

A CENTRAL NOVA SCOTIAN COUNTY AND THE LANDWARD PULL:

THE CASE OF COLCHESTER, 1867-1925

A thesis submitted by Terrence White in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Masters of Arts Degree in Atlantic Canada Studies at St. Mary's University.

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the first sixty years of Colchester County's experience within the Canadian Confederation. The middle years of the nineteenth century were critical ones for the people of the county as the economic conditions which had fostered growth and development to that point were about to change direction. A choice had to be made in the 1860's to continue the traditional economic development of a seaward looking economy or to choose the newly developing economy of a "modern" technology based on manufacturing, thus turning away from the international, overseas market.

The new landward opportunities did not appeal to some Nova Scotia counties but to many Colchester people the horizon was unlimited and clear. Colchester was well situated to benefit from a realignment of commerce on a continental oriented basis. Proposed rail connections from the upper provinces to Halifax must traverse the county and Colchester entrepreneurs were determined to seize every advantage.

This paper is organized into five separate sections which examine the economic, political and social responses of the county within the framework of the Canadian Confederation. Chapter one is a general summary of county population during the years under study. Basically this section will show the peak years for population of the county and the Town of Truro. The dominant characteristic

was that of a population drain from the county. Outmigration to other provinces and countries is illustrated by examples taken from county newspapers of the time.

Chapter two and Chapter three deal with county politics. They examine the choices made by county electors on the federal and provincial levels. Federally, it is possible to show a rural/urban split which emerged over the question of Confederation and protective tariffs. Basically, the town voters tended to vote Conservative and the county Liberal.

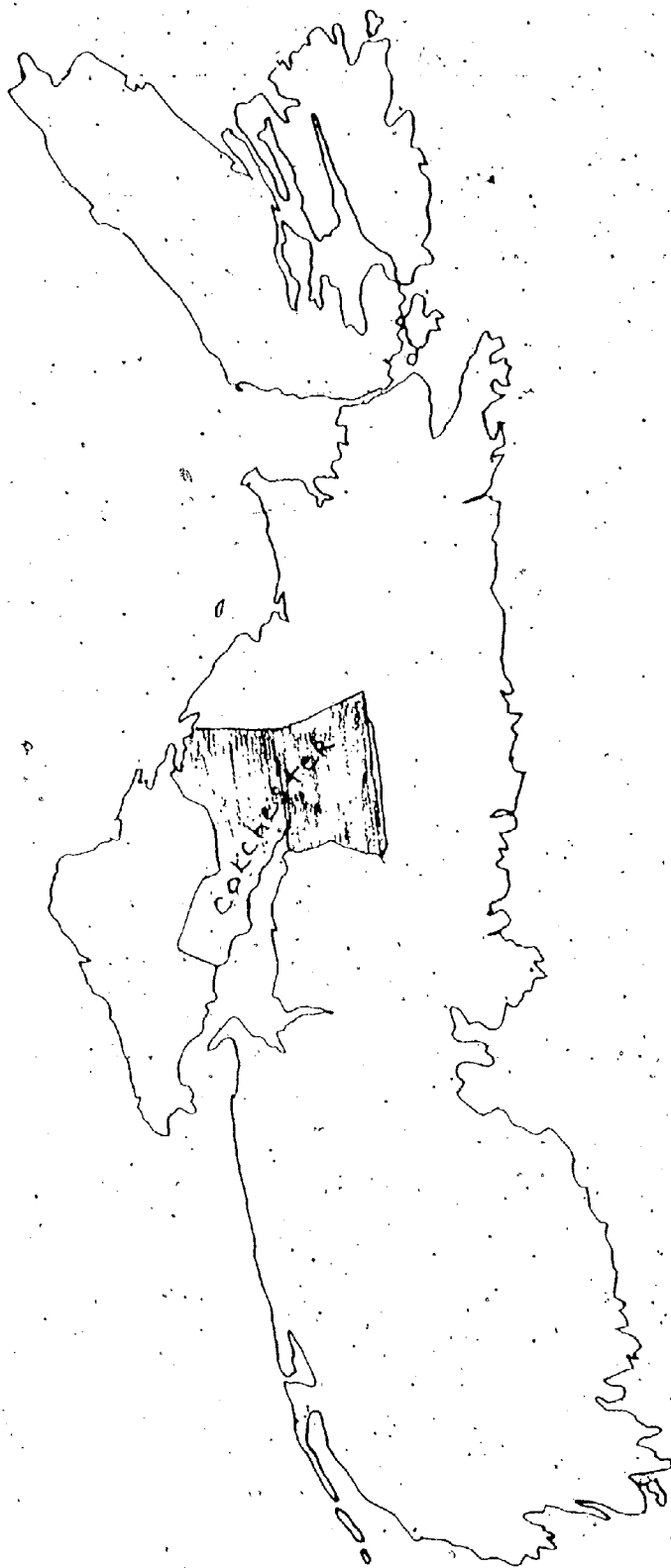
On the provincial level it can be shown that the rural/urban split persisted although the pattern is not as clearly seen federally and there are more exceptions to the rule. The Town of Truro tended to be decidedly Conservative.

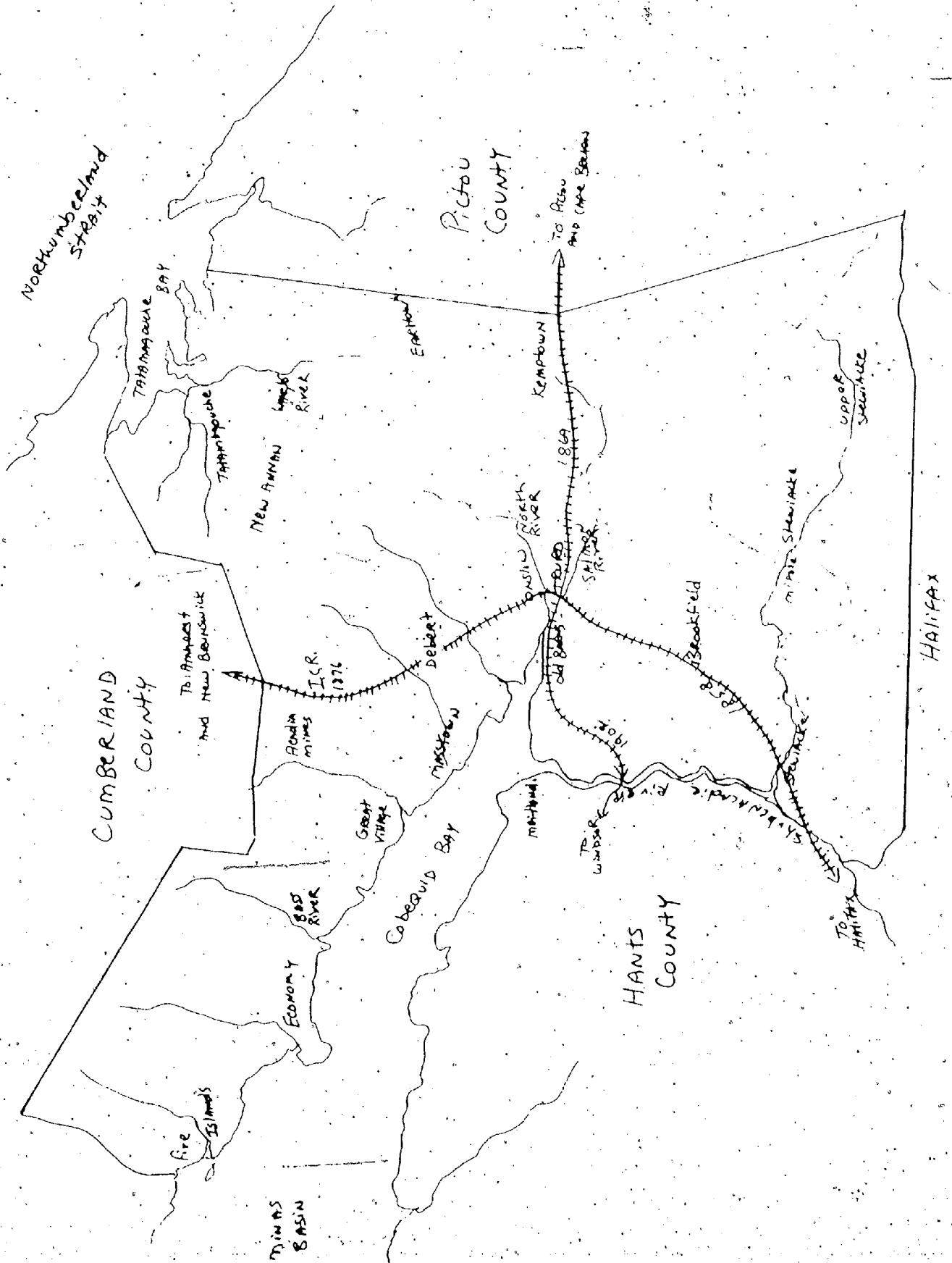
Chapter four deals with the shipbuilding industry of the county in general terms to show the decline of the industry during the last half of the nineteenth century.

Chapter five examines the Town of Truro and its metamorphosis from a rural market town at mid-nineteenth century to an aggressive manufacturing town, with national ambitions, in the short space of about thirty years. By 1925, when other Maritime towns were devastated by the centralization of economic and political power, Truro maintained a level of what may be termed modest prosperity by comparison.

Overall, the Town of Truro may be said to have desired, cherished and benefited by the landward attractions of

Confederation. The Colchester people outside the town, however, did not share this bright vision. They rejected fairly consistently any proposed benefits of Confederation. Rural industries declined, farms were abandoned and the only benefit of the railway was for passage away from their Colchester homes.







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## Introduction

### A Central Nova Scotian County and the Landward Pull: The Case of Colchester, 1867-1925.

Be it resolved that the citizens of Truro be requested to close their places of business on the afternoon of the 16th instant when the funeral obsequies are to be performed and that those who have flags be requested to have them placed at half-mast and that the citizens generally are requested to observe and give expression to any marks of respect they may deem suitable; that this council attend the funeral in a body; that this resolution be declared by publishing in the Daily News of this evening and that a copy of this resolution, duly embossed and certified by the Town Clerk, be immediately forwarded to Lady Archibald with whom this council express their profound and sincere sympathy.

The citizens of Truro prepared to honour an illustrious native son. Sir Adams George Archibald had died on December 14, 1892.

On Friday, the 16th, the day of the funeral, the town schools were closed for the afternoon. The children who lined the streets that day to observe the funeral procession would witness a display of respect and admiration and of genuine public grief as would be accorded few from the town or county. As the cortege made its way from the Archibald residence, on the hill above Brunswick Street, to First Presbyterian Church, blinds were drawn, flags were lowered and the five thousand citizens of the town turned

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<sup>1</sup>Truro Daily News. 15 Dec., 1892.

out to honour one of their own who had risen to national prominence and whose public life had been so exemplary.

Premier Fielding was unable to attend the funeral, he being absent in Boston, but His Honour Lieutenant-Governor Daly was in town for the occasion. Other mourners included Attorney General J. W. Langley; M. J. Power of Halifax, Speaker of the Provincial Legislature; Honourable W. A. Patterson, M. P. for Colchester; Honourable C. E. Church, M.P. for Shelburne; Colchester Senator Honourable Thomas McKay; and Honourable D. Weldon, M.P. for Albert, New Brunswick. Professor Lawson and Dr. Forrest were present representing Dalhousie University of which Adams G. Archibald was late Chairman of the Board of Governors. Mr. D. Pottinger, General Manager of the Government Railway and Mr. P. S. Archibald, Chief Engineer, arrived from Moncton. Mayor D. J. Thomas of Truro and the Truro Town Council were there and Warden James Graham with representatives of the Colchester County Council. All the local clergy, the law fraternity and the leading citizens of Truro solemnly assembled.

It was a "largely attended" funeral at First Presbyterian, its Minister Reverend John Robbins conducting the ceremony at the church. Tributes for the deceased were many. "His life", Reverend Robbins said, "was a lesson to the young of today, especially those who had a disposition

to leave their native country. Here was a man who had stood by his native country, laboured for its best welfare and had become eminent and beloved in doing so."<sup>2</sup>

These words may have lingered as the crowd stood by the grave site in the Robie Street Cemetery. Looking out from the spot, across the brown marsh stubble on a bleak December day it would be possible to see the rising bank of the Salmon River where Adams G. Archibald had been born seventy-nine years before. His "native country" then, in 1814, was Nova-Scotia. His "native country now", was Canada. In that broad sweep of years between beginning and end, his life and the life of his county and town had experienced dramatic changes.

Archibald's death had occurred at a watershed era in his county's history. For the twenty-five years that he experienced of the Canadian Confederation it would appear that the visions of progress for Nova Scotia which he had espoused in the 1860's had been fulfilled. But the hopeful beginning did not last. Archibald did not live to see the eventual sadder fate of his province and county as they moved into the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The traditional view of the Nova Scotian experience within Confederation has been one where development stopped

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<sup>2</sup>Halifax Herald. 17 Dec., 1892.

in 1867. This view has tended to be highly romanticized, much of it looking at the "Golden Age" of prosperity in the 1850's and 1860's as a contrast to what was perceived as decline when the wooden sailing ship was eased out of the world shipping patterns.

In the light of the renaissance which has occurred since 1970 in Atlantic Canada with regard to the study of the region, the traditional view of Maritime history has changed rather markedly. In this view, the Maritime experience on entering Confederation was, in the beginning, one for which every hope of success seemed to be possible. T. W. Acheson has shown the adaptability and resourcefulness of the Maritime entrepreneur to fit the reorganized economic reality which existed after 1867.<sup>3</sup> The great dream of becoming the industrial heartland of the newly created dominion was one which began to fade, however, by the last decade of the nineteenth century as the maritime economy was integrated into that of the continent.<sup>4</sup> In the wake of the Great War the economy of the Maritimes was devastated, its

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<sup>3</sup>T. W. Acheson. "The National Policy and The Industrialization of The Maritimes", Acadiensis, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1972.

<sup>4</sup>T. W. Acheson. "The Maritime and Empire Canada", in Bercuson, D. (ed.), Canada and The Burden of Unity, MacMillan, Toronto, 1977. Also J. D. Frost, "The Nationalization of the Bank of N.S. 1880-1910", Acadiensis, Vol. 1, Autumn 1982; L. D. McCann, "Metropolitanism and Branch Business in The Maritimes 1881-1931", Acadiensis, Vol. 13, No. 1, Autumn 1983.

people scattered and by 1930 the region had acquired the reputation as an economic backwater. It is within this context then that this paper will examine the experience of Colchester County.

The history of the county to about 1860 is not unlike many other Nova Scotian counties. The agricultural resources of extensive marshlands were identified and exploited early by the Acadians before 1755. Development of upland agriculture throughout the southern part of the county was undertaken by the Ulster Scots who came from New England and Ireland to found the townships of Truro, Onslow and Londonderry about 1760. In the northern county areas development was somewhat later. The DesBarres Estate<sup>5</sup> along the Northumberland Strait tried to introduce a tenant peasantry in the 1770's which limited development in a great block of 20,000 acres. Settlement which overflowed from Pictou County south and west through the hills or west along the shore confined the Scots to the hill country of the Earltown<sup>6</sup> and New Annan districts where an agricultural future was limited by soil and topography.

By the 1860's the limits of the agricultural potential for the county were close to being met. Maximum rural population occurred in census year 1871. Agriculture would

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<sup>5</sup>George Sutherland. The Rise and Decline of the Community of Earltown, Colchester Historical Society Publication, 1980.

be classed as subsistence, with no great export market, surplus produce or cattle being taken by boat from Truro to Windsor and thence to Halifax. The direct overland route from Truro through to Halifax was more difficult and less frequently used.

As with countless other areas of the Maritimes, the proximity of good timber to water in Colchester led to the development of a shipbuilding industry. Communities along the Shubenacadie mouth, the north shore of Cobequid Bay and along the Northumberland Strait produced vessels early in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. By mid-nineteenth century there were still about twenty good years left to the industry. By the turn of the twentieth century the vessels being turned out were few indeed. The seaside villagers no longer looked seaward for their livelihood.

By 1850 there was some evidence that there was potential in Colchester for industrial development in the British or American style. Mines were begun in 1848 at Acadia Mines and by 1851 the forges were producing pig iron capable of praise from judges at the London Exhibition of that year.<sup>7</sup> For people with a vision of the future this

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<sup>7</sup>T. Matheson. History of Londonderry, Phoenix Press, Truro, 1983, p. 9.

enterprise was one which promised much.<sup>8</sup>

At mid-nineteenth century the men who guided the destiny of Nova Scotia knew that their future might very well be perilous. Up to the 1840's this colony had been secure and dependent within the British imperial system. Mercantile capitalism functioned well for the Nova Scotian merchant exporter. The fish moved to the West Indies with British preferential tariffs and British protection. The lumber and ships moved as easily and profitably into the British market. When Britain abandoned the mercantile system in the 1840's, the Nova Scotians faced commercial ruin.<sup>9</sup>

The Reciprocity Treaty with the United States, negotiated in 1854, was looked upon as an economic salvation and its abrogation in 1866 caused a serious dislocation of business for Nova Scotians.

The decade of the 1860's was a crucial one for Nova Scotia. Was the future to be the traditional merchant economy under British aegis or was it to be a new and "modern" one based on the technology of railways, steel and

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<sup>8</sup>A succession of companies operated the Ironworks and its fate was a familiar one for many Maritime businesses - control by Montreal capitalists and liquidation by 1898. See T. Matheson, History of Londonderry. Phoenix Press, Truro, 1983. p. 31.

<sup>9</sup>See D. Sutherland, "Halifax Merchants and the Pursuit of Development 1783-1850", Canadian Historical Review, Vol. 59, No. 1, 1978.



coal, a technology which would tie Nova Scotia's fortunes to that of Canada? This was a momentous choice for the people and politicians of Colchester County at mid-century. Unlike those at the extremities, a central county, on the direct route of the Intercolonial Railway from Halifax to the "Upper Provinces", would have something to gain by a realignment of trade and commerce along continental or landward rather than seaward lines.

This paper will deal with the economic, political and social responses of Colchester County to the landward attractions as first proposed in the 1860's and thereafter show the integration of the county into the national economy up to 1930. Chapter one of the paper entitled, "Pastures Green, Afar", is a demographic study of the county. It will show how the Colchester population was dispersed during the sixty-year period under study. The population of the county at mid-nineteenth century will be shown to be fairly homogeneous. Population trends will show a maximum rural population reached in census year 1871. Overall maximum county population will be seen in census year 1891 but, like other Maritime counties, Colchester was affected by the insidious phenomenon known as outmigration.

Chapter two, "The National Question, The National Policy and Maritime Rights", will show part of the response to the big political questions of the period. The conflict

over competing philosophies of development in the 1860's will be illustrated by the arguments over the Confederation question. It will be seen that the county acquired a definite allegiance to the Conservative Party, an allegiance which seldom wavered. The anger and frustration which the Maritimes experienced in the aftermath of World War I will be seen as Colchester, too, felt the loss of economic and political influence in a Canada where power was increasingly concentrated in the center.

Chapter three of the paper, "Not Worse Off Than Other People", examines the political questions at the provincial level. The bold trends which appeared so obvious at the federal level are not so plainly defined at the provincial level. The emotion surrounding the Confederation question will be seen as a constant theme, though. It will be shown that there was a strong Conservative bias throughout much of the county's political experience. County voters often will be seen to express a preference for the Liberals provincially, yet maintaining the federal Conservative tie.

Chapter four, "As Dead As Chelsea", will show the decline of what was once a profitable and dynamic county industry. The evidence will demonstrate that the decline which occurred in the wooden ship business and associated industries, like lumbering, occurred before Confederation and was complete by the 1890's.

The final section of the paper, "Hustling Hub", is a study of the growth of industry in the Town of Truro over the time period in question. The evidence here will reveal a growth stimulated by the railway and a government policy of protection of home industry. It may be observed that Colchester entrepreneurs desired and cultivated the opportunities presented to them by the ties to Canada. Over the sixty year period, however, it will be seen that the prosperity of the town did not depend entirely on industrial development. There were other components which enabled the town to avoid the industrial collapse which other Maritime towns suffered after the first Great War.

## Chapter I

### "Pastures Green, Afar": Colchester Population 1867-1925

Population studies of our region emphasize one dominant feature: outmigration. Throughout the decades of the last quarter of the nineteenth century and into this one, the Maritimer, by necessity or by choice, has wandered away from his home. Colchester County was not immune to the "fever"<sup>2</sup> which afflicted so many of the people of the region and, indeed, the county contributed to the exodus like the rest. This section will indicate the trends which are evident in the county population and, using a selection of

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<sup>1</sup>See Alan Brookes, "Outmigration From the Maritime Provinces 1860-1900", Acadiensis, Vol. 5, No. 2, Spring 1976; Alan Brookes, "The Golden Age and the Exodus: The Case of Canning, Kings Co.", Acadiensis, Vol. 11, No. 1, 1981; Albert Kennedy, "The Provincials", Acadiensis, Vol. 4, No. 2, Spring 1975; Campbell & MacLean, Beyond the Atlantic Roar, Carleton Library #78, 1974. Nova Scotia Submissions of Its Claims With Respect to Maritime Disabilities Within Confederation as Presented to the Royal Commission, 1926. Henry Veltmeyer, "People Are Our biggest Product: Atlantic Canada and the Industrial Reserve Army", Canadian Dimension, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1978; Dominion Bureau of Statistics, The Maritime Provinces and Their Relation to the National Economy of Canada, 1948; Kari Levitt, Population Movement in the Atlantic Provinces, APEC, 1960; Pat Thornton, "Some Preliminary Comments on the Extent and Consequences of Outmigration From the Atlantic Region 1870-1920", Merchant Shipping and Economic Development In Atlantic Canada, Fischer & Sager (ed.), Memorial University, 1982; Pat Thornton, "The Problem of Outmigration from Atlantic Canada 1871-1921: A New Look", Acadiensis, Vol. 15, No. 1, Autumn 1985.

<sup>2</sup>"Fever" or "epidemic" were frequently used terms to describe the movement of people. A biography by G. W. MacPherson, (A Parsons Adventures, Yonkers Book Co., New York, 1925) gives an excellent account of his emigrant experience from Cape Breton to the United States in the 1880's.

newspaper stories, will show the reality of the population drain as it appeared to readers of Colchester <sup>1914</sup> newspapers during the time period in question. For some Colchester people the reality of "pastures green, afar"<sup>3</sup> was a dream realized with regret; for some a dream realized with joy.

Numbers for migrants from the Maritimes vary according to source but there is an indication of substantial outward movement during the time period under study. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics figures are the most comprehensive. Their estimate for the period from Confederation to 1934 is that the Maritimes lost 450,000 people.<sup>4</sup> Other studies estimate the loss of population to be even higher, at about 600,000,<sup>5</sup> or at least 100,000 each decade between 1881 and 1931. "In the difficult decade of 1921-1931, more than 147,000 Maritimers left the region...the massive exodus began in 1920 and most outmigration occurred in the worst economic times, before 1926."<sup>6</sup>

Nova Scotians tended to go to Massachusetts, particularly to the nearest large English speaking city,

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<sup>3</sup>Expression used by emigrant in letter home to Truro Daily News, 2 June, 1904, see pp. 29-30.

<sup>4</sup>Dominion Bureau of Statistics, The Maritime Provinces in Their Relation to the National Economy of Canada, 1934.

<sup>5</sup>See Pat. Thornton, Alan Brookes, Kari Levitt, Op.Cit.

<sup>6</sup>L. D. McCann (ed.), Heartland and Hinterland: A Geography of Canada, Prentice Hall, Toronto, 1982, p. 182.

Boston. In 1880, for example, seventy percent of Nova Scotians in the United States were in New England, compared to sixty-five percent of New Brunswickers and fifty-seven percent of Prince Edward Islanders.<sup>7</sup> As early as 1880 Boston contained more Nova Scotians than Yarmouth, Pictou and Sydney contained.<sup>8</sup> By the 1920's though, the flow of migrants to the Canadian West was apparent.

All of the reasons for emigration will never be known, of course, but some of them may be speculated upon. The last four decades of the nineteenth century were ones of very great economic changes for the Maritimes. These years witnessed a realignment of the region's oceanic outlook to that of a continental one, the integration of the region's economy, the domination of the region by Central Canadian business interests and the collapse of indigenous Maritime industry.<sup>9</sup> Emigration was one response to the disruption of the traditional economy.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>See Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1981, p. 193.

<sup>8</sup>A. J. Kennedy, "The Provincials", Acadiensis, Vol. 4, No. 2, Spring 1975, p. 86.

<sup>9</sup>T. W. Acheson, "The National Policy and the Industrialization of the Maritimes 1880-1910", Acadiensis, Spring 1972.

<sup>10</sup>Pat Thornton, "The Problem of Outmigration From Atlantic Canada, 1871-1921: A New Look", Acadiensis, Vol. 15, No. 1, Autumn 1985, suggests that outmigration may also be seen as a cause of the economic disruption as well as a result.

In economic terms the period 1870 to 1930 was nothing short of chaotic. With the end of the Civil War in the United States and the end of the Reciprocity Treaty, Nova Scotia experienced hard times as the market for products like fish and coal disappeared. The New England economy was buoyant; the Maritimes stagnated. Confederation in 1867 and the earlier removal of colonial trade preferences led to the decline of the lumber industry. The decline of the importance of the wooden sailing ship in the international carrying trade was significant in the economic decline. Historians often point to the transition made in this period as going from the economy of "wood, wind and sail" to that of "iron, coal and rail". The Intercolonial Railway and the National Policy united the Maritime economy inexorably with that of Central Canada. Consolidation and centralization of industry meant control from that center, too. There was also a persistent world wide depression from 1873 to 1896 which was a stimulus for local and regional depression.

Soil depletion was another reason for emigration. Originally rich virgin soil was depleted in time and the farms could no longer support large families.<sup>11</sup> The children moved on.

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<sup>11</sup>This point is frequently raised in local histories, for example, see George Sutherland, Rise and Decline of the Community of Barltown, Colchester Historical Museum Publication, 1980. In some cases initial settlement was made in areas with inadequate soil for farming. It soon became apparent that the farms could not support large families.

Life at home, either in town or on the farm, paled when compared to the bright lights of Boston or the excitement of the "West". The restlessness of youth is often cited in oral or written accounts as a reason for emigration the desire to escape the drudgery and routine of rural life for the conveniences of the city. "Looking for something better", is the way one author puts it, "the spirit of the Yankee". If they were not acquisitive, a faculty which repeatedly stings the high spirited to new adventure, they were impatient of obscurity and the suggestion of subservience. They were lustful of better clothes, better homes, property and perhaps power.<sup>12</sup>

The Maritime economy did not recover from the post-war depression of the early 1920's. As the Maritime industries closed, the attraction of a booming United States economy was inevitable and the great expanse of the Canadian prairie beckoned invitingly.

A profile of the population of Colchester County in the 1860's shows a fairly uniform group. Most of the people were descended from the Ulster-Scot stock which established the Cobequid townships (Truro, Onslow, Londonderry) a century earlier at the head of, and along the north side of, Cobequid Bay. There was no significant Loyalist settlement

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<sup>12</sup>D. C. Brewer, The Conquest of New England by the Immigrant, G. Putnam & Sons, New York, 1926, p. 164.



in the county and no large influx of any other group until the Highland Scots settled the Earltown district beginning in the year 1813. About the same time a group of Lowland Scots began settlement in the New Annan district. Another ingredient in the ethnic mix was the addition of Montbeliard people who were brought into the Desbarres estate from Lunenburg in the early 1770's. All of these groups were overwhelmingly Protestant (Presbyterian). Census figures for 1861 show a county population of 20,045, most Nova Scotian born (18,302).

Movement of population is not glaringly apparent by a casual perusal of population figures. The following table shows county population in census years 1851-1931. (Table 1 below)<sup>13</sup>

Table 1

	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
Colchester	15,469	20,045	23,331	26,720	27,160	24,900	23,664	25,196	25,051

Showing the percentage increase in population for each ten year interval illustrates the situation in starker terms.<sup>14</sup> (Table 2 on following page)

<sup>13</sup>Census of Canada, 1931, Vol. 1, p. 348.

<sup>14</sup>Census of Canada, 1931, Vol. 1, p. 350.

Table 2

	1851-61	1861-71	1871-81	1881-91	1891-01	1901-11	1911-21	1921-31
Colchester	29.58	16.39	14.49	1.65	-8.32	-4.92	6.48	-0.57

If fourteen percent is used as the minimum decadal growth necessary to retain natural increase, it can be seen that Colchester's decrease in population was evident in the 1870's.

As may be expected, the rural population decreased throughout the time period as the urban population grew. The following table (Table 3) shows the rural/urban division for Colchester.<sup>15</sup>

Table 3

Colchester:	Year	Rural	Urban
	1871	23,331	
	1881	23,259	3,461
	1891	22,058	5,102
	1901	18,907	5,993
	1911	16,924	6,704
	1921	16,815	8,381
	1931	16,347	8,704

<sup>15</sup>Census of Canada, 1931, Vol. 1, p. 365.

The figures for percentage increase of rural population per decade (1871-1931) emphasize the draining away of rural population.<sup>16</sup> This is shown below. (Table 4)

Table 4

	1871-1881	1881-1891	1891-1901	1901-1911	1911-1921	1921-1931
Colchester:	9.62	- 5.16	-14.29	-10.49	- 0.64	- 2.78

According to these figures, Colchester's census year for maximum rural population was 1871, with decreases each decade until census year 1931. It is reasonable to assume that 1871 would be the year of the maximum number of farms, maximum acreage, maximum acreage improved and maximum field crops. This, however, is not the case. All of these maximums were achieved in census year 1891.<sup>17</sup> It was possible then for the county to reach its maximum rural population and begin to decline, without an apparent lag in agricultural development. Reaching maximum rural population did not bring agricultural settlement in the county to a halt nor did it bring a corresponding decrease in agricultural production. Available data suggests that the value

<sup>16</sup> Dominion Bureau of Statistics, The Maritime Provinces and Their Relation to the National Economy of Canada, 1948, p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 24

of farm land, implements and machinery, livestock, value of field crops and animal products all increased in value.<sup>18</sup> Increased mechanization of farms compensated for loss of farm labour.<sup>19</sup>

Another segment of the rural population which contributed to the decline of population has been that of the rural craftsman (e.g. the blacksmith, the harness makers, the tanners, the millers, the coopers). The decline of these occupations would be responsible for the removal of many hundreds of crafts people and their families. The trend for Colchester County is discernible in the census statistics for 1871, 1881, 1891 (e.g. 67 millers in 1871, 60 millers in 1881, 34 millers in 1891 or 159 blacksmiths in 1871, 151 blacksmiths in 1881, 114 blacksmiths in 1891).<sup>20</sup>

By an examination of census figures for the subdivisions of Colchester it is possible to make further observations. Table 5 on the following page shows the

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 26. See also A. B. Balcom, "Agriculture in Nova Scotia Since 1870", Dalhousie Review, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1928.

<sup>19</sup>Dominion Bureau of Statistics, The Maritime Provinces and Their Relation to the National Economy, 1948, p. 27 - no understaffing of farms was noted.

<sup>20</sup>Dominion Bureau of Statistics Census of 1871, 1881, 1891. Also indicative of the decline in small local mills is the decline in the production of wheat in Colchester from a peak in 1881. See S. Ellesworth Lewis, An Economic History of Agriculture in Colchester County, Nova Scotia, Ontario Agricultural College, 1924. P.A.N.S., p. 24.

Table 5

## Colchester Population by Subdivision 1871-1931

Subdivision	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
Acadia Mines	1,673	2,158	2,665	1,074	1,254	783	551
Brookfield	1,039	1,186	1,074	950	910	904	885
Brule	693	794	742	715	581	548	539
Clifton	1,003	1,102	1,017	887	793	919	818
Earlton	1,233	1,173	1,038	895	657	575	546
Economy		1,331	1,106	820	685	675	679
Five Islands	2,023	769	763	762	615	524	527
Gay's River	734	757	672	735	613	527	449
Kemptown	370	353	298	236	226	229	300
Lower Londonderry	1,243	1,571	953	910	844	936	909
Lower Onslow	921	883	853	933	941	916	870
Lower Stewiacke	796	820	946	1,167	521	523	531
Middle Londonderry	813	1,015	1,249	1,015	961	917	838
Middle Stewiacke	665	748	694	618	568	518	466
New Annan	1,266	1,045	854	774	710	679	635
North River	1,272	1,205	1,175	1,041	1,069	1,130	1,125
Salmon River	845	1,212	1,304	1,280	1,345	1,833	2,168
Tatamagouche E.			741	716	617	583	648
Tatamagouche W-O	1,525	1,500	725	579	569	478	446
Upper Londonderry	1,052	1,353	1,150	1,042	954	1,021	973
Upper Stewiacke E.			812	714	607	586	475
Upper Stewiacke W-O	1,413	1,552	542	472	421	453	428
Waugh's River	638	732	685	572	445	432	411
Indian Reserves						126	130
Stewiacke (Town)					633	819	803
Truro (Town)	2,114	3,461	5,102	5,993	6,107	7,562	7,901
Colchester Totals:	23,331	26,720	27,160	24,900	23,664	25,196	25,051

\*Not incorporated.

population of Colchester subdivisions, 1871-1931.<sup>21</sup>

Maximum county population was recorded in the 1891 census year yet there are variations within the subdivisions which are worthy of comment. Acadia Mines, for example, also shows a peak in population for the 1891 census. This

<sup>21</sup> Census of Canada, 1931, Vol. 2, p. 29.

community was one in which some considerable degree of industrialization (mining, smelting, metal fabrication) occurred. Its subsequent decline in population would reflect the decline in business activity and the removal of people to Sydney, to Ontario, and to the United States.<sup>22</sup>

Agriculture-based communities, in regions of good soil,<sup>23</sup> tended to have a rather stable population with a peak population in the 1881 census, and showing less of a decline over the sixty year period. Clifton or Middle Stewiacke are examples of this type. North River population peaked in the 1871 figures but the population remained fairly stable.

Agriculture-based communities, in regions of poor soil, like Earltown or Kemptown, reached maximum population early, the 1871 census figures, and declined continually to 1931.

Agriculture-based communities, on good soil but close to an urban area (Truro), show a different trend. With the exception of a slight drop between 1891 and 1901, the trend for Salmon River district has been one of increasing population.

The New Annan district was agriculture-based but with probably better soil quality than that of Earltown, yet the

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<sup>22</sup>Trueman Matheson, A History of Londonderry, N.S., Phoenix Press, Truro, 1983, p. 57.

<sup>23</sup>Subjective observation.

population trend is similar. Both Earltown and New Annan are districts of Scottish settlement and this may suggest a mobility of this particular ethnic group. The lack of an agricultural tradition in the Scottish background has been noted by some scholars. They stress the preference of the Scots for education, the professions or the church, choosing to escape the drudgery of farm life.<sup>24</sup> The Scots were not always settled on the poorest land for agriculture and it has been suggested that there was something in the Scottish character which brought out a wandering tendency.<sup>25</sup>

The Tatamagouche district may be compared to the Economy/Five Islands district. Both were a mix of shipbuilding, farming and lumbering. The population trend of both is similar, a gradual decline after 1871. Tatamagouche historian, Frank Patterson, in noting the decline of shipbuilding industry at Tatamagouche commented about the effect this had on the economic activity of the district:

Men for the first time found that they were unable to obtain remunerative employment. Numbers at once left to obtain work in the United States and elsewhere. Others, mostly those who were older and could not well leave, returned to farming. From this, for years they were able to make but a poor living.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>D. Campbell & R. A. MacLean, Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots, Carleton Library #78, 1974, p. 105.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>26</sup>Frank Patterson, History of Tatamagouche, originally published 1917, Mika Reprint, 1973.

Some of the population movement obviously went to the town center, Truro, which recorded continuous growth from 1871 to 1931. The town's growth, when compared to other towns in Canada of over 5,000 population, was not unaffected by out migration.<sup>27</sup> The town grew but other towns were growing too, and faster. The pivotal census year appears to be 1891.

Loss of population by the county and town was often seen as a problem but just as often it went unnoticed. It was not usually dramatic in the largest sense and yet the small articles in the county newspapers of the time were sometimes the most revealing. What follows is an impression of outmigration from Colchester as illustrated by a chronological series of "small" stories.<sup>28</sup> They are meant to illustrate some of the reasons why Colchester people left, the conditions under which they left, or make some comment on the phenomenon called outmigration.

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<sup>27</sup>Truro ranked 51st in 1881, 46th in 1891, 53rd in 1901, 76th in 1911, and 78th in 1921. Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1921 Census, Vol. 1, p. 242.

<sup>28</sup>The articles presented are a random selection from P.A.N.S. files of Colchester newspapers. At P.A.N.S. there are sporadic issues of Truro Citizen, 1909; Colchester Sun, 1874-1924; Lunn's Weekly, 1911-1912; Mirror & Colchester County Advertiser, 1867-1868; New Era, 1911, Searchlight, 1899-1900; Colchester Vindicator, 1879-1880. The best continuous source is Truro Daily News, 1891 to present.



Colchester Sun 3 July, 1878

Texas hot. The greatest chance to get into business ever offered to any man or number of men. The parties offering the undermentioned places of business and properties for sale have taken what is called Texas fever and have determined to leave for that state and therefore offer to dispose of the following places of business, all in a good healthy condition and paying as well as other businesses of the kind in this province. First that well known and favourite house and property known as the

Prince of Wales Hotel - Al MacKenzie

Meat Business - James A. Leaman

Henderson Farm - J. C. Mahon

Victoria Hotel - Angus MacKay

Truro Driving park, 250 acres - MacKenzie,  
Leaman, Mahon, MacKay

Colchester Sun 24, May, 1883

Acadian Mines Localisms

Mr. George Smith has for the present given up his intentions of building a store and departed for St. Paul, Minnesota.

Colchester Sun 6 August, 1890

Employment for Women

There is an extraordinary demand now for girls and middle aged women for general house work. We can put into situations immediately one thousand, in the very best Boston families, at wages from \$3.00 per week upwards. No charge to either employee or employer. Apply at British American Citizen office, 7 Broomfield St., Boston.

Colchester Sun 26 November, 1890

Colchester Abroad

By a circular which recently came into our hands we notice that Mr. W. C. Ambrose has been appointed Resident Engineer of the 5th

District of the Southern Pacific Railway, the lines between Lathrop and Los Angeles, with headquarters at Tulare. Heretofore Mr. Ambrose had charge of Track and Water Supply but is now in full charge and as a son of Colchester we congratulate him on his promotion.

Truro Daily News 16 May, 1891.

Mr. Isaac Snook returned home yesterday after an absence of two years. Mr. Snook is one of the three Truro gentlemen who went to Buena Park, Cal., and established a condensed milk canning factory. He speaks very favourable of that section of the country and says it's immense.

Colchester Sun 27 February, 1891.

Six of the young men from Earltown are going west on the 1st of March to pursue their fortune in British Columbia and Washington territory. We wish them good luck while away and a safe journey home.

Truro Daily News 26 March, 1891

Robert H. Dickie, who has been driving J. A. Wright's milk wagon for the past two years, left this afternoon for Tacoma, Washington, to join his brother, Luther, in the lumber woods.

Truro Daily News 10 July, 1891

The fare to Boston on the State of Indiana is now \$4.00.

Truro Daily News 11 July, 1891

Geo. M. Yuill, who for some time past has been employed at C.P. Morgan's Jewelry Store, leaves

this afternoon for Nanaimo, B.C., where he will take a similar position with his brother, S. B. Yuill, who recently established a business in that city. We are sorry to see young men of Geo. Yuill's stamp leaving our town, but we wish him every success in his new home.

Truro Daily News

13 April, 1892

The station on the arrival of the train from the east, the Pictou Accommodation, CPR and ICR express, presented a very animated appearance. Conductor Dickson brought over 300 passengers from the east, most of them bound for Boston. About 25 were to join the westbound excursion to Manitoba; 40 persons left Truro and vicinity, while every station from Halifax to Truro supplied its quota, the Quebec express was crowded, also the CPR. Among those going from here were Arthur Christie, Fred Starrett, William Murray, and Fred McDowell. Many of the passengers bound for Manitoba and the Northwest Territory were young men going out to try their fortunes, the rates being offered by the CPR being \$13.50 to Winnipeg and points west on the same low basis. There is no question that it pays the CPR but it is a debatable question whether it pays the province to lose so much of its bone and sinew. But what is our loss is Manitoba's gain.

Truro Daily News

27 September, 1895

Earlton - Miss Janie McKay leaves on Wednesday for Boston where she is to take a course of training in a hospital there. We wish Miss McKay success in the noble calling she has chosen.

Truro Daily News

6 January, 1897

John N. Crowe left Debert Station some ten or fifteen years ago, a poor boy, to seek his fortune in the United States. He went to Salem, Mass., and after a time commenced to do business for himself by peddling furniture and ladders on a very

small scale. By honesty and industry, he has worked himself up step by step, till now he is the head of the firm of John N. Crowe and Co. of Salem and Lynn, Mass. They do business in all the New England States.

Colchester Sun 7 April, 1897

Great Reduction in Rates to Boston via St. John  
ICR line to St. John - connect with fast and  
suburb steamships St. Croix and Cumberland sailing  
from St. John every Tuesday and Thursday a.m. at  
8 o'clock.  
From Truro \$6.25.

Truro Daily News 22 April, 1897

It is with pleasure that we learn today from "All About Us" a weekly newspaper published in Chicago, Ill., "for Negro and all", of the success and advancement of a coloured citizen of Truro, in the person of E. H. Borden, now Rev. E. H. Borden, B.A., M.A., B.D., son of Mrs. Susie Borden of the Truro Laundry. Mr. Borden was, through the hard work of his mother and himself and the persevering economy of both, enabled to go through Acadia College, Wolfville, receiving degrees of B.A. and M.A. During the last few years he has been studying at the University of Chicago where a few days ago he received a degree of B.D. Mr. Borden was the only member of the race who came up for a degree and was doubly applauded by the large audience present.

Truro Daily News 20 January, 1899

A Boston correspondent to the Herald says Miss Ella Hardie, a nineteen year old Truro girl, was arrested at Worster last Sunday, on a charge of having no visible means of support. The girl is good looking, but fell into bad company.

Truro Daily News 26 September, 1899

Miss Susie M. Dickson, daughter of Mr. W. N. Dickson of this town who has been so successful as a teacher in Scotia, Humbolt Co., California, has lately been appointed Professor of Natural Science in the Southern Oregon State Normal School. This is a most advanced position for this bright Colchester girl to assume and it is a credit to her own marked ability, to our N.S. Provincial Normal School, of which she is a worthy graduate, and to Stanford University, California, for which institution she has her B.A. honours.

Truro Daily News 10 February, 1900

Miss Joanna McKay and Miss Maggie Murray have left Earltown and have gone to Boston. Both young ladies are greatly missed from their native place where they were well known for their activity in all good work.

Truro Daily News 14 April, 1900

The spring emigration to the United States does not appear to be so great thus far this season as heretofore, but still many of our young people are going over the border. A party from the Stewiacke Valley left this week for Boston, among whom were Miss Christie Jeffers, Miss Tena Miller, George Jeffers, Harold Kabert, Eddie Hamilton and Ervin McCaul.

Truro Daily News 14 July, 1900

Letter from "A Farmer", West New Annan

At present it is difficult to get farm help. Nearly all our young men and women wish to go over to Brother Jonathon. One reason is the want of a better circulation of money caused largely by producing too little on our farms and in our factories and importing too much. Another reason for so many leaving home is the want of steady employment.

Truro Daily News 30 May, 1901

Mr. Wm. Stevenson, who owned previously to Col. Purdy, the latter's well known farm at Westchester, died at Echo City, Utah, on April 28th, from pneumonia in his 79th year. Mr. Stevenson had, with Mr. C. B. Archibald, the stage route between Truro and Amherst. He was afterwards connected with the Pony Express through Utah, before the era of the railways. He was the pioneer settler at Echo City where he owned a ranch.

Truro Daily News 11 November, 1902

The Seattle Sunday Times of 19 Oct. has a most flattering account of the work of a native of Economy, Colchester County, in the city of Seattle and of his position as a "progressive, untiring upbuilder of that city".

Truro Daily News 12 March, 1903

On the 25th inst. Mr. John Baxter, Central New Annan, will have an auction sale, disposing of all his household furniture, and the livestock, agricultural implements and other things around a well ordered farm, with a view to leaving his native Colchester about April 1st for a future home in the State of California. At LeGrand, Merced Co., San Juan Valley, California, Mr. Baxter has had a brother, James C., and a sister, Mrs. John Murdoch, settled for a number of years and these relatives have had "pull" sufficient to induce this good resident of New Annan to also go west.

Truro Daily News 2 June, 1904

An Explanation of the Exodus - Former Truronian Writing From His Adopted Home in the U.S. says:

I noticed in a late copy of the news that a speaker in the Truro YMCA had made a statement that Canadian young men should stay at home. The fact of the matter is that most of us, who go from

Canada, are compelled to go to get employment sufficiently remunerative to enable us to save something for old age. The speaker possibly has not given the matter enough close attention to ascertain the true cause of the exodus. If I could find a position at home, in which I could earn one half I am now doing, I would pack up tomorrow and be with the rest of you in a few days. I have been looking for such an opening for years.

Too flippantly our speakers and writers too often condemn our young men, because they leave their native Canada to seek their futures and better themselves in the neighbouring Republic. It is assumed that our young fellows grow restless, weary of the "old house and home" and wander for novelty, fortune and adventure, in pastures green, afar.

Doubtless that is true in many instances and the old homestead and the wanderer both suffer by the separation; but there are hundreds of cases in which our smart young men, highly educated and cultured, are compelled to go abroad to get any adequate return for their services or their technical work for which they have been qualified and openings in which are not to be found in Canada.

We all regret this exodus of our young people, but, in our haste, we must not condemn them, until we can offer better inducements for them at home than we can at present are able to do.

Truro Daily News 8 June, 1910

Former Truro Girl Was First at the Land Office in Saskatoon.

A few days ago we referred to the pluck of a young lady school teacher at Saskatoon who kept her place for 12 days on the steps of the land office in Saskatoon until she was rewarded with the grant of land that she was after.

The land is near the town of Kindersley and is now worth \$10,000.

We might have known that such pluck as this young lady showed could only come from an energetic Bluenose. The Miss Williams referred to in the dispatches was Miss Minnie Williams, a former school teacher in the Willow Street School, Truro.

She went west a few years ago with her father Mr. Gilbert Williams (who lived on Victoria Street) and her brother Manson.

Some two years ago her mother and the rest of the family followed to Saskatoon, where they have since had their home.

The westerners by degrees will get their eyes opened to the pluck, energy and perseverance that our native saline breezes and our bracing climate instil into our people from their earliest years.

Truro Daily News 3 July, 1921

Miss Grace Horton has arrived at her Prince Street home from Glace Bay, Cape Breton, where she has been one of the efficient teachers on the school staff of that town. Miss Horton at the end of August will join her younger sister Marjorie, teacher at Rosabud, Alberta, and these two Truro girls will be added to the great body of Bluenose instructors in the West because the yearly stipends in the East were so niggardly small.

Truro Daily News 2 May, 1924

Notes From Earltown

Miss Isabel Cameron gave a farewell dance at her home, McBains Corner, on Monday evening. About a hundred guests were present and a most enjoyable evening was spent. Miss Cameron is one of our most popular young ladies and we regret her departure for the West. She will be followed by the good wishes of all.

Truro Daily News 3 May, 1924

It is with great pride that Colchester acquaintances have read of the scholastic advance and promotion of Charles MacKay, M.A. and B.A., Dalhousie; Ph.D., Princeton, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. D. MacKay, Truro. He has been appointed to the Chair of Physics at Harvard University. Prof. MacKay served overseas in the CDN. Seige Artillery. He is a clever product of our Colchester Academy.



Truro Daily News 2 July, 1924

New York: 30 June - Rev. Geo. Douglas Byers, a native of New Annan, Nova Scotia, was killed at Kocheck on the Island of Nainan where he was in charge of the Presbyterian Mission, by Chinese bandits on June 24, according to a cablegram received here today by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. The message said that Mrs. Byers and the family of the missionary together with all other persons connected with the mission and hospital at Kocheck were safe.

The Rev. Dr. Byers who had been in China since 1906 was born in New Annan, Nova Scotia, in 1874 and was educated at Albany College, Albany, Oregon, and at San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Mr. Byers was in charge of the Chinese in Kocheck and of fifty missions in outlying districts.

He worked among the Miao and Loi tribes which took him into the wild mountain districts.

Rev. Douglas Byers who was killed by Chinese bandits was a descendent of one of the pioneer families in the New Annan district of Colchester County. He had been engaged in missionary work for many years. He visited his birthplace three years ago. He was educated in the U.S. and was married there.

He is survived in the New Annan family by a brother Edward. When this missionary visited his Nova Scotia home a few years ago his wife was a visitor with her people in the United States.

Truro Daily News 9 August, 1924

Tatamagouche - Duncan Matheson, Chief Municipal Officer of the San Francisco Detective Force, has been in town visiting his uncle, George Douglas. He also looked up old friends, his connection with Tatamagouche dating as far back as 42 years when he taught in the Senior Department of the public school.

Truro Daily News 11 August, 1924

CNR Harvest Excursion August 15th

The CNR announced that the date of the

Harvest Excursion is August 15th and that 18 thousand able bodied men are needed from the East to garner in the grain crop.

Special Harvesters Trains will leave Truro at 10:45 a.m. and 11:10 a.m. Friday, August 15th and run through to Winnipeg without change. The equipment of this train will assure intending harvesters of a most comfortable journey to the West. The train will be made up of the most modern type of convertible colonist car, and a feature will be the new lunch counter cars on which hot meals will be served enroute. There will be special cars for women and family parties. The fare from Truro to Winnipeg will be \$24.60 plus half a cent a mile to points beyond in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Edmonton, Calgary and east.

For further particulars apply to nearest ticket agent CNR.

Truro Daily News 15 August 1924

The Harvest train that went through Truro this morning from Sydney was made up of 14 cars, the Halifax train had 11 and when it left Truro it had 15 with the trainmen's van.

Miss Hyson, teacher at Bible Hill School last year, left today for the Canadian West.

Mr. Borden Humble, teacher at Center School last year, went west on the Harvest excursion this morning.

Truro Daily News 16 August, 1924

The Misses Nettie Baird, Onslow Mountain, and Thelma Yorke, Parrsboro, Nova Scotia, former employees of the News office, left Friday morning on the Harvest train for the Canadian West.

Truro Daily News 28 August, 1924

New Annan - Mr. Willie Porteous intends leaving for Massachusetts, U.S.A., on August 23rd and Miss Ethel Porteous also intends going to the U.S.A., to train for a nurse in about two weeks. We will miss these young folks from our midst.

Truro Daily News 1 October, 1924

Tatamagouche. - Dr. Thomas Holmes, who is a native of Bayhead, is visiting his old home. Dr. Holmes who is a brother of Harvey Holmes, Bayhead, and Mrs. A. C. Cock, Waldegrove, has been away for over 30 years. He now has a good practice at Oakland, California.

Truro Daily News 1 May, 1928

Colchester People Entertain at an Annual Banquet

The Annual Banquet of the Maritime Provinces Association was held on Tuesday evening in the St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Hall when 133 members were seated at the beautifully arranged tables. In the absence of the President, Mrs. A. Hood, on account of illness, Mr. A. Thompson acted as Chairman. The speaker of the evening Mr. Reid Barmster of Vancouver, introduced by Dr. Sandford, gave a very interesting history of the Maritime Provinces. Musical numbers were given by Mrs. MacLeod, Miss Hogan, Miss V. Selkirk, Miss Dorothy Hay, and Mrs. G. Warrack. The Bickerton Brothers Orchestra provided music throughout the evening. Officers elected for this year were: Honorary President, Mrs. A. Hood; President, Mrs. A. Mann; Vice-President, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. R. Young and Mr. A. Thompson; Recording Secretary, Mr. D. A. Stiles; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. N. G. Carie and Pianist, Miss Anderson.

- British Columbia Paper

The Bickerton Brothers Orchestra mentioned include the three sons of Mrs. Geoffrey Bickerton, who was Miss Vera Scott, a former Truro girl and the youngest daughter of the late Donald Scott of Alton, Col. Co., and his wife Lucretia Hamilton of Brookfield, now of Vancouver.

Mrs. Bickerton is now living in New Westminster, B.C., and is a member of the Maritime Provinces Association, which is a strong order in that place.

For a variety of reasons the Maritime region experienced a tremendous drain of population during its first

sixty years within the Canadian Confederation.<sup>29</sup> Counties like Colchester which were influenced by the developing technology of "coal, steel and rail" and which were stimulated by the union of British North American colonies did not escape the population exodus. People left in spite of the industrialization process. Census records show the year 1891 to be a peak year for total population. The rural pattern for Colchester varied slightly, the peak census year being 1871 with declines thereafter.<sup>30</sup> Although the population of the Town of Truro continued to grow, the town began to decline relative to other towns after 1891.

Population studies of counties in other regions of Canada have shown the effects of migration to be almost like a "way station on a busy highway", with continual movement in and out.<sup>31</sup> Colchester's population movement was one way out, during the period 1867 - 1925 and was a mirror image of the Maritime experience during the same time. "Pastures green, afar" is an apt description of the fate of many people who were born and raised in Colchester.

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<sup>29</sup>A broad spectrum of opinion exists, from S. A. Saunders, Economic History of the Maritime Provinces, Acadiensis Press, 1984, to H. Veltmeyer, "People Are Our Biggest Product: Atlantic Canada and the Industrial Reserve Army", Canadian Dimension, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1978.

<sup>30</sup>See O. A. Lemieux et al. "Factors in the Growth of Rural Population in Canada", Proceedings of the Canadian Political Science Assoc., Vol. VI, 1934.

<sup>31</sup>See Gagan and Mays, "Historical Demography and Canadian Social History: Families and Land in Peel County, Ontario", Canadian Historical Review, Vol. 54, No. 1, 1973.

## Chapter II

The National Question, The National Policy, and Maritime Rights:  
Federal Politics and Politicians in Colchester, 1867-1925

The role that the state may play in development is a central question for any politician. In the changing economy of mid-nineteenth century Nova Scotia an attitude emerged among some politicians concerning the course of future development which put Colchester on a course inextricably bound to the continent. An alignment of county interests with those of railway and industry over those of shipping and overseas commerce began with young professionals like Adams G. Archibald in the 1850's. This image of an industrial future was one which became linked to the fortunes of the federal Conservatives and for most of the county's first sixty years of Confederation the politics were decidedly conservative. There were few liberal incursions into this bastion of conservatism.

In the decade prior to Confederation a distinction in philosophy began to be discernible between two groups of politicians.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand were those politicians who represented the old mercantile interests, the "wood, wind

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<sup>1</sup>D. A. Muise, "Parties and Constituencies: Federal Elections in Nova Scotia, 1867-1896", Canadian Historical Association Papers, 1971. Also D. A. Muise, "The Federal Election of 1867 in Nova Scotia: An Economic Interpretation", Collections of Nova Scotia Historical Society, 1968. Also D. A. Muise, "Elections and Constituencies: Federal Politics in Nova Scotia, 1867-1878", Ph.D. Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1971.

and sail" philosophy which looked back at Nova Scotia's "Golden Age" of prosperity and cultural flowering. These interests were aware of (and feared) any economic readjustment that might occur if Nova Scotia were to become part of a continental creation with her back to the sea. This was the laissez-faire mentality where "good government" was understood to mean "as little government involvement as possible".

On the other hand, there were politicians who favoured more direct government involvement in the affairs of state.<sup>2</sup> These were the people who did not look to the past for greatness, rather they saw their destiny in the future and that future was an industrial one. These politicians tended to be young professionals like Dr. Tupper of Amherst, the Conservative leader, but it also included some Liberals, including Liberal leader Adams G. Archibald, a lawyer from Truro. The important questions of the day for these men of the future were those concerning railways or education. The question of Confederation itself and the attitudes expressed toward it in the province reflected the divergent philosophy which was emerging in the 1860's.

Those counties with some hope of an industrial future, containing railways or coal fields or iron deposits or those

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<sup>2</sup>"Positivists" as Muise called them, "Parties and Constituencies: Federal Elections in Nova Scotia, 1867-1896", Canadian Historical Association Papers, 1971, p. 186.

which were urbanizing to some extent tended to be supporters of the new industrial philosophy. Generally these were central and northeastern counties (Halifax, Hants, Colchester, Cumberland, Pictou and Cape Breton). In the provincial election of 1863 Conservatives were elected in fifteen of the nineteen possible seats.<sup>3</sup> The old mercantile and commercial interests in the province had been challenged and defeated by the industrial philosophy which, after this election, became associated with the Conservative Party. The trend set here, on the provincial scene, was one which Colchester would follow on the national level in elections to follow.

In the politics of Colchester County there were two men who dominated, in terms of power and influence, from the 1850's to the 1890's. These were Adams G. Archibald and Archibald W. McLellan. They began their long association in county politics as political enemies and concluded as compatible compatriots. Each had a difficult transformation to make: Archibald from Reformer to Conservative and McLellan from Anti-Confederate to Confederate. Each had strong local loyalties but each participated ably on the larger, national stage.

Adams G. Archibald was the consummate lawyer with all the credentials for political success. The Archibald name

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<sup>3</sup>Op.Cit., p. 187.

and family connections in the county, his Presbyterian religion, and his education made him a formidable opponent in any election.<sup>4</sup> It was clear early in his career that his vision of the future for Nova Scotia was to be an industrial one. In 1851, in his first session as the Member of the House of Assembly, Archibald participated in the debates concerning construction of a trunk railway through British North America. "I need hardly say, Mr. Chairman," he said, "that I belong to those who consider a railroad communication with the neighbouring colonies and the adjoining States, essential to our prosperity. I agree with the Honourable Speaker that we must have a railroad that we must either be content to let all the world go ahead of us in the march of improvement, or we must use the same means which they do to keep abreast of our neighbours."<sup>5</sup>

Railways certainly would be part of Nova Scotia's future and the benefits to the province, he said, would be immeasurable. It would be possible, he maintained, to control this means of transportation, to direct the stream of traffic and Nova Scotia would become an important link in

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<sup>4</sup>Born 1814, Bible Hill, son of Samuel and Elizabeth Archibald. Ulster Scots grandparents had settled in Truro and Onslow townships, 1762. Educated Pictou Academy, articulated law in Halifax, 1838 called to bar of Prince Edward Island, 1839 called to bar of Nova Scotia, 1851 first elected for Colchester as Reformer.

<sup>5</sup>Quoted in C. B. Fergusson, "Sir Adams G. Archibald", Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society, Vol. 36, p. 12.



the communication between Europe and North America. He wondered if Nova Scotia would be "blind to our destiny", or whether the province would meet the new challenge with "an energy becoming our position".<sup>6</sup>

For any industrial future Nova Scotia's coal reserves would be of vital importance. It was Archibald who led the opposition to the monopoly held by the General Mining Association of the rich Nova Scotia coalfields. In 1857 he was one of two delegates sent by the province to London to break the mining monopoly. This visit resulted in a curtailment of the General Mining Association's rights and assured Nova Scotia's greater prosperity based on her mineral resources.

On the question of education, Archibald had no qualms about supporting Premier Tupper's Free School Act in 1864. An opposition leader, looking to score political points, might not have, but the issue illustrates the compatible philosophies of two: Tupper, Conservative; Archibald, Reformer. Tupper became the embodiment of the continentalist forces. Could Archibald long resist? The Confederation issue, or "National Question" as it came to be known, would be the watershed between Archibald, the Reformer, and Archibald the Conservative.

A. W. McLellan was a formidable politician in his

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<sup>6</sup>Op. Cit., pp. 13-14.

own right. He had an education, a luxury not afforded many of his fellow Colchester men, due to some modest prosperity achieved by his father, G. W. McLelan's shipping business and store in Great Village. A. W. attended Mount Allison Wesleyan Academy and by 1858, when his father died, he had had experience at sea and in managing the family business at home.<sup>7</sup>

He was elected to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly in 1858 as a Reformer, succeeding his father. His vision of prosperity lay seaward. Beginning in 1863, he began a career as a shipbuilder in Great Village, often in partnership with his brother-in-law, John M. Blaikie. The two continued to build into the early 1880's. He prospered. By 1867 it was acknowledged that he was a wealthy man.<sup>8</sup>

So there are the two: Archibald the talented lawyer who looked landward for the future of his county and McLelan whose experience and business was seaward. These two Reformers split on the National Question. Archibald was the Confederate. McLelan the Anti. No more bitter a contest was ever conducted in the county. McLelan was elected in September of 1867 but his later conversion, when confronted with political reality, was significant. The fusion of

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<sup>7</sup>P. B. Waite, "McLelan, Archibald, Woodbury", Dictionary of Canadian Biography, p. 572.

<sup>8</sup>P. B. Waite, Op.Cit., p. 572.

McLellan's views with those of the Confederate Archibald, was symbolic of the reality of a future for a Colchester tied to Canada.

The lines in the battle over the Confederation question had been drawn early. To Archibald, and to men who looked at the union of British North American Colonies as a means of promoting the greatest prosperity for Nova Scotia, this was an unequalled opportunity. Archibald was one of the five Nova Scotia delegates to the Charlottetown Conference in September, 1864. He was also one of the delegates to the Quebec Conference the following month. The political and economic horizons seemed limitless.

"The time has arrived," he said, "when we are about to assume the proportions of a great nation and such being the case we should not shrink from its responsibilities... If we are united we shall become a great country, and the time is not far distant when a colossal power growing up on this continent shall stand with one foot on the Pacific, and the other on the Atlantic, and shall present to the world, even on this side of the Atlantic, the fact that monarchical institutions are not inconsistent with civil and religious liberty and the fullest measure of material advancement."<sup>9</sup>

From 1864 until the first federal election in

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<sup>9</sup>C.B. Fergusson, "Sir Adams G. Archibald", Collections of Nova Scotia Historical Society, Vol. 36, p. 48.

September 1867, Archibald was one of the most important interpreters of what the proposed federal union would mean to Nova Scotia.<sup>10</sup> Joseph Howe would oppose him but Archibald would not be swayed. On April, 10, 1866, Archibald seconded Tupper's long awaited resolution in favour of Confederation. He was part of the delegation to London to complete the terms of Confederation and in the Macdonald's first Cabinet he became Secretary of State for the Provinces.

A. W. McLellan had his own opinions of the proposed union of British North American colonies and these were nowhere better expounded than in his address to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly on the 17th of April, 1865.<sup>11</sup> The arguments opposing Confederation set out then were used by McLellan until 1869.

In that long speech, embellished with Victorian rhetoric, McLellan made it plain that he was opposed to Archibald's views. It grieved him to be in such a position, he said, and that "no act of my little political life has given me half the pain I feel in being compelled to take a

<sup>10</sup>See also Parliamentary Debates of Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 11 April, 1865, for Archibald's hopes for Nova Scotia with regard to an integral part of the Confederation plan, the construction of the Intercolonial Railway, p. 266.

<sup>11</sup>Parliamentary Debates, Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 17 April, 1865, p. 249. This speech was later printed and circulated in pamphlet form.

position in opposition to that honourable gentleman."<sup>12</sup> He would act on his own "conscientious convictions", he said, of what was right and wrong, "of what may be or may not be for the good of my country." There was union already, he pointed out - with Britain.

We are citizens of the same Empire - subjects of the same Queen. The same flag that floats over Buckingham Palace floats over our citadel and protects the inhabitants of these provinces as well as those of London. Under that protection we enjoy every blessing and privilege that is known in a civilized and enlightened society.<sup>13</sup>

The Imperial connection was paramount: "I cannot understand why people who enjoy all the privileges, rights and immunities of the British Empire should desire to form any other connection in order that they may have greater room and scope."<sup>14</sup>

Then, of course, there was the matter of inadequate representation in the proposed federal house. Nineteen seats out of a total of one hundred and ninety-four would leave Nova Scotia at the mercy of Canada. He could envision his province completely subservient to Canada in the new country.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Op.Cit., p. 250.

<sup>14</sup> Op.Cit., p. 252.

<sup>15</sup> Op.Cit., p. 254. McLelan allegory included two hounds chained together by the neck, the large powerful one representing Canada, the smaller one, Nova Scotia.

The financial terms were inadequate, too, for the needs of Nova Scotia, according to McLellan. He pointed out the debts of the Upper provinces and to the wealth that was Nova Scotia's. He outlined the lack of trade that existed between Nova Scotia and Canada. The prospects of expanding commerce would be negligible, he claimed. Instead of expanding commerce and developing the natural products of Nova Scotia, he predicted that trade would be crippled and costs of living would increase. In return for getting the Intercolonial Railway built, he pointed out that Nova Scotia would have to surrender her constitution, risk disharmony among fellow colonists, reduce local expenditures for roads and bridges (or use direct taxation to make up the deficiency), be subject to the annoyance of a Stamp Tax, surrender to Canada the power to tax, and help pay the general expenses of a central government.

He ended on a patriotic note:

Let us then be content to go on prospering as we have and at the same time cultivating the ties of brotherhood with the other colonies, and above all, let us not take a step that will tend to sever our connection with England. My strong desire is to see this connection continued, that through our lives we may glory in the grandeur and greatness of the British Empire, and leave behind us those who shall inherit the same feelings of loyal attachment to her Crown and Institutions, that the same sentiments may bind together the people of these colonies. Every heart beating in unison even as one great heart when waked by the strains of "Rule Britannia" and "God Save The Queen".<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Op.Cit., p. 261.

All the arguments of this 1865 speech would echo and re-echo through the debate on the National Question from one end of the province to the other.

The Anti-Confederates were unable to stop the Confederation scheme but they were certainly determined to win the first elections held under the new arrangement. For Colchester this meant that two leading spokesmen for the opposing sides would face each other for the federal seat of Colchester. Secretary of State, A. G. Archibald, faced Anti-Confederate A. W. McLellan.

Election day for the first federal election had been set for 18 September, 1867. It has been said that most Nova Scotians had decided how they would vote as early as 1865, and that the campaign of 1867 was anticlimactic.<sup>17</sup> This could be said of the Colchester seat, too, perhaps but only after 5 June, 1867, for that was the date of the great Confederation debate held in Truro. As a political meeting it must be ranked as a classic, a direct confrontation of the best of the two opposing sides.

The Drill Room, just off King Street, was packed with from 2000 to 2500 people<sup>18</sup> all in their places well before the starting hour of eleven a.m. Charles Tupper and Adams

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<sup>17</sup>J. M. Beck, Pendulum of Power, Prentice-Hall, 1968, p. 8.

<sup>18</sup>New Glasgow Eastern Chronicle, 8 June 1867. The Eastern Chronicle was one of the Anti-Confederate papers to report the occasion. The Halifax Morning Chronicle was also Anti-Confederate.

G. Archibald represented the Confederates. Joseph Howe and A. W. McLellan represented the Anti Confederates (or Nova Scotia Party). The Halifax Morning Chronicle billed this gathering as "probably the greatest political demonstration that has ever taken place in the province outside of the city".<sup>19</sup>

The reception accorded the participants left no doubt as to which side the majority of the audience favoured.

When Hon. Mr. Howe, accompanied by Messrs. McLellan, Chambers, Morrison and Anhand, entered the building, there was such a show of acclamation sent up by the sturdy yeomanry of Colchester, as made the building ring for several minutes. When Messrs. Tupper and Archibald entered a few minutes previously, not a solitary cheer greeted them.<sup>20</sup>

Archibald led off the debate, choosing to discuss the character and career of Joseph Howe for most of his two hour address and only touching Confederation towards the end of his speech. He did venture the observation that he expected to be sent to Ottawa by the electors of the county. "The electors answered, 'NO', in the loudest terms, but Mr. Archibald said he knew more about it than many of them did."<sup>21</sup>

A. W. McLellan was scheduled to be the second speaker

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<sup>19</sup>Halifax Morning Chronicle, 6 June 1867.

<sup>20</sup>New Glasgow Eastern Chronicle, 8 June 1867.

<sup>21</sup>Halifax Morning Chronicle, 6 June 1867.



but he waived his position in the roster in order to allow Joseph Howe to rebut Archibald's comments. It was a two and one-half hour rebuttal.<sup>22</sup>

Charles Tupper then addressed the meeting with a long tirade of three hours duration. On the Confederation question "he was not greeted throughout by even the faintest cheer, although the advantages of the scheme were paraded in the most fanciful costume".<sup>23</sup>

A. W. McLehlan was received with three cheers as he rose to speak. In an address which was punctuated frequently by a cheering audience he dealt with some of the aspects of the Confederation question: the financial inadequacy of the terms, the extravagant salaries for officials, the small representation in Commons and Senate, the loss of constitutional rights, and particularly the lack of consultation on the question.<sup>24</sup>

Three cheers for the Anti-Confederate candidates were given at the close of the nine hour marathon session. The call for three cheers for Mr. Archibald was responded to by "a few struggling huzzas that were drowned in a torrent of groans and hisses".<sup>25</sup> It must have been obvious to

<sup>22</sup>Fully reported in the Halifax Morning Chronicle, 7 June 1867.

<sup>23</sup>Halifax Morning Chronicle, 6 June 1867.

<sup>24</sup>Fully reported in the Halifax Morning Chronicle, 8 June 1867.

<sup>25</sup>Halifax Citizen report. Reprinted in Eastern Chronicle, 8 June 1867.

Archibald that his would be an uphill struggle, irrespective of his past strong showing in Colchester elections.

There were other meetings throughout the county between June and polling day, September 18th.<sup>26</sup> The campaign in the press reiterated the usual arguments. Only the Halifax Reporter and Halifax British Colonist presented the pro-Confederation arguments.<sup>27</sup> The Halifax Chronicle like, almost all the provincial newspapers, was dogged in its condemnation of the proposed union.<sup>28</sup> There were some very local grievances directed against Archibald concerning bridges and roads<sup>29</sup> but most dealt with his stand on Confederation. ("Traitor" was a frequently used descriptive term.)

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<sup>26</sup>Meeting at Stewiacke reported in the Eastern Chronicle, 8 June 1867, local candidates plus Archibald and McLellan. Meeting at New Annan reported in the Eastern Chronicle, 30 June 1867, local candidates plus McLellan.

<sup>27</sup>See Halifax British Colonist, 1 August 1867, mentions benefits of union of interest to farmers of Earltown and New Annand (sic) and 8 August 1867, where it is pointed out that "Confederation and the ICR are marching hand in hand" and will be completed "before the autumn leaves of 1869 strew the mountains and valleys of Cumberland and Colchester". Also, 14 September 1867, Confederate letter re nomination day. See Halifax Reporter, 3 September 1867, pro-Archibald article and Confederate letter from Upper Stewiacke; 10 September 1867, Pro-Archibald article.

<sup>28</sup>Relevant to Colchester see Halifax Chronicle, 1 August 1867, Intercolonial Election Dodge article; 4 September 1867, Buying and Selling a Country article ridiculing Tupper and Archibald; 7 September 1867, open letter to Archibald from A. N. Tupper, Upper Stewiacke; 14 September 1867, Nomination Day in Colchester.

<sup>29</sup>Halifax Chronicle, 7 September 1867, open letter to Archibald.

Nomination Day was lively and it did give the Confederates the opportunity to make a show of strength with their parade of about one hundred carriages from Great Village to the Prince of Wales Hotel in Truro.<sup>30</sup> The Morning Chronicle observation that "the meeting appeared to be largely Anti" and that the "Nova Scotia candidates represent three quarters of the property of the county"<sup>31</sup> is probably quite accurate though.

The importance of the election to Archibald, who was after all a Cabinet Minister in Macdonald's first cabinet, is evidenced by the amount of money he spent conducting it. Bribery was the accepted custom of the day and it was later observed that Archibald's opponents gave twenty pounds a vote and that Archibald had spent "several thousand", being a "ruined man" in the aftermath of the election.<sup>32</sup>

The election result overall is well known. Eighteen of the nineteen federal seats were won by the Antis. Charles Tupper in Cumberland was the only successful Confederate candidate. Archibald was the only one of Macdonald's entire

<sup>30</sup>Halifax British Colonist, 14 September 1867.

<sup>31</sup>Halifax Morning Chronicle, 14 September 1867.

<sup>32</sup>Connolly to Langevin, 27 October 1867, Chapais Collection A.P.Q. quoted in G. K. Pryke, Nova Scotia and Confederation, 1864-1870, Ph.D. Thesis, Duke University, 1962. Also Halifax Chronicle, 7 September 1867, reprint from Eastern Chronicle, "The Confederate Candidates have plenty of rum and money at their disposal, but they will fail to have the desired effect."

cabinet to suffer defeat.

A glance at the election returns<sup>33</sup> indicates strong support for Archibald in Truro where the benefits of a railway to New Brunswick and the Upper Provinces might be appreciated but in most non-urban districts like the Stewiackes and along the Cobequid, (Economy, Portauipique, Debert) McLelan was superior. This town/county split shown in the first federal election is one which is constant throughout the period under study, with no exceptions. Truro, it seemed, was not adverse to the temptations which might await landwards.

There is a term used to describe an election in which the basic division of party loyalty is not seriously disturbed but the influence of short term forces on the vote is such that it brings about the defeat of the majority party.<sup>34</sup> The term is "deviating" and this may be applied to the highly emotional election of 1867. Colchester politics, over the course of the five years following that first general election, would show its preference for Confederation generally and the Conservative party specifically.

It is doubtful if Joseph Howe himself was more dedi-

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<sup>33</sup>Table 1. (On following page).

<sup>34</sup>J. M. Beck, Pendulum of Power, Prentice Hall, 1968, p. 429.

Table I  
General Election 1867

<u>Subdivisions</u>	<u>A. G. Archibald</u>	<u>A. W. McLellan</u>
Upper Truro	254	157
Lower Truro	63	84
Lower Stewiacke	83	132
Upper Stewiacke	108	219
North River	111	63
Lower Onslow	38	86
Earlton	110	58
New Annan	62	105
Waugh's River	77	89
Tatamagouche	97	88
Debert	89	167
Portapique	72	204
Economy	87	189
Kemptown	38	8
	<u>1289</u>	<u>1649</u>

Majority = 360

\*Unless otherwise stated, all election results are from Sessional Papers of Canada.

cated to repeal than A. W. McLelan. He eloquently placed Nova Scotia's case before Parliament in the fall session of 1867.<sup>35</sup> He attended and addressed repeal meetings in the county.<sup>36</sup> Like the other Anti-Confederates he expected that Britain might intercede on Nova Scotia's behalf. When this was denied, in 1868, the choices were limited: continue to agitate for repeal or to push for better terms for Nova Scotia. McLelan, like Howe, chose the latter.<sup>37</sup>

As part of Macdonald's "deal" with Howe in 1869, on better terms for Nova Scotia, were a number of political patronage appointments, including a seat in the Senate.<sup>38</sup> McLelan chose to become Chairman of the Railway Commission. By law this was denied him as long as he was a Member of the House of Commons. He could have the appointment, however, if he was in the Senate. Thus A. W. McLelan, M.P., became Senator A. W. McLelan. His resignation as M.P. in 1869 would be his last direct involvement in Colchester politics until 1881 when he resigned his Senate seat in order to contest the Colchester by-election of 1881. His indirect

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<sup>35</sup>A. W. McLelan, House of Commons Debates, 13 November 1867.

<sup>36</sup>Colchester Mirror and Advertiser, 8 February 1868. Repeal meeting.

<sup>37</sup>He was frequently reminded of his change of heart. See his explanation during budget speech, House of Commons, 30 March 1886, pp. 5-6.

<sup>38</sup>G. K. Pryke, Op. Cit., p. 244.

influence must not be underestimated and was crucial in the years immediately following his resignation in 1869.

The Colchester by-election of 1869 is interesting considering the various factions within the county that had to be addressed. There were the Anti-Confederates who supported McLelan in 1867 and now found McLelan as a strong Confederate. There were some Anti-Confederates who might compromise and support an independent. There was also Adams G. Archibald who had decided that his retirement from politics, which had been announced earlier, was premature and that he would re-offer for the seat.<sup>39</sup> Final nominations placed Adams G. Archibald against Masstown merchant and shipbuilder, F. M. Pearson. Both sides engaged in wholesale bribery of the electorate. The result was a victory for Archibald and the Conservatives.<sup>40</sup>

Note that resistance to Archibald was still strong in some former McLelan strongholds like Economy and Upper Stewiacke. Archibald acknowledged that only about one hundred and fifty votes were brought over from the Confederates by McLelan, mainly through business connections and relatives.<sup>41</sup> As a constituency, though, Colchester was

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<sup>39</sup>See G. K. Pryke, Op. Cit., pp. 245-248. Also interesting for details of political patronage involved. Also, see scathing article opposing Archibald in Halifax Morning Chronicle, 6 September 1869.

<sup>40</sup>See Table 2 - Halifax Morning Chronicle, 10 September 1869.

<sup>41</sup>Archibald to Macdonald, 14 September 1869; Macdonald Papers CLXXXVII.

Table 2  
Colchester By-election 1869

<u>Subdivisions</u>	<u>Archibald</u>	<u>Pearson</u>
Truro	302	130
Lower Stewiacke	115	98
Debert	91	154
Portápique	129	125
Tatamagouche	139	36
Waugh's River	94	58
Economy	96	125
North River	134	38
Old Barns	74	74
Kempton	<u>39</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Totals:</u>	<u>1213</u>	<u>844</u>

Pearson's majority at New Annan, 20; at Upper Stewiacke, 51.  
 Archibald's majority at Earltown, 400. Archibald's total majority  
 about 400.



officially "on side" (i.e. the Conservative, Macdonald side).

Adams Archibald's first stint as M.P. for Colchester was a brief one. In 1870 he was appointed as Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba thus precipitating another election in Colchester, the third the electors of the county faced in four years.

As in the preceding election, the year before, the old wounds were reopened as Anti-Confederates opposed Confederates. F. M. Pearson was chosen again by Anti-Confederates, but this time he was supported by Confederates like McLellan and locals like Hiram Hyde. Even Anti-Confederate MLA for Colchester, T. F. Morrison, was helping Pearson. Local extremists, like Robert Chambers the other MLA from Colchester who was elected as an Anti in 1867, were determined to offer voters a choice, however. Chambers opposed Pearson on the annexation ticket.<sup>42</sup> Pearson was pledged to support the Macdonald government. Chambers could not match him in personality<sup>43</sup> or organization. The electors gave Pearson a huge majority.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>G. K. Pryke, Op. Cit., pp. 282-284.

<sup>43</sup>Pryke says of Chambers that he was a "rather pleasant, old individualist who refused to humble himself by asking any man for his vote". G. K. Pryke, Op. Cit., p 284.

<sup>44</sup>Table 3 - Halifax Morning Chronicle, 11 November 1870.

Table 3.

Colchester By Election, 1870

<u>Subdivisions</u>	<u>Pearson</u>	<u>Chambers</u>
Truro	492	79
Upper Stewiacke	208	14
Lower Stewiacke	56	23
North River	106	41
Earlton	102	18
Kempton	21	10
New Annan	89	11
Tatamagouche	56	9
Waugh's River	63	4
Onslow	99	2
Upper Londonderry	211	11
Portapique	182	12
Economy	147	15
Old-Barns	54	19
<u>Totals:</u>	<u>1886</u>	<u>268</u>

It would appear that the coalition of Anti and Confederate was now complete. Perhaps it was, as has been suggested,<sup>45</sup> the strong pull of government patronage and the opportunities open to an M.P. who supported the governing party to appoint and give grants, which swayed the electors. The old fire and passion of 1867 was not there anymore.

Between F. M. Pearson's election victory in the by-election of 1870 and the return to active politics by A. W. McLelan in 1881, there was little evidence that Colchester's support for Macdonald and Canada had slipped. Pearson was re-elected in the general election of 1872. Technically he was elected as an Independent but had gone on to support the government on almost every vote in 1871 and 1872.<sup>46</sup> Colchester's only newspaper, the Sun, disliked Pearson though and gave unqualified support to J. F. Blanchard who was promoted as a government candidate in the election of 1872. The choice for voters tended to be limited then only to personalities. Both supported the government. The voters gave Pearson the majority.<sup>47</sup> Traditional support for Pearson along the Cobequid Shore (Londonderry, Economy,

<sup>45</sup>G. K. Pryke, Op. Cit., p. 285.

<sup>46</sup>D. A. Muise, Elections and Constituencies: Federal Politics in Nova Scotia, 1867-1878, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1971, p. 197.

<sup>47</sup>Table 4.

Table 4  
Colchester Election, 1872

<u>Subdivisions</u>	<u>Pearson</u>	<u>Blanchard</u>
Truro	163	326
Clifton	70	65
Lower Stewiacke	124	67
Upper Stewiacke	171	125
Upper Onslow	85	92
Lower Onslow	74	36
Earlton	62	125
New Annan	78	73
Waugh's River	99	72
Tatamagouche	78	105
Upper Londonderry	205	48
Lower Londonderry	231	23
Economy & Five Islands	175	23
Kempton	19	29
<u>Totals:</u>	<u>1634</u>	<u>1209</u>

Five Islands) remained strong but town voters preferred Blanchard.

The general election of 1874, the Pacific Scandal Election, saw the Conservatives ousted from power in Ottawa. Nova Scotia sent only three conservatives back to Ottawa out of a possible twenty-one and one of the casualties was Colchester's F. M. Pearson. Of course, the Colchester Sun opposed Pearson. A parliamentary correspondent for the Sun during the 1873 sitting of the House of Commons, Thomas McKay, presented himself as another independent candidate. It appears the campaign pitted Pearson's political machine, whose strength was largely rural and supported by A. W. McLellan, against a new, young idealistic group from Truro.<sup>48</sup> The issue, as in all of Canada, was corruption in high places. McKay had virtue on his side this time. The results show some slippage of the old hold that Pearson and McLellan held along the Bay (Economy, for example, is fairly close) in past elections. The town vote was strong for McKay.<sup>49</sup>

His first election in 1874 was a controverted one<sup>50</sup> and the result was that McKay's election was declared void. In a by-election held in December, 1874, McKay defeated Dr. A. C. Page by 1918 votes to 915. He declared himself

<sup>48</sup>D. A. Muise, Op. Cit., p. 248.

<sup>49</sup>Table 5.

<sup>50</sup>Some of McKay's agents were accused of bribery.

Table 5  
Colchester Election, 1874

<u>Subdivisions</u>	<u>Pearson</u>	<u>McKay</u>
Truro	177	342
Clifton	59	76
Lower Stewiacke	88	90
Upper Stewiacke	127	136
Upper Onslow	59	115
Lower Onslow	66	60
Earlton	55	94
New Annan	66	78
Waugh's River	91	65
Tatamagouche	70	93
Upper Londonderry	156	75
Lower Londonderry	168	87
Economy	117	92
Kempton	16	26
	<u>1313</u>	<u>1429</u>

"a Liberal and will give the present government his support in all such measures as meet his approval"<sup>51</sup> but the central issue in the ensuing debates of sessions after 1874 dealt with "free trade" versus "protection" and McKay would choose "protection". In 1877 he crossed the floor of the Commons to support the policies of the opposition. This issue was, after all, the one which would return the Conservatives to power in 1878 and keep them there until 1896.

The protectionist policies of the Conservatives are generally spoken of as the National Policy and are associated with the general election of 1878. The roots of this National Policy may be traced to at least 1874 and 1875 while Canada debated the virtues of each in desperation as the great depression, which began in 1873, deepened. In Colchester, the Sun accused the Liberals of letting manufacturers down on railway development and openly advocated a policy of protection.<sup>52</sup>

There was only one issue in the general election of 1878 and it has been said that the election was decided long before the campaign ever started.<sup>53</sup> The issue was the depression and the solutions to it. The Conservatives

<sup>51</sup>Parliamentary guide of Canada, 1874, p. 217.

<sup>52</sup>Colchester Sun, 3 March 1875, and 28 April 1875, in Pryke, Op. Cit., p. 301.

<sup>53</sup>J. M. Beck, Op. Cit., p. 30.

advocated protection. The Liberals advocated free trade. Fourteen of Nova Scotia's twenty-one federal constituencies returned Conservatives. Colchester was among them. Thomas McKay was elected as a Conservative this time, defeating Truro doctor, A. C. Page, again with a healthy majority of 376.<sup>54</sup> As usual the town vote was strongly Conservative as was, notably, any county area which might benefit from industry or railroad. Brookfield was on the ICR. It voted strongly for McKay. Londonderry Village and Lower Londonderry still had the strength to resist the Conservative pull but Londonderry Mines, the only county area outside Truro to have any hint of industrial development, voted for McKay and protection.

The political stage might have been crowded with newcomers after 1878 but it was not in Colchester. Rather, it was marked by the return of two aging veterans, A. W. McLellan and Adams G. Archibald. M.P., Thomas McKay became Senator McKay in 1881 which opened Colchester to a by-election, allowing A. W. McLellan to return to his old constituency. He resigned his Senate seat and was elected

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<sup>54</sup>Table 6.

<sup>55</sup>Senator A. W. McLellan's long letter addressed to the electors of Colchester which appeared in the Colchester Sun, 11 September 1878, outlines the folly of Liberal reciprocity. Even Adam and Eve, "left in the garden without protection" were at the mercy of Satan who "entered into competition and soon put them into bankruptcy". Also, see strong protectionist articles in the Sun, 3 July, 10 July, 14 August, 1878.



Table 6  
Colchester Election, 1878

<u>Subdivisions</u>	<u>McKay</u>	<u>Page</u>
Truro East	104	49
Truro West	132	60
Clifton	96	60
Brookfield	101	17
Stewiacke Lower	96	112
Stewiacke Middle	55	56
Stewiacke Upper West	46	66
Stewiacke Upper East	82	46
Salmon River	100	38
Kemptown	40	11
Earltown	151	43
Waugh's River	98	109
Tatamagouche	124	76
New Annan	69	84
North River	134	59
Onslow Lower	67	69
Debert	81	97
Londonderry Village	62	80
Londonderry Mines	64	29
Londonderry Lower	54	88
Economy	48	108
Five Islands	25	65
<u>Totals:</u>	<u>1829</u>	<u>1453</u>

by a majority of 428.<sup>56</sup> In the general election of 1882 McLelan was re-elected for another term. The old master repeated his victory in the general election of 1887, his majority increasing to 627. By this time McLelan was a prominent member of Macdonald's Cabinet. He had been Minister of Fisheries and Marine in 1882. From December, 1885, to January, 1887, he was Finance Minister and following that, Postmaster General for a year and a half.<sup>57</sup> In July, 1888, he accepted the position of Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia. The by-election to fill the vacancy thus created by McLelan's resignation was contested and won by former Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia (1873-1883), Adams G. Archibald.<sup>58</sup> The time of greatest influ

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<sup>56</sup>An intelligent choice according to the Sun, 22 June 1881. See also, report of political meeting featuring opponents A. W. McLelan and Charles Cummings in the Halifax Morning Chronicle, 13 June 1881. The Chronicle accused McLelan of promoting his own "selfish career". Halifax Chronicle, 17 June 1881, condemns the political deal which put McKay in the Senate.

<sup>57</sup>P. B. Waite, "A. W. McLelan", Dictionary of Canadian Biography, p. 573.

<sup>58</sup>"He felt it his duty to accede", to a "unanimous request" by the Liberal Conservatives of Colchester "though he had stated to some friends that nothing would induce him to again enter political life", Colchester Sun, 8 August 1888. The question of unrestricted reciprocity was the chief subject of his address. The Halifax Morning Chronicle speculated on the election, 9 August, 11 August, 13 August, 16 August, 1888, and suggested that there were factors in the election which would prevent the "real voice of the people" from being heard. For example, the "short line railways are under construction and Truro is flooded with employees of the ICR, directly under the control of the government and that there are pampered industries in the county, such as the Acadia Mines which are under obligations to the government or think they are".

ence for both the aging politicians was past, however. McLelan died in office at Province House in June of 1890. The by-election was the last for Archibald. He did not re-offer for the general election of 1891 and he died at home, in Truro, in December, 1892.

The Conservative hold on the county continued through the election of 1891. Former M.L.A., W. A. Patterson, of Tatamagouche, was elected with a large majority. This was the "loyalty election"<sup>59</sup> and the Colchester Sun was proud to proclaim the battle cry of the Liberal Conservatives - "Home Rule! - not Yankee Rule - for Canada!"<sup>60</sup>

By 1896 the federal Conservative party was in shambles. They lost the election of that year to Laurier's Liberals. In Colchester the Conservative candidate, Truro News editor, W. D. Dimock, was elected but with a reduced majority over the preceding election.<sup>61</sup> This election was declared void. Dimock did not re-offer for the by-election, the party's colors being carried by Dr. D. H. Muir of Truro. The Liberal

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<sup>59</sup>J. M. Beck, Pendulum of Power, p. 68.

<sup>60</sup>Colchester Sun, 6 March 1891. See also, R.M.F. Deering, The Federal Election of 1891, in Nova Scotia, M.A. Thesis, Dalhousie University, 1967. Deering notes that "counties with the highest investments in industrial establishments were consistently solid Conservative constituencies".

<sup>61</sup>One explanation was that "good Tories in every polling booth in Colchester temporarily left their party to support the Liberal; which was the Protestant side of the school question, even though Laurier himself was a Roman Catholic", H. Putnam, Interesting Political Happenings of Past 50 Years Recalled, Truro Daily News Jubilee, 1941.

candidate was F. J. McClure who won by a very slim majority in January, 1897.<sup>62</sup>

The general election of 1900 gave the seat back to the Conservatives. McClure's hold on the seat was tenuous and Conservative Seymour Gourley managed to defeat him by a majority of 279.<sup>63</sup> Gourley was one of only five Conservatives elected out of Nova Scotia's twenty seats in the House of Commons.

The 1904 general election was the last Liberal victory in Colchester until 1921. S. E. Gourley reoffered for the seat, he being opposed by Truro lawyer and longtime M.E.A., F. A. Laurence. Laurence had been first elected to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly in 1886 and he was a popular member, serving three terms as Speaker of the House. His attractiveness as a candidate is indicated in the polls by the closeness of the vote in Truro.<sup>64</sup> The old allegiances die hard though. Traditional Conservative polls like Acadia Mines and Earltown remained loyal. Traditional Liberal polls like Londonderry and Economy/Five Islands also held.

The appointment of F. A. Laurence to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia in 1907 forced a by-election in the county

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<sup>62</sup>Table 7 - Truro Daily News, 22 January 1897.

<sup>63</sup>Truro Daily News, 1 November 1900, issues discussed by candidates McClure and Gourley on Nomination Day.

<sup>64</sup>Table 8

Table 7

Colchester By-Election, 1897

<u>Subdivisions</u>	<u>McClure</u>	<u>Muir</u>
Truro A	92	131
Truro B	51	107
Truro C	44	142
Truro D	99	116
Truro E	61	69
Clifton	85	93
Brookfield	82	98
Lower Stewiacke North	98	69
Middle Stewiacke	54	54
Upper Stewiacke West	64	39
Salmon River	112	108
Kemptown	24	45
Earlton	73	130
Waugh's River North	81	49
Waugh's River South	82	40
Tatamagouche East	76	62
New Annan	115	60
North River	98	136
Lower Onslow	104	91
Upper Londonderry	96	119
Middle Londonderry	127	61
Lower Londonderry	122	65
Economy	101	62
Five Islands	94	41
Upper Stewiacke East	86	64
Acadia Mines	52	160
Tatamagouche West	79	46
Lower Stewiacke South	72	55
<u>Totals:</u>	<u>2324</u>	<u>2312</u>

Table 8

Colchester Election, 1904

<u>Subdivisions</u>	<u>Gourley</u>	<u>Laurence</u>
Truro 1	48	63
Truro 2	83	84
Truro 3	122	86
Truro 4	137	91
Truro 5	77	87
Truro 6	58	52
Truro 7	76	95
Clifton	97	81
Brookfield	108	85
Stewiacke Lower	81	95
Stewiacke Middle	81	61
Stewiacke Upper	38	58
Salmon River	35	64
Salmon River	50	57
Salmon River	22	44
Kemptown	36	26
Earlton	117	72
Waugh's River North	47	86
Waugh's River South	44	87
Tatamagouche	61	78
Tatamagouche West	40	74
New Annan	66	119
North River	95	127
Onslow Lower	114	83
Londonderry Upper	117	95
Londonderry Middle	62	120
Londonderry Lower	83	130
Economy	74	101
Five Islands	73	89
Stewiacke Upper East	54	80
Acadia Mines	71	31
Acadia Mines	88	37
Gays River	64	72
<u>Totals:</u>	<u>2419</u>	<u>2610</u>

and allowed the entrance of a political figure who would dominate the federal scene for ten years. This was industrialist John Stanfield. In 1907 he defeated Liberal Charles Hill. In 1908 the two faced each other again with a similar result.

The general election of 1911 is considered by many to have been a national referendum on the question of reciprocity.<sup>65</sup> John Stanfield carried the Conservative banner once more. The Liberals were represented by S. D. McLellan whose arguments in favor of reciprocity were reminiscent of past rhetoric on the merits of the "Golden Age of Nova Scotia". To the crowd of 1200 gathered at Portapique he remarked:

I have sat for hours, watching the white sails of Maritime commerce speed the hulls which Nova Scotia built and manned and filled with the harvests of our fields and wooded lands, and mines, and they came and went filled and to be filled all day long up and down this beautiful bay which lies in front of us. This was not so many years ago.

Today I may watch for hours and not a ship, not a sail, not a man, not a stick, not a root, a blossom is borne out upon the tide. And why? Because man stepped in and put a hand against it. Our neighbours to the south fought with nature and with God when they put a barrier against trade between these provinces and the States which lie across that shimmering sea.<sup>66</sup>

P. M. Laurier spoke to a large crowd of 6000 in Truro

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<sup>65</sup>J. M. Beck, Pendulum of Power, p. 120.

<sup>66</sup>The New Era, 4 September 1911.

and although the newspaper New Era noted that there were many Conservatives in the crowd and predicted that "the Stanfield reign is about over",<sup>67</sup> the Conservatives won the election with a large majority (644)<sup>68</sup>

John Stanfield did not re-offer for the general election of 1917 but the county Conservatives had no need to be disheartened. Their candidate was county-born financier F. B. McCurdy.<sup>69</sup> The Liberals did not field a candidate. McCurdy became Colchester's first M.P. elected by acclamation.

In July, 1920, McCurdy was appointed Minister of Public works and, as was the custom of the day, this occasioned a by-election in Colchester. The Liberal candidate, H. A. Dickson, was no match for McCurdy. County voters gave the Conservative candidate a majority of 1,444. It appeared, on the surface anyway, that this county had only confirmed its allegiance to the governing party but there was some evidence that the electorate was becoming more unpredictable. The two Acadia Mines polls, for example, gave a total of 190 votes to Dickson and 178 to McCurdy. This

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Usual town vote in favour of the Conservative candidate but unusually large this time: Stanfield - 1237, McLellan - 431, for the seven Truro polls.

<sup>69</sup>President F. B. McCurdy and Co., brokerage firm - elected 1911 M.P. for Halifax.



marked the first time Acadia Mines ever gave a Liberal the majority.

In 1920 then, the Conservative hold on the county would appear to be iron-bound. There were more changes in the offing, however, these being part of the regional protest movement of the 1920's which have come to be known as the Maritime Rights Movement.<sup>70</sup> For this county it meant changing allegiances from Conservative to Liberal and then a return to the traditional political fold.

The roots of the anger which was expressed in the Maritime Rights Movement began at the turn of the century with the frustration over the declining political influence of the region,<sup>71</sup> the inability to protect Maritime economic interests<sup>72</sup> and the emergence of a Canada which seemed to exclude the Maritimes.<sup>73</sup> It was the economic dislocation which became evident after the Great War that channelled this frustration into political action. The recession began in the spring and summer of 1920<sup>74</sup> and affected every

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<sup>70</sup>E. R. Forbes, Maritime Rights.

<sup>71</sup>Loss of 16 seats in the House of Commons between 1892 and 1924.

<sup>72</sup>Loss of control of the I.C.R., 1917-1923.

<sup>73</sup>Creation of new provinces, Saskatchewan and Alberta, in 1906, with high federal subsidies and in 1912 expansion of provinces of Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, with no financial compensation for the Maritimes.

<sup>74</sup>E. R. Forbes, Op. Cit., p. 54.

sector of the Maritime economy. Forty-two percent of the jobs in manufacturing disappeared in the region in the years from 1920 to 1926 and it has been estimated that fifteen to twenty percent of the population left the region during the decade.<sup>75</sup> The total labour force employed in manufacturing in the Maritimes declined from 46,004 in 1919 to 27,855 in 1921.<sup>76</sup> In Truro the numbers employed in manufacturing declined from 1,080 in 1920 to 778 in 1926.<sup>77</sup>

It was the Liberal party which capitalized on the emerging frustration and anger and which proclaimed itself to be the party of Maritime rights in the federal election of 1921. It was they who promised to redress the Maritime grievances and respond to the regional complaints. The stunning result of the 1921 election is evidence of the depth of feeling associated with the sense of grievance. In Nova Scotia the Liberals won all sixteen seats. In Colchester, F.B. McCurdy was defeated by a newcomer, Liberal Harold Putnam. That great McCurdy majority of only one year earlier had evaporated.<sup>78</sup> The town vote, as usual, was

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<sup>75</sup>E. R. Forbes, Aspects of Maritime Regionalism, Canadian Historical Association, Historical Booklet No. 36, Ottawa, 1983, p. 18.

<sup>76</sup>E. R. Forbes, Maritime Rights, p. 63.

<sup>77</sup>E. R. Forbes, Op. Cit., p. 209.

<sup>78</sup>Forbes cites McCurdy's inability to represent the province's interests in the government as being the major cause of defeat, E. R. Forbes, Op. Cit., p. 130.

Conservative but the final tally gave Putnam a majority of 296.

Putnam was one of twenty-five Liberals to win, out of the thirty-one Maritime seats. Their hopes of achieving something for the Maritimers was unfortunately dimmed by another political reality: the New Liberal government in Ottawa depended on a much larger block of Progressives, elected in Ontario and the Prairies.

As the Maritime economy continued to collapse around them and the federal government stood unable or unwilling to do anything to remedy the situation, the Liberals lost public support. By 1925 the Conservatives had become the party of Maritime rights. In the general election of that year they swept to the widest margin of victory ever, taking twenty-three of the twenty-nine Maritime seats. In Nova Scotia the Conservatives took eleven of the fourteen seats, including Colchester. Conservative G. T. MacNutt's majority over M. B. Archibald was a staggering 3,011, the greatest ever recorded in a Colchester election up to this time.<sup>79</sup> MacNutt held the seat again in 1926 although his majority was reduced to 2,018.

County voters, it appeared, would not be so quickly swayed by promises made by politicians of either stripe. They would wait and see before further changes were made.

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<sup>79</sup>See Table 9 for comparison of 1921 and 1925 voting pattern.

Table 9

Comparison: Colchester Elections, 1921 and 1925

<u>Subdivisions</u>	<u>1921</u>		<u>1925</u>	
	<u>McCurdy</u>	<u>Putnam</u>	<u>MacNutt</u>	<u>Archibald</u>
Truro	2134	1568	2444	695
Clifton	218	165	198	123
Brookfield	218	174	202	129
Lower Stewiacke	77	150	99	54
Middle Stewiacke	83	103	111	74
Upper Stewiacke	85	134	87	80
Salmon River	352	434	450	256
Kempton	60	31	48	39
Earlton	134	157	168	103
Waugh's River	63	164	109	84
Tatamagouche	122	183	160	132
New Annan	99	196	123	125
North River	218	193	207	130
Lower Onslow	154	256	196	125
Upper Londonderry	95	176	232	86
Middle Londonderry	180	259	204	210
Lower Londonderry	192	295	211	223
Economy	110	220	137	140
Five Islands	105	115	104	89
Upper Stewiacke East	85	153	105	85
Londonderry	183	169		
Acadia Mines			199	48
Tatamagouche West	103	122	113	109
Gays River	113	127	145	58
Brule	99	148	133	109
Stewiacke	180	166	220	88
<u>Totals:</u>	<u>5562</u>	<u>*5858</u>	<u>6405</u>	<u>3394</u>

\*Sessional Papers give total Putnam as 5888 which is typographical error.

In summary then, it is fair to say that the great issues confronting county voters on the federal level during the sixty years in question were Confederation, the National Policy and the regional protest known as the Maritime Rights Movement. As has been shown, the emotional nature of the 1867 election soon gave way to practical economics as Anti-Confederates and Independents were enveloped by the Conservative party. This adherence to the Conservative party and to the principle which kept it in power, the National Policy, was almost without exception through the history of elections in Colchester. The county also shared in the political upheaval brought on by the anger and frustration which produced the Maritime Rights movement.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Table 10. Compiled from Sessional Papers of Canada, Parliamentary Guide, Halifax Morning Chronicle - 10 September, 1869; 11 November, 1870; 21 December, 1874; 19 June, 1881; 16 August, 1881; and Truro Daily News - 22 April, 1897.

Table 10

## Federal Elections: Colchester, 1867-1925

Year	Elected	Party	Majority	Defeated Candidate
1867	A.W. McLellan	Anti-Confederate	360	A.G. Archibald
1869	A.G. Archibald (By Election)	Conservative	369	E.M. Pearson
1870	F.M. Pearson (By Election)	Independent	1618	R. Chambers
1872	F.M. Pearson	Independent	425	J.F. Blanchard
1874	T. McKay	Independent	116	F.M. Pearson
1874	T. McKay (By Election)	Independent	303	A.C. Page
1878	T. McKay	Conservative	376	A.C. Page
1881	A.W. McLellan (By Election)	Conservative	428	C. Cummings
1882	A.W. McLellan	Conservative	435	F.A. Laurence
1887	A.W. McLellan	Conservative	627	S.D. McLellan
1887	A.W. McLellan (By Election)	Conservative	626	S.D. McLellan
1888	A.G. Archibald (By Election)	Conservative	528	C. Eaton, E. Fulton
1891	W.A. Patterson	Conservative	803	P.M. A.G. Archibald, A.B. Fletcher
1896	W.D. Dimock	Conservative	177	F. McClure
1897	F.J. McClure (By Election)	Liberal	12	D.H. Muir
1900	S.E. Gourley	Conservative	279	F. McClure
1904	F.A. Laurence	Liberal	191	S.E. Gourley
1907	J. Stanfield (By Election)	Conservative	228	C. Hill
1908	J. Stanfield	Conservative	115	C. Hill
1911	J. Stanfield	Conservative	644	S.D. McLellan
1917	F.B. McCurdy	Conservative	Acclamation	
1920	F.B. McCurdy (By Election)	Conservative	1444	H.A. Dickson
1921	H. Putnam	Liberal	296	F.B. McCurdy
1925	G.T. MacNutt	Conservative	3011	M.B. Archibald

\*Note two controverted elections, 1874 and 1887, because of bribery.  
Each incumbent was re-elected, McKay in 1874 and A.W. McLellan in 1887.

## Chapter III

"Not Worse Off Than Other People":  
Provincial Politics and Politicians in Colchester, 1867-1925

The pattern of attachment to the Conservative party and Canada which emerged at the federal level in Colchester is not so easily discernible at the provincial level. The preceding section was organized on the basis of three themes: the National Question, the National Policy, and Maritime Rights. This is a much more difficult undertaking at the provincial level because of a lack of any genuine philosophical differences between the political parties.<sup>1</sup> The Confederation issue was, however, crucial for both parties in the province. The way in which this issue unfolded and the way in which it interacted with the federal scene determined that Nova Scotia would be dominated by one party for most of the sixty years of this study. All action on the political stage was played against a backdrop of Liberalism, the only unusual wrinkle in the fabric being the general election of 1920<sup>2</sup> when elements of class played an important part in the result, not only in Colchester, but in the province as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup>See J. M. Beck, Government of Nova Scotia, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1957, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup>His home was Folly Village, about five miles from McLellan's in Great Village.

The emotion surrounding the National Question at the federal level in 1867 pervaded the provincial scene as well and the vociferous nature of the federal campaign was matched blow for blow by the locals. Colchester had contributed an influential federal politician to the Anti-Confederation movement in the person of A. W. McLellan. McLellan's equivalent at the provincial level was T. F. Morrison. Like McLellan, he was a mariner. Like McLellan, his power base was along the Cobequid Shore.<sup>2</sup> Like McLellan, he had been a Member of the Legislative Assembly before Confederation. Like McLellan, he was a powerful speaker.<sup>3</sup> Like McLellan, his election in 1867 as M.L.A. for Colchester was a foregone conclusion by the time the ballots were cast on September 18th.

Morrison's running mate for the Nova Scotia party in 1867 was Truro merchant Robert Chambers. Chambers, by his own admission,<sup>4</sup> was not the fervent political being that Morrison was but he was opposed to the proposed "fundamental changes which certain parties have attempted to make in our constitution which, if not arrested, may entail great evils upon us, beyond our power to amend."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>His style of oratory had earned him the nickname "Rolling Billows Fletcher".

<sup>4</sup>See his open letter addressed to the electors of Colchester in the New Glasgow Eastern Chronicle; 8 June 1867.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.



The Confederates in the county were represented by Samuel Rettie and William McKim. It was their task to show the benefits of Confederation.

Since the arguments for and against Confederation were set out in the federal section of this paper, it would be redundant to repeat them here. Evidence suggests that all federal arguments were echoed by the local candidates before the election in September, 1867, and after.<sup>6</sup>

The electors of the county elected Morrison and Chambers to represent them in the local house. They joined thirty-four other Anti-Confederates in the thirty-eight seat House. Poll by poll results of this election are not available<sup>7</sup> but the final tally showed comfortable leads for the Antis.

Morrison	-	1630
Chambers	-	1622
Rettie	-	1311
McKim	-	1163 <sup>8</sup>

It may be reasonably surmised that the voting pattern was similar to that of the federal election; that is, the Town of Truro, Confederate; the rural county areas, particularly the Cobequid shore, Anti-Confederate.

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<sup>6</sup>See New Glasgow Eastern Chronicle, 8 June, 30 June, 1867, and Debates and Proceedings of Nova Scotia House of Assembly for speeches by Morrison and Chambers, 1868, pp. 66-75, pp. 96-99, pp. 109-110, pp. 239-243.

<sup>7</sup>Not at P.A.N.S. or given in any newspaper.

<sup>8</sup>Halifax Morning Chronicle, 21 September 1867.

Repeal sentiment was strong at least in the two eager M.P.P.'s from Colchester. There were indications that some people were willing to give Confederation a chance to work before condemning it. The Mirror and Colchester County Advertiser, 1 February 1868, noted the anxiety with which some people eyed the future, and the predictions of future suffering because of the union. It went on to say, though:

It may, or it may not be, that the union with Canada will make us suffer. The present depression of business, of course, is said by many to be owing to the Act. However, true reflection will enable us, if not looking on affairs with a biased sight, to see that it is too soon to tell whether or not the union shall be for our own good. As we have said in a late issue, we are certainly not worse off than other people; not even half so bad. What can possibly make us think so?"<sup>9</sup>

The issue of the same paper a week later recorded the meeting held in the Truro Court House on the 7th of February where a "large number of inhabitants of this county" met "to consider the feasibility of dissolving the union of Nova Scotia with the Canadas".<sup>10</sup> A resolution was passed which instructed the "representatives of the people of Nova Scotia" to seek repeal of the B.N.A. Act.

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<sup>9</sup>Mirror & Colchester County Advertiser, 1 February 1868.

<sup>10</sup>Mirror & Colchester County Advertiser, 8 February 1868.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>See Debates and Proceedings of Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 1868, pp. 67-74, 96-98, 108-110, 239-243.

An editorial in the same issue concluded: "Repeal! Yes, if the people can, we say repeal if the province wishes. But when the question of disloyalty comes up we shout, "No Surrender"!!"

Speeches by Morrison and Chambers in the House of Assembly in 1868 were vitriolic<sup>12</sup> in their condemnation of the terms of union, its method of implementation, and the men who made it possible.<sup>13</sup> Morrison was emphatic:

Mr. Speaker, we are asking the Commons of England to repeal this Act because it has created a feeling of distrust in the breast of every Nova Scotian, and by repealing it they will show the world that they are willing to do justice to the meanest subject who can show a cause of just complaint. If our request be granted our people will be peaceable and contented. It is because they wish to remain peaceable and contented within the British Dominions that we ask for Repeal and we will continue to ask until it is granted. I want to see every man on these benches voting for these Resolutions - helping to restore the Constitution of this country... I want every man in this Assembly and every man throughout the length and breadth of Nova Scotia to feel as warmly and earnestly on the subject as I feel for if I tell you that if I had a thousand voice, yea ten thousand voices and could raise them all, I would shout, Repeal! Repeal!! REPEAL!!! now and forever.<sup>14</sup>

Chambers was confident, too, that most Nova Scotians

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<sup>13</sup>Adams G. Archibald in particular was Morrison's target. See Debates and Proceedings of Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 1868, p. 73. Colchester electors "in their majesty rose to the difficulties of the hour" and succeeded in this "noble and a mighty victory" over Archibald with all his political expertise and "influence".

<sup>14</sup>Morrison in Debates and Proceedings, 1868, p. 74.

were opposed to union with Canada:

Wherever we look over the face of this country, we see opposition to the union. Farmers, fishermen, mechanics are all opposed to it, and demand repeal. The majority of the bankers and capitalists also entertain the same opinions. This feeling originated among the people themselves and has not been stimulated by politicians as certain gentlemen would have us believe. It is the duty of every patriotic Nova Scotian to oppose this union.<sup>15</sup>

There was one issue which was raised by Chambers which would eventually split the Anti-Confederates as it did the political alignment between himself and Morrison. The divisive issue concerned the best way to achieve their goal of repeal. If constitutional means was to be the means of protests, how far could it be carried?<sup>16</sup>

Of course, all of this occurred before the impracticality of repeal had been demonstrated by refusal of the Imperial government to reverse its decision. It was in the winter of 1869 when the leading federal Anti-Confederates Howe and A. W. McLellan made the deal for better terms for Nova Scotia (and themselves, it was said). When it became obvious that repeal could not be achieved then the objective of all the Anti-Confederates was to stay in office by any means possible.<sup>17</sup> This occasioned a falling out between

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<sup>15</sup>Chambers in Debates and Proceedings, 1868, p. 110.

<sup>16</sup>Chambers in Debates and Proceedings, 1868, p. 243.

<sup>17</sup>J. M. Beck, Government of Nova Scotia, p. 154.

the two Colchester members. In a public forum, the Legislative Assembly, Chambers accused Morrison of political collaboration with A. W. McLellan and other Confederates in Colchester.<sup>18</sup> Chambers himself remained a staunch repealer. He even contested the federal by-election in Colchester in 1870 on the annexation ticket, opposing the designated candidate and choice of Antis and Confederates, F. M. Pearson.<sup>19</sup> Pearson polled 1672 votes; Chambers polled 268. The next year Chambers could say:

I have no more favourable opinion of Confederation than formerly; but now that the government, the leaders of the party and a great many of the people of Colchester have accepted the situation, I consider that I may as well forego the old principles and go upon expediency.<sup>20</sup>

Principles or expediency notwithstanding, Chambers did not contest the provincial general election of 1871. This time the compromises were made and agreed upon before election day. There was no election in Colchester. The two

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<sup>18</sup>After an impassioned speech by Morrison denouncing the injustice of Confederation and unpatriotic Nova Scotians who caused the death of Nova Scotia, Morrison maintained he was the most rabid of all Antis and urged Nova Scotians never to accept the situation. Debates and Proceedings, 16 March 1871, pp. 218-226.

<sup>19</sup>See G. K. Pryke, Nova Scotia and Confederation, 1864-1870, Ph.D. Thesis, Duke University, 1962, p. 284.

<sup>20</sup>Chambers, Debates and Proceedings, 16 March 1871; p. 224.

candidates were elected by acclamation: T. F. Morrison and Samuel Rettie.<sup>21</sup>

As has been observed at the federal level, the fire and passion surrounding the National Question dissipated fairly rapidly as the county voters "accepted the situation". The effect of the 1871 election on the Anti Confederates in the province was to eliminate five of the seven extremists.<sup>22</sup> An even more significant change in the Anti-Confederate movement in Nova Scotia occurred as a result of the change of government in Ottawa in 1873. Unlike the Confederates who immediately became a provincial extension of the federal Conservatives, the Anti-Confederates had no such opportunity to share in the victories or promises of success and patronage. This opportunity presented itself when MacKenzie's Liberals formed the government and won the subsequent election. After this, the Anti-Confederates could become the provincial wing of the federal party. This was an important change and some believe it was a major step toward the acceptance of Confederation by Nova Scotia.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>The Morrison-Rettie Compromise was given scathing criticism by the Halifax Morning Chronicle, 6 May 1871, and the Acadian Recorder, 8 May 1871. See also Morrison's explanation in Debates and Proceedings, 21 March 1872, p. 136.

<sup>22</sup>J. M. Beck, Government of Nova Scotia, p. 154.

<sup>23</sup>C. Howell, Repeal, Reciprocity and Commercial Union in Nova Scotian Politics, 1886-1887, M.A. Thesis, Dalhousie University, 1967, p. 6.

This final submergence was significant, too, in the sense that it meant an end to the one big issue that divided the Confederates and the Antis. By 1876 the Acadian Recorder could remark candidly:

There is not, nor can there be, any policy dividing the people as far as local matters are concerned. The policy of the opposition will be to struggle by every means...to reach the Treasury benches, and the policy of the government will be to checkmate them, and retain the place and power they hold. A change of government in Nova Scotia, nowadays, would only mean changing the officials in some four or five heads of departments...Hereafter the local elections will turn on purely local matters.<sup>24</sup>

Colchester electors showed a decided Conservative bias in the provincial election of 1874.<sup>25</sup> The Conservatives did field two strong candidates in W. A. Patterson (farmer and lumber merchant from Tatamagouche) and J. B. Dickie (manager of the Merchants Bank of Halifax in Truro). Patterson and Dickie garnered votes in areas of the county where support might be questionable.<sup>26</sup> Truro support was massive. Support in the Stewiackes was unusually good. The Conservative

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<sup>24</sup> Acadian Recorder, 9 May 1876, quoted in J. M. Beck, Government of Nova Scotia, p. 156.

<sup>25</sup> 1874 was one of those rare years when federal and provincial elections occurred in the same year. Federally the nominally independent T. McKay was elected for Colchester. He supported the Conservatives in fact.

<sup>26</sup> See Table 1, - Election, 1874. Halifax Morning Chronicle, 21 December 1874.

Table 1

Provincial Election, Colchester 1874

	<u>Patterson</u>	<u>Dickie</u>	<u>Putnam</u>	<u>Morrison</u>
Truro.....	408	279	153	96
Clifton.....	60	76	57	47
Lower Stewiacke.....	97	98	70	67
Upper Stewiacke.....	127	123	79	73
North River.....	123	123	55	46
Lower Onslow.....	47	52	89	58
Earlton.....	134	142	22	42
New Annan.....	100	83	35	53
Waugh's River.....	112	104	71	77
Tatamagouche.....	157	147	36	45
Debert.....	107	102	145	135
Portapique.....	95	101	131	136
Economy.....	47	61	65	70
Kempton.....	30	31	15	13
Five Islands.....	32	32	36	36
Middle Stewiacke.....	42	34	67	58
Total:	<u>1718</u>	<u>1688</u>	<u>1126</u>	<u>1052</u>



majority in Upper Stewiacke is surprising considering the consistent Anti-Conservative vote federally in this area. Dickie may have had relatives by marriage here. His first wife was a Putnam from Stewiacke. Support in the northern areas of the county would reflect the popularity of Patterson in his home district. Earlton was strong Conservative anyway but the vote was overwhelming. New Annan and Tatamagouche were strong Patterson and Dickie's Waugh's River less so. The Cobequid Shore of the county showed the strength of past Liberal victories. Debert, Portapique and Economy remained loyal, Liberal Morrison picking up his greatest support in his home district of Portapique. The result overall meant the end of Morrison's political career as an elected politician.<sup>27</sup>

The provincial election of 1878 was important from the point of view that it was one of the few occasions in the history of Nova Scotia when the Conservatives were elected with a majority. This was the only time from 1867 to 1925 that the Nova Scotia electorate was willing to trust the Conservatives, the reason no doubt being the economic crisis caused by the world depression and by the impoverishment of the provincial Treasury. This Conservative victory in 1878

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<sup>27</sup>"Rolling Billows" Morrison was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1876 and remained a member until his death. He was appointed to the Executive Council in 1882 and was a member until his death. He died in 1886.

was a one-term government. Colchester's elected M.L.A.'s, W. A. Patterson and Wm. Blair<sup>28</sup> were on the government side of the House, at least.

The provincial Liberals were returned in 1882. Patterson and Blair were re-elected for Colchester, defeating Liberals S. D. MacLellan and W. H. Guild, with less convincing majorities. Blair polled 1484, Patterson 1494, MacLellan 1377, and Guild 1234. An Independent in the person of S. Rettie<sup>29</sup> also contested this election, drawing 448 votes.

The provincial election of 1886 has been called the "Repeal Election" in Nova Scotia. Liberal Premier W. S. Fielding used the election of that year to try and get some new financial arrangements with the federal government, the so-called "better terms" of Confederation.<sup>30</sup> All the old arguments of the Confederation debates were presented to the Nova Scotia electorate in a short campaign (the Legislature was dissolved on May 21st; the election day was June 15th).

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<sup>28</sup>J. B. Dickie did not re-offer. Wm. Blair was a popular farmer, J. P. and Col. of the 78th Highlanders. See also Colchester Sun, 11 September, 1878, "Nomination Day in Truro" speeches by federal and provincial candidates for election. Also, Colchester Sun, 18 September, 1878, "Victory".

<sup>29</sup>Colchester M.L.A., 1871-1874.

<sup>30</sup>See Colin Howell, Repeal, Reciprocity and Commercial Union in Nova Scotian Politics, 1886-1887, M.A. Thesis, Dalhousie University, 1967. Also, Phyllis Blakeley, "The Repeal Election of 1886", Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society, Vol. 26, 1945.

The two Anti-Confederation elections of 1867 and 1886 must be seen as being slightly different, though. Secession from Canada was a real possibility in the earlier one. By 1886 chances of secession were remote.<sup>31</sup>

Repeal was the stated Liberal intention as the campaign progressed. The Conservatives defended Confederation and the National Policy.

In Colchester, W. A. Patterson re-offered for the Conservatives. His running mate was Truro lawyer S. E. Gourley. The Liberals offered a similar team. One was merchant George Clarke, who, like Patterson, was from Tatamagouche. The second Liberal candidate was F. A. Laurence<sup>32</sup>, who was, like Gourley, a prominent Truro lawyer.

Clarke and Laurence were among the Liberals elected in the twenty-eight seat sweep of the province. For Colchester, the attraction of repeal seemed perhaps as powerful as the 1867 campaign.

A comparison of the results of the 1882 election and the repeal election of 1886 is useful to show where the repeal strength in the county lay (Table 2)<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>31</sup>C. Howell, Op. Cit., p. 10.

<sup>32</sup>A Repealer from earlier times. He was Secretary of the Repeal Meeting held in Truro and reported in the Mirror & Colchester County Advertiser, 8 February 1868.

<sup>33</sup>Table 2 - Compiled from Halifax Morning Chronicle, 22 June 1882, and Journals of Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 1887: the 1886 election was the first provincial election in which official results were published in the Journals.

Table 2

Comparison: Colchester Elections, 1882 and 1886

	1882					1886				
	B l a i r	P a t t e r s o n	M a c L e l l a n	G u i l d	R e t i e	C l a r k e	L a u r e n c	P a t t e r s o n	G o u r l e y	
Truro Polls	199	190	106	64	57	145	166	280	286	
Clifton	72	68	64	41	40	85	97	84	82	
Brookfield	70	65	44	48	---	73	80	85	97	
Lr. Stewiacke	60	63	90	135	8	121	122	88	85	
Mid. Stewiacke	47	42	51	55	13	54	56	59	44	
Up. Stewiacke (East & West)	38	48	116	100	98	163	178	95	101	
Salmon River	62	61	50	36	43	76	81	75	73	
Kempton	25	20	12	11	15	21	18	42	40	
Earlton	94	102	38	43	27	106	81	93	84	
Waugh's River	91	115	69	77	8	170	123	93	68	
Tatamagouche	86	115	59	50	12	161	102	101	69	
New Annan	48	63	73	70	18	146	126	47	34	
North River	164	123	43	32	25	108	113	110	105	
Onslow	78	79	61	43	37	89	90	67	58	
Up. Londonderry	45	73	76	70	21	105	105	82	78	
Great Village	48	44	110	85	---	---	---	---	---	
Mid. Londonderry	---	---	---	---	---	120	111	87	82	
Lr. Londonderry	44	41	100	91	8	103	96	49	61	
Economy	49	48	93	80	3	79	76	60	61	
Five Islands	33	30	73	65	7	73	69	35	38	
Acadia Mines	101	104	49	38	6	55	48	150	154	
Totals:	1484	1494	1377	1234	448	2053	1938	1782	1700	

As could be expected, the 1886 polls favouring Conservative protectionism are those with manufacturing or industrial interests: Truro and Acadia Mines. The Stewiackes revealed their Anti-Conservative nature very well, particularly Upper Stewiacke. Earlton voters favoured the northern county candidates; Clarke and Patterson, but the Waugh's River voters gave their support to the two Liberals. Tatmagouche voters gave villager Clarke the greatest tally, with the other local candidate Patterson receiving only one vote less than second-place Laurence. The strength of the Repealers show strongly when the Cobequid Shore polls are examined. The Liberals did well from Onslow to Five Islands.

The voters that chose the Liberals and Repeal in the provincial election of 1886 were just as decisive the next year federally. In 1887 A. W. McLellan was elected in Colchester.<sup>34</sup> The Conservative majority in the province, as a result of that federal election, was the excuse used by Premier Fielding for not acting on the Repeal resolutions. The voters, he said, had changed their minds on Repeal. The 1886 election was the beginning of a twenty-year reign for county Liberals. Clarke and Laurence were re-elected in 1890, defeating long-time candidate W. A. Patterson and

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<sup>34</sup>Elected twice, in fact. The first election was controverted (bribery). A second election confirmed McLellan's election.

Israel Longworth, prominent lawyer and former Truro mayor.<sup>35</sup>—

In 1894, F. A. Laurence again represented the Liberals, with Stewiacke lumber baron Alfred Dickie. The Conservatives fielded Israel Longworth again and popular Truro newspaper editor (Truro Daily News and Truro Weekly) W. D. Dimock. Laurence and Dimock were elected. Dimock's election was the first victory for the county Conservatives since 1882 but it was tainted somewhat. It was controverted and re-run in 1895. Dimock was confirmed, but his stay in provincial politics was short. He resigned in 1896 to run a successful federal campaign.<sup>36</sup> In the provincial by-election which resulted, Liberal Firman McClure defeated Truro mayor, R. J. Turner.

In the provincial election of 1897 the Liberals were represented by incumbent F. A. Laurence and Alfred Dickie who had run unsuccessfully in 1894. W. D. Dimock ran provincially again along with Colchester "Lumber King" and enterprising entrepreneur, T. G. McMullen. The town favoured Dimock and McMullen (Dickie - 287, Dimock - 511, Laurence - 350, McMullen - 570) as did Acadia Mines (Dickie - 53,

<sup>35</sup>Conservative newspaper Colchester Sun, 7 May 1890, decried the Liberal mismanagement of the economy, misuse of money, etc. and urged voters to throw Fielding out of office.

<sup>36</sup>Dimock's federal election in 1896 was controverted, too. He did not re-offer for the by-election in 1897, the party's colors, being carried by Truro Doctor D. H. Muir. The federal by-election was won by Liberal farmer McClure, by twelve votes.

Dimock - 162, Laurence - 55, McMullen - 153) but the county areas (like Economy, for example: Dickie - 104, Dimock 63, Laurence - 102, McMullen - 58) offset most of the Conservative advantage. Final tallies gave majorities to T. G. McMullen and F. A. Laurence.

There was a new element introduced into county politics for the provincial election of 1901 in that both parties fielded candidates that could be considered "outsiders" to county politics. F. A. Laurence re-offered for the Liberals but he was joined by industrialist-promoter-lawyer, B. F. Pearson. It is true Pearson had a county connection [he was born at Masstown, son of merchant and former Colchester M.P. (1870-1874), F. M. Pearson] but by this time he was an industrialist known far beyond the borders of Colchester.<sup>37</sup> The Conservative slate offered newcomer Truro merchant A. S. Black and, from Halifax, J. F. Stairs. In his corporate accomplishment Stairs compared favourably with B. F. Pearson but he was described by the Truro Daily News simply as

<sup>37</sup>Born in Masstown, 1855; educated Pictou Academy and Dalhousie; lawyer in Halifax (Pearson & Covert); City Alderman 1884-1890; organized Nova Scotia Telephone Co., 1887, with H. M. Whitney; organized Dominion Coal Co., 1893; organized Halifax Electric Tram Co., 1895; promoter and director of Midland Railway Co., 1898; organized New Brunswick Petroleum Co., 1899; organized West Indies Electric Co., Trinidad Electric Co., Demerara Electric Co., Sao Paulo Light and Power, Mexican Northern Power Co., 1899; organized Cape Breton Electric Co., 1902; later director of Dominion Atlantic Railway Co. and Canadian Atlantic Steamship Co. See Truro Daily News, 26 December 1906, and 1 February 1912, and The First 200 Years - History of Erskine United Church Congregation, Glenhome, Lancelot Press, 1974.

"capitalist".<sup>38</sup> The election was close with the traditional pattern - Conservative, Truro, Acadia Mines and some smaller enclaves like Earltown, Kemptown and Brookfield; the rest of the county Liberal. Laurence had a majority of thirty-four, Pearson a majority of eighteen.

In 1904, F. A. Laurence resigned his seat in the Nova Scotia House in order to run federally. This was a successful leap into federal politics for him<sup>39</sup> but one which precipitated a by-election in Colchester. On the local scene, H. T. Laurence, brother of F. A. and then serving as Truro's mayor, contested the seat for the Liberals. The Conservative candidate was Truro merchant John Suckling. H. T. Laurence was elected with a majority of 187 over Suckling.

Truro party allegiance to the Conservatives was maintained as Suckling polled 415 to the mayor's 325.<sup>40</sup> T. H. Laurence served as MLA for Colchester until the next pro-

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<sup>38</sup>Truro Daily News, 6 September 1901. See also, 26 September 1901, "Nomination Day in Truro".

<sup>39</sup>F. A. Laurence was Colchester M.P. from 1904-1907. In 1907 he was appointed to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, after a distinguished political career - M.L.A. Colchester, 1886-1904; M.P. for Colchester, 1904-1907. He was never defeated at the polls.

<sup>40</sup>Local issues were discussed by both candidates on Nomination Day. See Truro Daily News, 9 December 1904. Also, the genial nature of the contest in an election "practically free from corruption", see Truro Daily News, 21 December 1904.



vincial election which was held in 1906. He was not asked to re-offer.

The general election of 1906 was another double victory for the county Liberals. B. F. Pearson offered again. His running mate was a County Councillor, Ouslow farmer W. Davison Hill. John Suckling was one of the Conservative candidates. His partner was Stewiacke farmer J. H. McCleave.<sup>41</sup> This was an interesting election in that it was the only one (1867-1925) in which Truro gave the Liberals a majority. Hill led the polls in Truro with 557, Pearson followed with 539, McCleave was next with 469 and Truro candidate Suckling trailed with 440. Acadia Mines maintained its Conservative tradition (Hill 94, McCleave 158, Pearson 103, Suckling 144) but the margin of victory was down from previous elections. Overall it was a comfortable margin of victory for Hill (390) and Pearson (209).

The 1911 provincial election marked the return of the county to the Conservative fold. It also marked the entrance of Frank Stanfield into active politics on the provincial level. Brother John had been elected to the federal house in a 1907 by-election and was re-elected in 1908 and 1911. Frank Stanfield with his business interests

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<sup>41</sup> See Truro Daily News, 14 June 1906, speeches by all candidates except Hill who was ill.

in the Town of Truro re-established the Conservative dominance in town. R. H. Kennedy, County Warden, was Stanfield's running mate. The Liberal candidates in 1911 were the incumbents B. F. Pearson and W. D. Hill. Poll results for Truro and Acadia Mines illustrate the vengeance with which the Conservatives reasserted themselves (Table 3).<sup>42</sup> Overall, Stanfield's majority was 143. The majority for Kennedy was 73.

Table 3

1911 Colchester Election

	<u>Hill</u>	<u>Kennedy</u>	<u>Pearson</u>	<u>Stanfield</u>
Truro (All polls):	510	693	471	747
Acadia Mines:	45	156	57	173

The Conservative M.L.A.'s, Stanfield and Kennedy, repented their victory in the general election of 1916, defeating F. B. Schurman and G. H. Vernon with large majorities; 533 for Stanfield and 453 for Kennedy. The county seemed to be firmly held in the Conservative's grip but the next provincial election changed all such thoughts of complacent security.

Traditional political parties in Nova Scotia were faced

<sup>42</sup>Journals of Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 1912.

with a new phenomenon in the provincial election of 1920. With the exception of the brief Anti-Confederate years, Nova Scotians were willing to utilize either one of the two existing political parties to achieve their political ambitions. In 1920 a third party emerged which, for one election at least, played havoc with traditional voting patterns. The Conservatives, in particular, were affected by the emergence of this Farmer Labour Alliance. Province wide, the Conservatives won only three of the forty-three seats in the 1920 election. The Farmer Labour party won eleven. The Liberals won twenty-nine, many of these because of the split in the opposition vote.<sup>43</sup>

Colchester hardly seems a likely place for political radicalism. The county did elect two Farmer Party candidates, though, in that 1920 election. It was an interesting election in that it involved class issues as well as traditional politics. Some county districts broke their traditional pattern and voted along class lines. The solid Truro urban Conservative vote was never more sharply outlined than in this contest.<sup>44</sup>

The United Farmers of Nova Scotia was founded in 1920 in part as a response to rural anger over rural depopulation

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<sup>43</sup>J. M. Beck, Government of Nova Scotia, p. 162.

<sup>44</sup>Truro polls show Conservative Dunbar 1408, Conservative Kennedy 1291, Farmer Party Smith 355, Farmer Party Taggart 262.

and the decline in the importance of farming as an industry and vocation.<sup>45</sup> Another reason suggested is that the war years were regarded as prosperous ones and the post-war depression did not affect the agricultural industry in Nova Scotia until 1920.<sup>46</sup> Colchester farmer H. L. Taggart was the first President of the United Farmers of Nova Scotia. He and another county farmer, R. H. Smith, contested the July election, facing Conservatives R. H. Kennedy and Wm. R. Dunbar. Interestingly enough, Frank Stanfield did not re-offer in 1920.<sup>47</sup> The Liberals did not field a candidate.<sup>48</sup>

Table 4 shows the voting pattern of the 1920 provincial election in Colchester. Basically it followed the traditional rural versus urban pattern as observed in previous elections. For a small district like Earltown, it meant complete rejection of tradition though in their choice of Farmer candidate over traditional Conservative.

For the Farmer Party, the heady days of victory were

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<sup>45</sup>A. A. MacKenzie, The Rise and Fall of the Farmer-Labour Party in Nova Scotia, M.A. Thesis, Dalhousie University, 1969, p. v.

<sup>46</sup>A. A. MacKenzie, Op. Cit., p. 10.

<sup>47</sup>"Temporarily retired in 1920 due to business conditions" was the way his obituary in the Halifax Herald Mail put it, 25 September 1931.

<sup>48</sup>Some recollections of the time recalling the election assert that people voted for the Farmer candidates because they were Liberal. Quoted in A. A. MacKenzie, Op. Cit., p. 113.

short-lived in Colchester. They chose to contest a federal by-election in September of the same year and county voters gave Conservative F. B. McCurdy an overwhelming majority. It was apparent the county's loyalty to the third party was very fleeting indeed.

Perhaps the Colchester federal by-election was symbolic of the eventual fate of the whole Farmer Party movement. By 1921 the political wing of the Farmer's Movement was a mere shadow of its former self.<sup>49</sup> By 1922 membership had dropped from 2500 to 254.<sup>50</sup> By the 1925 provincial election only ten-third party candidates contested seats. Colchester was not one of these.

The choice facing voters in the provincial election of 1925 was a straight two party contest. Economic conditions in the province by 1925 were sufficiently bad<sup>51</sup> to finally loosen the Liberal grip on the province and, for only the second time since Confederation, the voters gave the Conservatives a majority. In Colchester a rejuvenated Conservative Party ran roughshod over the Liberals. Frank Stanfield was back in an active role as a strong Conservative candidate. His running mate was lawyer W. B. Armstrong.

The Liberal candidates, M. B. Archibald and Frank

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<sup>49</sup>E. R. Forbes, The Maritime Rights Movement, p. 50.

<sup>50</sup>J. M. Beck, Government of Nova Scotia, p. 168.

<sup>51</sup>See E. R. Forbes, The Maritime Rights Movement, pp. 54-72.

Reynolds, did not even hold the support of the traditional Liberal county districts like Economy/Five Islands or Upper Stewiacke.<sup>52</sup>

Over the sixty-year period under study here<sup>53</sup> the voters of Colchester followed only slightly the pattern as observed at the federal level. The Confederation issue was dramatic and emotional but, as happened federally, Colchester eased into the Conservative ranks as the reality of the political situation emerged. In the Repeal Election of 1886, echoes of the 1867 campaigns were loud enough to bring Colchester to the government side provincially, but the county still maintained its Conservative ties federally. The emergence on the political scene of the Stanfield brothers, John and Frank, had important results federally (John elected 1907) and provincially (Frank elected 1911).

The aberration in the traditional pattern of Colchester politics which occurred in the 1920 election was of short duration, as the Conservatives re-asserted their control in 1925.

Overall, from 1867-1925, it is possible to show an urban/rural split which has few exceptions through the

<sup>52</sup>See Table 4.

<sup>53</sup>Table 5 - Compiled from Beck, J.M. Government of Nova Scotia, University of Toronto Press, 1957; Parliamentary Guide, Journals of Nova Scotia House of Assembly.

entire period. . . Truro, the shine town of the county, was decidedly Conservative, its prosperity tied to manufacturing and to railway interests. The rest of the county seldom swayed from the Liberal trend which developed out of the debates surrounding the National Question in 1867. It would be the rural county voters who would be least likely to agree with that 1868 editorial in the Mirror & Colchester County Advertiser that "we are certainly not worse off than other people".<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Mirror & Colchester County Advertiser, 1 February 1868.

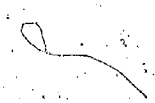


Table 4

## Colchester Elections, 1920 and 1925

	1882				1886			
	D u n b a r	K e n n e d y	S m i t h	T a g h a r t	A r c h i b a l d	A r m s t r o n g	R e y n o l d s	S t a n f i e l d
Truro	1408	1291	355	262	503	2425	440	2379
Clifton	124	124	163	172	114	230	103	219
Brookfield	122	145	144	128	95	256	80	211
Lr. Stewiacke	26	25	155	157	69	112	59	105
Mid. Stewiacke	21	21	119	125	56	130	57	125
Up. Stewiacke (E & W)	83	91	257	260	129	212	171	215
Salmon River	114	106	74	64	111	437	93	394
Kemptown	38	38	28	23	36	51	24	44
Earlton	79	82	186	188	102	163	102	153
Waugh's River	29	28	168	166	87	112	85	108
Talamaghouchie (E & W)	109	114	200	202	224	248	212	247
New Annan	31	36	194	194	95	131	102	135
North River	98	102	147	137	115	290	82	252
Lr. Onslow	62	48	204	225	99	244	95	216
Up. Londonderry	123	129	151	156	43	238	43	239
Mid. Londonderry	125	118	163	145	148	222	149	208
Lr. Londonderry	163	158	139	149	158	224	154	213
Economy	63	61	151	142	108	175	100	171
Five Islands	74	71	68	60	78	128	66	128
Acadia Mines	119	114	101	101	44	185	40	176
Gays River	46	46	109	107	50	155	45	159
Brule	53	55	157	158	83	139	80	131
Stewiacke Town	86	78	55	55	87	226	80	212
Totals:	3213	3096	3533	3420	2634	6733	2461	6439



Table 5

Year	Victorious Provincial Party	N.S. Assembly Seats			Con.	Colchester County		**E/L
		Con.	Lib.	Other		Lib.		
1867	Lib.	2	36	---		Chambers/ Morrison		
1871	Lib.	13	25	---	Rellie	Morrison		
1874	Lib.	14	24	---	Patterson/ Dickie			
1878	Con.	30	8	---	Patterson/ Blair			
1882	Lib.	14	24	---	Patterson/ Blair			
1886	Lib.	8	29	1		Clark/ F.A. Laurence		
1890	Lib.	10	28	---		Clark/ F.A. Laurence		
1894	Lib.	13	25	---	W.D. Dimock	F.A. Laurence		
1896						*F.J. McClure		
1897	Lib.	3	35	---	T. G. McMullen	F.A. Laurence		
1901	Lib.	2	36	---		F.A. Laurence/ B.F. Pearson		
1904						**T.H. Laurence		
1906	Lib.	5	32	1		Hill/ B.F. Pearson		
1911	Lib.	11	27	---	F. Stanfield/ R.H. Kennedy			
1916	Lib.	13	30	---	F. Stanfield/ R.F. Kennedy			
1920	Lib.	3	29	**11			R.H. Smith/ H.L. Taggart	
1925	Con.	40	3	---	W.B. Armstrong/ F. Stanfield			
1928	Con.	23	20	---	W.A. Flemming/ F. Stanfield			

\*By-elections: August 1896, F. J. McClure, Liberal; 1904, T. H. Laurence, Liberal.

\*\*Farmer/Labour Party.

## Chapter IV

"As Dead As Chelsea":  
The Fate of Colchester Shipbuilding Centers

26 May 1893, Folly Village - There is not much news to write. About the only excitement last week was the sailing of a schooner into our river. Such a thing has not happened in twenty years or more and after reading the interesting story of the pirate schooner in your paper we were almost induced to think she was coming with hostile intent, but, after discharging her cargo of phosphate, she quietly sailed away. Many years ago it was nothing strange to see barques and brigs loading with deals but since the Intercolonial Railway commenced to run, trade has found other channels and business in our village, instead of increasing, has diminished. They used to say in Boston, in speaking of any place not being lively, that "it was dead as Chelsea". The same might be said of our village, but yet when our friends go away they are always glad to get back.

The amazement of the newspaper correspondent in 1893 at the arrival of a schooner at Folly Village illustrates the degree to which the bays and wharves of Colchester were, by this time, empty. That is not to say that shipping and shipbuilding were dead in the county. The correspondent would know about local yards still producing. One of the great Colchester ships, the John M. Blaikie, was launched at Great Village in 1885.<sup>2</sup> There were still Colchester mariners, like Captain Leander Yuill who arrived back in

<sup>1</sup> Truro Daily News, 26 May 1893.

<sup>2</sup> Truro Daily News, 22 October 1900.

Truro in March of 1892 after an absence of five and one-half years. His ship, Scottish Minstrel, had taken him to Zanzibar, Capetown, Newcastle (Australia), San Francisco, West Coast of South America, Dunkirk, Cardiff and India.<sup>3</sup> But the great days were long past and, for the most part, before the embrace of the Canadian Confederation.

In its origin and development, the shipbuilding industry of Colchester County was not unlike other Maritime counties. Demand for local transport was early evident. The first ship to be built on the Fundy Shore of the county, the schooner Charles, was launched in 1787.<sup>4</sup> The first ship to be built on the North Shore of the county (Northumberland Strait) was the schooner Nelly, built at Waughs River in 1790,<sup>5</sup> by Thomas Alexander and Wellwood Waugh.

Beyond the local market the shipyards of the county built mostly for the British and Newfoundland market. Historian Patterson notes the shift, in the 1830's, (at

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<sup>3</sup>Truro Daily News, 1 March 1892. After the mid-1860's Canadian ocean going vessels operated mainly in the North Atlantic but concentrated in cargoes of American staples like grain, tobacco, oil and cotton. They could be found world wide. See E. Sager and L. Fischer, "Atlantic Canada and the Age of Sail, Revisited", Canadian Historical Review, Vol. LXIII, No. 2, June 1982, pp. 133-134.

<sup>4</sup>R. Harrison and M. E. Wright, History of Shipbuilding in Colchester County, Colchester Historical Museum, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>F. H. Patterson, Days of the Ships, Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia, Truro, 1970, p. 23.

least in the Tatamagouche yards) away from the smaller craft into ships, barques and brigs for the English market.<sup>6</sup>

On the Fundy Shore of the county by 1850 ships had been built at Onslow (1787), Great Village (1817), Princeport (1828), Five Islands (1841), Folly Village (1845), Lower Debert (1848), and Masstown (1849).<sup>7</sup> By the 1870's these communities, as well as Truro, Bass River, Upper Economy, Central Economy and Lower Economy, were centers for at least fifteen shipyards.<sup>8</sup>

Great Village alone produced over forty square-rigged vessels in addition to a large number of schooners. The years of peak production were between 1864 and 1866 when five barques, two brigs and at least six schooners were completed.<sup>9</sup> It was from the Great Village yards that the John M. Blaikie, the first four-masted barque to be built

<sup>6</sup>Patterson, Op. Cit., p. 48. Tatamagouche trade for the export market, the so called "transfer trade" is noted in Rosemary Ommer, "Anticipating the Trend: the Pictou Ship Register, 1840-1889", Acadiensis, Vol. 10, No. 1, Autumn 1980, pp. 73-74. Activity in this direction occurred steadily from 1818 onward.

Patterson's observation of the move to the larger ships by the builders at Tatamagouche in the 1830's is an interesting point. Alexander and Panting's study of Yarmouth (D. Alexander and G. Panting, "The Mercantile Fleet and Its Owners: Yarmouth, N.S., 1840-1889", Acadiensis, Vol. VII, No. 2, Spring 1978) reveals that the move to large ships there occurred in the 1850's. Perhaps the Tatamagouche builders were "anticipating the trend" as Ommer would say.

<sup>7</sup>Harrison and Wright, Op. Cit., p. 4.

<sup>8</sup>Op. Cit., p. 5.

<sup>9</sup>S. Spicer, Masters of Sail, Ryerson, Toronto, 1968, p. 65.

in Canada, was launched in 1885. This village also contributed many men who went to sea, and at least forty of them became master mariners.<sup>10</sup>

Along the North Shore of the county, Tatamagouche was the center of the industry. It is estimated that three hundred and ten vessels (schooners, brigantines, rigs, barquentines, and barques) were built there between 1790 and 1917.<sup>11</sup>

One family, the Campbells, dominated the industry at Tatamagouche. Alexander Campbell, his brothers William and James, and Alexander's sons, Dave and Arch, between them built perhaps one hundred and fifty ships from the 1820's to the 1880's.<sup>12</sup>

But what of the nature of detail work that the countyships performed? In the early days and perhaps up to the early 1870's there would be a substantial amount of coastal trade as recollected by one Colchester resident in 1917:

The chief trade was with Boston; practically all of the merchandise handled in Colchester came from that city. There was no Intercolonial Railway in those days and the farmers' produce, including potatoes; turnips, etc., were marketed in Boston

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Patterson, Op. Cit., Preface.

<sup>12</sup>Patterson, Op. Cit., p. 48.

by means of the numerous small coasters, which were Nova Scotia owned and manned, and for return cargoes brought flour, anthracite, cornmeal, indeed every class of merchandise. There were not high tariffs in those days, no near Canadian manufactureres to draw upon, and the coasters did a thriving business. I recall such busy and well-known vessels as the Algona, the Jessie, the Paddy Blake, and many others and among the commanders were the late Capt. Charles, Allie and Sammy Vance, all highly respected Masstown men who well served their day and generation in the coasting business. The arrival of a coasting schooner at the Masstown Creek in those days attracted more interest and attention than the docking of the Olympic would today at Halifax. The coasters brought much needed supplies for the people and enabled them to market their surplus farm produce at profitable figures.<sup>13</sup>

The ships of the last quarter of the nineteenth century would not experience the drudgery of the local traffic, even the New England trade. They were built for greater seas and greater profits (and greater risks). The John M. Blaikie from Great Village might leave Colchester in 1885 loaded with deals but she would not return. From then on it was sugar from Manila to Montreal or coal from Cardiff to Capetown. She was lost in the Strait of Sunda between Java and Sumatra after only four years at sea. She had paid for herself and had made twenty-five thousand dollars for her owner, John Blaikie.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Loran MacNutt, "Good Old Days in Colchester", Halifax Morning Chronicle, 15 May 1917.

<sup>14</sup>Truro Daily News, 22 October 1900.

It can not be disputed that shipbuilding was a major force in the industrial life of the communities in which the yards were located. The yard of McLellan and Blaikie in Great village employed from eighty to one hundred men ("equal to a small Glasgow").<sup>15</sup> Alexander Campbell employed two hundred Tatamagouche men by the 1840's.<sup>16</sup>

Like Alexander Campbell, builders were often exporters of lumber and importers and traders in general merchandise.<sup>17</sup>

For those days when the yards were operating, like the early 1850's for Alexander Campbell, "it made Tatamagouche a busy hive of industry. From sunrise to dusk the shores from Campbell's to Lockerbie's heard the music of the singing saws and the continual din of hammer, axe and adze. In the evenings, the small village presented a busy scene, men in groups gathered in the stores, or along the streets, mingling with sailors from the ships, or farmers from the surrounding district."<sup>18</sup>

The general assumption about the shipbuilding industry is that it produced great wealth for the builders. It was a

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Patterson, History of Tatamagouche, p. 61.

<sup>17</sup>Patterson, Days of the Ships, p. 48.

<sup>18</sup>Patterson, History of Tatamagouche, p. 101.

risky business, however, and few accumulated much capital. Again, Alexander Campbell is a prime example of what the successful builder was supposed to have been. He had come to Tatamagouche as a clerk for the Pictou company of Mortimer & Smith<sup>19</sup> in the 1820's, his first house a log cabin. By the time he died, in 1854, he was considered to be a man of wealth. His house<sup>20</sup> was finely furnished. He was accustomed to the feel of carpet underfoot and to the touch of silver and fine china. He was a leader in the Church, an officer in the Militia, Custos of the Court of Session, an agent of the DesBarres estate, a Member of the Legislative Council, a man of great political and social influence.<sup>21</sup> His estate, however, was insolvent.

The building of ships required capital, and for this Campbell had to rely on financing in England or by Halifax merchants.<sup>22</sup> Hulls could be made in Tatamagouche but sails, cordage, anchors, etc. had to be secured in Halifax or in England. This could mean expensive interest charges. And of course, the market for the final product could be unfavourable. It was not unknown to have the cost of ships

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<sup>19</sup>Op. Cit., p. 59.

<sup>20</sup>Still standing today in Tatamagouche, on grounds of ACTC.

<sup>21</sup>Patterson, Days of the Ships, p. 60.

<sup>22</sup>Op. Cit., p. 61.



exceed the sale price.<sup>23</sup>

There were saw mills, of course, and extensive tracts of timberland in the estate of Alexander Campbell after 1854. His sons, Dave and Arch, carried on the shipbuilding and lumber business until their deaths in 1887 and 1891. The latter's estate was declared insolvent and the timberlands were sold at auction.<sup>24</sup> The judgement of one village wag was that although the Campbells made no money, "they got a damn good living out of" their business.<sup>25</sup>

The most extensive study on Colchester-built ships was done by Frank H. Patterson who, by searching shipping registries, compiled a good record of Tatamagouche built ships.<sup>26</sup> This list appears in the 1970 publication, Days of the Ships, a privately published manuscript. By charting the Patterson information (see graph) and assuming that the Tatamagouche yards are typical of the county production, it can be shown that peak production years in this industry were from about 1838 to about 1866. This would coincide with the so called "Golden Age" of Maritime shipping.<sup>27</sup>

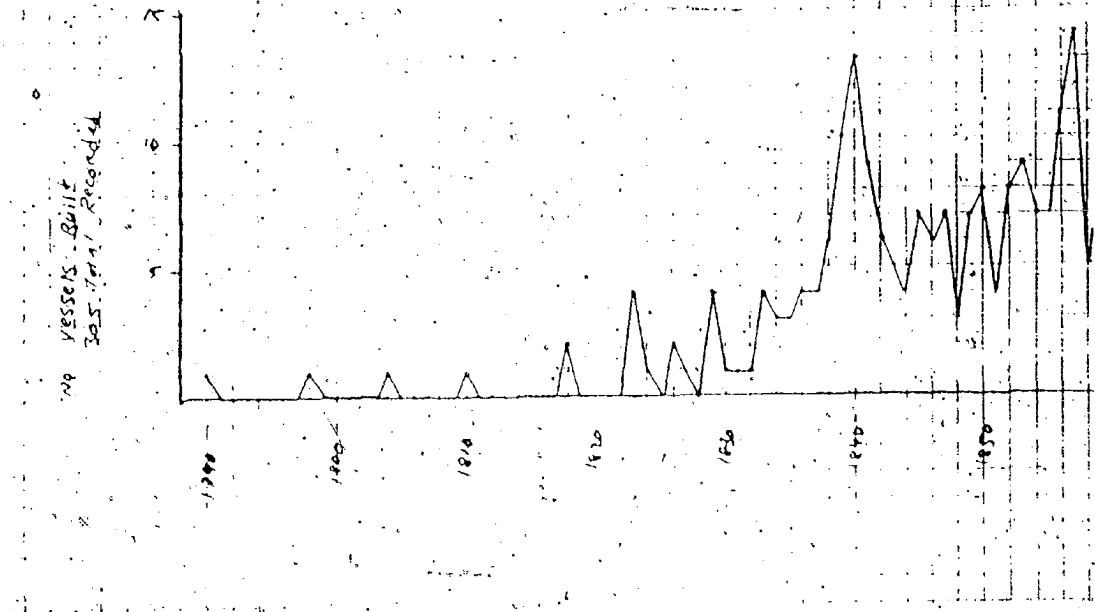
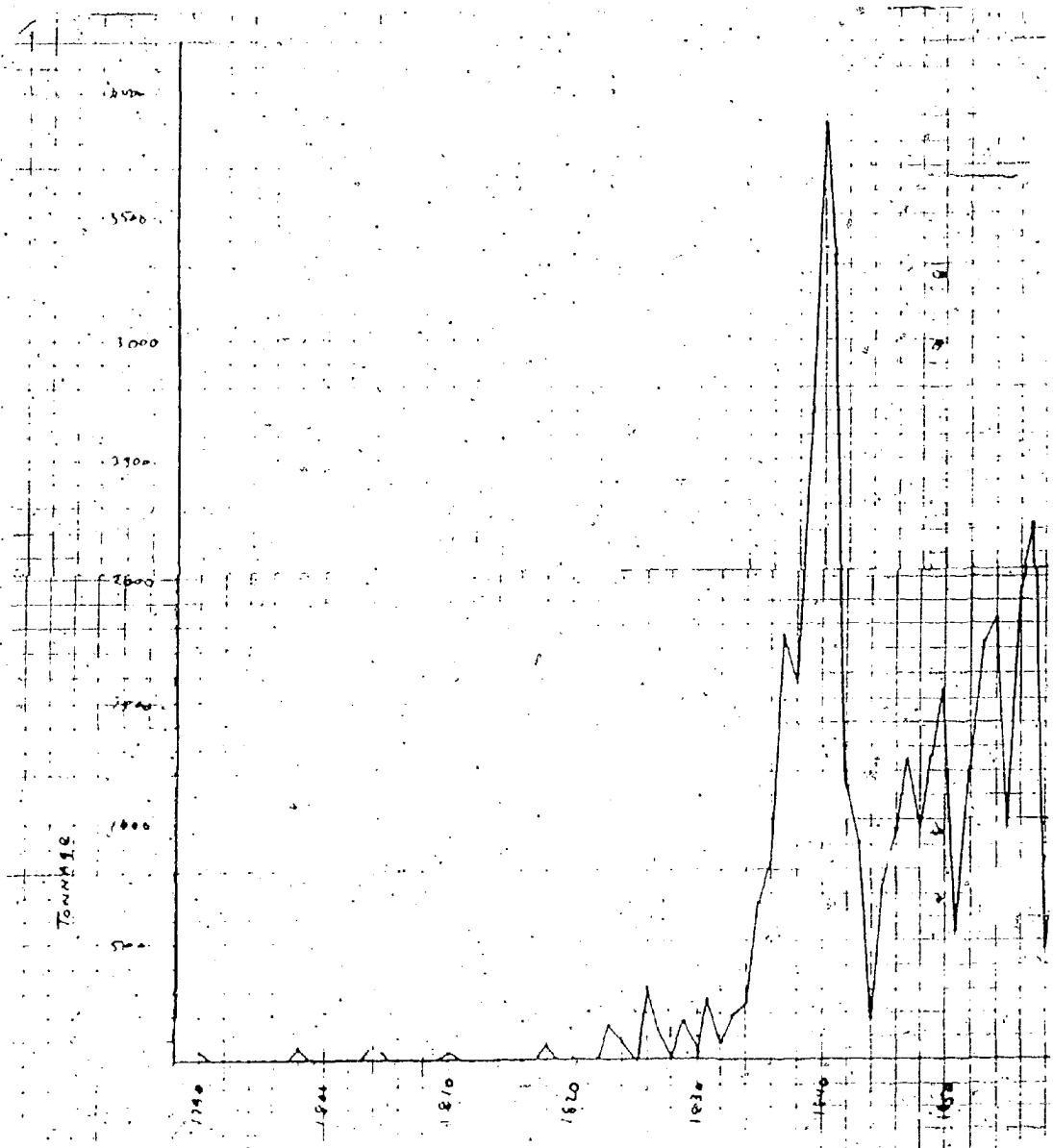
<sup>23</sup>Patterson, Days of the Ships, p. 61.

<sup>24</sup>Op. Cit., p. 77.

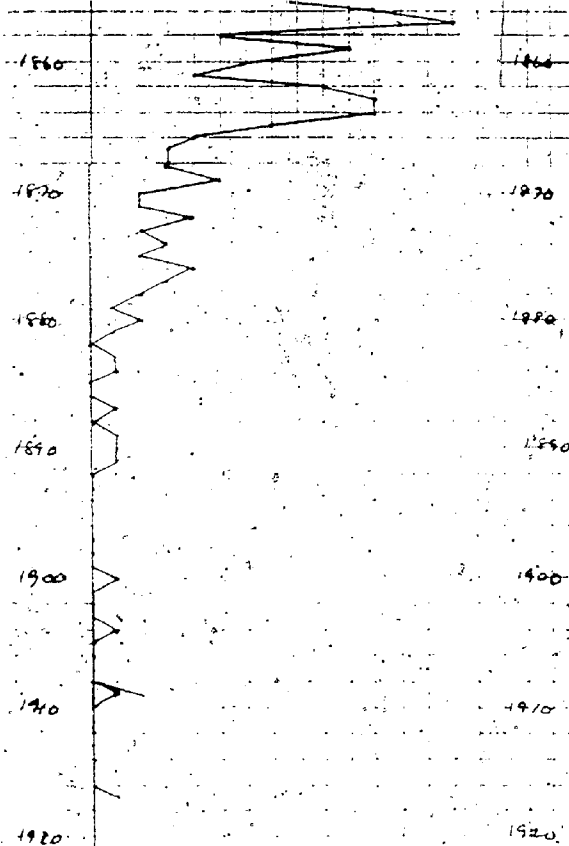
<sup>25</sup>Op. Cit., p. 79.

<sup>26</sup>Advice of Charles Armour, Archivist, Dalhousie.

<sup>27</sup>C. Armour and T. Lackey, Sailing Ships of the Maritimes, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1975, p. 48.



Sh. building. Tammagouché, Colquhoun Co.  
 Graphs compiled from processed F.H.  
 the days of the ships Tammagouché N.S.  
 Temo. N.S. 1970



There was still some activity until about 1876 but the industry was faltering and production became sporadic.

Explanations for the decline of the industry usually cite the development of steel-hulled ships and the use of steam power.<sup>28</sup> There is evidence that some builders were prepared to purchase (but not build) steel-hulled vessels but most were not able to make the transition from wood to steel. John M. Blaikie, for example, as noted in 1893, "is daily to be seen in our midst. His shipyard is idle now, but he is interested heavily in some of the finest ships afloat, built on Scotland's renowned river, the Clyde. One of them, the Queen Margaret, a beautiful four masted, steel ship, commanded by Capt. D. F. Faulkner,<sup>29</sup> is now on her way to Philadelphia to load case oil for Calcutta."<sup>30</sup>

The general world depression from 1873 to 1896 was no doubt a factor as well.

The Newfoundland market for fishing vessels failed too, and Patterson points out that by the eighties no ships were built at Tatamagouche for the foreign market.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Armour and Lackey, Op. Cit., p. 98; Spicer, Op. Cit., p. 230; Harrison and Wright, Op. Cit., p. 3; Patterson, Days of the Ships, p. 1, p. 67; Patterson, History of Tatamagouche, p. 119.

<sup>29</sup> Capt. D. F. Faulkner of Folly Village, Colchester County.

<sup>30</sup> Notes of Mrs. David Lundie, August 1983, in Great Village History, 1820-1960, Womens Institute, 1960.

<sup>31</sup> Patterson, History of Tatamagouche, p. 119.

Other scholars have speculated that the entrepreneurial spirit of the younger generation was not as great as that generation of mid-century builders.<sup>32</sup>

Recent scholarship has tended to challenge the traditional view; that is, the inevitability of decline of the industry due to the technology of iron and steam.<sup>33</sup> It is suggested that perhaps the critical factor in the decline of the industry was the existence of investment opportunities in the port cities of Atlantic Canada and elsewhere.<sup>34</sup> The Colchester experience, at least that of the North Shore, does not seem to support the view that the shipbuilders and owners in the county were investing elsewhere. Few in the county survived the financial pitfalls of the industry. Of the North Shore builders, only Robert Purves, who died in 1872, had any money that might be invested.<sup>35</sup> There is nothing to suggest that it was.

Of the builders on the Fundy Shore, perhaps John M.

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<sup>32</sup> Armour and Lackey, Op. Cit., p. 99.

<sup>33</sup> E. Sager, F. L. Fischer, and R. Ommer, "Landward and Seaward Opportunities in Canada's Age of Sail", Merchant Shipping and Economic Development in Atlantic Canada, Atlantic Canada Shipping Project, Memorial University, 1982.

<sup>34</sup> See E. Sager and L. Fischer, "Patterns of Investment in the Shipping Industries of Atlantic Canada, 1820-1900", Acadiensis, Vol. IX, No. 1, Autumn 1979; and E. Sager and L. Fischer, "Atlantic Canada and the Age of Sail Revised", Canadian Historical Review, Vol. LXIII, No. 2, June 1982.

<sup>35</sup> Patterson, History of Tatamagouche, p. 73.

Blaikie (1837-1927) would have money to invest but, as noted, at least some of this was still invested "seaward". His estate was disbursed among members of a large family at his death.<sup>36</sup>

The wealth of some Fundy builders, like Blaikie's business partner (and brother-in-law) A. W. McLellan of Great Village or F. M. Pearson of Masstown, was used to launch political careers.<sup>37</sup>

As a factor in the decline of the shipbuilding in Colchester, the railway, that manifestation of nineteenth century progress, must present itself as being relatively important but it must be remembered that the "great years" had passed by the opening of the Intercolonial Railway in 1876. Patterson does note the hastening decline of the North shore activity after the opening of the Short Line from Oxford to Pictou in 1890.<sup>38</sup>

The decline of the shipbuilding industry had a cumulative effect on the small communities where the yards were located. Perhaps they did become "as dead as Chelsea".

Men for the first time found that they were unable to find remunerative employment. Numbers at once

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<sup>36</sup>Conversations with Great Village resident Harry Nelson.

<sup>37</sup>A. W. McLellan, M.P.P., Senator, M.P., Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia; F. M. Pearson, M.P.P., 1870-1874.

<sup>38</sup>Patterson, Days of the Ships, p. 83.

left to obtain work in the United States and else where. Others, mostly those who were older and who could not leave, returned to farming. From this they were able to make but a poor living. The farms had "run out" and while there was as yet no home market for farm produce, the American market was closed by a high tariff.<sup>39</sup>

The lumber business also declined<sup>40</sup> as well as local industries associated with the sea trades (like the Henderson Paint Factory and Brodericks Block Factory in Five Islands).

Colchester villages whose futures were to be linked so closely to the sea declined as that bright vision faded. Progress and prosperity seemed to lie with landward enterprise by the 1870's.<sup>41</sup> An urban industrial future would await many of the young Colchester people who matured in the 1870's and 1880's. Cold steel rails from the West beckoned invitingly, and the village of Truro became a brash, aggressive town.

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<sup>39</sup>Patterson, History of Tatamagouche, p. 119.

<sup>40</sup>Harrison and Wright, Op. Cit., p. 6.

<sup>41</sup>Sager, Fischer and Ommer, Op. Cit., p. 27.

## Chapter V

Hustling Hub: Truro and Truro Industry, 1867-1925

The sixty years encompassed by this study are enough to illustrate some of the basic realities of the history of many Maritime towns. In this brief span it is possible to observe a remarkable transformation of a small market town into a manufacturing center with national ambitions. Truro had, at least for a time, an exceedingly congenial mix of geographic advantages; of railway connections and of aggressive capitalists. This combination of factors enabled the town to grow in response to the opportunities presented to it by its connection to Ontario and Quebec in the 1870's and 1880's<sup>1</sup> and westward from there as the Dominion grew apace. As the economy of the Maritimes was integrated into that of Central Canada (by about 1910)<sup>2</sup> Truro enterprise withered to some extent and the town moved into a period of rather modest prosperity compared to the heady days of the 1880's. Even the depression in the Maritimes which followed World War I was weathered relatively well by the town. Its place as geographic center of the province ensured its role

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<sup>1</sup>See T. W. Acheson, "The National Policy and The Industrialization of the Maritimes", Acadiensis, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>See T. W. Acheson, "The Maritimes and Empire Canada", in D. Bercuson (ed.), Canada and the Burden of Unity, MacMillan, Toronto, 1977.



as a regional distribution center and, in the words of a commercial trade magazine, Truro became a place "where times are never very bad".<sup>3</sup>

The bucolic nature<sup>4</sup> of the Cobequid district was changed irreparably by the designation of Truro as the northern terminus of the Nova Scotia Government Railway. The railway to Halifax opened in 1858. Now the age of steam and iron had breached the forest barriers to Halifax<sup>5</sup> and some Colchester people were determined to use the agricultural resources of the county to good advantage.<sup>6</sup>

Farmer W. M. Blair (later M.P.P.) was one of the people interested in "making milk for the Halifax market".<sup>7</sup> The

<sup>3</sup>Maritime Merchant, 19 January 1922, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup>For a description of Truro, 1860, see Israel Longworth, History of Cobequid, Microfilm, Colchester Historical Museum, Truro. Or, see Eliza Frame, Descriptive Sketches of Nova Scotia in Prose and Verse, P.A.N.S., published 1865. A description of Truro is reprinted in Colchester Historical Society Proceedings, Reports and Program Summaries, 1954-1957, pp. 108-112.

<sup>5</sup>The reluctance of Colchester farmers to go to Halifax is illustrated early by articles promoting the railway in the Nova Scotian, 7 October 1835.

<sup>6</sup>Industries based on agriculture seem natural enough for a fairly prosperous farming district. Generally though, there were several predictions at this period that an industrial and manufacturing future awaited Nova Scotia. See Joseph Outram, Nova Scotia, Its Condition and Resources, Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1850; Abraham Gesner, The Industrial Resources of Nova Scotia, MacKinley, Halifax, 1849; R. G. Haliburton, The Past and Future of Nova Scotia, J. B. Strong, Halifax, 1862; A. L. Spedon, Rambles Among the Bluenoses, John Lowell, Montreal, 1863.

<sup>7</sup>Recalled in a letter to the Colchester Sun, 27 December 1911.

idea of carrying milk sixty miles by rail was greeted with scepticism by railway officials but the farmers' persistence paid off. A good rate was set. Two cans were taken on that first trip in 1859. By 1883 an average of over 300 cans were sent to the city daily from stations along the line between Truro and Halifax.<sup>8</sup>

In the early 1860's Onslow and Lower Truro farmers did "a good business" in raising potatoes for the New England market.<sup>9</sup> These were shipped by sea from Clifton and Fort Belcher. In 1866 the Reciprocity Treaty in natural products was cancelled by the Americans and the county farmers looked for alternatives. W. M. Blair travelled to Portland, Maine, to investigate the growing of potatoes for a starch industry and to Paradise, Annapolis County, to investigate a cheese making operation. The cheesemaking was deemed to be the most practical for Colchester and a company was formed.

The growth of the dairy industry for the milk trade to Halifax and for the cheese plant was essential for the establishment of one of Truro's first manufacturing industries which operated on a national scale. This was the Truro Condensed Milk and Canning Factory, which began in 1883, the first of its kind in Canada.

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<sup>8</sup>Colchester Sun, 19 September 1883.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

The railway was of immense importance to the development of the town. This fact can not be underestimated. Industrial development began soon after that first rail link to Halifax in 1858. In 1863 Caffrey and Sibley founded the Truro Iron Foundry and Machine Co. John Lewis moved his last-making operation to Truro from Economy in order to be at a "good" shipping point<sup>10</sup> on the line to Halifax in 1865. By 1867, Truro was in the midst of a railway boom as the Government Railway pushed eastward to Pictou.<sup>11</sup> In 1868, Stanfield and Craig's Factory was producing soft felt hats near the railway line.

Railways were promised as part of the Confederation "package" and by 1868 the benefits of the rail connection were obvious. The editorial in the Mirror and Colchester County Advertiser left no doubt.

We feel certain the work will greatly increase the wealth and size of our town and neighbourhood, and we trust our fellow citizens will look after their own interest and be prepared with supplies equal to the demand. A hint is sufficient to a wise man.<sup>12</sup>

In 1872 the Nova Scotia Railway became part of the Intercolonial Railway and the first run was completed to

<sup>10</sup>Colchester Sun, 29 August 1883.

<sup>11</sup>See David Stephens, Truro: A Railway Town, Lancelot Press, p. 39. Eastern Extension of Nova Scotia Railway.

<sup>12</sup>Mirror and Colchester County Advertiser, 25 January 1868.

St. John, New Brunswick, in November. The I.C.R. link to Montreal was completed by 1 July 1876.

In response to the increase in population and commercial activity, the town was incorporated in 1875<sup>13</sup> and it appeared to be a town with definite ambitions. An editorial in the Sun of 5 October 1875 reveals much about the spirit and optimism of the time:

It can scarcely be denied that of all the towns and villages in our province, Truro is in the van, as regards all kinds of manufacturing interests. For our population we can proudly boast that we are more extensively engaged in all sorts of manufactories (sic) than any other community in this land of the mayflower.

It is but a few years since Truro assumed any proportions as a town and it is within the memory of many now living, when the waving pine and spruce and the rustling poplar, with their deep forest shades, covered our streets. A few years has produced a wonderful metamorphosis and where the sounds of the brute creation were nightly borne on the air, we are startled by the din of steam engines, and huge machinery working and creaking at the bid of our fellow men.<sup>14</sup>

Turning the future, the writer notes the "inland situation" of the town:

We can never gain the wealth of a Yarmouth, a Windsor, nor a Maitland by building ships or investing therein, though some of our enterprising merchants, apart from our inland position, have largely and boldly ventured into this branch of business and we hope with great profit to themselves.

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<sup>13</sup>Population of Truro, 1871, was 2,114.

<sup>14</sup>"Truro as a Manufacturing Town", Colchester Sun, 6 October 1875.

As a people we were obliged to turn our attention and our means in some other direction. We could furnish no shipyards to employ hundreds of our young men and increase our population by inducing scores to come from other places, so we had to be content with less daring enterprises, and we substituted our great source of wealth today, manufactories. Our iron foundry, steam sawmill, hat factory, last and peg factory, etc., etc. have gone beyond what we could reasonably expect and have been the means of giving Truro the prestige it now holds abroad and have increased in a most surprising ratio our population, wealth, and influence at home. Capital is all that we want to make us the manufacturing center of the whole Dominion. What is to prevent us from becoming the Sheffield of the Dominion?<sup>15</sup>

The 1870's did show that Truro had the promise to be an industrial town. Truro Manufacturing Company began the manufacture of furniture in 1870 with markets for the products in the "lower provinces" and as far west as Coburg, Whitby and London, Ontario.<sup>16</sup> In 1871 the Merchants Bank of Halifax opened a branch in Truro. Local entrepreneur T. G. McMullen started his steam lumber mill on Upper Prince Street close to the railway line. In 1874 the Halifax Banking Company opened a branch in Truro. In 1875, John Lewis expanded his last business to include pegs used in shoemaking, clothes pins and wooden bottle stoppers, selling into Quebec, Newfoundland, the Lower Provinces and also to

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Information from various sources, principally a series of articles from the Colchester Sun, 1881 and 1883, in the Doane Scrapbooks, Colchester Museum.

Europe. In 1877, Craig, Stanfield and Webster opened another hat factory,<sup>17</sup> "a most convenient situation close to the line of the railway". Production employed thirty-two workers, importation of wool from South America and rabbit fur from England to produce twenty-four dozen soft hats and twenty-two dozen hard hats daily, to be sold in Montreal, Halifax, St. John and smaller towns. A bottling plant for "aerated waters", the factory of Bigelow and Hood, opened in 1878 and the map of the town<sup>18</sup> for that year shows two carriage factories. A large steam grist mill was opened on Upper Prince Street in 1879, owned by T. G. McMullen.

There were some important developments in the 1880's, as well. Charles Stanfield<sup>19</sup> opened a textile mill in the town on the banks of the Salmon River in 1882. In the same year the Gates Organ and Piano Co. began production from

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<sup>17</sup>Stanfield and Craig's first operation "succumbed to the general trade depression which existed between 1874 and 1876" according to the Sun, 25 July 1883.

<sup>18</sup>Map at Colchester Historical Museum.

<sup>19</sup>Charles Stanfield tried his hand in different manufacturing ventures since his arrival in North America in 1855. In 1856 he started a woolen mill at Tryon, P.E.I., sold out and moved to Truro in 1867 in order to have the better transportation facilities with the proposed Intercolonial. In Truro he was involved in the manufacture of hats. He sold his interests and moved to St. Croix, Hants County, where he operated a textile mill for a short time. He left St. Croix and moved back to Truro, operating the woolen mill about two miles from town, at Farnham Road. In 1882 his textile plant in Truro was opened with nineteen employees.

their location on the Common.<sup>20</sup> In 1883 the Truro Condensed Milk Company opened, the first factory of its kind in the Dominion. It was expected that the greatest market for the condensed milk would be the Northwest<sup>21</sup> but there were some hopes of introducing the product for use on ocean steamers and sailing ships as well as to American cities. Initially, the work force involved thirteen people with a possibility of expansion to about thirty.

By 1884, the town boasted nineteen industries, eight of which were started since 1878.<sup>22</sup> Two hundred and seventy-two people were employed in manufacturing.<sup>23</sup>

Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for the choice of Truro as a location was the compliant nature of Truro's Town Council when it came to requests for either the free use of

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<sup>20</sup>Gates had operated in western Nova Scotia but the Sun article, 18 July 1883, says they moved to Truro because the town "possessed facilities both for labour and shipping superior to the first location". This operation moved into a recently vacated failed business, Truro Boot and Shoe.

<sup>21</sup>Other opinions express the importance of the western business, "Their market is from ocean to ocean; cut off from the Northwest and British Columbia and this industry is crippled beyond recovery", says J. F. Blanchard in McChulloch Jubilee, published by the Colchester Sun in 1889.

<sup>22</sup>"Report of Edward Willis on The Manufacturing Industries of Certain Sections of the Maritime Provinces"; Sessional Papers of Canada, No. 37, 1885, p. 72.

<sup>23</sup>By comparison, Londonderry, Colchester County, growing on the mining and smelting of local iron ore, employed six hundred and twenty-five in one industry, according to the Willis Report, 1885, Op. Cit., p. 72.

water from the town system or for exemption from town taxes. Mayors and Councillors<sup>24</sup> were either merchants or professionals and, as such, had an interest in the development and expansion of industry in the town. The first request came to Council on 1 April 1879<sup>25</sup> when overtures were made concerning the possibility of establishing a textile mill in Truro. The request for free water and taxes was granted but it was decided that policy should be set by Council on such matters. The policy was set within the week. The town would supply free water for ten years and exempt a company from taxes for ten years, but there were some stipulations: the new business was to be different from any then existing in the town, it was to have at least ten thousand dollars invested in the building and machinery and it was to employ at least ten employees.<sup>26</sup>

Policy or no policy, there were some exceptions. T. G. McMullen's request for tax exemption for his grist mill was allowed on condition that five thousand dollars be invested in the enterprise.<sup>27</sup> The possibility that the Halifax and Cape Breton Railway Company should locate their workshops in

<sup>24</sup>Council consisted of Mayor and two Councillors from each of three wards.

<sup>25</sup>Town Council Minutes, 1 April 1879, Truro Town Office.

<sup>26</sup>Town Council Minutes, 7 April 1879.

<sup>27</sup>Op. Cit., 14 October 1879.



Truro prompted Council to offer a twenty-year tax and water holiday.<sup>28</sup> Stanfield asked for twenty years in his request of 1882 concerning his proposed new mill as did the president of the Truro Condensed Milk Factory.<sup>29</sup>

Between 1879 and 1886 all the leading manufacturing interests in the town were registered for free water, free taxes or both.<sup>30</sup>

Little interest was shown by Council, at this time, in actively pursuing industry. At the 4 October 1881 meeting of Council, Councillor Craig spoke about the "importance of taking some measures to secure the introduction and maintenance of manufacturing enterprises in the town and expressed the desire that something should be done in this matter."<sup>31</sup>

The question of the town providing a bonus for industries locating within the town was apparently one which evoked controversy. In November, 1881, Council moved in response to a public meeting calling for an act to be drawn up for presentation to the legislature enabling Truro to offer a bonus to industry. The mayor was opposed and his

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<sup>28</sup>Op. Cit., 8 October 1880.

<sup>29</sup>Op. Cit., 8 September 1882 and 6 November 1882.

<sup>30</sup>See Table 1, from Town of Truro Annual Report for Year Ending 1888.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

Table 1

Exemptions From Taxes and Water Charges

<u>Factory</u>	<u>Date Granted</u>	<u>No. Years</u>	<u>Taxes</u>	<u>Water</u>
Stanfield & Co. Hat Factory....	9 July 1879	10	---	Water
T.G. McMullen Steam Grist Mill.	20 Oct. 1879	10	Taxes	Water
S.G.W. Archibald Tannery.....	23 Feb. 1881	10	Taxes	Water
Gates Organ & Piano Factory....	25 Oct. 1881	10	Taxes	Water
Clish & Crowe Iron Foundry.....	1 Jan. 1882	10	---	Water
T.G. McMullen Steam Grist Mill.	1 Sept. 1882	10	---	Water
John Lewis & Sons Last and Peg Factory.....	1 Sept. 1882	10	---	Water
C.E. Stanfield Woollen Goods Factory.....	8 Sept. 1882	10	Taxes	---
Truro Milk Condensing & Canning Co.....	6 Nov. 1882	10	Taxes	Water
W.S. Cox Tannery.....	2 Jan. 1883	10	Taxes	---
C.E. Stanfield Woollen Goods Factory.....	2 Apr. 1883	10	---	Water
Craig & Webster Hat Factory....	3 Apr. 1884	10	Taxes	Water
Spencer Bros. & Turner Furniture Factory.....	22 Apr. 1884	10	Taxes	Water
R. Hopper & Sons Last Factory...	7 July 1885	10	Taxes	Water
Truro Electric Co. Ltd.....	10 Dec. 1886	10	Taxes	Water
Chambers, Turner & Layton Furniture Factory.....	10 Dec. 1886	10	Taxes	Water

protest was noted in the minutes.<sup>32</sup> Bonuses were requested at the next meeting of Council for a proposed cotton mill and for the Union Manufacturing Company. A petition by Rev. Ebenger Ross and others was read at the meeting "praying Council not to ask the legislature for any act to legalize the issue of bonus debentures". Council proceeded in spite of this opposition and an act was prepared to "enable the Town of Truro to grant subsidies for the encouragement of manufacturing enterprises and to borrow money".<sup>33</sup> There is no evidence that the bonus was a factor in town politics<sup>34</sup> until the controversial bonus paid to the Midland Railway in 1898.

To the manufacturers of Colchester at this time, the attraction of a protective tariff proposed by the federal Conservative party after 1875 was irresistible. They rejoiced in the Conservative victory federally in 1878 and relished the prospect of the proposed National Policy. The Colchester Sun's editorial of 23 October 1878 pointed out

<sup>32</sup>Town Council Minutes, 14 November 1881.

<sup>33</sup>Op. Cit., 20 December, 1881.

<sup>34</sup>The Colchester Sun favoured it though. See "Building Up Towns" in the Sun, 18 April 1888, in which the policy of bonuses was a way of life for towns in Ontario and the United States. Locally, attention was drawn to the "pushing town" of New Glasgow and its success with bonusing. Truro "city fathers" were urged to consider the benefits of such a policy to attract industry or to encouraging existing industry to expand.

consequence of the National Policy with expansion of the plant and work force.

Dr. McRobert of W. E. McRobert & Sons Furniture expressed confidence in his prediction that the National Policy would give businesses like his the means to drive Ontario products from the Maritimes and to catch and surpass the upper province in manufacturing. For Charles Stanfield, the National Policy meant the difference between a successful hat factory and an unsuccessful one. His first hat factory could not compete with imported American and English stock and it was forced to close. After the National Policy created a home market Mr. Stanfield opened a new factory employing double the workers and doing three times the business than before, selling largely into the Montreal market.

The 1884 report by Edward Willis<sup>37</sup> into manufacturing garnered similar opinions from the Truro manufacturers. David Linton's carriage and sleigh factory claimed to have made considerable progress since 1878 and was undergoing an

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<sup>37</sup> "Report of Edward Willis on the Manufacturing Industries of Certain Sections of the Maritime Provinces", Sessional Papers of Canada, 1885 (No. 37), p. 35. This was a government report comparing the manufacturing situation (work force wages, invested capital, annual output, number of industries 1878 and 1884. Appendix No. 1 contains general notes and the views of manufacturers on conditions of business and the National Policy. Information on Linton's Carriage Factory, Truro, Condensed Milk Co., Craig and Webster Hats, Pennfield (must be Stanfield) Knitting Factory, Hopper Last Factory, J. Lewis and Sons, Gates Organ and Piano, T. G. McMullen Mills, Union Woolen Mill.

expansion of the factory and work force. Craig and Webster's hat factory sold its products chiefly in the Montreal and Quebec markets and the proprietors reported that "without the National Policy we couldn't run our business at all, simply because the Americans would slaughter their goods in our territory. The National Policy saves us from being crushed out."<sup>38</sup>

The unbounded optimism of the 1880's, as illustrated by the manufacturers of the town, was also evident in the Annual Reports of the Town which began to be issued in 1886. Mayors of the time emphasized the good health of the townspeople, the prosperity, the increase in property assessment value, the success of manufacturing industries in the town, the introduction of modern conveniences like electric lights and telephones, and the new buildings erected.<sup>39</sup> Mayor D. H. Muir, in 1890, cited three reasons for believing that Truro had a great future: firstly, its geographical location at the center of the province; secondly, its position as a key location in the railway network of the province and thirdly, its position as the center of a fine agricultural

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<sup>38</sup>Op. Cit., p. 121.

<sup>39</sup>Town of Truro Annual Reports, 1886-1890, Truro Town Office. See also, Colchester Sun, 2 May 1888, boasting of material progress of the town.

district.<sup>40</sup> This year, 1890, is the last year-end report in which any hint of optimism is apparent.

Still, the town seemed secure in its prosperity as it entered the decade of the 1890's. The various descriptions of Truro<sup>41</sup> at this time invariably note its position as the railway center of the province. The Board of Trade (formed 1889) report to the Truro Daily News<sup>42</sup> cited fourteen "manufactories", thirteen wholesale establishments, four weekly and one daily newspapers, nine hotels, eight churches, three banks, good water supply, fire service, handsome streets and squares, public park and excellent school system as features that made Truro a lively progressive town, with the wherewithall to become "a Lowell".<sup>43</sup>

The formation of a Board of Trade in 1889 is perhaps an indication that industry was not naturally choosing Truro as a situation for manufacturing and that some active inducement might be necessary. After their organization, the businessmen of the Board actively encouraged capitalists and

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<sup>40</sup>Op. Cit., year ending 1890.

<sup>41</sup>See descriptions "Pretty Town of Truro" in Colchester Sun, 6 August 1890; "Railway Center", Truro Daily News, 12 May 1891; "As Others See Us", Truro Daily News, 16 June 1899; and "The Town of Truro", Truro Daily News, 3 February 1900.

<sup>42</sup>Truro Daily News, 29 March 1895.

<sup>43</sup>Colchester Sun, 6 August 1890.

lobbied the Town Council on behalf of established industries or industries intending to locate in Truro.<sup>44</sup>

Truro did have to compete with other towns. Companies were not adverse to playing one town against another. Town Council had a letter from Craig & Mahoney Hat Company in 1896 saying they had an offer from a Quebec town and wondered if Truro would match the offer of free taxes, water and building.<sup>45</sup> In 1899 it was feared Truro might lose Mackeod Brothers wire mattress factory to an offer from Amherst. Rumor had it that Stellarton had made an offer to Stanfield's to induce the Truro firm to move there.<sup>46</sup> The Daily News stated the situation clearly:

These manufacturers have to greatly enlarge their present capacity for manufacturing in the early spring; it is only a matter of a good site and the greatest privileges with them, and they will build accordingly.<sup>47</sup>

The official handling of the inter-town rivalry was quite gentlemanly. Truro Town Council was interested in the possibility of having the Nova Scotia Carriage Company

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<sup>44</sup>In 1895, 1902 and 1906, the Board sought and encouraged carriage companies to locate in Truro without success. In 1906, they appeared before Town Council to plead the case for exemptions for Stanfields in their expansion.

<sup>45</sup>Town Council Minutes, 4 June 1896.

<sup>46</sup>Truro Daily News, 27 October 1899.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

relocated from Kentville to Truro in 1902 but Truro would make a bid for it only if the move from Kentville was definite. In the words of Mayor Black, "I am sure the people of Truro have no disposition to bid with Kentville".<sup>48</sup>

For local businessmen, the decade of the 1890's appeared to begin well. The Truro Gold Mining Company was incorporated in 1892 and the Truro Coal Mining Company opened a mine eleven miles from town on the Tatamagouche Road the same year. In 1896 Charles Stanfield sold his business, Truro Knitting Mills, to sons John and Frank. Under the guidance of the younger Stanfields the business was about to become very aggressive in the Canadian market.<sup>49</sup> Their mill was expanded in 1900 and again in 1903. The MacLeod Brothers wire mattress company was operating by mid-decade and in 1898 the Maritime Cap Company opened on the corner of Prince and Commercial.

Town Council had continued the policy of tax exemptions and free water which had existed in earlier decades but Councillors were always careful to have their actions

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<sup>48</sup>Town Council Minutes, 18 November 1902.

<sup>49</sup>Good luck played a role here, as well as the hard work of the Stanfield Brothers. Local legend has it that the reputation of the Stanfield underwear was made by the good name it got from miners during the Klondike Gold rush after 1898.



approved by public meetings of ratepayers.<sup>50</sup> Council did have particular objections to paying a bonus to industry, a celebrated example being the sum of thirty thousand dollars authorized to be paid to the Midland Railway Company.<sup>51</sup> The bonus was approved by the usual public meeting and Council eventually approved payment, but made known its contention that "the system of bonusing is not only wrong in principle but is injurious, pernicious and corruptive".<sup>52</sup>

The Lewis family, as noted, had a long association with industry in the town of Truro. Their peg and last business which was begun in the town in 1865 was decimated by two major fires in the 1890's, one in 1892 and another in 1898. In 1899 the business was removed to Lewiston, near Sheet Harbour, Halifax County, in order to be near supplies of hardwood and in order to use the shipping facilities available by sea from Sheet Harbour. The Lewis connection with the town was not severed for long, however. George Lewis and other investors formed a company for the manufacture of hats. Eastern Hat and Cap was incorporated in 1904. This Lewis enterprise was one which proved to be

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<sup>50</sup>For Example, see Truro Daily News, 8 December 1899.

<sup>51</sup>Town Council Minutes, 2 May, 12 May, 7 June, 5 July, 21 July, 1898. An act was introduced in the legislature enabling Truro to borrow the money by Colchester M.L.A., T. G. McMullen, who was incidentally a major shareholder in the railway company.

<sup>52</sup>Town Council Minutes, 7 June 1898.

one of the mainstays of Truro industry for the next fifty years. With associated companies (Eastern Shirts, 1910) the Lewis work force in the town approached three hundred by 1915, the products, reaching the Canadian market and Newfoundland.

Another major undertaking of the period was the restructuring of the Stanfield Truro Knitting Mill in 1906. As with the Lewis factory the Stanfields had a long association with the town. Truro Knitting Mill became Stanfields Ltd.<sup>53</sup> and proceeded to make an aggressive assault on the Canadian market. There were expansions of the mill in 1908 and 1913. The company bought the Hewson Mill in Amherst in 1910 and moved into the western Canadian market with sales representatives in 1910, 1911 and 1912.<sup>54</sup> By 1915 the work force numbered over two hundred.<sup>55</sup>

There were other factories in the town but Eastern Hat and Cap and Stanfields Ltd. were the only two to employ such large work forces. George Lewis and Frank Stanfield both had other financial interests in the town, as well. Lewis

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<sup>53</sup>John and Frank Stanfield were the prime movers and local capitalists like T. G. McMullen were included but also included were J. F. Payzant, President of the Bank of Nova Scotia and G. S. Campbell and J. W. Allison, Directors of the Bank of Nova Scotia. See Maritime Merchant, 25 January 1906; Truro Daily News, 15-18 January 1906.

<sup>54</sup>T. Stanfield, History of Stanfields, 1966.

<sup>55</sup>In 1896, when the Stanfield Brothers took over from their father, the work force totaled seventeen.

had a share of Markland Waterproofs,<sup>56</sup> a company established in 1913 to make oil cloths and denim, drill, and duck overalls. Stanfield was one of the organizers of Stanfield-Smith Company in Truro, wholesale stationers. In 1910 he "organized and controlled" the Truro Condensed Milk Company which was sold two years later to Bordens of New York. In 1911 he "organized" Truro Foundry and Machine Company,<sup>57</sup> and, of course, he had an active political side. In 1911 he was elected M.L.A. for Colchester. Other Colchester entrepreneurs did not have the lasting influence that these two had.<sup>58</sup>

Some smaller industries established prior to World War I were the Durkee Shoe Company in 1911 (relocated from Yarmouth) and three others in the clothing line - McMullen, Wilson and Adams (coats and skirts) in 1910, the Canada Cap Company in 1912, and Markland Waterproofs in 1913.

There was a feature that Truro possessed which gave it an advantage over other Nova Scotia locations and which did not depend on the generosity of the Town Council to grant tax exemptions or free water from the town's water mains. Being the geographical center of the province was an advan-

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<sup>56</sup>Maritime Merchant, 29 January 1914, p. 28.

<sup>57</sup>Halifax Herald Mail, 25 September 1931, obituary, Acadia Trust est. 1920 was a Stanfield company.

<sup>58</sup>T. G. McMullen, for example.

tage seized upon by businessmen very early on and the benefits of geographical location accrued to the town as the twentieth century began. Various accounts note this point.<sup>59</sup> Nine firms<sup>60</sup> are listed in the town publication Truro, Nova Scotia, Hub of the Province, as taking advantage of the town's position as a "natural" distributing center. It noted that with Truro as center, railroad mileage to any point in the province is practically reduced in half.<sup>61</sup>

During the years of the Great War the level of business activity in the town remained brisk.<sup>62</sup> Wholesalers benefitted from the stimulation of war given to the industrial towns of Pictou County and local factories were not much inconvenienced by a shortage of labour or material. Prosperity for the town was linked to the prosperity of the county agricultural districts surrounding it. The high returns for agricultural products received by county farmers enabled town merchants to, in one opinion, "experience a greater measure of prosperity since the war began than at

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<sup>59</sup>For example, "Pretty Town of Truro", Colchester Sun, 6 August 1890, or Truro Daily News, 1902, or Truro, Nova Scotia, Hub of the Province, Town Publication, 1915.

<sup>60</sup>McCulloch, Creelman and Urquhart, T. S., Patillo, J. J., Snook, Truro Market, C. E. Bentley, G. W. Reid, Blight and Prince, Massey Harris, Frost and Wood.

<sup>61</sup>Town of Truro, Truro, Nova Scotia, Hub of the Province, 1915, p. 61.

<sup>62</sup>See Maritime Merchant, 27 January 1916, 23 January 1919, p. 27.

any previous period in its history".<sup>63</sup> Railway wages had been increased<sup>64</sup> too and these were spent locally which added to the merchants' good fortune.

The years immediately following the First World War were those in which the realities of the Canadian economic system began to reveal themselves to the people of the Maritimes. With the stimulation of the wartime economy gone, Maritimers experienced the consolidation of economic and political power in Central Canada.<sup>65</sup> A depression began in the spring and summer of 1920 and the next half decade would see all the industries of the Maritimes affected. There was also a massive exodus of people in response. Heavily industrialized towns like Amherst and New Glasgow suffered a sharp decline in their manufacturing work forces.<sup>66</sup>

As the economic disorder enveloped the region it would be difficult for Truro to escape unscathed entirely but the

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<sup>63</sup>Truro Daily News editor W. D. Dimock in Maritime Merchant, 23 January 1919, p. 27.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>See E. R. Forbes, The Maritime Rights Movement, 1919-1927: A Study in Canadian Regionalism, McGill-Queen University Press, 1979, p. 54; L. D. McCann, "The Mercantile-Industrial Transition in the Metal Towns of Pictou County", 1857-1931, Acadiensis, Spring 1981, p. 29; N. Reilly, "The General Strike in Amherst, Nova Scotia, 1919", Acadiensis, Spring 1980, p. 56; T. W. Acheson, "The Maritimes and Empire Canada", in D. Bercuson, Canada and the Burden of Unity, MacMillan, 1977, p. 98.

<sup>66</sup>Forbes, Op. Cit., p. 209.

fate that befell many Maritime towns in this calamitous decade was not shared to the same extent by the Colchester shiretown.

The number of manufacturing establishments in Truro declined as did the number of employees in manufacturing.<sup>67</sup>

Population figures for the town show that population actually increased (1911 - 6,107, 1921 - 7,562, 1931 - 7,901). This may indicate the existence of branch businesses in the town engaged in wholesale and retail trading,<sup>68</sup> like the Canada Creosote Company which opened in 1924 or the Truro branch of the Woolworth chain which opened the same year.<sup>69</sup> Industries like carriage making were well on their way to extinction by the 1920's, being replaced by the automobile, a commodity manufactured outside the town and region. A service industry for central Canadian manufacturing replaced a home manufacturing industry.<sup>70</sup>

The optimism evident in the merchant opinions of 1919

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<sup>67</sup>See Table 2 (on following page). Manufacturing Industries of the Maritime Provinces, Canada Department of Trade and Commerce Bureau of Statistics; P.A.N.S.

<sup>68</sup>Sec L. D. McCann, "Branch Businesses in the Maritimes, 1881-1931", *Acadiensis*, Fall 1983, p. 112. Also, "Truro as Distributing Centre", speech by S. W. McCulloch of McCullough, Greelman Wholesalers in *Colchester Sun*, 17 April 1924.

<sup>69</sup>*Colchester Sun*, 28 February 1924.

<sup>70</sup>Foster Blaikie opened Truro's first garage in 1912. Christie Motors opened as a Ford dealership in town in 1922 with twenty employees.

Table 2

Industrial Statistics - Truro

Year	Establishments	Employees	Value of Products
1917	39	1,067	\$3,167,625
1918	44	1,029	\$3,841,129
1919	63	928	\$3,952,165
1920	Not issued in 1920.		
1921	Not issued in 1921.		
1922	Figures used afford no comparison earlier year.		
1923	22	734	\$3,170,895
1924	25	659	\$2,792,519
1925	24	662	\$3,060,869
1926	27	778	\$3,132,371
1927	25	795	\$3,117,466
1928	24	843	\$3,520,013
1929	29	955	\$3,935,124

persisted in 1920.<sup>71</sup> Editor Dimock of the Truro Daily News reported conditions in Truro to be "excellent", the past year (1919) being the best in the town's history in his opinion. In 1921 there was little change. Wholesaling firms like T. S. Pattillo and C. E. Bentley still retained their confidence. Stanfields reported another increase in sales and profits (as they had for the past twenty-five years).<sup>72</sup> In 1922 Mr. Dickie of Royal Banks's Truro branch could claim that the town came through the "catastrophic year of 1921" with scarcely a scar.<sup>73</sup> The town's apparently healthy economic condition was attributed mainly to the fact that the prosperity of the town did not depend entirely on its manufacturing industries, but also on the farmer and the railway workers. Truro appeared to be "a wonder little place for business, no matter what may be doing at points both east and west" and "not a place which changes very much, never has any great boom, never any serious depression", a place where "times are never bad".<sup>74</sup> It may be significant, though, that the town tax collector was finding it difficult to make his collections at this time.

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<sup>71</sup>Maritime Merchant, 22 January 1920, p. 68.

<sup>72</sup>Op. Cit., p. 28.

<sup>73</sup>Maritime Merchant, 19 January 1922, p. 26.

<sup>74</sup>Op. Cit., p. 22.



because of "the trade depression and unemployment".<sup>75</sup>

The report in the Maritime Merchant for 1923 indicated that the factories in Truro were going "full blast" and that there was no unemployment.<sup>76</sup> Stanfields reported 1923 as a year of record profits and the Colchester Sun noted that "in these dull times when the wail of pessimism is abroad in the land, it is comforting to know that some manufacturing businesses in the province are doing well".<sup>77</sup> Stanfields, payroll at the mill had reached 415 and they were advertising for workers (short hours, steady work, good pay).<sup>78</sup>

Town Council had few requests for concessions from prospective industry in this period but the complacency of earlier Councils was gone: In 1920, Council actively sought the establishment of an "Air Harbour" for Truro from the federal government. The creosote company was given concessions in 1924 and there was an increasing concern on Council's part that Truro should be advertised in tourist

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<sup>75</sup>Town Council Minutes, 27 January 1922. Tax collector MacKenzie asked for extra time as he feared he would not collect sufficient taxes to enable him to receive his bonus.

<sup>76</sup>Maritime Merchant, 15 March 1923, p. 116.

<sup>77</sup>Colchester Sun, 28 February 1924.

<sup>78</sup>Colchester Sun, 17 April 1924.

booklets and booklets describing "motor trips".<sup>79</sup>

The two largest factories in the town both indicated 1925 was a good year, and 1926<sup>80</sup> was similar. Perhaps Truro really did live a charmed life in the economic life of the Maritimes. Perhaps it really was a place where "times are never very bad".

The Colchester entrepreneurs of the 1860's and 1870's who looked to the prospects of a manufacturing future, could relish the bright opportunities afforded by the rail connection to the rest of the continent. To the John Lewis', the Col. Blairs, and the Charles Stanfields, the "steel spokes" furnished unlimited possibilities. That vision of a future was enhanced by the National Policy of the federal Conservative party after 1878. Truro industry was fed and nurtured on the protection of home industry, and achieved a moderate level of success (two large textile based industries and a host of smaller ones). With the manufacturing, a fine agricultural district surrounding it, its force of railway workers, and its natural geographic advantaged as a distributing point for the province, Truro blossomed in the 1880's and 1890's. As the regional economy

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<sup>79</sup>Town Council Minutes, 1923-1925. The creosote plant was across the river, technically located in Bible Hill, but was serviced by the town.

<sup>80</sup>Stanfields and Eastern Hat and Cap in Maritime Merchant, 29 January 1925, p. 27; 11 February 1926, p. 28; and 13 January 1927, p. 32.

was integrated with that of the continent, Truro was able to withstand the ravages of industrial spoliation which became evident following the First World War. The town maintained a level of modest prosperity which would be the envy of towns in neighbouring counties.

### Conclusion

For Colchester the attractions offered by the proposed union of British North America colonies in 1867 did not appear to be obvious at first. The Confederate candidates in the federal and provincial elections in September of that year were all soundly defeated. There were, however, trends which were discernible within the overall 1867 election results. A rural/urban difference of opinion may be seen even in 1867.

This paper has shown that the town desired that land ward pull which was offered in 1867, gloried in the Conservative connection and basked in the protection provided by a tariff wall. By 1890, townsman A. G. Archibald could survey the town from "the Collage" above Brunswick Street and feel that his ideas and visions of the 1860's had been vindicated. The town had changed in twenty-five years. Its population had grown. It was the center of active manufacturing industries. Rail links afforded the town access to markets east and west. Truro products reached beyond Central Canada to the Northwest and to British Columbia. This was a remarkable achievement accomplished in a short period of time.

Archibald did not live to witness the next twenty-five years of his town's progress. Town population continued to grow. The years of the Great War provided a temporary

stimulus and the town did avoid the fate which was dealt to other Maritime towns. Truro retained some of its former dignity because of its geographical location as a distribution center, its location in a fine agricultural district and its resident railway workers. The general attitude was that the great days were past and the best the town could do was to avoid a "boom and bust" cycle.

For the Colchester people outside Truro, Archibald's dreams were hollow ones. The benefits of union with Canada were opposed in 1867 and fairly consistently rejected throughout by the rural population of the county. The years from 1867 to 1925 revealed another face to them. Rural industries declined. The wooden ship industry of the 1850's and 1860's coasted to its conclusion by the 1890's. The railway, so vital to the town, served the county people only to draw them away from their homes. The rural population drained away beginning in the 1870's, some of it to Truro but most of it out of the province and out of the country. The talents and labour of these county people would benefit other provinces, other countries.

APPENDIX

A useful suggestion for further study would be a comparison of Truro/Colchester with one of several other towns/counties of the region. To be of assistance in a comparison which may be developed from this thesis, the following random statistics are presented. All figures are from the various census years unless otherwise indicated.

1861 - Birthplaces of Population

England.....	193	Germany, Holland.....	7
Ireland.....	322	Australia, Hungary....	~
Scotland.....	881	Spain, Portugal.....	0
Canada.....	11	France.....	0
N.B.....	113	Italy, Greece.....	2
N.S.....	18,302	Russia, Poland.....	0
P.E.I.....	39	Prussia.....	1
Nfld.....	12	Sweden, Norway.....	0
Channel Is.....	2	Other Foreign	
U. S.....	149	Countries.....	4
Other British		At Sea.....	5
Possessions.....	2		

1861 Total: 20,045

1861 - Occupations by Class for Colchester

Agricultural.....	3,871
Commercial.....	267
Domestic.....	6
Industrial.....	1,202
Professional.....	141
Not Classified.....	261

1861 - Dwellings, Families - Colchester

Barns, Outhouses.....	5,165
Shops, Stores.....	97
Houses Inhabited.....	3,123
Houses Uninhabited.....	105
Houses Being Built.....	103
Families.....	3,387

1871 - Origin of the People - Truro

African.....	116	Scandinavian.....	12
English.....	904	Scotch.....	1,266
French.....	8	Welsh.....	11
German.....	69	Swiss.....	9
Native Indian.....	12	Not given.....	77
Irish.....	1,523		

1871 - Dwellings, Families - Colchester

Temporary Dwellings.....	24
Houses Inhabited.....	3,846
Houses Uninhabited.....	116
Houses Being Built.....	42
Total Dwellings	
Occupied.....	3,870
Families.....	4,133

1871 - Immoveable Property and Shipping - Colchester

Acres of Land Owned.....	468,825
Warehouses/Factories/ Stores.....	700
Barns and Stables.....	4,614
Steam Vessels.....	0
Seagoing Sailing Vessels.....	38
	(Tonnage 8,499; Average tonnage 223)
Barges and Other Craft..	7 (Tonnage 94, Average size 13)

1871 - Occupation of The People by Class - Colchester

Agricultural.....	3,432
Commercial.....	467
Domestic.....	184
Industrial.....	1,362
Professional.....	297
Not Classified.....	859

1871 - Butter, Cheese - Colchester

Butter..... 625,026 lb.  
 Cheese..... 14,148 lb.

1871 - Industries - Colchester

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Hands Employed</u>
Blacksmithing	78	116 m
Boots and Shoes	49	137 m, 31 f
Brick and Tile	2	37 m
Cabinet and Furniture	6	33 m, 15 f
Carding and Fulling Mills	12	27 m, 3 f
Carpenters and Joiners	29	61 m
Carriage Making	22	43 m
Cooperage	11	17 m
Dressmaking	1	8 f
Flour and Grist Mills	26	24 m
Foundries and Machine Work	3	45 m
Lime Kilns	6	11 m
Saddle and Harness Making	11	30 m
Saw Mills	89	164 m
Tanneries	13	32 m
Tailors and Clothiers	6	13 m
Tin and Sheet Iron	4	9 m
Wool Cloth Making	2	10 m, 14 f
Boatbuilding	3	5 m
Jeweller and Watch Maker	3	4 m
Pump Factory	1	2 m
Shipyards	6	101 m
Paints and Varnish	3	21 m
Patent Medicine	1	1 m



1881 - Origin of The People - Truro

African.....	141	Italian.....	5
Dutch.....	4	Scandinavian.....	9
English.....	863	Scotch.....	1,385
French.....	58	Spanish/Portuguese...	3
German.....	28	Swiss.....	14
Native Indian.....	52	Welsh.....	17
Irish.....	880	Not Given.....	2

1881 - Dwellings, Families - Colchester

Temporary Dwellings.....	20
Houses Inhabited.....	4,725
Houses Uninhabited.....	227
Houses Being Built.....	53
Total Houses Occupied...	4,745
Families.....	4,930

1881 - Immovable Property and Shipping - Colchester

Acres of Land Owned.....	563,242
Warehouses/Factories/ Stores.....	703
Barns and Stables.....	5,083
Steam Vessels.....	1 (Tonnage 15, Average size 15)
Seagoing Vessels.....	45 (Tonnage 20,002, Average size 444)
Barges.....	11 (Tonnage 186, Average size 17)

1881 - Aggregate Value of All Industries - Colchester

Capital Invested.....	\$2,296,890
No. Hands Employed.....	1,683
Amount of Yearly Wages..	\$ 501,065
Total Value of Articles produced.....	\$1,731,587

1881 - Occupations by Class - Colchester

Agricultural.....	4,834
Commercial.....	744
Domestic.....	268
Industrial.....	1,589
Professional.....	356
Not Classified.....	700

1881 - Industrial Establishments - Colchester

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Employees</u>
Bakeries	4	6 m
Blacksmithing	68	100 m
Boots and Shoes	42	64 m, 1 f
Brick and Tile Making	2	38 m
Cabinet and Furniture	5	13 m
Carding and Fulling Mills	4	8 m, 1 f
Carpenters and Joiners	24	36 m
Carriage Makers	30	55 m
Cooperage	10	12 m
Dress Making and Millenry	2	3 f
Flour and Grist Mills	21	36 m
Foundries and Machine Working	4	43 m
Lime Kilns	5	23 m
Saddle and Harness Making	9	22 m
Saw Mills	95	313 m
Shingle Making	12	12 m
Tanneries	7	30 m
Tailors and Clothiers	9	15 m, 28 f
Tin and Sheet Metal	4	8 m
Wool Cloth Making	2	8 m, 9 f
Boatbuilding	1	1 m
Cheese Factory	1	2 m, 2 f
Furriers and Hatters	2	17 m, 10 f
Printing Offices	2	10 m, 3 f
Pump Factory	3	9 m
Shipyards	4	85 m
Stone and Marble Cutting	3	11 m
Gypsum	3	3 m

1891 - Dwellings and Families - Colchester

Total  
 Dwellings Occupied... 4,964  
 Dwellings Uninhabited... 198  
 Dwellings Under  
 Construction..... 37  
 Families..... 5,165

1891 - Industry - Truro

	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>
Number of Establishments.....	55	131
Capital Invested.....	\$156,430	\$368,346
No. of Hands Employed.....	306	708
Wages Paid.....	\$106,730	\$223,236
Cost of Material.....	\$213,965	\$389,627
Value at Factory of Product.....	\$391,180	\$844,790

1891 - Industry - Colchester

	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>
Number of Establishments.....	370	552
Working Capital.....	\$2,296,890	\$1,952,099
No. of Employees.....	1,683	2,355
Amount Paid in Wages.....	\$501,065	\$673,141
Value of Raw Material.....	\$732,817	\$1,274,704
Value of Articles Produced.....	\$1,731,587	\$2,552,306

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1901 - Dwellings, Families - Colchester

Houses..... 4,917  
 Families..... 5,022

1901 - Manufactures - Truro

	1881	1891	1901
Population.....	3,461	5,102	5,993
Establishments.....	55	131	16
Capital.....	\$156,430	\$368,346	\$464,555
Employees.....	306	708	350
Salaries and Wages.....	\$106,730	\$223,236	\$143,334
Cost of Material.....	\$213,965	\$389,627	\$353,517
Value of Product.....	\$391,180	\$844,790	\$633,838

1901 - Manufactures - Colchester

Establishments..... 61  
 Capital..... \$937,002  
 Employees on Salary..... 117  
 Wage Earners..... \$1,039  
 Cost of Materials..... \$690,509  
 Value of Product..... \$1,290,955

1911 - Manufactures - Truro (for 1910)

Capital.....	\$2,056,085
Salaries and Wages.....	\$ 298,821
Products.....	\$1,334,520
Establishments.....	14
Employees.....	688

1911 - Manufactures - Colchester

Establishments.....	80
Capital.....	\$3,032,652
Employees.....	1,619
Salaries and Wages.....	\$ 590,275
Material Cost.....	\$1,559,711
Value of Products.....	\$2,798,454

1921 - Towns Arranged According to Rank in Each Census - Truro

Rank in 1881 -	51
Rank in 1891 -	46
Rank in 1901 -	53
Rank in 1911 -	76
Rank in 1921 -	78

1921 - Dwellings and Households - Colchester

Rural Population.....	16,815
Rural Dwellings.....	3,608
Rural Households.....	3,679
Urban Population.....	8,381
Urban Dwellings.....	1,587
Urban Households.....	1,754

1931 - Absolute Increase in Each Ten-Year Period in Population - Colchester Since 1851

1851 - 1861	4,576
1861 - 1871	3,286
1871 - 1881	3,389
1881 - 1891	440
1891 - 1901	-2,260
1901 - 1911	-1,236
1911 - 1920	1,532
1921 - 1931	-145

1931 - Vacant and Abandoned Farms - Colchester

Number Vacant or Abandoned.....	69
Total Acres.....	9,576
Acres of Improved Land..	2,126
Value of Farms.....	\$52,625
Value of Buildings.....	\$17,275

1931 - Population Rural/Urban - Colchester

Total Population.....	25,051
Urban.....	8,704
Rural.....	16,374
% Rural.....	65.3
Total Farm Population..	11,725
% of Total Population..	46.8

1931 - Wage Earners Over 20 Not At Work - Truro

Total Wage Earners.....	2,219 (1,541 m; 678 f)
Number Not At Work.....	261 (207 m, 54 f)

1931 - Retail Merchandise Trade - Colchester and Truro

	County	Truro
Population.....	17,150	7,901
Stores.....	149	145
Full Time Employees.....	70	355
Net Sales.....	\$1,556,500	\$3,813,600

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