

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE POLLOK-GILMOUR EMPIRE

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Abstract of The Rise and Fall of the Pollok-Gilmour Empire

One of the major shipping firms of early nineteenth-century Glasgow was Pollok, Gilmour & Co., which commenced operations around 1804 and ceased operations in 1873. Its main cargo was timber from Britain's North American colonies, a commodity much in demand in Great Britain, where it was protected from foreign competition by controversial tariffs. Pollok-Gilmour operated through a network of colonial-based sub-firms managed by junior partners. It differed from earlier, less sophisticated timber importers in becoming directly involved in colonial production. These operations depended on a complex, tenuous credit structure and assiduous guidance by the senior partners. Pollok-Gilmour was very successful in its first four decades, and developed a private fleet of timber ships with an unmatched cumulative tonnage of forty thousand tons. It built most of these vessels in the shipyards of its colonial branch houses, helping to develop the colonies' economic potential. It was especially influential in the small colony of New Brunswick, where its Miramichi house became heavily involved in local politics and in a heated rivalry with the Cunard brothers. The company's success depended greatly on the herculean efforts of a few men, particularly Allan Gilmour Sr., whose bitter 1839 departure it never quite

recovered from. In later years, despite cultivating other trades like cotton and guano, it suffered from inferior successors. The branch houses became increasingly autonomous, though none made the leap to independence or survived past 1820. Only its Liverpool house, which developed a newer type of business, continued into the twentieth century.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The Glasgow shipping firm of Pollok, Gilmour and Company rose to a level of great prominence in the 1830's and 1840's. One of the foremost companies in the business of importing timber to Britain--an important trade dominated by British North America--Pollok-Gilmour was also involved in producing and selling ships, and at its pinnacle (around 1840) commanded Great Britain's largest private fleet. From 1812 to 1870 it operated through a network of sub-firms based in North America in the hands of junior partners. In particular, the small, young colony of New Brunswick was the site for as many as four of these branch houses. Though Pollok-Gilmour was also present in the Canadas and in two cotton ports in the United States, its proportional influence was easily greatest in New Brunswick, extending into politics and patronage. Maintaining the shipping line and related operations was a great financial and logistical challenge. In later years the firm moved into Liverpool and London, the two greatest ports of the British Empire. But ultimately there emerged no successors to match the skills and dedication of the early pioneers, and the firm was losing momentum well before the final partners departed in the early 1870's. Only the Liverpool firm adapted to the age of steamships, and survived into the twentieth century. Pollok-Gilmour's age came and went.

The most important source for the company's history was written in 1908 and revised in 1921 by John Rankin, the chairman of the surviving Liverpool branch and nephew of its founder Robert Rankin. Titled A History of Our Firm, it was printed for private publication. Rankin was a businessman, not a writer, and the book is not well-written. ('Businessmen shouldn't write histories of their own firms,' says Dr. Gordon Jackson.) It suffers from excessive decorum and a reluctance to face honestly the company's controversial aspects, such as the unhappy retirement of Allan Gilmour Sr., to whom Rankin feels an unnecessary antipathy. But it is an invaluable source of original information about the workings of the various firms started by Pollok-Gilmour and the individuals who administered them. Particularly useful are Rankin's accounts of the colonial branch houses, which contribute so much to the third chapter. Personal descriptions of the partners and discussions of finance and other aspects of the trade are also included. No history of Pollok-Gilmour can ignore this work.

N.B.: The New Brunswick city of St. John was known as St. John's in the early nineteenth century, but is referred to here by its modern name. The Dominion of Canada was only created in 1867: before that, the name 'Canada' referred to the future provinces of Ontario and Quebec, then known as Upper and Lower Canada respectively. To avoid confusion with the later Canada which includes other provinces, the region is referred to as 'the Canadas.' The term 'the Miramichi' refers to the several ports near the mouth of the Miramichi River.

The spelling and punctuation of the reproduced letters have been improved in many places for the sake of readability. SRA stands for the Stratford Regional Archives; UGD for the University of Glasgow Archives; P.P. for the British House of Commons' sessional papers (Parliamentary Papers).

Chapter I:
New Brunswick and Britain's Imperial Economy--
The Economic Background

In 1808 the tiny, struggling colony of New Brunswick, only a generation old, was thrust into a fairly important position in the growing British Empire. The dense forests that had impeded her development now became her bread and butter. Nineteenth-century Britain was very much an oceanic empire, dependent on its unsurpassed navy and especially on its far-reaching merchant fleets. Wood was strategically and economically valuable in such a nation, and Britain had been forced to import it from the continent for centuries. During the Napoleonic Wars, Westminster was more aware than ever of the importance of reliable supplies of such raw materials within the empire, and the nearest colonies, in North America, had vast timberland. Mercantilist policies were therefore adopted that lasted for decades after the wars, creating controversy and colouring British politics.

In the late eighteenth century Britain imported most of her timber from Baltic nations--including Prussia, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Russia--and some from North America, both the independent United States and the remaining colonies such as Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. But 1807 Orders in Council effectively cut off the American supply, and the latest French victories resulted in the Continental system. As part of a grand strategic plan to defeat the

British, Napoleon ordered the nations under his influence greatly to restrict exports to Britain, including Baltic timber. Shortages of wood already had the Royal Navy concerned, and now decisive measures were needed. Colonial production was one answer, and the cabinet took steps to encourage logging and shipping. As R.L. Schuyler points out, this required large up-front capital, and investors demanded assurance that their product would remain competitive when peace returned and Baltic wood, which cost far less to transport and was held to be of better quality, returned to the market.<1> The solution was a tariff on foreign timber imports later increased and widened to about 65s. per load of 50 cubic feet <2> and left in place after Waterloo. As a result, North American imports exploded. The colonies' annual exports of fir timber to the United Kingdom went from an average of 10,519 in 1803-6 to 188,322 in 1816-9; while similar figures for the Baltic nations went from 218,857 to 93,659.<3>

Such measures were part of a mercantilist tradition that included the Navigation laws which largely restricted British and colonial trade to ships of the Empire, a measure also designed to benefit the navy. Indeed, production of masts and spars had already been benefiting from Imperial policy. Britain had been offering bounties on masts since 1705, and these had been New Brunswick's chief export from the colony's

beginnings. (New Brunswick white pine was ideally suited for masts, and wood-cutting expeditions to service the shipyards in nearby Halifax, Nova Scotia, had started in the St. John river valley in 1779. Masts from the area were reaching Britain in 1782, two years before the New Brunswick colony was established^{<4>}.) Masts and other wood products useful to the navy were duty-free as a result of the wars. Other types of wood exports had enjoyed bounties and freedom from duties (when carried on British ships) since the 1760's. Lumber for masts was an increasingly exhausted resource, and now more mainstream commodities took the lead. New Brunswick's exports of spruce pine, and their products went from about 43 cwt. in 1802 to ca. 537 in 1818; while fir timber went from under 800 loads to over 140,000^{<5>}.

This export boom was based on simple economics in wartime Britain. Memel timber, which according to one dealer cost only 34s./load in 1789, rose to 88 in 1799, and reached an incredible 330 in 1809. In contrast, an 1811 load of colonial pine cost only 62s. 3p. (This price would calm down after the 1815 peace, falling to as little as 17s. 3p. in 1820.)^{<6>} New Brunswick wood was widely used in the shipping industry, despite rumours of susceptibility to dry-rot, and also in construction where it was valued as wainscoting material. Such trade was invaluable for a small,

undeveloped economy like New Brunswick, and colonial entrepreneurs did their utmost to profit. Firms like Pollok-Gilmour invested large sums in their lumber camps, building roads and bringing in supplies from Britain and the West Indies. The Third-World problem of depending on one export was also discernible, as alternative income sources like agriculture were neglected and boom-and-bust cycles emerged. In the decades to come, New Brunswick would be pouring most of her capital into refining her number-one product at home, as sawmills and even shipyards sprang up. This was an industry created from scratch, and unsurprisingly its early product acquired a reputation for comparatively poor standards in Britain.

With Napoleon defeated and Britain on top of the world, strategic and mercantilist concerns naturally seemed far less urgent. The rising commercial classes wished to break away from mercantilist policies and turn to free trade, in which the laws of supply and demand would be unimpeded by tariffs and subsidies, and no one trading partner--even a colony--would receive preferential treatment. The varying duties on timber imports quickly emerged as a focus of criticism.<7> Gerald S. Graham observes that North American timber was an interest especially vulnerable to public criticism, as it was new and unfamiliar with an aura of the Nouveau Riche, unlike more established economic players like the

landowners who foisted the expanded Corn Laws on the government.<8> Another group quick to oppose duties on foreign timber were merchants who imported the commodity from the Baltic, who were often based in North Sea ports such as those on Tyneside. Merchants who imported timber from America, on the other hand, tended to be found in western ports like Glasgow (Pollok-Gilmour), Belfast, and especially Liverpool. (London was, of course, represented in both camps.) As well as the free trade-vs.-Imperial interests debate, there was also the question of Britain's overseas-trade interests against her European trade, an issue surviving to some extent into the present day. As early as 1820 the House of Lords convened a committee to look into the matter, followed in the next year by the Commons. These committees took the middle of the road, deciding that some peacetime adjustments were called for though colonial trade did deserve priority over foreign trade. As a result, in 1821 Parliament slightly lowered foreign duties on spruce deals--the chief continental import--to 55s. and increased colonial duties from almost nothing to 10s.<9> At this level tariffs would stay for two whole decades.

For the moment agitation for equalized duties cooled marginally. Transatlantic freights, as high as 50s/load at the height of the wartime boom, were over twice the level of rates from the Baltic to Britain and

accounted for fully half the 45s. advantage.<10> The situation started to change in the mid-1820's, as the more inefficient, expensive British timber ships were largely driven out of the Baltic wood trade, replaced by Prussian and Scandinavian ships, and turned to the colonial trade. Such tightened competition, combined with inconsistent growth, steadily reduced rates to as little as 35s./load by the mid-1830's.<11> Such a reduced expense had less of a need for subsidization. As early as 1831, the Whig budget presented by Lord Althorp called for increasing colonial timber duties to bring them closer to those for foreign imports (the latter were to receive a small increase). As it happened, the government fell because of the first Reform Bill, and the matter was forgotten for the nonce. But the attempt was a harbinger of more successful future efforts.

The free trade movement was emerging as an unignorable force by the 1830's. The opponents of the Corn Laws also tended to oppose unequal tariffs for much the same reasons (Richard Cobden was an uncompromising advocate of total equalization), and the two issues were often discussed together. Free-traders brought the matter of timber duties to Parliament's attention again and again. Much was made of the new practice of companies shipping Baltic timber to Britain via North

America to avoid the higher tax. (This method was only profitable because foreign ships managed to carry wood from Europe to America at rates that only added 20s. to the total costs, little more than the Baltic-to-Britain freights.) Official statistics record over 20 such round trips in 1833, and David M. Williams insists that the true figure was much higher.<12> There was also a great deal of New England timber being smuggled into the colonies, a trade with a wider profit margin. Free-traders to a great extent achieved the upper hand in debates such as before an 1835 Commons committee considering the matter, which advised reducing the 45s. discrepancy to 30s. Indeed, many supporters of colonial trade seriously questioned that committee's objectivity, wondering why the witnesses who supported change so outnumbered the opponents. It is remarkable that change was delayed past the end of the decade.

The supporters of the status quo, in fact, were far from voiceless. Businessmen in the ports of Atlantic trade never tired of stressing the benefits of colonial protection. An example is a petition presented to Parliament at the time of the 1835 committee by the Belfast Chamber of Commerce through the friendly M.P. Emerson Tennant, who added his own comments. It observes that the developing American colonies were a prime captive market for British manufactures, whereas the Baltic economies could find manufactures elsewhere

on the Continent, their chief British import being cotton twists. Also noted is the trade's augmentation of emigration, which the government supported. Carrying cargo to America was a secondary concern for timber ships, which very often took nothing but ballast on their westward journey, and 50,000 emigrated, mostly from Ireland, for relatively low passages. Tennant additionally suggests that equalization, far from cheapening wood products, would actually drive America's lower-grade lumber out of the British market and leave only the premium Baltic product, denying the poor in places like Ireland vital cheap housing. Lastly, he wonders if denying the colonies economic protection would cause them to emulate their southern neighbours and secede from the Empire.<13> The Glasgow Chamber of Commerce was also an active lobby, even presenting petitions from their business partners in New Brunswick. And Liverpool was the busiest of ports with colonial timber trade. By 1840, a fifth of the tonnage coming there from overseas was from British North America (new docks were named "Brunswick" and "Canada"). The city's merchants resisted this type of free trade: when the Whigs fought the 1841 election on a budget that took measures toward equalization, Liverpool was one of the few borough seats to remain Conservative.<14>

One party that assiduously followed and even added

to the debate was the merchants and representatives of New Brunswick itself. The colony had had an effective Westminster lobby since the days of its foundation (it was separated from Nova Scotia in 1784 as a result of lobbying by Loyalists from the American Revolution, who were its first settlers). The defeat of the 1831 government was greeted with widespread celebrations, one town floating an ornamental boat made of Baltic wood and exploding an effigy of a prominent free-trader. When a serious prospect of equalization emerged, the Legislative Assembly at Fredericton and several municipal gatherings drew up petitions and authorized letters of protest, duly received by the Colonial Office<15>. Even the arch-rivals of the Miramichi, Alexander Rankin and Joseph Cunard, buried the hatchet long enough to co-sign such a message. And merchants active in New Brunswick, like Allan Gilmour, appeared before committees. Gilmour, perhaps the senior representative of the New Brunswick trade, testified both in 1833 and in 1835.<16>

Another issue that concerned the colony was the problem of overloading timber ships. The same intensifying competition that was driving down freight rates led many merchants to load greater cargoes on a given ship for a competitive edge. Timber, normally stored only in the hold, was now also piled on the decks above, dangerously raising the ship's centre of gravity.

Such ships were vulnerable to winter storms and instead of sinking outright were often swamped and disabled, the crew reduced to cannibalism and slow death while awaiting the outside chance of rescue. In the year 1838 48 timber ships were lost on the high sea, 27 without trace.<17> An 1839 Commons committee found a fairly unanimous opinion among its witnesses that Parliament must outlaw the practice. In the same year a temporary law was pushed through in a hurry, as the matter was an emergency involving safety. This law restricted timber cargoes to a ship's hold except for departures in the less stormy summer season from the first of May to the end of August, and used new methods for enforcement, empowering clearing officers to issue certificates now required for leaving port. The law was renewed three times over the next seven years, with a few adjustments such as allowing a ship at sea to move its timber onto deck during certain emergencies when leaving it below would be more dangerous, before it became relatively permanent. One amendment that was not made was to extend the summer season to the first of March for colonial ships, as one letter from colonial merchants suggested, arguing that New Brunswick ships were safer than the British realized (this protest aside, the measure provoked almost no formal protest).

The day of reckoning for tariff discrepancies came

in the early 1840's, and more equal duties could be delayed no further. With a new system installed for collecting duties, Sir Francis Baring produced a revenue-enhancing 1841 budget doubling the colonial levy (and lowering the foreign by 5s., in line with a 15s. closing of the gap). As ten years before, the government was defeated and an election intervened. But this time the issue did not go away. The new Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel and the Board of Trade President William Gladstone believed in freer trade and were looking for inequities to right. Peel set out to increase revenue the opposite way: if duties were lowered, he hoped, consumption would increase enough to mean greater returns through other taxes. In the budget of 1842 the foreign duty was lowered in two steps to 30s. The colonial duty, however, was once again close to nothing. A more welcome change was in the method of measuring deals, by now one of North America's main wood exports, for taxation. The original tale method, merely counting their number, did not discriminate among the greatly varying deal sizes and colonial merchants complained that Baltic merchants were exploiting this weakness by producing large deals. From now on they would be measured by volume alone.

The second controversial colonial trade was in the sale of locally-made ships. The original Loyalists included several ship's carpenters, and Saint John

quickly became a minor shipbuilding centre. The colony assembled 71 sloops and schooners and 93 square-rigged ships in its first decade<18>, before the first French war temporarily ended production. The real boom started along with the timber-export bonanza. Shipyards spread around the colony to places like Richibucto and the Miramichi River district. By 1842 New Brunswick would be producing 671 ships--an aggregate tonnage of almost 100,000--for that year alone, including 321 measuring more than 50 tons and 13 equipped with steam engines<19>. Colonists would build a ship in New Brunswick and send her across the Atlantic for sale in Liverpool, with a load of wood. In the period directly after Waterloo British North America was exporting over a thousand ships a year to Liverpool<20>. To a much greater extent than in the other colonies, a New Brunswick ship would be sent to Liverpool for registration, in later years increasingly for a copper lining as well, before being sold there. These ships had a great competitive advantage in their lower production costs, which reflected the money-saving proximity of their chief material, but also the new shipyards' somewhat lower standards. (A sampling by Richard Rice suggests that ships built in St. John between 1820 and 1900 had an average lifetime of 14.6 years, while those built for export in 1835 averaged only ten.<21>)

Like lumber, shipbuilding in the North American colonies was an industry basically started from scratch, and this showed particularly in the early days. Some ships were even built for only one voyage, to be dismantled and sold as planks along with their more important cargo<22>. But standards started to improve in some shipyards as greater capital and skill arrived from across the Atlantic. In particular, critics of colonial ships had to admit that the Pollok-Gilmour firm was making ships of an impressive quality. (One of the reasons for its entry into colonial production was the limited supply of British ships available at its Glasgow base <23>.) Its shipyards imported everything but wood, ensuring British standards, and took to building vessels for other firms on contract. Some of the hakmatak ships (made of American larch) were even in demand for their superior design. Meanwhile many low-grade ships were still being made, and laboured against a bad reputation in the nation that dominated world shipping. But this did not end demand for them: by mid-century almost half the ships owned by Liverpool firms were softwood vessels built in the colonies, chiefly New Brunswick.<24> Exports reached their badly-timed pinnacle around 1840, when they combined with a general economic downturn severely to depress prices in the ship market.

Now the British shipbuilders and their allies tried

to take action. In particular, the General Society of Shipowners headed by George Frederick Young called for a new duty against vessels sent from the colonies for British sale. Once again Parliament set up a committee to consider the matter. In this case, pressure subsided as colonial imports slowed. New Brunswick producers were hit hard by the shipping depression from 1839 to 1843, and forced to sell their ships for as little as two pounds per ton. And their product met with a crackdown by insurance inspectors. Lloyd's Register showed itself increasingly reluctant to give high ratings to ships not built in Britain, provoking colonial charges of a "gentlemen's agreement" conspiracy. Indeed, there was resentment closer to home: in 1838 the Liverpool Underwriters formed their own rating service, partly because the port's colonial trade made it more sympathetic to colonial shipbuilders.<25> But this rival was also accused of anti-colonial bias. In any case, the two registers merged in 1845, and the practice of registering overseas-built ships in the United Kingdom was effectively ended. To right the perceived slant, the colonial shipbuilders founded their own underwriting society, Bureau Veritas. (In the late 1840's and early 1850's, Lloyd's outfitted half a dozen agents in British North America, starting in St. John, to provide on-the-spot ratings for colonial-built ships, anticipating

similar arrangements elsewhere abroad.) As it turned out, the trade never recovered from the 1840's slump. The decisive blow came with the advent of iron ships in the 1860's, for which the colonies were quite unprepared. In developing steam transport the United Kingdom would regain control over its own shipping and British North American building would increasingly be limited to its own fleets.

The 1840's saw free trade consolidate its place among the British government's leading concerns. Imperial economic policies like colonial protection were forgotten to a great extent, although Joseph Chamberlain would revive the question at the end of the century. The remaining timber duties would be gradually reduced until their abolition in 1860, when Gladstone, now Chancellor of the Exchequer, would observe that British North America was now sufficiently developed not to require such protection.<26> Another important step in this direction was the abolition of the Navigation Laws in 1847, which opened the colonies to foreign and especially American trade. The Canadas had supported this change and welcomed the new business to the south, while maritime colonies like New Brunswick worried that their growing merchant fleets would be swamped by the new competition. It led directly to the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854, the first free-trade agreement between

British North America and the United States. These colonies' position in world trade was decisively changed. Economically, the emerging nation of Canada would not be an Imperial satellite and could not be perceived in terms of British politics anymore. But the importance of its earlier dependence should not be ignored. Timber and ships financed the beginnings of a future member of G-7 and provided a two-generation breathing space in which the colonies could develop to the point of trading freely with the American colossus and not being overwhelmed. The trade was suited to its time, and the troubles that came from excessive reliance on it were outweighed overall. These two exports paved the way for a less disadvantageous economic arrangement.

NOTES

1. R.L. Schuyler, Fall of the Old Colonial System: A Study in British Free Trade 1770-1870 (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1966), p. 104.
2. 49 Geo.III, c. 98; 50 Geo.III, c.77; 51 Geo.III, c.93; 52 Geo.III, c.117; 53 Geo.III, c.33.
3. Gerald S. Graham, Sea Power and British North America 1783-1820: A Study in British Colonial Policy (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), pp. 149-50.
4. R.G. Albion, Forests and Sea Power (Boston, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926), pp. 291-2.
5. P.P. (Readex Microprint) 1819 XVI, pp. 286-7, 294-5. See Appendix B, Table I.
6. P.P. 1821 VI, pp. 181-3.
7. See, for example, H.D. Dunskey's 1821 London pamphlet, Statement on the Present Timber and Deal Trade as Regards Europe and the British American Colonies, Resting on Plain and Undeniable Facts.
8. Graham, ibid.
9. The Lords committee report is in P.P. 1820 IV, pp. 381-491; the Commons committee report is in P.P. 1821 VI. Graeme Wynn's Timber Colony: A Historical Geography of Early Nineteenth Century New Brunswick (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981) contains a graph of British tariffs on foreign and colonial timber on p. 31.
10. See John D. Powles's figures in Appendix B, Table II.
11. For details on freight rates from New Brunswick to Britain, see ibid., Robert Carter's figures in P.P. 1833 VI, pp. 346, and Thomas Young's 'Freight Rates of Lower Port Timber to South Shields' in the same volume, on the transposition of p. 484.
12. See D. Williams' article 'Customs Evasion, Colonial Preference and the British Tariff, 1829-42' in Shipping, Trade and Commerce, P.L. Cotrell and D.H. Aldcroft (ed.) (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1981), pp. 99-116.

13. Hansard's Parliamentary Debates XXIX, pp. 1101-05 (27 July, 1835).
14. See Travis L. Crosby, Sir Robert Peel's Administration: 1841-46 (Newton Abbot, Devon: David & Charles, 1976), p. 22.
15. See P.P. 1841(2) II, pp. 29-40; 1842 XXXIX, pp. 583-99.
16. His 1833 testimony is in P.P. 1833 VI, pp. 526-35.
17. P.P. 1839 IX, pp. 223, 367. For figures on wrecks of New Brunswick ships, see Appendix B, Table X.
18. Graham, op. cit., p.47.
19. P.P. 1843 LII, p. 403.
20. I have derived this estimate from a conservative reading of reportedly unreliable data shown in F. Neal's article, 'Liverpool Shipping in the Early Nineteenth Century,' Liverpool and Merseyside: Essays in the Economic and Social History of the Port and Its Hinterland, J.R. Harris (ed.) (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969), p. 166.
21. Richard Rice, 'Measuring British Dominance of Shipbuilding in the Maritimes 1787-1890,' Ships and Shipbuilding in the North Atlantic Region (St. John's, Newfoundland: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1978), pp. 140-41.
22. For an 1824 description of such a ship--with illustration--see Frederick William Wallace, Wooden Ships and Iron Men (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1924), pp. 324-5.
23. Gordon Jackson, 'Scottish Shipping, 1775-1805,' Shipping, Trade and Commerce, p. 132.
24. P.L. Cotrell, 'The Steamship on the Mersey,' ibid., p. 143.
25. Anon., Annals of Lloyd's Register (London: Lloyd's Register of Shipping, 1934), p. 96.
26. See R.L. Schuyler, Fall of the Old Colonial System: A Study in British Free Trade 1770-1870 (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1966), p. 164.

Chapter II:
Allan Gilmour Sr. and the Rise of Pollok-Gilmour--
1904-39

The remarkable story of Pollok, Gilmour & Company's ascension to the ranks of major shipping companies is to a great degree the story of Allan Gilmour Senior (1775-1849). Along with John Pollok (1778-1858) and his brother Arthur Pollok (1780-1870), he was a senior partner in the Glasgow-based firm which helped supply Great Britain's immense need for wood. It was largely due to Gilmour's grand vision and downright-obsessive attention to detail that the company developed into an overseas empire that anticipated the multi-national corporations of the twentieth century. The key to its growth was in its branch houses in North America, which supplied the home firm with timber and other products for sale in Britain, and also received British products for overseas sale. This meant training personnel to carry out the senior partners' directives, but also a planner to determine the best policies and a middleman between Glasgow and America, to give orders and see that they were carried out. Gilmour performed both roles to the utmost. In an age of still poor communications, he went back and forth across the Atlantic to observe conditions and make clear what had to be done. He mastered this linchpin role so consummately that his contentious 1839 retirement left a vacuum that could not really be filled. And his partnership ended on a decidedly bad note, leaving a rancorous trace from which his firm arguably never recovered.

Though the partnership officially began in 1806, evidence suggests that the three senior partners were working together as early as 1804.<1> Gilmour had previously been one of many timber merchants in the Baltic trade; the Polloks had owned a grocery business. (The three had been schoolmates in Mearns.) From its earliest days, the business pattern was for Gilmour to travel to Continental ports and purchase wood, and the Polloks to stay in Glasgow and handle the home affairs.<2> Like so many other timber firms, Pollok-Gilmour suffered severe dislocations as a result of the Continental system. Gilmour, for example, was now denied permission to travel north of Memel to the important Russian ports. British North America beckoned, and Gilmour made his first journey to the Miramichi in the harsh winter of 1812. It was now that the firm began to assume its unique economic functions.

In 1806 Gilmour and the Polloks signed six Articles of Co-Partnership<3>. This non-notarized, quasi-formal agreement is of special interest, as it sheds much light on the firm's structure, and suggests some causes of its future difficulties. The first article arranges for each partner to invest a thousand pounds as stock, forbidding the stock's withdrawal but allowing the three to agree to increase it by a uniform amount. The second orders the balancing of the firm's books at the end of

each year. The third forbids any of the partners from engaging in business outside the firm without the other partners' consent (an important clause); decrees that profits and losses shall be shared equally; provides each partner with an annual salary of a hundred pounds; and allows for partners to draw on their shares only if the firm shows a profit two years in a row, in which case any partner can withdraw his share of the previous year's profit, or a smaller portion. The fourth provides for the agreement to last at least six years; allows each partner to withdraw from the agreement after three years, with a year's written notice to the other partners; and specifies that two-ninths of his due share (in stock, profit, and interest) shall be paid to him three months later, equal amounts after six and nine months, and the remaining third at future balances, as fast as profits allow (this was to prevent the company from being dangerously weakened by a too-abrupt loss of capital). The fifth makes a similar arrangement in the case of a partner's death, with the same payment schedule for his estate. The sixth provides for the arbitration of disagreements among any of the partners, by mutually-chosen neutral businessmen. The contract also declares that on the request of one or more partners, they shall all agree to notarize it, and in the meanwhile they shall behave as if it were legally binding.

This contract has some serious weaknesses, specifically in what it does not say. Enforcement of the agreement raised problems. There is no provision, as in the later branch-house articles, to fine a disobedient partner. In place of this the sixth article in practice was not very easy to apply. A second omission, which would ultimately make the first a serious one, is in making allowance for the considerable business expenses Gilmour incurred as the travelling partner. (When he was only crossing the North Sea, expenses were smaller and may have seemed unimportant.) In practice, Gilmour must have drawn on his share to pay these costs, cocksure that at the end of the day the Polloks would have to acknowledge that his contribution to the firm was at least as great as either of theirs, and depart from the contract to pay him out a full-third share. The agreement seems an afterthought, formulated perhaps in a hurry, with a naive implicit hope that gentlemen would be gentlemen and no problem could get too much out of hand. That the partners were afraid to notarize it is not unrevealing. In retrospect, perhaps it was unrealistic to hope that a partnership where one partner spent so much time away from the others, could avoid disharmony.

But these were problems for the future. In the meanwhile Gilmour was thinking big. Pollok-Gilmour

founded a Miramichi branch, a technically separate firm called Gilmour, Rankin & Co., after its junior partners James Gilmour (brother of Allan Sr.) and Alexander Rankin. It was created virtually from scratch in New Brunswick's thinly-populated north-east, with an impressive up-front investment of £7500. Exploiting the area's forest expanses required a more active role than a 'factor house's' traditional middleman role, purchasing commodities from producers already established in the area. Rankin-Gilmour went from extending loggers credit to entering the production sector itself, and mounted its own logging expeditions. The Miramichi properties eventually included a large sawmill, a store that stocked British imports, and a shipyard. Even the traumatic Great Fire of the Miramichi in 1825 could not brake the empire's momentum. A second branch had been spawned in the colony's single city St. John in 1822 (Robert Rankin & Co., with £10,800 capital). In 1828 Pollok-Gilmour expanded into the larger colony of Lower Canada, establishing both Allan Gilmour & Co. in Quebec (under the senior Gilmour's nephew Allan Gilmour Jr.) and William Ritchie & Co. (Ritchie was Gilmour's nephew) in Montreal: the total investment here was £10,000. By 1839 there were new sub-firms on the Restigouche River in northern New Brunswick, in the colony's north-east around Bathurst, and at Hamilton in Upper Canada. The company, once

worth £3000, was now doing business in the millions. The New Brunswick operations employed 5000 men and up to 2000 hired horses and oxen.<4> Bringing the logging operations food supplies--most of which came from outside the colony--was itself a massive task.

The sub-firms merited an original fashion of business arrangements. To restrict the home firm's liability, a branch house was founded officially in the name of the junior partner who maintained it, with the three senior partners equals. But in practice, as long as Gilmour was crisscrossing the ocean a junior partner would be receiving distinct orders from the Glaswegians, and know clearly what was expected of him. The new co-partnership agreements say much about the company's progress and evolving business sense.<5> The six articles are expanded to eleven. In one new provision Pollok-Gilmour promised to send the sub-firm any goods it required to pursue its business, charging it only their invoice price, freight costs and interest, with no additional commission fee. Another stipulated that a junior partner could only use the sub-firm's name in pursuing its regular business (which the senior partners would be kept aware of) and not for his own independent ventures; if he broke the rule, the sub-firm would not be responsible for such ventures (viz. redeeming losses). A third allowed a majority of the partners

(possibly the senior ones) eventually to close the firm down on six months' notice, in which case the junior partners promised to stay in their position long enough to sell off the sub-firm's assets. A fourth specified that each partner assigned himself his own share in the sub-firm, to ensure payment of any debts owed by partners to the company, or to each other. A final article provided that the agreement might be amended in future with extra articles and such amendments were to be recorded in the sub-firm's Sederunt Book.

The six familiar articles were added to in other places: the partners were given six months to raise their starting capital; the provision for a partner's death was extended to his bankruptcy; annual salary was £50 for each partner, but presiding junior partners were given £50 extra as managers; the junior partners promised to send the senior partners a monthly Day Book of their transactions, effective legal evidence; retirement only required six months notice, and payouts would be made over 18 months or even two years. Some of the earlier contract's omissions were now addressed. The Quebec partners were given an expense allowance of 50s. for every ship they loaded to entertain loggers and ship's officers (captains of ships being loaded by the company were to receive an average of three dinners, and other captains might be invited if they were potentially useful). In this case provisions were also made for

building storehouses and personal residences, though the junior partners were responsible for their own furniture. These agreements were more enforceable, as a £50 fine would be levied on partners who rejected the results of arbitration, and a £300 fine (£500 in the Quebec case) on those who violated the articles. There must have been greater preparation and thought, as the Miramichi and St. John contracts were drawn up at the time of the firms' inceptions, and the Quebec contract only a year later. And these contracts, with the aid of company lawyer George Young, were given the stamp that made them legally binding.

The attentive revisions in the branch-house articles were merited by the wide scope of these trans-Atlantic operations, in which partners rarely saw each other and gentleman's agreements were unfeasible. Pollok-Gilmour were pioneers in what was still a new type of business arrangement, with vertical integration of distribution and overseas production, only domestic retailing being omitted. Businesses such as the eighteenth-century tobacco trade and the contemporary Baltic timber trade took an active distributive role, and even supplied local producers, but the leading merchants of these firms visited producing areas less often, and did not go all the way to controlling production. Such organization was a harbinger of future

multinational business in an age when international communication would be easier. The company's responses to a situation where the power of central hierarchies was naturally limited bring to mind the challenges of mediaeval government. Choices for junior-partner positions were all-important. Junior partnership even seems comparable to the priesthood. (Marriage was largely frowned upon, partly because Gilmour's brother James, a Miramichi partner, entered into a marriage that Allan disapproved of, but also because partners were expected to concentrate on their work.) A typical junior partner was a first or second cousin of a senior partner, <6> came from the old Mearns school, and had worked his way from apprenticed clerk in the Glasgow office to experienced clerk in a sub-firm, to his own branch house. Not the least of Gilmour's achievements was in choosing the most capable, reliable men to serve the company in areas where their own judgement would often be crucial. He was also full of advice for his young underlings. <7> If this system had a flaw, it was in its excessive insularity: membership in the old-boy network was an irreplaceable asset, and outside talent was rarely brought in. And the somewhat feudal relationships that underpinned the empire were, like those of Charlemagne's realm, ultimately tenuous and dependent on a single man.

That man, Allan Gilmour Sr., had his hands full. <8>

By his own reckoning, he spent eight out of twenty-three annual seasons residing in America<9>, and spent an unnatural amount of time travelling from one important place to another. (Before the age of steam, it could take four months to cross the Atlantic.) A rough guide to the frequency of his absences from Glasgow is in the Glasgow Shipping Register <10>. This shows that in the 1820's and 1830's, he was listed as an absent partner for a third of the registrations of company ships. It also shows what journeys he was occupied with, revealing that he often went on domestic errands, to places such as London, Sunderland, and the Isle of Man. Both Folloks were always present, however, raising the question of why they could not have lessened Gilmour's burden at least on the domestic journeys.

Gilmour was a remarkably observant commercial traveller, even providing detailed information for potential future business opportunities. He kept a diary of his travels, sadly lost. But a letter and a diary section concerning his 1828 travels have survived, and illustrate his abilities well.<11> He was also highly skilled at business manoeuvring, as shown by an exploit carried out in the Canadas, probably in the 1828 season. Gilmour sent agents up the St. Lawrence and even up the Ottawa River to purchase orders of all the prospective timber before it was even shipped!<12> As a

result, he had a monopoly on all the timber that year and the other merchants had to buy from him on his terms to load their ships. (He performed this feat on at least one other occasion, in Norway in earlier times.) His pursuit of the firm's interests practically amounted to an obsession, and one wonders how capable he was of achieving personal happiness. Even toward the end of his tenure in 1838, he was taking pains (as in his 14 April letter to Quebec) to give his views on such matters as advanced methods for loading ships. He went out with a bang, sending letters to the younger partners that spring about the importance of keeping the right company and devoting themselves to their careers<13>.

As Gilmour built up his firm, he was becoming increasingly angry with the home partners. Arthur Pollok had maintained a store in Grangemouth from the early days, and the two brothers had their own concern-- Arthur Pollok & Co.--which was mentioned in the 1806 articles as completely within the main firm. But the Polloks had a habit of making important decisions independent of Gilmour. In 1825 they purchased a country estate at Broom, near Glasgow, for their leisure periods.<14> Gilmour was angered by this purchase, as he felt his partners should be spending all their time in Glasgow minding the business. (Gilmour concentrated so totally on the company's affairs that he was slow to understand that his associates might be somewhat less

devoted.) Then in 1829 the Polloks purchased a cotton mill at Broadley without consulting Gilmour, quite possibly with an eye to colonial exports.<15> This action reflected scant respect for the original articles which required such actions to be carried out jointly. Gilmour was livid, but the Polloks pleaded that the opportunity was one that had to be seized immediately before he could be consulted, and offered to separate the mills from the company concerns after a trial period. As it worked out, the matter was dropped if not forgotten. The Polloks tended to act as a brake on Gilmour's more ambitious schemes, and he often complained that the home partners only had a dim understanding of the business: witness his mention of the wine trade in the 1828 letter. He reproached them, presumably with justification, for letting him do all the spadework in projects such as the planned 1838 refurbishment of the company ships. The last straw came at the beginning of 1838, when Gilmour found out that the Polloks had purchased another estate at Lochliboside, and wondered how far their connivances would go.<16> He communicated to them his withdrawal from the firm--which was made public only in September and became effective the next New Year's--but the bitterness had barely begun: Gilmour's share in the firm came to only £164,500, far less than the one-third he felt he was at least worth.<17> Though this payout

was worth about 5 million in today's pounds, it is hard to believe that the Polloks could not have made a somewhat more generous deal for the man who had done so much to improve their fortunes, and their treatment of him seems distinctly shabby.

The letters of this period in SRA THH-77 tell a grim story.<18> Gilmour did not take this disappointment lying down. Aside from pursuing what he believed was his moral right, he apparently wanted to buy land to supplement his Hazledean estate near Glasgow, and spend his retirement as a member of the landed gentry. From his Hazledean estate near Glasgow he made plans to sue the Polloks for an extra £50,000 and, more importantly, tried unsuccessfully to fan the flames of rebellion among the American partners. Yet this boardroom campaign coincided with an economic depression that hit shipping hard, and the Polloks' control may well have been in serious question for a time. (The Polloks were not motivated by simple selfishness: they wanted to keep the company operating in the long term and were afraid of reducing their capital reserve too much, whereas Gilmour would have been happy to junk all the firms to extract what was due to him.) The junior partners had to choose which side they were on. Gilmour Jr. and the Rankin brothers chose the Polloks, quite possibly swayed by promotions to

senior partnership. Gilmour Sr. was crushed by the decision of his nephew, whom he had apparently been quite fond of, and cut him out of his will, to the latter's surprise. Ritchie took Gilmour's side and when defeated, withdrew from the firm. (A long court case followed concerning the expense allowances Ritchie had claimed.) Ritchie's brothers on the Restigouche also supported Gilmour Sr., but their firm was collapsing and they carried little clout. James Gilmour managed to stay neutral, retiring from the firm immediately. (He was paid out £63,500 less a penny, plus £9117.17/- in interest.<19>) Though he remained tight-lipped about the affair, he did suggest that Gilmour had been forced out of the firm.<20> He succeeded where Gilmour Jr. failed, at playing both sides of the field, and was the new beneficiary of the senior Gilmour's will.

The Polloks' suit against Ritchie (these proceedings were carried out in private sessions, in accordance with the contracts) resulted in a mixed judgement. Gilmour's suit for the extra fifty thousand dragged on to his 1848 death.<21> It was then succeeded by the junior Gilmour's suit against his uncle James, for the senior's legacy: Gilmour Jr. could not make himself believe that the senior had really disowned him. (The SRA THH-77 letters were presented as evidence in this case.) Gilmour Sr. seems to have spent his last years bad-mouthing the firm and declaring his curse over

it. And in point of fact, his departure was far from a blessing. In the often difficult years that followed, his successors could have used his advice and experience, instead of his hostility. Gilmour had left behind an empire that he had run almost single-handedly, and in any case it would not have been easy to develop a new leadership with anything like the same flair for hands-on management. But the firm had come a very long way in thirty-five years, and notwithstanding Gilmour's bitter words, would be around for a long time to come, thanks largely to Gilmour's earlier efforts. It was now at its peak, about to begin a long, slow decline.

NOTES

1. John Rankin cites legal evidence in the 1852 Gilmour v. Gilmour case in A History of Our Firm: Being Some Account of the Firm of Pollok, Gilmour & Co. and Its Offshoots and Connections 1804-1920 (Liverpool: Henry Young & Sons, 1921), pp. 15-16.

2. That Gilmour actually visited the Baltic regularly is made clear by his testimony before the 1835 timber duties committee in which he makes several first-hand observations on this region, P.P. 1835 XIX, pp. 235-49.

3. For a complete reproduction, see Appendix C.

4. Gilmour gave this estimate to the 1835 Parliamentary committee on timber duties, P.P. 1835 XIX p. 237.

5. See the articles for founding the 1812 Miramichi branch in UGD 36 1/8; ditto for the 1822 St. John branch in SRA THH-78; and for the 1828 Lower Canada branches ibid.

6. For specific details on the many relations between partners, see the genealogies in the addendum.

7. Gilmour's advice is found in some of the SRA THH-77 letters, such as one he sent to 'Shotts' Allan Gilmour, dated 30.4.36.

8. Rankin discusses Gilmour himself in op. cit., pp. 39-46.

9. From the same testimony as note <3>, p. 235.

10. Courtesy of the Glasgow Customs House.

11. See Appendix C for the diary section, the 10.8.1828 letter, and the 1838 Quebec letter mentioned below. John Rankin was surprisingly uninterested in Gilmour's observations, and he curtails his excerpt just as the party is reaching New York City!

12. Rankin, op. cit., pp. 41-2.

13. The 30.4.36 letter was copied and sent to other junior partners.

14. This purchase is attested to by an account of legal expenses incurred therein, in UGD 36 1/7.

15. See the correspondence between the senior partners dated 2.1.29 and 5.1.29, in SRA THH-77.

16. See Gilmour's letter to the Polloks dated 1.1.38 in SRA THH-77, which includes the complaint about participation in the ship refurbishment.

17. SRA THH-78 contains a receipt, and the 18.9.38 announcement of Gilmour's retirement in the Edinburgh Gazette. That it was not revealed in a Glasgow newspaper suggests the Polloks' reluctance to publicize the affair.

18. All letters in SRA THH-77 are summarized in the bibliography.

19. The receipt for James Gilmour's payout, like Allan Sr.'s, is to be found in SRA THH-78.

20. See James's letter to William Ritchie dated 13.4.40, in SRA THH-77.

21. Obituary notices for the senior partners, quoted from local newspapers, are mentioned in John Sheriff's 1907 memorandum in UGD 36 1/7.

Chapter III: The Overseas Firms

The individual sub-firms in Pollok-Gilmour's empire are worth examining in their own right. Even when Allan Gilmour Sr. was executing his detailed game plans, the day-to-day operations of the branch houses kept junior partners busy, and indeed offered them great leeway for making important decisions. After 1839, with no travelling central agent effectively to replace Gilmour, they came to emerge as virtually independent companies. When the official separation of the branch houses finally came in 1870, it was a recognition of the true state of things. Such a gradual divergence of interests reflected the physical and emotional distance between partners junior and senior, which had a cumulative effect over the decades. As old partners were replaced by new ones, bonds of consanguineity and the Mearns-school upbringing steadily weakened. (This process was visible in many timber-merchant firms of similar structure.<1>) This diffusion was a central cause of Pollok-Gilmour's decline. None of the branch houses, however, would make the leap from autonomous sub-firm to independent firm. Their founding partners often played a dominant personal role similar to the senior Gilmour. When they died, retired, or were promoted to Pollok-Gilmour's home firms, they might be succeeded by a new generation without the experience or ambition to fill their predecessors' shoes, who would rest on their

company's laurels and let things slide. By 1880, a scant decade later, all the branch houses had concluded their affairs. But like the home firms they had had their day. Over two generations they were the vanguard of the Pollok-Gilmour empire, and enjoyed considerable importance in their own North American environment. Their own achievements are not to be gainsaid.<2>

The first of the branch houses, Gilmour, Rankin & Co. was possibly the foremost. At its founding in 1812, north-eastern New Brunswick was largely an unpopulated expanse of virgin forest, except for a few French-speaking Acadians and Indians. For the last three decades almost all the colony's immigration had been into the St. John valley. Instead of turning to that area with already-established lumbering interests, Gilmour had the vision to understand the Miramichi's potential, and the planning mind to exploit it. Timber production in a relative void would be free of competition, and the new settlers that followed it would know who provided their living and whom they were expected to serve. The junior partners were Alexander Rankin (1789-1852) and James Gilmour, brother of the senior Allan. Alexander was clearly the one in charge, and James seems to have been something of a non-entity. Later, Richard Hutchison took James's place after his 1841 retirement, and directed the sub-firm after

Alexander's 1852 death. He was quite competent, though he could never quite manage to escape from under Alexander's enormous shadow.<3> Gilmour-Rankin ceased its business activities a short while after the 1870 separation, and unlike the other sub-firms, its debts seem to have been redeemed 100% by Hutchison.<4>

In a business environment without a class of primary producers to provide timber, Gilmour-Rankin ended up filling the production role. It equipped, sent out, and kept supplied many winter woodcutting expeditions that floated their booty downriver in the spring floods. The loggers generally had to build their own roads. To supply them, the company shipped in sugar and molasses from the West Indies, biscuit and tea from Britain, and pork from Boston and Montreal (hence the interest Gilmour Sr. showed in the pork-packing businessman on his 1828 tour). Credit was a vital element in such a cash-poor economy, and sometimes got out of hand. The company store that served the area, which offered commodities from Britain herself, and even spices and other re-exported goods, frequently paid its employees in kind. The partners built Douglastown as a company town on the north bank of the Miramichi. The contemporary observer Robert Cooney wrote that 'to the influence and patronage of these gentlemen, may be ascribed, in a very eminent degree, the present improved state of the town, as well as the character and utility

of the school.'<5> It was originally called Gretna Green, but a memorable 1825 visit by the colonial governor William Douglas facilitated the change to a less embarassingly romantic name. Also in 1825 came an extreme crisis in the Great Fire of the Miramichi, which claimed 160 lives and caused £200,000 in damage. Gilmour-Rankin lost £40,000, including £15,000 in stores and merchandise: all their buildings were destroyed, so the story goes, except for a shed that housed a corpse awaiting burial<6>. The sub-firm's resurgence was remarkable. It rebuilt both its imposing new sawmill and its shipyard, which built vessels on contract to local businessmen, often for sale in Britain, and later provided ships for the Pollok-Gilmour line. In 1840 100 ships left the Miramichi carrying Gilmour-Rankin loads.<7> Trade recessions, especially severe in semi-developed economies, were survived. An important underlying factor in Gilmour-Rankin's resilience, and in its ability to undertake long-term investments, was the empire's reserves of capital back in Glasgow. That the home firm could back the branch house's borrowing in a pinch--and this assistance must have been needed more than once--made a great difference.

So did Alexander Rankin. Alexander was the dean of the overseas partners, and the empire's leading light in

America.<8> As well as his own branch, he also held a share in the St. John firm and must certainly have influenced those in Bathurst and on the Restigouche. His function naturally became more important after the senior Gilmour's 1838 retirement, and he was promoted to senior partner. Alexander was the only senior partner to stay at his American post instead of coming to a home office; he clearly must have been more useful where he was. Merchants like Rankin combined ultra-frugal business practices and personal generosity in a uniquely Scottish way. (An anecdote tells of Hutchison extracting a full mortgage payment from an impoverished widow, then giving her a dress more valuable than any the town had seen before<9>.) Rankin concerned himself with the welfare of the local Indians, though he fretted that they were unreliable workers: an Indian legend suggests that his own house was spared in the 1825 fire because of his generous spirit <10>. (He bestowed £25 on every local Protestant church in his will, and donated a bell to the Catholic church.) He personally dominated the district, and was elected to the House of Assembly in 1827. He died in Britain in 1852, and the people of Douglastown gave him a second funeral, where they buried an empty coffin.

Robert Rankin & Co., founded in St. John at the mouth of the likewise-named river in 1822, faced a different challenge. This generation-old city had had

an established merchant class from the days of the first Loyalist settlements, and Rankin & Co. faced far more competition than Gilmour-Rankin. It could not be established on its own terms here, yet the city was the colony's undisputed centre of shipping and other trade, and well-worn paths led to settlements with plentiful timber nearby. Cultivating interior production and transport for the timber supply sometimes required the services of intermediaries like W.J. Bedell. Bedell was a broker in the upriver colonial capital Fredericton, who by 1840 was providing Rankin & Co. with gossip about developments in the administration--particularly regarding timber-cutting licences--and other information, as well as representing it before the Crown Lands Office. Bedell provided intelligence for several firms, but Rankin & Co. was clearly his most important client.<11> In town, the firm looked to the shipping end of the empire, and built wharves, warehouses, a large general store, stores for selling coal and salt, and in almost no time a productive, high-quality shipyard. Many of the early Pollok-Gilmour ships like the Marchioness of Queensbury were built there. In the 1830's Pollok-Gilmour's was quite profitable indeed, operating

sawmills on the Nashwaak River and selling imports to almost half the merchants of St. John.<12> In acquiring such a large share of the import market, the company was beating the older firms at their own game. Once again, the connection with Glasgow's capital and shipping acumen was decisive. In a city whose competitive bustle brings Liverpool to mind, such an achievement is not to be gainsaid.

The credit for this success belongs to, more than any other individual, the junior partner Robert Rankin. The firm, requiring a large upfront investment, had been established with an unusual six partners in 1822: the three senior partners, Robert and his brother Alexander, and Allan Gilmour, who served for six years as a junior partner without management responsibilities. But Rankin & Co. was basically a one-man operation. It was little wonder that Rankin was promoted to senior partner in 1838, and came home to establish Pollok-Gilmour's new house in Liverpool itself. His St. John experience suited him perfectly to this position. The importance of his talents to the St. John firm can be seen in its fate after he left. Maintaining the house in a heated business environment in the difficult 1840's would have been difficult enough for able men, and John Pollok Jr. (nephew of the senior partner) and George Young Jr. (son of the lawyer) were clearly not up to the task. Young was sent out in 1839 at the age of only 19, and it is

difficult to imagine why the Polloks chose him, unless they wanted to ensure his father's support in the struggle with Gilmour Sr. Young performed so poorly that he was denied the full junior partnership he had expected for 1841. Anecdote suggests that Pollok Jr. came into the office late in the morning at earliest, and left in the afternoon; while Young came in the evening and cancelled out the little work that Pollok Jr. had done.<13> They had come at a bad time for new partners, with affairs at the top unsettled and few experienced colleagues like Gilmour Sr. available for advice. After Pollok Jr.'s death in 1852, Francis Ferguson was transferred from Bathurst to take his place. Ferguson and Young got along so badly that the latter was recalled four years later. The firm closed in 1876, the year after Ferguson's death.

Gilmour Sr. took an early interest in the Canadas, visiting Montreal as early as 1824 <14>, and this was the next focus of expansion. Allan Gilmour & Co. (its junior partner was Gilmour Jr.) was established in Quebec in the busy year of 1828, and was the most traditional of the branch houses in its 'factor house' methods, content with purchasing timber produced by others. Another purchase was of grain, sometimes ground into flour, for the British market. Its operations centre was at Wolfe's Cove, chosen in accordance with

the senior Gilmour's counsel, and expanded into Indian Cove on the other side of the St. Lawrence River. Its shipyards produced some colossal timber ships for Pollok-Gilmour, such as the Advance which measured 1466 tons. It was also the nub for the trade routes taking imports and exports between Britain and the empire's Montreal and Hamilton branches, reaching into both Upper and Lower Canada. In 1838 Gilmour Jr. came home to take his uncle's place in Glasgow, and was replaced by his brothers John and David Gilmour. (A fourth brother, a second James Gilmour, joined the firm in 1841, but was so unreliable he lasted less than seven years.) David died in 1857, leaving John to manage the firm alone until his death twenty years later. Gilmour Jr. had remained a partner even after his 1870 retirement from Glasgow, sentimentality outweighing economy, and was left to pick up the pieces. He closed his interests at the end of 1877. His son, later the baronet Sir John Gilmour, entered into a partnership with businessmen from the firm (to please his father?) but after one Canadian visit that summer severed his links, so Gilmour & Co. may be said to have reached its conclusion in 1878.

William Ritchie & Co. of Montreal was started the same year as Gilmour & Co., and was made official by the same contract. From this base the firm operated in both Canadas, eventually building sawmills on the Ottawa

River. Montreal was the financial centre of British North America, and Ritchie & Co. provided the other Pollok-Gilmour branches with important intermediate credit services. Its sophistication was sufficient to make the senior partners feel threatened, and the Quebec-Montreal contract stipulates that arbitration must be carried out by British mediators. This clause turned out to be relevant, for Ritchie and his superiors could not agree on how great his expense allowance should be, despite the details in their contract. (The issue was less important for rural sub-firms.) Ritchie built a house for the firm's other businessmen and maintained a horse and carriage which he considered necessary for a businessman's stature, charging the expense to Glasgow. When he retired in 1842 the company settled on his terms, fearing the mischief he might do in the senior Gilmour's cause, then took him to court. The amount under dispute was only 1500, but the principal was important to both parties, and closed deliberations led to the mixed verdict of 1848.<15> Ritchie was replaced by the assiduous Allan Gilmour of Shotts (the empire had four Allan Gilmours, including the son of James who spent a period at the Miramichi branch), who moved the firm's headquarters to the growing town of Ottawa, on the border between Upper and Lower Canada, which was much closer to its production. 'Shotts' Allan, however, continued to do

most of his business at the Montreal end until 1853, when his Ottawa subordinates had proved so poor he had to take over personally. The partners took the unusual step of renaming the firm Allan Gilmour & Co. after 'Shotts' Allan, an especially strange move as the Quebec firm had the same name! (Did this hatred of Ritchie's memory also contribute to the decision to move to Ottawa?) After 1853 the Montreal end became an effectively autonomous firm, its manager meeting 'Shotts' Allan only once a year. After four disappointing years under James Gilmour, Thomas MacDuff was put in charge. MacDuff later squandered the firm's assets on pork speculation--he was warned to desist but, like a compulsive gambler, thought he could recoup his losses with a little luck--and he absconded in 1877. John Gilmour drowned himself in the icy St. Lawrence soon after. The last of the branch houses, this firm was liquidated in 1879.<16>

Francis Ferguson & Co. was a northeastern outgrowth of Gilmour-Rankin centred at the town of Bathurst. It seems to have been an autonomous operation from around 1832, but did not receive its articles until 1841 when the empire was being reorganized.<17> As managed by Ferguson, it was a fairly undistinguished branch, though it built sawmills, a wharf, and a small shipyard. Francis's brother John, originally an outdoor production

supervisor, joined the partnership in 1852, and became manager on Francis's transfer to St. John four years later. John Ferguson Jr. also took an important role. In its later years the firm ran consistently heavy losses, and it ended in liquidation in 1878. Nearby in the northern New Brunswick ports of Campbellton and Dalhousie was Arthur Ritchie & Co., the least successful of the branch houses. It commenced operations around 1833, and its junior partners were William Ritchie's brothers Arthur and Robert. Its timber was often substandard and over-measured, particularly Dalhousie's output <18>, and the firm became a chronic headache to the senior partners. The partnership ended with Robert's 1842 death and Arthur conducted his Restigouche business independently hereafter.

The branch house about which least is known is John Young & Co. in Hamilton, Upper Canada. It seems to have commenced toward 1836 and folded around 1841: if it had started earlier or finished later greater mention would surely have been made of it than the little that has survived<19>. Most revealing is the letter of advice sent to the young resident partner by Gilmour Sr. It shows that 'Shotts' Allan Gilmour spent several years there, selling dry goods, before being transferred to Montreal. The sub-firm's appearance was badly-timed, coming just before a trade slump, but the senior partners may simply have been too impatient to allow it

time to develop. In all certainty, Young & Co. was curtailed when 'Shotts' Allan was transferred to Montreal to replace William Ritchie.

The reorganization of this period included one expansion into a new field. For a while Pollok-Gilmour had been taking part in the growing cotton trade, bringing it to Liverpool from ports in the American South. By 1843 this trade had become lucrative and important to the firm, with a Pollok-Gilmour branch established in Liverpool. A branch house called Hoghton, Rankin & Co. was now commenced in New Orleans.<20> This firm not only exported cotton: it imported coal, iron and whiskey, and exported maize to famine-stricken Ireland. Its junior partner, George William Hoghton, was an exception among the empire's various partners in having a background different from the Mearns school. An English Catholic, he had been brought into the Liverpool firm by Robert Rankin and risen quickly. The later empire could have used more men like him. In 1854, he came home to the Liverpool firm. About the same time, Pollok-Gilmour expanded into Mobile, Alabama, establishing Pollok, Hoghton & Co., under a third John Pollok, which had close links with Hoghton-Rankin. But the whole business came to nothing in 1861, when the American Civil War broke out, the Union Navy placed the southern Confederacy under blockade, and Admiral

Farragut occupied New Orleans. Pollok-Gilmour lost a great deal of property, and had difficulty obtaining compensation.

Pollok-Gilmour made one other attempt at establishing an overseas branch house. In 1849 John and William Pollok (John later went to Mobile) sailed to Calcutta to start a firm that would employ the company ships in the legendary Indian trade. The firm was probably specifically interested in the sub-continent's cotton, and may have planned on shipping it to Hull.<21> This ambitious project, however, was aborted when the junior partners took sick and had to return home, absent less than two years. (William died shortly after, at the age of 21.) How far this new venture might have progressed, and whether it might have turned the company's fortunes around, remains a mystery.

NOTES

1. Arthur R.M. Lower, Great Britain's Woodyard: British North America and the Timber Trade, 1763-1867 (Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1973), p. 144.

2. The greater part of information about the branch houses is known through John Rankin's A History of Our Firm. The Miramichi firm is discussed in Chapter II, pp. 49-63; St. John in III, pp. 64-89; Quebec in IV, pp. 90-105; Montreal in V, pp. 106-20; Hamilton in VI, p. 121; the Restigouche in VII, pp. 122-3; Bathurst in VIII, pp. 124-29; New Orleans and Mobile in X, pp. 147-62; Calcutta on pp. 179-80.

3. Louise Manny mentions that Hutchison was notorious for his bad temper and records that a balladeer working in one of Hutchison's lumber camps composed a ditty: 'Here's young Hutch,/ He don't say much,/ But tells us to keep sober,/ We'll get our money by and by,/ When these hard times is over.' Quoted by Mary Peck, The Bitter with the Sweet: New Brunswick 1604-1984 (Tantallon, Nova Scotia: Four East Publications, 1983), p. 58.

4. Rankin, op. cit., p. 63.

5. Robert Cooney, A Compendious History of the Northern Part of the Province of New Brunswick (Halifax, N.S.: Joseph Howe, 1832), p. 108.

6. For a florid contemporary description of this fire--including the estimate of general damage--see Cooney, ibid., pp.63-71. For the estimate of the damage to Gilmour-Rankin, see Graeme Wynn, Timber Colony, pp. 125-6.

7. See Appendix B, Table XI, for a table of Gilmour-Rankin's shipments 1830-69; and Table XIV for statistics on general Miramichi trade 1828-30.

8. John Rankin describes Alexander Rankin in op. cit., pp. 55-60.

9. Louise Manny, Ships of the Miramichi (Sackville, N.B.: Tribune Press, n.d.), p. 47.

10. Esther Clark Wright, The Miramichi (Sackville, N.B.: Tribune Press, 1945), p. 42.

11. Wynn, op. cit., pp. 122-3.

12. For details on Bedell and on Rankin & Co.'s 1830's activity, see ibid., pp. 121-3.

13. Rankin, ibid., p. 88.

14. So reveals the Glasgow Shipping Register, in the 1824 bill of registration for the Broom.

15. UGD 36 2/1 contains a detailed report by the sessions, including each side's charges and counter-charges, an exhaustive audit of the profitable sub-firm's accounts, and the investigator's conclusion.

16. Notice of the 1879 closure was published in the Ontario Gazette on 15.11.79, reproduced in UGD 36 1/7.

17. These articles are to be found in UGD 36 1/8.

18. See William Ritchie's letters dated 28.3.40 and 15.5.40 in SRA THH-77.

19. Gilmour Sr. sent a 30.4.36 letter to 'Shotts' Allan at Hamilton; the 26.3.41 announcement of William Ritchie's retirement mentions the firm (UGD 36 1/8); as does William Ritchie in a 19.3.41 letter to Gilmour Sr. (ibid.). No articles of co-partnership seem to have survived for John Young & Co.

20. Articles of co-partnership for both the New Orleans and Mobile firms are to be found in UGD 36 1/8.

21. A possibility suggested by Dr. Gordon Jackson, based on his own research into Hull's trade.

Chapter IV: Pollok-Gilmour as a Shipping Firm

The Pollok-Gilmour empire shipped a huge volume of goods across the Atlantic. Timber alone accounted for over six million cubic feet per year.<1> For such a scale of operations, many timber firms chose to purchase and even build their own vessels, and Pollok-Gilmour did both in a big way. In the years before 1812, the company had already purchased some second-hand ships in Britain. The first was most likely a coasting brig called the Mary <2>, and vessels like the Oxford and the Mariner followed in the 1820's. Though the firm's ships were all purchased at first, before long they were being built in its own shipyards in Saint John, Quebec, and the Miramichi. By 1824 the Pollok-Gilmour fleet amounted to 78 vessels, the largest measuring 700 tons.<3> It eventually surpassed 100. The firm by no means relied solely on these ships to move its commodities, so by 1834 it was transporting over 300 cargoes a season, and in 1850 the St. John sub-firm alone loaded 130 ships; on occasion as many as 50 such vessels were simultaneously sailing up the Mersey.<4> The core of the fleet was about 20 timber ships which crossed the North Atlantic regularly, between Glasgow or Liverpool and New Brunswick or Quebec, of which one or two would be brand new, three-quarters colonial-built, and most measuring 500 to 700 tons (a few weighed slightly less).<5> The line was managed from Glasgow, though Liverpool was becoming more and more important.

The bulk of Pollok-Gilmour's trade was of course wood. Timber was a bulky, durable cargo that required a less high-quality vessel than usual, and aging ships that were no longer good enough for other trades were often made timber carriers. It was also highly seasonal, as seen by the large number of timber ships that sailed to America carrying only ballast.<6> In the colonies there was a huge demand for the products of the British industrial revolution, and the profit from such trade was pure gravy, but purchasing and loading this cargo took time and it was important to move the timber quickly. Gilmour provided the 1835 Parliamentary committee with valuable estimates about the trade. They show American deals costing around 30s./load at the American end, lower than most Baltic equivalents, New Brunswick timber (yellow pine) a pound a ton or 23s./load, Quebec yellow pine 17s./load (the Canadas had far more virgin forest than New Brunswick), and Quebec red pine about 30s./load, on a par with Baltic timber. For this typical load of New Brunswick yellow pine timber, Gilmour added a 2% insurance charge (the average for spring and fall, coming to sixpence), 34s. freight costs (more for timber coming from the busy port of Quebec, red pine especially), 10s. duty and 2s.6p. landing charges, and added 2% interest and 4% agent's commission to the 70s. subtotal to make a grand total of

74s.2p. (Quebec yellow pine similarly cost a total of 71s. 10 1/2p., red pine 91s.5p.)<7> The high foreign duty insured that Continental competitors would import only a small fraction of the colonial total, though home demand had grown so much that even they were importing more than in the boom years at the turn of the century.<8> Even after 1842 this imbalance was not immediately altered. Pollok-Gilmour also imported some timber from other areas such as Florida and the Pacific coast of North America.

In one case, the account for a Pollok-Gilmour timber carrier's voyage has survived.<9> In 1841 the Lady Falkland brought a load of yellow pine (as well as deals, red pine, birch, staves and a few lathes) from St. John to Port-Glasgow, where it was sold at public sale, under M. Jamieson's supervision, on 25 November. The agents in charge of selling the timber, John Laird & Sons, sent an account of revenues and expenses to Pollok-Gilmour dated 21 January. The wood was sold for £3103.7/2, half of it being bought by four firms. From this total Laird & Sons deducted £41.4/2, mostly their own 1% commission but also the expenses for advertising the sale and entertaining the buyers, leaving proceeds of £3062.3/-. Against this were expenses of £2417.15/9 in bills, but also £492.14/10 for cash remittances (credit was tight at this time), 88s.5p. for stamps officializing the bills, and £20.11/7 in discounts to

obtain cash settlements, for a grand total of £2935.10/7. The balance of £126.12/5, a profit margin of 4%, was on the slender side, reflecting the current slump in the timber trade. Laird & Sons add that they cannot yet produce this balance, as most of the buyers furnished bills of credit instead of cash, and that there was no demand for the staves, so they have advised their broker to sell at clearance prices. The account also mentions £507.1/- paid in duties at St. John, as well as £23.7/8 in other expenses incurred there; and £172.10/3 in disbursements of the 'Lady Falkland,' including 68 in Captain Hubbert's salary, £23.11/- in harbour duties, and other expenses including pilotage and towing into Glasgow, a fee that provided for harbour lights, and payments to John Laird & Co.

Another revealing document is Captain Francis Scott's statement of damages done to his 1156-ton Pollok-Gilmour ship the Ronachan by a collision, notarized at Quebec on 27 July, 1860.<10> The Ronachan, having left Liverpool on 25 May with coal and iron, was nearing her destination on the night of 1 July when the incident happened. She was struck by the Advance (a barque registered in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, and heading for Belfast) when the latter failed to heed the Ronachan's warnings. The damaged ship went directly to Quebec where Captain Scott immediately reported the collision. The vessel was repaired at the

company shipyards as quickly as possible, a Lloyd's agent providing a survey to register the repairs. The expenses were underwritten by the Merchant's Commission, an agency which advanced cash at 5% interest. The statement of expenses--excluding the value of the four working days the ship spent in repairs--is \$298 to the Quebec sub-firm for its repair work, \$81.75 to the sailmaker William Hunt, \$127.01 to William Hamilton, a connection of the firm who provided ropes and sundries, \$10 for the Lloyds survey (the agent seems to have thought the vessel measured less than 1000 tons and charged accordingly), \$20 for the Notary's fee, and \$26.84 for the Merchant's Commission interest: a grand total of \$563.60 (or £117.8/4 sterling). The British structures that served the shipping trade had penetrated the colonies to an impressive degree. Also revealed are uncertainties of exchange: a pound was normally worth \$5, but Hunt, who still did his accounts in pounds, operated at a four-to-one exchange rate. Scott was thus able to send an invoice to the Advance's owners (or insurers) and proceed on the return voyage without excessive delay.

As this affair shows, Pollok-Gilmour had its share of shipwrecks and accidents, and some provisions had to be made for disaster. Before the age of iron ships, direct insurance of the actual cargoes was rare, and it

was the ships themselves that were insured. Insurance was expensive, and shipowners sometimes formed societies to provide insurance to each member. Pollok-Gilmour took to self-insuring, absorbing up to a third of a ship's risk on the firm's own account, and Gilmour Sr. himself says that 'the bulk' of the company profits were achieved in this way.<11> Self-insurance helped make safety an especially great concern for Pollok-Gilmour: whereas the average ship had a crew of four men for every hundred tons--more for small ships, less for the larger ones--Pollok-Gilmour vessels tended to carry five despite their size.<12> (In another safety consideration, Pollok-Gilmour was among the first shipping lines to operate liquor-free vessels.) Such measures were fruitful, and only a minority of the firm's ships were lost at sea. Vessels giving more than twenty years service were not uncommon, while those that lasted less than ten were few.<13> But extra manning could be expensive--sailors of the British Empire demanded much higher wages and better food than their Baltic counterparts--and smaller ships, where fixed costs like the masters' salaries weighed heavily, were often unprofitable. The early 1830's was a time of thin margins, and one approach developed to tip the balance in the direction of profit was to urge the ships to make more than one west-to-east voyage in a single season, crossing the Atlantic three times almost nonstop.

Pollok-Gilmour offered a hundred-pound prize to the first ship to accomplish this feat,, and the Marchioness of Queensbury won. By the 1840's three-fifths of the timber carriers were doing this<14>, a major cause for ships only carrying ballast going east-to-west as time was now more important than ever.

Another profitable technique was diversification.<15> Imports from America could also include grains and flour, ashes for fertilizer, maize, fish, turpentine, apples, or even nuts. Wheat from the Canadas was such a common export that partners sometimes speculated about its price.<16> British exports to America were highly varied, reflecting the wide range of colonial demand. One common item was sails and other equipment for ships: at the very least, if demand was low the colonial firms could use the goods in their own shipyards. Hardware was also easy to move. Wine was carried often, as Gilmour Jr. finally succeeded in convincing the Polloks of the trade's value. Coal and metals had a reliable market, as America was only starting to develop its huge potential in this area of production. The same was true of many British manufactures, and textiles, shoes, chairs, and books were all exported. In the early 1830's over £100,000 worth were being moved every year. <17> (And there were also emigrants.) But many firms were aware of the great American markets, and total colonial exports burgeoned

over the decades. Supply managed to grow faster than demand, and by the mid-1830's prices were falling. Gilmour Sr., speaking before an 1833 Parliamentary committee, even fretted that the trade was no longer very profitable <18>, and the practice of sending ships to America without cargo had another reason to increase. But one alternative American commodity was so lucrative and attained such a great volume that it assumed a unique importance, second only to timber. That import was cotton.

Cotton textiles were the first goods to be manufactured through the large-scale production methods of Great Britain's industrial revolution, and for a long while the most important, yet the United Kingdom could not grow cotton. As with timber, British merchants looked far and wide to find primary producers, and the trade transformed national economies like India and Egypt, sometimes to the point of distortion. After the cotton gin revolutionized production at the beginning of the century, the subtropical southern states of the U.S.A. became the major supplier for factories in cities like Manchester and Glasgow. While American ships dominated the trade bringing imports into America, they faced serious competition for the cotton-export trade not from British ships, but from British North American vessels. When demand boomed in the 1830's, timber

carriers entered the trade in a big way. Timber ships were well-suited to the cotton trade, as cotton was also a light, bulky commodity and their shallow drafts enabled them to enter the port of New Orleans through the difficult Mississippi delta. Another consideration was the winter season, when the North Atlantic was too stormy for timber shipments and this trade offered employment in warmer seas for vessels that would otherwise have been idle. Besides New Orleans, other major cotton ports were Mobile, Charleston, and Savannah. The chief British port for cotton was Liverpool--already an important timber centre--as it was close to England's industrial North-West. Pollok-Gilmour entered this trade, which led to new houses in New Orleans and Mobile and partly to the Liverpool house itself. (It is no coincidence that Hoghton-Rankin was founded at practically the same time as Rankin-Gilmour.)

Pollok-Gilmour's many ships were managed from Glasgow, where most were registered. Glasgow was the natural place for the empire's centre. Besides being the senior partners' home, it was the 'Second City' of the British Empire, providing a sound base in several ways. Its port, one of the most active in active Britain, provided a wide range of services for shipping lines. It had a striving entrepreneurial class--Adam Smith was a native son--and a network of capital and home distribution was available. It was also a growing

industrial city, with a great demand for commodities like timber and cotton. Pollok-Gilmour wood was used to build Clydeside cotton mills and provided joists, beams and wainscotting for many local houses. Most Pollok-Gilmour imports here came through Port-Glasgow, with J. Laird & Sons (and sometimes A. MacLachlan & Co.) serving as agent; some came through Greenock, where the company agent was D. Weir & Co. Only London and Liverpool could match Glasgow's conditions, and the company duly expanded into those cities eventually. But other cities were not completely ignored. The great ship renovation project of 1838 took place in four ports, including Hull. The business of selling took the Allan Gilmours to many cities, including Bristol, Carlisle, Newcastle, and Sunderland. At first the firm did its London Business through the John William Jaffray agency, and its Liverpool business through Duncan Gibb, the leading Liverpool timber merchant in 1830. The Glasgow firm also had considerable financial functions, many of which were devolved to Liverpool in later years.

Pollok-Gilmour must have set up its own Liverpool house in 1838 because it had comprised such a large proportion of Gibb's business: in 1839 the new firm of Rankin-Gilmour imported about 9235 tons (5.09%), whereas Duncan Gibb fell to 8741 tons (4.78%) from 13,002 (11.0%) in 1830.<19> Liverpool had become the chief port

for American timber, taking in almost 75,000 tons in 1820, almost 100,000 in 1830, over 150,000 in 1839, and over 200,000 in 1850.<20> (Its Baltic imports, by contrast, remained around 15,000.) Between 1844 and 1853 an average of ca. 450 timber ships were entering the port each year, and 1852 wood imports were worth about 1.3 million. Large inventories accumulated: by 1 February 1850 the city stockyards in the south end had surpassed 250,000 square yards and contained over 8 million feet of timber weighing 150,000 tons and worth ca. 550,000, prompting proposals for new storage areas in the north end.<21> Most of the wood passed out of Merseyside, on canals and even trains, going as far away as London. The American timber trade here was an oligopoly dominated by a handful of large firms, most of which owned ships and avoided issuing commissions. By 1839 almost two-thirds of all wood coming into Liverpool came from ten companies--Rankin-Gilmour was number six, and rose to number four in 1850, importing 9946 tons (4.16%).<22> The contemporary writer Braithwaite Poole observed 'scarcely a dozen regular importers and only about a score dealers...nearly all of whom have recently amassed fortunes.'<23> Rankin-Gilmour, like many other timber merchants, unloaded its ships at Brunswick Dock.

Not all of Pollok-Gilmour's trade was on the North Atlantic routes. One lucrative import which emerged at a critical time was guano. In 1842 the company, not yet

recovered from Gilmour Sr.'s departure and the accompanying uncertainty, was reeling from a serious trade recession and faced further difficulties from Parliament's moves toward less unequal timber duties. It bore a huge surfeit of empty ships which could not find cargoes. But a new opportunity appeared: bird droppings from the Galapagos Islands were now fetching high prices as fertilizer. There was a little-known island off south-western Africa called Ichaboe rich in the same substance, and the idleness of many ships was now an asset. Many timber carriers became guano carriers, and Pollok-Gilmour's were among the early ones. As fertilizer was in demand among farmers, guano was often brought to minor British Isles ports like Cork, rarely exploited by the timber and cotton trades. The result was a windfall that lasted several years, kept the shipping line occupied (some vessels were sent to the Galapagos) and may well have single-handedly saved the empire from collapse. Such was the kind of resourcefulness that distinguished the firm in its early days and would be depleted in its later years. Of the 1503 round voyages by Pollok-Gilmour ships between 1846 and 1873, only 1151 carried timber, and 352 carried cotton and guano.<24>

To what extent did Pollok-Gilmour engage in trade outside its most familiar channels? As early as 1835

Gilmour Sr. had testified that his ships were making the occasional voyage to Sierra Leone in northwestern Africa.<25> It was a short distance from Ichaboe to Cape Town, which must have been a common destination of guano ships. The abundance of unoccupied vessels in the 1840's encouraged wide-ranging voyages. Thus, the Agnes Gilmour was lost off Cape Horn in 1849. To some extent, Pollok-Gilmour ships went around the Cape of Good Hope, and by 1850 Rankin-Gilmour was importing sugar from Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. In 1850 a sub-firm was ambitiously started in India itself, but it came to nothing because of its junior partners' ill-health. One wonders how the senior Gilmour would have handled this challenge. With his enthusiasm for new schemes, perhaps he would have refused to accept defeat and sent out new men. Or he might well have recruited more experienced, reliable men in the first place. Yet India must have afforded a new, somewhat unknown type of commerce, and how it would have adapted is a difficult question to answer. At any rate, the firm's 'golden age' of adventurousness would henceforth be past.

N O T E S

1. Scottish Field, November 10, 1910; quoted by John Rankin in A History of Our Firm, pp. 28-9.

2. Basil Lubbock, The Last of 'the Windjammers (Glasgow: Brown, Son & Ferguson, 1927), pp.77-8. Lubbock thinks it may be the 'Mariner', but that vessel was only registered in 1825, 13 years after the 'Mary' had taken Alexander Rankin and James Gilmour to the Miramichi.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. So Gilmour Sr. testified before the 1835 Parliamentary committee, P.P. 1835 XIX, p.239.

6. About three-fifths of the total by the mid-1840's: see Appendix C.

7. See the same volume as note <5>, with information on base prices on p.238, details of additional costs on pp.248-9.

8. Compare 1840 figures in P.P. 1843 LV, pp. 113-4, with 1800-18 figures in P.P. 1821 VI.

9. It is to be found in UGD 36 1/7. For more information on sundry shipping expenses, see the letter written to a ship captain in Appendix C.

10. It is to be found in UGD 36 1/6.

11. From Gilmour Sr.'s testimony before an 1833 Parliamentary committee investigating timber duties, P.P. 1833 VI p. 529.

12. Ibid., p. 528.

13. See Appendix A for specific information on longevity of Pollok-Gilmour ships.

14. See P.P. 1846 XLV, pp. 401-403.

15. The Clyde Bill of Entry (microfilm viewed in the Glasgow Reading Room in the Mitchell Library) provides considerable information about various commodities carried by Pollok-Gilmour and other Glasgow-based firms.

16. See William Ritchie's 13.3.40 letter to Gilmour Sr. in SRA THH-77.

17. Gilmour Sr., P.P. 1835 XIX, p. 235.
18. P.P. 1833 VI, p. 531.
19. David M. Williams' slightly 'conservative estimate, based on the *cargoes* of ships entering Liverpool, from 'Merchanting in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century: The Liverpool Timber Trade,' Business History VIII 1966, pp. 103-21.
20. Ibid,, p. 107.
21. Braithwaite Poole, The Commerce of Liverpool (London: Longman & Co., 1854), pp. 9-14.
22. Williams, op. cit., pp. 108-9, 120-21.
23. Poole, op. cit., p. 9.
24. Frederick William Wallace, In the Wake of the Wind-Ships (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1927), p. 80.
25. P.P. 1835 XIX, p. 235.

Chapter V: Shipbuilding and Other Colonial Investments

Firms like Pollok-Gilmour produced considerable amounts of capital for their colonial enterprises. The company's Quebec lumber yard alone was worth fifty thousand pounds.<1> Even stores could have large initial costs. Such investments of course formed an important part of the economic development of what were still young colonies. Less fortunate developing economies have been limited to primary-producer roles--often without choice--selling their resources to dominant nations which then refined them and produced manufactured goods. Taking this process to an extreme, Great Britain would import raw jute from India, weave it into sacks in Lancashire, and export the resulting textiles to the original sub-continent. A colony like New Brunswick, on the other hand, managed to mitigate its dependence on a single export, in this case timber, by building sawmills and shipyards with which to refine their resources so as to export manufactures. Though enterprises like shipbuilding were not permanently important, they were crucial in the short term. Much of this secondary production resulted from local investment by native entrepreneurs, but British firms often had relatively great capital resources to draw on, springing from the mother country's modern industrial economy. They could play an especially important role in virgin territory like the Miramichi. This function was Pollok-Gilmour's most permanent legacy: helping to build a

nation.

From the start, not all of New Brunswick's wood exports were of raw timber. Some were processed in sawmills, into shingles, lathwood, staves, and especially spruce deals (thin planks). At first lumber products were of very minor importance: in 1820 almost two-thirds of Britain's imported deals came from the Continent, with only a tiny amount coming from New Brunswick.<2> In these boom years pine timber provided ample profits and there was no great need to delay shipment with processing; more importantly, processing facilities simply did not exist. But as the most valuable pine forests were increasingly reduced--New Brunswick's red pine was largely depleted in a few decades--and a shipping suffered from overcapacity, competition heated up. In this business climate the relatively untouched spruce, suited to deal production, was increasingly attractive. By 1830 the Miramichi alone had 18 sawmills (and 13 grist mills).<3> The early sawmills were of a small scale, relying on water power from the many New Brunswick streams. With the shakeout of timber firms in the late 1820's and early 1830's, greater investments were made, sawmills increased in size, and output became sizeable. In 1839 exported deals, boards, and battens together exceeded pine timber in value for the first time.<4> Steam-powered sawmills

emerged and New Brunswick made her full-fledged entry into the industrial revolution. Growth in sawmill production continued through the 1840's: by 1850 exports of deals and similar products had risen from less than a hundred million feet in 1838 to 160 million, and were becoming comparable to timber exports even in size.<5>

Pollok-Gilmour was alert to the possibilities of lumber production. Though other sub-firms like St. John and Montreal-Ottawa built sawmills, the earliest and most important were the work of Gilmour-Rankin on the Miramichi. Of the many sawmills Gilmour-Rankin constructed, the most impressive emerged in Douglastown in the 1820's. This mill was said to employ 170 men <6>, and contemporary observer Robert Cooney described it as

extensive, and elegantly constructed...The machinery is constructed upon the most approved principles, and works twenty eight perpendicular saws, and two circular ones, cutting each day, upon an average, from 18,000 to 20,000 feet, plank measure... This Mill... possesses the additional advantage of lying so near the channel, that large vessels can load within pistol shot of it. The out offices and subordinate works, corresponding in their character and appearance with the principal, preserves uniformity in detail, illustrative of the well arranged system upon which the whole has been formed. This establishment is supposed to have cost £8,000 and is deservedly reckoned the most splendid of the kind in either Nova-Scotia or New Brunswick.<7>

Cooney's estimate was conservative. Gilmour Sr. himself

suggested a value of fifteen thousand pounds to the 1835 committee. He also mentioned that there were many expensive sawmills in the colony, which were often financed by mortgage.<8> Sawmill production was a serious concern for the firm, and shortly before his retirement James Gilmour discussed the importance of increasing the volume of deals and lathwood manufactured in the colony.<9>

Pollok-Gilmour's most ambitious investments were in shipbuilding.<10> The earliest vessels they had built to order were made in St. John. Indeed, the expansion of Pollok-Gilmour's shipping line was probably one of the chief reasons for the St. John sub-firm's founding in 1822. The city had much to recommend it as a place for ship production. It had been active in this industry for almost forty years, going back to several of the original Loyalists. In the ensuing decade the city expanded on its base. In 1842 New Brunswick produced 658 ships of 95,293 tons--over a quarter of all colonial production--and the greater part of the figure probably came from St. John. Its facilities were very much up to date: that year it built 13 ships equipped with steam power. (Throughout Britain's whole overseas empire, Montreal was the only other city to build this many steamships.)<11> By this time New Brunswick ships had entered the East Indies and Australia trades. In the

arduous trade of whaling, New Brunswick sailors managed to compete with New England and develop a permanent presence (unlike British vessels whose owners largely withdrew them from the business by 1850). The city accordingly turned to the formidable task of building sound whaling ships, and to an impressive degree succeeded. The most famous vessel built in St. John was the Marco Polo, an early clipper of 1625 tons launched in 1850. In 1851 she took passengers from Britain to gold-rush Australia, and made her name by triumphantly returning in a record-breaking six months less ten days.<12> The city produced some of the speediest clippers of the age: of the seventeen fastest ships on the Liverpool-Melbourne run in 1854-55, eight were built in New Brunswick, seven of them in St. John.<13> These ships were also becoming larger: the 1855 Australian clipper Morning Light measured 2377 tons. The considerable number of St. John shipwrights and craftsmen included many native sons, but was also bolstered by immigrants from Britain. The man in charge of building Pollok-Gilmour's St. John ships, George Thomson, was a native of Dumfriesshire.

Robert Rankin & Co. started building vessels almost immediately. Their builder (who also built ships for other firms) was George Thomson in nearby L'Etang.<14> The first major ship built directly for Pollok-Gilmour service was the Marchioness of Queensbury in 1824.

Measuring all of 667 tons and pioneering the triple-crossing season, she was one of the company's leading ships. In the late 1820's Thomson moved his shipyard to St. John proper. Thomson's ships for Pollok-Gilmour gradually increased in size. In 1834 came the Fhebe, at 729 tons the largest-measured ship built in St. John up to that time. The launching of the vessel was a festive occasion for the city, resulting in a school holiday and a large crowd of spectators.<15> The Princess Royal, launched in 1841, measured 1109 tons. Exactly who owned a ship could be a serious concern, what with the branch houses' nominal independence from Glasgow. Robert Rankin had the Dumfriesshire, a major ship of 874 tons, built in 1837 with John Pollok as official owner. When he moved to Liverpool the next year, however, he retained this vessel, which was transferred to his ownership.<16> With Thomson's death in 1841, coming at the start of a difficult decade for shipping, Pollok-Gilmour largely stopped acquiring St. John-built ships.

Allan Gilmour & Co. in Quebec was also concerned with shipbuilding.<17> Its large establishment at Wolfe's Cove included a shipyard, which Gilmour Jr. took a fairly active interest in. (One anecdote is that he refused to add figureheads to the new ships because this would not increase the amount of wood shipped in them.)

The full-time supervisor was one Captain Dick. Like the St. John firm, the Quebec firm took to building vessels in the first years of its existence. Its first major construction was the Wolfe's Cove, a 587-ton ship launched in 1831, and for the next two decades it dominated the company's ship production. Its ships also became bigger with time. Its most ambitious production period was in the late 1840's and early 1850's, a time when huge hardwood timber droghers were being built. The shipyard was employing about a thousand men and could build as many as four ships at once: in 1849 alone six were launched, measuring anywhere from 800 to 1300 tons.<18> The greatest of all known Pollok-Gilmour vessels, the 1613-ton Advance, was built here in 1852. Another notable Quebec-built ship was the 599-ton Actaeon of 1848 (not to be confused with an earlier Actaeon, built by the Miramichi sub-firm in 1838), which achieved unusual longevity for a hardwood ship. She was rebuilt in 1885, and in 1897 remained sound enough to carry a salt cargo from Liverpool to St. John in the rough autumn season; as late as 1905 she was still in service.<19>

About half of the ships built in St. John were registered in Glasgow; almost all those built at Wolfe's Cove before the mid-1850's were.<20> The Glasgow register shows an almost constant upward trend in the size of new ships. The early used vessels measured 300

to 500 tons; the directly-built ones from 1826 to 1832, almost 600; from 1835 to 1840, mostly 800 to 900; 1845 to 1852, anywhere from 600 to 1600. Those built before 1838 were almost all barques; those built later were almost all square-rigged 'ships.' (This trend almost certainly reflects the ships' increased size.) Another trend was the small number of ships that were wrecked: most Pollok-Gilmour vessels were eventually sold. One of the major changes in the company in the 1850's was that, with a couple of exceptions, its ships were no longer brought to Glasgow to be registered. After this time, as the branch houses became more independent, Wolfe's Cove ships simply became a Gilmour & Co. asset. Overall, the aggregate tonnage of Pollok-Gilmour ships rose gradually to ten thousand tons in the mid-1830's; next came six years of great expansion, raising the level to thirty thousand; this level was stable during the shipping glut of the early 1840's; in 1845 super-vessel production at Wolfe's Cove started with a bang, bringing the aggregate to a peak of about forty thousand; it stayed at this plateau until 1852, as the loss and sale of old ships balanced out new production; it then fell back to thirty thousand in two years; in later years the figure declined little by little, and more and more of it reflected production not registered in Glasgow. The pattern of the changing level is so clear it must reflect deliberate policy.

Not all of New Brunswick's ship production was in St. John. St. Andrews, on the St. Croix River that bordered America, developed a healthy business building ships that labelled themselves British on the river's New Brunswick side, and American on the other. In 1842 this town built 197 ships.<21> Another busy district was the Miramichi, whose ships included the Indian Queen, the eighth of the Australian run's fast New Brunswick ships. Here Gilmour-Rankin entered the industry in the early 1820's.<22> Its shipyard was built even before the 1825 conflagration, in which three ships--the Canada, the Concord, and the Jane--were lost. They were respectively valued at £3000, £3500, and £2500.<23> (Exactly where they were built is unclear, but they may have been built on the Miramichi.) Most vessels built by Gilmour-Rankin, however, were made for other merchants and sold in Liverpool by the home firms.<24> But some Miramichi ships found their way onto the Pollok-Gilmour line, built at Beaubair's or Rose Bank with master builders like Joseph Russell, John Harley, and W. Abrams. Though most of the timber ships built here were registered in British ports, the builders' increasing confidence can be seen in the number of vessels registered at home. At least two ships that carried Pollok-Gilmour goods, the 'Neptune' and the 'Romance,'

though like many vessels that carried the firm's cargoes, especially in the early years, they do not seem to have been owned by it.<25>

It was only in the 1850's and 1860's, however, that Gilmour-Rankin began to build ships directly. In the period after 1850 the empire was no longer expanding and the Wolfe's Cove shipyard had become too expensive for further production. The Miramichi's low-cost production had formerly been suited to building ships too cheap to meet Pollok-Gilmour's standards, for outsiders. Now Gilmour-Rankin was an increasingly independent company, and less fussy. Most of the ships built by Gilmour-Rankin were assembled between 1857 and 1868, chiefly at the firm's Douglastown shipyard, with James Henderson serving as master builder (at first within the Henderson & Sinclair partnership). Their names are alphabetical: first the Annie Laurie, next the Belle of the Ocean, etc. (The several common patterns in Pollok-Gilmour ships' names include the initial 'A' and Greek names--both appealing to Gilmour Jr. in Quebec--Scottish place names, and names from the partners' families such as the Agnes Gilmour and the Ann Rankin. The builders were not especially imaginative about conceiving new names, and when a ship was lost her name was often recycled.) Like the later Quebec ships, they were almost all registered at home and not in

Glasgow. These ships were not negligible. The largest of them, the Lenore of 1865, measured 1280 tons. Another, the Choice, was built in the same year and measured 1154 tons. The last vessel built by Gilmour-Rankin, a schooner called the Vigilant, was launched in 1873, three years after the final separation from Pollok-Gilmour and not long before Gilmour-Rankin's own conclusion.

Building ships was far from a simple business. <26> Timber carriers such as Pollok-Gilmour's were built in the 'cod's head and salmon's tail' principle, with a broadened prow and a narrower stern. In the early days, builders and even craftsmen might be paid simply with a share in the new ship. A ship would start as a 1/24 builder's model, then be built up from keel blocks to ribs to planking. A large vessel might even have Austrian rock salt between its planks to ensure long-term preservation.<27> Such attention in the building stage could ensure a long life for a ship. In the earlier years tree-nails made from hard woods like locust-wood, left to soak in salt water, were often used in place of rust-prone iron bolts. But metal would still be used for such features as 'knees' to strengthen ribs, or a copper reinforcement for which a ship would sail to Britain. Builders could season planks by spraying them with brine, or just by covering them with

lumps of rock salt and exposing them to the rain. The earliest ships were made largely of oak, with rock-elm and black birch often used at the keel-to-bilge base. Later on, Pollok-Gilmour discovered the possibilities of hackmatack, and made vessels from this material that could last decades. Henry Cleaver Chapman, a London shipbuilder who indicted the unseaworthy state of most colonial ships, termed Pollok-Gilmour an exception to the rule, noting that the firm spent twice as much as usual to construct a given ship.<28> As a result, of 1503 round voyages taken by Pollok-Gilmour vessels between 1846 and 1873, only 15 encountered disaster.<29>

The increase in colonial shipbuilding was insured by basic economics. Ships were simply cheaper to construct in the New World. 'I am well informed,' said George Frederick Young, that colonial shipyard workers were paid as little as one shilling per day, or a seventh of what they might get paid in Britain. Most of them, he insisted, were 'rude, unskilled labourers' who worked seasonally, turning to logging in the winter. While a British-built vessel would sell for at least £8/ton and might even cost 22 1/2, British North American ships cost 10 at most (11 if a copper lining was added) and had recently been selling for as little as 3. The result was so shoddy, he observed, that while a typical British ship would last twelve years on the A-

list of Lloyd's Register, a Canadian ship would last only four.<30> Joseph Somes put the wages figure at 6s./day for the unionized workers on the Thames, perhaps 4 in outports like Sunderland, and at most 2 1/2 in the colonies. Thus a colonial ship would cost four to six pounds per ton, vs. 9-12 in Sunderland(which was much cheaper than in London). He termed many of the colonial vessels 'coffins,' but praised St. John as the best of the colonial shipbuilding centres, capable of producing high-quality ships. The sale of cheap New Brunswick ships transformed the British market for a period in the 1830's and 1840's, as Somes's observations suggest. He complained that the 'many' colonial vessels in the India trade were giving British merchants a bad name, and that Sunderland was increasingly resembling the colonial pattern, with many timber merchants building ships for their trade there, often 'raiding' established yards for shipwrights and worrying little about standards.<31>

The 'golden age' of colonial shipbuilding came to an end with the advent of iron steamships. Such vessels, which emerged in the 1860's, required huge shipyards with large capital outlays supported by an advanced steel industry. Developed economies were better-suited to this industry than colonies, and in the new Dominion of Canada most iron ships would be built in the major provinces of Quebec and Ontario, though some

would be built in the Atlantic provinces. They could transport such huge cargoes in so little time that wooden ships were rendered uncompetitive and increasingly limited to less valuable, urgent products. But wooden ships were so widespread by this time that they could not be replaced overnight. The period of decline for wooden ships was a gradual process, lasting several decades, and many were still to be found at the time of World War I. Pollok-Gilmour was not around to take part in this new world, and had barely been aware of what was coming. It was not so much the firm's failure to become part of the age of steam that caused its demise, as it was its terminal decline that prevented it from rising to the challenge.

NOTES

1. David M. Williams, 'Merchanting in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century: The Liverpool Timber Trade,' Business History VIII, 1966, p. 111.
2. P.P. 1821 VI, pp. 182-3.
3. Robert Cooney, A Compendious History of the Northern Part of the Province of New Brunswick, pp. 124-5.
4. P.P. 1843 LV, pp. 496-7. A deal is always at least 7" wide and 6" long, and generally less than 3 1/4" thick, though sometimes more. If it is more than 21" long, it must be less than 8" thick. Lathwood is narrower, while a batten is even thinner (under 2 1/2") and longer (over 6'). See the definitions in the 1842 proposed changes to timber duties, P.P. 1842 XL, p. 17.
5. Ibid., pp. 418-19; and Graeme Wynn, Timber Colony, pp. 33-34. See the latter for a table of New Brunswick wood exports in the early nineteenth century.
6. Wynn, op. cit., pp. 125-6.
7. Cooney, op. cit., pp. 105-6.
8. P.P. 1835 XIX, p. 237.
9. SRA THH-77 8.6.38.
10. Appendix A is a partial list of the ships that comprised the Pollok-Gilmour shipping line.
11. P.P. 1843 LV, p. 403. See Appendix B, Table XIII.
12. For a vivid description of the ship and voyage, including a London Illustrated News description of the advanced comforts for passengers, see Frederick William Wallace, Wooden Ships and Iron Men, pp. 44-9.
13. Basil Lubbock, Colonial Clippers (Glasgow: James Brown & Son, 1921), p. 90.
14. For a detailed description of Thomson's operation, see Esther Clark Wright, Saint John Ships and Their Builders (private publication, n.d.), pp. 65-9.
15. An unidentified nineteenth-century St. John newspaper has a colourful description of the event,

quoted by John Rankin in a History of Our Firm, pp. 69-70.

16. Wright, op. cit., p. 68.

17. For specific information on shipbuilding in Wolfe's Cove, see Wallace, op. cit., pp. 34-7, 54, 59, 90.

18. Ibid., pp. 90, 37.

19. Ibid., pp. 36-7.

20. I have read the Glasgow Shipping Register with the kind permission of the Customs-House, Glasgow. See Appendix A for much detailed information on Pollok-Gilmour's Glasgow-registered ships.

21. P.P. 1843 LII, p. 403.

22. For specific information of Gilmour-Rankin's shipbuilding activities, see Louise Manny, Ships of the Miramichi, particularly the detailed table listing the ships.

23. From an official estimate of fire damages by a Chatham-based committee, courtesy of the New Brunswick Museum.

24. Rankin quotes several advertisements from Gore's Advertiser in the early 1840's promoting Rankin-Gilmour's sale of colonial-built ships in op. cit., pp. 130-33.

25. See The Clyde Bill of Entry in the issues of early August, 1844.

26. Wallace gives a lengthy discussion of different aspects of shipbuilding in op. cit., pp. 23-33.

27. From a step-by-step description by Edward L. Gallagher in History of Old Kingston and Rexton (Sussex, N.B.: Maritime Publishing, 1948), pp. 22-3.

28. From testimony before the 1844 shipbuilding committee, P.P. 1844 VIII, p. 62.

29. Frederick William Wallace, In the Wake of the Wind-Ships, p. 80.

30. P.P. 1844 VIII, pp. 10-12.

31. Ibid., pp. 24, 34.

Chapter VI: Colonial Politics and Rivalries

Early New Brunswick was dominated--physically, economically, and politically--by its forests. At the beginning of the timber boom, 85% of her small population seems to have depended on woodlands for a living, a proportion remaining well over half for decades. Noting this figure, W. Stewart MacNutt contends that such economic circumstances had a far greater influence on New Brunswick politics than more abstract issues like responsible government, which were so important in neighbouring colonies.<1> (To this day forest products like lumber and paper remain New Brunswick's most important industry.) Managing the timber resources was certainly one of the Fredericton-based colonial administration's prime concerns. Indeed, allocation of woodcutting rights was the great political controversy of the day, colouring the serious rivalry between the colonial government's executive and legislative branches. On one side was the Lieutenant-Governor's personally-appointed Executive Council; on the other, the economic elite that dominated the elected House of Assembly, including merchants from St. John and rural barons like Alexander Rankin. A cardinal development in New Brunswick's timber industry came in the second quarter of the nineteenth century: between 1825 and 1845 it came to be dominated by a handful of large-scale enterprises. This was particularly the case in the underpopulated north-east of the province, where

Gilmour-Rankin had a wide influence. But the company had a serious rival--economic and otherwise--in Joseph Cunard, based in nearby Chatham. For a generation they contended bitterly, their hostility extending into politics and sometimes turning violent. Ultimately, Rankin was the sole survivor.

Regulation of the forests was a difficult task for a small, new colony. Great Britain had taken a great interest in New Brunswick forests, due to the strategic importance of wood during the Napoleonic Wars, and reserved the most valuable wood for Royal Navy use under the "Broad Arrow" system.<2> Loggers had to apply for permission before cutting down trees in Crown forests, still a majority of the colony's acreage. Imperial supervision was relied on during this period to prevent unlicensed woodcutting, but proved totally inadequate. Yet Britain needed all the New Brunswick wood she could obtain, and tolerating illegal production seemed a lesser evil than producing too little. After Waterloo, however, a higher priority was given to maintaining proper order, and Westminster charged the Fredericton officials with direct enforcement of logging regulations. By 1819 the Executive Council was levying on licenced loggers a fee of one shilling for every ton of timber they were allowed to cut, a tax originally intended to pay for surveyors to observe logging

activities and ensure that the regulations would be in force. Loggers were also required to specify the place and amount of the timber they planned to produce. Not for the last time, the House of Assembly, whose members knew which way their sympathy lay, worried that this regime would mean the end of the colony's timber industry. Evasion of the rules, however, remained widespread. Not only was the colonial bureaucracy under-staffed and under-equipped, but what opportunities emerged for enforcement were often neglected, as 'trespassers' caught red-handed were often let off on payment of the 1s./ton fee for the amount they had cut.<3> The administration made a somewhat greater effort after 1824, transformed by stronger regulations and a new commissioner. But illegal logging was a chronic problem, never to be completely suppressed.

The early 1820's was a crucial time for administration of New Brunswick forests. In 1822, as the export market recoiled from Britain's recent timber-duty adjustments, the government decided a new approach was needed. It now demanded licence fee payments in advance, to discourage fly-by-night operations; placed a 1000-ton ceiling on individual licence-holders (though a logger could evade the rule by exploiting licences held in confederates' names'); and made enforcement of the rules more attractive by granting a third of the proceeds from seized timber to the inspector who had

seized it. Within two years brands marked on logs were officially registered and a regular schedule of surveys was in place. The original four clauses of forest regulation were now 21, helping to effect 'a relatively comprehensive system.'⁴ And the Colonial Office sent out Thomas Baillie to the post of Crown Lands Commissioner, a position he had not expected but would hold for over a dozen years. He reorganized the commission, previously in some disarray, and made it a tool toward realizing his own agenda for the colony. He was, in the words of Graeme Wynn, 'a brash Irishman who regarded himself as keeper of the New Brunswick Estate.'⁵ Says MacNutt:

His arbitrariness was based upon a conviction of the power of the prerogative and upon a determination to carry out the letter of his instructions. But there was a carelessness of administrative detail, particularly in financial matters, and too great a confidence in his subordinates which later exposed him to the merciless attacks of his enemies. He was probably garrulous, boastful, and vain.⁶

Baillie proceeded to advance his own program of forest development through a stronger Lands Office and stringent enforcement of regulations (insofar as that was possible): trespassers now paid double duty. He also pursued policies that favoured the full-fledged timber 'barons,' and encouraged increasing monopolies. The House of Assembly was incensed, and a long battle of wills began.

Baillie was politically skilled, and managed to

expand his power base with the passing years. His most important ally was Provincial Secretary William F. Odell, whose daughter he married. He reached his pinnacle with the 1831 appointment of Sir Archibald Campbell, who saw things Baillie's way and let him effectively run New Brunswick. He also benefited from the timber-licence duty, a source of revenue that went straight to the executive branch without being allocated by the Assembly. By 1824 twenty thousand pounds had accumulated<7>, facilitating generous patronage. It was partly to cultivate this income that he doubled licence fees in the early 1830's. Baillie's clique thus had a solid core of supporters in York County, the district of the capital Fredericton. His other major support base was in the Chatham vicinity dominated by Joseph Cunard. In Baillie's view, the best way to develop a strong timber industry that could resist difficult periods like the late 1820's was to foster large firms. This view is reflected in his 1828 proposal to award timber licences by auction, without priority for renewals, in a system that the prime movers could dominate.

Baillie's strategy also embraced land sale. In 1827 the Colonial Office had changed its policy of colonial land grants. Before then the emphasis had been on attracting as many settlers as possible to the colonies, to make them more defensible, so plots of land

were given away for the nominal price of a peppercorn. But administration of these lands was very expensive for the Colonial Office, provoking complaints of extravagance in Parliament. The colonies, it was now suggested, might pay their own bills by demanding payment for their lands. New Brunswickers were outraged by the idea, as free land was considered part of the Loyalist covenant, and managed to stall the policy change for four years. But sale of land was finally instituted in 1831, with Baillie's enthusiastic support. Involved deeply in land development, in 1834 Baillie formed the Land Company, an old-fashioned scheme to bring settlers to Queensbury parish near Fredericton, which achieved mixed success. He applied the trusted auction system to land sales. In the other American colonies, land sale worked poorly and few estates were sold. In New Brunswick, on the other hand, the now-recovering timber trade was decisive. Demand for timber that could be cut without licence was great enough to produce a land rush that lasted several years. From 1831 through 1834 an annual average of something less than sixty thousand acres were sold; in 1835 an unprecedented 247,000; in 1836 160,000.<8> The greatest premium was on land in the colony's north-western corner, where lay the last tracts of virgin forest, eventhough the American border was not yet defined here. As a result, nobody was sure if the zone's timber had

the same status as regular New Brunswick wood under Imperial regulations, though in practice there was no difference. (In the 1840's, Westminster settled the question by allowing all the wood in this area, colonial or American, to be traded in New Brunswick ports as a colonial product.) During the mid-1830's even American timber merchants, mostly from the adjacent state of Maine, were caught up in the land rush, working through dummy firms headed by colonial employees. The presence of the giant southern neighbour ended with the 1837 credit squeeze in the American economy, but many colonists had real fears about where this boom would lead them.

The struggle between cabinet and legislature intensified in the 1830's. The Assembly sent a delegation to Britain in 1833 to lodge detailed protests against Baillie's policies, particularly his recent program to develop certain underpopulated areas by handing them over to timber barons as monopolies. The Colonial Office expressed sympathy, but little changed. Another provocation came in 1835, when Baillie introduced five-year licences that helped perpetuate monopolistic powers. (This measure also prescribed a fixed duty for the loggers to pay irrespective of timber cut, reducing the surveyors' load.) Things came to a head in late 1836, when Lieutenant-Governor Campbell sent a Civil List Bill to the House of Assembly whose

fifth clause officially entrenched the auction system. The Assembly rejected this important financial bill out of hand. The result was an impasse, and the Assembly was prorogued in March 1837 with no resolution. The Executive Council was not greatly prepared for a serious confrontation, as it had disdained such "common" tactics as creating a party to contest elections to the Assembly and vie for its control, and cultivating support in the colonial press which their opposition dominated.<9> Once again, an Assembly delegation went to London to argue its case. Its timing turned out to be fortunate, as the American colonies were currently disgruntled: the year would see armed rebellions in both Canadas. Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary, decided to resolve the colony's discontent by nudging Campbell into resigning. The new Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Harvey, chose to give the Assembly its head. The Civil List Bill was passed on 17 July but on the 22nd amendments were added that stood the fifth clause on its head, giving priority in licence allocation to renewals and first-come, restricting auction to cases of simultaneous application. The Assembly placed control of the colonial forests in its own hands, severely restricting Baillie's powers. The contest was over.

More than anything else, the issue of monopolies brought Baillie down. His policy had helped effect a

new level of concentration in the timber industry. This trend was partly due to outside factors like the recent depression, which had driven many small operators out of business, and higher capital requirements for ambitious, profitable ventures such as sawmills. But measures such as the five-year licence had visible results. In 1835 36 of the granted timber licences covered 287 square miles between them; in 1836 270 covered 1300. (Maximum size of licensed area was no longer a concern: a licence was issued around now covering 150 square miles.)^{<10>} In 1828-29 six persons (all from the North-East) had held more than ten licences apiece; in 1836-37 twelve timber merchants (ca. 5% of the total, with the top four and five others coming from the North-East) held more than ten, covering almost half of the licensed area; in 1840-41 the number was eight (ca. 3 1/2%, seven from the North-East), covering 36%.^{<11>} And despite the new Assembly control of the forests, the change was permanent. Renewal priority could actually entrench already-formed monopolies, and the return to an auction system in 1846 produced little controversy. The same year mill reserves were introduced, which added to the monopolistic trend. Fourteen interests now possessed licences for 5,500,000 acres, over half the total, with one controlling 600,000.^{<12>} The varied, sometimes negative effects of economic oligarchy would be felt in New Brunswick to this very day.

The three Pollok-Gilmour branch houses in New Brunswick were now enthusiastically expanding, Gilmour-Rankin in particular benefiting from the new concentration. Alexander Rankin, allowed personally to hold multiple licences in his own name since the late 1820's, now held seventy-six. Seventy were one-year licences allowing production of 12,570 tons of timber (13 1/2% of the legal total) and of 820,000 feet of logs (7%). Six were five-year licences covering 120 3/4 square miles, for 3280 tons of timber and 505,000 feet of logs. Arthur Ritchie of the Restigouche now held thirty-nine one-year licences for almost 6000 tons and 120,000 feet; and seventeen five-year over 111 1/4 miles for 4440 tons and 400,000 feet. (This firm expanded far too quickly.) Francis Ferguson of Bathurst held a single one-year for 250 tons, and four five-year over 56 square miles for 2100 tons. But the champion was Joseph Cunard with ninety one-year for 13,750 tons and 1,280,000 feet; and fourteen five-year over 344 square miles for 11,740 tons and 1,020,000 feet. Together these four firms were licensed to produce about a third of New Brunswick's one-year timber and almost 18% of one-year lumber (deals, etc.). Ten years later the three surviving firms controlled almost two-fifths of timber-bearing land between them, with Gilmour-Rankin and Cunard alone accounting for over 30%.<13>

Joseph Cunard, brother and business associate of the famous Samuel, had come to the Miramichi in 1820.<14> His firm grew quickly and surpassed Gilmour-Rankin in the early 1830's. Cunard was a rural lord similar to Rankin, with a great sense of pageantry. The two firms were of the same basic type, with common interests in the timber trade and other enterprises like shipbuilding. Though they could agree on a few issues of popular consensus such as opposing timber-duty equalization, Rankin and Cunard's rivalry was bitter and impassioned. The north bank of the Miramichi was mostly Gilmour-Rankin territory with Douglastown at the centre, while Cunard controlled the south bank, his headquarters at the town of Chatham. (The town of Newcastle, dominated by Gilmour-Rankin, was built just across the river from Chatham partly as a rival centre.) At times the two towns resembled armed camps. This feud naturally extended to politics. As the north bank's outstanding citizen, Rankin was elected to the House of Assembly in 1827, and Cunard soon followed. The two sponsored their own clients in each of Northumberland County's ridings, and colonial elections were as disorderly as British elections before the first Reform Bill. Most notorious was the 'fighting election' of 1843, a situation close to open warfare which remained tense well after election day. Recalled one Gilmour-Rankin employee: 'Cudgels were used, and there were many

broken heads on both sides...Feeling afterwards ran so high that two companies of soldiers were sent from St. John to quell the riots.'<15>

The monopolies controversy became embroiled in the Rankin-Cunard enmity. In 1830 Baillie offered Cunard a monopoly in the Nepisiguit valley west of Bathurst in return for promised improvements such as deepening rivers. Rankin was himself offered a similar monopoly in the upriver Upsalquitch district near New Brunswick's geographical centre. He played the monopoly game for a short while, but then renounced it as unfair and proceeded to lead the fight against Cunard's Nepisiguit holdings with a vengeance. Rankin's about-face reflected mixed motives. On the one hand, he noticed the depth of popular resentment and wanted to protect his paternal standing. On the other hand, Cunard was simply the better of the two at this game, and the Upsalquitch holdings were not particularly profitable. In 1833 Rankin went to England to present to the Colonial Office a petition against the monopoly policy. Among other things, it was pointed out that Cunard had failed to make the promised land improvements. Westminster ruled in the petitioners' favour. So came one victory for Rankin in the long battle, which only ended with Cunard's disastrous bankruptcy in 1848. This failure resulted from a combination of many factors. The recent shipping depression and timber-duty

adjustments had hit both firms hard, but Cunard was overextended and particularly vulnerable to downturns. His company was perhaps fatally obsessed with the Rankin feud: one of its partners, criticized for selling too cheaply, supposedly replied, 'We don't care a d___ so long as we sell more deals than Gilmour, Rankin & Co.'¹⁶ As Cunard's firm fell from such a great height, the bankruptcy caused much hardship in the region and it took Cunard's brothers twenty-three years to pay his debts.

Rankin remained involved in politics for the rest of his life. In 1847 he advanced to New Brunswick's Executive Council. (Hutchison also had political interests: he campaigned against New Brunswick's entry into Confederation--one of his ships was named the Non-Confederate--but later was elected to the federal parliament in Ottawa.) Rankin's many official positions included Commissioner of Lights (administering lighthouses), Justice of the Peace, a place on the Boards of Health for Northumberland and Gloucester Counties (the latter county contained Bathurst), and memberships in the Mechanics Institute and the Northumberland Agricultural Society. ¹⁷ His varied interests included developing agriculture and education. Wynn compares Rankin's relationship with his underlings to the paternal authority of the earliest

industrialists--e.g. Josiah Wedgwood--who were not yet satisfied with riches alone but sought to emulate the aristocracy.<18> Yet at the end of the day, profits and satisfied home partners were the primary concern for merchant adventurers like Rankin; doing good for their colonial society must ultimately come second. When it came to final settlements, Gilmour Sr. was quite willing to strip the branch houses of their assets and leave the company's dependents in the lurch. This partly explains why none of the American sub-firms developed strong enough roots to survive the Pollok-Gilmour empire.

NOTES

1. MacNutt discusses this question in 'The Politics of the Timber Trade in Colonial New Brunswick, 1825-40,' Canadian Historical Review # 30 (October, 1949), pp. 47-65. The 85% figure is mentioned on p. 47. The greater part of the narrative of Baillie's career comes from this article.

2. Graeme Wynn devotes a whole chapter to the issue of New Brunswick's early forest administration in Timber Colony, pp. 138-49. He observes this early period on pp. 138-9.

3. The 'Broad Arrow' system is discussed by Gerald S. Graham in Sea Power and British North America 1783-1820, pp. 142-50; and by R.G. Albion in Forests and Sea Power, pp. 138-57.

4. Wynn, op. cit., p.141.

5. Ibid.

6. MacNutt, op. cit., p. 52.

7. Ibid., p. 51.

8. Wynn, op. cit., pp. 144-5.

9. MacNutt, op. cit., p. 61.

10. Wynn, op. cit., pp. 145-6.

11. Ibid., p. 124.

12. Ibid., pp. 147-8.

13. Statistics ibid., pp. 125-8.

14. A whole chapter of Esther Clark Wright's The Miramichi describes Cunard's firm, pp. 44-51, including an anecdote of a festive greeting Cunard received on returning to Chatham from business abroad (he had given notice of his impending arrival the night before), and two detailed eyewitness descriptions by William Wyse. The former depicts the near-riot that followed announcements of Cunard's bankruptcy, in which Cunard had to think quickly to save his skin; the latter depicts the 'fighting election.'

15. John Rankin quotes these reminiscences (by his brother Alexander) in A History of Our Firm, p. 52. A detailed eyewitness description by Wyse is quoted by Wright in op. cit., pp. 49-51.

16. Rankin, ibid.

17. Wynn, op. cit., p. 135, footnote 41.

18. Ibid., p. 137.

Chapter VII:
Finance and Management--The Home Firms

Its many American operations notwithstanding, Pollok, Gilmour & Co. was very much a British firm. Its Glasgow headquarters was the empire's centre, where vital central decisions were made. The company spawned two offshoots at home: Rankin, Gilmour & Co. in Liverpool (1838) and Gilmour, Rankin, Strang & Co. in London (1853). Their foundation reflected a desire to be as close as possible to the mainstream of the British Empire's trade, as the two locations were the busiest ports in the nation, and among the greatest ports in the world. These firms were engaging in a sophisticated, modern sort of commerce fairly different from Pollok-Gilmour's earlier business. They were attempting the leap to the new world of trade that the Clydeside firm had become too indifferent to concern itself with. The senior Gilmour had indeed left a vacuum behind him in Glasgow, as no successor of remotely equal talents emerged there. As the years went by, Pollok-Gilmour contributed less and less to the success of the company as a whole. In later years, the Liverpool and London partners were leaders of the company. As a result, both offshoots outlived the mother firm. Yet only one would manage the transition fully.

Financial operations at home were integral to the whole empire's survival and success. Its overseas production and shipping required relatively smooth

credit.<1> Supplies for New Brunswick lumber camps had to be purchased months in advance and shipped in from as far away as the United Kingdom. These camps then spent the whole winter in virtual isolation from the world. Only when the spring floods came could they float the fruit of their labours downstream to ports from which it could be exported. The voyage across the Atlantic took several more months. Even sale of the ship's cargo in Britain did not guarantee immediate payment. All in all, the better part of two years elapsed between early expenditures and accrual of returns. Pollok-Gilmour's financial operations were on a wide scale, both spatially and as regards time. In some ways the firm was essentially a financial company, moving money around Britain and America into the transportation and production sectors with the long-term plan of eventually being able to take out more money than it had put in. Bills of exchange were its lifeblood, and articles for branch houses established that Pollok-Gilmour would provide them with indefinite loans at a set rate of 5%.<2> In the early and middle nineteenth century, however, communication was especially difficult between British backing for credit and American operations drawing on it. The empire thus had to effect a step-by-step structure to prevent bottlenecks and keep things running smoothly. Only a handful of British-American firms were heavily enough involved in production to go

to these lengths.

Cash was inevitably in short supply among the colonial sub-firms. (It comes as no surprise that employees, especially in company stores, were often paid in kind.) Due to the distance involved, it was not feasible for a branch house simply to charge its bills to the Glasgow partners. Instead a hierarchy of credit was relied on. Firstly, branch houses would draw bills on the Montreal firm of Ritchie & Co. (later the second Gilmour & Co., of Ottawa). As Montreal was at the economic centre of British North America (and Ottawa, the eventual capital of Canada, was an increasingly important city), this firm had the financial resources to ensure that expenses were covered. It then drew on Pollok-Gilmour to pay its own expenses in so doing. Pollok-Gilmour had large enough reserves of capital to pay these bills, and before long would be receiving revenue from wood sales to maintain the reserves. Yet in the not infrequent times of tight money, this cycle was not sufficient. Ritchie & Co. then turned to growing New York City, the most important financial centre in the Americas. It drew on a New York firm called Maitland, Phelps, & Co. to back its debts. Maitland-Phelps then drew on Pollok-Gilmour, making a cycle of four steps. The mechanism was delicate and must have operated on fairly thin margins, but it worked for decades.

The men at the centre of this system were the senior partners in Glasgow.<3> Not a lot is known, even by John Rankin, about the characters of John and Arthur Pollok, senior partners from the firm's inception until their 1852 retirement at the respective ages of 74 and 72.<4> Gilmour Sr. in the SRA TH-77 letters predictably has nothing good to say about them. He directed special vitriol at John Pollok, whom he calls no more useful 'than a wax doll.'⁵ Arthur seems to have overseen fiscal matters, John sales distribution. (Another effective function, perhaps an important one at times, was to act as a brake on Gilmour: they approached his many plans for new ventures with skepticism and vetoed the more ambitious, much to his chagrin.) Business never took them out of the city. Perhaps the ever-changing world of Glasgow business required their presence almost all the time, yet it is hard to believe that John at least could not have shared some of Gilmour Sr.'s travel burden within Britain, which he bore along with his American duties. Despite Gilmour's bias, there was in all probability a grain of truth in his charges. The two brothers, John in particular, seem to have devoted a lot of time and effort to scheming. They were not overly concerned with keeping Gilmour Sr. informed about their

activities. An unnamed employee observed:

I rate the Polloks as honourable, capable men, else they could not have driven the team they did; but <Gilmour Sr. and Alexander Rankin> were the men with initiative, pluck, and staying power.<6>

When Gilmour Jr. entered the home partnership he started out energetically, trying to match his uncle's home activity--witness the several SRA THH-77 letters written by him from Liverpool and Carlisle. But he soon calmed down into much the same routine as the Polloks'. Unlike the senior Gilmour, he was regularly present for ship registrations. Robert Rankin in Liverpool and perhaps later William Strang in London took over such domestic chores as commercial travelling.

Other workers were active at Pollok, Gilmour & Co.'s head office. One was a Captain McArthur. From the 1820's to 1861 he was superintendent of the Pollok-Gilmour ships, a quite busy position. (Captain Cranston held the position in Pollok-Gilmour's last years.)<7> Another was Daniel Carmichael, the firm's head clerk. He had been with the company since 1817 and did much of the everyday office business. An 1847 letter he sent to his employers suggests a difficult atmosphere in the office. A morose Carmichael therein explains that he was absent the previous day to commemorate his thirtieth anniversary with the firm, and worries that he will not receive due appreciation until the day he dies.<8> Another clerk was George Sheriff. In 1861 Gilmour Jnr.,

who had been the sole Glasgow partner for nine years, took a new partner. At an earlier date, a rival firm had offered Sheriff an immediate partnership, and it is quite possible that Pollok promised him an eventual partnership as the price of his staying. At any rate, Sheriff was made partner. Carmichael was livid, feeling that his seniority should have guaranteed him the post. He was temporarily appeased when his annual salary was raised to a thousand pounds, but he seems to have quit the firm not long afterwards.<9>

The question arises of Pollok-Gilmour's local significance in the Glasgow area. It must have had a considerable reputation, especially after 1829. In that year, over half of the import duties collected at Port Glasgow--£6268.10/9 out of £12,377.8/4-- were collected on Pollok-Gilmour goods.<10> This is strong evidence that Gilmour had indeed monopolized the Canadas timber trade the year before. The firm's normal share of Glasgow's trade would normally be somewhat lower but still remarkable. That year it paid over 7% of export duties--£62.12/11 out of £804.16/4-- which must have been a more normal proportion. The company's local importance is suggested by the 1835 failure of James Atkins Laing's firm, which owed £12,000: Pollok-Gilmour, which had provided it with large quantities of wood, was one of the chief creditors.<11> In 1867 and

1868 the firm, now close to closure, was one of several co-litigants in a court case concerning the extension of Port-Glasgow's harbour--even now it took an active interest in local affairs.<12> Yet the partners bore a low profile, and their insular company remained an enigma to most other businessmen. This is one reason why it was often the subject of rumour and innuendo.<13>

Rankin-Gilmour in Liverpool commenced operations in 1838, though it was not officially established until 1843.<14> The contract of the senior Gilmour's retirement on 25 June 1838 provides for Gilmour Jr. and Robert Rankin both to come home, the latter to trade in Liverpool. It was only after five years of active trade that Rankin-Gilmour's founding articles were signed.<15> Rankin-Gilmour, unlike previous branch houses, was not formally independently-owned. The 1843 agreement establishes that the five senior partners each owned a joint share in the Glasgow and Liverpool firms, not distinct shares in the two. It was an outgrowth rather than a separate transplant. And its initial mission was not to create new business, but to maintain the trade which already existed for Pollok-Gilmour's empire there. For years Rankin was the sole resident partner. In the 1850's the New Orleans partner George Hoghton, whom the cotton trade had often brought to Liverpool, made it his place of residence in 1854. He became an effective

partner on a full-time basis, though his status was only made official in 1861. (He retired in 1866.) Also in 1861, the senior Rankin's nephew Robert Rankin II received a partnership. John Rankin, the junior Robert's New Brunswick-born brother and author of A History of Our Firm, became a partner in Rankin-Gilmour in 1870, just before its relationship with Pollok-Gilmour was ended by the latter's closure. The younger Rankins continued the firm and became important citizens of Liverpool, continuing many of their uncle's public interests.<16>

The dominant figure of Pollok-Gilmour's later years was Robert Rankin. Rankin threw body, mind, and soul into the company. Rankin's life was marked by considerable tragedy--six of his seven children died young--and he must have endeavoured to forget his troubles through work. His activities ranged beyond Liverpool, as he was increasingly pulling the Glasgow partners' weight along with his own. Recalled the unnamed employee: "...with my experience now, I tell you solemnly that R.R. was running all the branches and killing himself."<17> He was also active in civic affairs, serving for a couple of years in the early 1860's as chairman of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, a position of singular stature in this port city. And he backed commercial projects such as the laying of the first trans-Atlantic cable. Rankin must have

realized from experience how much improved international communications would benefit firms of Pollok-Gilmour's kind, and his unstinting moral and financial support was invaluable. His death in 1870 clearly spelled the end for Pollok-Gilmour, and was followed the same year by the junior Gilmour's retirement. His true legacy, however, was a Liverpool firm that lived on for generations.

After 1838 came a realignment in the empire's management. Before then all central decisions were made in Glasgow. Now the company's centre of gravity moved southward. In the 1850's the Pollok-Gilmour fleet consisted of 70 or 80 ships, almost all of which visited Liverpool at least once a year.<18> Most of the firm's vessels were registered in Glasgow, which continued to be the port from which the fleet was managed. But Liverpool became the firm's financial centre. Rankin-Gilmour prepared plans to provide mortgages for new ships and guarantee their expenses. One role in which the Liverpool firm did not greatly replace Glasgow was the increasingly tenuous relations with the colonial firms. Robert Rankin did visit America in 1857, receiving a grand welcome in his beloved St. John.<19> But he had closer links than the Glasgow firm with the branch houses in New Orleans and Mobile, due to Merseyside's demand for cotton. After these sub-firms

were closed by the American Civil War, Rankin-Gilmour became less and less interested in direct international trade, preferring the concern of shipping finance. The colonies seemed increasingly irrelevant to the Liverpool partners. After 1873 they could concentrate on the lines of business that interested them most, and the empire became a memory. They entered the age of steam, building a long series of iron ships each with the name St. M----- . In 1881 the individual ships owned by Rankin-Gilmour were made into individual companies not unlike branch houses of a previous time. This marked a new era for navigation.

Rankin-Gilmour survived the Pollok-Gilmour closure and, though not one of the top-rank shipping lines, was still around to some extent at the outset of the Great Depression in 1930. In one way, 1873 was a year of completed metamorphosis rather than death, and the previous thirty-five years were a protracted adjustment period. The company not only successfully moved its headquarters to a bigger port, it at last entered a new form of business that could be operated from one city instead of half a dozen places. But it was a new company which essentially had very little in common with the old, though several of Pollok-Gilmour's ships provided years of service for Rankin-Gilmour after 1873, and a few became companies in 1881. Production of colonial timber was certainly of no interest to Rankin-

Gilmour, and at any rate after 1867 British North America was a single self-governing dominion and no longer a group of colonies. The new company's activities are fairly beyond the scope of this work. In 1905, by which time John Rankin headed the firm, it became Rankin, Gilmour & Co. Limited. (He wrote A History of Our Firm three years later.) The firm's ships encountered much drama in World War I, described in an enlarged second edition of Rankin's book. Rankin-Gilmour met its end in the vast restructuring in world shipping that accompanied the Great Depression. To the senior Robert Rankin's efforts must largely be credited the survival of Rankin-Gilmour into the new age. These efforts encompass not just his diligent attention to business detail, but also his ability to nurture new talent. The company's promising young apprentices, who earlier aspired to the Glasgow citadel, were now moving into the Liverpool office instead. Yet this was a firm, remembers one employee, with a basic staff of only six:

This staff was so small that it seems impossible it could have accomplished what had to be done; but it simply worked like a machine. Homogeneous, methodical, persistent, it was better than if twice the number had been employed; but the office was, from today's standpoint, simply a treadmill.<20>

Rankin-Gilmour's success ultimately depended on a handful of dedicated people who could move with the times.

The Pollok-Gilmour empire included one other house.

In 1853, Gilmour, Rankin Strang & Co. was given its articles of co-partnership.<21> These obligated William Strang, formerly head clerk at Rankin-Gilmour, to trade for Pollok-Gilmour and Rankin-Gilmour in London.<22> Before then, John William Jaffray & Co. had been the company's agent in London much as Duncan Gibb in Liverpool. Apparently, Jaffray had proved unreliable and continued as agent only because the Polloks opposed any change here. (The new firm's formation came very soon after their retirement.) Unlike Rankin-Gilmour, it was a domestic branch house. Strang's role in the company increased in importance, and his status as senior partner was made official in 1861. This firm, like the one in Liverpool, outlasted Pollok-Gilmour. Gilmour-Rankin-Strang continued in business after 1873, maintaining its connection with Rankin-Gilmour. But it was for all intensive purposes a one-man operation, and did not develop the complete sort of team necessary for longevity. Neither did Gilmour-Rankin-Strang quite succeed in cultivating long-term interests. The firm was something of an afterthought, and not particularly ambitious. Strang's 1889 retirement spelled the end of the London house and left Rankin-Gilmour the only survivor of the Pollok-Gilmour empire..

NOTES

1. John Rankin discusses Pollok-Gilmour's financial structures and crises in A History of Our Firm, pp. 231-41.

2. There are many such contracts in UGD 36 1/8.

3. Rankin discusses the Glasgow firm itself in the first chapter of op. cit., pp. 12-48.

4. See Rankin's description of the Polloks ibid., pp. 29-38.

5. SRA THH-77 15.6.40. See Appendix C.

6. Quoted by Rankin in op. cit., pp. 285-8.

7. Rankin devotes the whole of Chapter XIV of op. cit., pp. 192-221, to ships, captains and the management of the fleet.

8. UGD 36 1/7. See Appendix C.

9. See John Sheriff's memorandum in UGD 36 1/9.

10. The Port-Glasgow customs records, courtesy of the Scottish Record Office, E504 28/147-50.

11. John R. Hume & Michael S. Moss, A Bed of Nails: The History of F. MacCallum and Sons, Ltd., Greenock (Glasgow: Tod and MacGregor, n.d.), p. 20.

12. Records of this court case are contained in UGD 36 1/1.

13. For mention of such rumours, see Gilmour Jr.'s 13.1.39 letter in Appendix C, also John Sheriff's memorandum in UGD 36 1/7.

14. Rankin describes the Liverpool firm in Chapter IX of op. cit., pp. 130-46.

15. Both contracts are to be found in UGD 36 1/8.

16. Robert Rankin is personally described by his nephew John Rankin in op. cit., including his public work, on pp. 70-81; ditto his nephews on pp. 139-46.

17. Quoted by Rankin ibid., p. 285.

18. So recalled Mr. White, a Rankin-Gilmour

employee who contributes a chapter to ibid., pp. 222-30.
This estimate occurs on p. 223.

19. Described in ibid., pp. 225-6.

20. Ibid., p. 224.

21. These articles are to be found in UGD 36 1/8.

22. Rankin describes the London firm in op. cit.,
pp. 163-9.

Chapter VIII:
The Decline and Closure of Pollok-Gilmour

Pollok, Gilmour & Co. entered a long twilight period at the beginning of the 1840's. Its decline did not become manifest immediately--in the 1840's all the shipping companies were enduring difficult times to some extent. But by the mid-1850's it was clearly losing momentum. This subsidence can be seen in evidence such as the dwindling variety of the firms' imports and exports. By 1860 each Pollok-Gilmour ship leaving the colonies seemed to carry an identical cargo of the firm's core import-- timber and deals--and coal was largely the only commodity exported from Glasgow.<1> The firm's final years, as it was being closed down in the early 1870's, came as an anti-climax. To use a cliché, Pollok-Gilmour ended not with a bang but a whimper. There was no question, and had not really been for some time previous, of the Glasgow firm continuing in business after Allan Gilmour Jr.'s retirement. It had simply not adjusted to a new world without colonial branch houses to be relied on. For years it had essentially been coasting on its past stature, with no effort at finding new commercial fields to keep it fresh. Instead, Gilmour Jr. relied on the company's traditional methods and let things run their course. There was now no senior Gilmour with the ambition and diligence to expand the company's horizons, or even enough dedicated people to maintain its long-term place in a fast-changing business world. But Pollok-Gilmour

was so well-entrenched that the new regime was safe for three decades.

Pollok-Gilmour was at its pinnacle in the late 1830's and early 1840's, a time of great restructuring following the unhappy departure of Gilmour Sr. Shares in the firm were adjusted. The formal contract of the senior Gilmour's retirement, signed on 26 June, 1838, lowers the Polloks' shares from a third each to a quarter; gives the new home partners Gilmour Jr. and Robert Rankin a sixth-share each; and gives a twelfth-share apiece to the most important American partners, Alexander Rankin and William Ritchie.<2> Complications arose with Ritchie's unexpected retirement: the one-twelfth share which he sold was too small to subdivide. As a result, the share simply went to John Pollok, providing possible evidence that John was the prime mover in the firm's many deals. In 1843, when Rankin-Gilmour in Liverpool was made a formal firm, the share structure was again rearranged. The two Polloks, Gilmour Jr., and Robert Rankin were each allotted nine-fortieths, and Alexander Rankin received the remaining tenth --these were shares in the combined Glasgow and Liverpool houses.<3> The annual salaries of partners living in Britain, in addition to their dividends, were set at £100 in 1838 and £200 in 1843. (The cost of living in Liverpool must have been higher than Robert

Rankin thought.) The original 1806 articles' inadequate provisions for dealing with possible disagreements were now a thing of the past. Wishing to avoid another 1838 crisis, the partners made later contracts more and more prolix and detailed.

The 1840's was a fairly successful decade for Pollok-Gilmour. The company faced serious problems but weathered out the storms. Around 1850 the St. John firm was still loading 130 ships per year, and the sight of as many as 50 Pollok-Gilmour ships entering the Mersey at once was apparently not unknown.<4>

The shipping line's total capacity reached its peak in the early 1850's. Imagination and flexibility (and luck) did not immediately evaporate with the loss of its foremost partner. A case in point is the guano trade, in which it put the alarming surfeit of carrying vessels to expedient use and exploited the possibilities of minor British ports. Similar vision informed the attempt to extend its cotton trade to India. It was this type of adventurousness that the company desperately needed in the following decades. The empire was something like a bicycle that had to keep moving forward to retain its balance. Though it did not collapse immediately, neither did it find lines of trade whose cultivation alone could provide the means for permanent survival. What followed was a twenty-year slide. Perhaps the Junior Gilmour started out

energetically, then got ground down by the passing years and became indifferent. Or perhaps the Polloks made a greater contribution to their company in the 1840's than the scant surviving record can reveal. Or perhaps a new Glasgow partner assuming much of the workload could have turned Pollok-Gilmour around in the 1850's. Whatever the cause, after 1852 Gilmour's failure to rise to the task of sole Glasgow partner--Robert Rankin was doing much of his work for him--was central to his firm's decline. In this period huge shipping lines like Cunard and Pacific & Oriental were emerging from shipping firms no greater than Pollok-Gilmour. That the senior partners lacked the ambition to make the shipping line their specialty and accumulate the capital to make it a great one may be understandable. More importantly, they were too insular to bring in new men with such ambition to take over and remake the firm.

Equally central to this decline was the disintegration of the trans-Atlantic network of branch houses. A new generation of junior partners were promoted after 1838, and most were undistinguished, bringing to mind the theory of 'third-generation decline' in business firms.<5> The best of the later merchants was Richard Hutchison of the Miramichi, who took over after Rankin's death and continued in business for some years after Gilmour-Rankin's dissolution. 'Shotts' Allan Gilmour and Francis Ferguson lasted until

the end of their firms. But more were unlucky, and a few were embarrassments. Several were poor choices for the position, and they could have used far tighter supervision.. Projects such as Hutchison's shipbuilding were very much the exception to the rule. Independence was being foisted on the junior partners by the home firms' inattention, and they were quite unprepared for its challenges. The colonial firms would have done better with colonial-born partners rising through the local hierarchies. But Pollok-Gilmour never managed to evolve from the early procedures of sending its own men out. In the final days, the sub-firms became headaches. Closing Pollok-Gilmour entailed closing the branch houses, selling their assets, and endeavouring to settle their debts, the Montreal firm being an especially thorny problem. A retired Allan Gilmour Jr. was kept busy with this task, protracted by the distance involved, through almost the whole of the 1870's. He even had to make an uncommon visit to North America to dispose of the Quebec and Montreal-Ottawa firms.<6>

In the 1850's and 1860's, Pollok-Gilmour's array of branch houses also suffered from a vacuum at its centre. The junior Gilmour had no intention, and probably no capability, of becoming an ocean-hopping middleman like his uncle. Instead it was the junior partners who would come to him. They visited Britain every second year,

when they should have been minding the home business, to handle sales of their wood in Glasgow and Liverpool. These visits became ordeals toward the end. John Rankin:

There were interviews from time to time with the senior partners, Mr. Rankin and Mr. Gilmour, but the field day was reserved till the day before they sailed again from Liverpool. Mr. Gilmour came up, and his remarks were, I fear, more frequently than not of the pungent order, and far less pleasant to face than the critical and painfully logical ones of Mr. Rankin. I have seen these partners come out of the private office perspiring, and the happiest moment of their visit, I believe, was often that on which they stepped aboard the outgoing steamer. I do not think that at these meetings they ever rose beyond the position of boys before a head master.<7>

Gilmour's lack of tact must have reflected increasing frustration at his inability to stop the empire's diffusion. His personal authority was severely limited by the rarity of his American visits and his inability to dictate an effective policy in his regular correspondence with the junior partners. John Rankin:

Mr. Allan Gilmour of <the 1850's and 1860's> was the critic <as opposed to Rankin the initiator>. His letters to the foreign firms were eminently censorious ones, fault-finding to a degree, but affording no useful directions. Those to Liverpool were not so couched, but afforded neither light nor support. They gave little more than a resume of pros and cons.<8>

Ultimately, the relationship between senior and junior partners was the glue that held the company together. That the British and American partners were more and more like strangers to each other was a telling symptom of the empire's subsidence.

1852-54 was another period of change. Alexander Rankin died, Gilmour-Rankin-Strang was founded in London, and the cotton business--more than ever a mainstay--was extended to Mobile. But most importantly, John and Arthur Pollok retired from the business after almost a century of service between them. They received immense settlements, which they later mostly squandered on a huge estate in Lismany, Ireland, badly managed by Arthur's son-in-law. The new situation was untenable: there were now only two partners, one each for the Glasgow and Liverpool offices. The large amount of work falling to Gilmour and Rankin, with the latter handling much more than the former, contributed greatly to the decline. The tight-knit nature of the partnership long prevented Gilmour from bringing fresh talent into Glasgow. The problem was belatedly addressed in 1861, when four new home partners were given shares.<9> Gilmour and Rankin now held a quarter-share each, while granting George Hoghton, William Strang, Robert Rankin II, and George Sheriff each a one-eighth share. The contract also gives special attention to the New Orleans and Mobile firms, which had suspended operations--permanently, as it turned out--with the outbreak that spring of the American Civil War and the subsequent Union blockade of the Confederate ports. (By this time the fine for refusing to accept arbitration had risen to £500.)

The 1860's were a disheartening decade for the once-great company. The 1861 agreement had reduced Pollok-Gilmour and Rankin-Gilmour to commissioned agents of the American firms, receiving a thousand pounds a year for their services. The loss of the cotton business was a heavy blow that helped seal the company's fate. The promotion of Sheriff, whose ability John Rankin does not rate highly<10>, did little to improve the deteriorating state of things. Gilmour basically just went through the motions. Recalled a man who had been employed in St. John in the 1860's:

I blame the seniors for not doing more teamwork. As far as I could discover, they did not suck the brains of the subs--no matter how clever and capable...Team work and intelligent calculation would have shown that St. John could not pay...Hoghton should have been made more of...Allan Gilmour junior, of Glasgow, wrote twice a month for years, but believe me there was never a word of business in the letters--only complaints of past actions and warnings against a repetition.<11>

The number of ships carrying Pollok-Gilmour goods was steadily dwindling. There was little question of exploiting new opportunities like the new iron ships. One steamship was built--the St. Mungo--but Gilmour and Rankin warily washed their hands of her, deferring her operation to Strang's firm.<12> All the company's remaining vitality was in the Liverpool firm and, to a lesser extent, the London firm. In some places in

Glasgow, recalled John Sheriff, jokes circulated that P.G. & Co. stood for 'poverty, grief' or 'poor grub.' He had also detected premature rumour that his own firm was about to go bankrupt.<13> The end came with Rankin's death in 1870.

At the age of 65, the junior Gilmour knew that it was now time to retire and that there was no point in trying to keep his firm going. At the end of 1870 came a final contract between Sheriff, Strang, Robert Rankin II, and John Rankin.<14> Gilmour stepped down and, in provision with previous contracts, left Sheriff to settle its affairs. A closure period of three years was set and Sheriff agreed to retire along with the Glasgow firm at the end of 1873. The other three must have been reluctant to have any connection with Sheriff, and stipulated that his relationship with them must end. The colonial connection was also discontinued at this time, and the branch houses were wound down. The Pollok-Gilmour empire now belonged to history.

In the last analysis, Pollok Gilmour & Co. and the firms associated with it were the work of a few individuals. Men like Allan Gilmour Sr., Alexander Rankin, and Robert Rankin were the key to its ascendancy. But an organization that depends on a handful of men needs a process to ensure that the best men available are brought in and allowed to rise to the

top. With its old-boy network based in the Mearns school, the early company was not yet capable of, or even interested in accomplishing this. More seriously, the later Glasgow firm was not at all better in this respect. But Pollok-Gilmour's leading partners were very much of the old school of business. Their central interest was in building a vehicle for their own talents and ambitions over the relatively short term of their own careers. The more modern concern of developing a long-term hierarchy that would outlive them was secondary. Admits John Rankin: "I think the strong individuality and unconsciously dominating influence of the seniors made their subordinates merely executive, and checked their initiative." <15> Such a structure could be adequate, sometimes even beneficial, for the early, expanding company. But in later years it became a distinct liability. The new school of large-scale corporate business would be one of large teams working together toward long-term goals benefiting the firm above all else. There was never any great chance that Pollok-Gilmour would become part of this world. What is remarkable is how much it accomplished within the old systems. It provided a few brilliant individuals with the means to realize an epic vision of international trade.

Pollok-Gilmour's hour of glory was achieved in a

nineteenth-century world as part of the navigation explosion. Shipping had expanded the world, yet made it less overwhelming. The firm's true monument is to be seen in the former British North American colonies--particularly New Brunswick--in whose development it played such a significant role. The relationship between home office and branch house was parallel to the relationship between Britain and the future nation of Canada. The crucial difference, of course, is that Canada outgrew and survived her imperial connection. In the first two thirds of the nineteenth century and even afterwards imperial trade was invaluable to colonial growth, but carried the price of export dependence at the expense of self-sufficiency. Even today Canada, like other former colonies and former colonizers, is struggling with the problem of limited economic independence. Such questions were certainly far from the minds of the Pollok-Gilmour merchants. They went off to a foreign land to make themselves rich, and the most successful were almost single-minded in their dedication to this end. There was not that much else to distinguish them. But for two generations they were part of the trade links that were the main sinews of the British Empire. In these two generations they witnessed a new nation being built, and to some extent helped build it. This they did in passing, as a way of increasing profits. They provided a similarly indirect

service to the United Kingdom, not only providing the wood for her trading ships and building the trading ships themselves, but even taking part in the growing foreign trade that was so vital to the world's first industrial economy. Yet the company's central purpose was to make the most of the current period, a fairly short period that came and went.

N O T E S

1. See issues of The Clyde Bill of Entry in this period.

2. UGD 36 1/8.

3. See the articles for Rankin-Gilmour in ibid.

4. Basil Lubbock, The Last of the Windjammers, p. 78

5. John Rankin gives portraits of the empire's many junior partners, both early and late, in A History of Our Firm, in the chapters on their respective branch houses. Chapter XII, titled 'Characteristics,' looks at the different generations.

6. UGD 36 1/8 contains an 1877 letter to Gilmour from an employee of the Montreal-Ottawa branch that told of uneconomical sawmills that would have to be divested of and must have convinced him to complete the sub-firm's closure.

7. Ibid., pp. 245-6.

8. Ibid., p. 250.

9. The 1861 contract is in UGD 36 1/8.

10. He describes him in op. cit., pp. 47-8. The preface to the second edition includes a letter from a New Brunswick acquaintance of Sheriff defending him.

11. Quoted ibid., pp. 285-7.

12. Ibid., p. 27.

13. Memorandum of conversation with John Sheriff, recorded 25 March 1907, in all certainty by John Rankin in researching op. cit.

14. The 1870 contract is in UGD 36 1/9.

15. Rankin, op. cit., p. 260.

A P P E N D I X A :

A Partial List of Pollok-Gilmour Ships

This list of ships owned by the Pollok-Gilmour firms is inevitably a partial one. It does not include vessels which only on a few occasions carried the company's cargoes or ones which were sold before registration. Nor does it include a handful--the Arthur Pollok, the John Pollok, and the Salamis--which are known to be Pollok-Gilmour ships through mention in John Rankin's A History of Our Firm but about which virtually nothing else is known.

The chief source for all lists except that of Miramichi-built ships is the Glasgow Shipping Register, courtesy of the Glasgow Customs-House. Almost all information on Glasgow-registered ships comes from its annual lists. (On non-Miramichi lists, vessels not registered in Glasgow are denoted *.) Different sources sometimes give conflicting reports of a ship's tonnage: in all such cases, the Glasgow Shipping Register receives priority.

With one exception, the source for all ships not registered in Glasgow outside the St. John and Miramichi lists is Frederick William Wallace's Canadian Shipping, with its alphabetical list. That exception is the Mary, from Louise Manny's Ships of the Miramichi (p. 45). In the St. John list, it is the source for the Euxine and the Eliza Keith, but for all other St. John ships not registered in Glasgow the source is

'Thompson's Ark,' the tenth chapter of Esther Clark Wright's Saint John Ships and Their Builders, pp. 65-9. In the Miramichi list, the source for the Canada, the Concord, and the Jane (not necessarily built on the Miramichi, but included here anyway, as they were present there in 1825) is a report assessing the amount of damage caused by the 1825 Great Fire of the Miramichi, provided by the New Brunswick Museum. The source for the Equator is A History of Douglastown, by Joan Black, Bill Grattan, and Brenda Price (p.95), and the source for the rest is Manny, op. cit., which describes them both individually on a year-by-year basis, and in table-form in an appendix.

(Abbreviations: Bg.=brig; Bgn.=brigantine; Bk.=bark; o.m.=old measure ton; S.=sloop; Sch.=schooner; Sq.=square-rigged ship)

Vessels Built by the Quebec firm (the ones with initial "A" were mostly timber droghers built of oak and other hardwoods, with iron fastenings and knees):

Name	Years in Service (from registration to loss, sale, or closure of the Glasgow firm)	Tonnage	Notes
Abeona*	1837-?	876	
Abeona	1847-54	611	Bk. burnt on Mississippi.
Achilles	1846-67	654	Bk. lost off Cornwall.
Acme	1847-63	1241	Sold to Liverpool; in Bristol 1879.
Actaeon	1847-64	599	Bk. sold abroad; still afloat as late as 1905; crossing Atlantic as late as 1897.
Adept	1847-73	1199	Lost in Atlantic 1878.
Advance	1852-73	1613	Largest of all Pollok- Gilmour ships; sold to Belfast 1878; made part of Belfast jetty 1885.
Advice	1852-73	1372	Sold 1873; made permanent hulk 1900.
Agamemnon	1845-60	1163	Sold to Liverpool; lost in Atlantic 1876.
Agnes Gilmour	1841-48	915	Lost on the Valpraiso- Cork run.
Ailsa	1852-73	1457	Burnt at New Orleans 1873.
Allan	1849-72	993	Lost at sea.
Amaranth	1865	1198	Sold to Greenock.
Ann Rankin	1840-57	465	Sold to Norway.
Arethusa*	1845-?	712	
Argo	1845-72	1163	Lost at sea.
Ariadne*	1861-?	670	
Arran*	1849-?	837	
Arran	1851-73	1064	Sold to Pacific & Oriental Steam 1882; scrapped 1885.
Arthur	1849-70	987	Sold to Aberdeen.
Award*	1859	846	Lost on maiden voyage.
Banner*	1863-?	1094	Lost off Jamaica 1880.
Barbara	1841-57	1018	Lost in Atlantic.
Bengal	1833	657	Sold to Greenock.
Broom	1838-54	889	Sold to Liverpool.
Bytown	1843-44	607	Lost in Gulf of St. Lawrence.
Canton	1834-52	664	Sold to Liverpool.
China*	1841-?	130	
Curlew*	1867-?	1224	In Belfast 1890.
Decision*	1866-?	1203	
Euxine	1839-63	895	Sold to Glasgow.
Fingalton	1837-53	860	Sold to Liverpool; rebuilt in Bristol 1854.

Ganges	1834-47	659	Sold to Ross.
Gatineau*	1862-?	1165	Sold to Greenock; condemned 1893.
Gilmour	1835-47	667	Sold to Bristol.
Glasgow	1833-53	584	Sold to Liverpool.
Hibernia	1837-47	484	Built 1827; sold to Glasgow.
Illustrious	1857-68	1172	Sold to Liverpool; lost at sea 1872.
Indus	1836-53	822	Sold to Liverpool.
Lochlibo	1842-54	1006	Sold to Dublin.
Marchioness of Abercorn	1837-?	875	
Marchmont	1849-73	1294	Sold to Belfast 1878.
Margaret	1840-72	917	Lost at sea.
Pollok			
Marion*	ca. 1865	n.a.	
Mearns	1833-56	587	Lost off Cape of Good Hope.
Mearns	1838-59	756	Lost off Cape Frills.
Ottawa	1843-73	1141	Sold to Glasgow; scrapped 1878.
Pekin	1835-46	668	Lost in St. Lawrence River.
Pollok	1836-53	815	Sold to Liverpool.
Quebec	1831-53	587	Sold to Liverpool.
Rankin	1844-58	1120	Lost in Atlantic.
Renfrewshire	1836-63	841	Sold to Greenock 1863; lost in Gulf of St. Lawrence 1873.
Ritchie	1839-?	916	
Ronachan	1849-73	1156	Burnt 1884.
Trenton*	1858-?	190	
Wolfe's Cove	1831-?	592	Coal hulk in Ipswich 1895.

Vessels Built on the Miramichi (except when otherwise noted, all were built for the firm by master builder James Henderson at its Douglastown shipyard):

(Year Built)

Actaeon	1838	560	Bk. built by W. Abrams, Rose Bank; John Harley master builder.
Agent	1844	628	S. built by J. Russell at Beaubair's; master builder unknown; for sale 1845.
Agnes	1844	696	Ditto.
Annie Laurie	1857	745 o.m.	S. built by Henderson & Sinclair at the Lower Building Yard, Chatham.
Ant	1837	74	Sch.; shipyard unknown; built by John Harley.
Belle of the Ocean	1857	647	S. built by Abrams Scott at Rose Bank.
British Princess	1841	462	Bk. built by J. Russell, Beaubair's; master builder Joseph Russell; registered in Glasgow 1843; sold to Hull 1854.
Canada	n.a.	n.a.	S. lost in 1825 Miramichi fire; worth £3000; shipyard and master builder unknown.
Canton	1834	482	Bk. built by W. Abrams, Rose Bank; master builder John Harley.
Choice	1865	1154	S. built by J. Harley, Beaubair's; master builder unknown; received a seven-year A1-rating from Lloyd's Register.
Concord	n.a.	n.a.	Bg. lost in 1825 Miramichi fire; worth £3500; shipyard and master builder unknown.
Cycla	1851	647	S. built by Henderson & Sinclair in Newcastle Parish
Defence	1844	603	As the 'Agent.'
Doria	1859	265	Sch. built by Henderson & Sinclair at Rose Bank; registered in Glasgow 1860; sold to Greenock same year.
Envoy	1860	425	Bk. built at the same place.
Equator	1851	788	Shipyard and master builder unknown.

Euxine	1855	1196	S. built by Haws & Mitchell, Newcastle; master builder unknown.
		o.m.	
Flower of the Forest	1860	937	S.
Garibaldi	1860	825	S.
Helena	1862	287	Bq.
		o.m.	
Icon	1863	341	Bk.
Importer	1940	734	S. built by J. Russell, Beaubair's; master builder Thomas Laurie.
Jane	n.a.	n.a.	Lost in 1825 Miramichi fire; worth £2500; shipyard and master builder unknown.
Jeanie Deans	1863	260	Bg.
Jura	1863	251	Bg.
Kathleen	1864	471	Bk.
Mavourneen			
Lady	pre-1844	672	Shipyard and master builder unknown.
Falkland			
La Plata	1866	629	Bk. sold to Norway 1874; otherwise as the <u>Choice</u> .
Lenore	1865	1280	S.
Elizabeth			
Mary	1865	732	Bk.
Mearns	1817	495	Bk. registered in Glasgow 1824; lost in Atlantic 1830.
Non-Confederate	1865	347	Bk.
Oberlin	1865	263	Bg.
Panther	1866	222	Screw bk.
Queen of Beauty	1867	176	Half bg.
Rolling Wave	1867	n.a.	Bg. probably built in Douglstown.
St. Clair	1868	371	Bk. built by Templeman.
Signet	1844	531	As the <u>Agent</u> .
Teazer	1868	ca. 50	
Unicorn	1868-73	n.a.	Builder and shipyard unknown.
Vigilant	1873	n.a.	Sch. with builder unknown.
Wallace	1941	810	Sq. built in 1841 by Joseph Russell; originally in Robert Rankin's name alone; sold to Leith.

Vessels Built in England:

Agamemnon	1823-26	519	Bk. built at Sunderland 1811.
Argo	1824	484	Bk. built at Whitby 1807; lost in Atlantic.
Dale	1821-27	450	Built in Whitby 1804; originally sq.; re-registered as bk.; sold to Liverpool 1827.
Intrinsic	1823-35	406	Built in South Shields; re-registered as the <u>Dale</u> ; lost near St. John.
Mariner	1824-52	312	Bg. built in Stockton 1799; sold to Liverpool.
Mary	ca. 1812	n.a.	Brig earliest known Pollok-Gilmour vessel; brought Alexander Rankin and James Gilmour to the Miramichi in 1812.
Oxford	1825-52	389	Bk. built in Whitby 1804; sold to Liverpool.
Spence	1828-32	322	Bk. sold to Glasgow.

Vessels Built Elsewhere in the Colonies:

Calliope	1845-49	671	Built in ALEMOUTH, Nova Scotia, 1840; lost at sea.
Coverdale	1844-?	312	Built in Salisbury, N.B., 1841.
Ellerslie	1846-?	734	Built in Oromocto, N.B., 1841.
Henry Hood	1844-55	309	Sq. built in Granville, Nova Scotia, 1837; sold to Whitby.
James and Mary Sinott*	1841-?	533	Sq. built in Granville, Nova Scotia.
Jane Augusta*	1840-?	948	Built in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia.
Joanna	1832-?	555	Built in Oromocto, N.B.
Lady Falkland	1843-54	672	Built in Parrsboro, Nova Scotia; sold to Liverpool.
Lesmahagow*	1841-?	741	Sq. built in Oromocto, N.B.
Rienzi*	1853-?	883	Built at St. Andrews; in Dublin 1866.

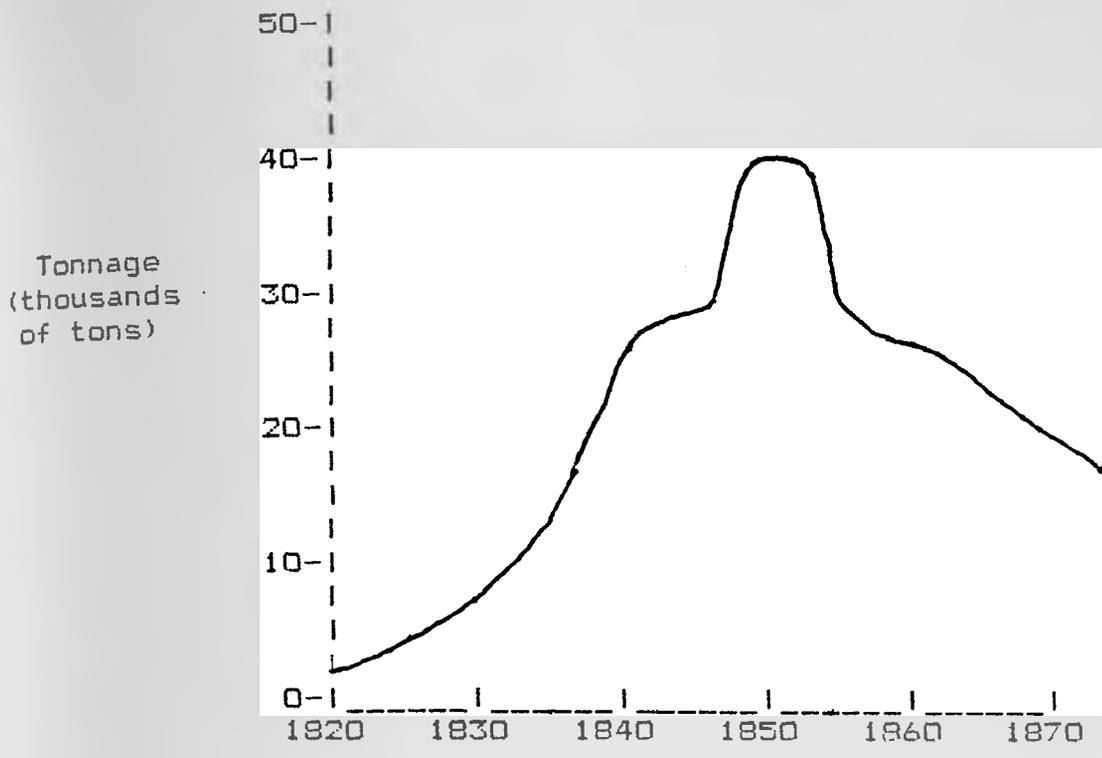
Vessels Built at St. John (master builder George Thomson):

Alert*	1834	1835	Sold to Jamaica.
Allan	1826-30	573	Lost in Bay of Fundy.
Gilmour			
Ann*	1827-33	335	Sold to Liverpool; in Bristol 1843, Newport 1845.
Ant*	1830-53	582	Sold to Liverpool; lost in Atlantic 1859.
Bee	1830-47	n.a.	Sold to Ross 1847.
Britannia*	1836-?	726	
Broom	1824-27	507	Lost at sea.
Canada	1845-51	808	Built 1841; sold 1851; lost 1866.
Carlton	1825-44	533	Lost in St. Lawrence River.
Corsair	1844-50	717	Lost off Newfoundland.
Countess of Loudon*	1840-?	785	Sq. sold to Glasgow; lost 1862.
Daedalus*	1834-44	396	Lost 1871.
Dumfriesshire*	1837-?	874	Originally owned by John Pollok; transferred to Robert Rankin; sold to Belfast by 1843.
Eliza Keith*	1840-?	537	Bk. in Liverpool 1843.
Enchantress	1846-9	832	Lost in Gulf of St. Lawrence.
Euxine*	1859-?	795	Bk. sold to Liverpool.
Faside	1829-?	572	Lost off Miramichi 1874.
Idea*	1836-37	284	Sold to Cork.
Jane Walker	1836-44	822	Built for John Walker; registered in Liverpool 1841 by Rankin-Gilmour; lost at sea.
Lotus	1845-57	873	Built 1840; sold to Bristol.
Marchioness of Queensbury	1830-52	667	Sq. built in 1824; first Pollok-Gilmour ship to make three Atlantic crossings in one year; sold to Hull.
Margaret Pollok	1824-31	504	Lost in Gulf of St. Lawrence
Miramichi	1829-73	581	Sold to Norway 1879.
Phebe	1834-?	813	
Princess Royal	1845-51	1109	Sq. built in 1841 owned by Alexander Rankin; sold to Liverpool; re-rigged as bq. and lost in St. Lawrence 1869.

Rankin 1829-38
St. John 1827-57
St. Patrick*
1837-38

576
n.a.
297

Lost off Newfoundland.
Lost near Miramichi.
Bq. sold to Galway.



Approximate Cumulative Tonnage
of
Pollok-Gilmour Ships (1820-70)
(see previous pages)

A P P E N D I X B :
Statistical Tables on the Timber
Trade and Colonial Shipbuilding

II: AVERAGE FREIGHT RATES FROM MIRAMICHI TO
BRITAIN 1818-31

Timber (s./load)	Deals (s./std. hd.)	Lathwood (s./fathom)
1818 55-60	55-58	47/6-60
1819 50	50	--
1820 42/6	127	42/6
1821 39-41	39-41	39-41
1822 40-42	40-137/6	--
1823 45/6-46	45/6-120	--
1824 45-48/6	45-47/6	46
1825 50-57/6	56/6-130	--
1826 37-42	37	37
1827 33-34	33-100	33
1828 33-34	105	--
1829 36	110	36
1830 32-33	80-100	32-33
1831 35	105	35

(Source: John D. Powles, P.P. 1833 VI, pp. 372-5. The downward trend in timber rates reflects the increasing number of carriers competing in this period. Deal rates were volatile, as deals still accounted for only a small proportion of this trade.)

III: SHIPS LEAVING THE AMERICAN COLONIES FOR GREAT BRITAIN, 1814-43

1814	433	1824	1683	1834	1905
1815	740	1825	1858	1835	2181
1816	879	1826	1770	1836	2026
1817	927	1827	1357	1837	1985
1818	1292	1828	1526	1838	2023
1819	1658	1829	1612	1839	2148
1820	1440	1830	1709	1840	2416
1821	1403	1831	1758	1841	2439
1822	1416	1832	1872	1842	1492
1823	1579	1833	1895	1843	2162

(Source: P.P. 1844 VIII, pp. 221-30.)

IV: SHIPS IN BRITISH-AMERICAN TIMBER TRADE 1841-5

	Total	Entered the U.K. Twice in the Year
1841	2054	1232
1842	1223	733
1843	1841	1104
1844	1955	1173
1845	2608	1564

(Source: P.P. 1846 XLV, pp. 401-3.)

V: TIMBER AND DEAL IMPORTS INTO GREAT BRITAIN 1841-43 (in £)

	Colonial Timber	Baltic Timber	Colonial Deals	Baltic Deals
			(including battens, etc.)	
1841	636,804	125,366	260,880	206,180
1842	377,984	102,117	226,319	157,885
1843	583,448	126,252	341,873	270,208

(Source: Joseph Somes, P.P. 1844 VIII, p. 25.)

VI: VALUE OF BRITISH EXPORTS TO THE AMERICAN COLONIES 1821-38 (in £)

1821	1,259,507	1830	1,857,133
1822	1,339,537	1831	2,089,327
1823	1,634,977	1832	2,075,725
1824	1,950,343	1833	2,092,550
1825	1,980,453	1834	1,671,069
1826	1,401,809	1835	2,158,158
1827	1,397,350	1836	2,732,291
1828	1,691,043	1837	2,141,035
1829	1,581,724	1838	1,992,459

(Source: P.F. 1840 XLIV, p. 315. The value of imports from these colonies was marginally lower.)

VII: VESSELS ON COLONIAL REGISTERS 1830-45

	Ships on New Brunswick Register	Total on Registers in American Colonies
1830	434	2210
1831	433	2314
1832	522	n.a.
1833	518	2143
1834	600	2337
1835	625	2460
1836	599	2530
1837	596	2616
1838	n.a.	n.a.
1839	705	2915
1840	608	2973
1841	696	3151
1842	658	3299
1843	687	3404
1844	595	3291
1845	593	3490
1855	894	5052
1867	1008	6906

(Source: Keith Matthews, "The Shipping Industry of Atlantic Canada: Themes and Problems," Ships and Shipbuilding in the North Atlantic Region, pp. 9-11.)

VIII: TONNAGE OF COLONIAL-BUILT SHIPS 1835-43

	Ships	Tons		Ships	Tons
1835	445	63,230	1840	771	143,288
1836	441	66,604	1841	668	132,857
1837	510	71,306	1842	558	75,662
1838	343	45,811	1843	386	40,088
1839	703	109,025			

(Source: Joseph Somes, P.F. 1844 VIII, p. 23. The annual average from 1839-41 of 128,390 tons, Somes points out, exceeded average annual losses in British shipping by 80 tons.)

IX: SHIPS LEAVING GREAT BRITAIN FOR NEW BRUNSWICK
1830-46

1830	532	1835	613	1839	550	1843	498
1831	477	1836	487	1840	522	1844	605
1832	539	1837	411	1841	446	1845	732
1833	457	1838	528	1842	275	1846	808
1834	456						

(Source: P.P. 1847 LX, p. 163. New Brunswick accounted for roughly a quarter of the colonial total.)

X: SHIPWRECKS OF NEW BRUNSWICK TIMBER SHIPS 1834-38

	Ships Wrecked Along Coasts	Ships Lost at Sea	Ships Lost Without Trace
1834	4	17	6
1835	15	17	17
1836	27	26	18
1837	7	25	19
1838	18	48	27

(Source: P.P. 1839 IX, pp. 233-4)

XI: WOOD SHIPMENTS BY GILMOUR-RANKIN (MIRAMICHI)
1830-69

1830	80	1840	94	1850	56	1860	20
1831	55	1841	100	1851	71	1861	21
1832	56	1842	46	1852	45	1862	14
1833	68	1843	65	1853	47	1863	24
1834	70	1844	79	1854	52	1864	28
1835	91	1845	97	1855	22	1865	18
1836	66	1846	88	1856	37	1866	23
1837	54	1847	36	1857	55	1867	16
1838	78	1848	48	1858	35	1868	24
1839	91	1849	55	1859	24	1869	28

(Source: the New Brunswick Museum. For the first three decades the average cargo varied between 300 and 400 tons; in the 1860's it hovered around 500. Timber predominated in the early years, but was surpassed by deals.)

XII: VALUE OF NEW BRUNSWICK EXPORTS 1833 (IN £)

	Timber	Deals & Boards	Masts & Spars
From St. John, etc. (i.e. to Great Britain)	184,747	92,627	21,460
From St. Andrews (i.e. to the U.S.A.)	20,474	66,477	--
	Total Wood	All Exports	
St. John	310,489	360,141	
St. Andrews	97,191	109,969	

(Source: P.P. 1835 XIX, p. 382)

XIII: VALUE OF NEW BRUNSWICK EXPORTS 1838-39 (IN £)

	Pine Timber	Ash, Birch, Etc.	Masts & Spars	Oars
1838	290,464	610	2940	1814
1839	281,727	869	2656	302
	Deals, Boards & Battens	Shingles	Lathwood	
1838	244,439	15,133	5845	
1839	292,187	15,974	4622	
	Staves	Timber & Oak	All Wood Exports	Total Exports
1838	6890	--	558,857	656,052
1839	9925	78	610,380	690,386

(Source: P.P. 1843 LV, pp. 418-19, 496-7.)

XIV: STATISTICS ON THE MIRAMICHI, 1828-30

Ships Leaving for the U.K.		Ships Coming from the U.K.	
1828	245		221
1829	178		154
1830	216		196

Ships Leaving for Other North American Colonies		Ships Coming from Other North American Colonies	
1828	120		120
1829	129		182
1830	140		173

	Imports (in £)	Total Exports (in £)
1828	120,643	118,309
1829	116,077	113,138
1830	119,190	128,676

	Timber Exports (in tons)	Exported Deals (in million ')
1828	114,458	1703
1829	83,807	1563
1830	102,998	2067

(Source: Robert Cooney, A Compendious History of the Northern Part of the Province of New Brunswick, pp. 90-94)

XV: SHIPS BUILT IN NEW BRUNSWICK 1814-47

1814	13	1823	44	1832	69	1841	118
1815	41	1824	81	1833	89	1842	82
1816	74	1825	169	1834	88	1843	60
1817	50	1826	125	1835	95	1844	80
1818	31	1827	114	1836	103	1845	79
1819	39	1828	67	1837	99	1846	114
1820	30	1829	60	1838	116	1847	102
1821	24	1830	46	1839	151	1856	129
1822	30	1831	56	1840	162	1867	104

(Source: Richard Rice, "Measuring British Dominance of Shipbuilding in the Maritimes, 1787-1890," Ships and Shipbuilding in the North Atlantic Region, pp. 148-51. In 1867 British North America was united by Confederation.)

A P P E N D I X C :
Some Reproduced Documents

The Original Articles of Co-Partnership for Pollok,
Gilmour & Co.

(from A History of Our Firm by John Rankin, who acquired
a copy of the articles from a descendant of William
Ritchie, pp.13-15.)

John and Arthur Pollok, Grocers in Glasgow, and
Allan Gilmour, Timber Merchant there, having agreed to
Trade in Company at Glasgow under the firm of Pollok,
Gilmour & Co., and at Grangemouth under the firm of
Arthur Pollok & Co., here bind themselves to observe the
following resolutions, viz.:--

1st. That their Joint Stock shall amount to Three
Thousand Pounds, One Thousand of which to be advanced by
J. Pollok, One Thousand by A. Pollok, and One Thousand
by A. Gilmour, and on no account shall any of them draw
out any part of their stock, but if it is thought
advantageous, they shall have it in their power to
advance their stock equally to whatever sum they may
find convenient.

2nd. That a proper Sett. of Books shall be kept
(of which this is Day Book A/c) in which shall be
narrated every transaction of the Concern, and the Said
books shall be regularly Balanced on the 31st day of
December annually.

3rd. That they shall all pay their whole attention
to this business, and none of them shall be concerned in
any other, either directly or indirectly, without the

consent of the other Partners, and they shall receive equal Shares of the Profit, or sustain equal proportion of the Loss that may arise from their dealings, but none of them shall draw out any of the profit that may appear at balancing untill<sic> the next balance following, and if at that Balance there is again a profit (and not otherwise) the former profit may be taken out. It being understood that Subsisting money shall be allowed, but that this shall not exceed the Sum of One Hundred pounds to each partner per annum.

4th. That this Contract shall continue for Six Years from this date, but any of the Partners shall have it in his power to withdraw from the same at the end of Three Years from this date, upon his having given intimation in writing to the other Partners Twelve Months before, in the event of which, two-thirds of his Share of Stock and Profit shall be paid him in 3 equal moities at Three, Six, and Nine Months after said Balance, and whatever part may be collected of his remaining one-third at the following Balance shall then be paid him, and so on, at every succeeding Balance.

5th. That in the event of the Death of any of the Partners before the expiry of this agreement, the Stock and Share of profits of said Partner, as appeared at the preceding Balance, with Interest thereon from the date of said Balance, shall be paid at the following Balance, the two-thirds in Three, Six, and Nine Months,

and the remaining one-third as above stated in case any of the partners shall withdraw from the concern.

6th. That if any difference shall arise during the Term of this Copartnery between any or all of the Partners, the same shall be adjusted according to the opinion of Men uninterested<sic> and experienced in business, mutually chosen.

We hereby promise in the transacting of this business most pointedly to adhere to the above Six Resolutions, and upon the request of any one of us, these with whatever others that may be thought proper by us all, shall immediately be extended on a proper Stamp in a Legal manner, and until then we consider ourselves as completely bound to observe the above as though it was<sic> extended in a Legal Manner on proper Stamped paper. Signed this first day of January, One thousand eight hundred and Six: Year.

Signed John Pollok

" Allan Gilmour

" Arthur Pollok

From Allan Gilmour's Diary
(written by Allan Gilmour Sr. together with Gilmour Jr.
and William Ritchie, during their 1828 tour)

(from Rankin, op. cit., pp. 288-96)

'5 June 1818.--Left Saint John, N.B., in steamboat at seven o'clock, and reached Eastport <in the American state of Maine to the west> after a very good passage, about a quarter past two o'clock, being a distance of about 60 miles. On our arrival at Eastport finding a packet waiting a wind for Boston, we went on board and engaged our passage by her. The packet is called the 'Sarah' of Boston, 133 tons by register, or 180 tons British.

'On our passage down to Eastport we had some conversation with a Mr. Smith, of St. John, who had cured a quantity of pork there last winter; he collected it from various quarters, but he said the greatest part of it was brought from the head of the Bay <of Fundy>; it cost him 4c. per pound, and he paid for spruce barrels 4s., which he said holds in pickle as well as ash; for cutting and packing he paid 1s. 6d., and other charges, including salt, would amount to 4s. 6d. more. It was his opinion that curing pork could be done to much better advantage at St. Andrews, where it is admitted by inland navigation from the United States duty free, and sells at about 3c. per pound.

'Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 6th, 7th and 8th June being thick, foggy weather, and little or no wind, we

could not sail, and during this time we lodged at Eastport in the house of a Mr. Pine, who formerly belonged to the Province of New Brunswick, in whose house we found very good accommodation, but charges are extravagantly high.

'9 June, Monday morning.--Having cleared, we sailed from Eastport at 8 o'clock. Eastport is at present, in appearance, an extremely dull place, and a stranger would at first view say that little or no business was done here, but being situated so near the British boundary, and from the number of large stores, it is very evident that smuggling to a great extent is carried on...A store on Campobello, or in any other near situation with a proper assortment of British goods, and under the management of a proper and active person, might do some good by disposing of them to the people to be passed into the States, and be enabled to receive flour or any other article of value for the use of the Provinces of New Brunswick or Nova Scotia, and thereby nearly save the duty, although the person carrying on such business should not be directly connected in passing the goods, but only do it by bartering or buying and selling. On account of the tariff Bill lately passed in the States, more British goods will in all probability be sent into the States through Eastport than formerly, as the duty on woolens, clothing, etc., directly imported to the States from Britain is so great

as to be almost a prohibition to the trade. Spruce barrels with twelve hoops sell here for 70c., or 3s. 6d. currency...We passed close to a small town on the American side called Lubec, the situation of which is good, but it cannot at present be a place of much business, as several large stores have been shut up for some time past, and indeed the very streets are beginning to be overgrown with grass, yet should the Tariff Bill remain permanent, Lubec may on account of its local situation revive, for doubtless British goods can be passed into the States with much facility here, and American goods received in return, as a person standing on the wharves at Lubec may speak to another on Campobello...'

The Gilmours and Ritchie spent a couple of days in Boston, Massachusetts. The diary describes Boston harbour, the quality of the city's buildings, the shops, and estimates its population at 70,000. 'We...went to view the Navy yard, and saw under cover two seventy-four-gun ships of an immense size. The foundation on which they are built being of wood, has begun to decay, and they are now taking it out piece by piece and building it of stone. They have a great extent of ground in the yard, and are now busily employed in constructing a dry dock...In the afternoon we took a stroll down among the shipping and fell in with Captain Palmer, of the 'Salamis' from Sunderland, with a cargo

of coals, who, on delivery proceeds to Saint John for a cargo of timber from R. Rankin & Co. Captain Palmer introduced us to Captain Fitzsimmons, master and owner of the brig 'Dorcas Savage,' of Porta-ferry, who brought from Wales a cargo of slates in good order by making bulkheads athwartship, and stowing the slates fore and aft. Captain Fitzsimmons is going to St. John for a cargo of timber; we therefore gave him a letter of introduction of R.R. & Co., and from what was said to him would expect he will load with R.R. & Co. There are at present a good number of vessels lying at Boston, and trade in shipping is said to be a very dull and losing business. The convenience in loading and discharging ships at Boston is good...No merchant ships are at present building here, and we saw only two small schooners on the stocks. We did not see in Boston Harbour any vessel that pleased us in the build, being for the most part too lean forward, rather little sheer, stern timbers not upright enough, and leaving the counters quite too hollow. We saw some good boats, the timbers bent of good scantling, the plank sound and solid, but the stern of most of them not well fastened to the body; wood chiefly red oak...'

The party took a coach from Boston to Providence, thence to New York via Newport on the steambat 'Washington.' Comments John Rankin: 'And so the log wags on till, on 22nd July, they are landed up at Quebec.

Nothing bearing on prospective business or indeed otherwise escapes attention: even in the slow travel of that day they had covered 2,863 miles--by steam and boats 2,593 miles, by land 270 miles <sic>.'

Gilmour Sr. travelled alone in the Canadas the next winter in a tour Rankin terms 'much more Spartan.' The first entry, on Christmas Day, says: 'Left Quebec at three a.m., with only a Mr. Levy, in the stage for Montreal. Morning very cold. Snow at Quebec not less than 3 1/2 feet deep, but as we came along got very thin. After a good deal of jolting passing over the Cachots, arrived Three Rivers about 9 p.m. and lodged.' Rankin: 'And so, while conveying his business enquiries, it proceeds; by turns he travels on wheels, by sleigh, on horseback or on foot. From many places he starts on his journey at 3 a.m., and after calls by the way, makes his destination by or after dark. In a Canadian winter there was not much pleasure in this. As showing the bent of his inclination, one notes the peculiar pains he takes to go over and criticise any vessel's hull he finds building (there is, or was, much shipbuilding on the Canadian lakes), and in the lumber districts, the special interest he has in any ship lumber that is being got out. The Falls of Niagara are reached by the 28th January, and whatever his inner feelings, he does not apparently waste much time or any paper on them.'

Letter from Allan Gilmour Sr. in Montreal to William Ritchie (and Allan Gilmour Jr.) at Green Island near Quebec on 8.12.28 'on beginning of Quebec Concern.'

(SRA THH-77)

Dear Sir <though the letter is addressed to Ritchie, Gilmour evidently had Ritchie's companion Allan Gilmour Jr. in mind, and he writes as if the reader were the latter>.

Since we parted on Saturday at 12 o'clock all has gone well, and I have been turning everything in my mind (I can think of). If you want any new form of Bills of Exchange, etc., you and Wm. Ritchie can be on the lookout and when you fall in with what you consider handsome you can enclose one or two forms to us as copies, but you to state what alterations you would like but if you can get them equally well done at Quebec or Miramichi, as in Glasgow this will not be necessary. I fully understand that you open every letter addressed to me and peruse and answer them but be most pointed to acknowledge receipt of them all and accept those from Messrs. Pollok Gilmour & Co., Glasgow, you will send me a copy of all this, or forward me the originals and you retain a copy.

I beg you do your utmost to have the Margt. Pollok load quickly and off to sea and be sure to say what you think of the steadiness and ability of the Capt. and if any faults be most pointed to mention distinctly what they are.

Learn from Thompson and Caldwell what rents Patton pays for both places but on no account let it transpire what you mean to do with Patton's places as you saw me mark on the charts, but just say if you had them, you would haul up a little timber (to hew) and redress it and say these places can do for nothing else, and say you want a place down opposite Montmorency or the <Prospect?> Cove but in every way I can balance I think more and more of Patton's two places but you must have them both and to keep your wharves so far from your neighbour Marshes ground at both ends up and down the river so that no person whatever, now or at any future period could ripe <filch> any<thing> bought from your wharves, and by (your) getting Patton's two places, if you choosed so soon, as your wharves is up and other People perceive the benefit you could rent off one of the places (with restrictions) and to keep the other you could sit rent free, next advantage by having your country house opposite you are Just beside all Ships loading Lumber both in the River and at the Quays or <sic> with the naked eye see every Person and movement, what ever side of the River you be on, as to ship building & rehewing of timber etc. and see every Person if they be doing their duty and with a glass in your hand sees every Person equally well as you were with them, and no capt. can say you are out of the way, if you are to be found at either of the places as you could

not cross (the River) without seeing each other and the place where every purchasing capt. will call, and every lumberer must pass each day out & in from all the rest of the Coves and Town as also the merchants.

Do not neglect to write Messrs. Gilmour, Rankin & Co. and Messrs. Robt. Rankin & Co., the price of window Glass and all kinds of wines at Quebec & Montreal and do send samples of all kinds of wine to G.R. & Co. and Robt. Rankin & Co. with prices from the auction, Bonus etc. or where you can purchase it cheapest, you ought also to send samples of the wines and prices to Messrs. Pollok, Gilmour & Co. to convince them, how business is done at Quebec & Montreal--this to show them the quality & prices--part of cheap wines would do well at St. John & Miramichi, these two concerns ought to have a proportion of the very cheapest of wines & Rum, do attend the auction, Rooms for information, and do keep in with Luther and propose to him frequently to take 1/2 share with him in purchasing Large Red Pine etc. from the Lumberers and in particular STAVE of all kinds, this proposal to be continued from time to time (altho you have no idea to carry it into effect, & this to get to the <illegible>) till you become full masters of your business and know where & (how & from) whom to apply too, and to know the best time of the year to purchase, and from whom, and by the surest plans to get the refusal of the choicest of articles from the Lumberers--

when these different articles comes first to Market--and do let us have your opinion & prospects of every thing and in particular as regards Patton's Coves, thus by the Margt. Pollok and the drafts to follow as soon after as possible, but I would consider my fortune made if I had Patton's Coves, at the same rent that has been paid for them for these twenty years past, but to have them in no other way than a perpetual feu <fee>, to pay so much in kind and so much yearly, and be you assured no money can be made without a cove, <'and to be by yourself' crossed out> and such a fine clean Beach is not to be had at Quebec as Patton's, also let us know how long <a> time (each side) timber can be floated off to ships to Ship's Tide, but I must repeat again that from the enormous charges the Fond-Keepers make with cheating & gulling you out of Measure, which causes shedding and time lying in the sun, and the destruction of hardwood <in this passage the handwriting is impatient and vexed>, and if you had a pond of your own, confident I am that any ordinary quantity of Elm, ash & oak could be kept <sic> in water a number of tiers deep, and at a trifle of Expence after your wharves is finished by floating one tier above another, as I pointed out to you it can be done and quite practicable--& to insure no reduction on the value of hardwood <illegible> & Exposed to the Sun.

I see you and William is much on the background as to speaking French--to be like other people you ought to apply yourselves instantly, I see it was of no use for you to be at Chaleur Bay <near the later Restigouche branch>, unless you had gone to a place where no English was spoke <sic>--you may perceive how Luther speaks to all his work men and every Canadian, you must write Messrs. Maitland, Kennedy & Maitland, New York, a kind of a complimentary letter thanking them for their advice as to our Tour saying we were all so highly satisfied & state the out lines of our Tour--Albany, Buffalo, Detroit, York, Kingston, Montreal, up the Ottawa to Bytown <renamed Ottawa> and down to Quebec, etc.--and if you know the acct. you owe them pass a draft if not cause them <to> state the amount to you as you & William thinks best and take pains on this letter and introduce my best respects, and state the day I sailed. I conclude by reminding you, which you have had abundance of opportunities of seeing hearing and witnessing the good opinion the Public has of the <actions?> of Messrs. Pollok, Gilmour & Co., Messrs. Gilmour, Rankin & Co., and Messrs. Robert Rankin & Co. & which be on your guard never to stray <from> and make it your study if the two new firms takes place, you <should try> to surpass the old ones as to Respectability & stability which can only be done by filling the foot steps of some of my partners.

You will also say by the Margt. Pollok if there be abundance of waters every Spring tide to Launch ships <from> Patton's ground and if there be depth of water to take ships on a fixed Hour, also the depth of waters every tide where you would lay down the fixed Time, say also at the place where you would build ships, of the Cross blocks for the Keel and ways <they> would lay <sic> on the rocks, so that no frost could affect them, and be at no Expence to buy and lay them down, also the foot of all Shores (if they) would stand on the Rocks--so that it would not be possible any vessel could be put out of shape by the frost <blasting> the ground.

Yours very truly--

Allan Gilmour

P.S. (written on the envelope): If you write do not neglect to give us the current prices of all kinds of Lumber from the smallest stick and upwards of this, also to Miramichi and Robert Rankin of St. John. The bearer is Pilot Paul <Bouz bot?> No. 132. I find him a steady man. <illegible> the Margt. Pollok is not engaged otherwise, off the Green Island the 12 of August at 12 O'Clock noon with a fair wind.

P.P.S.: Very full on Patton's Coves & the advantages that can be derived from them, and very full on all general business. Messrs. Pollok to peruse this letter as to the Quebec business--To write Messrs. Maitland, Kennedy & Maitland, New York.

Letter from Allan Gilmour Sr. in Glasgow to Allan
Gilmour Jr. in Quebec 4.14.38

(SRA THH-77)

Dear Sir,

I herewith hand you a copy of a letter that I wrote to my Brother James Gilmour of Miramichi of date 26th March 1838--for Alexd. Rankin who sailed with Messrs. Kirkton's ship the <Arcadia?> for Halifax & also hand you a letter for his son Allan Gilmour of Miramichi (now) at Quebec of date 8th of April as also one for Allan Gilmour of Shotts--of date 8th of April-- & one for your brother James, also one for your brother John, both of date 8th of April, which I beg you will carefully peruse, and as far as you consider them right you will force these contents to be obeyed as I do not mean to give much more advice to any of you residing in America, you having an abundance of my advice if attended to. And I now make a few remarks to yourself-- I was not a little surprised at you and Alexd. Rankin entering so cordially with the views of John and Arthur Pollok--and when there you saw that John and Arthur Pollok wished so much to have had the Contract extended to five years and your knowing well, that John and Arthur Pollok had laid these Plans--and not very honorable with me to reside at Broom--and Lochliboside in the head of Neilston Parish and to <hie?> you & I to be there Partners & when you should have known, that John Pollok is much worse than a sleeping Partner 100

miles from Glasgow, his mind being completely engrossed in cotton spinning. And even this spring already the Ships of Pollok, Gilmour and Co. is extremely neglected as to their repairs and a great waste of money: no Person to look after them and at this date the Marchioness not yet into dock. Such never took place while I had the charge. Also the House Property must go into running <the firm?>. Now supposing that you come home in September or October, do you not suppose that your time would be fully occupied to Travel from Port to Port to see all the ships Keeped<sic> in proper repair & to converse with all customers and to manage the House property. And I put the question to you & Alexd. Rankin: what you would consider a reasonable time for John and Arthur Pollok to <leave> Glasgow each day to dine at the Broom and to breakfast each day at the Broom and at what hour they could be in Glasgow? To this you gave me no answer. I also asked you what arrangements was made as to who would keep the Counting House & do the correspondence as John and Arthur Pollok says that you are to be the trader. Now if you even marry are you to continue to be their trader and Partner? Such arrangements cannot work long & to prosper therefore you should lose no time to make such arrangements that Mr. Alexd. Rankin come home and never be out of the Counting House in Glasgow. And if Mr. Alexd. Rankin will not come home you should instantly arrange for one of your

Brothers to come home to reside in Glasgow. Be considered as best qualified to Travel and if you & John Pollok live together in one house in Glasgow, I CUT WITH YOU FOREVER.

I remain

Yours very truly,

Allan Gilmour.

P.S.: I am perfectly sure that P.G. & Co. ships should have 4 Bow Loading Ports and fixed stanchions same way as ship 'Fingalton' in lower Hold and 'tween Decks to enable them to load & discharge quickly & this would enable long logs to get straight in & out of the ships <&> not to strain the bows of the ships by thrusting the Logs so much across the ships. This I had wished much for the last three years but Mr. A. Pollok did not sanction such, by always saying that such would take away a great quantity of Timber & could not <stand?> so much, but any storage that could be lost would be no consideration to me, compared with keeping the ships tight and strong, and if <you> fix the stanchions as Ship 'Fingalton,' the captain & the stevedores could not so readily injure the ships by overscrewing & wedging up the beams, and pulling the ends of the Beams & Knees from the ship's sides. You should also fall on some plans to make sure that the Capt. and Stevedores keep

all Log Ends of the rims of the cealing <obsolete spelling of sealing?> of ships fore and aft from 3 to 4 Inches so that the Log Ends and weight of the cargoes laying on the cealing do not spring the butt ends of the outside planks, and see all deck timber well fixed and never to carry any deck planks. And as you and Mr. Robt. Rankin is not become Ship owners you ought to cause the above <to> be strictly attended to, on every ship of F.G. & Co., by handing a copy of the above to each establishment of F.G. & Co. that loads F.G. & Co. ships. I think that the "Arthur Pollok" orders by far too much deck timber & spars--it ruins the ships in winter passages, and in case of a loss I think the insurance could not be recovered by law.

I remain

Yours truly,

Allan Gilmour.

'Private' letter from Allan Gilmour Jr. in Carlisle to James Gilmour on the Miramichi 13.1.39
'Detailing Cause of Quarrel with His Uncle'

(SRA THH-77)

My Dear Uncle,

I advised you already of my arrival and hastily told you of the position in which I found matters. I am happy to say now that Mr. Rankin, his wife and oldest daughter Mary (now all that is left of that family) were well when I left them on 9th last at Glasgow. Our Business on this side has been good this Year and the prospect is much better than for many Years past--but I shall not in this letter enter on particulars. I mean this letter to convey to you in as few words as I can put it the state of Private Matters with our Glasgow friends. The subject is to me a painful one, as it must be to you and all interested--and it is the more to be deplored and regretted when it is reflected on, that no good grounds exists for such a state of things. Such is my candid opinion. I assure you that differences seem to me so trivial, that if differences They can be called at all, are beneath notice. It will be impossible in a letter to make you understand so fully as I can were I present with you, but from what I may say of the enclosed copies of letters I hope you will see that all reasonable people can do or offer has been done.

I feel keenly how unpleasant it is to write to you of One whom we all esteem. He is your Brother & my Uncle, and I trust that you will perceive that anything

I may say is more in pity than any other feeling and entirely meant to give you a true Picture of what is going on for your information and guidance. You will Perhaps recollect something of what I told you of what I expect to find on my arrival at Glasgow and I must say, I did judge them most correctly, for what I predicted is fast coming & a great part already come. On my Arrival at Glasgow I immediately waited on my Uncle, who received me very kindly and for about a week all seemed to go well. He then made me aware that he intended entering an Action against John and Arthur Pollok for Breach of Contract, and I evidently saw all was not right in that quarter. He told me of what he conceived improper treatment as to purchase of Broadley Mill & what had been done for Wm. Craig and the Kirkton family, also of the Purchase of Lochliboside Estate and indeed very much a repetition of the Complaints I told you of when I was with you in November last. I was silent, I could say nothing. I felt that if I spoke it would only do harm and my object was if possible at a proper time to smooth off all sores for the general good, for I was then satisfied and am even now that no good could come of any other course. I was found fault with that I did not notice in Writing the Copy of the letter wrote <sic> to you of 27 July last, and I was urged to lay it before John & Arthur Pollok which was done and the enclosed is their answer dated 20 Decr. It was not meant that the

money laying in the Concern should be paid up--but that it appears has been brought on by himself, for as I am informed, he has been telling many that the Concerns were under labouring Circumstances and that he would transfer no property until he was paid out every farthing. HE EVEN WENT THE LENGTH TO TELL ME HE WOULD CUT THE CONCERNS TO PIECES IN SPITE OF ALL THE PARTNERS IN IT. I assure you I listened, I said not one word--but often tried to reason with him which I found perfectly hopeless and of no avail.

At times we had much satisfactory Conversation, and I brought your views of his retirement to this Country to his Notice, which he appeared to approve of and at once entered into your Mind as to a property. Mr. Reid of Hazeldon<sic> is about to sell his and we spoke of it & even appointed a time to go and examine it, and I rather made him aware you would be more pleased with Fingalton Estate--provided he succeeded in obtaining a larger one for himself--all which I assure you was received favourably and just as you could desire. It appears He has fallen out with Faside about a Park that lays into the Langton farm at the Laws and I believe that matter might have at once been adjusted if reasonably gone about.

Before I arrived at Glasgow J. & A. P. had told Mr. R. Rankin that He had left his money so far as it had

become due in their Hands, but the Amount was become so great they could not keep it, inasmuch as he was circulating that the Concerns was as I have before stated; and that they feared that if they allowed the sum to grow much larger, He might Come on them without a Moment's warning & put them to trouble and disgrace. Under these Circumstances they conceived they were bound in duty to the Concern to pay him out his Money as it became due & which you will observe is done in their letter as (copy enclosed) of 20 Decr., which letter I delivered to my uncle who now has it. My uncle expressed his Wish that I should receive from P.G. & Co. his money which I agreed to do. He, Mr. Rankin & myself went out to Mearns to attend the Funeral of Blackhouse's youngest daughter of about 6 years who died very suddenly. We went out in a chaise together on 28 Decr., and I arranged to go home to Walton with my Father who was at the Funeral and that I would spend a day or two with him & be in Glasgow on 1st Jany. Accordingly, on that night I went in & called at my Uncle's Lodgings. He was not in, and I left word I should be with him before 10 O'Clk. next Morning. I then went to my Lodgings at the Eagle Inn. On the morning of 2 Jany. I received the letter addressed to Mr. R. Rankin and myself of 29 Decr. by him.

On the 2nd Jany. and at the Hour appointed I waited

on my Uncle, who arranged with me to lift his Money from P.G. & Co. He at that interview told me he wanted a perusal of every letter that he had written to P.G. & Co. in 1829 & said that Mr. Carmichael would give them to me. I at once said that no papers could be taken from the office without the Knowledge of John & Arthur Pollok and I hoped that he would ask me to do nothing that was improper and dishonourable. He then became irritable and told me I had better pay the Money he had paid for my Father or he would Roup<auction> him out. On hearing such a threat, you may well conceive my feelings. But, and I am thankful for it, I replied not one word. I then left agreeing to meet him at the News Room to say how & where the money was to be paid. I met him at the News Room & subsequently went & drew the Money--about £22,919.18/7-- and then went and lodged £22,900 of it in the Banks, He being with me. I had still about £19 in my pocket and he requested I would go to his lodgings at 7 O'Clk. that night & pay him--which I agreed to do. After all this, being about 2 O'Clk. we were about to part, when he again spoke of the letters and said he could go to the Office & read them. I said, I did not think, but that if I asked them John & Arthur Pollok would let him have the letters. He at once told me to 'GO TO HELL!' and immediately he started & left me in the street. I was struck dumb, and did not know what to think. When the evening came I went into his

Lodgings and on entering wished him 'Good evening,' but did not attempt to sit. He was busy writing, and he asked me to take a chair. I did so & without speaking I took out the £19 I had & placed it on the Corner of the Table & <a>waited his time. He then put past all his papers, & appeared ready for me when I paid him his Money all right. He then handed me my Father's Accounts and again demanded payment. I told him I would pay him tomorrow if I could get as much money. I then left him, wishing him good night. Next Morning I asked Mr. Pollok for the money--about £309 --and asked him to send One of the Clerks to pay it, for I was then beginning to find my temper give way, and I feared I might do or say what afterwards I might regret. This was done and since then I have not been near him but on the same day--3rd Jany.--I wrote an answer to his letter of 29 Decr., Copy of which you have herewith also.

I have thus in as Short a Manner as I could, detailed to you what I have done and whether I have done right or wrong, time perhaps will show. At all events I am happy I have been enabled to act in such a Manner as even now I do not regret--I could not act a dishonourable part towards the Concern of Pollok, Gilmour & Co.-- and I conceived it was my duty at once to stand firm and do what I thought right and Honourable. Of course I know nothing more of my Uncle's Measures. He still swears he will lay an action for

£50,000 against John and Arthur. But to be candid I fear if he does he will get the Worst. You see what they offer & what they say in their letter of <27> Decr. and no more can be demanded even on the contract that he says has been so often broken. Before this last Outbreak I was with him one Morning when your and Mr. Rankin's letter of this fall was received--he gave them to me to read to him, which I did, but he made very little remark on them whatever he felt. With regard to myself now, I mean to do all I can for the Interest of the Concerns, without regard to any of their quarrels. Yet you may conceive how painful it is for me to be among them and at the New Room of other Public Places and their differences so much spoken of by the whole town & country, so tells almost every one of them.

J. & A.P. say not one word as far as I have ever been able to find out. Under these circumstances I shall say no more at present about a property for you, and I shall not be able to give you further information till April or so, as I expect to be 2 or 3 months absent, and it is not likely I shall be much about Glasgow next summer. Our Relations are all pretty well, and I hope this hastily written letter may find you all in the enjoyment of Health. We have had very stormy Weather lately & the damage done on Land & Sea is most awfull, which you will see by the papers. I have only

been two days on my tour and already made 6 Contracts
(for?) 3 Bathurst cargoes at <2p. for 17 tons?>, One
Restigouche <illegible> 16 Inches & 2 Quebec Cargoes at
from 3 to 6 White pine & Red pine. There is now every
prospect of a good Trade for Next Year. I expect of
course that this letter is <strictly> between ourselves.
I would write so to no other one.

Allan Gilmour.

P.S.: If you think it right you may show Mr. Rankin
this Letter, but as you please.

Letter from Allan Gilmour Sr. in Glasgow to William Ritchie in Montreal via 'New York by steamer from Liverpool' 15.6.40

(SRA THH-77)

Dear Sir:

I duly heed your letter of date 19th July from Bristol, as also yours from Montreal of date 13th March, which I received on the 6th of April, and Mr. Bannatyne also handed me the copies of Messrs. Pollok Gilmour & Co. letters to you of date the 15th & 24th Feb. & yours in answer to them of date 25th March & 7 of April for my perusal. These 4 letters are all on one sheet, but none of these letters throws any further light to me on the unjust situation that you <and?> Brothers Arthur & Robt. has placed yourselves in but the grossest insult that I have ever seen forced on <illegible> to any person, is Messrs. Pollok Gilmour & Co. letters to you wrote<sic> by John Pollok but such letters John Pollok never durst pen to me nor <illegible>, neither durst he to you but under the <illegible> of ALLAN GILMOUR WHICH I AM ABHORRED TO OWN AS MY NEPHEW EITHER IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE. But you must be well aware that after you signed the deed of contract which I never would have expected that you would have done, you are now found to abide by the consequence & every insult they chose to put on you, unless that you can overrule John & Arthur Pollok by votes & which impressed on your mind to do day after day & hour after hour while you were with me last

winter, to accomplish <by yourself & with your two Brothers Arthur & Robt.??> as unless you can get a majority of votes, you are bound neck and heel and must abide every insult and must <illegible> all your work for nothing, to the three in Glasgow of John & Arthur Pollok & Allan Gilmour <Jr.>. But I do lament the situation, that of our Brothers Arthur & Robt. has placed themselves in, and surely you are well aware that JOHN POLLOK HAS NEVER BEEN OF MORE USE TO ANY OF THE CONCERNS OF MESSRS. POLLOK & GILMOUR & CO. THAN A WAX DOLL, & still you did sign a deed of contract, allowing John & Arthur Pollok £400 a year to ride out to the Broom (to amuse themselves at your expense) and all I did say or can say <is> that unless you can muster a majority of votes to <defeat??> John & Arthur Pollok & Allan Gilmour, no man or men can form any idea, of the ulternal <sic> consequences. <As for you and your brothers,??> had you acted under my directions you could have been placed in very different circumstances. I am told that designing People in Liverpool looks upon Robt. Rankin, which has been the cause of all P.G. & Co. <wild??> speculations this year. And I conclude by requesting that you will on receipt <of this letter>, write me what determination that you see those connected with the concerns of Messrs. Pollok Gilmour & Co. in America has come to, other names of those who is to be home from America during this incoming winter to put all

things in something like a face of footing, & if not successful to obtain this do...<In the letter's final, rather incoherent passage, Gilmour Sr. suggests a strategy to allow Ritchie's brothers to retire on good financial terms, through the 'beefing up' of their shares.>

'Type of Letters to Ship Captains in 1838'

quoted in Rankin, op.cit., pp. 316-18.

Glasgow,
30th March, 1838.

Captain John Craig,
Sir,

In consequence of a quantity of contraband goods having been found on board of several of our ships, we deem it necessary to alter and amend the condition of our former agreement for sailing our ships, which in future shall be as follows:--

You engage for our safety as owners, as well as your own safety as shipmaster and commander, to use the greatest vigilance in your power, as also in the most particular manner to instruct your mate and all other officers to prevent the possibility of any contraband goods, even to the value of sixpence worth, being put on board of your ship under the penalty of forfeiting your wages and allowances as aforementioned. Your wages to be at the rate of eighty-four pounds p. annum from and after this date--say £7 p. month. A puncheon of rum to be allowed as stores for each voyage, and ten pounds each voyage for furnishing your cabin; with forty pounds additional provided you accomplish your two voyages within the season, that is to say, before the first day of the following year, and also provided you do not allow any contraband goods, or any traffick of any kind

on board of your ship. So that if you do not arrive at your discharging port the second voyage before the first of January next following, or if you allow any contraband goods or any traffick whatever to be carried on board of your ship, you cannot demand the allowance of £40, but to be satisfied with what under the circumstances of the case, we may think proper to give even although no part of said 40 should be allowed you. We have also occasionally found it unpleasant at settling accounts to be obliged to make deductions from the charges made in some of our ships' books. You know that the furnishing of the cabin and upholding the cabin materials are done by you for the allowance of ten pounds per voyage; and that no board wages are to be allowed you at whatever port you may go to discharge, and as a puncheon of rum is allowed for each voyage, we allow no farther charge to be made for spirits whatever length of voyage you may have. We also allow you to take a passenger or two in the cabin by giving the ship credit for £2 each; but should you take any passengers on board without putting the same to the credit of the ship in the ship's book, we in that case charge you 20 for each passenger at the settlement. We state these circumstances that nothing may appear in the ship's book that may require to be deducted at settling accounts. We have also taken a particular note of the quantity your ship should stow, and every expence that should be

incurred in navigating your vessel; and by your increasing the stowage and diminishing the expences and every charge that is possible, and having your vessel in such good order in the fall that she can be fitted out very moderately next spring, you shall receive from us every encouragement, and we hope to be able to continue to you the foresaid wages and allowances, although we understand and have been informed by many of the Captains of timber ships in the neighbourhood of Whitby and Shields that they are not paid more than from £7 to £8 p. month, and that only while they are at sea and discharging their ships, without any additional allowances whatever. We, however, by no means grudge the extra wages and allowances we give our Ship Masters while they are at sea and discharging their ships, without any additional allowances whatever. We, however, by no means grudge the extra wages and allowances we give our Ship Masters while they do their duty. If you agree to sail the ship "Faside" agreeably to the before-mentioned terms and stipulations please say so.

We are, Sir,
Your most obedient servants,
Pollok, Gilmour & Co.

From Daniel Carmichael to Allan Gilmour Jr. 1.15.47
(UGD 36 1/7)

Dear Sir:

The reason of my absence from the Countinghouse this day, is to commemorate in private, at my own house, the thirtieth year of my anniversary in your highly respectable establishment; an event, which few of my age can boast of.

And when I think of the many eventful changes that have taken place in the circle of my friends and acquaintances during that long period of time, it is eminently calculated to impress my mind with feelings of deepest responsibility, as to the improvement I have myself made towards my everlasting rest.

For fifteen months past, I have really had much to harass and perplex my mind and I have painfully experienced in no ordinary degree the shallow friendships of the world, during that time; but I hope in after years, if spared to overcome the load of anxiety and vexation, which to a certain extent, still haunt my mind.

I am happy at the same time to remark that I never had the business brought up to a higher standard of perfection than it is at present, and it is only those who have been similarly occupied can form a correct idea

of the magnitude of transactions that pass through my hands and perhaps my labours will not be adequately appreciated till my body is mouldering in the silent grave--"where the weary be at Rest."

Allow me to tender to you Sir, and to the Messrs. Follok my grateful acknowledgements for your kind consideration of my many deficiencies and wishing you all ever, comfort and happiness.

Yours truly,
Daniel Carmichael.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

FORMAL DOCUMENTS AND ACCOUNTS

The original six Articles of Co-Partnership between John Pollok, Arthur Pollok, and Allan Gilmour Sr., signed 1.1.06, are reprinted in John Rankin, A History of Our Firm, pp. 13-15.

SRA THH-78 contains: the articles establishing Robert Rankin & Co., St. John, signed by the three senior partners and by Robert and Alexander Rankin, effective 1.1.22; the articles jointly establishing Allan Gilmour & Co., Quebec, and William Ritchie & Co., Montreal, effective 1.5.29; the account by which Allan Gilmour Sr. received 164,500 pounds from the firm on his retirement, between 15.5.38 and 15.5.43; the account by which James Gilmour received 63,500 pounds less 1p., plus 9117 pounds 17s. in interest, over three years following his 1.1.41 retirement; and legal evidence employed in litigation over Gilmour's revised will.

UGD 36 1/1 contains records of the legal proceedings between Pollok-Gilmour (and others) and a merchant called John Fulton Anstruther over the extension of Port-Glasgow's harbour.

UGD 36 1/6 contains an official protest by Capt. Francis Scott of the 'Ronachan,' following a collision the ship was involved in.

UGD 36 1/7 contains an account for the 1842 St. John-to-Glasgow voyage of the "Lady Falkland."

USD 36 1/8 contains the 1812 articles which established Gilmour, Rankin & Co. on the Miramichi, and documents formalizing the firm's structural changes. These include contracts for changing senior partnership in 1838 and 1855; the articles founding Ferguson-Rankin in Bathurst (1842), Rankin-Gilmour in Liverpool (1843), Hoghton-Rankin in New Orleans (1843), Gilmour-Rankin-Strang in London (1853), and Pollok-Hoghton in Mobile (1854); contracts for changes at branch houses, such as the two Gilmour & Co. firms in Quebec and Montreal-Ottawa (1842), Gilmour-Rankin on the Miramichi (1842, 1853), Rankin & Co. in St. John (1842, 1854, 1856), and Ferguson-Rankin (1856); and papers pertaining to William Ritchie's 1841 retirement.

UGD 36 1/9 contains some documents from Pollok-Gilmour's final years, including the 1861 contract bringing in new home partners, the 1871 contract arranging Pollok-Gilmour's closure, an 1859 contract changing the partnership at Hoghton-Rankin and Pollok-Hoghton, and an 1869 contract doing the same for the Quebec and Montreal-Ottawa firms.

UGD 36 2/1 contains a 7.20.48 private report on the legal proceedings brought by the firm against William

Ritchie over the settlement granted him at the beginning of 1842. A special accountant was introduced by common consent to settle the matter with a lengthy investigation. The report contains a reproduction of the 1828 agreement which launched the Montreal partnership (pp. 50-58); details of the disputed sums (pp.117-26); and categorization of the items, along with the accountant's conclusions which favoured neither side completely (pp. 155-71).

L E T T E R S

SRA THH-77 contains an abundance of letters concerning the firm's affairs, dating from 1828 to 1848.

10.8.28 (Allan Gilmour Sr. on a ship harboured in Montreal to William Ritchie off Green Island near Quebec): Gilmour Sr. gives detailed advice to new partner Ritchie about how to set up a branch firm. The letter recommends, among other things, that the firms' yards be placed on a remote lot to prevent theft; and that Ritchie take a residence within view of his operations, so he can devote as much of his time as possible to the business. (See Appendix C.)

2.1.29 (Gilmour Sr. in Glasgow to John and Arthur Pollok in Glasgow): Gilmour Sr. protests that the Polloks' recent purchase of a Broadly cotton mill which he wants nothing to do with was a violation of the original 1806 Articles of Co-Partnership.

5.1.29 (J. and A. Pollok in Glasgow to Gilmour Sr. in Glasgow): in the Polloks' reply, they admit that they technically did need Gilmour's permission to make the purchase but plead considerations of time and the vital importance of immediately seizing an opportunity that might disappear quickly. They suggest a two-year trial period pending a possible separation of Gilmour's interest from the mill.

30.4.36 (Gilmour Sr. to 'Shotts' Allan Gilmour in Hamilton, Upper Canada): Gilmour sent 'Shotts' Allan, who was then a young employee of Young & Co., a letter of advice stressing the importance of commitment, continuous learning, church attendance, the right choice of friends, and avoiding excessive drinking and gambling. This letter, one of the only pieces of evidence confirming the existence of the Hamilton firm, survives through a copy dated 26.3.38 (see below).

1.1.38 (Gilmour Sr. in Glasgow to J. and A. Pollok): Gilmour discusses the upcoming project of refurbishing ships of the Pollok-Gilmour line in shipyards in London, Liverpool, Hull, and Glasgow. For a long time, says Gilmour, he had tried in vain to convince the Polloks to do their fair share of such spadework (Pollok had facetiously suggested that Gilmour derived "amusement" from these chores) and he washes his hands of this project, sarcastically suggesting that they might like to be similarly amused. The break is clearly at hand.

10.1.38 (Gilmour Sr. to Gilmour Jr. in Quebec and Alexander Rankin on the Miramichi): Gilmour raises the question of how to dispose of the North American firms, and suggests general retirement to allow complete removal of funds. He observes that John Pollok is assuming a tone of co-operation at the moment, but doubts his good faith.

16.1.38 (Gilmour Sr. to George Young in Glasgow): Gilmour writes to the firm's legal adviser to explore the prospects for legal action. He cites such earlier grievances as the Broadley mill purchase.

26.3.38 (Gilmour Sr. to James Gilmour on the Miramichi): Gilmour Sr. announces his retirement to his brother, admitting he is leaving in a hurry. He advises him to save the previous year's balance before the latter's own retirement, to be prepared gradually to auction off all the assets under his jurisdiction, and to press the Polloks for the best possible deal.

26.3.38: Gilmour Sr. sent out copies of the 30.4.36 letter of advice to all the junior partners as a final message.

9.4.38 (Gilmour Sr. to John Gilmour in Quebec): Gilmour Sr. counsels his brother to be careful when dealing with the Polloks and to avoid the outcome which he now realizes is in store for him.

8.4.38 (Gilmour Sr. to Allan, son of Jas. Gilmour, in Montreal): Gilmour gives general advice to his nephew, including to stay in the same house as his master W. Ritchie.

14.4.38 (Gilmour Sr. to Gilmour Jr.): Gilmour Sr. gives more advice about dealing with the Polloks, also

touching on business matters such as the firm's neglect of ship-repairs, the importance of ending the practice of deck-loading (citing the 'Fingalton' as a good example), and of introducing fixed stanchions and loading through the bow. His anger is manifest. (See Appendix C.)

8.6.38 (Jas. Gilmour to Gilmour Sr.): James acknowledges his brother's 26.3 letter and rather sits on the fence about the retirement controversy, observing that he has been twenty years away and will be retiring soon. He also raises the question of what to do with his son Allan, suggesting he return to the Glasgow office; and emphasizes that more of the firms' wood should be processed into deals and lathwood at home.

27.7.38 (Gilmour Sr. to Jas. Gilmour): Gilmour Sr.'s reply expresses regret and states that the Polloks' purchase of the Lochlibo estate over his head has caused a permanent split.

1.10.38 (Gilmour Sr. to Jonathan Spence in Sunderland): Gilmour Sr., replying to a supportive letter from a Sunderland merchant, makes clear his enmity toward the Polloks but is reticent about the causes of his retirement.

3.1.39 (Gilmour Jr. in Glasgow to Gilmour Sr.): Gilmour Jr. effectively comes down on the Polloks' side, citing

the importance of honouring a contract to the letter, and hoping an inquiry can be avoided. Gilmour Sr. must have felt stabbed in the back--he wrote no known reply.

13.1.39 (Gilmour Jr. in Carlisle to Jas. Gilmour): Gilmour Jr. insists that any differences between his uncle and the Polloks are 'beneath notice' and that 'all reasonable people can do or offer has been done.' He gives a critical account of his uncle 'more in pity than any other feeling' (really?) when he met him on the night of 2.1, and the latter described his plans for a Breach of Contract lawsuit against his erstwhile partners. Gilmour Sr. set out, with his nephew's cautious assistance, to withdraw from the firm all the cash he could (22,919 pounds--a memorandum in TH-77 confirms the number), along with useful legal documents. When Gilmour Jr. asserted that the Polloks would provide the documents on request, his uncle told him, 'Go to hell!' Gilmour Sr. also indicated his willingness to dissolve all the firms to acquire the assets due to him, which his nephew cites as cause for him to turn against him in the next day's letter. (See Appendix C.)

5.2.39 (Gilmour Jr. in Liverpool to Gilmour Sr.): Gilmour Jr. discusses his recent marriage and his plans to bring his bride to Britain, a journey that still took several months. This letter reflects the impressive degree of central control over Pollok-Gilmour which

Gilmour Sr.'s successors inherited, and Gilmour Jr.'s failure to realize that his uncle might hold his disloyalty against him.

22.7.39 (Gilmour Sr. in Glasgow to John Gilmour with copies sent to the Ritchie brothers in Montreal and on the Restigouche): Gilmour Sr. complains that when his 1/3 share in the Nainshaw estate was transferred to Gilmour Jr. on his retirement, the Polloks denied him shooting rights on the estate. He contends that John Pollok had given him a verbal assurance that he would retain shooting rights despite the transfer.

20 or 26.1.40 (Gilmour Jr. in Liverpool to Jas. Gilmour): Gilmour Jr. discusses James's announced retirement, and mentions that Gilmour Sr. will be taking Pollok-Gilmour to court over his settlement. Gilmour Jr.'s citing of his own lack of memory and his advice to James to "admit nothing" except what he remembers with perfect clarity are highly suspicious. He also mentions that Robert Rankin has sided with the Polloks; and says that Alexander Rankin has promised to deal with the Nainshaw problem.

26.1.40 (Gilmour Jr. in Liverpool to Jas. Gilmour): Gilmour Jr. citing rumours, assures James that Gilmour Sr. is hatching plots against Pollok-Gilmour, developing a 'monstrous' conspiracy with William Ritchie's

connivance. He also asserts that Gilmour Sr. and Ritchie had not been on friendly terms before this combination; and observes that business is currently 'dull.'

13.3.40 (W. Ritchie in Montreal to Gilmour Sr.): Ritchie mentions David Gilmour's conviction that John Pollok was about to retire and his hope that David and John Gilmour can ensure this. He also mentions that the 'Pollok' has been seized by New Orleans customs officers because the captain was carrying contraband in his personal capacity; that business is in serious trouble in the United States; and that he managed to cross the Atlantic in only 15 1/2 days, thanks to the new steamship line.

18.3.40 (W. Ritchie to Jas. Gilmour): Ritchie suggests that if nothing changes James should resign from the firm and continue in the business independently, and wonders about the likely outcome for the latter's son; he also cites the demand for timber in the construction of British cotton mills.

28.3.40 (W. Ritchie to A. Rankin): Ritchie, assuming a fairly snarky tone, accuses Alexander Rankin and his faction of unfairness; he also frets about the troubled Restigouche firm, in particular its Dalhousie office.

11.4.40 (Gilmour Jr. in Glasgow to Allan Gilmour, son of

Jas.): Gilmour Jr. blames the firm's recent difficulties on an excessive money supply, leading to the overly-generous granting of credit to lumbermen and other poor risks, and specifies that the policy of annual account payments must be adhered to with few exceptions. He sends along a gift of fishing tackle, talks about how well James will be welcomed in his coming retirement, and dangles the hope of son succeeding father. Even the junior partners had to be treated nicely while Gilmour Sr. remained a threat.

13.4.40 (Jas. Gilmour to W. Ritchie): in his reply to 10.3, James continues to sit on the fence; he admits that Gilmour Sr. was basically forced out of the firm; and mentions an argument over ten thousand pounds in profits.

19.4.40 (A. Rankin to W. Ritchie): in his reply to 28.3 Rankin, like James Gilmour, avoids offering any opinions of his own, seeking merely to continue business as usual.

15.5.40 (W. Ritchie to Robert and Arthur Ritchie on the Restigouche): William warns his brothers that despite Alexander Rankin's assurances, any talk of John Pollok retiring is simply a bluff; and he chides their huge unmoved stores and unreduced liabilities.

27.5.40 (W. Ritchie to Gilmour Sr.): Ritchie reports

that his withdrawal from the firm is underway and that he has written to the attorney Bannatyne. He mentions that the 'Pollok' has been refitted with a cargo of cotton; the 'Marchioness of Queensbury' is carrying New Orleans pork to Quebec; the 'Irvine' has ran aground at Mobile.

15.6.40 (Gilmour Sr. to W. Ritchie): in an angry, frequently incoherent letter, Gilmour criticizes the Ritchie Brothers' decision to sign new agreements with the Polloks and his accursed nephew--William to retire--that limited their room to manoeuvre. He suggests that they can still save the day by hanging together and organizing a revolt against the Polloks among the partners; he here asserts that John Pollok 'has never been of more use to any of the concerns of Messrs. Pollok & Gilmour & Co. than a wax doll.' (See Appendix C.)

22.7.40 (Gilmour Sr. to Spence): Gilmour replies to a letter from Spence that expressed some sympathy for the Polloks, based on a recent interview with Pollok Jr. His frustration and anger manifest in the letter's mistakes and cross-outs, Gilmour Sr. denounces his nephew as a liar having a common interest with the Polloks. He contends that 'if it had not been for me<the Polloks> would have been knocking stones on the road--& did I not take John & Arthur Pollok from a small Grocery and Spirit Shop into a business that they knew

nothing of... (See Appendix C.)

25.7.40 (Spence to Gilmour Sr.): in his reply--presumably written immediately upon receiving the 22.7 letter--Spence takes pains to extend courtesies, citing Gilmour Sr.'s invaluable past favours. He admits to having jumped to conclusions, expresses the opinion that his correspondent would not be so angry without some just cause, and criticizes the nephew's disloyalty.

16.2.41 (Gilmour Jr. in Carlisle to Jas. Gilmour): Gilmour Jr. reports that he has visited Bristol, London, Hull, and Newcastle to observe repairs on the company ships; notes that William Ritchie has visited Glasgow in the past year; wonders if the Edinburgh lawyers have been consulted; and complains about the substandard, over-measured wood coming from Dalhousie.

8.12.48 (Gilmour Sr. at Hazeldean to Jas. Gilmour at Eaglesham): Gilmour Sr. notifies his brother of changes to his will, by which James will become the principal beneficiary instead of Gilmour Jr.

M E M O R A N D A

UGD 36 contains three papers that in all probability resulted from John Rankin's research in writing A History of Our firm.

The first is a sad 15.1.47 letter (UGD 36 1/7) by the under-appreciated clerk Daniel Carmichael explaining that his absence the previous day was to commemorate his thirtieth anniversary with the firm, and worrying that he will not receive the gratitude due to him until he is dead. Rankin gives the letter a brief, fairly condescending mention in his book. (See Appendix C.)

The second is a 1907 memorandum (UGD 36 1/7) in which John Sheriff recalls some personal memories of the firm. Rankin must have considered most of this material too embarrassing to the company to appear in his book.

The third is another 1907 memorandum (UGD 36 1/9) in which George Young, the company lawyer, provides precise information about changes in the partnership, and quotes from obituaries and elsewhere to give personal information about the partners.

M I S C E L L A N Y

The Glasgow Shipping Register, viewed courtesy of the Customs House in Glasgow, provides considerable information on every Pollok-Gilmour ship registered in Glasgow, over a period stretching over the better part of two generations, beginning in 1821.

The New Brunswick Museum has provided a number of documents on Gilmour-Rankin, including statistics on its exports to Britain and on damage caused by the Great Fire of the Miramichi in 1825.

The Port-Glasgow and Greenock customs records, viewed courtesy of the Scottish Record Office, reveal a great deal about trade in those ports.

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Addendum:
Genealogies of the Pollok-Gilmour Partners

(Source: John Rankin, A History of Our Firm, pp. 302-5)

Addendum:
Genealogies of the Pollok-Gilmour Partners

(Source: John Rankin, A History of Our Firm, pp. 302-5)

The Polloks

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Allan Pollok = Margaret Anderson
of Craighton :
(d.ca.1800) :
:
:-----:
:
Thomas Pollok =? ? = James Pollok
: : Craighton
: :
:-----: ?= William Pollok
: : of
: : Titwood, Mearns
John Pollok Arthur Pollok=Barbara :
(1778-1858) (1780-1870) : Thomson :
SnrPtnr SnrPtnr : :
Glasgow Glasgow : :-----:
(1804-52) (1804-52) : :
: :
Allan Pollok =? John H William
(d.1886) (1826-56) (1830-51)
Manager of Ptnr, India Ptnr, India
Lismany Estate (1849-52) (1849-51)
cousin of his wife Ptnr, Mobile
(1854-56)

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The Rankins

James = Helen Ferguson
of Mearns : of Auchintiber
(1752-1815) : (1764-1838)

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:-----:
:
:   Alexander
:   (1788-1852)
:   Ptnr, Miramichi
:   (1812-52)
:   SnrPtnr      ? = ?      ?= John Strang
:   (1838-52)
:
:           William Strang
:           Ptnr, London
:           (1852-89)
:
:-----:
:
:   Allan Gilmour=Agnes   William = Mary   Ann =   Robert
:   Jr                   Ritchie           :   Rankin
:
:                   :   (1822-38)
:
:-----:
:
:   James = MarionFerguson Francis F.   John F=? :   (1822-38)
:   (1787-:   of Dunlop   (1807-75) (1813-88):   :   Snr Ptnr
:   1870) :
:           Ptnr      Ptnr      :   :   Liverpool
:           Bathurst Bathurst :   :   (1838-70)
:-----:
:           (1832-54) (1852-78) :
:
:   Robert R II   John R.   Ptnr      :
:   (1830-98)     (1845-1925) Saint John :
:   Ptnr         Ptnr      (1854-76) John F Sir James
:   Liverpool   Liverpool   Ptnr Rankin MP
:   (1861-98)   (1870-1925) Bathurst (1890-06)
:                                     (1865-78) (1910-13)

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