

Between the period 1898 to 1925 Canada and the British West Indies signed four commercial treaties. The first in 1898 was a preferential treaty which gave West Indian sugar a substantial preference on the Canadian market. The second in 1912 was a Reciprocal Treaty which was renewed in 1920 and 1925.

Trinidad and Tobago, as one of the largest colonies in the British West Indies, held definite advantages for Canadian manufacturers, and they spared no effort in attempting to gain control of the local market. But there were obstacles. First, there was the traditional trading links between the British West Indian colonies and the metropolitan powers of Britain and the United States. This traditional nexus made life difficult for Canadian manufacturers in their efforts to break into the local markets in any significant way.

Critical analysis of the Agreements showed that shipping was a weak link, and the Canadians constantly sought to remedy the situation, but the local market continued to be dominated by American and British goods.

The United States and Britain also continued to take most of Trinidad and Tobago's exports. Therefore, the trade agreements did not reap the anticipated rewards, and the import and export trade of the colony continued to be dominated by the United States and Britain right up to the outbreak of the Second World War.