

"The consignee, who resides here, not having implicit faith in the weighers at Halifax, despatched a city weigher from Montreal for the purpose of checking the cargoes—and I have now the honor to hand you copies of the weighing of various lots imported by the vessels named.

"It is asserted in some quarters that the weighers at Halifax do not weigh as closely as is the practice at other ports, and further, that owing to their regarding small sized hhds. as tierces, that the Halifax importer gains an advantage on the tare of tierces (so called) weighing over 1,300 lbs.

"As the enclosed statements give you the exact gross weight in each case it will be easy to check the Halifax returns and ascertain if there is any truth in the assertions.

"It is also stated that the Customs weighers at Halifax do not include scrapings in the weight for duty, which should certainly be included, as in many cases owing to the breaking of packages they are very large, representing frequently many hogsheads.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"JAS. F. WOLFE,

"Special Agent.

"J. JOHNSON, Esq.,

"Commissioner of Customs,

"Ottawa."

I am not prepared to say whether that is correct or not, but any one who is acquainted with the sugar trade, will see not only the propriety, but the absolute necessity of adding the scrapings if the correct weight is to be obtained. Then the Inspector reports again as follows:—

"MONTREAL, 6th December, 1884.

"I have the honor to return you file 3591—84, sent me for further inquiry, and to report that I find the weights returned by the officers at Halifax, to agree with weights returned by the private weigher, and that the only difference between the practice of Halifax and Montreal, as far as shown in the treatment of the cargoes ex-Ayrshire and Craigton, as regards weighing of sugar, lies in the weight of tare. The attached statement signed by the assistant weigher at this port, shows the cargo of the Ayrshire to have been entered 9,553 pounds, and that of the Craigton 12,434 pounds short of that. The same gross weight would have been entered at Montreal owing to the latter port only allowing 12 per cent. tare on packages weighing over 1,300 pounds, such packages being considered as hogsheads, whereas at the port of Halifax, the invoiced name of the package appears to rule for tare."

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

"JAS. F. WOLFE,

"Special Agent.

"J. JOHNSON, Esq.,

"Commissioner of Customs,

"Ottawa."

They take the invoices names, instead of applying the rule which prevails in Montreal as that upon which the allowance is made. Now, what does this show? It shows:

RETURN OF WEIGHTS EX SS. AYRSHIRE.

897 hhds. sugar, gross.....	2,094,632		
12 per cent. tare.....	251,356		
		Net,	1,843,276
2 tierces, 1,300 lbs. or less....	2,444		
14 per cent. tare.....	342		
		Net,	2,102
285 tierces, over 1,300 lbs.....	477,612		
12 per cent. tare.....	57,313		
		Net,	420,299
508 brls.....	126,389		
Tare at 26 lbs. each.....	13,208		
		Net,	113,181

Total.....	2,378,858
Entered as.....	2,369,305

To post..... 9,553

RETURN OF WEIGHTS EX SS. CRAIGTON.

1,086 hhds. sugar, gross.....	2,481,942		
12 per cent. tare.....	297,833		
		Net,	2,184,109
30 tierces, 1,300 lbs. or less....	35,672		
14 per cent. tare.....	4,994		
		Net,	30,678
389 tierces, over 1,300 lbs.....	621,676		
12 per cent. tare.....	74,601		
		Net,	547,075
363 brls.....	89,032		
Tare at 26 lbs. each.....	9,438		
		Net,	79,594
1 half-brl.....		Net,	107

Total.....	2,841,563
Entered as.....	2,829,129

To post..... 12,434

M. F. QUIN,
Assistant Weigher and Gauger,
Port of Montreal.

I have given these figures from the actual test of the weighing—a comparison of the two systems, not particularly for the purpose of finding fault with the port of Halifax, but to show that there has been no discrimination against that port, but that on the contrary, in various ways, that in the whole amount of the import of sugar from Jamaica in 1883, they had an advantage over Montreal of 3 cents per 100 lbs., and in these two cargoes an advantage of 12,434 lbs. I have read all the figures with reference to the steamships *Craigton* and *Ayrshire*, showing by the calculation that the Halifax merchant, who made the entry, had an advantage in the weighing alone—on the calculation of tare of—of 12,434 lbs. over what there would have been had the importation and weighing been in Montreal, and the entry made at that port. Now, so far as the investigation is concerned—so far as the charges—

Mr. VAIL. Before the hon. gentleman passes from that point, I would ask him is it a fact or not that sugar in Montreal is weighed by the city weighers?

Mr. BOWELL. The hon. gentleman has scarcely given me time. I was coming to that.

Mr. VAIL. I thought you were passing from it.

Mr. BOWELL. I was just going to refer to that point. Sugar in Montreal is weighed by the city weighers.

Mr. VAIL. Hear, hear.

Mr. BOWELL. What are you hear, hearing about?

Mr. VAIL. That is just what I said.

Mr. BOWELL. Would you like me to stop there? Sugar is weighed by the city weighers and checked by a Customs officer. I put that same question to the collector, and also to Mr. Wolfe the Inspector. I have heard people "hear, hear" and hallo before they got out of the woods, and I think my hon. friend was in that position.

Mr. BLAKE. He is in the wood.

Mr. BOWELL. No, he is out of the cane and into the syrup, and very soft syrup it is. The inspector reports that

"The weighing is checked by a Customs officer at the time of weighing, and a separate account is kept as a check by the Customs officer, Customs tares and city tares differ of course because they have a different mode of calculating it."

That only refers to the tares, and perhaps that may be the reason why the Halifax merchant had the advantage to which I have referred.

"The Customs officers get no fees for weighing or gauging at Montreal, and importers never know what officers may be sent to weigh their goods."

This is certainly an advantage over the system which prevails at some ports of having one weigher to weigh all the sugar, and every importer knowing who that man is.

Mr. VAIL. Who pays the weigher of the sugar?

Mr. BOWELL. The Customs pay him—the Government pay him.

Mr. VAIL. That is the city weigher?

Mr. BOWELL. Yes, for all work done for the Customs by him. I do not know how it may be in Halifax, but I have never yet been able to find anybody in Ontario or Quebec to work for nothing, and when we utilize a public officer, such, for instance, as a public analyst, we have to pay him, as we pay all those who do work for us. I can also state to the hon. gentleman that the city weigher of Montreal takes a solemn oath to perform his duties to the best of his knowledge and ability, and we have no right to assume that he is corrupt unless it is proved. I do not propose to occupy the attention of the committee longer, unless there are some questions the hon. gentleman wishes to ask me. I have already referred to the Heward importation, and the hon. gentleman says I must have known it was not correct. Well, I knew from reports, particularly by the Halifax papers that they stated that it is not correct.