

They went on to say that any changes in the preferential treatment for timber would tend to "most severely injure if not altogether annihilate the Trade of those Colonies, and of the entire disemployment of 1500 Sails of British Ships and 17,000 British Seaman... ."26 These kinds of arguments were apparently irresistible--the preferences, though altered at various times, remained for another 45 years.

In New Brunswick, the precarious dependence on a one-staple economy, coupled with provincial policies related to Crown lands, attracted many investors. The lumber industry promised fortune as well as bankruptcy. Local investors included merchants, legislators, farmers and lawyers; much American capital was also invested in timber land and timber making in the 1830s when the trade in spruce deals developed. This trade was accompanied by the building of hundreds of sawmills in New Brunswick to manufacture the deals, which were then exported to both United States and British markets.²⁷ British investors were there too, as well as Nova Scotian, and they were on hand as early as 1812.

"The early trade on the Miramichi... was largely controlled by Halifax and Scottish houses."²⁸ Behind this mild statement lies the intense and violent rivalry of the firms of Joseph Cunard and Alexander Rankine. They held monopolies on large tracts of timberland and were able to manufacture lumber to the exacting specifications of the British market, both in quality and quantity; so great was their control over the trade that smaller independent operators could not compete and the "middlemen who did business with the timber-gangs were in the camp" of either Cunard or Rankine. Their rivalry, accompanied by "collisions" in the woods, although it originated in trade, enmeshed politics and religion as well.²⁹

Joseph Cunard of Halifax, the younger brother of Samuel Cunard, began his enterprise at Chatham in 1820 and by 1830 had a monopoly on a vast area of timberland. He had been "granted reserved rights to all the timber above the falls of the northwest Miramichi," and by 1832 his holdings had been extended to include more land and to be in effect for ten years. Such favours, granted to

26 Petition of Alexander McNab and 37 others, 1821. RG5, Series P, Vol. 120, Doc. 31, PANS.

27 MacNutt, "Politics of the Timber Trade," p. 124; and Shortt and Doughty, eds., *Canada and Its Provinces*, XIV, p. 603.

28 Shortt and Doughty, eds., *Canada and Its Provinces*, XIII, p. 194.

29 MacNutt, "Politics of the Timber Trade," p. 124.