

[Page 79 - "The Exodus" A Selection from Stephen J. Hornsby's New Book: Nineteenth-Century Cape Breton: A Historical Geography](#)

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the province. A Louisbourg fisherman, questioned by an American traveller, replied that his two sons, aged 11 and 13, who helped him fish from a dory, "won't be with me many years... all our boys go to the States just as they get old enough." At the mines, men were leaving, especially during the depressed years of the late 1860s, 1870s, and early 1880s. In October 1881, a Sydney miner reported to the Trades Journal that "the exodus at present threatens to be the largest that has been known for years, in this locality. Among the working class, especially the colliers, the question is heard passing from lip to lip. 'Are you going to the States this fall?' and the answer 'Well, I don't know, but believe me, if I could raise money enough I would not stay long here.' This is the 'cry' among young and old, married and single." The reason for the exodus, according to this correspondent, was the "same reason in a Year 'Round Christmas Shop Maritime and Canadian Handcrafts and Souvenirs Folk Art and Country Gifts Quality Brass and Imported Gifts Kitchen and Bath Shop 15 PRINCE STREET SYDNEY BIP 5J4 539-7338 ? 't'4 Senior Citizens Secretariat 4th Floor, Dennis Building, 1740 Granville Street • P.O. Box 2065, Halifax, N.S. Phone 424-4737 or 424-4779 or 424-5329 or 424-4649 or 424-6322 THE SENIORS' ART AND PHOTO GALLERIES manner, that the Scotchman and Irishman have left their native shores, viz: to try and procure a better living for themselves and families." In April the following year, the Trades Journal reported that another Sydney miner claimed "the miners...have been miserably paid and are greatly dissatisfied.... There will likely be a big exodus from here during the course of the summer." Later in the decade, "B.C. fever" gripped the mining population. In May 1884, a miner at Little Glace Bay expected "quite an exodus" at the end of the month because all the "young men" intended to go "out west." In November 1887, more "able bodied young men" were reported to have left for British Columbia, many to work in the coal mines at Nanaimo, Vancouver Island. The GMA manager at Sydney Mines was so concerned about the loss of skilled men to the Nanaimo mines that he requested the GMA secretary in London to contact the British owners of the Nanaimo mines to tell them "that they are paying a big price for colliers and advise them to send more men out there from England." Yet the appeal was in vain, for in May 1888 "a crowd" left Sydney Mines, again for British Columbia, and it was reported that a "great many more would follow if their means would allow them...." The emigration continued. In March 1889, a Bridgeport miner remarked sardonically that "a few winters like this as regards work, and we will all be forced to go West." Again many left at the end of that summer; in October, a miner reported that "Cow Bay is fast becoming a 'one-horse' place, and a broken-winded horse at that." According to this miner, with colliers earning less than two-thirds of the wages of the previous year, "an emigration fever has consequently seized our young men and several are making preparations to go West." Yet the most common Canadian destination for Cape Breton emigrants was another part of the Maritimes. Of the Nova Scotians who moved to other parts

of Canada, some 60 percent lived in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Is? land in 1881, and 42 percent in 1891. A survey of 208 emigrant obituaries published in the North Sydney Herald between 1880 and 1893 shows that 51 people, 24 percent of the total, remained in Nova Scotia and neighbouring New Brunswick. At least three-quarters of these emigrants moved to Halifax, and most of the rest to the new industrial towns of Pictou County. In every corner of Nova Scotia there are seniors whose hobbies include the ability to capture precious moments and scenes of beauty with paint brush and easel or camera lens and film. Their creations deserve to be shown and shared by others but, unfortunately, most never are because of a lack of facilities and sites for shows. To encourage such artists and to enable more people to enjoy the paintings and photos The Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat sponsors year-round galleries at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax where seniors may hang their works for pleasure or offer them for sale. There's no charge to the artist, and the revenue from sales is paid in full to the artist without fees or commissions deducted. We extend an open invitation to seniors to use these facilities. For details and dates, call Valerie White at the Secretariat's toll-free line 1-424-0065 if dialing long-distance, or 424-0065 if calling from the Halifax metro area. >C Province of Nova Scotia Hon. Roland Thorrihill, Chairman The Senior Citizens' Secretariat For many, this change of residence was associated with industrial employment. The traditional Maritime economy based on "wood, wind and sail" was giving way in the 1880s and 1890s to one based on "iron, coal and rail." Protected by National Policy tariffs and connected to central Canadian markets by the Intercolonial Railway, new industries developed in the Maritimes, drawing rural labour to the expanding towns and cities. With a population of about 40,000 during these years, Halifax added new manufacturing to its old commercial economy and became Canada's largest producer of rope and second-largest refiner of sugar, as well as a considerable manufacturer of cotton, confectionary, paint, and lamps. Meanwhile, in Pictou County, New Glasgow emerged as one of the foremost industrial towns in the province. Located on the Pictou coalfield, the town was a suitable site for heavy manufacturing, and with the formation of the Nova Scotia Forge Company in 1889, it became home to the largest producer of primary steel in the country. With the increased demand for coal, the local mines took on more men, many of them from Cape Breton. Across the border in New Brunswick, Moncton was growing as a railway centre, with workshops and factories; while at Saint John, also a town of about 40,000 people, the new industries of smelting, rope and cotton manufacture, and brass and rail production joined the old sawmilling and shipping trades. The transformation of a rural labour force into an urban industrial one was not new to Cape Breton-