

poverty.<sup>53</sup> Although lumbering and heavy drinking were often equated, it would seem that the excess use of rum was a universal problem and not necessarily work-related in either province.

The West Indies trade -- fish and lumber for rum, sugar and molasses -- made the abundance of rum possible. The annual export of timber from Pictou between 1800 and 1820 was £100,000 yearly. One Pictou merchant in the early 1800s, "in one season imported 300 to 400 puncheons of rum, nearly all of which was consumed in the timber trade around Pictou Harbour."<sup>54</sup>

The merchants made credit available to lumber makers in both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. A "credit peonage" developed in which "capitalists" advanced credit to timbermakers, credit in the form of supplies and equipment. This credit often "equalled" the value of the timber obtained by the season's end.<sup>55</sup> Those engaged in the lumber trade, who neglected their farms and formed the habit of buying on credit, sometimes lost everything. A recently published analysis by Graeme Wynn suggests that the reported demoralizing effects of lumbering were more rhetoric than reality and grew out of the prevailing ethic of "hard work and self-denial" and the myth of agriculture as the only truly respectable occupation by which man could be "independent, religious, honest and morally righteous."<sup>56</sup> Social problems related to drinking and credit existed, but comments about the lack of moral virtues in lumbermen may have been greatly distorted and need to be considered in context.

One material effect of the different Crown lands policies in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick was the resulting small-scale lumbering activities with many participants, found in Nova Scotia, in contrast to the monopolies of the large scale enterprises of Cunard and Rankine in New Brunswick. Some perception of the difference in the scale of operations in the two provinces can be had by comparing census figures for 1881. The record for New Brunswick totals 478 lumber mills employing 7,494 men, or an average of more than fifteen employees per mill. Recorded for Nova Scotia are more than double the number of lumber mills -- 1190 -- but employed in them are fewer men -- 4,435 -- an average of less than

---

53 D. Campbell and R.A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots* (Toronto, 1974), p. 43.

54 *Ibid.*, p. 44.

55 Lower, *Great Britain's Woodyard*, p. 167.

56 Graeme Wynn, "Rhetoric and Reality," pp. 168-187.