

Bureaucratic rationalism, political partisanship and Acadian nationalism:  
The 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy

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## ABSTRACT

This doctoral dissertation is a microhistory of a textbook controversy in 1920 New Brunswick, Canada. During a time of post war sensitivity to nationalism and patriotism, public feeling was aroused as the result of a complaint about Myers' *General History*, a world history textbook with a newly written chapter about the Great War. In the chapter, the American author made no reference to Canada, and overemphasized British and especially American war efforts.

A close examination of events over the course of the following six months investigates the public outcry, the bureaucratic response of the New Brunswick Board of Education and the political manoeuvring of the media. Their focus on the original issues of patriotism, citizenship, history education and the role of schooling eventually dissolved into longstanding conflicts over language and religion.

Contextualized in the rich historical literature examining history and citizenship education and the history of education in Canada, this dissertation draws on a wide range of archival sources, most particularly the Board of Education correspondence and New Brunswick newspapers, to explore how questions about history education were interpreted through the lens of the bureaucratic rationality of the educational administrator, the political partisanship of the newspaper editor, and the Acadian nationalism of the Roman Catholic Bishop. The 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy contributes to our understanding of the political nature of public memory, and the complex intertwining of religion and language rights within schooling, history education and citizenship in Canada, and in New Brunswick.

## RÉSUMÉ

La présente thèse de doctorat constitue une microhistoire de la controverse qu'a suscitée un manuel paru en 1920 au Nouveau-Brunswick. En cette époque d'après-guerre, la sensibilité au nationalisme et au patriotisme demeure particulièrement vive. Or, une plainte formulée contre le Myers' *General History*, un manuel scolaire sur l'histoire du monde auquel on vient d'ajouter un chapitre sur la Grande Guerre, alerte l'opinion publique. Dans ce nouveau chapitre, l'auteur américain passe sous silence le rôle du Canada, accordant en revanche une importance démesurée à l'effort de guerre des Britanniques – mais surtout à celui des Américains.

Nous avons procédé à un examen attentif des événements qui se sont déroulés au cours des six mois ayant suivi la parution de ce chapitre : protestations du public, réponse administrative du ministère de l'Éducation du Nouveau-Brunswick, manœuvres politiques des médias. À l'origine rattachés au patriotisme, à la citoyenneté, à l'enseignement de l'histoire et au rôle de l'éducation, ces événements sont peu à peu devenus des conflits linguistiques et religieux de longue durée.

Mise en contexte au moyen d'une riche documentation sur l'enseignement de l'histoire et de la citoyenneté, ainsi que sur l'histoire de l'éducation au Canada, la présente thèse fait appel à des sources archivistiques abondantes et variées – en particulier la correspondance du ministère de l'Éducation et la presse écrite du Nouveau-Brunswick – et examine comment l'interprétation des questions relatives à l'enseignement de l'histoire a dans les faits relevé de la rationalité bureaucratique de l'administrateur de l'enseignement, de la partialité politique de la rédaction du journal et du nationalisme acadien de l'évêque catholique romain. La controverse suscitée au Nouveau-Brunswick par le manuel d'histoire de 1920 nous amène à saisir la nature

politique de la mémoire collective, ainsi que l'enchevêtrement complexe des droits linguistiques et religieux à l'éducation, à l'enseignement de l'histoire et à la citoyenneté au Canada et au Nouveau-Brunswick.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

*We have been at a loss here to understand how it is possible, if there is any kind of supervision of the textbooks, that the poison in the last chapter of Myers' could get into the schools easily to do its deadly work on the minds of the growing boy and girl.*

Letter to the Editor, *The Daily Gleaner*, February 18, 1920.

In the long line of scholarship about Canadian education in the twentieth century, much has been written about history education, its manifestations and its purposes.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have examined history textbooks for their content and biases, documenting the processes of their adoption and provision.<sup>2</sup> Schooling during and after the Great War has

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Penney Clark, "Clio in the Curriculum: The Jury Is Out," *Canadian Social Studies* 32, no. 2 (1998), <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=3&did=25874608&SrchMode=1&sid=3&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1164472216&clientId=10843#fulltext>, Ken Osborne, "Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping. History in Canadian Schools: Past Present and Future," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 3 (2000), Timothy J. Stanley, "Whose Public? Whose Memory? Racisms, Grand Narratives and Canadian History," in *To the Past: History Education, Public Memory & Citizenship in Canada*, ed. Ruth Sandwell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), and Amy von Heyking, *Creating Citizens: History and Identity in Alberta's Schools, 1905-1980* (Calgary AB: University of Calgary Press, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> A notable example of this is Penney Clark, "Take It Away, Youth! Visions of Canadian Identity in British Columbia Social Studies Textbooks, 1925-1989" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1995).

been the subject of considerable academic attention.<sup>3</sup> This study weaves together these threads of scholarly interest, but shifts the focus to New Brunswick, a province which has received comparatively less consideration. It fills a gap in knowledge about the history of education in New Brunswick, while adding to the understanding of the effect of the Great War and its aftermath on schooling and history education. This dissertation uses the lens of microhistory to probe a single episode, when a history textbook generated a storm of controversy in 1920 New Brunswick, for evidence about the nature and significance of history education.<sup>4</sup> As we will see, a detailed interrogation of the evidence relating to this single event not only provides the historian with a window on national identity, citizenship and patriotism that were identified at the time as the issues at the heart of the controversy; further investigation of this incident opens the door to a

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<sup>3</sup> Recent studies include Cynthia Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950* (Waterloo ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006), Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004). Throughout this dissertation, the 1914-1918 conflict is called the "Great War." Historian Niall Ferguson indicates that the term was introduced during the post-war era, while the designation "World War I" originated in September, 1918. Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War* (New York: Basic Books, 1999). The descriptor "Great War" appeared in the Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the City of St. John for 1918-1919. New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1920).

<sup>4</sup> For more on the role of microhistory to provide detailed research which contributes "to more nuanced general and even national histories," see Ruth W. Sandwell, "History as Experiment: Microhistory and Environmental History," in *Method and Meaning in Canadian Environmental History*, ed. Alan MacEachern and William J. Turkel (Scarborough: Nelson Education, 2009), 122.

deeper understanding of longstanding societal strains related to religion, language and schooling in New Brunswick.

This research begins with a secondary school World History textbook that was banned from the schools after a loud protest about its failure to note, let alone celebrate, Canada's and Canadians' role in the Great War. Copies of the book have disappeared from libraries, archives and other collections. The exact content of its pages and the look of its cover are lost. Its author is long dead, as are the school officials who prescribed the text, and the teachers and most of the students who used it. All knowledge of the textbook has not completely disappeared, however. Earlier and later editions provide clues regarding its contents, as do letters, newspapers, reports and other sources that discussed the notorious volume. From these bits of evidence it is possible to glean that the textbook was used almost continuously for 39 years in New Brunswick, Canada, but for a time in the early 1920s it was banned from the province's classrooms. This dissertation argues that the textbook's removal is more than just a response to the rupture of the Great War as manifested in schools. It situates New Brunswick secondary education within the Canadian context, and contextualizes the wartime and postwar events within the broader history of education in Canada. As a microhistory, a close reading of a wide range of documents concerning American academic P.V.N. Myers' *General History* and its public rejection by New Brunswickers reveals a great deal about public perceptions of war, of nationalism, of history education and the role of schools. The banning of Myers' *General History* provided a short, sharp shock to education officials in the province, and the manner in which it unfolded, was worried over and was brought to a temporary resolution all within the space of six months, sheds light on the role of textbooks and New Brunswickers' perceptions of the purposes of history

education in 1920. But more than that, the textbook controversy illuminates the complicated interplay of religion, language and politics in the province. Explicitly linked to nationalism and patriotism, the controversy was deeply enmeshed in conflicts and tensions between Anglophone Protestants and Francophone Roman Catholics, tensions that had existed in the province for over a century. This study investigates the roles of the active agents whose input affected the progress and outcome of the controversy.

P.V.N. Myers was a professor of history and political economy at the University of Cincinnati during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and his *World History* textbooks were prescribed in North American schools for over forty years. As many as ten different editions of his *General History* were printed in his lifetime.<sup>5</sup> The text was first prescribed for New Brunswick's secondary schools in 1910, and except for three years in the 1920s, it remained on the list of approved secondary school history texts until 1949. School officials received several complaints about the book in the years leading up to 1920, and most concerned its religious content. These took the form of Protestant clerics expressing concern about the Roman Catholic content in Myers' description of the Crusades and the Reformation.<sup>6</sup> Complainants were assuaged by the appointed head of the provincial Board of Education, the Chief Superintendent, with the

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<sup>5</sup> See the WorldCat network of library contents and services for an indication of the breadth and scope of Myers' textbook authorship. "WorldCat," OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., <http://www.worldcat.org/>.

<sup>6</sup> Leo A. Hoyt, to Carter, W.S., December 1, 1911. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books, 1900-1914*. RS116 B2s2. Provincial Archives of New Brunswick., Frank Baird, to Carter, W.S., November 7, 1919. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

assurance that bishops and other heads of various denominations had been consulted regarding the text's adoption.<sup>7</sup> The province's Textbook Committee, consisting of teachers, school administrators and other education officials, convened in December 1919, and approved Myers' text once again for use in the province's secondary school history courses, along with texts on British and Canadian history.

W.S. Carter was New Brunswick's Chief Superintendent in 1920, and he was the main recipient of complaints and concerns about Myers' textbook. His correspondence records for that time indicate that the offending text was never meant for New Brunswick schools, but due to an error in the shipping department of the Boston publisher, copies of the text were sent to a Saint John distributor.<sup>8</sup> From there a handful of the texts were distributed to booksellers across the province, where parents bought them for their secondary school aged children. The revised edition of the text included a

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<sup>7</sup> W.S. Carter, to Hoyt, Leo A., December 6, 1911. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books, 1900-1914*. RS116 B/2/s/2. PANB., ———, to Baird, Frank, November 8, 1919. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>8</sup> No evidence of the truth of this sequence of events exists other than the explanation reported to Carter and New Brunswick newspapers by the publisher's representative. See George H. Moore, to Carter, W.S., February 24, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. PANB. Throughout this dissertation, the twenty-first century spelling of the city of Saint John is used. In 1920, the name was spelled St. John, so any mention of the city cited in primary sources reflects that usage.

newly-written chapter, the subject of which was the war just ended.<sup>9</sup> Because of the method of textbook distribution, however, Carter had no knowledge of the unauthorized edition of the text, and was unprepared for the public condemnation heaped upon him during the course of the controversy.

The first hint of trouble came in early February 1920 when a returned serviceman, Christopher Armstrong, wrote a letter to the editor of *The Daily Gleaner*, the Fredericton newspaper, complaining that in a chapter about the war Canada's name was not mentioned, and the American role in the war was overemphasized. The *Gleaner* took up the cause and in the ensuing weeks, condemned the text as an insult to Canadians and to the nation's soldiers, focusing on the Chief Superintendent, the Board of Education and the provincial government as targets of censure.<sup>10</sup> Other anti-government newspapers in the province echoed the *Gleaner's* sentiments, while their pro-government counterparts, particularly in Saint John, offered a defense. Public commentary on the textbook was limited for the most part to editorials, letters to the editor and newspaper articles.

For six months after Armstrong's initial complaint, the Chief Superintendent sought a solution to the problem of replacing the disgraced textbook. Patriotic groups, newspaper editors, reporters and writers of letters to the editor protested the presence of

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<sup>9</sup> The 1921 edition of the text included the chapter on the war and an additional chapter about the Bolshevik revolution, but because no copies of the 1919 text are available, it is impossible to determine whether the chapter on the revolution was part of that edition.

<sup>10</sup> In 1920 New Brunswick, the Board of Education in essence *was* the provincial government. Members of the Board included the Chief Superintendent, the Premier and several of his cabinet ministers, the Principal of the provincial Normal School, and the Chancellor of the University of New Brunswick.



the American text in New Brunswick schools, and insisted that it be removed from the province's classrooms in favour of a Canadian alternative. At this point the small but growing Canadian publishing industry did not have a World History title written by a Canadian author, and it would not be possible that a Canadian World History textbook could be commissioned, written, and published in anything less than two years.<sup>11</sup> Carter surveyed publishers both nationally and internationally, and secured and forwarded review copies of proposed new World History textbooks by American and British authors to a special committee comprised of a handful of members of the Textbook Committee, and to leading New Brunswick clerics. Little consensus on a replacement existed and finally, a subcommittee of the Board of Education was struck consisting of Carter, the Premier and the Minister of Public Works, charged with choosing a World History textbook in time for the start of the school year in September.<sup>12</sup>

In early August the Board of Education adopted, without public comment, a replacement text by British author Edgar Sanderson, *Outlines of the World's History - Ancient Oriental Monarchies, Greece and Rome*.<sup>13</sup> Significantly, Carter's correspondence later in the year shows that the new text was chosen only after a decision to change the New Brunswick secondary school World History curriculum.<sup>14</sup> Apparently

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<sup>11</sup> John C. Saul, to Carter, W.S., April 14, 1920. *Prov: Ont. 1916-1923*. RS116 B7f2. PANB.

<sup>12</sup> W.E. Foster, P.J. Veniot, and W.S. Carter, "Report Re: High School Course in General History," ed. Board of Education (1920).

<sup>13</sup> New Brunswick Board of Education, "Board of Education Minutes 1909-1935," ed. Board of Education (August 4, 1920).

<sup>14</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., December 7, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B/7/e/2. PANB.

in the end, the only successful solution that could be found to the problem of the unsuitable text was to make significant changes to the course. Since clerics were unable to agree on a new text because of the way each proposed volume dealt with Christianity, the curriculum was truncated so that it ended with the birth of Christ. The study of history picked up again with a focus on British and Canadian history using separate texts for each. World History consisted of the study of ancient history only. The replacement text remained in use for two school years, after which a new edition of Myers' *General History* was introduced containing a freshly written half-page about the efforts of Canadian soldiers during the war.<sup>15</sup> This text was prescribed until later in the decade, when renewed complaints arose. These concerns finally prompted the province to produce an edition of the text authorized for use in New Brunswick, the content of which ended just before the start of the Great War. The localized revision, which was almost identical to the edition prescribed in 1919, remained on the list of authorized textbooks in the province until 1949. While the controversy of 1920 generated heated public discussions about the role of history education and the deeper meaning of public education for some weeks, in the end the controversy did not stimulate any long term change to history education or the role of the public in directing its course. The controversy was a flashpoint or eruption, not a rupture, and one that furthermore spoke to longer standing religious and linguistic stresses that were, in the end, of greater import to New Brunswickers than discussions of Canadian nationalism and history education.

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<sup>15</sup> Sanderson's *Outlines of the World's History - Ancient Oriental Monarchies, Greece and Rome* was published by Blackie and Sons, Ltd. of Glasgow and distributed in Canada by the Renouf Publishing Company Ltd. of Montreal. For the subsequent decision to re-prescribe Myers' text, see New Brunswick Board of Education, "Board of Education Minutes 1909-1935," (September 19, 1922).

The major themes of this study are well covered in the scholarly history of Canadian education over the past forty years. Historians have described in detail the creation of common school systems, with attention to the power relationships at play. Gidney and Lawr stress the importance of bureaucratic rationality and the way it became a means of governing not just the educational system but behaviour within the system.<sup>16</sup> Bruce Curtis argues that education became a means of ideological control not from above or outside, but from within through the colonizing effects of pedagogical practice. The result was that “the form of conflict and resistance changed from overt political struggle to struggles over the ‘practices, devices, techniques, and instruments of educational governance.’”<sup>17</sup> Educational leaders built a system which perpetuated their own interests with a moral element, Curtis posits, and this was necessary in part because of the decline of church influence in a secular school system.<sup>18</sup> Other scholars have focused on education as a preparation for citizenship. Students were not born citizens;

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<sup>16</sup> R.D. Gidney and Douglas A. Lawr, "Bureaucracy Vs. Community? The Origins of Bureaucratic Procedure in the Upper Canadian School System," *Journal of Social History* 13, no. 3 (1980).

<sup>17</sup> Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871* (London ON: The Althouse Press, 1988), 17.

<sup>18</sup> See also Tom Mitchell, ""The Manufacture of Souls of Good Quality": Winnipeg's 1919 National Conference on Canadian Citizenship, English-Canadian Nationalism, and the New Order after the Great War," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 31, no. 4 (1996/1997), <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=13356165&sid=2&Fmt=3&clientId=10843&RQT=309&VName=PQD>, and George S. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press, 2008).

they were “citizens in waiting.”<sup>19</sup> The purpose of schooling was to teach what it meant to participate in a democracy, including the rights, responsibilities and limits of citizenship. This was what Ken Osborne terms the “official rhetoric of citizenship” in Canada.<sup>20</sup>

While studies of the educational system have grown in recent years, one of the constant frustrations expressed by historians of education is the difficulty of determining what actually happened inside classrooms of the past.<sup>21</sup> Sources documenting the internal working of the classroom may be difficult to find, but historians’ research has revealed a multitude of factors influencing student learning, including level of funding,

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<sup>19</sup> Pamela Munn and Margaret Arnott, "Citizenship in Scottish Schools: The Evolution of Education for Citizenship from the Late Twentieth Century to the Present," *History of Education* 38, no. 3 (2009): 444.

<sup>20</sup> Osborne, "Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping. History in Canadian Schools: Past Present and Future," 410. Osborne stresses that the motivation behind this educational purpose was not always benign or positive, an observation echoed by Sunera Thobani. See Sunera Thobani, *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007). Rosa Bruno-Jofré notes that one of the challenges of educating citizens was that it was “difficult to separate the public and the private, the personal and the political.” Rosa Bruno-Jofré, "Manitoba Schooling in the Canadian Context and the Building of a Polity: 1919-1971," *Canadian and International Education* 28, no. 2 (1999): 109.

<sup>21</sup> See Penney Clark, "'Liberty of Trade from the Thralldom of the Autocrats:' Provision of School Textbooks in Ontario, 1850-1909," *Canadian Journal of Education* 29, no. 4 (2006), and Ken Osborne, "One Hundred Years of History Teaching in Manitoba Schools: Part 1: 1897-1927," *Manitoba History* 36, no. Winter (1998).

language of instruction, religion, and location.<sup>22</sup> The feminization of teaching in Canada had a profound impact on the classroom, as children were taught by young, inexperienced women with little training.<sup>23</sup> The more highly trained teachers seeking security, prestige and higher pay, however, opted for teaching in the secondary panel and were more likely to be male.<sup>24</sup> Historians agree that while pedagogical developments favoured moving beyond the textbook to utilize multiple sources in order to promote understanding and not the memorization of discrete facts, a pedagogy emphasizing rote learning persisted.<sup>25</sup> As Robert Stamp explains, “For students in academic or matriculation programs – and that included the vast majority – classroom life continued to be circumscribed by a proscribed curriculum of teaching subjects, authorized textbooks, deductive teaching, and external examinations.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Paul Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), and Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*.

<sup>23</sup> Alison Prentice and Marjorie R. Theobald, eds., *Women Who Taught: Perspectives on the History of Women and Teaching* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

<sup>24</sup> Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914*.

<sup>25</sup> See for example Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871*, and Amy von Heyking, "Shaping an Education for the Modern World: A History of the Alberta Social Studies Curriculum, 1905 to 1965" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Calgary, 1996). For an influential late nineteenth century argument against rote learning, see American Historical Association, *The Study of History in Schools: A Report to the American Historical Association by the Committee of Seven* (New York, London: MacMillan, 1899).

<sup>26</sup> Robert M. Stamp, "Canadian High Schools in the 1920's and 1930's: The Social Challenge to the Academic Tradition," *Historical papers/Communications historiques* 13, no. 1 (1978): 92.

As the twentieth century dawned, the system of secondary schooling in Canada expanded. Some scholars explain that this growth was to feed the simultaneous expansion of post-secondary schooling and served as a form of gate-keeping “for the occupational and social order” between the panels.<sup>27</sup> Indeed for an elite group of students, secondary school was a launch pad into higher education. For many, however, it was the route to a teaching career, as secondary school led not to university but to Normal School.<sup>28</sup> In addition, as Cynthia Comacchio argues persuasively, by the 1920s Canadian adolescence was established as a “crucial stage of citizenship formation,” with secondary schools as the primary site of enactment, and extra-curricular activities serving an important cohesive function.<sup>29</sup>

In answering the question, What was the purpose of history education? Canadian historians of education of the past forty years have addressed the broad themes of

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<sup>27</sup> R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar, *Inventing Secondary Education: The Rise of the High School in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 316. In her study of secondary schooling for girls, Joyce Goodman explores the way such schools represented “the development of ‘modern’ or scientific alternatives to classical education; ‘age pyramids’ and the sharpening of boundaries between the school and the university; cultural capital and the ‘making’ of elite groups, state and nation; segmentation and social mobility.” Joyce Goodman, “Social Change and Secondary Schooling for Girls in the ‘Long 1920s’: European Engagements,” *History of Education* 36, no. 4-5 (2007).

<sup>28</sup> Osborne, “One Hundred Years of History Teaching in Manitoba Schools: Part 1: 1897-1927.”

<sup>29</sup> Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*, 52.

citizenship, national identity, and memory.<sup>30</sup> Within schools, history education was conceived as a main vehicle through which this intersection of history, nationalism and citizenship was expressed, with the history textbook as the central artefact of that expression. The study of history, both in elementary and secondary schools, provided a national contextualization, what Ken Osborne called a “nation-building narrative

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<sup>30</sup> For research on national identity, see J.M.S. Careless, "Limited Identities - Ten Years Later," *Manitoba History*, no. 1 (1981), [http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb\\_history/01/limitedidentities.shtml](http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/01/limitedidentities.shtml), Geneviève Jain, "Nationalism and Educational Politics in Ontario and Québec," in *Canadian Schools and Canadian Identity*, ed. Alf Chaiton and Neil McDonald (Toronto: Gage Educational Publishing, 1977), Ken Osborne, "Teaching History in Schools: A Canadian Debate," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 35, no. 5 (2003), and George S. Tomkins, "Canadian Education and the Development of a National Consciousness: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives," in *Canadian Schools and Canadian Identity*, ed. Alf Chaiton and Neil McDonald (Toronto: Gage Educational Publishing, 1977).

On the subject of citizenship education, see Rosa Bruno-Jofré, "Citizenship and Schooling in Manitoba, 1918-1945," *Manitoba Historical Society* (1998), Osborne, "Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping. History in Canadian Schools: Past Present and Future.", Hans Smits and Jeff Orr, "The Challenge to Rethink Citizenship and Community in the Social Studies in Postmodern Times," *Canadian Social Studies* 31 (1997, Spring), and von Heyking, *Creating Citizens: History and Identity in Alberta's Schools, 1905-1980*.

For memory, see Keith C. Barton and Linda S. Levstik, *Teaching History for the Common Good* (Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2004), Stanley, "Whose Public? Whose Memory? Racisms, Grand Narratives and Canadian History.", Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), and David Williams, *Media, Memory, and the First World War* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009).

approach that dominated Canadian schools from the 1890s to the 1970s.”<sup>31</sup> It served to explain particular political and social institutions, their development and interconnectedness. It also presented certain social structures and practices as ordinary and expected, and worked effectively as a tool of assimilation, erasing the past of those who were outside the centres of hegemonic power, creating narratives with those who were within as the heroes. It prepared individuals for participation in a democracy. Bruno-Jofré notes that this role “appeared side by side with the overall notion of the Empire and often in relation to the danger posed by the Bolshevic [*sic*] revolution.”<sup>32</sup> These notions were not new; the American Historical Association’s 1899 report identified history education as necessary to everyday life, saying it provided students with “practical preparation for social adaptation and for forceful participation in civic activities.”<sup>33</sup>

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, history was a compulsory subject throughout Canada, both in elementary and secondary schools. In the younger grades, students learned about the past “through interesting stories that provided general knowledge and a rudimental cultural literacy, while also laying a foundation for

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<sup>31</sup> Ken Osborne, "To the Past': Why We Need to Teach and Study History," in *To the Past: History Education, Public Memory & Citizenship in Canada*, ed. Ruth Sandwell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

<sup>32</sup> Bruno-Jofré, "Manitoba Schooling in the Canadian Context and the Building of a Polity: 1919-1971," 105.

<sup>33</sup> American Historical Association, *The Study of History in Schools: A Report to the American Historical Association by the Committee of Seven*, 18.



subsequent historical study.”<sup>34</sup> Upper-level history classes relied on the memorization of facts.<sup>35</sup> The core content of the curriculum at all grades was Canadian history, with a few courses at the upper levels in British history and even fewer in World History “designed to show that Canada’s history was the continuation in North America of the long tradition of Western civilization.”<sup>36</sup> Canadian textbooks, like their American counterparts, were written by university professors and other scholars.<sup>37</sup>

As Cynthia Comacchio argues, while publicly funded secondary schools were places where children from a broad mixture of socio-economic, linguistic, racial and religious backgrounds could mix, the greatest advantages accrued to those who benefitted from the cultural capital of their backgrounds and the privilege imbued in their race, religion and language.<sup>38</sup> Those who lacked the requisite knowledge and

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<sup>34</sup> Osborne, "Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping. History in Canadian Schools: Past Present and Future," 409.

<sup>35</sup> See George Wrong’s 1899 report on the teaching of history in Canada, in American Historical Association, *The Study of History in Schools: A Report to the American Historical Association by the Committee of Seven*.

<sup>36</sup> Osborne, "Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping. History in Canadian Schools: Past Present and Future," 408.

<sup>37</sup> Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*.

<sup>38</sup> Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*.

Pierre Bourdieu describes the nuances of cultural capital, positing that a dominant hierarchy of cultural capital exists within the educational institution, which values intellectual pursuits, while external to the institution is another dominant hierarchy which endows economic power. Pierre Bourdieu, "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction," in *Knowledge, Education and Cultural Change*, ed. Richard Brown (London: Tavistock Publications Limited, 1973). Tim Stanley identifies racisms [*sic*] as

understanding had a different experience of both elementary and secondary schooling. For example, immigrant children were introduced to Canadian systems and standards of behaviour and thought through schools. As historians of the regions west of Ontario in particular have emphasized, the role of education to “Canadianize” was front and centre.<sup>39</sup> But the assimilative function of schools was not limited to immigrant children; particularly in those provinces where English was the language of the majority, provincial school systems were creations of societies in which those who were British, Caucasian and Christian were afforded the greatest opportunities and benefits. Even those who were among the founding peoples found that their children were objects of assimilation to those societal norms. Thus French-speaking and or Roman Catholic parents and children in communities across the country frequently fought for their language or religious rights to be upheld in the face of state attempts to control their educational opportunities.<sup>40</sup> Non-White children attended segregated schools, and for

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contextually specific “systemic social, political, and cultural practices that single out certain groups of people for exclusion while allowing others to exclude them.” He adds that racism cannot be reduced to “social phenomena such as class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and nationalism. . .” Timothy J. Stanley, “Bringing Anti-Racism into Historical Explanation: The Victoria Chinese Students' Strike of 1922-3 Revisited,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 13, no. 1 (2002): 144.

<sup>39</sup> Jean Barman, Neil Sutherland, and J. Donald Wilson, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1995), Bruno-Jofré, “Manitoba Schooling in the Canadian Context and the Building of a Polity: 1919-1971,” and von Heyking, *Creating Citizens: History and Identity in Alberta's Schools, 1905-1980*.

<sup>40</sup> Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914*, Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada*, 5th ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001), Wendie Nelson, “Rage against the Dying of Light’: Interpreting the Guerre Des Eteignoirs,” *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 4

First Nations, Métis and Inuit children, these included federally-run schools whether industrial, day or residential, which served to inculcate in Canadian ways of living, often with disastrous results.<sup>41</sup>

During the early twentieth century, vocational training became an expanding feature of Canadian secondary schools, and most historians attribute its development to a variety of causes. Robert Stamp describes two functions of vocational education programs, to provide social and vocational skills to students who would then take their place in the marketplace, and to create ““useful citizens”” who would foster industrial harmony during a time of labour unrest.<sup>42</sup> In addition, historians interpret the expansion of vocational education to fulfill a custodial role, particularly for urban children who once might have been employed on a family farm but now were under-employed in urban settings and who might be taking jobs from employable adults.<sup>43</sup> Other scholars observe that vocational training represented one more tool with which to manage the process of assimilation, a characteristic that was used to particular effect to educate

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(December, 2000), and Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*.

<sup>41</sup> Marie Battiste and Helen Semaganis, "First Thoughts on First Nations Citizenship: Issues in Education," in *Citizenship in Transformation in Canada*, ed. Yvonne Hébert (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), and Olive P. Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992).

<sup>42</sup> Stamp, "Canadian High Schools in the 1920's and 1930's: The Social Challenge to the Academic Tradition," 82. See also Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*.

<sup>43</sup> Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914*, Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*.

immigrant, First Nations, Métis and Inuit children in ways reflecting the dominant ideology.<sup>44</sup>

The single most comprehensive history of education in New Brunswick is Katherine MacNaughton's 1947 study, which covers the period from 1784 to 1900, and provides a detailed analysis of the political, social, economic, religious and linguistic factors at play in the development of New Brunswick schools.<sup>45</sup> MacNaughton describes the long period of discussion which delayed the establishment of the Common School Act, suggesting that the reason why the law took over ten years to be enacted was that during those same years successive governments dealt with other important issues including the railway industry, Maritime Union and Confederation.<sup>46</sup> MacNaughton and others also attribute the slow introduction of compulsory assessment for the provision of education to the reluctance of parents to submit their children to an education that would not necessarily serve them on the farm, on the fishing boat or in the lumber camp, emphasizing this tendency in Acadian parents in particular.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*, Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times*.

<sup>45</sup> Interestingly, during the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy, MacNaughton was a young teacher in a rural school, with one term's experience. She wrote to Chief Superintendent Carter to inquire whether the assignment of homework was appropriate, asking whether she was "justified in objecting when the parent threatens to burn the books the child takes home for the purpose of study?" Katherine F. MacNaughton, to Carter, W.S., January 23, 1920. RS116 B8p4. PANB.

<sup>46</sup> ———, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background* (Fredericton: The University of New Brunswick, 1947).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. See also Hart Stephen Caplan, "'A Law Unto Oneself': Compulsory Schooling and the Creation of the Student('S) Body in New Brunswick, 1850-1914" (M.A. Thesis (History), University of New

Maud Hody defines the Acadians in New Brunswick by stressing that “Acadian sentiments are based on special attitudes toward the Roman Catholic Church and the French language. Membership in the Roman Catholic Church is so close to the centre of Acadian feeling that an Acadian who has left the Roman Catholic Church is no longer considered an Acadian, and the ‘real’ Acadian must be of Acadian descent, speak French, and be Catholic in faith.”<sup>48</sup>

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Brunswick, 1998), Maud Hazel Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick" (Ed.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1964), Shawna Stairs Quinn, "'Sympathetic and Practical Men'? School Inspectors and New Brunswick's Educational Bureaucracy, 1879-1909" (M.A. Thesis (History), University of New Brunswick, 2006), Walter Sterling Stratton, "Secondary Education in Rural New Brunswick 1900 - 1966" (M.Ed. Thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1969), John E. Warner, "History of Secondary Education in New Brunswick" (M.A. Thesis (History), University of New Brunswick, 1944).

<sup>48</sup> Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick", 18-19. It is not possible to understand the history of the Acadians in New Brunswick without recalling the 1755 expulsion in which the French-speaking Roman Catholic inhabitants of the Maritimes were forcibly removed from their homes and sent into exile for refusing to swear allegiance to the British king. By 1920 the majority of French-speaking New Brunswickers were descendants of those exiles, some of whom had hidden in the forested northern reaches of the province and some of whom returned from temporary homes overseas. The legacy of the expulsion or “Grande Dérangement” distinguished the Acadians from the Québécois. For more on the history of the Acadians, see John Mack Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from Their American Homeland* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2005), William D. Gerrior, *Acadian Awakenings: Routes & Roots, International Links, an Acadian Family in Exile* (Hatchet Lake NS: Port Royal Publishing, 2003), Naomi E. Griffiths, *The Acadians: Creation of a People* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1973), Laxer, James. *The Acadians: In*

By 1872, education officials congratulated themselves on the growing numbers of children in school, but as MacNaughton explains, the increase was limited to ten of fourteen counties.<sup>49</sup> Discrepancies in school attendance by county were a recurring feature of education in New Brunswick up until the Equal Opportunities Act of the province's first elected Acadian Premier, Louis J. Robichaud in the 1960s.<sup>50</sup> Another obstacle to the establishment of common schools in New Brunswick was the lack of agreement between the Protestant Loyalists and the Roman Catholics, whether Irish or Acadian, as to the form those schools should take, how teachers should be trained and what teaching materials should be allowed.<sup>51</sup> In fact, even though New Brunswick public schools were non-sectarian, religious and linguistic differences played a key role in the development of public education in the province.

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*Search of a Homeland* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2006), and Richard Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick* (Halifax: Formac Press, 1989).

<sup>49</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*. MacNaughton describes a situation in which, in 1872, the attendance figures for three other counties were stable, while in Gloucester County over a thousand fewer children attended school than in the preceding year. She adds that in 1875 the school inspector for the newly created Madawaska County (formerly part of Victoria County) found not a single school operating under the Common Schools Act (p. 200).

<sup>50</sup> Clay Merrithew, "The Educational Reforms of the Programme of Equal Opportunity (New Brunswick)" (M.Ed. Thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1995).

<sup>51</sup> See also Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914*.

Research in Ontario and Quebec has documented the importance of religion and language in public education in Canada.<sup>52</sup> Wendie Nelson's study of rural Quebec residents in the mid-nineteenth century, for example, suggests that when those citizens rose up against what they interpreted as an unfair system of taxation, they showed that they were anything but apathetic toward education.<sup>53</sup> The history of education in New Brunswick warrants the same attention to religion and language, although the issues differ in some important regards. The experience of the Acadians in New Brunswick is comparable to that of the Québécois. Shortly after the passage of the Common School Act in 1871, the province's Roman Catholics prevailed upon the federal government to declare the Act unconstitutional because of the lack of religious freedom it afforded them. MacNaughton describes what was at stake saying the Roman Catholics "were faced with the necessity of paying taxes for schools to which they could not send their children unless they disobeyed their clergy."<sup>54</sup> The dispute culminated in 1875 in Caraquet, northern New Brunswick, when two men died during a riot.<sup>55</sup> In the aftermath,

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<sup>52</sup> See for example Chad Gaffield, *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict: The Origins of the French-Language Controversy in Ontario* (Kingston ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), and Jack Little, "In the Desert Places of the Wilderness': The Frontier Thesis and the Anglican Church in the Eastern Townships, 1799-1831," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, no. 71 (2003).

<sup>53</sup> Nelson, "Rage against the Dying of Light': Interpreting the Guerre Des Eteignoirs."

<sup>54</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*, 212.

<sup>55</sup> The two men who died were John Gifford, an Anglophone Protestant constable, and an Acadian protestor, Louis Mailloux. Mailloux's death was ruled committed by an unknown person. Nine men were tried for the death of Gifford. When the first to trial was found guilty, the case was advanced to the New Brunswick Supreme Court, which elected to dismiss the case against all nine men. See Ibid, and Wilbur,

a so-called “Compromise” was struck, the features of which are highly relevant to this study. While New Brunswick’s schools would remain non-sectarian, in larger centres, Roman Catholic children would be grouped together in one or several schools. The certificates of teachers trained in Roman Catholic teaching orders would be recognized as substitutes for Normal School graduation diplomas, although those teachers would still be required to write a licensing examination. The Board of Education would be responsible for the adoption of textbooks, but “it would be the aim of the educational authorities to render the textbooks suitable for all.”<sup>56</sup> Another smaller controversy followed in northern New Brunswick in the late 1890s when tension between Protestant and Roman Catholic ratepayers erupted over accusations that the Board of Education had made “‘secret’ regulations favoring [*sic*] religious teaching orders.”<sup>57</sup> The result was the modification and clarification of the rules, including the edict that only the Lord’s Prayer could be used in opening exercises, and religious instruction was permissible only at the end of the school day. Historians note that the Compromise “mollified opposition to non-sectarian provisos in the 1871 Act,” but it “effectively ignored

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*The Rise of French New Brunswick*. A Caraquet secondary school was named for Mailloux; the school’s web site directly credits the equal opportunities programs of the 1960s for the school’s construction. See “Polyvalente Louis-Mailloux: Historique,” New Brunswick Department of Education, <http://plm.nbed.nb.ca/ressources/historique.asp>.

<sup>56</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*, 220.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.



language as a factor.”<sup>58</sup> The separation of religion and language was a strategy also employed by the Roman Catholic Bishop in his response to proposed replacement texts during the 1920 textbook controversy.

The secondary school experience of New Brunswick students occurred largely in a rural setting; New Brunswick in 1920 was a predominantly rural province. Census data for 1921 (the nearest date for which data is available) indicated a rural to urban population ratio of 2:1.<sup>59</sup> The population density ranged from a low of 5.6 people per square mile in Sunbury County, to a high of 3,296 in the city of Saint John, and the next highest in Westmorland County at 36.9. Omitting the Saint John numbers which were clear outliers, Figure 1.1 illustrates the range.

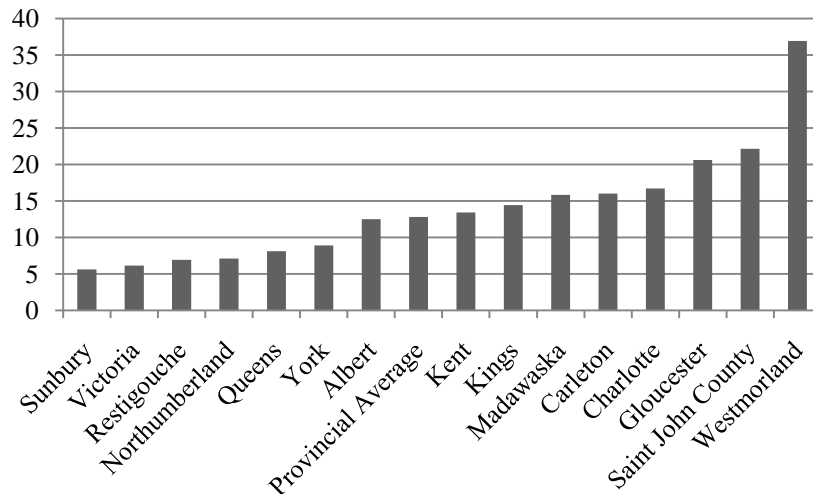
Figure 1.1 New Brunswick Population per square mile by County, 1921 Census<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Stairs Quinn, "'Sympathetic and Practical Men'? School Inspectors and New Brunswick's Educational Bureaucracy, 1879-1909", 53. See also MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*.

<sup>59</sup> Department of Trade and Commerce, *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921*, vol. II. Population. Age, conjugal condition, birthplace, immigration, citizenship, language, educational status, school attendance, blindness and deaf mutism (Ottawa: Dominion of Canada. Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1925), 612.

<sup>60</sup> ———, "Sixth Census of Canada - Bulletin I: Population of New Brunswick, 1921 [Microfiche]," (Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1921-1923), 2. The largest cities in the province in 1921 were Saint John in St. John County (47,163), Moncton in Westmorland County (17,488), Fredericton in York County (8,114), and Campbellton in Restigouche County (5,570). Of the fifteen counties, the census listed no cities or towns for Albert, Queens and Sunbury Counties. See ———, "Sixth Census of Canada - Bulletin I: Population of New Brunswick, 1921 [Microfiche]," 3-7.



Census data for 1921 also confirmed that secondary education in New Brunswick was a rural phenomenon.<sup>61</sup> As historians have documented elsewhere across the country, the varied and often shocking physical conditions of teaching were a subject of great concern to school inspectors and administrators.<sup>62</sup> One New Brunswick school inspector's report on a village Superior school, for example, noted the following needs: "There should be water in the building, better heating apparatus and flush closets in the basement. The outbuildings are quite unserviceable in cold and stormy weather and are a

<sup>61</sup> Of children aged 15-19 attending school, sixty-one per cent attended rural schools and thirty-nine per cent attended urban schools. See Department of Trade and Commerce, "Sixth Census of Canada - Bulletin XVII: School Attendance [Microfiche]," ed. Dominion of Canada Dominion Bureau of Statistics (1921-1923), 18.

<sup>62</sup> Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914*, Barman, Sutherland, and Wilson, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*, Roger P. Magnuson, *The Two Worlds of Quebec Education During the Traditional Era, 1760-1940* (London ON: The Althouse Press, 2005).

disgrace to any school.”<sup>63</sup> In other districts trustees arranged for the construction of new facilities, as in Edmundston, where a hundred thousand dollar school was planned containing “sixteen class rooms, a library, a laboratory, an assembly hall, a principal’s room, cloak rooms, etc.”<sup>64</sup> In his study of New Brunswick rural secondary education, Stirling Stratton observes that with the passage of the 1871 Common School Act, policies were put in place to encourage the development of small rural elementary schools. One of the consequences, he argues, was an entrenchment of the belief in locally controlled education which frustrated attempts to organize consolidated secondary schools. Historians agree that the Canadian move to consolidate rural schools was seen by bureaucrats as an effort to provide a better quality of education to those areas, but parental resistance was a major factor in delaying the establishment of such schools.<sup>65</sup> Thus, “only the urban areas gained the advantages of new academic high schools.”<sup>66</sup> This tendency to cling to local control was a common feature not just in New

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<sup>63</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1921), 10.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>65</sup> Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914*, Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*. Although four consolidated schools were established in New Brunswick by 1920, Stratton notes that these schools “were apparently not impressive enough to overcome the factors which hampered the rural development.” Stratton, "Secondary Education in Rural New Brunswick 1900 - 1966", 24.

<sup>66</sup> Stratton, "Secondary Education in Rural New Brunswick 1900 - 1966", 3. Stratton asserts that the province needed a visionary educational leader in order to rectify the situation, and that individual did not become Chief Superintendent of Education until the 1940s. He was Fletcher “Hurricane” Peacock, and by

Brunswick's rural areas, but also in Acadian communities, which were, however, often one and the same.<sup>67</sup>

The discrepancy in provision of adequate school buildings was in some ways a measure of the attitude of school trustees toward schooling, and scholars concur that this was a problem across Canada. Trustees' attitudes ranged from enthusiastic to apathetic.<sup>68</sup> William Richardson's 1922 study of urban schools in Canada highlighted the challenges faced by even the most devoted school trustees, who were "driven to base their decisions in board and council meetings on what was done in the so-called similar circumstances of previous occasions. The custom persists of debating at great length routine matters which should long since have been delegated to the board's expert officials. Vital

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1920 he had already made his mark as Director of Vocational Education in New Brunswick. Previously he had taught manual training at Normal School, directed manual training and home economics for the province, and served as secretary of a commission studying the need for vocational education. See "RS 116. Records of the Chief Superintendent of Education, D. Director of Education," ed. PANB (Government of New Brunswick, 2001).

<sup>67</sup> Neil J. Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History" (Ph.D. Dissertation (History), Dartmouth University, 1992).

<sup>68</sup> See for example Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871*, and Gidney and Lawr, "Bureaucracy Vs. Community? The Origins of Bureaucratic Procedure in the Upper Canadian School System." While the apathy of school trustees was regularly noted in New Brunswick, the "characteristic enterprise" of some was praised, including those in Apohaqui, where the practically-new Superior school building burned down just as the school year ended, but the trustees "immediately set to work to provide a new building on the same plan." New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 30.

questions remain untouched or if treated, the resulting policies are defined in terms adequate perhaps two or three decades earlier.”<sup>69</sup>

MacNaughton describes New Brunswick’s early educational legacy of general neglect as the result of a combination of cause and effect. The cause was “years of rule by ‘gentlemen’ insufficiently concerned with the needs of the common people,” and the effect was the slow development of education as control was transferred away from those “‘gentlemen.’”<sup>70</sup> The need for publicly funded education was expressed by New Brunswick educators as a manifestation of the society’s care for its children, but an equally important motivation was the sense of competition, whether with other provinces or internationally; one school inspector declared in his 1871 annual report, “‘The world . . . is moving, New Brunswick cannot stand still.’”<sup>71</sup> In spite of such pronouncements, however, MacNaughton concludes that during the years leading up to the Common School Act of 1871, the population existed in a “state of provincial apathy” and even once common schools were established, the ideal of a general education for all remained theoretical, as in practice neither parents nor legislatures had sufficient will to create an effective school system.<sup>72</sup> MacNaughton indicates that this was especially true

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<sup>69</sup> William Leeds Richardson, *The Administration of Schools in the Cities of the Dominion of Canada* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, Limited, 1922), 7.

<sup>70</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*, 179.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 166. In 1919-1920, one inspector report noted that in spite of the provision of fine schoolhouses, and sufficient numbers of students to fill them, some of the children “do not even ‘creep unwillingly to school.’” Another listed his observations of education systems in countries overseas, gathered during his

for secondary education in New Brunswick, the development of which was impeded by complaints that it was designed only as a portal to a university education. Parents continued to keep their children home from school, and as Hart Caplan observes in his study of compulsory schooling, New Brunswick was one of the last Canadian provinces to institute compulsory education.<sup>73</sup> In MacNaughton's estimation, the result was that although the compulsory attendance law was introduced in 1905, it was optional, which "robbed it of much of its efficacy."<sup>74</sup>

By 1920, when in his annual report Chief Superintendent Carter compiled an account of items for consideration and attention, "A better Compulsory Act" was on his list.<sup>75</sup> Stratton concludes that as far as rural secondary schools were concerned, by the 1920s a "lack of leadership and promotion by the leading educators, difficulties in

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military service, saying "I am certain our system compares very favourably with any I have seen but I do not believe our people, in general, take the same interest in education as the people of the old countries." A third described a Superior school, "the centre of parish education," which had prepared more Normal School students than any other, but the ratepayers of which were giving up the superior school grant because of increased taxation. The province did have its bright spots, however. Fredericton trustees described it as "encouraging to find the public manifest so much interest in the schools. . ." New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 17, 27, 34, 55.

<sup>73</sup> Caplan, "'A Law Unto Oneself': Compulsory Schooling and the Creation of the Student('S) Body in New Brunswick, 1850-1914".

<sup>74</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*, 255.

<sup>75</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," li.

transportation and communication, seemingly weak influence of the inspectors on the people, and the persistent ignorance of the rural populace forced the prospects of secondary education for rural children to return to the conditions of the nineteenth century.”<sup>76</sup> Meanwhile, Carter expressed the need for administrators to maintain control of education and block out the influences of “outside and irresponsible agencies.” His aim was concise: “The prime end and object of our schools is to supply instruction in essential studies, such as to enable our boys and girls to keep up with the times and not be at any disadvantages with others in the battle of life.”<sup>77</sup> This was an iteration of Curtis’ “educated self,” albeit one competitively framed. The goal of creating good citizens was also an acknowledged purpose of publicly funded education in New Brunswick, and there as elsewhere in Canada, children were “citizens in waiting.” In a 1920 address to teachers, one school inspector “urged the teachers to try to form pupils into good citizens, qualified and willing to bear their part in the public life of the Community and imbued with the ideals of service and co-operation.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Stratton, "Secondary Education in Rural New Brunswick 1900 - 1966", 24.

<sup>77</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," lvii. The characterization of life as a battle was repeated in a 1938 letter written by a rural New Brunswick parent about his son’s attempts to gain a secondary school education, quoted in Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*, 111. Robert Stamp also quotes a school promoter of the era who said “a high school education ‘is becoming more and more an essential part of a youth's equipment for life's battles, and that the unprepared will be obliged to fall to the rear in the competition for place and position.’” Stamp, "Canadian High Schools in the 1920's and 1930's: The Social Challenge to the Academic Tradition," 79.

<sup>78</sup> *Educational Institute of New Brunswick Executive Committee Records*, (Fredericton: Educational Institute of New Brunswick, 1920), 354.

The challenge of determining what happened inside New Brunswick classrooms is particularly daunting, because information generated by students and teachers related to day to day schooling is especially difficult to find in the province's archival records and museum collections. Caplan observes that "the lower ranks of society, whether urban or rural, were not committed to putting their thoughts to paper."<sup>79</sup> This explanation does not explain why such materials are available in other provinces, including Manitoba and Alberta.<sup>80</sup> The answer may rest in the value placed upon such archival sources by those who amass the collections. Just because a letter or diary does not appear in an archive does not mean that letters or diaries were not written; the problem is one of retention, not production.

While it is difficult to know what went on in individual New Brunswick classrooms, a study of the statistical data generated by the Chief Superintendent's Annual Reports, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics' census reports, and W.F. Dyde's 1929 study of public secondary education in Canada provides the historian with a view of the range and variation of student and teacher populations, and a good sense of the general contexts in which schooling occurred. The data helps to shed some light on the social, economic and political contexts of the textbook controversy in particular, and on history and citizenship education more generally.

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<sup>79</sup> Caplan, "'A Law Unto Oneself': Compulsory Schooling and the Creation of the Student('S) Body in New Brunswick, 1850-1914", 49-50.

<sup>80</sup> See for example Bruno-Jofré, "Citizenship and Schooling in Manitoba, 1918-1945.", and von Heyking, "Shaping an Education for the Modern World: A History of the Alberta Social Studies Curriculum, 1905 to 1965".



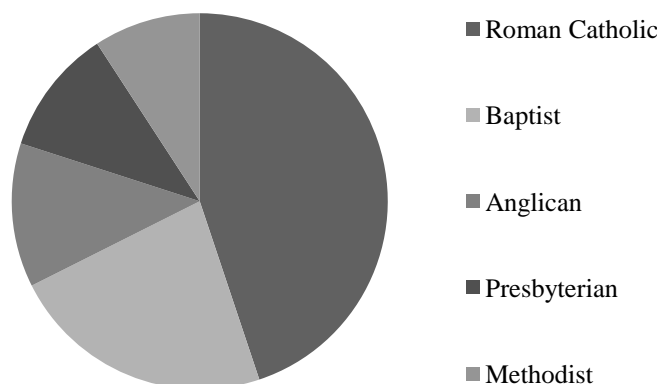
An examination of the religious and linguistic variations that existed within New Brunswick society and which were in evidence in the province's schools provides a starting point. With statistics of ninety-eight per cent reported adherence, in 1921 New Brunswick was an overwhelmingly Christian province, and as a result, the province's public schools were not secular. Instead, they operated under a Christian ethos. The *Manual of the School Law* made this explicit, instructing each teacher "To maintain a deportment becoming his position as an educator of the young, and to strive diligently to have exemplified in the intercourse and conduct of the pupils throughout the School, the principles of Christian morality."<sup>81</sup> Figure 1.2 shows the breakdown of religions in New Brunswick, but it does not indicate the two distinct groups of Roman Catholics in the province, the French and the Irish. The former were for the most part Acadian and traced their ancestry to well before the founding of the province, while a large proportion of the latter dated their ancestors' arrival with the 1848 Irish famine. Periodic tension between the two was a persistent issue in the province's history.<sup>82</sup> In other words, religion was indeed a complicating factor in the history of life in New Brunswick.

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<sup>81</sup> New Brunswick, *Manual of the School Law and Regulations of New Brunswick* (Fredericton: Province of New Brunswick, 1913), 141. At the same time, in accordance to the dictates of the Common School Act, teachers were instructed "While employed in the discharge of School duties not to make use of any religious catechism, nor to interfere, or permit interference on the part of others, with the religious tenets of any pupil."

<sup>82</sup> See William S. MacNutt, *New Brunswick: A History: 1784-1867* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1963), and Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick*. Persistent tension also existed between the Irish Roman Catholics and the Irish Protestants.

Figure 1.2 Religious affiliations in New Brunswick, with percentages of total population, 1921 Census<sup>83</sup>



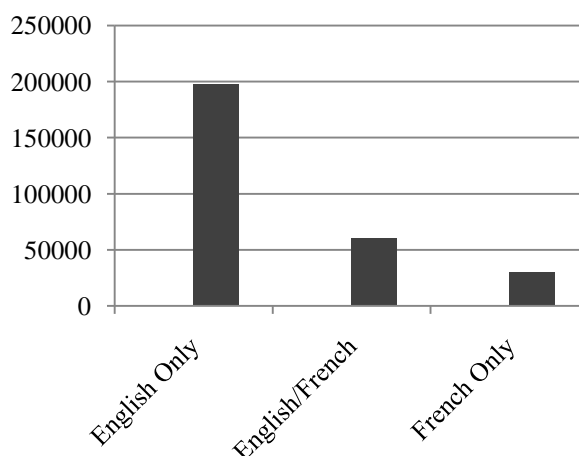
In terms of composition and proportion, New Brunswick's population displayed particular features not seen elsewhere in Canada. Historians studying the postwar era in points west of New Brunswick tend to focus on the effects of immigration on an Anglophone or Francophone population, and the impact on schools systems of efforts to assimilate immigrant children. But New Brunswick in 1920 was not a destination for immigrants. According to the 1921 census, ninety-four per cent of the population was born in Canada, with another three per cent born in the British Isles.<sup>84</sup> In addition to their

<sup>83</sup> Department of Trade and Commerce, *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921*, vol. I - Population. Number, sex and distribution; racial origins; religions (Ottawa: Dominion of Canada. Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1924), 572. Of the total population of the New Brunswick in 1921, 99.9 per cent claimed a religious affiliation. Sixty-six different religions were listed, and among figures for the least named were one Atheist, two Pagans, 23 Agnostics and 57 Confucians.

<sup>84</sup> ———, *Origin, Birthplace, Nationality and Language of the Canadian People: A Census Study Based on the Census of 1921 and Supplementary Data* (Ottawa: Dominion of Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1929), 96.

nativity, sixty-five per cent reported British, while thirty-one per cent listed French origin.<sup>85</sup> The majority of New Brunswickers spoke English, with ten per cent monolingual French speakers. Figure 1.3 provides an illustration of the linguistic breakdown between English and French.

Figure 1.3 English and French spoken by New Brunswick population over age 10, 1921 Census<sup>86</sup>



These figures indicate that New Brunswick's public school system was to all intents and purposes a predominantly Anglophone one.

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>86</sup> ———, "Sixth Census of Canada - Bulletin XIX: Language Spoken and Mother Tongue [Microfiche]," ed. Canada. Dominion Bureau of Statistics (F. Acland, 1921-1923), 9. The number surveyed who spoke neither English nor French was statistically insignificant at 0.05 per cent. In the other Maritime provinces corresponding figures show that English was the dominant language, but the proportion of French speakers was less than in New Brunswick. The population of French-only speakers was less than one per cent in Prince Edward Island and just over one per cent in Nova Scotia.

Unlike provinces such as Ontario or Quebec which had dual public school systems divided on the grounds of language or religion, New Brunswick schools were non-sectarian, and none were monolingually French. Instead, as Maud Hody's study explains, public schools were either English or bilingual, and "The French Department at the Normal School had the sole purpose of improving the English of Acadian student teachers sufficiently to enable them to follow the English course."<sup>87</sup> Those Francophone students who wanted to pursue a secondary education could leave the public system to attend private colleges, including the Roman Catholic Collège Saint-Joseph in Memramcook. Indeed, this is where many of New Brunswick's Anglophone and Francophone Roman Catholics including future priests and nuns received their secondary education.<sup>88</sup>

The provision of services in New Brunswick public schools focused only on English and French, since the population included so few speakers of other languages, but inequities existed depending upon the location of the school, and often inequities were reflected in language. French language schools had existed before the passage of

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<sup>87</sup> Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick", 229. Documents in the Provincial Archives show that letters written to the Chief Superintendent in French received an English response. See Urbain Sivret, J. Bennet Hachey, and C.B. Hills, to Carter, W.S. 1923-1924. RS116 B8d1c. PANB, W.S. Carter, to Sivret, Urbain; Hachey, J. Bennet; and Hills, C.B. 1923-1924. RS116 B8d1c. PANB.

<sup>88</sup> Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History". Convent schools were another site of French education for Francophone students. See Sheila Andrew, "Selling Education: The Problems of Convent Schools in Acadian New Brunswick, 1858-1886," *Historical Studies* 62 (1996).

New Brunswick's Common School Act of 1871, and MacNaughton suggests it was taken for granted in Acadian districts in the aftermath of the Act's passage that the use of the French language would continue in elementary schools.<sup>89</sup> As for the quality of education provided in Acadian schools, Hody echoes MacNaughton's charge against the general population of legislative and parental apathy, saying that the Acadians failed to insist on adequate schooling at all levels. She adds that "Allied with this apathy has been an attitude of slavish respect for tradition that has stubbornly opposed innovation many years after proposed changes have elsewhere proved successful."<sup>90</sup> While not without foundation, this harsh assessment ignores the attempts of individuals such as former schoolteacher Calixte Savoie to improve the conditions of Acadian schools starting in the mid-1920s, or the persistent efforts of Acadian school inspectors or Roman Catholic Bishop Edouard LeBlanc to ensure that Francophone students had access to education.<sup>91</sup> It also downplays the effects of systemic discrimination. For example, Hody also notes

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<sup>89</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*.

<sup>90</sup> Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick", 402. This charge of Acadian parental apathy is contested by Andrew who describes the active support of some parents for convent schools. See Andrew, "Selling Education: The Problems of Convent Schools in Acadian New Brunswick, 1858-1886."

<sup>91</sup> Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick*, Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History".

that the Common School Act was published only in English after 1878, although half of the province's school trustees were Acadian.<sup>92</sup>

Issues regarding the French language in New Brunswick schools were frequently connected to religion. Hody describes a Roman Catholic Church in New Brunswick dominated by an Irish hierarchy until 1936, with religious leaders interfering little in the affairs of the French language schools. She adds, however, that by the early 1920s, seven French-speaking religious orders were teaching in the bilingual schools, and many of the licensed teachers in Acadian districts were Roman Catholic teaching sisters.<sup>93</sup> Meanwhile, MacNaughton's study suggests that while the controversies of the late nineteenth century in the northern part of the province may have had religion as their main point of contention, the growing national consciousness of Acadians and their

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<sup>92</sup> Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick". In addition, by 1919 only one francophone, a school inspector, was included in the membership of the Textbook Committee. See "School and College," *Educational Review* 34 (January, 1920): 120. Among the members of the New Brunswick Board of Education in 1920 was the Minister of Public Works, Pierre Veniot. He went on to become the so-called first Acadian Premier of New Brunswick, although he was never elected such. He had a French name but his first language was English. See New Brunswick, "Biography of Pierre John Veniot," ed. Legislative Library (Special Projects, June 13, 2005).

<sup>93</sup> Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick". Boucher disagrees that religious leaders did not involve themselves in school affairs, and offers the career of Roman Catholic Bishop LeBlanc as an example. See Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History".

growing numbers meant that language and culture had become “complicating factors.”<sup>94</sup>

The years immediately after the Great War were a time of relative calm, almost the calm before the storm. An Acadian movement to improve the quality of French language education finally erupted in northern New Brunswick in 1922, and persisted until 1939.<sup>95</sup> This Acadian nationalism was specific to New Brunswick and distinct from either Québec nationalism or the kind of pan-Canadian implicitly Anglophone Protestant nationalism expressed during the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy.

The number of students attending New Brunswick secondary schools during the postwar era was not high, although as Comacchio argues, the end of the war ushered in a new era in which the number of secondary schools in Canada grew and adolescence as a construct came to the fore, with schools as one of the main site of adolescent identity construction.<sup>96</sup> Dyde’s 1929 study noted that 11.11 per cent of New Brunswick children aged fifteen, sixteen and seventeen attended secondary school in 1921, the lowest rate of secondary school attendance in the country.<sup>97</sup> In a separate section of his study, Dyde indicated that in 1923, New Brunswick had no separate secondary institutions, but

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<sup>94</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*, 228.

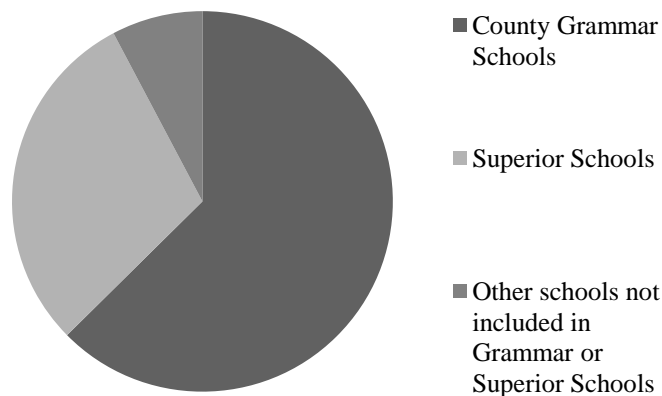
<sup>95</sup> Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick*.

<sup>96</sup> Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*.

<sup>97</sup> Quebec’s rate was the next highest at 12.82 per cent, and next was Saskatchewan at 25.96 per cent. The national average was 25.04. See W.F. Dyde, *Public Secondary Education in Canada* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929), 70.

instead students attended county Grammar schools and Superior schools.<sup>98</sup> Figure 1.4 shows the ratios of attendance for the various types of schools in which secondary education was offered, based on Dyde's statistics.

Figure 1.4 New Brunswick Secondary School Students Enrolled in Different Types of Schools, 1923<sup>99</sup>



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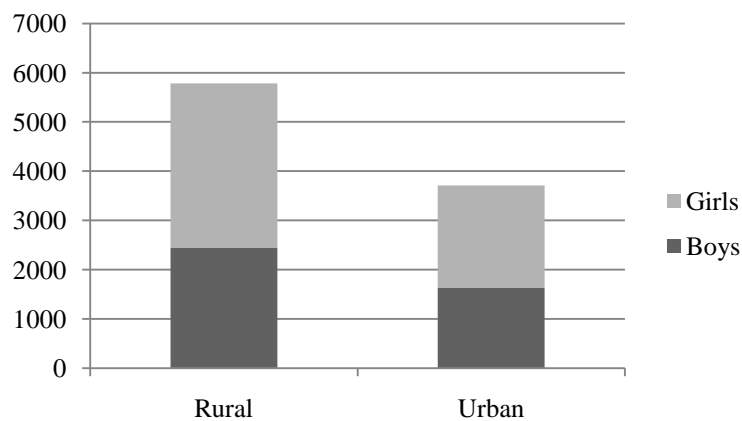
<sup>98</sup> Of these, Dyde noted that one Grammar school could be established in each county offering free education to all qualified resident students. The minimum requirement for schools in villages was ten qualified students taking regular courses above Grade Eight. Additional requirements were added to Grammar schools in towns and cities. One Superior school (a school having at least two rooms with the senior room having no students below Grade Five and ten students above Grade Seven) could be established for each 6,000 inhabitants in a county, with the possibility of additional schools to house greater numbers of students. See *Ibid.*, 34-37. MacNaughton's use of the terms "high school" and "grammar school" in the last part of her study suggest that in New Brunswick the designations were interchangeable. The Chief Superintendent's Annual Report for 1919-1920 included both Saint John High School and Fredericton High School in the list of Grammar schools. See New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," A31-A32.

<sup>99</sup> Dyde, *Public Secondary Education in Canada*, 46-47.



This data suggested that almost three quarters of New Brunswick students studying at the secondary level attended country Grammar or Superior schools, which by Dyde's definition were in villages, towns and cities. Data from the 1921 census reported that New Brunswick girls were proportionately more likely to study secondary education than boys, whether in rural or urban areas. Figure 1.5 illustrates the relationship between location and sex in New Brunswick secondary education.

Figure 1.5 New Brunswick School Attendance Aged 15-19, Rural Versus Urban Population by Sex <sup>100</sup>



The likelihood that in both rural and urban areas, more girls than boys attended secondary grades was a reflection of the prerequisite of secondary school matriculation in order to gain admittance to Normal School. Inspectors' reports for 1919-1920 reflected this trend with comments referring overwhelmingly to teachers helping

<sup>100</sup> Department of Trade and Commerce, "Sixth Census of Canada - Bulletin XVII: School Attendance [Microfiche]," 18.

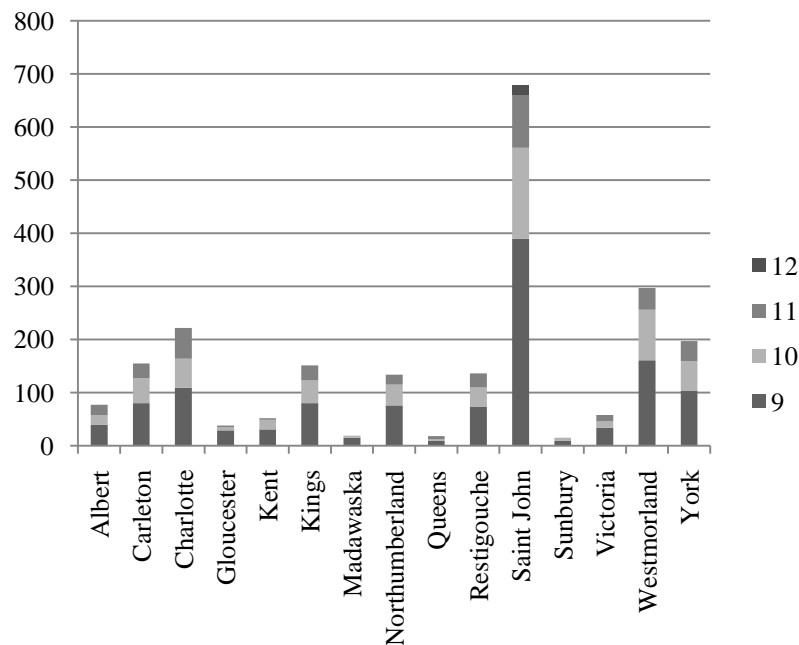
students to prepare for Normal School, not university entrance examinations.<sup>101</sup> These numbers highlighted the importance of secondary school as a training ground for a teaching career.

The number of students attending New Brunswick secondary schools was small, and the number of secondary school students studying history was even smaller. The Chief Superintendent's Annual Report for 1919-1920 tallied the number of students studying history at the secondary level by county. The figures, shown in Figure 1.6, indicated that in some counties, history was barely taught at the secondary level, and when it was, Grade Nine had by far the largest enrolment, with the numbers progressively declining in later grades. Only in Saint John was Grade Twelve history education offered that year. This small number of students studying history at the higher grade levels meant that most of a student's formal education regarding national identity, patriotism and citizenship occurred in elementary school. The urgency with which the cause of teaching students about the Great War in New Brunswick's secondary school history classes was promoted during the 1920 textbook controversy was thus undercut by the fact that by the time they were of an age to attend secondary school, for many students, their time in history class was already at an end.

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<sup>101</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education." In some schools, teachers prepared their students for the Normal School entrance examination while also preparing themselves for the examination to attain a higher class of teaching license. See for example the Blackville teacher, ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 10.

Figure 1.6 Number of Students Studying Secondary school History and Geography in New Brunswick, 1919-1920<sup>102</sup>



If they did study history in secondary school, New Brunswick students read English language textbooks. While no demographic evidence indicated the language of instruction in New Brunswick secondary schools, Hody's study has as one of its core definitions of terms the assertion that in the bilingual schools, French was the only language of instruction below Grade Four. At the secondary level, English, science and mathematics were offered in English, and other subjects were offered in French. Hody adds, however, that the only French language text officially prescribed for bilingual secondary schools was a Grade Nine grammar text. All other textbooks were in English.

<sup>102</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," A15.

Thus, at the level of secondary school history education, assimilation was the goal, and whatever textbook was prescribed would serve for both English and Acadian students.<sup>103</sup>

New Brunswick had a small population of non-White students in the early twentieth century who experienced the challenges of accruing the benefits of education without the support of cultural capital to sustain them, and with systemic barriers firmly in place. The First Nations population over age ten in 1921 numbered 1,001 and nearly one hundred per cent were Canadian born.<sup>104</sup> W.D. Hamilton's study of First Nations schools in New Brunswick reports that no residential or industrial schools were established in the province, so students attended day schools on reserve, the curriculum of which was the same as in the public schools.<sup>105</sup> The 1920 Canada Year Book indicated that in 1919 there were twelve day schools in the province, with 132 boys and 134 girls enrolled and an average attendance of 57.14 per cent.<sup>106</sup> The language of

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<sup>103</sup> Hody describes a bilingual textbook that was used in the French schools, but only in Grades Six, Seven and Eight: "Histoire Élémentaire du Canada, like the French-English Readers, was fully bilingual. English and French translations of the same material appeared opposite each other; inscriptions on maps were English, but map titles were French. This history text, which later underwent at least two revisions, was used in the bilingual elementary schools from 1914 until 1953." [Emphasis in the original.] Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick", 352-53.

<sup>104</sup> Department of Trade and Commerce, *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921*.

<sup>105</sup> W.D. Hamilton, *The Federal Indian Day Schools of the Maritimes* (Fredericton: The Micmac-Maliseet Institute, University of New Brunswick, 1986).

<sup>106</sup> This percentage was considerably higher than that of the other Maritime provinces but on a par with Ontario and Manitoba. The national average was 62.56 per cent. Department of Trade and Commerce, *The Canada Year Book 1920* (Ottawa: Dominion of Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1921), 667. The

instruction was not mentioned, no figures suggested the students' ages, and the percentage of the province's First Nations children who were not enrolled in school was not included. Olive Dickason's research indicates however that nationally, until compulsory school laws for First Nations children were instituted in 1920, eighty per cent of First Nations children enrolled in school were in Grades One to Three.<sup>107</sup> The fact that students attended day schools might suggest that the effects of the policy of "cultural genocide" represented by residential schools were less severe in New Brunswick, but the structure and curriculum of the day school system were such that opportunities for secondary education were limited or non-existent.<sup>108</sup>

Census data regarding the education of New Brunswick's African Canadian population was just as sparse as that for First Nations students.<sup>109</sup> 1921 figures showed

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same document indicated that one hundred per cent of New Brunswick's First Nation population professed the Roman Catholic faith.

<sup>107</sup> Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times*, Hamilton, *The Federal Indian Day Schools of the Maritimes*, 18. Hamilton indicates that vocational training was part of the day school curriculum, including agricultural training for boys and domestic training for girls. ———, *The Federal Indian Day Schools of the Maritimes*.

<sup>108</sup> Bruno-Jofré, "Manitoba Schooling in the Canadian Context and the Building of a Polity: 1919-1971." Much has been written about Canada's residential school system. See for example Robert Carney, "Aboriginal Residential Schools before Confederation: The Early Experience," *Historical Studies* 61 (1995), Sarah Carter, "Aboriginal People of Canada and the British Empire," in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Phillip A. Buckner (Oxford/Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2008), and Thobani, *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*.

<sup>109</sup> The New Brunswick African Canadian population represented 0.31 per cent of the province's total. The national figures were 0.21 per cent, while Ontario's was 0.24 per cent, and Nova Scotia's was the highest

that the province had a so-called “Negro” population of 1,133, but offered no statistics as to the percentage of those who were in school. Language data suggested that the majority of the total population were born in Canada, and English was the dominant language for nearly all.<sup>110</sup> In other words, for these children, language was not a barrier to attending secondary school. Attendance figures did not indicate race, but the Provincial Archives contain letters to and from Carter which told the story of racism and exclusion in so-called “coloured” schools at Saint John and in particular at Otnabog.<sup>111</sup> The Board of Education found it difficult to keep the latter school open during the first few decades of the twentieth century, and the official reason was the lack of qualified teachers.<sup>112</sup> Carter illuminated the problem in a 1914 letter to the Premier saying of the school, “As you are aware no one but a colored [*sic*] teacher would consent to go there.”<sup>113</sup> The situation had not improved by 1920 when the local school inspector reported that the ““African Colony”” school was closed because the previous teacher had

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in the country at 1.22 per cent. Department of Trade and Commerce, *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. 1*, 560-61.

<sup>110</sup> ———, *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921, Vol 21*.

<sup>111</sup> The latter was a rural community near Fredericton. Liberated slaves were granted tracts of New Brunswick land in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. See W.A. Spray, *The Blacks in New Brunswick* (Fredericton: Brunswick Press, 1972).

<sup>112</sup> Chief Clerk, to Grant, Donald, December 5, 1911. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and Library books, 1900-1914*. RS116 B2s2. PANB.

<sup>113</sup> W.S. Carter, to Flemming, J.K., January 27, 1914. RS116 B2a. PANB. This letter is part of a series of correspondence which also includes an exasperated appeal to the Premier from a Saint John letter writer who exclaims “This is Canada and not Alabama in the Southern States.” John T. Richards, to Flemming, J.K., March 3, 1914. RS116 B2a. PANB.

married, and no other was available.<sup>114</sup> Thus for African-Canadian children, access to a secondary education, or to any education at all, was severely limited, and in effect, New Brunswick secondary schools were White Anglophone institutions.

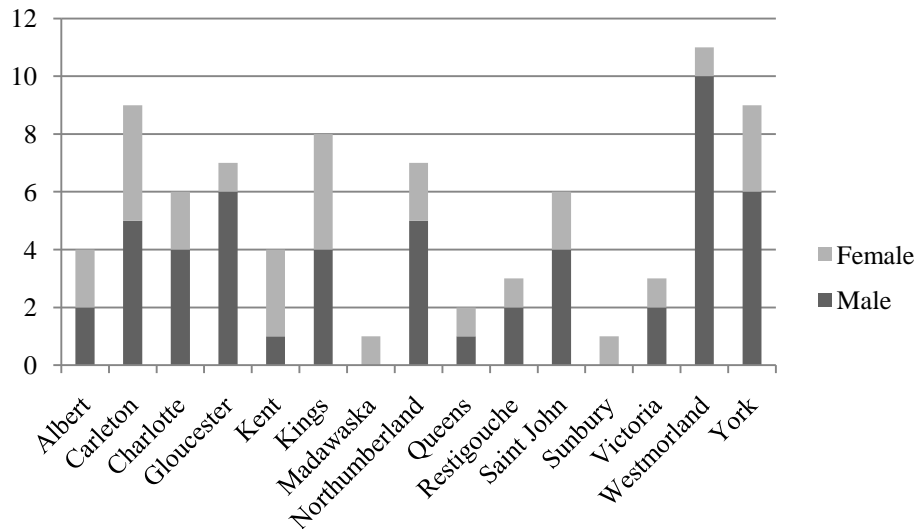
Statistical data helps to paint a picture of the New Brunswick secondary school student, and the same data provides information to create an image of the province's secondary school teachers. In 1920 these teachers were predominantly male. The aggregate numbers represented in Figure 1.7 show that the total was just fewer than fifty-six per cent, while the Board of Education's Annual Report for 1919-1920 tallied the provincial total including both the elementary and secondary panel at seven per cent.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> New Brunswick Board of Education, "Inspection of Schools Monthly Reports: 1920," ed. Education (Government of New Brunswick, 1920).

<sup>115</sup> In addition, the report listed the names of all Grammar and Superior school teachers, their location and type of school. For the Superior school teachers the amount of their provincial grant was indicated, and for the Grammar Schools, to this data was added their annual salary, their towns, the number of departments and teachers assistants in the schools, the grades of the students and the number of days taught. The names of the Grammar school teachers were followed by their degree; only two female teachers did not have initials after their names. The names of the male and female teachers were distinguishable because the female names included the full first name, while the male names included only initials. For instance, the faculty of the Campbellton Grammar school consisted of L.A. Gilbert and Kathleen K. Kirk. According to the list, the only married female teacher in New Brunswick was Mrs. Gaynell Burpee, who taught in Carleton County. See New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," A16, A30-32.

Figure 1.7 New Brunswick Grammar and Superior School Teachers, Male and Female, by County as of December 31, 1919<sup>116</sup>



Many New Brunswick secondary school educators in 1920 were ambitious, and male and female teachers alike took advantage of opportunities to distinguish themselves. A dozen formed the executive of the newly formed New Brunswick Teachers' Association.<sup>117</sup> Some Teachers' Institutes included addresses by principals and teachers

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., A16.

<sup>117</sup> Of the executive of the New Brunswick Teachers' Association in May 1920, all twelve members were Grammar or Superior school principals or teachers, three women and nine men. Of the officers, two out of four were male, and only the president, Principal Berton Foster of Fredericton High School, represented secondary schools. See "Schedule of Salaries from Trustees Adopted by the New Brunswick Teachers' Association for the School Year 1920-1921," *Educational Review* 34 (May, 1920): 235. The Secretary Treasurer A.S. McFarlane, was a Physical Drill instructor at the Normal School in 1920, and went on to become Carter's successor as Chief Superintendent of Education in 1931. See ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", PANB, "Series



on diverse topics, and Superior school teachers often took the top prizes in the county awards for physical training. Others assumed principalships as their more senior colleagues retired or moved away.<sup>118</sup> But while these examples suggest equitable employment and opportunities, up until 1920, female teachers at all levels were paid considerably less than their male counterparts. The highest annual Grammar school salaries in 1920, which included both local salary and provincial grant, were \$3,000 per year, and they went to the male principals in Saint John and Moncton. The highest salary paid a female was \$2,000 to a Saint John teacher. The lowest annual Grammar school salary of \$1,300 went to a male teacher in Sussex, while the lowest salary to a female \$875 was afforded a teacher in the small community of Fredericton Junction, Sunbury County. Both teachers at the low end of the scale had their Bachelor of Arts degrees, suggesting that while New Brunswick Annual Reports repeatedly mentioned poorly trained teachers, most teachers at the Grammar School level had a university education.<sup>119</sup>

A shortage of teachers was one of the most pressing issues facing school administrators in early twentieth century New Brunswick. The problem was one of

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Level Description Rs116 Records of the Chief Superintendent of Education 1896 - 1976," ed. PANB (Government of New Brunswick, 2002).

<sup>118</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

<sup>119</sup> For concerns about poorly trained teachers, see for example ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1910-1911 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1912), ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1916).

introducing new teachers to the profession, and at the secondary school level in particular, teacher retention. As one inspector noted, the factors drawing teachers away from the profession were “The lure of the West, the increased cost of living, the better advantages offered active and ambitious young men and women in the fields of industrial pursuits with their more favorable [*sic*] conditions and better remuneration. . .”<sup>120</sup> Inspectors’ reports indicated that at the secondary school level, in district after district, county after county, teachers and principals departed. When reasons were given the most commonly cited was the intention to teach in more westerly provinces where the pay was better, and the second, to return to school.<sup>121</sup>

While the reports of inspectors highlighted the exodus of secondary teachers, data about student teacher ratios did not distinguish between the two panels. Still, census

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<sup>120</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1919), 24. Some inspectors noted the move of teachers from rural to urban areas. Others also reported specifically that many young women who had intended to attend Normal School instead decided to take office work, particularly with the railroad or the T. Eaton Company in Moncton. See ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

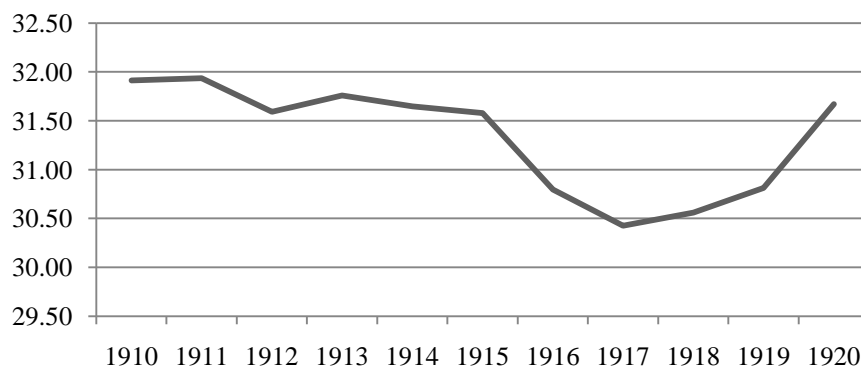
<sup>121</sup> For example, “Miss Louise Scott, B.A., who had been Principal for two years [at a County Grammar School], tendered her resignation to accept a position in a Ladies’ College in Toronto,” while at another Superior School, “Mr. Swan, the Principal, an earnest teacher, resigned at the end of the year to enter a University.” When New Brunswick teachers sought higher education, the university most frequently mentioned by name in the Annual Reports was Columbia in New York City. Another challenge facing teachers was the ability to secure suitable board and lodging at reasonable rates; for some, this was the reason for leaving a position. This problem, according to inspectors’ reports, was particularly acute in northern New Brunswick, in rural areas as well as in towns and villages. New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 39, 43, 14.

figures tell an interesting and illuminating tale. Figure 1.8 shows the provincial ratio of all students to all teachers, elementary and secondary, as of December 31 for the years 1910 to 1920, indicating that the number actually dipped during the war period, with a low of 30.43 in 1917, down from the high of 31.94 in 1913. By December 31, 1919, the ratio was on the rise again, sitting at 30.81, prompting speculation as to why these numbers warranted the dire tone expressed in the Annual Reports.

Figure 1.8 Ratio of Students to Teachers in New Brunswick Schools as of December 31, 1910-1920<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1909-1910 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1911), ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1910-1911 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1911-1912 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1913), ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1912-1913 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1914), ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1913-1914 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1915), ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1915-1916 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1917), ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1916-1917 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1918), ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

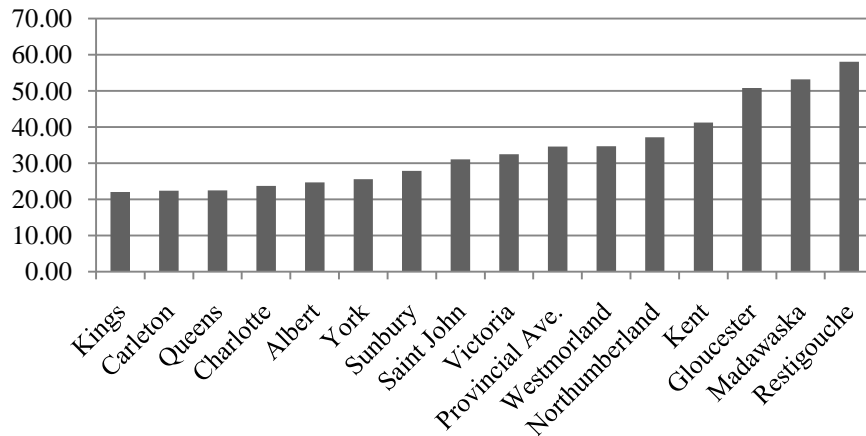


A county-by-county breakdown painted a different picture, however, indicating that the teacher shortage was not felt equally across the province, and was indeed a serious problem in some locales. Figure 1.9 shows the discrepancies as they existed in 1921, the closest year for which figures are available. The provincial average was around 34.55, with a low of 21.98 in Kings County, and a high of 58.07 in Restigouche County.<sup>123</sup> These figures may be compared to the population density of each county according to the 1921 Census, as shown in Figure 1.3. Notably, the city of Saint John is omitted from the graph because its population per square mile in 1921 was 3,296.

Figure 1.9 Ratio of Students to Teachers in New Brunswick Schools by County, 1921<sup>124</sup>

<sup>123</sup> The ratio of students to teachers in secondary school history class is impossible to determine, even though the numbers of students studying history are available, since the province compiled figures based on teachers' type of school, not on subjects taught.

<sup>124</sup> Department of Trade and Commerce, "Sixth Census of Canada - Bulletin XVII: School Attendance [Microfiche]," 42, New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1920-21," ed. Board of Education (Government of New Brunswick, 1922), A17.



These statistics show that New Brunswick was a province with vast local differences in the educational experiences of its students and teachers, particularly with relation to the availability of teachers. The narratives contained in the Annual Reports clearly indicated that these differences were a burden on the system's day-to-day operations, and dominated the attention of the administrators and teachers alike. The teacher shortage, while real, does not appear to have been a function of urban-rural identification alone, however, because the neither the most rural counties nor the most urban showed the extremes of student-teacher ratios. Instead, the teacher shortage appears also to have been somewhat correlated to language, because in many cases the areas with the highest student-teacher ratios were also those with the highest proportion of Acadians.<sup>125</sup>

Sunbury, Victoria and Restigouche Counties, for instance, were the most sparsely populated, and yet the former two had student-teacher ratios below the provincial average, while Restigouche had the highest of any county. The 1921 census did not provide data indicating language by county, so it is not possible to compare the student-

<sup>125</sup> Starting from New Brunswick's northwest, the counties which traditionally have significant numbers of French speakers are Madawaska, Restigouche, Gloucester, Northumberland, Kent, and Westmorland. For a 21<sup>st</sup> century representation of the languages spoken in New Brunswick, see Appendix A.

teacher ratios with language numbers on such a local scale. School inspector reports for the 1917-1920 school years did provide a window into this phenomenon, however. For the 1917-1918 school year, reports of the shortage of teachers came from the inspectors working in Northumberland, Restigouche, and Kings.<sup>126</sup> In 1918-1919, teacher shortages were reported in Restigouche and Gloucester Counties (the latter where the inspector identified that the main reason for the shortage was the better salaries available in other careers).<sup>127</sup> During the 1919-1920 school year, teacher shortages were identified by inspectors in Northumberland, Gloucester, Westmorland, York, Kings and Carleton Counties.<sup>128</sup>

Concern over the teacher shortage in both elementary and secondary panels was reflected in New Brunswick teachers' collective attempts to improve their rate of pay, and in administrative recognition of the problem.<sup>129</sup> The 1920 passage of legislation to

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<sup>126</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

<sup>127</sup> The inspector for the Moncton area reports a shortage not of teachers but of housing for teachers during this school year. ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

<sup>128</sup> ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education." New Brunswick Board of Education, "Inspection of Schools Monthly Reports: 1920." The District Seven inspector (York County area) also reported in May that many students had left school to engage in farm work. The District Eight (Carleton County area) inspector described a dearth of male teachers.

<sup>129</sup> For a news report on teachers' efforts to raise their salaries, see "New Brunswick Teachers Union to Seek More Pay," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 25, 1920. For the administrative response, see W.S. Carter et al., "Report of Committee Appointed under the Provisions of 9 George V., Cap.33, Re Increased

raise all salaries and establish minimums, and the creation of a system of loans to help meet the cost of attending Normal School were greeted as measures that would help to ease the teacher shortage.<sup>130</sup> The Saint John Trustees' report for 1919-1920 noted that the new salary schedule, effective January 1, 1920, had provided salary increases of

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Salaries of Public School Teachers " (Fredericton: New Brunswick Board of Education, 1920). The archives contain a poignant letter to Carter from a Chipman teacher planning to move west. She wrote that she looked forward to a day when teachers "will not have to apologize for living. These are rather bitter words, but true nevertheless. – the fighting spirit of Brian from who we are of remote descent ascends itself in this struggle for something equivalent to a living wage." M. Gertrude Killeen, to Carter, W.S., April 7, 1920. RS116 B8j4. PANB. The "fighting spirit of Brian" likely refers to Brian Boru, the ancient Irish king.

<sup>130</sup> Earlier efforts included the 1918 passage of a regulation that teachers admitted to Normal School were required to post a one hundred dollar bond which would be returned to them upon the completion of at least three years of service to New Brunswick schools. This rule was specifically designed to discourage graduates from taking up teaching positions outside of the province. See New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education." In addition, starting in 1917-1918, the minimum age for admittance to Normal School was lowered from seventeen to sixteen, but it was raised again for the 1920-1921 school year. By then, the newly passed regulations to increase salaries had induced some teachers to leave other occupations and return to the classroom, and had drawn some teachers back from the west. One inspector also remarked that the salary increase helped to convince married teachers to return to the classroom, suggesting that their absence from New Brunswick schools was the result of personal decisions. See ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1920-1921, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1922).

between one hundred dollars and \$362 for Secondary school teachers of both sexes.<sup>131</sup>

Legislation to establish a minimum teacher salary was subsequently passed and became effective on January 1, 1921.<sup>132</sup>

The statistical data only goes so far in explaining what went on inside New Brunswick Grammar and Superior schools. Qualitative data providing information about the curriculum enriches the quantitative picture. MacNaughton observes of New Brunswick education in the late nineteenth century that the pace of change was slow: "This province borrowed ideas and doctrines, texts and teachers; gathered inspiration and encouragement; and followed examples, from many sources. But everything was trimmed to fit the provincial purse and to conform to modest ideas of progress."<sup>133</sup> With the twentieth century, however, New Brunswick school personnel felt the effects of the industrial revolution as they responded to changing social and economic pressures. Administrators, principals and teachers undertook research to inform their practice with information about modern methods. For example, as a member of the Dominion Education Association, Chief Superintendent Carter was present at the Association's

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<sup>131</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 62.

<sup>132</sup> Eric Duncan MacKenzie, "The Historical Development of the New Brunswick Teachers' Association, 1902-1954" (M.Ed. Thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1971).

<sup>133</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*, 117.



1917 meeting at which John Dewey and William Wirt were the guest speakers.<sup>134</sup> The Normal School principal attended Columbia University during the summer of 1918.<sup>135</sup>

The major response to industrialization in New Brunswick was a change to the organizational structure of the educational system. By 1919 it was fragmented into four distinct units. As Chief Superintendent, Carter was head of the academic section, and Fletcher Peacock became Director of Vocational Education, which included manual training and domestic science.<sup>136</sup> The latter two courses were optional studies, and teachers received special grants toward the cost of specialized equipment needed.<sup>137</sup> In

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<sup>134</sup> Wirt oversaw the creation of a released-time system of schools in Gary, Indiana. See Jonathan Zimmerman, *Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2002). Several pages of the Chief Superintendent's Annual Report for 1915-1916 were devoted to a description of the "Gary Plan," with the added comment, "It will bear watching." New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1915-1916 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," liii.

<sup>135</sup> H.V.B. Bridges, to Carter, W.S., July 25, 1918. RS116 B6a1c. PANB. Among the lectures he attended were talks by William Bagley, Franklin Giddings, David Snedden, and William H. Kilpatrick. Bridges was not the first Normal School Principal to propose a research trip. In 1900, Eldon Mullin requested leave to travel to New England to study the Normal Schools there. Included in his fact-finding mission was information about "kindergarten methods in the primary grades" and manual training. Eldon Mullin, to the New Brunswick Board of Education, January 15, 1900. RS116 B6a1a. PANB.

<sup>136</sup> MacKenzie, "The Historical Development of the New Brunswick Teachers' Association, 1902-1954". Peacock spent the summer of 1919 taking a course in administrative vocational work at Columbia University. "School and College," *Educational Review* 34 (September, 1919): 17.

<sup>137</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education." For information about special grants for teachers, see Richardson, *The Administration of Schools in the Cities of the Dominion of Canada*.

1919, fifty-four students attended day courses in technical and vocational publicly controlled schools, while eight hundred attended evening courses.<sup>138</sup> This was not the limit, however. Stirling Stratton describes the expansion of courses during Carter's superintendency, adding that other external organizations such as business colleges, private, church and vocational schools provided vocational education for almost five thousand students taught by 208 teachers.<sup>139</sup>

Agricultural education was the third innovation in New Brunswick education in the early twentieth century. Under the federal Agricultural Instruction Act, designed "for the encouragement of agriculture 'through education, instruction and demonstration carried on along lines well devised and of a continuous nature,'" the province received a grant of just over sixty-four thousand dollars in 1919.<sup>140</sup> Physical training was the fourth educational unit, introduced to New Brunswick schools by an act of the legislature in 1910.<sup>141</sup> The system was based on a Swedish model used throughout the British Empire, and in introducing it, Carter declared "Physical training is as important as mental and should go hand in hand with it."<sup>142</sup> The Normal School Principal concurred, later characterizing the activity as an important component in developing a teacher's qualities as a disciplinarian. He wrote, "The sooner the teacher can get pupils to respond by

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<sup>138</sup> Department of Trade and Commerce, *The Canada Year Book 1920*, 130.

<sup>139</sup> Stratton, "Secondary Education in Rural New Brunswick 1900 - 1966".

<sup>140</sup> Department of Trade and Commerce, *The Canada Year Book 1920*, 259. Stratton observes that the addition of agricultural education helped to make up for the inadequacies of the secondary school system.

<sup>141</sup> Warner, "History of Secondary Education in New Brunswick".

<sup>142</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1909-1910 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," xlv-xlvi.

precise movement to her commands the easier will be the work of managing the school.”<sup>143</sup> Physical drill was competitive, with prizes offered annually to Normal School students and teachers who excelled.<sup>144</sup> A “trophy, book or picture, usually of a patriotic nature” also went to the school of a winning teacher.<sup>145</sup> These examples of education outside the academic stream were firmly established in New Brunswick schools by 1914, and they would take on additional importance during the Great War as their pedagogical goals were folded into the wartime curriculum.

The academic subjects taught in New Brunswick Grammar and Superior schools were languages (English, French, Latin and Greek, with the latter two optional courses), mathematics (arithmetic, geometry, algebra, book-keeping and trigonometry), history and geography, drawing, and natural sciences (physics, physiology and hygiene, chemistry and botany).<sup>146</sup> The pedagogical approach, for the most part, was wedded to the textbook. School inspectors regularly complained that history education consisted of

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<sup>143</sup> ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1916-1917 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 5.

<sup>144</sup> First prize for Physical Training in Inspectorial District No. Seven, as reported in the Inspector's annual report for 1919-1920 went to Miss Zula Hallett of Marysville for graded schools, Miss Alice Love of Moore's Mills for rural schools, and Miss Anna Jackson of Gagetown for semi-rural schools. All were secondary school teachers. ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 33-34.

<sup>145</sup> ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 34.

<sup>146</sup> ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1915-1916 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

committing textual passages to memory, and the persistence of this practice was confirmed by the two hour history component of the 1920 Matriculation and Leaving Examinations. Question number eight, for example, asked “What were the most important results of the Crusades?”<sup>147</sup> This query closely corresponded to a passage in Myers’ *General History* titled “Effects upon Civilization of the Crusades.”<sup>148</sup>

The use of textbooks was legislated in New Brunswick’s *Manual of the School Law*, the 1913 version of which included the instruction that these textual materials must be prescribed by the Board of Education. Also included among the provincial regulations was the charge to “Parents, masters or guardians” to ensure that students had the prescribed textbooks, and the responsibility for enforcing this regulation fell to trustees, with the additional power to provide books for indigent students.<sup>149</sup> While some textbooks were distributed through the Board of Education office in Fredericton, others

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<sup>147</sup> New Brunswick Education Department, "Examinations: Matriculation and Leaving Examinations, 1894 -1960," ed. Board of Education. Printed Records (July, 1920), 13. For school inspectors’ reports, see New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1916-1917 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

<sup>148</sup> See for example P.V.N. Myers, *General History*, 2nd Revised ed. (Boston: Ginn, 1921), 316. A copy of the 1906 edition of Myers’ *General History* purchased in a used bookstore in 2003 included relevant passages underlined in the section about the Crusades.

<sup>149</sup> New Brunswick, *Schools Act*.

were not “provincial,” in Chief Superintendent Carter’s words, and thus were distributed through a book distributor in Saint John.<sup>150</sup> Myers’ *General History* was one of these.

The New Brunswick Board of Education did not publish a curriculum per se in 1920, but rather issued a “Programme of Studies” which listed prescribed textbooks. Texts were adopted in the province based upon the recommendations of a Textbook Committee comprised of school teachers, principals, inspectors and superintendents, the Chief Superintendent, representatives from the Normal School, and the Chancellor of the University of New Brunswick.<sup>151</sup> This group met in December 1919, and decided that the English and Canadian history textbooks, Hughes’ *Britain and greater Britain in the nineteenth century* and Robertson and Hays’ *Public school history of England and public school history of Canada* should be changed, but that Myers’ *General History* should stay.<sup>152</sup>

While no copy of the unauthorized edition is available, the 1921 edition of Myers’ *General History* offered the closest approximation of that text. It opened with a general introduction describing prehistoric times including marking the divisions of prehistoric times into ages, “which are named from the material which man used in the manufacture of his weapons and tools” and continuing with a description of the way “man” utilized, shaped and adapted the environment for his own ends, with the use of

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<sup>150</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., February 18, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B7e2. PANB. Carter’s letter suggested that these textbooks were used in secondary school courses.

<sup>151</sup> “Myers History Not to Be Used in Public Schools of Province,” *Daily Telegraph*, February 14, 1920.

<sup>152</sup> New Brunswick Textbook Committee, “Textbook Committee Report,” ed. New Brunswick Board of Education (Fredericton: December 30, 1919).

fire and the domestication of plants and animals, for example.<sup>153</sup> This suggested a hierarchy in which man was at the top, and all else existed for his manipulation and consumption. Myers was dismissive of races other than the one he identified as the most civilized. He equated Aryans with civilization and progress; white Europeans had their place at the apex of the hierarchy. This exemplified what Stephen Jay Gould called “the oldest cultural prejudices of Western thought: the ladder of progress as a model for organizing life, and the reification of some abstract quality as a criterion for ranking.”<sup>154</sup>

New Brunswick students reading any edition of Myers would find no mention of their province, and scant mention of their country. Up until 1920, it was the focus in only two places in the text: Myers described the ceding of Canada to England by France in 1763, and he mentioned the creation of the Dominion of Canada in 1867. Otherwise, the text was America-centric. For instance, in the 1906 edition, Myers compared the positive effects of Canada’s transcontinental railroad to that of the United States, and concluded the section on the Dominion of Canada saying that it “seems marked out to be one of the great future homes of the Anglo-Saxon race. What the United States now is, the Dominion seems destined at a time not very remote to become.”<sup>155</sup>

The volume by Robertson and Hay was actually two books, Robertson’s *Public School History of England* and Hay’s *History of Canada*. The opening sections of Robertson’s text also constituted a hierarchical catalogue of races. Meanwhile Hay

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<sup>153</sup> Myers, *General History*, 2.

<sup>154</sup> Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996; reprint, 1996), 348.

<sup>155</sup> P.V.N. Myers, *A General History for Colleges and High Schools*, Revised ed. (Boston: Ginn, 1906), 729.

began his narrative of Canadian history with a statement that read more like a wishful assumption than fact, and situated his readers as citizens of the Empire saying,

Every boy and girl of Canada likes to read the story of our past. It is a tale of discovery and adventure, of the deeds of heroes, of fierce struggles with enemies, of bravely facing death and suffering in many forms. This record of the deeds of heroic men and brave women, who toiled and suffered to carve from the wilderness homes that are fitted to nourish a sturdy race, will help to form the life and character of the children who grow up to fill their places. . . .

Where are the boys and girls who are not proud of such a land, who are not eager to help make it their home, and to preserve it as a part of our great British Empire?<sup>156</sup>

Hay used adjectives like “hardy,” “brave,” and “bold” to describe the European explorers.<sup>157</sup> First Nations were presented at first more sympathetically than in other texts, and in a way that hinted at the complexity of their relations with the Europeans. As the chapter progressed, however, Hay returned to a more stereotypical portrait. The First Nations men were depicted as belligerent, the women hard-working and skilled, and the villages communal.<sup>158</sup> These textbook passages offered only a glimpse of what was considered appropriate historical narrative in 1920, and each of these in 1920 was threatened with removal from the approved textbook list, but not because of the passages noted above. In a province in which the textbook was the curriculum, all of the history

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<sup>156</sup> William J. Robertson and G.U. Hay, *Public School History of England and Public School History of Canada* (Toronto: The Copp Clark Company Limited, c1902), 201.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 201-02.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.

textbooks were explicitly Christian in outlook, and only one was written by a Canadian. This last fact became a key point of contention as the New Brunswick Board of Education deliberated over a replacement for Myers' *General History*.

The 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy provides a lens through which the effects of the Great War and its aftermath on education can be examined. More specifically, the effect of the conflict on history education provides a way of looking at national identity, citizenship and beliefs about the purpose of studying history, particularly at the secondary level. The characteristics and structure of secondary education in New Brunswick reflected socio-cultural and educational contexts which had parallels elsewhere, but were also specific to that place and that time. The history curriculum and the content of the textbooks prescribed and rejected in New Brunswick were illustrative of the values of the society of the postwar era, and offered a window on a normative way of thinking about the nation and the world, showing what was "natural" and "normal," and what was deemed "perverted."<sup>159</sup> The conversations

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<sup>159</sup> The term "perverted" was used repeatedly in editorials and letters to the editor to describe Myers' *General History*, but was not limited to the New Brunswick history textbook controversy. It also appeared during controversies in the United States in which American history textbooks were judged to be too British. See, for example, Harold Underwood Faulkner, "Perverted American History," *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, February 1926, and William Hale Thompson, "Shall We Shatter the Nation's Idols in School Histories?," *Current History* XXVII, no. 5 (1928). The former described assaults on history textbooks, giving particular mention to the New York City controversy in the early 1920s, an incident which is described more fully in this study in Chapter 2. The latter was a polemic written by the mayor of Chicago who mounted a long campaign later in the decade. Complainants in both controversies judged American history textbooks to be too British. For an account of the New York City textbook scandal, see Bethany J. Andreasen, "Treason or Truth: The New York City Textbook Controversy, 1920-1923," *New York History*



about history education in the newspapers and correspondence files of the Chief Superintendent, and the very nature of the discourse surrounding Myers' text, suggested political and socio-economic pressures brought to bear on the Board of Education which directly affected the outcome of the controversy. The correspondence spoke not just to the role of history education and textbooks in defining, maintaining, and promoting what it meant to be Canadian, but also to the perception of community leaders, most notably school administrators, newspaper editors, and clerics, of the need to be responsive to public opinion. The primary source documents showed that although the Great War was indeed a deeply traumatic event, the strong feelings provoked by 1920 discussions about history textbooks were just as much the manifestation of tensions surrounding the complex web of religious and linguistic relationships that comprised New Brunswick society as they were a reaction to the Great War. The 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy was absorbed into, reflected and was worked out within the terms of larger conflicts around religion and language.

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66 (1985). For more on New York City and on Thompson's Chicago campaign see Zimmerman, *Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools*.

## **Chapter 2: Rupture and Stability in New Brunswick Schools During the Great War and Postwar Eras**

What is the purpose of history education? The 1920 complainants who critiqued Myers' *General History* harboured particular notions about the importance of studying the past; they were very clear about what should be studied, although not quite so as clear as to why. As one author of a letter to the editor explained, "History is a comprehensive and accurate record of past events." The correspondent normalized his own concept of history education continuing "It is not natural to expect accuracy where there is bias: it cannot be said to be comprehensive where the important and the essential are ignored. History is therefore not written to please and to conform with the prejudices of a people or a class." The characterization of these notions of history education as normal, and of Myers' text as abnormal, was further reinforced with the caption provided by the newspaper editors which read, "Perverted History."<sup>1</sup>

In 1920, New Brunswick was emerging from a period of deep trauma brought on by the Great War. The consequences of war are devastating, including casualties and disruption of the social structure. As Keith Crawford and Stuart Foster argue the scale of this phenomenon is profound because "War shatters the established structures of identity and community; it disfigures and fragments patterns of everyday life and profoundly dislocates socioeconomic relationships; this is in addition to its psychological impact where the experience of war changes how people think about themselves and their

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<sup>1</sup> Another Parent, "Perverted History. [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920.

world, perhaps forever.”<sup>2</sup> Canadian historians agree that the Great War signalled a shift for humanity, in the way “The war and its aftermath reshaped people and nations,” for it “touched the lives of every Canadian man, woman, and child, whether they remained at home or served overseas. . .”<sup>3</sup> With a total of eighteen thousand New Brunswick men enlisted during the course of the war, the impact of the conflict was felt throughout the population.<sup>4</sup> In 1920, with the long term effects of the war still emerging, there was a sense in New Brunswick that, as another letter to the editor put it, “history is being made every day.”<sup>5</sup>

A sociological perspective of schooling posits that schools manifest the values of the societies in which they exist.<sup>6</sup> Historians also describe the way members of a society come to embody particular ways of thinking, which find their expression in the structure,

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<sup>2</sup> Keith A. Crawford and Stuart J. Foster, "On Nation, War and Memory," in *War, Nation, Memory: International Perspectives on World War II in School History Textbooks* (Charlotte NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc., 2008), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Tim Cook, *At the Sharp End: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1914-1916*, vol. One (Toronto: Penguin Group (Canada), 2007), 2-3, and David MacKenzie, "Introduction," in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David MacKenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Desmond Morton lists the provincial enlistment figures in Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> K.E. MacLaughlan, "In the Editor's Mail [Letter to the Editor]," *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920.

<sup>6</sup> Terry Wotherspoon, *The Sociology of Education in Canada*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2004).

curriculum and pedagogy of schooling.<sup>7</sup> When war disrupts a nation, the effects of the conflict and the societal response to it are felt in the classroom in numerous ways.<sup>8</sup> For New Brunswick schools, as with schools in other provinces, the Great War and its aftermath were times of significant change, and the stress to the educational system of dealing with the change was a factor in the events of the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy. This chapter shows how the day to day operations of the schools were affected for years both during and after the war, including changes to what was taught in the classroom and by whom. History education was subject to revision partly because a variety of New Brunswick citizens wanted public schools to reflect the events of the conflict just ended. The war also sparked new attitudes toward citizenship education. The documentary evidence shows that at the same time that they were responding to the crises of war, schools were also sites that served to preserve continuity, even during wartime. While in many ways the minutiae of daily life in schools took on a different aspect during the Great War era, in certain ways New Brunswick classrooms were markers of stability that might salve the pain and disruption of the wartime experience, even if the stability was a sign of institutional stasis necessitated by economic constraints.

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<sup>7</sup> See for example Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871* (London ON: The Althouse Press, 1988), and George S. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), and Nancy M. Sheehan, "World War I and Provincial Educational Policy in English Canada," in *Historical Perspectives on Educational Policy in Canada: Issues, Debates and Case Studies*, ed. Eric W. Ricker and B. Anne Wood (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1995).

Rupture and stability are useful organizing devices in order to study the effects of the Great War on New Brunswick schools, and they are equally useful in organizing our understanding of national identity. Despite the persistent myth that Canadian national identity was transformed on the battlefields of Vimy, the primary source documents of the 1920 New Brunswick textbook controversy suggest, as Philip Buckner argues, that it was possible to harbour strong feelings for Canada while maintaining a love of empire.<sup>9</sup> The commingling of loyalties informed arguments about the purpose of history education. This chapter outlines the rupture and stability that characterized schooling in New Brunswick during and after the Great War. It also examines scholarship on national identity in order to situate the various complex currents of Canadian nationalism within the discourse percolating among the discussants in 1920 as New Brunswick's secondary school World History textbook came under fire.

The Great War was omni-present in New Brunswick schools in a variety of ways, but the effects of the war that most directly informed the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy were the elements that represented rupture, those which interrupted day to day schooling, and which affected what was being taught in the province's classrooms. The combination of these factors created an atmosphere that enabled particular conversations about history education and history textbooks to ensue.

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<sup>9</sup> Phillip Buckner, "The Long Goodbye: English Canadians and the British World," in *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005). For analysis of the Vimy myth, see Tim Cook, "Quill and Canon: Writing the Great War in Canada," *The American Review of Canadian Studies* (2005), and Geoffrey Hayes, Andrew Iarocci, and Mike Bechthold, eds., *Vimy Ridge: A Canadian Reassessment* (Waterloo ON: Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies and Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2007).

The impact of the Great War that most directly affected day to day schooling in New Brunswick for the greatest length of time was the loss of personnel through enlistment or involvement in war-related endeavours outside schools.<sup>10</sup> At the outset of the war, several school inspectors and a large number of male teachers enlisted, and their absence affected the continuity of school supervision and oversight.<sup>11</sup> While excluded from the combatant role, female teachers also did their part in the war effort; Carter described “a great demand for women to take the places of men who have enlisted, in business and all other occupations. A great number of our young women have undertaken the work of nursing and other war work.”<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, the enlistment of male teachers continued.<sup>13</sup> The first reported casualty was that of Charles Lawson, a

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<sup>10</sup> Sheehan, "World War I and Provincial Educational Policy in English Canada."

<sup>11</sup> The Chief Inspector's first wartime report mentioned the enlistment of two out of eight school inspectors, and “a very large number of our male teachers.” New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1916), xxxvii.

<sup>12</sup> ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1916-1917 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1918), xxxvii.

<sup>13</sup> Also included in the Provincial Archives are letters from teachers making arrangements for war work both in and outside the classroom. See for example L.L. Jones, to Carter, W.S. and Clark, Geo. J. Fredericton, September 8, November 3 and December 1, 1914. RS116 B8k4. Provincial Archives of New Brunswick. Jones hoped his teacher's salary would continue to be paid during his overseas service. In 1916 the principal of St. Stephen High School expressed a desire to “serve [in the school] when I cannot be with the noble fellows in the trenches.” See A.E. Tingley, to Carter, W.S., May 26 1916. RS116 B8c4a. PANB.

“young and most promising” secondary school teacher from Saint John.<sup>14</sup> The same year, the Trustees of the Town of Chatham noted that many graduates and teachers were “doing their part in upholding the honor [*sic*] of the Empire and the glory of the Union Jack upon the field of battle . . .”<sup>15</sup> A lasting acknowledgement of wartime losses took the form of in-school memorial plaques which reinforced message of the ubiquitous monuments placed in public parks and squares following the war. As Jonathan Vance’s study of war and memory observes, these installations in schools “meant that a symbol of the war’s sacrifice was the children’s first sight at the beginning of the school day and their last sight at the end of it.”<sup>16</sup> For other students, the constant reminder of the war

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<sup>14</sup> New Brunswick, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” xxxviii. Charles was the brother of Jessie Lawson, who had a distinguished career as a New Brunswick educator and wrote an elementary history textbook. See Jessie I. Lawson and Jean MacCallum Sweet, *Our New Brunswick Story* (Toronto: The Canada Publishing Co. Ltd., 1948).

<sup>15</sup> New Brunswick, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” 114. The November 1915 issue of the *Educational Review* reported a resolution taken by the Teachers’ Institutes of York and Sunbury counties to express their “due appreciation of the heroism and self-sacrifice of the teachers of this province who have left home and all that is dear to them and have gone to the front in defence [*sic*] of King, country and home.” “News,” *Educational Review* XXIX, no. 6, Whole Number 342 (1915): 120.

<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 240. Two schools in Saint John were sites of such memorials: Albert School housed a brass tablet in memory of a former principal killed in the war, while Saint John High had a memorial to those former students who fought as well as those who died. See New Brunswick, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1920), ———, “Annual Report of the Schools of New

was embodied in teachers who were veterans.<sup>17</sup> These changes constituted more than just disruption, they created a permanent change in schools, because they made it difficult to ignore that a war had been endured.

Interruptions to schooling were sometimes the result of causes indirectly related to the war. During the winter of 1919, the effects of the influenza epidemic which had begun in 1918 were still being felt in New Brunswick schools, and were widely reported by school inspectors. Demobilized soldiers brought the disease home to their communities from Europe. At the height of the epidemic, the New Brunswick Department of Health prohibited gatherings of six or more people. Schools were closed, over thirty-five days of instruction were lost, and a handful of teachers died.<sup>18</sup> In

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Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1921).

<sup>17</sup> One inspector's report for 1920 mentioned a returned soldier, whose "trouble from his wounds prevented him from continuing his work." New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 42. The death by spinal meningitis of the same Principal Jones of Dalhousie who had inquired about his pay while he was overseas was reported in February, 1920. See "School and College," *Educational Review* 34 (1920, February): 145. The PANB contain no documents comparable to those in Archives Ontario outlining a provincial campaign to recruit returned servicemen as public school teachers. The rationale for the campaign was described as twofold: "This desire emanates not solely from a spirit of gratitude to these men, or from the recognition of their honorable and courageous patriotism, but also because it is realized that, in them, the educational system will acquire men of such spirit and force that the full benefits of the war experience, and of the sacrifices made, will be the inheritance of the children of Ontario." R.W. Anglin, Memorandum to Mr. Greene, June 12, 1919. RG2-43 1919 Box 56 File 5. Archives Ontario.

<sup>18</sup> Jane Jenkins quantifies New Brunswick losses from influenza, reporting that when the fall 1918 epidemic "finally subsided after four months there had been over 35,000 cases and 1400 deaths." Jane E.



addition, a smallpox outbreak led to the closure of a number of schools for as long as three or four months, while some parents objecting to mandatory vaccinations kept their children home from school.<sup>19</sup> These interruptions prompted expressions of concern from school inspectors who feared that the academic progress of New Brunswick's students was threatened.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to teacher shortages and epidemics, the war resulted in periodic disruptions of the school day and the school year. These ruptures in the school day were accepted because they served civic and national purposes, and as such could be used to further pedagogical ends. For instance, New Brunswick's need to maintain agricultural production was acute, and "pressing invitations were given in all instances to children of suitable age and capable of doing so to devote their energy and best efforts to work on the farm," with the result that school attendance fell well below average in some areas.<sup>21</sup> The work was formalized late in the war, when New Brunswick youth became involved in the newly created "Soldiers of the Soil" movement. This federal program for boys

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Jenkins, "Baptism of Fire: New Brunswick's Public Health Movement and the 1918 Influenza Epidemic," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 24, no. 2 (2007).

<sup>19</sup> Ian McKay, "The 1910's: The Stillborn Triumph of Progressive Reform," in *The Atlantic Provinces in Confederation*, ed. E.R. Forbes and D.A. Muise (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

<sup>20</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1919), ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

<sup>21</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1916-1917 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 26.

aged 15 to 19 was intended to ease the farm labour shortage caused by enlistment.<sup>22</sup> The 1917-1918 report of one rural school inspector noted that boys absent from school could “assist in seeding and harvesting. The idea of having such identified with an organization with patriotic aims should be an effective means of inculcating patriotism.”<sup>23</sup> In other words, as other scholars have emphasized, history class was not the only site of citizenship education or national indoctrination.<sup>24</sup>

Some elements of the wartime curriculum were not new but the relevance of their pedagogical purposes increased during the war. A pair of programs with patriotic overtones were woven into the New Brunswick secondary school curriculum and served not as disruptions but as additions to the Physical Training program. The Cadet Corps and Military Drill had been introduced in New Brunswick schools during the 1909-1910 school year and were taught outside of school hours, but their importance expanded during the war until at their height they were centrepieces of male student and teacher war efforts.<sup>25</sup> The two were optional courses at the secondary school and Normal School

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<sup>22</sup> Joan Champ, "The Impact of the First World War on Saskatchewan's Farm Families," *Winning the Prairie Gamble 2005 Exhibit* (2002),

[http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/saskatchewan100/researchpapers/WDM/Impact%20 of%20WWI.pdf](http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/saskatchewan100/researchpapers/WDM/Impact%20of%20WWI.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 49.

<sup>24</sup> See Sunera Thobani, *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), and Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*.

<sup>25</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1909-1910 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1911).

level, offered as long as student numbers warranted them. These courses were instructed by the same ex-military men who conducted Physical Training classes. Instructor salaries were paid and Corps prizes were awarded out of Strathcona Trust funds, which also paid for Physical Training prizes.<sup>26</sup> In 1914-1915, New Brunswick had twenty-four Cadet Corps, with another five added the following year.<sup>27</sup> The aims of the Cadet Corps, as described at a 1916 Teachers' Institute by a New Brunswick teacher, were "to develop a manly spirit," "to develop the mental powers," "to prepare men for military service," to foster "a social affiliation" and a "sense of honour," and to develop cleanliness and discipline. Of all of these, according to the speaker, "Discipline was the greatest and most helpful aid toward self-control and support of the laws of a democratic government. This training in obedience was helpful in curbing that spirit of carelessness that might arise from the personal freedom that grew out of the democratic government under which Canadians lived."<sup>28</sup> The sight of young men in military formation on school

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<sup>26</sup> ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education." The same report noted that the Physical Drill and Cadet instructor for Moncton had departed for a better-paying job in Western Canada, and a replacement could not be found. The following year his return and re-engagement were announced. ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

<sup>27</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1915-1916 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1917).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 154. Cynthia Comacchio offers a comparable description of the Cadet Corps in Canada originating from an "imperialist nationalism that promoted militarism as vital to membership in nation and empire, as well as to a superior type of manliness." Cynthia Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950* (Waterloo ON: Wilfrid Laurier University

grounds served as a symbol to the school community of service to nation.<sup>29</sup> Historians have noted that the Canadian Cadet Corps program was subject to controversy nationally and internationally, particularly because in some provinces participation was mandatory.<sup>30</sup> The evidence in New Brunswick suggests that the program was voluntary, and while interest in it continued throughout the war, the funding for instructors and prizes was limited.<sup>31</sup> Once the conflict had ended, mention of the Cadet Corps and Military Drill in annual reports declined. The Corps did not disappear: the Board of Trustees for Saint John approved the signing of bonds for rifles for two city school Cadet Corps in March 1920, and at the same meeting agreed to provide targets for a rifle

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Press, 2006), 113. During the war, the New Brunswick Normal School Principal also emphasized the benefits of cadet training, calculating that since the start of the war 140 students and graduates of the school went “bravely to do battle for the cause of liberty and justice,” and of that number, “Twenty-six of these are or were officers, showing how well their former training has helped them. Thirty-two have been wounded, and six are prisoners of war. Fourteen have made the supreme sacrifice.” New Brunswick, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1916-1917 by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” 8.

<sup>29</sup> This kind of visual image was supplemented elsewhere by the wholesale commandeering of school buildings for military purposes. See Roger Chickering, *The Great War and Urban Life in Germany: Freiburg, 1914-1918* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), and Sheehan, “World War I and Provincial Educational Policy in English Canada.”

<sup>30</sup> Cynthia Comacchio describes the controversial aspects of the Cadet Corps. See Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*. Nancy Sheehan invokes the mandatory nature of the program in Sheehan, “World War I and Provincial Educational Policy in English Canada.”

<sup>31</sup> New Brunswick, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.”

range in the basement of one of the schools.<sup>32</sup> Overall, the military focus in schools after the war was diminished: no longer was Military Drill offered as part of the training, nor were prizes for “shooting” offered at school closing exercises the way they had been as recently as the 1918-1919 school year.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless at the height of the war when they were at their most active, in New Brunswick the Cadet Corps and Military Drill were important elements of wartime pedagogy highlighting service to the nation.

If activities with a military bent preoccupied the male secondary school students and teachers and helped to promote patriotism, other war-related projects served a similar purpose and were mounted in schools and communities across Canada.<sup>34</sup> The most pervasive of these were the fundraising drives, which had schools as focal points for a continuous procession of special projects.<sup>35</sup> Carter highlighted the pedagogical

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<sup>32</sup> Board of School Trustees of St. John, *Minutes of Regular Meeting* (St. John: New Brunswick Board of Education, 1920).

<sup>33</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

<sup>34</sup> Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War*.

<sup>35</sup> For example, Desmond Morton describes the development of the Canadian Patriotic Fund in Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War*. New Brunswick's Normal School students raised seven hundred dollars for the Red Cross, Chatham students presented entertainments and as a result raised four hundred dollars, while Saint John teachers raised thousands of dollars over several years for the Patriotic, Belgian Relief and Red Cross Funds. See New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1915-1916 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education." No other New Brunswick fundraising effort was as remarkable, however, as the collection of one thousand dollars for the

benefits of the efforts to New Brunswick students observing in one report that “Possibly the self-denial engendered, the sympathy aroused by the suffering of others, and the planning of ways and means to provide for their relief, have an educational value beyond the amount of money raised.”<sup>36</sup> Fundraising drives were a regular feature in New Brunswick schools. They became so common by 1920 that Carter’s enthusiasm for them had waned, and he expressed concern about their frequency saying “Some of the objects are very worthy and desirable, but it must be borne in mind that school hours are short, holidays many, and pupils only have a limited number of years in which to attend school.”<sup>37</sup> With the war over, his patience with for interruptions of the school day had dwindled; students could learn much from these civic efforts, but not at the expense of the official curriculum.

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“Teachers’ Machine Gun Fund.” The fund was intended to purchase a machine gun for a provincial battalion. In his letter thanking the Carter, the Treasurer of the fund wrote that “About eight hundred teachers and former teachers representing nearly all parts of the province responded, with donations of from 50 cents to \$25.00. A number of ladies, former teachers, gave one dollar for each year in the profession.” The fund had its origins at a Rural Science School in Sussex during the summer of 1915, and Carter helped the cause by promoting it at various teachers’ institutes. The Treasurer reported that his work on the fund was “gladly given for the cause.” The project was not universally admired, however, and some teachers requested that the funds be offered to the Red Cross. In the end, only the surplus of \$64.90 was forwarded to that organization. See ———, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” xxxviii-xxxix.

<sup>36</sup> New Brunswick, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1915-1916 by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” lvii.

<sup>37</sup> ———, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” lvii.

Fundraising drives were just some of the public displays of support for the war incorporating Canadian students. Another was Empire Day, the observance of which across Canada was heightened during the war, but as Nancy Sheehan notes, with less emphasis on the empire than on the war.<sup>38</sup> In New Brunswick, however, the balance between empire and war was maintained, as students and teachers in Anglophone and Francophone schools alike celebrated Empire Day in the greatest number in 1915. Ceremonies ranged from Campbellton in the north where “The pupils paraded, headed by the Boy Scouts and Cadets,” to Fredericton in the south, where “About one thousand pupils were in parade, each carrying the Union Jack . . .”<sup>39</sup> Saint John was a staunchly Loyalist city, and there the Empire Day program was presented under the auspices of the Women’s Canadian Club, with the blessing of the Chief Superintendent and Board of Education. The teachers’ guide included instructions to make the day “bright, interesting and inspiring,” using history and geography to impress upon students the Empire’s “reality, growth, magnitude, essential unity, and common purpose; and the privileges, responsibilities and duties of citizenship.”<sup>40</sup> The day also included a reading titled “The War”: “Peace has been the high ambition of the Sovereigns and leaders of our Empire,

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<sup>38</sup> Nancy M. Sheehan, “Women and Imperialism: The I.O.D.E., Propaganda and Patriotism in Canadian Schools, 1900-1940,” *Aspects of Education, Journal of the Institute of Education, The University of Hull*, no. 40 (1989).

<sup>39</sup> In addition, eight hundred Chatham school children were “marshalled under their teachers and took part in farewell services by singing and other exercises upon the occasion of a company of our gallant boys leaving to take a share in the war which is now going on.” New Brunswick, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” 75, 113, 20.

<sup>40</sup> Women’s Canadian Club of St. John N.B., *A Suggested Programme for Empire Day Celebration 1915 in the Schools of New Brunswick* (St. John: 1915), 3.

but Germany has despised peace, and the works of peace, and has for many years, armed herself for war, and caused all other nations to provide sufficient armaments against possible attack. When the opportunity came the German rulers threw away their cloak of civilization and Christian brotherhood, and stood out boldly before the world saying 'Peace means inability and cowardice, I am brave, I am able, I am prepared – why should I desire Peace!' And the German people readily went to war."<sup>41</sup> As a whole, these home front activities served a number of purposes aside from aiding and promoting the war effort, but most importantly where students were concerned, they accomplished the specific pedagogical goals of inculcating patriotism and national identity.

These public displays represented an outgrowth of one of the greatest transformations in schooling during and after the Great War, which involved the incursion into schools of voluntary sector organizations. Scholars observe that in most combatant nations, the phenomenon featured efforts to promote patriotism which reinforced the messages of the official curriculum.<sup>42</sup> In Canada, one of the most active

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 10. This vilification of the enemy echoed the sentiments found in the teaching materials of other Allied nations. See Julia Stapleton, "Citizenship Versus Patriotism in Twentieth-Century England," *The Historical Journal* 48, no. 1 (2005), David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>42</sup> See Chickering, *The Great War and Urban Life in Germany: Freiburg, 1914-1918*, Jeanine Graham, "Young New Zealanders and the Great War: Exploring the Impact and Legacy of the First World War, 1914-2014," *Paedagogica Historica* 44, no. 4 (2008), Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*, J.A. Mangan, "'The Grit of Our Forefathers': Invented Traditions, Propaganda and Imperialism," in *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, ed. John M. Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), Eliza Riedi, "Women, Gender and the Promotion of Empire: The Victoria



organizations was the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire. The IODE had long been a presence in Canadian classrooms offering programming focused on Canada's membership in the British Empire although throughout the Great War, as was the case with the Women's Canadian Club Saint John program of 1915, focus was also directed to the conflict itself. Historians have noted the extraordinary depth of IODE involvement in Canadian schools, nowhere more so than in New Brunswick where it "took over the organization and planning of Empire Day, thus relieving teachers for other activities."<sup>43</sup> A war-focused Empire Day event at Fredericton High School included "a stirring address by Bishop Richardson in which he referred to the heroism of our Canadian men in the battle of Ypres and Vimy Ridge and of the remarkable discipline and power of endurance of the men of the First Contingent at the training camp at Salisbury Plains. . . ."<sup>44</sup> The IODE was also deeply involved in the provision of war-related textual materials. For instance, the organization continued its pre-war program to provide books to Canadian classrooms, but during the war, it changed the nature of the essay competitions it sponsored so that they would serve "to inculcate home front mythologies among children. The essay-writing contest, a common ritual

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League, 1901-1914," *The Historical Journal* 45, no. 3 (2002), and Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War*.

<sup>43</sup> Sheehan, "World War I and Provincial Educational Policy in English Canada," 264.

<sup>44</sup> ———, "Women and Imperialism: The I.O.D.E., Propaganda and Patriotism in Canadian Schools, 1900-1940," 20.

introduced in many public school systems, presented fairly systematic prescriptions for children to fabricate discourses related to the war.”<sup>45</sup>

When the war ended, the efforts of the IODE did not focus on the Empire as strongly as they had before the conflict. Instead they came to manifest Buckner’s “multiple identities” by also adopting an identifiably Canadian patriotism which responded to the demographic shifts occurring nationwide, particularly with regard to increased immigration. The Educational Secretary of the National Chapter expressed the postwar work of the IODE in a 1919 address to the National Conference on Character Education saying, “The process of Canadianization will be developed with the crystallization of a national public opinion, including the home, church, school, press, public forum, society, employed, employer, and the neighbourhood in the community. The movement will be slow. It will not be by revolution, but by evolution.”<sup>46</sup> George Tomkins reports that during this time, “growing nationalism forced the IODE to modify its imperialist perspective even to the point of encouraging the singing of ‘O Canada’ along with ‘God Save the King’ in patriotic exercises.”<sup>47</sup> Canadian nationalism and British imperialism existed side by side.

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<sup>45</sup> Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War*, 212. See also Adele Perry, "Women, Gender, and Empire," in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Phillip A. Buckner (Oxford/Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2008), and Riedi, "Women, Gender and the Promotion of Empire: The Victoria League, 1901-1914."

<sup>46</sup> National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship, *Official Report of the Proceedings of the National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship* (Winnipeg MN: 1919), 86.

<sup>47</sup> Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*, 134.

Notwithstanding the shift in focus away from the Empire, the IODE's essay contests and donations of library books continued, as did its prizes for scholastic achievement, and as Nancy Sheehan observes, "the values that the Empire was supposed to have stood for - justice, courage, honesty, loyalty and duty - remained very much ingrained in the curriculum and textbooks of the public schools."<sup>48</sup> A few new projects were added. These included the War Memorial Scheme which would place in schools reproductions of approved war paintings by "leading artists of the Empire," and would offer free lectures on Empire history and geography to Canadian children. The justification given was more applicable to the western provinces, however, with its expression of concern about immigration: "We have thought that our cousins to the south went too far in their teaching of the flag salute and the matter of American citizenship. Now that the melting-pot in Canada is fairly seething with strange ingredients, we realize that the educational authorities in the United States were quite right in making the primer of the new citizenship as direct and forcible as possible."<sup>49</sup> But the IODE's postwar motivation for supplying teaching materials to schools was more than just to promote assimilation; it was also to pay tribute to Canada's war dead. One official described the goal of sharing "our glorious traditions and ideals" so that children would "learn to love those institutions which we believe to be necessary to the

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<sup>48</sup> Sheehan, "Women and Imperialism: The I.O.D.E., Propaganda and Patriotism in Canadian Schools, 1900-1940," 27. During the 1918-1919 school year, for example, students at the Rothesay Consolidated School received \$5 prizes for "Leader of High School Entrance" and "Leader in High School Grades." New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1918-1919 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," 160.

<sup>49</sup> "An Educational Memorial Fund," *Educational Review* 34 (1920, March): 169-70.

peace and progress of the world. This we are doing in memory of our glorious dead and to perpetuate those ideals for which they fought in our defense [*sic*].”<sup>50</sup> The children who constituted the target audience of IODE instruction were not only immigrants, but all Canadian children, and respect for the nation’s institutions, including its schools, was seen as a measure of respect for the nation’s fallen soldiers.

A second group which proved vocal in the early 1920s was the Great War Veterans’ Association (GWVA). As a group, returned servicemen in general were an angry voice in postwar Canada, and the GWVA became one of their mouthpieces, although the group was frequently accused of radicalism, and represented only those veterans who had served overseas.<sup>51</sup> The Association’s executive was vehemently against radical labour, aligned with business and continued “the sharp distinction

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<sup>50</sup> National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship, *Official Report of the Proceedings of the National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship*, 85.

<sup>51</sup> The heightened emotions of the war veterans are described in Craig Heron and Myer Siemiatycki, "The Great War, the State, and Working-Class Canada," in *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925*, ed. Craig Heron (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), and McKay, "The 1910's: The Stillborn Triumph of Progressive Reform." Jonathan Vance describes the “profound estrangement of the returned man from the rest of civilian society.” See Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War*, 126. Desmond Morton reports that the scandal-plagued GWVA did not last past 1930, but the Canadian Legion was created in 1925. Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War*. For more on the Great War Veterans’ Association, see Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War*.

between officers and men, which characterized the Canadian Armed Forces.”<sup>52</sup> While the GWVA has merited the attention of scholars, its influence on Canadian schools has not, and the organization is rarely mentioned in conjunction with schooling.<sup>53</sup> The GWVA was not the only veterans’ group active in New Brunswick after the Great War, but during the New Brunswick textbook controversy, with the IODE it was one of the groups whose complaints about Myers’ *General History* were most frequently taken up by the newspapers. The very depth of involvement of voluntary sector organizations in school activities and their participation in discussions about educational issues was something new, ushered in by the war.

The deep involvement of voluntary sector organizations in schooling was a change originating from without, but changes from within also had their impact on schools, and constituted another element of the rupture of the Great War. Changes in textual materials were an example of this shift inside New Brunswick and Canadian classrooms. New war-related texts and pamphlets were introduced to Canadian schools soon after the start of the conflict. They ranged from the single volume *Canada War Book* to the serial *The Children’s Story of the War* and in addition to the IODE, came

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<sup>52</sup> Donald Avery, "The Radical Alien and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919," in *Canadian Working Class History: Selected Readings*, ed. Laurel Sefton MacDowell and Ian Radforth (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, Incorporated, 2006).

<sup>53</sup> One of the only examples of the connection between Great War veterans and schools is a brief mention of the introduction of manual and vocational training for servicemen after the Great War in Robert S. Patterson, "Society and Education During the Wars and Their Interlude: 1914-1945," in *Canadian Education: A History*, ed. J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp, and Louis-Philippe Audet (Scarborough: Prentice Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1970).

from sources as diverse as England's Victoria League and individual authors, with the result that, as Sheehan remarks, "in most provinces the course of study, textbooks and examinations began to reflect the history, causes, battles and heroes of the conflict."<sup>54</sup> In New Brunswick, the *Canada War Book* was sent to all public schools in early 1918, to be given to all teachers and all students over age ten, with instructions to the effect that five minutes of the day's lessons should be devoted to its contents, preferably immediately after opening exercises. Questions from the texts could be included in examinations. These materials reinforced the messages of the fundraising drives and Empire Day, the strength and endurance of the Canadian nation, and the importance of service to country.<sup>55</sup>

Procurement of textbooks that were part of the regular school curriculum was difficult because of the war. The Chief Superintendent's 1916-1917 Annual Report described the problem saying, "Owing to the increased cost of labour, paper, and freight rates, the price of text books has materially increased, especially of those which have to cross the ocean. The supply of these also cannot be depended upon."<sup>56</sup> The problems continued after the war. Carter's 1919-1920 Annual Report reflected his general frustration with textbook publishers and their inability to secure paper and undertake printing, as well as their reluctance to enter into new contracts. The high price of the product posed a challenge. Carter also criticized New Brunswick book dealers, saying

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<sup>54</sup> Sheehan, "World War I and Provincial Educational Policy in English Canada," 262.

<sup>55</sup> National War Savings Committee, *The Canada War Book* (Fredericton: Department of Education of the Province of New Brunswick, 1919, January).

<sup>56</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1916-1917 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," xlix.

that some were “very indifferent about keeping these texts in stock and the impression is given that they are not obtainable.”<sup>57</sup> Textual materials produced during the war still formed a part of the Canadian curriculum at war’s end, but like the materials from which they were made, their content was frequently deemed deficient.

This situation meant that American textbooks were more likely to be adopted than British, and the problematic nature of this choice was exacerbated by a turn for the worse in Canadian-American relations during the Great War. Canadian antipathy based on its neighbour’s neutrality prior to 1917 turned more passionate once the Americans entered the conflict. Canadian audiences accustomed to watching American films and reading American magazines, for example, were offended by American propaganda. In his study of Canadian nationalism, media and the war, Paul Litt describes the way American mass media suggested “that the United States was saving the world single-handedly. . . Such presumption and insensitivity on the part of eleventh-hour adherents to the cause bred a deep resentment in Canada. Newspaper editors printed indignant editorials.”<sup>58</sup> Tim Cook concurs that after the Great War, “Canadians were not happy with American and British histories that ‘devoted little space or attention to the part of the Overseas Dominions.’” He quotes officials at the Department of National Defence who in turn observed the postwar frustration of Canadians embodied in letters to newspaper editors. The letter writers deplored “‘the lack of Canadian initiative’” and

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<sup>57</sup> ———, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” xliv.

<sup>58</sup> Paul Litt, “Canada Invaded! The Great War, Mass Culture, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism,” in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David MacKenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 339.

demanding ““a historical record of the part played by Canadians in the greatest war of all time.””<sup>59</sup> The indignation over American content in history textbooks was a major part of the New Brunswick controversy, providing another indication that the resentment did not dissipate with the end of the War. One textbook publisher’s representative, for example, expressed his anti-Americanism in a letter to Carter when he said he would rather see books written by English authors used in Canadian schools adding, “We have a great deal too much Americanization going on here from the time we wake up to when we are going to bed.”<sup>60</sup>

This sense of frustration lasted for years, and in 1928, when his dissatisfaction had reached its zenith, one Canadian war veteran finally took it upon himself to rectify the situation, and with the blessing of the official war historian, he published a Canadian war history in *MacLean’s* [sic] magazine titled *The Truth About the War*. This proved so popular that it was re-published in pamphlet form, selling over one hundred thousand copies nationally. Cook notes that “The publishers received countless letters suggesting that ‘the article should be placed in the hands of every school child in Canada.’”<sup>61</sup> The New Brunswick Board of Education clearly took up the challenge, because it approved

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<sup>59</sup> Cook, "Quill and Canon: Writing the Great War in Canada," 507.

<sup>60</sup> Frank Wise, to Carter, W.S., February 20, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB. Carter’s Nova Scotia counterpart echoed these sentiments writing, "The country, however, is allowed to be filled with the absurd one-sided Yankee views in general popular literature, and universal corrective can be adapted to these hydra headed reptiles." A.H. MacKay, to Carter, W.S., February 26, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B7E2. PANB.

<sup>61</sup> Cook, "Quill and Canon: Writing the Great War in Canada," 512.



twenty-five dollars to cover the cost of supplying each of the province's teachers with a copy.<sup>62</sup> This incident, however, occurred in 1928, more than eight years after the original Myers' *General History* controversy, showing that the postwar anti-American feelings were long-simmering.

The postwar problems with procuring textbooks also meant that texts that were outdated were not replaced with more up-to-date editions.<sup>63</sup> In some cases these problems with textual materials were magnified to a greater extent after the Great War. Penney Clark affirms that Canadian editions of American secondary school texts were adapted and manufactured in Canada, but "were usually printed on poorer paper (made in Canada) and bound in a Canadian pyroxylin-coated cloth of stodgy appearance, carrying an unimaginative cover design."<sup>64</sup> All of these problems added up to what Ken Osborne called an interwar crisis in history education. Investigators determined that one of the main criticisms of curricula and textbooks was that Canadian students "often

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<sup>62</sup> New Brunswick Board of Education, "Board of Education Minutes 1927, 1935 (Cont) 1935-1943," ed. Education (1928, December 12).

<sup>63</sup> Nova Scotia's teachers were able to turn this challenge into an opportunity, according to that province's Superintendent of Education's Annual Report for 1920. A.H. MacKay reported that "The defect of the text had some compensations in making the teachers active components of contemporary events; and the examination answers in the secondary school grades proved that the pupils were following events beyond the text, thus tending to correct the primitive notion that school texts were the sole source of authoritative information." Province of Nova Scotia, "Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia for the Year Ending 31 July, 1920," ed. Education (Halifax: Province of Nova Scotia, 1921), xxi-xxii.

<sup>64</sup> Penney Clark, "The Rise and Fall of Textbook Publishing in English Canada," in *History of the Book in Canada*, ed. Carole Gerson and Jacques Michon (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 229.

knew more about the United States than they did about Canada,” and this latter complaint resulted partly from the fact that many of their textbooks had American origins.<sup>65</sup> The dissatisfaction with teaching materials was symptomatic of a rupture in attitudes toward public education.

The final element signalling the rupture created by the Great War and its aftermath was the development of the public desire for public schools to look at citizenship and citizenship education in new ways. National self-reflection was an important part of the postwar recovery period, and in Canada, the process included a re-assessment of citizenship. Jonathan Vance’s study of the Great War and memory articulates the Canadian perception of what was at stake: “Only the memory of the Great War could breathe life into Canada, giving birth to a national consciousness that would carry the country to the heights of achievement.”<sup>66</sup> Vance notes the need for a particular focus on youth because “Imparting that history to future generations was essential to the health of the nation; to keep it from them would do nothing less than stunt the development of the Canadian people.”<sup>67</sup>

Historians have documented that Canadians agreed on the necessity of new approaches to citizenship education, and part of the motivation was the sense that the Great War had changed the nature of youth. Comacchio describes the War as a

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<sup>65</sup> Ken Osborne, "Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping. History in Canadian Schools: Past Present and Future," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 3 (2000): 404.

<sup>66</sup> Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War*, 11.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 234. This sense of youth as the hope of the nation is one of the ways in which adolescence was constructed after the Great War. See Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*.

watershed, referencing its legacy with the lament at the time that young people who had “missed the experience of the war, [might] understand its horrors but not its beauties and its benefits. . .”<sup>68</sup> The postwar consensus was that the purpose of education was to create good citizens. As Amy von Heyking describes the ethos, “Good citizens were defined by their virtues, their character. The experience of the war taught educational leaders that it was not enough for these virtues to be encouraged or modeled; they should be taught.”<sup>69</sup> Tom Mitchell interprets this change as part of a burgeoning postwar moral economy combining philosophical idealism and the social gospel.<sup>70</sup> The moral economy and its role in postwar consensus building had its most overt manifestation in the National Council on Character Education.

The Council’s origins were in a national conference held in Winnipeg in October, 1919 attended by over fifteen hundred people, including New Brunswick delegates Bishop Richardson and Director of Vocational Education, Fletcher Peacock.<sup>71</sup> Its full title was the “National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship,” and the event opened with an address by Manitoba’s Lieutenant

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<sup>68</sup> Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*, 9.

<sup>69</sup> Amy von Heyking, *Creating Citizens: History and Identity in Alberta's Schools, 1905-1980* (Calgary AB: University of Calgary Press, 2006), 152.

<sup>70</sup> Tom Mitchell, ““The Manufacture of Souls of Good Quality”: Winnipeg's 1919 National Conference on Canadian Citizenship, English-Canadian Nationalism, and the New Order after the Great War,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 31, no. 4 (1996/1997), <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=13356165&sid=2&Fmt=3&clientId=10843&RQT=309&VName=PQD>.

<sup>71</sup> Richardson was the top Anglican official in New Brunswick.

Governor.<sup>72</sup> He articulated the conference goal by asking “how to create nobility of character in young Canadians through the schools and institutions” and “what education and training is best adapted to produce that excellence, that moral character, that individual worth - for these are the secret of human happiness and of social peace and progress.”<sup>73</sup> The Premier of Saskatchewan also addressed the meeting, and his speech alluded to regional antagonisms saying, “We all know in Western Canada that the wise men come from the East. We are quite prepared to learn something from the people of Eastern Canada, but some of the people in Western Canada think that the people in the East might occasionally learn something from the people in the West.”<sup>74</sup>

The Premier expressed hope for future co-operation that might “build up a bigger and brighter Dominion, and make Canada a better nation within the Empire.”<sup>75</sup> The discussion surrounding this issue was the most contentious of the conference, because of the implied threat to provincial responsibility for education. The hope for national consensus was articulated at the close of the conference with the resolution to set up a National Bureau of education “for purposes of educational investigation and as a clearing house for educational data,” but, in order to assuage those who feared an incursion into provincial powers granted by the British North America Act, “without any

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<sup>72</sup> While delegates from across the country attended the conference, including from Québec, proceeds and minutes were published in English and the evidence suggests that this gathering had an Anglophone focus.

<sup>73</sup> National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship, *Official Report of the Proceedings of the National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship*, 1-2.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

restrictions as to policy.”<sup>76</sup> A report on the conference in *Social Welfare* reported this resolution as largely unproblematic, but noted that before the conference began, other fears circulated regarding the meeting, including the concern that it was “a vast effort to evoke moral support to resist those who seek a better citizenship, cast in a new social mould,”<sup>77</sup> a fear clearly influenced by the “Red Scare” and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, but which the reporter deemed unfounded.

The second meeting of the group, newly christened the National Council on Character Education, was held a short four months after the first, suggesting the sense of urgency attached to the project. Thirty people assembled in Ottawa, again including New Brunswick delegates Richardson and Peacock. A report on the meeting in the New Brunswick teachers’ magazine noted that “The work of the Council is in no way professional,” but rather was financed by business interests and signified “the inauguration of a great forward movement in education.” The report listed two goals for the council: the first was “to arouse the people to the national importance of our schools,” while the second was to create a “national bureau of education.”<sup>78</sup> The way these goals were to be achieved would be of interest to New Brunswick teachers: by establishing a permanent council; by sponsoring a survey of literature, history, and geography texts conducted by academics from Queen’s, Toronto, and McGill Universities; and by organizing and implementing a program of propaganda that would

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<sup>76</sup> National Conference on Character Education, *Resolutions: Adopted by National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship* (Winnipeg MN: 1919), 2.

<sup>77</sup> Ernest Thomas, “Canada’s First National Conference on Character Education,” *Social Welfare* II, no. 3 (1919): 69.

<sup>78</sup> “National Council in Character Education,” *Educational Review* 34 (1920, March): 172.

“emphasize the national importance of education, and to secure more adequate remuneration for those engaged in this national service.”<sup>79</sup> The middle goal prompted considerable discussion from the New Brunswick delegates. Minutes of the meeting reported “Bishop Richardson feared that the people of the Maritime Provinces, being somewhat clannish, might consider themselves slighted unless due attention was to be given to what they were doing.”<sup>80</sup> Richardson was apparently mollified with the assurance that the survey was intended to examine current materials nationwide. Meanwhile, one of the Nova Scotia representatives set his province against its Maritime neighbours while working in a criticism of Ontario textbooks saying that Nova Scotians, far from being clannish, were the most catholic minded people in Canada, and never had religious troubles in their schools. In the elementary schools of Nova Scotia little stress was laid on text books, and unless the investigators got into touch with the teacher-training departments and the educational authorities, their report might be misleading and create nothing but ill-feeling. Nova Scotia was not to be judged by its text-books. For instance, it was at present using a very inferior set, namely, the Ontario Readers, which because of cheapness had been substituted for readers that were excellent in ethical content, style and suitability to pupil.<sup>81</sup> These exchanges showed the challenge of building national consensus in the face of parochial preoccupations.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> National Council on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship, *Minutes of Meeting of National Council on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship* (Ottawa: 1920), 6.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 7.

The minutes reported Fletcher Peacock's concern about the appropriateness of having university representatives examine public school textbooks. Peacock described a feeling prevalent in New Brunswick that "the universities were not closely in touch with some phases of the situation. It was felt that in the past they had exerted too much influence on the course of instruction in the elementary schools. It must be recognized that, notwithstanding the importance of higher education, many of the pupils left school after reaching the third, fourth or fifth grade, and only a small proportion went on to university."<sup>82</sup> One of Peacock's fellow council members admitted in the selection of the three universities "a certain appearance of sectionalism, but [argued that] their affiliations with east and west were strong and numerous, and when they needed a principal they usually brought one from the Maritime Provinces."<sup>83</sup> This was apparently enough to calm Peacock's fears.

As the Council considered the textbook survey, disagreement arose as to its scope, with some members hoping that all textbooks, not just those in literature, history and geography, would be examined. In the end, the original parameters of the proposal were retained. This meant that history textbooks would be surveyed for the aspects of their "Ethical content," "Adequacy for presenting landmarks or stages in social

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid. This is the same sentiment expressed by New Brunswickers in the late nineteenth century, according to Katherine MacNaughton, when suspicions about the benefits of higher education caused many parents to keep their children out of school. Katherine F. MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background* (Fredericton: The University of New Brunswick, 1947).

<sup>83</sup> National Council on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship, *Minutes of Meeting of National Council on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship*, 7.

progress,” and “Style,” with one member stressing that “The history taught must be unbiased and authentic.”<sup>84</sup> These decisions affirmed the centrality of textbooks and the study of history to the creation of citizens, however ideas about citizenship might have changed.

New expressions about the role of citizenship and citizenship education in Canada’s schools were representative of wartime rupture, but unlike many of the other indicators of postwar change, this rupture was seen as a positive force for good in Canadian society. By embracing citizenship as a moral endeavour, Canadians saw themselves as engaged in a movement that was progressive in nature and symbolic of the nation’s participation in the modern world.

Textbooks prescribed as part of the regular school curriculum were islands of stability in the sea of change brought about by the Great War, notwithstanding the fact that this stability was overwhelmingly the result of war and postwar economic prerogatives rather than any deliberate social or cultural planning. The effect of the war was to create a holding pattern of sorts when, as Penney Clark observes, “the seven-year contracts for texts developed between 1907 and 1911 were simply extended. Prices for paper and other materials rose precipitously, but publishers responded in a spirit of patriotism by extending contracts at the original prices.”<sup>85</sup> The publishing of textbooks

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

<sup>85</sup> Penney Clark, “The Publishing of School Books in English,” in *History of the Book in Canada*, ed. Yvan Lamonde, Patricia Lockhart Fleming, and Fiona A. Black (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 340. Minko Sotiron reports that the newspaper market contracted during the war, as cities once served by multiple papers were reduced to one or two due to dire economic circumstances. Minko Sotiron,



for the Canadian market was a tenuous business, but still the work continued. Paul Litt reports that “Canadian publishers, concentrated in Toronto, survived by publishing textbooks for Canadian schools, by acting as agents for British and American publishing houses, and by publishing Canadian editions of foreign books. Patriotic publishers put out Canadian works for a Canadian audience as well . . . .”<sup>86</sup>

For Carter in New Brunswick, this situation was disappointing, for stability meant stasis. He criticized the available Canadian and British (not World) history textbooks saying that they were “meagre [*sic*] in contents and uninteresting and uninspiring in matter.” If New Brunswick’s history textbooks were “obsolete,” Carter cited two obstacles preventing change: one was the war, and the other was the politicians who “always have an eye upon the electorate, which does not see the same necessity for change that possibly we do.”<sup>87</sup> This keen awareness of public opinion would prove to be an important factor in the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy. Carter was afraid to offend the public who supported education through the payment of their taxes, and afraid of offending the government, members of which constituted the greatest part of the Board of Education.<sup>88</sup> But in spite of Carter’s criticisms, and as reflected in public commentary during the textbook controversy, textbooks were also a

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*From Politics to Profit: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920*

(Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997).

<sup>86</sup> Litt, "Canada Invaded! The Great War, Mass Culture, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism," 330.

<sup>87</sup> W.S. Carter, to Smith, Ella L., April 26, 1915. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>88</sup> Of the eight members attending the February 10, 1920 meeting of the New Brunswick Board of Education, five were members of the Liberal provincial government. New Brunswick Board of Education, "Board of Education Minutes 1909-1935," ed. Board of Education (February 10, 1920).

mark of stability in the way they presented narratives of nation-building in order to reinforce the conviction that “good citizens needed to know their nation’s history.”<sup>89</sup>

Historians agree that by the end of the war and through its immediate aftermath, aside from the insertion of special added-on war-related materials and activities, Canadian school curriculum in general and secondary school history curriculum in particular remained relatively unchanged, and still reflected an Anglo-centric and Christian ethos.<sup>90</sup> Nancy Sheehan adds that any positive systemic wartime changes to schools were short-lived, and disagreements regarding pedagogical and curriculum reform combined with the halo effect of the war to result in a level of complacency that forestalled any significant permanent shifts.<sup>91</sup> As far as secondary school students in academic or matriculation programs, Robert Stamp observes that “classroom life continued to be circumscribed by a proscribed curriculum of teaching subjects,

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<sup>89</sup> Ken Osborne, "Voices from the Past," *Canadian Social Studies* 36, no. 3 (2002): 108. One letter writer articulated what was at stake with the New Brunswick controversy: “a history abounding in distortions of the true facts and gross historical inaccuracies has been put into the hands of those who in a very few years will be called upon to see that Canada occupies and retains her proper place in the family of nations.” MacLaughlan, "In the Editor's Mail [Letter to the Editor]."

<sup>90</sup> Robert Patterson describes the stability of the curriculum in Patterson, "Society and Education During the Wars and Their Interlude: 1914-1945." See also Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*, Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War*, and Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*.

<sup>91</sup> Sheehan, "World War I and Provincial Educational Policy in English Canada."

authorized textbooks, deductive teaching, and external examinations.”<sup>92</sup> It would take some years before intensive investigations of provincial systems were instituted which resulted in wholesale transformations of schooling, or before the introduction of new pedagogical approaches including progressive education.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, the influence of the latter was not felt in New Brunswick schools until well into the 1930s.<sup>94</sup> This situation reflects the often slow growth of change in education; a number of the province’s teachers and school administrators throughout the war and after sought further education at Columbia University where John Dewey was a well-known professor, but their immersion in such a milieu had little immediate effect on schooling in New Brunswick. The greatest indicator of stasis in history education in the province was the repeated refrain of school inspectors who complained that reliance on the textbook and rote learning continued to be the pedagogy of choice in history classes.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Robert M. Stamp, "Canadian High Schools in the 1920's and 1930's: The Social Challenge to the Academic Tradition," *Historical papers/Communications historiques* 13, no. 1 (1978): 92.

<sup>93</sup> Investigations into Canadian schooling included British Columbia’s Putman and Weir survey of the mid-1920s, a Royal Commission in Ontario in 1927, and New Brunswick’s special investigation into the problems in education in the early 1930s. See Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*, Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*, and New Brunswick Board of Education, "History of the Department of Education," ed. Education (1950). Tomkins also describes the development of progressive education in Canada, which originated in Alberta in the 1920s and moved east.

<sup>94</sup> Frances Helyar, "A Crisis in History Education: The Life Story of Myers’s General History Textbook in New Brunswick Schools (1910-1949)" (M.Ed. Thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2003).

<sup>95</sup> For example, the complaint arose during the 1910-1911 school year, and had not disappeared by 1920-1921. See New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1910-1911 by the Chief

The narrative of students as vulnerable, and as “citizens in waiting” also remained stable in Canada during and after the Great War. In spite of the large responsibilities they had taken on during the conflict, in the home and in the community, students were still characterized as in need of protection, and schools were an integral site where they could be protected.<sup>96</sup> As long as they were in school, children were shielded from the responsibilities of adulthood, giving them time to receive an appropriate education for citizenship which would provide them with the tools they needed to get along in life. But although schools were safe havens for children, critics were hyper-sensitive to issues of safety, both moral and physical. As a result, critics

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Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1912), and ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1920-21," ed. Board of Education (Government of New Brunswick, 1922). The example of the 1920 Matriculation Exam and its almost line-by-line duplication of themes from Myers' *General History* confirmed that the problem existed in secondary school. New Brunswick Education Department, "Examinations: Matriculation and Leaving Examinations, 1894 -1960," ed. Board of Education. Printed Records (July, 1920).

<sup>96</sup> While the scope of the problem of vulnerable children may have been exacerbated by the Great War, in some instances, response to the issue began years earlier. Neil Sutherland describes public health and social and moral reform movements which originated in the late nineteenth century and led to the creation of a number of child protection organizations by the early 1920s, including the Canadian National Council on Child Welfare. Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1978; reprint, 2000). Cynthia Comacchio, meanwhile, identifies efforts to solve the “problem of modern youth” as a postwar phenomenon. These efforts included the development of extra-curricular activities in secondary schools and the creation of institutions such as the Interprovincial Home for Young Women, established in New Brunswick in 1923. Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*.

during the 1920 New Brunswick controversy included bad history textbooks among the threats against students. In attacking Myers' *General History*, one letter writer hinted at the weight of schools' responsibility saying, "we commit with undoubting confidence the nurture of our children's minds, unreservedly, to other hands."<sup>97</sup> Another described in apocalyptic terms the way the province's "educational machinery" had submitted students "to the thought, to the teaching and to the influences that such a partisan and vicious history will naturally create, inspire and develop."<sup>98</sup> A third characterized the offending textbook as "poison."<sup>99</sup> The stakes were high, and according to these members of the public, as far as history education was concerned in New Brunswick the schools were failing. The critics' arguments and conclusions were hyperbolic: the dangerous consequence of the exposure of a small number of history students to a "perverted" textbook was the development of an entire country of ill-informed, unpatriotic citizens and a nation at risk. But in spite of the overblown rhetoric, the fundamental argument that children were not yet citizens and that they needed protection represented a continuation of prewar discussions.

The list of elements providing stability to New Brunswick schools is extremely short compared to those representing rupture, and this provides an indication of just how huge were the effects of the Great War. Of course, the province was not in the war zone, so the majority of students and teachers continued to show up for school throughout the

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<sup>97</sup> Canadian Born, "The Board of Education and Myers' Text Book [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920.

<sup>98</sup> Parent, "The Disgusting Textbook; Perverted History in Use in N.B. Schools [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 12, 1920.

<sup>99</sup> "That Perverted History [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 18, 1920.

year, and followed a curriculum similar to that of the pre-war years. For these New Brunswickers, school was a stable point of reference and experience, particularly in contrast to those across the Atlantic in the “theatre of war” whose homes and schools were destroyed or threatened. Still, the conflict had an impact on education, and it struck other societal domains equally hard, creating the impetus for the social unrest that followed, across Canada and in the Maritimes.<sup>100</sup> This era prompted questioning of the status quo as Canadians struggled to find meaning in the war, and the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy was part of this struggle.<sup>101</sup> The preceding examples of rupture and stability, however, omit one of the greatest focuses of Canadian attention, then and always: national identity. The attention paid to what it meant to be a Canadian during and after the Great War was part of a long and continuing history of national reflection, and it is a complex question to ask whether the nature of the reflection during that time represented rupture or stability.

While the popular history of Canada long ago adopted the notion that Canada came of age during the Great War, scholarly research has more recently inclined to

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<sup>100</sup> E.R. Forbes, "The Origins of the Maritime Rights Movement," in *Atlantic Canada after Confederation. The Acadiensis Reader: Volume Two*, ed. Phillip Buckner and David Frank (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1985), David Frank, "The 1920s: Class and Region, Resistance and Accommodation," in *The Atlantic Provinces in Confederation*, ed. E.R. Forbes and D.A. Muise (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), Ian McKay, "Strikes in the Maritimes, 1901-1914," in *Atlantic Canada after Confederation. The Acadiensis Reader. Volume Two*, ed. Phillip Buckner and David Frank (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1985), and Ian McKay and Suzanne Morton, "The Maritimes: Expanding the Circle of Resistance," in *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925*, ed. Craig Heron (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

<sup>101</sup> Jonathan Vance offers the most comprehensive analysis of this struggle on a national level in Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War*.

characterizing this transformational story as a myth.<sup>102</sup> Expressions of national identity in postwar New Brunswick reflected Philip Buckner's characterization of the "long goodbye" in which Canadians were able to articulate a growing sense of nationhood without rejecting the British Empire.<sup>103</sup> While George Tomkins identifies postwar Canadian national identity as ambivalent, Buckner rejects this notion and describes the Canadian experience of living "multiple identities."<sup>104</sup> The authors of letters to the editor about Myers' *General History* encapsulated this continued enthusiasm for Britain. In the same sentence one described "the records of the glorious achievements of Canada in the greatest of all Wars" and "the heroic deeds of our own boys, the hardships endured and the sacrifices made in defence [*sic*] of British institutions, the flag, our homes, our national honor! [*sic*]"<sup>105</sup> Even the self-named "Canadian Born," while listing the faults of Myers' text, described the situation as "Humiliating, rather, to the self-respect of

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<sup>102</sup> Expressions of the Vimy myth are contained in Ted Barris, *Victory at Vimy: Canada Comes of Age, April 9-12, 1917* (Toronto: Thomas Allen Publishers, 2007), and Pierre Berton, *Vimy* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986). For a dismantling of the myth see A.M.J. Hyatt, "Foreword," in *Vimy Ridge: A Canadian Reassessment*, ed. Geoffrey Hayes, Andrew Iarocci, and Mike Bechthold (Waterloo ON: Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies and Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2007).

<sup>103</sup> Buckner, "The Long Goodbye: English Canadians and the British World."

<sup>104</sup> Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*, and Phillip Buckner, "Presidential Address: Whatever Happened to the British Empire?," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 4, no. 1 (1993). It should be noted that this lack of ambivalence applied only to English Canadians. See Colin M. Coates, "French Canadians' Ambivalence to the British Empire," in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Phillip A. Buckner (Oxford/Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>105</sup> Another Parent, "Perverted History. [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920.

every loyal British subject, and a total ignoring of the achievements and valor [*sic*] of our country's sons and those who cheered and wrought to back them.”<sup>106</sup> These letters expressed continuity, not fracture, in Canadian national identity.

The letters also embodied an imagined community with the expectation of a national identity solidified by the nation's leaders through the conscious deployment of systems, including education.<sup>107</sup> They form part of a long history of attempts to use schools, and particularly history class, as a vehicle to develop consensus around a given definition of Canadian national identity.<sup>108</sup> They presented a version of being Canadian that was unproblematic and undisputed by the school administrators, newspaper editors, or clerics. It was Anglophone and Christian. In postwar New Brunswick, this way of imagining Canada was representative of a normalized image. The diverse imagined

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<sup>106</sup> Canadian Born, "The Board of Education and Myers' Text Book [Letter to the Editor]." The epithet "Canadian Born" was not without irony, since according to the 1921 census, ninety-four per cent of the New Brunswick population was born in Canada. See Department of Trade and Commerce, *Origin, Birthplace, Nationality and Language of the Canadian People: A Census Study Based on the Census of 1921 and Supplementary Data* (Ottawa: Dominion of Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1929).

<sup>107</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised ed. (London/New York: Verso, 2006).

<sup>108</sup> The Dominion History Competition to develop a Canadian national history textbook in 1890 was one example. See Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*. More recently, A.B. Hodgetts, J.L. Granatstein and Rudyard Griffiths have suggested ways that Canadian identity might be nurtured in schools. See A.B. Hodgetts, *What Culture? What Heritage? A Study of Civic Education in Canada* (Toronto: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1968), J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?* (Toronto: HarperPerennial, 1999), and Rudyard Griffiths, *Who We Are: A Citizen's Manifesto* (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2009).



communities existing outside of that narrow definition, whether they were French, Métis, First Nations, Inuit, African Canadian or any other were not part of the conversation.<sup>109</sup> The exclusion of the French speaking population of New Brunswick from the conversation, in particular, meant that the voices of about thirty per cent of the entire population were silent in discussions about education.<sup>110</sup>

But the stability suggested by Buckner's "long goodbye" and the postwar consensus surrounding New Brunswick's imagined community must be considered in light of the conscription crisis of 1917, which had a noticeable impact on New Brunswick, and in a limited and temporary way on the province's schools. Scholars characterize the crisis as a particularly difficult time for New Brunswick's Acadian population. Ian McKay lists the Acadians among the supporters of the war at its outset.<sup>111</sup> Until 1917, many showed their support by either joining English language

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<sup>109</sup> For discussions of Canadian national identity invoking Anderson's imagined communities see Thobani, *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*, Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis, "Introduction," in *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration and Identity*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006), Joyce Green, "Canaries in the Mines of Citizenship: Indian Women in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* XXXIV, no. 4 (2001), Rosa Bruno-Jofré, "Manitoba Schooling in the Canadian Context and the Building of a Polity: 1919-1971," *Canadian and International Education* 28, no. 2 (1999), and J.M.S. Careless, "Limited Identities - Ten Years Later," *Manitoba History*, no. 1 (1981), [http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb\\_history/01/limitedidentities.shtml](http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/01/limitedidentities.shtml).

<sup>110</sup> Department of Trade and Commerce, *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921*, vol. II. Population. Age, conjugal condition, birthplace, immigration, citizenship, language, educational status, school attendance, blindness and deaf mutism (Ottawa: Dominion of Canada. Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1925).

<sup>111</sup> McKay, "The 1910's: The Stillborn Triumph of Progressive Reform."

battalions, or the 165ème Acadian battalion, the members of which were dispersed into English battalions upon their arrival overseas. But the conscription crisis created division among Acadians, who were generally supportive of the war but divided about conscription, and it created suspicion among the English regarding Acadian devotion to the war effort. The result was a political schism in New Brunswick, with Acadians throwing their support behind the losing Liberals in the federal election of 1917, and the deepening of Acadian ambivalence toward the Anglophone polity which simmered below the surface.<sup>112</sup> This situation indicated that in contrast to the official rhetoric of solidarity and national consensus which was essentially Anglophone and Protestant, religious and linguistic lines divided New Brunswick just as they did Canada, and Acadians, like their Québécois counterparts, imagined a nation different from the Anglophone population.<sup>113</sup> During the immediate postwar era Acadian nationalism was dormant, however, and not until 1925 did it resurface as a vocal presence in New Brunswick.<sup>114</sup> Acadian support for the federal Liberals resulted in no change in the

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<sup>112</sup> See Maud Hazel Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick" (Ed.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1964), and Patrice A. Dutil, "Against Isolationism: Napoléon Belcourt, French Canada, and 'La Grande Guerre'," in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David MacKenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005). David MacKenzie and Colin Coates describe the 1917 federal election in David MacKenzie, "Eastern Approaches: Maritime Canada and Newfoundland," in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David MacKenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), and Coates, "French Canadians' Ambivalence to the British Empire." The Union party under Robert Borden won the election and formed the federal government.

<sup>113</sup> Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada*, 5th ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001).

<sup>114</sup> Richard Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick* (Halifax: Formac Press, 1989).

provincial Liberal government's educational policies in the immediate aftermath of the war, nor was there any discernable improvement to the educational opportunities afforded New Brunswick's French-speaking students. The only change in education correlating to the introduction of conscription was a sharp dip in the number of teachers in New Brunswick in 1917.<sup>115</sup>

Scholarly research about the creation of the League of Nations on January 10, 1920 indicates that the League introduced a new era of postwar international cooperation which affected schooling in member countries. Almost immediately members determined that attention to education could be an important tool in promoting peace. The implementation of such programs took some time, however, because of the postwar consensus that “national education lies outside and will always lie outside the competence of any official committee of the League.”<sup>116</sup> Falk Pingel notes that it was not until 1923 that a specific committee to study textbooks was established, with the suggestion was that it would “help to avoid ‘essential misunderstandings of other countries’ in future.”<sup>117</sup> The international networking opportunity afforded and encouraged “open exchange and dialogue between teachers, curriculum planners and

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<sup>115</sup> The 1917-1918 Annual Report included repeated notices about the enlistment of teachers, principals and school inspectors. New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1917-1918 by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

<sup>116</sup> Eckhardt Fuchs, "The Creation of New International Networks in Education: The League of Nations and Educational Organizations in the 1920s," *Paedagogica Historica* 43, no. 2 (2007): 201. See also Richard Veatch, *Canada and the League of Nations* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975).

<sup>117</sup> Falk Pingel, *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision* (Hannover, Germany: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1999), 9.

academics from different nations in order to bring attention to the mechanisms that appeared to perpetuate stereotyping and bias.”<sup>118</sup>

The early years of the League had an effect on Canada in three ways relevant to this study and to its focus on national identity, although the first two did not immediately affect schooling. First, Canada’s membership marked the nation’s entry into international negotiations not as a subordinate of the British Empire, but as a full participant in its own right.<sup>119</sup> It was an overt sign of Canada’s shifting national identity. Second, within eighteen months and as a direct result of achieving League membership, the country’s first “official definition of Canadian nationals and Canadian nationality” was created.<sup>120</sup> Both of these indices signalled an official change in Canadian national identity away from the Empire toward sovereignty. The third effect of the League on

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<sup>118</sup> Jason Nicholls, "Introduction," in *School History Textbooks across Cultures: International Debates and Perspectives*, ed. Jason Nicholls (Oxford UK: Symposium Books, 2006), 8. This development was reported in the Fredericton daily newspaper. "To Ban Partizan Text Books Now," *The Daily Gleaner*, June 27 1923.

<sup>119</sup> Veatch, *Canada and the League of Nations*. Hector MacKenzie questions Canadian motivation where the League was concerned saying, "Even a cursory glance at the policies pursued by successive Canadian governments after the First World War suggests a preoccupation with status and a deliberate avoidance of responsibility in world affairs." Hector MacKenzie, "Canada's Nationalist Internationalism: From the League of Nations to the United Nations," in *Canadas of the Mind: Nationalisms in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Norman Hillmer and Adam Chapnick (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 93.

<sup>120</sup> Department of Trade and Commerce, *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921*, vol. I - Population. Number, sex and distribution; racial origins; religions (Ottawa: Dominion of Canada. Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1924), xiv. See also David A. Worton, *The Dominion Bureau of Statistics: A History of Canada's Central Statistics Office and Its Antecedents, 1841-1972* (Kingston ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997).

Canada had to do with a focus on international co-operation, which was described by one academic as a direct defense against “crude nationalism.”<sup>121</sup> Ken Osborne quotes a school administrator who echoed the same sentiments and defined the goal of education to foster national pride and discourage national arrogance, to secure ““a patriotism which finds its meaning and its justification in the place which our nation can take along with all other nations in the common work to which people of all races and languages and colours are called.””<sup>122</sup>

Such lofty pronouncements did not prevent the continuation in the postwar era of nativism in Canada. Scholars note that Canadian veterans as a group exhibited nativist tendencies, with a general feeling that they were “guardians of national orthodoxy since they had gained a special identification with the nation through their participation in the war.”<sup>123</sup> Indeed, during wartime the GWVA had called for the “immediate deportation of all enemy aliens, and demanded that naturalized aliens be conscripted to work in industry for the \$1.10 a day paid to a private soldier in the trenches.”<sup>124</sup>

In New Brunswick, however, given the nativity of the majority of the population, nativism had no place in the pronouncements of the New Brunswick branches of the

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<sup>121</sup> J.L. Morison, "Nationality and Common Sense," *Queen's Quarterly*, no. 2 (1920): 160.

<sup>122</sup> Osborne, "Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping. History in Canadian Schools: Past Present and Future," 413.

<sup>123</sup> Howard Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 55. For more on veterans' sense of national identity, see also Buckner, "The Long Goodbye: English Canadians and the British World."

<sup>124</sup> John Herd Thompson, *Ethnic Minorities During Two World Wars*, ed. P.A. Buckner, 20 vols., vol. 19, *Canada's Ethnic Groups* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991), 9.

Great War Veterans Association and other patriotic organizations. No letters written directly from the GWVA to the Chief Superintendent of Education remain in the archives, but statements from the organization were part of the reportage during the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy. Rather than focusing on nativism, the criticisms of Myers' textbook were twofold: not enough credit was given to British and Canadian soldiers, and the new chapter about the war overemphasized America's part in the conflict.

In one instance, the Fredericton *Daily Gleaner* quoted a GWVA officer who cited the "strong feeling on the part of returned soldiers," and concluded that "Whatever the usefulness the original edition of the book may have had has been lost . . . Myers' History is looked upon with disgust by the soldiers as well as all other self-respecting Canadians."<sup>125</sup> The *St. John Globe* reported on the same GWVA meeting, and added mention of several other groups including the Graham Orange Lodge, the IODE and the Islington Lodge Sons of England, in each case stressing their "demand" that the offensive text be removed from schools.<sup>126</sup> According to the *Globe*, the Islington Lodge included in their resolution the suggestion "that the educational authorities have a Canadian writer compile a history of the war for use in the schools."<sup>127</sup> For the *St. John*

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<sup>125</sup> "Myers History Has Aroused Great Storm of Protest," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 13, 1920.

<sup>126</sup> "Agitation against Myers' History," *St. John Globe*, February 17, 1920.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. The Islington Lodge, apparently, wanted the issue to become a national one. The Ontario archives contain a letter written by an official of the Lodge to the federal Deputy Minister of Agriculture, enclosing a resolution against Myers' text and announcing the Lodge's intention to "place itself on record as being in support of those organizations and individuals who aim at the withdrawal of 'Myers' General History' from use in Canadian Schools just as soon as substitution can properly be effected." See Sterling

*Standard*, the recurring verb describing the attitude of the patriotic groups was “insist.”<sup>128</sup> The use of these verbs reflected the heightened emotions of the returned soldiers following the war, and the sense of urgency imbued in the project of recognizing wartime sacrifices. When a representative of a local chapter of the Protestant Loyal Orange Association wrote to Carter to complain about Myers’ text, the letter’s strongest language asked that “a text-book more in sympathy with British aims and ideals be substituted. . .”<sup>129</sup> These veterans identified as both Canadian and British, and their protests illustrated Philip Buckner’s point that even during the postwar era, imperialism and nationalism were not “antithetical concepts.”<sup>130</sup> The notion that the Great War fundamentally changed Canadian national identity was not manifested in the correspondence of the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy. Instead, expressions of national identity retained the form they had taken in Canada for at least twenty years, since the time of the Boer War.<sup>131</sup>

One of the assumptions common to those who complained about Myers’ *General History* was the notion that schools were a primary site where national identity could be

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Brannen, to Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Dominion of Canada, April 2, 1920. RG2-43 1920 Box 70 3-186 1920 File 2. Archives of Ontario.

<sup>128</sup> “F’ton Societies Line up against Myers’ History,” *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920.

<sup>129</sup> Loyal Orange Association Graham Lodge No. 20, to Carter, W.S., March 8, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>130</sup> Buckner, “The Long Goodbye: English Canadians and the British World,” 181.

<sup>131</sup> Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970). Berger cited Canada’s willingness to join in the imperialist cause as evidence that the country was ready then to conduct its own foreign affairs

inculcated. Schools were indeed important, but they were not the only site. Because national identity was so fluid and could transform from a “purely” Canadian expression to an imperial one and anything in between, it was inculcated in a variety of ways, both outside and inside schools. As Sunera Thobani enumerates them, “celebrations of national holidays and the parades, plays firework displays, street parties, family dinners. . . [and] the political practices associated with elections, referendums, voting, and so on” served as “ritualistic enactments of citizenship.”<sup>132</sup> Signs and symbols of the nation had their place in classroom displays, including flags, portraits of the reigning monarch, lyrics to the national anthem, national and provincial coats of arms. Flags in particular were duly noted by New Brunswick school inspectors during and after the Great War, and their absence was seen as a symptom of trustee and teacher neglect.<sup>133</sup> In another incident of concern, one 1920 letter to the editor of a New Brunswick newspaper complained about young peoples’ lack of attention during the playing of *God Save the King*.<sup>134</sup>

Ken Osborne observes that community celebrations of Empire Day, the Queen or King’s birthday, and later observations of Armistice Day, were designed to define

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<sup>132</sup> Thobani, *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*, 79.

<sup>133</sup> See for example New Brunswick, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.”

<sup>134</sup> “From the People [Letter to the Editor],” *The Daily Gleaner*, March 8, 1920. The letter pointed out that while Americans may have bragged about their war effort, at least their children stood at attention and sang their national anthem. The tone of the letter suggested that the actions of the young people should be attributed to the problem of modern youth as identified by Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950*.



national identity and were all rituals in which school children participated regularly.<sup>135</sup>

The dual focus on Canada and the British Empire was reflected in Empire Day celebrations during the war, when the program suggested mottoes for display in classrooms, including "The Empire is my Country; Canada is my Home."<sup>136</sup>

In his study of war and remembrance, Jonathan Vance reiterates Osborne's observation that public observances were part of the hidden curriculum, with the clear intent "to ensure that the sacrifice of Canadian soldiers remained a source of inspiration and instruction for schoolchildren."<sup>137</sup> In New Brunswick, however, school inspector reports suggested that the observance of Empire Day declined precipitously after the war. By 1920, Arbor Day [*sic*] was more likely to be mentioned than Empire Day.<sup>138</sup> The possible reasons for the decline include war-weariness, a rise in Canadian nationalism, or even a lack of funding for such observances. Whatever the reason, the sudden disappearance of Empire Day celebrations in New Brunswick was a rupture in school programming.

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<sup>135</sup> Ken Osborne, "Education Is the Best National Insurance: Citizenship Education in Canadian Schools, Past and Present," *Canadian and International Education* 35, no. 2 (1996, December), and Osborne, "Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping. History in Canadian Schools: Past Present and Future."

<sup>136</sup> Women's Canadian Club of St. John N.B., *A Suggested Programme for Empire Day Celebration 1915 in the Schools of New Brunswick*, 3.

<sup>137</sup> Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War*, 239.

<sup>138</sup> The contrast between the reports for the 1914-1915 and 1919-1920 school years, for example, was striking. New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education.", and ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education."

Osborne also describes children's participation in the in-school rituals of citizenship, including the study of history (Canadian and British), along with language and literature, civics, geography, physical education, music, gardening, and domestic science as elements of the citizenship curriculum in the early years of the twentieth century. In some ways the curriculum to promote national identity was hidden, and was not necessarily contained in just one subject area, although history was seen as "indispensible in this task."<sup>139</sup> The hidden curriculum of New Brunswick secondary schools was embodied in the province's textbooks and matriculation examinations, which during the postwar era showed a greater focus on Britain than on Canada. For example, the only Canadian content in the history textbooks was contained in a few brief lines in the World History textbook, and in Hay's *Public School History of Canada*, which was prescribed for Grade Ten.<sup>140</sup> The history section of the 1920 Matriculation and Leaving Examinations was wholly concerned with World History. The examinations also included tests in Latin and Greek translation, analysis of a passage from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, questions about the content of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, and a comparison of Carlyle with Burns and Byron. The sole Canadian content was

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<sup>139</sup> Osborne, "Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping. History in Canadian Schools: Past Present and Future," 409. Barton and Levstik make the interesting observation that the trappings of nationalism, such as the veneration of a flag, the singing of patriotic songs, reverence for national leaders and symbols, and support for government policies are not limited to democracies, but can also be found in dictatorships. Keith C. Barton and Linda S. Levstik, *Teaching History for the Common Good* (Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2004), 29.

<sup>140</sup> Textbook Committee, "New Brunswick High School Course in History 1920-21," ed. Department of Education (1920, August 3). By 1920, this textbook was eighteen years old. It was also the text prescribed for use in elementary schools.

contained in the botany examination with a question about local flora.<sup>141</sup> The bulk of study about Canada by New Brunswick students would be in elementary, not secondary school. By concentrating the focus on Canada in the elementary school curriculum, early school leavers received at least some instruction around national identity. But this organization of school curriculum was problematic for some, including the author of an essay proposing postwar educational reconstruction. Written by an officer in the Canadian Expeditionary forces and published in the November 1918 issue of *Social Welfare*, the essay urged the development of a “national policy for educational enterprise” saying, “Our elementary public schools in too many cases furnish all the training our citizens receive. In large sections of Canada our children do not even complete the training that is afforded there. Our secondary schools are conducted with an eye to either matriculation or the teaching profession. The great defect of our Canadian education lies in the character and quality of our secondary education.”<sup>142</sup> This call from a war veteran for a new policy suggested that the time was right for change to a Canadian educational system that had long failed to serve the nation adequately.

Once the conflict had ended, English Canadians had a strong desire for a retelling of the Great War that reflected their experience. The desire was expressed in a call for instruction about the war, but as the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy and the 1928 publication and distribution to schools of the pamphlet *The Truth About the War* showed, a satisfactory re-telling of the story of the conflict for

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<sup>141</sup> New Brunswick Education Department, "Examinations: Matriculation and Leaving Examinations, 1894 -1960," ed. Board of Education. Printed Records (1920, July).

<sup>142</sup> Hon. Capt. Edmund H. Oliver, "A Viewpoint in Educational Reconstruction," *Social Welfare* I, no. 2 (1918): 28.

schoolchildren proved elusive. Nevertheless, Carter attempted to do his part as shown by his recommendation of two items for the library of a Superior school in 1920: the multivolume *Children's Story of the War* and *Flag and Fleet: How the British Navy Won the Freedom of the Seas*.<sup>143</sup> These texts reflected Buckner's description of Canadian national identity as an admixture of Canada and Britain. *Flag and Fleet* was written by a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Canadian militia and member of the Canadian Special Mission Overseas. The author's perspective was particularly clear in a passage noting the late participation of the United States in the Great War: "The Americans were not able to do anything like what the Allies had done before and were still doing. The entire American loss in men (killed, wounded, and prisoners) was over one-quarter million. But Canada's loss of over two hundred thousand was ten times as great in proportion; for there are twelve-and-a-half times as many people in the United States as there are in Canada."<sup>144</sup> *The Children's Story of the War* was written by Sir Edward Parrott, an editor at an Edinburgh-based publishing house.<sup>145</sup> It was published serially between 1915 and 1919, and included notable Canadian content.<sup>146</sup> These instructional items represented both rupture and stability in New Brunswick schools, rupture because

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<sup>143</sup> W.S. Carter, to Arnold, Mildred H., June 8, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbook and library books, 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>144</sup> William Wood, *Flag and Fleet: How the British Navy Won the Freedom of the Seas* (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1919), 258-59.

<sup>145</sup> Michael Paris, *Over the Top: The Great War and Juvenile Literature in Britain* (Westport CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004).

<sup>146</sup> Sir Edward Parrott, "The Battle Glory of Canada," in *The Children's Story of the War* (Toronto: T. Nelson, [1915]-1919), and ———, "How the Canadians Captured Vimy Ridge," in *The Children's Story of the War* (Toronto: T. Nelson, [1915]-1919).

they were a reminder of the Great War and its trauma, and stability because their form and content reflected sanctioned teaching materials in familiar formats, and normalized expressions of Canadian national identity in English language schools.

Sometimes the stability represented by school materials was disrupted because of the often political nature of their adoption and provision. Textbooks have been variously described as economic and political artefact, regulated commodity, and cultural embodiment of legitimate knowledge.<sup>147</sup> History textbooks served to commodify, enshrine and make official a national story, with the result that when history education came under fire in North America and around the world, textbooks were frequently the bull's-eye. Historians have identified textbook "wars" in the United States, and controversies both Canadian and international.<sup>148</sup> As American Joseph Moreau puts it,

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<sup>147</sup> See for example Michael W. Apple, "Regulating the Text: The Socio-Historical Roots of State Control," in *Textbooks in American Society: Politics, Policy and Pedagogy*, ed. Philip G. Altbach, et al., *Frontiers in Education* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), and Penney Clark, "'Home-Grown Product' or 'Made in America'?: History of Social Studies in English Canada," in *Trends and Issues in Canadian Social Studies*, ed. Alan Sears and Ian Wright (Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press, 1997).

<sup>148</sup> For descriptions of American history textbook controversies, see Gerard Giordano, *Twentieth-Century Textbook Wars: A History of Advocacy and Opposition*, ed. Alan R. Sadovnick and Susan F. Semel, vol. 17, *History of Schools and Schooling* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), and Jonathan Zimmerman, *Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

Canadian history textbook controversies are described in Penney Clark, "Take It Away, Youth! Visions of Canadian Identity in British Columbia Social Studies Textbooks, 1925-1989" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1995), and Amy von Heyking, "Shaping an Education for the Modern World: A History of the Alberta Social Studies Curriculum, 1905 to 1965" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University

“national soul-searching has always played out through textbooks, especially those purporting to explain the country's past.”<sup>149</sup> In this way, while the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy provided a temporary disruption to secondary school history education, it also situated the province within a tradition of textbook controversies sharing similar features.<sup>150</sup>

The preceding analysis demonstrates the overall effect of the Great War on schools in New Brunswick. In terms of their day to day operation during and after the

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of Calgary, 1996). Penney Clark also offers a brief description of international history textbook controversies in Penney Clark, "Liberty of Trade from the Thralldom of the Autocrats: Provision of School Textbooks in Ontario, 1850-1909," *Canadian Journal of Education* 29, no. 4 (2006).

<sup>149</sup> Joseph Moreau, *School Book Nation: Conflicts over American History Textbooks from the Civil War to the Present* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2004), 16. Not only history textbooks served the purpose of creating a national story. In the nineteenth century, Egerton Ryerson famously introduced the Irish National Readers as a way to counter the influence of American materials in Ontario schools, and they were also used in New Brunswick schools. For more on the Readers, see Paul Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum*, and MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*.

<sup>150</sup> Many features of the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy were remarkably like those of the 1923 New York City history textbook controversy. During the latter, the New York City mayor ordered an investigation into American history textbooks that were deemed too British. When it was completed, the final report was discovered to have been written in large part by a well known nativist journalist in the employ of newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst. The most detailed account of the controversy is found in Bethany J. Andreasen, "Treason or Truth: The New York City Textbook Controversy, 1920-1923," *New York History* 66 (1985).

conflict, schools were subject to considerable disruption, the effects of some of which were permanent. The considerable loss of teaching personnel, the pervasiveness of fundraising campaigns involving teachers and schoolchildren, the incursion into schools of voluntary sector organizations and the changes to citizenship education were the most significant examples of this rupture. The war was also a time of stability, but examples of this were far fewer, and in many instances, stability meant stasis. Most notably, textbooks did not change, and while this saved New Brunswick parents the cost of buying new texts, it meant that the province's schools were saddled with old editions that did not meet the needs of the teachers or students. The Great War was often characterized as a turning point for Canada, and for Canadian schools, in many ways it was. But as far the expression of Canadian identity in New Brunswick's English language schools, curriculum, textbooks and classroom activities remained unchanged, and continued to be just as much British as Canadian.

Into this social milieu came the new, unauthorized edition of Myers' *General History*. The documentary evidence charting the reaction to the appearance of the textbook consists of three main narratives, each with a distinct purpose. The first was that of education officials, particularly Carter, whose response to the controversy was pragmatic, and designed to avoid offending anyone, including clerics, the general public and his political masters. He perceived a need to respond to public complaints, to remove Myers' text from the province's classrooms and to find a text that was available, affordable and acceptable to as many people as possible. This proved to be a nearly impossible task. In contrast, among newspaper editors and reporters, their purpose depended upon whether they were pro- or anti-government. For editors who supported Carter and the government, articles and editorials published in their newspapers were

meant to express that support. For the anti-government press, the goal was to inflame public opinion against the Board of Education and by extension, the government. Their method, at first, was to tap into the public's perceived need to acknowledge Canada's accomplishments and sacrifices during the Great War. They hoped to capitalize on the postwar feelings of nationalism. Eventually, however, their narrative transformed so that it was less about national identity and more about the failings of the Board of Education and the government, while the pro-government newspapers wrote in lockstep response. The third narrative was a religious one, told by the clerics whose opinions about replacement texts were solicited. For the Roman Catholic clerics in particular, their purpose was to promote and preserve their own sect within a non-sectarian education system, and reassert the terms of the "Compromise" surrounding textual materials in schools struck forty-five years earlier.

Together these three contrasting narratives and the interplay of the social strata they represented, their motivations, and the differences in their audiences served to illustrate ways of thinking about schooling, school materials and history education in the postwar era in New Brunswick. The next three chapters provide an examination of the primary source documents written by school administrators, the popular press and clerics during the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy. All were active agents in the course of events, and the object of the investigation is to discover where they were similar and where they diverged in their consideration of the purpose of history education and the history textbook.



### **Chapter 3: The School Administrator as Active Agent in the 1920 New Brunswick History Textbook Controversy**

New Brunswick's Chief Superintendent of Education found himself in a difficult situation in the early months of 1920. The beleaguered Carter was under attack in several of the province's newspapers because an unauthorized textbook had somehow found its way into schools. As he worked to identify the events that had led to the error, and tried to find a solution, Carter had little time for theoretical discussions about the purpose of history education. While ideological narratives about nationalism and public memory may have been the ones that drew readers into the discussions in the popular press, Carter was preoccupied instead with specific and deeply pragmatic criteria of acceptability. As long as a textbook could be readily obtained for a reasonable price, any edition already used elsewhere in Canada would suffice.<sup>1</sup> As the days and months passed, and the difficulty of procuring agreement from the clerics became clear, Carter had to adjust his criteria.

Meanwhile, critics took aim at the Board of Education's response to the textbook controversy, which by extension, were assaults on Carter's effectiveness as an

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<sup>1</sup> British World History textbooks were subject to criticism. As one publisher's representative put it, "somehow the text books on this particular subject in Great Britain (and there are only one or two) do not seem to handle the subject in a way that commends itself to people on this side of the Atlantic." See John C. Saul, to Carter, W.S., April 14, 1920. *Prov. Ont. 1916-1923*. RS116 B7f2. Provincial Archives of New Brunswick. The fact that a textbook was prescribed elsewhere in Canada seemed to mitigate the fact that it was published in Britain or the United States, although by this time because of the uproar over Myers, American textbooks were fairly soundly rejected.

administrator. As far as Carter was concerned, the Textbook Committee had done its job in selecting texts for the next school year. The committee of teachers, school administrators and other education officials had reapproved Myers' *General History* as the best World History textbook available, while agreeing that the British and Canadian histories should soon be changed.<sup>2</sup> Their choice of Myers' text had also been sanctioned at the January meeting of an interprovincial textbook committee in Halifax.<sup>3</sup> The news that an unauthorized edition of the *General History* had been shipped to New Brunswick booksellers came to Carter "like a thief in the dark," and he struggled to act quickly and quell the criticisms.<sup>4</sup>

During the 1920 history textbook controversy, Carter was at the centre of textbook decisions in New Brunswick. As the province's Chief Superintendent of Education since 1909, he was the public face and main spokesperson for the Board of Education. He was also a past President of the Dominion Education Association. From this position of power, he undertook to resolve the problem of the unauthorized textbook. He corresponded with the representative from Myers' publisher, convened the Textbook Committee for an emergency meeting in April, solicited publishers in Canada and Britain for possible replacements for Myers' text, distributed suggested texts to committee members and clerics alike, received their comments in return, and served as

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<sup>2</sup> New Brunswick Textbook Committee, "Textbook Committee Report," ed. New Brunswick Board of Education (Fredericton: December 30, 1919).

<sup>3</sup> W.S. Carter, to Moore, George H., February 14, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>4</sup> ———, to Vroom, James, February 21, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence regarding textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

the spokesperson for the Board of Education throughout the period from February to August. He was one of the three members of the ad hoc textbook committee whose decision to truncate the World History curriculum and adopt Sanderson's *Ancient Oriental history* brought the controversy to a close.<sup>5</sup> Thus Carter was a part of every step in the process to find a replacement for the unauthorized textbook. As an active agent during the controversy, Carter's correspondence was characterized by two purposes: to maintain process and procedure, and to avoid offending anyone.

Carter was born in 1859, a native of King's County. He attended the University of New Brunswick, and upon graduation he taught in the Saint John Grammar School and was later a school inspector. He continued in the Superintendent's post from his appointment in 1909 until his death in 1931.<sup>6</sup> He was first and foremost an administrator, one of Bruce Curtis' "choice men."<sup>7</sup> Carter featured largely in Shawna Stairs Quinn's study of New Brunswick school inspectors between 1879 and 1909. The formative years of his career coincided with the formative years for education in the province.<sup>8</sup> Stairs Quinn describes Carter and his fellow school inspectors as "men who acted in the knotty terrain between school policy and practice; men who were both

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<sup>5</sup> The other two members were Premier Walter Foster and Minister of Public Works, Peter Veniot. See Textbook Committee, "New Brunswick High School Course in History 1920-21," ed. Department of Education (August 3, 1920).

<sup>6</sup> "W.S. Carter Stricken at Home," *The Daily Gleaner*, January 7, 1931.

<sup>7</sup> Bruce Curtis, *True Government by Choice Men? Inspection, Education and State Formation in Canada West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

<sup>8</sup> Carter was a school inspector in southern New Brunswick from December 1885 to June 1909. Shawna Stairs Quinn, "'Sympathetic and Practical Men'? School Inspectors and New Brunswick's Educational Bureaucracy, 1879-1909" (M.A. Thesis (History), University of New Brunswick, 2006), 209.

sources and products of the countless forces that propelled educational ‘progress.’”<sup>9</sup>

Carter was no doubt an ambitious young inspector; his “impressive ability to keep *ahead* of his visitation schedule, quiet district squabbles so that they rarely reached the Education Office, establish teachers' associations, attend national conferences and lead stirring institute meetings placed him on the fast-track for the superintendency. . .”<sup>10</sup> Carter was fifty-one when he attained the position.

By 1920, Carter had been Chief Superintendent for eleven years. Much of his reaction to the public criticism resulting from the history textbook controversy had to do with his need to ensure the smooth running of the educational system with as little interruption as possible in the work of teachers and students. But as Chief Superintendent, Carter also worked to maintain an administration which provided the infrastructure to support a particular imagined community, the boundaries of which were English and Christian.<sup>11</sup> In this way, Carter’s task was the same one that Curtis ascribes to nineteenth century administrators in Lower Canada, “to configure relations and

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 10. Stairs Quinn notes that in New Brunswick, school inspectors fulfilled dual roles as inspectors and supervisors. Thus they were actively involved with teachers, trustees and ratepayers.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 183. Emphasis in the original. Stairs Quinn’s biographical sketch of Carter adds that he was one of eighteen children, ten of whom lived to adulthood. Four of his sisters and two brothers were teachers. He earned an Honours B.A. from the University of New Brunswick in Mental and Moral Philosophy and Political Economy, and studied law on evenings and weekends, briefly considering a legal career. See p. 210.

<sup>11</sup> Stairs Quinn notes that New Brunswick’s late nineteenth century school inspectors, including Carter, “commonly cast their patriotic radius slightly short of empire, . . . focusing on local heritage and national pride.” She adds that Carter had an active interest in local and Loyalist history. Ibid., 87-88, 210.

conditions of association in the promotion of national solidarities.”<sup>12</sup> The difficulty of the task was compounded in Lower Canada and New Brunswick alike by the complex interplay of English, French, Protestant and Catholic within the population of each. Still, Carter carried out his mission in a variety of ways: he interpreted the Manual of the School Law, he oversaw the appointment of teachers to the Normal School and school inspectors to the various districts across the province, and he monitored the licensing of teachers including those Acadian teachers whose lack of fluency in English was a cause of constant concern.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Bruce Curtis, "State of the Nation or Community of Spirit? Schooling for Civic and Ethnic-Religious Nationalism in Insurrectionary Canada," *History of Education Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (2003): 328.

<sup>13</sup> For an example of Carter's advice regarding school law, see W.S. Carter, to Waldron, Vivian B., September 10, 1920. RS116 B8b4c. PANB. Carter's attention to the Normal School is exemplified by the 1920 incident in which the long-serving head of the French department at the Normal School retired. Carter's initial choice for his replacement, Calixte Savoie, declined the appointment. Savoie left teaching within five years as a result of conflict over inadequate schooling for Acadian students, and went on to become one of the leaders of the Acadian nationalist movement in New Brunswick and a Canadian Senator. Calixte Savoie, to Carter, W.S. 1920, May 22. RS116 B8f4b. PANB, and Calixte F. Savoie, *Memoires D'un Nationaliste Acadien* (Moncton: Editions d'Acadie, 1979). Carter's challenges regarding the appointment of school inspectors had mostly to do with replacing retiring inspectors, and they were drawn from the ranks of New Brunswick's school teachers. See New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1921). Carter was regularly required to revisit the licensing requirements of Acadian teachers, as there were never enough fully qualified teachers to work in the bilingual schools. As a result, teachers working on special local licenses were commonplace. See for example ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1911-1912 by the Chief

In administering the provision of textbooks, Carter was dedicated to adhering to school law and practice. School law was specific regarding who should be responsible to select and pay for textbooks. It also laid out the importance of the presence of uniformly “good” textbooks, “especially in rendering practicable an efficient classification of the pupils, by which their progress is greatly promoted. . .”<sup>14</sup> While adhering to school law, Carter was also required to pay heed to administrative procedure, which included following the unofficial yet longstanding practice of submitting textbooks to New Brunswick’s Roman Catholic clerics for their approval, and he acknowledged this duty early in the controversy.<sup>15</sup> But the 1875 “Compromise” did not require Carter to offer textbooks to the Baptist clerics. Sending texts to the Baptist minister for approval may have been Carter’s attempt to reconfigure the relationship of religion within New Brunswick’s non-sectarian education system however slightly, by easing the Roman Catholic sect out of its powerful position where textbooks were concerned.

At the same time, within his administrative practice, Carter was concerned with normalized notions of national identity. Pan-Canadian national solidarity as it existed in New Brunswick was tenuous; the conscription crisis of 1917 hinted at its fragile state, and the rise of Acadian nationalism starting in 1925 was confirmation. Carter administered an educational system in which inequities based on language abounded. If

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Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1913).

<sup>14</sup> New Brunswick, *Manual of the School Law and Regulations of New Brunswick* (Fredericton: Province of New Brunswick, 1913), 122.

<sup>15</sup> W.S. Carter, to Webber, Harry. , February 21, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

Acadians felt they had a just cause, in some cases it was because they felt stymied by educational officials, one of whom was overheard in a private moment to say of them, ““It is by keeping them ignorant that we are best able to dominate them. Allow them to teach themselves and you place in their hands the most powerful weapon to wean themselves from their cultural and economic poverty.””<sup>16</sup> The national identity embodied in New Brunswick’s history textbooks, at whatever level, was essentially Canadian and British, although in fact more British than Canadian. Even the province’s only French language history textbook was actually a bilingual history textbook, an artefact with assimilative purposes.<sup>17</sup> It was widely assumed that the purpose of history education was to present an Anglo-centric account of the progress of civilization, and any textbook prescribed in New Brunswick should meet this criterion.

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<sup>16</sup> Richard Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick* (Halifax: Formac Press, 1989), 138. This is the translation of a passage from Savoie, *Memoires D'un Nationaliste Acadien*, 145. The patronizing sentiments expressed are similar to those reported by Bruce Curtis, that “State school reformers routinely argued that it would be far better to leave the masses completely ignorant than to teach them to read and write without forming their moral character.” See Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871* (London ON: The Althouse Press, 1988), 15.

<sup>17</sup> Ph. F. Bourgeois, *Histoire Elémentaire Du Canada* (London: Thomas Nelson et Fils, Ltd., n.d.), ———, *Elementary History of Canada* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., n.d.). This text was actually one volume, with French text on one side of each page, and English on the facing page. In spite of the fact that it was written in English and French, by 1922 Bourgeois’ textbook was specifically included on the prescribed list only for the bilingual schools. It was prescribed in New Brunswick from 1914 until 1953. See New Brunswick, *Manual of the School Law and Regulations of New Brunswick* (Fredericton: Province of New Brunswick, 1922), and Maud Hazel Hody, “The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick” (Ed.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1964).

From the start of the textbook controversy, Carter worried about public reaction. His initial correspondence responding to complaints about Myers' *General History* was addressed to the Saint John book distributor.<sup>18</sup> His letter outlined the action the Board was prepared to take, including requiring an exchange of new editions for old, and failing that, cancellation of the textbook. Carter acknowledged in another letter the negative consequences of the latter course of action, judging that "it would involve the purchase of an expensive book by each student, would disarrange their work which, up to this time has been based upon Myers', and it would be impossible, on short notice, to select another text."<sup>19</sup> In the meantime, Carter informed New Brunswick's secondary school teachers that the new edition of Myers' text was unauthorized.<sup>20</sup>

Carter's attempts to recover public confidence in the Board of Education were undermined by the very protocol he was determined to defend. As the days went by and newspaper criticisms mounted, Carter expressed frustration that he had apparently been "caught napping."<sup>21</sup> He condemned the "foisting" of the new edition of the textbook by

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<sup>18</sup> The letter was copied to the Boston publisher, the provincial Premier and his counterparts in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Manitoba, where Myers' text was also prescribed.

<sup>19</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., February 13, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B7e2. PANB.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. According the Manual of the School Law, teachers' salaries were paid in part by local trustees and in part by the province. In order to receive the provincial grant, however, teachers had to adhere to provincial regulations regarding their work. This included using only textbooks authorized by the Board of Education. New Brunswick, *Schools Act*.

<sup>21</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., February 13, 1920.



Myers' publisher on New Brunswick without prior notification.<sup>22</sup> This attention to protocol was "surely. . . incumbent upon them. When we authorize a text, we do not necessarily authorize any additions or alterations."<sup>23</sup> But New Brunswick employed a two-tier method of textbook distribution in 1920. Some texts, including those intended for elementary school students, were distributed through official channels, and while they were not free, they were obtained by parents at the schools. These were what Carter called "provincial" texts. Others, such as Myers' *General History*, were shipped directly from the publisher to a book distributor, to be sent to book sellers in communities across the province and sold to parents.<sup>24</sup> Carter repeatedly cited this practice as a cause of the textbook controversy, and wryly noted that his Nova Scotia counterpart avoided the problem because books arriving in the Halifax Board of Education office could be examined on site.<sup>25</sup> But he never suggested that the method of textbook distribution be changed, and no evidence indicates that the possibility was ever considered.

The historical reasons for this method of textbook distribution are difficult to determine. Partially off-loading the responsibility for textbook distribution to a private business may have been a cost-saving measure, important for a cash-strapped Board of Education. It may have been a question of space, in that textbook storage was more

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<sup>22</sup> W.S. Carter, to Fletcher, R., April 13, 1920. Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Manitoba. RS116 B7d. PANB, W.S. Carter, to Moore, George H., February 14, 1920.

<sup>23</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., February 13, 1920.

<sup>24</sup> W.S. Carter, to Webber, Harry. , February 21, 1920.

<sup>25</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., February 18, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B7e2. PANB.

practical in an industrial city such as Saint John where warehouses were widely available. In addition, Saint John was a commercial hub for New Brunswick; Fredericton was not. Finally, Saint John had far and away the greatest number of students studying at the secondary level, so the system of distribution may have been a case of keeping the books closest to the primary market.<sup>26</sup> Whatever the reason, the practice was long-standing; the 1892 *Manual of the School Law* listed the same Saint John book distributor, J. & A. McMillan, as the source for the prescribed history textbook of the day.<sup>27</sup> During the Great War, Carter suggested that the provision of free textbooks in New Brunswick schools would remove many of the problems associated with their use.<sup>28</sup> In 1917 he travelled to western Canada “with the prime object of inquiring into the cost and distribution of free text books, and incidentally to observe other school policies in practice there, worthy of our imitation and adoption.”<sup>29</sup> This indicated considerable attention devoted to textbook provision, but 1920 was the first time a problem with a textbook led to its removal from New Brunswick’s approved list. Newspaper reports clearly outlined the method of textbook distribution that resulted in the Myers controversy, and if Carter never considered streamlining the method of

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<sup>26</sup> See Figure 1.6.

<sup>27</sup> New Brunswick, *Manual of the School Law of New Brunswick* (Fredericton: Province of New Brunswick, 1892).

<sup>28</sup> ———, “Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1914-1915 by the Chief Superintendent of Education,” ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1916).

<sup>29</sup> W.S. Carter, “Chief Superintendent’s Report Re Free Texts, Etc.,” (Fredericton: New Brunswick Board of Education, November 27, 1917), 471.

textbook distribution, neither did anyone else offer the same suggestion.<sup>30</sup> This might have been the moment for change, but it did not happen.

While upholding policy and procedure, Carter was also sensitive to the motivation of his critics, but as the administrator of a public school system, always with an eye to the general public. For example, he noted the politics at play, although only obliquely. Several of his letters referred to complaints coming from “the office,” and accused his critics of having motives that were “political.”<sup>31</sup> He provided no specifics. More frequently he acknowledged the public need for textbooks to reflect Canadian ideology, including recognition of Canadian feelings in the wake of the Great War. He wrote to one British publisher saying, “Text books for use in Canada, must have a portion at least emphasize Canadian ideals,” [sic]<sup>32</sup> and elsewhere expressed the feared that almost all World History texts in use in Canada were of American origin.<sup>33</sup> By April he reported, “I am almost in despair of getting a suitable one by a British or a Canadian author,” adding that “my own opinion is that a History of the War cannot very well be written until our perspective has become better defined.”<sup>34</sup> Carter did not offer his personal opinion very often, but when he did it was with a sense of exasperation at the

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<sup>30</sup> "Circulation of Myer's History Is Stopped [Editorial]," *The Moncton Transcript*, February 14, 1920, "Myers History N.B. And N.S.," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 23, 1920.

<sup>31</sup> W.S. Carter, to Webber, Harry, February 21, 1920, ———, to Vroom, James, February 21, 1920, ———, to Messrs. J.&A. McMillan., February 27, 1920. RS116 B2s. PANB.

<sup>32</sup> ———, to George Philip and Son Ltd., March 26, 1920. *Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>33</sup> ———, to MacKay, A.H., February 18, 1920.

<sup>34</sup> ———, to Edward Arnold, April 13, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, British Columbia*. RS116 B7b. PANB.

unrealistic expectation placed upon him to find a Canadian replacement for Myers' text: "It is the work of half a life-time to write a text in General History and at present I do not think our perspective is well enough defined to warrant a History of the War."<sup>35</sup> In spite of his exasperation, however, he came to recognize that with the volume of negative reaction it engendered, Myers' *General History* was no longer suitable for use in New Brunswick's public schools.

Carter's concern with process and procedure was matched by his desire to avoid offense, but the textbook controversy provided ample opportunities to offend on a variety of fronts. Some of the transgressions were contained in Myers' text, and some were only indirectly related to the text but were directly connected to the New Brunswick context. Carter's correspondence indicated the range of New Brunswickers he feared offending. Again, his first concern was for the opinions of the general public. According to the rising tide of protest from New Brunswickers, Myers' offenses were the author's failure to mention Canada by name, and his concentration on the role of the United States in winning the Great War. Carter's initial letter to the Saint John book distributor recognized the sensitivity of Canadians to these two sins. He criticized the historical accuracy of the new chapter in Myers' text and its overemphasis on the American war effort. In doing so he predicted that students would take offense to the chapter saying, "The fact that Canada's part in the war and the sacrifices she made is not deemed worthy of mention is rather galling to the pride of the students in Canadian

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<sup>35</sup> ———, to Saul, John C., April 16, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Ontario, 1916-1923*. RS116 B7F2. PANB.

schools.<sup>36</sup> By April, Carter described the scope of his problem saying, “Prejudice has been aroused that will not easily subside. . . it is not desirable to give offense to any class in the community if it can be avoided . . . ”<sup>37</sup> His use of the word “prejudice” suggests that while Carter did not want to offend, he was not fully convinced that the complaints were valid. As the time to make a decision drew near, Carter reiterated his dilemma determining that “We do not wish to give offense to any class in the community, but this action makes a text very hard to secure.”<sup>38</sup>

Regardless of the feelings of the general public, however, under the terms of the 1875 Compromise, any replacement text for Myers had to run the gauntlet of approval by New Brunswick clerics, most particularly the Roman Catholic bishop. Considerable irony lay in the fact that as they reviewed proposed replacement texts, the clerics were united in one thing, and that was their praise for Myers’ text.<sup>39</sup> This is where their

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<sup>36</sup> ———, to J. & A. McMillan, February 11, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2S5. PANB. Copies of this letter were also forwarded to the newspapers, and passages from it were quoted.

<sup>37</sup> ———, to Warren, G.C., April 29, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B/2/s/3. PANB.

<sup>38</sup> ———, to Bridges, H.S., April 26, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbook and library books, 1915-1920*.

<sup>39</sup> E.A. LeBlanc, to Carter, W.S., April 9, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB, Louis J. O’Leary, to Carter, W.S., April 23, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and Library Books, 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB, G.C. Warren, to Carter, W.S., April 27, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

consensus ended; they could not agree on a replacement. This complicated Carter's dilemma, and in a letter to the Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia, he alluded to the difficulty of his position, observing that a new text "has to be selected with great care not to offend the religious sensibilities of any religious denomination, and should have merit."<sup>40</sup> He repeated this requirement expressing the pressure he felt saying, "I fear it is going to be a difficult matter to meet the point of view of all theologians of schools of religious thought and our time is very limited."<sup>41</sup> Carter's choice was an onerous one: remove Myers and alienate the clerics, or retain Myers and upset the public. As an interim measure, however, he chose the former, telling one publisher's representative that because of the "uproar" created by Myers' omission of Canada and focus on American participation in the war, "at the end of the present year Myers' will have to go."<sup>42</sup> The clerics' praise of Myers' text was outweighed by the public outcry against it.

If Myers' text offended many, and the proposed replacement texts offended the clerics, an important target in the controversy became the Board of Education itself. Criticisms of the Board were the ones about which Carter cared least. They were expressed most vehemently in the letters to the editor pages of the anti-government newspapers. For some, the Board's transgressions began with the fact that school officials had no knowledge of the unauthorized text; as one letter writer expressed it, "It

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<sup>40</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., February 13, 1920.

<sup>41</sup> ———, to LeBlanc, E.A., April 12, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS 116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>42</sup> ———, to The Renouf Publishing Co., March 10, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbook and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

is up to the Board of Education to know what is in the books that go into our schools, and they must be made to realize that.”<sup>43</sup> But the criticism escalated so that while condemning the “indifference, or incapacity and ignorance” of the Board of Education, others took direct aim at Carter suggesting that “the Chief Superintendent should adopt the course that any self-respecting official who had failed so palpably in his obligations would feel it his duty to take, and to take quickly.”<sup>44</sup> Another letter writer, while not calling for Carter’s resignation, assessed the situation saying, “The course of the Board is hesitating and unmanly, the explanation and the letter of the Superintendent vapid, apologetic and ludicrously defensive.”<sup>45</sup> To these criticisms, Carter responded privately in a letter to a supporter that “I cannot condescend to take notice of that kind of sniping.”<sup>46</sup> He defended himself to another correspondent saying, “I am willing to be responsible for anything we authorize, but when a text book is added to without any notice to me and no specimen copy sent, I cannot very well take account of it, except by accident.”<sup>47</sup> With these expressions, Carter showed himself impervious to those criticisms of a “political” nature, and his actions in removing Myers and finding a replacement textbook demonstrated that it was the general public and the clerics whom

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<sup>43</sup> K.E. MacLaughlan, "In the Editor's Mail [Letter to the Editor]," *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920.

<sup>44</sup> Parent, "The Disgusting Textbook; Perverted History in Use in N.B. Schools [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 12, 1920.

<sup>45</sup> Canadian Born, "The Board of Education and Myers' Text Book [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920. See also Another Parent, "Perverted History. [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920.

<sup>46</sup> Carter, W.S., to Vroom, James, February 21, 1920.

<sup>47</sup> ———, to Webber, Harry. , February 21, 1920.

he least wished to offend. If he feared offending his political masters, his fears were eased with the creation of the ad hoc Textbook Committee in June, in which Carter was joined by the Premier and the Minister of Public Works.<sup>48</sup>

As Carter worked to minimize the reaction to the textbook controversy, his correspondents had a variety of responses to his efforts, each of which reflected their own interests but did not necessarily serve Carter's. George Moore, the representative of Myers' publishing house, responded confidentially to Carter's first letter about the new edition of the text with an administrator's eye while anticipating Carter's personal opinion saying, "This whole occurrence [*sic*] represents fairly well the extreme difficulty of trying to write the history of events of such recent happening."<sup>49</sup> He proposed an administrator's solution, offering to publish a sixteen page pamphlet covering Canada's war contributions and suggesting that "If you have in mind anybody in the Province who would be competent to write such a pamphlet I am sure that the house would be glad to publish it and distribute it with the book without extra expense."<sup>50</sup> As a first step, however, Moore travelled to New Brunswick, met with the book distributor and arranged to exchange the unauthorized texts for authorized ones. In addition, he met with the Premier and with the editor of a pro-government newspaper.<sup>51</sup> While all of

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<sup>48</sup> New Brunswick Board of Education, "Board of Education Minutes 1909-1935," ed. Education (June 9, 1920), 94.

<sup>49</sup> George H. Moore, to Carter, W.S., February 12, 1920. *Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2S3. PANB.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> ———, to Carter, W.S., February 24, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. PANB.



these actions were undertaken in order to assist Carter's defense of the Board of Education against its critics, at their most basic level they were part of the publisher's efforts not to offend Carter and his fellow board members.

The representatives from other publishers had less at stake in their correspondence with Carter, since their goal was not to attempt to avoid the loss of a sale already transacted, but they still hoped to gain the Board of Education's approval of their products. John Saul of W.J. Gage described at length problems with World History textbooks in other provinces concluding with the vow "We are going to do our best to bring out a book of our own, written by a Canadian author, which will be an adequate presentation of the whole subject," including "proper representation to Canada" and the rest of the British empire in world history."<sup>52</sup> Frank Wise, representing MacMillan of Canada, expected that his suggestion would solve Carter's concerns about his proposed text saying, "Why not get your critics to formulate their complaints! I have not the least doubt they could be met satisfactorily, even if we were to make a few changes in the plates. I fancy, however, their complaint will vanish into thin air when it comes to a request for something definite."<sup>53</sup> With the detailed pages of criticisms submitted by the Roman Catholic clerics sitting in his files, Carter likely determined that Wise's simplistic solution was no solution at all. Carter's first need was to find an acceptable World History textbook before the start of the next school year, and finding a publisher with a title to suit his requirements proved to be almost impossible.

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<sup>52</sup> John C. Saul, to Carter, W.S., April 14, 1920.

<sup>53</sup> Frank Wise, to Carter, W.S., May 12, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

The textbook author Myers also responded to the New Brunswick controversy, offering no solution but only an explanation which further proved why his textbook was so offensive to Canadians. George Moore forwarded to Carter a copy of a letter written by Myers to his editor saying Myers' "fair-mindedness, and his generous appreciation of Canada's part in the war is very obvious in every line of this letter, . . . which you are at liberty to use as you see fit."<sup>54</sup> The final phrase suggested a hope that Carter might publish the letter in order to assuage the critics, but that correspondence which to Moore was so positive must have raised alarms for Carter, because he chose not to share it. While praising Canada, Myers likened the naming of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa to mentioning each state of the union individually in reference to the United States of America. Myers blamed the League of Nations for the "recent extraordinary development of nationalistic sentiment in all the self-governing Dominions of the British Empire," adding that he meant no offense when the Canadian forces were "given simply the same status as those of the homeland and covered with the honored [*sic*] designation 'British.'"<sup>55</sup> At another time and from another source, this designation might otherwise have been acceptable to Canadians. But given a national identity that encompassed both Canada and Britain, the need for recognition of the large Canadian losses during the Great War, and the anti-American feelings that were current during the textbook controversy, Carter likely saw the possibility that this letter would

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<sup>54</sup> George H. Moore, to Carter, W.S., February 24, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. PANB.

<sup>55</sup> P.V.N. Myers, to Thurber, C.H., February 17, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. PANB.

only add to the offense New Brunswickers felt. Myers' statement was never made public.

Anti-Americanism and a lack of sympathy for Carter were the main expressions in the response of Carter's Nova Scotia counterpart, Superintendent of Schools A.H. MacKay. Of course, in the matter of Myer's textbook, MacKay had nothing to lose. The method of book distribution in Nova Scotia meant that once discovered upon their delivery at the School Book Bureau in Halifax, the unauthorized copies of Myers' *General History* had been returned to the Boston publisher.<sup>56</sup> The New Brunswick controversy was not his problem. MacKay suggested that the best course of action was to insert into the text "a page of corrections from the Canadian and British point of view. It would have been the surest way of undoing the American propaganda." He downplayed the seriousness of Carter's problem, said that he ignored the press and thought the problem simple: "The text with the supplement was never prescribed, and the publishers should take them back wherever or whenever desired." He concluded his letter with a passage which must have offered cold comfort to Carter saying, "I don't think we will have any difficulty in getting a good substitute for Myers in our small but advanced grade, where even American buncombe would be sterilized by the teacher without the need of specific instructions."<sup>57</sup> This conclusion has the feel of a criticism of New Brunswick schools and their teachers, and hints at the isolation inherent in Carter's dilemma. Other school administrators had their own crises with which to contend; Carter was on his own.

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<sup>56</sup> "What Nova Scotia Did with Myers History Months Ago," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 21, 1920.

<sup>57</sup> A.H. MacKay, to Carter, W.S., February 26, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B7E2. PANB.

In spite of this lack of support from his Nova Scotia colleague, Carter rode the “storm of protest” over Myers’ *General History*.<sup>58</sup> With the fellow members of the ad hoc textbook committee, he selected Sanderson’s *Outlines of the World's History - Ancient Oriental Monarchies, Greece and Rome* as the replacement World History text for New Brunswick schools.<sup>59</sup> The fact that they chose to end the secondary school World History curriculum just before Christianity was a triumph of pragmatism. It was not an ideal situation, as Carter described to MacKay several months later saying, “Our High School History Course is somewhat tentative. . . Fortunately for us the Ancients were not Christians and had no particular scruples of theology, hence we were able to prescribe Sanderson’s ‘Ancient History,’ for Grade XI. I do not know how long it will last, but something had to be done.”<sup>60</sup> But it served to answer the concerns of the clerics, and the solution indicated that these were the critics Carter was most afraid of offending.

The bureaucratic pragmatism represented by Carter’s narrative of the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy offered a sharp contrast to the narratives of the popular press and the clerics. Carter wanted a smooth-running administration of schools. Although he repeatedly expressed a desire not to offend the general public, he was prepared to ignore or downplay the criticisms in the press which ostensibly represented the feelings of some members of that same general public. Carter was not overly preoccupied with the issues of national identity that mobilized the popular press and the

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<sup>58</sup> "Myers History Has Aroused Great Storm of Protest," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 13, 1920, and MacLaughlan, "In the Editor's Mail [Letter to the Editor]."

<sup>59</sup> Textbook Committee, "New Brunswick High School Course in History 1920-21."

<sup>60</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., December 7, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B/7/e/2. PANB.

public, and the newspaper criticisms did not necessitate the changing of the secondary school World History curriculum, only the changing of the textbook. It was the attempt to satisfy the clerics that led to the decision to truncate the curriculum. This fact indicated that Carter was afraid of offending the religious leaders, and more specifically, the Roman Catholic leaders. As the administrator of a non-sectarian school system, he was not particularly concerned about the religious message of the textbook. Nevertheless, because of the entrenched conflicts and power relations around religion and language in New Brunswick society manifested in the bureaucratic milieu, Carter was obliged to respond to the pressure brought to bear by religious leaders. It was a curious dilemma for the administrator of a non-sectarian school system to face.

The final decision of the Board of Education straddled the interests and desires of the public and the clerics: all editions of Myers' *General History* both unauthorized and previously authorized were removed from the approved list of textbooks, and thus were removed from New Brunswick classrooms. The secondary school World History curriculum was shortened and an abridged text by another author adopted so that materials potentially offensive to the Roman Catholic faith were denied entry to those same classrooms. This attempt to balance the various interests of New Brunswickers created a precarious solution that was expedient, finally allowing Carter to focus on other pressing educational issues, but it could not last.

## **Chapter 4: The Popular Press as Active Agents in the 1920 New Brunswick History Textbook Controversy**

If Chief Superintendent Carter's preoccupation during the history textbook controversy was ultimately with the opinions of New Brunswick's Roman Catholic clerics, this concern was not publicly expressed, and was not part of the public debate. Instead, Carter's actual behaviour during the history textbook controversy was motivated by pragmatic concerns which meant ensuring that New Brunswick secondary school history students and teachers had a textbook for the coming school year. He also desired not to offend the general public. These two goals were explicitly stated in his official correspondence and pronouncements. The popular press, meanwhile, served to propel the controversy forward. In contrast to Carter's concerns and motivations, the popular press aired ideological debates around the textbook issue that can be clearly traced to explicit political agendas. The pro-government newspaper editors that would have included school administrators and politicians among their audience defended Carter and the Board of Education. Every action of the Board of Education was interpreted positively and supported as the best response to a difficult situation. For instance, the Saint John *Daily Telegraph* reported that "The prompt action in the board of education of New Brunswick in refusing to authorize the latest issue of Myers [*sic*] history and advising other provinces of this action has been generally commended by all. . . ."<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, the editors of the anti-government newspapers attempted to use the controversy around Myers' *General History* in New Brunswick as a means of focusing

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<sup>1</sup> "Myers History Not to Be Used in Public Schools of Province," *Daily Telegraph*, February 14, 1920.

public criticisms on the Liberal government.<sup>2</sup> As the preceding chapter showed, Carter attempted to deal with the controversy by soothing the feelings of those whose newly embraced nationalistic sensibilities were bruised, while the clerics responded to the crisis by taking the opportunity to reiterate and confirm the position of the Roman Church within the status quo of the educational bureaucracy. Pro-government newspapers attempted to use the controversy to champion the general efficiency and responsible behaviour of the Board of Education and the government. The anti-government newspapers exploited the situation in a way that contrasted sharply with each of these. The nature and persistence of that anti-government rhetoric, indeed, helped to sustain the controversy for several weeks.

Research on the history of mass media in Canada indicates that in the immediate post-war years, the popular press to which most Canadians were exposed consisted chiefly of magazines and newspapers.<sup>3</sup> The nature of the magazine product was problematic; the Canadian market was flooded with American editions. As Paul Litt notes, even those which were of Canadian origin such as *Maclean's*, *Saturday Night*, and *Canadian Magazine* “were American in that they mimicked the American formula for mass market success, substituting Canadian for American content,” and as the decade progressed, concern over the flood of American magazines on the Canadian market

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<sup>2</sup> See "Untitled Editorial," *The St. John Standard*, February 13, 1920, and "Untitled Editorial," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920.

<sup>3</sup> These were the days before radio; the first Canadian radio broadcast did not occur until November 1920. Movie houses were common in cities, but they became popular with middle-class audiences only after 1920. See Mary Vipond, *The Mass Media in Canada*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 2000).

elicited public protest.<sup>4</sup> These concerns were added to the anti-American feelings that prevailed in Canada during and after the war with regard to the American war efforts. Litt writes that in contrast to the magazines, Canadian newspapers were local and reflected the interests of cities and towns and their environs, while the newspapers' reliance on American sources was broken with the creation of the federally funded Canadian Press news service.<sup>5</sup> But in his history of American influence on Canadian mass culture, Paul Rutherford describes as common the practice of adding filler news and advertisements of American origin. Although the pages of the newspapers reporting the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy were full of national, provincial and local news as well as numerous advertisements for local businesses, they contained the kind of American content described by Rutherford.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Paul Litt, "Canada Invaded! The Great War, Mass Culture, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism," in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David MacKenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 330.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Rutherford, "Made in America: The Problem of Mass Culture in Canada," in *The Beaver Bites Back; American Popular Culture in Canada*, ed. David E. Flaherty and Frank E. Manning (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993). For American content in New Brunswick newspapers, see "Avoid Operations for Kidney Troubles: Gin Pills for the Kidneys," *The Daily Telegraph*, February 14, 1920. More information about this product, advertised on the editorial page of the *Telegraph*, was available from a Canadian and an American address. Among the front page news articles in *The Daily Gleaner* on February 12 was a story from South Carolina in which a local sportsman violated a state gaming law and was fined ten dollars for sending a wild turkey to President Wilson. See "From Columbia South Carolina," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 12, 1920. See also "Washington's Birthday Honored at Mansion House," *The St. John Standard*, February 24, 1920. The subtitle of this article on the editorial



Minko Sotiron's study of Canadian newspapers suggests that the Canadian popular press was in a transitional state in 1920; nationally, the industry was moving away from exclusive reliance on partisan political support and toward a greater reliance on advertising than on subscriptions. The newspaper reports and editorials published during the history textbook controversy provide evidence that New Brunswick's newspapers straddled the new and old system. While their pages contained dozens of advertisements, they were still "enterprises that acted as spokesmen for, and were largely dependent on, the support of a particular political party."<sup>7</sup> This meant that each had a particular and still explicitly political role to play in a competitive market, and this was demonstrated by the partisan quality of the newspaper coverage of Myers' textbook. An editorial in the Fredericton *Daily Gleaner*, for example, referred to an unnamed Saint John newspaper, calling it the "sloppy morning organ of the Provincial Government," while its likely target, the Saint John *Daily Telegraph* noted in a sub-headline the "grossly unfair attempt of opposition newspapers to create wrong impression."<sup>8</sup> The difference between the pro- and anti-government newspapers was often evident in their

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page was "Celebrate tercentenary of sailing of the Pilgrim fathers - distinguished guests present." On the same page was a comic piece, apparently a syndicated column of American origin, taking up a double column in the upper quarter of the page of the *Standard's* editorial page. See Lee Pape, "Benny's Note Book," *The St. John Standard*, February 24, 1920. For more by this author, see ———, *Little Benny's Book* (New York: Macy-Masius, 1926).

<sup>7</sup> Minko Sotiron, *From Politics to Profit: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997). Sotiron remarks that these newspapers were generally small and unstable.

<sup>8</sup> See "Untitled Editorial," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920, and "Myers History Not to Be Used in Public Schools of Province," *Daily Telegraph*, February 14, 1920.

headlines. The pro-government *Daily Telegraph* focused on exonerating the Board of Education and stressed the Board's attempts to solve the textbook problem, including among its headlines "Reporting on the Board of Education meeting of February 11" and "Myers [*sic*] history not to be used in public schools of the province."<sup>9</sup> In contrast, the anti-government *Gleaner* stressed opposition to the text with phrases such as "Myers [*sic*] history has aroused great storm of protest,"<sup>10</sup> and "Sons of England ask abolition of Myers [*sic*] history."<sup>11</sup>

From time to time the political nature of the newspaper coverage became explicit. One of the best examples of this was an editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* that went to great lengths responding to a request from a rival newspaper for a history of the recent actions of the New Brunswick Liberal party. The editor's response welcomed the suggestion but added that "In order that this history might be presented in an unprejudiced fashion it might be taken largely from the testimony given by political friends of the *Standard* before various royal commissioners appointed to take testimony under oath regarding scandals which brought disgrace upon the province."<sup>12</sup> The

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<sup>9</sup> "Reporting on the Board of Education Meeting of February 11," *Daily Telegraph*, February 12, 1920. "Myers History Not to Be Used in Public Schools of Province," *Daily Telegraph*, February 14, 1920.

<sup>10</sup> "Myers History Has Aroused Great Storm of Protest," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 13, 1920.

<sup>11</sup> "Sons of England Ask Abolition of Myers History," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 18, 1920. See also "Agitation against Myers' History," *St. John Globe*, February 17, 1920, "Myers' History Still a Worry," *St. John Globe*, February 19, 1920, and "F'ton Societies Line up against Myers' History," *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920.

<sup>12</sup> "(A) Suggestion [Editorial]," *Daily Telegraph*, February 14, 1920. The *Daily Telegraph* was not above expressing similar sentiments in its reportage. One news report referred to "those who can see nothing good in anything done by any department of the present government." See "Myers History Not to Be Used

editorial stance of each newspaper was thus clear to its audience, and there were no surprises in the pro-government newspapers' support for Carter and the Board of Education or the anti-government newspapers' condemnation of both.

The reportage in the pro-government newspapers shared Carter's pragmatism with its emphasis on process and its defense of the system of textbook provision in place in New Brunswick: editors assumed that such a rational explanation would be appropriate to explain what was, they insisted, simply a technical problem. The representative from Myer's publisher visited the offices of the *Daily Telegraph* in Saint John when he travelled from Boston in an attempt to quell the upset. The result was a detailed article repeating the explanation already provided to Carter, that the unauthorized textbook had been sent to New Brunswick because of an error in the publisher's shipping department.<sup>13</sup> Only two other articles were published in the *Daily Telegraph* about Myers' textbook, and they provided details about the process of textbook approval, and the plans of the Board of Education to rectify the Myers situation. Not surprisingly given the partisan nature of the market, the news reports also criticized the anti-government newspapers when they could. For example, they repeated the headline accusation that the opposition papers were "grossly unfair," and referred to the "democratic . . . control of the text books by the leaders of the educational profession" who were "compelled in justice to the department as well as to themselves

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in Public Schools of Province." Examples of explicitly anti-government editorials include "Untitled Editorial," *The St. John Standard*, February 13, 1920, and "Untitled Editorial," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920 and "Provincial Government on the Defensive - a Serious Mess [Editorial]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 16, 1920.

<sup>13</sup> "History Shipped Here through Publisher's Error," *Daily Telegraph*, February 19, 1920.

to issue a statement showing just how the history was authorized and how it was possible for a few copies to get circulated without their knowledge or consent.”<sup>14</sup> By invoking fairness and justice on behalf of Carter and the Board of Education, the reportage suggested that the anti-government newspapers were unfair and unjust. The editor of the *Telegraph* was not above rebuking his newspaper’s competition by name, as when he directly repudiated an editorial in the *St. John Standard*, suggesting that “One of the greatest handicaps under which the opposition labours is its own record, and any proposal to record that history in enduring form for the school children would appeal to most members of the opposition as particularly unfortunate.”<sup>15</sup>

The pro-government newspapers provided only limited coverage of the history textbook controversy, especially compared to the volume of anti-government coverage, and in doing so they signalled that the Myers situation was not worth their time or attention.<sup>16</sup> This stance was reinforced by one *Daily Telegraph* editorial which proclaimed, “The statements appearing from time to time to the effect that this or that

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<sup>14</sup> “Myers History Not to Be Used in Public Schools of Province.” This article also included a quote from a member of the Textbook Committee who pointed out that it was “well to remember that all, or nearly all, of the histories used in the high schools of Canada are now written by American authors.” The third article published in the *Daily Telegraph* in support of the government was “Reporting on the Board of Education Meeting of February 11.”

<sup>15</sup> “(A) Suggestion [Editorial].”

<sup>16</sup> Between February 9 and 24<sup>th</sup> 1920, pro-government newspapers including the *Daily Telegraph* and the *St. Croix Courier* published three editorials on the subject of Myers’ *General History*. In contrast, the *Daily Gleaner* alone published six, the *St. John Standard* four, and two other papers printed one each for a total of twelve editorials by anti-government publications.

country really won the war, makes [sic] tiresome reading.”<sup>17</sup> The combined effect of the pro-government newspaper reportage and editorials was to suggest that the textbook problem was a minor procedural hiccup, and that Carter and the Board of Education had the situation well in hand.<sup>18</sup>

The Letters to the Editors pages of the newspapers constituted another site where the motivation of the editors of each publication was displayed. All but one of the letters published in the anti-government newspapers echoed the arguments of the editorials in opposition to Carter and the Board of Education, further reinforcing their partisan content. For example, a letter writer to the *St. John Standard* outlined what he saw as the failings of the school authorities, using phrases such as “a very regrettable error of judgment” and “lamentably remiss in their duty.” Kyle MacLaughlan questioned the authority of the Textbook Committee in relation to school law, and dismissed as “fatuous” the argument that only a few copies of the text were sold, or that it would be too expensive to replace the text.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, the pro-government newspapers did not

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<sup>17</sup> "Glory Enough for All [Editorial]," *Daily Telegraph*, February 16, 1920.

<sup>18</sup> For other pro-government editorials, see "Untitled Editorial," *St. John Globe*, February 16, 1920, "Circulation of Myer's History Is Stopped [Editorial]," *The Moncton Transcript*, February 14, 1920, and "Untitled Editorial," *St. Croix Courier*, February 19, 1920.

<sup>19</sup> K.E. MacLaughlan, "In the Editor's Mail [Letter to the Editor]," *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920. For other letters to the editor expressing similar sentiments, see Parent, "The Disgusting Textbook; Perverted History in Use in N.B. Schools [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 12, 1920, Another Parent, "Perverted History. [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920, Canadian Born, "The Board of Education and Myers' Text Book [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920, and "That Perverted History [Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 18, 1920.

print any letters to the editor on the subject of Myers' *General History* in 1920. Their coverage of the controversy was contained entirely within editorials and news reports, reinforcing the idea that their motivation was not to provoke a public outcry, but to support the actions of Carter and the Board of Education.

The only letter to the editor published in support of Carter in an anti-government newspaper focused squarely on administrative process and procedure, reflecting Carter's pragmatic approach to the problem. Its message was undermined by a response published immediately below, however, in an editorial placed to look like a letter. The pro-Carter letter's author was James Vroom, the Secretary of the St. Stephen Board of School Trustees, and an insider as far as administration of schools in New Brunswick was concerned.<sup>20</sup> Vroom noted that Myers' *General History* had never been authorized, and that teachers were not likely to use it again, since according to school law in doing so they would lose their government grant. Vroom was prepared to blame the book dealers who had "blundered," but he reserved praise for Carter saying that he deserved "the thanks of both teachers and dealers for promptly trying to arrange matters without

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<sup>20</sup> Vroom also wrote a letter of support directly to Carter, and Carter's response was described in Chapter 3. See W.S. Carter, to Vroom, James, February 21, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence regarding textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB. Carter and Vroom had likely known each other for many years, since Carter's school inspectorship included Charlotte County, in which St. Stephen is located. When Vroom died in 1932 at the age of eight-five, his obituary mentioned that he had taught until 1887, and that he subsequently served the town in a number of positions. In addition to Secretary of the Board of School Trustees, Vroom was town treasurer, and for forty-five years until his death, town clerk. See "Death of James Vroom Closes Career Crowded with Great Achievements," *Saint Croix Courier*, October 6, 1932.

loss to the dealers as soon as the subject was brought to his attention.”<sup>21</sup> The editorial response to Vroom was twice as long as his letter, and consisted of a blistering critique of his comments, reiterating the fact that process or not, “the indifference of the educational authorities and the inefficiency of the departmental organization . . . made it possible for the history poison to be passed on to the youth of this province.” The response turned into what amounted to a personal attack on Vroom and Carter, concluding that “The absurd suggestion of Mr. Vroom that the responsibility rests with blundering booksellers, reflects a trail of cowardice characteristic of men not at all times conscious of their limitations. In writing he may have yielded, as others have, to the importunities, the persistent pressing, of others interested in misleading the public mind. In that case, it should be regretted that he did not have the stamina sufficient to enable him to resist.”<sup>22</sup>

This response was not located in the usual editorial space, but in the same column below Vroom’s letter. This was a strategic placement which served to counter Vroom’s argument point by point.

The author of this strongly worded editorial and many more like it was James H. Crocket. As editor of Fredericton’s *Daily Gleaner*, he was active in the province’s political affairs, and had been at the forefront of publicizing several major scandals in the years leading up to the Great War.<sup>23</sup> Crocket was born to a Conservative New

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<sup>21</sup> James Vroom, "[Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 23, 1920.

<sup>22</sup> "That Perverted History [Editorial]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 23, 1920.

<sup>23</sup> Eric L. Swanick, "James Harvie Crocket," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online* (2000), [http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id\\_nbr=8091&interval=25&&PHPSESSID=39k43vkd6u9j5vva9kunt5cql6](http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=8091&interval=25&&PHPSESSID=39k43vkd6u9j5vva9kunt5cql6).

Brunswick family, and he and a number of his siblings attained prominence, including one brother who was also a newspaper editor in another part of the province, and another who became a Supreme Court Justice. James Crocket was also the son of William Crocket, who had twice been the Principal of the New Brunswick Normal School, and had held the post of Chief Superintendent of Education from 1883 to 1891. This family connection may have given James Crocket particular insight into the administration of schools, but it also may have been the source of his bitterness during the 1920 history textbook controversy.<sup>24</sup>

Crocket was the recipient of Christopher Armstrong's original letter of complaint and the editor who broke the story about Myers' unauthorized textbook. From the start his criticisms of Carter and the Board of Education were harsh. His motivation was clear: to enlist public reaction against the supposed incompetence of education officials

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<sup>24</sup> School Days Museum, "Dr. William Crocket," *Principals of the Provincial Normal School* (2009), [http://museum.nbta.ca/pns\\_principals.htm](http://museum.nbta.ca/pns_principals.htm). Katherine MacNaughton reports various rumours to the effect that the elder Crocket was dismissed from his Chief Superintendent's post because "he was too friendly with the Roman Catholics of Bathurst" or that "his services had been dispensed with because he was not liberal enough towards the Catholics," or even because his sons had refused to support the Liberal premier in their newspapers. This suggests that James Crocket's 1920 motivations for criticizing the Liberal government stemmed from a long-standing animosity. See Katherine F. MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background* (Fredericton: The University of New Brunswick, 1947), 224n. The senior Crocket's tenure as Chief Superintendent coincided with the first seven years during which Carter worked as a school inspector in southern New Brunswick. See Shawna Stairs Quinn, "'Sympathetic and Practical Men'? School Inspectors and New Brunswick's Educational Bureaucracy, 1879-1909" (M.A. Thesis (History), University of New Brunswick, 2006).



in the province, and by extension, against the Liberal government. The Board's actions, he reasoned, were a sign that the government cared little about national identity or patriotism, and had failed in its responsibility to educate the nation's young in a way that ensured the future of the country. As he wrote in the *Daily Gleaner*, "It is the duty of the Department of Education to have full knowledge of the contents and the character of alterations in and additions made to the prescribed text books. In a matter of such import the public are entitled to something more than the excuses and silly explanations."<sup>25</sup> The "excuses and silly explanations" to which Crocket referred had to do with Carter's descriptions of the method of textbook adoption and distribution, and the publisher's explanation about the Boston shipping error. Crocket was astounded that an unapproved and offensive textbook had slipped into the hands of New Brunswick students without the knowledge of Carter or the Board of Education, and he was equally astonished at what he considered their slow reaction to the problem. Crocket accused the Board of Education of an "unpardonable blunder" and of not acting "broadly and effectively" or with "immediate and decisive action." He concluded that the Chief Superintendent had failed in his duty, resulting in a situation that was "decidedly humiliating." Crocket's assertion that the situation had "provoked much public indignation" indicated progress in the pursuit of his goal to raise a public response.<sup>26</sup>

Within a few days, Crocket reported an upgraded intensity of the public reaction, writing that "The storm of public indignation aroused by the Myers' History bungle is

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<sup>25</sup> "Another Awkward and Humiliating Situation [Editorial]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 11, 1920.

<sup>26</sup> "History Textbook Situation [Editorial]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 12, 1920.

not abating. It is whirling on with increasing force. We are hearing from the country. In every district there has been a combination of the elements, adding power and rigor to the storm.”<sup>27</sup> Perhaps encouraged by his rhetorical flourishes, letter writers to his newspaper avouched his assessment and supported him in his goal, including “Another Parent” who concluded, “We can have but one history in our schools; and why should that be a history in which the public of this province have lost confidence?”<sup>28</sup> The editor of the Saint John *Daily Telegraph* acknowledged Crocket’s purpose and attempted to undermine his argument explaining, “One of the leading Fredericton book sellers states that he has only sold three copies of the objectionable edition of Myers [sic] History. This will give the public some idea of the very small foundation there is for the hullabaloo in connection with the circulation of the book.”<sup>29</sup>

Support for Crocket in his purpose soon appeared in other anti-government newspapers, and they echoed his contention that the Myers controversy threw “further light upon the serious conditions which now prevail in the administration of the affairs of the people of this province.”<sup>30</sup> The editor of the *St. John Standard* saw some good resulting from the controversy: “If the episode of Myer's History . . . has the effect of stimulating public interest in the whole public school system and its methods of

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<sup>27</sup> "Untitled Editorial," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 14, 1920.

<sup>28</sup> Another Parent, "Perverted History. [Letter to the Editor]." Another letter commended Crocket’s “duty-reminding and loyalty-touching articles” which “should rouse the public to a sense of the responsibilities thrust upon them in regard to the teaching of their children in our public schools.” See Canadian Born, "The Board of Education and Myers' Text Book [Letter to the Editor]."

<sup>29</sup> "Myers History Not to Be Used in Public Schools of Province."

<sup>30</sup> "Another Awkward and Humiliating Situation [Editorial]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 11, 1920.

administration something of value may be the outcome.”<sup>31</sup> This editor’s emphasis, like Crocket’s, was telling because it confirmed that the goal of the popular press was to raise public concern about the overall administration of education in New Brunswick, and not just to see that a particular history textbook was removed from the schools.

The editors of the anti-government newspapers and their letter-writing supporters used history education as a way of documenting the government’s failure to do what a government should do, to ensure the preservation of nationalist and patriotic feelings needed by the nation, and the nation’s young, in order to create a strong Canada.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, by including pedagogical ideas with their critiques of the Board of Education, their comments could be framed as a public service. The emphasis of some was on the veracity of facts, but within the descriptions of “truth” were contained a variety of perspectives and concerns put forward in the name of exploring the “truth” being taught to New Brunswick children. In the words of the Saint John *Globe* editor “History, to be worth studying, should be true, and facts should be stated in their true proportions.”<sup>33</sup> “Another Parent” articulated the purpose of history education by describing what it was not, saying, “we have at the head of our educational system one who views the service

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<sup>31</sup> “Muzzling the Muse of History [Editorial],” *The St. John Standard*, February 17, 1920.

<sup>32</sup> The pro-government newspapers are not mentioned here because the focus of their reportage and editorials was on the practicalities of textbook provision, aligned with Carter’s pragmatism. Their editors concentrated on the process of adoption and distribution of textbooks, and not with the purpose of history education, or the definition of Canadian national identity.

<sup>33</sup> “Untitled Editorial,” *St. John Globe*, February 16, 1920. For more references to truth and accuracy, see K.E. MacLaughlan, “In the Editor’s Mail [Letter to the Editor],” *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920, and Another Parent, “Perverted History. [Letter to the Editor].”

of history of nations and of great events to be to please, to tickle the fancy so to speak, to appeal pleasantly and yield to local notions and whims. . . The Chief Superintendent has unfortunately accepted fiction for history, and it is very much to be regretted from very many standpoints that he has blundered so egregiously.”<sup>34</sup> For this correspondent, the “service of history of nations and of great events” should be to present a national story, and one which was true. Letter-writer “Canadian Born” offered an equally clinical description of history as an “engaging and path-directing science.”<sup>35</sup> Crocket judged that Myers’ text would “deface the curriculum.”<sup>36</sup> Other agreed-upon features of history education included the requirement that the author of a textbook be unbiased. In other words, New Brunswick needed “a school history, written by a historian less plainly influenced by prejudices than the author of the book in question.”<sup>37</sup> In addition, history education should provoke strong feelings of patriotism in a nation’s students, and a history textbook was something to inspire public confidence; during this postwar era, the “youth of the province” should be “advised of, and inspired by, the glorious achievement of Canada in the greatest of all wars.”<sup>38</sup>

It was clear that many New Brunswickers feared the consequences would be great if the province failed in its task to educate the province’s students about the war. As MacLaughlan put it, the students were “just at the age when facts once learned are most apt to be assimilated,” and they were “those who in a very few years will be called

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<sup>34</sup> Another Parent, “Perverted History. [Letter to the Editor].”

<sup>35</sup> Canadian Born, “The Board of Education and Myers’ Text Book [Letter to the Editor].”

<sup>36</sup> “That Nauseating Textbook [Editorial],” *The Daily Gleaner*, February 9, 1920.

<sup>37</sup> “Muzzling the Muse of History [Editorial].”

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. See also “History Textbook Situation [Editorial].”

upon to see that Canada occupies and retains her proper place in the family of nations.”

It was “Far, far better to drop the subject of history for the year than to expose our students to daily contact with this miserable effusion which has entered our schools stamped with the approval of whatever body that is at present prescribing our textbooks.”<sup>39</sup> The Saint John *Globe* editor emphasized the historical understanding that Myers’ text failed to provide saying, “It is particularly desirable that the great war [*sic*] be presented to future generations in a way that will make clear the obligations which impelled Canada to join in the struggle, as well as to do justice to the part played by Canadian troops.”<sup>40</sup> These commentators shared the conceptualization of the purpose of history education that it should document the progress of civilization, a notion repeatedly described by Canadian historians.<sup>41</sup> They understood the nature of historical knowledge to be the ability to marshal a collection of “facts,” a “chronicle of events told in an epic format, with good guys and bad guys . . . and a strong, simple and one dimensional plot line.”<sup>42</sup> The epic tale was the Great War, the Germans and the Americans were the bad guys, and the Canadians, the British and their allies were the good guys who had won the war. The editor of the *Standard* likened the Board of

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<sup>39</sup> K.E. MacLaughlan, "In the Editor's Mail [Letter to the Editor]," *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920.

<sup>40</sup> "Untitled Editorial," *St. John Globe*, February 16, 1920.

<sup>41</sup> See for example Amy von Heyking, *Creating Citizens: History and Identity in Alberta's Schools, 1905-1980* (Calgary AB: University of Calgary Press, 2006), Ruth Sandwell, "School History Versus the Historians," *International Journal of Social Education* 20, no. 1 (2005), and Timothy J. Stanley, "Why I Killed Canadian History: Conditions for an Anti-Racist History in Canada," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 33, no. 65 (2000).

<sup>42</sup> Sandwell, "School History Versus the Historians," 9.

Education to King Canute in the way its members, by allowing Myers' *General History* into the province's schools, "would forbid the waves of historical progress to sweep up the shores of New Brunswick."<sup>43</sup>

The specific criticisms of Myers' text centered on two imputed sins: its failure to mention "the glorious achievement of Canada," and its emphasis on American war efforts. These criticisms were in line with postwar feelings of Canadian nationalism and anti-Americanism. Christopher Armstrong's original letter contained a catalogue of the ways these infractions were manifested in Myers' text, and the letter was widely quoted in editorials and letters to the editor.<sup>44</sup> Crocket's initial editorial response to the complaint combined Armstrong's two criticisms with grand language, writing that Myer's *General History* "may suit the taste and appeal to the sentiments of that vulgar and boasting group, a fraction only of a sane and powerful people but it is not the food which should be prescribed for the youth of this or any other British country. Let us have British and Canadian text-books for British and Canadian youth; let us have an accurate and unbiased resume of the mighty and desolating war, free from sloppy adulation which conscious merit scorns, and let Yankees exalt and trumpet in their schools their own belated air."<sup>45</sup> For Crocket, British and Canadian national identity subsisted comfortably; it was the American influence that was "nauseating." Not all the critics agreed wholly with Armstrong's two points of criticism. For instance, MacLaughlan thought the omission of Canada was a lesser offence than "the fact that an

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<sup>43</sup> "Muzzling the Muse of History [Editorial]."

<sup>44</sup> See "That Nauseating Textbook [Editorial].", "An Objectionable Text Book [Editorial]," *The Daily Times*, February 11, 1920, and "Untitled Editorial," *St. Croix Courier*, February 19, 1920.

<sup>45</sup> "That Nauseating Textbook [Editorial]."

inaccurate version of the war is given, tending to produce the idea that the United States forces were the main factor in the war, and to belittle the achievements of Great Britain and her Allies.” Still, he referred to “the important part played by Canada in the struggle. . . ,”<sup>46</sup> suggesting that his own image of national identity, too, incorporated both Britain and Canada. “Canadian Born’s” assessment was specifically anti-American, writing of the textbook that “Canadian self-respect will never tolerate this yoking up with a braggart caudate twin.”<sup>47</sup> Thus the words of these editors and letter writers played on two important dimensions of Canadian national identity during the postwar era. They expressed the persistent shared identity which held that “Canada was essentially part of a family of British nations.”<sup>48</sup> In addition, they served as expressions of the Canadian feeling that “American cultural products were not merely lacking - they were offensive.”<sup>49</sup>

The commentary in the newspapers made frequent use of rhetorical devices which established a normative version of history education and history textbooks, and the rhetoric was applied to the textbook adoption and provision process, Carter and the Board of Education, and Myers’ *General History* itself. The pro-government *Telegraph Journal* described the presence of the textbook in New Brunswick merely as a “mistake”

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<sup>46</sup> K.E. MacLaughlan, "In the Editor's Mail [Letter to the Editor]," *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920.

<sup>47</sup> Canadian Born, "The Board of Education and Myers' Text Book [Letter to the Editor]."

<sup>48</sup> Phillip Buckner, "The Long Goodbye: English Canadians and the British World," in *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 182.

<sup>49</sup> Litt, "Canada Invaded! The Great War, Mass Culture, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism," 338.

and an “oversight.”<sup>50</sup> Meanwhile the *St. Croix Courier* reported that Myer’s text had been “suppressed and banished from the schools, as it properly should be.” Pro-government newspapers agreed that Myers’ text was “inaccurate, misleading and thoroughly undesirable.”<sup>51</sup> The *Moncton Transcript* issued a news report which paraphrased Armstrong’s complaints citing the “undue credit” the text placed on the Americans, saying it “omitted such reference to the part taken by Canada as would be right and proper.”<sup>52</sup> But the editor of the *Courier* concluded that “the province has not known a chief superintendent of such democratic principles as Dr. Carter, or one who has more closely kept in touch with the needs of his department, with the schools, the parents, the pupils and the teachers of the province. Had there been equal zeal for the public welfare displayed in other quarters there would be less cause for just complaint against the present provincial government.”<sup>53</sup> James Vroom, the author of the only letter published in the *Daily Gleaner* in support of Carter and the Board of Education reminded readers that “It would be absurd to suppose that an authorized book could be changed in any way and the authorization not be affected. No one who thinks for a moment would entertain that notion.” He suggested that the *Gleaner*’s “loyal readers, old teachers, returned soldiers and indignant parents among your correspondents are tilting at a windmill.”<sup>54</sup> In other words, he argued that Myers’ textbook was indeed

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<sup>50</sup> "History Shipped Here through Publisher’s Error."

<sup>51</sup> "Untitled Editorial," *St. Croix Courier*, February 19, 1920. See also "Myers History Not to Be Used in Public Schools of Province.", and "Circulation of Myer's History Is Stopped [Editorial]."

<sup>52</sup> "Circulation of Myer's History Is Stopped [Editorial]."

<sup>53</sup> "Untitled Editorial," *St. Croix Courier*, February 19, 1920.

<sup>54</sup> Vroom, "[Letter to the Editor]."



offensive, but Carter and the Board of Education were guilty only of exemplary public service, and their critics were not of sound mind.

The anti-government newspapers, in contrast, cast the textbook adoption and provision process, Carter and the Board of Education, and Myers' *General History* as deficient if not dangerous. Kyle MacLaughlan commented that it was "rather a remarkable thing that the Text Book Committee should have passed Myers' General History into our schools and then object to being held accountable for the latest edition of that history as unauthorized. . . It is a disgraceful commentary on the administration of education in this province that the general public have had in this glaring instance to call the attention of the Board of Education to the subject matter of this book."<sup>55</sup> Crocket blamed the situation on the Board's "General indifference to the fundamentals and lack of reasonable supervision," and characterized Carter's comments as "useless and absurd."<sup>56</sup> "Canadian Born" criticized Carter's "brief and uncomprehensive [*sic*] analysis" of the textbook situation, and hoped that his "mature reflection" would "discover a larger cast of mind."<sup>57</sup> "Another Parent" characterized Carter's response to the controversy as "sloppy opinion [which] finds expression unhesitatingly" and asked,

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<sup>55</sup> K.E. MacLaughlan, "In the Editor's Mail [Letter to the Editor]," *The St. John Standard*, February 19, 1920. MacLaughlan continued saying, "If the board did not know what was in the book they have failed in this most important duty that was entrusted to them. If they are to be justified in this instance, who knows what books may eventually find their way into the hands of our students."

<sup>56</sup> "Another Awkward and Humiliating Situation [Editorial]."

<sup>57</sup> Canadian Born, "The Board of Education and Myers' Text Book [Letter to the Editor]." Meanwhile MacLaughlan asked Carter to provide a "complete and lucid explanation" about the problem. K.E. MacLaughlan, "In the Editor's Mail [Letter to the Editor]," *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920.

“Whither are we drifting with our boasted educational system. . .?” The result was “another awkward and compromising feature in a situation that is already too deplorable.”<sup>58</sup> The intended rhetorical effect of the repetition of words like “disgraceful,” “useless,” “sloppy,” “awkward,” and “deplorable” was to create the overall impression that New Brunswick was in a bad situation, and to suggest that it was clear where the fault lay. The public, they claimed over and over again, should indeed be up in arms.

The descriptions of the unauthorized textbook furthered the project to chip away at public confidence in Carter, the Board of Education, and the Liberal government. Crocket almost begrudgingly called the original edition of Myers’ text a “reasonable history” while the new chapter in the revised edition was a “decidedly objectionable feature.”<sup>59</sup> Letter writer “Canadian Born” applied descriptions to Myers’ *General History* that were strong: “obnoxious,” “offensive and unholy,” an “offered insult.”<sup>60</sup> Kyle MacLaughlan called the contents of Myers’ *General History* “pernicious and mischievous perversions.”<sup>61</sup> Other letters complained that the textbook outraged the public’s self-respect and honour, it was fiction and not history, and it provoked contempt

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<sup>58</sup> Another Parent, “Perverted History. [Letter to the Editor].” “Canadian Born” called the situation a “sorry mess, this wretched mire . . .” Canadian Born, “The Board of Education and Myers’ Text Book [Letter to the Editor].”

<sup>59</sup> “Another Awkward and Humiliating Situation [Editorial].”

<sup>60</sup> Canadian Born, “The Board of Education and Myers’ Text Book [Letter to the Editor].”

<sup>61</sup> K.E. MacLaughlan, “In the Editor’s Mail [Letter to the Editor],” *The St. John Standard*, February 18, 1920.

and not respect from New Brunswick students.<sup>62</sup> Like the rhetoric of their pro-government counterparts, the language used in anti-government newspapers also cast aspersions on anyone who disagreed with the writer's point of view. Crocket described his own supporters as "intelligent, public-spirited and prudent men and women," and called war veterans and the members of patriotic societies "thoughtful, earnest and loyal citizens . . ." He asked, "Is it natural for them to accept [Myers' text] as an impartial and unbiased work?"<sup>63</sup> He concluded saying that "A thinking man, an independent man, a sane man will not attempt to justify what has happened."<sup>64</sup> Only the insane would accept the presence of a "perverted" history in New Brunswick classrooms. Juxtaposed with Vroom's description of the critics who were "tilting at a windmill," these remarks suggest that impugning the sanity of an opponent was an accepted rhetorical practice in the arena of newspaper comment in 1920 New Brunswick.

The culminating effect of these editorials and letters was the rhetorical casting of Myers' text as harmful, of the textbook adoption process as deficient and ineffective, and of Carter and the Board of Education as inept. All of these failings were presented as evidence of the fact that the controversy represented more than a simple bureaucratic bungle; it spoke to a situation of profound administrative incompetence, and the dereliction of the Liberals in one of the key roles of good government, to ensure that nationalism and patriotism were central features of education in New Brunswick.

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<sup>62</sup> See Parent, "The Disgusting Textbook; Perverted History in Use in N.B. Schools [Letter to the Editor].", and Another Parent, "Perverted History. [Letter to the Editor]."

<sup>63</sup> "History Textbook Situation [Editorial]."

<sup>64</sup> "Another Awkward and Humiliating Situation [Editorial].", and "That Perverted History [Editorial]."

The so-called “storm of protest” over Myers’ *General History* eventually petered out. The last editorial on the subject appeared in the *St. John Standard* on February 24<sup>th</sup>, and the *Daily Gleaner* published the last news report and the final letter to the editor on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and March 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively.<sup>65</sup> By that time, perhaps as a symptom of the public’s exhaustion with the controversy, the textbook became the subject of an advertisement that ran in the *Gleaner* on February 24<sup>th</sup>. It read, “Myers [*sic*] History forgot to mention the great part Canadians played in the war. It also forgot to mention the moccasin dance at the Arctic Rink tonight, and this is to be the greatest mirth producer of the season. Barrels of fun. Everybody come.”<sup>66</sup> The same newspaper that had presented the textbook problem imbued with such a sense of urgency now profited from the advertiser who chose to make a joke of the issue. This was either the sign of a further campaign to mock Myers’ text, or an indication that the importance of the controversy had quickly waned. While Carter continued to work on finding a suitable replacement for several months more, the newspapers moved on to other topics.

Carter’s narrative of the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy was pragmatic and administrative. So was the narrative of the pro-government newspapers. They referred to the purpose of history education hardly at all, while condemning Myers for not mentioning Canada. Their purpose was to support Carter and the Board of Education, and to downplay the seriousness of the situation. The narrative of the anti-government newspapers had a different purpose. It consisted of critiques of Carter and

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<sup>65</sup> See “Text Books and Teachers [Editorial],” *The St. John Standard*, February 24, 1920, “Myers History N.B. And N.S.,” *The Daily Gleaner*, February 23, 1920, and “From the People [Letter to the Editor],” *The Daily Gleaner*, March 3, 1920.

<sup>66</sup> “Myers’ History (Advertisement),” *The Daily Gleaner*, February 24, 1920.

the Board, and it marshalled arguments about the purpose of history education in order to reinforce the critique, but for reasons of convenience as much as conviction. Anti-government editors, represented in the extreme by the *Daily Gleaner's* James Crocket, hoped to stir public opinion against the Liberal government and used the political composition of the Board of Education as a means to focus the criticism. To a lesser extent, Canadian postwar feelings of national identity and anti-Americanism were also invoked by editors, reporters, and on the Letters to the Editor pages, not necessarily because they cared about nationalism and patriotism, but because they thought the voting public did.

The anti-government newspapers made a number of demands during the controversy, but on the whole, their campaign, always an exercise in political anti-government rhetoric, had little long term effect. True, Myers' textbook was removed from classrooms, but this was a general demand not particular to the anti-government press. Neither Carter nor the Board of Education nor the government resigned; this is not surprising since this call was more of a knee-jerk response on the part of the newspapers, and one that was (and still is) a regular feature of political debate. A replacement text was found, but it was British, not Canadian, because no Canadian World History textbook existed. The strong anti-American feelings of New Brunswickers were appeased by the fact that at least it was not American. The newspapers' complaints came to very little, and the words of Nova Scotia's MacKay describing their efforts, while not

helpful to Carter when received, were prescient: “Montes parturiunt, nascitur ridiuculus mus. [sic]”<sup>67</sup>

Where the anti-government newspapers’ campaign against Carter and the Board of Education appears to have failed utterly was in creating a true “storm of protest.” If Crocket and his ilk hoped to raise the public ire, they did so only in the pages of their newspapers. No evidence exists to suggest that members of the public rose in complaint against Myers’ text and the actions of Carter and the Board of Education. During the winter months of 1920, other than the representatives of patriotic organizations who asked Carter to remove Myers’ *General History* from the province’s classrooms, no other individuals or groups wrote in complaint. When Sanderson’s abridged text was finally prescribed in August, no parents wrote to express concern about the cost of buying a new book. The teachers were also silent throughout the period of the controversy, writing no letters to Carter and offering no comment in their professional journal, the *Educational Review*.<sup>68</sup> The public uprising anticipated, provoked and encouraged by the anti-government newspapers did not materialize.

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<sup>67</sup> From the Latin, “The mountains parted, giving birth to a ridiculous mouse.” A.H. MacKay, to Carter, W.S., February 26, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B7E2. PANB.

<sup>68</sup> In addition, the Fredericton and Saint John Board of School Trustee reports for February and March contained no mention of the textbook issue. See City of Fredericton Board of School Trustees, *Minute Books (Book 3)* (Fredericton: New Brunswick Board of Education, 1920-1926), and Board of School Trustees of St. John, *Minutes of Regular Meeting* (St. John: New Brunswick Board of Education, 1920). The fact that parents and teachers did not write to Carter about Myers’ *General History* does not mean that they did not have other concerns. Letters to Carter from teachers included topics such as teacher-trustee relations and school discipline. See for example Anna F. Cyr, to Carter, W.S., March 13, 1920.

In the absence of documented public outcry after early March, however, Carter and the Board of Education persisted in their attempts to find a suitable replacement textbook. The pressure to do so must have come from somewhere. It may have been informal, expressed orally and thus remaining undocumented. The documentation may have been part of a collection that, because it originated from other than administrative sources, was not retained in the archives.<sup>69</sup> What is clear is that the opinions of New Brunswick's clerics regarding the replacement text were of utmost importance to the resolution of the problem. This practice, a relic of the 1875 Compromise, was acknowledged only once in the newspaper coverage of the controversy.<sup>70</sup> If Carter's

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RS116 B8k4. PANB, P.M. Monahan, to Carter, W.S., February 24, 1920. RS116 B8j4. PANB, and Florine Roy, to Carter, W.S., May 14, 1920. RS116 B8h4a. PANB.

Parents wrote to Carter regarding questions about topics including parent-teacher and parent-trustee relations, and provision of schools. Examples of these letters are Mrs. Clarence Craig, to Carter, W.S., May 15, 1920. RS116 B8c1d. PANB, Nelson Deacon, to Carter, W.S., May 6, 1920. RS116 B8c1d. PANB, and Fred Fletcher, to Carter, W.S., May 13, 1920. RS116 B8c1d. PANB. These letters from parents confirm that well into the twentieth century, New Brunswick "citizens made use of administrative channels to further their schooling objectives." Stairs Quinn, "'Sympathetic and Practical Men'? School Inspectors and New Brunswick's Educational Bureaucracy, 1879-1909", 63.

<sup>69</sup> Gidney and Lawr have noted that in Ontario, "the records of local conflicts, petitions, complaints, pleas for advice or redress of grievances generated by parents, teachers, ratepayers, and other interested participants outside official circles have rarely survived." This may also have been the case for some, although clearly not all such documents in New Brunswick. R.D. Gidney and Douglas A. Lawr, "Bureaucracy Vs. Community? The Origins of Bureaucratic Procedure in the Upper Canadian School System," *Journal of Social History* 13, no. 3 (1980): 440.

<sup>70</sup> The *Daily Telegraph* mentioned that "When Myers [*sic*] General History was first authorized, the text book committee had to meet not only the views of those interested in the authenticity of the history but

purpose during the 1920 history textbook controversy was to ensure the continued smooth running of the administration of New Brunswick schools and to avoid offending anyone, and the anti-government newspapers' object was to incite the public, encouraging its members to be offended and in doing so, denigrate the Liberal government, the purpose of the clerics was something quite different again.

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also had to satisfy the leaders of the different religious denominations that there was nothing objectionable in its pages." "Myers History Not to Be Used in Public Schools of Province."



## **Chapter 5: Clerics as Active Agents in the 1920 New Brunswick History Textbook Controversy**

It is difficult to consider the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy without revisiting the 1875 Compromise, because the issues at the centre of the earlier incident remained at the centre of public discussions about education forty-five years later. The measures designed to protect Roman Catholic educational interests in 1875 that were most relevant had to do with the provision of textbooks. Although New Brunswick's schools would remain non-sectarian, every attempt would be made by educational authorities "to keep the school books free from matter objectionable to anyone on religious grounds. . . ."<sup>1</sup> Thus, without the Compromise, 1920 clerics would never have been asked their opinions about textbooks, and the volume selected by the Textbook Committee at their April meeting would have been officially prescribed in plenty of time for the start of the new school year in September. As it was, the Anglican Bishop was not asked to comment, the Baptist Minister supported the first alternative, which was Sanderson's *Outlines of World History* without being critical of Myers' *General History*, and the Roman Catholic Bishop Edouard LeBlanc supported Myers, but not because he approved of the way the American's text dealt with the Great War. For LeBlanc, another issue was at stake. During a time and in a place, 1920s New Brunswick, where social and economic conflicts focused on Acadian fears of continued Anglophone Protestant supremacy, and at the same time that these issues were

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<sup>1</sup> Katherine F. MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background* (Fredericton: The University of New Brunswick, 1947), 220.

politicized within the context of successive provincial elections, LeBlanc found unacceptable the religious undertones of the replacement texts with which he was presented. From his perspective, they were simply too pro-Protestant and too anti-Catholic compared to Myers' text.

Chief Superintendent Carter wrote to his Nova Scotia counterpart at Easter to report that Sanderson's *Outlines of World History* had been recommended by the Textbook Committee. Describing it as an "emergency measure," Carter said "the Board expressed strong preference for a book of British or Canadian authorship. We have have [sic] not a large field for selection, but the Committee thinks very highly of this book. . . . If the book runs the gauntlet successfully of the theologians, I think it will be adopted by the Board."<sup>2</sup> LeBlanc rejected Sanderson's text, however, so that by June the Board of Education was no further ahead than it had been in February. With public opposition to Myers' *General History*, and formal Roman Catholic opposition to the proposed replacements, and highly sensitive to the political repercussions of offending the Acadian electorate, the Board of Education took the extreme measure of truncating the World History curriculum, and in doing so removed the difficult politicized issues the textbook controversy was feeding.

By reading the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy through the lens of the 1875 Compromise, we can focus our attention upon the lack of participation of the Anglican Bishop, the limited participation of the Baptist representative, and the decisive influence of Roman Catholic Bishop LeBlanc. This brings another dimension –

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<sup>2</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., April 6, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B7e2. Provincial Archives of New Brunswick.

the longstanding religious conflict within New Brunswick in general and New Brunswick education in particular – to our understanding of the process of the controversy. Reading the textbook controversy through the lens of the Compromise brings New Brunswick clerics into the narrative, revealing that they harboured clear notions about the purpose of education, including history education. Religion and language were particularly important to Bishop LeBlanc, and he had a direct impact upon the selection of a replacement for Myers' *General History*. But while honouring the 1875 Compromise may have been an important factor in the decision to involve the clerics and ultimately truncate the New Brunswick secondary school World History curriculum, the reason why Chief Superintendent Carter and the Board of Education were so affected by LeBlanc's textbook criticisms also lies in the political climate of 1920 New Brunswick. For the terms of the 1875 Compromise served in practice as a convenient vehicle that the Liberal government could manipulate to gain political support from the province's Acadian population.

Historians agree that the 1875 Compromise grew out of long standing conflict about religion, language and education, that it was intended to ease the tensions between New Brunswick's Anglophone Protestants and French Roman Catholics, and that a range of strategies was articulated in the Compromise to ensure that this goal was met.<sup>3</sup> The Compromise included the proviso that in heavily populated areas, Roman Catholic children could be grouped together in a school, and certificates of the Superior of any

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<sup>3</sup> Neil J. Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History" (Ph.D. Dissertation (History), Dartmouth University, 1992), and MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*.

Roman Catholic teaching order could substitute for Normal School attendance, although the candidates would still have to sit a licensing exam. The request for a shortened school day in order to allow time for religious instruction was rejected because the Common School Act already permitted the renting of parochial buildings for use as schools, and it was determined that “no restriction would be placed upon the use of such buildings after the close of the school.”<sup>4</sup> One of the key components of the Compromise, as Katherine MacNaughton argues, was that Roman Catholic teachers “should not be compelled to use any books which might contain anything objectionable to them in a religious point of view, with particular reference to the History and Readers prescribed by the Board of Education.”<sup>5</sup> While they agree that the official response was a promise to ensure the acceptability of all texts, these same historians do not document the first manifestation of the Compromise in the practice of submitting textbooks to clerics for review. A conflict over religion was the prime impetus for the Compromise, but language was also a factor. As Katherine MacNaughton observes, “Even if religion was the main issue, there are signs that the dual elements in the language and culture of the

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<sup>4</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*, 221. This regulation was important to the bilingual schools of Moncton, where parochial buildings were rented by the local school trustees for the provision of public education. See Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History", and Maud Hazel Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick" (Ed.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1964).

<sup>5</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*, 220.

province had become complicating factors by [1875].”<sup>6</sup> The primacy of religion and language in Acadian national identity is well-documented in scholarly research.<sup>7</sup>

New Brunswick’s provincial educational infrastructure was intended for all of the province’s population, Anglophone and Francophone, Protestant and Roman Catholic. Indeed, New Brunswick’s political elite trumpeted the accomplishments of Acadian students, as in 1889 when the provincial premier noted in an Ottawa speech that ““It goes without saying that French and English are equally taught in the schools. The French are anxious that their children learn English. They know that it is in their own interest to acquire this knowledge. . . For some years the administration of our school laws has been entirely divorced from politics, and I think it is better so. Our people are not afraid of French domination – the children of Acadian parents learn to read and write their own language in our public schools.””<sup>8</sup> Historians have argued, however, that economic and cultural differences between Anglophone Protestants and Acadians

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History", Colin M. Coates, "French Canadians' Ambivalence to the British Empire," in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Phillip A. Buckner (Oxford/Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2008), Naomi E. Griffiths, *The Acadians: Creation of a People* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1973), James Laxer, *The Acadians: In Search of a Homeland* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2006), and Richard Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick* (Halifax: Formac Press, 1989).

<sup>8</sup> Honorable A.G. Blair, quoted in Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick", 344. The premier’s remark about the apolitical nature of education is ironic and must itself be interpreted as political rhetoric, given the evidence of the role of politics throughout the history of New Brunswick schools.

resulted in different valuing of literacy in particular and education more generally. Hody explains that “the Acadians, returning from exile [after 1755], were scattered in tiny parishes throughout the northern counties,” and traditionally, Acadian children were prepared for life on the farm and in the home, and had little need for literacy. Acadians also strongly desired that education be sectarian.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, she adds, the Protestant faith emphasized Bible reading, which demanded literacy, resulting in an ethos valuing educational achievement. The result was that “Even before the [largely Protestant] Loyalists arrived in New Brunswick they had planned educational institutions for their future province, and there was little delay in seeking, and obtaining, funds for the support of the French Academy, later (1800) the College of New Brunswick. . . .”<sup>10</sup>

The educational experience of New Brunswick’s Acadians was certainly different from their Québécois counterparts, partly because New Brunswick education

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<sup>9</sup> Hody adds that “Although Acadian children have been attending neutral schools in New Brunswick for nearly a hundred years, the Acadians still hope to have an Acadian school system, French and Catholic, for their children. They consider a neutral school Protestant in its nature, but attack the public school mainly on the grounds of its lack of all religion.” Hody, “The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick”, 123, 28. See also Boucher, “Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History”, MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*.

<sup>10</sup> Hody, “The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick”, 122-24. See also MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*.

included reforms absent in the Quebec system.<sup>11</sup> Both populations were “French in language and spirit, Roman Catholic in faith and morals, conservative in social policy and economics, and agrarian in population.”<sup>12</sup> But the demographics of New Brunswick and Quebec were distinct from each other. New Brunswick’s French speakers constituted a minority of about a third of the provincial population, while Quebec’s French speaking population comprised a large majority.<sup>13</sup>

Evidence suggests that in spite of early indications of Acadian apathy toward education, by the late nineteenth century, apathy had been replaced by determination.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Roger Magnuson describes the Quebec situation saying, “Measures designed to improve public education and to facilitate school accessibility – free and compulsory education, free textbooks, obligatory teacher training, and minimum salaries for teachers – were ignored or rebuffed by Quebec’s ruling élites, including the government, the higher Catholic clergy, and the Catholic Committee.” Roger P. Magnuson, *The Two Worlds of Quebec Education During the Traditional Era, 1760-1940* (London ON: The Althouse Press, 2005), 132.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 121. Hody adds that “The Acadians consider themselves a peaceful, mild, and patient people, quite distinct from the militant French-Canadians.” Hody, “The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick”, 20.

<sup>13</sup> According to the 1921 census, in Quebec those “British born” (i.e. born in Canada) over age 10 who could speak only French was about 49 per cent, while those who could speak both French and English was 39 per cent. Department of Trade and Commerce, “Sixth Census of Canada - Bulletin XIX: Language Spoken and Mother Tongue [Microfiche],” ed. Canada. Dominion Bureau of Statistics (F. Acland, 1921-1923), 9. For the corresponding New Brunswick proportions, see Figure 1.3.

<sup>14</sup> The Caraquet riots which led to the 1875 Compromise provide an example of this determination. See MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*. The riots have their parallel in those described by Wendie Nelson which occurred in the eastern townships of Quebec in the mid-nineteenth century. Nelson argues

By then, New Brunswick's Acadian population was "growing steadily in numbers, importance, and national consciousness."<sup>15</sup> This trend continued into the twentieth century, and education was viewed as important to the maintenance of their national identity, with the notion that "The greatest guarantee for the preservation of the French language (and in the Acadians' view, their religion) came through the schools."<sup>16</sup> The principles of the province's Anglophone Protestant elite regarding education for French-speaking students did not necessarily constitute practice, however, and educational opportunities were still less than those offered to English-speaking students. During the early 1900s, attention toward inequities in Anglophone and Francophone education was renewed. For instance, starting in 1908, Acadian school inspectors complained about the lack of a French history text. This led to the creation of Bourgeois' *Histoire Elémentaire*

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convincingly that the troubles arose because "most parents wished to school their children, but objected to compulsion and to taxes deemed to be unjustly burdensome." Wendie Nelson, "'Rage against the Dying of Light': Interpreting the Guerre Des Eteignoirs," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (December, 2000)., para.24

<sup>15</sup> MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900; a Study in Historical Background*, 228. Stairs Quinn describes the career of school inspector Valentin Landry, which was cut short in 1886 because of his inability to reconcile his ardent Acadian national identity with the demands of the job. Shawna Stairs Quinn, "'Sympathetic and Practical Men'? School Inspectors and New Brunswick's Educational Bureaucracy, 1879-1909" (M.A. Thesis (History), University of New Brunswick, 2006).

<sup>16</sup> Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History", 227.



a few years later, although the text was bilingual, not unilingually French.<sup>17</sup> Other problems included the shortage of licensed teachers, and the lack of prescribed standards, with the result that according to the Annual Report for the 1911-1912 school year, in Acadian schools “Pupils were promoted not in accordance with their attainments, but in nearly all cases in compliance with the expressed wishes of parents and guardians.”<sup>18</sup> In addition, New Brunswick had only three bilingual Superior Schools.<sup>19</sup>

Parochial schools continued to exist into the twentieth century, and they were sites of further struggle, not just over religion, but language as well. Neil Boucher notes that these schools were only “tolerated” provincially, and in places like Moncton the power to regulate schools was in Protestant hands. The situation was further complicated by the fact that such schools “were not catering to Acadian linguistic aspirations. At the beginning of the twentieth century what could be termed parochial schools were

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<sup>17</sup> Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick". See Ph. F. Bourgeois, *Histoire Élémentaire Du Canada* (London: Thomas Nelson et Fils, Ltd., n.d.).

<sup>18</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1911-1912 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1913), 27. School inspector reports throughout the first and second decade of the twentieth century outlined the Acadian teacher shortage.

<sup>19</sup> Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick". Hody describes the work of the two Acadian school inspectors who together “developed a program of studies, achieved the introduction of new textbooks, and supervised the evolution of the graded schools of 1926 from the pathetic rural schools of 1900.” ———, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick", 132-33. For more on inequities in provision of and programs offered by French schools, see John E. Warner, "History of Secondary Education in New Brunswick" (M.A. Thesis (History), University of New Brunswick, 1944).

decidedly Anglophone.”<sup>20</sup> In fact, the first major challenge for Roman Catholic Bishop Edouard LeBlanc when he assumed his new post in 1912 was to settle a question over the division of an existing Moncton parish into two new parishes, one French and one English so that schools could be established in each language. In doing so, he waded into an “ethno-linguistic rivalry that had pitted Acadian nationalists against the Irish clergy within the Maritime Catholic church for years.”<sup>21</sup> By 1920 additional tensions were added to existing ones, including the heightened feelings created by the wartime conscription crisis and Acadian sympathy for the Irish rebellion.<sup>22</sup> Although these extra tensions were not related to schooling, they added to the Acadian sense of difference from their provincial counterparts, whether Anglophone or Protestant or both.

Into this complicated web of relationships came the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy. Given the Anglophone nature of secondary education in the province, and the small number of students who studied history at the time, very few Acadian students would have encountered Myers’ *General History*. Still, their Bishop played a pivotal role in the resolution of the controversy, one that was considerably more significant than that of either the Anglican or Baptist clerics. An examination of the

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<sup>20</sup> Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History", 227.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 246. Hody also notes the animosity between the Acadians and the Irish clergy. Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick".

<sup>22</sup> For more on conscription, see Patrice A. Dutil, "Against Isolationism: Napoléon Belcourt, French Canada, and 'La Grande Guerre'," in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David MacKenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005). Hody describes Acadian support for the Irish. See Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick".

attitudes of the religious leaders toward education, including history education, juxtaposed with an understanding of the political climate of the time brings clarity to an otherwise puzzling state of affairs in which the administrative practices of a non-sectarian education system were subject to considerable sectarian influence.

The Anglican Bishop played no apparent part in the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy. We can only assume that this is because the Anglicans represented a smaller proportion of the population than either the Roman Catholics or the Baptists.<sup>23</sup> Still, it is possible to determine Richardson's ideas about education at the time, and they provide a window on Protestant clerical thinking.<sup>24</sup> Bishop John Richardson was a New Brunswick delegate at the 1919 National Conference on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship in Winnipeg. At that meeting his presence along with that of other religious leaders was suspect. A contemporary report noted that "Educators cast sidelong glances at clericals - and with abundant justification. For here, quiet but persistent propaganda was carried on prior to the Conference and throughout the Conference, to secure the direct functioning of religion in the school curriculum."<sup>25</sup> The result was a resolution, according to the report, which

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<sup>23</sup> See Figure 1.2.

<sup>24</sup> John Andrew Richardson (1868-1938) was Bishop of Fredericton from 1908 until 1938. See The Anglican Church of Canada, "Metropolitans of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada," The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, <http://www.anglican.ca/search/faq/023.htm>, and D.G. Bell, "Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online: W.O. Raymond," University of Toronto/Université Laval, [http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id\\_nbr=8337&&PHPSESSID=yhzfqkvzape](http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=8337&&PHPSESSID=yhzfqkvzape).

<sup>25</sup> Ernest Thomas, "Canada's First National Conference on Character Education," *Social Welfare* II, no. 3 (1919): 69.

favoured a scientific and not a spiritual approach, expressed in the assertion that the council's work was "to be educational and the interests of education are alone to be considered. Religious methods which conflict with the assured results of educational science are not to operate from the first."<sup>26</sup>

While Chief Superintendent Carter launched his search for a replacement for Myers' *General History* in February 1920, the undaunted Bishop Richardson was in Ottawa as a New Brunswick delegate to the inaugural meeting of the National Council on Character Education. Meeting minutes show that Bishop Richardson attempted to revisit the role of religion in education for citizenship, as the council considered the earlier Winnipeg resolution regarding "the deepening and strengthening of the moral and spiritual factors" in education.<sup>27</sup> The Bishop expressed that "he personally had little faith in the practicability of imparting ethical education or moral ideals unless they were somehow related to supernatural sanction, whether from the Bible or from the Church."<sup>28</sup> A Nova Scotia school administrator countered with the contention that "the word 'spiritual' was given too narrow an interpretation. The spiritual, he said, was generally conceded to be everything that was non-material in person or personality, and as almost synonymous with the 'aesthetic.' The human soul was more than a religious item."<sup>29</sup> The minutes report no resolution to this discussion, but Bishop Richardson's part in it is notable for purposes of comparison of his ideas to those of his New

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> National Council on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship, *Minutes of Meeting of National Council on Character Education in Relation to Canadian Citizenship* (Ottawa: 1920), 15.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

Brunswick counterparts of other Christian sects. Like the Roman Catholic Bishop LeBlanc, Richardson felt strongly that religion had a place in the province's public schools.

New Brunswick archival documents contain no record of Carter asking Bishop Richardson his opinion about history textbooks. The Chief Superintendent did, however, write to a minister of the largest Protestant sect in the province: the Baptists.<sup>30</sup> In his response G.C. Warren, the pastor of Brunswick Street United Baptist Church in Fredericton, found nothing in the unabridged Sanderson's *Outlines of World History* to offend his faith. Instead he offered a critique that was more pedagogical in nature saying, "It is a good history, and ought to make a suitable text-book for our schools. Its pages, however, for a history of the world, seem unnecessarily crowded with the names of persons and events that are more or less obscure."<sup>31</sup> Warren considered the text for its literary merit, complained that it did not "measure up to the standard of the excellent text it is intended to displace," adding that he was prejudiced in Myers' favour because it was the history text he had studied at school, and had used as a reference ever since.<sup>32</sup> Given a choice, Warren would have retained Myers' *General History*. Unfortunately for Carter, this was not an option. Still, it illustrates that Warren was unconcerned about the

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<sup>30</sup> See Figure 1.2.

<sup>31</sup> G.C. Warren, to Carter, W.S., April 27, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks/Library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. This last admission suggests that Warren was considerably younger than Richardson or LeBlanc, since by then Myers' *General History* had been prescribed for New Brunswick secondary school history students for ten years.

way Myers' text presented Canadians' role in the Great War, or with the text's American content. This was in direct contrast to the concerns expressed in the popular press.

Roman Catholic Bishop Eduoard LeBlanc was the cleric whose opinions were most carefully considered by Carter and the Board of Education, as evidenced by their ultimate decision to prescribe Sanderson's text, but in its abridged form. Historians disagree about the importance of LeBlanc to education in New Brunswick, and much of the disagreement can be traced to differences in the way they interpret the problematic role of Acadian religion, language and culture in the history of New Brunswick society and education. Hody downplays LeBlanc's Acadian identity in describing his appointment to the diocese of Saint John, suggesting that it was an act of appeasement to ease the tensions between the Acadian and the Irish Catholics.<sup>33</sup> She argues as well that until 1936, the Roman Catholic clergy interfered little in French-language education. Neil Boucher, in contrast, carefully documents LeBlanc's Acadian identity, and characterizes the Bishop's attention to education as strategic. Boucher posits that the Nova Scotia-born LeBlanc's "Acadian background and his Eudist training meant that he understood . . . that there should be a link between religion and linguistic survival." Indeed, writes Boucher, "for LeBlanc the fight over education had a particular twist because for him there was more at stake than merely the religious dimension for which previous bishops had fought. He perceived the whole linguistic and cultural identity of

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<sup>33</sup> Hody writes, "True, Saint John was an English-speaking diocese; true, Mgr. LeBlanc was himself more English than French. But his name was Acadian, and he spoke French - that was enough. The Acadians had their bishop." Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick", 91.

Acadians to be at risk as well.”<sup>34</sup> This is a nuanced view of LeBlanc’s motivation, acknowledging that his desire to improve education for Acadians as a means of promoting the French language was also wrapped up in ensuring maintenance of the supply of recruits of future priests and nuns. One of the key features of LeBlanc’s long range plans for education, Boucher argues, included the establishment of a community of French teaching nuns, a goal which he achieved in 1924. Boucher describes the importance of this milestone for the Bishop: “A Francophone teaching order could provide French language education in the many Acadian villages and small towns of his diocese. He may also have thought that this could become a means of stabilizing the rural Acadian community.”<sup>35</sup> This description of the Bishop driven by active purpose, rather than the apathy suggested by Hody, offers a characterization of LeBlanc which was also manifested in his contributions to the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy.

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<sup>34</sup> In describing the Eudists, Boucher says “Intellectually, they came to live in a world polarized between good and evil, royalism and republicanism, Catholicism and Protestantism. Traditional values and strong central authority, both bulwarks against heretical innovation, were regarded as crucial. Thus, what came out of Rome, the pinnacle of ecclesiastical authority, was regarded as God-spoken and not to be challenged.” Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History", 247, 83, 191-92. The text and tone of LeBlanc’s letters about history textbooks in 1920 closely follow this description.

<sup>35</sup> Boucher adds that “At this time nationalists were trying to prevent Acadians from migrating, even to take up residence in urban settings, especially large ones both inside and outside the Maritimes.” Ibid., 298.

Evidence suggests that LeBlanc was preoccupied throughout his career with both religion and language, but in his letters regarding textbooks in 1920, he omitted language as a point of contention. Instead, his writing expressed a deep concern for the way Roman Catholicism was depicted in the proposed replacements, including Sanderson's unabridged *Outlines of World History* and *A General History of the World* by Oscar Browning. He penned long epistles with line-by-line analyses of the texts and the way they offended the faith.<sup>36</sup> For example, he complained of Sanderson's text that "There is hardly a page in it but has unfortunate insinuations, false or misleading statements. I would not say that the author intended to be unfair, but his sources of information are evidently one sided. Much of the book is a praise of the Reformation and a condemnation of the Catholic Church."<sup>37</sup> Critiquing Browning's text LeBlanc wrote "Throughout, like a connecting thread, runs the story of successive Popes, and, at every available opportunity, innuendoes, untrue statements and sneers are thrown at, either the occupant of the papal chair, or the papal authority itself."<sup>38</sup> These texts were in clear contradiction to his Eudist perspective and beliefs.

Like Warren the Baptist minister, LeBlanc alluded to issues of pedagogy in history instruction as part of his criticism saying that Browning's text would "confuse the student, rather than instruct him. It is not a logical history, i.e., one grouping events

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<sup>36</sup> Aside from the focus on religious content, these letters resembled the line-by-line critiques found in newspaper editorials and letters to the editor.

<sup>37</sup> E.A. LeBlanc, to Carter, W.S., April 9, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>38</sup> ———, to Carter, W.S., April 16, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.



around certain cardinal epochs, and showing how one period of history has its influence on another. It seems, rather, to be a mere chronology, to be, from beginning to end, a kaleidoscopic jumble of names and dates - - all tending to make the study of history a confusing and trying and distasteful thing to the average child.”<sup>39</sup> In other words, while LeBlanc argued explicitly that history education should present a logical progression of events, his other comments made it clear that “logical progression” should not include the inevitable triumph of Protestantism over Roman Catholicism. When LeBlanc was called away to Rome, another cleric stepped in to critique Sir Edward Parrott’s *Allies, Foes & Neutrals*; his assessment rejected the text and repeated LeBlanc’s criticisms of Sanderson’s and Browning’s texts. He referred to the heavy responsibility inherent in watching over the education of the flock saying, “It does not satisfy me as an acceptable text-book of history to be placed in the hands of our Catholic youth, whose interests in such matters it is my duty to safeguard as far as possible.”<sup>40</sup> The Bishop and his proxy had a duty toward Acadian children, and that duty extended to the progress of students within the non-sectarian school system.

In his letters, LeBlanc concentrated heavily on the appropriateness of proposed texts for Roman Catholic students and touched on the pan-Canadian nationalistic perspective only lightly. When he did turn his attention to national identity, his words about public education were somewhat ironic from a cleric taking advantage of the opportunity to exert influence upon a non-sectarian education system: “Texts [*sic*] books for public schools should be such as would not supply an excuse for controversy in the

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Louis J. O’Leary, to Carter, W.S., April 23, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and Library Books, 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

recitation of the lessons of the day. No one wants that in this country.”<sup>41</sup> The foundational issue for LeBlanc, therefore, was that none of the proposed replacements were appropriate to teach Roman Catholic students, so no New Brunswick students should be exposed to them. Like Warren, he expressed his preference for Myers’ *General History* saying, “I sincerely hope that Myers [*sic*] History will not be recalled for a simple omission and replaced by [a] misleading and unfair History of the World.”<sup>42</sup>

Among all the participants in the discussion about history textbooks in 1920, only the clerics became involved by invitation, not compulsion, and this influenced the nature of their participation. For LeBlanc, as for Warren, Myers’ treatment of the war was a minor concern. Both men barely mentioned the Great War in their correspondence with Carter. Their handling of the questions surrounding replacement textbooks, thus, stand in stark contrast to the perspectives and motivations of Carter, the Board of Education, their supporters, and those for whom Myers’ unauthorized chapter was so offensive. The clerics used the invitation, in Warren’s case, to express mild disapproval of a proposed replacement and support for Myers’ text, and in LeBlanc’s case, to support Myers while furthering a cherished aspiration to align school materials with the tenets of his religion. In taking advantage of the opportunity afforded him, LeBlanc acted with a mindset similar to the Anglican Bishop Richardson who used the national stage to press his cause of religion in schools. The evidence suggests that the reason why Richardson did not become involved in the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook

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<sup>41</sup> E.A. LeBlanc, to Carter, W.S., April 16, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

<sup>42</sup> E.A. LeBlanc, to Carter, W.S., April 9, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB. Emphasis in the original.

controversy, and the Baptist minister was only peripherally involved, was that the issue simply was not as pressing for Protestant as it was for Roman Catholic clergy in a province where secondary school education was already effectively Protestant.

If LeBlanc made strategic use of the textbook controversy to reiterate the importance of a Roman Catholic education, so too did the Board of Education have its own strategies and its own agenda. The New Brunswick archives contain no evidence to suggest that the terms of the 1875 Compromise were still in effect in 1920, other than the Board's move to solicit comments from clerics regarding the selection of replacement textbooks. Even though the majority of the critiques of the proposed replacement texts were negative, particularly the ones from Bishop LeBlanc, this does not explain why the Board of Education deemed it necessary to adopt the creative solution of changing not just the World History text, but the World History curriculum in time for the start of classes in September. New Brunswick's school system may have been non-sectarian, but this drastic decision indicates the importance of securing agreement about the textbook from the Roman Catholic Bishop. The stakes were high.

The most convincing explanation of just how and why the solution to the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy was provided by the truncation of the World History course can be found in the province's politics. The controversy occurred during the midpoint of a period of Liberal government in New Brunswick. The Liberals took office in 1917, were re-elected in 1920, and defeated in 1925. Calvin Woodward's account of the 1917 election campaign indicates that it was a bitter one. The then-Conservative government stressed issues including the provision of benefits for returning veterans and the creation of measures designed to attract immigrants. The government's platform highlighted achievements in education such as a reduction in

textbook prices and improvements in the Teacher's Pension Act. The Liberal opposition's promises included assistance to immigrants and improvements to education. The opposition won the election by a narrow margin.<sup>43</sup> Boucher suggests that "the Liberal victory was due in part to the overwhelming support they received in the counties where the Acadian population predominated."<sup>44</sup> David MacKenzie describes the outraged reaction of the *Daily Gleaner* editor to the election results. James Crocket wrote "If the English-speaking electorate submit quietly to the humiliation, the Acadians and their church will soon be in absolute control of the government and the affairs of the province."<sup>45</sup>

The next change in New Brunswick government occurred as a result of the 1925 election, and by Woodward's account, it was just as bitter as its 1917 predecessor, centering on a government hydro-electric project but also featuring a strong undercurrent of anti-Acadian feeling. The premier by then was Pierre Veniot, former Minister of Supply and Services, member of the Board of Education and the 1920 ad hoc textbook

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<sup>43</sup> Calvin A. Woodward, *The History of New Brunswick Provincial Election Campaigns and Platforms, 1866-1974: With Primary Source Documents on Microfiche* (Toronto: Micromedia, c1976).

<sup>44</sup> Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History", 264.

<sup>45</sup> David MacKenzie, "Eastern Approaches: Maritime Canada and Newfoundland," in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David MacKenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 358. The strength of Crocket's reaction against the Acadians raises the question of whether Crocket knew about LeBlanc's role in choosing a new textbook in 1920. The fact that his editorials about history textbooks did not focus on language or religion, and that they subsided before the end of February and did not resume in August with the decision of the ad hoc textbook committee, suggests that he did was not aware of the Bishop's part in textbook selection.

committee, and an Acadian. At least one newspaper reported a whispering campaign against Veniot, and “In the Saint John River counties, it was said that the word was spread that Veniot intended to institute a system of ‘separate schools’ and that he was an agent of the Roman Pope.”<sup>46</sup> Again the Liberals were carried strongly in French Roman Catholic communities, while the Conservatives were supported by English Protestant areas. This time however, the Conservatives won by a margin of thirty-seven to eleven.

Between these two eventful elections was the 1920 contest. It was the first postwar provincial campaign, and it was anomalous compared to those of 1917 and 1925, because it featured protest parties including the United Farmers of New Brunswick, the Independent Labor [*sic*] Party of Moncton, and the Returned Soldiers [*sic*] Party. The Opposition’s published 1920 election platform did not mention educational issues at all, while the Government’s focused on women, farms and labour. The Liberal platform did mention that “Education, one of the greatest of the public services has suffered more from changed conditions arising out of the war than any other.”<sup>47</sup> Surprisingly in the wake of the time and energy expended on the Myers’ controversy earlier in the year, textbooks were not mentioned at all. Also surprising given the importance of the Acadian vote in the 1917 and 1925 elections, the effect of the French Roman Catholic vote did not figure into accounts of the campaign or its results, which saw the Liberals re-elected.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Woodward, *The History of New Brunswick Provincial Election Campaigns and Platforms, 1866-1974: With Primary Source Documents on Microfiche*, 51.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-14.

<sup>48</sup> The vote was twenty-three seats for the Liberals, thirteen for the Conservatives, eight for the United Farmers and four for Independents. *Ibid.*, 48.

In spite of the fact that other issues dominated the 1920 election, Acadian support of the Liberal party clearly loomed large in New Brunswick, and this is the likely reason why Bishop LeBlanc's textbook criticisms were so important to the Board of Education. Even though a Textbook Committee was elected at the June meeting of the Educational Institute consisting of a majority of returning members who were familiar with the proposed textbooks and the events of the preceding winter, the problem of replacing Myers' *General History* was delegated to the ad hoc committee consisting of Premier Foster, the Minister of Supply and Services Veniot, and Chief Superintendent Carter.<sup>49</sup> Thus the politicians Foster and Veniot joined Carter as the public face of the solution to the textbook problem, which took into account the concerns of the Bishop of Saint John. This strategy would earn the Bishop's approval which in turn would earn the approval of Acadian voters. The ad hoc committee's actions constituted one small move designed to ensure the return of the government in an election which was looming during the summer of 1920. The textbook decision was so small that it was not mentioned in the platforms of either political party. Still it confirmed Carter's complaint

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<sup>49</sup> The members of the provincial Textbook Committee elected at the Educational Institute were reported in the 1919-1920 Annual report as "Dr. H.S. Bridges, St. John; Dr. George J. Oulton, Moncton; W.J.S. Myles, M.A., St. John; H.H. Hagerman, M.A., Normal School, Fredericton; J.F. Owens, M.A., St. John; A.S. McFarlane, M.A., Normal School, Fredericton; Miss Emma Caldwell, St. John; C.H. Harrison, M.A., Chatham; and Dr. B.C. Foster, Fredericton." Of these, only Caldwell, Harrison and McFarlane were new members. New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1919-20, by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Board of Education (Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick, 1921), 133.

that the textbook issue was indeed “political,” and not just on the part of the opposition parties, but on the part of the government as well.<sup>50</sup>

Bishop LeBlanc was an active agent in the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy because a forty-five year old agreement allowed it, but also because he represented a constituency that held considerable importance for the sitting government. His involvement in the political arena was strategic; Boucher describes him as “a man seeking accommodation over confrontation. . . . What power and energy he did have were he thought [*sic*] better spent if exercised within Acadian society which in the interwar years was facing major economic and social challenges.”<sup>51</sup> With this particular battle, LeBlanc chose not to engage on the basis of language. The textbooks under discussion were all written in English, a fact that passed without comment from the Bishop. But regarding the presentation of the Roman Catholic faith in history textbooks, LeBlanc was not prepared to be accommodating. As he saw it, the future of the Acadian people depended upon his diligence.

The changes to the New Brunswick secondary school World History curriculum in August 1920 signalled only a temporary end to the textbook controversy. For the next two school years, the prescribed texts were Sanderson’s *Outlines of the World’s History – Ancient Oriental Monarchies, Greece and Rome*, Hughes’ *Britain and Greater Britain in the Nineteenth Century* and Robertson and Hays’ *Public School History of England*

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<sup>50</sup> W.S. Carter, to Vroom, James, February 21, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence regarding textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB, and ———, to Messrs. J.&A. McMillan., February 27, 1920. RS116 B2s. PANB.

<sup>51</sup> Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History", 275.

*and Canada.*<sup>52</sup> The problem of secondary school World History textbooks rose again, however, and when it did, the responses of the Board of Education and the public indicated a changed political climate, shifting societal values, and different ways of thinking about the purpose of history education. The tenor of the discourse never again reached the level of hyperbole experienced in 1920.

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<sup>52</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1920-21," ed. Board of Education (Government of New Brunswick, 1922), and ———, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1921-22 by the Chief Superintendent of Education," ed. Education (Government of New Brunswick, 1923).



## Chapter 6: Epilogue to the Controversy

*Poor old New Brunswick, so dear to me, when I was a tot! How rapidly things change! And the lowering of the standards, my, with what rapidity it is being brought down.*

Letter to the Editor, *The Daily Gleaner*, February 18, 1920.

The 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy may have created a “storm of protest” at the time, but it was a minor event in the long history of education in the province and its effect served as a small eruption during the postwar era. In fact, the events of 1920 did not represent the only period of contention over Myers’ textbook in New Brunswick during the 1920s; other protests resurfaced periodically throughout the decade. Occurring as it did in the shadow of the Great War, the 1920 textbook controversy highlighted issues of national identity and citizenship. But while ideology regarding the purpose of history education may have been the most obvious engine driving the public reaction to the spectacle of Myers’ *General History*, as we have seen in the preceding chapters, the controversy featured other important and contrasting narratives, each with its own actors and motivating factors. Chief Superintendent Carter’s bureaucratic rationality, newspaper editor Crocket’s political partisanship, and Bishop LeBlanc’s Acadian nationalism all directed the progress and the resolution of the textbook controversy.

Problems surrounding Myers’ *General History* and controversy regarding the importance and meaning of history education did not end in 1920. Over the next decade, certain interest groups attempted to resurrect the debate, but without the “perfect storm”

of political interests that first gave rise to and then sustained the 1920 controversy, they were unable to capture and maintain public interest in the subject with the sole focus of nationalism and history education. The August 1920 decision of the New Brunswick Board of Education to change the secondary school World History curriculum and to adopt Sanderson's *Outlines of the World's History – Ancient Oriental Monarchies, Greece and Rome* was not the end of the textbook problem in the province; indeed, at the time Carter himself viewed the determination as only a temporary measure.<sup>1</sup> A truncated World History curriculum that ended before the birth of Christ may have satisfied the clerics who could not sanction the presentation of Roman Catholicism in Sanderson's text, but a curriculum without Christianity was no permanent answer to the criticisms surrounding history education in New Brunswick. A possible solution emerged within a year however, as P.V.N. Myers revised his *General History* once again, apparently this time in response to the Canadian criticisms of the earlier edition. The publisher's representative wrote to Carter effusively praising the author's "tolerance and discretion, . . . his judicious handling of controversial questions, and . . . his generous recognition and treatment of all schools of thought." The letter continued in a hopeful vein saying, "Now I think this book will satisfy your people if it can be considered on its merits and apart from the prejudices which were raised at the time of its displacement from the authorized list. There is no question in my mind that the educational people of the province would be glad to consider it."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., December 7, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B/7/e/2. Provincial Archives of New Brunswick.

<sup>2</sup> George H. Moore, to Carter, W.S., September 19, 1921. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books, 1921-1934*. RS116 B/2/s/4. PANB.

Myers' revised edition retained the section about the Great War, but now the chapter included a half-page about Canada's contributions to the war effort, opening with a tribute to "All the self-governing dominions of the British Empire," and stressing that "None, however, played a nobler and more self-sacrificing part than the Dominion of Canada."<sup>3</sup> Chief Superintendent Carter's initial response to the prospect of Myers' re-approval was succinct and indicated an unwillingness to suffer any further controversy. He replied to the publisher's suggestion that Myers' newly revised text be revisited, writing that Myers' "name is thoroughly discredited in this Province, and however excellent [the new edition] might be I could not hold out to you any expectation that it would be adopted here after what has taken place."<sup>4</sup> This knee-jerk response was offered in spite of the fact that Myers' had always been Carter's preferred text, the clerics consulted had also considered it to be the best World History textbook available, and now an edition was available without the elements that had made the previous one so offensive. Although it was over a year since Myers' text had been removed from New Brunswick classrooms, in 1921 the memory of the controversy was still fresh for Carter. His decision to reject the textbook was guided by bureaucratic pragmatism or perhaps bureaucratic weariness, but not by his conviction about the purpose of history education.

Within twelve months, however, the newly revised edition of Myers' *General History* including a half page on Canada's role in the chapter about the Great War was reintroduced to the approved textbook list. Carter's *Annual Report* for 1920-1921

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<sup>3</sup> P.V.N. Myers, *General History*, 2nd Revised ed. (Boston: Ginn, 1921), 701.

<sup>4</sup> W.S. Carter, to Moore, George H., September 21, 1921. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books, 1921-1931*. RS116 B2s4. PANB.

reported this change of heart, as he indicated that “Myer’s with the objectional [sic] chapter re-written seemed more likely of general acceptance than any other in sight.”<sup>5</sup> The reinstatement started with the 1923-1924 school year.<sup>6</sup> Announcements to that effect were placed in the November and December editions of the New Brunswick teachers’ magazine, the *Educational Review* in 1922.<sup>7</sup> Archival records do not document the discussion which resulted in the change, but the length of time between the publisher’s notice and the decision to re-prescribe Myers’ text was long enough that the deliberation could have been extensive.<sup>8</sup> Lingering echoes of the controversy can be identified in a 1923 editorial in the *Educational Review* that stressed the importance of history education saying “there is no subject of the school course of more importance than history, which includes . . . all that conduces to the production of good citizens. It

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<sup>5</sup> New Brunswick, "Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick 1920-21," ed. Board of Education (Government of New Brunswick, 1922), xli.

<sup>6</sup> New Brunswick Board of Education, "Board of Education Minutes 1909-1935," (September 19, 1922).

<sup>7</sup> "Official Notice," *Educational Review* 37, no. 4 (December, 1922), "Official Notice," *Educational Review* 37, no. 3 (November, 1922).

<sup>8</sup> Around this time, Textbook Committee member Emma Colwell wrote to Carter on another matter, and in her letter she suggested a way to improve the effectiveness of the textbook adoption procedure saying, “the faults of a text can only be found by working with that text in the class room for one term at the shortest.” She proposed that several teachers try out proposed texts in this fashion and report back to Carter before being considered by the Board. This type of documentation is rare in the archives; few surviving artefacts demonstrate the entry of a teacher into this type of administrative discussion, although teachers were no doubt highly interested in the provision of teaching materials. Carter was more accustomed to giving advice than to receiving it, and his response to the suggestion is unknown. Emma L. Colwell, to Carter, W.S., January 13, 1923. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books, 1921-1934*. PANB.

is essential that history texts ‘tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth,’ if the reader is to have an opportunity of acquiring such a grasp of the subject taught as will enable . . . the student to avoid for himself and his community the mistakes which have ruined other individuals and nations in the past.”<sup>9</sup> In contrast to their coverage of the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy, however, the province’s newspapers did not mention the 1922-1923 decision, and if the clerics were once again asked their opinion about Myers’ text, their letters during this phase of the discussion were not saved. In other words, the flashpoint of 1920 became a mere blip in 1922.

But the secondary school history textbook problem was a blip that kept resurfacing. By the 1925-1926 school year, New Brunswick’s secondary school students studied Myers’ text in Grades 9 through 11.<sup>10</sup> In 1926 the public protests flared up again; the Fredericton Branch of the Great War Veterans Association drafted a resolution asserting that Myers’ text devoted only two pages to Canada’s part in the war, and those pages omitted any mention of the later battles in which Canadian Forces were important participants. The GWVA concluded that “the great place which the British Empire as a whole occupied throughout the entire struggle and the contribution made by the Empire to the cause of Justice and Humanity are inadequately dealt with.”<sup>11</sup> These war veterans clearly possessed a national identity in which British and Canadian elements comfortably coexisted. As Buckner explains it, “the war did not lead to widespread

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<sup>9</sup> "Editorial," *Educational Review* (August/September, 1923): 4.

<sup>10</sup> New Brunswick, "Course of Instruction for Grammar and Other High Schools. 1925-26," ed. Board of Education (Government of New Brunswick, 1925).

<sup>11</sup> Great War Veterans Association of Canada, to Carter, W.S. 1926. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1921-1934*. RS116 B/2/s/4. PANB.

disillusionment with the empire, though it did greatly increase a sense of Canadian national consciousness.”<sup>12</sup> The veterans’ resolution differed from those of 1920 because rather than asking for a wholesale ban of Myers’ text, the GWVA recommended that earlier editions of Myers be used instead, or that a more suitable textbook used elsewhere in schools “throughout the Dominion of Canada” be adopted.<sup>13</sup> This reflected a greater sensitivity to the process by which textbooks were provided to New Brunswick schools, a sensitivity possibly originating in the public awareness generated by the earlier problems with Myers’ text.

At this time the *Educational Review* offered its first explicit public commentary on the Myers’ textbook controversy with an editorial stressing that teachers should introduce a variety of textual materials to the history classroom.<sup>14</sup> The magazine’s perspective also displayed an awareness of the challenges of choosing a suitable textbook: “The selection of History texts is, in a heterogeneous country like ours, an extremely difficult task. All that the Board of Education can do, if they wish their selections to be ratified and sustained, is to select those texts that give the greater amount of general information in such a manner as not to offend the religious or national susceptibilities of any powerful section.” On the next page of the journal was a report

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<sup>12</sup> Phillip Buckner, “The Long Goodbye: English Canadians and the British World,” in *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 191.

<sup>13</sup> Great War Veterans Association of Canada.

<sup>14</sup> This was the same recommendation contained in the American Historical Association’s 1899 report on the teaching of history. See American Historical Association, *The Study of History in Schools: A Report to the American Historical Association by the Committee of Seven* (New York, London: MacMillan, 1899).

that New Brunswick's Textbook Committee had recommended continuance of Myers' revised *General History* because it was "the best obtainable High School Text."<sup>15</sup>

The reaction of the popular press to renewed complaints about Myers' text in 1926 was more nuanced than in 1920. The Fredericton *Daily Gleaner* printed a series of letters to the editor reacting to the story, and these consisted of detailed and spirited commentary. These letters were a local example of the international debate about the role of war history in public education occurring at this time, a debate which historians have argued was largely inspired by the newly-created League of Nations.<sup>16</sup> The attitudes to war and peace embodied by the letter writers were complex, but by 1926 it was possible to discern a notable trend to actively advocate peaceful solutions to international problems where possible. One writer, a self-described teacher and war veteran, supported peace education saying, "If we used a history devoting the most of its space to Canada's part in the war, we should have a book with a bias, and we don't want a text-book with a military bias any more than one with a religious or political bias."<sup>17</sup> Another asserted, "We don't want militarism in this country. We want peace, and we want to avoid the paths that lead to war. We contend, however, that the proper study of the Great War will inspire our children with a love of country and make them proud of

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<sup>15</sup> "Untitled Editorial," *Educational Review* 40, no. 5 (January 26, 1926): 99-100.

<sup>16</sup> Ian Harris, "History of Peace Education," *Encyclopedia of Peace Education* (2008), [http://www.tc.edu/centers/epe/PDF%20articles/Harris\\_ch2\\_22feb08.pdf](http://www.tc.edu/centers/epe/PDF%20articles/Harris_ch2_22feb08.pdf), Susan Zeiger, "Teaching Peace: Lessons from a Peace Studies Curriculum of the Progressive Era," *Peace & Change* 25, no. 1 (2000), and Ken Osborne, "One Hundred Years of History Teaching in Manitoba Schools: Part 1: 1897-1927," *Manitoba History* 36, no. Winter (1998).

<sup>17</sup> K.C. Bishop, "Myer's History," *The Daily Gleaner*, January 26, 1926.

it.”<sup>18</sup> A third argued, “As to the tendency to emphasize peace instead of war and its attendant horrors what is history but a record of events? If wars occur they must have their place and their recognition. As long as human nature is human nature men will disagree, and it is from disagreement and misunderstanding that war arises, therefore why overlook the horrors of war? Why not face the facts as they are?”<sup>19</sup> These letters represented a significant contrast with those of the 1920 controversy; they offered a sense of engagement in a discussion about war and peace and an exchange of ideas, and all linked discussions of war and peace to the purpose of history education. The difference is one of complexity; while both series of correspondence addressed the topic of textbooks and history education, the 1926 correspondence arguments were more overtly nuanced, while the complexity of the 1920 arguments were below the surface.

The *Daily Gleaner* also reported the GWVA’s protest, albeit in a cursory manner and without editorializing.<sup>20</sup> Part of the explanation for James Crocket’s editorial silence relative to the hyperbole of 1920 can be traced to politics. By 1926, the Conservatives were in power. But Crocket’s political affiliation had also changed. He had engaged in a public disagreement with a fellow Fredericton Conservative in the early 1920s, with the result that the life-long Conservative took the unusual step of changing his party

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<sup>18</sup> F.M. Lockary, "Myer's History," *The Daily Gleaner*, January 28, 1926.

<sup>19</sup> G.H. MacNeill, "Myer's History," *The Daily Gleaner*, January 27, 1926.

<sup>20</sup> "Myer's History Protest Joined by Local Veterans," *The Daily Gleaner*, January 22, 1926. The article indicated that GWVA’s St. Croix was the first to re-examine Myers’ *General History*.



allegiance during that decade so that he became a Liberal for the rest of his life.<sup>21</sup> A final factor explaining the relative silence of the newspapers in general and the *Daily Gleaner* in particular can be found in the changing role and nature of newspapers; as Minko Sotiron observed of the Canadian newspaper industry, Crocket's accustomed editorial style became obsolete with the shift away from the political and toward a business model.<sup>22</sup> Whether for these reasons or others unknown, after 1920 history textbooks never again figured prominently in Crocket's editorials. Without him or anyone else harbouring a strong sense of outrage and possessing the platform to express it in a sustained protest, the 1926 GWVA complaint had little effect.<sup>23</sup>

The next major New Brunswick investigation into Myers' *General History* came in 1929, when the Saint John-based New Brunswick Historical Society took up the cause. The location of the Society's base was significant; from the time of its incorporation in 1785 Saint John strongly emphasized its Loyalist roots. In other words, this organization was Anglophone Protestant. Minutes from the Society's monthly meetings throughout the year charted the development of members' protest against Myers' text. In February, the group passed a resolution repeating earlier criticisms of

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<sup>21</sup> Eric L. Swanick, "James Harvie Crocket," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online* (2000), [http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id\\_nbr=8091&interval=25&&PHPSESSID=39k43vkd6u9j5vva9kunt5cql6](http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=8091&interval=25&&PHPSESSID=39k43vkd6u9j5vva9kunt5cql6).

<sup>22</sup> Minko Sotiron, *From Politics to Profit: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997).

<sup>23</sup> By 1930 the Great War Veterans Association had all but disappeared, replaced by the Royal Canadian Legion. See Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

the text based on its lack of attention to Canadian war efforts, adding that it was “considered pernicious that Canadian scholars should be mis-informed [*sic*]. . . and by alien writers – as to the comparative importance of British effort.” The resolution acknowledged Canada’s national identity as both Canadian and British, stressing members’ desire to have “a true record of history incorporated in the curriculum of the schools,” adding that they considered “the use and retention of MYER’S GENERAL HISTORY productive of an effect detrimental to the efforts being made in this country to build a Canadian nationality based upon British ideals. . .”<sup>24</sup> The Society asked that Myers be discontinued as a prescribed textbook, and that a suitable text by a Canadian or British author be found. The Society’s report for March suggested a broadening of the requirements for a new text, adding the need for a textbook featuring New Brunswick content.<sup>25</sup> By May, the Society had created a special committee to deal with Myers’ text which offered a “satisfactory” report on its efforts to lobby the provincial government and the Board of Education. The nature of the threat represented by the *General History* was made explicit: the report outlined the credit offered to Canadian magazine dealers by American publishers for unsold publications, identified as “an excellent illustration of the peaceful penetration, commonly known as ‘Americanism’ . . . The moral effect of this is great; and is a deliberate attempt to produce an ‘inferiority complex’ in the minds of the youth of Canada. It is vital to a healthy Canadian nationalism that this cause be

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<sup>24</sup> New Brunswick Historical Society, "Minutes," in *New Brunswick Historical Society Minutes 1921-1929* (Saint John NB: New Brunswick Historical Society, February 22, 1929). Emphasis in the original.

<sup>25</sup> ———, "Minutes," in *New Brunswick Historical Society Minutes 1921-1929* (Saint John NB: New Brunswick Historical Society, March, 1929).

removed.”<sup>26</sup> The introduction of Myers’ text to Canadian schools was described as another example of the same phenomenon. The report also offered the first direct criticism of the role New Brunswick’s clerics played in determining school textbooks, saying “It constitutes an absurdity,” and asking for justification from the Board of Education for including religious leaders in the process of textbook selection.<sup>27</sup> The criticism was one more round in the familiar and conflicted theme of language and religion, this time providing an Anglophone Protestant protest against the involvement of the French Roman Catholic Bishop in school affairs.

One Society member prepared a detailed criticism of Myers’ textbook, and the group resolved to publish and distribute the “evidence” in pamphlet form.<sup>28</sup> The pamphlet addressed the omission of information about the Canadian Expeditionary Forces or the British war effort, and it also provided a critique of the overall tone and subject of Myers’ text, which was described as “a United States product, and obviously intended for use in schools of that country and not suitable for Canada.” The pamphlet specifically criticized the way American policy and development were offered as the standard to which other nations were compared, and the fact that “wherever the word ‘OUR’ is used, it, of course, refers to the United States . . . and not Canada.”<sup>29</sup> Its

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<sup>26</sup> ———, “Minutes,” in *New Brunswick Historical Society Minutes 1921-1929* (Saint John: New Brunswick Historical Society, May 31, 1929).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> ———, “Minutes.” in *New Brunswick Historical Society Minutes 1921-1929* (Saint John: New Brunswick Historical Society, February 22, 1929).

<sup>29</sup> ———, *Why Myer’s General History Should Not Be Used in Canadian Schools?* (Saint John: New Brunswick Historical Society, 1929), 5. Emphasis in the original.

concluding paragraphs addressed a range of issues: pedagogy, nationalism, patriotism, the importance and purpose of history education, and the role of the media. Myers was accused of focusing on a main idea, “namely, the glorification of his own country – the United States of America,” and his text was accused of being “a supplement to the United States propaganda flooding this country in the form of periodicals, films and radio; and is more dangerous than these, for it bears the official sanction of Canadian Departments of Education, and is being taught in Canadian schools.”<sup>30</sup> This account showed that the wartime anti-Americanism described by Paul Litt continued long after the war’s end.<sup>31</sup> By September the Society’s attempts to disseminate its message were well under way, and meeting minutes include an acknowledgement of receipt of the anti-Myers pamphlet from the Public Library in London, Ontario.<sup>32</sup> As a result of all their efforts in 1929, by the end of the year, Historical Society members were optimistic that “the next school term, in July, 1930, will no doubt see the fulfillment of our desires,” and Myers would be replaced by a text offering “the best account of British effort in the Great World War.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>31</sup> Paul Litt, “Canada Invaded! The Great War, Mass Culture, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism,” in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David MacKenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

<sup>32</sup> New Brunswick Historical Society, “Minutes,” in *New Brunswick Historical Society Minutes 1921-1929* (Saint John NB: New Brunswick Historical Society, September 27, 1929).

<sup>33</sup> ———, “Minutes,” in *New Brunswick Historical Society Minutes 1929-1944*, ed. New Brunswick Historical Society (Saint John NB: November 29, 1929), 5.

In the meantime, the July 1, 1929 edition of *MacLean's* [sic] magazine brought national attention to secondary school history textbooks. Judging by the point-by-point similarity of the argument presented, one of the main sources of information for *MacLean's* was the New Brunswick Historical Society's pamphlet. The subtitle of H. Napier Moore's editorial was "Our own laxity and apathy are responsible for the instruction of Canadian youth according to the viewpoint of Uncle Sam." Moore described the faults of two main offenders, *Modern Progress* by Willis Mason West, and Myers' *General History*. He introduced his critique by engaging in the postwar discussion about peace and history education appealing to nationalist and pacifist alike saying, "It is not due to a desire on the part of Canadian parents, or on the part of *MacLean's*, to glorify war, or to raise a nation of sword-rattlers. The principle of the education of Canada's younger generation on the basis of a Canadian viewpoint and British Empire standards is the point upon which this article is intended to focus public attention."<sup>34</sup> The bulk of the article, like many of the textbook criticisms in 1920, consisted of analysis of particularly offensive sentences throughout each text, and the specific criticisms of Myers' book were direct quotes of the New Brunswick Historical Society's pamphlet. Moore went further, however, and asked rhetorically why American textbooks were used in Canadian schools. The reasons he cited: that no better texts were available; that no general history of Canadian authorship existed; that Myers' history covered more of the subject matter than any British texts; and that teachers liked Myers' *General History*. In response to each of these points, Moore observed that it was up to

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<sup>34</sup> H. Napier Moore, "Why United States Textbooks in Canadian Schools?," *MacLean's Magazine*, July 1, 1929, 3. The article was accompanied by a cartoon. See Appendix C.

education officials, not parents, to procure better textbooks; that “no serious attempt has been made to rectify the situation;” that Myers’ perspective was American; and that teachers were unlikely to contradict their superintendents.<sup>35</sup> Moore also addressed the price issue, asserting that “certain reputable publishers” denied that Canadian textbooks could be produced for less cost than their American counterparts, and asserting that to those who advanced the cost excuse, “the Canadianization of Canada isn’t worth a few cents.”<sup>36</sup>

Moore described as “extraordinary” the idea that clerics should have the power to approve school textbooks. Here he quoted New Brunswick’s Carter regarding the practice, but then exhorted Carter to “tell the public the whole truth. Can it be true that in this entire Dominion, or throughout the whole of Britain, there is not a historian who can set down facts without injecting harmful religious prejudices? And what is there about Myer’s [*sic*] History that so favorably [*sic*] impresses the theologians?” Moore concluded his article with a reminder of periodic calls for the “Dominion” government to offer a reward to the author of a Canadian general history textbook which could be adopted by all provinces, but noted that “the suggestion has apparently been dropped because of what is described as ‘a certain antagonism.’ Just what that antagonism is, nobody seems to know.”<sup>37</sup> Moore thus showed himself a poor student of history, unaware that precisely such a project had been attempted more than once.<sup>38</sup> He

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 61, 65.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>38</sup> See Penney Clark, “Clio in the Curriculum: The Jury Is Out,” *Canadian Social Studies* 32, no. 2 (1998), <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=3&did=25874608&SrchMode=1&sid=3&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD>

addressed Canadian nationalism and the purpose of history education, describing it as the duty of *MacLean's* to raise these issues, and placing the responsibility for solving the problem squarely on the shoulders of administrators like New Brunswick's Carter, saying he believed "that it is altogether likely that some of the persons entrusted with the administration of Canadian education are so lacking in patriotism and vision that they are unfitted for the posts they hold."<sup>39</sup> For Moore, when the future of the nation was at stake, neither bureaucratic pragmatism nor Canada's identity as a country with multiple "founding nations" provided an excuse for inaction.

A follow-up to Moore's article in *MacLean's* a year later reported on changes to textbooks in various Canadian locations commenting, "To those who have taken definite remedial action will go the thanks and commendation of every Canadian who has pride in his country and in the Empire of which it forms a part. On those who continue to sidestep their responsibilities, the pressure of public opinion must be still further exerted. It is the one pressure that cannot be dodged."<sup>40</sup> Not surprisingly given their lukewarm response to the New Brunswick Historical Society's pamphlet, the province's newspapers barely acknowledged the 1929 or the 1930 *MacLean's* articles. The *Daily Gleaner*, so preoccupied with Myers' *General History* in 1920, reprinted excerpts from Moore's 1929 editorial as a news story.<sup>41</sup> The *Telegraph Journal* presented its own

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&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1164472216&clientId=10843#fulltext, and George S. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press, 2008).

<sup>39</sup> Moore, "Why United States Textbooks in Canadian Schools?," 65.

<sup>40</sup> "Foreign Textbooks in Canadian Schools," *MacLean's Magazine*, July 1, 1930.

<sup>41</sup> "Some Facts Concerning Canada and the Great War," *The Daily Gleaner*, July 5, 1929, 9.

assessment of the state of Canadian national identity in its July 1, 1929 editorial saying that Dominion Day was a time to be concerned not with material advancement but instead with “. . . the growth of national spirit and a fuller consciousness of the great responsibility that lies in citizenship in Canada. While our people are going out to the conquest of the great new north and of the last west, and while cities grow and industries expand, the vital thing is the spread of education, of national consciousness, and the consciousness of spiritual value in nation building.”<sup>42</sup> Subsequent editions of the Saint John newspaper failed to report the *MacLean's* Dominion Day editorial. This lack of attention from newspapers might suggest that New Brunswickers did not welcome the national spotlight on this issue, or that they had had their fill of textbook talk, and had moved on.

The two New Brunswick efforts to revisit the question of Myers' *General History* in the later 1920s did not result in the same volume of public reaction experienced at the start of the decade, and revised editions of the text were prescribed continually until the 1940s. But the story was not entirely over. Eventually the repetition of complaints prompted action on the part of the Board of Education, and at some point the revisions included changes that resulted in a text intended specifically for New Brunswick schools.<sup>43</sup> These changes were not documented in Board of Education minutes, so it is unclear exactly when they occurred. It seems likely from the evidence that the attention of the New Brunswick Historical Society, and by extension, the

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<sup>42</sup> "Dominion Day," *Telegraph Journal*, July 1, 1929, 4.

<sup>43</sup> Myers' *General History* finally disappeared from the list of prescribed textbooks in 1949. See Government of New Brunswick, "Board of Education Minutes 1949," ed. Board of Education (November 22, 1949).



national attention brought by *Maclean's* forced a change to the text. At some time after 1929, then, an undated edition of Myers' *General History* was published with a title page indicating that it was authorized for use in New Brunswick schools. The Table of Contents suggested that the text contained seventy-six chapters, the final one titled "Evolution Toward World Federation," dealing with the events immediately preceding the Great War.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, that chapter ended the text on page 659. The text's Appendix B, however, listed "Topics for Reports" for chapter seventy-seven concerning the war, and chapter seventy-eight concerning the Bolshevik Revolution.<sup>45</sup> In addition, under the heading "Canada" the Index listed "part in the World War" with reference to pages 701 and 702.<sup>46</sup> In other words, the New Brunswick solution was to remove the offending chapter and edit the Table of Contents. This meant that the Index and Appendices referred to pages and sections of the text not found in that edition.

But the new edition also contained other changes. Canada's participation in the war, notwithstanding the index's reference to later pages, was explained on page 637 in a single short paragraph which read, "In the World War of 1914-1918 Canada from the very start played a conspicuous part, mobilizing close upon five hundred thousand men for service overseas. The Canadian Expeditionary Force did its share in all the campaigns of the Allied battle front." The paragraph that followed praised Canada, asserting that "the Dominion of Canada seems marked out to be the home of one of the

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<sup>44</sup> Table of Contents, P.V.N. Myers, *General History. For Use in New Brunswick Schools*, 2nd Revised Edition ed. (Canada: Ginn, n.d.), xi.

<sup>45</sup> Appendix, *Ibid.* The date at which the final chapter on the Bolshevik Revolution was added to Myers' text is unclear.

<sup>46</sup> Index, *Ibid.*, xvi.

great nations living under British laws and institutions.”<sup>47</sup> These paragraphs had an interesting genealogy; they were updated in each edition of Myers’ text to reflect the author’s perception of his Canadian audience. For instance, the 1906 edition was the first one to be used in New Brunswick schools, and the same passage in that edition read, “the Dominion of Canada seems marked out to be one of the great future homes of the Anglo-Saxon race. What the United States now is, the Dominion seems destined at a time not very remote to become.”<sup>48</sup> The 1921 edition of Myers’ text, which also included the expanded half-page about Canada’s part in the war later in the text, contained a slightly altered version of the earlier paragraph which read, “In the World War of 1914-1918 the Dominion was stanchly [*sic*] loyal to the motherland, sending more than four hundred thousand soldiers to fight by the side of the soldiers of Great Britain and of her other overseas dominions.” The segment ended saying “the Dominion of Canada seems marked out to be one of the great future homes of the Anglo Saxon Race.”<sup>49</sup> These edits to the text show that with each new edition Myers attempted to pay attention to his Anglophone Canadian readers, updating his figures and responding to the subtle changes in Canadian national identity.

The authorized New Brunswick edition of Myers’ *General History* showed evidence of the success of the New Brunswick Historical Society’s 1929 campaign. For instance, three specific criticisms contained in the Society’s pamphlets concerned the American focus of the text, giving the examples, “As in the case of the Emancipation of the Slaves in OUR Southern States,” “Expansion of the United States, called the Growth

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 637.

<sup>48</sup> ———, *A General History for Colleges and High Schools*, Revised ed. (Boston: Ginn, 1906), 729.

<sup>49</sup> ———, *General History*, 2nd Revised ed. (Boston: Ginn, 1921), 637.

of OUR OWN Country;” and “as the war progressed the real issues involved were more and more clearly revealed, so that when finally the United States entered the war on the side of the allies, President Wilson could declare a chief object of the war to be to deliver the free peoples of the world from the menace and the actual power of a vast military establishment controlled by an irresponsible government.”<sup>50</sup> The New Brunswick edition of the text changed the first two sentences to read, “As in the case of the emancipation of the slaves in the United States,” and “The Expansion of the United States: The Growth of the United States a part of the Great European Expansion Movement.”<sup>51</sup> The Society’s criticisms of Myers’ war narrative were too numerous to be edited, so the entire chapter on the war was removed. The appearance of the New Brunswick edition of Myers’ text at the end of the decade was ironic given the form it took at the start. Myers spent part of the 1920s revising his chapter on the Great War and the publisher extolled the features of the author’s rewritten account, but the final version that ultimately resided in the hands of the province’s students was virtually the same edition approved by the Textbook Committee in late 1919. The only exception was the changes to make the text less American. The solution desired by Carter and the clerics in 1920, to reinstate the edition which ended its main narrative just before the war, was finally achieved.<sup>52</sup> Aside from its regular inclusion on the list of approved textbooks and

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<sup>50</sup> New Brunswick Historical Society, *Why Myer’s General History Should Not Be Used in Canadian Schools?*, 5. Emphasis in the original report, but not the textbook.

<sup>51</sup> Myers, *General History. For Use in New Brunswick Schools*, 625, 647.

<sup>52</sup> By this time late in the decade, George Drew’s popular pamphlet “The Truth About the War” was widely available. It offered a Canadian-made account of the Great War to supplement Myers’ revised text, the narrative of which ended in 1914. See New Brunswick Board of Education, “Board of Education

infrequent letters of complaint, after 1929, Myers' *General History* was not mentioned again in the province's archival record.<sup>53</sup>

The 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy was also a blip in the lives of the three men who were most directly involved. For the rest of the 1920s, each continued to display deep commitments to other more major issues that had shaped their careers. By 1931, Carter was contemplating retirement, pending the conclusion of a special investigation into problems in New Brunswick education, at the close of which a Department of Education was to be created under a cabinet minister.<sup>54</sup> Clearly the

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Minutes 1927, 1935 (Cont) 1935-1943," ed. Education (December 12, 1928), and Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997). While the adoption of Drew's pamphlet made up for the removal of Myers' chapter seventy-seven about the Great War, no apparent attempt was made to replace the expunged chapter seventy-eight which described the events of the Russian revolution.

<sup>53</sup> For Myers' inclusion on the lists of prescribed school textbooks, see New Brunswick, "Course of Instruction for Grammar and Other High Schools. 1925-26.", ———, *Manual of the School Law and Regulations of New Brunswick* (Fredericton: Province of New Brunswick, 1929), School Book Branch, "School Book Branch Department of Education Inventory Oct.31, 1941," (Fredericton: New Brunswick Department of Education, 1941), and ———, "Proposed Order Text Books 1942-3," (Fredericton: New Brunswick Department of Education, 1942). For letters of complaint about Myers' text, see Juliette J. Roy, to New Brunswick Minister of Education, May 10, 1939. *Director of Educational Services Correspondence, Curriculum, Textbooks, 1939.* RS116 D24f2. PANB. Textbooks, 1939. RS116 D24f2. PANB, and Alice Webster, to Peacock, Fletcher n.d. *Director of Educational Services Correspondence, Curriculum, Textbooks, 1943-1944.* RS116 D24f6. PANB.

<sup>54</sup> "W.S. Carter Stricken at Home," *The Daily Gleaner*, January 7, 1931. The creation of a provincial Department of Education did not come into effect until 1936. See New Brunswick Board of Education, "History of the Department of Education," ed. Education (1950).

challenges he had faced throughout his term as Chief Superintendent had not abated, but he died suddenly of a heart attack in 1931 at the age of seventy-two. Crocket died in 1930 just before his seventy-first birthday, a Liberal for a few short years but still at the helm of his newspaper. Meanwhile, throughout Bishop LeBlanc's life, he continued to work strategically to further Acadian identity. This included his efforts to establish a separate teaching order for French speaking nuns, work which bore fruit in 1924, and his involvement in the rising tide of Acadian nationalism in New Brunswick during the latter part of the 1920s. Boucher describes LeBlanc's vision as "a paradigm of church sponsored nationalism in Canada during the first half of the twentieth century."<sup>55</sup> LeBlanc was sixty-five when he died in 1935.

The fact that Carter, Crocket and LeBlanc moved on to other issues during the 1920s, and the apparent failure of the New Brunswick public to respond to the renewed complaints about Myers' text only serve to reinforce the findings of this study. The 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy represented more than just a conflict over public education and history education. Regardless of the societal rupture occasioned by the Great War and the Canadian nationalist sentiments expressed throughout the discussions about secondary school World History textbooks, the 1920 controversy represented a perfect storm of protest. The constellation of narratives explored here shows that the 1920 protest had little to do with the politics of postwar patriotism.

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<sup>55</sup> Neil J. Boucher, "Acadian Nationalism and the Episcopacy of Msgr. Edouard-Alfred Leblanc, Bishop of Saint John, New Brunswick (1912-1935): A Maritime Chapter of Canadian Ethno-Religious History" (Ph.D. Dissertation (History), Dartmouth University, 1992), 360. For more on the rise of Acadian nationalism in the 1920s see Richard Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick* (Halifax: Formac Press, 1989).

Instead, it was long standing conflicts around the politics of religion and language that drove the conflict. Public opposition to Myers' text and formal Roman Catholic opposition to the replacements prompted the Board of Education to take action. Highly sensitive to the political repercussions of offending the Acadian electorate, the Board changed the secondary school World History curriculum and in doing so, cut the Gordian knot the controversy had created. In the process, it removed the thorny politicized issues the textbook controversy was feeding. When the complaints resurfaced a few years later, in the absence of political, social and economic pressures of comparable intensity, the Board retained the text that pleased the clerics, making minor changes to create an edition that was less pro-American and did not include the war chapter that so offended others.

It may be so, as Apple and Christian-Smith have noted, that "Teachers have a long history of mediating and transforming text material when they employ it in classrooms," but this practice was not reflected in the New Brunswick history textbook controversy.<sup>56</sup> Teachers were mentioned even less than students in the correspondence. Even when they were, the tone was almost universally negative. Carter complained that "No blame is given to those teachers in the three (3) Provinces who had the book in the schools, or perhaps one or two copies of it, and failed to note it."<sup>57</sup> Crocket took St. Stephen School Board Secretary James Vroom to task for his "borrowed suggestion" that teachers using a banned text would lose their government grant, pointing out that

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<sup>56</sup> Michael W. Apple and Linda K. Christian-Smith, "The Politics of the Textbook," in *The Politics of the Textbook*, ed. Michael W. Apple and Linda K. Christian-Smith (London: Routledge, 1991), 14.

<sup>57</sup> W.S. Carter, to MacKay, A.H., February 18, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Provinces and Countries, Nova Scotia, 1913-1925*. RS116 B7e2. PANB.

more than losing the grant, such teachers would be fired.<sup>58</sup> Meanwhile Vroom characterized “old teachers” among those who were “tilting at windmills” in criticizing the actions of the Board of Education.<sup>59</sup> Bishop LeBlanc described the way “the teacher could make the lesson very unpleasant for the pupils.”<sup>60</sup> Teachers were the target of criticism, and if they had any thoughts on Myers’ *General History*, they have been lost to time and the archives.

Carter wanted to avoid offending anyone, particularly the province’s ratepayers whose taxes funded the educational system. He hoped they would see the problems with Myers’ textbook as a temporary breakdown in an otherwise smoothly running machine. Crocket acted as a provocateur, hoping to present a convincing argument to New Brunswick voters that Carter, the Board of Education and by extension the provincial government were incompetent and should not be allowed to continue in office. LeBlanc’s goal was to impress upon New Brunswickers that Acadians were entitled to the same societal rights, responsibilities and benefits as their Anglophone Protestant counterparts. Discussions about the purpose of history education and appeals to “the public” were comprised just as much of “political prescriptions, economic decisions,

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<sup>58</sup> "That Perverted History [Editorial]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 23, 1920.

<sup>59</sup> James Vroom, "[Letter to the Editor]," *The Daily Gleaner*, February 23, 1920.

<sup>60</sup> E.A. LeBlanc, to Carter, W.S., April 16, 1920. *Chief Superintendent Office Records, Correspondence Regarding Textbooks and library books 1915-1920*. RS116 B2s3. PANB.

institutional settlements and educational models” as they were a set of descriptions or opinions regarding the purpose of history education.<sup>61</sup>

This study serves as an example of the way the focus on one dramatic issue or series of events provided a means of observing important conflicts and tensions within New Brunswick society more generally. As we have seen, on the surface the seeming issue at hand was conflict regarding national identity and the purpose of history education, a struggle that was very much a part of the Great War and postwar era in Canada. This conflict found expression as correspondents framed history education as a matter of national identity, citizenship and making meaning of past events. Reporters, editors and letter writers as well as members of patriotic organizations accepted as natural the idea that an appropriate history education would create good Canadian citizens who revered the nation’s institutions and the memory of those who suffered during the Great War; destiny and the future were important elements of this discourse. Textbook author Myers was also included in this group. His rationale for history education was expressed in the 1906 edition of his text: “We must try to discover the tendency of the historic evolution, to discern the set of the current of world events, and to divine the destiny reserved for the human race. Only thus shall we be able to form practical ideals for humanity and strive intelligently and hopefully for their realization.”<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Michel Foucault, "On the Archaeology of the Sciences: Response to the Epistemology Circle," in *The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose (New York: The New Press, 2003), 406.

<sup>62</sup> Myers, *A General History for Colleges and High Schools*, Revised ed. (Boston: Ginn, 1906), 747.



The broad societal rupture of the Great War set the stage for change in many aspects of Canadian society, including schooling, and it prompted a national conversation about the purpose of history education. Yet in the wake of the cataclysm of the war, and in spite of the post-war rhetoric of nationalism, New Brunswick's Board of Education chose to respond not only to the public calls for removal of Myers' *General History* from the province's secondary school classrooms due to its lack of Canadian content, but also to the religious objections of an important block of voters to proposed replacements and the texts' supposed anti-Catholic bias. Thus although they did not present as an overt element of the public commentary, religious, linguistic and political conflicts that had existed between the Anglophone Protestants and Francophone Roman Catholics in New Brunswick even before the province's founding in 1785, simmered below the surface, and provided the force and energy that drove the textbook controversy.

As I complete this dissertation I'm struck by the transformation in my understanding of the primary sources over which I've poured for so many years. If I think of the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy as a drama being staged before me, I see the people of New Brunswick as the audience. They had little to do throughout other than to cheer, boo, and sometimes heckle the actors. The main characters in this show were the Board of Education, the newspapers and the clergy. The Board of Education played its role reluctantly; it is almost as if the Board preferred to stage manage, but was thrust into a performing role as a result of the public outcry over Myers' textbook. Meanwhile, the newspapers and the clergy wanted not only to star but to direct the action. When the controversy began, the plot appeared to centre on nationalism and history education, with a subplot driven by public memory and

citizenship. In this original plot the newspapers appeared in the starring role. But as the controversy progressed, the plot reverted to an old and familiar one in New Brunswick, with the central themes of religion and language. The script changed, and the former stars of the show became secondary actors, while the Roman Catholic clergy emerged as the new leads. The Board of Education, as stage manager and actor, was caught off guard. I too was caught up in the transformation of the story. It is as if my role in the drama was to perch in the lighting booth, shining the spotlight of my scholarship on the characters on stage. I was confident at first about the script I had before me, but realized as time passed that the plot had changed. I had to pay close attention to what was said on stage in order to focus the spotlight on the appropriate character at the appropriate time. At the conclusion of my engagement with the 1920 New Brunswick history textbook controversy, I find that the show on which I dim the lights is not the one I thought it would be.

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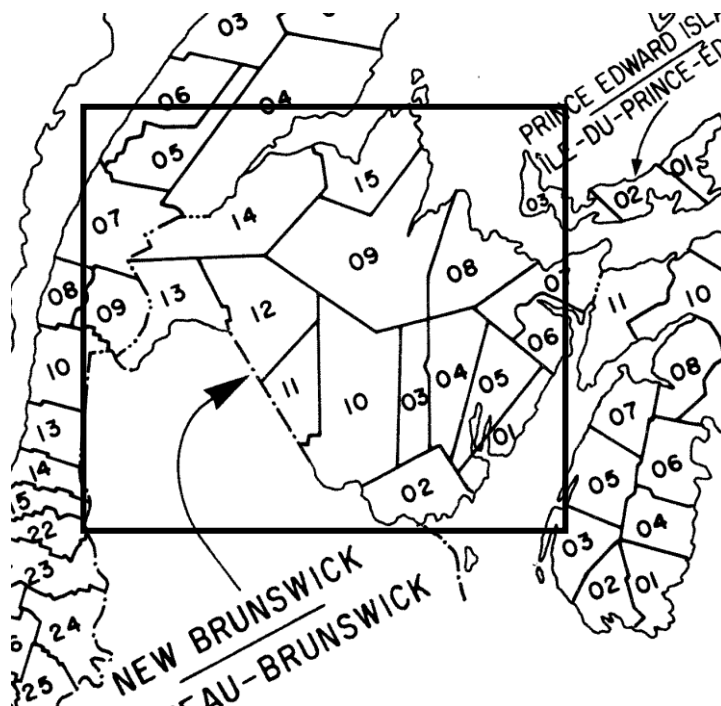
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## APPENDIX A: NEW BRUNSWICK CENSUS DIVISIONS

Figure A.1 Detail of index map of Canadian census divisions, 1976<sup>1</sup>



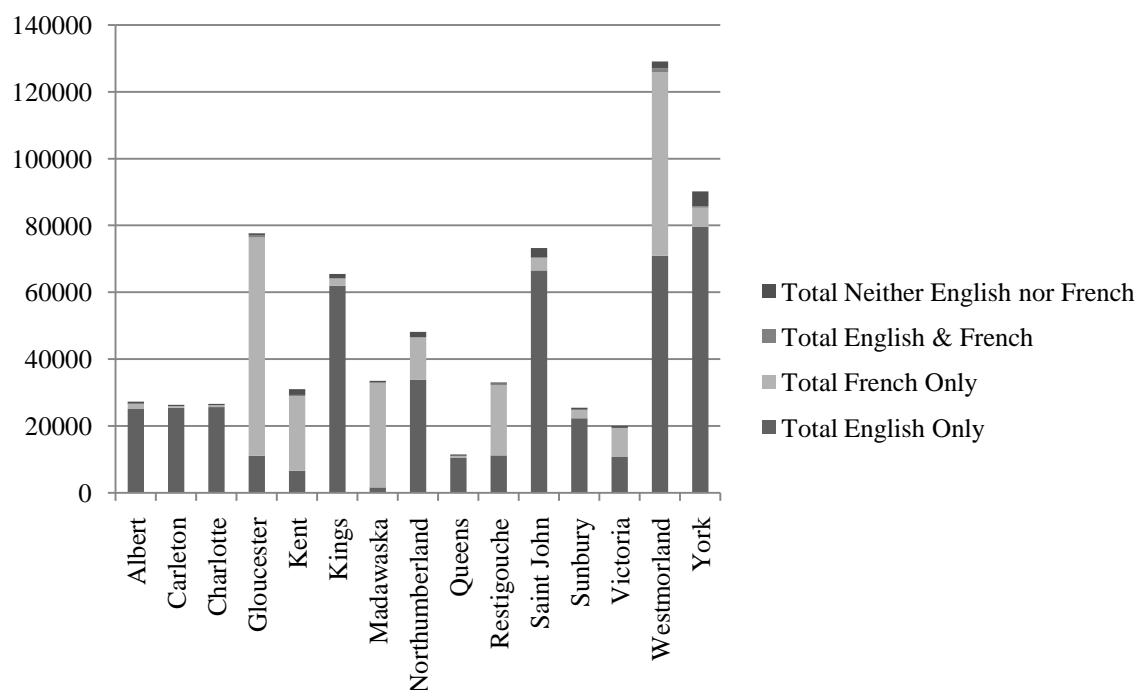
01 St. John County	08 Kent County
02 Charlotte County	09 Northumberland County
03 Sunbury County	10 York County
04 Queens County	11 Carleton County
05 Kings County	12 Victoria County
06 Albert County	13 Madawaska County
07 Westmorland County	14 Restigouche County

<sup>1</sup> "Canada: Index Map of Census Divisions," (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1976).



## APPENDIX B: LANGUAGE

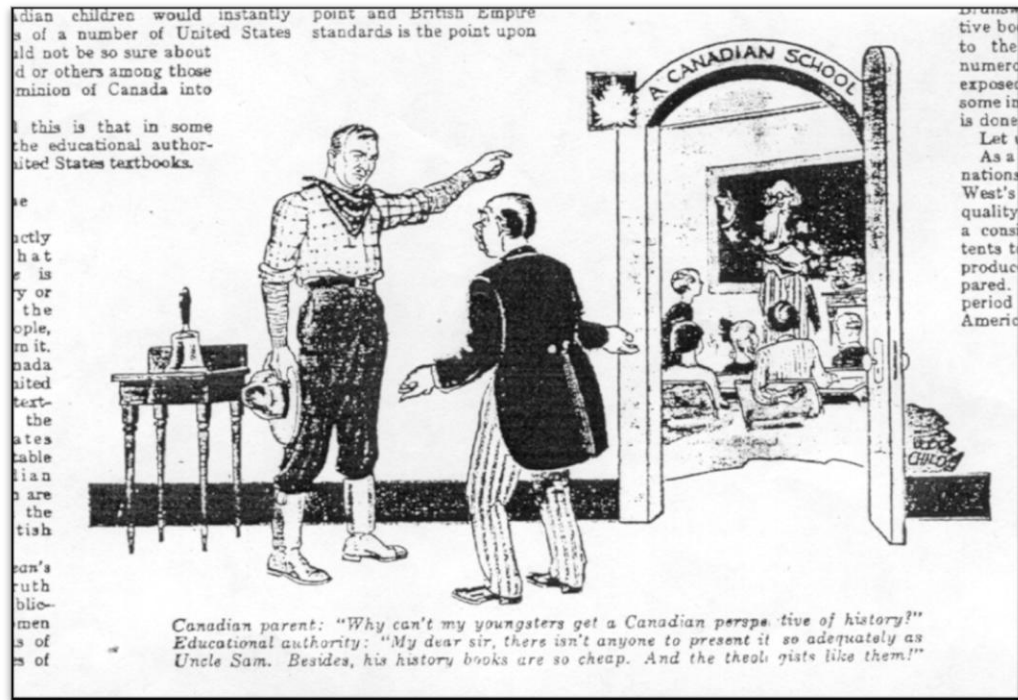
Figure B.1 Mother Tongue in New Brunswick by County, 2006 Census<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, *New Brunswick (Table). 2006 Community Profiles* (2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa. Released March 13, 2007. Retrieved April 30, 2008 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/community/Index.cfm?Lang=E>: 2007).

## APPENDIX C: CARTOONS

Figure C.1 Victor Child cartoon, MacLean's, 1929<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Victor Child, "Cartoon," in *Maclean's Magazine* (Toronto: 1929, July 1).

Figure C.2 Harry Murphy cartoon, *The Literary Digest*, 1923<sup>2</sup>



"As Mr. Hearst Sees It," a cartoon by Harry Murphy depicting the Hearst newspapers' view of American History textbooks. From *The Literary Digest*, July 7, 1923.

<sup>2</sup> Harry Murphy, "As Mr. Hearst Sees It," in *The Literary Digest* (1923).