

operation before 1786, so the manufacture of lumber was being encouraged to meet the needs of the incoming Loyalists.⁹

Encouragement to lumbering was only given, however, when the result would be favourable to the British government. Early in the nineteenth century, Parliament passed a succession of acts reserving colonial white pine trees as a supply of masts for the British navy. The Act of 1721 was the most stringent, as it reserved all white pines regardless of size. The final edict was the Act of 1729, a repetition of the 1721 statute, but with stronger legal "teeth." The Act of 1721 was extended to include Nova Scotia, an area then consisting of both peninsular and mainland Nova Scotia (modern New Brunswick), but not Cape Breton Island, which remained a French possession.

The Acts of 1721 and 1729 must have had little relevance for the Acadians, Micmacs and other peoples who made up the permanent population of the area until 1749. It is conceivable that the inhabitants were unaware of the legislation and in any case, their lumbering activities were probably minimal. Although it is known that the Acadians had sawmills as early as the 1680s, their exports of lumber were meagre. "A major reason may be that timber for masts... was not plentiful near Acadian settlements and it was masts above all which interested the French before 1710 and the British afterwards."¹⁰ However, masts were being cut in Nova Scotia before the founding of Halifax. In 1734, Governor Lawrence Armstrong at Annapolis issued an order for cutting timber because of "an immediate demand in the King's navy for timber of specified dimensions." The order authorized contractors "to cut and sell the requisite timber wherever it may be found on either side of 'this river,' unless the inhabitants on whose ground it is found are willing to sell it at a fair price."¹¹

It was of greater final significance to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick that white pine trees reserved for the British navy and marked by the "Broad Arrow" under the authority of the Surveyor General of the King's Woods, became a source of annoyance to the inhabitants of the Thirteen Colonies.

9 RG1, Vol. 223, Doc. 157, Public Archives of Nova Scotia [hereafter PANS]. C. Bruce Fergusson, *Lumbering In Nova Scotia: 1632-1953* (Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forests, Education and Information Division, 1967), p. 11.

10 Andrew Hill Clark, *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760* (Madison, 1968), pp. 177, 248-249.

11 Archibald M. MacMechan, ed., *A Calendar of Two Letter-Books and One Commission Book in the Possession of the Government of Nova Scotia 1713-1741* (Halifax, 1900), p. 199.