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FROM *CANADIEN* TO AMERICAN:

THE ACCULTURATION OF FRENCH-CANADIAN DESCENDANTS IN LEWISTON, MAINE, 1860 TO THE PRESENT

by

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A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Department of History
in the Graduate School
of Duke University

May 2001

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

Although Canada has contributed proportionally more of its population to the United States than any other nation, the international migration of Canadians to the U.S.A. has received little attention from scholars. Studies of French Canadians in the United States have centered on their migration, settlement, and formation of ethnic enclaves. Using Lewiston, Maine, as a community study, this dissertation examines how individuals of French-Canadian descent negotiated their entry into U.S. society from 1860 to 2001. Descriptive statistics compiled from federal manuscript censuses, city directories, and naturalization records provide portraits of the community at different points in time; the French-language newspaper of Lewiston and materials from Catholic archives provide much of the literary evidence in this work.

This study challenges our understanding of what we call "assimilation." It suggests that acculturation rather than "assimilation" better describes the process by which ethnic populations join the host society. Historians tend to oversimplify ethnic preservation and acculturation by depicting them as binary opposites. This study argues that, rather than struggling between ethnic retention and acculturation, French-Canadian migrants and their Franco-American descendants in Lewiston pursued them as intertwined goals from the 1870s to the 1950s. It also

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contends that their Americanization was anything but linear. Lewiston's francophones challenged, rejected, or redefined some of the norms of the host society, as they renegotiated their identity in the United States. Yet, modeling good citizenship was integral to their interconnected identity as ethnic Americans. The experiences of Lewiston's French-Canadian descendants challenge contemporary assumptions about the incompatability of ethnic retention and Americanization.

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INTRODUCTION[1]

[1]I presented parts of the introduction and first three chapters of this dissertation at the mini-colloquium of *l'Institut français*, Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts, in May 2000.

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In 1855, arsonists twice damaged the Catholic church of Lewiston, Maine. Allegedly members of the Know-Nothing political party, which opposed immigration and especially Roman Catholics, they registered their intolerance by burning the church of the Irish Catholic migrants who had come to work in this burgeoning industrial town.[2] Their actions established the cultural context which would greet the next group of migrants, French Canadians, who began arriving in Lewiston in the late 1850s. Through the second half of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, French Canadians confronted discrimination. Yet, in this context of persistent pressure by nativists in the United States to anglicize and to become assimilated Americans, most individuals of French-Canadian birth and background in Lewiston retained their French language, their Catholic faith, and many of their French-Canadian traditions through the first half of the twentieth century; some have maintained them to the present day. This dissertation traces the process by which French-Canadian migrants and their descendants in Lewiston, Maine, acculturated in U.S. society from the mid-nineteenth century to the contemporary era. Central to this thesis is the argument that French speakers in Lewiston actively negotiated the terms of their entry into U.S. society.

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[2]Typescript notes of Reverend Philip Desjardins on Saint Joseph Parish, Lewiston, Maine, Chancery Archives, Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine; Lewiston, Maine, *Democratic Advocate*, December 13, 1855.

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In recent decades, the field of migration history has attracted growing scholarly attention, in large part due to the work of the ethnic and labor historians who have tried to situate their studies in a broader, more global, context. To a larger degree than in the past, scholars are now also considering the non-European sources of migration to the United States. One sending society still greatly neglected by scholars is Canada, a nation that has contributed proportionally more of its population to the United States than any other donating country. During the century prior to 1930, from 2.5 to three million English- and French-speaking Canadians migrated to the U.S.A. Underscoring Canada's major contribution as a sending society, its native-born population totaled three million in 1871 and eight million in 1931. The proximity of Canadian-born migrants to their homeland, their exemption from U.S. immigration restrictions until 1930, and their relative slowness in becoming naturalized citizens of the United States have made their experience different from that of migrants from outside of North America. Though significant to the histories of both Canada and the United States, the international migration of Canadians during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has not received sufficient historical attention. On the one hand, this scholarly neglect reflects U.S. perceptions that few differences exist between English Canadians and Americans; on the other hand, it reflects Canada's discomfort with the

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large migration of its people to the U.S.A., for not being American is a defining element of the Canadian national identity. While English Canadians may have blended more easily into existing communities in the United States, language, religion, and the formation of ethnic enclaves distinguished French-Canadian migrants. Consequently, francophone migrants have received comparatively more attention from scholars than have their former, anglophone compatriots.[3] These French-speaking Catholics also received more attention from nativists in the U.S.A.

French Canadians migrated to the United States as part of the Québec diaspora in which nearly one million persons took up residence in the northeast by the start of the Great Depression. Most *Canadiens*, as the French Canadians called themselves, settled relatively close to home in New England's industrial centers, such as Lewiston and Biddeford, Maine; Manchester, New Hampshire; Central Falls and Woonsocket, Rhode Island; Lowell, Lawrence, and Fall River, Massachusetts. In these textile mill towns, the *Canadiens* succeeded the Irish as the predominant source of

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[3]John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1994), pp. 51-55, 128-129; Yolande Lavoie, *L'émigration des Canadiens aux États-Unis avant 1930: Mesure du phénomène* (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1972), pp. 63, 76-77. Randy William Widdis argues that while English-Canadian migrants may have appeared "invisible or not clearly discernable" in the U.S.A., high rates of endogamy, their reluctance to acquire U.S. citizenship, and their continued interest in Canada suggest that they had some distinctive traits. See *With Scarcely a Ripple: Anglo-Canadian Migration into the United States and Western Canada, 1880-1920* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), pp. 179-289, 350-351; quotation is from p. 351.

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unskilled labor after the Civil War.[4] They and their offspring eventually made up a substantial proportion of the population of the industrial centers of the northeast. In Lewiston, for example, people of French-Canadian birth and background comprised nearly half of the city's residents by 1900 and approximately sixty-five percent by 1930.[5]

Studies of French Canadians in the United States have focused primarily on their migration, settlement, and community formation.[6] Consequently, we know little about

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[4]Yolande Lavoie, *L'émigration des Québécois aux États-Unis de 1840 à 1930* ([Québec, Québec]: Éditeur officiel du Québec, 1981), p. 65. Not all French-Canadian migrants worked in the textile industry. On their experiences in lumbering and in the woods industries of Old Town, Maine, and in the granite industry of Barre, Vermont, see C. Stewart Doty, *The First Franco-Americans: New England Life Histories from the Federal Writers' Project, 1938-1939* (Orono, Maine: University of Maine at Orono Press, 1985), pp. 46-118.

[5]Ralph Dominic Vicero, "Immigration of French Canadians to New England, 1840-1900: A Geographical Analysis" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1968), p. 343; Laureat Odilon Bernard, "A Political History of Lewiston, Maine (1930-39)" (M.A. thesis, University of Maine-Orono, 1949), p. 6. For general accounts of French-Canadian migrants and their descendants in the northeastern United States, see Robert Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains* (Montréal: Chez l'auteur, 1958); Gerard J. Brault, *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England* (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1986); François Weil, *Les Franco-Américains, 1860-1980* ([Paris]: Belin, 1989); Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre (1776-1930)* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 1990); Armand Chartier, *Histoire des Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, 1775-1990* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 1991), recently translated as *The Franco-Americans of New England: A History* (Worcester, Massachusetts: Institut Français of Assumption College, 1999); Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre: Rêves et réalités* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 2000.)

[6]See, for example, Peter Haebler, "Habitants in Holyoke: The Development of the French-Canadian Community in a Massachusetts City, 1865-1910" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Hampshire, 1976); Frances H. Early, "French-Canadian Beginnings in an American Community: Lowell, Massachusetts, 1868-1886" (Ph.D. dissertation, Concordia University, 1979); Eileen McAuliffe Kanzler, "Processes of Immigration: The Franco Americans of Manchester, New Hampshire,

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their experiences after the opening decades of the twentieth century. Monographs by Michael Guignard, Tamara Hareven, and Gary Gerstle are among the few that consider the twentieth-century history of French-Canadian descendants. Guignard traces the decline of francophone institutions in Biddeford, Maine, over the twentieth century, relying heavily upon anecdotal and autobiographical information. Hareven looks at the interrelatedness of work and ethnicity in the predominantly French-speaking community of Manchester, New Hampshire, from the early 1900s through the 1930s. For his part, Gerstle examines how labor organizers fashioned a language of Americanism that appealed to the ethnic traditions of textile workers of French-Canadian descent, drawing them into the trade union movement of Woonsocket, Rhode Island. Dissertations by Sister Florence Marie Chevalier and William Arthur Paquette also contribute to the twentieth-century history of individuals of French-Canadian descent in the United States. In her sociological study, Chevalier explores the role of French-language societies to the early 1970s. Relying in part upon family history, Paquette compares the educational attainment and upward mobility of individuals of French-Canadian birth and background in Sanford, Maine, and Saint-Georges-de-Windsor, Québec, and examines whether cultural assimilation affected these

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1875-1925" (Doctor of Arts dissertation, Illinois State University, 1982.)

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goals.[7] As of yet, no systematic or comprehensive historical study addresses how French-Canadian descendants acculturated in U.S. society.

The most prominent debate in U.S. migration history has centered on whether migrants were "uprooted" or "transplanted." Relatively little debate has focused on the process of Americanization, a process many assume has taken place in a straight-line fashion leading to what we call "assimilation." Recent works, however, have questioned whether Americanization is in fact a linear process and whether the term "assimilation" accurately describes the way in which ethnic groups have become a part of U.S. society.[8]

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[7]Michael J. Guignard, *La Foi-La Langue-La Culture: The Franco-Americans of Biddeford, Maine* (by the author, 1984); Tamara K. Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Florence Marie Chevalier, S.S.A., "The Role of French National Societies in the Sociocultural Evolution of the Franco-Americans of New England from 1860 to the Present: An Analytical Macro-sociological Case Study in Ethnic Integration Based on Current Social System Models" (Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1972); William Arthur Paquette, "Educational Opportunity, Social Mobility, and Assimilation among the Québéçois [*sic*]: A Comparative Case Study of St. Georges de Windsor, Quebec, Sanford, Maine, and the Paquette Family in Each, 1870-1970" (Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 1993.)

[8]See Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973); John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1985.) Studies that challenge the linear model of assimilation include April R. Schultz, *Ethnicity on Parade: Inventing the Norwegian American through Celebration* (Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994); and Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Special Sorrows: The Diasporic Imagination of Irish, Polish, and Jewish Immigrants in the United States* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995.) Questioning the use

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This dissertation addresses these recent debates. Historian Dirk Hoerder argues against the use of the term "assimilation," because it suggests "the unconditional acceptance of the values and forms of behavior of the new society." In Lewiston, francophones often challenged, rejected, or redefined some of the norms of the host society. While acculturating, they simultaneously demonstrated greater cultural persistence than most other migrant populations, particularly over the course of the twentieth century. Given their persistent use of the French language, their consistent practice of Catholicism, the prevalence of endogamous marriage, their founding of ethnic institutions, and their adoption and reshaping of French-Canadian traditions in Lewiston, the term "acculturation" rather than "assimilation" better describes the process by which French-Canadian descendants engaged the host society. As Hoerder contends, the term "acculturation" considers what migrants brought from the society of origin to the host society. In his view, "it implies a gradual withering of old roots while sinking new ones at the same time, a process that often takes place unconsciously."[9] The experience of individuals of French-

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of the term "assimilation" is Dirk Hoerder, "From Migrants to Ethnics: Acculturation in a Societal Framework," in Dirk Hoerder and Leslie Page Moch, eds., *European Migrants: Global and Local Perspectives* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996), pp. 211-262.

[9]Hoerder, "From Migrants to Ethnics," p. 212. Offering a slightly different conceptualization of the migration and adjustment process

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Canadian descent in Lewiston challenges, however, the notion that "a gradual withering of old roots" necessarily takes place during the acculturation process. While historians tend to oversimplify ethnic preservation and acculturation by depicting them as binary opposites, Hoerder's concept of acculturation allows consideration of the complex interaction that takes place in the host society between pre- and post-migration cultural experiences. But even Hoerder's definition fails to consider that ethnic retention and acculturation may proceed hand in hand.

Accounts of French-Canadian descendants in the United States have similarly failed to consider this possibility. Almost universally, they present French-Canadian and Franco-American history as a continuing struggle between acculturation and *survivance* (the preservation of the French language, Roman Catholic faith, and French-Canadian traditions.)[10] Rather than struggling between ethnic retention and acculturation, Lewiston's francophones

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in her study of Italian migrants in western Canada, Patricia Katharine Wood advocates the use of the term "relocation," which she defines as "the act of transferring one's daily practices and beliefs to a new environment." See "Nationalism from the Margins: The Development of National and Ethnic Identities among Italian Immigrants in Alberta and British Columbia, 1880-1980" (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1995), pp. 21-22.

[10]The one notable exception is John F. McClymer, "The Paradox of Ethnicity in the United States: The French-Canadian Experience in Worcester, 1870-1914," in Michael D'Innocenzo and Josef P. Sirefman, eds., *Immigration and Ethnicity: American Society--"Melting Pot" or "Salad Bowl"?* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992), pp. 15-23.

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renegotiated their identity in the United States; the process by which they did so involved twists and turns and was anything but linear. This study thus offers a new lens through which to view the history of French speakers in the United States. In underscoring the non-linearity of acculturation, and in positing that ethnic retention and acculturation can serve as intertwined goals, this dissertation also offers a new conceptualization of the process of Americanization.

To examine how individuals of French-Canadian descent renegotiated their identity over the past century and a half, this work utilizes the vehicle of the community study. Once a major industrial center in the state of Maine and region of New England, the city of Lewiston remains largely unstudied. Yves Frenette has completed the only significant historical writing on Lewiston's French-Canadian population; his scholarly efforts, however, have focused principally on the settlement and community building of its French speakers.[11] This dissertation instead explores how the ethnic identity of those of

[11]See Yves Frenette, "La genèse d'une communauté canadienne-française en Nouvelle-Angleterre: Lewiston, Maine, 1800-1880" (Thèse de Ph.D., Université Laval, Québec, 1988); Frenette, "Understanding the French Canadians of Lewiston, 1860-1900: An Alternate Framework," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 25 (Spring 1986), pp. 198-229; Sylvie Beaudreau et Yves Frenette, "Les stratégies familiales des francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre: Perspective diachronique," *Sociologie et sociétés* 26 (printemps 1994), pp. 167-178; and Frenette, "Macroscopie et microscopie d'un mouvement migratoire: les Canadiens français à Lewiston au XIXe siècle," dans Yves Landry, John A. Dickinson, Suzy Pasleau et Claude Desama (dirs.), *Les chemins de la migration en Belgique et au Québec: XVIIe-XXe siècles* (Beauport, Québec: Publications MNH, 1995), pp. 221-232.

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French-Canadian birth and background in Lewiston changed over time, particularly over the course of the twentieth century. It explores the values, traditions, and collective coping strategies that francophones brought with them from Canada to the United States, and it examines the extent to which Lewiston's French-speaking population continued to rely upon models and resources available in Canada after the migration experience. This work also examines the processes of acculturation and Americanization, such as adoption of the English language, intermarriage between individuals of French-Canadian descent and those of other ethnic backgrounds, and the growth and decline of French-Canadian institutions in Lewiston. In addition, this study analyzes what promoted or hindered the acculturation of French speakers, and it considers the role of Catholic clergy in facilitating or delaying their acculturation.

Throughout this work, "French Canadians" will designate the French-speaking populations of Québec and other Canadian provinces in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Along with "*Canadiens*," the term "French Canadians" will also refer to the francophone migrants and their offspring who lived in the United States during the nineteenth century. "Franco-Americans" will refer to individuals of French-Canadian birth and background in the U.S.A. during the twentieth century, for this population began calling itself Franco-American around

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the turn of the century.[12] "French-Canadian descendants" or "individuals of French-Canadian descent" may be used from time to time, particularly when referring to multiple generations of French speakers in the United States.

From the late nineteenth through the twentieth century, French-Canadian descendants comprised one of the three largest population groups of Lewiston. The other two groups were the Irish and native-born Americans, or Yankees. Lewiston's three major ethnicities were not hermetically-sealed; individuals and families moved between them, and the meaning of each ethnicity changed over time. The city's French-language newspaper, *Le Messager*, provides an example of the permeability of ethnic lines. After commenting that William Curran had three sons serving in the U.S. navy during World War I, *Le Messager* stated: *"Bien que d'origine irlandaise, M. Curran est natif de la Province de Québec, a marié une Canadienne-française et est justement considéré comme l'un des nôtres."*[13] To distinguish members of Lewiston's three major population groups at different points during the century and a half that this work covers, I will employ the terms "American," "Irish," and (depending upon the century) "French Canadian"

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[12]Weil, *Les Franco-Américains*, pp. 177-178.

[13]*Le Messager*, 9 décembre 1918, p. 8. The following translations, and all others provided in this dissertation, are my own.
Le Messager: *The Messenger*
"Bien que...des nôtres.": "Although of Irish origin, Mr. Curran is native of the Province of Québec, is married to a French-Canadian woman, and is rightly considered as one of us."

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or "Franco-American" throughout much of this work. These were terms that Lewiston's ethnic groups used to define themselves and each other for much of the period under study.

While examining the contributions of elites, this dissertation will particularly emphasize the experiences of ordinary French Canadians and Franco-Americans. They made up a substantial proportion of Lewiston's working-class population in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Since they generated few records of their own, this study, of necessity, will piece together a wide variety of sources to reconstruct their history, including naturalization records and materials from religious archives, sources historians have thus far underutilized.

Descriptive statistics will provide portraits of Lewiston's changing population in 1880, 1920, 1960, and the 1990s. These years marked turning points in the history of French-Canadian migrants and their descendants. Briefly, from the 1880s, French-Canadians began demonstrating population stability in Lewiston.[14] The 1920s represented the final decade of the migration/ settlement/ community-formation period. During the 1950s and especially the 1960s, external forces such as the closing of textile mills in Lewiston, the advent of television, and changes in the Catholic Church, along with forces internal to the

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[14]Frenette, "Understanding the French Canadians of Lewiston," p. 205.

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community, speeded up the acculturation of many of the city's French speakers. Finally, data from the 1990s provides a contemporary portrait of Lewiston's Franco-Americans and what remains of their culture and institutions as they enter the new millennium. Throughout each of these periods, individuals of French-Canadian birth and background confronted different permutations of the cultural intolerance nativists promoted in Lewiston in 1855. The chapters that follow examine how francophones managed these outside pressures to become Americans of French-Canadian descent.

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CHAPTER ONE

Catholic Migrants in a Protestant Mill Town, 1850-1880

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In 1873, a reporter for the Lewiston *Journal* trailed a group of French Canadians walking to their new church; hearing them chatting in French caused him to reflect: "To all intents, one feels himself in a foreign city." What Protestant Americans (Yankees) observed inside the church bemused them all the more: "It seemed like a scene in another land," one journalist reported at Christmas in 1882, "the monks in long, white habits and black over-robes, coming and going at intervals; the gray nuns, replenishing the tapers and decorating the altar, with a genuflexion each time they passed and re-passed the host."[1] Like the Irish migrants who had come before them, French Canadians diversified the Protestant mill town of Lewiston, Maine, in the nineteenth century. In addition to their Catholic faith, French-Canadian migrants brought another language and different traditions to the Spindle City, vastly changing its character in the eyes of natives. This chapter examines the arrival of French-Canadian migrants to Lewiston in the nineteenth century, highlighting the religious, ethnic, and economic differences which distinguished them from the Americans and, to some extent, from their Irish co-religionists. For French Canadians, these differences led to ethnic segregation from 1860 to 1880 but, even as they developed ethnic solidarity during

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[1]*Lewiston Weekly Journal*, May 15, 1873, p. 26; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, December 26, 1882.

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this period, French Canadians began their acculturation into U.S. society.

When Governor Samuel Adams signed the act incorporating Lewiston as a town in 1795, it was an isolated, agricultural village of Massachusetts. The advent of manufacturing and railroads ended Lewiston's isolation, causing it to evolve into an industrial city by the mid-nineteenth century. Local businessmen, taking advantage of the power generated by the thirty-eight-foot falls of the Androscoggin River, organized Lewiston's early manufacturing operations. They opened a woolen mill before Maine gained its statehood in 1820, and they established the Lewiston Falls Cotton Mill Company in 1845. After a railroad line reached Lewiston in 1849, Boston capitalists built additional cotton and woolen mills in the town. The largest plants, the Bates, Hill, and Androscoggin mills, each had 50,000 spindles by 1872. In that year, Lewiston's nine cotton and five woolen mills produced over 32,000,000 yards of cotton cloth and nearly 700,000 yards of woolen cloth. Incorporated as a city in 1861, Lewiston became Maine's foremost textile center in the mid-nineteenth century.[2]

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[2]Geneva Kirk and Gridley Barrows, *Historic Lewiston: Its Government* (Lewiston, Maine: Lewiston Historical Commission, 1982), pp. 1, 3; James S. Leamon, *Historic Lewiston: A Textile City in Transition* (Lewiston, Maine: Lewiston Historical Commission, 1976), pp. v, 4, 6-7, 9; Georgia Drew Merrill, ed., *History of Androscoggin County, Maine* (Boston: W.A. Fergusson, 1891), p. 38; A.M. Myhrman and J.A. Rademaker, "The Second Colonization Process in an Industrial Community" (Typescript, Lewiston Public Library, n.d.), p. 5; Edmund S. Hoyt, comp., *Maine State Year-Book and Legislative Manual, for the*

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The textile industry dominated Lewiston's economy until the mid-twentieth century. In 1883, it provided employment for over 6,000 persons; at the turn of the century, seventy percent of the city's work force labored in its mills. Although Lewiston's textile industry, like the rest of New England's, declined after the First World War, it survived the Great Depression. Capitalists with national concerns purchased the Bates, Hill, and Androscoggin mills, which had planned to close in the late 1920s, in order to safeguard their investments in the utilities that sold power to these mills. In 1937, Lewiston's textile manufacturers employed 5,000 men and women, approximately half of the state's textile workers. Not until the permanent decline of most of Lewiston's mills in the 1950s did this one-industry city begin diversifying its economy.[3]

The initial source of labor for Lewiston's mills came from young, native-born farm women, who typically worked long enough to accumulate the funds they needed to finance further education, repay family debt, or establish a dowry. Irish migrants, who had arrived in the United States

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Year 1872 (Portland, Maine: Hoyt, Fogg & Breed, 1871), pp. 168-169; N. Dingley, Jr., *Historical Sketch of Lewiston* (Lewiston, Maine: Lewiston Journal [1872]), p. 15.

[3]Leamon, *A Textile City in Transition,* pp. 6, 14, 28-34, 43; Secretary of State, comp., *Statistics of Industries and Finances of Maine for the Year 1883* (Augusta, Maine: Sprague and Son, 1883), pp. 4-5; Myhrman and Rademaker, "The Second Colonization Process in an Industrial Community," p. 5.

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between the mid-1840s and early 1850s to escape the potato famine in Ireland, succeeded the American women as operatives in Lewiston's textile industry. The Irish had come to the Lewiston area to build the railroads and dig the canals that diverted water from the Androscoggin River to power the mills. When the native-born women went on strike in 1854 to back their demand for an eleven-hour work day, mill managers replaced them with Irish laborers.[4]

In that same year, the Know-Nothing political party came to Maine. It had formed in New York in 1852; when questioned about the organization, members sworn to secrecy typically quipped "I don't know," thus giving the party its name. The Know-Nothing movement spread to each state and territory of the United States, amassing one million members by 1854. In Maine, the movement took root in coastal and river towns, where much of the state's Irish population had settled. In 1854, anti-Catholic sentiment fomented by the Know-Nothings led to the burning of Catholic churches in the coastal communities of Bath and Ellsworth, Maine, and to the tarring and feathering of

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[4]Leamon, *A Textile City in Transition,* pp. 14-15; Myhrman and Rademaker, "The Second Colonization Process in an Industrial Community," p. 1; James H. Mundy, *Hard Times, Hard Men: Maine and the Irish, 1830-1860* (Scarborough, Maine: Harp Publications, 1990), p. 54. As in Lewiston, Yankee women initially dominated the labor forces of New England's textile mill communities; by the 1860s, Irish workers supplanted them. On this change from a native-born to immigrant-dominated work force in the textile mills, see Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.)

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Ellworth's Catholic priest. The state's Protestant ministers helped spread the Know-Nothing movement, which drew its membership from the middle and lower classes. By the fall gubernatorial election, up to one-fifth of Maine's voters either belonged to the party or sympathized with it, estimates historian Allan R. Whitmore. With approximately 27,000 members, Maine's Know-Nothing Party reached the height of its popularity in 1855, the year the state received its first Catholic bishop.[5]

That same year, nativists twice torched the Catholic church of Lewiston. Albert H. Kelsey helped repair the structure after the first fire, and he fought in vain to save the building during the second one. When he arrived at the scene, he "'found five or six hundred Lewiston people standing on the street opposite the burning building. They were hooting and yelling and jeering,'" he told an interviewer nearly a half-century later. After

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[5]Allan R. Whitmore, "'A Guard of Faithful Sentinels': The Know-Nothing Appeal in Maine, 1854-1855," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 20 (Winter 1981), pp. 165, 170, 172-176; Fergus Macdonald, *The Catholic Church and the Secret Societies in the United States* (New York: The United States Catholic Historical Society, 1946), pp. 29-30; Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), p. 84; William Leo Lucey, S.J., *The Catholic Church in Maine* (Francestown, New Hampshire: Marshall Jones Co., 1957), pp. 100, 124-125, 130-131, 155; James Paul Allen, "Catholics in Maine: A Social Geography" (Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1970), pp. 104-109; Mundy, *Hard Times, Hard Men*, p. 147; Diocese of Portland Centenary Year Edition, *Portland Sunday Telegram*, November 6, 1955, p. 6. Internal conflicts, increasing public opposition, and the rise of the Republican Party helped lead to the collapse of the Know-Nothing movement in Maine in 1856. Know-Nothings became absorbed into Maine's Republican Party, something which led the state's Irish population to lean towards Democratic Party membership. Whitmore, pp. 183-184, 189-190; Mundy, p. 189.

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fire engines arrived, someone cut their hoses. Kelsey procured another hose from the nearby Bates Mill, and he stationed people along the hose to prevent it from being cut; he then sprayed the gathering crowd before attempting to douse the enflamed structure. Kelsey blamed the Know-Nothings for the blaze. "'There was a feeling of bigotry abroad in those days,'" he remembered. A contemporary witness, "An Irish Catholic" letter writer to the *Democratic Advocate,* stopped short of indicting the Know-Nothing Party, but attributed the fire to "a few misguided men" within the movement. In its report of the fire, the *Democratic Advocate* charged: "Here are more of the practical workings of Know-Nothingism. Our place [Lewiston] will soon compete with Bath and Ellsworth, [*sic*] in their unenviable notoriety." Indignant, the rival *Lewiston Falls Journal* contended that the *Advocate*'s allegation was "unfounded," and it defended the Know-Nothings as "high-minded and honorable men." The *Journal* did not, however, condone the church burning, and it asked readers: "Will not some one move in reference to repairing the chapel which has been thus maliciously and wickedly destroyed?" Whether Know-Nothings were directly responsible for the two fires at Lewiston's Catholic church in 1855 is not certain; they were responsible, however, for creating in Maine an anti-Catholic climate that made possible the church's destruction. Whether the church burnings represented working-class Yankee protest against

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Irish strike breakers is also not certain, though it is possible. By 1850 the Irish comprised nearly one-fourth of Lewiston's residents and seventy-five percent of its unskilled labor supply. When they entered the mills, they constituted an economic threat. The poverty of Lewiston's Irish migrants, their involvement in petty crimes, the sanitation problems they caused the city by building shacks on vacant lots, their lack of temperance despite Maine's prohibition laws, and their Catholicism must have led Know-Nothings and other native-born Americans to view them as a social threat as well.[6]

The agent of the Franklin Company served, however, as a patron to Lewiston's Irish population, and he helped Catholicism take root in the city. Boston capitalists had created the Franklin Company in 1854, and it acquired ownership of the water power of the Androscoggin River, the canals, and several hundred acres of land. As its agent, Albert H. Kelsey built the Bates, Hill, Androscoggin, Lewiston, and Continental mills, and he planned city streets as well as the common, earning the titles "the man

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[6]Typescript notes of Reverend Philip Desjardins on Saint Joseph Parish, Lewiston, Maine, Chancery Archives, Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine; T. Edward Conley, "Lewiston's Pioneer Catholic Parish," in *Fiftieth Anniversary of St. Josephs [sic] Church, Lewiston, Maine: Catholic Guide and Reference Book* (n.p. [1908?]), p. 11; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, March 4, 1901, p. 2; *Lewiston Falls Journal*, December 15 and 22, 1855; letter by "An Irish Catholic" to the editor of the Lewiston, Maine, *Democratic Advocate*, December 13, 1855; *Democratic Advocate*, December 13, 1855; Mundy, *Hard Times, Hard Men*, p. 21; Margaret J. Buker, "The Irish in Lewiston, Maine: A Search for Security on the Urban Frontier, 1850-1880," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 13 (Special, 1973), p. 7; Leamon, *A Textile City in Transition*, pp. 15-16.

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who built Lewiston" and "godfather to the prosperity of the Spindle City," by the time of his death in 1901. Class and ethnicity intersected in Lewiston in complicated ways as this elite Yankee agent supported members of the Irish working class. Not only had Kelsey sold the Irish their church building, but he had also helped them repair the damage after the first fire; probably again with Kelsey's assistance, the Irish rebuilt their church after the second fire. Later, Kelsey sold the Irish one of the Franklin Company's finer lots. The Irish had asked the company to sell them land for a new church on terms similar to those it had granted Protestant denominations, but the company's Boston-based board of directors had twice refused to sell to these Catholics. In 1863, Kelsey simply penned a deed and slipped it among routine paperwork requiring official signatures from Boston. "'I realized how important it was to encourage Catholicism for the sake of the people who were flocking to our city,'" explained Kelsey. On the lot the Irish purchased, they built Saint Joseph's, the "Mother Church" of the six parishes Catholics founded in Lewiston through the early 1920s.[7]

Lewiston's next migrant population, French-speaking Catholics from Canada, began arriving in the city in the

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[7]Myhrman and Rademaker, "The Second Colonization Process in an Industrial Community," pp. 3-4; Dingley, *Historical Sketch of Lewiston*, p. 6; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, March 4, 1901, p. 2; Conley, "Lewiston's Pioneer Catholic Parish," p. 11; *Church World*, February 18, 1955, p. 13.

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mid-nineteenth century. Naturalization records reveal that at least two French Canadians had come to Lewiston by 1860. One of them, Charles Voyer, had lived in Lewiston for six months around 1857-1858 before moving to Biddeford, Maine, and eventually back to Lewiston in 1868. The other, Noel Gravel, had arrived in Lewiston in 1859, but he does not appear in the 1860 census. Late nineteenth-century, French-language accounts claim that Georges Carignan in 1860 became the first French Canadian to establish residence in Lewiston. The nominative federal censuses for 1850 and 1860 do not confirm an earlier French-Canadian presence in the city, nor even Carignan's in 1860.[8] Although Carignan may not have been the first person of French-Canadian descent in Lewiston, those of French-Canadian birth and background have long regarded him as the first francophone Canadian to reside in the city.

Promoting Carignan as Lewiston's first French Canadian was part of the identity-formation process. Not until the 1890s did Lewiston's French speakers embrace Carignan as their founder. In 1892, two years after Carignan's death, *Le Messager* first claimed in its *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day edition that Carignan had arrived in Lewiston in 1860 and

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[8]Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Records, Maine State Archives [hereafter, MSA], Augusta, Maine, vol. 17, pp. 139-140; Lewiston Municipal Court Naturalization Records, MSA, vol. 4, p. 503; *U.S. Census, 1860*; *Le Messager*, numéro souvenir, 24 juin 1892, p. 2, numéro souvenir, 2 juillet 1895; *Paroisse Canadienne-Française de Lewiston (Maine): Album historique* ([Lewiston, Maine]: Les Pères Dominicains, 1899), pp. 11-12; *U.S. Census, 1850*.

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had been its first French-Canadian resident. When the city celebrated its centennial in 1895, *Le Messager* published in its souvenir edition the biographies of notable French Canadians, and it included Carignan for his role as the city's first French Canadian.[9] These celebratory accounts featuring Carignan as a founding figure served to convey a sense of longevity (and not of transcience) to the French-Canadian presence in Lewiston; they also served to advance the argument of French speakers that they had exercised a role in the city's history. As we will see in chapter two, francophones contended--and offered evidence--in the 1880s and 1890s that they had a stake in the host society, contrary to the assertions of nativists. Pointing to Carignan as their Lewiston founder served a role, therefore, in the identity-making process of these French Canadians in their country of adoption.

French Canadians had migrated to various parts of Maine since the 1830s. According to geographer James P. Allen, they had come in two different migration streams. In one stream, French Canadians living on the south shore of the Saint Lawrence River, from the city of Québec down river to counties near Kamouraska, had moved eastward to the upper Saint John River valley in northern Maine (see map 1.) In the other stream, those living along the

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[9]*Le Messager*, 23 janvier 1890, p. 4, numéro souvenir, 24 juin 1892, p. 2, numéro souvenir, 2 juillet 1895.

Saint-Jean-Baptiste: Saint John the Baptist

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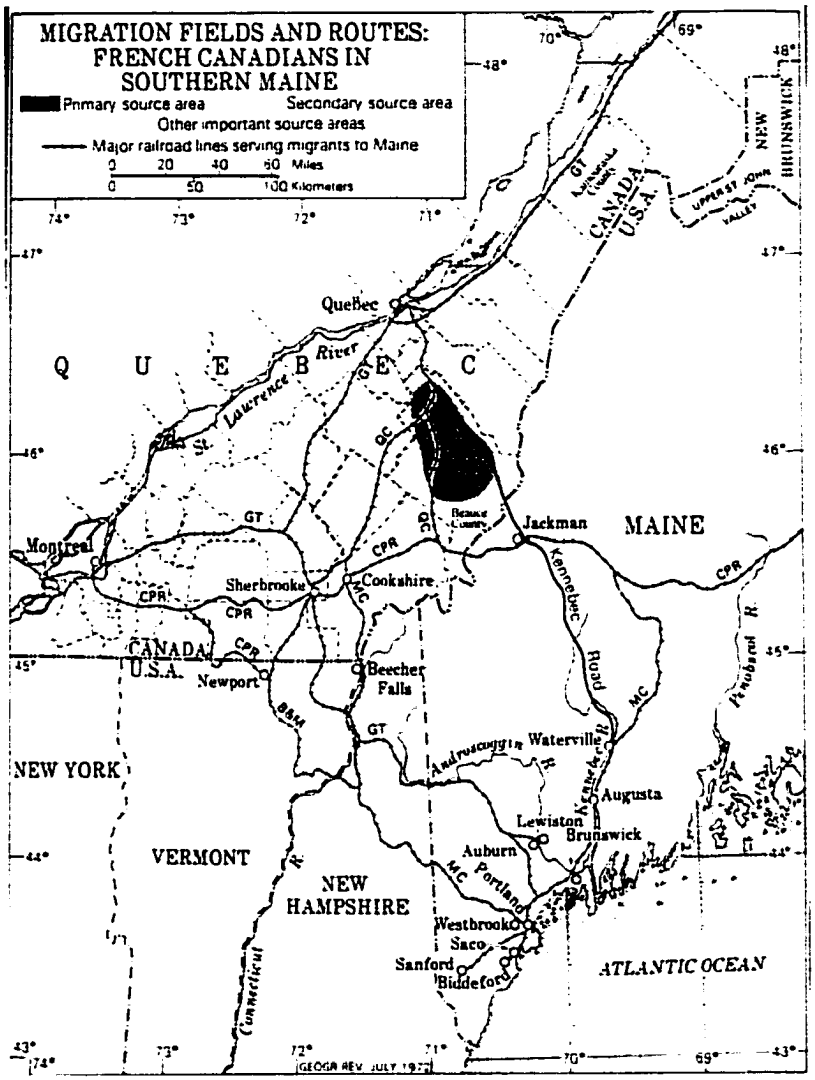
Map 1



SOURCE: James P. Allen, "Migration Fields of French Canadian Immigrants to Southern Maine," *Geographical Review* 62 (July 1972), p. 373.

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Chaudière River in Beauce county had come to central Maine on the Kennebec Road to pursue seasonal work in shipyards, on farms, and in the woods.[10] These pre-railroad migration patterns influenced population flows from Canada to Lewiston after the development of rail transportation.

Located about thirty miles south of Lewiston, the city of Portland, Maine, became the winter port of Montréal, Québec, when the Atlantic and Saint Lawrence Railroad (later part of the Grand Trunk Railway system) connected the two cities in 1853. In the mid-1870s a railway extension linked Lewiston to the Grand Trunk line, a development which significantly increased the French-Canadian population of the city. According to historian Yves Frenette, only the Carignan family resided in Lewiston in 1860, compared to 689 children and adults in 1870, and to 4,475 individuals in 1880. By 1900, French Canadians comprised almost half of the city's 23,761 residents.[11]

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[10]James P. Allen, "Migration Fields of French Canadian Immigrants to Southern Maine," *Geographical Review* 62 (July 1972), pp. 369-371. In an unsigned letter to the editor of the Portland, Maine, *Eastern Argus*, a promoter of U.S. investment in Canada indicated one could potentially travel the 212-mile road between Québec City and Augusta, Maine, in two days. *Eastern Argus*, July 4, 1834, p. 2.

[11]Allen, "Migration Fields of French Canadian Immigrants to Southern Maine," pp. 372-373; Myhrman and Rademaker, "The Second Colonization Process in an Industrial Community," p. 5; Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Report on the Social Statistics of Cities*, George E. Waring, Jr., comp., Part I: The New England and the Middle States (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1886), p. 26; Yves Frenette, "La genèse d'une communauté canadienne-française en Nouvelle-Angleterre: Lewiston, Maine, 1800-1880" (Thèse de Ph.D., Université Laval, Québec, 1988), p. 151A; Ralph Dominic Vicero, "Immigration of French Canadians to New England, 1840-1900: A Geographical Analysis" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1968), p. 343; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census,

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As Lewiston's French-Canadian population expanded beyond the city's industrial section, francophones also moved across the river into Auburn. They resided primarily in the section known as New Auburn, within walking distance of Lewiston's ethnic enclave, *Petit Canada*. Auburn, however, attracted far fewer migrants than its twin city. In 1880, for example, Auburn's population was less than half as large as Lewiston's, and over nine-tenths of it was native-born; by comparison, less than two-thirds of Lewiston's population was native-born in that year. Unlike Lewiston, which had ten Protestant and two Catholic churches, Auburn had fifteen Protestant and no Catholic churches in 1880.[12] Auburn was the bastion of Anglo-Saxon Protestants and, as we shall see, it became a wellspring of anti-Catholic activity.

Just as Lewiston became known for textile manufacturing, its sister city gained its industrial reputation for shoe production. Auburn's shoe industry began with two small factories in 1836 and, by 1859, the city had twenty-three shops that produced over 271,000

Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1931), p. 472.

[12]Frenette, "La genèse d'une communauté canadienne-française en Nouvelle-Angleterre," pp. 340-341; U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Compendium of the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)*, part 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 455; *Greenough's Directory of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Manufacturing Establishments, Societies, Business, Business Firms, Etc., Etc. in the Cities of Lewiston and Auburn, for 1880-81* (Boston: W.A. Greenough, 1880), pp. 209-211, 363-365.

Petit Canada: Little Canada

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pairs of shoes. The industry employed about 3,000 in 1876, and employment peaked at 8,000 in 1922. In 1935, Auburn's shoe industry had 6,500 on the payroll and produced over 12,000,000 pairs of boots and shoes. Together, Auburn and Lewiston became known as the "Industrial Heart of Maine" in the twentieth century. Their burgeoning factories from the nineteenth century became the major employers of French-Canadian migrants and their descendants.[13]

The migration of French Canadians to the Lewiston-Auburn area was part of the Québec diaspora in which hundreds of thousands of francophones moved to the United States between the end of the Civil War and the start of the Great Depression. Around 1860, French Canadians increasingly opted to migrate to the United States rather than to rural, western Canada. Speaking to the Maine Bar Association in 1923, Lewiston attorney F.X. Belleau, who had migrated east to Maine from Québec's Shefford county in 1876, explained: "'In the days of my youth rural Canada offered very little advantage to young people in its towns or villages. It was the case of either going West or coming East. The best opening for many youths was then the New England States to which we came in large numbers.'" People moving to the Canadian west needed capital to purchase land, and railroad fares to get there were higher

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[13]Myhrman and Rademaker, "The Second Colonization Process in an Industrial Community," pp. 11-13, 34; *Annual Municipal Report, Fiscal Year Ending February 28, 1937: Lewiston, Maine* (n.p. [1937]), p. 18.

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than to nearby U.S. states. Moreover, the industrializing cities of the northeastern United States offered jobs.[14]

The opportunity for waged work was an important consideration for French-Canadian migrants. Economic and demographic changes affecting the rural and urban populations of Québec created conditions of unemployment and distress during the second half of the nineteenth century. Agriculture became increasingly specialized and farmers less self-sufficient. Usury was a significant problem: indebtedness, incurred during years of poor harvest, was difficult to repay even in years of good crop yield, a situation that led to discouragement and precipitated migration, particularly among the young who despaired of continued prospects of working for little or nothing. Because industrial development in Québec's cities did not proceed at a pace rapid enough to absorb the province's surplus rural population, much of it needed to migrate elsewhere. During periods of recession, urban dwellers likewise had to migrate to earn the funds they needed to repay debt. Given the prevailing philosophy that they had to help themselves, French Canadians pursued jobs in the United States.[15]

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[14]Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre (1776-1930)* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 1990), p. 22; *Le Messager*, 19 janvier 1923, p. 9; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Records, MSA, vol. 18, pp. 757-758.

[15]Yves Roby, "L'évolution économique du Québec et l'émigrant (1850-1929)," dans Claire Quintal, dir., *L'émigrant québécois vers les États-Unis (1850-1920)* (Québec, Québec: Le Conseil de la Vie française en Amérique, 1982), pp. 8, 12-13, 17, 19; Roby, *Les Franco-*

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Nineteenth-century naturalization records reveal that Lewiston's French-Canadian migrants came predominantly from the province of Québec. Of the 1,188 French-Canadian men of Lewiston who became citizens from the 1870s through the 1890s, only 1.3 percent were born outside of Québec, and most of them were from the neighboring province of New Brunswick.[16] Acadians, French speakers from the Canadian Maritimes, tended not to settle in textile mill towns like Lewiston but in Maine towns with paper mills. These migration patterns probably helped the state's francophones

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Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, pp. 33-45; Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher et Jean-Claude Robert, *Histoire du Québec contemporain: De la Confédération à la crise* (1867-1929) (Montréal: Boréal, 1989), p. 168.

[16]No women appear in the nineteenth-century data. Women derived their U.S. citizenship from their husbands or fathers and did not naturalize on their own until 1922. Widows, however, whose husbands had declared their intention to become U.S. citizens but who had died before filing final papers, could become naturalized by taking an oath of allegiance. John J. Newman, "American Naturalization Processes and Procedures, 1790-1985" (Typescript, Family History Section, Indiana Historical Society, 1985), available at the National Archives and Records Administration, Waltham, Massachusetts [hereafter, NARA-Waltham], pp. 14, 22-23. The following constitute the nineteenth-century naturalization records of the courts of Lewiston, Auburn, and Portland, Maine, from which naturalization data represented throughout this chapter were compiled: Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Records, vols. 1-27.5, 1854-1894, MSA; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vol. B, 1895-1899, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; Lewiston Municipal Court Naturalization Records, vols. 4-8, 1882-1893, MSA; Auburn, Maine, Municipal Court Naturalization Records, 1893, NARA-Waltham; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Proceedings, vols. 1-2, 6-8, 1790-1845, NARA-Waltham; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 1-11, 1851-1899, NARA-Waltham; U.S. Circuit Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 1-3, 1851-1899, NARA-Waltham; Superior Court, Cumberland County (Portland, Maine), Naturalization Records, 1868-1899, MSA. Hereafter, these records will be cited more succinctly as "nineteenth-century naturalization records."

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to retain distinct regional identities as French Canadians and Acadians, identities occasionally noted in Lewiston.[17]

No more than 8.1 percent of the men who naturalized in the Spindle City in the nineteenth century were born in Québec counties north of the Saint Lawrence River. Of this group, two-thirds came from the three largest cities on the river: Québec City, Trois-Rivières, and Montréal.[18] The cities of Québec were thus not major suppliers of Lewiston's naturalizing francophones.

The remaining French Canadians who naturalized in Lewiston through 1899 had places of birth widely dispersed among Québec counties south of the Saint Lawrence River (see map 2.) They were not concentrated in any one county. No county, for example, supplied more than about twelve percent of the migrants who naturalized while living in Lewiston. Two regional patterns emerge, however. Témiscouata and Kamouraska, located directly north of Maine along the lower Saint Lawrence River, together supplied as

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[17]Allen, "Catholics in Maine," pp. 142, 142n, 145. Fleeting references to Acadians in Lewiston appear not in the city's French-language newspaper but in the chronicle maintained by the Dominicans and in the hospital reports of the Grey Nuns. See, for example, La chronique du couvent, la série couvents et paroisses, la sous-série couvent des Apôtres Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, Maine, les archives des Dominicains, Montréal, Québec [ci-après, la Chronique des Dominicains], vol. 1, 10 septembre 1883, p. 119; and *Hospital of the Sisters of Charity: Thirteenth Annual Report, 1905* (Lewiston, Maine: Haswell Press [1905], p. 17.

[18]Nineteenth-century naturalization records. See the Appendix for an explication of the methodology employed in determining the counties of origin of naturalized males.

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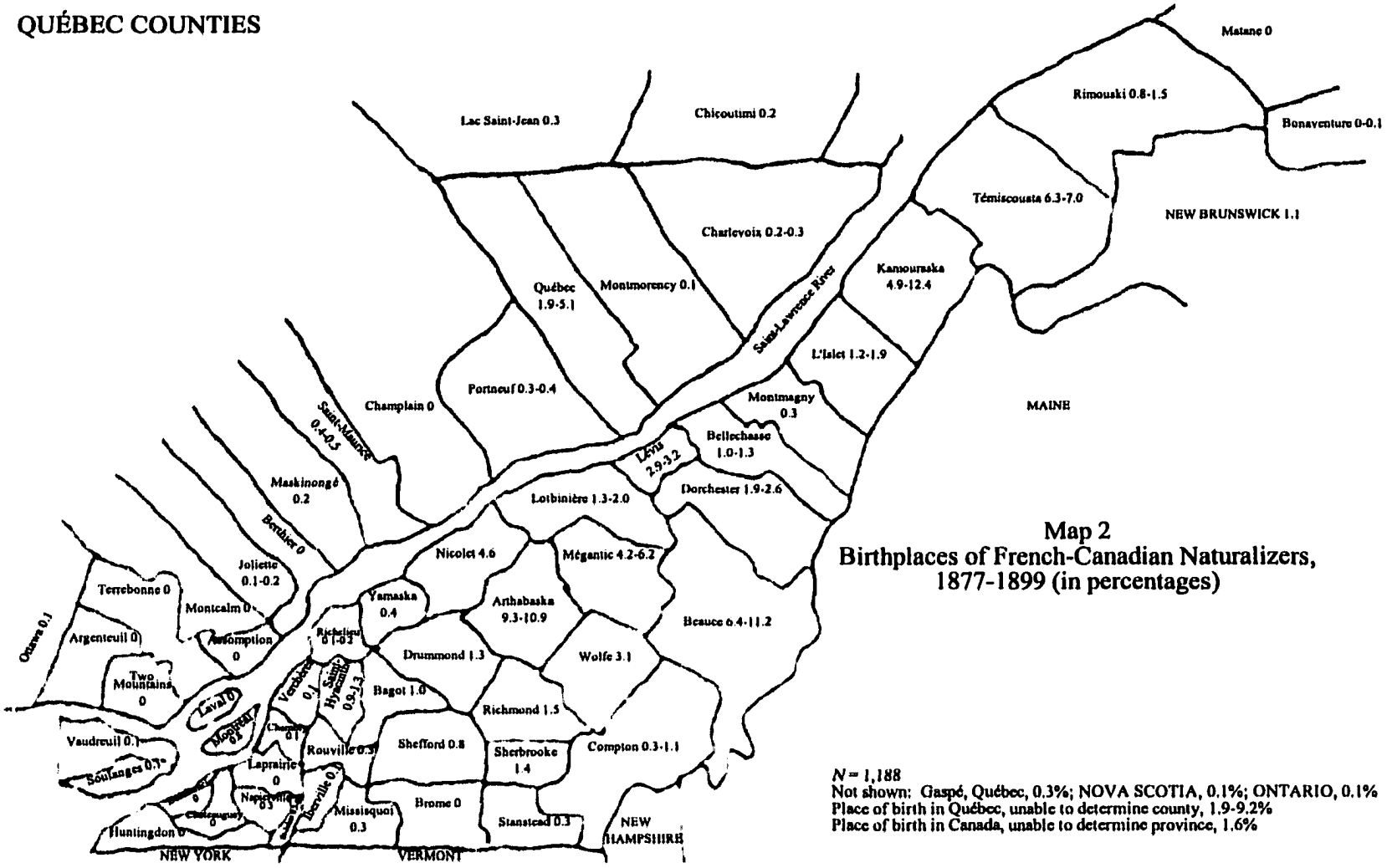

much as one-fifth (19.4 percent) of Lewiston's naturalizing males in the late nineteenth century. To Maine's west, a south shore belt of Beauce, Mégantic, Wolfe, Arthabaska, and Nicolet counties probably furnished over one-third (36.1 percent) of Lewiston's naturalizers.[19] These regional clusters appear as enlargements of the migration fields to Maine that existed before the extensive development of railroad transportation between Québec and the northeastern United States.

James Allen argues that railroad development largely accounts for the wide distribution of the places of origin of Lewiston's French-Canadian population. He points out that central Maine towns like Augusta and Waterville, which had pre-railroad connections to Beauce county, drew two-thirds of their French-Canadian population from Beauce after rail transportation connected them. Another central Maine town, Brunswick, received more than half of its French-Canadian residents from towns in four contiguous counties of Québec within fifty miles of l'Islet county, according to William N. Locke. Settled by francophones principally after the construction of railroads, Lewiston had a wider migration field than Augusta-Waterville or Brunswick because railways facilitated the spread of

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[19]Nineteenth-century naturalization records. Because the figures found on the maps of this dissertation may be rounded, regional totals that readers might compile from the maps may differ slightly from those represented in the narrative.

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information and contacts to this larger and faster-growing city, Allen maintains.[20]

Naturalization records provide a limited amount of information on the migrant journey of francophones prior to leaving Canada. Court clerks processing naturalization papers in the United States recorded the place of emigration for slightly over six percent of the French Canadians from Lewiston who naturalized through 1899. Over half of those for whom we have this information had migrated directly from their place of birth to the United States; probably up to sixty percent had done so. At least forty percent, therefore, had made one stop (and possibly more) within Québec before crossing the border to the United States. Flavien L'Heureux, for example, had been born in Sainte-Rosalie (Bagot county) and had migrated to the United States from Weedon (Wolfe county), a town in a non-contiguous county due east from his place of birth; his naturalization record, like those of other French-Canadian migrants, does not indicate whether he had made other stops in Québec before crossing the international border.[21] Perhaps the wide distribution of the migrants' places of origin, coupled with their geographic mobility prior to

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[20]Allen, "Migration Fields of French Canadian Immigrants to Southern Maine," pp. 379-380; William N. Locke, "The French Colony at Brunswick, Maine: A Historical Sketch," *Les Archives de Folklore* 1 (1946), pp. 110-111.

[21]Nineteenth-century naturalization records; L'Heureux's naturalization record is from the Lewiston Municipal Court, MSA, vol. 4, p. 495.

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leaving Québec, explains why French Canadians did not exhibit village or county identities once in Lewiston.

Court clerks provided more thorough information on the migration patterns of Canadians after they entered the United States. Over three-fourths (78.7 percent) of the French speakers who naturalized through 1899 had migrated directly to Lewiston, one-tenth (9.5 percent) had arrived at other locations in Maine before proceeding to the Spindle City, while another tenth (10.8 percent) had stopped first in other U.S. states, mostly in the northeast; the place of arrival of the remaining migrants (1.0 percent) was unknown. Available evidence suggests that the large majority of French Canadians who had migrated directly to Lewiston had remained in the city until their naturalization. Flavien L'Heureux, for instance, had arrived in Lewiston in 1872 and had lived there until his naturalization in 1885. Only three out of 1,188 persons had remigrated to Canada before becoming U.S. citizens.[22] The naturalization records suggest, then, that the French-Canadian men of Lewiston who opted to become

[22]Because the information provided on naturalization forms varied by courthouse prior to the creation of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization in 1906, we do not have complete details on the migrant journey of French Canadians after they entered the United States. The naturalization records of the Portland courts, for example, which account for about twenty percent of the data from the nineteenth century, furnish only the place of arrival in the United States. Records from the Lewiston and Auburn courts, which do detail the journey of migrants after the border crossing, reveal that only twenty-five men (merely 2.1 percent of all naturalizers) who had migrated directly from Canada to Lewiston had moved elsewhere before returning to the city to become naturalized citizens. Nineteenth-century naturalization records.

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U.S. citizens in the late nineteenth century had demonstrated considerable population stability within their adopted country prior to taking out their final naturalization papers. This demographic stability, however, was a late-nineteenth-century development.

Unlike during the seasonal migrations that had taken place prior to the Civil War, the French Canadians who arrived in the United States after the mid-1860s came in greater numbers, stayed for longer periods of time, and brought nuclear and extended families in a "chain migration." In fact, Yves Frenette finds that over ninety percent of the French Canadians who appeared in the federal censuses for Lewiston in 1870 and 1880 lived with other family members; their family migrations thus contrasted with the pattern common to other ethnic groups, a pattern of men migrating alone. Until the 1880s, these post-Civil War migrations of French speakers did not usually lead to permanent settlement. Like Charles Voyer, the French Canadians who migrated to Lewiston before 1880 typically moved on to other industrializing cities of the United States or back to the province of Québec. Sixty-seven percent of the French Canadians listed in the 1870 census for Lewiston did not appear again in the 1880 census, Frenette finds. As a temporary stopping place for the majority of its French-Canadian residents, Lewiston did not have a stable francophone population. Not until the final

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two decades of the nineteenth century did they begin settling in the Spindle City on a permanent basis.[23]

One of the first steps in the settling-in process was acquiring a parish of their own. During the 1860s, French Canadians worshiped with the Irish. In 1869, when Lewiston's French speakers numbered about 1,000, they began holding their own masses in the basement of Saint Joseph's Church with a Flemish priest, Clement Mutsaers, as celebrant. Assigned a French-Canadian priest in 1870, Lewiston's francophones subsequently formed their own "national" parish, initially renting from the Irish the chapel they had rebuilt following the nativist attacks of 1855. The pastor, Edward Létourneau, was a native of Beauce county and from the diocese of Saint-Hyacinthe, regions from which many French Canadians had come. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, other Catholic migrants who settled in the U.S. northeast and midwest replicated the same pattern as Lewiston's French Canadians: they celebrated mass with the ethnic group that preceded them, then held their own services in the church basement or chapel under the

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[23]Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 33-45; Yves Frenette, "Macroscopie et microscopie d'un mouvement migratoire: les Canadiens français à Lewiston au XIXe siècle," dans Yves Landry, John A. Dickinson, Suzy Pasleau et Claude Desama, dirs., *Les chemins de la migration en Belgique et au Québec: XVIIe-XXe siècles* (Beauport, Québec: Publications MNH, 1995), pp. 226, 228; Yves Frenette, "Understanding the French Canadians of Lewiston, 1860-1900: An Alternate Framework," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 25 (Spring 1986), pp. 205, 213; Frenette, "La genèse d'une communauté canadienne-française en Nouvelle-Angleterre," p. 162.

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direction of an appointed foreign-born priest, and later founded their own parish.[24] Through this process, French Canadians and other Catholic migrants rooted themselves in the United States.

As sociologists Robert E. Park and Herbert A. Miller argued in the early 1920s, forming tight-knit, ethnic communities was an integral part of the rooting process. Anti-Catholic hostility in the United States often worked to promote ethnic solidarity among new migrant populations. Whether Reverend Létourneau encountered anti-Catholic sentiment in Lewiston has gone unrecorded. As pastor of Maine's first French-Canadian parish, he stayed in his post only a little over a year, leaving under suspicious circumstances. His successor, Saint-Hyacinthe native Pierre Hévey, had difficulty finding lodging in the city on account of anti-Catholic, anti-French-Canadian sentiment on the part of its native-born residents.[25] This negative

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[24]E. Hamon, S.J., *Les Canadiens-Français de la Nouvelle-Angleterre* (Québec, Québec: N.S. Hardy, 1891), p. 405; *Paroisse Canadienne-Française de Lewiston (Maine)*, p. 13; Reverend John F. Crozier, ed., *One Hundredth Anniversary of Saint Joseph's Church, Lewiston, Maine, 1857-1957* (n.p., n.d.), p. 11; Antonin M. Plourde, O.P., "Cent ans de vie paroissiale: SS. Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, 1870-1970," *Le Rosaire* (août-septembre 1970), pp. 9-10; notes of Reverend Philip Desjardins; Frenette, "La genèse d'une communauté canadienne-française en Nouvelle-Angleterre," p. 273; James S. Olson, *Catholic Immigrants in America* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1987), pp. 101, 103-104, 113.

[25]Robert E. Park and Herbert A. Miller, *Old World Traits Transplanted* (New York: Harper, 1921), pp. 24, 306-308; Plourde, "Cent ans de vie paroissiale," pp. 9, 11, 13; *Le Messager*, octobre 1938, cited in Plourde, "Cent ans de vie paroissiale," p. 10; Hamon, *Les Canadiens-Français de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 406; Reverend Alexandre-Louis Mothon, O.P., 1893, cited in J. Antonin Plourde, *Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents*, vol. 2: *Les cinq fondations avant l'autonomie (1881-1911)* (s.l., s.é, 1975), p. 95.

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experience probably only further motivated the French-Canadian pastor to promote ethnic solidarity among Lewiston's French-speaking population.

In January 1872, several months after Hévey had arrived in Lewiston, he facilitated the founding of a national society. He asked the men of the parish to join him in a meeting after vespers one Sunday at which Charles Lalime of Worcester, Massachusetts, discussed the advantages of forming a mutual-aid association. Within a week, Lewiston's French Canadians founded the *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* society, named and modeled after one in Québec that nationalists had organized to unify francophones and to provide them (and, consequently, their families) with social assistance in times of illness, disability, or death.[26] Divisions within the Lewiston society led a group of French Canadians to form *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* in May 1874 as a literary club and alternative society. The following month, members of *l'Institut* traveled to Montréal along with over 10,000 French-Canadian migrants from the United States to celebrate *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day, in

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[26]Plourde, "Cent ans de vie paroissiale," p. 14; *Le Messager*, 29 juin 1897, p. 5; Florence Marie Chevalier, S.S.A., "The Role of French National Societies in the Sociocultural Evolution of the Franco-Americans of New England from 1860 to the Present: An Analytical Macro-sociological Case Study in Ethnic Integration Based on Current Social System Models" (Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1972), pp. 52-53. On the origins of French-language mutual-benefit societies in Québec and the northeastern United States, see Mark Paul Richard, "Coping before *l'État-providence*: Collective Welfare Strategies of New England's Franco-Americans," *Québec Studies* 25 (Spring 1998), pp. 62-64.

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honor of the patron saint of French Canadians, and to *fête* the fortieth anniversary of the city's *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste*. Its ethnic pride aroused by the event, *l'Institut* decided to organize Lewiston's own celebration in the following year. By merging with the local *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* society, *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* strengthened its forces in June 1875, and it organized in that month Lewiston's first public celebration of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day.[27] Founded during Hévey's tenure, *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* became an important national society in Lewiston, one that both provided social assistance to francophones and promoted their ethnic cohesion.

During the decade in which he ministered in Lewiston, Hévey also helped French Canadians to establish their own church, school, cemetery, and additional societies. In 1872, they built *Saint-Pierre* Church. Rather than continuing to share the final resting place of the Irish, they opened their own cemetery in 1876. Two years later, Hévey founded the first bilingual school in Maine, staffed by the *Soeurs Grises* of Saint-Hyacinthe, so-named because of the color of their habits. In 1879, he formed *les*

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[27]*Le Messager*, 29 juin 1897, p. 5; Yves Roby, "Émigrés canadiens-français, Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et images de la société américaine," dans Yvan Lamonde et Gérard Bouchard, dirs., *Québécois et Américains: La culture québécoise aux XIXe et XXe siècles* ([Saint-Laurent, Québec]: Éditions Fides, 1995), p. 136; *Paroisse Canadienne-Française de Lewiston*, p. 95.

l'Institut Jacques-Cartier: the Jacques Cartier Institute

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Enfants de Marie, a religious association for young women, and *l'Union Saint-Joseph,* another mutual-aid society which the men of the parish could join. Uniting French-Canadian men who had come to Lewiston from different parts of Québec and who did not know each other was the central goal of *l'Union Saint-Joseph.* Frenette argues that Hévey's efforts in promoting solidarity among French Canadians in Lewiston led to the creation of an ethnic network that helped root this previously-mobile population.[28]

Ethnic isolation characterized the community building of the 1870s. To establish their own parish, school, societies, and cemetery, Lewiston's French Canadians broke away from their Irish co-religionists. In life, as in death, these French speakers lived apart from the city's Protestant American and Irish Catholic residents, segregating themselves in their *Petit Canada.* In the early 1870s, the *Journal,* the newspaper of Lewiston's native-born American population, reported that the city's French Canadians were "quite clannish" because of their language, and that they patronized their own grocers, physicians, and hackmen. It noted, however, that the children spoke a

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[28]Plourde, "Cent ans de vie paroissiale," pp. 11, 15; Frenette, "La genèse d'une communauté canadienne-française en Nouvelle-Angleterre," pp. 239, 286-287, 292; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 5, p. 396; *Paroisse Canadienne-Française de Lewiston,* p. 96; *Noces d'Argent de l'Union Saint-Joseph: Programme des Fêtes Jubilaires, 22 et 23 juin 1904* ([Lewiston, Maine]: Le Messager [1904]), p. 4.

Soeurs Grises: Grey Nuns
les Enfants de Marie: the Children of Mary
l'Union Saint-Joseph: the Saint Joseph Union

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mixture of French and English, taking "to English, like a duck to water" and that their skills enabled them to serve as interpreters for older family members. While expressing mild concern that French Canadians had purchased little property in Lewiston and that they sent their earnings back to Canada, the *Journal* complimented them for their religious devotion, work ethic, temperance, and for how rarely they required police or court intervention. The *Journal*'s articles served to introduce Lewiston's French-speaking residents to its anglophone population and to explain how the city was becoming, in its word, a "*mosaic.*"[29] The articles also reveal that, by acquiring English-language skills, French-Canadian children had begun the process of acculturation.

While the ethnic isolation of French Canadians aroused the curiosity of Lewiston's American majority in the 1870s, there appears to have been little conflict between the two groups or between the French Canadians and the Irish during this decade. This impression arises, however, from English-language sources. Written accounts in French detailing the state of ethnic relations in Lewiston, such as chronicles by clergy or newspaper articles, first appear in the 1880s. Available evidence suggests that only after French Canadians achieved population stability in the

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[29]*Lewiston Weekly Journal,* December 19, 1872, p. 278, February 13, 1873, p. 344, May 15, 1873, p. 26; *Lewiston Evening Journal,* May 5, 1873, p. 3.

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Spindle City, and began actively to pursue the goal of acculturation into U.S. society, do we find tangible evidence of ethnic competition and conflict between them and Lewiston's American and Irish populations.[30]

Data compiled from the 1880 federal manuscript census provides a portrait of Lewiston's francophones at the start of the decade during which they began to form a stable population. In revealing the extent to which French Canadians differed from the rest of the Lewiston's residents, the census data serves as a baseline from which to compare changes in this population over historical time. For 1880, the data particularly highlights the economic and ethnic divisions of the Spindle City.

French Canadians made up the second largest ethnic group of Lewiston in 1880. Of the 182 households in the sample, Americans headed 54.9 percent, French Canadians 18.1 percent, and the Irish 17.0 percent; other groups headed the remaining households in the following proportions: English 5.5 percent, English Canadians 3.8 percent, and African-Americans 0.5 percent. Taking into account all 848 members of the 182 households, the distribution shifts: Americans made up less than half (47.8 percent) of Lewiston's total population, and French Canadians made up one-fourth (24.8 percent) of the city's

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[30]For a sociological perspective on how the decline of segregation increases ethnic competition and conflict, see Susan Olzak, *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992.)

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residents, followed by the Irish, who comprised one-sixth of the population (16.9 percent.) Members of the other ethnic and racial groups together constituted one-tenth (10.6 percent) of the city's residents and will not be included in some of the discussion that follows.[31]

French-Canadian households were larger than those of the other, most populous groups of Lewiston. In fact, 63.6 percent of the French-Canadian households had six or more members, compared to 38.7 percent of the Irish and 21.0 percent of the American households. French Canadians had larger nuclear families. In addition, while they did not extend their households with kin to the same degree as the Irish or Americans, a greater proportion of them took in boarders, the majority of whom (59.3 percent) were women. The nine-member household headed by Onesime Pepin serves as an example. In 1880, he and his wife, Octavie, had six children living at home and one boarder, a woman.[32] While

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[31]*U.S. Census, 1880.* See the Appendix for a brief explanation of the methodology employed in using the 1880 census.

[32]Census data reveals that 51.6 percent of the French-Canadian households had five or more members in the nuclear family, compared to 38.7 percent of the Irish and 17.0 percent of the American households; French Canadians extended their households with kin in 15.2 percent of the cases in the sample, compared to 19.4 percent of the Irish and 22.0 percent of the Americans; in addition, 36.4 percent of the French-Canadian households took in boarders, compared to 15.0 percent of the American and 6.5 percent of the Irish households. Of the twenty-seven boarders in the households headed by French Canadians, two (7.4 percent) were married men, one (3.7 percent) was a married woman, six (22.2 percent) were single men, and nine (33.3 percent) were single women; the marital status of the remaining three men (11.1 percent) and six women (22.2 percent) was unknown, but they were probably single; all twenty-seven boarders were Canadian-born, including two Irish males who had been born in Québec. Incidentally, only Americans extended their households with servants or farm laborers. *U.S. Census, 1880.*

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economic need probably underlay the practice of French Canadians to extend their households with boarders and kin, religious and cultural explanations likely account for the larger size of their nuclear families.

In fact, additional data from the 1880 census points particularly to cultural practice. The data suggests, for example, that French-Canadian children married at a younger age than Irish or American children. In 35.5 percent of the Irish households, the oldest, single, never-married child was nineteen years of age or older; this was true in 25.0 percent of the American households but in only 21.2 percent of the French-Canadian households. An examination of the age structure of all of Lewiston's residents provides additional evidence that French Canadians married young. The proportion of married, male, French-Canadian household heads in their twenties was more than double that of all non-French-Canadian heads in Lewiston. This pattern also holds true for the wives of these household heads.[33] Religious practice, then, did not solely account for the larger size of French-Canadian families. Indeed, Irish Catholics in Lewiston likely heeded the same religious teachings against limiting family size. The cultural practice of marrying at a younger age than Lewiston's other

[33]In all, 35.5 percent of married, male, French-Canadian household heads were in their twenties, compared to 15.9 percent of the non-French-Canadian male heads; in households headed by French Canadians, 43.8 percent of their wives were in their twenties, compared to 20.6 percent of the spouses of the rest of Lewiston's household heads. *U.S. Census, 1880.*

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ethnic groups, hence increasing the potential years of reproduction, accounts better for the larger size of French-Canadian families in 1880. This cultural practice had its origins in Québec. Historian Bettina Bradbury has found, for example, that French-Canadian men and women from two wards in Montréal tended to marry at a younger age than Irish Catholics for much of the second half of the nineteenth century.[34]

Lewiston in 1880 was predominantly working-class. Over eighty percent of the male and female workers from each ethnic group held blue-collar jobs. American men held the smallest percentage (82.1 percent) while Irish and French-Canadian working women had the highest percentage, for all of them engaged in blue-collar work. Although primarily working-class, American men and women enjoyed a greater variety of occupations, and they were far less tied to industrial work than Lewiston's other ethnic groups (see table 1.) As a visiting woman religious observed, textile mills employed most of Lewiston's Catholics, waking them with a bell at 4:30 each morning and ringing it again at 5:45, fifteen minutes before they had to begin their

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[34]Bradbury suggests that past differences in landholding patterns explained why French Canadians married at a younger age than the Irish. The practice of marrying young, she writes, "was typical in societies where land was available and where inheritance traditions did not constitute a brake on marriage." By contrast, the pre-migration experiences of the Irish--particularly their poverty and limited access to land in Ireland--had led them to delay marriage, a practice they continued in Canada. See Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 55-56.

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Table 1
Occupational Distribution of Lewiston's Ethnic Groups in 1880 (in percentages)[a]

Category	American	Irish	French-Canadian	All other
Men (N = 241)				
WHITE COLLAR				
-Self-governing professional	3.6%	0%	0%	0%
-Salaried professional	0	0	1.5	0
-Small business and managerial	1.8	0	0	0
-Semiprofessional	0.9	0	0	0
-Clerical and sales	11.6	2.4	3.0	9.5
BLUE COLLAR				
-Self-employed	0.9	0	0	0
-Non-industrial	26.8	7.1	4.5	19.0
-Industrial	42.9	90.5	87.9	71.4
-Primary sector	11.6	0	1.5	0
Unknown	0	0	1.5	0
Number	112	42	66	21
Women (N = 148)				
WHITE COLLAR				
-Self-governing professional	0%	0%	0%	0%
-Salaried professional	9.6	0	0	0
-Small business and managerial	0	0	0	0
-Semiprofessional	0	0	0	0
-Clerical and sales	1.9	0	0	5.9
BLUE COLLAR				
-Self-employed	0	0	0	0
-Non-industrial	21.2	20.6	2.2	1.8
-Industrial	67.3	79.4	97.8	82.4
-Primary sector	0	0	0	0
Number	52	34	45	17

SOURCE: Derived from every twentieth household in the *U.S. Census, 1880*.

[a]Columns may not add up to 100.0 percent on account of rounding.

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twelve-hour work day.[35] Less tied to mill work, Americans had higher socioeconomic standing in Lewiston in 1880.

In that year, only a small proportion of married women worked. But the proportions differed by ethnic group. Over one-fourth (27.3 percent) of the Irish wives worked outside of the home, compared to over one-tenth (11.9 percent) of the American and under one-tenth (8.1 percent) of the French-Canadian wives. The percentage of all other ethnic and racial groups with married, working women was essentially the same (8.3 percent) as that for French Canadians. Most married women, then, did not serve as secondary wage earners in Lewiston's families in 1880. Because American men held Lewiston's better jobs, most of their spouses probably did not need to supplement their wages. That was not the case in the Irish and French-Canadian households. Ethnicity, though, differentiated the ways in which these women contributed to their family's economy: Irish wives tended to work outside of the home more often than francophone women, and the latter more often took in boarders than their Irish counterparts. This was Octavie Pepin's situation. "Keeping house" was her occupation, and the boarder residing in her home brought additional income to her family. In brief, the low

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[35]*U.S. Census, 1880;* Annales de la Maison Mère, juillet 1881-septembre 1882, les archives de la Congrégation de Notre-Dame, Montréal, Québec, 6 novembre 1881, p. 151. See the Appendix for an explanation of the occupational classification and ranking system employed here.

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incidence of married women working outside of the home was not a phenomenon relegated to Lewiston's middle-class during the second half of the nineteenth century.[36] It did, however, necessitate other strategies to supplement the income the men brought to Irish and French-Canadian families.

One strategy was to have children work. Over one-third of the Irish and French-Canadian household heads (35.5 and 39.4 percent, respectively) had working single children under the age of twenty-one. This was the case in under one-seventh (13.0 percent) of the households headed by Americans. Francophone working children, all Canadian-born, comprised the largest proportion (44.9 percent) of Lewiston's work force between the ages of ten and twenty, inclusive; moreover, close to half (47.5 percent) of the city's working children under fifteen were French-Canadian, a proportion nearly double that of the city's French-speaking population. These children were part of a labor migration to the United States. Census data reveals that sixty (60.6) percent of Lewiston's French-Canadian households in 1880 had come to the United States with children. In fact, all six children living with Onesime and Octavie Pepin in 1880 had been born in Québec; the oldest five--two sons, ages eighteen and twenty-three, and

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[36]*U.S. Census, 1880.* Bradbury makes the same finding about Montréal's married, working-class women in the nineteenth century. See *Working Families*, pp. 169-172.

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three daughters, ages eleven to fourteen--all worked in cotton mills.[37] For French Canadians, as for the Irish, child labor was a family strategy to ensure survival.

Because so many French-Canadian and Irish children needed to contribute to their family economies, they did not have the same opportunity for education as American children. While nearly two-thirds (65.0 percent) of the individuals who had attended school during 1879-1880 were Americans, one-tenth (9.5 percent) were French Canadians, and one-sixth (16.8 percent) were Irish. These ratios reflect that American children had attended school in excess of their ethnic group's proportion of the city's total population, unlike the underrepresented French Canadians. The percentage of Irish school children matched the group's proportion of the total population, probably because Irish wives served as secondary wage earners in far more cases than French-Canadian wives. But other evidence reveals limits to the educational opportunity of Irish children. When census takers came around in 1880, only Americans were among those over the age of seventeen who had attended school during the previous twelve months. Among the Irish children who had gone to school, there were no boys over age eleven and no girls over fifteen; similarly, among French Canadians, no boys over age thirteen and no girls over fourteen had attended school.

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[37]*U.S. Census, 1880.*

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In the Pepin family, only the ten-year-old son, Edmond, had attended school during the census year; none of the older children had.[38] In addition to economic need, religion and ethnicity account for these differing patterns of school attendance. Sending children to public schools, where they would not receive religious instruction, was not an attractive option for Irish and French-Canadian Catholics. Religious and ethnic (particularly language) considerations led French-Canadians to found their own parish elementary school in 1878; the Irish followed suit, establishing one of their own in 1881.

One-fifth (19.7 percent) of Lewiston's population, aged ten and above, was illiterate in 1880.[39] Unsurprisingly, the French Canadians and the Irish supplied most of the persons lacking in literacy skills in that year. Over sixty (61.1) percent of the men who could not read and/or could not write were French-Canadian, one-fourth (25.9 percent) were Irish, and two (1.9) percent were American. In each of these ethnic groups, women outnumbered men who could not read and/or could not write. Onesime and Octavie Pepin constituted an exception, for the census taker recorded that Onesime could neither read nor write, while Octavie could do both. Nonetheless, among

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[38]*U.S. Census, 1880.*

[39]The youngest person whom census takers indicated could not read and/or could not write was ten years old. Of the 674 persons in the sample who were ten years of age and older, 133 lacked the ability to read and/or to write. *U.S. Census, 1880.*

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women lacking literacy skills, half (50.6 percent) were French-Canadian, while close to one-third (30.4 percent) were Irish, and only a small proportion (6.3 percent) were American. Pre-migration experience in part explains why French Canadians made up the majority of Lewiston's residents lacking literacy skills in 1880, for the province of Québec had no compulsory education laws before 1942, and students in the nineteenth century frequently left school around the age of ten or eleven, following their first communion.[40]

French Canadians were also more prone to unemployment than Lewiston's other large ethnic groups. Exactly half (50.0 percent) of the French-Canadian working men in the city had experienced unemployment at some point during the twelve-month period from June 1, 1879 to May 31, 1880. Among these men were Onesime Pepin, a laborer, and his son, Ludger, a cotton mill worker; they had been out of work for nine and two months, respectively, during this one-year period. Over one-third (38.1 percent) of the Irish and under one-sixth (15.0 percent) of the American working men had bouts of unemployment during the same year. These figures point to a labor queue among men, and it existed among working women as well. French-Canadian women had the greatest incidence of unemployment (28.9 percent), followed by the Irish (23.5 percent) and the American (13.5 percent)

[40]*U.S. Census, 1880;* Linteau et al., *Histoire du Québec contemporain,* pp. 273, 616.

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women. Each of the three Pepin daughters had herself been out of work from two to nine months during the previous year.[41] While Lewiston's working women had generally experienced less unemployment than men of the same ethnic heritage, they, too, were subject to a labor queue in which ethnic groups--in reverse order of their arrival to Lewiston--had endured the most frequent incidence of unemployment.

Ethnicity did not account, however, for any appreciable difference in the length of unemployment among Lewiston's working women. On average, unemployed American women had been out of work for 4.3 months during the year prior to the census taker's visit, compared to 4.4 months for French-Canadian women and to 4.5 months for Irish women. Similarly, ethnicity did not affect substantially the amount of time American and French-Canadian men were out of work, for the unemployed among them averaged, respectively, 6.0 and 5.9 months without work; Irish men fared better, averaging only 4.5 months of unemployment during the previous year.[42]

Census takers did not record more instances of illness or disability among any particular ethnic group on the day of their visit in 1880. Between two and three percent each

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[41]*U.S. Census, 1880.* On the phenomenon of unemployment prior to the Great Depression of the 1930s, see Alexander Keyssar, *Out of Work: The First Century of Unemployment in Massachusetts* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986.)

[42]*U.S. Census, 1880.*

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of the Irish, French-Canadian, and American residents of Lewiston were maimed, crippled, bedridden, otherwise disabled, or ill when enumerators came around. Thus, general health did not appear to differ by ethnic group. This finding stands in contrast to the annual reports the city physician had filed during the 1870s. He had argued that poor quality housing, inadequate ventilation, overcrowding, and unemployment had led to illness and death among the city's Irish and French-Canadian residents. In 1878, he had pointed out a correlation between consumption and factory work. As occupational data from the 1880 census reveals, Lewiston's Irish and French-Canadians were the most heavily represented in the city's factories.[43] The poverty of these ethnic groups had led to the health concerns the city physician had expressed in his yearly reports.

Ethnicity led to social segregation in Lewiston, as the choice of marriage partners reveals. Most of the mixed marriages in the Spindle City existed among the smallest groups which, with the exception of one African-American couple, had in about half of the cases searched outside of

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[43]*U.S. Census, 1880; Eighth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Lewiston, for the Fiscal Year Ending February 28, 1871; Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Journal Steam Press, 1871), p. 68; *Fifteenth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Lewiston, for the Fiscal Year Ending February 28, 1878, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Geo. A. Callahan, 1878), p. 72.

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their ethnic or racial heritage to find marriage partners. That was hardly the situation among members of Lewiston's three largest ethnic groups. The census sample reveals that 98.6 percent of American household heads had American wives, 94.7 percent of the Irish heads had Irish wives, and 100.0 percent of French-Canadian heads had wives of Canadian descent, presumably of French-Canadian heritage. Because the 1880 census does not indicate whether enumerated Canadians were English or French speakers, and because it does not provide the maiden names of spouses, one cannot know with certainty that all wives were French-Canadian. But other evidence confirms that there was little exogamy among Lewiston's French-Canadian population. In 1880, 92.6 percent of the marriages celebrated at *Saint-Pierre* Church were between *Canadiens*. The others were mixed marriages: in two instances, French-Canadian men took non-French-Canadian brides and, in the other two cases, French-Canadian women married non-French-Canadian men. Perhaps most French Canadians marrying other ethnics in 1880 had their marriages consecrated outside of the city's French Catholic church. None of the marriages that took place at the Irish Catholic church in that year involved French Canadians, however. Data compiled from a marriage index at the Lewiston City Clerk's office, which may be incomplete because Maine did not require marriage licenses before 1892, reveals that 85.7 percent of French Canadians married a spouse of the same ethnicity in 1880.

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By comparison, French Canadians in Fall River, Massachusetts, exhibited the same rate of intermarriage (fourteen percent) in that year. Of the eight cases in the Lewiston City Clerk's records in which French Canadians married outside their group in 1880, three involved French-Canadian men and five involved French-Canadian women.[44] While confirming a high rate of endogamy among French Canadians, the marriage records of *Saint-Pierre* Church and the city of Lewiston also suggest that a small number of the city's French Canadians--divided nearly evenly between men and women--engaged in mixed marriages once in the United States. Thus, French Canadians marrying in Lewiston in 1880 gave some evidence of acculturation into U.S. society.

During the 1880s and 1890s, French Canadians continued to build their ethnic community in Lewiston. Unlike the migrants who had arrived in the 1860s and 1870s, the new migrants transformed their surroundings so that Lewiston no longer was a Protestant mill town. As data from the 1880 census reveals, French Canadians in the Spindle City were at the bottom of the city's social and economic pyramid;

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[44]*U.S. Census, 1880;* Registre des mariages de la Congrégation canadienne de Lewiston, Saint Peter and Saint Paul Parish Pastoral Center, Lewiston, Maine, vol. M-1, 1880, pp. 65-80; Marriage Register for Saint Joseph Parish and Saint Patrick Parish, Saint Patrick Parish Pastoral Center, Lewiston, Maine, 1880, pp. 26-33; Index of Marriages by Groom's Last Name, Office of the City Clerk, Lewiston, Maine, 2 vols. (1999); Elliott Robert Barkan, "French Canadians," *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1980), p. 399.

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acculturation became the strategy by which to improve the position of the group. For French Canadians in Lewiston in the late nineteenth century, ethnic preservation and acculturation proved not to be dichotomous goals.[45]

[45]John F. McClymer has observed the same phenomenon among French Canadians in Worcester, Massachusetts, in "The Paradox of Ethnicity in the United States: The French-Canadian Experience in Worcester, 1870-1914," in Michael D'Innocenzo and Josef P. Sirefman, eds., *Immigration and Ethnicity: American Society--"Melting Pot" or "Salad Bowl"?* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992), pp. 15-23.

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CHAPTER TWO

"*Loyaux mais Français*": Negotiating French-Canadian Identity in the Spindle City, 1880-1900[1]

[1]I presented a version of this chapter at the conference of the American Council for Québec Studies (ACQS) in Charleston, South Carolina, in November 1998.

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On June 24, 1897, the feast day of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste*, an estimated 2,000 French Canadians paraded through the streets of Lewiston, Maine. Ten bands accompanied them. Flags of France and the United States adorned the city; huge, decorated arches curved above its streets. On this day, Lewiston's French speakers also celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of their mutual-benefit society, *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier*. After attending mass at *Saint-Pierre* Church, three hundred uniformed members of the society marched alongside a replica of the ship Cartier had sailed to the New World. The procession passed through the magnificent, evergreen archway *l'Institut* had constructed in front of its meeting hall. A banner on the structure stated emphatically: "'Not foreigners but Americans, Let us be fair.'"[2] It was on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day that French Canadians in Lewiston typically argued that maintaining their language and their traditions did not preclude them from being loyal residents of the United States.

Commonly heard and seen during *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebrations in the 1880s and 1890s, the slogan *"Loyaux mais Français"* made two important statements in the late nineteenth century.[3] It announced that French Canadians

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[2]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, June 24, 1897, p. 7; *Le Messager*, 29 juin 1897, p. 6.

[3]*Le Messager*, 2 juillet 1885, p. 1; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, June 24, 1892, p. 5, July 4, 1895, p. 12.
"Loyaux mais Francais": "Loyal but French"

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were modifying their social identity in the United States; more significantly, it asserted that francophones were doing so on their own terms. This chapter examines how individuals of French-Canadian birth and background negotiated their identity in the United States during the late nineteenth century, as nationalists in Québec attempted to pull them in one direction and as nativists in the United States attempted to pull them in another. Guided by Dominican priests and other local elites, Lewiston's *Canadiens* demonstrated their agency as they evolved into Franco-Americans by the start of the twentieth century.

Through their newspaper, Lewiston's francophone elites staunchly defended the interests of French-Canadian migrants in the United States. Founded in 1880 by Dr. Louis J. Martel, a native of Saint-Hyacinthe whom Reverend Pierre Hévey had invited to Lewiston to practice medicine, *Le Messager* reached 500 subscribers during its first month of publication. It appeared twice weekly in 1891 and had 3,000 subscriptions by the turn of century. The French-language newspaper's motto made clear its chief concerns: *"Religion et Nationalité."* Thus it served as an instrument for elites to perpetuate the three pillars of *survivance*: the French language, the Roman Catholic faith, and French-Canadian traditions.[4]

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[4]Gerard J. Brault, *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England* (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1986), p. 81; Charlotte Michaud, "Early Franco-American Medical Men," *Lewiston*

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During the first year of publication, editor J.D. Montmarquet wrote numerous columns to support the decision that tens of thousands of Québec residents had made to migrate to the United States. He often deflected criticism from nationalist clergymen and journalists in Québec who considered those depopulating the province traitors and *"la canaille."* Montmarquet took issue with suggestions that French Canadians should colonize new lands in northern Québec or western Canada, rather than migrate to the United States, because doing so required capital that few had. He complained that the Canadian government spent large sums of money to encourage immigration, particularly of people of English and Scotch ancestry, but did little to help the *Canadiens* who lived in poverty. Emigration, he claimed, was the only logical choice for scores of French Canadians.[5]

Through his columns, Montmarquet dismissed the arguments of French-Canadian nationalists that acculturation was at odds with *survivance*. Given the lack of opportunity in Québec, he contended there was little possibility that francophone Canadians would return

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Journal Magazine Section, April 10, 1976, p. 1A; Paul-M. Paré, "Les Vingt premières années du *Messager* de Lewiston, Maine," dans Claire Quintal, dir., *Le Journalisme de langue française aux États-Unis* (Québec, Québec: Le Conseil de la Vie française en Amérique, 1984), pp. 85, 93.

"Religion et Nationalité": "Religion and Nationality"
survivance: ethnic preservation

[5]*Le Messager,* 26 août 1880, 31 mars 1881.

"la canaille": "the rabble"

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permanently to their native land. Consequently, Montmarquet wrote editorials to promote naturalization, arguing that, by gaining the right to vote, French Canadians could exercise influence in their adopted country. He answered charges from Québec that the *Canadiens* would lose their language, religion, and ethnic identity as a result of taking the oath of allegiance to the United States. Montmarquet insisted: *"Nulle loi de naturalisation ne nous oblige de faire le sacrifice de notre caractère nationale, et nulle loi des Etats-Unis ne nous le demande."* Countering arguments that French-speaking migrants would lose their language in the United States, *Le Messager*'s editor maintained that the same danger existed in Canada. He pointed to complaints by the Québec press that English was the language of legislative bodies, businesses, and passenger trains north of the border. Americans posed no greater danger to the language, culture, and traditions of French Canadians, Montmarquet contended, than did English-Canadian groups like the Loyal Orange Lodge or the Young Britons in Canada. Those who naturalized, he asserted, could continue speaking French and preserving their ethnic traditions.[6]

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[6]*Le Messager*, 17 juin 1880, 26 août 1880, 14, 21 et 28 octobre 1880, 4 novembre 1880, 14 avril 1881.

"Nulle loi...le demande.": "No naturalization law requires us to sacrifice our national character, and no law of the United States demands that of us."

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Cultivating the ethnic and political consciousness of Lewiston's francophones became the central goal of *Le Messager*'s editor and of other French-Canadian leaders. Six months after *Le Messager*'s founding, when Lewiston had only about 100 French-Canadian voters, Montmarquet helped organize *le Club National*, an association designed primarily to promote naturalization, and he became its first president. Like Montmarquet, but unlike most of Lewiston's French-Canadian population in 1880, the other five officers of the organization did not hold industrial jobs. J.E. Cloutier, first vice president of *le Club National*, was a carpenter. Léon Lefebvre, the second vice president, was the first French Canadian elected to municipal office in Lewiston; a member of the Common Council in 1880, he worked as a carpenter in 1883 and probably had done so in 1880. Among the other members of *le Club National*, secretary Wilbrod Filiatrault was a clerk, treasurer Magloire Phaneuf a grocer, and Charles Sabourin, the sergeant at arms, operated a boot and shoe business from his home. Open only to men of French-Canadian ancestry, *le Club National* boasted 150 members by January 1881. Unlike similar clubs that French Canadians had organized in other cities of the northeastern United States, Lewiston's *Club National* was nonpartisan. This probably reflected Montmarquet's influence, for it was his

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editorial policy that *Le Messager* favor neither Democrats nor Republicans in national and local political contests.[7] Montmarquet played it safe by adopting a nonpartisan stance, it seems, to avoid creating divisions within Lewiston's francophone community.

In addition to promoting naturalization, *le Club National* served as a forum to discuss ideas. It took up ethnic and social concerns. Among the ethnic questions it addressed were whether French-Canadian children should be educated in French or English, and whether the *Canadiens* should blend in with Americans or work to preserve their French-Canadian ethnicity. Unfortunately, *Le Messager* did not report on the substance of these discussions. On occasion, individuals from Lewiston's other ethnic groups attended meetings of *le Club National,* most likely when the organization considered questions not directly related to French-Canadian identity. For instance, *Le Messager* reported that American and Irish residents of the city came to the January 1881 meeting, at which various members of *le*

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[7]*Le Messager,* 5 août 1880, 16 septembre 1880, 27 janvier 1881; *U.S. Census, 1880; Greenough's Directory of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Manufacturing Establishments, Societies, Business, Business Firms, Etc., Etc. in the Cities of Lewiston and Auburn, for 1880-81* (Boston: W.A. Greenough, 1880), pp. 39, 60, 120, 130; *The Lewiston and Auburn Directory of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Manufacturing Establishments, Societies, Business, Business Firms, Etc., Etc. for 1883* (Boston: W.A. Greenough, 1883) [hereafter, 1883 Lewiston city directory], p. 111; *Seventeenth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Lewiston, for the Fiscal Year Ending February 28, 1880; Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Journal Office, 1880), pp. 131-132.

le Club National: the National Club

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Club National played roles (including doctor, lawyer, *cultivateur,* journalist, a wealthy individual, and a poor person) to consider which station allowed one to be of greatest service to society.[8] Through its activities, *le Club National* served to raise the ethnic and social consciousness of Lewiston's French-Canadian migrants as they pondered their integration into the host society.

The organization's leader proposed and presided over a statewide convention in Waterville which had the same goals. Organized around *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in June 1881, the first convention of French Canadians and Acadians of Maine considered ways to preserve the ethnic heritage of the state's French speakers as they became integrated in the United States. Bishop James Augustin Healy sang mass at the convention and encouraged French-Canadian migrants to naturalize so that Catholics could gain influence in the country. The bishop strongly recommended that francophone youth receive instruction in English in all subjects other than religion. While the convention's francophone delegates adopted a resolution favoring naturalization, they also pushed for the preservation of the French language. These elites promoted the establishment of French Catholic schools to help children maintain their French, and they called upon francophones throughout the state to speak French in their parishes, schools,

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[8]*Le Messager,* 13 et 20 janvier 1881, 10 mars 1881, 12 mai 1881.
cultivateur: farmer

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societies, and homes. Resolving that the interests of Maine's French-speaking population did not rest with either the Democratic or Republican parties in particular, they maintained political neutrality and urged francophone voters to exercise their conscience at the polls.[9] Under the leadership of *le Club National*'s president, the Waterville convention gave statewide voice to many of its concerns. In Lewiston, the organization received a significant boost from the Dominican priests who arrived in the fall of 1881.

Anti-clerical measures of the French government, such as forbidding members of religious orders from living together in communities, had motivated the Dominicans to come to North America. They had especially wanted to serve in the United States. But, after considering calls from the Archbishop of New Orleans, Louisiana, and the Bishop of Saint-Hyacinthe, Québec, the Dominicans chose Saint-Hyacinthe as their North American base in 1873, believing it offered greater potential to furnish recruits to the order. As we shall see in succeeding chapters, the Dominicans' decision to locate in Québec had considerable impact on the preservation of French-Canadian ethnicity in Lewiston. Once established in Québec, the Dominicans looked for missions in the United States. When Catholic

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[9]*Le Messager*, 7, 14 et 21 juillet 1881; texte dactylographié, 17 juin 1881, Documents Book 6, Chancery Archives, Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine.

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prelates in Boston and Providence did not accept their offers to serve, they approached Maine's bishop.[10]

Financial considerations and finesse on the part of Bishop Healy and the Dominicans led Pierre Hévey to resign as pastor of *Saint-Pierre* parish during the fall of 1881. Hévey's unorthodox financial arrangements had worried the bishop since the latter's appointment in Maine. The French-Canadian pastor financed construction of *Saint-Pierre* Church by organizing "a Savings Bank in which he was allowed to use all but 10 per cent of the deposits," reported the Lewiston *Journal* in 1873. Established with the approval of Maine's first bishop, David Bacon, Hévey's *banque d'épargne* raised over $100,000 for church projects from 1872 until his departure. After meeting with Hévey in 1875, Bishop-elect Healy recorded his concerns that Lewiston's "Canadian Church" had $40,000 of debt and that "the priest has also received deposits from Canadians--This may at any time prove to be a strange & startling embarrasment [*sic*]." Six years later, Healy's concerns apparently materialized. According to Dominican sources reportedly originating from Hévey himself, and for reasons that went unrecorded, *Saint-Pierre* parishioners withdrew

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[10]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, February 4, 1882; la Chronique du Couvent de Saint-Pierre et Saint-Paul de l'ordre des Frères Prêcheurs, Lewiston, Maine, dans la série couvents et paroisses, la sous-série couvent des Apôtres Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, Maine, les archives des Dominicains, Montréal, Québec [ci-après, la Chronique des Dominicains], vol. 1, pp. 1-2; Jules Antonin Plourde, O.P., *Dominicains au Canada: album historique* (s.l., s.é., 1973), pp. 24, 26, 51-52.

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their savings from the pastor's *banque d'épargne* in 1881, leaving him $22,000 in debt. When the Dominicans approached Healy for an assignment in his diocese in that year, he sent the order's representative to visit Lewiston and Auburn. The Dominican priest called upon Hévey during his tour. Recognizing the bishop's intention, Hévey subsequently negotiated the terms of his resignation with the prelate and the Dominicans.[11]

Given the tenuous situation the Dominicans had faced in France, they were sensitive to religious and political issues in the United States after they arrived in Maine. As forced migrants, the French Dominicans were acutely conscious of American hostility toward Catholic migrants. Consequently, the Dominican monks did not wear their robes outside of the church and monastery of Lewiston, as they had in Europe and Canada, but instead dressed in laymen's clothing when appearing in public. At the *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day picnic in 1885, the Dominican provincial, who had traveled from Saint-Hyacinthe to Lewiston for the occasion, spoke of the unease he felt as a foreigner in the

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[11]Antonin M. Plourde, O.P., "Cent ans de vie paroissiale: SS. Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, 1870-1970," *Le Rosaire* (août-septembre 1970), pp. 11, 20-21; *Lewiston Weekly Journal*, May 15, 1873, p. 26; typescript notes of Reverend Philip Desjardins, Chancery Archives; diary of Bishop James Augustin Healy, Chancery Archives, vol. 1, May 7, 1875, p. 4; J. Antonin Plourde, *Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents*, vol. 2: *Les cinq fondations avant l'autonomie (1881-1911)* (s.l., s.é, 1975), p. 124 (n 58); la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, pp. 2-3. The Dominicans modified the parish name, calling it *Saint-Pierre et Saint-Paul* (Plourde, "Cent ans de vie paroissiale," p. 22); following local usage, *Saint-Pierre* will generally be used in this work.

banque d'épargne: savings bank

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United States. He expressed discomfort at appearing in public without his habit, and he underscored the irony that the United States, a nation which claimed to value religious liberty, showed little tolerance for different religious traditions. The Dominicans attributed this climate of intolerance to New England's Puritan roots.[12] It undoubtedly motivated them to help Lewiston's French-speaking Catholics solidify their ethnic network as they sought to gain influence in the city.

A year after arriving in Lewiston, the Dominicans opened a multi-level, utilitarian structure, called the Dominican Block, which provided space for businesses on the ground floor, classrooms on the middle floors, and an assembly room on the top floor. Upon hearing plans for the proposed structure, the Lewiston *Journal* likened it to a "French city building" or, according to *Le Messager*'s interpretation of the remark, a "City Hall *Canadien*." As anglophones suspected, the building became the center of French-Canadian activity in Lewiston. For example, *le Club National* held meetings and school children as well as the French-language societies put on musical and dramatic productions there.[13] The structure functioned as a space in

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[12]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, February 4, 1882; *Le Messager*, 2 juillet 1885, p. 1. On the Dominican perception of a Puritan climate in nineteenth-century New England, see Alexandre-Louis Mothon, O.P., 1883, in Plourde, *Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents*, vol. 2, pp. 64-65, 101.

[13]Ralph Skinner, *Historically Speaking on Lewiston-Auburn, Maine, Churches* (Lewiston, Maine: By the Author, 1965), p. 99; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, November 7, 1881; *Le Messager*, 17 novembre 1881, 12

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which the Dominicans could develop further the ethnic network Hévey had begun before them while simultaneously promoting the acculturation of French Canadians.

The Dominicans facilitated the development of ethnic networks in Lewiston by establishing additional associations for their French-Canadian parishioners. In 1886, a Dominican priest founded *l'Association Saint-Dominique* for young men, in order to keep them occupied *"utilement et honnêtement."* To channel constructively the intellectual and physical energy of its members, *l'Association* set up a library and gym by 1892, and it formed a baseball team in 1896; while baseball existed in Canada in the late nineteenth century, it is not known whether Lewiston's francophone migrants brought knowledge of the sport with them from Canada or whether they learned it in the United States. In 1888, the organist of *Saint-Pierre* parish organized a musical association for young boys, known as *la fanfare Sainte-Cécile* which offered concerts and participated in parades. The Dominicans founded *la Ligue Catholique,* a religious society for married men, in 1897. Parish women also had their own associations. They included the religious society, *les Dames de Sainte-Anne,* created for married and widowed women in 1888, and an auxiliary of *l'Union Saint-Joseph,*

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janvier 1888; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 24 janvier 1884, pp. 143-144; Brault, *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England,* p. 74.

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established in 1899. The latter, although a mutual-benefit society, had religious and ethnic goals: *"Leur but principal est le maintien des pratiques religieuses et de la langue française au sein de leurs familles."*[14] These societies, for which the Dominicans served as director or chaplain, expanded the ethnic network of Lewiston's francophones in the late nineteenth century.

The parish schools the Dominicans oversaw served as an arena both for preserving ethnicity and for pursuing acculturation. Before migrating to North America, several Dominicans had traveled to England to learn English; once in the United States, they continued to take language lessons. They similarly wanted parishioners to develop a facility with English, so they promoted its teaching in the parish schools. When they started a night school program

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[14]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 2, 3 octobre 1886, p. 69, vol. 3, 30 décembre 1888, p. 74; *Le Messager,* 18 novembre 1886, 3 mai 1888, 23 juin 1896; *Lewiston Evening Journal,* June 24, 1892, p. 5; *Paroisse Canadienne-Française de Lewiston (Maine): Album historique* ([Lewiston, Maine]: Les Pères Dominicains, 1899), pp. 89, 91; *Noces d'Argent de l'Union Saint-Joseph: Programme des Fêtes Jubilaires, 22 et 23 juin 1904* ([Lewiston, Maine]: Le Messager [1904]), p. 13. For an account that explores the development of baseball as a community sport in Canada's Maritime provinces and, to some extent, in the northeastern United States from the nineteenth century, see Colin D. Howell, *Northern Sandlots: A Social History of Maritime Baseball* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.) Relying almost exclusively upon sources published in English, this monograph, however, provides little comment about the participation of French speakers in either Canada or the United States in the sport.

l'Association Saint-Dominique: the Saint Dominic Association
"utilement et honnêtement": "usefully and honestly"
la fanfare Sainte-Cécile: the Saint Cecile band
la Ligue Catholique: the Catholic League
les Dames de Sainte-Anne: the Ladies of Saint Anne
"Leur but...leurs familles.": "Their principal goal is the maintenance of religious practices and the French language in their families."

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in 1883 for working children who could not read or write, they designated English as the language of instruction in a couple of classes. Because there were not enough *Soeurs Grises* to educate the growing number of schoolchildren, the Dominicans brought *les Petits Frères de Marie* from France to teach the boys of the parish in 1886. The Marist brothers, many of whom had received their education in England, taught their students in English and French. As girls and boys gained competency in English, they participated in dramatic and musical productions in both English and French at the *séances* organized at the end of the school year; they also answered exam questions in both languages, something which drew the praise of *Le Messager*. In February 1890, Bishop Healy sent the Dominicans a school program calling for more instruction in English, and they decided to adopt it. The pastor immediately traveled to Canada to search for additional sisters and brothers who could teach well in English. After finding some new educators, the Dominicans divided instruction in the parish schools, probably equally, between English and French.[15]

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[15]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, pp. 1-2, 20 août 1882, p. 34, 8 janvier 1883, p. 58, 2 février 1883, p. 62, 11 septembre 1883, p. 120, 11 décembre 1883, pp. 136-137, 18 décembre 1883, p. 137, vol. 2, 14 juillet 1885, p. 8[6], 5 février 1886, p. 20, p. 83, vol. 3, 11 et 18 février 1890, p. 189, 4 mars 1890, p. 192; newspaper clipping from the Auburn *Gazette*, December 28, 1889, inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, pp. 175-180; *Le Messager*, 10 juillet 1884, 28 juin 1888; *séance* program inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, 1890, p. 219.

séances: performances

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To continue this bilingual education, the Dominicans brought *les Dames de Sion* of France to the local area in 1892. These sisters staffed the school the Dominicans opened for francophone youth in Auburn, and they replaced the French-Canadian *Soeurs Grises* who wished to concentrate their efforts on charitable works. Additional *Dames de Sion* took over for the departing Marist brothers in 1893. This French order had houses in England, enabling it to provide sisters to the Lewiston-Auburn area who could teach in English.[16] Assisted particularly by religious orders from France in the late nineteenth century, the Dominicans encouraged both the preservation of French and the adoption of English-language skills, the latter facilitating the acculturation of the parish's youth.

Until the end of World War II, clergymen and journalists wrote the history of French-Canadian descendants in the United States, and they consistently emphasized *survivance* as a dominant theme in the experience of francophones in the U.S.A. Scholars from different academic disciplines have since examined themes other than ethnic preservation.[17] But studies of the nineteenth-

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[16]*Le Messager*, 22 septembre 1891, 15 septembre 1896; French-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, 1891, p. 268; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 15 octobre 1893, p. 150, p. 187.
les Dames de Sion: the Ladies of Zion

[17]Yves Roby, "Quebec in the United States: A Historiographical Survey," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 26 (Winter 1987), pp. 126-127.

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century experience of French Canadians have paid little, if any, attention to the issue of acculturation. Yet, it was a concept important to francophones. In Lewiston, French-Canadian leaders and the French Dominican priests helped the francophones who wished to do so to plant roots in their country of adoption.

Politics interested the Dominicans during the 1880s and 1890s. From time to time, they made brief comments and inserted French- and English-language newspaper articles about them into their monastery's chronicle. When Maine resident and Republican presidential candidate James G. Blaine made a campaign stop in Lewiston in 1884, three Dominicans attended the reception, and one took the opportunity to shake his hand.[18] But the Dominicans were not merely observers of politics.

They encouraged and assisted French Canadians in becoming U.S. citizens so that these migrants could gain influence in the host society. In February 1882, five months after his arrival in Lewiston, Pastor Alexandre-Louis Mothon attended a meeting of *le Club National* to urge the men of the parish to naturalize *"dans l'intérêt de leur situation et de leur influence aux Etats-Unis."* To set an example, he and another priest took out papers to declare their intention to become U.S. citizens. Prior to a local election in 1883, the Dominicans met with French-Canadian

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[18]La Chronique des Dominicains, vols. 1-5, passim, vol. 1, 26 juin 1884, p. 180.

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leaders J.D. Montmarquet, J.E. Cloutier, Stanislas Marcous, L.J. Martel, F.X. Belleau, P.X. Angers, and William Sabourin; as we shall see, each of these men was politically active in the late nineteenth century, and five of them gained an elected or appointed office in the Lewiston city government in 1883. The Dominicans worked closely with *le Club National* in its naturalization campaign. At mass one Sunday, Mothon invited parishioners to attend a meeting of the organization at which he and other French-Canadian leaders made a strong pitch for naturalization. The Dominicans gave *le Club National* access to the parish lists and even paid some of the court costs of parishioners who filed naturalization papers. The basic requirement for citizenship was that male migrants had to have lived in the United States for five years; women did not naturalize on their own, but acquired derivative citizenship from either their fathers (if they were minors) or their husbands. As a result of the concerted efforts of the Dominicans and *le Club National*, nearly eighty parishioners naturalized in time for the spring 1883 election.[19]

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[19]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 2 février 1882, p. 17, 4 février 1882, pp. 17-18, 15 février 1883, p. 64, 18 février 1883, p. 65, 6 mars 1883, pp. 74-75; *Le Messager*, 9 février 1882; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Records, Maine State Archives [hereafter, MSA], Augusta, Maine, vol. 19, pp. 81-82. The following constitute the nineteenth-century naturalization records of the courts of Lewiston, Auburn, and Portland, Maine, from which naturalization data represented throughout this chapter were compiled: Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Records, vols. 1-27.5, 1854-1894, MSA; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin

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Entries in the chronicle of the Dominicans indicate that over fifty of these French Canadians had traveled from Lewiston to Portland to naturalize. No French Canadians from the Spindle City had ever taken out final naturalization papers in Portland before 1883, naturalization records reveal. In fact, they point out that only the municipal court of Lewiston and the Supreme Judicial Court in Auburn had granted final papers to Lewiston's francophones in 1882 and prior years. Why, then, would French Canadians travel thirty miles by train to Portland in 1883, when two local courts could have processed their papers? *Le Messager* explains. Republicans controlled local politics, and they worried that French-Canadian voters would help Democrats remove them from office. To avoid pressure from Republicans, French Canadians chose to travel to Portland to process their naturalization papers. This way, they did not have to have Republicans accept their witnesses and administer their oaths, and they felt more at liberty to vote their

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County, Naturalization Records, vol. B, 1895-1899, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; Lewiston Municipal Court Naturalization Records, vols. 4-8, 1882-1893, MSA; Auburn, Maine, Municipal Court Naturalization Records, 1893, National Archives and Records Administration, Waltham, Massachusetts [hereafter, NARA-Waltham]; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Proceedings, vols. 1-2, 6-8, 1790-1845, NARA-Waltham; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 1-11, 1851-1899, NARA-Waltham; U.S. Circuit Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 1-3, 1851-1899, NARA-Waltham; Superior Court, Cumberland County (Portland, Maine), Naturalization Records, 1868-1899, MSA. Hereafter, these records will be cited more succinctly as "nineteenth-century naturalization records."

"dans l'intérêt...Etats-Unis.": "in the interest of their situation and of their influence in the United States."

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conscience, according to *Le Messager*.[20] In short, these French Canadians wished to acquire U.S. citizenship under circumstances with which they felt comfortable.

Lewiston's francophones continued periodically to use the courts of Portland after 1883. At times, they had little choice. In January 1884, *Le Messager* complained of unspecified *"taquineries"* on the part of the municipal court judge which forced French Canadians to go to the federal court in Portland to process their naturalization papers. Around 1893, the Republican-controlled state legislature passed a law denying municipal court judges the authority to naturalize foreign nationals, relegating this responsibility to superior court judges. Because these state court judges did not have the time to process naturalizations, assigning them the task was a Republican strategy to hinder citizenship acquisition, contended *Le Messager*. When over one hundred French Canadians were ready to naturalize at the state court in Auburn prior to the spring 1894 elections, the judge *"a tout simplement refuser de s'en mêler,"* and they had to travel to the federal court in Portland. *Le Messager* charged that the judge's action represented a ploy by Republicans to retain power: *"Ils ont essayé par tous les moyens de nous faire*

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[20]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 17 février 1883, p. 65, 2 mars 1883, p. 70; nineteenth-century naturalization records; translated letter of attorney F.X. Belleau to the editors of the Lewiston *Journal* and column by J.D. Montmarquet, both in *Le Messager*, 15 mars 1882.

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voter avec eux, et voyant qu'ils ne pouvaient réussir, ils ont pris ce moyen pour atteindre leur but." As a result, only one of Lewiston's French Canadians naturalized in Auburn in 1894; eighty-one others obtained their final naturalization papers in Portland. In all, over one-fifth (21.3 per cent) of the naturalized French Canadians of Lewiston traveled to Portland to gain their U.S. citizenship in the 1880s and 1890s.[21] Acculturation into U.S. society sometimes exacted a price in inconvenience.

Yankees had reason to worry about the political weight of naturalized French Canadians. Prior to the 1883 campaign, only seventeen French Canadians from the Spindle City had naturalized in the courts of Lewiston, Auburn, and Portland; in all, ninety French-Canadian men from Lewiston gained their U.S. citizenship during 1883. Viewed another way, the absolute number of naturalizations demonstrates the increasing stability of Lewiston's French-speaking population from the 1880s onward. Specifically, the records reveal that only two of the city's French Canadians

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[21]*Le Messager,* 10 janvier 1884, 16 et 27 février 1894; nineteenth-century naturalization records. The partisan tactics of Republicans to complicate naturalization procedures were part of a broader strategy to limit the voting strength of immigrants, a strategy that native-born Americans pursued throughout the United States during the period from Reconstruction to World War I. See Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), chapter five.

"taquineries": "[bothersome] teasing"

"a tout...s'en mêler,": "simply refused to mix them [into the schedule],"

"Ils ont...leur but.": "They have tried all means to make us vote with them, and seeing that they could not succeed, they took this step to attain their goal."

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had naturalized prior to 1880, whereas naturalizations exceeded 500 during the 1880s, and they surpassed 600 in the 1890s.[22] These figures attest to the willingness of French Canadians to naturalize and to the considerable efforts of the Dominicans and local elites in providing them with information and practical assistance to overcome political and other impediments to citizenship. Among other activities, *le Club National* organized fundraisers to help francophones pay the court costs associated with naturalization. French-Canadian attorneys like F.X. Belleau and P.X. Angers (the first a Democrat and the second a Democrat-turned-Republican) helped French speakers process their paperwork prior to their court appearances, and these attorneys also assisted francophones at the courthouse. When Maine changed its constitution, requiring candidates for naturalization to demonstrate the ability to read the U.S. Constitution in English beginning in 1893, *Le Messager* alerted readers to this obstacle and encouraged them to naturalize before the law went into effect; in 1892, 228 of Lewiston's French Canadians took out final naturalization papers, a figure unsurpassed in any other year in the nineteenth century. In fact, naturalizations did not hit triple-digit figures again in the 1890s, likely due both to challenging economic times and to the English-

[22]Nineteenth-century naturalization records. Lacking precise data on the relative growth of Lewiston's French-Canadian population during these decades, it is not possible to detail the relative increase in naturalizations as a proportion of that population.

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language requirement, which excluded unilingual francophones.[23] Despite the obstacles, Lewiston's French speakers acquired U.S. citizenship in significant numbers in the late nineteenth century, dramatically increasing the number of French-Canadian voters in the Spindle City.

Naturalization records provide us with a collective portrait of the francophone men who became eligible to vote. Eighty (80.3) percent of the French Canadians who naturalized in Lewiston from the 1870s through the 1890s had arrived in the United States under the age of eighteen. This large percentage illustrates that most of those who embraced U.S. citizenship had spent a portion of their formative years in their adopted land, presumably developing ties to the United States that made remaining

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[23]Nineteenth-century naturalization records; French- and English-language newspaper clippings inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, 1889, pp. 171-172; *Le Messager*, 4 février 1886, 20 février 1890, p. 4, 18 novembre 1892; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, February 12, 1891. Annual reports of Lewiston officials testify to difficult economic times in the city from 1893 until the turn of the century. See *Thirty-First Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenses of the City of Lewiston for the Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 28, 1894. Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Daily Sun Publishing Company, 1894), p. 138; *Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenses of the City of Lewiston for the Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 28, 1895, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Geo. A. Callahan, 1895), pp. 3, 140; *Thirty-Fourth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenses of the City of Lewiston for the Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 28, 1897, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Journal Office, 1897), p. 103; *Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenses of the City of Lewiston for the Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 28, 1900, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Le Messager, 1900), p. 154. Like Maine, other states imposed literacy requirements to limit the franchise of immigrants. See Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*, table A.13 and chapter five, especially pp. 136-146.

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permanently much more conceivable than it did to adult migrants. Most of the men who naturalized in the late nineteenth century appear to have come to the United States as part of a child labor migration, for over sixty (62.9) percent had arrived in the United States between the ages of ten and seventeen, inclusive.[24] Both the lack of opportunity in Québec and the jobs that the textile mills and shoe shops of Lewiston and Auburn provided these young migrants must have motivated them to shed their British citizenship.

Proximity, then, may actually provide a major reason why French Canadians became U.S. citizens. Historian Elliott Robert Barkan has argued that the proximity of French-Canadian migrants to their homeland explains why they have demonstrated greater reluctance than non-North Americans in becoming naturalized citizens and in assimilating into U.S. society. But nearness to Québec helped French Canadians in New England to keep abreast of the economic conditions in their homeland and may actually have encouraged their assimilation, Gerard Blazon points out.[25] The "proximity thesis" Barkan espouses therefore

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[24]Nineteenth-century naturalization records.

[25]Elliott Robert Barkan, "Proximity and Commuting Immigration: An Hypothesis Explored via the Bi-polar Ethnic Communities of French Canadians and Mexican Americans," in Jack Kinton, ed., *American Ethnic Revival: Group Pluralism Entering America's Third Century* (Aurora, Illinois: Social Science and Sociological Resources, 1977), pp. 163-179; Gerard Blazon, "A Social History of the French Canadian Community of Suncook, New Hampshire (1870-1920)" (M.A. thesis, University of New Hampshire, 1974), p. 155.

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cuts two ways. The lack of opportunity in Québec, which precipitated mass migration in the 1880s and 1890s, and the availability of jobs in the industrial center of Maine made it much more likely for French Canadians who had migrated to the United States at a young age to naturalize in the late nineteenth century.

U.S. legal requirements also help explain why those who had crossed the international border under eighteen made up the lion's share of naturalizers. In short, the process of gaining U.S. citizenship was easier for them: if they met the five-year residency requirement, they could take out (final) naturalization papers after reaching their twenty-first birthday. They did not have to go through the two-step process of declaring their intention to become a U.S. citizen and then filing their final naturalization papers at least two years later, the process required of other individuals.[26] In 1889, an English-language newspaper indicated that the two-year wait between filing first and final papers hindered the naturalization of French Canadians because it caused them to lose interest in

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[26]John J. Newman, "American Naturalization Processes and Procedures, 1790-1985" (Typescript, Family History Section, Indiana Historical Society, 1985), available at NARA-Waltham, p. 23. An exception to the two-step naturalization process existed for men who had served in the U.S. Army. Even if they had entered the United States at eighteen years or older, they needed only to file final naturalization papers, provided they had met the one-year residency requirement. This did not contribute many French-speaking citizens to Lewiston, however. Slightly under two (1.7) percent of the men who naturalized from the 1870s through the 1890s had served in the armed forces, and only one of these individuals was over seventeen when he had entered the country. Newman, p. 22; nineteenth-century naturalization records.

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pursuing U.S. citizenship. "As a consequence," it reported, "it is chiefly the young people who become citizens."[27] Because naturalization requirements were less stringent for those who had entered the United States under the age of eighteen, and since they were more likely than older French Canadians to know English (an important consideration after 1892), it is possible that French-Canadian leaders seeking to expand their political armies prior to municipal elections each spring targeted the young in their naturalization drives. For the ethnic group with the least power in Lewiston, political expediency may have dictated pursuing young voters.

Those who naturalized in the nineteenth century were indeed young. Three-fifths (59.3 percent) of the men who became U.S. citizens from the 1870s through the 1890s were twenty-five years of age or younger, and over three-fourths (77.2 percent) naturalized through age thirty. Only about one-seventh (14.1 percent) gained citizenship after passing the age of forty. By comparison, two-thirds (67.6 percent) of the French Canadians from Holyoke, Massachusetts, who naturalized from 1868 to 1899 were between twenty-one and thirty years of age, and under one-tenth (8.4 percent) were over forty.[28] Naturalization during the nineteenth century, then, was an action taken primarily by youth.

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[27]Auburn *Gazette*, December 28, 1889, inserted into the la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, pp. 175-180.

[28]Nineteenth-century naturalization records; figures on Holyoke are derived from data compiled by Peter Haebler, "Habitants in Holyoke:

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They did not wait particularly long to become citizens. To my knowledge, no scholar has examined nineteenth-century naturalization records to determine the length of time to become U.S. citizens. What we learn from the naturalization records of francophone residents of Lewiston is that over three-fourths (78.3 percent) of those who had crossed the border under the age of eighteen naturalized within the first five years of eligibility, that is, within five years of their twenty-first birthday; and over ninety (92.8) percent naturalized within the first ten years of eligibility. Francois Ouellette, for instance, had migrated to the United States at age fifteen, and he naturalized at twenty-two, one year after reaching the age of eligibility. Those who had entered the United States at age eighteen or older were a little slower to become U.S. citizens. Over fifty (56.4) percent of these French-Canadian men naturalized within the first five years of eligibility, that is, within ten years of their migration to the United States, and over eighty (84.2) percent naturalized within the first ten years of eligibility. Isidore Morin, for example, had arrived in the United States at age forty-seven, and he naturalized fourteen years later; given the five-year residency requirement, he became a U.S. citizen within nine years of

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The Development of the French-Canadian Community in a Massachusetts City, 1865-1910" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Hampshire, 1976). pp. 144. 263.

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eligibility.[29] Data for both groups of men does not suggest that French Canadians who naturalized in the late nineteenth century had waited particularly long to do so. While we do not have figures on the proportion of Lewiston's French-Canadian migrants who became U.S. citizens, the nineteenth-century naturalization data does challenge longstanding impressions, stemming from oft-made allegations, that French Canadians were especially slow about gaining citizenship.

Once French Canadians obtained U.S. citizenship, few gave it up. Letters loosely inserted into the bound volumes of naturalization records reveal that only five of the 1,188 francophones from Lewiston who naturalized through 1899 later repatriated in Canada. All were men in their seventies who relinquished their U.S. citizenship about fifty years after acquiring it. Geographer Ralph Dominic Vicero has estimated that about half of the French Canadians who had migrated to the United States in the nineteenth century later returned to Canada.[30] Quite unlike them, the preponderance of the French Canadians of Lewiston

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[29]Nineteenth-century naturalization records; Ouellette's naturalization record is from the U.S. District Court in Portland, Maine, NARA-Waltham, vol. 8, p. 113, and Morin's is from the Auburn Municipal Court, NARA-Waltham, 1893, p. 63.

[30]Nineteenth-century naturalization records; Ralph Dominic Vicero, "Immigration of French Canadians to New England, 1840-1900: A Geographical Analysis" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1968), pp. 394-395.

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who became U.S. citizens in the late 1800s made a conscious decision to modify permanently their ethnic identity.

Scholars have long assumed that the process of Americanization reduces inter-group competition and conflict. On the contrary, contends sociologist Susan Olzak, integration into U.S. society leads to ethnic competition which, in turn, leads to ethnic conflict. This community study of the acculturation of French Canadians corroborates her argument. Ethnic tensions increased in the Spindle City as Lewiston's French-Canadian men became naturalized citizens and voters. These French speakers became less segregated as they engaged U.S. political institutions and, when they demanded a share of influence, ethnic competition and conflict resulted.[31] As we shall see, the experience of these French Canadians demonstrates that, contrary to prevalent views, acculturation by ethnic populations in the United States served not to mitigate ethnic competition and conflict but to accentuate it.

The 1883 Lewiston municipal election was the opening round in the political battles that took place between

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[31]Susan Olzak, *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992.) The same can be said of the Irish in communities across the country. As Radical Reconstructionists tightened voter qualifications for foreign-born whites in the post-Civil War era, the Irish developed political machines and sought to control patronage. Ethnic competition and conflict resulted. On the development of Democratic political machines by the Irish, see Steven P. Erie, *Rainbow's End: Irish-Americans and the Dilemmas of Urban Machine Politics, 1840-1985* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), especially chapter two.

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French Canadians and Yankees. The election results gave the city's francophones a huge boost. Six of them won local office as members of the city's Common Council, the school commission, and the voter registration bureau. Their election doubled the number of French Canadians who had won office in the previous year. The six officials held some of Lewiston's better jobs. J.D. Montmarquet was editor and proprietor of *Le Messager*, J.E. Cloutier a carpenter, and Arthur Reny a bookkeeper, while the others were businessmen: J.N. L'Heureux sold books and stationery supplies, and Stanislas Marcous and Frank Pelletier sold groceries. Two French Canadians gained appointments (made by the mayor with the approval of the Board of Aldermen and Common Council) as city physician and Council secretary. The two appointed officials were professionals: L.J. Martel was a physician and F.X. Belleau was an attorney. Most, if not all eight, of the elected or appointed French-Canadian officials had played an active role in promoting naturalization in Lewiston in 1883. Montmarquet and Cloutier were founding officers of *le Club National*, while L'Heureux, Marcous, Martel, and Belleau had each traveled to Portland to serve as witnesses to a number of Lewiston francophones who had naturalized there prior to the spring election; if Pelletier and Reny had played a role in promoting naturalization in Lewiston, it was a less prominent role than the other six French Canadians. Importantly, each of the eight elected and appointed

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French-Canadian officials was a Democrat. According to the Dominicans, French-Canadian votes in the 1883 election tipped the political balance in Lewiston toward the Democrats, helping them to dislodge the Republican administration that had presided over the city for the previous five years. Thus the fears of Yankee Republicans had been borne out. Reflecting increasing confidence as well as a measure of partisanship, *Le Messager* claimed that Lewiston's Republicans had paid the price for treating the French-speaking population with indifference, and it warned them that greater numbers of French Canadians would vote in the future.[32]

Le Messager also seized the opportunity to rebut formally the accusations of Massachusetts Commissioner of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor, Carroll Wright. Wright had provoked French Canadians throughout New England in 1881 by criticizing them for not establishing permanent ties to the United States. Wright had written:

> With some exceptions the Canadian French are the Chinese of the Eastern States. They care nothing for our institutions, civil, political, or educational. They do not come to make a home among us, to dwell with us as citizens, and so become a part of us; but their purpose is merely to sojourn a few years as aliens, touching us only at a single point, that of work, and, when they

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[32]*Le Messager*, 16 mars 1882, 8 et 22 mars 1883; 1883 Lewiston city directory, pp. 52, 112-113, 118, 127, 139, 148; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, NARA-Waltham, vol. 7; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, February 27, 1883; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 6 mars 1883, pp. 74-75.

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> have gathered out of us what will satisfy their ends, to get them away to whence they came, and bestow it there. They are a horde of industrial invaders, not a stream of stable settlers. Voting with all that it implies, they care nothing about. Rarely does one of them become naturalized. They will not send their children to school if they can help it, but endeavor to crowd them into the mills at the earliest possible age.

Data on Lewiston compiled from the 1880 federal census and nineteenth-century naturalization records demonstrates the accuracy of some of Wright's criticisms; yet even as he wrote his famous polemic, French Canadians in Lewiston and other cities had made it out of date. They had already taken steps to form stable communities in the northeastern United States. Not surprisingly, they reacted angrily to his charges. Delegates to the June 1881 convention in Waterville adopted a formal resolution protesting against *"les insultes"* Wright had heaped upon francophones of the northeast. That fall, both the founder and the editor of *Le Messager* joined approximately thirty French-Canadian delegates from throughout New England at meetings in Boston to counter Wright's charges. Still smarting from Wright's criticisms in 1883, *Le Messager*'s post-election headline proclaimed: *"Ce que peuvent faire les Chinois de l'Est, quand ils sont aiguillonnes [sic]!"*[33]

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[33]Brault, *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England*, pp. 67-68; Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, *Twelfth Annual Report, 1881*, cited in Brault, p. 68; *Le Messager*, 21 juillet 1881, 3 novembre 1881, 8 mars 1883.

"les insultes": "the insults"

"Ce que...sont aiguillonnes [sic]!": "This is what the Chinese of the East can do, when they are goaded!"

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When francophone Catholics sought resources from the Lewiston city government in late 1883, religion became a battleground. In December, *Le Messager* complained bitterly that the municipal government chose not to pay for the night school the Dominicans were organizing. It reported that a local officeholder, who headed a large financial institution, had voiced concerns that educating French Canadians would cultivate political adversaries. *Le Messager* viewed his remarks and the city's denial of funding as part of a national trend of anti-immigrant hostility, and it directed its anger at both the Republican and Democratic parties for not supporting the school at which 900 French Canadians had indicated an interest in attending. That December, the monthly meeting of *le Club National* attracted 500 people, including Irish politicians who wanted to unite Irish and French-Canadian voters.[34]

Two months later, Lewiston's Board of Aldermen apparently divided over religious lines as it debated whether or not to allow the Dominicans free use of the city hall for a bazaar to raise the funds they needed to finance the evening school.[35] In the end, the Dominicans won on this issue. They soon recognized that the interests of

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[34]*Le Messager,* 13 et 20 décembre 1883.

[35]Councilmen with the Anglo-American surnames Parker and Coburn fought in favor of requiring the Dominicans to pay for the use of the city hall, while those with the Irish and French-Canadian family names of Callahan, Marcous, Peltier, and Cloutier opposed the measure. English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 1884, p. 145.

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Catholics in Lewiston depended largely upon Democratic victories, something they acknowledged in their monastery's chronicle after the spring 1884 election.[36]

During that election, Lewiston's French-Canadian voters overwhelmingly supported Democratic candidates. Several prominent *Canadiens* voted with the Democratic Party for the first time, *Le Messager* reported, and in the end Republicans mustered only ten of the 300 French-Canadian votes. The newspaper also announced that all five French Canadians vying for positions on the Common Council and School Committee had won office. This election proved to be a turning point, bringing political battle lines into sharper focus for much of the French-speaking population. As *Le Messager* saw it, Republicans had treated French-Canadian residents with condescension and had insulted them, both by calling them "foreigners" and by trying to buy their votes; moreover, Republicans had opposed granting the Dominicans free use of the city hall. The Democrats, however, had treated the French-Canadian population more kindly because they had wanted its votes, according to the French-language newspaper. Although a Republican won the mayor's race, something the Lewiston *Journal* touted by placing a crowing rooster at the head of its election report, Democrats retained a majority of seats on the Board

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[36]English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 1884, p. 145; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1. 3 mars 1884. p. 147.

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of Aldermen. After the election, *Le Messager* advised Republicans and their mouthpiece: *"Changez de tactique, MM. les républicains, ou sinon il est bien probable que le* Journal *n'aura pas occasion de sitôt de mettre un coq en tête de ses colonnes, car nous serons 500 votants l'an prochain."*[37]

Le Messager subsequently became a Democratic newspaper. Its founding editor had resigned in November 1883 and, under new editorial direction, the newspaper evolved into a Democratic publication during the 1884 presidential campaign. In June, *Le Messager* published a complimentary piece on Republican presidential candidate James G. Blaine but did not endorse him. The following week the newspaper claimed to be independent and counseled that French Canadians should vote according to the merits of the political parties. In August, *Le Messager* suddenly changed course, publishing several articles criticizing Blaine. Besides profiting personally from his support for railroads as Speaker of the House of Representatives, wrote the editor, Blaine had supported the Know-Nothings, he had called French Canadians ignorant, and he had suggested that

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[37]*Le Messager,* 21 et 28 février 1884, 6 mars 1884; *Lewiston Evening Journal,* March 3 and 4, 1884; Edmund S. Hoyt, comp., *Maine State Year-Book, and Legislative Manual, for the Year 1880-81, from April 1, 1880, to April 1, 1881* (Portland, Maine: Hoyt, Fogg and Donham [1881]), p. 204.

"Changez de tactique...l'an prochain.": "Change tactics, Republican misters, or otherwise it is quite likely that the *Journal* will not have occasion for a while to place a rooster at the head of its columns, because we will be 500 voters next year."

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French-Canadian votes were for sale. Worst, *Le Messager* charged, he represented a political party that was anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic. Following state elections in September, the newspaper claimed that French-Canadian Republicans prevented political unity among Lewiston's French speakers and were, in fact, *"traîtres."* The newspaper was no longer neutral in its political party preference. By October, *Le Messager* editorialized in favor of Blaine's Democratic opponent, concluding its piece with the request: *"Canadiens-Français, votez tous pour CLEVELAND et HENDRICKS."* On January 1, 1885, *Le Messager* made clear its political party affiliation but gave itself some latitude: *"En politique nous serons démocrate, mais démocrate indépendant."* The newspaper indicated it would support the Democratic Party as long it gave French Canadians a fair share of influence (that is, municipal patronage) and did not adversely affect their interests.[38] Democratic political partisanship thus became an avenue by which to pursue *survivance* and acculturation as intertwined goals.

Through the end of the nineteenth century, *Le Messager* worked to unite Lewiston's French speakers behind the

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[38]*Le Messager,* 15 novembre 1883, 19 et 26 juin 1884, 7, 14 et 21 août 1884, 11 septembre 1884, 30 octobre 1884, 1 janvier 1885.

"traîtres": "traitors"

"Canadiens-Français,...et HENDRICKS.": "French Canadians, vote all for CLEVELAND and HENDRICKS."

"En politique...démocrate indépendant.": "In politics we will be Democrats, but independent Democrats."

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Democratic Party. The newspaper encountered a number of obstacles. Influential French-Canadian Republicans were a significant one. French-Canadian attorneys were probably the motivating force behind the francophone Republicans. In 1895, two of Lewiston's three French-Canadian lawyers were active in the Republican Party; as *Le Messager* noted in the obituary of one of them two years later, P.X. Angers' efforts had served to divide Lewiston's French speakers in the late nineteenth century. In February 1887, French-Canadian Republicans had organized an alternative newspaper, *La République*, because they had perceived *"en un mot, une lacune à combler, celle de servir les intérêts de tous nos nationaux."* They had also formed a political club called *les Gardes Lafayettes* in 1888. While their newspaper did not survive more than a few years, and their club probably did not either, their presence and influence did. But French-speaking Republicans were few in number. In 1894, *Le Messager* challenged the *Journal*'s account that 200 French Canadians planned to organize another Republican Club, because it did not believe there were 200 francophone Republicans in Lewiston. Despite their small number, French-Canadian Republicans maintained a political presence in the Spindle City. During meetings they held at the Dominican Block, they put forward candidates to compete in caucus for the chance to run for office on the Republican ticket. In 1896, four French-Canadian Republicans won city government seats, while only two Democratic *Canadiens*

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gained local office in an election that returned the incumbent, anglophone Republican to the mayoralty. The four French-Canadian Republicans were: grocer William Sabourin, who won election to the Board of Aldermen; medical student Azarie Provost and druggist Emérilde Béliveau, who both gained seats on the Common Council; and insurance agent Philippe Lebrun, who became a poll warden. While scolding the *Canadiens* for supporting Republicans in that election, *Le Messager* congratulated Sabourin for winning a seat on the Board of Aldermen, and it expressed its trust that he would work to advance the interests of French Canadians. In complimenting Sabourin, the French-language newspaper proudly noted: *"Il possède l'anglais à perfection."*[39] Even though Sabourin stood on the opposite side of the political aisle, *Le Messager* held him up as a model to francophones; French Canadians apparently were proud when one of their members spoke English well. From the limited evidence, we can only infer that francophone Republicans like Sabourin were business and professional men sufficiently proficient in English to find themselves

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[39]*Le Messager*, 16 août 1888, 13 février 1894, numéro souvenir de 2 juillet 1895, 3 mars 1896, 19 mai 1896, 3 juillet 1896, p. 7, 7 juillet 1896, 12 janvier 1897; Lewiston, Maine, *La République*, 17 février 1887, p. 1; Georgia Drew Merrill, ed., *History of Androscoggin County, Maine* (Boston: W.A. Fergusson, 1891), p. 284; *Lewiston and Auburn Directory of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Manufacturing Establishments, Societies, Business, Business Firms, Etc., 1896* (Boston: W.A. Greenough, 1896), pp. 66, 170, 222, 234.

La République: *The Republic*

"en un mot,...nos nationaux.": "in a word, a gap to fill, that of serving the interests of all of our nationality."

les Gardes Lafayettes: the Lafayette Guards

"Il possède...à perfection.": "He speaks perfect English."

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comfortable in an anglophone milieu; perhaps they even depended upon the business of anglophones to make their living. For *Le Messager*, however proud it might be of men like Sabourin, Republicans constituted a political obstacle.

The Lewiston *Journal* was perhaps a lesser obstacle. It tried to capitalize on the lack of unity among francophones--and their apparent lack of a French-language Republican newspaper--by offering a column in French beginning in December 1889. Entitled *"Les nouvelles canadiennes,"* the column carried announcements of supposed interest to Lewiston's French-Canadian population, such as birthdays, death notices, church and mill news. But the *Journal* was not interested only in selling copy, for it made its political intentions clear around elections. Prior to the September 1890 elections, for example, it asserted: *"Maintenir le parti républicain au pouvoir, c'est assurer à notre belle et grande république une ère de prospérité sans précédent dans son histoire."*[40] The French-language column disappeared about one month later.

Despite the influence of some notable French Canadians, Republicans did not attract more than a small minority of Lewiston's francophones to their political

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[40]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, December 28, 1889, September 4, 1890.
"Les nouvelles canadiennes": "Canadian news"
"Maintenir le parti...son histoire.": "Keeping the Republican party in power is to assure to our beautiful and grand republic an era of prosperity without precedent in its history."

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party. In 1892, *Le Messager* estimated that eighty percent of Lewiston's French-Canadian voters were Democrats. Republicans did, however, draw French-Canadian votes and continued to win elections in the late nineteenth century. This disturbed *Le Messager*. While the *Journal* might announce Republican victories with a crowing rooster at the head of its election reports, *Le Messager* acknowledged them by placing an upside-down rooster atop its reports.[41]

Following Democratic losses in elections, *Le Messager* suggested explanations for the cross-party voting behavior of Lewiston's French-Canadian Democrats. Republican mill agents proved an obstacle to *Le Messager*'s efforts to inculcate allegiance to the Democratic Party. U.S. tariff policy probably was of central concern to them, for mills benefited from protectionism. Occasionally, the agents frightened French-Canadian workers into backing Republican candidates. After Republicans won the fall 1888 elections, *Le Messager* charged that mill agents had told employees *"s'ils votaient le bulletin démocrate, ils seraient réduits à ne pouvoir gagner assez pour pouvoir donner un repas par jour à leurs enfants."* Such talk by one foreman caused a number of working children to return to their homes crying, reported *Le Messager*. In 1892, the newspaper indicated that six workers had lost their jobs because they had voted Democratic. Two years later, after 600 French Canadians

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[41]*Le Messager*, 12 juillet 1892, 5 mars 1895.

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had voted against Dr. L.J. Martel, causing him to lose his second bid for mayor, *Le Messager* contended that mill agents had frightened workers into thinking that a Democratic administration in Lewiston would have led to salary reductions and to unemployment.[42]

The newspaper offered additional reasons why French-Canadian voters had sided against one of their own in 1894. *Le Messager* reported that some French Canadians had chosen not to join forces with the Irish. Others had traded their votes to Republicans for alcohol and for promises of jobs on the police force, thus revealing that French-Canadian votes could at times be bought.[43] Ethnic friction in the Democratic Party and false hopes of patronage proved obstacles to *Le Messager*'s efforts to promote Democratic Party unity.

So, it appears, did national character. Unlike when Democrats gained office, French Canadians typically received few of the patronage appointments and other jobs that Republican administrations doled out, causing *Le Messager* to push Democratic candidates at all levels of government and to chide francophones who supported

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[42]*Le Messager*, 13 septembre 1888, 11 mars 1892, 9 et 20 mars 1894. *Le Messager* had attributed Martel's mayoral defeat in the previous year to an Irish clique that had defected to the Republican Party. *Le Messager*, 7 mars 1893.

"s'ils votaient...leurs enfants.": "if they voted for the Democratic ticket, they would not be able to earn enough to provide one meal each day to their children."

[43]*Le Messager*, 9 mars 1894.

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Republicans with their votes. After Republicans won local elections in 1895, and French Canadians again received few of the spoils, it harped on the lesson. *"Nous espérons qu'elle sera comprise et qu'à l'avenir nous mettrons de côté les haines mesquines qui, jusqu'ici, nous ont divisés,"* *Le Messager* wrote. Here the newspaper hinted that national character sometimes prevented French Canadians from uniting. Later in the year, it explicitly stated that the lack of unity *"est un défaut un peu national, il faut l'admettre."* *Le Messager* felt divisions among French Canadians existed on both sides of the international border and were not particular to those living in the United States. When asking Lewiston's French Canadians to set aside their differences to join forces politically in 1896, it made reference to Honoré Mercier, a nationalist and former premier of Québec who had visited Lewiston several years earlier: *"Suivons le conseil du grand Mercier: 'Cessons nos luttes fratricides, unissons-nous.'"*[44] The newspaper hoped that appeal to a nationalist francophone leader from the homeland would help Lewiston's

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[44]*Le Messager*, 14 octobre 1886, 11 octobre 1888, 23 octobre 1891, 9 août 1893, 3 avril 1894, [19?] mars 1895, numéro souvenir de 2 juillet 1895, [7?] février 1896, 6 mars 1896, p. 2, 17 mars 1896, 13 avril 1897.

"Nous espérons...ont divisés,": "We hope that the lesson will be understood and that in the future we will set aside the petty hatreds which, up to now, have divided us,"

"est un défaut...faut l'admettre.": "is a weakness based somewhat upon nationality, one must admit."

"Suivons le conseil...'unissons-nous.'": "Let us heed the advice of the great Mercier: 'Let us end our fratricidal struggles, let us unite.'"

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French Canadians to overcome differences that might be rooted in their national character.

Over time, Lewiston's French-Canadian population evolved into solidly Democratic voters. The actions of Republicans at the local and national levels had prompted *Le Messager* to join the ranks of the Democratic Party in 1884, and this proved to be a significant development affecting the identity of Lewiston's francophone residents. From that point, the French-language press engaged Lewiston French Canadians in a dialectic; through this process, francophones fashioned their political identity in the United States. While French speakers in the Spindle City did join the Republican Party, the large majority through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries became Democrats. This was not the case in all New England communities with large French-Canadian populations. In Lewiston, however, francophones helped the city to evolve into a Democratic Party stronghold during the twentieth century. There is no evidence that the Dominican priests facilitated this development. Instead, *Le Messager*'s leadership from 1884, and the perceptions of francophones of their own self-interest, explain why Lewiston's French-Canadian population became Democratic Party loyalists. This political identity was integrally related to their acculturation into U.S. society.

Criticized by Carroll Wright and other nativists for a perceived lack of commitment to the United States and to

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its institutions, French Canadians became subject to maneuvering to curb their political power as they acculturated. Yankee Republicans in Lewiston and the state of Maine worked to maintain their power at the state and local levels by taking measures to limit the influence of the French-Canadian voters who joined the ranks of Democrats. The Republican-dominated state legislature passed a law in the early 1890s requiring the creation of local Registration Boards to revise voting lists. *Le Messager* saw this law as a Republican tactic to reduce the voting strength of francophones, and it offered credible evidence to support its view. Because Republicans comprised a majority of the Registration Board's Lewiston members, they did not allow Democrats to collect the names of voters from the different wards of the city in late 1893, and Republican canvassers used the opportunity to intimidate French-Canadian voters. After asking French Canadians who they had supported during the spring 1893 elections and who they intended to vote for in the 1894 elections, the canvassers lectured them if they had voted Democratic, urged them to vote Republican and, if they would not, threatened that the state legislature would pass a law requiring them to do so in the future! Prior to the spring 1894 municipal elections, *Le Messager* pointed out that a large majority of the 723 names the Registration Board had dropped from the voting lists were Democrats, and it published the names of French Canadians removed from the

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lists so that they could re-register, typically by showing proof of their U.S. citizenship. Republican tactics did not end there. Republicans kept the Registration Board open only a few days each year to limit the time French Canadians and other ethnic groups could register to vote, and the Board further hindered registration by asking francophones impertinent questions that wasted time, complained *Le Messager*. Consequently, the newspaper taunted the Registration Board prior to the spring 1894 elections: *"Ces pauvres républicains, ils ont tellement peur de se faire battre lundi, qu'ils ne veulent pas enregistrer les votants."*[45] In nineteenth-century Lewiston, the ballot box became a center of ethnic competition and conflict.

So did French-Canadian institutions. Lewiston's anglophones wanted control over the education of children. In 1884, a year after French Canadians had had to finance their evening school themselves, the city of Lewiston began to appropriate funds for public evening schools. While *Le Messager* lauded this decision it did not, of course,

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[45]*Le Messager*, 26 février 1892, 19 décembre 1893, 9 et 23 février 1894, 2 mars 1894. Similar efforts to limit the franchise of other immigrant populations took place throughout the country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*, chapter five.

"Ces pauvres...les votants.": "Those poor Republicans, they are so afraid to lose on Monday that they do not want to register voters."

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support the subsequent efforts of local officials to undermine the French-Canadian schools.[46]

In 1890, Lewiston officials tried to do just that. In August, nearly half a year after the Dominicans had increased the amount of instruction provided in English in the parish schools, Lewiston's superintendent of schools met with the Dominican pastor to ask him to send French-Canadian children to the city's public schools. He even offered to have Catholic teachers provide religious instruction before and after school and to provide some instruction in French. Changing demographics motivated the superintendent. From 1880 to 1890, the number of school-aged children of so-called American ancestry in Lewiston had dropped by over 450, those of Irish heritage had declined by about fifty, whereas the number of French-Canadian children of school age had increased by over 1,700. Because French Canadians did not send their children to public schools where they would receive instruction in English and mix with students of all backgrounds, the Lewiston school report released in November 1890 suggested that they lacked loyalty to the United States. "Our relations must be more closely interwoven. There must be more 'serious Americanism' and federation of common interests," argued Edward H. Hill, the president of the school committee. When Hill went on to

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[46]*Le Messager*, 30 octobre 1884.

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note that schoolhouses in Lewiston had declining enrollments, one had been sold, and five others were no longer in use, he revealed another reason for his interest in recruiting French-Canadian students to the public schools. The school report did not criticize the Irish for sending their children to parish schools, *Le Messager* noted, and it argued that parochial education was an issue among Catholics, even American Catholics. *"L'épiscopat catholique américain a signalé le danger des écoles publiques et ordonné au clergé de créer des écoles paroissiales," Le Messager* wrote, thus referring to the 1884 decree of the Council of Baltimore to promote parochial schools in the United States. While asserting the right of French Canadians to maintain their French language and their Catholic faith, *Le Messager* further contended that French speakers could indeed be good U.S. citizens and pointed out that they were, in fact, learning English.[47]

What *Le Messager* saw so clearly is precisely what anglophones did not comprehend: ethnic retention and acculturation were interconnected in the late nineteenth

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[47]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, 4 mars 1890, p. 192, 22 août 1890, p. 225; *Annual Reports of the School Committee and of the Superintendent of Schools of the City of Lewiston, for the Year Ending August 31, 1890* (Lewiston, Maine: Geo. A. Callahan, Printer, 1890), pp. 17-19, 23; article signé "Un Canadien-Américain," *Le Messager*, 20 novembre 1890, p. 4.

"L'épiscopat catholique...des écoles paroissiales,": "The American Catholic episcopacy has signaled the danger of public schools and has ordered clergy to create parish schools,"

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century. Lewiston's francophones were growing new roots in their country of adoption; they were not interested, however, in allowing their old roots to wither or die. *"Tout en adoptant les idées politiques et sociales de leur nouvelle patrie en lui vouant une affection profonde et un dévouement très sincère,"* pastor Alexandre-Louis Mothon wrote of his French-Canadian parishioners in 1893, *"ceux-ci espèrent bien conserver leurs traditions et leur langue, qu'ils considèrent comme liées inséparablement à leur foi religieuse."*[48] In the late nineteenth century, Lewiston's French speakers renegotiated their identity. That identity involved acculturating in the United States, not in assimilating, as nativists devoutly hoped.

In 1891, Lewiston school officials embarked upon more aggressive strategies to increase the enrollment of French-Canadian youth in the public schools. After city officials agreed to let a French-Canadian woman run a private Catholic school for francophone youth in a city schoolhouse that had remained vacant for eight years, the school commission chose to use the building again to open a new school of its own, even though two other schoolhouses on the same street remained only partially occupied.

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[48]Alexandre-Louis Mothon, cited in Plourde, *Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents*, vol. 2, pp. 112-113.

"Tout en adoptant...très sincère," "ceux-ci espèrent...foi religieuse.": "While adopting the political and social ideas of their new country and vowing profound affection and a sincere devotion," "they hope to preserve their traditions and their language, which they consider inseparably tied to their religious faith."

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Consequently, the Dominicans allowed the woman to teach her class in the assembly room of the Dominican Block before they built another school in *Petit Canada* to accommodate her students. In September 1891, Lewiston's school superintendent placed ads in *Le Messager* informing parents that one of the city's public schools, probably the one it had taken back from the French-Canadian teacher, would offer instruction in French and English, and another had a teacher who spoke both languages. The superintendent emphasized in the ad that the public schools did not charge tuition. The strategy to open a bilingual public school did not succeed because it did not enroll enough students, the Dominicans recorded in their chronicle. Over the next year and a half, the public schools probably attracted enough French-Canadian youth to worry the pastor, for he announced at masses in January 1893 that parents sending their children to public schools would not receive absolution; he made exceptions, however, for those who lived far from the Catholic schools or whose children continued their education beyond the grades offered in those schools.[49]

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[49]*Le Messager*, 7 mai 1891, p. 4, 4 septembre 1891; English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, p. 259; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, 1 septembre 1891, p. 272, 17 septembre 1891, pp. 272-273, 5 octobre 1891, p. 275, 21 décembre 1891, p. 282; French-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 1893, p. 82.

Petit Canada: Little Canada

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Another French-Canadian institution, the hospital founded by the *Soeurs Grises*, created considerable religious and ethnic competition in the Lewiston-Auburn area during the late nineteenth century. Lewiston had built a public hospital in the late 1860s, but it initially received little use; by 1876, the overseers of the poor felt the facility was inadequate for a hospital and decided to close it rather than expand it, preferring instead to treat the sick at the City Farm, which also housed the destitute. A decade later, English-language newspaper articles argued the need for a local hospital, citing support for the idea from mill agents and doctors. To meet this need, the *Soeurs de la Charité de Saint-Hyacinthe*, or *Soeurs Grises*, opened a hospital in Lewiston in 1888, after having raised funds for it through bazaars they had organized with the support of French-Canadian societies. In founding the hospital, the sisters continued in the United States a practice they had begun in Québec of institutionalizing social services for French speakers.[50]

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[50]*Sixth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Lewiston, for the Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 28, 1869, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Evening Journal, 1869), p. 9; *Seventh Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Lewiston, for the Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 28, 1870, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Geo. A. Callahan, 1870), p. 47; *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Lewiston, for the Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 29, 1876, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Geo. A. Callahan, 1876), pp. 86-87; *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenditures of the City of Lewiston, for the Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 28, 1877, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Journal Office, 1877),

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Several non-francophone physicians supported the Sisters' Hospital. No sooner did the sisters organize their hospital in Lewiston than Protestants began discussing plans to build an alternative, local hospital. Protestant women and ministers from Auburn, as well as the non-francophone doctors who had originally supported the sisters' plans to found a hospital, led the charge to build a competing institution. The Lewiston *Journal* published numerous articles about their proposed hospital which, the Dominicans perceived, had a clear anti-French subtext: *"Toujours sans le dire officiellement, c'est contre nous que ceci est dirigé."*[51]

French Canadians believed their hospital adequately met local needs, and that opening a second hospital in Lewiston would only jeopardize the success of their institution. Consequently, after a Republican state legislator from Lewiston sponsored a bill in 1889 to

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p. 66; English-language newspaper clippings inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 2, 1887, pp. 141-142; holographic report inserted into the Comptes Rendus de L'Asile Notre Dame de Lourdes de Lewiston à commencer de l'année 1884-1885, Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center Archives, Lewiston, Maine; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 2, 15 novembre 1887, pp. 130-131, 24 novembre 1887, p. 133. On the role of the *Soeurs Grises* as providers of social assistance in Québec and New England, see Mark Paul Richard, "Coping before *l'État-providence:* Collective Welfare Strategies of New England's Franco-Americans," *Québec Studies* 25 (Spring 1998), pp. 60-62.

Soeurs de la Charité de Saint-Hyacinthe: Sisters of Charity of Saint Hyacinthe

[51]Letter of F.X. Belleau, published in the *Lewiston Evening Journal,* February 15, 1889; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, 21 août 1888, p. 46, 13 janvier 1889, p. 80, 24 janvier 1889, p. 85.

"Toujours sans...est dirigé.": "Always without saying it officially, it is against us that this [hospital] is being planned."

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allocate $40,000 for the proposed Central Maine General (C.M.G.) hospital, the Dominicans organized French Canadians to protest against the measure. At masses, they asked parishioners to join them in a meeting at the Dominican Block to discuss the issue, and 800 French Canadians, Democrats and Republicans alike, showed up. Following the meeting, *Le Messager* expressed its pleasure that, although politics had divided French Canadians in recent years, they showed *"l'harmonie et l'unanimité"* on the question of opposing the creation of C.M.G. hospital. One notable Republican did not attend the meeting, however. He was J.E. Cloutier, a former Democrat, who had sponsored the appropriation for C.M.G. Twenty-five French Canadians from Lewiston traveled to the state capital in Augusta to lobby against Cloutier's bill. A French-Canadian state representative from Biddeford spoke favorably to the legislature about the Sisters' Hospital, helping to defeat Cloutier's bill. Among the epithets hurled at Lewiston's French Canadians for their opposition to C.M.G. was "'the French will not Americanize.'" Less than two weeks after the state legislature had denied funding to C.M.G., the Dominican pastor called for another meeting at the Dominican Block, this time to push more *Canadiens* to naturalize.[52]

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[52]Letter of F.X. Belleau, published in the *Lewiston Evening Journal*, February 15, 1889; Auburn *Gazette*, March 13, 1889, December 28, 1889, inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, pp. 115, 175-180; English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des

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Religious and ethnic prejudice against French Canadians led to the establishment of C.M.G. hospital in Lewiston. In November 1890, the Dominicans noted in their monastery's chronicle that individuals of American, and especially of Irish, ancestry continued to push for the creation of a second hospital in the Spindle City. At a state hearing in Augusta, an Auburn doctor complained that because people spoke French at the Sisters' Hospital, his patients would not go there. An Irish man testified that "he did not want it to be understood that this was a 'Catholic' hospital. It was a 'French Catholic hospital,'" he emphasized. A non-francophone doctor raised other complaints: the hospital also functioned as a home for orphans and the sisters, a chapel existed above the patients' wards, and physicians did not have a role in managing the institution.[53] The latter complaint, subtly acknowledging the doctor's discomfort at seeing women enter the male sphere of medicine as directors of a medical institution, reveals gender discrimination as another motive for creating a new hospital in Lewiston. Thus,

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Dominicains, vol. 3, pp. 92-93; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, 6 février 1889, p. 94, 10 mars 1889, p. 111, 12 mars 1889, p. 112, 24 mars 1889, p. 121, 28 mars 1889, p. 122; *Le Messager*, 14 mars 1889; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, March 11, 1889.

"l'harmonie et l'unanimité": "harmony and unanimity"

[53]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, [4?] novembre 1890, pp. 236-237; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, January 29, 1891, p. 1. The *Soeurs Grises* had opened an orphanage for girls at their residence when they arrived in Lewiston in 1878, and they relocated it to the hospital site when they moved there. Holographic report inserted into the Comptes Rendus de L'Asile Notre Dame de Lourdes.

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religious, ethnic, and gender biases of the late nineteenth century together conspired to create Lewiston's C.M.G. hospital, built after promoters secured state funding for the institution in 1891.[54]

So acute was the competition between C.M.G. and the Sisters' Hospital that it surfaced in a local contest for a music box. In December 1892, Peck's department store in Lewiston sponsored a contest whereby, for each twenty-five cent purchase, customers could cast a ballot favoring an institution of their choice. The one receiving the most votes would win the music box, valued at $200. By mid-December, Lewiston's two hospitals were among the top three institutions with the most votes. As the contest neared its end, English- and French-language newspapers regularly informed readers of the daily voting results. *Le Messager* implored readers to cast their ballots for the Sisters' Hospital and asked that they hand them to a francophone clerk, if they did not want to bother walking upstairs at Peck's to place them in the ballot box. In the end, C.M.G. hospital won the contest, with 28,291 votes to the 26,627 votes for the Sisters' Hospital. French-Canadian elites recorded their dismay. A disappointed Dominican priest acknowledged that the contest's result was not *"un echec pour l'Hôpital canadien"* but wished he could have

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[54]*First Annual Report of the Central Maine General Hospital, Lewiston, Maine, July 1, 1891, to July 1, 1892* (Lewiston, Maine: Journal Office, 1893), p. 8.

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celebrated a loss by *"l'institution rivale!!!"* *Le Messager* expressed its disappointment by admonishing readers: *"Si tous les Canadiens qui ont acheté à ce magasin avaient tous vôté, il n'y a aucun doute que le résultat n'aurait pas été le même."* It then conveyed the thanks of the *Soeurs Grises* to those who had supported their hospital during the contest.[55] Certainly, neither of Lewiston's two hospitals needed a music box. The contest for it gave expression to the intense ethnic and religious competition that existed between French and English speakers in the late nineteenth century.

Competition and tension between the Irish and French-Canadian Catholics of Lewiston surfaced in different ways in the late nineteenth century. As noted earlier, sometimes they joined forces in the Democratic Party, and at other times members of each group crossed over to the Republican Party when ethnic friction prevented political unity. Competition between the French Canadians and the Irish appeared in religious works as well, although it was usually more subtle. When French Canadians made plans for a bazaar to raise funds for their parish in 1882, the Irish

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[55]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 13 décembre 1892, p. 67, 2 janvier 1893, pp. 77-78; English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 1892, p. 67; *Le Messager*, 27 décembre 1892, 4 janvier 1893.

"un echec pour l'Hôpital canadien": "a defeat for the French-Canadian hospital"

"l'institution rivale!!!": "the rival institution!!!"

"Si tous...le même.": "If all of the French Canadians who had made purchases at this store had voted, there is no doubt the result would not have been the same."

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pastor, Thomas Wallace, scheduled one for Saint Joseph parish to coincide, *"probablement pour enlever à ses paroissiens la tentation préjudiciable à leur bourse de donner leur concours au Bazar Canadien!"* the Dominicans noted. On July 6, 1884, the Irish pastor and his assistant joined the Dominicans and bishop for lunch but were conspicuously absent from the afternoon ceremony to bless the new bells of *Saint-Pierre* Church. Less than two weeks later, Saint Joseph parish ordered a church bell 1,000 pounds heavier than any other found in Lewiston, causing the Dominicans to observe wryly: *"Il paraît que le P. Wallace a pris goût aux cloches!"* Wallace headed the Lewiston School Committee in 1886 and protested against the decision of the Board of Aldermen to let the Dominicans use two public school buildings; as a result, the city allowed the Dominicans only one building, making it difficult for them to accommodate the growing number of French-Canadian schoolchildren. In 1892, when the *Soeurs Grises* visited different parishes in the state to solicit funds for a boys' orphanage they planned to open, Wallace chose not to hold a special collection for them in his parish. As the French-Canadian population of Lewiston expanded and competed for resources, Wallace worried about the position of the Irish in the city. Consequently, in 1886, he made arrangements with Bishop Healy to erect a second Irish church in Lewiston, named Saint Patrick's, which he hoped would serve all of the English-speaking Catholics of

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Lewiston and Auburn. Wallace served as pastor of both Saint Joseph's and Saint Patrick's from 1890 until 1894, when the two became separate parishes with their own pastors, a development he deplored. He felt it divided the strength of Lewiston's Irish population and, while scolding Saint Joseph parishioners for having requested their own pastor, he reportedly stated "in a very short time this city would become a cananadian [*sic*] city."[56] This same concern must have underlay Irish support for C.M.G. hospital.

The religious and ethnic competition between francophones and the Irish Catholic and Protestant American populations of Lewiston likely motivated the *Soeurs Grises* to promote integration rather than ethnic isolation in the charitable institutions they founded in the Spindle City. Their hospital, Maine's first Catholic hospital, from the beginning admitted patients without regard to religious background or to ethnic origin, something Central Maine

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[56]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, novembre 1882, p. 92, 6 juillet 1884, p. 187, 17 juillet 1884, p. 193, vol. 2, 31 août 1886, p. 62, vol. 4, 1 août 1892, p. 30; English-language newpspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 1884, p. 193; written agreement between Reverend T.H. Wallace and Bishop James Augustin Healy, August 17, 1886, and letter of J. Kennedy to Bishop Healy, October 31, 1894, among "Parish Reports, 1879--", Chancery Archives; Reverend John F. Crozier, ed., *One Hundredth Anniversary of Saint Joseph's Church, Lewiston, Maine, 1857-1957* (n.p., n.d.), p. 13; Larry and Carol Marcoux, eds., *St. Patrick's Church, Lewiston, Maine, Celebrates 100 Years, 1890-1990* (n.p. [1990]), p. 7.

"probablement pour...Bazar Canadien!": "probably to eliminate the temptation of his parishioners to spend money at the bazaar of the French Canadians!"

"Il paraît...aux cloches!": "It seems that Father Wallace has taken a liking to bells!"

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General Hospital acknowledged in its first report. The original medical staff of the hospital, organized by Dr. Martel in 1893, included doctors without French surnames; in 1898, about two-thirds of the attending, consulting, and adjunct physicians at the hospital had non-French names. Women of all religious or ethnic backgrounds could join the association of hospital patronesses which, as in Canada, would periodically gather women together to sew for patients. The Men's Hospital Association, or patrons, formed in 1899 to work with the patronesses to organize concerts and dramatic productions for the benefit of the hospital, had a French-Canadian and an Irish man serving as co-presidents; selected as honorary presidents were the Anglo-American state governor, the Irish bishop, a French Dominican priest, and an Irish pastor of Lewiston.[57] Given the ethnic and religious competition that surrounded the hospital's founding, building bridges between ethnic and religious groups undoubtedly worked to ensure the institution's survival.

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[57]Alexandre-Louis Mothon, 1893, cited in Plourde, *Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents*, vol. 2, p. 101; Sommaire, 1885-1904, Sisters of Charity, Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center Archives, Lewiston, Maine, p. 10; Registre, vol. 1, 1880-1901, Sisters of Charity, Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center Archives, pp. 9, 11, 14-17; *First Annual Report of the Central Maine General Hospital*, p. 7; *Sixth Annual Report of [the] Hospital of the Sisters of Charity, Lewiston, Maine, 1898* (n.p. [1898]), pp. 3, 9; *Sisters' Hospital, 1902: Tenth Annual Report* (Lewiston, Maine: Haswell Press [1902]), p. 10; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, December 6, 1898, p. 9; English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 5, 1900, p. 358; *Le Messager*, 10 janvier 1899, p. 6; *Seventh Annual Report of [the] Hospital of the Sisters of Charity, Lewiston, Maine, 1899* (n.p. [1899]), p. 12.

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The Healy Asylum, an orphanage the *Soeurs Grises* founded in 1893, facilitated integration and Americanization. This likely explains why the institution did not encounter opposition from Protestant Americans; in fact, they supported the orphanage and attended a bazaar to raise funds for it in 1893. The sisters admitted boys, including juvenile offenders, of different religious and ethnic backgrounds to Healy Asylum. The 1896 report the francophone nuns wrote on the institution demonstrated an eagerness to illustrate Americanism in the late nineteenth century. Written entirely in English, this report reveals the sisters followed a curriculum similar to that of the public schools, and it stresses that they worked to help each boy under their care "to become an honorable and useful citizen." The picture they included of the kindergarten class prominently displays two U.S. flags. Thus, while administering a French-Canadian institution, the sisters wished to demonstrate their loyalty to, and integration into, U.S. society. Through their charitable works, by accepting people of other religions and nationalities, and by embracing American values, the *Soeurs Grises* gained acceptance for their institutions.[58]

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[58]Alexandre-Louis Mothon, 1893, cited in Plourde, *Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents*, vol. 2, p. 105; *Annual Report, Healy Asylum, 1896* (n.p. [1896]); L.C. Bateman, "The Sisters' Hospital: The Beautiful Structure Now Finished and Thrown Open to the Public," *Lewiston Journal* Magazine Section, November 15, 1902, p. 11.

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The actions of the sisters reflected political astuteness. Demonstrating elements of Americanism and non-sectarianism in their charitable institutions helped them to obtain necessary funding. With the assistance of F.X. Belleau, a Democrat who represented Lewiston in the state legislature, the Sisters' Hospital and the Healy Asylum received state appropriations in the 1890s. The Sisters' Hospital therefore competed with C.M.G. hospital for state aid; C.M.G., however, obtained more generous financial support from the state legislature.[59] Although mitigated, prejudice against the hospital francophones had founded in Lewiston persisted through the turn of the century.

Ethnic and religious rivalry probably helped Lewiston's francophones, particularly its elites, to sympathize with Louis Riel in the late nineteenth century. Riel was a *Métis*, a mixture of European and Native American ancestry, who had helped lead other *Métis* from the Canadian Northwest in an 1885 insurrection against the Ottawa-based federal government. Although Riel was insane, the federal government tried and hanged him for treason, actions that divided English and French Canadians. French Canadians from Québec protested vigorously against the federal government's handling of Riel, expressing anger at the

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[59]English- and French-language newspaper clippings inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 1893, pp. 94, 96; *Le Messager*, 21 mars 1899, p. 3; holographic report inserted into the Comptes Rendus de L'Asile Notre Dame de Lourdes; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 5, 1898, pp. 171-172.

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treatment of such francophone Catholics outside of the province of Québec. Throughout 1885, *Le Messager* published numerous articles on Riel and his trial. After his execution, French Canadians in Lewiston requested a mass for him which the national societies attended. There is no record that they held any public demonstrations on Riel's behalf. In June 1886, *Le Messager* joined voices with other French Canadians in the United States to protest against the Canadian government's treatment of Riel, arguing *"l'exécution de Riel est un flagrant outrage à notre nationalité que nous ne pourrons jamais oublier."* Francophone elites did not soon forget him. An editor of *Le Messager*, Dr. F.P. Vanier, wrote a play entitled *Louis Riel*, held at Lewiston's Music Hall, directed and acted by local French Canadians, including Dr. Martel who played Riel. On the tenth anniversary of Riel's execution, *Le Messager* reminded readers of his fate.[60] The controversy in Canada over Louis Riel's execution, which revealed deep religious and ethnic divisions within the nation-state, likely resonated with francophones in Lewiston subjected to discrimination on the basis of their religious background

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[60]*Le Messager*, 1885, passim, 3 et 10 juin 1886, 5 avril 1888, lettre au rédacteur signée "L." du 5 avril 1888, 19 novembre 1895; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 2, 2 décembre 1885, p. 12[1], vol. 3, 3 avril 1888, p. 25; French-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 2, 2 décembre 1885, p. 12[1]. For particulars of the 1885 insurrection and subsequent trials, see Bob Beal and Rod Macleod, *Prairie Fire: The 1885 North-West Rebellion* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1994.)

"l'exécution de Riel...jamais oublier.": "Riel's execution is a flagrant insult against our nationality that we can never forget."

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and ethnic origins. Concern over Riel's plight connected French Canadians, at least emotionally, on both sides of the international border in the late nineteenth century.

Perhaps one measure of that emotional connection was the enthusiastic reception Lewiston's francophones accorded Honoré Mercier in 1893. Mercier rose to power in Québec by capitalizing on the discontent of French Canadians with the Canadian government's handling of Riel; as Prime Minister, he pushed for greater autonomy for the province of Québec. Two years after leaving office, Mercier visited Lewiston during a speaking tour of French-Canadian centers in New England. According to *Le Messager*, Mercier wanted to see how French Canadians in the United States were doing, and he wished to promote the issue of Canadian independence from Britain. In introducing Mercier to a Lewiston audience of at least 3,000, including American and Irish individuals, attorney P.X. Angers called Mercier *"le Washington canadien."* Speaking in both English and French, Mercier suggested that francophones in the United States, through their industry and toil, had gained some prestigious positions and the respect of Americans, but he expressed his belief that francophones in Canada, for the most part, lacked both prestige and the respect of anglophones. Mercier contended that problems between English and French speakers concerning religious and linguistic issues in Manitoba and New Brunswick served as evidence that the English were not preserving minority

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rights in provinces outside of Québec. The solution, he suggested, was for Canada to gain its independence from Great Britain. *Le Messager* paraphrased Mercier: *"L'indépendance seule peut donner au Canada une liberté véritable."* While the French-language newspaper--and perhaps Mercier himself--did not elaborate on how Canadian autonomy might improve the situation of French Canadians, the remarks of *"l'apôtre de l'indépendance canadienne,"* as *Le Messager* called Mercier, must have drawn a sympathetic response from Lewiston's French speakers.[61]

Other ties existed between the francophones of Lewiston and Québec. Sending young men to Québec's *collèges classiques* connected French speakers of Lewiston to their sending society after the migration experience and helped them to preserve their French-Canadian ethnicity in the United States. Clergy provided secondary-level instruction in the *collèges,* training young men of approximately twelve to eighteen years of age who later joined the ranks of the elite in such capacities as physicians and clergymen.[62] Young francophone men seeking a

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[61]Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher et Jean-Claude Robert, *Histoire du Québec contemporain: De la Confédération à la crise* (1867-1929) (Montréal: Boréal, 1989), pp. 307, 320-321; *Le Messager*, 1 et 9 août 1893.

"le Washington canadien": "Canada's Washington"

"L'indépendance seule...liberté véritable.": "Only independence can give Canada true liberty."

"l'apôtre de l'indépendance canadienne": "the apostle of Canadian independence"

[62]Claude Galarneau, *Les Collèges classiques au Canada français (1620-1970)* (Montréal: Éditions Fides, 1978), p. 46; Robert G. LeBlanc, "A French-Canadian Education and the Persistence of *La Franco-*

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classical, secondary education during the late nineteenth century had to travel to Canada because Lewiston's parish schools offered only an elementary education, and New England did not then have its own *collège classique*. Periodic announcements in the local news of *Le Messager* indicate that some of Lewiston's French-speaking youth did attend the *collèges* of Québec, but the newspaper did not provide sufficient information to determine enrollment patterns.

The yearbooks of Québec's *collèges classiques* supply the necessary information. By consulting them, geographer Robert G. LeBlanc has determined that *Saint-Charles Borromée* in Sherbrooke and the *Collège de Saint-Hyacinthe* together had the largest proportion (about one-third) of the enrollments of French-Canadian descendants from the United States between 1865 and 1965. Raw data shared by LeBlanc reveals that the enrollments of Lewiston's French-Canadian youth at these two institutions increased as the nineteenth century progressed. Specifically, the two *collèges* had three enrollments from Lewiston in the 1870s, thirteen in the 1880s, and twenty-two in the 1890s. These increasing numbers reflect that more French Canadians in Lewiston had ascended the ladder of economic class high enough to be able to afford sending their sons to the

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Américanie," Journal of Cultural Geography 8 (Spring/Summer 1988), pp. 50, 52.

collèges classiques: classical schools

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collèges of Québec. As we shall see, Lewiston's enrollments at the *collèges* continued to increase in the early twentieth century. Training elites at the *collèges classiques* helped communities like Lewiston to maintain their ties with Québec and to preserve their French-Canadian traditions, French language, and Catholic faith, the three pillars of *survivance*.[63]

Trips to Québec provided Lewiston's French Canadians the opportunity to maintain regular contact with family and friends in *le pays natal*. Summer pilgrimages to Sainte-Anne de Beaupré in Québec, which the Dominicans organized around the saint's feast day in July, typically drew hundreds of Lewiston francophones. These pilgrimages, as well as individual trips, afforded the opportunity to visit relatives in Québec, surely providing a welcome respite from the hot mills during summertime. So many from the Androscoggin Mill took part in summer excursions during 1898 that a number of looms could not operate, and the mill had to bring in Polish workers to meet the shortage of labor.[64] When Lewiston's mills closed temporarily during

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[63]LeBlanc, "A French-Canadian Education and the Persistence of *La Franco-Américanie*," pp. 51-52, 55, 62. I am grateful to Robert G. LeBlanc for sharing his research notes, from which the figures in this paragraph were compiled. Note that all figures represent the number of enrollments and not individual students or graduates.

[64]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 2, 26 juillet 1887, p. 116, vol. 4, 10 juillet 1894, p. 229; *Le Messager*, 22 juillet 1898, p. 3. When the Androscoggin Mill hired Polish workers, *Le Messager* predicted *"le retour du pays natal sera désappointant pour quelques-uns,"* ("the return from the native country will be disappointing for some,") but it reported four days later that ten of the thirty Polish workers who had been learning to weave at the mill had left Lewiston. The

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periods of industrial crisis, French Canadians traveled to Canada for the length of their unemployment, spending it with family in Québec, presumably on farms where subsistence was easier than in an industrial city, for they had few savings on which to rely during difficult economic times. This happened in 1893, for example, when 800 of Lewiston's French Canadians left for *le pays natal* one day in August; by early December, when the Bates Mill reopened, most of the nearly 1,000 *Canadiens* who had departed during the mill's four-month shut-down had returned to Lewiston. The city's *Canadiens* also traveled to Québec for reasons not tied to religion or economics, such as a trip to Montréal's winter carnival by the snowshoe club, *le Lewistonnais,* in 1889.[65] Proximity to Québec allowed French Canadians to return temporarily, whether in times of need or leisure, to the networks they had in *le pays natal.*

The formation of a branch of the *Société des Artisans* in Lewiston served to unite francophones on both sides of the international border in a mutual-benefit society in 1898. *Les Artisans* had their headquarters in Montréal, and they sent their inspector general to Lewiston in that year to persuade francophones to join this Canadian

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newspaper did not indicate if the others kept their jobs, and it offered no evidence of ethnic conflict due to the employment of the Polish workers. *Le Messager,* 22 juillet 1898, p. 3, 26 juillet 1898, p. 3.

[65]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 15 août 1893, pp. 136-137, 27 septembre 1893, pp. 146-147, 4 décembre 1893, p. 177; *Le Messager,* 24 janvier 1889, 5 décembre 1893.

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organization. In a meeting held at the Dominican Block, the speaker emphasized to the 100 attendees that founding a branch of *les Artisans* in Lewiston would not supplant existing societies but would serve instead as an additional resource to the city's French-Canadian population. Over seventy-five joined the organization, which boasted 12,000 members in Québec and the United States in 1898.[66]

Celebrations of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day also connected French speakers in the United States and Canada. On these occasions in honor of their patron saint, French Canadians on both sides of the international border celebrated their common heritage. Periodically, they fêted together, as francophones from Lewiston and other New England cities traveled to Québec to join festivities organized in *le pays natal*. On one such occasion, which took place in Québec City in 1889, Dr. Martel underscored the shared roots of North America's francophones by calling the provincial capital *"le berceau de notre nationalité."* Speaking at the same event, Québec's Prime Minister, Honoré Mercier, urged French Canadians in the United States to maintain their language and their faith: *"'Parlez français et soyez catholiques; les Anglais et les Américains respectent toujours les Français qui ont le courage de parler leur langue et de professer leur religion.'"* Sometimes, as in

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[66]*Le Messager*, 8 juillet 1898, p. 3, 12 juillet 1898, p. 3, 22 juillet 1898, p. 3.

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1885, clergy from Québec came to preach in Lewiston on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day. In 1896, Lewiston's celebration culminated with 800 viewing the play, *Félix Poutré*, which focused on problems between anglophones and francophones in Canada during 1837, a theme which must have resonated with Lewiston's French speakers.[67] Whether in Québec or in Lewiston, *survivance*--in the face of domination by anglophones--always was a central theme of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day.

In Lewiston, French Canadians also tried to observe other religious and ethnic customs they had practiced in Québec. Bishops and employers in the United States did not always make allowances for them, however. Celebrating Christmas with a midnight mass was a cherished French-Canadian practice. But Bishop Healy, an Irish prelate who served in Maine from 1875 until his death in 1900, refused to accord French Canadians this privilege. As in Québec, New Year's Day was a special occasion. On this day, Lewiston's French Canadians would visit with family and friends, often enjoying music they created with fiddles and accordions. But the factories at which many of them worked usually remained open. Sometimes French Canadians took

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[67]*Le Messager*, 24 juin 1880, 2 juillet 1885, p. 1, 27 juin 1889, p. 5, 7 avril 1893, 23 juin 1896, 26 juin 1896, p. 2.

"le berceau de notre nationalité": "the cradle of our nationality"

"'Parlez français...leur religion.'": "'Speak French and be Catholic; the English and the Americans always respect the French who have the courage to speak their language and to profess their faith.'"

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matters into their own hands. In 1884, for example, a weaver told the Lewiston *Journal* that thirty-eight French-Canadian women had risked losing their jobs by informing employers that they would not work on New Year's Day. In 1889, French Canadians closed the local mills on New Year's Day simply by not showing up to work; some francophone workers had even left the factories early on New Year's Eve by escaping through the windows.[68] Preserving ethnic customs in a Protestant mill town occasionally necessitated taking risks.

Perhaps because French speakers in Lewiston and other New England cities made the effort to maintain French-Canadian traditions and ties to francophones in Québec, the attitude of Québec nationalists changed in the late nineteenth century. *Le Messager* pointed out in 1888 that the Canadian press looked more favorably than it had in the past upon compatriots who had migrated to the United States. In 1895 it published an article, presumably written by F.X. Belleau (then serving as U.S. consul in Trois-Rivières, Québec), which asserted that French Canadians now respected the francophones who had migrated to the United States and, in some cases, even envied them.[69]

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[68]*Le Messager*, 5 janvier 1882, 1 janvier 1885; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 1 janvier 1883, p. 50, vol. 3, 1 janvier 1889, p. 77, vol. 4, 1 janvier 1896, p. 351, 23 décembre 1896, p. 410; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, December 31, 1880, January 1, 1884.

[69]*Le Messager*, 24 mai 1888, l'article signé "F.X.B." dans le numéro souvenir de 2 juillet 1895, 7 septembre 1897.

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This change of attitude on the part of Québec nationalists must also have reflected the reality that hundreds of thousands of French Canadians living in the United States would probably never repatriate.

French-Canadian elites in the United States, through newspapers like *Le Messager*, served as a significant obstacle to the colonization and repatriation efforts of the governments of Québec and Canada.[70] In 1886, *Le Messager* publicized reports that a Canadian colonization agent, Charles Lalime, of Worcester, Massachusetts, had indicated families needed at least $1,000 to relocate to Manitoba, Canada; the newspaper felt *Canadiens* in the United States simply could not afford the cost. *Le Messager* argued in the same year that French Canadians had established national communities with churches and schools in New England, and they risked a great deal if they migrated to the Canadian west in order to found French-speaking colonies as an *"oeuvre patriotique." Le Messager*, whose existence depended upon francophones remaining in Lewiston, consistently argued in the late nineteenth century that French Canadians were better off in the United States. By the end of the century, *Le Messager* contended that French Canadians living in the United States *"ne*

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[70]On these efforts, see Robert G. LeBlanc, "Regional Competition for Franco-American Repatriates, 1870-1930," *Québec Studies* 1 (Spring 1983), pp. 110-129; and Robert G. LeBlanc, "Colonisation et rapatriement au Lac-Saint-Jean (1895-1905,)" *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 38 (hiver 1985), pp. 379-408.

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sommes pas batis pour faire des colons." Colonizing lands in Canada with children born and raised in New England's manufacturing centers was not practical, it asserted. A French-Canadian priest who had formerly worked as a colonization agent, attracting New England francophones to the Matapédia valley in Québec, told the Lewiston *Journal* the same thing in 1898. "'Thirty years in Lewiston has created a new generation that is not French-Canadian. They are French Americans, and have no claim upon Canada,'" the clergyman said. "'They are a textile class, and are unfitted for farm work by their labor in the mills here. Their fathers may have been farmers, but they are cosmopolitan...and are unfit for subduing the wilderness.'" In arguing against repatriation, *Le Messager* itself echoed the geopolitical designs Québec nationalists had come to adopt for New England in the late nineteenth century, when it wrote: *"Le Canada est français, les Etats-Unis sont peut-être encore bien loin de l'être, mais la Nouvelle-Angleterre est en train de le devenir, grâce à nous."*[71]

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[71]*Le Messager,* 4 et 18 novembre 1886, 12 octobre 1897, p. 2; *Lewiston Evening Journal,* February 10, 1898, p. 5. On the late-nineteenth-century hopes of French-Canadian nationalists to expand the influence of Catholics in the United States, see Robert G. LeBlanc, "The Francophone 'Conquest' of New England: Geopolitical Conceptions and Imperial Ambition of French-Canadian Nationalists in the Nineteenth Century," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 15 (Autumn 1985), pp. 288-310.

"oeuvre patriotique": "patriotic work"

"ne sommes pas...des colons.": "were not built to become colonizers."

"Le Canada...grâce à nous.": "Canada [i.e., Québec] is French, the United States is perhaps still far from being French, but New England is in the process of becoming French, thanks to us."

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Primarily as a discursive device, *Le Messager* went even further by supporting the idea of annexing Canada to the United States, an idea which had gained currency among some Canadians and Americans. French-Canadian migrants had not lost their faith or their language in the United States, and they had made material gains in their adopted country, *Le Messager* contended. As the newspaper saw it, francophones in Canada had little to lose and a great deal to gain by annexation. It was an alternative to mass migration. In Canadian politics, *Le Messager* sided with Liberals. If Canadian Conservatives continued their policy of taxing the poor of Québec, the newspaper argued in 1893, likely referring to protective tariffs, all that would remain in the province would be *"quelques* monuments.....*et des Anglais."*[72] It therefore hoped French Canadians could be linked under one nation, not by depopulating Québec, nor by repatriation, but by Canada's annexation to the United States.

French Canadians on both sides of the international border participated in the trade union movement of the late nineteenth century. Founded in 1869, the Knights of Labor became the first national labor organization in the United States, and it established itself in Canada in 1881. Called *les Chevaliers du Travail* by French speakers, the

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[72]*Le Messager,* 6 décembre 1892, 28 avril 1893 (emphasis in original.) *"quelques* monuments.....*et des Anglais.":* "a few monuments.....and some English [people.]"

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organization in Québec concentrated primarily on the city of Montréal, where it opened an assembly in 1882. Led by Cardinal Elzéar-Alexandre Taschereau, Québec's Catholic Church opposed *les Chevaliers du Travail* beginning in 1883, according to Fernand Harvey, because it felt the organization challenged the Church's authority as the guardian of traditional, cultural values, rooted in the province's rural past. After consulting Rome, Taschereau officially condemned *les Chevaliers du Travail* on February 2, 1885. Maine's Catholic bishop quickly followed suit. Healy, who opposed the Knights of Labor as a secret society, condemned the organization in his letter of February 18, 1885, written in French and English, and read at masses throughout the state. Those who joined the Knights of Labor, the bishop threatened, would not receive the sacraments. Unlike Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore, who eventually persuaded Rome to change its position on the Knights of Labor, Healy, who had attended seminary in Québec for three years, apparently felt comfortable with the stance of Québec's prelates; he continued to maintain contact with them in 1885 to learn of the activities of *les Chevaliers du Travail* in Québec and to keep informed of communications from Rome concerning the organization. Notwithstanding the opposition of Québec's Catholic hierarchy, *les Chevaliers du Travail* dominated the

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worker movement in the province of Québec in the late nineteenth century.[73]

In Lewiston, French Canadians joined the Knights of Labor despite Bishop Healy's opposition. Ossian C. Phillips, a leader of the organization, indicated in March 1886 that Lewiston's francophones "'comprise not a small portion of the Order,'" an observation *Le Messager* confirmed later in the year, when it noted that *"un grand nombre de nos lecteurs appartiennent à cette association."* When Phillips made his comment, the Knights of Labor was in the midst of a labor dispute at Lewiston's Bates Mill which involved French-Canadian workers. Details of their specific involvement are sketchy, however, likely due to secrecy on the part of both the Knights of Labor and the francophone Catholics who belonged to the organization. What we do know is that one French Canadian joined four other weavers in signing a published letter asking

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[73]Fernand Harvey, "Les Chevaliers du Travail, les Etats-Unis et la société québécoise (1882-1902)," dans Fernand Harvey, dir., *Aspects historiques du mouvement ouvrier au Québec* (Montréal: Les Éditions du Boréal Express, 1973), pp. 35, 37, 51, 55-57, 112-113; Charles A. Scontras, *Two Decades of Organized Labor and Labor Politics in Maine, 1880-1900* (Orono, Maine: University of Maine Press, 1969), p. 39; Albert S. Foley, S.J., "Open Foes and Hidden," *Bishop Healy: Beloved Outcaste* (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, 1956), pp. 168-169; diocesan letter of Bishop James Augustin Healy, February 18, 1885, Bishop Healy File, Chancery Archives; *Le Messager*, 2 septembre 1886; Registre du Grand Séminaire de Montréal, les archives du Grand Séminaire, Montréal, Québec, tome 1: 1840-1900, p. 20; l'Archevèque de Québec à Mgr. J.A. Healy, 21 mai 1885, Bishop Healy File, Chancery Archives; James Aug. Healy, Evêque de Portland, à Mgr. Edouard C. Fabre, Evêque de Montréal, 25 mai 1885, dossier de la correspondance, et 15 octobre 1885, dossier des Chevaliers du Travail/Knights of Labor, les archives de la Chancellerie, Archevêché de Montréal, Québec.

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management to re-hire a loomfixer, allegedly replaced for belonging to the Knights of Labor. According to the Dominicans, up to one-third of the 1,800 Bates Mill employees were French-Canadian. Some apparently were involved in the strike, precipitated by the firing of the loomfixer and expanded by demands for a salary increase, for the Dominican pastor urged strikers at mass one Sunday to exercise caution and restraint. In its local news column, *Le Messager* informed members of *les Chevaliers du Travail,* who were in need on account of the strike, that they could make application for assistance to a French-Canadian man in Lewiston. Catholic clergy must have reprimanded *Le Messager,* for it subsequently expressed regrets for publishing the announcement. But it did so in a mocking tone, suggesting its sympathies lay with workers and not with the Church on this issue. *"Nous n'y avons vu aucun mal,* bien que l'argent vînt des Chevaliers du Travail," the newspaper wrote, *"et nous espérons que Dieu ne nous enverra pas* le fléau de la petite vérole *pour punir nos abonnés d'avoir lu cette annonce exposant trop au grand jour les moeurs canadiennes aux Etats-Unis."*[74] *Le*

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[74]Scontras, *Two Decades of Organized Labor and Labor Politics in Maine,* pp. 51-52; Ossian C. Phillips, District Master Workman of the Maine Knights of Labor, quoted in the *Boston Sunday Globe,* March 7, 1886, p. 10, cited in Scontras, p. 52; *Le Messager,* 18 février 1886, 1 avril 1886 (emphasis in original), 2 septembre 1886; Lewiston, Maine, *Labor Advocate* ("the semi-official newspaper of the Knights of Labor in Maine," according to Scontras, p. 88), March 25, 1886; *Lewiston Evening Journal,* February 4 and 5, 1886; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 2, 4 février 1886, p. 20, 14 février 1886, p. 21. Lewiston's French Canadians were not the only ones to join the

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Messager's sarcastic tone, the participation of Lewiston's French Canadians in labor protest, and their membership in the Knights of Labor despite its condemnation by the bishop, all counter persistent impressions in the literature that French Canadians in the United States were unusually subservient to Catholic clergy and nearly always avoided engaging in labor protests.[75] Participation in the Knights of Labor appears to have signified the development of worker consciousness among Lewiston's French Canadians in 1886, revealing the intersection of their ethnic and class interests in the host society.

There is additional evidence of the participation of Lewiston's *Canadiens* both in the labor movement and in protest activity in the late nineteenth century. *Le Messager* encouraged workers and offered them guidance. In 1887, *Le Messager* informed readers whom to contact to organize a *"Union Nationale des Ouvriers Canadiens de*

Knights of Labor. In 1886, 300 French Canadians of Biddeford, Maine, formed their own local council of the Knights of Labor, despite the bishop's opposition to the trade union. Michael J. Guignard, *La foi-La langue-La culture: The Franco-Americans of Biddeford, Maine* (By the Author, 1984), p. 95.

"un grand nombre...cette association.": "a large number of our readers belong to this association."

*"Nous n'y avons...*Chevaliers du Travail," *"et nous espérons...aux Etats-Unis.":* "We saw no wrong there, *although the money came from the Knights of Labor,*" "and we hope that God will not *curse us with the pox* in order to punish our subscribers for having read this announcement exposing Canadian values too much [to those] in the United States (emphasis in original.)"

[75]Jacques Rouillard similarly argues against portrayals of French-Canadian workers in Québec from the late nineteenth century to World War II as marginal and clergy-dominated in *Histoire du syndicalisme au Québec: Des origines à nos jours* (Montréal: les Éditions du Boréal, 1989), p. 7.

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Lewiston," and by 1895, if not sooner, there existed a *Union des tisserands canadiens* in the Spindle City. Participation in such trade unions likely led to the demise of the Knights of Labor in Lewiston by the mid-1890s. One can infer from accounts in *Le Messager* that some francophone shoe workers also belonged to unions in 1893. During shoe strikes in Auburn in that year, the newspaper urged other *Canadiens* not to undermine the efforts of these unions by offering to work for lower wages than the strikers, thus undercutting the efforts of the working class; with such advice, *Le Messager* reflected, and sought to shape, the working-class consciousness of French Canadians in the late 1800s. In 1895, French Canadians took part in strikes at the Androscoggin and Continental mills to pressure employers to return wages to the levels of previous years. While *Le Messager* usually provided scant information on strikes, it is clear its sympathies lay with workers. It sided with Continental Mill employees, for example, when it implored in August 1895: *"Que les grévistes se tiennent donc unis encore quelques jours et nous sommes convaincu qu'on fera droit à leurs justes demandes."* Less than a week later, after one month of striking, Continental Mill employees returned to work without having won their demands. The Dominicans, who had not supported the strike, recorded in their chronicle:

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"Peut-être nos gens ne feront-ils plus ainsi des grèves pour rien."[76] Unlike the Dominicans, *Le Messager* proved itself particularly friendly to the development of working-class consciousness among French Canadians in the late nineteenth century, encouraging their participation in improving the conditions of their work lives in the United States.

This was evident in the Androscoggin Mill strike of 1898, one for which *Le Messager* provided extensive coverage. Because of this reporting, the Androscoggin Mill strike serves as the best-documented example of the intersection of ethnic and working-class consciousness among Lewiston French Canadians in the nineteenth century. A depression in the cotton industry in 1898 led 150 mills in New England to slash the wages of 125,000 workers, precipitating strikes in various cities, including Lewiston. French Canadians took part in the three-month strike, which began in mid-January, participating in ways that revealed their reliance upon their ethnic networks and

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[76]*Le Messager,* 27 octobre 1887, 29 août 1893, 26 septembre 1893, 20 octobre 1893, 26 avril 18[95], 30 avril 1895, 12 juillet 1895, 2, 8 et 23 août 1895; Scontras, *Two Decades of Organized Labor and Labor Politics in Maine,* pp. 138-139; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 7 août 1895, p. 326.

"Union Nationale des Ouvriers Canadiens de Lewiston": "National Union of French-Canadian Workers of Lewiston"

Union des tisserands canadiens: Union of French-Canadian Weavers

"Que les grévistes...justes demandes.": "That the strikers remain united for several more days and we are convinced that their reasonable demands will be realized."

"Peut-être...pour rien.": "Perhaps our people will not strike again in this way for nothing."

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their ethnic traditions. Their mutual-benefit societies, *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* and *l'Union Saint-Joseph,* raised money for the strikers by organizing musical programs at the local opera house. Committees of men and women collected contributions for needy workers, and sympathetic employees of other mills provided assistance. Rebutting the Lewiston *Sun*'s contention that 150 *Canadiens* had returned to Canada during the first few weeks of the strike, *Le Messager* claimed that only seven families had done so. The option to return to Canada would enable francophones to hold out for their former wages, a French-Canadian weaver told the Lewiston *Journal*. Probably bluffing more than a little, he stated that Canadian colonization agents would assist francophones with "a pass to Montreal, and from there to the unsettled regions of Lake St. John where we have 100 acres of good land given to us, and we can have work upon the government roads...to keep us while we are clearing our land." The weaver further suggested French Canadians could sit out the strike longer than "Yankees" because they lived more modestly. Two months into the strike, *Le Messager* reported there were about 500 strikers, and they met at the Dominican Block to decide to continue striking. When the Dominican pastor announced at masses during the last Sunday of March that the Androscoggin Mill would reopen the next day, and that workers could return if they chose, the chronicler recorded: *"Il sait qu'il marche sur des charbons ardents."*

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As they left church, some parishioners indicated the pastor should not get involved, others suggested the mill agent had paid him off, while some felt he was more concerned about how the strike would affect Easter collections. But *Le Messager* informed readers that the fathers of families no longer able to purchase groceries after two months of unemployment had asked the pastor to see if he could get the mill to reopen; the pastor had then spoken with the mill's agent, who had agreed to reopen the Androscoggin Mill on condition that workers accept a cut in wages.[77] The poverty of Lewiston's French Canadians began to diminish the resolve of some to continue striking.

As some French Canadians returned to work, the Lewiston *Journal* published sensational stories about the actions of strikers. Fifty women, "enraged amazons," threw a French-Canadian woman into a gutter because she had resumed working at the mill, reported the *Journal* on the last day of March 1898. While the *Journal* did not indicate the ethnicity of the fifty women, *Le Messager* had the clear impression that *"le confrère américain"* meant French-Canadian women. A fabricated story, charged the French-language newspaper, and it also argued the *Journal* had

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[77]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, January 17, 1898, p. 9, February 15, 1898, p. 5, March 10, 1898, p. 9; *Le Messager*, 18 janvier 1898, p. 2, 4 et 8 février 1898, p. 3, 15 février 1898, p. 3, 11 mars 1898, p. 7, 18 mars 1898, p. 3, 29 mars 1898, p. 2; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 5, 27 mars 1898, p. 142.

"Il sait...charbons ardents.": "He knows he is walking on hot coals."

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exaggerated reports of strikers tossing sticks and stones at police, stories written *"sans doute pour nuire à la cause ouvrière."* The American reporter offered such fabrications or embellishments simply because *"les grévistes ont le tort d'être de pauvres Canadiens!"* the French-language newspaper further contended. When Jean-Baptiste Labeau crossed the canal bridge to return home one evening in early April, after having worked all day at the Androscoggin Mill, strikers chased him, yelling "'Kill him!'" and "'Do him up!'" The chase ended when Labeau reached his home, whereupon his wife emerged to throw wood at her husband's badgerers, asserting he would continue to work. That was the *Journal*'s account. *Le Messager* reported Labeau was well off financially, something which annoyed those continuing to strike, and they followed him home blowing horns. *"C'était comique," Le Messager* stated. While acknowledging that Labeau's wife had thrown wood, the French-language newspaper indicated that an officer had let her know no harm was coming her husband's way. *Le Messager*'s explanation implied the event constituted a charivari, a cherished French-Canadian practice used as an assertion of power against those violating norms of the community.[78]

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[78]*Lewiston Evening Journal,* March 31, 1898, p. 12, April 4, 1898, p. 5; *Le Messager,* 1 avril 1898, p. 6, 4 avril 1898. On the role of the charivari as an instrument of self-governance among French Canadians, see Allan Greer, *The Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), especially pp. 69-86, 172-174, 217-218, 239-257, 361-362; for an

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After nearly three months of unemployment during winter months, strikers in early April 1898 returned to the Androscoggin Mill at their former wages. *Le Messager* suggested women felt more strongly than the men about continuing the strike, not only because they believed that victory was imminent, but also because the strike had been so costly to their families that they wanted results. The French-language newspaper indicated the workers had lacked organization. The only hint of any outside organizational assistance came from the Lewiston *Journal*, which published its suspicion that a man dressed in a "long coat and colored glasses," "a French Canadian who had formerly worked in Montreal," counseled strikers. While ethnic networks had helped sustain French-Canadian strikers for several months, their poverty forced them in the end to return to the Androscoggin Mill *"en acceptant les cruelles conditions des directeurs,"* conditions the French-language newspaper did not spell out.[79]

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interpretation of the charivari as an instrument of the working class in both the United States and Canada in the 1800s, see Bryan D. Palmer, "Discordant Music: Charivaris and Whitecapping in Nineteenth-Century North America," *Labour/Le Travailleur* 3 (1978), pp. 5-62.

"le confrère américain": "the American colleague"

"sans doute...cause ouvrière.": "without doubt to prejudice the cause of workers."

"les grévistes...pauvres Canadiens!": "the strikers have committed the wrong of being poor French Canadians!"

"C'était comique,": "It was funny,"

[79]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, March 28, 1898, p. 7, April 7, 1898, p. 5; *Le Messager*, 8 avril 1898, p. 6.

"en acceptant...des directeurs,": "accepting the cruel conditions of management,"

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The 1898 Androscoggin Mill strike, which *Le Messager* covered more extensively than any other labor action by local French Canadians in the late nineteenth century, gave evidence of the effort of French speakers to improve their economic conditions in the United States. Participation by francophones in this strike contravenes notions of the passivity of French-Canadian men and women in the world of work. These notions originated with their anglophone contemporaries, such as Carroll Wright, and have since permeated the historiography on French Canadians in the United States. One anglophone contemporary, Bowdoin College professor William MacDonald, wrote in 1898 that "docility is one of his most marked traits," when describing the attractiveness of the French-Canadian worker to mill managers. "Above all, he is reluctant, as compared with the Irish, to join labor unions, and is loath to strike," MacDonald contended. The actions of French Canadians in the Androscoggin Mill strike counter the impressions of such nineteenth-century contemporaries and those of scholars who have repeated their assertions; in their view, the ethnic consciousness of French Canadians trumped their consciousness as members of the working class. The actions of francophones in the 1898 Androscoggin Mill strike demonstrate otherwise. They reveal an emerging identity in the world of work, just as one emerged in politics and other spheres, as French Canadians acculturated. Their actions demonstrate a strong

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measure of commitment to improving their lot in the host society and not of returning to Canada.[80]

Whenever it had the opportunity, *Le Messager* encouraged French Canadians to participate in the host society. As Lewiston's francophones acculturated, they sometimes took part in distinctly U.S. holidays in the late nineteenth century. In 1892, anglophone organizers included French Canadians in Lewiston festivities commemorating the 400th anniversary of the founding of America by Christopher Columbus. They had children from the public and parochial schools celebrating together, and they surprised the Dominican pastor and Dr. Martel by asking them to speak in French during, respectively, the afternoon program for children and the evening program for adults. In addition, *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* paraded with the American societies during this celebration. As early as 1887, French-Canadian musicians took part in Lewiston's Fourth of July parade. In 1895, when Lewiston celebrated its centennial on Independence Day, several French-Canadian societies joined the parade, as did children of *Saint-Pierre* School, who carried flags of the United States and France. Prior to the event, *Le Messager* had coaxed French Canadians to participate in the

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[80]William MacDonald, "The French Canadians in New England," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 12 (April 1898), p. 265. Historian Peter Haebler reaches a similar conclusion about the commitment of French Canadians to the United States in his study of Holyoke, Massachusetts. See "Habitants in Holyoke," pp. 206-208.

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celebration by publishing an article, most likely written by F.X. Belleau, arguing the slogan *"Soyons loyaux mais Français"* need not prevent French Canadians from joining in the festivities. The newspaper had also urged: *"Montrons que nous sommes Américains, et décorons tous nos maisons."* In the late nineteenth century French Canadians typically observed another American holiday, Thanksgiving, which was not a work day, by attending mass at *Saint-Pierre* Church.[81] To the extent that Lewiston's French Canadians celebrated American holidays in the late nineteenth century, they did so in ways consonant with their ethnic and religious customs. Thus they reshaped their identity in their country of adoption.

This was especially evident on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day. Nothing made clearer how French Canadians were renegotiating their identity in the United States than their celebration of this ethnic holiday. Scholars, however, have focused on these celebrations to illustrate *survivance*. A reading of *Le Messager* in the 1880s and 1890s reveals that while ethnic preservation was indeed a

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[81]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 27 novembre 1884, p. 229, vol. 4, 21 octobre 1892, p. 40, 27 novembre 1892, p. 52, p. 76; French-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 1892, p. 40; *Le Messager*, 7 juillet 1887, 7 octobre 1892, numéro souvenir de 2 juillet 1895 et l'article signé "F.X.B." dans le numéro souvenir de 2 juillet 1895, 7 juillet 1895; English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 1895, p. 315; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, November 26, 1880.

"Soyons loyaux mais Français": "Let us be loyal but French"

"Montrons que...nos maisons.": "Let us show we are Americans, and let us all decorate our homes."

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major theme of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day, so was acculturation into U.S. society. On *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day, Lewiston's French Canadians promoted their ethnic heritage while asserting their loyalty to the United States. In this way, French Canadians in the U.S.A. departed from those in *le pays natal* in celebrating their ethnic feast day.

Neither the Province of Québec nor the country of Canada had an official flag until the mid-twentieth century. Since Canadians lacked national colors, the English in 1854 *"nous imposèrent le tricolore de la révolution française parce que Napoléon III s'alliait avec l'Angleterre contre la Russie," Le Messager* explained on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in 1952. French Canadians, the newspaper further explained, continued to use the three colors of France in their celebrations even after the English stopped doing so from 1870, following the Franco-Prussian War. To symbolize their French heritage on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in the nineteenth century, Lewiston's French-Canadian residents typically hung the Tricolor of France throughout the city. They also symbolized their loyalty to the United States by decorating the outside of their homes and businesses with the Stars and Stripes. Thus the flags of France and the United States symbolically expressed the non-competing loyalties--the intertwined

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identities--of Lewiston's *Canadiens*.[82] As the blue-white-red colors of France overlapped the red-white-blue ones of the U.S.A., Lewiston francophones conveyed that ethnic retention and acculturation represented the same goal.

They emphasized this point with the slogan *"Loyaux mais Français."* The variation *"Loyaux mais Canadiens-Français,"* which appeared on the banner that *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* unfurled during celebrations, made the same point.[83] Both slogans conveyed the loyalties of French-Canadian residents of the United States. Both also revealed that the *Canadiens* perceived their ethnic identity could be socially constructed and that, as a minority in an anglophone milieu, they were actively renegotiating that identity in the host society.

Integral to the process of renegotiation was identification with France during *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day

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[82]*Le Messager*, 2 juillet 1885, p. 1, 8 juillet 1886, p. 1, édition spéciale Saint-Jean-Baptiste, 24 juin 1952; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, June 22, 1882, June 27, 1893, p. 8, June 24, 1897, pp. 5, 7; English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 1892, p. 27; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 2, 28 juin 1886, p. 44. After a long search to determine why Catholic French Canadians had adopted the Tricolor, the symbol of the godless French Republic, I came upon *Le Messager*'s 1952 account. Whether accurate or not, the newspaper's explanation reveals that the *Canadiens* had lacked a flag of their own and had had to choose one. Appropriating the Tricolor in the United States served the purposes of French Canadians, not only in asserting their French identity, but also in arguing for acceptance in their adopted country based upon the historical ties between the French and American peoples.

"nous imposèrent...la Russie,": "imposed upon us the Tricolor of the French Revolution because Napoleon III was allied with England against Russia,"

[83]*Le Messager*, 2 juillet 1885, p. 1, 8 juillet 1886, p. 1; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, June 24, 1875, October 7, 1889, June 24, 1892, p. 5, July 4, 1895, p. 12.

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celebrations. Emphasizing their ties to France represented a departure on the part of francophones in the United States from their kin and kith in Québec, for French Canada had lost its ties to France after the British conquest of 1759-1760. French speakers in Lewiston found it expedient to resurrect those ties. While the practice may have reflected courtesy on the part of French Canadians wishing to be inclusive and respectful of their French from France religious leaders, the custom of paying homage to France predated the arrival of the Dominicans in Lewiston. During the first local celebration of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in 1875, for example, the decorations on the speakers' platform included the flags of France and the United States, and the band played *la Marseillaise* during the afternoon picnic. Identification with France was a way for Lewiston's French-speaking residents to highlight the shared roots and patriotism of the Americans and the *Canadiens*. During *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebrations, parades included allegorical chariots featuring French-Canadian, French, and American themes. For example, a young boy dressed in lambskin portraying *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* typically stood next to a lamb on one float, while on another, as in 1890, local French Canadians might pose as Revolutionary War figures Marquis de Lafayette and George Washington, even though French Canada had rejected both the American and French Revolutions. In addition to the symbols, the discourse of Lewiston's francophone

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population underscored the historic ties between the French and American peoples. On *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in 1897, Dr. Martel noted: "'When this nation was yet in childhood and struggling for her rights, for her independence, Canada's mother, France, came to the aid of the thirteen colonies,'" reported the Lewiston *Journal*. Martel also pointed out that the French had played an important role in exploring New England's coast and other areas of what eventually became the United States. By harking back to their French roots, French-Canadian elites like Dr. Martel argued for acceptance in the United States. During the 1882 convention of French Canadians and Acadians of Maine, which Lewiston hosted in conjunction with the feast of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste*, Dr. Martel contended: *"Nous avons cru qu'il serait toujours permis aux Etats-Unis de parler la langue de Lafayette sans être considérés comme des étrangers."*[84] Making reference to a notable French figure from the U.S. Revolutionary War served to buttress Martel's argument that French Canadians could maintain their ethnic identity while being loyal to the United States. In brief, identification with France during *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebrations helped French Canadians to appropriate the

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[84]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, June 24, 1875, June 22, 1882, June 24, 1890, June 24, 1897, p. 5; French-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, 1890, p. 212; *Le Messager*, 13 juillet 1882.

"Nous avons cru...des étrangers.": "We believed it would always be permissable in the United States to speak the language of Lafayette without being considered strangers."

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historic connections of French speakers to the United States. This was a strategy which helped Lewiston French Canadians to renegotiate their identity in the host society, allowing them to make more forcefully the argument that *survivance* and acculturation did not represent dichotomous goals. This strategy also gave evidence that their identity as French Canadians was evolving in the United States in ways that distinguished them from francophones in Canada.

During the 1897 *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebration, attorney Emile H. Tardivel explained what he felt French Canadians most wanted in the United States: *"Ce que nous voulons, pardessus toutes choses, c'est conserver notre langue et nos traditions dans la vie privée et parler la langue du pays et nous soumettre aux institutions américaines dans la vie publique."* He asserted that French Canadians had the right to preserve their ethnicity, just as Anglo-Americans had the right to preserve their heritage: *"Nous entendons rester Canadiens tout comme les descendants des premiers colons anglais de la Nouvelle-Angleterre sont restés puritains, c'est-à-dire par tradition, par amour des ancêtres."*[85] *Saint-Jean-Baptiste*

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[85]*Le Messager*, 2 juillet 1897, p. 7.

"Ce que nous...vie publique.": "What we want, above all things, is to conserve our language and our traditions in private life and to speak the language of the country and to submit to American institutions in public life."

"Nous entendons...des ancêtres.": "We intend to remain French Canadian just as the descendants of the first English colonists of New England have remained Puritan, that is to say by tradition, by love for ancestors."

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Day celebrations provided the forum for Lewiston francophones to renegotiate their identity in the host society.

As French speakers grew more numerous in the Spindle City, non-French-Canadian businesses and politicians also became involved in *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day events. By the mid-1880s, if not earlier, American businesses employing French-Canadian clerks decorated their establishments for the occasion. Civic leaders, including Lewiston's mayor and members of the Board of Aldermen and Common Council, often joined the parade and lakeside picnic, as well as the evening ceremonies usually held at Lewiston City Hall. The participation of local politicians and businesses in *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day activities testified to the growing economic and political influence of Lewiston's French-Canadian population at the end of the nineteenth century. So did signs *"Ici on parle français,"* which appeared in the shop windows of American businesses.[86] Acculturation was not unidirectional: it did not take place only among the migrant population.

By the mid-1890s, it appeared that Lewiston's anglophone population was beginning to understand genuinely

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[86]*Le Messager,* 8 juillet 1886, p. 1; French-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 3, 1890, p. 212; English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, 1892, p. 27; Alexandre-Louis Mothon, 1893, cited in Plourde, *Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents,* vol. 2, p. 112.

"Ici on parle français,": "French is spoken here."

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what francophones meant by the slogan *"Loyaux mais Français."* When Lewiston celebrated its centennial in 1895, the *Journal* complimented "the patriotic French Americans" for the large and beautiful evergreen archway they had erected over a street and for flying the U.S. flag above it. The *Journal* pointed out that, while various ethnic groups populated Lewiston, the city's "cosmopolitan" character was most evident during annual celebrations of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day: "Lewiston for the day loses its Americanism, almost, and one might believe himself transported to a French province and witnessing a religious *fete* [*sic*] across the seas." The Tricolor abounds on that day, as does the motto "*Loyal mais Francais* [*sic*]," the *Journal* reported. The newspaper also commented that most French Canadians in the city were U.S. citizens and that they rarely created disturbances at their public and private celebrations. Concluding its celebratory edition, the *Journal* wrote: "Each nationality has brought with it some of its peculiar habits or its religious rites that it mingles with its Americanism."[87] Although written about all migrant groups living in Lewiston, these words suggest that the city's large francophone population had made its impact.

Perhaps that is why the *Journal* complained in January 1896 that the distribution of anti-Catholic literature in

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[87]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, July 4, 1895, pp. 7, 12, 13.

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Lewiston by the American Protective Association (A.P.A.) served to foment discord at a time when the newspaper felt the city's residents enjoyed harmonious relations. According to the *Journal*, the A.P.A. had established a branch in Auburn and held weekly meetings. There is little additional information about the local doings or the membership of the organization. Founded in Iowa in 1887, the A.P.A. sought to reduce the influence of Catholics in labor and politics in the United States; at its height in 1894, the A.P.A. had about 500,000 members nationwide, though its strength lay in the midwest. Nationally, one of the organization's strategies was to promote anti-Catholic propaganda, usually sensational (and fabricated) stories about the actions of men and women religious. The A.P.A. did not spare Lewiston. In June 1895, the *Boston Daily Globe* ran an article describing the new Catholic church the Dominicans were planning in Lewiston which would have the largest seating capacity of any New England church; it reported the Dominicans were also erecting a monastery, a home for their janitor, and new stables. Six months later, the A.P.A. distributed anti-Catholic literature through the mail in Lewiston. In February 1896, *Le Messager* reported that a California woman had heard A.P.A. allegations that Lewiston's Dominican priests persecuted in the basement of their newly-built castle the Catholics who did not submit to their authority. She contacted Lewiston's mayor to ask that he intervene on behalf of the tortured Catholics. *Le*

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Messager responded by poking fun at the A.P.A., suggesting it had stumbled upon *"une idée monumentale, ou plutôt ils ont fait une découverte qui ne manquera pas de leur assurer l'immortalité."* The newspaper concluded its piece on the California woman's account: *"Ils sont grands comme le monde ces A.P.A."*[88]

Besides humor, *Le Messager* used reason to counter the nativism of the American Protective Association. When the organization appeared again in Lewiston in June 1896 to promote public schools, the French-language newspaper questioned why the United States claimed to maintain separation of church and state, when such separation did not exist in the minds of groups like the A.P.A. Its advocacy of public schools, *Le Messager* felt, was merely an attempt to promote Protestantism. Several years earlier, *Le Messager* had published an article, probably written by a local physician, suggesting the A.P.A. lacked gratitude toward descendants of those who had helped the United States gain its independence from Britain. The author harked back to ties between France and the United States:

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[88]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, January 13, 1896, p. 8, January 20, 1896, p. 7; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (1955; New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1992), pp. 62, 81, 84; *Le Messager*, 14 janvier 1896, p. 3; *Boston Daily Globe*, June 14, 1895, inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 4, p. 309; *Le Messager*, 4 février 1896.

"une idée...assurer l'immortalité.": "a colossal idea, or rather they have made a discovery that cannot but assure their immortality."

"Ils sont...ces A.P.A.": [figuratively] "The A.P.A. is something else."

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"Lafayette et Rochambeau, en prenant les armes pour l'oeuvre de l'émancipation de la jeune Amérique," the individual questioned, *"devaient-ils s'attendre qu'un siècle plus tard cette même Amérique chercherait à répudier les arrière-petits fils de ces soldats français, dont la noble vaillance faisait paraître pour elle le beau soleil de sa liberté?"* The question turned the issue of loyalty back to nativists. In a perspicacious conclusion, the article's author suggested the United States constantly searched for enemies: *"Aujourd'hui c'est la religion catholique qui s'écroule, et demain à qui le tour?"*[89] Acculturation into the United States by one of its least powerful groups did not preclude the group from openly critiquing the host society's idiosyncrasies.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Spanish-American War heightened ethnic tensions in Lewiston and highlighted some of U.S. society's idiosyncrasies, as it tested the loyalty of the city's French-Canadian population. Although there was no conscription during the Spanish-American War, *Le Messager* acknowledged that a small number of French Canadians had returned to Canada to avoid

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[89]*Le Messager*, 12 juin 1896, p. 4; l'article signé "Docteur G.," probablement le docteur J. Amédée Girouard, *Le Messager*, 15 décember 1893.

"Lafayette et Rochambeau...jeune Amérique," "devaient-ils...sa liberté?": "Lafayette and Rochambeau, in taking up arms to free the young America," "did they expect that a century later this same America would seek to repudiate the great-grandsons of these French soldiers, whose great valor helped it to achieve its liberty?"

"Aujourd'hui c'est...le tour?": "Today, it is the Catholic faith that falls [under attack], and whose turn will it be tomorrow?"

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participating in the war effort; it complained, however, that the English-language press exaggerated the estimates of those who had left the United States. *Le Messager* argued that French Canadians often returned to Canada during the spring to plant crops, and some had returned in 1898 because of hard times. The newspaper vigorously defended francophones against allegations by Americans that they feared participating in the war. It countered these charges both by pointing out that U.S. draft dodgers had moved to Canada during the Civil War and by indicating that two French-Canadian men were organizing young francophone volunteers to join the war effort. Periodically, it reported on the number who signed up to fight. For his part, the Dominican pastor encouraged French Canadians not to flee the United States but to remain to fight in the military conflict; he later found himself working against identification with war heroes, when he reminded parishioners of the Catholic custom of christening children with the names of saints and not names like "Dewey." The desire on the part of some French Canadians to christen lads with American names like Dewey's only provided further evidence of their fondness for their adopted country and of their acculturation. Following the successful conclusion of the war, *Le Messager* published a couple of articles chafing at notions then rampant of the superiority of Anglo-Saxons, arguing that the United States constituted a

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mixture of migrant populations that formed Americans, not Anglo-Saxons.[90]

Such arguments gave evidence that Lewiston's francophones had evolved from *Canadiens* to Franco-Americans by the turn of the century. The term "Franco-American," in fact, began to appear in *Le Messager* in the mid-1890s.[91] In expressing the loyalties of Lewiston's French speakers, this self-designation conveyed that they were playing an active role in constructing their social identity in the United States.

Through the late nineteenth century, then, French Canadians from Lewiston actively negotiated the terms of their entry into U.S. society. They fashioned their own brand of Americanism, reshaping their indentity in the process. They chose to maintain their French language, their Catholic faith, and many of their French-Canadian customs, while simultaneously learning English, becoming naturalized citizens and voters, founding charitable institutions, participating in elective office, joining trade unions and labor protests, and taking part in U.S. holiday celebrations and wars. From the 1880s, French-Canadian leaders and the French Dominican priests linked community-building activities to the efforts of French

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[90]*Le Messager*, 22 avril 1898, pp. 2, 3, 26 avril 1898, p. 3, 3 mai 1898, p. 3, 2 et 9 septembre 1898, p. 2; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 5, 12 juin 1898, p. 198.

[91]See, for example, *Le Messager*, 23 août 1895, 13 novembre 1896, p. 2, 15 janvier 1897.

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speakers to gain a stake in their adopted country. As French-Canadian migrants contended with pressure from nationalists in Québec on the one hand, and with pressure and discrimination from U.S. nativists on the other, elites helped Lewiston's French speakers to pursue *survivance* and acculturation, arguing convincingly that they did not represent dichotomous goals. The slogan *"Loyaux mais Français"* served to affirm this. Carrying flags of the United States and France in parades commemorating U.S. or French-Canadian holidays also gave evidence of the evolving French and American identities of Lewiston's francophones. So, too, did self-identification as Franco-Americans.

Contrary to what historians like Elliott Robert Barkan and François Weil have emphasized, the acculturation of French Canadians in the United States did not result principally from the social, cultural, economic, and technological changes of the twentieth century.[92] Not only did the acculturation of French Canadians take place earlier, but it also sprang from forces within the francophone community. In short, the acculturation of French Canadians had its origins in the late-nineteenth-century actions of French-speaking migrants who sought to improve the conditions of their lives in the host society.

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[92]Elliott Robert Barkan, "French Canadians," *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1980), pp. 399-400; François Weil, *Les Franco-Américains, 1860-1980* ([Paris]: Belin, 1989), pp. 201-214.

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The process of acculturation served to increase ethnic competition and conflict in the Spindle City, as French Canadians grew in number and sought a measure of resources and influence. Religious differences between themselves and Protestant Americans had proved to be the greatest source of competition and conflict for Lewiston's francophones in the nineteenth century. As French speakers continued their acculturation into U.S. society in the early twentieth century, the Catholic Church became the predominant battleground within which ethnic differences would be contested.

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CHAPTER THREE

The Winding Road from *Canadien* to Franco-American, 1900-1920[1]

[1]I presented a version of this chapter at the conference of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States (ACSUS) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in November 1999.

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During Lewiston's centennial celebration in 1895, a French-Canadian letter writer expressed pleasure at how much relations between French Canadians and Americans had improved by century's end. In particular, the writer noted, *"'l'Américain éclairé et intelligent ne nous reproche plus maintenant de parler notre langue et de pratiquer la religion de nos pères.'"* But French speakers in the United States, he warned, faced another danger: the hostility of New England's Irish prelates to the French language.[2] During the early twentieth century, Franco-Americans in Lewiston and elsewhere in Maine perceived the same hostility on the part of their Irish bishops, and they became engaged in heated, ethnic controversies. In religious as in secular matters, Franco-Americans during the first two decades of the twentieth century found that ethnic differences still served as a source of competition and conflict.

By the turn of the century, individuals of French-Canadian birth and background comprised forty-six percent of Lewiston's population.[3] During the first two decades of the new century, they referred to themselves both as

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[2]Article signed "F.X.B.," most likely attorney F.X. Belleau, *Le Messager*, numéro souvenir de 2 juillet 1895.

"'l'Américain éclairé...nos pères.'": "'the enlightened and intelligent American no longer reproaches us now for speaking our language and for practicing the religion of our fathers.'"

[3]Ralph Dominic Vicero, "Immigration of French Canadians to New England, 1840-1900: A Geographical Analysis" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1968), p. 343.

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Canadiens and as Franco-Americans, something they did well into the middle of the century. They continued to pursue many of their ethnic traditions and their acculturation into U.S. society. Some historians oversimplify ethnic preservation and acculturation by viewing them as binary opposites. For French-Canadian descendants in early-twentieth-century Lewiston, however, acculturation and ethnic preservation proved to be one and the same goal. Even as their ethnic feelings intensified during conflicts with Irish bishops, Lewiston's French speakers continued to Americanize on their own. The road they chose from *Canadien* to Franco-American took various twists and turns, demonstrating that the process of acculturation was anything but linear.

Naturalization was the most significant means by which French speakers continued their acculturation into U.S. society. The number of Lewiston's French-Canadian migrants who naturalized during the first two decades of the twentieth century dropped significantly from the late nineteenth century, however. Whereas 1,186 had naturalized during the 1880s and 1890s, only 684 francophones from the Spindle City became U.S. citizens during the 1900s and 1910s.[4] Three major reasons account for this drop. First,

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[4]Naturalization data from the nineteenth century were compiled from the records of the following courts: Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Records, vols. 1-27.5, 1854-1894, Maine State Archives [hereafter, MSA], Augusta, Maine; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vol. B, 1895-1899, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; Lewiston Municipal Court Naturalization Records, vols. 4-8, 1882-

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the economy of Canada and of the province of Québec improved during the early twentieth century, making remigration more appealing and reducing the incentive for French-Canadian migrants to give up their British citizenship. Second, U.S. naturalization laws became decidedly more stringent with the passage of the Naturalization Act of 1906 and the creation of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization in the same year. This significantly affected the volume of naturalizations. Seventy (70.3) percent of the 684 who naturalized during the first two decades of the twentieth century did so before September 27, 1906, when the new regulations went into effect; for half a decade after 1906, annual naturalizations dropped to the single digits. Third and paradoxically, given the opposition of French Canadians to

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1893, MSA; Auburn, Maine, Municipal Court Naturalization Records, 1893, National Archives and Records Administration, Waltham, Massachusetts [hereafter, NARA-Waltham]; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Proceedings, vols. 1-2, 6-8, 1790-1845, NARA-Waltham; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 1-11, 1851-1899, NARA-Waltham; U.S. Circuit Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 1-3, 1851-1899, NARA-Waltham; Superior Court, Cumberland County (Portland, Maine), Naturalization Records, 1868-1899, MSA. Hereafter, these records will be cited as "nineteenth-century naturalization records." The records of the following courts were consulted to compile data on the naturalization of Lewiston's French-Canadian migrants for the period from 1900 to 1919: Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vols. B, B-2, E, C-1, 1-8, 1900-1919, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vol. D-1, 1903-1906, NARA-Waltham; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vol. 11, 1900-1906, and vols. 1-8, 1912-1919, NARA-Waltham; U.S. Circuit Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 3-10, 1900-1912, NARA-Waltham; Superior Court, Cumberland County (Portland, Maine), Naturalization Records, 1900-1903, MSA. Hereafter in this chapter, the latter set of naturalization records will be cited as "naturalization records, 1900-1919."

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Canada's participation in World War I, the world conflict also suppressed the number of naturalizations. From twenty-one to twenty-seven French speakers of Lewiston became U.S. citizens each year from 1914 through 1918, the years during which Canada participated in the First World War; while these annual figures were higher than during the years immediately following the establishment of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, it was not until 1919, hence not until after World War I had ended, that naturalizations again approached pre-1907 levels.[5]

The francophones who naturalized in Lewiston from 1900 to 1919 had come from the same general regions of Québec as those who had naturalized in the late nineteenth century. Only a tiny minority--four (4.1) percent--had been born outside of the province of Québec. As in the late nineteenth century, Lewiston's newest francophone citizens in the early twentieth century had come predominantly from areas of Québec south of the Saint Lawrence River (see map

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[5]Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher et Jean-Claude Robert, *Histoire du Québec contemporain: De la Confédération à la crise* (1867-1929) (Montréal: Boréal, 1989), pp. 399-405; naturalization records, 1900-1919. The Naturalization Act of 1906 made naturalization the responsibility of the federal government, and it created the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization to oversee the naturalization process. In 1913 the agency was renamed the Bureau of Naturalization, and in 1933 it evolved into the Immigration and Naturalization Service. U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, *An Immigrant Nation: United States Regulation of Immigration, 1798-1991* ([Washington, D.C.]: Government Printing Office, 1991), p. 6; John J. Newman, "American Naturalization Processes and Procedures, 1790-1985" (Typescript, Family History Section, Indiana Historical Society, 1985), available at NARA-Waltham, pp. 10, 12.

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3.) Under ten percent (between 7.0 and 8.9 percent) had been born in counties north of the Saint Lawrence, and most of these individuals had come from the cities of Montréal, Québec, and Trois-Rivières. Two regions of Québec had again provided the largest proportions of French speakers who naturalized in Lewiston. The counties of Témiscouata and Kamouraska contributed up to fifteen percent of the city's naturalizers during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Beauce and counties to its west--Mégantic, Wolfe, and Arthasbaska--as well as counties to its north--Dorchester, Lévis, and Québec--together provided up to 42.3 percent of the francophones who became U.S. citizens from 1900 through 1919.[6] Thus, while the French-Canadian migrants of Lewiston who naturalized in the early twentieth century had come from the same general regions of Québec as in the late nineteenth century, their migration fields now reflected greater numbers from counties north of Beauce.

Twentieth-century naturalization forms provide little information on the journey these migrants had taken within Canada before crossing the border. The records from 1900 to 1906 did not even provide the place of emigration, which one could compare with the place of birth to gain some

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[6]Naturalization records, 1900-1919. The French Canadians who had been born outside of Québec had come from the Maritime provinces of New Brunswick (1.8 percent), Nova Scotia (0.4 percent), and Prince Edward Island (0.9 percent), and the central Canadian province of Ontario (1.0 percent.)

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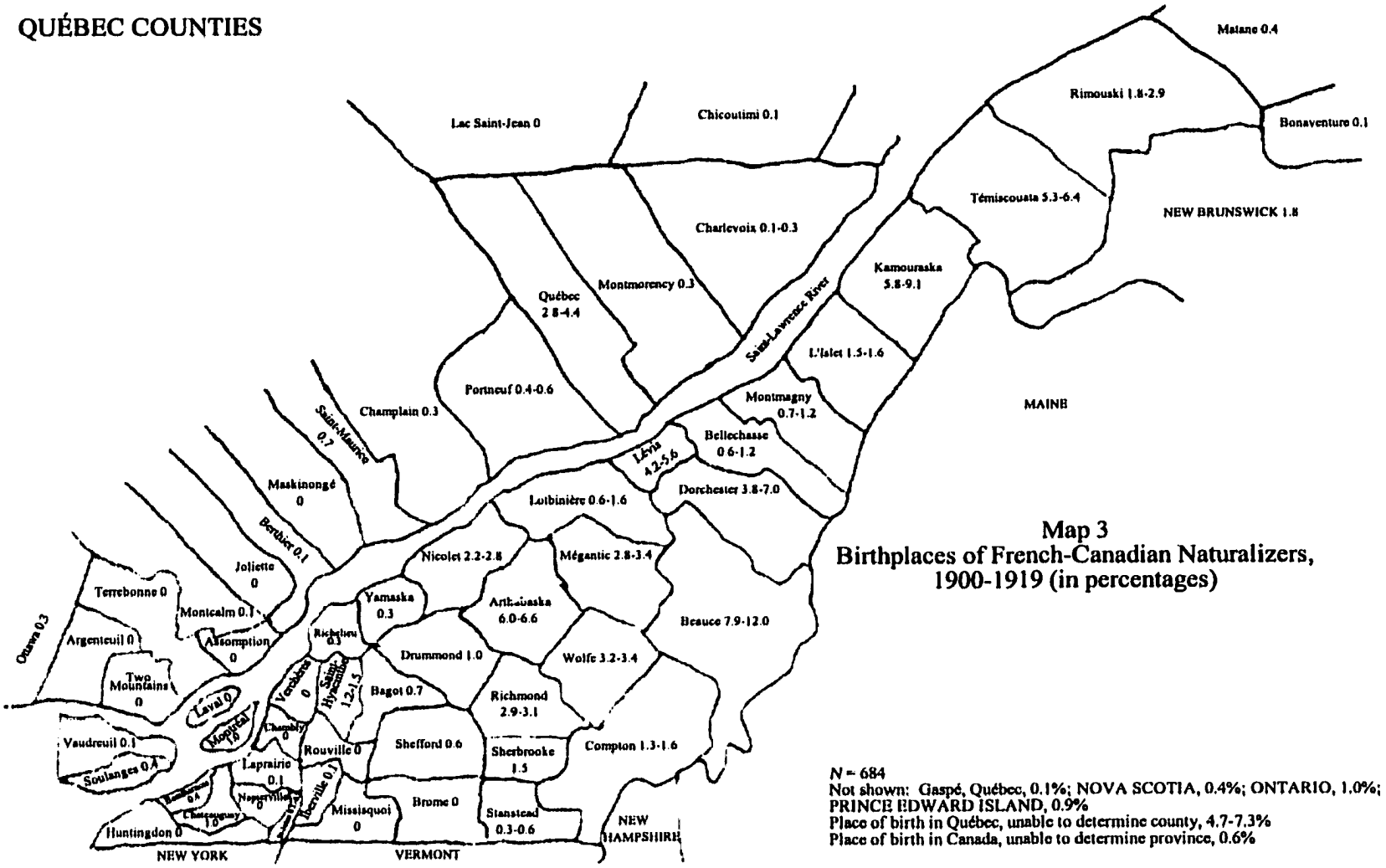

Map 3
Birthplaces of French-Canadian Naturalizers, 1900-1919 (in percentages)

N = 684
Not shown: Gaspé, Québec, 0.1%; NOVA SCOTIA, 0.4%; ONTARIO, 1.0%; PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, 0.9%
Place of birth in Québec, unable to determine county, 4.7-7.3%
Place of birth in Canada, unable to determine province, 0.6%

sense of migration patterns within the country of origin. Because the naturalization records from 1907 consistently reported the place of emigration, we know that two-thirds (66.0 percent) of the 203 French speakers who naturalized from 1907 through 1919 had migrated to the United States from their place of birth, and one-third (33.5 percent) had made at least one stop within Canada before crossing the international border. Arthur Grandmaison, for example, had been born in Hull (Ottawa county), and he had migrated to the United States from l'Isle Verte (Témiscouata county); like the naturalization records of other French-Canadian migrants, Grandmaison's is silent about whether he had lived elsewhere in Québec or Canada before crossing the border. None of the persons who naturalized from 1907 until 1919 appeared to have migrated to a different Canadian province before entering the United States, for each had migrated to the U.S.A. from his province of origin.[7]

We have slightly more information about the journey of French-Canadian migrants within the United States. Unlike some nineteenth-century naturalization records, those from 1900 to 1906 indicate only the place of U.S. arrival (that is, first residence) and not the migrant's other residences, if any, prior to naturalization in Lewiston.

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[7]Naturalization records, 1900-1919; Arthur Grandmaison's naturalization record is from the Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vol. 8, p. 41.

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These records reveal that ninety (90.4) percent of the francophones who naturalized from 1900 to 1906 had migrated directly from Canada to Lewiston, and under one-tenth had arrived in the United States at other locations in Maine (2.5 percent), other states in New England (3.1 percent), or in states outside of the New England region (1.0 percent.)[8] These records suggest there was little geographic mobility in the country of adoption by French speakers who naturalized through 1906. Naturalization records after 1906, while providing the port of entry of migrants, offer no information on their place of first U.S. residence. Other data on these naturalization forms, however, gives us a glimpse of the migration patterns of francophones within the United States. Shoemaker Philippe Neri Beaudet, for example, completed his first naturalization papers in Salem, Massachusetts. To take another example, the two oldest children of shoemaker Alphonse Bilodeau had been born in Lynn, Massachusetts, while his third child had been born in Norway, Maine, and his youngest in Lewiston. In all, seven out of 203 persons (3.4 percent) had filed their declaration of intention in U.S. cities other than Auburn or Portland, Maine, the cities where Lewiston's French-Canadian migrants filed their final naturalization papers. Twelve of the 203 (5.9 percent) had children born in the United States outside of

[8]The place of arrival for the rest (2.9 percent) of the 481 was unknown. Naturalization records, 1900-1919.

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the twin cities of Lewiston and Auburn.[9] These findings suggest that French-Canadian migrants did not evidence a great deal of geographic mobility in the United States prior to becoming citizens.

The records also suggest that there was little migration back and forth across the international border by the French speakers who naturalized in Lewiston. The places of birth of the children of migrants sometimes provide evidence of their return migration to Canada. For example, the two oldest children of Joseph Lachance had been born in Michigan in 1892 and 1893, while his seven youngest children at the time of his naturalization had been born in Québec between 1894 and 1906. Lachance, however, was the only one (0.5 percent) of the 203 men of Lewiston who naturalized from 1907 to 1919 for whom the places of birth of his children reveal such migration back and forth across the border prior to his naturalization.[10]

How French-Canadian migrants traveled from Canada to the United States appeared on naturalization records after 1906, when the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization revised and standardized record-keeping operations. Although Québec shares a long border with Maine, and eight

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[9]Naturalization records, 1900-1919; the naturalization records of Alphonse Bilodeau and Philippe Neri Beaudet are from the Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vol. 5, p. 21, and vol. 6, p. 6, respectively.

[10]Naturalization records, 1907-1919; Lachance's record is from the Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, naturalization records, vol. 6, p. 71.

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of its counties at the turn of the century lay along the state's western and northern borders, ninety (89.7) percent of the Lewiston francophones who naturalized from 1907 to 1919 had entered the United States in Vermont, most of them at the town of Island Pond. This is what Arthur Grandmaison had done, even though Témiscouata, the Québec county from which he had migrated, shares part of Maine's northern border; the reason for his circuitous route to Lewiston was that French-Canadian migrants traveled to the Spindle City almost exclusively on railway lines that passed through Vermont. Ninety-nine percent of those who naturalized from 1907 to 1919 had crossed the international border by train, most--like Grandmaison--completing all or part of their journey on the Grand Trunk Railway, typically over the course of one day.[11]

For these migrants, returning to their place of origin was relatively easy. Hundreds from Lewiston took part in yearly excursions that the church, local societies, or railroad companies organized to *le pays natal*.[12] But pilgrimages to Sainte-Anne de Beaupré, and trips to visit

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[11]Newman, "American Naturalization Processes and Procedures," p. 10; naturalization records, 1900-1919.

[12]*Le Messager*, 23 août 1901, p. 3, 3 septembre 1901, p. 3, 27 décembre 1901, p. 3, 10 juillet 1903, p. 2, 7 juillet 1905, p. 3, 2 août 1916, p. 8; la chronique du couvent, la série couvents et paroisses, la sous-série couvent des Apôtres Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, Maine, les archives des Dominicains, Montréal, Québec [ci-après, la Chronique des Dominicains], vol. 8, 22 juin 1903, p. 154, vol. 12, 6 août 1908, p. 258, vol. 13, 6 juillet 1914, p. 296.

le pays natal: the native country

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family and friends in the province of Québec, did not lead to repatriation.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, as in the late 1800s, Lewiston's French-language newspaper, *Le Messager,* worked hard to persuade francophones to remain in the United States and to become citizens. It had a challenging task because Canada's--and Québec's--economy had improved, reducing migration and making repatriation more attractive. Whereas net migration from Québec to the United States stood at 150,000 during the 1880s and at 140,000 in the 1890s, it dropped to 100,000 during the 1900s and to 80,000 in the 1910s. According to historian Yves Roby, not only did an improvement in Canada's and Québec's economy account for the reduced migration in the early twentieth century, but strikes and child labor legislation in the United States also made migration less appealing than in the past and encouraged remigration to Canada. Although *Le Messager* regularly informed readers of visits and talks in Lewiston by colonization and repatriation agents working for the province of Québec or the Canadian federal government, it stressed in other articles that better economic and social conditions generally existed in the United States. In January 1902, for example, *Le Messager* argued against returning to Canada to work in the manufacturing sector, contending *"nous aurons à travailler beaucoup plus et être moins payées."* In 1906, it contended that French Canadians did not live a

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better life farming in Canada, claiming, for instance, that individuals colonizing areas of northern Québec found that *"le marchand de bois...est le véritable seigneur."* It instead advised those who wished to return to the land to purchase farms in New England, where they could combine farming with a cash income from industrial work. Problems between Catholics and Protestants in the United States had declined significantly as Catholics had grown in number, the newspaper suggested, indicating (without evidence) that *"notre religion est plus honorée et plus respectée ici qu'au Canada,"* a suggestion that challenges contemporary national identity myths that Canada treated minorities better than did the United States. *Le Messager* also did not pass up the opportunity to point out examples of French Canadians migrating from Canada to Lewiston for a second time. While the newspaper acknowledged that colonization and repatriation agents acted out of a patriotic duty to make Canada a strong nation, it felt the possibility of repatriation was a significant obstacle for the francophones seeking to make progress in the United States.[13]

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[13]Yolande Lavoie, *L'émigration des Québécois aux États-Unis de 1840 à 1930* ([Québec, Québec]: Éditeur officiel du Québec, 1981), p. 53; Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre (1776-1930)* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 1990), pp. 227-232; *Le Messager*, 14 mai 1901, p. 1, 16 juillet 1901, p. 2, l'article signé "Siram" de 31 janvier 1902, p. 2, 15 mai 1903, p. 2, 13 octobre 1903, p. 2, 9 juin 1906, p. 3, 11 août 1906, p. 8, 30 août 1906, p. 1, 14 mars 1910, p. 5, 12 avril 1911, p. 8, 16 et 19 mai 1913, p. 8, 20 octobre 1913, p. 8, 21 décembre 1915, p. 8, 13 août 1917, p. 2.

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Consequently, *Le Messager* strongly encouraged French-Canadian migrants to naturalize. It particularly argued that naturalized francophones could wield more political influence in the community, an influence proportionate to its numbers. The newspaper insisted that a larger Franco-American electorate could demand an increasing share of the patronage appointments made after every municipal election. Disarming those who maintained that a tension existed between the preservation of French-Canadian ethnicity on the one hand and acculturation into U.S. society on the other, *Le Messager* contended that naturalization was not incompatible with French-Canadian identity. Indeed, naturalized francophones could better demonstrate their ethnic pride by advancing the interests of their group in the United States.[14]

In 1902, *Le Messager* conveyed this message with a bit of humor. Tongue-in-cheek, it asked women, who did not yet have suffrage, to do their part to get the men of the community to naturalize. It suggested that they introduce a patriotic dimension to their courtship rituals:

> *Quand un jeune homme dit à une demoiselle:*

"nous aurons...moins payées.": "we will have to work much more and be less paid."

"le marchand...véritable seigneur.": "the wood merchant...is the veritable lord."

"notre religion...qu'au Canada,": "our religion is more honored and more respected here than in Canada,"

[14]*Le Messager*, 2 avril 1901, p. 6, 17 mai 1901, p. 6, 14 février 1902, p. 3, 4 juin 1902, p. 2, 19 décembre 1902, p. 2.

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--M'aimez-vous?
Celle-ci devrait répondre:
--Etes-vous naturalisé?
Alors on verrait certainement grossir le nombre de nos votants, et notre influence devenir plus forte.
Allons, mesdmoiselles, un petit coup do [sic] coeur; c'est dans votre intérêt puisque c'est pour le bien de notre nationalité.[15]

In its efforts to promote naturalization, *Le Messager* periodically detailed in its columns the laws governing, the costs associated with, and the steps involved in the naturalization process. The newspaper regularly published information about evening classes designed to help francophones to learn English and to prepare them for the exam on U.S. history and government, instituted by the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. It even supplied--in English--the questions naturalization examiners often asked, along with the correct responses. This French-language newspaper routinely reported on the efforts of the individuals (usually attorneys) and the societies that organized naturalization clubs and drives and that helped French speakers process the paperwork necessary to become citizens. Occasionally, it would

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[15]*Le Messager*, 10 octobre 1902, p. 3.
"Quand un jeune...notre nationalité.":
When a young man asks a young woman:
--Do you love me?
She should respond:
--Are you naturalized?
Then we would certainly expand the number of our voters, and our influence would increase.
Come on, young ladies, a little shock to the heart; it's in your interest since it will help our nationality.

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suggest the number of compatriots eligible to take out first or final naturalization papers, urging them and the French-language societies to take steps to ensure their naturalization. It would also publicize the numbers as well as the names of those who had taken out naturalization papers.[16] Readers of *Le Messager* never lacked for information or prodding to become U.S. citizens.

Indeed, the newspaper was not above pressuring French-Canadian migrants to naturalize. Sometimes *Le Messager* published the names of persons who had previously filed their declaration of intent to become U.S. citizens but who were slow about taking out their final papers. It warned them that they faced having to start the process over if they did not complete it within the allotted seven years. During World War I, *Le Messager* wanted Lewiston's francophone men to demonstrate their loyalty to their adopted country by beginning or completing their naturalization and by serving in the U.S. military. It informed readers that migrants who did not initiate the naturalization process would be considered deserters by

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[16]*Le Messager*, 10 mai 1901, 14 et 21 mai 1901, p. 3, 11 février 1902, p. 2, supplément de 12 décembre 1902, p. 3, 17 février 1903, p. 3, 10 novembre 1903, p. 2, 30 septembre 1904, p. 6, 13 octobre 1905, p. 2, 10 juillet 1906, p. 2, 4 octobre 1906, p. 7, 14 avril 1909, p. 2, 24 mai 1909, p. 1, 13 octobre 1909, p. 2, 21 février 1910, p. 5, 7 et 17 mars 1913, p. 8, 22 octobre 1913, p. 8, 19 et 26 mai 1915, p. 8, 27 septembre 1916, p. 5, 18 janvier 1918, p. 1, 16 juin 1919, p. 6, 28 juillet 1919, p. 8, 30 juillet 1919, p. 1.

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Canada; those with first papers over seven years old would be considered aliens by the United States, it pressed.[17]

Unlike in Canada, there was no conscription crisis among individuals of French-Canadian birth and background in the United States during World War I. Canada, which did not have autonomy, entered the world conflict with Britain in August 1914. When Henri Bourassa, the editor of Montréal's *Le Devoir* and outspoken critic of Canada's participation in World War I, came to Lewiston during a 1915 speaking tour of New England, *Le Messager* reported that Franco-American elites helped fill the city hall auditorium even though some disagreed with his politics, including his opposition to Canada's entry into the world conflict. *Le Messager* was among the Franco-American newspapers that criticized French-Canadian nationalists like Bourassa during the anti-conscription riots that took place in Québec in 1918, when French Canadians objected strenuously to being forced by anglophones to take part in an imperial struggle they felt did not concern them. In that year, Canadian and British officers tried to expand the number of enlisted men by recruiting Franco-Americans living in the United States. They established offices in Portland and Lewiston, hoping to attract at least 500 from Maine to the war effort. They placed ads in *Le Messager* depicting soldiers at the front lines, ads which indicated

[17]*Le Messager*, 27 septembre 1916, p. 5, 17 septembre 1917, p. 8, 12 novembre 1917, p. 8.

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"ces hommes arrêtent les Huns" and which asked Franco-Americans: *"Pourquoi ne les aidez-vous pas?"* Recruiters in Lewiston spoke in English and French about the war, drawing 1,000 to 2,000 people to rallies at city hall. But they appear to have attracted few actual volunteers. Only eleven men joined the Canadian army as a result of a rally in May 1918, reported *Le Messager*.[18]

Lewiston Franco-Americans opted to fight the war under the U.S. flag. It probably helped that draft registrars included French speakers, one of them a Dominican priest. According to *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier*, Franco-Americans provided the largest number of volunteers to the war effort before the United States imposed conscription. Participation in the U.S. armed services was a means of demonstrating loyalty to the country of adoption. In all, approximately 800 Franco-Americans, representing about half of the total enlistees from Lewiston, served in World War I.[19]

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[18]Robert G. LeBlanc, "The Franco-American Response to the Conscription Crisis in Canada, 1916-1918," *American Review of Canadian Studies* (Autumn 1993), pp. 343-372; *Le Messager*, 1 septembre 1915, p. 8, 10 septembre 1915, p. 1, 1 avril 1918, p. 2, 5 avril 1918, p. 3, 27 et 31 mai 1918, p. 8, 7 juin 1918, p. 6, 25 juin 1918, p. 11.

"ces hommes arrêtent les Huns": "these men are stopping the Huns"

"Pourquoi ne les aidez-vous pas?": "Why not help them?"

[19]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, September 12, 1918, pp. 1, 10; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 13, 12 septembre 1918, p. 481; *Album-Souvenir, 1872-1922: Cinquantenaire de L'Institut Jacques-Cartier de Lewiston, Maine* ([Lewiston, Maine]: le Comité de l'Album-Souvenir, 1922), p. 31; *Le Messager*, 25 juin 1920, p. 1. Naturalization records reveal that no men who had served in the U.S. armed forces became citizens during World War I. Twelve former servicemen naturalized in 1919, and twenty-five did in 1920. These men

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Robert G. LeBlanc has argued that the cultural survival of French Canadians and Franco-Americans in their respective countries necessitated different responses to participation in the world conflict. A minority in Canada, increasingly agitated by the treatment of francophones outside of the province of Québec, French Canadians resisted being forced by Anglo-Canadians to take part in a war to defend the "mother countries" of England and France with which they felt no bonds. For their part, Franco-Americans intent upon preserving their ethnicity in the United States needed to demonstrate their loyalty to the host society. Their different reactions to participation in the war, according to LeBlanc, led to a "cultural divergence" between French-Canadian and Franco-American elites.[20] The basis of this divergence was that ethnic retention and acculturation comprised the same goal for Franco-Americans; this was not the case for French Canadians, however, who felt no need or desire to acculturate in Canada.

Assisted by publicity in *Le Messager*, Franco-Americans continued in the early twentieth century to organize themselves for naturalization. They formed their own

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accounted for one-fifth of the total naturalizations in both 1919 (21.4 percent) and 1920 (21.0 percent.) Naturalization records, 1900-1919; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, 1920, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine.

[20]LeBlanc, "The Franco-American Response to the Conscription Crisis in Canada," pp. 344, 365-366.

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naturalization clubs, sometimes creating new ones when they felt existing clubs lacked sufficient drive in promoting U.S. citizenship. In 1903, for example, a new club decided to help French-Canadian migrants pay the costs of naturalization in order to improve upon the results of the existing naturalization club. Franco-American attorneys continued to offer assistance at no cost to francophones who needed help to process their papers. Most of these attorneys were politically active and likely expected recompense on election days. Unlike in the nineteenth century, the Dominicans played little role in the naturalization efforts of the early twentieth century, other than by serving as examples for the city's francophone population as some of their members became U.S. citizens. While other naturalization clubs existed, such as the Democratic Club organized by city employees, which Franco-Americans could join, Lewiston's French speakers tended to rely upon their own clubs, the help of their own elites, and the resources of francophones to gain U.S. citizenship.[21]

French speakers continued to face obstacles to acculturation on their own terms and at their own pace. As in the late nineteenth century, about one-fifth (21.5 percent) of Lewiston's francophones traveled to Portland,

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[21]*Le Messager*, 17 janvier 1902, p. 2, 21 janvier 1902, 3 février 1903, p. 2, 13 février 1903, p. 7, 21 novembre 1905, p. 7, 9 décembre 1905, p. 7, 23 janvier 1906, p. 5.

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Maine, during the first two decades of the twentieth century to take out their final naturalization papers. All but one of them did so before the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization began overseeing immigration. While *Le Messager* did not comment specifically on the reasons for traveling to Portland after the turn of the century, local officials had probably made it difficult for Lewiston francophones to naturalize at the county courthouse prior to municipal elections. Newspaper announcements and naturalization numbers suggest this. For example, announcements of organized trips to Portland to process naturalization papers appeared in *Le Messager* in February 1905 and 1906, just a couple of weeks before the municipal election. *Le Messager*'s 1901 announcement and advice that the Auburn court's sitting judge *"est bien disposé envers nos gens; profitons en donc"* no longer seemed to apply. In fact, only five francophones from Lewiston naturalized at the county courthouse in Auburn in 1905 and 1906, while 112 others traveled thirty miles to Portland to take out their final naturalization papers.[22] This inconvenience, it appears, continued to be a price of acculturation.

New U.S. laws significantly impeded the naturalization of French-Canadian migrants. Beginning in September 1906,

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[22]Nineteenth-century naturalization records; naturalization records, 1900-1919; *Le Messager*, 21 mai 1901, p. 3, 21 février 1905, p. 3, 24 février 1906, p. 3.

"est bien...en donc": "is well disposed toward our people; let us profit by it"

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those who had entered the United States as minors under eighteen had to file a declaration of intention, or first papers, and to wait two years before filing their final papers to become U.S. citizens. Unlike in the past, they now had to follow the same two-step naturalization procedure as those who had entered the country as adults. Naturalization data reveals the effect of this new regulation in numerous ways. During the first decade of the twentieth century, over eighty (82.8) percent of the francophone men who became citizens had arrived in the United States under the age of eighteen, whereas only sixty (60.2) percent of those who naturalized during the second decade had arrived under eighteen.[23] While Lewistonians who had entered the United States as minors still constituted a majority of the French-Canadian migrants who became citizens during the second decade of the twentieth century, they no longer comprised the overwhelming proportion they had during previous years.

Child labor laws of the twentieth century likely account in part for this change. A 1907 Maine law, for example, which the state more strictly enforced than previous legislation, prohibited children under fourteen

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[23]Newman, "American Naturalization Processes and Procedures," p. 23; naturalization records, 1900-1919. Naturalization laws passed by Congress between 1906 and 1910 had the effect of limiting the number of immigrants eligible to vote and continued a pattern of restricting the franchise, a pattern that marked the period from Reconstruction to World War I. Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), p. 139, but see also chapter five.

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from working. While over sixty (63.6) percent of the men who naturalized in the late nineteenth century had arrived in the United States between the ages of ten and eighteen inclusive, only half (50.3 percent) of the men who naturalized in the early twentieth century had arrived between these ages, hinting at a decline in the proportion who had come to the United States as part of a child labor migration.[24] Changing demographics precipitated by child labor legislation probably had a role, therefore, in the shifting pattern of naturalization in the early twentieth century.

But other naturalization data points especially to the elimination of the one-step naturalization procedure enjoyed before 1906 by those who had entered the United States as minors. From 1900 to 1909, over half (55.9 percent) of Lewiston's francophones were twenty-five years or younger when they naturalized, a pattern consistent with the late nineteenth century. From 1910 to 1919, however, the proportion of men who naturalized at twenty-five or younger dropped to below one-fifth (17.9 percent.) New regulations which lengthened the time to naturalization account in large part for this significant drop. While improved economic conditions in Canada, and the 1906 requirement that candidates for citizenship had to

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[24]Sylvie Beaudreau et Yves Frenette, "Les stratégies familiales des francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre: Perspective diachronique," *Sociologie et sociétés* 26 (printemps 1994), p. 171; nineteenth-century naturalization records; naturalization records, 1900-1919.

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demonstrate that they could speak English, may have caused the young to put off naturalization, they likely would have had the same effect on older French-Canadian migrants and, consequently, do not account as well for this dramatic drop in young naturalizers during the second decade of the twentieth century.[25]

Each of these elements--improved economic conditions in the sending society as well as the English-language requirement and the two-step naturalization procedure in the receiving society--caused French-speaking men to take longer to naturalize in the early twentieth century than they had in the late nineteenth. These external forces therefore helped slow the process of acculturation during the first two decades of the century. While over half of the men who had entered the United States at eighteen years of age or older had naturalized within ten years of their border crossing (that is, within the first five years of their eligibility) in the 1880s and 1890s, the proportion dropped to around thirty percent in the 1900s and 1910s.[26] The proportion of those naturalizing within fifteen years of their arrival in the United States dropped from 84.1 percent in the 1880s and 1890s to 67.9 percent in the 1900s and to 59.0 percent in the 1910s. Among francophone men

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[25]Naturalization records, 1900-1919; *Le Messager*, 10 juillet 1906, p. 2.

[26]Nineteenth-century naturalization records; naturalization records, 1900-1919. The proportion was 28.4 percent in the 1900s and 30.8 percent in the 1910s.

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who had entered the United States under the age of eighteen, the proportion naturalizing within five or ten years of their twenty-first birthday dropped slightly after the turn of the century and drastically during the second decade. From 1900 to 1909, 72.5 percent of the men who had crossed the border as minors naturalized within five years of reaching their twenty-first birthday, but only 36.4 percent did so during the second decade; ninety (89.2) percent of these men naturalized by their thirty-first birthday during the first decade of the century, compared to over sixty (62.7) percent during the second decade. Requiring the young to take out both first and final naturalization papers particularly slowed the acculturation of French-speaking youth into U.S. society. Arthur Grandmaison again serves as a case in point. He had arrived in the United States before his fourteenth birthday in 1898 and, because he did not naturalize before new federal regulations went into effect in September 1906, he had to complete both first and final naturalization papers and to meet the English-language requirement. Grandmaison did not declare his intention to become a U.S. citizen until 1913, and he naturalized only in 1919, when he was thirty-five years old. Thus, although Grandmaison had entered the United States as a minor, he did not become a citizen until fourteen years after reaching the age of

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eligibility (twenty-one.)[27] In spite of the new naturalization regulations and improved economic conditions in Canada, a large majority of the French-Canadian migrants who became U.S. citizens in the early twentieth century, whether they had crossed the border as minors or adults, nevertheless naturalized within ten years of their eligibility.

Twentieth-century naturalization records suggest some of the occupational and family variables that affected the decision of French-speaking men to become U.S. citizens. Beginning in 1904, naturalization forms provided the occupations of the candidates for citizenship. The data reveals that a majority of the French-Canadian migrants of Lewiston who naturalized in the early twentieth century held industrial jobs: from 1904 to 1909, 65.8 percent were industrial workers, compared to 54.1 percent during the 1910s. White-collar workers made up more than one-tenth (12.4 percent) of the francophones who naturalized during the first decade of the twentieth century and over one-fifth (22.4 percent) of those who became citizens during the second decade. Lewiston's French speakers had experienced some upward occupational mobility from the first to second decade of the twentieth century. Arthur Grandmaison, formerly a mill operative, had become a clerk

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[27]Naturalization records, 1900-1919.

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by the time of his naturalization in 1919.[28] Like him, those with better jobs had more incentive to remain in the United States. But a more probable explanation for the increase in white-collar job holders who became citizens is that they likely spoke English at their places of employment much more often than industrial and other blue-collar workers. Grandmaison probably had to speak English more frequently in the course of his work than the Franco-Americans employed in the local textile mills and shoe factories. Like other white-collar workers who naturalized during the second decade of the century, Grandmaison must have been less intimidated than industrial workers by the English-language requirement instituted by the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and tested by its naturalization examiners.

After the Bureau standardized naturalization forms, the records provided information about the marital status and families of the male migrants who became U.S. citizens. Data for the period from 1907 to 1919 reveal that a preponderance (72.4 percent) of the men of Lewiston who naturalized in the early twentieth century were married; only a little over one-fourth (27.6 percent) were single. Over two-thirds (69.4 percent) of the married men had Canadian-born wives; conversely, under one-third (29.3

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[28]Naturalization records, 1900-1919; *Resident and Business Directory of Androscoggin County, Maine, 1918-1919* (Auburn, Maine: Merrill and Webber Company, 1918), p. 503.

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percent) had wives born in the United States. Having U.S.-born wives must have encouraged these men to naturalize. But the birthplace of children appears to have been a more decisive factor. Over half (57.6 percent) of the men who naturalized from 1907 to 1919 had children, and in 80.3 percent of these cases, their offspring had all been born in the United States; an additional 12.8 percent of these married or widowed men had some children, but not all, with birthplaces in the United States. Over ninety percent of the naturalizing men with children, then, had some offspring who had acquired U.S. citizenship at birth. As these children grew up, they undoubtedly developed ties to the United States that made it difficult for their fathers to contemplate relocating them to Canada, providing the impetus for these men to remain permanently in the United States. In Arthur Grandmaison's case, his wife and the four children they had by the time of his naturalization in 1919 had all been born in the United States, a situation which surely must have influenced his decision to become a U.S. citizen.[29]

The efforts of *Le Messager* and local elites to promote naturalization in Lewiston, and the desire of francophones to acquire citizenship, seem to have yielded significant results. Based upon a sample taken from the 1920 census, 44.3 percent of the city's adult, male, French-Canadian

[29]Naturalization records, 1900-1919.

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migrants had naturalized by 1920, and another 20.5 percent had declared their intention to become U.S. citizens. Thus, nearly two-thirds of Lewiston's first-generation adult, male, French speakers had begun or completed the naturalization process by the end of the second decade of the century. Hard-fought gains were well-kept. Official letters attached to the naturalization records reveal that only two (0.3 percent) of the 684 men who became U.S. citizens in Lewiston between 1900 and 1919 later repatriated in Canada. The tiny percentage of naturalized citizens of Lewiston who repatriated stands in sharp contrast to global estimates of remigration. About half of the individuals who had migrated from Québec to the United States in the nineteenth century remigrated to Canada, estimates Ralph Dominic Vicero, and about one-third who had migrated between 1900 and 1930 returned to Canada, estimates Yolande Lavoie.[30] The process of naturalization worked against these patterns, for the French-Canadian migrants of Lewiston who modified their ethnic identity by naturalizing in the United States tended overwhelmingly not to relinquish their citizenship through the affirmative act of repatriation.

As a result of the concerted efforts of francophones to naturalize and to vote, Franco-Americans gained

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[30]*U.S. Census, 1920;* naturalization records, 1900-1919; Vicero, "Immigration of French Canadians to New England," pp. 394-395; Lavoie, *L'émigration des Québécois aux États-Unis de 1840 à 1930,* p. 58.

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political strength in Lewiston in the early twentieth century. In 1903, their 1,200 voters comprised one-fourth of the city's voting population, and Franco-Americans increased their electoral strength by over 500 persons through 1916. Although the enfranchised Franco-American electorate was small in proportion to its overall population, it did make some significant political gains during the first two decades of the century. In 1907, Franco-Americans won three of the seven seats on the Board of Aldermen, the first time in Lewiston's history that they had gained so many seats. In 1914, Lewiston elected its first mayor of French-Canadian descent, and each year from 1917 to 1920 the city also elected a Lewiston-born Franco-American as mayor.[31]

Le Messager had worked hard in the early twentieth century to encourage Franco-Americans to overcome their differences and to unite politically. In 1902, the newspaper expressed its belief that doing so was a prerequisite to electing a mayor of French-Canadian descent. But Democratic, Republican, and Socialist political clubs headed by Franco-Americans competed for members and divided Lewiston's French speakers. Typically, *Le Messager* offered a brief announcement in its local news

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[31]*Le Messager*, l'article signé "Citoyen" de 15 décembre 1903, p. 2, 7 mars 1907, p. 2, 5 juin 1916; Geneva Kirk and Gridley Barrows, *Historic Lewiston: Its Government* (Lewiston, Maine: Lewiston Historical Commission, 1982), pp. 34, 36. Until the 1970s, Lewiston held annual elections for mayor. Kirk and Barrows, p. 51.

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column that a new club had formed to promote the interests of a particular political party in Lewiston elections, and it usually named the officers and sometimes indicated how many members the club had attracted. From these periodic announcements of "new" partisan clubs, we can infer that they were more akin to ad hoc political campaign organizations than to entrenched political machines. The Franco-American Socialist Club, which also sponsored candidates and tried to garner Franco-American support, had the least success in attracting votes. In 1904, for example, student Joseph A. Phénix won only forty-five votes in his bid for a seat in the state legislature, while the Democratic victors from Lewiston each outpolled him by over 2,000 votes. Occasionally, non-francophone Republicans tried to capitalize on divisions among Franco-Americans. In 1900, for instance, Republican candidates vying for seats in the state legislature promised to vote funds for the planned expansion of the Sisters' Hospital in order to gain Franco-American votes. Factions within the Democratic Party, probably centered on personality conflicts, further split Franco-Americans in the early twentieth century.[32]

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[32]*Le Messager*, 5 décembre 1902, p. 1, 8 mars 1904, p. 2, 15 avril 1904, p. 3, 7 juin 1904, p. 8, 26 août 1904, p. 2, 1 septembre 1904, 9 septembre 1904, p. 6, 13 septembre 1904, p. 7, 10 novembre 1913, p. 8, 27 septembre 1915, p. 8, 26 février 1917; *Le Messager*, 18 décembre 1900, inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 5, p. 391; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, August 18, 1900, p. 1; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 10, 10 février 1905, p. 59, 20 mars 1905, p. 114.

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Despite these divisions within the French-speaking community, and perhaps because of them, *Le Messager* continued to promote the Democratic Party. It periodically reminded francophones that Republican administrations in Lewiston refused Franco-Americans a fair share of patronage appointments. *Le Messager* was overt about patronage. It never passed up the chance to list the number of jobs, particularly on the police department or road commission, that Franco-Americans gained following Democratic victories in local elections, victories it typically acknowledged with a rooster crowing "KOKORIKO!!"[33]

Unity between Irish and Franco-American voters led to Democratic victories in Lewiston municipal elections. But Democratic gains also led to ethnic competition. In 1902, Franco-Americans overwhelmingly backed Irish-American D.J. McGillicuddy's bid for mayor, causing *Le Messager* to claim that his election was *"une victoire essentiellement canadienne."* Because Franco-Americans had delivered sixty percent of the Democratic vote in that election, they expected a proportionate share of the patronage appointments. When francophones did not receive enough of the jobs, two Franco-Americans on the Board of Aldermen and five on the Common Council threatened to resign from their elected posts until McGillicuddy agreed to settle the

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[33]*Le Messager*, 4 mars 1902, p. 6, 5 décembre 1902, p. 1, 21 mars 1905, p. 2, 31 mars 1905, pp. 7-8, 6 mars 1906, p. 7, 31 mars 1906, p. 2, 4 mars 1910, p. 5, 3 mars 1911, p. 4, 8 mars 1916, p. 1.

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matter to their satisfaction. This incident reveals the determination of Franco-Americans to wield the political clout they had won in order to push for their share of the spoils. It was an act of self-assertion that found parallels in religious matters, as we shall see. Through the first two decades of the century, cooperation and conflict characterized the relations between Lewiston's Irish and Franco-American populations as they vied for the right to appoint members to local jobs.[34]

After the turn of the century, *Le Messager* began expressing its hope for a mayor of French-Canadian descent. Its dream came to fruition in 1914 when Dr. Robert J. Wiseman won Lewiston's mayoral election. Wiseman's situation illustrates the permeability of ethnic lines in Lewiston. A native of Stanfold, Québec, he was the son of a Scotch father and Irish mother, and he married a woman of French-Canadian descent. Franco-Americans regarded him as one of their own; according to *Le Messager*, Wiseman was *"un véritable Franco-Américain de coeur et de nationalité."* Wiseman joined the Lewiston School Commission in 1908, gained appointment as temporary superintendent of schools in 1909, and won election to the Board of Aldermen in 1910. In both 1911 and 1913, he lost his bid for mayor in the

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[34]*Le Messager*, 4 mars 1902, p. 2, 15 février 1906, p. 2; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, April 2, 1902, p. 9, April 3, 1902, p. 8, April 5, 1902, p. 10; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 14, 18 mars 1919, p. 13.

"une victoire essentiellement canadienne.": "essentially a French-Canadian victory."

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Democratic caucus. After losing the Democratic nod in 1913, he decided to run as a Progressive candidate but lost the general election to the Democrat who had defeated him in caucus. *Le Messager* interpreted the election result as an indication that Franco-Americans were still loyal to the Democratic Party. In a meeting at the hall of *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* in November 1913, Franco-American Republicans, Democrats, and Progressives asked Wiseman to run again for mayor in the spring elections. Americans and Franco-Americans supported Wiseman's candidacy, *Le Messager* reported, and he agreed to run. This time, however, Wiseman did not campaign on the Democratic ticket. Instead, he gained the Republican nomination and the support of the Republican *Lewiston Evening Journal*. During the spring 1914 election, he ran on three tickets: Republican, Progressive, and Citizen. Dissatisfaction with the incumbent Democrat's administration, which had left Lewiston with a large deficit, propelled Wiseman's candidacy. Although some Franco-American Democrats did not vote for Wiseman, a coalition of Americans and Franco-Americans helped him trounce his Democratic opponent. Because of ill health and the demands of his medical practice, Wiseman chose not to run again in the following year. *Le Messager* hoped Wiseman would seek the mayor's job

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during the spring 1916 elections, *"mais cette fois ouvertement sur le bulletin démocratique."*[35]

For four terms from 1917 through 1920, Lewiston-born Democrat, Charles P. Lemaire, gained the mayor's office. When he won re-election in 1918, *Le Messager* was ecstatic, for it felt Franco-American voters had demonstrated unity and had asserted their political power. Exuding confidence, the newspaper warned Republicans that they had little future in the city. Lemaire and others celebrating his victory conveyed the same message in an evening torch light parade. When the parade passed through the city's Republican wards and in front of the Lewiston *Journal* offices, the *Saint-Dominique* band *"exécuta une partie de la marche funèbre de Chopin pour leur annoncer que réelement ils étaient bien morts, politiquement parlant."* Victory speeches followed at the hall of *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier.*[36]

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[35]*Le Messager,* 5 décembre 1902, p. 1, 27 octobre 1903, p. 3, 15 septembre 1909, p. 7, 5 mars 1913, p. 1, 17 novembre 1913, p. 1, 19 novembre 1913, 2 février 1914, p. 8, 27 février 1914, 27 février 1914, p. 4, 4 mars 1914, pp. 1, 8, 25 août 1915, p. 8; Yves Frenette, "La genèse d'une communauté canadienne-française en Nouvelle-Angleterre: Lewiston, Maine, 1800-1880" (Thèse de Ph.D., Université Laval, Québec, 1988), p. 381; Kirk and Barrows, *Historic Lewiston: Its Government,* p. 34; *Lewiston Evening Journal,* February 28, 1914, p. 7, March 2, 1914, p. 1.

"un véritable...de nationalité.": "a veritable Franco-American at heart and by nationality."

"mais cette...bulletin démocratique.": "but this time openly on the Democratic ticket."

[36]Kirk and Barrows, *Historic Lewiston: Its Government,* p. 36; *Le Messager,* 6 mars 1918, p. 1.

"exécuta une...politiquement parlant.": "played part of the funeral march by Chopin to announce to them that they were actually dead, politically speaking."

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By 1920, asserted *Le Messager*, Lewiston had become *"le château-fort des démocrates du Maine."* Research completed by Ronald L. Bissonnette demonstrates the accuracy of this claim. Every four years from 1904 to 1920, Democratic gubernatorial and congressional candidates gained a majority of Lewiston's votes, as did Democratic presidential candidates in the three elections from 1908 to 1916.[37] Democratic partisanship had become integral to Franco-American identity in the Spindle City.

As Lewiston's francophones continued their acculturation into U.S. society in the early twentieth century, they also sought to maintain their French language, Roman Catholic faith, and many French-Canadian traditions. Pressure from Irish bishops to push the Americanization of these French speakers resulted in ethnic controversies in which they joined with other francophones from throughout the state to demand greater influence in Maine's Catholic Church. Until 1905, Lewiston's Franco-Americans had maintained cordial relations with Maine's bishops, all of whom had been of Irish descent. Though displeased by the appointment of another Irish bishop in 1901, and by the new bishop's subsequent appointment of an Irish vicar as his assistant, *Le Messager* accepted these

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[37]*Le Messager*, 3 novembre 1920, p. 1; Ronald L. Bissonnette, "Political Parties as Products of Their Environments, A Case Study of Lewiston, Maine" (Honors thesis, University of Maine-Orono, 1977), pp. 27-29.

"le château-fort des démocrates du Maine.": "the Democratic fortress of Maine."

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decisions calmly. When the Woonsocket, Rhode Island, *Tribune* chastised *Le Messager* for its complacency, the newspaper explained: *"En bons catholiques, il faut se soumettre aux décrets du pape et à ceux de l'évêque, son représentant."* In 1884 and 1895, Bishop James Augustin Healy had threatened to forbid Catholics from reading *Le Messager* because of critical articles it had published on church issues and Catholic clergy in Québec and New England. Healy's rebukes had served to temper the French-language newspaper, particularly in its reporting of ethnic tensions and conflicts between Irish bishops and Franco-American parishioners in different New England states.[38]

In 1905, however, *Le Messager* erupted again. That year, it reported the rumor that Maine's third bishop, William O'Connell, had told his Diocesan Council that he wanted to anglicize the French-language parishes of Maine. While the newspaper felt O'Connell and other Irish clergy hoped to unify the state's Catholics, it strongly resisted the idea to *"nous forcer à parler la langue des protestants."* Lewiston's Franco-Americans, of course,

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[38]*Le Messager*, 1 janvier 1885, 22 novembre 1901, p. 2; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 1, 18 décembre 1884, pp. 234-235, vol. 4, 25 janvier 1895, p. 281; James Augustin Healy, Evêque de Portland, au Très Rév. Père A.-L. Mothon, 22 janvier 1895, les archives des Dominicains, correspondance de Mgr. Healy. On the nineteenth-century conflicts in Massachusetts and Connecticut between French speakers and their Irish bishops, see Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 162-181.

"En bons...son représentant.": "Good Catholics must submit to the orders of the pope and to those of the bishop, his representative."

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wanted to learn English; after all, their parish school had been the first in Maine to offer a bilingual education. *Le Messager* expressed pleasure at the bilingual training of children; after observing them taking their French and English exams at the end of the 1902-1903 school year, for example, it argued that facility in English as well as French would help these children to obtain good jobs in Lewiston in the future. But when *Le Messager* learned of O'Connell's desire to anglicize Maine's French-speaking population, it reacted angrily, even disrespectfully. This was such a contentious issue because, for individuals of French-Canadian birth and background, their French language and their Roman Catholic faith were inextricably intertwined. The saying *"Qui perd sa langue, perd sa foi"* captured well their sentiments. Following the report of O'Connell's remarks, *Le Messager* published a spate of articles complaining vociferously about the inferior position of Franco-Americans, and particularly of their clergy, within the diocese.[39]

No longer willing to accept all decisions of Catholic prelates, Franco-Americans decided to fight publicly for the interests of Maine's French speakers. Lewiston's

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[39]*Le Messager*, 23 juin 1903, p. 7, 13 octobre 1905, p. 2, supplément du 24 novembre 1905, 24 avril 1906, p. 2; Antonin M. Plourde, O.P., "Cent ans de vie paroissiale: SS. Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, 1870-1970," *Le Rosaire* (août-septembre 1970), p. 15.

"nous forcer...des protestants.": "force us to speak the language of Protestants."

"Qui perd...sa foi": "Whoever loses his language, loses his faith"

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l'Institut Jacques-Cartier quickly organized a committee on *la Cause Nationale* to join the fight. The committee wrote to Maine's Franco-American societies, asking for their support to thwart the efforts of Irish co-religionists who were working against the use of French in the Diocese of Portland. The societies subsequently began sponsoring fundraising events, such as whist parties, to raise money for *la Cause Nationale.*[40]

As *la Cause Nationale* gained momentum and planned a convention in Lewiston for francophone delegates from throughout Maine, the Irish Vicar General and the Dominican priests of Lewiston tried to cool the movement. Acting on behalf of Bishop O'Connell, who was abroad, the Vicar General called Joseph Côté, the convention's secretary, to Portland; while the substance of their discussions remained secret, Monsignor Edward F. Hurley, the Vicar General, must have pressured Côté to ensure the convention's proceedings remained respectful of the Catholic Church and its clergy. Hurley also telegrammed the Dominican pastor: *"Vous devez accepter la Présidence de la grande convention nationale de Lewiston,"* the Dominicans recorded in their chronicle. Hurley then visited the Dominicans in Lewiston and went to the hospital to see the ailing pastor, Alexandre-Louis Mothon. Following Hurley's visit, the Dominicans noted

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[40]*Le Messager*, 14 décembre 1905, p. 2, 19 décembre 1905, p. 7, 8 février 1906, p. 2, 10 février 1906.

la Cause Nationale: the National Cause

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that they did not agree with all of the goals of *la Cause Nationale* as reported in *Le Messager, "et on regarde comme très important de s'en emparer pour lui donner une direction."* As the Dominicans expressed hope that Mothon would be well enough to do the job, they implied that they wanted to preserve, above all, the interests of Maine's Catholic Church in its conflict with Franco-Americans.[41] But, in seeking to disconnect religion from nationality, the French Dominicans parted with Franco-Americans who viewed them as inseparable.

Francophone elites attending the March 1906 convention highlighted the fact that Franco-Americans made up 80,000 of Maine's 106,000 Catholics. They called for priests of the same heritage in parishes where Franco-Americans constituted a majority, and they requested the appointment of a Franco-American or, at the very least, a French-speaking bishop to succeed O'Connell, who had recently been elevated. While the convention acknowledged the importance of bilingual education in the parish schools, it argued the need to maintain the French language in order to preserve the Catholic faith of Maine's Franco-American population. *"La langue est la gardienne de la foi,"* convention

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[41]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 11, 4 mars 1906, p. 50, 9 mars 1906, p. 64, 11 mars 1906, p. 71.

"Vous devez...de Lewiston,": "You must accept the presidency of the large national convention of Lewiston,"

"et on regarde...une direction.": "and we regard taking hold of it very important to give it direction."

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delegates strongly believed.[42] In this respect, individuals of French-Canadian birth and background differed from Irish Catholics for whom no connection existed between language and faith. This difference was at the heart of the controversies that divided Irish and Franco-American Catholics in the early twentieth century.

Several Dominicans, including Mothon, attended the two-day *convention nationale*, held at the hall of *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier*. The Dominicans, however, chose not to serve on the committees organized *"pour traiter les difficultes questions."* *Le Messager* recognized the role the Dominicans played at the convention and, when it found itself embroiled in a dispute with them three months later, publicly alleged that Mothon had attended to inhibit the delegates and to spy for the Irish Vicar General.[43]

La Cause Nationale continued to gain momentum after the convention, and it generated support from sympathetic Franco-American clergy. They fed articles to *Le Messager*, which coded their signatures as "x," "xx," or "xxx," to denote different priests. When Bishop O'Connell called individual clergymen to Portland in April 1906, the

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[42]*Le Messager*, 15 mars 1906, p. 2.
"La langue...la foi,": "The language is the guardian of the faith,"

[43]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 11, 12 mars 1906, p. 71; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, March 12, 1906, p. 3; *Le Messager*, 16 juin 1906, p. 2.
"pour traiter les difficultes questions.": "to deal with the difficult questions."

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Dominicans suspected he was bearing down on those critical of his administration. The Dominicans wondered if the priests feeding *Le Messager* would be discovered and punished and if the newspaper would be condemned.[44]

By summer, the Dominicans found themselves the object of *Le Messager*'s wrath. When a delegation representing *la Cause Nationale* went to Rome in June 1906 to plead for a bishop of French-Canadian birth or background for Maine, it learned that six years earlier Dominican priests had asked the pope and cardinals not to appoint a *"Canadien-français"* as Maine's bishop. This information turned Franco-Americans against the Dominicans from France who had administered *Saint-Pierre* parish for a quarter century. Although Lewiston's Dominicans vigorously denied the allegations of representatives of *la Cause Nationale, Le Messager,* designated as the official organ of *la Cause Nationale* by its *Comité Permanent,* harshly attacked the order in a series of articles. The newspaper argued the Dominicans were closer to the Irish than they were to Franco-Americans and they, like the Irish, harbored goals of anglicizing French-Canadian descendants in the United States. *Le Messager*'s proprietor, J.B. Couture, asserted *"qu'ils sont venus à Lewiston pour nous 'évangéliser', tout comme on le fait des Sauvages ou des Chinois."* While not blaming local Dominicans, he repeated the complaint that

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[44]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 11, 5 avril 1906, p. 122, 11 avril 1906, p. 130.

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the Dominican order had opposed appointment of a *Canadien* as bishop of Maine in 1900, and he speculated the order had done so again in 1906. From the time the Dominicans had arrived in Lewiston, Couture further complained, none of the monastery's superiors or their assistants had been of French-Canadian descent.[45]

Le Messager increasingly directed its attacks toward the French pastor. It challenged Mothon, for example, to explain why Bishop O'Connell had permitted the Dominicans to tear down *Saint-Pierre* Church to erect another, *"un temple beaucoup trop riche pour notre population."* Suffering ill-health, undoubtedly aggravated by the personal attacks, Mothon resigned in July 1906, after having served three separate stints, a total of seventeen years, as pastor of *Saint-Pierre* parish.[46]

During the controversy between *Le Messager* and the Dominicans, the latter tried to undermine the newspaper. The Dominicans took away from *Le Messager* the job of publishing the bimonthly parish bulletin, *La Quinzaine*.

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[45]*Le Messager*, 7 juin 1906, p. 2, 12 juin 1906, pp. 1-2, 6 juillet 1906, p. 2, 10 juillet 1906, p. 1; undated copies of *La Quinzaine* inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 11, 1906, pp. 219, 239-240.

Comité Permanent: Permanent Committee

"qu'ils sont...des Chinois.": "that they came to Lewiston to 'evangelize' us, just like one does the Indians or the Chinese."

[46]*Le Messager*, 3 juillet 1906, p. 2; Mémorial du Monastère du Sacré-Coeur, Lewiston, Maine, Archives of the Dominican Sisters, Sabattus, Maine, vol. 1, 1906, p. 89.

"un temple...notre population.": "a temple much too costly for our population."

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They also asked the parish music director, Henry F. Roy, to launch a competing French-language newspaper. The Dominicans provided Roy with workspace, revenue from the publication of *La Quinzaine*, and some financial support, and *Le Courrier du Maine* made its first appearance on July 24, 1906.[47]

Thus the controversy over the preservation of the French language in Maine, precipitated by remarks reportedly uttered by the state's third Irish bishop, divided Lewiston's Franco-Americans from their French from France religious leaders. This dispute marked a defining moment in the history of Lewiston's francophone population. From that point, they increasingly looked to French Canadians to help them preserve their ethnic identity in the United States. No longer was it enough to have French-speaking religious leaders; Lewiston's French-Canadian descendants demanded *Canadiens*. The road to acculturation thus exhibited some twists and turns.

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[47]*Le Messager*, 12 juin 1906, p. 2; Henri F. Roy, *Échos d'Une Démission: Le Dernier Mot* (Lewiston, Maine: Echo Publishing Company, 1925), pp. 16-17, 19; Lewiston, Maine, *Le Courrier du Maine*, 24 juillet 1906, p. 1. The Dominicains had been divided over the issue of encouraging publication of *Le Courrier du Maine*, Roy later learned. For that reason, they had offered him only $100 in financial support to start this alternative newspaper, the largest amount they could provide without first gaining the approval of the monastery's council. After the Dominican provincial changed the personnel in Lewiston, Roy found himself lacking support for *Le Courrier du Maine*, and the newspaper ceased publication five months after it began. Roy, pp. 18-19; French-language newspaper clipping inserted onto the opening page of la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 12.

La Quinzaine: The Fortnightly
Le Courrier du Maine: The Courier of Maine

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At a meeting of over 700 persons at *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* hall in July 1906, Lewiston Franco-Americans decided to ask the Dominican provincial from France to appoint a pastor of French-Canadian heritage to succeed Mothon at *Saint-Pierre* parish. Delegates of *le Comité Permanent de la Cause Nationale* met in person with the provincial, and he granted their request. He split Mothon's position in two, appointing a French prior to head the monastery and a French-Canadian pastor to oversee the parish. *Le Messager* subsequently expressed its public thanks for *"un curé canadien."*[48]

The changeover to pastors of French-Canadian descent proved significant and long-lasting. From 1906 until 1986, when the Dominican order stopped administering *Saint-Pierre* parish, all pastors were of French-Canadian birth and background; in fact, all but one were Canadian-born. These French-Canadian *curés* and the one Franco-American pastor helped Lewiston's francophone population to preserve its ethnicity through much of the twentieth century.

Several developments internal to the Dominican order also helped Lewiston's Franco-Americans retain their ethnicity. Shortly after the French Dominicans had established themselves in Lewiston in the early 1880s, Mothon had clashed with the provincial vicar for North

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[48]*Le Messager*, 14 juillet 1906, p. 2, 4 août 1906, p. 2; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 11, 29 juillet 1906, p. 283, 31 juillet 1906, p. 284.

"un curé canadien": "a French-Canadian pastor"

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America, stationed in Saint-Hyacinthe. Mothon aspired that the Lewiston mission develop not as part of the Canadian province but as an autonomous American organization with an English-language ministry. The provincial vicar, also from France, instead saw the Dominican missions in North America as one administrative unit. Initially, the Dominican monasteries in Lewiston and Saint-Hyacinthe differed in that French from France Dominicans had assignments in Lewiston and French-Canadian Dominicans had theirs in Saint-Hyacinthe. A controversy ensued when Mothon strenuously objected to the transfer of a French Dominican from Lewiston to Saint-Hyacinthe. The provincial vicar prevailed over Mothon in this dispute and won the authority to move personnel between missions in Canada and the United States.[49] This development ensured an infusion of French-Canadian clergy into Lewiston for over a century.

Separatist tendencies persisted within the Dominican order in the late nineteenth century. In 1887, Lewiston's Dominicans took over the administration of *Sainte-Anne* parish in Fall River, Massachusetts, to help resolve an ethnic controversy in the Diocese of Providence. The Irish bishop, Thomas Francis Hendricken, had precipitated conflicts throughout his diocese by appointing Irish pastors to French-Canadian parishes, including *Sainte-Anne*.

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[49]Plourde, "Cent ans de vie paroissiale," pp. 27-29; J. Antonin Plourde, *Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents*, vol. 2: *Les cinq fondations avant l'autonomie (1881-1911)* (s.l., s.é, 1975), pp. 16-19.

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Embroiled in disputes with French-Canadian Catholics, Hendricken had not offered the French Dominicans a mission in his diocese in 1880, when they had first approached him. His successor, Bishop Matthew Harkins, consulted Bishop James Healy of Maine for a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Fall River, and Healy pointed to the Lewiston Dominicans, whom Harkins subsequently invited to Fall River. Tensions did not immediately dissipate, however. As a Dominican historian wrote in 1973, "*les Canadiens ne pardonnent pas facilement la ferveur qu'ont leurs pasteurs français à frayer avec les curés irlandais; de leur côté les religieux français ont des difficultés à s'entendre avec leurs confrères canadiens.*" This tension between French and French-Canadian clergy led to a secret struggle in the late nineteenth century in which French Dominicans from Fall River sought to separate the U.S. missions from the administrative control of Canada, in order to remain tied to the Province of France. As early as 1884, when the Lewiston mission had shown its separatist bent, the Dominicans in Canada had themselves hoped to achieve autonomy from France for the houses of North America. Between 1908 and 1911, due to problems the Dominican order had in France stemming from anti-clericalism, the missions in Canada and the United States gained autonomy from France and together became *la Congrégation Saint-Dominique*.[50]

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[50]Jules Antonin Plourde, O.P., *Dominicains au Canada: album historique* (s.l., s.é., 1973), pp. 52, 72-75, 99; Plourde,

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This development facilitated the Canadianization of the francophone Dominicans in North America. The effects were visible in the composition of the Lewiston monastery. Whereas none of the six Dominican priests and brothers who took over *Saint-Pierre* parish in 1881 had been French Canadian, fourteen of the sixteen Dominican priests and brothers (87.5 percent) in 1920 were French-Canadian migrants, and the other two were native of Belgium and France. The establishment of a novitiate in Saint-Hyacinthe also promoted the Canadianization of the order. By 1889, aspiring Dominicans from Canada could pursue their religious studies in Québec and no longer had to travel to Europe for all or part of their training.[51] The location of the Dominican novitiate served to solidify and to perpetuate French-Canadian control over the *Saint-Dominique* province. Over time, the Dominican novitiate provided a large supply of French-Canadian clergy to the order, and their assignment to Lewiston played no small role in the cultural persistence of *Saint-Pierre* parish. In the early twentieth century, like Lewiston's Franco-Americans, the

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Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents, vol. 2, pp. 251-252, 493-496.

"*les Canadiens...confrères canadiens.*": "the French Canadians do not easily forgive the earnestness with which their French pastors associate with Irish pastors; for their part, the French priests have trouble getting along with their French-Canadian colleagues."

la Congrégation Saint-Dominique: the Saint Dominic Congregation

[51]*U.S. Census, 1920; L'Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs. Les Dominicains: Qui sont-ils? Que font-ils? Où sont-ils?* ([Montréal?: s.é., 1986?]), p. 15.

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Dominicans became engaged in a struggle with Maine's fourth consecutive Irish bishop.

Displeased by the appointment of another Irish bishop for Maine in 1906, Franco-Americans from Lewiston and other parts of the state clashed with Louis S. Walsh shortly after he arrived in the Diocese of Portland. In one controversy that Walsh inherited from his predecessor, Franco-Americans from Lewiston and other parts of the state criticized the division of a Franco-American parish in Waterville, Maine. They strongly protested the reassignment of 1,200 Franco-Americans to a new parish created to meet the needs of 265 Irish Catholics and headed by an Irish pastor. Franco-American concerns centered on ethnic differences: based on what the Irish pastor and Irish bishop had said, they feared English would become the only language used in the new parish, and they worried that francophones might not establish an easy rapport with the Irish pastor.[52]

In another, much larger, controversy with Bishop Walsh, Franco-Americans wanted the state legislature to repeal an 1887 law establishing the bishop as sole proprietor of all Catholic Church properties in Maine. Instead, they wanted parishes to exercise control over their own institutions, just as the *fabriques*, or parish

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[52]Michael Guignard, "Maine's Corporation Sole Controversy," *Maine Historical Society Newsletter* 12 (Winter 1973), p. 113; *Le Messager*, 14 août 1906; Michael Guignard, "The Case of Sacred Heart Parish," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 22 (Summer 1982), pp. 21-36.

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corporations, had in Québec. Franco-Americans particularly feared that Walsh would use their funds to pursue the goal of assimilating them into U.S. society. Because the 1887 law had made it easier for the Church to establish credit, Walsh opposed the efforts of Franco-Americans to change it. He subsequently became the object of bitter attacks in the Franco-American press. The ensuing dispute, called the Corporation Sole controversy, lasted nearly a decade. During the controversy, Walsh interdicted six men, including the editor of *Le Messager*, "because of the grave public scandal given by their various words and acts in a recent attack on Church authority, Church property and Church law in the Diocese of Portland." Through a letter written by the diocesan chancellor, Walsh communicated his decision and asked priests to publicize it by reading the interdiction at masses in Lewiston and most likely throughout the diocese. In the letter, Walsh warned Catholic societies not to associate with the interdicted men lest they risk being "deprived of their rights and privileges as a Catholic Society in the Diocese of Portland."[53]

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[53]Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 264; Guignard, "Maine's Corporation Sole Controversy," pp. 111-130; *Le Messager*, 15 mai 1911, p. 4; James A. Carey, Chancellor and Secretary, Diocese of Portland, to "Rev. Father," May 9, 1911, les archives des Dominicans; la Chronique des Dominicains, 14 mai 1911, p. 156. Through the *fabriques*, French Canadians in Canada managed the finances of their own parishes; as a result, their parishes functioned as self-governing units in which members took a proprietary interest. Allan Greer, *The Patriots and the People: The*

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Like other Irish bishops in the United States, Walsh sought to Americanize the Catholic Church in the early twentieth century. This goal, coupled with Walsh's desire to assert his authority over the dissident francophones who challenged it, led him to attempt to curtail some French-Canadian practices in Maine. As a result of the Corporation Sole controversy, in which Franco-American societies played a central role, Walsh forbade the national societies from entering churches with their banners and insignias, something they typically did on French-Canadian feast days like that of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste*. After a synod in Portland in 1886, Bishop Healy had similarly refused Franco-American societies entrance to Maine's Catholic churches. But, after negotiations with Lewiston's Dominican priests and ethnic societies, Healy had agreed to consider the national associations as parish organizations if they accepted an appointed chaplain, submitted their bylaws to the bishop for approval, and gave the chaplain authority to overrule decisions adversely affecting issues of faith or morals. Despite the 1889 decision of the Council of Baltimore not to allow societies to enter Catholic churches in regalia, Lewiston's Franco-American associations had continued to do so until Walsh's 1911 ban. In 1905, the year before Walsh became bishop, the only societies that could not enter *Saint-Pierre* Church as a

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Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), p. 68.

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group were those without a religious character, namely those that did not restrict membership to Catholics and which did not have a chaplain who could overrule decisions. Walsh's ban, *Le Messager* complained, sought to separate religion and nationality, elements it viewed inseparable, as the slogan on its masthead continued to proclaim. The ban also discriminated against Franco-Americans, *Le Messager* charged, because it did not apply to Irish, Polish, and other ethnic societies.[54]

One effect of Walsh's ban was to dampen enthusiasm for *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebrations during the second decade of the twentieth century. Unable to enter the Catholic Church as a group, Lewiston's national societies opted not to organize parades in some years. Celebrations consequently lacked the grandeur of the past. Sometimes, they even lacked a religious component. Preoccupied with *la Cause Nationale*, Franco-American societies simply lacked the energy and the resources to organize large and splendid celebrations in honor of the patron saint of French

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[54]James S. Olson, *Catholic Immigrants in America* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1987), pp. 33-46, 197-202; *Le Messager*, 2 et 9 juin 1887, 2 juin 1911, p. 1; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 2, 25 août 1886, pp. 60-61, 5 juin 1887, pp. 108-109, 10 juin 1887, p. 109, 22 octobre 1887, p. 128; James Aug. Healy, Evêque de Portland, au Rev. A.-L. Mothon, O.P., 19 octobre 1887, les archives des Dominicains, correspondance de Mgr. Healy; Gerard J. Brault, *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England* (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1986), p. 76; *La Quinzaine*, no. 10, inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 10, 1905, pp. 221, 224.

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Canadians. As *Le Messager* put it in 1917, *"le narcotique du Corporation Sole ferait-il son effet, par hasard?"*[55]

Following Bishop Walsh's interdiction of six *Canadiens*, *la Cause Nationale* became the central topic of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day speeches for at least a half-decade. Whereas past speeches had usually focused on the place of Franco-Americans in the larger U.S. society, they now centered on their minority status in Maine. One of the interdicted, journalist Alfred Bonneau of Biddeford, Maine, promoted *la Cause Nationale* in 1911, asking Franco-Americans of the Lewiston-Auburn area to withhold funds from the Diocese of Portland and to support instead their parish schools. At Lewiston's *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebrations in 1915 and 1916, Bonneau continued to promote *la Cause Nationale*. He argued in 1916 that the situation of Maine's Franco-Americans was similar to that of French Canadians in Ontario.[56] Bonneau's remark was a reference to legislation against French-language use by the francophone minority in the schools of Canada's most populous province. In short, the conflict with Bishop Walsh caused a shift in the principal theme of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day speeches: rather than focus on the acculturation of "loyal"

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[55]*Le Messager*, 21 juin 1911, p. 5, 21 juin 1916, p. 8, 25 juin 1917, p. 8, 6 juin 1919, p. 8, 23 juin 1920, p. 6.
"le narcotique..., par hasard?": "would the narcotic of the Corporation Sole be taking effect, by chance?"

[56]*Le Messager*, 26 juin 1911, p. 4, 25 juin 1915, p. 1, 26 juin 1916, p. 8.

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francophones into U.S. society, keynote speakers addressed the conflict with the Irish hierarchy of Maine, particularly over the issue of preserving the French language. Thus, Walsh's efforts to push the Americanization of French-Canadian descendants precipitated ethnic tension and conflict, and, if anything, had the effect of increasing the determination of Lewiston's Franco-Americans to control the acculturation of French speakers in U.S. society. For them, it was not a straight-line process.

Celebrating Christmas with a midnight mass was another French-Canadian custom that Walsh curtailed. Because the pope had asked Catholic churches worldwide to open the twentieth century in religious celebration, *Saint-Pierre* Church had offered a midnight mass on New Year's Eve in 1900. At the request of parishioners, Pastor Alexandre-Louis Mothon wrote Bishop O'Connell in 1902 for permission to offer a midnight mass on Christmas Eve, explaining fears of disorder had prevented these celebrations in the past, but he pointed out that the midnight mass at the start of the new century had gone well. O'Connell granted his permission, later received Mothon's report that there were no disturbances within or outside of the church, and he allowed Franco-Americans to hold midnight masses at Christmas through the end of his tenure as Bishop of Portland. Unlike his predecessor, Walsh permitted midnight masses only among men and women religious and not the

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laity.[57] While the reasons for Walsh's decision have gone unrecorded, he must have felt motivated to withhold ecclesiastical privileges from the ethnic group that challenged his authority as head of Maine's Catholic Church.

As we shall see in the next chapter, Bishop Walsh favored the creation of territorial rather than national parishes, so that Catholics of all nationalities living within a parish's defined boundaries attended the same church. But, in 1907, Walsh divided *Saint-Pierre* to create another national parish in Lewiston for Franco-Americans living in the downtown industrial section known as *Petit Canada*. Rather than support an expansion of *Saint-Pierre* Church, they had asked for their own church as early as 1890, and French-Canadian descendants in New Auburn had made a similar request. In 1891, the Dominicans established a chapel-school in New Auburn, and they administered it until 1902, when Bishop O'Connell separated New Auburn's approximately 400 Franco-American families

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[57]*Le Messager*, 31 décembre 1900, inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 5, p. 393; A.-L. Mothon to Monseigneur [Bishop William H. O'Connell], December 1, 1902, January 8, 1903, Chancery Archives, Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine, Saint Peter's Parish File; W.H. O'Connell, Bishop of Portland, to Very Rev. A.-L. Mothon, O.P., December 2, 1902, les archives des Dominicains; *La Quinzaine*, 1 janvier 1905, inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 10, p. 4; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 10, 25 décembre 1905, p. 380, vol. 12, 25 décembre 1907, p. 214, 1908, p. 279, vol. 13, 25 décembre 1913, p. 281; Louis S. Walsh, Bishop of Portland, to Rev. J.A. Dallaire, O.P., Lewiston, December 22, 1907, Chancery Archives, Saint Peter's Parish File; Cecile Levasseur, comp., *75th Anniversary of the Founding of St. Mary's Parish, Lewiston, Maine, 1907-1982* (n.p., 1982), p. 15.

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from the 2,000-plus families of *Saint-Pierre* to create the parish of *Saint-Louis*, thereafter administered by secular (that is, diocesan) clergy. When the Dominicans obtained O'Connell's permission in 1904 to build a larger church in Lewiston, ostensibly because the existing structure required major repairs, Franco-Americans in *Petit Canada* renewed their request for a church of their own, closer to where they lived, rather than support a new building for *Saint-Pierre*. Despite divisions within the Franco-American community over this issue, the Dominicans in 1905 tore down *Saint-Pierre* Church, built a temporary chapel, and began construction of the basement of the large church that stands today. Discontent with the decision persisted in *Petit Canada*, which continued to push for a new parish. The displeasure of French-Canadian migrants in this matter may have had its roots in the *fabrique* tradition with which the migrants were familiar. Under the leadership of the first Canadian-born Dominican pastor of Lewiston, who was probably also versed in the tradition, the order polled the residents of *Petit Canada* during the 1906 parish visit, and the Dominicans subsequently decided to recommend dividing the parish in order to end the squabbling in the francophone community.[58] Residents of *Petit Canada* also

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[58]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, April 5, 7, 1890; Ralph Skinner, *Historically Speaking on Lewiston-Auburn, Maine, Churches* (Lewiston, Maine: By the Author, 1965), pp. 103-104; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 7, 16 octobre 1902, p. 193, 26 octobre 1902, p. 195, vol. 9, 30 octobre 1904, p. 241, 12 novembre 1904, p. 250, vol. 11, 5 novembre 1906, p. 375; typescript notes of Reverend Philip

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voiced their desire for a *Canadien* as pastor. In 1907, Walsh met with the individuals seeking a new parish, and he separated 825 Franco-American families from *Saint-Pierre* to create the national parish of *Sainte-Marie*, to which he appointed a pastor of French-Canadian descent. While local Franco-American leaders and the Dominicans approved of the establishment of *Sainte-Marie* parish, despite the ongoing construction of a new church for *Saint-Pierre*, Walsh likely had other motivations for his decision. Some have speculated that he felt threatened by the plan of the Dominicans to build a cathedral-sized, Franco-American church in Lewiston.[59] Succeeding events suggest he may have agreed to create another national parish in Lewiston in order to limit the influence of the Dominicans in the Spindle City.

In a little-known aspect of Maine's Corporation Sole controversy, Bishop Walsh struggled privately with the Dominicans for administrative control of *Saint-Pierre* parish during the public controversy and for long after it

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Desjardins, Chancery Archives; *Le Messager*, 1 novembre 1904, p. 7, 3 mars 1906, p. 2. The results of the parish visit revealed that 380 families of *Petit Canada* (Little Canada) supported creating a new parish in Lewiston, 200 did not, and 220 others had no opinion. La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 11, 18 novembre 1906, p. 383.

[59]*Le Messager*, 4 mai 1907, p. 3, 10 mai 1907, p. 6; *Programme-Souvenir, 1907-1932: Vingt-cinquième anniversaire de la Paroisse Sainte-Marie* (Lewiston, Maine: s.é., 1932), p. 7; Bishop Louis S. Walsh to V. Rev. Paul Duchaussoy, O.P., Dominican Monastery, Lewiston, June 21, 1907, Chancery Archives, Saint Peter's Parish File; Edgar Allen Beem, "La magnifique eglise [*sic*] gothique SS. Pierre et Paul: The Restoration of Lewiston's Franco-American Mother Church," *Maine Times*, May 17, 1991, p. 3.

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subsided. Because Reverend Joseph A. Dallaire, the first Dominican pastor of French-Canadian descent, had borrowed money on the parish's behalf and had changed architects and the plans for the new church without first securing diocesan approval, Walsh dismissed him. In 1912, when the Dominicans replaced the order's third French-Canadian Lewiston pastor, Walsh protested to the provincial in Saint-Hyacinthe that they had done so without first consulting him. Walsh further informed the provincial that they had to "reach some understanding in regard to the status of the Community in that parish" before he would consider the appointment of another Dominican pastor to *Saint-Pierre*. He asked the provincial to meet with him in Portland "and to bring whatever mutual contracts or signed documents there may be that have passed between the Bishop of Portland and the Congregation of St. Dominic."[60]

Walsh, it turns out, wanted the title to *Saint-Pierre* Church. The Dominicans maintained that Bishop Healy had granted them title to the church property in 1881 and that, according to the terms of the convention with him, they could hold it until the order left Lewiston. Walsh contacted Mothon who, as the first Dominican pastor of *Saint-Pierre*, had made the arrangements with Bishop Healy. Mothon subsequently informed Walsh--and the Dominican

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[60]Louis S. Walsh, Bishop of Portland, to Very Rev. H. Hage, O.P., Vicar General, April 22, 1909, February 1, 1912, les archives des Dominicains.

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provincial in Sainte-Hyacinthe, who had also contacted Mothon for the same information--that Healy had later asked him to pass title to *Saint-Pierre* back to the Diocese of Portland, in order to conform with decrees of the Council of Baltimore about placing church properties under diocesan control. Mothon indicated that he had agreed to Healy's request, but various circumstances had prevented the two from signing the necessary paperwork prior to Healy's death. After receiving Mothon's letter, Walsh contacted the Dominican provincial to request the transfer of *Saint-Pierre* parish property to the Diocese of Portland "as agreed upon by the late Bishop Healy and Father Mothon." When the provincial asked Walsh to let matters stand, Walsh dismissed the idea and proposed plans to take the matter to higher authorities in the Catholic Church; Walsh also threatened to withhold his approval for various needs of the parish: "The question of schools and further developments in the parish must certainly depend in a large measure upon the settlement of this matter." When the provincial did not agree to Walsh's proposal for a conference, Walsh informed him that he would withhold "favors" from the Dominicans, including his permission for "any other [Dominican] Fathers [to] come into the Diocese." Walsh steadfastly withheld approval for a new school for *Saint-Pierre* during this private struggle with the Dominicans for the rights to the parish property. In 1916, when the Dominican Master General in Rome asked Walsh to

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approve plans for a new school for *Saint-Pierre*, he informed him the Dominicans had decided to turn the church property over to the Diocese of Portland but would reserve the property of the monastery.[61] Walsh, in turn, allowed the construction of the new school, but he and the Dominicans continued to dispute technical points about the transfer until his death in 1924.

Ethnicity was at the root of this private conflict between Walsh and the Dominicans. The conflict, an extension of the Corporation Sole controversy which pitted French-Canadian descendants against their Irish bishop, led French-Canadian Dominicans to oppose the actions of the Irish bishop to exercise control over parish property. Correspondence from Mothon reveals that French Dominicans were more flexible in acceding to the demands of the Irish hierarchy than were French-Canadian Dominicans. Walsh implicitly recognized this fact: "The practical expulsion of the French Fathers from the Convent in Lewiston, the establishment of the new Province in Canada controlling the houses in the United States, and various local difficulties

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[61]*Paroisse Canadienne-Française de Lewiston (Maine): Album historique* ([Lewiston, Maine]: Les Pères Dominicains, 1899), p. 32; Plourde, "Cent ans de vie paroissiale," p. 19; copie de la lettre du Fr. A.-L. Mothon à Monseigneur Walsh, Evêque de Portland [1912], les archives des Dominicains; Louis S. Walsh, Bishop of Portland, to Very Rev. H. Hage, O.P., Provincial, May 13, 1912, July 30, 1912, January 20, 1913, les archives des Dominicains; copy of letter from Louis S. Walsh, Bishop of Portland, to Very Rev. Lewis Theissling, O.P., Master General, August 5, 1914, les archives des Dominicains; Fr. Lewis Theissling, Master General, to the Bishop of Portland, September 19, 1916, les archives des Dominicains.

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affecting the personnel and the administration of the parish in Lewiston," he wrote Mothon in 1913, "have all considerably and substantially changed the original purpose and spirit of their establishment." Frustrated with the difficulty he had in getting the French-Canadian Dominicans to cede parish property to the diocese, Walsh decided to ask the Dominican Master General in Rome to change the ethnic composition of the Lewiston monastery, to provide priests *"de toutes nationalités."* Walsh received no response to this request.[62] As we shall see in the next chapter, Walsh continued to struggle with the Dominicans--and with Franco-Americans--until his death in 1924.

The conflicts between Walsh and Franco-Americans in Maine, which surely helped motivate the bishop to attempt to curtail some French-Canadian practices in the state, may also have led him to push for an American education for francophone candidates to the priesthood. In 1919, for instance, the diocesan chancellor communicated to the pastor of *Sainte-Marie* parish Walsh's permission to send a Franco-American man to study at the Sulpician Seminary in Montréal, where Walsh himself had studied for two years. But the chancellor added that Walsh "wishes to say that you

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[62]Louis S. Walsh, Bishop of Portland, to Rev. A.-L. Mothon, O.P., January 24, 1913, les archives des Dominicains; undated, unsigned, holographic note in French which begins "Réponse du Revdssm P Procureur Général au T.R.P. Hage vicaire général de la Congrégation St. Dominique, à propos d'une demande faite par l'eveque [*sic*] de Portland (Me) au Rdssme P. Général," les archives des Dominicains.

"de toutes nationalités.": "of all nationalities."

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and the young student will make a mistake in not having him go to Baltimore."[63] Whether this advice was standard on Walsh's part or whether it constituted an exception is not known. In light of the ethnic conflicts that plagued Walsh's tenure as bishop, it suggested a desire on his part to limit French-Canadian influence in the diocese.

The struggles between Lewiston's Franco-Americans and Maine's Irish bishops during the opening decades of the twentieth century, and the competition that existed between Franco-American and Irish politicians to award patronage during this period, might seem to suggest that issues of ethnic identity preoccupied only the elites. But ethnicity also defined relationships for ordinary Franco-Americans. A few scant reports in *Le Messager* reveal that this was true in sports. In July 1919, Franco-American and Irish residents of Lewiston and Auburn formed their own baseball teams to compete against one another. *"Pour donner plus de confort et de liberté aux spectateurs,"* even the fans would be segregated, *Le Messager* announced in anticipation of the eagerly-awaited game. One section of the stands would be reserved for the Irish, another for the *Canadiens*, and a large section between them for those who remained neutral, *Le Messager* explained. Over 1,000 fans attended the game, which the Irish team won five to three. *"Le club Canadien*

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[63]Geo. P. Johnson, Chancellor, to Rev. Joseph Desilets, Lewiston, September 7, 1919, Chancery Archives, Saint Mary's Parish File; Registre du Grand Séminaire de Montréal, les archives du Grand Séminaire, Montréal, Québec, tome 1: 1840-1900, pp. 224-225.

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a été défait par les erreurs et les décisions de l'arbitre irlandais," *Le Messager* complained. To avoid this problem at the next game, the manager of the Franco-American team hoped to have an American umpire, *"afin d'avoir pleine satisfaction pour les deux clubs."*[64] By the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, therefore, ordinary residents and elites alike continued to perceive three major ethnicities in Lewiston.

Accounts of trade union activity and worker protest in the early twentieth century suggest that ethnic identity and working-class consciousness developed simultaneously among Franco-Americans in Lewiston. But, like their acculturation into U.S. society, this development was not linear: it took various twists and turns. Ethnic divisions at the workplace prevented unity in labor protests; in some cases, the divisions underscored the reality that ethnicity continued to define relationships for working-class Franco-Americans, as it did for francophone elites.

Among the signs of the growing consciousness of Franco-Americans as workers was their participation in Lewiston's Labor Day celebrations. In 1904, *Le Messager*

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[64]*Le Messager*, 11 et 18 juillet 1919, p. 8; 21 juillet 1919, p. 4.
"Pour donner...aux spectateurs,": "To make spectators feel more comfortable and at ease,"
"Le club Canadien...l'arbitre irlandais,": "The French-Canadian team was defeated by the errors and decisions of the Irish umpire,"
"afin d'avoir...deux clubs.": "in order to satisfy both teams."

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reported that about 7,000 persons took part in the city's Labor Day activities. The events included a parade in which the *Saint-Dominique* band marched, various races and contests at the city fairgrounds in which seven of the twelve winners were Franco-Americans, and an evening ball at Lewiston City Hall. While *Le Messager* did not indicate how many of the participants were Franco-Americans, its brief report of the day's activities--and its assumption that readers would be interested in the events--suggest that some had, in fact, joined in the festivities. Reports of other Labor Day celebrations in the early twentieth century also suggest the participation of Franco-Americans. In 1911, for example, the Lewiston *Journal* reported that the *Saint-Dominique* band marched in the parade and that Edmond Turmenne was among the organizers of the day's activities which drew thousands, including visitors from elsewhere in Maine. Turmenne, a Franco-American from Lewiston, was president of the Textile Workers of Maine and author of the *Colonne Textile* which appeared periodically in *Le Messager,* providing news of union activities and promoting unionization. In 1915, three Franco-American bands--*Saint-Dominique, Brigade,* and *Union Musicale*--participated in the Labor Day procession, and Franco-American (as well as non-Franco-American) individuals and businesses won awards for the work horses they entered in

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the parade which also celebrated the opening day of the Maine State Fair.[65] These newspaper reports suggest that Franco-Americans may have been more active than previously thought in developing their identity as workers and that, although there were different class variations, Franco-American identity was elastic enough to encompass all classes in the community.

There were other signs of working-class consciousness in Lewiston. In 1904, *l'Union Saint-Joseph* organized a *soirée* to raise funds for striking workers in Fall River, Massachusetts, a city which had a large Franco-American population. Lewiston-Auburn factories closed for Thanksgiving, and Franco-Americans had Requiem masses sung for workers from different rooms or departments in 1904, as they had in previous years. When Maine passed a law limiting the work week to fifty-eight hours in 1909, the *Saint-Dominique* band led Lewiston's parade, and two of the five members of the banquet reception committee were Franco-Americans. In 1911, carpenters from Lewiston and Auburn formed a local union, and all ten officers had Franco-American surnames. What these various details suggest is that the working-class and ethnic identities of

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[65]*Le Messager*, 6 septembre 1904, p. 3, 2 mars 1910, p. 2, 15 mai 1911, p. 8, 8 septembre 1915, p. 1; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, September 5, 1911, pp. 7-8, September 7, 1915, p. 2.

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a number of Franco-Americans had intersected by the early twentieth century.[66]

Accounts in *Le Messager* of union activity and labor protest add further evidence of the intersection of these identities. In September 1901, *Le Messager* reported that the Androscoggin Mill would reopen after having been closed one month for repairs. When pillowcase makers learned that they would have to operate six looms instead of four, and that their daily wages would drop from $1.30 to $1.00 when the mill reopened, fifty initially decided to strike. One week later, *Le Messager* reported that sixty striking weavers had returned to work, after agreeing to run six looms and to accept a daily wage of $1.07. *"Il est vrai que c'est moins qu'ils gagnaient auparavant,"* the newspaper sympathized, *"mais c'est toujours plus que l'agent des filatures voulait leur donner quand ils se sont mis en grève."* While *Le Messager* did not indicate the strikers were Franco-Americans, the fact that it reported the strike implies that they were. For its part, the Lewiston *Journal* offered no coverage of this labor protest. The Androscoggin Mill strike points to an important historiographic issue. The lack of coverage of small-scale worker protests in the English-language press, and the brief and incomplete reporting of the French-language

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[66]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 9, 23 novembre 1904, p. 273; Mémorial, vol. 1, Archives of the Dominican Sisters, 24 novembre, 1904, p. 36; *Le Messager*, 29 mars 1909, p. 7, 11 août 1911, p. 5.

soirée: evening program of entertainment

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press, provide reasons why historians have not recognized the greater role Franco-Americans have played in labor activities in the United States. By teasing out evidence from brief and scattered reports in the French-language press, often short paragraphs in the local news column, which scholars have tended to overlook when focusing instead on editorials, we can develop a better understanding of the world of work for Franco-Americans.[67]

In its reporting of meetings to organize Franco-American workers and the various strikes in which they participated, *Le Messager* revealed that it was not solely the mouthpiece of Franco-American elites but that it had the interests of workers at heart. In February and March 1905, the newspaper publicized efforts to organize shoeworkers. Representatives of the International Boot and Shoe Workers Union, Alphetus Mathieu of Montréal and Philip J. Byrne of Boston, came to speak in French and English to shoeworkers of Lewiston and Auburn. Large numbers of Franco-American men and women attended the meetings in both cities, *Le Messager* reported.[68] It did not specify exactly

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[67]*Le Messager*, 10 septembre 1901, pp. 3, 6, 17 septembre 1901, p. 3. C. Stewart Doty makes the same suggestion that scholars should examine the local news, and not just the editorials, to gain a better understanding of the lives of ordinary Franco-Americans in "The Future of the Franco-American Past," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 30 (Spring 2000), p. 14.

"Il est...gagnaient auparavant," "mais c'est...en grève.": "It is true that it is less than they were earning before," "but it is still more money than the mill agent wanted to give them when they went on strike."

[68]*Le Messager*, 21 février 1905, p. 7, 24 février 1905, pp. 3, 6, 28 février 1905, p. 7.

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how many attended nor how many joined the union. Nonetheless, the French-language newspaper's brief reports demonstrate that it included the francophone working class in its definition of the Franco-American community.

They also reveal the interest of Franco-American men and women in improving the conditions of their work lives. A shoe strike from December 1905 to January 1906 provides additional, though limited, evidence of this. About thirty leather workers at National Shoemakers of Auburn began the strike after asking for a salary increase and for recognition of their union. According to the Lewiston *Journal*, an organizer named Byrne of the Boot and Shoe Workers Union had instigated the strike. This must have been the Boston representative who had visited the Twin Cities earlier in the year. Unlike *Le Messager*, which indicated the demands of the shoeworkers were reasonable, the *Journal* expressed its disapproval: "The general feeling seems to be that the action of the strikers is unwarranted and should not have been taken." About twenty employees of the National Shoeworkers' Lewiston factory joined the strike in January. In reporting this news, the author of an unsigned letter to *Le Messager*'s editor referred to the strike as *"notre grève"* and asked: *"Par respect et pour l'honneur de notre nationalité, nous demanderions à nos compatriotes de s'éloigner de la manufacture et de ne pas faire de trouble, bien qu'en réalité nous soyons traités comme des esclaves."* The

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letter writer thus revealed that Franco-Americans participated in the strike, something that reports in the *Journal* and *Le Messager* did not make clear. The letter writer further complained that management maintained a blacklist, preventing strikers from finding jobs in other local shoe shops. At least eighty-four shoeworkers from Lewiston and Auburn went on strike before it ended in mid-January. When *Le Messager* reported that the strikers and management had reached a satisfactory agreement, it congratulated workers for having handled themselves well. Workers and manufacturers chose not to publicize the terms of their agreement, indicated the *Journal*, which also reported that nearly all strikers would regain their employment.[69] While we do not know how many Franco-Americans took part in the strike at National Shoemakers, what is significant is that they had a role in labor protest in the early twentieth century, countering impressions of their passivity at the workplace.

Other reports of labor protests present a mixed picture, one of both cooperation and a lack of unity in labor activity. In July 1906, seventy-five men working on

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[69]*Le Messager*, 27 décembre 1905, p. 6, 29 décembre 1905, p. 3, lettre non pas signé de 9 janvier 1906, p. 3, 9 janvier 1906, p. 6, 16 janvier 1906, p. 6; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, December 28 and 29, 1905, p. 9, January 9 and 15, 1906, p. 9.

"notre grève": "our strike"

"Par respect...des esclaves.": "Out of respect and for the integrity of our nationality, we would ask our compatriots to stay away from the factory and not to cause trouble, although in reality we are being treated as slaves."

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the electric railroad in Lewiston struck to back their demand to shorten their workday from ten to nine hours. *Le Messager* revealed that there was inter-ethnic cooperation in this strike: *"Les grévistes sont des Canadiens, à l'exception de sept ou huit Irlandais, mais tous sont d'accord pour demander la réduction des heures de travail."* The street railroad paid off the striking workers and indicated it would seek to replace them with Italian laborers. The strikers asked Mayor William E. Webster to help them in pressing their demands, and he agreed because the demands were reasonable, *Le Messager* reported. A Democrat, Webster surely recognized that the Irish and Franco-Americans were important sources of electoral support. Despite the mayor's efforts on behalf of the workers, the street railroad was not inclined to meet their demands. Encouraged when five Franco-Americans returned to work, it would not consider the offer of strikers to take a five-cent wage cut, for a daily salary of $1.60, in exchange for a shorter workday. It appears that local Franco-Americans were not the only ones complicating the strike situation. At one point, *Le Messager* expressed its hope that Franco-Americans from Brunswick, the former location of the railroad's central office, would not take the jobs of striking workers. Neither *Le Messager* nor the

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Journal appears to have reported the outcome of this strike.[70]

The strike of electric railroad workers illustrates several important points nonetheless. It demonstrates a measure of cooperation between Franco-American and Irish laborers to improve their difficult working conditions, highlighting the intersection of ethnic and working-class identities in Lewiston. It also demonstrates that the lack of worker unity was not necessarily the product of ethnic divisions; most of the strikers were Franco-Americans, yet it was a handful of Franco-Americans who returned to work and therefore complicated the protest for the remaining strikers. Like acculturation into U.S. society, the development of class consciousness did not proceed in a straight-line fashion among Lewiston's Franco-American population.

This was the case in the shoe strike of 1913, one for which *Le Messager* provided extensive coverage. In late September, about ninety shoeworkers from Lunn and Sweet left the Auburn factory to protest the fines the company had assessed for mistakes they had made on the job,

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[70]*Le Messager*, 14 juillet 1906, p. 3, 19 juillet 1906, p. 6, 21 juillet 1906, p. 7; Kirk and Barrows, *Historic Lewiston: Its Government*, p. 32. Perhaps *Le Messager* reported the outcome of the strike in subsequent issues which are illegible on microfilm; only one article on the strike could be found in the *Lewiston Evening Journal*.

"Les grévistes...de travail.": "The strikers are French Canadians, except for seven or eight Irish, but all are in agreement about demanding a reduction in the hours of work."

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claiming they could not support themselves with the resulting wages. A few of the strikers were Franco-Americans; the others were mostly Greeks, reported *Le Messager*. By early October, 135 shoeworkers were on strike. When *Le Messager* learned that Franco-Americans were taking the jobs of striking workers, it argued that they were hurting other Franco-Americans and advised them not to do so. The newspaper (as usual) considered the demands of the strikers reasonable, and it argued that Franco-Americans would ultimately benefit if the labor protest succeeded in improving the wages of workers. *Le Messager* had to come to terms with the working-class consciousness of Franco-Americans, for they comprised the base of its readership, and it tried to give them direction in this strike. But it appears not to have been successful. In mid-October, *Le Messager* reported that S.J. Pothier, the secretary-treasurer of the Shoeworkers Protective Union from Haverhill, Massachusetts, had arrived in Lewiston to lead the strike. About seventy-five Greeks escorted Pothier through several streets in a parade to the city's Central Labor Union hall while playing Greek music.[71] In its reporting of the event, *Le Messager* seems to have missed the irony that the strike leader the Greeks enthusiastically welcomed had a Franco-American surname and no Franco-American followers.

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[71]*Le Messager*, 29 septembre 1913, p. 8, 3 et 13 octobre 1913, p. 8.

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Ethnic conflict erupted between the Greeks and Franco-Americans in Lewiston. One evening, some Greeks called two Franco-Americans "'scabs.'" The following evening, reported *Le Messager*, a group of Franco-Americans gathered together to ensure that it did not happen again. Consequently, upwards of thirty Greeks and Franco-Americans broke into a fight that lasted about a half-hour. It ended only when police broke it up; had they not, claimed *Le Messager*, someone might have died. A letter to *Le Messager*'s editor suggested that past and current ethnic tensions between Franco-Americans and Greeks were at the center of the conflict. In the past, Greeks had tended to accept lower wages and to work as strike breakers. Shoe factory bosses encouraged the ethnic tensions, the writer pointed out, in order to manage their workforce. Yet, like the editor of *Le Messager*, the individual appealed to Franco-Americans to unite with the Greeks in this strike and not to serve as strike breakers, so that all groups could benefit in the end.[72]

But that did not happen. About one week after the fight, Joseph J. Ettor, a national organizer for the International Workers of the World, came to Lewiston. In addition to meeting with the Greek strikers, Ettor spoke with about a dozen Franco-American shoeworkers who had returned to the factory to convince them not to go back

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[72]*Le Messager*, 13 octobre 1913, p. 8, lettre signé "XX," 13 octobre 1913, p. 1.

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until the strike was settled. A shoe factory boss subsequently ventured into Lewiston's *Petit Canada* to try to persuade the shoeworkers not to heed Ettor's counsel, and the boss threatened that they would not have jobs after the strike if they did not return to work. Another incident reveals that some Franco-Americans continued to take the jobs of striking workers, causing ethnic tensions to persist between the Greeks and Franco-Americans. On their way home from Lunn and Sweet during the fourth week of October, strike breakers Henry Lupien, Joseph Albert, and J. Roy suffered head and leg injuries when *"une bande de Grecs"* attacked them with bricks and stones, reported *Le Messager*. Lupien required stitches to the head, and the other two sported bruises, indicated the Lewiston *Journal*. By late October, some Greeks had moved to Massachusetts to find work, and most other strikers, Greek and Franco-American, had returned to their jobs at Lunn and Sweet.[73]

The Lunn and Sweet shoe strike of 1913 reveals the competing roles of Franco-Americans in labor activity in the early twentieth century. Some Franco-Americans took part in the strike, but others interfered with it by serving as strike breakers. Consequently, competition for jobs led to conflict, as Greek and Franco-American Lewiston residents engaged in fights. Whether conflicts took place

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[73]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, October 18, 1913, p. 9, October 24, 1913, p. 14, October 28, 1913, p. 10; *Le Messager*, 17 et 20 octobre 1913, p. 8, 24 octobre 1913, p. 1, 27 et 31 octobre 1913, p. 8.
"une bande de Grecs": "a gang of Greeks"

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between Franco-American strikers and francophone strike breakers has gone unrecorded; reported conflicts were only between Greeks and Franco-Americans. Ethnic divisions, it appears, largely prevented the success of this strike. Not unlike the ethnic disputes within the Catholic Church that revealed curves in the road to acculturation, ethnic divisions in the world of work complicated the development of working-class identity among Franco-Americans. For ordinary Franco-Americans, as for the elites, ethnicity continued to establish the boundaries of relationships in the early twentieth century.

The small proportion of mixed marriages reflected this reality. High rates of endogamy persisted among each of Lewiston's three largest ethnic groups, but endogamy was particularly marked among Franco-Americans. Data compiled from the 1920 nominal census reveals that three-fourths of the American (76.5 percent) and Irish (75.0 percent) household heads had spouses of the same ethnicity, and over nine-tenths (93.5 percent) of the Franco-American heads had Franco-American spouses. Marriage records maintained by the City Clerk reveal that Franco-Americans continued in 1920 to choose spouses of the same ethnicity. Eighty (80.3) percent of the 346 marriages involving Franco-Americans in that year were with other Franco-Americans, while only twenty (19.7) percent were between a Franco-American and a person without a French name. Census data reveals that what little intermarriage existed among

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Lewiston residents of French-Canadian descent had taken place primarily among the American-born, for 96.6 percent of the first-generation heads in 1920 had Franco-American spouses, compared to 88.9 percent of those from the second generation.[74]

The membership of Lewiston's two Irish parishes in 1920 also reveals there was little intermixing between the Franco-American and Irish populations of the Spindle City. Because there are no extant rosters of church members, one must rely upon parish registers to reconstruct these lists; on the assumption that the parents of baptized children would have been members of the parish, I used their names to generate a list of the families belonging to Lewiston's Saint Joseph and Saint Patrick parishes in 1920.[75] In 77.6 percent of the fifty-eight families identified at Saint Joseph's, neither the mother nor the father of the baptized child had a French name; 6.9 percent of the families had fathers with French surnames, 13.8 percent had mothers with French maiden names, and in only one family (1.7 percent) did both parents have Franco-American names. Slightly over one-fifth (22.4 percent) of the childbearing families of Saint Joseph's, then, had at least one Franco-American member, unlike in 1880 when none had. There was a much

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[74]*U.S. Census, 1920*; index of Marriages by Groom's Last Name, Office of the City Clerk, Lewiston, Maine, 2 vols. (1999.)

[75]Among the baptized were converts to Catholicism. Because their parents would not likely have been members of these Catholic parishes, they were excluded from the data.

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smaller Franco-American presence at Saint Patrick's. Of the seventy families identified, 92.9 percent were headed by parents who both had non-French names, 1.4 percent had fathers with French surnames, 5.7 percent had mothers with French maiden names, and there were no families where both parents had French names in 1920. Only 7.1 percent of Saint Patrick's families of childbearing age, then, had at least one Franco-American member in 1920; by contrast, no parents of baptized children had French names in 1892, the first full year that the parish had celebrated baptisms.[76]

The data on the membership of Saint Patrick and Saint Joseph parishes in 1920 helps reveal the extent to which Lewiston remained ethnically segregated in the early twentieth century. At the same time, it demonstrates a measure of acculturation. The intermarriage of Irish and Franco-American Catholics led to a Franco-American presence in Lewiston's two Irish parishes by 1920.[77] That presence

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[76]Baptism Registers, 1875-1892, 1914-1931, Saint Joseph Parish Rectory, Lewiston, Maine, 1880, pp. 173-208, 1920, pp. 29-36; Baptism Registers, 1892-1899, 1910-1921, Saint Patrick Parish Pastoral Center, Lewiston, Maine, 1892, pp. 312-340, 342, 1920, pp. 445-482.

[77]In her 1944 study of marriage patterns in New Haven, Connecticut, Ruby Jo Reeves Kennedy found that, while ethnic endogamy declined from 1870 to 1940, over three-fifths of marriages continued to be endogamous in 1940; much of the intermarriage that took place was among co-religionists, she contended in "Single or Triple Melting-Pot? Intermarriage Trends in New Haven, 1870-1940," *American Journal of Sociology* 49 (January 1944), pp. 331-339. While Josef J. Barton criticizes aspects of Kennedy's study, he agrees with her conclusions, based upon his study of the marriage patterns of Cleveland, Ohio. See *Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City, 1890-1950* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 163-169. For an alternative view, based upon a re-examination of the New Haven marriage records, see Ceri Peach, "Which Triple Melting Pot? A Re-examination of Ethnic Intermarriage in New Haven, 1900-1950," *Ethnic and Racial*

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existed primarily among the wives of male parishioners. These Franco-American women perhaps viewed intermarriage to their English-speaking co-religionists as an avenue to social mobility.

Franco-American and Irish elites also intermixed in a Catholic club in early-twentieth-century Lewiston. In 1901, *Le Messager* reported that *"beaucoup de nos Canadiens les plus distingués ainsi que la meilleure classe d'Irlandais catholiques"* were members of the local organization of the Knights of Columbus. In 1919, when the French-language newspaper reported with evident pleasure that *"un bon nombre"* of Franco-Americans had joined this Catholic society, it argued that the intermingling of Franco-Americans with the Irish would help each ethnic group better understand the other as they worked on spiritual and temporal matters.[78]

The information on Franco-American membership in Lewiston's Irish churches and in the Knights of Columbus provides impressionistic evidence that individuals of French-Canadian descent in Lewiston first intermixed with

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Studies 3 (January 1980), pp. 1-16. For a more contemporary portrait of ethnic intermarriage based upon the 1980 census, see Stanley Lieberson and Mary C. Waters, *From Many Strands: Ethnic and Racial Groups in Contemporary America* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1988), chapters six and seven.

[78]*Le Messager*, 9 avril 1901, p. 3, 26 février 1919, p. 6.
"beaucoup de nos...d'Irlandais catholiques": "many of our most distinguished French Canadians as well as the better class of Irish Catholics"
"un bon nombre": "a good number"

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other ethnics within Catholic institutions. If correct, this impression suggests several points. First, it indicates that Catholic (notably Irish) institutions helped facilitate the acculturation of Lewiston's Franco-American population. Second, for a fraction of Lewiston's francophone population, it suggests that identity as Catholics may have come to supersede ethnic identity, that religion possibly served as a more cohesive bond than ethnicity in identifying relationships. If accurate, this represents a change from the late nineteenth century, a possible evolution in the identity of the city's French speakers. Third, while ethnic retention and acculturation represented the same goal for the majority of Lewiston's Franco-American population in the early twentieth century, for a growing minority they appeared to be divergent goals. This, too, represents a change.

One minority, which especially concerned *Le Messager,* needed encouragement to speak French. Periodically, *Le Messager* offered brief comments in its local news section revealing that some Franco-Americans felt ashamed of the French language. Consequently, they tried to speak only English, even if they spoke it poorly. During the controversy with Bishop O'Connell in 1905, *Le Messager* suggested that, when Irish clergy heard this badly-spoken English, it motivated them to push the anglicization of Maine's Franco-Americans. The newspaper coaxed those individuals reluctant to speak French by pointing out that

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French was still the language of diplomacy and was an essential part of who they were: *"Rougir de faire usage de sa langue maternelle, c'est comme si l'on méprisait sa propre marchandise."* At the same time, *Le Messager* wanted to encourage Lewiston's Franco-Americans to improve the quality of their French, suggesting that they avoid *"paroles grossières et méchantes"* that denigrated the language and reflected a lack of education. French Dominicans of *Saint-Pierre* parish apparently did, too, for they reproduced an article from *Le Messager* in the parish publication at the turn of the century, which indicated that the French *Dames de Sion "ont peu à peu transformé le langage de nos enfants"* to *"un français si pur."*[79] It was a compliment that they did not extend to the French-Canadian *Soeurs Grises* who had taught in the parish schools before the arrival of *les Dames de Sion* and who still taught the boys and girls residing at the orphanages they directed. Thus in Lewiston there existed a tension between so-called "Parisian" French and Canadian French, a tension that Franco-American elites fought but, on occasion, inadvertently fed.

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[79]*Le Messager*, 1 mai 1903, p. 3, 27 octobre 1905, p. 2, 23 janvier 1906, p. 2; *Paroisse Canadienne-Française de Lewiston*, p. 51.

"Rougir de...propre marchandise.": "To be embarrassed to speak one's mother tongue is like scorning one's own goods."

"paroles grossières et méchantes": "vulgar and wicked words"

"ont peu...nos enfants" "un français si pur.": "gradually transformed the language of our children" "a French so pure "

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Beginning around the turn of the century, *Le Messager* found itself defending the French spoken in Lewiston against comments by the *Journal* and educated Americans who put it down. One derogatory remark came from Bowdoin College professor William MacDonald who wrote in 1896 that Maine's French-Canadian population "speaks no language save the barbarous Canadian French." In Lewiston, Americans learned what they considered to be *"real Parisian French"* at Bates College, *Le Messager* reported in 1898, but Parisians would chuckle upon hearing it, the newspaper insisted. *Le Messager* contended that Lewiston's French-Canadian descendants communicated perfectly well with the Dominicans from France, and it maintained the difference between the French of both groups was small: *"Seulement, il existe une légère différence dans l'accent, comme il en existe une entre le langage des Anglais et celui des Américains."* In perhaps the clearest and most succinct explanation of the reason for this difference, *Le Messager* quoted Benjamin Sulte, a French-Canadian historian, who had stated: *"'La forme de notre langage est perdue en France. Nous l'avons conservée [en Amérique du Nord], et cette chose ancienne devient notre originalité.'"* When Bates College organized a French club in 1904 to provide opportunities for students to practice their French, it almost certainly did not take up *Le Messager*'s suggestion

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to work on *"le français du Canada."*[80] Spoken by Lewiston's working-class population, Canadian French offered no prestige.

Tension in the community over "Parisian" and Canadian French became an issue in the appointment of language teachers in the public schools. In 1913, attorney H.E. Holmes complained in a letter to the editor of the Lewiston *Journal* that the instructors who taught French at Lewiston High School were not native speakers, something which "results in the language being taught as a dead language." Holmes pointed out that, while Franco-Americans comprised half of Lewiston's population, there were no Franco-American teachers at the local high school. Hiring one of them to teach French would help students "learn to speak the language, and to speak it with a French accent," he maintained. Pleased by Holmes' efforts, *Le Messager* revealed in a front-page headline: *"L'Avocat Holmes combat le stupide préjugé faisant supposer que nous ne parlons pas le vrai français."* In 1919, the Lewiston school commission debated whether or not to hire a Franco-American to fill a vacancy to teach French at the high school. A Franco-

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[80]*Le Messager*, 25 octobre 1898, p. 2 (emphasis in original), 28 octobre 1898, p. 6, 16 février 1904, p. 3; William MacDonald, "French Canadians in Maine," *The Nation* 63 (October 15, 1896), p. 286.

"Seulement, il...des Américains.": "There only exists a small difference in the accent, just as one exists between the language of the English and that of the Americans."

"'La forme...notre originalité.'": "'The form of our language is lost in France. We preserved it [in North America], and this old form has become our originality.'"

"le français du Canada": "the French of Canada"

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American doctor serving on the commission pushed for the appointment of a French-Canadian descendant, while a non-French-surnamed doctor voiced his adamant opposition to teaching Canadian French in Lewiston schools. Perhaps a compromise, a Bates-trained Franco-American gained the appointment; she was Adrienne Belleau, the first Franco-American woman from Lewiston to graduate from Bates College and the daughter of politically prominent attorney F.X. Belleau.[81]

Tensions over the French spoken in Lewiston surfaced as Franco-Americans demanded and gained greater influence in the Spindle City. Putting down the French spoken by Franco-Americans was a means of social control, an effort to make French speakers with Canadian roots feel inferior to anglophones and to persons fortunate enough to have had ample access to education. Self-conscious francophones who began abandoning their mother tongue in the early twentieth century were among the minority for whom ethnic retention and acculturation became competing goals. This development of course worried Franco-American elites who derived their influence in the host society from French speakers. Their

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[81]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, April 10, 1913, p. 6; *Le Messager*, 14 avril 1913, p. 1, 6 août 1919, p. 2; *Bates College, Lewiston, Maine, 1915-1916* (n.p. [1915]), p. 164; Mabel Eaton, ed., *General Catalogue of Bates College and Cobb Divinity School, 1864-1930* (Lewiston, Maine: Bates College, 1931), p. 290; *City of Lewiston, Maine, Annual Report of the School Department for the Year Ending August 31, 1919* (n.p. [1919]), pp. 14, 29.

"L'Avocat Holmes...vrai français.": "Attorney Holmes is fighting the stupid prejudice that we do not speak real French."

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concern over the potential loss of the French language, which would point to a decline in the ethnic identity of French-Canadian descendants, helps explain why they engaged the Irish Catholic hierarchy and the French Dominicans in such bitter ethnic disputes in the early twentieth century. While promoting the use of English and acculturation into the United States, the elites wanted to ensure the preservation of the French language and of French-Canadian traditions.

One means of preserving the language was to acquire and read French books. In 1903, the Franco-American societies and *les Dames de Sion* together had about 2,500 mostly French titles that they allowed to circulate. Only after a Franco-American gained appointment to the board of the public library in Lewiston do we find indications in *Le Messager* and in the city's annual reports of the purchase of French books for local residents. In 1904, *Le Messager* reported that F.X. Belleau, a director of the public library, had been authorized to purchase from 300 to 400 French titles from Paris. The following year, the library planned to acquire several hundred more French books as a result of Belleau's efforts, the newspaper reported. The trustees noted in 1907 that "the small collection of French books in the library has been read and reread by the French people, who have repeatedly asked if more volumes might be added to what we already have." Reports of the city librarian and the trustees in other years also reflected

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high demand for French titles in the early twentieth century. Literacy rates had improved significantly from the late nineteenth century: in 1880, 43.5 percent of Lewiston's French-Canadian population, age eight and above, either could not read and/or could not write, whereas in 1920 only 8.4 percent were illiterate. By 1918, if not sooner, the Lewiston Public Library also looked to acquire titles by French-Canadian authors, such as clerics Camille Roy and Lionel Groulx. Not until 1916 did the library hire its first Franco-American librarian, Ernestine Lemaire, the sister of the municipal clerk who won election as mayor in the following year.[82] As Lewiston's Franco-Americans gained political influence and obtained greater access to city positions, they increasingly had the opportunity, as Belleau's influence in the selection of books at the public

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[82]English-language newspaper clipping inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 8, 1903, p. 16; *Le Messager*, 5 février 1904, p. 3, 7 décembre 1905, p. 3, 26 avril 1916, 20 décembre 1918, p. 13; *Forty-Fourth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenses of the City of Lewiston for the Fiscal Year Ending February 28, 1907, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Le Messager, 1907), p. 176; *Forty-Fifth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenses of the City of Lewiston for the Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 29, 1908, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Haswell Press, 1908), p. 141; *Forty-Sixth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenses of the City of Lewiston for the Fiscal Year Ending February 28, 1909, Together with Other Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Le Messager, 1909), p. 88; *Fifty-Fifth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenses of the City of Lewiston for the Fiscal Year Ending February 28, 1918, Together with Annual Reports and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the City* (Lewiston, Maine: Royal Press, 1918), p. 14; *U.S. Census, 1880; U.S. Census, 1920. Le Messager* (26 avril 1916) emphasized that Ernestine Lemaire's previous experience as a teacher and, particularly, her English-speaking ability helped her to obtain the position at the library. Her family connections certainly did not hurt.

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library reveals, to help French-Canadian descendants in the Spindle City to preserve their ethnicity.

An incident that took place in June 1901 further illustrates this concept. During a meeting of the Lewiston city government, the Anglo-American mayor asked Franco-Americans to cancel their *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebration because he feared delegates from across the state might bring smallpox to Lewiston. A Franco-American on the Board of Health, Vital Ouellette, supported the idea. Then he asked about the planned Fourth of July celebration, which would follow two weeks later. *"A cette question le silence se fait et tranquillement l'on aborde un autre sujet,"* reported *Le Messager*.[83] The access Franco-Americans had gained to city posts allowed them to exert influence in the conduct of local affairs, an influence which occasionally helped them to thwart actions prejudicial to their ethnic group.

The arrival of new francophone teaching orders to Lewiston in the early twentieth century helped the city's youth to preserve their French-language skills as they learned English. When the general chapter of *les Dames de Sion* decided that all houses had to observe the regulation not to teach male pupils, the order withdrew from the parish schools of Lewiston and Auburn in 1904, and the

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[83]*Le Messager*, 21 juin 1901, p. 6.
"A cette question...autre sujet,": "On this question there is silence and quietly the subject changes."

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sisters departed for new assignments in Kentucky, Saskatchewan, and Brazil. Expelled from France in July 1903, on account of anti-clericalism in the aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair, Dominican Sisters agreed to come to the United States to take over *Saint-Pierre* School. Because few of *les Dominicaines* could speak English, they initially supplemented their teaching staff with Dominican Sisters from houses in England and the United States, forming a staff of thirty-two in Lewiston during 1904-1905. The sisters spent their spare time and school vacations studying English. Anglophone sisters from nearby Saint Patrick's School, who were members of the French-Canadian order of *la Congrégation de Notre-Dame* of Montréal, gave *les Dominicaines* lessons in English each morning during the 1905 summer vacation. Beginning with the 1904-1905 school year, *les Dominicaines* taught religion, reading, and writing in French for the first half of each day, and they taught math and geography in English during the second half. *Saint-Pierre* School continued, therefore, to provide instruction in French and English on an equal basis after the arrival of the French Dominican Sisters.[84]

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[84]A.-L. Mothon to Monseigneur [William H. O'Connell], September 25, 1903, Chancery Archives, Saint Peter's Parish File; *La Quinzaine*, no. 6, 20 mars 1904, inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 9, p. 41, and no. 15, 7 août 1904, inserted into la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 9, p. 156; Mémorial, vol. 1, Archives of the Dominican Sisters, 1904, pp. 1, 5, 3, 16, 22, 23, summer 1905, p. 56, 2 juillet 1906, pp. 88-89; *Album-Souvenir: Vingt-Cinquième Anniversaire de l'arrivée des Religieuses Dominicaines à Lewiston* (Lewiston, Maine: Le Messager [1929]), p. 3; *Le Messager*, 26 juillet 1904, p. 3; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 9, 5 août 1904, p.

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In 1916, the Ursuline Sisters arrived to teach at *Sainte-Marie* School. Sisters from this French-Canadian order had migrated from Trois-Rivières, Québec, to Waterville, Maine, in 1888 to teach at the city's French-Canadian parish school. They studied English during school holidays, and they gained their autonomy in 1891 in part because Trois-Rivières could not supply English-speaking teachers to Waterville. The Ursulines of Waterville subsequently founded a novitiate, and the order grew. Six sisters of French-Canadian descent moved into a converted Lewiston mill building in 1916 which served as a convent-school.[85] During the first half of the twentieth century, the Ursulines divided instruction nearly equally between English and French at *Sainte-Marie* School. Their students learned to give presentations in English, and they put on musical and dramatic programs in both English and French.[86] Like the students of the Dominican Sisters, those at *Sainte-Marie* School had the opportunity to retain their

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151; Personnel Conventuel, Lewiston, 1904-1947, Archives of the Dominican Sisters.

la Congrégation de Notre-Dame: the Notre Dame Congregation

[85]Typescript, "History, Province of the Northeast United States, 1888-1980" [hereafter, Ursuline History], Ursuline Archives, Mount Merici Convent, Waterville, Maine, pp. 3, 10, 11, 12, 51. Two of the Ursulines had been born in Québec, two in New Brunswick, and two in Maine. Compiled from a postcard at the Ursuline Provincialate Archives, Dedham, Massachusetts, Saint Mary's Convent, Lewiston, Maine, file; *50th Anniversary: The Ursulines, St. Mary's School, Lewiston, Maine, 1916-1966* (n.p. [1966]); typescript, Entrances at Mount Merici Convent, Ursuline Archives, Waterville, Maine.

[86]Ursuline History, p. 52; circular letter, "Petit Journal de Lewiston," Ursuline Provincialate Archives, Saint Mary's Convent, Lewiston, Maine, file, 20 février 1920, p. 9, 7 mai 1920, p. 3.

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French language while learning the language of the host society.

The 1920 federal manuscript census, available since 1992, provides valuable information on Franco-Americans at the end of the second decade of the century. Few scholars have thus far utilized the 1920 census to examine how individuals of French-Canadian birth and background in the United States have changed over time. Other monographs have used the nominal censuses through 1910 and have, therefore, focused on the pre-1910 period; consequently, we presently know little about the experiences of Franco-Americans beyond the opening decade of the twentieth century. When contrasted with findings from the 1880 census presented in chapter one, data from the 1920 census reveals the extent to which differences between Lewiston's francophone population and the city's other large ethnic groups either had narrowed by, or continued to persist in, the early twentieth century.

By 1920, Lewiston had become an immigrant city (see table 2.) Nearly seventy (68.8) percent of its population consisted of migrants and their immediate offspring.[87] Most of the migrants had entered the United States after the turn of the century (see table 3.) Vénérand and Léontine Vallé, for example, had arrived in 1911, as had seven of

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[87]This figure includes a black migrant from Canada and her two children. *U.S. Census, 1920.* See the Appendix for a brief explanation of the methodology employed with the 1920 census.

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Table 2
Ethnic and Racial Composition of Lewiston, 1920

Group	Number	Percent[a]
Franco-American	454	46.6
American	303	31.1
Irish	60	6.2
English Canadian	47	4.8
English	21	2.2
Lithuanian	12	1.2
German	10	1.0
Greek	10	1.0
Polish	9	.9
Italian	7	.7
Scotch	7	.7
Jewish	5	.5
Russian	4	.4
Belgian	4	.4
Black	4	.4
Austrian	1	.1
Mixed	16	1.6
Total	974	99.8

SOURCE: Derived from every thirtieth household in the *U.S. Census, 1920.*

[a]Column does not add up to 100.0 percent due to rounding.

Table 3
Decade of Migration of First-Generation Residents of Lewiston in 1920 (in percentages)[a]

Decade	Franco-American	English Canadian	Irish	English	Other Migrants
1860-69	0.9%	0%	41.7%	0%	0%
1870-79	3.6	5.0	8.3	18.2	0
1880-89	18.4	5.0	25.0	18.2	11.9
1890-99	20.6	25.0	16.7	0	7.1
1900-09	32.7	30.0	0	54.5	40.5
1910-19	21.1	10.0	0	0	35.7
Unknown	2.7	25.0	8.3	9.1	4.8
Number	223	20	12	11	42

SOURCE: Derived from every thirtieth household in the *U.S. Census, 1920.*

[a]Columns may not add up to 100.0 percent on account of rounding.

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the nine children who lived with them in 1920. None of the Irish in the sample, however, had entered the United States in the twentieth century. As Lewiston's oldest migrant population, the Irish consisted primarily of third and later generations by 1920. Unlike them, individuals from southern and eastern Europe were among Lewiston's newest residents; they represented most of the "other migrants" found in table 3, three-fourths (76.2 percent) of whom had arrived in the United States in the 1900s and 1910s.[88]

Unlike in 1880, Yankees no longer made up Lewiston's largest population group in 1920, for Franco-Americans surpassed them in numbers. Given that the 1920 census identifies ethnic groups of only the first and second generations, the proportion of the population classified as "American" in table 2 represents not only Yankees, but also ethnic groups of the third and succeeding generations, including those of Irish and French-Canadian descent. By 1920, then, Yankees had become a small minority in the Spindle City. First- and second-generation Franco-Americans made up 46.6 percent of Lewiston's residents, and third- and later-generation Franco-Americans (classified as "American" in table 2) constituted an additional 3.1 percent of the city's population. In 1920, therefore, individuals of French-Canadian descent comprised approximately half of Lewiston's total population. Once a

[88] *U.S. Census, 1920.*

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Yankee town, Lewiston had evolved into a Franco-American city. By the early 1920s, it had become a bilingual community in which banks and stores had at least one French speaker. Even signs that forbade spitting on sidewalks appeared in both English and French![89]

In 1920, American, Irish, and Franco-American residents represented five-sixths (83.9 percent) of Lewiston's population and constituted its three major ethnicities.[90] The discussion that follows will contrast these three groups. Unless otherwise noted, the figures provided for Irish and Franco-American Lewiston residents represent only individuals from the first and second generations.

In 1920, the size of the nuclear families and extended households of Franco-Americans paralleled that of the Irish but remained significantly larger than that of the Americans. Slightly under one-third of the Franco-Americans (32.0 percent) and the Irish (31.6 percent) had nuclear families of five or more members, compared to under one-tenth (8.6 percent) of the Americans. Similarly, over one-third (37.1 percent) of the Franco-American households (including relatives and boarders) had six or more members, a proportion comparable to the Irish (36.8 percent) but significantly larger than the American households (12.9

[89]*U.S. Census, 1920; Cinquantenaire de L'Institut Jacques-Cartier de Lewiston, Maine*, p. 31.

[90]*U.S. Census, 1920.*

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percent.) Though Vénérand and Léontine Vallé had no boarders or relatives living with them in 1920, the eleven members of their nuclear family made their household one of Lewiston's largest.[91] Sizable Franco-American families like theirs especially stood out from the American households.

In 1920, Franco-Americans expanded their homes with relatives in nearly the same proportion as the Irish but less often than the American household heads. In all, 31.4 percent of the American heads took in relatives, compared to 26.3 percent of the Irish and 23.7 percent of the Franco-American heads. Unlike in 1880, when Lewiston's French speakers had more often extended their households with lodgers rather than relatives, in 1920 they took in boarders about as often as they did kin. But, as in 1880, they continued in 1920 to expand their households with boarders more often than Lewiston's other large ethnic groups. To wit, one-fourth (24.7 percent) of the Franco-American households took in boarders in 1920, compared to under one-sixth of both the Irish (15.8 percent) and the American (15.7 percent) households.[92] The large differences that existed in 1880 between the households of Lewiston's French speakers and those of the city's Irish and American residents had narrowed by 1920; in fact, most of the

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[91]*U.S. Census, 1920.*

[92]In addition, two (2.9 percent) of the American, two (2.0 percent) of the Franco-American, and none of the Irish heads extended their households in 1920 with housekeepers, servants, or hired help. *U.S. Census, 1920.*

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differences in the size and composition of the Franco-American households and those of their Irish co-religionists had all but disappeared.

Other data suggests some of the differences that persisted between the Franco-American, Irish, and American households of Lewiston. In 1920, as in 1880, Franco-American men and women tended to marry at a younger age than the Irish or Americans living in Lewiston. In close to half (47.4 percent) of the households headed by the Irish, for example, the oldest, single, never-married child was nineteen years of age or older, whereas this was the case in only one-fourth (25.8 percent) of the Franco-American households. American households had an even smaller proportion (17.1 percent) where the oldest, never-married child was over eighteen, but other data suggests that Franco-Americans married younger than Americans. While 21.8 percent of the married Franco-American male household heads were in their twenties, 9.8 percent of the American and none of the Irish heads was in his or her twenties. Similarly, 34.6 percent of the married Franco-American female heads were in their twenties, while 17.4 percent of the American and none of the Irish were. Given that the Irish represented an older migrant stock in Lewiston, the finding that no married Irish heads were in their twenties is not surprising; in fact, a closer examination reveals that the married Irish household heads were all between their forties and sixties, unlike the

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Franco-American and American heads whose ages ranged from the twenties to the seventies.[93] While the cultural practice of Franco-Americans to marry young does not explain why their family size approached that of the first- and second-generation Irish, who were at the end of or beyond their childbearing cycle in 1920, it does help account for the larger size of Franco-American families over those of the Americans. Religious practice likely explains the comparable family size of Catholic Irish and Franco-American Lewiston residents in 1920 and in part accounts for the difference between the sizes of their families and those of Protestant Americans.

In other areas, Franco-Americans stood out in Lewiston. Only thirty-nine persons in the sample could not read and/or could not write, and eighty (79.5) percent of them were Franco-Americans, the majority (60.0 percent) of whom were women. Vénérand and Léontine Vallé were among the thirty-nine, for neither could read nor write. Like them, most of the Franco-Americans lacking literacy skills represented first-generation stock. They constituted 64.1 percent of the French speakers who could not read and/or could not write, while the second generation supplied 12.8 percent, and later generations ("Americans" with French surnames) 2.6 percent. In contrast, no other ethnic groups

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[93] *U.S. Census, 1920.*

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in Lewiston reported a lack of literacy skills in 1920 by members beyond the first generation.[94]

The above figures belie the fact that, in 1920, the large majority of Franco-Americans was able to read and write. Of the first- and second-generation Franco-Americans ages eight and above, 87.3 percent were able both to read and to write. They lagged slightly behind Lewiston's other groups, for 96.4 percent of the Americans, 94.7 percent of the Irish, and 92.7 percent of all other ethnic groups in Lewiston could read and write in 1920.[95] While individuals of French-Canadian birth and background had made significant educational gains since 1880, they still trailed behind the rest of Lewiston's population in the early twentieth century.

Two-thirds (66.1 percent) of the first- and second-generation Franco-Americans who were ten and above reported an ability to speak English in 1920. Over one-fourth (27.4 percent) could not speak English, and census takers provided no indication of the English-speaking ability of the remaining Franco-Americans (6.5 percent.) The large majority (79.4 percent) of the Franco-Americans who did not speak English were Canadian-born. Most were also women.

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[94]*U.S. Census, 1920.*

[95]The figures may have been higher for each group because census takers provided no indication of the literacy status of 3.2 percent of the Americans, 4.3 percent of the Franco-Americans, 3.5 percent of the Irish, and 2.2 percent of the other ethnics who were eight and older in 1920. *U.S. Census, 1920.*

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In the Vallé household, each of the seven children from ages ten to twenty-one could speak English, as could their father, Vénérand. Only the wife and mother, Léontine, could not speak English. Women like her constituted 85.7 percent of the first-generation Franco-Americans who did not speak English. Among second-generation Franco-Americans, 55.0 percent of the non-English speakers were women.[96] The data, while revealing increasing levels of acculturation with succeeding generations, also suggests that women played a significant role in the preservation of the French language in Lewiston.

Further analysis reveals that only 15.0 percent of the men and 7.8 percent of the women of French-Canadian descent who did not speak English in 1920 had employment outside of the cotton industry. All others did not work, worked at home, or made their living in cotton mills. For her part, Léontine Vallé did not work outside of the home.[97] Staying at home or working in the cotton industry appeared consequential, therefore, to French-language retention in Lewiston.

In 1920, Lewiston largely remained a working-class community. But American and Irish men and women were less concentrated in industrial jobs than Franco-American and other ethnic groups (see table 4.) While Franco-Americans

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[96]*U.S. Census, 1920.*

[97]*U.S. Census, 1920.*

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Table 4
Occupational Distribution of Lewiston's Ethnic Groups in 1920 (in percentages)[a]

Category	American	Irish	Franco-American	All other
Men (*N* = 277)				
WHITE COLLAR				
-Self-governing professional	2.4%	4.2%	2.5%	0%
-Salaried professional	2.4	0	0.8	0
-Small business and managerial	14.6	8.3	5.0	7.7
-Semiprofessional	2.4	0	0	1.9
-Clerical and sales	12.2	12.5	7.6	3.8
BLUE COLLAR				
-Self-employed	3.7	4.2	1.7	1.9
-Non-industrial	22.0	29.2	28.6	23.1
-Industrial	34.1	41.7	52.9	61.5
-Primary sector	6.1	0	0.8	0
Number	82	24	119	52
Women (*N* = 177)				
WHITE COLLAR				
-Self-governing professional	0%	0%	0%	0%
-Salaried professional	12.2	12.5	0	0
-Small business and managerial	0	0	0	0
-Semiprofessional	8.2	0	0	0
-Clerical and sales	26.5	25.0	8.5	15.4
BLUE COLLAR				
-Self-employed	2.0	12.5	3.2	0
-Non-industrial	16.3	12.5	5.3	15.4
-Industrial	34.7	37.5	83.0	69.2
-Primary sector	0	0	0	0
Number	49	8	94	26

SOURCE: Derived from every thirtieth household in the *U.S. Census, 1920.*

[a]Columns may not add up to 100.0 percent on account of rounding.

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had experienced some upward, occupational mobility since 1880, the majority of the working men and women in 1920 held industrial jobs in the textile mills and shoe factories of Lewiston and Auburn. A modest measure of upward mobility had taken place with succeeding generations of Franco-American men. Whereas 87.7 percent of first-generation francophone men held blue-collar jobs in 1920, 76.3 percent of the second generation did. Franco-American women enjoyed no such mobility, for 93.8 percent of the second generation had blue-collar jobs, compared to 90.3 percent of the Canadian-born women.[98] As demonstrated, Franco-American women more often than men lacked the ability to speak English as well as the ability to read and write, skills important to upward occupational mobility.

Unlike in 1880, married Franco-American women (33.3 percent) more often worked than American (22.2 percent) or Irish (9.1 percent) women, and these Franco-American wives supplied well over half (58.8 percent) of Lewiston's wedded working women in 1920. Married, Franco-American women in the United States were more likely to work outside of the home than were married, French-Canadian women of Québec. According to historian Jacques Rouillard, married women in Québec tended not to work for wages prior to World War II; as late as 1941, only ten percent did. Rouillard accounts for the difference in workforce participation by Franco-

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[98]*U.S. Census, 1920.*

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American and French-Canadian women by pointing to cross-border differences. A higher demand for labor existed in New England, and Catholic clergy in Québec had more influence over their flock than they did in the United States, he argues. According to a Mrs. Lagace, who lived in Lewiston from 1903 to 1919, priests in the United States had many more parishioners than clergymen in rural Québec and were, therefore, unable to exert the same amount of influence over them.[99] Economic and demographic differences between Québec and New England thus led to increasing workforce participation by Franco-American women in the United States in the early twentieth century. So did the enactment of child labor legislation and the subsequent, increasing rates of school attendance, as we shall see.

In Lewiston, married francophone women who had been born in the United States (44.0 percent) more often tended to work outside of the home than those who had been born in Canada (29.2 percent.) This generational difference appears tied, in small part, to the presence of working children in the home: none of the married, second-generation francophone women had working children under eighteen at home, whereas 17.4 percent of the non-working, first-generation women had minor children contributing

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[99]*U.S. Census, 1920;* Jacques Rouillard, *Ah les États!: Les travailleurs canadiens-français dans l'industrie textile de la Nouvelle-Angleterre d'après le témoignage des derniers migrants* (Montréal: Les Éditions du Boréal Express, 1985), pp. 46-47; Mrs. Lagace, cited in Rouillard, p. 66.

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wages to the family economy. This was the case in the Vallé household. While Canadian-born Léontine Vallé did not work outside of the home, two of the working children in her household were under eighteen.[100]

In 1920, working single children under twenty-one came primarily from Franco-American (57.1 percent) households; about one-fifth (11.4 percent each) came from the American and Irish households. In all, Franco-Americans supplied sixty (60.8) percent of Lewiston's young labor force, a percentage moderately larger than their proportion of the population. In one of the few studies of Franco-Americans that utilizes the 1920 census, Sylvie Beaudreau and Yves Frenette find that only sixteen percent of Lewiston's Franco-American children between ten and sixteen years of age contributed to the family economy in 1920, in sharp contrast to 1880 when seventy-two percent did. Beaudreau and Frenette account for this drop by pointing to a 1907 Maine law forbidding the employment of children under fourteen, the unwillingness of parents to subject their children to the increasing intensification of textile production, and to an improvement in socioeconomic conditions in the early twentieth century. At the same time, they acknowledge that parents possibly falsified the ages of young working children to hide their noncompliance with child labor laws. In our sample, no Lewiston

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[100]*U.S. Census, 1920.*

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residents had reported having working children under fifteen in their household.[101]

Data from the 1920 census reveals that, of the persons who had attended school at any point since September 1, 1919, 32.0 percent were American, 49.1 percent were Franco-American, and 2.9 percent were Irish; the remaining 16.0 percent came from Lewiston's other ethnic groups. These percentages roughly reflect each group's proportion of the city's population. But data published in the 1920 Lewiston school report suggests that Irish and Franco-American youth did not enjoy the same access to education as the Americans. Specifically, the school report, which provides a census of school-age persons ranging from four to twenty-one years, reveals that Franco-Americans made up 69.1 percent of Lewiston's population of school age, the Irish 8.8 percent, and Americans 13.3 percent. Nonethless, proportionately more Franco-American children attended school in 1920 than in 1880. Beaudreau and Frenette argue that this increase in school attendance led to a change in family strategies between 1880 and 1920 whereby more Franco-American mothers entered the workplace to supplement the income of their spouses.[102] The participation of

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[101]*U.S. Census, 1920;* Beaudreau et Frenette, "Les stratégies familiales des francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre," p. 171.

[102]*U.S. Census, 1920;* the percentages of school-age persons were compiled from figures provided in the *Report of the School Department, City of Lewiston, Maine, for the Years Ending August 31, 1920 and August 31, 1921* (n.p., n.d.), p. 41; Beaudreau et Frenette, "Les stratégies familiales des francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre," p. 175.

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married francophone women in the workforce appears to have been primarily a twentieth-century phenomenon. This helps to explain the lack of occupational mobility that existed in 1920 between first- and second-generation francophone women, for the U.S.-born had probably lacked the experience as well as the skills to advance to better jobs.

While the differences between the Franco-American, Irish, and American populations of Lewiston had declined from 1880 to 1920, various signs point out that Franco-Americans were less well off than the other groups in the early twentieth century. Franco-Americans had more working mothers, took in more boarders, and held Lewiston's lowest-paying jobs. In addition, fewer of them owned property. While 47.4 percent of the Irish and 32.9 percent of the American heads owned their homes in 1920, only 17.5 percent of the Franco-American heads did.[103] Although Franco-Americans had made educational and economic gains since the late nineteenth century, they still lagged behind the largest ethnic groups of Lewiston in the early twentieth century, something which served as an incentive for them to continue to pursue their acculturation in the United States.

The 1920 census reveals some of the variables that may have prompted French-Canadian men in Lewiston to become U.S. citizens. As demonstrated in table 5, having first or

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[103]*U.S. Census, 1920.*

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Table 5
Variables Correlating to the Naturalization of Adult Male French-Canadian Migrants, 1920 (in percentages)[a]

VARIABLES	NATURALIZED or HOLDING FIRST PAPERS	ALIENS
Literacy		
Able to read and write (N = 75)	70.7	29.3
Unable to read and write (N = 11)	27.3	72.7
Unknown (N = 1)	100.0	0
Ability to speak English		
English-speaking (N = 76)	68.4	31.6
Non-English-speaking (N = 10)	40.0	60.0
Unknown (N = 1)	100.0	0
Length of U.S. Residence		
under 10 years (N = 12)	50.0	50.0
10-19 years (N = 29)	62.1	37.9
20-29 years (N = 22)	86.4	13.6
30-39 years (N = 16)	50.0	50.0
40-49 years (N = 7)	71.4	28.6
50-59 years (N = 1)	100.0	0
Age at Migration		
under 10 years (N = 22)	68.2	31.8
10-19 years (N = 39)	71.8	28.2
20-29 years (N = 14)	71.4	28.6
30-39 years (N = 5)	60.0	40.0
40-49 years (N = 5)	0	100.0
50-59 years (N = 1)	0	100.0
unknown (N = 1)	100.0	0
Choice of Spouse		
Canadian-born Franco-American (N = 52)	59.6	40.4
U.S.-born Franco-American (N = 10)	90.0	10.0
Non-Franco-American (N = 2)	100.0	0
No spouse (N = 23)	65.2	34.8
Place of Birth of Children		
All U.S.-born (N = 41)	73.2	26.8
Canadian- and U.S.-born (N = 6)	66.7	33.3
All Canadian-born (N = 8)	12.5	87.5
No children (N = 32)	68.8	31.3

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Table 5, continued

VARIABLES	NATURALIZED or HOLDING FIRST PAPERS	ALIENS
Home Ownership		
Owned (*N* = 10)	60.0	40.0
Rented (*N* = 50)	64.0	36.0
Resided in another's home (*N* = 25)	76.0	24.0
Unknown (*N* = 2)	0	100.0
Occupation		
White-collar (*N* = 10)	90.0	10.0
Blue-collar (*N* = 68)	66.2	33.8
None (*N* = 9)	33.3	66.7

SOURCE: Derived from every thirtieth household in the *U.S. Census, 1920*.

[a]Of the 88 French-Canadian migrants in the sample who were eighteen years of age or older (the earliest age at which they could take out first naturalization papers), 39 were naturalized, 18 had first papers, and 30 were alien; one whose citizenship status was unknown was excluded.

final naturalization papers correlated positively with the ability to read and write, the ability to speak English, and having children who had been born in the United States. Though the patterns were not as pronounced as with the other variables, engagement of the citizenship process also correlated with younger age of arrival to the United States and longer residency. It appears not to have correlated with marital status. While most of the men who held naturalization papers were married, a large majority of those without spouses had also engaged the naturalization process. Most married male migrants had Canadian-born spouses, but the large majority of those who did not had also taken steps towards naturalization by 1920.

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Specifically, those with U.S.-born wives of French-Canadian descent had engaged the naturalization process by a ratio of nine to one, and the two men who had married non-Franco-American women both had their first or final naturalization papers. An alien in 1920, Vénérand Vallé represents the flipside of most of these patterns. He had arrived in the United States in 1911 at the age of forty; his wife and seven of the nine children living with them in 1920 had been born in Canada; and, although he spoke English, he was illiterate.[104] In short, Vallé's older age at arrival, the shorter period of his U.S. residency, the Canadian birth of his wife and most of their children, and his lack of literacy skills probably all held him back from becoming a naturalized citizen.

Occupational and homeownership status did not correlate as strongly with naturalization as did other variables. The men holding first or final naturalization papers predominantly had blue-collar jobs. Ninety percent of those with white-collar occupations had taken steps, however, to change their citizenship status by the end of the second decade of the century. Homeownership did not correlate positively with adoption of U.S. citizenship, for the large majority of men with first or final naturalization papers either rented or lived in the

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[104]*U.S. Census, 1920.*

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household of another person.[105] In brief, owning a home and holding one of Lewiston's better-paying jobs did not appear to influence the decision to pursue U.S. citizenship to the same degree as non-economic variables. For first-generation Franco-Americans of Lewiston, language skills and family considerations seemed to be the most important variables affecting their citizenship status.

The above portrait of Lewiston's population of French-Canadian descent demonstrates that, by 1920, it had achieved great strides in making a place for itself in U.S. society, and that it had done so in large part on terms it had negotiated itself. Despite the efforts of Franco-American communities like Lewiston to acquire English and to acculturate, xenophobic tensions led Maine and other New England states to pass legislation pushing English-language instruction during and after World War I. Nativists in the Maine legislature passed a law in 1919 requiring English as "the basic language of instruction" in the state's public and private high schools. The following year, in a speech on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day, attorney Fernand Despins pointed out the irony of U.S. involvement in World War I, ostensibly to promote democracy, while zealots pushing Americanization worked to deny those of French-Canadian descent the ability to speak French in the United States. Like his predecessors on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in the

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[105] *U.S. Census, 1920.*

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late nineteenth century, Despins argued in 1920 that preserving the French language and French-Canadian traditions was not incompatible with loyalty to the United States.[106] The affirmation *"Loyaux mais Français"* still rang true. To Despins and to most other Franco-Americans in Lewiston, preserving ethnic traditions and pursuing acculturation did not represent dichotomous goals. This belief, and the resumption of heavy migration from Québec, would fortify Lewiston Franco-Americans in the 1920s against the Americanizing push of Bishop Walsh and that of the Ku Klux Klan.

To conclude, the experiences of Lewiston's Franco-Americans during the opening decades of the twentieth century highlight a number of important themes. To the extent that French speakers Americanized, they did so on their own. The actions of Irish bishops, to a large extent, and of nativists, to a lesser degree, generally intensified the ethnic feelings of Franco-Americans and, if anything, made them more determined to Americanize at their own pace; what happened in Lewiston therefore contradicts

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[106]*Acts and Resolves as Passed by the Seventy-Ninth Legislature of the State of Maine, 1919* (Augusta, Maine: Kennebec Journal Co., 1919), ch. 146; *Le Messager*, 25 juin 1920, p. 1. During the Americanization campaign of and following World War I, Connecticut in 1918 and Rhode Island in 1922 stipulated that English serve as the language of instruction in public and private schools. Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, pp. 291-292, 299-300. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Canadian provinces outside of Québec--including Ontario, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Alberta, and Saskatchewan--also enacted legislation to curb or to eliminate bilingual instruction in their schools. Discrimination against the French language in Canada had factored into the decision of many French Canadians not to participate in the "war for democracy."

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the common notion that outside pressures from nativists were primarily responsible for the Americanization of foreign-born persons and their children in the United States.[107] A related point, the process of acculturation was not a turnpike that led in a straight line to what we call "assimilation."[108] Curves in the road from *Canadien* to Franco-American slowed (but did not halt) the process of acculturation.

The experience of Lewiston's Franco-Americans also challenges commonly-held perceptions that the process of "assimilation" in the United States serves to mitigate ethnic conflicts. The ethnic controversies described in this chapter occurred during a period when the net migration of French Canadians had dropped from previous decades; lacking the reinforcement of new migrants, Franco-Americans chose to fight, even within the Catholic Church, to gain influence in proportion to their numbers. In the case of Franco-Americans, then, acculturation increased, rather than reduced, ethnic competition and conflict.[109]

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[107]John Higham, for example, emphasizes the effect of outside forces on U.S. immigrant groups in *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (1955; New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1992.)

[108]April R. Schultz draws a similar conclusion about the Americanization process in *Ethnicity on Parade: Inventing the Norwegian American through Celebration* (Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994.)

[109]Susan Olzak makes the same kind of argument in *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992.)

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Finally, acculturating in the United States was a strategy for ethnic preservation. To resist assimilation in U.S. society, immigrants and their descendants had to join it to some degree. Learning English, naturalizing, and voting were means to advance the interests of Franco-Americans in their country of adoption.[110] So were developing their identity as members of the working class and of the Democratic Party. Intermixing with other ethnics (notably the Irish) in Catholic institutions, including the institution of marriage, may have served the same ends. These elements all point to the evolution of the identity of francophones. In short, Franco-Americanism in the early twentieth century entailed accepting civic responsibility in the host society, learning its de facto official language, and participating in its institutions and wars, while being proud to speak the French language and to celebrate French-Canadian traditions. Like French-Canadian descendants in the late nineteenth century, most of Lewiston's Franco-Americans through 1920 continued to view acculturation as a way to achieve *survivance*. Only later did those goals significantly diverge.

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[110]John F. McClymer starts down this analytical road in "The Paradox of Ethnicity in the United States: The French-Canadian Experience in Worcester, 1870-1914" in Michael D'Innocenzo and Josef P. Sirefman, eds., *Immigration and Ethnicity: American Society--"Melting Pot" or "Salad Bowl"?* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992), pp. 15-23. But I go farther in analyzing and demonstrating how French-Canadian descendants renegotiated their identity in their country of adoption.

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CHAPTER FOUR

The Bishops, the Klan, the Depression, and the Intertwined Identity of Franco-Americans, 1920-1940[1]

[1]I presented a version of this chapter at the conference of the American Council for Québec Studies in Montréal, Québec, in October 2000.

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About one hour past midnight on August 10, 1924, a bomb exploded in Lewiston, Maine. Startled Lewiston residents awoke to confront a twelve-foot crucifix blazing atop one of the city's highest peaks, visible both in Lewiston and its twin city, Auburn. Ralph O. Brewster had won the Republican gubernatorial primary. The dynamite blast and the burning cross punctuated the victory celebration of the Ku Klux Klan. The organization had come to Maine in 1921 and, at its height in the mid-1920s, had upwards of 150,000 members.[2] The Klan in Maine represented a Protestant backlash against the growing number of Jewish and Catholic migrants, and it pressured them to Americanize. But not only the K.K.K. wanted French speakers to Americanize in the early 1920s: Bishop Louis S. Walsh of the Diocese of Portland also demonstrated little patience with Catholics who wished to retain their ethnic traditions. His brand of Americanization differed from the Klan's, of course, for his objective was to unify the Church against the anti-Catholic activities of groups such as the K.K.K. Yet through the 1920s, and through the Great Depression of the 1930s, despite pressure from the Roman Catholic Church and the Klan, Franco-Americans in Lewiston maintained their French language and many of their French-Canadian traditions; at the same time, they reshaped

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[2]*Le Messager*, 11 août 1924, p. 8; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, August 11, 1924, pp. 1, 12; Lawrence Wayne Moores, Jr., "The History of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine, 1922-1931" (M.A. thesis, University of Maine-Orono, 1950), pp. 25-26, 28.

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their identity in the United States. They did not constitute an ethnic enclave. So secure were Franco-Americans that they defined their own place in the economic, political, and religious life of Lewiston.

Heavy migration from Québec during the 1920s would continue to facilitate ethnic retention in the Spindle City but, as we shall see, it did not slow the process of acculturation. The immigration restrictions the United States imposed during the 1920s, principally to stem the tide of migrants from southern and eastern Europe, were also applied to Canadians in 1930. Until then, the international border between Canada and the United States remained relatively porous. Unlike during the opening decades of the twentieth century, French-Canadian migration to the U.S.A. returned in the 1920s to nearly the same high level that had existed in the late nineteenth century: from 1920 to 1929, the net migration from Québec to the United States totalled 130,000. Mechanization and the productivity of farms in Québec were low, and a recession from 1920 to 1922 precipitated migration.[3]

Le Messager kept an eye on the massive migration from Québec. In 1921, the newspaper explained that trainloads

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[3]Yolande Lavoie, *L'émigration des Québécois aux États-Unis de 1840 à 1930* ([Québec, Québec]: Éditeur officiel du Québec, 1981), p. 53; Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre (1776-1930)* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 1990), pp. 275-277; Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher et Jean-Claude Robert, *Histoire du Québec contemporain: De la Confédération à la crise* (1867-1929) (Montréal: Boréal, 1989), p. 405.

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of families arriving in Lewiston had come because of a lack of work *"au pays natal,"* and it warned readers *"ceux qui occupent aujourd'hui de bonnes positions feront bien de les conserver, car les candidats remplaçants vont se faire nombreux."* Citing the Lewiston *Journal, Le Messager* in June 1923 reported that, due primarily to Canadian migration, Lewiston's population was growing by about 300 persons each week, and that it had increased by 1,000 in the previous month. Some of the migrants had formerly lived in Lewiston and had chosen to return to the Spindle City because economic conditions were better in the United States than in Canada, it noted.[4]

Naturalization records from the 1920s and 1930s suggest, however, that few francophones had returned to Canada and then migrated for a second time to the United States. This information comes from an examination of the places of birth of the children of migrants who became U.S. citizens. Only twenty of the 1,238 individuals (1.6 percent) who naturalized while living in Lewiston in the 1920s and 1930s had some older, U.S.-born children as well as younger, Canadian-born children at the time of their naturalization. Pierre Therriault was one of the twenty. His two oldest children had been born in Massachusetts in

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[4]*Le Messager*, 24 août 1921, p. 6; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, as reported in *Le Messager*, 15 juin 1923, p. 8.

"au pays natal": "in the native country"

"ceux qui...faire nombreux.": "those who hold good jobs today will do well to keep them, for replacement candidates will be numerous."

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1911 and 1913, and his next three offspring had been born in the province of Québec from 1916 to 1920. In 1922, during a period of mass exodus from Québec, Therriault had migrated again to the United States, and in 1924 his youngest child (at the time of his naturalization) had been born in Maine.[5] The French Canadians of Lewiston who naturalized, it appears, participated little in such migrations back and forth across the international border.

Naturalization records also suggest the magnitude of the migration to the Spindle City in the 1920s. Of the 5,551 French-Canadian migrants of Lewiston who naturalized from 1877 to 1987, thirty (29.5) percent had migrated to the United States during the 1920s, a proportion more than double that of any other decade.[6] With the influx of new

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[5]Naturalization data for the period from 1920 to 1939 comes from the Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vols. 7-21, the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn Naturalization Records, vols. 22-32, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 8-38, National Archives and Records Administration, Waltham, Massachusetts [hereafter, NARA-Waltham.] These records will be cited as "naturalization records, 1920-1939" throughout the rest of this chapter. Pierre Therriault's naturalization record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 27, record #2747.

[6]The naturalization records from 1877 through 1987 come from the Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Records, Maine State Archives [hereafter, MSA], Augusta, Maine; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, NARA-Waltham; Superior Court of Maine at Auburn Naturalization Records, Auburn, Maine; Lewiston Municipal Court Naturalization Records, MSA; Auburn, Maine, Municipal Court Naturalization Records, NARA-Waltham; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, NARA-Waltham; U.S. Circuit Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, NARA-Waltham; Superior Court, Cumberland County (Portland, Maine), Naturalization Records, MSA.

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migrants in the 1920s and the natural rate of increase, French speakers made up an estimated sixty-five percent of Lewiston's 34,948 residents in 1930. Despite the immigration restrictions that prevented the arrival of many more francophones to Lewiston after 1930, the large concentration of Franco-Americans in the Spindle City helped considerably with the task of ethnic retention. The large infusion of French speakers in the 1920s helps explain the cultural persistence of Franco-Americans in Lewiston, as in other cities of New England, for at least another generation. Yet despite its magnitude, the migration of the 1920s has attracted little attention from historians.[7]

The province of Québec and the federal government of Canada worried about this mass migration. Repatriation and colonization agents working for Québec and Canada tried to persuade French-Canadian migrants to return to *le pays natal*. Some agents appeared in Lewiston in the 1920s. In 1923, J.-N. Jutras, a repatriation agent for the province of Québec, and Reverend J.-A. Beauchamp, a pastor and colonization agent from Abitibi, Québec, spoke to a packed

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[7]Laureat Odilon Bernard, "A Political History of Lewiston, Maine (1930-39)" (M.A. thesis, University of Maine-Orono, 1949), p. 6; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1931), p. 472. An exception is the article by Bruno Ramirez, "L'émigration des Canadiens français aux États-Unis dans les années 1920," dans Yves Landry, John A. Dickinson, Suzy Pasleau, Claude Desama (dirs.), *Les chemins de la migration en Belgique et au Québec: XVIIe-XXe siècles* (Beauport, Québec: Publications MNH, 1995), pp. 233-246.

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room at *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* hall. They promoted migration to Abitibi, an area of colonization far to the northwest of Montréal. Beauchamp tried to convince his audience that Abitibi was not another Siberia but was, in fact, a place suitable for farming. In 1924, over 200 attended a meeting at *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* hall on colonization in western Canada, organized by J.-E. Laforce, a railway agent working for the Canadian government, and Reverend A.-L. Lébel, the former pastor at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Lébel spoke of the churches, schools, and banks established in western Canada and expressed his hope that, with the migration of more French speakers to the region, they would remain francophone institutions; for his part, Laforce spoke about special railroad fares--at one-third of the usual cost--available to those wishing to travel to western Canada to live or to explore possibilities. Through the late 1920s, francophone agents, often clergymen, continued to visit Lewiston and other Franco-American centers in New England as they tried to recruit potential colonizers to rural Canada. The Canadian government supported their efforts by promoting the country in a 1925 advertisement as the *"Pays du Beurre et du Fromage,"* because of Canada's large export of dairy products; the ad encouraged readers of *Le Messager* to move to either eastern or western Canada in order to farm.[8]

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[8]*Le Messager*, 21 et 23 mai 1923, p. 1, 9 mai 1924, p. 8, 17 avril 1925, p. 10, 15 juin 1927, p. 6, 16 mai 1928, p. 8.

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Few believed that repatriation efforts would succeed, acknowledged the managing director of a Québec City newspaper to *Le Messager*'s Louis-Philippe Gagné in 1925. A complementary strategy was to use propaganda to slow the massive migration of francophones to the United States. The newspaper director admitted this to Gagné when he wrote that the Colonization Department of Québec had paid newspapers from the province to publish articles laced with propaganda *"pour essayer d'empêcher l'émigration des nôtres aux Etats-Unis."*[9] Ultimately, Canadian efforts to stem migration to the United States or to encourage a large remigration to settle farms in *le pays natal* proved unsuccessful.

From occasional, brief reports in *Le Messager*, it appears that few from Lewiston returned to Canada to colonize new lands in Québec or in the western provinces. Following the recruitment efforts of Jutras and Beauchamp in 1923, about seventeen local families voiced their intention to move to Abitibi; the newspaper did not later indicate how many of these families actually remigrated to Canada. In February 1929, after reading a report prepared by Québec's Minister of Colonization, *Le Messager* published

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"Pays du Beurre et du Fromage": "Country of Butter and Cheese"

[9]Lettre de Florian Fortin, Directeur-Gérant, La Cie de l'Événement, Québec, Québec, à Louis-Philippe Gagné, Lewiston, Maine, 1 septembre 1925, correspondence of Louis-Philippe Gagné, Franco-American Heritage Collection, Lewiston-Auburn College, Lewiston, Maine.

"pour essayer...aux Etats-Unis.": "to try to stop the emigration of our people to the United States."

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the names of three Lewiston families that had repatriated. Earlier that month, using figures obtained from Lewiston's French-language parishes, *Le Messager* had reported that the city's Franco-American population had declined from January 1927 to January 1929. The textile industry had bottomed out well before the Stock Market Crash of 1929, and the resulting industrial crisis had led to an 8.6 percent drop in the Spindle City's French-speaking population. The newspaper believed, however, that only about one-fourth of the approximately 1,600 who had departed Lewiston had returned to Canada, while the rest had moved to other locations in the United States.[10] Even during difficult economic times in Lewiston, remigration to Canada did not appear to be an attractive option for French-Canadian migrants, something which suggests that they were comfortable in the United States.

Only three of the 1,238 (0.2 percent) who naturalized in the 1920s and 1930s later gave up or lost their U.S. citizenship. The two men and one woman were each between sixty-three and seventy-four years of age when U.S. immigration officials notified the court clerk of their expatriation. One lost his U.S. citizenship for having lived in Canada for three years after his naturalization and for not having established a permanent residence in the

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[10]*Le Messager*, 1 juin 1923, p. 8, 13 février 1929, p. 1, 20 février 1929, p. 8; the data are derived from figures provided in *Le Messager*, 13 février 1929, p. 1.

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United States prior to October 15, 1946, thus violating the terms of the Nationality Act of 1940; immigration officials did not disclose the reasons for the expatriation of the other two persons.[11] Like naturalizers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, those who became U.S. citizens in the 1920s and 1930s tended overwhelmingly to retain their citizenship.

A significant demographic shift took place in Lewiston that facilitated the acculturation of Franco-Americans. By 1920, a majority of the city's francophones were U.S.-born. Data compiled from the 1920 nominal census reveals that while the first generation comprised 46.1 percent of Lewiston's population of French-Canadian descent, the second generation made up 47.7 percent, and succeeding generations ("Americans" with French surnames), 6.2 percent. Despite heavy migration from Québec during the 1920s, Canadian-born French speakers remained a minority in Lewiston in 1930. Aggregate data from the 1930 federal census (the nominal census will not be released until 2002) provided the numbers of only first- and second-generation Franco-Americans; the first generation made up 43.0 percent of Lewiston's French-Canadian stock in 1930 and the second generation, 57.0 percent.[12] This demographic shift to U.S.-

[11]Naturalization records, 1920-1939, and the letters attached to them.

[12]*U.S. Census, 1920;* 1930 figures are derived from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1932), p. 1031.

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born Franco-Americans would serve to accelerate the speed with which Lewiston's French speakers acculturated in U.S. society as the century progressed. The immigration restrictions the United States applied to Canada by 1930 would with time cause the proportion of U.S.-born Franco-Americans to increase further and thereby also serve to quicken the pace of their acculturation.

After 1930, Canadian migrants needed U.S. visas, jobs, and proof that they could support themselves financially before they could move to the United States. Even before 1930, however, there existed some limitations on the flow of Canadian migrants to the U.S.A. From June 1906, migrants had to pay an immigration, or head, tax and had to obtain a certificate of arrival before entering the country. U.S. immigration officials denied entry to Canadians who did not meet these requirements, and they deported those who had managed to enter the country without first obtaining the necessary documentation. Periodic reports in *Le Messager* reminded readers of the immigration requirements, and they revealed that Lewiston residents who had managed to enter the country illegally would make trips back to Canada in order to comply with the entry requirements they had avoided and which were a pre-requisite to naturalization. In July 1929, the newspaper informed readers that they no longer had to return to Canada to register legally their U.S. arrival, but could now do so at different locations in Maine, the nearest of

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which was Portland. During the 1920s, the newspaper occasionally warned readers traveling to Canada that U.S. authorities sometimes hindered Franco-Americans upon their return, and it strongly suggested that they bring identification, including naturalization papers or marriage certificates, to facilitate their re-entry into the United States.[13] As immigration statistics attest, these limitations on the flow of migrants from Canada hardly impeded the mass movement of French Canadians to the United States before 1930. While Canadians were not subject to the same immigration restrictions as overseas migrants in the 1920s, the entry requirements they had to meet and the periodic problems Lewiston residents had returning to the United States after visits to *le pays natal* nonetheless suggest that the large migration of Canadians concerned U.S. immigration officials.

It certainly concerned U.S. Census Bureau consultant Niles Carpenter, a sociology professor at the University of Buffalo. From the 1840s through the 1880s, and again in the 1910s, Canada had placed among the top five countries sending the largest number of migrants to the United States, he revealed in his 1927 publication. Like his

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[13]Yolande Lavoie, *L'émigration des Canadiens aux États-Unis avant 1930: Mesure du phénomène* (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1972), p. 13; *Le Messager*, 11 août 1920, p. 6, 14 août 1923, p. 8, 1 février 1926, p. 8, 25 octobre 1926, p. 8, 4 mars 1927, p. 8, 18 mars 1927, p. 4, 27 et 29 juillet 1927, p. 8, 24 août 1927, p. 6, 12 septembre 1927, p. 8, 18 avril 1929, p. 9, 1 juillet 1929, p. 8.

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contemporaries, who viewed European migrants as invading hordes, Carpenter saw the migration of Canadians--as well as Mexicans--as "invasions." He worried that their concentration along U.S. borders would ultimately lead the United States to cede land to Canada and Mexico. Using data he adapted from another source, which had sampled twenty-eight courts for the period 1913-1914, Carpenter argued that Canadians took longer than other migrant groups to acquire U.S. citizenship. In fact, Canadians placed last in his table of twenty migrant groups, because they took an average of 16.4 years from the time of their arrival in the United States until they processed their final naturalization papers. Although the data Carpenter presented does not distinguish between English and French Canadians, he was more worried about francophone migrants because he believed they would not Americanize as readily as English speakers.[14]

Carpenter may have been correct in arguing that Canadians took longer than other groups to acquire U.S. citizenship. But my findings suggest that a longer term, historical perspective, rather than one that relies

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[14]C. Stewart Doty, "How Many Frenchmen Does It Take to...?" *Thought and Action* 11 (Fall 1995), p. 90; Niles Carpenter, *Immigrants and Their Children, 1920: A Study Based on Census Statistics Relative to the Foreign Born and the Native White of Foreign or Mixed Parentage* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1927), pp. 64, 128-129, 264. An example of the historiography portraying European migrants as invading hordes is Marcus L. Hansen, "The Second Colonization of New England," *New England Quarterly* 2 (October 1929), pp. 539-560.

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primarily upon data from a single decade, leads both to a more nuanced and ultimately different understanding of the acculturation of French-Canadian migrants in the United States. Among the French-Canadian migrant men who had entered the United States as minors under eighteen, about one-third naturalized within five years of their twenty-first birthday, hence within five years of eligibility, in the 1910s, the decade from which Carpenter drew his data. But over three-fourths had done so within five years of their twenty-first birthday in the late nineteenth century and just under three-fourths had done so during the first decade of the twentieth. As argued in the last chapter, regulations that lengthened the time to naturalization for migrants entering the United States as minors appear to account best for the drop noted in the 1910s. The proportion of these men who naturalized by twenty-five remained at one-third (33.7 percent) in the 1920s and dropped to one-fourth (25.7 percent) in the 1930s. To take one example, Joseph Elzear Wilfrid Paradis arrived in the United States in 1923 at the age of seventeen, declared his intention to become a citizen at twenty-one, and naturalized several years later, just a few weeks short of his twenty-fourth birthday. While men like Paradis may have taken longer to naturalize than in past years, other evidence reveals they did not wait especially long to become U.S. citizens. As in the past, a majority of the men like Paradis who had arrived in the United States as

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minors became citizens by their thirty-first birthday, that is, within the first ten years of their eligibility. This was true of 60.1 percent of the men in the 1920s and 69.1 percent in the 1930s. Smaller proportions of women who had entered the United States as minors naturalized at a young age, however. One-fourth (26.0 percent) of the women in the 1920s and one-fifth (20.0 percent) in the 1930s naturalized within five years of their twenty-first birthday. During the 1920s, only two-fifths (40.0 percent) naturalized within ten years of their twenty-first birthday, while well over half (57.7 percent) did so during the 1930s. Estelle Labadie Plourde was among them. She arrived in the United States in 1916 at ten years of age and naturalized at thirty-one, hence within ten years of eligibility.[15] Thus, while some French-Canadian migrants took longer to naturalize in the 1920s and 1930s than they had in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, the data do not suggest that they were particularly slow to become U.S. citizens.

The naturalization records of French-Canadian migrants who had entered the United States as adults add further evidence of this. Unlike the women who had entered the United States as minors, those who had arrived as adults generally took less time to naturalize. In fact, the data

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[15]Naturalization records, 1900-1919, 1920-1939; Paradis' naturalization record from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 22, #2206 and Plourde's is from vol. 28, #2819.

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reveals their naturalization patterns were fairly similar to those of the men. During the 1920s, over three-fifths of the French-Canadian women (68.4 percent) and men (63.8 percent) who had entered the United States at eighteen or older became citizens within ten years of their border crossing. During the 1930s, however, under one-third (28.9 percent) of the women and about one-third (34.2 percent) of the men became citizens within ten years of their arrival in the United States. This significant drop from the twenties to the thirties reveals that the large majority of men and women who naturalized in the 1930s were not recent migrants. Yet, most women and men who had arrived in the United States as adults naturalized within fifteen years of crossing the border. Eighty (80.2) percent of the men and 76.3 percent of the women in the 1920s, and 72.7 percent of the men and 72.4 percent of the women in the 1930s, naturalized within fifteen years of arriving in the United States. Louis Philippe Blais, for instance, had crossed the border as an adult at age twenty-four, and he naturalized twelve years later, when he was thirty-six years old.[16] Like most other French-Canadian men and women who had entered the United States as adults, Blais had waited some time, but not particularly long, to naturalize.

The data presented above, like that presented in earlier chapters of this thesis, on the time it took

[16]Naturalization records, 1920-1939; Blais' record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 26, #2613.

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French-Canadian migrants to become U.S. citizens stands in contrast to the portrait Niles Carpenter painted of francophones hesitant to fulfill the civic requirements for political participation in the United States. Carpenter's 1927 publication highlights how poorly anglophone Americans understood the intentions of individuals of French-Canadian birth and background in the U.S.A. It reveals how trapped they were by received paradigms which postulated a false dichotomy between ethnic retention on the one hand and acculturation into the host society on the other.

The unhappy consequence for Franco-Americans was that they continued to experience discrimination during the interwar period by those who pushed Americanization. In 1920, over 100,000 of Maine's 768,014 residents were foreign-born, and one-third (33.1 percent) of this migrant population was French-Canadian. These French-Canadian migrants joined the ranks of Maine's Catholic Church which, by 1920, had 150,000 communicants, nearly one-fifth of Maine's total population.[17] Because Franco-Americans retained their French language, Roman Catholic faith, and

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[17]U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1920*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1923), p. 415; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1921), pp. 46-47; percentage derived from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), p. 415; *Official Catholic Directory for the Year of Our Lord 1920* (New York: P.J. Kenedy and Sons, 1920), p. 526.

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many French-Canadian traditions, they became subject to increasing pressure to Americanize following World War I. The postwar Americanization movement found expression in two different forms in Lewiston--one within and the other without the Catholic Church. For his part, Bishop Louis Walsh continued his offensive against the Dominican priests in the early 1920s, and he continued pushing French speakers to shed their language and culture. Other Americanizers operated against the Catholic Church, and their anti-Catholic activities help explain why Bishop Walsh pushed Franco-Americans to abandon some of their ethnic traits. These Americanizers were the nefarious Ku Klux Klan.

Unlike during the post-Civil War era, the Klan in the 1920s expanded far beyond the South, forging a national organization between three and six million strong. The Klan had appeal beyond the South not because it advocated white supremacy, as it had in the past, but because it had evolved into an organization that also embraced such themes as Americanism, nativism, Prohibitionism, and traditional moral and family values, contends Leonard J. Moore. If one looks beyond the Klan's rhetoric and to its activities, he argues, the Klan represented something more than a Protestant backlash against urban immigrants. In his view, based upon his study of Indiana, the state which had the largest Klan membership, the K.K.K. functioned as a social and civic organization through which white Protestants

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tried to reassert control over their communities. Its strength lay in states like Indiana in which white Protestants comprised a majority of residents.[18]

The same was true in Canada. The Ku Klux Klan had migrated north to Montréal in 1921 before spreading to the Maritimes, Ontario, and western Canada. The Klan allegedly burned Catholic buildings in Québec in 1922, but it did not develop into a strong organization in this province, where Catholics comprised about eighty percent of the population. The Klan drew its strength in western Canada where white Protestant majorities existed. In Alberta and Saskatchewan, the Klan directed its energy against French Canadians and against Catholic migrants from Central and Eastern Europe, in order to assert a Protestant and British character over the western provinces.[19]

The growing Catholic population of Maine attracted the Klan to the state. At their height in the mid-1920s, Maine Klansmen numbered about 150,000, surpassing the membership of any other New England state. The Klan's rise in New England in the 1920s is an aspect of nativism in the United

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[18]Leonard J. Moore, *Citizen Klansmen: The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, 1921-1928* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp. 1-3, 11, 118, 188-190.

[19]Julian Sher, *White Hoods: Canada's Ku Klux Klan* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1983), pp. 23-25, 30, 40, 48; *Martin Robin, Shades of Right: Nativist and Fascist Politics in Canada, 1920-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), pp. 11, 24.

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States that has not attracted much attention from historians.[20]

The K.K.K. first started recruiting in the Lewiston-Auburn area in 1923. Given the small number of African-Americans and Jews in Lewiston, it is clear that the Klan came to intimidate Catholics, the largest proportion of whom were Franco-American. *Le Messager* recognized the threat the Klan posed: *"Elle [cette secte] sent que le peuple franco-américain lui fait tort tout simplement parce qu'il est catholique et elle voudrait le réduire a [sic] néant."* The French-language newspaper challenged the Klan's version of "Americanism": *"Mais de quel droit le Ku Klux Klan s'autorise-t-il pour faire une lutte à mort aux Catholiques? La constitution américaine ne donne-t-elle pas le droit à tout individu de pratiquer la religion qu'il a embrassée?"*[21] With such discourse, Franco-Americans made clear that they knew their rights in their country of adoption, and their tone suggested that they would assert those rights.

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[20]Moores, "The History of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine," pp. 25-26; Doty, "How Many Frenchmen Does It Take to...?", p. 92. These works are among the very few that have examined the Klan's rise in New England.

[21]*Lewiston Daily Sun*, February 6, 1923, p. 12; *Le Messager*, 21 février 1923, p. 3.

"Elle [cette secte]...a [sic] néant.": "[This sect] feels that the Franco-American people have wronged it simply because they are Catholic and it would like to reduce them to nothing."

"Mais de quel...a embrassée?": "But by what law does the Ku Klux Klan authorize itself to destroy Catholics? Does not the United States Constitution give every individual the right to practice his religion?"

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Although born in Maine, F. Eugene Farnsworth, the King Kleagle of Maine's Ku Klux Klan, had lived his first thirty years in New Brunswick, Canada (which also had a Klan in the 1920s) before making his home in Massachusetts. In March 1923, he spoke at the Odd Fellows Hall in Lewiston against Roman Catholics and hyphenated Americans. Accounts in the English- and French-language press reveal that Farnsworth singled out Irish Catholics, but not Franco-Americans, in his remarks. Given Lewiston's demography, perhaps Farnsworth was being prudent. In its report of the meeting, *Le Messager* dismissed the Klan as a hollow threat, calling the K.K.K. *"tout simplement une exploitation nouveau genre de la curiosité publique."* It argued that English-language newspapers and local rumors had given the meeting more attention than it deserved. According to *Le Messager*, a local society had hired a private detective to attend the meeting, and he had counted 271 people there, among whom were two Franco-Americans, one businessman, and the rest, members of the working-class (presumably Yankees.) Not all supported the organization, *Le Messager* argued, suggesting that many had attended out of curiosity and pointing out that the Klan had collected less than $50.00 in contributions at the meeting. *Le Messager* also reported that Mayor Louis J. Brann, a Democrat, had stated

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he would not allow the Klan to use Lewiston City Hall or other public buildings for meetings.[22]

In April meetings in Auburn and Lewiston, Farnsworth continued his attacks against ethnic groups that had brought to the United States religious traditions other than Protestantism. In Auburn, Farnsworth argued: "'This is not an Italian nation, this is not an Irish nation, and this is not a Catholic nation, [*sic*] it always has been and always will be a Protestant nation.'" He voiced his concern that the Knights of Columbus in the United States was part of "'the Pope's political machine,'" and he argued against parochial schools, contending that all children should be educated in the public schools. He complained that Masons in Lewiston feared to wear their insignias lest they lose business. Without mentioning Franco-Americans, Farnsworth attacked Irish Catholics, warning that "'7,000 shanty Irish micks'" could have as much influence as 70,000 Protestants, an influence, in other words, far beyond their numbers. At a Lewiston meeting, Farnsworth similarly argued that as aliens gained political power in the United States, Protestants were losing control of the country.[23]

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[22]Pierre Vincent Bourassa, "The Catholic Church in the Franco-American Community" (Honors thesis, Bowdoin College, 1978), p. 54; Moores, "The History of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine," pp. 33-34; Robin, *Shades of Right*, p. 11; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, March 22, 1923, pp. 1, 10; *Le Messager*, 23 mars 1923, p. 8.

"tout simplement...curiosité publique.": "quite simply a new kind of exploitation of public curiosity."

[23]*Lewiston Daily Sun*, April 19, 1923, pp. 1, 5, April 21, 1923, pp. 1, 4.

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Farnsworth's broad attacks against Catholics and the foreign-born of course represented indirect attacks against Lewiston's Franco-Americans, a population growing in number and political strength in the 1920s.

Louis-Philippe Gagné responded to Farnsworth in a front-page article in *Le Messager*. Against Farnsworth's notion that the United States was a Protestant nation, Gagné contended: *"La séparation de l'Eglise et de l'Etat existe aux Etats-Unis et on n'a pas droit de dire que la nation est protestante."* His discourse conveyed that Franco-Americans knew intimately their constitutional rights in the U.S.A. Gagné went on to dismiss Farnsworth's assumption that people could not be both Catholic and American, and he chastized the K.K.K. for corruption in its national ranks: *"Mais quand on est accusé de criminel, comme le sont quelques-uns des chefs du Ku Klux Klan, on ne vient pas faire la loi chez les gens paisibles du Maine."*[24] Defenders of Franco-Americans, *Le Messager* never hesitated to assert the rights of francophones as U.S. residents nor to point out the idiosyncracies of the host society. Gagné's defense made clear what nativists neither could nor

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[24]*Le Messager*, 23 avril 1923, p. 1.

"La séparation ...est protestante.": "The separation of church and state exists in the United States and one does not have the right to say that the nation is Protestant."

"Mais quand...du Maine.": "But when accused as criminal, as were some leaders of the Ku Klux Klan, one does not come make laws for the peaceful people of Maine."

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would accept: the notion that ethnic retention proceeded hand in hand with acculturation into U.S. society.

In May 1923, *Le Messager* reported that the Klan was experiencing difficulty making inroads in Lewiston, and it felt that the nervousness of local Catholics about the Klan's presence had declined. Because Lewiston had a large Catholic population, demography worked in its favor against the Klan. The organization had difficulty renting a hall in Lewiston and ended up holding its meetings across the river in Auburn.[25]

Auburn was more receptive to the Klan. In contrast to Lewiston which had four Catholic churches, one synagogue, and nine Protestant churches in 1920, Auburn had one Catholic church, one synagogue, and eighteen Protestant churches. Only 15.2 percent of Auburn's 1920 population consisted of foreign-born whites, unlike Lewiston where they comprised 32.3 percent of the city's population. Men, women, and children of high school age attended Klan meetings in Auburn, and the K.K.K. held its first initiation ceremony at a secret meeting there in May 1923. By late September, the *Sun* reported the Klan had an estimated 1,700 members in Lewiston-Auburn and that it planned to purchase land for a temple in Auburn. Either these numbers from the English-language press were greatly exaggerated, or the Klan had lost ground by the spring of

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[25]*Le Messager*, 16 et 18 mai 1923, p. 8.

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1924; in March, *Le Messager* reported that, despite Farnsworth's claim to be making inroads in Lewiston and Auburn, the Klan had only several hundred members.[26]

The hooded knights at first encountered resistance even in Yankee Auburn. After the K.K.K. petitioned the City Council to use Auburn's city building for meetings, the sole council member with a Franco-American surname asked the body to deny the Klan's request, and it complied with a 3-2 vote in November 1923. After Klan-backed candidates won three seats on the Auburn City Council in December, a cross burned to celebrate the Klan's victory near the site of the newly-established Sacred Heart Catholic parish, largely composed of Franco-Americans. Now in the minority, Franco-American George C. Bolduc was the only Auburn city councillor in February 1924 to vote against the Klan's use of Auburn Hall.[27] Winning approval to meet in the Auburn city building represented another victory for the Klan, giving it stronger footing in Lewiston's twin city.

Remarks by Klan leaders published in the English- and French-language press of Lewiston never revealed any direct

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[26]*Resident and Business Directory of Androscoggin County, Maine, 1920-1921* (Auburn, Maine: Merrill and Webber Company, 1920), pp. 1101-1102; *Fourteenth Census of the United States*, vol. 3 (1923), p. 413; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, May 21 and 28, 1923, p. 12, September 21, 1923, p. 12, November 1, 1923, pp. 1, 5, November 28, 1923, p. 12; *Le Messager*, 28 mai 1923, p. 6, 19 mars 1924, p. 6.

[27]*Le Messager*, 24 septembre 1923, p. 1, 7 novembre 1923, p. 8, 14 décembre 1923, p. 8, 29 février 1924, p. 6; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, December 13, 1923, p. 1.

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attacks against Franco-Americans. The K.K.K., it appears, had a healthy fear of Lewiston Franco-Americans. Elsewhere in Maine, clashes took place in 1924 between Franco-Americans and Klansmen in Greenville in February, in Fairfield in July, and in Biddeford in September. The Klan certainly seemed aware of Lewiston's demography. In April 1924, when ten Klansmen paraded in regalia for the first time during an open meeting in Auburn's Odd Fellows Hall, W.H. Cline, Farnsworth's successor, "drew a comparison between the cities of Lewiston and Auburn relative to the Ku Klux Klan activities," reported the *Sun*. It continued: "The Klan[,] he stated[,] would not dare to parade in dress uniform in Lewiston, but intimated that such an act might be done in Auburn with impunity." About 200 Klan members paraded in regalia in Lisbon Falls, a community near Lewiston, in early May 1924. When *Le Messager* reported this news, it pointed out that the K.K.K. had not met in Lewiston for a year; it did note, however, that a thirty-foot cross facing the city had burned the previous week. Whether the cross burning was the Klan's doing or not, its purpose was to intimidate Lewistonians. According to the *Sun*, boys in Auburn may have burned it as a hoax. "'It is true that we have a pretty lively set of boys up this way who like no better fun than to stir up a little excitement, and if they could give the impression that the Ku Klux Klan had at last captured Lewiston, I am sure they would enjoy the joke immensely,'" stated the *Sun*'s unidentified source

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who lived near the scene. In mid-May, a cross burned from 9:30 p.m. until midnight in Auburn near the Lewiston Falls. Auburn police made no attempts to stop the burning, the *Sun* reported, and it implied the K.K.K. had set the fire.[28]

The presidents of Bates College in Lewiston and of Bowdoin College in Brunswick joined a national committee, called the National Vigilantes, to work to curb the growing influence of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States. Despite their leadership, some students from the two colleges attended Klan meetings in Auburn. About thirty-five students from Bates and a few from Bowdoin participated in Klan meetings in November 1923. According to the *Sun*, the K.K.K. intentionally changed the date of one of its scheduled meetings in order to thwart any efforts by Bates College officials to prevent its students from attending.[29] Perhaps Bates students themselves brought the Klan onto the college campus in August 1924.

That month, the English-language press reported, and *Le Messager* translated for its readers, the news that local Klan members planned to celebrate the Republican gubernatorial nomination of Ralph O. Brewster with a highly visible cross burning. On Sunday morning, August 10, 1924,

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[28]Doty, "How Many Frenchmen Does It Take to...?", p. 93; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, April 25, 1924, pp. 1, 11, April 29, 1924, p. 9, May 16, 1924, p. 16, July 3, 1924, p. 1; *Le Messager*, 2 mai 1924, p. 8.

[29]*Bates Student* (Lewiston, Maine), November 16, 1923, p. 1; *Le Messager*, 23 novembre 1923, p. 8; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, November 22, 1923, pp. 1, 4, November 28, 1923, p. 12.

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they apparently did so. Lewiston residents awakened by the dynamite bomb saw a twelve-foot cross blazing atop Mount David, located on the Bates College campus, and visible in both Lewiston and Auburn. Brewster went on to win the fall gubernatorial election, *"soutenu par les K.K.K.,"* noted the Dominicans in their chronicle. Brewster won every Maine county except Androscoggin. Auburn went to Brewster with 3,581 votes to his opponent's 1,883 votes; Lewiston, however, had supported Brewster's Democratic opponent with over 4,000 more votes than the 2,116 it had given him.[30]

Following Brewster's election came reports of more explosions, cross burnings, and Klan sightings in the Lewiston area. In September, *Le Messager* indicated that the English-language press had reported the Klan had set off bombs near Sabattus, a community that bordered Lewiston, and had burned a cross in Auburn. But *Le Messager* indicated *"de vulgaires canards"* rather than the Klan may have been responsible. The French-language newspaper contended that the results of the gubernatorial election should not be viewed as a Klan victory, pointing out that Brewster had denied ties with the organization. Perhaps persuaded by Brewster's denials, *Le Messager* may

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[30]*Lewiston Daily Sun*, August 8, 1924, p. 14, August 11, 1924, pp. 1, 12; *Le Messager*, 8 et 11 août 1924, p. 8, 10 septembre 1924, p. 1; la chronique du couvent, la série couvents et paroisses, la sous-série couvent des Apôtres Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, Maine [ci-après, la Chronique des Dominicains], les archives des Dominicains, Montréal, Québec, vol. 14, 10 septembre 1924, p. 192.

"soutenu par les K.K.K.": "supported by the K.K.K."

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simply have been trying to protect Franco-Americans from the fear of being themselves in the face of increasing activity designed to intimidate them. Several days after *Le Messager*'s commentary, the *Sun* reported that Franco-Americans Arthur Dumais and George Bolduc had seen 200 "white robed [*sic*] figures" in a remote section of Lewiston on Saturday night, that a cross burning had taken place around midnight the same evening in another section of Lewiston on the Côté farm, and that an explosion of dynamite bombs had preceded two other cross burnings that same Saturday night, one in Lewiston and the other in Auburn.[31] The Klan, or those who wished to credit the Klan, had made their presence felt in the Lewiston area.

Reported in the English- and French-language press in late 1924, divisions existed within the Klan of Lewiston-Auburn that diminished its ability to exert influence over the local community. The Klan did, however, maintain a presence in Auburn at least until mid-1926, when the City Council denied its request for permission to parade publicly in regalia. In that year, membership in Maine's Ku Klux Klan dropped to 61,136 from a high of 150,141 in 1925. The organization thereafter collapsed. Its statewide membership declined to about 3,000 in 1927 and to 226 in 1930. Corruption within the state organization, the

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[31]*Le Messager*, 10 septembre 1924, p. 8; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, September 15, 1924, p. 4.

"de vulgaires canards": "some ordinary hoaxsters"

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indictment of Farnsworth for treason, a lack of financial suppport, as well as the national decline of the Ku Klux Klan led to its demise in Maine.[32]

Sources make it difficult to judge the impact of the K.K.K. on Lewiston's Franco-American population. If the experience of Theophile Bernier is at all representative, however, it would appear that the Klan did not substantially intimidate this ethnic group. According to grandson Pierre Vincent Bourassa, Bernier refused to allow the K.K.K. to influence him adversely. Bernier voiced this opinion in English while in a hardware store, adding that "if the Klan did not like the way he felt they could pay him a visit to settle the problem." Assaulted one week later while returning home from his job in a textile mill, Bernier discovered nothing missing from his wallet. The attack, it seems, was his consequence for antagonizing the Klan. Bourassa indicates his grandfather did not report the incident because of the possibility that local police or judicial authorities belonged to the organization. The incident made Bernier more resolute about retaining his French-Canadian identity: "From that day on Monsieur Bernier refused to speak English, associated with few Protestants, and voted for the Democratic ticket."[33] From

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[32]*Lewiston Daily Sun*, October 23, 1924, pp. 1, 8, November 23, 1924, p. 12, June 11, 1926, p. 1; *Le Messager*, 21 novembre 1924, p. 8, 9 et 11 juin 1926, p. 8; Moores, "The History of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine," pp. 25-26, 99-100.

[33]Bourassa. "The Catholic Church in the Franco-American Community." pp. 58-59.

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this limited, anecdotal evidence, we can speculate that the effect of the Klan on at least some Franco-Americans may have been for them to assert more forcefully their ethnic identity. Interestingly enough, that assertion, at least in the case of Theophile Bernier, found expression at the ballot box as well as in his choice of language and associates. While it revealed a measure of retrenchment (in his decision to speak only French and to limit contact with non-Catholics), it also gave evidence of his acculturation (he was a voter.) Thus, in seeking to retain his ethnic identity and to express it by exercising suffrage, Bernier gave evidence of his decision to pursue acculturation and *survivance* as intertwined goals.

Another indication that the Klan did not succeed in intimidating Franco-Americans in Lewiston was that they did not feel it necessary to avoid Brewster. Although it was an open secret that Brewster had been involved with the Klan during his 1924 bid for governor, Franco-Americans had such confidence--and sufficient electoral power--that they could invite him to their events, and know he would feel compelled to attend. Franco-Americans invited the governor to their winter carnival in 1925 and to the *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day banquet in 1927, receiving him at the banquet with *"une véritable ovation."* In 1930, *Le Messager* reported that Franco-American Republicans met with Brewster in Lewiston and supported his bid for the U.S. Senate. That same year, when the American Snowshoe Union held its

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installation ceremony at the Lewiston chalet of the Franco-American club, *le Montagnard*, Brewster was among the politicians who spoke at the event.[34]

One effect of the Klan's presence may have been to prompt Franco-Americans to anglicize their names, but I have discovered no evidence of this in Lewiston in the 1920s. Only in 1930 did naturalization forms begin to provide a line for those wishing to change their name, and the records reveal there was little name changing among Lewiston francophones. Only ten (1.6 percent) of the 612 men and women who naturalized from 1930 to 1939 modified their names. Half of the alterations involved individuals shortening their names, typically by selecting one of their three given names as their own. For example, Joseph Elzear Wilfrid Paradis shortened his name to Wilfrid Paradis. Under half of the name changes of the 1930s involved anglicizations. Two men and two women anglicized their given names but retained their French family names. For example, Raoul Leopold Cote became Ralph Leopold Cote, and Lucienne Levesque became Lucy Levesque. None of the individuals who naturalized in the 1930s anglicized his or her family name.[35] Name changing is a topic that surfaces

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[34]*Le Messager*, 9 février 1925, p. 1, 24 juin 1927, p. 1, 2 avril 1930, p. 5, 9 juin 1930, p. 1.
"une véritable ovation": "a veritable ovation"
le Montagnard: the Mountaineer

[35]Naturalization records, 1920-1939; Cote's record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 29, #2886, and Levesque's is from vol. 25, #2551.

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frequently in the literature on Franco-Americans, but it seems to have occurred infrequently in Lewiston. Because the city had such a high concentration of French speakers, most who naturalized in the 1930s probably did not feel the pressure or the need to anglicize their names in order to fit into the social milieu. Moreover, passing as non-francophone appears not to have been an important consideration for the French-speaking migrants of this Franco-American city.

One might wonder if the post-World War I Americanization movement of the 1920s, including the visible presence of the Klan in the Lewiston area, had any effect on naturalizations in the interwar period. The number of French-Canadian migrants from Lewiston who became U.S. citizens nearly doubled during the 1920s and 1930s over the first two decades of the twentieth century. Whereas 684 had naturalized from 1900 to 1919, 1,238 did so from 1920 to 1939. But we cannot attribute this increase to the presence of the K.K.K. in the 1920s. Nearly equal numbers naturalized in the 1920s as in the 1930s. While the Americanization movement may have played a role in increasing the number of naturalizers in both decades, the lack of opportunity in Québec, not only during the 1920s but also during the Great Depression of the 1930s, surely motivated large numbers to pursue naturalization. During the Depression, jobs and New Deal benefits went first, if not exclusively, to U.S. citizens, and the Department of

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Immigration deported aliens who became public charges; these restrictions on the foreign-born must have propelled French-Canadian migrants to naturalize in the thirties.[36] Women also expanded the number of Lewiston francophones who naturalized during the 1920s and 1930s. Most importantly, as French-Canadian descendants continued the process of renegotiating their identity in the United States during the interwar period, they largely acculturated on their own and at their own pace.

Naturalization records provide us with a wealth of information about the French-Canadian migrants who became U.S. citizens during the 1920s and 1930s and, in the aggregate, they suggest some of their motivations for becoming citizens. One of the most significant changes in the records of the twenties and thirties is that they included women. To exercise the privilege of suffrage obtained in 1920, women had to be citizens. According to the Cable Act, as of September 22, 1922, migrant women could no longer gain derivative citizenship by marriage to U.S. nationals. Like single women, wives had to naturalize on their own. When Estelle Labadie married U.S.-born Lucien Plourde in 1927, for example, she did not automatically become a U.S. citizen; she became a citizen in her own right only when she filed final naturalization

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[36]Naturalization records, 1900-1919, 1920-1939; U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, *An Immigrant Nation: United States Regulation of Immigration, 1798-1991* ([Washington, D.C.]: Government Printing Office, 1991), p. 12.

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papers in 1937. During the 1920s, eighty-eight French-Canadian migrant women of Lewiston became naturalized citizens, and 206 did so in the 1930s. In all, they made up nearly one-fourth (23.7 percent) of the Lewiston francophones who naturalized during these two decades, and they account in part for the increase in the number of naturalizations from the first two decades of the century.[37]

As in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the francophone migrants of Lewiston who naturalized from 1920 to 1939 had come predominantly from the Province of Québec. Only 3.2 percent had been born outside of Québec.[38] The same regional patterns that surfaced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries emerged among naturalizers in the 1920s and 1930s. The French-Canadian men and women of Lewiston who became U.S. citizens from 1920 to 1939 had come overwhelmingly from Québec counties south of the Saint Lawrence River (see map 4.) Only from 2.3 to 3.0 percent had origins in counties north of the Saint Lawrence, and the majority of these individuals had been born in one of

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[37]*Le Messager*, 25 septembre 1922, p. 1; John J. Newman, "American Naturalization Processes and Procedures, 1790-1985" (Typescript, Family History Section, Indiana Historical Society, 1985), available at NARA-Waltham, p. 22; naturalization records, 1920-1939; Ange Marie Begin, O.P., comp., *Marriages of SS. Peter & Paul, Lewiston, Maine (1869-1979)* (Lewiston, Maine: Dominican Fathers [1980]), p. 553.

[38]They were from the Maritime provinces of New Brunswick (2.7 percent), Nova Scotia (0.1 percent), and Prince Edward Island (0.2 percent); the central Canadian province of Ontario (0.1 percent); and the western province of Manitoba (0.1 percent.) Naturalization records. 1920-1939.

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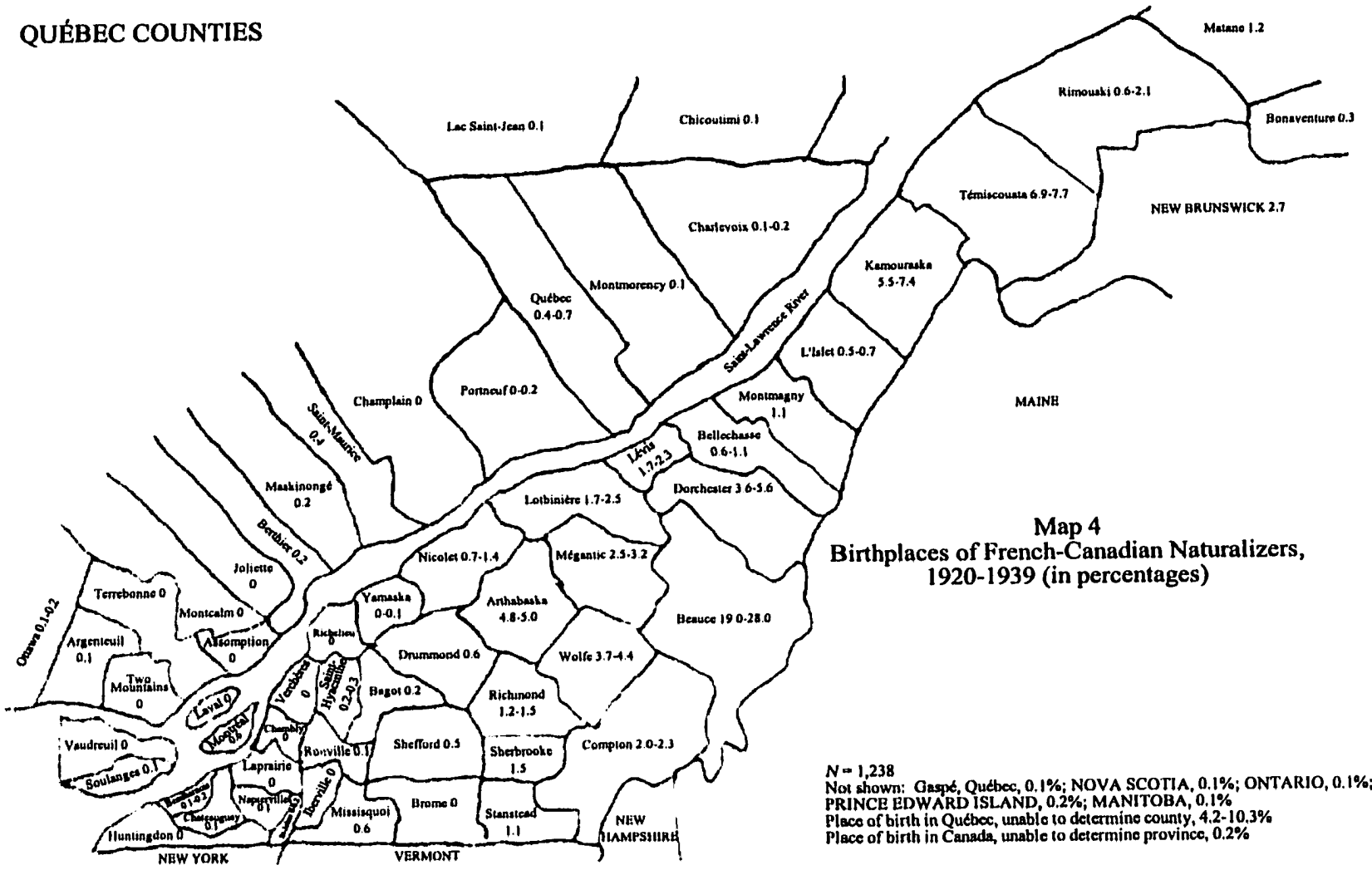

Map 4
Birthplaces of French-Canadian Naturalizers, 1920-1939 (in percentages)

N = 1,238
Not shown: Gaspé, Québec, 0.1%; NOVA SCOTIA, 0.1%; ONTARIO, 0.1%; PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, 0.2%; MANITOBA, 0.1%
Place of birth in Québec, unable to determine county, 4.2-10.3%
Place of birth in Canada, unable to determine province, 0.2%

the three largest cities along the river. As in the past, counties to the north and west of Maine had been the largest suppliers of French-Canadian Lewiston migrants. Two counties to the north of Maine, Témiscouata and Kamouraska, together had supplied up to 15.0 percent of the naturalizers in the twenties and thirties. The western belt of Dorchester, Beauce, Mégantic, Wolfe, and Arthabaska had sent as much as 46.2 percent of the population that naturalized. Beauce alone had provided from one-fifth (19.0 percent) to over one-fourth (28.0 percent) of those who naturalized during the 1920s and 1930s. While visiting Beauce county during his honeymoon in the summer of 1923, Louis-Philippe Gagné reported that the town of Beauceville had no industries, its residents barely made a living, and the town had no youth, for they had migrated elsewhere, such as to Lewiston and Waterville, Maine. Unlike during the opening decades of the twentieth century, the counties of Lévis and Québec had not supplied many of the Lewiston residents who naturalized (no more than 3.1 percent) from 1920 to 1939; the growing cities of Lévis and Québec within those counties must have offered more economic opportunities to French-Canadian residents in the twenties and thirties than had rural towns like Beauceville.[39] More than pressure from U.S. nativists, the lack of opportunity

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[39]Naturalization records, 1920-1939; lettre de Louis-Philippe Gagné, *Le Messager*, 11 juillet 1923, p. 1; Linteau et al., *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, p. 474.

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in rural Québec towns like Beauceville must have motivated French-Canadian migrants to naturalize during the 1920s and 1930s.

Naturalization records offer little information on the journey of migrants within Canada before they crossed the international border to the United States. During the 1920s, the records provided both the place of birth and the place of emigration of migrants, information from which we can discern whether French Canadians made at least one stopover before entering the United States. Beginning in 1930, the records also provided the last foreign residence of migrants which, when compared with their place of birth, similarly provided information about their migration patterns within Canada. Often the last foreign residence and place of emigration were the same; in cases where they were not, I compared the last foreign residence to the place of birth. What the records reveal is that nearly two-thirds (64.9 percent) of the individuals who naturalized in the 1920s and 1930s had migrated from their place of birth to the United States, and about one-third (35.1 percent) had moved within Canada before crossing the border; these proportions are comparable to those of persons who had naturalized during the first two decades of the century.[40] They suggest that a sizable number of the francophones who became U.S. citizens (or, in the case of

[40]Naturalization records, 1920-1939.

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those who had migrated as minors, that their parents) had unsuccessfully sought other opportunities in *le pays natal* before migrating to the United States; better opportunities in the U.S.A. surely motivated them--as well as those who had migrated directly from their place of birth--to remain.

Virtually no differences existed between the migration patterns of men and women within Canada. While 64.8 percent of the men had migrated from their place of birth to the United States, 65.0 percent of the women had similarly done so. Conversely, 35.2 percent of the men and 35.0 percent of the women had migrated within Canada before entering the United States. In addition, whereas between 1.3 and 1.5 percent of the men had migrated to a different Canadian province before crossing the international border, 1.7 percent of the women had. Lucy Levesque was one of them. Born in Québec, she had migrated to the United States from the neighboring province of New Brunswick.[41] But her migration pattern was exceptional, for most of the French-Canadian migrants who naturalized in Lewiston had moved to the United States from their province of birth.

Over four-fifths (81.8 percent) of the French-Canadian men and women who naturalized in Lewiston from 1920 to 1939 had entered the United States through Vermont, and only about one-sixth (17.2 percent) had crossed the international border into Maine. Their choice of

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[41]Naturalization records, 1920-1939.

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transportation explains these travel patterns. Like their predecessors, the French-Canadian migrants who naturalized in Lewiston in the 1920s and 1930s had arrived in the United States predominantly (88.8 percent) by railroad, and most of these individuals (77.8 percent) had completed all or part of their journey on the Grand Trunk line which passed through Vermont. To take one example, Estelle Labadie Plourde had migrated to the U.S.A. from Montmagny county, Québec, which lies on Maine's western border. Rather than entering the United States in Maine, she first passed through Vermont because she traveled on the Grand Trunk Railway. Under one-tenth (8.2 percent) of those who naturalized in the 1920s and 1930s had arrived in the United States by automobile, whereas none of the persons who had naturalized during the first two decades of the century had done so. This new means of transportation accounts for the increased proportion of Lewiston naturalizers in the 1920s and 1930s who had crossed the international border into Maine. By 1928, there were fourteen "ports of entry" along Maine's borders. Not all who had entered the United States through Maine had arrived by automobile, however, for some had walked across international bridges, others had taken ferries, and some had traveled on railroad lines other than the Grand Trunk. Louis Philippe Blais, for instance, had arrived at the

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"port of entry" of Jackman, Maine, on the Canadian Pacific Railroad.[42]

Available evidence suggests the time these migrants spent journeying to the United States was short. Only until 1930 did the naturalization forms provide the date of emigration from Canada and the date of arrival in the United States, information from which we can determine the length of the migrant journey. Nearly all (98.2 percent) of the naturalizers for whom we have this data had completed their journey to the United States within one day.[43] In terms of time and transportation, then, returning to *le pays natal* was not a daunting prospect; that these migrants stayed and became U.S. citizens testifies to their willingness to acculturate in their country of adoption.

Two items on the naturalization forms provide us with a glimpse of the journey that French-Canadian migrants had taken within the United States prior to their naturalization. Forty-seven of the 1,238 individuals (3.8 percent) who became U.S. citizens in the 1920s and 1930s had declared their intention to become citizens outside of Auburn or Portland, Maine, the location of the courts that Lewiston's French-Canadian migrants used to process their final naturalization papers. These forty-seven persons had filed first naturalization papers in other cities or towns

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[42]Naturalization records, 1900-1919, 1920-1939; *Le Messager*, 19 décembre 1928, p. 2.

[43]Naturalization records, 1920-1939.

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of Maine (1.5 percent), other states in New England (2.0 percent), or elsewhere in the United States (0.3 percent.) Louis Philippe Blais, for example, had filed his first naturalization papers in Augusta, Maine, and his final papers in Auburn. Ninety-eight of the 1,238 (7.9 percent) had children who had been born in the United States in places other than the twin cities of Lewiston and Auburn. The two children Louis Philippe Blais had at the time of his naturalization had both been born in Waterville, Maine, located near Augusta. As in the early twentieth century, the naturalization data suggests that the men and women who became citizens in the 1920s and 1930s had migrated little within the United States before settling in Lewiston. In their country of adoption, they were not a population "on the move."[44]

Over half of the women (56.8 percent) and men (56.9 percent) who became citizens in the 1920s had arrived in the United States as minors under eighteen. This pattern changed somewhat in the 1930s. While over three-fifths (63.1 percent) of the women who naturalized during the 1930s had crossed the international border as minors, under half (43.1 percent) of the naturalizing men had done so. Whereas about half of the men who had naturalized during

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[44]Naturalization records, 1920-1939. The quote refers to the work of Bruno Ramirez, *On the Move: French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860-1914* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), which emphasizes the geographic mobility of French Canadians.

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the first two decades of the twentieth century had entered the United States between the ages of ten and eighteen, inclusive, the proportion dropped to 37.7 percent in the 1920s and to 29.8 percent in the 1930s. By comparison, 30.7 percent of the women who naturalized in the 1920s and 37.9 percent in the 1930s had crossed the international border between ten and eighteen years of age.[45] Child labor legislation of the early twentieth century probably accounts best for the significant decline in the proportion of men, and for the small proportion of women, who had arrived between these ages. That legislation made migrating with young children less attractive than in the past, because the children could no longer legally contribute wages to the family economy.

Along with child labor laws, the regulations of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, such as English-language requirements (see chapter three), appear to have contributed to the decline in the number of francophones who naturalized shortly after reaching adulthood. The proportion of people naturalizing at age twenty-five and under continued to drop during the 1920s and 1930s, as it had after passage of the Naturalization Act of 1906. During the 1920s, 16.7 percent of the French-Canadian male migrants were twenty-five or younger at naturalization, and the proportion dropped even further to 8.9 percent in the

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[45]Naturalization records, 1920-1939.

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1930s. A similar pattern existed among the women who naturalized. In the 1920s, 14.8 percent were twenty-five or younger, and in the 1930s, 9.2 percent were.[46] Thus, changing patterns of migration influenced by child labor legislation and naturalization requirements imposed by the federal government (and influenced by promoters of Americanization) led to the naturalization of proportionally fewer young francophones in the 1920s and 1930s than in the past.

The records suggest some of the variables, including the internal forces, that affected the decision of francophone women and men to become U.S. citizens. Holding Lewiston's better-paying jobs was not central. Only about one-tenth of the French-Canadian migrant men (12.1 percent) and women (10.2 percent) who naturalized in the 1920s held white-collar jobs. In the 1930s, about one-tenth (11.8 percent) of the men were white-collar workers, while only one-fifteenth (6.3 percent) of the women were. Well over half of the men who naturalized in the 1920s (57.4 percent) and 1930s (57.4 percent) held industrial jobs. The proportion was smaller (40.9 percent) among the women who became citizens in the 1920s, but comparable (55.8 percent) in the 1930s. Estelle Labadie Plourde, a shoe worker, was part of this latter group. Unlike her, and unlike the men, a significant proportion of the women who naturalized did

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[46]Naturalization records, 1920-1939.

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not work outside of the home. Over one-third (35.2 percent) of the naturalizing women in the 1920s, and one-fourth (25.7 percent) in the 1930s did not work for wages. In addition, none of the men or women who became U.S. citizens in the 1920s was unemployed at the time of his or her naturalization; this was not the case during the 1930s, hence during the Great Depression, when a small fraction of the men (1.0 percent) and women (0.5 percent) who became U.S. citizens was unemployed.[47] These figures reveal that French-Canadian residents of Lewiston without jobs were not the ones demonstrating a commitment to the United States through the affirmative act of patriation.

Family considerations played a role in naturalization decisions. Around one-fourth (26.0 percent) of the men of Lewiston who became U.S. citizens from 1920 to 1939 were single, and about three-fourths (74.0 percent) were married. While more than one-third (37.6 percent) of the married men had U.S.-born wives, over three-fifths (61.7 percent) had spouses who had been born in Canada; the spouses of the remaining men (0.7 percent) had been born elsewhere or their place of birth was not indicated in the records. The places of birth of children appeared more consequential to the decision to naturalize than the wife's place of birth, just as during the early twentieth century. The offspring of three-fourths (75.5 percent) of the men

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[47]Naturalization records, 1920-1939.

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with children had all been born in the United States, and an additional one-sixth (16.6 percent) of the men had some children with U.S. birthplaces. Thus, 92.1 percent of the men with issue had children who had been born in the United States. This was the case for Louis Philippe Blais. Not only his two children but also his wife had been born in the United States, considerations which must have propelled him as other French-Canadian men to pursue his U.S. citizenship.[48]

The place of birth of children also appears to have influenced the decision of mothers to naturalize. Among the women with issue, over four-fifths (82.2 percent) had children who had all been born in the United States. This was the case for Estelle Labadie Plourde: the two children she had at the time of her naturalization had both been born in her country of adoption. An additional, small proportion of women (5.6 percent) had some (but not all) children with birthplaces in the United States; only around one-tenth (9.3 percent) had children who had all been born in Canada.[49] Thus, for Estelle Labadie Plourde as for most mothers, the U.S. birth of their children seems to have played a critical role in their decision to naturalize.

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[48]Naturalization records, 1920-1939.

[49]The place of birth of the children of the other 2.8 percent of the women was not indicated on the naturalization forms. Naturalization records. 1920-1939.

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So, it appears, did the citizenship status of their husbands. Two-fifths (40.8 percent) of the women who naturalized in the 1920s and 1930s were single, widowed, or divorced, and three-fifths (59.2 percent) were married. Under half (47.1 percent) of the married women had husbands who had been born in the United States, and about one-twelfth (8.0 percent) had Canadian-born husbands who had naturalized. Thus, no less than 55.2 percent of the married women who naturalized in the twenties and thirties had husbands who were U.S. citizens. The proportion may have been significantly higher, because court clerks in the 1920s and 1930s inconsistently reported the naturalization status of the husbands of women pursuing U.S. citizenship.[50] Naturalization regulations of the 1920s and 1930s made it possible for French-Canadian women who married U.S. citizens to naturalize sooner than single women. From September 22, 1922 to May 23, 1934, a migrant woman who married a U.S. citizen could naturalize after having lived in the United States for only one year; from May 24, 1934 until January 12, 1941, she had to have resided in the United States for at least three years. In either case, she did not have to meet the five-year residency requirement imposed upon men, single women, and women

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[50]Naturalization records, 1920-1939. Beginning in November 1940, the reporting was more consistent, because naturalization forms included a line on which court clerks could record the naturalization status of a person's spouse; before then, clerks occasionally inserted the information onto any available blank space on the form.

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married to non-citizens. Moreover, women who married U.S. citizens did not have to file first papers, something which shortened the naturalization process by at least two years.[51] Given these regulations, it is not surprising that most of the women who naturalized in the 1920s and 1930s were married.

But a closer examination of the records reveals that unattached women, and married women who lived without their spouses, were the first to have acquired U.S. citizenship through naturalization. During the 1920s, three-fifths (60.2 percent) of the women who naturalized were either single, divorced, widowed, or married but living apart from their husbands (due, perhaps, to a work situation, separation, or desertion.) During the 1930s, however, this group constituted only two-fifths (39.3 percent) of the French-Canadian women who became citizens. Conversely, married women who resided with their spouses comprised two-fifths (39.8 percent) of the women who naturalized in the 1920s and three-fifths (60.7 percent) in the 1930s. Single women and married women living on their own, it appears, were the ones more likely to naturalize during the first decade in which women could vote in the United States. In fact, the first two French-Canadian migrant women from Lewiston to naturalize were single. Siblings Octavie and

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[51]Not until 1934 did this same provision in the naturalization regulations apply to men. Newman, "American Naturalization Processes and Procedures," p. 22.

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Marie Anna Roberge, both milliners, had migrated together to the United States in 1895, and they naturalized on the same day in 1925.[52] During the 1920s, naturalization, it appears, appealed most to single women like themselves and to married women living apart from their spouses.

One other group of naturalizing women deserves brief mention before we turn to the naturalization campaigns of the 1920s and 1930s. These were women who had been born in the United States and who had lost their citizenship upon marriage to a foreign national. From March 2, 1907 until September 21, 1922, U.S. naturalization law followed the dictum: *"Qui prend mari, prend pays."* This practice ended in 1922, when women could no longer acquire derivative citizenship from their husbands.[53] When Marie Yvonne Godbout, who had been born in Lewiston in 1895, married her Canadian-born husband in 1913, she lost her U.S. citizenship; she could not acquire derivative citizenship when he naturalized in 1929 but had to become a citizen on her own, which she did by naturalizing in 1931. Twenty-seven women of Lewiston who had lost their U.S. citizenship

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[52]Naturalization records, 1920-1939; *Le Messager*, 28 octobre 1929, p. 8; the records of the Roberge sisters are from the Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, vol. 15, pp. 21-22.

[53]Newman, "American Naturalization Processes and Procedures," p. 23. If a woman married an alien ineligible to become a U.S. citizen, however, she could still lose her citizenship after September 22, 1922. Daniel Levy, *U.S. Citizenship and Naturalization Handbook* (St. Paul, Minnesota: West Group, 1999), p. 145.

"Qui prend mari, prend pays.": "Whoever takes a husband takes his nationality."

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by marrying French-Canadian migrants repatriated in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s.[54] These repatriates are not included in the naturalization figures discussed in this chapter, for the data focuses exclusively on Canadian-born women.

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During the 1920s and 1930s, *Le Messager* and local francophone elites continued both to promote naturalization and to guide French-Canadian migrants through the citizenship process. *Le Messager* frequently provided information about naturalization procedures, changes in naturalization laws, and potential questions and answers--in English--that might arise during the naturalization exam. The French-language newspaper regularly publicized classes offering instruction in English or which prepared French-Canadian migrants to become U.S. citizens, classes typically led by Franco-Americans and held in their own institutions. The newspaper strongly encouraged readers to avail themselves of these classes. It also kept track of candidates for naturalization and published the names of those who had taken out first or final naturalization papers, as it had in the past. *Le Messager* used whatever means it could to nudge francophones to naturalize. In June 1923, for instance, it informed readers that individuals who became citizens during the September court

[54]Naturalization records, 1920-1939; Marie Yvonne Godbout's record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 22, #2225.

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session would be eligible to vote in October in favor of a state law limiting the work week to forty-eight hours.[55] In doing this, *Le Messager* sought to connect the identity of Franco-Americans as workers with the opportunity to exercise influence in their adopted country. An acculturative step, the acquisition of citizenship could thus facilitate the intersection of working-class and ethnic identities among Franco-Americans.

Sketchy reports in *Le Messager* suggest that Franco-American women enrolled in classes beginning in the 1920s to learn English and to prepare for naturalization. In October 1920, fifty-four women, most of them married, took English lessons from Miss Ernestine Lemaire in the evenings in one of the school buildings of *Saint-Pierre* parish. While the French-language newspaper did not indicate the ethnicity of the women, most were probably Franco-American. The Y.W.C.A. also offered English and naturalization classes for women, and *Le Messager* encouraged Franco-Americans to attend. Some did. Some women also attended the naturalization classes that a Franco-American man led at *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* hall.[56] *Le Messager*'s brief

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[55]*Le Messager*, 22 août 1921, p. 4, 2 septembre 1921, p. 4, 15 septembre 1922, p. 8, 6 juin 1923, p. 8, 7 avril 1924, p. 8, 11 avril 1924, pp. 2, 8, 23 janvier 1925, p. 8, 4 septembre 1925, p. 8, 22 septembre 1926, p. 8, 12 août 1927, p. 8, 9 septembre 1927, p. 8, 23 mars 1928, p. 14, 9 octobre 1929, p. 8, 27 décembre 1929, p. 8, 14 avril 1930, p. 8, 1 décembre 1930, p. 8, 22 septembre 1934, p. 6, 23 avril 1938, p. 8, 22 septembre 1939, p. 10, 26 septembre 1939, p. 5, 28 septembre 1939, p. 10, 9 octobre 1939, p. 8.

[56]*Le Messager*. 15 octobre 1920. p. 6. 19 novembre 1924. p. 6. 21 novembre 1924, p. 8, 17 décembre 1924, p. 4, 11 mai 1927, p. 4.

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reports of these classes do not give us a clear sense of the total number of French-speaking women who participated. What they reveal, however, is that francophone women, like the men, were proactive in acquiring citizenship.

Elites continued to propagandize for naturalization. Attorney F.X. Belleau, for example, continued to argue in the post-World War I era that, unlike repatriation to Canada, naturalization was a practical option for French-Canadian migrants. It offered them the opportunity to increase their influence throughout New England. He saw naturalization as a strategy that served the interests of the group. Mindful of the pressure nativists exerted on U.S. ethnic groups to Americanize in the postwar years, Belleau implied that naturalization did not mean conceding to nativism and giving up ethnic identity, and he contended: *"Il n'est pas nécessaire non plus d'être plus Américain que l'Américain lui-même."*[57] For Belleau, as for other Franco-Americans, naturalization was a step in the process of acculturation, a process they defined very differently than cultural assimilation.

Belleau was one of a number of speakers who addressed the naturalization classes that Franco-Americans organized in the 1920s and 1930s. He spoke on the history of the naturalization of local Franco-Americans in March 1926.

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[57]F.X. Belleau, *Le Messager*, 17 septembre 1924, p. 4.
"Il n'est...lui-même.": "It is not necessary to be more American than the American himself."

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Other francophone speakers included businessmen, journalists, attorneys, and politicians. These speakers discussed such figures as George Washington, topics like the Declaration of Independence, and, more generally, the history of the United States. Students in the naturalization classes also studied the U.S. Constitution, and the non-francophone attorneys and politicians invited to address these classes probably spoke on state and local politics as well as naturalization laws. State representative George C. Wing, Jr., for instance, spoke about Maine politics and the issue of respect for laws in April 1928.[58]

But naturalization classes did not consider solely American themes. Franco-American mutual-benefit societies supported the classes financially and by providing speakers. In 1927, J.-H. Reny, president of the local *Conseil Gabriel* of *l'Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amérique,* advised candidates for citizenship not only to learn English well but also not to lose their mother tongue. Reny seized the opportunity to promote membership in the Franco-American societies, *"pour être un précieux appoint à notre élément,"* paraphrased *Le Messager.* As they became U.S. citizens, they should be proud of their French-

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[58]*Le Messager,* 22 mars 1926, p. 8, 27 septembre 1926, p. 8, 5 novembre 1926, p. 8, 11 février 1927, p. 8, 28 mars 1927, p. 8, 17 et 30 avril 1928, p. 8, 23 mai 1930, p. 8.

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Canadian identity, he told them.[59] If speeches by other mutualists reflected similar themes, naturalization classes served to promote an acculturation that emphasized ethnic retention as well civic integration.

After naturalization, the logical step was voter registration. When women gained suffrage in 1920, *Le Messager* informed readers of the conditions U.S.- and Canadian-born women had to meet in order to register to vote. Echoing Progressive reformers of the period, the French-language newspaper hoped that women would upgrade the quality of politics: *"Espérons que la participation des femmes aux élections ramènera l'honnêté dans la politique et plus de civilité et de décence dans les salles de votation."* It encouraged eligible women to appear before the voter registration bureau at city hall, telling them *"Nos compatriotes peuvent y aller sans crainte, car au Bureau on est très poli. (Ils ne peuvent faire autrement puisqu'il [sic] sont presque tous Canadiens)."* The newspaper's smug parenthetical comment reflected the political strength Franco-Americans had gained by 1920. *Le Messager*, of course, hoped woman suffrage would increase the voting power of Franco-Americans, and it kept an eye on

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[59]*Le Messager*, 18 mars 1927, p. 4, 21 mars 1927, p. 8, 1 août 1927, p. 8, 13 et 16 janvier 1928, p. 8.

Conseil Gabriel: Gabriel Council

l'Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amérique: the Saint John the Baptist Union of America

"pour être...notre élément,": "to be a valuable contributor to our element."

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voter registration. By noon on August 30, 1920, sixty of the 100 women who had registered to vote were Franco-American, it reported. When the local bureau stopped accepting applications from new voters before the mid-September state elections, *Le Messager* estimated that 1,500 of the 3,811 women who had registered were Franco-American.[60]

In October, when the voter registration bureau began accepting new registrations for the upcoming elections, *Le Messager* again encouraged women to register, indicating that the Catholic Church supported suffrage, even for women religious. For a cloistered order like the Ursuline Sisters of *Sainte-Marie* parish, suffrage was a bit overwhelming. After the pastor informed the sisters in August of their right to vote, they recorded their thoughts: *"Nous voyez-vous, suffragettes discutant politique, ah! ah! Que réserve encore l'avenir pour le beau sexe."* Only in late October, after learning that the bishop wished them to exercise their right of suffrage, did the four eligible Ursuline Sisters make the trip to city hall to register. But the voter registration bureau had

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[60]*Le Messager*, 30 août 1920, pp. 1, 6, 10 septembre 1920, p. 8.
"Espérons que...de votation.": "Let us hope that the participation of women in elections will bring honesty back to politics and more civility and decency at the voting places."
"Nos compatriotes...tous Canadiens).": "Our female compatriots can go there without fear, as they are very polite at the Bureau. (They cannnot be otherwise because nearly all are French Canadians)."

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closed, and the sisters needed to wait until prior to the next elections to register.[61]

Lewiston Franco-Americans organized their own naturalization and voter registration drives. Typically the drives did not favor either political party. In 1924, for example, both Republican and Democratic Franco-Americans formed a committee that visited Lewiston francophones from house to house to promote naturalization as well as voter registration. *Le Messager*, of course, strongly supported such efforts to get Franco-Americans to register to vote. After women gained suffrage, the newspaper encouraged them along with men to register. It regularly informed readers of the voter registration bureau's hours, and it reminded them of the requirement that voters had to read and write English. In 1924, after about fifty Franco-Americans had told members of the committee pushing voter registration that they did not want to *"se 'bâdrer'"* with voting, *Le Messager* chastised them in its columns. Individuals like this, the newspaper charged, give adversaries of Franco-Americans ammunition for calling

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[61]*Le Messager*, 22 octobre 1920, p. 6; circular letter, "Petit Journal de Lewiston," Ursuline Provincialate Archives, Dedham, Massachusetts, Saint Mary's Convent, Lewiston, Maine, file, 29 août 1920, p. 1, 28 octobre [1920], pp. 2-3. On the role of French-Canadian women religious in the early feminist movement of Québec, see Marta Danylewycz, *Taking the Veil: An Alternative to Marriage, Motherhood, and Spinsterhood in Quebec, 1840-1920*, ed. Paul-André Linteau, Alison Prentice, and William Westfall (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987.)

"Nous voyez-vous,...le beau sexe.": "Can you see us, suffragettes discussing politics, ha! ha! What the future yet holds for women."

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them such names as "'Fifty Fifty Americans,'" an obvious reference to Robert Cloutman Dexter's 1924 publication by the same title. Disappointed that the drive increased the number of Franco-American voters by only 460 out of a potential 800 new voters, *Le Messager* challenged non-voters to prove to their critics that they, too, were 100 percent American, because the Franco-American version of Americanism placed considerable emphasis on meeting civic responsibilities.[62] Thus in 1924 the Americanization movement, and the presence of some of its nefarious representatives in the Lewiston area, did concern Franco-American leaders. It did not seem, however, to pressure all Franco-Americans to pursue suffrage.

Interviews with elderly Franco-Americans may present a different picture about the effect of nativists like the K.K.K. on Lewiston residents. But currently available sources, including published and taped interviews with Lewiston Franco-Americans, shed no further light on this matter.[63] What is clear, however, is that the presence of

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[62]*Le Messager*, 1 septembre 1922, p. 6, 16 février 1923, p. 8, 15 août 1924, p. 1, 27 et 29 août 1924, p. 8, 31 août 1925, p. 8, 26 avril 1926, p. 8, 11 octobre 1926, p. 8, 9 novembre 1926, p. 4, 19 novembre 1926, p. 8; Louis-Philippe Gagné, *Le Messager*, 18 août 1924, p. 6; Robert Cloutman Dexter, "Fifty-Fifty Americans," *World's Work* 48 (August 1924), pp. 366-371. Dexter believed that individuals of French-Canadian birth and background maintained "divided loyalties;" like his contemporaries, he did not comprehend how--or rather, he refused to accept that--ethnic retention and acculturation could be intertwined goals.

"se 'bâdrer'": "to 'bother' themselves"

[63]Published interviews that include Lewiston Franco-Americans can be found in Dyke Hendrickson, *Quiet Presence: Dramatic, First-Person Accounts--The True Stories of Franco-Americans in New England* (Portland, Maine: Guy Gannett Publishing Co, 1980); and James W.

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the Ku Klux Klan in Lewiston in the 1920s represented another cycle of anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic hostility in the Spindle City. That hostility originated with the torchings of the city's Irish Catholic church, allegedly by the Know-Nothings, in the mid-1850s. It continued as discrimination, particularly by Protestant Yankees, against French-Canadian Lewiston residents in the late nineteenth century; the efforts of the American Protective Association in the 1890s was but one manifestation of this cycle of hostility. That cycle repeated itself in Lewiston through the actions of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s, directed in large part against the city's Franco-American population. Thus, a clear consequence of the K.K.K.'s presence in Lewiston is that it perpetuated discrimination against Franco-Americans.[64]

Much of that discrimination was directed against the practice of speaking French. In a speech before the Maine Bar Association in 1923, attorney F.X. Belleau argued against nativists who wanted francophones to abandon their

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Searles, ed., *Immigrants from the North: Franco-Americans Recall the Settlement of Their Canadian Families in the Mill Towns of New England* (Bath, Maine: Hyde School, 1982.) The most extensive collection of taped interviews with Franco-Americans of Lewiston is the result of the ethnographic project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* undertaken in 1981-1982, sponsored by the Maine Council for the Humanities and Public Policy, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Western Older Citizens Council; the thirty-two acquisitions are now housed at the Maine Folklife Center, University of Maine-Orono, along with several other interviews of Lewiston Franco-Americans that were not part of this project.

[64]Doty makes the same argument about the residual effect of the Klan on New England's Franco-Americans in "How Many Frenchmen Does It Take to...?"

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French language. "'No one disputes the fact that English is the language spoken in this country and that it is to one's great disadvantage not to speak it,'" he stated. "'But there is no necessity of forgetting the mother tongue,'" he contended as he promoted bilingualism. In 1925, the Maine state legislature considered and later tabled a bill to require public servants to use only English and for public transactions to take place solely in English. Representative H.E. Holmes of Lewiston, the attorney who had advocated Canadian French in the local schools in 1913, vigorously opposed the measure. He argued that French speakers had made a significant contribution during World War I *"et que si la langue française a été assez bonne pour combattre et pour mourir, elle devrait être assez bonne pour être écoutée dans l'Etat du Maine,"* paraphrased *Le Messager*.[65]

French even came under attack at the local level. In 1926, the *Lewiston Evening Journal* reported that some of the eight boys charged with stealing coal from the Maine Central Railroad had required assistance translating into French the words of the judge and clerk of courts. The boys were students or former students of *Sainte-Marie* School. As public servants, the judge, the clerk of

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[65]*Le Messager*, 19 janvier 1923, p. 9, 8 avril 1925, p. 8; *Maine Register: State Year-Book and Legislative Manual*, no. 56 (Portland, Maine: Portland Directory Company, 1925), p. 319.

"et que...du Maine,": "and if the French language had been good enough to fight and to die, it should be good enough to be heard in the state of Maine."

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courts, and attorneys should communicate with the public in its language, *Le Messager* asserted, in defense of the boys. This was a different position from July 1925, when *Le Messager* had reported that five boys around fifteen years of age, all born and raised in Lewiston, had been unable to speak English when they appeared in municipal court to face their charges. At the time, *Le Messager* had pointed to the incident as evidence of weakness in the education of Franco-Americans, because the boys had had six or seven years of schooling, and it had contended: *"Les citoyens de langue anglaise ont certainement raison de s'emouvoir et de demander des explications, en présence d'une situation qu'on peut sans exagération qualifier d'étrangeté."* In 1926, however, when the English-language press criticized Franco-Americans because some of their youth had difficulty communicating in English at the local court, *Le Messager* went on the offensive in asserting they should have been spoken to in French. As a result of *Le Messager*'s actions, the loyalty of Franco-Americans became questioned. The editor of the *Portland Evening Express* argued that English was "the common, the official and the chief language" of the United States and not knowing it constituted "an affront to the country, an injustice to the child and a silly, short-sighted policy." The editor of the *Journal*, in a fairly balanced article promoting bilingualism,

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nonetheless argued that francophones should talk "'American'" in public.[66]

Following the court incident, the state Commissioner of Education, Dr. Augustus O. Thomas, visited the schools of *Saint-Pierre* and *Sainte-Marie* parishes. According to the *Sun*, Thomas indicated that older students had greater knowledge of English than the younger ones, and he found that the women religious "'cannot teach English as well as a prepared lay teacher, as their English is imperfect.'" He felt that French instruction received too much emphasis at the schools, and he pointed out that the practice of speaking French in the home also hindered the acquisition of English. In early November, *Le Messager* worried that the negative press generated by the court incident and the subsequent visit by the education commissioner would prompt nativists in the Maine state legislature to take further measures to push the Americanization of French speakers. *Le Messager*'s editor, George Filteau, claimed there was no cause for alarm about English-language acquisition on the part of francophones. The three boys in question were between eight and thirteen years of age, he reported, and two had received under three years of schooling, while the

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[66]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, October 16, 1926, pp. 1, 9, October 28, 1926, p. 4; *Le Messager*, 10 juillet 1925, p. 6, 18 octobre 1926, p. 4, 3 novembre 1926, pp. 1, 6; *Portland (Maine) Evening Express*, as reported in the *Lewiston Daily Sun*, October 22, 1926, p. 20.

"Les citoyens...qualifier d'étrangeté.": "English-language citizens certainly have reason to rouse themselves and to demand explanations, in the presence of a situation one can without exaggeration qualify as strange."

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third could understand English when interviewed by *Le Messager*. Despite the negative comments of the English-language press, Filteau reiterated the argument that the judge should have spoken French to the boys; in a city where a majority of the population spoke French, so should the judge, he contended. A Dominican priest, R. Ouimet, defended the parish schools in the French-language press, arguing that teaching younger children in their mother tongue was an important pedagogical tool, and pointing out that Thomas had found that students from grade four up did as well in English as public school students. Ouimet thus sought to allay any fears among Lewiston Franco-Americans that their parish schools could not meet the language needs of their children.[67] The 1926 court incident and school inspection brought undue pressure to bear on Lewiston's Franco-American community, making francophones uneasy about expressing themselves in their mother tongue.

In 1931, another court incident created tension over the persistence of spoken French. Marcel Desjardins, an eleven-year-old boy, had to testify at the Superior Court of Maine in Auburn about an accident in which his father's bread truck had hit a three-year-old child on his sales route. Desjardins had to give some of his testimony in French. "Here is a boy 11 years old," Justice Herbert T.

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[67]*Lewiston Daily Sun*, October 27, 1926, pp. 1, 4; George Filteau, "Autour d'une sensation," *Le Messager*, 3 novembre 1926, pp. 1, 6; R. Ouimet, O.P., "La langue anglaise dans nos écoles paroissiales," *Le Messager*, 15 novembre 1926, p. 3.

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Powers admonished. "He has been to school for four years and he cannot speak English. Lewiston schools better be overhauled." The *Journal* splashed the judge's harsh words over its front page. Embarrassed by the negative publicity surrounding one of their students, the Dominican Sisters privately affirmed in their convent's journal *"que l'enseignement de l'anglais n'est pas négligé dans nos classes."* Following the court incident, the editor of the *Journal*, Arthur G. Staples, made the case for all citizens to learn good English. Yet he also encouraged bilingualism in English and French by francophones and anglophones alike. *Le Messager* translated Staples' editorial into French for its readers and indicated it was *"très à point, tout à fait sympathique et met à jour une situation délicate."*[68] Unlike the sensational front-page story that brought undue, negative attention to French speakers, the *Journal*'s editorial by Staples reflected a more enlightened, tolerant response to the issue of language differences in Lewiston.

In September 1931, another incident took place that discriminated against Lewiston Franco-Americans. According

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[68]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, April 18, 1931, p. 1, April 25, 1931, p. 4; Mémorial du Monastère du Sacré-Coeur, Lewiston, Maine, Archives of the Dominican Sisters, Sabattus, Maine [ci-après, Mémorial des Dominicaines], vol. 3, avril 1931, pp. 175-176; *Le Messager*, 29 avril 1931, p. 1.

"que l'enseignement...nos classes.": "that instruction in English is not neglected in our classes."

"très à...situation délicate.": "very timely, completely sympathetic and brings to light a delicate situation."

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to *Le Messager*, the new fire commissioner, an Irish-American doctor surnamed Scannell, posted rules in city fire stations forbidding the speaking of French. While *Le Messager* conceded that politeness dictated that francophones should not use French when non-French speakers were part of a conversation, a departmental practice since 1928, it pointed out that Franco-Americans held twenty-six of the thirty-six positions on the fire department and implied that they should otherwise feel free to speak in their mother tongue.[69] *Le Messager* offered a tempered response to the incident, but the fact remained that the fire commissioner's efforts to limit the use of French represented intensified discrimination against Franco-Americans. As we shall see in the chapters that follow, these efforts were part of a pattern of discrimination against French speakers that took place over the course of the twentieth century.

Some of the discrimination against Franco-Americans took place within the Catholic Church of Maine. In his promotion of American loyalties and the use of English, Bishop Louis S. Walsh worried more about the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the early 1920s than he did about Franco-Americans. Thus he acted like other Irish prelates who dominated the Catholic hierarchy in the United States and who sought to unify the ethnically-diverse Church in the

[69]*Le Messager*, 9 septembre 1931, p. 1; Louis-Philippe Gagné, *Le Messager*, 9 septembre 1931, p. 1.

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face of nativist hostilities. After Walsh visited *Saint-Pierre* School in 1922, for example, the Dominican Sisters recorded in their journal that he had urged them to *"bien travailler l'anglais."* After meeting in October 1923 with *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph de Lyons*, a teaching order from France, Walsh recorded in his diary, "I told them plainly that the State law about 'English as [a] basic language' must be followed." The 1919 law to which he referred represented part of the intensified discrimination against Franco-Americans that took place in the aftermath of World War I. Walsh apparently did not tell the sisters that the law applied to high schools, not to elementary schools like the ones they oversaw in South Berwick and Jackman, Maine. The Ku Klux Klan surely was on Walsh's mind. Its state headquarters were in Portland, the episcopal seat of Maine's Catholic Church. Among his files at the Chancery Archives in Portland are several copies of the *Maine Klansman*, the only known copies of this publication. In the December 13, 1923 issue is the report that Klan-backed candidates had won election to the Portland City Council and School Committee. "Portland citizens are, for the first time in decades, represented by a Protestant city government," the newspaper exuded. An undated, typed note addressed to the bishop from Klan headquarters following the elections underscored the point that Catholics had won no seats. "It is the 18th place in New England that the Klan has kept Catholics from holding office," Klansman G.S.

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Mertell wrote the bishop. "Hereafter no niggers [*sic*] catholics [*sic*] nor Jews will ever hold office in Portland." On New Year's Eve, Walsh recorded in his diary that the K.K.K. had contributed to making 1923 his most difficult year.[70]

In 1923, Walsh had launched his offensive against the Dominican priests. Despite continued communication with Dominican authorities in Québec over title to the property of *Saint-Pierre* parish in the early 1920s, Walsh still lacked the real estate deed he earnestly desired. The conflict between Walsh and the Dominicans became exacerbated when the bishop learned in the early 1920s that a Dominican priest had erected a chapel in Sabattus in 1913 on land purchased by his sister of Montréal without first obtaining the bishop's approval. The Dominicans had served Catholics in Sabattus on an unofficial basis since 1883, and by assignment of the bishop since 1905. News of the chapel infuriated Walsh, who demanded title to the property. Exasperated by the lack of progress in resolving the two continuing property disputes with the Dominicans,

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[70]James S. Olson, *Catholic Immigrants in America* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1987), pp. 15, 33-46, 197-202; Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 2, 14 mai 1922, p. 310; diary of Bishop Louis S. Walsh, Chancery Archives, Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine, October 24, 1923, p. 297, December 31, 1923, p. 365; *The Maine Klansman*, December 13, 1923, Chancery Archives, Bishop Walsh File; G.S. Mertell to Bishop [Louis S. Walsh], undated, Bishop Walsh files, Chancery Archives.

"bien travailler l'anglais.": "work English hard."

les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph de Lyons: the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Lyons

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both private extensions of the publicly-fought Corporation Sole Controversy, Walsh went on the offensive in 1923. According to the anniversary publication of the Dominicans, *"Mgr Walsh gardait un atout dans son jeu: diviser Saint-Pierre."* To gain the upper hand over the Dominicans, Walsh in 1923 carved *Saint-Pierre* parish to create two new parishes, Holy Cross and Holy Family, in the southern and eastern sections of Lewiston. Walsh also closed the Dominican chapel in Sabattus by assigning its members to Holy Family parish.[71]

When Walsh divided *Saint-Pierre*, he created Holy Family and Holy Cross as territorial parishes that would serve all Catholics living within their boundaries, unlike *Sainte-Marie* and *Saint-Pierre* which had been national parishes designed to serve Franco-Americans. The new pastors Walsh appointed were not of French-Canadian descent: Michael F. Drain of Holy Cross had been born in Ireland and Vital Nonorgues of Holy Family had been born in France. Given that the population of each of the two new

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[71]Louis S. Walsh, Bishop of Portland, to Very Rev. Raymund [*sic*] Rouleau, O.P., Provincial, January 12, 1922; R.M.R. [Rouleau] à Monseigneur Louis S. Walsh, 24 mars 1922; Louis S. Walsh to Very Rev. R.M. Rouleau, March 30, 1922; Louis S. Walsh to Very Rev. G. Proulx, O.P., Father Provincial, December 31, 1923, all in les archives des Dominicains; Antonin M. Plourde, O.P., "Cent ans de vie paroissiale: SS. Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, 1870-1970," *Le Rosaire* (août-septembre 1970), pp. 42-43; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 14, 8 mai 1920, p. 66, 13 mai 1920, p. 67, 17 décembre 1923, pp. 173-174; the parish bulletin, *La Quinzaine*, 1905, no. 12, dans la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 10, p. 259; *Le Messager*, 24 décembre 1923, p. 1.

"Mgr Walsh gardait...diviser Saint-Pierre.": "Monsignor Walsh played his trump card: to divide Saint Peter's."

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parishes was predominantly Franco-American, Walsh's intention in assigning these priests seems to have been to limit French-Canadian influence and to promote acculturation. Holy Family's demography confounded the bishop's plan: it immediately became a Franco-American institution because virtually all parishioners were of French-Canadian background. About ten percent of the parishioners of Holy Cross were Irish and Polish Catholics, so that it was not without struggle that the Franco-Americans of Holy Cross shaped their new parish into a Franco-American institution.[72]

In mid-November 1923, Reverend Drain met with about 100 women to plan a whist party to raise funds for the new parish of Holy Cross. All but seven of the women were Franco-American. When the francophone women saw that only the name of the parish did not appear in French on the tickets for the whist party, they complained to the pastor. Drain insisted that the parish's name would remain "Holy Cross." In protest, all but about twelve women left the meeting.[73] Thus began another controversy which ultimately pitted Maine's Irish bishop against Franco-Americans.

Following the walkout by the Franco-American women, francophone men took up the cause of pushing for *"Sainte-*

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[72]Registre du Grand Séminaire de Montréal, les archives du Grand Séminaire, Montréal, Québec, tome 1: 1840-1900, pp. 550-551; notes of Reverend Philip Desjardins, Chancery Archives; *Le Messager*, 14 novembre 1923, p. 1, 17 décembre 1923, p. 1.

[73]*Le Messager*, 14 novembre 1923, p. 1.

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Croix" as the official name of their parish. In December, from ninety to 125 men held meetings in the halls of Franco-American institutions in Lewiston to discuss the situation and to plan strategy. While they did not object to Drain's making announcements at masses in both English and French, they insisted that the parish be named *"Sainte-Croix,"* that it not become an English-speaking parish, and that their children receive instruction in French. As one family head put it, *"'les paroissiens de Ste-Croix ne sont pas des [sic] rebelles contre l'autorité religieuse; ils veulent tout simplement obtenir justice pour leur langue et pour la reconnaissance de leur origine française.'"* Disaffected Franco-Americans attended mass in other parishes and did not contribute funds to Holy Cross during the pastor's visit to their homes. A committee of men met with Drain. He told them that there would be only one hour of French instruction daily at the parish school, and he stated ambiguously that the parish name would be neither English nor French, reported *Le Messager*. Dissatisfied with the results of the meeting, the committee traveled to Portland in January 1924 to meet with Bishop Walsh, who conversed with them in French. Following the meeting, over 160 family heads gathered in Lewiston to learn what Walsh had said. He apparently had sympathized with the Franco-Americans. The inscription on the parish could read *"Sainte-Croix,"* Walsh had told the committee, because a majority of the members of this mixed parish were

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francophone. He felt, however, that celebrations should include some English for the benefit of the non-francophone members. But Walsh assured the committee that instruction at the parish school would be offered equally in French and English. Disaffected parishioners subsequently returned to Holy Cross for religious exercises.[74]

But the conflict was not over. Drain apparently disagreed with what Walsh had reportedly told the committee, and he remained at odds with his Franco-American parishioners. Drain informed them at mass in late January that the issues that had divided them were still unresolved, and he forbade them from meeting without his permission to discuss parish affairs. A committee of Franco-American men traveled again to Portland to complain to Bishop Walsh. Walsh proved much less receptive during the ten-minute meeting he accorded the delegates. He went back on his word, the committee felt, and he told its members that the United States was neither French nor Canadian but American, reported *Le Messager*. The following Sunday, few people attended masses at Holy Cross, and over 500 Franco-American men from throughout Lewiston met in the afternoon to discuss the controversy. They began a petition to have Holy Cross called *"Sainte-Croix"* and

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[74]*Le Messager*, 17, 21 et 24 décembre 1923, p. 1, 31 décembre 1923, p. 6, 7 et 11 janvier 1924, p. 1, 23 janvier 1924, p. 8.

"'les paroissiens...origine française.'": "'the parishioners of Holy Cross are not rebels against religious authority; they want quite simply to obtain justice for their language and recognition for their French origins.'"

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received messages of support from Franco-Americans from throughout New England. Women attended one of the Sunday meetings in early March. Participants at that meeting felt women should be included in future meetings, too, because they could help increase the intensity of the dispute by circulating petitions and by avoiding involvement in parish projects during the course of the controversy.[75] As francophones used their constitutional rights of petition and assembly to preserve their French-Canadian ethnicity in the United States, they provided only further evidence that they had their own brand of acculturation. Their acculturation, in other words, employed American forms, but they used these forms to achieve their own ends.

Tensions abated somewhat after the opening of the chapel-school building in late April 1924, and attendance at masses improved. When Drain surprised parishioners in June 1925 by announcing that there would be a special *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day mass for children, as in the other Franco-American churches of Lewiston and Auburn, *Le Messager* recognized this conciliatory gesture: *"Inutile de dire que ce geste de M. l'abbé Drain fera beaucoup pour effacer la malheureuse tension qui existe dans cette paroisse depuis sa fondation."* At masses, Drain gave announcements in French, then summarized them in English, and he recited communal prayers in French while members of

[75]*Le Messager*, 28 janvier 1924, p. 6, 30 janvier 1924, p. 1, 4 et 25 février 1924, p. 1, 5 mars 1924, p. 6, 10 mars 1924, p. 1.

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the congregation responded to them in their own language; these arrangements satisfied parishioners, reported *Le Messager* in August 1925. But only after Walsh died and his Irish successor, James Murray, appointed a Canadian-born francophone to succeed Drain as pastor of Holy Cross in January 1926 did the controversy end. Franco-Americans had won. By mid-January, the name *"Ste-Croix"* appeared on the chapel-school complex, and it remains on the structure to this day.[76]

The controversy at Holy Cross provides further evidence that the road from *Canadien* to Franco-American in Lewiston was not linear. In the face of Americanizing pressures within the Catholic Church, particularly by the Irish bishop and Irish pastor whose actions Louis-Philippe Gagné termed *"'de faux américanisme,'"* Franco-Americans fought for what they perceived to be in their ethnic interests. For Franco-Americans, *de vrai Américanisme* meant accepting one's civic responsibility in the host society, such as by naturalizing and voting.[77] It meant understanding--and defending--one's constitutional rights. It also necessitated learning English. But it did not

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[76]*Le Messager*, 21 avril 1924, p. 8, 5 mai 1924, p. 8, 22 juin 1925, p. 8, 17 août 1925, p. 8, 4 et 18 janvier 1926, p. 1; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 14, 24 juin 1925, pp. 210-211.

"Inutile de...sa fondation.": "Needless to say that Father Drain's gesture will do a great deal to efface the unhappy tension that has existed in this parish since its founding."

[77]*Le Messager*, 8 février 1924, p. 4.

"'de faux américanisme'": "'false Americanism'"

de vrai Américanisme: true Americanism

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entail giving up their ethnic heritage, which the Roman Catholic Church and nativists like the Klan believed.

Even in the presence of the local Ku Klux Klan and the Americanizing pressures that it represented, Lewiston Franco-Americans persisted in their ethnic struggle to see Holy Cross named *Sainte-Croix*. Louis-Philippe Gagné saw the struggle as part of a larger issue concerning the place in U.S. society of New England's two million Franco-Americans. He argued in 1924 that they represented *"une richesse nationale pour le pays américain,"* and, given this, he questioned: *"pourquoi veut-on nous enlever notre langue et nous traiter en parias?"* Gagné continued by encouraging Franco-Americans to fight to preserve their identity: *"Ne nous laissons pas assujettir [sic] aussi bassement et voyons à ce que nous gardions nôtre l'héritage de nos ancêtres."*[78] In brief, Gagné felt that Franco-Americans should be proud to speak French, to practice Roman Catholicism, and to participate in French-Canadian celebrations. Just as outside pressures were not primarily responsible for the acculturation of Franco-Americans, they also did not prevent this population from asserting its identity--and its brand of Americanism--in its country of

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[78]*Le Messager*, 5 mars 1924, p. 5.

"une richesse...pays américain": "a national treasure for the United States"

"pourquoi veut-on...en parias?": "why do they want to take our language away and to treat us as parias?"

"Ne nous laissons...nos ancêtres.": "Let us not permit the debasement of ourselves and let us see what we can keep of the heritage of our ancestors."

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adoption. Moreover, the Holy Cross affair demonstrates that Franco-Americans actively renegotiated their identity in the United States: they set the pace, and their definition predominated.

Until his death in 1924, Walsh continued to press the Dominicans for title to *Saint-Pierre* Church and the chapel in Sabattus. To force their hand, he threatened to seek a new arrangement between the Diocese of Portland and the Dominicans or to replace the order altogether, in which case he would publicize their private conflict. "If I am obliged to mention the maladministration of Father Dallaire in the construction of the new church, it will not take much time to decide the issue," Walsh wrote the Dominican provincial, "but I much prefer the quiet method without publicity, yet my mind is fully made up on this matter," he insisted.[79] Walsh's frustration in dealing with French-Canadian Dominicans, along with his concerns about the Klan in Maine, had probably led him to change course in the Holy Cross controversy in January 1924. Only Walsh's death that May prevented him from carrying out his threats.

Walsh's successors overturned a number of decisions he had made that discriminated against Franco-Americans.[80]

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[79]Louis S. Walsh to Very Rev. Gonzalve Proulx, January 12, 1924, les archives des Dominicains.

[80]Incidentally, Bishop John Murray also ended an ethnic conflict that had taken place between the Slovaks in Lisbon Falls and Bishop Walsh. The Slovaks had left the town's Catholic church to build one of their own, and Walsh had excommunicated four or five of the central figures in this case. Murray gave diocesan recognition to the new church and appointed a Slovak priest as pastor, ending the controversy between

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Shortly after John Murray became bishop, *Le Messager* stated: *"Le règne d'oppression et d'injustice que les Franco-américains durent subir pendant près d'un quart de siècle est fini."* To the great pleasure of Franco-Americans, Murray allowed Catholics to hold midnight masses at Christmas, beginning in 1925, and Murray's successor in 1932, Bishop Joseph McCarthy, granted the same permission. Through Murray's appointment of a *Canadien* as pastor of Holy Cross, and by allowing the parish to be called *Sainte-Croix*, he demonstrated respect for Lewiston Franco-Americans and for their efforts to preserve their language. Fluent in both English and French, Murray encouraged all priests within the Diocese of Portland to become bilingual. He also asked the Dominicans to celebrate masses again at the Sabattus chapel in July 1926, and they did. In 1934, Bishop McCarthy settled the longstanding dispute between the diocese and the Dominicans by signing papers officially giving the order title to the parish property, thus honoring the agreement they had made with Bishop Healy when they had first arrived in Lewiston in 1881. The Dominicans did not record in their monastery's chronicle, however, whether this agreement extended to the property in Sabattus as well. Through various measures, then, the episcopacy capitulated: the Irish bishops who succeeded Walsh ended the ethnic controversies that had plagued his

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the Slovaks and the Irish Catholic hierarchy of Portland. *Le Messager*, 4 janvier 1926, p. 1.

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administration and that had discriminated against Maine's French-speaking Catholics.[81]

The actions of Bishop Walsh in the early twentieth century and the ensuing conflicts between him and Lewiston Franco-Americans appear to have made several parishes more resolute about retaining their French-Canadian heritage and one of them more inclined to pursue acculturation. We can speculate about the long-term effects of his actions in part by looking at the language of masses. Today, *Saint-Pierre* and *Sainte-Croix* parishes each continue to offer one weekend mass in French; *Sainte-Marie,* which Walsh had created as a national parish in Lewiston's *Petit Canada,* also offered one French mass each weekend before closing during summer 2000. *Sainte-Famille,* however, dropped its remaining French mass by June 1991, becoming the only Franco-American church in Lewiston to celebrate all masses

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[81]*Le Messager,* 21 décembre 1925, p. 1, 4 janvier 1926, p. 4, 14 juillet 1926, p. 1, 17 novembre 1926, p. 8, 27 décembre 1926, p. 1; Cecile Levasseur, comp., *75th Anniversary of the Founding of St. Mary's Parish, Lewiston, Maine, 1907-1982* (n.p., 1982), p. 15; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 14, 18 juillet 1926, p. 247, vol. 15, 22 décembre 1932, p. 204, 17 janvier 1934, p. 290; *Lewiston Evening Journal* Magazine Section, May 21, 1927, p. A3. Elsewhere in the 1920s, an ethnic conflict raged between Franco-Americans and Rhode Island's Irish bishop, when he demanded that Franco-American parishes contribute to the cost of a Catholic high school. The controversy spread beyond Rhode Island's borders, dividing the moderate Franco-Americans who supported the bishop's plan from the militants who did not. *Le Messager* chose to remain neutral during this bitter conflict, known as the *Sentinelle* Affair. *Le Messager,* 28 mars 1927, p. 1, 29 juin 1927, p. 4. For details of the controversy, see Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre,* pp. 303-329.

"Le règne...est fini.": "The reign of oppression and injustice that Franco-Americans had to endure for nearly a quarter-century is over."

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in English.[82] Unlike the other Franco-American parishes, *Sainte-Famille* had a French from France pastor for nearly four decades during the twentieth century; appointed by Walsh in 1923, Vital Nonorgues served *Sainte-Famille* until his death in 1961. The pastors of Lewiston's three other Franco-American parishes from the 1920s through the end of the twentieth century, with the exception of Walsh appointee Michael F. Drain at *Sainte-Croix*, have all been of French-Canadian birth or background.

But it was not solely the ethnic origins of pastors that facilitated the acculturation of French speakers in the different parish communities. The orders of men and women religious who taught in the parochial schools determined the speed with which each parish community acculturated over the course of the twentieth century. If asked, older Lewistonians would say that the in-town schools of *Sainte-Marie* and *Saint-Pierre* were "more French" than the suburban schools of *Sainte-Croix* or *Sainte-Famille*. We can trace differences in the schools to the composition of their teaching orders. Each of the eleven Ursuline Sisters who taught at *Sainte-Marie* School in 1920 was of French-Canadian birth or background; in fact, nearly three-fourths (eight of eleven) were Canadian-born, which undoubtedly contributed to ethnic retention in the parish

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[82]*Lewiston Sun Journal*, June 22 and 29, 1991, p. 6.

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community. Among the thirty-one Dominican Sisters who taught at *Saint-Pierre* in 1920, over one-third (eleven) were French, two-fifths (thirteen) were of French-Canadian birth, one-fifth (six) were Franco-American, and one sister, a music teacher, was Spanish. Given the smaller proportion of Canadian-born sisters teaching at *Saint-Pierre*, one might have expected the parish to have promoted the acculturation of its children at a more rapid pace than *Sainte-Marie*. But most (eight out of eleven) of the French Dominican Sisters in 1920 did not speak English, and the novitiate the sisters established in 1927 in Valleyfield, Québec, ensured French-Canadian recruits to their order. Moreover, French-Canadian Dominican pastors administered the parish, and they brought to *Saint-Pierre les Frères du Sacré-Coeur*, a teaching order of men from Victoriaville, Québec, to teach some classes of boys beginning in 1928. The brothers also began teaching boys in grades six through eight at *Sainte-Marie* School in 1939.[83] Along with the orders of women religious, they surely helped the in-town schools to retain their ethnic heritage.

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[83]*U.S. Census, 1920; Le Messager*, 14 novembre 1927, p. 8; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 14, 8 juillet 1928, p. 316, 12 août 1928, p. 324; Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 3, 4 septembre 1928, p. 44; *The Brothers of the Sacred Heart, Lewiston, Maine: Golden Jubilee of Service, 1928-1978* (n.p. [1978]); Levasseur, *75th Anniversary of the Founding of St. Mary's Parish*, p. 21. Efforts to determine the ethnic composition of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart who served in Lewiston have thus far proven unsuccessful; presumably, most or all of the brothers who taught in Lewiston in the 1920s and 1930s were of French-Canadian birth or background.

les Frères du Sacré-Coeur: the Brothers of the Sacred Heart

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Different religious orders taught at the suburban parish schools of Lewiston. *Les Soeurs de la Présentation de Marie*, an order based in Saint-Hyacinthe, Québec, began teaching at *Sainte-Croix* in 1927. Each of the eight sisters who lived at the convent of *Sainte-Croix* during 1927-1928 was of French-Canadian descent. Four were Canadian-born, three were U.S.-born, and the place of birth of one is not known. As evidence of the orientation of *les Soeurs de la Présentation de Marie* towards Canada, all of them departed to Canada for their religious retreats during the summer following their first school year in Lewiston. Invited to *Sainte-Famille* by Reverend Vital Nonorgues, *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph de Lyons*, a French order, began teaching in Lewiston in 1926. The four founding sisters at *Sainte-Famille* each represented a different national or ethnic origin: one was Irish-American, one Franco-American, another French-Canadian (i.e., Canadian-born), and the superior was French. The personnel records of *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* make it possible to examine the ethnic composition of the order through the 1920s and 1930s. They reveal that only twelve percent (three out of twenty-five) of the sisters missioned at *Sainte-Famille* during the twenties and thirties were Canadian-born, twelve percent (three) had been born in France, and seventy-two percent (eighteen sisters) were U.S.-born. While one of the native-born sisters was Irish-American and another Anglo-American, the other sixteen were Franco-Americans,

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and they comprised over three-fifths of the personnel at *Sainte-Famille* from the mid-1920s to the late 1930s.[84]

Given that *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* appear to have had the smallest proportion of Canadian-born sisters among the teaching orders of Lewiston's Franco-American parishes, we might expect them to have promoted acculturation at a more rapid pace than the other orders, and they did. Unlike the other Franco-American schools of Lewiston which provided half a day of instruction in French, a practice typical of most Franco-American schools throughout New England until midcentury, *Sainte-Famille* offered only one hour of instruction in French each day, beginning when *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* arrived in the parish in 1926. According to Sr. Marie Therese Beaudoin, *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* "felt children must first meet the language of

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[84]Annales: École paroissiale Sainte-Croix de Lewiston, Sisters of the Presentation of Mary, Holy Cross Convent, Lewiston, Maine [hereafter, Annales de Sainte-Croix], vol. 1, 16 juillet 1928, supplemented with information provided by Sr. Susan Frederick, P.M., who consulted the records of the Provincial House in Methuen, Massachusetts; Sisters' Register: Sisters Who Have Been Missioned to Holy Family Convent, Lewiston, Maine, index cards [hereafter, C.S.J. Sisters' Register], Archives of the Provincialate of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Winslow, Maine; Liste des Soeurs qui ont passé à la Ste. Famille, Lewiston, Maine, les archives du provincialat des Soeurs de Saint-Joseph; supplemented with data provided by the late Sr. Germaine Bernier, C.S.J., archivist, who consulted the congregation's profession book for places of birth missing from the Register; *U.S. Census, 1920; Le Messager*, 3 juillet 1945, p. 6. The place of birth of one of the twenty-five sisters at *Sainte-Famille* was not known. Not all of the sisters at *Sainte-Croix* and *Sainte-Famille* were teachers. While the 1920 census distinguished the Ursulines and Dominicans who taught, the records of *les Soeurs de la Présentation de Marie* and *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* did not supply enough information to separate the teaching sisters from those who served their order in other capacities, such as housekeeping.

Les Soeurs de la Présentation de Marie: The Sisters of the Presentation of Mary

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the culture." Teaching for only one hour in French was an instructional standard they also followed in their Jackman and South Berwick schools, she explained.[85]

In summary, Bishop Walsh's actions may have served to promote ethnic retention in three Lewiston parishes and to facilitate the acculturation of a fourth. Created as a national parish by Walsh, *Sainte-Marie* in the heart of Lewiston's *Petit Canada,* served by Ursuline Sisters of French-Canadian descent, retained its ethnic character until its closing. Walsh's struggle with the French-Canadian Dominican priests of *Saint-Pierre* probably made them more determined to safeguard that parish's ethnic identity. A teaching order from France, the Dominican Sisters of the parish had a sizable number of Canadian-born teachers on their staff, and their novitiate in Québec ensured a continued supply of French-Canadian sisters teaching at *Saint-Pierre*, Lewiston's largest Franco-American school. The French-Canadian order of *les Frères du Sacré-Coeur* must have helped the Dominican and Ursuline Sisters with the task of ethnic preservation at the in-town parish schools. Walsh's conflict with the Franco-American parishioners of *Sainte-Croix* appears to have made them more

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[85]Gerard J. Brault, *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England* (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1986), p. 75; personal interview with Roger Bissonnette, who attended *Sainte-Famille* School from 1926 to 1933, Lewiston, Maine, August 17, 1993; personal interview with Sr. Marie Therese Beaudoin, C.S.J., who graduated from *Saint-Famille* in 1936 and who served as its principal from 1959 to 1961, Winslow, Maine, August 6, 1993.

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intent upon preserving their ethnic identity. The Canadian-born pastor appointed to *Sainte-Croix* by Walsh's successor invited the French-Canadian teaching order of *les Soeurs de la Présentation de Marie* to staff the parochial school, and this helped the parish community to retain its ethnic heritage. Only at *Sainte-Famille*, then, did Walsh's actions seem to promote acculturation. Appointing a French pastor who, in turn, invited the French order of *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* to teach at the school facilitated the acculturation of this parish community. By teaching primarily in English, *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* promoted more rapid acculturation than the other women religious of Lewiston. The Franco-American parish they served is the only one in Lewiston to have discontinued all of its French masses.

During their teaching ministry at *Sainte-Famille*, *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* did not neglect or discourage activities that promoted French-language acquisition. Students could earn diplomas in both English and French from *Sainte-Famille* School, as they could at other parish schools. They also participated in French composition contests, sponsored by the Franco-American societies, in competition with children from other Franco-American schools.[86]

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[86]Sr. Marie Therese Beaudoin, August 6, 1993; Lucien A. Aubé, "From the Parochial School to an American University: Reflections on Cultural Fragmentation," in Claire Quintal, ed., *Steeples and Smokestacks: A Collection of Essays on the Franco-American Experience in New England* (Worcester, Massachusetts: Éditions de

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But that did not prevent *Le Messager* from publicly criticizing *Sainte-Famille* for providing less instruction in French than the other parish schools. In 1935, the newspaper singled out the Irish Sr. Saint Agnes (née Donahue) when it contended that the school's francophone staff was insufficient. The founding principal of *Sainte-Famille* School and a teacher of English, Sr. Saint Agnes was more fluent in English and she addressed people who visited the school in that language. Parishioner Mrs. Gédéon Jacques defended the sisters and their school by arguing that, while parishioners of *Sainte-Famille* did not want to lose their French language, *"nous ne voulons pas non plus que nos enfants sortent de notre chère école paroissiale en maniant la langue anglaise insuffisamment."* Students had left Franco-American parish schools for the Irish ones in order to learn English, she argued, and some had even come to *Sainte-Famille* to do the same. *Sainte-Famille* parishioners who wanted their children to retain their French language had little reason to worry, Roger Bissonnette pointed out, because "there wasn't the danger for loss of language as there is now. Everyone with Canadian ancestors living in the area could speak French." Although *Le Messager* acknowledged the need to learn English in the United States, it maintained that French should not

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l'Institut français, Assumption College, 1996), p. 644; Annales de Sainte-Croix, vol. 1, 19 juin 1938; *Le Messager*, 21 mai 1937, p. 7, 11 juin 1938, p. 6.

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be accorded secondary importance. Franco-American schoolchildren should master French before acquiring English, the newspaper contended. One result of the controversy with *Le Messager*, indicated Sr. Alvina Levesque, was that the sisters were "almost not allowed to talk English outside of school."[87]

Ill feelings towards *Sainte-Famille* did not pass quickly. When Louis-Philippe Gagné spoke in 1936 about Maine's Franco-American population on Montréal's CKAC radio station, owned by *La Presse* and audible in Lewiston, he told listeners that an Irish nun in a French teaching order of Lewiston would tell her students to "'Talk United States!'" Gagné's sensitivity about the French language becomes all the more apparent in other parts of his speech. He proudly indicated on the air, for example, that Yankees called Lewiston "'the French City,'" and that it was no longer necessary for businesses to place signs in their windows announcing, *"'Ici on parle français.'" "C'est entendu on le parle partout et ce serait un suicide commercial pour tout homme d'affaires n'employant pas de*

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[87]*Le Messager*, 19 décembre 1935, p. 8, 21 décembre 1935, p. 6, 24 décembre 1935, p. 5, 26 décembre 1935, p. 6; C.S.J. Sisters' Register; *Church World*, February 18, 1955, p. 15; Sr. Marie Therese Beaudoin, August 6, 1993; Roger Bissonnette, August 17, 1993; personal interview with Sr. Alvina Levesque, C.S.J., who taught at *Sainte-Famille* almost continuously from 1932 to 1965, Waterville, Maine, August 20, 1993.

"nous ne...anglaise insuffisamment.": "we do not want our children to leave our dear parish school handling the English language insufficiently either."

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commis canadiens," Gagné asserted with evident pleasure.[88] The tension that arose between *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* and Gagné/*Le Messager* demonstrate that one parish community in Lewiston was moving faster than the others in reshaping its identity.

The controversy also highlights the presence of intergenerational tension in Lewiston's Franco-American community. Gagné had migrated to the United States from Québec in 1922 and had naturalized by 1928.[89] His quick naturalization offers no better evidence that acculturation was not inimical to preserving French-Canadian ethnicity. But, as a representative of the first generation, Gagné was apparently less inclined to accept *Sainte-Famille*'s faster pace of acculturation than were the predominantly Franco-American sisters who taught at the parish school during the 1920s and 1930s. As we will see in the next chapter, generational tensions grew in Lewiston as U.S.-born Franco-Americans increasingly used English as their primary language, causing older Franco-Americans to worry about the place of their mother tongue in the community.

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[88]*Le Messager*, 21 octobre 1929, p. 8, 23 juin 1936, p. 5.
"'Ici on parle français.'": "'Here we speak French.'"
"C'est entendu...commis canadiens,": "It is understood we speak it everywhere and it would be commercial suicide for businessmen not to employ any French-Canadian clerks,"

[89]Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vol. 17, #1777.

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Men like Gagné were not the only defenders of the French language and of French-Canadian traditions in Lewiston. In fact, an interesting dimension to the controversy at *Sainte-Croix* is that Franco-American women had precipitated it. As noted in the last chapter, the 1920 census informs us that Franco-American women in Lewiston were more likely than the men to speak only French. The insistence of women that *"Sainte-Croix"* be the name of their parish adds further weight to the impression that francophone women exercised a central role in the Spindle City as cultural hearthkeepers.[90] The incident at *Sainte-Croix* suggests that women were as willing as men like Gagné to take proactive measures to preserve their language and their ethnic heritage.

The discussion on naturalization presented earlier in this chapter suggests that Franco-American women appeared equally willing to take proactive steps to acculturate in U.S. society. So does the experience of *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* at *Sainte-Famille* parish and, of course, Mrs. Gédéon Jacques' defense of them. This study thus sheds light upon an aspect of the history of Franco-American women about which we have known hardly anything at all. They participated in the renegotiation of their ethnic

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[90]Women of other ethnic backgrounds have similarly played a vital role in ethnic retention. See, for example, Frances Swyripa, *Wedded to the Cause: Ukrainian-Canadian Women and Ethnic Identity, 1891-1991* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.)

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identity in the United States, hence were historical actors in their own right.

Not only have scholars not addressed the acculturation of francophone women, including their naturalization, but they have also neglected to examine their political participation. Part of the problem is that scholars examining the history of Franco-Americans have focused on the pre-1910 period, and women did not gain suffrage until 1920. Brief reports in *Le Messager*, however incomplete at times, provide us with a window onto the experience of women as they gained and exercised the right of citizenship in the 1920s and 1930s. They suggest that Franco-American women began adopting a political identity in the interwar years. In June 1924, *Le Messager* reported that a Mrs. Côté-Howard of Rockland, Maine, the wife of a prominent Democrat, spoke in French to about fifty women in a meeting room at Lewiston City Hall. The French-language newspaper explained that Côté-Howard was president of a committee organizing women's political clubs that sought to exert influence in state and federal elections. As a result of the meeting, the Franco-American Democratic Women's Club formed. It is not clear how long it survived or how active it became. Before the presidential election in 1936, *Le Messager* reported that a recently-founded group, *le Club des Femmes Démocrates*, headed by two Franco-American women, would hold a rally at *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* hall in

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favor of Franklin D. Roosevelt's re-election.[91] From the scant evidence, we can only infer that the Franco-American women's political clubs of the 1920s and 1930s were ad hoc organizations not unlike those that Franco-American men had created in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when suffrage for most of them had been a relatively new experience.

Despite the lack of information on the women's political clubs, two pieces of evidence, one quantitative, the other anecdotal, suggest the growing political consciousness of Franco-American women in the interwar years. By February 1928, according to *Le Messager*, there were 5,418 Franco-American voters in Lewiston: 2,117 were women and 3,301 were men. Franco-Americans constituted a majority of Lewiston's 10,580 voters, and they maintained a majority in five of the city's seven wards. While it is not clear whether 1928 was the first year in which francophone voters outnumbered those of other groups, it is evident that women comprised a significant portion of the potential voting strength of Lewiston's Franco-Americans. Besides registering to vote and joining political clubs, some Franco-American women showed another sign of their political consciousness. To celebrate Roosevelt's re-election in 1936, women at Clark Shoe in Auburn held a mock

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[91]*Le Messager*, 13 juin 1924, p. 8, 31 octobre 1936, p. 6.
le Club des Femmes Démocrates: the Democratic Women's Club

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funeral for the Republican Party. They placed an elephant in a small coffin and paraded it through the factory, hearing hisses from the few Republican stalwarts who worked there. But their fun did not end at the workplace. The women decided that the elephant should lie in state for one month, *"comme c'est l'usage pour les grands personnages,"* and they transported the coffin to *Le Messager*'s offices, where passers-by could view it from the front window. *"Ceux qui se sentent encore un peu de compassion pour ce pauvre éléphant peuvent donc passer au Messager et voir le cercueil,"* *Le Messager* informed readers. *"On est prié, cependant, de ne pas envoyer de fleurs."*[92] The women who staged the mock funeral almost certainly were Franco-American. This incident illustrates the intersection of their ethnic, political, and working-class identities as they evolved during the 1930s.

There are no indications from *Le Messager* that Franco-American women participated in the Republican Party in the 1920s or 1930s. Occasional reports in the French-language newspaper reveal, however, that a small group of Franco-

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[92]*Le Messager*, 10 février 1928, p. 1, 6 novembre 1936, p. 8; *Manning's Lewiston and Auburn, Turner and Webster (Maine) Directory for Year beginning April, 1936*, vol. 44 (Portland, Maine: H.A. Manning Company, 1936), p. 696.

"comme c'est...grands personnages": "as is customary for notables"

"Ceux qui...le cercueil,": "Those who still feel a little compassion for this poor elephant can therefore stop by *Le Messager* and view the coffin,"

"On est...de fleurs.": "You are asked, however, not to send flowers."

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American men continued to promote the Grand Old Party during these decades. But they appear not to have attracted many francophones to join them. When Democratic mayoral candidate, Louis J. Brann, defeated his Republican Franco-American challenger, Arsène Cailler, by over 2,700 votes in 1922, *Le Messager* contended that Lewiston's francophones had kept true to their political principles. In that election, no Republicans won seats in the municipal government. A Franco-American Republican Club existed in Lewiston at least from 1926 to 1931. It had its origins in *l'Alliance Civique*, formed in the 1910s to assist Franco-Americans in gaining local office, and it had helped Dr. Robert J. Wiseman win election in 1914 as the first mayor of French-Canadian descent in Lewiston. In 1926, *l'Alliance Civique* reorganized itself as *le Club Républicain Franco-Américain*, ostensibly to promote attorney Patrick Tremblay's expected run for the state senate, reported *Le Messager*. The following year, when *Le Messager* learned that Franco-American Republicans were trying to enroll more francophones in the Grand Old Party, still in hopes of electing one of their own to the state senate, it warned readers who switched parties that they would not be able to vote Democratic in the municipal primaries in the spring. The newspaper added: *"Plusieurs d'ailleurs s'en sont mordu les pouces le printemps dernier."* *Le Messager* did not indicate the actual size of the Franco-American Republican Club, perhaps because it did

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not know. Sometimes, it would give readers a rough idea of the club's size. In December 1929, for instance, the French-language newspaper reported that 330 individuals had appeared before the voter registration bureau and that a majority of them had switched to the Republican Party as a result of their membership in the Franco-American Republican Club.[93] Francophone Republicans probably never numbered more than a few hundred in the 1920s and 1930s.

They certainly did not exert much influence in the politics or on the voting behavior of Lewiston during the interwar period. The large majority of Lewiston's Franco-American population became Democratic Party loyalists. These Franco-Americans helped Lewiston to evolve into a Democratic stronghold, and their leaders played a role in building the city's Democratic political machine. From 1920 to 1939, Democrats won the mayor's office in Lewiston in all but two years; these Democratic mayors were Franco-American in 1920, from 1925 to 1929, and from 1932 to 1939.[94]

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[93]*Le Messager*, 8 mars 1922, p. 1, 5 mars 1926, p. 1, 15 mars 1926, p. 8, 12 septembre 1927, p. 8, 16 décembre 1929, p. 8, 5 octobre 1931, p. 8.

l'Alliance Civique: the Civic Alliance

le Club Républicain Franco-Américain: the Franco-American Republican Club

"Plusieurs d'ailleurs...printemps dernier.": "Besides, several bit their own thumbs last spring."

[94]Ronald L. Bissonnette, "Political Parties as Products of Their Environments, A Case Study of Lewiston, Maine" (Honors thesis, University of Maine-Orono, 1977), p. 26; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 15, 8 mars 1932, p. 136, 4 février 1935, p. 341, vol. 16, 4 mars 1936, p. 18; Geneva Kirk and Gridley Barrows, *Historic Lewiston: Its Government* (Lewiston, Maine: Lewiston Historical Commission, 1982), pp. 13, 39. Franco-American Dr. Robert

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Demography helped Franco-Americans to dominate local politics by the late 1920s. Their voting strength concerned their political adversaries as it did the non-francophones within the Democratic Party. When Franco-Americans embarked upon a naturalization and voter registration campaign in 1924, people *"dans certains milieux fanatiques," Le Messager*'s euphemism for nativists, became worried because Franco-Americans hoped to increase their voting strength by 1,000, making them a greater political force in Lewiston. When 300 Franco-Americans attended a naturalization class in November 1926, instructor A.-G. Légendre informed *Le Messager* that some Democrats opposed his efforts to promote naturalization *"sous prétexte que les votants de langue française sont déjà assez nombreux ici."*[95] While Legendre did not specify the nationality of these Democrats, they were most likely individuals of Irish descent who recognized that Franco-Americans would soon nudge them out of prominent positions on the local political scene. As Franco-Americans gained electoral strength in Lewiston, non-francophones worried about their place in local politics.

J. Wiseman served as mayor for most of these years: 1925-1929 and 1933-1935. Kirk and Barrows, p. 34.

[95]Louis-Philippe Gagné, *Le Messager*, 18 août 1924, p. 6; *Le Messager*, 9 novembre 1926, p. 4.

"dans certains milieux fanatiques": "in certain fanatic circles"

"sous prétexte...nombreux ici.": "under the pretext that French-language voters are already numerous enough here."

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So did Franco-Americans who were not part of the Democratic political machine. In the 1930s, some Franco-Americans helped bring to an end the machine politics that francophones had played a role in creating. Franco-American jeweler, Rodolphe Hamel, left the Democratic Party in 1930 to run for mayor on the Citizens' ticket, thus challenging the Democratic political machine. Hamel mounted a vigorous campaign but died during the election. The Republican candidate, Harold N. Skelton, subsequently picked up the endorsement of the Citizens' movement and won the mayoralty in both 1930 and 1931. When Skelton chose not to seek a third term in 1932, the Democratic machine regained the mayor's office. Political corruption and the resulting scandals in the 1930s motivated some Franco-Americans to take action. In August 1936, they formed a new society, called *les Vigilants*, open only to Franco-Americans. Promoted as a social organization in the English- and French-language press, *les Vigilants* had a larger purpose. *Le Messager* hinted at this both when it stated that *"le but premier des 'Vigilants' est le bien-être des citoyens de langue française, et ce terme 'bien-être' veut dire beaucoup"* and when it indicated that politicians could not be officers of the organization. By November, *les Vigilants* had eighty members, *"tous très bien*

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connus dans le domaine social, économique et professionnel," *Le Messager* reported.[96]

This new Franco-American society initiated the drive to revise Lewiston's city charter. Except for eliminating the Common Council, Lewiston had operated under its original charter since 1863. Under the old charter, political machines had handpicked candidates for mayor and aldermen, and the aldermen had used their power to appoint individuals to city positions as a means to reward members of their party. After adoption of the new city charter in 1939, local office seekers had to get their names onto the ballot through the process of petitioning, and they had to run for office as nonpartisans, that is, without political party designation. Run-off elections settled contests in which contenders lacked a majority vote. Under the new charter, the mayor made appointments to municipal boards and required the approval of the aldermen only for positions on the police department. In addition, city boards could no longer be filled solely by members of the same political party. Reforms such as these essentially

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[96]Bernard, "A Political History of Lewiston," pp. 12-21, 33-35, 43-47, 186-187; *Le Messager*, 6 août 1936, pp. 4, 6, 21 novembre 1936, p. 6; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, August 6, 1936, p. 20.

"le but...dire beaucoup": "the chief goal of the 'Vigilants' is the well-being of French-language citizens, and this term 'well-being' says much"

"tous très...et professionnel,": "all very well known in social, economic and professional circles."

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brought to an end the Democratic political machine that Franco-Americans had helped create in Lewiston.[97]

Besides supporting Democratic candidates at the local level, Lewiston strongly supported Democrats who ran for governor, congress, and president in the 1920s and 1930s. Democratic candidates for governor won a majority--sometimes over three-fourths--of Lewiston's votes in each gubernatorial election of the twenties and thirties. The same was true of Democratic congressional candidates who ran in presidential election years. Except for assisting Warren Harding in 1920, Lewiston voters threw their support behind Democratic presidential candidates during each of the other contests in the 1920s and 1930s. The Democratic Party reached out to Franco-Americans. In 1928, the Democratic National Committee printed pamphlets in French entitled *"'Pourquoi les électeurs de langue française doivent voter pour l'hon. Alfred E. Smith.'"* This gesture, which *Le Messager* applauded, and Smith's background as a Catholic Democrat must have enamored Lewiston Franco-Americans. Smith won nearly three-fourths of Lewiston's vote in 1928. In contrast, Auburn voters backed Republican Herbert Hoover by a larger than two-to-one margin.[98]

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[97]Kirk and Barrows, *Historic Lewiston*, p. 4; Bernard, "A Political History of Lewiston," pp. 7, 12-21, 163-165, 171, 186-187.

[98]Bissonnette, "Political Parties as Products of Their Environments," pp. 27-29, 35, 38; *Le Messager*, 24 octobre 1928, p. 8, 7 novembre 1928, p. 1.
"'Pourquoi les...Alfred E. Smith.'": "'Why French-language voters should vote for the Honorable Alfred E. Smith.'"

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Lewiston's twin city remained a Republican bastion. For Lewiston Franco-Americans, men and women alike, membership in and support of the Democratic Party had become an integral part of their identity by the late 1920s.

After the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization came into existence in 1906 and standardized naturalization procedures, few French-Canadian migrants from Lewiston ventured to Portland, Maine, to naturalize. During the 1920s and 1930s, only seven of the 1,238 (0.6 percent) made the thirty-mile trip to Portland to secure their final naturalization papers. All others became U.S. citizens at the Androscoggin County Courthouse in Auburn, even though the city was a Republican bastion.[99] This evidence suggests that national standards of procedure imposed by the federal bureau overseeing naturalization had helped dissipate the local political pressures that had formerly motivated French-Canadian migrants to naturalize in Portland. Perhaps the growing strength and confidence of Franco-American Democrats had fortified them as well.

One Democrat, Jean-Charles Boucher, helped make New Year's Day a legal holiday in Maine. In December 1934, the Franco-American societies of Lewiston and Auburn met to promote the idea of making this French-Canadian day of celebration a legal holiday statewide. Representative-elect Boucher, an active member of numerous Franco-American

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[99]Naturalization records, 1920-1939.

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societies, agreed to support the idea in the state legislature, and he introduced his bill in February 1935. Lewiston Mayor Robert Wiseman and members of local Franco-American societies traveled to the state capital in Augusta to attend hearings on Boucher's bill. In July 1935, the bill to make New Year's a holiday in Maine became law.[100] Enactment of this legislation provided further evidence of how Franco-Americans used American forms to renegotiate their identity in the United States. While becoming naturalized citizens and voters, Franco-Americans exercised whatever political clout they had to retain ethnic customs, like the celebration of New Year's Day, that they held dear. With the passage of this law, they also reshaped the identity of the state of Maine.

As in the nineteenth century, francophones in Lewiston took advantage of Québec's proximity to maintain, and even to expand, contacts in their homeland during the twentieth century. Enrollment in Québec's *collèges classiques* by young Franco-American men of Lewiston increased each decade until the Great Depression. For example, there were forty-two enrollments from Lewiston in the 1900s at the *Collège de Saint-Hyacinthe* and the *Séminaire Saint-Charles Borromée* and sixty-two at these institutions in the 1910s. The number peaked at 162 in the 1920s and dropped to 142 during

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[100]*Le Messager*, 17 décembre 1934, p. 6, 1 février 1935, p. 8, 13 février 1935, p. 6, 14 février 1935, p. 8, 6 juillet 1935, p. 6; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, December 18, 1934, p. 18.

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the Depression of the 1930s. Until the 1940s, Franco-Americans in Lewiston who wanted to provide a Catholic education for their sons beyond elementary school either had to send them to Canada or, from 1904, to Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts, the only *collège classique* francophones established in New England.[101] Anecdotal evidence suggests that Franco-Americans from the Lewiston area more often opted to attend *collège* in Canada rather than Worcester. Armand A. Dufresne, who had been born in New Auburn, later practiced law in Lewiston and went on to become Chief Justice of the Maine Supreme Court. He chose to attend the *Séminaire Saint-Charles Borromée* in Sherbrooke rather than Assumption not only because his father had a first cousin teaching at the institution but also because it charged less tuition. Reverend Hervé Carrier, a Lewiston native, indicated that financial considerations were a major reason why Franco-Americans had sent their sons to seminary in Canada, often to Sherbrooke

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[101]Data shared with me by Robert G. LeBlanc; interview with Romeo Boisvert by Steffan Duplessis and Raymond Pelletier, Lewiston, Maine, January 8, 1981, for the project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* Maine Folklife Center accession #1693; Robert G. LeBlanc, "A French-Canadian Education and the Persistence of *La Franco-Américanie,*" *Journal of Cultural Geography* 8 (Spring/Summer 1988), p. 51. Daughters of Franco-Americans could receive schooling beyond the eighth grade by studying with either the Dominican Sisters, who from their arrival in Lewiston in 1904 offered an additional year or two of education for girls, or the Ursuline Sisters, who had a convent school in Waterville (Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 1, 1904, p. 32, 1906, p. 94.) There were opportunities for women to pursue higher education in Québec beginning in 1908, but *Le Messager* offered no information about whether Lewiston Franco-Americans sent their daughters to the women's *collèges classiques.*

collèges classiques: classical schools

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like himself or to Saint-Hyacinthe where older priests had trained.[102] This quantitative and anecdotal evidence attests to the continuing ties between French Canadians in Québec and Franco-Americans in the United States, even as the latter population continued sinking roots in the host society.

Robert G. LeBlanc argues that the *collèges classiques* were promoters of *survivance*: "Above all, the classical college was a conservative institution promoting the preservation of the French language, Roman Catholic religion and other aspects of French-Canadian culture." What may be a little-known fact is that Franco-Americans also learned English at the *collèges* of Québec. Adelard Janelle, a longtime Lewiston resident who was active in the French-language societies, told an interviewer that boys he knew had attended the *collège* in Sherbrooke "'to learn English. Then they would come back, and find it easier.'"[103] If Janelle's impression is accurate, it suggests the unexpected conclusion that attending a *collège*

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[102]Interview with Armand A. Dufresne, Jr., by Marcella Sorg and Steffan Duplessis, Auburn, Maine, May 14, 1981, for the project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* Maine Folklife Center accession #1670; interview with Armand A. Dufresne, Jr., by Barry H. Rodrigue, Lewiston, Maine, March 28, 1994, Maine Folklife Center accession #2351; interview with Reverend Hervé Carrier by Raymond Pelletier and Mark Silber, Lewiston, Maine, March 19, 1981, for the project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* Maine Folklife Center accession #1697.

[103]LeBlanc, "A French-Canadian Education and the Persistence of *La Franco-Américanie,*" p. 51; Janelle, cited in Hendrickson, *Quiet Presence*, p. 5.

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classique in Québec did not necessarily promote a dichotomy between ethnic retention and acculturation.

Some Lewiston Franco-Americans, like Romeo Boisvert, attended the *collèges commercials* of Québec, where they, too, learned English. In contrast to the *collèges classiques*, these institutions emphasized instruction in science, math, and English over such subjects as Latin and Greek. Boisvert, a former mayor of Lewiston, maintained that he had not learned English at the city's parochial schools but at the *collège commercial* of Berthierville where he had studied for three years. This *collège* had teachers from the United States to instruct the Franco-American students, and it offered them four hours of instruction in English and two in French, Boisvert recalled. Announcements in the local news column of *Le Messager* confirm Boisvert's comments about the program of *Collège Saint-Joseph de Berthierville*. While we do not have detailed enrollment figures for this *collège*, we do know from *Le Messager* that about thirty-five youth from Lewiston-Auburn attended in 1930. Boisvert himself recalled that forty-two of the 210 Franco-Americans at Berthierville one year were Lewiston residents.[104] What we can infer from the limited information on Lewiston is that attendance at Québec's *collèges commercials* provided an

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[104]Romeo Boisvert, January 8, 1981; Linteau et al., *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, p. 273; *Le Messager*, 6 août 1930, p. 8, 16 août 1934, p. 8.

collèges commercials: commercial schools

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alternative to classical education and one that, surprisingly enough, promoted the acquisition of English among Franco-American youth.

Contacts between francophones on both sides of the international border expanded from the mid-1920s with the organization of the American Snowshoe Union in Lewiston. Scattered reports in *Le Messager* reveal that snowshoe clubs existed from time to time in Lewiston in both the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but not until 1925 did snowshoeing become a major sport in the city. Louis-Philippe Gagné was instrumental in organizing *Le Montagnard* snowshoe club, named and modeled after the largest snowshoe club of the province of Québec. The Lewiston club adopted the bylaws of *Le Montagnard* of Montréal as well as its motto, *"Toujours Joyeux."* The club's original charter indicated its purposes were "social, to engage in, foster, promote and encourage winter sports," and 150 men joined in its first year.[105]

As secretary and clerk of *Le Montagnard,* Gagné organized the first International Snowshoe Congress, held in Lewiston in 1925. Gagné worked with members of Maine's

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[105]*Le Messager,* 20 décembre 1888, 16 janvier 1890, p. 4, 17 février 1911, p. 4; *Annual Convention of the Canadian Snowshoe Union, February 7-8, 1925, Lewiston, Maine/Convention annuelle de L'Union Canadienne des Raquetteurs, 7 et 8 février 1925* (n.p [1925]), pp. 5, 9, 14; Edouard Garand, trésorier du Montagnard, Montréal, à Louis-Philippe Gagné, Lewiston, 28 mai 1924, 6 juin 1924, copies d'Augustin "Gus" Croteau déposées avec moi; Charter of *Le Montagnard,* January 6, 1925, in possession of Gus Croteau, secretary of the organization, Sabattus, Maine.

"Toujours Joyeux": "Always Happy"

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congressional delegation and U.S. immigration officials to address the concerns of Canadian snowshoe clubs that there might be problems crossing the border and that each snowshoer would have to pay U.S. immigration officials a ten-dollar fee to enter the United States. When Gagné lobbied the different snowshoe clubs in the Canadian Union to vote in favor of holding their 1925 congress in Lewiston, he had already worked through these issues, and he informed them that there would be no fee to pay at the border. Gagné also touted special railway fares, the use of the city armory to save on hotel expenses, and he emphasized to the Canadian clubs: *"Inutile de vous dire que point n'est besoin de parler anglais pour venir a [sic] Lewiston."* The Canadian Union voted to hold its congress in Lewiston, and snowshoe clubs came from such cities and towns as Montréal, Québec City, Trois-Rivières, Drummondville, Saint-Hyacinthe, Sherbrooke, Thetford Mines, and Ottawa, most by special trains on the Grand Trunk line. Four French-Canadian men arrived to Lewiston on snowshoes! Two snowshoed 272 miles from Montréal, and two others 172 miles from Sherbrooke.[106]

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[106]Charter of *Le Montagnard*, January 6, 1925; Raoul Charbonneau, "L'Union Canadienne de Raquetteurs," dans le Comité du Club Alpin (dir.), *La Raquette* ([Manchester, New Hampshire]: L'Avenir National, 1937), p. 19; U.S. Congressman Wallace H. White, Jr., Washington, D.C., to Louis Phillipe [*sic*] Gagné, Lewiston, September 4, 1924 and U.S. Senator Bert M. Fernald to Louis-Philippe Gagné, September 12, 1924, copies given to me by Gus Croteau; Edouard Garand à Louis Philippe Gagné, 1 septembre 1924, copie de Croteau déposée avec moi; Louis-Philippe Gagné à G.-H. Montpetit. Montréal. 11 novembre 1924. in the scrapbook of the L. & A. Montagnard Social Club, in possession

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Like *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebrations, the winter carnival included U.S. dignitaries and reflected the identity of Franco-Americans. Governor Ralph O. Brewster welcomed the Canadians to the Lewiston carnival, indicating that he felt the event would encourage ties of friendship between Canada and the United States. Ten U.S. and Tricolor flags flew above the twenty-foot ice castle erected at Lewiston city park. *Le Messager* estimated that over 7,000 Lewiston residents had taken part in the snowshoe races at the park and that 25,000 persons had attended the evening torch light parade. Other activities included two hockey games between members of *l'Association Saint-Dominique* and a team from Québec City, a Sunday morning parade to mass at *Saint-Pierre* Church, and a banquet at city hall attended by Lewiston Mayor Louis Brann.[107]

The February 1925 carnival spurred the creation of other snowshoe clubs in Lewiston and other areas of northern New England. Lewiston's *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* founded its own snowshoe club within a couple of weeks of the carnival, and its members decided to contact *le Club Commercial de Québec* to adopt the club's bylaws as

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of Diane Williams, Litchfield, Maine; *Annual Convention of the Canadian Snowshoe Union, February 7-8, 1925*, passim; *Le Messager*, 2 et 6 février 1925, p. 1.

"Inutile de...a [sic] Lewiston.": "Needless to tell you that none needs to speak English to come to Lewiston."

[107]*Le Messager*, 6 février 1925, p. 8, 9 février 1925, pp. 1, 6.

l'Association Saint-Dominique: the Saint Dominic Association

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its own. By the end of March 1925, four Lewiston snowshoe clubs--*Le Montagnard, l'Institut Jacques-Cartier, le Cercle Canadien,* and *les Diables Rouges*--formed the American Snowshoe Union, an idea Louis-Philippe Gagné had proposed, and he became its first president. In 1925, women organized snowshoe clubs of their own, called *les Dames Montagnards, la Gaieté,* and *l'Oiseau de Neige,* and they gained admission to the American Union in November of that year as auxiliary members. When a woman's snowshoe club had its flag blessed at mass at *Saint-Pierre* Church in 1928, a Dominican commented: *"Singulier spectacle que ces femmes et ces filles en habit d'homme, dans une église, même dans le sanctuaire!"* By 1936, Lewiston had five snowshoe clubs for women and five for men. Other clubs formed in Biddeford, Brunswick, and Rumford, Maine, and in Berlin, Somersworth, and Manchester, New Hampshire, and they joined the American Snowshoe Union. One of the goals of the organization was to alternate the location of its conventions yearly between Canada and the United States, something it has done over the course of the twentieth century.[108] Thus, Louis-Philippe Gagné's efforts in the

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[108]Les minutes des assemblées, les archives du Club Jacques-Cartier [ci-après, les minutes du Jacques-Cartier], Sabattus, Maine, vol. 1, 19 février 1925, p. 1; *Le Messager,* 30 mars 1925, p. 6; Raymond J. Lévesque, "L'Union Américaine de Raquetteurs," dans *La Raquette,* p. 22; *La Raquette,* pp. 34, 43; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 14, 19 février 1928, p. 303; *Le Messager,* 6 avril 1925, p. 8, 27 novembre 1936, p. 8.

le Club Commercial de Québec: the Commercial Club of Québec
le Cercle Canadien: the Canadian Circle
les Diables Rouges: the Red Devils

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mid-1920s to foster the growth of snowshoe clubs among Franco-Americans led to the creation of an organizational structure in the American Snowshoe Union that promoted interaction between francophones on both sides of the international border, an interaction that continued throughout the twentieth century. The Americanization movement of the 1920s had not discouraged Lewiston Franco-Americans from expanding their ethnic ties with *le pays natal*.

With one notable exception the Lewiston clubs that joined the American Union were French-language organizations. In 1926, when the Knights of Columbus snowshoe club had its flag blessed at *Sainte-Croix* Church, *Le Messager* indicated that members of the American Snowshoe Union had attended the ceremony and the president of the Canadian Union had traveled from Québec to participate. The head of the snowshoe club of the Knights of Columbus was a Franco-American, and Holy Cross had just been renamed *Sainte-Croix*. The day after the ceremony, *Le Messager* reflected on the ethnic intermixing taking place at the benediction of the club's flag: *"Une excellente leçon à tirer de la fête d'hier c'est que le sport de la raquette a contribué à unir en une même célébration des lurons des*

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les Dames Montagnards: the Women Mountaineers
la Gaieté: Cheerfulness
l'Oiseau de Neige: the Snow Bird
"Singulier spectacle...le sanctuaire!": "Peculiar sight these women and these girls in men's clothing, in a church, even in the sanctuary!"

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deux langues, pour la bénédiction du drapeau d'un club de la langue anglaise dirigé par un Franco-américain."[109] Acculturation was neither a straight-line nor a one-way process.

Beginning during the 1925 Christmas season, local snowshoe clubs teamed up with the *Société Saint-Vincent de Paul* to bring the French-Canadian custom of *la Guignolée* to Lewiston. According to *Le Messager*, parishes in Québec first began taking up a collection on Christmas Eve in 1884 for their destitute; while the French-language newspaper did not make clear when *la Guignolée* fell out of practice, it noted that Québec parishes revived the custom in 1903. The idea took root in Lewiston after Louis-Philippe Gagné discussed it with F.X. Marcotte, the president of the *Société Saint-Vincent de Paul* of *Saint-Pierre* parish. Subsequently, the *Saint-Vincent de Paul* societies from Lewiston's two largest parishes, *Sainte-Marie* and *Saint-Pierre*, took up the practice with the assistance of members of some of the snowshoe clubs. Yearly reports by *Le Messager* at Christmas time reveal that *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* and *le Montagnard* were the snowshoe clubs that most actively participated in *la Guignolée*, a practice that continued through the 1930s. Snowshoers would travel from

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[109]*Le Messager*, 18 janvier 1926, p. 1.
"Une excellente...un Franco-américain.": "An excellent lesson to draw from yesterday's celebration is that the sport of snowshoeing has contributed to uniting in one celebration snowshoers of two languages, for the blessing of the flag of an English-language club directed by a Franco-American."

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house to house, collecting cash, clothing, and other goods for the poor of their parish communities.[110] Imported from Québec, *la Guignolée* represented one of the ways in which Franco-Americans took care of the needs of their community before, and during the early years of, the development of the welfare state in the U.S.A.

Franco-Americans developed other means to provide for the needs of their group. Often, they arose through the creation of parish societies, such as the men's *Société Saint-Vincent de Paul*. The formation of *les Dames de Charité* of *Saint-Pierre* parish underscores the role men thought women could exercise in charitable work as well as conceptions of charity before the Great Depression. Formed in 1925 at the suggestion of F.X. Marcotte as an auxiliary of the *Saint-Vincent de Paul* society, *les Dames de Charité* of *Saint-Pierre* parish was conceived to visit the poor and to sew clothes for them. At one of the first meetings of the women's society, F.X. Marcotte *"souligna le rôle qu'une femme peut remplir mieux qu'un homme, auprès des malades et des pauvres, rappelant qu'une bonne parole fait souvent plus de bien qu'un secours matériel."*[111]

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[110]*Le Messager*, 11 décembre 1925, p. 3, 22 et 27 décembre 1926, p. 8, 23 décembre 1927, p. 2, 18 décembre 1929, p. 8, 18 décembre 1931, p. 14, 15 décembre 1934, p. 6, 18 décembre 1937, p. 6; lettre de F.X. Marcotte, *Le Messager*, 4 janvier 1926, p. 3; les minutes du Jacques-Cartier, vol. 1, 6 décembre 1926, p. 32, vol. 3, 9 décembre 1938, p. 49, 8 décembre 1939, p. 73.
Société Saint-Vincent de Paul: Saint Vincent de Paul Society

[111]Dames de Charité: Compte Rendu des Réunions, les archives des Dominicains, 24 août 1925, p. 1, 21 septembre 1925, p. 3.
les Dames de Charité: the Ladies of Charity

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Women, of course, had long been active in providing for needy francophones in Lewiston. *Les Soeurs de la Charité de Saint-Hyacinthe* had founded a hospital in Lewiston in the late 1800s, and they provided care for the indigent at no charge, as their annual reports revealed in the 1930s. These *Soeurs Grises* expanded their social services in the 1920s by building *Maison Marcotte*, a nursing home for the elderly, and *l'Orphelinat Saint-Joseph*, an orphanage for girls, in different wings of one structure. In donating $120,000 to the project, which would house 200 elderly and 250 orphan girls, businessman F.X. Marcotte stipulated that the sisters accept sixteen elderly Franco-Americans (twenty after the death of himself and his wife) at no charge for up to twenty-five years after he and his wife had passed. In publicizing Marcotte's donation, *Le Messager* indicated it would help keep indigent Franco-Americans from having to live at the city's poor farm and would prevent the associated shame. Implicit in *Le Messager*'s report was the pride of Franco-Americans in being able to take care of their own. This pride factored into the decision of the Woonsocket headquarters of the Franco-American mutual-benefit society, *l'Union Saint-Jean Baptiste d'Amérique*, to loan the *Soeurs*

"souligna le rôle...secours matériel.": "underlined the role that a woman could fill better than a man, near the sick and the poor, keeping in mind that a good word often does more good than material assistance."

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Grises from $200,000 to $300,000 to finance construction of their new institution.[112]

While Franco-Americans built institutions to meet their own needs, they were not strictly ethnic institutions, for they opened them to non-Franco-Americans and to non-Catholics. For example, the Sisters' Hospital, named *Hôpital Général Sainte-Marie* in 1908, continued in the twentieth century to accept patients without regard to religious background or national origin. In fiscal year 1920, while Franco-Americans constituted a majority of the patients treated at the institution, 37.7 percent of the women and 45.1 percent of the men admitted to the hospital did not have French surnames. A French Catholic institution, it welcomed other residents of the Lewiston area. Similarly, *Maison Marcotte* and *l'Orphelinat Saint-Joseph "sont ouvertes à tous, sans distinction de croyance ou de nationalité."*[113] This practice likely helped the

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[112]*Report of Saint Mary's General Hospital, Lewiston, Maine for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30th, 1934* (n.p., 1934), p. 11; *Saint Mary's General Hospital/Hôpital Général Ste-Marie, Lewiston, Maine: A Voluntary Charitable Institution Counting Fifty Years of Faithful Service to the Community, 1888-1938* (n.p. [1938]), pp. 7, 45; *Le Messager*, 25 mai 1927, p. 8, 9 décembre 1927, p. 2. For more information on the role of Franco-Americans in providing for their own needs before the advent of the welfare state, see Mark Paul Richard, "Coping before *l'État-providence:* Collective Welfare Strategies of New England's Franco-Americans," *Québec Studies* 25 (Spring 1998), pp. 59-67.

Les Soeurs de la Charité de Saint-Hyacinthe: The Sisters of Charity of Saint-Hyacinthe
Maison Marcotte: Marcotte Home
l'Orphelinat Saint-Joseph: the Saint Joseph Orphanage
Soeurs Grises: Grey Nuns

[113]Charlotte Michaud, "Gray [*sic*] Nuns in Lewiston Build Hospital, Student Nurses' Home, Marcotte Home," *Lewiston Journal* Magazine Section (December 10, 1938), p. A-12; *Annual Report of St. Mary's*

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institutions of the *Soeurs Grises* to procure state subsidies to help finance operations.

Because historians have devoted little attention to such charitable Franco-American institutions (and, for that matter, to other benevolent Catholic institutions), to date we know hardly anything about them. The same is true of the savings institutions of Franco-Americans, notably the credit unions, which they introduced to the United States in 1908. A French Canadian, Alphonse Desjardins, brought the cooperative credit movement from Europe to North America when he opened a *caisse populaire* in his home in Québec in 1900.[114] Reverend Pierre Hévey, who had

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General Hospital, Lewiston, Maine, 1917-1918 (Lewiston, Maine: Royal Press [1918]), p. 8; *Saint Mary's General Hospital*, 1938 report, p. 3; figures for 1920 are derived from the Registre, vol. 5, Sisters of Charity, Saint Mary's Regional Center Archives, Lewiston, Maine, pp. 388-551a; *Album souvenir du 75e anniversaire de la Paroisse Saint-Pierre et Saint-Paul de Lewiston, Maine, 1871-1946* (s.é., s.d.), p. 49; *Le Messager*, 26 octobre 1935, p. 6.

Hôpital Général Sainte-Marie: Saint Mary's General Hospital

"sont ouvertes... de nationalité.": "are open to all, without distinction to religion or to nationality."

[114]Michael B. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), p. 300 (n10); J. Carroll Moody and Gilbert C. Fite, *The Credit Union Movement: Origins and Development, 1850-1970* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), pp. 21-22; Joel W. Eastman, *The Credit Union Movement in Maine: A History of the Maine Credit Union League, 1937-1988* (Portland, Maine: Maine Credit Union League, 1988), p. 9. On the *caisse populaire* movement in Canada, see Yves Roby, *Alphonse Desjardins et les caisses populaires, 1854-1920* (Montréal: Fides, 1964); for a class analysis of the movement, see Ronald Rudin, *In Whose Interest? Quebec's Caisses Populaires, 1900-1945* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990); for an interpretation emphasizing cultural factors, see Brett Fairbairn, "Social Bases of Co-operation: Historical Examples and Contemporary Questions," in Murray E. Fulton, ed., *Co-operative Organizations and Canadian Society: Popular Institutions and the Dilemmas of Change* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), pp. 63-76.

caisse populaire: credit union

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instituted a *banque d'épargne* in Lewiston during his tenure in the 1870s, subsequently served as pastor of *Sainte-Marie* parish in Manchester, New Hampshire, where he organized *la Caisse populaire Sainte-Marie* with the assistance of Desjardins in 1908. When incorporated the following year by an act of the New Hampshire legislature, this institution became the first credit union in the United States.[115]

Hévey's *banque d'épargne* in Lewiston in the 1870s represented one of several attempts to create savings institutions for the city's French speakers. In 1905, *Le Messager* reported that attempts to found a bank for francophones in that year had not succeeded because the state government had denied organizers the necessary charter. The French-language newspaper suspected that banking interests had pressured the state to take this action because local bankers had feared losing up to one million dollars in deposits by Franco-Americans. Ten years later, Franco-Americans F.X. Marcotte, A.G. Gagnon, J.B. Janelle, and A.T. Gastonguay successfully obtained a state charter to create the Mutual Loan Company of Lewiston, designed to provide loans to purchase real estate or to

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[115]Eastman, *The Credit Union Movement in Maine*, p. 9. On the promotion of credit unionism in the United States, see Moody and Fite, *The Credit Union Movement*; Roy F. Bergengren, *Credit Union North America* (New York: Southern Publishers, 1940); Roy F. Bergengren, *Crusade: The Fight for Economic Democracy in North America, 1921-1945* (New York: Exposition Press, 1952.)

banque d'épargne: savings bank

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enable borrowers to get out from high-interest loans they held. *Le Messager* informed readers that the savings association had gained its charter despite opposition from banks that feared both losing Franco-American clients and having to compete with the new institution. An ethnic organization, the Lewiston Mutual Loan Society gave credit *"exclusivement à des compatriotes."* In 1921, the institution lost its charter and had to liquidate its assets, because the state banking commission worried about its declining yearly profits, reported *Le Messager*.[116] The French-language newspaper was silent about any suspicions it might have had that the action discriminated against Franco-Americans.

Not until 1938, in the midst of the Great Depression, did Lewiston francophones have their own credit union. In that year, four years after President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Federal Credit Union Act, *Sainte-Famille* opened the first parish credit union in the state of Maine for members of its church. Interestingly enough, it was the Antigonish movement, a Catholic social action movement of Nova Scotia, that had inspired pastor Vital Nonorgues to found this credit union. Nonorgues had pursued his philosophical and theological studies at Halifax, Nova Scotia, prior to his 1912 ordination and, before becoming

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[116]*Le Messager*, 5 mai 1905, p. 6, 16 avril 1915, p. 10, 2 août 1915, p. 8, 30 août 1915, p. 4, 11 avril 1921, p. 1.

"exclusivement à des compatriotes": "exclusively to compatriots"

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pastor of *Sainte-Famille* in 1923, had served as a priest in northern Maine's Saint John Valley, an area where the Antigonish Movement had influenced the development of cooperatives and credit unions during the Depression. Nonorgues founded the credit union of *Sainte-Famille* to help parishioners struggling with indebtedness during the same period.[117]

Discrimination against Franco-Americans may have played a role in the founding of *Sainte Famille* Federal Credit Union. In the 1930s, Bates College sociologists A.M. Myhrman and J.A. Rademaker observed that, while Franco-Americans held political power in Lewiston, Yankees owned and managed the large companies and banks and held economic and social power in the city. "To describe the social and ecological relationships briefly," they wrote, "it might well be said that the Yankees exploit the French

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[117]Eastman, *The Credit Union Movement in Maine*, p. 11; *Church World*, January 21, 1938, p. 1; Organization Certificate, Sainte Famille Federal Credit Union, March 16, 1938, Maine Family Federal Credit Union, Lewiston, Maine; Juliette Lajoie, *Ste. Famille Federal Credit Union 25th Anniversary, 1938-1963* (n.p., n.d.); notes of Reverend Philip Desjardins, Chancery Archives; C. Stewart Doty, *Acadian Hard Times: The Farm Security Administration in Maine's St. John Valley, 1940-1943* (Orono, Maine: University of Maine Press, 1991), p. 58; Mme. Laurent (Juliette) Lajoie, "Histoire de la fondation de l'Union Crédit Fédérale Sainte Famille à l'occasion de son vincinquième [*sic*] anniversaire, 1938-1963, Paroisse Sainte Famille, Lewiston, Maine" (texte dactylographié, 1963), déposé à Maine Family Federal Credit Union, Lewiston, Maine, p. 1. The French name of the credit union appears without hyphenation, reflecting the spelling used on its Organization Certificate as well as the practice of the institution. Readers interested in the Antigonish Movement should consult M.M. Coady, *Masters of Their Own Destiny: The Story of the Antigonish Movement of Adult Education through Economic Cooperation* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1939); and Malcolm MacLellan, *Coady Remembered* (Antigonish, Nova Scotia: St. Francis Xavier University Press, 1985.)

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Canadians, and operate on a basis of mutualism with the Irish in most instances." Longtime Lewiston resident and public school teacher, Geneva Kirk, informed an interviewer that banking institutions in Lewiston discriminated against Franco-Americans during the Depression by maintaining a quota system. A former Franco-American postmaster, the victim of such discrimination, had told Kirk that a banker had indicated he was "'well qualified'" for a job in his bank but that he could not hire him. When asked to explain, the banker had offered: "'We have one Frenchman here now, and that's our quota. That's a token number.'" Such discrimination against Franco-Americans probably carried over into the lending practices of bankers, motivating Franco-Americans to try again to found their own savings institution during the Great Depression, assisted by the passage of the Federal Credit Union Act.[118]

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[118]A.M. Myhrman and J.A. Rademaker, "The Second Colonization Process in an Industrial Community" (Typescript, Lewiston Public Library, n.d.), pp. 28-29; interview with Ms. Geneva A. Kirk by students of the First Year Seminar 187, Bates College, Lewiston, Maine, February 12, 1996, transcribed by Anne D. Williams in Anne D. Williams, ed., "The Experience of the Great Depression in Lewiston-Auburn, Maine: A Report by First Year Seminar 187" (Typescript, Bates College, winter 1996, reprinted October 1997), p. 87. Discrimination against Franco-Americans had motivated the founding of Rhode Island's first credit union in 1915. Under the leadership of Reverend Joseph H. Béland, who had consulted Alphonse Desjardins and Pierre Hévey, Franco-Americans organized the Central Falls Credit Union because banks had denied them loans. Florence Marie Chevalier, S.S.A., "The Role of French National Societies in the Sociocultural Evolution of the Franco-Americans of New England from 1860 to the Present: An Analytical Macro-sociological Case Study in Ethnic Integration Based on Current Social System Models" (Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1972), p. 208; Paul M. Paré, "Franco-Americans and Credit Unions," *InformACTION [Bulletin de l'Action pour les Franco-Américains du Nord-Est (ActFANE)]* 3 (February/March 1984), p. 5.

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During the Depression, the French-language media of Lewiston grew. As other French-language newspapers folded in different New England cities, *Le Messager* became a daily publication, beginning in January 1934. While *Le Messager* had sold about 5,500 subscriptions in 1925, its circulation peaked at between 9,000 and 10,000 during the 1930s. *Le Messager*'s increased circulation and its evolution to a daily newspaper demonstrate that the Depression did not necessarily weaken ethnic identification and ethnic institutions in the Spindle City. The newspaper did refashion itself, however. In 1934, *Le Messager* dropped without explanation the words *"religion," "nationalité,"* and *"patrie"* from its masthead and replaced them with *"franchise"* and *"vérité."*[119] Perhaps the change signified a shift in *Le Messager*'s outlook from the values its founders had brought from Québec to those it wished to promote amidst the political corruption of 1930s Lewiston.

Le Messager's president, J.B. Couture, founded the Twin City Broadcasting Corporation and gained a Federal Communications Commission license for a radio frequency. In August 1938, WCOU (COU for Couture) went on the air.

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[119]Paul-M. Paré, "Les Vingt premières années du *Messager* de Lewiston, Maine," dans Claire Quintal, dir., *Le Journalisme de langue française aux États-Unis* (Québec, Québec: Le Conseil de la Vie française en Amérique, 1984), p. 81; *Le Messager*, 10 juillet 1925, p. 6, 8 janvier 1934, p. 1; Kenneth E. Carpenter, "The Franco-Americans in Maine" (Honors thesis, Bowdoin College, 1958), p. 49.

"patrie": "country"
"franchise": "openness"
"vérité": "truth"

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Established in *Le Messager*'s building, it was the only radio station in Lewiston-Auburn, Maine. While much of WCOU's programming was in English, and three of its first four announcers had English surnames, it offered daily programs in French. One was "*Le Club Matinal*" from 6:00 to 7:00 each morning from Monday through Saturday, featuring songs, and local, national, and international news, as well as periodic announcements of the time of day. There were Sunday radio programs, also featuring news and entertainment, in French.[120] Programming in English and French on WCOU provides only further evidence of the intertwining of ethnic retention with the realities of living in an anglophone country.

The technology of radio may have intensified the transborder relationship of French Canadians and Franco-Americans in the 1930s. As early as October 1929, emissions from Montréal's CKAC radio station could be heard in the Lewiston-Auburn area. In December 1938, *Le Messager* announced that WCOU would broadcast the *réveillon* organized by *les Vigilants* from 2:00 to 4:00 on Christmas morning; because other radio stations did not operate during those

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[120]*Le Messager*, 14 mai 1938, p. 1, 17 août 1938, p. 12, 20 août 1938, p. 6; interview with Paul Belanger, a senior citizen, by Mark Silber and Raymond Pelletier, Lewiston, Maine, February 18, 1981, for the project, "*Notre vie, notre travail*," Maine Folklife Center accession #1685; Henry V. Gosselin, "The Franco American Daily Press in Maine and a Content Analysis of *Le Messager*, Lewiston, Maine" (M.S. thesis, Boston University, 1951), p. 15; Myhrman and Rademaker, "The Second Colonization Process in an Industrial Community," p. 28.

"*Le Club Matinal*": "The Morning Club"

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hours, the newspaper speculated that the broadcast would be heard not only in other states of the U.S.A. but in Canada as well. Given the proximity of Lewiston to the Canadian border, and the Franco-American ownership of WCOU, it would seem that the advent of radio could not necessarily draw Franco-Americans from the Spindle City into a more homogeneous, U.S. mass culture, lest they chose that to happen.[121]

The trade union activities of Franco-Americans in the 1920s and 1930s reveal how their identity continued to evolve in the United States. Their participation in unions and labor protests, including two major strikes in the 1930s, provide evidence of their efforts to improve working conditions in their country of adoption. They also provide further evidence that Franco-Americans did not follow submissively the dictates of their religious leaders.[122]

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[121]*Le Messager*, 21 octobre 1929, p. 8, 13 décembre 1938, p. 8. The technology of radio did not fashion a common culture in the United States during the 1930s. Lizabeth Cohen, for example, argues that while radio programming gave Chicago listeners of different racial and ethnic backgrounds some common experiences in the 1930s, it did not serve to homogenize the city's different groups. See *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 329.

réveillon: dinner party, usually after the midnight mass at Christmas

[122]That Franco-Americans were a priest-ridden population is a stereotype whose origins are difficult to pinpoint. It appears to have followed their ancestors from Québec, where it was also prevalent. In the United States, the characterization of Franco-Americans as clergy-dominated may have come from their religious leaders and from nativists. In December 1881, for example, the French Dominican Alexandre-Louis Mothon, who had remigrated from Saint-Hyacinthe to become pastor of Lewiston's *Saint-Pierre* parish, penned a letter to his order describing in this way the role of the parish priest:

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During the 1920s, Lewiston Franco-Americans increasingly joined textile unions. Salary reductions and unpleasant working conditions motivated them to organize. In February 1922, competition from textile mills in the South, which paid workers lower wages, led the cotton mills of New England to reduce the salaries of their workers. Unlike in other towns of the region, mill workers in Lewiston swallowed a twenty percent pay cut rather than risk striking during a depression in business. Although a majority of Lewiston's textile workers were not unionized

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> *Ce dernier [le prêtre] doit se charger ici d'une foule de choses dont nos curés de France ne songeraient pas même à s'occuper; c'est lui qui doit tout conduire, au temporel comme au spirituel...; il est, de plus, le pacificateur, le conseiller, l'arbitre universel, et rien d'important ne se fait, dans la plupart des familles, sans son avis ou sa direction.*
> (The latter [the priest] must occupy himself here with many things that our pastors in France would not themselves dream of doing; it is he who must lead everything, the temporal like the spiritual...; he is, furthermore, the peacemaker, the counselor, the universal arbiter, and nothing important takes place, in most families, without his advice or his direction.)

For his part, nativist Robert Cloutman Dexter wrote in 1924 of the French Canadian in Québec:

> So far as the individual habitant is concerned, his personal and family life is almost entirely controlled by the Church. He is obedient to his curé, who is for him not only the religious leader, but also the political, social, educational, and moral guide. His own ignorance and superstition only place him the more definitely under the influence of the priest.

Dexter believed that the same was true of Franco-Americans, asserting that "the Canadian Church remains essentially the same in the United States as in the villages of Canada. In the fundamental matters of church doctrine, religious ascendency, [and] the control of the priest,... there has been no change." Mothon, cited in J. Antonin Plourde, *Dominicains au Canada: Livre des documents*, vol. 2: *Les cinq fondations avant l'autonomie (1881-1911)* (s.l., s.é, 1975), p. 48; Dexter, "Fifty-Fifty Americans," pp. 369-370.

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in 1922, ninety percent of the loom fixers and enough weavers belonged to unions, reported *Le Messager*, that they could have forced the mills to close by going on strike. Following the failed strike vote, about 600 men and women from different departments in the mills joined the local textile union, which was part of the American Federation of Textile Operatives.[123]

After textile manufacturers cut wages from ten to fifteen percent in late 1927, anglophone and francophone labor organizers from outside Lewiston descended upon the city to sign up members to their competing unions. They represented the American Federation of Textile Operatives and the United Textile Workers of America, the latter associated with the American Federation of Labor. *Le Messager* expressed concern about their rivalry and the consequences for Lewiston: *"Il ne fait aucun doute qu'il existe une rivalité sérieuse entre les deux organisations ouvrières pour avoir le contrôle de la situation locale. De sorte que tout en s'organisant on se désorganise."* During a meeting of a men's society at *Saint-Pierre* parish, a Dominican priest told weavers not to rush to join these two unions, which could adversely affect local industries and social conditions in Lewiston, but to consider forming instead Catholic worker unions like those that existed in Québec. There is no indication that Lewiston Franco-

[123]*Le Messager*, 3 et 8 février 1922, p. 1, 31 mars 1922, p. 8; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 14, 13 février 1922, p. 137.

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Americans pursued the priest's recommendation. By February 1928, the United Textile Workers, which conducted meetings in French and English, had organized 800 from Lewiston. While *Le Messager* did not provide updated membership figures for the American Federation of Textile Operatives, it appears from one brief report in the newspaper that this organization might have had less success in attracting Franco-Americans because it held its meetings in English.[124]

Labor protests escalated in Lewiston-Auburn in the 1930s. In 1930, around 150 Bates Mill employees shut down parts of the mill when they went on strike for about two weeks following a twelve-and-a-half percent wage cut, one of several they had received over a two-year period. *Le Messager* did not indicate whether Franco-Americans were involved in the strike, nor did it provide much detail about the labor protest. The French-language newspaper did report, however, that it ended with some workers losing their jobs and others accepting the cut.[125]

Le Messager provided much more detail about the shoe strikes of 1932. In mid-August, over 200 cutters and stitchers at Cushman-Hollis Shoe Company of Auburn left

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[124]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 14, 14 décembre 1927, p. 297; *Le Messager*, 28 novembre 1927, p. 8, 9 et 12 décembre 1927, p. 8, 14 décembre 1927, pp. 1, 8, 16 décembre 1927, p. 2, 6 février 1928, p. 8.

"Il ne fait...se désorganise.": "There is no doubt that a serious rivalry exists between the two workers' organizations for control of the local situation. The sort that in organizing we disorganize ourselves."

[125]*Le Messager*, 18 et 28 juillet 1930, p. 8, 4 août 1930, p. 8.

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their jobs to protest a fifteen percent wage reduction, another of several cuts they had experienced over recent months, paralyzing other departments in the factory of 2,000 employees. They returned to work within days as their demands went to arbitration. When arbiters adjusted the wage reduction to nine percent in late August, cutters protested the decision as *"'injuste et inexcusable,'"* reported *Le Messager*, but they continued working. In early September, over 300 leather cutters formed a union called the Lewiston and Auburn Shoe Cutters Social and Protective Association.[126] *Le Messager* did not specify whether Franco-Americans had joined either the shoe strike or the union.

They were heavily involved in the shoe strike that began in mid-September. Following a blacklisting agreement among shoe manufacturers, a factory fired a Franco-American surnamed Croteau for distributing union cards in a shop other than the one in which he worked, and the manufacturers also fired another ten members of an employee committee. About 2,000 shoe workers, eighty percent *"de langue française,"* went on strike and paraded from downtown Lewiston across the bridge to the shoe shops in Auburn. Several days later, about 2,000 men and women paraded again from Lewiston to Auburn, some carrying signs, *"'Faisons disparaître la Liste Noire'"* and *"'Nous voulons Justice,'"*

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[126]*Le Messager*, 15 août 1932, p. 1, 17 août 1932, p. 8, 31 août 1932, p. 1, 7 septembre 1932, p. 6; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 15, 18 août 1932, p. 167.

"'injuste et inexcusable,'": "'unjust and inexcusable'"

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reported *Le Messager*. The French-language newspaper empathized with the strikers. Perhaps sharing more about itself than about popular opinion, *Le Messager* indicated that the public supported the strikers because they were not seeking a wage hike. About one week into the strike, following the report that Cushman-Hollis would close if its employees did not return to work, *Le Messager* urged Franco-Americans: *"Retournez au travail."* For their part, the Dominicans worried that Franco-Americans participating in the strike were giving Lewiston a bad reputation. At Sunday mass in late September, the Dominican pastor, Mannès Marchand, told parishioners of *Saint-Pierre*: *"'Je déplore amèrement que les grévistes n'aient pas suivi les sages directions qui leur ont été données hier (samedi) par M. le gouverneur-élu Brann.'"* Brann, a former mayor of Lewiston who served as an intermediary between workers and management in this dispute, had urged the strikers to return to work because manufacturers were losing orders. The supplications of *Le Messager*, the pastor of Lewiston's largest Franco-American parish, and civic leader Brann weighed on the Franco-American strikers. Two other factors did as well. The strike organizer was an anglophone from England, and some francophones told *Le Messager* that they no longer wanted to attend meetings in English, a language they did not comprehend. In addition, grocers decided not to extend further credit to strikers. The strike ended in late September with manufacturers maintaining the right to

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an open shop but giving partial recognition to an employee association or union. When nearly 3,000 shoe factory employees returned to work, *Le Messager* complimented the individuals who had lost their jobs--the action that had precipitated the strike--for not standing in the way of its resolution.[127]

In 1934, the Franco-American clergy of Lewiston used the pulpit to dissuade the city's shoe and textile workers from participating in strikes. In May, pastors Eugène Gauthier of *Sainte-Marie* and Mannès Marchand of *Saint-Pierre* warned parishioners at Sunday masses against heeding outside organizers encouraging shoe workers to strike; this followed the firing of Wilfred Therrien from Venus Shoe Company of Auburn after he had engaged in union activity, activity legalized by the National Labor Relations Act.[128] The shoeworkers did not strike.

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[127]*Le Messager*, 16 septembre 1932, pp. 9, 14, 19 septembre 1932, p. 6, 21 septembre 1932, p. 1, 26 septembre 1932, pp. 1, 2, 6, 28 septembre 1932, p. 1; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 15, 22 septembre 1932, p. 174, 31 octobre 1932, p. 187.

"de langue française": "of the French language"

"'Faisons disparaître la Liste Noire'": "'Do away with the Black List'"

"'Nous voulons Justice,'": "'We want Justice,'"

"Retournez au travail.": "Return to work."

"'Je déplore...gouverneur-élu Brann.'": "'I bitterly deplore that the strikers have not followed the wise directions given them yesterday (Saturday) by governor-elect Brann.'"

[128]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 15, 6 mai 1934, p. 305; *Le Messager*, 7 mai 1934, p. 6; Gorton James, Maine Compliance Office, National Recovery Administration, to Samuel C. Bartlett, Manufacture Labor Board, Boston, May 8, 1934, box 3, record group 25, National Labor Relations Board, NARA-Waltham.

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In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed legislation creating the National Recovery Administration (N.R.A.) Although it shortened the work week and improved wages, problems arose that eventually led to further unionization among Franco-Americans. Mill employee Cecile Lebel earned from seven to nine dollars each week during the Depression. "Then Roosevelt came in and gave us forty hours and fourteen dollars a week. We thought we were rich." But manufacturers sped up machines so that employees ended up working as hard as when they had put in fifty-four hours weekly, she indicated. "We weren't independent. We were *dependent,*" she stated emphatically. "We wanted a job. We needed the money."[129]

In late August and September 1934, all pastors of Lewiston's Franco-American parishes discouraged textile workers from joining an industry-wide strike that took place from Maine to Texas. Franco-American Mayor Robert Wiseman denied strike organizers permission to meet at city hall, and he summoned the National Guard to watch over the

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[129]Interview with Cecile Lebel by Mark Silber and Raymond Pelletier, Lewiston, Maine, February 18, 1981, for the project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* Maine Folklife Center accession #1692. Speedups and larger work loads following the passage of the N.R.A. were not unique to Lewiston's textile mills. Labor conflicts occurred throughout the textile industry, in both the North and South, as employers resisted implementation of the N.R.A. industrial codes. One result was the industry-wide textile strike which began on September 1, 1934. Tamara K. Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 347-348; Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 129-130.

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city's textile mills and to ensure that those who wanted to work could do so. Only about forty workers from the Androscoggin Mill took part in the sympathy strike but did so for less than one week. Thus nearly 6,000 textile workers of Lewiston and Auburn avoided participating in the industry-wide strike. They were not uninterested in organizing, however, for *Le Messager* reported in November that mill workers were forming the L.& A. Local Textile Workers Association which would cooperate with other unions, including the American Federation of Labor, in the event of future labor problems.[130]

A couple of years later, when *Saint-Pierre* parish hosted a festival to raise money for its new church (still only partially built following the struggles of the Dominicans with Bishop Walsh), the Dominican Sisters noted in their chronicle the participation of Americans and Jews at the festival and attributed it to the pastor's role in discouraging Franco-Americans from taking part in the 1934 textile strike: *"Le Père Marchand est très populaire depuis son intervention très heureuse en Octobre [sic] 1934 pour empêcher l'entrée en grêve des travailleurs de langue française. Bon nombre d'industriels lui en sont demeurés très reconnaissants et l'ont prouvé."* The sisters expected

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[130]*Le Messager*, 27 et 28 août 1934, p. 6, 4 septembre 1934, p. 8, 11 septembre 1934, pp. 1, 5, 8, 12 septembre 1934, p. 6, 14 septembre 1934, p. 1, 19 novembre 1934, p. 6; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, September 5 and 12, 1934, p. 1; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 15, 11 septembre 1934, p. 322.

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the festival to bring to the parish coffers about $5,000, a sizable sum in those days.[131]

In 1937, Franco-American clergy again cautioned parishioners against striking. Representatives of the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) had come to Lewiston-Auburn to organize shoe workers to help them achieve higher wages and better working conditions. When the strike began in late March, *Le Messager* reported that the meeting of strikers at Lewiston City Hall featured singing, music, and dancing: *"Ce semblait être une grande réunion de famille et il n'y a pas eu même un soupçon de désordre."* At Easter Sunday in late March, Pastor Marchand reminded parishioners of the hardships other strikes had brought to the community. What distinguishes this strike from others in the 1930s, something that other accounts have not emphasized, is that some Franco-Americans became openly critical of their clergy. Mrs. Alexina Leclair of Lewiston spoke frequently and in French at meetings of strikers at city hall and often led them in song. At one meeting shortly after the strike began, she voiced her support for the CIO and spoke against local clergy. "'We will earn a living and not merely an existence,'" Leclair

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[131]Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 3, 19-25 février 193[7?], pp. 332-333.

"Le Père Marchand...l'ont prouvé.": "Father Marchand is very popular since his very successful intervention in October [*sic*] 1934 to hinder French-language workers from joining the strike. A good number of industrialists have remained very grateful to him and have proved it."

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asserted. "Mrs. Leclair then said she did not think it proper for priests to talk against the strike as they did in most churches. She said they should preach; that they...should not seek to keep laborers at work merely to get 15 cents from them on Sunday," reported the Lewiston *Journal*. Unlike the English-language press, *Le Messager* sided with the strikers. This apparently led pastor Eugène Gauthier of *Sainte-Marie* to advise his parishioners to read some articles in the English-language newspapers as they decided whether or not to join the strike. In April, priests from the four Franco-American parishes of Lewiston asked shoe workers to return to their places of work. Subsequently, an unspecified number of Franco-Americans did return to work, particularly to the Somerset Shoe Company, reported *Le Messager*.[132]

Not all followed the advice of their clergy. W.J. Lessard responded in *Le Messager* to a letter that *Sainte-Croix*'s pastor, Edouard Nadeau, had published in the French-language newspaper in early April. Lessard argued that strikers did not view the situation the same way as

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[132]*Le Messager*, 3 mars 1937, p. 8, 4 mars 1937, p. 6, 26 mars 1937 p. 8, 29 mars 1937, pp. 2, 6, 30 mars 1937, p. 8, 12 avril 1937, p. 2, 20 avril 1937, p. 6; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 16, 28 mars 1937, p. 66, 11 avril 1937, p. 67; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, March 29, 1937, p. 2; Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 3, 1937, pp. 305-306. The CIO became the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1938. For a comprehensive history of the CIO as a labor federation independent of the American Federation of Labor, see Robert H. Zieger, *The CIO, 1935-1955* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1995.)

"Ce semblait...de désordre.": "It appeared to be a big family reunion and there was not any hint of disorder."

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the priest. He suggested that Nadeau tend to his affairs and not meddle with the strike, contending that the CIO was working to help poor people. Wrote Lessard: *"Nous savons fort bien que ce n'est pas l'Eglise catholique qui nous donne à manger et qui nous donne des gages suffisants quand nous ne gagnons pas assez d'argent pour nourrir et vêter nos enfants que vous nous obligez d'avoir sous peine de l'enfer."* Perhaps Philippe Gilbert best symbolized the change he wished to see effected in the perception of Franco-Americans. *"'On vous a dit et répété que vous, les Canadiens, vous n'étiez pas capables de vous tenir ensemble,'"* he said at a meeting at city hall. *"'Mais le Canadien est en train de devenir un lion. On commence à se fâcher. Montrez-leur que le mouton est changé en lion,'"* Gilbert cried out to loud applause. After three months, the shoe strike that had involved nineteen factories and 6,000 workers and that had led to marches across the bridge to Auburn and to the eruption of violence, ended unsuccessfully in late June. During the strike, Auburn police, businessmen, the courts, Lewiston's Franco-American pastors, and the English-language press all sided with manufacturers against the CIO and the largely Franco-American membership it represented. "Above all," concluded historian Richard Condon, "the *poverty* of the Lewiston-Auburn shoe workers forced them finally to submit."[133]

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[133]*Le Messager*, 12 avril 1937, p. 4, 20 avril 1937, p. 3, 28 juin 1937, p. 8; Richard H. Condon, "Bayonets at the North Bridge: The

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However unsuccessful or not, what the organizing and protests of the 1920s and 1930s reveal is that the identity of Franco-Americans as workers continued to evolve during the difficult economic times they experienced during the interwar years. This worker identity had its roots in the late nineteenth century, when French-Canadian descendants first joined the Knights of Labor and participated in strikes despite the opposition of their clergy. Even when Franco-Americans opted not to strike to resolve workplace conflicts in the 1920s and 1930s, they joined trade unions in order to improve their working conditions. While the strikes in which Franco-Americans participated may not have yielded positive results, their involvement helps to dispel notions about their passivity in the world of work. Beyond their participation in the 1937 shoe strike, the anti-clerical sentiments Franco-Americans openly expressed during the strike demonstrate that they were not as docile or as submissive to clergy as some have been wont to say.[134]

Lewiston-Auburn Shoe Strike, 1937," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 21 (Fall 1981), pp. 75, 92 (emphasis in original); Robert J. Branham, Lyn Francoeur, and William Surkis, "Roughing the Uppers: The Great Shoe Strike of 1937," VHS video, 1992.

"Nous savons...de l'enfer.": "We know very well that it is not the Catholic Church that feeds us and gives us sufficient wages when we do not earn enough money to feed and clothe our children that you insist we have under penalty of hell."

"'On vous...tenir ensemble,'": "'they told you and repeated that you, French Canadians, you were not capable of holding together,'"

"'Mais le Canadien...en lion,'": "'But the French Canadian is becoming a lion. We are beginning to get mad. Show them that the lamb has changed into a lion,'"

[134]My findings stand in contrast to those of Gary Gerstle. He has argued that the participation of Woonsocket's Franco-American workers

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The same appears true concerning the issue of limiting family size. As W.J. Lessard noted in his letter to *Le Messager*, Catholic clergy insisted that their parishioners not practice birth control. Antoinette Boucher, a senior citizen, indicated in 1981 that priests would not grant absolution in the confesssional to women who did. Other than advocating the rhythm method and prolonged nursing, the only advice clergy would give to couples who wanted to limit the sizes of their families was to "live as sister and brother," she pointed out. Juliette Filteau, a former restaurant owner, made the same observation when she stated that priests would advise separate bedrooms for couples who wanted to limit their family size. Otherwise, priests expected women to continue bearing children, even during the Great Depression, Filteau discovered, when one threatened to withhold communion from her. "So I got mad. I says, 'Can't have communion, uhn? Are you gonna support my kid if I can't support him?'" she shot back. When the priest responded, "'No,'" she told him to keep the host.[135]

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in a 1927 textile strike represented a departure in which they "had found the capacity to act in direct opposition to their ethnic leaders," namely their clergy. He views the strike as a pivotal event in which Franco-Americans, whom he portrays as clergy-dominated prior to World War I, began distancing themselves from their ethnic leadership to reshape their identity in the United States as members of the working class. See *Working-Class Americanism*, chapter one; quotation is from p. 57. In contrast, this study challenges longstanding myths of the servility and docility of French-Canadian descendants well before the First World War; moreover, it traces the origins of their working-class identity back to the late nineteenth century and not to the interwar years.

[135]Interview with Antoinette Boucher by Steffan Duplessis, Mark Silber, Raymond Pelletier, and Marcella Sorg, Lewiston, Maine,

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We can infer from comments such as Filteau's that Franco-American women did challenge the teachings of the Catholic Church and were not as submissive to clergy as generally believed. They, too, played an active role in renegotiating their ethnic identity in the United States.

Like other working-class Americans, French speakers benefited from the New Deal programs of Franklin Roosevelt during the Great Depression. Lewiston Franco-Americans had special reason to celebrate passage of the National Recovery Act in 1933, because they took credit for the legislation. William Bourassa, founder of the American Bobbin Shop in Lewiston, had circulated his idea for the N.R.A. among other industrialists, members of Congress, and through financial publications before a Massachusetts senator introduced the legislation. Roosevelt aide Louis Howe contacted Bourassa for a history of the idea, and the president subsequently pushed for the plan in a radio address. After passage of the N.R.A. about 10,000 Lewistonians--including Bourassa, textile and shoe workers, public and parochial school children, and members of Maine's congressional delegation--took part in the city's October 1933 parade. Roosevelt's New Deal programs won him widespread acclaim among Franco-Americans. In February 1934, *Le Messager* reported: *"Partout, on parle des bontés*

December 15, 1980, for the project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* Maine Folklife Center accession #1696; interview with Juliette Filteau by Margaret Lanoue, Lewiston, Maine, November 5, 1982, Maine Folklife Center accession #1623.

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de notre Président Roosevelt.....Même sa photographie faire plaisir à voir. On le constate par les exclamations entendues au bazar qui se tient actuellement à Ste-Marie." *Le Messager* did periodically complain, however, that Lewiston Franco-Americans were subject to discrimination in the award of government jobs and benefits. In January 1934, for example, the French-language newspaper argued that, while Franco-Americans comprised more than half of Lewiston's voters, only ten francophones had posts in the Civil Works Administration, compared to twenty-seven anglophones. In 1937, the newspaper published a series of articles that identified deserving Franco-Americans who had been denied old age pensions; it asserted that the Augusta agency overseeing the federal awards discriminated against Franco-Americans because they were Democrats.[136] The effect of the New Deal on Franco-Americans is a subject that merits additional research. Despite discrimination they may have endured in reaping its benefits, Lewiston Franco-Americans probably became more solidly Democratic in political identity as a result not only of the employment and pecuniary benefits they reaped from the New Deal, but also because of the legislation Roosevelt enacted to

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[136]*Le Messager*, 27 juin 1924, p. 4, 25 septembre 1933, p. 2, 5 octobre 1933, p. 1, 25 janvier 1934, pp. 1, 6, 10 février 1934, p. 6, 11 août 1937, p. 3.

"Partout, on parle...à Ste-Marie.": "Everywhere, people speak of the good works of our President Roosevelt.....Even his photograph pleases [people] to see. Exclamations heard at the bazaar currently underway at Saint Mary's confirm this."

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support the right of workers to organize during the Great Depression. Roosevelt's leadership as president appears to have cemented the allegiance of Franco-Americans to the Democratic Party. His tenure helped Franco-Americans continue to evolve more solidly in their identity as Democratic voters and members of the working class.

As in previous decades, the evolving identity of Lewiston Franco-Americans in the 1920s and 1930s revealed itself in public celebrations of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day. On this ethnic feast day, Franco-Americans continued to assert their identity in the face of the Americanization movement. Sometimes they needed a little prodding from *Le Messager*. In 1922, the year that *l'Institut-Jacques Cartier* celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, *Le Messager* encouraged readers: *"Ne craignons pas de montrer qui nous sommes, en portant à nos boutonnières, un petit ruban tricolore, demain, jour de la St-Jean-Baptiste et dimanche, fête du cinquantenaire de l'Institut."* Residents of *Petit Canada* decorated their homes, and the Franco-American societies paraded to *Saint-Pierre* Church for mass, during which the Dominican prior, Arsène Roy, emphasized the importance of preserving the French language in order to retain the Catholic faith. The following year, when *Le Messager* reminded readers of the upcoming feast day of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste*, it asked them to decorate their homes with flags and banners *"aux couleurs nationales et américaines, qui après tout sont les mêmes."* Thus it made

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explicit what francophones had conveyed through their symbols since the late nineteenth century, namely that their identities as French-Canadian descendants and Americans were closely intertwined. The French-language newspaper also asked Franco-Americans to sport buttons of the maple leaf or Tricolor. Despite the presence of the Ku Klux Klan in the Lewiston area, one thousand men, women, and children marched in the *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day parade in 1923 to and from *Saint-Pierre* Church, which was decorated with flags of France and the United States. Pleased by the large parade and fine celebration, the Dominicans noted: *"Le vrai patriotisme se réveille."* An industrial crisis in Lewiston in 1924, as well as cross burnings and Klan parades in the Lewiston area, probably discouraged the organization of a *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebration in that year. Other evidence suggests that Franco-Americans did not fear public demonstrations in that tumultuous year, however, for 1,000 children paraded through Lewiston's streets in September to celebrate the opening of the new school of *Saint-Pierre* parish. From 1925 to 1927, about 2,000 to 3,000 Franco-American children paraded on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day, carrying flags of the United States and either a flag or *boutonnière* of the Tricolor. After watching the children pass in 1926, *Le Messager* pointed out the symbolism they expressed when it stated that the U.S. flag *"est également tricolore et comprend le bleu, le blanc et le rouge."* Just as the

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colors of the French and U.S. flags were the same, so too were the ethnic and American identities of Franco-Americans. For a population renegotiating its identity in the United States, this symbolism spoke volumes. So did the singing of both "O Canada" and the "The Star-Spangled Banner," noted by the *Lewiston Daily Sun,* following the *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day banquet of 1938, anthems that Franco-Americans probably sang at celebrations in other years as well.[137]

To conclude, the experiences of Lewiston's Franco-Americans in the 1920s and 1930s demonstrate that this population continued to pursue both *survivance* and acculturation as intertwined goals prior to World War II. They carved a secure space for themselves in the economic, religious, and political life of Lewiston. Through the 1920s and 1930s, Franco-Americans expanded their ethnic institutions in the Spindle City as they continued to learn English and to become citizens and voters. Despite the presence of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s, Franco-Americans

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[137]*Le Messager,* 23 juin 1922, p. 8, 26 juin 1922, pp. 1, 3, 28 juin 1922, p. 4, 22 juin 1923, p. 6, 25 juin 1923, p. 1, 20 juin 1924, p. 6, 8 septembre 1924, p. 1, 26 juin 1925, p. 1, 25 juin 1926, p. 1, 24 juin 1927, p. 1; *Lewiston Daily Sun,* June 25, 1923, p. 12, June 27, 1938, p. 12; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 14, 24 juin 1923, p. 164.

"Ne craignons...de l'Institut.": "Let us not be afraid to show who we are, by wearing a small tricolor ribbon on our lapels, tomorrow, Saint John the Baptist Day and Sunday, the fiftieth anniversary of the Institute."

"aux couleurs...les mêmes.": "in the national and American colors, which after all are the same."

"Le vrai patriotisme se réveille.": "True patriotism awakens."

"est également...le rouge.": "is equally tricolor and consists of blue, white and red."

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in Lewiston, reinforced by heavy migration from Québec, did not shed their ethnic identity. The actions of the Irish bishop, Louis Walsh, appear to have spurred one Lewiston parish to move faster than the other Franco-American parishes in reshaping its identity. But there were forces internal to the community of *Sainte-Famille*--in, for example, *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* and their defenders--that promoted change. During the interwar period, Franco-Americans of Lewiston acculturated at their own rhythms, rather than to the drumbeats of nativists.

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CHAPTER FIVE

"The Quiet Evolution": Franco-Americans Become Americans, 1940-1970[1]

[1]Some of the material in this chapter previously was published in Mark Paul Richard, "From Franco-American to American: The Case of Sainte-Famille, an Assimilating Parish of Lewiston, Maine," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 31 (May 1998), pp. 71-93.

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On July 2, 1947, three anglophones precipitated a brawl in an Auburn café because they heard men and women speaking French there. Police arrested Glendon, David, and Annie Moody for assault and battery on Emery Samson, the owner of the café, Alliette Therriault, a waitress, and Lionel Beaulieu, whom the press did not identify. "According to officials, the Moodys were in the cafe and strongly objected to other persons using the French language in view of the United States being an English-speaking country," reported the Lewiston *Journal*. An argument ensued; then a fight broke out. During the fracas, a bottle hit Beaulieu in the head, Glendon and David Moody each sustained a bruised eye, and Therriault "had her dress torn off," indicated the *Journal*. Incredulous, *Le Messager* commented: *"Et voilà que nous croyions que cette espèce de specimen fanatique s'était éteinte avec Hitler."*[2]

Religious, class, and language differences still distinguished Franco-Americans from Yankees at midcentury. In a term paper discussing jokes collected from the Lewiston area that poked fun at Catholics and French speakers, University of Maine student Richard Clark wrote in 1966: "The anti-French feelings of the Protestants are based on the concept that the Lewiston French as a group

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[2]*Lewiston Evening Journal*, July 3, 1947, p. 5; *Le Messager*, 3 juillet 1947, p. 6.

"Et voilà...avec Hitler.": "And there we believed that this kind of fanatic was extinguished with Hitler."

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are of low intelligence. This view is supported by the fact that most of the menial jobs are held by members of the French population, mill jobs, for instance." But he also felt that ethnic retention on the part of Franco-Americans annoyed Protestant Yankees: "Another contributing factor to this idea is the reluctance of the French popilation [*sic*] to give up the last vestiges of thier [*sic*] Canadian heritage." That Franco-Americans did not speak standard French also caused Yankees to look upon them with disdain: "Most of them speak the local patois, a corrupt version of French as it was spoken in Canada a hundred years ago, with a few frenchified modern English words thrown in. Conversely, few of them speak good English, while some speak no English at all," he added. Clark's statements underscore the cultural hostilty that Franco-Americans still faced two decades after World War II had ended. Not surprisingly, as attorney Robert Couturier explained, "for some people [in the postwar era] having a French name and being of Canadian background was like having to wear a scarlet letter."[3]

Lewiston's Franco-American community was in transition after World War II. The immigration restrictions the United States had imposed upon Canadians in 1930 had ended

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[3]Collection of Catholic and French jokes from the Lewiston-Auburn, Maine, area by Richard Clark of Lewiston, Maine, fall 1966, Maine Folklife Center, University of Maine, Orono, Maine, accession #85, p. 32; Couturier, cited in Pierre Vincent Bourassa, "The Catholic Church in the Franco-American Community" (Honors thesis, Bowdoin College, 1978), p. 66.

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the mass migration of francophones to Lewiston as to other industrial centers of the northeastern United States. With each successive decade, the proportion of Canadian-born Franco-Americans declined; as the ratio of U.S.-born Franco-Americans increased in Lewiston, the francophone community quickened the pace of its acculturation into U.S. society. In particular, the community vigorously pursued anglicization, and its youth became unilingual English speakers. The pressure towards English was so strong in 1949 that the Dominican Sisters called it the *"envahissement de l'anglais."* Previously intertwined, the goals of ethnic preservation and acculturation unraveled at midcentury, such that each became a divergent aim. While discrimination against Franco-Americans contributed to reorienting the process of acculturation, by the 1950s and 1960s forces internal to the community increasingly promoted acculturation over ethnic retention. Franco-Americans more often married non-Franco-Americans, they canceled their subscriptions to *Le Messager* and instead read English-language newspapers, and they more frequently intermixed with anglophones in secular and religious associations. The identity of French-Canadian descendants broadened at midcentury; they evolved from Franco-American to American. If what we call "assimilation" is the last stage of the process of acculturation, and if "assimilation" represents the loss of group identity, it would appear that Franco-Americans at midcentury were in

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fact moving from acculturation to "assimilation" in U.S. society.[4]

World War II had a profound impact upon the Franco-American community. The advent of the Second World War dramatically increased naturalizations among French-Canadian migrants in Lewiston. Naturalizations jumped to the triple digits in 1939, the year that Canada entered World War II, and they remained in the triple digits until 1945, the year the war ended. During the 1940s, 1,787 men and women became U.S. citizens, surpassing the number who had naturalized in any prior decade; in fact, those who naturalized from 1940 to 1949 represented nearly one-third (32.2 percent) of the 5,551 French-Canadian Lewiston residents who acquired their U.S. citizenship from 1877 to 1987.[5] Although Canada did not impose a general

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[4]Mémorial du Monastère du Sacré-Coeur, Lewiston, Maine, Archives of the Dominican Sisters, Sabattus, Maine [ci-après, Mémorial des Dominicaines], vol. 5, 17 juin 1949, p. 17; Joan H. Rollins, "Introduction: Ethnic Identity, Acculturation and Assimilation," in Joan H. Rollins, ed., *Hidden Minorities: The Persistence of Ethnicity in American Life* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1981), p. 11; Melford E. Spiro, "The Acculturation of American Ethnic Groups," *American Anthropologist* 57 (December 1955), p. 1244.

"envahissement de l'anglais": "invasion of English"

[5]Naturalization records for 1939 are from the Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; and from the U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine records located at the National Archives and Records Administration, Waltham, Massachusetts [hereafter, NARA-Waltham.] The figure of 1,787 in the 1940s includes four minor girls whose parents filed naturalization petitions on their behalf. Naturalization data for the period from 1940 to 1949 comes from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn Naturalization Records, vols. 30-43, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 38-52, Overseas Military Petitions and Records, 1942-1945, NARA-Waltham. These records will be cited as

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conscription until November 1944, its passage of the National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA) in 1940 increased the possibility that it would draft unnaturalized French-Canadian males from the United States to serve in Canada's military. Unlike in the past, at midcentury *Le Messager* was not as good a source on happenings in Canada; consequently, it is difficult to assess the effect of the NRMA on Lewiston's French-Canadian migrant population. In the U.S.A., passage of the Alien Registration Act of 1940, a war measure that required non-citizens to submit fingerprints and to register yearly with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, motivated previously reluctant French-Canadian migrants to give up their British citizenship. In July 1940, only a couple of weeks after *Le Messager* had explained the alien registration law to readers, the newspaper reported that 1,500 individuals had requested first or final naturalization papers. While *Le Messager* specified neither the ethnicity nor the gender of those making requests, a large number must have been francophone women. Each year from 1941 to 1949, the number of French-Canadian migrant women who naturalized exceeded the number of men. This pattern was not unique to Lewiston's francophone women, however, for migrant women from throughout the country naturalized in greater numbers

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"naturalization records, 1940-1949" throughout the rest of this chapter.

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than men--for the first time in U.S. history--during the Second World War.[6]

Naturalizations declined significantly after the 1940s; it would seem that there were few French-Canadian migrants left to naturalize. During the 1950s, only 436 French-Canadian migrants of Lewiston became U.S. citizens, and this number dropped even further during the 1960s, when only 146 filed final naturalization papers. The large pool of unnaturalized migrants that had remained in the U.S.A. after the imposition of immigration restrictions in 1930 had apparently rushed to become citizens during World War II. In the 1950s and 1960s, while the number of French-Canadian women and men of Lewiston who naturalized usually was close, naturalizations by women tended to exceed those of the men in each year, a gendered pattern that reflected a national trend in the postwar era.[7]

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[6]J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 142, 229-230; U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, *An Immigrant Nation: United States Regulation of Immigration, 1798-1991* ([Washington, D.C.]: Government Printing Office, 1991), p. 15; *Le Messager*, 21 juin 1940, p. 10, 5 juillet 1940, p. 8; naturalization records, 1940-1949; Reed Ueda, *Postwar Immigrant America: A Social History* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994), pp. 125-126.

[7]The figure of 146 naturalizers for the 1960s includes four minor girls and two minor boys whose parents filed naturalization petitions on their behalf. Naturalization data for the period from 1950 to 1969 comes from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn Naturalization Records, vols. 42-47, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 53-64, NARA-Waltham. These records will be cited as "naturalization records, 1950-1969" throughout the rest of this chapter. On postwar naturalization trends, see Ueda, *Postwar Immigrant America*, pp. 126-127.

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Only a small proportion (3.2 percent) of the francophone residents of Lewiston who naturalized during the 1940s did so outside of the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn. French-Canadian migrants serving overseas during World War II constituted three-fourths (75.4 percent) of the individuals who processed their petitions at the U.S. District Court in Portland. Few from Lewiston, then, actually made the trek to Portland to naturalize during the 1940s. This was also the case in the 1950s and 1960s, when only a handful of Lewiston residents filed their citizenship papers in Portland.[8]

Naturalization records provide a window onto the pre- and post-migration experiences of the French Canadians who became U.S. citizens during and after World War II. As in the past, only a small minority (up to 4.4 percent) of the francophones who naturalized in Lewiston in the 1940s had been born in Canada outside of the province of Québec. During the 1950s and 1960s, however, that proportion jumped to one-tenth (10.0 percent.) As in prior decades, New Brunswick had supplied most of these non-*Québécois* francophones.[9]

Consistent with prior periods, a preponderance of the Québec-born migrants had come from counties south of the Saint Lawrence River. No more than 3.0 percent of the

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[8]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969.

[9]Naturalization records. 1940-1949. 1950-1969.

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individuals who naturalized in the 1940s had been born in counties to the north of this arterial waterway; the proportion climbed to 8.1 percent in the 1950s and 1960s, reflecting a wider migration field than in earlier periods. As in the past, a majority of the migrants who had been born north of the Saint Lawrence had come from the three largest cities on the river. Madeline Landry, for instance, a housewife who naturalized in 1952, had been born in Québec City. Among the places of birth south of the Saint Lawrence, roughly the same regional patterns surfaced again in the naturalization records, patterns which revealed pre-migration concentrations near Maine's northern and western borders. Two counties to Maine's north, Témiscouata and Kamouraska, had sent up to 15.4 percent of those who naturalized in the 1940s, and up to 12.2 percent of those who became citizens in the 1950s and 1960s (see maps 5 and 6.) Five counties to Maine's west--Beauce, Dorchester, Mégantic, Wolfe, and Arthabaska--had furnished the largest number of naturalizers from the 1940s, together supplying up to 49.1 percent. During the 1950s and 1960s, the French-Canadian residents of Lewiston who became U.S. citizens had more scattered places of birth; nonetheless, the three counties of Beauce, Compton, and Dorchester to Maine's west together had sent the largest number, furnishing between 30.2 and 36.1 percent of the naturalizers. Beauce county alone had provided the greatest proportion--as much as 29.6 percent in the 1940s

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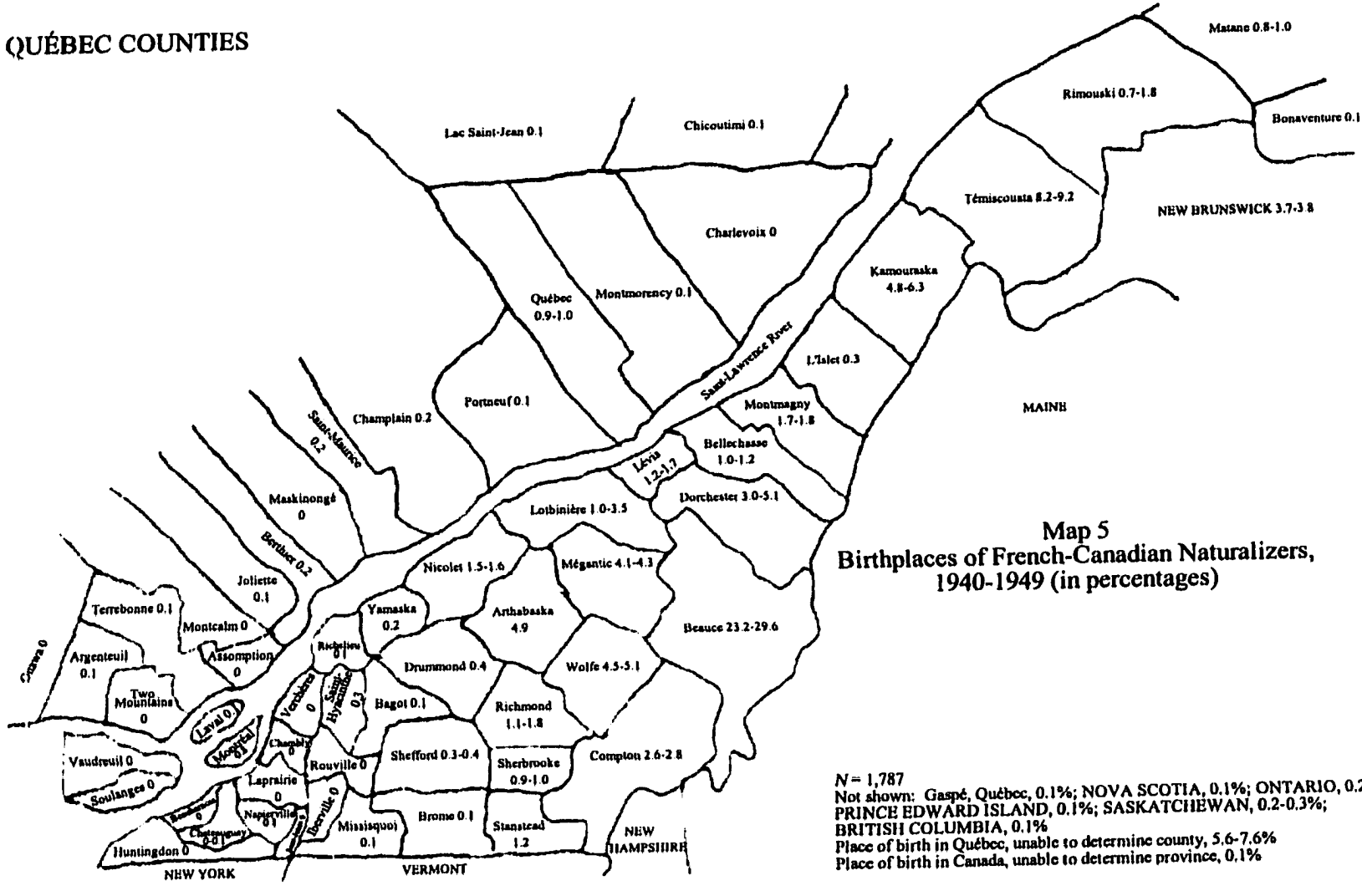

Map 5
Birthplaces of French-Canadian Naturalizers, 1940-1949 (in percentages)

N = 1,787
Not shown: Gaspé, Québec, 0.1%; NOVA SCOTIA, 0.1%; ONTARIO, 0.2%; PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, 0.1%; SASKATCHEWAN, 0.2-0.3%; BRITISH COLUMBIA, 0.1%
Place of birth in Québec, unable to determine county, 5.6-7.6%
Place of birth in Canada, unable to determine province, 0.1%

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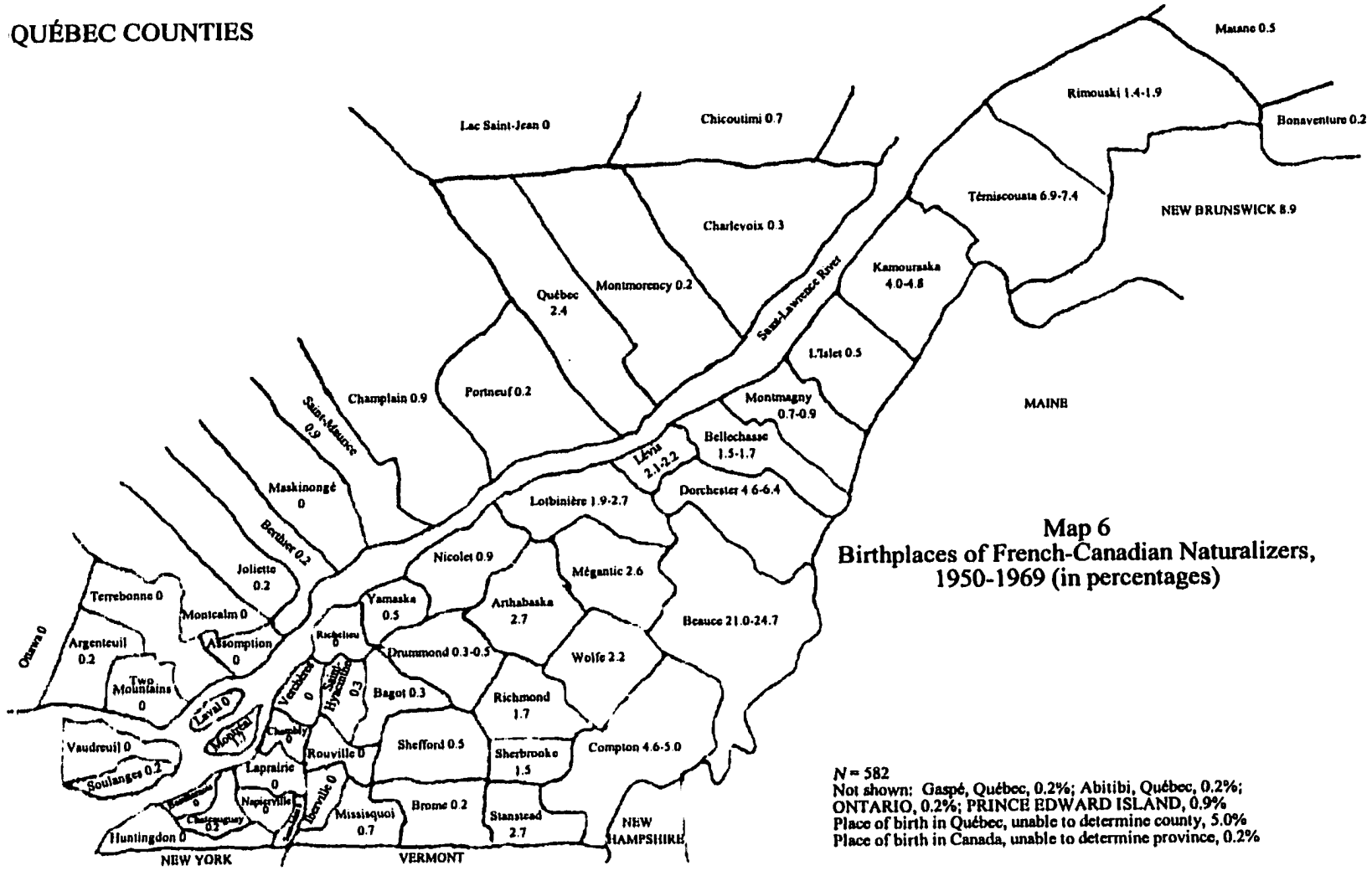

Map 6
Birthplaces of French-Canadian Naturalizers, 1950-1969 (in percentages)

N = 582
Not shown: Gaspé, Québec, 0.2%; Abitibi, Québec, 0.2%; ONTARIO, 0.2%; PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, 0.9%
Place of birth in Québec, unable to determine county, 5.0%
Place of birth in Canada, unable to determine province, 0.2%

and up to 24.7 percent in the 1950s/1960s.[10] Beauce had sent so many francophones to Lewiston, in fact, that *Le Messager* periodically published in the late 1940s and 1950s a column entitled *Chronique des Beaucerons* featuring news from different towns in the county; no other region of French Canada received as much coverage in this newspaper.

Like the French-Canadian migrants who naturalized in the 1920s/1930s, over three-fifths of the men (65.7 percent) and women (61.9 percent) who acquired U.S. citizenship in the 1940s had migrated from their place of birth to the United States, while one-third of the men (33.5 percent) and over one-third of the women (37.6 percent) had made one (or more) stops within Canada before crossing the border to the U.S.A.[11] Only a tiny proportion of the men (2.6 percent) and women (up to 2.2 percent) had migrated to a different Canadian province before journeying to the United States. As in the past, the places of birth of the children of those who naturalized in the 1940s suggest that only a minuscule proportion (1.8 percent) had returned to Canada and then had migrated to the United States for a second time before becoming citizens.[12]

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[10]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969; Landry's naturalization record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 44, #6098.

Chronique des Beaucerons: Chronicle of the Beaucerons

[11]The internal migration patterns of 0.8 percent of the men and 0.5 percent of the women could not be determined. Naturalization records, 1940-1949.

[12]Naturalization records, 1940-1949.

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Because naturalization forms stopped recording the place of emigration and the last foreign residence of migrants after 1952, we have little data on the migrant journey within Canada for those who naturalized after the 1940s. Among those who became U.S. citizens from 1950 to 1952, 54.8 percent of the men and 67.2 percent of the women had migrated from their place of birth to the United States. Also, a slightly larger proportion of men (3.2 percent) than women (1.6 percent) had migrated to a different Canadian province before crossing the international border. To take one example, Napoleon Eudore Poirier had been born in Bonaventure, a county in eastern Québec to the north of New Brunswick; he had moved south to New Brunswick before migrating further south to Maine in 1928. Thus, in contrast to the 1940s, a greater proportion of the men who naturalized in the early 1950s had migrated within Canada before entering the United States, while the opposite was true for women.[13]

Three-fourths (74.3 percent) of the French-Canadian migrants of Lewiston who naturalized in the 1940s had entered the United States in Vermont, and one-fourth (24.1 percent) had crossed the border into Maine. The large majority (76.4 percent) had arrived in the U.S.A. on trains, most on the Grand Trunk Railway; one-sixth (16.4 percent)--double the proportion from the 1920s/1930s--had

[13]Naturalization records, 1950-1969; Poirier's naturalization record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn. vol. 43. #5989.

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entered the United States on highways, using automobiles as their vehicle of migration. Only through 1966 did naturalization records provide information on the migrant journey of French Canadians to the United States. These records reveal that transportation patterns differed between those who naturalized in the 1950s and those who obtained their citizenship in the 1960s. Specifically, while 72.5 percent of the naturalizers from the 1950s had entered the United States in Vermont, only 44.1 percent from the 1960s had done so. Instead, more than half (53.4 percent) of the individuals who naturalized in the sixties had entered the U.S.A. in Maine, double the proportion from the 1950s (26.4 percent.) Jeannine Yvette Mathieu was one of these individuals; born in Beauce county, she had crossed the international border at Jackman, Maine, in 1957 and had become a U.S. citizen in 1961. A change in transportation explains this difference in migration patterns: a majority (57.6 percent) of the naturalizers in the 1960s had entered the United States on highways, rather than on railways as over two-thirds (68.8 percent) of those who had naturalized in the 1950s had done. Mathieu, for instance, had traveled to the U.S.A. by automobile.[14] We do

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[14]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969; Mathieu's naturalization record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 46, #6783. Migrants like Mathieu, who had entered the United States after 1930, would have been subject to the quota system the U.S.A. applied to Canada beginning in that year. John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1994), pp. 128-129.

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not know whether French-Canadian migrants like her owned the automobiles that had transported them to the U.S.A.; we can speculate, however, that the marked increase in this form of transportation suggests that naturalizers of the 1960s had arrived in the United States with more capital than those of prior decades whose passage to the U.S.A. had required only the purchase of a train ticket.

There is little evidence that those who naturalized at midcentury had lived elsewhere in the United States before settling in Lewiston. Only 1.3 percent of the naturalizers in the 1940s and 1.1 percent in the early 1950s had filed their first naturalization papers at courts other than in Auburn or Portland, Maine. These small percentages may understate the actual situation, because most of those who naturalized in the 1940s and early 1950s did not need to file Declarations of Intention to become U.S. citizens; spouses of U.S. citizens, minors who had arrived in the U.S.A. under the age of sixteen and who filed papers within one year of reaching twenty-one, and veterans of World War II needed only to file final naturalization papers.[15]

Other evidence suggests, however, that a larger proportion of naturalizers had migrated within the United States before becoming citizens. One-tenth (10.7 percent)

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[15]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969; *Le Messager*, 25 avril 1940, p. 12, 11 décembre 1946, p. 6; John J. Newman, "American Naturalization Processes and Procedures, 1790-1985" (Typescript, Family History Section, Indiana Historical Society, 1985), available at NARA-Waltham, p. 24. After 1952, filing first naturalization papers became optional for everyone. Newman, p. 19.

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of those who naturalized in the 1940s had children who had been born outside of the Lewiston-Auburn area. From 1950 until 1962 (after which naturalization forms no longer provided the places of birth of children), that proportion jumped to one-sixth (16.6 percent.) While French speakers who became citizens at midcentury had evidenced greater migration within their country of adoption than those who had naturalized in earlier periods, significantly fewer had migrated within the United States than within Canada. The data also suggests that at least 3.1 percent of those who naturalized in the 1950s and early 1960s had migrated to the United States from Canada for a second time before becoming citizens.[16] While this reflects a small increase over the 1940s, it nonetheless demonstrates that only a tiny proportion of those who naturalized in Lewiston had participated in such migrations back and forth between Canada and the United States before becoming U.S. citizens. After crossing the international border, the francophones who eventually became U.S. citizens did not demonstrate much geographic mobility.

More than half of the women (55.0 percent) and men (52.3 percent) who naturalized in the 1940s had entered the United States as minors under eighteen. Whereas over half (53.1 percent) of the women who naturalized during the 1950s and 1960s had also arrived in the United States under

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[16]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969.

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the age of eighteen, only about one-third (36.7 percent) of the men had done so. Just as in the 1930s, a majority of the men who naturalized in the fifties and sixties had migrated to the United States as adults eighteen years and older. Naturalized in 1951, Napoleon Eudore Poirier, for example, had crossed an international bridge between New Brunswick and Maine in 1928 while already in his mid-twenties.[17]

Francophones who naturalized from the 1940s through the 1960s tended to be older than those who had become U.S. citizens in the 1920s/1930s. Among women, those over forty constituted 40.5 percent of those who naturalized in the 1940s; this proportion increased dramatically to 60.9 percent in the 1950s, before dropping to 45.7 percent in the 1960s. Among men, 41.3 percent of those naturalizing in the 1940s were above the age of forty, and the proportion escalated dramatically to 71.8 percent in the 1950s, before plummeting to 38.9 percent in the 1960s.[18] Except for the 1950s, then, a majority of the French-Canadian men and women of Lewiston who naturalized at midcentury were forty or younger.

Those who naturalized in the 1950s represented a unique group. Over one-third (37.2 percent) had migrated to the United States either during the last two decades of

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[17]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969.

[18]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969.

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the nineteenth century or the first two decades of the twentieth. To take one example, Arcles Lafreniere had migrated to the United States in 1887 at the age of six; he naturalized only in 1952 at the ripe age of seventy-one, half a century after reaching the age of eligibility. French-Canadian migrants like Lafreniere, who had put off naturalizing through the Second World War and the years immediately following it, perhaps finally resigned themselves in the 1950s to the fact that they would not return to *le pays natal* to live out their final days. Equally significant, the Nationality Act of 1952 exempted elderly persons, as well as those who had resided in the U.S.A. for a long time, from having to demonstrate any English-language skills in order to naturalize. In March 1952, *Le Messager* informed readers that men and women age fifty and older, who had resided in the United States for at least twenty years as of September 1950, could naturalize in French, and it announced plans by *l'Association des Vigilants* to offer a naturalization class in French to meet their needs.[19] While the newspaper did not report on the results of the course, we can infer from the naturalization data of the 1950s that a sizable

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[19]Naturalization records, 1950-1959; Lafreniere's naturalization record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 44, #6200; U.S. Department of Justice, *An Immigrant Nation*, p. 19; *Le Messager*, 31 mars 1952, p. 6.

le pays natal: the native country
l'Association des Vigilants: the Association of Vigilants

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proportion of senior Franco-Americans had probably naturalized in French.

The French-Canadian migrants who had entered the United States as minors under eighteen, and who naturalized from the 1940s to the 1960s, had waited longer to acquire U.S. citizenship than had francophones from previous decades. Because the immigration restrictions the United States had imposed upon Canadians in 1930 had ended their mass migration to the U.S.A., those who naturalized in each successive decade disproportionately represented individuals who had delayed acquiring U.S. citizenship. Among the women who had entered the United States as minors under eighteen, and who chose to naturalize in the 1940s, 15.6 percent became citizens within five years of reaching their twenty-first birthday, representing a small decline from the 1930s, and the proportion dropped even further to 7.8 percent in both the 1950s and 1960s. While well over half of the women who had entered the United States as minors naturalized within ten years of their twenty-first birthday in the 1930s, that proportion dropped to 36.4 percent in the 1940s, to 13.6 percent in the 1950s, and to 9.8 percent in the 1960s. In the 1930s, one-fourth of the men who had arrived to the U.S.A. as minors under eighteen naturalized within five years of their twenty-first birthday; that proportion remained constant in the 1940s (24.4 percent), dropped in the 1950s (10.2 percent), and returned to roughly the same level in the 1960s (26.1

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percent.) That francophone men who naturalized at midcentury had waited longer to become U.S. citizens than in the past becomes clear when we examine the numbers who naturalized within ten years of reaching their twenty-first birthday. While over two-thirds naturalized within ten years of turning twenty-one in the 1930s, that proportion dropped sharply to under half (45.7 percent) in the 1940s, and it declined even more dramatically to one-seventh (14.3 percent) in the 1950s, before climbing to around one-fourth (26.1 percent) in the 1960s.[20] The naturalization records of women and men at midcentury reveal, then, that the individuals who had entered the United States as minors had held out for some time before becoming citizens.

The records of women and men who had entered the United States as adults present a more complicated picture. While over one-fourth of the women who naturalized in the 1930s had become citizens within ten years of crossing the border, hence within the first five years of eligibility, the proportion dropped to 17.0 percent in the 1940s, it rose to 35.7 percent in the 1950s, and it climbed further to 48.8 percent in the 1960s. The records reveal that, while close to three-fourths of the women who naturalized in the 1930s had acquired citizenship within fifteen years of their migration to the United States, the proportion dropped dramatically to 32.5 percent in the 1940s, before

[20]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969. Precise figures of naturalization patterns from the 1930s are provided in chapter four.

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rising slightly to 40.0 percent in the 1950s and rising more sharply to 65.9 percent in the 1960s. What these figures reveal is that the forties and fifties were "catch-up" years for the French-Canadian migrant women who had delayed acquiring their U.S. citizenship. Housewife Marie Rose Emelie Lepage, for example, had arrived in the United States in 1923 at the age of twenty; although her husband had naturalized in 1936, she had waited until 1941, eighteen years after migrating to the U.S.A., before becoming a citizen. Among the men who had arrived in the United States as adults, around one-third in the 1930s, about one-tenth (9.2 percent) in the 1940s, two-fifths (39.8 percent) in the 1950s, and three-fifths (61.3 percent) in the 1960s naturalized within ten years of crossing the border; in addition, while close to three-fourths of the men in the 1930s naturalized within fifteen years of their migration to the United States, this proved true of slightly over one-fourth (26.8 percent) in the 1940s, under half (47.3 percent) in the 1950s, and over four-fifths (83.9 percent) in the 1960s.[21] Thus, only in the 1940s and 1950s had more than half of the francophone women and men who naturalized waited more than fifteen years to become U.S. citizens. The French speakers of Lewiston who naturalized during these decades, in other

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[21]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969; Lepage's naturalization record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 35, #3800.

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words, had been much slower than those of other periods to obtain their U.S. citizenship.

They steadfastly retained their citizenship. Letters from Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officials attached to naturalization records reveal that only four of the 1,787 (0.2 percent) who naturalized in the 1940s later became expatriated. Among the naturalizers of the 1950s and 1960s, only two out of 582 (0.3 percent) later gave up or lost their U.S. citizenship. On only one of the six letters did INS officials supply the reason for the person's expatriation: Joseph Lorenzo Alfred Ouellette lost his U.S. citizenship in 1950 for having lived in Canada for three consecutive years following his naturalization in 1941.[22]

As in the 1930s, few francophones at midcentury opted to anglicize their names at the time of naturalization. During the 1940s, only three (0.2 percent) of the 1,787 naturalizers anglicized their given names, and none anglicized their family names. While the number of persons who changed their French names increased in the fifties and sixties, the overall proportions remained small. Only 1.4 percent in the 1950s and 4.1 percent in the 1960s anglicized their given name at the time of naturalization, and under one percent in either decade anglicized their

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[22]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969; Ouellette's naturalization record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 35, #3888.

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family name. Typically, the new surnames reflected spelling rather than phonetic alterations. For example, Francis Therriault changed his name in 1952 to Frank Terrio, and Joseph Louis Philippe Beaulieu, who both shortened and anglicized his name in 1961, became Philip Bolyer.[23] Discrimination against Franco-Americans in the postwar era appears not to have led to much name changing in Lewiston.

The naturalization records suggest some of the motivations of francophones for becoming U.S. citizens. During the 1940s, four-fifths (79.5 percent) of the men who naturalized were married, and nearly half (47.6 percent) of their wives were U.S.-born, a proportion larger than in previous decades.[24] This must have motivated the men to acquire U.S. citizenship. But, as in the past, the place of birth of their children appears to have been the more salient consideration. Over four-fifths (81.2 percent) of the men with issue had children who had all been born in the United States; about one-tenth (11.9 percent) had some children, but not all, who had been born in the U.S.A. In sum, over ninety (93.1) percent of the naturalizing men with issue had some children who had been born in the

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[23]Naturalization records, 1940-1949, 1950-1969; Therriault's and Beaulieu's naturalization records are from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 44, #6143, and vol. 46, #6787, respectively.

[24]Naturalization records did not provide the place of birth for 2.8 percent of the wives of naturalizing men. Naturalization records, 1940-1949.

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United States.[25] Three-fourths (74.4 percent) of the women who naturalized in the 1940s were married at the time of their naturalization. The husbands of 42.9 percent were U.S.-born, and an additional 40.1 percent of the husbands had derived their U.S. citizenship from their fathers or had naturalized on their own; thus, the husbands of 83.0 percent of the women who naturalized in the 1940s were U.S. citizens. This undoubtedly propelled migrant wives to naturalize. As with the men who acquired citizenship in the 1940s, over four-fifths (83.2 percent) of the women with issue had children who had all been born in the United States; another tenth (11.3 percent) had some, but not all, children who had been born in the U.S.A. Well over nine-tenths (94.5 percent) of the francophone mothers who naturalized in the 1940s, then, had delivered some or all of their children in their adopted country.[26] In short, both the external force of World War II, and the internal force manifested in family considerations, appear to have motivated large numbers of French-Canadian men and women to acquire their U.S. citizenship during the 1940s.

In the postwar era, family considerations, it seems, continued to propel francophone men and women to naturalize. Three-fourths of the men who naturalized

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[25]The proportion may have been higher, for naturalization records did not provide the place of birth of 3.2 percent of the children of the male naturalizers. Naturalization records, 1940-1949.

[26]Naturalization records, 1940-1949.

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during the 1950s (75.4 percent) and 1960s (75.9 percent) were married, whereas smaller proportions of the women who naturalized in the fifties (68.0 percent) and sixties (62.0) were married at the time that they acquired their U.S. citizenship. The naturalization records provide the places of birth of their spouses until 1966 and of their children until 1962. What these records reveal for the married male naturalizers is that slightly over half (51.8 percent) had U.S.-born wives, and the overwhelming majority with issue (87.0 percent) had children who had been born in the U.S.A. For the wedded female naturalizers, these records reveal that under half (47.2 percent) had husbands who had been born in the United States, and over one-third (36.0 percent) had foreign-born husbands who had acquired their U.S. citizenship from their fathers or through the naturalization process. Thus, over four-fifths (83.2 percent) of the married women who naturalized through 1966 had husbands with U.S. citizenship. As with the men, the overwhelming majority (93.1 percent) of the women with issue had children with places of birth in the United States. To take one example, Madeline Landry's three children and her husband had all been born in the U.S.A., something which must have motivated her in 1952 to acquire her citizenship papers.[27]

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[27]Naturalization records, 1950-1969.

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Naturalizations did not necessarily correlate with higher occupational status. Only a small proportion of the men (8.5 percent) and women (3.4 percent) who naturalized in the 1940s held white-collar jobs; half (50.8 percent) of the men and nearly half (48.2 percent) of the women were industrial workers. While one-fourth of the women who had naturalized in the 1930s were not working outside of the home at the time of their naturalization, the proportion rose to two-fifths (41.9 percent) in the 1940s. Thus, greater numbers of housewives like Marie Rose Emelie Lepage acquired their citizenship during World War II and in the years immediately following it.[28]

These occupational patterns changed somewhat in the 1950s and 1960s.[29] Beginning in the 1950s, a majority of the men and women who naturalized were not industrial workers. Under one-third of the naturalizing men in the 1950s (29.6 percent) and about one-third (32.5 percent) in the 1960s held industrial jobs; over one-third (38.4 percent) of the women who naturalized in the 1950s and one-third (33.3 percent) in the 1960s had industrial positions at the time of their naturalization. The proportion of naturalizing men with white-collar jobs climbed to one-fifth (19.7 percent) in the 1950s but dropped to one-

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[28]Naturalization records, 1940-1949.

[29]Naturalization records provide information on the occupations of petitioners only until 1966; therefore, the data from the 1960s discussed in this paragraph covers only the years from 1960 to 1966.

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twentieth (5.0 percent) in the 1960s. During the 1950s, one-twentieth (4.8 percent) of the naturalizing women had white-collar jobs, and this proportion doubled to one-tenth (10.3 percent) in the 1960s. Marielle Gaetane Roy, for instance, was a department store clerk when she naturalized in 1963. Half (50.3 percent) of the women who naturalized in the 1950s, and under half (44.9 percent) in the 1960s, did not work outside of the home.[30] Housewives continued, therefore, to make up a significant proportion of the women who acquired their citizenship in the postwar decades.

In summary, data from the 1940s through the 1960s illustrates that even the holdouts in Lewiston's francophone community took the acculturative step of naturalization at midcentury. The data particularly reveals that the community's cultural hearthkeepers--its women, and especially the housewives among them--turned out in large numbers to acquire their U.S. citizenship during and after the Second World War. While we have no way of knowing from currently available sources how many French-Canadian migrants of Lewiston never did naturalize, we can speculate from the naturalization patterns at midcentury that the overwhelming majority of Lewiston's French-Canadian migrant population had naturalized by the end of the 1950s.[31] For these first-generation holdouts, and

[30]Naturalization records, 1950-1969; Roy's naturalization record is from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn, vol. 46, #6866.

[31]We do not have global figures on the proportion of French-Canadian migrants who naturalized by 1960. Without citing his source, Elliott

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especially for those who naturalized in French, acculturation and ethnic retention presumably still represented intertwined goals.

The contribution of Lewiston Franco-Americans to World War II gave evidence that they still regarded these goals as intertwined in the 1940s. In 1942, state senator Jean-Charles Boucher of Lewiston argued in a radio address on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day that Franco-Americans did not have to give up their language, traditions, or faith to be good citizens of the United States. Boucher encouraged Franco-Americans to contribute to the war effort in whatever capacity they could. *"'Et lorsque nous aurons gagné la guerre, nous serons heureux d'inscrire aux pages de l'histoire de la race française en Amérique,'"* proclaimed Boucher, *"'les glorieux faits d'armes de nos Franco-américains qui de nouveau prouveront à nos ennemis que l'on peut être toute aussi patriote que n'importe qui tout en conservant notre foi et notre langue.'"* Franco-Americans enthusiastically supported the war effort. In the United States, there was no conscription crisis dividing English and French speakers as there was in Canada beginning in 1944.[32] In the 1940s, good citizenship remained an

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Robert Barkan claims that seventy-two percent of the French-Canadian migrants in the United States in 1950 were naturalized. Barkan, "French Canadians," *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1980), p. 397.

[32]*Le Messager*, 29 juin 1942, pp. 1, 6. On Canada's World War II conscription crisis, see Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, chapters five and six. Jean-Charles Boucher's political career

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important component of Franco-American identity; it demanded supporting U.S. objectives in the world conflict.

Besides serving in the armed forces, Lewiston Franco-Americans contributed financially to the war effort. In 1943, at the invitation of Treasury Secretary Edward B. Hitchcock, Franco-Americans from throughout New England organized a campaign to purchase war bonds, hoping to raise six million dollars to finance three Liberty ships to be named after Franco-Americans. Not coincidentally, the ten-week campaign began and ended on days important to the identity of Franco-Americans: it started on June 24, the feast day of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste*, and concluded on Labor Day, September 6. In all, New England's Franco-Americans raised over $12,000,000, double their original goal; Lewiston alone raised more than a half-million dollars. In December, *Le Messager* proudly informed readers that the U.S. government had accepted the six names Franco-Americans had proposed for the ships their funds would finance. At the same time, the jubilant French-language newspaper

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spanned three decades: he entered politics in 1933 by winning election to the Board of Aldermen, a position he held for four years, and he became mayor in 1943 and 1944; he also served in the state House of Representatives for two terms from 1934 to 1938 and in the state Senate for eleven terms from 1938 until his death in 1960. *Le Messager*, 24 mars 1960, p. 1; Geneva Kirk and Gridley Barrows, *Historic Lewiston: Its Government* (Lewiston, Maine: Lewiston Historical Commission, 1982), p. 42.

"'Et lorsque...en Amérique,'" "'les glorieux...notre langue.'": "'And when we will have won the war, we will be glad to write in the pages of the history of the French race in America,'" "'the glorious military feats of our Franco-Americans which will once again prove to our enemies that we can be as patriotic as anyone, all the while conserving our faith and our language.'"

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announced on its front page in big bold letters that Maine's cargo ship would carry the name of Jean-Baptiste Couture, *Le Messager*'s owner for a half-century, who had died in April. The federal government moved too slowly, however. By February 1945, Liberty ships carried the names of clergymen Joseph-A. Chevalier of New Hampshire and Charles Dauray of Rhode Island, journalist Ferdinand Gagnon of Massachusetts, and politician Aram J. Pothier of Rhode Island, but not Couture's name. On February 27, *Le Messager* complained that none of the twelve ships the United States had recently launched, eight of which had been built at the shipyard in South Portland, carried a Franco-American name. The implication, of course, was that Franco-Americans of Maine still did not have a ship named after one of their own. *"Personne ne regrette d'avoir contribué les $2,000,000 pour les bons de guerre, mais nous réclamons pour nous ce qu'on a donné aux autres! Pas plus, et PAS MOINS!" Le Messager* emphasized. Lewiston Mayor Jean-Charles Boucher, who had coordinated the successful bond drive in Maine, and Franco-American Waterville resident Harold Dubord, a member of the Democratic National Committee, pressed the federal government on this matter.[33]

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[33]Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre: Rêves et réalités* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 2000), p. 377; *Le Messager*, 7 avril 1943, p. 1, 21 et 23 juin 1943, p. 6, 11 septembre 1943, p. 6, 16 septembre 1943, p. 1, 3 décembre 1943, p. 1, 27 février 1945, p. 6; *Church World*, June 25, 1943, p. 1.

"Personne ne...PAS MOINS!": "No one regrets having contributed the $2,000,000 for the war bonds, but we demand [equally] for ourselves what we gave to others! No more, and NO LESS!"

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But the war ended before the U.S. government could honor its pledge to Maine Franco-Americans. This World War II episode reveals persistent efforts by Lewiston's French speakers to carve a place for themselves in the United States. Like francophones from throughout New England, they used the campaign to finance Liberty ships as a means to assert their ethnic identity in their country of adoption. Franco-Americans of Lewiston thus continued in the 1940s to negotiate the terms of their participation in U.S. society.

One of the terms they could not insist upon, of course, was the use of French by Franco-American soldiers. Reports in *Le Messager* nonetheless demonstrate that it kept an ear to the French-language expression of servicemen. In April 1941, hence prior to U.S. entry into World War II, *Le Messager* reported news from Reverend Leonard LeClair, a Lewiston native and chaplain of Maine's 103rd infantry, stationed at Camp Blanding, Florida. While Franco-Americans at the camp used English to learn combat techniques, and when speaking to non-francophone soldiers, LeClair indicated that they prayed and confessed in French.[34]

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[34]*Le Messager*, 23 avril 1941, p. 14. As with World War I, probably few French-Canadian migrants of Lewiston returned to Canada during World War II to enlist in the military. *Le Messager* shed no light on the discourse surrounding enlistment in either Canada or the United States during the Second World War.

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If this experience was common among Franco-American servicemen, it would suggest that the adage *"la langue est la gardienne de la foi"* continued to have meaning. But it may have been during the Second World War that Franco-American soldiers first recognized the fallacy of that much-repeated saying. During an interview in 1977, World War II veteran Clem Bernier dismissed the connection between language and faith, contending "'God listened just as well in English as he [*sic*] did in French.'"[35] If not during World War II, Bernier surely acquired this opinion during the postwar years, when English increasingly became the dominant language in Lewiston.

During World War II, *Le Messager* commented on the use of French by servicemen in France. It derided in October 1944 the non-Franco-Americans who spoke so-called "Parisian French" in wartime France. *"Les Américains de langue anglaise qui se piquent d'avoir appris un peu de français aux écoles ou au collège aiment à clamer du haut des toits qu'ils ont appris un français bien différent de celui que les Franco-américains parlent,"* stated *Le Messager*. *"Et ils déduisent de ce fait que nous ne parlons qu'un jargon."* Based upon letters Lewiston parents had received from their sons, *Le Messager* delighted in informing readers that French military officers better understood the French of

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[35]Bernier, cited in Bourassa, "The Catholic Church in the Franco-American Community," pp. 62, 78.

"la langue est la gardienne de la foi": "the language is the guardian of the faith"

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Franco-Americans than that of other Americans.[36] Franco-Americans, this account reveals, continued to see themselves as an ethnic group in opposition to *"les Américains."* As tensions over language continued to divide the two ethnicities in the 1940s, *Le Messager* sought to prove that the French spoken by Franco-Americans was not inferior to "Parisian French." Its comments reflected ongoing efforts to preserve the mother tongue of Lewiston's Franco-American community at midcentury.

Issues of ethnic retention preoccupied Franco-American elites from the 1940s through the 1960s. They worried particularly about the declining use of French among younger generations of Franco-Americans for whom English became the dominant language. They engaged in what historian Yves Roby has called a "cult of remembrance" in their efforts to instill ethnic pride.[37]

One of these efforts was *le Festival de la Bonne Chanson*, inspired by the *Congrès de la Langue Française*, held in Québec City in 1937. Lewiston Franco-Americans,

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[36]*Le Messager*, 30 octobre 1944, p. 6.
"Les Américains...Franco-américains parlent," "Et ils...qu'un jargon.": "English-speaking Americans who pride themselves for having learned a little French in school or in college like to shout from rooftops that they have learned a French very different from that which Franco-Americans speak," "And they deduce from this fact that we speak only gibberish."

[37]Yves Roby, "From Franco-Americans to Americans of French-Canadian Origin or Franco-Americanism, Past and Present," trans. Alexis A. Babineau, A.A., in Claire Quintal, ed., *Steeples and Smokestacks: A Collection of Essays on the Franco-American Experience in New England* (Worcester, Massachusetts: Éditions de l'Institut français, Assumption College, 1996), pp. 622-623.

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including Mayor Donat Lévesque, Pastor Mannès Marchand of *Saint-Pierre*, Pastor Edouard Nadeau of *Sainte-Croix*, state legislator Jean-Charles Boucher, as well as local doctors and attorneys, had attended the congress, which had urged the adoption of the songbook, *La Bonne Chanson*, by Reverend Charles-Emile Gadbois of the *Séminaire de Saint-Hyacinthe*. When Gadbois toured New England's Franco-American cities in 1939 to promote his work, he called upon *les Vigilants* of Lewiston. This Franco-American society subsequently organized North America's first *Festival de la Bonne Chanson* in 1940, attended by over 5,000, including Gadbois, representatives of the Québec societies *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* and *le Comité Permanent de la Survivance Française en Amérique*, as well as by officials of New England's largest Franco-American societies, *l'Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amérique* (based in Woonsocket, Rhode Island) and *l'Association Canado-Américaine* (based in Manchester, New Hampshire.) At the Lewiston armory, which was decorated in the colors of the United States, France, and Canada, the audience sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "O Canada," and students from the local Franco-American parochial schools competed against each other in their interpretation of songs from Gadbois' publication. This event, *Le Messager* asserted, revealed a population which still wished

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"vivre de sa pensée française en associant ce qu'il a de meilleur à ce que son pays d'adoption, les Etats-Unis."[38]

Lewiston delayed sponsorship of another *Festival de la Bonne Chanson* until 1946 because of U.S. entry into World War II. Organized again by *les Vigilants*, the 1946 festival entertained an audience of over 4,000. Students from Franco-American schools in Lewiston, Auburn, and Brunswick opened the event by singing the national anthems of the United States and Canada. Boys taught by *les Soeurs Grises* of Healy Asylum won first prize: $150 in cash and a trip to Montréal to take part in the city's *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebration. When the boys returned from Montréal, the sisters publicly thanked *les Vigilants* and expressed their hope that the boys from their orphanage

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[38]*Le Messager*, 3 juillet 1937, p. 8, 5 janvier 1939, p. 6, 20 mai 1940, pp. 1, 8, 21 mai 1940, p. 1, 13 mai 1943, p. 8; Annales: École paroissiale Sainte-Croix de Lewiston, Sisters of the Presentation of Mary, Holy Cross Convent, Lewiston, Maine [hereafter, Annales de Sainte-Croix], vol. 1, 10 janvier 1940; Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 3, 19 mai 1940, p. 391. *Le Messager* did not specify which colors of Canada were used to decorate the armory. Possibly it meant the colors of the Union Jack, which would have overlapped those of the U.S. and French flags; more likely, it meant red and white, Canada's official colors since 1921. Department of Canadian Heritage, *Symbols of Canada* (Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Government Publishing, 1999), p. 11.

le Festival de la Bonne Chanson: the Festival of the Good Song

Congrès de la Langue Française: Congress of the French Language

le Comité Permanent de la Survivance Française en Amérique: the Permanent Committee of French Survival in America

l'Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amérique: the Saint John the Baptist Union of America

l'Association Canado-Américaine: the Canado-American Association

"vivre de...les Etats-Unis.": "to live in French while associating with what is best in its country of adoption, the United States."

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"seront à l'avenir un peu plus canadien français et non moins bons citoyens américains" as a result of the trip.[39] The sisters understood the goal of the festival: the continued definition of *survivance* and acculturation as intertwined, and not dichotomous, goals.

Comments, such as those by *les Soeurs Grises*, reveal that Franco-American discourse in the 1940s continued to emphasize the importance of being good citizens of the United States. During this decade, naturalizing and contributing to the war effort were the principal ways by which Franco-Americans could demonstrate good citizenship. The French language and French-Canadian culture also remained integral to Franco-American identity during this decade, something elites promoted by twice organizing *le Festival de la Bonne Chanson*. Franco-American discourse surrounding the 1940 and 1946 festivals conveyed the message that retaining French-Canadian ethnicity took nothing away from U.S. citizenship; ethnic identification enhanced the qualities of Franco-American citizens of the United States. Better Franco-Americans would be better Americans.

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[39]*Le Messager*, 28 janvier 1942, p. 6, 20 mars 1946, p. 6, 2 mai 1946, pp. 5, 6, 6 mai 1946, pp. 3, 6; Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 4, 5 mai 1946; les Soeurs Grises de l'Asile Healy, *Le Messager*, 29 juin 1946, p. 6.

les Soeurs Grises: Grey Nuns

"seront à l'avenir...citoyens américains": "will be in the future a little more French Canadian and no less good American citizens"

survivance: ethnic preservation

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When *Le Messager* learned in 1946 that Franco-Americans of Manchester, New Hampshire, planned to hold their own *Festival de la Bonne Chanson,* the newspaper crowed that Lewiston had started a movement among New England francophones. But Lewiston's 1946 festival was the last musical competition of record between students of the city's Franco-American parochial schools. There were other French-language competitions, however. Franco-American societies continued to sponsor essay contests in French on such topics as *"La presse franco-américaine."* Beginning around 1949, and continuing through the late 1960s, Lewiston's French-language societies also organized French spelling bees, *"dans le but d'encourager les jeunes des écoles paroissiales à bien apprendre leur français,"* indicated *Le Messager* in 1961. As the French spelling contests grew, Lewiston students competed against youth from other Franco-American schools in Maine. French public speaking competitions in the 1950s and 1960s, organized by *la Fédération Féminine Franco-Américaine,* also pitted Lewiston students against those from other schools in Maine. State winners competed in a regional contest against Franco-American students from throughout New England. In 1953, the first year the women's society organized the contest, eighth-grade students spoke on *"La Paroisse"* and high school students on *"Une figure historique Française d'Amérique."* Local winners from *Saint-Pierre* and *Sainte-Croix* Schools took first and second

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prizes in 1959 for their speeches on Franco-American newspaperman Ferdinand Gagnon and French explorer and fur trader La Vérendrye.[40] Designed to encourage Franco-American youth to develop and retain their French-language skills, these oral and written contests represented an active response on the part of elites to the declining use of French by young Franco-Americans in the postwar era.

Another response to promote ethnic retention was to found additional local clubs and regional associations. In 1943, Mrs. Eugène Langelier established *la Survivance Française* in Lewiston as a woman's subcommittee of the *Comité de la Survivance Française de Québec* to preserve the Roman Catholic faith and the French language. The club organized lectures and conferences as well as social activities for its members. In 1947, prominent Franco-American men created at a Boston meeting *le Comité*

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[40]*Le Messager*, 6 mai 1946, p. 6, 10 juin 1946, p. 6, 16 novembre 1953, p. 12, 3 décembre 1953, p. 2, 7 juin 1956, p. B6, 7 décembre 1959, p. 1, 25 mai 1961, pp. 1, 5; Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 4, 6 mai 1948, vol. 5, 28 mai 1951, pp. 130-131, vol. 7, 29 octobre 1961, p. 148, 11 novembre 1961, p. 149, vol. 8, 15 mai 1965, 20 mai 1967; Annales de Sainte-Croix, vol. 2, 5 juin 1949, 14 novembre 1953, 5 novembre 1955, 25 mai 1956, 1 novembre 1959, vol. 3, 8 juin 1969; Annals of Saint Mary's Convent, Lewiston, Maine, Ursuline Provincialate Archives, Dedham, Massachusetts [ci-après, Annales des Ursulines], 27 mai 1951, p. 52; Journal de la Maison, Couvent de la Sainte-Famille, Lewiston, Maine, les archives du provincialat des Soeurs de Saint-Joseph, Winslow, Maine, 5 mai 1957, p. 83, 20 mai 1962, p. 108.

"La presse franco-américaine": "the Franco-American press"

"dans le but...leur français,": "in the goal of encouraging youth from the parish schools to learn their French well,"

la Fédération Féminine Franco-Américaine: the Federation of Franco-American Women

"La Paroisse": "The Parish"

"Une figure historique Française d'Amérique": "A historic figure [of] French America"

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d'Orientation Franco-Américaine to promote the preservation of French Catholic lifeways. The men's organization founded at its second congress, held in Lewiston in 1951, *la Fédération Féminine Franco-Américaine*. *La Fédération* sought to bring together existing associations of Franco-American women from the northeastern United States, and its formation served to acknowledge the role they had to play in *la survivance*. In addition to sponsoring public-speaking contests among students of Franco-American parochial schools, the women's association organized concerts, art exhibits, and festivals, all to promote French language and culture in the postwar era.[41]

One response to the intermixing of Franco-Americans with non-Catholic anglophones appears to have been the 1958 establishment of the Lewiston-Auburn Richelieu Club, named and modeled after the organization founded in 1944 by Franco-Ontarians in Ottawa. Richelieu Clubs had sprung up in Ontario, Québec, and New Brunswick before crossing the

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[41]*Le Messager*, 11 et 16 janvier 1943, p. 6, 23 juin 1950, p. B7, 8 juin 1967, p. 5; Fr. Thomas-M. Landry, O.P., secrétaire du Comité d'Orientation, sur l'histoire de l'organization et sur la "Vocation de la Femme Franco-Américaine," dans *2ème Congrès, Le Comité d'Orientation Franco-Américaine, les 9, 10 et 11 Novembre, 1951, Lewiston, Maine* (s.é. [1951]; Florence Marie Chevalier, S.S.A., "The Role of French National Societies in the Sociocultural Evolution of the Franco-Americans of New England from 1860 to the Present: An Analytical Macro-sociological Case Study in Ethnic Integration Based on Current Social System Models" (Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1972), p. 21; Charlotte Bordes LeBlanc, "History and Mission of the Fédération Féminine Franco-Américaine (1951-1991)," in *Steeples and Smokestacks*, pp. 501-508.

Comité de la Survivance Française de Québec: Committee of French Survival of Québec

le Comité d'Orientation Franco-Américaine: the Franco-American Orientation Committee

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border to the United States in 1955, when Manchester, New Hampshire, organized its own club. Like the founding of the organization in Ottawa, the establishment of the Lewiston Richelieu Club probably represented a reaction on the part of elites to the growing practice of French-Canadian descendants of joining anglophone secular associations, such as the Kiwanis, Rotary, and Lions service clubs. In 1949, Bates College student Faith Seiple observed that Franco-Americans comprised sixteen percent of the membership of the Lewiston-Auburn Kiwanis, twenty-eight percent of the Rotary, and thirty-seven percent of the Lions Club. Unlike them, Richelieu organizations had an explicitly Christian character, and their regulations stipulated that *"la langue officielle des clubs est la langue française."*[42] Lewiston's Richelieu Club, it seems, served in the late 1950s to resist the tide toward assimilation.

Other Franco-American institutions remained active following the Second World War. The snowshoe clubs, for example, continued to participate in international

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[42]*Le Messager*, 16 octobre 1958, p. 18; Chevalier, "The Role of French National Societies in the Sociocultural Evolution of the Franco-Americans of New England from 1860 to the Present," p. 158; l'avant-propos par Robert Fournier, *Les Clubs Richelieu: Les premiers 25 ans du Richelieu International* (Montréal: Éditions du Jour, 1971), p. 8; *Les Clubs Richelieu*, pp. 13-14; Faith Seiple, "Assimilation of French Groups into the Lewiston-Auburn Community" (Term paper [Bates College], 1949), available at the Lewiston Public Library, Lewiston, Maine, p. 4; "Règlements des Clubs Richelieu," p. 4, Fonds Club Richelieu Montréal Inc., Archives nationales du Québec, Montréal, Québec, bobine 6387.

"la langue officielle...langue française.": "the official language of the clubs is the French language."

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conventions in Canada and the United States, conventions which offered francophones on both sides of the border the opportunity for ongoing contact. Judging from the bylaws of *Le Montagnard*, the snowshoe clubs continued to function as ethnic organizations. *Le Montagnard*'s 1957 bylaws, for instance, spelled out the ethnic qualification for membership: *"Etre Canadien-français ou Franco-américain ou être reconnu comme tel."*[43] While delimiting membership, this statement implicitly acknowledged that ethnic identity could be socially constructed and that ethnic boundaries were permeable.

Associated with the snowshoe clubs, the holiday collection, *la Guignolée*, last took place in Lewiston in 1940. This ethnic tradition appears to have been a casualty of World War II. In fact, in 1943, *Le Messager* announced that there would (again) be no *Guignolée* at *Saint-Pierre* parish on account of the war, because many parishioners were working away from the city in shipyards.[44] While the snowshoe clubs remained active after the war, there is no evidence that they resumed *la Guignolée*.

While the Second World War seems to have curtailed at least one French-Canadian tradition, it did not prevent or

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[43]*Le Messager*, 6 février 1950, p. 6, 30 janvier 1961, p. 1; Règlements du Lewiston-Auburn Montagnard Social Club, Inc., 17 novembre 1957, que le secrétaire, Augustin Croteau, m'a donnés, p. 1.

Le Montagnard: The Mountaineer

"Etre Canadien-français...comme tel.": "To be French Canadian or Franco-American or to be recognized as such."

[44]*Le Messager*, 10 décembre 1940, p. 6, 17 décembre 1943, p. 10.

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discourage the founding of additional ethnic institutions in Lewiston. In 1944, funeral director Napoleon Pinette established the Aroostook Social Club for Lewiston area residents like himself who had migrated from Maine's northernmost county. In its first year, the club had over 100 members.[45]

The presence of the Aroostook Social Club in Lewiston reveals two major points. First, not only Acadians from New Brunswick but also Acadians from northern Maine had migrated to Franco-American Lewiston. Second, the club appears to have blended into the Franco-American fabric of Lewiston while introducing some Acadian elements. For example, *Le Messager* indicated in February 1950 that the club had *"une tradition tout-à-fait franco-américaine,"* suggesting that the newspaper's definition of Franco-American at midcentury was elastic enough to include Acadians. In that same month, the Acme Aroostook Club, as the association came to be called, organized a large Mardi gras party, perhaps Lewiston's first, and at least two other Franco-American societies organized Mardi gras parties that month. Providing further evidence of the inclusion of Acadian themes in Franco-American Lewiston, *les Dames de Sainte-Anne* of *Saint-Pierre* parish entered into the 1957 *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day parade the

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[45]*Le Messager*, 11 septembre 1944, p. 8, 12 octobre 1944, p. 6, 29 juin 1959, p. 1.

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allegorical chariot *"Evangeline et son père, épisode de l'histoire acadienne."*[46]

Perhaps a more inclusive definition of "Franco-American" at midcentury explains why the keynote speakers on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in 1940 and 1955 were New Brunswick Acadians. After all, Acadians since the colonial era had developed an identity distinct from that of the francophones who had settled Québec, for both geography and history had separated them. Moreover, *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day was not an Acadian holiday: from the 1880s, Acadians had had their own patron saint and feast day. Although French-Canadian and Acadian descendants had different histories, their migration to Lewiston led at midcentury to the appropriation of themes and traditions from the other group and to a broadening of "Franco-American" identity in

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[46]*Le Messager*, 16 février 1950, p. 8, 18 février 1950, p. 6, 22 février 1950, p. 6, 23 février 1950, 27 juin 1957, p. 11. Despite oral traditions and written accounts characterizing francophones from northern Maine as Acadians, not all were of Acadian descent, it should be noted. Béatrice C. Craig argues that French Canadians from the lower Saint Lawrence had colonized northern Maine's Saint John Valley along with Acadians from southern New Brunswick beginning in 1785. As large numbers of French Canadians migrated to Madawaska between 1820 and 1850, descendants of the founding families (of whom French Canadians had comprised a minority) practiced endogamy and forged an Acadian identity in order to exclude the new French-Canadian migrants and to preserve their social and economic dominance in Madawaska. Craig further contends that they also imposed their view of history--an Acadian one--on the community. See "Early French Migrations to Northern Maine, 1785-1850," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 25 (Spring 1986), pp. 230-247; and "Immigrants in a Frontier Community: Madawaska 1785-1850," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 19 (novembre-November 1986), pp. 277-297.

"une tradition tout-à-fait franco-américaine": "a tradition quite Franco-American"

les Dames de Sainte-Anne: the Ladies of Saint Anne

"Evangeline et...l'histoire acadienne.": "Evangeline and her father, episode of Acadian history."

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the Spindle City. This may have represented a step in the acculturation of these francophones into the host society. Dino Cinel has argued, for example, that Italian migrants in San Francisco broadened regional identities from their pre-migration experiences to form a national identity in the U.S.A. prior to their Americanization. Similarly, Toronto's Italian migrants expanded their "hometown" identities to adopt a national identity in Canada, contends John E. Zucchi; extrapolating Zucchi's argument, the process appears to have been a stage in the Canadianization of these Italian migrants.[47] Franco-Americans similarly appeared to enlarge their identity at midcentury.

The founding of additional credit unions in Lewiston at midcentury reveals more ethnic institution building in the Spindle City. *Les Vigilants* actively promoted the establishment of credit unions by Franco-American parishes. In 1945, *Saint-Pierre* parish founded its own credit union, modeled after that of *Sainte-Famille*. To promote membership, Dominican Pastor Hervé Drouin would invite parishioners to the sacristy after mass to obtain information about joining the credit union; Dominican

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[47]*Le Messager*, 24 juin 1940, pp. 1, 3, 27 juin 1955, p. 16; Naomi Griffiths, *The Acadians: Creation of a People* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1973), p. 80; A.I. Silver, *The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation, 1864-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), pp. 7-9; Dino Cinel, *From Italy to San Francisco: The Immigrant Experience* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1982); John E. Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto: Development of a National Identity, 1875-1935* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988.)

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sources reveal Drouin had been concerned about *"des désastres de famille que causent les corporations de prêts et crédit dans la paroisse."* In February 1947, *Le Messager* reported that ten professional and business men of Lewiston were considering founding a Franco-American bank, and it explained that *"le juge Adrien Côté a déclaré que ce groupe d'hommes considère que le nombre de directeurs de langue française dans nos banques locales n'est pas représentatif de la population de la ville."* While Franco-Americans did not establish their own bank, they did continue founding credit unions. In February 1947, *Sainte-Marie* parish organized its credit union, and *Sainte-Croix* parish followed suit in 1950. The Franco-American parish credit unions, several of which had accumulated assets of over one million dollars by 1959-1960, helped members gain economic strength in the postwar era. At *Saint-Pierre*, for example, Drouin credited his parish financial institution with facilitating the economic and social progress of its members: *"'on a développé une fierté économique qui a permis à nos Canadiens de monter les échelons de la vie sociale.'"*[48]

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[48]*Le Messager*, 5 et 8 mars 1945, p. 6, 18 avril 1945, pp. 3, 6, 31 octobre 1946, p. 6, 24 février 1947, p. 6, 2 octobre 1950, p. 6; Saint Pierre Credit Union Organization Certificate, Community Credit Union, Lewiston, Maine; Jules Antonin Plourde, O.P., dans "Notices Nécrologiques des Dominicains Canadiens (1873-1990)," les archives des Dominicains, Montréal, Québec, p. 847; Sainte-Marie Federal Credit Union Organization Certificate, February 23, 1947, Rainbow Federal Credit Union, Lincoln Street branch, Lewiston, Maine; minutes of the organization meeting of October 29, 1950, Sainte Croix Regional Federal Credit Union, Lewiston, Maine; *Lewiston Evening*

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Not all Lewiston credit unions were Franco-American institutions. The credit union movement spread beyond Lewiston's francophone parishes to other entities to which Franco-Americans belonged. In 1944, city employees founded the Lewiston Municipal Credit Union, modeled after the credit union of *Sainte-Famille* parish. Mayor Jean-Charles Boucher, the founding president of *Sainte Famille* Credit Union, was one of the seven to sign the organization certificate of the municipal credit union. Bates Mill in 1956 organized a credit union for its employees. In 1959, the Men's Club of the Irish church of Saint Joseph, headed by Franco-American John M. Lavertu, organized a credit union for the parish.[49] Lewiston credit unions, it appears, sprang up where Franco-Americans could be found.

The founding of Saint Joseph's credit union reveals one dimension to the changing identity of Lewiston's Franco-American community at midcentury: growing membership in the city's Irish Catholic parishes. In 1960,

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Journal, January 21, 1959, p. 12; *St. Pierre Credit Union 25th Anniversary, 1945-1970* (Lewiston, Maine: Screen Printing [1970]); Tenth Annual Report, December 31, 1960, Sainte Croix Credit Union; Drouin, cité par Plourde dans les "Notices Nécrologiques des Dominicains Canadiens," p. 847.

"des désastres...la paroisse.": "some family disasters that lending and credit corporations cause in the parish."

"le juge...la ville.": "Judge Adrien Côté has declared that this group of men considers the number of French-speaking directors in our local banks unrepresentative of the city's population."

"'on a développé...la vie sociale.'": "'we developed an economic pride that permitted our French Canadians to ascend the social ladder.'"

[49]*Le Messager*, 28 novembre 1944, p. 8; Juliette Lajoie, *Ste. Famille Federal Credit Union 25th Anniversary, 1938-1963* (n.p., n.d.); *Lewiston Evening Journal*, October 12, 1973, pp. 8-9.

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husbands and wives who both had non-French names headed less than two-fifths (38.6 percent) of the 176 families that baptized their children at Saint Joseph parish in that year. In all other families, one or both parents were Franco-American. Specifically, in 18.8 percent of the families baptizing children at Saint Joseph's in 1960, the husband had a French surname, and the wife had a non-French maiden name; in 24.4 percent, the husband had a non-French surname and the wife's maiden name was French; and in 17.6 percent of the families, both the husband's surname and the wife's maiden name were French.[50] Thus, three-fifths (60.8 percent) of the children baptized at Saint Joseph in 1960 had a father, mother, or both parents who were Franco-American. The changing composition of Saint Joseph parish surprised even the Irish pastor. After reading the marriage banns at Sunday mass around 1957, Reverend James F. Savage remarked that all names were French. "'Sometimes, I wonder what parish I'm in!'" he exclaimed.[51]

Ethnic intermixing also took place at Saint Patrick parish. Of the 104 families baptizing children at Saint

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[50]In one case (0.6 percent) the husband was non-Franco-American and the wife's maiden name was not provided. The data excludes the parents of converts, for they would probably not have been members of the parish. Baptism Register, 1957-1961, Saint Joseph Parish Rectory, Lewiston, Maine, 1960, pp. 57-79.

[51]Baptism Register, Saint Joseph Parish, 1960; Savage, cited in Mary Raymond Higgins, R.S.M., *For Love of Mercy: Missioned in Maine and Andros Island, Bahamas, 1883-1983* (Portland, Maine: Sisters of Mercy, 1995), p. 170; Savage had been born, and had completed his clerical studies, in Ireland. Clergy file, Chancery Archives, Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine.

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Patrick's in 1960, only 27.9 percent were headed by parents who both had non-French names. One-fifth (21.2 percent) of the families had fathers with Franco-American surnames and mothers with non-French maiden names, under one-third (30.8 percent) had fathers with non-French surnames and mothers with French maiden names, and one-fifth (20.2 percent) had parents who both had French names. Thus, nearly three-fourths (72.0 percent) of the families baptizing children at Saint Patrick parish in 1960 had one or both heads who were Franco-American.[52]

The large membership of Franco-Americans in Lewiston's Irish parishes in 1960 highlights several points. First, it reveals a measure of intermarriage between Franco-American and other (notably Irish) Catholics. Second, more often than Franco-American men, Franco-American women at both parishes accepted spouses from outside of their ethnic group, perhaps as an avenue to social mobility. Third, that one-sixth to one-fifth of the families of each parish had heads who were both of French-Canadian descent reveals the increasing anglicization of members of the Franco-American community and suggests, perhaps, a desire for social mobility that anglicization and membership in an English-speaking parish conferred.

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[52]Baptism Register, August 14, 1955-April 28, 1963, Saint Patrick Parish Pastoral Center, Lewiston, Maine, 1960, pp. 51-62. The data for Saint Patrick also excludes the parents of baptized converts.

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While a significant degree of endogamy continued among Franco-Americans, ethnic intermarriage increasingly took place in Lewiston at midcentury. Of the 312 marriages involving Franco-Americans recorded at the Office of the Lewiston City Clerk in 1960, nearly three-fifths (57.7 percent) were between Franco-Americans. Intermarriage rates had increased significantly since the early twentieth century: over two-fifths (42.3 percent) of the marriages involving Franco-Americans, more than double the proportion from 1920, were between a Franco-American and a non-Franco-American in 1960.[53] In slightly more than half (51.5 percent) of these mixed marriages, Franco-American brides took non-Franco-American grooms. While revealing a significant measure of ethnic intermixing since 1920, these figures underscore the fact that Lewiston Franco-Americans at midcentury continued to choose Franco-American spouses a majority of the time. Lewiston's demography made this feasible. Indeed, approximately two-thirds of Lewiston's residents were Franco-American in 1960: 68.7 percent of the men and 65.9 percent of the women in a sample drawn from the city directory had French surnames; conversely, only 31.3 percent of the men and 34.1 percent of the women

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[53]Index of Marriages by Groom's Last Name, Office of the City Clerk, Lewiston, Maine, 2 vols. (1999.) Men with French family names and women with French maiden names were classified as Franco-American. In marked contrast to the Lewiston figures, the intermarriage rate of Franco-Americans and non-Franco-Americans reached eighty percent in Fall River, Massachusetts, in 1961, claims Elliott Robert Barkan in "French Canadians," p. 399.

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in the sample had non-French surnames.[54] Lewiston's demography did not discourage endogamy among Franco-Americans. That so many exogamous marriages took place in 1960 testifies to the declining ethnic identity of the Franco-American community at midcentury. It also reveals the agency of Franco-Americans in integrating further into the larger community.

Le Messager worried about the decline of ethnic identity. It indicated in March 1951: *"Aujourd'hui, dans bien des milieux, la vie franco-américaine n'a rien de franco-américain."* In a March 1950 editorial, *Le Messager* expressed its belief that more and more Franco-American families felt that anglicization served as an avenue to social mobility: *"On croit malheureusement se rehausser en cultivant surtout la langue anglaise."* While acknowledging the value of learning to read, write, and speak English, the newspaper contended: *"Une nationalité qui perd sa langue se dégrade."* It appeared to acknowledge the perception of inferiority on the part of some francophones when it suggested in 1951 that speaking French caused embarrassment, resulting in the language being spoken less and less often.[55]

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[54]City Clerk's Index of Marriages; *Manning's Lewiston Auburn (Maine) Directory for Year beginning November, 1960*, vol. 57 (Springfield, Massachusetts: H.A. Manning, 1960) [hereafter, 1960 Lewiston city directory.] See the Appendix for an explanation of the methodology employed with the 1960 directory.

[55]*Le Messager*, 7 mars 1950, p. 2, 22 mars 1951, p. 4.

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The French-language newspaper deplored the exclusive use of English by francophones. In March 1952, *Le Messager* took *la Survivance Française* to task for hosting a fashion show in English at *l'Hospice Marcotte*. The program chair was a French-speaking Franco-American woman, the audience consisted of women *"toutes de langue française,"* and the commentator served as director of a French radio program, the newspaper pointed out. Yet, except for the opening remarks, the French-language society conducted the entire program in English, *Le Messager* complained, while it underscored the irony of this action by a society with *"survivance française"* as its name.[56]

During the 1950s and 1960s, forces within the Franco-American community promoted a more rapid pace of acculturation than in past decades, much of it centered on the use of English. To counter the momentum towards anglicization, *Le Messager* extolled the advantages of bilingualism at every opportunity. Often, it encouraged parents to continue speaking French at home to their children. In August 1954, for example, it editorialized:

"Aujourd'hui, dans...rien de franco-américain.": "Today, in many homes, Franco-American life has nothing Franco-American [in it.]"

"On croit...langue anglaise.": "We unfortunately believe that we enhance ourselves by cultivating only the English language."

"Une nationalité...se dégrade.": "A nationality that loses its language degrades itself."

[56]*Le Messager*, 28 mars 1952, p. 4.

l'Hospice Marcotte: Marcotte Home

"toutes de langue française": "all French-speaking"

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"Avant qu'il soit trop tard que les parents se fassent donc un rigoureux devoir de parler français à la maison, à leurs enfants et d'exiger d'eux qu'ils la parlent sans honte, sans crainte, sans timidité."[57]

It was a theme often expressed at *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebrations. In 1956, *Sacré-Coeur* parish of Auburn offered the *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day mass, and its pastor, Théodore Bouthot, *"exhorta les parents à parler et faire parler français à leurs enfants au sein de la famille."* At the evening banquet, Bouthot spoke, as had so many *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day orators before him, of preserving the French language, Catholic faith, and French-Canadian traditions. Like him, Pastor Wilfrid Ouellette of Auburn's *Saint-Louis* parish argued on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in 1959 that a significant problem for *survivance* was that too many Franco-American children no longer heard the French language spoken in their homes. Romeo Boisvert, state senator from Lewiston and president of *Le Messager*, asked those who attended the *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day banquet in 1961 to help youth to develop their French-language skills through reading and conversation.[58]

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[57]*Le Messager*, 27 août 1954, p. 4, 30 juin 1955, p. 4, 30 octobre 1958, p. 6, 23 avril 1964, p. 4.
"Avant qu'il...sans timidité.": "Before it is too late parents should make a rigorous effort to speak French in the home, to their children and to demand of them that they speak without shame, without fear, without timidity."

[58]*Le Messager*, 28 juin 1956, p. B-2, 22 juin 1959, p. 2, 19 juin 1961, p. 12.
"exhorta les parents...la famille.": "exhorted parents to speak and to have their children speak French within the family."

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During the 1963 *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebration, Raoul Pinette, president of Pinette Funeral Home, argued that in the aftermath of World War II, a time of great scientific progress, Franco-Americans were losing their language and culture. Technological advances had brought radios, phonographs, and televisions into the homes of Franco-Americans. French-Canadian descendants pointed particularly to the role of television in effecting the changeover from French to English in Franco-American communities like Lewiston. "Television has done a lot for the [French] language being extinct here, I think," opined Cecile Lebel in a 1981 interview. Children in the Lewiston community lost the ability to speak French as a result of watching television, offered Cecile Boisvert, also in a 1981 interview. She added: *"J'ai trouvé que ç'a tellement changé les familles."* In 1964, Norman Fournier argued: "The influence of television, in the last 10 years, has done perhaps more to Americanize the French Canadians than anything else the pro-assimilationist [*sic*] have tried in the past." He continued: "To a large extent, television has killed French Canadian [*sic*] culture in such centers as Biddeford and Lewiston," because it supplanted Franco-American plays and musical productions as family entertainment. Additionally, television gave Franco-Americans greater exposure to the English language and to different lifestyles. One effect of technological progress, Pinette pointed out in his *Saint-Jean-Baptiste*

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Day speech, was that children attending Franco-American schools in 1963 spoke English in the courtyards, quite unlike what they had done twenty and forty years previously.[59]

Lewiston's Franco-American schools anglicized at midcentury. As one marker of that anglicization, beginning in the 1950s, Franco-American youth competed in English against students from the Irish parochial schools, and sometimes against students from the public schools, in speech contests, essay competitions, and spelling bees. Participation by Franco-American parochial school students in these English-language contests represented a milestone in their acculturation. It signified that Lewiston's francophone youth had acquired the English-language skills with which to compete. Contributing in no small measure to this development, Lewiston's Franco-American schools had anglicized their curricula. It seems likely that parents who had received bilingual training in the schools had pushed for this change. So quietly did the changeover take

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[59]J.C. Larochelle, "Lewiston et Auburn fêtent La Saint-Jean-Baptiste," *Le Messager*, 20 juin 1963, p. 5; interview with Cecile Lebel by Mark Silber and Raymond Pelletier, Lewiston, Maine, February 18, 1981, for the project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* Maine Folklife Center, University of Maine, Orono, Maine, accession #1692; interview with Cecile Boisvert by Steffan Duplessis, Marcella Sorg, and Mark Silber, Lewiston, Maine, January 8, 1981, for the project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* Maine Folklife Center accession #1694; Norman Fournier, "Franco-Americans beginning New Era," *Portland Sunday Telegram*, January 26, 1964, p. 1C; Michael J. Guignard, *La foi-La langue-La culture: The Franco-Americans of Biddeford, Maine* (By the Author, 1984), p. 131.

"J'ai trouvé...les familles.": "I found that that so changed the families."

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place in the schools that it evoked no comment from *Le Messager*. By the 1950s and 1960s, students even received religious instruction in English; only their French-language course was not offered in English.[60]

The anglicization of Lewiston's second and third generations in part explains why attendance at Québec's *collèges classiques* dropped markedly after the 1940s. Enrollments at the *Collège de Saint-Hyacinthe* and the *Séminaire Saint-Charles Borromée* totalled 140 in the 1940s, remaining at essentially the same level as in the 1930s, but in the 1950s enrollments at the two *collèges* dropped dramatically to forty-one. If enrollments at the *collèges* of Québec by Lewiston students paralleled those of other New England Franco-Americans, they dropped even further during the first half of the 1960s, when the provincial government took control of Québec's educational institutions from the Roman Catholic Church.[61] The declining enrollments of Franco-Americans at the Québec

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[60]Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 5, 17 février 1951, pp. 111-112, 27 mai 1951, pp. 128-129; Annales des Ursulines, 19 janvier 1954, p. 83, 22 janvier 1957, p. 146, 4 janvier 1961, p. 290; Annales de Sainte-Croix, vol. 2, 14 mai 1962, 20 mars 1965; *Le Messager*, 6 avril 1959, p. 9; Lucien A. Aubé, "From the Parochial School to an American University: Reflections on Cultural Fragmentation," in *Steeples and Smokestacks*, pp. 640-641; personal interview with Sr. Yvette Poulin, C.S.J., who taught at *Sainte-Famille* School from 1945 to 1958 and later served as Superior of the convent until her departure in the early 1970s, Waterville, Maine, August 20, 1993.

[61]Data shared with me by Robert G. LeBlanc; the data on enrollments at *Saint-Charles Borromée* only cover the period to 1956; Robert G. LeBlanc, "A French-Canadian Education and the Persistence of *La Franco-Américanie*," *Journal of Cultural Geography* 8 (Spring/Summer 1988), p. 59.

collèges classiques: classical schools

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collèges at midcentury was evidence of their decreasing connection with Canada.

One reason for this loss of connection was that Lewiston Franco-Americans established their own high school in 1941. Concerned about the rapid anglicization of *Saint-Pierre* parish, the consequent weaknesses in the oral and written French-language skills of its youth, and the lack of opportunity for French-language instruction after grammar school, Dominican pastor Hervé Drouin founded a Franco-American high school in his parish. Ironically, his efforts at ethnic preservation encouraged a loss of connection with Québec. Building a high school, Drouin argued, would help ensure a francophone elite in Lewiston: *"A laisser ces enfants s'engouffrer dans ces boites de High Schools américains, c'est se priver d'une élite française capable de prendre les leviers de commande dans notre vie civique."* Ethnic tensions in the Catholic Church also motivated the pastor, who wrote: *"nous prétendons que sans une école d'enseignement secondaire pour nos garçons nous sommes battus et nous aurons travaillé pendant de longues années à préparer la voie à des curés irlandais."* Drouin also wanted to encourage more Franco-American youth to stay in school. He told an interviewer in 1985 that when he had arrived in Lewiston in 1940, he had found that "'Franco-American kids would finish eighth grade and be pushed into the mills to work.'" Although organized primarily for students from *Saint-Pierre* parish, *Saint-Dominique* High

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School accepted students from other parishes, opening one grade in the fall of 1941 and adding one each year until it became a four-year high school. State law since World War I had required the provision of secondary-level instruction in English, so the Brothers of the Sacred Heart who staffed the school taught all classes except religion and French in the English language. The Lewiston community nonetheless viewed *Saint-Dominique* as a Franco-American school. For instance, a woman religious who taught at the Irish grammar school of Saint Patrick indicated in the 1940s that *Saint-Dominique* did not meet the needs of all Catholic youth, because of the French courses and because instructors spoke with a French accent when teaching in the English language. In 1946, the Dominican Sisters, who had long provided Franco-American girls with two years of instruction beyond the eighth grade in their *cour supérieur*, began offering a four-year program for them as part of *Saint-Dominique* High School. Judging from the surnames of male and female graduates, Franco-Americans comprised over ninety percent of *Saint-Dominique*'s student body in each decade from the 1940s through the 1960s.[62]

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[62]François-M. (Hervé) Drouin, O.P., "Mémoire sur l'administration de la paroisse S. Pierre et S. Paul. De Janvier 1940 à Janvier 1943" (Texte dactylographié, déposé aux archives des Dominicains, Montréal, Québec, 1943), pp. 7-8; Drouin, cited in Charles Hillinger, "French in Maine Bear Bias Quietly," *Los Angeles Times*, January 28, 1985, part 1, p. 12; *Le Messager*, 22 avril 1941, p. 6, 16 octobre 1942, p. 8; *The Brothers of the Sacred Heart, Lewiston, Maine: Golden Jubilee of Service, 1928-1978* (n.p. [1978]); Fr. F.-M. Drouin, O.P., à La Très Révérende Mère Générale, Soeurs Grises le la Croix, Ottawa, Ontario, 4 octobre [19]51, Saint Peter's Parish file, Chancery

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Most of Lewiston's Franco-American youth did not attend *Saint-Dominique*, however. Instead, they attended Lewiston High School. *Saint-Dominique* was small, it charged tuition, and parents preferred to send their children to Lewiston High School for the English-language training they received there. There was little opportunity to speak French at the public high school. According to Geneva Kirk, who began teaching at Lewiston High in 1945, teachers had instructions to stop francophone youth from conversing in French between classes or during recess.[63] By sending their children to Lewiston's public high school, Franco-American parents contributed to the anglicization of the city's francophone youth.

The identity of Franco-Americans was changing at midcentury. Among younger generations, it no longer required an attachment to the French language or to French-

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Archives; Carol Patrell, "The Parochial School System in Lewiston and Auburn" (Typescript [1948?]), p. 2, available in the Lewiston Collection, Lewiston Public Library; *The Spirit Echoes, 1941-1991* [Lewiston, Maine: Saint Dominic Regional High School, 1991.]

"A laisser...vie civique.": "To let these children sink into these American high schools is to deny ourselves of a French elite capable of taking leadership roles in our civic life."

"nous prétendons...curés irlandais.": "we maintain that without a secondary educational institution for our boys we are defeated and we will have worked for many years to prepare the way for Irish pastors."

cour supérieur: upper course

[63]Jacqueline P. Boucher, "The Franco-American in Lewiston" (Senior thesis, Bates College, 1956), p. 36; interview with Ms. Geneva A. Kirk by students of the First Year Seminar 187, Bates College, Lewiston, Maine, February 12, 1996, transcribed by Anne D. Williams in Anne D. Williams, ed., "The Experience of the Great Depression in Lewiston-Auburn, Maine: A Report by First Year Seminar 187" (Typescript, Bates College, winter 1996, reprinted October 1997), pp. 87, 89.

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Canadian traditions. By the mid-1950s, *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebrations attracted few youth, and the programs became smaller with each passing year. Against the redefinition taking place at midcentury, *Le Messager* in 1954 publicized five elements it considered essential to Franco-American identity:

> *UN FRANCO-AMERICAIN est une personne de descendance française ou canadienne-française, née aux Etats-Unis, ou au Canada ou en France, venue par la suite demeurer en pays américains.*
>
> *UN FRANCO-AMERICAIN, pour l'être vraiment et faire honneur à ce titre, doit être fier de ses parents, fier de lui-même, fier de ses ancêtres et du passé de la race dont il est issu.*
>
> *UN FRANCO-AMERICAIN n'a droit vraiment à son titre d'honneur que s'il est né de parents catholiques, s'il est catholique convaincu lui-même, s'il fréquente son église catholique paroissiale et nationale et s'il montre le chemin de l'église à ses enfants.*
>
> *UN FRANCO-AMERICAIN n'a pas honte de parler français en chacune des occasions qui se présentent, publiquement ou autres, surtout au foyer familial et particulièrement dans les réunions de nos associations religieuses, paroissiales, patriotiques et civiques.*
>
> *UN NOM FRANÇAIS ne suffit pas pour dire de quelqu'un que c'est un Franco-Américain. Il faut plus que cela! On n'est pas Franco-Américain seulement quand cela fait l'affaire du portefeuille ou de l'amour-propre!*[64]

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[64]Boucher, "The Franco-American in Lewiston," p. 38; *Le Messager*, 23 mars 1954, p. 4.

> A FRANCO-AMERICAN is a person of French or French-Canadian descent, born in the United States, or in Canada or in France, [who] subsequently came to live in America.
>
> A FRANCO-AMERICAN, truly to be one and to honor this title, must be proud of his parents, proud of himself, proud of his ancestors and of the history of the race in which he is born.

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This article may or may not have originated in the editorial offices of *Le Messager*; by publishing it without attribution or disclaimer, the newspaper expressed its opinion. Through this article, *Le Messager* appeared to emphasize the distinction between "being" and "feeling" Franco-American.[65] For *Le Messager*, "feeling" Franco-American was insufficient to warrant wearing the ethnic label; ethnic identity depended upon active measures. It apparently had not felt it necessary to make such a declaration in earlier decades. *Le Messager*'s definition of Franco-American did not seem to prevail in the Lewiston community.

At midcentury, *Le Messager* appeared to be an anachronism, and it struggled for its life. In the 1930s, the decade when it had become a daily publication, the

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> A FRANCO-AMERICAN does not truly have the right to this title of honor lest he is born of Catholic parents, he is himself a proven Catholic, he attends his national Catholic parish church and he guides his children in the ways of the [Roman Catholic] Church.
>
> A FRANCO-AMERICAN is not ashamed to speak French on each occasion that presents itself, publicly or other[wise], above all in the family home and particularly in the meetings of our religious, parish, patriotic and civic associations.
>
> A FRENCH NAME does not suffice to say that someone is a Franco-American. It takes more than that! One is not Franco-American only when it helps the pocketbook or [one's] pride.

[65]These are terms that sociologist Anny Bakalian uses to differentiate ascribed from voluntary ethnic identification, particularly among different generations of an ethnic population. See *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1993.)

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newspaper had had a circulation of between 9,000 and 10,000; Franco-American identity in Lewiston appeared to have been the most intense during this period. But *Le Messager*'s circulation dropped sharply to 5,300 by 1940, and it declined more gradually to 4,760 by 1951, the year that a member of the Couture family sold the newspaper to a group of 100 stockholders. *Le Messager* struggled financially during the 1950s, changing hands in November 1954, and ending daily production to become a weekly newspaper in September 1955. Its subscriptions declined because third-generation Franco-Americans preferred to read the *Lewiston Evening Journal* or the *Lewiston Daily Sun*, noted a contemporary. By 1958, *Le Messager* had a circulation of 3,200. In February, it resumed twice-weekly publication, but that lasted only until November 1962, when it had to revert to weekly publication to cut costs.[66]

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[66]Kenneth E. Carpenter, "The Franco-Americans in Maine" (Honors thesis, Bowdoin College, 1958), p. 49; Paul-M. Paré, "Les Vingt premières années du *Messager* de Lewiston, Maine," dans Claire Quintal, dir., *Le Journalisme de langue française aux États-Unis* (Québec, Québec: Le Conseil de la Vie française en Amérique, 1984), p. 81; *Le Messager*, 9 février 1951, p. 1, 9 juin 1954, pp. 1, 4, 23 novembre 1954, p. 1, 6 septembre 1955, p. 1, 30 janvier 1958, pp. 3-4, 21 novembre 1962, p. 1; Boucher, "The Franco-American in Lewiston," p. 39. Circulation figures suggest that Franco-Americans probably dropped *Le Messager* in favor of the independent *Lewiston Daily Sun* rather than the Republican *Lewiston Evening Journal*. In 1950, the *Sun* had a circulation of 29,139 and the *Journal* 15,442; by 1960, the *Sun*'s circulation had increased to 31,592, whereas the *Journal*'s had decreased to 14,355. *Maine Register: State Year-Book and Legislative Manual*, no. 82 (Portland, Maine: Fred L. Tower Companies, 1950), p. 228; *Maine Register: State Year-Book and Legislative Manual*, no. 92 (Portland, Maine: Fred L. Tower Companies, 1960), p. 973.

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Support from unexpected sources did not stem the tide toward anglicization and a loosening of ethnic identification. Concerned about the threat of Communism after World War II, the United States increasingly competed against the U.S.S.R. in military and scientific endeavors in what came to be called the "cold war." Following the 1957 launching of the satellite Sputnik by the Soviets, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958 which, among other measures, increased support for education and promoted the acquisition of foreign languages.[67] This led to a profusion of committees and workshops on the French language. After attending a workshop on modern French teaching in 1965, *les Soeurs de la Présentation de Marie* noted in their chronicle: *"Dans son discours final, la présidente de l'assemblée encouragea tous les professeurs de français à tenir ferme leur dévouement à la cause du parler français. Malgré les nombreuses difficultés à vaincre il y a encore espoir de*

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[67]One the federal initiatives was sponsorship of the NDEA Institute, held at Bowdoin College during the 1961 and 1962 summers. Organized for teachers of Franco-American students, the Institute sought to promote French-language retention among New England Franco-Americans as a goal "in the national interest." While acknowledging "French-Canadian speech...as a respectable means of communication," the Institute's program focused on the promotion of standard French. Gerard J. Brault, "The Special NDEA Institute at Bowdoin College for French Teachers of Canadian Descent," *Publications of the Modern-Language-Association-of-America* 77 (September 1962), pp. 1-5. On the effects of the cold war on the domestic front, see Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.) Unfortunately, *Le Messager* provided little information on how the cold war affected the identity and culture of Lewiston's Franco-American population.

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succès."[68] The tide had changed in Lewiston well before the mid-1960s, however. The validation of the French language through federal initiatives during the cold war represented an effort that was too little and too late for Lewiston's francophone community. Its identity at midcentury was evolving rapidly, if quietly, from Franco-American to American.

Even Maine's Irish bishop promoted the French language during the cold war. In 1956, when Bishop Daniel Feeney addressed men and women religious of the Portland diocese at their annual convention of educators, he spoke in English, Latin, and French. Moreover, *"Monseigneur encourage nos villes bilingues à conserver ainsi la culture si louable de l'anglais et du français,"* recorded the Ursuline Sisters of Lewiston. The following year, Feeney promoted bilingualism in English and French in a speech to the regional convention of *la Société l'Assomption,* held in Waterville, Maine. Attendees enthusiastically applauded his remarks.[69] Fragmentary as it is, the above evidence on

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[68]Annales de Sainte-Croix, vol. 2, 2 mars 1965, 26 novembre 1965.
"Dans son...de succès.": "In her final speech, the president of the meeting encouraged all the French teachers to hold firm in their devotion to the cause of speaking French. Despite the numerous difficulties to overcome there is still hope for success."

[69]Annales des Ursulines, 11 octobre 1956, p. 137; *Le Messager,* 23 mai 1957, p. 1.
"Monseigneur encourage...du français,": "Monsignor encourages our bilingual cities to conserve in this way the culture so laudable of English and French,"
la Société l'Assomption: the Assumption Society (an Acadian mutual-aid association with headquarters in New Brunswick)

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the prelate's support for bilingualism suggests that Franco-Americans had maintained the gains they had won earlier in the century during their conflicts with other Irish bishops of Maine. If ethnic disputes between the bishops and Lewiston's Franco-Americans occurred at midcentury, the sources hide them well.

Ethnicity did, however, continue to define relationships at midcentury. Reports in *Le Messager* reveal that the yearly baseball game between the *Canadiens* and the Irish, begun in the early twentieth century and interrupted during the Second World War, resumed after the war had ended. The annual contest, pitting the best Irish and Franco-American ball players of Lewiston-Auburn against each other, often drew 2,000 to 4,000 spectators in the 1940s. The contests lasted at least until the mid-1950s, when their longtime promoter and the coach of the *Canadiens*, Omer Gauvin, decided not to continue organizing them. Lewiston brought back the event in a 1964 summer festival which featured, one evening, a ballgame between Irish and Franco-American teams.[70] That these contests took place as late as the 1950s and 1960s demonstrates the salience of ethnicity in Lewiston. Conversely, their apparent end may serve as a marker of the changing identity of the francophone community.

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[70]*Le Messager*, 10 août 1941, p. 6, 3 septembre 1946, p. 4, 6 septembre 1949, p. 4, 5 septembre 1950, p. 6, 16 août 1956, p. 5, 13 août 1964, p. 13.

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One dimension to Lewiston's Franco-American identity, its political identity, remained solidly Democratic at midcentury. Democratic presidential contenders carried the city from 1940 through 1968; in fact, Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1940s, and John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Hubert Humphrey in the 1960s, each won eighty percent or more of Lewiston's vote. Two days before Kennedy's election, an estimated 15,000 persons turned up before midnight to hear the Catholic candidate speak for forty-five minutes at Lewiston's municipal park, despite both his four-hour delay and the frigid temperature. During presidential election years, Democratic congressional candidates pulled over sixty percent of Lewiston's vote from 1940 to 1952 and over eighty percent from 1956 to 1968. Similarly, Democratic gubernatorial contenders won from sixty-two to seventy-one percent of Lewiston's vote from 1940 to 1952, and over eighty percent from 1956 to 1966. Republicans comprised only a small fraction of the city's Franco-American population at midcentury; in 1949, estimated Bates College student Glenn Kumekawa, they made up a mere fifteen percent of Lewiston's Franco-Americans. The proportion was probably smaller in 1969, when about three-fourths (73.5 percent) of Lewiston's registered voters were Democrats, slightly over one-tenth (11.9 percent) were Republicans, and one-seventh (14.6 percent)

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were Independents.[71] Franco-Americans had made Lewiston the fortress of Democratic candidates.

Franco-Americans dominated Lewiston politics during the forties, fifties, and sixties. Not surprisingly, ethnic voting characterized local politics at midcentury. Indeed, Franco-Americans won the mayoral contest each year from 1940 until 1970; following the guidelines of the 1939 city charter, each candidate gained the mayoralty in a nonpartisan election. Franco-Americans also controlled the City Council until 1964. In that year, when non-Franco-Americans won four of the seven seats on the Board of Aldermen, the *Portland Sunday Telegram* argued that it was the first time in four decades that Franco-Americans would not dominate the City Council. Observers cited by the *Telegram* contended that Lewiston voters were finally exercising independent political judgment and not voting strictly on the basis of ethnic background. According to one unidentified source, the Franco-American Lewiston voter was "'rebelling against the idea that only Franco-Americans

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[71]Ronald L. Bissonnette, "Political Parties as Products of Their Environments, A Case Study of Lewiston, Maine" (Honors thesis, University of Maine-Orono, 1977), pp. 35, 38; la chronique du couvent, la série couvents et paroisses, la sous-série couvent des Apôtres Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, Maine [ci-après, la Chronique des Dominicains], les archives des Dominicains, Montréal, Québec, vol. 17, 6 novembre 1960, p. 139, 8 novembre 1960, p. 139; *Le Messager*, 7 novembre 1960, p. 1; Louis-P. Gagné, "Kennedy," *Le Messager*, 7 novembre 1960, p. 3; Glenn Kumekawa, "Political Factionalism within the Franco-Americans in Lewiston" (Term paper [Bates College, 1949], available at the Lewiston Public Library, p. 17; 1969 figures are derived from data provided in Michael Guignard, "The Franco-Americans: The Relationship between Ethnic Identification and Political Behavior" (Honors thesis, Bowdoin College, 1969), p. 37.

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should rule here. The caliber of some of the Franco-Americans elected here in recent years proves the fallacy of such a policy,'" the person added. The 1964 election results did not mark a temporary change, for non-French-surnamed aldermen won a majority of seats on the City Council in additional elections in the 1960s.[72] As they evolved from Franco-American to American, French-Canadian descendants of Lewiston began to look beyond ethnic boundaries when selecting some of their local government leadership.

Another dimension to Lewiston's Franco-American identity, its working-class identity, also grew more solid at midcentury. By the end of October 1941, workers at the Androscoggin, Continental, Hill, and Bates mills--Lewiston's largest textile mills--had voted to accept union representation. The union elections underscored the intersection of ethnic and working-class identities in the Spindle City as well as the federal government's acknowledgement of that intersection. For example, when Bates Mill employees accepted the Textile Workers Union of

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[72]Kirk and Barrows, *Historic Lewiston: Its Government*, p. 13; Norman Fournier, "End to Bloc Voting Seen in Lewiston's New Council," *Portland Sunday Telegram*, December 13, 1964, p. 20A; *Maine Register: State Year-Book and Legislative Manual*, no. 97 (Portland, Maine: Fred L. Tower Companies, 1965), p. 293; *Maine Register: State Year-Book and Legislative Manual*, no. 98 (Portland, Maine: Fred L. Tower Companies, 1966), p. 304; *Maine Register: State Year-Book and Legislative Manual*, no. 99 (Portland, Maine: Fred L. Tower Companies, 1967), p. 306; *Maine Register: State Year-Book and Legislative Manual*, no. 100 (Portland, Maine: Tower Publishing Company, 1968), p. 310; *Maine Register: State Year-Book and Legislative Manual*, no. 101 (Portland, Maine: Tower Publishing Company, 1969), p. 330.

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America (TWUA) of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) as its union in an October 1941 election mandated by the Federal Labor Relations Board, they voted at *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* hall on ballots that appeared in both English and French. Delighted, *Le Messager* proclaimed that *"le français est la langue de l'accommodation même pour ce qui concerne le gouvernement officiel de Washington."*[73] The ballots in this election, the voting site, and the acceptance of union representation all highlighted the intersection of Franco-American and working-class identities in Lewiston.

Franco-American clergy had to come to terms with this reality. When the TWUA held a banquet in February 1943, pastors Hervé Drouin of *Saint-Pierre* and Félix Martin of *Sainte-Croix* both attended. Franco-American clergy, it seems, finally recognized that they had to support the trade union affiliation of their parishioners. In fact, a couple of weeks after the banquet, Drouin delivered a sermon entitled *"En Marge d'un Départ"* in which he argued that trade unions had served as friends of the working class, pointing to their efforts to eliminate sweat shops, end child labor, and shorten work days. Drouin connected these gains in the labor movement to the pursuit of liberty in the ongoing world conflict: *"'Prenons donc notre effort*

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[73]*Le Messager*, 30 octobre 1941, pp. 1, 10.
"le français...de Washington.": "French is the language of adaptation even for what concerns the official government of Washington."

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de guerre au sérieux, mais ne perdons pas sur le front domestique les libertés pour lesquelles nos soldats se sacrifient aujourd'hui.'"[74] Drouin's words must have resonated with Franco-American workers.

Clergy support for trade unions did not necessarily lead to support for striking, however. In late October 1945, workers from six Lewiston mills voted to join a regional strike on the first of November, if management did not grant their demands for a wage increase, a paid vacation, and a closed shop. At Sunday mass, Marcel Charbonneau, the assistant pastor of *Saint-Pierre*, expressed his view that the impending strike *"'certes, n'arrangera rien.'"* He did not stop there. *"'Cest dans l'harmonie, la paix et les concessions mutuelles que la vie en société devient possible et stable,'"* he stated, before admonishing: *"'A vous, de montrer que vous êtes de vrais chrétiens intelligents et raisonnables. A vous de montrer que vous comprenez la vraie liberté dont nous jouissons dans ce pays et pour laquelle il y a eu tant de sang de*

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[74]*Le Messager*, 8 février 1943, p. 6; Drouin, 21 février 1943, réproduit dans *Le Messager*, 11 mars 1943, p. 8. Only in the late 1930s/early 1940s did Franco-American clergy in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, also come out in favor of trade unions. Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 250.

"En Marge d'un Départ": "A New Beginning"

"'Prenons donc...sacrifient aujourd'hui.'": "'Let us take seriously our war effort, but let us not lose on the domestic front the liberties for which our soldiers are sacrificing today.'"

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versé.'"[75] Charbonneau's conception of "liberty" apparently excluded the right to strike.

Le Messager ostensibly agreed with Reverend Charbonneau, for it introduced his remarks with the comment that he *"a fidèlement traduit les sentiments des gens bien pensants."* On October 31st, the newspaper contended that the decision of 1,300 union members to strike would affect 6,000 local workers. It expressed the concerns of workers who did not want to strike because they worried about unemployment, the high cost of living, and the approach of winter. *Le Messager* further argued that the manufacturers had agreed to all of the demands of workers except supporting further unionization. After the strike began, *Le Messager* affirmed that it supported the rights of workers. But it repeated that the textile mills had agreed to all of their demands except one, an issue that was more important to the union than to the workers, it asserted. This was not solely a local strike, however. In all, 10,000 textile workers from Maine and 20,000 from the New England states of Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire participated in this CIO-organized regional

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[75]*Le Messager*, 29 octobre 1945, p. 1, 30 octobre 1945, p. 1.
"'certes, n'arrangera rien.'": "'certainly will not settle anything.'"
"'Cest dans...et stable,'" "'A vous, de versé.'": "'It is out of harmony, peace and mutual concessions that life in society becomes possible and stable,'" "'[It is up to] you to show that you are true, intelligent and reasonable Christians. [It is up to you] to demonstrate that you understand the true liberty that we make use of in this country and for which so much blood has been spilt.'"

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strike. In Lewiston, 6,000 textile workers struck, and 4,000 of them were Franco-American, estimated *Le Messager*. During the strike, Lewiston unionists from four of the six targeted mills took turns meeting at *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* hall, with Androscoggin Mill workers meeting at 10:00 a.m., those from Continental Mill at 11:00 a.m., the Hill Mill at 1:00 p.m., and the Bates Mill at 2:00 p.m., because the hall could not accommodate them all in one sitting. The strike was not resolved in Lewiston. Company representatives, CIO leaders, and a federal mediator negotiated its end in Boston. When *Le Messager* reported the resolution of this labor dispute in late November, it highlighted the gains workers had made, noting, for example, that their hourly wage had increased, that those working for the same firm for five years would receive a paid vacation of two weeks, and that employers would provide accident and health insurance. But it also pointed out that the strike's successful conclusion had depended upon dropping the request for a closed shop.[76]

In April 1955, 23,000 textile workers from throughout New England went on strike when manufacturers wanted to reduce wages and benefits to those paid in the South. As in 1944, about 10,000 of the strikers were from Maine's

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[76]*Le Messager*, 30 et 31 octobre 1945, p. 1, 2 novembre 1945, pp. 1, 3, 3 novembre 1945, p. 1, 19 novembre 1945, p. 8, 26 novembre 1945, p. 1.

"a fidèlement...bien pensants.": "has faithfully translated the sentiments of thoughtful people."

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industrial cities, including Lewiston. While *Le Messager* did not specify how many of Lewiston's Franco-Americans participated, it is clear from various reports that they were heavily involved in the strikes that took place at the Bates, Pepperell, and Continental mills. In late April, strikers held a dance at *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* hall to raise funds for needy workers. They had to generate some of their own monies because the Lewiston Welfare Department would only aid strikers who did not receive assistance from the the CIO, who had no possessions of value that they could sell to generate cash, and who declared themselves "paupers," a situation which would cost them their right to vote.[77] As had become usual, *Le Messager* sympathized with the workers, indicating *"ces restrictions sont douloureuses, quoiqu'elles signifient un peu d'espoir de secours pour certaines familles nombreuses."* The strikes at the three mills ended between early May and mid-July 1955, with workers from each company accepting salaries and contracts comparable to what they had had before the strike.[78]

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[77]*Le Messager*, 16 et 27 avril 1955, p. 1, 29 avril 1955, p. 4, 30 avril 1955, p. 1. Two decades earlier, in the midst of the Great Depression, the Republican chair of Lewiston's Board of Registration had breathed new life into an old Maine law, which allowed paupers to be excluded from voting, by disfranchising Lewiston voters who had received public assistance. Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), pp. 238-239.

[78]*Le Messager*, 29 avril 1955, p. 4, 2 mai 1955, p. 1, 13 mai 1955, pp. 1, 16, 14 juillet 1955, p. 1.

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Franco-Americans successfully won concessions from their employers during both the 1945 and 1955 strikes. As in the past, the trade union activity and labor protests of Franco-Americans at midcentury revealed their commitment to improving the conditions of their lives in the United States. Participation in the regional textile strikes of 1945 and 1955 demonstrated their solidarity as workers. Their use of *l'Institut Jacques-Cartier* hall for union meetings, elections, and fundraisers underscored their ethnic identification. In short, these activities in the world of work at midcentury demonstrated that Franco-American identity was inextricably tied to working-class identity, something which their newspaper and their clerical leaders had to accept, whatever their aversion to strikes.[79]

Lewiston remained predominantly a working-class community in 1960, and Franco-Americans held most of the blue-collar jobs. Because the 1960 federal manuscript census will not be released for several decades, I drew the following portrait of Lewiston's residents from the 1960 city directory. With ninety-two manufacturers of cotton, wool, rayon, shoe, brass, iron, and electronic products,

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"ces restrictions...familles nombreuses.": "these restrictions are distressing, although they signify a little hope of aid for certain large families."

[79]This contradicts Gary Gerstle's contention that, as the class consciousness of Woonsocket's Franco-Americans grew, their ethnic identification declined. See *Working-Class Americanism*, passim.

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Lewiston continued to promote itself as the "Industrial Heart of Maine" in 1960. Franco-Americans held most of its industrial jobs. In fact, men with French names doubled the proportion of other men who did industrial work, and nearly twice as many Franco-American women held industrial jobs as did other women in the city (see table 6.) Although Franco-Americans had experienced some vertical occupational mobility since 1920, individuals with non-Franco-American family names still held Lewiston's best jobs in 1960. While three-fifths (60.6 percent) of the men and over half (54.2 percent) of the women who did not have French surnames had blue-collar positions, three-fourths of the men (75.9 percent) and women (74.8 percent) with French surnames did.[80]

The concentration of Franco-American men in blue-collar jobs probably explains why so many of their wives worked outside of the home. Three-fourths (74.5 percent) of Lewiston's working wives in 1960 came from Franco-American households. Married women with French surnames were more likely to work than those without French surnames: over half (54.4 percent) of the married women with French surnames worked outside of the home, compared to two-fifths (40.7 percent) of the married women with non-French surnames. Thus, the prevalence of working wives among Franco-Americans, a pattern begun early in the

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[80]1960 Lewiston city directory.

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Table 6
Occupational Distribution in Lewiston in 1960
(in percentages)[a]

Category	Men with Non-French Surnames	Men with French Surnames	Women with Non-French Surnames	Women with French Surnames
WHITE COLLAR				
-Self-governing professional	2.9%	1.0%	0%	0%
-Salaried professional	2.9	1.7	11.9	4.8
-Small business and managerial	12.4	8.5	2.5	2.4
-Semiprofessional	1.8	0.5	1.7	1.4
-Clerical and sales	12.4	5.6	22.9	10.0
BLUE COLLAR				
-Self-employed	1.8	2.7	1.7	1.7
-Non-industrial	37.1	30.0	16.9	5.5
-Industrial	21.2	42.4	35.6	67.6
-Primary sector	0.6	0.7	0	0
Unable to determine	7.1	6.8	6.8	6.6
Number	170	410	118	290

SOURCE: Derived from every twenty-fifth entry in *Manning's Lewiston Auburn (Maine) Directory for Year beginning November, 1960*, vol. 57 (Springfield, Massachusetts: H.A. Manning, 1960.)

[a]Columns may not add up to 100.0 percent on account of rounding.

twentieth century, appears to have persisted into midcentury. Perhaps the wages these wives contributed to their family economies had helped Franco-Americans to achieve the same level (33.8 percent) of homeownership as non-Franco-Americans (33.7 percent) by 1960.[81]

[81]These percentages of homeownership reflect 152 out of 450 household heads with French surnames, and eighty-two out of 243 who did not have French family names. 1960 Lewiston city directory.

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Several other reasons account for the increase in homeownership at midcentury. Through savings accumulated by working overtime during the Second World War, Franco-Americans had acquired sufficient funds to make downpayments on homes after the war was over. The G.I. Bill also helped Lewiston Franco-Americans to purchase their own homes after World War II. So did ethnic networks. For example, politician and general contractor Jean-Charles Boucher built houses in the area immediately north of *Sainte-Famille* Church which he sold on bonds for deeds to those who could not otherwise afford their own homes. One of Boucher's clients, Wilfrid Marcoux, paid Boucher twenty dollars weekly for his mortgage, taxes, water, and insurance for five years in the early 1950s, after which he acquired a bank loan.[82]

The 1960 data reveals Franco-Americans had experienced some vertical occupational mobility by midcentury. Self-employment provided some Franco-Americans an avenue to upward mobility, largely in the construction and building trades for men and in hair dressing for women.

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[82]Interview with Reverend Hervé Carrier by Raymond Pelletier and Mark Silber, Lewiston, Maine, March 19, 1981, for the project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* Maine Folklife Center accession #1697; Sylvie Beaudreau et Yves Frenette, "Les stratégies familiales des francophones de la Nouvelle-Angleterre: Perspective diachronique," *Sociologie et sociétés* 26 (printemps 1994), p. 174; personal interview with Jacqueline LeTendre, daughter of Jean-Charles Boucher, Lewiston, Maine, August 25, 1993; personal interview with Roger Bissonnette of *Sainte-Famille* parish, Lewiston, Maine, August 17, 1993; personal interview with Wilfrid T. Marcoux of *Sainte-Famille* parish, Lewiston, Maine, August 25, 1993.

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Proportionally more Franco-American women than men had salaried, professional jobs in 1960. Ten of the fourteen French-surnamed women with such positions were nurses, while the other four were school teachers or principals.[83] It may be that the *Soeurs Grises* had trained most of these nurses at the nursing school of *Sainte-Marie* Hospital and had thus facilitated their mobility. Future research could provide insight into whether the charitable institutions of francophone women religious enabled Franco-American women over the course of the twentieth century to pursue options for waged work outside of the textile mills and shoe factories, where French-surnamed women of Lewiston remained concentrated in 1960.

The decline of Lewiston's textile industry at midcentury pushed Franco-American men and women into other jobs. Whereas the industry had employed 8,000 in 1951, it provided only 4,000 to 5,000 jobs by 1961. This structural change in Lewiston's economy had the effect of promoting the integration of French speakers with non-francophones. As Franco-Americans moved out of the textile mills into jobs other than those provided by the shoe factories, they often intermixed with non-Franco-Americans and spoke English, particularly if they found white-collar employment.[84]

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[83]1960 Lewiston city directory.

[84]Planning Services Group, Part III: "Economic Base Report," *The Comprehensive Plan, Lewiston, Maine, Program Report* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Planning Services Group, 1962), p. 12; James H.

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Other changes facilitated additional integration on the part of Lewiston's Franco-American population at midcentury. The automobile made possible a postwar migration of young Franco-American families from *Petit Canada* and other parts of downtown Lewiston to the Irish and Yankee suburbs of *Sainte-Famille* and *Sainte-Croix,* which in turn encouraged the intermixing of Franco-Americans with other Lewiston residents. In addition, the Second Vatican Council, which met from 1962 to 1965, encouraged better relations between Catholics and Protestants and led to a greater intermixing of the two groups.[85]

Ironically, as Québec premier Jean Lesage ushered in the Quiet Revolution in 1960 to modernize provincial institutions, strengthen the economy, and improve the position of francophones, hence while he took measures to assert the French identity of Québec, Franco-American communities like Lewiston were losing their French identity. The brother-in-law of Dominican Pastor Alexandre DesRochers of *Saint-Pierre,* Lesage visited Lewiston with

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Parker, "The Assimilation of French Americans," *Human Organization* 38 (Fall 1979), p. 311. On the decline of New England's textile industry in the 1950s and 1960s, see W. Stanley Devino, Arnold H. Raphaelson, James A. Storer, *A Study of Textile Mill Closings in Selected New England Communities* (Orono, Maine: University of Maine Press, 1966.)

[85]James Paul Allen, "Catholics in Maine: A Social Geography" (Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1970), p. 273; Guignard, *La foi-La langue-La culture,* p. 131.

Petit Canada: Little Canada

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his family in 1960.[86] But there is no record that he spoke to the city's residents about changes he envisioned for Québec at that time. *Le Messager*, in fact, did not follow the progression of Québec's Quiet Revolution. Possibly, *Le Messager*'s struggles to stay alive preoccupied it to such an extent that it looked inward and, for that reason, offered no coverage of Québec's evolution in the 1960s. More likely, Franco-Americans and French Canadians had so far diverged that the newspaper felt its readers were not interested. *Le Messager* probably accepted the reality that Lewiston was losing its connection with Canada. Franco-Americans were making fewer trips than in the past to *le pays natal*, they seldom had speakers from Québec presenting the keynote address at the annual *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day banquet, and they opted to educate their children locally. As the proportion of first-generation French-Canadian descendants declined, and as Franco-Americans increasingly chose to intermix with non-francophones in the host society, they less often looked to Canada than they had in the past. At the same time, they less often looked at their local French-language newspaper.

During the 1960s, *Le Messager* tried everything it could to survive. While in the past students had written columns in French for the newspaper, during 1961 they appeared in English and French, and students from both

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[86]La Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 17, 8 août 1960, p. 134.

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parochial and public schools submitted articles for publication. Although the bilingual page, "The Student Reporter/*La Voix de l'Étudiant,*" appeared only during calendar year 1961, its appearance signified *Le Messager*'s resignation to the fact that Lewiston youth no longer possessed the French-language skills of years past. The bilingual section represented an effort on the part of the newspaper to capture the interest of the community's youth. But it did not succeed. Still eking out issues in 1966, *Le Messager* became *Le Nouveau Messager* on August 25, when two of the five columns on its front page carried local news in English. Explained the editor: *"Nous dirigerons nos efforts à vous pourvoir d'un journal de langue française quelque peu parsemé d'anglais pour permettre à certains membres de familles qui aurait des difficultés à lire le français couramment."* The newspaper's management distributed free copies of the refashioned newspaper after Sunday masses in order to increase subscriptions, but it attracted few new customers. *Le Nouveau Messager* complained in September that local youth appeared uninterested in retaining the French language or culture, even at a time when the rest of the nation exhibited growing interest in bilingualism. It asked point blank in the September 22nd issue: *"Les Franco-Américains de Lewiston-Auburn veulent-ils un journal de langue française?"* *Le Messager* concluded its editorial by telling local Franco-Americans that, if they wanted their newspaper

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to survive, they had to subscribe. The newspaper dropped *"Nouveau"* from its name in February 1967, and in mid-June it appeared entirely in French again. A lack of subscriptions and paid advertisements finally took its toll. Its resources exhausted, the longest-running French-language newspaper in the United States published its last edition on May 9, 1968.[87]

Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day parades also ended in the 1960s. A lackluster parade in 1966 appears to have been the last public demonstration of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in Lewiston. By 1969, a mass and banquet were the only means by which Lewiston Franco-Americans celebrated the feast day of French Canadians.[88]

Lewiston's Franco-American parochial schools also declined in the 1960s. Gerard Brault points to four reasons for this development throughout New England in the 1960s and 1970s: high costs due to inflation, a drop in the number of women religious, decreasing birthrates following the postwar baby boom, and declining Catholicism.

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[87]*Le Messager*, 1961, passim, 2 février 1967, p. 1, 9 mai 1968, p. 1; *Le Nouveau Messager*, 25 août 1966, p. 1, 15 septembre 1966, p. 1, 22 septembre 1966, pp. 1, 4; Paré, "Les Vingt premières années du *Messager* de Lewiston, Maine," p. 94.

Le Nouveau Messager: The New Messenger

"Nous dirigerons...français couramment.": "We will direct our efforts to provide you with a French newspaper sprinkled a bit with English to permit [access to] certain family members who would have difficulty reading French fluently."

"Les Franco-Américains...langue française?": "Do the Franco-Americans of Lewiston-Auburn want a French newspaper?"

[88]*Le Messager*, 23 juin 1966, p. 1; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, June 20, 1969, p. 2.

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The Lewiston experience suggests a fifth reason: the anglicization of--or the desire to anglicize--Franco-American youth, whose parents increasingly sent them to the public schools. To some extent, by teaching in English, the men and women religious of Lewiston's Franco-American schools had worked themselves out of jobs. In 1968, the Dominican Sisters withdrew from Lewiston's *Saint-Pierre* and *Saint-Dominique* schools. While those schools remained open, *Sainte-Marie* parochial school closed when the Ursuline Sisters withdrew in the same year. In April 1969, the school board of *Sainte-Famille* estimated that only between thirty-five and forty percent of the parish children of school age attended their parochial school.[89]

The Franco-American parishes were changing at midcentury. In 1964, *Sainte-Famille* led Lewiston's Franco-American churches in the introduction of English masses. In 1967, *Sainte-Famille* offered two weekend masses in English, and *Saint-Pierre* and *Sainte-Croix* each introduced one English mass in that year, while *Petit Canada*'s *Sainte-Marie* Church still celebrated all of its masses in French.[90]

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[89]Gerard J. Brault, "The Achievement of the Teaching Orders in New England: The Franco-American Parochial School," in *Steeples and Smokestacks*, p. 277; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, June 12, 1968, p. 8; Mémorial des Dominicaines, vol. 8, 8 novembre 1967; Annales des Ursulines, 2 juillet 1968, p. 331; Minutes of the Holy Family Parish School Board, April 6, 1969, Holy Family School File, Chancery Archives.

[90]Fournier, *Portland Sunday Telegram*, January 26, 1964, p. 1C; *Lewiston Evening Journal* magazine section, December 16, 1967, p. 7-A; bulletin de la paroisse Saint-Pierre et Saint-Paul, octobre 1967, p. 1; les archives des Dominicains; *Le Messager*, 2 novembre 1967, p. 4.

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The Canadian-born pastor of *Saint-Pierre*, Louis-Philippe Fiset, had to acknowledge cultural realities. Unable to change the tide, he informed his provincial in Québec in March 1967 that *Saint-Pierre* had to offer bilingual services to keep anglicizing youth in the parish: *"nous ne pouvons rien faire dans cette évolution anglicisante."* In a letter to parishioners in June, Fiset argued that *Saint-Pierre*'s survival depended upon introducing English masses; the parish was losing families to the Irish parishes because its youth functioned in English, he contended. Eighty-six percent of the parishioners surveyed a few years back had supported the introduction of at least one mass in English, Fiset indicated, before concluding: *"Nous sommes rendus à la croisée des chemins et nous n'avons plus le choix."* In late September, before introducing one weekly mass in English, Fiset pointed out that Franco-American youth could not gain much from attending mass if they did not understand French, and he emphasized that Vatican II had promoted the idea of communicating in relevant languages.[91]

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[91]Jules Antonin Plourde, O.P., *Qui sont-ils et d'où viennent-ils? Nécrologe dominicain, 1965-1990,* tome 2 (Montréal: Les Dominicains au Canada, s.d.), p. 140; Louis-P. Fiset, O.P., au T.R.P. Thomas-M. Rondeau, O.P., Prieur Provincial, 23 mars 1967, les archives des Dominicains, dossier de Lewiston; Louis-P. Fiset, "Aurons-nous une messe en anglais?" bulletin de la paroisse Saint-Pierre et Saint-Paul, juin 1967, p. 1, les archives des Dominicains; *Le Messager*, 28 septembre 1967, p. 1.

"nous ne...évolution anglicisante.": "we can do nothing [to stop] this anglicizing evolution."

"Nous sommes...le choix.": "We are at a crossroads and we no longer have a choice."

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At *Sainte-Croix*, the parish council (a by-product of the Second Vatican Council) voted to start offering an English mass in November 1967. That decision must have pained Reverend Félix Martin, a native of the Aroostook county town of Fort Kent who had attended *collège classique* and seminary in Québec, and who had served as pastor of *Sainte-Croix* since 1939. Newspaper accounts from the 1950s portray Martin as a vigorous defender of the French language and culture. On *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in 1951, Martin argued the need to continue speaking and reading French in order to preserve the language. He contended that mixed marriages threatened cultural survival: *"'Dans ces unions, celui qui cède, ce n'est pas le conjoint de langue anglaise, mais celui de langue française.'"* In 1953, Martin proudly indicated that *Sainte-Croix* students still received a half-day of French instruction and not a half-hour, and that children and women religious still spoke French in the schoolyard. At the 1958 *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebration, which *Sainte-Croix* hosted, Martin spoke of the need to remain French. Martin must have supported only reluctantly the parish council decision to introduce an English mass at *Sainte-Croix* in 1967. Still under the leadership of Martin, *Sainte-Croix* in October 1969 was the sole Franco-American parish in Lewiston to celebrate only one weekend mass in English; in that year, *Saint-Pierre* and *Sainte-Marie* parishes each offered two

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weekend masses in English, while *Sainte-Famille* offered three.[92]

More than simply reflecting existing cultural realities, *Sainte-Famille* had facilitated the anglicization of the parish community since 1926, when *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph de Lyons* had begun teaching in the parochial school and offering only one hour of instruction in French each day. The sisters continued promoting English at midcentury. Third-generation French-Canadian descendant Marc Boisvert spoke no English when he entered first grade at *Sainte-Famille* in the mid-1950s; consequently, the sisters asked his parents to purchase a television set to help him learn the language, and they did. As late as the mid-1960s, *les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph* asked the parents of francophone children to speak English at home so that their offspring could develop facility with English. When Reverend Josaphat P. Sevigny, born in Québec but raised and educated in the United States, became the second pastor of *Sainte-Famille* in 1961, the parish had for decades led Lewiston's Franco-American community in the promotion of English. By the time of Sevigny's arrival, ethnic

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[92]*Le Messager*, 6 octobre 1953, p. 10, 2 novembre 1967, p. 4; typescript notes of Reverend Philip Desjardins, Chancery Archives; Marcel Blouin, "Il faut retrouver le climat français dit le curé Martin," *Le Messager*, 25 juin 1951, pp. 3, 10; Marcel Raymond, "Echos de la St-Jean," *Le Messager*, 23 juin 1958, p. 1; *Lewiston Evening Journal* magazine section, October 11, 1969, p. 6-A; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, Oct 11, 1969, p. 9.

"'Dans ces...langue française.'": "'In these marriages, the one who gives in is not the English-speaking spouse but the French-speaking one.'"

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retention and acculturation had largely become dichotomous goals in the parish community. Following the introduction of English masses under Sevigny's stewardship, Irish families joined *Sainte-Famille*, which promoted ethnic intermixing in the parish community.[93] At midcentury, not just *Sainte-Famille*, but all of Lewiston's Franco-American community was in transition. *Sainte-Famille* simply moved at a faster pace than the other parishes of the Spindle City.

In conclusion, the identity of French-Canadian descendants in Lewiston changed in the period from the 1940 to 1970. During the early 1940s, ethnic retention and acculturation still represented intertwined goals. After World War II, however, these goals became disconnected as the Franco-American community, particularly the younger generations, increasingly pursued acculturation over *survivance*. The pace of change quickened in the 1950s, and it accelerated more rapidly in the 1960s. External forces, such as television, the closing of textile mills, changes in the Catholic Church initiated by the Second Vatican Council, and continued discrimination against francophones in the postwar era all contributed to the acculturation of

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[93]*Church World*, March 17, 1972, p. 22, June 19, 1975, p. 4; personal interview with Reverend Real J. Nadeau, assistant at *Sainte-Famille* from 1962 to 1966, Lewiston, Maine, August 23, 1993. I learned English only after my parents followed the sisters' advice and made it the language of our household.

les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph de Lyons: the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Lyons

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Lewiston's Franco-American community. These external forces did not precipitate change, however. They merely spurred a process already under way. More likely, they caused Franco-Americans to view acculturation and ethnic preservation as incompatible objectives. When these goals diverged, Franco-Americans loosened their connection with Québec, younger generations became unilingual English speakers, their schools declined, the Franco-American parishes introduced English masses, *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day parades ended, and that venerable defender of French-Canadian ethnicity, *Le Messager*, ceased publication. These significant developments were the result of a long, historical evolution.[94] They took place at midcentury as French-Canadian descendants in Lewiston actively, if quietly, pursued a change in identity from Franco-American to American.

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[94]The historical evidence does not support the view of sociologist and Auburn native James Hill Parker that Lewiston francophones underwent "a cataclysmic shift in cultural orientation" during the 1960s, as he argues in "The Assimilation of French Americans," pp. 309-312, and in *Ethnic Identity: The Case of the French Americans* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983.)

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CHAPTER SIX

Americans of French-Canadian Descent, 1970-2001

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In the mid-1980s, Ernie Gagné, an office products salesman from Lewiston and grandson of the late Louis-Philippe Gagné, took on the persona of "Frenchie" for WBLM radio of Auburn. During the morning program, Gagné, who did not get paid for his role, would phone the radio station to banter with the disc jockeys in French-accented English. During one routine, for example, "Frenchie" could not complete the task of counting the station's record albums because he kept losing count after three. After moving to Portland, WBLM had a listening audience of 188,000 in Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. It had aired the morning show with "Frenchie" for over seven years when attorney Jed Davis, a director of the Holocaust Human Rights Center of Maine, filed a complaint with the Maine Human Rights Commission. Davis took issue with the negative stereotyping "Frenchie" perpetuated of a sizable population that had endured prejudice in Maine. WBLM claimed the program represented satire and refused to take it off the air. Davis and Lewiston native Paul Paré of *l'Association Canado-Américaine* both countered that programs that made fun of blacks would not be viewed as acceptable; neither should WBLM's show making fun of Franco-Americans. Eugene Lemieux, president of *l'Association Canado-Américaine,* argued: "'If a young person listens to 'Frenchie' and they recognize their father or grandfather has the same accent, they might become embarrassed and submerge their identity.'" Eighty

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members from the Augusta, Biddeford, Waterville, and Lewiston councils of *l'Association Canado-Américaine* met in Lewiston to petition to have "Frenchie" taken off the air.[1]

Journalist Paul Carrier situated the "Frenchie" controversy in the context of discrimination against Franco-Americans. A native of Southbridge, Massachusetts, he argued that Franco-Americans in Maine endured greater prejudice than those in Massachusetts because so many other ethnic and racial minorities existed as targets in Massachusetts. While WBLM might air the "Frenchie" program, it "wouldn't dream of reviving 'Amos and Andy,'" he asserted. In Maine, "'dumb Frenchmen' jokes are so commonplace that even the most 'politically correct' among us feel free to tell them," he complained. "Franco-American cashiers who make an honest mistake have been conditioned to apologize for being French, as if their errors are genetic," he contended. In Maine, he continued, "misguided Franco-Americans laugh louder than anyone else at mean-spirited insults that are thinly disguised as

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[1]Alan Clendenning and Greg Gadberry, "'Frenchie' Will Go on the Air to Discuss His Radio Character," *Portland Press Herald*, February 11, 1993, pp. 1A, 12A; Donat B. Boisvert, "'Frenchie' Issue Asks: What Is Humor?" Lewiston *Sunday Sun Journal*, October 17, 1993, p. 3D; Paul F. Davis, "'Frenchie' Releases Cassette," Lewiston *Sun Journal*, December 22, 1993, p. 1; *Sun Journal*, January 16, 1993, p. 1; Elizabeth Edwardsen and Christine Young, "Adieu, Frenchie: WBLM's Self-Proclaimed Comic Quits to Protect His Privacy," *Sun Journal*, February 12, 1993, p. 1; Niki Kapsamblis, "More Francos Are Angry over 'Frenchie,'" *Sun Journal*, January 26, 1993, pp. 1, 8; Lemieux, cited in *Sun Journal*, February 6, 1993, p. 32; Greg Gignoux, "Franco-Americans Petition to Get Rid of 'Frenchie,'" *Sun Journal*, February 9, 1993, pp. 1, 8.

l'Association Canado-Américaine: the Canado-American Association

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humor."[2] This self-deprecation seemed to bother Carrier the most.

When reporters learned "Frenchie's" identity and contacted him at home and work, he quit the radio program. When he did, Ernie Gagné defended his use of ''self-deprecating humor.'" He complained: "'It is highly distressing to me that, in a country that prides itself on freedom of speech and expression, that [*sic*] so few people can impose their standards of correctness on so many.'" Franco-Americans from the Lewiston area wrote letters to the editor to defend "Frenchie." Like him, a woman from Sabattus decried the loss of first amendment rights resulting in "Frenchie's" coming off the air, and she suggested that "the snobs in Lewiston" happened to "think they are better than anyone else." Without reflecting on the distinction between ascribed and voluntary ethnic identification, she further contended that the late Lewiston mayor, Ernest Malenfant, "used to speak like 'Frenchie,' and no one seemed to find it offensive." A man from Auburn who had enjoyed "Frenchie's" program offered "a suggestion for those folks who took offense to Frenchie: Lighten up and learn to laugh at yourself!" A man from Lewiston wrote: "I, for one, tell lots of French jokes and stories and will continue to do so. I could easily change

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[2]Paul Carrier, "Lafayette, Where Are You?" *Portland Press Herald*, February 9, 1993, p. 13.

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the lines to Polish or Italian." A woman from Lisbon complained that "Frenchie's" detractors had deprived her of the enjoyment of listening to him in the morning. Reflecting an inaccurate knowledge of history, she continued: "The Franco-Americans (along with many other ethnic groups) fled to the new world to escape persecution. Now they've turned on one of their own." These letter writers all had French surnames. Other Franco-Americans publicly supported "Frenchie," including his cousin, Louis-Philippe Gagné, who carried their grandfather's name. Louis-Philippe Gagné founded a group called "Francos for Frenchie" to try to get his cousin back on the air.[3]

The controversy over "Frenchie's" radio program reveals how much Franco-American identity had changed by the late twentieth century. As the previously intertwined goals of ethnic retention and acculturation unraveled, so did the bonds that held the Franco-American community intact. The discourse of "Frenchie's" defenders reflected an ignorance of the historic circumstances French-Canadian descendants had experienced during the previous century and a half. Gone with older generations of Franco-Americans like journalist Louis-Philippe Gagné was the firm resolve to fight against discrimination. Franco-Americans have tended to go along with ethnic jokes that put them down

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[3]Edwardsen and Young, "Adieu, Frenchie," p. 1; Gagné, cited in Edwardsen and Young, "Adieu, Frenchie," pp. 1, 8; *Sun Journal*, February 20, 1993, p. 5; *Sunday Sun Journal*, February 21, 1993, p. 3D; Davis, "'Frenchie' Releases Cassette," p. 8.

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rather than doing something to end them, wrote Franco-American author Denis Ledoux during the controversy. That a non-Franco-American had filed the complaint with the Maine Human Rights Commission over "Frenchie's" radio program underscores his point. In Ledoux's analysis, "young people cannot learn to take pride in their heritage when all around them their ethnicity is openly portrayed as lacking in intelligence and sophistication." Donat B. Boisvert argued that divisions in the Franco-American community over the program reflected generational differences. He pointed out that younger Franco-Americans had not been subject to "Dumb Frenchmen" and "Frog" jokes. (The term "frog" had long been used as an ethnic slur against Franco-Americans.) "Frenchie had no reason to assume that his cultural badge of honor would be called into question; he was simply going for laughs," Boisvert wrote. "Critics of his performances, however, felt that his younger audience on a rock station was vulnerable. Without an appropriate historic context, these listeners might find it acceptable to laugh at Franco-American culture."[4] This lack of "historic context" distinguishes contemporary Franco-Americans from their ancestors. In the past, *Le Messager*, Franco-American clergy, and speakers on *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day, who knew the lessons of history

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[4]Denis Ledoux, "Francos Have Too Long Acquiesced," *Sun Journal*, March 22, 1993, p. 5; Boisvert, "'Frenchie' Issue Asks: What Is Humor?" p. 3D.

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well, would communicate them to readers and listeners with whom they bonded as a result of a shared language, religion, and culture. Third- and later-generation Franco-Americans lacked this historical perspective.

By the late twentieth century, Franco-Americans had evolved into an amorphous population, one without a clear cultural identity. Language, faith, and traditions no longer united French-Canadian descendants as an ethnic group, nor did employment in the mills following the decline of Lewiston's textile industry. Younger generations increasingly distanced themselves from their ethnic roots and expressed embarrassment because their elders spoke French-accented English. Not only did Yankees and other English speakers poke fun at francophones, but Franco-Americans themselves did. Franco-Americans appeared to lack the resolve to fight against prejudice. Yet, they did not abandon all vestiges of their ethnic identity from the 1970s through the 1990s. In fact, curves in the road from Franco-American to American during these final decades of the twentieth century challenge notions we have of the process of assimilation in the United States.

Less evidence is available on the experiences of Franco-Americans during the last several decades of the twentieth century than there was for earlier periods of their history. Lewiston did not have a daily or weekly French-language newspaper in the late twentieth century. Fewer Catholic records exist for this period, largely due

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to the fact that orders of men and women religious declined in number and ended their ministries in Lewiston. In addition, there were fewer naturalization records.

Indeed, there were few French-Canadian migrants to naturalize. During the 1970s, forty-nine French-Canadian Lewiston migrants became U.S. citizens and, during the 1980s, a mere twenty-three did. Naturalization records suggest that most of the seventy-two French-Canadian naturalizers were probably postwar migrants to the United States. Naturalization forms indicate the year of arrival to the U.S.A. only until 1976. Thirty-nine of the forty-one persons for whom we have this information (out of seventy-two persons) had migrated to the United States between 1947 and 1968. Forty of the seventy-two were women, and thirty-two were men, continuing a postwar pattern whereby naturalizing women slightly outnumbered men.[5]

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[5]Naturalization data for the period from 1970 to 1991 comes from the Superior Court of Maine at Auburn Naturalization Records, vol. 47, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 65-76, National Archives and Records Administration, Waltham, Massachusetts. These records will be cited as "naturalization records, 1970-1991" throughout the rest of this chapter. It should be noted, however, that the naturalization records of the Superior Court ended in 1974; while the District Court handled naturalization petitions until 1991, no French Canadians of Lewiston naturalized there between 1988 and 1991, after which the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) took over the processing of naturalization petitions. In the 1970s three minor girls, and in the 1980s one minor boy, became U.S. citizens when their parents filed naturalization petitions on their behalf; they are included in our data. Another five men and three women with French surnames naturalized at the U.S. District Court in Portland, Maine, in the late 1970s, but there was no information on the naturalization form about their places of birth or emigration, nor even about their country of nationality; they were therefore excluded from the data.

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About two-thirds (65.3 percent) of the persons who naturalized in the 1970s and 1980s did so at the federal court in Portland. Political machinations at the local courthouse did not lead to this outcome, however, as they had one century earlier. When the Superior Court of Maine in Auburn stopped processing naturalization petitions in 1974, French-Canadian migrants of Lewiston had to use the U.S. District Court in Portland.[6]

As in prior periods, the overwhelming majority of the French-Canadian migrants who naturalized in the 1970s and 1980s had been born in Québec counties south of the Saint Lawrence River. Only about one-seventh (13.9 percent) of the naturalizers had been born outside of the province of Québec, a proportion slightly higher than in previous periods, and most of them had come from New Brunswick. A tiny proportion (4.2 percent) of the naturalizers had been born in Québec counties north of the Saint Lawrence River (see map 7.) As in the past, counties south of the river had furnished most of the naturalizers, and Beauce county had again sent the largest proportion--from 26.4 to 37.5 percent. Together Beauce and Compton, neighboring counties on Maine's western border, had furnished from

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Naturalization records, 1970-1991. On postwar naturalization trends, see Reed Ueda, *Postwar Immigrant America: A Social History* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994), pp. 126-127.

[6]Naturalization records, 1970-1991.

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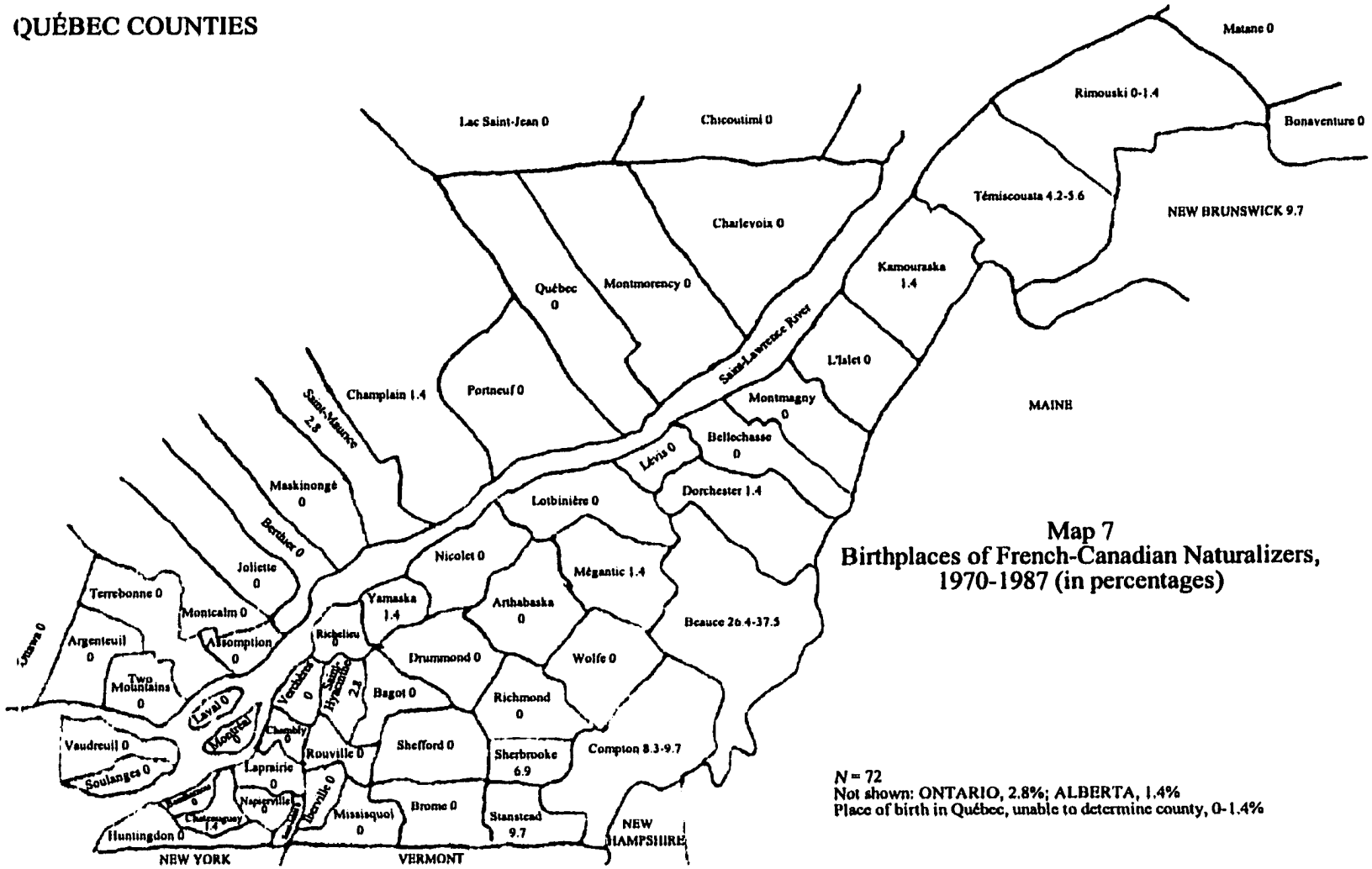

Map 7
Birthplaces of French-Canadian Naturalizers, 1970-1987 (in percentages)

N = 72
Not shown: ONTARIO, 2.8%; ALBERTA, 1.4%
Place of birth in Québec, unable to determine county, 0-1.4%

one-third (34.7 percent) to nearly one-half (47.2 percent) of Lewiston's French-Canadian naturalizers of the 1970s and 1980s.[7]

Because of changes in naturalization forms, we have considerably less information about the French-Canadian migrants who acquired U.S. citizenship in this period. We can, for example, determine the age of migrants at the time of their border crossing only until 1976. Under half (46.2 percent) of the women and over half (53.3 percent) of the men who naturalized from 1970 to 1976 had arrived in the United States as minors under the age of eighteen. One-third (33.3 percent) of the twelve women who had migrated as minors naturalized within five years of their twenty-first birthday, and one-half (50.0 percent) naturalized within ten years of turning twenty-one. Half (50.0 percent) of the eight men who had arrived in the U.S.A. as minors under eighteen naturalized within five years of reaching twenty-one, and under two-thirds (62.5 percent) did so within ten years.[8] Thus, what little data we have on the length of time it took French-Canadian migrants to naturalize from the early to mid-1970s suggests that women had waited longer than men to become U.S. citizens.

This was not the case among the migrants who had arrived in the United States as adults. One of the seven

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[7]Naturalization records, 1970-1991.

[8]Naturalization records, 1970-1991.

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men (14.3 percent) and two of the fourteen women (14.3 percent) who had crossed the international border as adults naturalized within ten years of their arrival; over half (57.1 percent) of the women and under half of the men (42.9 percent) naturalized within fifteen years of their migration.[9] Among the French Canadians who had migrated to the United States as adults, women had waited no longer than the men to naturalize.

Naturalization forms provide little information about the families of petitioners. Only until 1977 do they indicate their marital status. From 1970 to 1977, nearly three-fourths (73.3 percent) of the men and slightly over three-fourths (76.9 percent) of the women were married at the time of their naturalization.[10] We do not know whether the spouses of these naturalizers were U.S. citizens, potentially motivating the petitioners to become citizens themselves.

We have more complete information on the age of naturalizers. During the 1970s, slightly more than one-fourth (26.7 percent) of the women were over forty. The proportion more than doubled in the 1980s, reaching the same high level (60.0 percent) as in the 1950s. One of the women who naturalized in the eighties, Marie Laure Simone Marquis had been born in Beauce county and had become a

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[9]Naturalization records, 1970-1991.

[10]Naturalization records, 1970-1991.

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U.S. citizen while in her mid-fifties; her naturalization form does not indicate whether she had waited a considerable length of time to naturalize, as had so many of the French-Canadian migrants who had become U.S. citizens in the 1950s. In contrast to the women, the proportion of men over forty remained under one-third in both the 1970s (31.6 percent) and 1980s (30.8 percent.) Judging from the absence of INS letters attached to the naturalization papers of French-Canadian petitioners from the 1970s and 1980s, none appears to have given up or lost his or her U.S. citizenship.[11]

None of the seventy-two who naturalized in the 1970s and 1980s anglicized his or her name. The three women and four men who modified theirs dropped the baptismal names of Marie and Joseph. All but one selected their first name from among their middle names. To take two examples, Joseph George Rene Lavoie became Rene George Lavoie, and Marie Lise Ginette Poulin became Ginette Lise Poulin.[12]

While naturalizers of the seventies and eighties did not anglicize their French names, considerable anglicization took place in the Lewiston community during the last several decades of the twentieth century. When parents and grandparents spoke to their children and

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[11]Naturalization records, 1970-1991; Marquis' naturalization record is from the U.S. District Court, vol. 72, #15274.

[12]Naturalization records, 1970-1991; Lavoie's and Poulin's naturalization records are from the U.S. District Court, vol. 70, #14910. and vol. 69. #14512. respectively.

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grandchildren in French, they often responded in English. French became a foreign language to Franco-American youth. In fact, in 1986 half of the 368 students enrolled in French courses designed for non-francophones at Lewiston High School had French surnames. At Saint Dominic High School, students hesitated to speak French because their skills were not strong enough, or because they spoke non-standard French; putting the latter point differently, "'they don't want to identify with what they hear in their surroundings,'" observed French teacher Sr. Solange Bernier.[13]

What Lewiston youth heard in the city often was a mixture of French and English, sometimes in the same sentence. They also heard French sentence structures applied to the English language, resulting in awkward constructions. One twenty-two-year-old woman from Lewiston, a University of Maine student, told her interviewer in 1991, for example, that her grandmother, rather than saying "'Throw my shoes down the stairs,'" might say '"Throw me down the stairs, my shoes.'" This student had negative feelings about her background and "does not like to talk about her Franco-American ancestry. She is embarrassed at the stereotype [*sic*] that are placed

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[13]Pierre Vincent Bourassa, "The Catholic Church in the Franco-American Community" (Honors thesis, Bowdoin College, 1978), p. 65; Paul Carrier, "The Franco Factor: French Heard Less and Less," *Sunday Sun Journal*, September 28, 1986, pp. 1A, 12A; Bernier, cited in Carrier, September 28, 1986, p. 12A.

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on her because of her background," noted Amy Bither, her interviewer. "She has worked hard to put herself through college. She does not want to be associated with the typical image of an uneducated 'Frenchie,'" Bither continued.[14] Given that Franco-American youth could have such strong negative feelings about their culture, it is not surprising that the Lewiston community continued to anglicize rapidly in the late twentieth century.

Despite the negative feelings some contemporary Franco-Americans have about their culture, and despite the community's anglicization, traces of French-Canadian ethnicity persist in Lewiston. The language of masses reflects this. In 2000, *Saint-Pierre*, *Sainte-Croix*, and *Sainte-Marie* (before its closing during the summer) each still offered one weekend mass in French, while *Sainte-Famille* conducted all masses in English, as it had since 1991. But, when *Sainte-Famille* parish celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1998, the mass's opening song and second reading were in French, while all else was in English.[15] The language of masses at Lewiston's Franco-

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[14]Amy Bither, "Then and Now: Ste. [*sic*] Jean Baptist Holiday: Lewiston, Maine" (Term paper, University of Maine, fall 1991), Charles Stewart Doty Papers, Special Collections, Fogler Library, University of Maine-Orono, pp. 10-12.

[15]*Sun Journal*, June 22, 1991, p. 6; "Holy Family Parish 75th Anniversary, November 8, 1998, Lewiston, Maine," VHS video.

Saint-Pierre: Saint Peter
Sainte-Croix: Holy Cross
Sainte-Marie: Saint Mary
Sainte-Famille: Holy Family

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American churches thus reveals two tendencies in the late twentieth century: anglicization on the one hand, and cultural persistence on the other.

So does aggregate census data. When census takers came around in 1970, three-fifths (59.9 percent) of Lewiston's population reported having French as a mother tongue. In 1980, just over two-fifths (43.0 percent) of those age five and above spoke French at home. Not surprisingly, the city's youngest residents were the least likely to speak French in 1980: only 18.4 percent of youth between five and seventeen years of age spoke French at home, while 49.6 percent of persons eighteen and over did. The proportion of Lewiston's population, age five and over, that spoke French at home dropped to one-third (34.0 percent) in 1990.[16] While the above figures suggest considerable anglicization among members of Lewiston's Franco-American community in the late twentieth century, they also reveal that a sizable proportion of the city's residents still spoke French.

In fact, Lewiston was one of three New England cities in 1990 that had more than 10,000 francophone residents.

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[16]Figures are derived from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population: 1970*, vol. 1, part 21 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 185; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1980 Census of Population*, vol. 1, chapter C, part 21 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), p. 110; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population, Social and Economic Characteristics: Maine* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993) [hereafter, 1990 census], p. 234.

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Only Boston surpassed Lewiston. The 19,530 French speakers of Boston made up four percent of its population, and the 10,960 French speakers in Manchester, New Hampshire, comprised twelve percent of that city's population. With 12,590 francophones in 1990, Lewiston ranked second in New England in the number of residents who spoke French at home; among the three cities, Lewiston had by far the highest proportion (34.0 percent) of French speakers.[17]

Data compiled from the 1992 city directory provides a contemporary portrait of Lewiston's community and underscores the continued high concentration of Franco-Americans in the city. Of the 889 listings in the sample, three-fifths (59.2 percent) represented French-surnamed residents.[18] Those with non-French family names remained a minority in Lewiston in the late twentieth century.

Among the married women identified in the sample, over three-fifths (62.2 percent) of those who worked outside of the home in 1992 were the spouses of Franco-American men. But women married to Franco-American men were no more likely to work in that year than were those wedded to men

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[17]Madeleine D. Giguère, "New England's Francophone Population Based upon the 1990 Census," in Claire Quintal, ed., *Steeples and Smokestacks: A Collection of Essays on the Franco-American Experience in New England* (Worcester, Massachusetts: Éditions de l'Institut français, Assumption College, 1996), pp. 570, 582-583; 1990 census, p. 234.

[18]*1992 Catalist: Business and Household Digest of Lewiston-Auburn* (Loveland, Colorado: USWest Marketing Resources, 1991) [hereafter, 1992 Lewiston city directory.] See the Appendix for an explanation of the methodology employed with the 1992 city directory.

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with non-French family names. Specifically, 47.1 percent of the married women with French last names worked outside of the home, and 47.6 percent of those with non-French surnames did.[19] This change from 1960 suggests one way in which Franco-American households had become more like those of non-Franco-Americans by the end of the century.

Similarly, the data suggests that the family sizes of Franco-Americans and non-Franco-Americans had become comparable by 1992. In 98.3 percent of the households with French family names, there were three or fewer children under the age of eighteen living at home. This was the case in 90.0 percent of the households with non-Franco-American surnames.[20]

Homeownership statistics reveal that Franco-Americans had made significant economic gains by century's end. Over half (51.7 percent) of the Franco-Americans in the sample owned their homes, compared to two-fifths (39.1 percent) of the non-Franco-Americans. The differential between Franco-American and non-Franco-American-surnamed individuals may in part be explained by persistence patterns, for 17.9 percent of the non-Franco-Americans in the sample were new to the Lewiston area, compared to 7.2 percent of the Franco-American households.[21]

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[19]1992 Lewiston city directory.

[20]1992 Lewiston city directory.

[21]The figures include mobile home ownership. The proportions for new residents may have been higher, for the directory provides no indication of the length of residence of about one-third of either

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Occupational data from the 1992 Lewiston directory reveals a tremendous drop since 1960 in the proportion of French-surnamed men and women in industrial employment. In 1960, 42.4 percent of the men with French family names had earned their living in industrial jobs, while only 13.2 percent did in 1992 (see table 7.) The decrease among French-surnamed women was even more striking. While 67.6 percent had had industrial jobs in 1960, only 12.3 percent did in 1992. The closing of textile mills and shoe factories in Lewiston and Auburn eliminated many of the jobs Franco-Americans had long held.[22] In 1992, a greater proportion of men with French surnames could be found in non-industrial and self-employed blue-collar positions as well as in clerical, sales, and semiprofessional white-collar jobs; in that same year, nearly double the proportion of men held small business and managerial jobs than had been the case in 1960. Women with French surnames expanded their ranks the most in clerical and sales positions. But they also moved into non-industrial blue-collar jobs, as well as into semiprofessional, small

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the Franco-American or non-Franco-American households. 1992 Lewiston city directory.

[22]*Manning's Lewiston Auburn (Maine) Directory for Year beginning November, 1960,* vol. 57 (Springfield, Massachusetts: H.A. Manning, 1960); 1992 Lewiston city directory. By 1990, the Lewiston economic area (which included the surrounding cities and towns of Auburn, Mechanic Falls, Poland, Lisbon, Sabattus, and Greene) employed only 1,023 in the textile industry and 1,702 in the leather industry. Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards, *Census of Maine Manufactures, 1990* (Augusta, Maine: Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards, 1991), pp. 35-36, 45.

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Table 7
Occupational Distribution in Lewiston in 1992
(in percentages)[a]

Category	Men	Women	Unknown[b]
Persons with Non-French Surnames (*N* = 233)			
WHITE COLLAR			
-Self-governing professional	3.1%	2.4%	0%
-Salaried professional	11.6	16.9	19.0
-Small business and managerial	17.1	9.6	14.3
-Semiprofessional	3.1	8.4	14.3
-Clerical and sales	7.8	16.9	23.8
BLUE COLLAR			
-Self-employed	0.8	0	0
-Non-industrial	29.5	21.7	9.5
-Industrial	7.8	7.2	0
-Primary sector	0.8	0	0
Unable to determine	18.6	16.9	19.0
Number	129	83	21
Persons with French Surnames (*N* = 353)			
WHITE COLLAR			
-Self-governing professional	0%	0%	0%
-Salaried professional	1.1	5.8	0
-Small business and managerial	15.8	7.1	0
-Semiprofessional	3.2	4.5	0
-Clerical and sales	7.9	31.2	33.3
BLUE COLLAR			
-Self-employed	5.3	0.6	0
-Non-industrial	35.8	18.8	22.2
-Industrial	13.2	12.3	22.2
-Primary sector	0	0	0
Unable to determine	17.9	19.5	22.2
Number	190	154	9

SOURCE: Derived from every fifteenth entry in the *1992 Catalist: Business and Household Digest of Lewiston-Auburn* (Loveland, Colorado: USWest Marketing Resources, 1991.)

[a]Columns may not add up to 100.0 percent on account of rounding.

[b]The gender of a number of individuals could not be determined because of the use of initials in the city directory and because some names are given to members of both genders.

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business, and managerial white-collar positions. This occupational mobility facilitated acculturation. As Franco-Americans moved out of the textile mills and shoe factories, particularly as they entered white-collar positions, they had more occasion and greater need to speak English.[23] Structural changes in Lewiston's economy thus promoted the acculturation of its francophone community, particularly among the women, its cultural hearthkeepers.

Although the gap had narrowed considerably since 1960, in 1992 individuals with French surnames, regardless of gender, were more concentrated in industrial occupations than those without French family names. While the proportion of women in blue-collar jobs was nearly the same whether they carried a French surname or not, the proportion varied greatly among men. Over half of the men with French surnames and under two-fifths of those without French family names held blue-collar jobs in 1992.[24] In short, while vertical occupational mobility promoted acculturation, the lack of mobility among significant proportions of Lewiston's Franco-American population probably contributed to cultural persistence.

The institutions of the *Soeurs Grises* may have helped Franco-American women to achieve a measure of upward occupational mobility in Lewiston. Among the nine French-

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[23]1992 Lewiston city directory; James H. Parker, "The Assimilation of French Americans," *Human Organization* 38 (Fall 1979), p. 311.

[24]1992 Lewiston city directory.

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surnamed women at the salaried, professional level, four were nurses. Three of the four nurses worked at the institutions of the *Soeurs Grises*, or Sisters of Charity, such as Saint Mary's hospital or the nursing home, D'Youville Pavillion.[25] This suggests, as does data from the 1960 portrait presented in the last chapter, that the institutions of women religious may have facilitated some of the mobility that Lewiston's Franco-American women enjoyed by 1992.

Considerable ethnic intermixing took place in Lewiston in the late 1990s. In 1998, the Lewiston City Clerk's office recorded 228 marriages in which one or both individuals had a French family name. The data reflects a significant amount of ethnic intermarriage: just under three-fourths (73.2 percent) of the marriages were of couples in which one member did not have a French family name. Only about one-fourth (26.8 percent) of the marriages were between French-surnamed persons and therefore probably endogamous. Because mixed marriages had taken place between Franco-Americans and non-Franco-Americans throughout the twentieth century, relying solely upon French family names to discern ethnicity is problematic; yet, there is no feasible alternative. However imperfect, the evidence suggests that endogamous marriages celebrated among Franco-Americans in Lewiston in

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[25]1992 Lewiston city directory.
Soeurs Grises: Grey Nuns

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1998 had declined by more than half since 1960. As in prior periods, the data suggests that Franco-American women were somewhat more inclined than Franco-American men to take spouses of another ethnic background, for slightly more than half (52.1 percent) of the mixed marriages involved French-surnamed brides, and under half (47.9 percent) grooms with French family names.[26]

Judging by the Franco-American composition of Lewiston's former Irish parishes, ethnic intermixing also increased within the city's Catholic institutions. The directory of Saint Joseph parish reveals that half of its membership was Franco-American in 1999. Of the 1047 families listed, 526 (50.2 percent) had Franco-American surnames. Under half of the members of Saint Patrick parish were Franco-American in the same year. Of the 527 families listed in that parish's directory, 236 (44.8 percent) had French surnames.[27]

A 1996 development may have served as a cause or consequence of Saint Patrick's changing demographics. When the Irish pastor of Saint Patrick resigned due to ill health, the bishop, faced with a shortage of priests, appointed the Franco-American pastor and vicar of Saint Peter's to take over the ministry of Saint Patrick's. Both

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[26]Index of Marriages by Groom's Last Name, Office of the City Clerk, Lewiston, Maine, 2 vols. (1999.)

[27]Saint Joseph Parish directory, Saint Joseph Parish Rectory, Lewiston, Maine, July 7, 1999; Saint Patrick Parish directory, Saint Patrick Parish Pastoral Center, Lewiston, Maine, 1999.

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parishes had declining populations. Without addressing ethnic differences specifically, Bishop Joseph Gerry remarked, "I am asking the parishioners to work together in developing a greater sense of a Catholic community rather than simply a parochial one."[28] Although the bishop's decision to "twin" the administration of the two parishes led to a flurry of newspaper articles and letters to the editor, none focused explicitly on ethnic differences between the two parishes; while those differences may have been the subtext over which community members expressed their concerns, it is likely that the increased intermixing of Irish and Franco-American Catholics since midcentury had tempered members of both Saint Peter and Saint Patrick.

Although ethnic retention and acculturation no longer were intertwined goals among Franco-Americans in the late twentieth century, the evidence suggests that they had nonetheless proceeded in tandem since midcentury. That is, as the Franco-American community anglicized during the final decades of the century, it also made some attempts to instill ethnic pride, to retain French-Canadian lifeways, and to preserve the French language. Efforts promoting cultural renewal led to mixed results but nonetheless

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[28]Bishop Joseph Gerry, O.S.B., "'The Time Has Come to Consider a New Style of Ministry in the Lewiston Area,'" *Church World*, June 27, 1996, pp. 10-11; *SS. Peter and Paul Parish, Lewiston, Maine, 1870-1996, Paroisse Saint Pierre et Saint Paul* (Lewiston, Maine: SS. Peter and Paul Parish, 1996), pp. 31-32.

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demonstrated bends in the road from Franco-American to American.

The 1970s were a time of apparent ethnic resurgence in Maine, a time when the federal government funded bilingual education programs through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, when Saint Francis College in Biddeford founded its Institute of French-Canadian Culture, and when the Orono and Portland-Gorham campuses of the University of Maine offered courses in French-Canadian literature. In the early 1970s, Lewiston founded its *Centre d'Héritage Franco-Américain* in a classroom at *Saint-Dominique* High School. It collected articles, pictures, books, and other memorabilia on French-Canadian descendants. Funding from the Maine Arts and Humanities Commission supported the cultural programs and art exhibits of the center as well as symposia.[29] Today, Lewiston-Auburn College houses the French-Canadian Heritage Collection, an important resource for the local community as well as researchers, and the College continues to organize French-Canadian cultural programs and exhibits.

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[29]"Le Centre d'Héritage Franco-Américain de l'Etat du Maine," texte dactylographié, dossier sur Lewiston, Maine, Bibliothèque Mallet, Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Woonsocket, Rhode Island; Lance Tapley, "Franco-American Heritage Movement Is Catching Fire," *Maine Sunday Telegram*, March 19, 1972, p. 3D; brochure entitled "Festival Franco Américain," July 20-27 [1980], file on ethnic groups, Androscoggin County Historical Society, Auburn, Maine.

Centre d'Héritage Franco-Américain: Franco-American Heritage Center

Saint-Dominique: Saint Dominic

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Several bilingual newspapers appeared in Lewiston in the 1970s to fill the void left by *Le Messager*'s dissolution. The first, *Vérité*, gained its funding from the Model Cities Administrative Budget around 1971 but came to an end in 1972 after local officials tried to exercise control over its content. Its reincarnation, *Observations*, appeared in June 1972, after securing funding independent of Lewiston city officials, but it only lasted six months.[30]

A controversial publication, *Observations* brought to light problems francophones had gaining access to public services. For example, it complained about the practice of the Lewiston office of the Maine Department of Health and Welfare of turning away French speakers and telling them to return with interpreters. Employees at the local bureau, the newspaper alleged, were bilingual but either could not or would not translate information. *"Ça leur avait pris beaucoup de courage pour se présenter en premier lieu,"* the newspaper contended, *"et plusieurs, ne pouvant pas trouver d'interprète parce qu'ils n'en connaissent pas ou bien parce qu'ils ont honte d'avouer qu'ils ne peuvent pas parler l'anglais correctement, ne retournent jamais au Health and Welfare."* This humiliation, charged *Observations*, resulted in francophones being denied the

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[30]Lewiston, Maine, *Observations*, June 23, 1972, p. 2; Armand Chartier, *Histoire des Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, 1775-1990* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 1991), p. 350.

Vérité: Truth

Observations: Observations

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benefits they deserved. To take one other example, *Observations* complained that the sergeant answering calls at the Lewiston police station from 1:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. could not communicate in French, unlike the two daytime sergeants, and he had to resort to a dictionary or to an interpreter, resulting in precious time lost. While anglophones had twenty-four-hour police protection, francophones only had sixteen, *Observations* complained.[31]

The third bilingual newspaper launched in Lewiston in the 1970s, *l'Unité* began publication in May 1976 and lasted until 1984. During the late 1970s, it appeared quarterly, and in the early 1980s, nearly monthly. By June 1981, *l'Unité* distributed about 6,000 copies at no charge. It discussed the activities of Franco-American clubs in Lewiston and Auburn, French-language events and contests at Saint Dominic High School, and other news relating to Franco-American culture. It also reported on events taking place in Québec.[32]

This renewed interest in Québec marked a change from the 1950s and 1960s; it provides a clear example of the

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[31]Chartier, *Histoire des Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 350; *Observations*, July 21-August 4, 1972, pp. 1, 5; José Léveillé, *Observations*, September 1-15, 1972, pp. 1, 13.
"Ça leur...premier lieu," "et plusieurs...Health and Welfare.": "It took them a great deal of courage to apply [for benefits] in the first place," "and several, unable to find an interpreter because they do not know one or really because they are ashamed to admit that they cannot speak English correctly, will never return to Health and Welfare."

[32]Lewiston, Maine, *L'Unité*, May 1976, June 1981, pp. 1, 4.
l'Unité: Unity

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non-linearity of acculturation in the United States. For its part, Québec, which experienced intense nationalism in the late twentieth century, sought to re-establish ties with Franco-Americans. To this end, the government of Québec opened an office in Boston in 1969. The Québec Bureau worked with Franco-Americans to bring French-language programs to cable television stations in New England and New York; it must have been through such collaboration that Lewiston could first tune in to a Québec television station in the 1970s. Québec's Ministry of Culture also donated books to support Lewiston's *Centre d'Héritage Franco-Américain* in the early 1970s.[33]

At present, both technology and Canada's cancer care crisis have promoted contact between the *Québécois* and Franco-Americans. By 1999, cable television viewers in Lewiston could tune in to three French channels from Québec. Phil Nadeau, Lewiston's assistant city administrator, indicated in 1999 that he watched these channels to maintain his French-language skills and to keep current on Québec's separatist movement. Another connection between Franco-Americans and French Canadians stems from the crisis in Canada's health care delivery system, which led to a huge backlog of cancer patients awaiting treatment at Québec hospitals. By January 2000,

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[33]Chartier, *Histoire des Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, p. 366; Tapley, "Franco-American Heritage Movement Is Catching Fire," p. 3D.

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Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC) of Lewiston was one of five U.S. hospitals with which Québec's Ministry for Health and Social Services had contracted to provide cancer treatment. Ironically, CMMC was the hospital founded in the late nineteenth century in opposition to the French hospital of *les Soeurs Grises*. Today, a French-speaking social worker at CMMC assists the francophone patients; volunteers from the Franco-American community also help, whether by offering rides in the local area or a meal in their home.[34]

Other efforts have taken place during the past several decades to promote ethnic retention in Lewiston. Some, like the bilingual education program, were of limited duration. In 1970, Lewiston secured federal funding to provide bilingual instruction in English and French at three elementary schools, but the city's Board of Education dropped the program after two years. *Observations* offered several reasons for its discontinuance. Because of the lack of turnover among faculty, and the absence of local funds to create new positions, the school system used bilingual aides in the classrooms and not bilingual teachers as federal guidelines required; not only did teachers complain that the work of the aides disrupted

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[34]Daniel Hartill, "Cable TV Adds Third French Channel," *Sun Journal*, October 26, 1999, p. B1; Hope Ullman, "On the Way to Wellness," *Sunday Sun Journal*, January 2, 2000, pp. B1, B5. For background on Québec's separatist movement, a helpful (though dated) study is Kenneth McRoberts, *Quebec: Social Change and Political Crisis*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988.)

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their classrooms, but the federal government also would no longer accept Lewiston's remedy of utilizing only bilingual aides. The Bilingual Program chafed the Franco-American school superintendent, the newspaper suggested, by its "'militant'" advocacy in spring 1972, during which it distributed stickers advocating "'Frog Power.'" An ethnic slur, the term "frog" was turned around and used in this case as an assertion of French-Canadian ethnicity. In the final analysis, *Observations* attributed the end of the Bilingual Program to the lack of community support and to the pressure to assimilate: "If growing up French in Lewiston has, in fact, had negative overtones, then it is little wonder that Francos were slow to support the program. Many of them have spent most of their lives rejecting their 'Frenchness' in favor of assimilation by an Anglo environment." Suggested *Observations*: "What was needed, then, was a driving force to reverse the trend toward assimilation and establish positive feelings about French language and culture. Right or wrong, it appears that the School Department was not prepared to take on the role of missionary."[35]

A decade later, Lewiston's Franco-American community still expressed little interest in the possibility of establishing a bilingual education program. When the Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services conducted a

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[35]*Observations*, June 23, 1972, pp. 1, 4, 5.

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study in 1984-1985 to guage interest in establishing a program for third-grade students, it found a "'more negative (attitude toward French) among the Francos than the non Francos [*sic*],'" reported Barney Berube, a department official. This led him to conclude that bilingualism in Lewiston in the future would probably be found primarily among non-Franco-Americans and would be tied to intellectual rather than ethnic interest in the French language.[36]

Founded in fall 1974, *l'Unité Franco-Américaine*, a federation of nearly thirty societies from Lewiston and Auburn, worked to promote Franco-American culture and to unite Franco-Americans. It succeeded in getting a second French-language cable television station for the Lewiston-Auburn community as its first project, and it published the newspaper *L'Unité*. In 1975, it organized a *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day celebration at Our Lady of the Rosary Church in Sabattus, which the Franco-American societies of Lewiston and Auburn attended. Assisted by Franco-American pastors from the local area, the Canadian-born Dominican pastor, Reverend Raymond Laframboise, offered an outdoor mass to 500 people; following the mass, 350 persons stayed to enjoy a bean supper and evening program of dance and

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[36]Paul Carrier, "The Franco Factor: Beseiged Language, Culture Expected to Survive," *Sunday Sun Journal*, October 19, 1986, p. 10A; Berube, cited in Carrier, October 19, 1986, p. 10A.

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music, marking the only public celebration of the feast day of French Canadians in the 1970s.[37]

Not until the early 1980s was there another public celebration of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in the Lewiston area. In 1983, the Canadian-born Dominican pastor of Saint Peter's Church, Roger Gabriel Blain, planned a special mass for this feast day. *Le Centre d'Héritage* co-sponsored the celebration which included a social hour, buffet, and evening program.[38] Surely, it was no coincidence that French-Canadian pastors helped Lewiston area Franco-Americans to organize public celebrations of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in 1975 and 1983. The Canadianization of the Dominican order in the early 1900s had led to a steady supply of French-Canadian pastors to Lewiston, and they had helped the city to preserve its ethnic identity. The 1983 activities comprised, however, the last public celebration of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in Lewiston.

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[37]Paul Paré, "L'Unité Franco-Américaine: C'est pour tout le monde," *L'Unité*, hiver 1977-1978, pp. 1, 7; Gerard J. Brault, *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England* (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1986), p. 239 (n110); *L'Unité*, printemps 1978, p. 1; la chronique du couvent, la série couvents et paroisses, la sous-série couvent des Apôtres Pierre et Paul de Lewiston, Maine [ci-après, la Chronique des Dominicains], les archives des Dominicains, Montréal, Québec, vol. 17, 23 juin 1975, pp. 290-291; Jules Antonin Plourde, O.P., *Qui sont-ils et d'où viennent-ils? Nécrologe dominicain, 1965-1990*, tome 2 (Montréal: Les Dominicains au Canada, s.d.), p. 222.

l'Unité Franco-Américaine: Franco-American Unity

[38]Tom Robustelli, "French People Should Have a Holiday, Too, Says Sen. Charette," *Lewiston Journal*, March 26, 1982, p. 8; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, June 2, 1983, p. 12; St. Peter's Parish File, Chancery Archives, Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine.

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But, reflecting a curve in the road from Franco-American to American, the feast day reappeared as a private celebration in the 1990s. At the request of Franco-American residents, *Maison Marcotte*, founded by the Sisters of Charity and now functioning as an independent living center, commemorated *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in the 1990s with ethnic food like *tortière*, the singing of French songs, and waltzing. In 1997, the journalist reporting on *Maison Marcotte*'s celebration, while somewhat trivializing it in her conclusion, hinted at how far Franco-Americans had diverged from French Canadians in Québec: "Although the holiday has evolved to focus on separatist aspirations in Quebec, at Maison Marcotte it seems to have become a time for eating birthday cake and reminiscing."[39] Most importantly, the public celebration of *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day in 1975 and 1983, and the private celebrations at *Maison Marcotte* in the 1990s, counter assumptions that acculturation in the United States is a linear process.

Other efforts also counter these assumptions, including renewed contact with Québec, the attempt to promote bilingual education in the local schools in the early 1970s, the founding of bilingual newspapers, the establishment of *Le Centre d'Héritage*, and the formation and activities of *L'Unité Franco-Américaine*. In 1976, this

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[39]Carol Clapp, "St. Jean Still Remembered in Lewiston," *Sun Journal*, June 25, 1997, pp. 1A, 8A.

Maison Marcotte: Marcotte Home

tortière: meat pie, usually made with pork

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federation organized Lewiston's first Franco-American festival. The festival's purpose, recorded the Dominican priests, was one *"où l'ame franco américaine [sic] se retrempera dans ses traditions chaleureuses et familières et ranimera sa culture contemporaine."* The Franco-American festival became an annual event attracting tens of thousands of people. In 1979, for example, 130,000 persons attended. The eight-day celebrations, held at Kennedy Park, featured music, French-Canadian foods, exhibits, open air French classes, as well as non-French-Canadian activities, such as carnival rides. The festivals, with their beery carnival atmosphere, ended in the late 1980s. After a hiatus of about five years, a refashioned festival, called the *Festival de Joie,* came to Lewiston in 1993 and has since returned yearly to the Central Maine Civic Center. While featuring French-Canadian foods, Cajun and French-Canadian music and entertainment, and opening with the national anthems of the United States, Canada, and France, the *Festival de Joie* has evolved into a multicultural festival. In 1998, for example, it also featured Italian, German, Scandinavian, Irish, Mexican, Greek, Israeli, and country western music, as well as exhibits by Israeli, Scottish, Greek, and Native American groups.[40] While retaining French-Canadian flavor and a

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[40]*L'Unité*, May 1976, p. 1; la Chronique des Dominicains, vol. 17, 8 mai 1976, pp. 297-298; Dennis Hoey, "City to Swell for Franco Festival," *Lewiston Daily Sun*, July 15, 1980, p. 17; "Festival Franco Américain" brochure, July 20-27 [1980], Androscoggin Historical

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French name, the *Festival de Joie* is now a multicultural event.

The evolution of Lewiston's *Festival de Joie* symbolizes the changing identity of the city's Franco-American population. The continued existence of the festival suggests that interest in French-Canadian culture has not died out in Lewiston as Franco-Americans have evolved. The multicultural theme reflects that Franco-Americans see themselves as "one piece in the great American mosaic."[41] In short, they view themselves as Americans of French-Canadian descent.

Lewiston's Franco-American festival facilitated the founding of another ethnic organization in the city. In 1986, a Franco-American veteran from outside of Maine attended Lewiston's festival to recruit other veterans to start a local post of the Franco American [*sic*] War Veterans, Inc., an organization that existed in other New England states. Beginning with about twenty members, Lewiston Post #31 grew to 124 members by 1998. Although

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Society; Mark Shanahan, "Franco Fest Is on Again," *Sun Journal* February 6, 1993, pp. 1, 8; brochure, "6th Annual Festival de Joie, July 31-August 2,1998," in my possession.

"où l'ame...culture contemporaine.": "where the Franco-American spirit will be re-immersed in its warm and familiar traditions and will rekindle its contemporary culture."

Festival de Joie: Festival of Joy

[41]Here, I am echoing the title of an early introduction to French-Canadian heritage by Robert B. Perreault, *One Piece in the Great American Mosaic: The Franco-Americans of New England* (Lakeport, New Hampshire: André Paquette Associates, 1976.)

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one need not be Franco-American to join, most members are of French-Canadian descent.[42]

Today, most Franco-American clubs lack vitality. Despite having made allowances for the use of English at their meetings, or having in fact changed their language from French to English, they have been unsuccessful in attracting youth to their organizations, and their membership is both aging and declining. In the past, most of the Franco-American organizations had snowshoe clubs, and they organized sports events and other activities for their members. As ethnic ties have loosened, so has interest in the Franco-American clubs. Today, they appear to lack a clear sense of purpose around which to organize and attract new members.[43]

The foregoing suggests an ambivalence about Franco-American identity in the late twentieth century. This ambivalence is rooted in the problem of low self-image. In 1986, Paul Carrier noted having heard numerous anecdotes of Lewiston Franco-Americans calling themselves--or being

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[42]This information comes from a discussion I had with members of the Franco American War Veterans, Inc., Post #31, at the *Festival de Joie* on August 1, 1998, and from typescript notes providing general information on the organization's history, which the veterans distributed from their booth at the festival.

[43]Les minutes des assemblées, les archives du Club Jacques-Cartier, Sabattus, Maine, vol. 5, 8 juin 1984, p. 293; "Franco-American Social Clubs" (audiocassette, Maine Public Broadcasting [1993?]); Paul Carrier, "Clubs Survive, but Change Is in the Wind," *Sunday Sun Journal*, September 28, 1986, pp. 1A, 11A; Jonathan Van Fleet, "Le Club Richelieu proche fini," *Sun Journal*, July 20, 1998, p. B1; discussion with Russ Merrill, president of the Jacques-Cartier Club, Sabattus, Maine, November 12, 1999.

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called--"dumb Frenchmen" after having made mistakes at their places of work. He attributed the self-deprecatory remarks to a lack of pride and even to an element of "self-loathing."[44] Divisions within the Franco-American community over "Frenchie's" radio program in the early 1990s underscored their ambivalence and low self-image.

Persistent discrimination against Franco-Americans has contributed to these problems. Unlike in the past, when ethnic identity was stronger, contemporary Franco-Americans are reluctant to confront discrimination. In 1991, for example, it was Bates College students who protested against college policy forbidding francophone food service and maintenance employees from speaking French at work. "The policy constitutes gross hypocrisy on the part of the College, which prides itself on both fostering a diverse atmosphere at Bates and on encouraging a healthy relationship with the Lewiston-Auburn community," contended the editor of the *Bates Student*. Continued the editor: "The language ban obstructs diversity and favorable relations with the community, since it sends a message that Bates disapproves of the culture that surrounds us." A Franco-American student whose first language was French, but who in 1991 was learning it as a foreign language, argued the college policy contributed, perhaps unwittingly, to "the relentless extinction of a once proud culture." In

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[44]Paul Carrier, "The Franco Factor: Negative Image Takes Heavy Toll on Area Francos," *Sunday Sun Journal*, September 21, 1986, p. 1A.

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reversing the policy, Bates administrators indicated they had not been aware of the unwritten rule forbidding French in the presence of non-francophones. Despite the reversal, Franco-American employees still felt uneasy about speaking French at work, complained a student of French-Canadian descent in January 1992. He elaborated: "Tonight while an elderly French Canadian [*sic*] woman served me noodles, I heard a younger worker reminding her she had to say everything in English." In the student's view, "it was as if someone [had] insulted my own Memere!" Despite the policy change, the student further contended, "many of the older women still feel they cannot speak French and if they do or if they complain they will lose their jobs."[45]

One recent development augurs well for Lewiston. In 1997, the *Forum Francophone des Affaires* (*FFA*), an international trade association of thirty-six countries, selected Lewiston as its U.S. headquarters. The *FFA* seeks to promote tourism, business, and trading. U.S. companies that join the association can receive assistance with the French language, such as translating contracts.[46] The *FFA*'s presence in Lewiston validates the city's Franco-American

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[45]Karlene K. Hale, "Bates Lifts 'Don't Speak French' Rule," *Portland Press Herald*, November 21, 1991, pp. 1A, 12A; *Sun Journal*, November 19, 1991, p. 4, November 21, 1991, p. 14; *Bates Student*, November 15, 1991, pp. 4, 7, January 17, 1992, p. 9.
Mémère: grandmother

[46]Jonathan Van Fleet, "FFA to Call Lewiston Home," *Sun Journal*, September 13, 1997, pp. 1A, 7A; brochure on the FFA, file Forum Francophone des Affaires, Androscoggin County Historical Society.
Forum Francophone des Affaires: Francophone Business Forum

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community. In promoting contact with francophone businesses in other countries, it may contribute to French-language retention and Franco-American pride in Lewiston.

Another valuable organization came to the Lewiston area in 1981. In that year, the American-Canadian Genealogical Society of Manchester, New Hampshire, formed a chapter in Lewiston-Auburn.[47] It survives to this day, providing a collection of resources to aid French-Canadian descendants in the quest of tracing their roots. This genealogical society is but one effort in late-twentieth-century Lewiston that has raised the interest of the community in its ancestry.

The arrival of the genealogical society and particularly the *Forum Francophone des Affaires* have given Lewiston a boost at a time when its Franco-American institutions are in decline. The shortage of men and women religious has had a profound impact on Lewiston's Franco-American community. Moreover, one of the changes the Second Vatican Council inspired in the Roman Catholic Church was greater choice for women religious. Previously, sisters received assignments (called "obediences") from their superiors. Following Vatican II, women religious had more latitude to pursue different callings, which they did after engaging in a "discernment" process in conjunction with their communities to determine how they might best

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[47]*L'Unité*, janvier 1981, pp. 1-2.

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serve. As a result, women religious have opted for ministries outside of education and have pursued work in such areas as pastoral counseling, social services, and foreign missions. Consequently, the number of women religious educating children in Maine's parish schools continued to decline from the 1970s, requiring replacement by lay faculty, which increased the operational costs of the schools. These problems led Holy Family to close its parochial school in 1973.[48] In 2001, only Holy Cross and Saint Peter grammar schools and Saint Dominic High School remain open; men and women religious no longer administer or staff these institutions, although the faculty of each may contain one or two religious in any given year.

A shortage of priests led the Dominicans to withdraw from both Sabattus and Lewiston. No longer able to staff the Sabattus mission, the Dominicans turned it over to the Diocese of Portland in the mid-1970s, more than half a century after Bishop Louis Walsh had struggled with them for title to the property. In 1986, the Dominicans also

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[48]Yvonne Goulet, "Sisters Play Vital Role in Life of the Diocese," *Church World*, May 29, 1975, pp. 4-5; Reverend William K. McDonough, "Mini-Congress Reveals New Directions for the Sisters of St. Joseph in Maine," *Church World*, July 9, 1971, p. 5; Sr. Theresa Morin, S.C.I.M., "Today's Women Religious: 'Their Ministry Is Integral,'" *Church World*, September 1, 1972, p. 12; Sr. Janet Gagnon, C.S.J., "Sisters of St. Joseph: Return to Founder's Insight, Vision," *Church World*, May 1, 1980, p. 14; Donald C. Hansen, "Maine Catholic Schools Await Supreme Court Decision," *Maine Sunday Telegram*, March 21, 1971, p. 4A; Holy Family School file, Chancery Archives.

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withdrew from Saint Peter's parish and turned its assets over to the Diocese of Portland.[49]

Today, only three Franco-American parishes remain in Lewiston. Following the decline of the textile and shoe industries, and the movement of families to the outskirts of Lewiston, the population of Saint Mary's parish dropped to under 300 families by 2000. The parish no longer had the resources to support itself. Created when Bishop Louis Walsh divided *Saint-Pierre* parish in 1907, Saint Mary once again forms part of Saint Peter's. The Franco-American Heritage Committee, headed by the chair of the *Festival de Joie*, purchased the church from the Diocese of Portland for one dollar and plans to raise the funds required to make necessary repairs and to convert the structure into a Franco-American museum and cultural center. Like Saint Mary's population, that of Saint Peter's also declined from midcentury as youth moved from downtown Lewiston to the city's outskirts. Once Lewiston's largest Franco-American parish, Saint Peter trailed both Holy Family and Holy Cross in the number of families in 1996. Only the suburban parishes of Holy Family and Holy Cross thrive today.[50]

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[49]*Lewiston Daily Sun*, June 19, 1978, p. 15; Paul Badeau, "SS. Peter and Paul Parish: Dominicans Turn Administration over to the Diocese," *Church World*, June 19, 1986, p. 10; Our Lady of the Rosary Parish file, Chancery Archives; Henry Gosselin, "'A Parish Only One Year, and Already We've Begotten a Mission!'" *Church World*, December 2, 1976, pp. 16-17.

[50]Interview with Reverend Hervé Carrier by Raymond Pelletier and Mark Silber, Lewiston, Maine, March 19, 1981, for the project, *"Notre vie, notre travail,"* Maine Folklife Center, University of Maine, Orono, Maine, accession #1697; Michael Gordon, "Doors Closing at City

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In the late twentieth century, Lewiston's Franco-American parish credit unions evolved into institutions whose common bond expanded beyond the parishes they served and included non-Franco-Americans. In December 1969, for example, *Sainte Famille* Federal Credit Union amended its charter so that anyone living within the boundaries of the parish, whether or not they were members of Holy Family Church, could join the credit union. As the parish aged and *Saint Pierre* Credit Union attracted few young members, it expanded its field of membership in 1981 to the entire city of Lewiston, and in 1985 changed its name to Community Credit Union to reflect that modification. *Sainte Famille* Credit Union similarly changed its name to designate that it was no longer a parish or Franco-American institution, becoming Maine Family Federal Credit Union in 1993. In 1994, *Sainte Marie* Credit Union merged with Rainbow Federal Credit Union, the former parish credit union of Saint Joseph, and is now a branch of that financial institution. *Sainte Croix* Parish Federal Credit Union had planned to adopt a new, non-French name in 1996 but learned that another credit union in the country had already adopted the name it desired. Consequently, the credit union

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Church," *Sun Journal*, November 26, 1999, pp. A1, A11; parish bulletin, Saints Peter and Paul Parish, May 21, 2000; Michael Gordon, "Church to Be Cultural Center," *Sun Journal*, June 26, 2000, pp. A1, A7; Jules Antonin Plourde, O.P., *Dominicains au Canada: album historique* (s.l., s.é., 1973), p. 59. In 1996, Saint Peter had 1,410 families, Holy Family 1,974, and Holy Cross 2,324. *Sunday Sun Journal*, September 1, 1996, p. 1.

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substituted "Regional" for "Parish" in its name in the hope of attracting more business to its institution.[51] While still serving Franco-Americans, *Sainte Croix*, Maine Family, Community, and Rainbow credit unions are no longer strictly ethnic institutions, but ones that reflect the integration of Franco-Americans into the larger, non-Franco-American, non-Catholic community.

Franco-Americans and their institutions have evolved to such a degree in Lewiston that today an outside observer might not easily discern their French-Canadian roots. Contemporary Franco-American identity no longer depends upon the ability to speak French, the practice of Roman Catholicism, or the celebration of French-Canadian traditions, as it had in the past. French-Canadian descendants in Lewiston have intermixed considerably with other ethnic groups through intermarriage, through occupational changes, by joining the former Irish churches, and even by continuing to bank at their credit unions. Ethnic identity in Lewiston from midcentury to the present has evolved from an ascribed to a voluntary identification,

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[51]*Ste. Famille Federal Credit Union: 50 Years of Service, 1938-1988* (n.p., n.d.), p. 7; project of Pauline S. Gallant, Vice President, Community Credit Union, for the Northeast Credit Union National Association Management School, April 1988 summary, p. 2; "Community Credit Union History," undated typescript, Community Credit Union, Lewiston, Maine, pp. 3-4; Ann H. Boyce, "Giving Credit Where Credit Is Due: Spectacular Growth Marks Maine's Credit Unions," *Sunday Sun Journal*, June 12, 1994, p. 13F; Ronald L. Bissonnette, "A New Name," *Maine Family Federal Credit Union Quarterly* 1 (Winter 1993), p. 1; discussion with Denise T. Ouellette, Vice President for Marketing, Sainte Croix Regional Federal Credit Union, Lewiston, Maine, October 28, 1999; "Chairman's Message," 46th Annual Meeting Report, February 23, 1997, Sainte Croix Regional Federal Credit Union.

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from "being" to "feeling" Franco-American. After visiting Lewiston in 1998, Peter Behrens contended: "Lewiston represents the great American melting pot and also, for Québécois nationalists, the nightmare come true. Ethnically, the city is overwhelmingly 'Franco-American' but hardly anyone under the age of 50 speaks French." Yet, traces of French-Canadian ethnicity and culture persist in the former Spindle City. In Lewiston today, cultural identity represents a personal strategy, rather than a group effort as it had in the past.[52] Lewiston Franco-Americans have evolved into individual Americans of French-Canadian descent.

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[52]The evolution from "being" to "feeling" ethnic is explored in Anny Bakalian, *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1993); Peter Behrens, "Welcome to the Town of Ghosts," Montreal *Gazette*, October 10, 1998, p. B7; François Weil emphasizes the idea that the contemporary Franco-American identity is a personal strategy in *Les Franco-Américains, 1860-1980* ([Paris]: Belin, 1989), p. 218.

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CONCLUSION

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When the 119th Maine legislature convened in January 1999, Dr. Thomas F. Shields, a newly-elected Republican lawmaker from Auburn, introduced a bill to make English the official language of the state. Shields, born in Arkansas and raised in Missouri, had lived in the Lewiston-Auburn area for over thirty years and had practiced medicine at Lewiston's two hospitals. Nonetheless, he was startled by the controversy his bill precipitated and by the strength of the opposition of Maine's Franco-Americans. According to one journalist, the bill catapulted Shields "from being virtually an unknown freshman to one of the most talked-about members of the Maine legislature," one whose efforts attracted the attention of the media in Canada. Shields argued he merely wanted to make official a practice that Maine had employed for two centuries, whereby the state government would continue to produce documents and records only in English. His goal, he indicated, was to promote a common language among immigrants and to prevent the possibility of state documents having to be translated into Spanish. Shields' efforts fed into the contemporary political movement to make English the official language of the United States; U.S.ENGLISH, Inc., a Washington-based political action group, supported his proposed legislation. Shields' bill hit a raw nerve among Franco-Americans. They perceived L.D. 264 as a discriminatory measure, not unlike the 1919 law requiring English as "the basic language of instruction" in Maine's schools, a measure which the state

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had repealed only in 1969. Upon learning of Shields' bill, a seventy-three-year-old Franco-American woman asked her son why French-Canadian descendants were so despised. Reports such as hers, conveyed during hearings to members of the state legislature, contributed to the measure's defeat. The bill died in committee on Saint Patrick's Day 1999.[1]

This community study of French-Canadian descendants in Lewiston, Maine, during the past century and a half challenges our understanding of the process of Americanization and has implications for policymakers. It calls into question whether what we call "assimilation" actually takes place in the receiving society. The persistence of the French language in Lewiston, and the Franco-American community's efforts at cultural renewal during the past several decades, reveal that this population has not given up or lost all of the traits that make it distinctive. In short, the term "acculturation" rather than "assimilation" better describes the way in which this ethnic group has joined the host society.

This study also illustrates that the process of acculturation in the United States does not occur in a

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[1]Lewiston *Sun Journal*, February 2, 1998, p. 1B, March 4, 1999, pp. 1A, 12A; Bonnie Washuk, "Behind Tom Shields," *Sunday Sun Journal*, February 7, 1999, pp. D1, D5; Liz Chapman, "Group Joins Fracas over English Bill," *Sun Journal*, February 11, 1999, pp. A1, A5; *Acts and Resolves as Passed by the Seventy-Ninth Legislature of the State of Maine, 1919* (Augusta, Maine: Kennebec Journal Co., 1919), ch. 146; Liz Chapman, "English Bill Dies," *Sun Journal*, March 18, 1999, pp. A1, A9.

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straight-line fashion. The ethnic conflicts between Lewiston Franco-Americans and Irish clergy early in the twentieth century, and the cultural rebound and renewed contact with Québec during the final decades of the century, argue against a linear model of acculturation. The road from *Canadien* to American revealed numerous curves in the evolution of this population's identity.

Historians, with their proclivity for emphasizing binary opposites, have perpetuated the view that acculturation and ethnic retention necessarily represent dichotomous aims in the United States. What this study reveals, however, is that an ethnic group may in fact seek to retain its mother tongue and cultural traditions at the same time that it seeks to join the host society. The French-Canadian migrants who settled in Lewiston lived much closer to home than other migrants who had traveled overseas to the United States, and they were slower than other groups to naturalize. They nevertheless demonstrated a strong willingness to acculturate. Significantly, French-Canadian descendants Americanized themselves, relying upon their own resources and leaders to learn English and to become naturalized citizens and voters. They did this while maintaining close ties with Québec and while retaining their ethnic identification in the United States, such as by speaking French and by publicly celebrating *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day each year.

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French-Canadian descendants in Lewiston did not wish to assimilate into the host society, however. Instead, they negotiated their identity in the United States. They challenged, rejected, or redefined some of the norms of their country of adoption as they pursued their own ends. Subject to discrimination by nativists and by Irish clergy in the Roman Catholic Church, French speakers showed considerable agility, courage, agency, and flexibility in maintaining their interconnected French and American identities until the middle of the twentieth century.

Their experience refutes the classic three-generation thesis of assimilation and cultural rebound set forth by historian Marcus Lee Hansen in 1937. Hansen argued that second-generation ethnics had difficulty "inhabit[ing] two worlds at the same time" and consequently sought to distance themselves from their ethnic roots. He further contended that ethnic renewal took place among the third generation: "The theory is derived from the almost universal phenomenon that what the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember."[2] Until the middle of the twentieth century, first- through third-generation French-Canadian descendants in Lewiston successfully "inhabit[ed] two worlds at the same time." They could do so because, for them, ethnic retention and acculturation were closely

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[2]Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant* (1937; Rock Island, Illinois: Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center and Augustana College Library, 1987), pp. 13-15.

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intertwined. Only when these goals unraveled did (primarily) third- and later-generation Franco-Americans of Lewiston distance themselves from their ethnic heritage.

The contemporary movement to promote the English language among new migrants in the United States, and to make it the official language of the country, is gaining ground. Twenty-six of the fifty states in the U.S.A. have adopted laws making English their official language. U.S.ENGLISH, Inc., is currently working with members of Congress to enact federal legislation making English the official language of the country. Arguing against the promotion of cultural diversity in contemporary U.S. society, journalist Georgie Anne Geyer contends that the acceptance of languages other than English amounts to "reverse colonization," and that efforts to promote multiculturalism weaken U.S. citizenship, leading to "a dangerous watering-down of the levels of passion and commitment to nation."[3] This study suggests that the opposite is true. Lewiston's French-Canadian descendants put a premium on modeling good citizenship in their country of adoption. It was integral to their interconnected identity as ethnic Americans. In fact, better Franco-

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[3]U.S.ENGLISH, Inc., website, "States with Official English Laws," on January 9, 2001, at <http://www.us-english.org/inc/official/states.asp> and "Welcome to U.S.ENGLISH, Inc.," on January 9, 2001, at <http://www.us-english.org/inc/>; Georgie Anne Geyer, *Americans No More* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1996), pp. 176, 203, 210.

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Americans made better citizens, they fervently believed and effectively demonstrated.

When French Canadians began arriving in the United States in droves in the late nineteenth century, they were as foreign as any other migrant groups. They spoke French in a country whose official language was English. They maintained their Catholic faith in a nation dominated by Protestants. They celebrated in a public and grandiose way their cultural traditions, such as *Saint-Jean-Baptiste* Day, that the native-born had never before observed. They also comprised the working class of their communities. So different did they appear that the Massachusetts Commissioner of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor labeled them the "Chinese of the Eastern States" in 1881. But, as this study of Lewiston, Maine, reveals, French-Canadian migrants and their descendants demonstrated great willingness to join U.S. society and to learn its unofficial language. They did so at their own pace, however. Discriminatory efforts aimed at pushing them to acculturate more rapidly than they desired tended to have the opposite effect, that is, to increase ethnic identification and to slow their acculturation.

In light of the experience of French-Canadian descendants in Lewiston over the past century and a half, modern-day concerns over the practice of ethnic groups to remain hyphenated Americans appear greatly misplaced. Generalizing from the experience of French-Canadian

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migrants and their Franco-American offspring, groups that retain their mother tongue and their ethnic traditions while acculturating in U.S. society are no less American than other groups, including the native stock. Policymakers concerned about the contemporary large-scale migration of Hispanics across the southern U.S. border would do well to consider the experiences of the large migrant population that entered the United States from its northern border. In the host society, these French speakers demonstrated convincingly that they could be *"Loyaux mais Français."*[4]

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4 *"Loyaux mais Français":* "Loyal but French"

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APPENDIX

on Methodology

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The descriptive statistics used in this study came from three principal sources: federal censuses, city directories, and naturalization records. Much of the literary evidence came from the French-language newspaper of Lewiston, *Le Messager*. Following is a brief explanation of how I utilized each source.

1. Federal Censuses

The data sample compiled from the 1880 federal manuscript census for Lewiston (Androscoggin County), Maine, represented every twentieth household. Because the residents of institutions (such as hospitals) and mill housing blocks were not grouped according to households, and there was no indication of the relationships between the residents, I did not include them in the data. In all, the sample yielded 182 households containing 848 individuals.

The 1880 census did not indicate whether Canadian migrants were English or French speakers. In this study, individuals with French surnames who had been born in Canada, or whose parents had been born in Canada, were classified as French Canadians. Similarly, Canadian migrants and their children bearing English surnames were considered English Canadians.

Due to inconsistencies in the recording of data on unemployment, compilers of the 1880 census never tabulated

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and published the results.[1] Unemployment data for Lewiston appears to have been collected reasonably well, however, and the results compiled from my sample are reported in the narrative.

The sample taken from the 1920 federal manuscript census came from every thirtieth household and did not include institutions. The data represents 224 households containing 974 individuals. Unlike the 1880 census, the 1920 census indicated the mother tongue of enumerated persons and their parents, making it easier to distinguish between French- and English-Canadian descendants of both the first and second generations. Third- and later-generation individuals of French-Canadian descent were identified by their French surnames.

2. City Directories

Data compiled from the 1960 Lewiston city directory came from every twenty-fifth entry; if that entry was a business, however, I skipped to the next Lewiston resident. Unlike the 1880 and 1920 censuses, the directory did not enumerate each member of the household, but only provided the name of a male or female resident and the name of that person's spouse. The 922 entries I examined yielded a total sample of 1,455 residents. Each entry supplied only the occupation of the main person listed; I obtained

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[1]Alexander Keyssar, *Out of Work: The First Century of Unemployment in Massachusetts* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 343.

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information on the occupations of their spouses by tracking their names in the resident directory. In addition, I compiled data on homeownership by tracing the names and addresses of all household heads in the numerical street directory.[2]

For a portrait of the Lewiston community in the 1990s, I relied upon the 1992 city directory. Although the most recent Lewiston city directory was published in 1996, it did not provide sufficient information on the occupations, spouses, and homeownership of residents to be useful to this study. Data compiled from the 1992 directory came from every fifteenth entry; if the entry listed a business or an Auburn resident, I passed to the next Lewiston resident. In all, the sample comprised 889 listings that yielded information on 1,270 persons.[3]

3. Naturalization Records

To compile the naturalization data used in this study, I examined all of the naturalization records of the courts of Lewiston, Auburn, and Portland, Maine, from 1790 to 1991. These records, stored in court houses and in state and federal archives, are available for public inspection; it was not necessary to submit Freedom of Information/

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[2]*Manning's Lewiston Auburn (Maine) Directory for Year beginning November, 1960*, vol. 57 (Springfield, Massachusetts: H.A. Manning, 1960.)

[3]*1992 Catalist: Business and Household Digest of Lewiston-Auburn* (Loveland, Colorado: USWest Marketing Resources, 1991); *Lewiston, Maine, 1996 City Directory* (Brewer, Maine: Maine Marketing Resources, 1996.)

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Privacy Act request forms to view them, as is the case with records from 1991, which are in the possession of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The data comprised all Canadian migrants living in Lewiston who had French maiden names or surnames, as well as those with non-French names whose naturalization records identified them as French Canadians. The sources reveal that 5,551 French-Canadian migrants in Lewiston acquired their U.S. citizenship through 1991 (see table 8.) The information court clerks compiled on these individuals varied at different points in time, as naturalization forms changed. Before the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization came into existence in September 1906, the information even varied by courthouse, for there was no standardization of naturalization forms. Nonetheless, naturalization records serve as a rich source on U.S. migrants, a source that historians have rarely tapped.[4]

Among the valuable information they provide is the place of birth of migrants. But the records are seldom as complete as the researcher would like. Court clerks processing naturalization records in Lewiston, Auburn, and Portland typically recorded the town in which the migrant had been born but rarely the county; sometimes they even omitted the name of the province. Of the 5,551 French-

[4]One of the few historians to make extensive use of naturalization records is George J. Sánchez in *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.)

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Table 8
Naturalization of Lewiston's French-Canadian Migrants by Decade

Decade	Number
1860-1869	0
1870-1879	2
1880-1889	519
1890-1899	667
1900-1909	488
1910-1919	196
1920-1929	626
1930-1939	612
1940-1949	1,787
1950-1959	436
1960-1969	146
1970-1979	49
1980-1989	23
1990-1991	0
Total	5,551

SOURCE: Compiled from the naturalization records of the courts of Lewiston, Auburn, and Portland, Maine, for the period from 1790 to 1991: Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Records, vols. 1-27.5, 1854-1894, Maine State Archives [hereafter, MSA], Augusta, Maine; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vols. B, B-2, C-1, E, 1-21, 1895-1930, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Maine, Auburn, Maine; Supreme Judicial Court, Androscoggin County, Naturalization Records, vol. D-1, 1903-1906, National Archives and Records Administration, Waltham, Massachusetts [hereafter, NARA-Waltham]; Superior Court of Maine at Auburn Naturalization Records, vols. 22-47, 1930-1974, Auburn, Maine; Lewiston Municipal Court Naturalization Records, vols. 4-8, 1882-1893, MSA; Auburn, Maine, Municipal Court Naturalization Records, 1893, NARA-Waltham; U.S. District Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 1-2, 6-8, 1790-1845, vols. 1-11, 1851-1906, vols. 1-76, 1912-1991, Overseas Military Petitions and Records, 1942-1945, NARA-Waltham; U.S. Circuit Court, Portland, Maine, Naturalization Records, vols. 1-10, 1851-1912, NARA-Waltham; Superior Court, Cumberland County (Portland, Maine), Naturalization Records, 1868-1903, MSA.

Canadian migrants of Lewiston who naturalized, only 226 had been born in a Canadian province other than Québec, three more had probably been born outside of Québec, and the province of birth of twenty-nine others could not be determined. Alternatively, 5,079 migrants (91.5 percent)

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had been born in Québec, and another 214 (3.9 percent) had probably been born in the province. Thus, up to ninety-five percent of the 5,551 French-Canadian migrants who naturalized while living in Lewiston had been born in the province of Québec.

Determining the county in which these French-Canadian migrants had been born proved difficult, however. There were over fifty counties in Québec at the turn of the century. Numerous Québec towns had begun as parishes and, when they incorporated, they took the parish name as their own. Consequently, a number of municipalities in different counties of Québec shared the same name, particularly the names of saints. Sainte-Hélène, for example, appeared in Kamouraska, Arthabaska, and Bagot, all potential sources of Lewiston's French-Canadian population, for the Grand Trunk Railway passed through each of these counties. I was able to match 3,769 of the Québec towns listed in naturalization records to counties in the province. Such considerations as proximity to Lewiston, the place of emigration (if different from the place of birth), the dates that similarly-named towns incorporated, as well as the migration patterns of Lewiston's French-Canadian population suggested the county from which another 1,077 had *probably* originated. Insufficient or conflicting information prevented assignment of the remaining 447 (a figure which includes the 214 who had probably been born in Québec and not in another Canadian province.) On the maps and in the

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narrative of this thesis, wherever a range indicates the proportion of naturalizers from a given county, the larger figure includes those who had *probably* been born in the county, while the smaller figure represents those for whom the assignment is nearly certain.[5] For the sake of consistency, I have employed throughout this dissertation Québec county names and divisions as they existed around the turn of the last century.

Occupational Classification and Ranking System

The occupational classification and ranking system used in this thesis allowed me to examine changes in Lewiston, particularly among its population of French-Canadian descent, over nearly a century and a half of historical time. The categories and rankings I have utilized vary in the following ways from Stephan Thernstrom's classic scale of three decades ago.[6] Rather

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[5]I am grateful to Brian Young of McGill University for suggesting this procedure. Particularly helpful to the task of assigning Québec towns to counties were James White, *Ninth Report of the Geographic Board of Canada, 1910*, part II: *Place-Names in Quebec* ([Ottawa: King's Printer], 1910; Hormisdas Magnan, *Dictionnaire historique et géographique des paroisses, missions et municipalités de la Province de Québec* (Arthabaska, Québec: L'Imprimerie d'Arthabaska, 1925); E.R. Smith, "Map of Montreal and the Eastern Townships, also Showing the South Eastern Portion of the Province of Quebec" (St. Johns, Quebec: E.R. Smith and Sons, 1897); Canada, Department of Mines, "Quebec, 1911 [Map] Accompanying 'Place Names in Quebec' by James White," ([Ottawa]: Geographic Board of Canada, 1911.

[6]Thernstrom's two white-collar and three blue-collar categories are: I. High White-Collar (divided into two groups: professionals; major proprietors, managers, and officials), II. Low White-Collar (divided into three groups: clerks and salesmen; semiprofessionals; petty proprietors, managers, and officials), III. Skilled, IV. Semiskilled and Service Workers, V. Unskilled Laborers and Menial Service Workers. See *The Other Bostonians: Poverty and Progress in the American Metropolis, 1880-1970* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 290-292.

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than being lumped together into one group, professionals are characterized as self-governing or salaried. Small business, managerial, and semiprofessional jobs are ranked above clerical and sales positions. Types of occupation, not levels of skill, distinguish blue-collar employment categories; these classifications better reflect the nature of Lewiston's economy during the period under study and demonstrate more clearly how it changed over time. Assigning self-employed tradespeople to blue-collar rank reflects the way in which the community defined itself. No effort was made to determine whether independent contractors or grocers had capital and employees, thus meriting ranking as small business owners. Contractors in Lewiston typically worked for themselves rather than for wages and, if they had any employees, usually oversaw small operations; for these reasons, they are categorized as having self-employed, blue-collar occupations. Grocers are lumped together with merchants. Laborers often worked for the mills and factories of Lewiston and Auburn; those who did are classified as industrial employees. Because mills and factories dominated the local economy until the mid-twentieth century, persons identified in the sources simply as "laborers" through 1960, the last occurrence, are also

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classified as industrial workers.[7] Laborers employed by non-industrial concerns are ranked as non-industrial, blue-collar workers. Listing primary-sector employment as a separate category allows us to trace more easily the continuities or changes over time in the proportion of French-Canadian descendants employed in farming and lumbering, occupations this group engaged in before and after the migration experience. In addition, this classification system, unlike Thernstrom's, includes occupations which women have usually filled. Although somewhat arbitrary, the classification and ranking system detailed below better suits the Lewiston community, while still preserving elements which would make comparisons possible with other communities. For example, the categories of self-governing and salaried professionals correspond to Thernstrom's "high white-collar" jobs, and the remaining white-collar categories correspond to Thernstrom's "low white-collar" classification.

Occupational Rankings

I. White Collar

-self-governing professional: doctors, lawyers, dentists, professors; persons with advanced degrees, specialized training, usually licensed by the state, and often self-employed

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[7]In Lewiston, the term "laborer" seems to have been applied to unskilled factory workers and not primarily to navvies. For example, in the 1920 sample, census takers identified the occupations of eleven of the ninety-four working French-Canadian women as laborers. Seven of these "laborers" were employed by cotton mills, three by shoe shops, and one by a shirt factory. *U.S. Census, 1920.*

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-salaried professional: teachers, accountants, social workers, engineers, registered nurses, editors; occupations requiring college training; state officials; managers (and the few owners) of large businesses

-small business and managerial: people in supervisory positions and local officials

-semiprofessional: embalmers, journalists, photographers, librarians, opticians, music teachers, medical technicians, licensed practical nurses, and certified nurses' aides

-clerical and sales: cashiers, bank tellers, bookkeepers, secretaries, adjusters, auditors, agents, merchants, and grocers

II. Blue Collar

-self-employed: persons in manual trades, including barbers and beauticians, contractors and builders; mechanics with their own garage; cobblers, tailors, and dressmakers working for themselves; owners of rooming houses

-non-industrial: providers of domestic, personal, and protective services, including food preparers and servers, laundry workers, janitors, servants, letter carriers, and providers of fire and police protection; persons involved in transport or in servicing means of transportation, including teamsters, gas station attendants, and mechanics; people in the building trades, such as carpenters, painters, and plumbers; those in other trades, such as blacksmiths, meatcutters, bakers, printers, lithographers, haircutters, ice cutters, nurses' aides, and dressmakers (who typically worked from home); and laborers employed by non-industrial concerns

-industrial: mill and factory employees; people involved in manufacturing, processing, and assembly in the textile, shoe, metal, box making, and sanitary napkin industries; machinists; saw and grist mill workers; and laborers employed by mills and factories

-primary sector: persons engaged in farming, fishing, and lumbering

4. *Le Messager*

Founded in 1880 by Dr. Louis J. Martel, Lewiston's weekly French-language newspaper, *Le Messager,* changed hands at least four times during the first decade of its

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existence. Canadian-born J.D. Montmarquet, who had previously worked for *Le Travailleur* of Worcester, Massachusetts, served as the newspaper's editor from its founding until 1883; editorial committees subsequently directed the newspaper, probably until Québec-born Jean-Baptiste Couture purchased the newspaper in 1891 and became its owner-editor. Proprietor of *Le Messager* until his death in 1943, Couture published the newspaper twice weekly from August 1891, three times weekly from December 1905, and daily from January 1934. Besides Couture, the most notable journalist at *Le Messager* was Louis-Philippe Gagné, who had worked five years for *Le Soleil* of Québec before migrating to Lewiston in 1922; Gagné served thirty-eight (non-consecutive) years on the staff of *Le Messager*. Following Couture's death, his sons Valdor and Faust either owned *Le Messager* together or individually (passing it from one to the other) until 1951, when a group of 100 stockholders purchased the newspaper. *Le Messager* struggled to survive in the 1950s and 1960s. It changed hands again in 1954, its management scaled back its production from daily to weekly in 1955 and, except for a four-year stint from 1958 to 1962 as a biweekly newspaper, remained a weekly until ceasing publication in 1968.[8]

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[8]Gerard J. Brault, *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England* (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1986), pp. 81-82; Georgia Drew Merrill, ed., *History of Androscoggin County, Maine* (Boston: W.A. Fergusson, 1891), p. 284; *U.S. Census, 1880*; Paul-M. Paré, "Les Vingt premières années du *Messager* de Lewiston, Maine," dans Claire Quintal, dir., *Le Journalisme de langue française*

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My reading of this French-language newspaper of Lewiston centered on the local news, focusing on the lives of ordinary French Canadians and Franco-Americans. Microfilm produced during bankruptcy proceedings in the early 1950s of the period from 1880 to 1946 is of poor quality and contains significant gaps in coverage of up to two years. Page numbers of citations, possible only when supplied by the newspaper and visible on microfilm, are provided in the footnotes of this dissertation. Some articles from *Le Messager* have survived as clippings which the Dominican priests inserted into the chronicle they maintained at their Lewiston monastery; they are so acknowledged in the footnotes. Fortunately for me (and for others), the Maine State Library's Maine Newspaper Project recently produced a new microfilm of this French-language newspaper, covering the period from 1917 to 1968. While it, too, contains some gaps, they are significantly fewer than those of the microfilm produced a half-century ago. For this study, I have examined all microfilmed copies of *Le Messager* for the period from 1880 to 1968.

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aux États-Unis (Québec, Québec: Le Conseil de la Vie française en Amérique, 1984), p. 84; *Le Messager*, 15 novembre 1883, 7 avril 1943, p. 1, 27 décembre 1946, p. 6, 9 février 1951, p. 1, 23 novembre 1954, p. 1, 6 septembre 1955, p. 1, 30 janvier 1958, pp. 3-4, 21 novembre 1962, p. 1, 16 janvier 1964, p. 1; Lewiston Municipal Court Naturalization Records, vol. 7, September 10, 1892, MSA; typescript notes of Reverend Philip Desjardins on *Le Messager*, Chancery Archives, Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine.

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