THE SOCIETY AND ECONOMY OF A FISHING COMMUNITY:

LIVERPOOL, NOVA SCOTIA IN THE LATE 18^{th} CENTURY

by

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ABSTRACT

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The staples theory has dominated the history of the fisheries in Atlantic Canada for the last century. Historians have discussed the economic and social history of the region largely in terms of the impact of international trade and war. These two factors are important; however, they alone do not explain the development of the region. The people who lived there came from diverse backgrounds, chose to settle there for different reasons, and approached the exploitation of the resources of the region based on their own experiences and aspirations.

This thesis builds on studies of maritime communities from New England to Newfoundland to explain how people in a fishing-based community in Nova Scotia in the late 18th century lived and worked. It examines the economic strategies found in this Nova Scotian fishing community in comparison with other studies of economic pluralism in rural communities from New England, Québec, and New Brunswick. Liverpool, Nova Scotia was settled by New England Planters in 1759, after the expulsion of the Acadians. The circumstances of the new settlers were affected by the political climate and the changing conditions of international trade. Thirty years after their arrival, the New England Planters had shaped their economy and society based their environment and on their own traditions and expectations.

This study examines the work lives of fishermen and seafarers, the work of women, and the

economic role of the family in order to understand the full world of work that shaped this community. It examines the activities of local merchants as well as the role of community institutions to understand how this society functioned. Much as other historians have concluded about rural agricultural communities, this study concludes that this fishing based community had, and depended on, a plurality of economic activities, both commercial and non-commercial in nature, and that this plurality was a source of strength.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Fishing as a way of life has long been associated with poverty and powerlessness in North America; Fisher Ames for instance described American Fishermen as "too poor to remain, too poor to remove" to the First Congress of the United States.[1] Historians of the economy of the North Atlantic have long described fishing communities in terms of their success in participating in international trade and their dependence on staple resources and external markets.[2] Because of the importance of this level of trade, Nova Scotia's historians did not seriously examine commercial activity not related to exports, either neglecting local trade completely or judging that its impact was insignificant. Similarly discussions of Nova Scotia's society centre on the external influences of Britain and the United States and judge the smaller communities to have been relatively powerless in the face of these forces.[3] While fishing communities were often dependent on their single resource, the success or failure of the fisheries is not adequate to explain the development of all fishing-based communities. The works of Daniel Vickers and Christine Leigh Heyrman on New England and those of Sean Cadigan and Rosemary Ommer, among others, on Atlantic Canada have shown that not all such communities were the same. The

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[1] Cited by Julian Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations: Maritime Commerce and the Economic Development of Nova Scotia, 1740-1870* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1998),73.

[2] Described by Rosemary E. Ommer, "The Truck System in Gaspé, 1822-1877." in *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies in Historical Perspective* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1990), 49-50.

[3] George A. Rawlyk, *Nova Scotia's Massachusetts: A Study of Massachusetts-Nova Scotia Relations 1630-1784* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1973), 226-230.

available resources: for example, land and timber, and the nature of the society: whether it was a homogeneous or heterogeneous and transient population, played roles in determining whether residents could adopt diversified economic strategies, whether the market for the exchange of local products would develop, and whether local institutions, community and family, would matter in a Maritime fishing community. All of these factors contribute to the community's ability to develop and adapt to changes.

This study focuses on an area of 18th century Nova Scotia whose local economy has not been studied. Liverpool, Nova Scotia was founded in 1759 by New England Planters, communities that had been sending fishing vessels to this area of Nova Scotia for a century. This study examines how those people worked in the staple industries, and what other forms of work were available, as evidenced by the local business and tax records. The question posed here is whether the existence of two staple resources: fish and lumber, combined with the land grants made to the Planters created conditions that allowed a diversified economy with a local market to develop. If this was the case, then the further question arises of how this type of local economy affected their society. Specifically, my question regarding this fishing community is whether this mixed economy provided all the members of the families the opportunity to combine their efforts to contribute to the well-being of the household. They could have done this through the commercial sale or informal exchange of the products of their labour, or their labour itself, or through the production of goods that the family would otherwise have to purchase, thus increasing available income for all.[4]

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[4]Emily Nett, "Canadian Families in Social Historical Perspective", *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 6 n.3 (1981); and John Mack Faragher, "History from the Inside-Out: Writing the History of Women in Rural America", *American Quarterly*, 33 (1981), 537-557.

This study provides an example of how the economy of early fishing communities developed. The history and resources of Liverpool, Nova Scotia were different than those of the Cape Ann communities of Massachusetts, studied by Vickers and Heyrman, and again from those of Newfoundland studied by Cadigan, and Gaspé studied by Ommer. The economy of Liverpool, like these other communities, provides an example of the mingling of a commercial economy and pre-industrial work relationships, the international staple trade and local production and exchange. The mixing of different types of economic activity and the existence of local markets was the source of strength for communities studied in New England. In Nova Scotia these economic factors had the same effect, even though they existed on a reduced scale. This study improves the understanding of fishing communities by providing another view of the lives and work of seafarers and their families in the late 18th century Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

<u>Nova Scotia</u>

Throughout the twentieth century studies of the history and politics of Nova Scotia have focused on the influence of external forces and events. The seminal studies by Harold Innis and John Bartlett Brebner focused on political and trade relations with New England and with Britain, on the empire and on cod. New England's involvement with Nova Scotia was motivated by commercial interests, specifically a hoped-for expansion of their successful cod fisheries.[5] Britain's interest in Nova Scotia in the 18th century was strategic, focused on the naval defences

[5] John Bartlett Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia: A Marginal Colony During the Revolutionary Years* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), reissued by The Carleton Library (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1969), 106.

at Halifax.[6] According to Brebner the New Englanders' expectations were not entirely met. Nova Scotia was not able to produce the more valuable merchantable cod for European markets and had to settle for trade in low grade fish with the West Indies. Ultimately Nova Scotia became another minor market for New England goods rather than an important extension of that region's fisheries.[7] Innis argued that Nova Scotia was able to use its strategic importance to Britain against the French and later the United States to develop a strong commercial centre at Halifax and influence British imperial policy to favour its trade position.[8]

Both of these historians recognized that the portraits they painted of Nova Scotia's economic activity in the 18th century were incomplete because of extensive smuggling throughout the last decades of the 18th century, with possibly half of all trade going unrecorded.[9] This situation was the result of the close relationship of Nova Scotia to New England and the efforts of the colonial authorities at Halifax to control trade in order to raise revenue. Ships conducting trade were required to register with the naval office, either at Halifax or later Shelburne, prior to leaving Nova Scotian waters and upon returning.[10] A combination of the inconvenience of this process and the sentiment aroused by such regulations among the New England Planters makes it very probable that this registry incompletely records Halifax's

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[6] Harold A. Innis, *The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy*, revised edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1954), 212.

[7] Brebner, *Neutral Yankees*, 108.

[8] Innis, *The Cod Fisheries,* 488.

[9] Brebner, *Neutral Yankees*, 105 and Innis, *The Cod Fisheries,* 234.

[10] Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations*, 34.

economic activity.

Both Brebner and Innis described Nova Scotia in the 18th century as isolated and undeveloped. They gave the British and the new capital at Halifax a central and completely dominant role in the provincial economy in this period. Brebner felt that British spending and the Nova Scotian ability to capitalize on the hostilities between Britain and New England were the only factors that provided Nova Scotians any means beyond subsistence.[11] Innis felt that Nova Scotia was able to assume an important strategic position and a degree of independent action within the second empire because of its importance during and following the American Revolution.[12] Both historians, in discussing the Nova Scotian economy, largely discussed fish and British military spending, believing the internal economy to be insignificant to the history they were writing.[13] They agreed that the character of the New Englanders who arrived after the expulsion of the Acadians was important in the shaping of Nova Scotian politics in the ensuing period. An essential part of this character was independence and localism, and what Innis identified as 'aggressive commercialism.' These histories give us a broad idea of how the economy fit in the Atlantic world, but little understanding of what it offered most Nova Scotians in this period.

Later studies examined in greater detail the reasons why Nova Scotia could be so like New England, and so closely linked to it, but never have experienced the level of development that New England later underwent. More recent discussions of the history of Nova Scotia have

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[11] Brebner, *Neutral Yankees*, 108, 109.

[12] Innis, *The Cod Fisheries*, 491.

[13] Brebner, *Neutral Yankees*, 119-120; Innis, *The Cod Fisheries*, 233.

re-examined the role of the British military presence in its development and the influence of New England. George A. Rawlyk argued that the communities established in Nova Scotia by the New England Planters were mostly settled prior to the 1760s, thereby missing the most important decade in the growth of revolutionary ideology and the characteristics of rationalism and independence which were integral to later Yankee successes. Nova Scotia's Planter community had found itself firmly under the control of the British in Halifax, coping with the loss of the rights that they had enjoyed in New England, such as town government, and in no position to try to claim more autonomy. For this reason they would never develop the initiative, or the 'aggressive commercialism,' of their Yankee cousins.[14] At the same time he argued that Halifax did not provide a sufficient market to draw the trade of the hinterland away from Boston, thus Nova Scotia remained a poor and neglected satellite of Boston.

Julian Gwyn has further questioned the impact of British military spending and imperial trade policy on Nova Scotia's economic development in the 18th and 19th centuries. He asserts that the internal economy and markets of Nova Scotia were so poorly developed in the 18th century that they were unable to respond to favourable, protected trade with the West Indies in the 1790s. He felt that none of Nova Scotia's commodities were of a quality or quantity sufficient to compete with the exports of New Brunswick and Newfoundland, much less New England. He concluded that in the early period after the economic and demographic disaster wrought by the expulsion of the Acadians, the province was not able to build a commercial economy. For Gwyn, Nova Scotia was not a serious player is the staples trade, but was

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[14]. Rawlyk, *Nova Scotia's Massachusetts*, 226-227.

dependent on British public spending for anything beyond subsistence.[15] Graeme Wynn further concluded that the only residents of Nova Scotia who experienced anything beyond crude subsistence were merchants and a segment of the military in Halifax, and a few merchants in the small communities.[16] He wrote that on the south shore of Nova Scotia in the late 18th century, "A rudimentary sufficiency of food, shelter, clothing, and equipment was more characteristic than abundance in these still rather precarious settlements."[17]

Discussions of Nova Scotia's economy tend to focus on the Halifax region, Cape Breton, and the Annapolis Valley. These areas are much better understood because of the records that are available, particularly British shipping records and the records amassed in the study of the Planters, the vast majority of whom chose to settle in the Annapolis Valley. Descriptions of Nova Scotia's economy have consistently drawn attention to the province's failure to develop the linkages needed for an economy to escape staple dependency. This dependency on a single staple made it impossible for the Nova Scotian economy to develop.[18]

The failure of the Maritime economy to develop an agricultural sector which would have allowed the capital generated by the fisheries to remain within the regional economy has been considered its particular weakness. Gwyn argues that the few small successes of Nova Scotia's

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[15] Julian Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations*, 28- 42.

[16] Graeme Wynn, "A Region of Scattered Settlements and Bounded Possibilities: Northeastern America 1775-1800," *The Canadian Geographer* 31, no 4 (1987), 319-338.

[17] Graeme Wynn, "A Province Too Much Dependent on New England," *The Canadian Geographer*, 31, no. 2 (1987), 98-113, 109.

[18]Rosemary Ommer, *From Outpost to Outport: A Structural Analysis of the Jersey-Gaspé Cod Fishery, 1767-1886* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1991), 192.

agriculture were completely negated by the overall failure of the sector.[19] He maintains that many farmers owned only very poor land and many others only worked their land in outdated, labour-intensive ways.[20] Because of this, any revenue generated by the staple trades and military spending would have left the province immediately to pay for imported food. [21] This placed Nova Scotia within the staples model, in the same class as the West Indian plantation colonies. [22]

Local Economies

The discussion of the economic life of maritime communities at the local level has focused on the role of debt, merchants, and wage labour in the work lives of fishermen.[23] The truck system, the financing of fishing expeditions in exchange for guaranteed purchase of catches and payment in store credit, was commonly used in the fishing communities of Massachusetts in the 17th and early 18th centuries, and continued in Newfoundland into the 20th century. This system of credit was the subject of heated debate in Boston in the early 18th century; its critics saw it as responsible for severely limiting the economic possibilities of the community by depriving the recipients of payments in goods of the freedom to purchase from

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[19] Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations*, 67-73.

[20] Ibid., 110.

[21] Gwyn, "Economic Fluctuations in Wartime Nova Scotia," *Making Adjustments*, 76-79.

[22] Richard B. Sheridan, "The Domestic Economy", *Colonial British America*, Greene and Pole eds. (Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, 1984), 66.

[23] Rosemary Ommer, ed., *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies in Historical Perspective* (Fredericton, N.B.:Acadiensis Press, 1990), discussion following chapter one.

local producers and to control the proceeds of their labour.[24] Atlantic Canadian historians have blamed truck for depriving fishermen of economic autonomy and for retarding the development of maritime economies.[25] Further examination of different maritime communities has revealed that debt, and people, worked in different ways in different contexts. The difference seems to depend on the community itself; whether the local resources and how people used them provided the possibility for the development of local production beyond the fishery.

More recent community studies from Massachusetts provide examples of how different communities developed according to their resources and their approaches to exploiting them. The community of Gloucester in the 17th and 18th centuries, studied by Christine Leigh Heyrman,[26] and the small Cape Ann communities in the 17th century, studied by Daniel Vickers, are examples of mixed maritime economies. According to these authors, although fishing may have had primary importance in these communities, it was one part of a total strategy to building a livelihood that included kitchen gardens, crafts, and other work for all members of the family.[27] On the other hand, communities such as Marblehead in Massachusetts, also studied by

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[24]Joseph Ernst, " 'The Labourers Have Been the Greatest Sufferers': the Truck System in Early Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts," in *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies*, Rosemary Ommer, ed. 16-35.

[25]Gerald M. Sider, "The ties that bind: culture and agriculture, property and propriety in the Newfoundland village fishery," *Social History* vol. 5, no 1(January 1980), 1-39. Rosemary E. Ommer, "The Truck System in Gaspé, 1822-1877," *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies,* 49-50.

[26] Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Commerce and Culture: The Maritime Communities of Colonial Massachusetts* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1984), 46,47.

[27]Daniel Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630-1850,* The Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 198-199.

Heyrman, did not have access to alternate resources and were entirely dependent upon fishing. In these communities fishermen were more likely to spend their entire lives in the same occupation, and to end up in an inescapable debt relationship with their outfitting merchant.[28] The families of fishermen in such circumstances were unable to contribute significantly to the household income because they did not possess the resources to invest in other types of small production.[29] In some such communities, such as in Conception Bay, Newfoundland studied by Sean Cadigan, the family attempted to supplement the fishing income with some agriculture, but the output was not sufficient to meet the household's needs, much less generate another marketable commodity.[30] In this case Cadigan judged that agriculture was not enough to improve the lot of the fishermen and their families.

Fishing communities would develop other forms of local production and local markets for their products if more than one type of resource was available. If there were options other than the fisheries, theoretically, the people could afford to invest their time and money in fishing if they had confidence that their efforts would be rewarded, or work elsewhere if the conditions were too unfavourable.[31] This situation would give fishing families the ability to resist exploitative situations. Another significant variable, which separated the New England experience from that of Newfoundland, Gaspé, and Nova Scotia, was the existence of a local

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[28] Heyrman, *Commerce and Culture*, 234

[29] Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen*, 175.

[30] Sean T. Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant Settler Relations in Newfoundland 1785-1855* (University of Toronto Press, 1995) 64,65.

[31] Heyrman, *Commerce and Culture*, 232.

market able to purchase a significant quantity of local products, which would provide an economic buffer against bad years in trade or the fishery, and a stimulus to invest capital in local development.[32]

Debt of fishermen to local merchants and of local merchants to their own suppliers were found in all colonial communities. At the same time payment in kind, or by barter, was also common practice. Many historians had taken these as indicators of a weak or undeveloped economy.[33] Others have argued that debt alone does not indicate weakness or dependence, but could indicate future activity or confidence in the potential for economic growth.[34] In their discussion arising from the papers presented in "Merchant Credit and Labour in the Fisheries," in *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies*, Rosemary Ommer, Daniel Vickers, and David Galenson, considered the various uses that debt and truck can have in a maritime community. In the conclusion of the discussion, these historians agreed that truck is not automatically an instrument of control of debtors by their creditors or an impediment to the development of an economy, but can be a reasonable response to the problem of lack of specie. The distinction would depend on how debt and truck were used and whether they were replaced by more flexible systems of credit when possible which would give debtors more control and the ability to chose to participate in local exchanges other than with their creditor.[35] This difference

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[32] Edwin Perkins, *The Economy of Colonial America*, second edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 43.

[33] Wynn, "A Province Too Much Dependent on New England."

[34] Perkins, *The Economy of Colonial America*, 37

[35]Ommer, *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies*, 82.

distinguished most of New England's maritime communities from those further north. Many Canadian maritime historians would argue that Nova Scotia came closer to the Newfoundland model than the New England one in terms of how debt and credit were used, and that any economic benefits were concentrated on Halifax.[36] However, in the case of a mixed economy with more than one major commercial activity, merchants would not have the monopoly that would allow them to use truck to control the labour force. An examination of work relationships in such an economy as Liverpool's is necessary to understand how financing and labour would interact in a fishing community with a mixed economy.

Social Conditions

The nature of a society affects its economic development; as well the type of economic activity and its relative success affects the ongoing development of a society. This study deals with both of these interrelated factors in order to illuminate the process of change and development in Liverpool. The existence of a mixed economy and local market could have fostered greater social cohesion through regular economic interactions. People's daily exchanges with one another, rather than all exchanges being controlled by merchants or agents from outside, would engender a stronger sense of community. These values would be reflected in the social structure and in participation in the community's institutions. If the community used local resources to diversify its sources of income, the greater question is whether this materially benefitted households and the community as a whole. I intend to look at social conditions as well as considering the evidence that is available on material conditions to

[36] Graeme Wynn, "The Geography of the Maritime Colonies in 1800: Patterns and Questions," *They Planted Well, New England Planters in Maritime Canada, Margaret Conrad, ed.*, Planters studies series, no.1 (Fredericton: Acadiensis, 1988), 144,

consider the interrelations of the economy and the society. The great strength of some early New England communities was their social cohesion which was expressed through active participation in town government and neighbourly concern about each residents' well-being.[37]

The strength of a community in this era depended often on the stability of the household. In maritime communities, the presence of a significant population of young, unmarried men, the itinerant labourers of the maritime trades, coupled with long absences by heads of households were two factors which were blamed for weakening the family.[38] As well, the men lost at sea and the resulting disproportionate number of households in fishing communities headed by women, either left destitute families dependent on local charity or forced them to seek an income by going beyond their traditional roles.[39] These situations may have decreased the economic importance of the household in the maritime community. In agricultural settings where land holding and family line had great material importance, families had the motivation and capacity to work together as an economic unit for the betterment of all concerned.[40] In commercially-oriented staples economies, such as the fisheries, families might have difficulties sustaining this type of household economy. In a fishing community with a mixed economy, there was more chance for the family to function as an economic unit. The question remains whether this would

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[37] Heyrman, *Commerce and Culture*, 77-78

[38]Ibid., 250-255.

[39] Elaine Forman Crane, "The Socioeconomics of a Female Majority in Eighteenth Century Bermuda," *Signs* 15, no. 2 (Winter 1990), 231-258.

[40] Peter Hall, cited in Elaine Forman Crane, *Ebb Tide in New England: Women, Seaports, and Social Change, 1630-1800*, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998) 133; and Michael Merrill, "Cash is Good to Eat: Self-Sufficiency and Exchange in the Rural Economy of the United States", *Radical History Review* IV (1977), 42-71.

be enough to improve their material condition.

The members of a fishing household would be less likely to combine their efforts for their shared well-being mostly because they did not share much material wealth or real estate. A fisherman without land would have little advantage to offer to his sons as encouragement to remain with the family and work toward its betterment.[41] In economies entirely dependent on the fishery, "An introduction to the skills of the fishing trade, a reputation for reliability with local shoremen and merchants, and in some cases a small boat were the only material legacies that most... fathers could leave their sons." [42] As well, a young man's earning potential was near its peak when he was in his early twenties, so there was little reason to delay marriage. Therefore there would be little to motivate older sons to remain within the household to strengthen the family's socioeconomic position and support aging parents. The weakness of patriarchal control could be seen in grown children choosing to marry young and establish separate households.[43] Overall the lack of strong community and strong family leadership is connected with the general economic weakness of fishing communities.

The relationship between strong families and communities and a successful economy is certainly not direct. Public institutions, churches and courts, can play a strong role in reinforcing familial authority or in supplanting it for reasons not directly associated with economics.[44] If

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[41] Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen*, 138.

[42] Heyrman, *Commerce and Culture*, 255.

[43] Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen*, 171-177.

[44] Carole Shammas, "Anglo-American Household Government in Comparative Perspective", *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, vol. LII, No. 1(January 1995), 105-144.

family authority can be weakened irrespective of economic issues, it can also be strengthened irrespective of property or lineage issues. One example of this in fishing communities is the older sons' taking responsibility for the family after the death of the father. In many households headed by widows, adult men who were older sons remained within the family and contributed to it.[45] Further, in the agricultural context Béatrice Craig has shown that family loyalty to collective well-being and securing the family lineage is not invariably present.[46] In seafaring communities the absence of male heads of households, permanent or temporary, could foster cooperation and initiative within the entire household and is associated with greater economic power for women.[47] Therefore, in fishing communities cohesive households which acted to better the family's economic position could still exist and be the basis of a strong community in the absence of the traditional motivation of lineage and land.

Mixed economies are often depicted in negative terms. A common opinion in the 19th century held that people who mixed farming and staples production were bad farmers who neglected their land for easy money[48] while historians such as Wynn, describe a mixing of activities as the work of impoverished fishermen who had "... (an)acre or two of rockbound soil

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45 Crane, *Ebb Tide*, 116.

46 Béatrice Craig, "Land Transmission Practices among Nineteenth-Century Northern Maine French Canadians." *New England - New France*, Peter Benes, ed. (Boston University, 1992) 69-81.

47 Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay*, p 60. See also, Lisa Norling, *Captain Ahab had a wife: New England women and the whale fishery, 1720 - 1870* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

48 Thomas W. Acheson, "New Brunswick Agriculture at the End of the Colonial Era," *Acadiensis* XXII (Spring 1993) 5-26.

from which the families supplemented diets of fish."[49] However, different degrees of mixing economic activities offer different levels of flexibility and choice, so that even a low level of combined activity could have importance. The work of Daniel Vickers and Christine Heyrman shows that the ability to diversify was the factor that distinguished the communities which experienced long term economic success from those that did not. Rosemary Ommer also argues that even in economies completely dominated by a single staple, such as in Gaspé and Newfoundland, agriculture intended only for family use underpinned the merchant fisheries, and its failure brought about crisis.[50]

In the early fishing-based communities, agricultural activities and the economic activity of the household were important to the prospects of fishermen and their communities. This type of production was not always possible and often offered only meager returns, so residents of maritime communities would choose how to work according to the potential returns. In Newfoundland, although agriculture was absolutely necessary, its returns were so doubtful it was neglected when the fishery needed the hands.[51] On the other hand, in Gloucester, Massachusetts, fishing was only taken up after all of the land suitable for agriculture had been brought into production, and succeeding generations began to feel the pressure of a growing population on the land.[52] The priority that agriculture and household production had in a maritime community

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[49] Graeme Wynn, "The Geography of the Maritime Colonies in 1800"

[50] Ommer, "The Truck System in Gaspé," in *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies*, 69, note 39.

[51] Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay*, 69.

[52] Heyrman, *Commerce and Culture*, 46 and 64.

would indicate their relative values. If they were taken up last and abandoned first they probably were not profitable.

David Alexander asserted that there had been a time in which Newfoundland fishermen lived reasonably well.[53] However, throughout the history of the northeastern Atlantic seaboard, it seemed that the fishery doomed its participants to poverty, even as it provided the impetus for colonial expansion.[54] Broad examinations of this still very informal, early capitalist economy are unable to answer satisfactorily the questions of whether in some fishing communities the local economy was able to generate the linkages needed to escape the staple trap. In attempting to answer this for Liverpool, the less visible aspects of the economy must be examined. As well the shape that the local society took, its ability to cope with adversity, maintain stability and still respond to change is relevant to the discussion of the state of the economy as a whole.

Liverpool in the late 18th Century

Liverpool was founded in 1759, settled by New England Planters after the expulsion of the Acadians. The harbour at Liverpool had functioned as a base for the summer fishery for the French who called it "Port Senior" or "Port Rossignol,"[55] and had long been known to the New England fishermen of Cape Ann and Marblehead.[56] When the opportunity to settle closer to these fishing grounds was offered by Governor Lawrence of Nova Scotia, it was taken up by

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[53] David G. Alexander, *Atlantic Canada and Confederation: Essays in Canadian Political Economy*, compiled by Eric Sager et al (University of Toronto Press, 1983), 33.

[54] Rosemary Ommer, *Outpost to Outport*, citing a contemporary opinion from the Acadian Recorder 1827, p 107.

[55] Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, 43.

[56] Innis, *The Cod Fisheries*, 116.

many residents of Massachusetts's fishing communities.[57] Each new settler received a basic single share of the grant consisting roughly of 250 acres, divided in wood lots, fish lots, town lots, and some farm lots.[58]

The New Englanders did not have many resources at their disposal when they arrived at Liverpool and were forced to rely on the charity of the town's founders during their first winter.[59] They immediately focused their energies on fishing, resisting official encouragements to clear land.[60] They also identified shares of land as wood lots and established sawmills.[61] The first years were uncertain, some of the original grantees were insolvent by the end of the century,[62] but many of them and their descendants were still in the community almost thirty years after it had been founded.[63] Liverpool was well situated for the fisheries and had ample resources of white oak and other hardwoods and softwoods available for shipbuilding; however it had very

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[57] Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, 45.

[58] Elisabeth Manke, *Two Patterns of New England Transformation: Machias, Maine and Liverpool, Nova Scotia,* Phd Dissertation (Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins University, 1989), 101.

[59] 1761 Memorial to council at Halifax from John Doggett, in R.J. Long, *The Annals of Liverpool*, Typed Manuscript, 1926. National Archives of Canada, MG 30, C24, p 33.

[60] Petition from Liverpool Questioning Government Policies, PANS, MG 4, Vol. 77, 1762/07/08-1762/07/24; also Report of Governor Lawrence, letter June 16, 1760., in R.J. Long, *The Annals of Liverpool* pp.34-35.

[61] Proprietors Records, PANS, MG 4 Vol.77.

[62] Petition from Liverpool.

[63] Grant to the Committee of the Township of Liverpool, 1764. National Archives of Canada. MG9 B-5; Census for Queens County 1787, National Archives of Canada, microfilm M5219, RG 1 Vol. 443.

little arable land.[64] So the residents of Liverpool from the outset occupied themselves largely in fishing, cutting timber, and the related activities of shipbuilding and trade.

The South Shore of Nova Scotia felt the effects of the international conflicts of the 18th century. The Planters had little time to build up the community before the events of the American Revolutionary War tested their commitment to their new settlement and threatened their ships and property.[65] Liverpool did not enjoy much official support or encouragement from Halifax in the 1760s and 1770s, to the extent that the Legislative Assembly in Halifax once debated a bill intended to dissolve the township, moving its courts to Yarmouth and annexing the township to Lunenburg.[66] In the 1780s they saw enormous amounts of official attention and investment go to the nearby Loyalist community of Shelburne which nonetheless collapsed, while Liverpool's merchants were openly accused of treason and harassed by the British Naval Office.[67] Although some chose to leave Liverpool for the United States during that period, the town continued to grow with an influx of Loyalists, many from Shelburne.

The period of this study, the 1790s, was a generally prosperous period in Nova Scotia's

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[64] *Nova Scotia Resource Atlas*, Department of Development, Province of Nova Scotia, 1986; and, *Canada Land Inventory, Soil Capability for Agriculture* (Map), Soil Research Institute, Canada Department of Agriculture with the support of ARDA, Canada Department of Forestry, Ottawa, 1960.

[65] Bruce Fergusson, "Simeon Perkins", in *The Canadian Dictionary of Biography* V (University of Toronto Press, 1983).

[66] D.C. Harvey, Introduction, Perkins Diary 2 (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1958) xxx.

[67] Perkins Diary 2: 21 Sept.- 15 Oct. 1789.

unexceptional economic history.[68] The decade began with peace, allowing traders to conduct their business without worry, but depriving the province of Britain's military spending. After 1793, war began again with France, reversing the situation; traders had to defend their ships but stood to gain by plundering those of Britain's enemy. This decade provides the opportunity to study economic activity in a variety of circumstances; the fishermen and merchants, labourers and traders had to cope with changing political and economic situations and the society had to absorb these changes as well.

The Sources

Innis, Brebner, and Gwyn, based their discussions of the economy of early Liverpool and the south shore of Nova Scotia on international export activities. They used the customs records that are available, passages from the Diary of Simeon Perkins, [69] and the observations of travellers[70] to describe the region and its economic activity. The diary is an exceptionally detailed source on the period because Perkins, a diligent observer, kept a daily account of his life, work, and community, with few breaks, from shortly after his arrival there in 1766 to his death in 1812. As well as his observations regarding the politics of the time and the trade activity

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[68] Graeme Wynn, "A Region of Scattered Settlements and Bounded Possibilities," *The Canadian Geographer* 31, no 4 (1987), 327-328. See also the discussion of prices and wages in Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations*, 21-24. Liverpudlians involved in shared trade and fishing ventures would have enjoyed improved commodity prices; also many people worked for wages, both on land and at sea, which were rising through the period.

[69] The Diary of Simeon Perkins" in 5 Volumes. The Champlain Society. Volume 1 edited, with an introduction and notes by Harold A. Innis. Toronto. 1948. Volume 2, edited with an introduction by Dr. D.C. Harvey, notes by Dr. C. Bruce Fergusson. 1958. Volumes 3 - 5 edited with an introduction and notes by Charles Bruce Fergusson. 1961.

[70] Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations*, 147.

of the community, he made many entries about the daily operations of his business, the people who worked for him and the people he worked with. By studying these entries closely, one can gather a great deal of data about the people who worked and lived around Perkins. He also recorded many of his actions as a town official, which provide information that would otherwise not be available, as there are no records for that period of the Court of General Sessions or the Inferior Court of Common Pleas that convened twice annually to hear local cases. There are other records from the 1790s to complement the diary: poll tax records for 1791-1795,[71] and significant business records. Zenas Waterman, a blacksmith, ran a business in Liverpool throughout that decade, and his account books survive.[72] James Taylor, a Loyalist merchant, also left a very complete day book for the second half of the decade.[73] These two records contain information on the types of goods that were traded on the local level, and the arrangements that were made to pay for them. As well there exist a number of probate records and a "Township Book" with records of births, deaths and marriages. These last items made it possible to complete the demographic information about persons named in the other sources.

The Diary of Simeon Perkins offers detailed information about the activities of one merchant, as well as many useful observations about his society. However, the perspective of the author limits how much such a source can tell us. Perkins was a reasonably well-to-do business

[71] Poll Tax Lists for Queens County Nova Scotia, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, NAC, microfilm M5219, RG 1 Vol. 444-444½.

[72]Zenas Waterman Day Books, Liverpool, 1787 - 1805 Waterman Collection, PANS, MG1, Vol. 935III #10. 1787-1805.

[73]Taylor Account Book, James Taylor, Liverpool, PANS, MG3 Vol.997. 1795 - 1813; Perkins Diary 3: p.202 n.1.

man; the experiences and prejudices of his class would be reflected in his personal diary. One effect of relying on such a source is to limit the study to those with whom he came into contact, and with whom he may have chosen to do business. One indication of the effect of his bias is the almost complete absence of native people in the diary in the years studied. As well, the frequency of encounters with black people are not in proportion with the number of black residents of the area. However, if we chose to disregard this source because of these problems we would lose a rare and significant record of life in rural Nova Scotia at that time. This record contains important details about the lives and work of labouring men, blacks, women, and children; details that cannot be found elsewhere.

Waterman and Taylor's records as well as civil and church records can be used to help to corroborate and broaden the study by providing more information about the same subjects. Particularly store records can provide evidence of local economic activities, including those of women and children.[74] These business records, together with the probate records and the poll tax lists will also give considerable evidence of wealth or its absence, and the type of property and equipment held by different townspeople. Looked at over a decade these records should also show the different types of work performed by individuals at different times, whether or not there was change or advancement. The Perkins Diary also provides qualitative insight, such as who associated with whom in the work context, and what sorts of conflicts arose. The business

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[74] Elisabeth Manke, "At the Counter of the General *Store"Intimate Relations: Family and Continuity in Planter Nova Scotia, 1759-1800,* Margaret Conrad, ed. Planter studies series, no. 3 (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1995), 169-181; and Steven Maynard, "Between Farm and Factory: The Productive Household and the Capitalist Transformation of the Maritime Countryside, Hopewell Nova Scotia, 1869-1890." in *Contested Countryside*, ed. Daniel Samson, Acadiensis, Fredericton, 1994, 70-104.

sources also have substantial evidence of how debt was managed and how financial ventures were organized.

These sources provide evidence of diversification of the economy and the nature of the society. During the late 18th century the people who make up this study lived through pivotal events which shaped the development of Nova Scotia. Whatever information is available to better understand the challenges they faced and how they adapted to and shaped their new community merits our attention.

CHAPTER 2

SEAFARERS

In *The Cod Fisheries,* Harold Innis asserted that "in the half century between 1783 and 1833 fishing industry (of Nova Scotia) had increased rapidly as a result of the Revolutionary War, of the coming of the Loyalists, of the and the difficulties of France and the United States in later wars, and of the aggressive efforts of commercial organization."[1] This echoed Adam Smith who had described Nova Scotia before the American Revolution as the perfect mercantile colony, exporting raw or semi-processed materials and importing processed goods, from England or New England.[2] One of the raw products was, of course, fish. The evidence of the Perkins diary from this period shows Liverpool in very much that type of relationship with New England. Trade was restricted between the colonies and the United States after 1783, but a clause in the peace treaty maintained the right of New Englanders to use Nova Scotian shore —with the local inhabitants permission— to cure their catches.[3] Thus strong ties, communication, and opportunities for smuggling were maintained between Nova Scotia and New England after the American Revolution.[4]

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[1] Innis, *The Cod Fisheries*, 271. Specifically to the period and region of this study he gave the example of Yarmouth, whose "shipping increased from 26 vessels, 544 tons in 1790 to 41 totalling 1,880 tons in 1808... about 20 voyages a year were made to the West Indies, the remaining activities being a matter of coasting and fishing." Ibid.

[2] Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, 292.

[3] Innis, *The Cod Fisheries*, 210, 219.

[4] D.C. Harvey, Introduction, Perkins Diary 2, lvi.

The principal industry of Liverpool was fishing, and the principal occupations, fishing or trading, were carried out on the sea; but this does not mean that all adult males, save a few merchants, fished all their lives. The town identified itself primarily as a fishing community; the first settlers had a crest designed for the community featuring a cod, a salmon, a tree, and a sheaf of wheat.[5] This design indicates the preeminence of the fisheries, but also the expectation that there would be other commercial activities. The importance of the fisheries to the new settlers was demonstrated by the value placed on the fish lots in the original grants.[6] This value lasted into the 1790s, according to Perkins' exchanges of fish lots.[7] Fishing was an undertaking that dominated Perkins activities for a large part of the year. Beginning in the spring, he recorded the first report of each run of the various types of fish that the townspeople caught: starting with the local river fish, alewives, and then the mackerel, herring, salmon, and cod. He recorded his efforts to organize the resources needed for the fisheries: salt, vessels, and men. Many summers he complained that there were not enough men available for the task, and often observed that the fisheries had left the town with no men at all.[8]

Many maritime historians depict seafarers, both sailors and fishermen, as early wage workers, a pre-industrial proletariat.[9] Contemporary observers and later historians have

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[5] Manke, *Liverpool, Nova Scotia and Machias, Maine*, 100.

[6] Ibid. 97-99.

[7] Perkins Diary 2: 22August, 21 September, 1790.

[8] Perkins Diary 3: 21 June, 1790, 23 May, 1792.

[9] Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, "The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, and the Atlantic Working Class in the Eighteenth Century," *Jack Tar in History: Essays in the History of Maritime Life and Labour*, Colin Howell and Richard Twomey, eds.(Fredericton,

concluded that the work of seafarers, which required short periods of intense labour and then allowed for periods of idleness, did not encourage them to plan and work to develop their property, land, buildings or vessels, or improve their family's economic condition.[10] In households completely dependent on seafaring, the family's economic standing might decline as the father passed his prime. If he had no other source of income after he became too old for such arduous work, he would then have ended up dependent on the work of his sons. The sons however, would have little to gain by staying and contributing to the household, and would seek to set up their own households and work for their own benefit. Also the women of the destitute household would have been unable to purchase the materials for household production, and which would have allowed them to make a contribution to the family's income.[11]

Eric Sager has presented another possible approach to studying the work of seafarers in the north Atlantic; one which included the community in which the seafarers lived, focusing on kinship and patterns of authority as well as economic factors. In his study of work aboard the sailing vessels that worked in the North Atlantic coastal waters and travelled to the West Indies in the first half of the nineteenth century, he found that in their workplace, at sea, sailors enjoyed independence from their employers or outfitters and control over the means of production. In this light seafarers appear as self-directed, responsible, and skilled workers. Seafarers from small communities often worked with immediate family and neighbours in an environment that flourished on cooperation (fraternalism) rather than authority (paternalism). At sea they had

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N.B.:Acadiensis Press, 1991)11-36.

[10] Timothy Dwight, 1796, cited by Daniel Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen*, p.187.

[11] Daniel Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen*, 184-187.

complete control over, if not ownership of, the workplace.[12] The reliance on the mutual support of equals that seafarers experienced in their workplace, removed from the authority of the ship's owners or investors, created a daily work situation similar to that of the back country men in frontier Maine described by Alan Taylor.[13] The decisions about who would be the officers and crew on a fishing or trading voyage were influenced by the relationships among the seafarers in a small community as well as by the control and interests of the merchants.[14] These relationships were the source of greater control by the seafarers over their lives and work.

Did seafarers in Liverpool have any control over their work, or options other than working at sea? If they had to "go gray in the service of the sea" this would mean that they had no choice but to keep fishing or starve. A mixed economy would offer more choices and allow men to reduce the amount of hard work on long voyages they did as they aged. A network of family and community relationships would also help seafarers to change their work as they needed to and provide assistance and support in hard times. The question is whether they were a proletariat at the mercy of merchant-outfitters or a community of semi-independent or independent producers enmeshed in a multifaceted household economy.

This examination of the work of seafarers provides a better understanding of this staple-based economy, of its functioning, and of the roles that it gave to the local participants. In most studies fishermen and sailors are considered separately, but in the case of Liverpool these

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[12] Eric Sager, *Seafaring Labour,* 44-73.

[13] Alan Taylor, *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: The Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990) 83.

[14] D.A. Muise, "'Iron Men?' Yarmouth's Seagoing Workforce in Transition," *Jack Tar in History,* 253.

activities took place in close proximity. The Perkins Diary provides many examples of this. In 1792, twenty percent of the masters recorded by Perkins had made both kinds of voyages, and many of the mates had as well. Even if a seafarer only made one type of voyage, more often than not a family member was engaged in the other type. For example, in the years studied William Freeman spent every summer directing the mackerel fishery at Margaret's Bay in a partnership with Perkins while his kinsman Benjamin sailed frequently to the West Indies and United States. Some, like Elisha Hopkins Jr. progressed from local fishing voyages early in their careers to West Indies trading voyages later on. Trips to Europe from Liverpool were quite rare; one ship the *Adament*, owned by Hallet Collins, made the voyage once or twice a year in the period studied.

The property owned by seafarers, the terms of their work, and their ages in relation to their economic activities indicates whether they were able to adapt to changes in their work situations or accumulate wealth. In all of the studies of maritime communities, it is clear that in order to have any control over their work or their economic fate, a fisherman and his family must have access to more resources than the fishery. How much time seafarers spent at sea and their ages helps to answer the question of whether there was other employment in the community, and whether that employment was an option for many or few. The methods that local investors used to finance fishing trips and trading voyages, and the methods they used to pay seafarers also tell us how much control seafarers had over their work and whether they could use networks to benefit their family and improve their situations.

The diary kept by Perkins provides important data to help answer these questions about the lives and work of the seafarers of Liverpool. His observations of the work activity of the townspeople are extensive enough to provide a perspective on a maritime community's work-world that would otherwise not be available.[15] He recorded the arrivals, departures, and destinations of most vessels and their masters; he often mentioned the mates and, in the case of his own ships, the crews and their pay. He also recorded incidents, disputes among mariners, or mishaps at sea, which give further insight to the community and the structure of the town's fleet. The diary also contains enough information about investments and transactions to indicate whether fishing voyages were financed through truck, or whether other methods of financing fishing trips and trading voyages and paying for work also existed. All of the sources from Liverpool, like the diary and account books, contain examples of the complex financial transactions which were used to circumvent the problem of the lack of currency.

In order to reconstruct the work-life of seafarers in each of the years studied, I recorded all mentions of voyages, ships, masters, mates, and crew. The footnotes of the published version of the diary, which are based on the Township Books of the period, and an unpublished history of the area which used the same source,[16] enabled me to establish the ages of owners, masters, mates, and crew and relationships among them in order to examine the familial and social aspects of this work. I also compared the types of voyages and total times at sea spent by the seafarers in the study to evaluate the importance of this work in their livelihoods. The most complete records of the diary are for the masters and the vessels, followed by owners and mates. For some voyages Perkins recorded the entire crew and their conditions of employment.

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[15] Eric Sager. "The Maritime History Group and the History of Seafaring Labour." Labour / Le Travail. 15 (Spring 1985), 165-172.

[16] Robert Long, *Annals of Queens County* ,(unpublished typescript), 1928.

Although Perkins did not record the arrival and departure of each vessel, it is possible from what he recorded to gather enough data to conduct a quantitative analysis. The consistency in the amount of available data for each year studied and its agreement with the information found in the other local records supports its being considered representative of the entire seafaring activity in the community.

This study focuses on four years of the diary; two of which fall between the revolutionary wars, 1787 and 1792, and for which there are other records available, a census for the former, and a poll tax list for the latter. 1796 and 1799 are also studied to include a period of war, since war was a more common state than peace during the late 18th century and profoundly affected this economy.[17] War had been declared by Great Britain and her allies against revolutionary France in early 1793, but Nova Scotian involvement was limited until Spain became an ally of France in 1796. This event had a considerable impact on Nova Scotian trade in the Caribbean, which was also suffering from increased French incursions.[18] The year saw the community beginning to re-adapt to the reality of war in their economy, whereas 1799 saw a very changed economy, with the impact of privateering being felt in all sectors.

Perkins regularly recorded the vessels that departed for the West Indies or United States as well as vessels headed to Newfoundland, Labrador, or Quebec for the summer fishery. Many Liverpool vessels also spent the summers closer to home at Margaret's Bay, less than one day's sail north along the coast. These trips were mentioned often, but with less regularity or detail.

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[17] Gwyn, "Economic Fluctuations in Wartime Nova Scotia,"80-83.

[18] Dan Conlin, *A Private War in the Caribbean: Nova Scotia Privateering: 1793-1805*, Master of Arts Thesis(Halifax: Saint Mary's University, 1996), 22-24.

Fishing voyages were based on runs—the seasonal movement of schools of fish—of mackerel, salmon, and cod, all of which would be cured and shipped to appropriate markets. This work took place in an intense period of activity over the summer, during which the fishermen would work day and night to haul the fish as long as they were coming. Once the school moved on, they would be finished for the season. After the fish were salted and dry cured or pickled, the better ones were sent to Halifax for trade to Europe, or to the United States, while the lower grade went to the West Indies. [19]

The West Indies trade occupied sailors for varying periods of time, from single voyages of three months, to the busiest who made three such voyages in one year. These traders often made intermediate trips, particularly during the embargo on American shipping to the British West Indies, taking one cargo from the West Indies to the southern or central United States, purchasing a cargo there, returning to the West Indies and trading again to get a final cargo for Nova Scotia.[20] The Liverpudlians participated through the eastern seaboard in an elongated triangle of trade. Many of the goods they got in the West Indies were either used immediately or for exchange within the community, e.g. salt and rum, or traded with other Nova Scotian communities for cash or agricultural products. Liverpool's fish and lumber were not only traded with the West Indies, but also in the United States, usually Boston, Baltimore, or New York. The Liverpudlians there received either American or European imported manufactured goods or

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[19] Eric Sager, *Seafaring Labour: The Merchant Marine of Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989) and Innis, *The Cod Fisheries*, 485.

[20] Based on the voyages reported in the Perkins Diary 2, 3 and 4:1787, 1792, 1796, and 1799.

American agricultural products, which they either consumed or traded again.[21]

One shortcoming of Perkins' diary as a source is its relative lack of information on the inshore fishery. Perkins seems to have recorded this type of fishery, conducted from small boats, only when it varied from the routine, such as Ebenezer Dexter having foundered in the harbour and needing to be hauled to shore by companion boats.[22] This only tells us how Dexter fished, but not really how he made his living. It does give an insight into the community, and signals that Perkins was aware of, but not directly involved in, the activities of small craft inshore fishermen. It is inevitable that Perkins' diary would reflect his view of local events and would be confined to those which caught his interest. As a measure of the representativeness of his diary, I compared the numbers of certain classes of individuals included in the poll tax lists, and the number of these individuals found in the diary. The results in Table 1 clearly demonstrate that this source limits our perspective, and that other sources must be used to complement the diary.

Table 1. Frequency of Occurrence of Individuals on the Poll Tax List of 1791-1795 in the Perkins Diary for the Years 1787, 1792, and 1796.

	Owners or part owners of boats or shallops	Owners or part owners of vessels or schooners	Merchants
Poll Tax	21	11	8
Perkins' Diary	2	7	6

[21] Innis, *The Cod Fisheries*, p. 231. and John Bartlett Brebner, *The North Atlantic Triangle*; *the Interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain* (New York: Columbia). 1945.

[22] Perkins Diary 2: 28 June 1987.

Perkins dealt with small boat owners less regularly than with other groups in the community. However, this problem with the source can be partly overcome by broadening the search from the four study years to the entire diary, which resulted in the identification of fourteen more of the boat owners. Also in broadening the search to the family of the boat-owners, more connections were made. Of the twenty-one boat owners listed in the poll tax, eleven had immediate relatives among the seafarers mentioned by Perkins. This group had less contact with Perkins, and is not to be found among his crew lists, but evidence of their economic activity and their families' places within the community can still be found. The interactions with Perkins had with the small craft owners ranged from wage labour for mowing hay,[23] to household servant/apprentice,[24] and shipbuilding-related wage labour,[25] as well as coastal shipping and fishing. This situation may imply a diversified income strategy among Liverpudlians, but it also indicates that owners of small boats for the inshore fisheries did not sell their catches to Perkins. Several times, he mentioned purchasing catches from Margaret's Bay and Deep Cove for export, but these were from larger ships which would have come under the 'vessel' and 'schooner' class on the poll tax list. Of the four vessel owners not mentioned in the diary years studied, three had immediate relatives who were. Perkins' diary is not completely representative of all aspects of economic activity, however by linking with other sources it is possible to complete the picture.

The demographic information found in the Township Book and in the Perkins diary notes

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23 Perkins Diary 2: 4 Aug.1780, Gamaliel Stewart.

24 Ibid., 2 April 1781, Peter West.

25 Ibid., 5 May 1790, Benjamin Burrows.

allow the researcher to go beyond knowing who in Liverpool worked at sea. The age distribution in different types of seafaring-related activities shown in Table 2, indicate that age, and not simply economic status or connections, was a factor in the type of work that a seafarer would have done. This community did not contain simply two classes, the merchants and the seafaring labourers, but was characterized by an extensive occupational ladder. These figures must be considered in the light of the demography of the community being shaped by its relatively recent settlement (1759). There is evidence of a general aging of the population, but for all of the years studied, more than fifty percent of crews were under thirty and more than fifty percent of masters were over thirty. This implies that at least some seafarers could improve their condition. Certainly the careers of seafarers from larger families who were mentioned in all years, such as the Freemans and Collins, seem to follow a progression. Table 3, which shows the average ages of the different types of seafaring-related property holders on the poll tax lists, lends some support to this hypothesis, in spite of the small number of vessel-owners recorded by the tax collectors. In the sample, the boat owners, a group analogous to the crew on Table 2, were younger than the vessel owners, who were about the same age as the masters.

Table 2. Age Distribution of Seafarers and Merchants in the Perkins Diary Study

Age Group	1787 Crew N=17	1787 Masters N=31	1787 Merchants N=5	1792 Crew N=17	1792 Masters N=37	1792 Merchants N=9	1796 Crew N=12	1796 Masters N=41	1796 Merchants N=9	1799 Crew N=22	1799 Masters N=38	1799 Merchants N=9
0 - 10	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
11 - 20	7	1	-	4	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	
21 - 30	8	13	-	8	15	1	7	18	-	10	16	-
31 - 40	2	13	2	3	12	3	4	11	2	8	13	3
41 - 50	-	3	3	1	8	4	-	9	4	1	6	5
51 - 60	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	2	1	2	-
61+	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1

Table 3. Age Distribution of Seafaring- Related Property Holders on the Poll Tax Lists of 1791-1795

Age Groups	Owners and Part Owners of Boats N=11	Owners and Part Owners of Vessels N=7	Merchants N=7
21 - 30	4	0	0
31 - 40	6	4	2
41+	1	3	5

There were crew over forty in only two of the years studied, one man in 1792 and two in 1799. This strongly indicates that older men did not generally do this type of work. This could mean that older seafarers moved on to different work, or that they found themselves unable to compete for work and therefore destitute. Masters, who would have had more control over opportunities to sail, since many owned at least shares of vessels, also were less likely to be at sea after age forty. The consistent low level of participation in seafaring by older men suggests that this type of work represented a phase of people's work lives and was not the only source of livelihood. At the same time, the number of crew members under the age of twenty declined considerably, from seven in 1787 to two in 1799. This may indicate decreased opportunities for the very young or a decreased need for such young men to undertake this work, or it may not indicate any more than the aging of the seafarers studied, but it does reinforce the significance of the consistency of the numbers of older seafarers. By 1799, ten of the crew members mentioned were over the age of thirty, as compared to only two in 1787; this is a significant aging of a work group. The aging community might be a factor to some degree, but the age distribution of Masters remains steady throughout the period. The availability of work may also be a contributing factor, as the latter two years of the study included privateering, which required much larger crews, upwards of seventy men, as opposed to trading, which could be carried on with crews of fifteen men.[26] Throughout the period Perkins had difficulty in recruiting crews. In 1799 Liverpudlians were going to Halifax and Shelburne to recruit sailors. Therefore, there would have also been motivation for older Liverpudlian seafarers to continue working at sea longer if they had wanted to. The number of very young sailors was very small throughout the study. The "ship's boys" that were mentioned were always the relative, son or brother of a senior crew member.[27]

One group in Liverpool did not follow this pattern of changing work as they aged. There were nineteen black male heads of households in the town, and twenty more in the county, according to the 1787 census.[28] They served quite regularly as ships' crew, either for wages or as

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[26] Perkins Diary 2: 22 Feb. 1787 crew list, Perkins Diary 3: Nov. 1799, crews of Charles Mary Wentworth and the Fly.

[27] Ibid., Jesse Atwood Jr., 1 Oct. 1792; and Perkins Diary 3: 24 July 1799, Benjamin Freeman.

[28] Ibid., 7 May 1787.

indentured servants, but none ever appeared as a mate or master. Black men had navigation skills equal to white men, as Perkins acknowledged when he described the missing schooner *Pilgrim* as having no one on board qualified to navigate except 'Black Jack.'[29] In another instance a ship's caulker was brought from Shelburne, and Perkins later referred to the black man being at work on caulking.[30] The black community participated in the religious life that was so important to the community,[31] and possessed valuable seafaring skills. However, it was kept apart: Perkins consistently referred to people of African descent by their first names, as he did youth, and always mentioned colour.

Those who left the seafaring life early would be considered fortunate only if they had other employment or the means to support themselves, rather than having been pushed out by competition from younger workers. Men over the age of fifty would have had difficulty fulfilling the duties of a hand on a ship, but if there were no other available sources of income they might have had no choice but to try.[32] The records regarding seafaring cannot tell the reasons for working or not, but as many of these people owned some land, they had at least the possibility of trying to extract some support from it. Some of the workers named in relation to lumber and shipbuilding seemed to be associated only with land-based work, but others appeared to be involved in diverse types of work. Perkins regularly mentioned shortages of available labour;

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[29] Perkins Diary 3:, 7 August 1792.

[30] Ibid., 17 Dec. 1792.

[31] Perkins Diary 2: 1, 3 April 1787.

[32] Daniel Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen*, 186-187.

such as every man available being at the summer fishery,[33] a problem with a shortage of hands for shipbuilding,[34] and having to hire from Shelburne,[35] and to send to Shelburne for a caulker for his ship.[36] This would imply that if older community members needed to continue to work for wages, opportunities would have been available, at least in some years. Another indicator of diversified income strategies would be how much time people at the height of their careers spent at sea.

Table 4 shows the approximate amount of time spent at sea by masters mentioned by Perkins. The figures in Table 4 do not indicate any strong patterns, except that a considerable majority of masters spent less than half the year at sea, many spending less than three months. Even accounting for the landward preparation time required for a voyage and handling the catch or cargo afterwards, those men spent only part of the year engaged in sea-based activities. It is likely that these men had other land-based occupations or sources of income. For the years 1787 and 1799, calculations of the average age in relation to time at sea also showed no strong patterns, the average age of masters who spent less than three months at sea was thirty-three in 1787 and thirty-three and a half in 1799, for those spending more than six months at sea it was thirty-six in 1787 and thirty-two in 1799. Men did not seem to 'grow gray in the service of the sea', at least not the masters. Many of these people more likely had a mixed source of income

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[33] Perkins Diary 3: 23 May 1792.

[34] Ibid., 30 March 1791.

[35] Ibid., 7, 18 Aug. 1792.

[36] Ibid., 9 Dec. 1792.

rather than being only "maritime laborers."[37] It would only be from a diverse base of income that an older seafarer could make the transition away from the sea without being severely reduced.

Table 4. Distribution of Total Times at Sea Recorded for Masters in the Perkins Diary

Time at Sea	1787 N=31	1792 N=41	1796 N=49	1799 N=38
-1 - 3 months	17	13	19	14
3 - 6 months	7	22	16	14
+6 months	7	6	14	10

The evidence from the diary indicates that work was available to older, and younger, men who wanted it. It was possible for men from Liverpool to work at sea, either fishing or trading, without outfitting a vessel and incurring debt. The vast majority of crews that went to the West Indies worked for wages, with masters sometimes having an interest in the voyage, but quite often working for wages as well. Those fishing nearer to home also worked about as often for wages as for shares. Mentions of fishermen mounting a voyage at their own financial risk were rare.[38] The reasons behind the different approaches to financing voyages are subject to interpretation; working for shares could have meant that fishermen were able to take greater control of their labour, or that the merchants were unable to assume all of the financial risk of a trading or fishing venture. Working for wages gave seafarers more security but less control.[39] It is apparent that truck was not the dominant means of financing voyages and paying fishermen,

[37] Daniel Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen*, 136.

[38] Perkins Diary 3: 26 Feb. 1796.

[39] David W. Galenson, "Commentary on Merchant Credit and Labour in the Fisheries," in *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies in Historical Perspective*, 73-76.

so there would not have been a cycle of debt bondage to compel older men back to the sea.

The diary described few agreements to outfit local fishing. One such was made with three men to catch and cure alewives, but that was to be done from Perkins' mill stage.[40] Explicit use of the term "truck" to describe a payment occurred, but this was for a catch that was free to be sold. The fisherman in this case began his business dealings by charging Perkins in a fishing rights dispute, for which Perkins and his partners William Freeman and Bartlett Bradford had to pay the fisherman a total of £20. After this Perkins bought his fish for truck, but overall this fisherman did not seem powerless in the face of the merchants.[41]

The information contained in the poll tax rolls in 1792 to 1795 provides evidence as to how the male population was defined as workers in the eyes of the tax collectors. The basic rate of taxation was one shilling for a poll, or adult male; it rose based certain types of property, either ships or livestock, but not on land; or on the basis of occupation, for example merchants, doctors, and carpenters.[42] Beside each man's name is a reason for the tax given, either poll, owner of a boat, owner of six head of cattle, etc. Each class of ownership or occupation had a set tax rate, so the list does not distinguish between the types of merchants, or the types of vessels owned. Because the tax collectors only indicated one reason for the tax collected, the list gives some information about each taxpayer, but not a complete picture of either occupational groups or property ownership. In each year the collectors were only to describe the highest tax that

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[40] Perkins Diary 3: 19 April 1792.

[41] Ibid., 14, 15 Dec.1792.

[42] "An Act to raise a Revenue for the purpose of paying off all such debts as are now due by the Province," (Statutes: Nova Scotia House of Assembly, 1758-1799) 292-298.

applied; however, this instruction was interpreted differently from year to year.[43] In some lists many men were described only as "mekaniks" whereas in others their exact trade was given. Some collectors noted sheep, even though this would not affect the tax paid, while others only considered taxable livestock, cattle and horses, when the payer had more than six head. The five lists complement each other to provide a detailed picture of the local economy at the individual level.

A striking fact that emerges from the poll tax lists is that in a community which had 288 taxpayers in 1792, only twenty-five owned enough seafaring-related property to be taxed for it. Probably many more people did own boats, but were taxed for other reasons. A comparison of the references Perkins made to individuals and the reasons given for their tax shows that the list obscures some sources of income. Twenty-one people were assessed for more than six head of cattle, a tax level higher than that of master, so some of masters, such as Robert Callahan and Robert Harlow, ended up in that category. Because of this the categories of master and mate on the tax list were under-represented, comprising seventeen and four people respectively, fewer than found in the diary. Quite probably many owners of small boats were assessed on the basis of owning one cow or having a trade. Finally, a substantial category of "mekanik" emerged; twenty-six people were assessed as master craftsmen in shipbuilding related trades, such as cooper, sailmaker, and ship's carpenter.

The poll tax lists and the Perkins diary taken together provide very strong indications that the community was endeavouring to establish a diversified economic base, with some local

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[43] Poll Tax Lists for Queens County, Nova Scotia, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795. National Archives of Canada. microfilm M5219, RG 1 Vol. 444-444½.

production, and some skilled labour linked to the staple trade. Whether or not they were ultimately successful still remains in question; at times in his career Perkins was not optimistic about the prospects of the community. In 1773 he lamented that it seemed doubtful that the place would ever be more than a fishing village;[44] in 1787 he was having a particularly difficult year collecting, and therefore paying debts,[45] and on his 62nd birthday in 1796 he reflected,

> Thus have I been many years waiding thro publick & private Business, and now find myself grown old, and a Large Family on my Hands, and by reason of many misfortunes in Low Circumstances. But I desire to thank & Bless God that I have hitherto food & raiment and Some degree of health...[46]

Although Perkins had some difficult moments, he was able to build himself three houses and enlarge his last house twice; he expanded his business and build many ships, and helped his nephew Zebulon, and his eldest son John establish themselves as merchants.

On the poll tax list approximately fifty percent of those taxed were listed simply as polls. Graeme Wyn asserts that apart from a "scattered group of merchants" the inhabitants of settlements on the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia had only "kitchen gardens and fish (which) provided a meagre subsistence..."[47] Certainly it is much more difficult to find information on these people. Comparing the tax list to the diary entries makes it clear that many mates were considered only as polls, and that many were too young to be taxed. All of the masters who

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[44] Cited in Graeme Wyn, "A Province Too Much Dependent on New England," in *The Canadian Geographer* 31, no 2, (1987), 98-113.

[45] Perkins Diary 2: 28 Dec. 1787. In quotations from the Perkins Diary the spelling and syntax found there is reproduced as faithfully as possible.

[46] Perkins Diary 3: 24 Feb. 1796.

[47] Graeme Wyn, "The Geography of the Maritime Colonies in 1800." 141.

sailed local fishing trips, save one, were taxed as polls, whereas those who travelled to the West Indies were assessed slightly higher as masters. Many polls paid more than the minimum tax; but the tax collectors did not explain the reason for the different amount on the assessment rolls.

Peter and Paul West were brothers who appeared regularly in the diary throughout the period studied. They were born in 1762 and 1765 respectively, their father was Captain Thomas West, one of the original proprietors of Liverpool. In 1781 Peter went to live with Perkins' family at 70 shillings per month, and throughout the years studied reappeared doing land-based tasks, cutting timber, tending gardens and animals, and cutting hay for Perkins on an occasional basis. His brother Paul left Perkins' business at the mill in 1782 and did not reappear in the diary until 1791, when he went on the *Polly*, one of Perkins' schooners, as a hand. He served as a hand on fishing and trading vessels, working in Newfoundland, the West Indies and New York until 1799. He also cut wood and hay, repaired a wharf, and helped launch a ship for Perkins.[48] On the poll tax, Paul was taxed as a poll and Peter was taxed as the owner of a boat. The brothers appeared working together later in their careers more than they had when they were in their twenties and thirties. They never earned a great deal of money; by comparison to wages at that time, they were paid as unskilled labour,[49] but neither did Perkins mention the family, who he knew well, having difficulty with the law or with debt. Their father, Captain West, at the end of his career sold his dwelling house to Perkins, with the condition that he would be allowed to continue to use it until his death. He did not leave a dwelling for his sons, who would probably

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[48] Based on indexed references to the Wests in Perkins Diary 2,3, and 4: 1781 - 1803.

[49] Julian Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations*, 23, Table 2.2.

have their own homes by that point, but neither was he a burden for them.[50]

Women in the Fisheries

As little information as we have on men with less property, it still seems like volumes compared to that on women involved in the fisheries. The most common interpretation of this lack has been that women did not have significant roles in the fisheries. However, evidence used in studies from New England and Newfoundland[51] showed that women in the small boat fisheries were often responsible for the cure, a process that ultimately determined the value of the catch. Liverpool's property was organized in fish lots,[52] long narrow lots allowing as many properties as possible to have some beach front for curing catches. It is very likely that families which had small boats and worked inshore, or on the nearest banks, used family labour to cure catches. Such activity would not have normally merited Perkins notice. However, he did note that in July of 1790 Mr. Callahan's wife traveled to Indian Harbour to see Mr. Callahan's "place," a fish lot or beach front he had recently purchased where he was "carrying on a fishery".[53] She spent ten days there, which might not imply that her labour was needed, but she was actively interested in her husband's recent investment. Many people fished much closer to home when the runs of fish came ashore there, creating the opportunity for all members of a family to get involved in the catch and curing.[54] Perkins described one inshore fishing trip

[50] Perkins Diary 4: 27 May 1802.

[51] Crane , *Ebb Tide,* 125; and Cadigan, *Hope and Deception*, 69.

[52]Samuel Hunt, Town Plan of Liverpool Township, PANS, MG 4, Vol.77, 1794.

[53] Perkins Diary 3: 9 July 1790.

[54] Ibid., 24 Oct 1792.

involving himself, his daughter and son-in-law, and a widow who was a friend of the family: "I go with Mr. Newton, his wife, & Mrs. Draper in a Boat down the Harbour a Fishing. We katch about 140 haddick. The women were very lucky, & got, I believe a full share."[55] In spite of the reference to shares, this was likely an outing to supplement the family's larders with fresh or pickled fish.

Family members also got involved in the business side of the fishery, such as when Perkins consulted the wife of his partner in the mackerel fishery, William Freeman, about outfitting a ship and setting up shares. She did not go so far as to approve Perkins' actions in her husband's stead, but agreed to convey to her husband the details of the investment and his options.[56] Certainly the wives of often-absent fishermen were capable of performing an important role as contacts for their husbands. Encountering women acting in this manner did not seem to surprise Perkins, in fact he seemed to expect it. In another instance, when Perkins was waiting for a payment in fish from a Mr. Pride, the owner of a schooner, it was his wife who communicated that they could not pay as expected and proposed selling Perkins the schooner as payment. Perkins did not accept this proposal.[57] How that particular debt was settled was not recorded, but Pride appeared occasionally through the years, always as the operator of his own vessel.[58]

Debt and Credit

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[55] Perkins Diary 4: 27 July 1798.

[56] Perkins Diary 3: 30 May 1793.

[57] Perkins Diary 2: 28 Dec 1787.

[58] Perkins Diary 3 and 4: 2 Dec 1790, 7 June 1803, 8 Oct 1803.

The sources used in this study to understand the seafarers of Liverpool also provide some examples of debt in the community and show how it was handled. One debtor mentioned by Perkins, Stephen Morine, appeared in the 1787 census as the head of a household of seven. He was taxed as a poll throughout the taxation period, but his rate rose from one shilling in 1792 to one shilling six pence in 1793 and 1794. His parents were from Boston and he married in Liverpool in 1767,[59] so he must have been among the first settlers. Very occasional dealings with Perkins were recorded in the diary relating to selling wood, performing ship's carpentry, and selling hay. On January 10, 1792, he arranged to settle his debt of £77.9.1¼ to Perkins over a three-year period. He would not be charged interest in the first year, but as part of the payment he had to give Perkins his boat and build Perkins a gondola (a river boat). This level of debt implies a substantial investment on Morine's part, possibly outfitting a vessel for a seasonal fishing trip. The amount far exceeded the value of most land exchanges mentioned in the diary. His investment adventure failed quite dramatically, resulting in his having to use his boat—the most likely reason for the debt— as only one part of the debt settlement. The boat was built by the leading local ship's carpenter, so it would have been a valuable vessel of its type, and a serious loss for Morine. The promised gondola was delivered in August of 1793, and, when Perkins received two and a half tons of English hay from Morine in October of 1796, he made no mention of the debt. Perkins made three references to such debts within the study period, all of which were settled with a combination of goods, labour, and cash.[60]

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[59] Perkins Diary 3: p. 33, note 2.

[60] Ibid., 30 April 1787, Captain Bartlett Bradford; 20 Feb. 1792, Joseph Bangs; 21 Feb. 1792, Stephen Smith Jr.

Another individual who incurred a considerable debt to outside merchants did not fare so well. Perkins helped Robert Callahan write a very complex payment arrangement for his debt of £56.10 to the Halifax merchant Edward Irish, which involved joint obligations with his son Joseph, the deed to his thirty acre lot and securities against a horse and three cows. The debt was for a schooner which Callahan had for the previous winter. Later the same year Perkins was interrogated in connection with charges against Callahan from two Shelburne merchants.[61] In the end Callahan's problems were more than financial, his wife and step-daughter left his home to live with the family of Benajah Collins, and the Overseers of the Poor moved to bind out his ten-year-old son "on account of Callahan getting into liquor and not taking proper care of him." [62] Whether the drinking caused the failure or vice versa, Callahan's was a remarkable decline, and Perkins was appalled by the "deplorable" situation of someone who had been his peer. Callahan and his wife remained in Liverpool; she continued to have social contact with the Perkins family, even living in their home for a while.[63] Callahan was still carrying passengers in his boat in 1797, however, he entered a privateer as crew in 1799.[64] Given his experience, this was a low position for him to take on a vessel.

Many Liverpudlians found themselves in considerable debt at times; credit was necessary to allow the economy to function. Because of the shortage of hard currency, these debts were sometimes difficult to settle. Perkins was reduced to borrowing from his son-in-law, as well as

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[61] Perkins Diary 4: Ibid., 4, 12 March and 18 Aug. 1796.

[62] Ibid., 16-19 Jan. 1797.

[63] Ibid., 1 Jan 1798, 2 July 1802, 30 Dec. 1803.

[64] Ibid., 31 Oct 1797, 16 Jan 1799.

another merchant, in May of 1796 to settle a debt that was suddenly called in. It was not a particularly large debt; the problem was that he did not have cash on hand to make the required payment. The most extreme situations which arose because of debt were all connected to one merchant, Benajah Collins Esq., the head of one of the town's leading families. In October of 1787 he took legal action against his brother Peter over a debt of £10. Perkins wrote, "I understand he was seen going to jail."[65] Collins legal disputes were innumerable; but he united the community against him by keeping an elderly Samuel Hunt, a respected citizen, meeting-leader, and land surveyor, in prison for a year over a debt of £50. Hunt was vouched for by his neighbours, brought wood at the jail, and finally a collection was raised so that he could be released. Perkins was disturbed by this action of his peer as "(Hunt had) taken the Steps required by the act for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors"; furthermore, Hunt's wife had been ill, and died while he was in prison.[66]

It is clear that a lot of debt existed in the community as a whole, but that also a lot of debt was settled in one way or another. In the period of study Perkins did not often refer to individual debt; it would seem that debt on the part of the fishermen and sailors was not a matter of great concern to him as a merchant. Earlier in his career he had been frustrated by the difficulty of getting locals to settle their debts with him. He did not refer to extreme poverty, but to the tendency to apply available cash to distant creditors rather than local.[67] On May 4, 1803, Perkins mused that he had been in business for forty-one years and had experienced a "variety of

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[65] Perkins Diary 3: 17 Oct. 1787.

[66] Perkins Diary 4: 17 Oct. 1795, 27 Jan. and 20 Sept. 1796.

[67] H.A. Innis Introduction, Perkins Diary 1.

good and bad success". He felt that he had suffered the misfortunes of losses at sea and bad debts more than any other businessman in the town. Supporting the debts of his clientele was a necessary evil of conducting business in cash-poor times, but it did not prevent him from investing and expanding his business; nor did it, by his estimation, have that effect on the other local businessmen.[68]

Privateering: economic opportunities in wartime

As well as fishing and trading, the sea offered another opportunity for work and investment during wartime. Privateering was a common military practice in the eighteenth century which resembled licenced piracy. The privateers were privately outfitted vessels authorized by a letter of marque from the king to attack the enemy's shipping. They then had to establish to the Court of the Vice-Admiralty at Halifax that what they had taken was enemy shipping (libel), which would authorize them to sell the cargo and vessel as a prize and keep the proceeds from the sale, after paying court costs and admiralty fees.[69] During the War of the American Revolution Liverpool's shipping had endured many attacks by American privateers. In 1782 Simeon Perkins noted of one such incident, "The privateer that Captured Crowell is Capt. Perkins of Salem. I am sorry to have a Name Sake in so Contemptible Employment."[70] By the 1790s the merchants and seamen of Liverpool had taken up the practice of privateering. This activity had been approved by the crown in 1793, but it did not hold much appeal until 1796, when the war began to severely impinge on Liverpool's trade. Then the threat of French

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[68] C.B. Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 4, xxxix-xl.

[69] Ibid., xli-liv.

[70] Perkins' Diary 2: 12 Oct. 1782.

privateers and naval vessels and the cost of insurance were beginning to inhibit seriously the fishery and trade of Liverpool.[71]

In order to launch into the new endeavour, Liverpool required backing from Halifax for armaments and military commissions, which they were able to muster quickly. During the years 1797-1803 Liverpool sent out more than one fourth of all privateers that sailed from Nova Scotia.[72] They knew where to go and who to attack and experienced successes very quickly. They were motivated by financial need rather than patriotism; the war had all but killed their trade and they needed a new source of income. The replacement was so successful that when there was talk of British military successes in Europe and a possible peace in the fall of 1799, Liverpool's privateer owners rushed to send their fleet to sea one more time as quickly as possible.[73]

Privateering provided the opportunity to make enormous sums of money quickly; however it involved substantial financial risk; if the Court of the Vice-Admiralty did not libel the prize, the privateer's owners would have to pay costs to the court and the captured ship, and release the prize. Two foolhardy captures in succession by the young Captain Benjamin Collins in 1803 resulted in considerable expenses for the privateer's owners.[74] Both sides in the conflict took part in privateering, resulting at times in questionable gains, such as in 1796, when a prize taken turned out to be a Liverpudlian vessel, belonging to Captain Gorham, which had been

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[71] Conlin, *A Private War,* 22; and C.B. Fergusson, Introduction Perkins Diary 4, xl.

[72] C.B. Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 4, liv.

[73] Perkins Diary 4: 16, 18, 19, 21 Oct., 5, 20, 25, 27 Nov. 1799.

[74] C.B. Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 4, xliv

taken by the French in the previous year.[75]

Crews of privateers all worked for shares. The returns from a privateer cruise could be enormous, but a cruise might also end with nothing or with a debt to a ship captured without justification. Overall, working for shares was the best option for both crews and investors. A single seaman's share on the *Charles Mary Wentworth* paid as much as £48 and as little as £3 for cruises that lasted between three and six months.[76] Privateering could obviously yield a windfall for the crew, and even greater sums for the vessel's officers and owners, but it did involve considerable personal risk. The crews, because of the shares and because of the demand for labour, enjoyed a greater input into their conditions of work than they might otherwise have done. In 1801 Captain Alexander Godfrey mentioned consulting his entire crew before taking the decision to pursue a vessel. He also lost the crew of his privateer to desertion in 1800 because they felt he was not allowing them a sufficient time ashore between cruises.[77]

In the privateering years the practices of merchants, investors and captains were based on practices that had been established in peace-time. Years earlier the crew of a trading vessel had also shown that they would act together to oppose their master if the situation warranted it. Perkins mentioned having difficulty recruiting a crew in April 1790 because the seamen objected to Captain Bartlett Bradford, a long time friend and associate of Perkins. In the end, Perkins changed the master of that vessel for another.[78] Many of Liverpool's seafarers knew each other

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[75] Ibid., liii, liv.

[76] Conlin, *A Private War*, 111.

[77] Ibid., 116.

[78] Perkins Diary 2: April 1790.

by long association if not family relationships, and would likely not have hesitated to question decisions which affected the safety of the vessel. Personal relationships between merchants and captains determined who worked together, and captains chose their crews from people who they were familiar with when possible. The captains and officers of privateers were all local, and a very large part of the crew were as well. Privateering raised the demand for workers and raised the expectations for earnings, but it was carried on within the framework of the established community.

Many of the town's financial ventures, particularly during the era of privateering were undertaken by groups of financiers on shares. The risk in this type of venture was shared by the investors rather than the sailors. This understanding was exemplified by the judgement of the local arbitrators in a dispute between disgruntled investors and a vessel's master. The investors charged that the master, Captain Porter, had allowed himself to be cheated in the sale of his cargo of salmon. It was judged that Porter was not responsible for the loss caused by his actions, however obviously erroneous.[79]

Risk

One fact that separated seafaring from the other sources of income available in the late eighteenth century was the level of personal risk. In the census of 1787, twenty-one of the 180 households in Liverpool were headed by widows. Comparison with the census of an agricultural community demonstrates that the proportion of widows in Liverpool was particularly high. Horton, in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia, had only two of its 112 households headed by

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[79] Perkins Diary 3: 13-15 Sept. 1792.

women in 1770.[80] On that census the two women were not clearly identified as widows, but both households contained children, making it probable that they were. These statistics may imply a very low rate of remarriage for women in Liverpool, but the two communities had fairly similar male to female ratios, which would call into question the earning potential of older men. Of the twenty-one households headed by widows in Liverpool, fifteen contained adult men, which points to the importance of older sons to households. Perkins acknowledged this importance when he lamented at the deaths of two young sailors: "These losses fall heavy on two poor widows" and named their mothers, and then mentioned "the young widow" of one of the sailors.[81]

Death at sea was common and constantly feared. Illness overtook boats, killing captains, crews and passengers. Such a fever left an elderly man, Jabez Cobb, obliged to take command of the Schooner *Dolphin* and to engage two black men from Georgia to bring the vessel back to Liverpool after the captain and two of the crew died in passage.[82] Smallpox was also a constant risk during this period; three young members of the Collins family succumbed to it on a summer trip to Boston.[83] The greater risk was being washed overboard in rough seas, and this was a risk that affected crew far more than officers. The ships at that time were ill-equipped to rescue men who had washed over in rough seas, so those who did rarely survived. When James McCoy was

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[80] Census of Nova Scotia, 1767 - 1787, PANS RG 1, vol. 443, no. 15 Horton 1770, no. 45 Queens 1787.

[81] Perkins Diary 3: 3 May 1796.

[82] Perkins Diary 2: 21 Jan. 1787.

[83] Perkins Diary 3: 18 Oct. 1792.

washed over near Barbados, his comrades were unable to save him although he survived for nearly two hours in the water.[84] Likewise when Aquilla Inloes and Humphrey MacDonald were swept off the flying jib boom in high seas, Inloes was lost because he could not get hold of the rope, but MacDonald managed to pull himself back aboard. [85] MacDonald was lost later himself at sea in 1798 at the age of thirty-five.[86] This fact alone of seafaring life might cause an observer to conclude that it was a last resort as a source of income and not a choice. Privateering was a more than usually risky line of seafaring; however, relative to the possible returns and the similar risks experienced by West India traders during war time, it was a level of risk that seafarers accepted.[87] Risk was a constant part of this way of life, a part that seafarers accepted because it was a choice that offered a reasonable chance to make a living. One way that the seafarers attempted to reduce the uncertainty at home about the business was to communicate amongst themselves through port connections in the United States and the West Indies. Every master who returned to Liverpool had information on other local vessels which had been in similar waters, some of whom had been encountered directly, other messages had been passed through several hands.

The Fishing Community

The possibility of sudden wealth for those who engaged in privateering might have reduced the sense of mutual responsibility among seafarers and heightened competition. When,

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[84] Ibid., 7 Apr. 1796.

[85] Ibid., 20 June 1796.

[86] Perkins Diary 2, p.290, note 1.

[87] Conlin, *A Private War,* 109.

in October of 1794 a ship, the *Bernstorff*, carrying a French cargo of wine and brandy went adrift in Liverpool's harbour, considerable hostility arose between the militia of the town and that of nearby Herring Cove regarding who should "guard" the vessel and thereby have a claim to a share of the prize if it was condemned as libel. In 1794 every adult male was a member of the militia, and many were not pleased about it. Guarding the seized ship was an opportunity to have something back for the time spent training and in parade. Perkins managed to defuse the situation by intervening as Justice of the Peace rather than in his role as commanding officer of the Militia, but he was surprised by the level of animosity. The next day, when acting as commander of the militia, he recognized the need to accommodate the still agitated men and refrained from requiring parade or calling the rolls.[88] This case dragged on in the courts in Halifax until 1799, when the town received £600 for the prize, £200 of which Perkins noted paying out to "people that have demands on the *Bernstorff*."[89]

When privateering began in earnest after 1796 the town's authorities, through the sheriff, the militia, and the Overseers of the Poor acted to diminish the impact of the arrival of many itinerant sailors on the town. Integrating the privateers into the town was not possible, but the seamen were mustered and paraded in a military fashion in hopes of creating an atmosphere of propriety and discipline about the enterprise.[90] An increase in violent incidents and public drunkenness was evidenced by the town's local authorities attempts to regulate the behavior of

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[88] Perkins Diary 3: 18-22 Oct. 1794.

[89] Perkins Diary 4: 23 Oct. 1799.

[90] Ibid., 30 May 1799, 27 Nov. 1799.

the privateers.[91] This era of privateering, which was repeated in the first decade of the 19th century was an important test of the community's integrity. It brought a completely changed pattern of work and new sources of wealth.

The seafarers of Liverpool had more than the usual amount of choice in the 1790's; however, even without privateering it is apparent they had some choice. They did not always work in the same manner, some worked much more at sea than others; most left seafaring, at least travelling to the West Indies or on long fishing voyages, by the time they were in their forties. They changed their manner of working: investing in shares of boats, buying boats, or working for wages. In the winter some worked on land while others went to the West Indies. Some worked at shipbuilding while others did not. Many continued to work at fishing even when there were berths on privateers to be had.

A close examination of the work of seafarers reveals complexity in the economy and a capacity to adapt. The space existed in the economy for other types of activity than seafaring, and many of the seafarers studied participated in more than one type of activity, or had immediate relatives who did. This economy functioned on a modest scale, but it operated in a way that precluded the monopolistic control of one merchant, or one employer. Family was essential to the flexibility of the economy, with siblings sharing investments, and working together, and often some family members focusing on one domain of work while their relatives concentrated on another. Family and community associations were constant and vital parts of the economy which gave the community the stability to weather the effects of shifts in the markets for trade and the impacts of war and privateering.

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[91] Ibid., 14 March, 1798.

CHAPTER 3

WORK ON LAND

In the spring of 1773, Simeon Perkins wrote in his diary that the inhabitants of Liverpool had not been applying themselves sufficiently to the practice of agriculture. Consequently, they had to trade their much-needed salt for provisions from neighbouring communities. He felt that they did not "raise half a supply of potatoes or roots, and very little corn". In frustration he complained, "It is enough to discourage anyone from being among these people, even if a fortune was to be made."[1] His comments reflect his expectation that the townspeople would apply themselves to farming as well as to fishing and lumbering, and his belief that doing so was essential to the success of the community. Perhaps his standard for reasonable agricultural effort, as a native of Connecticut, might have been different than those of the majority of Liverpudlians, who came from coastal Massachusetts. If fishermen and their families were able to engage in agricultural activities, they could have produced all or some of their food needs, reducing the need for imported food and clothing. It could have also increased the household's economic strength, allowing fishermen to resist exploitation by merchant outfitters. Agriculture would have brought the community together through internal exchanges, strengthening the ties between households. The questions asked here are, how did the community approach diversifying their economy, and how important was this diversity to their prosperity?

One 19th century view of the value of mixing farming and fishing differed from that of

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[1] Cited in Elisabeth Manke, *Machias, Maine and Liverpool, Nova Scotia*, page 63. Perkins Diary 1: 8 February, 20 March, 1773.

Perkins. Julian Gwyn cites a merchant lamenting in 1837 that Nova Scotian fishermen insisted on combining the two activities, resulting in no great success at either.[2] However, even in a Gaspé Peninsula fishing community where there was very little land per family and no other possible income sources, Rosemary Ommer found that subsistence farming played an important role in the fishing families' well-being. This was despite the fact that agriculture did not generate any local trade or directly benefit the economic development of the community.[3]

Certainly the community of Liverpool would never have been in a position to export agricultural products, its soil having little agricultural potential.[4] It was only through extensive preparation that the soil would yield anything.[5] Even with these limitations, the agriculture of Liverpool could still have played an important role in its early economy by increasing the output of the household and involving the entire family in production, thereby bringing greater prosperity and greater unity to the household. Perkins described many arrangements for local exchange, but a more complete picture can be found in some of the surviving business records, the daybook of the merchant James Taylor for the years 1795 to 1813, and the account book of the blacksmith Zenas Waterman for the years 1787 to 1813.

Local Production

Perkins considered his own agricultural efforts to be important enough to record every year's planting of various crops, clearing, draining, and fertilizing fields and tending animals. He

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[2] Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations*, 74.

[3] Rosemary Ommer, *Outpost to Outport*, p.118.

[4] Manke, *Machias, Maine and Liverpool, Nova Scotia*, 62-70.

[5] Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations*, 147.

hired men to clear rocks on his property,[6] and build and tend pasture walls and fences.[7] One spring he recorded planting peas, beans, 'apple potatoes', cucumber and squashes, "all with my own hand."[8] On another occasion he "set out cabbages" that had been started by William Cheever, a ships' carpenter, and Mrs. John Peach.[9] Perkins did not refer to prices for these products, as he habitually did for fish and lumber. Agricultural products never found their way to the cargo holds of trading vessels; they were for family use, local exchange, and perhaps for feeding work gangs, as meals were often part of the pay reported for day labourers and carpenters.

Perkins noted harvesting 100 bushels of potatoes on November 6, 1790, but generally he did not record his yields. The exception to that practice was the hay harvest. Hay was an important crop as timber work required the labour of many draft animals which needed expensive feed. Growing hay was essential to making the sawmills profitable. Every late summer Perkins described the process of mowing and raking and gathering the hay into the barns. Every year he accomplished this by his own labour, by hiring hands for the task or directing one of his "hired men" to it, and by exchanges of labour for part of the harvest. In order to expand his production of hay, Perkins leased a meadow at Catherine's River in 1792 and 1796 from Francis Green for £5. Perkins made agreements with Robert Harlow and Thomas Kempton, both lumbermen, to work that land in 1796. They were to raise and mow the hay for

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[6] Perkins Diary 3: 26 July 1792.

[7] Ibid., 16, 30 April 1787.

[8] Perkins Diary 3: May 26, 1796.

[9] Perkins Diary3: 2 June 1792.

him, cutting for themselves "what (they) want" as payment for their labour. Often he was still obliged to buy or trade for hay by the end of the winter. In 1787, he got hay from Mr. Thomas for wintering his animals. In April of 1796, Perkins noted, "My hay is expended. I git 1 hundd from Captain Gorham, he owed me for keeping his sheep, and towards night Elisha Doliver brings me 10 hundred from Samuel Doliver. Good English hay."

Doliver was one family name that occurred repeatedly in entries regarding hay. There were Dolivers among the original proprietors of the Township of Liverpool.[10] They had their land in Port Medway at the mouth of the Medway River, a short sail north east of Liverpool. In the 1792 Poll Tax, the Dolivers were taxed for two boats, owned by Elisha and Samuel.[11] In 1792, Perkins recorded that Samuel Doliver had given him the bill of sale for two heifers and two bulls as security for his part of a debt.[12] This may have been how they financed their acquisition of the two boats or how they outfitted them. In the poll tax of 1793, there were five Dolivers taxed. James was taxed as the master of a vessel, Elisha for owning three head of cattle, Gamaliel for two head of cattle, another Gamaliel and Samuel as polls.[13] Either they had sold the boats again or, for Elisha, the cattle superseded his boat as a taxable item. The Doliver family obviously combined inshore fishing, based on their fish lots, and some agriculture. Perkins' diary often recorded the various Doliver relations working together, even though there were four

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[10] Grant to the Committee of the Township of Liverpool, 1764, National Archives of Canada, .MG 9, B-5.

[11] 1792 Poll Tax for Queens County, Nova Scotia, NAC, RG 1, Vol. 444.

[12] Perkins Diary 3: 10 November 1792.

[13] 1793 Poll Tax for Queens County, Nova Scotia, NAC, RG 1, vol. 444½,

separate Doliver households listed in the 1787 Census.[14]

Perkins did not deal with the same suppliers of hay year after year. There were a number of people who could exchange surplus hay, or who needed the income from assisting Perkins with his hay crop. No one would exclusively farm, but the surplus hay could be an important source of additional cash or credit. Perkins paid James Briggs of Port Medway £28.2.0 for hay in the spring of 1787.[15]

Most households in Liverpool kept livestock as well as the draft animals. Table 1 combines evidence from the census of 1787 and the Poll Tax lists to enumerate the sheep and cattle kept in Liverpool. An 1827 survey of provincial production found that although Queens County lagged well behind the provincial average in most areas of agricultural production, they raised more than three times the provincial average of sheep per capita.[16] Perkins referred to a hog pen beside his house, and the Waterman account books included debits for the service of slaughtering hogs. Neither fowls nor eggs are mentioned in any of the sources, except in 1795 when James Taylor paid £2.9 for feathers. Otherwise they must have stayed completely on the informal plane of economic activity and therefore been missed in all of the records that survived. All other types of household production, milk, cheese, butter, soap, candles, appear somewhere in the surviving account books of the period.

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[14] 1787 Census of Queens County, NAC, RG 1, vol. 443.

[15] Perkins Diary 2: March 27, 1787.

[16] Haliburton, *A Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia*, cited in Elisabeth Manke, *Machias, Maine and Liverpool, Nova Scotia*, 70.

Table 1. Livestock reported in the 1787 Census and the Poll Tax 1792-1795.

Source	Cattle survey 1786	Poll Tax 1792	Poll Tax 1793	Poll Tax 1794	Poll Tax 1795
Cattle (Oxen, cows)	359 (Liverpool) 617 (County)	126-144 (estimate)	396	351	373
Sheep	91	not counted	107	75	126

Liverpool was composed of 280 households, and its total population numbered 517 adults and 449 children in 1787,[17] The figures on Table 1 therefore represent a small number of livestock per capita. Sheep were counted by some tax collectors even though they were not mentioned as taxable items in the legislation for the tax.[18] The numbers for sheep may have been low; three instances cited in this chapter do not agree with the tax list and these numbers are much lower than those found in a survey done in 1827.[19] Perkins' accounts of the Dolivers and James Knowles, mention more animals than were counted in the poll tax, and he mentions Captain Gorham owning sheep, which were not listed on the tax at all. The tax lists demonstrate that the livestock was distributed throughout the community, providing a supplement to many seafarers' households.

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[17] 1787 Census of Queens County.

[18] An Act to raise a Revenue for the purpose of paying off such Debts as are now due by the Province, Statutes, The Nova Scotia House of Assembly, (1st Session 1791). 292-298; Amendment to the Act, (1st Session 1792).

[19] Manke, *Liverpool and Machias*, 70.

Exchange of livestock and animal products were not enough to eliminate imports or to provide a household with their primary source of income. Nevertheless, records of butter and milk as exchange and payment occur throughout Taylor's account book. One customer, Daniel Jean, a butcher, regularly traded with Taylor in 1795, and exclusively used beef and veal as payment. He was not on the poll tax list, but he may have travelled periodically from a nearby community to Liverpool to trade or provide his services. He worked in cooperation with Taylor that year, but did not appear in the account book in 1799. He did, however continue to appear occasionally in Perkins' diary, finally renting a store from him in order to set up a slaughter house in 1811.[20] Perkins and Waterman both mentioned that when someone slaughtered an animal, the meat was then used in trade. Throughout the period, moose meat also appeared frequently as an item of local exchange, even being the subject of a violent dispute between William Cohoon and Samuel Doliver.[21]

In 1787 a bolt of lightning struck Captain James Knowles' house. By Perkins description of its path we are provided with a view of the household of a seafarer.

> Lightning...struck the house of Mr. James Knowles at the easterly end, entirely shuck down the chimney at that end as far as the chamber floor... Two hogs were lying by the east end of the house. One of them was killed, the other appears to be much hurt and bleeds at the mouth. Two pigs were in a stye at ye easterly end of the house. One of them was killed ye other not hurt. Two calves were in a pen close to the westerly end and not hurt. Two girls were in ye room over where the sill was shattered, one of them sitting under the window...(not hurt). Mrs. Knowles was at a chamber window at the west end, and was not hurt...a trunk of clothes belonging to Miss Catherine Doggett was locked and standing in the east

[20] Perkins Diary 5: 19 Nov. 1811.

[21] Perkins Diary 2: 13, 14 Nov. 1787. The Inferior court of Common Pleas at Liverpool found in favour of the defendant, Doliver.

room was set on fire...[22]

The house was occupied only by women at the moment described. All of the men of the family were absent for the day or a longer period presumably because of their work. The women were inside most probably because of the storm. A fine day might have found them outside tending the animals or the garden. The women sitting at windows might have been watching the storm, or the animals, or using what light there was to spin or sew. The house that these women occupied and the animals and property associated with it were their responsibility, at least in the absence of any of the male members of the household. The work and attention of the women of the Knowles household were essential to the well-being of all concerned.

Women's responsibility regarding livestock was comparable to men's. In a letter of 1792, Perkins wrote to Joseph Mills with whom he shared the ownership of a stock of cattle about a proposal to settle their shares by selling a bull. Perkins referred to a conversation with Mills' brother-in-law and a letter from his sister on the subject.[23] This letter alludes to a complicated manner of keeping a stock of cattle, one that shared the responsibility, and the risk, among partners and families. The woman involved took her place naturally in the discussion of the settlement of the venture; probably she also had her place in the labour involved.

The manufacture of textiles for family use, and possibly to trade the surplus, was another important contribution that farm women have often made to their households.[24] The presence of

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[22] Perkins Diary 3: 27 June 1787.

[23] Perkins Diary 5: Appendix II, Letter of November 16, 1792, p. 425.

[24] Marjorie Griffin Cohen, *Women's Work, Markets and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (University of Toronto Press, 1988), 78-79.

sheep in the 1786 survey and the poll tax lists for Liverpool point to the possibility of textile production. However, few of the inventories found contained spinning wheels. Possibly the cheaper alternative of spindles was used, Zenas Waterman recorded selling those. As well, he recorded selling "loom irons" to Enoch Freeman, Isaac Dexter, Benjamin Freeman, and Jabish Cobb. A debt to Mother Cahoon (Cohoon) for weaving was listed in the estate papers of Lodowick Smith. In the settlement of the estate this debt was balanced by the sale of a codline to William Cohoon Junior.[25] Spinning was one of the few forms of female work Perkins mentioned. In 1789, Esther Matthews lived with the Perkins family to teach the girls how to spin.[26] Homespun cloth was for family use or informal exchange; it did not figure in the business records of Taylor or Waterman. Given the amount of sheep in the tax lists or even the later survey, it was unlikely that anyone produced a surplus of woven cloth. The work of making cloth into garments, however, appeared frequently in the business records of both Waterman and Taylor, and was clearly done by women. Many purchases of cloth and sewing supplies appear in the 1795 records of James Taylor. On July 27, 1795, Mr. Taylor credited Mrs. Benjamin Parker six shillings for making a waist coat, for which she received three shillings and three pence in cash. Even very limited textile production and finishing provided another possible source of cash for the family income or a commodity which could be traded for other local products, as well as diminishing the need for imports.

<u>Local Trade</u>

A large part of the food consumed in Liverpool was imported. In Perkins' and Taylor's

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[25] Estate Papers, Queens County Museum. Estate of Lodowick Smith, 1793.

[26] Perkins Diary 2: 24 Nov. 1789.

records there are regular references to imports of food. Meat and root vegetables came from neighbouring communities, such as Lunenburg and Horton. In these records there are also accounts of at least one or two major shipments per year of wheat flour, which Liverpool did not produce at all, and some corn from the United States. However imports were not the only source of food; the records of Taylor and Waterman also contain evidence of a local market, albeit on a small scale, for local products. There was a local grist mill for grinding corn, whose activities were recorded in the Taylor Daybooks in 1795. There was a steady exchange of hay, corn, and potatoes, some meat, some milk, and clothing made or repaired. The miller was also a shoemaker, whose products were exchanged through Taylor's store. Perkins once mentioned that Stephen Perry, a local man who worked for him at times cutting wood, had arrived with his brother Robert to sell butter and cheese.[27] Waterman even sold cured alewives, and fresh and smoked salmon locally. In spite of the obvious barriers to local agriculture, the community endeavoured to raise or trade amongst themselves what food and simple home products they could, increasing their household incomes and reducing the use of expensive imports as much as possible.

The transactions in the Zenas Waterman Account Books[28] give a picture of a family working together to support itself much like the urban New England families of the 17th and 18th centuries described by Elaine Forman Crane.[29] Zenas Waterman was a loyalist from Plymouth

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[27] Perkins Diary 3: 26 Sept.1796.

[28] Zenas Waterman Day Books, Liverpool, 1787 - 1805 Waterman Collection, PANS, MG1, Vol. 935 #10. 1787-1805.

[29] Crane, *Ebb Tide*, 125.

who settled in Liverpool in 1785, at the age of 23. He set himself up in Liverpool as one of the town's blacksmiths, providing iron fittings for vessels, tools for lumbermen, and household objects. In 1785 he married Eunice Dean, daughter of Captain James Dean, and the "daughter-in-law" (step-daughter-in-law) of Perkins' long-time business partner Bartlett Bradford.[30] The Deans were important customers in Waterman's early account book. In addition, Mrs. Waterman's work is mentioned from the outset. There were charges to Joseph Barss for "schooling" three children in the first ledger, and to Stephen Collins for schooling children in the second ledger. The quality of penmanship and spelling in the ledger suggest that it was not Zenas who provided the schooling. There were also extensive charges for making, repairing, and even laundering items of clothing in all of the ledgers. Members of leading families, such as Widow Ruth Collins, purchased finished garments regularly. As well, Waterman's hired men were often paid in tailoring, laundering, room and board, as well as a relatively small amount of cash. Waterman hired Timothy Holton from May 1792 to October 1793. His pay was partially in made clothing, including two "frocks", and clothing washed, and mended. He also received thread and buttons, tobacco and a spring trap. The Watermans' business sold cloth and butter along with the items smithed, and fish and lumber traded.

In 1792, Perkins as Justice of Probate, approved the binding of Robert Tong to Zenas Waterman[31]. Robert appears in the account books until 1793. His labour hauling wood, mending a fence, and killing a hog was sold or exchanged. The last account book, which ended in 1810,

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[30] Perkins Diary 2, April 3, 1785, and p. 268, notes 2,3. According to a note by R. R. McLeod accompanying B. Bradford's tombstone inscription at Queens County Cemetery Inscriptions, Internet, Queens County Genealogy Resources, rootsweb.com

[31] Perkins Diary 3: 3 Sept. 1792.

included work by James Waterman, who was born in 1787.[32] In 1804 he worked three days for James DeWolfe, as well he worked one month for Enoch Freeman, one week for Thomas Dogg. In the last account book, during the boom years of privateering, Zenas Waterman accepted employment on coastal and West India traders several times. Many of these transactions were described in the account book in the third person, and there was a change in handwriting. The family involvement in the business apparently included the bookkeeping. After 1810, Zenas Waterman acquired some of the only valuable farmland in Queens County,[33] on the newly opened road to the Annapolis Valley, and moved there with his family. One of the last accounts settled was that of his son James, which included materials and tools needed for cutting trees and clearing fields.

Waterman's blacksmith shop was a venue for small scale local exchanges. Waterman's customers bartered their own products for his smithing and the goods he sold. Cash was scarce in this period, so producing agricultural commodities or manufactured goods for exchange was important to be able to purchase tools needed for fishing, lumber work, and the household. Waterman also often received payment in labour, in services such as shoe making, in the use of a boat to haul sand, and in credit with merchants, Kirk, Taylor, or DeWolfe. Local products as payment were important for Waterman's business throughout its existence; his way of doing business remained remarkably stable considering the economic and political climate of the 1790s. Cash and import goods were increasingly used as payment during the boom years of

[32] Perkins Diary 4, p. 380. Note 5.

[33] *Canada Land Inventory, Soil Capability for Agriculture* (Map), Soil Research Institute, Canada Department of Agriculture with the support of ARDA, Canada Department of Forestry, Ottawa, 1960.

privateering, which were also the latter years of his business. The use of some local products, fish and agricultural products, as payment decreased in the latter half of the 1790's, but did not disappear altogether and it returned after 1800. Trade in wood products was fairly steady throughout the period, the largest change was in the use of cash. The Waterman records suggest that trade in local products was sensitive to external factors. It declined if more lucrative opportunities existed, or the simpler option of paying with cash was available.

Table 2. Methods of Payment Recorded in the Zenas Waterman Account Books, in Halifax currency and percentage of recorded total.

	Ledger One 1786-1789	Ledger Two 1790-1792	Ledger Three* 1793-1800	Ledger Four 1800-1807
Cash	£7.4.5 (4.7%)	£34.2.0 (16.5%)	£24.9.1 (16%)	£71.11.6 (28%)
Fish	£8.5.10 (5.4%)	£16.14.9 (7.9%)	£2.13.0 (1.7%)	£10.15.3 (4.3%)
Wood and wood products	£11.12.10 (7.8%)	£34.2.3 (16.5%)	£29.11.11 (19.5%)	£47.16.11 (18.8%)
Local agricultural products	£22.13.5 (15.3%)	£22.18.10 (11.1%)	£7.8.6 (5%)	£35.10.11 (14%)
Imported food	£7.1.10 (4.7%)	£15.7.6 (7.5%)	£24.18.1 (16.6%)	£15.2.6 (6%)
Rum, sugar and molasses	£15.2.8 (10.2%)	£11.19.1 (5.8%)	£16.16.4 (11.3%)	£12.5.0 (4.7%)
Cloth, finished products	£23.13.6 (15.9%)	£24.7.9 (11.9%)	£16.7.4 (10.9%)	£9.11.0 (3.7%)
Labour, 3rd party payments	£53.1.5 (35.9%)	£46.14.1 (22.5%)	£28.12.11 (18.9%)	£52.18.4 (20.7%)
Total	£148.15.11	£206.6.3	£150.17.2	£255.11.5

* Approximately 30% of this Ledger was illegible because of water damage.
Note: Totals of percentages by column vary slightly from 100 because of rounding of figures.

Merchant James Taylor's 1795 daybook transactions show that his business resembled

Perkins' more than Waterman's.[34] Taylor invested in fishing and trading voyages as well as selling finished products. To a large degree, his business was engaged in staple production. He sold salt and salmon twine, ship's bread and hand saws. He received payment largely in fish, lumber and cash. He undoubtedly supplied the fishermen and lumbermen, but his sway over them is not clear from the daybook. In 1795 he did not record any interest on the accounts. A substantial number of credits recorded were for cash, indicating that payments did not always equal store credit, and business was not dominated by truck.

Although he predominantly focussed on equipping ships and handling fish and lumber, James Taylor's store was also provided a place to exchange local agricultural products, and a source of materials for making garments at home. Transactions involving local corn ground at the grist mill and the trade of the local butcher were important to his business in 1795. He also received the occasional payment in soap and butter. A large part of his local sales were fabrics for domestic use and shoes made by the local shoemaker, and miller, William Smith. Taylor provided the local market with imported dry goods, such as cotton fabric, ribbons, and hats, and imported foods, such as wheat flour, tea, sugar and chocolate.

James Taylor's business was even more profoundly affected by privateering than Zenas Waterman's. In 1799, he invested in privateering ventures and fishing voyages but not in any ships trading in timber. He was a merchant very much in tune with the Atlantic world and was able to seize available opportunities, within the limits of the local resources. One significant change in the commodities at his store in 1799 was that local corn was no longer carried there,

[34]Taylor Account Book, James Taylor, Liverpool, PANS, MG 3 Vol.997. 1795 - 1813.

only imported. Also, Taylor received many pieces of luxury fabrics as payments, and resold them in Halifax or the United States; however, he did not sell any type of fabric to local people. The availability of goods from privateers' prizes may have affected the need to produce garments locally as people could have bought fabrics and finished garments in the prize auctions.[35]

In 1799, Taylor charged interest to five customers: Levi Minard, who was listed on the poll tax as the owner of two cattle, Richard Woods, the owner of one head of cattle,[36] the Bangs family, shipbuilders, James' brother William, a merchant in Shelburne, and Joseph Barss, a ship's captain. This might indicate that Taylor was becoming more mercenary as the opportunity to make more money developed, but more probably it indicates that individuals were willing to borrow money or run up larger accounts at Taylor's store in the expectation of increased revenues.

In Taylor's business the value of local commodity transactions was completely overshadowed by his other commercial activities.. The enormous increase in third party transactions in 1799 was the result of exchanges with external merchants; Taylor was dealing with merchants from Shelburne, Halifax, and New York. "Labour" now made up a very small number of these transactions. Taylor conducted business on two very different scales, having a several hundred pound credit from a privateer or trader recorded directly after a six shilling credit for potatoes. In 1795 and 1799, many accounts, even small ones were partly settled with cash payments. He also regularly loaned small amounts of cash, fifteen times in 1795 and thirty-

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[35] Perkins Diary 4: 3, 15 May, 1799.

[36] Poll Tax, 1793.

seven times in 1799.

Table 3. Credits recorded in James Taylor's daybooks for the years 1795 and 1799, in Halifax currency and percentage of total.

	1795	1799
Fish	£329.19.2 (12%)	£1029.6.9 (15%)
Wood and wood products	£174.11.2 (6%)	£67.1.0 (1%)
Cash	£296.6.6 (11%)	£758.12.7 (11%)
Local agricultural products	£42.17.2 (2%)	£92.2.0 (1%)
Rum, wine, imported agricultural products	£56.17.4 (2%)	£663.6.1 (10%)
Finished products, cloth and shoes	£32.9.11 (1%)	£60.6.1 (1%)
Labour, 3rd party payments	£32.7.10 (1%)	£1060.8.11 (16%)
Ship's cargoes, return on investment	£1737.11.11 (64%)	£1977.3.5 (29%)
Payments from privateers	0	£1060.8.11 (16%)
Total	£2703.1.0	£6805.12.7

Note: Totals of percentages by column vary slightly from 100 because of rounding of figures.

The changes in types of payment between the years examined reflect a change in how people were doing business. Most significantly, they had a lot more cash at their disposal in 1799. Taylor's overall volume of business also increased considerably, by 151% between 1795 and 1799. The much less pronounced changes in Waterman's accounts indicates that his business was more locally-oriented and isolated from the market than Taylor's. However, both businesses handled local products and imports, local consumption and exports, in all of the years studied. The influx of cash resulting from prize auctions and payment in shares of prizes[37] led to a relative decrease in the total value of local commodities. The latter continued to be important in absolute value, but paled in comparison with the profits from privateering. As well, the success of privateering caused men to change the way they worked, they spent less time lumbering and instead signed with privateers and spent increased amounts of time away at sea. In spite of these changes, domestic production continued; when Taylor stopped selling cloth and thread, Waterman continued trading in fabric and finished clothing and selling loom irons and spindles[38]. Less cheese, milk, or butter was used as payment at Taylor's than at Waterman's. Perkins also refers to ships arriving from the Annapolis Valley and from Lunenburg with agricultural products for sale.

Even if their efforts did not impress Perkins, undeniably Liverpudlians believed a certain amount of husbandry and horticulture was essential to prosperity. The business records cannot allow us to estimate the total value generated by agricultural activity in the community, at the family or community level. The object of this activity may have been subsistence, as these products were certainly not intended for sale outside the community. Those products were used as payments in both the Waterman and Taylor account books, and so, even on a very small scale, they allowed some households to increase their income by pooling the contributions from different family members. At Zenas Waterman's local products were exchanged for hooks and dogs for the lumbermen, hoes and yokes to work the small farm plots, nets, sail thimbles, and

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[37] Conlin, *A Private War,* 110, 111.

[38] Waterman, 2nd Ledger, 1793 on; accounts of Benjamin Freeman, Richard Carder, Benjamin Holme, William Smith, George Boil (Boyle), Silvanus Cobb.

pumps for the fishermen, and pots, kettles, spindles, and loom irons for the women. Lumber and fish were sold at Taylor's store for credit or cash, services such as schooling and making clothing were also sold available through him. The credits thus earned allowed people to buy cloth, dishes, finished shoes, or ground corn as well as ship's supplies and relative luxuries or they could draw cash from the store. The business records show a community engaging in diverse and complex activities to exploit to the best of their ability the resources available and their own labour. The credit and debit columns are filled with examples of local food and products being exchanged, fish and lumber being exchanged and used locally, as well as products for export. Local exchange on a small scale and participation in external markets function side by side within these small enterprises.

Lumber and Sawmills

The land in southwestern Nova Scotia is not valuable for agriculture, but it was heavily-wooded in the 18th century. The founders of Liverpool in 1763 considered this to be fundamentally important to the local economy. Particular note was made of the availability of white oak, which was suitable for shipbuilding. Perkins' intent from the outset was to trade in timber. Many of the new settlers established sawmills as early as they set up their fishing stages.[39]

When the proprietors of Liverpool received their grants of land, the larger parts, in fifty and two hundred acre lots, were looked upon and valued as wood lots rather than potential farms. Land was still a source of status; men had to hold land in order to vote in elections, but most of the township's land had such low value however, that the property value threshold for

[39] Liverpool Records, Queens County, PANS MG 4, Vol. 77, 405.

the franchise had to be disregarded.[40] People valued property for the earning potential and for the status it provided. This did not stop them from regularly violating the property of others. Perkins frequently found others cutting trees on his wood lots. This caused him some consternation as he was "Loath to Quarrel with (his) Neighbours."[41] He often had to deal with this problem, and at least once decided to solve it by selling the illegally cut wood to the trespasser.[42]

Table 4. Individuals named in the Perkins Diary involved in landward enterprises: lumber, shipbuilding, farm work, cross referenced with the poll tax lists 1793- 1795

Year	1787	1792	1796	1799
Number of individuals named	24	41	41	31
not found on tax lists	12	19	22	16
taxed as polls, 1 shilling	4	2	6	3
taxed as polls, more than 1 shilling	2	6	4	8
taxed as mechanics, carpenters	2	8	6	2
taxed for owning animals	2	2	0	2
taxed for owning a boat	1	3	1	0
taxed as master of a vessel	1	1	1	0
taxed as mate of a vessel	0	0	0	0

Table 4 cross- references the people working in the woods and at other land-based activities mentioned by Perkins and the poll tax lists in order to better understand who was doing

40 Perkins' Diary 2: 5 March, 1787.

41 Perkins Diary 2: 24 Jan, 1789.

42 Perkins Diary 3: 14 Jan. 1791.

this kind of work. The lumberers, shipbuilders, and other land-based workers referred by Perkins were fewer in number than seafarers; he described this type of work with much less consistency than seafaring. He generally mentioned "gangs" or "teams" at work in the woods without giving any names, or even the number of men in the gang. Even so, the fact that in each year, about 50% of the men named were not on any of the poll tax lists implies that this type of work belonged more to outsiders, transients, and younger men. Those who chose to hire themselves for periods of time generally fit that description. Younger relatives, such as Mrs. Perkins' nephew William Godfrey, bound themselves out to live and learn a trade.[43] Men from neighbouring communities, Lunenburg and Shelburne, Germans and blacks, often hired themselves as labourers by day or month; they would work on Perkins' land or in the woods as needed. These labourers were not exclusively dependent on their day labour; one man from Shelburne was engaged for a month, "unless he wishes to go home sooner," others left when opportunities to go on trading or privateering voyages came up. As the decade advanced the wages paid these labourers rose considerably, from thirty shillings a month in 1792 to sixty, seventy, and eighty five shillings a month in 1799.[44] In 1799, a year when privateering was very active and available labourers were scarce, Perkins wrote that his son John was working at mending a fence, a type of work he had not been described as doing before.

Work in the woods went on year round and involved many men. Winter was the season for cutting the trees, since they could be more easily transported by sled to the river, where they

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[43] Perkins Diary 2: 26 August, 1785.

[44] Perkins Diary 3 and 4: 26 July, 23 April, 7 Nov., 1792. 8 April, 23 Nov., and 5 Dec., 1799.

would be floated to the mills in the spring. People cut wood on wages or shares for others[45], or cut wood on their own land and paid by a share of the proceeds to have it sawed into planks at one of the sawmills. The work of sawing wood depended on the flow of the river to turn the mill wheels. It only stopped during the winter freeze and the summer months when the water levels were generally too low. Perkins' sawmill was run by a permanent employee, first Zoeth Freeman, then Timothy Bryant. When the river was open the cut boards would be rafted to Liverpool where they would be loaded on a trading vessel or be used in shipbuilding. The best season for cutting wood was opposite the fisheries' high season, so a man could profit well from combining the two practices. However, some degree of wood cutting and mill work went on almost year round, so those who worked in the woods did not participate in the extended fishing and trade voyages. A few were found on the poll tax lists to own small boats, others probably fished from stages in the river or the shore, as Silvanus and James Morton did, when the fish runs came to Liverpool's Harbour.[46].

Boards and other forms of lumber were an important exchange commodity, as is clear in the Taylor and Waterman records. Men paid their store accounts with boards, or earned store credits. Many of James Taylor's regular suppliers of finished boards, Brown, Ford, Kempton, are listed on the poll tax simply as polls, but their family names are all on the proprietor's list, so they were all selling wood from their own land.[47] Those who had wood lots were also interested in acquiring more woodland. Nelson Freeman bought land from Perkins with oak plank in 1792,

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[45] Perkins Diary 3: 1 December, 1791.

[46] Ibid, April 19, 1792.

[47] James Taylor, 1795, 1796; Robert Long. *Annals of Liverpool*, 40-41.

John Minard bought land with lumber in 1799. The work of cutting and sawing was definitely male-dominated, but was organized around family relationships, fathers, sons, brothers and in-laws often working together. The widow Patience Freeman, stepped out of her traditional role without difficulty to operate her family's sawmill in the late 1780's. She dealt with Perkins at that time and had an account with Zenas Waterman, where she bought items for timber work and for house work, and paid for them with cut boards and moose meat. At that time her son Peleg would have been in his mid twenties, and he had younger brothers close to his age.[48] Patience may have run the mill until the estate was settled or until her sons had enough experience to take over; her role indicates that she had enough knowledge of the operation to take charge.

Perkins' references provide a glimpse of the way timber work fitted into people's economic strategies. Joshua Boomer, his twin sons Job and Joshua, who were born in 1765 in Freetown Massachusetts, and their older brother John, born in 1759, and another son, Thomas, figured regularly in Perkins diary. They were not proprietors of Liverpool,[49] but were probably Loyalists, as they first appeared in the diary in 1782. Joshua was described in the Poll Tax as a "master house carpenter" and the rest of the male Boomers were listed as polls. The Perkins Diary referred to Joshua Junior, but he did not appear on the poll tax. In the census of 1787, only Joshua was listed as the head of a household, which contained four adult males, two adult women and two children.

Between 1787 and 1803, Job Boomer worked as a hand on a fishing vessel, getting sand for ballast in Perkins' shallop, rafting plank from the mill to the wharves, loading ships, and

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[48] Robert Long, *Annals of Liverpool*, 1446.

[49] Township Grant, 1764.

logging. In 1794, he rented a room to Timothy Bryant, a new employee at Perkins' sawmill. The lodging was far from impressive, "(Bryant) is in a cold room, but has a barracado (sic) built round him, and an old sail hung up to keep off the wind."[50] Mr. Bryant found new lodgings in March of that year. Boomer's life and work involved a great deal of loss and struggle. His young son was killed at his side in 1799, when the log load they were hauling overturned. He found himself in legal tangles with Zebulon Perkins (Simeon's nephew) over a wrecked shallop in 1797, and with two other men over ownership of a barrel of oil in 1803[51]. He did not come out ahead in these disputes.

Job's younger brother Thomas Boomer also had a difficult life in Liverpool. His only mentioned work was as a crew member on West India traders and privateers. He was involved in three violent confrontations with his captains, in 1792, 1793, and 1797. In all of these incidents he lost his berth on the ship in question but did not suffer any legal consequences. He also had a violent dispute with his father in 1799, Joshua Senior, and threatened him with a gun[52]. He was again master of a small sloop after that incident but in 1801 he was found responsible for running his employer George Boyle's sloop aground in nearby Port Medway. There was no mention made of the Boomer family in the final volume of the Perkins Diary, which covered the years 1804 to 1812.

Occasionally Job Boomer had performed small offices for the township, such as participating in a crew pursuing boat thieves on September 24, 1797. Perhaps he was also

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[50] Perkins Diary 3: 27 Jan. 1794.

[51] Perkins Diary 4: Jan. 25, 1797; Dec. 25, 1799; and Nov. 23, 1803.

[52] Ibid, Aug. 9, 1799; Aug. 15, 1801.

performing such a civic function when he broke the locks on the town's jail in 1801 to allow the prisoners inside to escape a fire that had started. The prisoners returned to jail voluntarily, but the jail was broken again the following night and Thomas Minard, a prisoner for debt, escaped.[53]

Thomas Minard was a member of another family who often encountered Perkins in work related to timber or the land. The name Minard did not appear among the proprietors on the town grant;[54] however, Elijah Minard was recorded as having been granted one share in 1775.[55] Elijah Minard had married in Liverpool in 1767 and had lived at the falls, the site of the sawmills upriver from the town. In 1797, he negotiated with Perkins regarding "the place where he lives." Perkins noted that Minard, "likes my proposals, & says he will advise with his sons & come again in a few days."[56] The outcome of this meeting was not noted, however it probably resulted in the Minards not having title to land. When Perkins sold the Potanuk Farm, one of the few lots of arable land in the district, in 1805, he mentioned it being the former Minard place.[57] Minards were mentioned from 1784 to 1810 working on land, selling wood, and working on boats. On November 24, 1801 Perkins went to see Elijah Minards' house and improvements on his 11 acre lot. Elijah may have found his situation acceptable, but his sons, John and Thomas,

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[53] Perkins Diary 4: 11, 12 Dec., 1801.

[54] Township Grant, 1764.

[55] Proprietors' Allotments Liverpool, Liverpool Records, PANS MG 4, Vol. 77. p.429, p.4.

[56] Perkins Diary 3: 21 Feb.1792 and note, p. 141.

[57] Perkins Diary 5: 23 July 1805.

struggled for years to purchase land from Perkins.[58] It was probably his land purchase which resulted in Thomas Minard being in debtors' prison in 1801. The Minards often paid for their purchases in lumber and worked in the sawmills but this did not seem enough to allow them to acquire some of the relatively expensive arable land in the township. On October 7, 1804, Thomas Minard moved to Boston with his family.

The Cohoon family of Port Medway were also regularly in contact with Perkins. William Senior was a proprietor. Throughout the years of the diary, his descendants sold Perkins boards, hay, oxen and alewives—fish that could be taken from a staging on the river. They also sold him land, wine salvaged from a wreck, and worked on a fishing voyage to pay a debt.[59] Mother Cohoon sold her weaving. The Cohoons also sold the service of local shipping, they often took small cargoes to Halifax, and William Junior's regular passages between Liverpool and Port Medway were an important means of communication for Perkins with his business partner (and twice son in law), Daniel Bishop.[60] William Cohoon the third bought land at Ragged Harbour, near Port Medway, from Perkins in 1811.

To work on the land was not in itself a sentence to poverty; however, working someone else's land seems to have been the lot of the poorest of the township. The ownership of land, however poor, provided a household a base which would allow all of the members of the household to work and contribute to the family's well-being. Throughout the 1790s, land

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[58] Perkins Diary 4: 19 March 1799; 5 April 1800; 5 June 1802.

[59] Perkins Diary 2: 3,4: 24 July 1783, 28 July 1788, 20 May 1791, 14 Dec. 1795, 14 March 1797, 9 Nov. 1801, 27 July 1803, 4-6 April 1811.

[60] Perkins Diary 4, note 2, p.256.

exchanges, sales and leases, went on at a steady pace. Owning land seemed to have become more important in the community than it had been in the first decades of its settlement. The ownership of land gave a position in the community, a source of wood, the possibility of raising a few crops or some livestock, and a place for staging for inshore fishing. These possibilities gave the landowner the opportunity to diversify his sources of income and to develop strategies in response to markets and prices.

Perkins argued to the colonial government that Liverpudlians were dependent on the proceeds of trade, either in fish or wood, as they "had no farms to resort to when trade failed."[61] Dependence on of having two staple resources was valuable at times, but left people vulnerable to total trade stoppages. From Perkins' own activities and from the evidence in the Taylor daybook, lumbering was an activity that fluctuated widely depending on external factors. It was an important income source for a lot of households, but exports of lumber were largely abandoned during the period of privateering, unlike fishing. This choice could have been the result of depressed timber prices because so many prize vessels were available for purchase, but generally fish was a more lucrative commodity than timber.

Shipbuilding

Shipbuilding represents a developmental step away from staples production; it creates linkages which can allow an economy to diversify and some individuals to increase their earning capabilities. Shipbuilding in Liverpool was an important part of the local economy throughout the late 18th century. Ships were built for local use, made to order for Halifax merchants, and built for sale on the open market when demand was high enough. The work of shipbuilding in

[61] Charles Bruce Fergusson, Introduction Perkins Diary 5, xxx.

Liverpool in the late 18th century was quintessentially pre-industrial. Ships' carpenters normally owned their own tools, and were hired to perform specific tasks at set rates, which usually included some provisions and rum. Shipbuilding had an important social aspect; the launch of a new ship was a matter of local pride, and this labour-intensive and risky activity required the assistance of all available men.[62] Milestones in the building of a ship, such as 'shutting in the deck," were celebrated with a drink of rum. The day of the launch often included a meal and drink provided by the investors or merchants who had the ship built.[63] Shipbuilders had valuable specialized skills, but were dependent for their livelihood on the markets and the will of investors to have ships built.

Joseph Bangs Senior was a shipbuilder in Liverpool at the time that Simeon Perkins was a merchant there. Between 1780 and 1810 Joseph Bangs and his son, Joseph Junior, built at least ten ships in Liverpool. They also refitted captured privateers and conducted the regular maintenance on many of the town's ships. The Bangs family were proprietors of the township and thus had land. They also built boats which Perkins described as being intended for their own use.[64] Joseph Bangs Senior worked exclusively as a carpenter and shipwright; his only variations in work were to go from choosing ships' timbers to be cut in the woods, to supervising the sawing of the wood at the mills and to working on the ships. He did not sell anything other than his labour, and he was never mentioned in relation to a voyage. He was an important local figure, Captain of the Militia in the mid 1790's, and a local constable. The town's observations

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[62] Perkins Diary 2: 2 August, 1788.

[63] Perkins' Diary 3: 3 Aug. 1790, 11 Aug. 1791, 9 Nov.1792, 31 Aug. 1796.

[64] Ibid., 12 June 1793.

of the king's birthday in 1790 were cancelled because of the funeral of Mrs. Bangs. At the time of Joseph Bangs remarriage, Perkins observed that there was "a good deal of company and a splendid supper for this poor place."[65] Joseph Bangs Senior was prominent locally and displayed some outward signs of prosperity, however his work arrangements with Perkins twice included arrangements to deal with Bangs' previous debts.[66]

Joseph Bangs Junior had followed in his father's footsteps and become a shipbuilder of note in Liverpool. In 1791, Perkins negotiations with carpenters were modeled on the way "Mr. Joseph Bangs Junior pays his workmen." [67] In 1793, Joseph Junior subscribed more to the new Methodist Minister than his father had; however he was considering relocating to Shelburne in the same year.[68] Joseph Bangs Junior was last mentioned building a ship in 1797, and was amongst some crew that were lost at sea near Jamaica in 1801.[69] All of Joseph Bangs' brothers ended up going to sea, which their father had managed to avoid. His son Thomas was also lost, due to a sickness on board ship on September 26, 1794. Thomas had never worked as a shipbuilder, but only as a carpenter. Thomas' life in Liverpool was not as peaceful as his eldest brother's. In 1791 Joseph Bangs Senior had called on Perkins for a warrant because he suspected, correctly, that Thomas and two other young men had stolen clothing from him with the intention of running off.

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[65] Perkins Diary 3: 4 June, 23 December 1790.

[66] Perkins Diary 2: 29 January 1788 and 3: 20 Feb. 1792.

[67] Perkins Diary 3: 29 March 1791.

[68] Ibid., 14 January, 12 June, and 7 October 1793.

[69] Perkins Diary 4: 3 Nov. 1797 and 23 Feb. 1801.

The Bangs family was prominent and fairly prosperous because of the trade and associated status of Joseph Senior. The rest of the family however, did not fare well or enjoy stability. The older sons were lost at sea; at the time of Joseph Junior's death, it was discovered that his widow was pregnant by another man. The younger sons remained in Liverpool, but pursued more modest trades and went to sea.[70] In 1802, Captain Bangs invited Perkins to view some of his land with the object of selling it to him to be paid in supplies for the family. He hoped that Perkins would accept his house and remaining land as security for the £112.17 he owed him. Perkins was unwilling to take the land as it had never been drained and cleared for mowing. [71] Bangs remained an associate of Perkins throughout his life, but had to work in a reduced capacity in his later years, acting as head carpenter for another shipbuilder.[72]

The Bangs family were not the only shipbuilders working in Liverpool at that time, and others may have experienced greater prosperity. They were, however, active shipbuilders and were associated with a prominent merchant. Their fate indicates the risk of being tradesmen rather than producers, and dependent on a single source of income. Although they had their own boats, they did not diversify their activities as much as other families, such as the Freemans and Cohoons. Joseph Bangs Senior's usual head carpenter, William Cheever, sold cabbages to Perkins, but apparently the Bangs family land was not even cleared for agriculture. The Bangs family's economic activity was entirely concentrated on the most volatile aspect of the local

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[70] Perkins Diary 4: 20 Dec. 1799, 15 Jan. and 4 June 1803.

[71] Ibid., Aug. 1802.

[72] Perkins Diary 5: 12 Sept. 1810.

economy, giving them periods of prosperity but ultimately leaving the family broken up and destitute.

The evidence from the local economy indicates that agriculture had a constant and important place there. It was pursued in various forms: the raising of animals on shares, the exchange of cabbage plants, and the trade in hay are some examples. It had a place in import substitution in the household, and as a commodity for exchange with the merchants and tradesmen. Agriculture did not allow fishermen and lumbermen to be self-sufficient in food, and could not shield them from the effects of crises in international trade, but it could provide an important supplement to staples-based incomes. The deployment of its members in various activities, and some land was the base which provided the family with a measure of economic stability. Activities changed as conditions and prices changed, but the base of local production, fishing and working the land, remained steady.

The ownership of land was the most important factor in determining the economic fate of a household. It was the tie that bound families, gave them a reason to work together and to feel commitment to the community. Working within the confines of the broad mercantile system, of the Atlantic trade, and under the frequent and powerful influence of the British military, the society and economy still had an important local focus, in spite of the much stronger outward pull of trade.

CHAPTER 4

LAND AND THE COMMUNITY

Two facts about Liverpool shaped its society from the outset. First, the new settlers came from a largely homogeneous background The communities were different but were almost all located in the same region of Massachusetts. Second, they received substantial grants of land. The fact that this land was not good farmland does not obviate the significance of landownership. Initially, the new settlers would have shared similar social standing because they all had the same legal status and rights as landholders. They were by no means equal, as many came with more resources than others, but landholding was a partial leveler. By looking at the ways these people used the available resources to build their economy, this chapter shows how the economy and people shaped the society of Liverpool.

By examining a variety of local institutions, committees for granting land, the courts and churches, we see how the community behaved socially and can understand the values upon which this behaviour was based. These values are reflected in the ways they dealt with the need for charity in the community and the ways they treated the disadvantaged, such as widows. In their studies of New England communities, Vickers and Heyrman link the commercially dominated fishing economy and certain types of social behaviour, specifically household disunity and conflicts within the communities. In Liverpool, the economy was driven entirely by commerce, yet people valued and invested energy in local relationships. The question here is whether the society also reflected the values that fostered these local relationships: whether there was familial stability that transcended generations and whether there was a commitment to community expressed in active involvement in local institutions and concern for fellow-townspeople.

The Town and Land

The Proprietor's Committee, who had the task of administering the land grants at the local level, gave the New Englanders a basis for reconstructing the type of community that they had known, and wished to recreate. In many ways, the town of Liverpool quietly circumvented provincial legislation to act in a manner acceptable to its residents; in fact the town itself, to which Perkins often referred and which was charged debits as a body by Taylor, did not exist in legal terms, as government was at the county level. Although it had no legal right to do so, the Proprietors' Committee assessed a rate to pay for a Congregational minister until the 1780s, when the Second Great Awakening divided Liverpool's religious community.[1] The first generation of Liverpudlians were very comfortable doing things the New England way, and avoiding the attention of the government in Halifax. The colonial administration may have thought they avoided having a string of isolated "little republics"[2] along the southwestern shore through the restrictions they imposed on local government, but the Planters creatively adapted to the circumstances and maintained a familiar form of social organizations.

The Proprietors' Committee continued to function long after its task of carrying out the distribution of land based on the initial and rewritten land grants had been accomplished. The Committee became a board of Trustees which continued to meet as late as 1978, although this body had no basis in provincial law.[3] In 1787, "a Number of Gentlemen (met) at Mrs. Wests to

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[1] Manke, *Machias, Maine and Liverpool, Nova Scotia*, 131.

[2] Rawlyk, *Nova Scotia's Massachusetts*, 226.

[3] Manke, *Machias, Maine and Liverpool, Nova Scotia*, Manke referred to this body and its impressive longevity in her dissertation. 128,129. This could be an indication of the success of the local determination to perpetuate New England-style town governance, even after it had

Advance money to have the forfeited Lands in this Township exhibited, & to obtain a Grant of it to the young men & others that have not yet had Land...".[4] The actions here seem representative of a concern for the place of the younger men in the community, except that this meeting took place a few days before a by-election. These new freeholders then were able to vote in the election which was closely contested.[5] Regardless of the motivation, the new landholders kept their land, and their position as freeholders in the community for years to come.[6]

The importance of land is indicated by the activity shown on the Index of Deeds for the period.[7] The actual deeds are no longer available but the index shows that the land itself was an important local exchange commodity. The index contains thousands of land transfers between Liverpudlians before the end of the 18th century. In the Perkins Diary, it is clear that land was one important way of settling debts, even though it had relatively low value. The Index of Deeds shows that land exchanges went on at a steady pace, individuals selling one year and buying again later. They were probably trying to sell wood land that had been harvested and buy lots that were uncut or potentially suitable for agriculture. The purchasers of land were largely local people who would use the land themselves. George Blowers was the only Halifax merchant who acquired land. Unfamiliar names appeared in the 1780s with the arrival of the Loyalists.

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substantially evolved in New England and in Nova Scotia. The town had been incorporated, and its government established in 1897. See Thomas H. Raddall, *Ogomkegea: The Story of Liverpool Nova Scotia*, (Liverpool: Queens County Museum, 1934, reprint 1983).

[4] Perkins Diary 2: 22 Feb. 1787.

[5] Ibid., 5,14 March 1787.

[6] An example is Samuel Kinney who appeared in James Taylor's accounts after 1795.

[7] Justices Records of Liverpool, PANS, MG 4, Vol. 77, No. 8

Perkins alone made 141 purchases of land during his almost fifty-year career. He acquired most of the land in the early years: 67% of his deeds of purchase dated from before 1780, and he sold more land in the last twenty years of his career. He made ninety-five land sales, and 66% of these were made in the 1790s and 1800s. Much of the land Perkins acquired was probably settlement for debts, but the fact that he slowed the rate of acquisition of land considerably later in his career implies either that he was not obliged to accept land as payment or that people were becoming better able to settle debts by other means. In fact he was able to liquidate most of his holdings in that period. Land did not seem to be losing value as a commodity of exchange over the period even though much of the wood would have been cut.

In 1792, Perkins reached an agreement with Ichabod Darrow, a shipbuilder according to the poll tax list,

> to sell him half of the two 200 acre Lots in Letter D., No. 32 & 33, (I do not own the other half). He is to give me a Deed of the Late John Lewin's 200 Acre Lot, in Letter A., No. 6, on Cornwallis Road, and pay Fadey Phillips £15., and I am to give him Credit on my Books for 30/, which is to balance the whole.[8]

Through this arrangement, Perkins and Darrow exchanged equivalent amounts of land, a debt of Perkins' was discharged and Darrow gained a small amount of book credit. Each must have had a better use for the lot they acquired that the other one, either to consolidate holdings or for a shipbuilding slip as opposed to a meadow or field. It is hard to judge the value of land from this, or most of Perkins' transactions. From his record it would seem that some acquisitions might have been speculative, but that they also helped settle debts and that they were directed toward acquiring some parcels of land for specific purposes. Although many Loyalists arrived after the

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[8] Perkins' Diary 3: 26 Jan. 1792.

Revolution and purchased land, the land value did not significantly increase. Neither did Liverpool attract outside speculators as had the Annapolis Valley.[9]

As Perkins' grew older, he acquired land for his son John. He gave John a house lot in 1806 for the "Consideration eighty five pounds which is in payment for his services Since he was of Age untill he went on wages in the Vessels."[10] In 1812, Perkins acquired, through the Proprietors' Committee, another 200 acre lot to provide hemlock for John's tan yard.[11] These land dealings were directed to providing for his son, who would carry on the business, and rewarding his past filial loyalty to the family enterprise.

Many of the deeds of sale were signed by both the husband and wife, which meant that the wife was relinquishing her dower.[12] This could have had serious consequences to her own security should she be widowed. Only the first generation of Liverpudlians would have benefitted from the ownership of land if it had all been sold to cover debts and thus had become consolidated in a few hands. Without knowing what proportion of land the deeds represent, it is necessary to look elsewhere to see the importance of land in terms of security for widows and for the use of the next generation.

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[9] Barry Moody, "Land, Kinship and Inheritance in Granville Township, 1760-1800," in *Making Adjustments,* 165-179.

[10] Perkins Diary 5: 14 Feb. 1806.

[11] Ibid., 9 Jan. 1812.

[12] Alexander Keyssar, "Widowhood in 18th Century Massachusetts: A Problem in the History of the Family," *Perspectives in American History* 8 (1974), 83-119.

Dower and Inheritance

The probate record, an index of wills, and scattered references in the Township Book in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia[13] offer some examples of wills, settlements of intestate estates, and a very few inventories. From these examples it is possible to see that widows' dowers were normally respected in Liverpool, and were valuable in providing them with support. When Josiah Whittemore, a carpenter and shipbuilder, died intestate in 1783, the court of probate settled the dower upon the widow and divided the remaining property among the children. The family further provided for their widowed mother by all of the married daughters selling their parts of the inheritance to their brother, Josiah, for a nominal amount. He in turn promised to care for their mother until her death. Despite this arrangement, the court still spelled in great detail Mrs. Whittemore's dower, including rights to the house, passages, a precisely defined garden plot, one third of the apple harvest, which Josiah Junior was obliged to gather for her, and cord wood, which he should deliver, and 20 shillings annually.[14] Josiah Junior had apparently moved from Connecticut to Liverpool to assume this responsibility, judging by the birth places of his children in the Township Book.[15] The siblings and the court could feel satisfied that the widow was adequately provided for, and that the heirs had received some consideration for their right of inheritance.

The dower was a security against destitution for many women, but their comfort might

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[13] Queens County Museum, Index of Wills, Will Book; and PANS, MG 4, Vol. 77, n. 8

[14] Estate Settlement for Josiah Whittemore, June 7, 1783. Wills and Probate, Queens County Museum, Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

[15] Township Book of Liverpool, Queens County Museum, typescript, 1951, p. 60.

still have been quite precarious. In 1792, the widow of Lieutenant Donald McLeod, who had died in an accident in 1787, was allowed by her right of dower to keep:

> ... the Best room and the Chamber over it, the Liberty of Baking in the Oven and a Passage in &out at ye front and Back Door, & privelidge of the well, & one third of the outdoors Sellar ... The Land, She has a piece, the S. E. side, & I have that fronting the street...[16]

The rest of the property not protected by her dower right was Perkins' because it had been used by McLeod as security for a debt. At that time, Elisabeth McLeod had four young children ranging in age from five to nine years old. Two months later, Perkins was negotiating to rent the stores on the property to a merchant from Shelburne for £12.10 a year. Mrs. McLeod did not want Perkins to rent the room in the house. It is not clear whether her wishes were respected, but the merchant, Mr. Kirk, became established in Liverpool at about that time.[17] As cold as the dealings between Perkins and Elisabeth McLeod seem to have been, she was a social acquaintance of his family's, hosting him and his wife on at least two occasions.[18] Mrs. McLeod probably improved her standard of living when she married Captain Samuel Man in 1794.[19]

The estate settlement of the widow of a seafarer, combined with references to her and her family in Perkins' diary, reveals a great deal about how she and her family had lived. When Humphrey MacDonald was lost at sea in 1798, at the age of 35, he apparently did not leave a will. His widow Drusilla was allowed to keep as paraphernalia basic furnishings and a feather

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[16] Perkins Diary 3: April 7, 1792.

[17] Ibid., June 7, 1792.

[18] Ibid., 18 Feb. 1790, 26 March 1791

[19] Township Book, Samuel Man.

bed, which was fitted with sheets "of best quality."[20] The settlement of his estate was apparently complex, Perkins was helping her to settle his affairs years later.[21] Humphrey was listed in the tax roll only as a poll, but he was described by Perkins as a "shipmaster."[22] He had been master of small, local vessels, and had once chartered Perkins' share of a coastal vessel.[23] When Drusilla died in 1804, her debts included a doctor's bill and several bills, less than £10 each, to different local merchants. Her assets included a house and a "place in the woods" that she was renting, and a share of a saw mill.[24] The debts of the estate were paid by one year of the house rent, two years rent of the "place in the woods," the sale of a pig, and the sale of the sawmill share. Drusilla had a family of six children, ranging in ages from new born to nine years in 1798, to support with her property.[25] She was not mentioned as being the subject of charity, nor was there any mention of guardianship or support of the children in the probate record or Perkins' diary.

In 1801, Drusilla chose to have her family inoculated against small pox. As a result her two youngest daughters died and she finally succumbed herself after a long and painful illness. Perkins followed this progress with great sympathy, but he did not write that the situation caused financial hardship for the family. On the day of her funeral, Perkins wrote: "The funeral is attended by a Great Number of both Societies. She was universally Esteemed as a Christian and

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[20] Queens County Will Book , Paraphernalia of Druscilla MacDonald, 1802.

[21] Perkins Diary 4: 14 Aug. 1801.

[22] Perkins Diary 2: p. 290, note.

[23] Perkins Diary 2: June 23, 1789.

[24] Queens County Will Book, estate of Druscilla McDonald, 1804.

[25] Township Record, PANS, MG 4, Vol. 77.

Neighbour." In 1804, at the age of 18, Humphrey Junior followed his father's steps to the sea.[26]

A small number of widows took over the running of their family enterprise for a substantial period of time and took on an important place in the community. The most prominent widow in Perkins' record of Liverpool was Phoebe (Freeman) West. She had shared the running of a tavern with her husband, John West, from the time of their first license in 1776, until his death in 1783. She continued to run the business successfully after his death, providing an important location for town gatherings until her death in 1806 at the age of 64.[27] Perkins often referred to "a number of gentlemen" meeting at her tavern to discuss local business such as the distribution of forfeit land grants and the recruitment of a Congregationalist minister from Massachusetts, to hold the local court prior to having a building for that purpose, to hold militia meetings, and to entertain visiting British officers.[28] She was never assessed for tax during the period; there is no evidence of her financial state. She was among the first subscribers to the new Methodist meeting house in March of 1793 as were the widows Isabel McLean and Desire Collins.[29] These widows had some economic standing in the community, but Perkins did not write that any of them was present at the first meetings held to discuss the building of the meeting house[30].

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[26] Perkins Diary 4: 22 Feb, 3 March 1801; Diary 5: 23, 25, 28 July, 8, 14 Aug., 7 Oct. 1802, 26 , 28 Feb. 1803.

[27] Perkins Diary 3: 20 Jan. 1790, and note.

[28] Perkins Diary 2 and 3: Feb 22, Sept. 10, 1787, Feb 22, 1790, Nov 10, 1790. June 7, 8, 1790, March 5, 8 1796.

[29] Robert J. Long, *Annals of Queens County*, 1088, 1089.

[30] Perkins Diary 3: 7, 8, 12, 13 March 1793.

Phoebe West was the only widow in the 1790s, to have run her husband's business for the rest of her life. Mary Dexter had similarly run her husband Enoch's tavern a decade earlier.[31] Patience Freeman, who was a widow in 1787, ran her family's sawmill for a few years and then disappeared from the records. Very shortly after Captain Bartlett Bradford's death, his estate was largely sold; however, his widow was still very involved in her late husband's business affairs years later.[32] The more typical means through which widows earned an income was to rent some or all of her property, as did the widows of Sylvanus Cobb,[33] Snow Parker and Benjamin Parker[34], or to rent part of her home for public use, such as a meeting house or a school.[35] They also relied on the support of their grown children, as did the widow Mary Snow, who Perkins described in a letter to Richard Uniacke appealing for his aid in gaining the release from impressment of her eldest son,

> the woman has, with utmost industry, and hard Labour, supported herself, & children, untill She is almost worn out. The second boy she has put apprentice to a shoemaker, and the third is sickly... the Lad in question, is a very prudent, Industrious, and Obedient child, and is now Capable, in a good measure, to support the Family. [36]

The type of work these widows were doing was entirely consistent with that of their New

[31] Perkins Diary 2, p.32, n.1.

[32] Perkins Diary 4:25 Sept. 1801 and 5: 27,28 April 1804..

[33] Ibid.,12 Sept. 1799.

[34] Perkins Diary 3: 13 Aug., 10 Sept.1790.

[35] Perkins Diary 2: 22 Oct. 1787.

[36] Letter to Richard John Uniacke, August 6, 1805, Perkins Diary 5, Appendix II, 474-5.

England cousins in the same situation; they were able to continue certain types of trades or service businesses in which they had worked prior to their husbands' deaths. Other than the widows of the tavern keepers, few of these women took a position that would be comparable to Cotton Mather's "deputy husbands", able to step into her husband's place in his absence.[37] They were able to support themselves or be supported by their families or dowers, but few assumed a role giving them the same degree of autonomy as a male.

Widows on the south shore of Nova Scotia apparently migrated to Liverpool, or other larger communities. In the 1787 census, there were no widows living in any of the outports of Port Mouton, Hebron, Savle (Sable) River, Port Hebear (sic),or Port Joli. In 1796, a Widow Robinson arrived from Shelburne with her two children in order to set herself up as a "Milner and Mantua maker".[38] Most widows by virtue of their dower, hard work, and skills did not become dependent on the charity of the community for their survival. The amounts raised for the poor in Liverpool in the late 1790's, after having risen steadily for many years,[39] declined from 1797 to 1801, and in 1802 it decided that it was unnecessary to raise a poor rate.[40]

That a man would be able to provide the means for his widow to be protected from destitution is an indication of a basic level of income and property. If he were further able to have his children established, this would indicate a better economic condition. This condition was not

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[37] For a discussion of this kind of work by widows and the concept "deputy husband" see Crane, *Ebb Tide,* 125-130. See also Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Goodwives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England 1650-1750* (New York: Vintage Press, 1991).

[38] Perkins Diary 4: 15 July 1796.

[39] C.B. Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 3, xv.

[40] C.B. Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 4, lvi.

often attained, even the process of providing for the widow might result in a burden on the children.[41] The ability to provide for children is not entirely measured by wills, as property was often distributed prior to the death of a father, as Perkins had done for his son John.

There are only thirteen surviving wills from Liverpool for the period 1774 to 1816. The limited evidence from these wills provides examples of two very different inheritance practices.[42] The three earliest wills, from the 1770s, divided all land equally among all heirs. This type of legacy does not bind the heirs in any formal relationships, but leaves adult siblings to handle their legacy, such as it is, as they wish.[43] Even if the will did not formally bind the heirs, they often inherited adjoining land, holding shares of what had been a combined resource for the family. In this situation they would probably continue to work together, or sell their legacy to one of their siblings. Of the ten later wills, (1790 to 1812) four specified that all property should go to the widow. In two of these, there were no restrictions on the widow's remarriage, money went to the other heirs, and reference was made to land already occupied. Five wills bequeathed double or larger shares to the eldest son, or two sons. In seven of the ten later wills daughters received smaller portions or cash. In one estate settlement, the family's approach clearly demonstrated a concern for maintaining a legacy intact, and the confidence that the legacy would provide for an

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[41] Keyssar, "Widowhood in 18th Century Massachusetts" 107-109.

[42] Queens County Museum, Queens County Will Book, wills of Elisha Freeman, 1774; --- Ellinwood, 1776; Jonathan Crowell, 1778; John Gardner, 1804; Lodowick Smith, 1793; Michael Haupman, 1794; Thomas Parker, 1805; John Nickerson, 1814; Peleg Little, 1813; William Freeman, 1808; John Peach 1803; Stephen Smith, 1807; Benjamin Parker, 1812; James Knowles, 1813; and Joseph Atkins, 1813, And Perkins Diary 4: 23 Jan. 1802.

[43] Toby Ditz, *Property and Kinship: Inheritance in Early Connecticut, 1750-1820,*Princeton University Press, 1986. 33.

heir and give him the means to care for his female relatives who did not inherit. The Freeman family chose to settle the estates of John and Nathan on their only surviving brother, Enoch, and give cash to all the female heirs, his sisters and Nathan's widow, and Enoch posted a bond securing his mother's support during her life.[44] The elder widow's claim apparently superseded that of the younger one. The earlier wills reflect the existence of large, and probably at that time, largely undeveloped land grants. The later wills show more concern about the condition of the widow and about providing a source of income for the eldest son.[45]

The later wills also reflect the diversification of the settlers assets. They exemplify the approach taken by the townspeople to exploiting the region's resources. Most wills carefully disposed of fish lots with beach front, but also of wood lots, improved land and barns, and cash. William Freeman's will bequeathed fishing licenses and a grist mill, as well as land and cash.[46] They are quite typical wills of the period which take the interests of the widow into account first[47], but they show a desire to leave a legacy to the descendants. Not all fathers, probably not the majority, had significant property to bequeath, but it would help the heirs if they did not have to take care of an aging mother.

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[44]Queens County Will Book, the estate settlements of John and Nathan Freeman, 1802.

[45] Carole Shammas, Marylynn Salmon, and Michel Dahlin, *Inheritance in America from Colonial Times to the Present.* Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, N.J., 1987. 41-55.

[46]Queens County Will Book, will of William Freeman, 1808, codices 1816.

[47] Beatrice Craig, "Land Transmission Practices."

Charity

Few people in Liverpool required public charity; this indicates that extended families were largely able to meet their own needs. The township had the responsibility to assess and distribute a poor rate through a body called The Overseers of the Poor.[48] Their activities went much further than raising a poor rate and distributing it; they were often consulted regarding widows, orphans, and young children who were not properly supported by their parents. They followed the New England practice of binding out unsupported children, and they involved themselves in family crises and disputes that might have left women, children, or men unable to work, or dependent on the town. There had been money voted for the building a poor house at the same time as the court house,[49] the latter was built, the former apparently not.

In March 1799, the Overseers of the Poor found a tenant for the newly widowed Mrs. Morris, whose husband William, a caulker in the shipyards, had died in February of that year. An itinerant minister would stay with her, have two meals a day and his mending and washing done by Mrs. Morris, and would pay 11/6 a month.[50] Another local women, Thankful Huskins, did not benefit as much from the attention of the Overseers. She had not married the father of her children, nor her second partner, "a black man". After the drowning death of her partner, the Overseers bound out her sons, the eleven-year-old to Perkins, and his older brother to the

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[48] Judith Fingard, "The Relief of the Poor in Saint John, Halifax, and St. John's, 1815 - 1860." in *The Acadiensis Reader: Volume One*. P.A. Buckner and David Frank, eds. Acadiensis Press, Fredericton, N.B., 1985. Pp. 190-211.

[49] Perkins Diary 4: 14 Nov 1797.

[50] Ibid., 20 Feb., 28 March 1799.

Freemans.[51] The Overseers also intervened in family crisis; for instance in the Callahan family, when the father's drinking resulted in his wife and stepdaughter feeling threatened and his ten-year-old son not being properly cared for. The women were safely lodged elsewhere and the possibility of binding out the boy was discussed, but not acted upon. [52]

In a heated dispute between James Luther and his pregnant wife, Mrs Luther's mother (widow Margaret McQueen) and two other women defended her from a feared attack, and attempted to help her move from his home. They sought a ruling from Perkins, whose main concern was that in her condition Mrs. Luther should not become a burden on the town. Upon hearing Mr. Luther's full story, Perkins judged that Mrs. Luther should be allowed to move to her mother's and take enough money and clothing to avoid having to seek relief during her "lying in".[53] In this instance, moral issues might have been of some concern; however Perkins confined his attention to the financial burden that might have been placed on the town. He did, however, protect her from her husband and see that she was provided for in her time of need.

Some record of the activities of the Overseers is found in the Liverpool Freeholders records. When they met, they determined the sum required for the maintenance of the poor, although they did not find an assessment necessary every year. Their members were taken from the same pool of community fathers who formed the church subscribers, the Proprietors' Committee, and the officers of the militia. They were active into the 1830s; in 1837 they listed who they were maintaining and at what cost. The list named old William Hicks, three widows,

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[51] Perkins Diary 4: 16 Jan. 1797.

[52] Ibid., 16, 19 Jan. 1797.

[53] Ibid., 11-13 July 1799.

three single men, two couples, and two women: Black Rose and "a Boston wanton."[54]

Throughout the 1790s, besides the official acts to provide for or regulate the poor, there were also spontaneous community acts of charity which imply a sense of communal responsibility towards the disadvantaged. During many winters, Perkins mentioned that people had spent a day bringing cut wood to widows.[55] The benefits of such charity were apparently not available to all. The sons of the widow Harrington were discovered illegally cutting wood from Perkins' land. They were not charged but they were prevented from taking more wood.[56] Community charity also benefitted an elderly Samuel Hunt, who received wood from his neighbours while he was in prison for a debt to Benajah Collins. The townspeople felt that Mr. Hunt was being badly treated by Mr. Collins and finally raised a subscription to settle the debt and allow Mr. Hunt to be released.[57] When John Day, a carpenter, cut his foot and could not work, a local subscription was taken to help him.[58] When John Heater, a recent immigrant to Liverpool, was ill and unable to work ,his neighbours each gave a day's work mowing his hay; Perkins sent his eldest son and a servant for three days.[59] Perkins' assistance to Heater, might have been more motivated by self-interest, as Heater was renting his land from Perkins and paying in a share of the produce. These actions demonstrated a pervasive acceptance of the

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[54]Freeholders Records of Liverpool, PANS, Vol. 77, n. 10, pp. 2-7.

[55] Perkins Diary 4: 7 Feb. 1798.

[56] Ibid., 22 Dec. 1797.

[57] Ibid., 27 Jan., 20 Sept. 1796.

[58] Perkins Diary 2, p.167, n.2 and 4: 25 May 1792.

[59] Perkins Diary 4: 31 July, 2, 3 Aug. 1798.

principle that the community had a responsibility toward hard working and upstanding neighbours who had fallen on hard times. No one could stand by and watch their neighbour suffer.

The manner in which the society defined itself and its roles becomes apparent through the process of passing property to heirs, supporting widows, and addressing the needs of the poor. This was a society that clung to the New England values of local community and neighbourliness. They mutually agreed to accept the enlarged authorities of the Overseers of the Poor and the Proprietor's Committee. The nature of the grants and land distribution gave the community the basis for continuing in the New England tradition in Nova Scotia. Their society is evidence of their success in doing that.

Moral Values

The degree to which this community expressed and put into action their shared moral values demonstrates a continued sense of community thirty years after they had left New England. The community's desire for propriety and stability in their society was also reflected in efforts to restrain the behaviour of youth. The Court of General Sessions of the Peace and the Churches often expressed concern about regulating the behaviour of the youth. Perkins was responsible for registering marriages, and was concerned that this practice be strictly observed lest, "sudden matches be made up without the consent of parents."[60] In fact, parents were not able to significantly delay the marriages of their children beyond their coming of age. One measure of the strength of a father's authority, according to Daniel Vickers, is the age of marriage. In 18th century New England agricultural communities, the family could provide its sons with land, and

[60] Perkins Diary 2: 23 Aug. 1787.

the latter remained working with their fathers into their mid to late twenties. On the other hand, the maritime communities of 18th century New England had little to offer their youth, and so they married and set up separate households relatively young: twenty four for men and twenty one for women.[61] Liverpool fits very closely within the Maritime model: the average age for first marriage for men was 23, and for women, 21, for the years 1780 to 1799. There was a slight increase in marriage age for men over the period, from 22.8 in the 1780s to 24 for the latter half of the 1790s.[62] This does not indicate that Liverpool parents held any remarkable sway over their children.

In the activities of the Overseers, in cases formally brought to Perkins, and in questions informally asked him, there is a an ongoing concern with propriety and the effect its absence might have on the community, particularly the young. In an early example, Israel Cheever, the Congregationalist minister, got the support of the local magistrates to call upon an Irishman who was living with a black woman without being married to insist that they "stand up and take each other in our presence, which they did."[63] This preoccupation with propriety remained through the political and religious upheavals of the period. When asked whether a young New Light minister, Harris Harding, who had gotten young Hetty Harrington pregnant, should be allowed to marry her without publication, Perkins felt that was the best thing to do in the situation. Reverend Harding however, did not share the desire for discretion and insisted on apologizing publicly for

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[61] Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen*, 72 and 174.

[62] From Marriage records found in the papers of Rev. John Payzant, Liverpool and the Liverpool Township Records. PANS, MG 4, Vol. 77.

[63] Perkins Diary 1: 4 May 1772, cited in Manke, *Machias, Maine and Liverpool, Nova Scotia*, 213.

his behaviour at both meetings, which was accepted by the New Lights but not by the Methodists.[64]

The merchant class in Liverpool led by example in their own commitment to the community. Perkins and most of his peers spent the vast majority of their time in the community. They only occasionally travelled to Halifax and New England for business. Their children spent one or two years elsewhere for their educations, but they also spent a lot of time with local teachers and socialized locally. Perkins' and his wife's social network included people from all levels of the tax lists and people from the nearby port communities as well as the tow n. As well, the tax list and the probate records indicate the existence of a "middling sort,"[65] a sizeable group of tradespeople and seafarers with diversified property worth a few hundred pounds. These people endorsed the moral and economic authority of the merchants and supported the community by acting as sheriffs and taking commissions in the militia.

Religion

The religious revivals of the second Great Awakening begun by Henry Alline in the 1780s brought about many incidents which demonstrated the founding generation's desire to perpetuate New England values and the tensions that existed between the generations. The arrival of New Light Congregationalism set in motion the end of the old New England community-based church and permanently divided Liverpool's religious life. In the first few years of the Awakening, Perkins' attention, and apparently that of the community leaders, was more directed to the matter of paying the minister and to the sharing of the meeting house, rather than to

[64] Perkins Diary 3: 28 Sept., 2 Oct., 1796.

[65] Conlin, *A Private War*, 94-96.

spiritual questions. The debate was between those who favoured recruiting a Congregationalist minister from New England, or a New Light minister from Nova Scotia. The community struggled for nearly a decade to find a mutually acceptable minister and establish a unified church, or at least to share a meeting house, before the settling on two meeting houses.[66] The impossibility of recruiting and keeping a Congregationalist minister from New England spelled the demise of Old Light Congregationalism in Liverpool and set the stage for the rise of the Methodist church. One element of unity continued even after the two meetings were established; at times funeral services would be shared between a New Light and a Methodist minister.[67] While the elders of the community struggled with the fiscal issues of ministers' salaries and meeting houses, the youth began to be drawn to the new meetings and itinerant ministers.

The religious fervor continued to build in the 1790s in Liverpool, reaching a peak in 1796, when as many as four different meetings were held on a given Sunday,[68] and prayer meetings were held every night of the week. In this year, as the New Light and Methodists were gathering followers, new converts to each church demonstrated their "change" through loud exhorting, crying, and fainting.[69] Although Perkins was happy to see "a number of young people approach the Alter, who were a short time ago wild & perhaps thoughtless of their eternal Concerns," he was wary however that the extreme demonstrations of young women might be

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[66] For a complete discussion of religion in Liverpool in this period, see Manke, *Machias and Liverpool*, 209-246.

[67] Perkins Diary 3: 20 July, 1795. 4: 26 May, 1799.

[68] Perkins Diary 4: 10 July, 1796.

[69] Ibid., 17, 19 Jan; 7,8,13,21, Feb; 6, 13, March; 19, 20, 26, 29, June; 1, 3, July, 1796.

excessive or exaggerated. He observed,

> God grant that their future Lives & deportment may be answerable to their profession. Great allowances must be made for the Tender frames of Young Females and different Constitutions of Different persons in making up a judgement about Such extraordinary Appearances.[70]

Certainly women, youth and servants found a new outlet for their own expression in the heat of the Awakening, and they embraced the opportunity to do so. They also brought their husbands and families into the fold. Ultimately, the period of very emotional conversions acted as an outlet for the tension arising from an uncertain political and economic period. The war with France was a few years old, and had affected Nova Scotia's West Indies trade and threatened all vessels that left the coast. Liverpudlians, however, were not yet involved in the privateering ventures that would make them active players rather than passive victims. Symptomatic of periods of such uncertainty, tales were circulating of flying ghost ships in the Bay of Fundy.[71] The following year, even before the privateering's first successes were being enjoyed, the young men of the town had redirected their attention to forming a social club to sponsor a ball once every three weeks.[72] Perkins regretted the relative decline of religious enthusiasm, but church attendance and membership remained high after the initial fervor. The two meetings were firmly established in the community and over time a respectful co-existence had developed between the two churches. This process moved religion out of the realm of local government and into the realm of

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[70] Ibid., 8 Feb. 1796.

[71] Ibid., 12 Oct. 1796. Also see Alan Taylor, *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors,* for a discussion of the significance of such beliefs.

[72] Ibid., 12 Jan. 1797.

individual conscience, but it did not fundamentally change religious practice in Liverpool.

Although such religious upheaval can be seen as a radical process,[73] this one did not shake the foundations of the local society. People chose which meeting to follow based on their old communities in Massachusetts[74] and their families' affiliation. Leading merchants and common folk were involved with both meetings,[75] and in 1796 the wild demonstrations of new converts took place in both houses. Although Rawlyk, among others, identifies this religious upheaval as a moment defining a Nova Scotian Planter identity separate from their New England roots,[76] Manke asserts that this process represented an adaptation of the New England religious culture to the new, British circumstances. She argues that the rise of Methodism represented a compromise between New England Congregationalism and Anglicanism.[77] The New Light community, lead by the Collins family, attracted Liverpudlians more involved with New England; whereas the Methodists, lead by Perkins, Elisha Hopkins, and Zenas Waterman, attracted those more kindly disposed toward the authority in Halifax. Thus political and even economic life was firmly entrenched in religious life long after the church and community government had been formally separated.

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[73] For a discussion of the possible sources and social implications of religious revivals, see: Gordon Stewart, "Socio-Economic Factors in the Great Awakening: the Case of Yarmouth Nova Scotia." *Acadiensis*, Series 3, Vol. 3,(Winter 1973) 18-34.

[74] Manke, Liverpool and Machias, pp. 242. 243.

[75] The subscription list for the New Light minister in 1794 began with the leading merchant, Benajah Collins who subscribed £16, and contained many more common folk, such as John Heater, who subscribed £1 and Job Harrington, who subscribed 10/. In PANS, Vol 77, n. 1.

[76] Rawlyk, Nova Scotia's Massachusetts, 250-251.

[77] Manke, *Machias and Liverpool*, 244-246.

The process of the religious revival in Liverpool in the 1790s involved two generations acting and responding very differently. The older generation and town leaders focused on the issue of unity, and failing that, fair distribution of the existing church property and establishment of new property to meet the new situation. The new Methodist Meeting House was soon plastered and painted inside and fitted with brass chandeliers from England, the New Light Meeting House soon after had a steeple and bell added.[78] These actions seem far from the interests of the young women who had been fainting and crying whilst undergoing "changes", intense experiences of conversion, in the revival. Whether their voices fell silent or they were absorbed into the orthodoxy, it is clear that what the older and younger generation sought something different from religion.

The rising generation

The ability of the society to meet the needs of the youth is attested by the latter's conformity, their participation in social institutions, and by their remaining in the community. Even though the participation of youth in the revival was strong, it was out of step with what their parents sought from religion. They also became involved in political life, which had always been important to the town. However, this involvement was not pleasing to Perkins, who felt that his generation was not being respected. In 1799, Perkins' election was opposed and this greatly affronted him. He asserted that, "...there was Now a Number of Young people Just come on the Stage, & a Number of Gentlemen lately come among us, who found a place ready prepared for them to make their fortunes, & did not Know the difficulties that we had gone thro in times past..." Perkins resigned his seat when his old friend, Colonel William Freeman was not elected

[78] Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 4, lxiii.

for the town. Freeman's victorious opponent, Joseph Barss, was paraded through the streets on a chair in triumph. The following day, Perkins wrote to the speaker of the Legislature that after thirty years of service, he felt he had done his share and that because of his age and the detriment that public service did to his business, he had decided to give it up.[79]

The diversity of the economic life and the interconnections between household and community through the economy had allowed the paternalistic institutions associated with New England town life to continue through the settler generation. The success of these economic strategies and the relevance of the community to the lives of its members determined whether the society would continue as it had for succeeding generations. The evidence here is that generally, men were able to provide the means for their wives in widowhood, but it is less certain that they were also able to leave a legacy for their children.

The era of privateering could have tested the cohesion of the community, or postponed its trial. The sudden influx of money could have given those "too poor to remove" their chance to leave. On the other hand, it could have been used to postpone financial crisis. The evidence from the town records up to the 1800s was that there was no mass exodus. The early 1800s saw the community building up its churches and constructing a building for a local market.[80] This era found the community as involved in local development as it was in the Atlantic world.

In the 1790s, the people of Nictaux, in the Annapolis Valley, and Liverpool came to regard improved land communication important enough to warrant a road across the province to

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[79] Perkins Diary 4: 3,4 Dec. 1799.

[80] Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 4, lx.

join the communities. Although the province was responsible for this type of funding,[81] local initiatives raised almost £200 toward the project, and an additional £250 was requested of the Legislature. Those subscribing to the road were hoping to be rewarded with grants of land along it, in one of the few cultivable areas of the region. The land on the newly-opened road was also designated for distressed families from the older settlements.[82] The opportunity to move inland from the sea was interesting to some families, but not all. The land made available was of fair productive value, but the residents of Liverpool demonstrated again that they did not share the supposedly universal preference for an agricultural life over the life of the sea.[83] Some families of craftsmen and people who principally worked inland[84] chose to move, but there was not an exodus of youth to the new land.

The House of Assembly gave lukewarm support to the process of road building. The province had denied the new communities town governments and the kind of tax structure that would enable them to plan and build their own roads; but also the Legislative Council in 1799 and 1803 only allowed roughly 60 percent of the road expenditures approved by the Legislative Assembly.[85]

The local trade activity and diversified economy of Liverpool provide evidence that these

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[81] Manke, *Machias and Liverpool*, 8.

[82] C. B. Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 4 , lvii, lviii

[83] Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen,* 136, 137, states that a lack of landward movement was indicative of the limited circumstances of fishermen.

[84] Zenas Waterman daybook, final entries. Reference to William Burk, C.B. Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 4, lvii and Perkins Diary 3, p 103, n 2.

[85] C. B. Fergusson, Introduction, Perkins Diary 4, lix.

people, whose livelihood came from commercial interests and the niche they were able to occupy in the Atlantic world, also had the will and ability to develop the community in which they lived. They used land grants to build communal ties: developing local trade, local religious institutions, and local government. Thus the community in its new circumstances perpetuated the values and institutions, some in altered forms, that they had brought from New England. They accomplished this in spite of considerably changed geographic and political circumstances, proving the importance of the people's agency in determining the direction that social and economic change will take.

Conclusion

The fishermen and the merchants who founded Liverpool, Nova Scotia in the mid 18th century expected to pursue their known trades and perpetuate their familiar society in a new location. More than one generation after its founding, the community had grown and changed as a result of adaptation to available resources and external forces. Prior studies have told us a great deal about how the regional economy and the fisheries developed, but left the historian speculating about how people worked and lived, and why certain choices were made. The use of personal, business, and church records shows how the individual fit into the economy and how the society functioned. This kind of study does not address the workings of the Atlantic world economy, but shows how people made their lives in this north Atlantic community.

The evidence gathered from the personal record of Simeon Perkins and the business records of Taylor and Waterman tells us much more than export records of this period would,[1] even though we must keep the limitations of these sources in mind when using them. The sources used in this study were created by the community's "leaders", well-off men. Such sources, particularly the diary which forms the base of this study, were shaped by the personal perspective, purpose, and bias of their authors. The effect of this is unpredictable, so the gaps left in these records are perhaps more perilous to the researcher than those of an officially-produced record. In the official record it is possible to identify the purpose and therefore the limits of the documents. With a personal record we cannot be certain what information has been overlooked, ignored, or distorted. Despite these limitations, the information recorded by a diarist as

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[1] For discussions of the incomplete nature of customs records of the time, see: Brebner, *Neutral Yankees*, 105, and Innis, *The Cod Fisheries,* 234.

meticulous as Simeon Perkins has a great deal to tell us about the world in which he lived as well as about the diarist himself. A first-person account can provide a unique level of detail about daily life that, when complemented by business and official records, and placed in context with other studies of the period and its economy, is very useful to the historian.

From these sources it is possible to find answers to questions about the economy and society at the community level: How did people work or trade, how were they paid? How did the family live, how did the community function? All of these records provide information about the daily work of the people of the community: who fished, who traded, when they sailed and how the were paid. They also contain social information: who got married when, who sickened and died while far from home, who needed charity. Most importantly these sources provide otherwise unavailable information about common men, women, and children, how they worked, what they produced and sold, and how they fit into the community as a whole.

The evidence shows us that the work of fishing in Liverpool in the 18th century was carried out in a variety of ways. From the shore, from small boats, and on vessels far out to sea. People worked for wages or shares, for themselves, and their type of work changed over their lifetimes. Debt to merchants was important; however, fishermen were not confined to dealing with one merchant, or to accepting one form of payment. Fishermen could also take berths on trading vessels in the winter, or work in the woods. The clearest conclusion to be drawn from the evidence is that there was a variety to the work in the fisheries and trade, and that people were able to move from one to another.

The response of this community to the opportunity presented by privateering clearly demonstrated their ability to adapt to changed economic and political conditions. The local merchants, by jointly investing and distributing risk, were able to arm and outfit ships in short order for that new venture. Much of the crew and all of the officers of privateers, as well as most of the investors, were local people. This resulted in most of the profits remaining in the community. As enthusiastically as the community pursued privateering, they did not let it undermine the fishing, their principal activity. Their actions demonstrated a capacity and willingness to adapt to new circumstances, as well as an underlying confidence, or trust, in their principal occupation.

The sources studied here also demonstrated the important place of the timber trade in the economy. It was a very broadly based activity, involving large numbers of land holders, small sawmills, and workers, but overall it was much less lucrative than the fisheries. As it was secondary in importance, the intensity with which it was pursued varied much more when privateering was most active. However, it provided an important commodity for export, and allowed for a local shipbuilding industry to develop. The local control of the shipping and trading of fish and lumber was a vital element of the developing economy and the community. Timber trade was a feature of almost any area of new European settlement in North America; in this community owning this resource allowed the settlers to choose how and when to exploit it. They were able to distribute their labour according to the seasons, and their activities according to the market.

The sources also prove the existence of a significant local market. Cleared land was used for pasture, hay, and some cultivation. Animals were raised, gardens planted, and meat and cloth produced. The local market and agriculture did not generate exports, but they helped the family by limiting purchases, and by strengthening the bonds of household and community. In the local market the work of women, and their place in the community is visible. Women were involved in raising animals, in tending gardens, in weaving and making clothing, in teaching children, and in assisting or replacing their husbands in running their businesses. Youths also had a place, performing simpler tasks, assisting in the fields, the mills, with trades and on board ships. They did not generally work as long or as often as adults, but those whose parents could not support them were bound out to work, and ideally, to learn. The many references to schooling in the Perkins Diary and the two business records prove the importance that this society placed on literacy and basic education of the youth.

The sources studied here suggest that fishing was never the sole activity, although the fisheries was the reason for the founding of the community. International trade may not have grown as fast as people wished; however, this community was diversifying its economy. To those who complained that the diversified activity detracted from the offshore fishery the research answers with evidence of the people's sensitivity to international markets and their willingness to fully exploit their potential. They understood a resource-based economy to be dependent on exports, but did not overlook local trade and local markets.

This community's "pluriactivité"[2] was not unusual. Historians have found evidence of such diversification elsewhere in 18th and 19th century eastern North America. *Pluriactivité* has been the object of a debate that has gone on for the last thirty years in Québec rural history. In the

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[2]"Pluriactivité" is the term Gérard Bouchard uses to describe the diverse economic activities of the people in the Saguenay region of Québec. In that case, the local economy was based on the combination of agriculture and forestry. Gérard Bouchard, *Quelques Arpents d'Amérique: Population, Économie, Famille au Saguenay, 1838-1971* (Québec: Boréal Press, 1996), Chapter V, L'économie paysanne et le travail forestier, 100-127.

late 1970s, Normand Séguin had proposed a theory of the "development of underdevelopment" based on his studies of the Saguenay region in the 19th century.[3] He argued that the farmers who had migrated there had become dependent on external markets because of their involvement in the timber trade. He concluded that their pursuit of that trade caused their agriculture and therefore their economic independence to suffer. Edras Minville, writing earlier on the subject, had argued that involvement in a market economy had "proletarianized" the rural population, so that they no longer had the social and cultural base, the "mentalité"to be successful farmers.[4] The multiplicity of economic pursuits not only damaged what should have been the primary activity by taking time and labour away from it, but also by destroying the cultural base upon which the activity depended. In Nova Scotia, a region dependent on exports, diversification and local markets were not expected to exist, or if they did, to matter. Where obviously valuable export commodities were so readily available, the small gardening efforts of a fisherman's family were thought to be negligible. Their pursuit was even seen by some contemporaries as indicative of a frustrating backwardness.

Many studies of supposedly commercially-oriented New England farming communities have demonstrated the persistence of "pluriactivité", and its social and economic importance. Studies that examined economic activities at the community and family level found a more complex situation in which families blended commercial and subsistence activities in order to

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[3] Normand Séguin, "L'économie Agro-Forestière: Genèse du Développement au Saguenay au XIXe Siècle," *Revue de l'Histoire de l'Amérique Française,* vol.29, no.4 (mars 1976) 559-565.

[4] Cited in Guy Gaudreau, "Le Rapport Agriculture-Forêt au Québec: Note Historiographique," *Revue de l'historie de l'Amérique française*, vol. 33, no. 1,(juin 1979) 67-78.

best exploit the resources available and to help them fulfill their economic and social objectives.[5] Douglas McCalla, in his study of the development of the successful, export-oriented economy of Ontario, found that the capacity to respond to external market opportunities was dependent on the foundations laid by the development of local markets and household-based production. Indeed he argues that the continued success of the economy in the mid- 19th century was based as much on the internal market as the external one.[6]

Gérard Bouchard, who has spent his career developing a different picture of the Saguenay than the one offered by Séguin in 1976, recently published a detailed analysis of the economy and society of that region. In it he wrote: "Le travail aux chantiers constituait une dépendance parmi d'autres et c'est précisement dans cette pluriactivité que la famille trouvait les moyens de sa survie, de son développement, et de sa reproduction élargie."[7] The wide-spread existence of *pluriactivité* has broad acceptance among historians; however, its perception as a positive and stabilizing force is not so common. Many see it as a frontier phase, its existence an indication of a peripheral, and most probably weak, economy.[8] For Liverpool, the mixed economy created not only economically important import substitutions, but also created a social environment where

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[5] Bettye Hobbs-Pruitt, "Self-sufficiency and the Agricultural Economy of 18th Century Massachusetts," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, XLI (July 1984), 333-364, and Daniel Vickers, "Competency and Competition: Economic Culture in Early America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, XLVII, 1, (January 1990) 3-29.

[6] Douglas McCalla, *Planting the Province: the Economic History of Upper Canada 1784-1870,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) 115.

[7] Gérard Bouchard, *Quelques Arpents d'Amérique*, 127.

[8] Serge Courville, Jean-Claude Robert, and Normand Séguin, "The Spread of Rural Industry in Lower Canada, 1831-1851," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, new series, Vol. 2 (1991), 43-70.

all could be engaged in the building of the community. It was an important part of continuing their familiar society in their new location. At the same time it provided an important economic base for the new settlement to build upon.

Throughout the study period, Liverpool was a largely homogeneous community where the members had similar status and shared a sense of belonging as "proprietors." Social and economic inequality existed, but there was a strong sense of communal responsibility and "neighbourliness." Widows and invalids benefitted from local charity and the spontaneous gestures of their neighbours. People acted together to help neighbours in need, establish new meeting houses, build roads, and resist the naval officers. The nature of the community changed over the years, particularly its religious expression, however communal action was still possible when a common need was felt.

An important feature of this evolving society was the development of an active group of the "middling sort." The nature of the local economy allowed a this middle group to exist, tradespeople, minor merchants, ships' captains, and owners of vessels. Between the leading merchants and the poorer of the community they provided a local market, and a source of competition in business, and of change in political, religious, and social life. Liverpool's business people and fishermen showed in the period studied an awareness of the geopolitical facts of their era and an ability to adapt their commerce to respond to external changes. At the same time they focused their energies on building and preserving a local community in keeping with their New England traditions.

In the 1790s Liverpool was isolated from both of the nearest trade centres, Halifax and Boston. At the time of the Planters' settlement, Liverpudlians had looked upon Boston as central to their trade world. By the end of the century that was no longer politically or economically true. Halifax was assuming its role as the source of economic leadership, but there remained significant mistrust between many of Liverpool's citizens and the administration at Halifax. The sense of isolation arising from these uncomfortable relationships may have heightened the sense of community, making people less likely to migrate and more committed to local institutions. The people had chosen to accept their place in the Empire rather than the Republic, but they governed their community according to their own expectations. They responded to external uncertainty during the early years of the Napoleonic Wars with heightened activity in the local churches. The sudden wealth brought by privateering resulted in local investment and greater interest in local politics. This community reminds us that the migrants to Nova Scotia were not simply passive recipients of external forces, political and geographic, which molded them; but that they approached life and work in their new home based on their own aspirations.

Life and work in Liverpool in the late 18th century relied on an integration of economic activity and human relationships which pervaded every aspect of the community. Diversity of activity was trusted to be the most reasonable and likely to succeed approach to exploiting the resources of Liverpool. Concentration on a single activity would have increased risks and left hands idle during off-seasons. As they had in New England, the Planters moved from the sea to the land to work depending on the season and the demand for their products. They preferred to share their work with family members and they relied on their family to cooperate to sustain the cycle of work needed to best exploit the land and the sea. This community did not grow remarkably, or rapidly advance economically, but it did evolve and adapt. It would be illuminating to compare the way that Liverpool began and developed with its neighbouring communities of Shelburne and Lunenburg. These two settlements were founded under very different circumstances, and coped with different challenges; they have intriguing commonalities and differences from Liverpool.

This thesis does not argue that this community was remarkably prosperous, or even as wealthy as some of the richer farming communities. Considerable evidence exists to the contrary. This thesis does argue on the other hand that there is a range of possible conditions between a precarious subsistence and prosperity, and that the ways in which people coped with these circumstances and lived within the limits of their environment can tell us a great deal about how people fit into the process of economic development. What is evident from this study of Liverpool is that there was a significant level of choice, in settling in that area, and in choosing to remain there. The community was linked to the Atlantic world and, particularly after the era of privateering, these people had the means to move on or move back to New England if they wished. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries there has been migration around the northeastern seaboard, and connection; however the community became established and over time evolved and adapted to the location. This study shows how people in Liverpool worked with the natural resources, worked with their families, and worked together as a community.

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