

on colonial and foreign timber equalized. The merchants of British North America argued to have the preferences retained; they became a powerful voice and colonialism was never quite the same again in the lumbering business. The complete abolishment of British preferences to British North American timber was successfully delayed until 1866.<sup>23</sup> This was 51 years after the Napoleonic Wars ended, and long after measures designed to hasten the move from mercantilism to free trade had been passed. The credit for the imposition of the timber preferences and for their retention long after the time of emergency, has been given to the lumber barons of the Ottawa.<sup>24</sup> The demands of these Upper Canadian merchants must, however, have been echoed by a myriad of lesser lobbyists, as witness the petition of Pictou timber merchants in 1821:

...from the encouragement which Great Britain afforded to this branch of Commerce, your petitioners were induced to fund their capital in engagements and contracts for furnishing for His Majesty's use and the British Market those supplies of lumber which could not be obtained from a different quarter. ...His Majesty's government proposes to impose a duty on timber imported from this and the neighbouring provinces, or so far to diminish the duties on foreign timber as to deprive these colonies of all hope of competition.<sup>25</sup>

Various other Nova Scotian merchants also petitioned in 1821 for a continuation of the preferences. Alexander McNab and 37 others interested in the local timber trade prepared a strongly worded and comprehensive petition which stressed the exchange of colonial timber for British goods and mentioned the effects on fishing, shipping and emigration if the preferences were removed:

...besides the advantages arising from the exportation of Timber from this province afforded to the importers of British manufactures by enabling them to make remittance to the Mother Country; greatly facilitates the importation of Salt at low rates, and other articles necessary for the Fisheries...creates a demand for the other products of the Country ...consumed in manufacture of the timber...turns the tide of Emigration to this quarter...by which the settlement...of the province is...greatly benefitted... .

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23 Lower, *Great Britain's Woodyard*, p. 128.

24 Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, p. 355.

25 Petition of John Patterson and 149 others, 1821. RG5, Series P, Vol. 120, PANS.