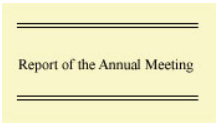
Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association
Rapport de l'assemblée annuelle de la Société historique du Canada



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Volume 17, Number 1, 1938

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/300170ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/300170ar

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Publisher(s)

The Canadian Historical Association/La Société historique du Canada

ISSN

0317-0594 (print)
1712-9095 (digital)

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Cite this article

Martell, J. S. (1938). Intercolonial Communications, 1840-1867. *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association / Rapport de l'assemblée annuelle de la Société historique du Canada*, *17*(1), 41–61. https://doi.org/10.7202/300170ar

INTERCOLONIAL COMMUNICATIONS, 1840-1867

By J. S. MARTELL

The plain purpose of this paper is to record the changes that took place in intercolonial communications in North America in the period that intervened between the Canadian union and Confederation. It is less concerned with what might have been if every plan to improve communications had been successfully transferred from paper to practice than with what actually was after each promoter had passed on his way. So much attention has been paid to the railway schemes of those years that it is easy to forget that, at the time of Confederation, intercolonial traffic was still dependent on the boats that plied the sea lanes and the coaches that creaked over the land. In recalling this fact, however, it is necessary to point out that there had been great improvements in the service provided by both these means of conveyance. Even in 1854, these improvements gave the colonies many more opportunities for contact than they had enjoyed in the past, yet it has been said that, with the exception of the two sections of Canada, transportation between the provinces in the year of the reciprocity treaty was not "substantially" better than it had been at the end of the French régime.[1] In winter, direct lines of communication between Canada and the Maritime Provinces may have been much the same in 1854, or for that matter in 1867, as they had been in 1763, but this was not the case in summer. The St. Lawrence route was neglected in 1854, but there had been a regular steamship service between Quebec and Maritime ports in the first four years of the 1840's and in 1852, and it was to be resumed in 1858 and increased thereafter. The overland routes to Canada through New Brunswick, while scarcely fit for carriages at any time before Confederation, were at least passable for mail carts and lumber waggons, whereas in 1840 their state had been such as to frighten both man and beast. Prince Edward Island was still more or less isolated in the winter when ice floes filled the Strait of Northumberland and "board ice" spread out from the shores, but this seasonal exception did not apply to the other Maritime Provinces or to Newfoundland. Steamships were able to sail between them in winter as well as summer. The invention of the steamship alone had made a great difference in communications between the four Atlantic colonies where all but one of the interprovincial routes were over water, while stage coaches, also new in the nineteenth century, had improved the overland connection between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Stage coaches were in their heyday in the Maritime Provinces in 1854, the year that railway construction began in earnest, but steamships increased in usefulness as the iron rails stretched across Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, linking the Atlantic with the Bay of Fundy in 1858, and the Bay with the Strait of Northumberland in 1860. The demand for better service on the sea was met with larger and swifter steamers. Even before the railway era in the Maritimes, more powerful boats had been put on

[1] W. M. Whitelaw, *The Maritimes and Canada before Confederation* (Toronto, 1934), 95. "When the Reciprocity Treaty was promulgated, each of the provinces had many easy contacts with the populous centers of the United States, the maritime provinces by sea, and Canada by land and inland navigation. With the exception of the two sections of Canada, interprovincial lines of transportation had not substantially improved since the end of the French régime."

the North Atlantic run between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. As no railways were built in Newfoundland or Prince Edward Island in the pre-Confederation period, traffic both in and between the Lower Provinces up to the year 1858 depended on steamships and sailing packets and carriages and carts. The railway changed the picture in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in the next nine years, as it had already done in Canada, but even in 1867 there were no through connections by rail between any of the mainland colonies. The telegraph and cable companies were more successful in overcoming intercolonial barriers. Their lines crossed provincial borders on the mainland between 1849 and 1851, and soon after spanned the seas that surrounded Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland. The electric transmission of public news and business and personal messages was a great step forward in the general move to link together the five potential partners in the pact of 1867, but the more real and lasting contacts continued to be made through the mails and through travelling and trading. Significant as these various contacts may be to students of Confederation, no attempt has been made to define their exact nature or extent. They present a subject in themselves and may well be subordinated, if not ignored, in a study which deals primarily with the facilities that made them possible.

The inauguration of the Cunard steamship line in 1840 and the establishment of Halifax as the distributing centre for colonial mails in the same year opened a new era in interprovincial communications in North America. The Cunard ships, vessels of 1,200 tons and 440 horse-power that were capable of crossing the Atlantic in twelve days and before the decade passed in nine and even eight days, made a particular impression on the people of the Maritime Provinces who had previously known only small schooners fitted up with engines of 25 and 50 horse-power. Awakened to the possibilities of steam navigation, they demanded bigger and better boats for their local lines. The imperial government, anxious for the quick transit of mails to and from the Halifax post-office, urged all the colonies to provide faster and more frequent transportation services, especially on overland routes. This combination of local opinion and imperial pressure produced immediate results—the beginning of the changes that, despite temporary and even permanent setbacks, were to increase and improve intercolonial communications in the next twenty-seven years.

Communications between the Maritime Provinces will be considered first. In 1840, the people of these three seaboard colonies had been enjoying the novelty of regular services by stage coaches and steamships for little more than a decade. An amusing contrast between past and present conditions was made by Joseph Howe in October, 1837, when he asked those suspicious of the new idea of railways what they would have said:

> Had any body told them, ten years ago, when Hamilton used to carry the mail on horseback, from Halifax to Annapolis, and sometimes in a little cart, with a solitary passenger beside him, who looked as if he was going to the end of the world, and expected to pay accordingly, that they would have lived to see a Stage Coach, drawn by four horses, running three times a week on the same road. . . .
>
> Would they have believed, had they travelled on foot with Stewart, the old Postman from Pictou to Halifax, who used to carry the mail

in his Jacket packet, and a gun to shoot patridges [*sic*] for sale as he went along, that before their heads were cold they would travel between the same places in a Coach and four, with a ton of letters and papers strapped on before and behind?[2]

The stages that ran from Halifax to Windsor and Annapolis and to Truro and Pictou connected with steamers for New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. During the greater part of the 1830's, these steamers crossed the Bay of Fundy once a week from Windsor to Saint John and twice a week from Annapolis and Digby to Saint John, thus giving a tri-weekly connection between the rich Annapolis Valley and the commercial centre of New Brunswick, as well as between the capitals of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, for both stages and steamers ran regularly between Saint John and Fredericton. In winter, sailing ships were substituted for steamships and usually plied weekly between Annapolis, Digby, and Saint John. The steamers were as yet too small to brave the Fundy crossing in the stormy months and the river at Windsor was closed to navigation from the last days of December to the first of April. In the Strait of Northumberland, all regular sailings were discontinued in winter. Mails and passengers crossed from Cape Tormentine to Cape Traverse once a week in small ice-boats when the weather permitted. Travelling conditions on the Strait were considerably better in summer. Then a steamer maintained a steady service between the three provinces, leaving Pictou for Charlottetown and Miramichi and returning to Pictou via Charlottetown within a week. The overland route between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick did not have enough traffic in the 1830's to warrant a through coaching service. Stages ran once a week from Saint John to the Nova Scotian border, but from there to Truro, a sixty-mile stretch over the Cobequid mountains, travellers had no recourse but to seek room in the mail waggon.[3]

The 1840's witnessed many changes in the communications between the Maritime Provinces and, indeed, between all the provinces. For the sake of clarity and at the risk of dullness, the changes on each route of travel will be considered in turn. Between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the most important routes were on the Bay of Fundy. The tri-weekly service, already described, was not increased until 1846, but schedules were speeded up with new steamers replacing the old. The first to be discarded was the S.S. *Maid of the Mist* which was "so defective in her equipments" in 1841 that travellers swore a voyage in her was no longer safe.[4] In August of that year, her owner, James Whitney, the steamboat magnate of New Brunswick, put the S.S. *Saxe Gotha* on the route to sail with the S.S. *North America* for the remainder of the season. The *Saxe Gotha,* whose engine was built by Napiers in Glasgow, was hailed as a fine ship, although a sea captain remembered her in later years as "a very crank boat" with "a list starboard or port, and hard to keep on even keel". None of these early steamships, the same authority recalled,

[2]*Novascotian,* Oct. 19, 1837.

[3]The chief sources of my information have been shipping lists, advertisements, and miscellaneous items in newspapers, schedules of various transportation services and more advertisements in almanacs, and official reports and records in sessional papers. An unpublished thesis by R. D. Evans, *Transportation and Communication in Nova Scotia 1815-1850* (Dalhousie University, 1936) proved to be a helpful guide to material in the 1830's and 1840's.

[4]*Acadian Recorder,* May 29, 1841.

had "bells to communicate with the engine room; the captain walked a narrow bridge directly over the engine giving orders by word of mouth to stop and go ahead; engines all open to weather".[5] In 1842, Whitney transferred the *Saxe Gotha* to the new Halifax-Saint John service, leaving the *North America* to carry on alone until joined by the S.S. *Herald* in the spring of 1843. A few months later, in August, 1843, the *North America* was taken off to be employed in another new venture. The *Herald*, which stayed on until 1848, was the first steamer on the Bay of Fundy to maintain a winter schedule.[6] In competition with Whitney's boats, in the early 1840's at least, was the S.S. *Nova Scotia* of the Annapolis Steamship Company. As this company received no regular government grants, it is difficult to determine when its ships were replaced and how often they sailed.

The popularity of the Windsor-Saint John steamers, which afforded the quickest and cheapest passage between Halifax and Saint John, enabled Whitney to establish a bi-weekly service from Windsor in 1846. The *Saxe Gotha* was brought back on the route to run with the *Herald* until they were both replaced in 1848 by the new S.S. *Commodore*. The increased traffic also meant a reduction in fares. Cabin class on the *Commodore* from Windsor to Saint John was $4.00 and deck passage $2.50. Two years later, coach fare from Windsor to Halifax was lowered from 10 shillings to 5 shillings, a reduction supposed to have "nearly, if not quite, trebled the amount of travel" on the Windsor-Halifax road in 1850 and which doubtless added to the business of the steamers.[7] The S.S. *Fairy Queen* joined the *Commodore* in 1849 and together they gave a four-day-a-week service to Saint John, twice from Windsor and twice from Annapolis and Digby, until 1851. The *Fairy Queen* was apparently not a new boat when she came on the route. A traveller from Montreal described her in 1850 as "an old hulk, barely sea-worthy",[8] and, as if to prove his words, she sank three years later, some months after being transferred to the Strait of Northumberland.

The service between Annapolis, Digby, and Saint John was improved in 1851, when provision was made for three sailings a week. For a year, the *Commodore* and *Fairy Queen* made the extra trip, but in 1852 the new S.S. *Herald* took over the run from Annapolis, while the other two ships divided the sailings from Windsor. This five-day-a-week service on the Bay of Fundy seems to have continued without change, except in winter, until Confederation. A number of new steamers, belonging to different companies, made their appearance after 1852: the *Creole* and *Forest Queen*,

[5]"An old sea captain" quoted by J. Murray Lawson, *Yarmouth Past and Present* (Yarmouth, 1902), 549.

[6]The *New Brunswick Chronicle*, quoted by the Halifax *Times* of Feb. 11, 1845, noted this fact with satisfaction. ". . . the Mails during the last two winters have been regularly transmitted across the Bay of Fundy, from this Port to Digby and Annapolis, by the steamer *Herald*, Capt. Brown, and we believe without a single failure or accident. The question of navigating the Bay of Fundy by steam during the winter, was formerly pronounced as next to impracticable, and it has been left to Capt. Brown to prove the fallacy of that conclusion. The trips of the Herald are now continued weekly, and very much to the advantage of the mercantile and travelling community."

[7]*Acadian Recorder*, Oct. 19, 1850. Two coaches left from both Windsor and Halifax every day, carrying in all an average of fifty people.

[8]Extract from the *Montreal Gazette* in the *Acadian Recorder*, Sept. 21, 1850.

replacing the *Commodore* and *Fairy Queen,* in 1853; the *Maid of Erin* in 1854; the *Pilot* in 1855; the *Westmorland* in 1857. The *Creole,* a 400-ton ship of 150 horse-power, saw particularly steady service after she was sold in 1855 by the Saint John and Westmorland Steamship Company to the King Brothers of Saint John and Halifax. As the latter firm already had the contract for carrying the mail by coach from Halifax to Windsor and Annapolis, this purchase gave them control of a through line of transport between the two largest towns in the Maritime Provinces.

The opening of the railway from Halifax to Windsor in the spring of 1858 was another boon to intercolonial travellers. Trains now ran to and from Halifax twice daily, Sundays always excepted.[9] The stages had also run daily, and twice daily when rival companies were on the road, since 1834, but at best they had taken over five hours for the forty-five miles. The regular schedule on the railway at first allowed for two hours and forty-five minutes and after 1864 two hours and a half. Halifax and Saint John were now within twelve hours of one another, whereas in 1853 twenty hours had been considered good time.[10] The new S.S. *Emperor,* which the King Brothers placed on the Windsor route in 1858, was said by one enthusiastic traveller just returned from a trip through Canada and the United States to be unsurpassed "in speed and comfort by any steamer of her class which floats upon our American waters".[11] The *Emperor* was succeeded in 1865 by the *Empress,* an even finer ship, owned by the same company. The record time across the Bay from Windsor, up to 1862 at any rate, was seven hours and twenty-one minutes, including the customary stop at Parrsborough in the Minas Basin.[12] Competition in 1862 between the King Brothers and the short-lived People's Line, connecting Windsor with Saint John and the Grand Trunk railway at Portland, reduced the through fare from Halifax to Saint John to $4.00. Both the *Emperor* and the *Empress* ran twice weekly from Windsor and Digby.[13] Subsidized by the Nova Scotian government to the extent of $3,000 a year for the carriage of mails, passengers, and freight, the King Brothers were nevertheless given the option of using sailing vessels in January and February for the weekly crossings from Digby. Such precaution seemed necessary after the recent series of disasters, involving trans-Atlantic as well as interprovincial steamers, off the coasts of the Maritime Provinces.[14] In winter, traffic from Halifax to New Brunswick depended on the overland route.

The dream of a daily service between Halifax and Saint John was realized in 1859, not via the Bay of Fundy as had been suggested in 1840, but overland. Stages began running from Truro to the New Brunswick border

[9]Even the dispatch of mails on Sunday drew down the denunciations of God-fearing citizens. In 1851, for instance, the committee on mail routes and schedules in Nova Scotia reported that their attention had been called by "the Sabbath Alliance and numerous Petitions" to the secular duties performed on Sunday by the postal authorities and that they had adopted schemes to provide that "no office be kept open or mail be transmitted through the Province on the Lord's Day".

[10]*British North American,* July 18, 1853.

[11]*Acadian Recorder,* Oct. 16, 1858.

[12]*British Colonist,* May 27, 1862.

[13]A small steamer now met the larger ships at Digby and carried mails and passengers up the river to Annapolis.

[14]The *Pilot* ran ashore near Digby in January, 1856, becoming a "total wreck", and the *Creole* was badly damaged near Annapolis in November, 1857. She sank when being taken across the Bay to Saint John.

in 1842. At first, mails and passengers were carried twice a week in the same coach, but by 1848 there was a four-day-a-week service provided by two passenger stages and two mail coaches, also carrying passengers. In 1850, the schedule was changed to two days a week with passengers leaving in the mornings and mails and more passengers in the afternoons. In 1851, the old bi-weekly mail and passenger service was resumed only to be altered again in 1852 to a tri-weekly service, which was kept up until 1859, when daily coaches were put on the road, connecting at Truro with the trains from Halifax and at Amherst with daily coaches from Saint John. A year later, daily trains ran from Saint John to Moncton, reducing even further the distance travelled by the stages.

Again it is clear that the building of provincial railways speeded up interprovincial communications. In 1853, stages between Halifax and Saint John took forty-six to forty-eight hours,[15] apparently travelling far into the night and early in the morning. The combined train and coach service in the 'sixties, without the over-night stop at Amherst, would have reduced this time by more than half. Leaving Halifax at six in the morning—through travellers were not likely to take the afternoon train—the sixty-four miles of rail to Truro were passed over in three hours (three and a half hours before 1864). The four-horse stage from Truro to Moncton, which was supposed to average seven to eight miles an hour, was probably capable of covering the hundred miles in fourteen hours, and the trains from Moncton, also maintaining their ordinary speed, the ninety-three miles to Saint John in four hours and a half. The fare from Halifax to Truro was $1.83, and from Moncton to Saint John, at the advertised rate of two cents a mile, $1.86; but what the stage proprietors charged does not appear in the almanacs and newspapers that alone provide such interesting details. In summer, the route was little used by intercolonial travellers. The postmaster of Nova Scotia reported in 1862 that "the passenger traffic . . . is very limited, travellers between New Brunswick and the United States, and Nova Scotia, preferring the route by steam across the Bay of Fundy via Windsor".[16] In winter, when traffic increased, trains usually ran once a day, but not always. On March 1, 1862, a Halifax paper, the *British Colonist,* reported: "Travelling on the railway has been almost suspended of late, owing to mismanagement on the line. At some places the tanks have frozen up, as there was no person to look after them. One day lately, sufficient snow had to be melted at one station to bring the train on to another,—the whole affair seems to be in confusion." This condemnation loses some of its force when it is known that the *British Colonist* was an opposition paper in 1862 and that the railways in Nova Scotia were owned and run by the government.

Two other routes between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick must be mentioned. The first, an all-sea route between Halifax and Saint John, via Lunenburg, Liverpool, sometimes Shelburne, and always Yarmouth, ports on Nova Scotia's south-western coast, did not prove particularly successful. An annual grant of £500 for three years offered by the legislature of Nova Scotia in 1841 for a steamship line between Halifax and Yarmouth was taken up in the following year by Whitney, who extended the service to Saint John. His *Saxe Gotha* ran weekly for eight months in

[15] *British North American,* July 18, 1853.
[16] *Journal,* Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1862, appendix 11.

1842, two months in 1843, and seven months in 1844, and then stopped.[17] Whitney was not long in discovering that, with any number of trading and sailing vessels on the same route, a steamship service, while convenient, was not essential.[18] A new line of sailing packets, carrying freight and passengers, replaced the *Saxe Gotha* in 1845. Three years later, Whitney decided to try his luck again, this time with the old S.S. *Herald* which, after sailing through the summer of 1848, disappeared sometime in the autumn. She seems to have been the last steamship between Halifax and Saint John, although not between Halifax and Yarmouth. Sailing packets carried on the service, more or less regularly, in the next eighteen years.

A far more important route was that between Pictou and the ports of northern New Brunswick. The St. Lawrence steamers provided direct service in the fifteen summers they plied between Quebec and Pictou and in every year it was possible to sail or steam to such places as Shediac, Richibucto, Miramichi, and sometimes Bathurst and Campbellton, via Prince Edward Island. Even before the railways were built, Pictou and Saint John were within two days of each other by this route. In 1848, the legislature of New Brunswick voted a small subsidy for a steamship line between Saint John and the head of the Bay of Fundy. A traveller, using this line in 1853, reported that he left Saint John on a Monday evening for the bend of the Petitcodiac, crossed the short distance overland to Shediac, and from there took a steamer for Pictou—all in forty hours.[19] After 1860, traffic between Saint John and Pictou went by rail to Shediac.

Both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were connected with Prince Edward Island by the steamships and sailing packets on the Strait of Northumberland. All three provinces usually helped to maintain the steamship and winter mail service. In 1840, Samuel Cunard's old S.S. *Cape Breton* was in her last year of service. The next year, the Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company secured the contract and increased the sailings between Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia but failed to include the New Brunswick port of Miramichi, where the Cunards had considerable business interests. The weekly run to Miramichi was resumed in 1842, when the Island Company put a new ship, the S.S. *St. George,* into service. They laid up their ancient S.S. *Pocohontas* which in 1841 had left Pictou for Charlottetown every Friday, returning Saturday, and leaving again on Monday for Georgetown or Charlottetown. The *St. George* continued to call at these ports as well as at Bedeque (Summerside) and Miramichi. No assistance for this service came from Nova Scotia or New Brunswick in 1844, and complaining of "severe losses", the company put their case before the government of both provinces in 1845, when they received £200 from New Brunswick, but could not claim the £350 voted in Nova Scotia as they were unable to conform with the new requirement for a weekly run from Pictou to St. Peters, Cape Breton, touching at Canso and Arichat. This must have been the last straw for the owners of

[17]Her average time was between two and three days and her best time forty-five hours.

[18]Whitney estimated a loss of £657 (in actual cash, aside from depreciation, only £57) in 1842, although he received the government grant of £500, subscriptions from the citizens of Yarmouth, Liverpool, Lunenburg, and Halifax amounting to almost £270, and over £1,400 in passage money. *Journal,* Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1843, appendix 41.

[19]*British North American,* June 17, 1853.

the *St. George,* for there was no steamship service in 1846, all traffic being dependent on sailing vessels "to the great discomfort and inconvenience of the Public, and to the detriment of Trade".[20] Since 1840, sailing ships had been running weekly between Shediac and Summerside and fortnightly between Bay Verte, Summerside, and Charlottetown, but the service between Georgetown and Pictou, seems to have stopped in 1841, when the steamship started to call at Georgetown. The packets between New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island were to continue on their routes until 1855, if not longer. Their proprietors usually received small government grants of £20 to £40.

Steamship service between the three provinces recommenced in 1847, when the S.S. *Conqueror,* owned by W. H. Scovil of Saint John, sailed once a week from Shediac to Charlottetown and twice a week from Pictou to Charlottetown; but after claiming the grants for that year, Scovil withdrew his ship,[21] and once again connections with the island were kept up by sailing ships. The situation was partially improved in 1849, when James Peake of Charlottetown placed the S.S. *Rose* on the route between Charlottetown and Pictou. The *Rose* ran bi-weekly until 1853 when she was sold for £1,000 to the Cunards at Halifax.[22] The successor to the *Rose* was the ill-fated *Fairy Queen* which Whitney of Saint John offered after the failure in 1852 of the intercolonial steamer *Albatross*—of which more anon.

The sinking of the *Fairy Queen* with loss of life in the autumn of 1853 awakened the public to the need of better steamships on the Strait. In the next two years, grants amounting to £2,100, £600, and £400 were passed by the legislatures of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, respectively, to encourage the employment of good, substantial ships between Charlottetown and Pictou, and Charlottetown, Summerside, and Shediac. L. P. W. Desbrisay of Richibucto was the recipient of all these handsome sums for the service performed by his S.S. *Rose Bud* and S.S. *Lady LeMarchant* which left Charlottetown twice a week for Pictou and once a week for Shediac and Richibucto in 1854 and twice a week to the three ports in 1855. In 1856, the legislature of Nova Scotia demanded a daily service between Pictou and Charlottetown for their annual grant of £200, but agreed, two years later, that Desbrisay could not have maintained such a schedule without "injurious consequences" to himself.[23] Desbrisay, in fact, did not increase his sailings at all in 1856; but William Heard of Charlottetown used or bought the *Rose Bud* for a new semi-weekly service between Charlottetown and Tatamagouche in Nova Scotia.

The facts found on the Strait services in the next few years do not, perhaps, present the full picture. Nova Scotia granted £200 for tri-weekly trips from Pictou to Charlottetown in 1857 and in 1858, but the advertisements of the Eastern Stage Coach Company show that the daily stage from

[20] *Journal,* Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1847, appendix 63.

[21] The *Conqueror* was described as "a new and substantial Iron Steamer, constructed on the latest and most approved principle". *Journal,* Legislative Assembly, New Brunswick, March 17, 1847. In 1851, the New Brunswick Assembly was informed that the *Conqueror* had run only one year, although that body had provided for an annual payment of £250 for three years.

[22] *British North American,* July 11, 1853. Peake in a petition to the Nova Scotian Assembly in 1852 said that the *Rose,* which he bought in England, had fifty horse-power. The Cunards rented her to the admiral at Halifax for £200 a month—a typical move of that shrewd company.

[23] *Journal,* Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1858, appendix 64.

Halifax continued to meet the Pictou steamers twice a week as usual. In August, 1857, a new steamer, the S.S. *Westmorland,* went on the route. Whether she belonged to Desbrisay, Heard, or Joseph Allison of Sackville, her proprietor in 1863, is an unsettled point. Her most likely owner, however, was Christopher Boltenhouse of Shediac, who received an annual grant of £500 from the government of New Brunswick for running a steamer between Shediac and the island in 1857 and 1858.[24] The opening of the Halifax-Truro railway in 1859, bringing twice daily trains within forty miles of Pictou, led to a bi-weekly mail service by schooner between Pictou and Georgetown, and more changes followed the coming of the railway to Shediac in 1860.

When the Prince of Wales visited Charlottetown in August, 1860, curious crowds were carried to the island centre in the S.S. *Westmorland* from Shediac, the new S.S. *Lord Seaforth* from Pictou, and the old S.S. *Lady LeMarchant* from Richibucto. The S.S. *Arabian,* employed on the St. Lawrence route, also added to the colourful scene in Charlottetown harbour. The *Lady Head,* the other St. Lawrence steamer, was not present. All these boats, with the exception of the *Lord Seaforth* which met the *Westmorland* at Pictou, connected with the new railway at Shediac. The policy of the New Brunswick government in subsidizing steamers to feed the railway with traffic was commended by the *Novascotian* early in September, 1860, when yet another ship, the S.S. *Princess Royal* was placed on the Shediac-Miramichi route.[25] The same paper noted a month or so later that one down train from Shediac carried thirteen cars filled with freight from Prince Edward Island and the north shore of New Brunswick.[26] Shediac was soon to overshadow Pictou as a centre for interprovincial steamship lines. Until 1864, the *Westmorland* left Charlottetown twice a week for both ports, but in that year the Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company, taking over the service with two fine new steamers, the *Princess of Wales* and the *Heather Belle,* gave another sailing a week to Shediac. Even before 1864, the sailings of Mr. Boltenhouse's boat, the *Lord Seaforth,* which began in 1860 to ply between Pictou, Pugwash, Georgetown, and the Cape Breton towns of Arichat, Port Mulgrave, and Port Hood, were discontinued. The bi-weekly service between Charlottetown and Tatamagouche or Brulé in the adjoining harbour, which had been kept up in some years at least since Heard opened it in 1856, was taken over by the Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company in 1864.

Whether the powerful steamers of the Island Company—the *Princess of Wales* was listed at 1,000 tons—continued to run on the Strait until Confederation is not certain but very probable. In 1865, W. H. Pope, one of the proprietors, received $1,200 from Nova Scotia for service between Charlottetown and Pictou and R. R. Hodgson, who may or may not have been a proprietor, $1,600 for service between Charlottetown, Pictou, and Brulé. The *Princess of Wales* ran between Charlottetown and Shediac in 1865, although the *Island City,* hired by the New Brunswick government, was on the same route that year.[27] In 1866, however, the *Island*

[24] *Journal,* Legislative Assembly, New Brunswick, 1859, appendix, p. Dccxxviii.
[25] *Novascotian,* Sept. 3, 1860.
[26] *Ibid.,* Oct. 15, 1860.
[27] *Journal,* Legislative Assembly, New Brunswick, May 27, 1867. New Brunswick refused the claim of the Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company for $3,000 for the running of the *Princess of Wales* in 1865.

City was employed between Halifax and Yarmouth.[28] The names of the steamers on the Strait in 1866 and 1867 do not appear in the records examined, but it seems safe to assume that the *Princess of Wales* and the *Heather Belle,* both new ships in 1864, were still in service. The New Brunswick legislature, in line with their policy since 1860, granted $13,900 in these two years for steamship service, mostly between Shediac, Prince Edward Island, and northern New Brunswick. The Nova Scotian legislature granted considerably smaller sums to maintain services from Pictou, $1,600 in 1866 for a connection with Charlottetown and $1,600 in 1867 for a service including Cape Breton as well as Prince Edward Island.

The importance of the Pictou-Charlottetown route was revived in 1867 when the railway from Halifax and Truro reached Pictou. The railway commissioner in his report for that year said that through passenger tickets from Halifax to Charlottetown had been reduced to $4.00, and he promised satisfactory arrangements for the conveyance of through freight. In 1864, the fare on the steamer alone had been 12 shillings. In the same year, fare from Brulé to Charlottetown was 9 shillings, from Charlottetown to Shediac 18 shillings, and from Charlottetown to Saint John via the European and North American railway from Shediac $4.50. Steamship schedules enabled travellers on the morning train from Saint John to take a boat from Shediac at two o'clock in the afternoon and reach Summerside at five and Charlottetown at ten thirty. The time from Pictou and Brulé to Charlottetown was the same—four hours. In the summer of 1865, round-trip tickets for a tour of the three provinces were sold for $13. Beginning at Halifax, this ticket took tourists to Windsor by train, to Saint John by steamer, to Shediac by train, to Charlottetown by steamer, to Pictou by steamer, to Truro by daily six-horse stages, and back to Halifax by train. In winter, when trains ran less frequently and connections with Prince Edward Island depended on the mail boats from Cape Tormentine, such service was not possible. The short but hazardous winter trip to the island was undertaken only once a week until the early 1850's, when a bi-weekly service seems to have been established.[29] In 1862, the post-office announced a tri-weekly service, the couriers receiving orders to cross, if possible, "every alternate day".[30]

Charlottetown was also linked by direct steamers with Halifax after 1864. In that year, the Boston and Colonial steamship line (Messrs. Snow and Company of Boston) placed the *Commerce* and *Franconia* on a fortnightly service between Boston, Halifax, and Charlottetown. The *Commerce,* said to have been "one of the finest boats afloat", had a capacity for 2,500 barrels of freight,[31] but like her sister ships she also carried mails and passengers, calling at ports in the Gut of Canso on her trips between the capitals of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. In 1865, the *Greyhound* replaced the *Franconia* and although she sank at the end of that season, business had been good enough to warrant the introduction of two new ships in 1866, the *Alhambra* and the *Oriental.* The *Commerce* came

[28]The *Island City,* according to the *Acadian Recorder* of May 23, 1866, was "a substantial paddle steamer of about 400 tons" with "comfortable accommodation for 80 or 90 passengers".

[29]The last reference to a weekly service was found in 1852. It may, however, have been continued beyond that date.

[30]*British Colonist,* Jan. 18, 1862.

[31]*Boston Post,* quoted by the *British Colonist,* May 17, 1864.

back on the route in 1867 to sail with the *Alhambra*. All these ships began their sailings early in the spring—the *Commerce* left Boston for Halifax on February 27, 1867—and continued until late in December.

Communications between the Maritime Provinces and Canada are not to be compared with those that linked the component parts of each country—for, throughout this period, the Maritimes and Canada were two distinct countries with different outlooks and different policies, even different customs.[32] Nevertheless, opportunities for contact increased after 1840. It is true that in the 1860's, anti-confederates in the Maritimes said that they had had practically no social or commercial intercourse with the Canadians, and that some Canadians at any rate still showed a surprising curiosity about Maritimers. It is also true that local patriots in the Lower Provinces, referring to certain unfortunate incidents, declared that they knew the Canadians too well. Whether the statements and stories, illustrating these views, are to be taken at their face value or not, the fact still remains that opportunities for contact increased after 1840, although for twelve years, all prior to 1858, there was no regular steamship service on the St. Lawrence. Improvements on the two roads to Canada began in 1840, making possible better mail service. These overland routes were little used by through travellers, but they were essential to lumbermen and to local residents on either side of the border. The most popular way of travelling to Canada, for the majority of the people in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick at least, was via the United States. From Halifax and Saint John, the so-called "inland route" by steamer to Portland and by rail to Canada was both cheaper and quicker than the St. Lawrence route. Before the Grand Trunk came to Portland in 1853, steamers from both provinces connected with trains at Boston and New York.

When the imperial government decided to despatch colonial mails from Halifax, particular inquiries were made as to the state of the roads that led through New Brunswick to Canada. The report made by the deputy postmaster-general at Quebec deserves to be quoted at length. He first describes the Temiscouata route:

> The route from Quebec to Halifax at present travelled, after leaving the River Saint Lawrence at Saint André, 108 miles below Quebec, passes for about 100 miles through the Territory in dispute between our Government and that of the United States. The greater part of this route is undeserving the name of a Road. It comprises percipitous mountains, forests and swamps, over and through which, at certain periods of the year, the unfortunate Couriers have to convey the Mail bags on their backs, no other mode of conveyance being practicable; and I will leave you, Sir, to fancy the toil and misery which must attend the transport of fifteen or sixteen hundred pounds weight of Mails (for an English mail now amounts to this enormous weight,) through such a wilderness. . . . It is, nevertheless, the natural channel to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, for it leads through the heart

[32]Even in 1866, the *Intercolonial Journal of Commerce*, a new publication in Montreal, explained its appearance by asking: "How many Canadians are acquainted with the currencies, the weights and measures, the commercial laws, &c., of the Maritime Provinces, and, on the other hand, where is the Maritime provincialist to be had who is skilled in the marks, brands, names, and denominations of the variety of goods produced and sold in Canada?" This extract appeared in the *Acadian Recorder*, Sept. 12, 1866.

> of the former Province, taking in Fredericton the seat of Government. Should it become absolutely necessary to adopt another route, there is only one choice, and that is the neglected road partially opened by His Excellency Sir James Kempt, which leaving the Saint Lawrence at Metis, 207 miles below Quebec, strikes the Restigouche River near the village of Campbelltown, New Brunswick, and bears the name of the Metis or Kempt Road. This road was never completed, and is now almost filled up with a secondary growth of trees, and is, consequently, in such a state as to be barely practicable for a foot post, which I established some years ago, and which now travels weekly. . . . It will cost from £15,000 to £18,000, judiciously laid out, to make this a good carriage road. . . . The journey from Quebec to Halifax, by this route, (after the Metis Road is improved) may be accomplished in from seven to eight days. . . . Whichever of the two Roads Her Majesty's Government may permanently improve, the Mails may be carried through in from 7 to 7½ days, probably 7. . . . It has already once been accomplished in six days on good winter roads, but it is a very different thing travelling light to conveying a Mail weighing a thousand or fifteen hundred pounds.[33]

The Temiscouata route was chosen in 1840 for the transmission of through mails and both the Canadian and New Brunswick governments proceeded to lay out money for the much-needed improvements. Although many thousands of pounds were spent in the next five years, the commissioner for the important stretch from Grand Falls, New Brunswick, to the Canadian border reported in 1846 that seventeen miles were still not "fit for carriages". He added that as the road was "the great thoroughfare for all the Lumberers, both British and American", it should be open to carriages and teams at all seasons of the year.[34] Winter travelling was probably the easiest. Some five years later, the Canadian railway delegates, Francis Hincks, E. P. Taché, and John Young, when crossing the portage section from Rivière du Loup to Lake Temiscouata on their way to the Maritimes, noted forty-two sleighs returning from New Brunswick.[35] In spring and autumn, parts of the road from Grand Falls were still reported to be very bad, but in 1851 the commissioner said that the road to Canada had been finally opened. The next year, postal service was increased, mail carts leaving Canada and New Brunswick three times instead of twice a week—a schedule that was maintained until Confederation. The New Brunswick and Canada railway, which began construction at St. Andrews in 1847, did not continue beyond Woodstock, seventy-three miles below

[33] *Journal*, Legislative Assembly, New Brunswick, Feb. 6, 1840.

[34] *Ibid.*, 1846, appendix, p. cxxxiii.

[35] In a memorandum published in the *Journal* of the Assembly of Nova Scotia in 1852, these gentlemen explained that the sleighs had been delivering "loads of pork and flour destined for the supply of the lumbering regions of N. Brunswick and Maine". "The flour", the memorandum continues, "had been manufactured in Upper Canada, and the cost of transportation from Riviere du Loup to Little Falls, in New Brunswick, a distance of about seventy miles, was 6s. 3d. currency per barrel. They ascertained further, that Upper Canada flour was carried as far south as the Grand Falls, a distance of thirty-six miles further, at a cost of 2s. 6d. per barrel additional. The points south of the Grand Falls are supplied from the city of St. John, and principally with Upper Canada flour which has reached that seaport by New York or Boston, by the route of the American canals and railroads."

Grand Falls. One authority states that this railway took twenty years to reach Woodstock and that then the company was bankrupt.[36] The *New Brunswick Almanac and Register* for 1864, however, contains a notice of trains leaving Woodstock to connect with the steamers at St. Andrews.

The other road to Canada, via northern New Brunswick, was less important for many reasons. It was far from the capital and commercial centre of New Brunswick and any important town in Canada, and it was close enough to the sea to lose traffic to steamers and sailing ships. Furthermore, as the St. John *Colonial Empire* pointed out in 1862, it "ran over the tops of all the mountains, after the old fashion, and consequently was almost useless".[37] In that year, the route was being changed to the valley of the Matapedia, along the route surveyed by Major Robinson for an intercolonial railway. Hopes for the railway had deferred this long-needed change. In 1844, the route had been surveyed with the intention of making a military road, but this was forgotten in the following year, when the formation of the Halifax and Quebec Railway and Land Company carried everybody away in a haze of pipe dreams. With assurance typical of the time, the *Acadian Recorder* of Halifax declared in 1845 that in "ten years hence a Rail Road from Halifax to the Columbia River, connecting Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, East and West Canada, and the Oregon Territory . . . will be, we have no doubt, in successful operation".[38] Two years later, the same paper noted that "since the project of a railway began to be talked about, nothing more has been said of the new military road that it was expected would have been made immediately after the report of Sir J. Alexander reached the [Home] Government".[39] The outbreak of the American Civil War called attention to the need of a good military road from Metis. Both money and labour were bestowed upon it in the early 1860's,[40] when a tri-weekly mail service was established.

The failure to take full advantage of the all-water route between the Maritimes and Canada, in the 1840's at least, may also have been partly owing to the prospect of an intercolonial railway. As it happened, the S.S. *Unicorn* was taken off the Pictou-Quebec run in 1845—the very year that plans were announced in London for the building of a railway from Halifax to Quebec. The service of the *Unicorn* was discontinued for reasons to be given shortly; but why did the Assembly of Nova Scotia refuse to encourage the employment of another steamer?[41] Seven years passed before an attempt was made to replace the *Unicorn*. In the mean-

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[36]G. P. deT. Glazebrook, *A History of Transportation in Canada* (Toronto, 1938), 155.

[37]Quoted in *British Colonist*, May 10, 1862.

[38]*Acadian Recorder*, Aug. 16, 1845.

[39]*Ibid.*, Nov. 20, 1847.

[40]According to the *St. John Colonial Empire*, quoted by the *British Colonist* of May 10, 1862, $45,463 had recently been spent on the road from Metis to Restigouche, leaving $49,100 necessary to complete it. Two companies of the 15th Regiment were to work on the road that summer.

[41]The committee of the Assembly which considered the petition of Captain Walter Douglas, formerly commander of the *Unicorn*, and others recommended that an annual grant of £500 be made for six years. The committee further said that "the commerce and carrying trade of this Province are materially advanced by frequent and rapid intercourse with Canada, and that many advantages have already resulted from an intimate social union of the people. . . ." *Journal*, 1845, appendix, 76. On April 10, the Assembly turned down this recommendation.

time, trade between Canada and the Lower Provinces had been gradually increasing,[42] although the volume was as nothing compared with that pouring through Maritime-New England trade channels, and more schooners were on the river. The time seemed ripe for a regular steamship service, even after the failure in 1852, but the reciprocity treaty, coming two years later, cut through the weak commercial ties on the St. Lawrence. Not until 1858 was a successful line established.

The *Unicorn,* the first Cunarder to cross the Atlantic, gave a fortnightly service between Pictou and Quebec from 1840 to 1844, inclusive. Only in the autumn of 1843 was she relieved by another ship, the supernumerary steamer *Margaret,* which the Cunard Company kept stationed at Halifax. As part of his contract with the imperial government, Cunard put the *Unicorn* on the St. Lawrence to carry English mails to and from Canada. He had a separate contract with the Nova Scotian government for the carriage of those mails overland from Halifax to Pictou. This local arrangement by which Cunard received £1,550 a year for a fast coach service was made, as the lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia pointed out in 1844, on "the plain understanding" that Canada and New Brunswick should contribute their share.[43] Both these provinces, however, refused to co-operate on the ground that all their packet postage was remitted to England and that it was the concern of the post-office at home to convey mails to the borders of every colony. Nova Scotia, literally and figuratively, was left holding the mail bags, being forced to pay the £1,550 for four years. At the end of that time, her protests were answered by making Boston the depot for Canadian mails, in both winter and summer, and discontinuing the steamship service on the St. Lawrence.

Three years later, in the autumn of 1847, when the Cunarders doubled their Halifax trips, arriving every fortnight in the four winter months and every week the rest of the year, English mails for Canada were again dispatched overland through New Brunswick, this time in summer as well as winter. The condition of the roads, particularly in Nova Scotia, did not augur well for the continuance of this service. A post-office surveyor, after examining the section from Halifax to Amherst in the fall of 1848, reported that it was in shocking condition, the carriage sometimes sinking in mud up to the axles.[44] It was an unfair report in a sense because he did not make any point of the fact that the trip was made at one of the worst times of year, nor did he mention, as did the *Acadian Record* in its comments, that the express mails from Halifax to Quebec were rarely, if ever, over five days on the road in any season, though the distance was 700 miles.[45] Nevertheless, in 1849 English mails to and from Canada again went via the United States, although some letters and most newspapers continued to go over the colonial route. All English mail for New Brunswick passed through Halifax. In 1855, the postmaster of Nova

[42] A table prepared by the *Quebec Gazette* and abridged in the *Acadian Recorder* of December 28, 1850, shows that the number of ships clearing from Quebec for the Maritimes and Newfoundland increased from 73 (4,056 tons) in 1845 to 154 (10,021 tons) in 1850.

[43] *Journal,* Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1845, appendix 3: Falkland to Stanley, Sept. 17, 1844.

[44] *Journal,* Legislative Assembly, New Brunswick, March 6, 1849: H. M. Watson to A. Woodgate, Nov. 18, 1848.

[45] *Acadian Recorder,* March 17, 1849.

Scotia suggested that both these provinces be asked to remunerate the couriers in Nova Scotia who had contracted to carry colonial mails only. New Brunswick rightly replied that their couriers were under the same burden as regards Canada and also carried Canadian and American mails to Nova Scotia, although this, of course, was provided for in the postal arrangement between the colonies.[46] No response came from Canada until Nova Scotia threatened in 1858 to hold the English mail, and then the postmaster at Toronto took the opportunity of saying what Canadians had apparently long felt, that the Allan steamers could bring English mails to Canada more quickly and in better condition. His department, he said, would therefore "gladly concur in the entire cessation of all transmission between Canada and England, *via* Halifax".[47] The imperial authorities agreed to the change. In 1861, Nova Scotia felt obliged to make good the bills that their couriers had vainly presented to the Canadian government.[48] Fortunately for the temper of Nova Scotians, there seems to have been little or no trouble over the transmission of intercolonial mails, which left Halifax for Canada twice a week until 1851 and three times a week thereafter. In the same period, mails for New Brunswick increased from two to six days a week, the daily service beginning in 1859, while mails for Prince Edward Island trebled from once to three times a week, the tri-weekly winter service beginning in 1862, three years before a similar service in summer.

The plan to place a steamer on the St. Lawrence in 1852 originated with B. H. Norton, American consul at Pictou, who believed that he saw great possibilities in a tourist route from New York to Quebec. Approaching the various colonial governments early in that year, he secured grants of £500 each from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, £200 from Prince Edward Island, and the promise of £1,000 to £1,500 from Canada.[49] In June, however, before the service began, he disposed of his interest to Captain Arthur Sleigh, a Londoner who had been president of the Halifax and Quebec Railway and Land Company and who was a large landowner in Prince Edward Island. Sleigh bought in New York, at a reputed cost of $150,000, the S.S. *Albatross*, a 1,100-ton ship of 250 horse-power, with accommodation for 120 passengers and 450 tons of freight.[50] Her fortnightly schedule, beginning the first of July, included Halifax, Pictou, Charlottetown, Shediac, and Miramichi. Rumours about Sleigh's monetary status were passed over in the general approval of the new service and were not even brought up when the *Albatross* stopped sailing in September; but as there is no record of her sinking, her failure to finish out the season may probably be put down to reasons of finance. In the same year, 1852, Captain Gaskin of Kingston in Canada declared his intention of running the S.S. *Cherokee* between Quebec and Halifax, but when the *Cherokee* arrived at Halifax on June 16, it was announced that she was "in the market for employment or sale".[51] She later sailed off to Boston. Four

[46] *Journal*, Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1857, appendix 11: Wilmot to Henry, Dec. 10, 1856.

[47] *Journal*, Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1859, appendix 31 (b): Report of Sidney Smith, June 19, 1858.

[48] *Journal*, Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1861, appendix 36. These claims came to £545-12-0.

[49] *Halifax Daily Sun*, May 17, 1852.

[50] *Ibid.*, July 7 and 30, 1852.

[51] *Ibid.*, June 17, 1852.

years later, when the railway was being built from Halifax to Truro, it was suggested to the railway commissioner that if the line were continued to Pictou, the Allans of Montreal would put a 700-ton ship on the Montreal-Pictou route, but the railway did not go to Pictou until 1867 and no steamer appeared on the St. Lawrence until 1858.

The steamship service which began on the St. Lawrence in 1858 not only continued but increased in the years that followed. The first season, the S.S. *Lady Head,* owned by S. Baby of Quebec, made fortnightly trips between Quebec and Pictou, calling at Gaspé, Paspebiac, Dalhousie, Miramichi, and Shediac. She was joined in 1859 by the S.S. *Arabian,* owned by A. Heron of Niagara, which also made fortnightly trips, including Bathurst and Richibucto. In 1860, the *Lady Head,* still on the same route, was employed by the Canadian government and offered another mail service to England, via the Allan steamers to and from Canada. As the Cunarders had in 1850 reverted to their old, slower schedule,[52] this move was welcomed, although Canada expected and received four pence sterling per half ounce for her trouble. In 1861, John Rose, the Canadian commissioner for Public Works, proposed that a commercial company be allowed to take over the *Lady Head.*[53] The details of the transfer, if made, have not been ascertained, but the *Lady Head* ran until 1866 when she was replaced by the new S.S. *Union.*[54] Cabin fare on the *Lady Head* was $20.00 from Pictou to Quebec. Freight was carried the same distance for 60 cents a barrel. Cabin fare on the *Arabian* from Shediac to Quebec was $14.00. The *Arabian,* brought on the route by the New Brunswick government because the *Lady Head* did not call at certain ports in the northern part of the province,[55] did not go further than the railway terminus at Shediac after 1859. How many years she sailed is not certain, but she probably stopped in 1865 when C. Boltenhouse began a new service between Shediac and the northern towns, including Campbellton on the Canadian border.[56] In 1865, the S.S. *Queen Victoria* was advertised for fortnightly trips between Halifax and Montreal, and in the same year, ships of the British Colonial Steamship Company linked Halifax, Saint John, and Quebec on their outward voyages from England. In 1866, Messrs. Chaffey and Brother of Kingston, probably the owners of the *Queen Victoria,* placed *Her Majesty* on the Montreal-Halifax run. The growing importance of the St. Lawrence route was doubtless the factor that induced the Grand Trunk, late in 1866, to give direct steamship service between Portland and Halifax.[57]

Fortunately for the size of this paper, which has already exceeded all

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[52]There is no authority for the statement in the *Cambridge History of the British Empire,* VI, 570, that the transatlantic Cunarders stopped calling at Halifax in 1859. They continued to arrive fortnightly (and monthly in four winter months) throughout the period under review, as the shipping lists adequately testify.

[53]*Journal,* Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1861, appendix 10: John Rose to the Provincial Secretary of Nova Scotia, Jan. 19, 1861.

[54]The *Union* was 231 feet long with accommodation for 100 cabin passengers. *Acadian Recorder,* July 30, 1866.

[55]*Journal,* Legislative Assembly, New Brunswick, 1859, appendix, p. Dccxxxi.

[56]*Ibid.,* 1864, appendix 14.

[57]*Acadian Recorder,* Oct. 5, 1866. This was a winter and summer service. The S.S. *Baltimore* and S.S. *General McCallum* went on the route in 1866. The *Baltimore,* which was wrecked in December, was replaced in January, 1867, with the S.S. *Equator.*

ordinary bounds, an adequate account of the communications with Newfoundland need take little space. Previous to 1840, there had been no regular service of any kind between St. Johns and other colonial centres, and in the next twenty-six years there was only one connection, St. Johns to Halifax, which, however, improved considerably in that period. The hope, entertained by the legislature of Newfoundland, for a steamship line running in conjunction with the Cunarders at Halifax was not realized in 1840,[58] but the call of the imperial government for sailing packets was promptly answered, and until 1844, two ships, the *Sandwich* and the *Charles Buchan,* carried mails, passengers, and freight between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. The average time in summer, when they sailed every fortnight after the arrival of the steamer from England, was five days, but in the four winter months, when their schedule, like that of the Cunarders, was on a monthly basis, they usually took nine to ten days. Arichat in Cape Breton was always a port of call and sometimes Charlottetown. Although the Newfoundlanders petitioned for a direct service, it was never granted to them. The first steamer on the route, Whitney's *North America,* called at Arichat in 1845 but changed to North Sydney in 1846, where steamers were more easily refueled. Thereafter, all the Newfoundland steamers stopped at North Sydney.

Steamships ran between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland without serious interruption, except for the first few winters, from 1845 to 1867. The *North America* and the *Unicorn* which succeeded her in 1846, were both laid up in winter, while sailing ships rode through the storms; but beginning in 1849 with Cunard's new ships, the *Falcon* and the *Kestrel,* steam service was maintained the year round. The *Kestrel* was lost off Newfoundland that summer, and the *Falcon* two years later. The second disaster forced Cunard to hire two sailing packets to carry on for a short interval before he was able to transfer the *Ospray* from the Bermuda run. Maintaining ships at Halifax for both the Bermuda and Newfoundland services, Cunard usually alternated them in winter and summer. The names of the steamers at one time or another sailing to St. Johns were, besides those already mentioned, the *Merlin,* the *Levantine,* the *Alfa,* and the *Delta.* They ran on the same schedule as the sailing ships, bi-monthly and monthly until 1861, when two extra trips, one in January and one in February, were announced.[59]

In 1865, the colonial secretary of Newfoundland approached the government of Nova Scotia on the possibility of a grant for a steamship service between Pictou and St. Johns. As Nova Scotia was already paying Cunard an annual subsidy of $1,500, the committee of the Assembly which considered this proposal decided that it would be better to wait until the railway reached Pictou.[60] Two years later, just prior to Confederation, Messrs. George Chaffey and Brother of Canada decided to put the S.S. *Merritt* in service between Montreal and St. Johns.[61]

The establishment of intercolonial telegraph and cable lines, although representing no less than a revolution in the realm of communications, may also be quite briefly recorded. The story of the intercolonial telegraph in

[58]Newfoundland offered a grant of £1,500 for a steamship line to Halifax in 1840.
[59]*Novascotian,* Jan. 28, 1861.
[60]*Journal,* Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1865, appendix 61.
[61]*Acadian Recorder,* April 22, 1867.

some respects is like that of the intercolonial railway. After the telegraph line from Toronto reached Quebec in the summer of 1847, no one doubted but that it would soon stretch out to Halifax along the route of the proposed railway. The *Quebec Mercury* reported on August 14 that the erection of posts beyond Quebec was already in process. The following winter, the British North American Electric Telegraph Association delegated F. N. Gisborne, their operator at Quebec, to make with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick "such final arrangements as will ensure the immediate construction of the line from Halifax to Quebec".[62] What seemed certain to the Canadian company, however, proved to be just the reverse. New Brunswick was unwilling to support a line that had no direct connection with Fredericton and Saint John[63] and Nova Scotia was dubious about paying a Canadian company for a service which an American company had already offered for nothing save the right to build. Gisborne pointed out the unfortunate features of foreign control and the Assembly of Nova Scotia agreed, but with an independence that marked their railway policy, decided to construct and operate on their own a line to the New Brunswick border.

Though Nova Scotia's decision was made in the spring of 1848, action did not follow until the government was sure of being able to connect at the border either with a Canadian or American line. The choice of direction and time rested with the New Brunswickers. The legislature in New Brunswick had incorporated a private company, headed by the presidents of the Bank of New Brunswick, the Commercial Bank, and the Bank of British North America, which had some difficulty in raising stock but finally in the autumn of 1848 began construction from Saint John to meet at Calais the American line from Portland and Boston.[64] Early in the new year a through connection was established between Saint John and Boston. Now began the race to link up Halifax and Saint John, work going on in both provinces in 1849, while American newspaper publishers, anxious to get the latest news brought by the Cunarders to Halifax, formed the since famous Associated Press and had dispatches carried from Halifax to Digby by pony express and across the bay to Saint John by steamer. This colourful service, which was not without competition from independent publishers, ceased in November, 1849, when the first news dispatch went out from Halifax by wire. The Associated Press were granted the privilege of the line so long as they used it fairly and "for the general good".[65]

In the meantime, the directors of the Canadian line had not been inactive. Early in 1849, they raised £8,000 in Quebec and that spring Mr. Gisborne was successful in obtaining subscriptions in Halifax. On June 15, the *Quebec Gazette* announced that all the stock of the company had been taken up and that Gisborne had gone to Halifax again with instruc-

[62] *Ibid.*, Feb. 26, 1848.

[63] The directors of the B.N.A. Electric Telegraph Association in their report of Feb. 3, 1847, said that they considered the following route to be the best: "From Metis through the Kempt Road to Campbellton (Baie de Chaleur) from thence to Dalhousie, Bathurst, Miramichi and the Bend of the Peticodiac (where a branch should diverge to St. John and Frederickton) and thereafter the direct and usual route to Halifax. . . ." Public Archives of Nova Scotia, vol. 442, Telegraph Papers.

[64] P.A.N.S., vol. 442: H. Partelow to Joseph Howe, Aug. 17, 1848.

[65] *Journal*, Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1850, appendix 83.

tions from the directors to take "immediate steps for building the line between that city and Metis",[66] but the move was made too late. All eyes in the Maritimes were now on the American route. Gisborne himself remained in Nova Scotia as superintendent of the government line to Amherst, and in 1850 his former company changed their plans and built along the Temiscouata route to meet at Woodstock the New Brunswick line from Fredericton and Saint John. The connection was completed in 1851, not, however, without the British North American Electric Telegraph Association going into debt. Their request in 1852 for a grant from Nova Scotia on the ground that they had performed a public service by carrying the telegraph through a "thinly settled country" in which they could not cover "working expenses" was turned down by the Assembly, but in New Brunswick the legislative body agreed to pay £250 for ten years. At the end of that period, the line was taken over by the Canadian government which cut it off in 1864 "owing to lack of business".[67] News and messages from Canada continued to come, as they had in the past, via American lines.

Plans for cable connections with Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland followed the successful operation of the telegraph in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Mr. Gisborne, soon to represent the New York, Newfoundland, and London Telegraph Company, conferred with the Newfoundland government in 1851 and made arrangements for the laying of a cable from there to Cape Breton. The next year, however, his scheme was to take the cable to Prince Edward Island and then lay another across the Strait of Northumberland to Cape Tormentine. This latter project, in conjunction with the building of a telegraph line from Cape Traverse to Charlottetown, was carried out in the autumn of 1852,[68] but plans for the Newfoundland cable were changed again, Cape Breton once more being chosen as the terminus. A cable, linking Cape Breton with the mainland, was laid in the Gut of Canso in the summer of 1853, but further work was held up for lack of money. Finally, Cyrus Field of New York bought out Gisborne's Company and, after an unsuccessful attempt in 1855, carried the cable from Cape North to Cape Ray in 1856. From Cape Ray, a telegraph line already led to St. Johns and Cape Race.

Breakdowns in both cable and telegraph lines, particularly in winter, were fairly frequent at first, but complaints were few. Grateful for the new means of communication, the public was apparently willing to put up with imperfections. When reporting in 1851 a twenty-five per cent increase in private messages, the commissioners of the telegraph in Nova Scotia noted that these messages had been sent to and from "the most distant points of this continent".[69] In 1866, telegraph rates were reduced by approximately thirty per cent.[70]

In closing such a straightforward record, a final summary seems scarcely necessary, but a few contemporary comments on communications between the colonies may not be out of place. No one denied that the changes in these twenty-seven years had made the Maritimes as one

[66] *British Colonist*, June 30, 1849.

[67] *Novascotian*, Dec. 16, 1861. *British Colonist*, June 30, 1864.

[68] The first telegraphic message between Charlottetown and Saint John, New Brunswick, was transmitted early in January, 1853. *Halifax Daily Sun*, Jan. 17, 1853.

[69] *Journal*, Legislative Assembly, Nova Scotia, 1851, appendix 22.

[70] *Acadian Recorder*, Aug. 8, 1866. A message from Halifax to Boston, for example, that had previously cost $1.10, was now sent for 80 cents.

province and had drawn Newfoundland closer to the continent, but there were conflicting views as to what had been done to bring together the Maritimes and Canada. These views found extreme expression in the *Acadian Recorder,* a paper that advocated Confederation until the 1860's and then violently opposed it. In 1856, when Hugh Blackadar, Sr., was still publisher, his editor, P. S. Hamilton, wrote:

> The natural barriers which once separated these Provinces from each other, are now in a great measure removed . . . [they] now find themselves face to face . . . the obstacles which distance and which gulfs and seas formerly interposed to their mutual intercourse, are now in a great measure removed by modern science and skill. The communication between any two of the Provinces is now almost as free as that which exists between the different parts of any one of them; and an immediate effect of their political Union would be to make it quite as much so. . . . Within the memory of men still living, it required as much time to journey from Sydney to Halifax, or from the coast of Bay Chaleur to Fredericton as is now required to go from Halifax to Toronto. . . . By passing across the State of Maine, Quebec, or Montreal, may now be reached from Halifax in 36 hours. Again, the facilities for communication by letter, within and between the Colonies, have undergone a still more striking improvement. Ten years ago, it required at least ten days for a letter to pass between Halifax and the Westernmost towns of Canada. The invention of the electric telegraph has effected a great revolution in this matter. There are no two towns, or villages, of a thousand inhabitants, in these provinces which *do* not now communicate with each other, by telegraph, in half a day, and which *may* not do so in one hour.[71]

Ten years later, when Hugh Blackadar, Jr., controlled the paper, the following was common:

> Who are to be banded together by a parchment constitution? The Canadians who inhabit a sparcely peopled territory in the interior, and the Acadians who are thinly scattered over the region down here by the sea, are to be cemented. We don't know each other. We have no trade with each other. We have no facilities, or resources, or incentives, to mingle with each other. We are shut off from each other by a wilderness, geographically, commercially, politically, and socially. We always cross the United States to shake hands.[72]

In 1858, George Brown of the Toronto *Globe* had seen the situation in a similar light, stating in October of that year that "there is no communication at present between the various sections sufficient to justify a political union".[73] Brown had no way of knowing that the steamship service started on the St. Lawrence in 1858—which brought Quebec within three days of Pictou—would continue without interruption until Confederation, and the editor of the *Acadian Recorder,* fully aware of the fact in 1867, pre-

[71] *Ibid.,* Oct. 11, 1856.
[72] *Ibid.,* July 27, 1866.
[73] Quoted by Frank H. Underhill, "Some Aspects of Upper Canadian Radical Opinion in the Decade Before Confederation" (*Canadian Historical Association Report,* 1927, 56).

ferred to ignore it, writing instead about the many changes that had come over communications between the Maritime Provinces.[74] This unseeing attitude, which must be explained in terms of the human heart and soul, did not, however, affect the fact that science and mechanics had provided the facilities for closer relations between the Canadians and their fellow colonists down by the sea.

Discussion. Mr. Glazebrook suggested to Mr. Martell three points that might be developed in the study of intercolonial communications: the relations of steamers to sailing vessels, the nature of the goods carried by water, and the reasons for the light traffic on the St. Lawrence in early years.

[74] *Acadian Recorder*, June 28, 1867, for instance. Leaving Halifax in the morning, one can take "a 11 o'clock lunch at Windsor or Truro, if so disposed, an early dinner at Pictou, tea in Charlottetown, P. E. Island, or even in St. John if the Bay of Fundy waters are in good humour".