \$21,789.50 was paid to a work force which increased from 16 to 138. The total weekly wages at full capacity in 1876 with a work force of 138 employees was between \$500 and \$600; thereby each person averaged between \$3.62 and \$4.23 a week.<sup>59</sup> The following February, 1877, 61 workers earned between \$200 and \$220 a week which averages between \$3.28 and \$3.52 a week each.<sup>60</sup> By 1889 wages appear to have risen somewhat; for, in that year the wages of 140 workers aggregated about \$700 a week and between \$35,000 and \$40,000 a year. The average salary, therefore, was \$5.00 a week with very little down-time.<sup>61</sup> In 1897, 140 workers at The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory earned a total of \$800 per week when on full time, averaging \$5.71 each; but at least in that particular year, 1897, these 140 workers were on half-time and took home only a fraction of their "full production" yearly earnings.<sup>62</sup> In the late 1890s Parker and Monroe employed as many as 50 workers and paid wages aggregating as much as \$17,000 a year. The average weekly salary for this factory was \$6.54 a week for a 52-week year, which was the highest wage to that date in the boot and shoe trade.<sup>63</sup> By 1908

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<sup>59</sup>Report of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company Limited, JHA 1877.

<sup>60</sup>Statement of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company Limited, JHA 1877.

<sup>61</sup>Daily Colonist, June 4, 1889.

<sup>62</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 38.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 60. Considering that these were probably Parker and Monroe's maximum employment and wage levels at that time, one must view them with caution. Moreover, the proportion of women and children workers was probably lower in Parker and Monroe's factory than in The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory in the 1890s.



70 workers earned approximately \$26,000 a year or an average weekly wage of \$7.14.<sup>64</sup>

Boot and shoe factory workers combined in unions at least on three separate occasions. Sometime before 1897 they formed The Boot and Shoe Factory Employees' Union, and later in the Spring of 1909 set up another union around the issues of the survival and small profits of independent shoemakers, and the low wages paid to apprentices. Again in 1904 a union was established by workers at The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory, when employees protested the high prices which the company charged workers for tacks and other supplies. In April of 1904 the workers went on strike over this issue, but the outcome is unknown. The workers struck the factory again in 1908 and in 1913. By 1913 there was a union representing the workers at the Parker and Monroe factory.<sup>65</sup>

(iii) Products, Markets and Style of Business

The production of boots and shoes in St. John's was an important local industry even before 1870. In 1857, \$13,800 worth of footwear was produced in St. John's; but, at that time the largest center of boot and shoe production was Harbour Grace where \$20,964 worth was produced. In 1869, 4,000 pairs of boots and shoes were manufactured in St. John's West alone. Five years later, in 1874, 10,000 pairs were made in St. John's West and a total of 12,850 pairs in the entire city.<sup>66</sup> Between 1874 and

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<sup>64</sup>Evening Telegram, October 24, 1908.

<sup>65</sup>R. Hattenhauer, "A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland" (unpublished report prepared for the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador, Summer, 1970), pp. 144-145.

<sup>66</sup>Census of Newfoundland, 1857, 1869, 1874.

1884 output increased dramatically for during this period the three most important factories were established -- The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company, Parker and Monroe, and Smallwood and Avery. By the end of 1884 production had soared to \$240,556 worth of finished goods. During the next two census periods, 1891 and 1901, the value of production in St. John's boot and shoe factories fell to \$230,000 and \$165,000 respectively, no doubt reflecting the economic depression in the country's economy during this period. After 1901, however, production increased, factories worked at capacity and by 1911 production in the city had risen to \$425,000 and continued to rise thereafter.<sup>67</sup>

The Homeville Boot and Shoe factory, in 1874, produced 200 pairs of footwear a week which, if the factory worked at that rate all year, meant the company produced approximately 10,400 pairs a year. The potential production for the factory was quoted at 600 a week.<sup>68</sup> In the first year The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company was in operation it produced 55,105 pairs of shoes averaging between 1,000 and 1,200 pairs a week.<sup>69</sup> By the late 1890s, however, the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory was on half-time and only produced \$160,000 worth of footwear.<sup>70</sup> Parker and Monroe complained that their business was declining in the mid-1890s as well.<sup>71</sup> From 1904 to 1914, however, the production of the local

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<sup>67</sup>Census of Newfoundland, 1857-1911.

<sup>68</sup>Public Ledger, May 19, 1871.

<sup>69</sup>Statement of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company Limited and Report of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company Limited, JHA, 1877.

<sup>70</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 38.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

footwear factories rose considerably. All plants worked at capacity and by 1914 the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company turned out a quarter of a million dollars worth of goods. The total Newfoundland production including three factories outside the city, aggregated approximately \$700,000.<sup>72</sup>

The kind of products manufactured and marketed in Newfoundland differed according to factory, shop and shoemaker. Browning's Homeville Boot and Shoe Factory advertised a wide range of sizes and styles of men's, women's and children's boots "amongst which the most factedious (sic) cannot fail to make a selection".<sup>73</sup> They even manufactured skating boots which they sold readymade or to order.<sup>74</sup> The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company Limited, from the first year of its operation in 1876 until 1914, made a wide selection of footwear as well, trying to cover as much of the local market as possible. When Parker and Monroe took over M. Archibald's Boot and Shoe Factory, they too sold a wide variety of men's, women's and children's boots; however, their specialty was men's and boys' fishing boots. When Smallwood and Avery opened their establishment in 1881, they manufactured hand-made boots and shoes. They also advertised the sale of 200 pairs of long boots "grained waxed leather, clump soled and hob-nailed, suitable for Mining and Railway purposes". Later that year they had a sale on their stock of 6,000 pairs of men's, women's and children's hand-made boots and shoes.<sup>75</sup> By 1890 these large

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<sup>72</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 114

<sup>73</sup>Public Ledger, May 19, 1871.

<sup>74</sup>Daily Chronicle, January 13, 1871.

<sup>75</sup>Evening Telegram, January 15, March 10, September 30, December 10, 1881.

factories still produced a wide range of styles and sizes of boots and shoes for the whole family and they continued to do so right to the end of the period.<sup>76</sup> For example, in 1908 Parker and Monroe, according to one newspaper report, manufactured 120 varieties of boots and shoes "from the strong fishermen's boot to the ladies fine drawing room shoe".<sup>77</sup>

The smaller shoemaker shops had a different set of products and a different clientele. They manufactured hand-made footwear and did custom and repair work in the early part of the period. However, these tradesmen never advertised except to announce a change of address or a public auction of their stock following bankruptcy. For example, Martin Bolger, when he changed his address from Duckworth Street to 274 Water Street, stated "all orders in the Boot & Shoe line will be promptly attended to".<sup>78</sup> By the 1890s, however, they advertised a little more and consequently more is known about them. In 1890, for instance, Henry Heath produced hand-made boots and shoes and hand-sewing was a specialty of the shop.<sup>79</sup> J. and T. Martin also manufactured hand-made boots and shoes; but for his higher class customers he offered another kind of product from semi-finished materials. He stocked an assortment of imported uppers and called on customers to choose a style which suited them and have the upper sewn to a sole:

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<sup>76</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., October 24, 1908.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., July 6, 1881.

<sup>79</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

Also a Large Stock of English Uppers always on hand. Gentlemen requiring a First-class Walking Shoe or Skating Boot can select their Uppers and have them made at the shortest notice.<sup>80</sup>

By the end of the period the custom work done in small shoemaker shops had all but disappeared and repair work too was not as plentiful as before:

Our People are using lighter boots and shoes, and are buying more of them. Where formerly many patched boots were seen, now it is rarely any but poor people that use these, and shoemakers on a small scale, or 'cobblers', are almost driven out of business by lack of trade.<sup>81</sup>

Indeed, the decline of the small shoemakers in St. John's had started much earlier than 1914. The decline of employment in small cobbler shops was a major concern of the shoemakers' union in 1900. The number of small shoemaker shops had declined from 46 to 38 between 1890 and 1914.<sup>82</sup> By 1913 only a few shoemakers produced hand-made boots and repaired footwear. John Kean manufactured men's hand-made waterproof boots and repaired all kinds of rubber boots; however, he did not neglect to mention that he did "Repairing While U. Wait".<sup>83</sup> John J. Channing did not mention that he manufactured boots and shoes at all. He only announced that he repaired footwear:

All kinds of Repairing. Rubber Neatly Repaired. Hand-Sewed Work a Specialty. Satisfaction Guaranteed. A Trial will Convince You.<sup>84</sup>

By the end of 1914 the market for hand-made boots and shoes had almost disappeared because of the market advances made by local and foreign

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Royal Commission, 1914, p. 114.

<sup>82</sup> Appendix III, Table 7.

<sup>83</sup> Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

ready-made footwear and the introduction of rubber boots in the last quarter of the 19th century.

The large local factories and a few of the smaller shops marketed their goods wholesale and retail. The large factories -- The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company, Parker and Monroe, and Smallwood's factory -- each had one or more retail shops. Their main business, however, was wholesaling to the large St. John's merchant firms, who included these goods in their Island-wide distribution system; and, later the factories made up wholesale orders for a growing number of independent outport shopowners.<sup>85</sup> Price lists were printed, samples were packaged and both were sent to prospective customers in the city and in the outports. Parker and Monroe announced in 1881, shortly after they took over the Archibald Boot and Shoe Company, that their samples were ready for the Spring trade:

The subscriber would also take this opportunity of informing the trade that their Samples for Spring are now ready, and they believe their lines will be found, for value, second to none, either of local manufacture or foreign competition.<sup>86</sup>

Many shoemakers operated other lines of business in conjunction with their footwear manufacturing. The most prominent of these activities were running tanneries and importing and selling foreign boots and shoes.

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<sup>85</sup>At the start of the period 1870-1914 many St. John's merchant firms had outport stores scattered throughout the Island. As time wore on and the price of fish declined these merchanting houses gradually sold their outport holdings to independent traders. Nevertheless, the St. John's merchants still remained very much in control of these shops because they were their major wholesale suppliers and frequently extended lines of credit to them. Shannon Ryan, "Newfoundland Cod Fishery in the Nineteenth Century" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1971), Chapter 2.

<sup>86</sup>Evening Telegram, January 15, 1881.

A tannery was connected with Browning's Homeville Boot and Shoe Factory in 1871.<sup>87</sup> The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company intended to invest in a tannery from the establishment of the factory and finally went through with the idea in 1890.<sup>88</sup> By 1890 J. and T. Martin and Roger Down each ran small tanneries along with their boot and shoe shops.<sup>89</sup> In the agency end of the business, by 1890 Parker and Monroe wholesaled and retailed imported leatherware and footwear; for instance, they were "Sole agents for the Celebrated Waterproof 'K' Boot",<sup>90</sup> in 1900 they imported Slater shoes, and at least by 1913 they stocked a wide range of rubber boots.<sup>91</sup> Sometime before 1897 The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company began importing rubber boots directly from a Canadian company.<sup>92</sup> By 1913 Frederick Smallwood was an "importer of English, American and Canadian fine shoes" including Edwin C. Burt's Celebrated Shoes.<sup>93</sup> Thus, while the boot and shoemakers of St. John's manufactured a wide assortment

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<sup>87</sup>Public Ledger, May 19, 1871.

<sup>88</sup>Evening Telegram, January 17, 1885; Registry of Companies, No. 18, #139, Certificate of Former Incorporation, May 28, 1890.

<sup>89</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>George T. Oliver and John Burke, The People's Songster, Buyers' Guide, and Gems of Poetry and Prose (St. John's, 1900), p. 91; Newfoundland Directory, 1913, p. 302.

<sup>92</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 38. This boot and shoe company was interested in manufacturing these items themselves and requested that the tariff be raised from 30 percent to 40 percent to make it worthwhile to establish the expensive plant necessary to start a business manufacturing rubber boots.

<sup>93</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913; Evening Telegram, February 2, 1913.

of footwear, by the 1890s they found that they could not compete with certain lines, notably rubber boots and stylish "carriage trade" footwear, and became importers and retailers of these items.

Why did these changes in production and business activities occur? Part of the answer lies in the competition between local producers and foreign companies, and the competition between one local producer and another. Prior to the establishment of large-scale Newfoundland production, the merchants did most of their business with foreign suppliers. Footwear, for instance, was an important part of the Hamburg trade in Newfoundland. The St. John's firm, McBride and Kerr, year after year, brought in the four "B's" of the Hamburg trade -- bricks, bread, boots and butter. Their footwear was popular in the local market and consumers did not switch easily to Boston or Newfoundland products. J.M. Devine recalled some of the praise given the Hamburg boots in one of his books:

An old fisherman once said to me, in praise of the Hamburg boot: 'We never claimed 'em to be waterproof, but I tell you, me son, they 'obliged' the foot of man in every other way'.<sup>94</sup>

While there was some local production before 1875, Newfoundland-made boots and shoes did not have a major share of the market until after the establishment of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company Limited. Before 1875 the manager of the factory was an agent for a Halifax firm which had contracts with St. John's businesses resulting in shipments of 120 tons ship freight of footwear.<sup>95</sup> As local production increased,

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<sup>94</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 41.

<sup>95</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 114. This business was admitted to being 'the first big sale made of Halifax goods of this class in Newfoundland'.



however, imports necessarily represented a diminishing fraction of domestic consumption. In the first year of production the company manufactured 55,105 pairs of footwear and sold 51,799 pairs, leaving them with a stock of only 3,306 pairs or six percent of that year's production.<sup>96</sup> A wide range of foreign footwear, nevertheless, was still advertised in the late 1870s and early 1880s. P.D. Knight and Company regularly announced the latest arrival of shipments of boots and shoes, notably their line of ladies' celebrated Prunella Boots.<sup>97</sup> While some firms like P.D. Knight and Company sang the praises of imported footwear, others, like Ayre and Marshall, who were investors in the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company, were obliged to strike a more equivocal position in their advertisements:

Our Stock of Boots and Shoes embraces Local and Foreign productions, selected entirely upon their merit, free of bias, and therefore are in point of value, the best procurable. Local makers have this season improved their styles and reduced their prices. We therefore believe we can with safety recommend their goods to the public.<sup>98</sup>

Still others, notably local manufacturers with retail outlets, tried to convince the public that their products were cheaper and wore better than imported goods. Firms like M. Archibald, the predecessor of Parker and Monroe, created aggressive campaigns to get their point across:

Wanted Immediately!!

A chance to show the Public that we can sell our own make of boots and shoes cheaper than the imported article can be sold elsewhere, also that our make of Boot and Shoes will wear double as long as

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<sup>96</sup>Report of the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory for 1876, JHA  
1877.

<sup>97</sup>Evening Telegram, June 13, April 8, May 3, 1879.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., September 15, 1879.

the Imported article. Therefore it is easy to see the advantage of Buying from us! Call and see for yourselves.<sup>99</sup>

Special sales were advertised by both importers of foreign footwear like William Parker<sup>100</sup> and local producers like Parker and Monroe. They even listed the sale prices for the different products and compared them with their regular prices, which was not a common practice in newspaper advertising in the late 1870s and early 1880s.<sup>101</sup> However, by the 1880s the local manufacturers had a firm hold on a major part of the market for boots and shoes. In 1889 C.R. Thompson, the manager of The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company, the largest of the local firms, measured the success of the company in terms of the number of competitors that had closed down: "Our customers are satisfied with our work, and we have driven seventeen drummers out of the market, and that's the best proof that we turn out a good article."<sup>102</sup> In another article that same year Thompson provided the readers of the Daily Colonist with further proof of the competitiveness of local products, noting that before The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Factory was established, as many as 30 Canadian leatherware companies sent salesmen to Newfoundland, in addition to four or five British companies. By 1889, however, only two sent their agents to Newfoundland to any extent: Messrs. Ely and Company of England and Messrs. R. Taylor and Company of Halifax.<sup>103</sup> Later in 1898 Parker and

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., April 8, 1879.

<sup>100</sup>This is not the Parker involved in Parker and Monroe, although it is likely that these two men were related.

<sup>101</sup>Evening Telegram, March 1, 1880; September 30, December 10, 1881.

<sup>102</sup>Daily Colonist, June 4, 1889.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., March 2, 1889; Evening Telegram, October 24, 1908.

Monroe claimed that the imports of boots and shoes had been approximately the same for the previous 10 years, around \$100,000 worth annually. Most of this amount, they claimed, were boots and shoes of a kind and quality that were not made in Newfoundland and could not be manufactured remuneratively without significant alterations in the tariff.<sup>104</sup> By 1914 imports of footwear were valued at about \$200,000 a year. Most of these goods -- about \$162,000 worth -- came from the United States and largely consisted of footwear for the carriage trade. The Americans cornered this market by manufacturing a stylish product and advertising extensively. Indeed, local merchants who previously sent their buyers exclusively to England were by that time sending them on annual trips to American centers. American imports increased from \$30,000 to \$162,000 over the period 1903-1913 chiefly to the detriment of Canadian factories, for in that same period Canadian imports fell from \$77,000 to \$15,000 worth of footwear.<sup>105</sup> Yet a portion of the total increase of American sales in Newfoundland was attributed to footwear produced by prison labour, imports of bankrupt stock and "dumping" of excess production by some American companies. One producer remarked: "There are about twenty firms in America competing for the Newfoundland market, and some dealers in this Colony only sell 'job' lines of boots ... dumped into the Colony so as to avoid price-cutting in the home market."<sup>106</sup> The local producers also claimed that

<sup>104</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 60.

<sup>105</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, pp. 114-115. These figures also included semi-manufactured goods like uppers and leggings.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., p. 114. The whole question of dumping excess production is discussed in William H. Becker, "American Manufacturers and Foreign Markets, 1870-1900: Business Historians and the 'New Economic Determinists'", Business History Review, Vol. 47, No. 4 (1973), pp. 466-481.

they had to undersell imports because of the universal bias of consumers against local goods:

There is always sentiment against local goods. Even if you go to Montreal you will see in the windows goods from Toronto, while if you go to Toronto it is vice versa. People think the imported goods are better and each trader is trying to get something that his neighbor has not got.<sup>107</sup>

Yet the Newfoundland boot and shoe factories were in a good competitive position at the end of the period. They did not try to compete with the carriage-trade imports from the United States, and indeed imported and sold these items themselves. They relied on a general line of products which had the widest appeal in the small national market.

A major reason for the success of the large boot and shoe factories was the protection provided by the tariff. In the mid-1890s imported boots and shoes paid a 35 percent duty.<sup>108</sup> Between 1898 and 1904 the tariff rate on imported footwear was raised to 45 percent. Earlier in 1889 C.R. Thompson, manager of The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company, analyzed the effect of the tariff in some depth. On the one hand he conceded that foreign producers, in effect, paid duty on all their cost of production, including raw materials, labour and capital costs and wholesale profit, while Newfoundland manufacturers only paid at most a reduced rate on their raw materials. On the other hand, he pleaded that the local factories had to carry proportionately larger stocks than foreign companies to meet both long-term and short-notice contracts and had a much smaller potential market than, for example, their Canadian

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<sup>107</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 116.

<sup>108</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, pp. 36-38.

competitors.<sup>109</sup>

The success of Newfoundland producers in the boot and shoe industry and the high tariff, however, spurred criticism from consumers, who charged that a group of merchant monopolists were gouging the public both in the market place and through government subsidies, tariffs and rebates. The owners countered that merchants formed only a small portion of these companies' shareholders and that they actually made very little on each item sold. Their large dividends, they explained, were due to careful and creative management and the quick turn-over of their stock.<sup>110</sup>

### Conclusion

While the boot and shoe industry was one of the largest employers in St. John's trades and manufacturing, it was also the only consumer industry which experienced a decline in its labour force between 1870 and 1914. The number of boot and shoe makers rose from 71 in 1871 to 343 in 1890; however, by 1913 the total number of cobblers and cordwainers in St. John's fell to 297. Over the same period the proportion of the total St. John's trades and manufacturing work force employed in cobbler shops and boot and shoe factories rose from 10.7 percent in 1871 to 14.1 percent

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 37. He also argued that the cost of production was less in Quebec than in Newfoundland because the work force was less mobile in Quebec, the cost of living was lower and, therefore, labour was cheaper. However, this argument is less convincing than the others considering the low wages that were paid locally and the severe unemployment that plagued the industrial work force in St. John's during certain periods. What he may be referring to would be the cost of keeping foreign superintendents, foremen and specialty craftsmen.

<sup>110</sup> Daily Colonist, June 4, 1889.

in 1890, but shrank to 8.5 percent by 1913.<sup>111</sup> This drop was probably caused by the mechanization of the industry and the inability of the local plants, despite all their success, to grow at a sufficient speed to absorb the dispossessed labour from the smaller firms. As with the other trades the majority of firms employed less than five people while the larger shops and factories employed most of the craftsmen and factory workers.<sup>112</sup> Many of the major firms, notably The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company, were owned by merchants and relied on the merchant elite for investment capital. The leather and footwear industry was especially interesting as an attempt at integrating local industries. In the ideal situation, hides and skins would be produced by local farmers, processed in the Island's tanneries and manufacturing into boots and shoes at Newfoundland factories. Each of these links, however, needed a different size market and Newfoundland provided such a small market that profitable economies of scale could not be reached. The local tanneries could not advantageously produce all the different kinds and qualities of leather needed for boots and shoes despite the intimate relation between many of the tanneries and boot and shoe factories. As a result, most of the machinery and raw materials for the boot and shoe industry were imported. Despite the success of this industry and considerable union activity, workers in the larger factories were not as well paid as many other trades-

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<sup>111</sup>Appendix III, Table 5.

<sup>112</sup>Appendix III, Tables 7 and 8. By 1890 most of these large firms employed between 10 and 40 workers. The Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company was the major exception having 108 on its payroll at that time. By 1913 the three major boot and shoe factories -- Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Company, F. Smallwood and Parker and Monroe -- employed 101, 59 and 50 persons respectively.

men in the city and they endured the same unemployment problems. From the beginning of the period small shops doing a custom hand-built boot trade were found in substantial numbers. Gradually, however, large scale production by local and foreign companies drove these small operations out of business or reduced them to repairing and retailing footwear. The major St. John's factories, with adequate government aid and tariff protection, increased their production to accommodate the local market for most lines of work boots and common footwear, leaving the carriage trade and specialty products to foreign firms. Frequently, these large firms acted as exclusive wholesale agents for these foreign lines.

## CHAPTER V

## THE MARINE AND FISHERY TRADES AND INDUSTRIES

Introduction

The marine and fishery trades, which included rope walks, cooperages, ship chandleries and sail lofts\*, was the most important sector of all St. John's trades and industries in the early 1870s, and the least important by 1914. Many of the trades in this sector grew throughout the period but not as quickly as others, especially some consumer industries; but their development was similar in many ways to these trades. For instance, the Colonial Cordage Company was owned and financed by major St. John's merchant families, the company imported most of its raw materials, machinery and technical expertise and employed large numbers of men, women and children on piece-work wages. The company quickly gained control over the local market with the help of the tariff, government subsidies, drawbacks and premiums; yet with the major depression in the fishery from the 1880s to the end of the century, and the emigration of a large number of fishermen, the market for the Colonial Cordage Company shrank and production was cut back. The industry recovered with the fishery from 1900 to 1914 and controlled the local market for a wide range of cordage, lines and twines, and wholesaled many of the products which it could not economically produce itself.

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\*Engine and boiler works, also an important part of marine and fishery trades, are discussed in the chapter on heavy industry.



The cooperages formed the largest part of the marine and fishery trades throughout the period, producing all the packages needed for the export trade. Many merchant firms had cooperages on their premises but large numbers of independent shops were scattered throughout the city. Toward the end of the period the merchants attempted, unsuccessfully, to consolidate cooperages as they had done in many other manufacturing fields, by promoting incorporated companies to mechanize the industry. Despite this set-back the merchants still controlled the market because they were the only buyers and the most powerful economic group in the city. While the cooperages imported their machinery and tools, they were one of the few industries which used mainly local raw materials, depending on Newfoundland saw mills for their lumber supplies. The coopers were probably the best organized and most vocal labour group in the city. They regularly negotiated industry-wide contracts with the merchants and took public positions and action on many issues concerning them including wages, employment of non-union labour, the truck system, the union stamp, mechanization, and outport and foreign competition. The cooperages were totally dependent on the fishery as a market for their goods and produced a wide assortment of packages including barrels, drums and casks. The volume of fish requiring packages did not expand very rapidly and the cooperage trade declined in importance relative to other manufacturing trades and industries. The remaining marine and fishery trades -- the ship chandleries and sail lofts -- disappeared because of the replacement of sail by steam and diesel engines. The shops that survived were reduced to retail outlets for marine supplies.

## Cordage

### Major Firms

Prior to 1870, there was at least one cordage factory in the city. The St. John's Roperie Company, located in Maggotty Cove, was incorporated in 1867 and was in business at least until it was destroyed by fire on December 4, 1869. Following the fire the damaged machinery was sold and from 1870 to 1874 another company operated a rope and oakum factory in the city.<sup>1</sup> From that time, however, until the construction of the Colonial Cordage Company in 1882,<sup>2</sup> there was apparently no St. John's production.

From about 1880 local merchants experienced problems in maintaining stocks of cordage, nets, lines and twines from Bridport in the West Country of England and other cordage centers, partly because of a general increase in demand for these products in other fishing and shipping countries. Some complained that this shortage was so acute that their businesses were materially affected.<sup>3</sup> As a response to these complaints and market conditions, Moses Monroe, a prominent St. John's merchant, organized the Colonial Cordage Company, and asked his brother, James H.

<sup>1</sup>Colonial Secretary's Papers, List of Incorporated Companies until 1899; Newfoundlander, December 10, 1869; The Times, December 11, 1869; Blue Books, 1870-1874.

<sup>2</sup>H.M. Mosdell, When Was That?: A Chronological Dictionary of Important Events in Newfoundland Down to and Including the Year 1922 (St. John's: Trade Printers and Publishers, Ltd., 1923), p. 110; D.W. Prowse, A History of Newfoundland (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Ltd., 1895), p. 510; Newfoundland Quarterly (June, 1903), p. 8; Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence taken in Newfoundland in 1914 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Ltd., 1915), p. 123.

<sup>3</sup>The Times, April 14, 1883.

Monroe, to come from Ireland to manage the new enterprise.<sup>4</sup> Moses and his brother James, together with some local merchants, including Charles Bowring, Robert Thorburn and John Syme, and some foreign capital,<sup>5</sup> financed the Colonial Cordage Company. It was incorporated in 1883 with a nominal capital of \$120,000, \$96,000 of which was paid up at the end of the first year.<sup>6</sup> On December 23, 1885, just as "the most priceless jewel in our Colonies manufacturing interests" was in full production and its future looked bright, it was destroyed by fire. Despite the fact that the £30,000 to £40,000 loss was not entirely covered by fire insurance, the factory was rebuilt.<sup>7</sup> The Colonial Cordage Company was re-incorporated on February 23, 1886, with an increased nominal capital of \$160,000, and over \$120,000 of this amount was paid up within the first year. The new rope works was reported as larger and better fitted than the old one, with most of the major buildings being constructed of brick

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<sup>4</sup>Interview with J.M. Alderdice, who was connected with the Colonial Cordage Company from his adolescence to the closing of the plant in the 1950s.

<sup>5</sup>Prowse, A History of Newfoundland, p. 510. Other indications of foreign capital came from the sharelist of the company as late as 1901 when Stavert and Easson, a foreign merchant bank, held \$26,000 of the company's stock (16 percent).

<sup>6</sup>Newfoundland Quarterly (June, 1903), p. 8; Annual Statement of the Colonial Cordage Company, 1883, JHA 1884, p. 684.

<sup>7</sup>Mosdell, When Was That?, p. 110; Evening Mercury, December 23, 1885, as cited in Royal Gazette, December 29, 1885. On January 4, 1909, the rope walk was once again damaged by fire. This time \$60,000 damage was done to the twine and netting department of the works and 80 girls were laid off for six months. Nevertheless, the company recovered and continued in business in much the same manner as before. Evening Telegram, January 5, 1909.

rather than wood.<sup>8</sup>

By 1901, when sharelists were first publically recorded, 65 shareholders had paid over \$160,000 for company stock but a far smaller number held effective control. Less than 10 percent of the shareholders, including Daniel and James Monroe, J.A. McLeod, the estate of John McNeil, James F. Parker (all involved with major St. John's merchant families), and Stavert and Easson, owned 50 percent of the company's shares. While Stavert and Easson, a foreign banking firm, was the largest single shareholder with \$26,000 of the stock (16 percent), Daniel and James Monroe's shares together totalled \$29,000 or 18 percent of the total amount.<sup>9</sup> By 1915 the ownership of the rope walk was even more concentrated than previously with less than 10 percent of the shareholders controlling 60 percent of the shares. The largest shareholder was Daniel Monroe who owned \$77,000 of the company's stock or 40 percent of the company.<sup>10</sup>

### Characteristics of the Trade

#### (i) Plant, Machinery and Materials

The machinery and raw materials used in the manufacture of cordage, rope, lines and twines were all imported despite several attempts to try

<sup>8</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 41, #287, Certificate of Incorporation; Annual Report of the Colonial Cordage Company Ltd. for the year ending December 31, 1886, JHA 1887, p. 889; Daily Colonist, October 1, 1886. It is stated in other places that the rope walk was in operation again as early as July of that year but the most convincing description is contained in this source.

<sup>9</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 41, #292, Sharelist to February 1, 1901. The shares held by Stavert and Easson may have been the result of an agreement in which these bankers agreed to surrender the shares to Daniel Monroe on payment of a loan or mortgage. This conclusion, however, is purely speculative.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., #2675, Sharelist to August 9, 1915.

and encourage local production of hemp, flax and other fibres used in the process. Most of the machinery was imported from the firms Comb and Barbour of Belfast and Lawson and Sons of Leeds, with a few pieces coming from American manufacturers and another English company.<sup>11</sup> The raw materials used on these machines were mainly hemp, coir and cotton yarns, including some manufactured twines which were imported from America or England depending on the price in each market and the freight charges. Between 1904 and 1914 these imported goods were valued between \$250,000 and \$300,000 a year.<sup>12</sup>

(ii) Employment, Wages and Working Conditions

During the first few years of operation between 1883 and 1885, the weekly wage bill of the company was between \$520 and \$550 for workers employed in the factory with another \$85 to \$120 paid weekly for netmaking

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<sup>11</sup>Daily Colonist, August 2, October 1, 1886. A huge 11½ ton manilla heckler and a dozen manilla spinning machines were made by Comb and Barbour. A dozen spinners were manufactured by Lawson and Sons. A second but smaller heckler was bought from another English company and two manilla finishing machines came from an American engineering firm. These, however, were only the machines used to prepare the raw materials for the manufacture of rope. In addition, a few machines were used for making rope and at least two others were used for the manufacture of manilla and sisal marline.

<sup>12</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, pp. 123-124. In the 1890s the Monroe Fibre Company appeared on the registry of companies and was supported by many of the same shareholders as the rope walk. This company, however, vanished before 1900 without a trace as to the reason for its appearance or disappearance. Perhaps the directors and other shareholders of the rope walk decided to import hemp and other fibres through a separate company, leaving the Colonial Cordage Company to manufacture and market the final product. Colonial Secretary's Papers, List of Incorporated Companies until 1899; Annual Reports of Monroe Fibre Company Limited 1890-1897, JHA 1891-1897. The paid-up capital in Monroe Fibre at the end of 1890 was \$90,000.

outside the factory. The total number of employees at the Colonial Cordage Company at this time was estimated at between 300 and 350. This number seems to be too high. Given the total weekly wage cost these employees would average at best between \$1.40 and \$1.50 a week which were hardly high wages for an industry with a reputation for providing the steadiest and highest wages of the time. By comparison, coopers in the early 1890s made \$1.30 a day or about \$7.80 a week.<sup>13</sup> It is likely that the total number of permanent plant workers was something less than 100 and that the remainder made a few nets at home as a supplement to their incomes. This interpretation is supported by employment figures calculated from the business directories which suggest that in 1890 as few as 54 persons, including management personnel, were employed at the Colonial Cordage Company rising to 72 by 1913.<sup>14</sup> It is possible, however, that a large fraction of the reported 300 to 350 employees included young boys and girls, who were described by one newspaper as "the unproductive part of our population ... who have no other means of employment".<sup>15</sup> In March of 1892 James H. Monroe said that the company employed boys and girls from 10 years upwards at a weekly wage ranging between \$1.60 to \$8.00 depending on the productivity of each worker.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Daily Colonist, March 27, 1886; Newfoundland Quarterly (June, 1903), p. 8.

<sup>14</sup>Appendix III, Table 5.

<sup>15</sup>Daily Colonist, March 27, 1886.

<sup>16</sup>Evening Telegram, March 25, 1892. The newspaper estimates of the work force at the rope walk were always large. With the construction of the new plant in 1886, it was hoped that not 300 but 400 or 500 would be employed; Daily Colonist, March 27, 1886. When the rope walk was in operation again in the fall of 1886, it was expected that in a short

A shortage of skilled workers was at times posited as a reason why the rope walk did not expand its production. To maintain the quality of the workmanship and to assure a well-crafted product, the company did what most new industries in Newfoundland did: they hired skilled foreign superintendents for each branch of their operation. Those hired by the Colonial Cordage Company were men who had spent their lives working in the major rope factories "on the continent", presumably Norway and Belgium.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the rope walk operated a rough and ready bonus system aimed at the stimulation of higher productivity. Besides paying their employees piece rates, at its establishment and for some years after, the management offered a bonus to the woman in the spinning room who produced the best work. This practice was said to foster "a spirit of emulation --- each one vying with the other to obtain the coveted prize".<sup>18</sup>

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time nearly 200 hands would be employed there and if everything went well, it would not be long before 300 people would make a living from this one industry. Also, reference was made to the multiplier effect whereby if 100 persons were regularly employed at the rope walk, perhaps as many as 200 or 300 "or even more" may benefit in supplying rope walk workers with goods and services; Ibid., October 1, 1886. D.W. Prowse, writing in the mid-1890s, estimated that the rope walk employed "upwards of 500 people -- men, boys and girls" (A History of Newfoundland, p. 510); and an advertising article in 1903 estimated that the works employed 200 operatives on the premises and provided home piece-work for another 700, Newfoundland Quarterly (June, 1903), p. 8. Finally, in 1914, at a time when the factory was in full production, the work force of the Colonial Cordage Company was estimated at 500 by the manager of the company, James H. Monroe. This figure undoubtedly included the "outside" piece workers, Royal Commission, 1914, p. 123.

<sup>17</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, pp. 123-124.

<sup>18</sup>Daily Colonist, August 2, October 1, 1886.

(iii) Products, Markets and Style of Business

A wide range of products was manufactured by the Colonial Cordage Company. A full line of common cordage and rope for the general shipping trade and lines, twines, nets and netting for the fishery were produced by the company. Both manilla and sisal ropes were made in sizes ranging from a fine six-thread cordage to an eleven-inch hawser. Russian hemp was twisted in sizes between "rattling" (a six-thread cordage) to what was called a six-inch Europe. Russian hemp was also manufactured into hawsers from one-half inch to thirteen inches in circumference. Coir rope, called "bass" locally, could be ordered in all sizes. What was referred to as bolt rope was manufactured by hand at the factory.<sup>19</sup>

The value of the production of the Colonial Cordage Company fluctuated somewhat during the period 1883 to 1914. According to census data, £50,000 or \$250,000 worth of rope and lines was produced in 1884. By the next census date, 1891, only \$160,000 worth of finished goods -- a 36 per cent decline from the 1884 level -- was manufactured at the rope walk. This decline was probably caused by the emigration of fishermen during the general economic depression in the Newfoundland fishery in the 1880s and 1890s. By 1901, however, the company had increased the value of its manufactures by 88 percent from \$160,000 to \$300,000 and in 1911 produced twines valued at that same figure -- \$300,000.<sup>20</sup> The manager, James H. Monroe, testifying before the Dominions Royal Commission in 1914, stated

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., August 2, 1886.

<sup>20</sup>Census of Newfoundland, 1884-1911. The 1884 figure was given in pounds; the 1891 census converted it to dollars using the exchange rate 5s. = \$1.00; and the 1901 and 1911 census used the exchange rate of 4s. = \$1.00.



that the annual trade of the Colonial Cordage Company was between \$350,000 and \$400,000. Forty percent of the total consisted of ropes and cordage and the remaining 60 percent was lines, twines and nets.<sup>21</sup> When a comparison is drawn between the value of production in the early 1880s and that in 1914, it can be seen that over the entire period the plant did not expand significantly.

Prior to the establishment of the Colonial Cordage Company, all the cordage, lines, twines and netting used in Newfoundland were imported from England, mostly from Bridport in the West Country.<sup>22</sup> In the late 1870s and early 1880s New England companies like the American Net and Twine Company in Boston made some headway into the Newfoundland market.<sup>23</sup> The local rope walk, however, was successful from the beginning and despite some competition from foreign manufacturers gradually reduced the foreign share to a fraction of its former dominance of the market. Between 1904 and 1914, for example, cordage imports declined from approximately \$60,000 to \$36,000, and Britain's share declined the most, falling from \$42,000 to \$23,000. The American and Canadian imports, while fluctuating from year to year, remained roughly the same, while Norwegian and Belgian cordage products, never very important in the Newfoundland trade, had all but disappeared by 1914.<sup>24</sup> Imports of American finished lines and twines

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<sup>21</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 123.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Morning Chronicle, January 18, 1871; Prowse, A History of Newfoundland, p. 510.

<sup>24</sup>Newfoundland Quarterly (June, 1903), p. 8; Royal Commission, 1914, p. 123. Norwegian imports were about \$6,000 during the first two years of the decade 1904-1914, but decreased to almost nothing by 1914; Belgian imports rose to a high of \$8,000 midway through the decade, but again fell away to nothing by 1914.

used in the manufacture of cod traps, on the other hand, rose considerably from \$47,000 to \$77,000 per year between 1904 and 1914. Imports of netting, chiefly from Britain and the United States, also increased between 1904 and 1914 from \$31,000 to \$50,000. Imports of lines and twines, however, were not a threat to the Colonial Cordage Company, for approximately two-thirds of it was imported by the company itself for its own netmaking operation or for wholesaling purposes. The increases in net imports, however, had occurred mainly in the last two years of the decade 1904-1914 in response to increased demand for herring nets. The Colonial Cordage Company, in 1914, was preparing to meet the demand for this product by expanding the "putting-out" branch of its operation.<sup>25</sup>

One of the major reasons for the success of the Colonial Cordage Company in the local market was the encouragement and protection provided by the government. All of the fibrous raw materials required at the rope walk were imported free of duty, and over the entire period the company imported an average of approximately \$86,000 worth of duty-free goods each year.<sup>26</sup> Also, from its establishment to 1895 the government paid the Colonial Cordage Company a premium of between five and seven and one-half percent

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., American imports of lines and twines rose from \$28,500 to \$52,000 between 1904 and 1914; Canadian imports rose from \$5,000 to \$10,500 with British imports remaining about the same throughout the decade making up the difference between American and Canadian imports and total imports. Britain gained the most in imports of netting between 1904 and 1914 increasing her share from \$9,000 to \$21,000. American sales rose from \$15,600 to \$22,000. Canadian sales remained roughly the same, about \$6,000. When the local rope walk decided to enter this trade, it had a 20 percent tariff to help protect its business.

<sup>26</sup>The Customs Returns, 1882-1900, 1907-1908, JHA 1883-1901, 1908-1909.

on raw materials.<sup>27</sup> Foreign goods, on the other hand, paid increasingly high duties over the years. From 1871 to 1886 imported cordage and fishing tackle paid an eight percent tax. In 1887 this duty was increased to 10 percent and in 1898 the tariff on twine, cables and cordage was increased to approximately 30 percent.<sup>28</sup> This level of protection and government aid is a major explanation of the company's success in the local market.

Government aid, to the extent that it reflected uncompetitive production, also explains why the company never developed an export trade, although other reasons were sometimes offered by contemporaries. In articles variously entitled "The Ropewalk Boodle" and "Plums and Peaches for the Winters and Morisons (shareholders) but nothing at all for the Norrises, Greenes and Scotts (workers)", one correspondent to the Evening Telegram suggested that the directors and shareholders were bleeding the company at the expense of the workers.<sup>29</sup> The company was secure in its protected local market, and had no intention of risking its steady six percent annual dividend<sup>30</sup> on export schemes.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>40 Vic., cap. 10; 49 Vic., cap. 8.

<sup>28</sup>"Statutes of Newfoundland, The Revenue Acts, 1870-1914".

<sup>29</sup>March 14, 25, 1892.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., March 21, 25, 1892.

<sup>31</sup>While the local product was criticized at times, for example, by the local sailmakers (Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 24), it also received some international acclaim. In its first year of operation, 1883, the Colonial Cordage Company won gold and silver medals for some of its products at the London Exhibition. Newfoundland Quarterly (June, 1903), p. 8.

## Cooperages

### Major Firms

The best account of the cooperage trade in St. John's in the 1870s and early 1880s comes from Jack Fitzhenry, the nephew of a cooper:

Coopering was the principal industry of the period. Indeed it is doubtful if there was a single street in St. John's without a cooper-shop in the late seventies and early eighties. Some of the shops were located in basements, but many were large and quite pretentious, occupying whole buildings, planned and erected as up-to-date cooperages. Between the rear of the house in which I lived and the James Street houses was the shop of my granduncle, Michael Curran. At the south corner of upper James Street (later named Moore Street) was my uncle Jim Fitzhenry's shop. Robert Moore's shop was on the west corner, and John Fitzgerald had a shop on Carter's Hill, above the McKim property.

In eighty-one my parents moved into a home of their own on Bulley Street and here again we were surrounded by cooperages. Frank Pippy off Henry Street, Mose Kelly near the Star of the Sea Hall, Billy Ring on Bell Street, John Hennessy on Henry Street extension, Mike Linegar on Theatre Hill, Dick Boggan at the top of Long's Lane and Toni Greene, Jr. in the lane between Bulley and Bell Streets. And so it was everywhere between Kenna's Hill and the Crossroads, cooper shops at every turn on every street, lane and by-lane.<sup>32</sup>

The coopers in St. John's, between 1870 and 1914, worked in one of three kinds of shops. The main merchant firms in the city, and a handful of prosperous master coopers, owned the largest cooperages. Individual coopers who ran small shops, employing less than five craftsmen, however, owned most of the cooperages. In 1890 Bowring Brothers, J. and W. Stewart, P. and L. Tessier, Job Brothers and Company and James Murray, all major St. John's merchants and a half dozen master coopers (notably Nicholas Cousens), owned the largest cooperages in St. John's. Between 1890 and

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<sup>32</sup> Jack Fitzhenry, "Wandering Memories", Newfoundland Quarterly (Autumn, 1946), pp. 25-26. He was probably about 70 years of age when he wrote this.

1914 the cooperages grew only slowly,<sup>33</sup> and by 1914 Harvey and Company, Harvey's Tub Factory, Bowring Brothers, A. Goodridge and Sons, J. Baird Limited, Baine Johnston and Company and Smith Company, all owned by major St. John's merchant families, together with 8 independent master coopers led by the Mercantile Cooperage, owned by Ethelbert G. Cousens, controlled the major cooperages in the city.<sup>34</sup>

Between 1900 and 1909 there was a concerted effort by St. John's merchants to consolidate and mechanize the cooperage industry. The St. John's Steam Cooperage, the Avalon Steam Cooperage Company and the Northern Stave and Heading Company were three incorporated companies organized to fulfil these aims. The St. John's Steam Cooperage was incorporated in 1900 with a nominal capital of \$150,000 but, during its short history, only raised \$26,500. The company was wholly owned and controlled by St. John's merchants. The largest interests in the venture were Bowring Brothers, James S. Pitts and Murray and Crawford, each of whom controlled 19 percent (\$5,000) of the stock to a total of 57 percent.<sup>35</sup> This cooperage, however, was completely destroyed by fire on September 11, 1901. While on the surface a great tragedy, this cloud had a silver lining. A 20 percent dividend was issued on February 11, 1902, and another five and three-quarters percent was issued on November 13,

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<sup>33</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>34</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>35</sup>Other shareholders in the company included Job Brothers and Company, A. Goodridge and Sons, W.B. Grieve and Gordon Baird and Company to name a few. Registry of Companies, No. 38, #369, Memorandum of Association, October 10, 1900; # 506, Papers Regarding the Winding-up and Dissolution of the Company, November 13, 1903.

1903, the result of a fire insurance settlement, the profit during its short history and the sale of assets following the fire.<sup>36</sup>

In 1902 another company, The Avalon Steam Cooperage Company was established with a nominal capital of \$50,000, of which only \$19,000 was paid into the company by January, 1903.<sup>37</sup> The Avalon Steam Cooperage purchased the assets of Harvey and Company's cooperage factory for \$5,000 and hired members of Harvey and Company to manage the business.<sup>38</sup> At the time of the first annual meeting in 1903 this company, like the previous one, was wholly owned by the St. John's merchant elite. Bowring Brothers, James Pitts, William C. Job, August and John Harvey, Joseph Outerbridge, Frederick Goodridge, James Gordon and Murray and Crawford were the shareholders. These were the same people who owned the burned-out St. John's

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., letters from James Gordon, secretary, director and liquidator, to W.B. Grieve for Murray and Crawford and Edgar Bowring, all dated November 3, 1903; to Arthur Mews, Registrar of Companies, in reply to his letters of November 2, 1903.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., No. 49, #500, Sharelist to January 20, 1903.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., #258, Agreement between John Harvey and The Avalon Steam Cooperage, dated January 1, 1902. Under this agreement the company also hired Harvey and Company in the person of John Harvey to manage the business for \$1,100 a year. The rest of the agreement stated that Harvey and Company had to provide power, use of the dry room, yardage and the like. Also, The Avalon Steam Cooperage bought Harvey and Company's cooperage stock at cost. John Harvey, in turn, as representative of the new cooperage company hired Edward F. Harvey, one of his relatives, as general manager at a salary of \$1,300 per year plus five percent of the net profits. Edward, however, was expected to employ a foreman and superintendent as well as clerical help. The foreman and superintendent of the Newfoundland Furniture and Moulding Company, a factory in which the Harveys held a considerable interest, took this job in addition to his regular duties. Ibid., #357, Agreement between John Harvey, merchant, of Avalon Steam Cooperage Company Limited and Edward F. Harvey, Gentleman, January 1, 1902.

Steam Cooperage.<sup>39</sup> On November 26, 1904, the cooperage bought over \$9,000 worth of machinery from The Newfoundland Furniture and Moulding Company and Harvey and Company, and took a long term lease on property partly occupied by the cooperage and partly occupied by The Newfoundland Furniture and Moulding Company at \$1900 per annum. The Avalon Steam Cooperage also leased Woods' lower premises on the east end of Water Street, which was essentially wharfage, and took a short term option on the rest of the property on Factory Lane occupied by Harvey's Butterine Factory.<sup>40</sup>

This agreement was prepared in order to facilitate the sale of the cooperage a month later to Nicholas L. Cousens and Sons for \$25,000. The Cousens, for their part, were to complete all the contracts that had been made by the company, use the remaining cooperage stock, pay the workers, hire Ethelbert Cousens as head of the slack barrel division of the plant at \$1,200 a year and pay themselves a maximum of \$10,000.<sup>41</sup> At the same time that these contracts were signed the Avalon Steam Cooperage

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<sup>39</sup>The ownership of this company was less concentrated than the previous one with Bowring Brothers, James Pitts and William C. Job (44.4 percent of the shareholders) controlling a majority of 57.9 percent of the shares. The interests of all other shareholders were considerable with the smallest holding 7.9 percent of the total stock. John Harvey, Augustus Harvey and Joseph Outerbridge, all involved in Harvey and Company, but holding shares individually controlled \$5,000 worth of shares (26.2 percent) in 1903. Ibid., #500, Sharelist to January 20, 1903.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., #632, Agreement between Newfoundland Furniture and Moulding Company Limited, Harvey and Company and Avalon Steam Cooperage Company Limited, November 26, 1904. The \$9,150.11 payment was made in \$9,000 worth of shares and \$150.11 cash.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., Contract between Nicholas L. and Ethelbert G. Cousens, coopers, and The Avalon Steam Cooperage Company Limited, November 15, 1904; Contract between Ethelbert G. Cousens and The Avalon Steam Cooperage Company Limited, November 15, 1904. The \$25,000 price was paid in \$10,000 cash and 150 full paid-up shares.



raised its nominal capital to \$100,000. By April 29, 1908, less than a year before the company was voluntarily wound up, 84 percent of the nominal capital was paid up. The largest single shareholder was Nicholas L. Cousens who controlled 18.5 percent of the company. Apart from Cousens, all the major shareholders were fish merchants.<sup>42</sup> By this time, however, the company was in financial trouble for it was forced to mortgage its cooperage stock to a total of \$15,000 on four different occasions between April 1906 and September 1907. It appears that none of the principal was paid on these mortgages during this time, and the company was only able to muster the interest. The shareholders of The Avalon Steam Cooperage Company Limited decided on December 24, 1908, to wind up the company.<sup>43</sup>

The only other limited liability company in the cooperage business in this period was the short-lived Northern Stave and Heading Company Limited which was incorporated October 26, 1907, with a nominal capital of \$30,000 of which \$20,100 was paid up. The Avalon Steam Cooperage Company Limited was a shareholder in this venture, but Harvey and Company, through Edward F. Harvey who owned 50 percent of the stock, was the main thrust behind the company. Not only were the Harveys and the Avalon Steam Cooperage involved but Ethelbert G. Cousens, the head of the slack package department of the Avalon Steam Cooperage since 1904, also had money in the

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., #630, special general meeting, December 23, 1904; Ibid., #1106, Sharelist to April 29, 1908. Over 60 percent of the shares were owned by less than 30 percent of the shareholders. The five individuals who made up this group were Nicholas L. Cousens, William C. Job, James Ryan, John Harvey and Joseph Outerbridge.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., #1109, Certificate of the Registration of a Mortgage or Charge, May 1, 1908; \$10,000, April 3, 1906; \$1,500, August 14, 1907; \$1,500, September 7, 1907; and \$2,000, September 9, 1907; #1171, Notice of Winding-up, December 24, 1908.



Northern Stave and Heading Company. Nevertheless, the factory did not succeed in meeting the expectations of the shareholders and they decided early in 1909 to wind up the company.<sup>44</sup> By establishing these companies the St. John's merchants tried and failed to mechanize and centralize the package industry under their direct control. They invested substantial sums of money, employed modern equipment and power systems, not to mention skilled and experienced managers, but failed to keep their cooperages in operation for any significant length of time. The major reasons for their failure were that seasonal fluctuations in demand left machinery idle for long periods, they were strongly opposed by the coopers' union who saw these new companies as a threat to their employment and job security, and they were apparently plagued by poor management practices, especially in the purchasing of cooperage stock.<sup>45</sup>

### Characteristics of the Trade

#### (i) Plant, Machinery and Materials

Coopers used principally Newfoundland materials; but they did import machinery, tools, iron hoops and rivets,<sup>46</sup> oak staves and heading and

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., No. 139, #1041, Memorandum of Association, October 26, 1907; #1204, Sharelist to February 1, 1909, #1205, Resolution for Voluntary Liquidation, February 3, 1909.

<sup>45</sup> See below, pp. 122-123.

<sup>46</sup> For example, Gleeson's Porta Bella House, a St. John's hardware store, ran the following advertisement in the Newfoundlander, April 4, 1871:

To Coopers & Others  
 500 Bundles  
     Iron Hoops  
     30 Kegs Puncheon Rivets  
     The Manufacture of Eliza  
 Tinsley who has justly acquired  
 the name and fame of being  
 the most reliable maker of a good  
 and sound article in All England.

relatively insignificant quantities of birch and soft wood staves and heading. In the total inventory of the trade, however, these imports formed a small percentage of the trade's total requirements. The most significant imported material came from Canadian and American flour mills who packaged their goods in hardwood barrels. Until a regulation was enforced sometime before 1937 prohibiting the use of second-hand packages in the fishery,<sup>47</sup> fish merchants in St. John's scurried to the different bakeries to purchase empty flour barrels. Apparently, in 1909 enough flour barrels were imported "to supply all the half-drums that we ship or equal to two-thirds of all the drums and halves".<sup>48</sup>

Throughout the period 1870-1914, however, most of the cooperage stock, including birch hoops, birch, fir and spruce staves and heading, were purchased from the sawmills in Bonavista and Trinity Bays. In reply to a letter from John Fleet of Miramichi, New Brunswick, enquiring about openings in the local lumber market, J. and W. Boyd, prominent lumber merchants, wrote the following passage on February 9, 1878:

... regarding cooperage stuff we can give you no encouragement to ship. There are numbers of small mills in different bays of the Island that cut nothing else but cooperage stuff and fully supply all their wants.<sup>49</sup>

Over 90 percent of the total amount of staves and heading required by the

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<sup>47</sup>Report of the Commission of Enquiry Investigating the Seafisheries of Newfoundland and Labrador other than the Sealfishery (St. John's: King's Printer, 1937), p. 59.

<sup>48</sup>Newfoundland Board of Trade Papers, 1909, Report by William A Munn, W.F. Goodridge and F.W. Horwood concerning Wooden Packages, October 16, 1909.

<sup>49</sup>J. and W. Boyd, Letter Book, 1875-1878; Daily News, December 9, 1896. This is an account of the beginning of a saw mill located in Lee Bight of Random Sound, Trinity Bay, which gives details of the size of the plant, its marketing practices and transportation routes.

cooperages was produced in Newfoundland sawmills,<sup>50</sup> but this cooperage stock was delivered to St. John's as a semi-manufactured product. The staves and heading were only cut and dressed at the mill, and the coopers had to round and plane the heading and plane, cylinder-saw and joint the staves, and assemble the packages.<sup>51</sup>

The price of Newfoundland cooperage stock was a matter of controversy between the merchants and coopers. The merchants thought that the high prices of cooperage stock since around 1900 was caused by outmoded milling methods and recommended that "portable mills" be introduced and encouraged by the government. These "portable mills" included a boiler and engine, stave sawing machine, pony planer, a head rounder and cost approximately \$2,000. The union, for its part, stated that the problem was not a lack of technology but an overabundance of it in some of the merchants' shops and especially, no doubt, in the incorporated cooperages. The coopers claimed that with the introduction of barrel-making machinery the merchants:

appointed a purchasing-agent to go out in the market and buy stock to feed these machines, with the result that the cooperages of the city, were left bare of stock, while the Company's wharf at Hoyles-town literally groaned under its burthen, and numbers of schooners lay off, awaiting their turn to discharge their lumber freights. This lumber was taken in apparently regardless of cull or price, something hitherto unknown within the memory of the present generation, and consequently there was an absurd and inflated figure quoted for all kinds of cooperage stock which has remained soaring ever since.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>John Joy, "Boxes, Casks, Cartons and Drums: A Study of Newfoundland Cooperages in the Twentieth Century" (unpublished research paper, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1972).

<sup>51</sup>Board of Trade Papers, Committee on Cooperage Stock, October 16, 1909; Reply to the Board of Trade Committee on Cooperages Stock by the Coopers' Union, November 30, 1909.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

The coopers' union also said that the same insane purchasing procedures were used with the flour barrels which the merchants frequently purchased for \$0.25 each which was considered a reckless amount considering that these second-hand packages had to be rebuilt to meet the requirements of the trade. In addition, the coopers viewed with alarm wild speculation in timber limits which was in vogue at the time.<sup>53</sup>

(ii) Employment, Wages and Working Conditions

In 1871 the 204 coopers in St. John's formed the largest single group of workers in the city's manufacturing sector. While the aggregate number of coopers increased to 347 by 1890 and 394 by 1913, their numbers grew at a slower rate than many of the other trades. In 1871 coopers made up 31 percent of the total number of tradesmen and factory workers in St. John's. By 1890 that share had fallen to 14 percent and continued to fall until by 1913 only 11 percent of St. John's tradesmen and factory workers were coopers.<sup>54</sup>

Wages and working conditions in St. John's cooperages were comparable to those in other producer goods industries; nevertheless, seasonal unemployment and economic depression generated attempts by employers to reduce wages, retard increases and to hire non-union workers. The St. John's coopers also had to compete with outport cooperages and deal with merchant attempts to mechanize the trade. While many of the coopers worked in independent shops, the merchants generally set the wages and

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Appendix III, Table 5.

consequently often clashed with them over wage rates and working conditions. For instance, in the spring of 1891 the coopers employed on James Murray's wharves were the victors of a strike brought on by an attempt to reduce their wages by almost 25 percent from \$1.30 to \$1.00 a day. In September of 1892 the St. John's Journeymen Coopers' Union was established and before Christmas of that year the 240-member union won a \$0.20 increase in their daily wages, raising it from \$1.30 to \$1.50 a day (15 percent).<sup>55</sup> A \$0.30 a day increase was negotiated sometime between 1900 and 1909 which brought their daily wage up from \$1.50 to \$1.80 (a 20 percent increase).<sup>56</sup>

The way in which coopers and merchants negotiated these contracts was by means of a complex schedule of piece work rates with a limitation placed on the number of packages which could be produced in a day by one man. For instance, under the contract signed between 1900 and 1909 the coopers made 15 birch drums a day for \$0.12 each, bringing a normal day's wage to \$1.80. Also, under the same contract coopers who made 75 pairs of birch headings earned \$1.80 for that day's work and so on.<sup>57</sup> The merchants, at least on one occasion, expressed dissatisfaction with the system:

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<sup>55</sup>R. Hattenhauer, "A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland" (unpublished report prepared for the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador, Summer, 1970), p. 124.

<sup>56</sup>Newfoundland Board of Trade Papers, 1909, Reply to the Board of Trade Committee on Cooperage Stock by the Coopers' Union, November 30, 1909.

<sup>57</sup>Board of Trade Papers, 1909, Report by William A. Munn, W.F. Goodridge and F.W. Horwood concerning wooden packages, October 16, 1909. They compared their figures on the labour costs with those in Halifax and found their local figures to be higher.

We look upon it as an injustice to the profession of Coopers to be limited to so many drums per day when a man is paid good wages.

Nowadays when work of all kinds is taken up more and more by specialists it is an injustice to the trade of the country to have its journeymen limited to what work they must only do.<sup>58</sup>

The union, on the other hand, simply pointed out that when the contract was negotiated the merchants had readily agreed to it and that the union appreciated their promptness. The writers of the report, James Cooney and James J. Power, respectively president and secretary of the union, also stated that by paying each man the same piece rate and limiting the amount of work the merchants could be sure the finished product was well-crafted.<sup>59</sup> Of course, this technique was also an effective way of spreading the work among the membership.

The coopers were not only concerned about the quantity of their wage package but also the kind of payment. At least until the 1890s, coopers (and probably all workers in St. John's and Newfoundland) were still plagued with the truck system. Early in 1855 coopers working for several merchant firms went on strike protesting the payment of their wages in 'truck'. In the ensuing court case the coopers won the decision; but, the merchants circumvented the result by redefining the coopers as "handymen" and not "tradesmen" and continued to pay them in truck. In April 1895 the coopers continued their struggle against the truck system by striking against Bowring Brothers.<sup>60</sup>

A major cause of contention between the coopers in St. John's and

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., reply by coopers dated November 20, 1909.

<sup>60</sup> Hattenhauer, "A Brief History of Newfoundland", p. 127.

city merchants, and certainly the most publicized, concerned the introduction of a union stamp. The merchants made good use of competition between St. John's and outport coopers, and it was generally held that the outport product was cheaper than the St. John's one.<sup>61</sup> The coopers' union viewed this with some concern, not only because they were being underbid, but also because they frequently had to repair poorly-made and damaged outport goods. The union introduced the stamp or trademark issue in 1897 when business was so bad that they had difficulty attracting apprentices. Within two months the journeymen received the support of the Master Coopers' Association which announced that as of the first of August, 1897, they would boycott any merchant who handled non-union packages.<sup>62</sup> Between October 4, 1904, and November 11, 1904, the members of the coopers' union went on strike against the use of non-union outport packages by St. John's merchants. The strike ended in defeat for the union and the reputed cheaper outport barrels remained the most serious threat to the union.<sup>63</sup>

The employment of non-union workers and the introduction of barrel-making machinery were the remaining concerns of the union. As early as June of 1898 some shops which employed non-union labour were warned that

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 100. On the other side of the coin the outport coopers had their own troubles. Their market was restricted unless they exported to St. John's and frequently the outport fish merchants were not at all responsive in their business dealings with local coopers. Peter Keough of Carbonear was one cooper who apparently was poorly treated by Ryan and Company, an outport fish merchant firm. Ryan and Company Papers, Local Letters, October 27, November 16, December 26, 1908.

if the practice continued their coopers would strike. Harvey and Company introduced machinery for the manufacture of herring barrels early in 1900 and when the union men refused to work they were replaced with non-union labour. A second strike took place on April 24, 1900, over this same issue.<sup>64</sup> While several attempts were made between 1900 and 1914 to mechanize the cooperage trade, none of these companies survived to the beginning of World War I.

(iii) Products, Markets and Style of Business

The output of wooden packages made in St. John's cooperages was extensive and the number of different products considerable. The cooperages basically had two lines of product: 'tight' work and 'loose' work.<sup>65</sup> The local cooperages manufactured tight oak barrels and sold them to fish merchants for the packaging and export of cod liver oil and seal oil. The market for this particular package was significant but not of overwhelming importance in the total business of the trade.<sup>66</sup> Pickled fish barrels were made of spruce or fir and held together with riveted iron hoops, and reeds were often used as caulking between the staves to make them water-

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., pp. 127-128.

<sup>65</sup>'Tight' barrels were waterproof and sometimes, depending on the skill of the cooper, airtight, while 'loose' work was not.

<sup>66</sup>Shannon Ryan, "The Newfoundland Cod Fishery in the Nineteenth Century" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1971), Table 5, pp. 216-217. From 1870 to 1901 the value of cod liver oil exports fluctuated between \$650,000 and \$200,000 on a general downward trend following 1884. The value of seal oil exports during the period 1870 to 1900 fluctuated from a high close to \$1,000,000 (1871) to as low as \$200,000 (1893) and exhibited a general downward trend following 1883. Ibid., Table 8, pp. 222-223.



proof. Pickled herring was unquestionably the most important market for tight softwood barrels.<sup>67</sup> Packages for dried salt cod fish were by far the most important product made in St. John's cooperages. Salt cod exports for the period 1870 to 1914 generally fluctuated between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 quintals every year worth roughly between \$4,000,000 and \$8,000,000. The packages used for salt fish were all loose or slack work made of either birch or softwood staves and hooped with birch saplings. The hardwood birch packages were sold mainly for fish destined for Brazil, especially the areas surrounding Pernam and Bahia in the north. For all practical purposes, all the fish shipped to these markets was packaged because of consumer preference in this hot and humid South American country. These birch packages were manufactured in two sizes: drums (128 pounds capacity) and half-drums (64 pounds capacity). The packages used in the West Indies trade, on the other hand, were largely made of softwood -- spruce and pine -- and hooped with split birch saplings. The most popular was the four-quintal cask. A large portion of fish exported to the Iberian Peninsula and Mediterranean countries, however, was shipped in bulk, but towards the end of the nineteenth century, some of these places, Spain particularly, demanded that their fish be packaged in casks. Indeed, the demand for casks was growing at such a rate that the Newfoundland sawmills were taken by surprise shortly after the turn of the century.

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<sup>67</sup>The value of herring exports ranged between \$430,000 and \$100,000 between 1870 and 1900 with a slow downward trend following 1883. Yearly salmon exports between 1870 and 1901 went from approximately \$50,000 a year to almost \$140,000 with no long term trends. Ibid., Table 6, pp. 218-220.

The market for packages, therefore, was large and fairly steady.<sup>68</sup>

The price of these packages appears to have varied dramatically from time to time and was a matter of some controversy. The merchants complained mostly about the price of drums and half-drums, charging that drums purchased in St. John's cost between \$0.40 and \$0.50 apiece and half-drums cost between \$0.35 and \$0.45 each, while prices in Halifax for drums ran between \$0.21 and \$0.25 each and half-drums were \$0.20 to \$0.22 apiece. The coopers, however, thought that these quotations for St. John's drums and half-drums were too high and that a more realistic figure, taking into consideration the existing fluctuation in demand and supply, would have been \$0.38 each for drums and \$0.33 for half-drums. The coopers also suggested that some firms in St. John's were only offering \$0.36 and \$0.30 respectively for drums and half-drums.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, only a few years previous to the Board of Trade Report on Cooperages in 1909, drums sold for \$0.21 each and half-drums were \$0.18 each. "What was the reason?" the coopers asked. "Simply because there was no demand for the article, and just as long as the world lasts this inexorable law of supply and demand shall continue to rule prices of all commodities."<sup>70</sup> The prices for birch packages apparently were the only ones which the merchants complained about, for softwood casks in fact were cheaper than

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<sup>68</sup> Board of Trade Papers, Committee on Cooperage Stock, October 16, 1909. Another package type which might have been used at this time especially for heavy-salted-hard-dried fish was the two-quintal or two hundredweight barrel. Joy, "Boxes, Casks, Cartons and Drums", p. 25.

<sup>69</sup> Board of Trade Papers, Committee on Cooperage Stock, October 16, 1909; the Coopers' reply, November 30, 1909.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

elsewhere and everyone seemed satisfied with them. The merchants and coopers even talked of trying to develop a softwood drum that might be satisfactorily received in the Brazilian market.

We believe that a more suitable drum can be manufactured from soft wood than [what] shipper[s] have used in the past. We would suggest a slightly heavier stave, well-dried and well-jointed and believe that a package can eventually be made from fir wood or spruce to give satisfaction.<sup>71</sup>

The markets for cooperage goods in St. John's appear to have been rather rigidly divided between the shops by custom and habit. That is, a master cooper generally had one major customer with whom he had either a written or verbal contract and perhaps a couple of others who would purchase any surplus. Competition was limited in St. John's given the industry-wide wage rates, and persons selling cooperage goods at below the agreed price were reprimanded. One man, Patrick McGrath, who was also a customs officer, brought down on his head the wrath of the master coopers in the spring of 1897 when he was accused of making a contract with Bowring Brothers to sell cooperage goods "at prices under the sum agreed to by our body". They charged that McGrath was able to do so because of his position with the government "which gives him an undue advantage over us, thereby interfering with our legitimate profits, and in other ways causing an injury to our business". While the master coopers do not make clear in their petition to the government exactly how McGrath used his customs office unethically, they do make it clear that they wanted the government to take steps "to prevent a recurrence of this infringement of our just rights".<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Colonial Secretary's Papers, Reports and Petitions, 1897, Petition from the master coopers of St. John's to the Executive Council, dated March 12, 1897.

Besides competition with the outports and among St. John's coopers, some fish merchants were concerned about competition from Halifax. They compared the prices of drums and half-drums in St. John's with those of Halifax and mentioned at least one Newfoundland firm which sent its fish to Halifax to be packaged. But considering the size and quality of Nova Scotia's salt cod fishery, these comparisons were dismissed by the St. John's coopers in the following comment:

Halifax is but a one-horse shipping centre as compared to our city and is no criterion to judge by, anyway their best output in packing fish for a day is between 300 and 400 packages, a number that has actually been turned out before breakfast on a pinch on certain of our wharves.<sup>73</sup>

### Ship Chandlery

#### Major Firms

Block and pump making was a small trade in St. John's which died between 1870 and 1914. Totally dependent on sailing vessels in the shipping trade and the fishery for its market, this craft passed away with the introduction of steam and diesel engines and competition from imports carried by local merchants. In 1871 Peter Duchemin operated the only shop in town. His specialty was the manufacture of ships' pumps; and, in the blockmaking end of the business he was said to use the latest techniques and the most up-to-date machinery available. Duchemin, however, died in May of 1871 and the business was taken over by his son, James L. Duchemin. By 1879 James had added a novelty and hardware section to his business to

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<sup>73</sup>Board of Trade Papers, Committee on Cooperage Stock, October 16, 1909; the coopers' reply, November 30, 1909.

supplement his income from the manufacture of blocks, mast hoops, pumps and deadeyes. In 1890 the Buchemin shop was still in the block and pump business but it did not survive the decade.<sup>74</sup> By 1890, however, one other firm had entered this trade and was owned by the Myler Brothers, manufacturing pumps, deadeyes and blocks of all styles and sizes, repairing compasses and dealing in lignum vitae and mast hoops.<sup>75</sup> By 1898 Myler Brothers, Malcolm Hampton and W.T. Boone operated blockmakers' shops but by 1913 only Hampton remained.<sup>76</sup> The market had contracted because of the decline of sail power and competition from importers of blocks, pumps and mast hoops had captured what remained of the market.

#### Characteristics of the Trade

Practically all of the raw materials used in the manufacture of blocks had to be imported. Brass patent bushings, which could not be made in Newfoundland, were purchased from a foreign company. Lignum vitae, the hardwood used in making the sheaves of the blocks, was also brought into the the country, and the cost was very volatile ranging between \$25 and \$50 a ton. Oak wood needed for mast hoops also had to be imported. For a time the Myler Brothers had birch mast hoops made on the West Coast; but these proved not to be durable and eventually were unmarketable.

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<sup>74</sup>P.K. Devine, Ye Olde St. John's, 1750-1936 (St. John's, 1936), p. 151; Morning Chronicle, June 1, 1871; Evening Telegram, December 19 1879, September 11, October 23, 1880, December 21, 1881; Newfoundland Directory, 1890; Evidence as to a Revision of the Tariff Taken Before the Hon. The Receiver General, January, 1898, p. 13.

<sup>75</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>76</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 13, 42; Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

Indeed, it seems that when the birch mast hoops proved unsatisfactory the Myler Brothers imported the finished product from abroad and stopped manufacturing mast hoops altogether. The production of these blockmaking shops was not very large; for the Myler Brothers never used more than one ton of lignum vitae a year. Since the Bank Crash in 1894 they had to let go three of their seven hands they employed that year and the remaining four worked on short time.<sup>77</sup>

### Sail Lofts

#### Major Firms

Sailmaking, like block and pump making, was another craft related to the fishery and shipping trade which all but disappeared between 1870 and 1914. The number of sailing vessels, especially in the shipping and sealing industry, started to decline some years before the 1870s. For example, only half the number of sailing vessels which prosecuted the seal fishery in the mid-1850s went to the front in the mid-1860s.<sup>78</sup>

A few lofts were run by sailmakers and some merchant firms before 1870; by 1871 at least 20 sailmakers worked in St. John's, and at least four sail lofts were known to be in operation. John Shamler's loft made all the sails for Baine Johnston's sealing fleet and was a bustling place in the winter and spring when the sealing fleet was under canvas. He was still in business running one of the largest shops in the city in 1890

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Levi George Chafe, Chafe's Sealing Book (St. John's: Trade Printers and Publishers, 1923), p. 6.

but was not in business at the beginning of World War I. George Dicks also had a loft in 1871, but between that time and 1890 he went into partnership with one of his relatives in the firm, J. and G. Dicks. This shop, like Shamler's, did not survive to 1913. A third shop known to be operating in 1871 belonged to Charles Hutchings who was prominent in the trade at the same time as Dicks. By 1890 he was still in business but in a smaller shop than either Dicks or Shamler and, like both of his peers, was not in business in 1913. Benjamin Morris owned the fourth shop in 1871. By 1890 his shop was still in business but was operated by Isaac Morris and by 1913 this loft, unlike those of his fellow craftsmen, dominated what remained of the local trade.<sup>79</sup>

#### Characteristics of the Trade

The raw materials for sailmaking were practically all imported, the most important of these being canvas. Rope and twine was also used in the manufacture of sails for roping and seaming. While the latter goods were made in Newfoundland by the Colonial Cordage Company from 1883 onward, at least one sailmaker, P.J. Motty, expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of the local product when he was making a case for lower customs duties on materials.<sup>80</sup>

Employment in the sailmaking trade fluctuated significantly between 1870 and 1914. In 1871 some twenty sailmakers worked in St.

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<sup>79</sup>Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 106; Newfoundland Directory, 1871, 1890 and 1913.

<sup>80</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 24.

John's. By 1890 that number increased to 56, but 23 years later, in 1913, only 27 worked in the city.<sup>81</sup> The wages in this trade were good in comparison to some. In 1880 sailmakers made \$1.50 a day or \$9.00 for a six-day week, while coopers made only \$1.30 a day in the early 1890s. Indeed, in the fall of that year the sailmakers went on strike demanding an increase in their daily wage from \$1.50 to \$2.00 a day. The result of the strike is unknown; however, it is likely that it was broken because the fall was a slow time of year for the sailmakers and the employers were organized to resist any pay raise.<sup>82</sup> This strike was undertaken without the protection of a union and, indeed, the workers did not establish one until late in September of 1896.<sup>83</sup> The sailmakers, while earning higher wages than some trades, also experienced a high level of unemployment. They frequently worked at their trade for as little as four months out of the year.<sup>84</sup> As the nineteenth century came to a close, the conditions of the sailmakers continued to deteriorate and by the end of World War I the union was disbanded because most of its membership had left the country in search of employment.<sup>85</sup>

Besides manufacturing sails, which was the main work in the trade,

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 18. It was stated by the President of the Sailmakers' Union that in 1898 there were only 27 sailmakers in the city. While this may have only been union membership, his evidence cannot be ignored. According to one source, the union once boasted of a membership of 70. Hattenhauer, "A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland", p. 130.

<sup>82</sup>Evening Telegram, October 6, 8, 1880.

<sup>83</sup>Hattenhauer, "A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland", p. 130.

<sup>84</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, p. 18.

<sup>85</sup>Hattenhauer, "A Brief History of Newfoundland", p. 130.



these craftsmen also made tents, awnings and tarpaulin covers. While they complained of foreign competition and demanded tariff protection against ready-made sails and tarpaulins, their main salvos concerning competition were directed at St. Pierre. The St. John's sailmakers claimed that most of the sails used in Fortune Bay and all along the South and West Coasts were purchased in St. Pierre and smuggled back to Newfoundland. Schooners, reportedly, freighted shipments of old sails to St. Pierre to have them repaired and returned to Newfoundland with both the old repaired and newly manufactured ones without paying any duty.<sup>86</sup> Beyond this, the market for sailmaking products was steadily shrinking and at the end of World War I, with the dissolution of the union, the trade was all but finished.

### Conclusion

The marine and fishery trades in Newfoundland were the old and traditional trades common to sea ports -- cordage works, cooperages, pump and block factories and sail lofts. During the period 1870-1914 their survival depended as much on technical marine developments as government aid and entrepreneurship. Indeed, two of these trades, block and pump factories and sail lofts, all but disappeared during these years because of the transformation of marine propulsion systems from sail to steam and diesel engines. Gradually, the market for sails, blocks, mast hoops, deadeyes and wooden pumps disappeared. On the other hand, the rope walk,

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<sup>86</sup>Tariff Commission, 1898, pp. 18, 56. The sailmakers also lobbied for a sail inspector for both the safety of shipping and the business that a properly regulated sail inspection would bring to their shops.

owned by members of prominent St. John's merchant families, prospered, even though it did not grow as rapidly as some industries, notably the clothing industry. Practically all the machinery and materials were imported; and while employment figures were often high, wages were not, for many young boys and girls were employed in the factory and the company relied a great deal on a "putting-out" system for net-making. The rope walk produced a wide range of common cordage, ropes, lines and twines and imported some kinds of lines and twines which it could not produce economically. With the help of government aid through subsidies, drawbacks and tariff protection, the cordage company controlled the local market, but at the same time it was imprisoned by it and production levels followed the ups and downs of the fishing industry throughout the period.

The cooperage trade was the largest employer in the St. John's manufacturing sector in the early 1870s, and while the work force continued to grow the number of coopers rose at a slower rate than workers in other trades, especially those producing consumer goods. St. John's merchants operated many of the larger cooperages in the city but failed in their attempts to mechanize and centralize the industry. The coopers, on the other hand, were a well-organized and highly-visible group of workers who negotiated industry-wide contracts with the merchants and the major master coopers, and took public positions on various issues from union stamps to mechanization of the trade. The cooperages were one of the few trades to use local materials successfully on a large scale, purchasing all their cooperage stock from Newfoundland mills. They manufactured a wide assortment of packages to meet the needs of the fishery, and did not experience any intrusions from foreign competitors because

of the prohibitive cost of freighting empty barrels to Newfoundland. The cooperages, however, were highly vulnerable to production fluctuations in the fishing industry.

Marine and fishery trades in St. John's declined in importance relative to other manufacturing industries between 1870 and 1914. The major causes for this result were technical changes in the markets for some of their products, like sails, blocks and pumps, and the stagnation of the Newfoundland marine economy. These trades depended, more than any of the others, on a vibrant and dynamic marine sector and the decline and stagnation that occurred in the Newfoundland fishery during this period severely restricted the marine and fishery trades.

## CHAPTER VI

### HEAVY INDUSTRY

#### Introduction

Heavy industry, which includes gas works, dry docks, engine and boiler works, foundries, blacksmith, tinsmith and plumber shops, was the most dynamic part of trades and industries manufacturing producer goods in St. John's. The total number of workers employed in heavy industry grew significantly over the period from less than 80 in 1871 to 470 in 1890 and 675 in 1913; yet, relative to growth in the entire manufacturing sector, heavy industry did not materially increase its share of the industrial work force. The larger works and foundries were owned by a small group of industrialists, major tradesmen and St. John's merchants, but by the end of the period the dry dock and all the engine and boiler works were in the hands of the railway which thereby controlled the major portion of the city's ship repair business. While there was a healthy trade in scrap metal in St. John's among the foundries, most of the raw materials and machinery in this sector were imported. St. John's heavy industry divided its energies between manufacturing new products and jobbing. The gas company manufactured gas from coal, serviced their customers' lights and stoves and maintained the company's gas lines. The engine and boiler works manufactured boilers and a few machines but were mainly involved in repairing boilers and other marine equipment, while the foundries manufactured a wide range of products from stoves to wind-

lasses and did some general jobbing as well. Tinsmiths and plumbers were often the retail arm for the foundries, fitted the stoves they sold and manufactured and repaired tinware of all kinds, and the blacksmiths usually did a general blacksmithing business with special emphasis on ship work.

### Gas Works

#### Major Firms

The St. John's Gas Light Company, one of the oldest and longest surviving St. John's factories, was incorporated with a nominal capital of £6,000 (\$24,000) by a special act of the House of Assembly in late April 1844.<sup>1</sup> Robert Job, a major St. John's merchant who chaired a committee that lobbied for the introduction of gas light, was the main thrust behind the project. During the summer and fall, due to the continued work of the committee and the salesmanship of Mr. McAusland, a foreign utilities contractor, the company raised the necessary funds to start construction. McAusland was hired in 1845 to build the gas works and lay pipes servicing the downtown area. At the end of construction 290 shops, 24 houses and 41 wharves from the Custom House to the Newman property in the East End were lit by the gas company under the management of Andrew H. Thompson.<sup>2</sup> The major shareholders at this time included Robert Job, Peter McBride, Henry P. Bowring, Lawrence O'Brien, Kenneth McLea, Henry P. Thomas, John Stuart and Walter Grieve, all of whom were

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<sup>1</sup>Statutes of Newfoundland, 1844, 7 Vic., cap. 12.

<sup>2</sup>J.M. Devine, Ye Olde St. John's, 1750-1936 (St. John's, 1936), pp. 86-87.

major St. John's merchants.<sup>3</sup> By the beginning of the period 1870-1914 the major investors of the company had changed considerably, for only the Bowring family, in the person of Charles Bowring, was still represented. The remaining shareholders in 1870 were city merchants including David Sclater, J.B. Wood, Richard Harvey, James Baird, Kenneth H. Prowse and Robert Hunt.<sup>4</sup> Between the early 1870s and 1891 the company's sharelist was once again overhauled with only the Bowrings, represented by Edgar R. and Henry A. Bowring, James Baird and David Sclater remaining from the 1871 group, while James Gordon, Robert Prowse and William H. Rennie were new to the company. Meanwhile, the paid-up capital was raised from £6,000 (\$24,000) to \$48,000.<sup>5</sup> From 1890 to the end of the period the company continued to do business and appeared to be thriving with apparently little change in its sharelist or capital structure.

#### Characteristics of the Trade

At the establishment of the company, the gas works manufactured gas from coal for the purpose of lighting and sold waste lime, a by-product of the process, to farmers near St. John's.<sup>6</sup> Many customers, however, were dissatisfied with the service given by the company and on a number of occasions rumours circulated through town that a new gas company was being

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<sup>3</sup>Statutes of Newfoundland, 1844, 7 Vic., cap. 12.

<sup>4</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1871.

<sup>5</sup>Statutes of Newfoundland, 1895, 59 Vic., cap. 39; Annual Statement of the St. John's Gas Light Company for 1891, JHA 1892, Appendix, p. 405.

<sup>6</sup>Evening Telegram, November 17, 1881.

formed to improve the situation. For instance, in March of 1880, "J.K.L.", in a letter to the editor of the Evening Telegram, complained about the dimness of the gas lights on Duckworth and Water Streets, the principal area covered by the gas company, and described how some businesses were obliged to use candles and lamps in order to see properly.<sup>7</sup> Ten days later another letter, which appeared in the same paper signed "Luminary", referred to the sale of 80 shares in the gas company as a sign that the gas works was in bad shape. He encouraged shareholders to sell their holdings and called on local capitalists to form a new company to provide the service.<sup>8</sup> Despite these rumblings of discontent, the St. John's Gas Company prevailed and no new companies were formed.

Nevertheless, with the coming of electric light to Newfoundland in the mid-1880s, the company needed a new market for its product.<sup>9</sup> By at least the mid-1890s the company, aided by a decrease in the cost of production,<sup>10</sup> had expanded its operations to include gas heat, and by 1900

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<sup>7</sup>Morning Chronicle, January 14, 1871; Evening Telegram, March 8, 1880; Devine, Olde St. John's, pp. 86-87.

<sup>8</sup>Evening Telegram, March 12, 1880. One interesting job that was advertised just before the complaints appeared in the paper was for a "thoroughly competent gas fitter". His job was to check all meters and handle all written complaints! Ibid., February 11, 1880.

<sup>9</sup>Annual Statements of the St. John's Electric Light Company 1886-1887, 1889-1892, 1895-1896, JHA 1887-1888, 1890-1893, 1896-1897; Devine, Olde St. John's, p. 87; H.M. Mosdell, When Was That?: A Chronological Dictionary of Important Events in Newfoundland Down to and Including the Year 1922 (St. John's: Trade Printers and Publishers, Ltd., 1923), p. 37.

<sup>10</sup>The price of gas made at the works declined considerably between 1880 and 1913. On July 1, 1881, the price was set at 16s. 3p. (\$3.23) per thousand cubic feet; however, by 1903 the price had fallen to \$1.50 per thousand cubic feet, less than half of the price during the 1880s. Evening Telegram, July 2, 1881; George T. Oliver and John Burke, The People's Songster, Buyers' Guide, and Gems of Poetry and Prose (St. John's, 1900), p. 7.

had opened a retailing and rental outlet supplying gas stoves for heating and cooking. At that time they did business on the strength that:

A large number of Gas Stoves are now used in Saint John's and had proved most satisfactory, both (sic) as regards

Convenience,  
Cleanliness,  
and Economy.<sup>11</sup>

By 1913 this part of the business had developed considerably, the number of employees on the premises had increased from 12 to 48 between 1890 and 1913, and the advertising was much more confident, if not altogether brazen:

Do you use a gas range? If not, why not?

The gas you consume will not cost as much as wood or coal required to do the same work. Your meals can be ready on the moment. The gas range will act the same one day as the other -- it is unvaried ... always right.<sup>12</sup>

The gas company thrived because of its unique position in the St. John's economy. First of all, it was a utility with a monopoly and was financed chiefly by its customers, the St. John's merchants. When electric lighting was introduced, the gas company relied more heavily on the marketing of its product for heating and cooking purposes and thereby prospered at least until 1914.

### Dry Docks and Engine and Boiler Works

#### Major Firms

In the 1850s Wood's dock in the East End and C.F. Bennett's shipyard were the two major centers for ship repair in the city.<sup>13</sup> By the

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<sup>11</sup>Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 7.

<sup>12</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913, p. 384.

<sup>13</sup>Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 47.



early 1870s, however, Bennett's operation had completely disappeared and John Woods, while still improving his facilities, was chiefly interested in providing dockage for the repair of small vessels.<sup>14</sup> With the increasing size of vessels and the limited capacity of these docks and slipways, it is not surprising that in the early 1860s a group of St. John's fish merchants joined together to form a dry dock company. The St. John's Floating Dry Dock Company was incorporated in 1861 with a paid-up capital of £5,500.<sup>15</sup> The largest shareholder, Stephen Rendell, a St. John's merchant, was the major force behind the formation of the company and its continued management at least until 1884.<sup>16</sup> Several other fish merchants were major shareholders, including W.B. Bowring, Robert Grieve, P.G. Tessier and R. Alexander.<sup>17</sup> Despite considerable maintenance expenditures the dock depreciated quickly, to such an extent that in 1873 the board of directors advised the shareholders to discontinue the lifting of large vessels and heavy sealing steamers. In 1874 they hoped "that before the

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<sup>14</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1871; Evening Telegram, April 22, 1881.

<sup>15</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 20, #155; Colonial Secretary's Papers, List of Incorporated Companies until 1899. The latter list also includes the North Atlantic Docking Company, but no mention is made of this company in the sources examined. It is likely that this company was either located elsewhere in Newfoundland, operated only a short time, or never opened for business at all.

<sup>16</sup>Reports of the St. John's Floating Dry Dock Company Limited, 1861-1884, JHA 1862-1885. From the beginning of the company in 1861 to at least 1882, and probably 1884, Rendell was the president of the board of directors and his name, rather than that of any other office or employee of the company, appeared alone as the signator on all annual statements of the company as printed in the Journal of the House of Assembly for the years indicated. Registry of Companies, No. 20, #155. Evidence in this file states that Rendell's estate was the major shareholder from 1900 onwards.

<sup>17</sup>First Report of the St. John's Floating Dry Dock to October 31, 1862, JHA 1863, Appendix, p. 1222.

existing Floating Dock becomes unsafe for lifting purposes, other and larger provisions will be made". The following year, however, the directors suggested that the physical facilities of the dry dock be expanded and the old sections repaired. They proposed that these additional costs be borne by a call of the general shareholders or by the issue of preferential shares. By 1880, the date of the next available annual report, an additional call had not been made on the shareholders nor were preferential shares issued by the company. Plans for the proposed graving dock undoubtedly intervened, and the floating dock continued on as best it could without the major repairs.<sup>18</sup> By 1884 the presidency of the company had been passed from S. Rendell to George A. Hutchings, another St. John's merchant, and new directors were gradually introduced to the board.<sup>19</sup> At the turn of the century James Gordon, yet another St. John's merchant and the estate of Stephen Rendell were the largest shareholders in the company.<sup>20</sup> Two years later the company was voluntarily wound-up, probably because of the better facilities at the graving dock,

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<sup>18</sup> Reports of the St. John's Floating Dry Dock Limited, 1873-1875, 1880, JHA 1874, 1876, 1881.

<sup>19</sup> Report of the St. John's Floating Dry Dock Limited, 1884, JHA 1885, Appendix, p. 616. The new directors included James Goodfellow, James Gordon and E.R. Bowring. James Goodfellow's name first appears in the report for 1881, JHA 1882, Appendix, p. 670. James Gordon is included in the 1891 directorate, JHA 1892, Appendix, p. 404. E.R. Bowring was on the board in 1892, JHA 1893, Appendix, p. 257. Each of these men served on the board for a number of years following the time they were appointed.

<sup>20</sup> Registry of Companies, NO. 20, #156, Sharelist to January 31, 1900. The company was owned by a total of 27 shareholders; however, Gordon and Rendell's estate (7.4 percent of the shareholders) owned 30.9 percent of the stock. Also, 55.9 percent of the stock was owned by five people (18.5 percent of the shareholders: Gordon, Rendell's Estate, Sir William V. Whiteway, Bowring Brothers and the trustee of James Goodfellow).

a slackening in the market for ship repair, and because a take-over was being proposed.<sup>21</sup>

In 1905 another incorporated company, using the same name as The St. John's Floating Dry Dock purchased the assets of the original firm. This company, with a paid-up capital of \$13,500, was a complete reorganization of the 1861 business; only three shareholders were common to both firms: Job Brothers, A.S. Rendell and A.F. Goodridge. At the start of this new company in 1905 a group of ten firms and individuals held \$1,000 worth of stock each.<sup>22</sup> By 1913, when the company was voluntarily disbanded, \$14,000 was paid into the company and the ownership of the firm was only slightly more concentrated than when it was established. The largest shareholder, James Baird, held \$2,100 worth of shares which represented over 14 percent of the total stock.<sup>23</sup> The reason for winding-up the company appears to have been for the purpose of reorganizing under a new name, The Terra Nova Dock Limited. In fact, that was practically the only change that took place for the \$16,000 paid-up capital in the firm was only slightly higher than its predecessor; all the shareholders but two were at one time or another investors in the previous company, and

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., #330, Resolution to Wind-up, January 4, 1902.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., No. 112, #722, Memorandum of Association, June 20, 1905; #918, Sharelist to December 31, 1906. These ten shareholders (58.8 percent of the total) owned 74.1 percent of the company's stock.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., #2031, letter from P.J. Berrigan to the Registrar of Companies, dated May 5, 1913, stating that a resolution providing for the voluntary winding-up of the company had been passed on April 3, 1913, and confirmed on April 21 of that year. Ibid., #2017, Sharelist to November 17, 1913.

the controlling interest of the firm was concentrated in the same hands.<sup>24</sup>

The graving dock, on the other hand, was a project of national concern. As the floating dock and slipways in St. John's harbour proved inadequate to handle the needs of the local shipping and fishing industries, pressure was placed on the government in the mid-1870s to arrange for a more permanent and substantial facility. Within the next two years the government hired a London engineering firm, Messrs. Kinniple and Morris, to provide them with an expert opinion and an estimate of the construction cost for a stone graving dock. In 1882 a contract was signed with Mason Loomis, a foreign contractor under a newly incorporated company, The Newfoundland Dock Company, Limited, to build the dock at an estimated cost of just over \$1,000,000.<sup>25</sup> Before the year was out, however, both Loomis and the government became interested in a wooden dry dock system developed by J.E. Simpson and Company of New York which could be built several hundred thousand dollars cheaper than the stone dry dock.<sup>26</sup> For some unknown reason Loomis was unable to meet his contract commitments, dropped out of the deal and the contract for building the graving dock went to J.E. Simpson and Company. The government owned the dock and

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., No. 257, #2043, Memorandum of Association, May 26, 1913; #2370, Sharelist to February 16, 1914.

<sup>25</sup> Kinniple and Morris, Report on Proposed Graving Dock and Harbour Improvements at St. John's, Newfoundland (St. John's, 1878), as cited in Vernon Robert Snelgrove, "The Construction of a Dry Dock at St. John's, Newfoundland" (unpublished research paper, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1972); Statutes of Newfoundland, 1882, 45 Vic., cap. 3.

<sup>26</sup> Colonial Secretary's Correspondence, November 29, 1882, A Report on the Docks in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore by Commander G. Robinson, December 20, 1882, pp. 642-656, as cited in Snelgrove, "The Construction of a Dry Dock".

financed the project by issuing four percent bonds to a total of \$600,000 and two years later, when the work was finished and some \$566,000 had been spent, the dock was leased to J.E. Simpson and Company for \$15,000 a year.<sup>27</sup> The New York company operated the dry dock until 1894 when, as a result of a dispute over the payment of rent and dredging costs, the government cancelled the lease.<sup>28</sup>

At this point Harvey and Company and James Angel and Company took advantage of the dispute between the government and J.E. Simpson's firm and submitted a joint tender for the operation of the dry dock. For some reason this tender was rejected by the government and was accepted only after several revisions and when the tender was submitted by James Angel and Company alone. The irony of the deal was that Angel was reluctant to get involved in the first place but was persuaded by Harvey, who wanted the north side of the dock for coal storage and general warehousing. Nevertheless, years later it became generally known that Harvey and Company remained a silent partner throughout the life of the contract. Angel and Harvey, therefore, leased the dry dock from the government for approximately

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<sup>27</sup> Statement of Simpson's Improved Dry Dock to February 25, 1886 (account of expenditure on the Dry Dock, and the compensation to parties for land taken and also dredging, in consequence of damage to property), JHA 1886, Appendix, pp. 602-603. The figure given in the text was one estimated before all the outstanding claims for damages were settled; but, the auditors thought that by the time that these were settled there would still be \$20,000 left from the government bond issue of \$600,000. The question remains as to whether or not J.E. Simpson and Company made any capital investment of their own during the construction of the dock. This, however, is unlikely seeing that the agreement between the company and the government was in the form of a building contract with an option to lease the property from the government upon completion of the graving dock. Statutes of Newfoundland, 1883, 46 Vic., cap. 5.

<sup>28</sup> D.W. Prowse, A History of Newfoundland (London: 1896), p. 510.

\$11,000 a year with the intention of refitting the shops on the premises "with the latest and best machinery procurable".<sup>29</sup> The contract lasted until 1898 when the government cancelled the lease through an act of the legislature by including the dry dock in the Railway Contract of 1898 with R.G. Reid. Reid bought the dry dock for \$325,000 or just over half of the original construction cost, refitted the dock with new equipment and built a machine shop on the property to replace an old one at Whitbourne. With this transaction, plus the renovations made to the property, Robert G. Reid had a deep water terminus for his railway and steamships, a dry dock for the repair of ships entering the port of St. John's and a machine shop for the building and repair of rolling stock.<sup>30</sup> The combined dry dock and machine shop was far and away the largest heavy metal operation in the city by 1913, employing over 130 tradesmen, labourers and management personnel.<sup>31</sup>

The first engine and boiler works in St. John's began as a branch of The St. John's Iron Foundry. In 1873 the Angel family established a foundry depot on Water Street called the Victoria Works which was managed by James Angel. Some years later, James Angel purchased the branch outright and expanded the business into an engine and boiler works. In the

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<sup>29</sup>Evening Telegram, April 26-29, 1902; Henry Youmans Mott, Newfoundland Men: A Collection of Biographical Sketches, with Portraits of Sons and Residents of the Island who had become known in Commercial, and Political Life (Concord, New Hampshire: R.W. and J.F. Cragg, 1894), p. 47; John F. Kennedy (ed.), Who's Who and Why in Canada (and in Newfoundland); A Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Living Canadians and Notable Men of Newfoundland (Toronto: Canadian Press Association, Limited, 1912), Volume I, p. 185.

<sup>30</sup>Snelgrove, "Dry Dock", p. 24; Evening Telegram, April 26, 1902.

<sup>31</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

mid-1880s he was joined by Alexander D. Brown, his son-in-law, in the partnership James Angel and Company, and this company was from that time to the turn of the century the proprietor of the Victoria Works.<sup>32</sup>

By 1890 another major engine and boiler works, The Terra Nova Foundry, was operating in St. John's. John Ledingham owned this business which proved to be the chief competitor of the Victoria Engine and Boiler Works. On May 31, 1892, the machine shop and storeroom were completely destroyed by fire at an estimated loss of \$14,500; but, despite this setback the business recovered and continued in operation. In 1899 the foundry was purchased by a group of local businessmen for \$30,000 -- the initial capital stock of the company. The major entrepreneur behind this take-over was John Anderson, a major St. John's merchant who was both the secretary of the new company and the largest shareholder in the Terra Nova Engine and Boiler Works controlling 28 percent of the paid-up capital in 1899.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Mott, Newfoundland Men, p. 47; Kennedy, Who's Who and Why, p. 153.

<sup>33</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890. The Terra Nova Foundry employed about the same number of people as the Newfoundland Consolidated Foundry in 1890; Daily Colonist, July 6, 1891; Royal Gazette, May 31, 1892; Registry of Companies, No. 1, #1, Sharelist to December 20, 1899. Under this major reorganization of the foundry five of a total of 56 shareholders (8.9 percent) owned 45 percent of the stock. Besides John Anderson, the major shareholders included Daniel Monroe, William C. Job, Francis J. Hunter, Augustus W. Harvey, Edgar R. Bowring and Walter Baine Grieve. By the end of 1902 the full amount of the nominal capital \$50,000 had been called and paid. In 1907 the Terra Nova Engine and Boiler Works was sold to the Angel Engineering Company, Limited. At the time of the sale the ownership of the Terra Nova Works was less concentrated than at its inception with six of 61 shareholders (9.8 percent) controlling 34.8 percent of the shares. All the previously mentioned shareholders were still prominent in the company with the exception of Augustus W. Harvey who had died on February 7, 1903. H.M. Mosdell, When Was That?: A Chronological Dictionary of Important Events in Newfoundland Down to and Including the Year 1922 (St. John's: Trade Printers and Publishers, Ltd., 1923), p. 57. Large new investors included Henry F. Bradshaw, Elizabeth Browning, Stephen H. Knight, Daniel Ryan and Robert Freeman. Registry of Companies, No. 1, #961, Sharelist to February 6, 1907.

In the interim between 1890 and 1913 a most interesting series of events took place in the heavy metal trades in St. John's. It has already been mentioned that in the 1890s James Angel and Company expanded their operation at the Victoria Engine and Boiler Works by leasing the graving dock, and that Robert G. Reid purchased the dock in 1898 under a railway contract with the government. Following this deal, Alexander D. Brown, James Angel's partner in the engine and boiler works, stayed on with the railway as general superintendent and engineer. James Angel, on the other hand, founded a new firm, The Angel Engineering and Supply Company Limited, with his two sons, John and Frederick W. Angel. This business had a nominal capital of \$100,000, three-quarters of which were taken up and divided equally between James, John and Frederick W. Angel; but, no calls were made on these shares at this time.<sup>34</sup> On February 17, 1908, the company negotiated a trust deed, mortgaging the property, buildings and machinery held on the West End of Water Street to secure the issue of a \$30,000 debenture. The trustees of the agreement were the Honourable James Angel of Angel Engineering and Supply Company and John Anderson of the Terra Nova Engine and Boiler Works. At about the same time an indenture between these two companies was signed bringing about a merger. The Terra Nova Works' shareholders received corresponding shares in the Angel Engineering and Supply Company Limited for those they held in their own business. In return for the surrender of the property, buildings and machinery of the company in the East End, the Terra Nova Works shareholders also received an additional 210 shares. By the time all of these transfers of property

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<sup>34</sup>Kennedy, Who's Who and Why, p. 185; Registry of Companies, No. 77, #536, Memorandum of Association, January 7, 1904; #824, Sharelist to February 19, 1905.



and shares were completed the Angel Engineering and Supply Company still emerged as one of the most tightly controlled of all the incorporated companies in heavy industry, for the Angels, James and his two sons, John and Frederick, owned 50.5 percent of the company's shares.<sup>35</sup> Four years after this merger, however, the Angel Engineering and Supply Company was absorbed by the Reid Newfoundland Company, Limited. While the company still had a capital of \$100,000 at the time of the take-over by Reid, it also carried a first mortgage of \$30,000, presumably the trust deed negotiated to guarantee a debenture issue of that amount, and a second mortgage of \$15,500. By the end of the period, therefore, the railway was in unchallenged control of the ship repair business in St. John's.<sup>36</sup>

### Characteristics of the Trade

#### (i) Plant, Machinery and Materials

All the materials for shipbuilding and engine and boiler works were imported apart from fir and spruce products which were supplied locally. One of the major concerns of all manufacturers in the city, but especially the owners of boiler works and other heavy industries, was the price of

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<sup>35</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 77, #1445, A Mortgage or Charge for the purpose of Securing any issue of Debentures, February 17, 1908; #1501, Indenture between the Terra Nova Engine and Boiler Works, Limited and The Angel Engineering and Supply Company, Limited dated November 29, 1909. The clauses of this agreement were passed by special resolution of the Terra Nova Engine and Boiler Works on February 11, 1908, and confirmed ten days later on February 21, 1908; #1590, Sharelist to April 4, 1908. Three other major shareholders were John Anderson, John Browning and Edgar R. Bowring.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., #1803, Special Resolution passed January 26, 1912, and confirmed February 5, 1912; #8134, Sharelist to December 31, 1914.

coal. F.W. Angel, a principal in the firm of Angel Engineering and Supply Company wrote the Newfoundland Board of Trade in 1909 to bring to the attention of the Newfoundland business community and the government what he called "the abnormally high cost of our fuel". He compared the price of coal in St. John's with the price in Great Britain, the Maritime Provinces, Boston and Montreal, and found that Newfoundland was at a considerable disadvantage:

All local enterprise, especially the manufacturer is seriously handicapped by the abnormally high cost of our fuel supply in competition with the foreign manufacturers. The comparison (per ton) is roughly as follows:

St. John's about \$6.00, Great Britain \$2.00 to \$2.50, Maritime Provinces \$1.50 to \$3.00, Boston and Montreal \$3.00 to \$5.00.

In all manufacturing the cost of power is the most serious fixed charge, and its high cost here is one of the reasons why certain attempts at manufacturing failed; the reason is very obvious from a comparison of the above figures.<sup>37</sup>

(ii) Employment, Wages and Working Conditions

Throughout the period unemployment was the chief concern of St. John's shipwrights and engine and boilermakers. The dry docks rented space to the captains or owners of damaged vessels who were generally responsible for finding shipwrights and boilermakers to make necessary repairs. Workers, consequently, depended on contractors for a steady supply of vessels and were highly susceptible to lay-offs and unemployment. For instance, in the late 1890s, when there were about 65 shipwrights in St. John's, they only coppered between 18 and 20 vessels a

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<sup>37</sup> Newfoundland Board of Trade Correspondence, letter from F.W. Angel to G.C. Fearn, Secretary, January 27, 1910.

year -- each of these jobs, which was a major part of a shipwright's work, would occupy 30 men for about five days.<sup>38</sup> The most important regulation of the St. John's Shipwrights' Association, to which most master and journeymen shipwrights belonged, was that "members should not employ outsiders on shipwrights' labour at times when members of the Society were walking about idle with their hands in their pockets". This rule was put to the test on many occasions. Daniel Condon, a member of the Society and a well-known local shipwright, was suspended in 1880 for hiring non-members. Also, at least one of his non-union employees, Solomon Snow, was told in no uncertain terms that he had violated the shipwrights' code, for, Snow brought a suit for intimidation against two members of the Shipwrights' Society.<sup>39</sup>

The engine and boilermakers were also fairly well organized and, from at least 1875, worked under complex employment agreements and regulations negotiated with the local contractors and owners of the city's engine and boiler works. For instance, from 1875 to 1891, men on outside jobs away from the shop worked only nine hours a day instead of the regular ten and received \$0.20 extra per day as "dirt money". In 1891 John Ledingham and James Angel, the owners of the major engine and boiler works in the city, drew up a new set of regulations which eliminated this clause. The owners insisted that their employees work a full ten-hour day whether working inside or outside the shop providing lighting conditions were suitable. Also, while overtime was paid after a man

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<sup>38</sup>Evidence as to a Revision of the Tariff Taken Before the Hon. The Receiver General, January, 1898, p. 32.

<sup>39</sup>Evening Telegram, May 13, September 30, October 1, 1880.

worked more than 56 hours a week, the workers contended that time and a half ought to be paid for work done after 6:00 p.m., even if 56 hours was not punched at the end of the week. The boilermakers protested that Angel and Ledingham abused the apprentice system by giving apprentices work which should only be done by expert craftsmen. They complained that this abuse of labour as well as their employers claim to determine whether a man be employed at piece rates or otherwise, adversely affected their earnings and job security. On Wednesday, July 1, 1891, twelve iron workers walked out of Angel's shop in protest against these new regulations, and three days later the rest of Angel's workers joined the strike. By Monday, July 6, about 100 men and boys from Angel's and Ledingham's engine and boiler works walked the picket line; but, by the end of the week at least one blacksmith, J. White, had decided to return to work and accept the regulations imposed by James Angel. While the outcome of the strike was not recorded in the local papers, the owners probably won. During this strike in 1891, the workers considered forming a union but after the strike was broken, they failed to carry through with their plans until October 1896. In May of 1902 the boilermakers again went on strike because the local works were employing non-union workers; however, this union action was unsuccessful. The boilermakers also took an active interest in tariff reform and lobbied for the appointment of boiler inspectors in the interest of both the public at large and the employment of members of the trade.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Daily Colonist, July 5-7, 9, 11, 13, August 22, September 4, 1891; R. Hattenhauer, "A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland" (unpublished report prepared for the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador, Summer, 1970), p. 140.

(iii) Products, Markets and Style of Business

The dry docks and slipways rented space to shipowners for the repair and refitting of their vessels and shipowners in turn were responsible for finding their own shipwrights and boilermakers. Most of this work was done by the engine and boiler works and major shipwright contractors. The Victoria Engine and Boiler Works kept boilers and engines in stock and also made them to order and did all kinds of ship's smith work; but, in addition to this the company made or retailed "goods of every kind in the engineering line" from ship's winches to nuts and bolts.<sup>41</sup> Master shipwrights, like Samuel Walsh, also did dockside jobs sometimes with the help of a diver if required.

Notice. To disabled ship owners and agents.  
Any complaint in my line cheaply and quickly cured, as I have on hand a first-class diver, and a suit that becomes him, also, -- all other appliances requisite.<sup>42</sup>

Indeed, shipwrights built and repaired small boats in backyards or wherever space allowed. For example, E. Mahoney, in 1881, took boat and oar orders which he promised to fill in the shortest possible time and at the lowest possible prices.<sup>43</sup> Both owners and workers in shipyards, dry docks and engine and boiler works were keenly interested in the tariff, and relied on its protection throughout the period.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Evening Telegram, February 11, 1881.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., November 28, 1881.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., April 20, 1881.

<sup>44</sup>Daily Colonist, July 6, 1891; Tariff Commission, 1898, pp. 19, 27.

## Foundries and Blacksmith Shops

While the Angel family was involved in the dry dock and engine and boiler works in St. John's, they began as blacksmiths and iron founders. In 1850 John Angel, Sr. came to St. John's to manage a foundry which had been built by Charles Fox Bennett in 1847.<sup>45</sup> Ten years later, on November 1, 1856, Bennett's foundry was destroyed by fire,<sup>46</sup> and in 1857 John Angel, Sr. and his son James established a small machine shop a short distance east of Bennett's old site. John Angel, Jr. came back from New York in 1867, where he was probably training or working as an engineer, and joined the family partnership, which operated for the next three years under the name of John Angel and Sons.<sup>47</sup> In 1870 this partnership was voluntarily dissolved with John Angel, Sr. retiring from the business. All the debts due to the company and all liabilities owed by the company were taken over by James and John, Jr. under the new firm, St. John's Iron Foundry Company.<sup>48</sup> In 1886 the foundry was incorporated as The Newfoundland Consolidated Foundry Company, Limited, with a paid-up capital stock of \$80,000. The initial investors in the reorganized firm besides the Angels were major St. John's merchants, James Goodfellow, A.W. Harvey, W.P. Walsh and James Baird, and

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<sup>45</sup>Newfoundlander, September 2, 1847; Royal Gazette, July 20, August 31, 1847. Bennett ran a foundry long before the one in 1847 was built at Riverhead. A drawing dated 1830 has survived which indicates that at that time Bennett ran not only a foundry but also a flour mill, a brewery, a distillery and a saw mill on his property in the West End. The drawing is located at Bennett Brewery in St. John's.

<sup>46</sup>Royal Gazette, November 4, 1856.

<sup>47</sup>Kennedy, Who's Who and Why, p. 153.

<sup>48</sup>Royal Gazette, August 9, 1870. It has been suggested that the St. John's Iron Foundry was established not only by the three Angels, but "in conjunction with several others". Mott, Newfoundland Men, p. 47.

two owners of large stove and tinware shops, George Gear and John Skeoch.<sup>49</sup> Until 1891 the foundry was highly successful and yielded good returns to its shareholders, but on August 22, 1891, the entire plant was destroyed by fire. While the company carried \$20,000 fire insurance, this amount did not cover the loss, estimated at between \$30,000 and \$40,000. Probably as a result of this loss and a slow recovery, the foundry reduced its capital from \$80,000 to \$64,000 in 1899 and wrote off the loss.<sup>50</sup>

By 1900, when better data is available on sharelists, the ownership of the company was concentrated in the hands of a few shareholders with five persons, less than ten percent of the total, owning 42.9 percent of the stock. The largest shareholder in the company was Mary Ann Skeoch, the widow of a large stove and tinware dealer, and the other major shareholders included James and John Angel and St. John's merchants like Kenneth R. Prowse and Marmaduke S. Winter.<sup>51</sup> In 1903 the nominal capital of the company was doubled to \$128,000,<sup>52</sup> and by 1914 \$127,280 had been paid. At the end of the period the concentration of ownership was just

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<sup>49</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 4, #27, Certificate of Incorporation, February 15, 1886.

<sup>50</sup>Daily Colonist, August 22, 1891; Registry of Companies, No. 4, #27. A note attached to the certificate of incorporation refers to a resolution for the reduction of capital which was adopted at an extraordinary general meeting on March 28, 1899.

<sup>51</sup>The control of the company (over 50 percent of the shares) could have been in the hands of as few as eight persons, each of whom held over a \$1,900 interest in the foundry. Besides those already mentioned in the text, John Bowring, John T. Gillard were part of the group of eight. Registry of Companies, No. 4, #25, Sharelist to January 18, 1900.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., #505, Special Resolution passed October 26, 1903, and confirmed November 9, 1903. This expansion could have been undivided dividends or an overflowing reserve fund which were issued as shares in the company.

about the same as it had been in 1900 with less than ten percent of the shareholders owning 43.1 percent of the stock. The largest single investor in the foundry was Kenneth R. Prowse,<sup>53</sup> who held slightly over ten percent of the stock, and practically all of the previously mentioned shareholders were still prominent in the company.<sup>54</sup>

Besides The Newfoundland Consolidated Foundry, the only other foundry which survived and prospered for any length of time was the St. John's Nail Manufacturing Company, Limited. This company was incorporated in 1883 with a nominal capital of \$25,000, and within the first calendar year of its establishment, all the stock was taken up and paid for in full. The nominal capital was increased the next year to \$48,200 and again all of it was taken up and paid for by the annual report of that year. In the beginning, the entrepreneurs and investors in the enterprise included major St. John's merchants like Charles R. Bowring, Robert Thorburn and Moses Monroe, as well as businessmen exclusively in heavy industry, notably James Angel and George Gear.<sup>55</sup> By 1900 the ownership

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<sup>53</sup> Kenneth R. Prowse's address was the address given for Mary Ann Skeoch in 1900 and 1915. He probably held her power of attorney concerning her investment as early as 1900, if not before.

<sup>54</sup> Registry of Companies, No. 4, #2514, Sharelist to February 14, 1915. Major new investors included Hugh Baird, James S. Pitts and Daniel A. Ryan. Alexander Taylor was the only major shareholder who was no longer with the company in 1915.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., No. 24, #187, Certificate of Incorporation, April 21, 1883; Annual Report of the St. John's Nail Manufacturing Company Limited, JHA 1884, Appendix, p. 683; Annual Report of the St. John's Nail Manufacturing Company Limited, JHA 1885, Appendix, p. 621; Registry of Companies, No. 24, #187, Certificate of Incorporation, April 21, 1883. Other identifiable and important shareholders in the company for the rest of the 19th century included a litany of St. John's merchants: George A. Hutchings, Edwin J. Duder, J.S. Pitts, John B. Ayre, E.R. Bowring, A.F. Goodridge, W.P. Walsh and James Gordon. Annual Reports of the St. John's Nail Manufacturing Company Limited, 1883-1896, JHA 1884-1897.



of the nail foundry was less concentrated than the other heavy industry companies with almost 30 percent of the shareholders controlling slightly over 50 percent of the stock. With few exceptions<sup>56</sup> the shareholders already mentioned were still connected with the company and a number of new investors were involved. Easson and Stavert, the bankers who at the same time held a large proportion of the Colonial Cordage Company's shares, also had money in The St. John's Nail Manufacturing Company. The other investors were principally St. John's merchants.<sup>57</sup> The largest shareholder was John B. Ayre, a member of one of the most prominent merchant families in St. John's, holding over five percent of the total stock of the company in 1900. By 1914 the ownership of the company was more concentrated than at the turn of the century with five of 51 shareholders (9.8 percent) owning 42.7 percent of the company's stock. The largest investor in the Nail Foundry in 1914 was James S. Pitts, a Water Street merchant who owned 11.2 percent of the stock. By 1914 there was also a considerable turnover in shareholders.<sup>58</sup>

Most of the workers in heavy industry were employed at the gas

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<sup>56</sup>George Gear, one of the founders of the company, Robert Thorburn and George A. Hutchings were no longer concerned with the company.

<sup>57</sup>John T. Gillard, James Stott, Rosina Goodfellow, James Howe and Alexander Marshall were in this group. Some of these people may have been investors prior to 1900 but they do not appear in any of the 19th century sources examined.

<sup>58</sup>Registry of Companies, No. 24, #188, Sharelist to January 13, 1900; #2494, Sharelist to January 18, 1915. John B. Ayre's holdings, for instance, were transferred to another member of the family, W.B. Ayre, a St. John's lawyer. As well James Gordon, Rosina Goodfellow, James Howe, Alexander Marshall and Easson and Stavert were no longer connected with the factory. Besides James Pitts and W.B. Ayre, other new shareholders who held large interests in the company included R.K. Bishop and Hugh Baird, both of whom were major St. John's merchants.

works, the dry docks, the engine and boiler works and the large foundries in St. John's; but, throughout the period small foundries and blacksmith shops appeared and disappeared with regularity. In 1871 Alexander R. Leask, for example, was the owner, engineer and manager of the Vulcan Foundry; however, in that same year, Leask was forced to petition for a certificate of insolvency and apparently left the trade, if not the country.<sup>59</sup> McLarthy and Sons also operated a blacksmith shop in 1871, but William McLarthy declared personal bankruptcy in the fall of 1878 and the firm disappeared.<sup>60</sup> In 1871 James Molloy, Sr. had a small shop on McBride's Hill which he worked with his three sons, Patrick, Edward and James, Jr., but his forge was no longer in operation in 1890. The only small blacksmith shop to remain in business from 1870 to 1890 was J. and T. Pope, and even this family firm had disappeared by 1913.<sup>61</sup> By 1890 at least 15 blacksmith shops were in operation in addition to the major firms.

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<sup>59</sup>Royal Gazette, July 3, 1871; Daily Chronicle, September 20, 1871.

<sup>60</sup>Royal Gazette, September 24, 1878.

<sup>61</sup>Newfoundland Directories, 1871, 1890, 1913. Between 1871 and 1890 the small blacksmiths and foundries were by no means static. As in most trades, new firms were continually being formed while others closed down. In 1879 John Scott gave notice to the public that he was establishing a foundry for the manufacture of stoves, windlasses, winches, hawser-pipes and the like. Within a matter of months, Scott formed a partnership with Lewis S. Browning. In June of 1881 the partnership was dissolved and Browning took over the business on his own account under the name Lewis S. Browning and Company. This firm did not survive to 1890. Evening Telegram, April 19, July 24, 1879, June 22, 1881. Hugh Doherty established the Avalon Iron Foundry Company Limited in 1880 on a very ambitious scale, promising to meet the needs of the city for everything from stoves to mill machinery; yet, by 1890, both he and his firm had disappeared from the trade. Ibid., November 19, 1880. In 1881 the partnership of Curran and Wyatt operated a general blacksmithing business from McLarthy's old shop on Holdsworth Street. By 1890 Thomas Curran ran the forge on his own and the business was still with the family in 1913. Ibid., September 26, 1881.

Miller and Peet, J. and T. Pope, Hamlyn and Brooking and E. and W. Doutney were the partnerships in business at that time. None of these people had been in the blacksmith trade in 1871. The remaining 11 firms were small shops owned by individual craftsmen about a half a dozen of whom were in the blacksmith trade in 1871.<sup>62</sup> At the end of the period, besides the important firms which have already been discussed, there were an additional 23 blacksmith shops in St. John's. R. Breaker and Company was the only partnership and all the rest of these shops were sole-trading companies. However, only a half a dozen of these owners had shops in 1890. Three of these older firms were formed as a result of the break-up of two partnerships, Miller and Peet and Hamlyn and Brooking. J. Miller and S.H. Peet each had their own shops as did Robert Hamlyn. Thomas McGrath, who in 1890 managed his father William's shop, ran the business on his own in 1913. Thomas Curran and William Feaver were still in business in the same style as in 1890.<sup>63</sup>

### Characteristics of the Trade

#### (i) Plant, Machinery and Materials

Most of the machinery<sup>64</sup> and raw materials for the foundries, like those for practically all the St. John's factories, were imported. The St. John's Nail Manufacturing Company originally included a rolling mill

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<sup>62</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1871, 1890; Royal Gazette, August 2, 1870. These sole traders included Charles Petrie, William McGrath, Patrick Buckley and W.S. Pope.

<sup>63</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890, 1913. For more information on Thomas Curran see above, p. 161, n. 61.

<sup>64</sup>For example, see Royal Gazette, July 20, 1847.

in its operation but abandoned it after a few years because the cost of importing raw materials and coal, and the small market made it impossible for the company to compete with English producers. Consequently, all the materials for the nail factory were imported. Steel sheets came from Great Britain, two-thirds of the drawn wire originated from Canada and the remainder was purchased in the United States.<sup>65</sup> Throughout the period the only major contribution made locally to the stock of raw materials was scrap metal. Advertisements appeared in local papers every now and again in search of this item:

WANTED

At the New Iron Foundry,  
Head of Patrick Street,  
A quantity of  
Cast Iron or Old Metal  
for which the highest price will be given,  
according to quality.

James Angel,  
manager<sup>66</sup>

(ii) Employment, Wages and Working Conditions

The moulders and blacksmiths experienced the same unemployment conditions that characterized the entire manufacturing sector in St. John's. The moulders were the first of these two groups to form a union, which came into existence in 1886. In May 1905 these workers went on strike,

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<sup>65</sup>Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Newfoundland in 1914 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Ltd., 1915), p. 107.

<sup>66</sup>Daily Chronicle, January 3, 1871.

refusing to do overtime while union members were out of work.<sup>67</sup> While there were rumours that the International Union would support the moulders by providing strike pay to the tune of \$137 a week for two years, the strike was broken and the union dealt a serious blow. A blacksmith's union was organized in 1896 and another in 1903. They probably both faded away shortly after being founded for nothing else is known of their activity.<sup>68</sup> Unemployment was a constant threat to the foundry workers, and even when they were on the job they earned only average wages. For example, in 1914 R.K. Bishop, a major shareholder in the St. John's Nail Foundry, estimated that the 30 workers there earned approximately \$1.50 a day which compared favourably with other wages in the manufacturing sector.<sup>69</sup>

### (iii) Products, Markets and Style of Business

The foundries and blacksmith shops engaged in a wide variety of work and manufactured an equally wide variety of products. The St. John's Iron Foundry and its successor The Newfoundland Consolidated Foundry made stoves, windlasses, winches, hawser-pipes, chaulks, ship's cambouses and railings. The foundry also did other cast iron work and all kinds of general jobbing. The other foundries that appeared during the period competed in these same general lines of goods and services.<sup>70</sup> After the nail

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<sup>67</sup>There was another strike in April of 1903 when the moulders protested against poor working conditions.

<sup>68</sup>Hattenhauer, "A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland", pp.123-124, 140-141.

<sup>69</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, pp. 107-108.

<sup>70</sup>Public Ledger, January 6, 1871; Evening Telegram, April 19, 1879, November 19, 1880.

factory stopped operating its rolling mill, it continued to manufacture cut nails from imported sheet iron; but, around 1900 the company found that the cut nails they produced were losing the market to a nail made from drawn wire. In response the nail foundry installed new machinery to manufacture nails by this new process and soon supplied the entire Newfoundland market in cut and wire nails. Strangely enough, the wrought iron nails, used extensively in boat and shipbuilding, were not made locally.<sup>71</sup> Most of the small blacksmith shops did general blacksmithing which included ship work, horseshoeing and the manufacture of railings for houses and graves.<sup>72</sup>

As in other trades, no attempt was made to develop foreign markets for locally-manufactured products. Given the scale of the industry, protection of the tariff and international competition, this result is hardly surprising. In 1914 the manager of the nail foundry, R.K. Bishop noted that:

The business is necessarily small and restricted to the requirements of our own country, the whole of which for cut nails and wire nails is at present secured by the St. John's Nail Manufacturing Company, so that no expansion of the business can be expected beyond that arising from increases in the population, which, however, the development of more of the natural resources of the country would doubtless bring about.<sup>73</sup>

When asked whether the consumer derived any benefit from the local nail foundry, R.K. Bishop admitted that with the duty on imported nails there was practically no difference between the foreign and the St. John's

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<sup>71</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 107.

<sup>72</sup>Evening Telegram, September 26, 1881; December 6, 1880, September 16, 1881, May 3, 1879.

<sup>73</sup>Royal Commission, 1914, p. 107.

price, although the local price was a little lower in order to capture the market.

### Tinsmiths' and Plumbers' Shops

#### Major Firms

One of the most interesting companies in this business between 1870 and 1914 was R. Peace and Company. This firm, in 1871, must have been fairly well established because by that time Robert Peace had dropped out of the business and John Skeoch and Alexander Taylor owned and operated the partnership under the old name of the company.<sup>74</sup> There is some evidence in the 1870s which suggests that both men were involved with The St. John's Iron Foundry from its beginning. Whether they were silent partners in the foundry or just retailers of some of their products is not clear; but, shortly after the Angel foundry went into production R. Peace and Company ran a huge advertisement for locally-made stoves in several newspapers, calling on the public to "Encourage Native Manufacturers when equal to any imported". This quarter-page advertisement listed the full line of Newfoundland stoves in bold print, and had as the focus of the presentation a large, detailed engraving of one of the stoves. Following the incorporation of the foundry John Skeoch was appointed to the board of directors in 1888 and Alexander Taylor was a member of the board throughout most of the 1890s. At the turn of the century with the better data on the ownership of incorporated companies that is available, John Skeoch's widow, Mary Ann and Alexander Taylor, while holding shares separately,

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<sup>74</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1871.

emerge as owners of over 15 percent of the foundry's stock. The partnership, R. Peace and Company, survived at least until the 1890s but was not in operation in 1913.<sup>75</sup>

The other major partnership in 1871 was Pennock and Andrews' shop which was owned and operated by William Andrews and James Pennock. Sometime between 1871 and 1881 the partnership was dissolved and James Pennock carried on the business by himself under the sign of the coffee pot; but, at the end of 1881 James Pennock died and notice was given to his debtors to pay up or be taken to court. By 1900, however, there was another James Pennock, together with Mrs. Harriet Pennock (undoubtedly relatives of the late James Pennock) operating a stove and tinware business in St. John's under the sign of the coffee pot. By 1913 the firm of James Pennock was still in operation but was owned in partnership with one Tasker Cook.<sup>76</sup>

Prior to the 1870s George Gear was in partnership with two other tinsmiths, Robert Vey and William Andrews, who has already been mentioned in connection with the firm Pennock and Andrews. Upon the dissolution of Gear and Company at the beginning of 1870, George Gear continued with the business on his own. He retired from the business, however, in 1882 and a partnership between Henry Gear, probably a relation, and William John

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<sup>75</sup>Daily Chronicle, September 13, 1871. However, at the bottom of the advertisement was a less conspicuous reference to the availability of British and American ranges as well as gothic grates, kerosene lamps and general tinware. Annual Reports of The Newfoundland Consolidated Foundry Company Limited, 1888-1896, JHA 1889-1897; Registry of Companies, No. 4, #25, Sharelist to January 18, 1900; Newfoundland Directory, 1890. At this time the firm consisted of the two partners, a foreman and three tinsmiths.

<sup>76</sup>Public Ledger, July 25, 1871; Evening Telegram, December 20, 1881; Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 77; Newfoundland Directory, 1913.



Barnes took over the business under the name Gear and Company. This partnership was still together in 1890 and by then operated the largest shop of its kind in St. John's. By 1913, however, no craftsmen or tradesmen were employed by Gear and Company, and the shop appears to have done only a wholesaling and retailing business in hardware, tinware and stoves without any jobbing.<sup>77</sup>

Besides these three major firms, in 1871 around 16 tinsmiths and plumbers worked in St. John's, but only a few of these can be identified as owners of their own shops. The most important was Elias Goudie who, between 1871 and 1880 became a member of a partnership called Allen and Goudie and later Allen, Goudie and Company. The firm, however, was wound up at the end of 1880 and Goudie formed a new partnership with Levi Diamond called Goudie and Diamond. By 1890 this firm was still in operation; and while both Goudie and Diamond worked in the business, Levi Diamond appears to have been the sole owner and was certainly the sole manager. By 1913 Levi Diamond was operating as a sole trader in the tinsmithing business.<sup>78</sup>

In 1890 there were 18 tinsmith and plumbing firms. Of the five partnerships in this group three have already been discussed: Gear and Company, R. Peace and Company and Goudie and Diamond. By 1890 R. and C.

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<sup>77</sup>Royal Gazette, January 18, 1870; Evening Telegram, March 16, 1881; Newfoundland Directory, 1890. This source lists 17 persons connected with the firm in 1890 including the two partners, two clerks, nine tinsmiths and four plumbers. Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>78</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1871; Evening Telegram, February 1, 1881; Newfoundland Directory, 1890, pp. 78, 331. In 1890 Diamond employed four tinsmiths, a clerk and a bookkeeper. A total of seven therefore worked at the shop. Newfoundland Directory, 1913, p. 161. By this time six tinsmiths and one general employee worked at the shop besides Levi Diamond.

Callahan ran a stove and tinware shop and a cannery for lobster and berries on the same premises. Gough and Moore, a partnership between William H. Gough and Philip F. Moore, operated the first business exclusively devoted to the plumbing trade. By 1913 the Gough and Moore partnership was dissolved and Philip Moore had joined with a man named Walsh to form Moore and Company which was principally a plumbing firm specializing in ship's work.<sup>79</sup> W.J. Clouston, although a sole trader in 1890, began in the late 1870s in partnership with A. George McCoubrey, a tinsmith who was also a sole trader by 1890. Clouston continued in business at least until 1913, while A. George McCoubrey's business by that time had been taken over by Adam McCoubrey, Jr.<sup>80</sup>

By 1913 there were four partnerships and 23 sole-trading companies in the tinsmithing and plumbing trades. Besides the ten companies which were in existence in 1890 or have already been discussed,<sup>81</sup> the most important was John Clouston, who was a major innovator and entrepreneur in the trade in 1913. He owned the largest shop in the city with 31 employees. While he marketed stoves and tinware and did general sheet metal work, he had a special interest in products related to the fishery. He was a manufacturer of a codfish air dryer which was patented in the United States, Canada and Newfoundland. He also tinned boneless and

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<sup>79</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890, p. 781; Newfoundland Directory, 1913, p. 293.

<sup>80</sup>Evening Telegram, November 27, 1879, October 14, 23, 1880; Newfoundland Directory, 1890, pp. 40, 108; Newfoundland Directory, 1913, p. 133.

<sup>81</sup>Gear and Company, Moore and Company, W.G. Pippy, James Pennock, Levi Diamond, W.J. Clouston, F. Gushue, R. Callahan, Adam McCoubrey and William Malcolm.

shredded salt codfish and cod tongues (all of which were new products) under the brand name "Island",<sup>82</sup>

### Characteristics of the Trade

Between 1870 and 1914 the tinsmith and plumbing shops were the major marketing outlets for stoves and gothic grates made either in Newfoundland or imported from the United States and Canada. These shops sold, installed and repaired stoves, and manufactured the necessary tin funnels to connect the stoves to the chimney. R. Peace and Company was a major retailer for stoves and grates made at The Newfoundland Consolidated Foundry, and by 1890 was even patentee of "The New Patent Fire Brick Cooking Stoves".<sup>83</sup> When first introduced, a few firms would have nothing to do with the local product. In 1871 Pennock and Andrews only sold imported units "which they offer in better quality, and as cheap as those of Newfoundland make".<sup>84</sup> Joseph Cooper of the American Stove Depot in the early 1870s sold, fitted and repaired only American stoves. He described his wares as units "whose cooking qualities and durability cannot be surpassed.... No Family should be without one". He picked the stoves made in Newfoundland for comparison and suggested that his product was "Superior to any of local Manufacture, and sold at a lower figure".<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913. There were at least nine tinsmiths, three general employees and one clerk in addition to Clouston at the shop.

<sup>83</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

<sup>84</sup>Public Ledger, December 5, 1871.

<sup>85</sup>Public Ledger, November 28, 1871.

Nevertheless, the Newfoundland product with the help of the tariff found favour in the local market and most firms carried both local and foreign units to satisfy the particular whims of their customers. For example, by 1880 the firm of McCoubrey and Clouston sold American, Canadian and Newfoundland stoves on a more-or-less equal basis.<sup>86</sup> This part of the tinsmith and plumbing trade remained strong throughout the period and even as late as 1913 W.J. Clouston focused special attention on this branch of the business in an advertisement presenting a large engraving of a stove highlighted in the center of a sun-like image.<sup>87</sup> The trade also included the wholesaling and retailing of kettles, pots and pans, lamps and the like, some of which the firms manufactured themselves, and some of which they imported.

Another important part of the trade was gas-fitting and plumbing for houses, buildings and ships. Many shops considered themselves tin-smiths, plumbers, sheet-iron workers and gas-fitters. In 1900 James Pennock viewed plumbing and gas-fitting as his shop's specialty, and shipping business and outport orders were specifically solicited.<sup>88</sup> George Gear from at least 1880 onward directed much of his energies to wholesaling and retailing plumbing fittings and fixtures to new home builders and professional contractors; and, advertised that his company was equipped to do all kinds of plumbing and gas-fitting, especially ship's work. He boasted that he had in his employ "competent workmen

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<sup>86</sup>Evening Telegram, November 27, 1879, October 14, 23, 1880.

<sup>87</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>88</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890.

from England, who are thoroughly posted in all the latest improvements in their trade".<sup>89</sup> Pittman and Shaw had quite a flair for advertising their plumbing services as witnessed in the following metaphor -- extended far beyond the bounds of literary propriety:

Pipe Dreams That Come True  
 He can afford to smile if all his  
 pipes, traps and drains are in good  
 repair. Else his Fine Plumbing dreams  
 would turn to a nightmare. Spring's  
 here -- be careful that no dew drops  
 from your ceilings and no sudden crop  
 of boiler leaks await you. Send for  
 US when you want expert Plumbing at low  
 rates. Finest sanitary work on new and old  
 jobs quickly done.<sup>90</sup>

Gough and Moore, however, appear to have been the first company to deal exclusively in the plumbing business, specializing in ship's work and importing a full range of English and American plumbing goods.<sup>91</sup>

Finally, the tinsmith and plumbing trade manufactured stencils for marking fish casks and other wooden packages, made tin liners for barrels containing cod liver oil and seal oil and produced cans for the packing of berries, lobster and other fishery products. In 1881, for example, Gear and Company advertised that they cut stencils to order.<sup>92</sup> James T. Phillips, in 1900, was a tin and sheet iron worker who sold tinware of all kinds but he had a special interest in the wholesaling of lobster cans made in his shop.<sup>93</sup> At least three St. John's merchants with wide

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<sup>89</sup>Evening Telegram, April 1, 1880, March 16, 1881.

<sup>90</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>91</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1890, 1913.

<sup>92</sup>Evening Telegram, March 16, 1881.

<sup>93</sup>Oliver and Burke, Buyers' Guide, p. 35.

mercantile interests, R. Templeton, G.M. Barr and R.G. Rendell, employed a number of tinsmiths to manufacture lobster cans.<sup>94</sup>

### Conclusion

The heavy industry trades, in terms of employment grew rapidly throughout the period. In 1871 only 79 persons were included in these trades by one business directory; but by 1890, 470 workers were so employed. Their number continued to increase until by 1913 there were 675 gas workers, boilermakers, moulders, blacksmiths, tinsmiths and plumbers working in the city. While the absolute increase in employment was impressive, heavy industry only managed to increase its relative share of the trades and manufacturing work force from 12.1 percent to 19.3 percent between 1871 and 1890. By 1913 heavy industry's share of the work force was still the same as it had been in 1890.<sup>95</sup> While most of the firms in heavy industry were small, the handful of large ones employed by far the majority of workers.<sup>96</sup> A small number of industrialists and major tradesmen had significant holdings in the larger shops and factories, but investment by St. John's merchants was both evident and plentiful in most of the large concerns. By the end of the period, however, the railway had purchased or bought out all the important dry docks and engine and boiler works and had an effective monopoly over the ship repair business. All machinery and raw materials for the heavy industry sector were imported.

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<sup>94</sup>Newfoundland Directory, 1913.

<sup>95</sup>Appendix III, Table 5.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid.

For instance, all coal, which was the major energy source for these industries and the primary component in the manufacture of gas, was imported and was extremely expensive. Nevertheless, heavy industry was protected from competition through a combination of the tariff, geographic advantage and high transportation costs from the mainland to Newfoundland. Furthermore, these trades maximized their opportunities in the local market by engaging in both manufacturing and jobbing. The gas company manufactured gas for light, heat and cooking purposes and also installed and repaired gas stoves, pipes and fittings. The engine and boiler works manufactured boilers and a few machines, but they were mostly interested in re-tubing and maintaining boilers and other marine equipment. The foundries manufactured stoves, windlasses, winches and nails of all description but were also involved in general jobbing. The tinsmiths and plumbers were concerned with the retailing and fitting of stoves, the manufacture of tinware and jobbing, while the blacksmith shops manufactured railings, did general blacksmithing, horseshoeing and ship work. Despite these conditions heavy industry in St. John's failed to keep its work force in steady employment, and failed to increase its production to any significant extent once the major foundries and engineering firms were established.

## CHAPTER VII

## CONCLUSION

## I

Between 1870 and 1914 Newfoundland trades and manufacturing industries expanded in terms of the number of persons employed and the number and size of firms; but relative to other sectors of the economy the rate of expansion was slow. In 1869 four percent of Newfoundland's occupied labour force was employed in this sector, rising to only seven percent by 1891 and nine percent by 1911. At the beginning of the period, small firms produced all of the locally-made goods and did all of the necessary repair work and jobbing. By 1914, a number of large mechanized factories dominated the market in most trades and manufacturing industries. Meanwhile, the small firms were either driven out of business or were reduced to retailing and repairing imported or locally manufactured products. The larger factories, nevertheless, were small by any industrial standard, and did not materially contribute to the diversification of the Newfoundland economy.

The capital which supported this industrialization came almost entirely from the retained earnings of the mercantile sector. There was no stock market in St. John's, and therefore, money for different ventures was raised in an ad hoc manner. Frequently, the people asked to become shareholders in a company were those whom the promoters



expected would be major wholesale customers for its products. Accordingly, most of the major factories were financed and controlled by St. John's merchants. The controlling interest in the companies was usually concentrated in the hands of a small group of these merchants compared to the total number of shareholders. Rarely, however, would a merchant invest over \$10,000 in a company, and usually even major shareholders invested less than \$5,000 or \$6,000 in any one company. Consequently, they spread the risk over a large number of different factories, and through limited liability protected their export-import business from failures in high-risk manufacturing ventures.

Very few interindustry linkages flourished between the trades and manufacturing sector and other parts of the Newfoundland economy. Most of the raw materials for St. John's shops and factories were imported and very little was produced locally. Successive governments encouraged the development of agricultural products which they hoped would find a ready market in the manufacturing sector, such as wool, hides, hemp and flax, but met with little success. Even attempts at supplying intermediate goods used by local factories were not successful. For instance, the tanning industry failed to supply St. John's boot and shoe factories with a product which was satisfactory for the requirements of the footwear industry and profitable for tanners. The only successful linkages were between Newfoundland sawmills and wood-using trades, especially the cooperage business, which was one of the largest industries in St. John's. But Newfoundland sawmills also supplied material to the furniture and the construction industry, thereby spreading their market dependence over several industries. In other industries, however, the metal materials,

machinery, hardwoods, cloth, paper, stone, food ingredients and chemicals were imported.

While the number of workers in St. John's trades and manufacturing grew during the period 1870-1914, unemployment, poor wages and working conditions were common. The most frequent complaints of labour concerned unemployment and the hiring of non-union workers when members were out of work. A number of unions were formed to protect the interests of workers, particularly from the 1890s and onward, but with few exceptions they met with little success. Given the unemployment problem and the relatively small number of workers in each trade, employers could write their own employment contracts with little fear of challenge. In the larger factories the best jobs commonly went to foreign foremen and superintendents who were imported to train local workers in the requisite skills.

The local shops and factories manufactured common and widely-used lines of products, such as men's and boys' work clothes and work boots, and left the finer lines of ready-made goods in the hands of foreign companies. It was simply not economical to invest in large scale production for such a diminutive and specialized group as the St. John's and outport carriage trade. Yet in the more common lines of goods the local shops and factories had to produce a wide selection of sizes, styles and qualities to meet the demands of the market and to build an economic operation. In short, the local manufacturers were flying in the face of two storms each with opposing tensions. On the one hand, the domestic demand for goods and services was highly diversified and complicated by fashion, while on the other the local tradesman and manufacturer needed as large an aggregate demand as possible to operate profitably.

St. John's trades and manufacturing industries were characteristically import substitution factories aimed at capturing the national market from foreign suppliers. Many trades and industries succeeded in dominating the Newfoundland market with the help of the tariff, the Island's isolation, high freight costs and the nature of the products and services produced. Once the manufacturing sector had grown to meet the national demand, production levelled off and companies considered future expansion only in terms of changes in local consumer tastes, increases in the birth rate and improvements in the standard of living.

The bakery and confectionary trades and factories were the largest employers among trades producing perishable consumer goods, and grew at a faster rate than most firms in the manufacturing sector. Throughout the period 1870-1914, firms were generally extremely small, employing less than five persons each, and minimal capital and technical requirements permitted new firms easy entry into the trade. Nevertheless, as time passed considerable consolidation occurred, resulting in larger and more mechanized factories which were financed to a considerable extent by the major St. John's merchant families. Practically all machinery and raw materials, from flour to food colouring, were imported and interindustry linkages did not exist. As consolidation and growth proceeded smaller shops broadened their inventories to include crockery, novelties and imported confectionery to offset the effect of competition from the larger factories. At the beginning of the period ship biscuit was the major product of the larger bakeries; however, with the decline of the fishery (the major market for ship biscuit) and the growth of railway and building construction, the demand for soft bread, cakes, pastries and con-

fectionery increased considerably. The tariff, the high cost of freight from the mainland to Newfoundland, and the extreme perishability of many of the products made in St. John's bakeries and confectioneries adequately protected this trade from foreign competition.

The largest employers and producers among trades and industries manufacturing consumer durables were the clothing, leather and footwear shops and factories. The clothing industry, which included woolen mills, clothing factories, dye works, tailoring, dressmaking and millinery shops, was one of the most dynamic trades in the city in terms of physical growth. Its share in the St. John's manufacturing work force increased from 13.3 percent in 1871 to 17.8 percent in 1913. While most of these employees worked in factories and shops which had between five and thirty persons on the payroll, by far the majority of the shops employed less than five persons. Many of the shops and factories were owned by tradesmen, but prominent St. John's merchants invested heavily in the incorporated businesses and frequently were silent partners in smaller shops. With the exception of some local wool, all raw materials and machinery were imported and consequently interindustry linkages were virtually nonexistent. The work force was predominantly female and wages were low. Unions experienced little success because of high anti-union feelings among owners and severe unemployment. Gradually over the period 1870-1914 the larger shops and factories gained control over an increasing share of the market and the smaller shops tried to make up their losses by selling imported or local factory-made cloth, millinery, ready-made clothing, boots and shoes and crockery. The smaller shops also made an increasing effort to attract repairing and pressing work. Stylings

became increasingly important as the period progressed and many firms actively sought outport customers. By 1914 the larger shops and factories, with the help of the tariff and high transport costs, had control over the local market.

The leather and footwear industry, which included tanneries, cobbler shops and boot and shoe factories, was the second largest employer in consumer manufacturing and also was the forum where the greatest effort was made to foster interindustry linkages. The footwear shops and factories in this sector were generally owned by tradesmen, but St. John's merchants financed and owned the larger factories. Although this industry prospered during the period 1870-1914, by 1914 the work force had experienced an absolute decline. The few large mechanized factories gradually gained control of the local market, but failed to absorb the workers laid off when small shops were driven out of business. At the beginning of the period the small shops produced custom hand-built footwear, but with the competition from the factories they either closed or were reduced to repairing and retailing footwear. By 1914 the larger factories which enjoyed government aid, tariff protection and geographic advantages dominated the market in most of the common lines of footwear and held exclusive wholesale agencies in many foreign lines.

The leather industry had a natural and logical connection with the footwear business. Indeed, the larger boot and shoe factories at one point or another established their own tanneries; but, as with other trades, most of the raw materials and machinery for leather manufacturing were imported despite attempts to encourage the development of animal husbandry for the purposes of the tanning business. While wages were comparable to other

industries in the city, employment figures fluctuated wildly and the working conditions were poor. The tanneries eventually captured a portion of the local market in sole leather and a few common lines of finer leathers, but were often unable to produce the proper quality even in these lines. In any case the industry was not able to reach the necessary economies of scale to operate at a profit, despite the intimate relations between the tanneries and boot and shoe factories. As a result foreign competitors monopolized the sale of finer leathers, and sold to the footwear industry over half of its requirements for sole and other common leathers.

The fishery and marine trades, such as rope walks, cooperages, pump and block factories and sail lofts, were the traditional industries of a seaport, and in Newfoundland were linked directly with the fishery. They formed the largest part of the trades and manufacturing sector at the beginning of the period but were the least important by 1914. Some of these industries, notably the sail lofts and block and pump factories, disappeared because of the technological change from sail to steam power. The rope walk and the cooperages expanded in terms of production and employment between 1870 and 1914 but at a slower rate than most trades and industries in St. John's. The rope walk, which was owned by members of prominent St. John's merchant families, in the end imported all raw materials and machinery, despite early government attempts to encourage hemp and flax fibres. Employment figures in the industry were often high because of the inclusion of netmakers, who worked at home in a putting-out system, but wages were low because of the large number of children on the payroll. The factory produced a wide range of popular cordages, ropes,

lines and twines and became exclusive wholesale agents for certain lines and twines which it did not produce. With the help of tariff protection, government subsidies and high freight costs for foreign competitors, the cordage company dominated the local market in cordage products.

The cooperage business was the backbone of the St. John's fishery and marine trades. Small cooperages could be found on every street and back lane in the city. Most of these shops were owned by tradesmen, but the major merchant firms also had their own cooperages. Since they were the only market, the merchants effectively controlled the industry; but at the turn of the century they were unsuccessful in an effort to mechanize and centralize the trade into a few large factories. While the cooperages imported most of their tools, machinery and metal fittings, they established lasting interindustry links with other sectors of the Newfoundland economy, for they purchased practically all their cooperage stock from Newfoundland sawmills. The cooperages produced packages principally for the fishery and consequently were highly vulnerable to production fluctuations in the fishing industry.

Heavy industry, which included gas works, dry docks, engine and boiler works, tinsmith and plumber shops was, in terms of production and employment, the most active part of the trades involved in manufacturing producer goods. Most of the firms in this sector were small, but by far the majority of the workers were employed in the few larger factories. Tradesmen owned the small shops and a small number of industrialists, tradesmen and merchants owned and operated the larger concerns. By 1914, however, the railway controlled all the important dry

docks and engine and boiler works, thereby monopolizing the ship repair business. All machinery and raw materials, apart from that generated from the local scrap metal trade, were imported. The high cost of some of these items notably coal, made expansion difficult, but local firms none the less controlled a sizable portion of the market. While they maximized their opportunities in the local market by engaging in both manufacturing and jobbing, they failed to keep their workers steadily employed and failed to increase production to any significant extent once the major firms had been established.

If Newfoundland had joined Canada in 1867, one wonders whether this pattern of development of secondary manufacturing would have been materially affected. On the one hand, the incidental tariff protection enjoyed by local shops and factories would have disappeared and Newfoundland would have become subject to the metropolitan pressures from Montreal and Toronto which wrestled the Maritimes manufacturing business from Halifax, St. John and other centres.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, local manufactures would have still been protected by the Island's isolation and high freight costs. Most of the industries producing consumer perishables would have survived because of the nature of their products and the cost and technical problems of transportation from the mainland. The heavy industry jobbing would remain in Newfoundland because of the requirements for custom work. The foundries, fishery trades, and the durable consumer trades, while not having protective advantages such as perishability and a need for custom work, would probably have remained competitive because of geographic

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<sup>1</sup>T.W. Acheson, "The National Policy and the Industrialization of the Maritimes, 1880-1910", Acadiensis, Vol. 1, Spring, 1972, pp. 3-28.



advantage and an intimate knowledge of the local market. While local manufacturers may have maintained control over the Newfoundland market if the country joined Canada, these same trades and industries, however, would have had great difficulty entering markets on the Canadian mainland.

## II

The obstacles that lay in the path of the development of a vibrant manufacturing sector in Newfoundland were substantially different from those of larger countries. Hollis B. Chenery, in an econometric study of some 50 countries, concluded that import substitution was the major source of growth of industrial production.<sup>2</sup> A commitment to import substitution, however, assumes a number of fundamental conditions which were not present in a small country like Newfoundland. A large domestic market, a diversified assortment of natural resources and raw materials, and the capacity to prosper as a closed economy were major characteristics which were missing in the Newfoundland case. The small size of the market had a dramatic effect on the development pattern of the entire manufacturing sector. The market demanded a wide variety of products and styles, yet the industries needed substantial markets for single items in order to reach profitable levels of production. The raw materials needed were not available within Newfoundland, and most input requirements, including fuel, had to be imported. Newfoundland's reliance on the export trade in the fishery and its other primary industries, and Newfoundland's general dependence on

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<sup>2</sup>H.B. Chenery, "Patterns of Industrial Growth", American Economic Review, Vol. 50, September, 1960, pp. 624-654.

imported raw materials, machinery and finished products, established that the country's economy was, and had to be, an open one whatever the level of revenue tariffs.

The effect that the size of the Newfoundland economy had on the development of St. John's trades and manufacturing industries is demonstrated by the history of this sector's growth in St. John's between 1870 and 1914. Trades and industries producing consumer goods led the growth of the St. John's manufacturing sector. These shops and factories (as Chenery found elsewhere) were not as severely affected by the small size of the market, and were more heavily protected by transport costs. The small size of the Newfoundland market, however, had a detrimental effect on intermediate and capital goods industries because they were more sensitive to economies of scale and an unbalanced availability of resources and raw materials. The consumer goods industries' dominance of the St. John's manufacturing sector and the minor role played by producer goods industries, however, is exactly opposite to the pattern Chenery found as necessary for the growth of industrial production through import substitution. He suggests that elsewhere consumer goods industries played only a minor role in industrial transformation, with the momentum being established by the intermediate and capital goods industries.<sup>3</sup> Given these observations, the difficulties that lay in the path of Newfoundland's attempts to develop a thriving manufacturing sector, particularly through import substitution, are thrown into stark relief.

Was there any alternative for Newfoundland or was she destined

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

never to share the higher production, employment and income levels enjoyed in countries with vibrant manufacturing sectors? Clearly import substitution was not the answer, for even if local shops and factories were successful in capturing the domestic market (and many of them were), the market itself was simply too small to support efficient plants. The development of an export capacity was exceedingly difficult because the country lacked any unique advantages of endowment and location. A possible exception to this general limitation was the sector where the country's material advantages were greatest, and where her skills and entrepreneurship were keenest -- the fishing industry and its related marine industries. The fishery, however, had entered a period of slow growth and technical stagnation; and while there were international reasons why this was the case, at least part of the blame must rest at the doorstep of the Island's businessmen. From the 1870s onward, the major merchant firms were in a constant state of retreat. By the mid-19th century they had established their headquarters in St. John's with outport stores to supply fishermen and to purchase their fish products. By the end of the 19th century the major merchant firms were selling or closing down their retailing outlets and retiring to the wholesale import-export trade. Throughout this time they failed to take an innovative role in either the production or marketing of fishery products, and were satisfied merely to complain about unfair competition and other external threats such as the French Shore and the Bait questions.

The effect of missed opportunity in the fishery had grave repercussions on the rest of the economy. The fishing industry became trapped into a traditional mold with consequent detrimental effects on employment,

income, and the generation of investment capital. While the country tried to develop its agricultural, mineral, timber and manufacturing potential through import substitution in the last quarter of the 19th century, the size of the Island's market and the poor state of business confidence, entrepreneurship and ingenuity inhibited meaningful economic advances. By the turn of the century, therefore, the Newfoundland Government had turned to foreign capital and entrepreneurship in the hope of developing primary exports in minerals and forest products. The results were equally disappointing.<sup>4</sup>

Between 1870-1914 there was considerable hope in Newfoundland that prosperity and rising employment could be secured by stimulating primary and secondary manufacturing. There was, as well, a strong tendency to view the fishery as being without potential, even though it employed most of the Island's occupied labour force, produced most of the country's national income and virtually all of its export income. The fishery was the industry which contained the mass of the country's economic experience and capital, yet it stagnated. Had Newfoundland business leaders been able to innovate in this area, the application of these skills and resources to other sectors of the economy would have considerably enhanced the prospects for dynamic economic growth.

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<sup>4</sup>David Alexander, "Development and Dependence in Newfoundland 1880-1970", Acadiensis, Vol. 4, Autumn 1974, pp 3-31.

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## APPENDIX I

TABLE 1

NEWFOUNDLAND IMPORTS, 1870 - 1914  
 IMPORTS INTO NEWFOUNDLAND BY VALUES  
 WITH DUTIES ON IMPORTS, 1870-1914

Year	Merchandise		Coin & Bullion	Total Imports	Duties Collected on Imports
	Dutiable \$	Free \$			
1870 <sup>1</sup>	6,464,742	191,107	-	6,655,849	837,406
1871	5,857,890	181,337	-	6,039,227	735,650
1872	6,500,659	215,409	-	6,716,068	788,168
1873	6,454,650	311,953	-	6,766,603	778,831
1874	6,938,288	416,401	-	7,354,689	830,852
1875	6,944,862	413,474	-	7,358,366	797,281
1876	6,763,661	442,237	-	7,205,898	831,732
1877	6,970,565	393,069	-	7,363,634	847,435
1878	6,326,033	542,690	-	6,868,723	799,772
1879	6,697,788	553,570	9,644	7,261,002	927,148
1880	6,413,875	502,914	49,454	6,966,243	857,931
1881	6,449,372	370,536	43,800	6,863,708	952,411
1882	7,332,841	942,381	75,000	8,350,222	1,010,308
1883	8,227,152	903,512	800	9,131,464	1,149,927
1884	7,387,694	686,498	1,600	8,075,792	1,067,633
1885	6,191,696	504,961	1,843	6,698,500	897,600
1886	5,658,196	353,549	8,290	6,020,035	915,264
1887	5,030,830	363,078	3,500	5,397,408	1,088,999
1888	7,036,757	383,243	400	7,420,400	1,246,383
1889	6,124,449	410,216	72,400	6,607,065	1,241,558

continued....

TABLE 1 - continued

Year	Merchandise		Coin & Bullion \$	Total Imports \$	Duties Collected on Imports \$
	Dutiable \$	Free \$			
1890	5,876,923	491,632	300	6,368,855	1,314,921
1891	6,049,337	657,998	162,123	6,869,458	1,414,229
1892 <sup>2</sup>	4,512,948	495,129	4,800	5,012,877	1,717,968
1893	6,777,752	794,817	-	7,572,569	1,608,771
1894	6,470,907	627,506	66,325	7,164,738	1,485,794
1895	4,779,229	371,031	851,473	6,001,733	1,192,371
1895-6 <sup>3</sup>	5,398,215	512,861	75,785	5,986,861	1,382,030
1896-7	5,407,898	521,871	8,566	5,938,335	1,474,574
1897-8	4,711,954	470,090	6,819	5,188,863	1,343,936
1898-9	5,667,880	590,237	53,128	6,311,245	1,529,938
1899-0	6,581,887	913,846	1,414	7,497,147	1,643,631
1900-1	6,171,529	1,187,913	117,061	7,476,503	1,880,011
...	...	...	...	...	...
1908-9	6,601,854	4,638,861	161,622	11,402,337	2,269,937
1909-0	7,736,738	4,950,905	112,053	12,799,696	2,542,873
1910-1	8,165,165	5,112,301	106,444	13,383,910	2,574,439
1911-2	9,007,413	5,519,413	206,664	14,733,490	2,839,032
1912-3	9,272,730	6,735,739	3,896	16,012,365	2,916,552
1913-4	7,996,126	7,191,882	5,718	15,193,726	2,704,835

<sup>1</sup>The year 1870 and following are calendar years.

<sup>2</sup>Because of the Great Fire of 1892 in St. John's, many of the import returns were destroyed:

"Imports comprise whole return for Labrador, E.C., Blanc Sablon, Pilley's Island and Flower's Cove; half year for rest of island," Customs Return, 1892, JHA 1893, Appendix 34.

<sup>3</sup>The year 1895-6 and following are measured from July 1 to June 30.

Source: Customs Returns, 1870-1914, JHA 1871-1915, Appendix.

## APPENDIX I

TABLE 2

CANADIAN IMPORTS, 1870 - 1914  
IMPORTS INTO CANADA FOR CONSUMPTION  
BY VALUES WITH DUTIES ON IMPORTS, 1870-1914

Fiscal Year	Merchandise		Coin & Bullion \$	Total Imports \$	Duties Collected on Imports \$
	Dutiable \$	Free \$			
1870	45,127,422	21,774,652	4,335,529	71,237,603	9,425,028
1871	60,094,362	24,120,026	2,733,094	86,947,482	11,807,590
1872	68,276,157	36,679,210	2,753,749	107,709,116	13,020,684
1873	71,198,176	53,310,953	3,005,465	127,514,594	12,997,578
1874	76,232,530	46,948,357	4,223,282	127,404,169	14,407,318
1875	78,138,511	39,270,057	2,210,089	119,618,657	15,354,139
1876	60,238,297	82,274,810	2,220,111	94,783,218	12,828,614
1877	60,916,770	33,209,624	2,174,089	96,300,483	12,544,348
1878	59,773,039	30,622,812	803,726	91,199,577	12,791,532
1879	55,426,836	23,275,683	1,639,089	80,341,608	12,935,269
1880	54,182,967	15,717,575	1,881,807	71,782,349	14,129,953
1881	71,620,725	18,867,604	1,123,275	91,611,604	18,492,645
1882	85,757,433	25,387,751	1,503,743	112,648,927	21,700,028
1883	91,588,339	30,273,157	1,275,523	123,137,019	23,162,553
1884	80,010,498	25,962,480	2,207,666	108,180,644	20,156,448
1885	73,269,618	26,486,157	2,954,244	102,710,019	19,121,254
1886	70,658,819	25,333,318	3,610,557	99,602,694	19,427,398
1887	78,120,679	26,986,531	532,218	105,639,428	22,438,309
1888	69,645,824	31,025,804	2,175,472	102,847,100	22,187,869
1889	74,475,139	34,623,057	575,251	109,673,447	23,742,317
1890	77,106,286	34,576,287	1,083,011	112,765,584	23,921,234

continued....

TABLE 2 - continued

Fiscal Year	Merchandise		Coin & Bullion	Total Imports	Duties Collected on Imports
	Dutiable	Free			
1891	74,536,036	36,997,918	1,811,170	113,345,124	23,416,266
1892	69,160,737	45,999,676	1,818,530	116,978,943	20,550,474
1893	69,873,571	45,297,259	6,534,200	121,705,030	21,161,711
1894	62,779,182	46,291,729	4,023,072	113,093,983	19,379,822
1895	58,557,655	42,118,236	4,576,620	105,252,511	17,887,269
1896	67,239,759	38,121,402	5,226,319	110,587,480	20,219,037
1897	66,220,765	40,397,062	4,676,194	111,294,021	19,891,997
1898	74,625,088	51,682,074	4,390,844	130,698,006	22,157,788
1899	89,433,172	59,913,287	4,705,134	154,051,593	25,734,229
1900	104,346,795	68,160,083	8,297,438	180,804,316	28,889,110
1901	105,969,756	71,730,938	3,537,294	181,237,988	29,106,980
1902	118,657,496	77,822,694	6,311,405	202,791,595	32,425,532
1903	136,796,065	88,017,654	8,976,797	233,790,516	37,110,355
1904	148,909,576	94,680,443	7,874,313	251,464,332	40,954,349
1905	150,928,787	100,688,332	10,308,435	261,925,554	42,024,340
1906	173,046,109	110,236,095	7,078,603	290,360,807	46,671,101
1907 (9 mo)	152,065,529	97,672,345	7,517,008	257,254,882	40,290,172
1908	218,160,047	133,719,908	6,548,661	358,428,616	58,331,074
1909	175,014,160	113,203,355	9,988,442	298,205,957	48,059,792
1910	227,264,346	142,551,081	6,017,589	375,833,016	61,024,239
1911	282,723,812	169,021,296	10,206,210	461,951,318	73,312,368
1912	335,304,060	186,144,249	26,033,881	547,482,190	87,576,037
1913	441,606,885	228,482,181	5,427,979	675,517,045	115,068,688
1914	410,258,744	208,198,400	15,235,305	633,692,449	107,180,578

Source: Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The Canada Year Book 1914,  
Ottawa: 1915, Table 6, p. 260.

## APPENDIX I

TABLE 3

TARIFF RATIOS FOR CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND, 1870-1914  
 RATIO OF DUTIES COLLECTED ON IMPORTS TO DUTIABLE IMPORTS  
 AND DUTIES COLLECTED ON IMPORTS TO TOTAL IMPORTS  
 FOR CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND, 1870-1914

Canada			Newfoundland		
Year	Duties to Dutiable Imports	Duties to Total Imports	Year	Duties to Dutiable Imports	Duties to Total Imports
1870-71 <sup>1</sup>	20.9	14.1	1870 <sup>2</sup>	13.0	12.6
1871-72	19.6	14.0	1871	12.6	12.2
1872-73	19.1	12.4	1872	12.1	11.7
1873-74	18.3	10.4	1873	12.1	11.5
1874-75	18.9	11.7	1874	12.0	11.3
1875-76	19.6	13.1	1875	11.5	10.8
1876-77	21.3	13.9	1876	12.3	11.5
1877-78	20.6	13.3	1877	12.2	11.5
1878-79	21.4	14.2	1878	12.6	11.6
1879-80	23.3	16.4	1879	13.8	12.8
1880-81	26.1	20.2	1880	13.4	12.4
1881-82	25.8	20.4	1881	14.8	14.0
1882-83	25.3	19.5	1882	13.8	12.2
1883-84	25.3	19.0	1883	14.0	12.6
1884-85	25.2	19.0	1884	14.5	13.2
1885-86	26.1	19.2	1885	14.5	13.4
1886-87	27.5	20.2	1886	16.2	15.2
1887-88	28.7	21.3	1887	21.6	20.2
1888-89	31.8	22.0	1888	17.7	16.8
1889-90	31.9	21.8	1889	20.3	19.0
1890-91	31.0	21.4	1890	22.4	20.6

continued....

TABLE 3 - continued

Canada			Newfoundland		
Year	Duties to Dutiable Imports	Duties to Total Imports	Year	Duties to Dutiable Imports	Duties to Total Imports
1891-92	31.4	21.0	1891	23.4	21.1
1892-93	29.7	17.8	1892 <sup>3</sup>	38.1	34.3
1893-94	30.3	18.4	1893	23.7	21.2
1894-95	30.9	17.8	1894	23.0	20.9
1895-96	30.5	17.8	1895	24.9	23.2
			1895-96 <sup>4</sup>	25.6	23.4
1896-97	30.0	19.2	1896-97	27.3	24.9
1897-98	30.0	18.7	1897-98	28.5	25.9
1898-99	29.7	17.5	1898-99	27.0	24.4
1899-00	28.8	17.2	1899-00	25.0	21.9
1900-01	27.7	16.7	1900-01	30.5	25.5
1901-02	27.5	16.4	1901-02	n.a.	n.a.
1902-03	27.3	16.5	1902-03	n.a.	n.a.
1903-04	27.1	16.5	1903-04	n.a.	n.a.
1904-05	27.5	16.9	1904-05	n.a.	n.a.
1905-06	27.8	16.7	1905-06	n.a.	n.a.
1906-07	27.0	16.5	1906-07	n.a.	n.a.
1907-08	26.5	16.1	1907-08	n.a.	n.a.
1908-09	26.7	16.6	1908-09	34.4	20.2
1909-10	27.5	16.7	1909-10	32.9	20.0
1910-11	26.8	16.5	1910-11	31.5	19.4
1911-12	25.9	16.2	1911-12	31.3	19.5
1912-13	26.1	16.8	1912-13	31.5	18.2
1913-14	26.1	17.1	1913-14	33.8	17.8

<sup>1</sup>fiscal years.

<sup>2</sup>calendar years.

<sup>3</sup>Because of the Fire of 1892 in St. John's, many of the import returns were destroyed:

"Imports comprise whole return for Labrador, E.C., Blanc Sablon, Pilley's Island, and Flower's Cove; half year for rest of island."  
JHA 1892, Appendix 34, also Blue Book, 1892.

<sup>4</sup>Year measured from July 1 to June 30.

Source: Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The Canada Year Book 1914, Ottawa: 1915, Table 6, p. 260; Customs Returns, 1870-1914, JHA 1871-1915, Appendix.



## APPENDIX II

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF THE LABOUR FORCE IN NEWFOUNDLAND, 1857-1911

	1857	1869	1874	1884	1891	1901	1911
Occupied Labour Force	43,251	47,024	53,309	73,796	56,984	67,368	82,426
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Primary	94.0	90.0	89.0	87.0	70.0	69.0	63.0
- Agriculture	4.0	4.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	4.0
- Fishing (males)	89.0	84.0	86.0	82.0	64.0	61.0	53.0
- Lumbering	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	3.0
- Mining	--	1.0	0.0	0.5	2.0	2.0	3.0
Secondary	5.0	9.0	10.0	10.0	22.0	23.0	27.0
- Mechanics	5.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	7.0
- Factory Workers	--	--	--	--	2.0	1.0	2.0
- Others	--	5.0	6.0	5.0	15.0	17.0	18.0
Services	1.9	1.6	1.5	3.8	7.9	8.1	11.0
- Professionals	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	2.0	2.0	2.0
- Merchants/Traders	1.6	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.6
- Clerical/Shop Labour	--	--	--	2.2	3.4	3.5	5.6
- Government Service	--	--	--	--	1.1	1.1	1.8

Source: David Alexander, "Newfoundland's Traditional Economy and Development to 1934", Acadiensis, Vol. 2, 1972-73, Table 4, p. 68.

## APPENDIX II

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF THE LABOUR FORCE IN CANADA, 1871-1911

	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911
Occupied Labour Force	1,130,000	1,378,000	1,606,000	1,783,000	2,724,000
	%	%	%	%	%
Primary	--	51.2	49.5	44.3	39.5
- Agriculture	50.0	48.0	45.8	40.2	34.3
- Fishing	--	2.1	1.9	1.5	1.3
- Forest Operations	--	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.6
- Mining	--	0.5	1.0	1.6	2.3
Secondary	--	29.4	26.3	27.9	27.1
- Manufacturing	13.1	13.8	16.2	17.3	19.9
- Construction	--	15.6	10.1	10.6	7.2
Services	17.0	19.4	24.2	27.8	33.4

Source: O.J. Firestone, Canadian Economic Development 1867-1953 (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1958), Tables 65 and 66, pp. 184-185.

## APPENDIX II

TABLE 3

VALUE OF PRODUCTION  
IN SECONDARY MANUFACTURING,  
1884 - 1911

	Newfoundland Population	Total Output	Output Per Capita
1884	197,335	\$1,435,952	\$ 7.28
1891	202,040	1,458,966	7.22
1901	220,984	2,113,184	9.56
1911	242,619	2,816,487	11.61

Source: Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1884, 1891, 1901, 1911. The figures presently in this Table have been altered and do not coincide with the figures presented in the census. The output of sawmills has been omitted. Output for the construction industry was never included when the census was compiled for these years.

## APPENDIX II

TABLE 4

VALUE OF PRODUCTION  
IN SECONDARY MANUFACTURING,  
1870 - 1910

	Canadian Population	Total Output	Output Per Capita
1870	3,673,000	\$ 87,000,000	\$23.69
1880	4,308,000	110,000,000	25.53
1890	4,820,000	189,000,000	39.21
1900	5,356,000	223,000,000	41.64
1910	7,116,000	508,000,000	71.39

Source: O.J. Firestone, Canadian Economic Development, 1867-1953 (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1958), Tables 5 and 67, pp. 57 and 188. The figures on output exclude the construction industry.

## APPENDIX II

TABLE 5

ESTIMATE OF NEWFOUNDLAND'S  
NATIONAL INCOME FOR 1884

	Low Estimate		High Estimate	
	\$	%	\$	%
Primary	6.6M	88.0	6.6M	78.6
Secondary	0.7M	9.3	1.4M	16.7
Services	0.2M	2.7	0.4M	4.8
Realized National Income	7.5M	100.0	8.4M	100.0

Source: David Alexander, "A New Newfoundland: The Traditional Economy and Development to 1934", unpublished paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, Kingston, Ontario, June 1973, Table 4, p. 21.

## APPENDIX III

TABLE 1

LIST OF MAJOR FACTORIES IN ST. JOHN'S, 1869-1914<sup>1</sup>

	1869	1874	1884 <sup>2</sup>	1891 <sup>3</sup>	1901	1911
Nail Factory & Rolling Mill			1	1 <sup>4</sup>	1 <sup>5</sup>	1 <sup>6</sup>
Iron Foundries	2	3 <sup>7</sup>	6	2	1	1
Rope Walks	1 <sup>8</sup>	1	1	1 <sup>9</sup>	1 <sup>10</sup>	1 <sup>11</sup>
Gas Works	1	1	1	1 <sup>12</sup>	1	1 <sup>13</sup>
Lime Kilns	1 <sup>14</sup>	n/a	n/a	2 <sup>15</sup>	1 <sup>16</sup>	n/a
Carriage Factories	1 <sup>17</sup>	2 <sup>18</sup>	n/a	2 <sup>19</sup>	2 <sup>20</sup>	1 <sup>21</sup>
Furniture Factories	1 <sup>22</sup>	2 <sup>23</sup>	7	4	6	4
Tanneries	2	2 <sup>24</sup>	4	2	4	4
Boot & Shoe Factories	1 <sup>25</sup>	2 <sup>26</sup>	3	1 <sup>27</sup>	1	2 <sup>28</sup>
Clothing Factories						1 <sup>29</sup>
Bakeries (by machine)	4	5 <sup>30</sup>	6 <sup>31</sup>	4	6	8
Tobacco Factories			2	1 <sup>32</sup>	1 <sup>33</sup>	1 <sup>34</sup>
Breweries	1	3 <sup>35</sup>	4	2	3	2
Paint/Soap/Oil Cloth Factories						1 <sup>36</sup>
Distilleries	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Marble Works	n/a	2 <sup>37</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Printing Shops						x <sup>38</sup>
Others	n/a	n/a	29 <sup>39</sup>	13 <sup>40</sup>	51 <sup>41</sup>	42 <sup>42</sup>
TOTAL - St. John's	16 <sup>43</sup>	24 <sup>44</sup>	64 <sup>45</sup>	36	78	71
TOTAL - Newfoundland	20	26	112 <sup>46</sup>	39 <sup>47</sup>	104	114

<sup>1</sup>Blue Books, 1870-1901. While the Blue Books form the basis of this table, where possible, information from the census was used to improve the quality of the data. These changes are indicated below.

TABLE 1 - continued

- <sup>2</sup>In the interim between 1875 and 1884 a number of factories were added to or subtracted from the Blue Books. In 1878 a tobacco factory was added but disappeared from the count in 1879. A soap making business was included in 1880 and a woolen factory in 1881. In 1882 another brewery, two tobacco factories and a rope walk were listed in addition to those factories listed in the previous year. The next year, 1883, the woolen factory was excluded and a nail factory added. In 1884 two more tanneries, an additional brewery, four more foundries, five additional cabinet factories, and two more boot and shoe factories appeared in the Blue Book. As well, a miscellaneous group of 24 factories were mentioned which must have included the bakeries, the distillery and soap factory, for these were not mentioned specifically in the list. This would give a grand total of 53 factories in St. John's according to the Blue Book.
- <sup>3</sup>The 1891 census is often viewed sceptically because the counts in almost every category appear to be too low. Because the Blue Books 1885-1891 were copied from the census this source does not provide a check against what is clearly a low count.
- <sup>4</sup>The nail factory produced 6,000 hundredweight nails valued at \$25,000. Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1891.
- <sup>5</sup>The nail factory produced \$36,000 (9,080 hundredweight) of nails in St. John's West in 1901. Ibid., 1901.
- <sup>6</sup>\$64,494 nails manufactured in St. John's West in 1911. Ibid., 1911.
- <sup>7</sup>Census, 1874, mentions three iron foundries and engine works employing about 100 men daily.
- <sup>8</sup>The Blue Books for 1870-1874 include a rope and oakum factory in St. John's; Mosdell reported that a fire on December 4, 1869 destroyed a rope and oakum factory in Hoylestown, St. John's East. When Was That? A Chronological Dictionary of Important Events in Newfoundland Down to and Including the year 1922 (St. John's: Trade Printers and Publishers, Ltd., 1923), p. 110.
- <sup>9</sup>The Rope Walk in St. John's West produced \$160,000 worth of ropes and lines in 1891. Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1891.
- <sup>10</sup>The value of rope and line manufactured in St. John's West in 1891 was \$300,000. Ibid., 1891.
- <sup>11</sup>\$300,000 worth of rope and twines were made in St. John's West in 1911. Ibid., 1911.
- <sup>12</sup>Although not mentioned specifically in either the Blue Books or the census, the gas works was still in operation.

TABLE 1 - continued

- <sup>13</sup> \$70,000 worth of tar and coke manufactured in St. John's in 1911 was probably produced at the gas works. Ibid., 1911.
- <sup>14</sup> £300 worth of lime was burnt in St. John's East. Ibid., 1869.
- <sup>15</sup> Two lime kilns were operated in St. John's East and burned 6,000 bushels of lime valued at \$2,100. Ibid., 1891.
- <sup>16</sup> 12,000 bushels of lime were produced at a total value of \$4,000. Ibid., 1901.
- <sup>17</sup> £1,700 worth of carriages were made in St. John's East. Ibid., 1869.
- <sup>18</sup> Carriages valued at £1,328 were made in St. John's East and carriages valued at £2,128 were made in St. John's West in 1874. Ibid., 1874.
- <sup>19</sup> \$17,200 worth of carriages were built in St. John's East in 1891 and \$2,500 worth of carriages in St. John's West. Ibid., 1891.
- <sup>20</sup> A carriage factory in St. John's West had an output of \$3,000; some \$13,000 worth of carriages were produced in St. John's East that same year. Ibid., 1901.
- <sup>21</sup> \$95,000 worth of carriages were made in St. John's East in 1911. Ibid., 1911.
- <sup>22</sup> £400 worth of chairs and cabinets were produced in St. John's East. Ibid., 1869.
- <sup>23</sup> Cabinet wares to the value of £1,500 were manufactured in St. John's East and £700 worth of cabinet wares were manufactured in St. John's West in 1874. Ibid., 1874.
- <sup>24</sup> Two tanneries in St. John's tanned 4,600 sides of leather valued at £2,800. Ibid., 1874.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid., 1869.
- <sup>26</sup> 2,850 pairs of shoes were manufactured in St. John's East in 1874; and 10,000 pairs of shoes were manufactured in St. John's West. Ibid., 1874.
- <sup>27</sup> \$230,000 worth of boots and shoes were manufactured in St. John's West in 1891. Ibid., 1891.
- <sup>28</sup> \$50,000 worth of boots and shoes were made in St. John's East in 1911 and \$375,000 worth were made in St. John's West. Ibid., 1911.
- <sup>29</sup> \$267,000 worth of clothing was made in St. John's East in 1911. While this was probably manufactured in more than one factory, the census does not indicate this. Ibid., 1911.



TABLE 1 - continued

- 30 The census of 1874 mentions one mill bakery which produced 20,500 bags of bread using 12,000 bags of flour and employed 23 hands and two superintendents. This bakery consisted of one bakery and three stores (warehouses). Ibid., 1874.
- 31 Ibid., 1884.
- 32 The tobacco factory processed 447,265 pounds of tobacco which was valued at \$150,000. Ibid., 1891.
- 33 The tobacco factory in St. John's East produced 281,000 pounds which was valued at \$112,400. Ibid., 1901.
- 34 \$75,000 worth of tobacco was produced in St. John's East. Ibid., 1911.
- 35 Census of 1874 mentions a third brewery not included in the Blue Books. One of the breweries was located in St. John's East, employed 17 hands, and produced a total of 1500 gallons of malt liquor (£10,000). There were two in St. John's West, one of which employed ten hands, two clerks, and produced £500 of malt liquor. Ibid., 1874.
- 36 \$130,000 paint, soap and oil clothing was made in St. John's East. Ibid., 1911.
- 37 Census of 1874 mentions two marble works in St. John's West. Ibid., 1874.
- 38 An undisclosed number of printing shops had an output valued at \$160,000 in St. John's East in 1911. Ibid., 1911.
- 39 Census of 1884 lists 37 factories in the 'other' category. The Blue Book, 1884 identified eight from this category, which leaves 29 factories still in the 'other' category. Ibid., 1884.
- 40 The census and Blue Books list 22 'other' factories, but nine of these were identified elsewhere in the census. Ibid., 1891.
- 41 The census and Blue Book for 1891 list 58 factories in the 'miscellaneous' category. Seven of these were identified elsewhere in the census. Ibid., 1901.
- 42 While the census and Blue Book for 1911 list 52 miscellaneous factories, at least ten of these were identified elsewhere in the census. Ibid., 1911.
- 43 Undoubtedly this list of the number of factories in St. John's is incomplete. The census for 1869 has a further category, "wooden wares other than the above" (referring to chairs, cabinetware and carriages) which totalled £11,230, £10,665 produced in St. John's. If the list

## TABLE 1 - continued

for St. John's was incomplete, then it goes without saying that the total for the rest of Newfoundland is also incomplete. Ibid., 1869.

<sup>44</sup> Obviously these figures exaggerate the importance of St. John's as a manufacturing center for Newfoundland because, if a rigorous examination of these sources were made for other districts, notably Harbour Grace, then the total number of Newfoundland factories would increase and the relative importance of St. John's would be diminished. Ibid., 1874.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 1884.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> This total is very low, as is the 1891 total for St. John's, especially when compared with the 1884 count. Given the reputation of the 1891 census, it should be viewed with some suspicion.

## APPENDIX III

TABLE 2

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF MECHANICS  
AND FACTORY WORKERS IN ST. JOHN'S  
WITH THE TOTAL FOR NEWFOUNDLAND, 1869-1911

	St. John's East	St. John's West	St. John's Total <sup>1</sup>	Newfoundland Total	St. John's Newfoundland %
1869	895	591	1486	2019	73
1874	706	622	1328	2171	61
1884	1215	1074	2289	3628	63
1891	1075	1174	2249	3740	60
1901	985	1374	2359	3737	63
1911	1496	1884	3380	6580	51

<sup>1</sup>The figures used for St. John's were the categories in the census St. John's City and Suburbs from Beck's Cove, &C., East and St. John's City and Suburbs from Beck's Cove, &C., West. The rest of the electoral districts of St. John's East and St. John's West was excluded.

Source: Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1869-1911.

# APPENDIX III

## TABLE 3

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF MECHANICS AND FACTORY WORKERS IN ST. JOHN'S  
WITH THE TOTAL OCCUPIED LABOUR FORCE OF ST. JOHN'S, 1869 - 1911

	St. John's East		St. John's West		St. John's Total		% Mechanics/ O.L.F. St. John's
	Mechanics &c. <sup>1</sup>	Occupied Labour Force	Mechanics &c.	Occupied Labour Force	Mechanics &c.	Occupied Labour Force	
1869	895	3094	591	2829	1486	5923	25
1874	706	1842	622	2067	1328	3909	34
1884	1215	3832	1074	3467	2289	7299	31
1891	1075	4078	1174	3675	2249	7753	29
1901	985	4087	1374	4520	2359	8607	27
1911	1496	6717	1884	7139	3380	13856	24

<sup>1</sup>These figures include the categories of mechanics and factory workers only. The category known as 'other' which was probably dominated by transport and construction workers was deliberately left out of the calculation.

Source: Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1869-1911.

## APPENDIX III

TABLE 4-A

TOTAL PERSONNEL OF TRADES AND MANUFACTURING  
IN ST. JOHN'S, 1869-1913

	Directory <sup>1</sup>	Interdirectory Changes	Census <sup>2</sup>	Inter- Censorial Changes %
1869	-	-	1486	-
1871	655	-	-	-
1874	-	-	1328	89.4
1884	-	-	2289	172.4
1890	2441	372.7	-	-
1891	-	-	2249	98.3
1901	-	-	2359	104.9
1911	-	-	3380	143.3
1913	3494	143.1	-	-

<sup>1</sup>The directory figure for 1871 is clearly an underestimation and its chief use is as a statistical sample in the examination of the structure of trades and manufacturing in St. John's. The figures for 1890 and 1913 include tradesmen, factory workers, clerks, management, in short all personnel in St. John's trades and manufacturing.

<sup>2</sup>The census includes only tradesmen and factory workers.

Source: Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1869-1911; Newfoundland Directory, 1871 (Montreal: John Lovell, 1871); Newfoundland Directory, 1890 (Montreal: Might and Company, 1890); Newfoundland Directory, 1913 (St. John's: Newfoundland Directory Company, 1913).

## APPENDIX III

TABLE 4-B

TOTAL NUMBER OF LARGE FIRMS  
IN ST. JOHN'S TRADES AND MANUFACTURING, 1870-1914

	Directory <sup>1</sup>	Interdirectory Changes %	Blue Books <sup>2</sup> and Census	Inter- Censorial Changes %
1869	-	-	76	-
1871	n/a	-	-	-
1874	-	-	24	150.0
1884	-	-	64	266.7
1890	104	-	-	-
1891	-	-	36	56.3
1901	-	-	78	216.7
1911	-	-	71	91.0
1913	120	115.4	-	-

<sup>1</sup>The directory figures for 1890 and 1913 are the totals for firms employing five or more people.

<sup>2</sup>The census and Blue Books figures appear to be based on no objective standard. The most prominent factories are undoubtedly included but the counting of the factories not in the forefront is inconsistent. The figure for 1891 is clearly wrong.

Source: Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1869-1911; Newfoundland Directory, 1871 (Montreal: John Lovell, 1871); Newfoundland Directory, 1890 (Montreal: Might and Company, 1890); Newfoundland Directory, 1913 (St. John's: Newfoundland Directory Company, 1913).

## APPENDIX III

TABLE 5

PERSONNEL IN ST. JOHN'S TRADES AND MANUFACTURING  
1871, 1890, 1913

	1871		1890		1913	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
CONSUMER INDUSTRIES:						
— Perishables						
- Butchers	40	6.1	51	2.1	78	2.2
- Bakers/Confectioners	36	5.5	166	6.8	313	9.9
- Butterine Workers	n/a	n/a	11	0.5	20	0.6
- Brewery Workers &c.	3	0.5	39	1.6	58	1.7
- Tobacco Workers	n/a	n/a	45	1.8	136	3.9
— Durables						
- Tailors &c.	87	13.3	388	15.9	622	17.8
- Boot & Shoe Workers	70	10.7	343	14.1	297	8.5
- Tanners	2	0.3	33	1.4	56	1.6
- Harness & Saddlemakers	3	0.5	17	0.7	23	0.7
- Cabinetmakers	12	1.8	120	4.9	225	6.4
- Carriagemakers	5	0.8	61	2.5	72	2.1
- Printers	29	4.4	70	2.9	203	5.8
- Photographers	4	0.6	10	0.4	29	0.8
- Stonecutters	4	0.6	17	0.7	21	0.6
- Jewellers/Watchmakers	8	1.2	41	1.7	60	1.6
- Soapmakers	1	0.2	3	0.1	n/a	n/a
- Locksmiths	n/a	n/a	3	0.1	n/a	n/a
- Standard Manufacturing Workers	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	53	1.5
CONSUMER TOTALS						
- Perishables	79	12.1	312	12.8	605	17.3
- Durables	225	34.4	1106	45.3	1661	47.5
GRAND TOTAL	304	46.4	1418	58.1	2266	64.9

continued....

TABLE 5 - continued

	1871		1890		1913	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
PRODUCER INDUSTRIES:						
— Fishery Trades						
- Cordage Workers	n/a	n/a	54	2.2	72	2.1
- Coopers	204	31.1	347	14.2	394	11.3
- Sailmakers	20	3.1	56	2.3	37	1.1
Shipwrights						
- Ship Carpenters	40	6.1	86	3.5	49	1.4
Riggers						
- Blockmakers	8	1.2	10	0.4	1	0.0
— Heavy Industry						
- Heavy Metal Workers	43	6.6	263	10.8	345	9.9
- Engineers	16	2.4	74	3.0	168	4.8
- Gas Workers	n/a	n/a	12	0.5	48	1.4
- Tinsmiths & Plumbers	20	3.1	121	5.0	114	3.3
PRODUCER TOTALS						
- Fishery Trades	272	41.5	553	22.7	553	15.8
- Heavy Industry	79	12.1	470	19.3	675	19.3
GRAND TOTAL	351	53.6	1023	41.9	1228	35.1
GRAND TOTALS						
- Consumer Industries	304	46.4	1418	58.1	2266	64.9
- Producer Industries	351	53.6	1023	41.9	1228	35.1
FINAL TOTAL	655	100.0	2441	100.0	3494	100.0

Source: Newfoundland Directory, 1871 (Montreal: John Lovell, 1871); Newfoundland Directory, 1890 (Montreal: Might and Company, 1890); Newfoundland Directory, 1913 (St. John's, Newfoundland Directory Company, 1913).



## APPENDIX III

TABLE 6

FIRMS IN ST. JOHN'S TRADES AND MANUFACTURING  
1890, 1913

	1890		1913	
	#	%	#	%
CONSUMER INDUSTRIES:				
— Perishables				
- Butchershops	23	5.8	29	6.5
- Bakeries/Confectioneries	65	16.3	59	13.2
- Butterine Factories	2	0.5	2	0.4
- Breweries &c.	4	1.0	7	1.6
- Tobacco Factories	2	0.5	1	0.2
— Durables				
- Clothing Factories &c.	75	18.8	73	16.4
- Boot & Shoe Factories &c.	55	13.8	43	9.6
- Tanneries	4	1.0	5	1.1
- Harness/Saddlemakers Shops	4	1.0	5	1.1
- Furniture Factories	12	3.0	16	3.6
- Carriage Factories	13	3.3	15	3.4
- Printing Shops	10	2.5	24	5.4
- Photographic Studios	3	0.8	7	1.6
- Jewellers/Watchmakers	11	2.8	13	2.9
- Locksmith Shops	1	0.3	-	-
- Soap Factories	1	0.3	-	-
- Standard Manufacturing Co.	3	0.8	1	0.2
- Marble Works	3	0.8	4	0.9
CONSUMER TOTALS				
- Perishables	96	24.0	98	22.2
- Durables	192	48.0	206	46.2
GRAND TOTALS	288	72.0	304	68.2

continued....

TABLE 6 - continued

	1890		1913	
	#	%	#	%
PRODUCER INDUSTRIES:				
— Fishery Trades				
- Rope Walks	1	0.3	1	0.2
- Cooperages	60	15.0	77	17.3
- Sail Lofts	7	1.8	4	0.9
- Block & Pump Factories	2	0.5	1	0.2
— Heavy Industry				
- Foundries &c.	23	5.8	31	7.0
- Gas Works	1	0.3	1	0.2
- Tinsmith & Plumbers Shops	18	4.5	27	60.5
PRODUCER TOTALS				
- Fishery Trades	70	17.5	83	18.6
- Heavy Industry	42	10.5	59	13.2
GRAND TOTAL	112	28.0	142	31.8
GRAND TOTALS				
- Consumer Industries	288	72.0	304	68.2
- Producer Industries	112	28.0	142	31.8
FINAL TOTAL	400	100.0	446	100.0

Source: Newfoundland Directory, 1871 (Montreal: John Lovell, 1871); Newfoundland Directory, 1890 (Montreal: Might and Company, 1890); Newfoundland Directory, 1913 (St. John's: Newfoundland Directory Company, 1913).

## APPENDIX III

TABLE 7

THE SIZE OF FIRMS IN ST. JOHN'S  
TRADES AND MANUFACTURING, 1890, 1913

	1890			1913		
	5+ <sup>1</sup>	<5 <sup>2</sup>	Total	5+	<5	Total
CONSUMER INDUSTRIES:						
— Perishables						
- Butcher Shops	1	22	23	2	27	29
- Bakeries/Confectioneries	6	59	65	6	53	59
- Butterine Factories	2	-	2	2	-	2
- Breweries &c.	4	-	4	7	-	7
- Tobacco Factories	1	1	2	1	-	1
— Durables						
- Clothing Factories	25	50	75	29	44	73
- Boot/Shoe Factories &c.	9	46	55	5	38	43
- Tanneries	2	2	4	4	1	5
- Harness/Saddle Shops	2	2	4	2	3	5
- Furniture Factories	5	7	12	6	10	16
- Carriage Factories	3	10	13	4	11	15
- Printing Shops	4	6	10	9	15	24
- Photographic Studios	1	2	3	3	4	7
- Jewellers/Watchmakers	3	8	11	5	8	13
- Locksmith Shops	-	1	1	-	-	-
- Soap Factories	-	-	1	1	-	-
- Standard Manufacturing	-	-	-	1	-	1
- Marble Works	3	-	3	1	3	4
CONSUMER TOTALS						
- Perishables	14	82	96	18	80	98
- Durables	57	135	192	69	137	206
GRAND TOTAL	71	217	288	87	217	304

continued....

TABLE 7 - continued

	1890			1913		
	5+	<5	Total	5+	<5	Total
PRODUCER INDUSTRIES:						
— Fishery Trades						
- Rope Walks	1	-	1	1	-	1
- Cooperages	11	49	60	15	62	77
- Sail Lofts	3	4	7	1	3	4
- Block/Pump Factories	1	1	2	-	1	1
— Heavy Industries						
- Foundries &c.	9	14	23	5	26	31
- Gas Works	1	-	1	1	-	1
- Tinsmith/Plumber Shops	7	11	18	10	17	27
PRODUCER TOTALS						
- Fishery Trades	16	54	70	17	66	83
- Heavy Industry	16	25	42	16	43	59
GRAND TOTAL	33	79	112	33	109	142
GRAND TOTALS						
- Consumer Industries	71	217	288	87	217	304
- Producer Industries	33	79	112	33	109	142
FINAL TOTAL	104	296	400	120	326	446

<sup>1</sup>Firms employing five or more persons.

<sup>2</sup>Firms employing less than five persons.

Source: Newfoundland Directory, 1871 (Montreal: John Lovell, 1871); Newfoundland Directory, 1890 (Montreal: Might and Company, 1890); Newfoundland Directory, 1913 (St. John's: Newfoundland Directory Company, 1913).

## APPENDIX III

TABLE 8

PERSONNEL OF LARGE AND SMALL FIRMS  
IN ST. JOHN'S TRADES AND MANUFACTURING  
1890, 1913

	1890				1913			
	5+ <sup>1</sup>	<5 <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>3</sup>	Total	5+	<5	R	Total
CONSUMER INDUSTRIES:								
— Perishables								
- Butcher Shops	5	34	12	51	23	45	10	78
- Bakeries/Conf. Shops	84	70	12	166	224	74	15	313
- Butterine Factories	11	-	-	11	20	-	-	20
- Breweries &c.	39	-	-	39	58	-	-	58
- Tobacco Factories	41	3	1	45	136	-	-	136
— Durables								
- Clothing Factories	234	98	56	388	488	78	56	622
- Boot/Shoe Factories	201	77	65	343	210	48	39	297
- Tanneries	21	6	6	33	53	1	2	56
- Harness/Saddle Shops	13	3	1	17	13	7	3	23
- Furniture Factories	94	14	12	120	191	22	12	225
- Carriage Factories	31	24	6	61	44	24	4	72
- Printing Shops	50	15	5	70	179	15	9	203
- Photographic Studios	5	5	-	10	20	7	2	29
- Jeweller/Watchmakers	17	18	6	41	35	17	8	60
- Locksmith Shops	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-
- Soap Factories	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-
- Standard Manu. Co.	-	-	-	-	53	-	-	53
- Marble Works	17	-	-	17	7	11	3	21
CONSUMER TOTALS								
- Perishables	180	107	25	312	461	119	25	605
- Durables	683	266	157	1106	1293	230	138	1661
GRAND TOTAL	863	373	182	1418	1754	349	163	2266

continued....

TABLE 8 - continued

	1890				1913			
	5+	<5	R	Total	5+	<5	R	Total
PRODUCER INDUSTRIES:								
— Fishery Trades								
- Rope Walks	54	-	-	54	72	-	-	72
- Cooperages	86	94	167	347	146	119	129	394
- Sail Lofts	28	12	16	56	21	5	11	37
- Shipwrights/Riggers	-	-	86	86	-	-	49	49
- Block/Pump Factories	5	4	1	10	-	1	-	1
— Heavy Industry								
- Foundries &c.	170	41	52	263	227	79	39	345
- Engineers	-	-	74	74	75	30	63	168
- Gas Works	12	-	-	12	48	-	-	48
- Tinsmith/Plumbers	55	20	46	121	66	31	17	114
PRODUCER TOTALS								
- Fishery Trades	173	110	270	553	239	125	189	553
- Heavy Industry	237	61	172	470	416	140	119	675
GRAND TOTAL	410	171	442	1023	655	265	308	1228
GRAND TOTALS								
- Consumer Industries	863	373	182	1418	1754	349	163	2266
- Producer Industries	410	171	442	1023	655	265	308	1228
FINAL TOTAL	1273	544	624	2441	2334	584	576	3494

<sup>1</sup>Firms employing five or more persons.

<sup>2</sup>Firms employing less than five persons.

<sup>3</sup>Persons listed in the directories as belonging to the particular trade indicated but without any indication of their employer.

Source: Newfoundland Directory, 1871 (Montreal: John Lovell, 1871);  
Newfoundland Directory, 1890 (Montreal: Might and Company, 1890);  
Newfoundland Directory, 1913 (St. John's: Newfoundland Directory Company, 1913).











