

## **French speakers...not always, But always Franco-Americans!**

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Despite its name, New England—along with the adjoining section of New York—forms an important part of French North America. However, two factors have tended to erode this history. First, much of the region blends into the better identified hearths of Acadia and Canada. As a result, its French history has often been presented as a mere side-story of its more celebrated neighbors. Second, inter-colonial conflict and the resulting English dominance reduced much of the early French presence in this area to a somewhat opaque heritage population. Removal and acculturation forced the French history of this early period to be all but forgotten, and French industrial resettlement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century produced a more enduring image of “Franco-American” society in this Northeast Region of the United States.

### *Colonial Settlement*

The first documented European entry into North America began with the Vikings in the 10th century, but their attempts at colonization were soon abandoned. After an almost five-hundred year hiatus, a second European entry began in the Caribbean and Labrador seas. By 1504, French ships were fishing on the Grand Banks and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Sixteen years later, mapmakers had documented the areas of Newfoundland in the north and Florida in the south, but the area between the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Gulf of Mexico lay uncharted. European merchants, dreaming of more valuable commodities like spices, hoped that this *terra incognita* was an extension of Asia. The first effort to chart this mid-latitude region with any detail was a French expedition under the command of Giovanni da Verrazzano.

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In 1524, *La Dauphine* departed from Dieppe (France), made landfall on the southeastern coast of North America, and sailed north. The crew went ashore at New York Bay, Long Island Sound, and the Gulf of Maine. They gave the northern Carolinas the classical name of “Arcadia,” a toponym later moved north and corrupted into “Acadia.” They described Block Island as looking like the Isle of Rhodes in the Mediterranean, which led English religious dissidents to name their colony Rhode Island over a century later. And they referred to the Maine coast as *Terra onde di mala gente* (the Land of Bad People), when the Indigenous peoples bared their buttocks and kept aloof, obviously having had previous contact with Europeans. To the dismay of Old World merchants, it was concluded that North America was a unified land mass.

Efforts were then mounted to find a water passage through North America to the Pacific, as well as to create settlements and systematically exploit resources. However, as a result of Reformation conflict, France’s state-sponsored efforts in the Americas fell apart for the rest of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Nonetheless, private fishing people and traders from France continued to frequent North America. In 1583, Etienne Béllenger from Rouen imported furs from Acadia (Maine) and made large profits. The next year, merchants from St. Malo began a fur rush into the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Gulf of Maine.

In 1598, the Edict of Nantes provided a temporary peace between French Catholics and Protestants. This allowed the French state to again involve itself in overseas activity, as they established an arc of settlement from Québec (1608) to Tadoussac (1600) and Acadia (1604). Soon afterwards, the English continued this coastal settlement on the New England seaboard (1620), as did the Dutch along the Hudson River (1615) and New York Bay (1626). The colonists then moved further inland. However, the religious toleration provided by the Edict of Nantes began to erode, and Protestants began to leave France in larger numbers. French Protestants are even found with early English settlers in North America. In 1620, the family of Guillaume Molines (Mullins) arrived aboard the *Mayflower* in the settlement of Plymouth (Massachusetts).<sup>1</sup>

The largest French claims in modern-day New England lay in Maine. The English held only the southern tip of Maine, as well as a few coastal areas and the lower Kennebec River. A rough coastal boundary was established between New France and New England at the St. George River (Thomaston, Maine). French jurisdiction was then

shared between the sub-regions of Acadia and Canada: The capital of Acadia was established at Pentagoët (Castine, Maine) from 1670 to 1675, while a handful of Catholic missions on the major river systems tended to be staffed from Québec. A road was surveyed through Maine, to connect the population centers of Canada and Acadia in 1670, but was never constructed. Instead, the St. John River remained as the primary interior waterway between Canada and Acadia. Seignurial concessions were taken along the river by fur-traders at Madawaska, as well as on Mont Desert Island and elsewhere.

French occupation west of Maine came about as a by-product of the movement into the interior of the continent. As the French moved up the St. Lawrence River and into the Great Lakes, control of this waterway became an increasing priority, especially given growing conflict with the Iroquois, Dutch, and English over the fur trade as the 17<sup>th</sup> century progressed. The French established celebrated settlements along the waterway, in territory of their indigenous allies, such as Fort Frontenac (Kingston) and Fort Pontchartrain (Detroit), but they also established lesser-known settlements south of the St. Lawrence that facilitated communication between neighboring regions.

A primary example of these inter-regional systems is the Champlain Route. Departing from the St. Lawrence River at Sorel, this route went up the Richelieu River into Lake Champlain and Lake George, then into the Hudson River. At various points along this corridor, one could go east or south towards the Atlantic coast of New England and New York. Or, one could also go west into the Iroquois country of New York and, from there, re-enter the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes or move into the Mississippi watershed. Fort Sainte Anne at Isle La Motte on Lake Champlain (Vermont) in 1666 served as an early fortification protecting this route.

By the early 1700s, Europe's North American colonies became more tightly integrated into their imperial networks. England's conquest of New Netherlands (New York), in 1664, gave them a united coastline from southern Maine to northern Georgia. The French expanded their territory from Newfoundland and Hudson Bay through the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes to the Rockies, down the Mississippi to Louisiana, and into the Caribbean. This colonial expansion put the two kingdoms on a collision course for war.

Almost a century of warfare then erupted in a series five colonial wars between 1688 and 1763. The first two Anglo-French wars (1688–1713) had little impact on French settlement in continental North America. The primary victims in New England were the indigenous peoples. Although the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) gave peninsular Acadia to the British, the Acadian settlers remained on their lands. The major effect of this French defeat was abandonment of the small settlement at Pentagoët and the French concentration of efforts at interior missions of Maine.<sup>2</sup>

The second two colonial wars (1744–1763) were larger events that involved several regions of North America and brought two other French populations into New England.<sup>3</sup> The first group arrived when the British recruited religious dissidents from Europe to help bolster their colonial settlements. In 1752, over thirty French Protestants were settled in the frontier town of Frankfort (Pownalborough/Dresden) on the Kennebec River in Maine.<sup>4</sup>

The second group were not so willing. At the start of the Seven Years War about 13,000 Acadians lived in Nova Scotia, but in 1755 the British deported almost 7,000 of them to port cities from Maine to Georgia. Because of the poor record-keeping, it is hard to gauge how many Acadians stayed in New England, but it probably numbered in the hundreds.<sup>5</sup> After the defeat of New France, the French in New England either went back to their hearths in Canada, Acadia, and Louisiana or assimilated into indigenous or English society. Many in New England and New York carry French ancestry from this period, but it is largely a hidden heritage.

The territorial struggle for North America continued. The next war between France and Britain in North America was during the American Revolution (1775–1783), when the French saved the United States from defeat.<sup>6</sup> During this conflict, about 200 French Canadians fought in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Regiments of the United States Army. After the war, in 1786, their families settled on the Canadian and Nova Scotia Refugee Tract in upstate New York. This was the first block of Franco-American settlement that would remain as a heritage population in the northeastern United States.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time, other individuals and families of French Canadians unrelated to the Refugee Tract also moved back and forth across the border region of British North America and the new United States. Besides the traditional water and portage systems of

the Champlain Route, this movement was assisted when the public roadways of Vermont and New Hampshire were connected over the border to Québec's Craig Road in the early 1800s.<sup>8</sup> Such networking then allowed travelers to more easily move throughout the regions. For example, in 1785 two migration streams made up of French Canadians from the lower St. Lawrence Valley and Acadians from the lower St. John Valley migrated into the ill-defined frontier region between Québec, Maine, and New Brunswick to form the celebrated Madawaska Settlement. By 1800 there were 69 of these families living there along the St. John River.<sup>9</sup>

The last of the wars between France and Britain took place during the quarter century of the French Revolution (1789–1815) and included the War of 1812 in North America. Very unpopular in the in the northeastern United States, settlers on both sides of the boundary between British North America and the United States continued cross-border trade, regardless of hostilities. In this way, farm products were smuggled across the Maine borders into Québec and New Brunswick, from Vermont into Québec, and from New York into Québec and Ontario. This cross-border trade built a sense of familiarity and friendliness between the *anglophones* in New England and New York and the *francophones* of Québec and the Maritimes, which would assist later developments.

### *Early Industrial Period*

After the War of 1812, the French-Canadian migration to the northeastern United States remained relatively small in number, individualistic, and largely confined to border-states. Many of these early arrivals soon acculturated to Anglo-American society but would serve as important points of reference for the larger contingent of immigrants who came during the expansion of industrial capitalism after 1870. The irregular movement of these “first Franco-Americans” into New England began to take on a pattern as the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed—the result of a variety of “push and pull” factors.

The push factors began when officials encouraged the migration of marginalized people from the British Isles to overseas colonies such as Canada. Local enterprise in the St. Lawrence Region was, however, handicapped by a severe climate and a mercantile system that discouraged local manufacture, as well as a lack of available and fertile land.

This restricted employment to low-wage, unskilled labor, primarily in resource production like timber or fisheries. So when almost a million redundant British and Irish migrants flooded into Canada, the result was job competition and depressed wages.<sup>10</sup> The pull factors drawing migrants to the United States from the St. Lawrence were the new republic's lack of available workers, as well as its abundance of fertile soil, a warm climate, and a free-enterprise system that favored the manufacture of finished products.

One of the early areas of industrialization lay in Rhode Island. French Protestants from Europe had been in the state since colonial times. They, along with other elites, became involved in the development of textile mills at the start of the Industrial Revolution. In this way, the Ballou family set up a factory in 1814 and then moved to Woonsocket three years later. Coincidentally, the first identified French Canadian to arrive in Rhode Island was François Proulx, who settled in Woonsocket in 1814.

Although such manufacturing had begun in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Industrial Revolution only really got underway in the 1830s, as when Boston capitalists began not only the Amoskeag Mills on the Merrimack River in 1837 but established the entire community of Manchester in New Hampshire. As the industrial economy spread, laborers and small landholders in the St. Lawrence Region created a mixed economy: They kept a small farm, but also would work in mills or on larger farms for wages. Frequently, between crop cycles, they would go to New England and New York as industrial projects needed laborers. Those without land tended to stay in the States.

Not all migration into New England focused on factory growth. Some of it was to search for better farm lands or jobs in resource harvesting, like timber. The population in the Madawaska Settlement in northern Maine and western New Brunswick had grown from 331 people in 1799 to 1,000 in 1820. Because of the lack of fertile farm land, tension developed—after 1825—between the old French settlers and more recent French-Canadian migrants. Some relief came from an unexpected source. In the 1830s, as New Brunswick and Maine faced off in the Northeast Boundary Dispute and the Aroostook War, the State of Maine built infrastructures to bolster their claims to the rich timberlands that included the Madawaska Settlement.

One of these structural investments was the Aroostook Road (1828–1836), which connected northern Maine to the south. This roadway provided access to new lands,

expansion of the timber industry, and a migration corridor to the rest of New England when industrial development began. Although the frontier was established in 1842 and divided French families on either side of the new border, the Aroostook Road helped to relieve some the tension in what had been until then an isolated region.<sup>11</sup>

Other new road and canal construction assisted this migration and the related industry. In some cases, traditional corridors were redeveloped, as when the Champlain Canal (1823) was built southwards from the Lake Champlain valley and the Erie Canal (1825) was built eastwards through the Mohawk valley. Both were built in order to draw resources and trade into the Hudson River valley of New York. These canals then led to industrial development at the confluence of the Mohawk and Hudson rivers, in order to take advantage of the area's hydro-mechanical power. In Cohoes, a dam was built across the Mohawk River in 1831, followed by a woolen mill in 1832 and a cotton mill in 1837.

New England capitalists initially attempted to establish a utopian factory system that employed Yankee farm girls. However, the profit motive overcame this idealism, as the mills grew in response to markets and industrialists discovered that immigrants would work for lower wages and without utopian infrastructures. As textile production and the factory system prospered, a larger workforce was needed. Labor recruiters began to be sent from Rhode Island to Québec, in the 1840s, to encourage immigration.

The 1830s and 1840s were contentious decades in the northern borderlands region, but also provided for opportunities. During the Rebellions of 1837 and 1838, Canadian rebels found sanctuary in the U.S. In this way, journalist Ludgar Duvernay founded the first French newspaper in the United States: *Le Patriote Canadien* in Burlington (Vermont) in 1839.

Because of their knowledge of inter-regional and cross-border networks, French Canadians became expert in the art of smuggling. The normal contraband consisted of tea and tobacco smuggled into Canada, while cloth and sugar came into the United States. In 1842 and 1843, a criminal network in the Eastern Townships of Québec counterfeited money and disposed of it in New England, New York, and as far west as the Mississippi Valley. The smuggling of alcohol became a growth industry after the 1840s, as Maine and other Protestant states moved towards its prohibition.<sup>12</sup>

At first, Catholic rites were often performed by traveling priests, who would periodically make a circuit from their home parishes through unorganized regions. Catholics also would change religion (sometimes several times) in order to be able to participate in some form of worship, a move that also provided economic opportunities. A French Baptist Church was established in Waterville, Maine. The first French-Canadian and Acadian parish established in Maine was St. Bruno's in Van Buren in 1838 and the Bishop of St. John (New Brunswick) administered the parishes of the St. John Valley with the consent of the Diocese of Portland until 1870. However, Roman-Catholic administration began to grow in northeastern United States, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, largely in response to the sizable Irish immigration. In 1853 dioceses were created in Portland (for Maine and New Hampshire) and in Burlington for Vermont.

This input was not always welcomed by Protestants in the United States. The rise of the Know-Nothing movement led to acts of violence against French-Canadian (and other) Catholics. In Maine, in 1854, a Franco-Swiss priest was tarred and feathered in Ellsworth and a Catholic church that included French and Irish parishioners was burned in Bath. However, the Know-Nothing movement dissolved into the U.S. Civil War.

When the Civil War broke out in the United States in 1861, it provided a boost to parts of the manufacturing sector, as the Union military demanded footwear, clothing, blankets, food, and other supplies for over two million soldiers and sailors.<sup>13</sup> Some French Canadians migrated into New England to take work vacated by newly recruited soldiers while others joined the U.S. military. Although it has been alleged that as many as 35,000 French Canadians served in the Union Army, this is a speculative estimate based on post-war patriotism. In reality, perhaps half that number would be likely.<sup>14</sup>

Up until 1870, the French tended to acculturate to Anglo-American society in the United States. They lived in a variety of urban settings that were defined better by occupation and income than by ethnicity. They intermarried with other ethnic groups, occasionally changed religions, and followed a diversity of trades. As the numbers of French-Canadian and Acadian migrants increased and concentrated around more sizable factories, this pattern changed.

When the Civil War ended, the demand for manufactured goods continued, in order to supply urban growth and the westward expansion of the United States. The

French-Canadian migration still took place for the earlier push-and-pull reasons, but also because of new mill expansion in the United States. When the “Mastadon” Mill was completed in Cohoes, New York, in 1872, it was the largest single cotton mill in the world: the building was 335 meters (1100 feet) long, holding 130,000 spindles and 2700 looms that were tended by 2500 workers who produced 640 kilometers (700,000 yards) of cotton fabric per week.<sup>15</sup> This expanded production required more workers, so French Canadians were recruited.

### *Late Industrial Period*

The French-Canadian migration to the United States gained momentum in the 1870s but became very noticeable in the 1880s. In 1870 there were only 70,000 French Canadians in all of the United States, but ten years later 200,000 were living in New England, which equaled 5 % of the region’s population. After 1880, Franco-American numbers increased by about 100,000 per decade to perhaps a million migrants circulating in, out, and around New England, New York, Québec, and the Maritimes. Of these, perhaps a half-million French-Canadians remained permanently in the United States.

What was the significance of these numbers? Much of the literature on the subject refers to it an “Exodus” or “Diaspora.” This was certainly true from the point of view of Québec, as well as for the Franco-Americans themselves: By 1900, a half-million migrants constituted one-third of the Québec population. However, the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was a period of large-scale migration for many ethnicities, even for the British and the Yankees. During the “Great Wave” of immigration, from 1880 to 1930, French Canadians actually represented less than 2% of the 27 million immigrants who came to the United States. What distinguished the French-Canadian migration was its concentration in and linkages between the New England mill cities in which they lived and Canada. These connections formed the backbone of an enduring archipelago of Franco-America that existed longer than for other ethnic groups.

After 1880, mixed ethnic neighborhoods developed into *petits canadas* in larger cities of New England and New York. This concentration of *francophones* allowed physicians, dentists, lawyers, teachers, journalists, priests, and politicians to establish

successful careers in mill centers. Besides being able to obtain medical care, education, and spiritual guidance in their own language, French Canadians also established their own drama clubs, music societies, and other social institutions. Over 300 Franco-American newspapers were established in New England. Two of the largest were *L'Avenir National* (1894–1949) in Manchester (New Hampshire) and *Le Messager* (1880–1966) in Lewiston (Maine). Both circulated far beyond their home towns and successfully competed with large city papers from Montréal and Québec.<sup>16</sup>

Several early and well known works of Franco-American fiction appeared. First published as *feuilletons* (serialized stories) in Franco-newspapers, they often served a political purpose and were written in a journalistic style. These stories highlighted social tensions of the day, idealized rural life and moralized about the dangers of the urban-living. Honoré Beaugrand (1848–1906), a free-thinker and publisher of *La République* of Fall River (Massachusetts), wrote *Jeanne la fileuse: épisode de l'émigration, franco-canadienne aux États-Unis* in 1878. In this novel of social realism, Beaugrand defended the French-Canadian immigrants to New England, who—at that time—were often viewed as apostates by the Catholic elite of Québec. Beaugrand himself traveled widely and eventually returned to Montréal, where he served as mayor and journalist.<sup>17</sup>

Most of the Roman Catholic parishes that had been established in New England and New York had been established for Irish immigrants. The French tended to join these parishes, but as their numbers grew they established their own national parishes. For example, Irish Catholics came to Lewiston, Maine in the 1850s, followed by French Catholics in 1860. The French Canadians broke away from the Irish parish in 1870 and established St. Pierre/St. Peters. In 1878, the Sisters of Charity (Gray Nuns) came from St. Hyacinthe (Québec) and established a parochial school, as well as what today would be called “adult education.” In 1881, Dominican priests from France took over St. Peter’s and its 6000 parishioners; they established schools and invited other orders to come in to run them, including the Marist Brothers from Europe. In 1888, the Gray Nuns opened a “French hospital” in Lewiston, as well as an associated orphanage and child care.<sup>18</sup> In such a milieu, a conscious philosophy of *survivance* (ethnic survival) took root and, in the case of the French parishes, their motto was embodied in the expression: *Perde sa langue, c’est perdre sa foi* (loss of language leads to a loss of faith).

These kinds of infrastructures ensured survival even in the face of difficulty. When major economic depressions hit the United States in 1873 and 1893, Franco-American families were able to maintain themselves by relying on the support structures of the *petits canadas*. Indeed, it is commonly said that Franco-Americans tended to make less use of public services during times of economic difficulty than other ethnic groups. This, in turn, ensured the survival of the *petits canadas*.

However, in smaller cities and towns of New England and New York, well-defined *petits canadas* did not form and the French tended to acculturate to the more dominant *anglophone* population and more rapidly marry with other ethnicities.<sup>19</sup> Intermarriage was not rare. One of the often repeated stereotypes concerns the alleged conflict between French and Irish Catholics. There were some well documented cases of quasi-ethnic conflict like the Sentenille Affair, as well as some general trends like the rise of ethnic parishes and competition in political parties or for jobs, in addition to isolated events. However, these did not define a general trend. By and large French and Irish Catholics not only cooperated in many ways, but they also intermarried and lived harmoniously together.<sup>20</sup>

One of the better documented travelers of this era was Félix Albert. Born in 1843 on a farm near Rivière-du-Loup (Québec), he married Desneiges Michaud in 1866 and took over his family farm. After an initial prosperity, their farm began to fail due to bad weather and agricultural blights in the late 1870s. Trying to maintain the farm with a cash income, Albert migrated along the Temiscouata and the Aroostook roads, trading as he went, and then took sawmill work in Caribou, Maine. This strategy was insufficient. In 1881, the family took the railroad to Lowell, Massachusetts. Félix took jobs in construction and worked as a woodcutter and carter, while the rest of family worked in the mills. They saved and invested their money. Félix built and rented tenement houses, and opened a grocery and used furniture shop—catering to the immigrant community. However, the family lost almost all their property in the Panic of 1893. They managed to save a farm from foreclosure, and returned to farm life in New Hampshire. In 1908, they sold this farm, and then moved back to the *petit canada* of Lowell to retire.<sup>21</sup>

A long-lived stereotype is of Franco-Americans as “docile” workers, refusing to join unions and supportive of management.<sup>22</sup> The reality is much more complex, variable,

and even contradictory. Some Franco-Americans were indeed grateful for the opportunity to make the transition from farm life into the industrial world. Others did not support management as much as look out for their family well-being. There were militant Franco-American workers in New England who were strong labor advocates, while some had collectivist energies channeled into Catholic associations of the *petits canadas*. Still others broke with the factory milieu and entered business and professions.<sup>23</sup>

At first, many of the French-Canadian migrants planned to work in the States, make money, and then return to Canada. One indicator of this is naturalization and voting records. Unless an immigrant was naturalized, they could not vote. Only 4000 French-Canadian immigrants out of 200,000 were naturalized in all of the United States in 1881. Nonetheless, political activity did begin.<sup>24</sup> As the century progressed, more and more migrants became immigrants, settled down, and became voting citizens.

What did the Yankees think of the French Canadian arrivals? In mill towns in New England, before larger migrations from Europe took place, the French Canadians stood out as much as the Chinese migrants who had been similarly brought in as workers in the western United States. In 1881, Carroll Wright, chief of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, referred to them as the “Chinese of the Eastern States” on the eve of congressional ratification of the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882). The strong rebuttal that came from French residents in New England forced him to qualify his statement and caused the professional French Canadians in the United States to coin the term “Franco-American,” as a way of demonstrating their loyalty to their adopted country.<sup>25</sup>

As a result of this twin desire to adapt to a new country and keep their own heritage intact, an overt and intentional patriotism to the United States as well as links to Canada and France became an institutional part of Franco-American life, especially on St. Jean-Baptiste Day. Parade banners declared “Not foreigners but Americans” and “Loyaux mais Français,” the flags of the United States and France were flown, and speeches celebrated the historic links between France, Canada, and the United States. Franco-Americans believed that they had the right to celebrate their ethnic heritage and religion as much as did the Yankees: “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” (We intend to remain French

Canadians like the descendents of the first English colonists of New England remain Puritans, which is to say by tradition, in respect for our ancestors).<sup>26</sup>

It was a world of mixed messages for French Canadian and Acadian migrants. “Ici on parle français” (French spoken here) appeared in the windows of Yankee merchants to encourage francophone customers. Although Yankee elites were grateful for the workforce and the consumers, they were also suspicious and resentful of immigrants, as ethnic slurs, racism, and anti-French jokes all came into play in the northeastern United States.<sup>27</sup> However, the location of French Canadians and Acadians in the racist pecking order of the day was ambiguous. French was acknowledged as an elite language, the language of diplomacy and at least the equivalent of English. It was further acknowledged that the French had civilized the Yankees’ Anglo-Saxon ancestors in England. Therefore, Yankees could not so vehemently condemn Franco-Americans as they did Italians, Russians, or Blacks. As the owner of the S.D. Warren Mill paper mill in Westbrook, Maine expressed it, when he got to heaven, he hoped that there would only be Republicans and Congregationalists there!<sup>28</sup>

Mill growth continued in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as new migrants arrived from Europe. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Amoskeg Mills in Manchester (New Hampshire) employed 17,000 workers in thirty separate factories that contained eight million square feet of floor space, making four million yards of cloth a week.<sup>29</sup> By 1900, over 17,000 Franco-Americans lived in Woonsocket (Rhode Island), making up 60% of the population and being known as the “Franco-American capital of the United States.” Woonsocket had developed a large branch of the mutual aid society, Union St. Jean-Baptiste, and the city’s Franco-American politician Aram Pothier was elected Republican governor of Rhode Island six times between 1908 and 1928.

Despite institutional studies and “big picture” history, settled Franco-American life was highly social. Extended families and neighbors would visit each other frequently. Adults would play cards on Saturday nights in their kitchens and talk. Cooking and food were at the center of the gatherings, and Sunday dinners were social occasions. Kids would play games outdoors like *kick la canne* or *petit bois*. For special events, people would play music, clog dance, or sing songs, and—in later years—listen to the radio together. Sports were sponsored within and between towns, workplaces, and clubs. Some

were national U.S. pastimes like baseball and football, while others grew out of French North American traditions; Franco-Americans were said to excel at boxing and hockey, while snowshoe clubs were established and linked into cross-border events.<sup>30</sup>

Colleges began to open to allow access to Franco-Americans. Edmundite priests fled anticlericalism in France in 1889, came to Québec, and in 1904, opened St. Michael's Institute in Winooski, Vermont, which evolved into a college. Also in 1904, members of the Augustinian Order established Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts.

The period of World War I (1914–1918) serves as a significant marker for transformation of Franco-American life in New England. Many immigrant members of labor and progressive movements, as well as their American-born counterparts, opposed the unregulated capitalism of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This opposition came to a head during World War I. Yankee demagogues identified non-English speakers as the source of the anti-war and the pro-labor activism. Many activists were jailed or deported, others were cowed into silence. Political leaders came to see immigrants as dangerous elements that needed to be converted to a proper appreciation for capitalism, which was synonymous with democracy to the nation's *anglophone* elite.

As a result, the United States embarked on an “Americanization” movement after World War I, which essentially was one of “Anglo-conformity.” In Maine, the state legislature prohibited the use of French in public schools, in 1919, except for the Parisian French of language classes, and school officials became virtual language police. More insidious, this movement encouraged the resurrection of the Ku Klux Klan, which recruited over half-a-million members in New England alone and embarked on an anti-Catholic campaign in the 1920s. The KKK was active in small towns and large cities. Franco-Americans fought back, sometimes in pitched battles. Sociologists found “facts” to back up such discrimination. One academic study (1918) ranked Franco-Americans seventh–behind Jews but before Blacks–while another (1926) declared almost half of all French Canadians to be retarded.<sup>31</sup> This oppression was ironic considering that as many as 100,000 Franco-Americans served in the U.S. military during the First World War.<sup>32</sup>

While this external struggle was going on in the 1920s, an internal one also developed in the Catholic Church. When the Irish-American bishop of Providence

(Rhode Island) attempted to redirect monies from Franco-American parishes to English language schools in the diocese, a major conflict erupted. Franco-American elites saw it as an assault on their traditional *survivance* and the *petits canadas*. The “Sentenille Affair,” named after the nationalist journal, the *Sentinelle*, polarized Franco-Americans throughout New England. Appeals against the bishop went to state legislatures and the Pope, interdictions and excommunications were made, but the Vatican supported the program of Anglo-assimilation.<sup>33</sup>

Although the Catholic Church and the *petits canadas* had been able to hold families together during earlier economic crises, the institutions could not hold out during the Great Depression of 1930. As a result, Franco-American workers increasingly turned to labor unions, public assistance programs, national rather than local support groups, inter-ethnic cooperation, and class-consciousness.<sup>34</sup> Major labor actions of the decade included more and more Franco-Americans, such as the textile workers’ strike of 1934 and the shoe workers’ strike of 1937.

One of the outlandish fears being expressed by *anglophones* in the United States at this time was that continuing migration from Canada, coupled with a high birth rate, might result in Franco-American political domination of the Northeast United States, which could result in a “vote” of New England succeeding from the United States to join Canada.<sup>35</sup> With such sentiments being expressed and the start of the financial downturn in the 1930s, the United States began to restrict what had been an open border with Canada. Migration was allowed, but it was more closely controlled. Manufacturing jobs had also begun to decline, so this new limited migration largely consisted of those involved in the contract timber industry.

The manufacturing generated by World War II brought the United States out of the Great Depression, but led to a new wave of Anglo-assimilation. As in the First World War, a high percentage of Franco-Americans participated in the conflict. But afterwards, high employment was maintained by Cold War production, which led to a pervasive prosperity around the United States. Defense contractors like the aviation engine company, Pratt & Whitney, and the nuclear submarine construction company, General Dynamics, gave Connecticut the highest per capita income in the United States by the early 1960s. This drew workers from all over the continent and explains why many

Franco-Americans from northern Maine show up in Connecticut after World War II. Veterans went to school with educational monies provided by the “GI Bill,” and overall access to education increased as universities and colleges expanded to meet the demand.

At the same time, a new form of “Americanization” also was instituted as a result of the Cold War. This manifested itself as suspicion of anything “foreign” and an attempt by U.S. citizens to be 100 % “American,” which included speaking English. While this trend of “Anglo-homogenization” was going on, new counter-trends also began. The Beatnik Movement, anti-nuclear campaign, Rock and Roll, and Vatican II all conspired to provide alternatives to *survivance* and the *petit canada*.<sup>36</sup>

Two Franco-American novelists embodied these transformations. Marie Grace de Repentigny Metalious (1924–1964) from Manchester, New Hampshire, wrote devastating novels criticizing New England life, such as *Peyton Place* (1956), which not only became best-sellers but were made into Hollywood films. Jack Kerouac (1922–1969), from Lowell, Massachusetts produced his celebrated novel of hitch-hiking across the United States, *On the Road* (1951), which not only set a tone for this post-war opening into the world beyond New England’s *petit canadas*, but also intuitively harkened back to the more expansive, continental view of “America” of colonial days. It became an iconic book for generations of iconoclasts.

The combined effect of all these internal and external assaults that had taken place since 1918 was a death knell for traditional Franco-American society. As Franco-activist Yvon Labbé has so succinctly put it:

By the 1960s [Franco-American] bilingual schools had, for the most part, disappeared. Their societies increasingly became moribund and, worse, drinking clubs. I believe many of those societies, formally serving as protective ramparts, became stifling cages without exits. By the 1960s, Franco’s were experiencing another conquest, another exile. Another identity, another face than their own was being imposed. Ignorant of our contributions, our literature and folklore, our history, our cultural and language assets, the public education system had nearly succeeded in erasing us from the public place...As the 1960s marched in, we had become mostly silent, colorless, and hidden. A shame-based education and socialization process fed the silent invisibility.<sup>37</sup>

However, social changes were underway in the United States and Canada that were about to turn Franco-American heritage in a totally new direction. The 1960s was a time for ethnic recognition and civil rights around the world. The movement for French rights in Québec was called *la révolution tranquille* and spilled over to other Canadian provinces. So it is not surprising that the Franco-Americans in New England also sought new definitions, new empowerment, and new forms of expression.<sup>38</sup>

In the United States, as a result of the Civil Rights Movement, the Johnson Administration adopted a series of laws and programs to create a “Great Society.” One of the programs was the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Although its focus was on Anglo-assimilation, it also encouraged multicultural and bilingual education. One of ESEA’s programs sought to assemble bilingual and multicultural materials that were already available in many languages, including French, as well as to generate new materials. As a result, resource guides and anthologies of essays were produced about the French in the United States, in addition to a wide range of creative publications and activities, such as collections of plays and poetry, as well as conferences and workshops. Although the materials in these volumes varied widely in quality, it was the first time such a broad diversity of material had been assembled.<sup>39</sup>

While these programs were implemented on a national level, action was taking place locally. The 1919 English only law in Maine schools was overturned in 1969, soon followed by the establishment the PACE Fabric Project in northern Maine, one of the first bilingual education program that received a federal grant to help French-speaking children in the United States.<sup>40</sup> Four important regional histories about the French in New England then began to be assembled.

- Gérard Brault (1986), *The French Canadian Heritage in New England*
- François Weil (1989), *Les Franco-Américains*
- Yves Roby (1990), *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle Angleterre, 1776–1930*
- Armand Chartier (1991), *Histoire des Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle Angleterre*

Although, these works provided an important transition from an ignored or polarized stereotype into modern multi-dimensional studies, they were points of view grounded in old perceptions.<sup>41</sup> As this new academic work on the French in New England began to take hold, new grassroots movements also developed. In Orono, a dynamic group of

young student-activists christened themselves the Franco-American Resource & Opportunity Group (F.A.R.O.G.), adopted a frog as their symbol, and began a free-wheeling, multimedia assault on the traditional establishment.<sup>42</sup>

New community festivals and organizations evolved. In 1971, Franco-Americans in Lowell, Massachusetts declared a Franco-American Day on June 24<sup>th</sup> (St. Jean Baptiste Day), but instead of a traditional, religious-based festival, it became a cultural celebration with popular music and further developed into a celebration of writer Jack Kerouac, with involvement of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell and the U.S. National Park Service.<sup>43</sup> Other new festivals sprang up, such as Madawaska's *Festival Acadian* (1977) and Biddeford's *La Kermesse* (1982) in Maine. *Action pour les Franco-Américains du Nord-Est* (Action for Franco-American of the Northeast, ActFANE) was one of the new groups that grew out of the Title VII activity in 1979. It sought to establish a political grassroots advocacy group for Franco-Americans in New England and New York.<sup>44</sup> The interplay of community and academic activities supported and energized each other.

Several Franco-American academic programs developed, some from older Franco-American colleges, such as the Franco-American Institute at Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts. The development of the federal and state programs also led to the evolution of new programs at public universities, such as the Franco-American Collection and French North American Studies at the University of Southern Maine, the Franco-American Centre and Franco-American Studies at the University of Maine at Orono, and the Acadian Archives at the University of Maine at Fort Kent. As these organizations have been establishing themselves, new forms of Franco-American creativity also developed. These included the poems and stories of Norman Dubé, the stage works of Greg Chabot and Michael Parent, the poetry of Susann Pelletier, the singing of Liliane Labbé and Josée Vachon, and the dance of Cindy Larock.

In addition, new aspects of Franco-American life have begun to be expressed in nuanced and passionate ways. While attention is being paid to Franco-American women by organizations like the Franco-American Women's Institute, others point out that the feminist views of "separate spheres" between men and women do not neatly apply to immigrant women in general and Franco-American women in particular.<sup>45</sup> Novelist

David Plante from Rhode Island, poet Steven Riel of Massachusetts, and writer Paul Paré of Maine creatively explored the previously taboo subject of gay love and frustration in traditional Franco-American society. Cabaret singer Jean-Paul Poulain of Maine sang about his sexual abuse by the priesthood and received condemnation and applause. Ray-Luc Levasseur (Sanford) reflected on his Franco-heritage in writings from underground and federal prison, when he resisted corporate profiteering from South Africa's apartheid system and the Contra War in Central America. The creative styles and geographic diversity of this Franco-effort has been startling.

A newer tightening of border control began in the aftermath of the tragedy of 11 September 2001, as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security imposed even more stringent regulations for cross-border activity. However, a new addition to Franco-American society has been French-speakers from other parts of the world. The arrival of *francophones* from Togo, Haiti, Martinique, Chad, Cambodia, Djubuti, Tahiti, Congo and many other points of the compass have made the fabric of Franco-New England very exciting. All this contributes to a rich blend of cultures, which lately has taken on the image of a "French Renaissance."<sup>46</sup> This beautiful *mélange* is particularly relevant today, given the ever-widening spread of global enterprise and transborder populations, as well as the need of a multicultural consciousness to comprehend them. Suddenly, Franco-New England is central to the needs of a new world!

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<sup>1</sup> Such French Protestants became important artisans and merchants in the English colonies, such as goldsmith Apollon Rivoire, father of Boston patriot Paul Revere, and the merchant descendants of Pierre Baudouin that founded Bowdoin College and the towns of Bowdoin and Bowdoinham in Maine.

<sup>2</sup> Faulkner. The first series of colonial wars started at different times in different locations and were known by different names. The first colonial war was the War of the League of Augsburg (1688–1697), which is known by the English in North America as King William’s War (1688–1699). The second was the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1713), which Anglo-Americans know as Queen Anne’s War (1703–1713). There were other more localized wars that also impacted French outposts, such as King Phillip’s War (1675) and the Five Year War (Dummer’s War, 1721–1726).

<sup>3</sup> The second series of colonial wars started at different times in different locations and were known by different names. The third colonial war was the War of the Austrian Succession (1744–1748), which is known by the English in North America as King George’s War (1745–1749). The fourth was the Seven Year’s War (1754–1763), which Anglo-Americans know as the French and Indian War (1754–1760).

<sup>4</sup> The Franco-Protestant settlement on the Kennebec River lay opposite Fort Richmond. Since Fort Richmond had fallen into decay, the settlers built Fort Shirley to protect themselves from French and Abenaki attacks. Charles Allen, “Some Huguenot and Other Early Settlers,” 3: 351–379. Massachusetts, Military Extracts, April 1754, 7: 195. Goold, “Fort Halifax,” 8: 206–210, 213–214. The National Huguenot Society. Although frequently referred to as “Germans” or “Irish,” these spurious designations often referred to just one stop on a complex route of migration for these French Protestants.

<sup>5</sup> English colonial officials were suddenly expected to provide for the up-keep of the deported Acadians and protested vehemently. Not all the colonies accepted the new arrivals. Massachusetts sent ships carrying 1500 Acadians back to Nova Scotia in 1762. Daigle and LeBlanc.

<sup>6</sup> An often overlooked fact is that the United States won its independence from Great Britain as a result of French military assistance and material aid. Like most nationalist epics, U.S. history emphasizes the role of its homegrown Anglo-insurgents. Barry Rodrigue, “An Album in the Attic.”

<sup>7</sup> In 1784, the New York legislature granted 231,540 acres (937 sq km) in the Refugee Tract which were divided into 80 and 420 acre lots, except 5,000 acres, which were granted to the officers and privates among these refugees. A French Baptist Church was established in Altona in 1856.

<sup>8</sup> The U.S. Census of 1790 showed 29 French families in Vermont—152 people out of 80,000.

<sup>9</sup> Craig, “Immigrants in a Frontier Community: Madawaska, 1785–1850,” pp. 59–60.

<sup>10</sup> The “Great Migration” took place between 1815 and 1850, when approximately 800,000 immigrants went to Canada, largely from the British Isles.

<sup>11</sup> Craig, “Immigrants in a Frontier Community: Madawaska, 1785–1850.” Rodrigue, “Soldiers, Spuds, and Spruce: Maine’s Military Roads to the Maritimes.”

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<sup>12</sup> Lawrence to Whitcomb. Lathrop to Whitcomb. Whitcomb to Lincoln; to Forward. Unidentified correspondent to Young.

<sup>13</sup> War needs for iron and then steel caused an enormous industrial expansion in Troy, New York. Walkowitz, pp. 23–24. In Manchester, New Hampshire, the Amoskeag Mills expanded production to even make rifles and railroad engines. Hareven, p. 12. Not all sectors or manufacturers prospered. Access to resources determined manufacturing success during the Civil War. In the case of cotton, which came from the rebelling southern states, textile manufacturers prospered if they had stockpiled cotton or had connections to those that had.

<sup>14</sup> French-Canadian recruitment into the Union army during the civil war happened for a variety of reasons. For some, it was patriotism to a new nation or opposition to slavery. For others, it was the chance to earn an enlistment bounty or a fee to serve as the substitute of a wealthy draftee. In still other cases, coercion was involved. Because of a lack of such studies and the relative wealth of data, studies of French American participation in the U.S. Civil war is begging to be done. Some French Canadians became celebrated veterans. Writer Rémi Tremblay (1847–1926) came from the Eastern Townships of Quebec, served in the 14<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry, and—in 1884—wrote the Civil War novel, *Un Revenant*. Bélanger. Musician Calixa Lavallée (1842–1891) came from near Montréal, travelled throughout French America from New Orleans to the West Indies, joined the 4<sup>th</sup> Rhode Island Infantry, and—in 1880—composed the music for the Canadian anthem, “O Canada.” Potvin.

<sup>15</sup> United States, Department of the Interior, p. 12.

<sup>16</sup> Perreault. Pervier, p. 270.

<sup>17</sup> Ricard. Pervier, pp. 268–270.

<sup>18</sup> As an example of some of the difficult dynamics, the Dominicans from France accepted the Anglo-conformity policies of the Diocese of Portland and the U.S. Catholic Church, which ran counter to the desires of their parishioners and the Canadian Dominicans. They even promoted Parisian French in their schools. Frenette, “Understanding the French Canadians of Lewiston,” pp. 115, 116, 117, 120, 121. In some areas, Catholic schools worked with local school districts to provide education, despite regulations to keep church and state activities separate. This Catholic school arrangement persisted in the St. John Valley of northern Maine right up until the early 1970s, when Protestants complained to the Department of Education and the practice was ended. Paradis, p. 431.

<sup>19</sup> Fewer immigrants came to smaller towns and could not support a French Catholic parish, let alone a parochial school or French professionals and infrastructures. The French settlers had to use the same stores, workshops, and schools as the dominant English-speakers. In the case of Dexter, Maine, the town even went so far as to briefly establish a separate school for French-Canadian children in order to encourage acculturation. This resulted in Dexter being the town, in 1974, with the highest degree of language assimilation in the State of Maine. Blanchard, pp. 143, 145. James Allen, “Franco-Americans in Maine: A Geographical Perspective,” pp. 50, 60.

<sup>20</sup> A standard explanation for the image of French and Irish antagonism is that Irish-Americans tended to dominate both Democratic Party politics and the Catholic Church in the United States. Rather than challenge Irish-Americans on their own turf, it is said that Franco-Americans developed an alternative strategy of joining the Republican Party and supporting national parishes in a variety of locales in New England, most successfully in Rhode Island. However, in many parts of the Northeast, Franco-Americans joined the Democratic Party and labor unions, supported the church hierarchy, and intermarried with Irish-American families. Historian Yves Frenette sees part of the reason of Franco-American leaders endorsing the Democratic Party in Lewiston, Maine as being their equating the United States’ Republican Party with Canada’s Conservative Party, whose policies had forced them to migrate. Frenette, “Understanding the French Canadians of Lewiston,” p. 123. Blanchard, p. 142. Many case studies of Franco-Irish cooperation abound. Guignard. Redmond. Historian Daniel Walkowitz has assessed French and Irish cooperation and competition in Cohoes, New York, and also sees it as largely one of cooperation. Walkowitz, pp. 161, 226, 260.

<sup>21</sup> Early. Albert.

<sup>22</sup> Hendrickson. Craig, Book review.

<sup>23</sup> There are examples of management support. DeRoche, pp. 183, 185. Redmond. DeRoche also documents how various Franco-American women also carved out professional careers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as secretaries, news reporters and columnists, business agents, writers, and teachers. DeRoche, pp. 182–186, 191–194. Samuel Sault was an early labor leader in Cohoes, New York. An ex-textile worker, he ran the

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labor newspaper, the *Regulator* and was a leader in the 1880 Harmony cotton mills strike. Walkowitz, p. 220. United States, Department of the Interior, pp. 23–25. Horace Rivière of Providence Rhode Island became an officer in the United Textile Workers and served as an important bridge between national union and Franco-American workers. Gerstle, pp. 56, 158, 160. Laflamme, p. 166. An analysis of the 1910 pulp and paper strike on the Androscoggin River of Maine shows factors other than docile Franco-American workers to be the determining factors in labor organizing, such as company-dominated towns in which a multi-ethnic work force was intentionally divided by management in both the work place and tenements. Larson. Different industries had different factors that hindered labor action, which were often mistakenly associated with Franco-American predilections. For example, cotton mills tended to be more difficult to organize, as the work force often consisted of non-career, part-time women working between family cycles of care-giving. Their short-term mill-work goals made them vulnerable to management, which paid them lower wages, used them in flexible hours, and sexually exploited them. Laflamme, p. 162. DeRoche, pp. 178, 180–181, 182. Larson, pp. 298–299. Many Franco-Americans were loyal to collective associations, but to associations embodied in concepts of family, parish, and ethnic infrastructures. Class consciousness existed, but it was part of a larger cultural discourse. As long as this larger support network could hold members of the *petits canadas* together, mass membership in labor unions was not a high priority for Franco-Americans. Indeed, economic crisis tended to reinforce internal ethnic cohesion and promote inter-ethnic rivalries. Historian Jacques Ferland has convincingly argued that concepts of labor association need to be expanded beyond the stereotype of just unions. Ferland. Laflamme, pp. 156–157, 158, 163. The early Franco-American workforce operating in a *petit canada* also made it difficult for unions to access and include them, but it did happen. It was a process to develop working class solidarity. Walkowitz identifies a period of transition in the 1870s, when the French Canadians arrived in Cohoes, then their participation in the labor movement in the 1880s. Walkowitz, pp. 144, 169–170, 184, 191–192, 220, 249, 252, 260.

<sup>24</sup> In this way, voting could be seen as one of the indicators of a migrant’s intent to return to Canada or stay in the United States. Historian Yves Frenette documents the increasing participation of French immigrants in civic affairs. In 1879, for the first time, a Frenchman ran for political office—Franco-Irish Charles Sabourin, who unsuccessfully ran as city councilor. Frenette, “Understanding the French Canadians of Lewiston,” 2007, p. 117. In 1880–1882, the Franco-American middle class organized a French Canadian Political Club in Cohoes, New York. Walkowitz, pp. 164–165.

<sup>25</sup> The term “Franco-American” or, more simply, “Franco,” is not universally accepted. Over the years, the expression has expanded in a haphazard fashion: Adopted by some but not by others. In its most restrictive use, “Franco-Americans” are considered descendents of French-Canadian factory workers, in the cities of the northeastern United States, and are additionally seen as being Roman Catholic, poor, uneducated, and conservative. In its widest application, Franco-Americans are any French-speaking people in the Americas—from the Arctic Archipelago to Tierra del Fuego. Louder and Rodrigue. Richard, p. 214.

<sup>26</sup> Franco-American lawyer, Émile Tardivel, made this link between Franco’s and Yankees at a St. Jean-Baptiste celebration in Lewiston, Maine in 1897. Richard. Tardivel.

<sup>27</sup> There were regional differences and differing degrees of French acceptance in New England. Journalist Paul Carrier and politician Pat LaMarche both document how French-Canadian and Acadian heritage was celebrated in Massachusetts, but was attacked in Maine. Doty, “How Many Frenchmen Does it Take to...?”. Carrier. LaMarche.

<sup>28</sup> DeRoche, 185.

<sup>29</sup> Hareven, p. 12.

<sup>30</sup> Blanchard, pp. 144, 148. Duval. Bonang and Camiré. DeRoche, pp. 188–190. Roderick. Hills.

<sup>31</sup> The author of the 1918 study, H.B. Woolston, was a professor of sociology at the University of Washington. Clifford Kirkpatrick, who ranked French Canadians as being twice as retarded as *anglophone* U.S. citizens, was a professor of sociology at the University of Minnesota and Indiana University. Doty, “How Many Frenchmen Does it Take to...?”, p. 333.

<sup>32</sup> Paradis, pp. 428, 431–436. Even labor unions supported immigration barriers in order to maintain wages, which undermined their attempts to enlist Franco-American workers. Blanchard, pp. 145, 148. Laflamme, p. 159. Doty, “How Many Frenchmen Does it Take to...?”, p. 336. Labbe, “KKK Women’s Auxiliary.”

<sup>33</sup> While the Germans, Irish, and French had empowered the Catholic Church in the United States, Catholics had begun to increasingly arrive from southern and eastern Europe in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. As a result, the Vatican began to appoint the English-speaking Irish clergy to positions of power in the United States, positions that allowed them to serve as brokers between the nation’s Anglo-Protestant majority and

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the Catholic Church's increasing polyglot membership. In order to encourage acceptance in the United States, this Catholic hierarchy encouraged English-speaking schools and parishes. National parishes resisted. This led to several dramatic confrontations, such as the Corporation Sole movement in Maine (1910) and the Sentenille Affair in Rhode Island (1925). At the center of each case was an Irish-American bishop's attempt to redirect monies from Franco-American parishes to English language schools in the diocese.

<sup>34</sup> Historian Matthew Laflamme has documented this transition from *petit canada* to class consciousness in Waterville, Maine in the 1930s. In 1934, Franco-Americans joined with Lebanese workers to win the General Strike there. Laflamme. This transition of religious social services collapsing under the strain of the economic depression had occurred in other times and places. In Québec, it was a major factor that led to transition into the Quiet Revolution. Doty, "How Many Frenchmen Does it Take...?", p. 338. The shift to a wider view beyond *survivance* and the *petits canadas* was nothing new. The French migrants to New England had followed many different lifestyles and work patterns, even during the late industrial period. Although the *petit canada* and *survivance* have been emphasized as bulwarks against assimilation, there were other factors in operation. The Franco-American preoccupation with *survivance* and *petits canadas* has been largely crafted by the Franco-American elites and by scholars who find such institutional history easier to document than less tangible *mentalité*. The *petit canada* was not an air-tight box, but was permeable in two directions. Women exercised independence and more control than has frequently been attributed to them by the elites, but this control tended to express itself in informal but important social networks rather than institutional offices, as evidenced by informal women's societies that would meet to knit and talk. Franco-American families remained intact, and the children began the transition into skilled labor. Blanchard. Historian Celeste DeRoche has documented the "complex, shaded, and nuanced" life of Franco-American women that bridged work, family, and neighborhoods. DeRoche, pp. 174–176, 178, 184, 187, 190. The life and writing of author Camille Lessard-Bissonette (1883–1970) reflect the struggle of many Franco-American women against the oppressive hierarchies of this era. Charron and Robbins. Walkowitz, p. 254.

<sup>35</sup> Niles Carpenter, who expressed fears of New England's succession to join Canada, was a professor of sociology at the University of Buffalo and a consultant for the U.S. Census Bureau. Doty, How Many Frenchmen Does it Take to...?", p. 334.

<sup>36</sup> One of the results of the post-World War II secularization was that the large-scale and unifying ethno-religious festivals that had earlier predominated began to fade away. Richard, pp. 219–221.

<sup>37</sup> Labbé, "Out of the Shadows," p. 418.

<sup>38</sup> The "Quiet Revolution" in Canada was not always so quiet. In the 1960s and 1970s, as the revolutionary Front de Libération du Québec (Liberation Front of Québec, FLQ) carried on underground activities in Canada aimed at securing sovereignty for Québec, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) went so far as to tap the phone of the mainstream Franco-American politician, John Martin of Maine, fearing a spill-over effect of covert operations along the U.S. Canada border. The implied message was that anyone who was French in this region was a potential enemy of the state.

<sup>39</sup> In addition to the Civil Rights Act (1964), the Johnson Administration's goal was to merge marginalized populations into what political leaders considered "mainstream" society. One of the key elements of this policy was the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In 1968, a new provision (Title VII) was added to ESEA, one which focused on multicultural and bilingual education. Its goal was to better assimilate non-English-speakers. The focus of this Act was primarily on Latino and Asian immigrants. However, the law was implemented in such a way as to also engage more wide-spread multiculturalism and, as a result, resident non-English speakers in the United States were also empowered, including Franco-Americans. As part of ESEA Title VII implementation, National Assessment and Dissemination Centers for Bilingual Education (NADC) were established around the United States in 1975. They based the New England Center in Massachusetts, which—in turn—established a National Materials Development Center (NMDC) in New Hampshire. Normand Dubé from the St. John Valley of Maine served as its very dynamic and creative Director from 1977 to 1981. In 1976, the National Materials Development Center produced *A Resource Guide for New England Libraries on Franco-American Studies* by Phyllis Hagel, followed by Pierre Anctil's more complete *A Franco-American Bibliography: New England* in 1979. The seven volumes of the *Franco-American Overview* were published between 1979 and 1982 and consisted of an introductory volume by Renaud Albert, André Martin's volume on the Midwest and West, Madeleine Giguère's two volumes on New England, and Mathé Allain and Carl Brasseaux's three volumes on

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Louisiana. Richard Nixon promulgated Executive Orders 11246 and 111375 in 1971, which required federally funded agencies to apportion the funds to match local population characteristics, including ethnicity and language. In 1972, Congress passed an Ethnic Heritage Studies Program and mandated bilingual education programs under Title VII of ESEA and the Emergency School Aid Act.

<sup>40</sup> The success of PACE-FABRIC encouraged the Valley school districts to pursue other federal grants to promote bilingualism among their students, although there were reactions against it by newer anglophone Protestants who had settled in the St. John valley. Paradis, pp. 436–438.

<sup>41</sup> While these four books did reach a wider audience, most took a long time in production and – when they finally did appear—often came out in French or in small press runs. Only later were some of them made available in English or to a broader market. They also tended to focus on a generic “Franco-American” society—with southern New England serving as the basic model. This is a problem, because many of the French population in northern New England do not easily fit into this definition, while the Acadians tended to disappear from view. By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, strong ethnic organizations like Woonsocket’s Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste (USJB) and Manchester’s Association Canado-Américain (ACA) spread throughout southern New England, in response to the concentration of French Canadians in the region’s industrial cities. Although begun as mutual aid societies (insurance companies) for French Catholics, they also created large libraries and active cultural centers. Since it has been easy for researchers to use such concentrated archival holdings to study “Franco-American” society, the resulting scholarship has tended to follow the USJB and ACA vision of “their” people. Exceptions to their norm just “did not exist” or were under-reported – such as people like Ted Roderick (Rodrigue), the Socialist Party’s Franco-American candidate for mayor of Lewiston in 1932. Studies that have exclusively used these collections have been “source driven” works that lump the Maine experience with the very different but well documented experiences of southern New England. Indeed, when Historian Barry Rodrigue’s work on the life of Franco-American entrepreneur Thomas G. Plant came out in 1994, readers questioned multimillionaire Plant’s Franco-American heritage because Plant did not fit the stereotypical image of a poor mill-worker. Rodrigue, *Tom Plant*; “The Cultural Trigonometry of Franco-American Stereotypes;” and “Tom Plant, la route du Canada et les stéréotypes sur les Franco-Américains.” A file on Ted Roderick is in the Franco-American Collection at the University of Southern Maine’s Lewiston-Auburn College, Lewiston, Maine.

<sup>42</sup> Brown.

<sup>43</sup> Brunelle.

<sup>44</sup> ActFANE was established in 1979 in Manchester, New Hampshire, but moved to Lowell, Massachusetts. It was somewhat inspired by the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL), which was formed in 1968. See Waddell, “French Louisiana,” pp. 229–251. Editor Yvon Labbé of the *F.A.R.O.G. Forum* and Geographer Dean Louder ran afoul of some of the gangster elements in Louisiana when they began working with métis critics of the high-stakes backers of CODOFIL. Yvon Labbé and Dean Louder, Interview.

<sup>45</sup> DeRoche, p. 176. FAWI. Labbé, personal communication. Langellier.

<sup>46</sup> A humorous incident, reflecting this new surge in Franco-American and Acadian Studies c 2001 happened when an officer of an historical society in Brunswick, upon hearing that a graduate student proposed to do a study of local French musical traditions, remarked: “Oh, no, not another Franco-American project!” This reaction highlights the recent activism surrounding Franco-Americans in Maine, as well as the dismay of some traditional authorities to this resurgence. Mckeen.