

**The Davison Family of Wallace and Pictou:
A Case Study in Maritime Enterprise**

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The Davison Family of Pictou and Wallace: A Case Study in Maritime Enterprise

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An Abstract for the Thesis Presented in Partial
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In 1837 two brothers left their home in the town of Pictou, Nova Scotia and re-settled along the province's North Shore at Wallace, which was a small, Loyalist community. They were part of a specialized exodus of entrepreneurs who left Pictou in search of available water-front land close to an ample timber supply, to establish shipyards. The brothers were raised in an upper-middle class family; their father was a successful timber merchant and they both received their education at Pictou Academy. These experiences gave them the opportunity to form a network of relationships with influential members of the local business community and beyond into the upper echelon of Nova Scotian society. They utilized this network of social support in the establishment of their shipyard, and continued to form new relationships as their business flourished.

Wallace, as a shipbuilding community, functioned within a hierarchy of building centers in Nova Scotia and the entire Atlantic region. Throughout the nineteenth century, small villages and towns such as Wallace, produced wooden vessels which were often registered to the nearest port of registry. In the case of Wallace, it was Halifax, until the Pictou registry opened in 1840. The vessels produced by these communities contributed greatly to the shipping activity of larger port towns and added significantly to the size of their fleets.

For my friends and family for all the love and support they gave me while researching and writing this thesis, especially my parents Janet and Terry, my grandmother Lenore and grandfather Norman, whom I miss greatly, and for Troy.

Introduction

The shipbuilding industry can rightly claim a significant position within the Nova Scotian and Atlantic Canadian history and even identity. Throughout the nineteenth century wooden vessels were launched by the hundreds from the shores around the region. During the same period wooden vessels could be seen anchored in almost any harbour or bay, providing transportation for people and goods. Shipyards could be found in many coastal villages and towns, providing employment and an opportunity for investment for many of the region's families.

Throughout the nineteenth century, communities scattered along the shores of Nova Scotia produced wooden vessels to be used for coastal trade and transport, for sale around the region, especially to Newfoundland, and for sale in Great Britain. During the first half of the century many of these vessels carried timber, one of the Maritime Provinces' largest exports of the period, to Great Britain prior to their sale. By the second half of the nineteenth century Nova Scotian and Atlantic Canadian vessels could be found

all over the world used as trading vessels, owned both locally and by British investors.

This industry helped to shape the character of many Nova Scotia communities. As the industry expanded through the first half of the nineteenth century, it fostered the development of many communities, helping them progress to from an agricultural-based economy to an industrial-based economy. Shipbuilding touched the lives of many families living in coastal communities. Shipbuilding and its related services, provided either full-time or supplemental employment to many men. Shipbuilding also attracted to these communities settlers looking to invest or work in the industry, helping the towns to grow and progress.

This maritime venture also helped many Nova Scotian and Atlantic Canadian entrepreneurs make their fortunes. Merchants, traders and investors benefited from the successes of the industry, which often were reflected in their communities.

Shipbuilding and shipping, a related industry which was based on the carrying trade, in Nova Scotia and the Atlantic provinces culminated in the years known as the 'Golden Age of Sail.' The 1860s was a decade of prosperity, when Atlantic Canadian vessels were in

high demand and were sailed around the world carrying cargo. However this prosperity began to decline in the 1870s and the wooden shipbuilding industry had largely collapsed by the turn of the century. Scholars have investigated the role protectionism, fluctuations in global markets and the availability of primary source materials had in the life cycle of the shipbuilding and operating industry in Atlantic Canada. The foremost investigation for many academics has been the question of collapse: why did the region's builders and investors abandon the enterprise rather than persist by adapting to the change?

The historiography of this maritime enterprise includes studies of the rise and decline of the great fleets. There are also histories of the shipbuilders, owners and masters of the great vessels. Historians such as Frederick William Wallace, writing in the 1920s, have helped to instill a nostalgic style into the writing of maritime history, invoking a longing for what has passed. In later years, new sources have been drawn upon to offer a revisionist analogies of the industry. For example, the works produced by the Maritime History Group based at Memorial University, have examined the industry in relation to global events and demonstrated how the

peaks and declines of the international economy affected shipbuilding, shipping, and shipowning in Atlantic Canada. They discarded the view that the downturn of the industry could be explained based on technological change. Rather they mounted more encompassing examinations. Their studies concentrated on the major ports of Yarmouth, Saint John, Halifax, Saint John's and Charlottetown, and examined the shipbuilding and shipping from a variety of perspectives, locally and internationally. Eric Sager and Gerald Panting in *Maritime Capital*, looked at the rise and fall of the industries in Atlantic Canada in conjunction with economic events, technical changes and resource availability throughout North America and Europe.¹ There are also numerous scholarly works on family history and community studies, but there is a dearth of scholarly materials linking the themes of family and shipbuilding. Many of these sources, based firmly on primary materials, animate the stories of Maritimers' relationship with the sea.² These works

¹ Eric Sager and Gerald E. Panting, *Maritime Capital, The Shipping Industry in Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal & Kingston, 1990. For reviews of this book, see Darrell McLaughlin, "Wood, wind and merchant capital," *Acadiensis*, Vol. 23, no. 2, 1994, pp. 145-147 and Judith Fingard's review in *Queen's Quarterly*, Vol. 99, no. 1, 1991, p. 179-181.

² An excellent look at the life at sea for a ship's captain and his family see *If We Are Spared to Each Other, Love and Faith Against the Sea - The Diary of Annie Rogers Butler and the Letters of John Kendrick Butler*, compiled and edited by Raymond A. Simpson, Lancelot Press, Hantsport, 1995. Clement W. Crowell explored the life of Captain Henry Lewis in *Novascotianman*, Nova Scotia Museum, Halifax, 1979. For works on the life of ordinary seamen, see Judith Fingard, *Jack In Port, Sailortowns of Eastern Canada*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1982; Eric Sager,

bring to life the realities of ordinary sailors, ship's captains and their families who worked in the merchant marine and fishing fleets around the region.

Most scholarly studies have investigated shipbuilding in Atlantic Canada by examining the major ports which hosted the large fleets. This practice often overlooks minor shipbuilding communities. These smaller centers operated often as satellites of some larger port, where they registered their vessels and acquired much of their building materials. These outport communities greatly contributed to the prosperity of the larger ports. For instance, in relation to this thesis, vessels registered in the port of Pictou, Nova Scotia were constructed not only in the town of Pictou, but also in communities along the entire North Shore of Nova Scotia. It is these hinterland communities that lack representation in the present historiography.

As this author explored the literature on shipowning and shipbuilding in Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Provinces, another gap in the historiography was identified: much of the social history of these enterprises had been overlooked. Activities in the shipyards,

Seafaring Labour, The Merchant Marine of Atlantic Canada, 1820-1912, McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston, 1980; and *Jack Tar in History, Essays in the History of Maritime Life*

the lives of builders and labourers, their families and above all, the community dynamics of the satellite building centers received only passing mention in many historical investigations.³

This thesis is based on the records of one family involved in the shipbuilding and shipping industries on Nova Scotia's "North Shore". Housed at the Wallace and Area Museum are the records of the Davison family and their ship-related business. The Davisons came to Wallace from Pictou in 1837. In Pictou, the family had been heavily involved in the timber trade and stood among Pictou's notables. Two brothers, James and David Davison, removed to Wallace as part of a larger exodus of Pictou entrepreneurs and established a shipyard and a general store, which they operated successfully until 1868. The brothers employed several dozen men and constructed over thirty vessels, all of which they used for trading, followed by sale in Great Britain or Newfoundland. Their store was frequented by several hundred local residents. During their lives James and David developed a strong kinship network on which they drew for support. The brothers also contributed to their

and Labour, ed. Colin Howell and Richard Twomey, Acadiensis Press, Fredericton, 1991.

³ In the works produced by the Maritime History Group, references to shipbuilding families generally on related to the large mercantile families, such as the Carmichaels, Killams, and Millidges. These works, however, do not delve deeply into the lives of the builders or their families.

community and involved themselves in the sociopolitical events of Nova Scotia.

The documents in the Davison collection consist of correspondence, shipyard contracts, accounts and store ledgers. Unfortunately, there are numerous gaps in the records. Daybooks and formal accounts from the Davison shipyard do not exist. Lack of documentation hampered aspects of this study. A complete understanding of the financial history of the Davison enterprise proved elusive. Moreover, the role of the women in the Davison enterprise can only be glimpsed through the records created by the male members of the Davison family.

This work began as a case study to examine the inner dynamics of the Davison family, but evolved to include the role of society and community in development of a family enterprise. Much of what has been discovered merely compliments the recent work of others, but it is an amplification with a decidedly human face.

Through this case study the Davison family, both in terms of their public and private spheres, is examined within the context of their community. The social factors of kinship, networking, and friendship which were closely tied to achievement among nineteenth

century entrepreneurs, are explored for the Davison family. Issues such as marriage and the social inter-connections of the family in relation to events in their business are discussed.

Historians who have examined the registries of ports around Atlantic Canada argue that the port of Pictou entered a building decline earlier than the rest of the region. This pattern is also applicable to the port of Wallace. The collapse of shipbuilding and shipowning in Wallace will be addressed in terms of what happened to the Davison family. This study, however, will not seek to explain definitively the reasons why the Pictou fleet peaked and declined earlier than the rest of the Atlantic Canadian provinces. But the conclusions drawn by this study may contribute to a better understanding of why the Age of Sail came to an end in one part of Nova Scotia.

This thesis has been chronologically divided into four chapters based on developments in the Davison family's history. Each chapter addresses various subjects in relation to the family enterprise. Beginning with the brothers' move from Pictou to Wallace, the text traces developments within the shipyard, social and political aspects of the family and closure of the Davison yard. These

developments are placed within the context of Nova Scotian, British North American and British events. This thesis attempts to fill a void in the historiography of shipbuilding in Nova Scotia and the Atlantic region and encourage further study of the industry, as well as the families and communities who supported it.

Chapter One

1800-1837 - Growing Up in Pictou

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Nova Scotia still functioned within the old colonial system, having strong economic and social ties to Great Britain. However, the colony was beginning to come into its own, as signs of growing maturity and autonomy were revealing themselves at all levels of Nova Scotian life. Political reforms stirred quietly throughout the colony, British protectionist economic policies were modified to provide more opportunity and immigrants from all over Great Britain and Europe continued to arrive annually.¹ By 1830, Nova Scotia had three colleges and numerous private schools, a definite sign of increased development. Travel by land was still difficult, since many roads were only beginning to be blazed, but the sea provided a ready means of transportation for people, goods and mail.

The economy of Nova Scotia was the driving force behind many of these social advancements. By the turn of the nineteenth century,

¹ W.S. MacNutt, "Chapter 8, Climates of Reform, 1828-1840," *The Atlantic Provinces: The Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857*, McClelland and Stewart Ltd., Toronto, 1965, pp. 188-212.
Rosemary E. Ommer, "The 1830s - Adapting their Institutions to their Desires," *The Atlantic Region to Confederation, A History*, Philip A. Buckner and John G. Reid eds., University of Toronto Press, Toronto, and Acadiensis Press, Fredericton, 1994, pp. 284-306.

Nova Scotian merchants and traders provided Great Britain and the West Indies with cod and timber. In turn, colonial merchants returned with British-made goods and sundries for re-sale. Fluctuating international markets, affected by war and then by cyclical swings in the new capitalist market, made the timber trade a lucrative yet tricky business. Baltic timber, which had been the major source of British imported timber, was slowly being replaced by Maritime timber, and cod remained in demand, which provided many colonials with employment, from the trading houses in Halifax to the wharves of Lunenburg.

Towns and villages around the province were expanding and prospering, thanks to these new economic forces. Increased transportation and immigration helped many pioneer communities grow into bustling small towns. Evidence of this industry could be found along the shores and in the forests throughout Nova Scotia. Labourers secured employment cutting wood and shipbuilders established yards on the banks of many Nova Scotian rivers and harbours.

This chapter will explore the beginning of the journey of two such builders and the environment that encouraged their endeavors.

As the international demand expanded for colonial staples such as timber and fish, so did the demand on Maritime enterprise. This development in international trade shaped the growth of individual businesses. This chapter will introduce one family and their entrance into the expanding colonial mercantile world of nineteenth-century Nova Scotia. Attention will be paid to the social environment and economic forces which motivated this particular Nova Scotian family to enter the mercantile and shipbuilding world. This will also be the story of the dynamics of a family and how kinship ties influenced the local business world, including the roles of women and children in the evolution of family enterprise.

II Pictou Town

The town of Pictou at the turn of the nineteenth century was a community closely tied to the colonial timber trade, and was greatly influenced by fluctuations in international markets. Although it possessed many of the traits of a town, it remained an out-port, closely tied to Halifax. Since the arrival of its first European settlers it had continued to grow. Between 1791 and 1803 Pictou's

population jumped from 1,300 to 5,000. By the early 1800s, it had a school, literary and philanthropic societies, a militia, wharves that were frequented by vessels from all over the world and about 20 buildings within the main town, which included several taverns and stores. Pictou's population at this time included some very successful business men, who were closely tied to town and provincial politics.

Pictou is a small community located on Nova Scotia's Northumberland Strait. The town proper is situated on the shores of a protected harbour, at the foot of a sloping hill. It first provided a seasonal home to Mi'kmaq hunters, and later a more permanent home to a small group of Acadian families.² The founding of the town has traditionally been accredited to the Scots, the first of whom arrived at Pictou in 1773.³ Prior to their arrival, the Philadelphia Company had attained large tracts of Crown land, and was charged with the task of soliciting settlers who would clear and farm the land. The majority of the first settlers were indeed farmers, but soon merchants and professionals emerged among the predominately

² Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou, Nova Scotia*, Dawson Brothers, Montreal, 1877, reprinted in 1972, Mika Studio, Belleville, pp. 24-45.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-97; Roland H. Sherwood, *Pictou Pioneers*, Lancelot Press, Windsor, 1973.

Highland Scottish population. One visitor reflected on the potential of the tiny village:

Lightly bounds the Traveller's heart, when he heaves in sight of the Harbour of Pictou. There is a magic about salt water that never fails to infect those who have been accustomed to see it making a position of almost every prospect...It is utterly impossible for the Tourist to throw off the sober reflections that throng upon the mind,...in short from the present to the exciting prospects of the future. Its safe and capacious harbour, its noble rivers, its mines, its agricultural and maritime capabilities, and above all the industry, frugality, and intelligence of its growing population....⁴

As the town grew and matured, it evolved into the focus of commercial, religious and educational activity on Nova Scotia's North Shore. One central source of this maturation was the timber industry. In 1807, Napoleon blockaded the Baltic ports from which Britain obtained much of its timber. This forced Britain to look elsewhere for suppliers, and the rich forests of her colonies seemed an obvious alternative. Liverpool was the destination for most of this timber and the vessels that were constructed from it.⁵ There were several years during this period when Pictou traders exported

⁴ Joseph Howe, *Western and Eastern Rambles: Travel Sketches of Nova Scotia*, 1831, reprinted 1973, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, pp. 144, 151.

hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of timber. Allan Dunlop has commented on the nature of this growing and colourful town: "...the populace of this perverse little hamlet had already demonstrated the independence which was to be the bane of church, mercantile and government cliques in Halifax."⁶

The growth and success of Pictou timber traders was temporarily interrupted by the outbreak of the War of 1812. Pictou traders quickly felt the effects of American privateers, who patrolled the waters off of Nova Scotia. The threat of the Americans was very real to those living in Pictou and vessels bound for the open sea were escorted by a convoy, to ensure their protection. Pictou merchant and timber trader Thomas Davison wrote to Thomas Oxford, a Liverpool broker, regarding a Liverpool vessel's voyage to British North America - "...your Ship Flora arrived here all well on the 17th Ins't which was a fortunate thing from the number of American privateers now on our Coasts...". Thomas continued in his letter to list no fewer than 28 vessels awaiting convoys in Pictou

⁵ For a discussion of the role of the timber trade in Liverpool commerce during the nineteenth century, see David M. Williams "Merchanting in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century: the Liverpool Timber Trade", *Business History*, Vol. VIII, no. 2, 1966, pp. 103-117

⁶ Allan Dunlop "The Pictou Literature and Scientific Society", *Nova Scotia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 3, 1973, pp. 99-100.

Harbour, bound for ports in the United Kingdom.⁷ Again Davison stated that the war caused changes for Pictou and Nova Scotian traders - "...from the great number of Shipping [sic] taken by American Privateers [sic] on the Coasts to new Brunswick & the interruption of the Trade in Canada - the export of timber there has hitherto depended chiefly on the State of [ill.] for pine."⁸

Following the end of hostilities, Pictou returned to its prior state of trade. However, timber resources within the Pictou area had dwindled and traders were forced to go further and further afield in search of timber. Pictou never again reached its pre-war timber export peak. Yet timber remained a constant factor in the economy of the town during the first half of the nineteenth century, as an export and a primary material in the shipbuilding industry.

The success of the local timber merchants led to growth of trade, shipbuilding and other related activities, attracting all sorts to Pictou, from immigrants to investors. Pictou exported a large percentage of the region's farm produce, much of which went to

⁷ Thomas Davison to Thomas Oxford, 20 August 1812. Letter book of Thomas Davison; Wallace and Area Museum Society (hereafter WAMS), MG 13, 001.

⁸ Thomas Davison to Thomas Gitston, December 1812; WAMS MG 13 001.

Halifax and even Great Britain.⁹ By 1830 Pictou had developed a new export, which helped to offset the drop in demand for local timber. Coal had become one of the area's growing industries. James MacGregor in 1798, the first Gaelic-speaking Secessionist minister to settle in Pictou, was the first colonist to discover coal (on his own property), and used it to heat his own home.¹⁰ From then on, coal grew to become one of the county's most important natural resources. Rev. George Patterson, writing in 1877, estimated that following the end of the timber trade, no industry had been so crucial to the progress of the area as coal mining. A license for the mining of coal in the Pictou area was first obtained in 1807 by John McKay. In the beginning, he sold only to local inhabitants, but with the outbreak of the War of 1812 demand for coal increased, and McKay began to supply the garrison, navy and people of Halifax.¹¹ Merchants and entrepreneurs from around the province and Great Britain began to show interest in Pictou coal, and quickly machinery was brought to the Pictou coal fields, companies were established and production increased. From that time onward, mining in Pictou

⁹ Julian Gwyn, "Nova Scotia's shipbuilding and timber trade: David Crichton of Pictou and his Liverpool associates, 1821-1840," *Canadian Papers in Business History Vol. II*, Public History Group of Victoria, Victoria, 1993, p. 213.

¹⁰ Marjory Whitelaw, *Thomas McCulloch, His Life and Times*, Nova Scotia Museum, 1985, p. 12. Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

County grew, and Pictou coal replaced timber as the port's chief export.

Besides acting as a port of trade, Pictou was a place of arrival. Hundreds of immigrants ventured through the port, some remaining in the county, others continuing on to other areas of Nova Scotia or beyond. Most immigrants found passage to the colonies on vessels which were not constructed to accommodate their human cargo. The crossings were often long and difficult and the unsanitary, close living conditions, and unclean drinking water were conducive to disease. It was not uncommon for one of these vessels and passengers to be quarantined in Pictou Harbour. But sickness was not always recognized soon enough and waves of smallpox, typhus, diphtheria and dysentery spread from the ships throughout the town and countryside many times during the first half of the century. Immigrant and trading vessels not only brought disease to the human population of Pictou, but, during the 1850s, hidden in the ballast of a ship coming from Britain also were the seeds of what the Scottish immigrants called "Stinking Willie" or ragwort. Normally harmless, the yellow weed caused hundreds of Pictou County cows to become gravely ill and die. No cure was ever found

¹¹ Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 398.

for the "Pictou County Cattle Disease" but by the 1880s Pictou County farmers had removed it from their farmlands.¹²

Pictou was a notorious hot-spot of political controversy; religion and politics were ardently intertwined. It was also during the early years of the nineteenth century that the town became renowned for religious conflict between two branches of the Presbyterian Church - the Church of Scotland, known as the Kirk, and the dissenters, known as Seceders. This conflict found its way into the political and educational ring, and was the source for numerous disputes. Generally those who supported the Kirk also supported the Tories and alternately, those who were Seceders supported the Reform party.¹³ Religious differences were not the only source of conflict. The population was a mixture of British immigrants, some Highland Gaelic-speaking Scots, Lowlanders, disbanded British soldiers and a growing body of merchant and traders from southern Scotland and England. Such a mixture of cultures added to the disorderly reputation Pictou has often been assigned.

Pictou had a history of colourful and violent elections, where votes were bought with rum and muscle. It was not uncommon for

¹² A.A. MacKenzie, "The Pictou Cattle Disease," *Acadiensis*, Vol. 4, no. 2, 1975, pp. 79-83.

the two battling sides to come to blows in the streets of Pictou wielding sticks, resulting in injury and even death. The well known "Brandy Election" or the "Big Election" of 1830 involved a pitched battle between Tories and Reformers in a contest for a seat in the Provincial Assembly. The Reformers favoured Pictou Academy, while the Highland Tories were opposed. Making it to the polling station could be a risky venture met by violence during the first half of the century. Alternate polling days did not even help. Eventually the violence did cease in Pictou, but elections remained an excitable topic in the area.¹⁴

Highlighted among the religious and political turbulence of early Pictou was the educational work and highly charged political writings of Rev. Thomas McCulloch. He had helped usher the town into a new educational, political and religious era during a time when the entire province was experiencing an "intellectual awakening."¹⁵ McCulloch was a well educated Secessionist minister who arrived in Pictou in 1803. His school, which has become known

¹³ Brian Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose at the Polls; Epic Nova Scotian Election Battles, 1758-1848*, Formac Publishing, Halifax, 1994, p. 251.

¹⁴ See James M. Cameron *Political Pictonians*, New Glasgow, 1967, for a detailed account of political history in Pictou County.

¹⁵ Throughout the province during this period there was a noticeable surge of interest in academics. See D. C. Harvey "The Intellectual Awakening in Nova Scotia," *Dalhousie Review*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1933-34, pp. 1-22.

as the 'Academy,' was attended by the sons of many local businessmen. Between the activities at his private school, his politically controversial writings and religious instruction, he and the town witnessed a new intellectual, and turbulent period. His anti-Establishment views, clearly obvious in his belief that education should be liberal, non-sectarian and available to all, were beliefs that not all Pictonians or Nova Scotians shared. Certainly, his activities managed to upset and even enrage a number of people, enough so that one evening McCulloch's school was set fire by a local man, and it burned to the ground.¹⁶

Joseph Howe, during his 1830 tour of Nova Scotia, stopped in Pictou and was quick to observe some of the colourful events taking place:

But mercy preserve us, we are riding into Pictou with as much ease and as little ceremony as we would into Chezetcook, or the Dutch Village. Into Pictou! that seat of disaffection and bad government - that abode of patriots and den of radicalism - that nook where the spirit of party sits, nursing her wrath to keep it warm, during ten months of the year in order to disturb the Legislature all the other two. Into Pictou, that cradle of liberty - from whence, after strangling the serpents

¹⁶Whitelaw, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

that would have crushed her, she is to walk abroad over the four quarters of the globe, regenerating and disenthraling mankind....¹⁷

Following the turn of the nineteenth century, Pictou had expanded rapidly, particularly in response to the Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812. The British demand for timber had profound effects on the community, both positive and negative. While the timber trade provided employment and a boost to the local economy, it diverted some from other established trades. Local cleric James MacGregor noted in 1809 that the wartime demand for timber had brought “ships, sailors, money, and spirituous liquors ... in a manner [which] caused us to lay aside farming, our most innocent, and ...give up ourselves to the felling, squaring, hauling and squandering of money.”¹⁸ Timber coming from British North America accounted for 60% of British timber imports between 1808-1812 and by 1830 that figure rose to over 80%.¹⁹ It has been estimated that by 1810 Pictou merchants were receiving annually

¹⁷ Joseph Howe, *Eastern Rambles, op. cit.*, p. 146. Joseph Howe was a Nova Scotia politician, writer and newspaperman. He was a member of the Reform party and championed the Anti-Confederation Movement in the Maritimes. See Murray Beck “Joseph Howe,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 10, pp. 362-370.

¹⁸ George Patterson, *Memoir of the Rev. James MacGregor*, 1859, p. 370 as cited by Gwendolyn Davies, ed., *The Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters*, Carleton Press, Ottawa, 1990, p. xxi.

¹⁹ Julian Gwyn, “Nova Scotia’s shipbuilding and timber trade,” *op. cit.*, p. 211.

between £80,000 and £100,000 sterling for pine timber.²⁰ Clearly timber was the resource upon which early Pictou was built. Writing in 1825 at the peak of Pictou's success, Joseph Howe reported in his paper the *Novascotian* that:

Several new wharves have been built, which together with the old serve as a foundation for stores, mechanics shops, sheds, &c and all the other conveniences for a maritime commerce ... Sixty new buildings have been put up there in two years, and the preparations the approaching season are far more extensive than anything which has yet been done...²¹

Several merchant traders emerged from the opportunities of the British North American timber trade to assume the position of a ruling class in Pictou. Thomas Davison was one such merchant.

²⁰ Rosemary E. Ommer, "Anticipating the Trend: the Pictou Ship Register, 1840-1889," *Acadiensis*, Vol. X. no. 1, 1980, p. 72; Rev. George Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 244. Patterson's estimate of £100,000 on average, includes some of the out lying communities which shipped timber from Pictou, as Pictou was the only port of entry in the area during this period.

²¹ Joseph Howe, *The Novascotian*, 26 Oct. 1825 as quoted by Julian Gwyn, "Nova Scotia's shipbuilding and timber trade," *op. cit.*, p. 212-213.

III

The Davison Family of Pictou, Nova Scotia

Amid these turbulent social and economic events, Thomas Davison and his wife Jannet raised eleven children in their impressive sandstone home, located on the north-west corner of George and Water Street, facing the shores of Pictou Harbour.²² Thomas, a timber merchant, was a second-generation Scottish immigrant. His father William Davison, a gentleman farmer, had come to Nova Scotia during the early 1760s from Dingwall, in the Scottish Highlands, and settled in Portapique, a small community on Nova Scotia's Fundy Shore.²³ William Davison was a member of the Scottish gentry and the heir to the ancestral home of the Clan Davison, Tulloch Castle. In 1766 he married Jane Fletcher, another recent Scottish immigrant. The couple had five children. Thomas Davison, their second son, was born in Portapique in 1774.

²² Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou, op. cit.*, p. 256. Jannet and Thomas's children: Mary Jane b.1798 d. 1824, m. John McKay of Pictou; David b. 1799 d. 1860; John Brown b. 1803 d. 1845; Robert P. b. 1806 d. 1825; Annabell b. 1807 d. 1909; Margaret Eliza b. 1810 m. William Fletcher; James Bayne b. 1812 d. 1894; Peter; Samuel; Frederick; William, he became a train engineer in Pictou.

²³ All information regarding early Davison ancestry is courtesy of Audrey Davison Ryan, a descendent of Thomas Davison.

In 1797 Thomas married Jannet Urquhart of nearby Londonderry, Colchester County. Rev. George Patterson, a Pictou County historian, listed "David Urquhart and Family" as passengers of the ship *Hector*, who came from Sutherlandshire, Scotland, in 1773, and settled in Londonderry.²⁴ The newly married couple moved to Pictou in 1803 and by 1810 Thomas had come to occupy a distinguished position within the town as a successful businessman.²⁵ Local historian Frank H. Patterson named Thomas as one of Pictou's principal merchants, "next to [Edward] Mortimer [and] John Dawson."²⁶ Thomas became involved in a variety of business avenues: dry goods trade, shipbuilding, but most of his dealing revolved around the lucrative Pictou timber trade. Simultaneously, he began to take an active role in church and state affairs.²⁷

Thomas quickly rose to occupy a high ranking position within the local militia. In 1814, he was listed among the officers of the 5th Battalion of the Pictou Militia. Thomas held this commission along with such distinguished colleagues as Robert Pagan,

²⁴ George Patterson, *County of Pictou, op. cit.*, p. 454. Patterson wrote that the Urquharts had only one child, therefore it seems Jannet was a young passenger on board the *Hector*. However, she is not listed on George MacLaren's *Hector* passenger list. The passenger list has been disputed and varies from source to source.

²⁵ Frank H. Patterson, *The Founder of Pictou Town*, Truro, 1955, p. 47.

Edward Mortimer and John Dawson.²⁸ Thomas was among the first trustees of Pictou Academy and supported strongly the teaching of Rev. Thomas McCulloch.²⁹ His three eldest sons, John, David and James, were educated by McCulloch at his private Grammar School, which operated in Pictou between the summer of 1811 and January 1815, prior the opening of Pictou Academy. In 1813 Thomas wrote to Halifax merchant John Brown regarding the benefits of McCulloch's school and noted that his boys had "made very satisfactory progress" under his instruction.³⁰

The Davison family was also involved in the social and philanthropic elements of Pictou life. Upon Jannet's arrival in Pictou, she founded the Widows' Benevolent Society, and maintained a position within the society most of her life.³¹ Thomas was one of the founding members of the Pictou Friendly Society. The Society was formed on 5 May 1809 to "provide its members with financial help and visits during illness and funds to help defray expense of

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47. Roland H. Sherwood, *Pictou Pioneers*, Lancelot Press, Hantsport, 1973, pp. 52-55; Stanley Spicer, *Masters of Sail*, Petheric Press Ltd., Halifax, 1968, p. 42. All authors cite Thomas as a leading Pictou merchant.

²⁷ Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou*, Dawson Brothers, Montreal, 1877, p. 256.

²⁸ George MacLaren, *The Pictou Book, Stories of Our Past*, Hector Publishing Co., Ltd., New Glasgow, 1954, pp. 128-129.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129. B. Anne Wood, "Thomas McCulloch's Use of Science in Promoting a Liberal Education," *Acadiensis*, Vol. 17, no. 1, 1987, p. 61.

³⁰ Letter book of Thomas Davison; WAMS MG013 001.

³¹ Audrey Davison Ryan, unpublished research.

burial and a small pension annually to HIS widow and family.”³² Through community activities, including his support for the formation of the Academy, Thomas accomplished several things. He helped to ensure “the status and economic security” of his children by providing them with a source of education and introducing his “non-business” sons, to the intellectual and social elite of the community.³³ Thus, Thomas not only added to his own reputation within the community, but also worked to help solidify his family’s future prosperity.

This image of the perfect family was shattered, however, in 1817, when Thomas Davison abandoned his wife and eleven children and removed to Boston with Eliza Dawson, the recent widow of a former business associate and one of the most successful merchants in Pictou, John Dawson. Several years later, in 1831, Thomas died. His short obituary reflected his indecorous behavior, rather than his career and earlier social standing. It simply read: “At Boston, on the

³² Emphasis on the word ‘his’ was added by the creator. Hector Center Trust Papers, NSARM, mfm 13272.

³³ Peter Dobkin Hall, “Marital Selection and Business in Massachusetts Merchant Families, 1700-1900,” *The Family, its Structures and Function*, St. Maritine’s Press, New York, p. 234. Many of the other successful merchant families in Pictou sent their sons to the Grammar School and Academy, providing the Davison boys an opportunity to meet and befriend many of their future business associates. This educational opportunity also affected one son profoundly. John, Thomas’s eldest son, was a founding member of the Pictou Literary and Scientific Society, which met regularly to discuss literature and science. Members gave lectures on various scientific topics of interest to them. It appears that John was quite well educated and active in the intellectual community of

13th Feb. last, Thos. Davison Esq., late merchant at Pictou.³⁴ Eliza's death followed nine months later, when she was penniless and living in a Boston slum.³⁵ Eliza's youngest daughter Margaret, who had accompanied her mother to Boston, was rescued from the slum by Pictou lawyer and merchant Abraham Patterson. It was suspected that both women were alcoholics and had become involved in prostitution.³⁶ Patterson financed her return to Pictou, where she married and moved to Guysborough.

Jannet Davison was left with few alternatives when her husband abandoned her and their family. There were limited employment opportunities for women during this period, especially women associated with such a scandal. Furthermore, Nova Scotian laws allowed women in her position little recourse. A woman, upon marriage, relinquished all her assets to her husband, even future

Pictou. He also later served as a vital business and social link for his two younger brother James and David when they moved to Wallace.

³⁴ *Acadian Recorder*, March 26, 1831.

³⁵ Meghan P. Hallett, "Wives and Lovers. The Dawson/Davison Scandal. Pictou and Boston, 1817-1835," an unpublished paper, Saint Mary's University, 1996.

³⁶ Abraham Patterson had received some communication from Eliza and a Boston lawyer James Fullerton which led him to believe that Eliza and Margaret were alcoholics. He was also in communication with M.J. Hubbard, who was a Boston lawyer and sat on the board of directors of an institution for "penitent females", a charity which offered assistance to unwed mothers and women who were believed to be involved in prostitution. Following the death of Eliza, Margaret had been found living in a "house of ill fame" and was taken to the institution. "...I take the liberty of addressing you to obtain information in regards to a young woman named Margaret Dawson - Several Weeks since she was found in a very miserable condition in a House of Ill Fame, from which she was rescued...Mrs. D[awson] died I believe in Jany last and during the last years of her life, from what I

earnings. She could not enter into contracts, purchase or sell land.³⁷ As Rebecca Veinott has aptly noted: "common law reflected a complex constellation of cultural values [and] economic relationships,...[w]ives were effectively their husbands' chattels...[her] very identity was subsumed in that of her husband..."³⁸ Thomas, although not living in Pictou, was still legally required to support his family, but there were "no effective legal mechanisms" compelling him to do so.³⁹

Thomas and Eliza's departure must have scandalized Pictou. Both John Dawson and Thomas Davison were distinguished members of local society, and may at one time have been friends. Frank Patterson later wrote that the affair was one of the "highlights in the Pictou scandals of that time."⁴⁰ Nevertheless, Jannet and her family were not shunned by the community. We see this in the comments of Abraham Patterson. He told James Fullerton, a Boston

have been informed, I should judge that she has become much reduced in both character and circumstances." M.J. Hubbard to Abraham Patterson, 13 June 1832, Patterson Papers.

³⁷ For a further discussion of married women's property law refer to Philip Girard, "Married Women's Property, Chancery Abolition, and Insolvency Law: Law Reform in Nova Scotia, 1820-1867," *Essays in the History of Canadian Law, Volume III, Nova Scotia*, Philip Girard and Jim Phillips, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1990, pp. 80-127; Philip Girard and Rebecca Veinott, "Married Women's Property Law in Nova Scotia, 1850-1910," *Separate Spheres, Women's Worlds in the 19th-Century Maritimes*, Acadiensis Press, Fredericton, 1994, pp. 67-92.

³⁸ Rebecca Veinott, "Child Custody and Divorce: A Nova Scotia Study, 1866-1910," *Essays in the History of Canadian Law, III*, p. 275.

³⁹ Rebecca Veinott, "Child Custody and Divorce: A Nova Scotia Study, 1866-1910," *Essays in the History of Canadian Law, III*, p. 275.

⁴⁰ Frank Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

lawyer, about Davison having abandoned his wife "a *most worthy* woman and ten *fine* children..."⁴¹

Jannet remained solvent following Thomas's departure. Furthermore, she became a successful business woman. Generally, women were denied the right to carry on most business transactions. Widows, however, were given many more liberties than married women. Widows could carry on their husband's business, as well as purchase and sell land. It appears that the community chose to view Jannet as a widow, rather than ostracize her and her family for Thomas's behavior. After Thomas's departure but prior to his death, Jannet purchased a lot of land.⁴² Within the deed there is no reference to Thomas or another man acting on behalf of Jannet. This deed is quite relevant to the reconstruction of Jannet's position following her husband's departure. In effect, the community ignored the fact that Thomas was alive in Boston. The community clearly did not associate Jannet and her children with the scandal caused by Thomas, and instead gave her *de facto* status as a widow. She continued to carry on parts of his established dry goods trading

⁴¹ Abraham Patterson to James Fullerton, 23 January 1832, Patterson Papers, *op. cit.* The italics were added by the author. Patterson mistakenly wrote that Jannet had 10 children instead of 11.

⁴² In 1825 Jannet purchased lot, which included a house, barn and some timber, from John McKay for the sum of £40. Deed, John McKay to Jannet Davison, Registered 2 Sept 1825, Pictou County Deed Book, Vol. 10, NSARM, mfm 18478.

business, and ran a boarding house. Thus Jannet obtained the independence to provide for her family.

During these years of Jannet's leadership of the family, her children and especially her eldest sons David and John, who were eighteen and fourteen at the time of their father's departure - no doubt helped her operate the business. David was often a witness on legal documents concerning his mother. Jannet rented many of Thomas' properties and began to operate a boarding house, not an uncommon occupation for widows.⁴³ Her daughters would have offered her assistance in the cooking and cleaning duties, as Jannet provided her guests with meals, alcoholic drinks and a laundry service. As her sons grew, they undertook more responsibility and entered the local business community on their own, although always supporting their mother.

During this difficult period the community of Pictou supported the family by frequenting their place of business and keeping up old business ties, and the Davisons continued to grow and even prosper. For instance, one activity that Mrs. Davison undertook, was taking in washing. Jotham Blanchard, a distinguished member of the

⁴³ For a look at nineteenth century widows, see Michael Katz's *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth Century City*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1975.

community was one of her regular customers. It was also during this period that David Davison, Jannet's eldest son, made his first foray into the shipbuilding industry.

Raising a large family could not have been easy for a woman in Jannet's position. However, she managed to raise all eleven children, many of whom continued to live in Pictou and the surrounding area and became productive members of their community. Her service to the community and good reputation no doubt eased her life. This stalwart matriarch outlived many of her children and died in 1862 at Wallace, Nova Scotia, where she had long lived with her daughter Annabell and son James.

IV

As a young man David Davison was an ambitious shipbuilder. In 1817, at the age of eighteen, he built his first vessel, the *Messenger*. It was a fair-sized schooner for the time, 44 tons with two masts. He built it with his partner Nathaniel Powell. Both were listed on the vessel registry, as mariners and natives of Pictou. David and Nathaniel Powell each owned 32 shares in the schooner and it

remained in their possession until 1826.⁴⁴ Nova Scotian ship registries followed the British registration system where shares in ships were measured in 64ths. A shareholder might own only one or two shares, or one person might own the entire 64 shares.⁴⁵ Further on into the nineteenth century it was not uncommon to see several owners listed on the registry for the same shares. This system of ownership meant that the risk could be dispersed among investors. In comparison, if all 64 shares were owned by one person, then the proceeds would be concentrated, but that was both risky and expensive. David and Powell operated their schooner for nine years, likely sailing around Atlantic Canada in search of cargoes.

David joined forces with William Powell in 1828 to build the 60 ton schooner *Rival*.⁴⁶ David and William did not retain this vessel for as long; in 1830 the schooner was registered *de novo* in Halifax.⁴⁷ By using a vessel for themselves, the builders sought to

⁴⁴ Halifax Ship Registry; NSARM, Reel 14532

⁴⁵ Shareholding was not an exclusive investment of merchants. It was not uncommon to see mariners or farmers listed as shareholders. Also it was very common for the master of the vessel to retain several shares in the vessel, therefore providing some assurance for the owners that the master will behave responsibly with a vessels that he had an interest in. For a further explanation see Sager and Panting, *Maritime Capital, op. cit.*, p. 78-81.

⁴⁶ Halifax Ship Registry; NSARM, Reel 14532.

⁴⁷ A *de novo* registry is "one in which a vessel already on the registry is re-registered for a variety of reasons ... *De novos* were fairly common in the first half of the nineteenth century, but changes proclaimed in the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854 made them much less usual after that date." Reasons for this type of registry could be a change in port or in ownership. Halifax Ship Registry Guide, Maritime Shipping Project, Memorial University, 19, p. 22.

earn back some of their investment, through involvement in the carrying trade. During the first half of the nineteenth century the sale of "second hand" vessels was very common. There was a significant market for used vessels and most vessels changed hands at least once.⁴⁸ This recycling of tonnage provided small traders, farmers or mariners with an entry into one of the most dynamic elements of the early nineteenth-century economy.

Little is known of the Davison family between 1830 and 1837. It can be assumed that James and David spent some time studying maritime law and operations. Both are listed on numerous documents as master mariners and David acted as master for many vessels constructed in the brothers' shipyard. David was listed on numerous registers of Davison vessels as master. The term master denoted that one was qualified to take command of a vessel after passing a professional examination for a master's ticket. Many maritime insurance companies insisted that a licensed master command a vessel. The tickets were issued by the British Department of Trade, based on competency and experience.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Sager and Panting, *Maritime Capital, op. cit.*, p. 80.

⁴⁹ Peter Kempt, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1988, pp. 534 & 868.

David and his younger brother James were raised in a mercantile family. Both their father and mother were involved within the business community of Pictou, and no doubt the boys grew up learning about trade and the timber industry. In the years following the departure of their father, they were left in the position of having to work within the business, to aid their mother and help to care for their siblings. This must have provided a valuable learning experience. The persons that they met, the connections that they made and the lessons learned would be used as the foundation for a future business partnership between David and James, and played crucial roles in the success of their enterprise.

Chapter Two

1837-1840 - Challenge and Response

Regionally, the 1840s were a time of change and conflict. Following a period of relative stability during the 1830s, came a decade of economic instability, coupled with social and political turmoil. The old colonial policies established by the British government were being dismantled by both Whig and Tory governments in Britain. One of the first major policies to fall was that which regulated trade. Beginning in 1842, a new administration, led by Sir Robert Peel, ushered in an era of decentralization and free trade. The fundamentally credit-driven, export-based economy of the colonies, which had burgeoned under the old merchant regime, felt the cold hand of the Peel administration and many suffered under it.

Eliminated were the imperial policies which had been instituted to encourage trade with the colonies by increasing tariffs on foreign imports. The colonial staple trades of fish and timber soon began to suffer. In 1842, when the British government largely repealed the duty on foreign timber, colonial timber merchants faced

stiff foreign competition.¹ As the timber, shipping and shipbuilding industries were closely interrelated, these policy changes had sweeping effects. The 1849 dismantling of the Navigation Acts again put added pressure on Maritime shipbuilders and merchants, who lost all protectionist advantages that colonial shippers had enjoyed under the old British system.

The abrogation of the old colonial system precipitated several short-term economic slumps, which resonated throughout all aspects of the timber and carrying trades. During the initial years of the decade, trade and shipbuilding depreciated, recovering for a time in 1845-47. But again the economy fell into a depression in the last years of the decade, recovering only at the start of the 1850s. These slumps were devastating for many Maritimers. For instance, Nova Scotia's role in the international carrying trade was so severely affected, that much of the trade to the West Indies was virtually eliminated during the 1840s.²

In spite of this upheaval in Maritime trade, the local shipbuilding industry continued to expand throughout the second half of the decade. Builders began building vessels with a greater

¹ T.W. Acheson, "The 1840s: Decade of Tribulation," *The Atlantic Region to Confederation*, Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid eds., University of Toronto Press Toronto, 1994, p. 308.

carrying capacity, as well as an increased number of sails and masts - a reflection of the development of new technology and a desire to deliver their cargoes faster and more safely, to meet increased competition.³ Colonial vessels continued to maintain a position on overseas markets, as they remained comparably cheap for buyers in the United Kingdom. The proximity of timber supplies to Maritime builders allowed them to keep production costs down. Even following the repeal of the Navigation Acts, the United Kingdom remained a favorable market for colonial tonnage. Another crucial and often over-looked factor for this continued demand was the already existing relationship between the Maritimes and the United Kingdom. The economic expansion of the 1820s and 1830s laid the ground work for many over seas commercial partnerships and inter-dependencies. Numerous British buyers developed solid relationships with Maritime merchants and builders. They came to know and trust those they dealt with, and in many instances these relationships endured the difficulties presented by the economic changes of the 1840s. "The combination of British demand and British protection in the first half of the century," noted Sager and Panting, "left the

² *Ibid.*, p. 308.

Maritime colonies with a substantial shipbuilding expertise and infrastructure designed for the building of large ocean-going vessels.⁴ This infrastructure occupied a vital position in the world of nineteenth century merchant credit and business, where respectability, status, and networking could make or break colonial entrepreneurs.

Prior to 1850, shipowning in the Maritimes had yet to mature. The majority of builders and owners sold their vessels relatively quickly after construction. For example, Rosemary Ommer and Eric Sager discovered that 69% to 82% of vessels registered in Pictou during the 1840s had been built for the transfer trade.⁵ Vessels coming from this region were sold primarily at Liverpool and in Newfoundland. By 1846 almost 20% of vessels on the United Kingdom's registries were built in the colonies. That was a landmark year for Maritime builders, one of the most productive to

³ Eric Sager and Gerald Panting, *Maritime Capital: The Shipping Industry in Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 1990, p. 55.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁵ Rosemary E. Ommer, "Anticipating the trend: the Pictou ship register, 1840-1889," *Acadiensis*, Vol. X, no. 1, 1986, p. 75; Sager and Panting, *op. cit.*, p. 31. The difference in the data is due to the author's methodology. Rosemary Ommer considered only the major building centers of the North Shore, while Sager considered all vessels registered to the port of Pictou.

date. Of that 20%, approximately 70% of the vessels came from in the Maritimes.⁶

For many, the 1840s featured widespread social upheaval. Immigration continued, however more and more newcomers arriving in Nova Scotia were unskilled labourers who faced grave difficulties throughout the depression years. Many of these people were Highland Scots who upon their arrival in Pictou, decided to stay. Prior to the Highland Clearances, in which Highland proprietors emptied their estates of the small tenant farmers, many Scots chose to come to the colonies, and in particular Pictou, to make a better life for themselves. The largest influx was between 1801 to 1805, when as many as 1300 people landed in a single season.⁷ Often they came with some money to aid them in their new home. They were able to settle on lands already cleared by the deported Acadians or had their choice of lots. As a result of the Clearances, thousands of Scots were forced to leave their homes and opted to come to Nova Scotia. Much of the best farm land was soon taken, often leaving poorly-skilled newcomers to seek employment as labourers in a seasonally oriented economy. Out of these difficult years came an increasing

⁶ Sager and Panting, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-34.

trend toward urban and out-migration. Settlers abandoned their homes in the search of a better life in distant towns and cities, often in the United States.⁸

Politically, many Nova Scotians began calling for responsible government, a cause championed by figures such as Joseph Howe. The heated, and often violent, elections of the 1830s continued along Nova Scotia's North Shore, especially in Pictou, where battles between the Kirksmen and Seceders were often fought in the political ring. Overall, there were feelings of bitterness and dissension between those living in the North Shore and those in power in Halifax. It was not until 1836 that Pictou County became a separate riding from Halifax County, a situation which led many in Pictou County to feel underrepresented and their elected representative lacked any worthy influence.⁹ Despite the separation of the two counties, the violence continued in Pictou.

⁷ Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou, Nova Scotia*, Dawson Brothers, Montreal, 1877, reprinted in 1972, Mika Studio, Belleville, p. 222.

⁸ Acheson, "Tribulation," *op. cit.*, pp. 313-315.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 324. For further details of elections in Pictou, Cumberland and Colchester Counties, see Brian Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose at the Polls: Epic Nova Scotian Election Battles 1758-1848*, Formac, Halifax, 1994, pp. 216-287.

II

The Role of Timber

During the 1820s and 1830s the timber trade in the Nova Scotia continued to be a profitable endeavor. It slowly diversified as Nova Scotian and Maritime merchants recognized the potential of building their own vessels, rather than relying on British-built tonnage. The industry grew from one in which a few vessels were built by settlers for coastal fishing and transportation to a time when shipyards employed hundreds of men, producing several vessels per season, primarily for use in the transfer trade.¹⁰ However the rise of shipbuilding was far more complex than this. Factors such as war, global trading patterns, the Newfoundland fishery, and British protectionist policies on trading all had their positive and negative effects on the growth on this industry.¹¹

During the early years of the nineteenth century the industry remained small, however viable. It is difficult to quote exact

¹⁰ A further explanation of the mechanics of the transfer trade will be discussed in a future chapter. However, this phrase refers basically to the activities of Maritime shipbuilders who constructed vessels primarily for sale in the United Kingdom.

¹¹ Eric Sager with Gerald Panting, *Maritime Capital. The Shipping Industry in Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal & Kingston, 1990, pp. 23-46.

tonnage figures, as registers were not regularly kept until later on into the century, but it is believed that between 1815 and 1860 over 2.2 million tons were constructed in the Maritimes, compared to 5.2 million tons built throughout the entire United Kingdom during the same period.¹² Clearly, shipbuilding had become a major economic force in Nova Scotia and the Maritime provinces during the first half of the nineteenth century, which helped to shape much of the region's socioeconomic development.

Some of the largest and most successful shipyards of Nova Scotia's Northumberland Shore were begun by men from Pictou. Pictou has long been acknowledged as one of Nova Scotia's great shipbuilding centers, although only a small number of vessels registered at Pictou were actually constructed there.¹³ Dotted along the coast are numerous inlets and small, protected harbours, suited for shipbuilding. Almost every small village and town between Pictou and Pugwash produced vessels during the first half of the nineteenth century. In communities such as East River, Brule, and Fox Harbour, and in larger communities like River John and

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹³ Phyllis R. Blakeley and John R. Stevens, *Ships of the North Shore*, Maritime Museum of Canada, Halifax, 1963, p. 3. The Pictou ship registered opened in 1840, which attracted builders from surrounding areas to register their vessels in Pictou, rather than the next nearest registry that was located in Halifax.

Tatamagouche vessels were built that varied in size from small coastal schooners in the early years, to large barques destined for trans-Atlantic trade in later years. These yards operated as satellites of Pictou, it being the port where most registered their vessels and acquired rigging, chains, and other necessary materials.¹⁴ During the 1820s and 1830s, there was a small exodus to nearby outports of young Pictou entrepreneurs who wished to establish their own shipyards and business. Timber resources in and around Pictou had been exhausted early in the nineteenth century. The finer qualities of timber had been exhausted and all the pine suitable for trade was gone.¹⁵ Those wishing to participate in the timber trade and/or build ships, while remaining close to a ready timber supply, were forced to relocate.

Native Pictou names such as Purvis, Crerar, MacKay, McKenzie, Kitchin and Campbell resounded throughout the shipbuilding history of many communities along the North Shore¹⁶. One of the most notable of the merchants and builders of the North Shore, was

¹⁴ Despite New Glasgow's growing involvement within the industry, it had yet to match the activity of Pictou during the 1830s and 1840s. The Davison brothers along with other Wallace and Tatamagouche builders dealt almost exclusively with tradesmen and merchants in Pictou and Halifax. This fact might be tied to the relationships already formed between out-port builders and those in Pictou and Halifax, before New Glasgow began to make its presence in the industry.

¹⁵ Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

Alexander Campbell. Campbell left Pictou in 1823 to oversee the timber interests of Edward Mortimer (one of Pictou's most successful businessmen) in Tatamagouche, but abandoned his position shortly after his arrival and in 1824 began building wooden ships. Campbell went on to build hundreds of ships, and became a great land owner, a thriving merchant and finally a member of Nova Scotia's provincial legislature.¹⁷ Tatamagouche historian Frank Patterson noted that Campbell was quickly followed by others wanting to participate in the wooden shipbuilding industry.¹⁸

Another migrant was Robert Purvis, born in Pictou approximately at the same times as James Davison, and like many others, introduced into the industry by way of the timber trade. He came to Tatamagouche in 1837, settled and began to construct vessels. Later he moved his yard to the shores of Wallace Harbour, and there continued shipbuilding and ran a very successful general store.¹⁹ In only a few short years, many of the inlets and bays of Nova Scotia's North Shore had been transformed into shipyards

¹⁶ Stanley Spicer, *Masters of Sail*, 1968, pp. 48-50; Phyllis R. Blakeley and John R. Steven, *Ships of the North Shore*, Halifax, 1963; James M. Cameron, *The Ships, Shipbuilders and Seamen of Pictou County*, The Pictou County Historical Society, New Glasgow, 1990, pp. 25-40.

¹⁷ Frank Patterson, *History of Tatamagouche*, 1917, pp. 59-64.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 73; notes of Roy Kennedy, 1983.

producing vessels for domestic use, sale on the British market, and schooners for the inshore fishery.

Following other entrepreneurs, James and David Davison decided to leave their home in Pictou and begin a business of their own in a growing community along the North Shore. James chose to move to Wallace, while David went to Tatamagouche for several years to work with former Pictonian Alexander Campbell. Wallace had everything needed to establish a business. There was still waterfront property available and the forests surrounding the small town had yet to be harvested at any great rate. This was no doubt a big draw for James. His father was a timber trader, and he had witnessed the close relationship of the timber trade to shipping and shipbuilding. Wallace possessed enough of a population that labour would not be difficult to find. Most of all, at this time, Wallace did not have an established shipbuilding or merchant community that could compete with a newcomer such as James.

III

Wallace, Nova Scotia

Pictou was the center of social, political and economic activity on Nova Scotia's North Shore. Events in Pictou had ramifications throughout the shore. Often the immigrants who arrived in Pictou continued on to communities in Pictou County or further up the shore to Tatamagouche and Wallace. These communities were more of a mix than Pictou, a blending of English, Irish and immigrants, with already established Loyalist and Planter families. Such outposts were not immune to the diseases which affected the Pictou area. Epidemics of smallpox and diphtheria killed many Cumberland and Colchester County settlers.

While the elections of Cumberland and Colchester did not include the notoriously violent mobs that Pictou politics witnessed for several decades, the continuous battles between the Reformers and Tories did have an impact. Here too votes were bought with rum, clever hustling and rampant patronage.

When James Davison arrived in Wallace circa 1837, it was primarily an agrarian community, with very few service industries. Over the next forty years the dynamics of this small town would greatly alter, due largely to the arrival of men such as James and David Davison.

Writing in circa 1765-1775, Colonel Joseph Frederick W. DesBarres's recorded the following observations of Wallace:

*Ramsheg Harbour, The Flatts which extends from both Shores, at the entrance of this Harbour leave but a narrow Channel through which at all times (excepting at Slack Water) the Tides stream with great Velocity & render the Navigation into it very unsafe, altho the depth of Water is sufficient for a Frigate up to the Anchoring Ground... from the Mast Head the Flatts shew very distinctly.*²⁰

Despite Colonel DesBarres's first impressions of Wallace Harbour and Bay as being hazardous, ships would one day regularly navigate the dangerous narrows to reach what eventually became a bustling port and shipbuilding center. The waters of the Northumberland Strait flow into a large harbour, continuing into a small protected bay, which during DesBarres's time was bordered by lush forests.

²⁰ Colonel J.F.W. DesBarres's Chart of Frederick Bay, ca. 1765, as quoted by Frank H. Patterson, *Tatamagouche, op. cit.*, p. 64.

Besides timber, the lands surrounding the Bay yielded salt marsh hay, sandstone and salt deposits.

The community was originally called Remsheg, meaning in the Mi'kmaq language, the meeting of two waters, referring to the Wallace River, which empties into Wallace Bay. Wallace was first permanently inhabited by a small group of Acadian families prior to the 1755 expulsion. In 1783, the vacated Acadian lands were resettled by United Empire Loyalists.²¹ Loyalist family names such as Forshner, Tuttle and Peers, remain prevalent in Wallace today. By 1793 approximately 40 families resided in Wallace.²²

The 1827 census shows that Wallace was then mainly an agrarian community. Its population had risen to 103 families, comprised of 1211 individuals who were divided between the Anglicans and Methodists.²³ Included in the 1827 census was the occupation of each household head. Some 76% of the polled household heads declared themselves to be farmers. Only 2% said they were mariners, while close to 10% claimed they had a trade, and another 2% said they were innkeepers.

²¹ Harry R. Brown, *The Valley of the Remsheg*, The North Cumberland Historical Society, Oxford, 1973, pp. 1-4.

²² List of Remsheg household heads who paid Poll Taxes in 1793. A total of forty men listed. Remsheg Poll Taxes; NSARM, reel 13580, RG1, Vol. 444 1/2, no. 10.

²³ *Statistical Return of the Township of Wallace, 1827*; NSARM, Reel 13580, RG Vol. 446, no. 107.

Around 1837, at the age of 25, James Davison left Pictou and resettled in Wallace. The first record of James' presence in Wallace is a deed involving his purchase of a piece of land in March 1837. About this same period the written business records of James and David begin. David accompanied his younger brother on the move from Pictou, although he took a position with Alexander Campbell in his shipyard in nearby Tatamagouche. The early months of 1837 appeared to be an ideal time for the two men to undertake a move and establish their own business. The timber trade was booming and demand for colonial tonnage continued to expand. The first half of 1837 was the peak of this growth but then came a financial panic, which started in the United States, making the following years particularly difficult for many merchants, especially those attempting to establish themselves. This short-lived depression apparently had little effect on James, as he continued shipbuilding through the 1830s.

James no doubt chose Wallace for its sheltered bay and the availability of wood lands. One already-successful builder, and personal friend of the Davison brothers, Alexander Campbell, helped them get established. The brothers had attended Rev. McCulloch's

academy in Pictou with Campbell, so they no doubt were well acquainted. For the brothers, having a person of such influence and experience in their early years was of tremendous benefit. Campbell gave David a position in his firm and provided James with the credit and materials he needed to set up his business and home.

An excerpt from a March 1837 invoice from Campbell to James provides an example the rather large amount of goods James had purchased. Items such as "12 Tea Pots @1/1, 12 Doz. Cups and Saucers @ 3/1, 2 doz. 34 in. Scythes," were no doubt for resale in his store. Goods such as "1 Bible 11/-, 1 silk handkf [handkerchief] 4/-" were items he ordered likely for himself, and the "3 Coils 1-2-15 Rope @52/6, 6 1/8 in. Screw Augers @3/4", quite possibly were purchased for use by his yard workers.²⁴

Timber was the basis on which their business relationship was founded. Large portions of James's account with Campbell was often settled with timber and this timber was no doubt put to use in the large Campbell shipyard. Davison timber was also resold by Campbell on the British market. Cargo manifests signed by James, and registered at the Wallace Customs House, reveal that James

²⁴ Account of James B. Davison and Alexander Campbell, March - May 1837; WAMS MG009 Box 1 027-028.

loaded vessels with deals and battens, and shipped them under the title of "A. Campbell and Co." to buyers in England.²⁵ As a relative new-comer to the business, the association with a well-known businessman such as Alexander Campbell, gave James respectability and status. Selling his timber under Campbell's name would have aided him in his entrance into the overseas trade.

Whether or not Campbell's involvement with the Davisons was altruistic or self-interested, he nevertheless gave James the start that he needed. Campbell invested in several Davison-built vessels. James was always the principal investor but Campbell owned approximately 1/3 of each of the three vessels they built. In 1837, James and Alexander began building the brig *Alexander Stuart*. It was a vessel of 173 tons, 78 feet long. It appears that it was constructed for the transfer trade and was sold the following year to a buyer in Cork, Ireland.²⁶

Most of the vessels constructed at this time were built either on speculation or on contract specifically for the transfer trade. In Rosemary Ommer's investigation of the Pictou Ship Register, she

²⁵ Cargo Manifesto, Barque *Standard*, 1837; WAMS, MG009 Box 1, 192.

²⁶ Halifax Ship Registry; NSARM, reel 14532.

discovered that Wallace builders built only for the transfer trade.²⁷ A quick glance at register lists for Wallace built vessels confirms this. Most Wallace builders retained their vessels for no more than three years. Those who chose to build on speculation took more of a risk. The industry suffered major ups and downs, and building a vessels without a guaranteed buyer could be costly. To generate income while seeking a buyer, the vessel was often used in trade by the owners. For instance, an owner might send the vessel to Great Britain loaded with deals. If a buyer for the vessel could not be found in Great Britain, it might be loaded with British goods for shipment to British America, or sent on to Newfoundland to collect cod for export. Most Wallace built vessels were sold to British merchants or to entrepreneurs in the herring, cod and seal fisheries.

In 1838 Campbell again lent his backing to Davison to build the brig *Friends*. James owned 43 shares and Alexander 21. It was 151 tons and sold in the same year to merchants in Whitby, England. James used his profits to pay off suppliers such as Campbell and the Halifax broker William Lawson. In 1839, Davison built his largest vessel to date. The barque *Lawrence*, again owned in part by Campbell, was 490 tons and sold the same year to a merchant in

²⁷ Ommer, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

Beaumaris, a town on the Welsh coast. The last vessel the partners built together was the schooner *Dolphin*. James was registered as sole owner, but Davison letters and account records reveal that Campbell was a financial backer. James sold it in Halifax later that same year.

The following spring the pair chose to dissolve their informal partnership, a decision alluded to in a letter from Campbell to Davison of 23 April 1840 :”Since you left this Tuesday I have been endeavoring to make a statement of our account down to the 1st Inst. and feel very desirous the Business should be brought to an immediate close and settled in such way as will do Justice to both parties...”²⁸ Campbell requested that Davison’s account, the balance of which was £455-14-7 1/2, be settled in deals, due the 31st of December, 1840.²⁹ Why the partnership was dissolved is unclear; it is evident however that the two were becoming unhappy with their arrangement, and debate had erupted over the acceptance of a draft note. Lois Kernaghan has offered one explanation: “Alexander’s forceful ambition apparently precluded any long-term, harmonious partnerships...” and that within the community “...few dared to

²⁸ Alexander Campbell to James B. Davison, 23 April 1840; WAMS, MG009, Box 2, 072.

²⁹ Account of James B. Davison with Alexander Campbell, 1840; WAMS, MG009, Box 2, 015.

challenge him, since he was domineering and intolerant of opposition.³⁰ Local oral history records that the two had a falling-out which resulted in a long-lasting, bitter, relationship.³¹

During these first three years, James learned how volatile the shipbuilding industry was. Operating on credit between vessel sales was the norm, but it often made for difficult times. The industry was susceptible to extreme fluctuations in the market. Alexander Campbell expressed his exasperation with the unpredictability of demand for timber and ships in a letter to James, when responding to a request for several pounds needed to pay a creditor. Clearly Campbell wanted Davison, the eager young builder, to understand the nature of the industry:

...You must not blame me if new business has not been entered into... I now see this more and more every day but this fault is not mine. I wish you had my place for a few days to try your patience. I am doing all I can and will continue still to do so but I must not be expected to so now."³²

Following completion of the schooner *Dolphin*, James realized the difficulties of selling a schooner in the 'off season.' In a letter

³⁰ Lois Kernaghan, "Alexander Campbell," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, pp. 122-123.

³¹ North Shore Archives Society, Alexander Campbell file.

³² Alexander Campbell to James B. Davison, June 24, 1839, WAMS, MG009, Box 2, 007.

to Halifax merchant and ship broker, William Lawson, James expressed his concern : "...had [I] understood that Vessels of her kind could realize if not more in Sept....," he might have chosen to sell his vessel at another date which coincided with an up-swing in the market. James continued, "...[I] feel obliged to you to assist me with the prospects that I have in the present instances."³³ While waiting until the schooner could be sold at a profit, James arranged to send a cargo of timber to Halifax. Then the schooner would continue on to Labrador, to load herring and return to Halifax for what he hoped would be a fast sale.

Besides establishing himself as a shipbuilder, James Davison began to take steps to become a man of status, and respectability. Upon arriving in Wallace, James purchased a lot of land. As he earned money and credit, he purchased more real estate. At this time land was a significant sign of status, but also served as a source of credit. Land offered him a source of collateral when he experienced difficulty. In 1837, James purchased a two and a half acre lot for £100:

... beginning at the Northwest Corner of
lot number seventy five in Remsheg
Grant, now owned by the said Stephen

³³ James B. Davison to William Lawson Jr., Nov. 20, 1839, WAMS, MG009, Box 2, 128.

Treen ... Containing two and a half acres together ... all and singular the houses, improvements water courses casements commodities, appendantances hereof... Reg'd 8th December 1837.³⁴

This purchase contained a section of land on the north side of the post road (water side), which ran from Pictou to Pugwash, as well as a small section on the south side, where several years later James would build his new home. Apparently a blacksmith shop was included with this parcel of land, which was a great benefit to James, as he could have materials needed for vessels forged on site.³⁵

In the spring of the following year, for £250 James purchased another lot of land, the remainder of lot seventy-five. The two lots were separated by a small stream that emptied into the Bay. It was a large lot of 200 acres, containing a large house, a barn, some meadowland and woodland, and again it bordered on the Bay.³⁶ This

³⁴ Deed, James B. Davison from Stephen Treen, Cumberland County Deeds; NSARM, Reel 17560, Vol. O, p. 296.

³⁵ As recorded in the deed, Stephen Treen was employed as a blacksmith, and it is very possible had his own shop on his property. The author also considers this a strong possibility in reference to the very early entries in the Davison account books. Prior to the sales records for the store, James sold almost exclusively forged goods, such as horse and ox shoes, axe heads, plough blades, nails etc. to local settlers. The inclusion of a shop on the property no doubt made the land more attractive to him. Contracts between the Davisons and yard workers also records the hiring of a blacksmith to work in their yard. WAMS, MG009

³⁶ Cumberland County Deed Book, Vol. P, p. 230. Local lore states that the house located on this lot was constructed by Peter G. Tuttle, a Loyalist settler and that it was large and stately. The lot indeed

parcel of land provided accommodations for James, his brother and the men they employed in their yard.

Local history records that at one time there was an impressive 'colonial style' house on the property, constructed in the late 18th century by the original owner, Stephen Treen. The post road which ran along the shore from Pictou passed through the Davison property, the yard being on the north side and the house on the opposite side of the road, facing the yard. It is believed that when David moved from Tatamagouche to join his brother in Wallace, he lived with James in the house until when James built another house on the other side of the stream. James constructed the new house for himself and his new wife, as he was married in January 1841.

During the peak productivity of the yard, from the mid-1840s to the mid-1850s, it supported a blacksmith shop, saw pit, and numerous workshops. Local historians have recalled that the Davison yard was one of the best outfitted in Wallace. On the same section of land, and close to the Davison wharf, was the 1 and 1/2 story building which was used as a store. This building may have dated from the late 18th century, constructed by previous owners. It was

was formerly owned by Peter G. Tuttle and presently contains a large barn and the ruins of a small cellar, which was been dated to the Loyalist period.

a mortise-and-tenoned framed structure, secured with wooden pegs and handmade wrought nails.³⁷ The main floor provided enough space to display goods, while the upper story was much like a loft and would have provided excellent storage space. Over the next several years these lots, accompanied by the improvements made on them by James, were used repeatedly as collateral by James for the financing of his shipyard and store.

Local heritage recalls that several of the men employed in the Davison yard were boarded in the brothers' home across the road. The men slept in hammocks strung between the walls in a large attic above the kitchen. Presumably the rest of the workers were housed in cabins on the Davison property. The Davison brothers, like most builders of their time, paid their employees on the company-store system. However, they did differ in one way. Surviving contracts with workers reveal that often a large portion of their wages were paid in cash money, while the remainder was placed towards their board and/or came from the store.

³⁷ D. Mark Laing, *Davison Kennedy Property Condition Study Report*, G.F. Duffus & Company Ltd., Nova Scotia Department of Government Services, August 1991, p. 10. The second deed made note of buildings and improvements on the land, which it is believed referred to a large barn, house, and 1 1/2 story outbuilding. Presently only the barn and remnants of a stone foundation from the house remains. The small outbuilding which James used for a store was torn down in 1996.

The Davison brothers, like many of the industry's early owners and builders, used timber to finance their business. Timber became their prime source of credit and capital. They built their vessels of local wood and their vessels carried timber to Halifax and Great Britain. During the 1830s, the glory days of the 'Age of Sail' were beginning to unfold. Increasingly urban and rural builders were finding their niche in the growing transfer trade. At this time builders generally sold their vessels directly on the British market, rarely retaining a share, as the enterprise was still in an early stage of development.³⁸ The 1830s gave both brothers an opportunity to begin, while their already established partner and employer, Alexander Campbell, provided them with backing. By hiring David in his Tatamagouche yard, he gave him the chance to learn first hand about the industry. His financial support helped James to set up as a shipbuilder and merchant. During these early years the brothers established their future roles in their enterprise. David remained closely tied to vessel construction and transportation. He supervised work done in the Davison yard, and was often the master on board Davison vessels. James was the more dominant of the two. James operated in more public spheres, as he

³⁸ Frank H. Patterson, *Tatamagouche, op. cit.*, p. 60; Ommer, *op. cit.*

searched for investors or buyers and managed much of the Davison money. As the economy of the 1840s blossomed and the demand for wooden vessels grew, the Davison brothers of Wallace, Nova Scotia, were prepared to enter the new decade as independent builders and partners.

Chapter 3

1840-1850: Frontier to Boom Town & The Establishment of a Family Enterprise

Throughout the 1840s, within the tiny village of Wallace, expressions of economic, social, and political upheaval and change steadily multiplied. Wallace continued to grow, thanks to the timber trade and shipbuilding industry, which attracted both long-term settlers and transient labourers. The still-dense forest surrounding Wallace appealed to lumberers and builders alike. A large portion of the population claimed lumbering, shipbuilding and related ventures as their main occupation, rather than the typical rural occupation of agriculture. By the 1840s Wallace township was the most populated of any part of Cumberland County.¹ The lush marshlands left vacant by the expelled Acadians supplied many of the early Loyalist settlers with a source of rich and productive farmlands. This left a decisive mark on the history of the community, as Brian Cuthbertson has noted: "An observer of the Cumberland scene would have been astonished by the pronounced disparity in wealth between the older

¹Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou, Nova Scotia*, Dawson Brothers, Montreal, 1877, reprinted in 1972, Mika Studio, Belleville, p. 217.

and more established inhabitants of the marshlands, and that of the later and less fortunate settlers...²

Wallace was also in the throes of major changes in religious affiliation. The predominantly Presbyterian population from the Scottish Highlands became severely divided during the Great Disruption of 1843. Years of growing dissatisfaction within the Established Church of Scotland culminated in 1843, when close to four hundred ministers and leaders seceded to form the Free Church of Scotland. News of the controversy quickly crossed the ocean and the troubles plagued churches in the colonies. Within five years after their organization in Scotland, Free Church Congregations, Presbyteries³, and Synods had been founded in Nova Scotia. In the spring of 1845 the Free Church Presbytery of Pictou reported: "... the congregation at Wallace and Gulf Shore, about three quarters have adhered and are about to apply to the Synod for a Minister."⁴ In 1848, Wallace Free Church finally received a minister of its very own.⁵

² Brian Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose at the Polls: Epic Nova Scotian Election Battles 1758-1848*, Formac, Halifax, 1994, p. 217.

³ Presbytery is a court within the Presbyterian Church "composed of the ministers and one or two presbyters of each church in a district." *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Desk Dictionary*, 1977, p. 521.

⁴ Harry R. Brown, *Churches and Clergy of North Cumberland*, North Cumberland Historical Society, Pugwash, 1975, p. 73.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

To confront the growth of dissent, the Halifax association of the Established Church of Scotland sent a representative to gauge and enlist support for mainstream Presbyterianism. The elected representative Rev. Norman MacNair reported:

Wallace is a pretty, considerable, village, situated 46 miles west of Pictou. I only spent one week there, but my reception indicated that the Church of Scotland should cultivate this field. A Large congregation sat in the half finished church in the forenoon. Efforts have not been lacking to entice the people from her pale, but many remain attached to the Communion. The territory requires, at least, one full time minister.⁶

Rev. MacNair resigned from his appointment the following year, as he could not speak Gaelic, which was still required in Wallace.⁷

A quick glance at congregation lists reveals that the break from the Established Church divided the population of Wallace. Many of the community's business and political leaders were Scottish in origin, leading to many troubled business partnerships and an upheaval in political loyalties.⁸

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

⁸ For a further discussion of the role of religion in early Nova Scotian politics, see Brian Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose at the Polls: Epic Nova Scotian Election Battles 1758-1848*, Formac, Halifax, 1994.

The decade was also a formative time for education, travel, communication and social change in Wallace. Prior to the 1840s, the best way to reach Wallace was by sea, since the post road from Truro to Amherst (later known as the Sunrise Trail) lacked a regular stage coach until later into the decade. But by the turn of the decade Wallace was important enough to have regular mail service with Halifax, via steamer three days a week.⁹ For many years only privileged Wallace children received a formal education, taught in a private home first by a minister and later by a trained teacher. The new middle class families, who prospered from trade and shipbuilding, mounted displays of their wealth and status by contributing to the well-being of their community. Merchants had the first schoolhouse built for the use of the whole community. Local churches, many which dated from the eighteenth century, were also expanded or rebuilt, to accommodate local population growth.

Timber, farming and shipbuilding were not the only industries to employ Wallace residents. By 1840, Wallace's sandstone quarry was in full operation. The deposit had been discovered by the first settlers, but was not put to large commercial use until 1811, when construction on Province House was begun in Halifax. With the

⁹ Harry R. Brown, *Valley of the Remsheg*, North Cumberland Historical Society, 1973, p. 42

completion of that building, Wallace sandstone grew in demand and soon was being shipped as far away as New York and California.¹⁰

Wallace now possessed all the trade marks of an established town. Schools and churches were under construction, mail service arrived on a regular basis and due to the construction of the post road, travel to the community was not long and difficult. One could even visit Wallace on the regular coach service. Taverns, inns and stores had been established. More importantly, the village had several growth industries, aside from farming, which attracted investors and labours alike. Wallace sandstone was in demand all over North America and Wallace-built ships could be found in ports all around Atlantic Canada, the United Kingdom, and indeed the world.

II

Early Shipbuilding at Wallace

Shipbuilding at Wallace began in the 1820s, when several large yards were established along the shores of the Bay. By the later 1840s, shipyards of men such as Robert Purvis, John Crerar and Nicol Nicolson regularly produced vessels for the transfer trade.¹¹

¹⁰ Francis Grant, *Strait News*, January 29, 1976, WAMS.

¹¹ Halifax and Pictou Ship Registries, NSARM mfm 14532.

Wallace's shipbuilding industry began amidst difficult circumstances. Britain's drift toward free trade meant that local merchants faced uncertain prospects.¹² Many Wallace builders, including the Davisons, responded by using their vessels to transport timber or local goods to Britain and then return with dry goods, in the process keeping the vessel for several years after its construction. This shift away from the vessel transfer trade toward retained ownership of ocean-going tonnage for Wallace builders and merchants, added "much to the quality and standard of living of the colonists."¹³ Accordingly, the 1840s became a time of commercial development and growth for Wallace, as the village prospered, primarily thanks to the shipping and shipbuilding industries.

Amidst this upheaval, the Davison family continued to put down roots. As the brothers' business grew, so did their role in the community and surrounding county. James began a family of his own, an influential role in local politics, and involved himself in the social and religious life of Wallace. David concentrated his efforts on building vessels, running the yard, and acting as master for most

¹² T.W. Acheson, "The 1840s: Decade of Tribulation," *The Atlantic Region to Confederation*, Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid eds., University of Toronto Press Toronto, 1994, p. 308.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

Davison vessels on trading voyages or during their final voyages to their point of sale.

The Davisons had weathered family scandal and economic fluctuations of the 1820s and 1830s without suffering any long term financial set-back. During the first year of the new decade they experienced a most productive season, which launched James and David's twenty-year partnership. The Davison brothers were responsible that season for the building of three vessels: the schooner *Sisters*, 79 tons, the schooner *Velocity*, 165 tons and the ship *Colonist*, 639 tons. The Halifax Ship Register recorded James as the builder and David as master of all three. Both men were master mariners, but David seemed to be the only brother to accompany a Davison vessel to sea. The schooners *Sisters* and *Velocity* were owned outright by James. For several years, he used the *Sisters* to transport lumber while awaiting a buyer. The arrangement was outlined in a letter from Halifax shipbroker William Lawson Jr. to James Davison:

The *Sisters* is discharged and Juniper being sold at 35/7 & 33/9 per ton - I have advertised her for sale by auction this day in order to see who would probably purchase. Then [ill.] come forward say that she is entirely too

shallow for our trade being 8 ft instead of 9 or 10 feet. I have therefore concluded to send her back to you I hope that I shall be able to pick up Full freight for Tatamagouche & Wallace - she will Commence loading this afternoon & I hope to see she is sound & insured £1500 agreeably to your wishes. She is a fine vessel and I think she will sell.¹⁴

Despite the difficulties created by the design of the vessel, the *Sisters* was sold in 1842 to a Liverpool buyer. The *Velocity* also was sold shortly after its construction to a London merchant.¹⁵

The ship *Colonist* posed a greater risk to the brothers, who entered into her construction equally, both owning 32 shares. A vessel of such a size, if proved unprofitable or was wrecked, could bankrupt its owners. By sharing ownership the brothers only slightly lessened the personal risk they faced. The *Colonist* was retained by the brothers for several years and they used it to ship lumber and other goods to and from Halifax and the United Kingdom.¹⁶ Throughout this formative stage of their business, the brothers began to rely on a ship broker and merchant, William Lawson Jr., of

¹⁴ William Laswon, Jr. to James B. Davison, 5 August 1840; WAMS, MG009, Box 1, 070.

¹⁵ Halifax Ship Register recorded *Sisters'* register canceled on October 18, 1842 and registered de novo in Liverpool. The *Velocity's* register was canceled March 1841 and was registered de novo in London. James owned 64 shares of both vessels.

¹⁶ Pictou Ship Register recorded the vessel's register closed in 1843 and it was transferred to London in April 1843.

Halifax for assistance in locating buyers, cargoes and insurance for their vessels. For example, Lawson wrote in 1840:

It is time to be doing something about the Insurance on the ship. If you will let me know the particulars say the tonnage of the *Colonist* and the amount you wish insured on freight cargo and ship, I will attend to it. Please let me know by first mail. I trust that you have commenced loading and are getting forward.¹⁷

Despite the productivity of the Davison yard, local enterprise remained vulnerable to cyclical shifts in the larger metropolitan economy. Even such established firms of Cannon Miller & Co., a Liverpool trading and merchant company, faced moments of adversity.¹⁸ In January of 1840 James wrote Liverpool seeking to open a line of credit with the firm, in order to purchase ship rigging and other goods. His request, for the time, was declined with the comment:

The continued depression in trade in this country and the claims of our old friends and correspondents have looked upon us for assistance in this business [which] precludes our adding your names to our list of correspondence added to

¹⁷ William Lawson Jr. to James Bayne Davison, 5 September 1840; WAMS, MG009 Box 2, 072.

¹⁸ For more information on Cannon & Miller's relationship with Nova Scotian merchants see Julian Gwyn, "Nova Scotia's shipbuilding and timber trade: David Crichton of Pictou and his Liverpool associates, 1821-1840," *Canadian Papers in Business History*, Public History Group, University of Victoria, Victoria, 1993, pp. 211-233.

which we have determined not at present to open any new accounts ... otherwise we should have had much pleasure in the opening of an account with you.¹⁹

Boom and bust conditions in Britain tended to decrease demand for colonial tonnage. Between 1841 and 1845, only ten vessels were constructed in Wallace. But half of these came from the Davison yard. In 1841 James built the barque *Envoy*, 481 tons, which was owned by his associate William Lawson. The other vessel to be built that year was an impressive barque, the 536-ton *Perthshire*, which was sold the following year in Glasgow, Scotland.

The year 1840 marked an important milestone in the Davison yard history. It was the last time that the brothers owned a vessel together. Here, the beginnings of a division of labour occurred. For the next five years James would build vessels of which his brother was sole owner and master. David acted as master for the majority of Davison vessels, an important element of the brothers' business. Gregg Finley, in his work on family involvement in the shipbuilding industry, has noted the importance of kinship and the role of ship's captain:

¹⁹ Cannon Miller & Co. to James Bayne Davison, 18 January 1840; WAMS, MG009, Box 1, 068.

The captain was responsible for the vessel and its crew, for the safety of its cargo while at sea, and for supervising the final disposition of the cargo in a foreign port. As well, he had to purchase supplies for his ship, and often had to have it repaired between voyages or to arrange for additional fitting and rigging... The captain was consequently in charge of a large investment in the ship and its cargo.²⁰

With these factors in mind, David was the best choice for captain the Davison vessels. By employing his brother as master for his vessel, James ensured that his major investment was under close, trustworthy supervision. For David, acting as master on board his own vessels must have been a natural position. As master he became responsible for transporting the vessels which he built and owned to their point of sale.

Surviving Davison employee contracts reveal that, despite the listing of James as builder, David appeared to have played a very large role in the day-to-day operations of the yard. Even though James was recorded as builder of the schooner *Alert* in 1843, the contracts illustrate David's involvement, acting as a yard foreman of sorts:

²⁰ A. Gregg Finley, "The Morans of St. Martins, N.B., 1850-1880: toward an understanding of family participation in maritime enterprise," *The Enterprising Canadians*, Maritime History Group.

This agreement in and at Wallace this fifth day of April one thousand Eight Hundred and forty three Between Roderick Chisholm and Frederich Millard Ships Carpenters of the one Part and David Davison of Wallace of the other part ... (Roderick and Frederich) by these presents bind and oblige themselves to build for the said David Davison a Vessell [sic.] ... In consideration of the above Vessell being built and delivered afloat and sufficiently tight to him the said David Davison he the said David Davison truly agrees to find as follows Viz to find all Timber, Iron & Spikes, Plank and whatsoever maybe required...²¹

Nearly all surviving Davison shipyard contracts had been made between David and yard workers, with James signing only as a witness. The only contract made between James and yard workers was written in 1841, probably in relation to the construction of the barque *Envoy*. These contracts reveal that workers were bound to report to David, but were paid in part from the store operated by James, illustrating the interconnections of the Davison partnership.

Over the course of the next few years, James constructed several vessels of which David was master and owner. However,

Memorial University, 1979, p. 41.

after 1846, the brothers never paired up to build or own shipping.²² In 1846 David took on the shipbuilding aspect of the Davison business solely, while James secured cargoes, buyers and the financial backing to construct vessels. This year was important for another reason. Following the severe slump suffered in the early years of the decade, 1845-1846 marked a slow growth of new vessel registries around the province. In 1846, over 100,000 tons of newly-built Maritime and Quebec vessels were registered in the United Kingdom, an increase of over two-fold since 1843.²³ In Wallace, in 1846, no fewer than eleven vessels were constructed, totaling over 1100 tons.²⁴ It was the most productive year to date for Wallace shipbuilding. On average, the vessels were under 150 tons, typical of vessels during this period constructed for the transfer trade and nearly every vessel was sold on the Newfoundland or British markets. Of the eleven vessels, three were constructed in the Davison yard; all were built and owned by David Davison.

²¹Contract was signed by Robert Chisholm, Frederick Millard, David Davison and James B. Davison, witness. Contract between Roderick Chisholm and Frederick Millard with David Davison, 5 April 1843; WAMS, MG009 Box 1, 002.

²² This is true according to register records. However, it is the author's belief that James offered his brother some financial support and aided David in securing cargoes and buyers for his vessels.

²³ Eric Sager and Gerald Panting, *Maritime Capital: The Shipping Industry in Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 1990, p. 41.

²⁴ The total tonnage is no doubt closer to 1300 tons as the Ship Register failed to report any tonnage for the brigantine *Rio*, constructed by David Davison.

Table 3-1Breakdown of vessels built at Wallace, Nova Scotia, 1840-1849.²⁵

Year	Total Vessels	Average Tonnage	No. to Nfld.	No. to Gr. Britain	No. retained within N.S.
1840	6	228.5	-	5	1
1841	2	508.5	-	2	-
1842	2	111	1	-	1
1843	3	85	2	1	-
1844	2	102.5	1	-	1
1845	1	101	1	-	-
1846	9	119.6	3	1	3
1847	5	72.2	-	1	1
1848	1	121	1	-	-
1849	1	123	-	-	1

For the remainder of the decade shipbuilding continued to grow, despite another severe depression in 1847. Five vessels were constructed in Wallace during 1847 and only one in 1848 and 1849; the Davison yard produced one vessel each year. As the end of the decade approached, shipbuilding again was on the rise. New tonnage on ship registries around the province and region were increasing, and again times appeared to be bright.

²⁵ There is some discrepancy between the total number of vessels constructed and the location of transfer. This is due to the format of the table and the nature of the records. This table does not account for those vessels which were wrecked prior to their sale or for the vessels whose registry was left open. Halifax and Pictou Vessel Registries, Dalhousie University Archives.

III

The Nineteenth-Century Merchant

Credit was the basis for most colonial business relations. The early-nineteenth-century economy was seasonally oriented, operating within a usual period of twelve months, a reflection of the economy's harvests and timber marketing cycles. Upon tracing the line of credit from the farmer, to merchant to wholesaler, one is led back to the metropolitan centers of Great Britain, more specifically Glasgow and Liverpool in the Maritime context.²⁶ This cyclical nature of nineteenth century business usually meant that creditors did not receive their payment for months or even years. A pertinent example of this system might involve a shipbuilder who purchased rigging from a chandler in the late summer, following the construction of a new vessel. The builder was perhaps unable to pay the chandler until the sale of his vessel, which could be as long as several years, depending on market demand.

During this period, sterling or cash was a rare commodity. Business was conducted using barter, promissory notes, or the

²⁶ Douglas McCalla, "An introduction to the nineteenth-century business world," *Essays in Canadian Business History*, Tom Traves ed., McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1984, pp. 17-18.

promise of credit at one's place of business. These forms of exchange could be carried on in various forms for years. Under this system, familiarity, respectability, and networking strongly affected whom one might chose to do business with. A well-known man, who contributed to his community, likely would have easier access to credit than a relative stranger with few connections in the merchant world. During this period, when communication was slow and information scarce, the quality of one's sphere of influence could be the decisive factor to deciding whether to grant credit. The situation often led merchants to seek out relatives in others ports, as family and their immediate friends were generally considered relatively trustworthy. These kin-folk could provide merchants with information, and act as their agents.

Overall, then, family and friends could be considerable assets in the economic world of the nineteenth century merchant. Lenore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, in their study of the early nineteenth-century English middle class, have written extensively on the subject. They contend that kinship played a crucial role in the career of an aspiring entrepreneur:

... this personal element in the use of middle-class property was set in a network of kinship, 'friendship' and community... There are innumerable examples of the way personal ties entered into business and commercial affairs... Merchants, farmers and manufactures, and especially bankers, depended on London facilities and with trusted kin in such positions, the wheel of business turned more smoothly. Even at a more local level, kinship and friendship often provided the paths along which goods and services travelled.²⁷

This familiarity factor extended beyond the decision to grant credit. Shipowners also looked to builders whom they knew and trusted, or at the very least, whom a colleague knew and trusted, to purchase from. Quite often fear of the unknown prompted beginners to deal with builders in their vicinity. This practice, as Sager and Panting have described, "afforded several advantages: knowledge of the men and their reputations, the ability to supervise the work in progress, and the opportunity to take part in the supply of materials."²⁸

This system was a complex arrangement of inter-related credits and debits which transcended rank and status, running from

²⁷ Lenore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1987, p. 215.

the great merchant houses of Great Britain to the common farmer in rural Nova Scotia.. As Rosemary Ommer has noted, the system could “provide the debtor with an opportunity to better himself,” but it also “ placed him in jeopardy in the event of an unsuccessful season,” forcing many debtors to worry about a descent into debtors’ prison.²⁹

The positive and negative aspects of family ties and credit were well-known to the Davison brothers. Growing up in the shadow of a merchant father in Pictou at the height of the timber trade, had a lasting effect on the two young colonials. The family that the brothers left behind in Pictou continued to aid them in their Wallace enterprise. The elder of the two, David, never married, but shortly after James arrived in Wallace, he wed the daughter of a leading Nova Scotian family. The constant presence of the Pictou Davisons in James’s and David’s lives secured their business transactions, while James’s new marriage introduced the Davison brothers to many of Nova Scotia’s political and mercantile elite.

The Davison family correspondence included numerous letters from John Bayne Davison, the brother who was born between David

²⁸ Sager and Panting, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

and James, and who spent most of his life in Pictou. John's correspondence with his brothers also serves to illuminate two facets of nineteenth-century life: the precarious position that a satellite community such as Wallace endured and the crucial role that John played as an agent and source of information for his brothers. The people of Wallace relied heavily on the goods that local merchants such as James could purchase from wholesalers elsewhere. James's success often relied on the efficiency and honesty of his agents abroad. The surviving letters from John reveal that he acted as a source of political, economic and social information for his brothers. Moreover, he acted on behalf of his brothers, locating goods requested by James, or providing items which he thought might be of use to the Wallace firm.

For example, in the early winter of 1838, James contacted his brother to request fish for the Wallace store. His brother replied in March 1838:

I send the articles as ordered as well as I can. There is no such thing as Herring or any such thing as Fish at all except some fine Codfish. I send all that I have. The articles are as below which is as much as I think that your man can

²⁹ Rosemary Ommert, "Anticipating the trend: the Pictou ship register, 1840-1889," *Acadiensis*, Vol. X, no. 1, 1986, pp. 309-310.

take... 800 Pork, 3 3/4 Flour, 91
Codfish, 50 Barley, 1 Coffee Mill, 8 Gu.
Rum, 1 Gu. Brandy, 10 Rice.³⁰

To retrieve these articles, James sent one his employees, who was put up by his brother through the time needed to gather the goods, before returning to Wallace. John, of course, charged the expense of having this guest to his brother reporting: “[He drank] 2 Gills Rum, I charge them to you. The amount of his account is £1.6.11 1/2 which I may place to your debit.”³¹

Here, John illustrated how familial ties buttressed colonial business. He was constantly securing material his brothers might need for their store or shipyard. James gave him the authority to purchase goods on his behalf, and to make decisions for him when necessary:

... I think that I will give Crerar a small order for some retailing articles that you might not think of which I think will be no harm, as a shop here now [ill] some variety and I think Dry Goods do best when there is a good assortment...³²

This correspondence also served as personal communication, and John was always eager to keep his brother up to date on Pictou

³⁰ John Bayne Davison to James Bayne Davison, 2 March 1838; WAMS, MG009 Box 2, 048.

³¹ *Ibid.*

events, in letters, which often blended business with other news.

For example, in December 1839, John wrote saying:

... I have your favour of the 21st... I fear that your chance for sledding this season is but small. I rec'd from Geo. Hatton 50/ which he says you lent him which I retain for the money paid McKinnon as also 40/ paid McIntosh as I am making up money for Halifax. The Balance of M. McLeod a/c is £3.3.6 1/2 which I have charged to you and forward the Receipts as also deposit money... We have a Petition forwarded against this new batch of magistrates and with the Election there will be nothing but row after row, we are all well wishing you the same...³³

Correspondence from John ceased after 1841. Very little is known of this Davison brother, except that he died in 1845. Possibly, he was ill for sometime prior to his death, and opted out from business transactions for his brothers, due to poor health. In any event, John's death must have been a blow to his brothers, since they lost both a close relation and a valued business ally.

The other crucial kinship tie within the Davison enterprise involved James's new wife, Lavinia, daughter of Robert and Lavinia Dewolf Dickson and granddaughter of Charles and Amelia Bishop

³² John Bayne Davison to James Bayne Davison, 10 December 1839; WAMS, MG009, Box 1, 034.

Dickson.³⁴ Charles Dickson was the son of Major Charles Dickson, who had commanded a company of soldiers at the capture of Fort Beausejour in 1755.³⁵ Charles Jr. became active in business and state, operating as a successful and influential merchant, a shipbuilder, farmer and the Registrar of Deeds for Colchester County, the provincial representative in Halifax and for a time, a Justice of the Peace for Pictou and Colchester Counties.³⁶ Many of his sons and grandsons followed in his steps, acquiring positions among the mercantile and political elite of their area and the province. Robert, Lavinia's father, was also a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner of Sewers, represented Onslow in the Legislature, was a Colonel of the Militia and a successful farmer.³⁷ Charles and Lavinia Dewolf were married in Horton, but later removed to Onslow to raise their children.³⁸ Among Lavinia's Dickson Davison's numerous and noteworthy uncles, aunts and cousins, were Mary

³³ John Bayne Davison to James Bayne Davison, 10 March 1840; WAMS, MG009, Box 1, 059.

³⁴ Thomas Millar, *Historical and Genealogical Record of Colchester County*, Colchester Historical Society, Truro, 1873, pp. 384-385.

³⁵ Arthur Wentworth Hamilton Eaton, *The History of Kings County*, 1910, p. 643.

³⁶ Millar, *op. cit.*, p. 384; Eaton, *op. cit.*, p. 644.

³⁷ Millar, *op. cit.*, p. 384.

³⁸ The couple had ten children: Charles Edward, b. 1799; Sarah Amelia Dickson, b. 1801, m. John Roach; Elisha Dewolf Dickson, b. 1803; Robert Benjamin, b. 1805; Joseph McLean b. 1807; Jacob Thomas Dickson, b. 1809, unmarried, lawyer, teacher and government official; John Dickon, b. 1811; Lavinia Dewolf Dickson, b. 1813, m. James Bayne Davison 1841; William, b. 1815; Abigail, b. 1818. Source, Emily McKay Dewey, *The Dickson Book*, 1950. See Appendix B for a Dickson-Davison family genealogy.

Archibald Campbell, the wife of Tatamagouche shipbuilder and merchant Alexander Campbell; Thomas Roach, husband of Mary Olivia Dickson; John Roach, who married Sarah Amelia Dickson; and Thomas Dickson, husband of Sarah Patterson.³⁹ In 1802 Lavinia's aunt Elizabeth, who was only fifteen at the time, married a young lawyer, Samuel George William Archibald. Elizabeth, being from "a family that was highly influential in public life," was the perfect match for the future judge, member and speaker of the House of Assembly.⁴⁰ Another well respected lawyer, Lavinia's uncle Thomas Dickson, held a seat in the House of Assembly, as well as lesser positions, such as registrar of probate.⁴¹ The Dickson family had a tradition of reform politics and provided Nova Scotia history with some of the most colourful and exciting provincial elections.⁴²

In Lavinia, James could have not found a better wife. She was a well-educated woman, twenty-eight years old when they married, on January 28, 1841, in Onslow. Their granddaughter Mary Davison Kennedy described her grandparents' wedding day thusly:

³⁹ Mary Archibald Campbell was the daughter of Olivia Dickson and Colonel David Archibald, who was the brother of the Hon. Samuel George William Archibald.

⁴⁰ J. Murray Beck, "Hon. Samuel George William Archibald," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. VII, p.21-25.

⁴¹ Allan C. Dunlop, "Thomas Dickson," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. VIII, p. 222.

⁴² See Brian Cuthbertson, *op. cit.*

...This old house [now WAMS] was built and furnished for her and contained everything when she came, even to trained servants, as Annabell Davison had come from Pictou to do just that. And it was a good thing as "Viney" was a "DeWolfe" and practically useless about housework. She had gone to school at Horton Academy and was a perfect lady and never changed. Grandpa and Grandma were married Jan. 28, 1841, in Onslow and drove in a sleigh to Wallace that day, and the next, stopping at a Halfway House in Wentworth. Grandma was a tall, very thin girl, and nearly froze. I have her wedding dress of wool and silk, cream with tiny waist and voluminous skirt. Also her slippers of white kid, no heels and white silk stockings. Also, I have a green silk which she never liked, didn't wear out. It is like new. All their materials were imported: probably French. Most of her finery was used up. Mary got a lot and all the best silver when she married.⁴³

The house, which James had constructed about 1840, now looks rather plain, but in its time would have appeared quite grand. A two

⁴³ Mary Davison Kennedy to Emma Dewey, 1950, WAMS. The only evidence of Annabell Davison, James's elder sister, living in Wallace comes following the death of David Davison in 1860 when both she and her mother came to live in Wallace, but not a servants for James and his family. The sentence "Mary got a lot ..." referred to Mary Kennedy's aunt Mary Dickson, whom she was no doubt named for. Mary's reference to her grandmother receiving an education at Horton Academy is puzzling. The only known academy at Horton during the period of Lavina's youth was a Baptist school for boys. In all likelihood, Lavinia attended a private school possibly operated in a private home. Frank H. Patterson wrote of his great grandmother, Mary Dickson, that her younger sister Elizabeth, "had been sent for her education to a 'select Academy for Young Ladies', near Wolfville. It is possible that Mary was referring to this same institution. Nothing is known of such an academy. At the time the only school which operated under a government charter, were those created for the education of boys only. Boarding schools operating in private homes at this time were however, not unheard of.

story-house structured in Classical Revival style, it included a full cellar, and stood directly across from Davison's shipyard. The front facade, facing the water, "shows a three bay organization with windows balancing on either side of the entrance..."⁴⁴ A large entrance followed down a hall, with two large rooms on either side and led into a large ell, used as the kitchen. One of the most notable elements of the house was the central hall. A panelled semicircular arch divided the hall midway. "The parlour chimney pushes into the hall on the east side, the principle of symmetry dictates a matching 'pier' on the west wall, even though the west 'pier' is only an empty cavity."⁴⁵ The entire length of the central passage was decorated by an ornate hand-painted stencil, one of the few surviving examples of pre-1860 stenciling in Canada. The second story consisted of five medium-sized rooms, plus a large open attic over the ell, in which Davison yard workers were boarded. The room over the vestibule was said to be used as James's office, as it overlooked the yard, an ideal space for this purpose.

Most of the domestic duties fell not to Lavinia, but rather to servants. Although only one servant been identified, it is likely that

⁴⁴ D. Mark Laing, *Davison Kennedy Property Condition Study Report*, Nova Scotia Department of Government Services, August 1991, p. 14.

a man of James's stature would have employed several domestics, with one being assigned to see to the needs of his workers. A balance sheet, dated 1850, with local doctor Charles Creed reveals that James had Dr. Creed, of nearby Tatamagouche, visit a young girl in his employ: "July 13 1844, Pill for Servant Girl, £0.1.0."⁴⁶

Unfortunately all the correspondence created by the Davison women has been lost, so the little that we know of Lavinia derives from her portrait, along with many personal effects, which remain in the Davison Family Collection, held by the Wallace and Area Museum Society. Given the absence of any written communication from Lavinia, one is forced to examine the 'physical' evidence of her life. Her gowns and several of Lavinia's lace bonnets and lacemaking tools survive. Artifacts such as these, "speak forcefully," as Davidoff and Hall have insightfully written, "for what is seldom said in words."⁴⁷ Raised in an upper middle class home, Lavinia no doubt learned lacemaking from her mother, older sisters, or as part of her education, and spent many hours working on this and other domestic improvements, suited to a woman of her station.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴⁶ Account of James B. Davison with Dr. Charles Creed, 1850; WAMS, MG009 Box 1, 038.

⁴⁷ Davidoff and Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 387.

Lavinia's education added to her prestige as a moral and proper lady, which benefited her new husband's reputation. "...Women were regarded as central to the image of the family status, their training was directed to that end."⁴⁸ Clearly, Lavinia was a key player in the success of the Davison family. Peter Dobkin Hall has insisted that many marriages among merchants in the nineteenth century occurred "for purposes having no direct connection to the family except insofar as it benefited from the increased profitability of the family firm."⁴⁹ Primary commercial activities at this time were concentrated within a small circle of kin, and the Dickson family was wealthy and well established.⁵⁰ So this provided James with an already-entrenched commercial group which he could call upon during his preliminary years of business to help him establish himself within the business and later the political community. It was "the [kin] *group* from which these entrepreneurs derive[d] so much of their strength," as "personal

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p 289. For more information regarding the role of women's education in relation to her marital social status see Lenore Davidoff, *The Best Circles: Society Etiquette and the Season*, Croom Helm, London, 1973, pp. 32, 51, 93.

⁴⁹ Hall, "Family Structure", *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40; Miller, *op. cit.*, Dewey, *op. cit.*

contacts of individual members of the family [were used] to benefit the careers of other family members.⁵¹

The marriage spoke volumes about the Davison family's position in Nova Scotia society. With Lavinia a member of a distinguished family, the man she married was required to support her in a manner to which she had become accustomed. On the threshold of marriage, James B. Davison began to accumulate civic honours. In 1840, he became Master Extraordinary of the Court of Chancery. With this appointment, James obtained power to "administer oaths to all persons answering or making affidavits to be used in the said court..."⁵² Others appointed to the same position in the local area were the Hon. Alexander Campbell, of Tatamagouche, Lavinia's uncle Thomas Dickson, of Pictou, and the Hon. James Shannon Morse, an Amherst lawyer.⁵³ James was the

⁵¹ Robert K. Lamb, "The Entrepreneur and the Community," *Men in Business, Essays in the History of Entrepreneurship*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1952, p. 103, and Deborah Gorham, "Victorian Reform as a Family Business: the Hill Family," *The Victorian Family, Structures and Stresses*, Croom Helm, London, 1978, p. 121, respectively.

⁵² Records of all Oaths of Office, Province of Nova Scotia Court of Chancery; NSARM, MG 100, Vol. 226, #40.

⁵³ The political implications of this appointment is likely a reflection of James's station and political patronage. Campbell and Dickson were both Liberals and future reform supporters. Campbell was a strong supporter of Dickson in the 1840 and 1841 Colchester County by-elections. Dickson became a strong supporter of Joseph Howe. Morse was the only Tory appointed in the Colchester-Cumberland region at this time. Kernaghan, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-123; Allan C. Dunlop, "Thomas Dickson," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. VIII, p. 222.

youngest among these appointees, suggesting new-found social status, which would only benefit the Davison family business.

During the remainder of the 1840s James continued to cultivate social, business and political relationships. No doubt he was more than just an intrigued bystander during the many fiery election battles of that decade, episodes fueled by rum and strong-arm tactics, notorious to the north shore.

James also became a father for the first of five times in 1842, with the birth of his daughter, Mary Campbell Davison. It is interesting to note the middle name which the couple chose for their daughter. By this time, James and Alexander Campbell's business connections had ceased, in a supposedly unpleasant manner. This likely caused some difficulties in the Davison home, since Lavinia's cousin was married to Alexander. Perhaps this choice of name was a good-will gesture. At the very least, it illustrated the close ties between kinship and business. In 1844, the Davisons had a son Arthur, and the following year Robert Dickson was born. In 1849 David was born, no doubt named for his uncle, and their last child, Charles Creed, possibly named for Davison family friend, Dr. Charles Creed, was born in 1852.

The 1840s was a crucial decade in the history of the Maritimes. The shipbuilding industry, as many other industries, evolved from the form of an enclave industry, dependent on Great Britain, to an increasingly independent enterprise. The dismantling of the old mercantilist trade policies led to increased foreign competition. Slowly, Maritimers learned to compete in their new environment, and the shipbuilding and shipping industries changed and grew in response to the new economic forces.

The 1840s was also a busy decade for the Davison family. Their store and shipyard must have become one of the most active parts of town. At any one time, a group men were at work in the yard. Townspeople were stopping by to purchase items from the store, and to visit the family. The yard also provided employment for men throughout Cumberland and Colchester Counties. Both brothers were supporters of responsible government, and supported it in their community.⁵⁴ By the end of the decade the brothers had settled into a division of labour which appeared to suit both men. James occupied himself with the financial support of their business, while David continued to build vessels.

⁵⁴ James and David signed petitions which were circulated throughout Wallace, to demonstrate their support for responsible government. NSARM, reel 15605, Vol. 8, #20.

The new decade became a period of unprecedented growth. Wallace shipyards enjoyed their most productive years, while James had several hundred names on his ledgers and would consider a Father of Confederation one of his closest friends. The following chapter will explore the 1850s, keeping in mind the role of family , friends and community in the Davison family business.

Chapter 4
1850-1870:
The Peak and Decline of a Family Enterprise

The 1850s have come to be known as the beginnings of the 'golden age' for the Maritime Provinces.¹ In Nova Scotia, Responsible Government had been won as of 1848, and Maritimers thrived under their newly acquired autonomy. Education came to be viewed as a right for all, rather than a privilege for few. Religion no longer occupied as large a role in educational politics, as legislation which had made the Church of England, the established church of the colony, was abandoned.² The Roman Catholic Church however, remained steadfast in its battle for separate schools. The railway debate had begun and many Maritimers hoped that a link to the Canadas would lead to increased commercial activity. Throughout the decade, rail lines were constructed around the region, though a

¹ See Julian Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations: Maritime Commerce and the Economic Development of Nova Scotia, 1740-1870*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston, 1998 for an examination of Nova Scotia's economic history. In particular Gwyn addresses the term 'golden age' and its use in the description of the Nova Scotian economy.

² Ian Ross Robertson, "The 1850s: maturity and reform," *The Atlantic Region to Confederation: A History*, Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid eds., University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1994, p. 340. For a further examination of the history of education in Nova Scotia see Terrence Murphy, "The religious history of Atlantic Canada: the state of the art," *Acadiensis*, XV, no. 1, 1985, pp. 152-177; B. Anne Wood, "The significance of Evangelical Presbyterian politics in the construction of state schooling: a case study of the Pictou District, 1817-1866," *Acadiensis*, Vol. 20, no. 2, 1991, pp. 62-85.

rail connection to the Province of Canada would not be realized for another twenty years.

During this era shipbuilding, shipowning, and trade continued to expand. Fleets around the Atlantic Provinces grew, as did the life span and tonnage of individual vessels. This surge derived from eastern Canada's successful entrance into the international carrying trade. From the 1850s to 1890s, Atlantic Canadians maintained a prominent position in the world carrying trade.³ One of the most marked changes, which indeed was a factor in these 'boom years,' was the changing patterns of vessel ownership. Some historians believe that this ownership pattern was inexorably related to this 'golden age of sail.' "The age of sail," Eric Sager claimed, "was essentially a shift from short-term to long-term shipowning..." and the boom in owning "resulted from the longer retention of local assets..."⁴

The appearance in the 1840s of increased vessel tonnage continued into the 1850s. Frederick William Wallace dubbed the decade the "era of famous ships."⁵ Builders began to construct

³ Eric Sager and Gerald Panting, *Maritime Capital*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal & Kingston, p. 88.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁵ Frederick William Wallace, *Wooden Ships and Iron Men*, Charles E. Lauriat Co., Boston, 1937, p. 42.

grander and better out-fitted vessels. The success and social position of many Maritime builders had become recognized around the region. Many prosperous business men throughout the Maritimes owned shares in wooden vessels or invested in shipbuilding on some level. The *Acadian Recorder* reported that while "no young man can rationally hope to attain, in Nova Scotia world-wide renown as a lawyer or a doctor," nevertheless he "may attain such hopes as a shipbuilder."⁶

II

The Coming of the 'Golden Age'

Nevertheless, the opening of the decade did not seem promising for Maritimers. The economic fluctuations of the 1840s appeared to continue into the 1850s. 1850-1851 were difficult years for many, as traditional Nova Scotian exports declined. A depressed demand on the British market for Nova Scotian agricultural and forestry products, coupled with the competition which local fishermen faced by better outfitted Americans, meant lean times for many Maritimers. The dismantling of the British Navigation Acts in 1849 effectively removed all restrictions on foreign shipping, which

⁶ *Acadian Recorder*, 4 November, 1854, as cited by Rev. George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou*, Dawson Brothers, Montreal, 1877; reprinted by Mika Publishers, Belleville, 1972, p. 217.

allowed the Americans to enter into British trade. On the surface, it appeared that this might have had adverse effects on colonial builders and traders, however they soon found that they could compete, as trade took a favorable up swing in the middle of the 1850s.

After several unstable opening years, eventually this decade was to become one of the best in recent memory, since the Napoleonic Wars. The Maritimes still operated within the old commercial system. The steamship, while no longer a new invention, did not yet greatly affect the market for wooden vessels, nor disrupt the operations of the carrying trade. The market for Maritime goods continued to expand; Nova Scotia exports such as fish and fish products and potatoes were on the rise. This diversity of markets and goods contributed to a somewhat more stable economy.

One of the largest influences on the Maritime economy during this period was the signing of the Reciprocity Treaty between Britain and the United States in 1854. Free trade, reinforced by British demands for trading and transport vessels during the Crimean War, resulted in a colonial shipbuilding and shipping boom

during the mid 1850s. At this point, exports from the Canadas and Maritimes to the United States began their ascent, to reach a peak during the American Civil War. The discovery of gold in California and Australia at mid-century created a demand for vessels to transport thousands from Britain and North America, who were eager to make their fortune in gold.

The boom created by the Crimean War added to the furtherance of the impression of a Maritime 'golden age.' Certainly by the close of the decade the economy appeared bright, as it seemed that the Maritimes were edging closer toward self-sufficiency. Prospects dimmed for a time at the conclusion of the war in the Crimean. Following the end of hostilities investment in Britain declined sharply, which in turn affected shipbuilding in the colonies. But, as Sager has concluded, "net capital formation in shipping in the Maritimes faltered only slightly in 1858 and 1859" and experienced a resurgence in the 1860s.⁷ This short-term recession in the colonies was one of many, and serves to illustrate the precarious situation which the colonial economy operated. The cyclical swings in British and European economies often dictated the direction which

⁷ Sager, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

the colonial economies would take, as so much of colonial exports found markets abroad.

Overall, it was a time when appearances were deceiving. Ian Ross Robertson aptly observed: "The term 'golden age' may be a survival from another historiographical era, and may obscure either 'danger signs' that contemporaries failed to notice or anxieties of the same people about being left behind economically..."⁸ On the horizon were the iron hulled steam vessels, capable of traveling at reliably higher speeds and their construction was more resilient than traditional wooden vessels. As noted earlier, steam was not a new invention. Beginning in 1831 the *Royal William*, a 1000 ton steamer driven by 180 horsepower engines, was one of the first steamers in colonial British America, running from Pictou and various ports around Lower Canada and the Maritimes. Due to an unfortunate encounter with cholera, the *Royal William's* colonial career was cut short and the vessel was disposed of. However, a Canadian vessel was constructed in 1832 to take the *Royal William's* place. The General Mining Association purchased the *Pochahontas* to "ply between Pictou and Charlotte Town, sometimes going as far as

⁸ Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

Miramichi.⁹ Steamers continued to run as transport and mail vessels around the North Shore of Nova Scotia. Despite the early uses of steam, the technology did not have a negative impact on Maritime shipbuilding for several more decades.

III The Peak of Shipbuilding at Wallace

The residents of Wallace, Nova Scotia, not having the gift of foresight, made every attempt to benefit from the flourishing economy of the new decade. Wallace continued to grow, influenced in part by expansion in the shipbuilding industry. The community's population had increased to 2500 by 1861, mainly through natural increases, so that the majority of Wallace families continued to be of Scottish origins. While over one-third of the population claimed to be employed in a marine-related occupation, agriculture remained the largest occupation of Wallace residents. Despite the relatively small population, Wallace supported a variety of businesses and occupations. There were, for instance, 2 surgeons, 36 carpenters, a tin smith, 6 teachers 13 shoe makers and 10 millers in the village.¹⁰

⁹ Rev. George Patterson, *op. cit.* p. 395.

¹⁰ Cumberland County Census, 1861, NSARM mfm 13595.

Shipbuilders of Nova Scotia's North Shore reached their peak productivity during 1850s. The year 1854 distinguished itself as a momentous period of activity, as 13,745 gross tonnage of new vessels were registered on the Pictou Ship Register.¹¹ Most of the new tonnage continued to be destined for the transfer trade, and was sold in the United Kingdom and in Newfoundland.

Table 4-1

Breakdown of vessels built at Wallace, Nova Scotia 1850-1859.¹²

Year	Total	Average Tonnage	No. to Nfld.	No. to Gr. Britain	No. retained within N. S.
1850	5	121.8	3	-	1
1851	7	198.8	4	2	-
1852	14	169.5	4	2	-
1853	7	134	2	2	-
1854	17	286.9	5	4	-
1855	10	211.7	3	3	2
1856	10	187.6	4	4	2
1857	6	125.3	4	1	-
1858	3	106.3	2	-	-
1859	3	111	2	1	-

In relation to the rest of the Maritimes, Wallace's vessel production peaked two decades early. Most major Maritime ports were busiest in the late 1870s. Rosemary Ommer has dubbed the port

¹¹ Rosemary Ommer, "Anticipating the trend: the Pictou ship register, 1840-1889," *Acadiensis*, Vol. X, no. 1, 1986, p. 75.

¹² There is some discrepancy between the total number of vessels constructed and the location of transfer. This is due to the format of the table and the nature of the records. This table does not account for those vessels which were wrecked prior to their sale or for the vessels whose registry does not

of Pictou a “rogue element” in relation to other Maritime ports. While the port experienced some ups and downs, it never again reached the fleet size of 1854. She compared the phenomenon of Pictou to studies of Sager and Fisher in relation to growth rates, and found that the rate of decline (on a percentage basis) that besieged Pictou after 1854 could be compared to the sharp decline the region as a whole experienced in the 1890s.¹³ Despite her detailed examination of the Pictou phenomenon, a clear-cut reason for its early decline has yet to be defined, and indeed a distinct reason may never be found.

In 1854 along the shores of Wallace Bay, no fewer than seventeen vessels were constructed, totaling close to 5000 tons. Among the 15 launches were the two largest vessels ever built in Wallace, and they were among the largest of the time built on the North Shore. Local merchant Robert Purvis built the 990-ton ship *Retriever*. Christopher Jordensen, acting for British merchant John Brown, built the 829-ton ship *Thames*. Both men had operated large yards in Wallace for several years prior to construction of these vessels. The building boom was matched by equally good times for

include a reason for the register for that vessel being closed. Halifax and Pictou Vessel Registers, Dalhousie University Archives.

owners of Wallace-built vessels. During this period most Wallace vessels were sold relatively quickly, with only a one or two year period between the date of construction and date of sale. Long-term ownership was not a common undertaking of Wallace builders or owners.¹⁴

In light of this building boom, Wallace and Pugwash builders petitioned the Nova Scotian government for a vessel registry to be based in Wallace. At this time, most Wallace and Pugwash builders were forced to register their vessels in Halifax or Pictou. This meant that they had to arrange to have their vessels inspected by the Halifax or Pictou Registrar. The residents of these communities felt that the increased shipping and building in the area warranted a registry:

Petition of the...Inhabitants of the Ports of Pugwash and Wallace in the County of Cumberland respectively [submit] with That for the last six years an officer of the Customs has never [ill.] at the Port of Wallace for the entering and clearances of the Shipping arriving here and at the above [ill] port of Pugwash and Tatamagouche which have been of material benefit to the commercial [success] of this[ill] of said County... That by the end of this present Year there will have been built and launched at the

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 68-69.

¹⁴ See Appendix A, A List of Wallace Built Vessels.

afore said ports ... 25 vessels most of them of vary tonnage. The occurrences of which [ill.] assignment compelled to resort either Halifax or Pictou on loss of time to obtain registry...That your petitioners are of opinion that the commercial interests of the aforesaid Ports and the positions which they are attaining Warrant your Petitioners in asking for a remedy...¹⁵

The Petition was signed by 62 men, mostly local builders and merchants. Among the group were: Levi M. Eaton, Christopher C. Jordenson, Robert Purvis, James and David Davison, Alexander Mcfarlane, Joseph Kerr, George Oxley, Charles B. Oxley and Stephen Fulton, all of Wallace.¹⁶

The boom in shipbuilding had a significant impact on the small community of Wallace. During this period, three hotels were established and numerous residents opened boarding houses to accommodate business travelers and the many men who traveled to Wallace to work in the yards or wood lots.¹⁷ Skilled labourers and tradesmen also took up residence in the town. Blacksmith shops, tailors, cobblers, harness makers, and sail makers were among the

¹⁵ Petition for Registry of Shipping, 1850; NSARM, RG5, Series GP, Vol. 2, #4.

¹⁶ All the men were established Wallace and Pugwash builders and merchants. Christopher Jordenson operated one of the largest yards in Wallace, built vessels for a British firm. The Oxley family was a merchant family in Wallace and Pugwash. Stephen Fulton was a merchant, shipowner, shipbuilder and political figure in the Wallace area. He was a member of the provincial assembly for the Tory party. Alexander Mcfarlane owned a large shipyard in Wallace and was involved in provincial politics. He was eventually appointed to the Senate.

tradesmen who ventured to Wallace to take advantage of the prosperity.¹⁸

The new decade ushered in a new success for Wallace shipbuilders. During the first half of the 1850's, no fewer than 61 vessels were constructed in Wallace. The Davison yard accounted for at least eight of the vessels, which totalled roughly 1000 tons.¹⁹ According to criteria set out by Rosemary Ommer, such enterprise placed the Davison brothers among the major owners listed on the Pictou Ship Register.²⁰ This meant that for several years the Davison yard had two and three vessels simultaneously on the stocks.

Throughout the entire decade, no fewer than thirteen vessels were constructed by David Davison, combining for over 1600 tons. The majority of vessels were owned by David and he also served as their master. They were undoubtedly constructed for the transfer trade as the majority of vessels, which were brigs and brigantines,

¹⁷ Interview with Mr. Rollie Betts, Wallace, 1965, p. 1, WAMS.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pg. 2.

¹⁹ Beginning in the 1850s, the Halifax, Pictou and Pugwash Ship Registers did not always record the builder.

²⁰ Ommer in "Anticipating..." *op. cit.*, p. 78, used the 1000 ton figure to select major ship owners listed on the Pictou Ship Register. Those who owned at least 1000 tons in one decade was included in her list. The 1000 ton figure for the Davison yard includes vessels listed on both the Pictou and Halifax Ship Registers.

were sold to Newfoundland within two years of their construction.²¹ The demand for these rigs in Newfoundland, Eric Sager has found, was directly related to the success of the seal and cod fisheries, and more importantly to the saltfish trade to Brazil and the West Indies. During the 1840s and 1850s Newfoundland traders mainly employed Maritime-built brig and brigantines for the seal and saltfish trade.²² Only two Davison vessels were not sold in Newfoundland first was the brigantine *Violante*, 139 tons, built by David in 1853, and owned by James Black Oxley, a Halifax merchant. It was sold to Liverpool in 1854. Similarly, the brigantine *Bessie Bent* was built by David in 1854 and again owned by James Black Oxley. Its register was closed in 1868, when it was stranded near Brandon Creek.

The Newfoundland market was vital to the Nova Scotian economy for another reason. The Davison vessels, prior to their sale, often made trading voyages to Newfoundland, carried timber in the early years of the 1840s. However the timber trade began to decline by mid-century, and they most likely turned to carrying Nova Scotian

²¹ See Appendix A.

²² Eric Sager, "The Port of St. John's, Newfoundland, 1840-1889, a preliminary analysis," *Ships and Shipbuilding in the North Atlantic Regions*, Keith Matthews and Gerald Panting eds., Maritime History Group, Memorial University, St. John's, 1978, pp. 21-39.

agricultural produce or livestock. During the 1840s and 1850s the majority of debits at their store were paid in labour or produce. This produce, carried on Davison vessels, was sold in Newfoundland, adding to the profits for the family. This relationship between North Shore communities to the produce trade in Newfoundland warrants further study but this theme lies beyond the objectives of this thesis.

Following the end of the Davison brothers' relationship with Alexander Campbell, it was uncommon for them to seek out financial backing, especially from an urban backer. Unfortunately, correspondence between David and his business associates does not exist to shed some light on these events. While David concentrated his efforts on the yard, James remained the financier and merchant of the family. Store ledgers document that several hundred individuals and families who dealt with the Davison store, looking to the brothers to supply goods ranging from cloth, to flour, to writing paper.

James' increased reputation as a Liberal and successful merchant/shipbuilder, coupled with his social network solidified by his marriage, led to two political appointments. In 1850, he was

appointed Customs Controller for Wallace. The appointment meant that James boarded all vessels entering or clearing the port to collect the applicable duties. In June of 1855, James was named Surveyor of Shipping by the Lieutenant Governor, Gaspard Le Marchant. This position required James to "...Superintend and Survey the Admeasurement of Ships and execute all other acts and duties ... designated by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854."²³ In this role James was required to visit each new vessel in the Wallace area, and record its measurements for provincial ship registries.

These appointments may have also been closely tied to a newly formed friendship between James Davison and Jonathan McCully. McCully worked as a lawyer in Amherst until his governmental duties and new marriage took him to Halifax. Throughout his career McCully served in a variety of capacities within the provincial government, but he has been most associated with his ties to Joseph Howe and his role as a Father of Confederation. Today, McCully has become a rather unimportant figure. Nova Scotian historian, Peter B. Waite called him a stubborn or pugnacious man and an "unlovely

²³ Although the primary document read "Surveyor of Shipping," James's duties required him to perform the duties of a Registrar. He most likely recorded information on Wallace built vessels which was entered into the Pictou or Pugwash Registries. NSARM, mfm reel 10,215, #4.

fellow".²⁴ Despite being held in low regard by many, McCully held some significant appointments and carried a certain amount of power and prestige during his time.²⁵ During the 1860s, McCully and Howe became bitter enemies: Howe was vehemently opposed to Confederation, a cause which McCully supported. Considerable personal correspondence between James Davison and McCully, beginning about 1850, remains. The circumstances surrounding the formation of this relationship are unclear. McCully was raised in Cumberland County, although, it is doubtful that this was how the pair met. Possibly, as James entered the realm of public service, he made McCully's acquaintance, since McCully served on the Executive Council. It is more likely however that they met through a mutual acquaintance. In 1842 McCully married Eliza Creed, sister of the Davison family doctor, Charles Creed.

The relationship between these two was one of business and friendship, as an excerpt from this 1859 letter from McCully reveals:

²⁴ Peter B. Waite, "Jonathan McCully," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. X, p. 458.

²⁵ Numerous accounts of Jonathan McCully's contributions to Canadian history have fingered him as an unimportant figure. Nevertheless, he held positions in the Legislative Council, judge of probate, member of the railway commission, served as a delegate at Charlottetown and Quebec, editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, Senator, and Nova Scotia Supreme Court judge. Despite his often dismissed role in history, his relationship with a rural merchant such as James B. Davison would have proved invaluable.

Dear Davison, I had some faint hope when I was in Amherst that I might find time to see you & return via Pugwash, Wallace and Tatamagouche - But sickness in my family force my return home by the shortest route. There are a good many subjects I should like much to discuss with you...²⁶

Those "subjects" touched on many things. James informed McCully of the political attitudes of Wallace residents and in return, McCully kept James abreast of Halifax events:

...I saw[Henry] Oldright in Amherst & spoke to him about the £200.0.0 I sent up in May. I have no [ill.] of any kind & altho I spoke to M Young once upon the subject before I was in Amherst he has never since hinted the subject to me or referred to it. I dont [sic.] want to be thought suspicious or as distrusting to any one and yet £200 sent off at Election times ought not to be left without so much as a note of hand to fall back upon...²⁷

McCully also acted as James agent and on occasion, attorney. He even turned to James for advice, a clear indication of their trust:

...But I have done more [ill.] to bring about the present state of affairs than any other 1/2 dozen men of this party. And they all pretty well know it. Some of them want me to go to the Att. Office but it is not my time. Tell me what you think...²⁸

²⁶ Jonathan McCully to James B. Davison, 6 July 1859; WAMS, MG009, Box 1, 099.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

In return for McCully's aid, James lent him his wholehearted political support and acted as McCully's eyes and ears in the county:

Well Young I suppose will not run an Election in Cumberland... You ask me what I think about you preferring your claim to the Attorney Generalship, now some has nor can any one pretend to have anything like the claim that you have to any office in the Govt or the party....²⁹

The correspondence reveals that McCully was also close to David and, in fact, the entire Davison family. Both brothers supported McCully and his party's interests in Wallace.

These letters also reveal glimpses of details of the Davisons' personal lives, details not often found in business correspondence. One very important event that the letters chronicle is the sickness that had begun to plague David beginning in the late 1840s: "I am sorry to hear of David's illness. I hope as you do not speak of it in you last not he is recovered."³⁰ David's illness is unknown, but McCully inquired numerous times about his condition. Paired with account sheets from family doctor Charles Creed, it appears that David suffered for many years prior to his death in 1860. Accounts

²⁹ James B. Davison to Jonathan McCully, 12 September 1859; WAMS, MG009, Box 1, 100.

³⁰ Jonathan McCully to James B. Davison, 20 February 1850; WAMS, MG009 Box 1, 084.

of David's doctor visits begin circa 1848, revealing that on numerous occasions throughout the years Dr. Creed was called upon to visit the patient and to prescribe him "powders and pills".³¹

This body of correspondence also reveals the political networks, which operated in the nineteenth century. As a staunch member of the Liberal party, James not only informed McCully of Cumberland County activities and attitudes, but also solicited support for the party and its members. Davison's letters also reveal the often corrupt nature of nineteenth century politics "...Northup is now taking Judgements that King had a party with Wallace Rum...I blame Purdy for the loss of the Election...He thought to make money out of it and openly said so..."³²

During the 1860s, James' relationship with McCully took a downturn, from which it never recovered. Ill feelings began to appear about the time of David Davison's death. James's grief is evident in a letter he wrote to McCully several days after the death of his brother:

³¹ Account of David Davison with Dr. Charles Creed, September 1850; WAMS, MG009, Box 1, 037.

³² James B. Davison to Jonathan McCully, 12 September 1859. On 12 May 1859 the election of the twenty-first Assembly was held. The Conservative party swept Cumberland County, winning all three seats. "Northup" was in reference to Jeremiah Northup, MLA, merchant, shipowner and vice-president of the Merchants' Bank in Halifax. He was a Reformer who supported Joseph Howe and served as MLA for Halifax County between 1867 and 1870. He was later appointed to the Senate.

His death will free you and the Executors from any difficulties you may have had on my a/c. You should not have called in a third party as you did the doctor. You know me long enough to know that I would not be [approving]...I cannot but otherwise think strange of such work it does not like as if our old friendship is now as it was I have put this day [ill] that influences could or would of you [or] on you nor behind parts have made me work as [ill] poor David did at the Election with the party. If it had not been for this old fellow [ill], I have nothing to give...³³

From this time onwards, the diminishing correspondence between the pair turns ever more towards business, with very little personal news being exchanged. McCully continued for some time to handle financial and legal matters for James. Increasingly, James turned to Liberal Henry Oldright, a lawyer, merchant and former Wallace resident, for financial and legal assistance. Oldright had been a Davison family acquaintance prior to his move to Halifax. His wife, Margaret Helen, was the daughter of Robert Kerr, a Wallace merchant. Margaret was also a friend of James' wife Lavinia. So it is not surprising that James chose Oldright as his new associate. In

Directory of Members of Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia, 1758-1958, Provincial Archives of Nova Scotia, Halifax, 1958.

³³ James B. Davison to Jonathan McCully, 4 June 1860; WAMS, MG009 Box 1 #103.

1865, Oldright wrote to update James of the events in the Provincial Legislature and the status of his old friend:

I have been so busy with both meetings and [ill] for work for the last week that I have not had time until now to thank you for the report you sent us of the Wallace meetings. It reads well and agrees perfectly with reports, verbal, thus I heard from other quarters...What you think... of my prediction about a new arrangement of parties being fulfilled? M. McC has made it near impossible to get back with his old Liberal friends, he has the strength to stand above it; [ill] he must go somewhere. Archibald is in a different position. He has not treated some of us well and perhaps I have that might have said things of him in the presence of sneaks that might have been left unsaid; but the bench has not been made so wide but that he can get back over it.³⁴

Several weeks later, Oldright wrote to inform James of his feelings regarding a recent debate in the provincial legislature: "We had a rather spiary debate this afternoon. I think that [ill] will lead to the

³⁴ Henry Oldright to James B. Davison, 2 February 1865; WAMS, MG009 Box 1 #135. Oldright was no doubt referring to McCully's new found support for confederation. In the fall of 1864, McCully had made his views clear in the *Morning Chronicle*, that he non-longer supported the anti-confederate movement and his old Liberal colleagues. This letter was written one month after McCully was fired from the *Morning Chronicle*. He quickly purchased the old *Morning Journal and Commercial Advertiser*, calling it the *Unionist and Halifax Journal*. He used this paper to voice his views on confederation. Waite, *op. cit.*, p. 458.

opposition to Confederation in the Council, but he [McCully] professes not to have made up his mind."³⁵

James's alliances with various public officials like Jonathan McCully probably led to his political appointments. As many of his peers also ran for offices, by the 1850s James had become well acquainted with most of the region's political figures. A successful public official and merchant, James was in a position to contribute to his own community, and to gain further respectability. As an act of status and generosity, in 1853, he donated a section of land not far from his home, for construction of the new Knox Presbyterian Church.³⁶ The *Novascotian* reported "A new Presbyterian church was opened for the first time at Wallace, 2nd inst., on which occasion a sermon was preached by the Rev. Wm. McCulloch of Truro. The sale of pews realized £305, being about £20 more than the cost of the building."³⁷

The decade had secured the Davison family's position among the influential elite of their small community and within the governing class of Nova Scotian society. Despite the often

³⁵ Henry Oldright to James B. Davison, 24 February 1865; WAMS, MG009, Box 1 #130.

³⁶ Harry R. Brown, *Churches and Clergy of North Cumberland*, North Cumberland Historical Society, Pugwash, 1975, p. 86.

unpredictable nature of the shipbuilding industry, it appears that by the Confederation era, the family had attained a degree of prominence and security. The community of Wallace had evolved from a rural Loyalist farming village, into a tiny industrial hub. Shipbuilding in Wallace never again reached its 1854 peak, but local yards remained viable far into the next decade, employing many in shipyards, as crews on locally built vessels, or in connection to the industries related to shipbuilding.

III The Decline of a Maritime Enterprise

The 1860s witnessed the decline of shipbuilding on Nova Scotia's Northumberland Strait. The Pictou Vessel Register peaked in 1854 with approximately 14,000 tons being registered that year.³⁸ Individual communities along the North Shore did not all peak and fall along the same pattern. For instance, Tatamagouche produced only 7 vessels, totaling 1808 tons in 1854, while producing 14 vessels, totaling 2243 tons, in 1857.³⁹ Overall, however, every

³⁷ *Novascotian*, 24 October 1853, p. 342; NSARM, mfm reel 8082. In the twentieth century, the church was under-used and fell into disrepair. Today, only the Knox Cemetery remains, which contains the Davison family plot.

³⁸ Ommer, "Anticipating...." *op. cit.*, p. 69.

³⁹ Frank Patterson, *History of Tatamagouche*, Halifax, 1917, pp. 139-140.

yard along the North Shore experienced decline after the mid-1850s. From 1854 new registries in the Pictou register fell steadily. New registries on the Pugwash register experienced a short-lived surge in 1865, peaking at 10,000 new tons, outnumbering new tonnage in Pictou by over 5000 tons. Comparatively, in 1865 production at Wallace was small, numbering only four vessels, totaling 444 tons. Tatamagouche experienced a slightly more productive decade, and produced 6 vessels in 1865, totaling 1614 tons.

Table 4-2

Breakdown of vessels built at Wallace, Nova Scotia 1860-1870.⁴⁰

Year	Total	Average Tonnage	No. to Nfld.	No. to Gr. Britain	No. retained within NS
1860	3	130.3	3	-	-
1861	6	127.7	1	1	-
1862	5	102.6	3	-	-
1863	4	180.5	-	1	1
1864	3	164	-	1	-
1865	4	111	1	-	1
1866	7	43.9	-	2	1
1867	1	289	-	-	-
1868	2	55	-	-	1

(No vessels were constructed in 1869 and 1870 at Wallace)

⁴⁰ There is some discrepancy between the total number of vessels constructed and the location of transfer. This is due to the format of the table and the nature of the records. This table does not account for those vessels which were wrecked prior to their sale or for the vessels whose registry was left open. Halifax and Pictou Vessel Registries, Dalhousie University Archives.

Overall, production in Wallace during the 1860s plummeted. Not only were fewer vessels constructed, but also fewer larger rigged vessels used for trans-Atlantic voyages, such as barques, brigs and brigantines were constructed. The trend returned to the construction of coastal vessels, such as schooners.

Table 4-3

Number of Vessels built at Wallace, by rig, 1853-1865

Year	Schooners	Brigs	Barques	Brigantines	Ships
1853	-	1	-	7	-
1854	1	2	5	7	2
1855	1	2	3	4	-
1856	1	2	2	5	-
1857	1	-	-	5	-
1858	1	-	-	2	-
1859	1	-	-	2	-
1860	-	-	-	3	-
1861	2	2	1	2	-
1862	2	-	-	3	-
1863	2	1	1	-	-
1864	1	-	-	2	-
1865	2	1	-	1	-
1866	5	-	-	-	-

Another noticeable change in the 1860s was in ownership. At this time more "outside" ownership is visible. Increasingly, three or more men from Halifax are named as owners of Wallace built vessels. Local owners tended not to be the builder anymore, but local

businessmen or farmers. For instance in 1866 the 39-ton schooner *Fear Not* was constructed in Wallace. Its owners were Robert Trote, a Wallace shipbuilder and David Henderson, a Wallace farmer. The vessel was sold five years later in Charlottetown.⁴¹ During this time, considerable agricultural trade was carried out between Prince Edward Island and Wallace farmers. Henderson probably invested in the schooner to transport his produce to PEI for sale.

The 1860s saw a steep decline in production at the Davison yard. Only 6 vessels were constructed during the entire decade, the last in 1868. Yard responsibilities were resumed by James, following the death of David in June 1860. David's death had to have been a blow to James and his family. David had been his partner and neighbour through his brother's entire career. In 1859, David produced his last vessel, the 134-ton brigantine *Alert*. James wrote Jonathan McCully upon his brother's death: "The burial of my late Brother took place yesterday at Ten. He suffered much and for many months. I trust that he is in a better world and [I] have reason to

⁴¹ It is probably safe to assume that Trote was also the vessel's builder, however during the 1860s it became increasingly uncommon for the vessel registers to list the builders. Halifax and Pictou Vessel Registers, Dalhousie University Archives, and the Pugwash Vessel Register, North Shore Historical Society, Pugwash.

know that he was a __amped man for many months before his death.⁴²

Hardly any correspondence of a personal nature of David's has survived. Little is known of his personal life, except what can be drawn from business documents, or his brother's correspondence. However, the legal documents resulting from the settling of his estate reveal some personal facts. When David died he was owed £2067.2.⁴³ and the corresponding list of debtors highlights the several hundred people David conducted business with.⁴³ Another point of note: David left nearly all of his estate to the women in his family. To his sister Margaret, who had married Wallace clockmaker William Fletcher, he left the land and the house in which she lived. He left a portion of the revenue collected from his debts to his "beloved brother-in-law," William Fletcher. He left another Wallace couple, his friends James and Mary Fuller of Wallace, the farm which they had rented from David. To his mother Jannet and his unmarried sister Annabell, he left his remaining real estate. It was around the time of David's death that these two women came to live with their family in Wallace. It appears that Jannet and Annabell

⁴² James B. Davison to Jonathan McCully, 4 June 1860; WAMS, MG009 Box 1 #103.

continued to live in David's house following his death. David also left half of his personal estate to Jannet and Annabell to share. To his brother's wife, Lavinia, he left the remaining portion of his real estate and the remaining half of his personal estate, in trust for Lavinia and her children. The children were to receive their portion of his estate upon their twenty-first birthday and marriage. David appointed his friend William Scott trustee for Lavinia and her children. When David bequeathed land or capital to a woman, he left the specific instruction that the gift not be subject to ownership by their husband or subject to their husband's debt. In addition, David's will stated that if the woman was to die, her portion would be passed to her children, not to a husband.

Complete records could not be obtained to estimate the worth of David's estate, however at the time of his death, he was owed £2067-2-43 and £392-4-2 in "desperate debts."⁴⁴ If even a portion of these debts were collected, William Fletcher was left a sizable inheritance. Analysis of receipts for moneys paid to Lavinia, Jannet,

⁴³ "List of Goods and Debts due the Estate of the Late David Davison, 1 June 1860," NSARM, mfm 19279, Cumberland County Court of Probate Records.

⁴⁴ "List of Goods and Debts due the Estate of the Late David Davison, 1 June 1860," NSARM, mfm 19279, Cumberland County Court of Probate Records.

and Annabell, shows each was left several thousand dollars or close to five hundred pounds.

To his brother, with whom David had been in business with for so many years, he left nothing. James, along with William Scott and Henry Oldright, were named by David executors of his will. It can be assumed from his will that David was very close to his brother's family, his mother and sisters, and was generous with his close friends. His will also highlights an unknown friendship. William Scott was a member of the Scott family of Wallace, who were shipbuilders and owners during the boom times of the Davison family. Beginning several years later, Robert, Archibald, Richard and George Scott began constructing vessels, many for the same markets as the Davisons built for. At the time of David's death, the brigantine *Pearl* was on the stocks. James completed its construction, and James, William and Henry assumed its ownership and arranged its sale in December 1860 to St. John's, Newfoundland.

IV

The End of an Era

James continued to build following his brother's death, but not on the same large scale, nor did he retain the vessels for any period of time before their sale. David had served as master of most Davison vessels, so without a trustworthy captain to command his ships in trade, James promptly sold them. For instance, the first vessel that he built following the death of David (also the first vessel that he had built since 1845) was the 133-ton brigantine *Pearl*. The brigantine was sold quickly, on 30 December 1860; its register and ownership was transferred to St. John's, Newfoundland. The following year James built and owned the 136-ton brigantine *Ruby*, which was sold 26 October 1861 at an unknown location. Finally in 1862 he built and owned the brigantine *Gem*, which was sold the same year to St. John's, Newfoundland. In 1865 James built two vessels, the brigantine *Success* and the schooner *Norland*. The brigantine was sold the same year again to St. John's. The *Norland* was sold in Quebec. In the second-to-last vessel he built, was the

130-ton brigantine *Joe Gorden* for William Gordon, a Pictou merchant. The vessel was sold four years later in Rio de Janeiro.

James built his final vessel in 1868 and by all accounts the Davison yard closed following its sale. He produced the 64-ton schooner *Quartette*, which he sold the same year to John F. Stairs of Halifax. The *Quartette* supposedly was named by James' eldest son Arthur. He chose the name for his group of four friends who often met, and they called themselves "the Quartette". Arthur suggested the name to his father, who was reported to reply "Why I think that would be a capital name. Let her be the Quartette."

After the launch of the *Quartette*, the Davison shipyard closed. The general store carried on for a while longer. Store ledgers cease after 1872 and there is no mention of the store in any Davison family records. James's eldest son, Arthur, left to study law, and moved to Amherst to practice. Another son, Charles, moved to Boston. A third son, Robert, did stay in Wallace, but did not continue in the family business. Robert ran a farm on his family's home and served as a Justice of the Peace. It is unclear why the shipyard was allowed to close, except that the second generation had lost interest in the industry. In addition, following the death of David, James no

doubt lost a certain drive to continue with shipbuilding. For many years he had relied on David to produce the vessels, while he occupied himself with the financial and mercantile half of the business. David's death also came at a time when the Maritime economy was in a slump. Shipbuilding in the region declined dramatically following the mid-century boom and only began to return to prior figures in 1863.⁴⁵

The final years of the Davison yard were difficult ones. Timber had long-ceased being a ready cargo for Davison vessels to carry, and they were forced to look for new cargoes. During the 1860s, James had had difficulties selling vessels and completing sales. For instance, in 1864 James had a schooner to sell (it is unclear what schooner this was) and advertised in the *Eastern Chronicle*. On 18 July 1864 James received a letter from Charles Graham of Antigonish in response to his ad: "...I would like to know what is the lowest you would take for her, also her dimensions and tonnage with a description of the materials and so forth..."⁴⁶ Graham telegraphed James that he was coming to see the vessel. Graham viewed the vessel and returned to Antigonish. Several days later he sent the

⁴⁵ Sager and Panting, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

⁴⁶ Charles Graham to James B. Davison, 18 July 1864; WAMS MG009 Box 1 #121.

following telegraph to James: "We will not buy your vessel. Have concluded to build."⁴⁷ James must have been very disappointed by the news and clung to this potential sale. He sent a telegram to Graham with an offer of new terms. September 13 Graham telegraphed: "Your vessel or terms will not suit. Will write".⁴⁸

V

The End of a Family Enterprise

Hard hit by the death of David and the volatile nature of the economy, James retired from building and trading. James died in 1894 and the Davison property passed to his son, Robert. For many years Robert operated a fairly successful farm on the Davison property. Robert was among many of his generation living along the North Shore who chose not to involve themselves in the shipbuilding industry. Not long after James retired from the industry, shipbuilding in Wallace slid into relative obscurity. After 1880 the occasional small coastal fishing or trading vessel was constructed, but none of any great size, or any vessels for the transfer trade.

⁴⁷ Charles Graham to James B. Davison, 10 September 1864; WAMS MG009 Box 1 #124.

⁴⁸ David Graham to James B. Davison, 12 September 1864; WAMS MG009 Box 1 #126.

Steamers had been used in the Wallace area, and all around the Maritimes for many years to carry the mail, yet steam technology failed to make any lasting in roads within the Wallace industry. In 1880 Donald McDonald, Alexander Mackenzie, Andrew Scott, James Scott, and John Ferguson, Pictou "tradesmen" had two steamers constructed in Wallace. Registry records do not indicate who built the vessels, but records that the 15 ton *Mary Ann* and the 25 ton *Mary Ann* were constructed in Wallace. Both vessels were owned from many years by these men, retained no doubt to carry out trade voyages. The two steamers were the last vessels to be built at Wallace in the nineteenth century.

It appears that contemporaries of the Davison brothers chose to abandon shipbuilding shortly after James built his last vessel. It is unclear why building in Wallace and the entire North Shore contracted earlier than in the rest of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick industry. The question of the early closure of the industry in Wallace cannot be answered in this study, and it may never be fully understood. However, the reasons for the Davison family's early exit from the industry might be explored and later applied to a larger study of North Shore shipbuilding.

The death of David Davison, who commanded Davison vessels and ran the shipyard, was a great blow to the family enterprise . David did much of the 'hands on' work in the yard, hired the yard workers and acted as master for most Davison vessels on trading voyages and to their final point of sale. Without the skill and assistance of David, James was left with the perhaps-overwhelming task of running the yard, the store and handling the financial interests of the business. As well, James might have lost some interest and personal drive to continue the yard without his brother.

David's death came at a time when there was a decline in the demand for colonial tonnage. During the 1860s the traditional market for many Davison vessels in Newfoundland had taken a down turn. The need for the brigs and brigantines, which James had been accustomed to selling to Newfoundland, dropped dramatically as imports of salt cod in Brazil and the West Indies contracted. This loss of a ready market no-doubt was a crucial factor in the closing of the Davison, and many other North Shore shipyards.

In the later years of the 1850s, the Davison brothers also faced the task of searching out new cargoes for their vessels.

Timber was not in demand in the way it once had been. The once ample supply of timber surrounding Wallace was running out, meaning that loggers were forced to go further inland in search of suitable timber, making timber more expensive for men such as James and David. They had at one time carried timber on most of their trading voyages, and without a cargo they lost money their trips overseas. As demonstrated earlier, James had begun to experience difficulty selling vessels, and if this problem continued, it could destroy his business. He also suffered some financial losses. In May of 1865, James sent his new schooner, the *Norland*, to Quebec for sale, loaded with coal, and to return with a cargo of flour and plaster. On the voyage to Quebec, her mast broke, the order of plaster was cancelled and her new owners were disappointed with the holding capacity of the schooner:

It was rather a disappointment to us to hear of her getting her mast broken at the outset...It will [cargo] likely be trainshipped there as she will not likely go back to Wallace at present. Nor more Plaster being required by the parties at present....M. McGregor will settle with you for cost of the vessel. We are willing to leave it in his hands. We are considerably [concerned] about her storage capacity. She has only 800 bll

in her hold. As though should would
have carried almost 1000...⁴⁹

The discrepancy in carrying capacity probably led the new owners to offer James a lower price than originally agreed, again leaving James at a loss.

Events in Wallace and the North Shore paralleled those occurring in Prince Edward Island. Nicolas J. De Jong and Marven E. Moore have noted that the decline in Prince Edward Island building was tied to vessel size. They have claimed that in Britain, the demand was for larger vessels, vessels which Island builders did not, could not or chose not to produce.⁵⁰ Rosemary Ommer, in on her study of the Pictou Vessel Registry, had suggested that the Pictou economy had been based on fish and timber, and Pictou ships were built to carry these exports and for sale. Once the transfer trade failed to be as profitable, builders in the Pictou area turned to other development opportunities, such as coal and related landward industries.⁵¹

⁴⁹ W.R. Brodie to James B. Davison, 10 June 1865; WAMS MG009 Box 1 #134.

⁵⁰ Nicolas J. de Jong and Marven E. Moore, *Shipbuilding on Prince Edward Island*, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, 1994, pp. 131-168.

⁵¹ Ommer, "Anticipating...." *op. cit.*, p. 88-89.

The same pattern of events which Ommer observed in Pictou can be used to arrive at an understanding of the decline of the Wallace industry. By the 1860s, timber was no longer a staple export and building for the transfer trade was no longer as profitable as it once had been. As in Pictou, Wallace had the ability to adapt and here adaptation tended to focus on the local quarries. By the 1860s, Wallace sandstone was in demand all over North America. Agriculture remained a viable industry and trade with Prince Edward Island increased. To sum up, Wallace builders essentially seemed to lose interest in competing and changing their ways, and turned their interests to other industries.

Appendix A - A List of Vessels Constructed at Wallace Nova Scotia, 1816 - 1880.¹

<u>Vessel Name</u>	<u>Year Built</u>	<u>Rig</u>	<u>No. Tons</u>	<u>Built By</u>	<u>Owner (s)</u>	<u>Port Reg't</u>	<u>Port Transf'd</u>
<i>Countess Dalhousie</i>	1816	Schooner	91	-	Samuel Cunard	Halifax	-
<i>Julian</i>	1820	Schooner	44	Alex. Heustis	-	Halifax	-
<i>Lark</i>	1825	Schooner	43	-	-	-	-
<i>Jessie</i>	1825	Schooner	35	James Harrington	-	Halifax	-
<i>Alex'd Stewart</i>	1837	Brig	173	James B. Davison & Alex. Campbell	James B. Davison & Alex. Campbell	Halifax	Cork, Ireland
<i>Friends</i>	1838	Brig	151	James B. Davison & Alex'd Campbell	James B. Davison & Alex'd Campbell	Halifax	Whitby, England
<i>Volney Lawrence</i>	1838 1839	Brig Barque	490	James B. Davison & Alex'd Campbell	James B. Davison & Alex'd Campbell	Halifax Halifax	Beaumaris
<i>Dolphin</i>	1839	Schooner	63	James B. Davison	James B. Davison	Halifax	Halifax
<i>Sisters</i>	1840	Schooner	79	James B. Davison	James B. Davison	Pictou	Liverpool
<i>Velocity</i>	1840	Schooner	165	James B. Davison	James B. Davison	Pictou	London
<i>Colonist</i>	1840	Ship	639	James B. Davison	James B. & David Davison	Pictou	London
<i>Sisters</i>	1840	Schooner	53	-	-	Halifax	Liverpool
<i>Eliza Allan</i>	1840	Brig	201	-	Robert Purvis	Halifax	lost at sea
<i>True Blue</i>	1840	Brig	234	Alexander Campbell	Alexander Campbell & Wellwood Waugh	Pictou	Greenock, Scotland
<i>Envoy</i>	1841	Barque	481	James B. Davison	William Lawson	Halifax	London, England
<i>Perthshire</i>	1841	Barque	536	John Crerar	John Crerar	Halifax	Glasgow, Scotland

¹ Halifax, Pictou and Pugwash Vessel Registries. Blanks denote information left unrecorded on registry. The spelling of individual's and vessel names has been left as recorded in registry.

<i>Hope</i>	1842	Brigantine	144	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Sarah Jane Livingston</i>	1842	Schooner	78	-	David LeBlanc	Pictou	Arichat
<i>Alert</i>	1843	Schooner	-	James B. Davison	David Davison	Pictou	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Ranger</i>	1843	Schooner	57		John Carins	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Enterprise</i>	1843	Brigantine	113	Mathias Williams	Mathias Williams	Halifax	Poole, England
<i>Hero</i>	1844	Brigantine	106	James B. Davison	David Davison	Pictou	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Catherine Isabella</i>	1844	Schooner	99	David McKay	David & John McKay, & John Nicolson	Pictou	Broken up.
<i>Herald</i>	1845	Brigantine	101	James B. Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Rale</i>	1846	Brig	103	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Rio</i>	1846	Brigantine	-	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Rose</i>	1846	Barque- intine	104	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Trio</i>	1846	Schooner	84	-	-	Halifax	Halifax - new owners
<i>Trio</i>	1846	Schooner	67	-	-	Halifax	Halifax - new owners
<i>Euphrates</i>	1846	Brigantine	139	-	Douglas Foley	Halifax	Halifax - new owner
<i>Asiatic</i>	1846	Brigantine	148	-	Nelson & David Sanford	Halifax	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Eliza Stone</i>	1846	Schooner	83	Charles Keith	Charles Keith	Pictou	Poole, England
<i>Regis</i>	1846	Brig	229	Charles Keith	-	Pictou	-
<i>Transit</i>	1847	Brigantine	104	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Brother</i>	1847	Schooner	36		Jeremiah, Redmond & Owen Donohoe	Halifax	-

<i>Brothers</i>	1847	Schooner	36	William Mitchell	Henry Gesner Pineo	Pictou	Halifax
<i>John Bull</i>	1847	Brigantine	121	-	William Sanders, & Charles R. Allison	Halifax	Dublin, Ireland
<i>Conservative</i>	1847	Schooner	64	-	John & Robert Reid	Pictou	-
<i>Active</i>	1848	Brigantine	121	-	John Gibson	Halifax	St. John's Nfld.
<i>John Gibson</i>	1849	Brigantine	123	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Halifax
<i>Myrtle</i>	1850	Brigantine	109	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Stanley</i>	1850	Barque	212	-	Thomas Coffin Jr.	Pictou	Halifax
<i>Dove</i>	1850	Schooner	72	Richard Scott	Richard Scott	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Caroline</i>	1850	Schooner	84	Archibald Richard, & Robert Scott	Archibald Richard & Robert Scott	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Margaret Campbell</i>	1850	Brigantine	132	John Nicolson	Levi W. Eaton	Pictou	-
<i>Leamon</i>	1851	Brigantine	110	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Swift</i>	1851	Brigantine	110	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Mary</i>	1851	Brigantine	117	-	Wm. Fairbanks & Jonathan & David Allison	Halifax	Nfld.
<i>Beal</i>	1851	Brig	256	-	Robert Brown	Pictou	London, England
<i>Fox</i>	1851	Schooner	183	John R. Nicolson	Robert Brown	Pictou	London, England
<i>Long-ataboo</i>	1851	Barque	532	John R. Nicolson	Levi W. Eaton	Pictou	condemned
<i>Caroline</i>	1851	Schooner	83	-	Richard, Robert, & Archibald Scott	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Volant</i>	1852	Brigantine	116	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Belle</i>	1852	Brigantine	150	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.

<i>Robert Henry</i>	1852	Brigantine	150	-	Jonathan C. & David Allison, Wm. Fairbanks, & Richard Scott	Halifax	Liverpool England
<i>Malaga</i>	1852	Brigantine	98	-	James G. Creighton & Thomas Ritchie Grassie	Halifax	Lost at sea
<i>Example</i>	1852	Brigantine	109	Allan Mac Donald	Levi Eaton	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Emerald</i>	1852	Brigantine	111	Archibald Scott & James Chambers	Archibald Scott & James Chambers	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>John</i>	1852	Brigantine	122	Levi W. Eaton		Pictou	-
<i>Willing Lass</i>	1852	Brigantine	115	James Carty, Michael McKay, & Richard Heustis	James Carty, Michael McKay, & Richard Heustis	Pictou	Greenock, Scotland
<i>Huntress</i>	1852	Brigantine	110	John Nicolson	John & Kenneth Nicolson, & Neil Morrison	Pictou	-
<i>Susannah</i>	1852	Brigantine	177	C.C. Jordenson	Robert Brown	Pictou	-
<i>Port Wallace</i>	1852	Barque	230	C.C. Jordenson	Robert Brown	Pictou	
<i>Alpha</i>	1852	Brigantine	131	C.C. Jordenson	Robert Brown	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Isabella Barrass</i>	1852	Ship	649	Thomas Friar	John Batter	Pictou	-
<i>Speed</i>	1852	Brigantine	105	Neil Morrison, Kenneth & John Nicolson	Neil Morrison, Kenneth & John Nicolson	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Violante</i>	1853	Brigantine	139	David Davison	James Black Oxley	Halifax	Liverpool England
<i>Andres</i>	1853	Brigantine	114	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.

<i>Wallace</i>	1853	Brigantine	124	Archibald James & Robert Scott	Archibald James & Robert Scott	Pictou	Wood-bridge, England
<i>Bride</i>	1853	Brigantine	135	Allan Mac Donald	Allan Mac Donald	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Eve</i>	1853	Brigantine	129	Stephen Fulton	Stephen Fulton	Pictou	Liverpool England
<i>Isabella</i>	1853	Brig	164	John Nicolson	John Brown	Pictou	-
<i>John</i>	1853	Brigantine	133	Robert Purvis	George Can	Pictou	-
<i>Bessie Bent</i>	1854	Brigantine	135	David Davison	James Black Oxley	Halifax	stranded at sea
<i>Bessie</i>	1854	Brigantine	286	-	Daniel Kirkland, Simon Fitch Barass	Halifax	-
<i>Missionary</i>	1854	Barque	230	-	James Black Oxley	Halifax	Liverpool England
<i>Leader</i>	1854	Brigantine	138	William Treen	John Pike	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Reform</i>	1854	Schooner	15	James Carins	James Carins	Pictou	broken up
<i>Selina</i>	1854	Barque	289	CC Jordenson	Robert Brown	Pictou	London, England
<i>Isis</i>	1854	Barque	497	Neil McKay	Robert Brown	Pictou	broken up
<i>Omer Pacha</i>	1854	Brig	250	John Nicolson & Neil Morrison	James Purvis	Pictou	London, England
<i>Eclipse</i>	1854	Brigantine	147	William Treen	William Treen	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Mary</i>	1854	Brigantine	134	Richard Heustis	Richard Heustis	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Clayton</i>	1854	Barque	280	-	Arthur Marsters & Elisha Embree	Pictou	Stockton-on-Tees, England
<i>Noel</i>	1854	Brigantine	135	Archibald & Richard Scott	Archibald & Richard Scott	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Pride</i>	1854	Brigantine	134	Allan Mac Donald	-	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Harvest</i>	1854	Barque	128	C.C.	-	Pictou	-

<i>Home Retriever</i>	1854	Ship	990	Jordenson Robert Purvis	-	Pictou	-
<i>Tweed-side</i>	1854	Brig	261	Allan Mac Donald	John Miller	Pictou	-
<i>Thames</i>	1854	Ship	829	C.C. Jordenson	John Brown	Pictou	-
<i>Alma</i>	1855	Brigantine	109	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Basque Island, Nfld.
<i>Margaret</i>	1855	Barque	560	Neil McKay	Neil McKay	Halifax	Aberdeen, Scotland
<i>Florence Nightingale</i>	1855	Barque	261	-	Donald Murray	Halifax	lost at sea
<i>Inkerman</i>	1855	Schooner	84	-	John Nicolson Jr.	Pictou	Halifax
<i>Balaklava</i>	1855	Brigantine	119	-	William McNab	Halifax	Halifax
<i>Eureka</i>	1855	Brigantine	92	-	Andrew, Zabud A. & Michael McKay	Pictou	Bideford, England
<i>Iris</i>	1855	Brigantine	127	Richard Heustis	Richard Heustis	Pictou	-
<i>Darling</i>	1855	Brig	140	Allan Mac Donald	Allan Mac Donald	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Crimea</i>	1855	Barque	386	Edward Chambers	Stephen Fulton	Pictou	Liverpool England
<i>Mary Jane</i>	1855	Brig	239	-	William Treen	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Orion</i>	1856	Brigantine	126	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Effort</i>	1856	Brigantine	93	-	-	Halifax	Liverpool England
<i>Rover</i>	1856	Schooner	74	-	Joseph O'Brien	Pictou	Halifax
<i>Duke of Malakoff</i>	1856	Barque	599	-	George Lewis	Halifax	Liverpool England
<i>Margaret</i>	1856	Brig	220	-	Joseph Bell & Geo. & John H. Anderson	Halifax	Yarmouth
<i>Celt</i>	1856	Brigantine	79	Richard Heustis	Richard Heustis	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Sea Flower</i>	1856	Barque	289	-	Archibald Patterson	Pictou	Liverpool England

<i>Selina</i>	1856	Brigantine	108	-	Stephen Fulton	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Danube</i>	1856	Brig	161	James Robertson Jr.	James Robertson Jr.	Pictou	South Hampton
<i>Elfrida</i>	1856	Brigantine	127	Allan Mac Donald	Allan Mac Donald	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Hebe</i>	1857	Brigantine	126	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Inkerman</i>	1857	Schooner	83		John Duffus & William Lawson	Halifax	lost at sea
<i>Abeona</i>	1857	Brigantine	136	Stephen Fulton	Stephen Fulton	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>United Brothers</i>	1857	Brigantine	127	Allan Mac Donald	Allan Mac Donald	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Kaloolah</i>	1857	Brigantine	129	Neil McKay	Neil McKay	Pictou	County Cork, Ireland
<i>Iona</i>	1857	Brigantine	151	-	James & John MacDonald	Pictou	Nfld.
<i>Brisk</i>	1858	Brigantine	128	David Davison	David Davison	Pictou	Harbour Grace, Nfld.
<i>Glencoe</i>	1858	Brigantine	134	John McDonald	John McDonald	Pugwash	Nfld.
<i>Lucknow</i>	1858	Schooner	57	-	Alexander Macfarlane	Pugwash	-
<i>Alert</i>	1859	Brigantine	134	David Davison	David Davison	Pugwash	Nfld.
<i>Staffa</i>	1859	Schooner	56	Allan Mac Donald	Allan Mac Donald	Pugwash	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Sam Slick</i>	1859	Brigantine	143	-	Henry Gesner Pineo	Pugwash	Belfast, Ireland
<i>Pearl</i>	1860	Brigantine	133	James B. Davison	Henry Oldright, Wm Scott & James B Davison	Pugwash	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Kingalock</i>	1860	Brigantine	123	-	Richard, Archibald & George Scott	Pugwash	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Islay</i>	1860	Brigantine	135	Allan Mac Donald	Allan Mac Donald	Pugwash	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Ruby</i>	1861	Brigantine	136	James B. Davison	James B. Davison	Pugwash	-

<i>Tay</i>	1861	Schooner	16	-	William Waugh	Pugwash	-
<i>Helena</i>	1861	Brigantine	111	-	Murdock Nicholson & Kenneth Nicholson	Halifax	Campbellton
<i>Barra-couta</i>	1861	Barque	267	-	Peter Crichton	Pictou	lost at sea
<i>Saint Hilda</i>	1861	Schooner	70	Allan Mac Donald	Allan Mac Donald	Pugwash	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Adona</i>	1861	Brig	166	-	Wm. & Benjamin Betts	Pugwash	London, England
<i>Jane</i>	1862	Schooner	76	Allan Mac Donald	Allan Mac Donald	Pugwash	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Ava</i>	1862	Schooner	62	-	Richard Scott	Pugwash	lost at sea
<i>Gem</i>	1862	Brigantine	130	James B. Davison	James B. Davison	Pugwash	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Oban</i>	1862	Brigantine	129	Allan Mac Donald	Allan Mac Donald	Pugwash	St. John's Nfld.
<i>Mountain-eer</i>	1862	Brigantine	116	-	James & Wm Betts	Pugwash	-
<i>Velocity</i>	1863	Schooner	71	-	Archibald Scott	Pugwash	Pictou
<i>Lively</i>	1863	Schooner	23	-	John O'Brien	Pugwash	-
<i>Janet</i>	1863	Barque	366	-	Joseph O'Brien, Stephen & Wm. Fulton, & Jeremiah & Joseph Northup	Pugwash	-
<i>Nimrod</i>	1863	Brig	262	-	John Shaw	Pugwash	Aberdeen, Scotland
<i>Normandy</i>	1864	Brigantine	198	-	Amos Purdy	Pictou	Liverpool England
<i>Adam Burns</i>	1864	Schooner	99	-	Murdock Munro	Pugwash	-
<i>Freestone</i>	1864	Brigantine	195	-	T. Battey	Pugwash	-
<i>Norland</i>	1865	Schooner	89	James B. Davison	Roderick McGregor	Pictou	Quebec
<i>Mystery</i>	1865	Schooner	33	-	Isaac Stack, Rufus Rindress	Pugwash	Prince Edward Island
<i>Sucess</i>	1865	Brigantine	129	James B.	James B.	Pugwash	St. John's

<i>Rob Roy</i>	1865	Brig	193	Davison	Davison	Pugwash	Nfld.
				-	John S. Forshner		-
<i>Joe Gordon</i>	1866	Brigantine	130	James B. Davison	William Gordon	Pictou	Rio de Janeiro
<i>Caledonia</i>	1866	Brigantine	223	-	John Forshner	Halifax	Aberdeen, Scotland
<i>Garibaldi</i>	1866	Schooner	83	-	J.N. Kerr	Pugwash	-
<i>Garibaldi</i>	1866	Schooner	67	-	William Harrison, John Baker, John Heustis, Charles Kerr & Stephen Fulton	Pugwash	Halifax
<i>Lark</i>	1866	Schooner	35.93	-	George & Archibald Scott	Pugwash	Stranded
<i>Fear Not</i>	1866	Schooner	38.53	-	Robert Trote & David Henderson	Pugwash	Charlotte-town
<i>Wallachia</i>	1866	Schooner	83	-	Joseph B. Kerr	Pugwash	Liverpool England
<i>Mary Ann</i>	1867	Brig	289	-	Tom Battey	Pugwash	Marlaix, France
<i>Quartette</i>	1868	Schooner	64	James B. Davison	James B. Davison	Pugwash	Halifax
<i>Isabella</i>	1868	Schooner	46	-	George & Richard Scott	Pugwash	-
<i>Adventure</i>	1871	Schooner	54	-	Archibald James & George Scott	Halifax	Prince Edward Island
<i>Trio</i>	1871	Schooner	30	-	John Mac Donald & Harries Harpell	Pictou	Charlotte-town
<i>Wallace</i>	1872	Schooner		-	William Alain & James Drysdale	Pugwash	Sunk while in Port
<i>Rover</i>	1873	Brigantine	273	-	Wallace Shipbuilding Ltd.	Halifax	Wrecked and Sold

<i>Onward</i>	1873	Schooner	36	-	George & Archibald Scott	Pugwash	Pictou
<i>Ada Fulton</i>	1874	Brigantine	182	Stephen Fulton	Zeras Kempton, Jacob Heustis, Henry , Chas. A. & Silas Fulton	Halifax	Abandoned
<i>Pricilla May</i>	1874	Brigantine	200	Jerry Nelson	A.W. Snow, Jeremiah Nelson, & Charles Oxley.	Pugwash	-
<i>Decon</i>	1875	Schooner	194	-	Robert Wallace	Halifax	Long Island, New York
<i>Hertford</i>	1875	Schooner	170	-	Abner Betts	Pugwash	-
<i>Philistine</i>	1875	Schooner	45	William Forshner	James McLennan William Forshner & Wm. Smith	Pugwash	lost on rocks
<i>Mary Ann</i>	1880	Steamer	15	-	Donald McDonald, Alex. Mac Kenzie, John Ferguson, Jas. & Andrew Scott	Pictou	-
<i>Mary Ann</i>	1880	Steamer	25	-	Donald McDonald, Alex. Mac Kenzie, Andrew Scott & John Ferguson	Pictou	-

Appendix B - Genealogies of the Davison and Dickson Families¹

The Davison Family of Londonderry and Pictou, Nova Scotia

Thomas Davison (b. 1774 d. 1831), son of William Davison and Jane Fletcher, m. 1797 **Jannet Urquhart** (b. ca. 1773 d. 1862)

1. Mary Jane (b. 1798 d. 1824) m. John Mckay of Pictou
2. David (b. 1799 d. 1860)
3. John Bayne (b. 1804 d. 1845)
4. Robert P. (b. 1806 d. 1825)
5. Annabell (b. 1807 d. 1907)
6. Margaret Eliza m. William S. Fletcher, a Wallace clockmaker and jeweller
7. James Bayne (b. 1812 d. 1894) m. Lavinia Dickson, dau. of Robert and Lavinia Dickson
 - i. Mary Campbell (b. 1842 d. 1890) m. Thomas Brodie, Quebec merchant
 - ii. Arthur (b. 1844 d. 1897) m. 1873 Mary Huestis
 - iii. Robert (b. 1847 d. 1910) m. Mary Araminta Purdy (b. 1845 d. 1915)
 - i. Mary Brodie (b. 1879 d. 1964) m. Michael A. (b. 1874) Kennedy
 - i. John Alexander Kennedy (b. 1907 d. 1987)
 - iv. David (b. 1849 d. 1892)
 - v. Charles Creed (b. 1852 d. 1917)
8. Peter
9. Sammuel
10. Frederick
11. William

The Dickson Family of Onslow, Nova Scotia

Charles Dickson (b. 1749 d. 1796), son of Robert and **Abigail Dixson** m. Amelia Bishop (b. 1754 d. 1846), daughter of John and Mary Bishop

1. John (b. 1773 d. 1858) m. Lydia Hamilton (d. 1866)
 - i. Charles (b. 1798)
 - ii. Eliza (b. 1799 d. 1819)
 - iii. John Mason Tufton (b. 1802)

¹ Genealogy is based on the notes of Audrey Davison Ryan, Wallace and Area Museum and Emily McKay Dewey, *The Dickson Book*, 1950.

- iv. Mary Oliva (b. 1804) m. Thomas Roach
- v. William Andrew (b. 1806 d. 1825)
- vi. Robert (b. 1808 d. 1870) m. Lydia Hamilton (b. 1815 d.1901)
- vii. Lavinia (b. 1811)
- viii. Sarah Ann (b. 1818)
- ix. George William (b. 1820 d. 1821)
- 2. Charles (b. 1775 d. 1721) m. Rachel Todd Archibald (b. 1775 d. 1817)
- 3. **Robert** (b. 1777 d. 1835) m. **Lavinia DeWolf** (b. 1774 d. 1854)
 - i. Charles Edward (b. 1799 d. 1831) m. Sarah Lusby
 - ii. Sarah Amelia (b. 1801 d. 1867) m. John Roach
 - iii. Elisha DeWolf (b. 1803 d. 1853) m. Barbara Weir
 - iv. Robert Benjamin (b. 1805) m. Catherine Muirhead
 - v. Joseph McLean (b. 1807 d. 1865) m. Lavinia Blair
 - vi. Jacob Thomas (b. 1809)
 - vii. John (b. 1811 d. 1827)
 - viii. **Lavinia** (b. 1813 d. 1901) m. **James B. Davison**
 - ix. William (b. 1815 d. 1881) m. Rebecca Dickey
 - x. Abigail (b. 1818 d. 1891) m. Daniel McCurdy (b. 1806)
- 4. William (b. 1779 d. 1834) m. Rebecca Pearson (b. 1784 d. 1854)
- 5. Abigail (b. 1781) m. (1) Andrew Wallace m. (2) Robert Lowden
- 6. Mary (b. 1783 twin d. 1872) m. Dr. John Murray Upham
 - i. Olivia (b. 1804 d. 1845) m. William Campbell
 - ii. Charlotte (b. 1806 d. 1844) m. George Scott Flemming
 - iii. Charles Dickson (b. 1808)
- 7. Olivia (b. 1783) twin d. 1872) m. (1) Col. David Archibald (d. 1814) m. (2) John Henderson (d. 1832)
 - i. Samuel George (b. 1804 d. 1871) m. Maria Henderson
 - ii. Elizabeth (b. 1806 d. 1870) m. Alexander MacKenzie
 - iii. Mary (b. 1808 d. 1895) m. Hon. Alexander Campbell
 - i. Elizabeth (b. 1826 m. Archibald Campbell
 - ii. Margaret m. S.S. Blowers Archibald
 - iii. Hannah m. John S. McLean
 - iv. Olivia m. Howard Primrose
 - v. David A. (b. 1830 d. 1887) m. Francis Felicity Kavanah
 - vi. George M. m. Sarah Ross
 - vii. Archibald m. Jessie Sedgewick
 - viii. William M.
 - iv. Charles Dickson (b. 1809)
 - v. William Henry (b. 1811 d. 1812)
 - vi. Hon. Thomas Dickson (b. 1813 d. 1890) m. Susan Corbett
- Children of Olivia and John Henderson
 - i. Maria (b. 1819 d. 1906) m. John P McKay
 - ii. Amelia (b. 1821 d. 1902) m. (1) James Purves

- m. (2) John McKinlay
 - iii. David Burnyeat (b. 1823 d. 1857)
 - iv. Jessie (b. 1827 d. 1861)
- 8. Elizabeth (b. 1785 d. 1830) m. Hon. S.G.W. Archibald
 - i. Charles Dickson (b. 1802 d. 1868) m. Bridget Walker
 - ii. John Duncan (b. 1804 d. 1830) m. Annie Mitchell
 - iii. Foster Hutchinson (b.1806)
 - iv. George William (b.1822)
 - v. Sir Edward Mortimer Archibald (b. 1810 d. 1884)
 - vi. Elizabeth (b. 1812 d. 1831)
 - vii. Mary (b. 1814 d. 1836) m. George Hill
 - viii. Rachel Dickson (b. 1815 d. 1818)
 - ix. Sir Thomas Dickson (b. 1817) m. Sarah Smith
 - x. Sampson Salter Blowers (b. 1819 d. 1893) m. Anovie Corbett
 - xi. Peter Suther (b. 1820 d. 1877)
 - xii. William George (b. 1822 d. 1857)
 - xiii. Richard (b. 1823 d. 1824)
 - xiv. Jane Amelia (b. 1826 d. 1838)
 - xv. Robert Dickson (b. 1828. d1828)
- 9. Sarah (b. 1787 d. 1791)
- 10. Thomas (b. 1791 d. 1857) m. Sarah Ann Patterson (d. 1850)
- 11. Lavinia (b. 1795 d. 1860) m. Rev. John Burneat

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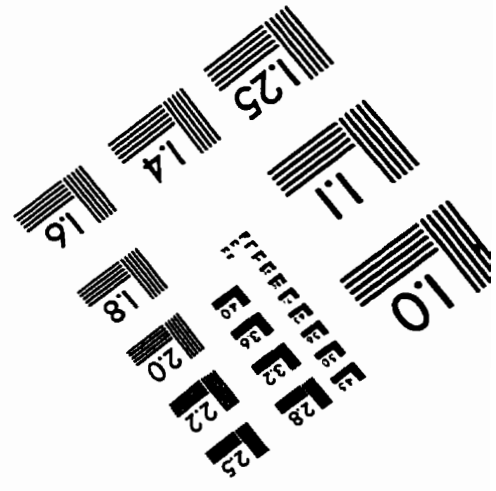
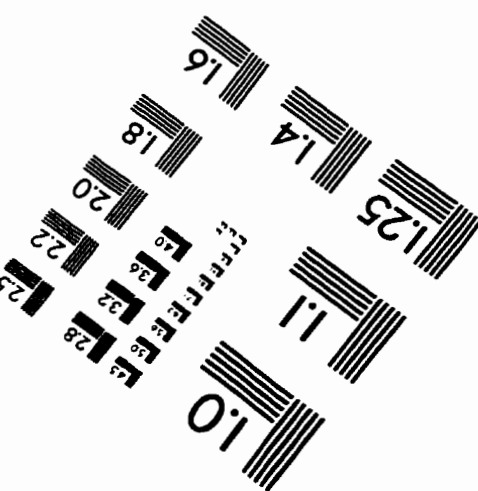
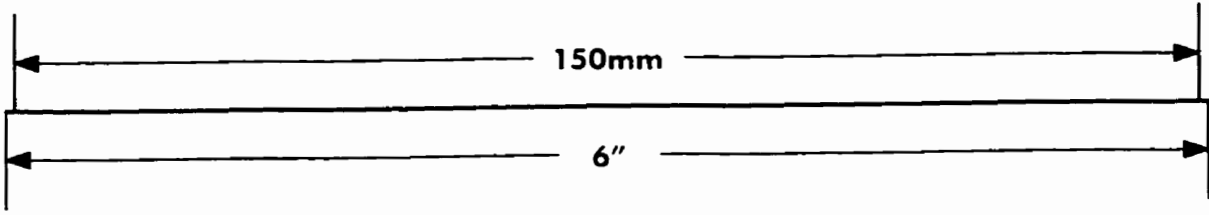
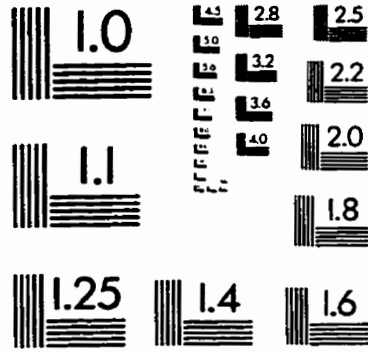
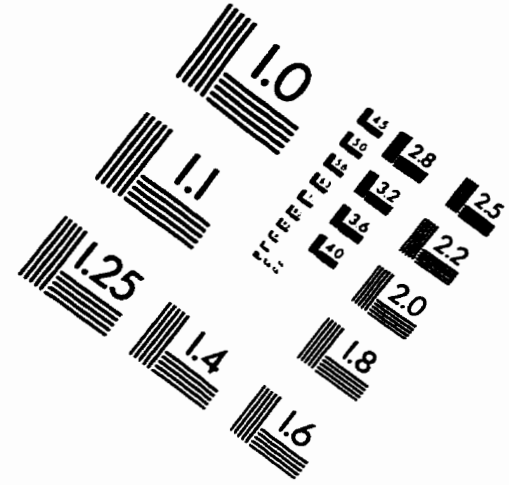
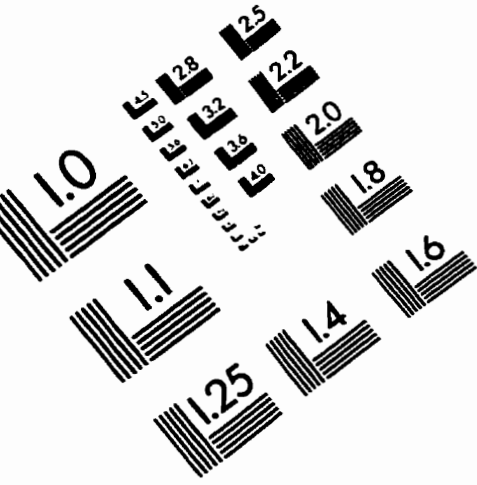
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