

FOR GOD, KING, AND COUNTRY: THE CANADIAN CHURCHES AND THE  
GREAT WAR, 1914-1918

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## ABSTRACT

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Canada in the early twentieth century was a profoundly religious nation, with nearly 95 percent of the population identifying as Christians. The churches were important nation-building institutions, active in social welfare and education, but they also played a more intimate role in the lives of Canadians, determining moral values, providing social gathering points, and offering emotional and spiritual support in difficult times. Throughout the Great War (1914-1918), the churches continued to fulfill these important functions, providing an ideological framework that helped people make sense of the war, understand their duties as both Canadians and Christians, and cope with the sacrifices required of them.

This dissertation examines the four major Canadian denominations (Roman Catholicism, Presbyterianism, Methodism, and Anglicanism) in French- and English-speaking Canada. It looks first to establish the varying justifications offered for the war by the churches before using them to contextualize the variety of activities undertaken on behalf of the war effort, activities which included prayer and considerable charitable giving in addition to military service. It then examines the difficult final years of the war. In 1917, as conscription divided English and French Canada over the extent of the commitment to the overseas war effort, differing ideas of imperialism, internationalism,

and the division between the moral and the political brought conflict both within and between denominations. Finally, an attempt is made to consider how the churches played a role in mourning the war-dead and imbuing the hoped-for peace with a meaning sufficient to justify the immense sacrifices.

By using the churches as an interpretive model, this dissertation adds nuance to the Canadian historiography of the Great War, looking beyond the military effort to the experiences of the home front. It also looks to bring together the histories of French and English Canadians, showing the ways in which French-speaking Catholics supported the war in their own way and illuminating some of the conflicting interpretations of the war held by otherwise supportive English-speaking Canadians.

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I would also like to thank Dr. Richard Connors, Dr. Damien-Claude Bélanger, Dr. Galen Perras of the University of Ottawa and Dr. Mark McGowan of the University of Toronto, who kindly consented to serve as examiners. Your time, feedback, and expertise are greatly appreciated.

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My colleagues and friends are due their own acknowledgements, not only for their various contributions to this dissertation, but for their encouragement and sage advice. Notably I would like to thank Elizabeth Stobert, whose family graciously gifted me her grandfather's copy of the 1918 Canadian Book of Common Prayer when she heard I was looking for one to consult.

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a few lines all of the things that I would like to say, but know that I have never doubted your love, support, and pride, and that they have meant everything. But family is not only the one that you're born into, but also the one that is accumulated moving through life, and I have been immensely fortunate in both cases. And so, I would like to thank John, who in addition to sharing the joys and frustrations of daily life, has automated what could be automated, diligently kept me to task, and patiently read and re-read sections to determine whether I was making any sense and helped me fix things when I was not. Although I don't know what the next chapter of our lives together holds or where it will take us (although I sincerely hope that it includes pie), I'm looking forward to figuring it out with you.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACJC	Association catholique de la jeunesse canadienne-française
CEF	Canadian Expeditionary Force
CWGC	Commonwealth War Graves Commission
MSA	Military Service Act
PPCLI	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry

Note — For certain handwritten sources, particularly those where an oral delivery was intended, common abbreviations (i.e. product<sup>n</sup> for production) have silently been expanded to enhance readability. Where this has been done, it has been noted in the footnotes.

## INTRODUCTION

On August 4, 1914, crowds gathered around the newspaper offices in Canada's major cities to read the latest updates on the European situation. The German army had invaded Belgium, ignoring both the latter's declaration of neutrality and a British guarantee of military support in the event of a German attack. In response to the invasion, the British had issued an ultimatum demanding that Germany withdraw its troops, and, as Canadians anxiously waited for news, the hours ticked down to the deadline and a British declaration of war. Over the course of the previous month, the European situation had deteriorated rapidly as a consequence of the assassination of the heir of the Austro-Hungarian throne by Serbian nationalists. Austria-Hungary had gone to war with Serbia on July 28. On August 1, Germany declared war on Russia when the latter, which had joined the Serbs against Austria-Hungary on July 28, refused to stop mobilizing its troops. In Canada, members of the government gathered in Ottawa to discuss the situation, but the question to be decided was not whether Canada would join the developing European war, but what form such participation might take. Although Canada was a self-governing dominion of the British Empire, its major foreign policy decisions, including whether or not to go to war, were still made in far-off London; when Britain was at war, Canada was automatically at war.

The fifty-one months that followed would prove to be a stern test for Canadians. The nation that awoke to the news of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, was one whose people had lived under the stresses of war for four long years. Among the important institutions that had helped Canadians cope with these trials were the

Canadian churches. Historian Richard Allen wondered whether “the nation could have carried the war effort to a successful conclusion without the full support of its religious institutions.”<sup>1</sup> J.M Bliss went so far as to claim that “only the churches had the ideological resources” needed to help Canadians endure the “emotional nightmare” of the war.<sup>2</sup> While neither of these sweeping claims can be proven conclusively, it is undeniable that the churches played an important role in framing the Canadian war experience. From the outbreak of war, the churches sought to find a deeper meaning in the conflict and to explain the principles at stake in ways that helped people make sense of the sacrifices being required of them. The cultural influence of the churches as public institutions and the leading roles many clergymen played in their communities ensured that these messages were widespread, helping shape wartime activities and ultimately coming to serve as consolation for the losses and hardships suffered. Not only did the churches contribute materially to the war effort, they played essential social roles by providing a sense of community, sustaining morale, and offering ways to reconcile difficult and conflicting ideals.

Yet the churches did not boast of their important wartime contributions. In October 1914, the editor of the Methodist *Christian Guardian* stated that he was “[i]n common, we are sure with the great majority of our readers ... find[ing] it difficult these days to have interest in anything that does not in some way relate to the war.”<sup>3</sup> But, in the *Christian Guardian* and other religious periodicals, more space was generally

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-28* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 35.

<sup>2</sup> J.M. Bliss, “The Methodist Church and World War I,” *Canadian Historical Review* 49, no. 3 (1968): 219-220.

<sup>3</sup> “From the Front,” *Christian Guardian*, 21 October 1914, 4.

devoted to recognizing the efforts of Canadian soldiers overseas than the activities of those who remained at home. And, after the Armistice, the work done by the churches on the home front faded even further into the background. In 1921, Toronto's Trinity Methodist Church published a book to celebrate its war achievements. A collection of anecdotes from congregants who had served overseas, the *Trinity War Book: A Recital of Service and Sacrifice in the Great War* makes only passing reference to the activities undertaken by the congregation on the home front.<sup>4</sup> A similar tribute book published by the Catholic Diocese of Antigonish, while it does publish some of Bishop James Morrison's circulars and addresses on war topics, devotes more than two-thirds of its pages to nominal enlistment rolls from the diocese's parishes.<sup>5</sup> On this local scale, unless a mortgage was paid off, a new building consecrated, or some other notable event occurred, a large number of parish and diocesan histories are strangely silent on the life of the church during the war. Nor, with the exception of a handful of military chaplains,<sup>6</sup> are there major biographies or memoirs available for the era's prominent clergy and

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<sup>4</sup> *Trinity War Book: A Recital of Service and Sacrifice in the Great War* (Toronto: Trinity Methodist Church, 1921)

<sup>5</sup> *Catholics of the Diocese of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and the War, 1914-1919, with Nominal Enlistment Rolls by Parishes* (Antigonish: St. Francis Xavier University Press, [1920?]).

<sup>6</sup> Chaplains' memoirs include Rosaire Crochetière, *Capitaine-Abbé Rosaire Crochetière: Un vicaire dans les tranchées*, ed. Alain Bergeron, (Sillery: Editions du Septentrion, 2002); George Fallis, *A Padre's Pilgrimage* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1933); F.G. Scott, *The Great War as I Saw It* (Toronto: F.D. Goodchild, 1922); George Wells, *The Fighting Bishop: As Recounted in the Eighty-Seventh Year of His Life to His Daughter Jeanne Carden Wells* (Toronto: Cardwell House, 1971). A collection of sermons by Allan Shatford contain two preached while he was serving as a chaplain overseas — see *He ... Yet Speaketh!: Glimpses of the Life and Work of Canon Allan P. Shatford* (Toronto: Musson Book Company, 1938). Charles Gordon (otherwise known as the author Ralph Connor) served as a chaplain overseas and in 1917-1918 returned to Canada, where he undertook a North American speaking tour on behalf of the war effort — see *Postscript to Adventure: The Autobiography of Ralph Connor* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975).

those few that do exist make little reference to their wartime experiences.<sup>7</sup> Given the wide range of activities that the churches were involved in, both as national institutions and as part of their local communities, and the importance often attached to the Great War as a watershed period in the development of a mature Canadian nation, this silence is both puzzling and intriguing. Why would the churches, which preached the need for all to contribute to the war effort, virtually ignore the efforts made on the home front?

This lack of attention is carried over into many of the histories of the Canadian churches. Although the war is often mentioned in histories that deal with the first half of the twentieth century, the important pastoral and ideological role played by the churches in supporting the war effort and maintaining morale is not generally discussed. Histories of the institutional churches, which focus primarily on growth and expansion, are notably terse in their discussion of the war period. From 1914 to 1918, with many parishioners and ministers occupied with various forms of war service and with the war imposing other demands on scarce funds, the institutional churches were generally forced to pause their extension work and struggle to maintain their existing operations. This period, where expansion stagnated and attention was directed elsewhere, is therefore of relatively little interest for institutional historians, despite the importance the war played in the lives of people who lived through it. Philip Carrington's *The Anglican Church in Canada* is particularly laconic, for example, noting only that during the Great

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<sup>7</sup> Biographies of J.S. Woodsworth, who left the Methodist ministry during the war, obviously make mention of this, but devote little attention to the activities of his churches in relation to the war — see Kenneth McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959) and Allen Mills, *Fool for Christ: The Intellectual Politics of J.S. Woodsworth* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991). The memoirs of John Cragg Farthing, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, does mention writing the government during the war in relation to chaplains, food controls, and the Ross Rifle, but only in brief — see *Some Reflections of John Cragg Farthing* (Montreal: n.p., 1942).

War “both clergy and laity did their duty in whatever state of life it pleased the Lord to call them to.”<sup>8</sup> Other Anglican histories, which have a particularly strong focus on institutional development, share this tendency to brevity regarding the war.<sup>9</sup> For Presbyterians and Methodists, the Great War interrupted ongoing discussions about church union, a topic which has tended to dominate denominational histories of the period. In John McNeil’s 1925 history of Presbyterianism, written on the eve of church union to celebrate the growth and history of Canadian Presbyterianism, only three pages are devoted to the war. Of these, a single sentence mentions the work of those at home, and that was devoted to the women’s groups who had provided comforts to the soldiers. Nine pages describe the debates around church union.<sup>10</sup> Likewise Marguerite Van Die’s study of Methodist theologian Nathaniel Burwash contains more than forty pages about church union, while the only mention of the impact of the war is a passing reference to the fact that three of his four sons served overseas, one of whom was seriously wounded.<sup>11</sup> While there is a small body of literature dealing directly with the churches and the war, this has a heavy focus on the activities of the institutional churches with respect to questions like chaplaincy. The attention paid during the war to the soldiers serving overseas is largely reflected in the historical literature.

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<sup>8</sup> Philip Carrington, *The Anglican Church in Canada, A History* (Toronto: Collins, 1963), 252.

<sup>9</sup> See Carrington, *Anglican Church in Canada*; Barry Ferguson, ed., *The Anglican Church and the World of Western Canada, 1820-1970* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1991); Alan Hayes, *Anglicans in Canada: Controversies and Identity in Historical Perspective* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Norman Knowles, ed., *Seeds Scattered and Sown: Studies in the History of Canadian Anglicanism* (Toronto: ABC Publishing, 2008); Edward Pulker, *We Stand on Their Shoulders: The Growth of Social Concern in Canadian Anglicanism* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1986).

<sup>10</sup> McNeil, *The Presbyterian Church in Canada*, 266-269.

<sup>11</sup> Van Die, *An Evangelical Mind*, 17, 144-186.

This dissertation elaborates on the important role played by religion in the Canadian experience of the Great War by examining in detail the actions of the churches on the home front. It seeks to evaluate the ways in which the four largest Canadian denominations — the Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Methodists — reacted to the war from its outbreak in 1914 through to the Armistice in November 1918. The churches, viewed less as institutional bodies than as integral parts of Canadian society, serve as an interpretive model for examining the issues that Canadians believed were at the root of the Great War and how those beliefs shaped their wartime actions. Fundamentally, this dissertation will analyze the lived experience of the war on the home front through the frame of the churches, showing wherever possible local reactions to the events of the war and viewing the war effort as more than merely military contributions. It will examine how English Canadians initially struggled to understand what it meant to wage war as a Christian people and how they ultimately came to see the war as a global struggle for justice and liberty. This perception allowed a broad scope for war-work as an adjunct to the military effort, including prayer and war relief, but it left little room for alternative perspectives and little tolerance for those not felt to be bearing their share of the war's burdens. And this dissertation will refute the assumption that the Catholic church in French Canada was opposed to the war, showing instead how it supported the war in its own way. Throughout the war, even in the face of provocation and unrest, the church preached loyalty, moderation, and respect for authority. It undertook efforts to relieve suffering through contributions to the Canadian Patriotic

Fund and war relief, it prayed for peace and for Allied victory, and it worked to support both volunteers and conscripts.

The social and political influence of the Canadian churches during the early twentieth century should not be underestimated. In 1911, the last census year before the outbreak of war, close to 95 percent of Canadians claimed affiliation with one of the various Christian denominations. Of Canadian Christians, 88 percent — nearly 85 percent of the overall population — identified with one of the four major denominations. Roman Catholics accounted for 39 percent of the population, the majority in French Canada, while the three major Protestant denominations together accounted for 45 percent of the overall population. The Protestant share was divided relatively evenly, with slightly higher numbers of Presbyterians than Methodists and slightly lower numbers of Anglicans (see Table 0.1). While church attendance figures and membership rolls give figures that are undeniably lower than these census totals, religion — and Christianity in particular — played a vital role in people's lives, culture, and identities. Even among those who were not overtly religious or who did not practice regularly, a 'diffusive' form of Christian culture was commonplace, shaping not only behaviours and practices but also attitudes and morality.<sup>12</sup> Historians like Lynne Marks, William Westfall, Michael Gauvreau, and others have demonstrated that this Christian culture extended far beyond the institutional churches to exert a strong influence on everything

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<sup>12</sup> The phrase 'diffusive Christianity' was coined by Jeffrey Cox in *The English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth, 1870-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). See also Michael Snape, *God and the British Soldier: Religion and the British Soldier in the First and Second World Wars* (London: Routledge, 2005), 52-68.

from leisure pursuits to national vision, affecting ideas about education and social reform.<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 0.1 — Religious Denominations of the Canadian Population (1911)**

<b>Total Population</b>		<b>7,206,643</b>
Roman Catholic	2,833,041	39.31%
Presbyterian	1,116,071	15.49%
Methodist	1,089,993	15.12%
Church of England	1,043,017	14.47%
Other Christian	809,568	11.23%
<i>Baptist</i>	382,720	5.31%
<i>Lutheran</i>	229,720	3.19%
<i>Other</i>	197,128	2.74%
Non-Christian	233,897	3.25%
<i>Jewish</i>	16,041	0.22%
<i>Other</i> *	217,856	3.02%
No religion stated	32,490	0.45%
No religion	26,893	0.37%

\* ‘Other’ was used as the census category. No further information is available about the composition.

Adapted from: K.G. Basavarajappa and Bali Ram, “Table A164-184: Principal Religious Denominations of the Population, census dates, 1871-1971,” *Historical Statistics of Canada, Section A: Population and Migration*, Statistics Canada. Available online from [http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm#A2\\_14](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm#A2_14)

<sup>13</sup> A selection of these works include Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1989); Michael Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada from the Great Revival to the Great Depression* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1991); Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900-1940* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001); Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

In the first decades of the twentieth century, clergymen were comfortable taking public stances on religious issues and addressing political issues from the pulpit. A distinction was recognized between the sacred and the secular, but religion was not understood as something separate from ordinary life or from the larger society. As William Westfall argues in his study of Protestant culture in late-nineteenth century Ontario, the churches and Canadian society evolved alongside one another, reflecting and reinforcing a set of common values and ideals.<sup>14</sup> Religious practice, then as now, was bound up not only with matters of faith and belief, but also questions of ethnic heritage and tradition, respectability, and a sense of community. The churches, therefore, were dynamic and outward facing institutions whose public role was not only accepted but generally expected. Christianity was a pervasive force whose reach and importance extended far beyond Sunday services and church buildings, serving as a cultural touchstone and shaping morality and social conscience. As a major part of Canadian society, when war broke out in August 1914, people looked to the churches to provide support; the churches responded by attempting to make sense of the war, and the sacrifices that the nation required for its successful war effort, through the frame of their religious heritage.

Long before the war, the churches had served as social gathering points, building a sense of community. Sunday services could be as much a social activity as a religious one, particularly in small towns, and participation in various church associations provided a respectable form of recreation. Local churches hosted women's groups, organized cadet groups and Sunday schools, and staged suppers, picnics, and a range of

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<sup>14</sup> Westfall, *Two Worlds*, passim.

well-attended entertainments.<sup>15</sup> The major events of people's lives were marked with religious ceremonies, with baptisms, marriages, and funerals bringing families and communities together. These activities continued throughout the war but churchmen and women also involved themselves in a bewildering range of endeavours associated with the war: raising funds for relief organizations, supporting the Canadian Patriotic Fund, assembling soldiers' comforts, organizing patriotic meetings, buying Victory Bonds, encouraging recruiting, praying for the safety of loved ones, and many others. Most of these efforts were natural extensions of the pre-war work done by the churches within their communities. For each of the more than two hundred 'war Sundays' clergymen of all denominations conducted services and addressed their congregants. Their words arose out of their personal experiences of the war as an ongoing event and were intended as explanations, exhortations, and encouragements rooted in particular moments and directed towards particular groups of people. Clergymen were aware of the preoccupations and circumstances of their congregants and sought to address these, not only from the pulpit but also through pastoral visits and by involving themselves in their communities.

In August 1918, R.C. Blgrave, the rector of St. Mark's Anglican (Parkdale) in Toronto, enthusiastically reflected on the efforts that had been made over the course of the previous four years, writing:

The pulpits of the land have been the greatest incentive to recruiting; they have furnished the greatest amount of information; they have instilled the most genuine patriotism; they have exalted the national ideals; they have

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<sup>15</sup> Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, passim.

inspired the morale of the people; they have comforted the stricken and bereaved as no other single force has managed to do ...<sup>16</sup>

Motivated as he was by a desire to assert that the churches were playing a dominant and necessary wartime role, Blagrave's language is undeniably hyperbolic, but he accurately indicates some of the wide range of activities in which the churches involved themselves. With the exception of recruiting, which was a particular and obvious wartime function undertaken by some clerics, most of these activities were extensions of the churches' nation-building efforts, which predated the war but were given a new patriotic impetus by it. Others were traditional pastoral services, like visiting bereaved families. That the churches played a role in war-related activity both at an institutional level (sending chaplains and establishing organizations to oversee soldiers' welfare) and more personally (memorial services and pastoral visits), speaks to the links between the churches' traditional religious functions and the civic role that they felt was theirs to perform. Religion was not set apart but was woven into the fabric of Canadian society.

Interest in the Canadian churches and the Great War has increased as a result of the war's centenary and the body of literature dealing directly with the churches and the war has grown as a result.<sup>17</sup> Although this revived interest promises to better integrate religion into the histories of the Canadian war experience, most existing works have a relatively narrow focus, dealing with a single denomination and/or geographic region.

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<sup>16</sup> R.C. Blagrave, "The Church and the Labour Problem," *Canadian Churchman*, 22 August 1918, 540.

<sup>17</sup> Relatively recent works include Gordon Heath, ed., *Canadian Churches and the First World War* (Pickwick Publications: Eugene, Or., 2014); Norman Knowles, "'O valiant hearts who to your glory came': Protestant Responses to Alberta's Great War" in *Frontiers of Patriotism: Alberta and the First World War*, eds. Adriana Davies and Jeffrey Keshen, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2016), 231-244; Mark McGowan, *The Imperial Irish: Canada's Irish Catholics Fight the Great War, 1914-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017); Ian Baird, "For God and Empire: War Sermons and Voluntary Enlistment among New Brunswick's Anglicans in the Great War, 1914-1917," (MA thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2018).

There is also a strong tendency to focus on the institutional churches and on the military aspects of the response, notably chaplaincy and ministries to soldiers serving overseas. One of the few works to move beyond geographic or denominational considerations, Duff Crerar's *Padres in No Man's Land* is a comprehensive study of the work of overseas chaplains and the development of the Canadian Chaplains Services. Understandably, given the subject, it devotes little attention to the religious situation on the home front and the impact on the congregations left behind when their ministers became chaplains.<sup>18</sup> The other major work to look beyond geography and denomination is the edited collection *Canadian Churches and the First World War*. The most comprehensive work to date on the churches' activities during the war, the book brings together work on all of the major and some of the key smaller denominations (Lutherans, Baptists, the historic peace churches), but its structure does not allow for discussion that engages common themes across denominational boundaries. Its contributors also tend toward institutional and military history at the expense of considering the critical social and intellectual contributions made by the churches during the war.<sup>19</sup> Two smaller-scale works, Gordon Heath's article on the Protestant press during the 1917 conscription crisis and Norman Knowles's chapter on Alberta's

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<sup>18</sup> Duff Crerar, *Padre's in No Man's Land* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995). Also available and dealing with the question of military service are Bob Anger, "Presbyterian Chaplaincy during the First World War," *Canadian Society of Presbyterian History Papers* (2002): 15-31; Duff Crerar, "Bellicose Priests: The Wars of the Canadian Catholic Chaplains, 1914-1919," *Canadian Society of Church History Papers* 33 (1991): 13-32; Duff Crerar, "The Church in the Furnace: Canadian Anglican Chaplains Respond to the Great War," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 35 (1993): 75-103; Duff Crerar, "In the Day of Battle: Canadian Catholic Chaplains in the Field, 1885-1945," *CCHA Historical Studies* 61 (1995): 53-73; Duff Crerar, "Scattered by the Whirlwind: Alberta Chaplains and the Great War" in *Frontiers of Patriotism*, 71-80; Michelle Fowler, "Faith, Hope and Love: The Wartime Motivations of Lance Corporal Frederick Spratlin, MM and Bar, 3rd Battalion, CEF," *Canadian Military History* 15, no. 1 (2006): 45-60; and Mark McGowan, "Harvesting the 'Red Vineyard': Catholic Religious Culture in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919," *CCHA Historical Studies* 64 (1998): 47-70.

<sup>19</sup> Heath, ed., *Canadian Churches and the First World War*.

Protestant churches in *The Frontier of Patriotism*, a recent history of Alberta during the Great War, bring together multiple denominations, but they are narrowly focussed studies that do not seek to draw larger conclusions.<sup>20</sup> In all cases, the activity and attitude of the French Canadian Catholics remain underrepresented and poorly understood. This dissertation deliberately seeks to tell a more national story, bridging some of the traditional gaps between Protestant and Catholic, French and English, in order to explore commonalities in the experiences of Canadian churchmen and women while at the same time demonstrating how the distinctive traditions and theology of each denomination affected its approach to the war.

This dissertation uses existing denominational studies of the wartime churches has been used to lay a foundation for understanding the activities of the churches. The historiographical literature of Methodism is perhaps the richest of any denomination. This is no doubt because the records of the Methodist Army and Navy Board (formed in 1915) are exceptionally well-preserved and accessible at the United Church of Canada Archives in Toronto. The Methodists, stung by allegations that the denomination was not contributing proportionally to the war effort, made an active effort after the war to document the efforts made both institutionally and by individual circuits, and this is reflected in the interest shown by later historians.<sup>21</sup> J.M. Bliss's 1968 article, "The

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<sup>20</sup> Gordon Heath, "The Protestant Denominational Press and the Conscription Crisis, 1917-1918," *CCHA Historical Studies* 78 (2012): 27-46; Knowles, "Protestant Responses to Alberta's Great War" in *Frontiers of Patriotism*, 231-244.

<sup>21</sup> See Murray Angus, "King Jesus and King George: The Manly Christian Patriot and the Great War, 1914-1918," *Canadian Methodist Historical Society Papers* 12 (1997-1998): 124-132; Robert MacDonald, "The Methodist Church in Alberta during the First World War," *Canadian Methodist Historical Society Papers* 10 (1993-1994): 145-169; Penny Bedal and Ross Bartlett, "The Women Do Not Speak: The Methodist Ladies' Aid Societies and World War I," *Canadian Methodist Historical Society Papers* 10 (1993-1994): 63-86.

Methodist Church and the First World War,” was the first to study the response of the denomination, with Bliss arguing that the Methodist view of the war remained idealistic and hopeful despite the suffering.<sup>22</sup> Published in 1985, David Marshall’s answering article, “Methodist Embattled,” takes an alternate view, influenced by the modernist tendency to look for disillusionment, and finds that the war caused a crisis of faith for many Methodists who served overseas with the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF).<sup>23</sup> These differing conclusions point not only to the changing attitudes toward studies of the war experience occasioned by Paul Fussell’s *The Great War and Modern Memory* in 1975, but also reflect the fact that Marshall privileges the attitudes of the chaplains and soldiers who served overseas and demonstrates the difficulty of arriving at a single, fully representative war experience.<sup>24</sup> This dissertation, with its exclusively domestic focus, reflects little of the atmosphere at the front. Instead, the idealism regularly preached by clerics at home dominates, making Marshall’s less rosy outlook an important counterbalance indicative of a gap that developed between soldiers and civilians as the war challenged their faiths in different ways.

Although Methodists would be most troubled by questions of pacifism and conscience during the war, Presbyterians had been the most vocal advocates of the peace movement in the pre-war period and the question of pacifism features frequently in histories of Canadian Presbyterianism. Brian Fraser, in a study of pre-war liberal

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<sup>22</sup> Bliss, “Methodist Church.”

<sup>23</sup> David Marshall, “Methodism Embattled: A Reconsideration of the Methodist Church and World War I,” *Canadian Historical Review* (1985): 48-64. Marshall acknowledges the influence of Paul Fussell and the modernists in his chapter on Methodists in *Canadian Churches and the First World War*. His chapter softens his earlier stance, acknowledging the difficulty in arriving at a single representative war experience. See Marshall’s chapter in Heath, *Canadian Churches*, 102ff, esp. 102n3.

<sup>24</sup> Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

pacifism amongst Canadian Presbyterians, finds that the Presbyterian peace movement rested on the same base of progressive theology as the social gospel movement.<sup>25</sup> This movement, expressed most clearly by Presbyterians and Methodists, actively sought to remake the world until it resembled, or even became, the Kingdom of God.<sup>26</sup> As Thomas Socknat had earlier pointed out in his general study of Canadian pacifism, unlike the deep-seated principles of non-resistance more commonly associated with the Quakers or the other traditional 'peace churches', liberal pacifism viewed war as a failure of society which could be rendered obsolete by societal reform and improved international diplomacy.<sup>27</sup> To this end, Michelle Fowler's studies of the Presbyterian denominational press finds that Presbyterians continued to advocate for improved international structures, even after the outbreak of war.<sup>28</sup> Although Amy Shaw's examination of conscientious objectors found that the churches did not seem to maintain their pre-war pacifism to any significant degree after 1914, her conclusion is based on a study of exemption claims made under the 1917 Military Service Act (MSA). As the provisions of the MSA made little allowance for individual conscience, instead treating membership in one of the traditional peace churches as a determinant, most conscientious objectors in Canada were members of groups with recognized absolutist

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<sup>25</sup> Brian Fraser, "Peacemaking among Presbyterians in Canada: 1900-1945," in *Peace, War, and God's Justice*, ed. Thomas Parket and Brian Fraser, 125-143 (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1989)

<sup>26</sup> For a full study see Allen, *Social Passion*.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Socknat, *Witness against War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 7-8.

<sup>28</sup> Michelle Fowler, "'Death Is Not the Worst Thing': The Presbyterian Press in Canada, 1913-1919," *War & Society* 25.2 (2006), 23-38; "Keeping the Faith: The Presbyterian Press in Peace and War, 1913-1919," (MA thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University, 2005).

views.<sup>29</sup> This more stringent definition of pacifism ignores the questioning that took place as Canadian Protestants tried to reconcile their liberal pacifism to the reality of being at war. As this dissertation argues, support for the war remained nuanced, with men who considered themselves to still be pacifists nonetheless feeling that the war was a necessary one and contributing to the war effort.

The relative lack of Presbyterian studies, at least in comparison with Methodists, is likely a consequence of the fact that the relevant Presbyterian archival records have, unfortunately, been lost or destroyed. This lack of an institutional record means that the historiographical emphasis has, by necessity, been on the denominational periodicals and prominent individuals, including Major Charles Gordon, an overseas chaplain who wrote social gospel novels under the pseudonym ‘Ralph Connor’.<sup>30</sup> Existing studies, most notably Fowler’s study of denominational periodicals and Stuart Macdonald’s examination of the sermons of the Rev. Thomas Eakin, examine Presbyterian reactions to the war, but they divorce the primary source material from the chronological progression of the war.<sup>31</sup> By analyzing the material along broad themes that stretch the length of the war period, both Fowler and Macdonald make generalizations that tend to

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<sup>29</sup> Amy Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objecting in Canada during the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009). Shaw’s “Conscientious Objectors in Alberta in the First World War” in *Frontiers of Patriotism*, 475-481 is largely a summary in relation to Alberta.

<sup>30</sup> D. Barry Mack, “Modernity without Tears: The Mythic World of Ralph Connor,” in *The Burning Bush and a Few Acres of Snow*, 139-157; Beth Profit, “‘The Making of a Nation’: Nationalism and World War One in the Social Gospel Literature of Ralph Connor,” *Canadian Society of Church History Papers* (1992): 127-138. Gordon also features prominently in Brian Fraser’s chapter on the war in *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988), 155-171. See also Gordon’s autobiography, *Postscript to Adventure* and the wartime Ralph Connor novels *The Major* (Toronto: McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, 1917) and *The Sky Pilot in No Man’s Land* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1919).

<sup>31</sup> Fowler, “Death Is Not the Worst Thing”; Fowler, “Keeping the Faith”; Stuart MacDonald, “The Wartime Sermons of the Rev. Thomas Eakin,” *Canadian Society of Church History Papers* (1985): 58-78. More recently, MacDonald has also offered a review of the Presbyterian historiography, but this paper primarily offers suggestions for further research rather than drawing conclusions: “Myth Meets Reality: Canadian Presbyterians and the Great War,” *Canadian Society of Church History Papers* (2012): 103-120.

obscure the way that rhetoric shifted in tone and purpose as the war went on. Although the same language may have been employed throughout the war, this language was employed to different ends as the war progressed and circumstances changed. In adopting chronology as one of the driving factors, this dissertation tries to contextualize statements with reference to the unfolding events at home and overseas in order to show how the early justifications of the war later became both calls to action and sources of consolation.

Although all four major denominations were international organizations, with a steady flow of people, books, correspondence, and ideas coming from Britain and other nations, the Church of England in Canada had the most explicitly imperial ties. As Richard Ruggle points out, Canadian Anglicans were also strongly supportive of government policy regarding defence questions in the years surrounding the Great War.<sup>32</sup> Despite this support, their imperial identity, and the fact that upwards of 30 percent of the CEF were nominally Anglicans, relatively little historical attention has been paid to the activities of the denomination during the war.<sup>33</sup> There is a developing interest in imperial Anglicanism, which puts the Canadian church into its broader international context, but this literature says little about the experiences of Canadian Anglicans themselves.<sup>34</sup> What this literature does, however, is raise important methodological

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<sup>32</sup> Richard Ruggle, "Some Canadian Anglican Attitudes to War and Peace, 1890-1930," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 25 (1993): 133-142.

<sup>33</sup> For a more complete breakdown as of 2011, see Gordon Heath, "Canadian Churches and War: An Introductory Essay and Annotated Bibliography," *McMaster Journal of Theology and Ministry* 12 (2010-2011): 62-64.

<sup>34</sup> See Joe Hardwick, "Fasts, Thanksgivings, and Senses of Community in Nineteenth Century Canada and the British Empire," *Canadian Historical Review* 98, no. 4 (2017): 673-703; Richard Vaudry, *Anglicans and the Atlantic World: High Churchmen, Evangelicals, and the Quebec Connection* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003); Michael Snape, "Anglicanism and Intervention: Bishop Brent, the United States, and the British Empire in the First World War," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 69, no. 2 (2018): 300-325.

considerations about the ways in which clerical statements relate to public sentiment and what importance to attach to international ties, issues dealt with in this dissertation.<sup>35</sup>

Addressing the Canadian experience more directly, Trevor Powell, the archivist for the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle in southern Saskatchewan, has written a well-rounded survey of activity in the diocese during the war, but this is only for a single locale.<sup>36</sup> Likewise, in his MA thesis Ian Baird examines recruiting and voluntary enlistment among New Brunswick Anglicans, a limited frame of reference. Although Baird demonstrates how Anglican priests began to promote recruiting more extensively as the provincial unit, the 26th Battalion, began to struggle to fill its ranks, the analysis is not sufficient to draw wider conclusions.<sup>37</sup> This local focus is likely a consequence of the nature of the material available. Archival material, institutional publications, and even many denominational periodicals are dispersed in small diocesan archives, making the task of assembling larger-scale histories much more difficult.

As is the case for Anglicans, Roman Catholic records are contained in numerous diocesan archives across the country. There is also the important cultural and linguistic divide between French- and English-speaking Catholics, a divide which has been perpetuated in the historical literature. Thanks largely to research by Mark McGowan on Canada's Irish Catholics, however, the reaction to the war by Canada's English-

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<sup>35</sup> Philip Williamson, "National Days of Prayer: The Churches, the State and Public Worship in Britain, 1899-1947," *English Historical Review* 128, no. 531 (2013): 121-174. From a Canadian perspective, S.F. Wise, "Sermon Literature and Canadian Intellectual History," *United Church Archive Bulletin* 18 (1965): 3-18; Hardwick, "Fasts, Thanksgivings, and Senses of Community,"; Gordon Heath, *A War with a Silver Lining: Canadian Protestant Churches and the South African War, 1899-1902* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009); Gordon Heath "Sin in the Camp: the Day of Humble Supplication in the Church of England in Canada in the Early Months of the South African War," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 44 (2002): 207-26.

<sup>36</sup> Trevor Powell, "The Church on the Home Front: The Church of England in the Diocese of Qu'Appelle and the Great War," *Saskatchewan History* 64, no. 2 (2012): 8-23.

<sup>37</sup> Baird, "War Sermons and Voluntary Enlistment."

speaking Catholics is better understood than the reaction of their French-speaking co-religionists. McGowan's *The Imperial Irish* is a detailed survey of the Irish Catholic reaction to the war, supplementing his earlier regional studies and his look at the Catholic culture of the CEF. *Imperial Irish* provides a more general picture of the attitudes and behaviours of both the English-speaking Catholic hierarchy and individual English-speaking Catholics, arguing that the double minority status of English-speaking Catholics meant that they had to continually assert their own identity and patriotism.<sup>38</sup> Because of their association with Catholic Quebec, which was felt to be hostile to the war, and Pope Benedict XV, who was felt to be pro-German,<sup>39</sup> English-speaking Catholics had to overcome accusations of disloyalty to the British cause, while still maintaining a distinctive identity within the Canadian Catholic church, which had traditionally been dominated by French-speaking bishops. Similarly, in a study of a 1917 raid on a Guelph Jesuit seminary, instigated on suspicion that among the novices were men avoiding conscription, Brian Hogan concluded that the war could serve as an excuse for the expression of local prejudices, which notably included anti-Catholic

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<sup>38</sup> Mark McGowan, *The Imperial Irish*; "Between King, Kaiser, and Canada: Irish Catholics and the Great War, 1914-1918," in *Irish Nationalism in Canada*, ed. David Wilson, 97-120 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009); "The Degreening of the Irish: Toronto's Irish Catholic Press, Imperialism, and the Forging of a New Identity, 1887-1914," *Canadian Historical Association Papers* 24, no. 1 (1989): 118-145; "Harvesting the 'Red Vineyard'"; "Sharing the Burden of Empire: Toronto's Catholics and the Great War, 1914-1918," in *Catholics at the 'Gathering Place': Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841-1991*, eds. Mark McGowan and Brian Clarke, 177-207 (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1993); *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Ontario, 1887-1922* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).

<sup>39</sup> On Benedict XV, see Xavier Boniface, "Neutralité et impartialité du Saint-Siège dans la Grande guerre," in *1914: Neutralités, neutralismes en question*, eds. Ineke Bokcting, Béatrice Fonck, Pauline Piettre (New York: Peter Lang, 2017), 41-56; Jean Jacques Becker, *Le pape et la grande guerre* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2006); John Pollard, *The Unknown Pope: Benedict XV (1914-1922) and the Pursuit of Peace* (London: Continuum, 1999). Although the pope was also involved with humanitarian efforts on both sides, this was less discussed in the press at the time. See Francis Latour "L'action du Saint-Siège en faveur des prisonniers de guerre pendant la Première Guerre mondiale," *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 1 no. 253 (2014): 43-56.

sentiment.<sup>40</sup> The need to overcome this anti-Catholic feeling and assert their place in society by demonstrating their loyalty and patriotism meant that English Canadian Catholics increasingly distanced themselves from their French-speaking co-religionists who, as this dissertation will demonstrate, approached the war from a different cultural background.

The attitudes and reactions of the Catholic Church in French Canada have received relatively little scholarly attention, despite the importance often attached to the role of Catholicism in French Canadian identity. Although there are numerous references to the appeals for calm made by Montréal's Archbishop Paul Bruchési during the conscription crisis, much more historical attention has been paid to the outspoken opposition of the war by *nationaliste* Henri Bourassa. Although Bourassa's nationalism had roots in his Catholicism, it is a mistake to see Bourassa's views as the only, or even necessarily the dominant, reaction by French Canadian Catholics. Geoff Keelan and René Durocher, in their studies of the influence of Catholicism on Bourassa's thinking, indirectly acknowledge as much, showing that there was a clear difference of opinion between Bourassa and the French Canadian hierarchy. They conclude that, although Bourassa was careful not to fall afoul of the bishops in the first years of the war, his views were shaped by his own understanding and analysis of both the situation in Europe and

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<sup>40</sup> Brian Hogan, "The Guelph Novitiate Raid: Conscription, Censorship and Bigotry during the Great War," *CCHA Study Sessions* (1978): 57-80. See J.R. Miller, "Anti-Catholic Thought in Victorian Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 64, no. 4 (1985): 474-494; Kevin Anderson, "'This typical old Canadian form of racial and religious hate': Anti-Catholicism and English Canadian Nationalism," (PhD dissertation, McMaster University, 2013).

domestic politics.<sup>41</sup> Work on French Canadian communities outside of Quebec further makes it clear that generalizing to a single attitude about the war hides the multiplicity of reactions that existed at the time. James Trepanier, examining the impact of French Canadian nationalism on the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts fundraising campaign, found that competing visions of French Canadian nationalism were evident during the campaign, even among those who supported Catholic efforts to provide recreation huts for CEF soldiers.<sup>42</sup> When Bourassa's stance is not taken as a driving factor of analysis, quite a different view begins to take shape of French Canadian views of the war. Likewise, rates of military enlistments and opposition to conscription in 1917 and 1918 should not be read as the only actions of French Canadians.<sup>43</sup>

The first decades of the twentieth century were, for French Canadian Catholics, a difficult period. As Terence Fay and Sheila Ross demonstrate, linguistic and ethnic tensions within the church structure itself meant that French Canadian culture was being

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<sup>41</sup> René Durocher, "Henri Bourassa, les évêques et la guerre de 1914-1919," *Canadian Historical Association Papers* (1971): 254-269; Geoff Keelan, "Catholic Neutrality: The Peace of Henri Bourassa," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Society* 22, no. 1 (2001): 99-132; "Bourassa's War: Henri Bourassa and the First World War," (PhD dissertation, University of Waterloo, 2015). See also Charles-Philippe Courtois and Laurent Veyssièrre, *Le Québec dans la Grande Guerre: Engagements, refus, héritages* (Montréal: Septentrion, 2015).

<sup>42</sup> J. Trepanier, "Helping 'nos chers conscrits': The Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts and French Canadian Nationalism, 1917-1926," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 47, no. 2 (2013): 246-267. Trepanier relates the difference in attitudes to the Ontario schools crisis. For more see Jack Cécillon, *Prayers, Petitions, and Protests: The Catholic Church and the Ontario Schools Crisis in the Windsor Border Region, 1910-1928* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013). See also I.J.E. Daniel and D.A. Casey, *A History of the Canadian Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts* (Canada: n.p., 1922). The Catholic Army Huts and their activities overseas are also dealt with in McGowan, "'Harvesting the Red Vineyard'"; McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 252-263, 293; *Waning of the Green*, 178-180; Crerar, *Padres in No Man's Land*, 69, 81-82, 128.

<sup>43</sup> There is a wealth of this literature. See, for example, Martin Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War: The Canadian Government and the Suppression of the 1918 Quebec Easter Riots," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (2008): 503-540; Robert LeBlanc, "The Franco-American Response to the Conscription Crisis in Canada, 1916-1918," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 23, no. 3 (1993): 343-372; Andrew Theobald, "Une Loi Extraordinaire: New Brunswick Acadians and the Conscription Crisis of the First World War," *Acadiensis* 34, no. 1 (2004): 80-95; Andrew Theobald, *The Bitter Harvest of War: New Brunswick and the Conscription Crisis of 1917* (Fredericton: Goose Lane, 2008); Gregory Kennedy, "Answering the Call to Serve their (Acadian) Nation: The Volunteers of the 165th Battalion, 1911-1917," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 51, no. 104 (2018): 279-299.

continually challenged outside of Quebec, even within an institution that had traditionally acted as a defender of that culture.<sup>44</sup> Nor, as Roberto Perin describes in his study of the sometimes strained relationship between the Roman curia and the Canadian hierarchy, could French Canadian churchmen count on the support of Rome.<sup>45</sup> As barriers were broken down between English-speaking Catholics and Anglo-Protestants through their shared involvement in the war effort, language began to become a more important marker of identity than religion, isolating French Canada and leaving few commentators interested in exploring the French Canadian response to the war on its own cultural or religious terms.

Although this body of denominational literature provides a foundation for further studies, the tendency to focus on the institutional churches or on military aspects has left unaddressed the fundamental question of how the churches helped Canadians understand and cope with the war. The historiography has also tended to downplay the considerable non-military contributions made by the churches to the war effort. While a comprehensive national history of the Canadian home front has yet to be written, historians have begun to shed light on some of these home front activities. Desmond Morton's *Fight or Pay*, intended as a counterpart to his earlier study of Canadian soldiers, examines the Canadian Patriotic Fund and the work done to relieve the financial burden placed on families when their breadwinners enlisted. This work,

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<sup>44</sup> Terence Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002); Sheila Ross, "Bishop J.T. McNally and the Anglicization of the Diocese of Calgary: 1913-1915," *CCHA Historical Studies* 69 (2003): 85-100; McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 10-16, 97-103, 226-234, 243-246, 258-268, 274-275.

<sup>45</sup> Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada: The Vatican and Canadian Affairs in the Late Victorian Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990). See also Pellegrino Stagni, *The View from Rome: Archbishop Stagni's 1915 Reports on the Ontario Bilingual Schools Question*, ed. and trans. John Zucchi (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).

together with Sarah Glassford's study of the Canadian Red Cross, makes it clear that contemporaries understood not all contributions to the war effort were made by those in uniform and that all Canadians at home had their own obligations to serve.<sup>46</sup> Mourad Djebabla-Brun's *Combattre avec les vivres* seeks to show how food conservation and production likewise were seen as contributing to victory.<sup>47</sup> With the majority of Canadians never serving in uniform, the concepts of service and sacrifice during the war must be recast to include a broader range of experiences, including the work done by those remaining at home.

A number of local, topical, and regional histories of the war also provide a wider frame of reference for considering Canada's Great War experience. Robert Rumilly's *Histoire de la province de Québec*, while not strictly a history of the war, contains several volumes concerning the war period and integrates religious and social questions into the narrative. The wide scope and chronological arrangement of Rumilly's work, however, leaves the reader picking through the mass of material to reconstruct some of the extensive activities of the Catholic church in Quebec during the war, and much has been left out.<sup>48</sup> Other older regional histories, like Elizabeth Armstrong's *Crisis of Quebec* and John Herd Thompson's *The Harvests of War* are supplemented by historians seeking to explore the local histories of particular communities.<sup>49</sup> Some of these local

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<sup>46</sup> Desmond Morton, *When Your Number's Up: The Canadian Soldier in the First World War* (Toronto: Random House, 1993); Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004); Sarah Glassford, *Mobilizing Mercy: A History of the Canadian Red Cross* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 80-128.

<sup>47</sup> Mourad Djebabla-Brun, *Combattre avec les vivres: L'effort de guerre alimentaire Canadien en 1914-1918* (Québec: Septentrion, 2015).

<sup>48</sup> Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 41 volumes (Montréal: Éditions Bernard Valiquette and Montréal-Éditions, 1940-1969).

<sup>49</sup> Elizabeth Armstrong, *The Crisis of Quebec, 1914-1918* (New York: AMS Press, [1937] 1967); John Herd Thompson, *The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918* (Toronto: McClelland and Stuart, 1978).

studies, including Jean Provencher's study of the 1918 Quebec conscription riots, or Patricia McKegney's look at anti-German feelings Berlin/Kitchener, Ontario, have relatively narrow perspectives, making it difficult to see how particular aspects of life in one community are representative of wider experiences.<sup>50</sup> Other local studies focus extensively on recruiting or other matters associated with the military experience. This is true not only in the English-language historiography, but also in French where works by Gérard Filteau and Jean-Yves Gravel are primarily interested in the military record of the 22nd Battalion, the only francophone battalion to serve at the front.<sup>51</sup> More recent edited collections do attempt to move beyond the 22nd Battalion and purely *nationaliste* concerns, but they likewise devote significant space to military matters, including recruitment, conscription, and overseas experiences.<sup>52</sup> And Simon Jolivet's *Le vert et le bleu*, which looks at Quebec and Irish-Canadian identity at the beginning of the century also chooses to examine the Great War-period primarily through the formation of the Irish Canadian Rangers, a limited lens through which to view the period.<sup>53</sup> These works generally fail to ask whether the Catholic church offered French Canadian soldiers any special spiritual support, a topic taken up in this dissertation.

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<sup>50</sup> Jean Provencher, *Québec sous la Loi des Mesures de Guerre, 1918* (Montréal: Éditions du Boréal Exprès, 1971); Patricia McKegney, *The Kaiser's Bust: A Study of Wartime Propaganda in Berlin, Ontario 1914-1918* (St. Jacob's, Ont.: Bamberg Press, 1991).

<sup>51</sup> See Gérard Filteau, *Le Québec, le Canada et la guerre, 1914-1918* (Montréal: Éditions de l'Aurore, 1977); Jean-Yves Gravel, *Le Québec et la guerre, 1914-1918* (Montréal: Éditions du Boréal Exprès, 1974). See also Jean-Pierre Gagnon, *Le 22e Bataillon (canadien français) 1914-1919: Étude socio-militaire* (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1986); Pierre Vennat, *Les 'Poilus' québécois de 1914-1918: Histoire des militaires canadiens-français de la Première Guerre mondiale*, 2 vols. (Montréal: Éditions du Méridien, 1999); Réal Bélanger, "Albert Sévigny et la participation des canadiens français à la Grande Guerre," *Revue internationale d'histoire militaire* 54 (1982): 86-102

<sup>52</sup> Courtois and Veyssièrre, *Québec dans la Grande Guerre*.

<sup>53</sup> Simon Jolivet, *Le vert et le bleu: Identité québécoise et identité irlandaise au début du XXe siècle* (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2011). Robin Burns also examines the formation of this unit in "The Montreal Irish and the Great War," *CCHA Historical Studies* 52 (1985): 67-81.

In English, Robert Rutherford's *Homefront Horizons* explores three mid-sized communities in different regions (Lethbridge, Alberta; Guelph, Ontario; Trois-Rivières, Québec), but the soldier remains more prominent than the civilian as the study is most interested in questions of recruiting and leave-taking rituals.<sup>54</sup> Jim Blanchard's study of Winnipeg goes to the other extreme, broadening the scope to include a variety of political developments that took place during the war but that were unrelated to it, obscuring the impact that the war itself had on the lives of the citizens of Winnipeg.<sup>55</sup> James Pitsula's study of Regina, while deliberately incorporating consideration of the social gospel movement and work to 'Canadianize' immigrants, unfortunately relies almost exclusively on articles published in the *Regina Leader*, limiting the depth of his analysis.<sup>56</sup> Because of their prominence in the social landscape of Canada, the churches are generally referenced in these and other studies of the home front, but sweeping statements are often made on the basis of an unrepresentative and limited selection of sources. Brock Millman's *Polarity, Patriotism and Dissent*, for example, discusses the support offered by the churches, but he bases his analysis almost exclusively on the synod proceedings of a single Anglican diocese.<sup>57</sup> The reality of the Canadian religious reaction to the war is more complex, both ideologically and geographically, than this kind of sampling can capture.

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<sup>54</sup> Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

<sup>55</sup> Jim Blanchard, *Winnipeg's Great War: A City Comes of Age* (Winnipeg: University of Winnipeg Press, 2010).

<sup>56</sup> James Pitsula, *For All We Have and Are: Regina and the Experience of the Great War* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2008).

<sup>57</sup> Brock Millman, *Polarity, Patriotism, and Dissent in Great War Canada, 1914-1919* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016).

The question of how much Canadians at home knew about the war is an ongoing discussion. In his *Propaganda and Censorship*, Jeffrey Keshen claims that the tight censorship and the distance from the front kept Canadians effectively isolated from the worst of the war's realities. It was this distance that allowed them to support the war.<sup>58</sup> Iain Miller, in his study of wartime Toronto, refutes this assertion. Miller, who tries to look beyond recruiting figures and propaganda to portray the life of the city during the war, argues that the information available to Canadians was sufficient for them to understand something of the nature of the fighting overseas and that their support was offered in spite of this.<sup>59</sup> While Canadians were no doubt insulated by the distance from the worst horrors of the front, they were not ignorant of the costs of the war. By studying how the churches supported Canadians, this study looks to shed some light on the reasons why it was felt the sacrifices were worth making.

Canadians, and the Canadian churches, did not exist in isolation. Just as Canadian Catholics looked to Rome and had links with institutions in Ireland and elsewhere, Canadian Protestants had financial and cultural links that stretched across the Atlantic. The British connection was particularly important and British historians provide a number of interesting studies notably for the Church of England, which can provide

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<sup>58</sup> Jeffrey Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship in Canada's Great War* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1996). See also Myriam Levert, "Le Québec sous la règle d'Anastasie: l'expérience censoriale durant la Première Guerre mondiale," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 57, no. 3 (2004): 333-364.

<sup>59</sup> I.H.M. Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief: Torontonians and the Great War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

useful models for the present study.<sup>60</sup> Robert Beaken's *The Church of England and the Home Front* is a richly fascinating small-scale history of the city of Colchester and the various roles played by its parish churches and resident ministers during the war. The wealth of documentation preserved in Colchester is, unfortunately, not equalled in the Canadian context, making a comparative survey impossible, but Beaken illustrates the ways in which the war affected the everyday life of the churches.<sup>61</sup> In more general studies of wartime England, Rene Kollar and Adrian Gregory have acknowledged the importance of better integrating religious views and practices into the way that people understood the conflict and their roles in it, although this has not necessarily been the prime focus of either work.<sup>62</sup> In the French context, in *La guerre et la foi* Annette Becker searches for traces of religious faith, finding that religion helped maintain a strong emotional and spiritual link between the trenches and the home front.<sup>63</sup> Canada's greater religious pluralism and the distance between Canada and the battlefield mean her strongly Catholic reading of the war cannot be applied, but Canadians, too, used prayer as a means of connecting themselves to loved ones absent on military service. Peter Houlihan, in his look at the occupied portion of France, theorizes even more directly

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<sup>60</sup> Included in this category are Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London: SPCK, 1978); David Thompson, "War, the Nation, and the Kingdom of God: The Origins of the National Mission of Repentance and Hope," *Studies in Church History* 10 (1983): 337-350; Albert Marrin, *The Last Crusade: The Church of England in the First World War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994); Shannon Bontrager, "The Imagined Crusade: The Church of England and the Mythology of Nationalism and Christianity During the Great War," *Church History* 71, no.4 (2002): 774-798; Thompson, "National Mission of Repentance and Hope". On the Dissenting side, Alan Wilkinson, *Dissent or Conform?: War, Peace and the English Churches, 1900-1945* (London: SCM Press, 1986); Mark Chapman, "Theology, Nationalism and the First World War: Christian Ethics and the Constraints of Politics," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 8 (1995): 13-35.

<sup>61</sup> Robert Beaken, *The Church of England and the Home Front, 1914-1918: Civilians, Soldiers and Religion in Wartime Colchester* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2015).

<sup>62</sup> Rene Kollar, *Searching for Raymond: Anglicanism, Spiritualism, and Bereavement between the Two World Wars* (New York: Lexington Books, 2000); Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>63</sup> Annette Becker, *La guerre et la foi: de la mort à la mémoire, 1914-1930* (Paris: A. Colin, 1994).

about the role religion played in shaping wartime identities and how the role of the clergy needs to be considered as a constructive force. He emphasizes how the shared religiosity of French and German Catholics in the occupied zones allowed a religious and sacramental identity to at times transcend national ones.<sup>64</sup> Australian historians also use religion as a category of analysis in questions of identity, examining imperial loyalty and attitudes toward conscription, a consideration which has not been applied in Canada except in so far as language figures into the debate.<sup>65</sup> Studies from New Zealand and Scotland examine communities in mourning and the ways in which religious expressions were used.<sup>66</sup> Coming into the war late and with a different religious landscape, the existing American studies do not translate into the Canadian context quite as readily, despite the geographic closeness.<sup>67</sup> These international studies all point to the pervasive influence of religion in society as a cultural and ideological force.

The strong link between the Catholic church in Quebec and French Canadian identity has already been a major consideration for historians. Sylvie Lacombe has

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<sup>64</sup> Peter Houlihan, "Local Catholicism as Transnational War Experience: Everyday Religious Practice in Occupied Northern France, 1914-1918," *Central European History* 45, no. 2 (2012): 233-267. For a comparative perspective on clerical nationalism, see A.J. Hoover, *God, Germany, and Great Britain in the Great War: A Study in Clerical Nationalism* (New York: Praeger, 1989).

<sup>65</sup> J. A. Moses, "Australian Anglican Leaders and the Great War, 1914-1918: The 'Prussian Menace', Conscription, and National Solidarity," *Journal of Religious History* 25, no. 3 (2001): 306-325; Alan Gilbert, "Protestants, Catholics and Loyalty: An Aspect of the Conscription Controversies, 1916-17," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 6, no. 1 (1971): 15-25; Jeff Kildea, "Australian Catholics and Conscription in the Great War," *Journal of Religious History* 26, no. 3 (2002): 298-313; R.S.M. Withycombe, "Australian Anglicans and Imperial Identity, 1900-1914," *Journal of Religious History* 25, no. 3 (2001): 286-305.

<sup>66</sup> Kathryn Hunter, "'Sleep on dear Ernie, your battles are o'er': A Glimpse of a Mourning Community, Invercargill, New Zealand," *War in History* 14, no. 1 (2007): 36-62; James Lachlan MacLeod, "'Greater Love Hath No Man than This': Scotland's Conflicting Religious Responses to Death in the Great War," *Scottish Historical Review* 81, no. 211 (2002): 70-96. See also the more general literature surrounding death and mourning, Pat Jalland, *Death in War and Peace: Loss and Grief in England, 1914-1970* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010);

<sup>67</sup> John Piper, Jr., *The American Churches in World War I* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985); Philip Jenkins, *The Great and Holy War: How World War I Became a Religious Crusade* (New York: HarperOne, 2014).

demonstrated how Bourassa's national vision was influenced by his Catholicism in the years following the Boer War, contrasting it with the increasing imperialist sentiment in English Canada.<sup>68</sup> Michel Bock contrasts Henri Bourassa's pan-Canadian attitude toward French Canadians with the development of Abbé Lionel Groulx's more strictly French Canadian outlook, one that developed during the war and in large part through the struggles over French-language education against 'les Boches d'Ontario.'<sup>69</sup> In the context of the Ontario schools crisis, Adrian Ciani and Jack Cécillon have described the conflict between Bishop Michael Fallon of the Roman Catholic Diocese of London and some of his French Canadian parishes over the question of French-language education and worship in 1917, while John Zucchi has provided a concise summary of the struggle along with a translation of the apostolic delegate's reports to the Vatican.<sup>70</sup> The role of Catholicism in Quebec identity also appears in Denis Monière's history of ideologies in Quebec, where he points out the importance of ultramontanism and the impact of the churches on the development of social services and the labour movement.<sup>71</sup> William Ryan, evaluating the pre-war period from an economic standpoint, demonstrates how local priests often spent decades in a single location, becoming strong advocates for their communities and respected leaders in the years leading up to 1914.<sup>72</sup> Likewise, Jean

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<sup>68</sup> Sylvie Lacombe, *La rencontre de deux peuples élus: Comparaison des ambitions nationale et impériale au Canada entre 1896 et 1920* (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2002).

<sup>69</sup> Michel Bock, *Quand la nation débordait les frontières: Les minorités françaises dans la pensée de Lionel Groulx* (Montréal: Éditions Hurtubise, 2004).

<sup>70</sup> Adrian Ciani, "'An imperialist Irishman': Bishop Michael Fallon, the Diocese of London and the Great War," *CCHA Historical Studies* 74 (2008): 73-94; Pellegrino Stagni, *The View from Rome: Archbishop Stagni's 1915 Reports on the Ontario Bilingual Schools Question*, ed. and trans. John Zucchi (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002); Cécillon, *Prayers, Petitions, and Protests*.

<sup>71</sup> Denis Monière, *Le développement des idéologies au Québec des origines à nos jours* (Montréal: Éditions Québec/Amérique, 1977).

<sup>72</sup> William Ryan, *The Clergy and Economic Growth in Quebec (1896-1914)* (Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1966).

Hamelin and Nicole Gagnon in *Histoire du catholicisme québécois* point out the various ways in which the Catholic church protected and nurtured Quebec identity, morality, and stability.<sup>73</sup> This dissertation, which begins with an assumption of the vital role played by religion in Canadian society, looks to expand this discussion by exploring how those principles were acted out in a time of domestic and international crisis.

For Canadian Anglo-Protestants, religion and national vision also informed one another. Proponents of the social gospel movement looked to reform Canadian society in accordance with Christian principles, making Canada a more righteous nation. The war sparked activity on social questions, particularly within the Protestant churches, as a result of clerical admonitions to work toward the creation of a better world at home, as well as seeking victory on the battlefield. Richard Allen's considerable work on the topic mentions the war only briefly, as his *Social Passion* begins in earnest with the 1919 Winnipeg General strike and his biography on Salem Bland ends in 1914.<sup>74</sup> But denominationally focussed histories of the social gospel movement, notably Phyllis Airhardt's *Serving the Present Age* and Brian Fraser's *Social Uplifters*, acknowledge that the war led to an increase in prominence for the social gospel movement, in part because the war created new opportunities for social service. It also gave a new impetus to

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<sup>73</sup> Jean Hamelin and Nicole Gagnon, *Histoire du catholicisme québécois: Le XXe siècle* (Montréal: Boréal, 1984).

<sup>74</sup> Richard Allen, ed., *The Social Gospel in Canada: Papers of the Interdisciplinary Conference on Social Gospel in Canada, March 21-24 1973, at the University of Regina* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1975); "Salem Bland and the Social Gospel in Canada," (MA thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1961); "The Social Gospel and the Reform Tradition in Canada, 1890-1928," *Canadian Historical Review* 49.4 (1968): 381-399; *The View from Murney Tower: Salem Bland, the Late Victorian Controversies, and the Search for a New Christianity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); *Social Passion*.

existing efforts by allowing these to be framed in more patriotic terms.<sup>75</sup> There was also a social Catholicism, but it was not driven by the same kind of national vision. Instead, social Catholicism was based largely on the dignity of the human person as espoused in Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum novarum* and much of the work was taken up by religious orders and groups like the St. Vincent de Paul Society, rather than diffusing more broadly as was the case for the social gospel movement.<sup>76</sup> Although historians like David Marshall and Ramsay Cook have wondered whether the increasing social activism of the churches resulted in their ultimate secularization and was a scramble to remain relevant. But, from the perspective of those involved, it was necessary for the churches to remain engaged in society.<sup>77</sup> Canadian churchmen and women at the time of the Great War were confident that the Christian message remained relevant in their own lives and only needed to look around to see the cultural and ideological influence exercised by the churches.

Looking beyond the Great War, Carman Miller has argued convincingly that Canadian historians should take into account the experience of the Boer War

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<sup>75</sup> Phyllis Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); Fraser, *The Social Uplifters*. Pulker, *We Stand on Their Shoulders*, while not generally treating the impact of the war on Anglican social thinking, does devote a chapter to the activism of Canon F.G. Scott, Canada's most famous chaplain.

<sup>76</sup> Leo XIII, *Rerum novarum: Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labour*, papal encyclical, Vatican website, 15 May 1891, available online at [http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_15051891\\_rerum-novarum.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html). See also Peter Baltutis, "'To Enlarge Our Hearts and to Widen our Horizon': Archbishop Neil McNeil and the Origins of Social Catholicism in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1912-1934," *CCHA Historical Studies* 74 (2008): 29-50; Michael Gauvreau, "Forging a New Space for Lay Male Piety: St. Vincent de Paul Societies in Urban Quebec and Ontario, 1846-1890," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 42, no. 83 (2009): 35-67.

<sup>77</sup> Other works on the social gospel movement include Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*; Cook, *The Regenerators*; David Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); Westfall, *Two Worlds*; Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991); R.A. Wright, *A World Mission: Canadian Protestantism and the Quest for a New International Order, 1918-1939* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008).

(1899-1902) as the lessons learned in this earlier war were applied in shaping Canada's response in 1914.<sup>78</sup> This is likewise true in terms of the churches. Gordon Heath's work on the Protestant denominational press during the Boer War demonstrates that the churches of 1899-1902, like their counterparts from 1914-1918, felt that they had a role to play as commentators on both the moral and political aspects of the conflict. They were actively involved in the nation-building process, both through their activities and through their denominational periodicals, practices which would continue through, and after, the Great War.<sup>79</sup> Moving in the other direction, beyond 1918, Mourad Djebabla-Brun's *Se souvenir de la Grande Guerre* examines the public memory of the war in Quebec, but its starting point is the Armistice and he speaks little about how the post-war memory was influenced by the experience of the war itself.<sup>80</sup> Jonathan Vance's *Death So Noble* looks at the themes of memory and remembrance that emerged in English Canada as a result of the war. Vance points out that Canadian memorials were often hopeful, suggesting that Canadians believed that the war's suffering had been worthwhile, helping to construct a better world.<sup>81</sup> These hopes had their roots in wartime rhetoric, and this thesis seeks to demonstrate that the churches played an important role in fostering this sense of meaning.

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<sup>78</sup> Carman Miller, "Framing Canada's Great War: A Case for Including the Boer War," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2008): 3-21.

<sup>79</sup> Gordon Heath, *War with a Silver Lining*; Heath, "Sin in the Camp,"; "Forming Sound Public Opinion?: The Late Victorian Canadian Protestant Press and Nation-Building," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 48 (2006): 109-159.

<sup>80</sup> Mourad Djebabla-Brun, *Se souvenir de la Grande Guerre: La mémoire plurielle de 14-18 au Québec* (Montréal: VLB, 2004).

<sup>81</sup> Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997).

This dissertation will rely on a variety of primary sources in order to show how the churches helped instill the war with meaning and how that meaning translated into action. A range of documents generated by the institutional churches was used, including official correspondence, pastoral letters, the reports of various church bodies, and addresses made by various ecclesiastical officials. Because the intention has been to show the efforts of local churches within their communities, rather than to document the behaviour of the churches as institutional bodies, efforts have been made to supplement these sources with evidence of congregational responses drawn from letters, diaries, parish records, local secular newspapers, and other sources. Government records, including the papers of Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden, are also used to show the churches acting in the public sphere and the way that this activity was both accepted and expected by the public. Denominational periodicals, however, form the backbone of this study because they allow the war's progress to be followed as it was seen by contemporaries. In selecting sources and in choosing which material features in this dissertation, an attempt has been made to look beyond the experience of the major Ontario cities, although because of biases in the material consulted, they feature heavily, as does Montreal. British Columbia and the Maritimes, both with distinctive religious landscapes, perhaps appear underrepresented, and this is a reflection of their lesser presence in the sources consulted. But the available evidence suggests that churchmen

and women in these areas experienced the war similarly to their fellow Canadian Christians living elsewhere in the country.<sup>82</sup>

For each of the four major denominations, at least one periodical was surveyed in detail for the entire war period. The selection of sources was made in an attempt to ensure representative coverage for each denomination and to supplement existing studies. In all cases, secular periodicals, which often published information about Sunday services and other religious events, were used to provide additional information and perspectives. For the Presbyterians, whose institutional war records have not survived, three periodicals were consulted in their entirety, including one published in Atlantic Canada. In French Canada, official Catholic periodicals issuing from the dioceses of Saint-Boniface, Montréal, and Québec were read completely. Others were sampled extensively for periods and topics of particular interest. The *Christian Guardian* was the only major Methodist periodical and therefore the only one examined, but the survival of the denomination's Army and Navy Board records provided a useful counterpoint. Five Anglican periodicals were surveyed, including two small journals published for British audiences as fundraising tools for the Diocese of Qu'Appelle in southern Saskatchewan. In light of the work done by McGowan, a different approach was taken for Canada's English-speaking Catholics. The *Catholic Register*, the most cited periodical in *Imperial Irish*, was read for the first months of the war to get a sense of its coverage. The *Catholic Register*, another Ontario denominational periodical, was

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<sup>82</sup> See Murray Angus, "Living in the 'World of the Tiger': The Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in Nova Scotia and the Great War, 1914-1918," (MA thesis, Dalhousie University, 1993); Charles Brewer, "The Diocese of Antigonish and World War I," (MA thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1975); Lynne Marks, *Infidels and the Damn Churches: Irreligion and Religion in Settler British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2018).

read for the entire war period. Then Catholic voices were sought out in secular periodicals or elsewhere to widen the source base.

One unfortunate reality is that the voice and opinion of the person in the pews has been difficult to capture given the nature of the sources consulted, and so silence must often be assumed to be agreement or at least acquiescence. When practical, numerous examples of a particular viewpoint were sought out from different denominations and/or regions and referenced to show that the ideas were circulating broadly. Local newspapers and other sources, including Belgian relief and Patriotic Fund records, were used to show how individual congregations reacted with practical efforts to editorials in their denominational periodicals or pastoral letters issued by the upper clergy. Occasions where dissent was expressed or questioning of the dominant message became apparent have not been downplayed and have been utilized whenever possible to show the nuance of the Canadian reaction to the war. Letters to the editor were particularly valuable on this account. Throughout, a concerted effort has been made to view Canadians and their war experiences in light of their own cultures, traditions, and theology, showing areas of commonality and to suggest where diverse opinions may be found.

The primary sources, whether archival sources or periodicals, were analyzed according to a series of broad themes chosen to illustrate the changing aspect of the war in the context of Canadian religious and public life. Some of these — questions of prayer, consolation, and support for recruiting, among others — were identified in advance, while others arose during the process of analysis, particularly in the case of

French Canada where there was less existing research to draw on. Although each chapter deals with a particular theme, the overall organization uses chronology as a driving factor to show the changes that took place over the course of the war. At the beginning of the war, the imperial connection and duty to Britain were important parts of framing Canada's responsibilities. By the end of the war, Canadians could be proud of their own contributions as part of a global effort. The churches both marked this shift and, by calling on Canadians to live up to their responsibilities with respect to the war, encouraged it. The justifications and questioning of the early days were no longer necessary later in the war as different issues came to the fore. Unfortunately, the war's immense scale means that only certain themes and ideas can be followed closely and there is much that either appears briefly, is relegated to a footnote, or is omitted entirely. Choices had to be made, such as not including discussion of the work of institutional bodies formed to work with the military in support of Canadian soldiers or the impact of enlistments on the work of the churches at home, and limiting discussion about the Ontario schools struggle. The military effort overseas appears as context or when events overseas had a direct impact on the experience of the war at home and the associated work done by the churches.

The first chapter describes the kind of place that Canada was in the years before the outbreak of war and provides an overview of the different denominational structures. The early years of the twentieth century were a time of immense growth for Canada, which challenged the churches structurally as they rushed to expand westward to serve

the settler populations and, inspired by the social gospel movement, became increasingly active participants in building the Canadian nation according to Christian principles.

Supporters of this more active Christianity hoped that supporting cadet programs and the militia would allow them to emphasize a 'muscular Christianity' that would attract young men by instilling manly virtues and training them in clean living. The experience of the Boer War was also important for the precedent that it provided when the Great War broke out in 1914, but the increased imperialism that resulted led to conflict with French Canadian *nationalistes*, who were wary of being drawn into overseas conflicts and protective of their language and culture in the face of assimilationist pressures.

The second chapter focusses on the first eighteen months of the war, looking at the way that the churches in English-speaking Canada reconciled their pre-war liberal pacifism with participation in the war. Although the English Canadian churches justified the war as a defence of ideals like liberty and righteousness, some individuals remained conflicted about how to reconcile Christian principles with the demands of war. Nonetheless, these justifications made the events unfolding in Europe more immediate for Canadians and set the moral and ideological foundations for the various kinds of war-work that would take place. Differences in the way that each denomination presented and debated these justifications help reveal nuances in the 'patriotic consensus' that developed in English Canada while also showing how notions of international responsibility, national character, and individual duty to the state were developing in the early part of the war.

The third chapter examines three different facets of the Canadian war effort in English Canada as the churches sustained morale by encouraging prayer and war-related charitable work and engaged in recruiting to support the military effort. This chapter attempts to move beyond a narrow focus on military service to shed light on other contributions made by and through the churches at home. It concludes with a look at clerical attempts to raise recruits for the CEF and the way that, having infused the war with such purpose, serious issues would arise about the extent and equality of the sacrifices being made.

The fourth chapter turns to the response of the Catholic church in Quebec from the beginning of the war through 1916, where the religious and cultural heritage of French Canada resulted in a different approach to the war. Turning the focus away from the outspoken *nationalistes*, like Bourassa, to focus instead on the activities of the churches shows that French-speaking Catholics were not indifferent to the war and recognized the responsibilities inherent in Canada's imperial relationship. They answered calls to prayer and proudly contributed to a variety of war-related charitable activities, including the Canadian Patriotic Fund and relief for war-ravaged Europe. But they did so as part of their Christian duty to relieve suffering, rather than in the spirit of imperial patriotism which dominated in English Canada. The Catholic church provided spiritual care to those who enlisted and prayed for their safety, but did not involve itself in recruiting, much to the dismay of English Canada.

The fifth chapter reviews the clash that arose between French and English Canada in 1917 as the issue of conscription became all but unavoidable. The English Canadian

commitment to uphold the cause of the war to the ‘last man and the last dollar’ was incompatible with the more moderate efforts undertaken in Quebec and pre-existing linguistic and ethnic tensions boiled over into rioting in Montreal and a divisive election campaign. When the pope made another attempt to broker peace in the summer of 1917, English-speaking Protestants, committed to achieving victory and suspicious of his motivations, were little inclined to listen to his pleas, while Catholic internationalism temporarily brought French- and English-speaking Catholics back into agreement but did nothing to ease the greater divisions.

The sixth chapter deals with the difficult final year of the war. The chapter is organized episodically to explore some of the different experiences of 1918, revisiting some of the ideas and themes from earlier chapters in the late-war context. Prayers for peace continued, both at the behest of the government and in response to military events overseas, the phrasing echoing the rhetoric of the earlier periods but with significant differences as the result of four years of war. The churches also had to react to the consequences of conscription, both societally as riots broke out in Quebec City and in the lives of individual conscripts. This chapter also examines the role played by the churches and their message in consoling the families of those killed as a result of the war and the importance of thanksgiving as part of celebrating the Armistice and thinking about victory. The immediate post-war period and questions for future research are dealt with briefly in the conclusion.

This dissertation demonstrates that churches played an important social and cultural role in shaping the way that Canadians experienced the Great War. Uniquely

equipped by their traditions and history, the churches were able to help Canadians navigate the emotional and practical questions raised by the war by enduing it with meaning. They emphasized Canada's role as part of an imperial and trans-Atlantic world, contributing to Canadians' determination to fight through to victory despite difficulties and internal divisions. From justification to consolation, religious language and ideas were pervasive and profoundly affected how Canadians understood the war, framed their activities, and coped with their losses. This study hopes to tell that story.

## CHAPTER 1

## A TIME FOR PEACE: CANADA BEFORE THE GREAT WAR

Canada's response to the Great War was determined by the kind of nation that it was before the outbreak of war. In 1914, Canada was still a young country, tied legally and culturally to Great Britain. Confederation in 1867 had established a national government and cemented domestic sovereignty, but Canada still had no international status other than as part of the British Empire. Major international decisions, including whether or not to go to war, were still made in London. Still the previous two decades had been a time of immense growth for Canada, and this engendered a sense of confidence about the role that Canada could play on the global stage. The Canadian churches were among those institutions caught up in a wave of optimism about the kind of nation that Canada could become. And, as hundreds of thousands of new immigrants flooded into the country following the opening of the Prairies to mass settlement in the 1890s, the churches made concerted efforts to shape a Canadian national character. But what form this national character should take was the subject of competing concerns. Whereas French Canadians, as one of the founding peoples of the nation, wanted to preserve their language, religion, and culture, many English Canadians wanted to strengthen a sense of Canada's fundamental Britishness and encourage an increased role within the empire. The churches, with visions of a nation shaped and guided by Christian values, were among the Dominion's nation-builders, even as their own institutional structures were challenged by the need to rapidly expand to serve the

growing population. If it is true that, as it is often said, Canada came of age during the Great War, the stage for this was set well before a single shot was fired.

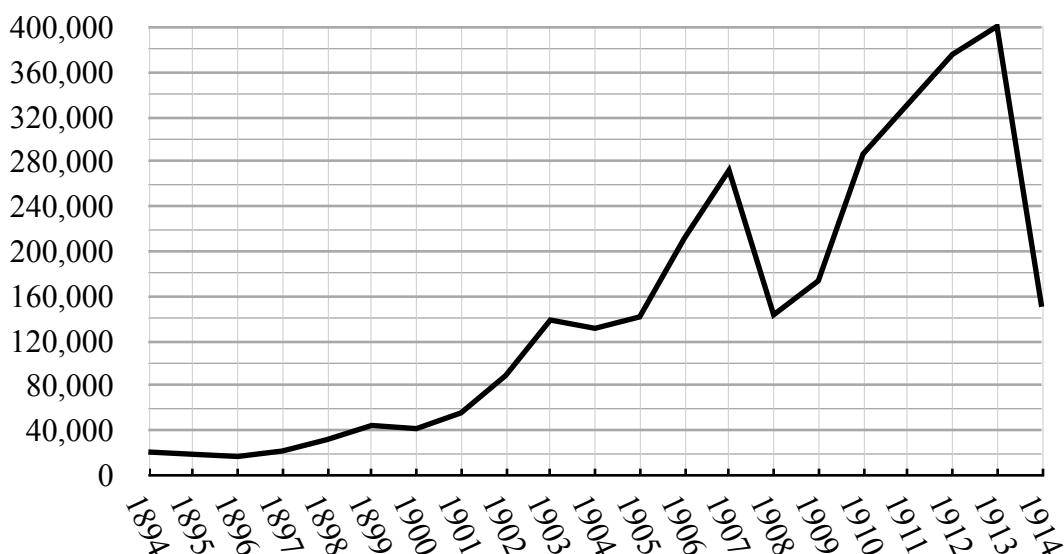
### *Demographics*

Between 1901 and 1911, the last census period before the outbreak of war, the Canadian population grew from 5.37 million to 7.21 million, a remarkable 34 percent increase. Although natural increase remained important to population growth, particularly in French Canada, much of this expansion was due to immigration, which had been increasing steadily since 1897. The decade's most remarkable growth, however, came after 1906, with an average of 217,000 arrivals each year. The three years immediately preceding the war saw an even greater rate of immigration, with the number of arrivals jumping up to an average of 369,000 each year, bringing Canada's pre-war population up to an estimated 7.88 million in 1914 (see Figure 1.1).<sup>1</sup>

The majority of these new immigrants settled in the vast open spaces of the prairie provinces, where the economic structures and civic institutions were expanding to serve the rapidly growing population. Although many of these settlers were agricultural, drawn by the promise of free land, western Canadian towns and cities also underwent a boom, transforming from small outposts to flourishing urban centres in only a few years. Towards the end of the period, as economic growth drove new industrial opportunities, the popularity of Ontario as a destination increased. But, with relatively little land available for agricultural settlement, new arrivals to Ontario tended to settle in cities and

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<sup>1</sup> K.G. Basavarajappa and Bali Ram, Series A1, *Historical Statistics of Canada, Section A: Population and Migration*, Statistics Canada. Available online from [http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm#A2\\_14](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm#A2_14)

**Figure 1.1. Annual Immigration to Canada (1894-1914)**

Adapted from: K.G. Basavarajappa and Bali Ram, "Series A350: Immigrant Arrivals in Canada, 1852-1977," *Historical Statistics of Canada, Section A: Population and Migration*, Statistics Canada. Available online from [http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm#A2\\_14](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm#A2_14)

they tended very strongly to be British.<sup>2</sup> Regardless of their eventual destination, however, people from Britain and Ireland made up the majority (51.8 percent) of arrivals in Canada until the outbreak of war interrupted the flow of people across the Atlantic. This pattern of immigration helped to ensure that Canada remained in many ways a largely British nation, a perception that was particularly strong in Ontario.<sup>3</sup>

In other essential ways, Canada's colonial heritage ensured that it would never be completely British in outlook or composition; in 1911, 28.6 percent of the overall Canadian population claimed French ancestry. French Canadians had a distinctive identity and sense of nationality, one that was wrapped up in questions of language,

<sup>2</sup> McInnis, "Canada's Population," 538, 543-548

<sup>3</sup> McInnis, "Canada's Population," 538, 543-545; Ramsay Cook, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 67-68, 149-150.

culture, and religion.<sup>4</sup> Since the collection of linguistic information was highly politicized in early-twentieth-century Canada, it is somewhat difficult to determine the extent of French Canadian populations outside of Quebec. In Quebec, which accounted for 27.8 percent of the overall Canadian population, upwards of 80 percent of the population spoke French. Despite the presence of French Canadian communities in the Maritimes, Ontario, and the West, French-speakers made up less than 5 percent of the population in the rest of Canada.<sup>5</sup> Language, as an obvious sign of otherness, was a major battleground for Anglo-Protestant imperialist-nationalists in their attempt to create a thoroughly British nation and it was French-language minority communities outside of Quebec that were most subject to the pressures of assimilation. Education became a particular linguistic and cultural battleground, and French Canadian communities outside Quebec received support in their efforts to retain their ‘bilingual’ confessional schools from the Roman Catholic church and other groups within Quebec.<sup>6</sup>

Thanks to immigration, French was only one of the linguistic possibilities in Canada at the beginning of the twentieth century. In addition to immigrants from Britain and Western Europe, approximately one third of all arrivals in the two decades before 1914 were from ‘non-traditional’ sources, including Scandinavians, Poles, Russians,

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Ltd., 1974), 27-31, 67-74.

<sup>5</sup> Chad Gaffield, Byron Moldofsky, and Katharine Rollwagen, “‘Do Not Use for Comparison with Other Censuses’: Identity, Politics, and Languages Commonly Spoken in 1911 Canada,” in *The Dawn of Canada’s Century: Hidden Histories*, ed. Gordon Darroch (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2014), 93-123. Also Basavarajappa and Ram, “Series A125-163: Ethnic Origins of the Population,” *Historical Statistics*.

<sup>6</sup> Brown and Cook, *A Nation Transformed*, 27-31, 67-74; Michel Bock, *Quand la nation débordait les frontières: Les minorités françaises dans la pensée de Lionel Groulx* (Montréal: Éditions Hurtubise, 2004), 170-180, 219-229; Sylvie Lacombe, *La rencontre de deux peuples élus: Comparaison des ambitions nationale et impériale au Canada entre 1896 et 1920* (Québec: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 2002), 84-94, 216-222.

Italians, and Ukrainians (see Table 1.2). Despite the active recruitment of ‘non-traditional’ settlers with farming experience to settle the West, contemporaries of both British and French origin nonetheless began to worry about the effect that they would have on the country and the difficulty of assimilating all the new arrivals.<sup>7</sup> Because language was seen as a major stumbling block in the process of ‘Canadianization’, some English Canadians viewed French Canadians as insufficiently Canadian, despite their role as one of Canada’s two founding peoples. Many French Canadians, already at a demographic disadvantage and with traditional concerns about the survival of their culture, worried not only about being swamped by the new arrivals but also about assimilationist pressures that increased as Anglo-Protestant Canadians made more active efforts to shape a unified British Canada.<sup>8</sup>

### *Economics*

Like the population, the Canadian economy was growing rapidly in the early decades of the twentieth century thanks to lowered transportation costs, the exploitation of new resources, manufacturing growth, and the expansion of agriculture. This overall growth and dynamism fed the sense of optimism and confidence about Canada’s future and raised important questions about the kind of nation that Canada was becoming.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Brown and Cook, *A Nation Transformed*, 57ff; Cook, *Sense of Power*, 129-132, 138-152.

<sup>8</sup> Brown and Cook, *A Nation Transformed*, 74, 127-129; Kevin Anderson, “‘This typical old Canadian form of racial and religious hate’: Anti-Catholicism and English Canadian Nationalism” (PhD dissertation, McMaster University, 2013), 43ff; John Herd Thompson, *The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), 16-17, 73-81.

<sup>9</sup> Brown and Cook, *Nation Transformed*, 2-4, 49.

**Table 1.2. — Origins of the Canadian Population**

	Total Share of Population			% Change
	1881*	1901	1911	1881-1911
<b>British</b>	58.93 %	57.03 %	55.49 %	- 6.19 %
<b>French</b>	30.03 %	30.71 %	28.61 %	- 4.98 %
<b>Western Europe</b>	6.58 %	6.67 %	7.12 %	+ 7.53 %
<b>Northern Europe</b>	0.12 %	0.62 %	1.78 %	+ 93.21 %
<b>Eastern Europe</b>	0.03 %	0.63 %	2.37 %	+ 98.80 %
<b>Other Europe</b>	0.19 %	0.60 %	1.84 %	+ 89.59 %
<b>Other</b>	4.11 %	3.74 %	2.79 %	- 47.45 %

\*This information is not available for the 1891 census, so 1881 has been used as a reference instead.

Adapted from: K.G. Basavarajappa and Bali Ram, "Series A125-163: Origins of the Population, 1871-1971," *Historical Statistics of Canada, Section A: Population and Migration*, Statistics Canada. Available online from [http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm#A2\\_14](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm#A2_14)

Agricultural products had always been a major component of the Canadian economy, even before the opening of the prairies brought thousands of new acres under seed, and it was common to think of Canada as an agricultural nation whose people were strengthened by living close to the land. But the reality was that Canada was becoming increasingly industrialized and urbanized.<sup>10</sup>

Canadian industry was largely centred in Quebec and Ontario, and manufacturing as a sector was as vital to the overall Canadian economy as agriculture. As a category, manufacturing included a huge range of industries, many of them related to the processing of natural resources or to preparing agricultural products for the domestic or

<sup>10</sup> McInnis, "Canada's Population," 540-541, 558-564.

international markets.<sup>11</sup> Technological advances in machinery and methods of production improved outputs and electrification would come to play a major role in industrial manufacturing, as well as improving living conditions for Canadians who lived in major urban centres, where electric lights and streetcars were commonplace by 1914.<sup>12</sup> Because so much of the industrial capacity was already located in central Canada, the munitions industry that developed during the war was also largely concentrated in Ontario and Quebec, widening the development gap between the industrial and agricultural parts of the country.<sup>13</sup>

The spread of the railroads had been an essential element in opening the west to immigration. Hundreds of villages sprang up in western Canada based on the mere rumour of a proposed rail line. These towns prospered when lines were constructed, bringing in goods and settlers and allowing grain to be shipped back east, and failed when the rumours contained no substance. The spread of the railroads was also an essential element in overall economic growth, dramatically reducing the time and expense associated with moving goods and products across the geographic expanse of Canada.<sup>14</sup> By allowing communication and travel, they also helped link communities, which contributed to the developing sense of national identity.

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<sup>11</sup> Marvin McInnis, "Canadian Economic Development in the Wheat Boom Era: A Reassessment," unpublished paper, available online at <http://qed.econ.queensu.ca/faculty/mcinnis/Cdadevelopment1.pdf>, 18-20; Brown and Cook, *A Nation Transformed*, 83ff.

<sup>12</sup> McInnis, "Economic Development," 25-30.

<sup>13</sup> Thompson, *Harvests of War*, 49-56, 131-132, 158-160.

<sup>14</sup> John Bartlet Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1966), 211-214, 225, 233-236.

Just as Canadian heritage and governance was linked to Britain, so too was its economic system.<sup>15</sup> Although the United States was a major source of imported goods, the majority of Canadian exports, many of them agricultural, were bound for British markets.<sup>16</sup> Outside of Quebec, the 1911 election had been fought on the question of trade, and the Conservatives, led by Robert Borden, had come to power by favouring imperial ties and opposing a reciprocity treaty that would have encouraged freer US-Canadian trade at the cost of imperial trade. Although Western farmers would have welcomed lower tariffs on their American-manufactured farm machinery, the majority of Canadians instead voted to maintain the imperial connection.<sup>17</sup>

Urban industrialization, however, had consequences. People who moved from the countryside to work in the factories found themselves cut off from their social support networks and workers faced harsh working conditions and long hours. Seasonal employment meant that months could pass without steady wages, and an illness or injury that impaired a wage earner's ability to work could plunge a family into poverty.<sup>18</sup> The lower a family's economic standing, the less likely its children were to receive an education and the earlier they were sent out to work, perpetuating cycles of precarious employment and poverty.<sup>19</sup> In areas where there were poor sanitary conditions and

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<sup>15</sup> Douglas McCalla, "Economy and Empire: Britain and Canadian Development, 1783-1971" in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Philip Buckner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 240-258.

<sup>16</sup> Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle*, 220-224, 237-238, 245-246; Marvin McNinn, "Canadian Economic Development in the Wheat Boom Era: A Reassessment," unpublished paper, available online at <http://qed.econ.queensu.ca/faculty/mcinnis/Cdadevelopment1.pdf> (accessed 15 Jan 2017).

<sup>17</sup> Patrice Dutil and David MacKenzie, *Canada 1911: The Decisive Election that Shaped the Country* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2011), 76-80, 99, 127, 194, 249-280; C.P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict, Vol 1: 1867-1921* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 143-149.

<sup>18</sup> Herbert Ames, *The City Below the Hill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, [1897] 1972), 68-77; Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993), 80-107.

<sup>19</sup> Bradbury, *Working Families*, 119-128; J.S. Woodsworth, *My Neighbour* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press [1911] 1972), 65-77.

overcrowding, both infant mortality and overall death rates were high.<sup>20</sup> Urban crime rates and the easy availability of alcohol were also subjects for concern, and moral reformers keenly observed the frequency with which drunkenness and economic hardship seemed to go hand-in-hand.<sup>21</sup> Reformers also recognized the material difficulties faced by the urban working class and advocated for better city planning and improved housing and worked to improve the availability of social services, many of which were still provided by private organizations, including the churches, as charity, rather than as civic relief.<sup>22</sup>

### *The Canadian Churches*

Among the self-consciously nation-building institutions to be challenged by the rapid growth of this period were the Canadian churches.<sup>23</sup> All four of the major denominations — Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Methodist — believed that a mature Canadian nation, one shaped by Christian values, had an important role to play as part of a larger world community. But to play this larger role, the nation first had to be built up. Serious social problems had been revealed by urbanization and there were worries about how best to integrate immigrants. Emboldened by a theology that

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<sup>20</sup> Ames, *The City Below the Hill*, 84-86; Bradbury, *Working Families*, 73-76; Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 58-59.

<sup>21</sup> Richard Allen, *A Social Passion: Religious and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-28* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 12-13, 264-283.

<sup>22</sup> Woodsworth, *My Neighbour*, 155-216; Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water*, 44-67, 155-160.

<sup>23</sup> Throughout the text, the word ‘church’ is not generally capitalized, except when appearing as part of a quotation or official name. This choice has been made deliberately to de-emphasize the institutional nature of the churches and to ensure parity in how the denominations were treated. It also allows a distinction to be made between Canadian Catholic church and the global organization of the Roman Catholic Church.

saw social service as a Christian duty, the churches were active and outward-facing organizations that saw themselves as playing a crucial role in building and supporting Canadian society. The large infusion of immigrants forced the institutions to expand rapidly, and, although this stretched resources, it also helped to forge a stronger association between the work of the churches and the growth of the nation.

The ways that the different denominations acted in the wider society, including the kinds of social projects that they undertook and the way that they reacted to external events, like the Great War, were shaped by their unique institutional and theological heritage. The varied structures, whether the top-down episcopal models of the Anglicans and Roman Catholics, the congregation-centric emphasis of the Presbyterians, or the Methodist conference system, each carry their own unique heritage and sometimes confusing terminology. Although some reactions were shared by the different denominations, both the underlying motivations and the institutional effects could be quite different and it is important to understand something of the history and development of each denomination in order to better recognize these distinctions.

### *The Roman Catholic Church*

Although Catholic clergy arrived in Canada with the earliest French settlers, the ecclesiastical hierarchy was relatively slow to develop. The early Diocese of Québec, established in 1674, was a huge diocese that at its height encompassed the most of North America down to the Gulf of Mexico. Although a large territory was lost to the United States after the American Revolution, additional subdivision of the Canadian church did

not occur until apostolic vicariates (mission fields established under the direction of a bishop) were established for Upper Canada and Nova Scotia in 1817.<sup>24</sup> The strength of the Canadian Catholic church remained in Quebec, but the British government withheld permission for the creation of a new diocese in the province until 1836, when the Diocese of Montréal was finally created.<sup>25</sup> This marked the beginning of a new wave of development such that by Confederation the Canadian church consisted of two provinces (the Archdioceses of Québec and Halifax) and their fourteen suffragan dioceses, with the Archbishop of Québec the metropolitan responsible for all of the territory between New Brunswick and British Columbia.<sup>26</sup> This vast territory was extensively subdivided in the subsequent decades to reflect the growth of the Canadian population. By 1890, the civil province of Ontario was divided into three ecclesiastical provinces, Kingston, Ottawa, and Toronto. The suffragan dioceses of Kingston and the majority of those of Toronto were English-speaking, whereas the Province of Ottawa, at least initially, had a majority francophone population and the Diocese of London contained a sizeable French Canadian minority. By 1914 the Roman Catholic establishment in Canada consisted of nine provinces, their twenty-three suffragan dioceses, an independent archdiocese, five

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<sup>24</sup> These would ultimately become the Archdioceses of Kingston and Halifax, respectively. See Appendix A for a list of Roman Catholic dioceses.

<sup>25</sup> In the text, the Catholic archdioceses will always be referred to as Québec and Montréal to help distinguish them from the Anglican dioceses, which will be written as Quebec and Montreal.

<sup>26</sup> See Appendix A for an organizational chart for the Catholic church.

apostolic vicariates, and one apostolic prefecture.<sup>27</sup> An apostolic exarchate also existed to minister to Eastern Rite Ukrainian Catholics.<sup>28</sup>

In Quebec, the Catholic church emerged from the aftermath of the 1837-1838 Rebellions renewed in its role as the defender of French Canadian culture and at the centre of a sense of a revived national vision.<sup>29</sup> This public role for Catholicism made the Quebec church particularly receptive to the centralizing impulse of ultramontanism in the following decades; Quebec Catholics already had a history of allowing the church a prominent role in education, health, and social services and were quick to adopt the increasingly elaborate and public Roman ceremonial that visibly distinguished Catholics from Protestants.<sup>30</sup> Rather than relegating religion to the private sphere, as was the case for Protestants, ultramontane Catholics increasingly claimed public spaces as religious spaces through pilgrimages, processions, and other public displays and institutions, factors that contributed to anti-Catholic feeling among some Anglo-Protestants. In addition to their religious oversight, bishops became important advocates in organizing and providing social services and education, the human and material resources for which were provided by a growing variety of religious congregations operating under the bishop's jurisdiction. A growth in the number of local postulants and an influx of male

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<sup>27</sup> There was also a Province of Newfoundland, which contained two suffragan dioceses, but these have not been included in the totals here or elsewhere in this section. See Appendix A List of Catholic Bishops for details of the Newfoundland dioceses.

<sup>28</sup> Nykyta Budka, head of Canadian Eastern Rite Catholics, caused a stir early in the war for issuing a pastoral calling for support of Austria-Hungary, but this letter was issued before the British declaration of war. Accusations of his disloyalty would persist throughout the war. See Stella Hryniuk, "Pioneer Bishop, Pioneer Times: Nykyta Budka in Canada," *CCHA Study Sessions* 55 (1988): 21-41.

<sup>29</sup> Roberto Perin, "French-Speaking Canada from 1840," in *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, eds. Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), 196-197.

<sup>30</sup> Perin, "French-Speaking Canada," 197-205; Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada: The Vatican and Canadian Affairs in the Late Victorian Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 4-5; Terrence Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics: Gallicanism, Romanism, and Canadianism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 69ff.

and female religious from France after 1870 helped to ensure that in the late nineteenth century Quebec had perhaps the highest level of social and health services anywhere in the country, most it provided under the aegis of the Catholic church.<sup>31</sup> Outside of Quebec, where French speakers were in a minority, the advocacy of a bishop was an even more essential element in the maintenance of French-language religious services and schools, particularly as the provinces legislated away rights to a non-English education.<sup>32</sup>

After the initial redistribution to better serve the established areas of Eastern Canada, subsequent ecclesiastical development had occurred to address the growing areas of settlement in the north and in Western Canada. Between the turn of the century and 1914, this meant the erection of ten new dioceses and four apostolic vicariates. How to appoint bishops to these new territories and the replacement of bishops in the older sees became a matter of increasing contention because the growing strength of English-speaking Catholics, driven largely by immigration from Ireland, created two competing national visions within the Catholic establishment.<sup>33</sup> In the West, much of the work of church planting was done by the Oblates and other religious orders originating in Quebec and France. This, together with the fact that oversight came from the French-speaking Archbishop of Saint-Boniface (established as a diocese in 1847 and elevated in

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<sup>31</sup> Perin, "French-Speaking Canada," 206.

<sup>32</sup> Perin, "French-Speaking Canada," 198, 203-205, 220-223; Perin, *Rome in Canada*, 17-18, 25, 65, 126, 145-155; Brown and Cook, *Nation Transformed*, 253-262; Jack Cecillon, *Prayers, Petitions, and Protests: The Catholic Church and the Ontario Schools Crisis in the Windsor Border Region, 1910-1928* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013); Jean Hamelin and Nicole Gagnon, *Histoire du catholicisme québécois, Le XXe siècle (1898-1940)* (Montréal: Boréal, 1984), 36-41.

<sup>33</sup> Hamelin and Gagnon, *Catholicisme québécois*, 22-24, 48-49

1871), ensured that the Catholic church as originally established in Western Canada had a distinctly francophone character.

Recognizing the linkage between language and culture, French-speaking bishops, whether from France or Quebec, also made an effort to provide religious instruction and services in the native languages of settlers, an inclusive stance that ran counter to the assimilationist views common in Anglo-Protestant Canada and to the position taken by some English-speaking bishops who, believing a unified Catholicism was the best defence against the Protestant majority, urged integration into mainstream Canadian society.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, the demographic balance was against the best efforts of the French Canadian wing of the church to maintain its control; in 1901 perhaps only 41 percent of Ontario Catholics and 25 percent of Catholics in the prairies were francophones. The Vatican also tended to side against the French Canadian view in its choice of bishops — it avoided selecting known nationalist candidates and seemed to favour the English speakers by appointing anglophone bishops to vacant sees outside of Quebec that had once had French ordinaries.<sup>35</sup> Nor did the statement made at the 1910 Montreal Eucharistic Congress by Cardinal John Bourne, the Archbishop of Westminster and primate of the Catholic church in Great Britain, engender confidence. By declaring

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<sup>34</sup> Perin, “French-Speaking Canada,” 215-219; Perin, *Rome in Canada*, 6, 14, 19-30, 115, 155-185; Mark McGowan, “Toronto’s English-Speaking Catholics, Immigration, and the Making of a Canadian Catholic Identity, 1900-1930” in *Creed and Culture: The Place of English-Speaking Catholics in Canadian Society, 1750-1930*, ed. Terrence Murphy and Gerald Stortz (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993), 204-245; Mark McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999), 56, 119, 178-180, 220-230; Hamelin and Gagnon, *Catholicisme québécois*, 101-106.

<sup>35</sup> Perin, “French-Speaking Canada,” 221-223; McGowan, *Waning of the Green*, 238-244; Hamelin and Gagnon, *Catholicisme québécois*, 106-111; Fay, *History of Canadian Catholics*, 188. Also of note is the fact that the majority of French-speaking bishops outside of Quebec were not French Canadian by birth, but were French. McGowan, “Toronto’s English-Speaking Catholics,” 243n116. The apostolic delegates sent to Canada to diplomatically represent the Vatican and serve as an internal arbitrator for the Canadian church’s difficulties were also chosen for their familiarity with Britain and their capacity for the English language. Perrin, *Rome in Canada*, passim.

that English should be the language of Catholicism in North America, Bourne was attacking a major pillar of French Canadian identity, and the lack of argument from notable ‘Irish’ bishops whose dioceses contained important francophone communities, including Michael Fallon (Bishop of London), increased the antagonisms between the two groups.<sup>36</sup> Although the balance in the hierarchy remained relatively even throughout the period leading up to the Great War, French Canadian Catholics both outside and within Quebec already felt under attack within their own church.

### *The Church of England in Canada*

The Church of England was, like the Roman Catholic Church, organized into dioceses and administered by bishops. Anglicans also retained some elements of traditional Catholic theology and worship, but in many other ways the Church of England reflected the heritage of the Reformation. Rather than authority issuing downward from the head of the church — the Archbishop of Canterbury in this case, rather than the pope — the true governing bodies of the Church of England in Canada were the synods, where bishops, together with lay and clerical delegates elected from the various parishes, met to transact the business of the church, including the election of bishops. The General Synod’s first meeting was in 1893, and it typically met every three years to determine matters that affected the whole church, including matters of general

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<sup>36</sup> Michel Bock, *Quand la nation débordait les frontières: Les minorités françaises dans la pensée de Lionel Groulx* (Montréal: Éditions Hurtubise, 2004), 244-247; McGowan, “The Making of a Canadian Catholic Identity,” 205-206, 214-216; Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: Mgr. Bruchési*, vol. 15 (Montréal: Éditions Bernard Valiquette, n.d.), 99-130.

doctrine.<sup>37</sup> Provincial synods, which addressed regional issues, were also held triennially. Unlike the Catholic church, where archbishoprics were designated, Anglican provincial metropolitans were elected from among the diocesan bishops. Likewise, the primate was elected and, at the time of the Great War, retained the administration of both his own diocese and province. Diocesan synods were held annually, with individual dioceses maintaining considerable autonomy over administration and matters of practice. Because Anglican bishops were in charge of mission fields and church planting within their dioceses, the hierarchy expanded somewhat in anticipation of population growth. Six new dioceses were created in the 1870s, four in the next two decades, and five more between 1900 and 1914. Of these new bishoprics, all but three were in developing areas and eleven were in Western Canada.<sup>38</sup> It took time for these new dioceses to become self-supporting, however, and they continued to receive support from the more established dioceses in Eastern Canada and from English missionary organizations, helping to ensure that Anglicans maintained the closest cultural and practical ties with England.

The Church of England in Canada and elsewhere in the empire was bound together not by an international hierarchy but rather through the shared heritage of the Book of Common Prayer. With a usage dating back to 1662, the Prayer Book arose from the religious compromise of the English Reformation between those who wished to retain the fundamentally catholic character of the Church of England and those who wanted a

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<sup>37</sup> In the early twentieth century, the General Synod maintained the traditional practice of meeting as two separate houses, one for the bishops and the other for the remaining delegates. Events, including the outbreak of war in 1914, could also cause a postponement of General Synod meetings.

<sup>38</sup> See Appendix B for a list of Anglican dioceses. Unlike the other Canadian denominations, which included Newfoundland in their denominational structures, Newfoundland was not part of the jurisdiction of the Church of England in Canada.

more radical Protestantism. Over the centuries, the shared language of the Prayer Book had allowed the two wings of the church to co-exist, with High Church Anglicans adopting theology and ritual resembling those of Roman Catholics and Low Church Anglicans rejecting these elements in favour of a plainer worship style and more Protestant theology. These differences occasionally flared up into open conflict in England, but the relatively lower density of Anglicans in Canada generally prevented this. Certain dioceses were notably ‘higher’ in practice, but this did not guarantee that individual parishes chose to follow suit — for example, in the Diocese of Qu’Appelle, a High Church diocese, the vestry of one of the parishes voted to discontinue the chanting of prayers (a mark of a High Church parish) in favour of said prayers at all services (a Low Church practice).<sup>39</sup> This stance toward compromise also meant that individual parishes, clergymen, and churchgoers adopted a broad variety of stances on social issues, with the consequence that individual Anglicans were active in social gospel circles and temperance reform, but the institutional church took little action in the period before the Great War.<sup>40</sup>

### *The Presbyterian Church in Canada*

Formed in 1875 as a result of the merger of competing branches of Canadian Presbyterianism, the Presbyterian Church of Canada was the largest of the Protestant

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<sup>39</sup> Minutes of the Parishioners of St. Matthew’s Church (Estevan, Sask.), 8 Nov 1916, Minute Book (1904-1919), Collection R-705 (Parish Records), Archives of the Anglican Diocese of Qu’Appelle.

<sup>40</sup> Edward Pulker, *We Stand on Their Shoulders: The Growth of Social Concern in Canadian Anglicanism* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1986).

denominations in 1911.<sup>41</sup> Individual churches, sometimes known as preaching points, were organized as a charge. In the cities, a charge might consist of a single church, but rural charges were often multi-point, with a minister travelling between several communities to provide services. Ministers were ‘called’ to a charge by a session, a meeting of the leaders of the congregation held to do the business of the church. Charges were organized into presbyteries and presbyteries organized as synods. The church as an institution came together annually to meet as the General Assembly, which was headed by an elected moderator who served a one-year term.<sup>42</sup> The traditional strongholds of Presbyterianism were Nova Scotia and south-western Ontario, although there was also an influential Presbyterian presence in Montreal and an independent Presbyterian organization had existed in British Columbia before it amalgamated with the Presbyterian Church of Canada as a synod in 1875.<sup>43</sup>

Organized upward from the level of the congregation, the Presbyterian church as an institution nonetheless was involved in planting churches during the immigration boom and it appointed superintendents of missions to provide services and oversee growth until mission fields could become self-supporting congregations. The first superintendent of missions was appointed in 1881 to organize the church in the North-West Territories. By 1902, the original four congregations and eighteen missions west of the Great Lakes had become 141 congregations and 258 mission fields organized into

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<sup>41</sup> Basavarajappa and Ram, “Table A164-184: Principal Religious Denominations of the Population, census dates 1871-1971” *Historical Statistics*. See full chart of denominational strength on page 7.

<sup>42</sup> See Appendix C for an organizational chart of the Presbyterian church.

<sup>43</sup> John McNeill, *The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1875-1925* (Toronto: General Board, Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1925), 225-227; John S. Moir, *Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada*, 2nd edition (Toronto: Presbyterian Church of Canada, 1987), 144-145. See either of these works for information on the union of the various Presbyterian bodies.

eighteen presbyteries. Two superintendents had to be appointed to oversee work that now stretched across the Prairies and could no longer be done by one man based in Winnipeg.<sup>44</sup> By the time of the Great War, the Presbyterian Church had expanded from the original five 1875 synods to eight as first a Manitoba Synod (1884) and then a Saskatchewan Synod (1906) were divided out. Presbyterian growth was organized both from the east and from the west, and the Alberta Synod (1906) was created from the British Columbia Synod.<sup>45</sup> From small beginnings, by 1914 the four western provinces accounted for four of the eight synods, twenty-eight of the seventy-six Canadian presbyteries, and contained half of all Presbyterian preaching points.<sup>46</sup> Despite this growth, however, other measures show that the Presbyterian Church's establishments in Western Canada remained young. Although containing almost a third of all Presbyterian families, Western Canadian Presbyterians made up less than a quarter of communicants, a significant number of congregations remained mission fields, and three-quarters of the denomination's operating funds continued to be raised by established congregations in Eastern Canada.<sup>47</sup>

As a Reformed church, Presbyterian theology was based on the writings of John Calvin, a sixteenth-century French lawyer and theologian. Calvinism was brought to Scotland by John Knox and organized as the established church in Scotland in 1560. From its beginning, the church was organized to put the laity and clergy on an equal

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<sup>44</sup> Moir, *Enduring Witness*, 160-161.

<sup>45</sup> McNeill, *Presbyterian Church*, 237-239.

<sup>46</sup> The Presbyterian Church of Canada contained two foreign presbyteries, one in Honan (China) and one in Trinidad. The few Newfoundland charges were also part of the Canadian Presbyterian Church, attached to the Presbytery of Halifax. Moir, *Enduring Witness*, 161; Gordon Harland, "Robertson, James (1839-1902)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 13, (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003), available online at [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/robertson\\_james\\_1839\\_1902\\_13E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/robertson_james_1839_1902_13E.html)

<sup>47</sup> Moir, *Enduring Witness*, 161.

footing in matters of governance, rejecting the traditional ecclesiastical structure and sacramental theology of the Catholic church. Scripture alone was to be the source of theology and religious practice. Sin was understood as disobedience and all goodness, like human kindness and morality, was seen as evidence of God's irresistible grace working through individuals. Despite this seeming lack of agency, personal morality remained essential to a devout religious life because, while not all moral people would share in salvation, one had to be a moral person in order to be among the elect who would be saved.<sup>48</sup> Although various internal divisions arose in Scotland as a result of disagreements about governance, church-state relations, and the interpretation of this basic theology, by the late nineteenth century Canadian Presbyterianism had a unified organization and a relatively moderate theological outlook that avoided strict Calvinistic views on issues like predestination. Influenced by a Social Darwinian interest in environmental factors and a philosophical idealism that insisted that the good of the individual was identical to the good of society, the theological emphasis shifted relatively easily from questions of individual salvation to social reform.<sup>49</sup> As a result, Canadian Presbyterians, along with Methodists, were heavily involved with the reforming work associated with the social gospel movement. The reforming impulse of Presbyterians was, however, shaped by their theological heritage. Rather than trusting the individual, who was necessarily and inherently sinful, to make the right choices, Presbyterians sought to legislate morality or, at the very least, to use laws to limit the

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<sup>48</sup> Jonathan Hill, *The History of Christian Thought* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 198-204, 206. Moir, *Enduring Witness* also contains a history of Presbyterianism in from the time of Calvin.

<sup>49</sup> Moir, *Enduring Witness*, 172-175; A.B. McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 165-167, 216-228; Brian Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988), 4-8, 14-17; Allen, *Social Passion*, 5-6.

extent of temptation and misbehaviour.<sup>50</sup> Temperance campaigns were the most obvious manifestation of this reforming imperative, although here Presbyterians were, for other reasons, perhaps surpassed in zeal by the Methodists. But Presbyterians were also the most ardent advocates of legislation that restricted activity on Sunday, an issue which would become a question during the war.<sup>51</sup> They also maintained a strong mission program, both at home and abroad, and were critical of anything which might draw resources away from this basic task of the church.

### *The Methodist Church*

In Canada, the Methodist Church was formed in 1884 when the country's various Methodist factions united into a single body, sometimes known as a connexion.<sup>52</sup> Methodism had been independently established as a denomination in the mid-eighteenth century as an offshoot of Anglicanism. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism and a conservative Anglican priest, had encountered Moravian missionaries while undertaking mission work in Georgia. Influenced by their Pietist emphasis on an emotional religion based on a personal relationship with Christ, Wesley had a conversion experience that shifted his thinking about faith and religion. Returning to England, his previous focus on devotion and moral strictness (the source of the name 'Methodist') was replaced with a new understanding of holiness based on the relationship that a person had with Christ.

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<sup>50</sup> See T. Stewart, Young People's Society Topic, "Our Laws Bearing on Morals What They Are and How to Enforce Them," *Presbyterian Witness*, 6 March 1915, 3.

<sup>51</sup> Paul Laverdure, "Canada's Sunday: The Presbyterian Contribution, 1875-1950" in *The Burning Bush and a Few Acres of Snow: The Presbyterian Contribution to Canadian Life and Culture*, ed. William Klempa (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1994), 83-99.

<sup>52</sup> For histories of the different Methodist groups see *Centennial of Canadian Methodism* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1891); Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996).

One was to live a moral life not because of a desire for self-purification, as in Calvinism, but because it was an outward reflection of an inner spiritual transformation.

Wesley, and the Methodist preachers and revivalists who followed him, travelled widely, staging emotionally-charged mass meetings to provoke conversion experiences in others, a practice which was among the reasons for the ultimate split from the Church of England and the antecedent for the circuit system.<sup>53</sup> For Methodists, the circuit or station was the most basic level of organization. Called a mission when the operating funds came from the institutional church rather than the congregation, circuits could, like Presbyterian charges, contain either one or several individual congregations (appointments), and ministers generally spent only three years on a circuit before being moved elsewhere.<sup>54</sup> Circuits were arranged into districts led by a chairman, and districts were formed into conferences, which met annually, led by an elected president. Districts met quarterly and were the primary administrative level, doing much of the preliminary work for conference meetings, which then assessed probationers, ‘stationed’ clergy, and otherwise dealt with church business. A national board, the General Conference, met quadrennially with elected general superintendents and a series of standing committees dealt with larger issues between meetings. Like the other denominations, the Methodist

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<sup>53</sup> Hill, *Christian Thought*, 212-216; Marguerite Van Die, *An Evangelical Mind: Nathaniel Burwash and the Methodist Tradition in Canada, 1839-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1989), 9, 34-35, 169, 185, 193.

<sup>54</sup> Circuits were traditionally composed of a series of class meetings (small groups led by a lay leader), rather than congregations or churches, but by the turn of the century these class meetings had essentially vanished from Canadian Methodism although lay-lead groups continued, especially in areas where clergy were not readily available. There were periodic attempts to revive the class meeting, but to limited success and many of its functions were effectively taken over by Sunday schools and prayer meetings. See Semple, *Lord’s Dominion*, 372, 380-387; George Emery, *The Methodist Church on the Prairies, 1896-1914* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 22-23, 37, 237; Marilyn Färdig Whitely, *Canadian Methodist Women, 1766-1925: Marys, Marthas, Mothers in Israel* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), 34, 86-89 126-128.

Church was forced to expand to meet the challenges of the growing Canadian nation, but, for a variety of reasons, including the relatively decentralized administration of the Church, higher-level structural changes are less indicative of growth than for the other denominations.<sup>55</sup> In 1884, a single general superintendent oversaw the nine Canadian conferences. By 1910, a second general superintendent had to be appointed with particular responsibility for the territory west of the Great Lakes.<sup>56</sup> The number of Canadian conferences had increased to eleven, but two Ontario conferences were also merged during the period.<sup>57</sup> The best indication of Methodist growth is the number of church stations established. Between 1889 and 1914, the number of Methodist church stations increased from 1,329 to 2,025. The fastest rate of increase was in the Prairies, where the number of stations increased from 163 to 627, with the demand for ministers to fill new posts increasing as one moved westward from Saskatchewan into Alberta.<sup>58</sup> Nearly 48 percent of the prairie circuits were mission stations, a number which jumped to 77 percent in Alberta, but, at a national level, the denominational leadership was primarily in the hands of Ontario Methodists, with the province still containing roughly half of all Methodist circuits.<sup>59</sup>

While the conversion experience remained central to the Methodist understanding of faith, the highly strung emotionalism of the camp meeting that had distinguished

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<sup>55</sup> See Appendix D for an organizational chart of the Methodist church.

<sup>56</sup> With the resignation of Albert Carman in 1914, the number of general superintendents dropped back down to one, with the energetic efforts of S.D. Chown proving sufficient to workload.

<sup>57</sup> There was a Newfoundland Conference present in the Methodist Church from 1884. The Canadian Methodist Church also oversaw missionary activities through a circuit in Japan. *Centennial of Canadian Methodism*, 337.

<sup>58</sup> Emery, *Methodist Church on the Prairies*, 70, 85-86.

<sup>59</sup> A relatively high percentage of Maritime churches were also missions, mainly because they were struggling, not because they were newly established. Emery, *Methodist Church on the Prairies*, 23-24, 48, 70-78, 110; Semple, *Lord's Dominion*, 108.

Methodism from Anglicanism and Presbyterianism had gradually vanished from Canadian Methodism in favour of settled churches, regular services, and a more educated clergy. By the end of the nineteenth century, although outwardly similar to the other denominations, Methodists still retained some important characteristics derived from their heritage. The construction of a church building was less of a priority for newly established Methodist congregations in comparison with Anglicans and Presbyterians, and congregations might continue to meet in schoolhouses and private homes for some time. When church buildings were constructed, considerable interior space was devoted to meeting and Sunday school rooms, rather than worship space. And the probationary system — where candidates were given charge of a station under a district chairman for several years while preparing for theological examinations and ordination — continued to be the primary way of training new clergy, in contrast to the university education necessary for Presbyterian and Anglican ordination or the seminary training given to Roman Catholic priests.<sup>60</sup> From the beginning, Methodist theology emphasized right living and service to others as part of the evidence of a Christian life. As a result, they viewed social reform as part of a modern expression of their traditional evangelism.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Semple, *Lord's Dominion*, 225ff; Van Die, *Evangelical Mind*, 34-35, 73, 163-173; William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989).

<sup>61</sup> Semple, *Lord's Dominion*, 348-353; Van Die, *Evangelical Mind*, 8-9, 58, 87; Whitely, *Methodist Women*, 184-203.

*Social Gospel*

Despite denominational differences in outlook and organization, one of the important beliefs shared by the churches was that Canada was a land of great potential which was yet to be fully realized. Another shared belief was that Canada's essentially Christian character needed to be maintained and strengthened as that potential developed. The changes that took place as Canada expanded were viewed with a combination of optimism and alarm by the churches. Prosperity and material growth could be seen as a sign of God's favour, but they also raised fears that materialism was replacing spiritual values. The swelling population was necessary for Canada to grow into maturity as a nation, but social problems became more apparent as more people crowded into cities. The Canadian churches were active participants in Canadian social life and reform, committed to acting out their sense of mission.

Although denominations and individuals were drawn to social reform efforts for a variety of reasons and took a wide range of actions, the movement as a whole was known as the social gospel movement. As historian Richard Allen characterized it, the social gospel movement, broadly speaking, was "a call for men to find the meaning of their lives in seeking to realize the Kingdom of God in the very fabric of society."<sup>62</sup> The movement was intellectually grounded in the liberal theology of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and national social gospel movements also existed in the United States and Great Britain, although these movements peaked somewhat earlier and were in decline by the time of the Great War. In contrast, the social gospel movement was still strong in Canada and was one of the major forces shaping Canadian attitudes

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<sup>62</sup> Allen, *Social Passion*, 4.

toward nation-building in the years before 1914 and in some senses it would gain strength, rather than lose it, as a result of the war. There was a social Catholicism but it was directed less toward the moral reform of society and more toward providing education and social services because it was based on the dignity of the human person as created in the image of God.<sup>63</sup> The most active and vocal Christian social reformers of the period tended to be Protestants, and the social gospel movement as traditionally framed was an ecumenical Protestant undertaking.

The liberal theology that was the foundation of the social gospel movement arose as religious thinkers grappled with two of the early nineteenth century's major intellectual developments — evolutionary theory and new forms of Biblical criticism. By challenging literal readings of the Bible, both threw into question the previously assumed relationship between God and the natural world, seeming to privilege human reason over divine revelation. This shift required theologians and believers to come up with new ways of understanding this relationship. While conservative evangelicals largely rejected the new theories and continued to insist on literal readings of the Bible, the larger majority of religious thinkers in Britain, and therefore in Canada, instead adopted a new liberal theology based on belief in an immanent God who was acting continuously in the world. This revised view of traditional theology put an increased emphasis on the humanity of Christ, the importance of history and historical context, and the social interpretation of the Gospel message.<sup>64</sup> This shift in emphasis had two

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<sup>63</sup> Peter Baltutis, "'To Enlarge Our Hearts and to Widen Our Horizon': Archbishop Neil McNeil and the Origins of Social Catholicism in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1912-1934," *CCHA Historical Studies* 74 (2008): 29-50.

<sup>64</sup> David Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 47, 59, 62-66, 82-83; Allen, *Social Passion*, 3-7, 16-17.

practical consequences. The first was that it became common, even necessary, to understand and interpret current events, like the cataclysm of the Great War, in the context of a constructive history, whereas under the older theological models reference could have been made more simply to divine tribulation or testing. The second consequence was the acting out of Christ's social teachings in modern society as the social gospel movement.

While the Catholic church was able to draw on its religious orders and newer lay groups like the St. Vincent de Paul Societies to provide social services, the Protestant denominations had no such pre-existing framework for action.<sup>65</sup> Instead, a variety of organizations were established: the Methodist Department of Temperance and Social Reform (1902); the ecumenical Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada (1907, renamed as the Social Service Council in 1912); and the Presbyterian Board of Social and Moral Reform (1908, later the Board of Social Service and Evangelism, and in 1915 combined with the Board of Home Missions).<sup>66</sup> Although some notable Anglicans were active and prominent members of the Social Service Council, as a denomination Anglicans were reluctant to involve themselves in social gospel work and an equivalent denominational Department of Social Service was not fully staffed until the 1918 General Synod, and it largely confined itself to the publication of a series of pamphlets on various social issues.<sup>67</sup> As the names of these organizations reveal, little distinction was made between social and moral reform. For many social gospellers, the two were,

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<sup>65</sup> Michael Gauvreau, "Forging a New Space for Lay Male Piety: St. Vincent de Paul Societies in Urban Quebec and Ontario, 1846-1890," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, 42, no. 83 (2009): 35-67; Baltutis, "Social Catholicism," 38-44.

<sup>66</sup> Allen, *Social Passion*, 12, 15, 31-32.

<sup>67</sup> Allen, *Social Passion*, 37; Pulker, *We Stand on Their Shoulders*.

in fact, synonymous. Both people and nations had to be righteous in order to be truly strong and prosperous. This expansive view of social reform would carry over into justifications of the war, encouraging churchmen to entwine the struggle for righteousness at home with the struggle going on overseas.

Although modern proponents of the secularization thesis argue that the social gospel movement was an attempt by the churches to reverse their declining relevance by forging a new social role and identity, this was not how participants understood their activities.<sup>68</sup> For them, participation in this socially-oriented Christianity was not a rear-guard action but rather a return to a vital Gospel message and a way of strengthening and reinforcing the Christian foundations of the nation to prepare for an earthly Kingdom of God. So although it was recognized that church membership was declining in many places and that perhaps the church needed a revival, the aim was not merely to boost Sunday attendance. The aim was to rebuild a Christian society following the ideal of Christ and to establish a period of righteousness, peace, and moral prosperity in which Christianity would triumph over both moral degeneracy and irreligion. The kind of nation envisaged by the social gospellers was one grounded in Christian principles, with no distinction to be made between the sacred and the secular.<sup>69</sup> As historian William Westfall notes, this involved a cultural shift to accompany the theological shift so that, while “religion helped to divide the culture into secular and sacred elements,” it also allowed the churches to set themselves against the negative secular forces that seemed to

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<sup>68</sup> Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith* and Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

<sup>69</sup> Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 217-232; Allen, *Social Passion*, 4-7, 16-17.

be driving society and its problems, including urban poverty. “From this exalted position it [religion] then set out to ... in time remake the secular world in its own image.”<sup>70</sup> The Methodists, with their traditional emphasis on personal conversion and purity, and the Presbyterians, who built on a historical belief that right living was an outward sign of grace, were able to view the increased social focus from within a framework of traditional theology, ensuring a sense of continuity with the past. Consequently, they became the movement’s most energetic workers.

### *National and Imperial Missions*

When war broke out in August 1914, Protestant responses to the war often contained a strong and outwardly facing social component because Canadian moral and social reformers saw themselves as part of a global community working to create a more peaceful and equitable world. Looking beyond Canadian borders, many felt a philosophical and theological debt was owed to Germany, where the Protestant Reformation, Biblical criticism, and some of the early liberal theology had originated. There was for some, therefore, a distinct feeling of betrayal about the extent to which the Germans under the Kaiser had abandoned Christian principles in favour of militarism and repudiated international attempts to build a more socially just world. But the most important cultural and historical ties were to Great Britain, with high rates of immigration helping to ensure that there was a strong imperial element to Canadian nationalism, at least in English-speaking Canada. As Carl Berger has argued, “Canadian imperialism was one variety of Canadian nationalism,” and Canadian imperialists hoped

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<sup>70</sup> Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 196.

that Canada would take on an increasing role in the work and governance of the empire as the nation grew and matured. Canadian imperialism was not simple to define as it took on a variety of forms, but, as Berger notes, the social gospel was itself an important element of imperialism, “an expression of a different but interconnected sense of mission.”<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately, this imperial nationalism tended to be strongly assimilationist, and there was little room for cultural or religious diversity in this strongly Anglo-Protestant vision for the nation.<sup>72</sup> English-speaking Catholics adopted many aspects of this national vision, only dissenting to insist that it was possible to be both a good Catholic and a good Canadian.<sup>73</sup> Despite this, French Canadian Catholics remained firmly attached to defending their own national vision, language, and way of life.

The sense of mission that accompanied both the social gospel movement and imperial nationalism brought with it important notions of duty and responsibility at both the national and individual levels, and it was a relatively simple matter for ideas of righteousness and Christian charity to become intertwined with questions of citizenship. The missionary outreach of the churches went hand in hand with the imperial emphasis on Britain’s civilizing and uplifting influence to shape a national vision that allowed otherwise disparate groups to work together to achieve the common goal of establishing

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<sup>71</sup> Berger, *The Sense of Power*, 7, 186, cf. 217ff.

<sup>72</sup> This Anglo-Canadian nationalism and the pressure towards assimilation would have negative consequences, including anti-Catholicism, the residential schools system, and home missionary activities intended to make immigrants conform to ‘Canadian’ standards. For a discussion, see Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *Christian Churches and Their Peoples, 1840-1965: A Social History of Religion in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 107-141.

<sup>73</sup> McGowan, “Toronto’s English-Speaking Catholics,” 209-214; Mark McGowan, *Imperial Irish: Canada’s Irish Catholics Fight the Great War, 1914-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2017).

a Christian nation. Building a worthy Canadian character was a way of legitimizing Canadian nationhood and its participation as an equal in imperial affairs.<sup>74</sup> In the English-speaking Catholic context, Mark McGowan calls this emphasis on “patriotism, loyalty to the Crown, social mobility, ecumenism, and pride in the freedoms afforded by Canadian citizenship” the “gospel of Canada”, and this ‘gospel of Canada’ was also common in the Protestant churches and in the education system in the period leading up to the outbreak of war in 1914.<sup>75</sup>

The outbreak of the Boer War in 1899 provided the first major opportunity for Canadians to prove their imperial loyalty. Because British motivations for going to war against the Boers were not uncontroversial, there was outspoken opposition to the war in both English- and French-speaking Canada, but, when Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier reluctantly decided to send a Canadian contingent to South Africa, willing volunteers, overwhelmingly English-speaking Protestants, quickly filled the available places.<sup>76</sup> In general, the Protestant churches were eager supporters of the British war effort in South Africa, framing it in a way that emphasized the grievances of the British settlers and the progressiveness of the imperial project. By justifying the necessity of British actions, it was easier for clergymen to explain to their congregants why Christ’s

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<sup>74</sup> Berger, *Sense of Power*, passim.; Phyllis Airhart, “Ordering a New Nation and Reordering Protestantism, 1867-1914,” in *The Canadian Protestant Experience, 1760-1990*, ed. George Rawlyk (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1990), 99-101.

<sup>75</sup> Mark McGowan, “Toronto’s English-Speaking Catholics,” 209; Gordon Heath, “‘Forming Sound Public Opinion’: The Late Victorian Canadian Protestant Press and Nation-Building,” *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 48 (2006): 125ff.

<sup>76</sup> Carman Miller, “A Preliminary Analysis of the Socio-Economic Composition of Canada’s South Africa War Contingents,” *Histoire sociale/Social History* (1975): 219-237; Carman Miller, “Loyalty, Patriotism and Resistance: Canada’s Response to the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902,” *South African Historical Journal* 41 (1999): 312-323; John MacFarlane, “La longue marche de l’Afrique du Sud: En mémoire des Canadiens français qui ont participé à la première intervention militaire du Canada au XXe siècle,” *Mens* 7 vol. 2 (2007): 200-220; Gordon Heath, *A War With a Silver Lining: Canadian Protestant Churches and the South African War, 1899-1902* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009).

command to ‘turn the other cheek’ was not always to be followed, an important precedent that would be followed in the early months of the Great War.<sup>77</sup> The reasons for supporting the Boer War were varied, but among them was the hope that Canada’s two national groups would join together in a demonstration of loyalty to the civilizing imperial mission.<sup>78</sup> While this would not prove to be the case and French Canadian support for the Boer War and for the imperial project in general was noticeably lower, a general feeling of toleration was evident in the churches.<sup>79</sup> The English Canadian experience of the Boer War had been a positive one that reinforced their sense of optimism about the nation’s development and its future. Canadian soldiers had proven themselves on the battlefield, renewing confidence about the strength of the Canadian character in comparison to the more class-bound British society. It also led to a new enthusiasm for the military and a strengthened desire among more imperially minded English Canadians for Canada to take on increasing responsibility within the empire for its defence.<sup>80</sup> Like many other French Canadians, Laurier, who had sent troops in 1899 only as a result of British pressure and popular enthusiasm, was far less enthusiastic about the imperial project.<sup>81</sup> *Nationalistes*, like Henri Bourassa, were actively opposed and increasingly vocal about their alternative national vision.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Heath, *Silver Lining*, xviii-xxi, 14-35, 97-99, 105-113, 141-144.

<sup>78</sup> Miller, “Loyalty, Patriotism and Resistance,” 315-320; MacFarlane, “En mémoire des Canadiens français,” 204-210; Heath, *Silver Lining*, 21-39, 50-58, 122-128, 132.

<sup>79</sup> Heath, *Silver Lining*, 82-86.

<sup>80</sup> James Wood, *Militia Myths: Ideas of the Canadian Citizen Soldier, 1896-1921* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 65-94, 133-143, 147-150.

<sup>81</sup> Stacey, *Age of Conflict*, 52-82, 123-143

<sup>82</sup> Denis Monière, *Le développement des idéologies en Québec: Des origines à nos jours* (Montréal: Éditions Québec-Amérique, 1977), 192-200; Lacombe, *Rencontre de deux peuples élus*, 38-40, 70-78.

The three years of the Boer War were a high point of Canadian imperialism, but after the war ended the effects did not immediately fade. The Boer War experience had reinforced Canadian beliefs that a volunteer militia of citizen-soldiers was equal to whatever tasks they might be called to face, and in the years before 1914 the militia gained strength in many parts of the country as men were drawn in by the social and ceremonial aspects of militia service. Rifle clubs, an adjunct of militia units because marksmanship was thought to be among the most important skills for a good soldier, also increased their membership, even in Quebec. Enthusiasm for the militia remained low in Quebec, however, due to the unilingual character of the militia hierarchy and a series of regulations forbidding militia units from participating in religious processions or adopting 'foreign' uniforms, like those of the Papal Zouaves.<sup>83</sup> The Permanent Force, the regular army, was also expanded in the aftermath of the Boer War as Laurier agreed to assume responsibility for the maintenance and garrisoning of imperial fortifications at Halifax and Esquimalt beginning in 1905.<sup>84</sup> Compulsory cadet training in schools was widely promoted and was supported, either officially or tacitly, in nearly all the provinces, including Quebec, where the collèges classiques had a long tradition of cadet training.<sup>85</sup>

Although there were concerns from temperance groups and the churches about the drinking that went on at militia camps and the unfortunate effects of militarism, both

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<sup>83</sup> Wood, *Militia Myths*, 42-49, 71-72, 101-104; Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 11-13.

<sup>84</sup> Stacey, *Age of Conflict*, 125-126.

<sup>85</sup> Woods, *Militia Myths*, 112-113, 150-164, 176-179; Desmond Morton, "The Cadet Movement in the Moment of Canadian Militarism, 1909-1914," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue d'études canadiennes* 13 vol. 2 (1978): 56-68.

cadet and militia training were seen as a way of inculcating young men with patriotism, citizenship, and self-discipline. They were also viewed as a way of avoiding the physical problems associated with urban living by providing vigorous exercise in the outdoors.<sup>86</sup> Sam Hughes, the Minister of Militia and Defence in the Borden government after the Conservative's 1911 electoral victory, was not alone in feeling that the militia training could be moral training for the nation.<sup>87</sup> Social gospel reformers, who worried about the dangers of urban life for young men, the demographic least likely to attend church, emphasized these positive aspects of militia training, even if they remained wary of militarism and the temptations of 'camp life'.<sup>88</sup> Churches proudly associated themselves with militia units, hosting regimental services, and clergymen volunteered to act as unofficial or honorary chaplains. They tried to use the opportunities given to them by involvement with the militia to promote the ideals of a 'muscular Christianity'.<sup>89</sup>

Canada's growing involvement in matters of imperial defence did not go uncontested, however. As Britain turned its attention toward the rising threat of Germany, the demands on Canada and the other colonies ceased to be theoretical. The dreadnought crisis of 1909 led Britain to ask the dominions for direct contributions to the Royal Navy so that capital ships could be constructed. Although New Zealand and Australia provided monetary support to the Royal Navy, Laurier refused, instead opting to establish an independent Canadian navy. Two vessels were purchased in 1910 from

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<sup>86</sup> Woods, *Militia Myths*, 92-94, 106-108, 132-134, 152-162, 174-186, 200-203; Morton, "Cadet Movement," 59-60, 63-64.

<sup>87</sup> Morton, "Cadet Movement," 65.

<sup>88</sup> Woods, *Militia Myths*, 159-161; Lynn Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 118-120.

<sup>89</sup> Duff Crerar, *Padres in No Man's Land: Canadian Chaplains and the Great War*, second edition (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 13-18, 22-28.

the Royal Navy to establish the nucleus of a new Canadian fleet, a compromise which did little to satisfy those imperialists who felt not enough was being done to aid Britain with the burden of imperial defence. Debates about the naval issue caused the national vision of Henri Bourassa and other French Canadian *nationalistes* to publically clash with the imperial outlook of many English Canadians, who felt strongly that Canada had a duty to contribute to the defence of the empire. As had been the case with the dispatch of troops during the Boer War, Bourassa feared the creation of a precedent that would commit Canada to potentially costly foreign intervention over matters that did not directly affect Canadian interests. Even the establishment of a Canadian navy was dangerous because of the promise that the Canadian vessels would be put at the disposal of the British in the event of war.<sup>90</sup> Re-opening the question following the 1911 election only raised the level of animosity over imperial issues and the failure to contribute the money promised to defray the costs of building dreadnoughts damaged Canada's reputation in Britain.<sup>91</sup>

Military enthusiasm was not the only consequence of the imperial feeling roused by the Boer War. It also led to increasing friction between English- and French-speaking Canada as the two cultures and conceptions of the Canadian nation came into conflict with one another. French Canadian *nationalistes*, including Henri Bourassa, Lionel Groulx, Armand Lavergne, and Olivar Asselin, felt that the future of French Canada could best be preserved within an independent and autonomous Canada that was free to

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<sup>90</sup> Stacey, *Age of Conflict*, 126-143; Dutil and MacKenzie, *Canada 1911*, 39-69, 199-200, 214, 217, 225-229; Monière, *Idéologies en Québec*, 192-201; Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: Sir Lomer Gouin*, vol. 14 (Montréal: Éditions Bernard Valiquette, n.d.), 70-76, 134-155; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 15:26-29, 67-89.

<sup>91</sup> Stacey, *Age of Conflict*, 158-161.

chart its own course without being beholden to Great Britain's foreign policy concerns.<sup>92</sup> They also clearly perceived that the imperial nationalism of many English Canadians had little room for a strong and vibrant French Canada, especially outside of Quebec, where the terms of Confederation protected the educational and linguistic rights of French Canadians. In 1903, only a year following the end of the Boer War, the Ligue nationaliste was founded to oppose imperialism and to advocate for Canadian autonomy.<sup>93</sup> It was only one of many distinctive francophone societies including l'Association catholique de la jeunesse canadienne-française (ACJC), founded during this period to promote French Canadian identity.<sup>94</sup>

Although there were a number of ways in which the different attitudes and outlooks of French and English Canadians caused difficulties, the most notable was in the realm of education. The strong association between the Catholic faith, the French language, and the French Canadian sense of identity meant that the ability to raise and educate children in francophone Catholic schools was a guarantee of survival, especially outside of Quebec, where francophones were increasingly a minority as immigration swelled the Canadian population. First in New Brunswick, then in Manitoba, both of which had precedents of bilingual education, provincial governments had attacked francophone schools as inefficient, restricting language teaching and public funding and trying to force the closure of many schools, measures which the Catholic church in

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<sup>92</sup> Monière, *Idéologies en Québec*, 180, 198-206; Bock, *Quand la nation débordait les frontières*, 94-103, 138-149.

<sup>93</sup> Monière, *Idéologies en Québec*, 197.

<sup>94</sup> Laurier Renaud, *La fondation de l'A.C.J.C.: L'histoire d'une jeunesse nationaliste* (Jonquière: Presses collégiales de Jonquière, 1972).

Quebec rallied to prevent.<sup>95</sup> In Ontario, the issue would come to a head in 1912, when the provincial government passed Regulation 17, which allowed French-language instruction to be given only in the lower grades and only when no English was understood. Problems with the quality of education given in ‘bilingual’ schools in Ontario had been increasingly an object of concern since the 1880s, with legislation passed in 1907 requiring all teachers to be certified doing little to correct the problems; a 1912 report commissioned by the provincial government had found that many of the province’s bilingual schools, taught mostly by religious, still had unqualified teachers.<sup>96</sup> Because Ontario’s anglophone bishops, including those whose dioceses contained significant francophone minority communities, had adopted ‘separate’ confessional schools as an important symbol of their belonging and respectability in the province, they were mostly supportive of Regulation 17 as a way of raising the standards of and gaining public recognition for Catholic education. This put them in opposition to the French Canadian clergy, whose sense of national mission led them to advocate across parish and diocesan boundaries for francophone rights.<sup>97</sup> Beginning in 1912, Quebec groups, including the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste and the ACJC, undertook to raise increasing amounts of money to support the maintenance of francophone schools in Ontario. While it was a struggle that increased a sense of French Canadian identity and solidarity, it contributed to the building tensions between English and French Canada.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Perin, *Rome in Canada*, 127-157.

<sup>96</sup> John Zucchi, “Introduction” in *The View from Rome: Archbishop Stagni’s 1915 Reports on the Ontario Bilingual Schools Question* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2014), xvi-xix; Cecillon, *Prayers, Petitions, and Protests*, 53.

<sup>97</sup> Zucchi, “Introduction”, xxi-xxvi; Bock, *Quand la nation débordait les frontières*, 170-180, 219-221, 250-252; Cecillon, *Prayers, Petitions, and Protests*, 75-111.

<sup>98</sup> Zucchi, “Introduction,” xxi-xxii, xxviii-xix, xxxv; Cecillon, *Prayers, Petitions, and Protests*, 251-258;

On the eve of war, Canada was a rapidly growing nation optimistic about its future. There were problems associated with the country's rapid growth, including urban poverty and how best to assimilate the new arrivals to Canadian society, but reformers were confident that the problems could be solved by bringing society as a whole more in line with Christian ideals. Fissures existed between French Canada and English Canada on a host of issues, from imperial involvement to the appointment of bishops to education rights, but there had been very little open conflict, except perhaps in House of Commons debates or in the press. Although an economic downturn had begun in 1912, the nation as a whole was prosperous, peaceful and forward-looking.<sup>99</sup> The shooting of an Austrian archduke in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, was a relatively minor piece of foreign news that few imagined would have an impact on Canada. But, as events would develop over the course of the following weeks, the world, including Canada, would be swept up into the maelstrom of the Great War.

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<sup>99</sup> John Herd Thompson, *The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), 12-22.

## CHAPTER 2

NOT PEACE BUT A SWORD: JUSTIFYING THE WAR IN THE ENGLISH  
CANADIAN CHURCHES, 1914-1915

As Canada's religious periodicals went to press in the first days of August 1914, the general outlook remained one of grim uncertainty. The assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, in Sarajevo on June 28 had become a major international incident and, by the end of July, it no longer seemed that diplomacy would be sufficient to avoid war as the major powers, one after another, had begun to mobilize. Initially Britain, which had been allied with France since 1904, had held back from committing itself in hopes that peace might still be salvaged, but, in answer to German questioning, the British government had reasserted an 1839 pledge to guarantee Belgian neutrality.<sup>1</sup> "What will the next few days, or the next few hours bring forth?" wondered the *Christian Guardian*, the Canadian Methodist weekly. "As we write, that is the one question everyone is asking. Will it be peace and sanity and a striving after justice in a Christian and human way, or will it be murder and rapine and the settlement of issues with a bloody hand?"<sup>2</sup> But events were moving quickly and, by the time the issue made its way into the hands of its readers, the answer was already known.

Following a war plan that demanded swift action in the west, Germany declared war on France on August 3 and German troops crossed the frontier into Belgium on the morning

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<sup>1</sup> Margaret Macmillan, *The War that Ended Peace: The Road to 1914* (Toronto: Allen Lane, 2013), esp. 614-631; David Stevenson, *1914-1918: The History of the First World War* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2012), 10-16, 25-36.

<sup>2</sup> "What Shall It Be?," editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 5 August 1914, 5. Religious periodicals often went to press before the issue date or carried reports from local correspondents that commented on events several weeks after they had occurred, resulting in an apparent mismatch between the date indicated in the text and that of the footnote.

of August 4. In response, Britain issued an ultimatum giving the German army twelve hours to withdraw. When Germany refused to withdraw its troops from Belgium, Britain declared war on August 4.<sup>3</sup> Tied to Britain both legally and culturally, Canadians could do little but wait for news from overseas. “Before these lines are read all Europe may be in a life and death struggle,” acknowledged the *Presbyterian Record*, counselling hopefully that “In our helplessness we can only fall back upon the great truth that GOD REIGNS, and though human passion may for a time turn to hell, the kingdoms of the world shall become ... the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

The crowds that had gathered around newspaper offices in Canada’s cities were among the first to hear of Britain’s declaration of war. They reacted to the news with cheering, impromptu parades, and the singing of the national anthem.<sup>5</sup> Others learned of it as the evening editions of the newspaper circulated or as the news passed by word of mouth. “The *Globe* came as we went to dinner,” L.M. Montgomery, well-known author and wife of the Presbyterian minister in Leaksdale, Ontario, wrote in her diary. “I could not eat. I could only sit there dumbly trying to realize it — to realize that our Empire was at war. ... These last four days have seemed a nightmare. Already Canada is ablaze.”<sup>6</sup> In a flurry of activity, Red Cross units were formed and men flooded

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<sup>3</sup> John Keegan, *The First World War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 69; Macmillan, *War that Ended Peace*, 623-637.

<sup>4</sup> Original emphasis and typography. “Horrible, Horrible War!!!,” *Presbyterian Record*, August 1914, 337.

<sup>5</sup> See “How the News Was Received in Canada,” *Calgary Herald*, 5 August 1914, 7; “War Announcement Gives Rise to Great Outburst of Patriotic Feeling,” *Calgary Herald*, 5 August 1914, 10; I.H.M. Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief: Torontonians and the Great War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 15-17; Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada’s Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004); 34-41.

<sup>6</sup> L.M. Montgomery, diary entry 5 August 1915, *L.M. Montgomery’s Complete Journals: The Ontario Years, 1911-1917*, ed. Jen Rubio (Oakville: Rock Mill’s Press, 2016), 161.

recruiting stations to secure their place with the overseas contingent promised to Britain, a force with an initially authorized strength of 25,000.<sup>7</sup>

Just as the overt patriotic displays and rush to the recruiting offices were part of the Canadian reaction to the outbreak of war, so too was tMontgomery's quiet dismay. Beneath the wave of public enthusiasm, a deep questioning was also happening. What cause could be sufficient justification for such widespread death and destruction? What did Canadians have at stake in it? What did it mean to wage war as a Christian nation? While the precipitating events may have been political, there was a need to understand the deeper principles involved and what the defence of those principles required from not only nations, but also individuals. The churches, as the *Toronto Globe* recognized in an editorial, were one of the places people turned to looking for answers to these questions:

But for the preacher, and for the people he will face tomorrow, there looms up back of all the flags and the shouting another question, the penetrating question of the rightness and wrongness of all war, and of this war. They ask him, not the somewhat impertinent question, 'What would Jesus do?' but the more difficult, the more personal, the more inescapable question, 'In this matter of killing Germans and Austrians what would Jesus have me do?'<sup>8</sup>

Seeking to fully comprehend the extent of the sacrifices Canadians were willing to make during the Great War requires some understanding what they believed they were sacrificing for. It has long been recognized that the views people held of the war played a major factor in determining how they would later remember and commemorate it,<sup>9</sup> but,

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<sup>7</sup> G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1962), 18-20; Tim Cook, *At the Sharp End: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1914-1916* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2007), 24-27.

<sup>8</sup> "Preacher: Teacher: Writer," editorial, *Toronto Globe*, 22 August 1914, 4.

<sup>9</sup> The major work in the Canadian context is Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997).

more than that, the way that people framed the war shaped how they conducted themselves while it was being fought. One of the vital tasks undertaken by the churches in the early months of the war was to provide answers to some of the fundamental questions posed by the war. As traditional sources of moral guidance and comfort in times of trial, the churches were among the important public institutions which tried to provide a framework through which individuals could understand not only the issues at stake, but also what it meant to be at war. In the context of the diffusive Christian culture of the early twentieth century, moral questions remained profoundly religious ones, and the outbreak of war posed important moral issues with which people needed to grapple, not only at the national level but also personally.<sup>10</sup> The explanations and justifications offered by the churches in answer to these questions would have a profound and enduring effect on the way that people understood and experienced the Great War, ultimately shaping the scope of their activities and their reactions to the events overseas.

Although the imperial ties that drew Canada into the war at the side of Britain chafed for some in French Canada, the identities of many English-speaking Canadians were bound up with notions of Britishness. The decision to go war may have been made in London, but Canadians were ready to answer the call. Although Canada had been a self-governing dominion since Confederation in 1867, in 1914 its international outlook

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<sup>10</sup> cf. J.S. Woodsworth, "The Functions of the Church," *Christian Guardian*, 2 September 1914, 10-11.

remained largely colonial.<sup>11</sup> “We are British! and we will stand by the mother land in this greatest campaign of all time,” declared the *Christian Guardian*.<sup>12</sup> They were not alone in expressing this sense of duty at this time of need. “Canada is British not merely in days of peace and prosperous ease; she is more intensely British when the call comes for sacrifice for Britain’s sake,” asserted the *Presbyterian*.<sup>13</sup> The *Catholic Register*, whose editor, Father Alfred E. Burke, would soon enlist as a chaplain, similarly stated that

Never more so than now is it brought home to us that the British Empire stands for the truest guarantee of peace and order to the world ... [This war] will prove for us beyond peradventure that we as Canadians are Britishers to the core and that Britain’s troubles are our troubles, Britain’s shield our safety. We must sacrifice something for this protection.<sup>14</sup>

While the Boer War fifteen years earlier had been subject to sharp criticism in some quarters,<sup>15</sup> in the late summer and fall of 1914 Britain’s decision to go to war was widely accepted as a regrettable but necessary action in the face of German aggression.<sup>16</sup> In his

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<sup>11</sup> R. Matthew Bray, “‘Fighting as an Ally’: The English-Canadian Patriotic Response to the Great War,” *Canadian Historical Review* 61, no. 2 (1980): 141-146; Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), passim; Sylvie Lacombe, *La rencontre de deux peuples élus: Comparaison des ambitions nationale et impériale au Canada entre 1896 et 1920* (Québec: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 2002), 136-182.

<sup>12</sup> “A United Canada,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 26 August 1914, 5.

<sup>13</sup> “Britain’s Greatness,” editorial, *Presbyterian*, 3 September 1914, 195.

<sup>14</sup> “Pax Britannica,” editorial, *Catholic Register*, 17 September 1914, 4. See also Mark McGowan, *The Imperial Irish: Canada’s Irish Catholics Fight the Great War, 1914-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2017), 78-79.

<sup>15</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 52-53, 56-62; Carman Miller, “English Canadian Opposition to the South African War as Seen through the Press,” *Canadian Historical Review* 55, no. 4 (1974): 422-438; Thomas Socknat, *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 23-28; Gordon Heath, *A War with a Silver Lining: Canadian Protestant Churches and the South African War, 1899-1902* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009), xviii, xx-xxi, 39-45, 82-86. Criticism of the Boer War was also in circulation in the years immediately preceding the Great War as part of the move towards liberal pacifism. See, for example, “Jesus and the Men of War,” *Toronto Globe*, 7 September 1912, 6.

<sup>16</sup> Revisionist positions, like the one taken by Niall Ferguson, assigning blame to Britain for intervening unnecessarily in international affairs and ultimately bearing responsibility for the war would have found no resonance with contemporary Canadians. For Ferguson’s argument see *The Pity of War: Explaining World War I* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).

first message to his diocese after the war began, John Cragg Farthing, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, assessed the situation, writing,

The Empire risks its all, its very existence; by going into this war, we stand to lose everything: we stood to lose our honour and to break our obligations had we kept out of it. . . . Horrible as war is, to break our pledged word, and to see a weak nation wronged would be more horrible. At such a time, we must remember that Righteousness, not peace, is the ideal of Christ.<sup>17</sup>

In seeking to justify participation in the Great War, Canadian clergymen had to address the general question of war. Christ was, after all, the Prince of Peace.<sup>18</sup>

Although none of the major denominations had a heritage of absolute non-resistance, as did the traditional peace churches like the Quakers and Mennonites, liberal pacifism had gained ground in the Canadian Protestant churches in the years before 1914. Just as the social gospel movement worked towards establishing a more perfect society domestically, liberal pacifism was strongly humanitarian, holding that the progress of Western society would allow international diplomacy to ultimately eliminate war and the suffering it entailed.<sup>19</sup> In 1911, the Presbyterian General Assembly, encouraged by American President Howard Taft's proposal to resolve all future disputes with Britain through arbitration, unanimously passed a motion in favour of resolving disputes

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<sup>17</sup> J. Cragg Farthing, "A Message on the War," *Montreal Churchman*, September 1914, 3.

<sup>18</sup> cf. Isaiah 9:6 and Ephesians 2:14-20

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Socknat, "Canada's Liberal Pacifists and the Great War," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue d'études canadiennes* 18, no. 4 (1983): 30-31; Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 4-11, 20, 44-45, 69-73; J.M. Bliss, "The Methodist Church and World War I," *Canadian Historical Review* 49, no. 3 (1968): 213-214; Stuart MacDonald, "The Wartime Sermons of the Rev. Thomas Eakin," *Canadian Society of Church History Papers* (1985): 61-62. MacDonald, in writing about the Canadian Presbyterians and the war, rejects the usefulness of liberal pacifism as a category given its grudging acceptance that war might be necessary, but it has been employed here as a convenient label for the playing out of social gospel thought with respect to internationalism. See Stuart MacDonald, "For Empire and God: Canadian Presbyterians and the Great War" in *Canadian Churches and the First World War*, ed. Gordon Heath (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 135n9.

without having to resort to war.<sup>20</sup> The issue of international peace was endorsed as part of a progressive social program which, according to the *Toronto Globe*, included “the application of Christian principles in industrial life,” addressing the relationship between disease and poverty, the provision of proper education, and greater economic equalities.<sup>21</sup> Encouraged by the work of the non-sectarian Canadian Peace and Arbitration Society, founded in 1905, the Canadian Protestant churches continued to take up the question of permanent peace.<sup>22</sup> The Roman Catholic Church, given its structure, heritage, and ideology had a different kind of internationalism to that evidenced here in the Protestant denominations and, in this period, Catholic clergy not inclined to work ecumenically. This did not preclude, for example, individual membership in the Peace and Arbitration Society, which was a non-sectarian organization that drew its membership across denominational borders and included both women and a rabbi among its directors. It did mean, however, that Catholic churches were not likely, for example, to participate in the Society’s request for a ‘Peace Sunday’ to be observed in Canadian churches; the Catholic position on such principles originated from the pope, rather than individual bishops.

One of the strongest statements against war arose in the Presbytery of New Westminster (Vancouver) in reaction to the re-opening of the naval question in 1913. Their ‘Peace Manifesto’, unanimously passed by the presbytery delegates, was sent directly to Canadian Prime Minister Robert Borden and to Opposition Leader Sir Wilfrid

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<sup>20</sup> “Unanimous Vote for Arbitration,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 14 June 1911, 3 and “Congregations to Vote on Church Union,” *Toronto Globe*, 14 June 1911, 1, 4.

<sup>21</sup> “A Progressive Assembly,” *Toronto Globe*, 17 June 1911, 9.

<sup>22</sup> For a presentation of the Society’s aims, see “Canadian Peace and Arbitration Society,” CIHM 85858 (Toronto: n.p., [1907?]). See also Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 29-35, 46-48.

Laurier and circulated through the press, gaining attention in other provinces. It called war “a relic of barbarism, as absurdly out of place in the twentieth century as it is wasteful and wicked” and called upon the nations of the world to make “a serious inquiry ... as to the necessity of war.”<sup>23</sup> Both the Presbyterian General Assembly and the Methodist General Conference passed peace resolutions later that summer. The Presbyterians resolved “to use every reasonable effort in our power ... to secure the abolition of war and to bring about the glad day of peace on earth and good-will to men.”<sup>24</sup> And the Methodists expressed their desire to work toward “universal peace on the basis of the sovereignty of Christ, the internationalizing of the law of justice and love in a brotherhood of Empires — as well as a brotherhood of man.”<sup>25</sup> In May 1913, William Clark, the Bishop of Niagara, likewise chose to use his opening address to his synod to declare that “No principle can be settled by war.” War, he stated, could only determine which military was stronger. Arbitration had been shown to be a better way of resolving disputes and “should receive the commendation of all Christian men.”<sup>26</sup>

Despite their condemnations of war and support for institutions which might prevent it, there was, however, recognition implicit in these resolutions that permanent peace was a goal still to be achieved. Christ had taught peace and the love of one’s

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<sup>23</sup> “Presbyterians and World Peace,” *Toronto Globe*, 24 January 1913, 4. See the accompanying editorial on the same page, “A Presbyterian Peace Manifesto” by editor J.A. Macdonald, a Presbyterian minister active in the peace movement. The London Presbytery endorsed the manifesto at its March meeting, and others may have done so as well. See “London Will Enforce New Adolescent Act,” *Toronto Globe*, 3 March 1913, 9. See also Brian Fraser, “Peacemaking among Presbyterians in Canada: 1900-1945,” in *Peace and War and God’s Justice*, edited by Thomas Parket and Brian Fraser (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1989), 126-128; Brian Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988), 156-160; Michelle Fowler, “‘Death is not the Worst Thing’: The Presbyterian Press in Canada, 1913-1919,” *War & Society* 25, no. 2 (2006): 26-27.

<sup>24</sup> “Assembly Desires Universal Peace,” *Toronto Globe*, 13 June 1913, 4.

<sup>25</sup> “Conference Urges Study in Interests of Peace,” *Toronto Globe*, 20 June 1913, 8.

<sup>26</sup> “Bishop of Niagara on Folly of War,” *Toronto Globe*, 29 May 1913, 11.

neighbour, but the fallen nature of man meant that, when society fell short of the ideals of righteousness, sometimes war was the lesser of the evils. The ‘Peace Manifesto’ of the New Westminster Presbytery, despite its strong condemnation of war, also called for the Canadian Parliament to “unite in a declaration which will make it quite clear to all the world that while Great Britain should exhaust every possibility in order to avoid the awful catastrophe of a European war, yet should such a war result, Canada is ready to stand or fall with the Empire.”<sup>27</sup> The pre-war position of the Protestant churches was a limited pacifism, which recognized that circumstances might still require the Christian nations to engage in armed conflict despite their best diplomatic efforts. And, in the late summer of 1914, this was exactly the situation that seemed to have arisen for the British Empire.

While there were those who eagerly embraced Britain’s cause from the outset, it was with a feeling of profound disappointment and regret that many clergymen sought to explain the war, reconciling their pacifism with a sense of international justice.<sup>28</sup> “We will stick to our old belief — war is a crime, it is folly, it is sin against God and man and all that both hold dear,” ran an editorial in the *Christian Guardian* in November 1914. “It is only justified under conditions of the most awful extremity, and never to be looked upon with anything like complacency.”<sup>29</sup> When the *Canadian Churchman* asked the opinion of W.D. Reeve, the Anglican assistant bishop of Toronto, he acknowledged that

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<sup>27</sup> “Presbyterians and World Peace,” *Toronto Globe*, 24 January 1913, 4.

<sup>28</sup> While it is now acknowledged that Britain went to war for its own national interests, rather than an altruistic love of Belgian freedom, this was not the prevailing view at the time. See, for example, Alan Kramer, *The Dynamics of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Ferguson, *The Pity of War*.

<sup>29</sup> “The Gain and the Loss,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 18 November 1914, 5-6. See also the war resolution passed at the 1915 General Conference meeting, quoted in “Church Should Work for National Life,” *Toronto Globe*, 14 June 1915, 7.

“this war is greatly to be deplored, that it is a satire on civilization, and a disgrace to Christianity.” Sill, he had faith that God would not have permitted the war unless “ultimate good, great good, will come out of it all...”<sup>30</sup> The moderator of the Victoria Presbytery, although he believed “war to be anti-Christian,” could not “blame our own country for taking up the sword in defence of the weak, and to refuse to revert to barbarism by admitting that might is right.”<sup>31</sup> While war remained something to be deplored, it was the circumstances of British participation in the Great War that enabled support to be offered. Although Britain could have opted for peace, that peace would have been, according to Professor Robert Law of Knox College, Toronto, “a selfish, ignoble, unrighteous peace; a peace built upon broken treaties; peace at the price of treachery...” Given the choice between such a peace and standing up against “cruel and unscrupulous might” which “tramples underfoot the weak and defenceless,” Law continued, “thank God in the hour of trial Britain failed not, and Canada failed not, and, please God, will not be found wanting.”<sup>32</sup> As George Thornloe, the Anglican Archbishop of Algoma, told a church parade of the 51st Soo Rifles, “Peace is the greatest blessing of man, but war is oftentimes the price of peace.”<sup>33</sup>

Germany had begun its western campaign in August 1914 with an invasion of Belgium and France. The Belgian defenders held out bravely, slowing the German advance, but by early September the Allied armies had been forced into a retreat,

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<sup>30</sup> W.D. Reeve quoted in “The Canadian Church and the War,” *Canadian Churchman*, 1 October 1914, 633. See a similar statement from George Thornloe (Abp. of Algoma) under the same header.

<sup>31</sup> “News of the Churches,” *Presbyterian*, 24 September 1914, 283-284.

<sup>32</sup> Preached in St. Andrew’s Church, Toronto. Robert Law, “A Sermon on the War,” *Christian Guardian*, 16 September 1914, 12-13, 26-27. See also “War Against War Is Britain’s Cause,” *Toronto Globe*, 10 September 1914, 7.

<sup>33</sup> George Thornloe quoted in “First Church Parade in Sault Ste. Marie,” *Toronto Globe*, 17 August 1914, 2. See also “The Great Issue,” editorial, *Presbyterian Witness*, 19 September 1914, 4.

Belgium was mostly overrun, much of northern France occupied, and Paris itself was threatened. Although the pressure on Paris was relieved by the Battle of the Marne in September and some captured French territory recovered, a series of battles through the fall of 1914 succeeded only in established a line of opposing defensive positions that terminated at the Channel coast. The trench lines had been dug.<sup>34</sup> In this early period of relative German success and mobile warfare, the physical defence of the empire figured into how the war was justified, but the principles at stake were felt to be even more vital. In Toronto, Archdeacon H.J. Cody addressed a Thanksgiving service at the Anglican Church of the Epiphany. He invoked a sense of imperial mission and told his listeners:

We may thank God [for Canada's distance from the front] and at the same time out of that thankfulness feel an increased responsibility to give added service for the Empire's life. Make no mistake about it. Whatever other great issues are involved, the issue is the life, the mission and continued world service of the British Empire. The issue for us Canadians still, whether we are to be a great free democracy in this world-wide British Empire, or be a colony of the German Empire, ruled by German governors, governed by German ideals.<sup>35</sup>

The editorialist of the *Presbyterian Witness*, writing in the December issue, separated the ideals for which the war was being fought from the question of empire entirely, writing:

in the great struggle upon which Great Britain has entered, it is not the integrity or the future existence of the empire which is at stake; it is the liberties and the holiest rights of mankind which are threatened and for the safeguarding of which our nation is making such sacrifices. . . . [Germany's]

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<sup>34</sup> Stevenson, *1914-1918*, 44-60.

<sup>35</sup> H.J. Cody quoted in "Britain Gains Respect for Keeping Her Word," *Toronto Globe*, 10 October 1914, 6.

policy of ‘blood and iron’ must perish before the gospel of the lowly Galilean.<sup>36</sup>

The Belgian treaty, derided as a ‘scrap of paper’ by the Germans, stood for more than mere diplomacy. It represented the values of Christian civilization — honour, justice, liberty, and righteousness — values that were important enough to go to war to defend.<sup>37</sup>

Just as pre-war liberal pacifists understood their efforts on behalf of international peace as part of a broader program of social reform, some clergymen sought to explain the war to their parishioners using the same framework.<sup>38</sup> Some were quite explicit in linking the ideals of the war with the coming of the Kingdom of God. H.A. Kent, in an editorial in the *Presbyterian Witness*, took the long view of the working out of God’s vision for the world, noting that “Jesus had proclaimed a kingdom other than that of Rome, a kingdom in which righteousness, purity, truth, liberty, God should rule instead of injustice, vice, lies, slavery, and Caesar.” By tracing historical struggles for liberty and freedom, Kent concluded by stating that “It is thus no new enemy that we face, but an old foe in new form. . . . We believe that our nation has entered this struggle with high thoughts of her duty, and in the interest of righteousness and liberty, and these things

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<sup>36</sup> “Christless Culture,” editorial, *Presbyterian Witness*, 12 December 1914, 4. In the context, ‘our nation’ likely refers to the empire as a whole as Canadian troops were not at the front. For another, less ambiguous example of this identification, see Donald Solandt, “Some Great Discoveries,” *Presbyterian*, 1 July 1915, 13 — “When we think of these multitudes to whom our Empire is a symbol of freedom and justice and security, we feel a thrill of gratitude for the opportunity to fight for, and, if need be, die for such a country.”

<sup>37</sup> Canadian legal scholars also recognized that international law had a symbolic importance. Although lacking overtly religious language, the need to uphold ‘civilization’ in the form of diplomacy and peaceable internationalism is not so different than the principles invoked by churchmen. See Peter Price, “Of Solemn Pacts and Paper Scraps: International Law and the Purpose of War, 1914-1918,” *International Journal* 71, no. 1 (2016): 5-19.

<sup>38</sup> Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 45-51; Bliss, “Methodist Church,” 224-227; Neil Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996), 395-397, 402; Norman Knowles, “‘O valiant hearts who to your glory came’: Protestant Responses to Alberta’s Great War” in *Frontiers of Patriotism: Alberta and the First World War*, eds. Adriana Davies and Jeffrey Keshen, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2016), 234-238.

belong not to Caesar, but to God.”<sup>39</sup> For Francis G. Brown, writing for the *Christian Guardian* in May 1915, “... this war, when you catch its inner significance, is a spiritual war. It involves the very principles of righteousness for which the Church stands. ... Liberty, humanity, religion — all are involved in it, for all three are at one at the bottom. ... It may be thorny, and our feet may bleed, but we are treading the way of the Prince of Peace which leads us up to God.”<sup>40</sup> The majority were, however, more cautious about directly linking the war with religion, relying instead on appeals to recognize the linkage between individual morality and national responsibility in times of crisis and the duties of Christian citizenship.

Although there was broad consensus that Canada should do its part to support the empire and defend the ideals of civilization at this time of war, there were also denominational differences in approach and they appear in these more subdued explanations of the war. External factors would play a role in denominational reactions, most notably in the reaction of the English-speaking Roman Catholic hierarchy, who had to balance their identities as proud Canadians with the neutral position taken by the papacy under both Pius X and Benedict XIV, but so too would cultural and theological factors.<sup>41</sup> Although none of the major denominations taught a firm separation between religious teaching and secular concerns, there were subtly different attitudes held with respect to church/state relations, the prominence given to social gospel teaching, and the

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<sup>39</sup> H.A. Kent, “Past and Present,” *Presbyterian Witness*, 10 October 1914, 4. He alludes here to Rome as the secular city as in Augustine’s *City of God* and Matthew 22:21.

<sup>40</sup> Francis G. Brown, “Some Theories on the War Tested and Proven,” *Christian Guardian*, 12 May 1915, 9-10.

<sup>41</sup> For a thorough discussion of Canada’s Irish Catholics, see McGowan, *Imperial Irish*.

role played by the individual conscience in each denomination's theology. Each of these elements played a role in shaping denominational reactions to the war.

The Anglican church, sometimes informally known as 'the English church', was the denomination whose ecclesiastical and cultural ties to Britain were the strongest. As a consequence, its justifications of the war were the most likely to invoke a sense of imperial mission, equating the British Empire with the spread of liberty and progress.<sup>42</sup> Archdeacon H.J. Cody, speaking to the Toronto Insurance Institute, on October 28, 1914, was confident that, despite empires having been associated with "despotism" in the past, "It is the unique glory of the British Empire that it is indissolubly associated with and synonymous with political liberty." With the "political liberty the whole world over" at stake, the war was "a struggle between liberalism and despotism: between industrialism and militarism, between the masses and the classes, between progress and reaction."<sup>43</sup> Herbert Symonds, rector of Montreal's Christ Church Cathedral, admitted in April 1915 that "We have had our questionings and our doubts about the empire: we have not lived in a fool's paradise. But we are proud today of the justice of our course and our single desire to see fair play. We are fighting against the irresponsibility of one nation in relation to another. We have nailed to our masthead the flag of public right."<sup>44</sup> For J.D. Llwyd, Dean of Nova Scotia, the circumstances, together with the ideals at stake, determined the righteousness of the war. Britain was bound to defend Belgium and to assist France in its struggle to avoid "practical extinction as a nation", but also at stake was "All that a thousand years of English struggle has won for the world ...; each man's

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<sup>42</sup> Berger, *Sense of Power*, 217-232.

<sup>43</sup> H.J. Cody quoted in "British Empire Ideals at Stake in This War," *Toronto Globe*, 29 October 1914, 7.

<sup>44</sup> Herbert Symonds quoted in "Englishmen Proud in Hour of Peril," *Toronto Globe*, 24 April 1915, 8.

personal freedom; self-government; popular rights; the sacredness of personality itself.

No war has had a more righteous basis.”<sup>45</sup>

Anglican explanations of the war made a particular appeal to the notion of righteousness. This was, in part, because Anglicanism had a strong liturgical tradition based in the Book of Common Prayer that gave clergymen a shared vocabulary from which to draw, a linguistic heritage distinct from the social gospel emphasis on the Kingdom of God.<sup>46</sup> In their appeals to the notion of a righteous war, Anglicans turned not only to the Bible, as did the other Protestant denominations, but also to their own heritage. When Bishop Farthing, in the first weeks of the war, stated that ‘Righteousness, not peace was the ideal of Christ’, he was subtly echoing the versicles used in the services of Morning and Evening Prayer which ask first for righteousness and only then for peace.<sup>47</sup> In his explanation of the war, Halifax’s Archdeacon W.J. Armitage referenced not only the Pauline epistles but also the Thirty-Nine Articles, the 1563 document which set out the tenets of Anglican doctrine. He concluded by writing:

There are righteous wars, wars which it would be absolutely wrong not to wage against tyranny, oppression, and injustice, and in defence of life,

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<sup>45</sup> J.D. Llwyd, quoted in “The Canadian Church and the War,” *Canadian Churchman*, 1 October 1914, 634.

<sup>46</sup> In September 1914 the editor of the *Canadian Churchman* asked leading churchmen for “their opinions about the Righteousness of the present War,” which may have influenced the pervasiveness of this language, but the idea of righteousness in relation to the conflict was already present and persisted throughout the war. “The Canadian Church and the War,” *Canadian Churchman*, 1 and 8 October 1914.

<sup>47</sup> Morning Prayer would have been the most common Sunday morning service during the period. Both Morning and Evening Prayer could also be celebrated by lay leaders in the absence of an ordained priest. For the versicles and responses, see *Book of Common Prayer* (1662):

O Lord, save the King.

*And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.*

Endue thy Ministers with righteousness,

*And make thy chosen people joyful.*

O Lord, save thy people.

*And bless thine inheritance.*

Give peace in our time, O Lord,

*Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God ...*

liberty and independence. ... There was but one course open in England, her pledged word must be kept to the letter. ... We have been loud enough and profuse enough in our profession of loyalty. Let us show now by our actions that we mean every word we say.<sup>48</sup>

It was not only bishops and prominent churchmen who could fall back on this heritage, but also laymen and women. The Book of Common Prayer provided Anglicans with collects and intercessory prayers appropriate to wartime, a selection of which were swiftly authorized for use by the bishops, and the nature of regular services — which already contained in the ordinary prayers for the king, the state, and peace — lending themselves well to the occasion. In November 1915, Dyson Hague, the incumbent at the Church of the Epiphany (Toronto) and a professor at Wycliffe College, wrote that

As the tenseness of the War increases, men seem to be thinking more and more of dependence upon men and munitions ... Poles apart from this ... is the spirit of England's Church as reflected in the Prayer Book. ... [T]he spirit of the Prayer Book is the spirit of the deep recognition of God as the *only* Arbiter of War and the *only* Giver of Victory. ... Our victories are not going to be for the glory of English generals nor English arms merely, but for the glory of God.<sup>49</sup>

A shared language of empire and worship did not, however, guarantee consensus about the way the war should be approached, despite the fact that Anglican support for the war was nearly universal. The issue in question was one of behaviour, of what it meant to be part of a Christian nation at war. At the outbreak of war, Henry Gray, the Anglican Bishop of Edmonton, had asked that prayers for peace be said, rather than prayers for victory, and stated that he did not consider it “right to pray for the success of

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<sup>48</sup> W.J. Armitage quoted in “The Canadian Church and the War,” *Canadian Churchman*, 8 October 1914, 649.

<sup>49</sup> Original emphasis. Dyson Hague, “The Spirit of the Prayer Book in Time of War,” *Canadian Churchman*, 11 November 1915, 714.

an army in an international struggle.”<sup>50</sup> This question arose as a matter of debate at the 1915 meeting of the General Synod as part of discussions about the ongoing revision of the hymnal and the Prayer Book. The second verse of God Save the King, which made direct reference to God confounding the knavish tricks of the enemy, had been dropped from a pre-war draft of the hymnal because the sentiments were felt to be un-Christian for violating the commandment to love one’s enemy.<sup>51</sup> Due to the war conditions, it was suggested that the verse be restored, but objections were raised on the basis that God should not be asked to intervene against the Empire’s enemies.<sup>52</sup> As the Rev. W.J. Boyd of Edmonton stated, the German people were not responsible for the ‘knavish tricks’ of the army: “They had nothing to do with the awful atrocities and why should we ask God to confound them?”<sup>53</sup> For those who supported the use of the optional verse, there was no reason it should not be used to pray for victory and for the defeat of the enemy unless

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<sup>50</sup> Henry Gray quoted in “Offer Prayers for Peace in Anglican Churches of City,” *Edmonton Capital*, 10 August 1914, 4.

<sup>51</sup> The verse, which was not printed in the c1908 *Book of Common Praise* attached to the 1918 Canadian revision of the Book of Common Prayer (the two were often printed together), runs

O Lord our God arise,  
Scatter his enemies  
And make them fall;  
Confound their politics,  
Frustrate their knavish tricks,  
On Thee our hopes we fix,  
God save us all!

Compare with Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:27-28.

<sup>52</sup> Church of England in Canada, 1915, *Proceedings of the General Synod*, 7th Session, 38, 49. See also “Synod’s Loyal Cable Opposed, but Sent,” *Toronto Globe*, 18 June 1915, 5; “The Seventh Session of the General Synod,” *Canadian Churchman*, 23 September 1915, 605; Nor’wester, “Sidelights on the General Synod,” *Canadian Churchman*, 23 September 1915, 603; “The National Anthem,” *Canadian Churchman*, 30 September 1915, 615.

<sup>53</sup> W.J. Boyd quoted in “General Synod Spurns Empire’s ‘Hate’ Verse,” *Toronto Globe*, 17 September 1915, 7.

going to war had itself been wrong in the sight of God.<sup>54</sup> Interestingly, the Prayer in Time of War and Tumults, a 1662 collect which petitioned that the devices of the enemy be confounded, their pride abated, and their malice assuaged, was returned without opposition to the working draft of the revised Prayer Book at the same meeting.<sup>55</sup> The Prayer, among those authorized for special use at the beginning of the war was, as Archdeacon W.J. Armitage of Halifax later explained, “too expressive of national need to be relegated to oblivion.”<sup>56</sup> Although the inherent conservatism of the revision process may have played a part in the acceptance of the prayer, so too did the tone, which displayed, according to Dyson Hague, “no trace of national cocksureness” but was rather an appeal for deliverance.<sup>57</sup> As this debate shows, even amongst those who supported the war effort as a defence of fundamental principles, there was disagreement about the extent to which God could be petitioned for victory. Although the bishops

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<sup>54</sup> “Anthem’s Verse of ‘Hate’ Defended by Dr. Cody,” *Toronto Globe*, 20 September 1915, 6; H.J. Cody, “The History and Significance of the National Anthem,” speech delivered to the Empire Club of Canada (Toronto), 21 December 1916 available online at <http://speeches.empireclub.org/62030/data?n=1> See also Clementine Fessenden, letter to the editor, “A Hymn for the Church Militant,” *Toronto Globe*, 20 September 1915, 4; Robert Ker, letter to the editor, “Ecclesiastical Pacifists,” *Toronto Globe*, 21 September 1915, 4. For a Methodist view, see W.S. Dingman, letter to the editor, “The National Anthem,” *Christian Guardian*, 29 December 1915, 29.

<sup>55</sup> The Prayer in Time of War and Tumults is appropriate for general use during times of war but had been removed from the draft Prayer Book in 1912 because it was felt a prayer with “such strong and forcible language” was not needed — see W.J. Armitage, *The Story of the Canadian Revision of the Prayer Book* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1922), 226-228. See also “Compromise on Creed: No Divorcees’ Weddings,” *Toronto Globe*, 23 September 1915, 6. The returned prayer remained in the Canadian Prayer Book until 1949. The text runs in full:

O Almighty God, King of all kings, and Governor of all things, whose power no creature is able to resist, to whom it belongeth justly to punish sinners, and to be merciful to those who truly repent: Save and deliver us, we humbly beseech thee, from the hands of our enemies; abate their pride, assuage their malice, and confound their devices; that we, being armed with thy defence, may be preserved evermore from all perils, to glorify thee, who art the only giver of all victory; through the merits of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

<sup>56</sup> Armitage, *Revision of the Prayer Book*, 228; “Prayers for Peace,” *Toronto Globe*, 12 August 1914, 6. It was not, however, included in the prayers recommended in the Anglican Diocese of Montreal, whose bishop recommended the forms suggested by the Archbishop of Canterbury — see “Prayers Authorized to be Said During the War,” *Montreal Churchman*, September 1914, 10-11.

<sup>57</sup> Dyson Hague, “The Spirit of the Prayer Book in Time of War,” *Canadian Churchman*, 11 November 1915, 714.

ultimately authorized the use of the contentious verse during the war for those who wished to do so, the objectors continued to remain free to abstain from its use.<sup>58</sup> When the anthem was sung at the General Synod meeting, Montreal's Archdeacon J. Paterson-Smythe resumed his seat when the line 'Confound their politics' was reached.<sup>59</sup> Whether or not to use the verse remained a question throughout the remainder of the war, with individual priests and congregations free to follow their own consciences on the matter.<sup>60</sup>

For Presbyterians, the issue of the war similarly came down to Canada's membership in the empire and the ideals involved, but those ideals were framed in terms that were more rigidly moralistic. Having entered the war because Germany, in the words of the Rev. Thomas Eakin, had violated "the sacred treaties which should be the moral currency of nations", the issue of conscience and national character dominated in the first months of the war, with a strong focus on the proper conduct of the war.<sup>61</sup> The church conceived its responsibility not "to feed the burning fire of patriotism", but rather to consecrate judgment upon that patriotism. We pray for victory. We assume to be a chosen instrument to visit righteous judgment upon a people who have transgressed the laws of nations and of humanity. ... We trust that

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<sup>58</sup> Message 10, *General Synod*, 7th Session, 49. See also "The Seventh Session of the General Synod," *Canadian Churchman*, 23 September 1915, 605.

<sup>59</sup> "Temperance Favoured, With Some Dissent," *Toronto*, 20 September 1915, 7.

<sup>60</sup> Archdeacon H.J. Cody claimed all the verses were being used at St. Paul's (Toronto) throughout the war. On the other hand, a bulletin from a 1915 military service at Christ Church Cathedral (Montreal) left out the second verse and included the optional third verse to the Dominion of Canada — see 11 April 1915 (bulletin inserted), Service Book, Christ Church (Montreal), Montreal Diocesan Archive. The order of service for the 1916 St. George's Day service at Christ Church Cathedral, Hamilton omits the second verse and includes an imperial verse in addition to the verse to the Dominion — see "Order of Service (30 April 1916)," (Hamilton: n.p., 1916), CIHM 84018. For the verse to the Dominion, see Hymn 353, *Book of Common Praise* (Toronto: Musson Book Company, c1908)

<sup>61</sup> Thomas Eakin, Sermon — Great Babylon (Daniel 4), 21 November 1915, 207/0802, Thomas Eakin Papers, Presbyterian Church of Canada Archives. See also Michelle Fowler, "Keeping the Faith: The Presbyterian Press in Peace and War," (MA thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University, 2005), 28-39, 99; MacDonald, "The Wartime Sermons of the Rev. Thomas Eakin," 58-78.

it will be ours to emerge triumphant ... and to have a share in re-building the broken fabric of international affairs into a noble and enduring temple of peace. A nation that would engage worthily in a task so sacred should have hands clean ... and a heart pure...<sup>62</sup>

Intention was more critical to determining whether the struggle was right than the means by which the struggle was carried out, as the *Presbyterian Record* explained in October 1914:

War is never wrong when it is war against wrong. ... A war of selfish spite or vengeance or for aggression or gain is always wrong; but a war in defence of weakness against strength, a war for truth and plighted pledge, for freedom against oppression, is God's war wherever waged, and with whatever weapons, whether tongue or pen or sword.<sup>63</sup>

And any victory, according to the *Presbyterian Witness*, "should be a victory unsullied by unworthy acts and speech, a victory which will cause us no shame or regret and which will not rankle in the hearts of the vanquished."<sup>64</sup>

With a religious heritage and style of worship that emphasized 'preaching the gospel', Presbyterians turned to the Bible and the example of Christ in their justifications of the war. James Fraser, writing to the editor of the *Presbyterian*, while acknowledging that Christ taught his followers to turn the other cheek, also thought it worth remembering that circumstances needed to be taken into account and, when confronted unjustly, Jesus "did not turn the other cheek, but said: 'If I have spoken evil bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me.' Here is plainly and undeniably resistance of the evil-doer."<sup>65</sup> Loving one's enemies did not necessarily

<sup>62</sup> "The Church in Council," editorial, *Presbyterian*, 3 June 1915, 573-574.

<sup>63</sup> "Fight and Pray," editorial, *Presbyterian Record*, October 1914, 433-434. See also J.M. Shaw, "The Church and the Present Crisis," *Presbyterian Witness*, 7 November 1914, 4; "What One German Idea Has Done," editorial, *Presbyterian Record*, October 1914, 435-346.

<sup>64</sup> "Our Duty in the Present Crisis," editorial, *Presbyterian Witness*, 29 August 1914, 4.

<sup>65</sup> James Fraser, letter to the editor, "Our Attitude to Germany," *Presbyterian*, 10 December 1914, 556. cf. Matthew 5:38-39, 43-44; Luke 6: 26-29; John 18:19-23; 1 Peter 2:20.

mean allowing them to behave wrongly without intervention. The *Presbyterian Witness*, which had little doubt that Christ “cannot approve the selfish aggression of Germany, in forcing war”, did wonder if “He approve[s] our men when they train and fight to hinder evil, to right wrong, to save the life of our Empire and the world?” The answer came down to the intention behind the fight:

All such commands as — ‘Love your enemies’ — refer to attitude of mind and heart, to the aim, the motive with which men do what seems the duty of life, even though it be the duty of stopping evil and death, by stopping the life that is wrongfully causing evil and death. ... The Sunday service in the Church and the Monday service in the trench are one, and upon the man, not the place, depends the character of both.<sup>66</sup>

Writing in December 1914 for the Young People’s Society, the Rev. T. Stewart took Christ’s statement that he came ‘not to bring peace but a sword’ and related the war to the ongoing great struggle against evil. For Stewart, “There is a sense in which we may say that war is raging now in Europe because to some extent, we have learned the principles of Christ. ... To fight in defence of an ill-used child or woman would be a Christian duty. Why should different laws hold for nations and for individuals[?]”<sup>67</sup>

Despite these justifications, for some Presbyterians, the war nonetheless represented a challenge to the work done by the churches in the world, which clearly remained incomplete.<sup>68</sup> The editorialist of the *Presbyterian Witness* believed this firmly to be the case, writing that “the war has shown conclusively that the Church does not exercise the commanding influence in the modern world which might be expected of it

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<sup>66</sup> “Khaki at Church,” editorial, *Presbyterian Witness*, May 1915, 194.

<sup>67</sup> T. Stewart, Y.P.S. Topic, “Who Is on the Lord’s Side?,” *Presbyterian Witness*, 26 December 1914, 3.

<sup>68</sup> For non-Presbyterian perspectives, see H.J. Cody quoted in “Pray for Those Who Carry Authority,” *Toronto Globe*, 3 December 1914, 7; Byron Stauffer quoted in “Something Wrong with Our Christianity,” *Toronto Globe*, 5 October 1914, 6.

after nineteen centuries of life and work.”<sup>69</sup> He was not alone in this belief.<sup>70</sup> R.H. MacPherson, writing to the editor of the *Presbyterian Witness*, was troubled that the forms of prayer suggested were all “British prayers for martial success” that “make the fighters feel that they are justified in letting loose the passions that dehumanize men.” Instead, Christianity was being weighed in the balance and there was a need to pray “that we may see wherein we have been disloyal to the Prince of [P]eace and how we are denying him when we trust in armies and navies to guarantee freedom and peace rather than in the way of the Cross.”<sup>71</sup> For the members of the Belleville presbytery, the outbreak of war was a clear demonstration that societies “in which moral and spiritual progress does not keep pace with intellectual and material progress” were doomed. It was now the challenge of the church to pick up the pieces.<sup>72</sup>

It was also the duty of the church to set the example, to prevent the sowing of hatred and bitterness and to prepare for the coming of peace. The Presbyterians were not the only denomination to be taken aback by reports of German atrocities against civilians in Belgium and the willful destruction of such cultural monuments as the Louvain library and the Rheims cathedral. Like the other denominations, they used

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<sup>69</sup> “The Church and the Present Crisis,” editorial, *Presbyterian Witness*, 16 January 1915, 4.

<sup>70</sup> See “War’s Grim Pathway Real Road to Peace,” *Toronto Globe*, 17 August 1914, 6; “Social Reaction of War Service,” editorial, *Toronto Globe*, 28 August 1914, 4; “War a Challenge to Christian Faith,” *Toronto Globe*, 15 October 1914, 6; “The Difference Christianity Has Made,” editorial, *Presbyterian Witness*, 15 August 1914, 4; W.G. Jordan, letter to the editor, “Penitence and Patriotism,” *Presbyterian*, 1 April 1915, 357-358. For secondary sources, see Fraser, “Peacemaking,” 130.

<sup>71</sup> R.H. MacPherson, letter to the editor, “The War and Prayer,” *Presbyterian Witness*, 17 October 1914, 2. See also “Christianity is on Trial,” *Presbyterian*, 24 September 1914, 270.

<sup>72</sup> “News of the Churches,” *Presbyterian*, 3 December 1914, 519-520.

these reports to strengthen their commitment to battle against the forces of militarism.<sup>73</sup>

The *Presbyterian Witness* was particularly vehement, declaring that in light of the reports from Europe:

who can say that the war ... is not a holy war, a battle for freedom and truth and righteousness against the malignant, unscrupulous and unrelenting forces of militarism; and we can never lay down our weapons until the mighty enemy, which is the very embodiment of anti-Christ in the world, is humbled in the dust and forever shorn of its power to waste and destroy in the earth.<sup>74</sup>

Germany's use of poisonous gas in April 1915 and its sinking of the *Lusitania* in May solidified this conviction, but Presbyterians were wary about being drawn down the same path. W.T. Herridge, Moderator of the General Assembly for the year beginning in June 1914, cautioned, "It is the temper of a people and not its brute force, which in the long run determines what its future shall be. ... Unless the things due to Caesar are rendered in the finest spirit, we shall fail both in our patriotic service, and in the service we owe to God. ... We need good citizens and good Christians in these crucial days, and we cannot have the one without the other."<sup>75</sup>

The Methodists were similarly concerned with the conduct of the war, with the editorialist of the *Christian Guardian* noting that "with each passing week we are also more and still more impressed with the necessity, and also indeed the difficulty of

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<sup>73</sup> Michelle Fowler, "Keeping the Faith: The Presbyterian Press in Peace and War, 1913-1919," (MA thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University, 2005), 28-39; Fraser, "Peacemaking," 129. For other reactions to reports of German atrocities, see Byron Stauffer quoted in "If God Has First He Will Use It," *Toronto Globe*, 21 June 1915; H.J. Cody quoted in Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 45; James Sweeny (Anglican Bishop of Toronto) quoted in "Recall of the Church Will Follow the War," *Toronto Globe*, 9 June 1915, 7; T.W Savary quoted in *Canadian Churchman*, 27 May 1915, 333; Bliss, "Methodist Church," 215-216; Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 50.

<sup>74</sup> "The Disturber of Europe," editorial, *Presbyterian Witness*, 14 November 1914, 4. See also W.T. Herridge quoted in "General Assembly Calls to Sacrifice," *Toronto Globe*, 5 June 1915, 5.

<sup>75</sup> W.T. Herridge, "Caesar's Things and God's," *Presbyterian*, 3 June 1915, 577-579. In the secular press, see "Shall We Hate the Germans?," editorial, *Toronto Globe*, 12 January 1915, 4.

keeping a good conscience and fighting a righteous cause righteously.”<sup>76</sup> Engaging in the war in a Christian manner meant the fight could be carried on “courageously, unflinchingly, even relentlessly up to a limit, but it does not mean that we can fight in a spirit of hate. The command to love our enemies is upon us now as much as it ever was, and there can be no excuse for a disobedience of it.”<sup>77</sup> The course of the church, according to Byron Stauffer, was not “the mere justification of our side and the condemnation of our enemies” because that would make it “nothing but an ecclesiastical van in the line of march.” Although the time to preach peace and disarmament was past, “it is still the time to preach fairness and charity, and impose the spirit of Christ upon our people.”<sup>78</sup>

What the spirit of Christ meant in the context of the war was not a settled matter for Canadian Methodists. Although the Presbyterians had, as a denomination, been the most active in making statements on liberal pacifism in the pre-war period, this stance had been tempered by a doctrinal acceptance of humanity’s frailties. The emphasis placed by Methodism on the individual conscience and personal standards of behaviour, on the other hand, meant that the question of pacifism was not settled easily upon the outbreak of war. So Francis Brown could find agreement when he stated that Jesus “came to teach and vindicate also the great fundamental principles of liberty, truth, justice, and righteousness. And if history teaches us one thing it is this — that these

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<sup>76</sup> “Keeping a Clear Conscience,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 25 November 1914, 5.

<sup>77</sup> “The Christian Way,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 21 October 1914, 1. See also Edward Trelawney, “Christian Duty under War Conditions,” *Christian Guardian*, 19 August 1914, 7; “The Temptation to Hate,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 13 October 1915, 1.

<sup>78</sup> Byron Stauffer, “Being Fair to One’s Enemies,” *Christian Guardian*, 25 November 1914, 11-12. See also A. Carman and S.D. Chown, “Address of the General Superintendents to the General Conference of 1914,” *Supplement to the Christian Guardian*, 23 September 1914, 1-8.

great principles have been secured and defended at the edge of the sword.”<sup>79</sup> But so too could James Lawrence when he declared that “One’s patriotism must correspond in character to the character of one’s citizenship in the universe-wide kingdom to which he belongs; and that kingdom’s laws forbid every sort of corporeal violence.”<sup>80</sup> Far from vanishing as the war effort took on its own momentum, the debate continued in the pages of the *Christian Guardian* throughout 1915 and would continue to resurface periodically until early 1918. Clearly there was some truth in the statement made by the Rev. Douglas Hemmeon that “beneath the shouting of the multitude, many men’s minds are secretly and profoundly troubled” about how to respond to the war. The question for Hemmeon and others like him was not “‘Ought one to die for the nation?’ but ‘Ought one to kill for the nation?’”<sup>81</sup> J.L. Dawson, in a letter to the editor, captured something of the dilemma facing people when he wrote:

Not one [of the letter writers supporting the pacifist position] seems to doubt that the Spirit of Christ is so opposed to militarism that it must eventually annihilate it completely. ... But for today we are compelled to face the fact that ... each British citizen has ... reached a place where he must decide whether he will help the Empire as it is ... and so accept his own full share of the chastening with which God is now visiting the world; or hold himself aloof from it under the conviction that he can serve the Empire in a superior way by affirming the Christliness of its future...<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Francis Brown, “The Transfiguration of War,” *Christian Guardian*, 23 September 1914, 8.

<sup>80</sup> James Lawrence, letter to the editor, “The Church and the War,” *Christian Guardian*, 11 November 1914, 26-27.

<sup>81</sup> Douglas Hemmeon, letter to the editor, “The Ethics of War,” *Christian Guardian*, 27 January 1915, 2. See also Kenneth Kingston, letter to the editor, “The Ethics of War,” *Christian Guardian*, 17 February 1915, 26; Charles Bishop, letter to the editor, “Some More Questions about War,” *Christian Guardian*, 3 March 1915; Douglas Hemmeon, letter to the editor, “The Ethics of War,” *Christian Guardian*, 3 March 1915, 2, 20; George A. Bainborough, letter to the editor, “The Ethics of War,” *Christian Guardian*, 24 March 1915, 24.

<sup>82</sup> J.L. Dawson, letter to the editor, “War and the Spirit of Christ,” *Christian Guardian*, 5 May 1915, 26-27. Dawson was ultimately supportive of the war effort. See also, James Hughes, letter to the editor, “Reasons for Not Enlisting,” *Christian Guardian*, 1 November 1916, 11-12.

Although each of these letter writers drew others writing in support, those voicing these pacifist views were undoubtedly in the minority and it is impossible to know the extent to which similar objections were held silently by Methodists or those of other denominations.<sup>83</sup> Many who had been active in the pre-war peace movement, including William Creighton, editor of the *Christian Guardian*, were prepared to set aside their general objections to war on the basis of the circumstances.<sup>84</sup> As Creighton replied to Hemmeon in January 1915, “As we see it, our Christian nation in August last faced a tremendously critical situation with no explicit mandate from the Christ ... that she must not under any possible circumstances lift sword against her neighbour.”<sup>85</sup> For S.D. Chown, the General Superintendent and another pre-war pacifist, the circumstances were critical to the way in which he managed to reconcile his pre-war convictions with his ardent and vocal support of the war effort:

For myself it is enough to know that Christ, as I perceive Him, would not stand with limp hands if a ruthless soldier should attempt to outrage His holy mother as the women of Belgium were violated. ... [N]or would He retreat and give place to the armed burglar ... nor would He witness, without any effort to prevent it, the destruction of the civil and religious liberty which His teaching has enthroned in our British Empire.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Because those opposed to the war tended to remain silent, or were silenced, it is difficult to assess how widespread their views were. For some discussion of this, see Bliss, “Methodist Church,” 214-217, 223-224; Fowler, “Keeping the Faith,” 49; Fowler, “Presbyterian Press,” 32-34; Fraser, “Peacemaking,” 129-130; Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 47-48, 61-62, 66-74, 81, 87-88; Amy Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objection in Canada during the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 4-14, 20, 31, 63, 98-126, 160.

<sup>84</sup> David Marshall, “‘Khaki has become a sacred colour’”; David Marshall, “The Methodist Church and the Sanctification of World War One” in Heath, *Canadian Churches and the First World War*, 105-106, 113-115; Socknat, “Liberal Pacifists,” 32-34; *Witness Against War*, 45-51.

<sup>85</sup> “The Ethics of War,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 27 January 1915, 5.

<sup>86</sup> S.D. Chown, “Pacifism at Chautauqua,” *Christian Guardian*, 23 August 1916, 7, 13. See also S.D. Chown, “Dr. Chown on the War Situation,” *Christian Guardian*, 16 September 1914, 2; S.D. Chown, “A Message to our Soldiers,” *Christian Guardian*, 16 December 1914, 7, 19; “Not a Militarist,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 23 December 1914, 6; “The Pacifists,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 6 October 1915, 5.

For Methodists, the war was clearly framed as a struggle against militarism and for a wider peace, but, as was the case for the Anglicans, the practical meaning of this in the context of Christianity was a matter of some question. When a cable from King George V was received by the 1914 General Conference meeting which made reference to “the prayers of Canadian Methodists for ‘the overthrow of our enemies’” there were objections. As was the case during the Anglican debate over the national anthem, “There were some who said: ‘That is what we mean; why not say so?’” But the majority of attendees “welcomed the substitution of ‘militarism’ for ‘our enemies’”. That was, in fact substituting the particular enemy which we are fighting for the general phrase.”<sup>87</sup> It was only through framing the war as a clash of ideals that Methodists could come to an agreement about what kind of prayers should be offered. Whether or not the war was presented as a struggle against militarism or a war against war, Methodist enlistments remained well below their percentage share of the overall population throughout the period of voluntary enlistment, suggesting that those who were uneasy about the morality of going to war may not have been swayed by these arguments.<sup>88</sup> Methodists, who were justifying the war amongst themselves long after the other denominations had reconciled their Christian principles with the reality of the conflict, would also go on to become the denomination whose stance on recruiting was perhaps the most vehement. When prominent Methodists such as S.D. Chown or William Creighton had had to

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<sup>87</sup> ‘Candidus’, “A Layman at the General Conference,” *Christian Guardian*, 7 October 1914, 11-12. See the report on ‘War and Peace’ presented to the 1914 General Conference by the Department of Temperance and Moral Reform — “Methodists Condemn Militarism,” *Grain Growers’ Guide*, 25 November 1914, 12, 19.

<sup>88</sup> Semple, *Lord’s Dominion*, 398, 402-403; David Marshall, “‘Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour’: The Methodist Church and the Sanctification of World War One,” in *Canadian Churches and the First World War*, ed. Gordon Heath (Eugene, Or.: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 107, 113-114.

convince themselves that it was right to go to war by arguing that Jesus himself would not have stood aside, so how could they offer anything other than their full support of the war?<sup>89</sup>

Like their Protestant counterparts, Canada's English-speaking Roman Catholics were proud of their imperial citizenship and this, as much as their religious heritage, informed their reaction to the outbreak of war.<sup>90</sup> "[T]he British Empire has been forced in defence of its very life and liberty into a struggle fraught with the gravest import," Mgr. Michael Fallon of the Diocese of London wrote in a circular at the outbreak of war. His letter, which was to be read from every pulpit, continued, "Every sentiment of loyalty to our King and country prompts us to turn to God for gifts of peace and security for the Empire, that will mean the freedom and welfare of the world."<sup>91</sup> For Fallon, only the British Empire had the power to defeat Prussian militarism and, with the liberties of the empire at stake, "the duty of the hour consisted in prayer, charity, industry, and sacrifice" for all, whether at the front or at home.<sup>92</sup> As Mark McGowan has demonstrated in his study of Canadian Irish Catholics during the war, issues of imperial duty and citizenship were prominent in the patriotic discourse of the English-speaking Catholic bishops and in the various Catholic periodicals throughout the first period of the war.<sup>93</sup> The support for the British cause expressed by Canadian Catholics took a

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<sup>89</sup> Marshall, "Khaki has become a sacred colour," 106-107. For a further discussion of Methodist enlistments, see Chapter Three, 148-150.

<sup>90</sup> Mark McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 8, 18, 56, 72-90; McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 29-36, 74-85.

<sup>91</sup> Michael Fallon quoted in "Mass 'Tempore belli' Directed to Be Used," *Toronto Globe*, 31 August 1914, 3. See also McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 77.

<sup>92</sup> "Knights of Columbus' Autumn Initiation," *Toronto Globe*, 13 October 1914, 5.

<sup>93</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 74, 76-85.

variety of forms, from the direct — like Father Burke’s statement to the *Toronto Globe* that “I think we are all agreed that the first and best thing is to smash the Kaiser”<sup>94</sup> — to the more oblique — such as Bishop Olivier-Elzéar Mathieu’s request that the faithful of the Diocese of Regina pray “that henceforth the so-called good faith among nations may be sincere; that treaties may be respected as binding...”<sup>95</sup>

While the pope and the international institution of the Roman Catholic Church remained neutral throughout the war, its traditional teachings on just war gave Canadian Catholics a way to understand their national obligations. As John Thomas McNally, Bishop of Calgary, explained at a ‘war meeting’ held on September 8, 1914, “The right of self-defence is natural with states as with the individual.” In the case of Britain, “The sword was drawn in defence of the maintenance of a treaty essential to future peace, for the protection invoked by a weaker nation overwhelmed by a superior force, and in fulfilment of an obligation towards a friendly nation...”<sup>96</sup> Because the cause was a just one, Catholics could support the Canadian war effort in good conscience as part of their duties as citizens, duties about which many bishops and priests spoke publicly in order to set an example for others.<sup>97</sup> In Western Canada, where a large proportion of the

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<sup>94</sup> A.E. Burke quoted in “To Smash the Kaiser First and Best Thing,” *Toronto Globe*, 12 August 1914, 6.

<sup>95</sup> O.-E. Mathieu, “Pastoral Letter (No. 20),” 8 September 1914, *Lettres pastorales et lettres circulaires de S.G. Mgr: O.-E. Mathieu, 1914-1923* (Regina: n.p., [1923?]), 397-399 (in French 17-19).

<sup>96</sup> J.T. McNally, “The Moral Aspect of the War: Our Present Duty,” *Calgary Herald*, 12 September 1914, 11.

<sup>97</sup> See McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 76-78

priests were French Oblates, some priests provided a more concrete example, returning to Europe as reservists to serve as soldier-priests in the French army.<sup>98</sup>

Catholics felt there was also a larger duty due alongside the national one.

Although Toronto's Archbishop Neil McNeil wrote in a circular in the first weeks of the war that "You do not need to be reminded of the duty of patriotism. You are as ready as any to defend your country and to share the burdens of Empire," he had begun the letter by writing "There are duties to our fellow-men in general and to our country in particular which events press upon us ... The first duty is prayer to God for peace. The powers of the world have for many years striven in their own way to give us peace, and they have failed. Let us turn to God for the peace which the world cannot give."<sup>99</sup> In this, Canadian Catholics took their lead from the pope. Both Pius X, who died on August 20, 1914, and his successor, Benedict XV, urged Catholics throughout the world to pray that the 'evil causes of war' be removed and peace be restored.<sup>100</sup> The societal failings that led to the war identified in Benedict XV's first encyclical — the absence of love in relations between men, lack of respect for national leaders, unjust relationships between classes, and materialism — were faults that transcended national borders and

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<sup>98</sup> The number of reservists who went from Western Canada is unknown, but those who did go were accorded positive publicity. For example "Items of Local Interest," *Redcliffe Review*, 14 August 1914, 8; "Catholic Priests Are Ready to Die for France," *Edmonton Bulletin*, 13 January 1915; "Memories of Unselfish Devotion and Unexampled Heroism During War in France Cannot be Effaced," *Edmonton Bulletin*, 22 December 1915, 12. *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface* also reported regularly when news was received of French soldier-priests who had served in Western Canada.

<sup>99</sup> Neil McNeil quoted in "Whole of Catholic Clergy Are Praying for Peace," *Toronto Globe*, 20 August 1914, 7. See also McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 74-81.

<sup>100</sup> See "Pope Requested Prayer Throughout the World," *Toronto Globe*, 20 August 1914; Benedict XV, *Ad beatissimi apostolorum: Encyclical of Pope Benedict XV Appealing for Peace*, papal encyclical, Vatican website, 1 November 1914, available online at [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xv\\_enc\\_01111914\\_ad-beatissimi-apostolorum.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xv_enc_01111914_ad-beatissimi-apostolorum.html); Benedict XV, *To the Peoples Now at War and To Their Rulers*, apostolic exhortation, Vatican website, 28 July 1915, available online at [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_ben-xv\\_exh\\_19150728\\_fummo-chiamati.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xv_exh_19150728_fummo-chiamati.html)

had been a part of pre-war Catholic social teaching.<sup>101</sup> On the recruiting platforms and local pulpits, however, this reminder of the sinfulness of the world would be reinterpreted in a national framework by some Canadian Catholics, who painted Germany as the chief sinner, with militarism a particular evil to be defeated in order to restore human liberties.<sup>102</sup> Even as they followed the pope's request to pray for the restoration of peace and looked to works of charity to ease the burdens of war at home and abroad, English Canada's Catholic priests and bishops were unafraid of coupling faith and patriotism.<sup>103</sup>

Regardless of denomination, Canada's English-speaking clerics sought to situate the war within a framework of meaning and explain to their parishioners the issues that were at stake. They remained convinced of the value and necessity of peace, but accepted that war was unfortunately the price of that peace. As a consequence, they urged Canadians not only to do their duty to the empire, but to support a war being fought in defence of honour, justice, liberty, and righteousness. While it is difficult to know the extent to which these ideas were taken up by the general public, looking at the debates that took place within the denominational structures is one way of looking beyond the surface patriotism to some of the questions and difficulties that faced

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<sup>101</sup> Benedict XV, *Ad beatissimi*, par. 5. See also Leo XIII, *Rerum novarum: Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labour*, papal encyclical, Vatican website, 15 May 1891, available online at [http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_15051891\\_rerum-novarum.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html); Peter Baltutis, "'To Enlarge Our Hearts and to Widen Our Horizon': Archbishop Neil McNeil and the Origins of Social Catholicism in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1912-1934," *CCHA Historical Studies* 74 (2008): 29-50.

<sup>102</sup> See "Canada's Best Friend Attacked by Disease," *Toronto Globe*, 25 August 1915, 7; McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 85-89.

<sup>103</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 90-91.

Canadians. What was the role of God in the war and in securing victory? What was the relation between individual and national sinfulness? How could one both work for peace and wage war? Although each denomination interpreted events through their own unique heritage and traditions, there was broad consensus that the war was one that had been forced upon Britain and that was being fought not only for the physical defence of Belgium and the British Empire, but for the values of Christian society. By lifting the war from its physical and political implications, Canadian clergymen were not merely reacting passively to events overseas. They were actively addressing larger issues, including the moral responsibilities of states in times of international crisis and the values which should underlie national character. Canadians were also having to negotiate in a new way the conflict between the duties owed to the nation and the importance of the individual conscience, a conflict that would only become more acute as the war went on and greater demands were made.

## CHAPTER 3

PRAYER, CHARITY, AND SERVICE: WAR-WORK AND RECRUITING IN THE  
ENGLISH CANADIAN CHURCHES, 1915-1916

By the end of 1914, the initial shock felt at the outbreak of war had faded. While a deep uneasiness may have remained about civilized nations reverting to the barbarity of war, most people seem to have accepted that this war, at least, was one that nonetheless needed to be fought in defence of justice and liberty. With this sense of resignation, helped no doubt by the dispatch overseas of the men of the First Canadian Contingent in October 1914, the war became a more personal matter to English-speaking Canadians. With the war seen as struggle in defence of basic principles and more than merely a clash of arms, the war effort also needs to be understood in these broader terms. Fully integrated into Canadian public life, the churches were a part of the country's war effort, both as national institutions and in their local communities. Just as they had sought to explain and justify participation in the war, the churches encouraged Canadians to take action, calling people to prayer and repentance, directing attention to humanitarian needs, and encouraging recruiting.

*Call to Prayer*

The national war effort intensified through 1915 and 1916 and, for the churches, this meant not only promoting charity and encouraging enlistment, but also calling people to repentance and prayer. Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops authorized prayers for weekly use at the outbreak of war, prayers that continued to form a part of

regular services until the Armistice. Prayer also played a part in Methodist and Presbyterian services, although ministers, less bound by liturgical forms, had more freedom in determining the wording and content. Special services of prayer and intercession were also held by the various denominations, all of these helping draw people together through common petitions for those who served at the front, for the support of the anxious, the easing of suffering, and the arrival of a lasting peace. While private prayer was encouraged and no doubt provided comfort and consolation to individuals, public prayer was one of the ways that the churches asserted their commitment to the war effort and emphasized the public role that religion continued to play in the shaping of Canadian society.<sup>1</sup> At the February 1915 synod meeting, John Richardson, Anglican Bishop of Fredericton, spoke to the duties of the church during the war, telling people that, “The first duty of the Church — the most superficial duty it may be, but certainly the first — is to send her sons to fight for our heritage of liberty. ... [T]he Empire calls for men, let not the Empire call in vain.” But he also noted “a deeper duty — a duty still more difficult — a duty of even greater moment. Not alone to give her sons ... but to give herself in a more earnest effort to strengthen and sustain the Empire in its relationship to God.” In this, the church was to “give the Empire an example of faith and courage” and to “make much of prayer and intercession.”<sup>2</sup> The churches would call people to recognition of this deeper duty throughout the war.

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<sup>1</sup> See Philip Williamson, “National Days of Prayer: The Churches, the State and Public Worship in Britain, 1899-1957,” *English Historical Review* 128, no. 531 (2013): 337; Joe Hardwick, “Fasts, Thanksgivings, and Senses of Community in Nineteenth-Century Canada and the British Empire,” *Canadian Historical Review* 98, no. 4 (2017): 675-703.

<sup>2</sup> John Richardson, “News of the Churches,” *Canadian Churchman*, 11 February 1915, 89.

The government joined the churches in calling people to prayer, with state-sponsored days of prayer recognized as a way to unite both the nation and the empire. In September 1914, a delegation of clergymen visited Prime Minister Robert Borden, hoping to have a national day of prayer proclaimed. While Borden was open to the possibility, he wished to emphasize the imperial tie by having it be “general throughout the Empire.”<sup>3</sup> It proved impossible to organize an imperial day of prayer in the fall of 1914 as a day of intercession had been held in Great Britain in August and, in any case, the British government lacked the authority to co-ordinate any such observance as the responsibility for arranging days of prayer rested with governments of the dominions.<sup>4</sup> The lack of official co-ordination, however, did not prevent January 3, 1915, from being widely observed as a day of prayer in Canada, the United Kingdom, and other parts of the empire.<sup>5</sup> Whether or not Archdeacon John Paterson-Smyth, rector of St. George’s Anglican in Montreal, was believed when he asserted that the empire at prayer was “of more value than a hundred new warships or another million of men”, patriotic services with special prayers were held in churches across Canada.<sup>6</sup> In Ottawa, where Ethel Chadwick attended high Mass, prayers were said for the empire, its allies, and a lasting peace “not grounded on hate.” Chadwick, who had already lost friends serving with the

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<sup>3</sup> Letter from George Perley to Lewis Harcourt, 30 September 1914, Day of Prayer (Department of External Affairs Correspondence), P2/14, Vol. 253, RG-25 A-2, Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Lewis Harcourt to George Perley, 1 October 1914, Day of Prayer (Department of External Affairs Correspondence), P2/14, Vol. 253, RG-25 A-2, Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>5</sup> In the case of January 3, 1915, the British declaration was made early enough for the various other places in the empire to independently declare their own days of prayer. Philip Williamson, Stephen Taylor, Natalie Mears, and Alasdair Raffé, eds., *National Prayers: Worship for National and Royal Occasions in the United Kingdom, 1871-2012*, manuscript in preparation, 2017. For information about the Canadian proclamation, see File 3060 (Day of Prayer), Vol. 795, RG6-H3 (Dept. of Justice), Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>6</sup> J. Paterson-Symthe quoted in “Empire in Prayer Asset to Nation,” *Montreal Gazette*, 4 January 1915, 5.

British forces, found in the prayers “a simple but beautiful message”.<sup>7</sup> The churches in Calgary reported record attendances, drawing in people who did not regularly attend services.<sup>8</sup> While the federal government would not proclaim another day of prayer until January 1918, after the success in 1915 the first Sunday in 1916 would be observed unofficially as a day of prayer by the different denominations.<sup>9</sup> That these days of prayer seem to have resonated not only with the institutional churches but also with individuals indicates that the public accepted not only the leading role taken by the churches on the matter, but also a general agreement that the war was a fight for fundamental ideals.<sup>10</sup>

A call for the recognition of personal and national sins often accompanied discussions of prayer, particularly as the first anniversary of the declaration of war passed without victory seeming any closer. The editorialist of the *Presbyterian* cautioned that the “direst injuries are moral ... and these are as likely to befall the people who abide at home as those who are at the front.” Worried that the war would cause people to lose their ability to pity and allow a spirit of hate to take possession of them, he also wondered, “Why has God withheld victory so long from the Allies? May it not be because His purposes for mercy ... can only be accomplished ... [by the] humble in

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<sup>7</sup> Diary entry, 3 January 1915, Book 1914, Ethel Chadwick Fonds, MG30-D258, Library and Archives Canada. See also Sandra Gwyn, *Tapestry of War: A Private View of Canadians in the Great War* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1992), 168-169.

<sup>8</sup> “Attendance at City Churches Broke Records,” *Calgary Herald*, 4 January 1915, 5.

<sup>9</sup> See M. MacGillivray, “Open Letter,” *Presbyterian*, 16 December 1915, 592; S.D. Chown, “The Call to Prayer,” *Christian Guardian*, 13 December 1915, 2. Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops proclaimed days of prayer for their dioceses — for examples see “The Day of Self Denial and Penitence and the Day of Solemn Intercession,” *Quebec Diocesan Gazette*, February 1916, 16-17; “Circulaire au Clergé (23 décembre 1915),” *Mandements et circulaires de Mgr. C.-H. Gauthier* (Ottawa: Chancellerie, [1922?]).

<sup>10</sup> See Williamson, “National Days of Prayer,” 331-332, 353-357, 360-363.

spirit?”<sup>11</sup> In September 1915, Canon Rees, writing for the *Montreal Churchman*, asked whether victory was deserved, telling readers to “Look abroad on our national life; how chaotic it is even now! ... I know very well that we cannot be always on our knees [praying]; but what evidence is there that the majority of us even desire to pray more earnestly ...? If not, do we deserve to win? ... [H]ave we a right to expect succour ... when we have not asked for it as we ought?”<sup>12</sup> S.D. Chown, in declaring the last weekend of 1915 a special period of prayer for Methodists, noted that “We have come to the most serious moment in all this war. Never has it been so necessary for us to recognize that it is not by might ... that victory shall be ours, but by the blessings of the Almighty ... We need to repent deeply of our national sins, and personal and social transgressions, that the lifting up of our hands may be clean ...”<sup>13</sup> Praying for victory had to be more than a simple petition for success. With the war framed as a defence of such fundamental principles as liberty and justice, true victory could only be achieved when both individuals and the nation came to embody those principles and align themselves with the will of God. On the anniversary of the outbreak of war, Charles Roper, the Anglican Bishop of Ottawa, suggested to his diocese that three things should guide their supplications. First, people needed a spirit of thanksgiving not for the success of Britain’s armies, but for the progress of the empire’s just cause. Secondly, people needed to cultivate a spirit of humility, faith, and trust in God and His plans. And, only

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<sup>11</sup> “The Perils of War,” editorial, *Presbyterian*, 4 November 1915, 437-438.

<sup>12</sup> Canon Rees, “Do We Deserve to Win?,” *Montreal Churchman*, September 1915, 8.

<sup>13</sup> S.D. Chown, “The Call to Prayer,” *Christian Guardian*, 13 December 1915, 24.

then, with these two things achieved, could there be earnest prayers for victory and, through victory, an enduring peace for all nations.<sup>14</sup>

Although special days of intercession, both at the beginning of the year and at the anniversary of the outbreak of war, were popular, sustained prayer campaigns seem generally to have met with less success. No widespread religious revival accompanied the war, and, even within the churches, enthusiasm for special prayers was not necessarily universal. In July 1915, John Farthing, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, observed disappointedly:

I have been in Churches where no war prayers were offered, where the war prayers could not be found. ... At the beginning of the war there were special services ... The attendance at these has fallen off and in most cases the services have been discontinued. ... The people are for the most part trusting to armaments ... We have a nation at war, but not a nation at prayer ... This nation must in its heart turn to God and put its trust alone in Him. ... Faith in Him does not mean we shall neglect the means of warfare.<sup>15</sup>

The editorialist of the *Christian Guardian* similarly observed that the scale of the war might be calling into question the efficacy of prayer, writing that

With so much talk about big guns and high explosives, efficiency and skilled diplomacy, it may be that we find it difficult to keep up the same old faith in prayer and in the far-reaching significance and power of spiritual forces. In the midst of all this clash of brawn and brute forces it may be hard to realize that those old virtues of the spirit, meekness, gentleness, kindness, unselfishness, are the same fine, splendid things that we used to believe them to be.<sup>16</sup>

But, despite the regret of the church establishment that the power of spiritual forces and the need for national repentance were not more widely acknowledged, letters to the editors of religious periodicals, resolutions passed at the meetings of various lay

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<sup>14</sup> "Special Intercession on War Anniversary," *Toronto Globe*, 5 August 1915, 5.

<sup>15</sup> John Farthing, "The Only Giver of Victory," *Montreal Churchman*, July 1915, 3.

<sup>16</sup> "No Need of Strengthening," *Christian Guardian*, 10 November 1915, 5-6.

associations, and the continued appeal of the special prayer services suggest that prayer was a comfort to many.

Prayers asking for the continued safety of loved ones serving overseas and prayers for the dead were particularly meaningful, providing an active sense of connection with distant and departed loved ones.<sup>17</sup> As Ruth Antliff wrote to her son Will, “one feels so helpless for we can do nothing for you so far off, and in such great danger, but pray for you...”<sup>18</sup> The unveiling of honour rolls in churches, a practice which became ever more widespread in 1915 and 1916 as the number of recruits increased, helped build a sense of patriotism and served as a concrete focus for people’s prayers. The Methodist church at Delton Junction, Quebec, for example, used their honour roll “to remind those remaining at home of the absent ones needing their prayers.”<sup>19</sup> Having a son or husband’s name placed on an honour roll was an ongoing public recognition of his willingness to serve and an assurance that, should he die overseas, his sacrifice would not be forgotten.<sup>20</sup> In addition to ensuring that they were recognized in congregational prayers, having a loved one’s service recognized also could carry material benefits as many churches made special efforts to send comforts, such as Christmas parcels, to ‘their boys’ at the front. The congregational news and annual reports also increasingly remarked proudly on the number of men each church had in uniform. But, while these honour rolls served to highlight the patriotism and service of those serving overseas,

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<sup>17</sup> The role of the church in helping Canadians deal with casualties will be dealt with further in chapter six.

<sup>18</sup> Ruth Antliff quoted in Mélanie Morin-Pelletier, “‘The Anxious Waiting Ones at Home’: Deux familles canadiennes plongées dans le tourment de la Grande Guerre,” *Histoire sociale/Social History* 47, no. 94 (2014): 358.

<sup>19</sup> “The Conferences,” *Christian Guardian*, 21 April 1915, 24.

<sup>20</sup> For the importance of memorial honour rolls in the creation of post-war memory, see Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 115-135.

they also silently drew attention to the sacrifice being made by the families who remained at home and provided a subtle pressure to those who had not yet enlisted.

The Second Battle of Ypres, fought at the end of April 1915, was the first major test of the Canadian army in the field and the beginning of the casualty lists that characterized the remaining years of the war. The battle was swiftly followed by memorial services. These memorial services, whether held in churches or as ecumenical public services, were widely attended and served both to commemorate the dead and to inspire continued resolution. At Parliament Hill in Ottawa, W.T. Herridge, then Moderator of the General Assembly and senior chaplain of the Ottawa Garrison, was assisted by A.W. Mackay of All Saints' Anglican and together they "paid a noble tribute to the fallen and bespoke the prayers of Christian people for the comfort of the stricken hearts and desolate homes throughout this land."<sup>21</sup> In Halifax, ten thousand gathered at the arena for a service jointly addressed by Clarendon Worrell, the Anglican Archbishop of Nova Scotia, and Dr. J.W. MacMillan, a Presbyterian minister.<sup>22</sup> The people at these services and at the many other memorial services, large and small, that would be held before the war ended were drawn together through the sacrifices being made overseas and, through these experiences, helped shape a national community. The public prayers uttered at these ceremonies, the tributes given to Canadian soldiers by the ministers conducting them, and the encouragement offered to those who remained behind would play a role in shaping this community. As Archdeacon H.J. Cody told his congregation on May 2, 1915:

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<sup>21</sup> "Table Talk," *Presbyterian*, 6 May 1915, 464.

<sup>22</sup> "Ten Thousand Halifax People Joined in Notable Memorial Service," *Halifax Herald*, 10 May 1915, 2; "Table Talk," *Presbyterian*, 20 May 1915, 513.

The cup of anguish and sorrow has been put to the lips of the Canadian people and we must try and drink this cup with calmness, self-control, prayerful love for our own, courage, endurance, and Christian faith in the life to come. We are made to realize the deeper unity of the whole Dominion. Private sorrow has become public property and it calls for a fresh determination to destroy the machine of scientific frightfulness. Without the shedding of blood there can be no deepening of national life and no real progress. We must learn to suffer hardship, bereavement, and sorrow with a deep and stern joy.<sup>23</sup>

As the war effort entered a new and more costly phase, the moral debates and questioning that had characterized the first year of the war was replaced by more strident calls to prayer as a duty. In November 1915, the editor of the *Christian Guardian*, William Creighton, made this plain to readers, challenging all those who “for any legitimate reason, have not answered the Empire’s call to military service” to sacrifice himself at home so that “every hour should be something of a sacrament.” He also admonished those who did not take the task seriously:

Shame to us if in any hour of any day there entirely departs from us this thought, that ... better men than we are dying in our stead ... We speak of atonement, but atonement can mean nothing to a man until he enters into the spirit of the one who gives himself for him. ... No more terrible calamity could be imagined for any man than that he should be able to go on his smiling way through these dark and terrible days shedding no tears and bearing no unutterable burden of heartache and sorrow and loss.<sup>24</sup>

In May 1916, S.D. Chown called on Methodists to recognize the seriousness of the situation and no longer to observe special periods of prayer, “but to pray without ceasing until peace is restored.”<sup>25</sup> Inspired by the National Mission of Repentance and Hope being organized by the Anglican church in England, local prayer campaigns were conducted in association with the Lenten season in 1916 by the Protestant

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<sup>23</sup> H.J. Cody quoted in “Ministers Eulogize Canada’s Dead Heroes,” *Toronto Globe*, 3 May 1915, 5.

<sup>24</sup> “The Fellowship of Suffering,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 24 November 1915, 5.

<sup>25</sup> S.D. Chown, “A Call to Unceasing Prayer,” *Christian Guardian*, 10 May 1916, 2.

denominations.<sup>26</sup> John Farthing, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, declared that just as efforts were being made to “organize and concentrate our physical forces” there needed to be an effort to organize the spiritual forces for “we believe that God desires us to do more than respond to the call to arms. ... We want ... to become through this sorrow, better men and women, more fitted for the new world that shall be after the war.”<sup>27</sup>

While prayer was portrayed by the churches as something uplifting, that would inspire patriotism and uplift the national character, this was not always the interpretation given to the churches’ efforts by the people in the pews. As the wartime rhetoric became increasingly strident and ‘doing one’s bit’ became a matter of public scrutiny, the emphasis on loving one’s enemy could be lost, even when it concerned prayer. J. Puttenham, writing to the editor of the *Christian Guardian*, called on his fellow Methodists to “pray without ceasing for the living lads who are defending our liberties in this tremendous war, that God will give strength to our allied forces to crush so completely those brutal and wicked Huns that it will take them a couple of millenniums [*sic*] before they will ever be permitted to torment this world again.”<sup>28</sup> He was surely not alone in his prayer, however much the church might urge people to focus on higher ideals.

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<sup>26</sup> For the background of the National Mission of Repentance and Hope in England, see David Thompson, “War, the Nation, and the Kingdom of God: The National Mission of Repentance and Hope,” *Studies in Church History* 10 (1983): 337-350.

<sup>27</sup> John Farthing quoted in “Church News,” *Canadian Churchman*, 2 March 1916, 137. For comment on the Canadian Mission of Repentance and Hope, such as it was, in the Presbyterian church see also “Repentance and Hope,” editorial, *Presbyterian*, 24 August 1916, 123-124; “Table Talk,” 26 October 1916, 349.

<sup>28</sup> J. Puttenham, letter to editor, “Let Us Pray for the Living Not the Dead,” *Christian Guardian*, 11 October 1916, 24-25.

*Call to Charity*

By defining the Great War in ideological and moral terms that encompassed more than only military activities, the Canadian churches encouraged a broad conception of war-work on the home front which included not only prayer, but also charity. As a 1915 report from the British Columbia Methodist Conference noted, “The truest patriotism shows itself in service, and many who cannot go to the battle-line have done the best they can by being true to every principle of right and helping in Red Cross and relief work.”<sup>29</sup> During the war Canadians contributed to an almost bewildering variety of charitable organizations. The Canadian Patriotic Fund and the Red Cross are perhaps the best known of these because of their national scope, the widespread publicity given to the work, and their overt links with Canadian soldiers. But they were far from the only causes to which wartime Canadians devoted time and money.<sup>30</sup> Unlike the well-organized national campaigns of the Patriotic Fund or the Red Cross, many of these efforts took place on a more local level. Although a great deal of this charitable activity occurred outside the churches, whether the term is employed institutionally or more broadly, it is nonetheless important to consider the tremendous amount of work done by individual congregations, ministers, and church auxiliary groups that has remained largely unacknowledged. Given the general paucity of documentary evidence for much of this diverse wartime work, examining church responses also offers insight into the interests and motivations of Canadians more generally. Although the institutional

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<sup>29</sup> “British Columbia Conference,” *Christian Guardian*, 9 June 1915, 20.

<sup>30</sup> These organizations have also received the most attention from historians. For the history of the Canadian Patriotic Fund see Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004). For the history of the Red Cross, see Sarah Glassford, *Mobilizing Mercy: A History of the Canadian Red Cross* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 81ff.

churches made some efforts to put worthy causes before their people and encouraged charity as a Christian virtue, this was work organized and undertaken largely by churchmen and women to express solidarity with the war effort and in sympathy for those who served and, even more especially, with those who suffered.

‘Red Cross work’ was a broad category of work that included not only fundraising but also such material contributions as rolling bandages, hemming sheets, producing hospital pyjamas and bed jackets, and knitting socks. It encompassed work performed under the umbrella of a variety of organizations that included not only the Canadian Red Cross Society and its parent organization, the British Red Cross Society, but also groups such as the St. John’s Ambulance Association, Women’s Institutes, the National Women’s Patriotic Service Committee, and various other ladies’ auxiliary and mission organizations.<sup>31</sup> Little needed to be done to encourage the practical aspect of Red Cross work, as women looked for ways that they could contribute to the war effort by helping Canadian soldiers. Annual reports from congregations show that Red Cross activity could be sizeable. For example, in 1915, the Red Cross Society for the Dovercourt Road Presbyterian Church (Toronto) made and contributed 32,490 articles for soldiers.<sup>32</sup> In 1916 in Vancouver, the 60 members of the St. John’s Presbyterian “Red Cross Circle” collected \$364 and made more than 12,000 various articles as their contribution in 1916.<sup>33</sup> Other congregations did not form their own Red Cross groups, but reported that the Women’s Missionary Societies, Ladies’ Aids, and other church associations were

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<sup>31</sup> Glassford, *Mobilizing Mercy*, 88-90, 97-100, 105-106, 111.

<sup>32</sup> “News of the Churches,” *Presbyterian*, 27 January 1916, 88-91.

<sup>33</sup> “News of the Churches,” *Presbyterian and Westminster*, 8 February 1916, 176-177. This would have been equivalent to \$6844 in 2018. All adjusted figures are from the Bank of Canada inflation calculator at <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>

doing considerable work for the Red Cross in addition to their normal activities.<sup>34</sup> In some places women came together in their communities, rather than through their churches, to knit and sew for the troops. The members of Tommy's Helpers, a St. John's Ambulance Association branch formed in 1915 by farm women from North Maryfield, Saskatchewan, were a mix of Methodists and Presbyterians, and the goods that they produced were divided between the Red Cross, the St. John's Ambulance Association, and boxes of comforts sent directly to the seven men from the district serving overseas.<sup>35</sup> In Tompkins, Saskatchewan, the priest-in-charge of St. Peter's Anglican reported that a 'Sock Shy' held by the parish Women's Auxiliary in December 1915 had collected 175 pairs of socks and \$21 for the Red Cross. In the spring, he reported that the women of the town raised money by "placing a granary in a prominent place in the main street to collect from the various farmers, coming into town, donations of grain," with the proceeds going to the Red Cross.<sup>36</sup> The reports made by circuit ministers to the Methodist Army and Navy Board in 1918, although from only a minority of circuits, suggest that both approaches were common, with more than half of the responding circuits indicating that the work was done interdenominationally by the women of the area, and a quarter reporting distinctive congregational committees formed by women to

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<sup>34</sup> See "Table Talk," *Presbyterian*, 1 July 1915, 8; Penny Bedal and Ross Bartlett, "The Women Do Not Speak: The Methodist Ladies' Aid Societies and World War I," *Papers of the Canadian Methodist Historical Society* (1993-1994): 63-86.

<sup>35</sup> Membership fluctuated from 1915 to 1919. Eighteen of the twenty-six total members could be identified on the 1916 Prairie Census — eight identified as Methodists, ten as Presbyterians. Four (including a mother and daughter) had family members serving overseas. The group chose to affiliate with the St. John's Ambulance because they believed that the Red Cross only collected money for the wounded and they wanted the freedom to do piecemeal work, much of which, ironically, was sent to the Red Cross depots in Regina and Winnipeg. Minute book (1915-1919), St. John Ambulance Voluntary War Aid Association (Maryfield Branch), R-E350, Saskatchewan Archives.

<sup>36</sup> "Reports from Sections," *Qu'Appelle Railway Mission Magazine*, February 1916, 5-6; "Reports from Sections," *Qu'Appelle Railway Mission Magazine*, March 1916, 5, Box 254, R-705, Archives of the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle. The \$21 raised would have been equivalent to \$445 in 2018.

do war work (see Figure 3.1.).<sup>37</sup> Whether they came together as congregations or communities, churchwomen found outlets for their desire to contribute materially to the well-being of the sick and wounded.

Women were not the only ones working for the Red Cross. The 1915 appeal from Lord Landsdowne, the chairman of the British Red Cross Society, for an empire-wide collection on Trafalgar Day (October 21) was spearheaded in Canada by the lieutenant governors.<sup>38</sup> In Ontario, the circular letter sent by the lieutenant governor recognized the influence of the churches and specifically asked them to encourage their clergy to participate in the collection. The churches responded. The copy of the lieutenant governor's letter announcing the collection sent out to Presbyterian ministers contained a message of support from the Moderator of the General Assembly, Methodist ministers received an appeal made by their General Superintendent and the Secretary of the General Conference, and the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops in the province issued special communications and pastoral letters to their clergy.<sup>39</sup> Although the contributions were made through the general collection, rather than on a congregational basis, it can still be seen that the official request paid dividends. In his pastoral letter asking that patriotic sermons be preached on the Sunday preceding Trafalgar Day to emphasize "the empire's righteous cause and the call of patriotism in relation thereto" and encouraging contributions to the general collection on October 21 James Sweeney,

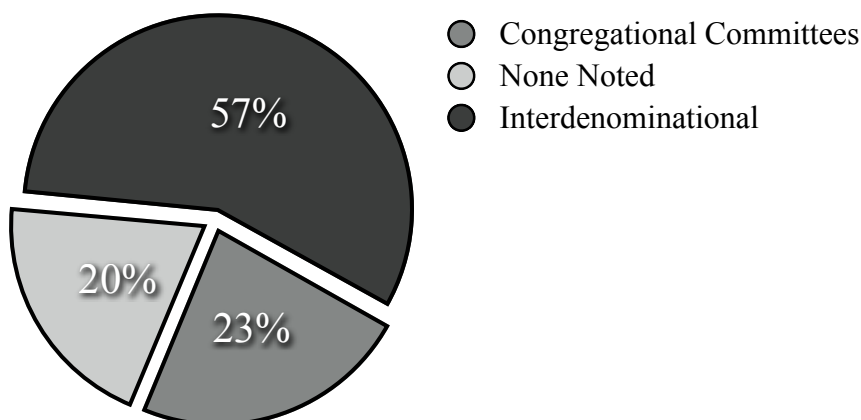
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<sup>37</sup> Folders 606-612, Box 27, 78.100C, Army and Navy Board Fonds, United Church of Canada Archives.

<sup>38</sup> Glassford, *Mobilizing Mercy*, 108-110.

<sup>39</sup> *Report on the British Red Cross Fund, Trafalgar Day, October 21st, 1915* (Toronto: A.T. Willgress, 1916), 13-14.

**Figure 3.1. — Organization of Methodist Women’s Patriotic Groups  
(Army and Navy Board Reports, 1918)**



	<b>Congregational Committees</b>	<b>No Committees Noted<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Interdenominational Committees<sup>b</sup></b>
<b>Maritime Conferences<sup>c</sup></b>	6	1	10
<b>Montreal Conference</b>	3	3	6
<b>Ontario Conferences</b>	19	14	38
<b>BC and Prairie Conferences</b>	3	9	22

<sup>a</sup> Although no patriotic committees are explicitly noted, most of these circuit reports nonetheless note various materials (socks, hospital supplies, etc.) being produced for patriotic purposes. It is generally unclear whether these were produced by the circuit women acting individually, working through existing congregational groups, or working through community organizations, although it may be assumed that no special congregational committees were formed to undertake women’s war work.

<sup>b</sup> Including places where work was done through Red Cross groups, Women’s Institutes, IODE chapters, etc.

<sup>c</sup> Excluding Newfoundland.

Source: Folders 606-612, Box 27, 78.100C, Army and Navy Board Fonds, United Church of Canada Archives.

the Anglican Bishop of Toronto, made special note of the fact that the clergy had been approached by the lieutenant governor.<sup>40</sup> On Trafalgar Day, ministers and priests were

<sup>40</sup> James Sweeney quoted in “Church News,” *Canadian Churchman*, 14 October 1915, 654.

among the volunteer canvassers and churches were among the places used as receiving stations.<sup>41</sup> While the scale of participation was no doubt encouraged by the lieutenant governor's request, many congregations also undertook Red Cross collections outside the large general campaigns, with the impetus coming from the congregation or the minister.<sup>42</sup> Additional collections for the Red Cross also seem to have been common at meetings of church patriotic societies and, because of their prominent position in their communities, ministers and their wives were often called upon to participate in, as was reported in Manitoba's Swan River District, "what was essentially a people's movement."<sup>43</sup>

Unlike the Red Cross, work for the Canadian Patriotic Fund seems rarely to have been undertaken by the churches in English Canada. An earlier version of the Patriotic Fund had operated during the Boer War to provide for the needs of wives and children left behind by soldiers on overseas service. On August 25, 1914, a new organization was established nationally under the patronage of the Governor General to help care for the families of Canada's Great War volunteers. Provincial and local branches, some of which had formed before August 25 on the initiative of civic notables, could choose to affiliate with the national organization.<sup>44</sup> Mayors, members of Parliament, and local businessmen were among those who regularly held positions on Patriotic Fund executive

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<sup>41</sup> "Ontario Helps Red Cross," *Christian Guardian*, 27 October 1915, 4; A Methodist minister, "Trafalgar Day in a Small Town," *Christian Guardian*, 17 November 1915, 21-22.

<sup>42</sup> Notices appeared throughout the pages of congregational news in the various denominational periodicals.

<sup>43</sup> "Our Manitoba Letter," *Christian Guardian*, 21 April 1915, 18. See also Glassford, *Mobilizing Mercy*, 82-83, 90, 105-107, 117 and the experience of L.M. Montgomery, diary entry, 29 November 1915, *L.M. Montgomery's Complete Journals: The Ontario Years, 1911-1917*, edited by Jen Rubio (Oakville: Rock Mill's Press, 2016), 207-208.

<sup>44</sup> Morton, *Fight or Pay*, 62ff.

committees across the country. Clergymen of all denominations, many of them already interested in social issues thanks to the influence of the social gospel, were also involved with the Fund officially as committee members and less officially, as they intervened to help dependants, often wives but sometimes also parents, obtain relief, without which people could be left destitute.<sup>45</sup>

While a combination of humanitarianism and Christian charity surrounded discussions of the Red Cross and other war relief, the work of the Patriotic Fund was clearly distanced from charity and was presented as a matter of national duty. While a family had to endure the absence of its breadwinner while he was serving at the front, it was felt that the soldier's dependants should not also have to bear the financial burden. Those families in receipt of assigned pay and a military separation allowance whose income still did not reach a living wage were to receive money from the Patriotic Fund to make up the shortfall as a recognition of their sacrifice.<sup>46</sup> By encouraging communities to, in the words of the Fund's honorary secretary Sir Herbert Ames, "Raise what you can and draw what you need," the burdens of war could be redistributed so that all were contributing, each in their own way.<sup>47</sup> Donating to the Fund was a patriotic duty for citizens to undertake, with the slogan 'Fight or Pay' raising support of the Fund near to the level of service in the trenches. Support for the Patriotic Fund was urged in a

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<sup>45</sup> Morton, *Fight or Pay*, 56, 65, 84-85, 97, 103, 124-125, 176-177; Philip H. Morris. ed., *The Canadian Patriotic Fund: A Record of Its Activities from 1914 to 1919*, (Ottawa?: n.p., 1920?). Because the Patriotic Fund branches were local, interventions in particular cases would have been handled by local clergy. The Methodist Army and Navy Board correspondence does show, however, that institutional help was sought in dealing with the government over the matter of separation allowances, which were necessary to receive support from the Patriotic Fund. Assorted files, Boxes 24-25, 78.100C, Army and Navy Board Fonds, United Church of Canada Archives.

<sup>46</sup> See Herbert Ames, *Our National Benefaction: A Review of the Canadian Patriotic Fund* (Ottawa: n.p., 1915), 14-15.

<sup>47</sup> Ames, *Our National Benefaction*, 3-4. See also Morton, *Fight or Pay*, 90-96.

general way by church papers as a worthy enterprise, individuals associated with the churches made personal contributions, and clergymen served as part of local and provincial Patriotic Fund committees, but, however much their Christian principles may have informed their actions, they did so as citizens. For example, Robert McKay offered support for the Patriotic Fund from the pulpit of St. Paul's Presbyterian in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, during the 1916 Patriotic Fund campaign, noting that "But as faith without works is dead, so true religion is marked by practical kindness and active benevolence. ... And this verse surely applies to the Patriotic Fund ... We think of it as a secular obligation but it is a sacred duty as well. Here as is usually the secular and the sacred are inseparably intertwined."<sup>48</sup> In this case, however, the secular organization predominated. There were no special church collections on behalf of the Patriotic Fund and clergymen served with the Fund as individuals, rather than as representatives of their denominations.<sup>49</sup>

The notable exceptions were the special appeals made by some Roman Catholic bishops in the fall of 1914, including the special appeal made by Neil McNeil, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Toronto, who issued a special circular to his clergy on the matter in August.<sup>50</sup> He cautioned them that "all the people of Toronto watch us to see whether our professions of patriotism are genuine. We know they are genuine, but let us show to the public that we mean what we say by combining our contributions

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<sup>48</sup> Robert McKay, sermon, 13 Feb 1916, No. 11, Folder 4 — Anniversary Sermons 1914-1953, Box 26, PCC 2011-5010, Margaret Taylor Fonds, Presbyterian Church of Canada Archives.

<sup>49</sup> Morris, *The Canadian Patriotic Fund*.

<sup>50</sup> For more information about this campaign in French Canada, see chapter four. See also Mark McGowan, *Imperial Irish: Canadian Irish Catholics Fight the Great War, 1914-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 94, 324n113.

under the head: ‘The Archbishop and the Catholic Parishes of Toronto’.” The letter mandated priests to forward \$200 in installments from parish funds to help make up the \$5,000 archdiocesan contribution.<sup>51</sup> McNeil felt the need to make a large, and therefore public, contribution as an archdiocese because of a lingering distrust on the part of many Protestants in the patriotism and citizenship of Roman Catholics, who ultimately owed allegiance not only to the government and the king, but also to the pope in Rome.<sup>52</sup> Ensuring a large donation was made as an archdiocese helped to ensure that Catholic patriotism was visible, something which, as Mark McGowan demonstrates, remained a consideration throughout the war for the English-speaking Catholic church, which repeatedly needed to assert its war record against claims of disloyalty.<sup>53</sup>

Relief operations undertaken on behalf of groups in war-torn Europe were, like Red Cross work, charitable causes adopted by the churches. The major relief effort, beginning in the fall of 1914, was to aid the Belgians. Although large numbers had fled, leaving everything behind to become refugees, most of the population of Belgium remained in territory now occupied by the Germans. Largely dependent on imported wheat before the war, the devastation caused by artillery barrages and the disruption caused by the German occupation meant that food shortages for Belgian civilians became acute within a matter of months. With the German occupiers seizing control of

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<sup>51</sup> See McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 94; “Gigantic Outpouring for Patriotic Fund,” *Toronto Globe*, 27 August 1914, 7; Archbishop’s Circular, 25 August 1914, MN PC02.03, McNeil Papers, Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto; Toronto and York County Patriotic Association Folder, FW WE05.01, First World War Fonds, Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto. Adjusted for inflation, in 2018 each parish would have been expected to contribute \$4380 to make up a total contribution of \$109,430 from the Archdiocese of Toronto.

<sup>52</sup> See ‘Columbia,’ “The Loyalties of Catholics,” *Catholic Record*, 22 August 1914, 4; Kevin Anderson, “‘This Typical Old Canadian Form of Racial and Religious Hate’: Anti-Catholicism and English Canadian Nationalism, 1905-1965,” (PhD dissertation, McMaster University, 2013), 51-58, 62-69.

<sup>53</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*.

food stocks and refusing to supply the civilian population until the British lifted their naval blockade, charitable organizations stepped in to negotiate an agreement allowing food to be imported for the civilian population through the Netherlands, which remained neutral, so long as the Germans did not confiscate these supplies. Although the Occupation remained a time of scarcity, the flow of international relief was sufficient to avoid mass starvation.<sup>54</sup> While there was a real humanitarian problem, Belgium also became a touchstone, its symbolic meaning as important as the physical reality. For Toronto's Archdeacon J.H. Cody, rector of St. Paul's Anglican (Bloor Street), Belgian relief was a practical way that congregants could manifest their commitment to the ideals for which the war was being fought. On Sunday, January 3, 1915, which was observed by proclamation as a day of "Humble Prayer and Intercession" for the war throughout the nation, Cody called on his congregation not only to pray as requested for those serving and a "speedy and favourable peace ... [that] shall endure", but also to take charitable action on behalf of the starving Belgians.<sup>55</sup> He told his congregation:

I have no hesitation at all in praying directly for victory, because the value of victory depends on the cause. ... We are praying as well as fighting, not simply for the continued existence of the British Empire, but for the continued dominance of all those ideals for which the free peoples of the world are contending. Our confession of sin will be the more genuine and our prayers much more effective if we accompany them by some practical willingness to help.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Antoon Vrints, "Food and Nutrition (Belgium)" in *1914-1918 online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, edited by Ute Daniel, Oliver Janz, et al. (Berlin: Freie Universität, 2014), DOI: 10.15463/ie1418.10267

<sup>55</sup> Quotes from the day of prayer proclamation: *Canada Gazette Extra*, 10 December 1914, 71790, File 3060 (Day of Prayer), Vol. 795, RG6-H3 (Dept. of Justice), Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>56</sup> H.J. Cody quoted in "From Din of War to Day of Prayer," *Toronto Globe*, 4 January 1915, 7.

Although the genuineness of the confessions or effectiveness of the prayers cannot be determined, the congregation of St. Paul's displayed their willingness to help, collecting \$6,987 to ease the suffering of the Belgians. The money was used to purchase 2,382 bags of flour, which were sent as practical relief.<sup>57</sup>

While Cody's efforts were undertaken on a congregational basis, the Methodists undertook a denominational campaign in January 1915, with S.D. Chown, the General Superintendent, calling for action to be taken "in the name ... of humanity, of patriotism, and the teachings of the Founder of Christianity."<sup>58</sup> More than \$20,000 was swiftly raised following Chown's appeal, most of it coming from collections held by congregations, towns, and Sunday schools (see Figure 3.2).<sup>59</sup> This fund was managed and allocated through the British Wesleyan Conference for the use of refugees in Britain, rather than through any of the other organizations established for Belgian relief.<sup>60</sup> Presbyterian papers also drew their readers' attention repeatedly to the need for this relief work, but the idea of a denominational appeal was rejected. As W.T. Herridge, then Moderator of the General Assembly, remarked, "I am sure that Presbyterians throughout Canada have not been slow in contributing to the Belgian Relief Fund. For this reason, and also because it seems preferable that we should give as citizens rather

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<sup>57</sup> Ordinary Sunday collections at St. Paul's were about \$350 during this period. The total amount was pledged or collected over two Sundays. Also collected were \$100 for the Red Cross, plus an additional \$367 to purchase flour for school children and \$258.26 for additional unspecified supplies. Adjusted for inflation, the appeal raised approximately \$148,000 for Belgian relief. Diary entries, 3-24 January 1915, Book 1915, Box MU4980, Series B-1, Cody Papers, F980, Archives of Ontario.

<sup>58</sup> S.D. Chown, "Appeal on Behalf of the Belgian Relief Fund," *Christian Guardian*, 13 January 1915, 19.

<sup>59</sup> Figures and donors as reported in the *Christian Guardian* from January 1915 through December 1916. The 'town' collections may or may not have been interdenominational or municipal efforts, but the listed donor was the name of a municipality, with no further identifying information. Collection for the fund continued, with contributions periodically being acknowledged through 1917, but the bulk of donations had already been made by April 1915.

<sup>60</sup> "Methodist Belgian Relief," *Christian Guardian*, 12 May 1915, 3-4.

than as members of any Church, I have not thought it wise to appoint a special Sunday for such an offering.”<sup>61</sup> As institutional Presbyterianism, which emphasized the role and autonomy of the session, usually left such matters in the hands of individual congregations, Herridge’s statement did not discourage local churches from holding collections, and Presbyterian churches and Sunday schools appear alongside their Anglican and Methodist counterparts on Belgian relief rolls. Catholic congregations were generally discouraged from holding independent collections, but the archdiocese of Toronto hosted Father G. Rutten, a priest sent by the Belgian government as a delegate to raise relief funds, and served to forward funds to the Catholic hierarchy in Belgium. Records indicate donations were received by the archdiocese for forwarding on behalf of the Catholic schoolchildren of Toronto, the Phi Beta Club (“an organization of Catholic Young Ladies”), and the Ontario Knights of Columbus.<sup>62</sup>

Catholic women’s organizations also banded together, much like their Protestant counterparts, to fundraise and prepare socks and other garments for Belgian relief and the Red Cross and they, too, appear on the lists of donors to the Belgian Relief Fund.<sup>63</sup> Exact numbers aren’t known given the multitude of ways that donations were made and church contributions cannot be separated out, but overall Canadian contributions to Belgian relief totaled in excess of \$3 million.<sup>64</sup> These varied contributions — the \$1.57 raised by the children of Christ Church Anglican Sunday school in St. Andrew’s East,

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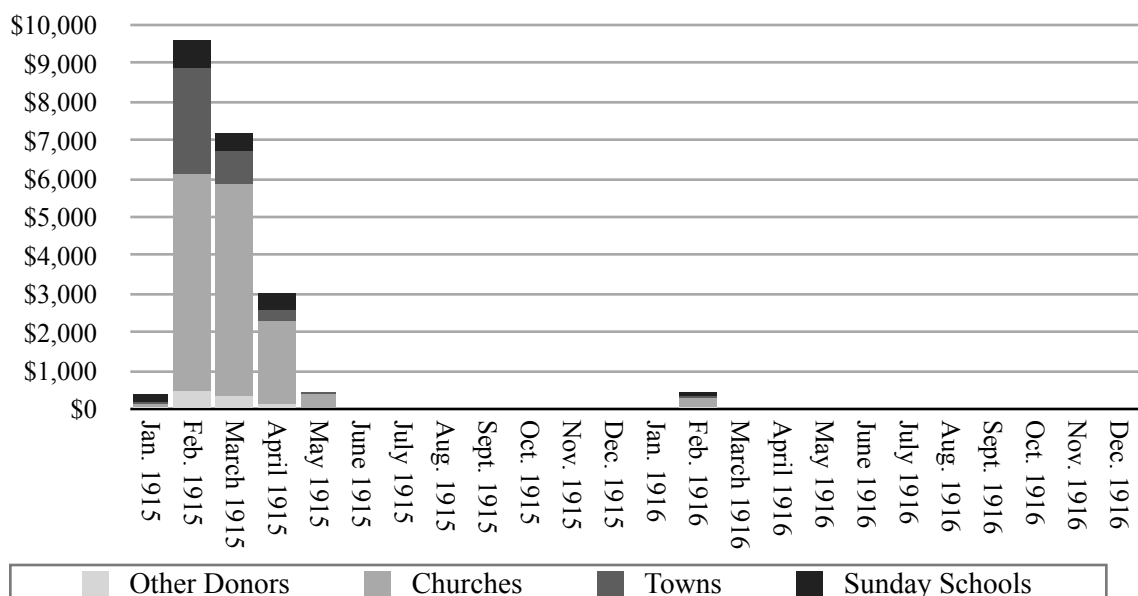
<sup>61</sup> W.T. Herridge, “The Belgian Relief Fund,” *Presbyterian Record*, February 1915, 51. Also printed in the *Presbyterian*, 21 January 1915, 64 and *Presbyterian Witness*, 23 January 1915, 6.

<sup>62</sup> Relief Operations — Belgium, FW R002, First World War, Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto.

<sup>63</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 95-96.

<sup>64</sup> J. Castell Hopkins, *Canada at War: A Record of Heroism and Achievement, 1914-1918* (Toronto: Canadian Annual Review, Ltd, 1919), 253-253. This would equate to at least \$50 million in 2018.

**Figure 3.2. — Methodist Belgian Relief Fund Donations  
(January 1915 - December 1916)**



As acknowledged in the *Christian Guardian*, 6 January 1915 - 27 December 1916.

Quebec; the \$7 collected by homesteaders at a small church gathering in Canopus, Saskatchewan; the \$16 raised by the six Sunday school classes at Maisonneuve Presbyterian Church, and others — were more than just humanitarian aid.<sup>65</sup> Because the war had been framed in terms that went beyond merely military efforts, contributing to war relief, especially Belgian relief, was a way of engaging with the deeper principles of justice and righteousness at the base of the struggle.

The religious periodicals and the churches also brought other relief operations to the attention of people. Serbian relief, a Russian Jews Relief Fund, and Syrian relief

<sup>65</sup> See the lists of donors in *Pro Belgica*, a newsletter published in Montreal by the Belgian Relief Committee. Copies are available as Serials Microfilm P-467, Library and Archives Canada.

were but a few of the many calls made in reaction to war-related suffering overseas.<sup>66</sup> The editor of the *Christian Guardian*, in noting the multiplying number of appeals, was not apologetic for “continuing to point out new ways whereby we can give our money and service toward patriotic and helpful ends. . . . The need of our time is not to be looked upon as a burden, but as an opportunity.”<sup>67</sup> Foreign missions and participation in international Christian organizations before the war meant that Canadian churchmen and women were already accustomed to thinking and acting as part of a global community.<sup>68</sup> As the war multiplied needs, acting in charity to relieve suffering was both a Christian and a patriotic imperative. The *Presbyterian* preached economy as “one of the homeliest and most prosaic of virtues”, but one which would allow Canadians to contribute more easily to the Red Cross and other funds.<sup>69</sup> It also cautioned that contributions to war relief and other charities should not come at the expense of normal church and mission contributions as that work had not been suspended; war relief work was an additional duty.<sup>70</sup>

Even when work for war charities was organized denominationally, most of the donations were intended to support non-sectarian causes or organizations. There were, however, exceptions to this pattern. Catholic dioceses undertook special collections as recommended by the Vatican for relief work in Eastern Europe. The Archdiocese of

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<sup>66</sup> For Canadian Protestant reactions to the Armenian genocide, see Gordon Heath, “‘Thor and Allah in a hideous, unholy confederacy’: The Armenian Genocide in the Canadian Protestant Press,” in *The Globalization of Christianity: Implications for Christian Ministry and Theology*, ed. Steve Studebaker and Gordon Heath (Eugene, Or.: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 105-128.

<sup>67</sup> “The Opportunity to Serve,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 22 November 1916, 6.

<sup>68</sup> cf. R.A. Wright, *A World Mission: Canadian Protestantism and the Quest for a New International Order, 1918-1939* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2008), 8-10, 107ff.

<sup>69</sup> “Economy and the War,” editorial, *Presbyterian*, 25 November 1915, 509-510.

<sup>70</sup> Robert Laird, “A Strong Finish,” *Presbyterian*, 31 December 1914, 631. See also “Shirking the War Burden,” editorial, *Presbyterian Record*, April 1915, 145.

Toronto helped co-ordinate the proceeds of a special collection undertaken in 1915 for relief work in the Catholic dioceses of Poland, receiving funds from the Dioceses of Alexandria, London, and Sault Ste. Marie for a total of \$6,960.<sup>71</sup> The Diocese of Pembroke, which had a significant Polish population, administered its own collection.<sup>72</sup> Canadian Protestants also contributed directly to their European co-religionists. Blanche Bieler and her husband, Charles, a Swiss-born theology professor at Montreal's Presbyterian College, spearheaded relief efforts for Franco-Belgian Protestant refugees and orphans. Blanche Bieler wrote that, with four sons serving overseas, she tried to console herself "by cutting fabric and rolling bandages in the Red Cross rooms at McGill, but that wasn't enough to satisfy my emotions," so she worked with relatives remaining in Europe to organize relief efforts.<sup>73</sup> Their efforts were promoted by Professor Bieler through the church papers and at General Assembly; in 1915 Presbyterians raised \$843 for the housing of French Protestant war victims and \$414 for the support of Belgian Protestant orphans, the latter amount raised mostly by Sunday schools.<sup>74</sup> In 1916 the Methodists also undertook to collect on behalf of a Protestant orphanage in France, raising \$976.73 through February 1917, again with Sunday schools particularly encouraged to undertake collections.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> This total also includes \$108 donated by an unknown individual and \$50 raised by the staff of the Toronto Public Library. War Relief — Poland, FW R007, First World War, Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto. The total raised would be equivalent to about \$147,500 in 2018.

<sup>72</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 95.

<sup>73</sup> Blanche Bieler quoted in Philippe Bieler, *Onward Dear Boys: A Family Memoir of the Great War* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 50.

<sup>74</sup> Charles Bieler, letter to editor, "Protestant Fund for War Victims," *Presbyterian*, 29 April 1915, 458-459; Charles Bieler, "Two War-Victim Funds," *Presbyterian*, 6 January 1916, 2. Adjusted to 2018 equivalents, \$17,860 was raised for war victims and \$8770 for Protestant orphans.

<sup>75</sup> "Hocart Orphanage Fund," *Christian Guardian*, 7 March 1917, 23. In 2018, this would equal \$18,370.

The ways that Canadians contributed charitably during the war display a number of general principles. First, the Canadian churches were not operating in isolation, but saw themselves as parts of international organizations. Whether it was the Methodist Belgian Relief Fund working through the British Wesleyan Conference or Roman Catholic relief funds being disbursed directly to the episcopal organizations in Belgium and Poland, there was a sense of interconnectedness that helped inform Canadian relief efforts. Canadians did not view the war as a local European struggle into which they had been forced because of their imperial tie; instead they were proud to take their part in defending global freedoms. Secondly, the churches used their organizations and periodicals to help to bring charitable causes to the attention of their people and provide information about legitimate channels of donation. The multiplication of war-charities and relief efforts, not all of which have been dealt with above, resulted in a proliferation of appeals for funds. By singling out particular charitable efforts, indicating their suitability, and warning against fraudulent collectors, the churches no doubt helped their members determine which charitable efforts to support. And, finally, the scope and extent of charitable activity was mostly determined locally. Although the power of the institutional church in raising funds can be seen when denominational or diocesan efforts were undertaken, these were the exception, rather than the rule during the war. The vast majority of activities were directed by local ministers, congregations, and church groups, meaning that the kinds of work undertaken and the causes taken on were determined by the attitudes of the people involved, rather than being directed from above. The Red Cross, which directly benefitted the Canadian sick and wounded, and Belgian relief,

because of its connection with the reasons for going to war, were causes particularly adopted by these groups because of their emotional and patriotic resonances, allowing those at home to feel as though, through their charity, they were contributing to the wider war effort.

### *Call to Service*

The morning following the British declaration of war, crowds of willing volunteers waited outside militia armouries across the country to enlist for overseas service, despite the fact that the nature and extent of any Canadian contingent were not yet known. It was not until the following day — August 6, 1914 — that militia commanders received orders from Sam Hughes, the Minister of Militia and Defence, ordering drafts of men to be sent to a new mobilization camp at Valcartier, Quebec. Militia commanders were able to select the best of the volunteers to be part of the contingent, leaving thousands disappointed not to have been chosen. Still, despite the fact that the federal government had authorized a contingent of only 25,000 men, over the following weeks some 36,000 made their way to Valcartier, all hoping to get to the front. Ultimately, the government authorized 30,617 officers and men, all those remaining in the camp, to proceed overseas on October 1. Canada's first contingent, the men who would form the basis of the 1st Canadian Division, were a mixed group, but the majority were service veterans who had served in British units. Although 70 percent of the officers had been born in Canada, the

majority of the contingent (64 percent) had been born in Britain.<sup>76</sup> While this figure makes sense in light of the heavy British immigration of the previous decades and the preference for men with military backgrounds, much would be made of the fact that there were relatively few ‘Canadian’ recruits later in the war as recruiting numbers fell.

The first contingent had mobilized in a matter of weeks, with drafts being selected locally by militia commanders and sent to the central mobilization camp at Valcartier where the men were attested as part of the overseas force. These groups of men, along with others who took it upon themselves to make the journey, began to arrive at Valcartier in mid-August. Although the quick mobilization meant little time for planning, local communities wanted to send off their volunteers well. In addition to the crowds that gathered at the railway station to see off the soldiers, local churches organized farewell services, wanting to recognize the momentous occasion in some way.<sup>77</sup> At St. Luke’s Anglican in Winnipeg, where twenty men were preparing to depart, a ‘Canadian flag’ was run up the flagpole at the morning service on August 23 to show appreciation for the willing sacrifice of the men and to display the link between Canada and Britain.<sup>78</sup> The vicar, W.B. Heeney, promised that “We will not forget you were in St. Luke’s, but Sunday after Sunday we will remember that you are representing us and lift you before the throne of the All Protecting Father on the wings of prayer.”<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1962), 17-31; Tim Cook, *At the Sharp End: Canadians Fighting the Great War 1914-1916* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2007), 24-36.

<sup>77</sup> Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada’s Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 53-58, 62-66; Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief: Torontonians and the Great War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 18-21; Cook, *At the Sharp End*, 26-36.

<sup>78</sup> It is unclear exactly what flag this was. It may have been a Union Jack or the 1871 pattern Red Ensign. See John Robert Colombo, “Canadian Red Ensign,” In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, last modified 16 February 2018, available online at <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/red-ensign>

<sup>79</sup> “Church News,” *Canadian Churchman*, 3 September 1914, 573-574.

Although most militia units were only allowed to send 250 men to join the numbered battalions being organized at Valcartier, regiments also held services for their departing members. T. Crawford Brown, a Presbyterian minister who had been chaplain of Toronto's 48th Highlanders since 1907, was disappointed not to be able to accompany his men overseas due to his own poor health, but he led a drumhead service at Long Branch Camp, where the Toronto units were concentrating. With his parting words he told the men, "The sons of Canada are inspired with courage for the cause of righteousness[;] keep yourselves pure, clean, upright, avoid revelry, trust in God, do the right. May the Lord of Hosts be with you."<sup>80</sup> These public farewell services served not only to mark the departures, but, as importantly, allowed those remaining at home to feel that they were sending the men off to fight for a righteous cause and with God's blessing and protection. In Toronto, with farewells said and the men of the Queen's Own Regiment formed up in ranks to depart, Archdeacon H.J. Cody, another pre-war militia chaplain remaining at home, led all present in a brief prayer service, asking God to give the men guidance and protection. The *Canadian Churchman* described how the men stood with bare heads, "forgetful of military regulations", as "a profound sense of the seriousness of the mission upon which they were embarking came to all present, with the recollection that they were engaged in a righteous cause."<sup>81</sup>

On October 6, 1914, only days after the departure of the convoy carrying the first contingent, the strength of feeling in Canada led the Canadian government to offer

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<sup>80</sup> "Church News," *Canadian Churchman*, 3 September 1914, 573. See also Thomas Hamilton, "Crawford Brown, Thomas," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval (2003), available online at [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/crawford\\_brown\\_thomas\\_15E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/crawford_brown_thomas_15E.html)

<sup>81</sup> "Church News," *Canadian Churchman*, 3 September 1914, 573.

Britain another group of 20,000. Even before an official reply had been received from the British government, the first of the additional fifteen overseas battalions had been authorized and were being recruited up to strength. Mounted units, hospital staff, engineers, and other support units were selected from around the country to fill out the establishment soon after the British government accepted the newest Canadian offer (see Figure 3.3). In the spirit of enthusiasm and patriotism that characterized the early months of the war, there was little difficulty in finding willing recruits and some units, particularly in Western Canada, were filled within days. The only thing the new contingent, the basis of the 2nd Division, would lack were heavy guns as all suitable artillery pieces had already been sent overseas.<sup>82</sup>

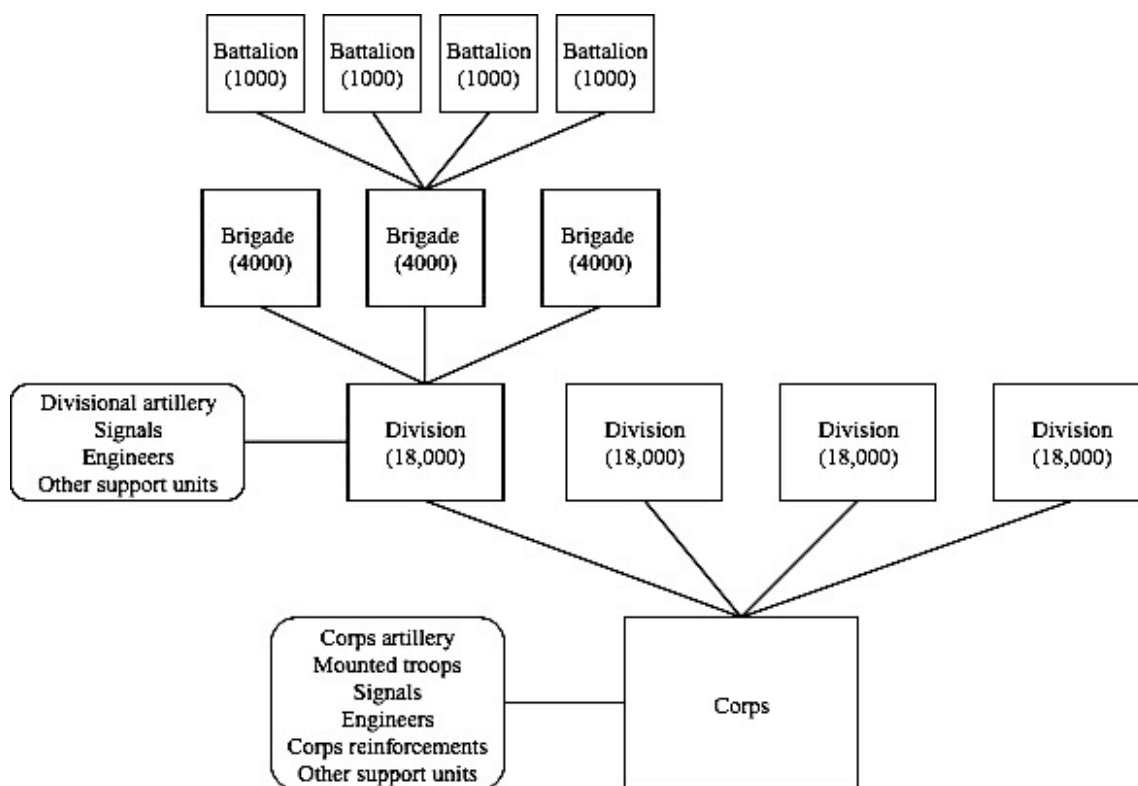
There were no lack of willing volunteers for these first two contingents, with each man weighing his various responsibilities and coming to a private decision to serve.<sup>83</sup> Young men eager for adventure and those whose family roots or birthplaces were in Britain may have needed little more motivation to enlist. Others were attracted by the prospect of board and steady pay — \$1.10 a day for a private, roughly equivalent to the wages of an unskilled labourer. The economic depression that had begun in 1912 and continued into 1915, made the prospect of employment and adventure seem worth the danger. Additional motivation could have been provided by pre-war associations with local militia units, some of which volunteered for overseas service as a group. Then there was the notion of a righteous war of ideals which Britain was obliged to fight in

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<sup>82</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, 109-111; Cook, *At the Sharp End*, 304-305.

<sup>83</sup> I.H.M. Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 68.

**Figure 3.3. — Organization of Canadian Overseas Military Units**



Adapted from the c.1918 Canadian Expeditionary Force organizational chart found online at <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/cef-cec/cef-cec-eng.asp>

defence of honour and freedom, a moral argument the churches kept before the people.<sup>84</sup>

Days before departing from Valcartier for overseas, Private Walter Robus from

Norwood, Ontario, wrote a reply to a letter from the minister of his local Methodist

church:

Well, I have been chosen as one of the first Canadian Contingent to go to the front today & we are likely to be off this week, we have been fully equipped out & we are ready for the fight & by God's Grace we hope to win out & to return safe home to Canada, & if we should go under why we know it was in

<sup>84</sup> For discussions about motivation behind enlistment, see Richard Holt, *Filling the Ranks: Manpower in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 35-36; McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 105-162.

a good cause, the cause of Liberty & Justice, which always wins out in the end.<sup>85</sup>

With accommodations for such a large group of men unavailable in Britain and no winter camp in Canada, the men of these new battalions spent the winter of 1914/1915 training in their military districts, sailing for Europe in the spring of 1915.<sup>86</sup> Thirty-three chaplains had sailed with the first Canadian units to see to their spiritual and religious needs while overseas, but the quick dispatch of men had left little opportunity for local churches to do more than promise that their prayers would accompany the men overseas.<sup>87</sup> Now, with overseas units quartered in Canada through the winter, local churches began to look for ways to work with the soldiers. Sing-a-long services were organized following the Sunday evening services, mixing hymns and more popular songs — the ministers often giving a short address to appeal to the men’s spiritual side in a less formal atmosphere than a regular service. Socials and entertainments were organized by the women of the congregations, with food and appropriate musical programs provided, and parish halls and Sunday school rooms were turned over to serve as recreation rooms in the evenings. For churches in Halifax, Toronto, Montreal, and other cities where large numbers of troops either congregated or passed through, this was the beginning of work that would last the duration of the war, with soldiers of all religious backgrounds welcome to make use of the offered facilities with no further

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<sup>85</sup> Original emphasis. Letter from Walter Robus to A.M. Irwin, 20 September 1914, Canadian Letters and Images Project, <http://www.canadianletters.ca/content/document-61699?position=2&list=z-MXYhnDeDO632dOJ009XqyamugT197Swlebba7KMvo>

<sup>86</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, 111-112; Cook, *At the Sharp End*, 304-305.

<sup>87</sup> The story of Canadian chaplains is presented in Duff Crerar, *Padres in No Man’s Land: Canadian Chaplains in the Great War* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1995) and his “Dismissed: Military Chaplains and Canadian Great War History” in *Canadian Churches and the First World War*, edited by Gordon Heath (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 241-262.

obligation.<sup>88</sup> St. James Methodist Church in downtown Montreal, a church with a strong and progressive social gospel outlook, was one of those churches that dramatically expanded the scope of its work during the war, despite financial difficulties, transforming its basement into a social club, providing showers and a three-lane bowling alley in addition to more conventional amenities. Thousands of soldiers passed through before the end of the war.<sup>89</sup> As with the other war-work discussed in this chapter, the extent and scope of the efforts undertaken were determined on a congregational level on the basis of perceived need and the resources available. Although few churches made arrangements as elaborate as those of St. James, they offered what they could. This work allowed congregations the opportunity to support Canadian troops in a practical and visible way, but it was also hoped that these entertainments and recreation rooms would provide a more wholesome alternative to bars and taverns. Special efforts were made to make them appeal to a variety of men, many of whom would not have been regular churchgoers. The recreation rooms were kept stocked with books, newspapers, magazines, writing paper, and games, and canteens offered the chance to supplement military rations. This work was a natural extension of the pre-war social mission of the

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<sup>88</sup> For details of the work individual churches did for the soldiers, see the pages of church news printed in the *Christian Guardian*, the *Presbyterian*, *Presbyterian Witness*, and the *Canadian Churchman* throughout the war.

<sup>89</sup> While the notion of a bowling alley as a feature of a church might seem unusual, plans made in 1913 for the relocation of Montreal's Dominion Square Methodist Church included a bowling alley in addition to Sunday school rooms, a gymnasium, dining room, entertainment hall, lockers and showers. Presbyterian model church plans published for the 1914 General Assembly also included a bowling alley and a swimming pool, inspired by YMCA buildings. St. James itself had plans to build some of these more ambitious elements before the war, but was prevented from doing so due to its financial situation. See Rosalyn Trigger, "God's Mobile Mansions: Protestant Church Relocation and Extension in Montreal, 1850-1914," (PhD dissertation, McGill University, 2004), 303-304, 322-325, 343-344

churches, with practical and social work being seen as an extension of the Christian message and an opportunity to draw people to the churches.<sup>90</sup>

By February 1915, with the men of the second contingent still training at home, the men of Canada's first contingent had arrived in France. The first Canadian troops to see action were the men of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI), a battalion of veteran soldiers raised privately by Hamilton Gault. They arrived in France on December 21, 1914, with the 1st Canadian Division following in early February.<sup>91</sup> With units now in the battle zone and with more preparing to join them, it was only a matter of time before the first Canadian casualties were reported. The number of casualties was low initially, but on Thursday, April 22, 1915, the newspapers began reporting on a battle taking place in Flanders. "British Holding Fast in Desperate Struggle," proclaimed the banner headline of the *Toronto Globe*.<sup>92</sup> By Saturday, it was known at home that Canadian units were in the thick of it and people were being warned to expect heavy casualties — in the final accounting, the total number of dead, wounded, and missing in the four days of fighting would number nearly 6,000.<sup>93</sup> As Archdeacon Cody told the people of St. Paul's Anglican (Bloor Street, Toronto) on April 25, while Canadians waited to know the fate of the troops fighting at Ypres, "The terrible experience that has come to us in Canada, bringing with it sorrow and anguish to many, has made us realize the grim fact that we are at war."<sup>94</sup> As a result of the sacrifices, a new sense of pride and determination began to be heard in sermons and speeches.

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<sup>90</sup> Trigger, "God's Mobile Mansions," 193ff.

<sup>91</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, 39-40; Cook, *At the Sharp End*, 95-103.

<sup>92</sup> *Toronto Globe*, 22 April 1915, 1.

<sup>93</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, 61-92; Cook, *At the Sharp End*, 109-169.

<sup>94</sup> "Church News," *Canadian Churchman*, 6 May 1915, 286.

Memorial services for the fallen, in addition to offering consolation, were among the first places where this resolve was expressed. At the memorial service in Halifax, Clarendon Worrell, the Anglican Archbishop of Nova Scotia, addressed an estimated 10,000 people when he said:

We have come together today as Canadians and therefore as citizens of the greatest empire the world has ever known, and we are proud to declare ourselves citizens of that empire, not only in time of prosperity, but of adversity as well. We have the privileges ... We are ready to bear the responsibilities ... We fight to establish that it is right only that can give a might that is justifiable and lasting.<sup>95</sup>

At the Parliament Hill memorial, Dr. W.T. Herridge, then the moderator of the Presbyterian Church and a militia chaplain for the 5th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, gave the address to the assembled crowd, which included men from many of the area's militia regiments and overseas battalions. Herridge was persuaded that

instead of deterring others from seeking to share their peril, this baptism of blood will arouse amongst us a still deeper consciousness of national duty, and will incite our youth to prepare themselves to emulate the zeal of their comrades across the sea, that they, too, may have a part in this great conflict, which is not simply a conflict between opposing hosts drawn up in battle array, but between opposing ideals and purposes, a conflict the issue of which will decide, in the years to come, the tone and quality of modern civilization.<sup>96</sup>

While the Canadian units had proven themselves in the firing line, despite the heavy cost, it now fell to Canadians still at home to live up to their sacrifices and prepare for their own service in the struggle for civilization.

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<sup>95</sup> Clarendon Worrell quoted in "Ten Thousand Halifax People Joined in Notable Memorial Service," *Halifax Herald*, 10 May 1915, 2.

<sup>96</sup> W.T. Herridge quoted in "On Their Graves Are Placed Tributes of Admiration for Their Dauntless Courage," *Ottawa Citizen*, 29 April 1915, 1.

The summer of 1915 would mark a new stage in recruiting for Canada. In June, as the British government was expanding its own troop commitments on the Western Front, it asked the Canadian government if, in addition to the 5,000 troops a month needed as reinforcements for the two divisions already in Europe, it could contribute ‘further formed bodies of troops.’ In July, Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden committed Canada to raising a force of 150,000 and plans were made to form the 3rd Canadian Division. From this point, recruiting offices would remain open for the duration of the war to meet the expanding manpower demands, rather than as was necessary to fill particular unit targets.<sup>97</sup> Clergymen had been involved with recruiting in the fall of 1914, particularly if they had personal links to the military or in areas where units authorized for the second contingent were slow to fill their ranks, but it was in mid-1915, as part of the intensifying recruiting efforts, that the scale of clerical recruiting efforts increased.<sup>98</sup> In Brantford, the Ministerial Association passed a resolution supporting appeals from the pulpit and suggested a public recruiting meeting be held at the armories on Sunday, July 18, after the evening services.<sup>99</sup> On August 1, Saskatoon held a parade where the bugle band and Boy Scouts of St. James Anglican Church, accompanied by their minister, led three dozen cars filled with the wives and children of soldiers through the streets in order to encourage recruiting.<sup>100</sup> On August 17, James Sweeny, Anglican Bishop of Toronto, took to the platform at an open-air meeting held by the city’s Citizens’ Recruiting

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<sup>97</sup> The 3rd Division was formed in December 1915. Nicholson, *Official History*, 133; Cook, *At the Sharp End*, 347-348.

<sup>98</sup> For a more detailed study of Anglican recruiting efforts in New Brunswick, where the 26th Battalion was threatened with losing its provincial designation due to slow recruiting in the fall of 1914, see Ian Baird, “For God and Empire: War Sermons and Voluntary Enlistment Among New Brunswick’s Anglicans in the Great War, 1914 through 1917” (MA thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2018), 21-27

<sup>99</sup> “Ministers to Help Recruiting in Brant,” *Toronto Globe*, 9 July 1915, 2.

<sup>100</sup> “Soldiers’ Wives and Children in Long Procession,” *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 2 August 1915, 3.

League, calling on each Canadian to stop thinking “colonially” about the defence of the empire and “come forward and do his bit” in “a holy war, a fight of right against might, a fight for the inviolability of treaties.” He questioned whether Canadians were “going to let those who went from us die in vain”.<sup>101</sup> The following week, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Toronto, Neil McNeil took to the same platform to appeal for the defeat of the “germ disease” of militarism. “Our duty is to do what we can to make our side win,” he declared, noting that the young man who enlisted was doing his part to eradicate the poverty caused by the war not only in Toronto but throughout the world.<sup>102</sup>

Clergymen also took to their own pulpits in support of recruiting. In Ottawa at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, W.T. Herridge took Luke 22:36 (“He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.”) as his text, remarking that “even Christ ... [would] not accept peace at any price.” He continued, telling listeners that they “must not shrink from the sacrifice which the stern needs of the time demand” because, sad as it was “to see our sons going across the sea, and to know that, in all likelihood some will not return ... IT WOULD BE FAR SADDER IF, ONE BY ONE, THE LIGHTS OF LIBERTY WENT OUT AROUND THE WORLD.”<sup>103</sup> In St. Paul’s Roman Catholic Church in Saskatoon, Father Henri LaCoste, O.M.I., spoke about the virtue of patriotism that meant a good Christian would also be a good citizen, putting the love of his country above the love of his family at such a time as this. Noting those who had already gone from the parish, he said that

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<sup>101</sup> “Call of the Camp to Young Citizens,” *Toronto Globe*, 18 August 1915, 6.

<sup>102</sup> Neil McNeil quoted in “Canada’s Best Friend Attacked by Disease,” *Toronto Globe*, 25 August 1915, 7.

<sup>103</sup> Original emphasis and typography. W.T. Herridge, *The Call of the War: A Recruiting Sermon*, (Ottawa: n.p. 1915). The pamphlet carries the note that it was “Published by Request of the Honourable the Minister of Militia and Defence.”

he “hoped to see others go to the front to fight for the integrity of the British Empire.”<sup>104</sup> S.D. Chown, the Methodist General Superintendent, was even more forceful, using his visit to First Methodist Church in Prince Rupert, British Columbia, to declare that “the time has now arrived when every man attired in civilian clothes should be called upon to give a reason why he had not donned the khaki.”<sup>105</sup> A pre-war pacifist, Chown was convinced that Christ would not have stood aside as the Germans ravaged Belgium and threatened “the destruction of the civil and religious liberty which His teaching has enthroned in our British Empire.”<sup>106</sup> He made recruiting a recurring theme, not only in letters to the *Christian Guardian*, which itself took a particularly hard line in favour of the war effort, but also as he visited Methodist churches throughout the country.<sup>107</sup>

Of course, not all clergymen chose to involve themselves in recruiting — Charles Bishop, a Methodist minister from Bow River, Alberta, wrote throughout the war to the *Christian Guardian* in defence of Christian pacifism and spoke for this otherwise largely silent group in writing that he would not presume “to tell any man that it was his duty to go to the front” and asked “a greater degree of fairness be shown to those of us who are not convinced that to take up arms is our Christian duty.”<sup>108</sup> There were also more

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<sup>104</sup> Quoted in “Good Christians Ought to make Good Soldiers,” *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 2 August 1915, 5. The French-born Lacoste had come to Canada in 1889 to teach theology at the University of Ottawa, before relocating to Saskatchewan in 1906. He was responsible for setting up the first Association culturelle franco-canadienne (ACFC) in Saskatoon in 1914. See J.-B.-A. Allaire, *Dictionnaire biographique du clergé canadien-français, Les contemporains* (Saint-Hyacinthe: Imprimerie de ‘La Tribune’, 1908), 325; <http://musee.societehisto.com/saskatoon-paroisse-des-saints-martyrs-canadiens-n381-t688.html>

<sup>105</sup> S.D. Chown quoted in “British Columbia News,” *Christian Guardian*, 15 September 1915, 20-21.

<sup>106</sup> S.D. Chown, “Pacifism at Chautauqua,” *Christian Guardian*, 23 August 1916, 7, 13.

<sup>107</sup> See S.D. Chown, “An Appeal for Army Recruits,” *Christian Guardian*, 14 July 1915, 2. See also David Marshall, “‘Khaki has become a sacred colour’: The Methodist Church and the Sanctification of World War One” in Heath, *Canadian Churches and the First World War*, 102-108, 114-116, 127-129.

<sup>108</sup> Charles Bishop, letter to editor, “The Minister and the War,” *Christian Guardian*, 10 May 1916, 22-23. See also Amy Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objection in Canada during the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 99-106, 111-115.

general protests about the use of the pulpit for recruiting, but Bishop and others who shared these sentiments seem to have been in the minority. In early 1915, when the Rev. Byron Stauffer suggested to the Hamilton Presbytery that “recruiting could be left to the Hon. Sam Hughes,” other ministers disagreed, claiming that, because the empire and its freedoms and liberties were at stake, all reasonable means, including making appeals from the pulpit, could be used to enlist men in its defence.<sup>109</sup> Roman Catholic and Anglican priests do not seem to have faced the criticism if they chose to lend their voices to the recruiting efforts as, with many bishops in both denominations speaking out strongly in favour of the war effort and taking to the recruiting platforms, local priests and the officers of parish organizations felt free to make recruiting addresses.<sup>110</sup> The *Christian Guardian*, while aware of protests, was “convinced that the great majority of our more thoughtful people will consider such use perfectly legitimate. And Methodist ministers can legitimately make such appeal, for no class of men have sent their sons more freely.”<sup>111</sup> Chown, concerned about rumours that Methodists were not enlisting in sufficient numbers, went further yet, admonishing the ministers and people who had “not yet risen to the full measure of their responsibility in respect to recruiting” and urging “special efforts to spur into abounding practical activity the fund of latent loyalty of which we are surely possessed in equal degree with the other Churches of Canada.”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> “Hamilton Presbytery,” *Presbyterian*, 25 February 1915, 194.

<sup>110</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 111-115.

<sup>111</sup> “Editorial in Brief,” *Christian Guardian*, 21 July 1915, 7.

<sup>112</sup> S.D. Chown, letter to ministers, “The Church and the War,” *Christian Guardian*, 24 November 1915, 2.

Despite the vocal and enthusiastic encouragement of Chown and William Creighton, editor of the *Christian Guardian*, the proportion of Methodists enlisted in the CEF remained well below the proportion of Methodists in the overall population. Although the point was raised by Chown that a number of Methodists who enlisted in the first contingents may have been misclassified since the attestation sheets, adapted from British examples, incorrectly referred to the denomination as ‘Wesleyism’, the number of Methodists enlisted remained lower than expected even after the error was corrected and the denominational formed its Army and Navy Board to encourage recruiting.<sup>113</sup> There are likely a variety of reasons for this trend, including the fact that the number of Anglican recruits was swelled by recent British immigrants, but the influence of denominational theology should be taken into account. Methodists traditionally placed a heavy emphasis on the individual conversion experience, personal morality, and the necessity of following one’s conscience. As a result, questions from lay and clerical writers about pacifism and reconciling military service with Christian values continued to appear in the *Christian Guardian* until the introduction of conscription in 1917. Nor was a firm sacramental separation recognized between the clergy and the laity, as was the case for Catholics and Anglicans, and ministers were transferred to new circuits every three or four years, preventing long-term pastoral relationships from developing. Even in the case where a minister was strongly encouraging enlistment, the combination of these factors mean Methodists may have felt freer to follow their own judgement in remaining out of uniform. Given the important

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<sup>113</sup> Marshall, “‘Khaki has become a sacred colour,’” 113-114; J.M. Bliss, “The Methodist Church and World War I,” *Canadian Historical Review* 49, no. 3 (1968): 218.

role of the parish identified by Mark McGown in Irish Catholic enlistment patterns and the involvement of Anglican priests in local enlistment in New Brunswick explored by Ian Baird,<sup>114</sup> it is nonetheless clear that the support of the Canadian clergy did play a role in securing recruits for the CEF, even if the full extent of their influence remains to be fully explored.

The appeals of churchmen became arguably more important in the fall of 1915 as the work of recruiting shifted from the militia to local communities.<sup>115</sup> In response to declining numbers of recruits in September 1915 (see Figure 3.4.), new recruiting strategies were adopted and battalions appealing to particular identities emerged. While some of these were based on physical characteristics, like the bantam battalions which accepted men under 5'2", or on pastimes, like the sportsman battalions, others were based on a sense of ethnicity, morality, or community. Irish Canadians were found in other battalions, but they could also choose to join Montreal's Irish Canadian Rangers (199th Battalion), Toronto's 208th Irish Battalion, or one of the other Irish units, most of which tried to emphasize their religious neutrality. And there were a variety of Highland battalions across the country to appeal to those of Scottish heritage.<sup>116</sup> In the 203rd 'Hard and Dry' Battalion, teetotalers could feel at home in a battalion that emphasized clean living and eschewed the wet canteens, a fact that caused the temperance-

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<sup>114</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 111-119; Baird, "For God and Empire," passim.

<sup>115</sup> See Holt, *Filling the Ranks*, 106-123 for a discussion of the administration and responsibilities of recruiting in 1915 and 1916.

<sup>116</sup> See McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 119-146; Simon Jolivet, *Le vert et le bleu: Identité québécoise et identité irlandaise au tournant du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2011), 170-211.

supporting *Christian Guardian* to particularly recommend the unit.<sup>117</sup> Other units recruited from a particular geographic area, and local pride was often wrapped up with the fate of these units.<sup>118</sup> The scale of clerical recruiting efforts are impossible to determine, in large part because they were primarily local efforts that took a variety of forms depending on individual circumstances and opinions; but across the country clergymen of all denominations lent their voices to the war effort. Whether by giving recruiting sermons, addressing recruiting rallies, conducting special services at which uniformed men were prominent, or with their choice of words at memorial services for the fallen, Canadian clergymen kept the cause of the war before their people as motivation for them to ‘do their bit’.

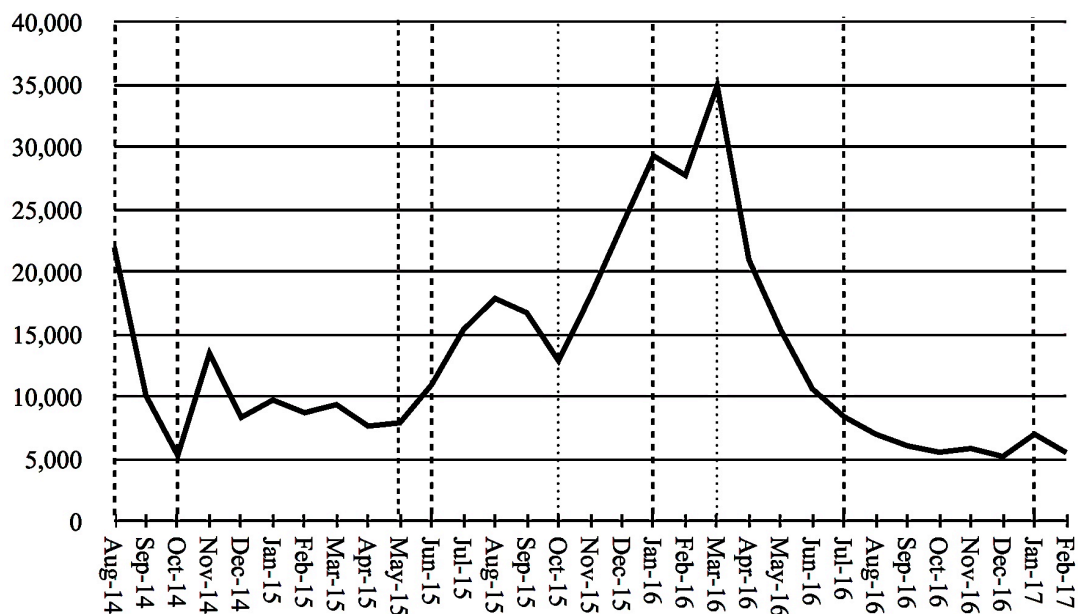
By the end of 1915, Canada had three formed divisions in France. Thanks to the new recruiting strategies and lowered physical standards, recruiting remained brisk, even as Britain edged toward conscription. So when the British government, having committed at the Chantilly Conference in July to a large Anglo-French offensive in the summer of 1916, approached Canada for more troops at the end of 1915, it was agreed that a fourth division would be added to the Canadian Corps.<sup>119</sup> This was a huge commitment of manpower considering the need to keep the units at the front supplied with reinforcements. But Prime Minister Borden, in his 1916 New Year’s message, did

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<sup>117</sup> “The Methodist Battalion, *Christian Guardian*, 15 March 1916, 2; “The Conferences,” *Christian Guardian*, 15 March 1916, 23; “The Hard and Dry Battalion,” *Christian Guardian*, 22 March 1916, 2; W.B. Caswell, “The 203rd Battalion,” letter to ed., *Christian Guardian*, 7 June 1916, 30. For more on temperance activities in connection with the CEF, see Tim Cook, “‘More a Medicine than a Beverage’: ‘Demon Rum’ and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First World War,” *Canadian Military History* 9, no. 1 (2012): 6-22; Fay Wilson, “Booze, Temperance, and Soldiers on the Home Front: The Unraveling of the Image of the Idealized Soldier in Canada,” *Canadian Military History*, 25, no. 1 (2016): 1-26.

<sup>118</sup> Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons*, 82-85.

<sup>119</sup> The 4th Division was formed in April 1916. Nicholson, *Official History*, 133-135.

**Figure 3.4. — Monthly Recruiting Figures (August 1914 - February 1917)**

<b>Aug. 1914</b>	— First contingent offered and units authorized
<b>Oct./Nov. 1914</b>	— Second contingent offered and units authorized
<b>late April 1915</b>	— First large-scale Canadian casualties suffered
<b>June 1915</b>	— 3rd Canadian Division authorized (formed Dec. 1915)
<b>Oct. 1915</b>	— New recruiting strategies adopted in Canada
<b>Dec. 1915/Jan. 1916</b>	— 4th Canadian Division authorized (formed April 1916)/ Borden's pledge of 500,000 men
<b>March 1916</b>	— Introduction of conscription in Britain
<b>April/May 1916</b>	— Concentration of Canadian units in camps for training
<b>July 1916</b>	— Further overseas units authorized
<b>Jan. 1917</b>	— National registration in Canada

Sources: "Guide to Sources Relating to Units of the Canadian Expeditionary Force," *Library and Archives Canada*, available online at <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/005/f2/005-1142.29.022-e.pdf>; G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1962); David Stevenson, *1914-1918: The History of the First World War* (Toronto: Penguin Group, 2012), 201-204.

not speak of military formations but instead doubled the authorized strength of the

Canadian military force from its previous level, declaring:

More than a twelvemonth ago our empire consecrated all its powers ... to a great purpose which concerns the liberties of the world and the destinies of all its nations. ... By the greatness of the need our future efforts must be measured. ... From tomorrow, the first day of the new year, our authorized force will be 500,000. This announcement is made in token of Canada's

unflinching resolve to crown the justice of our cause with victory and an abiding peace.<sup>120</sup>

For a nation with a pre-war population of eight million, raising a military force this size was no small matter, especially when the labour demands of a rapidly expanding war economy and large-scale agricultural production were taken into account. But the figure became a symbol. As G.W.L. Nicholson writes in his *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War*, “Instead of relating Canada’s needs in manpower to the number of reinforcements actually required by her forces overseas, it became the fashion to speak of the necessity for Canada to redeem her ‘pledge’ to place 500,000 men in uniform.”<sup>121</sup> The reaffirmation of Canada’s resolve also played a role in hardening attitudes, especially as recruiting numbers began a precipitous decline in the spring of 1916, exactly the same period when Canadian casualties began to climb dramatically, increasing the need for reinforcements (see Figure 3.5).<sup>122</sup>

‘Spectator’, a regular commentator in the *Canadian Churchman*, captured the increasing frustration of the period, writing in May 1916:

The call for men to enlist in the Canadian Army is becoming more and more urgent, even frantic. Where shall the two hundred thousand men that have yet to be raised come from? ... But promises are one thing, fulfilment is an entirely more important thing. ... Nowhere on the horizon is there any sign of the last or second last man coming to the aid of his country.<sup>123</sup>

The tone and intensity of recruiting efforts from mid-1915 until the end of voluntary recruiting meant that the decision whether or not to enlist became a public matter of

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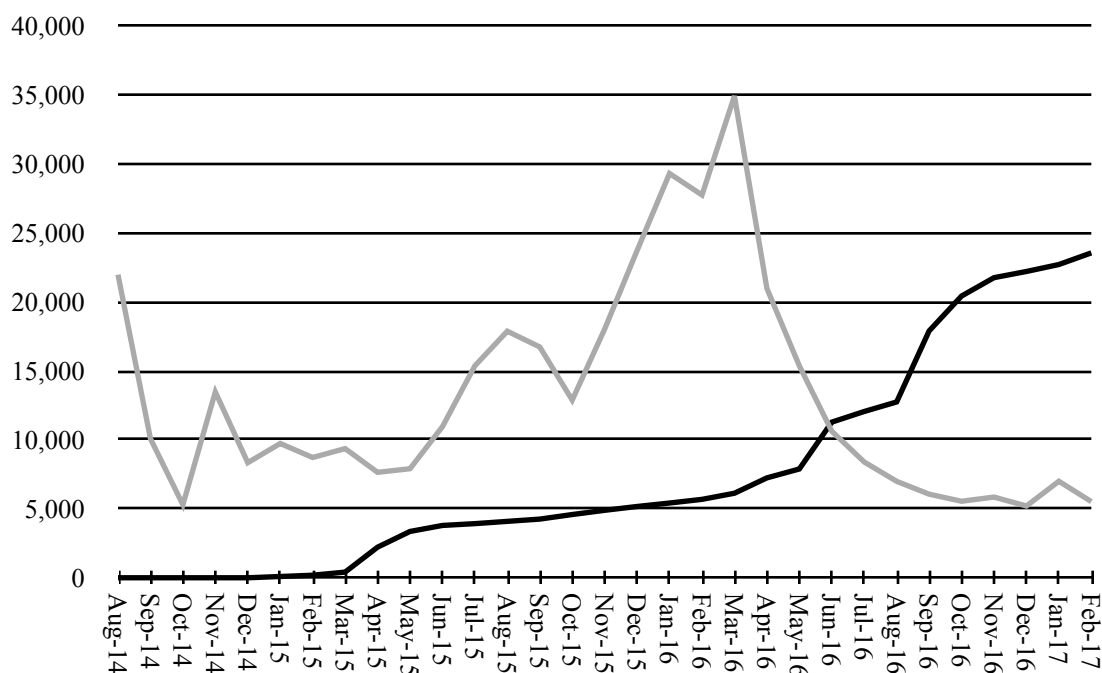
<sup>120</sup> Sir Robert Borden quoted in “Authorized Canadian Force Raised from Quarter to Half-Million Men,” *Toronto Globe*, 1 January 1916, 1.

<sup>121</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, 217.

<sup>122</sup> Brock Millman, *Polarity, Patriotism, and Dissent in the Great War in Canada, 1914-1919* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 131-132; Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 97-100.

<sup>123</sup> ‘Spectator,’ “Comments on Matters of Interest from Week to Week,” *Canadian Churchman*, 11 May 1916, 296.

**Figure 3.5. — Monthly CEF Enlistments vs. Cumulative Fatal Casualties (August 1914 - February 1917)**



**Note** — The total number of Canadian casualties include those who were wounded, captured, or ill. Fatal casualties made up only a small part of the overall casualties but serve here as a proxy as the statistics were more readily available on a monthly basis.

Sources: G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1962); "Canadian Virtual War Memorial," *Veterans Affairs Canada*, available online at <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial>

patriotism and duty, one to be questioned daily by recruiting sergeants and others.<sup>124</sup>

While it was recognized that men had legitimate reasons for not enlisting or might not be physically fit for military service, these were largely invisible reasons for someone not to be in uniform and did not protect men from harassment.<sup>125</sup> Already in July 1915, Canon Ernest Smith concluded a recruiting sermon in St. John's Anglican Church in Saskatoon

<sup>124</sup> Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 79.

<sup>125</sup> See Nic Clarke, *Unwanted Warriors: Rejected Volunteers of the Canadian Expeditionary Force* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015), 79-112.

with a caution: “We look with pride upon our men, when we know they have offered themselves for the conflict, but, brethren, I want here to sound one note of warning — be careful not to condemn the man who does not so offer himself for active service. There may be reasons why he cannot go, reasons of which you know nothing, and which really do not concern you.”<sup>126</sup> Byron Stauffer, writing in the *Christian Guardian* in September 1915, also warned about the need to “exercise extreme care in labelling men heroes or cowards” through such things as white feather campaigns because it was too easy to make mistakes.<sup>127</sup> But these cautions went largely unheeded; even in sermons that recognized the legitimate need of some men to remain at home, there were harsh words for those perceived as ‘slackers’.

Father John J. O’Gorman, an Ottawa priest preparing to go overseas as a chaplain, gave a series of recruiting sermons in January 1916.<sup>128</sup> For him, “Those eligible Canadians who have not yet become soldiers, have not failed to do so for lack of courage to perform a patriotic duty. ... It is not patriotism our slackers lack, it is imagination.” They failed to see that Canada’s lines of defence were in Flanders and that to wait until Canada was threatened directly would be to wait too long.<sup>129</sup> Because the Catholic church taught the virtue of patriotism and national loyalty, every Catholic slacker would be considered “a scandal to the Church.”<sup>130</sup> In October at a memorial service for several men of the congregation of Halifax’s Fort Massey Presbyterian

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<sup>126</sup> Ernest Smith quoted in “Stirring Sermon on Recruiting,” *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 26 July 1915, 3-4.

<sup>127</sup> Byron Stauffer, “Great Deeds by Humble Folk,” *Christian Guardian*, 22 September 1915, 12-13.

<sup>128</sup> These were printed in Catholic newspapers and collected for publication as a pamphlet: J.J. O’Gorman, *Canadians to Arms!* (Toronto: Catholic Extension Society, 1916). See McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 82-83, 89-90, 101 for further details.

<sup>129</sup> O’Gorman, *Canadians to Arms!*, 10-12.

<sup>130</sup> O’Gorman, *Canadians to Arms!*, 4, 11.

Church who had been killed in action, the Rev. R.W. Ross, while emphasizing prayer on the part of those at home as a contribution to victory, was critical of those who were failing to enlist. He declared, “In days like these how contemptible is the shirker and the pleasure seeker, the man who would profit by a nation’s agony, while his old comrade fights ... for a mere pittance! ... The greatest enthusiasm and sacrifice is demanded in the interests of humanity and the Kingdom of Heaven.”<sup>131</sup> ‘H.’, writing in the *Christian Guardian*, in November, admitted that “those soft, sleek, selfish slackers ... those dodgers of their duty that we find busy seeking place and profit now that better men are gone — these bring grave doubts and problems to my mind” about whether the sacrifices being made overseas were being made in vain.<sup>132</sup>

While clerics might criticize those who were felt to be shirking their duty during a time of national crisis, it was the seriousness of the issues at stake that gave them the justification to do so. After more than two years of preaching the righteousness of the cause, the sacredness of defending liberty and freedom, and the need to recognize national and imperial obligations, not to mention time spent working with soldiers, praying for their safety, and conducting memorial services for the fallen, it would have been unthinkable to abandon the effort when the need seemed greatest. But, even as their recruiting rhetoric became more strident, the churches did not forget their pastoral duties to those who remained at home, even if the tension between the two was readily apparent. A letter to the *Christian Guardian* from a man whose business obligations were keeping him from enlisting lamented, “Now I cannot go to a public meeting. I

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<sup>131</sup> R.W. Ross, “The Message of Our Hero Martyrs,” *Presbyterian Witness*, 28 October 1916, 2.

<sup>132</sup> ‘H.’, “Our Poets’ Corner — The Insistent Question,” *Christian Guardian*, 8 November 1916, 2.

cannot walk down the street. I cannot go to Sunday school, [Epworth] League or church, ... I cannot even go home and read *Youth and Service* or the *Guardian* without being told that I am a shirker.”<sup>133</sup> W.B. Creighton, the staunchly pro-war editor, replied:

As we see it, we have no right to tell the writer what he ought to do in precise terms, or to call him names if he doesn't do it. But we have a right to remind him of this fact, that there are actually thousands of young Canadians in military service today who have made as great sacrifices ... He may make what application he will of these facts to his own circumstances. ... If his conscience tells him he oughtn't to enlist, then he ought to bravely face out the situation.<sup>134</sup>

The *Presbyterian* also recognized that, with the voluntary system faltering, it was often those who had reasons for remaining at home who felt the pressure to enlist most keenly, writing:

There is a widespread feeling that the system of voluntary enlistment has well-nigh reached its limit. The brave and unselfish fellows have gone. Pressure of all kinds is now being brought to bear and the consequence is that high-spirited men, who really ought to stay at home, feel obliged to offer ... while young men without ties, whose work is not essential to the welfare of the nation, are left.<sup>135</sup>

It began to seem clear to many that the only just solution to the manpower problem was conscription.

As the war stretched on into 1916, the initial wave of patriotic fervour had long since settled into a determination to see the conflict through to a successful conclusion. While fit men of military age had the opportunity to join the fight directly by enlisting

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<sup>133</sup> 'One Who Wants to Do His Bit,' letter to editor, "The Question of Enlisting," *Christian Guardian*, 15 November 1916, 25-26.

<sup>134</sup> W.B. Creighton, editorial response, "The Question of Enlisting," *Christian Guardian*, 15 November 1916, 26.

<sup>135</sup> "The Call for Men," editorial, *Presbyterian*, 22 June 1916, 588. See also "Give Us His Name," editorial, *Canadian Churchman*, 16 December 1916, 775.

for military service, those who remained at home also sought ways to serve. In a society where Christianity remained a vital force, prayer was one such contribution. Prayer helped to reinforce a sense of connection with those absent on military service, boosted morale, and helped the nation align itself with God's will. Charity was another way of serving and here a wide range of possibilities offered themselves. Red Cross branches devoted themselves to providing supplies for the wounded and women's organizations knitted socks and assembled comforts for the soldiers. The plight of the Belgians, publicized in the press and so closely tied to the reason the empire had gone to war, drew widespread sympathy and people looked for ways to relieve the suffering. With principles like righteousness, liberty, and freedom at stake, abandoning the effort was almost unthinkable, but the voluntary system was beginning to fail, particularly when it came to the question of military reinforcements. In order to maintain the war effort and support Canadian troops at the front, new strategies would need to be adopted.

## CHAPTER 4

## CHARITÉ ET PRIÈRE: FRENCH CANADIAN CATHOLICS, 1914-1916

On August 8, 1914, Paul Bruchési, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Montréal, celebrated the seventeenth anniversary of his consecration as bishop. What should have been a joyous celebration of a life devoted to faith and Christian service was overshadowed by events taking place overseas. Four days earlier, the British declaration of war had made Canada a participant in the conflict unfolding across Europe. Addressing the group assembled at Montreal's St. James Cathedral, Bruchési acknowledged a "préoccupation angoissante" that he could not fail to discuss. The war had come like "une explosion soudaine, un incendie dont l'origine nous échappe et qui se déclare, presque en même temps, aux quatre coins de la maison." He continued:

Et nous, Canadiens, nous ne sommes pas étrangers à la lutte qui s'engage de l'autre côté des mers. ... C'est notre devoir à tous de donner à l'Angleterre notre loyal et généreux appui. Notre peuple n'y manquera pas. La voix de la religion le sollicite autant que l'amour de la patrie. La mobilisation de nos volontaires est déjà commencé. ... Nous aurons à organiser des secours et à nous montrer charitables. ... Nous prierons donc le Dieu des armées de protéger l'Angleterre et la France son alliée. ... Demandons pour elles la victoire, mais la victoire qui tournera à la gloire de Dieu lui-même et au triomphe si longtemps attendu de l'Église de Jésus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

The elements of which Bruchési spoke — Canada's obligations, the mobilization of volunteers, charitable giving to alleviate the suffering caused by the war, and the need to pray — continued to feature prominently in many of the statements made by French Canadian clerics about the war throughout the coming years. But the war would prove

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Bruchési quoted in "L'anniversaire (XVII) du sacre," *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 16 August 1914, 100-102. St. James Cathedral was rededicated to Mary, Queen of the World, in 1955 and this name has become the more familiar one.

to be a time of severe testing. Many English Canadians, failing to understand the position of French Canadian Catholics, would accuse French Canada of failing to shoulder its share of the war's burdens. On the other side, French Canadian *nationalistes* would oppose the 'imperialist' war and challenge the authority of both the church and, following the introduction of conscription in 1917, the state. Although the Union Jack flew over the archbishop's palace in the war's early days, deep fissures were revealed as the war went on.<sup>2</sup>

French Canadian Catholics had an understanding of the Great War that was complicated and nuanced and the tendency to view French Canadian participation through either the conscription crisis of the last years of the war or through out-spoken *nationalistes* like Henri Bourassa has obscured this nuance. Britain and France were the two mother countries of Canada, but feelings toward both could be ambiguous. Where many English Canadians felt a sense of patriotic obligation to Great Britain or sought to take on the responsibilities of defending the empire, at the time of the Great War many French Canadians accepted their British citizenship because it had been a guarantee of linguistic and religious rights in the centuries since the Conquest. But those rights were being challenged by provincial governments outside of Quebec as minority linguistic and educational rights were clawed back, acts which were seen by many, both within and

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<sup>2</sup> "Loyal Utterance of Archbishop Bruchesi," *Toronto Globe*, 10 August 1914, 3; Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: 1914*, vol. 19 (Montréal: Montréal-Éditions, n.d.), 20-35.

outside the church, as violating the pact made at Confederation.<sup>3</sup> And France had turned its back on the institutions and values of the Catholic Church in a series of acts, beginning with the French Revolution and the institution of a secular republic. Starting in 1902, the Third Republic's aggressive secularism drove many religious orders from France. Many of these fled to Canada, bringing with them a sense of unease about the virtue and worthiness of French society.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, in addition to the cultural and linguistic ties between the two countries, the personal religious links between the French and Canadian bishops remained strong and French religious and priests serving in Canadian parishes were among the French reservists called to the flag in the aftermath of the German invasion, a point of some patriotic pride.<sup>5</sup>

French Canadian Catholics did not hold themselves separate during the war, and war news appeared prominently in both secular and religious periodicals throughout the province. But the actions and reactions of French Canadians were framed in a different cultural context than that of English Canada. Lacking the overt patriotic or imperial ties

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<sup>3</sup> Interpretations of both the Conquest and Confederation have been debated in the historical literature, particularly since the Quiet Revolution. The description here is the one that matches the view presented at the time of the Great War. For more information, see Serge Gagnon, *Québec and Its Historians*, 2 volumes (Montreal: Harvest House, 1982, 1985); Arthur Silver, *The French Canadian Idea of Confederation 1864-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982); Sylvie Lacombe, *La rencontre de deux peuples élus: Comparaison des ambitions nationale et impériale au Canada entre 1896 et 1920* (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, Ltd., 1974), 263; Elizabeth Armstrong, *The Crisis of Quebec* (New York: AMS Press, [1937] 1967), 38; Michel Bock, *Quand la nation débordait les frontières: Les minorités françaises dans la pensée de Lionel Groulx* (Montréal: Éditions Hurtubise, 2004), 106-107, 110-112. This was also a major theme in the pages of *La Croix*, a radical Catholic journal published in Quebec City and explains the interest taken by the other French-language Catholic journals in the supposed religious revival in France and in the work being done by French priests and religious called up to military service. For a discussion of French anti-clericalism specifically in the context of recruiting in Quebec, see 'Un religieux canadien,' *La controverse de guerre entre catholiques* (Québec: L'Association civile de recrutement de Québec, [1916?]); Jacques Michel, *La participation des canadiens français à la Grande Guerre* (Montréal: Éditions de l'A.C.F., 1938), 142-157.

<sup>5</sup> For an enduring example, see the memorial plaque in Notre-Dame-de-Québec in Quebec City "Aux français de Québec morts pour leur patrie."

of English Canadians and looking instead to Rome, French Canadian clerics would present the war not as a righteous struggle, as anglophone Protestants did, but through the lens of Catholic internationalism and as God's chastisement for a sinful world. Although the military response in francophone Quebec generally remained muted, French Canadian Catholics would work to relieve the suffering caused by the war, both at home and abroad. And, taking their lead from the pope, they would pray, not for the simple victory of British arms, but for a just and durable peace based on Christian principles. Viewed on their own terms, rather than in comparison to English Canada or through Bourassa's opposition to the war, it becomes clear that French Canadian Catholics were not untroubled by the war or hostile to it. Instead, through charity and prayer, they contributed broadly to the war effort and were rightly proud of their voluntary efforts.

The first major document issued by the French Canadian hierarchy following the outbreak of war was a joint pastoral letter issued on September 23, 1914. This letter established the official position of the French-speaking Catholics in Central Canada. The letter was signed by the bishops (or diocesan administrators) of Montréal, Ottawa, Québec, Rimouski, Valleyfield, Chicoutimi, Pembroke, Trois-Rivières, Nicolet, Saint-Hyacinthe, Joliette, Mont-Laurier, and Sherbrooke, and the apostolic vicars of Golfe-Saint-Laurent and Témiscamingue. The letter, which assured Britain it could "compte à bon droit sur notre concours" was welcomed by English-speaking Canada as an expression of support for the war effort. And, while it was an expression of loyalty and

solidarity, and would be invoked later in the war as a promise of support,<sup>6</sup> it should also be read in light of newly-elected Pope Benedict XV's first address to the world's Catholics.

Pope Pius X, reportedly overcome with shock and sorrow because of the war, died suddenly on August 20, 1914, and his successor Giacomo della Chiesa was elected on September 3, taking the name Benedict XV. The new pope's first act was to address a letter to the world's Catholics, asking them to "agissent sans cesse ... soit dans l'humilité de prière privée, soit dans le solemnité des supplications publiques, demandent à Dieu ... qu'il se souvienne de la miséricorde et dépose enfin le *fléau de sa colère*, par lequel il demande raison aux peuples de leurs iniquités."<sup>7</sup> As leader of all Catholics, including those on both sides of the war, the pope took a position of strict neutrality for the Catholic Church, acknowledging the sins of all the nations involved and working to alleviate the war's sufferings without reference to nationality or religion. This opened the papacy up to criticism from Protestants and from the secular press, who felt that Germany's acts of aggression against Belgium and France should have been condemned. This criticism later became more strident, but it was not absent in these early weeks, while the shock of the invasion was still fresh. Despite the disapproval, the pope did not vary his stance throughout the war.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> "Quebec and Recruiting," editorial, *Toronto Globe*, 15 November 1915, 4. The writer quotes a letter from "A Quebec Conservative leader of Cabinet rank" asserting "The pastoral letter of the Bishops is being lived up to by the clergy".

<sup>7</sup> Original emphasis. Benedict XV, "À tous les catholiques de l'univers," *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 1 October 1914, 66-67.

<sup>8</sup> See John F. Pollard, *Benedict XV: The Unknown Pope and the Pursuit of Peace* (London: Continuum, 1999), 85-139; Francis Latour, "L'Action du Saint-Siège en faveur des prisonniers de guerre pendant la Première guerre mondiale," *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 253 (2014): 43-56; Xavier Boniface, "Neutralité et impartialité du Saint-Siège dans la Grande guerre," in *1914: Neutralités, neutralismes en question*, ed. Ineke Bockting, Béatrice Fonck, Pauline Pietre (New York: Peter Lang, 2017), 41-56.

The joint pastoral letter issued by the French Canadian bishops in the fall of 1914 should not only be read as a commitment to support Britain, but also as a reflection of Benedict XV's position in the Canadian context. Dated September 23, 1914, but circulated widely only in mid-October, the letter publicly established the position of the French Canadian hierarchy. While the French Canadian bishops were happy to say that Canada had "généreusement offert en hommes et en argent" to Britain, the focus swiftly moved to the consequences of the departures of the Canadian volunteers and Allied reservists, the economic difficulties caused by the war, and the need to alleviate suffering. A special collection was recommended to this end in each diocese, with the amount raised to be split equally between the Canadian Patriotic Fund, established to provide for the needs of wives and children left behind by Canadian volunteers, and diocesan relief to help other families who "à raison du chômage forcé ou d'autres causes, seraient réduites à l'indigence." With much of the available social support provided under the auspices of the churches, the Quebec bishops directly linked the need for domestic social relief with the war effort.<sup>9</sup> Their goal was to reduce suffering, but, with this "premier devoir accompli," the letter continued, "notre tâche ne sera cependant pas terminée." Responding to the pope's "cri vibrant de la paix", the bishops exhorted their flocks to prayer in order to "apaiser la colère de ce Dieu qui fait souvent dans ces conflits entre les nations l'instrument de ses justes vengeances." Through the Christian virtues of charity and prayer, "Dieu se lassera toucher" and would bring about not only

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<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of not wanting to forget the needy at home in the context of the war, see Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 19:64-67, 105-110, 160-161. This was also a concern in English Canada.

peace but also “un attachement plus ferme envers la Sainte Église” and greater liberty for the Church in public life.<sup>10</sup>

Historians interpreting this joint pastoral letter have looked at the rapid move from recruiting to support for the Patriotic Fund and have taken it to reveal ambivalence or ‘malaise’ on the part of the signatory bishops.<sup>11</sup> There certainly were those within the Catholic hierarchy who later expressed reservations at the position taken — Georges Gauthier, the auxiliary bishop of Montréal, for example, told Henri Bourassa that he was happy to not have had to sign the letter and, after the introduction of conscription, Élie Latulippe, Bishop of Mont-Laurier, expressed second thoughts.<sup>12</sup> But it should also be noted that at the time that the letter was written, the first contingent was already at Valcartier preparing to embark for Europe and a second contingent had not yet been announced; a call for recruits, regardless of whether or not the bishops were inclined to issue one, would have had no real outlet.<sup>13</sup> In reality, even if recruiting had been ongoing, it is extremely unlikely that a call for recruits would have been made in this way by the bishops as the normal subjects for such letters were religious matters. Prayer

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<sup>10</sup> See Eccl. Provinces of Québec, Montréal, and Ottawa, “Lettre pastorale ... sur les devoirs des catholiques dans le guerre actuelle,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 26 October 1914, 258-263.

<sup>11</sup> Jean Hamelin and Nicole Gagnon, *Histoire du catholicisme québécois: Le XXe siècle, 1898-1940* (Montréal: Boréal, 1984), 300-301; Armstrong, *The Crisis of Quebec*, 58-63.

<sup>12</sup> Latulippe told Bourassa in June 1917 that “aujourd’hui, sachant ce que je sais” he would have refused to sign. Little is known about the circumstances or timing of Gauthier’s admission. René Durocher mentions it, but the reference is to a letter from Bourassa to Gauthier in 1916. Durocher’s article also notes that Gauthier was a subscriber to *Le Devoir* and generally sympathetic to Bourassa’s cause. See René Durocher, “Henri Bourassa, les évêques et la guerre de 1914-1918,” *Historical Papers/Communications historiques* (1971): 268, 273n29.

<sup>13</sup> G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War, Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1962), 20-31, 109-111.

and charitable giving were traditional concerns of the Church. Military service was a civil matter and therefore not an appropriate subject for a pastoral letter.<sup>14</sup>

The joint pastoral letter nonetheless sparked off ideological debate. Father John J. O’Gorman, an Irish Catholic priest in the Diocese of Ottawa, was among those who warmly welcomed the joint pastoral letter, but his enthusiastic interpretation of Canada’s duties to England would lead to an acrimonious exchange of letters between Henri Bourassa, who accused O’Gorman of unsound theology in his promotion of the letter, and Charles Gauthier, the Archbishop of Ottawa. At question was the extent of episcopal authority on matters that were not, strictly speaking, religious.<sup>15</sup> Also coming into conflict were two different visions of patriotism and national responsibility. Bourassa, whose primary concern was the development and autonomy of Canada as a North American nation, recognized the political links that connected Canada to the empire, but, lacking the cultural ties that caused English Canadians to feel a broader sense of imperial citizenship, he did not believe that there was a moral imperative for Canadians to wage war on behalf of the empire. Bourassa instead looked to protect Canada’s best interests.<sup>16</sup> This contrasted with the patriotism based on respect for authority and divine law traditionally taught by the church, which warned of the danger of focussing on particular national issues and ignoring international links and

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<sup>14</sup> In English Canada, bishops would act more overtly. See Mark McGowan, *The Imperial Irish: Canada’s Irish Catholics Fight the Great War, 1914-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2017), 89-90.

<sup>15</sup> McGowan, *The Imperial Irish*, 82-83; Durocher, “Henri Bourassa, les évêques et la guerre,” 255-256.

<sup>16</sup> Henri Bourassa, *Que devons-nous à l’Angleterre? La défense nationale — La révolution impérialiste — Le tribute à l’empire* (Montréal, n.p., 1915), esp. ix-x, 253-259; Sylvie Lacombe, *La rencontre de deux peuples élus: Comparaison des ambitions nationale et impériale au Canada entre 1896 et 1920* (Québec: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 2002); Geoff Keelan, “Bourassa’s War: Henri Bourassa and the First World War” (PhD dissertation: University of Waterloo, 2015), 81ff.

responsibilities. In the context of Canada, as Abbé J.-A. D'Amours, writing as 'Un patriote', argued through *La Presse* in a series of articles in the summer of 1916, this meant that "le patriotisme canadien ... doit embrasser, dans l'ordre raisonnable de la justice et de la charité toute la société constituée sous l'autorité de la souveraineté britannique, de telle façon que les 'patries particulières' restent unis, en communion de vie, d'action et d'intérêts avec la 'patri universelle' ..."17 While there were those, even among the clergy, who sympathized more with Bourassa than with D'Amours, this would remain the inclusive version of patriotism urged by the hierarchy.18 As Bruchési said in January 1916 at a service blessing the Laval University Hospital (formally the No. 6 Canadian General Hospital) as it prepared to proceed overseas: "Le Canada n'est pas un pays neutre ... Sans doute, nous avons une autonomie dont nous sommes fiers; mais nous le devons à l'Angleterre qui veille sur nos libertés. ... Or, nous ne voulons pas être allemands, C'est pourquoi nous devons faire notre possible, puisque le sort du Canada est lié à celui des armes anglaises."19

Regardless of these ideological debates, some of which would not appear until later in the war while others were largely hidden from public view, and any potential misgivings on the part of some clergy,20 the general reaction to the 1914 joint pastoral letter seems to have been favourable, at least based on the results of the collection taken

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17 'Un patriote' (J.-A. D'Amours), *Où allons-nous?*, 43. This position was not uncontroversial, and not only with Bourassa. See an answering pamphlet, M.L.O. Maillé, *Aux articles 'Où allons nous?' et à M. l'abbé D'Amour*, (n.p, 1916), CIHM 81566.

18 Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: Courcellette*, vol. 21 (Montréal: Montréal-Éditions, n.d.), 16-18, 149-150.

19 Paul Bruchési quoted in Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 21:17-18. cf. Bourassa, *Que devons-nous*.

20 Durocher, "Henri Bourassa, les évêques et la guerre de 1914-1918,"; McGowan, *The Imperial Irish*, 10-13, 16-18, 98-104, 226-236, 266-271; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 19:62, 65-67.

on behalf of the Patriotic Fund in October 1914. The diocesan collection yielded at least \$36,313.42 to be split equally between the Patriotic Fund and relief work within the dioceses.<sup>21</sup> The \$19,248.71 raised for the Patriotic Fund may look small in comparison to the \$1.6 million raised by the Montreal branch of the Patriotic Fund during their Whirlwind Campaign of August 1914, but when compared against diocesan giving, the extent of the support offered by the Catholic faithful takes on a different significance.<sup>22</sup> Notwithstanding historian Desmond Morton's observation that in the Diocese of Montréal the "parish collection yielded a total of only \$9400, half for the Fund", this figure represents at least 80 percent of the money routinely given through the diocese in a year.<sup>23</sup> Quebec's Catholics were clearly responding. Outside of the Diocese of Montréal, the percentages varied from 51 percent of regular annual diocesan giving in Sherbrooke to 16.6 percent in Trois-Rivières. In Ottawa, the special collection yielded 69 percent of regular giving, and this number jumps to 116 percent if the city parishes, which do not have reported collection figures, are excluded (See Table 4.1). And parishes were pleased with the results of the collections. The *Journal de Waterloo* reported "la jolie somme de \$50.00" from the parish of St-Bernardin-de-Waterloo

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<sup>21</sup> This amount includes the totals from Montréal, Québec, Joliette, Mont-Laurier, Nicolet, Sherbrooke, St-Hyacinthe, Trois-Rivières, Chicoutimi, Rimouski, and Ottawa. Information on the amount collected is not available from Valleyfield, Pembroke, or the apostolic vicariates of Golf-St-Laurent or Témiscamingue. See Table 4.1 for details and sources.

<sup>22</sup> In 2018 equivalents, the Catholic collections raised an equivalent of \$394,600 in comparison to the \$35 million generated by the Montreal Branch.

<sup>23</sup> Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 260n113. The Diocese of Montréal did not publish its 1914 figures, but the figures from 1915 and 1916 have been averaged to yield \$11,500 as an estimate of 'regular' or routine collections (i.e., excluding special collections). Based on an analysis of the available figures for other dioceses, this is likely an overestimate of around 5% of the actual figure. See *Mandemants, lettres pastorales, circulaires et autres documents publiés dans le Diocèse de Montréal depuis son érection*, vol. 15 (Montréal: Arbour et Dupont, 1919).

(Diocese of St-Hyacinthe).<sup>24</sup> In Magog, where the congregation of St. Patrice (Diocese of Sherbrooke) reported a collection of \$147.34, the contributor noted “N’est-ce point un chiffre éloquent?”<sup>25</sup> In West Shefford, \$57.11 was collected by the parish of St-François-Xavier (Diocese of St-Hyacinthe), “un resultat dont notre paroisse peut-être fière.”<sup>26</sup> Also important to keep in mind is that, in places where branches of the Patriotic Fund were established in the early weeks of the war, civic collections had already been held to support the fund. In Montreal, where the major campaign had taken place during the last week of August, \$1.6 million had been raised by the Patriotic Fund, with around \$300,000 raised by the teams of French Canadian canvassers.<sup>27</sup> Archbishop Bruchési had personally given a \$1,000 donation in early September and the Sulpicians had subscribed \$25,000.<sup>28</sup> In late October, when the bishops asked the Catholics to donate through the diocesan collection, how many had already donated through the previous campaigns?

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<sup>24</sup> “Waterloo,” *Journal de Waterloo*, 29 October 1914, 8. This would be approximately \$1100 in 2018. The curé at Saint-Bernardin-de-Waterloo was Abbé Michel Beauregard, born to a farm family near Saint-Hyacinthe and educated there. See J.-B.-A. Allaire, *Dictionnaire biographique du clergé canadien-français, Tome sixième* (St-Hyacinthe: Imprimerie du ‘Courrier de St-Hyacinthe’, 1934), 69.

<sup>25</sup> “Nouvelles des environs,” *Journal de Waterloo*, 29 October 1914, 5.

<sup>26</sup> “Nouvelles des environs,” *Journal de Waterloo*, 5 November 1914, 5. The curé during the war was Abbé Eugène Pelletier, born in a working class family in Bagot and educated in the seminary at Saint-Hyacinthe. See Allaire, *Dictionnaire, Tome sixième*, 458.

<sup>27</sup> Morton, *Fight or Pay*, 85.

<sup>28</sup> “Actes de loyauté,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 21 September 1914, 182-185; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 19:38-39. Bruchési gave the 2018 equivalent of \$22,000 and the Sulpicians more than \$547,000.

**Table 4.1. — Diocesan Collections for the Patriotic Fund (October 1914)**

	<b>Total Collected</b>	<b>Patriotic Fund</b>	<b>1914 Regular Giving</b>	<b>Total as a % of 1914 Giving</b>
<b>Québec *</b>	\$8,800	\$4,400 <sup>b</sup>	\$24,184	38 %
<b>Trois-Rivières *</b>	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$12,040	16.6 %
<b>St. Germain de Rimouski</b>	\$2,900 <sup>a</sup>	\$1,450	n/a	—
<b>Chicoutimi</b>	\$2,800 <sup>a</sup>	\$1,400	\$11,951	23.4 %
<b>Joliette</b>	\$1,461.40 <sup>a</sup>	\$730.70	n/a	—
<b>Nicolet</b>	\$2,485.29	\$1,242.65	\$9,689	25.7 %
<b>Mont-Laurier</b>	\$650 <sup>a</sup>	\$325	n/a	—
<b>Montréal *</b>	\$9,400	\$4,700	\$11,500 <sup>c</sup>	81.7 %
<b>St-Hyacinthe *</b>	\$2,795.62	\$1,397.81	\$7,382	37.9 %
<b>Sherbrooke *</b>	\$2,318.50	\$1,195.25	\$4,572	50.7 %
<b>Ottawa *</b>	\$2,886.62	\$1,443.31 <sup>d</sup>	\$4,167.64	69.3 %
Ottawa (w/o city parishes)	\$2,886.62	\$1,443.31	\$2,480.02	116.4 %

\* Indicates dioceses where there was at least one local branch of the Patriotic Fund formed in 1914.

<sup>a</sup> Doubled Fund donations from the *Canadian Annual Review* or *How Much Shall We Give*.

<sup>b</sup> The *Canadian Annual Review* lists a donation to the Fund of \$4617 from the churches in Québec. The reported diocesan figure is given. In all other cases, diocesan figure was higher.

<sup>c</sup> Montréal did not publish 1914 diocesan giving. Figure is an average of the two subsequent years rounded up to the nearest hundred. Based on giving in other dioceses, this is likely an overestimate of approximately 5% of the actual figure.

<sup>d</sup> None of the Ottawa city parishes reported funds from this collection to the diocese.

Sources: Canadian Patriotic Fund, *How Much Shall We Give*, 5th edition, (n.p.: Canadian Patriotic Fund, 1918); J. Castell Hopkins, *Canadian Annual Review 1914* (Toronto: Canadian Annual Review Ltd, 1918), 512; Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 260n113; *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires de S.G. Mgr. F.-X. Cloutier*, vol. 4 (Trois-Rivières: Le Bien Public, Ltée, 1923), 71-72; *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Québec, Sa Grandeur Mgr. L.-N. Bégin*, Vol. 11 (Québec: n.p., 1912), 123\*; *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires de S.G. Mgr. J.-S.-Hermann Brunault*, vol. 3 (Nicolet?: n.p., 1924?), 18\*-19\*; *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de St-Hyacinthe*, vol. 15 (St-Hyacinthe: L'Imprimerie du Courrier de St-Hyacinthe, 1913), 309-312; *Mandements, lettres pastorales, circulaires et autres documents publiés dans le Diocèse de Montréal depuis son érection*, vol. 15 (Montréal: Arbour et Dupont, 1919), 419-427, 488-496; *Mandements, lettres pastorales, circulaires et autres documents publiés dans le Diocèse de Sherbrooke*, vol. 6 (Sherbrooke: Le Progrès de l'Est, 1915), 364-367; *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Chicoutimi* (Chicoutimi: n.p, 1919), 133-135; *Mandements et circulaires de Mgr. C.-H. Gauthier* (Ottawa: Chancellerie, 1922?), 121-126.

Collections for the Patriotic Fund and other war charities were not necessarily seen in the same light as enlistments for military services, however. Even after the 22nd Battalion, the CEF's first francophone unit, was officially authorized as part of the second contingent on October 15, 1914, many French Canadians remained reluctant to enlist. Recruiting for the 22nd began with a meeting in Montreal attended by some 20,000 people and was funded by a \$50,000 gift from Dr. Arthur Mignault, a Montreal philanthropist and colonel in the 65th Carabiniers Mont-Royal militia regiment. Thanks in part to transfers of francophone recruits from other Quebec-raised battalions, the unit was recruited up to strength in three weeks and began training in Saint-Jean. The majority of the men were attested in either Montreal or in Saint-Jean, but elsewhere enthusiasm was much lower and the unit had a high number of desertions until it was transferred to Amherst, Nova Scotia in March 1915.<sup>29</sup> The Portneuf correspondent for *L'Action sociale* wrote of a visiting militia officer, attempting to recruit for the second contingent:

Il a réussi, je crois, à enrôler toute... une recrue. Et encore n'a-t-elle pas les forces physiques nécessaires, ce qui réduit considérablement le nombre. L'enthousiasme n'a donc pas été profond: cependant notre officier a réussi à donner la frousse à quelques gamins, et c'est beaucoup, parce que nos gamins ne sont pas facile à effaroucher!

On ne s'enrôle pas mais on donne généreusement pour les victimes de la guerre.<sup>30</sup>

Despite this resistance, the correspondent noted that parish manifested its support for the war effort in other ways. The collection requested in the bishop's letter was abundant,

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<sup>29</sup> Jean-Pierre Gagnon, *Le 22e Bataillon (canadien-français) 1914-1919: Étude socio-militaire* (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1986), 28-41, 54-72, 148, 346-362; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 19:62-63, 72-74; Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: Philippe Landry*, vol. 20 (Montréal: Montréal-Éditions, n.d.), 64, 77, 80-84.

<sup>30</sup> Portneuf is located in the Diocese of Québec, between Quebec City and Trois-Rivières. "Courriers de la Province," *L'Action sociale*, 12 November 1914, 8.

many cases of clothing were sent as Belgian relief, and a bilingual program was organized by the area's women in support of the Red Cross.<sup>31</sup>

Charity was a Christian virtue promoted by the church and could therefore be more widely encouraged by clerics and more readily supported by parishioners than the more overt military efforts. Appeals could also be made on a variety of grounds. The parishioners of St-Honoré-de-Shenley (Archdiocese of Québec), whatever else they thought of the war, seem to have agreed about the need to defeat Prussian militarism and felt that they had given generously to the bishops' collection as the parish was not a rich one. Despite this, their correspondent to *L'Action sociale* noted that “nous ne pouvons que les encourager davantage à cette charité. Qui donne aux pauvres, aux miséreux, prête à Dieu, et qui prête à Dieu est payé au centuple.”<sup>32</sup> The curé of Ste-Marie in Beauce (Archdiocese of Québec), Joseph-Édouard Feuiltault, addressed more earthly matters. He organized a collection for Belgian relief and, in thanking parishioners for their generosity, recommended a subscription for the French. He appealed particularly to the men of the parish to give generously to the French appeal, so as to match the contributions of clothing and linens given by the parish's women to the Belgians. He told his parishioners that “‘aider à l'Angleterre, c'était du loyalisme', — ‘aider à la Belgique, c'est de la charité', mais que — ‘aider à la France, c'est un devoir commandé par la voix du sang.’”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> “Courriers de la Province,” *L'Action sociale*, 12 November 1914, 8.

<sup>32</sup> “Courriers de la Province,” *L'Action sociale*, 19 November 1914, 8. Abbé Michel-Gaudiose Lemieux, the curé from 1909 until 1918, was born and educated at Lévis. He was noted for his compassion and charity. See Allaire, *Dictionnaire, Tome sixième*, 385-386.

<sup>33</sup> “Courriers de la Province,” *L'Action sociale*, 3 December 1914, 9. Feuiltault was born in Lambton, in the Eastern Townships. He studied in Rome from 1879-1881, before teaching theology at Laval. He was named curé in Beauce in 1896. For more details, see <http://www.patrimoine-culturel.gouv.qc.ca/rpcq/detail.do?methode=consulter&id=8112&type=pge#.W3jEfi2ZPNY>

Working to relieve suffering and hardship caused by the war would continue to be an important part of the way that the Catholic church presented the war to French Canadian Catholics. Domestically, the Patriotic Fund was the pre-eminent war charity, having been established as a way of shifting the financial burden of the war away from families whose breadwinners were serving overseas.<sup>34</sup> The province of Quebec led the others for the amount of donations brought in, especially in the early campaigns. It raised more than \$9.68 million through March 31, 1919 with only \$4.59 million being distributed within the province. The rest of Quebec's contribution was distributed to the other provinces as needed through the national committee.<sup>35</sup> Despite this record, the official history of the Fund, written shortly after the war by Philip Morris, notes somewhat despairingly that "The history of the Canadian Patriotic Fund in Quebec can only be read with the most conflicting emotions." He cites the disproportionate amounts raised by the city of Montreal — over \$7 million, raised largely through the success of corporate schemes in Montreal whereby workers donated a day's pay — and a million dollar gift from the provincial government in comparison to the amounts raised in other districts, with Morris claiming that "throughout the greater part of the province local contributions were practically negligible."<sup>36</sup> But this is a short-sighted view that fails to take into full account the circumstances of French Canadian giving to the Fund and

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<sup>34</sup> See "La part de tous," editorial, *L'Action sociale*, 15 October 1914, 1.

<sup>35</sup> Because of a surplus in funds, the Montreal branch of the Patriotic Fund opted not to conduct a fundraising campaign in 1918. Likewise, the provincial government opted not to vote a grant to the Fund in 1918. See Philip H. Morris, ed., *The Canadian Patriotic Fund: A Record of Its Activities from 1914 to 1919*, (Ottawa?: n.p., [1920?]), 235, 237; Morton, *Fight or Pay*, 78-79, 83-86, 118-121, 174-177. Adjusted for inflation to 2018 equivalents, Quebec raised nearly \$128 million, with only about \$61 million distributed within the province.

<sup>36</sup> Morris, *Canadian Patriotic Fund*, 235.

overemphasizes the role played by local organizing committees, which in some areas of the province served as hubs of distribution rather than as collection points.<sup>37</sup>

While it is undeniable that local organizations were slow to materialize throughout Quebec — it was not until a special organizer was sent from the national organization in 1916 that local committees were organized in many parts of Quebec — this does not necessarily mean that people in these districts were not donating to the Patriotic Fund or contributing to other war-related charities. The most obvious example is the October 1914 collection requested by the bishops' joint pastoral letter. In all of the dioceses for which evidence is available, the funds collected by the parishes were sent to the diocesan offices, which forwarded the amount to the Patriotic Fund as a single gift. In dioceses where giving is reported on a parish-by-parish basis, only in the city of Ottawa did otherwise active congregations fail to register donations to the Fund through the diocesan offices.<sup>38</sup> And a lack of local organization did not stop people from these regions from sending contributions directly to the Patriotic Fund offices, either to the nearest local branch or to the offices in Ottawa. Local branches, when they formed, were primarily for distribution, not for collection. The Quebec City branch of the Fund, in particular, assumed organizational responsibilities for a broad range of territory where there were relatively few families dependent on the Fund for support.<sup>39</sup> In the final

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<sup>37</sup> See Morris, *Canadian Patriotic Fund*, 235ff, 314-325.

<sup>38</sup> The lack of a recorded donation for any city of Ottawa parish together with the location of the National Patriotic Fund offices suggests that the results of collections may have been sent directly to Fund organizers and therefore do not appear on the diocesan reports. On the other hand, the French-speaking priests in Ottawa refused to support the Fund campaign in 1916, citing the need to concentrate on the bilingual schools question. See *Mandements et circulaires de Mgr. C.-H. Gauthier, 3<sup>e</sup> évêque et 2<sup>e</sup> archevêque d'Ottawa* (Ottawa: Chancellerie, [1922?]), 121-126; Morton, *Fight or Pay*, 120; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 21: 27-28.

<sup>39</sup> Morris notes that \$68,422.44 reached the honorary treasurer of the Fund directly from citizens of Quebec. Morris, *Canadian Patriotic Fund*, 248-249.

accounting reports, more than a million dollars is noted as having been sent directly to the honorary treasurer of the Patriotic Fund from the province of Quebec.<sup>40</sup>

In some ways, the phrasing of the second appeal of the Patriotic Fund in early 1916 worked against the Fund in Quebec. The letter from the governor general, Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, written in his capacity as the president of the Fund, expressed the \$8 million target as the equivalent of a dollar given by each Canadian. The bishops of Montréal, Québec, Ottawa, Sherbrooke, Trois-Rivières, Mont-Laurier, and Valleyfield recommended the appeal of the Fund to their parishioners and ordered the campaign to be announced and the governor general's letter read from the pulpits of all churches, but there were no diocesan collections as there had been in 1914.<sup>41</sup> In the Diocese of St-Hyacinthe, which still acted as a clearing-house for donations collected by individual parishes, Bishop Alexis-Xyste Bernard advised his clergy that “ce n'est pas une quête que demande le Gouverneur Général, mais bien une souscription de la part de chaque citoyen ... En conséquence, vous ne ferez pas de quêtes dans les églises.”<sup>42</sup> Instead he asked priests to choose “des hommes de bonne volonté” who would

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<sup>40</sup> Morris, *Canadian Patriotic Fund*, 304-316.

<sup>41</sup> P. Bruchési, “Circulaire ... au clergé de son diocèse,” 24 December 1915, *Montréal*, 367-368; L.-N. Bégin, “Circulaire au Clergé (No. 97),” *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Québec, Sa Grandeur Mgr. L.-N. Bégin*, vol. 11 (Québec: n.p., 1912), 209-210; C.-H. Gauthier, “Circulaire au Clergé,” 23 December 1915, *Ottawa*, 2; Paul LaRoque, “Circulaire au Clergé (No. 123),” 27 December 1915, *Mandements, lettres pastorales, circulaires, et autres documents publiés dans le diocèse de Sherbrooke*, vol. 6, (Sherbrooke: Imprimerie du ‘Messager de Saint-Michel’, 1920), 401-402; F.-X. Cloutier, “Circulaire au Clergé (No. 131),” *Mandements, lettres pastorales, et circulaires de S.G. Mgr. F.-X. Cloutier, 3ième évêque des Trois-Rivières*, vol. 4 (Trois-Rivières: Imprimerie ‘Le Bien Public, Ltée’, 1923), 122; F.-X. Brunet, “Circulaire au clergé du diocèse de Mont-Laurier (No. 15),” 28 December 1915, *Circulaires et lettres pastorales de Mgr. François-Xavier Brunet* (n.p. [1921?]), 101; J.-M. Énard, “Circulaire (28 décembre 1915),” *Oeuvres pastorales de Mgr J.-M. Énard 1er évêque de Valleyfield*, vol. 4, (Paris: Pierre Téqui, 1922), 221.

<sup>42</sup> A.-X. Bernard, “Circulaire au Clergé (No. 72),” 26 December 1915, *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de St-Hyacinthe*, vol. 15 (St-Hyacinthe: L’Imprimerie du Courrier de St-Hyacinthe, 1913), 351-353.

undertake the collection, so that the money could be forwarded to the diocese to be given to the Fund.<sup>43</sup>

Because of its size and the reporting of the results of the second Patriotic Fund campaign through the diocesan offices, the Diocese of St-Hyacinthe can serve as an interesting case study. Stretching in the north from the south shore of the St. Lawrence River and bounded in the south by the border with the United States, the diocese contained seventy-five parishes. It encompassed the counties of Richelieu, St. Hyacinthe, Bagot, Rouville, Iberville, Missisquoi, and a large part of Shefford, with a handful of parishes in each of Verchères and Brome (see Figure 4.2 for a map of the dioceses of southern Quebec). Missisquoi, Brome, and Shefford counties were all considered part of the Eastern Townships, and some communities would have had significant English-speaking minorities, but the area covered by the Diocese of St-Hyacinthe was predominantly Catholic (approximately 89 percent in 1911) and French Canadian (excluding Verchères and Shefford, which were mostly in other dioceses, the counties in the diocese were 89 percent French Canadian in 1911).<sup>44</sup> The results of the October 1914 collection in the diocese were relatively strong, representing 37.9 percent of the regular diocesan giving. On a county-by-county basis, the donations generally increased in 1916 (see Table 4.3). Taking into account only the money donated to the Patriotic Fund from the October 1914 collection, of the thirty-three parishes whose giving dropped more than 50 percent between 1914 and 1916, more than half had local

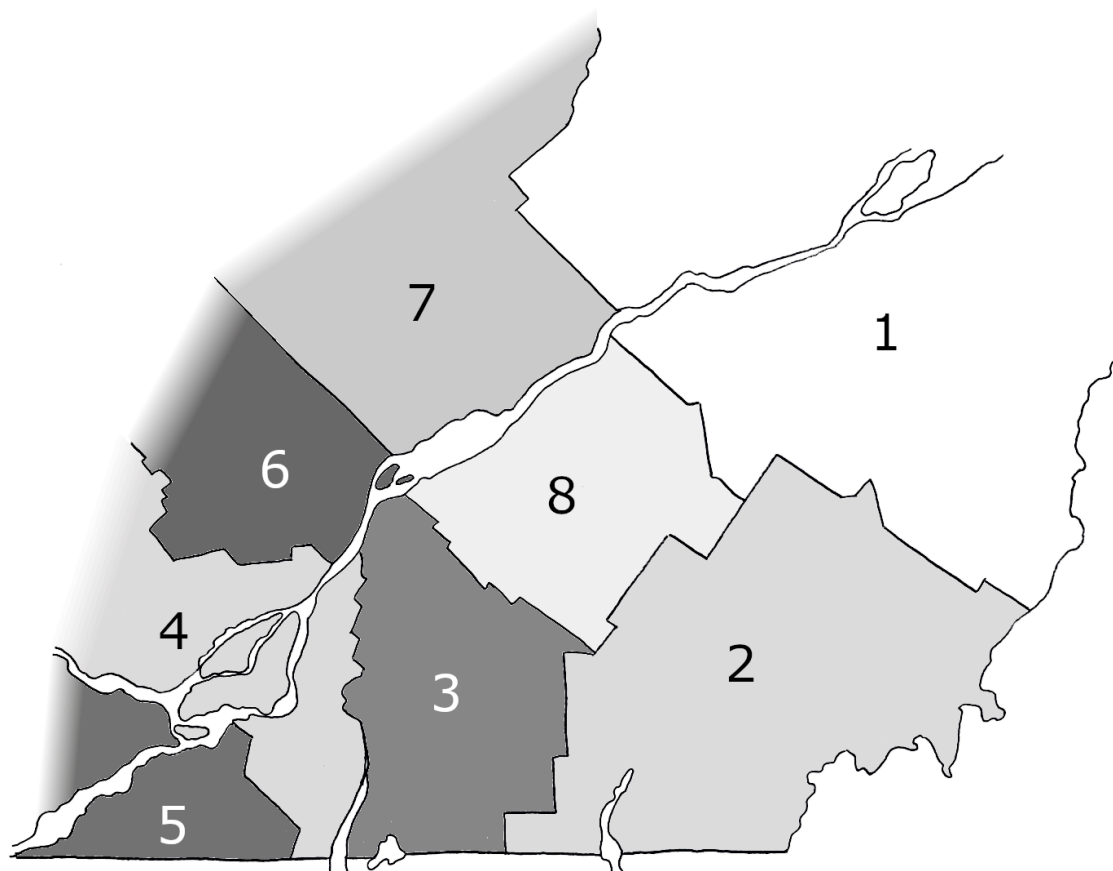
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<sup>43</sup> A.-X. Bernard, "Circulaire au Clergé (No. 72)," 26 December 1915, *St-Hyacinthe*, vol. 15, 351-353.

<sup>44</sup> Père Alexis, O.F.M.Cap, *L'Église catholique au Canada*, (Québec: Éditions de l'Action Sociale Catholique, 1914), CIHM 73544, 80-82; Charles Choquette, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Saint Hyacinthe," (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912), available online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13351b.htm>

or county committees of the Patriotic Fund to which donations might have been made directly.<sup>45</sup>

**Figure 4.2. — Map of the Dioceses of Southern Quebec (c1914)**



<b>Key</b>	<b>1</b>	Québec	<b>2</b>	Sherbrooke	<b>3</b>	St.-Hyacinthe
	<b>4</b>	Montréal	<b>5</b>	Valleyfield	<b>6</b>	Trois-Rivières
	<b>7</b>	Joliette	<b>8</b>	Nicolet		

<sup>45</sup> There were fourteen parishes that recorded no collection and which do not obviously appear to have had local or county branches to which donations might have been directed. Three of these parishes were in Verchères, two in Bagot, two in Iberville, two in Richelieu, and three in Rouville. Also not donating in 1916 were the religious orders which had donated to the diocesan collection in 1914, possibly because the collection in 1916 was not an official one.

**Table 4.3. — Patriotic Fund Collections in the Diocese of St-Hyacinthe (1914-1919)**

	<b>1914 Patriotic Fund Donation</b>	<b>1916 Patriotic Fund Collection</b>
<b>Richelieu</b>	\$177.35	\$249.05
<b>Verchères*</b>	\$99.38	\$0
<b>St. Hyacinthe</b>	\$233.31	\$306.24
<b>Bagot</b>	\$219.75	\$593.75
<b>Shefford*</b>	\$272.24	\$156.50
<b>Rouville</b>	\$159.43	\$189.10
<b>Iberville</b>	\$185.72	\$221.70
<b>Missisquoi</b>	\$149.05	\$251.40
<b>Brome*</b>	\$43.15	\$90.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,402.81</b>	<b>\$1,996.40</b>

\* These counties were only partially in the Diocese of St-Hyacinthe. The remaining parishes in the county were located in the Diocese of Sherbrooke.

Sources: *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de St-Hyacinthe*, vol. 15 (St-Hyacinthe: L'Imprimerie du Courrier de St-Hyacinthe, 1913) 309-312, 506-509; Philip H. Morris, ed., *The Canadian Patriotic Fund: A Record of Its Activities from 1914 to 1919*, (Ottawa?: n.p., 1920?).

While these donations were relatively modest, it is not necessarily true that, as

Desmond Morton states:

At Rimouski, St-Hyacinthe, or Chicoutimi, local notables were not likely to come forward to summon meetings and collect donations. If local *curés* were inspired to encourage a *collecte* at the church door on a Sunday, it was more likely for the *blessés de l'Ontario*, the victims of Ontario's Regulation 17 against French-language schools ...<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Italics original. Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay*, 78. This is not to deny that collections for Ontario schools were also held throughout the province by parishes and even dioceses. See Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 19:102-104, 140-147; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 20: 51-52.

Such a granular analysis as undertaken for St-Hyacinthe also shows that a number of the “thirty more or less passive counties peopled mainly by French Canadians” identified by Morris in his history of the Patriotic Fund had their donations rolled up in the donations for other areas (see Table 4.4).<sup>47</sup> If one takes into account the more widespread 1914 collection, it might safely be said that the vast majority of these ‘passive’ counties in fact made at least some contribution to the Patriotic Fund. In St-Hyacinthe, the Catholic church served as a proxy for organized Patriotic Fund committees. This no doubt increased donations in areas of the diocese without Fund committees for the 1916 campaign, but the published accounting sheets for the Fund show other collections spread throughout the province which are similar to those held in St-Hyacinthe. The Patriotic Fund’s 1917 pamphlet *How Much Shall We Give?* lists donations from six parishes sent directly to the Patriotic Fund in 1916 totalling \$639.22, with a further six direct parish donations made in 1917 providing another \$351.28.<sup>48</sup> The final accounting reports published in the 1920 history of the Patriotic Fund does not list all of these as parish contributions but does list another thirty-seven small donations (the majority under \$50) made directly to the Fund from communities who only record donations in 1916. With the number of Quebec bishops who endorsed the collection, it is not unreasonable to think that some these additional direct donations might also have been the result of parish collections.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Morris, *Canadian Patriotic Fund*, 235.

<sup>48</sup> Canadian Patriotic Fund, *How Much Shall We Give*, 5th edition, (n.p.: Canadian Patriotic Fund, 1917)

<sup>49</sup> Morris, *Canadian Patriotic Fund*, 321.

**Table 4.4. — Total Patriotic Fund Collections in the Diocese of St-Hyacinthe by Source (1914-1919)**

	<b>Total Collection (Diocesan Records)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>County Collection (Fund History)</b>
<b>Richelieu</b>	\$426.40	—
<b>Verchères*</b>	\$99.38	—
<b>St. Hyacinthe</b>	\$539.55	\$9,274.09 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Bagot</b>	\$813.50	—
<b>Shefford*</b>	\$428.74	\$34,412.16
<b>Rouville</b>	\$347.53	\$1,116.00
<b>Iberville</b>	\$407.42	—
<b>Missisquoi</b>	\$397.45	\$20,249.04
<b>Brome*</b>	\$133.15	\$23,504.29
<b>Total</b>	\$3,399.21	

<sup>a</sup> All of these donations appear in the Auditor's Reports in the Patriotic Fund's official history as two lump sum direct donations in St. Hyacinthe County. It is not directly specified that these were the diocesan collections, but the amounts match closely (\$1,400 and \$2,000 respectively) and there were no other direct donations made in the county.

<sup>b</sup> Total includes the \$3,400 in donations from the churches of the Diocese of St-Hyacinthe. See Table 3.2.

Sources: *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de St-Hyacinthe*, vol. 15 (St-Hyacinthe: L'Imprimerie du Courrier de St-Hyacinthe, 1913) 309-312, 506-509; Philip H. Morris, ed., *The Canadian Patriotic Fund: A Record of Its Activities from 1914 to 1919*, (Ottawa?: n.p., 1920?), 321.

Nor was the Patriotic Fund the only war-related charity for which collections were conducted. In most of the dioceses, additional collections were held by the churches for a variety of charities. Other collections were also recommended by the bishops, although the church played no role in collecting (see Table 4.5 for a list). Local churches, like the Ste-Marie in Beauce (Archdiocese of Québec) mentioned earlier, also organized fundraising campaigns and collections for French and Belgian relief. This

fundraising, while perhaps most active at the outset of the war, continued as the war went on, with the curé often being noted as spearheading efforts. The “Aide à la France” committee in the county of St-Hyacinthe was active into 1916, for example, with Bishop A.-X. Bernard, the Séminaire de St-Hyacinthe, the parish of Laprésentation, and several priests appearing on the list of contributors.<sup>50</sup> Mark McGowan, in his study of Canadian Irish Catholics, found that churches and bishops in English Canada also undertook campaigns, not only for monetary contributions but also for goods, which he notes as “appealing to the culture, occupation, or location” of the communities that supported them.<sup>51</sup> Important as affinity was at the local level in determining support for parish-level campaigns, there were also other considerations. Official appeals from the bishops tended to be accompanied by either official pronouncements from the governor general or the lieutenant governor, as was the case for the Red Cross. Or they were requests which came through Pope Benedict XV. The Bishop of Nicolet recommended the campaign for Polish relief, for example, because, through the invitation of the pope, the Polish bishops had been encouraged to seek help from Catholics in other countries.<sup>52</sup> In 1917, the collection for Lithuanian relief was encouraged because the pope, “profondément ému de tant de souffrances, a bien voulu venir en aide aux victimes de la

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<sup>50</sup>The curé of Laprésentation, J.-A. Laurence, appears twice on the donor list, the first time as having remitted an amount of \$163.35 and the second with a subscription of \$5. The assumption has been made here that the first is a parish collection given the amount and the duplication. J.N. Fournier, “Compte-rendu financier de la souscription 'Aide à la France', du Comté de St-Hyacinthe,” *La Tribune de St-Hyacinthe*, 27 January 1916, 4. For more on Quebec’s French war relief work, see Alban Lachiver, “Le soutien humanitaire canadien-français à la France en 1914-1918,” *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains* 179 (1995): 147-173.

<sup>51</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 95.

<sup>52</sup> J-S-Hermann Brunault, “Circulaire au clergé (No. 60)”, 8 October 1915, *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires de S.G. Mgr. J.-S.-Hermann Brunault, deuxième évêque de Nicolet*, vol. 3 (Nicolet?: n.p., [1924?]), 135-136.

**Table 4.5. — Other War-Related Collections in Quebec Dioceses (1914-1917)**

Diocese	Campaigns	Totals
Montréal	<i>Belgian Relief (1915)*</i> <i>Red Cross (1915)</i> Help for the Dioceses of Reims and Arras (1916) British Sailors' Relief Fund (1916) <i>Help for the Diocese of Verdun (1916)</i> Lithuanian Relief (1917)	\$4,928.48 \$1,920.00  \$3,919.58
Nicolet	Polish Relief (1915) Red Cross (1917) Lithuanian Relief (1917)	n/a n/a n/a
Québec	Polish Relief (1915) <i>Red Cross (1915)</i> British Sailors' Relief Fund (1916) Lithuanian Relief (1917) Red Cross (1917)	\$4,715.15  \$1,689.07 \$2,602.18 \$2,031.91
Sherbrooke	<i>Red Cross (1915)</i> British Sailors' Relief Fund (1916)	\$683.31
Trois-Rivières	<i>Red Cross (1915)</i> British Sailors' Relief Fund (1916) Lithuanian Relief (1917)	n/a n/a
Valleyfield	British Sailors' Relief Fund (1916)	n/a
St-Hyacinthe	Red Cross (1915) British Sailors' Relief Fund (1916) Lithuanian Relief (1917)	\$1,480.40 \$529.47 \$916.92
Chicoutimi	Wounded of the Fleet and British Armies (1915)	n/a

\* Collections noted in italics were recommended by the diocese, but the funds were not collected or reported by the diocese.

Sources: *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires de S.G. Mgr. F.-X. Cloutier*, vol. 4 (Trois-Rivières: Le Bien Public, Ltée, 1923); *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Québec, Sa Grandeur Mgr. L.-N. Bégin*, Vol. 11 (Québec: n.p., 1912); *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires de S.G. Mgr. J.-S.-Hermann Brunault*, vol. 3 (Nicolet?: n.p., 1924?); *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de St-Hyacinthe*, vol. 15 (St-Hyacinthe: L'Imprimerie du Courrier de St-Hyacinthe, 1913); *Mandements, lettres pastorales, circulaires et autres documents publiés dans le Diocèse de Montréal depuis son érection*, vol. 15 (Montréal: Arbour et Dupont, 1919); *Mandements, lettres pastorales, circulaires et autres documents publiés dans le Diocèse de Sherbrooke*, vol. 6 (Sherbrooke: Le Progrès de l'Est, 1915); *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Chicoutimi* (Chicoutimi: n.p, 1919).

guerre en Lithuanie”, personally donated 20,000 francs in addition to offering the Vatican as an intermediary for collections undertaken in other countries.<sup>53</sup>

In addition to charity, there was prayer. On August 10, 1914, in his Valleyfield cathedral, Joseph-Médard Émard preached that

Il faut donc supplier Dieu, l’auteur de la paix, de la rétablir dans un monde où elle est aujourd’hui si profondément troublée. ... C’est en union avec [l’Église] que nous devons demander que les temps redeviennent tranquilles sous la protection divine. Que la guerre soit de brève durée et ait bientôt cessé ses ravages. Que les souffrances qu’elle entraîne soient diminuées sous l’empire et par l’exercice de la charité chrétienne. ... En un mot, que les luttes fratricides s’éteignent bientôt sous l’action de l’amour fraternel rétabli dans ses droits sur les bases de la justice, et que la paix du Christ règne de nouveau...!<sup>54</sup>

Already on August 5, 1914, the prayers mandated during the Mass in the Diocese of Montréal had been changed to pray for peace.<sup>55</sup> The joint pastoral letter of 1914 re-established this as the practice in the signatory dioceses, who had been observing the period of mourning for Pius X and thanksgiving for the election of Benedict XV. The letter also asked for parishes to arrange for their children to make a general communion with peace as the intention.<sup>56</sup> Some parishes had not waited for the bishops before initiating their own efforts for peace. On August 31, 1914, at the urging of the curé, Abbé Edouard-Pierre Chouinard, 150 children in the parish of St. Paul de la Croix in Témiscouata (Diocese of Rimouski) “ont fait une communion pour le succès des armes

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<sup>53</sup> Quoted in F.-X. Cloutier (Bp. of Trois-Rivières), “Lettre pastorale prescrivant une quête en faveur des Lithuanais,” 10 May 1917, *Trois-Rivières*, 208-216.

<sup>54</sup> J.-M. Émard (Bp. of Valleyfield), “La Guerre,” 16 August 1914, *Oeuvres pastorales de Mgr. J.-M. Émard, 1er évêque de Valleyfield*, vol. 4 (Paris: Pierre Téqui, 1922), 39-46.

<sup>55</sup> “Communication officielle,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 10 August 1917, 82.

<sup>56</sup> For only one example: Eccl. Provinces of Québec, Montréal, and Ottawa, “Lettre pastorale ... sur les devoirs des catholiques dans la guerre actuelle,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 26 October 1914, 258-263. The pastoral letter is also published in the collected pastoral letters for the signatory dioceses.

anglaises et françaises, et la rétablissement de la paix en Europe.”<sup>57</sup> Catholics were also enjoined by Benedict XV to pray daily for the return of peace, with special prayers to that end circulated.<sup>58</sup>

With the exception of the special prayers written by Benedict XV, Catholics prayed for peace through the traditions of the church. There were already prayers *pro pace* and *pro tempore belli* available for priests to use at the direction of their bishops. The requirement to pray for peace in the liturgy was not lifted until November 1918, after the Armistice was signed.<sup>59</sup> Some of the changes made to prayer for peace were of a more permanent nature — from late 1915, it was permitted to add *Regina Pacis* to the Litany of the Virgin Mary for the duration of the war, a change which ultimately became permanent.<sup>60</sup> These public prayers were a necessary acknowledgement of God’s sovereignty over the world and a plea for His mercy in restoring peace. In October 1914, *L’Action sociale* sought to explain that, just as in the Bible war was often “un châtement du péché et un moyen de l’expié”, this war was “une grande et salutaire expiation dont toutes les nations, surtout celles qui sont engagées dans la bataille, doivent profiter” as all had acted against God and the church.<sup>61</sup> The scale of the

<sup>57</sup> “Couriers de la Province,” *L’Action sociale*, 10 September 1914, 6. Chouinard was born in Matane and was trained in the Diocese of Rimouski. See J.-B.-A. Allaire, *Dictionnaire biographique du clergé canadien-français, Les contemporains* (Saint-Hyacinthe: Imprimerie de ‘La Tribune’, 1908), 128-129.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, “Prière pour la paix,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 15 February 1915, 106.

<sup>59</sup> See, for example, A.-X. Bernard (Bp. of St.-Hyacinthe), “Circulaire au clergé (No. 98),” 18 November 1918, *St-Hyacinthe*, 624-625;

<sup>60</sup> See [http://www.vatican.va/special/rosary/documents/litanie-lauretane\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/special/rosary/documents/litanie-lauretane_en.html) where ‘Queen of Peace’ remains the invocation after ‘Queen of the Holy Rosary’. For examples of the local implementations of the pope’s authorization of this practice, see J.-S.-Hermann Brunault, “Circulaire au clergé (No. 61),” *Nicolet*, vol. 3, 141; O.-E. Mathieu, “Circulaire au clergé (No. 25),” 1 August, 1917, *Lettres pastorales et lettres circulaires de S.G. Mgr. O.-E. Mathieu, Évêque de Regina 1914-1923* (Regina: n.p., [1923?]), 153-154 (in English 525-526).

<sup>61</sup> This editorial was also argued against claims that the war was a particular punishment for France’s anti-clericalism and so acting against the church was also mentioned in that context. “La guerre et l’expiation,” *L’Action sociale*, editorial, 28 October 1914, 1. See also, L.-A. Paquet, “Les causes essentielles de la Grande guerre,” *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface*, 1 March 1917, 66.

destruction and extent of the casualties meant that the emphasis soon shifted away from the nature of the punishment and onto the steps that individuals needed to take to ensure that the peace was a true one. Antonio Huot, writing in June 1915 for the *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, wrote of the need for individuals to purify themselves: “Pour un catholique ... ces terribles événements entrent dans les desseins adorables de Dieu ... [qui] permet les guerres pour l’expiation des péchés du monde. ... Seule, ne l’oublions jamais la sanctification des peuples par la vérité, par la pénitance et par la prière pourra assurer au monde une paix durable.”<sup>62</sup> It was through God that the promise of a true peace was promised, but it was offered through faith and would be obtained through prayer.

The church hierarchy was not alone in asking for the prayers of Canadians. A government proclamation was issued in the name of King George V asking that the first Sunday of 1915 be “a day of Humble Prayer and Intercession to Almighty God on behalf of the cause undertaken by Our Empire and Our Allies ... and for a speedy and favourable peace that shall be founded on understanding and not hatred...”, with letters and copies of the proclamation sent to all of the country’s major religious leaders.<sup>63</sup> The Secretary of State’s office soon received replies. Ovide Charlebois, O.M.I., the Apostolic Vicar of Keewatin, wrote back that “nous accueillons cette Proclamation avec joie et empressement. Elle correspond à notre plus ardent désir.”<sup>64</sup> In Montreal,

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<sup>62</sup> Antonio Huot, “Sommes-nous meilleurs?,” *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 24 June 1915, 674-676. See also “La prière nécessaire,” *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 15 April 1915, 514-516.

<sup>63</sup> *Canada Gazette Extra*, 10 December 1914, 71790; File 3060 (Day of Prayer), Vol. 795, RG6-H3 (Dept. of Justice), Library and Archives Canada. Efforts were also made to send letters to some of Canada’s prominent rabbis in a display of inter-faith co-operation.

<sup>64</sup> Letter from O. Charlebois, O.M.I. to Dept. of Secretary of State, 24 December 1914, File 3060 (Day of Prayer), Vol. 795, RG6-H3 (Dept. of the Secretary of State), Library and Archives Canada.

Bruchési had already invited people to “s’unir, en un jour déterminé, dans une supplication solennelle,” and was happy to announce January 3 as that date.<sup>65</sup> In Rimouski, Bishop A.-A. Blais replied simply that “A ces fins des prières se font dans le diocèse Rimouski depuis le commencement de la guerre et s’y feront particulièrement le 3 janvier.”<sup>66</sup> And so, on January 3, together with men and women from other denominations in churches across the country, French Canadian Catholics prayed for peace.

On Passion Sunday (March 21, 1915), it was at the pope’s request that another day of prayer was held, this time for the world’s Catholics.<sup>67</sup> In Chicoutimi, children were encouraged to participate because “Rien de plus propre à toucher le Cœur de Dieu que la prière de ceux à qui Jésus a dit: *Laisser venir à moi les petits enfants.*”<sup>68</sup> Other calls to prayer were issued regularly, both by the civil authorities and by the pope, and the evidence suggests that when such calls were issued, the people of Quebec responded and ‘faire battre le ciel’ with their prayers so that God would grant peace. The official religious journals of the dioceses of Montréal, Québec, and St-Boniface circulated the calls to prayer and similar declarations appear in the pastoral letters of the other bishops. At the level of the parish, although it is impossible to know how widely observed such days of prayer actually were, the local pages of *L’Action sociale (L’Action catholique*

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<sup>65</sup> Letter from A. Harbourg, (Chancellor of Montréal) to Dept. of Secretary of State, 19 December 1914, File 3060 (Day of Prayer), Vol. 795, RG6-H3 (Dept. of Justice), Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>66</sup> Letter from A.-A. Blais to Dept. of Secretary of State, 20 December 1914, File 3060 (Day of Prayer), Vol. 795, RG6-H3 (Dept. of Justice), Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>67</sup> The pope had requested prayers to be said in Europe in February and elsewhere in March, the difference in dates for logistical reasons. For one example of the pope’s declaration: “Prières pour la paix,” *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 18 March 1915, 450-452.

<sup>68</sup> Original italics. M.-T. Labrecque (Bp of Chicoutimi), “Circulaire au clergé (No. 135),” 8 March 1915, *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Chicoutimi*, vol. 4 (Chicoutimi: n.p., 1919), 137-140.

from mid-1915) have notices from contributors across the province of Quebec that days of prayer were held in accordance with the wishes of the bishops or of the pope.

This is not to deny that there were conflicting views about Canada's participation in the war. The question of Canada's obligation to Britain first arose in the first weeks of the war, following an editorial titled "Le devoir national" by Henri Bourassa in *Le Devoir* on September 8, 1914.<sup>69</sup> In it, Bourassa held to the position that he had taken during the Boer War that Canada was not obligated to involve itself in Britain's wars. By 1915, Bourassa had come out definitively against participation in the war,<sup>70</sup> but, on September 8, 1914, he had written that

Le Canada, nation anglo-française, liée à l'Angleterre et à la France par mille attaches ethniques, sociales, intellectuelles, économiques, a un intérêt vital au maintien de la France et de l'Angleterre, de leur prestige, de leur puissance, de leur action mondiale.

C'est donc notre devoir national de contibuer ... au triomphe et surtout à 'l'endurance' des efforts combinés de la France et de l'Angleterre.<sup>71</sup>

Still, he asserted that in the current war Canada was not threatened by direct attack and "n'a aucune obligation morale ou constitutionnelle ni aucun intérêt immédiat dans le conflit actuel." He warned that a military effort would, in fact, have "des conséquences désastreuses" for Canada.<sup>72</sup> Despite Bourassa's initial reluctant concession that Canada had an interest in the war because of its ethnic and economic ties, a position he would

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<sup>69</sup> See also Henri Bourassa, *The Duty of Canada at the Present Hour* (Montréal: Le Devoir, [1915?]), which slightly expands Bourassa's arguments from *Le Devoir* as proof to an English-speaking audience that he supported Canadian participation in a limited way.

<sup>70</sup> Durocher, "Henri Bourassa, les évêques et la guerre de 1914-1918," 252-253.

<sup>71</sup> Henri Bourassa, "Le devoir national," *Le Devoir*, 8 September 1914, 1.

<sup>72</sup> Henri Bourassa, "Le devoir national," *Le Devoir*, 8 September 1914, 1. Bourassa's sense of nationalism held that participation in foreign wars was perhaps the primary danger of imperialism and that Canada needed to develop into a fully autonomous nation in order to reach its destiny. See Lacombe, *La rencontre de deux peuples élus*, 28-40, 70-78.

later reject as his opposition to the war increased,<sup>73</sup> this editorial would spark a series of refutations in *L'Action sociale*, the journal which often acted as a semi-official venue for the Archdiocese of Québec.

On September 11, *L'Action sociale* published “Notre devoir”, the first in a series of ten editorials over the subsequent month that sought to outline Canada’s duty and to counter Bourassa’s claim that Canada had no moral obligation to support Britain.<sup>74</sup> Unlike Bourassa, whose opposition to participation in Britain’s war was based on a political conception of Canadian independence and a deep-rooted anti-imperialism, the editorialist of *L'Action sociale* invoked the teaching of the church with respect to authority, writing:

Notre loyauté envers l'Angleterre, loyauté qui constitue une tradition d'honneur pour notre Église et pour notre race, ne repose pas seulement sur notre intérêt bien entendu ...; cette loyauté repose sur un devoir rigoureux, le devoir d'obéir aux puissances établies par Dieu pour gouverner la société. Notre obéissance au pouvoir établi est un devoir de notre religion, une vertu de notre foi.<sup>75</sup>

According to the loyalist position taken in this series of editorials, this duty to Britain, which had been accepted in Canada since the Treaty of Paris (1763), now obliged Canada to “donner notre concours effectif à la métropole dans la grande lutte.”<sup>76</sup> The more sweeping view of Canada’s duty taken by *L'Action sociale* was accompanied by a broader sense of Canadian security than that taken by Bourassa. There might be no

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<sup>73</sup> For a survey of Bourassa’s changing attitudes, see Geoff Keelan, “Bourassa’s War.”

<sup>74</sup> These editorials were published between 11 September 1914 and 6 October 1914 in *L'Action sociale*. Durocher identifies only the first three in his article on Bourassa and the Quebec bishops, not the last seven which more directly engage with *Le Devoir*. The *L'Action sociale* editorials are unsigned, but are usually attributed to Abbé J.-A. D’Amours. See also Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 20:83, 95-98.

<sup>75</sup> “Notre devoir,” *L'Action sociale*, 11 September 1914, 1.

<sup>76</sup> “Notre devoir envers l'Angleterre,” *L'Action sociale*, 14 September 1914, 1.

direct attack threatened at the moment, but should the British fleet be defeated, it would be “trop tard pour nous défendre chez nous” wrote the editorialist.<sup>77</sup>

With *Le Devoir* publishing a rebuttal on September 21 by an anonymous specialist, both sides accused one another of deliberate misrepresentation based on political motivations. While the position of *L'Action sociale* was not as extreme as the theological position taken by Father John J. O’Gorman, one of the most vehement clerical supporters of the war in the English-speaking Catholic church,<sup>78</sup> the appeal to ‘natural law’ was too much for Bourassa. Where Bourassa made his case for Canada’s obligation based on codified ‘positive law’ and constitutional arguments, *L'Action sociale* wrote that “Nous croyons que cette obligation morale a sa source dans le droit naturel, qui ‘ordonne aux citoyens ... d’aimer, de servir et de défendre leur patrie...”<sup>79</sup> The public spat, which predates publication of the bishop’s joint pastoral letter, drew clergy to both sides of the issue, although it largely faded into the background in the aftermath of the pastoral letter’s publication as Bourassa did not wish to provoke a conflict with the bishops by criticizing their position.<sup>80</sup> But the question of the church’s position would flare up again in the fall of 1915, to be taken up by Olivar Asselin, another *nationaliste* journalist, in the pages of *L'Action*. This time, ecclesiastical discipline was at issue, with *L'Action catholique* defending French Canadian priests from English-Canadian accusations of disloyalty on the basis of the position taken by the

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<sup>77</sup> “L’intérêt du Canada,” *L'Action sociale*, 16 September 1914, 1.

<sup>78</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 82-83.

<sup>79</sup> “Argumentation fallacious,” *L'Action sociale*, 24 September 1914, 1.

<sup>80</sup> Durocher, “Henri Bourassa, les évêques et la guerre de 1914-1918.”

bishops and Asselin questioning the need of priests to obey the bishops on matters that were not, strictly speaking, religious.<sup>81</sup>

Mgr. Louis-Adolphe Paquet, a prominent theologian and friend of Bourassa, would have a final word on the subject in the summer of 1917 as the question of conscription was coming to a head. Paquet, writing thinly disguised under the pseudonym of ‘Louis Romain’, wrote in *La Vérité*: “Cette colonie est-elle tenue par une obligation morale stricte, c’est-à-dire en justice, de prendre part aux guerre étrangères les plus graves où la métropole est engagée? Nous disons: non.” He held that neither the Canadian constitution nor allegiance to the king obliged Canadian participation, although strategic considerations might compel the sending of troops. But “si le Canada n’était tenu, par un devoir rigoureux, de prendre part à la guerre actuelle, peut-on du moins admettre que la charité et la bienveillance le justifiait de le faire? Nous répondons: oui.”<sup>82</sup> While the duty of charity implied, in a larger sense, a moral obligation, it was one that could be satisfied in ways other than by sending thousands of men and millions of dollars overseas — it is not necessary to ruin oneself in order to save another from ruin. Paquet then applied this to an analysis of the September 1914 joint pastoral letter, identifying three major points: Canada’s contribution to the war in men and money, the need to meet the needs created by the war, and the need for the faithful to pray. While

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<sup>81</sup> Asselin’s articles on the subject in *L’Action* in the fall of 1915 were collected and published in two pamphlets — Olivar Asselin, *L’Action catholique, les évêques et la guerre*, (Montréal: n.p., [1915?]) and *Les évêques et la propagande de L’Action catholique*, (Montréal: L’Action, 1915). See also “Simple mise au point,” *L’Action catholique*, 5 October 1915, 1. (*L’Action sociale* became *L’Action catholique* in mid-1915.) Armstrong, *Crisis of Quebec*, 114-115ff; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 20:123-126.

<sup>82</sup> Louis Romain (L.-A. Paquet), “Consultation doctrinale,” *La Vérité*, 7 July 1917, 1. Also published as “La participation du Canada à la guerre,” *Les Cloches de St-Boniface*, 15 August 1917, 238-242. See also Armstrong, *Crisis of Quebec*, 214-219.

the last two points easily relate to charity, the first had been subject to a variety of interpretations. But based on the fact that the bishops “disent du Canada et du Canada seulement, *notre patrie*” and the “nobles et fermes déclarations épiscopales” against conscription, Paquet concludes that in signing the joint pastoral letter the bishops “n’ont pas voulu affirmer pour le Canada, dans la guerre actuelle, une obligation de justice envers l’Angleterre, et qu’ils n’ont eu en vue qu’un concours de charité, lequel se mesure d’après notre situation et nos moyens.”<sup>83</sup> Paquet’s defence of the 1914 pastoral letter was written in the highly charged atmosphere of 1917, when the introduction of conscription had called into question the limits that might be placed on the Canadian war effort. Paquet was trying to thread the needle, asserting that, while Canada had a duty to Britain, that the obligation was not one that required abandoning Canada’s best interests.

Although the Catholic church in Quebec did not engage itself in the work of recruiting, it did offer support to French Canadian volunteers. In the first weeks of the war, Bruchési was pleased to recommend as chaplain Chanoine A.-L. Sylvestre, which allowed him to give “à nos soldats un prêtre de ma maison et un chanoine de mon chapitre, d’affirmer une fois de plus la loyauté” of French Canadians.<sup>84</sup> Outside the formal military establishment, the churches also provided for the volunteers. Before leaving Montreal for Valcartier, a number of the French Canadian volunteers from the 65th Carabiniers Mont-Royal had sought out a special Mass from their militia chaplain, Abbé Deschamps, and were happy to receive medals and chaplets to take with them. On

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<sup>83</sup> Italics original. Louis Romain (L.-A. Paquet), “Consultation doctrinale,” *La Vérité*, 7 July 1917, 1. Also published as “La participation du Canada à la guerre,” *Les Cloches de St-Boniface*, 15 August 1917, 238-242.

<sup>84</sup> “Depart pour le camp,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 7 September 1914, 158.

the day of their departure for camp, Deschamps, unable to go with them because of his own health and parish responsibilities, blessed them.<sup>85</sup> At a service in Rigaud in September, Joseph-Médard Émard, Bishop of Valleyfield, spoke of the pride that all could take in the French Canadian volunteers:

Une fois de plus nous signalons le loyalisme indéfectible de notre population. L'Église honore et bénit le patriotisme qui se manifeste partout. ... Nous implorons donc de toutes nos âmes, de tous nos cœurs, le Dieu des combats de soutenir le courage et le patriotisme de nos soldats, de leur donner la force de vaincre leurs ennemis et les nôtres, de faire triompher la noble cause du droit et de la justice.<sup>86</sup>

This sense of pride would find a focus in the creation of the 22nd Battalion, the first francophone battalion and the only one to see service at the front, and in the creation of two French Canadian military hospitals, one under the patronage of Dr. Mignault and the other raised by l'Université Laval.<sup>87</sup> Reaching France in September 1915 as part of the 2nd Canadian Division, the 22nd Battalion took heavy casualties capturing Courcelette in September 1916. On October 26, at Notre-Dame in Montreal, where an empty catafalque stood draped with the Union Jack, Archbishop Bruchési conducted a memorial service. He reminded mourners of the promise of resurrection offered by Christ and of the fact that all of the men had enlisted “voluntariement, généreusement ... convaincus qu'ils se dévouaient à une grande cause, justement définie la cause de la

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<sup>85</sup> “Depart pour le camp,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 7 September 1914, 158-160; “Nos soldats et leur aumonier,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 31 August 1914, 138-139. Compare with sendoffs from Trois-Rivières described in Robert Rumilly, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 66-72.

<sup>86</sup> J.-M. Émard, “SG Mgr Émard et la guerre,” *La Croix*, 3 October 1914, 2.

<sup>87</sup> Thirteen further francophone battalions would be formed, but many had difficulty recruiting and were plagued with discipline problems, poor officers, and high desertion levels. All would eventually be broken up to serve as reinforcements. See Gagnon, *Le 22e bataillon*, 148-187. For more on the two hospitals, see Michel Litalien, *Dans la tourmente: Deux hôpitaux militaires canadiens-français dans la France en guerre (1915-1919)* (Outremont: Athena Éditions, 2003); Mélanie Morin-Pelletier, “Des oiseaux bleus chez les Poilus: Les Infirmières des hôpitaux militaires canadiens-français postés en France, 1915-1919,” *Bulletin d'histoire politique* 17, no. 2 (2009): 57-74.

civilisation, du droit et de l'humanité, convaincus que c'était leur patrie qu'ils allaient protéger et défendre."<sup>88</sup> He continued, speaking of their bravery, and concluded with the statement that "Le monde avait besoin d'être purifiée et d'expier. ... Et dans le grand œuvre accomplie nous pourrions dire que le Canada, tout le Canada, ... notre province de Québec en particulier, et ... les Canadiens français, auront fait leur noble part."<sup>89</sup>

To date, little has been written about the money and effort that was put into overseas relief efforts, and, in studies of Canada during the Great War, the war effort has been defined primarily as a military or economic endeavour. When charitable efforts have been considered, the Patriotic Fund and the Red Cross have been accorded the most attention, perhaps in large part because of their association with Canadian soldiers and work with the wounded. There is also the difficulty in tracing donations to overseas relief, making it a case of the left hand making gifts unknown to the right. But this focus does not capture the full range of Canadian participation, something particularly important when considering the case of French Canada. The attitude of French Canada during the war, when viewed only through the frame of the military efforts or through the objections of the *nationalistes*, has been portrayed, both at the time and since, as indifferent, if not hostile.<sup>90</sup> There was undeniably resistance, exacerbated by ethnic tensions and the ongoing struggle to retain French-language education outside of

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<sup>88</sup> Paul Bruchési quoted in "Allocution de Mgr L'archevêque pour ceux qui tombent au champ d'honneur prononcée dans l'église Notre-Dame à Montréal," *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 6 November 1916.

<sup>89</sup> Paul Bruchési quoted in "Allocution de Mgr L'archevêque pour ceux qui tombent au champ d'honneur prononcée dans l'église Notre-Dame à Montréal," *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 6 November 1916. See also, "Les Canadiens-français au front," *Le Progrès de Valleyfield*, 9 November 1916, 2.

<sup>90</sup> For a recent example of this phenomenon, see Brock Millman, *Polarity, Patriotism and Dissent in Great War Canada, 1914-1919* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 46-60.

Quebec, but communities remained engaged in war-related activities through the first years of the war. Reframing the experience of the war in Quebec to focus on the Christian virtues of charity and prayer, rather than only on enlistment, shows that French Canadians were not indifferent to the war and were proud of their voluntary contributions.

French Canadians gave to war-related charities, both through the church and through non-denominational organizations, and prayers for peace were regularly said at the urging of both the government and the pope in churches and chapels across the province. French Canadians also took part in the military effort, through enlistment for overseas service and in other ways. At No. 4 General Hospital, sponsored by French Canadians and sent to serve the French wounded, each of the 150 beds “portent ... le nom d’une paroisse, d’une association, d’un donateur”<sup>91</sup> In Montreal, the Gray Nuns opened a convalescent hospital to serve returned Canadian soldiers.<sup>92</sup> But the various efforts of the Catholic church in French Canada, and of French Canadians more generally, went largely unknown and Quebec remained the subject of much criticism in English Canada, which focussed instead on the effort made to secure French-language schools in Ontario, as though the two were mutually exclusive. As the editor of *Le semaine religieuse de Montréal* wondered in December 1915, “Après ce que font nos institutions publiques, après ce qu’ont fait nos soldats sur les champs de bataille, on se demande vraiment comment il se fait d’autre part que nous ayons tous les jours à

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<sup>91</sup> “L’hôpital franco-canadien à Paris,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 13 September 1915, 182-184. See also “L’hôpital Laval,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 26 June 1916, 407-410.

<sup>92</sup> “L’hôpital militaire des Soeurs Grises,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 27 December 1915, 425-427, originally in *La Presse*.

entendre les attaques d'une certaine presse ontarienne criant à tous venant que les Canadiens de race française ne sont pas loyaux à l'Angleterre."<sup>93</sup> These tensions, which had been building since the early days of the war, would flare up in 1917 as the government made the momentous decision to impose conscription, despite the opposition of French Canada.

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<sup>93</sup> Editorial comment, "L'hôpital militaire des Soeurs Grises," *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 27 December 1915, 426-427.

## CHAPTER 5

## A NATION DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF: CONSCRIPTION AND CONFLICTING VIEWS OF THE WAR EFFORT, 1917

The morning of July 1, 1916, British and French soldiers rose out of their trenches to attack the Germans at the Somme in the largest offensive the Entente forces had yet staged on the Western Front. As the offensive had originally been conceived, the French army had been intended to provide the main attacking force, but, in February 1916, the Germans had attacked the fortresses of Verdun, beginning a bloody battle of attrition that would stretch on into December as the French refused to abandon the territory to the Germans. With the fighting at Verdun consuming French attention and resources, the British Fourth Army became the main attacking force on the Somme. With the help of a week-long preliminary artillery bombardment, it was hoped that the troops would be able to break through the German lines and into the open territory beyond. But the reality was very different, with the men being cut down in no man's land by German machine gunners and most failing to even reach the German positions. Some units, including the Newfoundland Regiment, almost ceased to exist due to the large number of casualties. The Canadian Corps, stationed at another part of the front, avoided the slaughter of the opening day of the battle, but, at the beginning of August, it was moved to the Somme front. As the attacks continued throughout the remainder of the summer and into the fall, modest gains were made, but at the cost of tens of thousands of lives.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Keegan, *The First World War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 276-299; Tim Cook, *At the Sharp End: Canadians Fighting the Great War 1914-1916* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2007), 405-526; G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1962), 160-200.

While careful control of news dispatches from the battlefield, press censorship, and the physical distance from the front meant that Canadians were somewhat isolated from some of the realities of war, neither were they completely ignorant.<sup>2</sup> The long casualty lists appearing daily in newspapers were just one indication that the war was far from won, however much each captured hill or village may have seemed a step toward that ultimate victory. The film, *The Battle of the Somme*, was also shown to huge audiences in Toronto and elsewhere in the country, giving people some indication of the shattered landscape of the battlefield and of what life at and just behind the front was like.<sup>3</sup> With the war stretching on into a third year, many English Canadians felt that a new determination was needed and that the war effort, which had thus far been based entirely on voluntarism, needed to be put on a more organized footing to ensure that all parts of society were contributing. Canada needed to be able to uphold its responsibilities, not only as a subordinate part of the empire, but, as J. Castell Hopkins stated, “a British nation with a nation’s responsibilities and wealth...”<sup>4</sup> Manpower was becoming a serious concern. Recruiting numbers had been falling precipitously since the spring of 1916 and it was worried that, despite the need for reinforcements, the men who were enlisting were being taken away from essential industrial or agricultural positions. Although rising numbers of men and women were involved in the work of munitions production, acute labour shortages were still slowing production in the

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<sup>2</sup> cf. Jeffrey Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship in Canada's Great War* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1996); M.J. Farrar, *News from the Front: War Correspondents on the Western Front 1914-18* (Thrupp, Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishers, 1998); I.H.M. Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief: Torontonians and the Great War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 6-14.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of Toronto during the summer of 1917, see Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 49-58.

<sup>4</sup> J. Castell Hopkins quoted in R. Matthew Bray, “‘Fighting as an Ally’: The English-Canadian Patriotic Response to the Great War,” *Canadian Historical Review* 61, no. 2 (1980): 149. See also Bray, “‘Fighting as an Ally’”, 149-164; Nicholson, *Official History*, 281-220.

summer of 1916, and farmers were complaining about a shortage of experienced help.<sup>5</sup> For those English Canadians who felt that the war needed to be waged ‘to the last man and the last dollar’, conscription, which had been imposed in Britain in March 1916, was beginning to seem like the only way of achieving this end, even if it had to be enacted over the objections of French Canada.

When Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden announced on December 31, 1915, that Canada’s new recruitment target would be a force of half a million men, it marked a tenfold increase from the 50,000 that had been the authorized strength of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) in January 1915. Although some greeted the announcement with enthusiasm, others had concerns about how Canada was going to fill this pledge, with the governor general, Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, fearing that “the magnificent total of 500,000 may be beyond the powers of the Dominion of Canada to provide under voluntary enlistment.”<sup>6</sup> In the short term, these worries were not borne out as monthly recruiting figures remained strong, reaching an all-time high of more than 34,000 in March 1916, the same month that Britain introduced conscription.<sup>7</sup> In May 1916, shortly after the formation of the 4th Canadian Division, the total strength of the CEF had swelled to 300,000, but recruiting numbers had begun to decline precipitously. And in September, as a consequence of the Somme casualties, the total

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<sup>5</sup> David Carnegie, *The History of Munitions Supply in Canada, 1914-1918* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1925), 67, 107-108, 127, 250-251; Mourad Djebabla-Brun, *Combattre avec les vivres: L’effort de guerre alimentaire canadien en 1914-1918* (Montréal: Septentrion, 2015), 138-163.

<sup>6</sup> Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, quoted in Patrick Dennis, *Reluctant Warriors: Canadian Conscripts and the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), 18.

<sup>7</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, Appendix C, Table 1; David Stevenson, *1914-1918: The History of the First World War* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2012), 202-204.

strength of the CEF fell for the first time since the beginning of the war, dropping by 7,600 in two months.<sup>8</sup> The problem was not going to be reaching a force of 500,000, but of keeping the existing units adequately supplied with reinforcements.

Balancing the various demands on the country's manpower and resources was felt to be a job for the government, and, in the summer of 1916, various religious bodies began to pass resolutions asking for the government to take action. Meeting in Winnipeg in mid-June, the Presbyterian General Assembly endorsed a proposal of the Hamilton Recruiting League asking the government to "take early steps to ascertain the resources of this Dominion in men, materials and money with a view to the wisest and most effective contribution to the sacred cause of freedom and righteousness for which the Empire and its Allies are now contending."<sup>9</sup> The Anglican Synod of Huron passed a resolution expressing its "conviction that the duty of fighting for one's country in a righteous war, in defence of the highest ideals of civilization ... should ... be borne equally by all the properly qualified men of the nation" and calling for the "complete and effectual mobilization of the entire resources of Canada in men and material."<sup>10</sup> Similar sentiments were expressed at other spring synods, including at the meetings of the dioceses of Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Ontario and at the meeting of the Provincial Synod of Ontario.<sup>11</sup> None of the Methodist conferences meeting that summer seem to

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<sup>8</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, Appendix C, Table 2.

<sup>9</sup> Presbyterian Church of Canada, *Acts and Proceedings of General Assembly 1916* (Toronto: Thorn Press, 1916), 63. A telegram from the Hamilton Recruiting League was presented during one of sederunts (sessions) "asking the co-operation of the Assembly with other Canadian Churches in calling ... [for] the registration of men, and the mobilizing of resources", but no further details about the message are provided.

<sup>10</sup> "Diocese of Huron," *Canadian Churchman*, 29 June 1916, 411, 416

<sup>11</sup> cf. C.L. Worrell quoted in "After the War," *Canadian Churchman*, 22 June 1916, 393, 399-400; "The Synod," *Quebec Diocesan Gazette*, July 1916, 84; "Diocese of Ontario," *Canadian Churchman*, 13 July 1916, 442, 449; "The Provincial Synod of Ontario," *Canadian Churchman*, 21 September 1916, 603.

have passed resolutions calling for registration or conscription, but the recruiting problem was kept in mind through addresses by recruiting officers and with patriotic services.<sup>12</sup> Discussion in the *Christian Guardian* about the need for men and whether ministers should enlist were less explicit than the resolutions calling for registration, but they were nonetheless part of the questioning taking place during the summer of 1916. And, by October, the *Christian Guardian* was also openly acknowledging that the voluntary system had ‘broken down’ and that it might be the time for “some system of national registration, to be followed by some form of national service.”<sup>13</sup> On August 16, 1916, the Borden government, recognizing that the voluntary system was no longer adequate to meet the demand for men, formed the National Service Board to ensure that the available manpower would be used to greatest effect. The first major action of the Board came in December 1916 with the distribution of registration cards.<sup>14</sup>

English Canada generally welcomed national registration as a means to ensure that all Canadians were contributing to the war effort according to their means, equalizing the sacrifice and balancing the conflicting demands of industry, agriculture, and the military. There was, however, a strong geographic, ethnic, and religious component to their support for the policy.<sup>15</sup> In noting that “the system of voluntary enlistment has well-nigh reached its limit,” the *Presbyterian* felt the need to also remind readers that “It is notorious that some areas of the country have shirked their share of the great

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<sup>12</sup> For examples, see “The London Conference,” *Christian Guardian*, 21 June 1916, 18; “Ashamed of Men Not Yet in Uniform,” *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 26 June 1916, 3; “The Toronto Conference,” “The Montreal Conference,” *Christian Guardian*, 28 June 1916, 19; “The Conferences,” *Christian Guardian* 19 July 1916, 23, 21; “Montreal Letter,” *Christian Guardian*, 30 August 1916, 22-23.

<sup>13</sup> “The Recruiting Problem,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 4 October 1916, 5.

<sup>14</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, 219-220; Bray, “Fighting as an Ally,” 154-160.

<sup>15</sup> Instead of ‘ethnic’, the term ‘racial’ would have been used at the time, both in English and in French.

sacrifice.”<sup>16</sup> This pointed comment was aimed squarely at French Canada, particularly Quebec, and was relatively mild in comparison to some of the other accusations circulating in the press, which seized on the anti-imperialist editorials of *Le Devoir*, the impassioned defence of French-language education rights in Ontario, and anti-conscription disturbances at recruiting meetings as evidences of Quebec’s disloyalty.<sup>17</sup> While recruiting in Quebec had been slow, with the proportion of French-speaking recruits below their share of the Canadian population, the reasons for this were varied.<sup>18</sup> But regardless of the reasons — the lack of opportunities and difficulties encountered by francophone recruits in the CEF, earlier marriages and larger families, anti-imperialism, or anger over the Ontario schools situation — it was widely felt in English Canada that Quebec was failing to do its duty and must be made to do so if Canada was to meet its pledge of 500,000 men and keep the Canadian troops already overseas supplied with reinforcements.

The Catholic church was often implicated as one of the primary reasons for the lackluster response in French Canada by both Protestant and secular periodicals.

William Munroe, in writing to the editor of the *Presbyterian* to defend the enlistment

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<sup>16</sup> “The Call for Men,” editorial, *Presbyterian*, 22 June 1916, 588.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: Philippe Landry*, vol. 20 (Montréal: Montréal-Éditions, n.d.), 80-84, 133-138; Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: Courcellette*, vol. 21 (Montréal: Montréal-Éditions, n.d.), 24-27, 148-150; Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: La conscription*, vol. 22 (Montréal: Montréal-Éditions, n.d.), 40-44, 62-64; Elizabeth Armstrong, *The Crisis of Quebec 1914-1918* (New York: AMS Press, [1937] 1967), 105-111.

<sup>18</sup> Debate continues about the actual proportion of enlistments, with suggestions that the rates of enlistment are almost even between French and English Canada if place of birth (i.e. removing the British-born), marital status, and the percentage of urban dwellers are controlled for. Leaving aside this kind of analysis, the contemporary perception was that Quebec was failing to do its duty. The association of French Canada with Quebec has also obscured the contribution to the CEF of French-speaking Canadians, especially outside of Quebec. See Chris Sharpe, “Enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1918: A Re-evaluation,” *Canadian Military History* 24, no. 1 (2015): 26-39, 47-50, 52-60; Jean Martin, “Francophone Enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1918: The Evidence,” *Canadian Military History* 25, no. 1 (2016): article 18; Jean Martin, “Yes, French Canadians Did Their Share in the First World War,” *Canadian Military History Journal* 17, no. 4 (2017): 47-55.

record of Anglo-Protestant Quebecers, spoke for many English Canadians when he expressed disappointment that “there has been no clarion call for Frenchmen [*sic*] to defend the cause of Britain...” He felt that “There would have been a different story to tell if the priests had preached patriotism and the duty of young men to defend their country as Protestant ministers have been doing.”<sup>19</sup> While Archbishop Bruchési of Montréal and Cardinal Bégin of Québec, the two most prominent French Canadian bishops, had made a series of statements in support of the war effort, it was parish priests who were most often accused of working against efforts to find recruits in Quebec. While on a recruiting campaign through Quebec in May 1917, Major-General François-Louis Lessard, Canada’s ranking French Canadian officer, was quoted in *La Patrie* wondering if the lower clergy had “bien compris la responsabilité énorme qu’il assume en mettant ... une sourdine à l’appel hiérarchique de l’Église?”<sup>20</sup> While many of these claims were based on rumour or hearsay, they were widely believed. In Cape Breton, James Morrison, the Bishop of Antigonish, observed that when Québécois priests in his diocese were replaced by French-speaking Acadians, the number of enlistments from the area rose.<sup>21</sup> Although the contemporary press focussed on *nationaliste* priests who followed Henri Bourassa’s lead in urging their parishioners to refuse to serve an imperial power, French priests who had fled France’s anti-clerical legislation were also implicated. Elizabeth Armstrong, in her *Crisis of Quebec*, references a recruiting officer

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<sup>19</sup> William Munroe, letter to editor, “Quebec, Canada and the Empire,” *Presbyterian*, 12 October 1916, 318-319. See also “Recruiting in Canada,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 29 March 1916, 4; “Quebec and the War,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 25 October 1916, 5.

<sup>20</sup> F.-L. Lessard quoted in “Declarations du Général Lessard,” *La Patrie*, 8 May 1917, 3. See also “En présence d’un auditoire nombreux, le Lt-colonel Blondin parle de l’action glorieuse de nos soldats C.-F. au front,” *La Patrie*, 8 May 1917, 1-2; Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 22:63.

<sup>21</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 112.

who claimed that enlistments were lower in regions where French religious were serving than in areas “where the native Canadian clergy kept their flocks within the bounds of strict loyalty to Britain and friendliness to her French ally.”<sup>22</sup>

Although priests in Quebec were not making the strong public statements desired by English Canadians, there is evidence to suggest that they were not all opposed to recruiting. In early January 1917, a letter signed by Colonel Mignault was sent by the military authorities to the bishops and parish priests throughout Quebec asking for their help in securing recruits.<sup>23</sup> The overall response is unknown, but letters sent by twenty parish priests to the French Canadian recruiting organization were forwarded to Ottawa. Among these priests, representing parishes in the Dioceses of Valleyfield, Sherbrooke, Québec, Rimouski, Joliette, and Nicolet, were both French Canadians and French religious priests, all of whom expressed sympathy and support for Mignault’s recruiting efforts.<sup>24</sup> Although almost all of the priests noted that the men of their area were needed on the farms or were working in munitions factories, half included lists of men who might be willing or able to enlist. But even those who did not provide names were supportive of the task. In Katevale (Diocese of Sherbrooke), L.-N. Caron replied that he had taken up the subject from the pulpit on January 28, 1917, asking “ceux de mes

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<sup>22</sup> Armstrong, *Crisis of Quebec*, 38. The supposed viewpoint of these French expatriates towards the war is probably best expressed in *La Croix*, a radical Catholic journal published in Quebec City. See also ‘Un religieux canadien,’ *La controverse de guerre entre catholiques* (Québec: L’Association civile de recrutement de Québec, 1916?).

<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, the contents of this letter remain unknown as a copy was not included in the file. It may exist in the records of Military District No. 4 (where the French Canadian Recruiting Mission was headquartered) or, as it was sent to the bishops, in a diocesan archive. File 1982-1-87, Vol. 6600, RG24 (Dept. of National Defence), Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>24</sup> Not enough information is available from census records or other sources to provide a more detailed analysis of the group. While the letter copies do not contain the names of the priests, the information was obtained through *Le Canada Ecclesiastique* (1917). The eighteen parishes for which the information could be found had an average population of 1500.

paroissiens qui pourraient le faire de s'enroler comme soldat pour la grande guerre."<sup>25</sup>

A. Morin, the French-born Eudist priest at Ste-Anne-de-la-Pointe-au-Père (Diocese of Rimouski), noted that his parish of three hundred had already furnished three men to the army, two of whom had been killed at the front. While he could think of no one else who could enlist without leaving "une vide regrettable", he wrote, "Je pourrai me contenter d'entretenir mes paroissiens dans leur fidèle sympathie dans la cause des Alliés de l'Entente, et dans la prière et confiance dans la victoire."<sup>26</sup> From Arthabaska (Diocese of Nicolet), another priest wrote that the 178th Battalion had recruited in the area the previous year and everyone who wanted to enlist had already done so. He noted that, "Je ne suis pas hostile au recrutement volontaire, loin de là. J'admire les jeunes gens qui s'enrôlent et quand il m'arrive de les rencontre je leur dis:- 'Vous faites bien.' ... Il est juste que les Canadiens Français fassent leur part."<sup>27</sup> Although fragmentary, this evidence is suggestive of the fact that the attitudes of the clergy may well have been more supportive than previously acknowledged.

Given the strong and public role played by parish priests in French Canadian communities, it is unsurprising that the attitude of the local curé would have had an impact on local enlistments. It is, however, impossible to know whether, and to what extent, priests addressed the topic of military service or if they simply remained silent on the matter. The church had long been a supporter of agriculture, and in many rural

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<sup>25</sup> Letter from L.-N. Caron to Colonel Mignault, 31 January 1917, File 1982-1-87, Vol. 6600, RG24 (Dept. of National Defence), Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>26</sup> Letter from A. Morin to Colonel Mignault, 1917, File 1982-1-87, Vol. 6600, RG24 (Dept. of National Defence), Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from unknown priest (Arthabaska) to Colonel Mignault, 24 January 1917, File 1982-1-87, Vol. 6600, RG24 (Dept. of National Defence), Library and Archives Canada.

districts priests may have felt that the men were more necessary at home, supporting increased production, than overseas.<sup>28</sup> Even those who supported the war effort in these other ways may have felt that it was not the role of the church to spend its time promoting recruiting, unlike their English Canadian counterparts. At a Montreal recruiting rally in early May 1917, days before conscription was announced as the new government policy, Father Simard took the platform to tell listeners:

We are at war and it is our duty to take part in the burden, but before we can tell a man to enlist we must have the proper authorities indicate who should enlist. ... It is not the part of the clergy to go through the country preaching recruiting. ... What you may demand of the clergy is the expression of a fair opinion on the duty of the people.

While Simard went on to claim “This War is a just war in which our country is engaged. Can one hesitate to admit that we should take part in it?” this was not the resounding cry for enlistment that English Canada felt was needed.<sup>29</sup>

Framing the Ontario schools struggle in direct reference to the war going on overseas may also have played a role in Quebec’s low enlistment rate. References in *Le Devoir* and elsewhere to the oppression by ‘les Boches d’Ontario’, referring to ‘les blessés d’Ontario’, and calling the money sent from Quebec in support of French-language schools ‘les munitions de guerre’ would have made it seem that the more important struggle was the one within Canada, especially if references to the war overseas were limited to the prayers for peace mandated during the Mass or to charitable

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<sup>28</sup> For a discussion of the wide-ranging role of parish priests in French Canadian communities, see William Ryan, *The Clergy and Economic Growth in Quebec (1896-1914)* (Quebec: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 1966). For a discussion of the role of the parish in determining Catholic enlistments in English Canada, see McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 111-119.

<sup>29</sup> Father Simard quoted in “Quebec and the War,” *Catholic Record*, 19 May 1917, 4.

contributions made to alleviate the suffering it caused.<sup>30</sup> This played poorly outside of Quebec, where many were increasingly focussed on Canada's larger role in the world and understood the war as a global struggle for liberty and freedom.<sup>31</sup> This frustration was a long-simmering one. Already at an October 1915 recruiting meeting at St. Matthew's Presbyterian in Point-St-Charles, Quebec, Brigadier-General F.S. Meighen had been clear: "There will be no bilingual problem in the country if the Germans are not beaten — no question of English Schools or French Schools, for but one language will be taught, and that the German language. ... This war is not won yet, and Canada must send a constant stream of men to fill the gaps on the firing line."<sup>32</sup>

As the war dragged on, the focus on this domestic struggle seemed increasingly trivial to English Canadians. Assurances that French Canadians were willing to defend Canada if it were in danger rang increasingly hollow in communities whose sons were serving overseas or, increasingly, buried in one of the cemeteries just behind the front. The 24,000 casualties suffered by the CEF during the three months of fighting at the Somme had deeply affected those remaining at home; to fail the men at the front by not keeping them properly reinforced was unthinkable, even at the cost of increased tensions within Canada.<sup>33</sup> Nor was a compromise peace at this point something to be considered. In December 1916, the Allies summarily rejected German proposals for a negotiated

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<sup>30</sup> For an example of this kind of rhetoric, with quotations from Élie Latulippe (Ap. Vic. of Témiscamingue), see Henri Bourassa, "Les Boches d'Ontario," *Le Devoir*, 29 June 1915, 1. See also Armstrong, *Crisis of Quebec*, 91-98, 152-159; Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: 1914*, vol. 19 (Montréal: Montréal-Éditions, n.d.), 76-77, 84-94, 145-148; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 20:16-22, 64-72, 116-138; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 21:18-28, 36-37, 43-38, 51-64, 143.151.

<sup>31</sup> Bray, "Fighting as an Ally," 149-168; Brock Millman, *Polarity, Patriotism, and Dissent in the Great War in Canada, 1914-1919* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 52, 84-96.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in "News of the Churches," *Presbyterian*, 28 October 1915, 422-423.

<sup>33</sup> Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 100-105, 146.

peace as making peace while Belgium remained subjugated and German militarism was undefeated was an impossibility.<sup>34</sup> The editorialist of the *Presbyterian Witness* cautioned that, although war-weariness was understandable, “we must not lose sight of the issues at stake or shrink from any sacrifice which may still be necessary to rid the world of the greatest peril by which our Christian civilization has ever been threatened. ... What German guarantees would be worth the scrap of paper on which they were written?”<sup>35</sup>

As the process of national registration began on January 1, 1917, religious leaders across the country were among those urging men to fill out the registration cards. Distributed by the National Service Board the cards requested information about the respondent’s occupation, citizenship, health, and the number of dependants for which they were responsible. The government and Prime Minister Borden repeatedly offered reassurances that this registration was not a step toward conscription, but simply an attempt to survey the nation’s available manpower.<sup>36</sup> Since the outbreak of war, the Canadian war effort had been driven by the spirit of voluntarism and, in English Canada, urged on by justifications that emphasized the righteousness of the empire’s cause. In French Canada, the imperial rhetoric was largely absent but, while praying for peace and attempts to ease the suffering caused by the war characterized the response of the Roman

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<sup>34</sup> W.B. Fest, “British War Aims and German Peace Feelers during the First World War (December 1916-November 1918),” *The Historical Journal*, 15, no. 2 (1972): 289-290, 308; Esther Caukin Brunauer, “The Peace Proposals of December 1916-January 1917,” *The Journal of Modern History* 4, no. 4 (1932): 555-568; Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 58-60.

<sup>35</sup> “The Perils of a False Peace,” editorial, *Presbyterian Witness*, 20 January 1917.

<sup>36</sup> J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: The Story of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977), 44-45.

Catholic hierarchy, there were also strong assertions of loyalty to Canada and Britain.

Respect for authority and the rule of law were important Catholic teachings.<sup>37</sup>

These differing approaches to the war continued to characterize the churches' reactions to the government's request. Presbyterians, while approving of the decision to register men of military age, felt that this was not sufficient. "If we are to win a decisive triumph over [Prussian militarism] and save civilization from going down beneath the heel of pagan barbarism," warned the *Presbyterian Witness*, "every man and woman in the nation must be prepared to render some service to the nation" whether through munitions production, conservation of food and wealth, patriotic giving, or in other ways.<sup>38</sup> In the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, the seat of the Anglican Diocese of Quebec, C.R. Eardley-Wilmot told listeners:

No man worthy of his citizenship and who has any love for his country will neglect this plain duty [to accurately fill out and return the registration cards]. But it is most fitting that the first day of the week in which this is to be done should be a day of special prayer in connection with the War, for it serves to remind us once again both of the sacredness of the appeal which our Empire is making for the unselfish service of all at this time, and also of the fact that all our efforts ... are of no avail without the help of Almighty God, who is the only Giver of Victory.<sup>39</sup>

S.D. Chown, in a general letter to Methodists, grounded his appeal in a Social Gospel reading of the Bible:

To us, as representing one of the great Christian forces of the Dominion, the call [to national service] appears to be based upon the truth of God's Word. ... The Bible has no place for shirkers. 'If any man will not work, neither shall he eat.' ... It is immoral for any man to enjoy the blessings conferred

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<sup>37</sup> Mark McGowan, *Imperial Irish: Canada's Irish Catholics Fight the Great War, 1914-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 73-74.

<sup>38</sup> "National Service," editorial, *Presbyterian Witness*, 6 January 1917, 1.

<sup>39</sup> Eardly Wilmot, "Our Empire's Cause and the Peace Proposals," *Quebec Diocesan Gazette*, January 1917, pp. 7-10.

by the community and not contribute his utmost to its welfare. ... The National Service Movement also rests upon the Scripture, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven ...' If ever a war in all history was seeking first the kingdom of God, this is...<sup>40</sup>

The Catholic response in both English and French Canada emphasized the role of the government.<sup>41</sup> In the Diocese of London, which had a not insignificant francophone population, Bishop Michael Fallon ordered his clergy to explain that "this registration is not connected, directly or indirectly, with military conscription, and that this National Service is quite as much an obligation of Catholic loyalty as it is of patriotic citizenship."<sup>42</sup> Similar statements were expressed by Cardinal Louis-Nazaire Bégin in the Archdiocese of Québec, who urged his clergy to advise their parishioners to "répondre exactement aux questions posées, afin de se rendre aux désirs de l'autorité civile" as the request was "motivée par des raisons d'intérêt public et fait simplement appel à la bonne volonté des citoyens." He hoped that people would not look for "des fuites prétextes pour se soustraire au devoir qui incombe à tout bon citoyen."<sup>43</sup> In Montreal, Archbishop Bruchési called on the people of Quebec to answer the government "en toute liberté, sincèrement et loyalement." He called on them to set the example and "Faisons preuve de patriotisme éclairé; et conformément à l'enseignement et à la tradition de l'Église catholique, montrons une respectueuse déférence envers

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<sup>40</sup> S.D. Chown, letter to Methodist Church, "National Service," *Christian Guardian*, 3 Jan 1917, 2. cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:10; Matthew 6:33.

<sup>41</sup> See also McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 229-231.

<sup>42</sup> Michael Fallon, "Bishop Fallon Commends National Service," *Catholic Record*, 13 January 1917, 1.

<sup>43</sup> Louis-Nazaire Bégin, "Chronique diocésaine," *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 18 January 1917, 311-312.

l'autorité civile, agissant selon ses droits."<sup>44</sup> Bruchési, having been reassured by the government, insisted that registration was not a precursor to conscription.

The results of the registration were mixed when they were tabulated in June 1917. Approximately 80 percent of the population completed their National Service cards, and more than a third of potential recruits were found to be engaged in 'essential occupations'. But there also seemed to be a pool of several hundred thousand men who were neither engaged in essential work nor enlisting voluntarily for overseas service.<sup>45</sup> Recruiting continued and a special campaign was organized in Quebec by Postmaster General Pierre Blondin, who had taken on the responsibility of raising the 258th Battalion; Major-General François-Louis Lessard, Inspector General of the Canadian forces in eastern Canada; and several returned officers from the 22nd Battalion. The results were disappointing, however, with fewer than a hundred recruits raised during the campaign throughout the province.<sup>46</sup> Even the English Catholic press, which had been at pains not to show division with the church in French Canada,<sup>47</sup> was frank about the situation, admitting:

That the Province of Quebec has not taken its proportionate share in Canada's effort in the great War is a fact that would be useless to deny. ... There is need of plain speaking in the matter, for things have now come to pass when the peace of Canada and even the stability of Confederation are menaced. ... More than moderate success can hardly now be hoped for [from

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<sup>44</sup> Paul Bruchési, "Lettre ... relativement au 'Service national'," *Mandements, lettres pastorales, circulaires et autres documents publiés dans le Diocèse de Montréal depuis son érection*, vol. 15 (Montreal: Arbour & Dupont, 1919), 443-445. See also Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 22:12-14.

<sup>45</sup> Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 46.

<sup>46</sup> Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 22:49-50, 60, 62-64; Jean-Pierre Gagnon, *Le 22e bataillon (canadien-français), 1914-1919: Une étude socio-militaire* (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1986), 206-212.

<sup>47</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 10-17, 44-52, 98-103, 225-231, .

recruiting in Quebec], but even moderate success will be positively disappointing to some people.<sup>48</sup>

Nor was there any success with the Canadian Defence Force, which had been formed in hopes that men enlisting for home defence duties would free up other volunteers for the front.<sup>49</sup> Then came the battle of Vimy Ridge. It was celebrated immediately as a national victory at a time when such clear-cut triumphs were few and far between, but the cost of capturing the ridge made the manpower situation impossible to ignore. In four days of fighting, the four divisions of the Canadian Corps, fighting together for the first time, suffered a staggering 10,600 casualties.<sup>50</sup> Borden, who was in the United Kingdom for the Imperial War Conference at the time of the battle, visited Canadian troops and the wounded in hospitals. With the war seemingly no closer to ending and voluntary enlistments unable to replace the projected casualties, he returned to Canada convinced that conscription had become necessary.<sup>51</sup>

The year had begun with optimism. The war was far from won, but the fortress of Verdun had held out against German attacks, the Somme offensive had made some modest gains, the munitions factories were churning out millions of artillery shells, and the arrival of the millions in Kitchener's New Armies had swelled the ranks of the BEF. But in February 1917, the Germans had resumed their campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare and the failure of the grain harvest in South America led officials to worry about global food shortages. In Russia, a revolutionary government had seized

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<sup>48</sup> "Quebec and the War," *Catholic Record*, 19 May 1917, 4.

<sup>49</sup> Dennis, *Reluctant Warriors*, 24.

<sup>50</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, 245-265; Tim Cook, *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War 1917-1918* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2008), 93-140.

<sup>51</sup> Serge Durlinger, "Vimy's Consequence: The Montreal Anti-Conscription Disturbances, May to September 1917," in *Turning Point 1917: The British Empire at War*, edited by Douglas Delaney and Nikolas Gardner (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), 160; Nicholson, *Official History*, 340-343.

power and, on March 15, forced Tsar Nicholas II to abdicate, ending the Russian monarchy and throwing the country into turmoil. In Europe, Vimy had been one of the few bright spots of the spring campaigns, which had ground to a halt elsewhere along the front. The United States had declared war on the side of the Entente on April 6, ending its long period of neutrality and providing a new source of men and matériel, but it would take until 1918 before American troops could take to the field in large numbers.<sup>52</sup> So, despite his earlier statements that there would be no conscription, on May 18, Borden stood before Parliament announced:

All citizens are liable to military service for the defence of their country, and I conceive that the battle for Canadian liberty and autonomy is being fought today on the plains of France and Belgium. ... If the cause for which we fight is what we believe it to be ... I believe that the time has come when the authority of the State should be invoked to provide the reinforcements necessary to sustain the gallant men at the front ...<sup>53</sup>

Archbishop Bruchési wrote to the prime minister on May 22, very concerned about the consequences of the announcement. He noted the generous voluntary response of the country and wondered if the number of men raised by conscription would be enough to influence the end of the war.<sup>54</sup> Believing the previous statements that there would be no conscription, Bruchési and the other bishops had given their own assurances and urged people to fill out their National Service cards. Aside from his own sense of betrayal, Bruchési worried about the potential consequences of the announcement. He warned Borden that “L’excitation est grande dans le peuple. ... Dans la Province de

<sup>52</sup> Stevenson, *1914-1918*, 301-370; Keegan, *First World War*, 275-299, 382-343, 350-355.

<sup>53</sup> Robert Borden quoted in “Statements in Commons on Conscription Proposals,” *Toronto Globe*, 19 May 1917, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Bruchési wrote: “Mais, est-ce bien ce nombre de soldats qui influera définitivement sur le sort de la guerre? Ne croyez-vous pas vraiment que, étant donné notre population de sept million à peine, nous avons fait notre part généreusement?” Paul Bruchési to Robert Borden, 22 May 1917, R6113-8-4-E, Borden Correspondence, Library and Archives Canada.

Québec, en particulier, on pourra s'attendre à des soulèvements déplorables. On annonce des assemblées de protestation. Les émeutes ne seront pas improbables. Est-ce qu'on n'ira pas jusqu'à l'effusion du sang?" While Bruchési wanted "le triomphe de la justice et de la civilisation sur la cruauté et la barbarie", he feared lasting damage to "le bonheur et la paix du Canada."<sup>55</sup> He had reason to be anxious. There had already been clashes at recruiting meetings over the subject. On July 23, 1915, a recruiting meeting at Montreal's Parc Lafontaine had been broken up by a group of men throwing stones, who marched yelling "A bas la conscription!" to the Champ de Mars, where they held an impromptu rally. More rallies had been held in the subsequent days, but, as there was then no plan to implement conscription, the agitation had died down.<sup>56</sup> In March 1917, the Association catholique de la jeunesse canadienne-française (ACJC) had painted signs on Montreal buildings proclaiming "À bas la conscription — Down with Conscription" and more anti-conscription meetings had been held.<sup>57</sup> In May, recruiting meetings in Grand'Mère, Montreal, and Joliette had been disrupted by anti-conscriptionists.<sup>58</sup>

Now that conscription was to be a reality, however, the disturbances became increasingly widespread and much more serious, with the first demonstration in Montreal taking place on Wednesday, May 23 and carrying on through the weekend. Large crowds assembled in protest, there were fights between the anti-conscriptionists and returned soldiers, and the windows of pro-conscription newspapers were smashed.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Paul Bruchési to Robert Borden, 22 May 1917, 123399-123402, R6113-8-4-E, Borden Correspondence, Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>56</sup> Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 20:80-84; Armstrong, *Crisis of Quebec*, 110-112. For more on anti-war unrest in Quebec, see Millman, *Polarity, Patriotism, and Dissent*, 109-123.

<sup>57</sup> Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 22:40-44.

<sup>58</sup> Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 22:62-64.

<sup>59</sup> Durflinger, "Vimy's Consequence," 168-170.

Bruchési, concerned by the increasing civil disorder, issued an official call for moderation on May 25. In recognizing the seriousness of the situation, he appealed to his people “d’user de leurs droits de citoyens libres, dans la modération et dans le calme, et d’éviter tout acte, toute manifestation qui tourneraient nécessairement contre eux.” He did not ask for agreement with the government’s intentions, but rather called the faithful to petition in prayer that God would “éclairer et diriger ceux qui nous gouvernent, qu’il nous épargne les dissensions et les troubles et fasse régner parmi nous l’union et la paix.”<sup>60</sup> Demonstrations continued despite the appeal for calm,<sup>61</sup> and Bruchési wrote again to Borden on May 27. Although he had “dans la prière une confiance sans bornes,” he also felt it “un devoir de conscience” to write frankly to Borden. Conscription, Bruchési wrote, seemed “inopportun et malheureux” and “les soulèvements populaires” were proof enough of this. If the excesses of the crowds had to be put down by force, the result would be “au cœur des hommes des haines qui ne s’éteignent pas”.<sup>62</sup> Despite Bruchési’s words, however, the Military Service Act (MSA) was introduced to Parliament on June 11 and signed into law by the governor general on August 29. Each of these stages in the introduction of conscription were marked by further rioting and violence, particularly in Montreal.<sup>63</sup>

Like Bruchési, John Farthing, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, whose residence was only steps away from Philips Square in downtown Montreal, where some of the

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<sup>60</sup> Paul Bruchési, “Monseigneur L’archevêque recommande la modération,” *La Presse*, 25 May 1917, 1.

<sup>61</sup> Durflinger, “Vimy’s Consequences,” 170-171.

<sup>62</sup> Paul Bruchési to Robert Borden, 27 May 1917, 123403-123405, R6113-8-4-E, Borden Correspondence, Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>63</sup> Durflinger, “Vimy’s Consequences,” 162, 171-183.

most violent protests took place, recognized the critical situation. In his September diocesan message he wrote:

Amidst the world crisis Canada is facing a great crisis of her own, a consequence of the war. Never was there the need for wiser statesmanship in our leaders and cooler heads on our people. While this applies to all Canadians, it particularly applies here in the Province of Quebec, which will be the storm centre. ... Unfortunately many are seeking to make the struggle a question of race and religion. ... [T]he true patriot will do all in his power to unify.<sup>64</sup>

But, unlike Bruchési, Farthing, whose only son had enlisted in 1916, was convinced that conscription of men and wealth was necessary, identifying that as the true issue. He continued:

We must do all in our power as a Dominion to uphold the righteousness of the cause for which we and our allies contend; we must heartily support the men who have gone and are now facing the horrors of war for us ... In such a struggle, when the freedom of all in the Dominion is at stake, it is only right that all should share equally the responsibility and the risks.<sup>65</sup>

Others, more distant from Quebec, were less understanding of French Canadian opposition. The editorialist of the *Presbyterian and Westminster* tried to be fair-minded but could not understand why Quebec was opposed to conscription, writing:

One can understand the Nationalist position, that Canadians should not take part in purely British wars, but only those in which the safety or welfare of Canada is involved. But surely by this time it must be plain to all that the most vital interests of Canada are bound up in the issue of the war and the only question is how we can carry it on most effectively to a just conclusion.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> John Farthing, "The Bishop's Message," *Montreal Churchman*, September 1917, 3. For a more thorough discussion of the conciliation in the Protestant press during the conscription crisis, see Gordon Heath, "The Protestant Denominational Press and the Conscription Crisis, 1917-1918," *CCHA Historical Studies* 78 (2012): 27-46.

<sup>65</sup> John Farthing, "The Bishop's Message," *Montreal Churchman*, September 1917, 3.

<sup>66</sup> "A Crisis in Canada," *Presbyterian and Westminster*, 7 June 1917, 643-643.

English Canadian Catholics found themselves caught between their steadfast support for the war, their displeasure with the protests taking place in Montreal and elsewhere, and their desire not to cause further division from their French-speaking co-religionists, even as they distanced themselves from their position.<sup>67</sup> Accusations that the Catholic Church was behind the opposition to the war in French Canada stirred up anti-Catholic feeling and risked making the conscription question a potentially divisive religious matter. Although the most vehement anti-conscriptionists had no particular association with the Catholic church, the calls for armed opposition to conscription and the dynamiting of the Cartierville residence of Lord Atholstan, owner of the pro-conscription *Montreal Star*, on August 9, 1917, raised fears that there would be Catholic violence elsewhere.<sup>68</sup> Nicholas Watson, an Anglican lay reader at St. Aiden's in Palmer, Saskatchewan (Diocese of Qu'Appelle), recounted that, "We are just on the borders of a strong French Roman Catholic settlement [Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan]: the French Canadians under pressure from the priests are all appealing against conscription. ... Fortunately, arms and ammunition have been gathered up by the mounted police, but it is said that quite a quantity is hidden."<sup>69</sup> In Brandon, Manitoba, Hartly Biggs, a Baptist minister, accused local Catholics of stealing three railway cars of ammunition and distributing it amongst themselves.<sup>70</sup> These were relatively isolated incidents that appear to have gone no further than accusation and had little grounding in fact, but the English-

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<sup>67</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 10-13, 16-18, 98-104, 226-236, 266-271.

<sup>68</sup> Serge Durflinger points out the relatively limited role in the anti-conscription movement played by Henri Bourassa, whose sense of nationalism was explicitly tied to his Catholicism, and highlights the much larger role played by younger and more extreme leaders. See Durflinger, "Vimy's Consequence," 166-167.

<sup>69</sup> Nicholas Watson, "Palmer, Sask.," *Occasional Papers of the Qu'Appelle Association*, No. 124 (Spring 1918) 23-24, R-705, Archives of the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle.

<sup>70</sup> "Demand Apology," *Catholic Record*, 13 October 1917, 1.

speaking Catholic bishops felt the need to speak out about the patriotic record of Canadian Catholics. Neil McNeil, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Toronto, gave an interview to the *Toronto Star* to explicitly address the loyalty of the Catholic church to the empire. He asserted:

Today the loyalty of the Catholic soldier and of Catholic populations is absolutely essential to the continued existence of the British Empire, and people are so confident that this loyalty can be depended on that they play with side issues which seem superficially to indicate that there is a difference between Catholics and Protestants in the War. There is no difference. We are all involved in the same issue. ... Thirty years ago we all held in Canada the opinion which still prevails in parts of Quebec. We looked upon ourselves as British colonists depending on the Empire for defence against any public enemy. ... The real test of loyalty is obedience to the law. No part of Canada has yet failed in this test.<sup>71</sup>

Another factor influencing people's perception of the Roman Catholic Church at home and abroad in relation to the war was the activity of Pope Benedict XV in trying to bring about a negotiated peace. Although the Vatican undertook significant humanitarian activity during the war for the benefit of prisoners of war and the many people displaced in Belgium, Lithuania, Poland, Syria, and elsewhere, the pope was widely seen as favouring Germany because of his failure to speak out against the worst of its excesses and for continuing to suggest a negotiated peace.<sup>72</sup> Benedict had taken advantage of his position to speak of peace since the beginning of the war, but in the summer of 1917 he made another effort, this time with a more definite basis for negotiations. Directed to the leaders of the belligerent nations, the text of the note leaked out into the press in mid-August and was widely published, even before the

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<sup>71</sup> Neil McNeil, "Not Religious but Racial," *Catholic Record*, 17 November 1917, 1.

<sup>72</sup> See John Pollard, *Benedict XV: The Unknown Pope and the Pursuit of Peace* (London: Continuum, 1999) 112-116; Francis Latour, "L'action du Saint-Siège en faveur des prisonniers de guerre pendant la Première guerre mondiale," *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains* 253.1 (2014): 43-56.

United States had received an official copy of the note through diplomatic channels. The diplomatic reaction, spearheaded by American President Woodrow Wilson, was disappointing for Benedict, who had hoped that the various governments might finally be open to negotiation.<sup>73</sup> The English-language press in Canada, which was steadfast in its position that conscription was necessary to support the Allied war effort, rejected any notion of a premature peace. The *Toronto Mail*, in an opinion piece reprinted in other newspapers, pointedly wondered “Why should the pope at this time put forth suggestions for ending the war which are greatly favorable to Germany ... It is because of Austria, the most powerful of the Roman Catholic nations.”<sup>74</sup> The *Christian Guardian* similarly accused the pope of proposing ‘German terms’ and asserted, “The fact that the present proposals emanate from the Vatican makes but little difference. ... We are tired of war, but we are not so tired of it that we are prepared to submit to a German-dictated peace. ... [W]e do not want and do not intend to have a peace which by any possibility can be tortured into the semblance of a German victory ...”<sup>75</sup>

In fact, the text of the papal note was relatively balanced and looked to provide grounds for negotiation which might bring about an end to the war. It began with a re-statement of papal impartiality and of Benedict’s desire to do as much possible good, without distinguishing for nationality or religion and omitting nothing which might

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<sup>73</sup> See Pollard, *Unknown Pope*, 126-128; Dragan Zivojinovic, “Robert Lansing’s Comments on the Pontifical Peace Note of August 1, 1917,” *Journal of American History* 56, no. 3 (1969): 556-571; John Snell, “Benedict XV, Wilson, Michaelis, and German Socialism,” *Catholic Historical Review* 37, no. 2 (1951): 151-178; C.J. Herber, “Eugenio Pacelli’s Mission to Germany and the Papal Peace Proposals of 1917,” *Catholic Historical Review* 65, no. 1 (1979): 20-48.

<sup>74</sup> “What Lies Behind Pope’s Peace Move,” *Toronto Mail* reprinted in *Calgary Herald*, 31 August 1916, 6. France was not considered a Catholic nation in the same ways as Austria because of the anti-clerical position of the Republican government.

<sup>75</sup> “The Pope’s Peace Proposals,” *Christian Guardian*, 22 August 1917, 5.

contribute to “une paix ‘juste et durable’.”<sup>76</sup> The proposals, which Benedict hoped might form the basis for negotiation, began with the hope that “la force morale du droit” could be substituted for the force of arms, with a reduction of military strengths, the establishment of international arbitration to prevent further conflicts, and freedom of the seas. By 1917, it was very clear that the Allies would accept no peace without the restoration of the territory occupied by Germany, and the peace note specifically named Belgium and captured France as territories which would need to be returned before peace would be possible. But the exchange of territory was to be reciprocal, with the Allies restoring captured German colonies. Other territorial disputes were to be given due consideration in “le même esprit d’équité et de justice” so that they might serve as the base for “la future réorganisation des peuples” and would not serve as sites of future conflict.<sup>77</sup> With the war seeming more and more “comme un massacre inutile”, Benedict recognized “l’honneur des armes” and reminded the leaders that upon them depended “le repose et la joie d’innombrables familles, la vie de milliers de jeunes gens, la félicité en un mot des peuples, auxquels vous avez le devoir absolu d’en procurer le bienfait.”<sup>78</sup> Benedict concluded that he was “uni dans la prière et dans la pénitence à toutes les âmes fidèles qui souprenent après la paix” in imploring the Holy Spirit to give the leaders light and counsel which would lead to peace.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Official versions of the peace note are available in French and Italian. Benedict XV, “Aux chefs des peuples belligérants,” Apostolic exhortation, 1 August 1917. Available online at [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/fr/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_ben-xv\\_exh\\_19170801\\_des-le-debut.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/fr/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xv_exh_19170801_des-le-debut.html)

<sup>77</sup> Benedict XV, “Aux chefs des peuples belligérants.” Benedict’s suggested terms can be compared with Wilson’s more famous “Fourteen Points” of January 1918 and to Lord Landsdowne’s letter revising the Allied war aims of December 1917. See, for example, “La lettre Landsdowne,” *L’Action catholique*, 4 December 1917, 1.

<sup>78</sup> Benedict XV, “Aux chefs des peuples belligérants.”

<sup>79</sup> Benedict XV, “Aux chefs des peuples belligérants.”

The tension mounted for English-speaking Catholics between their loyalty to the pope and their ideological commitment to the war effort. The editorialist of the *Catholic Record* addressed this directly in his discussion of the peace note, writing,

Our object, it has been repeatedly stated, is to destroy Prussian militarism, not to crush the German people; to make the world safe for democracy against the inordinate ambitions of autocratic rule. But Prussian militarism, class privilege and military domination can be destroyed utterly and effectively only by the people concerned. ... No, in spite of the suggestive influence of the parrot repetition that the War must go on and on until complete military victory on the field is achieved, we do not believe that it is necessary, or that Prussianism can be more effectively beaten than it will be when the Central Powers accept the bases proposed by the Pope for the opening of negotiations which, God grant, will bring peace to a war-worn and war-weary world.<sup>80</sup>

English-speaking Catholics also responded to the accusations of partisanship directed at the pope by the non-Catholic media. Toronto's Archbishop Neil McNeil published a pamphlet, *The Pope and the War*, which presented a careful analysis of the political position and activities of the pope, pointing out that "Whether right or wrong in judgement, [Catholics in the warring countries] are convinced of the justice of their respective countries' cause ... If the Pope condemned either group of belligerents ... he would thereby place millions of Catholics in the agonizing necessity of choosing between their Church and their country ..."<sup>81</sup> There was no option other than neutrality and "attempts to lessen the horrors of the war."<sup>82</sup> This well-circulated pamphlet helped convince the *Toronto Globe* to rethink its attacks.<sup>83</sup> Other Catholics, less well-known than McNeil, also wrote letters to the editor in defence of the record of Canadian

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<sup>80</sup> "The Pope's Peace Proposal," *Catholic Record*, 25 August 1917, 4.

<sup>81</sup> Neil McNeil, *The Pope and the War*, (Toronto: n.p., 1918), 3. See also McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 204-207.

<sup>82</sup> McNeil, *The Pope and the War*, 5.

<sup>83</sup> McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 207.

Catholics. Following an unfavourable article which accused the pope of taking advantage of the war to regain control over the lost Papal States,<sup>84</sup> Father George O'Toole, a Catholic priest from Cantley, Quebec, accused the *Ottawa Citizen* of printing "an unqualified insult to your Catholic reader" that was "calculated to stir up the hatred of Protestant against Catholic."<sup>85</sup> Anna T. Sallier, another self-identified Catholic, objected to the blame given to "that old bogey of the Jesuits" by the article and cited the positive record of various Catholic institutions and individuals during the war.<sup>86</sup> As Mark McGowan notes, English-speaking Catholics were constantly forced to provide proof that one could be a good Catholic and a loyal Canadian.<sup>87</sup> The ways in which English Catholics rejected the peace note, while still asserting their loyalty and commitment to the war effort, were reactions against pre-existing anti-Catholic sentiment, but also came from the need to differentiate themselves from French Canada at this critical juncture.

Given the extent to which the responses of the Catholic church in French Canada were shaped by papal appeals for prayer and charity and the loyalty felt to Rome, the response to the peace note in French Canada was largely positive. In Western Canada, *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface*, the periodical for the largely francophone Diocese of Saint-Boniface, urged its readers to "Redoublons de prières et d'instances auprès de Dieu pour que les efforts du Père commun des fidèles soient couronnés de succès et que

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<sup>84</sup> George Herron, "Enemy Peace Influences," from *The Menace of Peace*, printed in *Ottawa Citizen*, 1 September 1917, 12.

<sup>85</sup> George O'Toole, letter to editor, *Ottawa Citizen*, 5 September 1917, 12. O'Toole and the *Citizen* engaged in debate over the question in the subsequent days. See *Ottawa Citizen* editorial pages 6 September 1917 through 13 September 1917.

<sup>86</sup> Anna T. Sallier, letter to editor, *Ottawa Citizen*, 7 September 1917, 14.

<sup>87</sup> Mark McGowan, *Imperial Irish*.

la paix soit enfin rendue à l'univers."<sup>88</sup> In Montreal, Archbishop Bruchési defended the pope's right to call for peace, as his "attitude depuis le commencement de la guerre ... l'influence qu'il a exercicée plusieurs fois en faveur des prisonniers ... lui donnent assurément le droit d'intervenir dans l'horrible conflit mondial..."<sup>89</sup> *L'Action catholique*, which was understood to serve as an unofficial publication for Cardinal Bégin, made the telling editorial observation that "En relisant ... la lettre du Pape ... en s'apercevra que les objections, et les reproches même, qu'on lui faisait, doivent être attribués, moins au document lui-même, qu'aux préjugés et aux passions particularistes avec lesquels on a voulu la lire ou on n'a pas pu s'empêcher de la lire."<sup>90</sup> There were those in English Canada for whom nothing short of a German defeat, which would represent the triumph of liberty and justice, would be enough to justify the losses of the previous three years and this drove the reception of the peace note. As one *Montreal Gazette* editorial declared,

To accept the terms of the Vatican is to ... leave Germany the dominant military power of Europe, to confirm autocracy as against democracy, and to make the sacrifices of the Allies a vain thing. ... No peace terms are acceptable which leave the world 'as you were.' Democracy must be made to rule. Militarism must cease to exist as the governing force. The defeat of Germany can alone accomplish this end ...<sup>91</sup>

But in French Canada, which was not driven by the same dominant narrative of patriotic nationalism as English-speaking Canada and whose outlook was more closely tied to Catholic internationalism, the peace note was read through a different frame of

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<sup>88</sup> "Nouvel appel du pape en faveur de la paix," *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface*, 1 September 1917, 255.

<sup>89</sup> Paul Bruchési quoted in "Les propositions de paix du Saint-Père," *L'Action catholique*, 15 August 1917, p. 6

<sup>90</sup> "L'intervention du Pape en faveur de la paix," editorial, *L'Action catholique*, 21 August 1917, p. 1

<sup>91</sup> "Peace Proposals," *Montreal Gazette*, 17 August 1917, 8. See similarly "Peace and the Pope," *Ottawa Citizen*, 16 August 1917, 12.

reference. And, in light of the ongoing issue of conscription, the rejection of the pope's terms also provided those, like Henri Bourassa, further opportunity to snipe at the Borden government. In one of a series of editorials published in *Le Devoir*, Bourassa was scornful of the insistence on the absolute right of democracies, particularly in light of the Canadian domestic political situation in the summer of 1917. Quoting President Wilson's response to the pope, which served as the general Allied response, Bourassa wrote:

S'il y a, dans le monde entier, un pays soumis à 'l'actuel domination d'une vaste organisation militaire, dirigée par un gouvernement irresponsable', c'est bien le Canada. ... Et c'est ce parlement sans mandat, ce gouvernement sans autorité morale, maintenu à coups de force arbitraire, qui impose la conscription, contrairement aux engagements le plus précis des ministres et à la volonté manifeste de l'immense majorité de la population.<sup>92</sup>

Bourassa was not entirely incorrect about the Borden government having no mandate. The term of Parliament had been unanimously extended in February 1915 in an effort to avoid a wartime election, but the conscription issue had shattered the fragile political detente and ruled out any further extension of Parliament, forcing an election before the end of 1917. Before the introduction of the MSA, Borden had approached the Leader of the Opposition, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, long-time head of the Liberal Party, with the offer of a national or 'union' government, offering to share the Cabinet, but Laurier's opposition to conscription, at least without a referendum, had made any such agreement impossible. The Conservative majority, bolstered by a number of English-speaking, pro-conscription Liberals, was enough to pass the MSA and two additional election

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<sup>92</sup> Henri Bourassa, "Le Pape et le Président," *Le Devoir*, 31 August 1917, 1. For more on Bourassa's reaction to papal peace efforts, see Geoff Keelan, "Catholic Neutrality: The Peace of Henri Bourassa," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 22 no. 1 (2011): 116-122.

measures. These were the Military Voters Act, which enfranchised all those serving overseas with the CEF regardless of age, nationality, or gender, and the Wartime Elections Act, which enfranchised the female relatives of soldiers at the same time as it disenfranchised conscientious objectors and those from ‘enemy’ nations naturalized since 1902. The measures were intended to ensure support for conscription, but they also reflected the view that those who were unwilling to bear the burdens of citizenship should be deprived of their voice in choosing the government.<sup>93</sup> As English-speaking pro-conscription Liberals joined Conservatives under the Union banner to oppose the anti-conscription ‘Laurier Liberals’, the election campaign leading up to the December 17 vote would reveal the deep divide running through the country.

Although the churches had traditionally avoided overt pronouncements on what they considered political matters, particularly during election periods, the fact that the Union election was, in effect, a referendum on conscription meant that some saw the issues at stake as moral, rather than political. The 16,000 casualties suffered by the Canadian Corps in October and November during the taking of Passchendaele made it even more abundantly clear that reinforcement of the troops at the front was impossible under the current voluntary system.<sup>94</sup> As a result, clergymen in English Canada took to the pulpit and the press to make their views widely known. In an essay published in the December 6, 1917, issue of the *Canadian Churchman*, Toronto’s Archdeacon H.J. Cody

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<sup>93</sup> Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 67-73; Amy Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objection in Canada during the First World War*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 3, 6-8, 32-34, 60-62, 120, 126, 131, 162; John Herd Thompson, *The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918* (Toronto: McClelland and Stuart, 1978), 80-81, 126-127, 143-144.

<sup>94</sup> Nicholson, *Official History*, 311-327; Cook, *Shock Troops*, 309-372; Dennis, *Reluctant Warriors*, 39-40.

offered justification for his support of the Union government based on the issues of the war. He wrote:

Is this OUR war? ... Are our shores being defended in France and Belgium? Are more men urgently needed? To all these questions an emphatic affirmative is the only answer. Then Canada must stay in the war, bear her share of the struggle and sacrifice, and see that the price which her sons at the front are paying is not paid in vain. And to accomplish this end there is absolutely no alternative to the Military Service Act. To ensure this the Union Government must be supported. ...

It must be supported ... if as a nation, we are definitely, determinedly, unitedly and practically to renew our consecration to the great cause, and to proclaim to our friends and foes alike the unbroken resolve of the free young Dominion to remain in the fight for freedom, justice, mercy, humanity, civilization and Christianity even unto the end.<sup>95</sup>

Cody was not alone in supporting the Unionists as numerous bishops also wrote letters expressing their support.<sup>96</sup> In London, Michael Fallon, the Roman Catholic Bishop of London, penned his own letter, releasing it in the press to explain his stance in the election. He explained:

... I feel it an obligation of conscience and a duty of citizenship to make plain my own personal position and to influence ... those who have any confidence in my deliberate judgment. ... Were I not convinced that the issue, the dominating issue, is far and away beyond and above party politics, I should never entertain a thought of breaking silence during an electoral campaign. ... In the approaching election the issue which dwarfs all others is Canada's effective continued participation in the war. ... Can any Canadian honestly deny that the defeat of the Conscription Government would mean a real slackening of our purpose?<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Emphasis and typography original. H.J. Cody, "Archdeacon Cody Appeals for Union," *Canadian Churchman*, 8 December 1917, 777.

<sup>96</sup> See John Cragg Farthing, "The Bishop's Message," *Montreal Churchman*, September 1917, 3; "Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada," *Canadian Churchman*, 11 October 1917, 651-652; "Our Bishops and the Union Government," *Canadian Churchman*, 6 December 1917, 776, 780; David Williams, "From a letter from the Bishop of Huron to his clergy," *Canadian Churchman*, 13 December 1917, 802.

<sup>97</sup> Michael Fallon, "Right Reverend M.F. Fallon on Election Issue," *Catholic Record*, 15 December 1917, 1. See also "Unprecedented Political Situation," editorial, *Catholic Record*, 29 December 1917, 4; "The Right Reverend Dr. Fallon's Letter to the Press," editorial, *Catholic Record*, 29 December 1917, 4.

While the letters of Fallon and the Anglican bishops were greeted warmly by the press, despite the traditional bugbear of episcopal interference in political matters, these pronouncements were not universally welcomed and there were complaints about the extent to which clergymen were seen to be interfering with the free exercise of democracy. This was particularly true of the Methodists. S.D. Chown, the Methodist General Superintendent, had written an open letter to Methodists on their duty in the election and their obligation to the troops at the front. In it, he told Methodists that

At the present time the supreme issue of winning the war so dominates the whole of Canada's present and future life, and will so affect the relation of our country to the world at large, that the old modes of political thought should be entirely superseded by loftier conceptions of patriotism ... This is a redemptive war, and its success depends entirely upon the height of sacrifice to which our people can ascend. It is under this conviction that ministers of the gospel feel in duty bound to enter the political arena. ... If it were right to enter into this war at all, and we all believe it was right, then it is right to continue in it until the end with all the power and resources we can commend.<sup>98</sup>

But, in Edmonton, prominent Methodists who objected to the position taken by Chown published their own open letter, writing "We have no quarrel with Dr. Chown in any private rights as a citizen and expressing himself as such, but as Methodists we do object to the prostitution of his high office ... in order to get political preferment for any party, whether Liberal or Conservative."<sup>99</sup> The *Christian Guardian* was criticized for printing several editorials strongly supporting the Unionists, with at least one letter-writer calling for the resignation the Executive Committee of the Board of Social Service and Evangelism, which had released its own statement urging people to vote for Union

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<sup>98</sup> S.D. Chown, "An Open Letter on the Duty of the Hour," *Christian Guardian*, 12 December 1917, 7-8. See also "Toronto Ministerial Association and the Union Government," *Christian Guardian*, 12 December 1917, 2.

<sup>99</sup> "Methodists Enter Protest on Chown," *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 15 December 1917, 6.

candidates.<sup>100</sup> The *Christian Guardian* also lost a number of readers over their political stance.<sup>101</sup> The Presbyterian leadership opted not to release a statement on the election, although some presbyteries and district meetings chose to address the question and the *Presbyterian and Westminster* carried an editorial offering its support of the Unionists because it was the only way of maintaining “the safety and honour of Canada, and — so far as Canada can contribute to it — the safety of the Empire and the freedom of the world.”<sup>102</sup>

In their local communities, less prominent clergymen also had to determine whether or not to speak out about the election, sometimes knowingly risking their positions to do so. One such local Methodist wrote to the editor of the *Christian Guardian*, hoping for help in determining his “duty as a Christian minister.” He wrote that he “would rather bury myself than be a traitor ... to my conscience, my sense of debt to the men who died for me in France and Flanders, and to God my Father,” but worried about the response of his congregation and Quarterly Board for overtly preaching support for the Union government.<sup>103</sup> The letter-writer was right to be worried about the potential for congregational disturbances. It was reported that, in one Ontario town, the Methodist pastor’s decision to speak in favour of the Union government descended into chaos as a “leading man in the congregation expressed his dissent by rising in his seat and starting to go out.” When he was hissed by another

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<sup>100</sup> See “The Union Government’s Policy,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 24 October 1917, 6; “Canada’s Great Day of Destiny,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 28 December 1917, 5; “After the Battle,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 19 December 1917, 5; W.T. Mossop, letter to editor, “Doesn’t Like Their Action,” *Christian Guardian*, 19 December 1917, 2.

<sup>101</sup> See “Please Stop My Paper,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 2 January 1918, 6.

<sup>102</sup> “The Church and the Elections,” *Presbyterian and Westminster*, 13 December 1917, 557.

<sup>103</sup> ‘Honour,’ letter to editor, *Christian Guardian*, 5 December 1917, 2.

congregant, “he turned and with all his force threw his hymn-book at the head of the man who had hissed him. This did not end the disturbance, for a lady in the audience expressed her opinion audibly, whereupon her neighbour in the pew in front of her turned about and slapped her in the face.”<sup>104</sup> It is not reported if the pastor’s address went ahead after this imbroglio.

In Quebec, while the worst of the anti-conscription violence had died down after the arrest of the ringleaders, the election campaign was not free from violence. On November 11, a campaign meeting in Saint-Anselme for Albert Sévigny, the Minister of Inland Revenue and one of the few French Canadian ministers in the Union Cabinet, was interrupted by revolver shots and hurled stones, ending with smashed windows.<sup>105</sup> A few days later in Westmount, another meeting was disrupted and a group of students from Laval University burned Sévigny in effigy. Meetings for Charles Doherty, Herbert Ames, and other Union candidates were also broken up and the candidates prevented from speaking.<sup>106</sup> Throughout the campaign, *L’Action catholique*, while continuing to urge citizens to do their duty of conscience in expressing their opposition to conscription, condemned violence and called for calm, even in the face of attacks by the English-language press. On December 1, the editorial explained that “la seule manoeuvre” of the Union campaign was “d’ameuter contre la province de Québec le

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<sup>104</sup> “Table Talk,” *Christian Guardian*, 24 January 1918, 78.

<sup>105</sup> For more on Sévigny and his position, see Réal Bélanger, “Albert Sévigny et la participation des canadiens français à la Grande Guerre,” *Revue internationale d’histoire militaire* 54 (1982): 86-102.

<sup>106</sup> J. Castell Hopkins, *Canadian Annual Review, 1917* (Toronto: Canadian Annual Review, Ltd., 1918), 608-609; Armstrong, *Crisis of Quebec*, 201-209.

reste du pays. ... Restons calmes et nous aurons brisé entre les mains des adversaires la seule arme qu'ils possèdent contre nous."<sup>107</sup>

Although the English-language press repeatedly equated a vote for Laurier to a vote for Bourassa and the Kaiser, the Liberal campaign was not for an end to Canada's participation in the war, but rather for keeping Canada's commitment to the war in line with the nation's resources and for a referendum on conscription to determine whether the law should be fully implemented or repealed.<sup>108</sup> *L'Action catholique* was careful to point this out in the days before the election, writing, "Les deux adversaires actuellement en présence dans l'arène électorale sont unanimes dans leur volonté d'aider l'Angleterre et ses alliés. ... Seulement depuis quelques mois ils diffèrent d'opinion sur la nature de ces moyens." But the same editorial was highly critical of the way the Unionist campaign had been run, writing:

Mais aux milieu du cataclysme mondial; au moment où chacun doit non seulement faire son mieux et s'imposer des sacrifices personnels, au moment où tous doivent s'appliquer à maintenir la communauté de sentiments et de volontés seule capable de donner aux efforts toute leur valeur, jeter dans les esprits des germes de défiance, amener les citoyens les uns contre les autres, et soulever une partie du pays contre l'autre, c'est faire un acte criminel.<sup>109</sup>

For a people already angry about its treatment by the English-speaking provinces on the question of education, the harsh election treatment and refusal to countenance the French Canadian position only widened the growing chasm between the two parts of the country.

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<sup>107</sup> "Du calme," editorial, *L'Action catholique*, 1 December 1917, 1. See also "L'isolement," editorial, *L'Action catholique*, 5 November 1917, 1; "Parlons donc raison," editorial, *L'Action catholique*, 12 December 1917, 1. See also Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 22:168-171, 190-197.

<sup>108</sup> See "La déclaration Borden," editorial, *L'Action catholique*, 22 November 1917, 1; Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 22:192-193.

<sup>109</sup> "Parlons donc raison," *L'Action catholique*, 12 December 1917, 1.

On December 18, when the civil election returns were issued, the result was a clear Union victory. The strong and public statements of support for the Unionists from many of the English-speaking bishops and clergy may not have translated into the wholehearted support of their congregants, but, when all the votes were counted, the Union Government won 153 seats to the eighty-two, mostly in Quebec, won by the Liberals.<sup>110</sup> This was a clear mandate for the Military Service Act, which had been in operation since the first class of men (single men between the ages of twenty and thirty-four) had been required to register between October 13 and November 10, 1917. The results of this registration also made clear the fact that most of the men who had not already enlisted felt that they had reasons not to do so; of the 404,395 men who had reported for registration (another 70,000 failed to appear), 380,510 requested exemptions.<sup>111</sup>

The election had divided the country along linguistic lines, with French Canadians voting overwhelmingly against the Unionists. The editor of the *Catholic Record*, despite the paper's support for the war effort and the Union government, was one of those concerned about the repercussions this might have for national unity, writing, "In the opinion of many, the result of the election is the greatest thing that has happened in Canadian history; others may look on it as a disaster. Few will deny ... that it creates a situation calling for wise, prudent, and firm statesmanship."<sup>112</sup> In the Quebec provincial

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<sup>110</sup> Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 76-78; Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 139, 142, 158-160; Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 163-180, 190-191; Nicholson, *Official History*, 346-347; Thompson, *The Harvests of War*, 122-146. Voter turnout was estimated at 75%, the highest of the period — see Elections Canada, "Voter Turnout at Federal Elections and Referendums," online at <http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=ele&dir=turn&document=index&lang=e> For a riding by riding breakdown of the election results, use Parliament of Canada, "History of Federal Ridings Since 1867," online at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/FederalRidingsHistory/HFER.asp>

<sup>111</sup> Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 83-85.

<sup>112</sup> "Unprecedented Political Situation," editorial, *Catholic Record*, 29 December 1917, 4.

legislature, frustration over the ongoing schools question and the election came to a head and, on December 21, Joseph-Napoléon Francoeur, the representative from Lotbinière, presented a motion expressing that “la province de Québec serait disposée à rompre le pacte fédératif de 1867 si, dans les autres provinces, on croit qu’elle est un obstacle à l’union, au progrès et au développement du Canada.”<sup>113</sup> While the reference to the breaking up of Confederation was understood by some to be a threat of secession on the part of Quebec, this airing of grievances also caused people to reflect on national unity and the future of the country. Even if English Canadians remained less conciliatory than Francoeur might have hoped, there was still a certain recognition that French Canadians could not be expected to do all the work of reconciliation. In an editorial the *Christian Guardian* expressed a hope that both sides would be able to put the past behind them “to make a really new beginning in our national life. ... But if we are to have peace and good-will in Canada for years to come, Quebec will have to do her share to bring it about. And in honesty and fairness we oughtn’t to ask her to do more than her share.”<sup>114</sup>

The French-language Catholic press, while acknowledging the racial and religious bitterness displayed in the election campaign that had prompted the motion, sought to remind readers that French Canadians still had an important part to play in

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<sup>113</sup> Quoted in René Castonguay, “Un bluff politique, 1917: La motion Francoeur,” *Cap-aux-Diamants* 53 (1998): 22. See also Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 22:211-214. Francoeur was not the first to question the breakup of Confederation. A call for an independent Quebec had been published on June 9, 1917, in *La Croix*, a nominally Catholic journal, but the radical views of this paper were completely out of step with the more widely circulated French-language periodicals, whether secular or Catholic.

<sup>114</sup> “Quebec and the Future,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 9 January 1918, 6. See also Edith Luke, “Montreal Letter,” *Christian Guardian*, 9 January 1918, 15-16; “The Francoeur Motion and Secession,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 30 January 1918, 6; “Quebec and the Dominion,” editorial, *Presbyterian and Westminster*, 31 January 1918, 95; “The French in Canada and the Church’s Task,” editorial, *Presbyterian Record*, March 1918, 79-80.

Confederation.<sup>115</sup> In a series of editorials denouncing the Francoeur motion as inopportune and expressing regret at its introduction, *L'Action catholique* found a bright spot in the unity displayed by French Canada in the election results, which would allow them to speak freely against “aux visées impérialistes, aux rêves fous et aux projets anti-nationaux du cabinet Union” on questions that affected all Canadians.<sup>116</sup> From Trois-Rivières, Joseph Barnard, the editor of *Bien Public*, wrote that, despite the election results and animosity:

Si dans une heure aussi grave, le peuple du Canada a pu se laisser égarer de la sorte, il est plus que temps de chercher d'où vient le mal. ... Le rôle que notre province de Québec reste libre de remplir pour le meilleur intérêt de la confédération, n'est pas terminé. La tâche comporte encore assez de grandeur et de patriotisme pour ne pas cesser d'être belle.<sup>117</sup>

As the year ended, Canadians were left reflecting on the nation's commitment to the war effort. Having framed the war as a struggle for fundamental principles and sent their sons overseas to fight in their defence, English Canadians were determined take whatever measures might be necessary to sustain that effort until the end. Hugh Strang, writing from Goderich, Ontario, was one of those heartened by the election results as they left “no room for doubt in any quarter that Canada as a whole is emphatically in favour of continuing the war vigorously and effectively to a successful and satisfactory

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<sup>115</sup> The debate in the Quebec legislature also largely reflected this belief. See Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: L'Armistice*, vol. 23 (Montréal: Montréal-Éditions, n.d.), 16-21.

<sup>116</sup> “La motion Francoeur — Elle tombe mal!,” editorial, *L'Action catholique*, 29 December 1917, 1. See also “La motion Francoeur — Sa portée et son mérite,” editorial, *L'Action catholique*, 27 December 1917, 1; “La motion Francoeur — ‘Visa le noir, tua le blanc’,” editorial, *L'Action catholique*, 31 December 1917, 1.

<sup>117</sup> Joseph Barnard, “Les évènements,” *Bien Public*, 27 December 1917, 1.

conclusion.”<sup>118</sup> But not everyone agreed. The election results, with their deep divide between French and English Canada, showed that. As *L’Action catholique* explained:

les Canadiens français sont opposé au service militaire obligatoire ... et ensuite, qu’ils estiment ... non seulement que Québec a fait son devoir, dans le lutte mondiale, mais que la participation militaire du Canada à la guerre actuelle ne peut plus se continuer comme auparavant, et que, si nous sommes disposés à mettre au service des Alliés notre agriculture et notre industrie, en cela, maintenant, doit surtout consister notre concours.<sup>119</sup>

The discord did not deter the new Union government, and the first conscripts were ordered to report for service on January 3, less than a month after the election. In the coming months, Canadians would have to adjust to this new way of waging war.

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<sup>118</sup> Hugh Strang, letter to editor, “Election Advertising,” *Presbyterian and Westminster*, 3 January 1918, 27-28.

<sup>119</sup> “La motion Francoeur — ‘Visa le noir, tua la blanc’!,” editorial, *L’Action catholique*, 31 December 1917, 1.

## CHAPTER 6

TESTED IN THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION: PRAYING FOR PEACE,  
MOURNING THE DEAD, AND CELEBRATING VICTORY, 1918

In many ways 1917 had proven to be a year of trials both for the Allies and for Canada. The entry of the United States into the war had brought a new ally and the promise of a new reserve of resources and manpower, but it would take time for American strength to be felt on the Western Front. In the meantime, German submarines threatened the supply routes to Britain and the failure of the South American grain crops made the success of the next Canadian harvest more vital. Coal shortages, the high cost of living, and pressure for food conservation made daily life increasingly difficult — not only was thrift being touted as a practical duty, for many it was a necessity. The Canadian victories at Vimy Ridge, Hill 70, and Passchendaele had been uplifting and brought glory and recognition to the Canadian Corps, but the immense casualties suffered as a result of these actions had their own impact on thousands of homes and families. Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden's participation at the Imperial War Cabinet meetings in London was likewise a gratifying recognition of the Canadian war effort, but Borden had returned home resolved that conscription was the only way to maintain an adequate level of reinforcements in a war that might last several more years. At the beginning of 1918, after forty-one difficult months of war, popular enthusiasm and voluntarism were no longer sufficient on their own to sustain the scale of effort needed and morale had to be shored up against increasing war weariness. While Canadians remained determined to carry the war through to a conclusion, the burdens were becoming increasingly heavy.

Although it could not have been anticipated at the beginning of the year, 1918 would bring the end of the war. In the eleven months before the guns finally fell silent, however, Canadians still faced stern tests of their resolve and the churches would try to help them face these challenges. The Military Service Act (MSA) would ensure a steady supply of reinforcements to the Canadian Corps as it faced some of its costliest battles, but the operation of the MSA came with its own challenges to the churches. New conscripts required spiritual support and pastoral care as they prepared for overseas service. And, as the implementation of the MSA led to civil unrest, the Catholic church in Quebec tried to urge moderation and respect for authority. External events, including the devastating Spanish flu epidemic, brought their own difficulties and sorrows.

*January 1918 — Prayers for Peace and the Operation of the Military Service Act*

January 6, 1918, the first Sunday of the new year, was observed throughout Canada and the rest of the British Empire as a day of prayer and thanksgiving. The previous November, acting on the advice of the British War Cabinet, King George V had issued a personal appeal to the people of his dominions, calling on them to

devote a special day to prayer that we may have the clear sightedness and strength necessary to the victory of our cause. ... With hearts grateful for the divine guidance, which has led us so far towards our goal, let us seek to be enlightened in our understanding, and fortified in our courage facing the sacrifices we may yet have to make before our work is done.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Copy of telegram from W.H. Long (Secretary of State for the Colonies) to the Governor General, 24 November 1917, File 2041-2062-1917 — Day of Prayer, Vol. 217, RG13 (Department of Justice), Library and Archives Canada. The proclamation was also circulated in the Canadian press — see, for example, “The Call to Prayer,” *Toronto Globe*, 5 January 1918, 4.

The Borden government, in line with the procedure followed for previous national days of prayer, requested that the governor general, the Duke of Devonshire, issue a proclamation so that the request might be “made effective and observed throughout the Dominion.”<sup>2</sup>

Like the day of prayer held in 1914, this imperial call to prayer was a recognition of the important role religion played in public life as a guardian of morality and source of emotional and spiritual strength. Along with underscoring the justice and righteousness of the British cause, the king’s appeal, in asking for continued guidance and courage during a critical period in the war, reflected a belief that such public prayers were a way of aligning the nation’s collective will with God’s purposes so that it might advance His causes. During the Boer War, in contrast, official calls to prayer had expressed a desire for the nation to take recognition of its sins and repent for them in order to obtain victory.<sup>3</sup> The linkage between sinfulness and the continuation of the war did not entirely vanish, but the rise of a more liberal theology had tended to shift the emphasis away from war as a Divine tribulation which had to be endured as a corrective for sins. Instead, the emphasis was placed on the love of God for humanity and the necessity of acting in accordance with the Divine will. So, while Canon Henry Plumptre of St. James Anglican could still ask “are we worthy of victory?,” it was in the overall context of the “best prayer” being “the turning away of those sins within ourselves” and

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<sup>2</sup> Memorandum to the Governor General, 6 December 1917, File 2041-2062-1917 — Day of Prayer, Vol. 217, RG13 (Department of Justice), Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Williamson, “National Days of Prayer: The Churches, the State and Public Worship in Britain, 1899-1957,” *English Historical Review* 128, no. 531 (2013): 324-354; Gordon Heath, “Sin in the Camp: The Day of Humble Supplication in the Church of England in Canada in the Early Months of the South African War,” *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 44 (2002): 207-226.

approaching “God with a clean hand and a pure heart” rather than an attitude of penitence.<sup>4</sup>

At St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Thomas Eakin addressed the king’s appeal in both his morning and evening sermons, expressing this belief that through prayer people could better aid in bringing about the fulfilment of God’s plans and intentions. In the morning, he assured congregants that

If it is a war of ideals, in which we believe that justice is on our side, then we can without hypocrisy bring our cause before [God], and link ourselves up with the source of spiritual power and faith by the renewal of our allegiance to him. . . . Will he allow victory to hang in the balance till we agonize by prayer[?] Perhaps he will do that very thing, for we who pray are the agents of his will and he cannot commit us to that agency until our hearts and lives are purified.<sup>5</sup>

In the evening, Eakin further elaborated this theme, noting:

God is not a national Deity, whether Anglo Saxon or Prussian, and what he is concerned with is not a limited triumph but that through travail and affliction the soul of Christendom may be re-born that humanity may be rescued from false ideals of living and that the Divine treasures of the ages may not perish from the Earth. . . . Intercession is not cringing before an Almighty objective world ruler soliciting Him to take our part in an international conflict. It is co-operation with God in the prosecution of His wise and holy purposes.<sup>6</sup>

It was through prayer “which keeps the soul clean and makes clear the avenues of right approach to God” that Canada could be morally prepared for victory.<sup>7</sup> John Farthing, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, likewise emphasized the need to approach God not as “His dictators” but as petitioners, seeking to better understand and conform to His plan

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<sup>4</sup> Canon Plumtre quoted in “Church News,” *Canadian Churchman*, 10 January 1918, 28-29.

<sup>5</sup> Abbreviations from the handwritten original have been expanded. Capitalization as in original. Thomas Eakin, Sermon — Day of Prayer, 1918 January 6, 207/528, Thomas Eakin Papers, Presbyterian Church of Canada Archives.

<sup>6</sup> Abbreviations expanded. Capitalization original. Thomas Eakin, Sermon — Day of Prayer, 1918 January 6, 207/528, Thomas Eakin Papers, Presbyterian Church of Canada Archives.

<sup>7</sup> Abbreviations expanded. Thomas Eakin, Sermon — Day of Prayer, 1918 January 6, 207-528, Thomas Eakin Fonds, Presbyterian Church of Canada Archives.

in all aspects of life.<sup>8</sup> While the prayer authorized for the diocese asked for “such complete victory over our enemies as will ensure abiding and universal peace”,<sup>9</sup> in his address Farthing chose to focus on the work that needed to be done at home to bring about the Kingdom of God. He explained:

On this day of prayer we must bring our wills and our lives to the service of God and His Righteousness; and I call upon you all here before God, before His altar, to consecrate yourselves anew to do His will, to strive for the right, to further the Kingdom of Christ, and never to rest until Right shall prevail in Canada, and that we shall fight for Right here as our sons are on the battlefields of Europe.<sup>10</sup>

Canadians could fight for righteousness at home, as well as on the battlefield, by working to address social problems like poverty and inequality which had been thrown into a sharper focus as a result of the war.<sup>11</sup>

With a devotional tradition of more direct intercession on which to call, Canadian Catholics also prayed for peace on January 6, imploring God to take mercy on the world and restore peace. Montréal’s Archbishop Paul Bruchési approvingly quoted the king’s proclamation in inviting people throughout his archdiocese to make Epiphany “un jour spécial d’actions de grâces et de supplications ardentes.” The Blessed Sacrament was to be exposed throughout the day in hopes that “Dieu se laissera toucher et que, au cours de l’année qui vient de s’ouvrir, nous aurons la paix qui nous implorons depuis si longtemps de sa puissance et de sa bonté.”<sup>12</sup> Under the broad umbrella of the king’s

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<sup>8</sup> John Farthing, “Prayer,” *Canadian Churchman*, 7 February 1918, 84-85.

<sup>9</sup> “A Prayer for Victory,” *Montreal Churchman*, January 1918, 3.

<sup>10</sup> John Farthing, “Prayer,” *Canadian Churchman*, 7 February 1918, 84-85.

<sup>11</sup> John Farthing, “Prayer,” *Canadian Churchman*, 7 February 1918, 84-85. See also Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-28* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 18-45.

<sup>12</sup> Paul Bruchési, “Jour de Prière publique,” *La Croix*, 5 January 1918, 4. This was the also the case in the church of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade in the Diocese of Trois-Rivières — see “Courriers — “Sainte-Anne de la Pérade,” *Bien Public*, 10 January 1918, 6.

request, there was room for special emphasis and within the devotions of the Catholic tradition there was room to adapt the observance, as the varied responses of the Catholic bishops show. Toronto's Roman Catholic Archbishop Neil McNeil instructed that devotions should be directed towards such matters as the "liberation of Belgium, the alleviation of the sufferings of France and Poland, and the ultimate triumph of the cause of civilization", with the litany of the Holy Names of Jesus recited to those ends.<sup>13</sup>

Cardinal Louis-Nazaire Bégin ordered that prayers should be offered throughout the Archdiocese of Québec "pour attirer la protection divine sur les armées de l'Empire et de ses alliés, et pour implorer la miséricorde de Dieu en faveur de la paix si désirée."<sup>14</sup> As requested, churches in the archdiocese sang the Miserere after the High Mass in addition to their normal prayers for peace.<sup>15</sup>

January 6 was also the day when the first church parade of Catholic conscripts raised under the MSA took place in Quebec City. *L'Action catholique* recorded that, as they paraded to St. Patrick's Church for Mass, "On les a vus défiler dans nos rues, corps de clairons en tête en parfait ordre."<sup>16</sup> The MSA, passed in the summer of 1917, had officially been in operation since October 13, 1917, with all those in Class 1 (unmarried men and childless widowers aged between 20 and 34) having been ordered to report before November 10.<sup>17</sup> Men reporting had three options: they could register as willing

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<sup>13</sup> "All Churches Offer Prayers," *Toronto Globe*, 8 January 1918, 6.

<sup>14</sup> L.-N. Bégin, "Jour de prière," *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 3 January 1918, 274.

<sup>15</sup> See "Saint-Sauveur," *L'Action catholique*, 7 January 1918, 3; "Pour la victoire des alliés et la paix," *L'Action catholique*, 7 January 1918, 6.

<sup>16</sup> "La parade d'église," *L'Action catholique*, 7 January 1918, 6.

<sup>17</sup> J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977), 83-87.

to serve and return home to await orders; they could 'report voluntarily' for immediate service; or they could submit a request for an exemption.

From the perspective of obtaining the 100,000 soldiers needed as reinforcements for the Canadian Corps, the results of this reporting period were disappointing. By the end of the year, while some 404,395 men had reported to their local registrars, 380,510 of them had sought to be exempted from service, and several thousand more had simply failed to register despite penalties for failing to comply with the MSA.<sup>18</sup> The percentages of men seeking exemption on one of the various grounds varied from a high of 98 percent in Quebec to a low of 89 percent in Manitoba, with a national average of 94 percent. Exemption claims were evaluated in one of the 1,253 local tribunals established across the country on the basis of written evidence submitted by the applicant. These local tribunals judged the cases quickly. By the end of 1917, with 52,788 cases remaining to be heard, 278,779 exemptions — 85 percent of the claims examined — had been granted and only 47,868 denied.<sup>19</sup> While some exemption tribunals granted exemptions more liberally than others, the frequency with which exemption claims were upheld suggests that voluntary recruiting had failed, at least in part, because the men who remained out of uniform felt that their work or home responsibilities prevented them from serving overseas and could convincingly make this case to others. Others simply did not wish to serve, and filed exemptions as the only legal way of asserting their opposition.<sup>20</sup> Of the roughly 24,000 men willing to serve, some chose to volunteer

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<sup>18</sup> Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 83-87; Patrick Dennis, *Reluctant Warriors: Canadian Conscripts and the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), 34-37.

<sup>19</sup> Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 83-84, 86; Bouvier, *Déserteurs et insoumis*, 70-72.

<sup>20</sup> Patrick Bouvier, *Déserteurs et insoumis: Les Canadiens français et la justice militaire (1914-1918)* (Outremont: Athéna Éditions, 2003), 69-72.

for service immediately, while others waited to be called alongside those whose exemptions had been rejected. On January 3, 1918, this call came, with men instructed to report to their local depots in batches ranging in size from twenty-five to two-hundred to begin their training. The first drafts of conscripts, containing many of those who had reported voluntarily, would proceed overseas in February to train in England in preparation for service at the front.<sup>21</sup>

Rather than seek exemptions, some men simply refused to register with the authorities. Others registered but refused to report for service when called. To deal with these defaulters and with those who deserted after entering training, a special unit of federal officers was established to investigate and arrest men believed to be in violation of the MSA. These officers, while they operated across the country, were particularly active in Ontario and Quebec, the two most densely populated provinces. In Quebec, the percentage of men who registered but failed to report was particularly high as nearly 41 percent of registered men defaulted.<sup>22</sup> These men often had the support of their communities, who helped them avoid the federal enforcement officers charged with investigating and arresting men found to be in defiance of the MSA.<sup>23</sup> Until the end of the war, the behaviour and over-zealousness of these officers would be the subject of criticism and cause much resentment, and not only in French Canada. When a delegate travelling to the 1918 Methodist General Conference was detained for not carrying his

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<sup>21</sup> Dennis, *Reluctant Warriors*, 43-50.

<sup>22</sup> Bouvier, *Déserteurs et insoumis*, 81-85.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec: L'Armistice*, vol. 23 (Montréal: Montréal-Éditions, n.d.), 57-58, 68-77, 81, 96-102. Little is actually known of these defaulters, and Jean Martin points out that the experiences of conscription in the two world wars are often conflated in the public memory. See Jean Martin, *Un siècle d'oubli: Les canadiens et la Première guerre mondiale (1914-2014)* (Montréal: Athéna Éditions, 2014), 200.

marriage certificate and forced to pay a \$25 fine, the action prompted a letter of protest to the Department of Militia and Defence from the Army and Navy Board and a discussion in the *Christian Guardian* about the need to administer the law with, as A.W. Hone wrote, “some mixture of common sense”.<sup>24</sup>

Men who did choose to seek exemptions could do so on a variety of grounds, including having an obvious physical disability, a previous honourable discharge from military service, work in an essential or specialized occupation, or if military service would cause their families or businesses undue hardship.<sup>25</sup> Despite repeated campaigns by provincial and federal governments about the need to increase food production, campaigns in which the help of the churches was specifically sought,<sup>26</sup> the MSA was not specific on the question of agricultural workers. Not until an order-in-council was passed on December 2, 1917, just weeks before the Union election, was it clarified that agricultural exemptions were to be allowed.<sup>27</sup> Clergy were also specifically exempted under the act in recognition of their vocation, although the ministers of the Manitoba Methodist Conference, not recognizing a sacramental priesthood, asked that they not be treated as clergy.<sup>28</sup> An initial lack of clerical exemptions in the Military Service Bill had

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<sup>24</sup> File 320, Box 14, 78.100C, Army and Navy Board Fonds, United Church of Canada Archives; “Two Regrettable Incidents,” *Christian Guardian*, 6 November 1918, 5; A.W. Hone, letter to the editor, “A Strange Affair,” *Christian Guardian*, 6 November 1918, 26.

<sup>25</sup> Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 84.

<sup>26</sup> See, for example the various letters from J.-E. Caron, Quebec Minister of Agriculture, asking for the help of the bishops and curés to promote economy and agricultural production during the war circulated by the A.-X. Bernard (Bp. of St.-Hyacinthe) — *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Saint-Hyacinthe*, vol. 15 (Saint-Hyacinthe: L’Imprimerie du Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe, 1913), 489-495, 581-582, sup1-14,

<sup>27</sup> See Djebabla-Brun, *Combattre avec les vivres*, 251-277; J. Castell Hopkins, *Canadian Annual Review 1918* (Toronto: Canadian Annual Review, Ltd., 1919), 464-465.

<sup>28</sup> See File 316, Box 14, 78.100C, 78.100C, Army and Navy Board Fonds, United Church of Canada Archives. While Catholics and Anglicans recognized priests as separate from the laity by virtue of their ordination vows, this view of a sacramental priesthood was not recognized in Protestant theology. Methodists, in particular, did not recognize a theological distinction between the clergy and the laity.

drawn sharp criticism from Cardinal Bégin of Québec, who spoke against the damage that conscription would do to the Catholic church, but the provision was added to the final Act.<sup>29</sup> Still, the question of how to define ‘clergy’ remained, particularly as it concerned divinity students. Although Protestant students were not exempt, only taking their ordination vows at the end of their training, Catholic seminarians who trained as religious priests took vows early in their formation and were, as a consequence, exempted from military service.<sup>30</sup> Methodists, whose probationers undertook circuit work for several years as part of their preparation for ordination, were particularly affected by this distinction and it aroused anti-Catholic sentiment. In Guelph, the question became a major national issue as local Methodist ministers accused the Jesuit novitiate of being a haven of men seeking to avoid military service, causing the seminary to be raided by federal enforcement officers. None of the novices, who included the son of Justice Minister Charles Doherty, were found to be avoiding military service.<sup>31</sup>

It was also possible to seek exemption as a conscientious objector, but this route was almost entirely barred for those who were not members of one of the traditional peace churches. Members of mainstream denominations who were opposed to war on the grounds of conscience had to decide whether to seek an exemption on other grounds,

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<sup>29</sup> “L’opinion de Son Éminence,” editorial, *L’Action catholique*, 28 July 1917, 1. See also a pastoral letter from J.-M. Énard (Bp. of Valleyfield) from earlier in the war in which he makes an extended argument against soldier-priests in the style of the French army — “Lettre au Clergé — Le prêtre-soldat,” *Oeuvres pastorales de Mgr. J.-M. Énard, 1er évêque de Valleyfield*, vol. 5 (Paris: Pierre Téqui, 1924), 223-243.

<sup>30</sup> See “Clergé et service militaire,” editorial, *L’Action catholique*, 26 July 1917, 1; “Un tiens vaut mieux. . .,” editorial, *L’Action catholique*, 7 August 1917, 1; J.-M. Énard, “Circulaire — Qu’uset-ce que le ‘clergé’,” *Valleyfield*, 397-405.

<sup>31</sup> For more, see Brian Hogan, “The Guelph Novitiate Raid: Conscription, Censorship, and Bigotry during the Great War,” *CCHA Study Session* (1978): 57-80; Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada’s Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 178-190; McGowan, *Imperial Irish*, 270-274, 285.

to enlist in violation of their principles, or risk prosecution under the MSA. Given the overwhelming support offered for the war effort by the churches, those few who chose to pursue an exemption on the grounds of conscience, rather than on any other of the grounds for exemption that might have applied, received little support for their efforts from the churches.<sup>32</sup> Although a large body of records survives for the Methodist Army and Navy Board, the only one of the military service boards whose records have been preserved, it is telling that there is no correspondence dealing with attempts to obtain an exemption on the grounds of conscience.<sup>33</sup> Perhaps this is unsurprising, however, given that the Methodist stance, as reflected in the *Christian Guardian* in May 1917, was that “when a nation is threatened, and when it is clearly seen that the only way to preserve freedom is to fight for it, the pacifism which suited us in milder days vanishes into thin air. ... Pacifism is good, but it has its limits. Most Christians are pacifists, but they will fight if they have to.”<sup>34</sup> By making enlistment a matter of moral obligation over the course of the previous three years, the churches had made absolute pacifism a matter for the individual conscience and not one of doctrine or theology. In a war portrayed as a struggle against militarism and in defence of justice, there was often impatience toward those who put their individual interpretations of Christianity above the common cause.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Thomas Socknat, *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 75, 81; Amy Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience: Conscientious Objection in Canada during the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 4, 98-126, 135.

<sup>33</sup> 78.100C, 78.100C, Army and Navy Board Fonds, United Church of Canada Archives.

<sup>34</sup> “How Deep Does Pacifism Go?,” editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 30 May 1917, 5-6. See also John Rogers, letter to the editor, “Mr. Bishop’s Protests,” *Christian Guardian*, 14 June 1916, 21.

<sup>35</sup> Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience*, 4-8, 98-126, 162.

*March 1918 — The German Spring Offensive and Unrest at Home*

On Friday, March 22, 1918, the *Toronto Globe* declared the beginning of “Germany’s Greatest Offensive” to its astonished readers.<sup>36</sup> The previous day, using some fifty divisions transferred from the Eastern Front following the Russian withdrawal from the war on March 3, the Germans had launched a massive attack aimed at breaking through the Allied lines. On the first day of the attack, the Germans advanced upwards of three kilometres in places, forcing the British Third Army into a fighting retreat that continued on Saturday.<sup>37</sup> As the armies overseas were locked in this desperate struggle, Sunday, March 24, also marked the beginning of Holy Week, the series of services marking Christ’s last days. L.M. Montgomery, wife of the Presbyterian minister in Leaksdale, Ontario, wrote in her diary that “Everywhere that day humanity was in its supreme agony — everywhere the hearts of men were failing them for fear.”<sup>38</sup> News had come through that Paris was being shelled, causing fear that the line had been broken. It was not until the Monday newspapers were delivered that it was made clear that, despite being forced to abandon the gains made at such cost during the 1916 Somme offensive, the British line had held firm.<sup>39</sup> To the normal Palm Sunday observances, special prayers were added for the cause of the Allies at this critical time. Cardinal Bégin issued a letter to the Catholic churches in Quebec City, instructing them

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<sup>36</sup> *Toronto Globe*, 22 March 1918, 1. See also I.H.M. Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief: Torontonians and the Great War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 163-169.

<sup>37</sup> G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1962), 362ff; Tim Cook, *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1917-1918* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2008), 389ff; Stevenson, *1914-1918*, 397-410.

<sup>38</sup> L.M. Montgomery, journal entry 31 March 1918, *The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery, Volume 2 (1910-1921)*, ed. Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988), 243.

<sup>39</sup> Montgomery, journal entry 31 March 1918, *Selected Journals*, 243-244.

that “C’est le moment pour nous de livrer à la miséricorde divine le suprême assaut de nos prières et de nos pénitences, afin d’obtenir la victoire pour les alliés et la paix pour le monde.” He recommended that special services might be held in the afternoon or evening for public prayers before the exposed Sacrament. He concluded by adding, “Pendant que nos braves soldats sacrifient leur vie dans l’horrible et sanglante mêlée, nous avons l’impérieux devoir de soutenir leur courage et de seconder leurs efforts par nos généreuses immolations et par nos supplications ardentes. . . . Il faut que tous ceux qui ne sont pas au poste du danger, soient au poste de la prière.”<sup>40</sup> St-Jean-Baptiste was one of the Quebec City parishes to hold a special afternoon service in answer to Bégin’s letter, and the church “était trop petite pour contenir les fidèles qui allaient implorer la miséricorde divine” as the Sacrament was processed around the church.<sup>41</sup> At St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Halifax, which had survived the December 6 explosion that devastated the city, killing nearly two-thousand and wounding thousands more, Clarendon Worrell, the Anglican Archbishop of Nova Scotia, took a moment in his sermon to reassure the anxious congregation, declaring, “Let the news stiffen within us our determination. Let it stir within us the resolve that if we have not yet made our full sacrifice, we will do it now.”<sup>42</sup>

As Holy Week went on, the reassuring news that there had not been a major German breakthrough was tempered by reports of continued German gains. At the hinge between the British and French armies, command of the British Fifth Army was

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<sup>40</sup> L.-N. Bégin, “Lettre de Son Éminence le cardinal Bégin,” *L’Action catholique*, 25 March 1918, 1. See also Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 23:64-65.

<sup>41</sup> “Courriers de la Ville — Saint-Jean-Baptiste,” *L’Action catholique*, 25 March 1918, 3.

<sup>42</sup> Clarendon Lamb Worrell quoted in “Church News,” *Canadian Churchman*, 4 April 1918, 225.

temporarily transferred to the French in case the heavy fighting succeeded in driving a wedge between the two, and French general Ferdinand Foch was named supreme commander of the Allied armies in order to co-ordinate the Allied defences.<sup>43</sup> On March 27, the *Toronto Globe* reported ominously that in places the Germans had advanced further in this offensive than at any other time since the fall of 1914.<sup>44</sup> The tense situation overseas seemed in some ways to overshadow the celebration of Easter, but the joy of the Easter season could also provide hope, as the lead editorial in the *Montreal Churchman* emphasized:

Gethsemane and Calvary seem more in harmony with us during the prolonged death struggle in the Somme Valley. We may remember, however, that we have Our Lord's exhortation at such times, when men's hearts are failing them for fear and when the distress of nations prevail, to look up and lift our heads for our redemption draweth nigh.<sup>45</sup>

And on Easter Sunday, churches in towns and cities across the country were full, sometimes to capacity. Even if, as L.M. Montgomery recorded in her diary, she could not "feel rejoicing in the thought that the German offensive had failed," at least she could attend the Easter service "feeling thankful that so far it had failed of decisive success."<sup>46</sup>

That Holy Week was marked not only by uncertainty overseas, but also domestic turmoil. On Thursday, March 28, a confrontation in Quebec City escalated into large-scale riots. Officers of the Dominion Special Police charged with investigating defaulters under the MSA, behaving in the heavy-handed way that had already been a

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<sup>43</sup> Keegan, *First World War*, 402-404.

<sup>44</sup> See *Toronto Globe*, 27 March 1918.

<sup>45</sup> "Eastertide," *Montreal Churchman*, April 1918, 5.

<sup>46</sup> Montgomery, journal entry 31 March 1918, *Selected Journals*, 245.

source of friction between the authorities and the Quebec population, had temporarily taken into custody a man not carrying his exemption papers. Crowds, augmented by those who were leaving nearby churches after the end of the Maundy Thursday services, gathered outside the police station in Saint-Roch. Believing that there had been an arrest, the crowd began throwing stones and bricks at the police station, breaking its windows. Once it became known that the officers had left the station, some in the crowd pursued them, assaulting three officers and forcing them to promise to stop arresting conscripts. Only the intervention of the police chief, a local Member of Parliament, and Joseph-Albert Côté, one of the vicars of the Saint-Roch parish church, convinced the crowd to disperse.<sup>47</sup>

The situation remained unsettled the following day as rumours circulated of planned attacks, most notably on the registrar's office responsible for registering conscripts. Good Friday services proceeded normally throughout the day, and all was quiet until evening, when a mob smashed the windows of the offices of the *Quebec Chronicle* and *L'Événement*, two pro-conscription newspapers. The crowd then moved on to the registrar's office, where windows were smashed, the door broken down, papers flung out into the street, and the office set on fire. In answer to the violence, the civil authorities called on the military to help control the situation, and, with the soldiers' help had dispersed the crowd by midnight. On Saturday morning, the officer in charge of the Quebec Military District, Brigadier General Joseph-Philippe Landry, assumed control of

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<sup>47</sup> Chris Young, "'Sous les balles des troupes fédérales': Representing the Quebec City Riots in Francophone Quebec (1919-2009)," (MA thesis, Concordia University, 2009), 29-33; Martin Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War: The Canadian Government and the Suppression of the 1918 Quebec Easter Riots," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (2008): 508-509; Jean Provencher, *Québec sous la loi des mesures de guerre 1918* (Trois-Rivières: Les éditions du Boréal express, 1971), 47-53.

the city on the instructions of the federal government, who had lost confidence in the ability of the city police to control the situation. A thousand additional troops were dispatched to Quebec from Ontario and another 3,000 from Western Canada. Major-General François-Louis Lessard, the highest ranking francophone officer in Canada, was ordered to Quebec City from Halifax to assume command.<sup>48</sup>

On Saturday soldiers openly patrolled the streets and mounted guard at important buildings. Again in the evening a crowd began gathering, this time outside the drill hall in Quebec's Upper Town, the first place MSA defaulters were taken upon arrest. The crowd taunted the soldiers on guard, yelling insults, and throwing snowballs, pieces of ice, bottles, and stones. As the crowd became increasingly unruly, the Riot Act was read and a detachment of mounted artillerymen charged the crowd in order to break it up. Once again, the city police did little to stop the crowd from looting weapons from hardware stores. There were minor injuries on both sides, but the situation remained largely under control until the streets emptied in the early hours of Sunday morning.<sup>49</sup>

On Easter Sunday, a letter from Cardinal Bégin was read from the pulpits deploring the "scènes de désordres et de violences" of the previous days as being counter to the respect for authority taught by the church, despite the legitimate grievances of the population. Bégin evoked the week of penitence that had just concluded and the teaching of the church:

Les souvenirs de la Passion du Sauveur, que la sainte liturgie évoquait d'une façon si saisissante, ces jours derniers, donnaient aux fidèles d'autres exemples à suivre et d'autres enseignements à pratiquer. Si nous voulons

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<sup>48</sup> Young, "Sous les balles des troupes fédérales," 33-39; Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War," 509-512; Provencher, *Québec 1918*, 54-66.

<sup>49</sup> Young, "Sous les balles des troupes fédérales," 39-41; Provencher, *Québec 1918*, 67-77.

que Jésus-Christ nous pardonne et nous bénisse, il faut que nous sachions mieux conformer notre conduite aux graves leçons qu'Il nous prêche du haut de sa croix.<sup>50</sup>

In the parish of Saint-Roch, the neighbourhood where the crowds had gathered on the previous evenings, the curé, Philippe-August-Robert Lagueux acknowledged the difficulties in having to see sons sent away to war, but censured those who had participated in the mobs, telling the assembled gathering that it was “contre la morale et contra la justice comme contre la charité chrétienne que de se livrer à des actes de violence contre les personnes et contre les biens.”<sup>51</sup> In the church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, the curé, Joseph-Esdras Laberge added his own words to Bégin’s call for calm. In addition to calling on parishioners to not take part in the rioting, not even as bystanders, he addressed the conduct of the authorities, noting “S’il y avait ici ... des soldats, hommes de police ou détectives, je leur dirais qu’ils doivent respecter les droits de chacun. Il n’est pas plus permis à un soldat ou à un homme de police qu’à un civil d’être injuste et brutal.”<sup>52</sup> He also reminded congregants “de prier et de prier beaucoup afin d’obtenir du Dieu Tout-Puissant la victoire pour les Alliés et la paix pour le monde.”<sup>53</sup> In the Basilica, Canon Eugène Laflamme referred to the war situation and to the call to prayer issued by Bégin the previous Sunday, telling parishioners:

Mais n’est-il pas particulièrement triste que des désordres comme ceux que nous déplorons se produisent à l’heure tragique où les destinées de deux nations qui nous doivent être chères à plus d’un titre se décident dans un des combats les plus terribles que l’histoire puisse enregistrer? ...

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<sup>50</sup> L.-N. Bégin, “Une lettre de Son Éminence,” *L’Action catholique*, 1 April 1918, 1.

<sup>51</sup> P.-A.-R. Lagueux quoted in “Courriers de la Ville — Saint-Roch,” *L’Action catholique*, 1 April 1918, 3.

<sup>52</sup> J.-E. Laberge quoted in “Courriers de la Ville — Saint-Jean-Baptiste,” *L’Action catholique*, 1 April 1918, 3.

<sup>53</sup> “Courriers de la Ville — Saint-Jean-Baptiste,” *L’Action catholique*, 1 April 1918, 3.

Réfléchissons-y sérieusement, dans le calme d'un esprit dépouillé de toute passion et de tout préjugé nous comprendrons que notre devoir n'est pas de recourir à la sédition, mais de prier en toute humilité, de faire montre vers Dieu l'hommage de nos supplications et de nos sacrifices. Répondant à la pressante invitation qui vous faisait dimanche dernier ... soyons fidèles à demander à Dieu 'la victoire pour les alliés et la paix pour le monde.'<sup>54</sup>

The clerics acknowledged that there were legitimate grievances about the enforcement of conscription and the actions of the federal officers, but lawlessness, particularly in light of the situation overseas and the holy season, was not an appropriate reaction. Nor would it address the problems. Caught up in events, Bégin and the priests of Quebec City called not only for calm, but also for the recognition of authority and for those on both sides to act in accordance with the spirit of Christian charity. Just as, a few months earlier, the church had urged moderation in the face of virulent election rhetoric, it once again called upon French Canadians to avoid extremism in the interests of civil peace.

Despite the pleas from the city's pulpits, large crowds gathered again that evening. There were some incidents, including the looting of several hardware stores, one of which was set on fire. Two rioters were wounded before the crowds dispersed when soldiers, acting without orders, struck back at the jeering crowds for throwing bricks and ice. Soldiers continued to patrol openly on Monday, April 1. Warnings were posted cautioning that the consequences for further public demonstrations would be arrest and imprisonment, and notices printed urging people to remain in their homes.<sup>55</sup> *L'Action catholique* was one of the newspapers to carry the notices, both the unsigned military notice and a message from the mayor, Henri Lavigueur, the latter of which the

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<sup>54</sup> E. Laflamme quoted in "Notre devoir," *L'Action catholique*, 1 April 1918, 8.

<sup>55</sup> Young, "'Sous les balles des troupes fédérales,'" 41-48; Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War," 517-518.

newspaper printed beside Bégin's letter calling for calm.<sup>56</sup> The paper's editorial also called for citizens to stay at home to avoid fanning small events into larger ones; by staying at home, citizens could render "le plus grand service au pays, à votre province et à votre race."<sup>57</sup>

Unfortunately, these warnings were not heeded and as crowds again assembled that evening, despite the efforts of the soldiers to disperse any gatherings. As the soldiers clashed with the unruly crowd, several times throughout the evening officers gave their soldiers orders to fire. By the time the night was over, sixty-two rioters had been arrested, hundreds of weapons had been seized, more than a hundred soldiers and civilians had been injured, and four civilians had been killed.<sup>58</sup> Worried that the rioting was only the beginning of a much larger anti-conscription uprising, the federal government imposed martial law and ordered the trains entering and leaving the city to be scrutinized. They also dispatched additional troops to Montreal and suspended the sale of firearms until May.<sup>59</sup>

Despite the rioting, the federal government remained determined to enforce conscription. Although Canadian units had not been in the path of the main German advances the previous week, sparing them from the worst of the fighting, the government nonetheless took steps to ensure that sufficient reinforcements would be available for fighting that now looked likely to continue into 1919 and perhaps even 1920. On April 19, an order-in-council was passed cancelling the exemptions that had

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<sup>56</sup> *L'Action catholique*, 1 April 1918, 1, 8.

<sup>57</sup> "Restez chez vous," editorial, *L'Action catholique*, 1 April 1918, 1.

<sup>58</sup> Young, "'Sous les balles des troupes fédérales,'" 48-53; Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War," 519-520; Provencher, *Québec 1918*, 96-125.

<sup>59</sup> Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War," 520-540.

already been issued, making nineteen-year-olds eligible for conscription, and ordering all men between twenty and twenty-two to report immediately for service.<sup>60</sup> Concerned that the cancellation of exemptions and a stricter enforcement of the MSA might cause more trouble, as a precautionary measure Ottawa ensured an increased military presence remained in the province of Quebec until the end of the war.<sup>61</sup> The Catholic church, having been caught up in the events of Easter week, continued to urge moderate behaviour and co-operation with the authorities; further violence would not change anything. In May 1918, the curé at Terrebonne (Archdiocese of Montréal), Joseph-Sinaï Comtois, felt the need to caution his parishioners:

At the last election conscription was established as a result of the verdict at the polls. The law is hard, but the laws of the land must be obeyed. Today we have in our midst agents of the Federal Police. . . . Use moderation. They are doing their duty, and there must be no wrath in your dealings with them, all of which will be to the honour of our parish.<sup>62</sup>

It was not French Canada, however, that expressed its displeasure about the cancellation of exemptions but farmers who felt that they were being unfairly targeted. A delegation of more than 2,000 farmers from Ontario and Quebec descended on Ottawa to make the case that agricultural production required labourers and calling for conscription of men employed in non-essential industries before those working on farms. The farmers asserted their patriotism and their willingness to serve the Allied

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<sup>60</sup> Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 90-94; J.L. Granatstein, "Conscription in the Great War" in *Canada and the First World War*, edited by David Mackenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 230-271; Nicholson, *Official History*, 348-350.

<sup>61</sup> Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War," 520-540.

<sup>62</sup> J.-S. Comtois quoted in "Quebec Falling into Line," *Catholic Record*, 11 May 1918, 1, originally printed in the *Toronto Globe*. Comtois was born in an agricultural family in Maskinongé and was educated at the Grand Séminaire in Montreal. He had been the curé in Terrebonne since 1908. See J.-B.-A. Allaire, *Dictionnaire biographique du clergé canadien-français, Les contemporains* (Saint-Hyacinthe: Imprimerie de 'La Tribune', 1908), 212.

cause and defended themselves against accusations of both slacking and disloyalty. But they continued to insist that the needs of production should not be subordinated to the manpower needs of the Canadians Corps and that doing so would compromise the Allies' ability to wage war in the long term.<sup>63</sup> The protest encouraged reflection, even by those who had previously considered the needs of the front to be paramount. Although the *Christian Guardian* had been critical of farmers for remaining at home to profit during the period of voluntary recruiting,<sup>64</sup> it now wondered "do we need men for the battle-front so badly that we are justified in running such risks of under-production as we will run by drafting farmers' sons...?"<sup>65</sup> The *Catholic Record*, having warned repeatedly of the dangers of voting to conscript others, was less tolerant, writing, "There are few self-respecting Canadians today who have not more respect for the Quebec farmers who honestly, openly, and vigorously opposed conscription than they have for the farmers who voted there for under the impression that they themselves would bear no part of the burden; and now whine when it touches themselves."<sup>66</sup> Despite the protests, Prime Minister Borden held the line that "Production is absolutely essential and the duty of the Government is to see that it is carried on. But if we wait for longer consideration of exemption, if we have long delays and our men are destroyed or decimated, what answer can we make to them?"<sup>67</sup> Borden, who invoked memories of his visits to the Canadian wounded in Britain, continued to put the needs of the front

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<sup>63</sup> Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 169-172.

<sup>64</sup> See, for example the editorial response to F.W. Miller, letter to editor, "The Farmer and the War," *Christian Guardian*, 5 December 1917, 2; "How the Farmer Fares," *Christian Guardian*, 5 December 1917, 6.

<sup>65</sup> "Farmers' Sons and Military Service," editorial, *Christian Guardian*, 22 May 1918, 5.

<sup>66</sup> "Farmers and Conscription," editorial, *Catholic Record*, 25 May 1918, 4.

<sup>67</sup> Robert Borden quoted in Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 169-170.

first, but many at home, including the churches which had so firmly preached recruiting, were beginning to wonder how Canada could continue to sustain such an effort.

*May and June 1918 — Prayers for Victory and Protection, Another Reaction to the MSA*

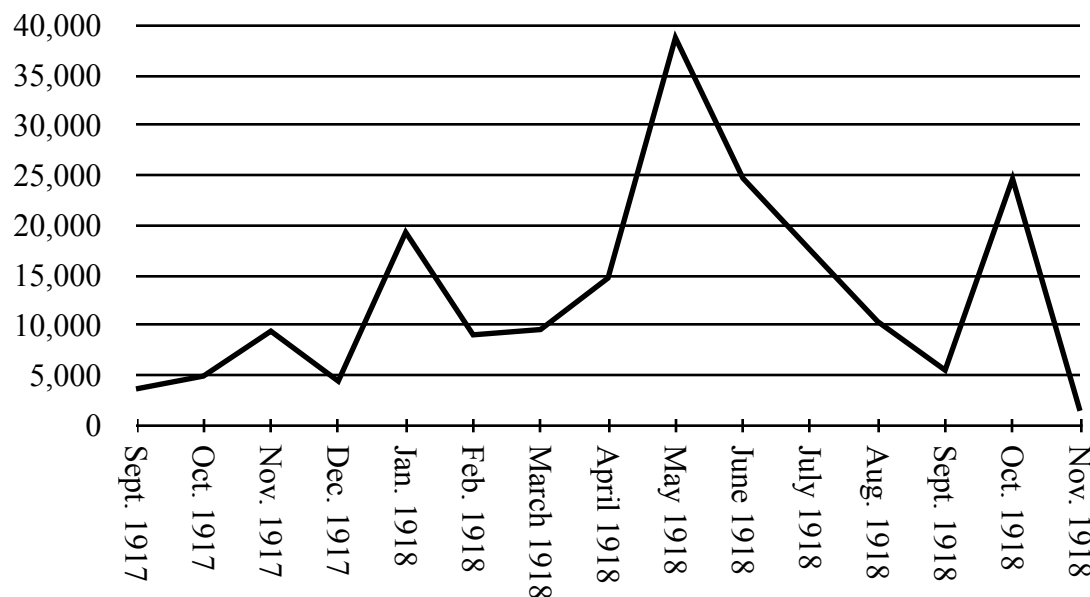
While it is undeniable that thousands of Canadian men refused to serve in uniform, choosing instead to default or desert, and that the Easter riots expressed a deep-seated discontent with the enforcement and administration of the MSA in Quebec, to focus only on these elements is to ignore the sacrifices made by the thousands of men who did respond to the government's demand for their service. Although the exact number of men who served as a consequence of the MSA remains somewhat unclear, before the end of the war more than 24,000 conscripts made their way to the front as reinforcements for the Canadian Corps and more than 100,000 others were engaged in training or other duties.<sup>68</sup> Because these conscripts were called up and sent for training within a relatively short period of time, the impact of their departures fell on many homes relatively simultaneously (see Figure 6.1). For homes and businesses that had been relying on the help of exempted men, the future became more uncertain.

In English Canada, where many communities and churches were already maintaining honour rolls of those who had voluntarily enlisted, the families and friends of those conscripted looked to have their names and contributions recognized as well. Pride in a community or church's record of voluntary service had been a major feature of the voluntary enlistment period, with the record of names a visible symbol of sacrifices

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<sup>68</sup> See Dennis, *Reluctant Warriors* for the story of Canadian conscripts at the front.

**Figure 6.1. — Voluntary and Compulsory Enlistments (September 1917 - November 1918)**



Appendix C, G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1962), 564.

made. The pressure to enlist recruits, which had intensified from mid-1915, had branded the men who remained at home as 'slackers' unwilling to answer the call to serve, an unfair label that meant some questioned whether volunteers and conscripts should be recognized on an equal basis. One anonymous cleric wrote to the editor of the *Montreal Churchman* seeking guidance on the issue:

I am very much concerned, and perhaps many of my brother Clergy are too, in regard to what course to take re[garding] the men of our parishes who are being called up under the [Military Service] Act. It is obvious their names cannot be placed on our Rolls of Honour as that particular honour is only for those who volunteered. Of course, we shall pray for them as for the others! But the difficulty is, that their friends will want their names included ... What are we to do?<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> 'Honour to whom honour is due,' letter to editor, *Montreal Churchman*, September 1918, 6.

The editorial response, while voicing regret that the war effort could not have been sustained through continued voluntary enlistment, was firm in its position that no one should presume to judge another man's conscience:

We know of no authority in the parish competent to or capable of judging the motives of men who have not volunteered. ... We do know of some men who longed to volunteer but were prevented by home ties while others who did volunteer acted from lower motives and did the easier thing.

... These drafted men are going forward to fight, face hardship, suffer wounds and die for the cause of liberty and freedom. They are leaving the same aching hearts of loved ones behind, they will doubtless sustain the prestige of Canada overseas, and in the comradeship of Canada's army they will share, and volunteer and draftee will go over the top and bleed and die together.

No, it is not 'obvious' to us that their names cannot appear on our Honour Rolls. It seems to us imperative that they be placed there.<sup>70</sup>

It was a sense of duty that had kept some men at home, despite the pressure on them to enlist. Already in 1916 the United Farmers of Ontario had felt the need to pass a resolution asserting this fact and deploring the recruiting campaign that was "either taking men from the farms who are more needed there than in the trenches, or as branding as disloyal or cowardly many young men who are neither but are kept on the farms through a sense of duty more urgent than that of enlisting."<sup>71</sup> But farm workers were not the only ones to feel that duty at home was more important than service in the trenches. In September 1917, just before registration under the MSA began, a Methodist probationer wrote to T. Albert Moore, the secretary of the Army and Navy Board seeking guidance about what he should do. As he wrote:

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<sup>70</sup> Editorial response, "Concerning Honour Rolls," *Montreal Churchman*, September 1918, 5.

<sup>71</sup> United Farmers of Ontario resolution quoted in J. Castell Hopkins, *Canadian Annual Review 1916* (Toronto: Canadian Annual Review, Ltd., 1917), 309-310. See also Djebabla-Brun, *Combattre avec les vivres*, 138-152

Up to this time I have felt it my duty to remain at home for I have felt my call to the Ministry to be as definite as my conversion. . . . However if those in authority are likely to need my services I am willing to go, for then I shall know God is calling me through them. . . . The question I, as well as many, have to face is ‘In which sphere of labour am I of more value, at home or in the ranks?’ . . . I could have waited until the drafts are made, but I am no slacker, having done my duty at home, as God directed, for I am patriotic enough, and love my country enough to go voluntarily if [my] duty lies there.<sup>72</sup>

Other Methodist probationers doing circuit work, not covered under the clerical exemption because they had not yet been ordained, similarly wrote to the Army and Navy Board seeking support for exemption claims because of the important work that they felt they were doing at home.<sup>73</sup>

In French Canada, where a lower proportion of men had enlisted voluntarily, there was a larger pool of men available to be conscripted and it was as a result of the MSA that the full weight of Canada’s military effort was seen and felt by the population at large. Jean Martin recently estimated that roughly 39,000 French Canadians were attested while the MSA was in operation, approximately a third of all those conscripted and far more than the number of French Canadians who defaulted.<sup>74</sup> As Bishop Joseph-Médard Émard of Valleyfield wrote in May 1918 in his farewell letter to the conscripts of his diocese, when the law commanded and duty called, they had responded “sinon

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<sup>72</sup> File 326, Box 14, 78.100C, Army and Navy Board Fonds, United Church of Canada Archives.

<sup>73</sup> See the files in Box 14, 78.100C, Army and Navy Board Fonds, United Church of Canada Archives. The question of whether clergy should be free to enlist as combatants had been an ongoing one, with denominations eager to ensure that regular ministries were maintained. See, for example, Trevor Powell, “The Church on the Home Front: The Church of England in the Diocese of Qu’Appelle and the Great War,” *Saskatchewan History* 64, no. 2 (2012): 11-14.

<sup>74</sup> The number of defaulters in Quebec was given as 18,827, although not all of these were necessarily francophones and there were likely francophone defaulters elsewhere. The number of French Canadian conscripts from Quebec is also unknown, but given the distribution of Canada’s francophone population, it is likely that the majority of the 39,000 were from the province. Jean Martin, “Yes, French Canadians Did Their Share in the First World War,” *Canadian Military History Journal* 17, no. 4 (2017): 50-52; Bouvier, *Déserteurs et insoumis*, 26-27, 81-85.

d'un coeur joyeux, au moins avec courage et générosité."<sup>75</sup> Although they had waited until the government had told them that they were needed and some went only reluctantly, the sentiments of conscripts were not always so different from the volunteers who had preceded them. Private Hilaire Dennis, an Ontario francophone who was among the earliest conscripts to reach the front after voluntarily reporting in the autumn of 1917, wrote home to his family that "... as I have said before, I am ready as many other Canadian lads did to make the supreme sacrifice for my people and country."<sup>76</sup>

It was in the spring of 1918, after the first groups of conscripts had proceeded overseas and in the aftermath of the German offensives, that a shift began to occur in the way the Catholic church in French Canada approached the war. As conscription increased the number of French Canadians in uniform, prayers became more fervent and new work began with the military organization. In calling for special prayers to be said to the Virgin Mary in the Diocese of Valleyfield throughout the month of May, Bishop Émard asked that the faithful pray not just for "une paix tellement appuyée sur la justice et l'amour"<sup>77</sup> as he had done in December 1917, but to obtain "cette même paix par la victoire des Armées Alliés." With the war having an effect on the economic life of the country and "sur la vie intime des familles", he noted that "C'est notre patrie elle-même qui souffre et qui saigne à son tour."<sup>78</sup> The attention of other Catholic groups also turned toward serving needs of the rapidly increasing numbers of French Canadian soldiers. At the same time as the Knights of Columbus were collecting for their Catholic Army Huts

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<sup>75</sup> J.-M. Émard, "Lettre d'adieu aux conscrits de son diocèse," *Valleyfield*, 79.

<sup>76</sup> Hilaire Dennis quoted in Dennis, *Reluctant Warriors*, 65.

<sup>77</sup> J.-M. Émard, "Souhaits de bonne année aux fidèles de son diocèse," *Valleyfield*, 44.

<sup>78</sup> J.-M. Émard, "Pour la victoire et pour la paix," *L'Action catholique*, 28 April 1918, 1.

to serve Canadian Catholic soldiers overseas, the Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Society began establishing ‘Chez Nous’ huts for French Canadian conscripts in training camps in Canada. These huts sought to provide newspapers, books, and other items intended to help the conscripts “rester fidèles à leurs habitudes chrétiennes.”<sup>79</sup> This same impulse had driven the English Canadian churches to establish recreation rooms for soldiers in training locally, but, before 1918 and the “milliers des jeunes gens ... appelées aux casernes” by conscription, there had not been the same need in Quebec.<sup>80</sup>

To help with the separation and attendant anxieties, conscripts and their families turned to familiar Catholic devotions to pray for the safety of the men and a peace obtained through an Allied victory. To mark Pentecost Sunday (May 19, 1918) the Ligue du Sacré-Coeur in one Côte-de-Beaupré parish, at the instigation of one of the parish’s conscripts and encouraged by the priest, organized a pilgrimage to Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré with the intention of obtaining “une paix décisive en faveur des Alliés et aussi afin que les ligueurs conscrits se conservent purs et pieux.”<sup>81</sup> Fifty youths, amongst them all the parish’s conscripts, walked the three hours from their parish church to the shrine, their numbers swelling to seventy-eight as they walked, interspersing canticles to the Sacred Heart and to Saint Anne between recitations of the rosary. After the six o’clock Mass concluded, the pilgrims returned home, “heureux et fortifiés” and a few days later the conscripts “répondaient à l’appel des chefs militaires courageusement

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<sup>79</sup> “L’Aide aux conscrits canadiens,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 10 June 1918, 358-360.

<sup>80</sup> “L’Aide aux conscrits canadiens,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 10 June 1918, 358-360.

<sup>81</sup> “Rendez à César ce qui est à César et à Dieu qui est à Dieu,” *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 25 July 1918, 735-736. The author of the piece is unknown, but it is noted that the account came originally from one of the pilgrims.

et sans tapage.”<sup>82</sup> On May 26, a pilgrimage to Notre-Dame-des-Victoires in Quebec City was organized by “les jeunes gens congréganistes” to ask “Notre-Dame d’intercéder pour que Dieu accord enfin à nos armes la victoire et la paix, et à nos jeunes gens une protection toute spéciale.”<sup>83</sup> With the permission of the military authorities, 525 conscripts and a military fanfare led the procession of 3,000 pilgrims through the streets to the church, where a special Mass was celebrated for the soldiers in the chapel and an open-air sermon by Abbé Côte of Saint-Roch parish spoke of the duties of the soldiers and the nobleness of their sacrifice for “la sauvegarde des foyers menacés et la gloire de la patrie.”<sup>84</sup> A smaller pilgrimage took place the same day at the shrine at Cap-de-la-Madeleine.<sup>85</sup> Individual pilgrims also made their way to these shrines in larger than normal numbers; the diocesan news for the Archdiocese of Québec recorded that throughout the month of May at Notre-Dame-des-Victoires “Il ne se passe pas de journée ... qu’il n’y vienne des groupes de pèlerins des paroisses de la ville et des environs, prier l’auguste Vierge d’accorder la victoire pour les alliés et la paix pour le monde.”<sup>86</sup> With an increasing number of French Canadian conscripts in uniform, a swift and decisive victory increasingly became the object of petition.

In addition to pilgrimages, the cult of the Sacred Heart, which had become an important part of French Canadian devotional life in the late nineteenth century, took on

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<sup>82</sup> “Rendez à César ce qui est à César et à Dieu qui est à Dieu,” *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 25 July 1918, 735-736.

<sup>83</sup> “Le pèlerinage de demain,” *L’Action catholique*, 25 May 1918, 12.

<sup>84</sup> “À Notre-Dame des Victoires,” *L’Action catholique*, 27 May 1918, 2.

<sup>85</sup> “À Notre-Dame des Victoires,” *L’Action catholique*, 27 May 1918, 2.

<sup>86</sup> “Chronique diocésaine,” *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 30 May 1918, 616.

a new aspect as it reflected the new concerns of 1918.<sup>87</sup> The feast day of the Sacred Heart, held on the Friday nineteen days after Pentecost, was often celebrated with a special evening ceremony and procession, with public oaths of consecration. On June 7, 1918, these celebrations were larger and more elaborate than in previous years and many were conducted with special intentions for the swift ending of the war.<sup>88</sup> The presence of uniformed conscripts, who participated with the permission of the military authorities, was also something new and different.<sup>89</sup> In Montreal, for example, a company of conscripts in training participated as a body in the devotions at the Gésu under the command of their officer, all receiving communion.<sup>90</sup> The largest of the celebrations was held in Quebec City, where the crowd may have swelled to 30,000. Along the procession route, homes and businesses were decorated with flowers and banners of the Sacred Heart and a thirty-foot monstrance, illuminated with 2,700 electric lightbulbs, was prepared to receive the statue, which was borne through the streets at the head of the procession by a hundred conscripts in uniform who took it in turns to take the places of honour carrying the statue.<sup>91</sup> Thousands of bare-headed men filed along the procession route “avec un cierge à la main et chantant de toute leur âme:

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<sup>87</sup> Although devotions to the Sacred Heart had existed for centuries, they were especially promoted by Pope Leo XIII, with the feast being raised in importance in 1889 and voluntary consecration being promoted in 1899. See Leo XIII, *Annum Sacrum (On Consecration to the Sacred Heart)*, papal encyclical, Vatican website, 25 May 1899, available online at [http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_25051899\\_annum-sacrum.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_25051899_annum-sacrum.html)

<sup>88</sup> See the pastoral letters calling for special celebrations from Paul Bruchési (Abp. of Montréal), “Lettre ... sur la célébration de la fête du Sacré-Coeur,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 3 June 1918, 338-342; L.N. Bégin (Abp. of Québec), “Mandement établissent une fête particulière en l’honneur du sacré-Coeur de Jésus,” *Semaine religieuse de Québec*, 6 June 1918, 626-629.

<sup>89</sup> Although militia units had historically participated in religious processions as units, in the summer of 1914 Sam Hughes, a proud Orangeman, had insisted, despite the objection of Cabinet colleagues and outrage in French Canada, on a new militia regulation that prohibited armed, uniformed troops from participating as a body alongside religious symbols like crucifixes. See Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons*, 11-13.

<sup>90</sup> “La fête du Sacré-Coeur à Montréal,” *L’Action catholique*, 8 June 1918, 12.

<sup>91</sup> “Le Sacré-Coeur regne à Saint-Sauveur,” *L’Action catholique*, 8 June 1918, 1, 7.

Dieu, notre Père  
 O Dieu Sauveur  
 Faites cesser la guerre  
 Au nom du Sacré Coeur.”<sup>92</sup>

At the conclusion of the evening, Arthur Paquet, Saint-Sauveur’s representative in the provincial legislature, took the oath of consecration on behalf of the crowd, consecrating “nos personnes, nos familles, nos parents, notre PATRIE et nos armées” and asking especially that the soldiers be granted “le courage dans les combats et la générosité dans le sacrifice; couvrez-nous tous de votre protection et conduisez-nous à la VICTOIRE!”<sup>93</sup> In keeping with the church’s greater enthusiasm for victory, this was more emphatic than the oath of the previous year, which had petitioned more simply: “O Roi des rois, Maître des nations, nous demandons que ... la guerre finisse, que la paix nous soit accordée.”<sup>94</sup>

There was also a material aspect to this devotion. In Saint Joseph, Manitoba, the parish took up a subscription with the intention to erect a monument to the Sacred Heart “afin d’obtenir qu’il protège leurs familles, leurs conscrits et leurs moissons.”<sup>95</sup> Other parishes also undertook collections to erect these statues to similar ends. In Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix (Archdiocese of Ottawa), the wording wrapping around the base of the statue erected in 1918 reads simply “Que Votre règne arrive / Soyez nous propice / Donnez nous la paix / Ayez pitié de nous” (see Figure 6.2). A statue in Mascouche (Archdiocese of Montréal) was erected by the parish of Saint-Henri to implore for an end to hostilities; it was later rededicated to recognize the victims of the war and the

<sup>92</sup> “Le Sacré-Coeur regne à Saint-Sauveur,” *L’Action catholique*, 8 June 1918, 1, 7. This wording was not unique to the celebration in Quebec City the same one is described as having been used in Trois-Rivières — see Joseph Barnard, “Les Évènements,” *Bien Public*, 13 June 1918, 1.

<sup>93</sup> Emphasis and typography original. “Courriers de la Ville — Saint-Sauveur,” *L’Action catholique*, 10 June 1918, 3.

<sup>94</sup> “L’apothéose du Sacré Coeur à St-Sauveur,” *L’Action catholique*, 16 June 1917, 7.

<sup>95</sup> *Cloches de Saint-Boniface*, 1 June 1918, 145.

Spanish flu epidemic and to commemorate the dead in the cemetery where the statue was erected.<sup>96</sup> At Saint-Joseph-de-Soulanges (Diocese of Valleyfield), the parish erected its monument in 1919 in thanks for the protection given to the parish's men during the war.<sup>97</sup> Soldiers and their families also made or sought out small tokens with the emblem of the Sacred Heart that could be carried into battle and organizations like *Le Messager canadien du Sacré-Coeur* produced celluloid buttons stamped with an appropriate image to satisfy the demand.<sup>98</sup>

The Catholic church in French Canada had, like the churches in English Canada, been involved with supporting soldiers since the early days of the war, not only through such institutional structures as chaplaincies, but also less formally. In the spring of 1915, just before leaving Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu for their training camp at Amherst, Nova Scotia, the men of the 22nd Battalion had gathered as a body for “une imposante cérémonie religieuse” to consecrate themselves to the Sacred Heart. On behalf of the assembled men, the battalion chaplain had taken the oath of consecration and given each soldier their Sacred Heart flag, “symbole émouvant de la patrie, du devoir et du sacrifice.”<sup>99</sup> Three years later, as French Canadian conscripts prepared to go overseas, they also looked to devote themselves and their service to the Sacred Heart. Instead of

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<sup>96</sup> “Monument du Sacré-Coeur,” Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec, 2013. Online at <http://www.patrimoine-culturel.gouv.qc.ca/rpcq/detail.do?methode=consulter&id=167987&type=bien#.W384tH5G3NZ> (accessed July 2018).

<sup>97</sup> “Historique de l’Église Saint-Joseph,” Paroisse Saint-Joseph-de-Soulanges. Online at <https://www.paroissestjoseph.org/historique-eglise-saint-joseph#monument> (accessed July 2018).

<sup>98</sup> “Le bouton-drapeau aux armes du Sacré Coeur,” *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface*, 1 July 1918. See also “L’armée du Sacré-Coeur,” editorial, *L’Action catholique*, 1 May 1918, 1; Mark McGowan, “Harvesting the ‘Red Vineyard’: Catholic Religious Culture in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919,” *CCHA Historical Studies* 64 (1998); Michael Snape, *God and the British Soldier: Religion and the British Soldier in the First and Second World Wars* (London: Routledge, 2005), 81-84.

<sup>99</sup> J.A.H., *Les poilus canadiens: Le roman du vingt-deuxième bataillon canadien-français* (n.p., [1919?]), 9.

**Figure 6.2. — Monument to the Sacred Heart at Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix, Quebec**



Photograph by author, July 2018. Edited to show detail.

conducting these ceremonies as a unit, as the men of the 22nd Battalion had done, these conscripts took part in the celebrations of their communities, adding a more martial air to them. In French Canada, prayers for the end of the war took on a more direct and more fervent aspect as more and more families saw their sons don uniforms and prepare to proceed overseas to fight for the Allied cause. Instead of being a conflict in far-off Europe, the war had become something personal.

*August 1918 — The Heavy Cost of Victory*

August 4, 1918, marked four years since the beginning of the war. As had been the case in previous years, some churches chose to mark the anniversary with special services, using them to remind people of the reasons why the war was being fought. At Toronto's Saint James Anglican Cathedral, Canon Herbert Plumtre combined loyalty to the empire with pride in the Canadian war effort, telling listeners, "Four years ago, Great Britain did a deed which brought Canada's name into the list of nations. Nothing but justice to Belgium, chivalry to France, and her own honour dictated her course. We have paid for it in sorrow and tears, but we have saved our souls and can hold up our heads."<sup>100</sup> But the experience of four years of war had changed Canada from the nation that greeted the war with patriotic enthusiasm. The voluntarism that had sustained the nation through the first years of the war was no longer sufficient. Conscription had been required in order to keep the Canadians Corps properly reinforced. And fundraising campaigns were no longer exceeding their goals as people were unable to sustain the repeated demands from so many organizations; early in 1918, the Toronto and York Patriotic Fund had required an extra day to meet their goal, the first campaign in a major city not to reach its target by the announced deadline.<sup>101</sup> In Alberta and Manitoba, the provincial organizers of the Patriotic Fund had publicly expressed the opinion that the financial burden of supporting the dependants of soldiers should be fulfilled by the

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<sup>100</sup> H.P. Plumtre quoted in "Church News," *Canadian Churchman*, 8 August 1918, 511. His text was Proverbs 4:18 — "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

<sup>101</sup> Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 151-152.

government through taxation rather than voluntary contributions.<sup>102</sup> Canadians were proud of what they had accomplished in terms of war relief and on the battlefield and remained determined to see the war through to victory, but, at the beginning of the fifth year of war, they were beginning to tire under the constant strain of war.

The German offensives had finally ground to a halt in June as exhausted troops outpaced their supply lines and the number of casualties exceeded the reinforcements available. While the Allies had suffered more than 300,000 casualties in the spring fighting and had been pushed back in many places, there were hopes that the Germans' morale was beginning to crack; an Australian attack at Hamel on July 4 had found the Germans surprisingly unwilling to defend the territory, instead deciding to retreat or surrender. Major attacks were planned at numerous places along the front to capitalize on this fact, and, on August 8, an Allied attack on Amiens, spearheaded by the Canadian Corps, pushed the Germans back nearly eleven kilometres and captured thousands of prisoners. Although gains were more modest in subsequent days, in the following two weeks the Canadians liberated twenty-seven villages and advanced a total of twenty-two kilometres. Finally, the tide of the war had turned, but there would be no respite for either the Germans or the Canadians. On August 26, the Canadians were attacking again, this time on the Arras front, trying to break through the German defences that made up the Hindenburg Line. Although the Canadians faced hard fighting in pushing through the heavily fortified positions, the Germans were falling back across much of the Western Front in the face of Allied attacks.

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<sup>102</sup> Philip Morris, *The Canadian Patriotic Fund: A Record of Its Activities from 1914 to 1919* (Ottawa?: n.p., [1920?]), 73-74, 110-112.

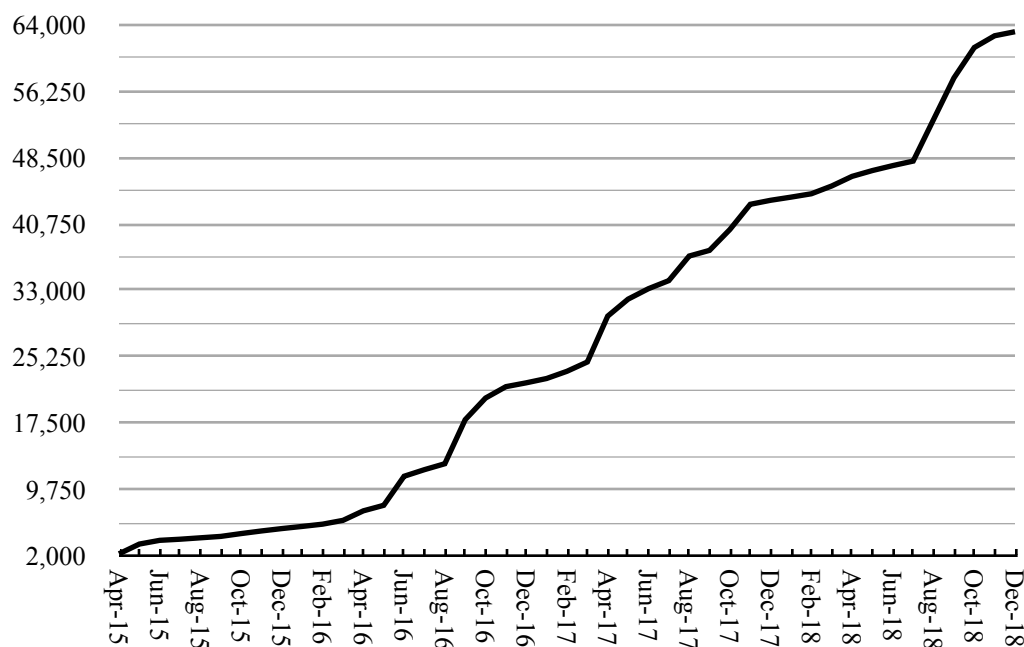
But the series of victories beginning at Amiens would cost the Canadians dearly (see Figure 6.3). Although Vimy would remain the costliest single battle for the Canadian Corps, with more than 10,000 total casualties suffered in the course of four days of fighting, Canadian units suffered nearly 12,000 total casualties in the fighting that took place between August 8 and August 20, only to begin another attack on August 26. Unlike previous engagements, where there had been time to rest and rebuild following major losses, in the fall of 1918 the Corps was attacking almost continuously. Between August 26 and September 4, there were another 11,000 total casualties. Only the availability of conscripts enlisted under the MSA enabled the Canadian Corps to replace the lost men and maintain its fighting efficiency, although the Corps was affected by the loss of the many long-service veterans and officers among the dead and wounded.<sup>103</sup> But these losses, particularly the more than 6,300 fatal casualties, fell heavily on the families waiting at home. As Ruth Antliff wrote on August 29, 1918, to her son, Will, who was serving overseas, “While we read daily accounts of the victories and the advance of the allies, we are almost speechless when we see the lists of casualties that follow.”<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Cook, *Shock Troops*, 409-507; Nicholson, *Official History*, 386-440; J.L. Granatstein, “Conscription in the Great War,” in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David Mackenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 62-75; Nick Lloyd, *Hundred Days: The End of the Great War* (London: Viking, 2013).

<sup>104</sup> Ruth Antliff quoted in Dennis, *Reluctant Warriors*, 104-105. The Antliff letters are also used extensively in Mélanie Morin-Pelletier, “‘The Anxious Waiting Ones at Home’: Deux familles canadiennes plongées dans le tourment de la Grande guerre,” *Histoire sociale/Social History* 47, no. 94 (2014): 353-368.

**Figure 6.3. — Cumulative Fatal Casualties  
(April 1915 - December 1918)**



Numbers from “Canadian Virtual War Memorial,” *Veterans Affairs Canada*, available online at <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial>

Because of the private nature of anxiety, grief, and loss, it is difficult to find sources that speak directly to this aspect of the Great War experience. Soldiers’ letters home have been treasured and preserved, along with the telegrams and official letters of condolence announcing the death of a husband or son in uniform, but there are relatively few traces of the emotional impact that these deaths had on the families or of the way in which they were supported and consoled by their communities. As might be expected, local churches made an effort to reach out to congregants who had suffered losses due to the war. Archdeacon H.J. Cody’s appointment diary from the war years has been preserved and a study of it, together with the roll of war-dead from the post-war

memorial in his Toronto parish of St. Paul's Anglican (Bloor Street) and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) register, shows that when he learned of a death that had taken place overseas, he paid a visit to the family almost immediately, the same level of pastoral service offered regularly to parishioners during the same period.<sup>105</sup> This matches well with responses received to the questionnaire sent out to Methodist ministers by their Army and Navy Board after the end of the war, asking for a record of their circuit's wartime activities. Although most of the surveys were not returned or were incomplete, the majority of those that were returned indicated that the families of those wounded or killed on overseas service were being ministered to 'in the normal way'.<sup>106</sup> Notices of prayers for men reported wounded appear in various periodicals, but, lacking further evidence and overshadowed by the dead, little more can be said about support offered by the churches to those families, some of whom clearly found comfort in religion. After her son, James Murphy, was wounded in the arm at Vimy Ridge, his mother began saying the 'Thirty Days Prayer' in hopes that he would not lose his arm or succumb to the effects of his wounds.<sup>107</sup>

The emotional impact of a death was difficult to bear, but perhaps more difficult yet was the news that a soldier had been reported missing. The lingering uncertainty was difficult as it kept a faint hope alive for families that men might yet turn up alive. A death notice at least granted a sense of finality. Writing to a friend, Irene Ford offered

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<sup>105</sup> Appointment diaries (1914-1918), Series B, H.J. Cody Papers, MU4980, Archives of Ontario. Because the memorial at St. Paul's lists only deaths, the nature of the sources don't allow any comment to be made about Cody's actions when news of a wound or serious illness reached the families at home.

<sup>106</sup> Folders 605-616, Box 27, Army and Navy Board, United Church of Canada Archives.

<sup>107</sup> Letter from 'Mother' to James Murphy, date unknown, Canadian Letters and Images Project, available online at <http://www.canadianletters.ca/content/document-484>

this as comfort for the loss of her son: “we know you must feel this blow very much but you are spared the suspense which many mothers must endure when sons are reported ‘missing’ what terrible things that might mean, we have no idea: or if ‘wounded’ what terrible suffering some poor boys must endure while nature and medical skill do their best to heal the broken body.”<sup>108</sup> Notice of a death also allowed families to hold memorial services to mourn and attempt to find closure. While large public memorials, such as those held after the gas attack at St. Julien or the capture of Courcellette, recognized individual sacrifices as part of a larger effort, this would not have been the way that the majority of Canadian families would have commemorated their war dead. Most memorial services were much smaller and recognized men as individuals, giving people a chance to show the respect and sympathy of the church and community for the sacrifices made. In Montreal, Edith Luke described going into a downtown church in August 1916 to find the pulpit draped in crêpe and the organist playing the funeral march. She learned that “four young men of that congregation had fallen on the field of action during the week, giving their lives for their country. These marks of respect in this great downtown church were for them, so no wonder people bowed their heads and wept softly as one of the young choristers sang ‘Crossing the Bar.’”<sup>109</sup>

Religious sentiments also appear in the letters of condolence received by families, not only as consolation but as part of the process of assigning meaning to the deaths. The Methodist Army and Navy Board asked ministers to send notices of

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<sup>108</sup> Irene Ford to Ida Johns, letter 1 October 1917, Canadian Letters and Images Project, available online at <http://www.canadianletters.ca/collections/war/468/collection/20780/doc/221> See also Laura to family of Hadden Ellis, letter, 10 October 1917, Canadian Letters and Images Project, available online at <http://www.canadianletters.ca/content/document-14092>

<sup>109</sup> Edith Luke, “Montreal Letter,” *Christian Guardian*, 16 August 1916, 22.

Methodist casualties so that an official letter of condolence could be sent from the church acknowledging the sacrifice that had been made part of the empire and in the cause of righteousness.<sup>110</sup> But these sentiments were reflected in private letters as well. One such letter to a mother who lost her son in August 1918 reads, “[Christ] give His life that we might have Eternal Life; our boys are giving theirs that we may remain in Christian liberty ...”<sup>111</sup> Writing to her sister after hearing of the death of her nephew in May 1917, another woman struggled with the spelling but had no doubt as to the meaning of her nephew’s sacrifice — “Willie give his life bravley and fearlessly and gloreysly for the saek of liberty and justice and we are all proud of him ...”<sup>112</sup> These letters of condolence, while giving a sense of community to the bereaved family, could also be overwhelming. When Philippe Bieler, son of one of the theology professors at Montreal’s Presbyterian College, died of trench fever at a casualty clearing station on October 1, 1917, his mother and father received the notification on October 10 and the news appeared in the newspapers the next day, with the first of the more than two-hundred letters of condolence beginning to arrive almost immediately. In a letter to her two other sons still on overseas service, his mother, Blanche, noted that the letters contained “such lovely thoughts about the sacrifice, and eternal life! ... All that doesn’t bring back our little soldier, but it helps to carry the weight.” She also noted that “All

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<sup>110</sup> Letters reflecting the same sentiments also seem to have been sent when ministers notified the Army and Navy Board of permanent wounds. See Box 25 for letters informing the Army and Navy Board of losses and Files 580-590, Box 26 for letters of sympathy and replies. Army and Navy Board, United Church of Canada Archives.

<sup>111</sup> Foxwarren Home Economics to D. Watt, letter, 2 September 1918, Vaughan David Watt Fonds, University of Manitoba Archives, available online from [http://www.umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/canada\\_war/watt/website/index.shtml](http://www.umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/canada_war/watt/website/index.shtml)

<sup>112</sup> Emma to the Bell Family, letter, 16 May 1917, Canadian Letters and Images Project, available online from <http://www.canadianletters.ca/collections/war/468/collection/20482/doc/221>

these emotions will be prolonged, as we receive the letters from Europe [from chaplains, medical officers, and former comrades].”<sup>113</sup> After his son Ed went missing in June, the Rev. J.W. Morgan placed a notice in the *Christian Guardian* on August 2, 1916 as many of the people who had written him with inquiries about his son took the paper and having the news printed “will save me some work and trouble, and the strain is quite enough for now.” He wrote that, although they had had no news, “We are striving to fight the battle as bravely as he. His poor mother has been almost prostrate.”<sup>114</sup>

Some families sought consolation in working to help those soldiers still fighting in service of the cause for which their loved ones had died. S.J. Hughes, a Methodist minister in Quebec, wrote of working with soldiers after the death of his son, Gordon, on the Somme, noting that “we cannot do enough for men going to meet the same danger.”<sup>115</sup> In October 1917, a month after the death of her son, Earl, Mrs. Ida Johns sent \$15, the amount of his last assigned pay cheque, to the Y.M.C.A. to be used for the association’s work overseas.<sup>116</sup> She also sent letters and Christmas packages to two of her son’s trench-mates.<sup>117</sup> Others sought to console one another. On reading in the newspaper of the death of Earl Johns, Mrs. Hey. Strang wrote his mother. The two women seem never to have met, but, as Earl had written after her son’s death to describe the burial, she felt the need to reach out. In offering her condolences, she admitted, “We

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<sup>113</sup> Blanche Bieler, letter, 23-24 October 1917, printed in Philip Bieler, *Onward, Dear Boys!* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2014), 205.

<sup>114</sup> J.W. Morgan, letter to editor, “Fate of Ed Morgan Still Uncertain,” *Christian Guardian*, 2 August 1916, 30.

<sup>115</sup> S.J. Hughes quoted in “The Conferences,” *Christian Guardian*, 10 January 1918, 18.

<sup>116</sup> Tim [unreadable] to Mrs. Henry Johns, letter, 11 October 1917, Canadian Letters and Images Project, available online at <http://www.canadianletters.ca/collections/war/468/collection/20780/doc/221>

<sup>117</sup> R.H. Hoover to Ida Johns, letter, 17 December 1917; Jackson Woods to Ida Johns, letter, 1 January 1918; R.H. Hoover to Ida Johns, letter, 2 February 1918, Canadian Letters and Images Project, available online at <http://www.canadianletters.ca/collections/war/468/collection/20780/doc/221>

did not raise our boys for this and I wonder sometimes if it is worth the price paid in so much blood, the only thing that seems left to us is to live so as to be worthy of their sacrifice.”<sup>118</sup> She also wrote out a poem (“To You Who Have Lost” by John Oxenham) that she found had helped in her own grief. The poem spoke of loss, but also of purpose and of death in the presence of God:

... He died as few men get the chance to die,—  
 Fighting to save a world’s morality.  
 He died the noblest death a man may die,  
 Fighting for God, and Right, and Liberty;—  
 And such a death is Immortality.

‘He died unnoticed in the muddy trench.’  
 Nay, — God was with him ...<sup>119</sup>

Through their traditional pastoral ministries, the churches provided what consolation they could to the grieving families, but they also were able to provide reassurances that the sacrifices were worthwhile through their continued assertions that the war was serving an important function in bettering the world. The combination of religious faith and belief that the war was being fought in pursuit of a worthwhile cause was important to families trying to cope with the fact that a loved one would never return.

### *October 1918 — The Spanish Flu Epidemic*

As the Allied armies pushed back the Germans in Europe, Canadians at home were faced with the problem of disease. An influenza epidemic, which had been affecting troops overseas since the spring, began sweeping through the country in the fall of 1918.

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<sup>118</sup> Mrs. Hey. Strang to Ida Johns, letter, 3 October 1917, Canadian Letters and Images Project, available online at <http://www.canadianletters.ca/collections/war/468/collection/20780/doc/221>

<sup>119</sup> Line breaks as originally published, rather than as copied. John Oxenham, “To You Who Have Lost,” *All’s Well!* (London: Methuen, 1915), 35-36

The first Canadian cases of the so-called 'Spanish' flu had appeared in July among the sailors of troop ships and soldiers returned to Canada to convalesce, but the relatively limited scale and swift quarantine of the affected men had enabled the authorities to prevent a widespread outbreak. When the disease reappeared in the fall, however, possibly carried up from New England by American soldiers departing for Europe from Canadian ports, it spread rapidly, with the first civilian cases appearing in mid-September. Because of the pressing need for reinforcements overseas due to the heavy casualties suffered by the Canadian Corps during the string of attacks made in the last three months of the war, military authorities were reluctant to stop troop movements and the cramped quarters of military barracks, troop trains, and transport ships allowed the virus to spread easily from person to person and city to city. The troops slated to fight against the revolutionary Bolshevik government as part of the Siberian Expeditionary Force brought the flu with them into Western Canada as they travelled westward to their assembly point in British Columbia and within only a few weeks of the first cases the illness was widespread.<sup>120</sup> At its peak in late October, between one-sixth and one-third of the Canadian population had been infected and there would be upwards of 50,000 deaths directly attributable to the flu or its secondary complications.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Mark Humphries, "The Limits of Necessity: Public Health, Dissent, and the War Effort during the 1918 Influenza Pandemic," in *Epidemic Encounters: Influenza, Society, and Culture in Canada, 1918-20*, edited by Magda Fahrni and Esyllt Jones (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2012), 23-29, 35-38; Mark Humphries, "The Horror at Home: The Canadian Military and the 'Great' Influenza Pandemic of 1918," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Society/Revue de la Société historique du Canada* 16, no. 1 (2005): 235-260.

<sup>121</sup> Estimates of the number affected varied widely because, even in places where influenza was made a reportable disease, more mild cases were often treated at home by family members and went unreported. The variety of ways that the causes of death were reported also makes calculating an exact death toll impossible. See Janice McGinnis, "The Impact of Epidemic Influenza: Canada, 1918-1919," *Historical Papers/Communications historiques* 12, no. 1 (1977): 120-140; Magda Fahrni and Esyllt Jones, "Introduction," in *Epidemic Encounters*, 1-29.

Although local authorities quickly took steps to deal with the epidemic, existing facilities were soon overwhelmed. As the regular hospitals filled with patients, emergency hospitals were established in schools and other suitable buildings and staffed by volunteer nurses, aided by such medical professionals as were available.<sup>122</sup> Among the thousands of volunteer nurses to step in to tend the sick, whether at home or in hospitals, were Catholic religious communities, many of them freed from their teaching duties when schools were closed in an attempt to prevent the disease from spreading further. In Winnipeg, the hospital sisters were aided by those from other religious orders, including Oblates, Loretto sisters, Holy Name sisters, and Jesuits from the Collège de Saint-Boniface. Their help was “acceptés avec joie et reconnaissance.”<sup>123</sup> In Montréal, Archbishop Paul Bruchési helped organize the groups of teaching brothers, Viateurs, and Marists, who “par groupes de 50, 40 ou 30, en tout une couple de cents au moins” became nurses. Other female religious joined those Grey Nuns, Sisters of Providence, and Sisters of l’Hôtel-Dieu normally engaged in nursing duties so that more than a thousand female religious were engaged in caring for the sick during the worst of the crisis. In praising their work in *La Semaine religieuse de Montréal* at the end of October, Abbé Elie-Joseph Auclair, exclaimed, “quelle armée pacifique, douce, dévouée, compatissante, aimante et par le fait, puissante, elles forment depuis quinze jours, affairées et inlassable!”<sup>124</sup> Protestant ministers were also among those who took on a

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<sup>122</sup> Linda Quiney, “‘Rendering Valuable Service’: The Politics of Nursing during the 1918-19 Influenza Crisis,” in *Epidemic Encounters*, 48-69.

<sup>123</sup> “L’Influenza dans l’ouest,” *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface*, 1 November 1918, 203-204.

<sup>124</sup> E.-J. Auclair, “Le dimanche — 27 octobre 1918,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 4 November 1918, 295-297. See also Magda Fahrni, “‘Respectfully Submitted’: Citizens and Public Letter Writing during Montreal’s Influenza Epidemic, 1918-1920,” in *Epidemic Encounters*, 76-77, 86, 94n95; Magda Fahrni, “‘Elles sont partout’: Les femmes et la ville en temps d’épidémie, Montréal, 1918-1920,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française* 59, no. 1 (2004): 67-85.

variety of duties in attempting to relieve the suffering, particularly in hard-hit rural areas.

Percy Hackworth, the Anglican clergyman at Watrous, Saskatchewan, recounted his experience, noting:

The epidemic certainly gave the clergy an opportunity of disproving ... that a parson is a wishy-washy work one day in the week sort of creature. My men worked like Trojans: doing chores, cutting wood, looking after furnaces, milking cows, feeding horses for sick people. Their wives made, and the clergy carried all over the prairie, gallons of soups, broths, jellies, &c. I personally was thankful for my rough-and-ready knowledge of medicine, and my note book shows a total of sixty-three cases whom I cared for, sponged, doctored, fed and bullied during the outbreak. ... My family was almost the first to catch the flu and for eleven days and nights I had not my clothes off.<sup>125</sup>

And Protestant congregations, after four years of gathering together for practical war-work, also stepped in to do what they could to help those suffering from the epidemic. In Edmonton, Wesley Methodist Church established a laundry service with electric washers in their basement to do the washing to help stricken families and women from nearby McDougall Methodist came together at the church to cook all the meals for, on average, seventeen families who were otherwise unable to fend for themselves during the epidemic. The *Christian Guardian's* northern Alberta correspondent, T.D. Jones, in writing of the work being done, noted that the flu was not “an occasion for laziness” but “an opportunity for doing good, and the churches as organized bodies have proven themselves leaders in service.”<sup>126</sup> Clergymen were, of course, also required to bury the increasing numbers of dead, but these funerals seem largely to have been family affairs. While this was due in part to the flu situation and public health concerns, the private

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<sup>125</sup> *Occasional Papers of the Qu'Appelle Association*, Spring 1919, 25-27, R-705, Archives of the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle.

<sup>126</sup> T.D. Jones, “Northern Alberta Letter,” *Christian Guardian*, 20 November 1918, 17.

nature of these ceremonies contrasts with the public memorials and community participation held for the war dead.

Although small groups of individuals might come together to organize nursing care or others services in aid of the flu victims, almost everywhere public health boards and other local authorities acted to forbid public gatherings to prevent the transmission of the flu virus. In Alberta, for example, gatherings any larger than seven people were prohibited by the provincial government. This prohibition included church services.<sup>127</sup> In general, however, churches were asked to voluntarily close their doors rather than being ordered to do so.<sup>128</sup> In Ottawa, the health authorities gave “a hint” to the churches that they should close and a meeting of the city’s Ministerial Association on October 5 determined that “the churches should hold no services until the epidemic had subsided.”<sup>129</sup> Some protested against this action, including A.J. Fidler of St. Clement’s Anglican Church in North Toronto; he felt that closing the churches was unwise, unnecessary, and un-Christian, lowering the churches to the same level as saloons and theatres, as people needed to call on God in times of trouble and should be able to go to the churches in order to pray for the end of the epidemic.<sup>130</sup> But most clergy recognized the wisdom of the public health authorities and cancelled their services, however much the action might have been regretted.

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<sup>127</sup> T.D. Jones, “Northern Alberta Letter,” *Christian Guardian*, 13 November 1918, 14.

<sup>128</sup> Fahrni, “Respectfully Submitted,” 77, 91n45.

<sup>129</sup> “News of the Churches,” *Presbyterian and Westminster*, 31 October 1918, 408.

<sup>130</sup> “Church News,” *Canadian Churchman*, 31 October 1918, 704. Also “Manitoba Letter,” *Christian Guardian*, 20 November 1918, 20. For a discussion of Toronto during the flu epidemic, see Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 185-189.

The decision to close the churches was a weighty one for Catholic bishops as attendance at Sunday Mass was a matter of obligation. On Tuesday, October 8, in a letter released through the press, Archbishop Bruchési announced that, in all places where the flu had appeared and until the end of the epidemic, that the Low Masses should not be said and sermons omitted at all services.<sup>131</sup> On Thursday, following the official advice of the board of health, which prohibited large gatherings, Bruchési amended his previous instructions and ordered all religious offices to be cancelled for the following Sunday and dispensed the faithful from their religious obligations, calling on them instead to pray together as families.<sup>132</sup> It was the first of four Sundays without any services in Montreal. Elsewhere the churches would remain open temporarily but services were abbreviated and people wary of contracting the illness. “La journée de dimanche a été particulièrement triste. Les messes dites en hâte, et le public pressé de fuir, tout cela produisait une pénible impression.” wrote Joseph Barnard, editor of *Le Bien Public*, the unofficial newspaper of the Diocese of Trois-Rivières.<sup>133</sup>

Despite the cancellation of services, steps were taken to ensure that people were not entirely deprived of the comforts of religion. Bruchési, in announcing the second week of closure, established a pattern that would largely hold in subsequent weeks, suggesting that on weekdays and Sunday afternoons the faithful might individually make “courtes et ferventes visites au Saint-Sacrement”, and he ordered that priests celebrating

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<sup>131</sup> Paul Bruchési, “Reglements pour le temps de l’épidémie,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 14 October 1918, 242. The same instructions were issued in other dioceses, including that of Trois-Rivières and Québec — F.X. Cloutier, “Circulaire au Clergé (No. 150),” *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires de S.G. Mgr. F.-X. Cloutier, 3ième évêque des Trois-Rivières*, vol. 4 (Trois-Rivières: Le Bien Public, Ltée, 1923), 243-244; L.-N. Bégin, “Une lettre de Son Éminence,” *L’Action catholique*, 11 October 1918, 1.

<sup>132</sup> Paul Bruchési, “Reglements pour le temps de l’épidémie,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 14 October 1918, 243. See also Rumilly, *Histoire de la province de Québec*, 23:114-117.

<sup>133</sup> Joseph Barnard, “Les Évènements,” *Bien Public*, 17 October 1918, 1.

their private Masses in the morning have the bells rung so that people at home could hear them and participate in spirit.<sup>134</sup> Then, priests, vested in surplice, stole, and humeral veil, could carry the ciborium with the consecrated Host through the streets of the parish.<sup>135</sup> Abbé Élie-Joseph Auclair described how “Le son des cloches, annonçant le départ de la procession, a attiré les citoyens aux fenêtres de leurs demeures, pour se courber sous la bénédiction du Saint-Sacrement. Et le Dieu de guérison et de résurrection passa ... secourant tous ceux qui tendaient les bras vers lui.”<sup>136</sup> While some priests made the procession on foot — including Archbishop Bruchési, who walked in procession with the canons of St. James Cathedral behind the ciborium and cross — other priests were driven through the streets in automobiles so as to be seen by more people.<sup>137</sup> The instructions to keep large crowds from gathering remained in force in Montreal until November 10, despite requests from Bruchési that services be allowed for the celebrations of All Saints (November 1) and All Souls (November 2), two feast days which recognized the dead and would therefore have been particularly meaningful in the aftermath of the flu epidemic and in light of the overseas military situation. The authorities refused to grant their permission because, although the number of deaths and new infections was declining, they feared the dangers of prematurely allowing

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<sup>134</sup> Paul Bruchési, “Lettre ... au sujet de la fermeture des églises,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 28 October 1918, 278-281. See also Élie-Joseph Auclair, “Le dimanche — 27 octobre 1918,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 4 November 1918, 295-297.

<sup>135</sup> Paul Bruchési, “Lettre ... au sujet de la fermeture des églises,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 28 October 1918, 278-281. The humeral veil is a large piece of fabric worn by clerics at, among other occasions, processions of the Blessed Sacrament, in giving Benediction, and in taking Viaticum to the sick. The humeral veil wraps around the shoulder and is used to grasp the vessel containing the consecrated Host so as to emphasize that the blessing comes from Christ through the Sacrament. The ciborium is counterpart of the chalice.

<sup>136</sup> Élie-Joseph Auclair, “Le dimanche — 20 octobre 1918,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 28 October 1918, 281-283.

<sup>137</sup> Élie-Joseph Auclair, “Le dimanche — 20 octobre 1918,” *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 28 October 1918, 281-283.

gatherings to resume. In Western Canada, the churches in some places remained closed until December, although some local papers provided space for ministers to publish sermons and orders of service for home worship.<sup>138</sup>

While watching the Sacrament processing through the streets or reading encouraging sermons may have provided some of the spiritual solace sought during the epidemic, they could not replace the sense of community offered by gathering together to worship. Abbé Auclair wrote of how one woman was found on her knees praying at the closed door of Montreal's St. James Cathedral, seeking out the sense of comfort and community found in the church.<sup>139</sup> After four weeks with no services, John Farthing, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, expressed the tension between wanting to prevent the spread of the disease and the yearning for the comforts of the church during a time of testing, writing:

With war slaying our youth in France, and Pestilence slaying them here, it is levying a double toll upon our race. Sorrow fills our hearts. Then to make it worse, kind Science comes and tells us that we must not foregather, because this dread Pestilence lurks in the very breath of our nostrils ... We wanted to thank God for the wonderful victories which our men were winning for us. ... We wanted to pray for them, and for our brethren in sorrow, and for those who were sick, and to come to the Father together that our souls might be strengthened.<sup>140</sup>

Farthing urged that people pray at home for as long as the churches remained closed so that their voices might still "ascend to God as one, though we pray separately."<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> A.E.R., "British Columbia Letter," *Christian Guardian*, 4 December 1918, 28-29; H.D.R., "Our Saskatchewan Letter," *Christian Guardian*, 11 November 1918, 19.

<sup>139</sup> E.-J. Auclair, "Le vendredi — 1er novembre et le dimanche — 3 novembre 1918," *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 11 November 1918, 308-310.

<sup>140</sup> John Farthing, "The Bishop's Message," *Montreal Churchman*, November 1918, 3.

<sup>141</sup> John Farthing, "The Bishop's Message," *Montreal Churchman*, November 1918, 3.

The deadly flu epidemic, coming after four years of war and at a time of heavy overseas casualties, might have seemed like an occasion to question God, but the clergy did their best to reassure people of God's love. For J.P.D. Llwyd, the Anglican Dean of Nova Scotia, there was no reason for a shallow questioning of God at such a time because "The truth is that one of the strongest proofs of the real presence of the Creator in His world is found in this very instinct urging men to struggle against every form of wrong." The war, despite its tragedy, "has burnt into our minds a new conviction of the supremacy of spiritual values, and has educated us in the power to give." And the flu epidemic gave a glimpse of "the splendour of the fight which science is waging for the good of mankind" and through the closed churches taught "the sweetness of worship". In all of this struggle, "the motive power, the energizing soul of it all can certainly never be Evil, but Good, which is another name for God."<sup>142</sup>

When regular services resumed, there was much to mourn as well as much to be thankful for. In Quebec City, at Trinity Anglican there were "special services of Thanksgiving ... for the present victories of the Allied arms, and also for deliverance from the recent epidemic," while across town at Quebec Methodist Church, the morning service on November 10 was a memorial service for Private Alphonse Verrette.<sup>143</sup> Verette, who had first enlisted in September 1914 and been discharged as medically unfit before reaching the front, had volunteered again in December 1917 and was killed in action on September 28, 1918.<sup>144</sup> In Montreal, the resumption of services coincided

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<sup>142</sup> J.P.D. Llwyd, "'God's in His World'," *Canadian Churchman*, 14 November 1918, 729. This article, despite its publication date, was clearly written before the Armistice.

<sup>143</sup> "In and Out About Town," *Quebec Chronicle*, 9 November 1918, 5.

<sup>144</sup> See Verette's digitized personnel file online at Library and Archives Canada.

with a visit from a delegation of the French Foreign Legion, lending the day a martial air. In his address, Bruchési's thankfulness that the "épidémie qui a causé tant de souffrances et de deuils" was ending and peace drawing nearer was accompanied by a remembrance of "nos soldats canadiens." He noted the achievements on the battlefield of the 22ième Battalion at Vimy, Courcellette, Valenciennes, and Cambrai and the deaths of all those who "reposit en terre française. Ce sont *nos* héros ...". And he asked that the men of the Foreign Legion "veuill[ent] bien les appeler *vos* frères."<sup>145</sup> Despite the continued mourning, the much-anticipated peace was nearly within reach.

*November 11, 1918 — Armistice*

The service book of St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church in Ottawa contains the following notation for November 11, 1918:

On Monday morning at 3:10 am the Church bells were rung by Mr. Hughes and Sergt. Brooks to help announce the news that the Armistice had been signed; fighting on every front ceased at 11 am. There was a celebration of the Holy Communion at 8 am at which 25 were present. In the evening at 7 pm the Church was packed for a Thanksgiving Service.<sup>146</sup>

In Toronto, sirens, whistles, horns, and the clanging of fire trucks joined the ringing of church bells to rouse people from sleep to announce the Armistice.<sup>147</sup> While there were some, including the *Christian Guardian's* 'Susan Sunshine', who "thought they could have celebrated peace just as well if they had not been roused until seven," people

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<sup>145</sup> Original emphasis. Paul Bruchési quoted in E.-J. Auclair, "Le dimanche — 10 novembre 1918," *Semaine religieuse de Montréal*, 18 November 1918, 324-328.

<sup>146</sup> Entry for 11 November 1918, service book, Saint Bartholomew's Church (Ottawa), 601 S5 2 (1917-1925), Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives.

<sup>147</sup> Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief*, 190-192.

spilled out into the streets to celebrate together.<sup>148</sup> Montreal's Victory Loan parade had been scheduled for November 11, so, in the words of Edith Luke, the city was "already decorated from centre to circumference" as the day unexpectedly became one of great rejoicing. She recounted that "One of the most touching sights of the day to me was a mother with her arms literally full of the flags of the Allies, who sobbed aloud, evidently overcome in the midst of rejoicings by the thought of her boy, who could never return in this world."<sup>149</sup> In Halifax, when the guns boomed out at noon to announce the hour "set by Royal Proclamation for public thanksgiving, the doxology of praise rang forth in Old Saint Paul's from a chorus of two thousand tongues. None will ever forget the moment."<sup>150</sup>

Although a false Armistice had been celebrated on November 7 in some communities, giving officials a chance to prepare for the real thing, these were, by and large, spontaneous outpourings of emotion after the long and difficult years of war. Common elements played out in their local variations in towns and cities across the country: the Kaiser was hanged or burned in effigy, sometimes both; huge parades wended their way through streets jammed with people; bonfires and fireworks capped off a day of festivities; and thanksgiving services were held at which thousands expressed their profound gratitude for the arrival of peace. In New Hamburg, Ontario, the first citizens learned the news shortly after 5:00 when they heard whistle blowing in

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<sup>148</sup> "Susan Sunshine," "The Day of Peace," *Christian Guardian*, 27 November 1918, 10.

<sup>149</sup> Edith Luke, "Montreal Letter," *Christian Guardian*, 11 December 1918, 16.

<sup>150</sup> "Church News," *Canadian Churchman*, 21 November 1918, 751. The text of the doxology is a simple one:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Stratford, twenty kilometres away. At 11:00, a service of praise was held in the town skating rink, where the Methodist minister gave an address to the thousand people who had gathered there.<sup>151</sup> In Toronto, the crowd at Queen's Park for the thanksgiving service may have contained 100,000 worshippers, most of whom would have been unable to hear the assembled dignitaries, who included not only the lieutenant governor, mayor, and premier, but also Roman Catholic Archbishop Neil McNeil, Anglican Bishop James Sweeny, Methodist General Superintendent S.D. Chown, Rabbi Jacobs, a former moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly, and eight chaplains. Even if they could not hear the addresses, all could join "with a full heart of gratitude and a new confidence" in singing the hymns, responding to the litany of praise, and in the moment of silent prayer which concluded the service.<sup>152</sup>

The note of gratitude was not confined only to the day of the Armistice. On Tuesday, November 12, in the Cathedral of Sainte-Cécile, Joseph-Médard Émard, the Bishop of Valleyfield, presided over a ceremony held with "la double intention de rendre à Dieu hommage pour la victoire des Alliés et pour le remercier du bienfait de la paix."<sup>153</sup> Together the congregation, composed of "un grand nombre de prêtres et de religieuses, les élèves du collège et une bonne partie de la population", sang the *Te Deum*.<sup>154</sup> Sunday, November 17 was initially suggested by the government as a day of national thanksgiving, although this was delayed until December 1 in deference to the

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<sup>151</sup> "Hilarity When the News Came," *Toronto Globe*, 12 November 1918, 16. The article details similar celebrations held in a dozen different Ontario towns.

<sup>152</sup> "Vast Crowd Renders Thanks for Victory," *Toronto Globe*, 11 November 1918, 9; "Big Victory Loan Parade Feature of Celebrations," *Toronto Globe*, 12 November 1918, 9.

<sup>153</sup> J.-M. Émard, "Te Deum d'actions de grâces à l'occasion de la victoire des Alliés," 11 November 1918, *Valleyfield*, 109-110.

<sup>154</sup> "Notes locales," *Le Progrès de Valleyfield*, 14 November 1918, 5.

Spanish flu epidemic still affecting parts of the country. Western Canada was one of those places where the flu prevented people from expressing “in a public way that deeper feeling of gratitude to God”, but news of the Armistice “was too joyous not to be celebrated in some way, and our cities had wonderful and jubilant and *noisy* times, and our smaller places followed suit in the best way they could.”<sup>155</sup> In tiny Oxbow, Saskatchewan, the flu epidemic had abated sufficiently for the town to hold a ‘union’ thanksgiving service on November 17 in the Methodist church “to celebrate the dawn of a new day.” A united choir led the singing and each of the town’s ministers gave a short address on appropriate topics: ‘Thanksgiving,’ ‘Our Fallen Heroes,’ and ‘The Peace Conference.’<sup>156</sup> In Calgary it was reported that services had never been “so generally attended” as on December 1. At the Anglican pro-Cathedral of the Redeemer, the crowd overflowed into the vestibules and galleries. St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Cathedral, where Bishop John McNally officiated, was likewise filled to capacity. A large crowd also turned out at North Hill Presbyterian to hear the pastor, J. Rex Brown speak on the meaning of victory — “It is not merely that we have won. . . . But the right has triumphed. Honour and truth are vindicated. Justice is to be secured — freedom guaranteed. . . . Those who come not back have not given their lives in vain. They died for mankind and have saved the world some of the most precious things.”<sup>157</sup>

While the Armistice meant an end to the bloodshed, it also meant the beginning of a new time of reconstruction, one that would require continued devotion to the task of

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<sup>155</sup> Emphasis original. H.D.R., “Our Saskatchewan Letter,” *Christian Guardian*, 11 November 1918, 18.

<sup>156</sup> H.D.R., “Our Saskatchewan Letter,” *Christian Guardian*, 11 November 1918, 18.

<sup>157</sup> “Thanksgiving Services in Calgary Churches Attended by Throngs,” *Calgary Herald*, 2 December 1918, 8.

building a righteous world lest the sacrifices of the previous four years have been made in vain. In the Diocese of London, Bishop Michael Fallon felt that, while it was fitting that hearts be humbly raised “in grateful thanksgiving to Almighty God Who, in the very midst of our sorrow and gloom, has deigned to show us His infinite Mercy by the assurance of our victory and the triumph of the principles upon which our just Cause rested,” people must continue in the following months to look to “our good God ... for light, guidance and support in the fulfilment of obligations that bear even more heavily on victors than on vanquished.”<sup>158</sup> On Tuesday, November 19, a Solemn Pontifical Mass was to be celebrated with that intention. The following day, another “sacred duty” was to be recognized and a Solemn Pontifical Mass of Requiem was to be celebrated for the souls of Canada’s sons who had given their lives for “Canada’s Cause.”<sup>159</sup>

At the beginning of the war the churches had sought to explain the deeper principles at stake and to justify Canadian participation. In French Canada, this had largely meant viewing the war through the frame of Catholic internationalism and looking to the example of Pope Benedict XV, who emphasized the need to pray for a just peace and to take action to relieve suffering. On November 17, at the thanksgiving service held at the instruction of Cardinal Bégin in Notre-Dame-de-Québec, Chanoine Eugène Laflamme reflected on the experience of the war: “Comme il convenait à des chrétiens, nous avons tous accepté sans défaillance les devoirs et les longs sacrifices de la guerre; comme il convient à des chrétiens, nous aimons et bénissons la paix, car nous

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<sup>158</sup> Michael Fallon quoted in “Thanksgiving Mass and Requiem for Fallen Soldiers,” *Catholic Record*, 23 November 1918, 1.

<sup>159</sup> Michael Fallon quoted in “Thanksgiving Mass and Requiem for Fallen Soldiers,” *Catholic Record*, 23 November 1918, 1.

n'avons jamais voulu la guerre qu'en vue de la vraie paix."<sup>160</sup> Then he reflected on the newly arrived peace, noting:

Une des vœux les plus ardents de Sa Sainteté Benoît XV se trouve aujourd'hui virtuellement réalisé. ... [Il] souhaite une paix juste; tout indique que nous l'aurons; il désire une paix durable — il y a lieu de croire que nous l'aurons aussi.

... À l'heure présente, et ce n'est pas notre moindre sujet de joie, dans l'ordre des faits aussi bien que dans l'ordre des idées, le droit prime la force matérielle — l'agresseur injuste, malgré ce qui était hier sa puissance, est défait; les nations qui ont droit à l'existence revivent; la charité chrétienne, selon le programme pontifical de Benoît XV, semble devoir reprendre son empire dans le monde.<sup>161</sup>

French Canadians had experienced the war very differently than their English-speaking fellow Canadians, who largely failed to recognize that French Canadians were contributing in their own ways to the war effort.

In English Canada, where the imperial connection was felt more strongly and the military effort had been such a vital part of the Canadian war experience, pride and grief were often mingled with gratitude for the peace. John Neil, minister at Westminster Presbyterian (Toronto) and one of the wartime moderators of the General Assembly, spoke of these mixed reactions: "Mingled with the rejoicing there is sorrow for the loss of so many of our boys who have fallen in battle. ... I was never so proud of being a Canadian or a Briton as today."<sup>162</sup> The victory was viewed as a vindication of the principles which Britain — and therefore Canada — had entered the war to defend. In an editorial on November 12, the *Toronto Globe* acknowledged the gratitude felt to God

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<sup>160</sup> E. Laflamme quoted in "Cérémonie solennelle d'actions de grâces à la basilique," *L'Action catholique*, 18 November 1918, 1.

<sup>161</sup> E. Laflamme quoted in "Cérémonie solennelle d'actions de grâces à la basilique," *L'Action catholique*, 18 November 1918, 1.

<sup>162</sup> "Live Now for the Future," *Toronto Globe*, 12 November 1918, 8. According to census records, Neil was born in Ontario to Scottish parents.

in “this moment of intense relief and supreme joy.” The editorial went on to discuss the meaning of the peace and the struggles still to come:

In the natural exultation of the moment it must not be forgotten that this armistice means the triumph of righteousness over injustice, of truth over falsehood, of right over wrong. It is a fresh proof of what many have never questioned even in the darkest days since 1914, that the universe is built on righteousness, and that tyranny, cruelty, and falsity cannot persist forever. . . .

As we think of the future our exhilaration and gratification must not blind us to the fact that many things remain to be done, many difficulties to be faced, many problems to be solved. But the past is the guarantee of the future, and the God Who has given victory will give the wisdom needed for the complete settlement of all the questions at issue.<sup>163</sup>

The Armistice was not an end to the larger struggle for righteousness, but was an opportunity which, in deference to the previous four years, could not be allowed to pass by. As Archdeacon H.J. Cody told the crowd at Queen’s Park, “Surely the sacrifices of our fighting men challenge us. The battle-line may have quivered and bent, but it never broke. . . . Let us take up the torch of truth and justice and hold it high. Let us not break faith with those who died on Flanders fields and the pastures of Picardy.”<sup>164</sup>

On November 11 and in the days that followed, as Canadians celebrated and mourned and planned for a world that was better, more just, and more peaceful, people came to the churches, as they had during the war, to find a sense of community and to give expression to a faith that had helped give meaning to the world and their place in it. During the war Canadians had struggled and been tested. Separated by language and culture, French and English Canadians had understood the war differently and these different experiences had driven the two groups further apart. But there had also been

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<sup>163</sup> “Praise God!,” editorial, *Toronto Globe*, 12 November 1918, 6.

<sup>164</sup> H.J. Cody quoted in “Vast Crowd Renders Thanks for Victory,” *Toronto Globe*, 11 November 1918, 9.

common experiences. Canadians of both languages had prayed for peace and victory, had contributed time and money to war relief, and had seen young men don khaki, some of them never to return. As they had looked to their churches to provide comfort and guidance during the war, now they could look to them to give shape to the future. In his pastoral letter announcing the end of the war and calling for thanksgiving, Paul LaRocque, Bishop of Sherbrooke, asked the Catholics of his diocese to devote themselves to living “une vie plus chrétienne, une vie ... plus conforme en tout à la foi catholique” because it was only through this kind of life that it was possible to have

la vraie paix, la paix avec Dieu, la paix dans la justice. — C'est une telle vie ... qui donnera de l'efficacité à nos prières pour que la faveur de l'armistice dont nous nous réjouissons soit bientôt suivie de celle, plus grande encore d'une paix internationale, solide et durable, basé sur les immuables et éternels principes de la justice et du droit, une paix qui, selon la belle pensée de Benoît XV, tienne compte des légitimes aspirations des petites nations aussi bien que des grandes.

In Montreal on the day of the Armistice, J.A. Osborne, rector of Montreal's St. Columba's Anglican Church, also looked to the heritage of his church to find inspiration. Looking back on the experience of the war and forward to the work still to be done, he told his congregation:

For four years a struggle grim and ghastly, splendid and heroic, has been going on between the spiritual and the material ... Now the thundering line of battle has crumpled up ... and in the silence that has at last fallen over the fields of Flanders we know that God has won. ... All that we deserve is only mercy for our sins, and yet God is pouring into our hands almost more than we are able to receive.

Let us make no mistake about it, the victory over materialism and self-worship has been won, 'not by might and not by power,' but by that Spirit which can be evoked only by prayer, and used only by those who are faithful to the end.

... 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me?' That is the question. If we love our God, our King, our Empire, and our

Dominion, can there be any other answer save that of the beautiful prayer of our Eucharist, 'Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and our bodies.'<sup>165</sup>

With the task of waging war finally ended, people could turn their full attention to other matters, not only mourning the dead, but also building a righteous peace. CONCLUSION

The jubilation with which Canadians celebrated the end of the Great War was shaped by their profound gratitude that their efforts had been rewarded and a just peace had been earned through their sacrifices. Throughout more than four years of war and suffering, Canadians found themselves forced to grapple with difficult questions about the importance of patriotism, of conscience, of loyalty, and of faith during times of conflict. Helping Canadians face these problems were the Canadian churches. Both nationally and within their communities, the churches were important public institutions which not only guided Canadians through the moral and intellectual issues raised by the war but also helped them cope with the resultant emotional turmoil. What cause could be worth such immense devastation? What was Canada's relationship to a war being fought so far away? What was the role of God in the conflict and in the restoration of the peace? What was the duty of each individual? These were profound questions whose answers shaped the scope of activities undertaken, provided consolation to the anxious and bereaved, and ultimately helped give meaning to the peace. As sources of comfort, fellowship, and moral guidance, the churches had a profound and enduring effect on the way that Canadians at home understood and experienced the Great War. Religion was more than a matter of personal faith. It was a dynamic cultural force that

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<sup>165</sup> Some of the paragraph breaks in the original have been omitted in the extract for ease of readability. J.A. Osborne, "The Voice of the City," *Montreal Churchman*, December 1918, 10.

affected how Canadians interpreted domestic and international events, the way they came together as communities, and the way they worked to shape the nation.

Examining the rhetoric and activities of the Canadian churches has shown that, in the early months of the war the churches constructed a framework of meaning through which the war could be understood. These understandings largely persisted throughout the war and into the immediate post-war period. In English Canada, where ethnic and imperial ties reinforced a patriotic connection to Britain, clergymen justified the war as a necessary one being fought in defence of values like honour, liberty, and righteousness. Although they lacked this imperial frame of reference, the French-speaking Catholic clerics were also loyal in their response, understanding that Canada's place in the world was determined by its relationship with Britain. They also looked to the humanitarian example set by Pope Benedict XV and, like their English-speaking counterparts, encouraged prayer and war relief as a way of contributing to the war effort. For Canadian clergy of all denominations, the war was understood in more than military terms. The enthusiastic local responses and the pride communities took in their various kinds of war work indicate that many Canadians shared this broader view of the war.

There were important differences, however, in the way that French- and English-speaking Canadians understood and interpreted the war. Viewed on their own terms, rather than in comparison with the English Canadian military effort or through the *nationaliste* opposition, it is clear that French Canadians were generally supportive of the war and contributed to the national war effort. They prayed regularly for a just and durable peace at the urging of both the pope and the government. They also undertook a

variety of collections for the Canadian Patriotic Fund and other war charities, working through their churches and directly with humanitarian organizations. But their war effort took place in a different cultural context than that of English-speaking Canadians. With their war work largely ignored both at the time and in subsequent histories, this thesis has tried to identify and contextualize the ways in which the Catholic church in French Canada and French Canadian Catholics supported the war at both a diocesan and a parish level. In doing so, it is apparent that French Canadians contributed broadly to the war effort and were proud of their voluntary efforts. Even in the midst of the conscription crisis, French-speaking Catholics continued to petition for victory, act to relieve suffering caused by the war, and support soldiers serving in uniform, activities which deserve a wider recognition.

Just as French Canadian Catholics interpreted events through their own traditions, culture, and theology, each of the major denominations in English Canada also had their own approach to the war. Examining these denominational differences helps break down the view that the English-speaking churches were uncritical supporters of the war and gives voice to some of the individual questioning that took place as Canadians came to understand what it meant to be at war. Although there was widespread agreement in the English-speaking churches that the war was being fought against militarism and in defence of the values of Christian civilization, people continued to struggle with reconciling Christ's command to love one's enemies with the brutal necessities of waging war. Even as the English Canadian churches rallied to support Canada's military effort and provide comfort to the families of soldiers, individual support for the war was

often accompanied by important moral questions about the methods of waging war and the importance of the individual conscience. But with so much at stake and with so many of their friends and relatives in uniform, attitudes hardened, leaving little patience for those whom they felt not to be bearing their share of the burden, no matter what the reason. As recruiting numbers began to fall throughout 1916, at exactly the same time as Canadian casualties dramatically increased, it began to seem that the only way of ensuring that Canadian units at the front remained adequately reinforced was through the imposition of conscription. The English Canadian clergy regretted the abandonment of the voluntary system, but they refused to abandon the sacred cause for which the war was being fought. As Archbishop F.H. DuVernet, the Anglican Metropolitan of British Columbia, wrote in May 1917 to the editor of the *Canadian Churchman* just after the introduction of conscription legislation:

The voluntary system, from a moral and spiritual standpoint, must always be the higher of the two, but the compulsory system from a practical and national standpoint will always be the wider ... If [a man] is not free to choose otherwise, he is not offering a willing sacrifice for a great cause, but, on the other hand, ... when something more than the individual is involved ... the necessity of having every member in the body doing his share and not leaving the burden to the willing few becomes very evident.<sup>166</sup>

Conscription was a flashpoint for the linguistic and ethnic tensions that had been growing between French and English Canada since before the war. French Canadians, resentful of the increasing restriction of their linguistic rights outside of Quebec, were vehemently opposed to compulsory military service and rioted against its imposition in 1917 and 1918. Although they recognized that Canada had a duty to Britain and a stake

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<sup>166</sup> F.H. DuVernet, letter to the editor "Voluntary v Compulsory," *Canadian Churchman*, 31 May 1917, 353.

in the war, they remained committed to a voluntary war effort that took into account the abilities, needs, and best interests of Canada. But, when the results of the 1917 election confirmed conscription as the will of the national majority, the Catholic church in Quebec set aside its disappointment and objections to urge a respect for authority and calm in the face of provocation. They also worked to offer support and encouragement to French Canadian conscripts, just as they had earlier worked to support volunteers. It was not only English Canadians who spilled out into the streets on November 11 to celebrate the fact that their efforts and sacrifices had led to victory.

The end of the war meant that Canadians had to pick up the pieces of their pre-war lives. People's experience of the war had been intensely personal and rooted in their local communities, and it was at this level that they first experienced the peace. Local congregations held services of thanksgiving for the victory, Sunday school rooms that had been turned into soldiers' recreation rooms were reclaimed, and veterans arriving home were welcomed by their families and friends. War work committees turned their attention and remaining funds to other matters or simply disbanded. At Prime Minister Robert Borden's parish church, All Saints' Anglican in the Sandy Hill neighbourhood of Ottawa, the Soldiers' Aid Committee divided its remaining funds between aid for war refugees in France and the Netherlands and ongoing rebuilding of Halifax after the devastating explosion there the previous December.<sup>167</sup> In North Maryfield, Saskatchewan, the women of Tommy's Helpers St. John Ambulance Branch dissolved the group in February 1919, deciding that they would be able to accomplish relatively

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<sup>167</sup> Vestry report, 13 January 1919, All Saints' (Sandy Hill), 601 A1 1 m (1900-1920), Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives.

little in the three months they felt refugee work would continue, and forwarded the balance of their funds to the Belgian Relief Fund.<sup>168</sup> But it would take time to adjust to the peace and much could never go back to the way it had been, for better and for worse. The war had changed the lives of millions of Canadians, whether or not they had served overseas.

While Canadians on the home front had not been subjected to the trials and dangers faced by Canadian soldiers in the trenches, they had faced their own difficulties and challenges. Although distance had separated them from the full horrors of the front, letters, newspaper reporting, returned men, and the daily casualty lists had made them aware of the extent of the conflict. As long as the fighting continued people, with the support of the churches, had channelled their anxiety and grief into war work and determination to see the war through to a finish. But, with the arrival of peace and the return of veterans from overseas throughout the spring and summer of 1919, the war's permanent effects became increasingly apparent. A divide had opened up between those who had seen service at the front and those who had remained at home and some returned soldiers found it difficult to settle down to civilian life, turning away from churches and associations that had given shape to their lives before the war. Some returned men were openly critical of the idealistic stance that the churches had taken in supporting the war and of the extent to which social concerns seemed to have replaced simple spiritual truths.<sup>169</sup> A.E. Lavell, a former Methodist chaplain, explained that after

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<sup>168</sup> Minute book, 20 February 1919, St. John Ambulance Voluntary War Aid Association (Maryfield Branch), R-E350, Saskatchewan Archives.

<sup>169</sup> There were also those at home who had been critical of the churches for their lack of focus on spiritual matters. See H.D. Ranns, "Should We Continue to Preach About the War?," *Christian Guardian*, 2 January 1918, 8-9; David Marshall, "Methodism Embattled: A Reconsideration of the Methodist Church and World War I," *Canadian Historical Review* 46, no. 1 (1985): 48-65.

life at the front, where “you live in the presence of immediate danger and death; when you are called to continuous and strenuous action; and take sacrifice for granted as once you did comfort and ease, you learn the difference between religion and its frills and accretions. Your creed becomes very simple. . . . “I believe in Jesus” will do for most of us.”<sup>170</sup> Many returned men also had to cope with the life-changing effects of their wounds and with the memories of what they had experienced overseas.<sup>171</sup> In April 1919, while waiting to be demobilized, Harold Simpson, a gunner who had won a Military Medal in 1917 for bravery in the field, wrote to his mother, explaining:

A fellow has been through a battle and his soul is sick with the horror of it all, for no matter how hardened one may be, the sight of shattered broken men is a cruel one. . . . Perhaps his best pal has gone under before his eyes and again the whole grim tragedy of it seems to dance before his gaze. . . . Even in his dreams he sees again those cruel, gaping wounds, hears those heart-rending cries of pain and his whole being revolts. It is unbearable.<sup>172</sup>

And more than 60,000 war dead would never return home.

In the period following the Armistice, the justifications offered for the war remained powerful. It was important that a better and more just world emerge out of the immense sacrifices that had been required. As early as December 1915, the editorialist of the *Christian Guardian* had cautioned that unless something was “accomplished as the result of all the fighting and sacrifices, our name would go down to posterity as the most foolish and weak and wicked nation the world had known.”<sup>173</sup> The war, having

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<sup>170</sup> A.E. Lavell, “The Returning Soldier and the Church: II. ‘He May Be Right’,” *Christian Guardian*, 24 April 1918, 9-10. See David Marshall, “‘Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour’: The Methodist Church and the Sanctification of World War One,” in *Canadian Churches and the First World War* (Eugene, Or.: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 124-125.

<sup>171</sup> See Desmond Morton and Glenn Wright, *Winning the Second Battle: Canadian Veterans and the Return to Civilian Life, 1915-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

<sup>172</sup> Harold Henry Simpson to Mother, letter, 13 April 1919, Canadian Letters and Images Project, available online at <http://www.canadianletters.ca/collections/war/468/collection/20696/doc/221>

<sup>173</sup> “The Call for Peace,” *Christian Guardian*, 22 December 1915, 5.

been justified as part of a progressive vision of the world, could not merely be about the military defeat of Germany. On the second anniversary of the outbreak of war, George W. Tebbs, rector of St. James' Anglican Church in Hamilton, called the war "part of God's education of the world." He stated that, while "God never allows tyranny to triumph in the world, victory would only be possible when "the nations which are to be God's instruments of judgment" had become "worthy weapons in his hands."<sup>174</sup>

With the arrival of the Armistice, the task shifted from waging war to building a meaningful and lasting peace. As William Wood wrote in the *Presbyterian and Westminster* in the weeks following the Armistice:

In many a home there will be earnest thanksgiving for the hope, now reaching to something like certainty, that the soldier son will be spared to come back. ... Peace has come, but ... there will be many — many — whose hearts must almost break for others no less dearly loved, no less true and brave, who shall not return ...

Our celebrations will be but froth and madness unless deep in the hearts of our people there is clear and earnest moral purpose concerning the new peace time into which we have entered ... God has not permitted us the victory that we should treat it as an empty bauble. It comes laden with the greatest responsibility that ever confronted a generation of men.<sup>175</sup>

Although Canadians at home were called upon to support the work of peace and do their part to improve the life of the nation, the responsibility for shaping the new world fell upon the delegates of the Paris Peace Conference.<sup>176</sup> Canadians could be proud that their efforts had earned Canada a role in these negotiations, but many Catholics were disappointed that the pope, who they considered head of the only true global institution,

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<sup>174</sup> George W. Tebbs quoted in "Church News," *Canadian Churchman*, 17 August 1916, 526.

<sup>175</sup> William R. Wood, "Peace? Aye, Peace," *Presbyterian and Westminster*, 21 November 1918, 470-471.

<sup>176</sup> For an account of the Paris Peace Conference, see Margaret Macmillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2001).

had been excluded from the Conference table.<sup>177</sup> As delegates met to redraw the map of Europe and determine the scale of reparations owed by Germany, the League of Nations emerged as a powerful symbol of hope for a peaceful future. For S.D. Chown, General Superintendent of the Methodist Church, “No way of peace but God’s way can last, and we feel that [with the League of Nations] President Wilson not only popularized the world’s best juristic thought, and interpreted the highest desires and aspirations of humanity, but he ... set forth divine ideals of international relations ...”<sup>178</sup> The editorialist of the *Canadian Churchman* agreed, asking readers whether they were prepared to serve

the Baal of Force or the God of Brotherhood? For, however imperfectly it may be conceived or stated in the present [League of Nations] Covenant, there is no other Christian opinion possible than that principle of some such League as this according to the mind of Christ. ... We must see to it that the League Covenant is no ‘scrap of paper’ but a vital creative force. We must let Christ have His way with it and with us.<sup>179</sup>

Despite the hope aroused by the League of Nations, the actual signing of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, which officially marked the end of the war with Germany, passed by quietly. The *Toronto Globe* noted that “The signing of the Armistice in November last was the occasion for the spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm by the citizens, and the actual fixing of signatures to the treaty [passed] almost unnoticed.”<sup>180</sup> Thanksgiving services were held in some communities on Sunday, June 29. Other areas chose to commemorate the peace the following Sunday, the same day as

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<sup>177</sup> See “Our Prime Minister’s Peace Message,” editorial, *Catholic Record*, 12 July 1919, 4; “Troisième anniversaire,” editorial, *L’Action catholique*, 11 November 1921, 3.

<sup>178</sup> S.D. Chown, “World Reconstruction,” *Christian Guardian*, 30 July 1919, 7-8, 22.

<sup>179</sup> Editorial, *Canadian Churchman*, 10 July 1919, 411.

<sup>180</sup> “Signing of Peace Stirs Few in City,” *Toronto Globe*, 30 June 1919, 8.

imperial celebrations in London. Elsewhere, July 19, the day of celebration proclaimed by the Canadian government, was observed as Peace Day.<sup>181</sup> By this point, the fighting in Europe had been over for six months, wartime activities had largely concluded, and men had already begun to return home, so celebrations were of a different character than the wild joy exhibited on Armistice Day.<sup>182</sup> Germany, which was widely blamed for having started the war, had shown little remorse for plunging the world into such a devastating war. The editor of the *Canadian Churchman* noted grimly that “Relief, not satisfaction, is what the average citizen feels about the Treaty signed at Versailles last week. The only thing that could give us genuine satisfaction would be an honestly repentant Germany. ... As it is, the future looks dark and will remain dark as long as Germany experiences no change of heart.”<sup>183</sup> Joseph Barnard, editor of *Bien Public*, agreed, noting that because Germany could once again take up its dream of domination, “Les vaincus d’aujourd’hui restent toujours les agresseurs possible de demain. ... [N]ous espérons que la fameuse Ligue des nations s’emploiera constamment à en décourager la réalisation.”<sup>184</sup> After the emotional and patriotic intensity of the previous four years, reactions to the final peace treaty were hopeful but far more muted than the wartime rhetoric had been.

In addition to the task of building a peace overseas, Canadians were also faced with the domestic consequences at home. A divide had widened between French- and

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<sup>181</sup> See “Thankful for Peace Signing,” *Toronto Globe*, 30 June 1919, 2; “Celebrate Peace, Saturday, 19th,” *Toronto Globe*, 3 July 1919, 16; “Give Thanks for the Peace,” *Toronto Globe*, 7 July 1919, 9; “Canadians in Joyous Throngs Celebrate the Day of Peace,” *Toronto Globe*, 21 July 1919, 3; “Whole City Celebrates the Coming of Peace,” *Toronto Globe*, 21 July 1919, 9.

<sup>182</sup> For an expression of this attitude, see “La Paix,” editorial, *L’Action catholique*, 30 June 1919, 1.

<sup>183</sup> Editorial, *Canadian Churchman*, 3 July 1919, 423.

<sup>184</sup> Joseph Barnard, “Les événements,” *Bien Public*, 3 July 1919, 1.

English-speaking Canadians, one that would prove difficult to heal both nationally and locally. Large issues, like conscription and the Ontario schools question, had made some French Canadians feel unwelcome within Confederation. But there had also been numerous smaller slights. On the day of the Armistice in Waterloo, Quebec, for example, the English-speaking organizer of the parade refused to allow the town's firemen to take part in the celebrations. As the editor of the *Journal de Waterloo* complained, "Ils étaient prêts à suivre la procession, comme c'est leur droit et la coutume dans toutes les manifestations, mais est-ce parce qu'ils étaient tous Canadiens-français, toujours est-il que M. Perkins leur refusa de parader."<sup>185</sup> In the post-war period, with the loyalty displayed by French Canadians having been little recognized during the war, Abbé Lionel Groulx and other *nationalistes* seem increasingly to have abandoned both the traditional loyalism of conservative Quebec and the pan-Canadian vision of Henri Bourassa. Increasingly they would see Quebec as the bastion of French Canada.<sup>186</sup>

Not all of the societal changes caused by the war were negative, however. The outpouring of activity had given a new impetus to social reform efforts as people became increasingly aware of Canada's existing social inequalities and were called upon to address them. The large number of men rejected from the army as medically unfit had shown the dramatic consequences of poverty and poor living conditions, for example.<sup>187</sup> As the editorialist of the *Christian Guardian* noted in September 1915, "The world will

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<sup>185</sup> "La paix est signée," *Journal de Waterloo*, 14 November 1918, 1.

<sup>186</sup> See Michel Bock, *Quand la nation débordait les frontières: Les minorités françaises dans la pensée de Lionel Groulx* (Montréal: Éditions Hurtubise, 2004); 299-340. For a brief discussion of the features of loyalism of the Quebec elites in the early twentieth century, see Damien-Claude Bélanger, "Thomas Chapais, loyaliste," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 65, no. 4 (2012): 439-472.

<sup>187</sup> See Nic Clarke, *Unwanted Warriors: Rejected Volunteers of the Canadian Expeditionary Force* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015), 79-112.

be better after the war only if the men who are left then will make it better, and life is made better in its everydayness or it is not made better at all.”<sup>188</sup> In the post-war period some of the women who had devoted their efforts to the Patriotic Fund or the Red Cross turned their attention and energy to social reform work, which became increasingly professionalized during the interwar years. Although this professionalization, which took the activity out of the hands of the various church councils, has been read as a decline in the relevance of the churches by historian David Marshall and others, this considers the question only on an institutional level.<sup>189</sup> On a more personal and ideological level, social gospel ideals continued to provide motivation and inform the activities of the new generation of social workers. In fact, Richard Allen has shown that the social gospel movement was given new momentum in the immediate post-war period as clergymen and others who had viewed the war as an ideological struggle embraced a variety of new efforts to reform Canadian society.<sup>190</sup> The war also led to a revitalization of Protestant overseas missions, as R.A. Wright has demonstrated in his study of inter-war Canadian Christian internationalism.<sup>191</sup> As their ‘Thank Offering for Peace’ in the fall of 1919, Canadian Presbyterians sought to raise \$4 million to be used for home and foreign missions. “In gratitude for deliverance from world bondage,” explained the *Presbyterian Record*, “we are asked to help save the world from bondage to sin and to enthrone in all the world the Prince of Peace.”<sup>192</sup> Although David Marshall

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<sup>188</sup> “The Everydayness of Life,” *Christian Guardian*, 15 September 1915, 5.

<sup>189</sup> See David Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

<sup>190</sup> See Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).

<sup>191</sup> R.A. Wright, *A World Mission: Canadian Protestantism and the Quest for a New International Order, 1918-1939* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2008).

<sup>192</sup> “Thanksgiving for Peace,” editorial, *Presbyterian Record*, August 1919, 225.

points out that many of the Methodist ministers and probationers who served at the front seem to have fallen away from the church upon their return from overseas,<sup>193</sup> the Canadian churches emerged from the war as dynamic, outward facing institutions, sure that their ideals had a place in shaping the world.

During the war Canadian clerics had done more than merely react to events beyond their control but had actively sought to address critical issues like the moral responsibilities of states in times of international crisis and the duties owed by citizens to the nation. These issues did not vanish with the war's end and remained matters of concern long after the last Canadian soldier was demobilized. Regardless of denomination or language, when Canadian clerics addressed the war, both during the conflict and afterwards, they situated the conflict within a wider framework of meaning. Fighting the war involved more than merely the military effort and all citizens were called on to demonstrate their loyalty in support of a greater cause. The Canadian clergy staked out this larger framework in order to help people reflect on their experiences, to provide consolation, and to encourage continued work on behalf of righteousness and justice. And Canadians responded to this message, during the war and afterwards, praying for peace, working to relieve suffering, and striving to create a better world. They would also draw upon it to give meaning to their sacrifices and to mourn their dead.

Monuments and memorial services were used to recognize the war dead, giving families an opportunity to publicly mourn their losses. They also served to connect individual sacrifices to the larger causes for which they believed the war had been

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<sup>193</sup> Marshall, "Methodism Embattled"; Marshall, "Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour."

fought. Some of these memorials were personal — a memorial plaque in a local church or the photographs and medals of a fallen soldier displayed proudly in the home — but others were acts of community that contributed to the ongoing process of shaping the memory of the war and its meaning.<sup>194</sup> In this way, commemoration was both an acknowledgement of private griefs and a public recognition of a community's efforts and achievements. The participation of the churches and the presence of religious themes were critical elements in both these processes, ensuring a continuity with normal practices of mourning and ensuring their public legitimacy. Given the British government's decision not to allow the repatriation of the bodies of the imperial war dead, these commemorations had to serve a dual purpose, substituting for funerals and distant gravesites and serving as a reminder that the sacrifices of the war had been made in furtherance of a noble and righteous cause.

In the immediate interwar period, public commemorations remained intensely personal, rooted in people's individual experiences of the war.<sup>195</sup> On November 11, 1920, Toronto came to a halt at noon for a moment of silence to recognize the second anniversary of the end of the war. For more than an hour before the beginning of the devotional service, which began with the moment of silence, people had been coming forward to lay their private tributes at the base of the city cenotaph. Ranging from a simple bunch of maple leaves to elaborate wreaths, many of these bore personal dedications: "In loving memory of my three dear boys, Fred, Alan and Arthur," "To

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<sup>194</sup> See Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); Mark Connelly, *The Great War, Memory, and Ritual: Commemoration in the City and East London, 1916-1939* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002); Melissa Davidson, "Acts of Remembrance: Canadian Great War Memory and the Public Funerals of Sir Arthur Currie and Canon F.G. Scott," *Canadian Studies/Études canadiennes* 80, no. 1 (2016): 109-127.

<sup>195</sup> For a fuller treatment of this, see Davidson, "Acts of Remembrance."

Daddy from Ena,” “In loving memory of our only son, Sergt. Gordon Gilbert, 2nd Howitzer Battery, who died March 10, 1919 at Buxton, after being gassed.”<sup>196</sup> As people stood together in silence to recognize the war dead, as the *Toronto Globe* writer explained, “It was not the silence of solitude, but the profound response to the impulse of heart and memory that recalled days of stress, of anguish, of sorrow — and of triumph.”<sup>197</sup> Nationally, in their local communities, and personally, Canadians were left to come to terms with the cost of the war, but interesting questions remain to be asked about the changes that took place in Canadian commemoration during the interwar period and about the nature and meaning of the more private acts of commemoration.<sup>198</sup>

In this dissertation, the Canadian churches served as a way of exploring the attitudes and experiences associated with the Great War. This has meant sitting at the intersection of different types of historical literature — religious history, the history of war and society, and the history of French Canada — and using the strengths of each to build a fuller picture of Canadian society during the war. Understanding the attitudes of Canadians and their churches, both English- and French-speaking, with respect to the war provides a new perspective, not only on the wide range of their wartime activities, but also on the post-war period. English-speaking Canadians, who believed that the war was serving a greater purpose, carried these ideals into their post-war commemorations.

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<sup>196</sup> Dedications quoted in “Citizens Assemble at Midday Service of Remembrance in Memory of Their Heroic Dead,” *Toronto Globe*, 12 November 1918, 8.

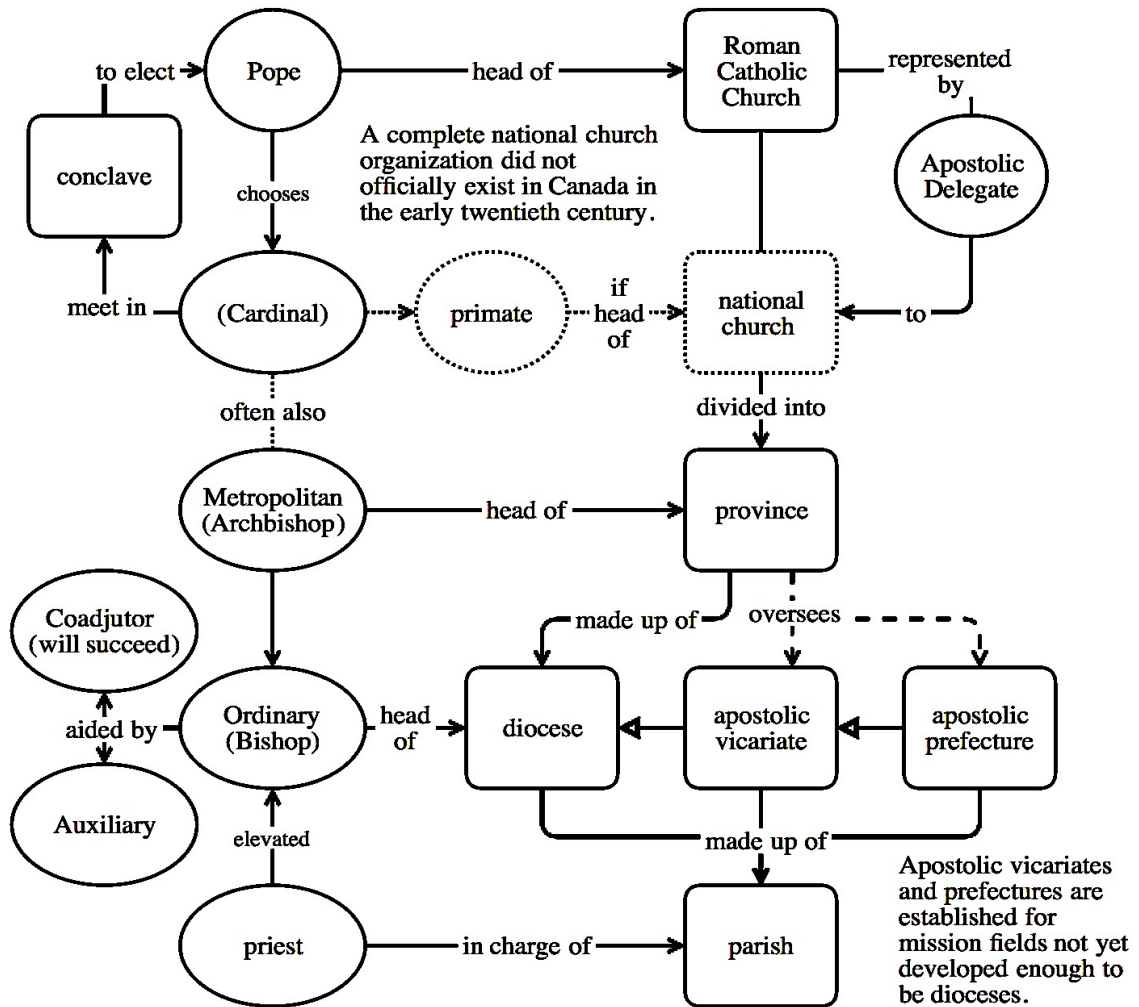
<sup>197</sup> “Citizens Assemble at Midday Service of Remembrance in Memory of Their Heroic Dead,” *Toronto Globe*, 12 November 1918, 8.

<sup>198</sup> Of particular note in the religious context are memorials like fonts, reredoses, lecterns, altar vessels, etc. donated in memory of an individual or group killed in battle. The purchase of Victory Bonds by Sunday schools was suggested in 1918 as fitting memorials by the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. There is also an imperial element, as a number of Western Canadian Anglican churches were furnished or constructed as memorials or thank-offerings by British individuals and parishes. For a mention of this latter phenomena, see Trevor Powell, “The Church on the Home Front: The Church of England in the Diocese of Qu’Appelle and the Great War,” *Saskatchewan History* 64, no. 2 (2012): 20.

French-speaking Canadians, who contributed broadly to war efforts and were proud of their voluntary efforts, found their loyalty went largely unrecognized and continued to embrace new national visions which increasingly made language, not religion, the principle form of cultural determination. Religion during the period of the Great War was much more than a matter of personal belief. It was woven into society in a profound and pervasive way, organizing communities and providing a vocabulary that, even though it could prove exclusionary and divisive, was also inspirational and comforting. Regardless of language or denominational affiliation, religion had a lasting influence on people's views of international and individual responsibility and the role given to the individual conscience. From early struggles to understand how the war fit into a progressive world to the decision to impose conscription, religious language and ideas shaped Canadians' commitment to the war and the extent of their contributions.

## APPENDIX A

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN CANADA AND LIST OF ARCHDIOCESES, DIOCESES AND BISHOPS

*Organizational Structure*

Priests may be religious (belonging to a religious order such as the Jesuits or Oblates) or secular (belonging to their diocese). Bishops might likewise belong to a religious order.

Auxiliary bishops, apostolic vicars, and apostolic prefects are also the titular bishops of sees that are no longer active. These titles are not referenced in this dissertation.

*List of Archdioceses, Dioceses, and Bishops*

<b>Popes</b>		
	Pius X	1903-1914
	Benedict XV	1914-1922

<b>Apostolic Delegates</b>		
	Pellegrino Francesco Stagni	1910-1918
	Pietro di Maria	1918-1926

<b>Archdiocese of Quebec (raised 1819)</b>			
	Archdiocese of Québec	1674	Louis-Nazaire Bégin (Cardinal Archbishop)
	Trois Rivières	1852	François-Xavier Cloutier
	St. Germain of Rimouski	1867	André-Albert Blais
	Chicoutimi	1878	Michel-Thomas Labrecque
	Nicolet	1885	Joseph-Simon-Herman Brunault
	Vic.Ap. of Golfe St-Laurent	1905	Gustave Maria Blanche, C.I.M. (d. 1916) Patrice Alexandre Chiasson, C.I.M. (from 1917)

<b>Archdiocese of Halifax (raised 1852)</b>			
	Archdiocese of Halifax <sup>1</sup>	1842	Edward McCarthy
	Charlottetown	1829	Henry O'Leary
	St. John in America (New Brunswick)	1842	Edouard Alfred LeBlanc
	Antigonish (prev. Arichat)	1844	James Morrison
	Chatham	1860	Thomas Barry

<sup>1</sup> Created as the Vic.Ap. of Nova Scotia in 1817.

<b>Archdiocese of Toronto (raised 1870)</b>			
	Archdiocese of Toronto	1841	Neil McNeil
	Hamilton	1856	Thomas Joseph Dowling
	London	1856	Michael Francis Fallon, O.M.I.

<b>Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface (raised 1871)</b>			
	Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface <sup>2</sup>	1847	Adélarde Langevin, O.M.I. (d. 1915) Arthur Béliveau (from 1915)
	Diocese of Prince Albert <sup>3</sup>	1907	Albert Pascal, O.M.I.
	Regina (Archdiocese fr. 1915)	1911	Olivier Elzéar Mathieu
	Vic.Ap. of Keewatin	1910	Ovide Charlebois, O.M.I.

<sup>2</sup> Created as the Vic.Ap. of North-West Canada in 1844.

<sup>3</sup> Created as the Vic.Ap. of Saskatchewan in 1891.

<b>Archdiocese of Montréal (raised 1886)</b>			
	Archdiocese of Montréal	1836	Paul Bruchési
	Saint-Hyacinthe	1852	Alexis-Xyste Bernard
	Sherbrooke	1874	Paul-Stanislas La Rocque
	Valleyfield	1892	Joseph-Médard Émard
	Joliette	1904	Guillaume Forbes

<b>Archdiocese of Ottawa (raised 1886)</b>		
Archdiocese of Ottawa (prev. Bytown)	1847	Charles Hugh Gauthier
Pembroke <sup>4</sup>	1898	Narcisse Zéphirin Lorrain (d. 1915) Patrick Thomas Ryan (from 1916)
Mont-Laurier	1913	Élie Latulipe
Haileybury <sup>5</sup>	1915	François-Xavier Brunet

<sup>4</sup> Created as the Vic.Ap. of Pontiac in 1882.

<sup>5</sup> Created as the Vic.Ap. of Temiskaming in 1908.

<b>Archdiocese of Kingston (raised 1889)</b>		
Archdiocese of Kingston <sup>6</sup>	1826	Michael Spratt
Peterborough <sup>7</sup>	1882	Michael O'Brien
Alexandria in Ontario	1890	William Macdonell
Sault Ste. Marie	1904	David Scollard

<sup>6</sup> Created as the Vic.Ap. of Upper Canada in 1817.

<sup>7</sup> Created as the Vic.Ap. of Northern Canada in 1874

<b>Archdiocese of Vancouver (raised 1908)</b>		
Archdiocese of Vancouver <sup>8</sup> (prev. New Westminster)	1890	Timothy Casey
Victoria (prev. Vancouver Island, elevated 1903-1908)	1846	Alexander MacDonald
Pref.Ap. of Yukon-Prince Rupert (Vic.Ap. fr. 1916)	1908	Émile-Marie Bunoz, O.M.I.

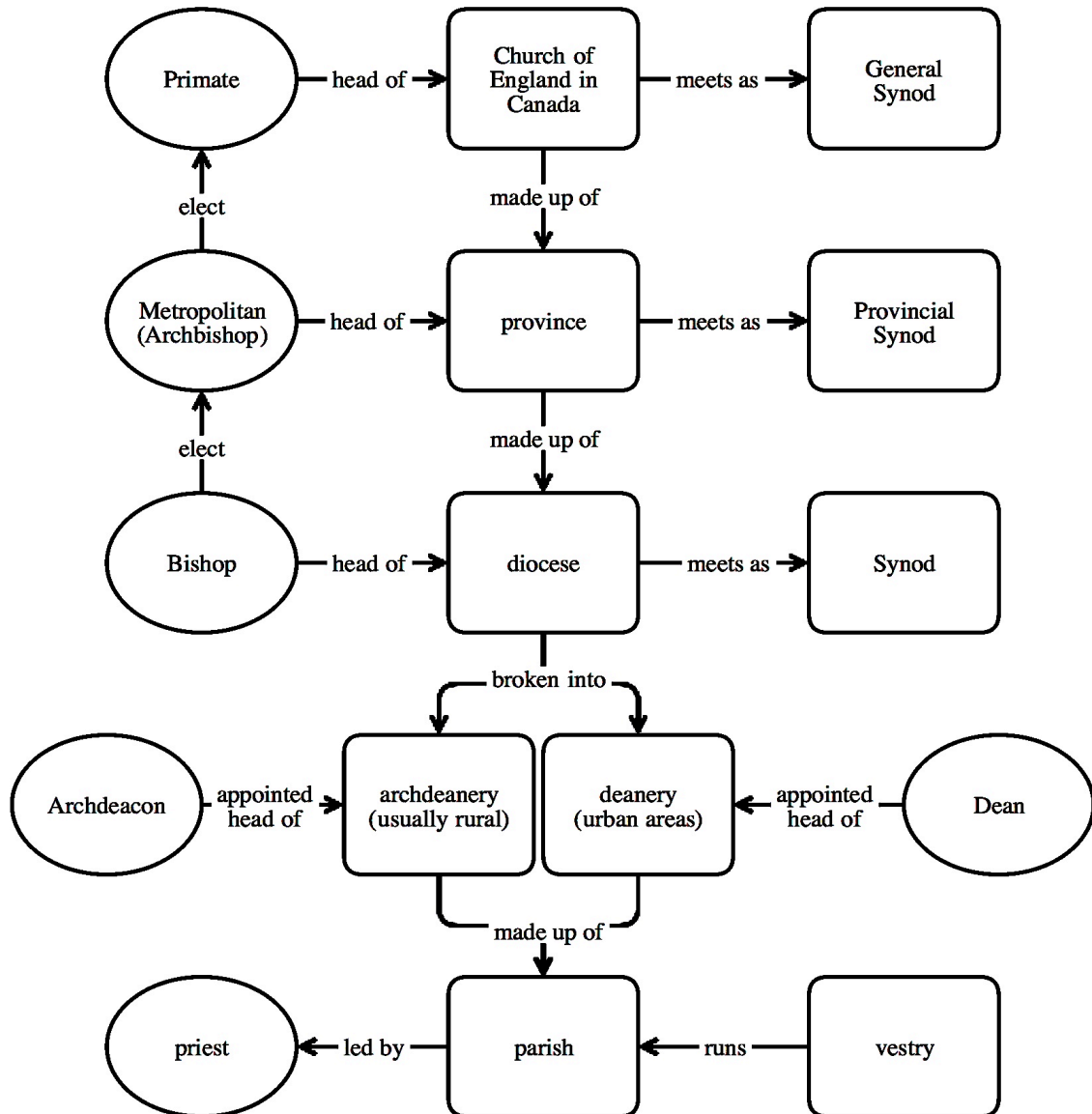
<sup>8</sup> Created as the Vic.Ap. of British Columbia in 1863.

<b>Archdiocese of Edmonton (raised 1912)</b>			
Archdiocese of Edmonton (prev. St. Albert)	1871	Émile-Joseph Legal, O.M.I.	
Calgary	1912	John McNally	
Vic.Ap. of Athabaska	1901	Émile Grouard, O.M.I. Celestine Joussard, O.M.I. (co-adj.)	
Vic.Ap. of Mackenzie	1901	Gabriel Joseph Élie Breynat, O.M.I.	

<b>Archdiocese of St. John's, Newfoundland (raised 1904)</b>			
Archdiocese of St. John's, Newfoundland	1847	Michael Francis Howley (d. 1914) Edward Patrick Roche (from 1915)	
Diocese of Harbour Grace	1856	John Thomas McNally	
Diocese of Saint George's	1904	John March	

<b>Other</b>			
Archdiocese of Winnipeg (resp. to Holy See)	1915	Arthur Alfred Sinnott	
Ukrainian Ap.Exarchate of Canada (resp. to apostolic delegate)	1912	Nykyta Budka	

## APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA  
AND LIST OF PROVINCES, DIOCESES AND BISHOPS*Organizational Structure*

In the absence of a priests, lay readers could also take charge of a parish, but could not celebrate the sacraments. In Canada, cathedrals are also parish churches and have a priest-in-charge. A pro-cathedral is a parish church temporarily serving as a cathedral.

*List of Provinces, Dioceses, and Bishops*

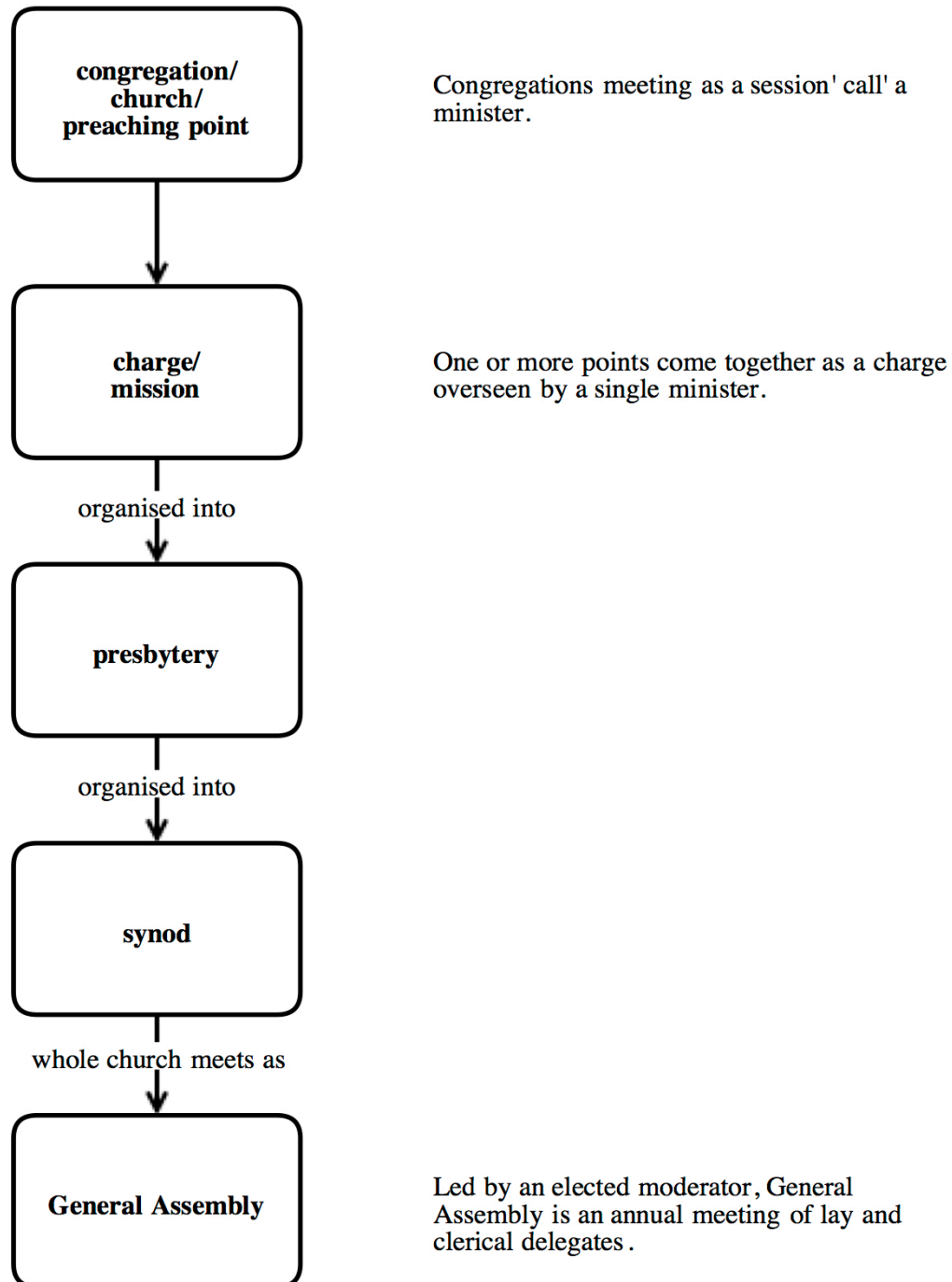
<b>Ecclesiastical Province of Canada (est. 1861)</b>				
	Diocese of Nova Scotia	1787	Halifax	Clarendon Worrell (Archbishop)
	Diocese of Fredericton	1845		John Richardson
	Diocese of Quebec	1793		Andrew Hunter Dunn (d. 1914) Lennox Williams (fr. 1915)
	Diocese of Montreal	1850		John Farthing

<b>Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land (est. 1875)</b>				
	Diocese of Rupert's Land	1787	Winnipeg	Samuel Matheson (Archbishop and Primate)
	Diocese of Athabasca	1845	Peace River	John Richardson
	Diocese of Mackenzie River	1884	Chipewyan, Alberta	James Lucas
	Diocese of Yukon	1907	Dawson City	Isaac Stringer
	Diocese of Saskatchewan	1874	Prince Albert	Jervois Newnham
	Diocese of Calgary	1888		W. Cyprian Pinkham
	Diocese of Edmonton	1914		Henry Gray
	Diocese of Qu'Appelle	1884	Regina	Malcolm Harding
	Diocese of Keewatin	1902	Kenora	Joseph Lofthouse

<b>Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario (est. 1912)</b>				
	Diocese of Algoma	1872	Sault Ste. Marie	George Thornloe (Archbishop)
	Diocese of Toronto	1839		James Sweeny William Reeve (assist.)
	Diocese of Huron	1857	London	David Williams
	Diocese of Ontario	1862	Kingston	William Mills Edward Bidwell (co-adj.)
	Diocese of Niagara	1875	Hamilton	William Clark
	Diocese of Ottawa	1896		Charles Roper
	Diocese of Moosonee	1872	Chapleau, Ontario	John Anderson

<b>Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia (est. 1914)</b>				
	Diocese of Caledonia	1879	Prince Rupert	Frederick Du Vernet (Archbishop)
	Diocese of British Columbia	1859	Victoria	Augustine Scriven (d. 1916) Charles Schofield (fr. 1916)
	Diocese of New Westminster	1879	Vancouver	Adam de Pencier
	Diocese of Kootenay	1914		Alexander Doull
	Diocese of Cariboo	1914		Adam de Pencier

## APPENDIX C

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF  
CANADA AND LIST OF MODERATORS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY*Organizational Structure*

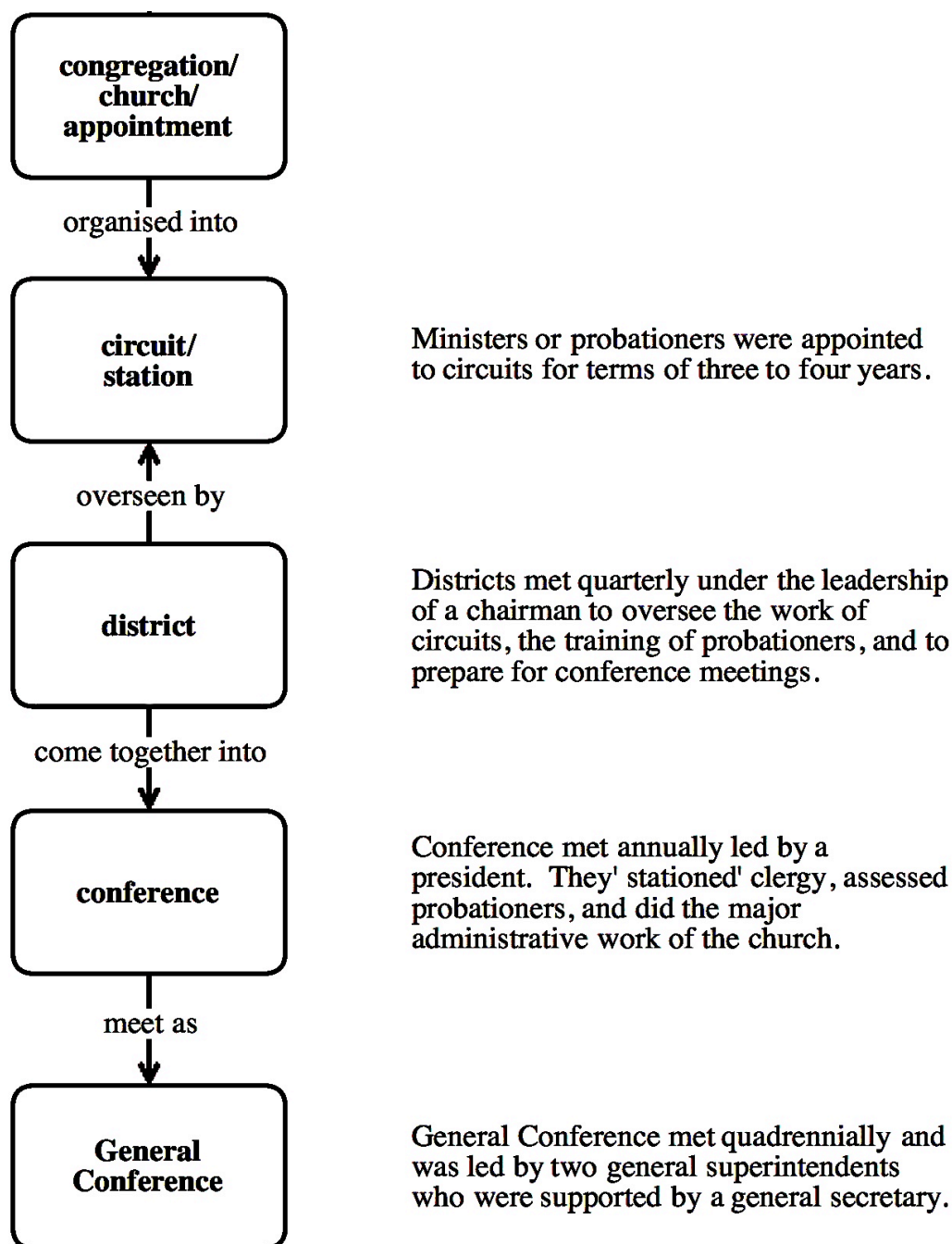
*List of the Moderators of the General Assembly*

Moderators are elected annually at the June meeting of the General Assembly. They retain their local appointments during their term.

W.T. Herridge	St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Ottawa	1914-1915
Malcom Macgillivray	Chalmers Presbyterian, Kingston	1915-1916
A.B. Baird	Manitoba College, Winnipeg (Professor of Church History and Hebrew)	1916-1917
John Neil	Westminster Presbyterian, Toronto	1917-1918
Colin Fletcher	Caven Presbyterian, Exeter, Ontario	1918-1919

## APPENDIX C

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH



Albert Carman retired as general superintendent in 1914. He was not replaced and S.D. Chown became the sole general superintendent, supported by T. Albert Moore as general secretary.

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