HABITANTS IN HOLYOKE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRENCH-CANADIAN COMMUNITY IN A MASSACHUSETTS CITY, 1865-1910

PETER HAEBLER

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HABITANTS IN HOLYOKE:
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRENCH-CANADIAN
COMMUNITY IN A MASSACHUSETTS CITY,
1865-1910

by

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B.A., University of Massachusetts, 1963
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A THESIS

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May, 1976
This thesis has been examined and approved.

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ABSTRACT

HABITANTS IN HOLYOKE: 
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRENCH-CANADIAN 
COMMUNITY IN A MASSACHUSETTS CITY, 
1865-1910 

by 

PETER HAEBLER

This dissertation examines the acculturation of the French-Canadian community of Holyoke, Massachusetts, from 1865 to 1910. In 1900 Holyoke, a medium-sized city of 45,000 with a French-Canadian population of approximately 15,000, was the sixth largest French-Canadian center in New England. French-Canadians never constituted more than one-third of the total population, a fact which mandated a greater degree of ethnic integration than in cities such as Manchester, New Hampshire and Woonsocket, Rhode Island where they were the predominant ethnic group. Holyoke's French-Canadian migration began after 1865 when the town's industrial base, consisting primarily of cotton and woolen textiles and paper manufacturing, was expanding and, consequently, when social relationships were in flux.

Historians, as well as contemporary observers, have viewed French-Canadian migrants to New England as clannish, poorly educated, prolific reproducers and reluctant to naturalize and participate in American life. These conclusions
are disputed in this essay. The analysis is multi-variate and is organized as follows. The first chapter considers demographic and economic conditions of agriculture in French Quebec which fostered emigration, as well as other factors, such as the demand for unskilled and semi-skilled labor, which drew French-Canadians to New England in the late nineteenth century. The remainder of the dissertation is organized around the premise that by the mid-1880's French-Canadian cultural isolation had been greatly eroded and that they had begun to play an important role in the larger Holyoke community. Part One (Chapters 2-3) considers the French-Canadians in Holyoke through the first phase of their development (1865-1885) in which the basic French-Canadian institutions, the family, Catholic Church and schools, were transplanted or founded and struggled to survive in an unfamiliar environment. While French-Canadian cultural isolation was not complete, the group relied heavily upon its own social and cultural resources during these years. Part Two (Chapters 4-6) examines the acculturation and growing influence of Holyoke's French-Canadians between the mid-1880's and 1910. Not only did French-Canadians become prominent in civic, business and social activities, but at the same time they were moving away from the customs and practices which characterized their lives in French Canada. By 1910, French-Canadians, by actively participating in most facets of Holyoke life, had indicated that they had become Americans of French-Canadian descent.
As a study of acculturation and ethnic integration, this work focuses on patterns of internal and external mobility, occupational mobility, and both internal and external perceptions of status. These patterns are explained by systematic study of French-Canadian attitudes toward organized labor, naturalization and politics, changes in their voluntary institutional and social arrangements and finally, the relationships between the French-Canadians and other ethnic groups in the city. Analysis was based upon systematic consideration of French and English-language newspapers, corporate and organizational records, statistical summaries derived from city, state and federal records, and oral interviews.
INTRODUCTION: IMMIGRATION STUDY IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE FRENCH-CANADIAN IMMIGRATION

One of the most persistent themes of immigration study in the United States concerns the rate of cultural, social and economic assimilation attained by various groups of new arrivals. Until the early twentieth century, Hector St. John de Crevecoeur's belief that the practice of American democracy had produced a "new man" was not seriously questioned. George Bancroft, the most notable of the nineteenth century filopietistic writers, glorified the American experiment in self-government. Bancroft viewed immigration and the subsequent western settlement as the escape of brave individuals from hierarchy and privilege and who, regardless of differences in background, were willingly transformed into free men in a new land.

The first generation of professional historians shared the belief that ethnic differences were destined to give way as part of the successful completion of a democratic order. Frederick Jackson Turner emphasized the role of the frontier environment in forming a common culture. While Turner was cognizant of the influence of European conditions on immigration, his work reflected the nativist fear of new arrivals from lands without knowledge of representative government. Turner viewed the late nineteenth century immigrants as a threat to American institutions and was pessimistic about the ability of the cities to assimilate the varied groups. For Turner, with an anti-urban bias, the frontier acted as a
safety valve to relieve the pressures of surplus labor in the cities. He feared that the combination of continued migration plus shrinking free land reserves might trigger a destructive class war.³

In the nineteenth century Anglophilic students of American History believed that representative government as practiced in the United States and England had Teutonic origins. John Fiske and Henry Cabot Lodge argued that Southern and Eastern European immigrants should be excluded as a threat to Teutonic purity, believing that the newcomers were incapable of fulfilling the responsibilities required in a democratic society. As late as the 1920's, reflecting the Turnerian bias against "new immigration", Henry Pratt Fairchild argued that the mixture of Southern European and Nordic stocks would produce calamitous results.⁴

The work of "scientific eugenics", which reached the height of its popularity in the decade following World War I, explained ethnic differences in the light of inherited traits. Popularized by Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard, the eugenicists provided a pseudo-scientific rationale for the restriction of "inferior" races in the 1920's.⁵ Social anthropologists, particularly Franz Boas, exploded the claims of "scientific racism" and emphasized the importance of culture in determining human behavior.⁶ However, in studying American society, social scientists were as susceptible as historians in their belief in the power of assimilation. Sociologist W. Lloyd Warner, for example, placed ethnic subcultures in an
anthropological framework and traced a pattern of residential, occupational and social mobility which led toward total assimilation.\(^7\)

The post-World War I historians who developed the field of immigration study, such as George Stephenson, Theodore Blegen and Carl Wittke, were largely Turnerians.\(^8\) These men widened and softened Turner's nativism by their empathetic study of German and Scandinavian immigrant groups, but shared many of his suspicions too. Mostly mid-westerners of Northern European stock, they studied their forefathers who came to the agrarian sections of the United States, shying away from newer or more urban immigrants.

The Turnerian emphasis on the assimilative effects of the environment reflected both the ethnocentricity and narrowness of the early historical study of immigration. Scholars in the social sciences explored areas of ethnicity ignored by historians. Economists and sociologists recognized the late nineteenth and early twentieth century immigration as an important contemporary issue. While much of their writing reflected a racial bias against the "new immigration", some works, for example Thomas and Znaniecki's, \textit{The Polish Peasant in Europe and America}, were perceptive and sympathetic.\(^9\) Although lacking in historical perspective, the social scientists gave immigration studies a new emphasis by exploring the interrelationship between individuals, families and community life.\(^10\)

The social scientists were also more optimistic than
the Turnerians about the assimilative capacity of American
cities. Robert Ezra Park, one of the founders of the "Chicago
school" of urban sociology, contended that the bases of com­
munication of new arrivals were disrupted by city life. How­
ever, using an ecological model derived from the natural
sciences, Park maintained that the city was composed of many
subcommunities - business districts, residential areas, slums,
immigrant enclaves - which helped to integrate the individual
into the larger urban life and provided a basis for community.
Park argued further that in addition to the primary relations
which characterized life within the subcommunity or "natural
area", secondary relationships, for example, the work situation
and the schools, also provided a means of interaction with the
larger urban community. For the urban immigrant, the secondary
relationships, especially the foreign language newspapers,
served as integrating forces by their ability to transmit
information about the wider society to the immigrant. For Park
the city was the frontier environment that fostered assimila­
tion.11

More recent historians, many of whom were themselves
products of the later immigration, and were beneficiaries of
the social scientists, have considered the conditions in
Europe which led to migration to the United States. Marcus
Lee Hansen, a student of Turner, took a wider view of American
immigration by focusing on the entire spectrum of European
emigration rather than on a particular ethnic group.12 Hansen
showed the continuity of the immigration process throughout
American history and emphasized the social and economic forces, common to all European countries, which underlaid emigration.

The publication of Oscar Handlin's *Boston's Immigrants* in 1941 marked a major departure in the study of immigration history. Handlin, fusing the wide focus of his mentor, Hansen, with the insights and methodology of the social sciences, traced the effects of immigration on the social structure, culture and economy of Boston, showing the impact that Yankee Protestants and Irish Catholics had on each other. The Irish responded to the migration process by erecting their own ethnic community and were simultaneously unwilling and unable to assimilate with the Yankee-dominated society. In *Boston's Immigrants* and *The Uprooted* Handlin emphasized the internal resources of the ethnic communities. Rather than an easy and inevitable process of assimilation into American life, Handlin's picture was one of ethnic struggle to maintain group traditions and identity.

While the earliest writing on migration to the New World stressed the lure of the "land of opportunity", recent scholarship, in the tradition of Hansen and Handlin, has explored the internal factors which created conditions forcing emigration. Brinley Thomas, Frank Thistlewaite and Philip Taylor all have viewed American immigration from a European perspective and the 1973 *Perspectives in American History* was devoted to a detailed examination of the elements that led to emigration from several European countries. In a 1974
article, demographer Kingsley Davis attempted to create a universal framework to understand mass migration. Davis viewed migration as the consequence of technological inequalities between territorial areas. The combination of the increased productivity of the Industrial Revolution and a rising birth rate were key factors in the European emigration of the nineteenth century. In a general survey of three centuries of immigration to America, Maldwyn Jones emphasized the similarities in the migration and settlement experiences of the various ethnic groups.

Social and cultural shifts in the United States in the past decade have encouraged a new study of ethnicity. The Civil Rights movement of the 1960's renewed interest in Black History as a vehicle to convey racial pride and as a means of legitimatizing the place of Blacks in American History. Hispanic-Americans and Indians have undertaken similar quests. White ethnic groups, in reaction to the assertiveness of minority groups, have also explored their role in American History. Together these efforts have promoted a positive view of cultural diversity. While the older immigrant groups have been the subject of considerable investigation, there has been a new interest in more recently arrived or numerically small groups. In most of these studies, the impact of American culture and the retention of ethnicity are common themes. While cognizant of the interaction between the older groups and the immigrants, there is little agreement concerning the influence of Americanization. In separate studies of Italians
in Chicago, for example, Rudolph Vecoli, in the tradition of Oscar Handlin, emphasized the continuing evidence of Old World culture within the Italian community, while Humbert Nelli stressed the rapid assimilation and mobility that Chicago's Italians achieved.¹⁹

Most of the immigration studies have focused on the European migration to the United States. Prior to the 1920's, there was little scholarly attention paid to intracontinental migration in North America. Only when immigration restriction laws closed off most foreign immigration to the United States did scholarly research on internal migration begin. Sociologist Donald J. Bogue and his colleagues addressed the question of internal movement within the United States caused by the economic difficulties of the Great Depression and discovered that most migration was between places of the same type and that this movement did not measurably add to the growth of the urban population.²⁰ In a larger framework, Everett S. Lee combined data concerning regional economic growth with information of internal migration to obtain a unified analysis of the resulting interaction in the United States between 1870 and 1950.²¹ Particular attention has also been given to the internal movement of Blacks within the United States as well as to the interaction of economic development and migration between the nations of the Western Hemisphere.²²

The literature of the French-Canadian immigration to the United States is small. There is little disagreement among historians of this movement concerning the reasons for
French-Canadian emigration from Quebec during the last half of the nineteenth century. Steadily worsening economic conditions in agricultural Quebec, caused principally by soil depletion, combined with a soaring increase in population and increased land division, and forced many French-Canadians to seek alternative livelihoods. Canadian industry was not then sufficient to absorb any significant number of displaced farmers. The increased capacity of New England industry, especially textiles, after the Civil War combined with the need for cheap labor to provide the needed employment for tens of thousands of French-Canadians.

Perhaps the most enduring view of the French-Canadians in New England, fostered in part by the French-Canadians themselves, is of a people who maintained their separate identity and long resisted efforts to acculturate them. Evidence of cultural unity can still be found in most French-Canadians centers in New England, and in recent years French-Canadians, influenced by the new interest in ethnicity, have expressed concern over the decline in the use of the French language and the general loss of French-Canadian culture. In the available studies of French-Canadians in New England, however, the evidence suggests that there were many similarities between the French-Canadian experience and that of other ethnic groups who came to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The French-Canadians came to the United States for essentially the same reasons as other immigrants of the period. They clustered together in ethnic settlements
and came to terms with life in the United States. Prior to 1910, French-Canadians, like other immigrants, did not become assimilated. Rather they borrowed elements from the larger community, while at the same time they retained certain identifiable ethnic characteristics.

During the first decade many French-Canadian migrants showed considerable physical mobility both within New England and between New England and Canada, a favorite argument of opponents of French-Canadian migration. Although the foundations of solid, permanent French-Canadian communities had been laid in many towns by the 1870's, the idea of the French-Canadians as "Birds of Passage" was a common theme in the literature of the day, and was given widespread credibility by the oft quoted "Chinese of the Eastern States" report of the Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of Labor in 1881. The Bureau Report, written by Carroll Wright, pictured the French-Canadians as docile workers, willing to work long hours for low wages, whose prime concern was to accumulate enough savings to return to Quebec and who showed no willingness to become Americanized. Another source of opposition, for which Robert C. Dexter was a vocal and xenophobic spokesman, contended that the goal of the French-Canadians was to retain their ethnic and religious solidarity and that their high birthrate was a threat to the religious and racial makeup of New England.

Writing in 1891, Father E. Hamon attempted to refute the charges made against the French-Canadians by the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor and others. While acknowledging
the migratory habits of some French-Canadians, Hamon argued that the majority of migrants remained in New England and had established strong, stable communities. By 1900 most public officials and journalists agreed that the French-Canadians had achieved a considerable degree of integration and were a permanent part of New England life.28

Much of the recent scholarship of the French-Canadian migration to New England has attempted to calculate the timing and size of the movement from Quebec. In doing so, these scholars have reflected the new social history which emphasizes quantitative and structural approaches and represents a departure from an ethnocentric view of migration. Marcus Lee Hansen, Leon Truesdell and Gilles Paquet all have taken note of the uneven quality of the French-Canadian movement and the rough correlation between the heaviest periods of migration and economic prosperity of New England industry.29 Ralph Vicero's study, completed in 1968, marked a breakthrough in the study of French-Canadians in New England.30 Vicero, a geographer, surveyed the economic problems facing rural Quebec which resulted in the post-Civil War exodus. He discovered a causal relationship between French-Canadian settlement and the location of the New England textile industry. In examining the patterns of French-Canadian migration, Vicero concluded that after the Civil War French-Canadians were increasingly drawn to the small and medium-sized cities which had a substantial textile production.
Studies of individual French-Canadian communities reflect a variety of historiographical approaches and reveal many differences which make it difficult to make significant generalizations concerning the French-Canadian experience. However, from the limited sources it is possible to develop a tentative typology of French-Canadian settlements in New England. While French-Canadians could be found throughout the six state area, they generally settled in three definable locations; first, small villages and towns where the French-Canadians constituted a majority of the population; second, medium-sized cities where they were a majority or were the single largest element of the population; and third, medium-sized cities where the French-Canadian community was large but did not constitute a majority nor was it the largest single element in the population.

In general, French-Canadian resistance to Americanization appears to have been strongest in the first type of settlement, considerable in the second, and less sustained in the third. Gerard Blazon's study of the textile village of Suncook, New Hampshire is the most encompassing survey of the first type of French-Canadian settlement, small towns and villages. Blazon found little demographic stability in the two decades following French-Canadian movement to Suncook and thus there was a slow growth of permanent institutions. The stability that was eventually achieved was due in large measure to the strength of the local French-Canadian parish. Suncook was almost entirely French-Canadian, and even though
close to Manchester and Concord, was culturally isolated. Although the French-Canadians of Suncook made considerable adaptations to their new surroundings, lacking contact with other groups, they retained a high degree of cultural solidarity. Conversely, David Blow, in an article on the French-Canadians in Winooski, Vermont, concluded that the French-Canadian cultural erosion was evident in the last decades of the nineteenth century when the second generation began to reach maturity. Although similar in size, the percentage of French-Canadians in Suncook was considerably higher than in Winooski and afforded the French-Canadians of the Vermont town greater contact with non-French-Canadian elements.

Considering medium-sized cities with a dominant French-Canadian population, most studies of this type settlement are sociological descriptions set in the mid-twentieth century. Elin Anderson's 1937 work on Burlington, Vermont and Bessie Wessel's 1931 study of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, both view French-Canadian communities as less progressive and enterprising than the counterpart settlements of other ethnic groups. Anderson noted the French-Canadians lack of material progress, citing as evidence a high percentage of the third generation still employed in the mills, a comparatively passive labor force, the conservative influence of Church leadership and an ethnocentric social life. Wessel saw a high degree of ethnocentricity in Woonsocket as well. As the predominant ethnic group, the French-Canadians played an important role in the cultural life of the city. They were
less prone to intermarry and considered Americanization only as a supplement to their retained French-Canadian identity. Thus, Wessel considered the majority of the French-Canadians in Woonsocket, as late as 1930, to be an unassimilated, immigrant group. George Theriault's 1951 study of Nashua, New Hampshire pictured the French-Canadians as culturally self-sufficient and not well-integrated into the larger community. In a study of Manchester, New Hampshire, Tamara Hareven suggested that the French-Canadians of that city retained close ethnic ties into the twentieth century. Thus, in medium-sized cities with a dominant French-Canadian population, these studies indicate that French-Canadians were rather slow to lose their ethnic exclusiveness.

Finally, we must consider medium-sized cities with a large, but not predominant French-Canadian population. In a study of Lawrence, Massachusetts, Donald Cole viewed the French-Canadians in the context of the entire cycle of immigration to that city. Coming after the Irish, and before the Greeks and Italians, the French-Canadians' progress in social integration was related to the time of their arrival. While not as forceful as the Irish or Germans in asserting themselves in local affairs, the French-Canadians had achieved a high degree of social integration by the late nineteenth century when the "newer" groups began to arrive. The largest single French-Canadian community in New England was in Fall River, Massachusetts, but the French-Canadians constituted only one-third of the population of that textile city. Philip Silvia
argues that although the French-Canadians were not prominent in trade union activity in Fall River, they had by the 1880's achieved a social and economic position similar to that of their compatriots in Lawrence.\(^{37}\)

The focus of this study, Holyoke, Massachusetts, is an example of the third type of French-Canadian settlement in which there was a considerable degree of assimilation. Holyoke was a medium-sized city and in 1900 was the sixth largest French-Canadian center in New England. The French-Canadian population of Holyoke was never more than one-third of the city's total, a fact which mandated a greater degree of ethnic interaction than was needed in other types of French-Canadian settlements. While Cole and Silvia viewed the French-Canadians as one of many ethnic groups within an urban context, there is no historical study which focuses on a French-Canadian community within a major industrial city.

Holyoke provides a unique setting for a study of ethnic interaction. From its inception in 1850, Holyoke was a planned industrial town, with a high percentage of its population foreign-born. Holyoke, as a new town, had not yet achieved institutional stability when major French-Canadian migration began after the Civil War. In addition, Holyoke's economic base was considerably wider than those cities in which most French-Canadians in New England settled. Unlike many New England textile towns dominated by one or two companies, Holyoke offered a wider range of employment opportunities. Thus the French-Canadians who came to Holyoke confronted a
new town whose basic institutions were undergoing rapid change, a considerable degree of economic diversification and a social structure within the working class that reflected the complex makeup of the city's industry. This work provides a multi-variable analysis of the French-Canadian experience in Holyoke. The study is organized as follows. The first chapter considers the French-Canadian background which created conditions conducive to emigration, factors which drew French-Canadians to New England in the last half of the nineteenth century, as well as the French-Canadian movement into New England and to Holyoke in particular. The remainder of the dissertation is organized around the premise that major changes were occurring in the French-Canadian community by the mid-1880's, when the second generation had reached its majority. Part One, Chapters Two and Three, considers the French-Canadians in Holyoke through the first phase of their development, 1865-1885, while Part Two, Chapters Four, Five and Six, treats the growing influence and power that the French-Canadians held between the mid-1880's and 1910. Within both Parts One and Two, an analysis of French-Canadian acculturation and ethnic interaction is made on the basis of their patterns of internal and external migration, occupational mobility, perceptions of their status as indicated by French-Canadian attitudes toward organized labor, naturalization and politics, changes in their institutional and social arrangements and finally, the relationship of the French-Canadians to other ethnic groups within the city. This study ends in 1910. After that date there is
a paucity of information which reflects ethnicity in Holyoke. Official reports, for example, consider third generation French-Canadians as native born Americans of native parentage. The increased rate of French-Canadian acculturation and the absence of pertinent statistical information presents formidable obstacles to investigation after 1910.

Prior to 1910, French-Canadians in Holyoke most frequently referred to themselves as "French-Canadians", "Canadians", or "French", appellations which helped them define their place in American society. For purposes of consistency, the term "French-Canadian" is used throughout this dissertation, except in direct quotations, to designate not only those born in French-Canada, but the second and third generations as well. Only in the first decade of the twentieth century does the term "Franco-American" find acceptance, providing another indication of the French-Canadians self-conception and heralding a new phase of their history in the United States.
REFERENCES AND NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION


6 Vecoli, "Ethnicity," 78-79.


18 For a fuller exposition of this topic see Rudolph J. Vecoli, "European Americans: From Immigrants to Ethnics," International Migration Review, VI (Winter, 1972), 418-429.


CHAPTER I

THE FRENCH-CANADIAN MIGRATION TO NEW ENGLAND

The French-Canadians who came to New England in the last half of the nineteenth century were bearers of a cultural heritage that was unusual in its completeness and intensity. The British Conquest of Canada in 1763 profoundly altered French-Canadian life. In the aftermath of the French defeat, the French-Canadians were largely successful in their effort to maintain a separate ethnic identity. The French-Canadian émigrés in Holyoke and New England came from a society which had been self-contained for more than a century. Canadian cultural patterns determined the nature and mode of settlement in New England. It is therefore appropriate to survey briefly the Canadian historical experience in order to identify the salient features of the French-Canadian heritage among those who migrated to New England.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, French policy makers attempted to shape Canada according to the mercantilist philosophy which emphasized the promotion of colonization and of commercial development. But the efforts of the royal government were sporadic and often unrelated to colonial realities. The plans of Louis XIV's finance minister, Colbert, to impose upon Canada an economic system beneficial to France were thwarted by the preoccupation of the colony's entrepreneurs with the fur trade and the government's inability to induce significant numbers of Frenchmen to
emigrate to Canada. In spite of royal encouragement, only 10,000 migrated to New France during the more than 150 years of French rule.¹

Canada's distinctive pattern of land settlement provides an example of French difficulties in directing colonial development. Land along the St. Lawrence River and its major tributaries was divided into seigneuries, which, superficially at least, resembled the contemporary manorial estates in France. However, the seigneurs, the beneficiaries of these grants, were far removed from the great French nobility in lineage, wealth and power. Few seigneurs were able to lure many Frenchmen to become habitants by settling on their lands. The seigneurs had little control over the habitants. Although required to pay a small annual rental, in reality the habitants were in command of their land.²

Geography rather than royal design created the land system for New France, and this system retained its basic form even after the British Conquest. Land along the rivers was subdivided among the habitants in long, narrow plots in order that each would have frontage on the river. As settlement proceeded inland, a second rang (row) of farm plots was laid out parallel to the waterfront holdings. A road was cut between the first and second rang, at a distance of about one mile from the river, making the length of the farms approximately ten times their width and less efficient to farm than a square plot. Habitants built their farm houses close to the road which from a topographical perspective gave the appearance
of an elongated village. The rang became the fundamental social unit of French Canada. A tradition of mutual aid developed within its confines and eventually councils and schools were organized on a rang basis.\textsuperscript{3}

Towns and villages, in spite of encouragement from both French and provincial officials, developed slowly in Canada. The subsistence agriculture of the habitants did not require the commercial and service functions traditionally offered by towns, and, the alternative economic activity, the fur trade, which continued into the early eighteenth century, also did not need substantial urban support.\textsuperscript{4}

The Catholic Church was a principal organizing force. In areas where there was a church, leadership was generally assumed by the curé (pastor) of the parish. The parish played a special role in the social organization of rural Canada. It was the one place where people met regularly and it served to create a bond of social unity. The curé was accorded a special position of respect and few social events were complete without him. He acted as judge and advisor and was privy to the problems of every individual in the parish. His unique position provided him an opportunity to shape community opinion and it was his value system and attitudes toward the outside world which the villagers accepted. As in France, the curé fulfilled the responsibility for the registration of births, marriages and deaths.\textsuperscript{5}

The rang pattern of settlement made the habitant largely self-sufficient and limited his social activity to his
nearest neighbors. He was content to leave the handling of local affairs to the curé and the conseil de fabrique (board of wardens). The conseil de fabrique was one of the few institutions allowing popular participation in the affairs of the colony. The conseil oversaw the administrative functions of the parish. Usually it consisted of the curé, as chairman, and wardens chosen annually by the parishioners. It supervised the upkeep of parish property, watched over local church finances and if a parish school existed, the conseil governed it.6

Although the tradition of parishioner involvement was important, the French-Canadian conseil was generally controlled by the curé and usually deferred to his wishes. Given the remoteness of French civil authority, the role of the curé as spiritual and temporal leader was reinforced because by the mid-eighteenth century most habitants were Canadian-born and of peasant origins. Quite naturally, the habitant turned to the village priest for guidance following the confusion which resulted from the British conquest.7

The Catholic Church became the primary vehicle for the preservation of French-Canadian culture after the Conquest. British rule effectively ended opportunities for French-Canadians to attain positions of influence in government, the army or commerce. French-Canadian businessmen, lacking the capital or credit of their new English and Scottish competitors, turned to the rural countryside as the only hope of economic survival. What for them had been an emerging commercial
society replete with prospects, became the leavings of British commerce and the meager opportunities of a largely rural peasant society. One result of this construction was the idealization of rural values, encouraged by the clergy, and the acceptance of the view that separation was the only way to resist assimilation with the British. Sociologists Charles Wagley and Marvin Harris summarized: "Isolated and out of contact with the English, old French-Canadian values were erected as sacred rules. Frugality became a prize virtue and fecundity an evident duty...A myth developed that the French-Canadians had always been a rural people".8

This transformation strengthened the position of the local curé. The parish priest warned of the dangers of Protestantism and taught that the meager economic conditions of the habitants had a spiritual value more precious than the worldly wealth of the Anglo-Saxon invader.9 The curé, according to Wagley and Harris, "contributed to the conservatism of the French-Canadian habitant and to the ideal of 'unchangeableness' in regard to French Canada. Perhaps more than any other factor, the leadership of the clergy has strengthened the in-group feeling of the French-Canadian".10

Throughout the eighteenth century, the Canadian Catholic hierarchy was dominated by men dedicated to the "religious re-generation" of Canada. Following the French Revolution, the arrival of émigré French nobility and clergy, who believed liberal democracy was incompatible with Catholicism, reinforced the conservative outlook of the Church. In the first half of
the nineteenth century, there was a gradual fusion of religious and political thought within the Church under the leadership of Bishops Ignace Bourget and Louis-François Lafleche. By mid-century, Lafleche articulated a position which equated episcopal authority with divine right. He contended that as divinely ordained leaders of a Catholic nation, French-Canadian bishops were entitled to total obedience from Catholics in both spiritual and temporal matters. The acceptance of this ideology by the habitant was made easier by the clergy's establishment of a Catholic primary school system which was developed in the early nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{11}

The Canadian Church also reinforced the custom of large families. French colonial policy had provided bounties to families with many children and had proscribed certain penalties against bachelors in an effort to encourage population growth in Canada. In addition, large families were an economic necessity in an agricultural economy. The teachings of the Catholic Church further encouraged parents to produce large families for the greater glory of God. The French-Canadian population, which was 70,000 at the time of the Conquest, had increased by 1861 to 884,000, one of the most rapid population increases in the western world. Many French-Canadians believed that this population growth, \textit{revanche des bercau} (the revenge of the cradle), was an assurance that the French-Canadians would never assimilate with the growing British population.\textsuperscript{12}

The isolation of the predominantly rural French-
Canadian population and the stature of the curé, facilitated acceptance of the ideal of "unchangeableness". French Canada became dedicated to preserving, "as in ice", its religious and cultural heritage. Religion became the main element in the cultural solidification of the French-Canadians and language was elevated to a sacred position. "The French language, guardian of the Faith", became a standard theme of French-Canadian rhetoric. In the view of one observer, French Quebec was unique in that it remained a "virtual theocracy" well into the twentieth century. In this self-contained society ideals were expressed in theoretical and absolute terms. Isolation, minority defensiveness, inferior economic status, and conservative Catholicism, resulted in a value system in which the rewards and goals were of another world. Religion served many functions in French-Canadian culture. It provided hope and consolation in a life where material rewards were sparse. It made the individual aware of the collective conscience of his society, approving or disapproving both the individual and institutional patterns of behavior. The French-Canadian knew his place in this highly integrated society and was not inclined to go beyond his ascribed status. French-Canadian émigrés brought these attitudes and values to the United States. 13

British political action and social attitudes insured that French-Canadians would not find equity within Canadian society thus reinforcing their cultural isolation. The Quebec Act, 1774, restored the prerogatives of the Canadian Church
and French-Canadian land holders that they had lost after the Conquest, but did little to win the loyalty of the mass of habitants. Few French-Canadians heeded the demands of their bishops to aid Britain during the American Revolution. Great Britain, responding to the demands of British Canadians for a legislative assembly, enacted the Canada Act in 1791 which divided the colony into Upper and Lower Canada, each with its own governmental structure. Although the French-Canadians comprised approximately 75 per cent of the population of Lower Canada (Quebec), their numerical superiority was never reflected by political control. Political ineffectiveness, combined with economic exclusion, increased French-Canadian hostility toward the British. They viewed the British as "exploiters", barbarians", and "enemies of the race". In turn, the British looked with disdain at the conservatism of the French-Canadian peasants, their "antiquated" French legal system and the influence and power of the Church. Armed rebellions in 1837 and 1838 further separated the two ethnic groups. While the uprisings were not simply French-Canadian against British, the harsh treatment of French-Canadians by British troops increased already existing tensions.14

As a consequence of the rebellions the British government appointed the Earl of Durham Governor-General and High Commissioner and gave him broad powers to investigate conflicts within Canadian society and prescribe remedies. His Report, issued in 1839, alienated most French-Canadians. The
Report portrayed the French-Canadians as a regressive and unenterprising people. Durham was convinced that French-Canadian nationalistic feeling had to be discouraged and that the government of Canada entrusted to "none but a decidedly English legislature". Durham believed that the union of Lower and Upper Canada would produce an English majority and he hoped that the French-Canadians "in a minority, would abandon their vain hope of nationality".

Canada was united in 1840 by the Act of Union. The French-Canadians, however, did not assimilate into the English culture as Durham had predicted. French-Canadian cultural nationalism was reinvigorated by the challenge of the Report and the Act of Union. The resistance to assimilation was successful and the French-Canadians achieved such a degree of political power in the new national legislature that it became apparent that Canada could not be governed without co-operation between French and English peoples. With the establishment of the Confederation in 1867, which gave the Canadian provinces a great degree of self-government within a federal framework, the French-Canadians were able to control the Province of Quebec and to preserve their distinctive cultural heritage into the twentieth century.

Some of the distinctive features of French-Canadian society eventually created conditions which required the departure of thousands of habitants from French Canada. The rapidly expanding population served to insure the survival of the "race", and the agricultural mode of life insulated the habitant from threats of change from an outside world.
that in its industrial and urban growth was hastening the forces of modernization. In the early nineteenth century, however, both French-Canadian population growth and agricultural isolation combined to create an ever-growing economic problem.

By the mid-nineteenth century an agricultural crisis was imminent. The pattern of farming in French Canada still closely resembled the practices used during the French regime. The family farm was the basic unit of production and although complete self-sufficiency was not achieved, the level of commercial exchange was quite low. Although a wide range of crops was grown, wheat was the most important one. In the late 1820's, an estimated 30 per cent of the total acreage under cultivation in French Canada was devoted to its production. Wheat was the major cash crop and the prosperity of both the habitants and the rural villages of Quebec were closely tied to the annual harvest. Peas, potatoes and various feed grains were of lesser commercial importance but were prominent items in the French-Canadian diet.18

Although French-Canadians were dependent on agriculture, they had been slow to adopt modern farm techniques, especially in the areas of fertilization, crop rotation and the raising of livestock. The Durham Report concluded that the habitants were in the tradition of the "worst methods of small farming".19 Crop rotation was little appreciated and less practiced. Some crops, especially wheat, were planted annually in the same fields until declining productivity
dictated removal to new land, where the pattern was repeated. A British traveler in the late 1840's, observing that the banks of the St. Lawrence had formerly been called the granery of Canada, remarked that "everywhere idleness, ignorance and an avaricious spirit on the part of the cultivator have led to the same results in the diminishing the ability of the disposition of the soil to produce good crops of wheat". The failure of French-Canadians to use available manure for fertilization, inefficient methods of soil tillage, and their use of unclean and unimproved seed, all helped to reduce productivity of the land. In addition, habitants knew little about selective breeding. Although livestock production was not primarily intended as a commercial undertaking, most observers noted that French-Canadian stock was smaller and of distinctly inferior quality compared to stock raised by English-speaking farmers.

The effects of years of agricultural mismanagement, although widely recognized in the early nineteenth century, did not immediately show. After 1824, however, Quebec enjoyed only one superior harvest and between 1827 and 1844 at least six counties experienced a decline of wheat production greater than 90 per cent. In many other counties the decline exceeded 50 per cent. A few areas were not affected, but the areas of greatest decline had an overwhelming French-Canadian population. Loss of productivity in wheat caused a shift in emphasis to other crops, especially potatoes, which became an increasingly large part of the habitants' diet. However, a potato
blight swept across Quebec in the early 1840's and by 1851 potato production had dropped by about 50 per cent throughout the province and in some areas the decline was as great as 70 per cent. Thus, during the decades of the 1830's and 1840's, rural Quebec experienced a severe agricultural depression.\textsuperscript{22}

Declining productivity and economic distress were made more acute by a 400 per cent increase of the French-Canadian population between 1784 and 1844. In addition, the land available for expansion was limited. The Constitutional Act of 1791 had altered the land system of Quebec by providing that future land would be granted in accordance with British law, thus fixing the bounds of the seigneurial lands. Land acquisition in the seigneuries required no initial outlay of cash and only modest annual rents. Outside the seigneurial boundaries, a cash down payment was needed, with subsequent costs increased by interest charges. As late as 1851, 89 per cent of the French-Canadians were still within the seigneurial bounds. Although good unoccupied agricultural land did exist in some seigneuries, it was becoming too expensive for most habitants to acquire.\textsuperscript{23}

The difficulties facing French-Canadians wishing to acquire additional seigneurial land were compounded when they attempted to settle outside their bounds, principally in the area east of Montreal known as the Eastern Townships. Few French-Canadians lived in the Townships which were generally some distance from French-speaking areas. In the Townships,
English law and Protestantism prevailed, and there was a strong cultural and social reluctance on the part of most French-Canadians to migrate there. More important, the terms of land tenure were a formidable obstacle. The widespread poverty of the French-Canadians made land purchase in the Townships unrealistic for all but a few. 24

Land was an essential element in the social and economic fabric which had evolved in French Canada following the Conquest. By 1850, however, population growth and the increasing unavailability of land had put a serious stress on traditional social patterns. The habitants' most immediate response to these difficulties was to divide existing plots. In 1835 the Secretary to the Montreal Agricultural Society maintained that 80 acres was the minimum that could be farmed profitably. Census figures for 1851 show that the average land holding in Quebec was only 69 acres, but in the seigneurial areas the farms were even smaller. At the extreme, in the seigneurial county of Montmorency, 41.2 per cent of the holdings were 8.3 acres or less and in Kamguraska County the percentage was 33.6. This situation reduced the efficiency of the already overworked land and also greatly expanded the size of the landless population. Unemployment was frequent, especially in winter, and many young men left their families to find seasonal work in the lumber industry. 25

There were few employment opportunities in Canada outside of agriculture. Manufacturing developed slowly and until the early twentieth century was not a major factor in
the economy. By 1850 French-Canadians had become the largest element in lumbering and lesser numbers found work in the ship-building yards along the St. Lawrence. However, a commercial crisis in the late 1830's, followed by a general depression in Canada from 1846 to 1850, had serious effects on these industries, especially lumber. The French-Canadians were more generally affected because the decline caused many creditors to press for payment, thus adding to an already serious agricultural problem. At this time, the first significant French-Canadian migration to the United States occurred. Many habitants crossed the border to work as seasonal lumberers, although pockets of permanent settlers could be found in many factory towns.26

Some of the migrants found their way to the Middle West and New York State, but New England had a special attraction for the French-Canadians. In addition to physical proximity, the changing nature of the New England economy was an important factor in stimulating migration. The rapid expansion of the factory system, especially in cotton and woolen textiles, and boots and shoes, created a demand for factory workers. Initially, the labor requirements were filled by native New Englanders. However, by the 1840's a general expansion of manufacturing and railroad construction required increased numbers of unskilled workers and the native labor force was not elastic. The turnover rate among New England farm girls, the traditional mainstay of the textile work force, had always been quite high. They left the mills during slow
time or when they tired of factory life, returned to their homes. In the 1840's, a large influx of Irish workers contributed to a general decline of wages in the cotton textile industry which resulted in a wave of strike activity and accelerated the movement of native girls from the mills. Frequently vacant positions were filled by immigrants willing and eager to work, even at the comparatively low wages of the textile industry. In the 1840's and 1850's the Irish were the main source of immigrant labor, but some openings were filled by French-Canadians. In the late 1850's and early 1860's, Irish immigration declined temporarily and French-Canadian migration increased commensurately. The opportunity for the large-scale employment of women and children in the textile mills was reflected by the increased migration of French-Canadians as complete family units. By 1880 French-Canadians had become the dominant element in the textile work force. There were an estimated 37,500 French-Canadians in New England in 1860, most of whom lived in manufacturing towns.27

By 1860 economic conditions in French Canada were severe. Land problems had become particularly acute. The land was rapidly losing its capacity to produce, while population increases were causing accelerated subdivision of existing cultivated land, traditional land holding patterns militated against any significant increase in the availability of new land. Also, embryonic Canadian industry provided no outlet for the surplus population. In summary, years of economic difficulty had reduced much of rural Quebec to near destitution.
A combination of adverse economic developments had profoundly discouraged this rural society. Thus, some inhabitants reluctantly left Canada in the 1840's and 1850's. After the Civil War, many more undertook the perils and uncertainties of emigration.

The conclusion of the Civil War marked the beginning of a major population movement from French Canada to New England. As Table 1 indicates, the volume of this migration increased steadily until 1900, when there were approximately 575,000 French Canadians in the six New England states, ten percent of the total population of the area. But even these figures do not accurately reflect the size of the movement. Virtually every observer has remarked about the temporary character of the French-Canadian migration, especially in its early stages. Many

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Net Migration per decade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860-1870</td>
<td>52,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>1870-1880</td>
<td>65,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-1890</td>
<td>102,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-1900</td>
<td>106,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

habitants were seasonal workers, while others stayed a year or two and then returned to Canada. For those who remained in New England, a visit every year or so to Quebec was common and made easier by special excursion rates that were offered by the railroads several times during the year. Possibly a million French-Canadians crossed the border at some time during the nineteenth century but the number of multiple crossings is incalculable. While there was a considerable degree of "commuting" across the Atlantic Ocean by European immigrants, the percentage of French-Canadians who travelled back and forth between the United States and Canada was much greater. The physical proximity of Quebec and the volume of the two-way traffic across the international boundary made the French-Canadian migratory experience different from that of other immigrant groups entering the United States in the nineteenth century. 28

While the volume of French-Canadian migration to New England increased during the last half of the nineteenth century, (see Table 1), the movement had an uneven quality. Two factors were important in determining the size of the flow at any given time. First, the state of the economy in general and the Québécois economy in particular, and second, and more important, economic conditions in New England. In general, from 1860 to 1900 the entire Canadian economy was plagued with serious problems stemming mainly from British policies. These problems hastened the French-Canadian exodus. The fortunes of the New England economy were more important in
determining the timing and amount of French-Canadian movement. In the post Civil War years, New England textile mills were short of operatives, principally because of a growing demand for consumer goods during the period. French-Canadians responded to this employment opportunity; some sections of rural Quebec suffered drastic population losses because of outward migration. A short recession in the first half of 1867 lessened the movement, but conditions improved later in the year and the demand for labor brought large numbers of French-Canadians to the region until 1873.29

The depression of 1873 shattered the Canadian economy and had severe effects in New England, especially in cotton textiles. New England mills first cut wages, then shortened hours and, in some cases, shutdown entirely. A sudden return to prosperity in the spring of 1879 unloosed the largest wave of French-Canadian immigration. The peak years of this movement, which closely followed the New England economic cycle, were 1880-1883, 1886-1893 and 1895-1900. An abrupt downturn in 1893 resulted in some factory closings and in a massive "backflow" of French-Canadians.30

The movement of French-Canadians to New England fell off sharply after 1900. The New England cotton textile industry had begun to feel the effects of Southern competition and thus there was a slight and temporary reduction in the size of the total textile work force. Also, by the mid-1890's, new immigrants from Poland, Portugal, Greece, Russia, and Italy had begun to provide a significant percentage of the
textile labor force. A general price rise, combined with traditionally low wages in textiles, caused a decline in real earnings and set off a wave of strikes at the turn of the century. These disputes discouraged French-Canadian immigration, caused some French-Canadians to return to Canada, and thus opened mill jobs for many new immigrants at the end of the strike in much the same manner as the French-Canadians had replaced Irish and native workers fifty years earlier. Finally, the nature of the work force was being altered. The number of women in the textile mills had begun to decline, partly because technological improvement had made the new machinery more productive but at the same time more unwieldy and thus more difficult for women to operate. Others were transferred to different textile operations which required less physical labor. Legislation to reduce the number of children in mills became stricter and better enforced. The French-Canadians often depended on the earnings of the entire family and thus this reduction of employment opportunities for youths may have discouraged many families from leaving Canada.  

Correspondingly, while employment prospects lessened for French-Canadians in New England, conditions in Canada showed considerable improvement. In the early twentieth century, general prosperity returned to Canada. A population increase, especially on the Western prairies, enlarged the domestic consumer market and this in turn helped to develop manufacturing. A gradual shift by French-Canadians to a more modern system of farming began to show some results thus
improving material conditions. In sum, the economic considerations which played such an important role in stimulating French-Canadian migration to New England in the nineteenth century, by 1900 had been altered to the point where most French-Canadians considered it more advantageous to remain in Quebec.32

Historians have assumed that because of the rural nature of French Canada most of the migrants had previously been engaged in agricultural pursuits. However, it appears that a significant minority of habitants had been employed in non-agricultural areas prior to coming to the United States and that some had previous experience in textile mills in Canada. In 1908, a United States Immigration Commission (The Dillingham Commission) survey on the pre-migration occupations of French-Canadian textile operatives indicated that approximately two-thirds of the male cotton operatives and three-fifths of the male woolen operatives had previously worked on farms. However, among women operatives, 22.9 per cent in cotton and 31.9 per cent in woolen textiles had worked in those industries prior to coming to the United States. Even if this data gives a reasonably accurate picture of the job histories of French-Canadians in the United States in 1908, it can be surmised that given the slow pace of industrial development in Canada the percentage of French-Canadians coming directly from the farm was much higher in earlier stages of immigration. Important questions are raised, however, as to the nature of the migrant population. Those workers who had
worked in manufacturing or had lived in cities or towns before coming to New England might be expected to adapt more readily to their new life than those who had previously spent their entire lives in rural Quebec.\textsuperscript{33}

While bleak economic prospects in Canada undoubtedly raised the possibility of migration for many French-Canadians, direct encouragement was often provided by New England industry. As early as the 1840's, some mills sent agents to Canada to hire girls for the factories. French-Canadians were sought not only because they were available, but because in the view of many mill operators, they made good and inexpensive workers.\textsuperscript{34} In 1859, an agent of the Dwight Manufacturing Company of Chicopee, Massachusetts wrote, "the French are much better than the Irish when learned. They work steadier and are much more ambitious".\textsuperscript{35} The opinion of many New England employers was summarized by Carroll Wright, Chief of the Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of Labor. "...Almost without exception, the mill managers, whatever they have to say about the traits of the Canadians, prefer them in their mills; for they are industrious in the extreme, do not grumble about pay, are docile and have nothing to do with labor agitations".\textsuperscript{36} Although not aimed at the French-Canadians, the Foran Act of 1885 made direct recruitment of labor illegal. Prosecutions, however, were few, and besides, New England employers could usually get sufficient recruits by merely informing their French-Canadian workers of their needs. This information was quickly relayed to friends and relatives in
Canada. Family connections were another important factor in stimulating and providing direction to the post-Civil War migration to New England. Stories and experiences related by the émigrés on visits home or in letters tended toward exaggeration, but to the French-Canadian farmer with limited economic prospects these provided further encouragement to migrate. Knowledge that friends and relations would extend a warm reception, perhaps provide lodging until employment was secured or even arrange for a job for the new arrival, lessened the fears of moving. Unsurprisingly, French-Canadian communities in New England tended to consist largely of former residents of a handful of villages and towns in Quebec. 37

The location of the French-Canadians was largely determined by employment opportunities and the industrial expansion of Southern New England, particularly in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In 1900, these two states contained 58.8 per cent of the French-Canadians in New England. French-Canadian workers were found in a wide variety of industries, but most worked in textiles. In 1900 they comprised more than 45 per cent of all cotton mill operatives in New England and represented about one-third of the entire textile labor force of the region. Consequently, the areas of heaviest French-Canadian concentration were in the textile towns in the Merrimack, Blackstone and Connecticut river valleys and in southeastern Massachusetts. 38

Textiles employed a large percentage of women and children. The tradition of family work that existed in rural
Quebec was readily modified to suit the industrial conditions and French-Canadians provided a larger percentage of women and children for the work force than any other ethnic group. Their wages, even at rates lower than adult males, contributed to the income of the household and provided the means by which many French-Canadian families were able to advance beyond the subsistence level. In addition, the custom of family work had an important impact on other aspects of social and cultural life. Educational opportunities, for example, were severely constricted in a society where the employment of minor children was the norm.

French-Canadians came to New England seeking to improve the material quality of their lives. In the process, they brought with them, in varying degrees, the customs, mores and institutions of French Canada and in this respect contributed to the cultural diversity of New England. French-Canadians made great efforts to insure the survival of their heritage (la survivance) and encouraged the ideal of cultural separation. The constant arrival of newcomers from French Canada, the frequent visits to Quebec, and the geographical concentration of sizable numbers of French-Canadians in particular neighborhoods — all these factors reinforced Canadian customs. Moreover, since a large number of émigrés originally had no intention of remaining permanently in the United States, they were reluctant to abandon their traditional way of life.

The movement to preserve French-Canadian traditions was reflected in conscious efforts to preserve language,
religion and cultural identity. The Church often assumed a position of leadership in la survivance, as it had in Canada after the British Conquest. The French-Canadians living in New England established their own parishes, with French-Canadian priests, and in which the French language was used. The Irish-dominated Catholic hierarchy was far from unanimous in support of national parishes, but by 1891, ninety-six French-Canadian parishes had been created, mostly in New England. Bishop Williams of Boston, whose jurisdiction, until 1870, included all of Massachusetts, was sympathetic to French-Canadian appeals. Williams had, however, few French-Canadian priests under his control to assign to the numerous communities requesting them. As Canadian prelates gradually abandoned their efforts to stop the movement to New England, they became more willing to permit priests to do missionary work among those who left French Canada. Bishop Williams was then able to secure the services of some of these priests and authorized the creation of a number of French-Canadian parishes.41

Most parishes established a school as soon as possible. By 1891, fifty-three French-Canadian parish schools were in operation, most in New England. These schools emphasized the teachings of the French language and the preservation of religious practices and traditional customs. In addition, a wide array of charitable, insurance, and fraternal societies, often under the auspices of the local parish, also served to reinforce community values. The first generation of French-Canadians in New England, largely within the framework of their religious
institutions, and with the French language serving as a cohesive force, were able to erect an impressive network of organizations designed to preserve their cultural solidarity and to ease the shock of the migration experience.\textsuperscript{42}

The large scale migration of French-Canadians to New England encountered a considerable degree of opposition from native New Englanders and earlier arrived immigrants. While many manufacturers had encouraged, and even induced, French-Canadians to come to New England, labor leaders and social reformers often proved hostile to this migration. They charged that the French-Canadians bore part of the responsibility for slowing the movement to reduce working hours and to regulate the conditions of employment, especially for women and children. Manufacturers voiced opposition to proposals to tighten and enforce school attendance laws on the grounds that such action would discourage the migration of French-Canadian families. Workers argued that the willingness of the French-Canadians to work cheaply tended to lower the wage scale for everyone. Further, the migratory and docile nature of the French-Canadian work force proved a hindrance to the formation of labor unions. In some instances labor leaders noted that French-Canadian priests had told workers not to participate in strikes and walkouts. There seems to be an element of truth to many of these charges, especially regarding the French-Canadians' acceptance of low wages and their retardation of trade unions. However, the French-Canadian experience was very similar to that of other immigrant groups and low wages,
particularly in textiles, were due more to the increasingly unfavorable competitive position of the New England textile industry, in both the domestic and world markets, than to the presence of French-Canadian workers alone. It was not only the impact of the French-Canadians on the labor situation that concerned native New Englanders. They were also angered by the migratory character of the French-Canadian movement and the frequently stated desire to return eventually to Quebec. These fears were not quieted by the statements of French-Canadian leaders urging their people to obtain American citizenship. In spite of such pleas, naturalization proceeded slowly, in part because of the ambiguous nature of the appeals. Leaders of French-Canadian communities in New England were caught between their desire to maintain a separate culture and their wish to exert more influence in local affairs by having a sizable voting bloc. The rate of naturalization for French-Canadians was considerably below that of other groups. An 1888 Massachusetts report showed that only 22.9 per cent of the eligible French-Canadian males had become citizens as compared with an overall average of 51.9 per cent for all immigrant groups in the Commonwealth. As anti-foreign, anti-Catholic feeling increased in the mid-1880's, criticism of the French-Canadians also grew. Self-proclaimed patriots warned that the French-Canadians were part of a Papist plot to gain control of the region, citing the 1869 remarks of Bishop de Goesbriand of Burlington, Vermont. The Bishop had implied that French-Canadians were part of a
divinely sanctioned movement to extend Catholicism in the United States. Also, the high French-Canadian birthrate aroused fears that New England was about to be unalterably and disastrously changed by the vast number of French-Canadians that were both coming to and increasing within the region. 44

While some Americans questioned the loyalty of the French-Canadians because of their reluctance to embrace citizenship, others were apprehensive about the threat posed to political institutions by even the slowly growing numbers of French-Canadian voters. One journalist, noting the lack of French-Canadian experience with democratic government, concluded that French-Canadians had "not learned the real importance of conscientious and intelligent action, especially in local affairs... It may be that their views are purchased in municipal elections". 45 The process of naturalization was slow, not only because of a certain degree of apathy, but also because a five year residence and an ability to read English were required. Even though the proportion of French-Canadian voters was lower than most other ethnic groups, in many cities they held the balance of political power between the Yankee and Irish factions. Consequently, they were often able to secure places on political tickets, appointive offices, and other rewards. 46 Perhaps overstating the case, The Nation concluded in 1892 that "there is not a politician or office-seeker in all New England who would say anything to offend the French-Canadian vote". 47

By 1900, fears concerning the French-Canadians had
lessened greatly. Sizable numbers had lived in New England for more than a generation without any calamitous results. Moreover, a new wave of immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe had captured the attention of American nativists. In part, the decrease in hostility can be attributed to changes that took place within the French-Canadian communities. The peak of French-Canadian migration was over and in spite of efforts by some to maintain cultural separation, much integration into the larger society had occurred. The children of the French-Canadian émigrés did not always have the same dedication to the preservation of the cultural heritage. One observer has noted that:

Second-generation Franco-Americans became even more absorbed in the American way of life. The young were entranced by the mass media and a variety of attractions which abounded in urban centers... They lived in an era in a milieu where everything hailed American superiority. They did not want to pass for immigrants in the richest country in the world... Furthermore, among those who spoke no English upon their arrival, the quickest to succeed in America were those who were also quickest to understand the importance of mastering the language of the country.

By 1900, the French-Canadians in New England, as a group, had adopted a considerably large part of the American life style than had those of the previous generation.

These changes were quite evident to non-French-Canadian observers. Testimony before the United States Industrial Commission illustrated the new attitudes toward the French-Canadians. A member of the Board of Trustees of Lowell Technical College concluded that "it is the desire of the Church to keep these people together. I think
there is a growing independence among the French and a
general desire to become thoroughly assimilated. The race
is not prejudiced, and they assimilate wherever they go". 50
Another witness said that Canadian-born mill operatives "are
very clannish, they have their own stores and the first genera-
tion rarely improves. They have no desire to improve. The
American-born [French-Canadians] operatives want to live as
other Americans do and their habits of life are different.
They are more intelligent and more ambitious to rise in the
world". 51 Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, who favored some sort
of restrictive legislation, boasted of his Norman blood and
proclaimed that the French-Canadians "who have come in recent
years in such large numbers to New England form an excellent
addition and have proven to be a valuable and promising
element in our population". 52

In 1910 a New England community leader summarized
the French-Canadian experience in his city over a period of
a half century. Appearing before the United States Senate's
Dillingham Commission, he said:

While at first they were gregarious, living in 'Little
Canada', they have, especially since the introduction
of the electric-car system, established their homes in
other sections of the city. Although at first essentially
alien and foreigners, having come to the community for
their own profit and pleasure and preserving their isola-
tion, they have now in large part adopted the language
and customs of the United States and they are here to
stay. 53

The stereotype of the French-Canadian as docile and
clannish was not completely destroyed, but by 1910 they were
generally accepted as a permanent part of New England life.
While the general pattern of French-Canadian immigration to New England is discernible, the importance of this movement can only be discovered through examination of individual French-Canadian centers. It is to be expected that the nature of French-Canadian settlement and adjustment varied with the conditions encountered in different locales. In Holyoke, Massachusetts, the focus of this study, French-Canadians were confronted with circumstances different in many respects from those found in other New England towns. Incorporated in 1850, Holyoke was still a "new town" when French-Canadian immigration began. Moreover, at an early date Holyoke had a diversified economic base, dominated by paper and textile manufacturing, but also including foundries, wire making, and machine manufacturing. Most importantly, the French-Canadians in Holyoke, unlike those in Woonsocket, Rhode Island and Manchester, New Hampshire, were never a numerical majority and thus were required to interact with a non-French-Canadian population more than their compatriots in other French-Canadian centers in New England.

Holyoke was a product of the Industrial Revolution. Situated on the west bank of the Connecticut River some seven or eight miles above Springfield, and next to a fifty-four foot waterfall, the site possessed the ideal physical prerequisites for a mid-nineteenth century industrial town. In the late 1840's a group of industrial investors, including some of the Boston Associates, who had founded Lowell, Lawrence, Chicopee Falls and Manchester, organized as the
Hadley Falls Company. They hoped to imitate their earlier successes by transforming the rural countryside into a model textile village. The river was dammed and plans drawn for a town on the west bank. The development of the town proceeded along the lines set forth by the Hadley Falls directors, with a system of three levels of canals and plots laid out for mill sites and boarding houses. The Hadley Falls Company hoped to derive profits from the production of cotton textiles and the sale of water power. In 1850, at the behest of the company directors, the Massachusetts General Court created the town of Holyoke from a section of what had previously been West Springfield.  

During its first decade, the Hadley Falls Company experienced severe financial difficulties. In 1859, after a number of reorganizations, the Holyoke Water Power Company was established to handle water power and real estate sales, while the Lyman Mills Corporation carried on the textile manufacturing functions. After the Civil War, the competitive position of Lyman Mills became more secure, and together with a flourishing paper making industry, provided Holyoke with a continued, if uneven, economic growth until the 1890's.  

The population of Holyoke included, almost from its inception, a large proportion of foreign-born. During the 1850's many of the employees of the Hadley Falls Company came from the farms of Holyoke and surrounding towns, but at least half of the work force was Irish. There were a small number of English and Scottish immigrants, the latter coming as a
result of the company's attempts to recruit skilled female weavers from Glasgow. Even though the population was almost entirely English-speaking, there was considerable hostility between natives and the foreign-born. The gap widened even further after the founding of St. Jerome's Roman Catholic Church in 1856, a year when Know Nothingism was at its height in Massachusetts. The new church more clearly delineated the religious differences between the Irish and native-born. In addition, the liquor issue further aggravated ethnic differences. In 1852, Massachusetts passed a prohibition statute, but the law proved to be ineffective in Holyoke where illegal saloons flourished. The fondness of Irish workers for an occasional visit to these taverns antagonized many Yankees who supported the temperance movement. Until the end of the century, control of liquor selling proved to be the overriding political issue in Holyoke.  

The pattern of French-Canadian migration to Holyoke was similar to that of the rest of New England. A few French-Canadians came to the area in the mid-1850's, but the major influx began after the Civil War. In the employment records of the Hadley Falls Company it is difficult to find more than a handful of obvious French surnames. The first substantial number of French-Canadians came as a result of recruiting efforts by the Lyman Mills which commissioned Nicholas Prew (Proulx) to go to Canada and return with workers. Prew and his family originally came to the Holyoke area between 1852 and 1854 to work in the mills of nearby Mittineague. Prew's
first stay was short, but of undetermined duration. The family returned to Canada, but in 1858 came back, this time to Holyoke, Prew found work in the Lyman Mills and evidently impressed his employers. In 1859, when improved business conditions created a labor shortage, Prew was asked to find prospective mill workers in Canada. The mill constructed a large four horse wagon for Prew and, on his initial trip, he also took another horse and wagon for the baggage of the emigres. Prew traveled through the Province of Quebec speaking in French of the high wages at Lyman Mills and attempting to induce as many as possible to accompany him back to Holyoke. On his first journey, Prew recruited forty-five young girls and six or seven boys.\textsuperscript{58}

The first passage, which lasted nearly a week, took place in the fall. The prospective workers slept at night in the fields or, whenever possible, in barns. In Vermont, the travelers took refuge for the night in a barn, presumably without permission. The residents of the area, not knowing the purpose of Prew's trip, surrounded the barn. Prew was able to explain the situation and with some reluctance the Vermonters allowed them to remain in the barn after paying a fee to the owner.\textsuperscript{59}

The mill paid Prew $4 or $5, plus transportation expenses, for each operative that he brought to Holyoke. Over a five year period, he made many trips to Quebec and is reported to have transported an estimated 500 French-Canadians to Holyoke. Prew's activities are the only known efforts at
direct labor recruitment by Holyoke industries in Canada. The demand for labor rose and fell with the economic conditions created by the Civil War. In 1867-1868, when the mills once again needed French-Canadian labor, the type of service provided by Nicholas Prew was no longer needed. By the end of the Civil War Holyoke was directly connected to Quebec by railroad. And workers who had gone to work in the mills were sufficiently satisfied to urge friends and relatives in French Canada to move to Holyoke also.60

There were approximately 250 French-Canadians, out of a total population of 5500-6000, in Holyoke in the first half of the 1860's. Since virtually all were British subjects, they were not liable to the Civil War draft. Indeed, it appears that some French-Canadians postponed taking out naturalization papers in order to avoid wartime service. In the published draft calls, only one French name appears. It is probable that some French-Canadians did join the Union Army for the enlistment bonus. The Springfield Republican reported in January, 1864 that "an order had been issued for the arrest of the Frenchmen, who could 'parley vous' in English as well as anyone before they enlisted on the Holyoke quota, but grew very Frenchy after they were sent to camp and were discharged because they couldn't understand what the officer said".61 While some French-Canadians might have taken advantage of the bonus system, there are stories that others were lured from Canada on the pretense of a job offer. They signed agreements, written in English, before they left
home and when they arrived in Holyoke, found an enlistment officer awaiting them, and only then discovered that they had actually signed enlistment papers.62

The Civil War temporarily shut off employment opportunities for the French-Canadians. Cotton supplies were quickly depleted and by late 1861 some 700 Holyoke workers, of a total population of 4600, were unemployed. The war led the town in a direction not anticipated by the original planners. The directors of the Holyoke Water Power Company overcame their determination to keep the town exclusively a center for textile production. In 1865-1866 the Power Company sold water rights to nine paper mills and a variety of other manufacturing endeavors were begun in Holyoke in the post-war period.63 This industrial diversification greatly enhanced Holyoke's economic stability and created a demand for more labor. Holyoke's labor needs coincided with the beginnings of large scale emigration from Quebec. French-Canadians proved to be the single largest source of new immigration for the town until after the turn of the century.
REFERENCES AND NOTES TO CHAPTER I


5. Falardeau, "Role and Importance," 345.


8. Wagley, Minorities, p. 177.


10. Wagley, Minorities, p. 175.

12 Eccles, Canada under Louis XIV, p. 48; Wagley, Minorities, p. 182.

13 Falardeau, "Role and Importance", 350-351; Wagley, Minorities, pp. 181-182; Theriault, "Franco-Americans", pp. 256, 267.


16 Ibid., II pp. 307.


18 Johnston, Notes, I, p. 363; Robert Leslie Jones, "French-Canadian Agriculture in the St. Lawrence Valley, 1815-1850," Agricultural History, XVI (July, 1942), 139.


20 Johnston, Notes, I, p. 311.


34 Copeland, Cotton Manufacturing, p. 120; William MacDonald, "French Canadians in New England," Quarterly Journal of Economics, XII (April, 1898), 264.

35 Shlakman, Chicopee, p. 148.


48 Ducharme, Shadows of the Trees, p. 230; Bonier, Debuts, pp. 93-94.


50 Industrial Comm., 1901, XV, p. 71.

51 Ibid., 1901, XIV, p. 385.


55 Ibid., pp. 30-65.

The original family name, "Proulx", had been Anglicized, probably by an employed who wrote the name phonetically, and Prew accepted the change.


From the Holyoke Transcript, August 18, 1923. This article is contained in a scrapbook in the Holyoke Public Library, reference number, 4:63. The article contains an interview with Timothy Lague who was one of the young men on Prew's first trip. Lague gives the date of this journey as 1853, but this is either a misprint or the result of an inaccurate memory, 1859 is probably more accurate.


Springfield Republican, January 28, 1864.

Holyoke Mirror, June 8, 1861, October 26, 1861; Holyoke Transcript, September 5, 1863, May 21, and November 12, 1864; Interview with Fr. Brodeur, Holyoke, Massachusetts, August 28, 1974.

Green, Holyoke, pp. 70-82.
Copeland, Alfred Minot (ed.). "Our County and Its People"; A Hiso
Part One: 1865-1885

The French-Canadian community of Holyoke went through two distinct phases between 1865 and 1910 distinguished principally by different levels of participation in the larger community. During the first period, 1865 to the mid-1880's, participation was limited; after 1885 it increased substantially, in part because of the contacts and modest successes which were achieved in the earlier years. Part One of this study examines interaction in the economic, cultural, social and political spheres during the years in which the basic French-Canadian institutions of Holyoke were founded and struggled to survive in an unfamiliar environment.

The principal area of contact between the French-Canadians and the larger Holyoke community in the two decades following the arrival of the French-Canadians, was economic. As the most recently arrived immigrant group and with few skills marketable in an industrial economy, the majority of French-Canadians began life in Holyoke at the bottom of the economic ladder. Large working families had long been the accepted norm in agricultural Quebec, and these were readily accommodated by the mills and factories of Holyoke. While individual income was low, the total family earnings, combined with frugality, provided some families with the means to improve their economic and social position. Independent business ventures were few, but they did provide a basis for contacts and political influence in a later period.
The French-Canadians brought with them the social and cultural institutions of Quebec. During the 1865-1885 period, the French Catholic parish was at the center of French-Canadian community life. Most social, fraternal and cultural groups had formal or informal ties with the Church. Cultural and social interaction with other ethnic groups progressed slowly and political activity, largely the province of French-Canadian businessmen, went undeveloped until the mid-1880's. While their isolation was not complete, the French-Canadians of Holyoke were a self-contained group in the years prior to 1885.
CHAPTER II

MIGRATION, EMPLOYMENT AND ADJUSTMENT

The French-Canadian movement to Holyoke was motivated principally by economic considerations. Until 1910, the ebb and flow of French-Canadian migration was tied closely to the city's economic condition. The movement was two-way throughout this period, producing large waves of émigrés when business was good and causing the departure of others during slack periods. The recruiting efforts of Lyman Mills had brought significant numbers of French-Canadians to Holyoke in the years prior to the Civil War. At war's end there were about 500 French-Canadians in the town. During the next five years this figure nearly quadrupled because the cessation of hostilities brought prosperity to the textile mills. Also, by 1867, seven new paper mills had opened. The post-war boom ended by the summer of 1867, and short time work and pay cuts became commonplace. The effects of this down turn on French-Canadian immigration are uncertain, but the accidental deaths in 1868 of two men, both recent arrivals from Quebec, indicate that some migration to Holyoke continued even during periods of economic stagnation. By late spring, 1869 the economic cycle had turned and the town enjoyed general prosperity for the next two years. ¹

In 1870, the French-Canadian community numbered about 1800 persons. During the next decade the total rose to 6200, or from 17% to 28% of the city's population (See Appendix B).
The Federal Census of 1880 indicates that at least three-quarters of the increase was the result of inward migration. French-Canadian movement continued to be linked to the business cycle. A brief downturn during the winter of 1873-1874, and a more serious economic crisis which began in the latter part of 1875, caused much unemployment and brought wage cuts and short time for those who kept their jobs. In 1877 a sign at a Holyoke mill gate proclaimed, "Positivement pas d'admission sur ces lieux a ce moulin. Pas besoin d'aide ici", (Positively no admission to the areas of this mill. No help needed here). Many French-Canadians left the city to look for work in other New England cities or returned to Canada.

The 1870's crisis was nationwide and Holyoke did not recover completely until early 1879. However, with economic recovery, French-Canadians flocked to the city in unprecedented numbers. Some immigrants appear to have chosen Holyoke as they came brandishing job advertisements which had been sent to them or had been printed in Canadian newspapers. Many found temporary lodging with friends or relatives, often to the consternation of local health authorities concerned with overcrowding.

In the 1880's, Holyoke's population was predominantly working class, but the French-Canadians were submerged even within this class. Many were attracted to the city's textile industries, especially the cotton mills; the largest percentage of employed French-Canadians worked there. However, the textile mills preferred to hire women and children for many
jobs because they could be paid at a lower wage rate than adult males. The male head of the household usually found employment in other industries, as day laborers, or as skilled or semi-skilled craftsmen. An 1871 town directory, which generally included only male heads of household, provides a picture of the types of jobs held by the male breadwinner.  

**TABLE 2. - Occupations of French-Canadians in Holyoke, 1871**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Job</th>
<th>Number of French-Canadians Employed</th>
<th>Percentage of Total French-Canadians Listed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laborers</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Textiles</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolen Textiles</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Industry</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Construction (inc. carpenters, masons, etc.)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. Manufacturing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trades</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. Trades (inc. blacksmiths, teamsters, shoemakers, etc.)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. (inc. 9 widows)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total French-Canadians Listed</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The directory shows that more than one-quarter of the French-Canadian adult males worked as laborers, with textile
mill employment a distant second, followed closely by con-
struction and building related jobs. Table 2 reveals the
predominantly working class nature of the French-Canadian
community. Only two professional men were listed in the
directory, a priest and a physician; only five French-Canadians
ran their own businesses, and three of these were grocers.

By the mid-1870's, about one-third of the operatives
at Lyman Mills, the city's largest employer, were French-
Canadians. An 1878 Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of
Labor report showed that this figure held true for the entire
textile industry in Holyoke. The report also revealed the
extent of French-Canadian child labor. 7 The report detailed
the number of workers in three selected occupations, laborers,
textile operatives, and paper mill workers, by age, sex, and
country of birth. The figures show that French-Canadians repre-
sented 35 per cent of the textile work force at a time when
they comprised only 20 per cent of the city's population.

TABLE 3. - Age and Sex Characteristics of Canadian Textile
Operatives in Holyoke, 1878

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Canadian Work Force</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadians - 15 years &amp; under</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadians - 16-20</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadians - 21-60</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadians - 60+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Textile Work Force</td>
<td>1456</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Work Force Canadian</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Even though the Canadian element in textiles was more than one-third of the male work force, three-fourths of it was under 21 years of age. Moreover, the percentage of French-Canadian child labor was high, not only in comparison with their population in the city, but also relative to other ethnic groups in the mills. Table 4 indicates that Canadian males under 21 years constituted more than 50 per cent of that age group, even though they numbered only 35.5 per cent (Table 3) of the total male work force.\(^8\)

### TABLE 4. - Age and Sex Characteristics of Canadian Textile operatives, as a percentage of the work force, Holyoke, 1878

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Canadian Work Force 15 &amp; under</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Canadians to Total Work Force 15 &amp; under</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Canadian Work Force 16-20</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Canadians to Total Work Force 16-20</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Canadian Work Force 21-60</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Canadians to Total Work Force 21-60</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Canadians did not find jobs as readily in the better paying paper mills, which used comparatively little child labor. Only 12 per cent of the male and 5 per cent of the
female workers in the paper mills were born in Canada. Also, 17 per cent of the day laborers in Holyoke were Canadian. To summarize: three occupations, laborer, textile mill operative, and paper mill worker totaled nearly 1500 Canadian-born workers. This figure represented almost half of the total French-Canadian population of Holyoke in 1875.\textsuperscript{9}

An 1877 report of Lyman Mills, listing the names of its management personnel, provides another indication of the status of French-Canadian workers. Only one French-Canadian name appears on that list, a second hand in the spinning department. At the time, Lyman Mills employed 1200 people.\textsuperscript{10}

Thus, the evidence indicates that Holyoke's early French-Canadians occupied a low place on the employment ladder. Although the French-Canadians were the single largest ethnic group in the low paying textile mills, the French-Canadian work force there was comprised largely of women and children. Adult males found work elsewhere, most frequently as day laborers, although a small number were skilled or semi-skilled craftsmen. It is apparent that child labor was important to French-Canadians and that they utilized it in greater proportions than other ethnic groups.

The state census of 1885 shows that the employment status of French-Canadians had undergone some improvement. During the previous ten years, Holyoke's French-Canadian population had doubled to 7000 persons. At least half of the increase was due to immigration. It is possible that many of the newcomers stepped into skilled labor positions. But it
is more likely that the greater proportion began in low paying jobs and thus obscured, to some degree, the occupational mobility experienced by those French-Canadians who had resided in Holyoke longer. Table 5 is a selected list of jobs held by French-Canadians in 1885.  

TABLE 5. - Number and percentage of persons born in French Canada in selected occupations, Holyoke, 1885

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number of French-Canadian born employed</th>
<th>French-Canadian born as a percentage of total work force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbers</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants and Dealers</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookkeepers and Clerks</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamsters</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brickmakers</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenters</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masons</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painters</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Mill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives - Male</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Mill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives - Female</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Mill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives - Male</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Mill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives - Female</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolen Mill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives - Male</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolen Mill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives - Female</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most significant aspects of Table 5 are the sharp rise in the number and percentage of French-Canadians involved in the operation of retail businesses and the large increase
in those employed in construction and building related jobs. The proportion of French-Canadian males in the paper making industry had doubled over a ten year period, while the percentage of both males and females in the textile mills had declined. Although French-Canadians were still predominantly working class, their position in 1885 was much improved since the 1870's.

For the period from 1870 to 1885 it has been possible to provide a general picture of French-Canadian employment in Holyoke. A large percentage of the working women and children were found to have jobs as textile mill operatives, while the adult males were employed in a much wider variety of occupations ranging from day laborer to store owner and skilled craftsman. While the working class nature of the French-Canadian community has been established, it is also important to know the wages received by French-Canadians in comparison with other groups. The actual wage rates are not in themselves reflective of the relative economic position of the workers. During the 1870's and 1880's wages frequently fluctuated due to market and general economic conditions. In addition, there was a general, if erratic, decline in the cost of living, caused in part by the immigrant's ability to live at a comparatively lower standard. Professor Robert Layer has computed the earnings of cotton mill operatives from 1825 to 1914 using pay records of six New England mills including Holyoke's Lyman Mills. According to Layer, the cotton mill
workers take home pay in 1880 was 15 per cent less than it was in 1870, while the cost of living had declined 35 per cent in the same period, and thus real earnings rose by 22 per cent. Even though the cotton textile operatives' earning power had increased, their position was still inferior to workers in other industries, as shown in the following table.

TABLE 6. - Average annual wages of selected industries in Holyoke, 1880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Average Annual Wage Per Worker</th>
<th>Percentage of Women &amp; Children in Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Industries</td>
<td>$304</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmiths</td>
<td>$401</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpentry</td>
<td>$306</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Goods</td>
<td>$260</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Founderies &amp; Machine Shops</td>
<td>$412</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Mills</td>
<td>$317</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolen Goods</td>
<td>$284</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 6 shows that in 1880, a good economic year, the industries in which French-Canadians were most heavily employed were the lowest paid. The high proportion of working French-Canadian women and children in these industries added to the total family income, but individual earnings
among French-Canadians were significantly lower than the city average. Male laborers could expect to earn from 75 cents to $1.25 per day during this period, which was comparable to the cotton mill operatives average wage of 77 cents to $1.09 per day. However, the uncertainties of finding work made day laboring a precarious occupation. Only in the paper mills, where there were few French-Canadians, and in building and construction trades, could a French-Canadian male expect to earn a wage higher than the city average. In 1886, a year of economic recovery, carpenters earned $2-2.25 per day, two and one half times the average daily wage of a cotton mill operative. As French-Canadians moved into better paying jobs (Tables 3 and 5) during the 1870-1885 period, their relative position improved. However, the evidence indicates that, especially in the 1870's, as a group French-Canadians earned less than other ethnic groups.

Wages in the textile industry were not only lower than in other major industries but these wages varied according to work performed. This wage differential was to the further disadvantage of the French-Canadians because mills employed large numbers of women and children in the lowest paying jobs. The wage rates that appear in Table 7 are for the entire state of Massachusetts, but they do give an indication of the wide differences in the earnings of adult men as compared to women and children in both the cotton textile and paper making industries.
TABLE 7. – Average weekly wages of selected jobs in the Massachusetts cotton goods and paper making industries, 1872, 1878 and 1881

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job</th>
<th>1872</th>
<th>1878</th>
<th>1881</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Hands</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>5.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Persons</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frame Spinners</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frame Spinners, Girls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frame Spinners, Boys</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warpers</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>10.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressers, Men</td>
<td>15.47</td>
<td>11.27</td>
<td>18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weavers, Women</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>6.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobbin Boys</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth Room, Men</td>
<td>8.16</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>7.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth Room, Women &amp; Children</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>5.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paper Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job</th>
<th>1872</th>
<th>1878</th>
<th>1881</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper Machine Tenders, Men</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>15.25</td>
<td>15.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thresher Women</td>
<td>8.89</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rag Cutters, Women</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8.40</td>
<td>6.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finishers</td>
<td>11.33</td>
<td>10.20</td>
<td>12.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finishers, Girls</td>
<td>6.93</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>7.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutters, Girls</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the late nineteenth century, there were many uncertainties for industrial workers, not the least of which were the numerous business declines which resulted in unemployment, pay cuts, or shortened hours. Holyoke's mill owners, on at least three occasions, agreed to halt production for periods of two to four weeks in order to raise the market price of their products. In addition, most mills shut down for a few weeks in the summer for repairs, temporarily leaving hundreds unemployed. 17

Until 1886 most of Holyoke's industrial workers were paid monthly. Some paper mills experimented with weekly
paydays in the late 1870's and Hadley Thread began using the weekly system in 1878. But most of the larger employers resisted the weekly payments on the grounds that the time-keeping and bookkeeping costs would be too great. In 1886, however, Holyoke's major employers, Lyman Mills and Farr Alpaca, converted to weekly pay because of the imminent passage of a state law requiring it. The law was passed, in part, because of pressure from merchants who favored a weekly pay system which would lessen the need for them to extend credit. The merchants, however, successfully opposed the complete abolition of the trustee system, a measure proposed by some social reformers and labor leaders. The trustee law enabled a creditor to attach a person's wages pending satisfaction of debts. Merchants complained that some French-Canadians would give one name at their boarding house, another at the mill where they worked, and a third to the merchant. When the merchant obtained a trustee writ he often found it difficult to locate the debtor. An estimated 1200-1500 writs were issued yearly in Holyoke in the late 1870's, most for small amounts. There remains a scattering of trustee writs in the papers of the Lyman Mills dating from the 1873-1874 period. These show French-Canadians having their wages attached for periods ranging from three to six months. In some cases, the wages of minor children were attached to satisfy debts of their fathers. The trustee system undoubtedly worked hardships on the French-Canadians who, because of their low economic position, were more likely to go into debt. An 1878
Massachusetts law which exempted from attachment the first ten dollars of income, brought a great measure of relief from the trustee system. Some French-Canadians sought their own way of escaping the effects of trusteeism. In 1879 one Joseph Paradise attempted to collect his attached wages by calling for them in the name of Joseph Heaven. The paymaster was neither amused nor fooled.  

It is difficult to determine, with any precision, the working conditions that French-Canadians confronted in Holyoke mills. The best overall description was given in an 1874 Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of Labor report which included an evaluation of conditions in nine Holyoke textile mills. The Bureau investigators considered equipment available, routes of egress in case of fire, adequacy of ventilation, safety of the machinery, and paid special attention to the encasement of moving parts. Three of the mills, including the Germania Mills which had a large German-born work force, were adjudged among "the finest in the state". The major deficiency in most mills was the lack of adequate ventilation. Indeed, local newspapers had previously reported that temperatures in some mills often exceeded 95 degrees. The state investigators found that the weaving rooms of Lyman Mills were "very hot and disagreeable in consequence of steam flowing through them. There is no necessity for so much of it and manufacturers with a little care might save both the steam and the health of operatives at the same time". 
Similar conditions were discovered in Merrick Thread's winding rooms where the air was considered to be impure and oppressive. Among the worst offenders was Lyman Mills, which employed large numbers of French-Canadian workers and whose facilities were among the oldest in Holyoke.\textsuperscript{21}

The Labor Bureau, headed in these years by Carroll Wright, was considered "a model for the country". Wright's biographer concluded that this 1874 inspection of textile factories was an example of the pains the Bureau took to gather quantitative information on working conditions. The Bureau's willingness to make comparisons on a statewide basis indicates that most Holyoke mills were above average in matters of health and safety, but in mills that most probably employed the greatest number of French-Canadians, conditions were inferior.\textsuperscript{22}

The frequent newspaper accounts of serious, sometimes fatal, industrial accidents among workers of all ethnic backgrounds, attests to the dangers involved in mill work. The loss of a finger in a circular saw or an arm caught in gearing were risks that were faced daily. Fatigue from working 10 to 12 hour days, the inexperience of a ten or eleven year old worker, the unguarded belts and machinery - these were the prime ingredients of industrial accidents.

Prior to 1885, labor agitation in Holyoke was sporadic, spontaneous, poorly organized and, with one partial exception, unsuccessful. In the fourteen recorded strikes between 1864 and 1884, anger over wage cuts appears to be the prime cause
of the walkouts. The strikes, particularly in the mills, took place during periods of economic difficulty when employers attempted to reduce costs by lowering wages. Because of the economic climate, unemployed workers could easily be found to replace the strikers and those who walked out were either discharged or required to return at the old wage scale. The only exception occurred in 1873-1874 when 250 weavers, mostly women and children, at Lyman Mills and 70 weavers at Hampden Mills struck because of 10-15 per cent wage cuts. At Lyman Mills the leaders were quickly "ferreted out" by company officials and fired. The remaining strikers returned to work. The difficulties at Hampden Mills were of longer duration. At the beginning of the walkout the strikers were fired and expelled from company housing, and Lyman Mills agreed not to hire them. Hampden Mills, in an effort to divide and conquer, restored the wage cuts of the non-striking weavers. After the strike had lasted five days, the company agreed to restore some of the wage cut. Two months later it was reported that all wages had been restored to their pre-strike level and that nearly all the strikers were back at work.23

Union activity in Holyoke before 1884 was minimal. A small paper makers' union was formed in 1874 and survived for three years and the Sovereigns of Industry, a short-lived effort to establish industrial co-operatives, enrolled a few members. However, there is no reason to suspect that these organizations had any effect on local conditions within the French-Canadian community. With the possible exception of
Isaiah Mercier, who was treasurer of the paper makers’ union, there is no reason to believe that any number of French-Canadians were connected with these organizations.\textsuperscript{24}

The degree of French-Canadian involvement in strike activity is also a matter of conjecture. The commonly held attitude towards French-Canadian workers, expressed by the Massachusetts Labor Bureau, was that they were willing to work long hours for extremely low wages, and under virtually any conditions.\textsuperscript{25} Nationalities of the strikers were not usually reported, although in the 1873-1874 strike of several weeks duration, the newspapers reported that many of the strikers had returned to Scotland. Since the number of French-Canadians at Lyman Mills was rising during this period, it is likely that some French-Canadians were hired as replacements for strikers. In 1872, after a strike by Irish railroad laborers, French-Canadians were sent by train from Holyoke to replace them. They were met by the strikers and the train was driven back to Holyoke. The railroad owners waited until the strikers had been paid off the next day and then the French-Canadians took their place.\textsuperscript{26}

The most vocal protestations against French-Canadian labor during this period followed a large influx of French-Canadians to Holyoke in the spring of 1879. Economic prosperity was returning to Holyoke and the rest of the nation after three and one-half years of depression. At this time, the Holyoke Paper Company placed an advertisement for 100 rag cutters. Local newspapers charged that unscrupulous railroad
agents had traveled throughout Quebec inducing French-Canadians to seek their fortunes in Holyoke. In a period of two months, an estimated 600-1000 French-Canadians descended on the city, causing considerable concern among the residents. The émigrés arrived, often as family units, piling their baggage at the railroad station as they went off to search for work and lodgings. At a time when wages for day laborers and mill operatives ranged from 75 cents to $1.25 per day, French-Canadians reportedly offered to work for 50 cents.27

One concerned citizen wrote that the French-Canadians:

overstock our overcrowded labor market, they reduce the hire of skilled and unskilled labor; and they will brand our industry, as well as ourselves, with that hateful, that odious, and that despicable cognomen, "pauper", unless preventive measures are speedily taken to the influx...If our people lived as they lived, and hived as they hived, we should have a pestilence to record greater than that which at this moment is ravaging some of the finest provinces of the East.28

Another, "One of the Working Men", claimed that mill owners told other workers that "they can hire all the French help they want on their own terms, or no terms at all, as they will for 50 cents/day...How, I ask, can any poor workingman compete with them...?"29

The furor caused by the sudden migration was short lived and the influx slowed of its own accord before any organized effort was undertaken to stop it. French-Canadian residents of Holyoke sent word to Canada that the supply of jobs was limited. The migration tapered off and some recent arrivals returned to Canada or went to find jobs in other New England cities. The following year, 1880, a smaller wave
of French-Canadians arrived in the city, but little concern was expressed, perhaps because business was good and jobs plentiful. 30

In the years prior to 1885 the French-Canadians were, as all other ethnic groups in Holyoke, largely working class. However, in comparison with other groups, the French-Canadians were found in greater numbers in the lowest paying jobs, especially as textile mill operatives and day laborers. By 1885, some French-Canadians had made significant advances, particularly by moving into the retail trades and as skilled workers. But the continued influx of émigrés from Canada, most of whom found employment in the lower paying jobs, kept the French-Canadians at the bottom of Holyoke's economic ladder.

The low economic status of the French-Canadians, combined with Holyoke's chronic housing shortage, forced many into overcrowded and disease-infested tenements. Prior to 1873, the Holyoke Water Power Company would not permit sale of land for housing unless it was part of a mill site. Some mills did build tenements, but not in numbers sufficient to meet the demand. Lyman Mills, for example, with 1200-1500 employees, rented about 250 apartments to their operatives. Except for periods of economic difficulty, the local newspapers consistently lamented the lack of housing in the city. Consequently, the tenements that did exist were seriously overcrowded. The 1880 federal census showed that each dwelling
in Holyoke housed an average of 10.52 persons, which was the third highest housing density rate in the nation, behind only New York City and Hoboken, New Jersey. Many families took in boarders to defray living expenses. In one instance, the Springfield Republican reported that a "Kanuck" family rented a room to another family of seventeen members for $6 per month in an apartment which cost the first family only $4 per month. The incident came to light following the death of one of the children. In another case, a French-Canadian family sublet three attic rooms, each housing nine persons. Overcrowding was particularly severe during periods of heavy French-Canadian migration to the city. New arrivals would often take temporary shelter with friends and relatives while looking for a place of their own. At the extreme, investigators found 39 children in a two and a half story house, and on another occasion, 27 French-Canadians were discovered in a four room tenement. During the 1879 influx, one local citizen suggested that a sanitary officer stroll through 'Canada Hill'. "He will find them packed like mackerel in a barrel; ten or twelve people living in one small tenement of four rooms".31

Holyoke was not a healthy place to live. Indeed, an 1875 Massachusetts Labor Bureau report raised the suspicion that housing and health conditions ranked among the worst in the nation:

Holyoke has more and worse large tenement houses than any manufacturing town of textile fabrics in the state, and built in such a manner that there is very little
means of escape in case of fire. The sanitary arrangements are very imperfect, and in many cases, there is no provision made for carrying the slops from the sinks, but they are allowed to run wherever they can make their way. Portions of yards are covered with filth and green slime, and within twenty feet, people are living in basements of houses three feet below the level of the yard. One large block, four stories high, and basement, has eighteen tenements, with ninety rooms, occupied by nearly two hundred people; and yet there are only two three-feet doorways on the front, and none on the back, with an alley-way at back of only six feet in width. At present there is some spare room at the front, but it is uncertain how long it will remain so. There are also quite a number of six and eight tenement houses, with only one door at front and none at back, overcrowded, dirty, and necessarily unhealthy. Our agent visited some tenements having bedrooms into which neither air nor light could penetrate, as there were no windows and no means of ventilation, and some of them were actually filthy. It is no wonder that the death-rate, in 1872, was greater in Holyoke than in any large town in Massachusetts, excepting Fall River, and if an epidemic should visit them now, in the state they are in, its ravages would be great. 32

During the 1870's, outbreaks of disease, at times reaching epidemic proportions, visited the Holyoke population. Smallpox, typhoid, diptheria and scarlet fever claimed many lives. Smallpox outbreaks in 1870 and 1873 were especially severe, with 147 cases and 22 deaths in 1870. Smallpox was often contracted and spread by paper mill workers who handled disease ridden rags. The Springfield Republican commented that "the mill operatives who handle rags have become so accustomed to the danger of catching diseases that they lose all alarm". 33 The French-Canadians endured more than their share of hardships. In crowded tenements, infections spread through entire families, in one instance killing four children, all of whom worked, leaving the rest of the family virtually destitute. 34
In 1876, the Transcript expressed concern about the vile conditions in many of the tenements and urged the city to take remedial action. In the course of its report, the Transcript singled out the French-Canadians as a group needing particular attention:

Families come from Canada to earn a living in the mills. They have no money and take the cheapest quarters they can find. They sicken, languish and suffer and being without means they must be fed, lodged, clothed and doctored at the city's expense...On financial grounds, as well as those of human decency, it would be a gain for the city to clean up those improperly drained, fever infested quarters.35

The local French-Canadian newspaper, Le Jean-Baptiste, took umbrage at the Transcript's remarks, believing that the French-Canadians had been unfairly singled out as a degraded people. Le Jean-Baptiste contended that the water supply was responsible for the typhoid outbreak. The Transcript retorted that the typhoid had been confined to specific areas of the city and that if the water had been to blame the disease would have been city-wide, a point which further underlined conditions in French-Canadian areas.36

In the 1870's, Holyoke officials made some attempts to improve health conditions, but by and large they attained only marginal success. Compulsory vaccinations, at local expense, were ordered during the worst outbreaks. During the 1870 smallpox epidemic a pest house was established to isolate the infected and the first of many to die there was French-Canadian. Local officials also made creditable efforts to build both a water and sewage system, which by the end of the decade served the larger part of the city. In 1880 a
full time Board of Health was established. The Board quickly promulgated regulations requiring the vaccination of all children, new mill employees, school teachers, as well as rules governing sanitation and garbage. Physicians were required under pain of fine to report all cases of communicable disease. As sweeping as the Board of Health's regulations were, it took a few years before they were effectively enforced. Mill superintendents were often lax in requiring vaccinations of new employees. Newly arrived French-Canadians, unaware of Holyoke's regulations were the most frequent victims of disease. In November and December, 1881, alone, there were 30 cases of smallpox in the city, 20 of which were fatal. The outbreak was centered in the French-Canadian sections, and the majority of the deaths were in French-Canadian families.37

French-Canadian doctors administered whatever medical attention the French-Canadians received. The skills of these physicians varied with the individual, often to the disadvantage of their patients. Dr. Moses M. Mitivier, who arrived in Holyoke in 1873, was a surgeon of considerable talent. On the other hand, the methods of other French-Canadian doctors raised questions. During one scarlet fever outbreak a French-Canadian doctor used live frogs as a treatment. The reptile would be held as the patient exhaled into its mouth. In 1882, the Transcript expressed its outrage against a French-Canadian doctor who attended a large French-Canadian family for several days without discovering that at least four of the children had contracted smallpox. Later in the same year, a French-
Canadian physician was called to account for not promptly reporting a smallpox case to the proper city health officers. However, in this instance, the doctor pleaded ignorance of the law and the Board of Health took no action against him. By the mid-1880's the number of outbreaks of epidemic proportions had been reduced in Holyoke. In late 1885, smallpox broke out in French-Canadian areas; this epidemic was presumably brought to Holyoke by new arrivals from Canada where an epidemic was then raging. The city physician authorized three French-Canadian doctors to examine residents of the district. More than 500 French-Canadians were given vaccinations at city expense and those arriving from Canada were met and vaccinated at the railroad station by city health officials. The outbreak of the disease quickly subsided.

The lack of adequate housing and sanitation in Holyoke worked hardships on the French-Canadians. As a low income group they lived in the poorest housing and were disproportionately subject to the inroads of disease. In addition, the constant, if uneven, flow of new French-Canadians often ignorant or suspicious of the city's regulations concerning vaccinations and other health measures, stimulated outbreaks of disease. While Holyoke's French-Canadians were not the only victims, as the poorest ethnic group they bore a heavier burden than others.

The process of migrating from an essentially rural, agrarian environment to a nineteenth century industrial city required some degree of adjustment. The impact of this
adjustment can never be fully recaptured, but available sources do provide glimpses of what occurred. Some French-Canadians undoubtedly realized the dream of many and saved enough money while in Holyoke to return to Canada and purchase their own farm or business. In 1883, for example, a former Holyoke clothing store clerk opened a hotel in Montreal. Others became disillusioned and returned without capital, although there are no figures that provide even a hint of the size of this return flow to Canada. One thing is certain. Those French-Canadians who remained in Holyoke did not turn to the familiar practice of agriculture. In 1900 less than 1 per cent of those born in French Canada earned their living by farming. During the depression of the late 1870's a group of French-Canadians in Massachusetts undertook to explore the possibilities of colonization in Arkansas. In 1877 a number of French-Canadians in Holyoke expressed interest and the project was endorsed by the local newspaper, Le Jean Baptiste. The investigators returned from Arkansas full of enthusiasm. They reported that land was cheap and plentiful and that the prospects for farming and mining were good. But the scheme attracted little interest and there was no further mention of it. Later in the same year meetings were held to discuss the merits of returning to Quebec, and a project endorsed by the Canadian government, settlement in Manitoba. Opposition speakers claimed that wages in Canada averaged 40 cents per day, with longer hours than in Holyoke. A few French-Canadians did leave for Manitoba, but most returned to the city within a year. Canadian repatriation efforts
later in the century met with even less enthusiasm. Thus, for those who remained in New England, a return to farming did not provide a viable alternative and forced the French-Canadians to dramatically change their lifestyle.40

The process of adjustment highlighted cultural differences within the French-Canadian community as well as between the community and the larger society. One Holyoke French-Canadian, for example, suffered considerable embarrassment when a French-Canadian newspaper revealed that he had charged a fee to a poor, new arrival from Canada for identifying the latter at a bank. The multiple levels of the local bureaucracy confused and angered some French-Canadians, especially recent arrivals. In 1880 and 1885 French-speaking census takers were employed in French-Canadian districts, but problems still arose. In 1885 an enumerator reported that many newly arrived French-Canadians were puzzled by the number of visits by various officials. Assessors collecting the poll tax and truant officers conducting the school census preceded the state census taker. These officials often found suspicion; some French-Canadians refused to answer what they regarded as foolish questions. On one occasion, a census taker, faced with a defiant French-Canadian family which had already been visited by the two other officials, produced an old G.A.R. badge. Thinking it a symbol of authority, the family promptly answered all questions put to them. Undoubtedly, the help and advice of earlier migrating friends and relatives considerably mitigated the shock of transition, but these incidents suggest
that emigration and resettlement remained a confusing and frightening experience for some.\textsuperscript{41}

The acculturation experience did not result in any significant amount of criminal activity. The French-Canadians in Holyoke, both in an absolute sense, and in relation to other groups, were law abiding. The annual statistics of arrests (Table 8) indicate that the French-Canadian crime rate was one and a half times to three times

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Year} & \textbf{Total Arrests} & \textbf{Number Arrested} & \textbf{Percentage} & \textbf{Percentage} \\
& & \textbf{born in} & \textbf{Arrests} & \textbf{of Total} \\
& & \textbf{Ireland} & \textbf{Canadian} & \textbf{Population} \\
& & & & \textbf{born in} \\
\hline
1874 & 647 & 408 & 44 & 63.1 & 6.8 & 25.0 & 17.3 \\
1875 & 577 & 359 & 43 & 62.3 & 7.5 & 25.0 & 17.3 \\
1876 & 496 & 309 & 37 & 62.3 & 7.5 & 25.0 & 17.3 \\
1877 & 396 & 174 & 31 & 43.9 & 7.8 & 25.0 & 17.3 \\
1878 & 464 & 211 & 38 & 45.5 & 8.2 & 25.0 & 17.3 \\
1879 & 457 & 223 & 52 & 48.9 & 11.4 & 25.0 & 17.3 \\
1880 & 684 & 361 & 85 & 51.3 & 12.4 & 19.4 & 22.4 \\
1881 & 1012 & 451 & 133 & 44.4 & 13.1 & 19.4 & 22.4 \\
1882 & 1010 & 415 & 131 & 44.4 & 13.0 & 19.4 & 22.4 \\
1883 & 1183 & 523 & 143 & 44.2 & 12.1 & 19.4 & 22.4 \\
1884 & 999 & 402 & 107 & 40.2 & 10.7 & 19.4 & 22.4 \\
1885 & 1022 & 362 & 124 & 35.4 & 12.1 & 19.4 & 22.4 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Arrest statistics of individuals born in Canada and Ireland, Holyoke, 1874-1885\textsuperscript{a}}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{a}Derived from Holyoke, Municipal Register, 1875-1886
less than their proportion of the city's population, while that of the Irish-born residents was more than double their proportion of the city's population. The higher incidence of French-Canadian arrests in the 1879-1882 period, a time of heavy French-Canadian migration, does suggest that some of the newcomers experienced difficulties in adjusting to life in the United States. But it is also important to look at the nature of the crimes. Holyoke's arrest figures do not indicate the nationality of those who committed each type of offense, but one-half to two-thirds of all arrests were for drunkenness and 70 per cent to 80 per cent were for either drunkenness or assault and battery. 42

Those French-Canadians who remained in Holyoke became part of the industrialized society. Whatever traumatic adjustments individuals had to make, the French-Canadians as a group made the transformation largely within the norms of accepted behavior in Holyoke.

Nativist fears and suspicions of the early French-Canadian migrations were often allayed as the new arrivals proved to be peaceful citizens and productive workers. The attitudes expressed towards the French-Canadians between 1865 and 1885 reflected changes which had taken place within the French-Canadian community. Until the early 1880's both the Transcript and the Springfield Republican viewed the French-Canadians with gentle, paternal condescension. In part, this attitude was fostered by the mill owners who did not want to discourage French-Canadian workers from coming to the city.
Only rarely, and then during periods of significant French-Canadian immigration or heavy local unemployment, did the tone of the newspaper remarks become hostile. Rather, the papers looked upon the French-Canadians with wry amusement and treated their shortcomings as one would a child's transgressions, hoping that with time and maturity they might turn out to be worthy citizens. When the police chief pursued "a French Canuck", but brought back the wrong man, the Transcript exclaimed, "an innocent Frenchman", as if to doubt such a thing were possible. The misspellings by French-Canadian doctors of "fiver", "leaver disease", and "parolise of the blood", and those by Canadian correspondents of "Ohliake" and "Schikipifells", (for Holyoke and Chicopee Falls), were mentioned by newspaper editors. The French-Canadians were also treated with a degree of anonymity. Victims of industrial accidents were often nameless, as reference was made to "a Frenchman", "Frenchy", or "a Kanuck".

On two occasions open hostility to French-Canadians surfaced in print. The first was a spirited debate on the merits of Americanization following the opening of the French-language parochial school in 1876. A letter signed "Justicia" appeared in the Transcript in June, 1876. Without referring to the French-Canadian school in Holyoke, the writer praised a decision of the school committee in Fall River which refused to recognize a French-Canadian school in that city on the grounds that all the instruction was given in French. The
The author of the letter believed that the public schools should be the main agent to blend dissimilar elements into one nation and it was therefore necessary that everyone become familiar with the national language. "Justicia" regarded the toleration of parochial schools as a backward step, for it encouraged revival of sectarianism. All children should be required to attend public schools for:

as long as a great part of the population is permitted to live in its native ignorance and is taught to believe that our public schools are but so many places of infamy and the resort of immoralities of the grossest nature, that it is a sin to attend them, that even there seats are infested with heresy, they can never have but a partial success.46

There was a quick rejoinder to the "Justicia" letter. A second letter appeared, ostensibly written by a French-Canadian, and signed with the nom de plume, "Jus". "Jus" offered a rebuttal to "Justicia", maintaining that restrictions on parochial schools would defy constitutional principles by having the state arrogate to itself the right of parents to determine the nature of the education of their children. "Jus." bristled at the suggestion that the French-Canadian schools produced anything but honest, upright and law-abiding citizens and offered the practical argument that parochial schools saved the city money.47

The high-minded praise of Americanization in "Justicia's" first letter was replaced in a second letter by a vitriolic anti-Catholicism. Questioning the benefits of Catholic schools, "Justicia" asked, "Why is it that the
largest number of criminals are from that denomination?"
The letter contained the whole litany of religious hatred:

Everyone knows who occupies those quarters which are characteristic for their stench, their low smoky and filthy aspects. Where are the rum holes, the drunkards, the ragged and miserable; where vice in all its hideous forms is promiscuous with crimes of every grade?... There never was a single nation that has prospered under Catholic Institutions, while most of them have degenerated and dwindled into the utmost insignificance. 48

"Justicia" concluded with the charge that parochial schools were simply a devise to keep Catholics under the subjugation of the Church. "The clergy is against the [public] schools mainly because they inculcate democratic principles and thereby develop a certain independence of mind which is dangerous to their faith". 49

The war of words continued throughout the summer of 1876, with more than a dozen letters appearing in the pages of the Transcript. 50 By coincidence, Holyoke was scheduled in August to host the General Convention of all French-Canadian societies in the United States. The corresponding secretary and one of the local co-ordinators for the Convention was Didace St. Marie. St. Marie also wrote to the Transcript. His letter was intended to provide the non-French-Canadian citizens of Holyoke with information concerning the Convention. It is also evident that St. Marie was attempting to allay any suspicions that might have been aroused by the "Justicia" controversy by stressing the positive purposes of the Convention. "Although other nationalities are not so much interested in it, I trust they will be happy to learn that we are endeavoring to improve our moral and material
condition and that we are trying to make demonstrations worthy of ourselves and worthy of the prosperous city in which we live".\textsuperscript{51}

The second anti-French-Canadian outbreak occurred during the large migration to Holyoke in the late 1870's and early 1880's, when local workers feared competition from French-Canadians and struck out against what they perceived to be the French-Canadian's low standard of living.\textsuperscript{52} The \textit{Springfield Republican}, as late as 1882 inserted the alleged remark of a tramp who contended that "this country is fast going to the dogs; no one will hire a man around here unless he is a Frenchman. What a pity we could not all have been born Frenchmen and then we could get a soft job. This is a blarsted country anyhow".\textsuperscript{53}

By the mid-1880's prejudicial references to French-Canadians are difficult to discover. More typical was the description of a French-Canadian killed in an accident as "a quiet industrious man", or of a French-Canadian political candidate as "competent for the position".\textsuperscript{54} The reasons for the changed attitudes were two-fold. First, by the mid-1880's enough French-Canadians had achieved positions of influence within the community that newspapers took pains to avoid offending them. Second, the French-Canadians were no longer on the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder. A significant number of Poles had begun to migrate to Holyoke and the newspapers now focused their derision on "Polacks" who threw their rubbish into the streets.\textsuperscript{55}
While the newspapers generally treated the French-Canadians in a benign manner, French-Canadian relations with other ethnic groups were not always that peaceful. Many older French-Canadians can recall that well into the twentieth century there were almost ritualistic contests between French-Canadian and Irish youths, who would meet regularly at a tacitly agreed on location to battle one another. Invisible, but real, boundaries separated Irish and French-Canadian sections, and 'trespassing' in a hostile zone was an open invitation for conflict.\(^{56}\)

Such incidents were even more common in the pre-1885 period. Often the fights were confrontations between individuals which erupted in the mills or a saloon. The most common form of ethnic strife was between French-Canadian and Irish boys. On occasion conflict reached such proportions as to attract official notice. In 1882, for example, the Irish Catholic pastor, Fr. Haskins, requested the police to take action to stop the clashes between French-Canadian and Irish boys returning from night school. Very rarely outbreaks had political overtones, as for example when French-Canadians gleefully taunted Holyoke Fenians on their return from a futile invasion of Canada in 1870. In the same year, French-Canadians and French-speaking German Alsacians fought over the latter's celebration of Prussian victories.\(^{57}\)

Ethnic rivalries were a part of late nineteenth century life in the United States and the French-Canadian-Irish antipathy reflected the economic competition that the
French-Canadians had provided for the Irish as well as differences between the groups within the Catholic Church. A more complete understanding of the relationship between ethnic groups can be reached by a study of the developing institutions of the French-Canadians. As the French-Canadian community became more stable and attained potential political influence, they were treated by the older power structure with a deference suited to their new status.
REFERENCES AND NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1 Green, Holyoke, pp. 74-90; Transcript, June 1, 1867, December 21, 1867, January 11, 1868, June 20, 1868, October 31, 1868; Springfield Republican, September 9, 1865, May 27, 1867, January 13, 1868, September 22, 1868, October 10 and 28, 1868.

2 Transcript, April 11, 1877.

3 Green, Holyoke, pp. 137-138; U.S., Bureau of the Census, 1870, I, p. 166, 1880, I, p. 450; Transcript, April 26, 1873, November 5 and 8, 1873, February 11, 1874, April 11, 1874, December 19, 1874, September 29, 1875, September 9, 1876; Republican, November 27, 1873.

4 Transcript, March 28, 1879; Republican, March 27 and 28, 1879; Holyoke News, April 9, 1879.

5 Holyoke Town Directory, 1871, pp. 9-93.

6 Lyman Mills Papers, Register of Employees, 1877-1882, LB-6.

7 Mass. Labor Bureau, A.R. (1878), pp. 228-230. The report categories the workers in each of the selected industries by country of birth. The Massachusetts Census of 1885 was the first census to distinguish French-Canadians from others born in Canada. Thus, the figures used here include all those listed as having been born in Canada. However, subsequent data indicates that English Canadians in Holyoke represented less than 10 per cent of the Canadian total and the figure was usually closer to 5 per cent. There is no reason to suspect that the percentage of English Canadians was significantly higher in Holyoke prior to 1885.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Transcript, August 18, 1877.

11 Massachusetts Census, 1885, Vol. I, Pt. 2, pp. 178-181. The table of occupations was constructed according to place of birth. In 1885 approximately one-quarter of Holyoke's French-Canadian population had been born in the United States, and thus is not included in this table. However, it is likely that the largest part of this group was under ten years of age and that their omission from this table does not seriously distort the picture of French-Canadian employment.

Layer, Earnings, p. 47.

Ibid., pp. 31-34; Republican, July 27, 1877, March 23, 1880.

Layer, Earnings; Transcript, May 3, 1886.


Republican, November 1 and 14, 1878, July 19 and 26, 1880, May 1, 1885; Transcript, July 31, 1884. Many French-Canadians used this time to visit Quebec.

Massachusetts, Acts and Resolves of the General Court, 1878, Chapter 260 and 1886, Chapter 87; Green, Holyoke, p. 200; Lyman Mills Papers, AB-1, Box 1; Republican, January 25, 1877, February 19 and 20, 1877, June 26, 1878, October 14, 1878, March 27, 1879, October 13, 1885, January 14 and 31, 1886.

Republican, May 21, 1877.


Ibid., pp. 128-149.


Transcript, April 30, 1864, October 15 and 22, 1870, March 4, 7 and 18, 1874, April 1, 4 and 22, 1874, November 2, 1882; Republican, August 14, 1866, October 17, 1869, December 20, 22 and 24, 1873, February 16, 1874, July 27, 1877; Holyoke Independent Journal, December 23, 1873; Holyoke News, October 12, 1878.

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26 Transcript, May 22, 1872, March 7, 1874.
27 Ibid., March 19, 26 and 29, 1879, April 5 and 16, 1879; Republican, March 27 and 28, 1879, April 7, 11 and 17, 1879, May 12 and 29, 1879, Holyoke News, April 9, 1879.
28 Transcript, April 23, 1879.
29 Ibid., April 5, 1879.
30 Ibid., April 5, 1879, September 17, 1879, March 20, 1880, April 7 and 17, 1880, July 17, 1880, November 6, 1880; Republican, April 2 and 12, 1879, March 6 and 24, 1880.
33 Republican, January 6, 1877.
34 Ibid., September 25, 1869, August 9, 1870, November 21, 1870, February 6, 1871, April 2 and 18, 1877, October 17, 1878, September 5, 1879, October 15, 1879, December 12, 1879; Transcript, January 11, 1872, January 25, 1873, July 5 and 12, 1873, September 12, 1874, January 30, 1875, November 17, 1875, April 15, 1876, November 11, 1876, October 27, 1877; Green, Holyoke, pp. 118-119.
35 Transcript, April 15, 1876.
36 Ibid., May 10, 1876. Publisher Pierre Chatel had recently moved the newspaper from Northampton to Holyoke.
37 Ibid., October 15, 1870, July 12, 1879, December 3 and 17, 1881, February 22, 1882; Republican, April 17, 1869, August 5, 1880, November 30, 1881, December 10, 14, 15 and 30, 1881, May 4, 1882.
38 Republican, June 2 and 14, 1879, January 16, 17 and 19, 1882, May 1 and 2, 1882; Transcript, April 1, 1874, November 14, 1874.
39 Republican, November 7 and 10, 1885, December 12, 1885; Transcript, December 19, 1885, January 19, 1886.
Mass. Labor Bureau, A.R. (1903), p. 14; Transcript, March 28, 1877, November 24, 1877, May 6, 1882, May 4, 1883, April 2, 1887, October 16, 1888; Republican, March 19, 1877, April 6 and 19, 1877, October 31, 1877, November 2, 1877, March 25, 1878, April 13, 1881 and April 24, 1897.

Transcript, September 13, 1882; Republican, June 8, 1880, November 14, 1881, April 24, 1897.

Holyoke, Municipal Register, 1875-1886.

Transcript, April 20, 1867.

Republican, May 12, 1879, December 26, 1879.

For example Transcript, July 25, 1865, July 1, 1871; Republican, April 14, 1879.

Transcript, June 3, 1876.

Ibid., June 14, 1876.

Ibid., June 28, 1876.

Ibid.

Ibid., June 17, 21 and 24, 1876, July 8, 15, 19, 22, 26 and 29, 1876, August 12, 1876.

Ibid., July 22, 1876.

See above pp. 80-81.

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CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH-CANADIAN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

The French-Canadians brought the institutions of Quebec with them to Holyoke. These institutions functioned quite differently, or had no counterpart, in the United States, forcing the French-Canadians to alter their customs and practices to meet the realities of their new homeland. The pervasive control of the curé in rural Quebec was eroded in the more complex setting of a late nineteenth century industrial city. While the Church was the only provider of primary education in much of Quebec, in Holyoke the parochial schools had to adjust to a setting in which secular, publicly-supported education was the norm. Also, French-Canadians had to learn the purposes and mechanics of popular political participation as the American political form was unfamiliar to most émigrés.

As more French-Canadians considered Holyoke their permanent residence, their interest and participation in those local affairs which affected their position on the city also increased. Their religious and social institutions were noticeably altered in the two decades following 1865. French-Canadian perceptions of the role of the Church and parochial education changed as their aspirations and values were modified by the industrial experience. Political awareness increased as more French-Canadians realized the potential value that political action held for themselves and the French-Canadian
community. Thus, between 1865 and 1885, French-Canadian institutions underwent a process of transition and adaptation.

For the first French-Canadians, the Church was the most important social institution. In 1869 they established a French Catholic parish which served for the next decade as the focal point for virtually all group activities. In Canada, the curé was generally an authority figure to whom the parishioners turned for guidance. Yet by 1880, the first French-Canadian pastor, Fr. Andre Benjamin Dufresne, had become embroiled in controversy with a significant part of his congregation, a dispute which illustrated the growth of independent attitudes which had taken place in the French-Canadian community.

The priests who left Canada to minister to French-Canadian émigrés, like the French-Canadian clergy as a whole, have long been regarded as products of cultural isolation. One French-Canadian commentator described the clergy as "models of self-effacement and not ecclesiastically ambitious". It would appear, however, that many who went to New England were more adventurous. Monsignor Roger Vieu, presently Chancellor of the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts, postulates that many priests offered their services to American bishops and received assignments in New England with the consent of their Canadian superiors. Once in the United States they would inform their colleagues in Canada of potential opportunities and encourage them to make application.

If this view is accurate, Father Dufresne appears to
be atypical of the early French-Canadian clergy in New England. He was born in St. Hyacinthe, P.Q. and received a classical education at the Séminarie St. Hyacinthe. He embarked upon a teaching career, which included a stint as professor of economics at St. Hyacinthe's, before becoming a priest in 1856 at the relatively advanced age of thirty-seven. Following his ordination, Fr. Dufresne served in a number of parishes in the Province of Quebec, but became ill, and in 1864 was assigned to the post of Director of Missionaries for the Diocese of Sherbrooke. Later he served in the important office of Vicar-General of the diocese. Fr. Dufresne, therefore, was not a country priest looking for the adventure and challenge that an American assignment might offer. In the late 1860's he was a middle aged, "tall, spare" man who spoke little English. He had considerable administrative experience in the Church hierarchy and late in life entertained the hope that he might be elevated to the position of Bishop of Burlington, Vermont. Perhaps his decision to come to New England was born of a desire to obtain the necessary credentials for a bishopric. There is no hint of his personal motivation, but in 1868 Fr. Dufresne, recovered from his illness and supplied with a letter of recommendation from the Bishop of Sherbrooke, offered his missionary services to various French-Canadian centers in the United States. Shortly thereafter he was assigned to Holyoke.3

The founding of the parish in 1869 was an indication of the developing ethnic self-consciousness of the French-
Canadians. The first Catholic church, St. Jerome's, had been established in 1856, but it provided little comfort for the French-Canadians. The church was staffed entirely by Irish priests, and the services were conducted in Latin and English. Poverty and an inadequate knowledge of the English language deterred many French-Canadians from attending Mass regularly at St. Jerome's. In addition, rivalry with the Irish made many French-Canadians uncomfortable in the Irish church.

By 1865 local French-Canadian leaders had become concerned that the lack of adequate religious guidance was causing an increasing number of their group to fall away from the Church. In that year, there were twenty-two marriages recorded in Holyoke in which at least one party, as indicated by surname and place of birth, was French-Canadian. In seventeen of these marriages both parties were French-Canadian, but eleven couples were married outside the Catholic Church and five of these ceremonies were performed by the local Baptist minister. Of the twenty-two marriages, only eight were conducted by a Catholic priest. In 1869 French-Canadians were further shocked when they discovered that a number of French-Canadian girls were receiving religious instruction and English lessons at a local Protestant Church.

In 1868 a delegation of three French-Canadians went to Boston to ask Bishop Williams to create a French-speaking parish in Holyoke. Until the establishment of the Diocese of Springfield in 1870, Western Massachusetts Catholics were
under the jurisdiction of the Boston diocese. Bishop Williams was one of the few prelates in the Catholic hierarchy who favored the formation of national parishes and had actively sought French-speaking priests for Massachusetts. He indicated his willingness to authorize a new parish, provided that the French-Canadians could show a substantial number of potential parishioners. Accordingly, the French-Canadians conducted a census in late 1868 or early 1869. This census provided the first reasonably accurate indication of the size of the French-Canadian population in Holyoke. The count revealed the following:

- 299 male heads of household
- 1286 women and children
- 161 young people of both sexes who lived in boarding houses and whose parents did not live in Holyoke
- 1746 Total French-Canadian population

This census convinced Williams that Holyoke could support a French-Canadian priest and he appointed Fr. Dufresne.  

In April, 1869, Fr. Dufresne arrived in Holyoke and began the tasks of organizing a parish and constructing a church building. By the summer of that year Fr. Dufresne's efforts were bearing fruit. The Holyoke Transcript reported that the Sunday Mass, conducted in a rented hall, attracted an overflow crowd of at least 700, with prospects for even larger attendance. In addition, several hundred children attended Sunday School where religious instruction was given in French. The newspaper expressed approval of Fr. Dufresne's undertaking, pleased that the growing French-Canadian population now had an energetic and effective shepherd to insure a degree
of social control over a potentially disruptive element, concluding: "Our French population is rapidly increasing by immigration and propagation and the moral influence of a French church can scarcely fail to be of great benefit to them and the community at large."  

The Holyoke Water Power Company, anxious to make Holyoke attractive to French-Canadian labor, offered without cost, to the French society, as the congregation was known until 1878, one of three sites for a church. Fr. Dufresne selected a location on Cabot Street in the southern part of the town. Construction of a temporary wooden church progressed to the point where it was possible to hold services there at Christmas, 1869, only eight months after Fr. Dufresne's arrival. This prodigious effort was evidence of the priest's energy and skill, and of the eagerness of French-Canadians to have their own parish. One indication of the effectiveness of Fr. Dufresne and the unity achieved by the French-Canadian community is illustrated by the Holyoke Marriage Register. In 1870, the first full calendar year of Fr. Dufresne's pastorate, there were 24 marriages in which at least one party was French-Canadian. In 21 of these marriages both parties were French-Canadian and all were married by Fr. Dufresne. In two of the three remaining couples, one partner had a Yankee name and both had their marriages performed by Fr. Dufresne. The last marriage, between an Irish boy and a French-Canadian girl, was celebrated at St. Jerome's. Thus, in 1870, all the marriages involving French-Canadians were
performed by a Catholic priest and all but one by a French-Canadian priest.  

The larger community's hope that the church would serve a stabilizing function were fulfilled, although there were some lapses. On one occasion, the Transcript noted with obvious indignation that a French-Canadian funeral ended with a livery horse race between two carriages occupied by some of the bereaved. More typical, however, was the extensive coverage that the newspaper gave in 1872 to the first major celebration in Holyoke of the Feast of St. Jean Baptiste, patron saint of French Canada. The day's activities included a public parade and procession and appropriate church services. The Transcript, with paternal condescension, remarked on the absence of disorder and drunkenness and concluded that the celebration was a "creditable affair, fitly illustrating the strength and character of the French-Canadian population".  

The parish quickly outgrew the capacity of the original church. In the spring of 1872 Fr. Dufresne conducted a parish census. His count totaled 450 families and did not include unmarried persons living in boarding houses. The priest estimated Holyoke's French-Canadian population at 3000, almost double what it had been only three years earlier. The next summer Fr. Dufresne announced plans to construct a new brick church on a site adjacent to the original structure. However, the priest encountered difficulties in raising the needed monies. The details are not known, but it appears that the nation-wide economic downturn, which affected Holyoke in the
latter part of 1873 and caused some French-Canadians to return to Canada, was an important factor. Eventually the task of raising funds was put into the hands of several prominent French-Canadian businessmen. Construction of the new church was not begun until early 1875.\textsuperscript{10}

The construction delay proved to have tragic consequences. On the evening of May 27, 1875, during vesper services, a fire, started by an altar candle, swept through the wooden church. The structure was packed with an estimated 600-800 worshipers and as many as ninety-two perished in the fire or died in subsequent weeks or months.\textsuperscript{11}

The fire victims reflected the separateness of the French-Canadian community. A survey by the City Almoner showed that only seventeen were United States citizens and officially residents of the city, the remainder were aliens. The city expended $713.50 for burying fire victims, but this sum does not reflect the welfare grants to survivors which were hidden in the total expenditures for city paupers.\textsuperscript{12}

The parish showed considerable resiliency in recovering from the trauma of the fire. Although the new church was not completed until 1878, a parish school was opened in 1876 and Fr. Dufresne was making plans to construct a new parish rectory. The completed church, which cost $60,000, was named the Church of the Precious Blood, a designation which it retains to the present.\textsuperscript{13}

To this point, the narrative description of the founding of the first French-Canadian parish and the early labors
of Fr. Dufresne, have given some indication of the transformation and growth of one important institution in the French-Canadian community. The church provided needed stability and served as a focal point for French-Canadian social activities. Essentially this development represented a collective triumph over the adversities of poverty and the tragedy of the fire. However, in the late 1870's and early 1880's, the pastor who had served as a unifying force, quite suddenly became a disruptive element in French-Canadian life in Holyoke and church activities became scenes of conflict. Ostensibly Fr. Dufresne was the cause of the controversy. Beyond the actions of one man, however, there were larger conflicts illustrating that many French-Canadians were eager to come independently to terms with the new conditions of life in their adopted homeland.

The controversy that swirled around Fr. Dufresne began in 1878, and took many forms. A civil suit brought against him by Joseph Parker initially unleashed frustrations and anger which some parishioners felt about their pastor. The Parker case began in 1876 with the appearance in Holyoke of Fr. Charles Chinquy. Chinquy, a French-Canadian and renegade Catholic priest, had left the Church and had established his own religious group. Chinquy was active in missionary work in Canada and the Midwest of the United States. On occasion, he came to New England. Chinquy's message emphasized the venalities and autocratic nature of the Catholic hierarchy and he achieved a certain degree of notoriety among
the more militant anti-Catholic Protestants. French-Canadian Catholics were a special target for Chinquy and he often preached in French to whet their curiosity and attract their interest.  

In March, 1876, a forthcoming visit by Chinquy was announced in the local newspapers. At Sunday Mass, Fr. Dufresne forbade any of his congregation to hear the defrocked priest. However, several parishioners, whether from curiosity or out of stubborn defiance of their pastor's edict, did attend. When Fr. Dufresne learned that his command had been disregarded, he directed that the culprits make their transgressions known to him. If they failed to do so, Fr. Dufresne threatened excommunication. Joseph Parker was singled out for special attention. Parker, a French-Canadian who ran a livery business, denied that he had ever attended the Chiniquy meeting and claimed that Fr. Dufresne had publicly excommunicated him without cause. Further, the priest directed that the people of his parish should not hire Parker's hacks for funerals or weddings, and if they did he would not perform the ceremony. In a civil suit which Parker filed in October, 1878, he claimed that the ecclesiastically imposed boycott had ruined his business and asked for $10,000 in damages.  

Testimony presented during the legal proceedings provide an indication of Fr. Dufresne's conduct as pastor and of the influence which he had in the French-Canadian community. One party related that they arrived for a funeral using one of Parker's hacks and were turned away by Fr.
Dufresne who told them, "When you know better than to come in those hacks I will do your work and not before". Gilbert Potvin, who had been one of the group responsible for establishing the parish, gave an indication of the effect of the boycott by stating that he had refrained from using or recommending Parker's service because he was afraid that Fr. Dufresne might take similar action against him and ruin his business. Fr. Dufresne asserted in his defense that he had acted "in performance of his duty as a Roman Catholic priest and with a view to the enforcement of ecclesiastical discipline". Further, he contended that his actions were in accord with the rules and regulations of the Church and thus were not meant to be willful or malicious acts to injure Parker's business. The judge's charge to the jury was most direct. "Our laws do not allow any ecclesiastical authority to interdict a man from pursuing his ordinary business or prevent even members of the same denomination from which he had been excommunicated to deal with him". The jury awarded Parker a judgment of $3433. The decision received wide-spread notice and provided a measure of comfort to opponents of Catholicism. The case was the subject of a Thomas Nast cartoon and the Springfield Republican commended the verdict, claiming that it "shows that superstitious fidelity to priestly authority is greatly weakened".

The Parker case was not an isolated incident. Rather it was a catalyst which released long contained resentments and complaints against Fr. Dufresne. From 1878 until 1882,
"The suit of Joseph Pena, a Hulpho hackman, against the Hon. Aaron B. Brewin, the priest of the French Catholic Church in that city, for $10,000 damages, on the ground that the defendant used his ecclesiastical authority to break up the plaintiff's business, resulted yesterday in a verdict of $400 for the plaintiff."

"There is no ecclesiastical authority to be recognized under our government which allows a wanton and unreasonable interference with a man's private business, not connected with the Church, from which he has been excommunicated. Our institutions and our laws recognize no such power. The Church may excommunicate, rate him, but they must not pursue him further, and interfere with his private business. If they do that, they do a wrongful act. If they do that, they do an act which gives no justification for such acts that he has been excommunicated from the Church. In other words, our law do not allow any ecclesiastical authority to interfere with a man from pursuing his ordinary business, or prevent even the members of the same denomination from which he has been excommunicated to deal with him." - James Rown.

Fig. 1. - Thomas Nast, "No Interference," Harper's Weekly Magazine (December 6, 1879), 960
Fr. Dufresne was engaged in a continual controversy with a sizable part, and perhaps even a majority, of his own parishioners. In December, 1878, a remarkable letter appeared in the *Holyoke News*. It was signed "French Catholic", and neatly summarized the complaints of many churchgoers in Precious Blood parish. More importantly, the letter vividly illustrated that Fr. Dufresne, by attempting to run his parish as if it were in rural Quebec, was going to meet with fierce opposition. Although there is no clue as to authorship of the letter, the issues raised and the subsequent disputes over many of these same complaints, attest to the genuineness of the frustrations expressed. The letter began by noting that the new church, which had been dedicated earlier that year, was built by a great sacrifice of all of Holyoke's French-Canadians. Although the new building was a proud achievement, the parish was now divided into two classes, the rich and the poor. The writer charged that the rich worshiped in the main body of the church and when they married or died services were held in the nave upon payment of a $20-$30 fee. However when poor parishioners were in need of the same services, they had to pay $10-$15 and were allowed only the use of the basement facilities. "Had not Christ shed His blood for the poor equally?", the writer lamented. The exorbitant prices had had their effect, for in the past weeks, the writer continued, three French-Canadian couples were married by Protestant ministers, and thus were automatically excommunicated. French-Canadians in Holyoke were
mainly laborers making 75 cents - $1.25 per day, the letter continued, and could not afford the exorbitant fees. Thus, they risked excommunication if they wished to marry.\textsuperscript{22}

In addition, the writer explained that the parishioners were told that they must pay the priest $1 per month as a tithe, a heavy burden for a large family. While the tithes were the only means of support for Canadian parishes, in Holyoke the priest received a $600 annual salary and the fees from marriages, funerals and baptisms for his personal use. French-Canadians would pay even these fees without a murmur, the letter continued, if their pastor was poor and the parish in need. But Fr. Dufresne was the owner of much valuable property in Holyoke and many French-Canadians felt they were more needy than their priest.\textsuperscript{23}

The letter writer's final complaints were thinly veiled references to the Parker case. The writer expressed irritation at the continued threats of excommunication, possible closing of the church, and Fr. Dufresne's preference for the public recital of transgressions instead of preaching the word of God. The past Sunday Fr. Dufresne had charged five parishioners with "perjury", presumably because they had given depositions in the Parker matter. "How could these five persons be guilty of that crime when they swore to what they heard him Fr. Dufresne say publicly in the presence of the whole congregation and when many more members are ready to testify to the same facts?"\textsuperscript{24} The letter concluded by stating that the anonymous and public expression of dissatisfaction
was chosen because if the complaints were made in person the individual "would be cruelly and unrelentingly persecuted both in and out of the Church".25

The newspaper printed Fr. Dufresne's emphatic denial of the charges, but no matter how strong the denials, a real fission had taken place in Precious Blood parish. There is no evidence of any other public criticism of Fr. Dufresne for nearly a year following the publication of the letter in the News, but immediately upon learning of the verdict in the Parker case in November, 1879, the parish erupted. A movement was begun by some of Fr. Dufresne's opponents to petition the bishop to create a new French-Canadian parish. The ostensible rationale for the division request was that the parish now numbered over 5000 souls and that this many people overtaxed the facilities of the church and the energies of the priest. While there was considerable merit to this argument, other issues emerged as well. At Precious Blood, as was the case in many churches, pews were rented, in this instance at the rate of $5 per quarter. Many poorer families could not afford this sum and thus were required to sit in less desirable sections of the church or to stand during Mass. Also, some French-Canadian businessmen had become suspicious that Fr. Dufresne had turned their customers against them and thus they were willing to aid the effort to get a new priest.26

Fr. Dufresne was not without his supporters within the parish. While it is not possible to determine how many were caught up in the dispute on either side, there is some evidence
to indicate that the battle lines were drawn largely between generations. Older French-Canadians tended to believe that the "trouble" was caused by younger people who had acquired some notions of independence by mingling with non-French-Canadians and now did not care much for religion or the "good of the Church." The nature of this division is quite significant, indicating the difficulties of maintaining old customs and behavior patterns in new and different circumstances. The older generation, which had spent most of their lives in Canada, found it difficult to justify what they believed to be a personal attack on their pastor, a person that they had always treated with outward deference, respect and perhaps even regarded with awe.  

The leaders of the parish division movement collected nearly 300 signatures for their petition, one name per family. In the early months of 1880, the disgruntled parishioners held overflow meetings in order to pass resolutions, select committees to present the petition to Bishop O'Reilly of Springfield, and to hear the subsequent reports.  

Bishop O'Reilly gave the Holyoke delegations sympathetic hearings, but avoided making any commitments. The Bishop found himself in an uncomfortable position. Although there seemed to be sufficient population growth to justify a second French-Canadian parish, experienced French-Canadian priests were not easy to find. Also, the Bishop must have been reluctant to give direct offense to Fr. Dufresne who he believed had done an excellent job in founding and sustaining the
parish. O'Reilly appears to have viewed his role in this situation as that of a conciliator. In March, 1880, he appointed a French-Canadian priest to serve as an assistant to Fr. Dufresne. Fr. Dufresne had run Precious Blood alone for nearly eleven years and Bishop O'Reilly believed that a new priest would make it easier for Fr. Dufresne to cope with the administrative duties of the large parish. Undoubtedly, the Bishop hoped that the young curate would provide a buffer between the pastor and the more dissentient parishioners. However, the immediate reaction from Fr. Dufresne's opponents was negative, and they again asked the Bishop to create a new parish.29

Time might have soothed some of the more bitter feelings had it not been for a bizarre turn of events which took place in mid-March, 1880, less than two weeks after the appointment of the new curate. On March 12th, Fr. Dufresne suddenly departed for Canada, leaving in his wake rumors, suspicions, and accusations. A complicated and confusing story emerged which indicated that the priest had sold wine illegally, although Fr. Dufresne maintained that it was given freely to parishioners for medicinal purposes, a practice common in French Canada. A Federal revenue agent had received information that the priest was selling wine and he confronted Fr. Dufresne with the charge. There is no indication of who transmitted this information to the revenue agent, although it was generally believed to be individuals who wished the parish division to be carried out.30
A week later, Fr. Dufresne returned to Holyoke amid charges and countercharges. No legal action was taken against him, although the priest purchased a federal liquor license at a cost which included a penalty and implied guilt. But the liquor issue renewed efforts to get a second French-Canadian parish for Holyoke. However, leaders of the division movement acknowledged a serious problem. If division was achieved, diocesan policy would dictate a separation on territorial lines. Church rules required all families to receive special services such as baptisms and funerals from the church in the parish in which they lived. Many of Fr. Dufresne's most vocal opponents lived near Precious Blood church and even if the parish were divided they would still be dependent on him for certain religious services. Thus, it is likely that the advocates of parish division hoped that the unfavorable publicity that Fr. Dufresne had received would induce the Bishop to transfer him from Holyoke.31

Bishop O'Reilly, aware that matters in Precious Blood parish were becoming extremely serious, went to Holyoke on Sunday, April 4th. After Mass he met in the church basement with about one thousand men of the parish. They indicated their dislike for Fr. Dufresne in "plain terms", stating also they had $35,000 pledged for the construction of a new church if O'Reilly would order the division. Once again, the Bishop refused to commit himself and promised only to give the matter serious consideration.32

The controversy did not lead Fr. Dufresne to take
conciliatory measures. The next Sunday he denounced his opponents from the pulpit and refused to rent pews to anyone who had signed the division petition. His backers sent their own petition to the Bishop in which they expressed their opposition to any parish division and accused Fr. Dufresne's foes of "spreading ... false and malicious charges." They concluded that the parish would be better off without "misled sheep."  

Fr. Dufresne's opponents waited in vain for the Bishop to act. Bishop O'Reilly took no public action to resolve the conflict and Fr. Dufresne remained pastor of an undivided Precious Blood parish until his death in 1887. The situation in the parish never again reached the intensity of the conflicts of 1879-1880, but there are indications that the bitterness lingered on. In July, 1880, a new mutual benefit society, the Union of St. Joseph, was created at Precious Blood. Fr. Dufresne was chosen as spiritual director of the organization, and none of the officers, as best as can be determined, played an active role in the parish division movement. It appears that the Union of St. Joseph was Fr. Dufresne's personal device to seek revenge on his opponents, many of whom were prominent in the older St. Jean Baptiste Society. Within two weeks of the founding of the new group, the St. Jean Baptiste Society had revised its by-laws with the intent of giving the Society more freedom from the Church and by implication, from Fr. Dufresne.  

During the next two years at least a half dozen other
incidents were reported in the newspapers concerning disputes between Fr. Dufresne and individual parishioners. Most involved Fr. Dufresne's refusal to baptize or rent pews to those who had expressed opposition to him. Bishop O'Reilly, by his inaction, gave tacit support to Fr. Dufresne.  

The disputes between Fr. Dufresne and some of his parishioners reveal that the issues involved more than personality conflicts. At stake was the role that the priest could play in an American French-Canadian community. Fr. Dufresne, in addition to his pastoral duties, also acted as a banker and property owner, roles which frequently brought him into conflicts having nothing to do with his priestly functions. Fr. Dufresne's investments were probably not made from inherited wealth as there is no indication that his family had money. More likely Fr. Dufresne's position as pastor provided him with capital for investment purposes. He received a modest annual salary from the diocese which was supplemented in several ways. By a tradition which, in the United States, survived into the mid-twentieth century, collections taken at Easter and Christmas, feast days which generally produced the greatest church attendance, were considered personal gifts to the pastor. In addition, his prerogatives included stole fees; payments for performing weddings, funerals, and baptisms. In Canada there had been a strict schedule of payment for such services. A large fee for a funeral, for example, would provide for a more elaborate ceremony than would a smaller sum, and a family's social
standing was judged in part by the type of church services they could afford. In the United States, the custom developed that the priest would accept any gift that the family offered, with little if any variations in the service performed. Fr. Dufresne, however, adhered rigidly to the Canadian tradition with its highly structured fee schedule. The early years of Fr. Dufresne's tenure probably did not produce much in the way of financial rewards. However, as the parish grew and the French-Canadian community became more prosperous, the emoluments of the pastor might well have been considerable. This speculation is borne out in part by the fact that Fr. Dufresne's name does not appear on the list of those individuals who paid $100 or more in local property taxes until 1874, five years after his arrival in the city.\(^{36}\)

Prior to the founding of a French-Canadian-owned bank in 1889, French-Canadians of moderate or little means had difficulty in obtaining loans from Holyoke's banking institutions. Fr. Dufresne provided one source of financial aid for the French-Canadians. Monsignor Vieu recalled an incident that occurred when he was serving as a curate at Precious Blood which reveals the extent to which Fr. Dufresne pursued his financial interests. The Monseignor came in contact with an elderly man who, in his youth, had borrowed money from Fr. Dufresne to purchase an apartment block. The terms of the loan specified that the money would be repaid at noon on a certain date. As the day approached, the borrower realized that he would not be able to acquire the necessary
funds until sometime in the afternoon of the appointed day. He asked the priest to extend the limit for a few hours or renegotiate the loan. Fr. Dufresne refused, foreclosed on his note and took possession of the building. 37

In early 1879 Fr. Dufresne brought suit against a tavern owner, Peter Monat, on the grounds that Monat had defaced a building that the priest owned. Fr. Dufresne claimed that in erecting a building that was adjacent to his, Monat had used the wall of the Dufresne building as a partition wall and had put holes in the building joints. In court Monat maintained that he had a verbal agreement with the priest to proceed as he had. The judge believed Monat and dismissed the charges against him. A few months later, Monat, who had testified against Fr. Dufresne in the Parker case, found that agents of the priest had removed the contents of his uncompleted building and had put them on the sidewalk. Incidents such as these were bound to weaken Fr. Dufresne's position as spiritual shepherd of the French-Canadians in Holyoke. 38

Fr. Dufresne's maneuvers sometimes got the best of him. During the liquor license dispute, he transferred some of his property to other French-Canadian citizens, on a temporary basis, perhaps because he feared possible attachment or wanted to avoid embarrassment if the extent of his holdings were revealed. The priest made an agreement with one French-Canadian contractor in which he sold an apartment building to the contractor for $1 with the understanding that
when the troubles were over the property would return to the
priest on the same terms. When Fr. Dufresne attempted to
regain title to the building, the contractor innocently
responded, "What apartment house?" 39

Fr. Dufresne died in May, 1887, but controversy con­
cerning him did not end with his death. All the property of
the parish, including the church building had been bought in
Fr. Dufresne's name. In his will, written in Holyoke in
September, 1886, but filed in his hometown of St. Hyacinthe,
P.Q., Fr. Dufresne left the bulk of his property, including
the church, to Bishop O'Reilly. However in October, 1887, two
of his nephews contested the will in Probate Court. They
lost, but the decision was reversed on appeal by the Supreme
Judicial Court in April, 1888. The major burden of the
nephews' case was that Fr. Dufresne had been a resident of
Massachusetts when he died, but that his will reflected
Canadian not Massachusetts law in that there was no attesting
attorney nor proper witnessing of the document. The Supreme
Judicial Court concurred, agreeing that the priest's will
had no validity in the Commonwealth and all the property,
including the church itself, belonged to the nephews as next
of kin. One can only imagine the consternation that the
decision brought to diocesan officials. The diocese quickly
began elaborate but secret negotiations with the nephews.
The final arrangements are obscure, but the church property
remained intact and title was transferred to the Bishop. 40
The significance of Fr. Dufresne's tenure in Holyoke can easily be obscured by the personal issues in which he was so constantly embroiled. To be sure, the priest's personal characteristics, his stubborness and apparent pecuniary self-interest, caused much of his difficulties. However at the root of all these disputes was a fundamental cultural conflict. Fr. Dufresne was to the end of his life a French-Canadian priest in the most encompassing sense. In spite of his seventeen years in the United States, Fr. Dufresne remained culturally isolated. He never tried to master the English language and the manner in which he drafted his will indicated that he had little interest in what occurred outside the French-Canadian community. In every major action that he took, Fr. Dufresne was functioning as tradition in French Canada dictated. He ran Precious Blood in the same manner that he would have directed a parish in Quebec. The French-Canadian curé was in part shepherd and protector of his people and this was entirely consistent with Fr. Dufresne's efforts to protect French-Canadians in Holyoke from the harmful and corrupting influence of a Rev. Chiniquy. The French-Canadian curé was also the spiritual father of his parish. Fr. Dufresne was attempting to exact a measure of paternal discipline in his actions against Joseph Parker and others who defied his will in the parish division matter. As he stated at the Parker trial, Fr. Dufresne felt that he was only exercising his rightful powers as a priest and that to do less would have been a dereliction of sacred duty. Such actions would
not likely have been questioned in French Canada. As comforter of the sick, Fr. Dufresne distributed wine out of a sense of Christian charity, but this action conflicted with the laws of the United States. The highly structured system of fees for special church functions was still in operation in Canada when Fr. Dufresne practiced it in Holyoke. Even in his personal business affairs, there is no evidence that the priest used his wealth to enhance his material comfort. Rather, he used his authority as leverage on his capital in order to enrich his parish; his ultimate intentions were made clear by his will which left virtually all his property to Bishop O'Reilly and thus to the diocese which he had served so long.

Fr. Dufresne's difficulties within his own parish illustrate how quickly the traditions and customs of the French-Canadians had eroded. This is not meant to imply that the French-Canadians in Holyoke in the 1880's had become Americanized, but rather that as a group they were forced to deal with a non-French-Canadian world more so than Fr. Dufresne and that they were able to change their values and expectations accordingly. Those French-Canadian merchants and builders who had achieved a degree of material prosperity and positions of prestige and authority in the French-Canadian community, and who provided the leadership to the opposition to Fr. Dufresne, would not meekly accept the often arbitrary paternalism of their pastor. Thus, while French-Canadians in Holyoke long maintained a separate cultural identity, this
culture had undergone significant changes in its transmission from French Canada to New England as evidenced by these conflicts within the local parish.

Father Dufresne's difficulties were not confined to struggles with his own congregation. His efforts to establish a French Catholic school in Holyoke brought him into conflict with members of the Protestant elite and with their educational orthodoxies.

Since the time of the British Conquest of Canada, parochial education had been an integral part of the French-Canadian effort to maintain their faith and cultural identity. One of the most persistent charges leveled by opponents of French-Canadian migration to New England was that French-Canadians showed considerable reluctance to educate their children. This sentiment received the aura of official approval in the "Chinese of the Eastern States" statement issued by the Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of Labor in 1881. The report stated that the French-Canadians:

will not send their children to school if they can help it, but endeavor to crowd them into the mills at the earliest possible age. To do this they deceive about the age of their children with brazen effrontery... And when [they are forced into the schools] the stolid indifference of the children wears out the teacher with what seems to be an idle task.41

The Holyoke experience modifies this charge. Precious Blood established a school in 1876, about as soon as the financial realities would permit. The low attendance figures in the school's first years were due more to the inadequacies of the school and Fr. Dufresne's conflicts with the Holyoke
School Committee, than to the intransigence of French-Canadian parents. By the early 1880's, when these difficulties were resolved, Precious Blood school had an enrollment in excess of 500 students.

Enthusiasm of the French-Canadians for education was not completely self-generated. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts pioneered in the field of compulsory school attendance and also passed a number of laws that limited the ages and conditions of work for children. In the 1870's, the General Court passed a series of laws concerning public education which were to directly affect the French-Canadians in Holyoke. In general, these laws required longer periods of schooling for children who worked in factories and mercantile establishments, and by charging the local school committees with the responsibility for enforcement, greatly increased their effectiveness.42

The first attempt to begin a French-Canadian school in Holyoke took place in 1876. Fr. Dufresne's first seven years had been devoted principally to organizing the parish and constructing a church building. His educational efforts prior to 1876 had been confined to providing religious instruction at Sunday School. In that year he started a school which 70 students attended. Classes were held in the church basement and all the instruction, given by two lay teachers, was in French.43

The opening of this school touched off a debate on assimilation,44 and led to an extended dispute between
Fr. Dufresne and local school officials. An 1876 Massachusetts law required children under 14 years of age to provide evidence of having had twenty weeks of schooling prior to employment each year. Local school committees were authorized to issue certificates of attendance only if the schools met with their approval and satisfied the requirements of the law.\(^45\) When schools reopened in September, 1876, the Holyoke School Committee, pursuant to this law, established a committee to examine the private schools in the city. The special committee consisted of three members of the school committee, including Moses M. Mitivier, a French-Canadian. In 1874, Dr. Mitivier, a proponent of public education, had been elected to the school committee for a three year term.\(^46\) School Committeeman Kelley, chairman of this special committee, submitted a report which stated that the French-Canadian school conformed to the law and should be recognized. A minority report was also offered. The author of this second report is not identified, but there is little doubt that it was written by Dr. Mitivier.\(^47\) The dissenting opinion pointed out that the French-Canadian school, with over 200 pupils, had only two female teachers, one of whom could not speak English. It was argued that two teachers could not properly handle that number of children and that since English was not studied, the school did not conform to existing law. The full committee, perhaps sensing that they were dealing with a potentially volatile issue, laid the matter on the table for the rest of the school year.\(^48\)
In 1877, another special committee, which also included Dr. Mitivier, was appointed to again examine the French-Canadian school. This committee attempted in vain to visit the school in an official capacity. Fr. Dufresne asked for public financial assistance for the parochial school, but at the same time made it clear that he would in no way relinquish any control over it. The matter was further exacerbated by personal animosity between the priest and Mitivier. The School Committee, faced with Fr. Dufresne's intransigence, had little choice but to accept the recommendation of the special committee to refuse to approve the school for the purpose of issuing work certificates. This stalemate continued until 1882.49

For the next four years, the enrollment at Precious Blood school ranged from 100 to 200 pupils. The parish history maintains that Fr. Dufresne accepted only those students who would follow the thirty-eight week course as opposed to the public schools, which would issue work certificates after twenty weeks of schooling. It would appear that French-Canadian parents, given a choice between a French Catholic education for their children or the opportunity to have them employed for half the year, chose the latter. Given the crowded conditions at Precious Blood school, perhaps many parents thought the public schools offered a better education. The attendance figures also suggest that most of the French-Canadian school students might have been from families whose income did not require their children to work.50
Fr. Dufresne realized that the enrollment of the parish school could not be substantially increased unless the impasse with the school committee was resolved. The fire of 1875 necessitated that the new church be completed as quickly as possible and Fr. Dufresne directed his energies and the resources of the parish to that end. By 1881 he was able to turn his attention to the school. He invited the Canadian Order of Grey Nuns to take control of the education in Precious Blood parish. A dramatic increase in enrollment followed the arrival of the nuns. 300 students began the 1881 fall term and by the end of that year, 600 were attending. Fr. Dufresne also began plans for a school building which was completed in 1883.51

The Holyoke School Committee, of which Dr. Mitivier was no longer a member, was quick to conclude that the presence of a teaching order of nuns was sufficient reason to approve the school. Accordingly, such recognition was granted in February, 1882. However, there is considerable doubt as to whether the school was in compliance with an 1878 Massachusetts law which required that classes be conducted in English. By all accounts, much attention was given to the study of the French language, and Canadian and Church history. The Grey Nuns, who had been educated in Canada, were unfamiliar with United States History, and thus the students likely learned little of the history of their new homeland. One of the reasons given for the replacement of the Grey Nuns in 1887 was that little, if any, instruction at the school
was in English. Also, the rules governing the Grey Nuns restricted them to the teaching of girls. Fr. Dufresne did make plans for a school for boys shortly before his death and there are indications that boys did attend Precious Blood before then. However, their number and the manner of their instruction is unclear. Neither is it certain that the school retained its thirty-eight week attendance policy.\textsuperscript{52}

By the mid-1880's, a French Canadian Catholic school was solidly entrenched in Holyoke. In 1884, one-quarter to one-third of the French-Canadian children aged 5 to 15 attended Precious Blood, although many of them also worked part of the year. The school was yet another symbol of the strength of Holyoke's French-Canadian community and served to transmit and strengthen French-Canadian and Catholic values. Yet the influence of the school touched only a minority of the French-Canadian children in the city.\textsuperscript{53}

Most of the French-Canadian children who did not receive a parochial education attended the city's public schools. After 1876, a semi-annual census was conducted by the truant officer to ascertain the number of children of school age in the city, but the form in which the results were published makes it difficult to determine exactly how many French-Canadians were in the public schools and for what duration.\textsuperscript{54} There are some indications that the state law concerning school attendance was modified in Holyoke to conform to local sentiment. Manufacturers were quite aware of the value of French-Canadian labor and favored the establishment
of French-Canadian institutions in Holyoke as a means of insuring a cheap and stable work force. Evidence of employer pressure is largely by inference, but the policy of school officials usually worked to the manufacturers advantage. As early as 1877 there were charges that the Superintendent of Schools had permitted children under 14 to work without school certification for reasons of hardship but in violation of the law. Also, state investigators discovered a number of children who had been hired without the proper papers. In his 1880 report, the Superintendent candidly admitted that he had approved work certificates for children who came directly from Canada:

Many of the school certificates, although issuing from French Canadian schools to pupils not knowing a word of English, were nevertheless received by me whenever I found the pupils able to read and write any language. The influx from the northern border comes in families, only the younger members of which enter, nolens volens [Whether willing or unwilling], the schools.

If Holyoke officials were inclined to be flexible in their enforcement of the school laws, there were other factors which contributed, however unwittingly, to greater French-Canadian school attendance. In 1879, the Massachusetts General Court authorized the use of state police detectives to act as factory inspectors and commissioned them to look for violations relative to the employment of women and children. The inspectors, despite their small numbers, succeeded to the point where some employers asked for relaxation of the laws. Manufacturers were required to retain a file of school certificates for each employee under 14 and administrative costs
plus increasingly severe penalties for violation, led many factories to reduce or eliminate their younger workers. Initial enforcement of the twenty week law in Holyoke benefited from a surplus labor market and most employers appeared willing to discharge the children in favor of older workers. In a related matter, in 1882 the City Council appointed an assistant truant officer who was French-Canadian. In subsequent years, this post was always filled by a French-Canadian who was usually active in the French-Canadian districts. The enforcement of factory laws and school attendance laws did not end the practice of child labor, but it did insure that most children received some schooling.\textsuperscript{56}

French-Canadians presented special problems for school authorities. Officials proceeded from the assumption that French-Canadian parents were more anxious to have their children work in the mills than attend school. There were attempts by French-Canadian parents in Holyoke to misrepresent the ages of their children in order to obtain work certificates. The Superintendent of Schools quickly adopted a policy of requiring birth or baptismal records as proof of age. In the case of new arrivals, a temporary work certificate was usually issued if the child could not offer proof of school attendance in Canada. If evidence was not forthcoming, the truant officer was dispatched to insure that the child received the twenty weeks of required schooling.\textsuperscript{57}

The periodic influx of large numbers of French-Canadians into Holyoke seriously taxed the capacity of the
schools in the French-Canadian areas. In 1879, for example, one room at the Chestnut Street school had 80 pupils, all but six of whom were French-Canadians. Such inequities were only temporary, however, and school officials were quite flexible about closing and opening rooms as circumstances required.50

During the 1880's, the truant officer's census indicated that about 75 per cent of the city's children between the ages of 5 and 15 attended school at least part of the year. After 1881, 25 to 33 per cent of the French-Canadian children attended Precious Blood. Excluding those age five, six and fifteen, who were not required by law to attend school, it is likely nearly one-half of the French-Canadian children spent at least part of the year in the public schools. Dissatisfaction with Fr. Dufresne or cost factors might have influenced some parents not to send their children to Precious Blood. A more likely explanation, given the large number of French-Canadian children who were employed, was that public schools, which met for three separate ten week sessions, provided longer periods for the children to work.59

A further indication of the economic position of Holyoke's French-Canadians was the almost total absence of French-Canadian names in the high school rolls. Sons, and occasionally daughters, of prominent French-Canadians were sent to Canada for either all of their education or to pursue a college degree, but the majority of French-Canadians left school permanently as soon as the law allowed.60

By the mid-1880's, a substantial number of Holyoke's
French-Canadians were receiving a public education. The quality of this education is difficult to determine. French-Canadian teachers were not hired by the city until a later period, although some teachers did have proficiency in the French language. To some degree however, French-Canadians in the public schools were exposed to the values and ideas of their adopted country.

The French-Canadians in Holyoke established, in addition to religious and educational institutions, social organizations which were modeled on their Canadian counterparts. These groups, dominated by male community leaders, by their numbers and durability provide an indication of the strength and stability of the French-Canadian community. After 1885, the number of French-Canadian social-fraternal groups in Holyoke grew rapidly, attesting to the maturity and strength of their community. Prior to that year however, there were only two major French-Canadian social-fraternal groups in the city, one of which was not founded until 1881. The activities of these organizations provide another view of social life within the French-Canadian community.

In Holyoke, as in many other French-Canadian centers in New England, a fraternal organization was begun even before the establishment of a French Catholic parish. In October, 1868, the St. Jean Baptiste Society was founded following the Fourth General Convention of all French-Canadian societies in the United States. The St. Jean Baptiste
Society was modeled after similar groups in Canada and the United States. It combined national and ethnic goals, langue, foi et nationalité, with mutual benefit programs designed to provide financial relief for members and their families in case of ill health or death of the family head.61

Although the St. Jean Baptiste Society was organized during a period of significant French-Canadian migration to Holyoke, the founders were men who had been in the town a number of years, and who had achieved some measure of worldly success. The first president, for example, was Holyoke's only French-Canadian doctor, and Issac Perry (Paré), a successful grocer, played an important role in the Society until his death in 1879. Indeed, of those Society presidents who can be identified, all were merchants, small businessmen or professional men.62

The St. Jean Baptiste Society experienced considerable difficulty in its first years of existence and it is possible that the Society was dormant for a period. In 1873, high costs forced the group to abandon plans for a street parade on the feast day of their patron. During better times, the Society served as a focal point for other French-Canadian social events. The St. Jean Baptiste Society held an annual dance on New Year's Eve, a traditional French-Canadian holiday. The Society organized excursions to Canada, as well as naturalization efforts. In 1876, Holyoke was host to the General Convention of French-Canadian societies, an indication that the city was considered among the most important French-
Canadian centers in the United States. While contemporary accounts of the convention conveyed a sense of local pride and accomplishment, the proceedings themselves gave indications of how the societies had become isolated from the majority of French-Canadians. One delegate put the matter succinctly: "These conventions represent the interests of only 2000 Canadians [in the United States] at the most, while our conventions a few years ago were representing all our emigrant countrymen." Much the same could be said for the Holyoke society. From 1870 to 1900 the city's French-Canadian population had tripled, while the membership of the St. Jean Baptiste Society, at times nearly 100, stood at only 50 in 1879.

French-Canadian social activity in Holyoke was given new life by the formation of the Union Canadienne in November, 1881. The functions of the Union Canadienne were similar to those of the St. Jean Baptiste Society. One important difference was that the older organization retained close ties with the Catholic Church. It required that members be practicing Catholics and a priest served the group as chaplain. The rapid growth of the Union Canadienne indicated the changing nature of the French-Canadian community. By the early 1880's enough French-Canadians had achieved some degree of prosperity that they were anxious to join a social organization as a symbol of their success. The exclusivity of the St. Jean Baptiste Society provided an opportunity for the Union Canadienne to grow quickly. Starting with 60 members in 1881,
the rolls of the Union Canadienne had risen to 300 by 1885. One immediate consequence of the establishment of the new group was the revitalization of the St. Jean Baptiste Society which liberalized its rules to permit members to receive benefits after six months membership instead of one year, and also made attendance at a member's funeral optional. By 1884, the St. Jean Baptiste Society had increased its membership to 250.65

From a very early period there was a considerable degree of co-operation between the two societies. Dual membership became common and perhaps served as a means of increasing an individual's insurance benefits. At least four persons served as president, at different times, of both organizations. The two groups made joint preparations to construct a hall which could serve the needs of both societies. However, this plan was delayed several years because of inadequate financial resources. The success of the Union Canadienne and the rebirth of the St. Jean Baptiste Society were indications that growing numbers of French-Canadians could afford the membership fees, desired the mutual benefit protection, and wanted the prestige of being identified with a social, fraternal group. Neither group paid much attention to the majority of French-Canadians in the city who were low paid workers and laborers, except indirectly, principally through naturalization efforts.66

The St. Jean Baptiste Society and the Union Canadienne represented the most sustained social-fraternal activity among
the French-Canadians in Holyoke in the pre-1885 period. Other social outlets did exist, but they were less enduring. Literary, debating and musical organizations, often outgrowths of the two larger societies, were short-lived. Social activities for French-Canadian women were very limited in this period. A young ladies sodality existed at Precious Blood and some women participated in plays and musicals. These are the only recorded activities in which women were not simply the partners of the male participants.  

While the newspapers chronicled the social events of a minority of French-Canadians, the amusements of the mill operatives and laborers are less certain. Baseball, for example, was popular with Holyoke residents, but the box scores contained no French-Canadian names. Judging from the newspaper reports of the actions of the police court, many French-Canadian men boisterously frequented local taverns. One summer a young, courageous, and perhaps foolhardy French-Canadian entertained large numbers of Holyoke residents by going over the river dam in a small boat. This feat was repeated a number of times and a collection was taken to "defray expenses."  

Beyond the above mentioned activities, there is no clear indication of the leisure pursuits of French-Canadian workers. The hours and conditions of labor severely limited the time that a laborer could devote to recreation. But short time, layoffs and mill closings did offer periods of involuntary leisure. How this time was spent is not known.
The French-Canadians in New England were frequently accused of having little interest in the politics and public affairs of their adopted country. Whether because of a desire to return eventually to Canada or simply from disinterest, most French-Canadians never became United States citizens, a fact that disturbed many Americans. This charge was valid for Holyoke in the years before 1885, when few French-Canadians became naturalized.

Beginning in 1872, some French-Canadians in Holyoke made considerable efforts to persuade their fellow countrymen to become United States citizens. Through 1885, their naturalization drives produced disappointing results. The pattern of naturalization was erratic, roughly following the economic cycle. In part, naturalization campaigns by the General Convention of French-Canadian societies partly influenced the number that took out papers each year. The only consistent feature of naturalization was that the vast majority of French-Canadian men who became United States citizens were thirty years old or younger.

Specific legal requirements also influenced naturalization. First, a prospective applicant had to reside in the United States for five years, in Massachusetts for one year, and had to serve a two year probationary period after declaring intentions to become a United States citizen. These rules help to explain the timing of Holyoke's first French-Canadian naturalization drive which occurred in 1872, five years after the large immigration of 1867. Second, the applicant had to
read in the English language. This provision discouraged many adults from taking out naturalization papers. Many, especially the older men, never learned English and others, whose proficiency was marginal, were reluctant to risk the embarrassment of possible failure. In general, those who became naturalized were the better educated, more ambitious younger men who had been born in Canada, but had grown up in Holyoke or some other New England city.69

Leaders within the various ethnic groups provided the motivating force for the naturalization efforts in Holyoke. There is no evidence that either of the two major political parties initiated naturalization campaigns prior to 1885. As might be expected, French-Canadian organizers were those men who had the most to gain by increasing the number of naturalized French-Canadians in the city. Merchants and professional men who had established themselves permanently in Holyoke depended on French-Canadian patronage for their economic survival and thus were anxious to persuade other French-Canadians to plant their roots in the city. Further, as these individuals prospered, they took a greater interest in local affairs and wanted a large naturalized French-Canadian population to provide the political power needed to insure French-Canadian interests. Sporadically, they attempted to create permanent naturalization clubs, but generally, these organizations were active only from September to the December city elections each year. Some clubs were organized independently, but the individuals who served as club officers were by and large the
same men who made up the bulk of the membership of the St. Jean Baptiste Society and the Union Canadienne. In short, they were the elite of Holyoke's French-Canadians; the merchants, retailers and professional men.  

On occasion, the fraternal groups would directly sponsor naturalization drives. In 1879, the General Convention adopted a resolution which strongly advocated naturalization and the St. Jean Baptiste Society conducted an extensive search that year for potential applicants. One stated purpose for founding the Union Canadienne in 1881 was naturalization and its principal organizer, Joseph Beauchemin, was long a leader in the effort to get French-Canadians to become United States citizens. The naturalization clubs were usually non-partisan, but many of their activities tended to discourage a mill operative or laborer from joining. In an effort to gain stability and permanence, some clubs charged membership dues, in one case 25 cents per month. A worker with a large family might not have considered this a good investment. Club balls and dances were termed successful when they attracted eighty to one hundred couples, but again, these had little appeal to the mill workers. Through 1885, naturalization efforts did not succeed in persuading large numbers of French-Canadian émigrés to take actions which would signify their intentions to remain in the United States permanently.  

Table 9 provides an indication of the erratic pattern of French-Canadian naturalization. In part, the widely varying number of French-Canadians who became United States
citizens in each year can be attributed to the naturalization efforts of the French-Canadian community. The 1874 figures reflect the fruits of the first citizenship drive in 1872 (considering the two years needed to receive final papers). The other significant year, 1883, was two years after the founding of the Union Canadienne which stimulated naturalization. However, organized efforts alone do not completely explain the naturalization pattern. A well-published campaign by the St. Jean Baptiste Society in 1879 did not produce much in the way of results, and in most of the years from 1875 to 1880, naturalization clubs were also active.

TABLE 9. - Number of French-Canadians naturalized, by age, Holyoke, 1868-1885

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>21-25</th>
<th>26-30</th>
<th>31-35</th>
<th>36-40</th>
<th>41-45</th>
<th>46+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>1871</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1872</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals 78 48 25 10 3 4 168
Percent. of Total 46.4 28.6 14.9 6.0 1.8 2.4 100
Economic conditions also affected naturalization. Business in Holyoke was stagnant from 1873 until the spring of 1879. This decline caused many French-Canadians to leave Holyoke and decreased the number applying for citizenship. The economic picture does not explain the large numbers who received their papers in 1874. However, those who became citizens in that year included John Prew, Daniel Proulx and Didace St. Marie, individuals who were among the most prominent leaders in the city. The 1874 group appears to have consisted largely of men who already had a stake in Holyoke. In contrast to the mill operative, they were men more apt to remain in Holyoke and wait out the hard times. In 1879 business conditions improved only to slip again in 1884, a pattern which approximates the rise and decline in the number who received citizenship papers. Table 9 also denotes the relative youth of the French-Canadian men who became naturalized, 75 per cent were thirty years old or younger and nearly half, 46.4 per cent, were twenty-five years or younger, an indication of the relative youth of Holyoke's French-Canadians and the fact that changing national allegiance held more promise for men who were just beginning their adult lives. Thus, the combination of organized naturalization efforts and the business cycle are the two most prominent factors in explaining the pattern of French-Canadian naturalization in Holyoke through 1885.

French-Canadians were not only slow to naturalize before 1885, but also they became citizens and voted at a
much lower rate than did men of other ethnic groups. It is difficult to determine the exact number of French-Canadians who registered to vote during this period. Prior to 1885 census and voting statistics did not generally indicate ethnic origins, or if they did, did not differentiate between French-Canadians and others born in Canada. But voter registration figures for 1875 do provide some indication of the degree to which French-Canadians became citizens. In that year, about half of the French-Canadians in Holyoke lived in Ward 4, although they comprised approximately 40 per cent of the ward's population. Therefore the figures in Table 10 must be viewed judiciously.

TABLE 10. - Voter registration of foreign-born males in the City of Holyoke and Ward Four, Holyoke, 1875

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Ward Four</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ratable Polls</td>
<td>3861</td>
<td>842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Voters</td>
<td>2225</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalized Voters</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aliens</td>
<td>1516</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Ratable Polls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who were Legal Voters</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Legal Voters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalized</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Ratable Polls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aliens</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Derived from *Holyoke Transcript*, September 11, 1875.
While the results of Table 10 are not conclusive, it is significant that the ward which had the highest percentage of French-Canadian residents, also had the highest percentage of aliens and the lowest percentage of legal voters than any ward in the city.

The 1885 census provides information which makes possible a more precise indication of the amount of French-Canadian naturalization than the 1875 figures. In 1885 Holyoke had the highest percentage of alien polls (unnaturalized males 21 and over) of any city in Massachusetts. In addition, only 34.75 per cent of the foreign-born males were voters, the second lowest figure in the Commonwealth. This statistic is attributable in great measure to the number of French-Canadians who were not naturalized.73

TABLE 11. - Number and percentage of voter and aliens, by country of birth, Holyoke, 1885a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Polls not Voters</th>
<th>Legal Voters</th>
<th>Aliens</th>
<th>Total Males Voting Age</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total in City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>346</td>
<td>4046</td>
<td>2888</td>
<td>7289</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Canada</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>1245</td>
<td>1584</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>1877</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass.</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>1181</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1264</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Table 11 gives dramatic illustration of French-Canadian naturalization behavior. Only 21.3 per cent (polls not voters and legal voters) of the eligible French-Canadians were citizens, compared to 48.8 per cent and 40.4 per cent of the Irish and Germans respectively. 74

Historian Samuel P. Hays has noted that the physical development and growth of American cities in the mid-nineteenth century produced a differentiation and decentralization in the social and economic life of the cities. In turn, the political structure was also decentralized. Each section and group demanded its own representation and the political division of the cities into wards was the usual response. The ward system resulted in a new type of political leader. Councilmen tended to reflect the concerns of their particular community and the economic and social leaders in each ward began to gravitate toward politics as an extension of their leadership role. Hays concludes that by the end of the century, "the typical ward-elected city councilman was a small businessman-retailer, director of a funeral home, real estate promoter and contractor, director of a community bank, a clerk, a skilled artisan or an unskilled laborer". 75

Hays' description of late nineteenth century political life is a close approximation of the realities in Holyoke. In its original city charter of 1873, the city was divided into seven wards. The city executives, the mayor, treasurer and clerk, were elected at-large, while the legislative body was chosen by ward. The city council consisted of a seven
member board of aldermen, one from each ward, and a common
council of twenty-one members, three per ward. Through
1910, the major political rivals were the Irish and the
Yankees. Although the Yankees were in a distinct minority,
they were usually able to rely on support from the Germans,
English and Scots. Both Yankees and Irish wooed the French-
Canadians, with varying success, especially in the post-1885
period when the number of French-Canadian voters was sub-
stantially increased. The local political system, until
modified in 1897, worked to the advantage of the French-
Canadians in that they could usually secure a nomination from
both parties for at least one common council seat in wards
with a large French-Canadian population. Prior to 1885 there
was a gradual increase in French-Canadian political strength
as the French-Canadians both used and were used by the other
political factions. On one hand, the French-Canadians were
able to secure elected and appointive office at least in pro-
portion to their political strength. On the other, the extent
of French-Canadian influence was severely limited by other
groups who wanted to use the French-Canadians to promote
their own political advantage and in the process neutralized
the impact of the French-Canadians.

The task of unifying Holyoke's small French-Canadian
vote was made more difficult by divisions among themselves.
It is possible to determine the political affiliations of
twenty French-Canadian leaders through 1885. Eleven were
Republicans, eight Democrats, and Dr. Mitivier, changed his
loyalties twice, ending his life as a Republican. The reasons for this marked division of leadership are obscure. It has been suggested that the French-Canadians brought their political differences with them from Canada, but there is little evidence for this in Holyoke. The Republicans were, as a group, slightly more affluent than their Democratic counterparts, but not strikingly so. Personal differences and the realities of political life in the French-Canadian wards are more probable explanations. The political split between French-Canadian leaders made it extremely difficult for the French-Canadians to vote as a bloc.

Since as late as 1885 there were only 258 French-Canadian voters in Holyoke out of a total of 4046, it is difficult to determine how their ballots were cast. Both Wards Two and Four, in which approximately 70 per cent of the French-Canadians lived, consistently voted Democratic. Ward 4, with the largest percentage of French-Canadian residents, generally favored the Democratic candidates by a margin of better than 2 to 1 in the 1883-1885 period. In Ward 2, with fewer French-Canadians, the Democratic totals were in the range of 55 to 60 per cent.77

In spite of the paucity of voters, French-Canadians did manage to play a role in city politics. From the first city election in 1873 through 1885, there was a French-Canadian candidate for the city council from Ward 4. Grocer Isaac Perry ran unsuccessfully as a Republican for the common council three times and for ward alderman on one occasion.78
In 1877 Perry was instrumental in organizing a caucus of French-Canadian voters to unite behind one of their number and to urge the Republican and Democratic ward committees to accept him as one of their three common council candidates. However the caucus did not result in the desired harmony in that two candidates claimed victory. Both the Democrats and Republicans included Didace St. Marie on their joint slate for common council, but the other French-Canadian contender, Wilfred Tanguay, succeeded in obtaining enough signatures to place his name on the December ballot. Although St. Marie was elected, 157 votes to 82 for Tanguay, the election seriously split French-Canadian ranks.

A similar situation occurred the following year. The caucus could not agree on a candidate and the two French-Canadian contenders were again pitted against one another in the final election. The returns showed the same type of split that had taken place the previous year. Victor Guyott defeated Pierre Bonvouloir, 133 votes to 125, for the third council seat.

The French-Canadians learned from the battles of 1877 and 1878. In 1879 Ward 4 French-Canadians finally managed to unite behind one candidate and except for 1880, a French-Canadian was able to get the common council nomination of both parties, and thus was elected, until 1883. In 1880 the Republicans abandoned the bi-partisan approach and endorsed a French-Canadian for the council in order to get French-Canadian votes for their mayoral candidate. The GOP
elected a mayor, but the French-Canadians came in last in a field of six. In 1884 and 1885 the growing political strength of French-Canadians became evident when John J. Prew was unopposed for the ward's only seat on the board of aldermen. 81

In Ward 2 French-Canadians were not able to field a common council candidate until 1879 and did not win a seat until 1881. Since the dominance of the Democratic party in the ward was much less pronounced than in Ward 4, the practice of endorsing a joint ticket with the Republicans was less common. Only twice between 1879 and 1885 did French-Canadian candidates receive both nominations simultaneously. All other French-Canadians in Ward 2 ran as Republicans in these years. In 1884 and 1885 the normal partisanship in Ward 2 was intensified by a bitter city-wide dispute concerning the granting of liquor licenses. Although the license question appeared on the ballot annually, the prohibition forces made strong, but unsuccessful, efforts in both these years. In 1884 Ward 2 common councilor Didace St. Marie, who had moved from Ward 4, lost his bid to become the ward's alderman by a narrow margin, and another French-Canadian, also running as a Republican, lost a seat on the common council by a single vote. St. Marie charged the Republicans in his ward with treachery, indicating that they had not given him full support. However, the fact that St. Marie was a grocer and retail liquor seller was probably a more important factor in his defeat. Still, in the next election,
the GOP Ward 2 candidate for alderman was beaten and French-
Canadians indicated that they had voted against him because of the lack of Republican support for St. Marie the previous year. 82

With a very small percentage of the city's voters French-Canadians were able to occupy at least one, and occasionally, two seats on the common council in all but one year from 1878 through 1885. In addition, a French-Canadian was elected to the board of alderman in 1884 and 1885. In local affairs French-Canadian voting patterns were largely determined by geography. In the heavily Democratic Ward 4, the French-Canadian leaders largely embraced the majority party. In Ward 2 where the political balance was more even, all French-Canadian candidates ran as Republicans. It is obvious that prior to 1886 that city politics were of concern to only a few French-Canadians in Holyoke. While the motives of those who sought office varied with the individual, one issue became important to many of them. An 1877 state law had empowered the local city councils to grant liquor licenses and at least half of the French-Canadians who held elective office before 1886 were liquor retailers or distributors. The 1884 and 1885 elections were previews of what was to come. Liquor was to become the overriding local issue for the rest of the century and more French-Canadians would be drawn into the competition for licenses.

In addition to elective office, French-Canadians also were accorded a measure of other political rewards.
They sat on the city committees of both parties and were regularly appointed as delegates to the numerous state and county conventions which nominated candidates for all the positions from governor and congressman to state representative. The police officers were appointed annually by the mayor until 1888 and there was at least one French-Canadian, at times two, on a force which numbered 10 to 15 members. When M. J. Laporte was considered for the position of city lamplighter, the Springfield Republican indicated the growing acceptance of French-Canadian political appointments by commenting that "as the French are very seldom represented in public positions, Mr. Laporte is worthy of consideration". In 1882 a French-Canadian was appointed as the second truant officer and his prime responsibility was to look after the growing number of children of his own nationality. Finally, French-Canadians do not appear to have been discriminated against in the distribution of liquor licenses. In short, by the mid-1880's, a small but growing number of French-Canadians played an active role in the city's political life and they reaped benefits which were, at the very least, in proportion to their political strength.

A major countervailing force to the growth of French-Canadian political power was the strength of their connections with Canada. The continued flow of new immigrants from Quebec brought news of home to those already in the city and kept alive dreams of returning to Canada. The volume of the movement between Quebec and Holyoke was quite large. The railroads
were well aware of the potential profits involved in the travel of French-Canadians, and in Holyoke, as in most French-Canadian centers in New England, the local ticket agent was French-Canadian. Almost every summer and again during the Christmas holidays, the railroads offered special excursion rates to Canada at a cost of $9 to $11 per round trip, approximately half the regular fare. While the rates represented a week's pay or more to a mill operative, it was possible for a frugal family to save enough money to be able to visit Quebec every two or three years. As many as 500 French-Canadians at a time, perhaps 10 per cent of the city's French-Canadian population, would take advantage of these offers to visit Canada. The number of personal notices in the newspapers, especially during the summer months, of Holyoke French-Canadians visiting in Quebec, or of Canadian visitors in the city, attests to a considerable amount of contact.85

The French-Canadians in Holyoke gave support to Canadian arts and to numerous causes. The Canadian poet, Louis Frechette, for example, was feted at a banquet in the city which attracted dignitaries from Canada as well as from all over Massachusetts. Parishioners at Precious Blood contributed funds to help build a Canadian cathedral. Many Holyoke French-Canadians kept abreast of Canadian happenings. Canadian newspapers circulated in the city and the few copies of locally published French-language papers that survive from the pre-1885 period contain more Canadian than Holyoke news. Certain political events in Canada aroused more interest in
Holyoke than local issues. One of the first French-Canadian organizations that was established in Holyoke was intended to promote the cause of Canadian independence. Various solutions were proposed, including the annexation of Quebec to the United States. While agitation in Holyoke was largely rhetorical, the issue of a free Canada surfaced a number of times prior to 1885. The execution of Louis Riel, a separatist insurgent, by the Canadian government in 1885, sparked a vocal and angry response in Holyoke. Mass meetings were held to condemn the action and funds were collected by the St. Jean Baptiste Society and the Union Canadienne for the relief of Riel's widow and children. In the following year an effort was made by French-Canadian leaders to get those who could still vote in Canada to return for the national election and there was much jubilation in the city following the defeat of the party responsible for Riel's death.86

French-Canadian institutions in Holyoke underwent important changes in the transition from Quebec to Holyoke. The religious, educational and social institutions could not function in the pluralistic society of Holyoke as they had in the cultural isolation of Quebec. Consequently, they underwent adaptations which reflected the changes which migration to the United States had brought to the French-Canadian community of Holyoke.
NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER III

1 Ducharme, Shadows of the Trees, pp. 83-84.

2 Interview with Msgr. Roger Vieu, October 11, 1974.

3 "Jubilé d' Or Paroissial", p. 11; Interview with Msgr. Vieu, October 11, 1974; Hamon, Les Canadien, p. 236.

4 "Canadians in Holyoke", pp. 1-2; "Jubilé d' Or Paroissial", p. 9; Interview with Msgr. Vieu, August 26, 1974.

5 Holyoke, Marriage Register, City Clerk's Office, Holyoke City Hall, 1865; Transcript, February 27, 1869.

6 Transcript, February 27, 1869; "Jubilé d' Or Paroissial", p. 11; "Canadians in Holyoke", p. 2; Interview with Msgr. Vieu, August 26, 1974.

7 Transcript, August 14, 1869.

8 Ibid., April 17, 1869, December 11, 1869, January 8, 1870; Holyoke, Marriage Register, 1870; Hamon, Les Canadien, p. 237; "Canadians in Holyoke", pp. 2-3.

9 Transcript, April 30, 1870, May 14, 1870, June 22 and 26, 1872.

10 Ibid., April 10, 1872, May 17, 1873, October 24, 1874; Republican, December 11, 1873, September 21, 1874; Canadians in Holyoke", p. 3.

11 "Canadians in Holyoke", pp. 3-4; Hamon, Les Canadien, pp. 237-238; McCoy, "Springfield", II, p. 674; Transcript, May 29, 1875, June 2 and 5, 1875. In the confusion of the moment many victims were counted twice and the problem was compounded because both French and Anglicized spellings of some of the names of the dead were recorded separately.

12 Transcript, December 23, 1874, June 12, 1875, July 3 and 21, 1875, December 25, 1875.

13 Ibid., June 26, 1875; Republican, May 9 and 30, 1878, June 5, 1878; Holyoke News, May 8 and 29, 1878; "Canadians in Holyoke", pp. 4-5; "Jubilé d' Or Paroissial", p. 13.

14 Chiniquy, Fifty Years, passim.

15 Massachusetts, Hampden County Superior Court, Joseph Parker vs. A. B. Dufresne, Case #102, Filed October 7, 1878. Hereafter cited as Parker vs Dufresne; Transcript, March 19, 1879; Republican, October 24, 1878; Holyoke News, March 19, 1879.
Transcript, November 12, 1879.

Parker vs. Dufresne.

Transcript, November 12, 1879.

Ibid., November 12, 1879, July 16, 1880; Republican October 29, 1879, November 12, 1879, July 16 and 17, 1880; Parker vs. Dufresne.

Harper's Weekly Magazine (December 6, 1879), 960.

Republican, November 12, 1879.

Holyoke News, December 28, 1878.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., January 4, 1879; Republican, November 17 and 26, 1879. The Transcript, the major Holyoke newspaper available during this period, showed considerable reluctance to discuss Fr. Dufresne's difficulties, perhaps as a matter of civic pride. The Transcript made no mention of the Parker case until the final verdict had been reached, even though the case had been in litigation for more than a year. The paper also made little mention of the petition movement until it was in an advanced stage. Fortunately for the historian, the Springfield Republican had no such inhibitions and indeed over the years seemed to delight in exposing any volatile issues which arose in the smaller, but growing industrial city to its north. The Republican's biases toward the parish division petition drive were revealed when it commented: "This experience is teaching the people a little independence. It is encouraging to see the superstitious veneration of priests weakening and when a priest learns that he will be blamed like any other man for doing wrong, he will be more apt to do right". November 26, 1879.

Republican, December 3 and 9, 1879.

Ibid., December 1, 2, 5 and 8, 1879, January 10, 1880, February 5, 1880.

Ibid., March 8 and 10, 1880. The name of the curate was not reported. Fr. Dufresne did not introduce him to the congregation, as was customary, an omission which further antagonized the pastor's opponents. The parish history, "Jubilé d' Or Paroissial", does not include the names of any assistant pastors who served before 1884.
30 Republican, March 16 and 17, 1880; Transcript, March 17, 20 and 24, 1880.

31 Republican, March 27, 1880, April 2 and 3, 1880; Transcript, April 3, 1880.

32 Republican, April 6, 1880.

33 Ibid., April 13, 1880; Transcript, April 21, 1880.

34 Republican, June 9, 1880, July 26, 1880, August 7, 1880; Transcript, July 24, 1880.

35 Republican, August 10, 1880, June 29, 1881, March 2, 1882, October 7, 1882; Transcript, May 31, 1882.

36 Interview with Msgr. Vieu, October 11, 1974; Lists of individuals who paid $100 or more in property taxes were printed in both the Transcript and Republican, usually in August of each year. See also Horace Miner, St. Denis, A French-Canadian Parish (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 224.

37 Interview with Msgr. Vieu, August 26, 1974.

38 Republican, February 12 and 19, 1879; Holyoke News, April 9, 1879.


40 Massachusetts, Hampden County Probate Court, Estate of A. B. Dufresne, File #15335. Fr. Dufresne's will is included in a packet which also contains various legal documents related to the appeal of his nephews; Transcript, May 16 and 17, 1887, October 5, 1887, April 25 and 26, 1888, July 20 and 24, 1888, December 4, 1888; Republican, May 12 and 17, 1887, July 10, 1887.

41 Mass. Labor Bureau, A.R. (1881), pp. 469-470. For the complete text see Appendix A.


43 Le Travailleur (Worcester, Massachusetts), February 3, 1876; Transcript, May 24, 1876.

44 See above, pp. 92-95.

45 Massachusetts, Acts, 1876, Chapter 52.
Mitivier was something of a rebel and his political career can most charitably be described as erratic. Unlike most French-Canadians of this period, Mitivier was an admirer of the public school system and opposed the establishment of parochial schools.

The Holyoke School Committee Minutes, located in the office of the Superintendent of Schools, are quite terse and do not elaborate on this or any other matter. However, Mitivier was one of the three men on the special committee. The majority report was written by the chairman, Kelley. Mitivier's well-known views on parochial education and his disputes with Fr. Dufresne make him the most logical author of the minority report.

Holyoke, School Committee Minutes, September 5, 1876 and October 26, 1876; Alexandre Belisle, Histoire de la presse franco-américaine et des Canadiens-français aux États-Unis (Worcester: Ateliers Typographiques de "L'Opinion Publique", 1911), p. 281; Republican, September 7 and 30, 1876; Transcript, September 9, 1876.

Holyoke, School Committee Minutes, June 5, 1877 and September 4, 1877; Republican, September 1, 4 and 6, 1877.

"Canadians in Holyoke", p.5.

Holyoke, School Committee, Annual Report (1881), pp. 21, 36 and (1882), p. 36; Transcript, November 9, 1881, December 14 and 21, 1881, May 3, 1882, August 4, 1883, September 25, 1883; Republican, October 15 and 21, 1881, March 24, 1882, April 17, 1882, July 31, 1882, September 6, 1883.

Massachusetts, Acts, 1878, Chapter 171; "Canadians in Holyoke", p. 6; Green, Holyoke, p. 303; Transcript, November 9, 1881, February 8, 1882, December 10, 1884, September 6, 1887; Republican, October 15, 1881, February 16, 1882, December 17, 1886.


Pursuant to an 1876 law, the city truant officer prepared a semi-annual census of children between the ages of five and fifteen years, inclusive. The truant officer's report detailed the number of children attending public and parochial schools, those who were employed or at home, and gave a breakdown of their ethnic background by parentage. As helpful as these statistics are, they can only provide general impressions of French-Canadian school attendance. State law required twenty weeks of school attendance for all those between ages ten and fourteen prior to employment. The semi-annual census made no distinction between the twenty week students and full time students. Children aged five, six and
fifteen were included in these reports even though they were not required by law to attend school. Therefore, the total number of French-Canadian children five to fifteen and the number attending Precious Blood School were revealed, but the reports do not provide accurate figures on how many French-Canadians attended public school or for what duration. Massachusetts, Acts, 1876, Chapter 52 and 1878, Chapter 257; Holyoke, School Committee, A.R. (1877-1886).

55 Holyoke, School Committee, A.R. (1880), p. 29; "Canadians in Holyoke", p. 5; Green, Holyoke, p. 301; Republican, September 1, 1877, November 2, 1887.

56 Massachusetts, Acts, 1879, Chapter 305; Ensign, Compulsory School Attendance, pp. 65, 67; Transcript, September 9 and 16, 1876; Republican, September 11, 1876, December 26, 1879, October 13 and 18, 1882.

57 Transcript, January 1, 1881; Republican, February 20, 1879, April 18, 1879, September 20, 1880, July 22, 1886.

58 Transcript, June 18, 1879, January 1, 1881.

59 Holyoke, School Committee, A.R. (1881-1886).

60 Transcript, February 12, 1884, September 1, 1884, January 5, 1885.

61 Ibid., October 17, 1868; Republican, October 8 and 19, 1868, December 21, 1868; Prior, "French-Canadians", II, pp. 208-209.

62 Transcript, October 17, 1868, Names of society presidents were obtained from reports of elections in the Transcript and Republican.


64 Franco-American Centennial Committee, "The Franco-Americans Honor Holyoke's Historic Hundredth", Holyoke, 1973, p. 28; Transcript, June 7 and 14, 1873, December 31, 1873, April 8, 1874, June 24, 1874, January 2, 1875, August 16 and 19, 1876, October 15, 1879.

65 Prior, "French-Canadians", II, p. 241; Transcript, December 14, 1881, April 19, 1882, July 1 and 8, 1882, August 2, 1882, February 26, 1883, February 18, 1884; Republican, November 8 and 10, 1881, July 17, 1885.

66 Republican, April 21, 1883, October 22, 1883, August 19, 1884, September 1, 1884, October 13 and 20, 1884, January 5, 1885.
67 Ibid., July 19, 1877, November 8, 1881, November 14, 1882, February 5, 1884; Transcript, July 23, 1870, November 29, 1876, December 6, 1876, March 2, 1878, December 4, 1878, March 20, 1880, January 18, 1882, September 13, 1882.

68 Transcript, August 20, 1873, September 24, 1873.

69 Letter to author from Jacques Ducharme, February 10, 1975; Transcript, October 11, 1886.

70 Holyoke Independent Journal, July 7, 1874, September 1, 1874; Transcript, May 4, 1872, March 21, 1874, October 31, 1874; Republican, March 17, 1874, September 16, 1874, August 6, 1879, October 14, 1882, September 20, 1884.

71 Springfield Democrat, November 16, 1883; Transcript, April 29, 1874; Republican, September 30, 1879, October 6, 24 and 29, 1879, November 8, 1881, November 15, 1883.

72 Until 1885, Holyoke's foreign-born were required to go to the District Court in Springfield to become naturalized. From 1886 to 1906 this process took place in the Holyoke District Court. The figures in this table are derived from naturalization records retained in the Hamden County Superior Court, Civil Division, Springfield and the Holyoke District Court. The figures include only those French-Canadians who gave Holyoke as their place of residence at the time of their naturalization and they include only those who became United States citizens. There is no indication of how many filed first papers but never became naturalized. In addition, these figures are in variance with those which appeared in contemporary newspaper accounts of naturalization efforts. The newspaper figures tend to be higher, which might indicate confusion between first and second papers or an inflated figure given by naturalization club officials. It is also possible that the naturalization records are incomplete, especially in those years which show little or no naturalization. These figures therefore, must be viewed with caution, but they do provide an indication of the cyclical nature of the naturalization process and are especially helpful in determining the ages of those French-Canadians who became citizens.


74 Ibid., (1888), pp. 203, 213. The figures for French-Canadian voting and naturalization in Holyoke were 16 per cent and 21.3 per cent, which were similar to the French-Canadian figures statewide which were 18 per cent and 22.9 per cent respectively.

76 Transcript, March 13, 1873.


78 In 1876 Dr. Mitivier was elected to the Common Council from Ward Four as a Democrat. In addition, in 1876 and 1877, A. G. Ridout was chosen to represent Ward Three on the Council. A historical sketch of Holyoke's French-Canadians, published in 1973, lists Ridout as a French-Canadian. This may be the case, but it is probable that Ridout was a Protestant, and the ward from which he was elected had a very small French-Canadian population. In short, if Ridout was French-Canadian, his case was untypical and his elections were not significant indications of French-Canadian political strength. "Holyoke's Historic Hundredth", p. 38; Transcript, December 6, 1876, December 5, 1877, September 23, 1882, April 25, 1884.

79 Transcript, December 2, 1873, December 5, 1874, December 8, 1875, December 6, 1876, November 27, 1877, December 5, 1877; Republican, November 28, 1877, December 3, 1877.

80 Transcript, November 27, 1878, December 4, 1878; Republican, November 26, 1878.

81 Transcript, November 29, 1879, December 3, 1879, December 8, 1880, December 7, 1881, December 2 and December 4, 1882, December 4, 1883; Republican, December 7, 1880, November 26, 1883, December 1 and 3, 1883, November 29, 1885.

82 Transcript, December 3, 1879, December 8, 1880, December 3, 1881, December 4, 1882, December 10, 1884, November 21, 1885, December 2, 1885; Republican, November 26, 1883, December 3 and 7, 1884; New England Homestead, December 6, 1884.

83 Republican, January 13, 1884.

84 Ibid., May 2, 1881, June 15, 1881, March 5, 1885, May 3, 1885; Transcript, July 29, 1874, September 17, 1879, January 10, 1880, September 29, 1880, September 16, 1882, March 5, 1883.

85 Transcript, December 18, 1872, August 2, 1873, December 29, 1875, July 18, 1877, August 21, 1878, April 21, 1880, May 19, 1880, June 12, 1880, October 27, 1882; Republican, June 12, 1879, July 21, 1881.
Le Courrier de Holyoke, December 17, 1874; Transcript, October 17, 1868, May 1, 1869, August 20, 1870, February 1, 1882, May 17, 1882, January 16, 1884, August 7, 1885, December 11 and 16, 1885, February 4, 1886, September 9, 1886, October 7 and 16, 1886; Republican, October 19, 1868, January 14 and 16, 1882, August 7 and 8, 1885, November 19 and 21, 1885.
PART TWO: 1885-1910

By the mid-1880's, the French-Canadian community of Holyoke had achieved a degree of stability, permanence and prosperity. From 1885 to 1910 there was an ever greater integration of the group into the city's life. This development was two-fold. Not only did French-Canadians become more prominent in civic, business and social activities, but at the same time they were moving farther away from the customs and practices which characterized their lives in French Canada. Although identifiable as an ethnic group, the French-Canadian residents of Holyoke in 1910 were far removed from their ancestors of the 1860's and 1870's in perceptions of their role in the city and American society.

The French-Canadian community experienced important changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Emigration from French Canada slowed substantially and the French-Canadian population of Holyoke became more stable. During this period, French-Canadians made major economic advances as more French-Canadian workers enjoyed a broadening of employment opportunities and became more active in organized labor in order to protect their economic position.

French-Canadian institutions continued to reflect French-Canadian adjustment to life in the United States. On the one hand, the institutions helped preserve a sense of ethnic identity by maintaining some of the customs and practices of French Canada and to some extent perpetuated the
isolation of French-Canadians from the rest of the Holyoke community. On the other hand, the institutions also served as vehicles which aided French-Canadian integration into American life.

The participation in community life of French-Canadians who had spent most of their lives in the United States, or who had been born in the United States, changed the French-Canadian relationship to the political process. In addition, an increasingly prosperous French-Canadian business community became eager to expand their influence in local affairs. As French-Canadian political strength grew, their vote was sought by both major political parties. The French-Canadian community secured a measure of influence in local government and played a pivotal role in the political history of Holyoke in the late nineteenth century.
CHAPTER IV

PHYSICAL MOBILITY AND THE EXPANSION OF OCCUPATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Between 1885 and 1910, the French-Canadian population of Holyoke rose from approximately 7000 to 16,000 persons, an increase of 129 per cent, slightly greater than the population growth of the city as a whole (106 per cent). The largest single source of this increase can be attributed to children born in the United States of French-Canadian parents. In 1885, 70.4 per cent of French-Canadians in Holyoke had been born in Canada, but in 1910 this figure stood at 51 per cent.\(^1\) While the rate of new immigration slowed, the movement back and forth across the international boundary did not. This population flow, as in earlier years, was largely determined by economic conditions in Holyoke and the United States. New immigration was substantial in the years between 1885 and 1893, especially following the economic downturn in 1884-1885 when business conditions in Holyoke improved greatly. Between 1885 and 1890 the number of French-Canadians in the city increased by approximately 2500 persons, about half of whom were immigrants.\(^2\)

The economic collapse of 1893 virtually stopped new migration to New England and it became a commonly held thesis that vast numbers of French-Canadians returned to Canada because of the economic crisis. In 1894, for example, truant officers completing the semi-annual school census showed that
the total population of Holyoke had failed to rise, a fact which they attributed to a large exodus of French-Canadians. However, a closer look at the school age population, extracted from the reports of the Superintendent of Schools in the 1890's, reveals that this outward movement was highly selective.

TABLE 12. - Number and percentage of French-Canadians, ages 5 to 15, to total Holyoke population, ages 5 to 15, 1892-1896.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of French-Canadians age 5-15</th>
<th>Percentage of French-Canadians age 5-15 to total population age 5-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>2435</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>2747</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>2697</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>2655</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>2983</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 shows that while the total number of French-Canadian children age 5 to 15 declined slightly in 1894 and 1895, the percentage of children in this age group remained stable in comparison with the total number of children in Holyoke. This would indicate that those French-Canadians who did leave the city were primarily younger adults who had fewer family ties to keep them in Holyoke. Most French-Canadians remained in the city and endured the economic difficulties as best they could. This assertion is borne out
in part by Table 13 (below) which shows that the percentage of French-Canadians in the city remained constant after the economic recovery and did not rise, as might be expected if a large number of families had returned to Holyoke.\(^5\)

**TABLE 13.** - Number and percentage of French-Canadians, ages 5 to 15, to total Holyoke population, ages 5 to 15, 1897-1904.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of French-Canadians age 5-15</th>
<th>Percentage of French-Canadians age 5-15 to total population age 5-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>3035</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>3116</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>3044</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>3202</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>3420</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>3416</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>3466</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>3496</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The economic improvement in the latter years of the 1890's did result in an increase of French-Canadian immigration, but from 1900 to 1910 the rate of this flow slowed. By 1900 economic opportunities in Canada provided employment for many who might have otherwise emigrated to the United States a decade or two earlier. In addition, the influx of large numbers of Eastern and Southern Europeans willing to work for lower wages than French-Canadians, reduced the job prospects
for single, more mobile French-Canadians. In Holyoke, for example, the Polish population more than tripled in the first decade of the twentieth century, from 1200 to 4000.6

Immigration remained an important factor in the French-Canadian population growth in the 1890's, but after the turn of the century fewer French-Canadians migrated to Holyoke, and the children born of French-Canadian parents accounted for the largest part of the rise in the numbers of French-Canadians in the first decade of the century. The French-Canadian population of the city remained stable in the three decades after 1910 at between 15,000 and 16,000, and continued to constitute approximately one-quarter of the total as Holyoke's population reached a peak in 1917 and slowly declined thereafter.7

The majority of the French-Canadians lived in Wards One, Two and Four. The residential areas of Ward Four, above the dam and near the Lyman Mills, were the original French-Canadian settlements in Holyoke. In the 1890's however, Polish immigrants began to move into the ward. Many French-Canadians moved into the adjacent Ward One, which had previously been a predominantly Irish enclave. In 1900 French-Canadians constituted 30 to 35 per cent and 15 to 18 per cent of the populations of Wards One and Four respectively. The number of French-Canadians in Ward Two had increased steadily since the establishment of the first French Catholic church in the area in 1869. By the turn of the century, Ward Two was 55 to 60 per cent French-Canadian, the only ward in
Holyoke in which the French-Canadians were a majority. The French-Canadian areas were primarily tenement districts and their density rates were among the highest in the nation. In 1885 Holyoke's housing density rate was 10.9 persons per dwelling and by 1910 this figure had risen to 11.9. Moreover, in the two largest French-Canadian wards, One and Two, the rates were 19.2 and 22.6 respectively.

By the early twentieth century, the French-Canadians of Holyoke had become a residentially stable population. This is demonstrated in the following mobility study comparing French-Canadian physical mobility with that of non-French-Canadians in the decades 1880 to 1890 and 1900 to 1910, and also compares the mobility of the French-Canadians in both periods. Names for the study were taken from tax assessor's field books for 1880 and 1900. These names were checked against the city directories for these years and those individuals who were listed in the directories were traced year by year, for a decade, in the directories. A yearly tracing was employed because the directories often listed the intended destination of those who left the city. Assessor's field books are extant for all years from 1873 to 1900, but the information is listed by ward and street, which would make the task of tracing individual mobility within the city quite difficult. For this reason, city directories, in which individuals are listed alphabetically, were used for tracing purposes. 1880 was selected as the beginning year because city directories were not issued annually until then. The
Fig. 2. - Map of Holyoke, 1910
study is biased to the extent that the field books listed only the male heads of households, twenty years and older, thus excluding movements of sons and daughters who lived with their parents.

To insure that the final sampling was representative of the geographic location of the French-Canadians within Holyoke, names were randomly selected from the field books on the basis of the percentage of the city-wide total of the French-Canadian population (heads of household) in each ward. This formula was derived by comparing the total number of field book entries per ward, with the percentage of French-Canadian names extracted from a random sampling of fifty names per ward. To test the reliability of the city directories, 150 randomly selected names of French-Canadians and non-French-Canadians were chosen from the 1880 field books in order to get a final sampling group of 100 in each category. Thus, the 1880 sample required searching in the 1880 and 1881 directories with 137 French-Canadian names taken from the assessor's field books in order to locate 100 of these names in the directories. In the non-French-Canadian category, 127 names produced 100 directory entries. In the 1900 sample, 137 French-Canadian names from the assessor's field books yielded 105 matching names in the city directories, while 105 non-French-Canadian entries were uncovered from 135 field book names. In the 1880 sample, the non-French-Canadian group had a somewhat higher visibility in the city directories. 78.7 per cent of the non-French-Canadian field book entries
were located in the city directories, as opposed to 73 per cent of the French-Canadian names. In 1900, the figures for each group were nearly identical. 77.8 per cent non-French-Canadian and 76.6 per cent French-Canadian names from the assessor's field books were listed in the city directories.

In the 1880 sample, the residential stability of the non-French-Canadian group was slightly greater than that of the French-Canadians, as indicated by Table 14.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>French-Canadians</th>
<th>Non-French-Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In City 10 Years</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left City Once</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Removals From City</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indication of Death</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost-Dropped From Sight</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost-Confusion of Names</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

39 per cent of the non-French-Canadian group, as compared to 34 per cent of the French-Canadians, remained in Holyoke for the entire 1880-1890 period. 62 per cent and 58 per cent of the non-French-Canadian and French-Canadian
groups respectively, stayed in the city or the city directories provided information as to either their intended place of removal or indicated that the individual had died (usually by listing his widow). 18 French-Canadians and 13 non-French-Canadians are listed as having left Holyoke and there is no indication that they ever returned to the city. Table 15 shows that the majority of the non-French-Canadian moves out of the city were for relatively short distances and that virtually all remained in New England, while half of the French-Canadians who left Holyoke indicated their intention to go to Canada.

TABLE 15. - Place of intended departure from Holyoke of French-Canadians and non-French-Canadians, 1880-1890

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Intended Removal</th>
<th>French-Canadians</th>
<th>Non-French-Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater Holyoke Area</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere in Massachusetts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere in New England</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside New England (USA)</td>
<td>1 (N.Y.)</td>
<td>1 (PA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two individuals left Holyoke and subsequently returned. One French-Canadian, Luke Croteau, a teamster, went to Plainville, Connecticut in 1887, but was listed in the 1888 and
subsequent Holyoke directories. One non-French-Canadian, George Blake, moved to neighboring South Hadley Falls in 1884. The Holyoke directories also included listings for South Hadley Falls and Blake is listed there until 1890, when his residence was again given as Holyoke.

While slightly more than a third of each group remained in the city for ten years, there was considerable movement within Holyoke, as shown in Table 16.  

TABLE 16. - In-city mobility of ten residents of Holyoke, 1880-1890

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Moves Within Holyoke</th>
<th>French-Canadians</th>
<th>Non-French-Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slightly more than a third of each group dropped from sight, never to appear again in the city directory. Table 17 shows that the large majority of this group disappeared in the first three years of the sample period. Inaccuracies in the initial directory might account for some of this disappearance. Given the additional fact that many had moved within the city prior to dropping out of the
directories, it is likely that this group consisted of a large number of young, single men, who left without a trace. This speculation is given added weight by the 1900 sample which provides the ages of the men (see Table 21).

TABLE 17. - In-City Mobility of French-Canadians and non-French-Canadians who disappeared from the city directories, 1880-1890

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Disappeared From Directory</th>
<th>Previous Moves in Holyoke French-Canadians</th>
<th>Non-French-Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 Total</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>6 - - - - - 6</td>
<td>4 - - - - - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>6 6 0 0 0 0 12</td>
<td>9 4 0 0 0 0 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>1 4 0 0 0 0 5</td>
<td>3 3 2 0 0 0 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>2 1 1 0 0 0 4</td>
<td>1 2 0 0 0 0 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>0 1 1 0 0 0 2</td>
<td>0 2 0 0 0 0 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>0 1 1 1 0 0 3</td>
<td>0 1 1 0 0 0 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 1</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>0 1 0 1 1 0 3</td>
<td>0 0 0 1 0 0 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>0 0 0 1 0 0 1</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1880 sample indicates that the French-Canadian male heads of household were slightly more mobile, and perhaps younger, than their non-French-Canadian counterparts, although the differences between the two groups was not great. The most significant difference, already noted, was that half of the French-Canadians who gave information concerning their intended departure from the city indicated that they were going to Canada.
The results of the 1900 sample are different from those of 1880 in several important ways. First, the level of mobility for both groups is somewhat less than in the 1880-1890 decade and the mobility of the French-Canadian group is nearly identical with that of the non-French-Canadians. Second, a very high percentage of both groups (94.3 and 82.8%, French-Canadian and non-French-Canadian respectively) can either be traced through the entire decade, or the directories provide information concerning their departure or removal. Finally, the 1900 field books give the ages of most of the heads of households, which lends a greater depth to the results of the sample.

TABLE 18. - Residential mobility of French-Canadians and non-French-Canadians, 1900-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>French-Canadians</th>
<th>Non-French-Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In City 10 Years</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left City Once</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Removals From City</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indication of Death</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost-Dropped From Sight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost-Confusion of Names</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The same number (56) of both French-Canadians and non-French-Canadians, slightly more than a half of the sample, remained in Holyoke during the entire ten year period. The most important difference between these groups, shown in Table 19, is that younger French-Canadians tended to move more frequently within the city than did non-French-Canadians, age 20-30. Conversely, French-Canadians 31 years and older tended to reside in the same location somewhat longer than non-French-Canadians of the same age.

TABLE 19. - In-City Mobility of ten year residents of Holyoke, 1900-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Moves in City</th>
<th>French-Canadians</th>
<th>Non-French-Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age in 1900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-30 31-40 41-50 51+ Total</td>
<td>20-30 31-40 41-50 51+ Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 6 6 2 15</td>
<td>7 3 2 1 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 6 4 1 14</td>
<td>4 7 2 3 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 5 0 0 9</td>
<td>3 7 4 2 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 3 2 0 8</td>
<td>2 1 1 2 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 2 1 0 7</td>
<td>0 4 0 0 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0 1 0 0 1</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1 0 1 0 2</td>
<td>1 0 0 0 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1 0 0 0 1</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17 23 14 3 56</td>
<td>17 22 9 8 56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pattern of movement of those individuals who left the city during this decade is quite similar to that of the 1880 sample. The intended destination from Holyoke was somewhat greater than in 1880, but only one-third, as opposed to one-half, of the French-Canadian departures were for Canada.
As might be expected, those who left the city tended to be younger and the French-Canadians who departed had a history of mobility within Holyoke. More than half of the departures in both groups took place prior to 1905 and thus the reasons for leaving do not appear to be tied to any general economic difficulties, such as the 1907-1908 decline.

TABLE 20. - Place of intended departure from Holyoke of French-Canadians and non-French-Canadians, 1900-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Intended Removal</th>
<th>French-Canadians</th>
<th>Non-French Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater Holyoke Area</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere in Massachusetts</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere in New England</td>
<td>4 (all Conn.)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside New England (USA)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside USA</td>
<td>11 (all Canada)</td>
<td>1 (Poland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six French-Canadians and three non-French-Canadians appeared to have left Holyoke and then returned. All three of the non-French-Canadians moved to neighboring towns and two of them returned to Holyoke only to depart a second time. Four French-Canadians moved to nearby towns and returned, and two eventually left Holyoke again. Two French-Canadians went to Canada, both for a two year period, and then returned to Holyoke. Confirmation of these multiple moves is made easier
by the fact that most went to nearby towns and were listed in the Holyoke directories. In one case, that of E. Ally, a small businessman, his movements were corroborated by a biographical sketch which appeared in the French-Canadian newspaper. Ally resided in Holyoke until 1907, when he returned to Canada for two years before coming back to Holyoke.\textsuperscript{10} Eighteen non-French-Canadians and only six French-Canadians dropped from sight without a trace. All of the French-Canadians and thirteen of the non-French-Canadians were forty years old or younger in 1900, thus presenting the possibility that they migrated without giving notice, rather than having died in the intervening period.

\textbf{TABLE 21. - In-city mobility of French-Canadians and non-French-Canadians who disappeared from the city directories, 1900-1910}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in 1900</th>
<th>French-Canadians</th>
<th>Non-French Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previous Moves in Holyoke</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 Total</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>9 5 2 2 1 19</td>
<td>5 5 1 0 0 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>3 2 1 0 0 6</td>
<td>4 0 3 1 0 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>4 0 0 0 0 4</td>
<td>4 0 0 0 0 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51+</td>
<td>0 0 1 0 0 1</td>
<td>1 0 0 0 0 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0 1 1 0 0 2</td>
<td>1 0 0 0 0 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The similarities between the French-Canadian and non-French-Canadian groups in the 1900 sample are much greater
than the differences. Slightly more than half of each group remained in the city for the entire decade, with the French-Canadians showing somewhat more mobility within the city. Outward mobility for both groups tended to be greater for those under forty years old and about one-third of the French-Canadians who indicated their place of departure went to Canada. Significantly, both groups showed a high degree of visibility and relatively few individuals disappeared from the directories without explanation.

Given the likelihood that the French-Canadians were more accurately enumerated in the first decade of the twentieth century than in the 1880's, the two sample groups of French-Canadians show important differences which support the general argument that the stability of the French-Canadian community increased between 1880 and 1910. Indeed, the greater visibility of the 1900 group is an indication that the French-Canadians were playing a larger role in the city. The greatest mobility was recorded among the younger men. While this is not surprising, it does challenge contemporary notions concerning French-Canadian movement. The 1900-1910 results, as well as school census figures for the 1890's, strongly indicates that French-Canadian families regarded Holyoke as their permanent home and would endure economic difficulties, such as occurred after 1893 and 1907, rather than return to Canada. French-Canadians showed no substantially greater inclination to leave the city than non-French-Canadians and return to Canada was practical for only a few,
mostly younger men.

Holyoke experienced its most prosperous period in the years after 1880, primarily because of the growth of the paper industry. Five new paper mills were begun in 1880 and by 1883 Holyoke was generally recognized as the paper making center of the world. Although the industry was hurt slightly by the economic downturn in 1884-1885, by 1887 the paper trade had recovered and business remained good until 1893. The success of paper making produced a number of satellite industries, the most important of which manufactured paper making machinery.

Prior to 1893, the textile manufacturers, if not so prosperous as their counterparts in paper, certainly added to the city's economic growth. Lyman Mills, Holyoke's largest employer, generated regular, if unspectacular, dividends throughout the period. The thread mills were prosperous and by 1890 Farr Alpaca had a larger payroll than even Lyman Mills.

The depression of 1893 marked the beginning of Holyoke's decline as a major manufacturing center. Although the decline did not affect the textile mills equally, most of the city's mills ran poorly until 1897. The papermakers might have been content to sit out the hard times if it had not been for changes within the industry. Holyoke was still producing mainly high grade paper at a time when there was a growing demand for cheap, pulp paper. In addition, there had been a growing number of consolidations within the industry which put increased pressure on Holyoke's small, independent
papermakers. Local paper mill owners had long resisted outside attempts to form a paper trust, but the depression, the restructuring of the industry and the apparent success of the American Thread Company, and the imminent inclusion of the locally owned Deane Steam Pump Company into the International Pump Corporation, made many owners interested in the formation of a paper trust. And, after complex negotiation, the American Writing Paper Company was formed in 1899. Incorporated in New Jersey, this trust included twenty-five mills, sixteen of which were in Holyoke. The American Writing Paper Company was not to enjoy the success of Standard Oil or United States Steel because it had been formed by people outside of the industry who were unfamiliar with the specific requirements of the business. Within two years the shrewder of Holyoke papermakers sold their interests in American Writing Paper and either started small, independent paper mills or went into other types of business ventures. The policies of the American Writing Paper Company undermined the industry on which so much of Holyoke's economic stability rested. The paper trust began large purchases of supplies outside the city, to the detriment of local supporting businesses. Since its inception the combine had been unwilling to spend the money needed to modernize its mills and thus lost business to newer plants in the South. By 1906, the trust had lost control of the writing paper market and with it any advantages that it had.

At the turn of the century, Holyoke shared in the
general prosperity of the United States. However, there were signs that the city's industrial growth was slowing. The last new, permanent mill power, guaranteed units of water power, had been sold in 1881; and now could be obtained only by the transfer of existing leases. In 1903, introduction of electrically transmitted power further reduced the city's earlier physical advantages. Thus, by 1910 Holyoke's hopes of becoming a major industrial city had passed. Physical advantages, which had made it an attractive and promising site in the 1840's, had now been outweighed by new technology, changing market conditions, and the inept management of the city's leading industry.12

Despite the failure of grandiose plans for expansion, economic growth did occur. Between 1885 and 1910, the number of manufacturing jobs in Holyoke rose from 9332 to 16,776 (47.5 per cent). Precise measurement of the distribution of French-Canadian employment is made difficult by the absence of information concerning the ethnic composition of the work force. However, some generalizations are still possible. Massachusetts laws relating to compulsory education and child labor eliminated all workers under fourteen years of age. The number of employed fourteen-sixteen year olds was also reduced because of a state regulation requiring that youths not literate in English attend night school, and making the employers responsible for enforcement. A large percentage of the working children appeared to have been French-Canadian. Most young workers and adult women were employed in the
cotton and woolen textile industries. Regulation of hours and conditions of labor for women did not curtail the number employed in textiles and there was a noticeable increase in the percentage of women employed in the paper industry.\textsuperscript{13}

While the largest percentage of French-Canadians were still employed in manufacturing, the census material indicates that by 1910 the French-Canadians were no longer the most recently arrived immigrant group in Holyoke, and, in all likelihood, had improved their position on the economic ladder. In 1885 less than 1 per cent of the city's population was composed of "new" immigrants (more recently arrived than the French-Canadians\textsuperscript{14}), while the 1910 census shows that approximately twelve to fifteen per cent of the city's residents, mostly Poles and Russian Jews, were in this category.\textsuperscript{15} While the number of newcomers was not sufficient to occupy all the lowest paying jobs, their pattern of employment, especially in the textile industry, indicated that some French-Canadians enjoyed a widening of employment opportunities following their arrival. The employment register of Lyman Mills and a study of the Farr Alpaca Company reveals a sharp increase in the number of Poles employed in the 1890's.\textsuperscript{16}

Table 22 (below) provides a comparison of wages in Holyoke's major industries. The pattern is similar to that of the earlier period in which cotton and woolen textile operatives received the lowest wages, the paper mill workers were paid slightly above the city average, and skilled craftsmen, carpenters, and foundry workers could expect a relatively
high wage. Again, while the exact ethnic distribution by type and place of employment cannot be determined, French-Canadians comprised a large proportion of the city's carpenters\textsuperscript{17} and the presence of large numbers of Poles in the textile mills suggests that many French-Canadians, particularly adult males, were in better paying positions in the mills and in the city in general.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1895</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1905</th>
<th>1910</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Industries</td>
<td>$440</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Textiles</td>
<td>$324</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine Shops &amp; Foundries</td>
<td>$565</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Mills</td>
<td>$480</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolen Textiles</td>
<td>$363</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpentry\textsuperscript{b}</td>
<td>$670</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\textsuperscript{b}Listed as "Building" in the Massachusetts censuses and as "Carpentry" in the Federal censuses.

The improved employment picture for French-Canadians must be tempered somewhat by the proportion of women and children that worked in Holyoke industry. Table 23 (below) shows the great disparity in the wages received by women and children as compared to males in 1900.
TABLE 23. - Average wages received by males, females and children under 16 years in selected industries in Holyoke, 1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Children under 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Industries</td>
<td>$523</td>
<td>$308</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenters</td>
<td>$513</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Textiles</td>
<td>$457</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundry Workers</td>
<td>$583</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Mills</td>
<td>$515</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolen Textiles</td>
<td>$432</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The percentage of women and children in industry declined slightly between 1880 and 1900, but the largest proportion probably remained French-Canadian. The Polish who emigrated to Holyoke in these years, if their percentage of the school population is indicative, were mostly young adults, either unmarried or with children too young to work. On a state-wide basis, the ratio of French-Canadian women employed was twice that of the Poles and census enumerators discovered only twenty-eight Polish children employed in the entire Commonwealth in 1900. Given the earlier pattern of French-Canadian employment, it is probable that a very high percentage of the women and children employed in Holyoke were French-Canadian.
In both the textile and paper mills, with a high proportion of women employees, wage rates for women were generally inferior to those of male workers. Yet, the wage structure for Holyoke's operatives did have a brighter side. The annual average wage received by the city's cotton mill workers, for example, was slightly higher than the annual average in other New England textile cities. And, while wage scales fluctuated, real earnings remained stable from 1885 through 1910, even including the depression years of the 1890's.

Recent investigations have indicated that the structure of the family life cycle for French-Canadians encouraged the employment of women and children. The tradition of family work in agricultural French Canada was easily modified to meet the demands of industrial labor. The propensity of French-Canadians to form large families, combined with the custom of family employment, made a greater proportion of French-Canadians than other immigrant groups available for the labor market. However, changing industrial conditions, especially in the textile industry, and the state labor laws of the late nineteenth century, lessened the advantages of large families. Although precise demographic information is lacking for Holyoke, it is likely that the size of French-Canadian families diminished in the late nineteenth century, as they did elsewhere, but that the large scale employment of adult women continued.

Another indication of economic progress within the
French-Canadian community can be gauged by the increased participation of some French-Canadian males in commercial activity. Table 24 is a list of selected businesses taken from the Holyoke city directories.

**TABLE 24. - Number of French-Canadians engaged in selected occupations in Holyoke, 1885-1910**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>1885</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1895</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1905</th>
<th>1910</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmiths</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

Although no single pattern emerges from Table 24, French-Canadian participation in many occupations steadily increased, and in some cases leveled off after 1900. Much of this increase was in lower middle class occupations. While the gains corresponded to French-Canadian population growth, they represented a substantial proportional increase in French-Canadian small businessmen as compared to the pre-1885 period.
However, French-Canadians were not as successful in advancing into upper middle class occupations. The number of French-Canadian lawyers, doctors, and dentists, for example, remained fairly stable, or even declined, in the 1885-1910 period.

A comparison of the 1890 and 1895 figures in Table 24 gives added weight to the argument that the 1893 depression had little effect on the permanence of the commercial segment of the city's French-Canadian population. The 1885 to 1890 decline in saloon owners was the result of Massachusetts legislation which reduced the number of licenses available in Holyoke, and the reduction of French-Canadian boot and shoe makers was perhaps in part a reflection of the increasing obsolescence of that craft. In general, Table 24 is illustrative of the growing numbers of French-Canadians who had advanced to the rank of small businessmen and store owners, and is another indication of the increased prosperity of the French-Canadian community.

While the size of the French-Canadian business community grew in the years after 1885, the large majority of French-Canadian workers continued to be employed in Holyoke's mills and factories. These workers became increasingly active in their own behalf. The conditions of labor, in the absence of contradictory statements, appear to have been at least equal to the general conditions of the period. The one labor and two local Socialist newspapers that are extant from this period are significantly silent on any issues related to local working conditions.25 True, Mortiz Ruther, Holyoke's most
active Socialist, wrote in 1898 that he had "seen the bright young lassies from the country and Canada go to work in the health-giving, pure air of the rag rooms and a few years after they looked like rags themselves". However, the principal concerns of labor leaders, judging from the stated causes of industrial disputes, were hours and wages, not working conditions. While temporary advances were frequently achieved by strike action, more permanent gains resulted from state laws controlling hours and conditions of labor.

Labor agitation and trade union activity in Holyoke, which was negligible prior to 1885, went through a number of phases before 1910 which were in part related to the economic cycle. In 1885 there was a surge of strike action and union organization. The local chapter of the Knights of Labor, profiting from victories in national strikes, enlisted several hundred Holyoke workers and were an important force for a brief period. Labor activity continued at a high level into the 1890's, climaxing with a divisive building trades strike in 1892.

The nation-wide depression which followed the economic collapse of 1893 weakened Holyoke's unions; only a few survived the hard times. With the return of prosperity at the end of the decade, the Holyoke labor movement revived. A major strike in 1901 closed most of the city's paper mills and ended in a significant victory for the workers. But a series of unsuccessful strikes in 1903 seriously crippled the movement for a number of years. The position of the unions
was further impaired by the economic difficulties of 1907. By 1910 Holyoke's labor movement was just beginning to show signs of recovery.

In general, French-Canadian workers cannot be considered in the vanguard of the Holyoke labor movement; their union activities were exceeded by those of German and Irish workers. After 1890, however, there was a significant upsurge of French-Canadian participation in labor agitation. But labor activity between 1885 and 1891 took place without major assistance from French-Canadian workers. Indeed, major labor organizations often saw French-Canadian workers as obstacles to better wages for Irish and German membership. The Holyoke section of the Knights of Labor was founded in 1883 with fourteen workers. In September, 1885 the Knights boasted a membership of 300 and remained an important element in Holyoke affairs until 1887-1888. The Socialist Labor Party had a small but loyal following, principally among the city's German residents. The cigarmakers, weavers, bricklayers, painters and carpenters also had locals in Holyoke. Only in the carpenters union was there a sizable representation of French-Canadians. Two important strikes, one in 1885 at Germania Mills which was successful, and the other in 1886 at Skinner's Unquomonk Silk Mill which failed, were conducted by the German-dominated weavers union, with the support of the Socialist Labor Party. The strikers' meetings were held at the German Turnverein Hall and in one instance it was reported that a meeting conducted in German had to be translated for the
benefit of the Irish and American workers present. 29

In the spring of 1887, the Connecticut River Lumber Mill refused demands for a ten hour day and a walkout insued. The company, which also owned a mill in Vermont, quickly brought in strikebreakers from the north, the majority of whom were French-Canadians. There were angry confrontations between the strikers and the imported French-Canadians which led to police intervention. The strikers, few of whom were French-Canadians, were successful in persuading most of the scabs to leave the city and raised funds for their departure. It became clear that most of the strikebreakers did not know that a strike was in progress until they arrived in Holyoke. The company was able to hire enough local help to permit the partial resumption of operations at the lumber mill, but the nationalities of these new employees can not be determined. Clearly, the strikers felt that their biggest threat was the importation of French-Canadian strikebreakers. Until the strike was over, they maintained pickets near the railroad lines leading into the lumber mill and carefully checked each arriving train from the north for possible scabs. 30

In the late 1880's there were a number of smaller strikes in Holyoke in which French-Canadians were used as scabs. A small segment of the French-Canadian work force, carpenters in particular, helped organize their part of the labor market and played key roles in several strikes. But the bulk of French-Canadian workers were hostile or indifferent to trade union activity until the early 1890's when the threat
of cheap, imported labor appeared to change the attitudes of many French-Canadian workers.

The number of French-Canadians who joined unions or participated in strike action is a matter of conjecture. Union membership records from this period no longer exist. The best evidence available is the names of union officers which appeared in both the general and labor press. From these sources it is clear that the French-Canadians dominated one local of the carpenters union, and were very strong in the lathers, barbers and clerks unions, in addition to having membership in many of the city's other labor organizations. Contemporary accounts of individual strikes also provide indications of the ethnic makeup of the participants.

A laborers' strike in 1891 proved to be a watershed in French-Canadian attitudes toward unionization. Laborers employed by the Holyoke Water Power Company on the construction of a new canal were mostly Irish. They struck after their wage and hour demands were rejected. The strikers marched to building sites being worked by employees of contractor Daniel O'Connell and they induced more than 200 of his laborers to join the strike. Both the Water Power Company and O'Connell discharged the strikers and replaced them with French-Canadians. The next day, the strikers, who had quickly organized a union, marched to the various construction sites. The Transcript reported the confrontation:

Arriving at the street railway company's place they found a few Frenchmen at work. They closed around the place. The men would not move or take any notice of the signs made to them. One of the striking
Frenchmen spoke to them in their own language, and they replied back. The police were in sight...
The strikers were by this time getting very excited and using considerable violent language. "Come get out of there now. If you don't you'll get hurt. Come and join us. Hurrah for $1.75 for nine hours work. Get the Canucks out."

In spite of the police protection given to the strikebreakers, a majority of the French-Canadians did leave their jobs and joined the largely Irish strikers. Faced with the unprecedented unity of essentially unskilled laborers, the contractors contemplated going outside the city for help. One builder argued that it was possible to import and protect up to 200 Italian laborers. The strike quickly collapsed. Although no reasons were given for the strike's sudden end, it is possible that the contractor's threat to import outside labor was an important factor.

However, the threat of imported labor became a reality later in 1891. The Central Labor Union (CLU), a council of all labor organizations in Holyoke, charged O'Connell's construction company with using Italians on a water system project in nearby South Hadley. Twenty-three French-Canadian laborers who had been receiving $1.75 per day were replaced by Italians who were paid $1.35 per day. Thus, French-Canadians could see that they were no longer the cheapest source of labor and that steps had to be taken to protect their jobs and their standard of living.

The laborers' strike led to the formation of the Protective Labor Union (PLU), which consisted of unskilled or semi-skilled day laborers. The Irish dominated the PLU but
French-Canadians made up an important part of the membership. At one meeting, thirty of the fifty-three new members accepted were French-Canadian. The PLU benefited from the support of the CLU which represented all the labor organizations in the city. In April, 1892 the PLU conducted a strike against the Holyoke Water Power Company which succeeded in large part because the CLU threatened a general strike against the company. A short time later, the CLU ordered a strike of city laborers after several non-union teamsters were hired by the city. The teamsters were required to join the union. Also, the PLU successfully petitioned the Board of Aldermen to raise the pay of city laborers from $1.75 to $2 per day.34

Holyoke's unions made important gains from 1891 to 1893. Many new unions were organized and older ones strengthened. More than a dozen strikes were conducted, the majority of which were successful. Among French-Canadian workers, the carpenters proved to be the most loyal to the labor movement. Carpentry had long been a traditional occupation among French-Canadians. A common saying declared: "If you give a French-Canadian a hammer and saw, you have a carpenter."35 One retired carpenter recalled in 1974 that his father, also a carpenter, told of how contractors would wait at the railroad station in Holyoke to hire newly arrived carpenters from Canada.36 Holyoke's carpenters organized as early as 1885 and French-Canadian names appeared in the lists of union officers. In 1889 French-speaking carpenters formed a separate local and almost immediately plunged into local politics.
During the city election campaign they called a meeting of French-Canadians in an attempt to unify the French-Canadian vote, especially in the Ward Two alderman's race which was between two French-Canadians. The Democratic candidate, Common Councilor Frederick St. Martin, accused his GOP opponent, grocer Joseph Beauchemin, of having his building constructed by a contractor who hired scab labor. Beauchemin refuted the charge by producing a copy of the contract which indicated the hours and wages of the workers and in turn claimed that St. Martin was associated with the only construction firm in the city, his brother's, which would not employ union men. The secretary of the French-Canadian carpenters' union supported Beauchemin's allegation. This issue, along with the liquor question, contributed to St. Martin's defeat, 249 to 161, in a ward which usually went Democratic and which had the largest French-Canadian population in the city.37

In 1892, the carpenters played a key role in a major attempt by the CLU to exercise its power. Both the French and English-speaking carpenters' union, with CLU backing, demanded that contractors grant them nine hour work days, uniform wages, and most important, hire only union men. A strike began when the contractors would not comply with the carpenters' requests. The strike spread slowly and was confined to those contractors who were members of the strongly anti-union Builders Association. The president of the French-speaking carpenters, on behalf of both unions, met secretly with several contractors who agreed to wage and hour demands,
but reserved the right to hire whom they wanted. With the strike two weeks old the CLU began to seek support for the carpenters from the other trade unions. It became clear that many of the unions were not anxious to participate in a sympathy strike. The bricklayers and masons, for example, whose work was tied to that of the carpenters, gave notice that they would strike only if a settlement was not reached within thirty days, by which time the carpenters' absence would have forced them to discontinue their work. While some groups, including the plumbers, did join the walkout, the general strike did not extend as far as the carpenters had hoped. P. J. McGuire, President of the national carpenters' union which had provided financial aid to the strikers, came to Holyoke when the strike was a month old and urged the carpenters to hold firm. But the lack of support from other Holyoke unions forced the carpenters into negotiations with the contractors. The strikers were given some concessions, but their main objective, the union shop, was not achieved. Although Holyoke considered itself a "banner city of unionism", lack of adequate support led to the unsatisfactory conclusion of the carpenters' strike.38

French-Canadians were most active in the carpenters' union in the years prior to 1893, but they also dominated the less successful efforts of the retail clerks and barbers. French-Canadians had long been the predominant group among Holyoke's retail clerks. In 1886 a meeting was held at French Hall to organize a mutual benefit association. The call for
the meeting attempted to broaden the appeal of the organization by declaring all clerks eligible regardless of politics or nationality, although the officers subsequently elected were mostly French-Canadians. This venture was not successful, for a year later the association divided the treasury among its members and adjourned sine die. In 1893 another attempt was undertaken when a clerk's union of more than seventy members was organized. Again, the majority of officers were French-Canadian. The clerks union joined the CLU. However, this group was also short lived, a victim of the 1893 depression.39 The barbers experienced even more difficulties than the retail clerks. Their first attempt at organization, with a strong French-Canadian membership, in the mid-1880's had failed by 1889. Efforts were made again in 1891, 1894 and 1896, but after a few months each of these unions succumbed.40

The celebration of Labor Day in Holyoke in 1893 marked the height of labor's power for the next decade. Delegations from nineteen unions, more than 1100 men, including 400 from the PLU, marched in the parade. One week later wages for spinners at Lyman Mills were reduced 10 per cent and the union voted to accept the cut without protest. Within a short time, wage reductions and layoffs affected every mill in the city. The Labor Day parade in 1895 had only eight unions represented and less than 400 marchers. In 1896 the Socialist Holyoke Labor noted that of the twenty-four member unions that made up the CLU three years before, only half remained and only five of these were vigorous and active. The unions in which French-
Canadians had the largest representation, the carpenters, clerks and barbers, had been among the first victims of the 1893 decline and the PLU was on its last legs. Until the end of the decade organized labor was very weak and it was in no position to press its demands.

When business revived, union activity reached, for a brief period, new heights and French-Canadians were more involved than at any previous time. The first stirrings were seen in 1898. The carpenters union was revived, with large French-Canadian participation, and the new mule spinners union boasted a French-Canadian officer. In the following year there was a resurgence of union activity, especially in the traditionally difficult to organize textile industry. In May 400 weavers and loomfixers struck Farr Alpaca over grievances arising from a speed up and the institution of a new system of fines. The leader of the walkout was Frank LeFebre, who was to successfully organize a weavers union at the conclusion of the strike. For the first time, strikers meetings were held in French Hall and many of the speeches were given in French. The workers demanded a 10 per cent wage increase but compromised for 5 per cent. More significantly, the Farr Alpaca strike breathed new life into the labor movement in Holyoke and there were six more strikes before the end of the year. Two weeks after the conclusion of the Farr Alpaca strike twenty doffer boys at Lyman Mills walked out in a wage dispute. Within two days the strike had gained the support of the spinning room workers, chiefly French-Canadians and Polish women, and Lyman's
1500 employee operation was shut down completely. Again meetings were held at French Hall and two French-Canadian women operatives were among the strike leaders. The Lyman strike failed after two weeks because the company brought in Polish strikebreakers from Chicopee and could afford to hold out while annual repairs were being made in the mills. But the French-Canadian doffers stayed out to the last and forcibly attempted to prevent other workers from returning to the job. The Transcript reported that "some of the French-Canadian strikers are indignant because Poles have been engaged to fill their places and this fact probably had more to do with today's outbreaks than anything else." The doffers bided their time, struck again in December and won a 5 per cent increase.

By June, 1900 six textile unions had been organized in Holyoke, five of them by Frank LeFebre who had become New England general organizer for the National Textile Union. Many other unions had begun or had been reconstituted, including the barbers, painters, clerks, shoemakers, lathers and musicians, all of which were dominated by French-Canadians or had significant French-Canadian strength. The carpenters, who had re-organized in 1898, accepted an AF of L charter as a French-speaking local the following year. The French-speaking carpenters were among the strongest unions in the Holyoke labor movement and were able to survive the post-1907 decline. Union membership records date from 1906 and, as shown in Table 25, indicate a stable membership. One member, Peter Provost, Jr., served for a number of years as
secretary of the state carpenters' organization. In addition, a number of the officers of the English-speaking carpenters local were French-Canadian, indicating perhaps the movement of second and third generation French-Canadians into the labor market.44

TABLE 25. - Membership of French-speaking Carpenters Union, Local 390, Holyoke, 1906-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June, 1906</td>
<td>188</td>
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<tr>
<td>July, 1906</td>
<td>235</td>
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<td>August, 1906</td>
<td>206</td>
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<tr>
<td>March, 1907</td>
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<td>February, 1908</td>
<td>229</td>
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<tr>
<td>October, 1909</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April, 1910</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1910</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aDerived from: Local #390, French-Speaking Carpenter's Union, Holyoke, Records, 1906-1910.

The labor movement hit its peak with the successful conclusion of the stationary fireman's strike in 1901, the most momentous strike in Holyoke's history. The strike originated with the stationary firemen in the paper mills. Since 1884 there had been sporadic union activity in the paper mills, but the percentage of French-Canadians in that industry had been small. The stationary firemen, who worked twelve
hour shifts at $1.75 per day, demanded $2 for an eight hour
day and a union shop. A recently passed law required the
licensing of firemen, thus limiting their numbers, and giving
them hope of improving working conditions through bargaining.
Eagle Lodge, the local paper workers union, was able to shut­
down twenty-five paper mills in Holyoke and South Hadley Falls
for two weeks. The strikers received widespread support
from the other unions in the city, the mayor and other city
officials spoke at rallies in their behalf and the conserva­
tive Transcript contended that "a twelve hour day for ordinary
workers is indeed an anachronism". The strike was success­
ful and the owners, principally the American Writing Paper
Company, assented to all their demands, except that for a
union shop. The strike benefited other unions in the city as
well, the textile workers alone adding 200 new members. On
Labor Day 1901, 10,000 Holyoke workers marched. It was organ­
ized labor's greatest hour in Holyoke. The momentum carried
into 1902 when ten of the recorded fourteen strikes achieved
at least partial success.46

Starting in 1903, there were a series of divisive
strikes, characterized by weak union leadership, which crippled
the labor movement in Holyoke for the rest of the decade. In
1903 there was another paper mill strike. Eagle Lodge had
voted not to strike but reversed itself when 500 coarse mill
finishers went out. Both the French and English-speaking car­
penters voted to conduct a sympathy strike in conjunction with
other trade unions. However the CLU merely put the offending
paper mills on the "unfair list", which permitted other unions' workers to continue there. The two carpenters locals proved to be the most supportive to the strikers, but even their help was restrained. Both agreed to complete just those jobs in the paper mills that they already begun. But without the strong support of the other unions, the paper workers could not carry out a long strike and they capitulated after nine weeks. The Eagle Lodge, which was the strongest labor group in the city two years earlier, was so disrupted by the strike that it disbanded for three years.47

The following year the carpenters felt the effects of the lack of labor solidarity. Both the French and English-speaking locals, a total of 425 carpenters, struck following refusal of wage and hour demands by the contractors. The intransigence of the contractors was a key factor in the loss of the strike but the failure of the other unions to support the carpenters played an important role. The plumbers union, which had originally agreed to conduct a sympathy strike, disbanded because the majority of their membership desired to work on projects struck by the carpenters. The contractors were able to outlast the carpenters, who returned to work after fourteen weeks at old wage scales.48

The disasters of 1903 and 1904 marked a turning point in the fortunes of organized labor in Holyoke. As indicated by Tables 26 and 27, Holyoke workers were able to win only one strike between 1903 and 1910, and the number of locals was almost halved between 1904 and 1905. Holyoke's unions
were already weak when the 1907 decline struck and it was not until 1910 that prospects brightened.

**TABLE 26. - Number and results of strikes in Holyoke, 1899-1910**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Strikes</th>
<th>Succeeded</th>
<th>Compromised</th>
<th>Failed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1906</td>
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<td>1907</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>2</td>
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*Derived from: Mass. Labor Bureau, Annual Report (1899-1910).*

The history of the labor movement in Holyoke from 1899 to 1910 is replete with examples of French-Canadian participation. Exact breakdowns by ethnic origins are impossible, but, especially during labors' halcyon years, 1899-1902, French-Canadians were far from being passive, docile workers. By 1899 many French-Canadians had been in Holyoke for a generation.
TABLE 27. - Number of union locals and union membership, Holyoke, 1904-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of locals</th>
<th>Total union membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>1907</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>1908</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2846</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


and most had long since abandoned any notions of returning to Canada. The threat as well as the actual importation of Italian workers, and the continued influx of Poles into Holyoke, changed the attitudes of many French-Canadian workers about labor unions. Many French-Canadians had measurably improved their material lot in Holyoke and for the first time their jobs and security were threatened by cheaper labor, in much the same way that the French-Canadians had threatened Yankee and Irish workers only a few years earlier. In 1904 two French-Canadian union carpenters were brought to trial for assaulting another French-Canadian, recently arrived from Canada, who had refused to join the union.\(^49\) Although only an isolated example, this incident suggests that French-
Canadian workers of long residence in the United States were more receptive to the labor movement than their Canadian counterparts. In the 1889-1893 period some French-Canadians, especially skilled workers, were drawn into labor organizations. After economic recovery had been achieved in the late 1890's, the enthusiasm for trade unions among French-Canadians was more general. Although the Holyoke labor movement suffered from the same ills that plagued union efforts nationally, the greater participation of French-Canadians was another indication of their growing strength and of their determination to reap the benefits of life in the United States.

In the late nineteenth century French-Canadian emigration to Holyoke peaked and a growing percentage of Holyoke's French-Canadian population was born in the United States. While the majority of the more recent arrivals likely took the lowest paying jobs, the employment picture had improved markedly for French-Canadians between 1885 and 1910. The number of French-Canadian small businessmen increased and with the influx of Polish and Russian immigrants to Holyoke, French-Canadian workers enjoyed some measure of job betterment. By the 1890's the image of docile, passive French-Canadian operatives was shattered by their increased involvement in labor agitation. After a generation in Holyoke, as a group, the French-Canadians had shed much of their Canadian outlook and had become a vital and active element in the life of the city.
NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER IV


3 Holyoke, Superintendent of Schools, Annual Report, (1894), p. 21; Republican, June 26, 1894.

4 Holyoke, Superintendent of Schools, A.R. (1892-1896).

5 Ibid., (1897-1904).


9 Intra-city movement may be exaggerated by this table. Some listings in the directories indicated that the address given was that of a boarding house. It is possible that some unmarried men roomed and boarded at different locations. However, since only the boarding address is given, it is not possible to determine the extent of this practice.

10 La Justice, August 5, 1909. A number of names of those who were counted as having left Holyoke and never returned, were discovered in the city directories later in the decade. However, the lack of any corroborative information, such as the same address or similar occupation, made it impossible to determine if the name belonged to the same individual.

11 See Tables 29 and 30 below.

12 Green, Holyoke, pp. 137-195, 227-250.


18 Holyoke, School Committee, A.R. (1890-1904).


20 Ibid., (1904), pp. 46-47, 64.


23 For a fuller discussion of the family life cycle see Tamara K. Hareven, "The Family as Process: The Historical Study of the Family Cycle", Journal of Social History, VII (Spring, 1974), 322-329; Hareven, "Family Time", pp. 365-389. A study of the baptism and marriage records of St. Martin's, a French-Canadian parish in Somersworth, New Hampshire, between 1882 and 1925, revealed that until 1900 each married woman in the parish, on average, gave birth every two years, by 1910 this figure had dropped to one child every four years and between 1910 and 1925 the parish average was a child every five years. Ducharme, Shadows of the Trees, p. 228.

24 Holyoke City Directory, 1885, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1905, 1910. This list is only representative of those French-Canadians who chose to advertise in the city directory. However, a comparison of the 1900 listings with those in the French-Canadian sponsored 1899 Guide des Adresses des Canadiens-français de la Nouvelle-Angleterre reveals that in most categories French-Canadian merchants were more inclined to advertise in the city directory rather than the Guide, an indication that the merchants' success was dependent on more than just French-Canadian patronage.

25 Holyoke Labor, April, 1894 - August, 1896; Proletarian, May - December, 1899; The Artisan, April, 1908 - December, 1910.

26 Socialist Labor Party Papers, Moritz Ruther Scrapbook, Reel 36.

28 Green, Holyoke, p. 205. Green maintains that the Haymarket Square incident of May, 1886, had a chilling effect on labor activity in Holyoke. Haymarket might well have contributed to the sudden decline in the Knights of Labor and the weakened position of the Socialists, but 1887 was a year of much labor agitation, indicating that the effects of any Haymarket backlash were brief indeed.

29 Transcript, November 18, 1885; Republican, March 19 and 24, 1885, April 17 and 27, 1885, September 6, 1885, October 13 and 15, 1885, February 6, 8, 9 and 13, 1886, August 1, 1887.

30 Transcript, May 10 and 17, 1887; Republican, May 5, 6, 8 and 21, 1887.

31 Transcript, May 7, 1891.

32 Ibid., May 6 and 7, 1891; Republican, May 6, 7, 8, and 9, 1891.

33 Transcript, October 23, 1891.

34 Ibid., April 9, 1892, May 4, 1892; Republican, April 11, 1892, May 3, 1892.


36 Interview with Joseph Charpentier, August 28, 1974.

37 Transcript, September 21, 1889, November 25, 1889, June 12, 1890; Republican, March 26, 1885, December 4, 1889.

38 Republican, May 4, 5, 9, 14, 17, 18, 20, 23, 25 and 28, 1892, June 5, 13 and 19, 1892; Transcript, May 5, 6, 9, 12, 17, 20, 27 and 30, 1892, June 1 and 8, 1892.


40 Transcript, May 7, 1889, January 27, 1891; Republican, April 27, 1894, June 19, 1894, July 11, 1896.

41 Transcript, September 5, 1893, September 3, 1895; Republican, September 12, 1893, October 21, 1893, January 2, 1894, February 2, 1894, March 25 and 28; Holyoke Labor, January 4, 1896.
Transcript, July 6, 1899.

Ibid., May 25, 26, 27 and 31, 1899, June 5, 14, 16, 22 and 26, 1899, July 5 and 6, 1899, December 13 and 14, 1899; Republican, April 1, 1898, December 5, 1898; Holyoke Evening Telegram, July 7, 1899; Mass. Labor Bureau, A.R. (1899), pp. 119-120.


Transcript, June 14, 1901.

Ibid., May 29, 1901, June 1, 3, 4, 10, 14, 15, 27 and 28, 1901, July 8, 1901, August 31, 1901; Mass. Labor Bureau, A.R. (1901), pp. 143-144, (1902), pp. 31-32; Massachusetts, Acts, 1900, Chapter 202.

Transcript, June 1, 8, 9 and 13, 1903, July 1, 2, 3 and 18, 1903, August 18, 1903, September 18, 1903; Mass. Labor Bureau, A.R. (1903), pp. 366-367.


Transcript, June 17, 1904.
CHAPTER V

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

The development of French-Canadian economic strength was paralleled by the growth of French-Canadian institutions and increasing evidence of French-Canadian integration into community life. The adjustments of individual émigrés to life in the United States was made easier by the increased stability of the institutions of the French-Canadian community and, as the percentage of American-born French-Canadians increased, community institutions were altered to deal with new needs. The local French Catholic Church surmounted Father Dufresne's autocratic tenure and succeeding pastors adjusted to American surroundings by delimiting the role of the Church in accordance with the desires of most parishioners. After 1887 the Church still played an important role in the French-Canadian community and in the lives of its parishioners, but its importance was diminished because of the growth of other aspects of French-Canadian life in Holyoke. A strengthened parochial school system provided more students with French Catholic education, but also served to assist their integration into American life. In the post-1885 period, organizations with little or no religious affiliation were also founded, illustrating the strength of secular activities in French-Canadian social life. Thus, by the twentieth century, the majority of Holyoke's French-Canadians sought to maintain the heritage and customs of French Canada, while leading lives in
which the old culture had been irreversibly altered.

French-Canadian émigrés who came to Holyoke after 1885 were absorbed into the community with little apparent difficulty. The large, increasingly prosperous permanent settlement of French-Canadians in the city undoubtedly smoothed the transition for many new arrivals. There were occasional newspaper references to court cases involving French-Canadians. These mostly concerned desertion, non-support and stubborn children, but there is no indication of any widespread breakdown of the traditional family unit.¹ In one instance, a French-Canadian youth was arrested for cutting down trees on private property two days after his arrival from Canada. Even if this incident reflected cultural differences, it is noteworthy only because of its rarity.²

Crime was no more of a factor among French-Canadian residents than it had been in the pre-1885 era. Table 28³ shows that the percentage of French-Canadians arrested was quite constant from 1886 to 1910 and that the rate of arrests, after 1895 was slightly less than their proportion of Holyoke's population. The figures in Table 28 include only those individuals not born in the United States. Further, the number of people in Holyoke who were born in French Canada rose from 5067 to 8035 between 1885 and 1910 and thus the percentage of French-Canadian émigrés involved in illegal actions actually declined. Conversely, the Irish-born population of Holyoke decreased from 5415 to 5246 during the same period, a fact reflected by the decreasing Irish crime rate, but still
TABLE 28. - Arrest statistics of individuals born in Canada and Ireland, Holyoke, 1886-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Arrests</th>
<th>Number of Arrests</th>
<th>Percentage of Arrests</th>
<th>Percentage of total Population born in Ireland Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Irish Canadian</td>
<td>Irish Canadian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1223</td>
<td>481 121</td>
<td>39.3 9.9</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1887</td>
<td>1183</td>
<td>371 130</td>
<td>31.4 11.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>1141</td>
<td>304 145</td>
<td>26.6 12.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>1186</td>
<td>350 NA</td>
<td>29.5 NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>1330</td>
<td>450 190</td>
<td>33.8 14.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>1351</td>
<td>423 177</td>
<td>31.3 13.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>1493</td>
<td>425 198</td>
<td>28.5 13.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>1453</td>
<td>382 157</td>
<td>26.3 10.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>1894</td>
<td>1211</td>
<td>319 143</td>
<td>26.3 11.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>1895</td>
<td>1520</td>
<td>380 187</td>
<td>25.0 12.3</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1896</td>
<td>1341</td>
<td>332 155</td>
<td>24.8 14.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>1410</td>
<td>335 189</td>
<td>23.8 13.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1128</td>
<td>273 146</td>
<td>24.2 12.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>1197</td>
<td>293 159</td>
<td>24.5 13.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1399</td>
<td>299 191</td>
<td>21.4 13.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1403</td>
<td>298 178</td>
<td>21.2 12.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>1335</td>
<td>271 179</td>
<td>20.3 13.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1343</td>
<td>280 183</td>
<td>20.9 13.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>1555</td>
<td>278 212</td>
<td>17.9 13.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1650</td>
<td>321 219</td>
<td>19.5 13.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>1761</td>
<td>317 213</td>
<td>18.0 12.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>1680</td>
<td>315 195</td>
<td>18.8 11.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1803</td>
<td>327 249</td>
<td>18.1 13.8</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1909</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>327 252</td>
<td>17.3 13.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1714</td>
<td>267 235</td>
<td>15.6 13.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

accounted for a greater percentage of crime than their percentage of the population would indicate. Drunkenness and simple assault were again the most common offenses and the French-Canadian transgressions appear to have been no greater than those of other nationalities. Statistically at least, the emigration of French-Canadians to Holyoke in the post-1885 period did not result in socially disruptive behavior.
Whatever the personal adjustments which individuals made, the flow of French-Canadians to the city was conducted largely within the framework of accepted social behavior.

French-Canadians were however, involved to some extent in illicit activities which were not reflected in the arrest figures, for example, prostitution. Holyoke's best known madame, Carrie Pratt, who married a Holyoke French-Canadian, operated a brothel on the outskirts of the city. According to local historians, most of her employees were French-Canadian girls who had come to Holyoke to work in the mills and drifted to Carrie's farmhouse when jobs were scarce. Many of the girls told their families in Canada that they worked as domestics and French-Canadian realtor and contractor Joseph Prew, reportedly allowed the girls to use his address for mail, so that their families in Canada would not know where they really lived.  

French-Canadian institutions played an important role in maintaining the social equilibrium as well as assisting in the process of social integration. The disputes of Fr. Dufresne with his parishioners and the Holyoke School Committee, which occurred between 1876 and 1882, subsided before the pastor died in 1887. Yet only under a new pastor were the changes evident in the mid-1880's in the French-Canadian community reflected by the actions and policies of the French Catholic Church in Holyoke. The creation of a second French-Canadian parish in 1890, and a third in 1905, considerably lessened the possibility that one pastor could serve to divide
the French-Canadians as Fr. Dufresne had. The three parishes each performed the traditional functions of tending the spiritual needs of the congregations and of educating the young. The construction of new edifices also absorbed much time and energy. When the policies of the pastors coincided with those of leaders of the larger community, for example in advocating naturalization, the interchange was usually peaceful. Only in matters related to education did the Church and the city come into conflict and these matters were quickly resolved.

In addition, Holyoke French-Canadian churches moved closer to American Catholic churches in their customs and practices. In 1908, for example, the Transcript reported that the city's three French-Canadian churches had celebrated Candlemas Day without special ceremony in much the same fashion as the other Roman Catholic churches. In Canada, especially in rural Quebec, Candlemas Day, one of the most important liturgical events, was traditionally celebrated by elaborate church services and large family meals.5

Rev. Herman Landry, Fr. Dufresne's successor at Precious Blood, soon provided a new direction for the parish. Fr. Landry was born and educated in Canada and had served as a priest in the Springfield diocese for ten years prior to coming to Holyoke in 1887 at the age of forty-five. Within a month of his arrival Fr. Landry replaced the Grey Nuns at Precious Blood School with sisters of the Order of St. Anne of Lachine. St. Anne's was also a Canadian order but their
constitution permitted them to teach boys as well as girls, and more significantly, those nuns who were brought to Holyoke had to be able to teach in both French and English. The new pastor clarified his attitudes in an address to the French-Canadian naturalization club. He urged those who intended to remain in the United States to become citizens. Only in that way, he contended, could French-Canadians gather sufficient political power to enable them to enjoy all the benefits of their adopted homeland. All that citizenship involved, Fr. Landry maintained, was the renouncing of allegiance to an English Queen who had no love for the French-Canadians. Further, the Irish provided ample evidence that obtaining American citizenship was not a danger to one's faith. Shortly thereafter, Fr. Landry urged those French-Canadians in evening school to learn English, for it was the only way to obtain a good job and get ahead. Fr. Landry's forthright advocacy of Americanization was applauded by the Transcript. The newspaper thought that he showed a progressive and liberal spirit and that he was "a live priest and up to the times." But Fr. Landry's actions only gave voice and support to what was already occurring. In fact, his role was very limited. He soon took ill and was incapacitated much of the next three years before his death in 1890.

Following Fr. Dufresne's death in 1887, the Bishop of Springfield had ordered that a census be taken in Precious Blood parish. The count revealed a French-Canadian population of 8500-9000 and thus the Bishop authorized the purchase of
land for a second parish, an issue which had fragmented the French-Canadians nearly a decade earlier. For an undetermined reason, the consumation of this plan was delayed and the creation of the new parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, was announced by the Bishop only in 1890, two months before the death of Fr. Landry. The boundary between the two parishes was drawn by the Bishop to provide a French Catholic church for the sizable French-Canadian population in Ward 4, Precious Blood remaining located in the other heavily French-Canadian area, Ward 2. After the turn of the century, when immigration and population pressures forced many French-Canadians into the "Flats" (Ward 1) below the dam, Immaculate Conception parish was established in 1905 in what had previously been a predominately Irish area. The fact that both new parishes quickly constructed churches and began schools was an indication of the continued importance of the Church to the French-Canadians and of the prosperity of the French-Canadian community.

The five men who served as pastors of Holyoke's French Catholic churches from Fr. Dufresne's death in 1887 to 1910 shared some important characteristics. They were all born and educated in the Province of Quebec. However, unlike Fr. Dufresne, each pastor had served for ten to twenty years as a priest in the United States, usually in the Springfield Diocese before assignment to Holyoke. All had become Americanized and there is evidence that all five endorsed French-Canadian naturalization efforts. As men who had chosen to
pursue their careers in the United States, they understood and supported efforts of French-Canadian secular leaders to obtain more leverage and security in the community in which they lived. The pastors maintained their role as spiritual fathers of their congregations and clerical conflicts between priests and parishioners did occur. But these disputes took place in a context not likely to result in serious disruption to parish life and pastors were apt to seek compromise rather than confrontation. Whatever their personal shortcomings, the pastors fulfilled the needs of their parishioners and by 1910 Holyoke's three French Catholic churches were vigorous and financially sound.10

One indication of the effectiveness of the French-Canadian churches in Holyoke, was the continued support parishioners gave in the face of active Protestant conversion efforts. The main tactic of the French Protestant clergy was to try to arouse fears of Catholic domination among Protestant Americans while simultaneously stressing the venalities of the Church of Rome to Catholic French-Canadians. French Protestant efforts frequently tried to gain advantage from rifts within the Catholic Church. In 1884, for example, a French Protestant campaign started in Fall River in the midst of an acrimonious dispute between French Protestants and the Irish hierarchy.11

The most prominent evangelist in New England was Calvin Amaron, who served as President of the French Protestant College in Springfield (now American International College),
and was a frequent visitor in Holyoke. Amaron, who "sounded the loudest nativist trumpet", contended that Rome's "purpose is, by wily means, to overthrow if possible, the Protestant edifice and upon its ruins build up that gigantic system of error, the full evil results of which are so clearly seen in Canada."\textsuperscript{13}

The history of French Protestantism in Holyoke was marked by internal dissension. Both Congregational and Baptist evangelists were sent to the city by their respective state missionary societies. Congregational efforts were more sustained. After a few earlier attempts, a permanent mission was established in 1886 and continued, without prospering, for twenty-one years. Indeed, the existence of the mission would not have been possible without assistance from the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society, which paid the entire salary of the ministers. The turnover rate for the clergy was quite high, nine pastors in twenty-one years, most of whom were young men serving in their first assignment. Usually they either moved to more prosperous vineyards or left the clergy, frustrated by their lack of accomplishment. The Holyoke Congregational group was never able to obtain its own church, meeting Sunday afternoons at the Second Congregational Church. Membership figures indicate an average of 25-30 communicants, with the number rarely exceeding forty in any one year. Some of these were not converts, but came from the Huguenot tradition which had been carried to Canada. The state Congregational missionary society withdrew from the
struggle to establish ethnic churches in 1907 and the remain­
ing French Congregationalists affiliated with one of the
city's two Congregational churches.\textsuperscript{14}

The Baptists were even less successful. Working
under the auspices of the area (Westfield) Baptist Convention,
the French Baptist minister was required to work in Spring­
field, Chicopee, and Westfield, as well as Holyoke. Converts
were few and progress slow. In 1892 the Westfield Convention
withdrew support for French evangelical efforts and within
two years lack of funding from other sources forced the French
Baptist minister to abandon Holyoke.\textsuperscript{15}

In 1885 and again in 1887 the two denominations came
into conflict with each other over efforts to convert French­
Canadians. The Congregationalists accused the Baptists of
misrepresentation in the soliciting of funds and charged that
the theological credentials of Baptist ministers were inferior
to those of the Congregationalists.\textsuperscript{16} These battles, although
only minor tempests, further weakened what was an impossible
task for the French Protestants. Their efforts had little
impact on the vast majority of Holyoke's French-Canadian
population. The relationship of French-Canadians to the
Catholic Church had been altered in the course of a generation
in the United States. By 1890 Holyoke's French-Canadians were
religiously more independent than they or their parents had
been in Canada. But the Catholic Church was vital to most
families and individuals and they were not ready to discard
traditional religious practices as they perceived these as
an essential part of their heritage.

French-Canadians exhibited their strongest support for the Church by their allegiance to Church sponsored education. By the mid-1880's, Fr. Dufresne had secured the teaching services of the Grey Nuns and the impasse with the school committee had been resolved. During the next two and a half decades the parochial system became even more extensive. The two new French Catholic parishes, Perpetual Help and Immaculate Conception, began their own schools and the facilities at Precious Blood were expanded. By 1910, as the French-Canadian school population leveled off, more than half of the city's French-Canadian children received a French Catholic education. While in most aspects of their lives French-Canadians were absorbing more of American culture, in matters of education, the parochial schools reinforced French-Canadian ethnic identity.

As noted, when Fr. Landry became pastor of Precious Blood in 1887, he replaced the French-speaking Grey Nuns with bi-lingual teachers from the Order of St. Anne. While this action was important in terms of French-Canadian acculturation and community acceptance of the parochial school, it had little impact on school attendance. Enrollment at Precious Blood had been rising since the Grey Nuns arrived in 1882 and the new teachers neither hindered or stimulated this trend. In the decade following the approval of Precious Blood school by the Holyoke School Committee, the French Catholic school educated, on the average, 35 to 40 per cent of the French-
Canadian children in the city, as indicated in Table 29.

TABLE 29. - Attendance at Precious Blood School, 1881-1891a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of French-Canadians ages 5-15</th>
<th>Attendance at Precious Blood</th>
<th>Percentage of French-Canadians 5-15 at Precious Blood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>1495</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>1597</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>1568</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>25.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>1701</td>
<td>509</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>1769</td>
<td>694</td>
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<td>1915</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>NA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>2137</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>2302</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>2290</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>2380</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A dramatic change occurred in 1892 when the newly formed Perpetual Help church opened its parish school. The sharp rise in the total number of children attending French-Canadian parochial schools is an indication that many parents desired a French Catholic education for their children and that either the lack of space at Precious Blood or geographic considerations had prevented the realization of this desire.
prior to 1892. Until 1904 more than half of the city's French-Canadian children attended one of the two parish schools. Although the School Department did not record the ethnic background of students after 1904, the French Catholic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number French-Canadians ages 5-15</th>
<th>Attendance at Precious Blood</th>
<th>Attendance at Perpetual Help</th>
<th>Percentage of French-Canadians ages 5-15 at French-Canadian Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>2435</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>58.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>2747</td>
<td>728</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>2697</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>57.1</td>
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<td>2983</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>525</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1900</td>
<td>3202</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>3420</td>
<td>1119</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>3416</td>
<td>1191</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>3460</td>
<td>1241</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>3496</td>
<td>1174</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aDerived from: Holyoke, Superintendent of Schools, Annual Report, (1892-1904).

school attendance figures kept pace with the growth of the total school population. The opening of Immaculate Conception
school in 1906 did not result in any sudden rise in French-Canadian enrollment. Rather the figures indicate that this new school drew children from Perpetual Help, the parish which had been divided to create Immaculate Conception. The increase in the number of students at Precious Blood after 1894 reflected the opening of new and larger facilities, as shown by Tables 30 and 31.

TABLE 31. - Attendance at French-Canadian parochial schools, Holyoke, 1905-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Precious Blood</th>
<th>Perpetual Help</th>
<th>Immaculate Conception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1026</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>1050</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>1144</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1032</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1052</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1001</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>697</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The French-Canadian parochial schools served as a means of transmitting French-Canadian culture and religious practices. In 1889 when the Superintendent of Schools and a delegation from the Holyoke School Committee visited Precious Blood School, they noted that the children under seven years of age, ie., those not legally required to attend school, were taught entirely in French. The older pupils were taught mainly in English and the Superintendent was favorably impressed with the operation of the school. When Perpetual Help School
opened there was concern expressed by some School Committee members that too much of the teaching was conducted in French, but a visit by the School Committee resolved the issue to everyone's satisfaction.  

In general, the relationship between the Church and public school officials was much more harmonious than it had been during Fr. Dufresne's tenure. When a new school building was opened at Precious Blood in 1894, the pastor, Fr. Charles Crevier, invited the School Committee to inspect it. It was the first time that the School Committee had been extended such an offer by Church authorities and the visit was described as "a happy exchange of courtesies." Clearly however, the French-Canadian clergy desired that all their parishioners send their children to the parochial school. In 1890 Fr. Landry delivered a sermon which attacked the public school system, claiming that the pupils learned little and that neither French nor English was taught well. At this time, the fee for students at Precious Blood was fifty cents per pupil per month, a sum within reach of all but the poorest families. The attendance figures suggest that many low and moderate income families thought a French Catholic education worth the cost.

During the 1880's and 1890's a series of state laws helped to encourage French-Canadian parents to send their children to the parish schools. These laws mandated long periods of compulsory school attendance and thus offset any economic advantage that had been previously gained by public
school attendance. The minimum age permitted for work in factories or mercantile establishments, which had been ten years in the 1880's, was raised in stages to fourteen years by 1898. Similarly, annual compulsory school attendance was increased to eight months during the same period. There were still problems of enforcing the state laws, but if the annual reports of Holyoke's truant officers can be believed, most of the children attended school the prescribed length of time.  

TABLE 32. - Number of work certificates issued, by age, by the Holyoke Superintendent of Schools, 1880-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>10-12</th>
<th>13-14</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The number of work certificates issued by the Superintendent of Schools each year, as shown in Table 32, showed an erratic pattern, but by 1910 the amount was half what it had been three decades prior and since 1898 were issued only
to those fifteen and sixteen years old who were not required to attend school.

Thus, with opportunities for child labor cut off for most families and with the addition of French Catholic schools in each French-Canadian ward, many parents chose to send their children to the parochial schools.

Public school attendance was becoming increasingly unattractive for French-Canadians. Using the figures in Tables 30 and 31 above, and remembering that compulsory education was only required of children aged seven to fourteen, the attendance patterns of the mid-1880's had been reversed in less than a decade. In the earlier years approximately half the French-Canadian children went to the public schools and only one-third attended Precious Blood. From 1882 to 1910, 50 to 60% of the French-Canadian students went to one of the three French Catholic schools, while only one-fourth to one-third received a public education. From 1882 onward, there was usually but one French-Canadian representative on the School Committee and there is little evidence that this presence was valued by the French-Canadian community. Until the mid-1890's there were no French-Canadian teachers in the grammar schools and then only a few were hired. The first French-Canadian was not hired at the high school until 1904.

French-Canadians did participate in considerable numbers in the public evening school. The Holyoke School Committee had created an evening school in 1870 and French-Canadians were hired as instructors and administrators.
Naturalization clubs and French-Canadian social-fraternal groups had urged French-Canadians to attend and learn English, but the efforts were sporadic and the results mixed. In 1887 however, the General Court passed a statute which made employers liable for a fine for any minor employee who could not read or write English and who was not attending school. Enrollment in the evening school immediately skyrocketed. In October, 1887 some 1500 persons were in attendance, the majority of whom were French-Canadian. Since the average age of these students was eighteen years, the state law appears to have been the force which motivated their attendance.\textsuperscript{24}

Whether French-Canadian youths attended public or parochial schools, the vast majority ended their formal education when they became fifteen years old. Few went to, much less graduated from, high school. In 1909 only four of 105, and in 1910, eight of 118, Holyoke High School graduates were French-Canadian. The French Catholic parishes did not develop programs for older students until the 1920's. As in the earlier period, some wealthier French-Canadian families sent their children to Canada for preparatory and college education. St. Cesaire's College, in St. Cesaire, Quebec, appears to have been a favorite for Holyoke residents. The President of the New England chapter of St. Cesaire graduates in the first decade of the twentieth century was John D. Goddu, a former state representative, and the Holyoke Sealer of Weights and Measures. Holyoke boasted at least thirty St. Cesaire graduates, many of whom, including Goddu, were active
in promoting their alma mater. In 1907 alone, twenty Holyoke residents were enrolled there. A handful of French-Canadian students continued their education in the United States, attending schools which included Holy Cross, Amherst and Mount Holyoke, or pursued commercial or professional study.25

By the early 1890's more than half of Holyoke's French-Canadian children received a French Catholic education. While these schools attempted to transmit French-Canadian traditions, history and religious practices, they were certainly more than French-Canadian schools in an American locale. Massachusetts law and the realities of life in Holyoke demanded that the students receive a substantial part of their instruction in the English language. While the parochial schools strengthened the French-Canadians sense of ethnic identity, they also attempted to ease their integration into the larger Holyoke community. It is also evident that most French-Canadians left school at the earliest possible moment, reflecting both the economic realities and the effects of a culture in which the values of further education were not stressed.

The language barrier was an obstacle to social integration for some French-Canadians. While census information does not provide accurate statistics by ethnic group, there is some evidence that the ability to communicate in English increased among French-Canadians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1885 the Massachusetts state
census reported that 60 per cent of the French-Canadian males of voting age could not read or write in English. In 1910, 10.5 per cent of all Holyoke residents ten years and older could not speak English. These two figures are not exactly comparable and no ethnic determinations were made in the 1910 statistics. Yet given the large number of Poles and Russian Jews who came to the city around the turn of the century, the figures do suggest that French-Canadian illiteracy in English was largely confined to older immigrants who never attempted to learn the language of their adopted homeland and that French-Canadian mastery of the English language had substantially increased since 1885. It is also significant the 60 per cent of the Holyoke residents unable to speak English in 1910 were women, attesting to the more restricted environment in which they lived.

While English proficiency increased among French-Canadians, many still understood only French. In 1888 an article written in a Canadian newspaper by a former French-Canadian resident of Holyoke explained that the employment of French-speaking sales personnel in retail stores in Holyoke had proved to be a profitable practice. As late as 1896, the city truant officers felt compelled to print their business cards in English and in French. The following year the Board of Aldermen ordered all official announcements to be printed in the French and German-language newspapers. This action undoubtedly had political overtones, but it also indicates that many foreign-born residents were not bi-lingual.
While the French language served to separate the French-Canadian community, linguistic protection was not complete. In one case, an Irish police captain, fluent in French, questioned two French-Canadian men in English. The men discussed their answer in French and the officer was able to obtain enough information from this supposedly private conversation to locate his suspect.29

By the twentieth century, both the French Catholic Church and the parochial education system had experienced changes which permitted them to serve as agents of social integration. The institution of marriage underwent similar alteration which directly related to the life stages of Holyoke's French-Canadian community. As more American-born children of French-Canadian parents reached marriageable age, the rate of ethnic intermarriage increased markedly.

Interrmarriage between ethnic and religious groups is an important index of social integration. Traditionally, newly arrived émigrés stress the importance of cultural unity and there are generally strong familial and community restraints on marriage outside one's group. Subsequent generations, who experience more contact with other groups, are more inclined to marry those of other ethnic backgrounds and religious persuasions. The French-Canadians in New England behaved in a similar fashion. The reaction to the British Conquest had created an ideal of ethnic exclusiveness. The mores governing adherence to linguistic and religious traditions also applied to the selection of one's marriage partner.
Opposition to intermarriage continued to exist. For example, the 1909 Guide français de Fall-River, Mass., termed intermarriage "a crime against God and a national abomination." But this sentiment was not a statement of an ideal, but a reaction to the increased French-Canadian intermarriage throughout New England.

French-Canadian intermarriage in Holyoke did not increase steadily over a period of time. Rather, a modest degree of ethnic intermarriage, which was present at the time of the establishment of the first French Catholic church, was maintained until 1900. Only after the turn of the century was there a marked rise in French-Canadian intermarriage.

A clear pattern emerges from the examination of data from the Holyoke Marriage Register in the decennial years from 1870 through 1910.

TABLE 33. - Number and percentage of French-Canadians involved in ethnic intermarriages, Holyoke, 1870-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1870</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Marriages in Holyoke</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total FC-FC Marriages</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-Mixed Marriages</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Marriages with one or two parties FC</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of FC Intermarriage</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 33 shows that the French-Canadian rate of ethnic intermarriage remained rather constant in the sample years from 1870 through 1900. Only after 1900, when the large French-Canadian migration to Holyoke had stopped and when the second generation married in large numbers, did the rate of intermarriage rise.

TABLE 34. - Place of birth of French-Canadian marriage partners, 1870-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1870</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of FC Married</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of FC Married Born in U.S.</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of FC Married Born in U.S.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures for 1910, shown in Table 34, reveal a dramatic increase in the percentage of French-Canadians born in the United States at the same time that a rise in the French-Canadian intermarriage occurs (Table 33). Even though the percentage of U.S.-born French-Canadians rose steadily in the sample years of the nineteenth century, the rates of intermarriage did not. It was not until 1910 that the relaxation of cultural pressures and increased opportunities for social encounters permitted substantial ethnic intermarriage to take place.

1910 also marked a change in the pattern of French-Canadian intermarriage.
### TABLE 35. - Characteristics of French-Canadian ethnic intermarriage, 1870-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1870</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total FC-Mixed Marriages</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Male FC in Mixed Marriages</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Female FC in Mixed Marriages</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-Irish Marriages</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10.5a</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-Yankee Marriages</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-Polish Marriages</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-German Marriages</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5a</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-Other Marriages</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aOne 1900 partner was half-Irish and half German.

Table 35 clearly indicates that the Irish and native-born Yankees were the preferred partners in French-Canadian intermarriages. Marriages with the Irish and Yankees was consistent with patterns in other New England cities. The Irish were the predominant ethnic group in Holyoke and co-religionists of the French-Canadians. The intense rivalry between the two groups was not invariably an insurmountable obstacle to marriage. Throughout the period there was very little French-Canadian marriage with either the Germans, English, or Scotch, all of whom were present in Holyoke in significant numbers.

The pattern of French-Canadian intermarriage changed with the 1910 figures. Irish and Yankee partners still
predominated, but there was an increase in marriage with other groups. Two marriages involved Polish partners. The Poles began settling in Holyoke in the mid-1880's and replaced the French-Canadians at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. These marriages appear to signify a degree of acceptance of the Polish community. Two Italians, a Scot, and a Dane are included in the "Other" category and together with the Poles and Germans are indicative of the erosion of the French-Canadian ideal of exclusivity.

TABLE 36. - Number and percentage of French-Canadians married in Catholic Church, 1870-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1870</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FC-FC Marriages in Catholic Church</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-FC Marriages Outside Catholic Church</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-Mixed Marriages in Catholic Church</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-Mixed Marriages Outside Catholic Church</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Marriages in Catholic Church</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of all FC Marriages in Catholic Church</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The male/female ratio of French-Canadians involved in ethnic intermarriages appears to be of little significance. Of the eighty-four marriages represented in Table 35, forty
French-Canadian partners were male and forty-four were female.

After 1900, French-Canadians showed a greater inclination to marry those of other ethnic backgrounds, but this greater freedom of choice did not extend beyond the Catholic Church, as illustrated in Table 36 (above).

The rate of French-Canadian intermarriage with partners of other religions (Table 36) did not keep pace with French-Canadian ethnic intermarriage (Table 33). In 1870, the first full year following the founding of the French-Canadian church in Holyoke, all marriages involving French-Canadians were conducted in a Catholic church. In the sample years following, the percentage married in a Catholic church lowered slightly, but remained over 90 per cent up to 1910. A small percentage of French-Canadians were married outside the Catholic Church.

TABLE 37. - Number and percentage of French-Canadians married in French Catholic Church, 1870-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1870</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number FC Married in FC Church</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number FC Married in other Catholic Churches</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number FC Married Outside the Catholic Church</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of FC Married in FC Church</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some were married in the church of their non-French-Canadian partner or by a Justice of the Peace. A few French-Canadian couples were married by French Protestant ministers, attesting further to the limited success of that movement in Holyoke. Finally, the Marriage Register showed that a number of French-Canadians married outside the Church because they or their partners were divorced, thus prohibiting marriage by a priest.

Although the percentage of French-Canadians that married in the Catholic Church remained constant, the percentage married in the French Catholic churches did not. Table 37 (above) shows a significant drop in 1910 in the percentage of French-Canadians married in the French Catholic church. The restraints against second generation French-Canadians marrying outside their own ethnic group had lessened, but the intensity of the religious ties remained constant.

The Holyoke Marriage Register reveals that in the years between 1870 and 1910 the larger percentage of French-Canadians married one another. However, the information also shows that second generation French-Canadians, born in the United States, were more inclined to marry partners from other, and increasingly varied, ethnic groups (Tables 33, 34, and 35). The trend towards ethnic intermarriage was not accompanied by a loosening of traditional ties with the Catholic Church, but second generation French-Canadians were less inclined than the earlier generation to have their marriages solemnized in French-Catholic churches (Tables 36 and 37). The Marriage Register indicates that, although the French-
Canadian religious orientation had not been substantially altered by the migration process, by 1900 the French-Canadian institutions had lost some of their power. The decline in the percentage of French-Canadian marriages in a French Catholic church is a small, but significant indication of the beginnings of a broader social integration.

Constance Green, in her study of industrial Holyoke, remarks:

The French Canadians were less sociable than either the Irish or Germans. The sombre habitant heritage of stolid acquiescence in the hard conditions of a working world was not lightly cast aside. Work, go to Mass, save money, and return to Province Quebec - that was the long order... Outside their church few knew much pleasure... Here was no font of a rich culture.33

While this statement might be considered accurate for the first generation of French-Canadians in Holyoke, it surely does not reflect the realities of social life after 1885. French-Canadian social activity remained largely self-contained and ethnocentric, but starting in the mid-1880's there was a proliferation of new organizations which reflected the increased stability, maturity and prosperity of Holyoke's French-Canadians. The two oldest societies, St. Jean Baptiste and Union Canadienne, continued to be the most important and prosperous of the French-Canadian social groups in the city. In 1884-1885 the two organizations jointly financed the construction of a building for social purposes. The new hall was located in Ward Six, three blocks above the upper level canal. This site was a considerable distance from the French-Canadian areas and reflected the status and aspirations of the
membership of these two groups. \textsuperscript{34}

There is evidence of tensions, especially in the St. Jean Baptiste Society, between older members who desired to retain traditional practices and younger French-Canadians whose roots were more firmly fixed in Holyoke. The St. Jean Baptiste Society's close connections with the Catholic Church caused some of these disagreements. Faced with a decline in new members, younger members proposed to eliminate the oath which required prospective members to make monthly confessions. The rule change passed, but only by a three vote margin. The society refused to change its rules to permit a majority to accept new members and in 1888 narrowly rejected a constitutional change which would have required new members to be naturalized. \textsuperscript{35}

The St. Jean Baptiste and Union Canadienne Societies remained stable, but increasingly static until the late 1890's when they both became charter members in the Union St. Jean Baptiste. L'Union was established largely through the efforts of Holyoke truant officer, Edouard Cadieux. Cadieux envisioned an organization which would encompass all French-Canadian fraternal groups in the United States, and was instrumental in effecting a merger of the St. Jean Baptiste and Union Canadienne in 1898. Some initial opposition was encountered from the Union Canadienne which noted that a large number of the membership of St. Jean Baptiste were over forty-five years old and feared that a merger would produce a drastic depletion of the Union's death benefit funds. In 1899 Holyoke leaders were
successful in gathering delegates from all over New England to a meeting where plans were drawn for what was to become the Union St. Jean Baptiste. Holyoke was denied the honor of housing L'Union headquarters, which were located in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, because of stringent Massachusetts incorporation laws. But Cadieux was elected first president and the Holyoke group received the honored designation of Council #1.\textsuperscript{36}

L'Union was organized by eighteen independent societies with a stated purpose "to bind together in a spirit of brotherhood all persons of French descent living in the United States and to work towards their betterment both as individuals and collectively."\textsuperscript{37} L'Union became involved in efforts to preserve French-Canadian language, religion and culture, but the fraternal aspects of the society were overshadowed by the insurance features and other more practical consideration. Indeed, the visionary hopes of Cadieux and others of a strong ethnic, fraternal organization were dashed in the first decade, when a financial scandal tarnished L'Union, although no one from Holyoke was involved. Formation of L'Union revived interest in the organization in Holyoke and by 1908 the local chapter had a membership of 600.\textsuperscript{38}

While the St. Jean Baptiste and Union Canadienne remained important groups in the years after 1885, they did not provide the only social outlet as they had in earlier years. Many new groups were established and their most significant feature was the great diversity of their interests
and purposes. Many groups appear to have been begun by second generation French-Canadians who desired to retain their cultural ties with French Canada, but who were also distinctly American. The Order of Foresters, founded in Holyoke in 1890, was typical. The Foresters had mutual benefit functions and an avowed "purpose to inculcate the principles of good citizenship, while preserving the distinct French Canadian contribution to our common civilization." Only one new group, La Ligue du Sacre Coeur, begun in 1884, had predominately religious objectives. Secularization was carried to the extreme with the founding of the Cercle Rochambeau in 1900, which took as its motto, *s'instruire et s'amuser* (to instruct and amuse oneself).

A large number of organizations dedicated to cultural and recreational pursuits also flourished for varying periods of time. The French National Band was revived a number of times and there were several literary and debating societies, as well as a French-Canadian dramatic group. French-Canadian store clerks were especially active in these endeavors, an indication that younger French-Canadians were seeking their own social outlets. The visit of a snowshoe club from Montreal inspired Holyoke French-Canadians to imitate their Canadian brethren and a local group was formed. The Snowshoe Club went on extended trips, often to Canada, and was dominated by Holyoke's French-Canadian elite. The increase in French-Canadian social activity permitted several organizations to form a corporation in 1902 and to construct a building for
social purposes. The structure, called the French National Monument, was located in Ward Two, convenient to all French-Canadian sections. It served as headquarters for virtually all French-Canadian societies in the city, as well as a meeting place for other groups.42

Women increasingly participated in French-Canadian social activity, beginning in the late 1890's. In French Canada women had rarely participated in any organizations not connected with the Church. Significantly the Guilmant Club, a musical organization formed in 1896, was composed of young French-Canadian women who had been born or had spent most of their lives in the United States. Various other groups included French-Canadian women thus indicating both the changing role of French-Canadian women and the growing affluence of the French-Canadian community. In 1900 a French-Canadian branch of the Ladies Catholic Benevolent Society was formed and in 1907 a French Protective Association for neglected French-Canadian children was organized. In the latter group, the officers were men, while the board of directors was composed entirely of women, mostly wives of prominent community leaders. Finally, by 1908 L'Union St. Jean Baptiste organized women into separate units.43

Judging from the names of the officers of the French-Canadian groups in the 1885-1910 period, it would appear that the social activity was largely confined to the middle and upper classes. Certainly the literary and musical organizations had little appeal for most factory workers, although
it is likely that many workers took advantage of the insurance protection of the L'Union or the Artisans, even if they did not participate in the social functions. The only organized groups apparently designed for the industrial worker were the ethnic social clubs which appeared in the mid-1880's. These clubs were one way of obtaining a liquor license when all public Holyoke licenses permitted under state law had been distributed. There is no evidence that French-Canadians clubs served functions other than as drinking and meeting places. Indeed, local authorities complained on occasion that a substantial part of the membership of some French-Canadian clubs was not French-Canadian. 44

Social activity in the post-1885 period was characterized by a marked increase in the number and type of organizations. There was a decline of purely religious oriented groups, although many organizations had as one of their objectives the preservation of French-Canadian cultural and religious traditions. The period saw a large number of groups dedicated to cultural and recreational pursuits. Most important, newer social groups indicated changes occurring in the French-Canadian community. The younger generation felt a need to form their own clubs which were centered more in an American milieu and French-Canadian women experienced a greater independence in their social activity than had been common in the Canadian tradition. In addition, the large number of social groups was another indication of the growing prosperity and need for status recognition within the French-Canadian community.
French-language newspapers were a potentially powerful institutional force, but this influence was very muted in Holyoke. French-language papers were published in the city from 1881 to 1964 with only brief interruptions. The papers provided the city's French-Canadian residents with local and Canadian news and exhorted them to be true to their traditional values and practices. Yet the newspaper's role as a bulwark against assimilation is misleading. The Holyoke papers generally endorsed *la survivance*, especially in the early twentieth century, but it appeared that they were fighting a battle that had already been lost.

The first French-language paper, *Le Courrier*, was begun by Dr. Moses M. Mitivier in 1874. The paper appeared to be prospering, but after attacking the wife of a prominent French-Canadian contractor, Mitivier was sued for libel. The case was settled out of court but *Le Courrier* ceased publication. *Le Defenseur*, published by Charles T. Roy, made its first appearance in September, 1884 and for the next eighty years Holyoke had a locally owned and operated French-language paper, published weekly or semi-weekly. The variety of the contents of these newspapers makes it difficult to evaluate their appeal or influence. One of the staples of the French-Canadian papers was the serialized story, *le feuilleton*, and it was not unusual for the serial to occupy one-fourth of the non-advertising space in the paper. The *feuilletons* were generally romantic novels designed to appeal to the feminine reader. The Holyoke papers reported news of Quebec in
considerable detail, although an unscientific sampling of the available papers suggests that the percentage of Canadian news diminished from 1874 to 1910. Local news, personal notes, as well as reports from other French-Canadian centers in New England occupied most of the remaining space. La Justice in 1909 and 1910 contained a surprising amount of news from France which appealed to a limited segment of the French-Canadian community. 47

The more successful French-language newspapers were Republican, but also backed French-Canadian candidates with little regard for their political philosophies. In the years that copies of La Justice are available, the political coverage was extremely low keyed. The annual state elections were hardly mentioned and while positions were taken on local issues, the passions and extreme partisanship which characterized the English-language press was lacking in La Justice. 48

The editorial content of La Justice in 1909 and 1910 emphasized the need to preserve French-Canadian culture against the pressures of assimilation. The paper identified itself, along with the clergy and the national societies, as the main force in providing unity and stability for French-Canadians. La Justice editorially praised the French Catholic schools as a vital element in French-Canadian life, urged its readers to be "firm as a rock" in matters of religion, and regarded the family as the foundation of the society and the bulwark against assimilation. 49

This editorial comment came during a period when
French-Canadian integration into the larger community was occurring at an increasingly rapid pace. It is difficult to find evidence to indicate that the newspaper's exhortations were widely heeded. The paper provided news and entertainment for the French-speaking community in Holyoke. But even if the majority of French-Canadians were in sympathy with La Justice's position concerning la survivance, their personal goals and aspirations led in another direction. The Church and French Catholic schools were still viable elements in French-Canadian life in 1910, but most French-Canadians were reaching beyond their traditional boundaries and embracing attitudes and participating in activities as Americans of French-Canadian descent.

French-Canadians, while maintaining a separate identity, strengthened their ties with the larger community in Holyoke. By the end of the nineteenth century, French-Canadians were no longer the largest single source of new immigration into the city and whatever xenophobic tendencies existed, were focused on the Poles, Russian Jews and Greeks. There were unflattering newspaper references to a "Jew peddler" who was "allegedly" robbed and to a Polish wedding which ended in a fight.50 On the other hand, French-Canadians received stalwart support and praise in the press. The Springfield Republican called Pierre Bonvouloir, after his 1886 election to the School Committee, "a representative man among his people [who] will do credit to those who elected him".51 Ophir Genest, Republican candidate for City Clerk in 1890 was
described as "a young French lawyer, bright, intelligent and progressive... He stands well with the French residents and is respected by all who know him". The Transcript took umbrage to a series of articles in Harper's in 1893 which reiterated many of the unfavorable cliches about French-Canadian immigration to New England. The Transcript disagreed that French-Canadian immigration was a "threat". The paper argued that French-Canadians had been a good influence on Holyoke and that "there will never be the slightest trouble through increased Canadian population". Similarly, in 1908 the Transcript described the French-Canadian population as "industrious, frugal and intelligently progressive". As a community newspaper the Transcript had a vested interest in maintaining pleasant relations with the French-Canadians who represented more than one-fourth of the city's population. However, in the quarter century after 1885, the tone of the Transcript's remarks concerning the French-Canadians, suggests that the paper considered them to be a permanent and valuable part of the community and entitled to their fair share of the rewards and responsibilities of city life.

French-Canadians also became active outside their own ethnic community. They were active in the Michael Davitt Land League, an organization which worked on behalf of tenant farmers in Ireland. Contractor Louis LaFrance had a summer home in the Holyoke colony at Biddeford Pool, Maine, which was made up of the city's non-French-Canadian elite, and a French-Canadian youth was elected President of the Holyoke High School
French-Canadians intermingled, while maintaining their separate identity as illustrated by the 1909 entry of a basketball team by the French Catholic Perpetual Help Church in a YMCA league which also fielded teams from the First and Second Congregational, Second Baptist, Grace and Presbyterian churches.57

While French-Canadian acceptance increased, ethnic conflict did not disappear. The rivalry with the Irish occasionally erupted into street fights and in one instance, shooting. The Irish took offense at periodic French-Canadian efforts to cross party lines and unite behind French-Canadian candidates. On St. Patrick's Day, 1910, La Justice, in a conciliatory move, published an editorial which urged better relations between the two groups and repeatedly referred to "co-operation", "adjustment" and "harmony". Yet a month later the French-Canadian paper editorially supported a statement by a French-Canadian pastor denouncing the methods by which an Irish priest lured French-Canadians away from the French Catholic parish. Rivalry with the Irish continued, but the realities of earning a livelihood muted some of the ethnic tensions. As an example, a French-Canadian barber in an Irish section instructed his son never to say anything disparaging about the Irish, explaining, "They put the bread on the table."58

The influx of newer ethnic groups into Holyoke produced some tensions with the French-Canadians, caused in part by competition for jobs and housing. A French-Canadian union
man was given a four month jail sentence for breaking the shop window of a Jewish barber who was undercutting the union scale. The Lyman Mills tenements in Ward Four attracted a large segment of the newer immigrants. Ward Four had been the first French-Canadian enclave in Holyoke, but by the mid-1880's French-Canadians had begun to move to other sections of the city as they prospered and as newer and poorer groups, especially the Polish, moved in. As a transitional area, Ward Four was the scene of frequent violent outbreaks between French-Canadians and Poles after 1885.\textsuperscript{59}

In the 1885-1910 period, Holyoke's French-Canadians became more fully integrated into the life of the larger community. French-Canadian religious, social and cultural institutions had been altered by their new environment and served to facilitate further integration, while reinforcing French-Canadian ethnic identity. Another measure, however, of the extent of social integration can be discovered through an examination of the French-Canadians' role in Holyoke politics after 1885.
NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER V

1 See for example Republican, March 26, 1886, November 2, 1886, November 19, 1891.

2 Ibid., April 16, 1889.

3 Holyoke Municipal Register, Chief of Police, Annual Report (1886-1910).


5 Transcript, February 3, 1880.

6 Ibid., October 1, 1880.

7 Ibid., August 1 and 31, 1887, October 3, 1887, October 1, 1888; Republican, June 11, 1887, July 13 and 28, 1887, August 30, 1887, July 7, 1890; Interview with Msgr. Vieu. August 30, 1974; "Canadians in Holyoke", p. 6; "Jubilé d' Or Paroissial", pp. 13-15; "Holyoke's Historic Hundredth", p. 24.

8 Transcript, December 15, 1887, January 24, 1890, May 6 and 19, 1890, September 23, 1904, November 6 and 21, 1905, February 8, 1908; Republican, May 25, 1887, June 6, 1887, October 18, 1887, May 16 and 26, 1890, October 14, 1890; "Canadians in Holyoke", p. 6; "Holyoke's Historic Hundredth", pp. 34-36; Interview with Fr. Brodeur, August 28, 1974; "Paroisse Notre-Dame du Perpétuel-Secours, 1890-1950". Holyoke, 1950, no pagination; Paroisse Immaculée Conception, "Jubilé D' Or, 1905-1955", Holyoke, 1955, no pagination.

9 Interview with Msgr. Vieu, August 26, 1974; "Canadians in Holyoke", pp. 6-8. Only one, Father Charles Crevier, could be said to have possessed traits commonly associated with Canadian curés. Fr. Crevier succeeded Fr. Landry as pastor of Precious Blood parish and served in that position until his death in 1927. He was thought by some to have been an autocrat. Crevier had hopes of becoming the Primate of French-Canadians in the United States if the Vatican permitted the organization of the Church in the United States to follow ethnic line. Accordingly, Fr. Crevier constructed a rectory of a size and grandeur that was worthy of any potential episcopal occupant.

Silvia, "Spindle City", p. 415. It would seem to be more than coincidental that French Protestant evangelists were sent to Holyoke in 1881, shortly after the volatile intra-parish conflicts of Fr. Dufresne.


French Protestant College Journal, October, 1889.


Westfield (Massachusetts) Baptist Association, Yearbook, (1887-1892); Republican, February 9, 1894.

Transcript, February 18 and 28, 1887, March 3, 4 and 26, 1887.

"Canadians in Holyoke", p. 6.

Transcript, March 28, 1889, April 5, 1892.

Ibid., November 8, 1894.

Ibid., January 14 and 20, 1894. The incident caused a minor furor in the parish. Father Landry went to the Transcript and demanded to know who provided the newspaper with information about the sermon. The editor refused to provide the name and Fr. Landry denounced the paper and called upon French-Canadians to boycott it. However, at a meeting attended by 1000 French-Canadians, the general sentiment was that such an action against the Transcript was ridiculous and those who rose in defense of Fr. Landry were shouted down. Fr. Landry was apparently no more successful than Fr. Dufresne had been in controlling matters that were outside his religious province.

Ibid., January 14, 1890.

Holyoke, Superintendent of Schools, A.R. (1880-1910); Massachusetts, Acts, 1883, Chapter 224, 1888, Chapter 348, 1890, Chapter 384, 1898, Chapter 496.

24 Holyoke, Town Report (1870), p. 29; Massachusetts, Acts, 1887, Chapter 433; Springfield Democrat, October 13 and 19, 1883; Republican, February 4, 1886, November 2, 1886, October 6, 16, 19, 20 and 25, 1887; Transcript, November 5, 1885, October 3, 1887, September 28, 1888, October 9, 1888, October 12, 1889.

25 "Canadians in Holyoke", p. 8; Transcript, September 4 and 9, 1884, January 5, 1885, August 18, 1885, August 24, 1886, March 9, 1894, September 5, 1899, March 18, 1907, August 28, 1907, June 24, 1909, June 23, 1910.


28 Republican, September 22, 1896; Transcript, February 15, 1888, May 5, 1897.

29 Transcript, July 26, 1890.

30 Quoted in Dexter, "Habitant Transplanted", p. 208.

31 Holyoke, Marriage Register, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910. The Marriage Register presents very few ambiguities. The ethnic background of most individuals is readily apparent by their surnames. In the later years, the maiden names of the married couple's mother resolves questions concerning previous ethnic intermarriage. The stated place of birth answers most questions of ethnic origins. The only difficulty lies with a few who are given the designation "Yankee" and who were born in the United States. It is possible that some had their names Anglicized, but the number of cases at issue is too few to affect the conclusions drawn in this section.

32 See for example Anderson, We Americans and Wessel, Ethnic Survey.

33 Green, Holyoke, p. 371.

34 Republican, September 1, 1884, January 5, 1885.

35 Ibid., December 21, 1886, August 25, 1888; Transcript, May 5, 1887, November 16, 1887, January 4, 1888, June 1, 1888, September 1, 1888.

36 "Holyoke's Historic Hundredth", p. 28; Republican, April 6, 1898; Transcript, August 3, 1898, January 24, 1899, April 11, 1899, August 18 and 26, 1899, March 29, 1900.

38. Transcript, January 13, 1908, December 27, 1910; Letter to author from Jacques Ducharme, May 10, 1974; Prior, "French-Canadians", pp. 241-244.


40. Named after Count de Rochambeau, a Frenchman who fought with the United States during the American Revolution.


42. Copeland, "Our County", III, p. 112; Republican, August 28, 1885, October 20, 1885, July 15, 1886, October 18, 1887, January 25, 1888, February 7 and 21, 1888, January 24, 1891, February 16, 1894, February 17, 1896, September 13, 1897; Transcript, October 31, 1885, December 30, 1886, April 8, 1889, February 13, 1890, May 9, 1896, July 16, 1898, April 20, 1899, February 26, 1902, February 16 and 24, 1904, September 23, 1909.

43. Republican, February 17, 1896; Transcript, January 13, 1897, October 17, 1900, March 21, 1907, October 5, 1908, November 8, 1910, December 13, 1910.

44. Republican, November 22, 1886, December 29, 1886, May 13, 1895; Transcript, May 5, 1894.

45. Between 1874 and 1910 there were a total of twelve French-language newspapers published in Holyoke. The majority were short-lived, lasting only a few weeks or months, and two were published elsewhere and had a page of local news inserted. The most important papers were:

Le Défenseur, 1884-1894.
La Presse, 1895-1903.
La Justice, 1902-1964.

Unfortunately, files of these papers are non-existent. A few scattered copies can be found in a collection of French-Canadian newspapers microfilmed by the Societe Franco-Americain and located at the Boston Public Library. The only reasonably complete run is that of La Justice, which begins
in April, 1909. The evaluation of the earlier newspapers is based on the few copies available, contemporary comments in the English-language press, and the descriptions provided by studies of French-Canadian newspapers, especially, Belisle, Histoire de la Presse, and Maximilienne Tetrault, Le Role de la Presse dan l'Evolution du Peuple Franco-Américain de la Nouvelle-Angleterre (Marseille: Imprimerie Ferran, 1935).

46 Transcript, October 7, 1874, November 28, 1874, March 10, 1875; Republican, February 1, 1875, March 9, 1875; La Travailleur, July 22, 1875; Belisle, Histoire de la Presse, p. 130.

47 Le Courrier, December 17, 1874; Le Défenseur, March 16, 1893; La Presse, November 17, 1899; La Justice, April, 1909 - December, 1910; Belisle, Histoire de la Presse, pp. 130-131, 281-282; Tetrault, Role de la Presse, pp. 10-45; Ducharme, Shadows of the Trees, p. 123.

48 La Justice, April, 1909 - December, 1910.

49 See for example La Justice, April 8 and 23, 1909, May 6 and 27, 1909, August 26, 1909, April 21, 1910.

50 Transcript, July 6, 1897, October 25, 1909.

51 Republican, December 12, 1886.

52 Ibid., November 16, 1890.


54 Transcript, July 1, 1893.

55 Ibid., January 29, 1908.

56 Ibid., June 28, 1899, July 31, 1909; Republican, February 20, 1886, May 21, 1886.

57 Transcript, January 22, 1909.

58 Interview with Msgr. Montcalm, October 15, 1974; Republican, April 2, 1888; Transcript, March 31, 1890, November 24, 1908; Holyoke Evening Telegram, November 3, 1906; La Justice, March 17, 1910, April 28, 1910, May 9, 1910.

59 Republican, September 30, 1890, March 12, 13 and 14, 1895, June 29, 1898; Transcript, July 17, 1903.
CHAPTER VI

THE GROWTH OF FRENCH-CANADIAN POLITICAL POWER

The improved economic well being and increased social activity of French-Canadians in Holyoke in the late nineteenth century were matched by their growing interest in local political affairs. After 1885 there was a dramatic increase in the number of French-Canadians who chose to make Holyoke their permanent home and who became United States citizens. At the same time, French-Canadians began to exhibit a degree of political power which reflected their increased prosperity and standing in the community. French-Canadian political participation was encouraged by both major political parties who sought their vote in order to control local government. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Republicans had succeed ed in capturing the majority of the French-Canadian vote which had previously been Democratic. The French-Canadians had been unable to obtain any substantial influence or recognition from the Democrats and the problem was exacerbated by conflicts with the Irish who dominated the party, and Democratic leaders had been unable to develop a unified stand on the foremost local issue of the period, control of liquor selling. Thus, Irish Democratic corruption, combined with their exclusion of French-Canadians from the political spoils, widened cultural differences and provided a rationale for the French-Canadians to turn to the GOP. In turn, the Republicans catered to French-Canadian desires for political and social recognition
by insuring that they received a share of municipal jobs as well as places on the party ticket. Although French-Canadian political independence was circumscribed by Republican party leaders, the extent of French-Canadian participation and influence belies the commonly held notion of their widespread political apathy.

As noted in Part One, native New Englanders viewed the first stages of French-Canadian migration with some concern. One common complaint was of the apparent reluctance of French-Canadians to become United States citizens. In Holyoke prior to 1886, organized French-Canadian naturalization efforts proceeded quite slowly and as a group French-Canadians were less likely to become citizens than other foreign-born immigrants. After the mid-1880's, however, French-Canadians began to take a more active interest in local affairs and yet nativist opinion raised new doubts as to the suitability of the French-Canadians. In 1893, journalist Henry Loomis Nelson expressed the apprehension felt by nativists toward French-Canadian political activity which was based largely on a faith in the resilience of American democracy and the power of assimilation rather than in the French-Canadians themselves:

It is in the local government that evil foreign influences are first felt. It will be in the town meeting that the French Canadians will first give evidence of incurable incompatibility... If it be true that he has few political virtues; if his comprehension of his power in the town meeting is dull or narrow; if, when he grows more enlightened his first impulse is to use that power for the aggrandizement of his Church; if the political knowledge that he has brought from Canada is of the commercial value of his vote - there is still little reason to believe that he will always remain unworthy of American
citizenship, and no reason whatever to fear that he will ever be a serious menace to American institutions. He may be an annoyance or an inconvenience; he may, for a time, increase the expensiveness of politics; but he will not materially damage the stalwart growth of the American democracy. It is far more reasonable to believe, whatever difficulties he may add to our present problem, that in the end we shall greatly prize his American-born descendants.

Nelson's view bore little resemblance to French-Canadian activities in Holyoke. Both the American-born French-Canadians, and Canadian-born sons of the first generation of emigrés, played an increasingly important role in political affairs. After 1885 there was a significant increase in French-Canadian naturalization and a corresponding rise in the level of their political participation. The number of French-Canadian naturalizations remained high until the Depression of 1893 when a decline reflected an economic situation which caused many French-Canadians to return to Canada. Economic recovery brought increased naturalization, although the pattern was erratic and showed substantial year to year fluctuations.

There were a number of forces which shaped French-Canadian naturalization in Holyoke after 1885. A prime factor was the French-Canadian business and professional community which desired to enlarge its influence in local matters. This phenomena was not confined to Holyoke. The General Convention of French-Canadian societies in the United States had long urged that local groups organize naturalization clubs. In the four meetings of the General Convention between 1886 and 1901 the call for naturalization was even more emphatic.
the increase in French-Canadian voters created a situation in which, for a few years, French-Canadians controlled the political balance of power in Holyoke. Unlike the earlier period, the effort to naturalize the French-Canadians became increasingly partisan and the political competition for the French-Canadian vote, while broadening the base of French-Canadian power, also had the effect of neutralizing some of its impact.

The arrival of Fr. Landry, as Fr. Dufresne's successor in the summer of 1887, proved to be an important catalyst for French-Canadian naturalization efforts. Fr. Landry was an ardent advocate of naturalization and unlike his predecessor, he actively urged his parishioners to become American citizens. Coinciding with secular naturalization campaigns, Fr. Landry's brief tenure in Holyoke marked the beginning of the most vigorous and successful naturalization efforts. After the new pastor had been in the city for a little more than a year, the *Transcript* voiced its hearty approval of his actions:

> It is pleasing to note the interest taken in the matter of citizenship by our French population. Since the advent of Rev. H. Landry a decided change has taken place in his parishioners. The listless, careless policy before noticeable in matters of politics has disappeared from the French residents and an active American spirit has taken its place... People from Canada who came to the States and grow wealthy and prosperous do well to look to their own interests in becoming citizens and taking an active part in the government and advancing their own interest as well.4

Although Fr. Landry was not responsible for the French-Canadians increased political awareness, the timing of his arrival in Holyoke proved fortuitous.

The 1885-1893 period produced some basic changes in
the French-Canadian approach to naturalization. Attempts were made to keep the naturalization clubs active year round and there was a determined effort by Republican French-Canadians to enroll their fellow countrymen who had previously tended to vote with the Democrats. In 1885, Joseph Beauchemin, a grocer and one-term Republican Ward Two Councillor, was appointed to the Board of Registrars of Voters. Beauchemin had been the principal organizer of the Union Canadienne in 1881, a group which had worked for French-Canadian naturalization. As a registrar Beauchemin was in an excellent position to encourage naturalization and at the same time to promote his own political career. He ran unsuccessfully for the School Committee in 1887, but was elected to the Board of Aldermen from Ward Two in 1889. In 1891 he proposed a state-wide organization of French-Canadian political clubs, but the venture evoked little enthusiasm.

Beauchemin was an important figure in the Lafayette Naturalization Club which was based in Ward Two. In the fall of 1887, the Lafayette Club attempted to develop a power base in the ward and made plans to operate on a year round basis. About the same time, another group of French-Canadians were organizing a naturalization club to coincide with the political season. Amid much confusion and bitter exchanges, the second group also adopted the name of Lafayette, having supposedly received assurances that Beauchemin's organization would affiliate with it. Such was not the case. After a flurry of name calling, the second group backed off and vowed not to
become involved in political activity. The nature of the dispute suggests that Beauchemin's efforts to create a city-wide club, with both political and naturalization functions, was not acceptable to all French-Canadians and thus showed the political factionalism which existed within the French-Canadian community.6

Beauchemin's Lafayette Club embarked upon a program designed to integrate French-Canadians into the mainstream of Holyoke political life. Not only did the club urge naturalization, but it also offered instruction in the English language and held discussions on political issues.7 This approach was favored by many French-Canadian leaders who believed that French-Canadian influence would only be felt if their group participated in all aspects of American life. In 1891, for example, the Holyoke newspaper L'Indépendant argued that the French-Canadians must learn English on the grounds of sheer expediency. Not only would knowledge of English be valuable in securing better jobs, but it was needed to safeguard French-Canadian political interests to prevent French-Canadians from becoming an "inferior race" in their adopted homeland.8

From 1885 to 1893 French-Canadian naturalization took place on two levels. City-wide, non-partisan groups, often with the backing of the French Catholic church, continued to operate, but usually only during the political season from September to December. By the early 1890's however, the most prominent naturalization vehicles were the clubs formed in the French-Canadian wards. These became year round organizations,
generally evolving into political clubs in which naturalization was just one facet of their undertakings. The number of French-Canadians who became United States citizens increased rapidly during this period (see Table 38 below). The French-Canadian naturalization drives both stimulated and channeled the newly found community awareness of the French-Canadians. 9

TABLE 38. - Number of French-Canadians naturalized, by age, Holyoke, 1886-1906a

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<th>Age at Naturalization</th>
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<th>26-30</th>
<th>31-35</th>
<th>36-40</th>
<th>41-46</th>
<th>46+</th>
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<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 405 242 164 70 40 68 10 999

aDerived from: Massachusetts, Holyoke District Court, Naturalization Records, 1886-1906.

Table 38 shows the pattern of French-Canadian naturalization in Holyoke between 1886 and 1906. The 1886-1893 period
was one of high naturalization activity. The Depression of 1893 had a negative effect on naturalization in 1894 and 1895. However, the number rose to 83 in 1896, the largest in any single year to that time. One salient characteristic demonstrated by Table 38 is that almost two-thirds of those who became citizens between 1886 and 1906 were thirty years of age or younger, thus suggesting that older men who had likely spent a greater part of their lives in Canada were reluctant to shed old allegiances or still harbored dreams of returning to their homeland. In 1894 and 1895 the number of new citizens thirty years and younger dropped substantially indicating perhaps that younger men with fewer ties, were mobile during the economic downturn.

The odd-even year pattern is more difficult to explain. Since both city and state elections were held annually in those years, pre-election enthusiasm is not a satisfactory answer. The bi-annual Congressional races rarely had much impact on French-Canadians, although the rise in naturalizations two years after the Presidential contests of 1896, 1900 and 1904 might offer a partial explanation.

When economic prosperity returned in 1896-1897, so did the naturalization clubs on both the ward and city-wide level. However, after 1902 there is almost no mention of naturalization efforts organized specifically for and by French-Canadians. In 1909 and 1910 the French-Canadian newspaper La Justice contained no references to naturalization in Holyoke, although it did report French-Canadian drives in neighboring towns.
Citizenship campaigns largely became the function of the city committees of the two major political parties. In addition, by the turn of the century a large part of the French-Canadian population between ages 21 and 25 were men who had been born in the United States and thus were citizens.10

French-Canadian naturalization efforts, although impressive, were still considerably less successful than those of other ethnic groups in Holyoke. The only accurate gauge of comparative naturalization by ethnic group is provided by the Federal Census of 1900.11

TABLE 39. - Naturalization of foreign-born males, by country of origin, Holyoke, 1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Foreign-born males 21+</th>
<th>Percent. of total in city</th>
<th>Aliens</th>
<th>Percent. of total aliens</th>
<th>Percent. of group aliens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada-English</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada-French</td>
<td>2450</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>1468</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>2092</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Countries</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7186  100.0  3023  42.1

Table 39 indicates that about one-third of Holyoke's foreign-born male population of voting age was French-Canadian, but that almost half of the aliens were French-Canadians. Further, of the city's major ethnic groups, only the Poles, who were more recent arrivals than the French-Canadians, had
a larger percentage of unnaturalized males. While the French-Canadian figures pale in comparison to the other ethnic groups of long residence in Holyoke (all of which, except the Germans, were English-speaking), it must be recalled that in 1885 84 percent of the French-Canadian males were aliens. The French-Canadian gains stand out even more when it is considered that during the intervening fifteen year period French-Canadian immigration to Holyoke was much greater than that of older ethnic groups.

To summarize, from 1886 through 1906, with the exception of the depression years, French-Canadian naturalization proceeded at a high rate. Nearly two-thirds of those who became United States citizens were men thirty years old or younger who had fewer ties to Canadian traditions and had likely spent most of their formative years in the United States. As the French-Canadian vote became more important in city politics, the nature of French-Canadian citizenship drives changed. Early efforts were led by French-Canadian community leaders who desired to play a larger role in local affairs. Gradually naturalization functions were taken over by the political parties who were attempting to capture the French-Canadian vote. By 1910 half of Holyoke's French-Canadians had been born in the United States and many others had spent most of their lives in their adopted homeland.

The increase in French-Canadian naturalization was accompanied by a corresponding decline in commitment, if not interest, in Canadian affairs. Next to the Church and parochial
education, the frequent interaction between Holyoke's French-Canadians and Quebec was the most important factor in reinforcing distinct cultural values. The opening of direct telephone service between the city and Canada in 1897 further facilitated the flow of information across the border. Special events, such as a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Anne de Beaupre, a private train for a reunion at St. Cesaire's College and visits of the Montreal Snowshoe Club, supplemented the normally heavy traffic between Holyoke and French Canada. This back and forth movement reached its peak during the summer months. For those unable to leave Holyoke, the Province of Quebec gave certain French-Canadian lawyers in the city the authorization to collect depositions which had legal standing in provincial courts. It was not unusual for seriously or fatally ill individuals to return to Canada to recuperate or to spend their final days with old friends and relatives. Also, Quebec, occasionally served as a place of refuge for those fleeing the law.

Canadian politics continued to be discussed in both Holyoke's English and French-language newspapers, but concern over events north of the border never again produced the emotional furor engendered by the Riel execution in 1885. In the late 1880's and early 1890's, there was a short-lived movement, headed locally by Dr. Mitivier, urging the annexation of Canada by the United States. Mitivier's position paralleled that in Canada of a small group of individuals, of whom Goldwin Smith was the best known, who looked upon
annexation as the final guarantee of Anglo-Saxon civilization in North America. Continentalism had little appeal to Canadian French who feared that annexation would bring greater pressures for assimilation. Neither Mitivier's efforts nor the brief life of the newspaper L'Annexionniste in 1892, produced much enthusiasm in Holyoke and the question of annexation quickly dissipated.¹⁸

While the amount of contact between French Canada and Holyoke increased after 1885, French-Canadian residents in the American city were in general more occupied with local rather than Canadian issues.

The growth of Holyoke produced demographic changes which altered the form of city government. By the 1880's the predominately Yankee manufacturing interests which had controlled Holyoke since its incorporation in 1850, had been forced out of political power by the immigrant groups, especially the Irish, who had come to work in the mills. Until the mid-1890's the political influence of the Irish was all pervasive and produced a social and cultural upheaval of enormous proportions. By 1900 nativists, who were appalled by what they perceived to be the corrupting influence of Irish rule, were able to challenge effectively the Irish domination of City Hall, with the aid of other immigrant groups including the French-Canadians. The successful "reform" machine, led by Mayors Chapin and Avery, soon came to terms with the Irish politicians and there was more outward decorum in city administration. However, the tenor of Holyoke politics changed
li' :le as the GOP mayors proved willing to seek political accommodations with the Democrats who usually controlled the Board of Aldermen.

The French-Canadians' perception of politics in Holyoke changed considerably from 1885 to 1910. Although French-Canadians were slower to naturalize and exercise their franchise than the Irish or Germans, they did significantly increase their proportion of the city's voters in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The French-Canadian vote which was largely Democratic in the mid-1880's became predominately Republican by the end of the century. This shift was not so much a change in the political allegiance of individuals, but rather reflected the success of the Republican Party in enrolling new French-Canadian voters. At the same time, the willingness of French-Canadians to vote with the GOP was an indication of important changes in the attitude of the French-Canadian community.19

As noted, longstanding religious and economic rivalries with the Irish, and the belief that the Democratic Party was not sufficiently accommodating, were factors in the French-Canadians' political decisions. It would be misleading to imply that the French-Canadians voted as a bloc. In 1893 the Transcript expressed the confusion of many Holyoke citizens when it asked, "Are Frenchmen Republicans or Democrats? Who can tell?"20 At this time, there were important political divisions in the French-Canadian community, often centered around personality differences. The lack of political
unanimity was both advantageous and disadvantageous for the French-Canadians. In the late 1880's and 1890's both political parties actively solicited the important French-Canadian vote with political favors. But French-Canadian leaders were continually frustrated in their efforts to organize an effective ethnic voting bloc with which they hoped to exact even greater concessions from the major political parties.

TABLE 40. - Estimated number of French-Canadian voters in Holyoke, 1885-1910a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number French-Canadian Voters</th>
<th>Total Voters in City</th>
<th>French-Canadian voters as a percentage of total voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>4046</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>600+</td>
<td>4843</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>6597</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>6687</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>2100</td>
<td>9810</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The size of the French-Canadian vote in Holyoke in any given year is difficult to determine with any precision.
After 1885 there were no statistical breakdowns of registered voters by ethnic origin. The problem of numbers is compounded by the fact that third generation French-Canadians, who become numerically important by 1900, were classified as native-born of native parents in the census returns and are thus virtually indistinguishable as an ethnic bloc. The figures in Table 40, with the exception of those for 1885, are only estimates of French-Canadian voting strength, taken from contemporary sources and available census material.

However imprecise, Table 40 does provide an indication of the relative growth of French-Canadian voting strength from 1885 to 1910. The figures on naturalization support the idea that French-Canadian voters were increasing at a rate in excess of their population growth. In 1885 French-Canadians comprised 25.8 per cent of the city’s total population, but only 6.4 per cent of its voters. By 1910 this imbalance was less severe, with French-Canadians constituting more than 20 per cent of the voters and 27 per cent of the total population. While it is true that French-Canadians were slower to naturalize and vote than English-speaking and German emigres, they compare favorably with other ethnic groups who came to Holyoke in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1910, for example, in the heavily French-Canadian Ward Two, 32 per cent of the eligible foreign-born males were naturalized, while in Ward Four, with a large Polish population, the percentage was only 23.8 per cent.

Prior to 1897 the Holyoke City Council consisted of
three common councilors and one alderman elected annually from each ward. Since the bulk of the French-Canadian population lived in Wards Two and Four, and later Ward One, this system of geographic representation worked to the advantage of French-Canadians. French-Canadians were often able to secure two of the Common Council seats from Ward Two and one from Ward Four, and on occasion benefited from party attempts to ethnically balance the tickets in other wards. From 1887 to 1895 there were between three and six French-Canadians on the twenty-one member Common Council. The French-Canadians were able to elect only three ward aldermen before 1892. However, from 1892 to 1910 every alderman that represented Ward Two was French-Canadian and in four of those years, a French-Canadian was elected from Ward Six.23

In 1896 the city charter was altered, primarily because of the opposition of the manufacturing elite to the abuses of City Council dominated by Irish Democrats. The revamping of the system of representation was not directed primarily against the French-Canadians, but it worked to their disadvantage. The 1896 charter abolished the Common Council in favor of one Board of Aldermen. One representative was elected annually from each of the city's seven wards, and fourteen aldermen were chosen in city-wide elections every two years. Each party generally included French-Canadians on their at-large slate and between 1897 and 1910, two and sometimes three French-Canadians held at-large seats.24

In 1903, the Democrats desire to include a French-
Canadian on their at-large ticket proved to be an embarrass­ment. There were eight candidates in the at-large primary in­cluding one French-Canadian, Ward Two Alderman Eugene Laramay. The Democrats agreed that the candidate with the lowest total would withdraw and that the party would endorse the remaining seven for the seven seats in the general election. Much to the surprise of the Democratic City Committee which had been actively attempting to regain the French-Canadian vote, Laramay ran last in the primary. Since the Republicans had not nominated a French-Canadian, apparently there would be no French-Canadian elected at-large. This situation brought protests from French-Canadians, and in an effort to gain their support, the Democratic Committee persuaded another at-large candidate to withdraw, making room for Laramay, who was eventually elected.25 The Laramay incident illustrates how the adoption of the new city charter subjected French-Canadians to political considerations largely beyond their control, and perhaps explains why the proportion of French-Canadians on the Board of Aldermen decreased as their voting strength increased.

The 1896 charter was the result of social conflicts in Holyoke, but the principal issue continued to be the liquor license question. In 1892 the Springfield Republican contend­ed that "...the [liquor] license question is the one thing that is on the minds of the politicians from one years end to another."26 The competition for licenses and control of liquor selling were paramount considerations in Holyoke's
political life in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the French-Canadians played an important role in determining how these issues were resolved.

Until 1894 the power to grant liquor licenses was vested in the seven member Board of Aldermen and, as a result, their political leverage was considerable. In the 1880's, 100 to 160 licenses were issued annually and an unknown number of illegal saloons flourished. The police force, which until 1888 was appointed yearly by the Mayor, was not large enough to enforce the license laws and also was constrained or uninterested because of the power and interests of the Mayor and Council. The situation was made more acute by an 1889 Massachusetts law which linked the number of licenses to population and reduced Holyoke's total to twenty-seven, though with growth this figure rose later to thirty-five. The new law considerably increased the pressures on the Aldermen and led to the candidacy of individuals whose sole task was that of balancing the competing liquor interests in their wards. Political careers were made or lost by the alderman's ability to deliver the promised number of licenses. Whatever their personal motives, the aldermen attempted to bring some order to the situation by raising license fees to over $1000 annually, both as a revenue measure and as a means of discouraging potential applicants. Even with the high fees, the number of applicants usually exceeded the available licenses by three or four times. The most effective method of awarding licenses was by means of a "ring" or "combination".
Four or five aldermen favorable to the liquor interests would meet privately in the weeks prior to the granting of licenses and work out a distribution that was mutually agreeable. If the "ring", with a majority of votes on the Board, remained intact, as was usually the case, the licenses were awarded with a minimum of public bickering. Critics of "ring rule" argued that this system bred the most unsavory sort of political maneuvering. The most flagrant abuses were committed by the political machine of Michael Connors, an alderman and cigar distributor. Connors' success was due to his control of liquor patronage and after his election to the City Council in 1891 he became the key element in the "ring". Allegedly, saloon keepers who wanted a license were required to purchase a liberal supply of cigars from Connors.27

French-Canadians, no matter what they felt about the merits of the liquor license distribution system, were generally opposed to the imposition of legal prohibition. While some French-Canadian tavern owners personally benefited from traffic in liquor, the general sentiment among French-Canadians, sometimes even expressed from the pulpit, was that total prohibition was impossible and that regulated liquor selling was preferable to abuses that might arise from widespread illegal selling.28 Massachusetts law required an annual referendum on liquor selling, which was held in conjunction with the city election in December. The French-Canadian Ward Two usually returned a vote of at least two to one, and at times as high as five to one, against prohibition. On at
least two occasions, in 1892 and 1898, French-Canadians pro-
vided the margin which kept Holyoke from going dry.  

The liquor issue brought many French-Canadian business-
men into the political arena. Between 1886 and 1892, a French-
Canadian served on the Board of Aldermen, the body which
awarded licenses, for only one term. However French-Canadians,
particularly through their representatives on the Common
Council, were able to obtain a respectable number of licenses.
In 1889, when the license restriction law went into effect,
the scramble and bargaining for permits became intense. A
prime example of maneuvering concerned Napoleon Aubertin,
elected to the Common Council in 1888 from Ward Four and a
long time saloon keeper. Aubertin was unable to secure one
of the twenty-seven licenses issued in 1889 but was success-
ful in making an arrangement with an Irish liquor vendor,
Thomas Lawler. Lawler received permission to move his tavern
to Aubertin's premises. The saloon was operated by Aubertin
and he reportedly paid Lawler $3000 for this arrangement,
three times the cost of the license.  

In December, 1889, grocer and liquor seller Joseph Beauchemin was successful in
his race for alderman from Ward Two, but only after he public-
ly announced that he was retiring from the liquor business.
Beauchemin had the misfortune to head the alderman's com-
mittee on liquor licenses. The committee members were unable
to agree among themselves and the award of licenses caused
sufficient dissatisfaction among Beauchemin's constituents
to prevent his re-election in 1890.
In 1891, French-Canadians became even more successful in the quest for liquor licenses following the election of two of their number to the Board of Aldermen. Ward Two shoe dealer Antioine Marcotte and Ward Six trucker Mederic LaPorte, both Republicans, became members of the liquor "ring". With Michael Connors, Laporte, whose election campaign had been marred by charges that he promised licenses in return for political support, was one of the most aggressive aldermen in the "combination". French-Canadians secured seven of the thirty-five first class licenses issued, causing the Transcript to remark, "What an atmosphere of France and Canada there is about the licenses for 1892". Alderman Marcotte was content to work his influence on behalf of two of his constituents, Labarre and Monat, who were seeking a joint license. Marcotte agreed to demolish a tenement he owned if Labarre and Monat succeeded, as they did, in getting a license. In return the saloon keepers erected a structure on the site, paid a rental to Marcotte and agreed to turn over ownership of the building to the alderman in three years time. Marcotte's single-mindedness in the license matter was a prime reason for his defeat in the next election to Democrat Frederick St. Martin, who prudently made promises of licenses if elected. Rumors that LaPorte had offered a license to an Irish alderman in return for the latter's acquiescence in the decisions of the "ring", did not prevent his re-election.

In 1893 LaPorte was again a leading figure in the "ring" and St. Martin replaced Marcotte. However, the harmony
which usually prevailed in the "ring" was shattered, primarily because St. Martin would not honor promises for licenses that he had made during the campaign. The dissolution of the "ring" threw the license awarding process into disarray. St. Martin was briefly able to take advantage of the confusion and four licenses were granted to his French-Canadian constituents in Ward Two. However, through the efforts of Connors and LaPorte a new unity was soon achieved. Within a week the aldermen reconsidered the licenses that had already been granted and gained a measure of revenge for the turmoil St. Martin had instigated, withdrawing approval for three of the Ward Two licenses which he had sponsored.34

While the liquor issue crossed party lines, the Irish Democratic domination of elected offices in Holyoke in the late 1880's and early 1890's was the major factor in the perpetuation of "ring rule." The efforts of both Democratic and Republican mayors to enforce strictly the liquor selling laws proved futile. Two mayors took the drastic step of refusing to sign licenses approved by the aldermen until those previously convicted of license violations were purged from the list. But political pressures and the need for the license revenue35 forced these mayors to relent and sign the permits. To predominately Yankee manufacturing leaders in Holyoke, manipulation of the liquor licenses was the most irritating aspect of Irish Democratic rule. Their moralistic opposition to the abuses of the license system masked much of their resentment at being replaced as the city's political leaders.
The Yankee elite dominated the local Republican Party, although numerical necessity required that they seek political support from the English, Scotch, German and part of the French-Canadian communities. Within the GOP, some voters called for total prohibition. On a few occasions, usually in conjunction with state-wide efforts, the prohibitionists came very close to their goal in the annual liquor referendum. By and large, however, the dominant figures in the Republican Party used the liquor issue to gain support and break the political control of the Irish. Although Holyoke usually returned a respectable majority for the Democratic candidates in state elections, local Republicans were not without victories at the state level. In 1888 they were able to shepherd successfully, as an amendment to the city charter, a police tenure bill which made all police appointments, except that of Chief, permanent, through the Republican-dominated General Court. But the 1889 license restriction law made the enforcement of illegal selling most difficult and some on the police force were inclined to overlook violations.  

The unsavory aspects of the license distribution in 1893 gave Republicans an opportunity to make structural changes in city government. The Democrats nominated an associate of "ring" boss Connors for mayor, while the GOP put forth a former police chief, Marciene Whitcomb, who had long opposed "ring rule". Whitcomb was elected by a margin of nine votes and once in office directed the police to enforce the laws concerning liquor selling. At the same time, the Republicans
in the General Court introduced legislation to create municipal liquor commissions, appointed by the mayor, to act on license approval matters. As the bill was making its way through the legislature, the 1894 "ring" was formed by Connors and St. Martin. St. Martin had apparently mended his political fences for half of the applicants from his ward received licenses. Mayor Whitcomb delayed signing the licenses until the liquor commission bill was enacted. Whitcomb then appointed the commission which took new applications and subsequently rescinded the licenses of many tavern owners, including some French-Canadians who had been aided by St. Martin.37

It soon became apparent that neither the liquor commission nor the revised 1896 city charter, which increased Republican strength in the city, could control the Irish machine. In 1895, Whitcomb, who had been elected state senator, was able to maneuver a bill through the General Court which would have permitted the governor to appoint a police commission, which in turn would control the granting of licenses. But opposition from the City Council and pressure from state-wide liquor interests, induced Governor Greenhalge (Rep.) to veto the Whitcomb Bill in the name of home rule.30

With the Board of Aldermen now removed from liquor license distribution, the Democratic machine focused on recapturing the mayor's chair and the patronage that went with it. In 1895 Connors' lieutenant, James Curran and in 1897, Connors himself, both won election as chief executive and both received overwhelming support from the French-Canadian
wards. Connors' one year administration was the high point of Democratic influence in Holyoke prior to 1910. The "ring" boss gave lip service to the enforcement of the liquor laws, but his opponents soon charged bribery and corruption in the awarding of licenses, and two liquor commissioners resigned in disgust. Ironically, the Connors' machine was destroyed not by its own malfeasance, but as a result of a scandal not directly related to his organization. In the summer of 1898 it was discovered that the City Tax Collector, James Keough, had embezzled $150,000 of city funds. The Keough scandal proved to be the catalyst which brought the bulk of the French-Canadian vote into the Republican Party and helped insure GOP domination of city politics for the next twelve years.

The Republican machine was put together by W. F. Whiting, son of a former Holyoke mayor and Congressman. Whiting was a paper manufacturer and later a member of Calvin Coolidge's cabinet. Whiting's brother-in-law, Arthur Chapin, was the successful Republican mayoral candidate in 1898 and he occupied the mayor's office until 1904, when he was elected State Treasurer. Chapin's successor as mayor was Nathan Avery, who also served six terms and was closely allied with the Whiting organization. The twelve years, 1899-1910, of unbroken Republican control of the mayor's office were marked by a business oriented approach to city government. The most flagrant abuses in the license system were controlled. On the surface, Republican rule was efficient and honest, although
the Republicans used patronage to come to an accommodation
with the city's Democratic politicians who normally controlled
the Board of Aldermen.41

An important part of the Republican's success was
their ability to capture the larger proportion of the French-
Canadian vote. The French-Canadians had generally voted
Democratic in both state and city elections, but by the late
1880's and during the 1890's there were signs that a shift
was taking place. The McKinley-Bryan campaign momentarily
disrupted past voting patterns in Holyoke. For the first
time since the Civil War, the GOP carried Holyoke in a Presi-
dential race and in the heavily French-Canadian Ward Two,
which had supported Cleveland in the three past elections,
voters supported McKinley by a margin of almost two to one.42
Yet it was not national or state politics, but local issues
which put the French-Canadians solidly in the Republican camp.

As with the size of the French-Canadian voting bloc,
the nature of the "French-Canadian vote" is equally difficult
to determine with precision. Only in Ward Two, and there not
until the 1890's, did the French-Canadians constitute a major-
ity of residents. In 1900, Wards One and Four had a French-
Canadian population of 30 to 35 per cent and 15 to 18 per
cent respectively. Therefore, only in Ward Two are French-
Canadian voting patterns somewhat discernible. In the years
1886-1898, in the annual election for mayor, Ward Two, which
was divided into two precincts in 1895, generally returned
a majority of 60 to 65 per cent for the Democratic candidate.
The French-Canadians of Ward Two were closely tied to the patronage machine of the Irish as indicated by the two to one and three to one margins received by Michael Connors in his 1896 and 1897 mayoral campaigns. The scandal of 1898 and the growing realization on the part of many French-Canadians that they had been receiving short shrift from the Irish Democrats altered their voting habits. The switch to the Republican Party was made more difficult for French-Canadians because of their longstanding opposition to prohibition which found its strongest political voice in the GOP. The events of 1898 had revived the hopes of the anti-liquor forces, as well as those who simply wanted an honest city administration. This dichotomy was reflected in the 1898 vote in Ward Two, especially in Precinct 2A with a population nearly two-thirds French-Canadian. Although the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mayor</th>
<th>Liquor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapin(R)</td>
<td>Sheehan(D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Total</td>
<td>2949</td>
<td>2584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precinct 2A</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precinct 2B</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aHolyoke, Election Register, City Clerk's Office, 1898.

Republican candidate, Chapin, did not receive a majority of the ward's vote, he did get a larger percentage than any other GOP
mayoral hopeful in fifteen years. The prohibitionists came within 69 votes of making Holyoke dry, but French-Canadians made it clear that to them reform meant strict control of liquor not prohibition. The 66.8 per cent vote of liquor licensing in Precinct 2A was only slightly less than the city's largest margin, 67.9 per cent in the largely German precinct, 3B.

Through the use of the liquor question and political appointments, the Republicans were able to consolidate their gains among the French-Canadians and from 1899 to 1910, with one exception, Precinct 2A was in the GOP column in the mayoral elections.

TABLE 42. - Republican mayoral vote, by percentage, Precinct 2A, Holyoke, 1896-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1896</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1906</th>
<th>1907</th>
<th>1908</th>
<th>1909</th>
<th>1910</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[a\] Holyoke, Election Register, City Clerk's Office, 1896-1910

\[b\] Three-way race

The French-Canadian vote in Wards One and Four is more difficult to determine. Ward One was a former Irish enclave into which the French-Canadians had begun to move in the 1890's. Both precincts generally went 55-70 per cent for the Democratic mayoral candidate and the French-Canadian vote, indicated by activities on behalf of each party, appeared
to be split. Most of the French-Canadians in Ward Four lived in Precinct 4A, a section which included the Lyman Mills tenements. Ward Four had been the original French-Canadian area in Holyoke, but in the 1890's they were being replaced by the Polish immigrants who took over the lowest paying jobs in the cotton textile mills. By 1900 approximately one-fourth to one-third of 4A was French-Canadian. Precinct 4B was largely Irish and although both Ward Four precincts were Democratic, there were significant differences in their voting patterns. In the Irish 4B, the Democratic margin was always greater than in the other precinct, suggesting that the Republicans were the recipients of a good share of the French-Canadian vote in 4A.\(^{45}\)

There were major differences not only in the ethnic makeup of the three French-Canadian wards, but in the economic structure as well. Table 43 provides information on those French-Canadians who paid property taxes of $100 or more in Wards One, Two and Four in selected years from 1875 to 1900.\(^{46}\)

Table 43 clearly shows the movement of major French-Canadian property holding into Ward One in the 1890's, and especially into Ward Two, and the decline in property holding in Ward Four. By 1898 there were many French-Canadians in Ward Two to whom the idea of an honest, business-like government would appeal. But the French-Canadians growing affinity for the Republican Party was not simply a by-product of their increased affluence. The change in voting patterns, which is evident after 1898, indicates that the revelation of the
TABLE 43. Number of French-Canadian residents of Wards One, Two, and Four, who paid $100 or more in property taxes, Holyoke, 1875-1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Amount of Tax</th>
<th>1875</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1885</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1895</th>
<th>1900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$100-200</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$200-500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$500-1000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Democratic scandal gave some French-Canadians a moral rationale to abandon their old political allegiances. In addition, they could no longer rely on Democratic largess. The political change was not complete and the importance of local issues is shown in Precinct 2A which generally continued to return a Democratic majority in the annual gubernatorial races in the years 1898-1910, while voting for the Republican candidate for mayor in the city election a month later.  

The most influential French-Canadian Democrat in Holyoke was Pierre Bonvouloir. Bonvouloir was a successful grocer who was later instrumental in establishing the French-Canadian-owned City Cooperative Bank in 1889. Bonvouloir harbored political ambitions and had made a number of unsuccessful attempts to gain election to the Common Council. In 1886, in an effort to oust an incumbent, anti-liquor Republican
mayor, the Democrats nominated Bonvouloir for a school committee at-large seat in order to attract French-Canadian votes. He was only the second French-Canadian to run city-wide and his nomination began a period in which the French-Canadian vote became a commodity of value in Holyoke. At the nominating caucus Bonvouloir stressed the nature of his voter appeal, claiming that he was representative of a "race" which the Democrats should recognize. Bonvouloir ran considerably ahead of his party's ticket in the French-Canadian wards and was elected by a narrow margin, while the Democratic mayoral candidate lost by 58 votes.48

Bonvouloir was re-elected to the School Committee in 1888 by a margin of almost two to one city-wide. The next year he sought the office of City Treasurer. He had the misfortune to encounter a popular Republican incumbent and his candidacy was hurt by intraparty feuds with the Irish. Special efforts were made by the French-Canadian community to forget party differences and unite behind Bonvouloir, the first of their race to run for a municipal administrative position.49

The French-Canadian efforts moved the Republican Transcript to remark that "the disadvantage of having to run against a Frenchman in this city is apparent. The Frenchmen have drawn the line of nationalism very foolishly and every man of the men who vote at all may be relied upon to vote for Bonvouloir. It is not too much to expect every American to rebuke such an assumption by placing his ballot where it belongs".50 Doctor Mitivier replied to the newspaper's charges and indicated that
the general feeling in the French-Canadian community had reached the point where meaningful political representation should be expected. Mitivier claimed that the "wholesale condemnation of their sympathy for one of their countrymen does not seem to have been inspired by a great sense of justice" and argued that the Transcript's position was "not founded on Mr. Bonvouloir's qualifications, but simply to punish the French people and because of their sympathy for him."51

Bonvouloir was defeated by more than 300 votes, while the Democratic candidate for mayor won by approximately the same margin, a result which caused considerable resentment among Holyoke's French-Canadians. Dr. Mitivier blamed the Transcript for the defeat, but the paper was more accurate, claiming that "Mr. Bonvouloir has been the victim of a scheme and of the imprudence of his friends."52 Many French-Canadians believed that the scheme was hatched by the Irish Democratic leaders who had engineered Bonvouloir's nomination to get French-Canadian support, but then failed to help him in the general election. This speculation was borne out in part by the election returns which showed Bonvouloir running slightly ahead of the Democratic ticket in the French-Canadian areas, but considerably behind in otherwise Democratic sections of the city. The campaign left a legacy of bitterness and some French-Canadians vowed to be more careful before giving their support again to the Democratic Party.53

The Republicans tried to capitalize on this dissatis-
faction by running a French-Canadian, Ophir Genest, for City Clerk in 1890. They succeeded to the extent that, although losing, Genet ran as much as two to one ahead of other Republicans in the French-Canadian wards. The following year the Republicans even approached Bonvouloir, whose stature had been enhanced by his association with the City Cooperative Bank, and offered to support him for the School Committee race in order to dissuade him from making another attempt for the office of City Treasurer. But Bonvouloir proved loyal to the Democracy and ran strongly for City Treasurer, losing by only sixty votes. In 1892, with the Republican City Treasurer running for mayor, Bonvouloir won the post capturing 60 per cent of the votes. Bonvouloir remained City Treasurer until 1932. He became a political institution in Holyoke and was rarely challenged at the polls. His ability and reputation for honesty were unmatched in Holyoke politics during this period. In 1901 when he did face opposition, the Republican Transcript urged voters to return Bonvouloir for he was "safe, sound and conservative." In 1898, without his knowledge, the Democratic State Convention nominated Bonvouloir for State Treasurer. The Democrats had little chance of capturing any office on the lower part of the state ballot during these years, and the nomination, which Bonvouloir declined, was in large part a goodwill gesture toward the French-Canadian vote. Bonvouloir remained active in Holyoke politics and his influence helped hold some French-Canadians in the Democratic Party. The importance of Bonvouloir's political rise was not
lost on the Republicans and they dutifully courted the French-Canadian vote, especially through appointments to various city commissions. In the 1880's French-Canadians had been appointed to the Park Commission, Board of Assessors and Registrar of Voters, but in the 1890's the custom became institutionalized. Unofficially there was a "French-Canadian seat" on the Board of Registrar of Voters, Park Commission, Board of Assessors, Fire Commission, Board of Public Works, the Overseers of the Poor, and various less important positions. French-Canadian vacancies were, with few exceptions, filled by other French-Canadians. Most of the appointees were Republican, because from 1893 through 1910 the GOP controlled the mayor's office for all but two years. Even the two Democratic mayors found it expedient to re-appoint Republican French-Canadians or replace them with Democratic French-Canadians. The Republicans used these appointments to consolidate support among French-Canadian business interests appointing, for example, Gilbert Potvin, Jr. to the Board of Public Works, 1897-1909 and Daniel Proulx as Fire Commissioner, 1898-1903. They also rewarded politically faithful French-Canadians who they had used to balance the GOP ticket, eg. P. T. Tetrault, Sealer of Weights and Measures, 1906, John D. Goddu, Sealer of Weights and Measures, 1907-1910, and O. H. Genest, Registrar of Voters, 1894-1897. The Republican mayors also used appointive posts to side track the careers of ambitious politicians, for example, M. J. LaPorte, Park Commissioner, 1894-1897 and Fire Commissioner, 1894-1897, and
William Beaudro, Board of Assessors, 1908-1929. Commenting on businessman Daniel Proulx's appointment, the Transcript candidly admitted Proulx represented a group "to which it is necessary to cater a considerable extent on account of the strong vote which that class controls." 

LaPorte, in the 1890's and Beaudro, a decade later, were aldermen with ambitions to become mayor and challenge the Yankee elite that controlled the Republican machine. The party quashed the ambitions of both and then gave them appointive positions in an effort to restore harmony and soothe French-Canadian feelings. LaPorte was perhaps the most powerful Republican politician of the period and proved to be a difficult man for the party leaders to control. As a leader of the liquor "ring", LaPorte had built a power base which was not confined to the French-Canadian community. He had unsuccessfully sought the mayor's nomination in 1893 and was consoled with a seat on the Park Commission. He was unsuccessful again in 1896 and then given a post on the Fire Commission. In 1897, when it appeared that the colorless incumbent Republican mayor would not run for re-election, LaPorte announced again. The party leaders felt that LaPorte was too close to the liquor interests and pursued the mayor to run once more. LaPorte was still able to make a strong showing in the party caucus and the incumbent retained the nomination only by the adroit use of his power of appointment to the Liquor Commission. LaPorte's candidacy so split the Republicans that the Democrats elected Michael Connors, the head of the liquor "ring", as mayor.
In the twentieth century the Republicans were again able to solidify French-Canadian support by providing state positions to a number of Holyoke French-Canadians, including LaPorte. 57

A number of city commissions and boards were appointed by the Board of Aldermen, giving French-Canadian politicians an opportunity to barter and bargain for positions for their supporters. When "ring politics" was in full flower, Democrat Frederick St. Martin was able to secure the appointment of his brother, Joseph, a dry goods clerk, to a seat on the Board of Assessors, a position which he held for fifteen years. In 1900 four French-Canadian aldermen, one Democrat and three Republicans, agreed to join with four Republican aldermen to appoint a Water Commissioner. In return, French-Canadian Dr. George Robert, was appointed City Physician. 58 A similar arrangement with the Democrats had fallen through a few years earlier when three Democratic French-Canadian aldermen voted for a Water Commissioner, only to have their French-Canadian candidate for City Physician rejected. 59

Paralleling the development of the practice of appointing French-Canadians to certain municipal positions, party leaders began to guarantee French-Canadians a certain number of elected positions on the City Council. In discussing the possible successor to a French-Canadian Common Councilor in 1888, the Transcript announced that he should be French-Canadian too since it was generally agreed that "the French residents are supposed to have at least one representative in the council". 60 Both parties usually accepted this axiom,
and especially before the abolition of the Common Council in 1896, the slates in the French-Canadian wards generally included one or more French-Canadian candidates for the council. Noting in 1895 that the Democratic ticket in Ward Four, put together by Alderman P. O'Shea, contained a French-Canadian, the Transcript commented that "it is no more than right that the French should have a representative in the council. P. O'Shea has always brought a Frenchman with him when elected. P O' is a hustler always". 61

By the early 1890's both parties in effect acknowledged that the alderman's seat in Ward Two should go to a French-Canadian and rarely did either nominate a candidate who was not French-Canadian. Until the dismantling of the Democratic "ring" in the late 1890's and because of the size of the Irish Democratic vote, the Republican Party needed the French-Canadian vote more than their opponents. The large Irish vote, plus the constant warfare on liquor related issues between Irish politicians, caused the Democratic leaders to ignore the political sensibilities of the French-Canadians and allowed the GOP to make inroads. This was especially true among those French-Canadians who became voters in the late 1880's and after, who had less allegiance to the Democratic Party and had repeatedly witnessed the cavalier manner in which the Democrats treated the French-Canadian community. The Republicans took full advantage of this situation and included many more French-Canadians on their tickets than did the Democrats. As was the case with their patronage
appointments, the GOP French-Canadian nominees were given visibility and prestige, but usually had little chance of achieving election or power. On eight occasions between 1889 and 1910 a French-Canadian was on the Republican slate for either City Clerk, State Representative or State Senate. Of these, only John Goddu, a 1905 State Representative candidate, was successful.  

In spite of their client status within the Republican Party, more French-Canadians gravitated to the GOP because the Republicans made more promises and offered more opportunities than did the Democrats. Even the brief flurry of American Protective Association activity within the Republican Party between 1893 and 1895 did not deter the French-Canadians. When the Republicans began to move against the Irish machine in the late 1890's, they emphasized their support of the French-Canadian community. In 1900, for example, when a Democratic circular, printed in French, attacked the Republicans for doing nothing for the French-Canadians, the Transcript responded with a list of fourteen Republican French-Canadians who held elective or appointive office in the city. In the first decade of the twentieth century the Transcript continually emphasized the support that the GOP received from leading French-Canadians and ridiculed Democratic professions of concern for the French-Canadians.  

After the embarrassing defeat of Laramay in the Democratic primary in 1903 the Republican newspaper chortled, "The Democrats' love for the French residents over which they have shown so much concern the last
The pre-election promise of French-Canadian appointments to the posts of Liquor Commissioner and City Marshall by Democratic mayoral candidate Ryan in 1905, brought a sardonic reply from a "French Citizen" who thought the idea "that Ryan would appoint a Frenchman City Marshall or as a License Commissioner is amusing".

The Democrats unwittingly abetted the Republicans by a series of political blunders which further alienated the French-Canadian community. During the 1894 campaign in which liquor was the overriding issue, "ring" boss Connors offended many French-Canadian Democrats by claiming that he could buy all the French-Canadian votes in Ward Four with $25 or the promise of a license. In 1899 Democratic leader John Sheehan published an article in his newspaper, The Free Press, indicating that his party would win even if the entire French-Canadian vote went Republican. This statement produced an angry letter in the Transcript from a Democratic "French Voter". "It was a bad piece of diplomacy on the part of Mr. Sheehan's organ because it cast a slur on the French vote as not being very important and of small account". The failure of the Democrats to nominate any French-Canadians on their city-wide slate in 1896 further eroded their support. Only after 1906, when the liquor interests in the party had been repudiated, did the Democrats again actively solicit the French-Canadian vote through nominations and appointments to party positions, a practice which had been common in the Republican Party for
nearly two decades. The Democratic advertisements acknowledged the Republican preference of French-Canadians, but urged them to believe that the Democratic Party now had their best interests at heart. For the most part Democratic appeals went unheeded, and in city-wide elections, most French-Canadians favored the Republicans.67

The differing treatment of French-Canadians by the two political parties influenced their vote. In general, Republicans proved more accommodating, primarily because they needed the French-Canadian vote if they were to have any chance of unseating the Irish. While the French-Canadians had only a marginal influence in the policy of the GOP, their political sensibilities were handled carefully and they were given positions of prestige and visibility within the party and in Republican city administrations. On the other hand, cultural and ethnic differences between the Irish and French-Canadians led the Irish-controlled Democratic Party to alienate the French-Canadian voters by only reluctantly appointing or nominating French-Canadians and failing to support those French-Canadians who did run as Democrats.

French-Canadians had some leverage and bargaining power because of the political balance in Holyoke, but before 1910 they were seldom in a position to control events. One of the most conspicuous aspects of French-Canadian political activity was the failure of their leaders to unify French-Canadians and effectively use their power to their advantage. Repeated attempts were made to elect French-Canadian candidates,
regardless of party, but usually the efforts failed because of political differences, personal feuds or overzealousness.

In the 1880's and 1890's French-Canadian political clubs were created each year in the wards with a large French-Canadian population. These groups were independent of one another and usually non-partisan. The major purpose of these clubs was to unite French-Canadian voters behind the same candidates and then attempt to persuade one of the political parties to include them on their slate. Until the Common Council was abolished in 1896, the likelihood that one or more of the three nominees for the Council would be French-Canadian was reasonably good. However, the process of candidate selection clearly shows that French-Canadians wishes were at the mercy of party leaders. It was not uncommon for the French-Canadian caucus to result in more disunity than harmony. In 1893, for example, the Ward Two French Independent Club was torn apart by disagreements over a choice for alderman. The position of the French-Canadians in ward politics was weakened further by disputes within the ward, especially within the Democratic Party. Feuding Irish politicians, each seeking the ward's alderman's chair, would present separate slates for the Common Council to the ward caucus. Each ticket would usually include at least one French-Canadian for ethnic balance, a practice which further split French-Canadian influence. In the early twentieth century, French-Canadian political organization was carried out largely under the auspices of the broader political organizations.
In the case of Pierre Bonvouloir, French-Canadian ethnic pride outweighed political affiliation and he enjoyed nearly unanimous support from the French-Canadian community during his long political career. However, other French-Canadian aspirants were not as fortunate. In a special edition before the election in 1887, the normally Republican _Le Defenseur_ urged its readers to support all French-Canadian candidates except Joseph Beauchemin, a GOP hopeful for the Ward Two seat on the School Committee and an active political figure in the French-Canadian community. Beauchemin was defeated by a non-French-Canadian and shortly after a letter, signed with the pseudonym "Emil", appeared in _Le Travailleur_ of Worcester charging _Le Defenseur's_ owners, the Roy brothers, with treachery and ingratitude. "Emil" alleged that Beauchemin had befriended the Roys with financial support when they first came to Holyoke and that the paper's attack did a disservice to French-Canadian interests. The French-Canadian newspaper replied that Beauchemin's educational qualifications did not warrant the paper's support:

> It is evident to any sensible person that the election of a candidate to a position he could fill with neither distinction or honor, would be most prejudicial to the influence exercised by the French-Canadians. It would be better not to have public trusts filled by Canadians than by persons who are notoriously incapable of fulfilling their duties. By their non-capabilities they reflect discredit on their fellow countrymen.

The "Emil" incident aroused much controversy among French-Canadians and illustrates how personal difference could easily shatter French-Canadian political unity.
The Republican machine which had won the city election in 1898, moved to strengthen its support among French-Canadians by nominating Daniel Proulx for the State Senate the following year. Proulx was an attractive candidate, with excellent prospects for election and received the full support of the Republican Party. The Transcript called his nomination "both wise and strong. It will give the French people a chance for legislative representation. They have never gotten so very much politically from either party. This year all French voters ought to be Republican for Senator at least". In spite of the impressive support from Republican and French-Canadian leaders, Proulx lost. Some 500 French-Canadian voters, approximately the margin of Proulx's defeat, did not cast ballots in the election, causing the Holyoke French-Canadian newspaper to conclude that the French-Canadians had made themselves a laughing stock and had diminished the value of the French-Canadian vote.

If apathy was an ingredient in Proulx's defeat, overzealous support could also prove fatal. In 1906 John Goddu, a one term State Representative, was selected to challenge the same Irish Democratic State Senator who had beaten Proulx seven years earlier. La Justice destroyed any hope of victory for Goddu when the newspaper asked Democratic French-Canadians "Why should you deliberately propose to sacrifice the only chance we have to send one of our own to the Senate?" The reaction from the French-Canadian community to this remark indicates the degree to which they had become politically
independent. Many expressed their outrage at La Justice's statement and reportedly hundreds decided to vote Democratic in protest. A similar incident occurred two years later when La Verdette, a short-lived rival to La Justice, supported a French-Canadian candidate by publishing remarks which ridiculed the Irish. French-Canadian politicians quickly disassociated themselves from the La Verdette statement, but their candidate, the first French-Canadian chairman of the School Committee, was not reelected.

In the 1890's the French-Canadian vote shifted towards the Republican camp in city-wide elections. But in races between two French-Canadians the results were not so predictable. The heavily French-Canadian Precinct 2A supported the Republican candidate for mayor in every election except one between 1899 and 1910. In the same twelve year period the ward was represented by Democratic aldermen for ten of those years. While most of the ward's voters perceived that French-Canadian interests would be better advanced by the city's Republicans, in ward politics, personalities, patronage and effectiveness in office overcame partisan considerations.

Prior to 1910, French-Canadians in Holyoke increased their political influence but were not generally able to exhibit power independent of the two major political parties, or dominance within one. Throughout this period, French-Canadian community leaders could not politically unite the French-Canadians and use their vote to gain more patronage. Local political circumstances permitted Republicans to be
more accommodating than the Democrats to the French-Canadians, as Republicans attempted to increase their power base and oust the entrenched Irish machine. The GOP offered more than political accommodation. The French-Canadians had been predominately Democratic in the 1870's and 1880's and followed the political lead of their co-religionists, the Irish. The growth and changes which had become evident in the French-Canadian community by the mid-1880's also changed their perceptions of the two political parties, particularly in local affairs. The Republicans were able to convince the French-Canadians that they were the party of integrity and stability without raising the specter of anti-Catholicism and anti-immigration which existed within some elements of the party. At the same time, the Democrats made the decision easier for the French-Canadians by their administration of the liquor "ring" and their apparent lack of concern with French-Canadian political feelings. By 1900 the second generation had become politically active and although less susceptible to overt ethnic flattery, were still not able to make significant inroads into the political power structure and thus continued to take what they could from the Republicans.
NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER VI

2 Gatineau, Convention Générales, pp. 161, 284, 491.
3 Transcript, August 31, 1887, September 19, 1888, October 1, 1888.
4 Ibid., September 1, 1888.
5 Ibid., December 19, 1891; "Holyoke's Historic Hundredth", pp. 38-39, 43.
6 Transcript, March 26, 1886, April 3, 1886, April 22, 1887, September 9, 10, 13 and 22, 1887; Republican, March 24, 1886, October 22, 1886.
7 Transcript, October 18 and 25, 1887, November 15, 1887; Republican, September 17, 1887.
8 Transcript, January 30, 1891.
9 Ibid., May 7, 1886, January 4, 1889, September 23 and 25, 1889, September 5, 1891, September 7 and 8, 1892; Republican, August 14, 1888, September 19 and 30, 1889, October 9, 1890, November 17, 1893.
10 La Justice, April, 1909 - December, 1910; Republican, August 31, 1896, September 30, 1897; Transcript, February 13, 1897, September 19, 1898, September 25, 1899, September 18, 1900, September 16, 1901, September 4, 1902, September 25, 1906.
11 U.S., Bureau of the Census, 1900, Vol. I, pp. 938-941, 946-149. In the 1910 Census, Vol. II, p. 881, there is no ethnic breakdown of alien males 21 years and older. The 1910 figures are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Foreign-Born Males 21 Years and Older</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naturalized</td>
<td>3765</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Papers</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aliens</td>
<td>4615</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the percentage of aliens is higher in 1910 than in 1900, given, first the high level of French-Canadian naturalization in the intervening decade (Table 38), second, the increase in the Polish and Russian population, and, finally, the slower growth of Holyoke's French-Canadian population, it is probable that the percentage of alien French-Canadians was significantly lower in 1910 than it had been in 1900.

12 See Table 11 above.
13 Transcript, September 30, 1897.
14 Ibid., July 18, 1900, June 17, 1904; Republican, January 25, 1888; La Justice, July 29, 1909.
15 Transcript, September 27, 1888, November 6, 1890.
16 See for example Republican, October 23 and 26, 1894.
17 Ibid., November 14, 1892.
19 Paul Kleppner, The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics, 1850-1900 (New York: The Free Press, 1970). Kleppner maintains that religious differences (ritualism versus pietism) were the central elements in determining midwestern political attitudes. More important, in Kleppner's view political affiliations were an extension of religious beliefs. The ritualists and pietists had differing concepts of public morality and this was reflected by their voting habits. For example, ritualistic Catholics and German Lutherans more often identified themselves with the Democratic Party, while pietists - Norwegians, Welsh and native Baptist and Methodists - were usually Republican. During the depression of the 1890's Kleppner contends that there was a shift in the traditional basis of political alignments. The Bryan campaign of 1896 appealed to pietistic values and changed the nature of the party's support. At the same time, the Republicans sublimated divisive cultural differences to promote themselves as the party of "prosperity".

Kleppner's approach is innovative, but it is difficult to apply it to Holyoke. The two largest ethnic groups in the city, the Irish and French-Canadians, constituted 60 to 70 per cent of the total population during the period and both were Roman Catholic, i.e., ritualistic. Yet the Irish remained loyal to the Democracy while the French-Canadians increasingly voted Republican in local elections, particularly after 1898. If the ritualistic versus pietistic model does not hold true for Holyoke, there were social and cultural differences
between the Irish and French-Canadians which help explain the nature of the political alignments in Holyoke.

20 Transcript, November 17, 1893.
21 See Table 38.
24 Holyoke, Municipal Register, 1886-1910.
25 Transcript, November 19, 20 and 23, 1903.
26 Republican, February 21, 1892.
27 Green, Holyoke, pp. 263-265.
28 Transcript, December 8 and 11, 1899.
29 Holyoke, Election Register, City Clerk's Office, 1886-1910.
30 Transcript, June 14, 1889.
31 Ibid., November 20, 1889, June 18, 1890, July 25, 1890.
32 Ibid., April 2, 1892.
33 Ibid., November 23 and 24, 1891, March 16, 1892, April 1, 2 and 4, 1892; Republican, April 3, 1892, December 4, 1892.
34 Transcript, March 20, 1893, April 1, 3 and 5, 1893; Republican, April 1, 2 and 4, 1893.
35 After 1889 first-class licenses cost $1000 - $1500 per year and were an important source of city revenue.
36 Massachusetts, Acts, 1888, Chapter 386; Green, Holyoke, pp. 253-255; Republican, May 3 and 29, 1887, July 28, 1887, February 12, 1888; Transcript, June 12, 1888, April 24, 1889, May 4 and 15, 1889.
37 Massachusetts, Acts, 1894, Chapter 428; Republican, December 6, 1893, January 5, 1894, March 7 and 20, 1894, April 2 and 4, 1894, June 5, 1894, July 3, 1894; Transcript, January 15, 1894, March 30, 1894, May 1, 1894, July 2, 1894.
The irony of the Keough case was compounded for the French-Canadians by the nature of his appointment. In 1892 Keough and Daniel Proulx both sought the position of tax collector. After a long and confusing struggle involving a questionable ballot taken by the Board of Aldermen, the Aldermen, largely through the adroit political maneuvers of Alderman M. LaPorte, overrode a ruling of the mayor, and named Proulx tax collector. Keough brought suit and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court eventually declared him the tax collector. For details see Massachusetts, Supreme Judicial Court at Springfield, Petition of James Keough for a Writ of Mandamus vs the Board of Aldermen of the City of Holyoke and Daniel Proulx, Case #95, Filed February 20, 1892.

Transcript, July 16, 1895; Republican, January 24, 1895, October 31, 1897, May 23, 1898, August 14, 1898.

Green, Holyoke, pp. 268-277.

Holyoke, Election Register, 1886-1896.

Ibid., 1886-1900. The ethnic breakdowns of each ward are based on information derived from Holyoke, Assessors Field Books, 1880-1900.

Holyoke, Election Register, 1885-1898.

Ibid., 1886-1910.

Based on lists of major Holyoke taxpayers listed in the Transcript and Republican, 1875-1900. Figures are not available by ward after 1900.

Holyoke, Election Register, 1898-1910.

Transcript, December 4 and 8, 1886; Republican, December 5, 8, 9 and 16, 1886. An interesting sidelight to the race was that in three non-French-Canadian wards a total of 79 voters, more than Vonvouloir's margin of victory, cast their ballots for "Peter" Bonvouloir, while the remainder of his votes were for "Pierre". A recount gave a majority of the "Peter" ballots to Bonvouloir, making his final margin of victory 43 votes.

Transcript, November 16, 18, 20 and 25, 1889; Republican, November 24, 1889.

Transcript, November 30, 1889.

Ibid., December 2, 1889.
52 Ibid., December 4, 1889.
53 Ibid., December 6, 1889; Republican, December 1, 4 and 8, 1889.
54 Transcript, December 6, 1901.
55 Ibid., December 1, 1890, November 11, 1891, December 1 and 3, 1891, November 12, 1895, October 5, 1898; Republican, November 16, 1890, December 3, 1890, November 22, 1891, December 3, 1891, December 7, 1892, October 10 and 21, 1898.
56 Transcript, May 31, 1899.
57 Ibid., October 6, 1893, November 25, 1893, November 27, 1895, August 17, 1897, October 5, 1897, November 10, 1897, January 12 and 13, 1898, November 16, 1904, July 12 and 19, 1907, July 1, 1908, August 1, 1908, February 24, 1910, March 4 and 9, 1910; La Justice, March 3 and 10, 1910; Republican, May 16, 1894, January 16, 1896, October 19, 1896, November 15, 1896, January 29, 1897, February 17, 1897, October 22 and 23, 1897, December 15, 1897, January 17, 1898, September 27, 1898; Holyoke, Municipal Register, 1886-1910; "Holyoke's Historic Hundredth", pp. 42-43.
58 Republican, January 2, 1893; Transcript, December 19, 1899, January 1, 1900.
59 Republican, January 9, 1898.
60 Transcript, August 1, 1888.
61 Ibid., November 2, 1895.
62 Ibid., October 2, 1889, October 19, 1892; Holyoke, Election Register, 1889-1910.
63 Transcript, November 17, 1893, October 22, 1894, November 3, 1894, October 12, 1895, November 20 and 30, 1903, December 3, 1903, October 5, 1908, December 4, 1909; Republican, September 2 and 23, 1894, September 26 and 29, 1895.
64 Transcript, November 19, 1903.
65 Ibid., November 27, 1905.
66 Ibid., November 14, 1899.
67 Ibid., December 4, 1894, October 3, 1907, January 12, 1909, October 3, 1909; Republican, December 3, 1896; La Justice, August 19, 1909, November 3, 1910.
Transcript, November 23, 1886, November 21, 23 and 25, 1887, December 1, 2 and 5, 1887, September 5, 1891, November 5, 1891, November 5, 1895, December 1, 1900, December 4, 1902; Republican, November 19, 1887, December 1, 1887, November 17 and 21, 1893.

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Holyoke, Election Register, 1898-1910.
CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the years 1865 to 1910, the French-Canadian community in Holyoke evolved from a self-contained, ethnocentric grouping into a community that while highly integrated into American society retained its unique ethnic identity. The process of cultural adjustment accelerated noticeably in the mid-1880's and continued into the twentieth century as the second and third generations became active in community affairs. The gradual absorption of American values and customs was hardly unique to the French-Canadians and indeed the French-Canadian experience in Holyoke parallels that of other immigrant groups throughout American history. However, there is a long held belief that the French-Canadians were especially resistant to acculturation and maintained a high degree of ethnic separation. French-Canadians did not quickly or completely abandon their traditions and customs, but the Holyoke experience indicates that the process of social integration began at a relatively early date.

From 1865 to 1900, French-Canadians left Canada by the tens of thousands to escape the increasingly severe agricultural depression that affected rural Quebec. The textile mills of Holyoke provided an economic incentive for French-Canadian migration there. The movement to Holyoke was uneven and generally heaviest during periods of economic prosperity in the textile mills. Recruiting efforts by the owners of
the Lyman Mills, who wanted a cheap, docile labor supply, brought the first significant numbers of French-Canadians to Holyoke and the movement was sustained by the French-Canadians themselves through the transmission of information to friends and relatives in Canada. The large number of semi- and unskilled jobs and the opportunity for the employment of women and children, enabled French-Canadian families, with few industrial skills, to contribute to the total family income. French-Canadians quickly became the predominant ethnic group in Holyoke's textile mills. The wage scales in textiles were considerably lower than those of most other industries and the French-Canadians, as the newest and poorest immigrant group, served the interests of the mill owners as a readily available source of cheap labor. With the textile work force dominated by women and children, adult French-Canadian males most frequently found employment as day laborers. Thus in the first decades after their arrival in Holyoke, French-Canadians occupied a position at the lowest end of the economic ladder. Their general lack of industrial skills forced them into the lowest paying positions. The availability of jobs for women and children in the textile mills, and the tradition of family work brought from rural Canada, helped insure the economic survival of the family unit, while at the same time perpetuating the inferior economic position of French-Canadian textile operatives.

Through 1910, the economic stability of the largest part of the French-Canadian work force was tied to Holyoke's
mills. Yet by 1885 there were indications that the economic position of the French-Canadians had improved markedly. As the French-Canadian community grew, more French-Canadians moved into lower middle class occupations. To some extent, French-Canadians were forced from the lowest paying positions in the mills by the arrival of Polish immigrants in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Most of the newcomers were males and took the places of some French-Canadian children and adult males, while French-Canadian women continued to depend upon mill work to contribute to the family earnings.

By 1900 the nature of the French-Canadian work force had been altered. Massachusetts laws regulating the conditions and hours of work and compulsory education had effectively removed children under fourteen years of age from the mills. The resulting loss of family income was recovered, to some degree by the improved position of the male breadwinner, supplemented by the continued employment of women, usually in low paid positions in the textile and paper mills.

The evolving economic status of the French-Canadians was related to their changing attitudes toward organized labor. Prior to 1885, union activity in Holyoke was almost non-existent, in part because the French-Canadians provided a cheap labor supply which could be used to replace dissident workers. During the period of labor activity in the late 1880's, only the carpenters, among French-Canadian workers, showed any inclination for collective organization. French-Canadians were still used, as in the 1887 Connecticut River
lumber mill strike, as strike breakers. Only with the threat by employers, in the early 1890's, to import new sources of cheap labor, did French-Canadian workers join unions in sizable numbers. The laborers' strike of 1891, and the increased number of Polish immigrants in Holyoke, convinced many French-Canadians that collective action was needed to protect their economic position. While French-Canadian enthusiasm for labor organization was exceeded by other ethnic groups in the city, French-Canadian participation in union activities after 1890 was considerable and suggests that the supposed docility of French-Canadian workers could be overcome when their economic position was threatened.

For those French-Canadians who remained in Holyoke or elsewhere in New England, settlement involved major changes in their lives. Most immigrants came from a rural background. In Holyoke they were crowded together in tenements and factory work rooms. On balance however, conditions in Holyoke represented an improvement from what most French-Canadians had left in Canada. Few turned to agricultural pursuits in the United States and the failure of Canadian repatriation efforts indicates that French-Canadian expatriates saw more promise in coming to terms with industrialization than returning to farming in Canada. Cultural and physical ties between the émigrés and Quebec remained close, but with time Holyoke's French-Canadians developed local interests and concerns which outweighed all but their family commitments in Canada.

French-Canadian migrants to Holyoke enjoyed a warmer
welcome than that received by the Irish who came before them. Employers valued their labor and supported campaigns to transplant Canadian institutions in the city. The new arrivals could expect the support and aid of their compatriots to help ease the disruptions of migration. Slack economic conditions and virulent anti-Catholicism were responsible for the two major anti-French-Canadian outbreaks, but the generally non-disruptive behavior of the French-Canadian community and the need for their labor helped keep friction between the French-Canadians and other ethnic groups at a low level.

French-Canadians in Holyoke were not as migratory as most contemporary observers contended. The French-Canadian community consisted largely of young family units and much of the movement out of the city appears to be that of unattached males who had greater mobility than entire families. As the poorest group in Holyoke, French-Canadians in their first decades in the city were more mobile than other elements. However, by 1900, French-Canadians had achieved a degree of residential stability that was nearly identical with that of the entire population.

The institutions which French-Canadians brought to Holyoke from Canada experienced great changes as the nature of the French-Canadian community evolved between 1865 and 1910. For the first generation of immigrants in Holyoke, the French-Canadian institutions served to unite and strengthen the group in the city. Yet at the same time, these institutions functioned to soften the adjustments of individuals in
a new environment and helped ease their way into an industrial society. This dual role continued through 1910 and the changes which took place in these institutions reflected the changes that were occurring within the French-Canadian community.

In the first decade after its founding in 1869, the French Catholic Church in Holyoke fulfilled a role similar to that which it played in Canada in that it served as the primary instrument of social organization and was a vehicle of cultural unity. By 1880, the parish was split among itself, with the pastor, Father Dufresne, at the center of the controversy. While the disputed issues concerned the autocratic nature of Fr. Dufresne's pastorate, the conflicts provide indications of the direction of the changes that had taken place within the French-Canadian community. Many French-Canadians, after only a decade or less in Holyoke, were not willing to accept clerical leadership as they had known it in Quebec. Fr. Dufresne's attempts to fulfill the role of a Canadian curé by demanding absolute obedience from his congregation in both secular and ecclesiastical matters were rebuffed by a large part of the church membership. Subsequent French-Canadian pastors in Holyoke, men who had spent most of their clerical lives in the Springfield diocese, accepted the more limited role that the Church played in the United States. The Catholic Church remained an important element in the lives of Holyoke's French-Canadians, but was not all encompassing as it had been in Canada.
The French Catholic parish school provides another example of the dual function of French-Canadian institutions. Prior to the 1890's the parochial school educated only a minority of Holyoke's French-Canadian children. For most families the shorter terms of the public schools permitted children more time to work in the mills and outweighed the benefits of a Catholic and French-Canadian education. With the establishment of a second parish school in 1892, and more important, more stringent Massachusetts laws concerning compulsory education and child labor, the advantages of public school attendance were lost and the enrollments of the French Catholic schools rose. The parish schools served both to preserve French-Canadian identity and at the same time, through state requirements to conduct a portion of the instruction in the English language, helped to ease the transition into the larger community.

The French-Canadian social-fraternal groups originally were extensions of Church activities. Designed primarily for the community leaders, these organizations served the interests of a small minority of the French-Canadian people. However, after 1885 dozens of new organizations were founded and with few exceptions, had aims and purposes that were decidedly secular. This later social activity was a further indication of the nature of the changes that had taken place in Holyoke. Younger French-Canadians wanted the prestige and recognition not available from the existing groups. The wide scope of interests of the new groups attests to the
growing prosperity of the French-Canadians and a desire to pursue recreational activities and entertainment without the guidance of their parish priest.

In sum, the French-Canadians, as evidenced by their social institutions, quickly shed many of their Canadian practices. While they retained a French-Canadian identity, their institutions readily adapted to conditions in the United States. Rather than remaining culturally isolated in Holyoke, French-Canadian institutions worked to integrate the people into the life of the city. After 1900, the pace of ethnic intermarriage quickened, a sign that the French-Canadians had been no more successful in maintaining survival than other ethnic groups had been.

French-Canadians in New England were long viewed as reluctant to abandon their allegiance to the British crown and accept American citizenship. The proximity of New England to Canada and the desire of many to return eventually to Quebec provide plausible explanations for this reluctance. The Holyoke experience suggests that the changes that were evident by the mid-1880's in French-Canadian social life and economic status also affected attitudes toward naturalization and political activity. An analysis of the men who embraced American citizenship provides some explanation for the timing of the changes which took place in Holyoke. Nearly 80 percent of those who naturalized were under thirty-six years of age, two-thirds thirty years or younger. These were men who had likely spent most of their adult lives in the United
States, had fewer ties to Canada than did their fathers, and had determined that their futures would be most secure in Holyoke. These children of the first immigrants had reached their majority by the mid-1880's and played a decisive role in shaping the direction of the French-Canadian community. While French-Canadian naturalizations did lag behind those of other immigrant groups who came to Holyoke in the mid-nineteenth century, by 1900 the percentage of French-Canadians who became citizens exceeded those of the newer immigrants of the late nineteenth century. The first generation of French-Canadians were exceedingly hesitant to sever their ties with their homeland, but their children and later immigrants exhibited much less reluctance.

French-Canadian business and professional men, who at an early date tied their futures to that of Holyoke's, had long been interested in exercising political pressures to enhance their position in the city. However, the majority of French-Canadian males - mill workers, craftsmen and laborers - showed little enthusiasm for political activity prior to the 1890's. In addition to the forces which had turned the French-Canadians outward, French-Canadians enjoyed a unique position in the city's political struggles. The local Republican Party, dominated by the manufacturing interests had, by the late 1870's, lost political control of the city to an Irish Democratic machine. While the French-Canadian vote was small prior to the 1890's, the bulk of their support went to the Democracy. The excesses that occurred in the control and
distribution of liquor licenses in the late 1880's and early 1890's, reflected badly on the Democratic leadership. Republicans were successful in altering the governmental structure of the city, but "liquor politicians" were able to avoid serious limitations on their activities. A major Democratic scandal in 1898 renewed the determination of Republicans, who resented the Irish-Catholic nature of the opposition party, to regain control of the city. In the ensuing struggle, the French-Canadian vote determined the political balance and French-Canadians received political favors in excess of their voting strength. The Republicans were far more successful in luring French-Canadians to their party through the adroit use of political patronage. For their part, French-Canadians resented their exclusion from political power by their Irish antagonists in the Democratic Party and were increasingly inclined to blame the Democrats for the unsavory political climate in the city. While French-Canadians were an important factor in insuring GOP domination in Holyoke for more than a decade, political factions within the French-Canadian community, made united political action impossible. The French-Canadian vote was valued, especially by the Republicans, but French-Canadians themselves were not able to exert effective independent political pressure on behalf of their community. Indeed, by the twentieth century, the multi-faceted nature of Holyoke's French-Canadians indicated that ethnic solidarity in politics or any other area was not possible.
The cultural isolation of Holyoke's French-Canadians was short-lived. While it is important to remember that French-Canadians retained their ethnic identity and much of their cultural heritage, they also made significant accommodations with their industrial surroundings at an early date. By the mid-1880's, when a new generation made its impact felt, these changes had pervaded the French-Canadian community and had altered the peoples' perceptions and values. By 1910, while not abandoning their ethnic identity, the diversity of values and aspirations within the French-Canadian community, indicated that they had become Americans of French-Canadian descent.

It would be hazardous to maintain that the Holyoke experience was typical of that of French-Canadians in other parts of New England. Massachusetts school attendance and labor laws altered family patterns of work sooner than in other states. Holyoke's diverse economic base lessened the impact of hard times and provided French-Canadian workers with greater employment flexibility. The French-Canadian community, although numerically one of the largest in New England, never constituted more than one-third of the total population of Holyoke and forced a greater degree of ethnic interaction than was needed in other cities. The Holyoke experience does suggest however, that French-Canadians in New England might not have been as self-contained as most observers have surmised.
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<tr>
<td>Hamon, E.</td>
<td>Les Canadiens-français de la Nouvelle-Angleterre</td>
<td>Quebec: N. S. Hardy, 1891.</td>
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APPENDIX A

The Chinese of the Eastern States

With some exceptions the Canadian French are the Chinese of the Eastern States. They care nothing for our institutions, civil, political, or educational. They do not come to make a home among us, to dwell with us as citizens, and so become a part of us; but their purpose is merely to sojourn a few years as aliens, touching us only at a single point, that of work, and, when they have gathered out of us what will satisfy their ends, to get them away to whence they came, and bestow it there. They are a horde of industrial invaders, not a stream of stable settlers. Voting, with all that it implies, they care nothing about. Rarely does one of them become naturalized. They will not send their children to school if they can help it, but endeavor to crowd them into the mills at the earliest possible age. To do this they deceive about the age of their children with brazen effrontery. They deceive also about their schooling, declaring that they have been to school the legal time, when they know they have not, and do not intend that they shall. And when at length they are cornered by the school officers, and there is no other escape, often they scabble together what few things they have, and move away to some other place where they are unknown, and where they hope by a repetition of the same deceits to escape the schools entirely, and keep the children at work right on in the mills. And when, as is indeed sometimes the case, any
of them are so situated that they cannot escape at all, then the stolid indifference of the children wears out the teacher with what seems to be an idle task.

These people have one good trait. They are indefatigable workers, and docile. All they ask is to set to work, and they care little who rules them or how they are ruled. To earn all they can by no matter how many hours of toil, to live in the most beggarly way so that out of their earnings they may spend as little for living as possible, and to carry out of the country what they can thus save: this is the aim of the Canadian French in our factory districts. Incidentally they must have some amusements; and, so far as the males are concerned, drinking and smoking and lounging constitute the sum of these.

Now, it is not strange that so sordid and low a people should awaken corresponding feelings in the managers, and that these should feel that, the longer the hours for such people, the better, and that to work them to the uttermost is about the only good use they can be put to. Nor is it strange that this impression is so strong, that the managers overlook for the time being all the rest of the operatives, and think that every thing should be shaped to the lowest ones. Yet the same principle which we have stated as showing the right way of conduct in the former case should direct here also. Society should be shaped to the better portion of the people; and where the case requires it the laws should be so amended and enforced that these people will either be coerced to
conform to our established ways, or else go where the already established ways of the country do please them.

APPENDIX B

French-Canadian Population of Holyoke, 1860-1910

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