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EDUCATION AND SURVIVANCE IN HOLYOKE, MASSACHUSETTS CA 1880:

THE CHOICES OF FRENCH-CANADIAN FAMILIES

by

Susan M. Gazaille

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTERS OF ARTS

in the Department  
of  
History

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA  
1986



Susan M. Gazaille, Ottawa, Ontario, 1986.

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ISBN 0-315-33325-1



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A scholarship offered by the Government of Canada and the University of Ottawa in conjunction with ACTfane provided me with the opportunity to study Canadian and Franco-American history.

I would like to thank several people for their assistance. My memoir director, Paul Lachance, was very generous with his time and patience while I learned the language of computers.

For their help with city records, I thank Timothy Barrett and Elizabeth Koeber of the Holyoke School Department, Michael Barran of the Holyoke Public Library and Dolores Gooley of the Holyoke Engineering Department.

Ella DiCarlo, local historian, offered guidance while, with the special permission of the publisher, Tom Schumaker, I was able to leaf through the aged issues of the Holyoke Transcript from the 1870's and 1880's.

Special thanks to Florence Belanger who located forgotten records from Precious Blood parish and to Soeur Monique Duhamel of the Soeurs de la Charite who provided me with the earliest known records of the Precious Blood School.

The enthusiasm that these people showed for this project made the researching very enjoyable.

I especially appreciate the help and support given to me by L.C.S., my family and my husband, Peter.

This thesis was prepared under the direction of Professor  
Paul Lachance, Ph.D., of the Department of History of the  
University of Ottawa.

## INTRODUCTION

The importance of a French parochial education to the proponents of French-Canadian survivance in late nineteenth century New England is clear in the words the Bishop of Springfield delivered at the benediction of the French-Canadian school in Holyoke, Massachusetts in 1883. "Le grand moyen pour les Canadiens de conserver leur foi, est de conserver leur langue, de rester attaches a leurs coutumes et de faire instruire leurs enfants dans la langue maternelle."<sup>1</sup> The Twelfth Annual Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of Labor (1881) specifically singled out the French-Canadians as guilty of sending their children to work at the earliest age possible in defiance of the state compulsory education and child labor laws.<sup>2</sup> There seems to exist a contradiction between the words of the Bishop concerning the survivance practices of the French-Canadians and the state labor report, one citing the importance of French parochial education and the other pointing out the lax attendance of French-Canadian students in schools. How important was survivance to the French-Canadian immigrants? To what extent did their strategies of economic survival conflict with their efforts for cultural survivance? This thesis will attempt to answer these questions by examining the choices made by the French-Canadian parents in Holyoke concerning the education of their children in the 1880-1881 academic year.

French-Canadian survivance in New England has been studied from several perspectives. The traditional interpretation given by E. Hamon, S.J. in one of the earlier works (1891) on the French-Canadian situation in New England views the permanent immigration of French-Canadians from Canada as a blow to the mother country yet also

as part of a "divine mission." "Ce déplacement de population s'est fait sans secousse, en silence, pour ainsi dire, comme si un mot d'ordre de la Providence avait envoyé ces hommes accomplir un décret mystérieux en s'implantant au coeur même du puritanisme protestant.... Cette dépopulation ...a permis à la race française et catholique de jeter de profondes racines dans les États de l'Est, et qui sait le rôle qu'elle peut être appelée à jouer dans l'avenir?" According to Hamon's traditional viewpoint, the mission of the French-Canadians of New England was, in part, to resist any outside influences which try to invade their culture. "Tout s'unit dans un effort commun: Conventions, journaux, sociétés de Saint-Jean-Baptiste, rivalisèrent de zèle pour proclamer bien haut, parfois même plus haut que la prudence ne l'eût suggéré, le programme patriotique des Canadiens émigrés aux États: Notre religion, notre langue, nos moeurs."<sup>3</sup>

Later works such as Josephat Benoit's L'Âme Franco-Américaine (1935) and a collection authored by several Franco-Americans entitled Les Franco-Américains Peints Par Eux-Mêmes (1936) warn of obstacles to guarding the French-Canadian language and culture, such as the danger of assimilation, while reinforcing the role of survivance in New England.<sup>4</sup> By the 1930's, the idea of "divine mission" had lessened and evolved into the effort to keep the French-Canadian identity. The continuation of the French-Canadian culture through the regular practice of religion, language and customs is a basic concept in the traditional perspective of survivance.

A more recent historical interpretation of the study of French-Canadians in New England examines the ways in which the French-Canadians transferred their native institutions and traditions to New England in the process of forming ethnic communities in a new environ-

ment. Scholars such as Mason Wade, Richard Sorrell and Léon-F. Bouvier focus their studies on the transmission of French-Canadian culture to the New England communities. In their interpretations, French-Canadian culture is defined in terms of the same values found in the traditional concept of survivance: religion, language, family, and customs.

Mason Wade's perspective centers on the idea that the parish "was the basic social unit of French Canada, religiously, scholastically, and municipally; and it played an equally vital role, at least in the first two respects, among the French-Canadian immigrants in New England in the last century."<sup>5</sup> In the latter half of the twentieth century, along with the building of churches, parishes grew to include parochial schools, convents and fraternal societies such as the Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste. Wade singles out the parish, the center of the French-Canadians' social activities, as the tool through which faith, language and customs could be preserved.

Sorrell studies the role of the French-Canadian elites, the leaders in their ethnic communities of New England. Sorrell found that the elite, through their efforts in French-Canadian parishes, schools and clubs, believed they were upholding traditional values from Quebec. That these values were changing in the American environment only reaffirmed the need for survivance in the eyes of this elite. According to Sorrell, parishes and schools, the major tools of resistance to outside influences became more important to the elites in New England than they were in Quebec. The national and religious societies and the French press in New England were also "reference points" to remind themselves of and to assert their identity.

The crucial elements in this elitist view of survivance,

according to Sorrell, were the home and family. The family was the protective tool which shielded its members from the influences of the new environment and "its supposedly attendant values of materialism, individualism and egotism." In his description of the elitist view of survivance, Sorrell points out that not all French-Canadian families followed the leadership of the elite because daily life changed the immigrants' views and their value priorities.<sup>6</sup>

Léon-F. Bouvier studied the social stratification of French-Canadians in New England in 1950 and found that while the obvious function of survivance was to save the French-Canadian language, religion and culture, the hidden effect was the loss of a generation in the process of integration into American society. The second generation of French-Canadians, the American-born of one or more Canadian-born parents, completed significantly less years of schooling than other ethnic groups including Irish, Italian and Polish. They also occupied the lowest occupational rank among the groups. By not sending their children to English secondary schools and colleges, the French-Canadians indirectly preferred their children to have lower ranked occupations than to lose the faith and language of their ancestors. The second generation Polish, Italian and notably the Irish tried to adapt to the American institutions, especially that of secondary education.<sup>7</sup>

Bouvier found the French-Canadians did not improve their social status as quickly as other ethnic groups because of their firm determination to preserve their language, culture and religion as well as their resistance to influences which may cause them to drift from their traditional institutions. Bouvier concludes that survivance had the same importance to French-Canadians in New England as it did to

those in Quebec. Similarities in survival efforts between the two areas include the role of the clergy and protecting themselves from an adversary: the Irish in New England and the English in Quebec.<sup>8</sup> According to Bouvier's interpretation, renewed efforts for survival resulted in the retardation of the ethnic group's advancement in American society.

Other scholars such as Tamara Hareven, Frances Early and Peter Haebler study the French-Canadian family's economic situation and adjustment to living and working in an industrial community. These scholars reveal that the immigrant laborers transferred their traditional institutions and customs to an industrial lifestyle and modified them to fit their new environmental conditions. Revisionists closely investigate the effect of the economic and social forces on the immigrant family in the community and the way in which the French-Canadians used their culture to deal with these forces. These scholars define culture more widely than the traditional perspective of language, religion and customs.

Hareven studies the structure and traditions of the French-Canadian families and its reaction to working in an industrial environment. The family was a "source of continuity and stability" during the process of adjustment to a new lifestyle.<sup>9</sup> Hareven examines the family life cycles and the kinship networks which evolve when the work ethic and customs of a preindustrial culture are transferred and adopted to industrial work.<sup>10</sup> This viewpoint is mainly concerned with the relationship between the family and its work patterns within an industrial capitalist system.

Early, who studied the French-Canadians in Lowell, Massachusetts describes the revisionists' interpretation of culture in which it is

viewed as "a largely positive adaptive tool: immigrants, despite adversity, used their 'cultural baggage' -- values, behavior patterns, and institutions-- to help them control and fashion their own destinies." Immigrant families are no longer only considered as "victims" of the industrial system in this revisionist viewpoint; rather, they are regarded as having some control of their lives.<sup>11</sup>

Early concentrated on the French-Canadian immigrants in Lowell, Massachusetts where, in 1870, they were members of the working class, "primarily industrial laborers." Most of the French-Canadian children over ten years old were employed out of necessity. The practice of child labor was still prevalent in 1886. The children's wages were needed in order for their families to stay out of debt.

Early also found, in contrast to Sorrell, that in the first stages of French-Canadian immigration to Lowell, there was no lay "classe dirigeante." Rather than a transferred elite of professionals from Quebec, Lowell's leaders seem to have come from the ranks of the working-class French-Canadians. Early does acknowledge that the role of the clergy and lay leaders through parish institutions probably helped the French-Canadian immigrants in the change from "a peasant to a working-class lifestyle."<sup>12</sup>

Haebler, in his study of Holyoke, Massachusetts found that the cultural traits brought with the French-Canadian immigrants quickly adapted to the new situation. "French-Canadian perceptions of the role of the Church and parochial education changed as their aspirations and values were modified by the industrial experience." According to Haebler, rapid alteration occurred in the mid 1870's and the 1880's, forcing the French-Canadian community to re-evaluate the purpose and structure of their institutions.<sup>13</sup>

The interpretations of survance by Wade and Sorrell study the cultural institutions transferred from Quebec to New England and the development of French-Canadian communities and the growth of French-Canadian identity in New England. Bouvier found certain aspects of their culture retarded French-Canadian advancement in American society. The revisionists ask which values the French-Canadians brought to New England and to what extent these values changed in the process of adapting to an industrial environment. Hareven, Early and Haebler emphasize change rather than transferral of cultural institutions. While cultural and materialist perspectives are not necessarily incompatible, the historiography does raise the question of the relative importance of survance in the Franco-American experience.

To measure the importance of survance in the Franco-American experience, this thesis will examine, through quantitative methods, the choices of French-Canadian parents in Holyoke, 1880, concerning the education of their children. Within the context of the cultural interpretation of survance, if the French-Canadians were interested in saving and promoting their language, faith and culture, they would support the French-Canadian school rather than the others. According to the revisionist viewpoint, certain French-Canadian values may have altered during the process of adaptation to the environment. Under this interpretation, the value of survance may have changed in face of the pressures of economic survival and of forming a French-Canadian community within a city of anti-Catholic sentiment. The choice of work over education, or a non-French school over the French school would indicate the French-Canadian values were being modified due to economic forces or to the influence of the American milieu according to the revisionist concept.

This thesis is based on a source which directly reveals the choices made by French-Canadian parents in the education of their children - the Holyoke School Census for the 1880-81 academic year. The school census reveals the choices made by the parents of children five to fifteen concerning which school they attended or where they were employed or, if the children were still at home. Information on the birthdates of the children, the addresses of the families as well as the nationality of the fathers is also given. To confirm the data in the school census and for supplementary information, the households were matched to the 1880 United States Census Manuscript Returns for Holyoke, Massachusetts which provide information on the household address and the number of households per dwelling. Data concerning the individual included the relationship of individual to head of household, sex, age, occupation, employment, literacy and birthplace of both the person and his parents. The 1880-81 school census and the 1880 federal census were used not only to facilitate linkage but also because at this time, the language of instruction in the French-Canadian parochial school was still French, and as will be explained later, the school was involved in a controversy with the Holyoke School Committee.

#### DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE TECHNIQUES

To exploit the two sources, the following sampling technique was employed. From the federal census, a systematic sample of every tenth household was selected. If the tenth household did not include school age children, or was not an entry in the school census, the next family which met the requirements was recorded. A total of 395 households comprised the sample. The survey represents 12.8 percent of the

total Holyoke population. The Holyoke School Census provided additional data for children of the city between the ages of five and fifteen and included home address, year of birth, school attended, place of employment of child and nationality of father. This source provided more precise characteristics of the students themselves. Using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences—the combined information was analyzed. When evaluating household characteristics with 395 cases, the error range is plus or minus 5 percent at a 95 percent confidence level.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HOLYOKE SCHOOL CENSUS SAMPLE

There are 822 children listed in the school census sample. All except one were between the ages of five and fifteen. For the purposes of the study, the eighteen-year-old student was dropped from the statistics. The educational choices sample includes just under one-fifth of the total children recorded in the school census for the 1880-1881 academic year. The Truant Officer counted 4,640 children, ages five to fifteen in Holyoke as of May 1, 1881 and classified the youths according to school, work or neither of the two, in which case they were considered "at home."

TABLE 1. CLASSIFICATION OF CHILDREN IN THE SCHOOL CENSUS

|  | School Census |       | Educational Choices Sample |       |
|--|---------------|-------|----------------------------|-------|
|  | N             | %     | N                          | %     |
| Children attending school              | 3,523         | 75.9  | 664                        | 80.9  |
| Children at work in mills, shops, etc. | 604           | 13.0  | 92                         | 11.2  |
| Children neither at work nor at school | 513           | 11.1  | 65                         | 7.9   |
| Total                                  | 4,640         | 100.0 | 821                        | 100.0 |

Source: Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report, 1881, p. 7.

The numbers obtained in the sample for school and work are represen-

tative of the source. The category neither at work nor at school includes both children who listed "minding house" under the work place column of the school census and children who have blanks in both the work and school categories. In the sample, ten children listed "minding house" and fifty-five had no information on school or work.

The school census total undercounted the actual number of children, age five to fifteen, in Holyoke in 1880. Matching families from the federal census to the school census reveals an extra 112 children. Of the total number of unrecorded children in the school census, all save twenty-four were either 5, 6, 14 or 15 years old, the ages when schooling was not mandatory. It is understandable that the number of children in these age groups is considerably less in the school census than in the federal census. Schooling before seven years of age was by choice. Many of these children would not appear on the school rosters until the next few years. The remaining twenty-four children who were not registered in the school census represent a small percentage given the possibility of transiency, death, illness or physical handicaps. Overall, the school census sample is representative of the seven-to-thirteen-year-old population in Holyoke, the years of mandatory education.

Because the federal census was taken in the month of June, 1880, and the school census for the 1880-1881 academic year was dated as of May 1, 1881, there is a time span of one year between the two sources. In the tables which list the ages of the children, one year is added to their ages taken from the federal census so the information is comparable to that of the school census.

Children are classified according to nationality of their fathers. Where the father's birthplace is listed in the federal

census as Canada, the child will be considered of French-Canadian origin in the tables. In the federal census, a differentiation was made between the "Maritimes" and "Canada." In addition, the school census specified whether the fathers were French-or English-Canadians. Only four English-Canadian families were listed in the source, none of which were selected during the sampling procedure. With this information the Canadians are assumed to be French unless otherwise specified.

In the interest of historical accuracy, in the following tables, the French-Canadian parochial school, Précieux-Sang, will be listed as the "French" school and the Irish parochial institution, St. Jerome's, will be listed as "Parochial." These are the terms used in the Holyoke School Committee reports for the respective schools. Also, unless otherwise specified, the tables containing information on "Students" pertain to those children who are attending school at the end of the academic year.

The analysis of choices concerning education will begin first with a description of the industrial city of Holyoke, the environment of the French-Canadians. Characteristics of the milieu which may have influenced the choices will be described including the immigration of French-Canadians to the city and the living and economic conditions which existed in 1880. Secondly, the French-Canadian community itself and its relations with the Irish population and the anti-Catholic sentiment of greater Holyoke will be noted. This information is important when studying the choice of school, public or parochial, French or Irish. Thirdly, a description of the choices available including specifics on the various educational institutions and

employment opportunities will be presented to clarify all the options. The fourth section will single out the educational choices of the French-Canadian parents and will describe the characteristics of their families and identify patterns in decision-making. Such elements as family composition, socio-economic standing, location of school and residence of students and acculturation measured by generations will be investigated. These same characteristics of the French-Canadians will be looked at again in the fifth section in comparison to the Irish and American population to find any significant similarities or differences which might illuminate the role of survivance, if any, in the choices of the French-Canadians.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

<sup>1</sup>E. Hamon, Les Canadiens-Français de la Nouvelle Angleterre (Québec: N.S.Hardy, 1891), title page.

<sup>2</sup>Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries, Twelfth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor (Boston: Rand Avery, 1881), p. 469.

<sup>3</sup>Hamon, pp. 10-11, 63.

<sup>4</sup>Josephat Benoit, L'Âme Franco-Américaine (Canada: Albert Lévesque, 1935); Association Canado-Américaine, Les Franco-Américains peints par eux-mêmes (Canada: Albert Lévesque, 1936).

<sup>5</sup>Mason Wade, "The French Parish and Survivance in Nineteenth-Century New England," Catholic Historical Review 36 (1950):163.

<sup>6</sup>Richard S. Sorrell, "The SURVIVANCE of French Canadians in New England (1865-1930): history, geography and demography as destiny," Ethnic and Racial Studies 4 (1981):95,99-104.

<sup>7</sup>Léon-F. Bouvier, "La Stratification sociale du groupe ethnique Canadien-Français aux États-Unis," Recherches sociographiques 5 (1964):374-8.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 379.

<sup>9</sup>Tamara K. Hareven, "Family Time and Industrial Time: Family and Work in a Planned Corporation Town, 1900-1924," Journal of Urban History 1 (1975):367.

<sup>10</sup>Tamara K. Hareven, Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship Between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 371.

<sup>11</sup>Frances H. Early, "The French-Canadian Family Economy and Standard-Of-Living In Lowell, Massachusetts, 1870," Journal of Family History 7 (1982):180. Early warns against overemphasizing the ability of the immigrants and the opportunity available to them to shape their lives.

<sup>12</sup>Frances H. Early, "Mobility Potential and the Quality of Life in Working-Class Lowell, Massachusetts: The French Canadians ca. 1870," Labour/le travailleur 2 (1977):221-27. Also "The French-Canadian Family Economy," pp. 183-87.

<sup>13</sup>Peter Haebler, "Habitants in Holyoke: The Development of the French Canadian Community in a Massachusetts City, 1865-1910" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Hampshire, 1976), p. 102.

CHAPTER I

CHARACTERISTICS OF FRENCH-CANADIANS IN HOLYOKE CA 1880

Ralph Vicero estimates that approximately 350,000 French-Canadians immigrated permanently to New England between 1840 and 1900. By 1900, the French-Canadians comprised a little over one-tenth of the New England population.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 1.1 ESTIMATED FRENCH-CANADIAN POPULATION OF NEW ENGLAND

| Year | Number of French-Canadians | Total Population | Percentage of French-Canadians |
|------|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1860 | 37,420                     | 3,135,283        | 1.19                           |
| 1870 | 103,500                    | 3,487,924        | 2.97                           |
| 1880 | 208,100                    | 4,010,529        | 5.19                           |
| 1890 | 365,000                    | 4,700,749        | 7.76                           |
| 1900 | 573,000                    | 5,592,017        | 10.25                          |

Source: Ralph D. Vicero, "Immigration of French Canadians to New England, 1840-1900: A Geographical Analysis" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1968), p. 275. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860-1900.

The last decades of the nineteenth century were the highpoint of the flow.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 1.2 ESTIMATED NET MIGRATION OF FRENCH-CANADIANS TO NEW ENGLAND

|          | Years     | Number  |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Vicero:  | 1860-1870 | 52,700  |
|          | 1870-1880 | 65,750  |
|          | 1880-1890 | 102,800 |
|          | 1890-1900 | 106,300 |
| Lavoie*: | 1900-1910 | 100,000 |
|          | 1910-1920 | 80,000  |

Sources: Ralph D. Vicero, "Immigration of French Canadians to New England, 1840-1900: A Geographical Analysis" (Ph.D dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1968), p. 192. Yolande Lavoie, "Les mouvements migratoires des Canadiens entre leur pays et les États-Unis au XIXe et au XXe siècles: étude quantitative," in La Population du Québec, ed. Hubert Charbonneau (Boreal: Montreal, 1973), p. 77.

\* Lavoie's figures from 1900-20 are used here to show the highpoint was in the 1800's which the data of both scholars reveal.

According to the Seventh Census of Canada, it "was not in quest of a higher standard of living but to avoid a lower' that the French Canadian was impelled to migrate."<sup>3</sup> In the second half of the nineteenth century, the French-Canadian population grew quickly. The Quebec economic situation was principally agricultural; yet expansion in this sector was limited. Industrialization was also slow to develop. A lack of available land and little industrial employment limited job opportunities for the increasing population. In this situation, Faucher concludes, "l'émigration à grande échelle devint une nécessité."<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, industrial centers were developing in New England. Their textile mills were in need of a larger labor force. French-Canadians gravitated to New England where they obtained work. Such cities as Holyoke had many employment opportunities for immigrants, and the factory managers and business owners welcomed the influx of immigrants to fill the available positions in their establishments.

Holyoke was a rural community with farming as its main interest until, like so many of its sister communities in New England, the Industrial Revolution changed the economic basis of the area through the manufacturing of textiles and paper products. Incorporated in 1850, Holyoke was a planned company town, originating through the energies of a group of businessmen, the Boston Associates. An ideal spot on a bend of the Connecticut River, Holyoke soon became the site of a dam providing water power and paths of canals lined by mills and boarding houses. Not until after the Civil War did the economy steadily grow and prosper with the establishment of several paper mills joining the thread and yarn mills already in operation for over a decade. In 1880, Holyoke's specialty was manufacturing paper

although other industries such as thread, silk and alpaca mills and machine shops were among the ranks of large buildings bordering the canals.<sup>5</sup>

Many French-Canadians immigrated to Holyoke, obtained jobs in the mills and inadvertently became recruiters for their employers. When immigrants sent newsy letters to their native villages they spread the word of the opportunities to be found in New England. Migrant workers returning to Quebec made a more forceful impression on their countrymen especially those who arrived in their home towns with savings. They were examples of the gains and opportunities to be found in the United States. The financial incentive and the "tales and stories of the wonders of the States" played an important role in persuading others to immigrate.<sup>6</sup>

New England mill owners found the French-Canadians to be conscientious, hard workers. In an effort to tap further into the available French-Canadian labor force in Quebec, they hired French-Canadian immigrants to return to Quebec on recruiting tours.<sup>7</sup> In Holyoke, the head of one of the original French-Canadian families, Nicholas Proulx became a recruiting agent for Lyman Mills. In the 1850's, the Proulx family along with four other pioneering families had been the first French-Canadians to settle in Holyoke. Proulx traveled through the villages of Quebec in a long covered wagon, recruiting people to work in the mills.<sup>8</sup> The native agent spoke of the "wonders" of the industrial town of Holyoke and offered such encouragement as cash wages. Jacques Ducharme, in his novel The Delusson Family, describes a character named Dulhut based on the Holyoke recruiter, Nicholas Proulx. In 1871 Dulhut invites the head of the Delusson family to leave his farm in Quebec for the employment

## opportunities in Holyoke:

"I am at Holyoke, which is a very large village. Some ten thousand people. It is on the Connecticut River, and there are mountains all about. It is not at all like this." He motioned with his hand, and his tone held something of distaste, as if he had come to love the new country better than the old.

Jean Baptiste noticed this tone, and the manner in which the names of the village and the river had rolled off Dulhut's tongue. This was a foreigner speaking, and no longer one of them; yet he held out to Jean Baptiste a prospect of riches. It was something that could not be ignored, for he was a married man, and had four children.... He wanted for his children better things than he had known. So he listened as Dulhut spoke of the work in Holyoke, and of the country and its people.

Proulx lured future industrial laborers with an opportunity to earn money to send back to the family in Quebec. If an entire family immigrated, they could save money and return home with an eased financial situation.<sup>10</sup>

The railroad facilitated traveling in the 1870's by providing a direct connection between Quebec and New England, Montreal and Holyoke. Railroads themselves became involved in recruiting immigrants. They cut their prices in order to obtain higher volume of passengers. The fare from Montreal to New England was a relatively low ten dollars. On the trains, guides and interpreters were provided to aid the French-Canadians on their southward trip.<sup>11</sup> The Holyoke Transcript reported in April, 1873, "Frenchmen are coming into town 'thicker and faster and more of 'em' according to the officer stationed at the Connecticut Railroad depot who said there were fresh arrivals with every train."<sup>12</sup>

Unfortunately for the new arrivals, 1873 was the beginning of a five-year economic depression for Holyoke. It was not until 1878 that businesses revived and continued their boom through the beginning of the 1890's. With the manufacturing revival in 1878, factory owners

had to expand their work force and French-Canadians answered their call immediately. The Holyoke Transcript reported great numbers of French-Canadians arriving in the city during 1879 and 1880.

They come with all their worldly goods packed in boxes and bundles and the gents' room at the Connecticut Railroad depot is packed with their effects till it looks like a wholesale warehouse. Leaving the bulk of the articles at the depot, they start out ... to find a place to stop. Some have friends or relatives here. Many have spent their last cent to get here, expecting to find plenty of work on their arrival. A crowd of emigrants arrived Thursday, having seen an advertisement of a paper company for 100 rag-cutters, and clamoured to be directed to the mill. Failing to find tenements, lodging rooms or work, some of them have gone on to Providence...and other points, but many have no money to go further... The working people view their coming with some apprehension, fearing that the effect will be to overcrowd the labor market, and cheapen wages still further.... A troop of them, big and little, are seen starting out on foot from the depot after the arrival of nearly every through train from the North.<sup>13</sup>

In Holyoke, the significant periods of French-Canadian influx were the 1870's and 1880's.

TABLE 1.3 FRENCH-CANADIAN POPULATION IN HOLYOKE

|      | United States Census             |                               | Vicero                              |
|------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|      | Total Holyoke<br>Population<br>N | F-C-born<br>Population<br>N % | Estimation of F-C<br>Community<br>N |
| 1860 | 4,997                            |                               | 165                                 |
| 1870 | 10,733                           | 1,731 10.9                    |                                     |
| 1880 | 21,915                           | 4,902 22.4                    | 6,000                               |
| 1890 | 35,637                           | 7,046 19.8                    |                                     |
| 1900 | 45,712                           | 6,991 15.3                    | 15,500                              |

Sources: Vicero, p. 289; United States Census, 1860-1900; Green, p. 367.

The French-Canadian population increased by 183 percent between 1870 and 1880 and by 44 percent between 1880 and 1890. The French-Canadian population figures would be greater if the United States Census had included the native-born of French-Canadian parentage: The federal

census figures include only the population of French-Canadian origin in Holyoke, while Vicero's include second generation, American-born children.

In analyzing the actual choices of the French-Canadians in the education of their children, it is important to look first at the characteristics of the city and population of Holyoke. The main elements which will be examined include the living conditions, class structure, residential location of ethnic groups and characteristics of households in Holyoke. The effect of these factors on educational choices will be analyzed in the following chapters.

With a population increase of at least 10,000 each decade after 1870, the rapid growth of a city which was not physically expanding at the same rate resulted in an acute housing shortage and other related situations. In the period following the Civil War, Holyoke found itself with a larger population than it could house. City and state records document the extremely poor living standards for the workers of Holyoke in the last three decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup> Through the 1870's the housing conditions were poor and by 1880 the situation was critical. Tenements were built close to the factory sites, within walking distance for the workers. Because land in the industrial area was valuable, tenements were crowded together in order to efficiently use space. A housing shortage forced ten to twelve families to cohabit in homes intended for two or three. In 1880 only two other United States cities had a more severe housing shortage than Holyoke. New York had 16.37 people per dwelling, Hoboken followed with 11.50 and Holyoke had 10.52.<sup>15</sup> The Massachusetts Bureau of Labor reported the poor living conditions in 1875.

Holyoke has more and worse large tenement houses than any manufacturing town of textile fabrics in the state, and built in such a manner that there is very little means of escape in case of fire. The sanitary arrangements are very imperfect, and in many cases, there is no provision made for carrying the slops from the sinks, but they are allowed to run wherever they can make their way. Portions of yards are covered with filth and green slime, and within twenty feet, people are living in basements of houses three feet below the level of the yard....Our agents visited some tenements having bedrooms into which neither air nor light could penetrate, as there were no windows and no means of ventilation, and some of them were actually filthy.<sup>16</sup>

The housing problem was alleviated somewhat in 1884 when the Holyoke Street Railway opened up new sections of the city by providing transportation.<sup>17</sup>

High rent in the tenement districts affected the poor living standards even further. In order to meet the rent payments, many families had to take in boarders. The money set aside for rent limited the purchases of other necessities such as food, fuel, and clothing.<sup>18</sup>

Seriously inadequate housing and poor sanitary conditions encouraged illness and diseases to run through the city. As in many cities of this era, Holyoke battled such epidemics as smallpox, diphtheria, measles, scarlet fever and tuberculosis. Immigrant residents resisted medical help in the form of vaccinations. In Holyoke, mandatory vaccines both frightened and angered the French-Canadians and the Irish. Despite medical efforts, epidemics raced through the poorer sections of the city crowded with immigrant families living in unhealthy conditions. Over the census years 1870-1890, Green calculated Holyoke had the third highest mean death rate in Massachusetts, 23.1 per thousand. Only Boston and Fall River were higher at 24.1 and 23.4 respectively.<sup>19</sup>

In 1880 a Board of Health was created to take measures to

alleviate the unhealthy conditions in the city. Over the next decade, while the Board oversaw the vaccination of children, its primary concern was an adequate sewerage system. The Board of Health had little effect upon public health and sanitation until the turn of the century because their recommendations were not enforced by the city authorities.<sup>20</sup>

Poor living conditions, the shortage of housing and sanitation affected the working-class of the Holyoke population more acutely than others. The social stratification in Holyoke shown through the occupational levels of its residents provides information on those who experienced or escaped the hardships.

In the educational choices sample, the occupational rank<sup>21</sup> of household heads breaks down as follows:

TABLE 1.4 OCCUPATIONAL RANK OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

|                 | N   | %     |
|-----------------|-----|-------|
| White-collar:   |     |       |
| High            | 9   | 2.3   |
| Low             | 44  | 11.3  |
| Skilled         | 88  | 22.7  |
| Unskilled       | 208 | 53.6  |
| No or ambiguous | 39  | 10.0  |
| Total           | 388 | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Census, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Missing cases: 7. Occupational information space left blank in manuscript census.

Half of the household heads are classified in the unskilled category. Just under one-quarter have skilled occupations. Thirteen percent are in the white-collar levels.

The occupational rank according to ward gives an indication of the areas in which working-class families were concentrated. Wards one through four have the highest percentage of working-class.

household heads.

TABLE 1.5 OCCUPATIONAL RANK OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY WARD

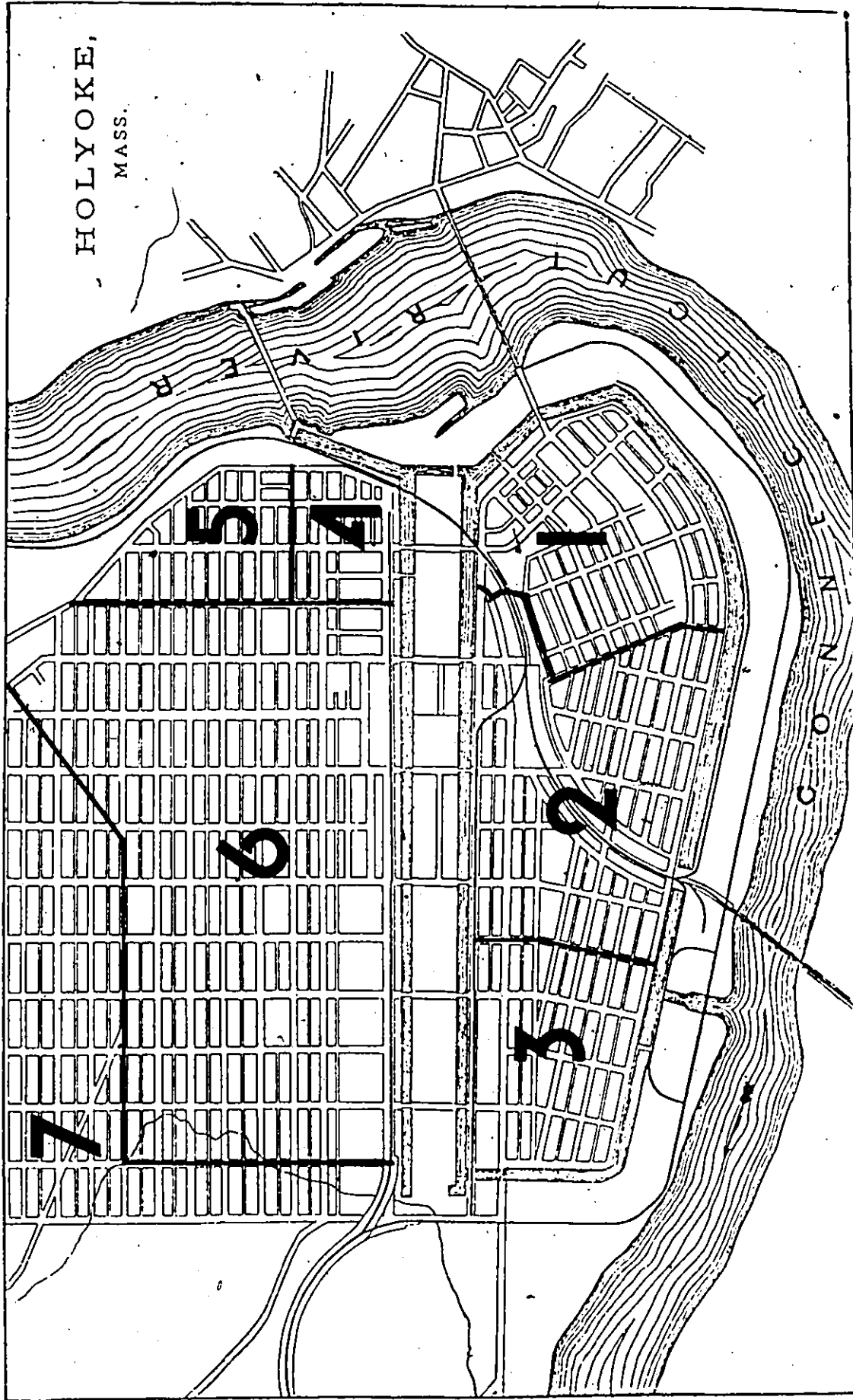
| WARD | White-Collar<br>& Skilled |      | Unskilled |      | No or<br>Ambiguous |      | Total |     |
|------|---------------------------|------|-----------|------|--------------------|------|-------|-----|
|      | N                         | %    | N         | %    | N                  | %    | N     | %   |
| 1    | 13                        | 22.8 | 40        | 70.2 | 4                  | 7.1  | 57    | 100 |
| 2    | 16                        | 32.0 | 29        | 58.0 | 5                  | 10.0 | 50    | 100 |
| 3    | 8                         | 17.0 | 36        | 76.6 | 3                  | 6.4  | 47    | 100 |
| 4    | 25                        | 32.1 | 47        | 60.3 | 6                  | 7.7  | 78    | 100 |
| 5    | 15                        | 23.8 | 31        | 49.2 | 17                 | 27.0 | 63    | 100 |
| 6    | 45                        | 64.3 | 21        | 30.0 | 4                  | 5.7  | 70    | 100 |
| 7    | 19                        | 82.6 | 4         | 17.4 | 0                  | 0.0  | 23    | 100 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, Sample, 1880.

Missing cases: 7. Occupational information was blank.

These wards also have the lowest percentage of white-collar and skilled occupations. Green specifically singles out the area of the "flats," ward one, located to the south, and the area of wards four and five as having the most severe overcrowding and sanitation situations.<sup>22</sup> Map 1.1 on page twenty-three, which shows the wards of Holyoke, reveals that wards four and five were the smallest in area; yet these were among the three wards with the largest number of families (see Table 1.5). Ward six which also had a large number of families was much larger in area. It was a residential ward still in the process of being developed. Ward seven was mainly agricultural. These two areas had the lowest percentage of unskilled workers and the highest of skilled and white-collar. The other wards with higher percentages of working-class residents were those which experienced the more serious overcrowding and sanitation problems. The occupational and residential characteristics of the city indicate that poor living conditions affected the working-class more acutely than the higher class levels.

MAP 1.1 WARD DIVISIONS OF HOLYOKE, MASSACHUSETTS, 1880



Source: Atlas of Holyoke City, Massachusetts (Boston: George H. Walker & Co., 1884).

Map: George E. Waring, Jr., Report on the Social Statistics of Cities, vol. 1: The New England and the Middle States (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886; reprint ed., New York: Arno Press, 1970), p. 227.

In Holyoke as in other industrial centers, class differences coincided with ethnic differences. The breakdown of the Holyoke population according to birthplace in federal censuses from 1870 to 1900 reveals the large number of immigrants throughout this period. In 1880 half of the residents were foreign-born.

TABLE 1.6 HOLYOKE POPULATION, 1870-1900

|         | 1870   |       | 1880   |       | 1890   |       | 1900   |       |
|---------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
|         | N      | %     | N      | %     | N      | %     | N      | %     |
| U.S.    | 5,257  | 48.9  | 11,015 | 50.3  | 18,625 | 52.3  | 26,751 | 58.5  |
| Canada  | 1,731  | 16.1  | 4,902  | 22.4  | 7,046  | 19.8  | 6,991  | 15.3  |
| Ireland | 2,850  | 26.6  | 4,241  | 19.4  | 5,993  | 16.8  | 5,650  | 12.4  |
| Other   | 895    | 8.3   | 1,757  | 8.0   | 3,973  | 11.2  | 6,320  | 13.8  |
| Total   | 10,733 | 100.0 | 21,915 | 100.0 | 35,637 | 100.0 | 45,712 | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1880-1900; Green p. 273.

Differences in household structure and family patterns between ethnic groups are also relevant to the question of choice of school or work. The number of children per family and family structure are a necessary background to the choices. In a recent study, Myfanwy Morgan and Hilda Golden provide an overview of the household structure and family patterns by ethnic groups for Holyoke in 1880. Their sample, taken from the 1880 federal manuscript census of the general population, studied the relationship between ethnicity (determined by place of birth of head of household) and household size, composition and general family type. The results of the educational choice sample which selected only families with school-aged children can be compared to Morgan and Golden's findings to reveal how these families differed from the general population of the city.

The statistics on nativity of household head in the educational choices sample and in Morgan and Golden's survey are very similar.

given the margin of error of the two samples.

TABLE 1.7 BIRTHPLACE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

|               | Morgan & Golden Sample |     | Educational Choices Sample |     |
|---------------|------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|
|               | N                      | %   | N                          | %   |
| United States | 111                    | 29  | 101                        | 26  |
| Canada        | 86                     | 23  | 88                         | 22  |
| Ireland       | 148                    | 39  | 159                        | 40  |
| Other         | 34                     | 9   | 47                         | 12  |
| Total         | 379                    | 100 | 395                        | 100 |

Sources: Myfanwy Morgan and Hilda Golden, "Immigrant Families In An Industrial City: A Study of Households in Holyoke, 1880," Journal of Family History 4 (Spring 1979): 61; U. S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Missing cases: 5. Information on place of birth not available.

According to the federal census for 1880, the native- and the foreign-born each comprised half of Holyoke's population.<sup>23</sup> The discrepancy of the federal census with the Morgan and Golden and educational choices samples is due to the ethnic breakdown of the federal census counting American-born children of foreign-born heads. In the educational choice sample, 55 percent of the sample of the total population, children and other members of the household as well as heads, were born in the United States. Approximately 22 percent of those living in Holyoke were Canadian-born and 17 percent were natives of Ireland. The remaining 6 percent listed their homelands as Scotland, England, Wales, Germany or France. Thus the educational choices sample reflects the proportion of ethnic groups in the federal census for 1880 in Table 1.6. For the purposes of this study only the three major nationalities, American, Irish and French-Canadian will be listed separately; those remaining will be categorized together.

As noted above, the main influx of French-Canadians to Holyoke occurred in the 1870's and 1880's. The Irish had begun settling in

the city prior to the French-Canadians. In 1855, the Irish numbered 1,657 while only forty French-Canadians had made Holyoke their home at that time.<sup>24</sup> The percentage differences between Tables 1.6 and 1.7 reflect the more recent migration of the French-Canadians. According to the federal census, 22 percent of the Holyoke population were Canadian-born. In the educational choices sample, the same percentage of household heads were also born in Canada. When an ethnic group had been established longer in the community, such as the Irish, the discrepancy between percentage of total population is even greater, 40 percent to 19 percent.

The figures on the occupational levels within the ethnic groups reveal differences between foreign- and native-born Holyoke residents.

**TABLE 1.8 OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY ORIGIN**

|               | U.S. |       | Canada |       | Ireland |       | Other |       | Total |       |
|---------------|------|-------|--------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|               | N    | %     | N      | %     | N       | %     | N     | %     | N     | %     |
| White-collar: |      |       |        |       |         |       |       |       |       |       |
| high          | 5    | 5.0   | 1      | 1.1   | 2       | 1.3   | 1     | 2.2   | 9     | 2.3   |
| low           | 24   | 24.0  | 4      | 4.6   | 11      | 7.1   | 5     | 10.9  | 44    | 11.3  |
| Skilled       | 35   | 35.0  | 23     | 26.4  | 21      | 13.5  | 9     | 19.6  | 88    | 22.7  |
| Unskilled     | 33   | 33.0  | 53     | 60.8  | 94      | 60.6  | 28    | 60.9  | 208   | 53.6  |
| No/ambiguous  | 3    | 3.0   | 6      | 6.8   | 27      | 17.4  | 3     | 6.5   | 39    | 10.0  |
| Total         | 100  | 100.0 | 87     | 100.0 | 55      | 100.0 | 46    | 100.0 | 388   | 100.0 |

Sources: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Census, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Missing cases: 7. Information on occupation not available.

A majority of American-born heads held white-collar and skilled occupations, in contrast to the majority of foreign-born heads in the unskilled category. The Canadian- and Irish-born had the same percentage of unskilled workers. The Irish had a lower percentage of heads in the skilled category and a higher in the no occupation classification than the French-Canadians. Morgan and Golden's sample found that out of the three nationalities the Irish had the highest

percentage of unskilled or semi-skilled workers and the lowest in the nonmanual occupations. The difference in the two samples may be due to using separate occupational classifications. However both samples show the Irish and the French-Canadians were more likely to be classified in the lower ranking occupational levels.<sup>25</sup> Taking account of class differences in location within Holyoke (see Table 1.5), native-born residents of the city were less likely to experience overcrowded housing and unsanitary living conditions than the foreign-born.

Members of the same ethnic group clustered in certain sections of the city, giving some wards an ethnic identity.

TABLE 1.9 WARD BY ORIGIN OF RESIDENT

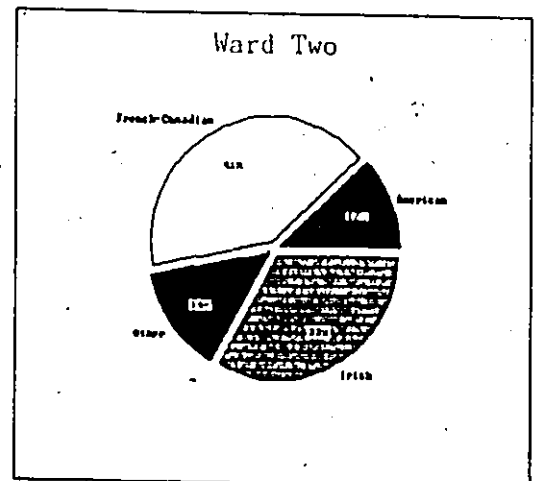
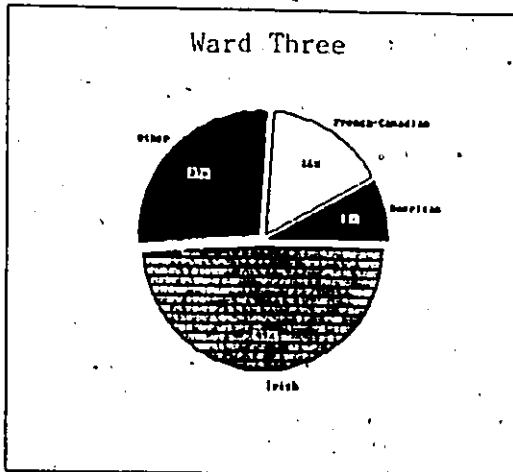
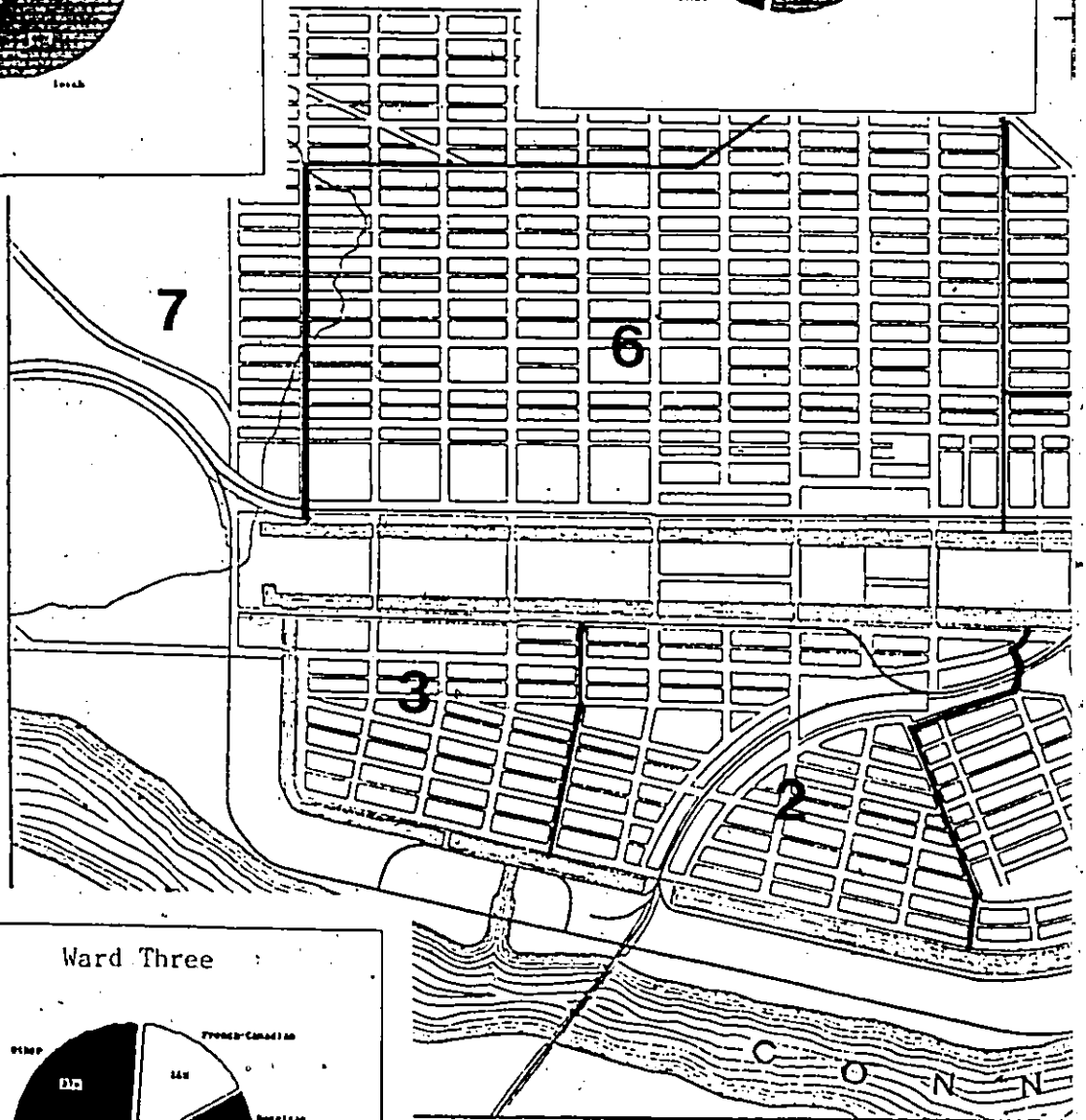
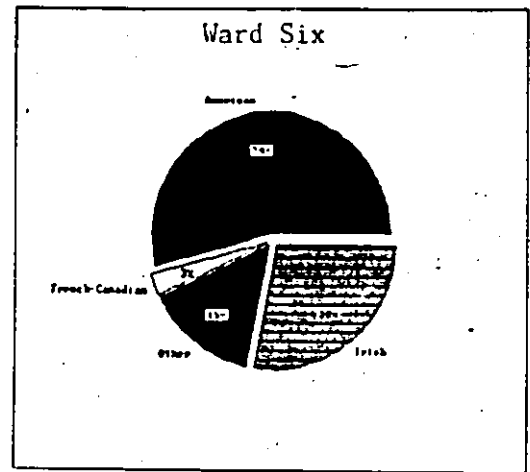
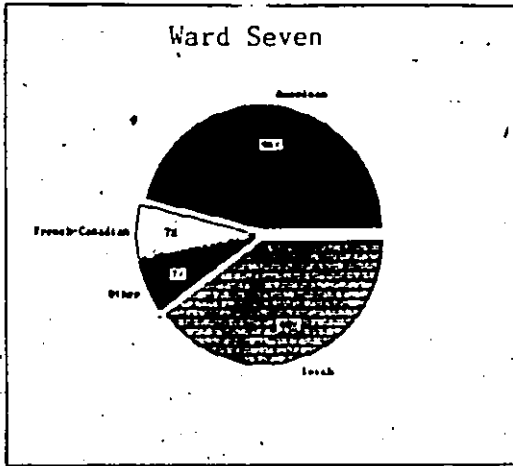
| WARD | <u>United States</u> |    | <u>Canada</u> |    | <u>Ireland</u> |    | <u>Other</u> |    | <u>Total</u> |     |
|------|----------------------|----|---------------|----|----------------|----|--------------|----|--------------|-----|
|      | N                    | %  | N             | %  | N              | %  | N            | %  | N            | %   |
| 1    | 59                   | 14 | 103           | 25 | 185            | 45 | 66           | 16 | 413          | 100 |
| 2    | 43                   | 12 | 150           | 42 | 117            | 33 | 49           | 14 | 359          | 100 |
| 3    | 28                   | 8  | 53            | 16 | 163            | 49 | 88           | 27 | 332          | 100 |
| 4    | 59                   | 9  | 399           | 62 | 168            | 26 | 21           | 3  | 647          | 100 |
| 5    | 35                   | 8  | 24            | 6  | 374            | 86 | 3            | 1  | 436          | 100 |
| 6    | 244                  | 54 | 12            | 3  | 124            | 28 | 69           | 15 | 449          | 100 |
| 7    | 75                   | 46 | 12            | 7  | 65             | 40 | 11           | 7  | 163          | 100 |

Sources: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Missing cases: 8. Information not available.

Map 1.2 of the ethnic make-up of the wards on page twenty-eight indicates which wards were more densely populated by the three main nationalities. Green found that while more than one ethnic group lived in the same ward, they obeyed the self-imposed invisible boundaries drawn to delineate each nationality's "territory." Clearly, Irish families with school-age children were the largest ethnic group in wards one, three and five. Ward five, which was 86 percent Irish, was the area known as the Irish "Patch."

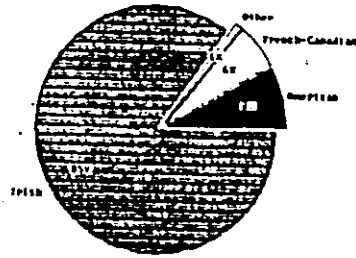
MAP 1.2 WARD BY ORIGIN OF RESIDENT



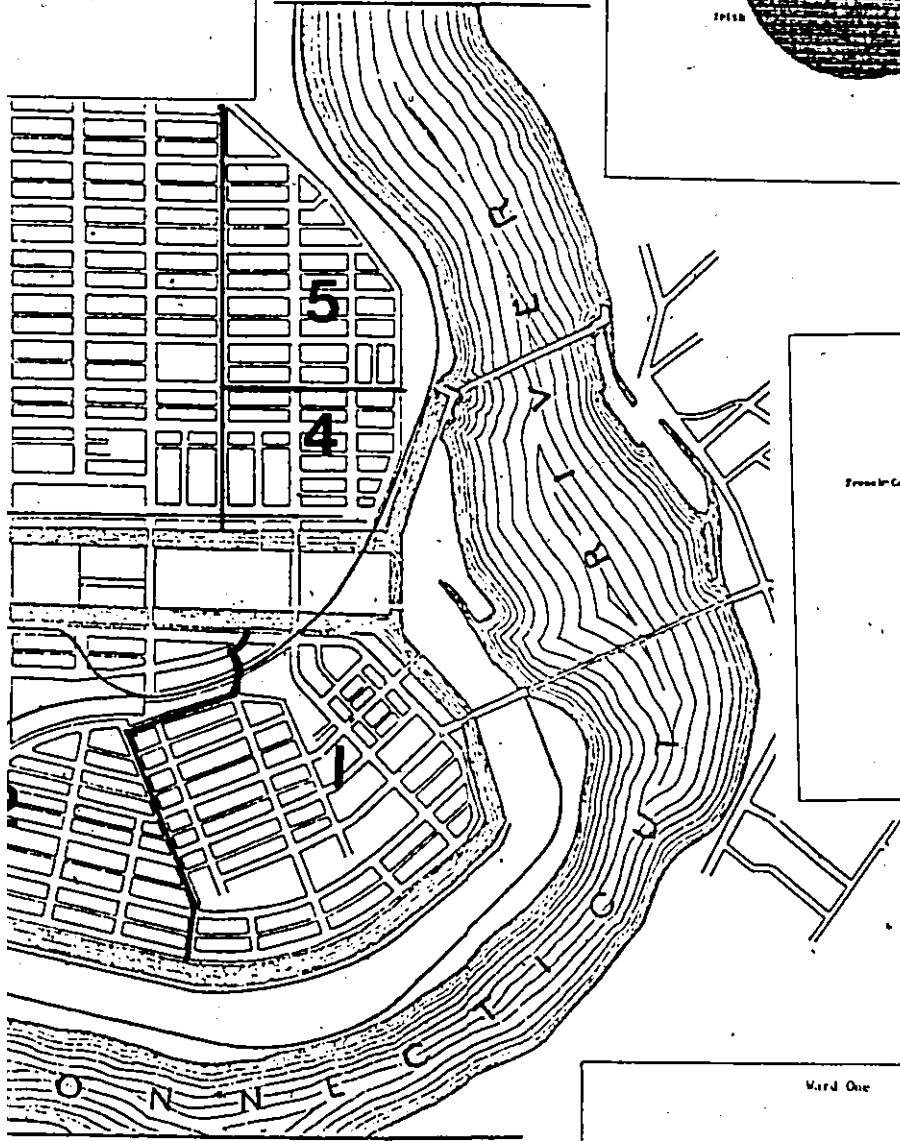
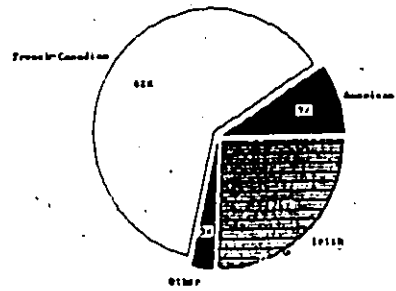
Six



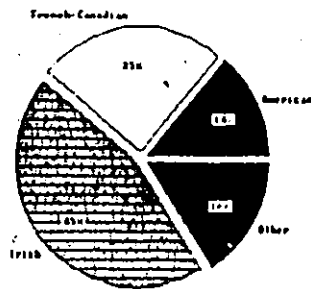
Ward Five



Ward Four



Ward One



Two



The French-Canadians dominated ward four, known as "Frenchville"<sup>26</sup> and were well represented with the Irish in ward two. Wards six and seven, which included the land leading farther away from the center of the city into the agricultural section of the community, were inhabited primarily by families with American-born heads. These two wards encompassed more land area than did the first five wards. The sections lying on the outskirts of the city were in the process of being developed although they remained primarily farming area.

The federal census for Holyoke, 1880, counted 2,084 dwellings for 21,915 people. The ratio of population per dwelling was 10.52. With 3,881 families in the city the ratio of families per dwelling is 1.86.<sup>27</sup> There were several dwellings at each address. The number of people per address in the Holyoke sample, calculated by multiplying the average number of persons per household by the average number of households per address, was 29.7.

The distribution of persons per address by ward reveals that ward four was the most densely populated followed at some distance by wards one, two and five.

TABLE 1.10 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS PER ADDRESS, AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD BY WARD.

| WARD  | Average N of Households per Address (A) | Average Household Size (B) | Average N of Persons per Address (AXB) |
|-------|---|----------------------------|--|
| 1     | 5.7                                     | 6.9                        | 39.3                                   |
| 2     | 4.2                                     | 7.0                        | 29.4                                   |
| 3     | 2.6                                     | 7.0                        | 18.2                                   |
| 4     | 6.6                                     | 7.9                        | 52.1                                   |
| 5     | 4.4                                     | 6.1                        | 26.8                                   |
| 6     | 1.9                                     | 6.3                        | 12.0                                   |
| 7     | 1.2                                     | 7.5                        | 9.0                                    |
| Total | 4.3                                     | 6.9                        | 29.7                                   |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

The same wards, one, two, five and especially four, also had the highest averages of households per address. The average household size per ward ranged from 6.1 in ward five to 7.9 in ward four. The wards which were more crowded were primarily inhabited by families of foreign-born heads (see Table 1.9). The housing situation in ward four especially was most acute; 62 percent of the people living within its boundaries were French-Canadian. Thus, there are indications that while the Americans managed to escape the worst of the Holyoke living conditions which the immigrant families experienced, the French-Canadians, the newest arrivals to the city, lived in the wards in which the situation was the most extreme.

The mean size of a Holyoke household in 1880, according to the federal census was 5.65. Morgan and Golden's sample was slightly lower, 5.49.<sup>28</sup> The mean of the educational choices sample, 7.11 was higher due to the sampling criteria which chose only families with school-aged children. Families with offspring in school were larger than the average household in the city.

Families with foreign-born heads had larger families than those of American-born heads.

TABLE 1.11 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS PER ADDRESS, AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD BY ORIGIN.

|                 | Average N of<br>Households per<br>Address<br>(A) | Average<br>Household<br>Size<br>(B) | Average N of<br>Persons per<br>Address<br>(AxB) |
|-----------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| American        | 2.3  | 6.1                                 | 14.0  |
| French-Canadian | 7.4  | 8.5                                 | 62.9  |
| Irish           | 3.9  | 6.9                                 | 26.9  |
| Other           | 3.7  | 6.0                                 | 22.2  |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Of the immigrant households, the French-Canadians by far had the highest average of household size, 8.5 compared to the Irish average of 6.9. Again in the averages of households and persons per average, the American had the smallest averages and the French-Canadians had significantly higher averages than either the American or Irish population. This is an other indication that the French-Canadian experienced the worst of the living conditions in 1880 Holyoke.

The analysis that follows is based on individual-level as well as household-level data. More than half of the educational choices sample were children of household heads.

TABLE 1.12 CLASSIFICATION IN RELATION TO HOUSEHOLD HEAD

| Gender   | Male | Female | Total | Percentage |
|----------|------|--------|-------|------------|
| Head     | 356  | 39     | 395   | 14.1       |
| Wife     | 0    | 349    | 349   | 12.4       |
| Child    | 793  | 814    | 1607  | 57.3       |
| Relative | 42   | 67     | 109   | 3.9        |
| Servant  | 12   | 51     | 63    | 2.2        |
| Boarder  | 160  | 124    | 284   | 10.1       |
| Total    | 1363 | 1444   | 2807  | 100.0      |

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Slightly over 2 percent were servants, nearly 4 percent were relatives and approximately 10 percent were boarders. More than half, 58 percent, of the families in the educational choices sample were nuclear, consisting of father, mother and children only. The majority of families, 88 percent were two-parent households.<sup>29</sup> Single-parent households made up 12 percent of the sample; 9 percent were headed by women and 3 percent by men.

Approximately every two out of five families housed one or more people other than the nuclear family. One-quarter of the households

had boarders, 17 percent had a relative and 11 percent had servants living in their homes. It is interesting to note that more families housed boarders than relatives. Morgan and Golden had similar results in their survey. Both the general population and the educational choices samples found over one-third of all households included non-kin such as boarders, servants or other employees.<sup>30</sup>

The French-Canadians were more likely to have a larger number of children in their households than the American or Irish heads.

TABLE 1.13 NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY BY BIRTHPLACE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

|                  | U.S. |       | Canada |       | Ireland |       | Other |       |
|------------------|------|-------|--------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
|                  | N    | %     | N      | %     | N       | %     | N     | %     |
| Children/family: |      |       |        |       |         |       |       |       |
| 1-3              | 70   | 71.4  | 24     | 27.3  | 48      | 30.4  | 24    | 52.2  |
| 4-6              | 27   | 27.6  | 37     | 42.1  | 85      | 53.8  | 18    | 39.1  |
| 7-9              | 1    | 1.0   | 24     | 27.3  | 24      | 15.2  | 3     | 6.5   |
| 10-12            | 0    | 0.0   | 3      | 3.4   | 1       | 0.6   | 1     | 2.2   |
| Total            | 98   | 100.0 | 88     | 100.0 | 158     | 100.0 | 46    | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

The majority of American households had smaller families with 1 to 3 children; only one family had 7 children. Half of the Irish households were in the 4 to 6 children category; 15 percent had 7 to 9 children. One-quarter of the French-Canadians had families with more than 7 children, the highest percentage of the three ethnic groups. This is in keeping with the evidence presented earlier that the French-Canadians had the largest number of persons per dwelling and persons per household and has important implications in their socio-economic standing which will be examined later as a factor in their educational choices.

In general, Holyoke in 1880 was an overcrowded, unsanitary

industrial community. It was a city of multi-ethnic identity with more immigrants arriving daily. The French-Canadian-born comprised at least 22 percent of Holyoke's population. Members of this ethnic group were over-represented in the working-class population of Holyoke. They were concentrated in the wards in which the living conditions were most severe. The French-Canadians also had larger families than the other ethnic groups. Therefore, the condition of the French-Canadians corresponds to that analyzed by revisionist historians in other New England communities.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

<sup>1</sup>Ralph D. Vicero, "Immigration of French Canadians to New England, 1840-1900: A Geographical Analysis" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1968), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>See Vicero, noted above and Yolande Lavoie "Les mouvements migratoires des Canadiens entre leur pays et les États-Unis au XIXe et au XXe siècles: étude quantitative," in La population du Québec, ed. Hubert Charbonneau (Montréal: Boréal, 1973), pp. 73-88.

<sup>3</sup>Iris Saunders Podesa, "Quebec to 'Little Canada': The Coming of the French Canadians to New England in the Nineteenth Century," The New England Quarterly 23 (September 1950):367.

<sup>4</sup>Albert Faucher and Maurice Lamontagne, "Histoire de l'industrialisation," in Le "retard" du Québec et l'infériorité économique des Canadiens-français, eds. René Durocher and Paul-André Linteau (Montréal: Boréal, 1971), p. 31.

<sup>5</sup>Constance McLaughlin Green, American Cities in the Growth of the Nation (London: Athlone Press, 1957; reprint ed., New York: Harper & Row, 1965), pp. 85-89.

<sup>6</sup>Vicero, pp. 216.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 219-22.

<sup>8</sup>Wyatt C. Harper, The Story of Holyoke (Holyoke: Centennial Anniversary Committee, 1973), p. 48. Proulx's first wagon returned to Holyoke with 43 girls and seven or eight men and boys. Over a period of five years local history estimates Proulx brought over 500 French-Canadians to the town. He was paid 4 or 5 dollars per person in addition to traveling expenses.

<sup>9</sup>Jacques Ducharme, The Delusson Family: A Novel (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1939), p. 6.

<sup>10</sup>Harper, p. 48.

<sup>11</sup>Vicero, pp. 112-113, 217.

<sup>12</sup>Ella Merkel DiCarlo, Holyoke-Chicopee: A Perspective (Holyoke, Mass: Transcript-Telegram, 1982), p. 194.

<sup>13</sup>Constance McLaughlin Green, Holyoke Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution In America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), pp. 201-202. Where there is no title specification of Green's work, the reference will be taken from Holyoke.

<sup>14</sup>Green, American Cities, p. 87.

<sup>15</sup>Green, p. 260.

<sup>16</sup> Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries, Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of the Statistics of Labor (Boston: Rand Avery, 1875), p. 392.

<sup>17</sup> Green, p. 260.

<sup>18</sup> Paul N. Dubovik, "Housing in Holyoke and Its Effects on Family," Historical Journal of Western Massachusetts 4 (Spring 1975):48.

<sup>19</sup> Green, pp. 119, 258.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 256-8.

<sup>21</sup> Theodore Hershberg and Robert Dockhorn, "Occupational Classification," Historical Methods Newsletter Nos. 2 & 3 (March/June, 1976):59-98. The vertical occupational code was used to study the occupational structure. The vertical code consisted of nine levels which are collapsed into five for the purpose of presentation of material. Where an occupation found in the educational choices sample was not listed in Hershberg's classification, the listing from Michael Katz' similar code was used. It is described in Appendix Two in The People of Hamilton, Canada West (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 343-8. Where the occupational information space was blank in the manuscript census, the person was listed as a missing case.

<sup>22</sup> Green, p. 117.

<sup>23</sup> George E. Waring, Report on the Social Statistics of Cities, vol. 1 (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1970), p. 220.

<sup>24</sup> Green, p. 367.

<sup>25</sup> Myfanwy Morgan and Hilda Golden, "Immigrant Families In An Industrial City: A Study of Households in Holyoke, 1880," Journal of Family History 4 (Spring 1979):61.

<sup>26</sup> Green, p. 112.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, Tenth Census of the United States, 1880: Population, 2:1416

<sup>28</sup> Morgan, p. 61.

<sup>29</sup> Of the two-parent households, 83 percent of the husbands and wives were born in the same country. Morgan and Golden found 98 percent of married couples to have the same nation of birth in their survey. p. 60. The difference may be due to the constant influx of population to Holyoke and the nature of the educational choices sample. The survey of the general population may have included more immigrant couples with no children or children over the school age which the family census would not include.

<sup>30</sup> Morgan, p. 64.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FRENCH-CANADIAN COMMUNITY IN HOLYOKE

The French-Canadian community and its interaction with other ethnic and religious groups in Holyoke will be examined and related to the significance these relationships might have in the educational choices. Some historians such as Mason Wade emphasize the importance of the parish in the development of French-Canadian communities. Through the parish, French-Canadians could practice their language, religion and culture.<sup>1</sup> The chapter will begin with a description of the founding of the first French-Canadian parish, Precious Blood, and the special circumstances in which the parishioners found themselves. A split between members, dissatisfaction with the pastor and a controversy over the parish school set up the historical background of the French parochial school. An explanation of the relationship between the Catholics and the Protestants and the French-Canadians and the Irish will follow. These associations are also important in studying the choice between Irish parochial or public schools as alternatives to the French parochial school.

Until 1869, there was no French-Canadian parish in Holyoke for the immigrants and their families. The first French-Canadians attended the only Roman Catholic church in Holyoke, St. Jerome's, which was founded in 1854 by Irish immigrants. Without a parish of their own, the French-Canadians had to practice their religion in an English-speaking church. According to Wade, in many New England centers, immigrants dissatisfied with the situation stopped attending church services until they became numerous enough to organize their own parish.<sup>2</sup>

During the period before their own parish was formed many French-Canadian marriages in Holyoke occurred outside the Catholic Church. Of twenty-two weddings in which at least one party was French-Canadian, only eight ceremonies were performed by a Catholic priest. The determination of the French-Canadian community in their endeavor to organize a parish was heightened when they discovered, in 1869, that several of their young girls were learning English and receiving lessons in doctrine from a Protestant church in the city.<sup>3</sup>

In 1868 three members of the French-Canadian community in Holyoke petitioned the diocese for a parish of their own. Before Bishop Williams of Boston<sup>4</sup> would consent, he needed proof that there were sufficient worshipers to warrant the establishment of a new parish. In 1868 or 1869, interested parties conducted a survey with fairly accurate results.<sup>5</sup>

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| 299        | male heads of households                             |
| 1286       | women and children                                   |
| <u>161</u> | young boarders whose parents did not live in Holyoke |
| 1746       | total French-Canadian population                     |

The parish was approved and in April, 1869, Father Dufresne arrived to take on his responsibilities as "Monsieur le Curé." At first, Father Dufresne conducted religious services in a rented hall on High Street with approximately 700 worshipers. A Sunday School taught several hundred children Catholic catechism in French. The Holyoke Water Power Company, whose labor force was largely French-Canadian contributed land for the permanent site of the parish. A wooden building on the corner of Park and Cabot Streets was constructed in time for the new priest's first Christmas services. Tragedy struck in 1875 when flames swept through the wooden frame during religious services. Ninety-two people died as a result of the fire. A new, architec-

turally elaborate building, at a cost of \$60,000, was completed in 1878 and named Precious Blood Church, la Paroisse du Précieux-Sang.<sup>6</sup>

While the building of the new church went on, Father Dufresne organized a parochial French school. The school opened in 1876 with two lay teachers and seventy students. Classes were conducted in the basement of the church.<sup>7</sup> Four years later the school, still housed in the church, had a student body of 90 boys and 95 girls. Napoleon Hamil was in charge of the boys and Melvina Menard supervised the girls. The students were taught the basic subjects, "and in addition the boys are taught English."<sup>8</sup>

The Precious Blood School sparked lively controversy in the city on many counts. In the same year as the opening of the school, Massachusetts passed laws requiring educational instruction to be conducted in English, a law ignored by the French school. Clergy, laity and Anglophone Catholics alike joined in the protest against French language schools.<sup>9</sup> These foreign language parochial schools were viewed with suspicion; patriotic citizens questioned the immigrants' "loyalty" to their new country of residence.<sup>10</sup>

The year the Precious Blood School opened, 1876, a state law went into effect giving the local school committees the authority to verify all private schools were up to public school standards and met the requirements of the law. In Holyoke a special committee was assigned to investigate the private schools. One French-Canadian, Dr. Moses Mitivier, was a member of the investigative team. The doctor was known for his anti-clerical sentiments and supported public education. The head of the special committee reported the French school conformed to all requirements. However, a second report was submitted which found the ratio of teachers to students in the school

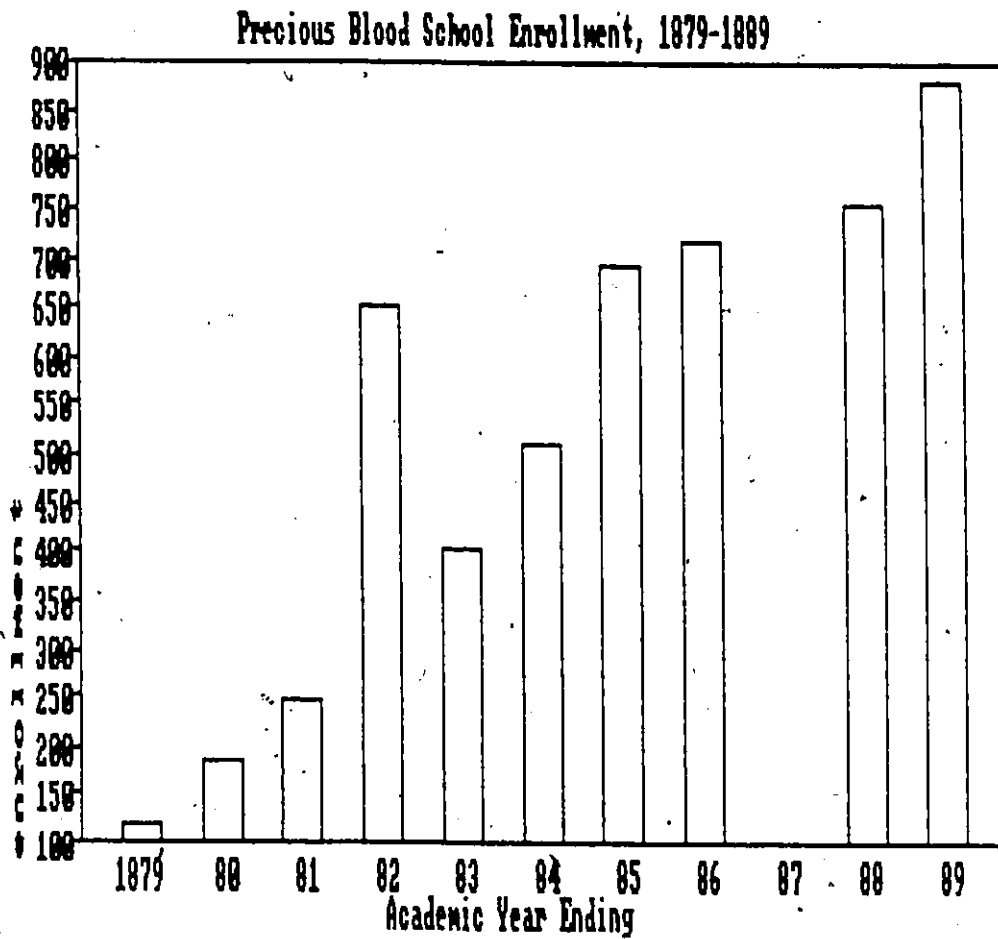
was inadequate. The report also charged that English was not the language of instruction, a violation of the law. The author of the dissenting report is not identified; however, Haebler has little doubt that it was Dr. Mitivier.<sup>11</sup> The Holyoke School Committee did not reach a decision on this delicate issue and tabled the matter until the following year.

The special committee reassigned in 1877 again included Dr. Mitivier. When the committee went to evaluate the French school, Father Dufresne barred them from entering. The situation was not aided by the personality clashes between the pastor and doctor.<sup>12</sup> With no proof the Precious Blood school was adhering to the laws, the Holyoke School Committee did not accredit the institution.<sup>13</sup> The school was not approved until 1882.<sup>14</sup>

Unstable attendance figures plagued the school for the first few years as Graph 2.1 on page forty reveals. In October, 1881 the Grey Nuns came from St. Hyacinthe, Quebec to take over the teaching in order to quell complaints of an inadequate staff for the number of pupils in the school. With the Sisters' arrival, enrollment increased from 340 students at the beginning of the year and ended with twice that number.<sup>15</sup> However, objections were made to the curriculum taught by the nuns. The courses included French, catechism, psalter and Church history which took up a significant part of the day. Arithmetic and English were also taught. The Sisters, educated in Canada, were unfamiliar with United States' history which was not included in the curriculum.<sup>16</sup>

On May 4, 1882, the School Superintendent E. L. Kirtland conducted exams in the French School in French, English and arithmetic.

GRAPH 2.1 ENROLLMENT IN THE FRENCH PAROCHIAL SCHOOL, PRECIOUS BLOOD, 1879-1889



Source: Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report, 1879-1889.

Note: The enrollment figures for 1887 are not available.

According to the chronicles of the Grey Nuns, Kirtland was not satisfied with the progress of the students in arithmetic. He also found the classrooms overcrowded and cited an insufficient number of teachers for the student population.<sup>17</sup>

On June 30 of the same year, Father Dufresne conducted a second exam of the students which was attended by Kirtland and other members of the School Committee, including Mitivier. The children satisfactorily answered questions on all subjects taught, "le Syllabaire, le devoir du Chrétien, le manuscrit, le Psautier, les 1er, 2e et 3e livre anglais, la grammaire, l'Histoire Sainte, le calcul, les 4 règles simples."<sup>18</sup>

During the years Precious Blood remained an unaccredited school, Father Dufresne pressured the Holyoke authorities for its approval. The pastor threatened that without accreditation, the French-Canadians would leave the city for another destination where their needs were met. According to Green, Holyoke manufacturers realized that unless the French-Canadian could recreate his cultural institutions including parish and school in his new environment, the immigrant and his family would leave the city and they used their influence to alleviate the social pressure against the French school.<sup>19</sup> The French-Canadians, a steady and cheap labor force, were valuable to Holyoke businessmen. The industrialists reassured and financially encouraged this immigrant group to stay and form a community with their national institutions. When the school was accredited in 1882, the Grey Nuns taught mainly in French and although they did teach English the amount of daily instruction is not known.<sup>20</sup> Precious Blood School, during the 1880-81 academic year was taught by two lay teachers; one of whom did not speak English.<sup>21</sup> The Grey Nuns were not to arrive until the following

school year.

Less than a decade after its founding, the Precious Blood parish itself suffered a split among its parishioners. The dissension surrounded the pastor, Father Dufresne. Some parishioners disapproved of their religious leader's actions. Others could not support a personal attack on the priest,<sup>22</sup> following the Québec tradition in which the curé was the symbol of authority and spiritual leadership. Roger Magnuson writes of the rural Québec clergymen: "Inasmuch as the local curé mixed and mingled with the people his influence went far beyond that of spiritual leader. He was at once friend, adviser as well as arbiter...."<sup>23</sup>

Father Dufresne was educated in Québec and pursued a career in teaching eventually becoming a professor of economics at St. Hyacinthe. In 1856 he became a priest at the age of thirty-seven and served in Québec parishes. Father Dufresne held the post of Vicar-General of the diocese, a prestigious position. When the priest applied to serve in a New England parish Haebler describes, Father Dufresne was "not a country priest looking for adventure and challenge that an American assignment might offer." The clergyman aspired to become the Bishop of Burlington and perhaps Father Dufresne saw his move to Holyoke as a step in that direction.<sup>24</sup>

Father Dufresne was an intelligent, energetic man whose organizational skills built the Precious Blood parish. It was the pastor's proficiency in financial management that caused trouble in the parish. From 1878 to 1882, the crucial years in the formation of the French parochial school, there were many complaints lodged against Father Dufresne. He was accused of selling wine illegally by Federal revenue

agents. The pastor did not face legal action although consequently, he bought a liquor license and paid a penalty, which implied guilt. Another incident which disillusioned parishioners was Father Dufresne's practice of lending large amounts of money and foreclosing on the loans without giving the French-Canadians involved time to organize their finances.<sup>25</sup>

Father Dufresne earned a salary of \$600 a year in addition to the fees for any ceremonies he performed. Extra income included one dollar a month in tithes paid by each family in addition to the pew rental fee. According to Haebler's research, in their economic situation these fees were very difficult for French-Canadians to meet.<sup>26</sup> In Quebec, the French-Canadians were responsible for similar fees. The parish priest did receive a casuel, a fee for saying masses and performing sacraments. Families also paid the capitation, the tax per family. In rural parishes, people also paid the dîme, one-twenty-sixth of their harvest.<sup>27</sup> The parishioners in Holyoke seem to have paid larger amounts for religious ceremonies. Letters to the Holyoke Transcript complained people who were married by Father Dufresne in the church paid twenty to thirty dollars while those who could only afford ten to twenty dollars were married at the altar in the basement of the church.<sup>28</sup>

When Dufresne tried to influence the actions of the French-Canadian community, a group of his parishioners challenged the priest's authority. In 1876, Dufresne forbade his parishioners to attend a lecture given by Charles Chiniquy. Chiniquy was a French-Canadian, a former Catholic priest who had converted to Protestantism. He traveled around New England speaking against Catholicism. Those Precious Blood members who did not heed their pastor and some who were

falsely charged with attending the lecture were ostracized from the French Catholic community by the priest. Father Dufresne used his authority to have the businesses of the accused boycotted. One man, Joseph Parker sued the pastor for damages to his livery business and won a settlement of \$3,433. This action attained wide-spread publicity throughout the United States.<sup>29</sup>

The dissent surrounding Father Dufresne split his parish in half. A movement began among those unhappy with the situation to separate from Precious Blood and start their own parish. At a meeting held in April, 1880, the determination of the French-Canadians to get another parish with a new priest was expressed in the resolutions drafted that evening.

Resolved. That we French Catholics of Holyoke ... representing over 3000 people do hereby pray Rt. Rev. P. O'Reilly to divide the parish, and to give us permission to have a new church and another priest.

Resolved. That we recognize the members of the committee for the division of parish as good Catholics and honorable men, and we do not believe in the least that they have been the instruments who have compelled Rev. A. B. Dufresne to pay a fine and take out a license.

Resolved. That for the propagation of the Catholic religion, we regret sincerely the events which have occurred lately in Holyoke and hope they will never occur again.

Resolved. That we make known to other Nationalities who do not know our troubles, to have a little charity, not to denounce us or to judge us not.

Resolved. That we will not give up the movement till we have gained a division of the parish, a new church and another priest.<sup>30</sup>

In their resolutions, the French-Canadians sought the understanding of the Holyoke community and apologized for the recent events involving their parish. The diocese did not approve an appendage of Precious Blood and in 1887 when Dufresne died, he left a divided parish.

Dufresne managed the Massachusetts parish the same way he would have led a parish in Quebec. The pastor culturally isolated himself; he held onto the traditional clerical methods of leading his community. Dufresne who never learned to speak English was determined to keep the French-Canadian heritage strong.<sup>31</sup> The priest used his talents and authority to enhance the parish funds. While Dufresne did earn a reputation for being financially aggressive, the parish did have many expensive responsibilities, the new church, a modest rectory, a convent and the school. The pastor's financial prowess was for the material benefit of the parish, not for himself, as his will attested. Dufresne left almost all of his property to the parish in the name of Bishop O'Reilly and the diocese.<sup>32</sup>

Haebler has advanced the interpretation that the rocky years the parish endured were the result of a split between Father Dufresne and those parishioners who were staunchly faithful to traditional French-Canadian values and those who changed their values in order to adapt to living in a New England city. Haebler interprets this division as a sign of rapid acculturation, the change in attitudes which occurred among Holyoke's French-Canadian community. In the late 1870's, the "old customs and behavior patterns" of Quebec were very difficult to maintain in a new environment. The split seemed to be between generations; the old thought the young "had acquired some notions of independence by mingling with non-French-Canadians and now did not care much for religion or the 'good of the Church.'" It was the French-Canadians who had attained a certain level of economic success, small business owners and skilled craftsmen who no longer accepted their pastor's authority as absolute. These people were not yet

Americanized although they did alter their values in response to their new environment which functioned with a different set of values.<sup>33</sup>

Green also noted that by the end of the century, French-Canadian Catholics had become more critical of their religion. The priest's word was no longer unconditionally accepted. The French-Canadians examined all sides of an issue, even the Protestant views. According to Green, the French-Canadians thought the Irish Catholics took the clergy's word too readily without questioning him in unclear matters.<sup>34</sup>

The educational choices sample will test Haebler's hypothesis through the educational choices of French-Canadian parents by looking at the characteristics of parents who chose to send their children to French school in comparison to those who did not. If the dissension in Precious Blood parish is an indication that some members willingly changed their ways in order to interact with the outside community, and the other half of the parish supported surviance and made conscious efforts to guard their native language, values and institutions in Holyoke, this split may have affected French-Canadian parents' decisions concerning the education of their children. The uncomfortable situation between the pastor and the parishioners might have influenced schooling choices and thereby indirectly influenced the role of surviance in the family decisions. Parents who supported the pastor, Father Dufresne would be more likely to send their children to the parish school. Members who disapproved of the parish leadership for different reasons would be less likely to have their families attend the French school. The choices of the French-Canadians will be one way of testing the question of changes in traditional values in the matter of education for their children.

## THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS IN HOLYOKE

During the same period that the French-Canadian community was experiencing internal struggles, the ethnic group was also dealing with anti-Catholic, anti-foreign sentiments in the city, a topic covered by Kenneth Underwood in Protestant and Catholic. In the 1870's the Catholic population in Holyoke grew more quickly than the Protestant. Since that decade, the Roman Catholics have outnumbered the Protestants in the community.<sup>35</sup> This rapid growth disturbed the Protestants, setting the stage for a rivalry between the two religious groups. Green also noted that as the Catholics became established in the city and upgraded their economic level, the tension increased.<sup>36</sup> This was not an unfamiliar scene in New England as anti-Catholic sentiment, erupting in the 1850's and continuing on, plagued the first Catholic immigrants, the Irish.<sup>37</sup> There are two perspectives concerning the relations between the Protestants and Catholics; one version reports the hostility between the two religious groups and the other describes Protestant opposition to Catholic efforts to isolate themselves from outside influences.

Underwood maintains the problems between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Holyoke were only partly due to religious differences. Class and nationality affiliations were significant to both faiths and were a source of rivalry and jealousy.<sup>38</sup> In Holyoke a rift existed between Catholics and Protestants, and between American-born and immigrants, the majority of whom were Catholic. According to Green, rarely did New Englanders socialize with immigrants; the Irish were thought of as "uncouth." There was also little social contact between the churches until the turn of the century. Little intermarriage took

place between Catholics and Protestants, due in part to the economic differences which existed. Their children did mingle in public school but economic status and the areas in which the families lived separated the groups.<sup>39</sup>

Protestants also resented the Catholic practice of limiting their financial contributions to their own parishes. They disapproved of the large, elaborate churches erected by the Catholic parishes which were accompanied by large debts. The majority of the Catholic parishioners were mill workers with little extra money to contribute to these debts leaving the Protestants financially responsible for the charitable institutions for the city's needy.<sup>40</sup>

Green describes a clash of personalities; the "defiant, aggressive" character of the Irish Catholics irritated the Protestants. Green excuses Protestant prejudice in her study. "Perhaps the Protestants, as a class possessed of far greater means and infinitely greater social prestige, were sometimes guilty of a tactless disregard of their Catholic fellow citizens, but if so it was generally unconscious."<sup>41</sup> An excerpt from the records of the Second Baptist Church does not support Green's view of the Protestant attitude toward the Catholics.

We have to constantly regret that we are surrounded (and perhaps no other church in the association is) with an immense population that are bound by ignorance and superstition to a church of forms and ceremonies. A church that neither incites nor demands Holiness or purity and hardly morality in its members. Upon such a people the Gospel has but little effect or impression even when they can be reached which is but seldom, owing to the strictness with which their spiritual advisers admonish them of the sin of hearing any protestant preaching.<sup>42</sup>

This excerpt, taken from a Sunday sermon delivered by the Protestant minister, reveals the Protestant attitude toward the Catholics of the city.

While there is evidence of antagonistic feelings on the part of both religious groups, some Protestants did make an effort to break through the Catholic isolationist actions in the spirit of "Americanism." The Holyoke Transcript printed excerpts from an article originally published in the Catholic Journal which warned Catholics of the evils of associating with Protestant families. The local newspaper's response to the isolationist article reveals the tone of the Protestant overtures to the Catholics. The quotation from the Catholic paper is as follows:

In some towns we will find one Catholic family and two non-Catholic side by side in street after street, and between these families associations are very naturally formed. The children go to school together, the young people keep company, and the older ones borrow and lend articles of household use. Indeed a sort of union is formed between them.

No other means of ridding one's self of their consequences is given us but avoiding the associations that lead to these and kindred evils. It is nearly impossible for us to avoid the associations of any one or a number of persons if we are continually in their presence or constantly meeting them at their and our homes; hence the great desirability of Catholics living among themselves as much as possible.

The city newspaper's response to this article appealed to the good will and patriotism of the citizens of the United States, where all should help their fellow man. The Holyoke Transcript painted a very charitable picture of the Protestants' goodwill efforts towards the Catholics.

This advice must seem churlish and preposterous to honest and intelligent Catholics that have lived for years in kind and friendly relations with their Protestant neighbors, who have worked with them, sympathized in their troubles, respected their opinions, contributed to their charities and poured out money like water to feed their starving countrymen.

It may be good religion, from the Journal's standpoint, but it is poor humanity, poor charity, and poor patriotism in a republic like this, where it is necessary for all good citizens to appreciate and help each other and work together for the general good.

Both the article and its response represented extreme opinions of the dangers of Protestants and their benevolence to the Catholics.

Protestants in Holyoke opposed another of the Catholic actions which was considered isolationist, the establishment of parochial schools. When the city's first parochial school, St. Jerome's, opened in 1868 public dissension quieted because of the financial relief it offered Holyoke. This postponed the doubts of the anti-parochial school population temporarily. The group's main argument was that the community and especially the children, were divided along religious lines by the educational institutions. When his school opened, the pastor of St. Jerome's wanted to "strengthen the religious wall" by organizing the Catholic children into a parish school which would firmly instruct the young Irish parishioners in their religion.<sup>44</sup>

The complaint of religious segregation in Holyoke continued with increasing fervor when the francophone parochial school opened. The established New England citizenry were alarmed at such ethnically-based institutions which impeded the process of assimilation. The Thirteenth Annual Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of Labor (1882) described the reservations about French schools. "However much the effort of the French to educate their children in these institutions may be applauded, the parochial school will always excite hostility on the part of the native...their establishment by the members of any race will always raise suspicion in the American mind as to the sincerity of professions of loyalty to our government on the part of the founders."<sup>45</sup>

During the 1870's and 1880's, the Holyoke public school system was seriously inadequate to meet the needs of the students. A shortage of educators and school space caused overcrowding and poor

teaching quality. Green credits this situation to the local taxpayer who was unwilling to spend money to improve the state of the schools. The taxpayer did not want to pay for free education for mill laborers' children. In view of this, Green found the opposition to parochial schools surprising as they alleviated the conditions in the public schools.<sup>46</sup> The Protestant opposition to Catholic separate schools was stronger than the financial relief these schools provided the taxpayers.

The antagonistic relations between Holyoke's Protestants and Catholics may have affected the French-Canadians' position on survival and their schooling choices. In public schools, all religions and nationalities were mixed. Parochial schools purposely separated the Catholic children from the other young Holyokers of different religious backgrounds. The French parochial school further segregated its students along ethnic and linguistic as well as religious lines. This school also provided a learning environment in which the French-Canadians' native language could be used academically as well as socially among the students. Families who did not want their children to integrate with those of other religious and ethnic backgrounds would choose the parochial schools while those who desired their offspring to socially integrate into the greater Holyoke community and to form social contacts for the future would choose the institutions which did not distinguish between the students.

## THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FRENCH-CANADIAN AND IRISH COMMUNITIES

Were the Protestant-Catholic differences or the French-Canadian - Irish differences more important to the educational choices? Although the majority of the French and the Irish immigrant groups in Holyoke were Catholic, an antagonistic rivalry developed between the two. The first Catholic church, St. Jerome's was founded by Irish immigrants in 1854. Upon their arrival, the French-Canadian immigrants attended services in the Irish church. Here, the newest immigrants faced the same problems as many other French-Canadians in New England communities who were not yet numerous enough to organize their own parishes. The French-Canadians found it difficult to practice their religion in English; going to confession, and listening to sermons in a language other than French was frustrating. The lack of elaborate religious rituals and traditions, including the music of the Gregorian chants made the English masses almost alien. These elements were not included in New England Catholic services because of "Yankee prejudice against 'popish pageantry.'"<sup>47</sup>

Moving from Quebec where the Catholic church was a wealthy and powerful institution, firmly established, to a new city, and a young parish was another adjustment for the French-Canadians. They were not used to paying high fees which New England churches collected. Such fees as seat money, baptismal, marriage and formal offerings tapped into limited funds. Also, Easter and Christmas collections given to the pastors added to the parishioners' financial contribution. Before their own parishes were organized, many French-Canadians stopped attending the Irish parish functions and services. Wade points out that the Catholic Church in Quebec was reluctant to send French-

Canadian priests to New England because they thought the emigrants forgot their faith as well as their country. However, when immigrant communities became permanent, some French-Canadian priests did move to New England to lead parishes in spite of the indifference of the Quebec Catholic authorities.<sup>48</sup>

French-Canadians attended St. Jerome's until they were numerous enough to form Precious Blood parish in 1869. Five years later, 1876, a second offspring of St. Jerome's parish, Sacred Heart was formed by Irish Catholics. The year of 1886 brought another split from the main Irish parish, Holy Rosary Church, in ward one. By 1890, Precious Blood's facilities were not large enough to accommodate the growing French-Canadian population and Our Lady of Perpetual Help was founded. Thirteen years later, the third French-Canadian parish, Immaculate Conception, was established in ward one.

As the French and the Irish parishes sprung up over the city, the rivalry between the two ethnic groups also grew. In his study of the history of French parishes, Mason Wade differentiated between Catholic groups which settled in New England. Wade classified two types of parishes, territorial and national. Territorial parishes which were English-speaking wanted the assimilation of foreign Catholics into one common American Catholic religion. Irish congregations fall into this category. National parishes, which conducted their worship in a foreign language wanted their own parishes to continue their customs and to keep their language while practicing patriotism to the United States. Wade explains "There was a temperamental incompatibility between French and Irish, reinforced by each group's racial prejudices, strong group consciousness, and mutual aid tendencies, which

led to the demand for separate French parishes as soon as the French Canadians were numerous enough to support them".

The "temperamental incompatibility" also included the Irish perception of the role of foreign-born Catholics in America. They believed that the assimilation of foreign-born Catholics would ease the anti-Catholic prejudice in New England. The Irish Catholics thought that the French were dividing and weakening the Church through their francophone churches and schools by holding fast to their language and traditions and resisting American ways. Wade explains that the Irish clergy continuously pressured French-Canadians and were dubbed by the Quebec immigrants as the "Irish assimilators."<sup>49</sup>

Underwood, in his study of the Catholics and Protestants in Holyoke also found evidence of Irish pressure on the French-Canadians. "The Irish stressed the importance of distinguishing faith from a particular culture, while the French sought to conserve 'the natural order' already established."<sup>50</sup> From the traditional viewpoint, the French-Canadians had been taught by their Catholic leaders that they had a religious mission to practice their religion and hold onto their French-Canadian values. The way to remain loyal to the French Catholic 'nation' was to protect their language, religion and cultural traditions.<sup>51</sup> The French-Canadian cohesion irked the Irish Catholics. According to Wade, the Irish believed in order to fight anti-Catholic sentiment in New England all Catholic immigrants had to unite to present a united front to Protestant society. These efforts on the part of the Irish to change national parishes into territorial institutions only strengthened the resolve of the French-Canadians to practice and protect their faith, language and culture and to resist

outside influences.<sup>52</sup>

Mason Wade described the relationship between the Catholics and Protestants, the Irish and the French-Canadians in the New England region. Underwood specifically studied these relationships in Holyoke. His findings support Wade's analysis. According to Underwood, the tenacity with which the French-Canadians held to their faith and cultural ways and with which the Irish persisted in trying to change the other ethnic group caused a rift in the Catholic religion.

Ethnic rivalry in the Catholic church and serious disagreement over the strategy which would best hold the loyalty of the immigrant affected relations with Protestants chiefly in that it reduced the cohesiveness and unity of Catholicism and turned the attention of<sup>53</sup> its leaders inward toward their own nationality cleavages.

Holyoke scholars agree that this disunity was very disturbing to the Irish of the city who wanted recognition from the Protestants. Green characterised the Irish Catholics of the city as "representing the church militant, and were not content with easygoing patient ways." The French Catholics, with their attentions turned toward their own were not overly concerned with other groups, Catholic or Protestant. First generation immigrants still identified with their home in Quebec and through the church, kept the association, the lifeline alive. "Thus the French church commanded a tenderness which the church of the Irishman, filled with defiant memories of the 'old country' could never attain."<sup>54</sup>

The antagonism between the two groups was felt by their children who also took part in hostilities against each other. The Holyoke Transcript reported fighting between groups of French and Irish in November, 1882.

The smouldering hostilities between the French and the Irish boys which boiled over two years ago and fairly broke up the evening schools, have broken out again and there have been outbreaks of stoning and fighting along Lyman street in the dry bridge neighborhood. The fights usually originate in the mills and the fighters bring them out to the street and let the school boys finish. Both sides are to blame, and the fighting should be stopped before it reaches such heights as it did last season. The authority of the respective priests had a good effect in stopping the fighting before and unless the boys take timely warning and cease their battles it would be well for some one in authority to interfere.

The product of adults and children alike, these fights were only a part of a string of public fights between Irish and French-Canadians, Catholics and Protestants over the last decade.

The decision of which type of education French-Canadian children were to receive was made in the midst of anti-Catholic sentiment and immigrant rivalry in the city. The year 1880 was also a time of major influx of French-Canadian immigrants joining those already settled. The French-Canadian community was still in the process of forming and its parish was already divided over their controversial pastor. This same man was involved in a clash with the Holyoke School Committee over the accreditation of the French-Canadian school. The life of a French-Canadian immigrant in Holyoke in 1880 was complicated; each factor discussed above may conceivably have influenced his or her decision-making process. The choices made by the French-Canadian parents will reveal the relative importance of different factors. Whether the French-Canadians sent more children to the public or the parochial schools will reveal if the conflict between the Catholics and the Protestants or between the Irish and the French-Canadians was more intense. The main question concerning the French-Canadian community remains, how strong was the motivation of survivance in their choice of education for the young?

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup> Wade, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>3</sup> Haebler, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Monseignor Roger Viau, July 15, 1985.  
The Springfield diocese was divided from the Boston diocese in 1870. Bishop O'Rielly, American-born of an Irish-born father, headed the Springfield diocese.

<sup>5</sup> Haebler, p. 106.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 107-109; Précieux-Sang, 75e Anniversaire (Holyoke: La Justice, 1944), p.

<sup>7</sup> Haebler, p. 128.

<sup>8</sup> Holyoke City Directory, 1880, p. 35.

<sup>9</sup> Kenneth Wilson Underwood, Protestant and Catholic: Religious and Social Interaction in an Industrial Community (Boston: Beacon Hill, 1957), p. 220.

<sup>10</sup> Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries, Thirteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of the Statistics of Labor (Boston: Rand Avery, 1881), pp. 90-91.

<sup>11</sup> Haebler, p. 129.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Haebler, "Educational Patterns of French-Canadians in Holyoke 1868 to 1910," Historical Journal of Massachusetts 10 (June 1982):21.

<sup>13</sup> Holyoke Transcript, September 5, 1877.

<sup>14</sup> Holyoke School Committee, Minutes of the Meetings, February 6 and 7, 1882.

<sup>15</sup> Haebler, "Habitants" p. 131. Archives des Soeurs de la Charité, Un Siècle d'histoire; 12e Fleuron, p. 156.

<sup>16</sup> Letter from the Grey Nuns to the St. Hyacinthe Motherhouse, October, 1881. Extraits des chroniques des Soeurs de la Charite.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Green, p. 301; Interview with Viau.

<sup>20</sup>Extraits des chroniques des Soeurs de la Charité.  
English was a course included in the Sisters' curriculum. However, it is not known if any other courses were conducted in English by the Sisters.

<sup>21</sup>Haebler, p. 117.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 103, 117.

<sup>23</sup>Roger Magnuson, A Brief History of Quebec Education (Montreal: Harvest House, 1980), pp. 40-41.

<sup>24</sup>Haebler, p. 104.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., pp. 104, 118-123.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 82, 87, 115; Ella Merkel DiCarlo, p. 195.

<sup>27</sup>Interview with Pierre Savard, June, 1985.

<sup>28</sup>DiCarlo, p. 195.

<sup>29</sup>Haebler, p. 112.

<sup>30</sup>Holyoke Transcript, April 3, 1880.

<sup>31</sup>Haebler, p. 125; Interview with Viau.

<sup>32</sup>Haebler, pp. 119-126; Interview with Viau.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>34</sup>Green, p. 338.

<sup>35</sup>Underwood, p. 44.

<sup>36</sup>Green, p. 332.

<sup>37</sup>Wade, p. 178.

<sup>38</sup>Underwood, p. 221.

<sup>39</sup>Green, pp. 49, 329, 345.

<sup>40</sup>Green, pp. 125, 334.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 345.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 333.

<sup>43</sup>Holyoke Transcript, August 4, 1880.

<sup>44</sup>Green, pp. 287, 300-301; Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report (1876-1883).

<sup>45</sup>Thirteenth Annual Report, pp. 90-91.

<sup>46</sup>Green, pp. 286, 300.

<sup>47</sup>Wade, p. 169.

<sup>48</sup>Wade, p. 168-169; Interview with Viau.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. 168-169, 178, 184-185.

<sup>50</sup>Underwood, p. 221.

<sup>51</sup>Claire Quintal, "An Unrecognized Minority: New England Franco-Americans" 5 (Spring 1981): 384.

<sup>52</sup>Wade, pp. 176-178.

<sup>53</sup>Underwood, p. 221.

<sup>54</sup>Green, p. 337.

<sup>55</sup>Holyoke Transcript, November 11, 1882.

### CHAPTER III

#### EDUCATIONAL CHOICES IN HOLYOKE, 1880

In addition to socio-economic circumstances and ethno-religious cleavages, educational choices were also affected by other factors concerning the education of children in Holyoke: child labor legislation, compulsory school attendance laws, the quality of the schools and their location in the city. Each of these elements will be explained and related to the influence they may have had on the choice of French-Canadian parents.

The school laws observed in 1880, which were enacted in 1873 and modified in 1874, included truancy and compulsory attendance rules. Children between the ages of seven and fourteen were required to attend school; education before this age was optional. Between ten and fourteen years of age, children could find employment in manufacturing, mechanical or mercantile establishments after they had completed twenty weeks of school. The Superintendent of Schools issued certificates officially recognizing students who had completed the schooling requirements. Employers were obliged to keep these work certificates on file, in addition to the age certificates of employees under sixteen years of age. Birth or baptismal records were needed as proof of age. Minors over ten could work during school vacations although they had not yet met the school requirements. Children under fourteen who were illiterate were not allowed to work.

Parents and employers were responsible for any infractions of these laws. Truant officers were authorized to check businesses who employed minors for accurate work certificates. Those who did not adhere to the laws were subject to fines from twenty to fifty

dollars.<sup>1</sup>

Until 1880 children between ten and fourteen in Massachusetts had been allowed to attend school half-day and work the other half.<sup>2</sup> In the 1880-1881 school session, students were required to complete twenty full weeks of instruction before leaving to obtain full-time employment. The academic year was divided into three terms. The Superintendent of Schools reported a decline in enrollment in the third term due to students who departed to work.<sup>3</sup>

Child labor laws were not strictly enforced in Holyoke. There are indications that the state laws were bent concerning compulsory attendance because of local pressure from business owners. In 1879 an effort was made to enforce the school attendance law in which students could work half-day and go to school the other half. Holyoke employers cooperated in hiring older workers and releasing the children because there was an abundance of available labor in the city at the time. The cost of maintaining work certificate files and penalty fees also influenced factories to hire older rather than younger workers.<sup>4</sup> However, the effort did not stop illegal child labor practices. During the 1880-81 academic year, the Holyoke Truant Officer noted an increase in the number of children working without having met the legal requirements. Mr. Doyle did not place the blame on families or on any specific nationalities; rather, he considered the unconcerned mill managers and overseers to be responsible. In the concluding remarks his report for the School Committee the officer wrote:

... I have found somewhat more irregularities in respect to the employment of school children than in former years. This is partly due to the demand for help and the reluctance to dismiss old hands until the new ones are "broke in," partly

to heedlessness of busy overseers and agents, and partly to disrespect for the law. There are some corporations employing hundreds of hands that are careful to carry out every requirement of the School Committee and their example leads me to hope that the rest may some time try to imitate them.

Haebler and Green maintain the school and labor laws in Holyoke did not stop the use of child labor but they did insure that children received some education.<sup>6</sup>

The children who were not in school or did not work were classified as "minding house" in the school census. These children were either ill, handicapped or were needed at home to help manage the household. One of the ten children in the sample who is listed as "Minding house" is fifteen-year-old Catherine Nugent. Catherine remained at home while her two parents and two older sisters worked in the paper and woolen mills and her five younger siblings attended school. She was accompanied at home by her eighty-year-old grandmother and three-year-old brother. Margaret Barret, age thirteen, remained at home with her mother and three-year-old brother while her father and five older siblings worked.

In 1880, the French-Canadians of Holyoke had choices concerning the education of their children: the French parochial, the Irish parochial or one of the public schools. The public educational system was divided into three levels, primary, grammar and high school. First through fifth grades were classified as primary. The grammar level included sixth through ninth grades. At all levels, the curriculum included the basic subjects of reading, writing and arithmetic. History and geography were added in the grammar school.<sup>7</sup> The public schools were co-educational.

Not all grades were represented in Holyoke's 12 public schools.

TABLE 3.1 GRADE LEVELS OF HOLYOKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

| SCHOOL          | N OF CLASSES |         |         |       | N OF TEACHERS |
|-----------------|--------------|---------|---------|-------|---------------|
|                 | HIGH         | GRAMMAR | PRIMARY | MIXED |               |
| Elm             | 5            | 0       | 0       | 0     | 5             |
| Appleton        | 0            | 6       | 4       | 1     | 11            |
| Park            | 0            | 6       | 3       | 0     | 9             |
| Sargeant        | 0            | 0       | 9       | 0     | 9*            |
| Lyman           | 0            | 0       | 5       | 0     | 5             |
| Chestnut        | 0            | 1       | 8       | 0     | 9             |
| Ewingville      | 0            | 1       | 2       | 0     | 3             |
| Baptist Village | 0            | 1       | 2       | 0     | 3             |
| Northampton     | 0            | 0       | 0       | 1     | 1             |
| West            | 0            | 0       | 0       | 1     | 1*            |
| Ingleside       | 0            | 0       | 0       | 1     | 1             |
| West Holyoke    | 0            | 0       | 0       | 1     | 1             |

Source: Information taken from Table F. in the Annual Report of Holyoke School Committee, 1880-1881, p. 85.

\* One teacher was temporarily assigned to the school to accommodate a surplus of students.

For instance, the Lyman St. and Sargeant St. schools held primary classes only. The Chestnut St. school had eight primary classes and one grammar level classroom. The only two schools which included grades one through eight were Appleton and Park St. schools. Appleton also housed the new ninth grade. The Elm St. school was the only public high school in the city. Some schools, especially those on the outskirts of the city, had only one teacher who taught a mixture of grades based upon the attendance and the levels of the students.<sup>8</sup>

Under the direction of Fr. Harkins the Irish parochial school, St. Jerome's, was divided according to sex. The girls school had been taught by the Sisters of Notre Dame since 1868. The boys had received instruction since 1872 from the Sisters of Charity, renamed the Sisters of Providence. Both schools were graded according to the public school levels. The girls' institution went up through high

school grades and their curriculum included a French language course and introduction to chemistry and botony. In the boys' school the highest level was grammar.<sup>9</sup> St. Jerome's school offered an education similar to that of the public schools along with religious instruction taught under the direction of priests and nuns.

In 1880, classes for the French parochial school were held in the basement of the Precious Blood church. The Precious Blood school consisted of primary and grammar grades. Napoleon Hamil was in charge of the boys and Melvina Menard headed the girls' education, both under the direction of Fr. Dufresne. They were taught the common subjects "and in addition the boys are taught English."<sup>10</sup> The Precious Blood school instruction was primarily given in French.<sup>11</sup> Students of this school received an education in the basic subjects and religion in the French language under the direction of Fr. Dufresne.

There were only two other private schools in Holyoke, Mount St. Vincent and a school taught by one woman in her home. Mt. St. Vincent was an orphanage which included its own school run by the Sisters of Providence. The charitable institution housed several children from Vermont although it mainly served the Springfield Catholic diocese.

The annual reports of the Holyoke School Committee provide statistics on the total enrollment in Holyoke schools during the period under consideration. Over the span of five years from 1879 to 1883 the public school system increased its enrollment by nearly 700 students. The French parochial school also experienced rapid growth, especially in the 1881-82 academic term, the year the Grey Nuns arrived to assume the teaching responsibility of the pupils.

**TABLE 3.2 ENROLLMENT IN HOLYOKE SCHOOLS, 1879-1883**

|                  | 1879 | 1880 | 1881 | 1882 | 1883 |
|------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Public           | 1814 | 2134 | 2174 | 2123 | 2507 |
| Irish parochial  | 1004 | 1078 | 1046 | 952  | 1025 |
| French parochial | 119  | 185  | 248  | 649  | 401* |
| Mt. St. Vincent  |      |      | 55   | 78   | 86   |
| Private          | 10   | 3    | 0    | 8    | 11   |
| Total            | 2947 | 3400 | 3523 | 3810 | 4030 |

Source: Annual Report, Holyoke School Committee, 1879-1883

\* Decrease in enrollment due to Fr. Dufresne no longer accepting children under seven years old according to Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report, 1883, p. 22.

Prior to 1881 the orphanage children were not listed separately from the Irish parochial students in the totals of the school census.

However, 45 children were listed living at the orphanage in the school census.

The figures for the Irish parochial school remain relatively constant throughout the period. Only twenty-one more students were recorded in 1883 than in 1879. It is interesting to note that both the public and Irish school totals dropped in 1882 when the French school total rose. The trend reversed in the following academic year, 1883 when the Truant Officer reported Fr. Dufresne no longer accepted children under seven years old.<sup>12</sup> It seems likely that the trends are interrelated.

Since 1881 the Truant Officer included a breakdown of students according to the nationalities of their fathers in the annual report.

**TABLE 3.3 TABLE OF NATIONALITIES**

| YEAR ENDING        | 1881 |       | 1882  |       | Gain |      |
|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
|                    | N    | %     | N     | %     | N    | %    |
| American parentage | 652  | 14.1  | 687   | 13.7  | 35   | 5.1  |
| Irish              | 1928 | 41.6  | 2063  | 41.1  | 135  | 6.5  |
| French-Canadian    | 1495 | 32.2  | 1597  | 31.8  | 102  | 6.4  |
| Other              | 565  | 12.2  | 671   | 14.4  | 106  | 15.8 |
| Total              | 4640 | 100.0 | 3017* | 100.0 | 378  | 7.5  |

Source: Annual Report of the Holyoke School Committee, 1883.

\* error in addition. The correct column total is 5018.

The three major nationalities experienced approximately the same percentage of enrollment increase. The Irish had more children in school than any other ethnic group. The comparison between Tables 3.2 and 3.3 reveals that while the number of Irish children increased in 1882, enrollment in the Irish school dropped. The French school enrollment increased by 401 students, or by 60 percent in the same year. French-Canadian students must have transferred from the other school systems to the French school. This would account for the drop in the number of students in the public and Irish schools.

The table on age distribution of students per school reveals that a strict correlation between the age of a child and his grade level cannot be made.

TABLE 3.4 AGE DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO SCHOOL<sup>13</sup>

| AGE             | 5-6  | 7-9  | 10-12 | 13-14 | 15   | TOTAL |     |
|-----------------|------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-----|
|                 |      |      |       |       |      | %     | N   |
| French          | 18.7 | 28.1 | 43.8  | 9.4   | 0.0  | 100.0 | 32  |
| Parochial       | 10.0 | 34.8 | 39.1  | 13.4  | 2.9  | 100.0 | 210 |
| Appleton        | 5.0  | 30.0 | 34.2  | 26.7  | 4.2  | 100.0 | 120 |
| Park            | 2.2  | 14.5 | 51.1  | 28.9  | 3.3  | 100.0 | 90  |
| Sargeant        | 23.1 | 58.5 | 15.4  | 3.1   | 0.0  | 100.0 | 65  |
| Chestnut        | 4.1  | 51.0 | 22.5  | 18.4  | 4.1  | 100.0 | 49  |
| Lyman           | 4.4  | 56.5 | 34.7  | 4.4   | 0.0  | 100.0 | 46  |
| Other public    | 8.0  | 36.0 | 32.0  | 14.0  | 10.0 | 100.0 | 50  |
| Mt. St. Vincent | 0.0  | 0.0  | 100.0 | 0.0   | 0.0  | 100.0 | 2   |

Source: Holyoke School Census, 1880-1881, Sample.

In Sargeant and Lyman St. schools which contained only the primary grades, the students' ages ranged from five to thirteen. Large numbers of immigrant children of different educational backgrounds entered the school system yearly. The pupils were placed in the grade which would accommodate the child's previous education. Immigrant children who spoke a foreign language such as the French-

Canadians and Germans posed a particular problem in placement. The public schools were all conducted in English which made learning for foreign language students more difficult.

During the large influx of French-Canadians which began in 1879, the Superintendent reported a problem in the primary schools. Students of many nationalities, of different ages, speaking various languages were placed in same class. Teaching and learning was difficult in such a situation.

Hundreds of these pupils, knowing not a word of English, enter our schools at the lowest grade. Some can read their mother tongue and know something of numbers, while others know nothing. While some have passed their thirteenth birthday, others require other evidence than their appearance and intelligence to convince the teachers that they have passed their fifth. Differing widely in age, in degree of maturity, in home influences, in ante-school attainments, and of course in quality of character to be wrought into worthy manhood and womanhood, agreeing in but one thing, -ignorance of the language, -placed forty or fifty in a room at the beginning of a term, to be increased to sixty, seventy, or eighty within a few weeks, under one teacher, perhaps, the last appointed and least experienced....<sup>14</sup>

The overcrowded situation and the multi-national character of students made the quality of education doubtful in the primary grades during this period. For French-Canadians attending public school, instruction was given in English and although some teachers spoke French, no French-Canadian educators were hired until later.<sup>15</sup>

The school census sample shows that approximately the same number of boys, 333, as girls, 331 attended school although the age distribution varied. There was no significant difference between boys and girls five through ten years old. Between the ages of eleven and twelve, 22 more girls attended school than boys. This trend reversed in the thirteen to fifteen age bracket with 24 more boys enrolled in school.

TABLE 3.5. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS BY SEX

|    | MALE |      | FEMALE |      | TOTAL |     |
|----|------|------|--------|------|-------|-----|
|    | N    | %    | N      | %    | N     | %   |
| 5  | 7    | 53.8 | 6      | 46.2 | 13    | 100 |
| 6  | 22   | 48.9 | 23     | 51.1 | 45    | 100 |
| 7  | 37   | 49.3 | 38     | 50.7 | 75    | 100 |
| 8  | 43   | 47.8 | 47     | 52.2 | 90    | 100 |
| 9  | 37   | 50.7 | 36     | 49.3 | 73    | 100 |
| 10 | 43   | 52.4 | 39     | 47.6 | 82    | 100 |
| 11 | 31   | 40.8 | 45     | 59.2 | 76    | 100 |
| 12 | 36   | 45.0 | 44     | 55.0 | 80    | 100 |
| 13 | 40   | 59.7 | 27     | 40.3 | 67    | 100 |
| 14 | 25   | 59.5 | 17     | 40.5 | 42    | 100 |
| 15 | 12   | 57.1 | 9      | 42.9 | 21    | 100 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample.  
 U. S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Education was apparently valued more for the older boys than for the girls. Although it is difficult to interpret the data from the lack of correlation between age and grade level, the data reveals boys remained in school longer than girls.

When the data on the age and sex distribution of students is broken down further according to the birthplace of family head, differences between the ethnic groups appear.

TABLE 3.6. ORIGIN OF STUDENTS ACCORDING TO AGE AND SEX

|               | AMERICAN |      | F-C |      | IRISH |      | OTHER |      | TOTAL |     |
|---------------|----------|------|-----|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-----|
|               | N        | %    | N   | %    | N     | %    | N     | %    | N     | %   |
| <b>MALE</b>   |          |      |     |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 5-6           | 8        | 27.6 | 6   | 20.7 | 12    | 41.4 | 3     | 10.3 | 29    | 100 |
| 7-9           | 22       | 18.8 | 27  | 23.1 | 50    | 42.7 | 18    | 15.4 | 117   | 100 |
| 10-12         | 31       | 28.2 | 19  | 17.3 | 48    | 43.6 | 12    | 10.9 | 110   | 100 |
| 13-14         | 11       | 16.9 | 11  | 16.9 | 37    | 56.9 | 6     | 9.2  | 65    | 100 |
| 15            | 5        | 41.7 | 0   | 0.0  | 5     | 41.7 | 2     | 16.7 | 12    | 100 |
| Total         | 77       | 23.1 | 63  | 18.9 | 152   | 45.7 | 41    | 12.3 | 333   | 100 |
| <b>FEMALE</b> |          |      |     |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 5-6           | 0        | 0.0  | 11  | 37.9 | 11    | 37.9 | 7     | 24.1 | 29    | 100 |
| 7-9           | 24       | 19.8 | 36  | 29.8 | 49    | 40.5 | 12    | 9.9  | 121   | 100 |
| 10-12         | 28       | 21.9 | 23  | 18.0 | 68    | 53.1 | 9     | 7.0  | 128   | 100 |
| 13-14         | 16       | 36.4 | 2   | 4.6  | 22    | 50.0 | 4     | 9.1  | 44    | 100 |
| 15            | 1        | 11.1 | 3   | 33.3 | 5     | 55.6 | 0     | 0.0  | 9     | 100 |
| Total         | 69       | 20.8 | 75  | 22.7 | 155   | 46.8 | 32    | 9.7  | 331   | 100 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample;  
 U. S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Compared to their proportion among students of all ages, 18.9 percent, French-Canadian boys and girls over the age of ten, except for three fifteen-year-old girls, are underrepresented. Irish boys are most overrepresented in the thirteen to fourteen age group, and Irish girls in all age groups ten and above. American girls were the latest of the ethnic groups to begin school; not one is listed until the age of seven, the mandatory age for schooling. Over the age of ten, approximately the same number of French-Canadian boys, 30, as girls, 28, were still in school, although at the age of fifteen no French-Canadian boys remained in school.

There were other factors besides the level of schooling and the age of their children which may have influenced parents in choosing an educational institution for their children. Overcrowding in the public schools had been a constant concern for Holyoke authorities. The data on enrollment figures in Table 3.2 shows the rapid growth of school-age children in the city in the early 1880's. When St. Jerome's School opened, it alleviated the situation in the public schools. The public school on Chestnut Street, which was only a block away from the Irish parochial school virtually emptied at the other's opening. It was not until 1880 that the last classroom was refilled. Since the mid 1870's, the Superintendent had been cautioning and advising the opening of supplementary classrooms in the near future because of the yearly population increase in the city.<sup>16</sup>

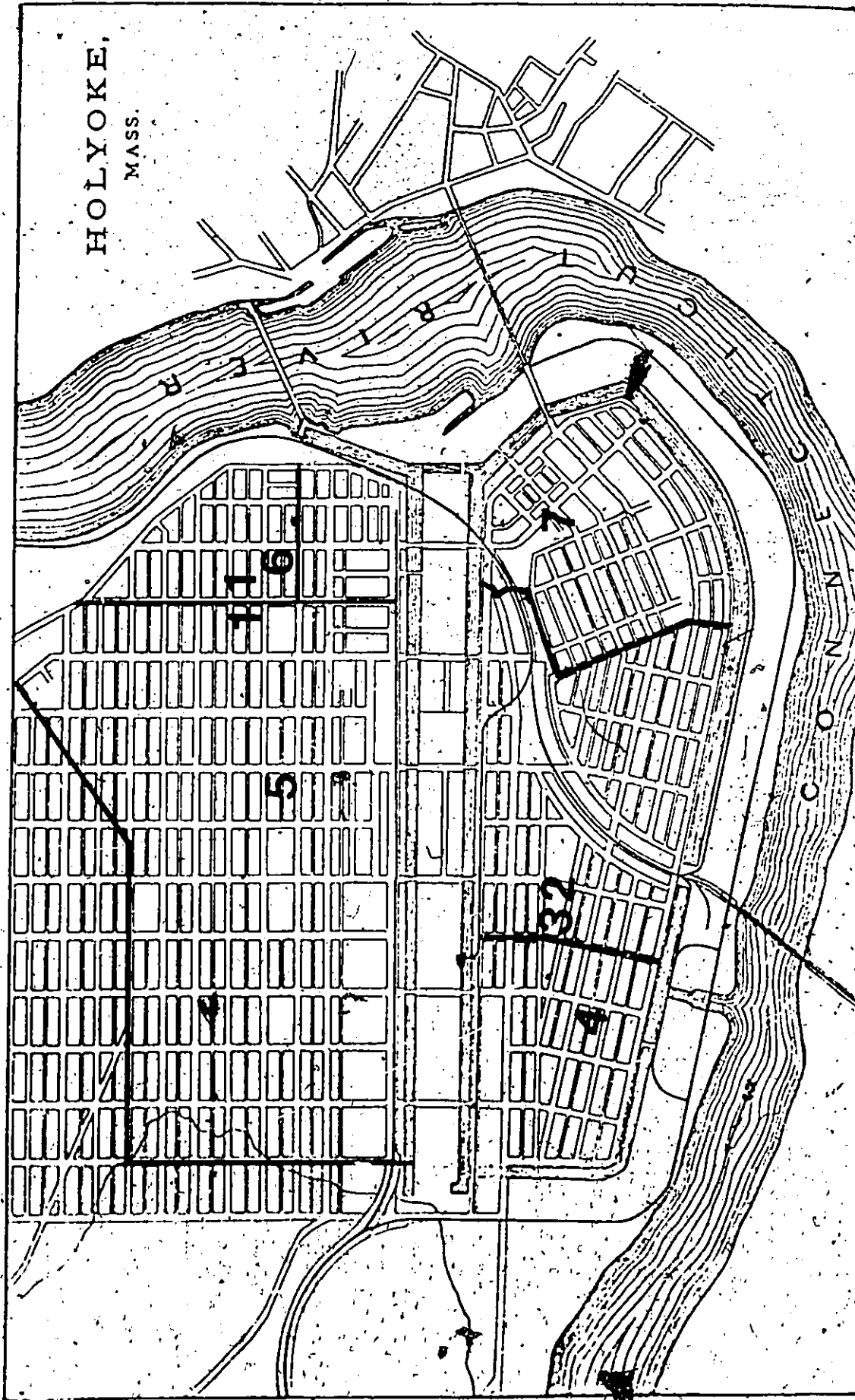
The schools listed in the tables were located in six of the seven wards of the city. The French school was in ward two, sharing the same block with the public Park St. school. The Irish parochial school was located on the border of wards five and six. The Chestnut St. school was situated just opposite St. Jerome's Institute in ward

five. Lyman St. School was located in ward one, Appleton in ward six and Sargeant in ward three. Map 3.1 on page seventy-one reveals the locations of the respective schools.

From Table 1.9 in Chapter 1 on the concentration of ethnic groups, ward two, where the French and the Park St. schools were located, was 42 percent French-Canadian and 33 percent Irish. St. Jerome's Institute bordered ward five, which was 86 percent Irish, and ward six. The Chestnut St. school was located in ward five, and bordering of ward four, which was 62 percent French-Canadian and 26 percent Irish. The Appleton St. school was in an area in which the American-born were the majority. Ward one, home of the Lyman St. school, was split primarily between the Irish and the French-Canadians. Ward three also found a mixture of the ethnic groups. The relationship between the location of the schools and the ethnic make-up of the wards will be examined later.

The 1876 Massachusetts laws gave the local school committees the authority to issue work certificates only if the schools met all the educational requirements. At this time, Fr. Dufresne was embroiled in the debate with the School Committee over the accreditation of the French school. According to Holyoke authorities, the French school had an inadequate teaching staff for the number of students enrolled. Of the two instructors, only one spoke English. Teaching was done primarily in the French language. The School Committee did not recognize Precious Blood School until 1882 after the Order of the Grey Nuns from St. Hyacinthe had assumed the teaching responsibilities. At a special meeting called February 13th, the School Committee officially recognized Fr. Dufresne's school. The Superintendent was informed to issue work certificates to Precious Blood students.<sup>17</sup>

MAP 3.1 LOCATION OF HOLYOKE SCHOOLS, 1880.



Source: Atlas of Holyoke City, Massachusetts

(Boston: George H. Walker & Co., 1884).

Map: George F. Waring, Jr. Report on the Social

Statistics of Cities, p. 227

Legend of schools:

- 1 Irish parochial
- 2 French parochial
- 3 Park Street
- 4 Sargeant-Street

- 5 Appleton Street
- 6 Chestnut Street
- 7 Lyman Street

In July of the same year, the Holyoke Transcript reported Fr. Dufresne had informed the school authorities of his attendance rule.<sup>18</sup>

Nonaccreditation of the only French parochial school in the city posed problems for the French-Canadian families. Since the Holyoke School Committee refused to approve the school, it did not issue work certificates to the French students. In any case, according to parish history, Fr. Dufresne required the students to attend the full school session thereby forfeiting the chance to work the last term.<sup>19</sup> Thus, neither the School Committee nor Fr. Dufresne permitted students in the French school to work in the mills, although it is not known whether either authority strictly enforced their position in this matter.

There is no indication in the parish or city sources that either the students attending the public or parochial schools had any tuition fees to pay other than a small amount for supplies such as pencils and paper. City taxes supported the public educational system and the parochial schools were financed by the parish through the financial contributions of the parishioners. In 1979, the Springfield Diocese became the last Catholic diocese in the United States to begin charging tuition to the students enrolled in parochial schools.<sup>20</sup>

Whatever the quality of public education may have been, the overall impression in the city was that parochial education, French or Irish, was of a lesser quality than in the public system. Fr. Harkins of St. Jerome's found many of his parishioners sent their children to public school. The argument between Fr. Dufresne of Precious Blood and the School Committee concerning the accreditation of the school was going on at this time. Besides dividing children in schools along religious lines, the French school was also taught in a

foreign language. For these children, local citizens saw to their dismay that "no direct means of Americanization existed."<sup>21</sup> Within the French-Canadian community, parents envisioned different goals for their children. Some, like Dr. Mitivier, sent their children to public schools so they might be exposed to the American culture and language as a first step in acculturation. Others who wanted to delay their children's introduction to the American culture sent their students to the French parochial school which placed emphasis on religion and the French language. Families who enrolled some of their children in the French school and others in the Irish parochial or the public institutions would do so for a variety of reasons, including economic, acculturation or residence factors. For the parents, the choice of school was not simple; it encompassed many considerations.

The type of school parents chose for their children, public or parochial, if the latter, then French or Irish, depended on how the three educational systems met the criteria of the parents. The selection was made not only by what the schools had to offer but also by other factors such as the location of the schools, compulsory attendance and child labor laws. Parents also had to consider problems which the schools faced. The French school of course was in the midst of the accreditation dispute with the Holyoke School Committee. The students of the French school in a rule made by Fr. Dufresne were required to attend the full academic year forfeiting the chance to work the final weeks. All the schools were experiencing overcrowded classrooms, a condition which heightened with the 1879 influx of French-Canadians into the city. An insufficient number of teachers, few of whom spoke French in the public schools, reduced the

quality of education for all the students. In the educational options available to their children, parents had to take into account what each school system had to offer, any conditions attached to the enrollment of students and any problems with the institutions before making their selection.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

<sup>1</sup> Forest Chester Ensign, Compulsory School Attendance and Child Labor (New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1969), pp. 54-66; Holyoke Transcript, September 5, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> Ensign, pp. 61-62.

<sup>3</sup> Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report (1881), pp. 36, 81-85.

<sup>4</sup> Haebler, pp. 133-34.

<sup>5</sup> Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report (1881), p. 31.

<sup>6</sup> Haebler, pp. 132-134; Green, pp. 101-102, 200; Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report, (1878-1881).

<sup>7</sup> Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report (1880), p. 23.; (1881), p. 85.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., (1881), p. 85.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., (1880), p. 35.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Haebler, p. 128.

<sup>12</sup> Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report (1883), p. 22. However, no mention of this rule is found in the Extraits des chroniques des Soeurs de la Charité.

<sup>13</sup> The age groupings in the distribution tables are divided according to child labor and education laws. Compulsory education encompassed children between the ages of seven and fourteen. Children were able to work part time upon reaching the age of ten. Since the School Census included the fifteen year olds in the city, a separate category is provided for this age bracket although school attendance was not mandatory.

<sup>14</sup> Holyoke School Committee, (1879), p. 41.

<sup>15</sup> Haebler, p. 136.

<sup>16</sup> Holyoke School Committee, (1879-1883); (1880), pp. 28-34; (1881), p. 42.

<sup>17</sup> Holyoke School Committee, Minutes of the Meetings, February 6 and 13, 1882.

<sup>18</sup> Holyoke Transcript, July 12, 1882.

<sup>19</sup>Paroisse du Précieux-Sang, 75e Anniversaire, p. 17.

<sup>20</sup>Interview with Viau.

<sup>21</sup>Green, pp. 301-303.

## CHAPTER IV

### CHOICES OF FRENCH-CANADIAN FAMILIES

French-Canadian parents in Holyoke had to choose first between enrolling their children in school, entering them into the labor force or keeping them at home. In the Twelfth Annual Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of Labor, the French-Canadians specifically were charged with sending their children to work at the earliest possible age. These allegations will be studied in the case of French-Canadian families and their decisions concerning the options for their children. Secondly, families who sent some or all of their children to school had to decide which institution they would frequent: the public, French parochial or Irish parochial school.

As indicated in proceeding chapters, several factors may have influenced these decisions made by French-Canadian parents. First, the availability of school rooms and the location of schools with respect to the children's residences will be examined. Secondly, demographic factors - the age of the child and the number of children in the family - will be considered; and thirdly, the socio-economic standing of the family. Fourthly, the possible effects of acculturation measured in terms of the length of time the French-Canadian families had been residing in the United States will be related to the choices made concerning the children. Investigating these factors will present a clearer understanding of the role of survivance in the French-Canadian educational choices. Through the educational choices of the French-Canadian parents, this chapter will examine in particular Frances Early's argument that French-Canadian immigrant families used their culture to have some control of their lives,

especially in the area of family economy. Also, Peter Haebler's hypothesis that the traditional French-Canadian values quickly altered during the formation of the ethnic community will be tested in the area of education against Leon-F. Bouvier's findings that the long-term affect of survivance was to slow the French-Canadian upward movement into American society.

Beginning with the basic choice between school, work and home, over one-quarter of the French-Canadian children in the school census sample were employed by the end of the 1880-81 academic year.

TABLE 4.1 PROPORTION OF FRENCH-CANADIAN CHILDREN 5-15 AT HOME, AT WORK AND AT SCHOOL

|        | N   | %     |
|--------|-----|-------|
| Home   | 2   | 1.0   |
| Work   | 50  | 26.3  |
| School | 138 | 72.6  |
| Total  | 190 | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Missing cases: 19. Information concerning school or employment not available.

Seventy-three percent of the children were enrolled in school. Only two children were kept at home. Since the latter were so few, the analysis will be henceforth limited to the choice between school and work.

Of the 73 percent of French-Canadian children five to fifteen who attended school, 23 percent were enrolled in the French school, a higher percentage than for any other individual school. The French school, the Chestnut St., the Irish parochial and Park St. schools each included primary and grammar grades which may account in part for the larger percentages attending these schools.

**TABLE 4.2 SCHOOL ATTENDED BY CHILDREN OF FRENCH-CANADIAN ORIGIN**

|           | N   | %     |
|-----------|-----|-------|
| French    | 31  | 22.5  |
| Parochial | 22  | 15.9  |
| Park      | 21  | 15.2  |
| Appleton  | 9   | 6.5   |
| Sargeant  | 17  | 12.3  |
| Lyman     | 12  | 8.7   |
| Chestnut  | 26  | 18.8  |
| Total     | 138 | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U. S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Sixty-two percent of French-Canadian students were enrolled in the public institutions and 38 percent attended the parochial schools. Thus, more French-Canadian students attended the public schools than the total number enrolled at the two parochial schools together. Of those who chose a Catholic education in the sample, thirty-one frequented the French school. Twenty-two attended the Irish parochial school and, at first glance, this seems to be an impressive number, but given the high percentage of French-Canadians in the same ward as the school and the available accommodations for students in the classrooms, this number is not surprising.

An analysis of educational choices on the family level in addition to the individual level is also very informative.

**TABLE 4.3 PROPORTION OF FRENCH-CANADIAN FAMILIES WITH ALL CHILDREN 5-15 AT SCHOOL, SOME AT SCHOOL AND AT WORK AND ALL AT WORK**

|                              | N  | %     |
|------------------------------|----|-------|
| All children at school       | 48 | 55.8  |
| Children at school & at work | 34 | 39.5  |
| All children at work         | 4  | 4.7   |
| Total                        | 86 | 100.0 |

Source: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample. Missing cases: 2. Families with no children in school or at work.

In the decision to have children attend school or work, more than half of the French-Canadian families had all of their children, five to fifteen years old, attending school. Only 5 percent had all their offspring at work at the end of the school year. However, 40 percent of the families had children both at work and at school. Overall, 44 percent of French-Canadian families had at least one employed child under fifteen.

Some families with more than one child in school sent their children to different schools. Although only one-fifth of French-Canadian families sent all their children to the French school, approximately one-third had at least one child, five to fifteen years old, attending this French school.

TABLE 4.4 PROPORTION OF FRENCH-CANADIAN FAMILIES WITH ALL, SOME AND NO CHILDREN 5-15 IN THE FRENCH SCHOOL

|                    | N  | %     |
|--------------------|----|-------|
| All children       | 17 | 20.7  |
| At least one child | 8  | 9.8   |
| No children        | 57 | 69.5  |
| Total              | 82 | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Seventy percent of the families chose either the public or the Irish parochial schools. Considering the limited number of places in the French-Canadian parochial institution in the 1880-81 academic year, a significant percentage of this ethnic group were represented by one or more of their children in the parish school.

A first consideration in the choice of school is the proximity of the school to the residence of the family. An analysis of the wards in which the French-Canadians lived and those of the schools which

their children attended suggests the importance of the distance factor in choice of school. The breakdown of French-Canadian households per ward revealed that half of the French-Canadians resided in the smallest ward, ward four (see Table 1.9 and Map 1.1 in Chapter I). Wards one and two also had a high proportion of the French-Canadian households. They inhabited either the area known as "Canada Hill" (ward one) or the "Flats" (wards one and two).

How common was it for French-Canadian students to attend a school close to their home? The majority of students, 58 percent, attended schools in the the same wards where they lived; however, there were notable variations from school to school. Where proximity seems to have been an important factor, the schools were located in the wards in which French-Canadian households were more numerous.

TABLE 4.5 PROPORTION OF FRENCH-CANADIAN STUDENTS RESIDING INSIDE AND OUTSIDE WARD OF SCHOOL ATTENDED

| School (Ward)   | Inside |       | Outside |      | Total |       |
|-----------------|--------|-------|---------|------|-------|-------|
|                 | N      | %     | N       | %    | N     | %     |
| French (2)      | 10     | 32.3  | 21      | 67.8 | 31    | 100.0 |
| Parochial (4-6) | 20     | 90.9  | 2       | 9.1  | 22    | 100.0 |
| Park (2)        | 15     | 71.4  | 6       | 28.6 | 21    | 100.0 |
| Sargeant (3)    | 4      | 23.5  | 13      | 76.5 | 17    | 100.0 |
| Lyman (1)       | 8      | 66.7  | 4       | 33.3 | 12    | 100.0 |
| Appleton (6)    | 1      | 11.1  | 8       | 88.9 | 9     | 100.0 |
| Chestnut (4-5)  | 26     | 100.0 | 0       | 0.0  | 26    | 100.0 |
| Total           | 80     | 58.0  | 58      | 42.0 | 138   | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Note: As there is no school in ward four; the figures for this ward are included with the nearest schools, Parochial and Chestnut St.

The French, Sargeant St. and Appleton St. schools had the highest percentage of students from outside wards. One reason these three facilities may have a higher percentage of students from other areas is that each included primary to grammar level classes. For

instance, all students from ward one were forced to travel outside of their neighborhood to receive any instruction higher than primary. (See Table 3.1 in Chapter III describing the individual schools and their classroom levels.)

Another factor accounting for the relatively high proportion of French-Canadian students traveling outside their ward to attend some of the public schools was the policy of the Holyoke School Committee to transfer pupils from one school to another, when a school became overcrowded, in order to make room in the classrooms to alleviate the situation. In cases where there were not enough students to warrant a teacher, that classroom was closed and the children dispersed to other rooms or schools. Thus, there was not much of a choice for families between the public schools their children attended. It largely depended upon the enrollment and attendance figures of each school and upon the accommodations of each building. In 1881, such actions were needed to alleviate classroom conditions in several schools.

The obvious means of relief for the overcrowded buildings was to be found in a readjustment of boundaries of the schoolhouse districts, which was undertaken by a special committee, consisting of the chairmen of the three district committees. They withdrew from Appleton-street building all pupils south of Sargeant-street, sending the primary grade to Sargeant-street and the grammar pupils to Park. They then withdrew from Park and Sargeant all pupils below the fifth grade, residing above Spring-street, and sent them to the new Dwight-street building to which transfer they added the fourth grade pupils from the Lyman-street house.

The French and the Irish parochial schools did not take part in the transferral of students from school building to building to accommodate the overflow of students; rather, they were independent schools which offered courses of instruction through the grammar level. Parents deliberately chose to have their children attend these

institutions. According to Table 4.6, on page eighty-four in contrast to the Irish parochial school which drew 90 percent of its French-Canadian students from wards four, five and six, only 42 percent of the students attending the French school came from the two wards surrounding the building.

Maps 4.1 through 4.6 beginning on page eighty-five which pinpoint the addresses of students attending Holyoke Schools, provide an additional perspective on the distance factor. The French-Canadian school drew students from all parts of the city except wards five and six which had few French-Canadians living within their boundaries. The majority of students lived in ward two, the area bordering the school and in ward four, the uptown area in which the Irish school was situated. These students from ward four went out of their way to attend Precious Blood School located several blocks away. They could have easily attended the Irish or nearer public schools, but these French-Canadians purposely chose the French school. For these French-Canadian families, surviance took precedence over proximity in the choice of school.

When French-Canadians in ward four did not select the French school for their children, more chose the public than the Irish parochial school. The Chestnut St. public school had a larger percentage of French-Canadian students from ward four than the nearby Irish parochial school. In this ward shared by the French and the Irish, ethnic tension may have influenced French-Canadian parents to foresake religious instruction in the Irish institution for a public education. For these families, surviance was not a primary consideration in the choice of school for their children.

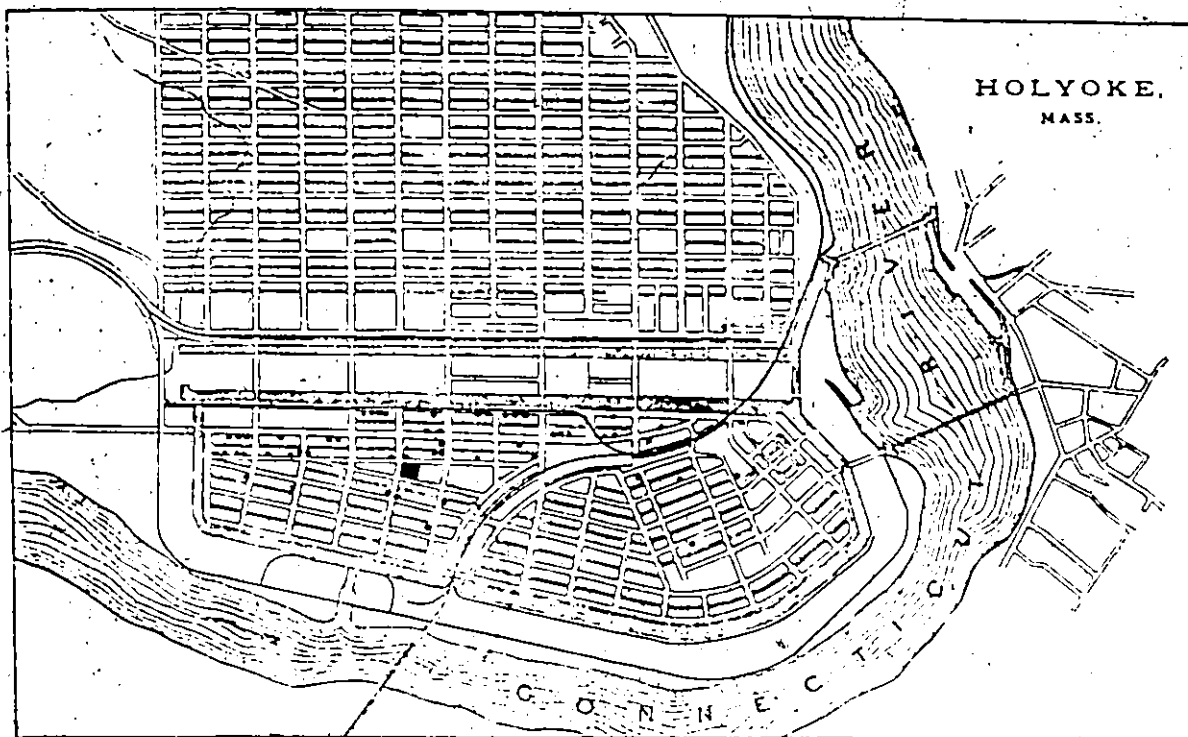
TABLE 4.6. WARD OF FRENCH-CANADIAN STUDENTS BY SCHOOL

| WARD      | 1 |      | 2  |      | 3 |      | 4  |      | 5 |     | 6 |      | 7 |      | TOTAL |     |
|-----------|---|------|----|------|---|------|----|------|---|-----|---|------|---|------|-------|-----|
|           | N | %    | N  | %    | N | %    | N  | %    | N | %   | N | %    | N | %    | N     | %   |
| Parochial | 2 | 9.1  | 0  | 0.0  | 0 | 0.0  | 16 | 72.7 | 2 | 9.1 | 2 | 9.1  | 0 | 0.0  | 22    | 100 |
| French    | 6 | 19.3 | 10 | 32.3 | 3 | 9.7  | 10 | 32.3 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0  | 2 | 6.4  | 31    | 100 |
| Park      | 5 | 23.8 | 15 | 71.4 | 1 | 4.8  | 0  | 0.0  | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0  | 0 | 0.0  | 21    | 100 |
| Sarreant  | 6 | 35.3 | 5  | 29.4 | 4 | 23.5 | 0  | 0.0  | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0  | 2 | 11.8 | 17    | 100 |
| Lyman     | 8 | 66.7 | 0  | 0.0  | 0 | 0.0  | 4  | 33.3 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0  | 0 | 0.0  | 12    | 100 |
| Appleton  | 0 | 0.0  | 0  | 0.0  | 0 | 0.0  | 8  | 88.9 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 11.1 | 0 | 0.0  | 9     | 100 |
| Chestnut  | 0 | 0.0  | 0  | 0.0  | 0 | 0.0  | 24 | 92.3 | 2 | 7.7 | 0 | 0.0  | 0 | 0.0  | 26    | 100 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census; Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

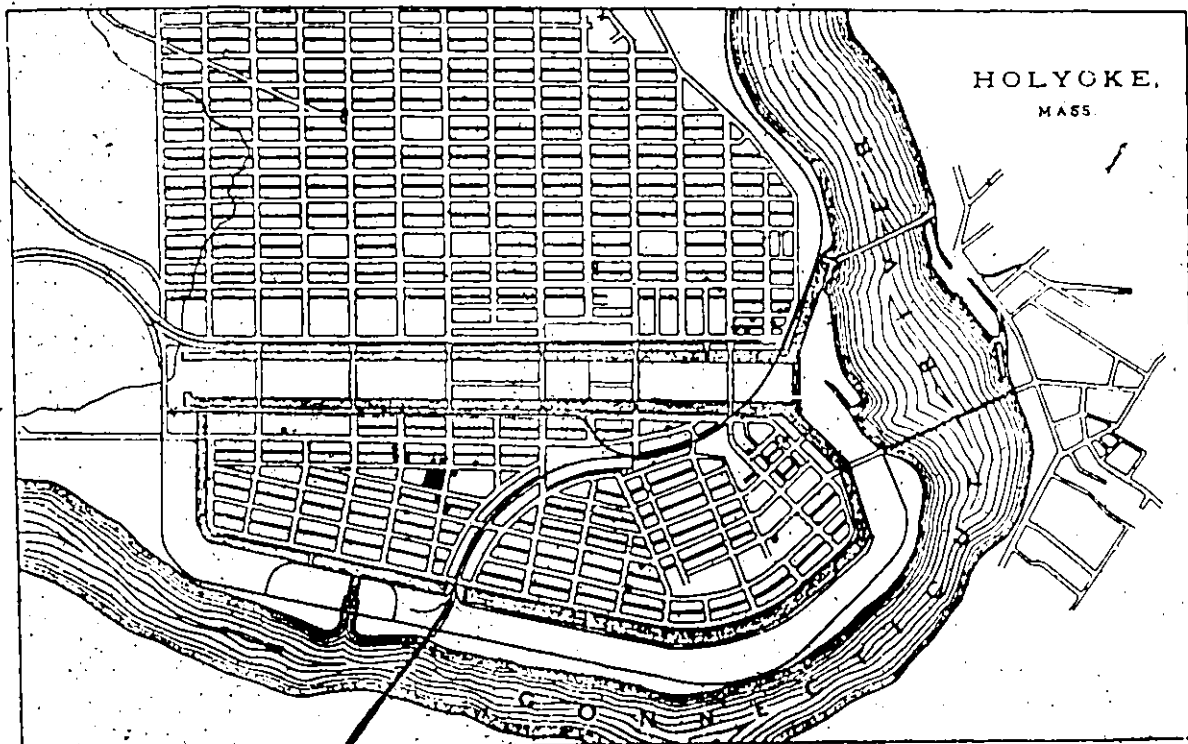
Note: No other French-Canadian children are listed in the remaining public schools or the orphanage run by the Sisters.

MAP 4.1 RESIDENCE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING THE PARK STREET SCHOOL



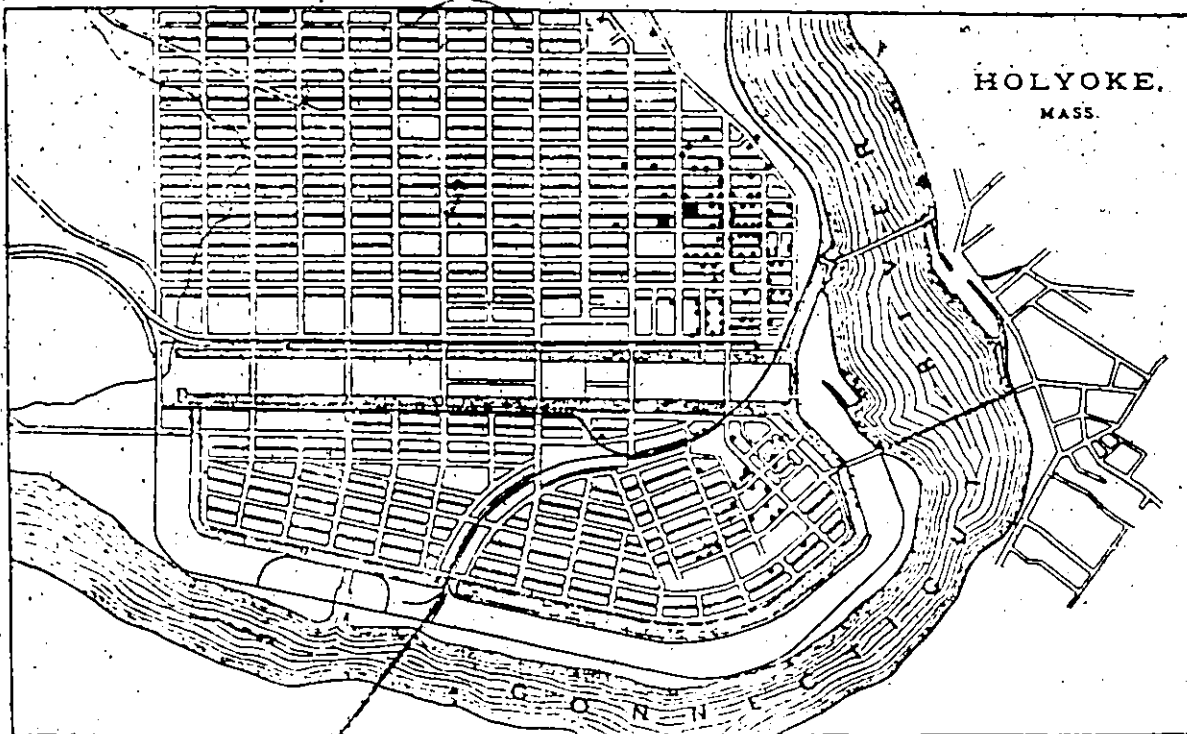
Total families: 65. Family residences shown: 56. Missing: 9, identifiable addresses not available.

MAP 4.2 RESIDENCE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FRENCH PAROCHIAL SCHOOL.



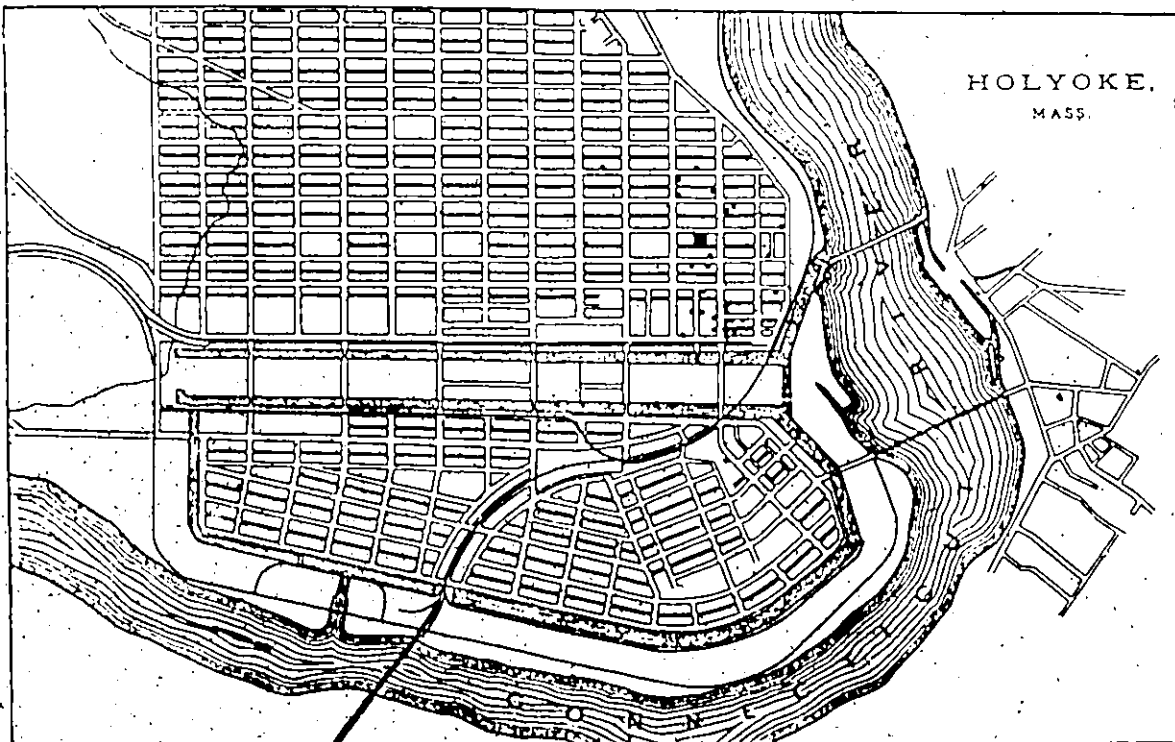
Total families: 26. Family residences shown: 24. One family resides in ward seven in an area not covered by the map. Missing: 1.

MAP 4.3 RESIDENCE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING IRISH PAROCHIAL SCHOOL



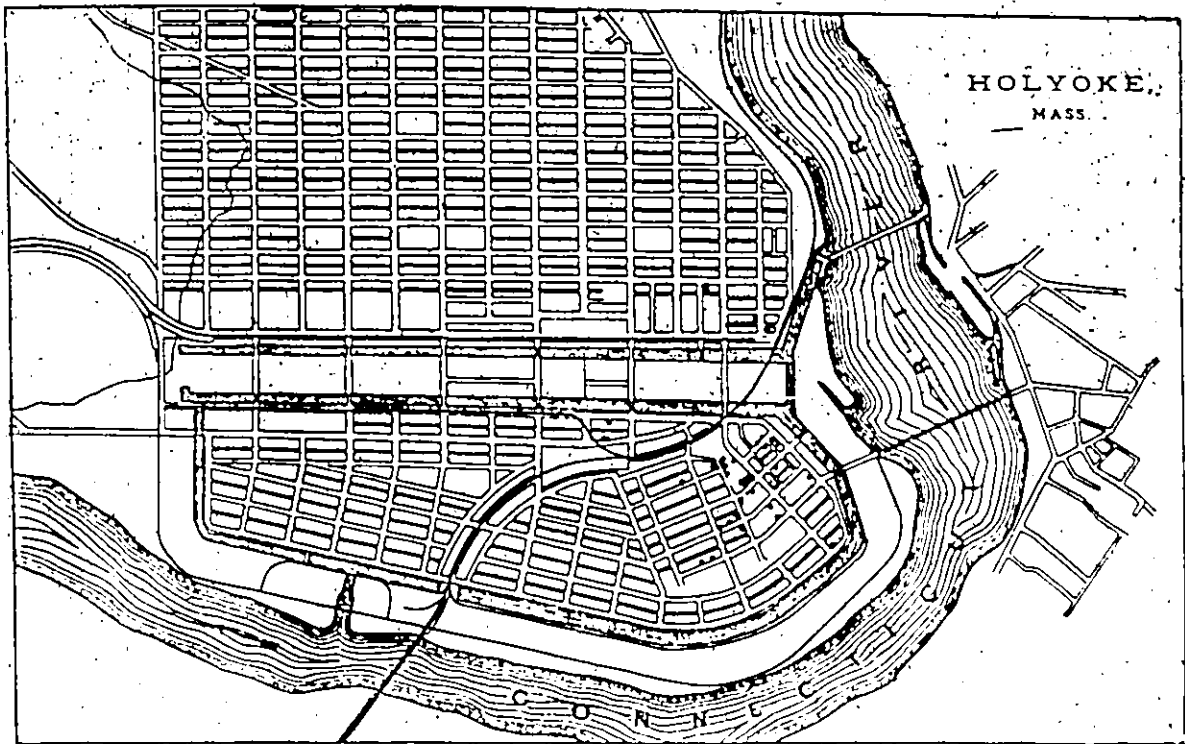
Total families: 114. Missing: 6. Located in ward seven: 2.

MAP 4.4 RESIDENCE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING CHESTNUT STREET SCHOOL



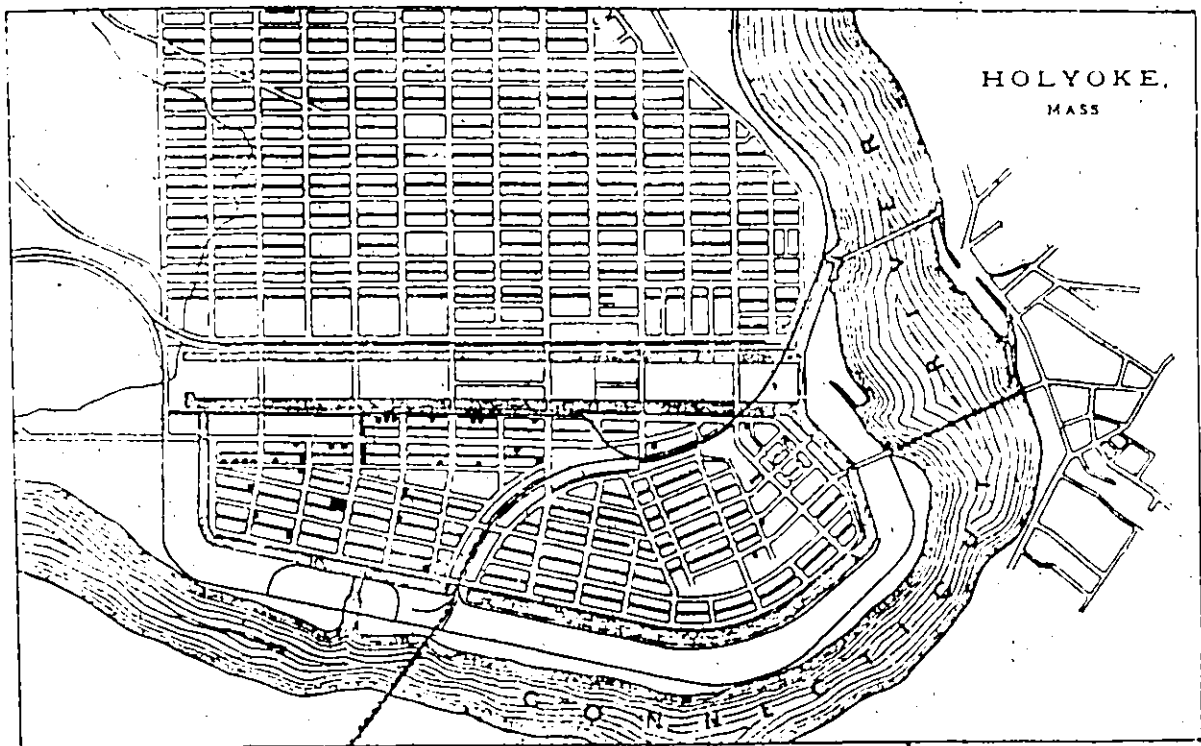
Total families: 35. Missing: 3.

MAP 4.5 RESIDENCE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING LYMAN STREET SCHOOL



Total families: 34. Missing: 4.

MAP 4.6 RESIDENCE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING SARGEANT STREET SCHOOL.



Total families: 48. Missing: 11. Located in ward seven: 1.

The French and the public Park St. schools were situated on the same block in ward two. Approximately the same number of French-Canadian children from wards two and three attended the public school as the French school. Thus survivance was apparently not the major consideration for these French-Canadian families either. Where distance was not a factor, in educational choice, the parents of many pupils purposely selected the public school over the French institution. Perhaps these families did not support the pastor of Precious-Blood, Father Dufresne. Perhaps they wanted their children exposed to other cultures, or, there may have been economic reasons such as the opportunity to work part of the academic year. An investigation of the demographic characteristics of the French-Canadian families may bring out other factors which influenced the educational choices.

If proximity of the school is the most obvious factor potentially affecting the choice of schools, the most obvious factor affecting choice of school or work was the age of the child.

TABLE 4.7 PROPORTION OF FRENCH-CANADIAN CHILDREN AT WORK AND AT SCHOOL BY AGE GROUP

|       | At Work<br>% | At School<br>% | N   |
|-------|--------------|----------------|-----|
| 5-9   | 0.0          | 100.0          | 80  |
| 10-12 | 17.7         | 82.4           | 51  |
| 13-14 | 64.9         | 35.1           | 37  |
| 15    | 85.0         | 15.0           | 20  |
| Total | 26.6         | 73.4           | 188 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Over half of the French-Canadian children in the sample were the legal age to work, ten and above. Of the 108 children, ten and over, who

were eligible to work, almost half did so. A majority of the children thirteen and older were employed; 85 percent of the fifteen-year-old children, the age when schooling was optional, worked. The percentage of French-Canadian children working rather than going to school increased sharply with the age of the child.

The age of French-Canadian children also appears to be related to choice of school. Among French-Canadian children enrolled in school, half of the students of the French school were ten and over; in the other school systems over half of the students were below the age of ten.

TABLE 4.8 CHOICE OF SCHOOL BY AGE OF FRENCH-CANADIAN STUDENTS

| School | Parochial |       | French |       | Public |       | Total |       |
|--------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
|        | N         | %     | N      | %     | N      | %     | N     | %     |
| 5-6    | 5         | 22.7  | 6      | 19.4  | 6      | 7.1   | 17    | 12.3  |
| 7-9    | 11        | 50.0  | 9      | 29.0  | 43     | 50.6  | 63    | 45.7  |
| 10-12  | 5         | 22.7  | 14     | 45.2  | 23     | 27.1  | 42    | 30.4  |
| 13-14  | 1         | 4.6   | 2      | 6.5   | 10     | 11.8  | 13    | 9.4   |
| 15     | 0         | 0.0   | 0      | 0.0   | 3      | 3.5   | 3     | 2.2   |
| Total  | 22        | 100.0 | 31     | 100.0 | 85     | 100.0 | 138   | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Children above the age of ten could legally work, it will be recalled, unless they were enrolled in the French school whose students were required to attend the full academic year. In the French school, 53 percent of the students were ten and older compared to only 27 percent in the Irish school and 42 percent of the French-Canadians in the public schools. The possibility of children in the Irish and public schools working part time could account for the lower percentages of French-Canadians ten to fifteen years old enrolled in those schools. It will be recalled that the Holyoke School Census was taken in the

third term, when eligible students could work.

For the French-Canadians of Holyoke, families with up to eight children were not uncommon.

TABLE 4.9 NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FRENCH-CANADIAN HOUSEHOLD

| Children/family | N  | %     |
|-----------------|----|-------|
| 1-3             | 24 | 27.3  |
| 4-6             | 37 | 42.1  |
| 7-9             | 24 | 27.3  |
| 10-12           | 3  | 3.4   |
| Total           | 88 | 100.0 |

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Census, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

In the educational choices sample, the number of children in French-Canadian households varied from 1 to 12. The mean number of children per French-Canadian family is 5.2, 455 children in 88 families.

French-Canadian families also had up to six children in the age range between five and fifteen.

TABLE 4.10 NUMBER OF CHILDREN 5 TO 15 PER FRENCH-CANADIAN HOUSEHOLD

| Children/family | N  | %     |
|-----------------|----|-------|
| 1               | 28 | 32.6  |
| 2               | 32 | 37.2  |
| 3               | 14 | 16.3  |
| 4               | 7  | 8.1   |
| 5               | 4  | 4.7   |
| 6               | 1  | 1.2   |
| Total           | 86 | 100.0 |

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Census, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

The number of children attending school per family ranged from 0 to 5. Half of the French-Canadian families with children in school had only one child enrolled as a student. One-third of the families

had two students; more than two in school per family was not common among the French-Canadians.

French-Canadian families had between 0 and 3 children, ten to fifteen years old, at work per family. The majority of families had no children at work. Two out of every five French-Canadian families had one or more children, ten to fifteen, at work.

Since children over the age of ten could work after completing twenty weeks of school, at the end of the required attendance, parents could send one or all of their eligible children to work. Half of the French-Canadian families had all their children in school, forty percent had children both in school and at work and few had all children at work.

TABLE 4.11 NUMBER OF CHILDREN 5 TO 15 AT SCHOOL, AT SCHOOL AND WORK AND ALL AT WORK BY THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY

|       | All at School |       | School & Work |       | All at Work |       |
|-------|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|-------------|-------|
|       | N             | %     | N             | %     | N           | %     |
| 1-3   | 18            | 37.5  | 2             | 5.9   | 1           | 25.0  |
| 4-6   | 22            | 45.8  | 12            | 35.3  | 3           | 75.0  |
| 7-9   | 6             | 12.5  | 19            | 55.9  | 0           | 0.0   |
| 10-12 | 2             | 4.2   | 1             | 2.9   | 0           | 0.0   |
| Total | 48            | 100.0 | 34            | 100.0 | 4           | 100.0 |

Source: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample. Missing cases: 2. These French-Canadian families had no children five to fifteen at work or at school.

The majority of French-Canadian families who had all of their children five to fifteen in school were smaller- or medium-sized with 1 to 3 or 4 to 6 children per family. Those with all their children at work were also in the same categories. Over half of the families who had children both at school and work were larger-sized families with 7 to 12 children. Smaller families were more likely to have all their children at school and larger families were more likely to have some

children in school while others worked.

Of the four families whose children, five to fifteen, were all employed, three had only one child listed in the school census. Of the 34 French-Canadian families with children at work and at school, 71 percent had one working child, 27 percent had two employed children and 3 percent had three. A significant proportion, 44 percent, of French-Canadian families had at least one child at work which reveals sending children to work was a common practice.

The number of children per family is not a strikingly significant factor in the enrollment of students in the French school.

TABLE 4.12 NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY BY CHOICE OF SCHOOL

|                 | All in French |      | French & Other |      | All in Other |      | Total |       |
|-----------------|---------------|------|----------------|------|--------------|------|-------|-------|
|                 | N             | %    | N              | %    | N            | %    | N     | %     |
| Children/family |               |      |                |      |              |      |       |       |
| 1-3             | 4             | 19.1 | 1              | 4.8  | 16           | 76.2 | 21    | 100.0 |
| 4-6             | 7             | 20.6 | 4              | 11.8 | 23           | 67.7 | 34    | 100.0 |
| 7-9             | 5             | 20.8 | 2              | 8.3  | 17           | 70.8 | 24    | 100.0 |
| 10-12           | 1             | 33.3 | 1              | 33.3 | 1            | 33.3 | 3     | 100.0 |
| Total           | 17            | 20.7 | 8              | 9.8  | 57           | 69.5 | 82    | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Twenty percent of families with 1-3, 4-6 and 7-9 children had all of their children at the French school.

Along with the effect of number of children per family, if the revisionist scholars are correct, the occupational rank of household members should have been a factor in the educational decisions of the French-Canadians.

Revisionist scholars studying the New England industrial centers in the second half of the nineteenth century have found the number of household members employed and their occupational levels made the

difference between living below the poverty level or even with it.

In 1870 Lowell, working children "were crucial to the French-Canadian family economy." The more children employed, the higher the

contribution to family income. If the household head had a skilled occupation, his income may have been adequate to meet the basic necessities for his family. However, these parents would send their children to work in order to make their family's lifestyle more comfortable and perhaps to be able to save some of the earnings.

Early summarized the situation in Lowell: "...some families managed to escape absolute want: the ability to achieve a decent living standard depended largely upon the size, composition, and age structure of the working-class family in conjunction with the earning power of the gainfully employed family members."<sup>2</sup> If the situation in Holyoke in 1880 was similar to that of Lowell, the choices for education and French parochial education would have been influenced by the economic position of the family.

An economic factor which entered into the decision-making process concerning the options for the children was the need for their participation in the family income. Family characteristics and the socio-economic situation can explain, in part, if the child's income was necessary for the economic survival of the family. If not, which option did the parents choose? More information can be obtained through the analysis of occupation of household head, the number of children per family, supplementary income from siblings, as well as each factor related to the choice of school.

Early's research on French-Canadians in Lowell, Massachusetts reveals that families in which workers held unskilled positions with children too young to work suffered from poverty. The same type of

family with a skilled worker as the household head could get by because of the higher wages.<sup>3</sup> In the educational choices sample, one third of the French-Canadian family heads in Holyoke had white-collar or skilled occupations and would earn higher wages than the 60 percent of unskilled heads. Would families with higher wage earners have less of a need to send their children to work than those with unskilled heads? If so, would higher income families send their children to school full-time, and to which institution?

In the educational choices sample, the findings on the occupational rank of household head by the choice of school or work for their children echo Early's observations. French-Canadian families in Holyoke with white-collar and skilled heads had a higher proportion, 63 percent, of all their children five to fifteen, attending school than the unskilled head with 52 percent. Families headed by unskilled workers were more likely to have some of their children at school and at work, 48 percent, than those with higher ranked occupations of whom 30 percent were in this category. Cases with all their children at work were too few to draw pertinent conclusions. This analysis of occupational rank of family head by choice of work or school indicates economic factors were a consideration in the choices for the education of the children.

In Massachusetts at this time, the French-Canadians were stereotyped as taking every opportunity to send their children to work, almost preferring work to education for their children. The 1881 Annual Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of Labor singled out the French-Canadians and dubbed them the "Chinese of the Eastern States" for the practice of falsifying the ages of their

children in order for the youngsters to obtain full-time employment.

French-Canadians will not send their children to school if they can help it, but endeavor to crowd them into the mills at the earliest possible age. To do this they deceive about the age of their children with brazen effrontery. They deceive also about their schooling, declaring that they have been to school the legal time, when they know they have not, and do not intend that they shall. And when at length they are cornered by the school officers, and there is no other escape, often they scabble together what few things they have, and move away to some other place where they are unknown, where they hope by a repetition of the same deceits to escape the schools entirely, and keep the children at work right on in the mills. And when, as is indeed sometimes the case, any of them are so situated that they cannot escape at all, then the stolid indifference of the children wears out the teacher with what seems to be an idle task....

Because there were few cases of French-Canadian families with all their children at work, and it will be recalled, over half of the children over the age of ten were still in school, this situation does not fit the stereotype of French-Canadian practices in Massachusetts at that time.

In Holyoke, during the 1880-81 academic year, the Truant Officer noticed a rise in the number of employed children who had not met the legal schooling requirements. Mr. Doyle, it will be recalled, placed the responsibility for this illegal practice on the employers rather than on the parents and did not specify any nationality as the main offender.<sup>5</sup> However, Haebler found French-Canadians in Holyoke had the reputation of putting their children to work at the earliest age possible and even using deceit to insure their youngsters jobs. The city officials' actions were based upon the impression that French-Canadians would rather have their children work in the mills than attend school.<sup>6</sup> The school officials did note that many underaged Holyoke children falsified their ages in order to obtain full-time employment out of economic necessity. In 1877, the Superintendent of

Schools was charged with allowing children under fourteen to work without fulfilling the school requirements "for reasons of hardship but in violation of the law."<sup>7</sup> Again, the evidence from the 1880-81 school census sample does not fit the stereotype of French-Canadian child labor practices.

The sample of school children for the 1880-81 academic year was taken during the years of trouble between the city authorities and Father Dufresne. Whether the children attended the full thirty-eight weeks because of the priest's specification or because the school committee would not issue work certificates to students attending the school anyway does not matter. Children who did enroll in this institution were not able to work during the second half of the school year. This would be a burden on families who needed the income of their offspring. Many students attending the other schools in the city did capitalize on the opportunity to work part of the school year. The truant officer reported issuing 720 work certificates to students having completed the required weeks of schooling for the 1880-1881 academic year.<sup>8</sup>

One would expect the occupational level of French-Canadian household heads to have affected the ability of families to send their children to the French school. However, only about one-quarter of the families with all or at least one of their offspring enrolled in the French school had skilled household heads as opposed to over one-third of those who sent all their children to either the Irish parochial or public institutions. These findings are contrary to what one would expect and are a first indication that Haebler's rapid acculturation interpretation might best explain the findings from the educational choices sample.

Only 16 percent of the French-Canadian households with white-collar or skilled heads had all their children in the French school compared to 25 percent of unskilled laborers; and less skilled than unskilled sent at least one of their offspring to the French school.

TABLE 4.13 OCCUPATION OF FRENCH-CANADIAN HOUSEHOLD HEAD WITH CHILDREN 5-15 ATTENDING SCHOOL BY CHOICE OF SCHOOL

|              | ALL IN FRENCH |      | FRENCH & OTHER |      | ALL IN OTHER |      |
|--------------|---------------|------|----------------|------|--------------|------|
|              | N             | %    | N              | %    | N            | %    |
| Occ of head: |               |      |                |      |              |      |
| Skilled/     |               |      |                |      |              |      |
| White collar | 4             | 23.5 | 2              | 25.0 | 19           | 36.5 |
| Unskilled    | 13            | 76.5 | 6              | 75.0 | 33           | 63.5 |
| Total        | 17            | 22.1 | 8              | 10.4 | 52           | 67.5 |

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample. Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-1881, Sample.

Missing cases: 5 heads reported no or ambiguous occupations.

Nineteen of the twenty-five French-Canadian families in the sample with skilled and higher level occupations sent all their children to schools other than the French institution. These parents would be the French-Canadian elite, to whom Haebler refers in the split between the parishioners of Precious Blood parish. Following Haebler's interpretation this elite, who disapproved of Father Dufresne and wanted to create their own parish, would not have supported the French school through the enrollment of their children.

The results of choice of school by socio-economic level are consistent with Haebler's argument; however, this raises the question of how more unskilled French-Canadian family heads were able to send a larger proportion of their children to French school than those in the skilled categories. Many French-Canadian students had older siblings over the age of mandatory schooling who could potentially be contri-

buting to the family income. Sixty-six percent of French-Canadian families with children, five to fifteen years old, had children sixteen and older. Of these older siblings, almost all, 97 percent were listed with an occupational title in the federal census. Only one French child over fifteen reported "student" as an occupation.

Of the French-Canadian families with all of their children in the French school, 82 percent had older offspring with occupational titles compared to 58 percent of those who sent all their children to other schools. Families with no older working children were more likely to send their children to the public or parochial school where students under fifteen could work part of the year. The more older siblings with occupational title there were per family did not increase the number of households sending all their children to French school and it actually decreased in families with children in the French and other school category. However, the highest percentage of French-Canadian families with no children in the French school were those with no potential for supplementary income from siblings. The potential for family income was a factor in the choice of school. The majority of families who chose the French school had added income from working children over the mandatory school age. These results confirm Early's findings on the importance of the financial contribution of French-Canadian children to the family income as well as Hareven's study on the French-Canadian family structure and work ethic in a new, industrial environment.

In addition to residence and demographic and socio-economic factors, there remains one more element to consider which may have affected the educational decisions. Acculturation, measured by the length of stay in the United States, may have influenced the French-

Canadian choices: The families identified as ~~French-Canadian~~ by the birthplace of the head of the household included first- and second-generation immigrant children. A family with all its children born in Canada is presumed to have spent less time in the United States than a family with some of its children born in Canada and some in the United States; and French-Canadian families with all American-born children would have been exposed to the American culture longest of the three classifications.

Virtually all the French-Canadian household heads in Holyoke were Canadian-born or American-born of French-Canadian fathers.

TABLE 4.14 BIRTHPLACE OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER

| Birthplace of Father of Head | Canada |       |
|------------------------------|--------|-------|
|                              | N      | %     |
| Birthplace of head:          |        |       |
| United States                | 5      | 5.4   |
| Canada                       | 87     | 93.5  |
| Ireland                      | 1      | 1.1   |
| Other                        | 0      | 0.0   |
| Total                        | 93     | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

More than half, 58 percent of the children, five to fifteen, in the sample were born in Canada: Almost all of their fathers, 95 percent, were Canadian-born, only 5 percent were American-born.

TABLE 4.15 BIRTHPLACE OF CHILDREN 5-15 BY BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER.

| Birthplace of Father | Canada |       |
|----------------------|--------|-------|
|                      | N      | %     |
| Birthplace of child: |        |       |
| United States        | 87     | 41.8  |
| Canada               | 121    | 58.2  |
| Ireland              | 0      | 0.0   |
| Other                | 0      | 0.0   |
| Total                | 208    | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

The French-Canadian population in Holyoke was comprised of recent immigrants, with new arrivals joining them yearly. The high number of recent immigrants, which could affect their educational choices, can be investigated with reference to two interpretations, Haebler's view that the French-Canadians were in the process of rapid adjustment to American society and their values were altering to meet the new conditions, contrary to Bouvier's conception that the upward movement of French-Canadians in the social stratification was retarded because survivance.

The families with American-born offspring had a significantly higher percentage of all children attending school, followed by families with both Canadian- and American-born children.

TABLE 4.16 GENERATION BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN 5-15 ALL AT SCHOOL, AT SCHOOL AND AT WORK AND ALL AT WORK BY FAMILY

| Generation        | All at School |      | School & Work |      | All at Work |      | Total |     |
|-------------------|---------------|------|---------------|------|-------------|------|-------|-----|
|                   | N             | %    | N             | %    | N           | %    | N     | %   |
| All American-born | 16            | 72.7 | 5             | 22.7 | 1           | 4.6  | 22    | 100 |
| Can and Amer-born | 21            | 58.3 | 13            | 36.1 | 2           | 5.6  | 36    | 100 |
| All Canadian-born | 11            | 36.7 | 16            | 53.3 | 3           | 10.0 | 30    | 100 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-1881, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

The most recent immigrants had the lowest percentage of all children at school and the highest in the two other classifications in which some or all of their children were at work. The longer a French-Canadian family had been settled in the United States, the more they would choose to send their children to school rather than to work for the duration of the academic year. These figures support Haebler's interpretation that the French-Canadian values quickly altered during this period in the ethnic community, at least in decisions for the

education of their children.

The effect of acculturation is also clearly revealed in the choice of school. Of the families whose children were all born in the United States, not one had all their children enrolled in the French-Canadian school and only 14 percent had one or more in the French and other school category.

TABLE 4.17 GENERATION BY CHOICE OF SCHOOL

| Generation        | All in French |      | French & Other |      | All in Other |      | Total |     |
|-------------------|---------------|------|----------------|------|--------------|------|-------|-----|
|                   | N             | %    | N              | %    | N            | %    | N     | %   |
| All American-born | 0             | 0.0  | 3              | 14.3 | 18           | 85.7 | 21    | 100 |
| Amer & Can-born   | 10            | 29.4 | 3              | 8.8  | 21           | 61.8 | 34    | 100 |
| All Canadian-born | 7             | 25.9 | 2              | 7.4  | 18           | 66.7 | 27    | 100 |
| Total             | 17            | 20.7 | 8              | 9.8  | 57           | 69.5 | 82    | 100 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

One-quarter of the newest immigrant families enrolled all their students in the French school. The Canadian- and American-born and the all Canadian children, families with less acculturation exposure had relatively similar choice percentages. The longer the family had resided in the United States, the less likely were their children to be members of the French school student body.

Are these findings at odds with Bouvier's argument that survivance made French-Canadians less supportive of education, retarded their adjustment to American society and slowed their upward social movement? In support of Bouvier's argument, it is true that the French-Canadian immigrants in Holyoke had come from a country in which education was not yet compulsory. In Quebec the administration of education was divided between two committees, Catholic and Protestant. Catholic education was controlled by the clergy. It was

paid for by a land tax, government aid and largely by a tax paid by families with children in school.<sup>9</sup>

Quebec Catholic schools emphasized the areas of religion and French language instruction. Their curriculum also included arithmetic, science, geography, Canadian history and English. The history texts centered on Roman Catholic and French-Canadian laws and traditions, usually written by clerics. History other than Quebec history was only minimally studied.<sup>10</sup> There was secondary education solely for the boys in the colleges classiques. Marie-Rose Malouin describes the purpose of girls' education when religious communities in Quebec began to take on teaching responsibilities.

Trois éléments se dégagent de ce programme: les religieuses entendent fournir à leurs élèves au moins une formation générale de base; cette formation ne vise pas à orienter les jeunes filles vers une carrière mais plutôt à les préparer à bien remplir leur future rôle d'épouse et de mère, c'est-à-dire de maîtresse de maison; enfin, cette démarche éducative baignera dans une conception chrétienne de la vie. Ces objectifs sont le reflet des valeurs, des préjugés et des limites de la société québécoise au milieu du 19e siècle. Ils sont conformes à la place réservée à la femme, au Québec, à la fin du siècle dernier.

It was feared an educated woman might rebel against her role of wife and mother.<sup>12</sup>

Louis Bachand recounted in "L'école paroissiale" that most French-Canadian immigrants were poor and upon arriving in New England they were preoccupied with the subsistence of their not-so-small families. Their children, ten and twelve years old, worked in the factories. This was not uncommon in Quebec during the same time period. Bachand discerned a pattern of school followed by either employment or American high school among the French-Canadians in New England. Viau found a similar pattern in Holyoke for both young men and women- school, work and then marriage. According to Viau, the

French-Canadian was not motivated towards school. While Father Dufresne valued education, he alone could not sway others to follow suit. The pastor's influence was limited in the parish because of his rocky relationship with the French-Canadian community.<sup>13</sup>

The extent to which education was valued less in Quebec than in the United States is reflected in the literacy rate of the heads of French-Canadian households. The educational choices sample reveals just under half were illiterate.

TABLE 4.18 LITERACY OF FRENCH-CANADIAN HOUSEHOLD HEADS

|                | N  | %     |
|----------------|----|-------|
| Read and write | 50 | 56.8  |
| Read only      | 3  | 3.4   |
| Write only     | 1  | 1.1   |
| Neither        | 34 | 38.6  |
| Total          | 88 | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

If this appears to support Bouvier's argument, a comparison of the literacy of recent and longer established French-Canadian immigrants suggests he may have exaggerated the long-term effect of negative attitudes towards education.

TABLE 4.19 GENERATION BY LITERACY OF FRENCH-CANADIAN HOUSEHOLD HEADS

|                  | U. S. |       | U.S. & Canada |       | Birthplace of Children<br>Canada |       | Total |       |
|------------------|-------|-------|---------------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|                  | N     | %     | N             | %     | N                                | %     | N     | %     |
| Literacy:        |       |       |               |       |                                  |       |       |       |
| Can read & write | 19    | 86.4  | 20            | 55.6  | 11                               | 36.7  | 50    | 56.8  |
| Read only        | 1     | 4.5   | 1             | 2.8   | 1                                | 3.3   | 3     | 3.4   |
| Write only       | 1     | 4.5   | 0             | 0.0   | 0                                | 0.0   | 1     | 1.1   |
| Neither          | 1     | 4.5   | 15            | 41.7  | 18                               | 60.0  | 34    | 38.6  |
| Total            | 22    | 100.0 | 36            | 100.0 | 30                               | 100.0 | 88    | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

When analyzed by length of stay in the United States, the statistics reveal that 86 percent of the French-Canadian heads whose children were all born in the United States, compared to 37 percent of families with all Canadian-born children. The more recent arrivals had a higher percentage of illiteracy, reflecting their lack of formal education in Quebec. Table 4.19 on literacy indicates a rapid process of acculturation, and supports Haebler's interpretation of a relatively rapid alteration of traditional French-Canadian values in Holyoke.

In conclusion, characteristics which emerge from the educational choices sample of French-Canadian families with school-age children include 65 percent of household heads were unskilled laborers and two-thirds of the families had children with occupational titles. The higher the number of children per family, the more children, ten to fifteen, there were at work. Families tended to have one or more students in school as their economic situation became more stable.

Of the French-Canadian children ten to fourteen years old who could work part of the school year, half of them did take the option to work. Forty-four percent of the families had 1 or more children ten to fifteen at work. For the other half of the ten-to-fourteen-year-old French-Canadians and those nine and under, more French-Canadians were enrolled in public than parochial schools. This is not surprising because of the greater availability of room in the public schools. Thirty-nine percent did choose parochial institutions and more selected the French school than the Irish.

Those families who sent their children to the French parochial school did so in the midst of a rift within the parish itself and an accreditation issue between the pastor and the city

School Board. Families with children enrolled specifically wanted a parochial education taught in French and upholding the traditional values of religion, language and customs. The majority of these families had some, if not all of their children born in Canada. They had not been exposed to the American culture long enough to have their choices affected by acculturation. Economically, only one-quarter of these families had household heads with skilled or higher level occupations, but 90 percent had older siblings with an occupational title who could potentially contribute financially to the family income needed to survive. The distance between school and residence of student reveals the French Parochial school drew children from all wards; children went out of their way to attend this school. These French-Canadian families in 1880 Holyoke were proponents of survivance through the education of their children in Precious Blood School.

In the educational and employment decisions made by the French-Canadians, Early's findings on the economic necessity and the methods of child contribution to family income in Lowell are similar to those of Holyoke. Haebler's interpretation that French-Canadian values rapidly changed can be supported in the generational findings of the educational choices sample. Also, Haebler's description of the parish split between French-Canadians of higher economic levels are upheld in the information that families with heads holding skilled and jobs were less likely to send their children in the parish school. Evidence that Bouvier's findings that education was not highly valued by the French-Canadians of New England is supported only for the most recent immigrants. The progress in literacy of those residing in the United States long enough for their children to be born there is more

consistent with Haebler's hypothesis of rapid acculturation. The French-Canadians, whose choices concerning the education of their children reflect the strongest support of survivance, are recent, working-class immigrants who had not yet been affected by acculturation and who were able to meet the subsistence needs of their families by older working children. Contrary to Sorrell, for whom survivance was an elite phenomenon, the evidence suggests it was, in the short run, a characteristic of recent working-class immigrants.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV.

<sup>1</sup>Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report, 1880-81. pp. 43-44.

<sup>2</sup>Early, "The French-Canadian Family Economy", pp. 184, 186, 192.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 186, 189.

<sup>4</sup>Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries, Twelfth Annual Report, 1881, pp. 469-470.

<sup>5</sup>Holyoke School Committee, 1881, p. 31.

<sup>6</sup>Haebler, p. 134.

<sup>7</sup>Holyoke School Committee, 1877, p. 85.

<sup>8</sup>Holyoke School Committee, 1881, p. 30.

<sup>9</sup>Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher and Jean-Claude Robert, Histoire du Québec contemporain: e la Confederation à la crise, 1867-1929 (Montréal: Boréal Express, 1979), p. 244; Robert Magnuson, pp. 43-47; Marie-Rose Malouin, "Les Rapports entre l'école privée et l'école publique: l'académie Marie-Rose au 19e siècle," in Maîtresses de maison, maîtresses d'école, eds. Nadia Fahmy-Eid and Micheline Dumont (Montréal: Boréal, 1983), p. 78.

<sup>10</sup>Magnuson, pp. 51-53.

<sup>11</sup>Malouin, p. 90.

<sup>12</sup>Magnuson, p. 60.

<sup>13</sup>Magnuson, p. 55; Bachand, p. 199; Interview with Viau..

CHAPTER V

A COMPARISON OF THE CHOICES OF  
FRENCH-CANADIAN, AMERICAN AND IRISH FAMILIES

Chapter IV presented the educational choices of the French-Canadians in Holyoke and factors affecting their choices. The same factors, residence, the age and number of children, the socio-economic rank of the household heads and acculturation may have affected the educational choices of the American and Irish ethnic groups as well. Similarities and differences between the ethnic groups will be described in this chapter to provide further insight into the motivation behind the French-Canadian educational choices.

In the main choice of home, work or school according to ethnic group, the French-Canadians had the highest percentage of children at work and the lowest of children at school.

TABLE 5.1 CHILDREN 5-15 AT HOME, AT WORK AND AT SCHOOL BY ORIGIN

| Origin | American |       | F - C |       | Irish |       | Other |       |
|--------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|        | N        | %     | N     | %     | N     | %     | N     | %     |
| Home   | 0        | 0.0   | 2     | 1.1   | 8     | 2.4   | 0     | 0.0   |
| Work   | 4        | 2.7   | 50    | 26.3  | 27    | 7.9   | 11    | 13.1  |
| School | 146      | 97.3  | 138   | 72.6  | 305   | 89.7  | 73    | 86.9  |
| Total  | 150      | 100.0 | 190   | 100.0 | 340   | 100.0 | 84    | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Census, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Census, Holyoke, 1880, Sample. Missing cases: American: 11; F-C: 19; Irish: 24; Other: 3. Information concerning situation of children not available.

The Irish had more children at home than the French-Canadians while the Americans did not have any. French-Canadians had the largest percentage of their children at work, 26 percent; over half of all

working children, 54 percent, were French-Canadian. Although the Irish had less than 10 percent of children at work, these comprised 29 percent of the working children. In comparison to the foreign-born groups, the Americans had an extremely high rate of sending their children to school and a low percentage of working children, 15 years old and under.

The choice of school or work by ethnic group reveals the Americans had the highest percentage of all children at school and the French-Canadians had the lowest.

TABLE 5.2 CHOICE OF SCHOOL OR WORK BY BIRTHPLACE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

|                | All at School |      | School & Work |      | All at Work |      | Total |     |
|----------------|---------------|------|---------------|------|-------------|------|-------|-----|
|                | N             | %    | N             | %    | N           | %    | N     | %   |
| Origin of Head |               |      |               |      |             |      |       |     |
| United States  | 83            | 95.4 | 2             | 2.3  | 2           | 2.3  | 87    | 100 |
| Canada         | 48            | 55.8 | 34            | 39.5 | 4           | 4.7  | 86    | 100 |
| Ireland        | 115           | 77.2 | 24            | 16.1 | 10          | 6.7  | 149   | 100 |
| Other          | 34            | 77.3 | 8             | 18.2 | 2           | 2.3  | 44    | 100 |
| Total          | 280           | 70.9 | 68            | 17.2 | 47          | 11.9 | 366   | 100 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Census, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

French-Canadians had the highest percentage, 44, of families with at least 1 child at work followed by the Irish with 23 percent and the American at 5 percent. There is little variation between the percentages in the all at work category. This is another indication that the French-Canadian stereotype of preferring work to school for their children is exaggerated.

The choice of school by each ethnic group reveals that while 23 percent of the French-Canadians who sent their children to school chose the French parish school, more than half of the Irish sent their children to their parochial school, St. Jerome's.

TABLE 5.3 CHOICE OF SCHOOL BY BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER

| School: | American |       | Canadian |       | Ireland |       | Other |       |
|---------|----------|-------|----------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
|         | N        | %     | N        | %     | N       | %     | N     | %     |
| French  | 1        | 0.7   | 31       | 22.5  | 0       | 0.0   | 0     | 0.0   |
| Irish   | 10       | 6.8   | 22       | 15.9  | 174     | 57.0  | 4     | 5.5   |
| Public  | 135      | 92.5  | 85       | 61.6  | 131     | 43.0  | 69    | 94.5  |
| Total   | 146      | 100.0 | 138      | 100.0 | 305     | 100.0 | 73    | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Almost all children of American heads, 93 percent, and of non-French and of non-Irish immigrants, 95 percent, attended the public schools. The Irish by contrast had a lower percentage of children attending public school than the French-Canadians.

TABLE 5.4 EDUCATION CHOICES BY BIRTHPLACE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

|                      | Families with American Heads        |       |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
|                      | N                                   | %     |
| Students             |                                     |       |
| All in public school | 77                                  | 90.6  |
| Public & other       | 1                                   | 1.2   |
| All in other school  | 7                                   | 8.2   |
| Total                | 85                                  | 100.0 |
|                      |                                     |       |
|                      | Families with French-Canadian Heads |       |
|                      | N                                   | %     |
| All in French school | 17                                  | 20.7  |
| French & other       | 8                                   | 9.8   |
| All in other school  | 57                                  | 69.5  |
| Total                | 82                                  | 100.0 |
|                      |                                     |       |
|                      | Families with Irish Heads           |       |
|                      | N                                   | %     |
| All in Irish school  | 65                                  | 46.8  |
| Irish & other        | 21                                  | 15.1  |
| All in other         | 53                                  | 38.1  |
| Total                | 139                                 | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Census, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

While one-third of the French-Canadian families sent at least one

of their children to the French school, almost two-thirds of the Irish families had one or more children in their parish school. The majority of families with American heads had their children enrolled in the public schools. Those who sent students to other schools were of either French or Irish decent. Overall, the French-Canadians had a lower percentage of children attending their ethnic school than the Irish theirs or Americans attending public schools.

A breakdown of Holyoke's schools according to the birthplace of the students' fathers reveals their ethnic identity. The French school had the strongest ethnic identity. Nearly all family heads who sent their children to the French school were Canadian-born.

TABLE 5.5 SCHOOL ATTENDED ACCORDING TO BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER

|           | U. S. |      | CANADA |      | IRELAND |      | OTHER |      | TOTAL |     |
|-----------|-------|------|--------|------|---------|------|-------|------|-------|-----|
|           | N     | %    | N      | %    | N       | %    | N     | %    | N     | %   |
| French    | 1     | 3.1  | 31     | 96.9 | 0       | 0.0  | 0     | 0.0  | 32    | 100 |
| Parochial | 10    | 4.8  | 22     | 10.5 | 174     | 82.9 | 4     | 1.8  | 210   | 100 |
| Park      | 18    | 20.0 | 21     | 23.3 | 32      | 35.6 | 19    | 21.1 | 90    | 100 |
| Appleton  | 72    | 60.0 | 9      | 7.5  | 21      | 17.5 | 18    | 15.0 | 120   | 100 |
| Sargeant  | 6     | 9.2  | 17     | 26.2 | 27      | 41.5 | 15    | 23.1 | 65    | 100 |
| Lyman     | 6     | 13.0 | 12     | 26.1 | 15      | 32.6 | 13    | 26.5 | 46    | 100 |
| Chestnut  | 6     | 12.2 | 26     | 53.1 | 17      | 34.7 | 0     | 0.0  | 49    | 100 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

The Irish identity of the Parochial school was almost as well-defined; over four out of every five students had Irish-born fathers. The Appleton St. school, located in ward six where the largest proportion of the residents were American-born (see Table 1.9), had the most students with American-born fathers while Park and Lyman St. schools had a fair representation of the three nationalities. Half of the students in the Chestnut St. school, located one block away from

the Irish parochial school, were French-Canadian. Although a public school, its French-Canadian student-body is probably one reason why more French-Canadian parents chose it for their children rather than the Irish school.

A comparison of the addresses of students with the location of the schools indicates the relative importance of distance as a factor in the choice of school by the different ethnic groups.

TABLE 5.6 PROXIMITY OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOL\* BY BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER

|                 | Residing Inside<br>Ward of School |      | Residing Outside<br>Ward of School |      | Total |     |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|------|------------------------------------|------|-------|-----|
|                 | N                                 | %    | N                                  | %    | N     | %   |
| American        | 85                                | 71.4 | 34                                 | 28.6 | 119   | 100 |
| French-Canadian | 80                                | 58.0 | 58                                 | 42.0 | 138   | 100 |
| Irish           | 197                               | 68.9 | 89                                 | 31.1 | 286   | 100 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

\* Only the schools with a significant number of students are included: Parochial, French, Park, Sargeant, Lyman, Appleton and Chestnut St. schools.

Approximately the same proportions of children from American and Irish families, 70 percent, attended a school from within their ward of residence. The French-Canadians had a lower proportion, 58 percent, of students attending schools within their ward of residence. They were more likely to send their children to schools outside of their ward of residence. For this ethnic group, the ease of sending children to a nearby school was less of a consideration in the selection of the type of education their children would receive.

In general, there is a striking difference between the French school and the other public and parochial schools in the city in the proportion of students coming from outside the ward where the school

was located. Sargeant and Lyman were primary schools and a high percentage of their studentbodies came from within their respective areas. These were younger children and the distance they traveled to school may have been a factor in decision-making. Chestnut and Appleton included both grammar and primary grades and had more students from other wards although again, the majority came from inside the wards where the school was located. Park St. school which also included all grade levels below high school had 57 percent of its studentbody come from outside wards, the neighboring wards one and three. The higher percentage of outside students may be due to the fact that the Park St. school was the only building in wards one through three to include grade levels higher than primary. Another consideration is the periodic opening and closing of classrooms in different public school buildings. In the two parochial schools, only one-fourth of St. Jerome's students came from outside wards in contrast to two-thirds of the French school student body. The French-Canadian school drew students from a larger area than the other schools. This is consistent with families who sent their children to the French school being motivated, in some capacity, by survivance. They wanted their children to receive a parochial education in French even though it meant they would travel farther to school, perhaps even by-passing other schools on their walk to Precious Blood School.

In addition to proximity of school to home, there was also variation from ethnic group to ethnic group in the way in which the age of the child figured as a consideration in the choice of school or work. The French-Canadians had a lower percentage of children at the age of thirteen and older in school than either the Irish or Americans.

TABLE 5.7 AGES OF CHILDREN 10-15 AT WORK AND AT SCHOOL BY BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER

|       | Children at School |       | F-C |       | Irish |       | Other |       |
|-------|--------------------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|       | American           |       | N   | %     | N     | %     | N     | %     |
|       | N                  | %     |     |       |       |       |       |       |
| 10    | 24                 | 26.1  | 18  | 31.0  | 35    | 19.1  | 5     | 15.2  |
| 11    | 21                 | 22.8  | 10  | 17.2  | 36    | 19.7  | 8     | 24.2  |
| 12    | 14                 | 15.2  | 14  | 24.1  | 43    | 23.5  | 8     | 24.2  |
| 13    | 19                 | 20.7  | 9   | 15.5  | 31    | 16.9  | 8     | 24.2  |
| 14    | 8                  | 8.7   | 4   | 6.9   | 28    | 15.3  | 2     | 6.1   |
| 15    | 6                  | 6.5   | 3   | 5.2   | 10    | 5.5   | 2     | 6.1   |
| Total | 92                 | 100.0 | 58  | 100.0 | 183   | 100.0 | 33    | 100.0 |

|       | Children at Work |       | N   | %     | N   | %     | N   | %     |
|-------|------------------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
|       | N                | %     |     |       |     |       |     |       |
|       | 10               | 0     | 0.0 | 1     | 2.0 | 1     | 3.7 | 0     |
| 11    | 0                | 0.0   | 4   | 8.0   | 0   | 0.0   | 0   | 0.0   |
| 12    | 0                | 0.0   | 4   | 8.0   | 1   | 3.7   | 0   | 0.0   |
| 13    | 1                | 25.0  | 10  | 20.0  | 3   | 11.1  | 1   | 9.1   |
| 14    | 0                | 0.0   | 14  | 28.0  | 7   | 25.9  | 3   | 27.3  |
| 15    | 3                | 75.0  | 17  | 34.0  | 15  | 55.6  | 7   | 63.6  |
| Total | 4                | 100.0 | 50  | 100.0 | 27  | 100.0 | 11  | 100.0 |

Source: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample.

Within each ethnic group the percentages of children at work rose in relation to age. Few American children worked and the majority who were employed were fifteen years old. Fewer Irish children worked at earlier ages than the French-Canadians, and the majority of employed Irish children were also fifteen years old. Only one-third of employed French-Canadian children were age fifteen. French-Canadian children began to work at an earlier age than the Irish or American children.

Family size, as shown in the preceding chapter, was a contributing factor to the practice of child labor. Of the three ethnic groups, the French-Canadians had the highest average number of children with 5.2 children per household, followed by the Irish with 4.4 and the Americans with 2.8. American families had the smallest

number of offspring with 70 percent of their households containing 1 to 3 children.

TABLE 5.8 NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER HOUSEHOLD BY BIRTHPLACE OF HEAD

| N. of children | U.S. |       | Canada |       | Ireland |       |
|----------------|------|-------|--------|-------|---------|-------|
|                | N    | %     | N      | %     | N       | %     |
| 1-3            | 70   | 71.4  | 24     | 27.3  | 48      | 30.4  |
| 4-6            | 27   | 27.6  | 37     | 42.0  | 85      | 53.8  |
| 7-9            | 1    | 1.0   | 24     | 27.3  | 24      | 15.2  |
| 10-12          | 0    | 0.0   | 3      | 3.4   | 1       | .6    |
| Total          | 98   | 100.0 | 88     | 100.0 | 158     | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Half of the Irish families had 4 to 6 children and the French-Canadians had a higher percentage of large families with 7 to 12 children.

The same trend in the total number of children per family by ethnic group is revealed in the analysis of the number of children, five to fifteen, per family.

TABLE 5.9 NUMBER OF CHILDREN 5-15 PER HOUSEHOLD BY BIRTHPLACE OF HEAD

| N of children | U.S. |       | Canada |       | Ireland |       |
|---------------|------|-------|--------|-------|---------|-------|
|               | N    | %     | N      | %     | N       | %     |
| 1             | 47   | 54.0  | 28     | 32.6  | 52      | 34.9  |
| 2             | 30   | 34.5  | 32     | 37.2  | 34      | 22.8  |
| 3             | 7    | 8.1   | 14     | 16.3  | 48      | 32.2  |
| 4             | 3    | 3.5   | 7      | 8.1   | 10      | 6.7   |
| 5             | 0    | 0.0   | 4      | 4.7   | 3       | 2.0   |
| 6             | 0    | 0.0   | 1      | 1.2   | 2       | 1.3   |
| Total         | 87   | 100.0 | 86     | 100.0 | 149     | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

The American families had fewer children between the ages of five and fifteen. French-Canadian families had the highest percentage of 4 to

6 children in this age range; and the Irish percentages fell in between the two other ethnic groups.

Keeping in mind the information on the number of children per family, the number of children, five to fifteen, at school and at work per family provides a further glimpse into the characteristic choices of the three ethnic groups.

TABLE 5.10 NUMBER OF CHILDREN AT SCHOOL PER HOUSEHOLD BY BIRTHPLACE OF HEAD

|                | U.S. |       | Canada |       | Ireland |       |
|----------------|------|-------|--------|-------|---------|-------|
|                | N    | %     | N      | %     | N       | %     |
| N of Students: |      |       |        |       |         |       |
| 0              | 16   | 15.8  | 6      | 6.8   | 20      | 12.6  |
| 1              | 46   | 45.5  | 45     | 51.1  | 45      | 28.3  |
| 2              | 30   | 29.7  | 26     | 29.5  | 45      | 28.3  |
| 3              | 6    | 5.9   | 5      | 5.7   | 38      | 23.9  |
| 4              | 3    | 3.0   | 5      | 5.7   | 9       | 5.7   |
| 5              | 0    | 0.0   | 1      | 1.1   | 2       | 1.3   |
| Total          | 101  | 100.0 | 88     | 100.0 | 159     | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Despite the differences in family size, over three-quarters of the American and French-Canadian families both had 1 to 2 children in school, 76 and 81 percent respectively. A larger percentage of Irish families had 3 students per household, while the French-Canadian and Irish had comparable percentages of 4 and 5 students per family. Overall, the Irish tended to have more children enrolled in school than either the French-Canadians or the Americans; although, relative to the size of the family, the Americans had the higher number of children at school.

This trend reverses in the analysis of the number of children at work per family. More French-Canadian families clearly had 2 to 4 children at work per family than either the Irish or American.

TABLE 5.11 NUMBER OF CHILDREN AT WORK PER HOUSEHOLD BY BIRTHPLACE OF HEAD

| N of children at work: | AMERICAN   |              | FRENCH CANADIAN |              | IRISH      |              |
|------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
|                        | N          | %            | N               | %            | N          | %            |
| 0                      | 97         | 96.0         | 50              | 56.8         | 124        | 78.0         |
| 1                      | 4          | 4.0          | 27              | 30.7         | 33         | 20.8         |
| 2                      | 0          | 0.0          | 9               | 10.2         | 2          | 1.3          |
| 3                      | 0          | 0.0          | 2               | 2.3          | 0          | 0.0          |
| 4                      | 0          | 0.0          | 5               | 5.7          | 0          | 0.0          |
| Total                  | <u>101</u> | <u>100.0</u> | <u>88</u>       | <u>100.0</u> | <u>159</u> | <u>100.0</u> |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

In keeping with the results of the above tables, the American households had the fewest number of children at work; four families each had only one child at work, and it will be recalled, three of them were fifteen years old. The French-Canadians had the highest number of children at work per family and the Irish household figures fall in between the two other ethnic groups.

Following residence, age and the number of children per family, it is interesting to compare how the socio-economic standing of American, French-Canadian and Irish families affected their educational choices.

As it was shown in Chapter I, unskilled workers were most exposed to elements of poverty such as overcrowded housing, poor sanitary conditions and higher mortality. In Holyoke, American-born heads held the majority of the white-collar and skilled occupations and were the least represented in the lower ranked occupations (see Tables 1.8 and 1.9). The French-Canadian and Irish heads had the same percentage of unskilled workers although the French-Canadians had a higher percentage of skilled occupations.

Analysis of the choice of school or work by occupational rank of household head reveals some variation, but less than one might expect.

TABLE 5.12 OCCUPATIONAL RANK OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY SCHOOL OR WORK FOR THEIR CHILDREN

|               | American Household Heads |       |         |       |           |       |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|
|               | White Collar             |       | Skilled |       | Unskilled |       |
|               | N                        | %     | N       | %     | N         | %     |
| All at School | 20                       | 90.9  | 31      | 100.0 | 29        | 93.6  |
| School & Work | 2                        | 9.1   | 0       | 0.0   | 1         | 3.2   |
| All at Work   | 0                        | 0.0   | 0       | 0.0   | 1         | 3.2   |
| Total         | 22                       | 100.0 | 31      | 100.0 | 31        | 100.0 |

|               | French-Canadian Household Heads |       |         |       |           |       |
|---------------|---------------------------------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|
|               | White Collar                    |       | Skilled |       | Unskilled |       |
|               | N                               | %     | N       | %     | N         | %     |
| All at School | 2                               | 50.0  | 15      | 65.2  | 27        | 51.9  |
| School & Work | 1                               | 25.0  | 7       | 30.4  | 25        | 48.1  |
| All at Work   | 1                               | 25.0  | 1       | 4.4   | 0         | 0.0   |
| Total         | 4                               | 100.0 | 23      | 100.0 | 52        | 100.0 |

|               | Irish Household Heads |       |         |       |           |       |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|
|               | White Collar          |       | Skilled |       | Unskilled |       |
|               | N                     | %     | N       | %     | N         | %     |
| All at School | 10                    | 76.9  | 18      | 85.7  | 68        | 75.6  |
| School & Work | 3                     | 23.1  | 2       | 9.5   | 14        | 15.6  |
| All at Work   | 0                     | 0.0   | 1       | 4.8   | 8         | 8.9   |
| Total         | 13                    | 100.0 | 21      | 100.0 | 90        | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Over 90 percent of American heads in each occupational rank had all their children at school. However, 100 percent of skilled heads had all children in school. The only American family who had all children at work was an unskilled laborer. Skilled Irish and French-Canadian heads also had higher percentages of all children at school. Unskilled French-Canadian heads had the highest percentage of children at work and at school and the unskilled Irish had the highest percentage of children all at work.

Analysis of the choice of school for children of the three ethnic groups by the occupational rank of household head reveals more variation due to this factor in the choices of the French-Canadians.

TABLE 5.13 OCCUPATIONAL RANK OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY CHOICE OF SCHOOL FOR THEIR CHILDREN

|                | American Household Heads |       |         |       |           |       |
|----------------|--------------------------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|
|                | White-Collar             |       | Skilled |       | Unskilled |       |
|                | N                        | %     | N       | %     | N         | %     |
| All in Public  | 20                       | 90.9  | 29      | 93.6  | 24        | 80.0  |
| Public & Other | 0                        | 0.0   | 1       | 3.2   | 1         | 3.3   |
| All in Other   | 2                        | 9.1   | 1       | 3.2   | 5         | 16.7  |
| Total          | 22                       | 100.0 | 31      | 100.0 | 30        | 100.0 |

|                | French-Canadian Household Heads |       |         |       |           |       |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|
|                | White-Collar                    |       | Skilled |       | Unskilled |       |
|                | N                               | %     | N       | %     | N         | %     |
| All in French  | 0                               | 0.0   | 4       | 18.2  | 13        | 25.0  |
| French & Other | 0                               | 0.0   | 2       | 9.1   | 6         | 11.5  |
| All in Other   | 3                               | 100.0 | 16      | 72.7  | 33        | 63.5  |
| Total          | 3                               | 100.0 | 22      | 100.0 | 52        | 100.0 |

|               | Irish Household Heads |       |         |       |           |       |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|
|               | White-Collar          |       | Skilled |       | Unskilled |       |
|               | N                     | %     | N       | %     | N         | %     |
| All in Irish  | 4                     | 30.8  | 8       | 40.0  | 38        | 46.9  |
| Irish & Other | 2                     | 15.4  | 5       | 25.0  | 10        | 12.4  |
| All in Other  | 7                     | 53.9  | 7       | 35.0  | 33        | 40.7  |
| Total         | 13                    | 100.0 | 20      | 100.0 | 81        | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample,

Over 90 percent of the white-collar and skilled American heads both had all their children in the public schools. A slightly lower percentage, 80, of the unskilled heads did the same. The white-collar Irish heads had a lower percentage of all children at the Irish parochial school and a higher percentage of all their children at another school than either the skilled or unskilled heads; but again the spread is only 10-15 percent points. By contrast, no French-

Canadian white-collar head had any of their children attend the French school, while one-fourth of the unskilled heads had all their children attending the French parish school. There is an indication among both the Irish and French-Canadian households that the higher the occupational level of the head, the less likely they were to send all their children to their respective ethnic parochial schools, although the indications are stronger in the statistics for the French-Canadians.

The lack of a stronger association between socio-economic level of household head and the choice of school or work is due in part to the extra income older children may have contributed to the family income.

TABLE 5.14 SUPPLEMENTAL INCOME FROM SIBLINGS

|                      | American |       | F-C |       | Irish |       |
|----------------------|----------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-------|
|                      | N        | %     | N   | %     | N     | %     |
| Households           |          |       |     |       |       |       |
| No older children    | 73       | 73.0  | 30  | 34.1  | 69    | 43.4  |
| With older children: |          |       |     |       |       |       |
| occupation listed    | 22       | 22.0  | 56  | 63.6  | 88    | 55.4  |
| at home only         | 3        | 3.0   | 1   | 1.1   | 1     | .6    |
| at school only       | 2        | 2.0   | 1   | 1.1   | 1     | .6    |
| Total                | 100      | 100.0 | 88  | 100.0 | 159   | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Nearly two-thirds of the French-Canadian families and over one-half of the Irish families with children between five and fifteen also had older children with occupations who could supplement the household income. By contrast, barely one-fourth of the American families had older children, and less of these aided the family financially. To be sure, there was less need for them to do so. According to the occupational tables of heads, the American-born had better jobs than the foreign-born. In these families, the need for extra income would not

have been as great as in the French-Canadian or Irish households.

These findings are supported by the results of the number of children with an occupational title per family. The Americans had the highest percentage of no older working children, the Irish had the highest percentage of 1 to 4 working children and the French-Canadians had the highest in the 5 to 7 category.

TABLE 5.15 NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH OCCUPATIONAL TITLE PER FAMILY

|          | 0   |       | 1-2 |       | 3-4 |       | 5-6 |       | 7 |       |
|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|---|-------|
|          | N   | %     | N   | %     | N   | %     | N   | %     | N | %     |
| Head     |     |       |     |       |     |       |     |       |   |       |
| American | 72  | 36.9  | 24  | 20.3  | 2   | 3.9   | 0   | 0.0   | 0 | 0.0   |
| F-C      | 31  | 15.9  | 23  | 19.5  | 20  | 38.5  | 11  | 50.0  | 3 | 100.0 |
| Irish    | 66  | 33.9  | 58  | 49.2  | 27  | 51.9  | 7   | 31.8  | 0 | 0.0   |
| Other    | 26  | 13.3  | 13  | 11.0  | 3   | 5.8   | 4   | 18.2  | 0 | 0.0   |
| Total    | 195 | 100.0 | 118 | 100.0 | 52  | 100.0 | 22  | 100.0 | 3 | 100.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

The same situation in Lowell existed in Holyoke, as Early also found that the French-Canadian and Irish fathers accepted wages of their offspring more often than American and English fathers.<sup>1</sup>

In Lowell, since the children's income was crucial to family survival, their children entered the workforce at an early age. In Lowell, 1870, the French-Canadian families, most children age 11 and over, were working and not attending school. In Holyoke, a decade later, the French-Canadians had the lowest average of children attending school and the highest percentage of offspring at work than any other nationality. The French-Canadian children also began to work at an earlier age than the other ethnic groups. American-born parents had a significantly higher percentage of children in school than the offspring of the foreign-born parents.

In Holyoke, the need for the financial contribution from all possible family members caused some families to try to evade the law concerning education for minors. The local newspaper realized the panic this law caused among the immigrants although the lack of education for the children was deplored.

There is probably no law that causes more futile and unreasoning protest among the class it affects, than the law which debar children under 14 from working in manufacturing and their establishments unless they have had twenty weeks of previous schooling within the year. There is not a day but parents visit the Superintendent's office, and try to be let off, pleading to have it 'fixed' somehow so that their children can go to work and loth to believe that there is no way of evading the law. Sometimes they offer money, thinking they may buy the privilege. Many of them are poor, and no doubt really feel that they cannot afford to dispense with the children's labor, but the numbers of such applicants show that the children would have very little chance to obtain any education if it was not for his provision.

Under the new school law the line will be drawn still more closely, no child under fourteen being permitted to work in any such establishment if he or she is unable to read or write. By such firm laws the State intends to secure to poor children their educational rights.

Although, in the 1879-80 report of the Holyoke School Committee, the Truant Officer stated that he found very few instances of establishments employing children who had not met all the schooling or age requirements.<sup>3</sup>

According to the sample from the school census, over one-fifth of the children eligible to work did find employment. The sole child to report working and attending school at the same time was a fifteen-year-old boy, American-born of an Irish-born father. The boy worked for Davis' Livery. The children worked in retail stores or in the various mills including the paper, cotton, woolen, silk, thread, screw and alpaca manufacturing establishments.

More French-Canadian children, five to fifteen, were employed than either the Irish or American children.

TABLE 5.16 CHILDREN 10-15 AT WORK\* BY BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER

|               | N  | %     |
|---------------|----|-------|
| United States | 4  | 4.4   |
| Canada        | 50 | 54.9  |
| Ireland       | 28 | 30.8  |
| Other         | 9  | 9.9   |
| Total         | 91 | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.  
 \* Does not include children who listed minding house as place of employment.

Missing cases: 2. Information on child's origin not available.

Few American children reported a place of employment. American household heads did have the highest economic level of the three groups and perhaps were not in need of supplementary income from their children, or, perhaps they highly valued education. Overall, the French-Canadian and Irish household heads had relatively the same economic standing, the French-Canadian did have more skilled heads but they also had larger families. More French-Canadian families had children at school age contributing to the family income.

TABLE 5.17 EMPLOYED CHILDREN BY AGE AND SEX

| Age   | MALE |       | FEMALE |       | TOTAL |       |
|-------|------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
|       | N    | %     | N      | %     | N     | %     |
| 10    | 2    | 3.4   | 0      | 0.0   | 2     | 2.2   |
| 11    | 4    | 6.9   | 0      | 0.0   | 4     | 4.3   |
| 12    | 3    | 5.2   | 2      | 5.7   | 5     | 5.4   |
| 13    | 9    | 15.5  | 6      | 17.1  | 15    | 16.1  |
| 14    | 16   | 27.6  | 8      | 22.9  | 24    | 25.8  |
| 15    | 24   | 41.4  | 19     | 54.3  | 43    | 46.2  |
| Total | 58   | 100.0 | 35     | 100.0 | 93    | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Of the children who listed a place of employment in the school census, 61 percent were male and 39 percent were female. Their ages ranged from ten to fifteen. Boys began to work at an earlier age than girls. Over half of the girls who did work were fifteen years old. Boys under fourteen were more likely to be sent to work than girls.

The remaining factor to be evaluated in the educational choices of the ethnic groups is that of acculturation.

TABLE 5.18 GENERATION BY CHILDREN ALL AT SCHOOL, SOME AT SCHOOL AND WORK AND ALL AT WORK BY BIRTHPLACE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

Families with American Heads

|               | Birthplace of Children |       |              |       |              |       |
|---------------|------------------------|-------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|               | All in U.S.            |       | U.S. & Other |       | All in Other |       |
|               | N                      | %     | N            | %     | N            | %     |
| All at School | 77                     | 93.9  | 3            | 100.0 | 1            | 100.0 |
| School & Work | 3                      | 3.7   | 0            | 0.0   | 0            | 0.0   |
| All at Work   | 2                      | 2.4   | 0            | 0.0   | 0            | 0.0   |
| Total         | 82                     | 100.0 | 3            | 100.0 | 1            | 100.0 |

Families with French-Canadian Heads

|               | Birthplace of Children |       |               |       |             |       |
|---------------|------------------------|-------|---------------|-------|-------------|-------|
|               | All in Canada          |       | Canada & U.S. |       | All in U.S. |       |
|               | N                      | %     | N             | %     | N           | %     |
| All at School | 11                     | 37.9  | 22            | 59.5  | 15          | 75.0  |
| School & Work | 16                     | 55.2  | 13            | 35.1  | 5           | 25.0  |
| All at Work   | 2                      | 6.9   | 2             | 5.4   | 0           | 0.0   |
| Total         | 29                     | 100.0 | 37            | 100.0 | 20          | 100.0 |

Families with Irish Heads

|               | Birthplace of Children |       |                |       |             |       |
|---------------|------------------------|-------|----------------|-------|-------------|-------|
|               | All in Ireland         |       | Ireland & U.S. |       | All in U.S. |       |
|               | N                      | %     | N              | %     | N           | %     |
| All at School | 2                      | 50.0  | 21             | 77.8  | 93          | 78.2  |
| School & Work | 0                      | 0.0   | 6              | 22.2  | 18          | 15.3  |
| All at Work   | 2                      | 50.0  | 0              | 0.0   | 8           | 6.7   |
| Total         | 4                      | 100.0 | 27             | 100.0 | 119         | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Returns, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Of the ethnic groups, the French-Canadians were the latest arrivals in Holyoke; 26 percent of the French-Canadian households had children all born in the United States compared to 78 percent of the Irish and 82 percent of the American. The effect of acculturation on the choice to have all children at school, some at school and at work and all at work is clear in the patterns found within each ethnic group. Of the families with American-born heads, 97 percent of which had children all born in the United States, almost every family had all children at school. The Irish, in which 79 percent of the households had all children born in the United States, the longer a family had been in the country, the higher the percentage of sending all their children to school. The same goes for the French-Canadians, and in addition, as the acculturation time rose, the percentages of children all at work declined.

In the analysis of acculturation according to the choice of school per ethnic group, the results are not as clear-cut as the preceding analysis. As Table 5.19 on page 126 shows, the data on the French-Canadians is the best indication of exposure to the American culture as a factor in choices of school. No French-Canadian family with all children born in the United States had all their children in the French school compared to one-third of the families who had spent the least amount of time in the new country. The information on the Irish households reveals that while acculturation was a factor in the choice of parish or public school, it was not as definitive a factor as it was to the French-Canadians.

TABLE 5.19 GENERATION BY CHOICE OF SCHOOL ACCORDING TO BIRTHPLACE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

Families with American Heads

|                      | All in U.S. |       | U.S. & Other |       | All in Other |       |
|----------------------|-------------|-------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|                      | N           | %     | N            | %     | N            | %     |
| All in public school | 75          | 91.5  | 1            | 50.0  | 1            | 100.0 |
| Public & other       | 1           | 1.2   | 0            | 0.0   | 0            | 0.0   |
| All in other school  | 6           | 7.3   | 1            | 0.0   | 0            | 0.0   |
| Total                | 82          | 100.0 | 2            | 100.0 | 1            | 100.0 |

Families with French-Canadian heads

|                      | All in U.S. |       | Canada & U.S. |       | All in Canada |       |
|----------------------|-------------|-------|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|
|                      | N           | %     | N             | %     | N             | %     |
| All in French school | 0           | 0.0   | 10            | 29.4  | 7             | 25.9  |
| French & other       | 3           | 14.3  | 3             | 8.8   | 2             | 7.4   |
| All in other school  | 18          | 85.7  | 21            | 61.8  | 18            | 66.7  |
| Total                | 21          | 100.0 | 27            | 100.0 | 34            | 100.0 |

Families with Irish Heads

|                     | All in U.S. |       | Ireland & U.S. |       | All in Ireland |       |
|---------------------|-------------|-------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|
|                     | N           | %     | N              | %     | N              | %     |
| All in Irish school | 45          | 41.3  | 19             | 67.9  | 1              | 50.0  |
| Irish & other       | 18          | 16.5  | 2              | 7.1   | 1              | 50.0  |
| All in other school | 46          | 42.2  | 7              | 25.0  | 0              | 0.0   |
| Total               | 109         | 100.0 | 28             | 100.0 | 2              | 100.0 |

Sources: Holyoke School Census, Manuscript Census, 1880-81, Sample; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Returns, Holyoke, 1880, Sample.

Throughout the analysis of the differences and similarities between the American, French-Canadian and Irish ethnic groups, a pattern has emerged in which households with American-born heads were more likely to be in a higher socio-economic level, have a smaller number of children, with more children at school and less at work than households with foreign-born heads.

Between the immigrant groups, there are indications that the Irish were in a slightly better situation than the French-Canadians. French-Canadians had a higher number of children per family, more

children at work and less at school. Their socio-economic levels were approximately the same as the Irish although the French-Canadians had more older working children. Families of foreign-born heads needed supplementary income from their children more than families of native-born heads. Among the children, ten to fifteen years old who worked part of the academic year, the majority were French-Canadian. This ethnic group also sent their children to work at an earlier age than either the Irish or the American.

In terms of residence, children from French-Canadian families were more likely to travel to attend a school of their choice outside their ward than the other groups, especially those who went to the French school.

The educational choices of the ethnic groups reveal that survivance was a motivation for the French-Canadians and the Irish in their choice of ethnic parochial schools. However, the reason for sending the French-Canadian and Irish children to the ethnic schools may have been different. The French-Canadians were trying to save their language as well as their religion, unlike the Irish whose school was conducted in English. Overall, survivance emerged as a factor in educational choices even at this time when the economic and living conditions for the families of foreign-born heads were poor.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

<sup>1</sup>Early, "The French-Canadian Family Economy," pp. 186, 189.

<sup>2</sup>Holyoke Transcript, May 8, 1880.

<sup>3</sup>Holyoke School Committee, Annual Report, 1879-80, p. 26.

## CONCLUSION

One hundred years later one cannot know the precise personal motives of the French-Canadians behind their decisions to send their children to work, to school or to have them remain at home in 1880 Holyoke. One can, however, study the choices made along with the surrounding circumstances and the characteristics of the French-Canadians in order to obtain indications of the reasons for their actions.

In 1880 Holyoke, there were French-Canadian families who sent their children to the French parochial school. These people acted consistently with the traditional interpretation of the importance of French-Canadian parochial education to survivance. Seventy-three percent of all French-Canadian children, five to fifteen, attended school. Thirty percent of the French-Canadian families who enrolled children in school sent one or more of their children to the French school. One quarter of the heads of these families held skilled occupations; three-fourths had unskilled positions. No white-collar families had children in this school. Families with students in the French school also had a higher percentage of older siblings with occupations than the general French-Canadian community. These are indications that they could afford to send their children to the parish school and forfeit the opportunity to have the students work part of the academic year. The action of these families also reveals that rather than receive extra income from the children ten years old and up, they would rather the youths remain in school and receive instruction in religion and French as well as the standard subjects.

The majority of the French-Canadian families who sent their

children to the Irish parochial or public schools or to work support the revisionist theory that French-Canadian values were transformed upon immigration to New England. Whether these French-Canadian children did not attend the parish school because of the split between the parishioners, dissatisfaction with the pastor, the accreditation issue or for economic reasons, the actions of these families does not indicate support for education as a means of survivance. Those who sent their children to the Irish parochial school chose to have their children deal with ethnic tension between the Irish and the French-Canadians as well as forfeit instruction in French. Those who selected the public school placed their children in constant contact with children of other cultures and religions.

As a community, the majority of French-Canadians chose the public educational system first, followed by the French school, and lastly, the Irish parochial. Because of the limited space in the parochial schools, it is difficult to draw any closer conclusions concerning this choice. French-Canadian families who sent their children to French school acted in support of survivance; those who sent their children to public school placed their children in a situation which was detrimental to survivance according to its traditional definition.

As an ethnic group, in comparison to the Irish and American communities, the French-Canadians had a significantly larger percentage of their children at work. Families with American-born heads were generally in higher economic levels than the families of foreign-born heads. Americans also were able to escape the worst of the living conditions and overcrowded housing situations. The French-Canadians and the Irish fared approximately the same in these aspects

although there are indications that the French-Canadians were more likely to experience the worst living conditions.

French-Canadians generally had larger families and more of their children at work than the Irish or Americans. According to Early, the larger the family, the more income was needed to survive, although the more people working, the more comfortable were the living conditions that the family would experience. Early's definition of culture as an "adaptive tool" is seen through the way in which the French-Canadian immigrants in 1880 Holyoke resolved their concern of economic survival -- family economy -- and education for their younger children while adapting to a new environment.

In Holyoke, Massachusetts, 1880, the choices of French-Canadian families concerning education as a tool of survivance do not indicate that survivance was as strong a motive within the community as traditional historians describe. Rather, within the choices, there is more evidence to support the revisionist scholars who claim that traditional values altered in the new environment. The educational sample results support especially Haebler's interpretation that rapid acculturation took place within the Holyoke French-Canadian community. The acculturation analysis of generation and choice of school reveal the longer a French-Canadian family had resided in the United States, the less likely they would be to have any children in the French parochial school. Clearly the majority of the French-Canadians did not value education for survivance above all else, whether it was for economic reasons, social purposes or differences in opinion with the parish priest and his supporters.

One must keep in mind that this study covers one point in time

only, the year of 1880, during the period in which the Holyoke French-Canadian community was still in the process of growing. These conclusions can be made only in reference to this year and to this formative stage of the development of the local French-Canadian community. There are indications in the increasing enrollment figures of Precious Blood School and in the opening of two new French-Canadian parochial schools in 1891 and 1907, that in later years, there was much more support of the French-Canadian schools. However, the motivation behind this growth may not have been the same because the education offered by these parochial institutions, had changed from the type of instruction offered in 1880. In 1880 Holyoke, while some French-Canadians made decisions concerning the education of their children which support surviance through education, the majority of the families of this ethnic community did not act through their educational choices and decisions in a manner which supported surviance above all else.

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