AWAY BUT STILL AT HOME: A HISTORY OF SOUTH SHORE NOVA SCOTIAN ACADIANS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

by

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Abstract

This thesis focuses specifically on south shore Nova Scotian Acadians. The first chapter discusses Acadian identity and demonstrates their support for the war which derived from wanting to protect their religion. Their connectedness to their communities, fostering of good relations, and support for the nation and Empire is also highlighted. The second chapter then focuses on how Acadian civilians supported the war through community gatherings and demonstrates that their support, which benefitted the nation and the Empire, also aided their communities. The third and final chapter highlights how many Acadians from south shore Nova Scotia served during the war and how they were dedicated and patriotic despite facing discrimination. The thesis concludes that south shore Nova Scotian Acadians were motivated to protect their religion as it was being stripped from Europeans. They also recognised the importance of supporting the nation and Empire while at the same time, staying loyal to their communities.

Dedication

To my aunt Lucille d'Entremont and my grandmother Marceline d'Eon

Acknowledgements

First off, I would like to thank Dr. Marc Milner for guiding me through the thesis process and for helping me write an articulate, coherent thesis. I would also like to thank him for showing me how to better place this body of work in the greater context of the Second World War.

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A big thank you goes to the Second World War veterans, Charlie Muise, François Amirault, and Anselm d'Entremont as well as to Lucille d'Entremont and Marceline d'Eon who were in the Women's Auxiliary for sharing their experiences during the war. Without your service, this thesis would not have been written.

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List of Abbreviations

Library and Archives Canada (LAC)

Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF)

Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF)

National Resource Mobilization Act (NRMA)

Royal Air Force (RAF)

Royal Canadian Navy (RCN)

Member of Parliament (MP)

Wartime Information Board (WIB)

Bureau of Public Information (BPI)

Great War Veteran's Association (GWVA)

Mention in Dispatch (MiD)

Prisoner of War (POW)

National Salvation Division (NWS)

Department of National War Services (NWS)

Women's Institute (WI)

The Federated Women's Institute of Canada (FWIC)

General Service (GS)

Princess Louise Fusiliers (PLF)

Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA)

Royal Canadian Navy Reserve (RCNR)

Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS)

Canadian Women's Auxiliary Air Force (CWAAF)

Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC)

Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCN

Introduction

Much of the scholarship on controversies during the Second World War in Canada focuses on Francophone-Canadians. This of course is due to the Conscription Crises of 1942 and 1944, in which a lot of Francophone-Canadians, especially the Quebecois, were opposed to Canadians being forced into the military. Because some of the Quebecois were very vocal about their opposition to not only conscription but the war in general, people began to think that all Francophone-Canadians were anti-war. This anti-war narrative continued long after the war was over as historians tended to focus only on the Quebecois when doing their research. While the Quebecois are the largest demographic of Francophone-Canadians, Canada is composed of other Francophone-Canadian groups such as the Franco-Ontarians, Franco Manitobans, Métis, and the Acadians. Very few Canadian historians have researched the Acadians perspective on the Second World War and when they do, as will be shown below, the focus is on New Brunswick Acadians. This thesis looks more closely at the experiences of French speaking Canadians in the Second World War of by focusing on the Acadians of south shore Nova Scotia.

According to Olivier Courteaux, most Francophone-Canadians agreed with Canada in joining the war even though they had no reaction to France's entrance into the war. Even Quebec's media discretely supported the Federal Government. However, the Quebec nationalists' minority was heavily anti-war. For example, André Laurendeau, director of the *l'Action Nationale* magazine, questioned Ottawa's decision to join the war as the Westminster Statute of 1931 had given Canada political autonomy. Also, other nationalists considered themselves Americans who no longer had ties to France

because of the 1763 Treaty of Paris, which ultimately gave North America to the British. This form of reasoning legitimised their decision to not support France as well as Britain.[1] Montreal's mayor, Camillien Houde, was placed in an internment camp in Ripples, New Brunswick, for encouraging people not to register under the National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA), which called for conscription for the defence of Canada on June 21st, 1940. The NRMA was seen as only temporary law in response to the worsening Allied situation in Europe with Hitler's Blitzkrieg against Holland and Belgium, Italy joining the war on the side of the Axis, and the Fall of France.[2] *Le Devoir*, which is also in Montreal, believed that the NRMA was the first step towards sending men overseas.[3] Courteaux, however, says that most Francophone-Canadians accepted the NRMA.[4] Nugent, in her PhD dissertation entitled *The Acadian Response to the Conscription Crisis of World War II*, conducted interviews with Acadians from New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia about their wartime experiences. One Acadian veteran from Nova Scotia who trained in Quebec, said he was embarrassed by the attitude of Quebec civilians towards the British and Anglo-Canadian soldiers. He did not go into detail, but Nugent does mention both Acadians and non-Acadians also shared the anti-British sentiment because of the superior attitude the British displayed

[1] Olivier Courteaux, *Canada between Vichy and Free France 1940-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 19.
[2] Daniel Byers, *Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016), 43.
[3] Jeff Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 19.
[4] Olivier Courteaux, *Canada between Vichy and Free France 1940-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 32.

while training in Canada.[5] Such events lead some Anglo-Canadians to think that all Francophone-Canadians were against the war.

Before discussing the Acadians in the context of the Second World War, it is important to understand Acadian historical identity. The Acadians originated from western France, mostly from the former provinces of Poitou, Normandy, and started migrating to North America as early as the 1600s. They did not come to what was referred as "New World" to trade with the Indigenous people, nor were they out to "discover" new territory. They simply wanted a better life as wars and monarchs made it difficult for the average European to live a stable life. The "New World" was a challenge for Acadians due to the harsher climate, however they were able to build a life that was better than that in France. Acadians also settled in areas far removed from other Francophone-Canadians such as the Quebecois. They evolved as a separate people because they settled in a dispersed fashion along the long "disconnected" shoreline of Atlantic Canada, and land they settled witnessed many territorial changes between the English and French empires. This group's distinction became more apparent shortly before the outbreak of the Seven Years War when they decided to side with neither the British or French. This eventually led to their deportation in 1755-1764 for not signing an Oath of Allegiance to the British Crown.

Historian Naomi Griffiths has sought to explain the distinctiveness of the Acadian people in three books. In her first, *The Acadians: Creation of a People* (1973), she discussed how those who settled in present day Nova Scotia and in the southern

[5] Helen Jean McClelland Nugent, "The Acadian Response to the Conscription Crisis of World War II" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1983), 94.

portion of New Brunswick aimed to establish a sustainable community rather than a trading station or a base from which they could explore deeper into the "New World". While the settler population was largely of French origin in the 17th century, Griffiths highlights the importance of settlers from Scotland, Ireland, England, and Portugal in shaping Acadian identity in relation to their customs and techniques used to adapt to their new environment.[6] Although not mentioned in Griffith's work, it should also be said that the Mi'kmaw were immensely important to Acadian identity as they established a strong relationship with the Acadians. This relationship was facilitated by the fact that the Acadians settled on land not used by the Mi'kmaw. The Acadians took advantage of marshlands with help of the aboiteaux, a system which allows the seawater to drain into the ocean but block it from re-entering the marshlands. The Mi'kmaw saw this as creating new land thus not invading on their territory.[7] Intermarriages between these two groups would soon become frequent as well.

In her second book, *The Context of Acadian History* (1992), Griffiths argued that the Acadians created their own identity due to their daily activities and their changing relations between themselves as migrants and the New World. From this identity, they created their own political views in relation to the conflicts and people surrounding them.[8] She claims that Acadian political identity was established between 1713 and 1730. This was largely because of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, which gave mainland Nova Scotia to Britain. The Acadians acquired more independence because of this and

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[6] Naomi E. S. Griffiths, *The Acadians: Creation of a People* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited,1973), 2-3.
[7] James Laxer, *Acadians: In Search of a Homeland* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2006), 30.
[8] Naomi E. S. Griffiths, *The Context of Acadian History 1686-1784* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 4.

could govern their affairs freely. British colonial control, except in the Annapolis Valley, was light. So Acadians could choose their own delegates to represent them through elections in order to settle land disputes and negotiate with the British. These negotiations were often debates relating to Acadian loyalty to Britain, which they refused to submit.[9] The Acadians also had more freedom because their settlement patterns were not restricted to the seigneurial system such as in Canada, where the colony consisted of three districts: Trois Rivières, Montreal, and Quebec, and followed a more traditionally French system of ownership and governance.[10]

The deportation of 1755-1764 also shaped Acadian identity. While it is commonly believed Acadians were deported because they did not sign the Oath of Allegiance to the British Crown, there were various causes that led to the deportation. Some Acadians did sign the oath under Nova Scotia's governor, Richard Phillips in 1729 from which he gave an oral promise of neutrality to the Acadians if the British were to come into conflict with the French or Mi'kmaw. Also, an anonymous letter reveals that the British may have been interested in the fertile lands the Acadians possessed and that deporting them would allow them to acquire it.[11] The Acadians claimed to be neutral while tensions increased between the French and English in the 1750s. However, Charles Lawrence, the governor of Nova Scotia at this time, decided to deport the Acadians after an Acadian militia took part in the defence of Fort Beauséjour at present day Aulac, New Brunswick, violating their stance of neutrality. Lawrence

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[9] *Ibid.*, 40-42.
[10] *Ibid.*, 21.
[11] John Mack Faragher, "A Great and Noble Scheme: Thoughts on the Expulsion of the Acadians," *Acadiensis* 36, no. 1 (2006): 83, http://www.jstor.org.proxy.hil.unb.ca/stable/30303272.

gave the Acadians one more chance to take the oath, which they refused after Beauséjour fell to the British in June 1755, causing Lawrence to order for the expulsion of the Acadians on the 28th of July 1755.[12] Acadians were sent back to France, some went to Britain, and the Thirteen Colonies (now the United States) on crammed ships which made them susceptible to disease and malnutrition. Griffiths says that nuclear families were not deliberately separated during the deportation, but there was no effort to keep extended family together. Once they arrived at places like the colonies, provisions were given to them due to their poor health caused by typhoid and smallpox.[13] After 1764, the Acadians began to migrate back to their traditional homelands, in places such as the banks of the St. Lawrence, northern New Brunswick, Nova Scotia (though not on the land they had previously settled on), and Prince Edward Island. Others went to the Caribbean, specifically to the island of Santo Domingo. Some even went as far as to the Falkland Islands, though that settlement was unsuccessful. Lastly, many went to the Spanish colony of Louisiana (previously controlled by France) where they would become known as Cajuns.[14] This is significant because one of the goals of the deportation was to destroy the Acadian community. However, as Griffiths says, "it provided the Acadians with one of the foundations of their unique identity in the centuries to come."[15]

James Laxer, a political economist, has also written about Acadian identity, especially in the post-colonial period. For example, in 1871, New Brunswick Premier

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[12] Chris M. Hand, *The Siege of Fort Beauséjour, 1755* (Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions and the New Brunswick Military Heritage Project, 2004), 98.
[13] Naomi E. S. Griffiths, *The Context of Acadian History 1686-1784* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 103-105.
[14] *Ibid.*, 112-124.
[15] *Ibid.*, 127.

George E. King introduced the Common School Act which called for free primary school education, new school districts, and the construction of new schools. This act would benefit Acadians and all those living in New Brunswick. However, the act also said schools would be non-confessional. This meant that Catholicism could no longer be taught in schools. Nuns and priests would have to acquire a teaching certificate from the government and would not be able to wear their religious garments. Acadians could send their children to Catholic schools, but they were not exempt from the taxes that funded the new provincial schools. Many Acadian households were too poor to send their children to school and those who could would have to pay double as Catholic schools were no longer subsidized. They saw this act as an attack on their culture, language, and religion, each of which is part of their identity.[16]

Acadians, Quebecois, and English Catholics resisted the Common School Act by refusing to pay the school tax, but it came at a cost. Those who refused to pay this tax lost their right to vote and could not hold any type of public position. Despite these consequences, many New Brunswick Catholics refused to pay. In Gloucester County, for example, there were 1,433 students before 1871, after that date, numbers dropped to 479 students. One priest by the name of M. Michaud was also jailed for not paying the tax in September of 1873. This conflict heightened in 1875 when Acadians in Caraquet realised that their town could come under political dominance of the English Protestant minority due to their inability to vote. Once a new school board consisting of three Protestants was established (because the previous members did not pay the tax) they appointed Philip Duval, who was a Methodist from Jersey in the Channel Islands, as

[16] James Laxer, *Acadians: In Search of a Homeland* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2006), 129-130.

chairman. This was decided at a public meeting where many Acadians showed up despite not being able to vote. Once Duval said the meeting was ready to commence, he was lifted from his seat by three men and carried out the door while another grabbed some documents belonging to James Blackhall, who was to become a school board member, and then sent him out as well. The next day, Acadians who were present at that meeting went to Blackhall's house demanding that he sign a letter of resignation. Windows of his house were broken, and his stove was overturned which led to him and another member of the school board resigning out of fear.[17] In response, men who had participated in this riot were to be arrested, but during this process one policeman and one of the rioters were killed.[18] The rioters were found guilty during the trial but were not charged for the death of the police officer.

These events had a positive impact as amendments were made to the Common School Act. In districts with two or more primary schools, students could attend a school other than the one in their district. This allowed for Catholic as well as Protestant schools to be formed. Schools with a Francophone majority were to be taught in French with French reading materials and those who received a teaching certificate from a Catholic institution would be allowed to teach as well, and if students desired, a period of religious education was to be held after school hours.[19]

By the late 19th century, Acadians had much more of a collective conscience. Father Marcel-François Richard and a group of clergymen selected a national flag and a national hymn (*Ave Maris Stella*) in 1884. Acadians also created their own national

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[17] *Ibid.*, 134-136.
[18] *Ibid.*, 137-139.
[19] *Ibid.*, 143-144.

holiday in 1881, which is celebrated on August 15th. The Acadians were still not content, however, as they wanted their churches to become more "acadianized." This does not mean they wanted to create their own denomination. Acadians simply wanted more Acadian priests in their churches, as according to Léon Thériault, Acadian parishes had Anglophone priests while Acadian priests were often sent to English parishes. Acadians also wanted their own bishop. Petitions and delegations were sent to the bishops of the Maritimes, the apostolic delegation in Ottawa, to the Vatican, and advertisements appeared in newspapers and at national conventions to address their concerns. The Acadians were met by opposition from Scottish and especially the Irish clergymen who argued that the English language offered the best potential to expand Catholic influence in North America.[20] After a long struggle, Acadians finally received their own bishop, Father Édouard LeBlanc, on December 10th, 1912, in Saint John, New Brunswick. Father LeBlanc then worked to create an Acadian parish in Moncton a few months after he became a bishop.

Problems remained, however, as Father LeBlanc did not have control over Chatham, which was in a completely French diocese in New Brunswick, but predominantly English-speaking Scots and Irish Catholics. Instead, Chatham was given to Father Louis O'Leary of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Acadians now aimed to boycott O'Leary's consecration.[21] With the help of a petition which was delivered by Father LeBlanc to Rome they successfully appointed Bishop Patrice-Alexandre Chiasson as the see of Chatham on September 9th, 1920. Acadians were making slow

[20] Léon Thériault, "The Acadianization of the Catholic Church in Acadia (1763-1953)," *The Acadians of the Maritimes: Thematic Studies* (Moncton: Centre d'études acadiennes, 1982), 302-304.
[21] *Ibid.*, 322-323.

but steady progress to "acadianize" their church as in 1938, Moncton became a diocese, which was then moved to Bathurst.[22] Moncton then became an archdiocese on March 8th, 1936 and on December 10th of the same year, Bishop Arthur Melanson became the city's archbishop. Finally, a diocese in Edmundston, New Brunswick was created on December 25th, 1944.[23]

More problems for the Acadians arose in the 1960s when Louis J. Robichaud, who was a member of the Liberal Party and the first Acadian to become the Premier of New Brunswick in 1960, aimed to create equality amongst the English and French with the hopes of benefitting the Acadians. He tried to do this by making French an official Language in New Brunswick. He was slow to do this, however. The opposition leader, Charlie Van Horne, had tried to do this as well, but surprisingly, Robichaud voted against his motion. He opposed Van Horne because he did not want to give credit to Horne's efforts in trying to embarrass the government. The Liberal government, in a speech in February 1968, said that New Brunswick should be playing a unique role in the Canadian effort for national unity in a country with two founding cultures (though completely ignoring the Indigenous population). It should also be said that the Liberal government created a report that municipalities must provide official documentation in both official languages whenever it was appropriate. In March, Robichaud forwarded a motion in the legislature to recognize English and French as official languages but received opposition from the English traditionalists. At the head of this opposition was Leonard Jones, the mayor of Moncton. Young Acadians who were protesting in

[22] *Ibid.*, 326.
[23] *Ibid.*, 329-330.

Moncton against tuition hikes, also demanded their right to be heard in French at the government level.[24] Finally on April 11, 1969, the New Brunswick legislature adopted French as an official language, making New Brunswick the only officially bilingual province in Canada. This law was passed unanimously despite previous opposition.[25] These events demonstrate how Acadian identity still exists and that they are distinct from other Francophone Canadians. They also highlight the struggles the Acadians faced to maintain their identity due to their time and place in Canadian history, particularly in New Brunswick where the Acadians are numerous and concentrated enough to form a critical political force in provincial parties. In Nova Scotia, it is not possible for Acadians to have much influence in politics as the population is too small.

Nova Scotian Acadian identity, specifically those on the southern shore, developed differently than that in New Brunswick. The communities are small and scattered, spread on the coast line, sometimes, on a peninsula, making them excellent for the fishing industry, which many Acadians participate in. Although, this was not originally the case. Prior to 1755-1764 the settlements of Port Royal and Grand-Pré, were prosperous areas for Acadians. After Port Royal was burned in 1613 by Samuel Argall and his men who came from Jamestown, Virginia, some of the French fur traders such as Charles de Biencourt and Charles de La Tour decided not to return to France and continued with the fur trade, keeping in contact with their agent, David Lomeron, in France. The fur traders moved down to Cape Sable Island where a fort named Fort Lomeron was built. Cape Sable Island was frequently used by Basque (people who lived

[24] James Laxer, *Acadians: In Search of a Homeland* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2006), 222-223.
[25] *Ibid.*, 225.

on the border between Spain and France) and Portuguese fishermen. The island was a logical choice as it was closer to the shipping routes, and there was also a Mi'kmaw settlement there which could provide them protection from the English and Dutch who were looking for a place to settle. After Biencourt died in 1623, his cousin La Tour, assumed leadership over the Frenchmen in a newly established settlement.[26] La Tour soon shifted his focus northward, to the far side of the Bay of Fundy, and established a French presence in what is now southern New Brunswick.

In the mid 1600s, another settlement named Pubnico, west of Cape Sable Island, appeared on the south shore. Its original spelling was Pogombook, a Mi'kmaw word which means "land from which the trees have been cleared for farming." The French originally spelled it as Pobomcoup before changing it to Pubnico.[27] The settlement was founded in 1653 by Philippe Mius d'Entremont, the First Baron of Pobomcoup, when Charles de La Tour, who was the governor of Acadia at the time, was giving out land grants from which d'Entremont received his.[28] d'Entremont arrived at Acadia three years prior to Pubnico's foundation with La Tour. The region of Pubnico was much larger during the 17th century than it is today as it covered everything from Cape Forchu (Yarmouth County) to Cape Negro, located east of Cape Sable Island. According to Griffiths, the Mius d'Entremont family was the only recorded family in Pubnico. The Baron had with him his wife, Madellene Ellie, three sons named Jacques, Abraham, and Philippe, and a two-year-old daughter named Marie. The Baron also had an older

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[26] J. Alphonse Deveau and Sally Ross, *The Acadians of Nova Scotia: Past and Present* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1992), 14-15.
[27] *Tricentenaire de Pubnico 1651-1951: Album souvenir août 21-25, 1951* (Yarmouth: Lawson Publishing Co., Ltd, 1951), 9.
[28] Naomi E. S. Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People, 1604-1755* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 66-67.

daughter named Marie-Marguerite who for the most part, lived with her husband, Pierre Melanson at Port Royal. This man would become known as the founder of Grand Pré in 1682. Griffiths, however, also mentions the Poulet family who were settled at Cape Negro and who were on the edge of poverty.[29] All of these Acadian settlements, even the large and very prosperous (and loyally neutral) farming areas around Grand-Pré and Port Royal, were cleared of Acadians during the Expulsion.

After the Seven Years War ended in 1763, with the signing of the Treaty of Paris, Acadians were given permission to return to Nova Scotia in 1764, provided that they take the Oath of Allegiance that they had been refusing to sign for years. Another condition that the Acadians had to accept, which was in place until 1768, was that those who received land grants would have to settle with Protestants. There was also a law that prevented Catholics from buying or inheriting land, but it was changed so that it did not extend to the colonies. It was only then that the Acadians started to return to Nova Scotia. While the British had made it more appealing for Acadians to return, the law preventing Catholics from settling was only removed from the Nova Scotia statutes in 1783.[30] There were only two places where the Acadians could return to where they had originally settled in Nova Scotia: Pubnico and Isle Madame on the south coast of Cape Breton. All the other present-day settlements in Nova Scotia are post-deportation settlements. The great dyke lands around Grand-Pré had, by 1768, been given to New Englanders.

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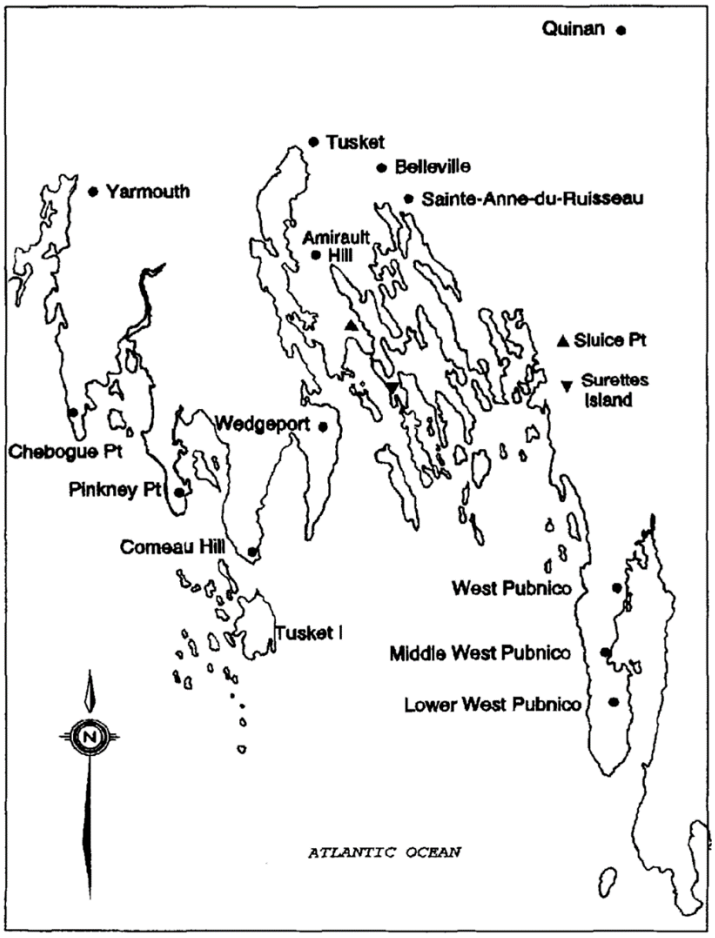
[29] *Ibid.*, 91.
[30] J. Alphonse Deveau and Sally Ross, *The Acadians of Nova Scotia: Past and Present* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1992), 74-75.

Acadians migrated to the south shore of Nova Scotia in greater numbers from the mid 1760s until the early 1800s due to the availability of land and the developing fishing industry. The Municipality of Argyle (Yarmouth County), became home to many small Acadian settlements: Pinkney's Point, Chebogue Point, Wedgeport, Belleville, Sluice Point, Quinan, Amirault's Hill, Surettes Island, Comeau Hill, Tusket, Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau, and of course, Pubnico. All subsequently developed a unique dialect due to being isolated from one another.[31] The land in this region is rocky, making it difficult for farming and also consists of multiple islands and peninsulas, meaning that the settlements are isolated. The 1941 census shows that Yarmouth County's population was 22,415 but gives no numbers or percentages of the populations in the Acadian villages.[32] Yarmouth County also had a French speaking

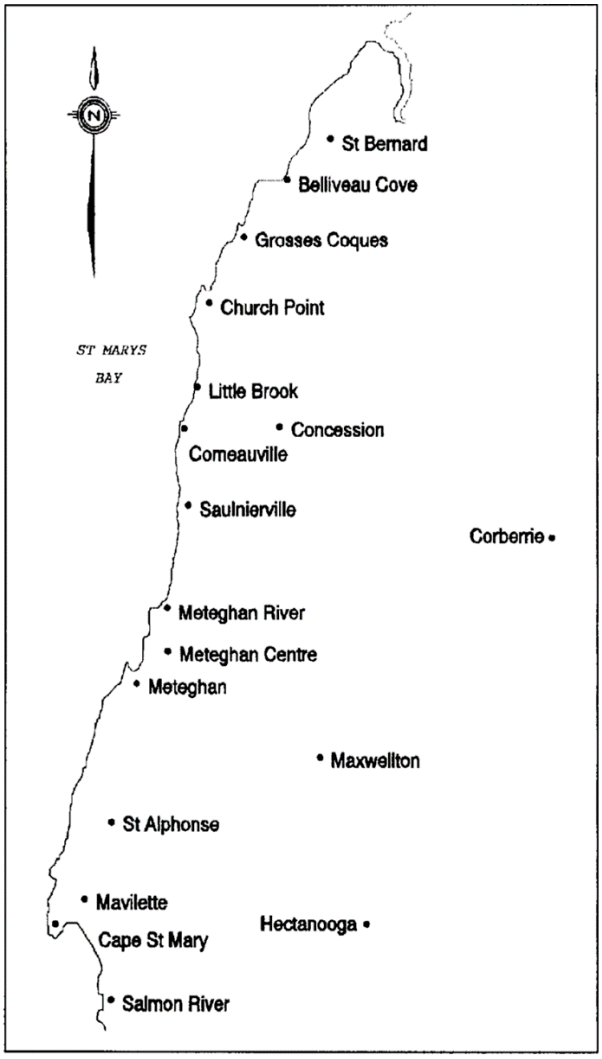


Map of Argyle (Courtesy: Atlantic Direct)

[31] *Ibid.*, 75-77.
[32] *Eighth Census of Canada 1941 Vol II: Population by Local Subdivisions*, ed. Edmond Cloutier (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1944), 5

population 8,663. 1,168 of those could only speak French (898 for the rural population) while 7,495 were bilingual (4,886 for the rural population).[33]

Also, on the south shore is the Municipality of Clare in Digby County. It is the biggest Acadian region in terms of size and population density. Clare is usually referred to as a par-en-haut (up) region whereas Argyle is par-en-bas (down). Other names include la ville française (the French village) or the French Shore. While Clare consists of only post-deportation settlements, in 1755-1756, a small group of refugees (most likely escaping from the English) led by an Acadian named Pierre Belliveau, died while spending the winter on an island near what is now Belliveau Cove. The island was then used as a burial ground in memory of those who died by the first permanent Acadian settlers from 1771 to 1791. In 1890, a chapel was built on the island which is still being maintained today. In addition to Belliveau Cove, Mavillette, Salmon River, Hectanooga, Concession, St. Bernard, Grosses Coques, Church Point, Little Brook, Saulnierville,



Map of Clare. (Courtesy: Atlantic Direct)

[33] *Ibid.*, 741.

Comeauville, Corberrie, Meteghan, St. Alphonse, Cape St. Mary, and Maxwellton all make up this Municipality of Clare.[34] Similar to Yarmouth County, the land is rocky, however, there are little to no islands and peninsulas thus making these settlements more condensed. The 1941 census shows that Digby's population was 19,472. Unlike Yarmouth County, the population for the Acadian villages in Digby County are present. All Acadian villages had a population of under 1,000 people except for Salmon River, which had a population of 1,159 and Saulnierville, which had a population of 1,303.[35] Digby County's French speaking population was 8,729. 1,939 could only speak French (1,938 for the rural population) while 6,790 were bilingual (6,591 for the rural population).[36]

During the Second World War many Acadians moved away from their communities to fight a war that was not a direct threat to them. This is interesting because the Seven Years Wars had been a direct threat to their communities, yet Acadians did their best to remain neutral. During the Seven Years War, however, Acadians were aware that siding with the French or English would threaten their way of life. For the Second World War, a more aggressive response was needed from the Acadians for they knew if nothing was done, the threat could be more immediate. Canada's decision to join the war was a controversial matter within the country (just as it was during the First World War) as it is commonly believed that Francophone-Canadians were reluctant to serve because it was an "English man's war." It is common

[34]J. Alphonse Deveau and Sally Ross, *The Acadians of Nova Scotia: Past and Present* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1992), 88-89.
[35] *Eighth Census of Canada 1941 Vol II: Population by Local Subdivisions*, ed. Edmond Cloutier (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1944), 5-13.
[36] *Ibid.*, 741.

for people to view all Francophone Canadians as a single group. This also includes the way they think. For example, historians Jeffrey Keshen and Andrew Iarocci said that Acadians, Quebeckers, and Franco-Ontarians, during the recruitment process of the First World War, were less likely to join because they viewed the war as a "British imperial venture."[37] Andrew Theobald destroyed that myth in relation to the Great War. This thesis argues that, when examining south shore Nova Scotian Acadians in relation to the Second World War, it is clear that they supported the war. They were motivated to protect their religion as it was being stripped from Europeans and supported the nation and Empire while at the same time, staying loyal to their communities.

This thesis highlights the persistence of Acadian historical and cultural identity, to provide a new perspective on the wartime responses of small Francophone communities along Nova Scotia's south shore. Chapter One will examine Acadian identity in the Second World War by discussing the failed attempt to revive the Acadian battalion from the First World War as well as the attempt to include more French training camps for soldiers in the Maritimes and how this was of little concern to south shore Nova Scotian Acadians. It will then demonstrate how wanting to protect their religion was a motivator in supporting the war effort. The tightness of Acadian communities will then be discussed to demonstrate how those who left the community remained connected with them while in other provinces or overseas thus demonstrating their loyalty to them. The chapter will also highlight how Acadians struggled with their identity in relation to the belief that all Francophone-Canadians were anti-war and how

[37] Andrew Iarocci and Jeffrey Keshen, *A Nation in Conflict: Canada and the Two World Wars* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 11.

they combatted this by encouraging Canadian unity. Language will then be discussed in relation to their support of the Empire which will then go beyond language to better examine how they viewed the Empire. Chapter Two will then focus more broadly on Acadian civilians in the war. An analysis of wartime propaganda is included to understand how Acadians were encouraged to participate in the war. The chapter will demonstrate how some Acadians were able to support the war individually by buying war bonds but then highlight how a large portion of the support from Acadians was done through community gatherings by using their schools, churches, local Legions, and sometimes local households to raise money. The chapter will also demonstrate how Acadians donated materials and rationed while highlighting how these community gatherings benefitted the nation and Empire while some of it also aided their communities and the people within them. Chapter Three will focus on Acadians in the military, with specific focus on the many south shore Nova Scotian Acadians, men and woman, who enlisted in all branches of the military. The chapter will then have a brief discussion on how Acadians volunteered to go overseas rather than wait to be conscripted under the NRMA or for overseas service. Lastly, Acadian discrimination in the military will be covered which demonstrates that despite this, Acadians still got along with Anglo-Canadians, U.S., and British soldiers and served in patriotic fashion thus demonstrating their willingness to protect and serve the nation and Empire.

The research for this thesis comes from archival material such as letters, diaries, and records of south shore Acadians who served in the Second World War, and now held at the Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos, Yarmouth County Museum & Archives, and the Argyle Township Courthouse and Archives in addition to the six oral interviews

I conducted with community members who lived through the war years, both as soldiers at the fighting fronts and civilians on the home front. The largest bulk of research resulted from a from a close qualitative and quantitative reading of *Le Petit Courrier* was founded in Pubnico, Nova Scotia by Desiré d'Eon in 1937. d'Eon originally wanted to become a teacher but he had difficulty speaking clearly due to problems with his throat, so he decided to create a French language newspaper. There were other French newspapers such as *l'Évangeline* (or *La Voix d'Évangeline* as it was called during the war), founded in Digby, Nova Scotia in 1887 but then moved to Moncton, New Brunswick in 1905. Others such as *l'Acadie* and *l'Acadie libérale* had appeared but gone out of business before *Le Petit Courrier* surfaced. d'Eon knew that it would be difficult to sustain a newspaper in the Great Depression. There was a desire for a French language newspaper, however, the majority of Acadians did not have the money, time, or interest to read them. d'Eon tackled this problem by writing about the people in the region and the events in each community. It was this decision that led to the success of *Le Petit Courrier*.[38] Although the majority of the newspaper articles are written in French, there are some written in English and even in "Chiac" (a mix of French and English with Acadian slang) though they are few and far between. More importantly however, the newspaper contains various articles and war propaganda reflective of Acadian identity in their support for the war. *La Voix d'Évangeline* along with the *Yarmouth Herald* and *Halifax Herald* are used as well to give greater context to the reactions of Acadians and Anglo-Canadians in Nova Scotia. In all, this variety of local

[38] Jeanelle and Lorna d'Entremont, *Désiré d'Eon: journaliste* (Pointe-de-l'Église, NS: Centre provincial des resources pédagogiques, 1988), 5-6.

sources has allowed me to produce a micro-history of one French-speaking region during the Second World War.

Historiography

Very few articles and books have been written on Acadians as a whole in the Second World War. This is not surprising, as they are often only focused on during the colonial period of the 17th and 18th centuries. When discussing the Second and even the First World War, Quebec often overshadows them due to the sheer size and political power of Quebec, but also because of the tendency of Canadian historians to lump all Francophone Canadians together and assume that Quebec speaks for them all.

One of the first works on Acadians during the Second World War was written at a surprisingly early date, *Brève histoire tragique: son martyre et sa résurrection* by Emile Lauvrière in 1947. It is a history of the Acadians that briefly covers everything from the first explorers and founders of Acadia in the 16th and 17th centuries, the deportation, exile in the 13 Colonies and Europe, post deportation in the Maritime Provinces and in Louisiana, to Acadians in modern times which includes a section on the Second World War. Lauvrière discusses the opinions given by *La Voix d'Évangeline* and the opinions of other people in relation to the war and those of Acadians. He also shows statistics for voluntary enlistments as well as for war bond purchases. For example, he mentions how *La Voix d'Évangeline* saw the war as one of religion and labelled Hitler as the antichrist. As for people, he mentions a French engineer named André Bérenger who believed the Acadians would support the war. This was also the opinion of François Comeau, who was the president of the Société Nationale

l'Assomption, a patriotic society that organised the National Acadian Conventions from 1881 to 1937.[39]

Lauvrière also discusses the problems Acadians had during the war. He says that because the Acadians did not know "French" (most likely referring to their dialect), they could not join the French-Canadian units such as the Régiment de la Chaudière and had to join the English ones. He also claims that because Acadians did not have their own militia, they were less prepared than the average Canadian to enlist and go into basic training. Nevertheless, they were able to join the military, notably the air force.[40] Lauvrière does not appear to have a clear argument in his book as he seems to discuss each section individually rather than collectively. However, he seems to argue that the Acadians were in support of the Second World War, using different opinions from various people and groups to support his argument.

In 1949, authors Guy Courteau and François Lanoue in *Une Nouvelle Acadie, Saint-Jacques de l'Achigan*, discusses the municipality of Saint-Jacques, Quebec, which is known to have an Acadian population. Religion, civic rights, education, the economy, and politics/ military history are all subjects discussed in the book.[41] There is no core argument as each subject is discussed independently, but the book does include two small paragraphs on both wars. The one on the First World War mentions how the locals wished to create a memorial for those who served, while also mentioning two soldiers named Marcel St-Georges and Wilfrid Venue, who volunteered. However, their

[39] Emile Lauvrière, *Brève histoire tragique: son martyre et sa résurrection* (Paris: Librarie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien Maisonneuve, 1947), 198-199.
[40] *Ibid.*, 199.
[41] Guy Courteau and François Lanoue, *Une Nouvelle Acadie, Saint-Jacques de l'Achigan*, (Montreal: Imprimerie Populaire Limitée, 1949), 30.

surnames are not Acadian. As for the Second World War, he lists Acadians such as Albert LeBlanc, and Bernard Dugas in addition to other non-Acadian names to highlight the municipalities' support.[42]

Fifteen years later, J. Henry Blanchard, a school teacher in Prince Edward Island wrote a few books on Acadian history, focusing specifically on Prince Edward Island, including *The Acadians of Prince Edward Island 1720-1964*. It includes a brief section on Acadians in the First and Second World War and concludes that the Acadians managed to preserve their identity despite their challenges and are proud of it.[43] He discusses how many Acadians on the island served in both wars. When discussing the First World War, he mentions the 105th Highland Regiment which was formed in December of 1915. Out of the 1,250 officers and men, 220 were Acadian. From the parish of Bloomfield, Prince Edward Island, 100 Acadians served as well. As for the Second World War, Blanchard says the number of Acadians who served was "impressive" but presents little information to support his statement. He only mentions a war monument located in Egmont Bay, Prince Edward Island which has 13 Acadian names on it.[44] These first two books support the idea that Acadians were very much in support of the Second World War which is not surprising as one was written by a man of French origin, the other by an Acadian.

In 1982, the *Acadians in the Maritimes: Thematic Studies*, which publishes essays relating to Acadian history, published an essay written by Philippe Doucet, a

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[42] *Ibid.*, 296.
[43] J. Henry Blanchard, *The Acadians of Prince Edward Island 1720-1964* (Ottawa: Le Droit and Leclerc Commercial Printers, 1964), 144.
[44] *Ibid.*, 141.

political scientist, titled *Politics and the Acadians*. Doucet discusses how Acadians responded to many political situations beginning in the colonial period until the 1960s, which includes a discussion on the Second World War. Doucet argues that; "the history of the Acadians is the source of their identity which gives them better knowledge of themselves and a more comprehensive vision of their society."[45] When discussing the Second World War, he takes a different approach than the previous two authors. He focuses mostly on conscription by discussing the opinions of many Acadians, including politicians or newspapers. He also gives the vote percentages during the plebiscite of 1942, which was an opportunity for Canadian citizens to vote either "yes" or "no" for conscription for overseas service. He claims that the majority of Acadians and Francophone-Canadian voted "no" for conscription. Doucet also discusses how radio broadcasts from Quebec made their way into the Maritime Provinces, most of which were from anti-conscriptionist speakers. He asks whether this was a reason many Acadians voted "no" but does not give a definitive answer. Despite the Acadian opposition to conscription, Doucet says that the Acadians still supported the war. However, Doucet does mention how conscription seemed to "open new wounds" for Acadians as during the First World War, when conscription was put in place in 1917, some Acadians fled to the forest which is reflective of their ancestors who did so to avoid deportation. One woman even cut off the trigger fingers of her husband so that he could not serve.[46]

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[45] Philippe Doucet, "Politics and the Acadians," in *Acadians in the Maritimes: Thematic Studies*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton: Centres d'études acadiennes, 1982), 219.
[46] *Ibid.*, 257-259.

Helen Jean McClelland Nugent, who was a high school teacher before becoming a history professor and eventually the Chair of the History Department of Franklin College in Indiana, also focuses on Acadians and conscription in her PhD dissertation titled "The Acadian Response to the Conscription Crisis of World War II" completed in 1983.[47] She goes into much more detail than Doucet as she only covers the Second World War and asks the question of whether Acadians response to conscription crisis resembled that of Anglophone-Canadians or of the Francophones in Quebec.[48] She first discusses how the response of the Quebecois is often believed to be the response of all Francophone-Canadians and how many authors, such as Edward McInnis, have only focused on the Quebecois perspective. Other authors such as Donald Creighton and J. L. Granatstein have focused only on Quebec as well to emphasize the "split" between French and English Canadians. She also attributes New Brunswick Acadian Parliament members and their support of conscription to why Acadians are not recognized as a distinct group. This is because they never listened to the Acadians who opposed conscription, thus making their voices unheard.[49] Her regions of focus include Restigouche, Madawaska, Gloucester, Kent, and Westmoreland county in New Brunswick. For Nova Scotia, the regions of Clare, Digby, and Argyle. Lastly, in Prince Edward Island, the regions of King's, Queen's, and Prince county.[50]

Nugent provides vote percentages during the plebiscite, opinions from Acadian politicians, Acadian newspapers such as *La Voix d'Évangeline*, and the Nova Scotian

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[47] "Helen Jean McClelland Nugent," *prabook.com*, accessed December 2nd, 2017. http://prabook.com/web/person-view.html?profileId=433600.
[48] Helen Jean McClelland Nugent, "The Acadian Response to the Conscription Crisis of World War II" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1983), 28-29.
[49] *Ibid.*, 1-2.
[50] *Ibid.*, 3-5.

paper, *Le Petit Courrier*, and interviews to help determine whether the Acadians were for or against conscription, while also providing information to demonstrate that Acadians are distinct from other Francophone-Canadians (as done above). She says that there were differences in opinion amongst Francophone-Canadians for conscription which were largely due to their geographical locations and sociological variances. This means that the Acadians formed opinions that differ from the Quebecois due to where they live and the sociological forces surrounding those regions.[51] Nugent then concludes, "The Acadian response to the conscription crisis is best described as acquiescence to the majority view of the community but to the overall Maritime community rather than only the Acadian community."[52] This demonstrates that she disagrees with Doucet even though she suggests that the Acadian were reluctant to support conscription.

A different approach is taken when Ronald Cormier, a journalist and amateur historian from Moncton, publishes: *J'ai vécu la guerre: Témoignages de soldats acadiens*, in 1988 and *Entre bombes et barbelés: Témoignages d'aviateurs et de prisonniers de guerre acadiens, 1939-1945* in 1990. They are collections of first hand accounts from Acadian Second World War veterans from New Brunswick (and one Acadian veteran from Prince Edward Island).[53] For example, in the first book, Cormier includes a testimony from Rodolphe Blanchard, from Grande-Anse, New Brunswick. He discusses how his journey to England from Halifax had no escort, making them

[51] *Ibid.*, 98.
[52] *Ibid.*, 113.
[53] Ronald Cormier, *Entre bombes et barbelés: Témoignages d'aviateurs et de prisonniers de guerre acadiens, 1939-1945* (Moncton: Les Éditions d'Acadie, 1990), 121.

vulnerable to U-Boat (German submarine) attacks.[54] The books also contain a timeline of events from the war which allows the reader to better place these first-hand accounts in the greater context of the Second World War. In his second book, there is even a section which briefly discusses what the Acadian veterans did after the war. There is no historical analysis, nor is there an argument present in either book. This is to be expected as the goal of the books was to only record the experiences of Acadian veterans during the war. Many of these experiences could have easily belonged to someone who was not Acadian. This is because many discuss the harsh realities of war which would have been experienced by everyone regardless of their ethnic background. However, Blanchard also discusses how he wished to be a part of the North Shore New Brunswick Regiment, where many Acadians were placed, but was denied.[55] This demonstrates that some Acadians had a desire to be with their people and did not like being separated, similar to the deportation.

Another edition of *Acadia in the Maritimes* was published in 1995, except the name changed to *Acadia of the Maritimes*. In this new collection there is a chapter titled "Acadians and Economics: From the Colonization to 1960" written by Pierre-Marcel Desjardins, Michel Deslierres, and Ronald C. LeBlanc, who are all economic professors at the University of Moncton. The authors briefly cover the Second World War and its changing economy. Their overall argument however is that the Acadians made smart economic choices, moved with what they were subjected to, maintained their agriculture philosophy for a long period but then changed it (rather late) to better address new

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[54] Ronald Cormier, *J'ai vécu la guerre: Témoignages de soldats acadiens, 1939-1945* (Moncton: Les Éditions d'Acadie, 1988), 218.
[55] *Ibid.*, 218.

economic challenges, and stayed united during times of hardship.[56] When discussing the war, they mention how it had some positive impacts on their economy although the federal government could have created plans to better benefit the Maritimes. They also explain how Acadians preferred to return to their traditional way of life after returning from the war, hence their slow adaptation to the changing economy. However, agriculture declined after the war leaving only specialised farming such as apples from Nova Scotia and potatoes from both New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. New technology then made its way into the fishing industry and Acadians had to change their ways to adapt.[57] As for participation in the war, the authors give no opinion or analysis.

A year later, Cormier published another book titled *Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*. This is an attempt to write a short history of the experience. He discusses topics such as the Great Depression, Acadians on the home front, conscription, Acadians in the military, and their overall participation. It is the first book that tries to give a general history of the Acadians rather than focusing on a specific topic as the other authors have done. He acquires his information the same way the previous authors have: through newspapers, first hand accounts, and statistical information such as voting percentages, enlistment numbers, and casualty lists. Cormier does not have an explicit argument, however he does conclude that the Acadians did not hesitate to participate in the war, thus agreeing with Lauvrière and Blanchard. Furthermore, he says that they served even though they knew not all would be commanded by officers who spoke their

[56] Pierre-Marcel Desjardins, Michel Deslierres, and Ronald C. LeBlanc, "Acadians and Economics: From the Colonization to 1960," in *Acadia of the Maritimes: Thematic Studies from the Beginning to the Present*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton: Chaire d'études acadiennes, 1995), 201-202.
[57] *Ibid.*, 228.

language. And if even the Canadian and New Brunswick governments did acknowledge from the beginning the sacrifices made by Francophone-Canadians, it would still take a quarter of a century for these governments to give the Francophone-Canadians their language rights.[58]

The problem of conscription is tackled again in an undergraduate thesis titled, "The Re-Emergence of an Acadian Collective Identity as Highlighted by the Conscription Crisis of 1942." Written by Patricia D. Thibodeau at Mount Allison University, it argues that because of the 1942 plebiscite on conscription, the Acadians in New Brunswick became more expressive politically which rekindled their identity. This demanded attention from the New Brunswick government after the Second World War and allowed New Brunswick Acadians to gain more rights and be equal alongside the Anglo-Canadians. She essentially analyses Acadian identity prior to the plebiscite, how Acadians became unified, the conscription crisis in both world wars, and examines what may have influenced the Acadian plebiscite vote.[59] Like all the other authors, she uses Acadian newspapers, opinions from Acadian politicians, and vote percentages to support her argument. However, she also includes sources from authors noted above such as Philippe Doucet, Ronald Cormier, and Helen Jean McClelland Nugent. She agrees with Doucet that Acadians opposed conscription but says this resulted from them wanting political equality rather than from a collective identity as seen in Quebec.[60] The plebiscite and the conscription crisis of both world wars are the only things she focuses

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[58] Richard Cormier, *Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (Moncton : Les Éditions d'Acadie, 1996), 110.
[59] Patricia D. Thibodeau, "The Re-Emergence of an Acadian Collective Identity as Highlighted by the Conscription Crisis of 1942" (undergrad thesis, Mount Allison University, 1997), 2-4.
[60] *Ibid.,* 51.

on in relation to military history as she does not examine Acadian participation in either war.

There is a halt in publications as the next emerges only in 2010 when Ronald Cormier published *Les Acadiens, la conscription et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale: "une question de race…"* in *Les Cahiers*, which is a collection of articles published by the Acadian Historical Society in Moncton, New Brunswick. It is a trimmed down version of his book, *Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* except it only focuses on conscription. It also provides more background information on the war and briefly explains the conscription crisis of the First World War, which he says Anglo-Canadians agreed to while Francophone-Canadians opposed it. Much of the information in the article appears in his book thus meaning he still agrees with Lauvrière and Blanchard that Acadians still wanted to support the war; however, he also agrees with Doucet and Thibodeau that Acadians opposed conscription.[61]

By 2010 little had been written on Nova Scotia Acadians in either war, and then in 2014, *Memoirs of an Acadian WWII Soldier*, was published by Yvette Saulnier-Johnson. It tells the story of her father, Gilfred Saulnier, who was born in the Acadian village of St. Benomi in Digby County.[62] He served and fought in Italy and Germany over a four-year period.[63] The book also covers his life after he returned to Nova Scotia. There is also nothing in the book that reflects his Acadian identity. This is because the book discusses what Saulnier witnessed and experienced in combat, which could have

[61] Ronald Cormier, "Les Acadiens, la conscription et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale: "une question de race…," *Les Cahiers* 41, no. 2 (2010): 127.
[62] Yvette Saulnier-Johnson, *Memoirs of an Acadian WWII Soldier* (Tusket: Argyle Township Courthouse and Archives, 2014), 6.
[63] *Ibid.*, 34.

been anyone's experience regardless of their identity. If there were events that affected Saulnier solely because of his Acadian background, they were not recorded.

The most recent publication on Acadians and the Second World War was written by Julien Massicotte, an associate professor at the University of Moncton who specialises in sociology, and Mélanie LeBlanc, also from the University of Moncton, who specialises in sociolinguistics.[64] Published in Autumn of 2016 under the title "l'Acadie et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale" it focuses only on New Brunswick Acadians. The authors explain how their goal is to give the reader a preliminary portrait of Acadia during the Second World War and they use many of the sources previously discussed.[65] That being said, the article aims to lay out different possibilities for how the Acadians may have reacted to the war rather than provide an argument with a solid conclusion. For example, they pose questions such as: what made the Acadians want to participate in the war and how did they react to Canada joining the war?[66] While the article is more theoretical than objective, the authors do conclude that this topic should be studied as it would help to better understand the evolution of Acadian society.[67]

While the focus of the thesis will be exclusively on the Second World War, it is important to briefly discuss what has been written on the First World War to see if there are similarities between the arguments and conclusions made by the previous authors. As noted above, Blanchard discusses how many Acadians from Prince Edward Island

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[64] "Julien Massicotte," *umoncton.ca*, accessed December 2nd, 2017. http://professeur.umoncton.ca/umce-massicotte_julien/; "Mélanie LeBlanc," *umoncton.ca*, accessed December 2nd, 2017. http://professeure.umoncton.ca/umce-leblanc_melanie/.
[65] Julien Massicotte and Mélanie LeBlanc, "l'Acadie et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region* 45, no. 2 (2016): 51-52.
[66] *Ibid.*, 49.
[67] *Ibid.*, 67.

served in the First World War which demonstrates that they were in support of this war as they were in the second. Also, Doucet includes a small section on the conscription crisis in the First World War in addition to the Second World War in his essay, "Politics and the Acadians." He says that the Acadians opposed conscription during the First World War but still showed their support thus agreeing with Blanchard. He also mentions how only three out of the 12 Acadian senators and one Acadian member of Parliament out of 15 supported conscription. The three Acadian newspapers at the time, *Le Moniteur Acadien*, *l'Acadien*, and *l'Évangeline*, were all torn on the issue with *Le Moniteur* supporting conscription, *l'Acadien* opposing it, and *l'Évangeline* remaining neutral. Although *l'Évangeline* did publish an article opposing the war in general on the 27th of April 1917, the next issue clarified that the article was published without the directors' consent and that it did not reflect their opinions.[68] Despite this, Doucet concludes that Acadians generally opposed conscription which he says could be reflective of their past treatment by the English during the deportation.[69]

Pierre-Marcel Desjardins et al also briefly cover the First World War in "Acadians and Economics: From the Colonization to 1960" from which they discuss how the changing economy from the beginning of the war onwards benefitted Acadians. For example, the arrival of steam, iron, railways, and the pulp and paper industries allowed the Acadian shipyards in the Clare region to grow economically from 1914 to

[68] Philippe Doucet, "Politics and the Acadians," in *Acadians in the Maritimes: Thematic Studies*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton: Centres d'études acadiennes, 1982), 253-254; *Debates of the Senate of the Dominion of Canada 1917 Official Report*, ed. Albert Horton (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1918), vi-viii; *Official Report of the Debates of the House of Commons Seventh Session-Twelfth Parliament* (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1918), v-vii.
[69] Philippe Doucet, "Politics and the Acadians," in *Acadians in the Maritimes: Thematic Studies*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton: Centres d'études acadiennes, 1982), 256.

1919, building 46 wooden ships during that time. However, when their economic growth began to decline, many Acadians also could not adjust to these new economic changes and had to move to urban centers for work.[70] The authors, however, are silent on the Acadian's participation as they were when discussing the Second World War.

In 2004, Andrew Theobald completed his master's thesis at the University of New Brunswick and then published the findings in the journal *Acadiensis* as, "Une Loi Extraordinaire: New Brunswick Acadians and the Conscription Crisis of the First World War." He gives a brief historiography on what has been written on the 1917 conscription while simultaneously pointing out the lack of attention given to the Acadians during this time period.[71] He argues that the Acadian opposition to conscription was due to settlement and the Anglo-Canadian belief that French-Canadians were slackers and that they ignored Acadians contributions to the war.[72] Using many of the same sources used by previous authors, however, he too agrees that the Acadians supported the First World War despite being opposed to conscription. Theobald adds, though, that the New Brunswick Acadians were accused of not supporting the war. Acadians stressed their support for the war in response by highlighting their voluntary service on the front. The 165th Acadian Battalion was also created to dispel the belief that Acadians were anti-war or "slackers" in addition to wanting to prevent their identity from being overshadowed by the Anglo-Canadians.[73] A lot of what Theobald wrote in this article then appeared in

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[70] Pierre-Marcel Desjardins, Michel Deslierres, and Ronald C. LeBlanc, "Acadians and Economics: From the Colonization to 1960," in *Acadia of the Maritimes: Thematic Studies from the Beginning to the Present*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton: Chaire d'études acadiennes, 1995), 227.
[71] Andrew Theobald, "Une Loi Extraordinaire: New Brunswick Acadians and the Conscription Crisis of the First World War," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region* 34, no. 1 (2004): 81-82.
[72] *Ibid.,* 80.
[73] *Ibid.,* 83-84.

The Bitter Harvest of War: New Brunswick and the Conscription Crisis of 1917 published in 2008. In this book, he also discusses how the Anglo-Canadians were in support of conscription as Theobald notes there was an Anglo and Francophone-Canadian split in New Brunswick.[74] But it was initially an urban/ rural split, with rural anglophone communities – like Acadian ones – opposed to conscription.

Greg Kennedy, who is a professor at the l'Université de Moncton who specialises in Acadian colonial history, Canadian history, and Atlantic history, wrote "'Pour défendre ce que j'ai de plus cher, ma patrie': l'Acadie et la Grande Guerre."[75] It was published in 2015 in *Les Cahiers* and discusses the Acadian national movement, Acadian soldiers, the 165th Acadian Battalion, and life after the war. He also gives a brief summary of Canada's contribution to the war. His overall argument is that Acadians were patriotic thus supported the war alongside Anglo-Canadians.[76] He uses statistics and letters written by soldiers to help demonstrate that.

The most recent written piece on Acadians and the First World War was in autumn of 2017 and follows suit with what Kennedy has written. "Yes, French Canadians Did Their Share in the First World War" by Jean Martin, argues that contrary to popular belief, French Canadians served in the war on a large scale. He supports this by discussing his methodology which was to simply examine all enlistment records at the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and take out those who have a French surname.

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[74] Andrew Theobald, *The Bitter Harvest of War: New Brunswick and the Conscription Crisis of 1917* (Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2008), 64.
[75] "Gregory Kennedy," *umoncton.ca*, accessed January 8th, 2018. http://professeur.umoncton.ca/umcm-kennedy_gregory/.
[76] Gregory Kennedy, "Pour défendre ce que j'ai de plus cher, ma patrie': l'Acadie et la Grande Guerre," 46, no. 1 (2015): 7.

He found that 75,755 were of French-Canadian origin. However, because some of those enlistment records were duplicates along with an unknown number of defaulters and/ or deserters, it brings the 627,586 Canadians in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) down to 619,636. Because of the little more than 1% excess in files, the number of French-Canadians was prorated to 74,795. As for the Acadians, not much is said except for that out of the total number of French-Canadians in the CEF, 400 were Arsenault and 800 were LeBlanc. Martin says this seems to indicate that Acadians enlisted in large numbers.[77]

Most authors agree that Acadians supported the war effort, not just in the Second World War, but in the First World War as well. There is also a lot of attention given to the New Brunswick Acadians. This is not surprising as they are in a much more condensed region whereas in south shore Nova Scotia the settlements are a fair distance apart from one another. This, of course, would have made it difficult for them to organise politically. It is interesting that *l'Acadie et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* was published around the time this thesis was being written. The questions they posed will be addressed here, but with the focus on the south shore Nova Scotian Acadians as not much attention has been given to them. It may help not only answer the questions posed by Massicotte and LeBlanc, but to also help in filling the void of sources needed to conduct these studies as noted by the authors.[78]

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[77] Jean Martin, "Yes, French Canadians Did Their Share in the First World War," *Canadian Military Journal* 17, no. 4 (2017): 49.
[78] Julien Massicotte and Mélanie LeBlanc, "l'Acadie et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale," *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region* 45, no. 2 (2016): 52.

Chapter 1: Acadian Identity during the War

During the Second World War, Acadians felt it was necessary to do their part. This is interesting because the Acadians, like the Quebecois, had long been mistreated by the British Empire and the Canadian Government. Acadians had to defend their identity when the British wanted to make them British subjects during the 1700s, and when the New Brunswick provincial government attempted to remove Catholicism from their schools during the 1800s. Nevertheless, the Acadians were in support of the Empire and the war. This chapter argues that Acadians supported the war in several ways that were tied to their specific cultural identity. For one, some felt compelled to serve, or support the war effort on the home front, because they felt their Roman Catholic religion, which was an important aspect of their identity, was being threatened by the war in Europe. Also, south shore Nova Scotian Acadians felt obligated to support, and stay loyal to, their tight-knit communities, both overseas, and at home, during the war years. Finally, Acadians showed dedication to their country and the British Empire in newspaper articles, and through their use of language, to combat the belief that Francophone-Canadians were opposed to the war.

Before diving into the Acadian reaction to the war in south shore Nova Scotia, it is important to highlight the failed attempt to incorporate Acadian identity into the military and how this did not discourage Acadians from enlisting. Some of the recruitment posters told Acadians and other Francophone-Canadians that they could receive their training in French. Ronald Cormier mentions how only some were given the opportunity to train in French but only in select regions. These French training camps were in Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick. *La Voix d'Évangeline* expressed

their disappointment with this as there were no camps built in Prince Edward Island or in Nova Scotia thus making it difficult for Acadians in those regions who only spoke French to enlist. The French camp in New Brunswick was in Edmundston (camp No. 71) and gave instructions both in French and English. Unfortunately, Acadians who lived in the English parts of the province such as Kent, Westmorland, and Victoria had to do their training in English in Fredericton. This meant that those in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island who wanted to train in Edmundston, would not be able to train in English as well, meaning that the recruitment posters advertising bilingual training were giving false information or making promises they could not keep. On top of that, there were barely any French books inside the camp in Edmundston and a lack of French officers. So, despite being a bilingual camp, Acadian soldiers would still have to be instructed in English due to a lack of resources.[79]

There was also an attempt to revive the Acadian Battalion that was active during the First World War. The 165th Acadian Battalion was created in Moncton, New Brunswick in 1915 and was commanded by Louis-Cyriaque D'Aigle. The battalion was created due to the belief that English military units hid Acadian identity and threatened it as well. However, Acadians also wanted to show their loyalty to the Empire while also preserving their rights. The battalion had a total of 24 officers and 526 men which made them short by 200 of the required number. As a result, the battalion was disbanded in September of 1916 to provide reinforcements for the Forestry Corps and the front.[80] *La*

[79] Richard Cormier, *Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (Moncton : Les Éditions d'Acadie, 1996), 64-67.
[80] Andrew Theobald, *The Bitter Harvest of War: New Brunswick and the Conscription Crisis of 1917* (Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2008), 44-46.

Voix d'Évangeline raised the question to Ottawa of why Acadians did not have their own unit whereas in Quebec, they had units such as the Royal 22nd Regiment. The government did respond to this by saying that it would reorganise the army in order to place Francophone and Anglophone-Canadians on an equal field, still, no Acadian unit was created. The newspaper raised the issue again by discussing how before there was a lack of French officers to command an Acadian unit, however, now that the government started to recruit French officers along with building French training camps, this is no longer an issue. The newspaper also said that the belief of there not being enough Acadians to create a unit is false because they have been placed in many other units. *La Voix d'Évangeline* tried for three years after September 1939 to form an Acadian unit but had no luck.[81]

Bona Arsenault, who was the MP of Bonaventure, Quebec, explained after the war why Acadians may have not received the unit they wanted. He said that out of the 72 members of the National Defense Committee when James Ralston was the minister between 1940 and 1944, only three were Francophone-Canadian.[82] According to Jean Pariseau and Serge Bernier, resources were limited for training Francophone-Canadians even in Quebec. Only 12.5% of basic training centres and 20% of advanced training centres offered informal bilingual services, while the only two advanced training centres not designed for infantry, specialised, and technical training in Quebec operated only in English. Additionally, Francophone-Canadians who received trades in their language made up only 4% of the military, not to mention the lack of French speaking officers or

[81] Richard Cormier, *Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (Moncton : Les Éditions d'Acadie, 1996), 72-74.
[82] *Ibid.*, 75.

even non-commissioned officers to train Francophone-Canadians soldiers needed for specialists and trades for operations. Pariseau and Bernier also mention how French-speaking officers had to learn English in order to serve which would explain why there were so few as they only made up 14% of all officers.[83] This demonstrates that even though *La Voix d'Évangeline* believed that they could have had an Acadian battalion, the resources were not there.

While *La Voix d'Évangeline* was persistent in their attempt to revive the battalion, *Le Petit Courrier* was silent on the issue as they were for the French training camps. Veteran Charlie Muise said he had no issues being trained in English despite *La Voix d'Évangeline*'s demand for bilingual camps across the Maritimes.[84] This was also the case for veteran Anselm d'Entremont from West Pubnico. He enlisted in 1941 and trained in Aldershot and in Halifax, Nova Scotia before serving in Sicily, Belgium, Holland, and Germany until the war ended.[85] This demonstrates that south shore Nova Scotian Acadians were less concerned about losing their identity in the military than those in New Brunswick. Despite many south shore Nova Scotian Acadians not being able to train in French, nor have their own unit, they still answered the call and served knowing that their identity would be barely, if not at all, represented within the military.

The one thing that did concern south shore Nova Scotian Acadians during the war was their religion. An opinion piece written in *Le* Petit *Courrier* on October 5th, 1939 claimed that the war was a one of religion and social order. By the time the

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[83] Jean Pariseau and Serge Bernier, *French-Canadians and Bilingualism in the Canadian Armed Forces Volume I 1763-1969: the Fear of a Parallel Army* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1988), 127.
[84] Charlie Muise in discussion in the author, July, 2017.
[85] Aline d'Entremont in discussion with the author, March, 2018.

opinion piece was published, Canada had declared war on Germany on September 10th. The war had also entered the phase known as the "Phoney War" where there was no major Allied operation on the western front until May, when Germany invaded France and the low countries. There were, however, a few small operations such as the Saars Offensive lasting from the 7th to the 16th of September. Nevertheless, the dominant event of September was the German and Russian assault on Poland where the two countries were temporarily united to crush Catholic Poland.

The unnamed author of the October 5th article, discussed how it was the Christian nations versus Nazism and Communism because Hitler wanted to re-establish German paganism despite believing in God, while Stalin, being an atheist, wanted to rid the world of religion.[86] The German government is also labelled as unreasonable and aggressive, thus recognising them as a significant threat. The article ends by stating that no Christian nation should remain indifferent to current events in Europe and that while one can understand remaining neutral in terms of armaments, the Christian and civilised nations should give moral support to England and France who must deal with this threat.[87] A few months later, another article expressed sympathy for Poland, which was now under German and Russian control. Poland, as the author claims, was losing its culture and religion (which was Catholicism) to the Nazis and Soviets.[88] Additionally, there was a section published in three separate editions titled "La vraie pensée d'Hitler sur le christianisme." These sections contain quotes from Hitler discussing how he

[86] Poland was invaded both by Germany and Russian on September 1st, 1939. Many would have believed that Russia was an equal threat. This sentiment changed after Germany invaded Russia on June 22nd, 1942 thus severing the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, singed August 23rd, 1939.
[87] "La guerre qui sevit," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 5th, 1939.
[88] "Le sort de la Pologne," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), January 25th, 1940.

wants to remove Christianity from Germany while stating that people in Germany, unlike in Italy, cannot be pagan and Christian, they must be one or the other.[89] Furthermore, the articles describe how Hitler rejected the proposal for a nationalist church detached from Rome by saying that this thought is outdated.[90]

Once Hitler began purging religion in Europe, *Le Petit Courrier* was quick to spread the news to the public. The author describes how monastic life in Austria has stopped while the Benedictine convents in Württemberg and Silesia in Germany were locked, but then reopened by the Nazis to accommodate their soldiers.[91] A concordat was created between the German Catholic church and the government in 1933 which meant bishops could not be involved with politics. The negotiations for the concordat were finalised by Hitler when he accepted the Vatican terms under the condition that the Catholic Zentrum (Catholic Centre Party) be dissolved. This concordat was supposed to protect the Catholic church in Germany, however, the Nazis violated the concordat not long after it had been created and many German Catholics and members of clergy were persecuted. Once war broke out, Hitler eased pressure off the church as he needed their support for the war effort, which they agreed to do. Throughout the war, however, German bishops received moral support form Pope Pius XII and worked closely with him as they coped with the current state of their country. German bishops also protested

[89] "La vraie pensée d'Hitler sur le christianisme," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 14th, 1940.
[90] "La vraie pensée d'Hitler sur le christianisme," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 21st, 1940.
[91] "l'Église et le Nazisme," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 20th, 1941.

Nazi policies such as euthanasia, and the conditions in the Warthegau, which was a subdivision formed from Polish territory annexed in 1939.[92]

After France fell in June 1940 the Nazi policy against Catholicism spread. In France, the Cathedral in Strasbourg had been declared a "national monument to the Third Reich" and had ceased all religious practice.[93] The Germans had also removed the bishops from Strasbourg and from Metz and banned religious ceremonies. Catholic schools were closed and other Catholic organisations as well as journals were dissolved. The number of convents had been reduced as well and 60 priests were removed from Alsace.[94] According to Robert Gildea, the Catholic Church was the strongest institution in occupied France. However, in Nantes, the Germans forbade bell ringing unless it was used to mobilize forces. This ban, however, was relaxed after a month. *Le Semaine religieuse* magazine was also censored and during funerals, the French could no longer drape the tri-colour flag over their coffins. Traditional processions to cemeteries and graveside speeches held on All Saints Day were banned along with Catholic Youth movements. The banning of youth movements proved to be difficult for the Germans as the clergy did their best to regroup them, specifically in sports clubs.[95] In Vichy France, however, religion had more freedom. Philippe Pétain, who was the Chief of State of Vichy France, told children to attend mass because he believed they could learn from the church. Pétain also ordered religious instruction to be incorporated into the public-

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[92] Peter C. Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe, 1943-1950* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 24-25.
[93] "l'Église et le Nazisme," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 20th, 1941.
[94] "Mesures anticatholiques des Nazis en France," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 17th, 1941.
[95] Robert Gildea, *Marianne in Chains: Everyday Life in the French Heartland Under German Occupation* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2002), 195-197.

school curriculum and allowed the clergy to teach in their traditional garments. This demonstrates that Catholicism was not under threat in Vichy France. Sweets says, however, that the Catholic church may have lost respect due to its public association with the regime.[96]

Not much is said about Italy, however, an article discussed the possibility of Hitler removing the Pope from the Vatican. Fulton Sheen, a priest from the United States in an interview with the *Catholic Sun*, expressed his worry that the Nazis may have to invade Italy to keep it under Axis control. Sheen then claims that Hitler is possessed by the Devil, which he says is apparent due to his hatred of Christianity.[97] The Italian Catholic Church, like the German church, opposed Fascism in 1938 when Pope Pius XI withdrew Italian church support due to Mussolini's racial laws, which discriminated against the Jews. Little was done to reduce Catholic influence in Italy as Fascism was losing popular support. Even when Rome fell in 1944, the Nazis did not touch the church, in fact, there was a re-emergence in the Catholic movement. The Catholic Boy Scouts and Girl Guide organisations were resurrected while new organisations such as the Christian Worker's Association of Italy and Catholic Institution of Social Activity, were created.[98]

The full extent of Nazi opposition to the Catholic church remained to be revealed in 1939-1940, but the evidence from Poland was clear enough. *Le Petit Courrier*

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[96]John F. Sweets, *Choices in Vichy France: The French Occupation under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 54.
[97] "Hitler pourrait chasser le Pape du Vatican," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), February 5th, 1942.
[98] Peter C. Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe, 1943-1950* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 26-27.

described in 1942 in more detail how Poland was losing its religion explaining how Cardinal Bertram, an Archbishop from Breslau, Germany, requested that Catholic priests from the Warthegau listen to public confessions rather than individual ones, and allowed laypeople to give the sick the Blessed Sacrament. While this does not seem to be a negative consequence of German rule, the Acadian newspaper calls this "primitive Christianity" to show its disapproval.[99] The Nazis did much more than what was said in the newspaper. For example, historian Halik Kochanski describes how the partition of Poland caused by German and Russian occupation created chaos in church organisation, as the new border split archbishoprics. The Germans attempted to Germanise the church by imprisoning members of the clergy and banning Polish masses and confessions. The Russians on the other hand placed a heavy tax on churches causing them to close.[100] Not much is said about the loss of Polish culture in *Le Petit Courrier*, however, Kochanski describes how the removal of Polish culture was part of the Third Reich's plans. Hans Frank, Hitler's personal lawyer and Chief Jurist in Poland's General Government, called for the removal of Polish theatres and cinemas as well as newspapers thus preventing them from expressing their opinions. For education, Heinrich Himmler in May 1940, only allowed Poles to be in school until the fourth grade to teach them basic arithmetic and how to write their name, but not read. Also, all secondary schools and universities were closed.[101]

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[99] "La Pologne retourne au christianisme primitive," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 16th, 1942.
[100] Halik Kochanski, *The Eagle Unbowed: Poland and the Poles in the Second World War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 126.
[101] *Ibid.*, 98-99.

In July 1942, *Le Petit Courrier* published an article containing the story of three monks who had escaped Greece by boat eventually making their way to Haifa, Israel. The monks described the pillaging of Christianity in Greece by the Nazi regime. They mention how the Germans had taken the church bells to use the materials for guns while other religious works of art had been put into trucks and transported somewhere to the north. Religious texts had also been taken away in large quantities.[102]

These articles reflect Acadian identity because Christianity, specifically Catholicism, was an important part of it. It is only natural that the Acadians would want to defend their religion by supporting other Christian nations because their religion had been threatened before. They also sympathize with Poland and demonize Hitler by calling him a pagan because they understand what it is like to have one's culture attacked. By making Acadians aware of Hitler's religious purge of Europe in *Le Petit Courrier*, it demonstrates their willingness to stand up against Fascism in order to preserve a part of what makes them Acadian by covering events outside of their region. It is interesting that nothing is said about the Jews as they were clearly Nazi Germany's main target. *Le Petit Courrier* acknowledges the existence of the concentration camps but were silent on the mass persecution of the Jewish faith. They were more concerned about their religion being taken away from them. Not much is said about religion in relation to the Japanese as well. However, there is a snippet in *Le Petit Courrier* discussing the interment of 500 priests and religious people in Japanese concentration

[102] "Trois moines en Palestine racontent le pillage Nazi," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 23rd, 1942.

camps, 100 of whom were Americans.[103] None of these articles make an explicit call to arms, however, this notion is present in other parts of the newspaper.

For the most part, Acadians were encouraged to support the war like any other Canadian, through propaganda. Balzer discusses how propaganda is made up of things about the war the general public will find displeasing, such as learning about atrocious acts committed by an enemy or giving the public a worse case scenario of what could happen if nothing is done about a particular problem. He also says propaganda can shape and manipulate people's opinions and direct behaviour to achieve a response, usually in favour of those creating the propaganda. It was the Wartime Information Board (WIB) which produced the propaganda and made sure that the Canadian public was committed to the war effort. The WIB was a small organisation, working with the Bureau of Public Information (BPI) in December of 1939, but then grew once Canada became more involved with the war effort after the fall of France in 1940. The press saw the WIB as a threat to democracy because they believed it would prevent them from expressing their own opinions as the WIB had social scientists to analyse public opinion and shape the propaganda accordingly.[104] Balzer argues, however, that the media was not spineless even with the government and military setting regulations.[105] An example of this can be seen above when *Le Petit Courrier* gave their opinion of the war, which was in support of helping France and Britain, before the creation of the WIB. This

[103] "500 prêtre et religieuses internés par les Japonais," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 9th, 1943.
[104] Timothy Balzer, *The Information Front: The Canadian Army and News Management During the Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 7.
[105] *Ibid.*, 9.

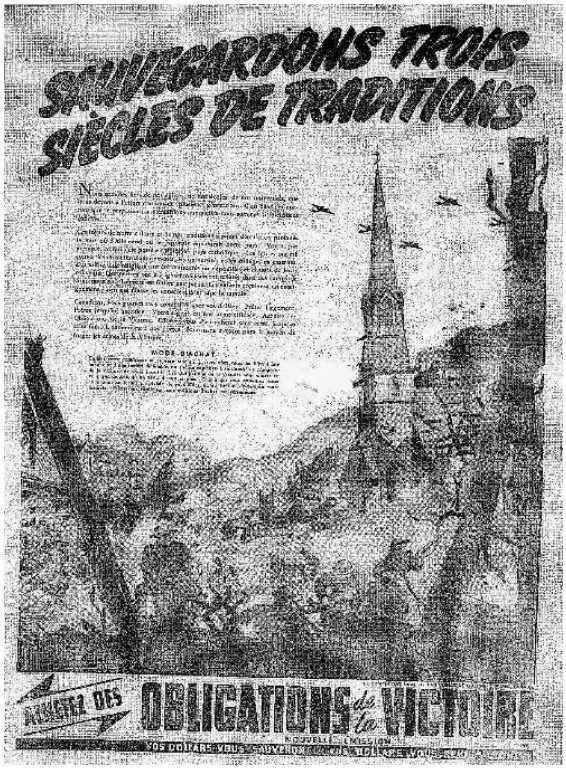
opinion remained consistent throughout the war, therefore demonstrating that the WIB did not have much influence over them and their views.

Much of the propaganda used religion to encourage the sale of War Savings Certificates. These were sold door to door by volunteers and people could also purchase them at banks, post offices, and trust companies. After seven years every $4 spent would grow to $5 which the buyer would receive at the end of that seven-year period. One person however, could not own more than $600 in certificates. One poster discusses how the church bells in Canada are still ring freely every Sunday. A quote by Prime Minister Mackenzie King (included in the poster), on the other hand, says that this is not the case in other countries. The poster essentially tells Canadians that if they want to save their churches as well as their liberty from Nazi rule they should unite and buy War Savings Certificates.[106] Another poster encouraged the sale of War Savings Certificates by showing a teacher with her students. She is pointing out the window towards a church and a cross and in bold there is the words "Liberté, Liberté". She is telling her students that people go to church freely to give tribute to God thus enjoying religious freedom and that their schools are also free. She

[106] "Les cloches sonnent librement chaque dimanche au Canada," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 10th, 1941.

also mentions how the countries under Nazi rule have been stripped of their personal, educational, and religious freedom.[107]

In February 1940, Victory Bonds (or War Bonds) began to appear, which unlike the War Savings Certificates, had no purchase limit. There were 10 Victory Bond drives during wartime and one postwar. They would grow at an interest rate of 1.5% for short term bonds (seven years) or 3% for long term ones (14 years) and had a lot more success than the certificates. Both the certificates and war bonds were organised under the National War Finance Committee beginning in December 1941. The pieces promoting Victory Bonds were a lot more dramatic than the War Savings Certificates. One example contains a church in the background surrounded by ruins and soldiers fighting on the front. The title of the poster calls for Canadians to help preserve "three centuries of traditions." The text, like in previous articles, describes what has been done to the churches in countries such as Poland. It also mentions how many of the faithful were massacred or placed in concentration camps while others were chased from their convents. Universities and Colleges were converted into barracks and the students are being taught paganism, which the piece claims to make them immoral. Unlike the other



[107] "Liberté, Liberté," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 24, 1941.

pieces, this one also highlights the Japanese as an equal threat to Canadian culture and tradition.[108] One last poster takes a more symbolic turn when promoting Victory Bonds. It says that the dead are telling Canadians to help the living, as they are most important, and that the debt owed to the dead can be paid to our children and loved ones by exempting them of all worries. Attached to this statement is a stained-glass window of a Saint looking up at a star which could be representative of the Virgin Mary. These pieces seem to be targeted at Francophone communities as the star could represent the Virgin Mary. The Virgin Mary is a very important symbol to the Acadians as she is the patron saint of Acadians, the inspiration for their national holiday (August 15th is Assumption Day, the day of the Virgin Mary on the Catholic calendar), the national hymn (*Ave Maris Stella*), and is represented by the star on the flag. Even if this not the case, the stained-glass represents the church thus highlighting the importance of religion to the Acadians.[109] Many of these pieces also appeared in *La Voix d'Évangeline*, Moncton as well thus further demonstrating the importance of religion to Acadians.

In addition to war finances, religion was used in other ways to gain support. One article discusses Catholicism and materialism in relation to John Vereker, 6th Viscount Gort, who in 1944 was the governor of Malta. During a Candlemas in Malta, he received all the curates from every village and city on the island, which he called a remarkable example of the complementary roles of the church and state. This led him to make a statement about the war in relation to materialism. He says the British Empire was able to purge itself from its materialist past which he says leads to a better spiritual life. The

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[108] "Sauvegardons trois siècles de traditions," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), February 19th, 1942.
[109] "Nos morts nous parlent," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 14th, 1943.

author adds that countries like Canada and the United States still have problems surrounding materialism as they are far away from the war.[110] Britain, for example, did, in fact, "purge" itself from materialism early in the war as rationing was introduced in January 1940. This way, scarce resources could be distributed effectively and fairly which also keep people from thinking that producers and suppliers were profiteering. It was not just food that was rationed, but household goods and clothing as well.[111] The author supports this by noting Canada's spending on alcohol was $250 million in 1943.[112] Because religion is a strong part of Acadian identity, it was logical to use it to gain Acadian support by promising a better spiritual life. By noting the amount of money Canadians spent on alcohol in 1943, some Acadians may have minimized their consumption or stopped drinking completely.

Religion has always been used as a comfort tool during difficult times, so it is without a doubt that it was used amongst Acadians to give hope and boost morale. This was mostly done through anecdotes. For example, an uplifting story about two German prisoners of war converting to Christianity was published in June 1941. They were interned in England before being sent to Canada where they converted after studying theology. It was in the camp where they had their first mass.[113] When the swastika was flown in Rome to honour Hitler, Pope Pius XI went to his summer home because he believed the Cross of Christ could not fly next to "the pagan symbol." The article also discusses how the Cross of Lorraine (a Christian cross used by the Free French) was

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[110] "Purgé du matérialisme," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 16th, 1944.
[111] Mark Donnelly, *Britain in the Second World War* (London: Routledge, 1999), 56-57.
[112] "Purgé du matérialisme," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 16th, 1944.
[113] "Prisonniers convertis," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 19th, 1941.

being pitted against the swastika and how Charles de Gaulle (leader of the Free French) is part of the intellectual movement which fosters the love of Christ.[114] This was to show that not all hope was lost in Europe in the fight against Fascism. Similar sentiments are seen in England where people are beginning to appreciate the smaller things in life such as the food they eat. The rich were also beginning to understand the struggles of the poor which the author says is the work of God.[115]

Other examples include a priest named Waitz from Salzbourg, Germany who says that the struggle between the Nazis and the church is still on-going. Priests have begun to teach religion in church to counter the teaching programs established by the Nazis which avoid religion. He then reaches out to all Catholics by saying that despite having to often submit to a violent force, it is key to remain strong.[116] As for the French, Ferdinand Foch, the French general who was the Supreme Allied Commander during the First World War, was described in an article as being a devoted Catholic. His Catholicism, according to the author, was reflective of his confidence in his country. The author then discusses Canada's mass production of war goods and how our soldiers are better armed. He also says Canadians should continue to work, fight, and produce as Foch said: "victory is achieved through will power."[117] This is significant because identifying a man of high prestige, like Foch, as a Catholic would resonate with Acadians and inspire them to continue their support for the war.

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[114] "Sous le signe de la croix de Lorraine," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 4th, 1941.
[115] "La guerre a ses lecons," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), December 4th, 1941.
[116] "Lutte ou mourir," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 23rd, 1942.
[117] "La volonté de vaincre," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 7th, 1943.

One last story was about Titus Brandsma, a priest well known to the Catholic community who was sent to the Dachau concentration camp. He was placed in a few concentration camps before arriving at Dachau because he wrote a letter outlining what he thought the Catholic journals' code of conduct should be. At Dachau, he was tortured and humiliated but despite this, he stayed strong until his death almost a year after entering the camp. The article, quoting the last line of his letter, also said that if the Germans attack the church, God will have the last word and compensate his servants.[118] Anecdotes such as these all had the same goal in mind, to show that Catholics are strong, dedicated people in order to give Acadians, and other Catholics hope.

Religion was an important aspect for the Acadians during the Second World War. The fact that many articles discussed the removal of religion (specifically Catholicism) from Europe highlights their concern of the growing Nazi threat and their willingness to support those affected by it. Religion was also used to set moral guidelines for wartime consumption, boost morale, and encourage support for the war effort. The fact that Acadians used the very thing they fought to defend signifies its overall importance in Acadian life as well as in other religious communities, to provide comfort and hope when their freedom and livelihood was threatened. A study conducted by René Baudry even shows that out of the 25 parishes in Yarmouth County, 18 were French, which again, highlights to how important religion was to Acadians in south shore Nova Scotia.[119]

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[118] "Le calvaire d'un grand catholique," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), January 25th, 1945.
[119] Léon Thériault, "The Acadianization of the Catholic Church in Acadia (1763-1953)," *The Acadians of the Maritimes: Thematic Studies* (Moncton: Centre d'études acadiennes, 1982), 331.

While much of the information above comes from *Le Petit Courrier*, it does not necessarily mean that only the Acadian newspaper believed the war was a war of religion. An examination of the English language Canadian press demonstrated that, the opinions expressed reflect those of the owner and that they also influence the readers. However, people consume media that reflect their opinions meaning that public opinion and the media help to shape one another. Content from media does not all come from hegemony, but also from interactions of influences and groups.[120]

In contrast, the English language newspapers in Yarmouth and Halifax did not have as much of a focus on religion as *Le Petit Courrier*. *The Yarmouth Herald* for example had a greater focus on Britain, especially during the bombings. Photos of the destruction in London appeared in the newspaper, with one in particular showing civilians cleaning up the rubble.[121] This was also the case for *The Halifax Herald*, which during the beginning of the war, had in bold red, "Empire At War" and also included a message from the King about how the Commonwealth was in danger. Also in the newspaper was an article which made a call for prayers but there was no indication that Christianity was threatened.[122] This is significant because it demonstrates that it was primarily Acadians (at least in Nova Scotia) who believed the war was one of religion while Anglo-Canadians believed it was one which threatened their empire and their core values.

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[120] Timothy Balzer, *The Information Front: The Canadian Army and News Management During the Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 9.
[121] "Civilian Pioneers Clean-Up After Bombers Ccme Over," *The Yarmouth Herald* (Yarmouth, Nova Scotia), January 23rd, 1941.
[122] "Congregations Urged To Face Future With Christian Fortitude," *The Halifax Herald* (Halifax, Nova Scotia), September 4th, 1939.

After Acadian soldiers from southern Nova Scotia returned home, they were given a letter written by a local person and some flowers to thank them for their service. A letter written to a soldier named Marc d'Entremont from West Pubnico said that he fought for "our liberties and religion".[123] Another letter written to Anselm Simon Bourque from Sluice Point by a man named Gaubert LeBlanc discussed how he defended the country, however, he also said that Bourque was a great honour to the village because he defended their common interests and their way of life.[124] This demonstrates that Acadians were in agreement with the newspapers that joining the war effort was a noble cause. It should be said too that Acadians, according to P. M. Desjardins et al., preferred to go back to their traditional way of life after they returned home from Europe despite the social changes that wars often bring.[125]

Aside from religion, *Le Petit Courrier* includes many stories about Acadians in relation to their involvement in the war effort. For example, an Acadian mother named Louise J. B. Senez, from Montreal but who had family in the Maritimes, gave her nine sons to the armed forces. The majority were in the air force with one joining the Canadian artillery and two others in armoured car regiments. One, Sergeant Wilfred Senez (22 years old) was killed in action when flying over Hamburg, Germany after two years of service in the air force.[126] This story is significant because it highlights the fact that Acadians had large families even after the colonial era. There was also an Acadian

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[123] Letter, 1945, Joanna d'Entremont, 2005. 68, Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos Archives.
[124] Anselme Bourque, *My Experiences: Royal Canadian Air Force World War II 1939-1945* (Saint-Jean-sur- Richelieu, 1996).
[125] Pierre-Marcel Desjardins, Michel Deslierres, and Ronald C. LeBlanc, "Acadians and Economics: From the Colonization to 1960," in *Acadia of the Maritimes: Thematic Studies from the Beginning to the Present*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton: Chaire d'études acadiennes, 1995), 228.
[126] "Une acadienne donne 9 fils aux force armées," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), December 16th, 1943.

who helped develop the atomic bomb. The Manhattan Project began with a meeting with the President's Advisory Committee on Uranium, which was created on October 12th, 1939. This meeting was a chance for scientists such as Leo Szilard, Edward Teller, and Eugene Wigner to explain their case for the potential military value of nuclear research. Despite some skepticism from people such as Army Lieutenant Colonel Keith Adamson and Navy Commander Gilbert Hoover, the White House approved the research.[127] Alphée Comeau, originally from Meteghan, was an assistant chief engineer at a factory in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. During the production, no one in Comeau's family knew where he was or what he was doing as the Manhattan Project was a closely guarded secret.[128]

Stories such as these demonstrate that south shore Nova Scotian Acadians were in support of the war and that the anecdotes and propaganda in *Le Petit Courrier* had not fallen on deaf ears. It is significant that *Le Petit Courrier* included stories from Acadians outside of Nova Scotia because it demonstrates just how tight-knit Acadians are and that they were willing to support the war regardless of where they were living. Acadians are very loyal to their tight-knit communities as many live in them their entire lives. My grandmother, for example, still lives in the same house that her parents and grandparents lived in. There would often be as many as three generations living in one house since many Acadians were poor. The house would also be passed down from generation to generation. Their loyalty derives from the fact that many Acadian communities,

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[127] Vincent C. Jones, *Manhattan: The Army and the Atomic Bomb* (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History United States Army, 1985), 21-22.
[128] "Un Acadien a travaillé sur la bombe atomique," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), August 30th, 1945.

especially in Nova Scotia, are surrounded by English communities. It was difficult for an Acadian to find a job outside his or her community due to language barriers or lack of education during the 19th and early 20th centuries, with exception to the First World War when many Acadians served in the Canadian Corps. Many became fishermen from which their shores offered an abundance of wealth, and still does today. Those who became teachers taught within their own communities as well as those joining religious organisations.

Fellow Acadian soldiers would sometimes meet one another while overseas. These stories were recorded in *Le Petit Courrier*. Two soldiers from West Pubnico named Walter Amirault and Marc d'Entremont were in Italy. Although they were not part of the same regiment, they saw one another during their service.[129] This was also the case for brothers Evangeliste and Bernard d'Eon who met in Holland.[130] Two brothers from Wedgeport living in East Boston, fought in Tunisia with the US Army. The older brother, Everette LeBlanc, was tending the wounded when he noticed a soldier who looked familiar; he soon found out that it was his younger brother, Melvin LeBlanc. They also had a third brother who was serving in Guadalcanal in the Pacific.[131] These stories also demonstrate how tight-knit Acadians are. The fact that these stories make their way into *Le Petit Courrier*, highlight their loyalty and desire to stay connected to their communities. As described in the introduction, the newspaper informed Acadians on what people from other communities were doing. Regardless of

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[129] "En Italie," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), November 11th, 1943.
[130] "Deux frères soldats se rencontrent en Hollande," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), August 9th, 1945.
[131] "Acadiens avec les troupes américaines en Afrique," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), February 18th, 1943.

where these Acadians are currently living or serving overseas, they are still connected to their communities with the help of the newspaper.

For *Le Petit Courrier* and Acadians in general, it did not matter where Acadians came from or where they were currently living. What mattered most was their support for the war which would allow Acadians to continue their traditions within their communities such as their religious practices. *La Voix d'Évangeline* would also include people from outside of New Brunswick. For example, a photo of four Francophone Canadians in the Canadian Navy was published in the Moncton newspaper. They were part of a minesweepers fleet. The one on the left is Bernadin d'Eon from West Pubnico while the other three are from Quebec.[132] Focusing on Pubnico, *La Voix d'Évangeline*, in another article, discussed how the village celebrated Acadian National Day on the 15th of August thus also recognising the importance of stepping outside the community but always being brought back to it, whether it be through a newspaper or coming into contact with a relative overseas.[133] Aside from that, the articles in *Le Petit Courrier* also demonstrate that

[132] "Acadiens et Canadiens français dans la marine," *La Voix d'Évangeline* (Moncton, New Brunswick), June 18th, 1942.
[133] "Pubnico a célébré la fête nationale," *La Voix d'Évangeline* (Moncton, New Brunswick), August 27th, 1942.

Acadian solidarity remained strong, as it was during the deportation where Acadians were sent to many different parts of the world.

Acadian solidarity could also be seen when a soldier was killed. *Le Petit Courrier* often discussed the details of the funerals. The seats were filled at the church in Lower Saulnierville (which according to the article was rare) for the funeral of Gerald d'Eon, who served with the Canadian navy. Friends and family came from as far as Halifax to attend and the family received 200 cards, and 15 telegrams.[134] Another large funeral was in Salmon River (Municipality of Clare) at the St.Vincent de Paul church. 400 people from all over attended the funeral from which the hearse was followed by 12 cars, a few trucks, and many people on foot.[135] After a funeral in Meteghan for Edmond Robichaud, who was overseas for three months before being killed in Germany, his coffin was placed on the steps outside the church. The honour guard (composed of Acadians) then fired five shots into the air. Around a thousand-people attended this ceremony which was one the biggest turnouts that the community had seen. The funeral was held on the 12th of May 1945, after the war in Europe ended. This could be one of the reasons why there was such a high attendance, however, it does not diminish the fact that Acadians stood together during difficult times.[136]

Acadians knew Anglo-Canadians often saw all Francophone-Canadians as one group as highlighted in the introduction. This conflation would lead some Canadians to

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[134] "Beau service militaire à Saulnierville mardi à la memoire de Gerald d'Eon," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 3rd, 1941.
[135] "Funerailles du soldat Joseph Emile Thibault," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 30th, 1942.
[136] "Service en mémoire du soldat Edmond Robichaud," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), May 17th, 1945.

believe that Francophone-Canadians as a whole did not support the war effort. Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King, in September 1940, tried to encourage Canadian unity in Parliament by using themes such as Franco-British cooperation for the defence of freedom, and conscription. He also stressed that the war was not a "British war" but a struggle of two European democracies (Britain and France) against Nazi oppression.[137] Acadians agreed with King as his election posters appeared in *Le Petit Courrier* which encouraged all provinces to participate in the war. Acadians clearly supported King as only his posters appeared in the newspaper, however, it should be mentioned that many Acadians generally supported the Liberal Party.[138]

Le Petit Courrier challenged this belief by highlighting Quebec's involvement in the war effort. For example, the director of Service Information, Hebert G. Lash, said he was in favour of Canadian unity and discussed Quebec's participation in the war. He said the belief that Quebec is not participating in the war was false. He supported this by discussing how the first regiment to be completed was one of French-Canadian origin. In addition, three other regiments in Quebec had been mobilised along with reserve forces to reinforce the overseas regiments. He also mentions how other Francophone-Canadians have joined English regiments such as the Black Watch and how the Canadian Navy is 30% French-Canadian.[139] Serge Bernier's chapter in *The Second Quebec Conference Revisited* mentions how many francophones had volunteered for

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[137] Olivier Courteaux, *Canada between Vichy and Free France 1940-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 18.
[138] "Maintenons l'unité Canadienne!," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 14th, 1940.
[139] "Les Canadiens-français et la presente guerre," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 17th, 1941.

service before the NRMA. He says that 20% of Canadians in the military were francophone in 1944 while the total francophone population was 30%.[140]

As for civilians, one figure who is well known in the United States is Jean C. Garand, the man who invented the M1 Garand, a semi-automatic rifle widely-used by the U.S. Army in both the Pacific and European theatres of the Second World War. It was mentioned how Garand's background is French-Canadian (born in Quebec) and that instead of Garand becoming wealthy from his invention by selling it or demanding a royalty, he donated his product to the country.[141] This story in particular could have helped to inspire Francophone-Canadians by conveying the idea that they are generous, in hopes that others will follow this example.

Another propaganda piece titled: "Impossible n'est pas Français" was published in *Le Petit Courrier* on October 1st, 1942. As other propaganda pieces described earlier, it called on the Francophone-Canadians to participate in the war effort by buying stamps and Victory Bonds. It also said that it is the civilians who hold the fate of the country in their hands as the soldiers depend on them for manufactured goods.[142] While the other propaganda pieces discussing religion could

[140] Serge Bernier, "French Canadians in the Canadian Armed Forces in 1944," in *The Second Quebec Conference Revisited*, ed. David B. Woolner (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 196.
[141] "Un patriote," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), January 29th, 1942.
[142] "Impossible n'est pas français," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 1st, 1942.

have inspired any Christian to contribute (though they were written in French), this one was directly targeted towards Francophone-Canadians by implicitly telling them they were (and still are) hard-working people. The fact that a propaganda piece was made to encourage it demonstrated a need to encourage Francophone-Canadian support to foster Canadian unity.

Additionally, another article published in July 1942, also responded to the belief that Francophone-Canadians were not participating in the war. This response was centered around the 1942 conscription debate and featured quotes from Thomas Crerar, the Minister of Mines and Resources and Ernest Bertrand, a member of parliament under the electoral district of Laurier, Quebec. Both men warned Canadians about the dangers of a divided country during war. Crerar says that anyone who accuses Francophone-Canadians of lacking courage and patriotism are "making the biggest mistake of their life" and describes how Francophone-Canadians are in the army, navy, and air force. He also says Anglo-Canadians as well as Francophone-Canadians should work to understand one another thus strengthening the unity of the country. As for Bertrand, he has rejected trivial comments made by Canadians in Nova Scotia and the rest of the country, whether they be for conscription or against it as it does nothing but pit the two ethnicities against one another.[143]

It should be said that Acadians in New Brunswick also recognised the importance of national unity. One of the first articles published about the war discussed how Francophone and Anglo-Canadians should live and work together to achieve peace

[143] "Le danger intérieur," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 9th, 1942.

as they are the two major ethnic groups within Canada.[144] Later on in April 1941, a statement from Jean-Marie-Rodrigue Villeneuve, otherwise known as Cardinal Villeneuve from Quebec, was published in English in *La Voix d'Évangeline* which supported national unity in order to preserve their language, religion, and culture. Villeneuve also dismissed the rumours that Quebec wanted to separate from Canada while at the same time highlighting their distaste towards Communism and Fascism.[145] This demonstrates that the sentiment of unity was not exclusively in Nova Scotia and that Acadians, despite where they are from, thought alike.

While it is clear not all Francophone-Canadians were opposed to the war, an article was published on July 16th, 1942, with the title "Le bill de la conscription est maintenant loi" though it was not actually law.[146] The 1942 conscription debate took place in a context of global crises. The war overseas was not going well for the Allies. Europe and the Balkans were under Axis control, the Middle East and the Suez Canal were unstable, the Russians were not faring well through the winter months, and the Japanese appeared unstoppable. To make matters worse, there was a shortage of recruits in Canada forcing the Cabinet in April 1941 to agree to keep NRMA conscripts on duty in Canada for the duration of the war, which made more men available for overseas service.[147] The decision to pass conscription was approved by the plebiscite held on April 27th, 1942 in all provinces except for Quebec. Prime Minister King's initial

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[144] "Le Canada est en guerre avec l'Allemagne," *La Voix d'Évangeline* (Moncton, New Brunswick), September 14th, 1939.
[145] "La guerre, le Canada et le Canadien français," *La Voix d'Évangeline* (Moncton, New Brunswick), April 24th, 1941.
[146] "Le bill de la conscription est maintenant loi," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 16th, 1942.
[147] J. L. Granatstein, *The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 201.

promise was that there would be no conscription but the plebiscite, however, freed him from his promise. He now had to figure out a way to please the conscriptionists in Cabinet while not alienating a now unified Quebec.[148] His famous quote from his speech on June 10th, 1942: "not necessarily conscription, but conscription if necessary, " is surely reflective of that.[149]

Le Petit Courrier gave no definitive opinion on conscription. There was an article discussing the plebiscite but it maintained a neutral position by stating that to vote either yes or no for conscription is to vote for or against overseas conscription. It also mentions how those who oppose conscription believe they can defend their country if the enemy decides to invade whereas those for conscription believe that the enemy must be defeated overseas. The former belief is questioned as the author says Canada's population is too small to mount a proper defence and would need help from other countries, however it asked rhetorically who would be willing to rush to Canada's aid when she has made little effort to help others.[150] This suggests that *Le Petit Courier* may have been for conscription. This would not be the first time Acadians supported conscription. During the First World War, Acadian elites in New Brunswick such as those in Parliament and the clergy supported conscription. The newspaper, *Le Moniteur Acadien* also supported conscription in 1917. However, other Acadian newspapers in New Brunswick such as *l'Acadien*, denounced Acadians who supported Robert Borden, the Canadian Prime Minister at the time, and conscription. Despite this controversy, all

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[148] *Ibid.,* 227-228.
[149] *Ibid.,* 234.
[150] "Le plebiscite," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 23rd, 1942.

Acadians supported the war in general.[151] This was also the case during the Second World War. Acadian members of Parliament such as Clarence Véniot and Aurèle Léger supported the government's decision. However, Léger personally believed that conscription was not necessary.[152]

Nugent mentions that the representatives for all six Acadian ridings in the Maritimes opposed conscription.[153] She also says that Acadians in Nova Scotia saw no reason for conscripts to be forced overseas and that encouraging enlistments would produce better soldiers.[154] On the other hand, her statistics show that 77% of Nova Scotians voted "yes" during the plebiscite.[155] The percentage of "no" votes in all Acadian regions (not just Nova Scotia) is lower than that of Francophones in Quebec as well.[156] Lastly, Léon Theriault claims that all Acadian counties in New Brunswick voted "no" and that the Acadian regions in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island almost all voted "no" as well.[157] This makes it difficult to assess whether the majority of Nova Scotian Acadians as a whole were for or against conscription, though Nugent does conclude that most Acadians in general supported conscription.[158] Despite this however, Acadians wanted to show that some Francophone-Canadians did support the war. By showing examples of Quebec's participation, it would help to dissipate the belief that all

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[151] Andrew Theobald, *The Bitter Harvest of War: New Brunswick and the Conscription Crisis of 1917* (Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2008), 65-67.
[152] Philippe Doucet, "Politics and the Acadians," in *Acadians in the Maritimes: Thematic Studies*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton" Centres d'études acadiennes, 1982), 257.
[153] Helen Jean McClelland Nugent, "The Acadian Response to the Conscription Crisis of World War II" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1983), 64.
[154] *Ibid.*, 106.
[155] *Ibid.*, 75.
[156] *Ibid.*, 85.
[157] Philippe Doucet, "Politics and the Acadians," in *Acadians in the Maritimes: Thematic Studies*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton" Centres d'études acadiennes, 1982), 258.
[158] Helen Jean McClelland Nugent, "The Acadian Response to the Conscription Crisis of World War II" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1983), 100-101.

Francophone-Canadians were uninvolved. This would prevent people from accusing Acadians of not supporting the war simply because they speak French as well as prevent the nation from being divided. It should also be said that even though the majority of Quebec opposed conscription, some still wanted to support the war. An article from the *l'Evénement Journal* in Quebec was featured in *Le Petit Courrier*, which discussed the second war bond drive in September 1942 in which the Canadian government wanted to raise about $2 billion.[159] The fact that this was published demonstrates that some Québécois still wanted to support the war despite having political differences.

Language is another important aspect of Acadian identity. Due to Acadians being surrounded by English communities after the deportation, they developed unique dialects consisting of old French words (also possessing the old French numerical system) throughout Nova Scotia and other Maritime Provinces. Language was used to foster relations with important figures who played crucial roles in the war. An article when recounting the Duke of Kent's visit to Nova Scotia, discusses how he spoke in French whenever he had the chance. The author said this is important because it demonstrates how he is aware of the diversity within Canada. Furthermore, other members of the Royal Family such as King George VI, the king's sister in law (no name given), and Queen Elizabeth also knew how to speak French as well as many others.[160] Cardinal Arthur Hinsley from England, also addressed French-Canadian soldiers in their mother tongue while Malcolm MacDonald, Britain's High-Commissioner to Canada at the time, discussed how the country should be bilingual.[161] In a radio broadcast featuring

[159] "Le prochain emprunt," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 10th, 1942.
[160] The article does not specify who these people are.
[161] "Ils parlent francais," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 9th, 1941.

the wives of Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt, they discussed their visit to Quebec and how they received a warm welcome when their husbands met with military personnel to discuss new operations. The Quebecois were pleased with how the Churchills and Roosevelts spoke French in a way which the author describes as "impeccable" but then discusses how Canadian politicians do not make the same effort even though the Canadian Parliament is bilingual.[162] These are just a few examples, nevertheless, they help to convey the fact that Acadians were willing to foster good relations with the British despite their past and be their ally.

Many of the Acadian soldiers such as Edmond Robichaud, had the Union Jack, on their catafalque.[163] This was also the case for the funerals of Joseph Saulnier and Emery Geddry.[164] A funeral held for Melbourne Saulnier, who was in the navy, even included the Last Post in addition having the Union Jack on his catafalque.[165] This demonstrates that although they see themselves as Acadians, they also acknowledge the fact that they are part of the British Empire, or more specifically, the British Commonwealth from which Canada shared its head of state with the Commonwealth and Empire after 1931. Despite the fact that Acadians had been deported by the British 200 years ago, they recognised that the country which sought to assimilate them in the past, was playing an important role in the fight for freedom. This recognition did not mean Acadians automatically accepted everything encompassing the empire however.

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[162] "Ils parlent français," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 28th, 1944.
[163] "Service en mémoire du soldat Edmond Robichaud," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), May 17th, 1945.
[164] "Services pour deux soldats morts en guerre," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 12th, 1944; "Service en mémoire de Emery Geddry," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 26th, 1944.
[165] "Service en mémoire de deux militaire," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 7th, 1944.

For example, an article written by Léandre LeGresley from *La Voix d'Évangeline* discusses how Acadians, despite their willingness to sacrifice themselves for their country, are not receiving compensation for their sacrifices, even if a family had three or four sons overseas.[166]

Also, in relation to the British, Acadians spoke highly of the Royal Air Force (RAF) which successfully defended their country during the Battle of Britain. The Battle of Britain was Hitler's attempt to gain air superiority in order to launch Operation Sea Lion which would have been a full-scale invasion of the United Kingdom. The battle began on July 10th, 1940 when the Luftwaffe, under Generalfeldmarschall Albert Kesselring's command, attacked a British convoy on the English Channel under the code-name "Bread" which was on route to ports on the southern coast.[167] *Le Petit Courier* spoke about how they admired Britain because of what the country has suffered and accomplished. The newspaper described the country as "valiant" and said that "all eyes of the Empire are turned towards Great Britain as it is left alone to defend against an entire continent." The article was directed specifically towards the pilots of the RAF, who demonstrated their patriotism and heroism when the country was in danger.[168] Calling the RAF pilots patriotic and heroic was certainly not for the sake of propaganda. There was a large presence of pilots from all over the Empire. All of which, answered Britain's call to defend the heart of the Empire. People from South Africa, New Zealand, and Southern Rhodesia.[169] Even people from conquered European countries,

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[166] Pour nos militaires," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 23rd, 1943.
[167] Richard Hough and Denis Richards, *The Battle of Britain: The Greatest Air Battle of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 125.
[168] "Héros de l'air," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 26th, 1940.
[169] Richard Hough and Denis Richards, *The Battle of Britain: The Greatest Air Battle of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 191.

notably Poland and Czechoslovakia, joined the RAF to seek revenge against the Germans to whom many would have lost their homes and family to.[170]

Acadians also defended the British over the belief that they were not doing their part by making other countries fight their battles and carry the burden of the war. *Le Petit Courrier* discussed how British casualties totalled 514, 993 whereas Canada's casualties were only 10,422 by 1943. As for the other Dominion countries, Australia totals 52,959, New Zealand 19,345, South Africa 2,615, and India 101,979 which is still considerably low in comparison to the British.[171] The fact that the Acadians are willing to defend the British against false accusations demonstrates that they saw them as a valuable ally.

While being allies with the British was important, south shore Nova Scotian Acadians also wanted to protect the Empire. *Le Petit Courrier* published an article stating that the British Empire upheld the democratic system that Hitler and Mussolini wanted to replace. Included was a German article discussing how Hitler believed the British colonies in South Africa no longer wanted to be under British rule and were open to the more "progressive" nations of Europe in order to show that this was indeed the Axis' true goal.[172]

These articles demonstrate that while supporting their country was of great importance, Britain and the Empire were also important to Acadians because they believed it held together a just political system which would no longer exist if the

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[170] *Ibid.*, 186.
[171] "Nos pertes," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 24th, 1943.
[172] "Est-il meilleur?," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), May 30th, 1940.

Empire collapsed. The fact that Britain was one of the last European countries capable of resisting the Axis, the Acadians urged their people and all Canadians to lend their support because if Britain surrendered, the Empire would have been weakened leaving Canada and the other Dominion countries to fend for themselves. The Acadians were aware of this as after the Battle of Britain ended, *Le Petit Courrier* thanked Britain for their protection and explained how their situation would be much worse than it is now if it was not for them.[173]

There is no doubt that south shore Nova Scotian Acadians participated in the war effort. The preservation of their religion was a key factor in their support for the war as Germany's religious purge of Europe and Hitler's thoughts towards Christianity were amongst the first topics covered in *Le Petit Courrier* once the war began. Acadian soldiers who returned were then thanked for protecting their religion. Their loyalty and connectedness to their tight-knit communities regardless of where they were along with the mass gatherings at funerals highlights the fact that Acadian solidarity, during times of struggle, had not been broken. Examples of Acadian and Quebecois involvement in the war would help to demonstrate that not all Francophone-Canadians were against it while language was used to foster relations with the British by highlighting the Royal Family's ability to speak French. Not to mention the fact that they wanted to preserve the Empire as it held the very system in place from which they could live their way of life. All of this helps to demonstrate that the Acadians supported the war.

[173] "Deux ans de guerre," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 11th, 1941.

Chapter 2: Acadian Civilians and the War

Behind any modern army is an industrial force producing the weapons, vehicles, uniforms, and other goods necessary for it to function. Because of this, the home front is often just as important as the army itself. Canadians working in factories and buying war bonds helped in many ways to combat Hitler's fascist regime and eventually the Japanese Imperial Army in the Pacific. While most Acadians lived in rural areas and many were farmers and fishermen, it is likely that south shore Nova Scotian Acadians worked in the war industry as well due to the changing economy in the Maritimes. Nevertheless, Acadian civilians did what they could to support the war. Some Acadians were able to support the war by buying war bonds individually, however, a large portion of the support from Acadians was done through community gatherings by using their schools, churches, local Legions, and sometimes local households to raise money to buy war bonds and donate to the Red Cross. Some Acadians also participated by donating material goods and rationing. While these community gatherings would have benefitted the country and Empire, some of it also aided their communities and the people within them, which demonstrates their loyalty to their communities alongside fighting for a greater cause.

During the First World War, the economy in the Maritimes began to change with the expansion of steam, iron, steel, railways, and the pulp and paper industry. This caused some Acadians prior to 1939 to abandon their farming and fishing industries and move to urban areas as they could no longer keep up with the need for more capital, and specialisation. This can be seen in *Le Petit Courrier* where many Acadians are shown to have acquired jobs outside of their villages. Few industrial activities took place in

Acadian areas of the south shore. But one that did was wooden ship building. Acadian

shipyards prospered during the First World War, especially those in Clare as they were able to build 46 ships from 1914 to 1919.[174] In 1939, however, there was little demand for wooden ships. Vincent Pottier, who was a member of Parliament (MP) for the Shelburne, Yarmouth, and Clare regions did try to increase shipbuilding on the Acadian shores by demanding in 1940 a program for wooden ship construction, which he argued would benefit the war effort. He tried again in 1941 when he said there was a need for more financing for family shipyards to aid in the construction of minesweepers. The reason why he wanted more financing for Maritime shipyards was because two shipyards (no specific location given) which did receive contracts had to turn them down because although they had the materials, they did not have the finances.[175] He claimed that this financing would benefit all Maritimers, not just Acadians.[176] According to Desjardins et al., the last wooden ship the Acadians built was in 1938.[177] Nugent says,

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[174] Pierre-Marcel Desjardins, Michel Deslierres, and Ronald C. LeBlanc, "Acadians and Economics: From the Colonization to 1960," in *Acadia of the Maritimes: Thematic Studies from the Beginning to the Present*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton: Chaire d'études acadiennes, 1995), 226-227.
[175] *Official Report of the Debates of the House of Commons Second Session-Nineteenth Parliament Vol II*, ed. Edmond Cloutier (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1941), 1382-1383.
[176] Helen Jean McClelland Nugent, "The Acadian Response to the Conscription Crisis of World War II" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1983), 52.
[177] Pierre-Marcel Desjardins, Michel Deslierres, and Ronald C. LeBlanc, "Acadians and Economics: From the Colonization to 1960," in *Acadia of the Maritimes: Thematic Studies from the Beginning to the Present*, ed. Jean Daigle (Moncton: Chaire d'études acadiennes, 1995), 227.

however, that minesweeper construction in Meteghan was a major economic factor in that Acadian village during the Second World War.[178] The two photos of the Meteghan

Shipbuilding Company taken by the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) highlights just that.[179] Gilbert Tucker mentions how the Meteghan Shipbuilding Company in June 1944 accepted an order to build two vessels once space became available after the shipyard completed its Admiralty contract. These two vessels would have been the last to be built on the east coast. However, the contract was cancelled due to slow progress on the programme initially launched in August 1943 combined with the events unfolding in Europe.[180] Tucker also says that two thirds of the total wooden minesweepers built in Canada came from Nova Scotia since they were suited to Nova Scotian building methods.[181] Despite the lack of economic prosperity enjoyed by Acadian shipyards and other industries Acadians participated in, this did not stifle the Acadians ability or willingness to support the war effort.

Before discussing civilian involvement in the war effort, it is important to examine how Acadians were encouraged to participate. Much of the propaganda used to

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[178] Helen Jean McClelland Nugent, "The Acadian Response to the Conscription Crisis of World War II" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1983), 52-53.
[179] *Meteghan Shipbuilding Co.*, Royal Canadian Naval Photograph H-1538, Meteghan, NS; *Meteghan Shipbuilding Co*., Royal Canadian Naval Photograph H-1537, Meteghan, NS.
[180] Gilbert Norman Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada: Activities on Shore During the Second World War* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1952), 81-82.
[181] *Ibid.*, 50.

encourage Acadian support related to war bonds. The first piece of war bond propaganda in *Le Petit Courrier* appeared in the January 11th issue of 1940, it discussed the government's need for money to fund the war effort. It also mentions how Germany

asks for its citizens to pay for the war and receive nothing in return whereas in Canada they ask for a loan which they will pay back with interest. The advertisement claims Canada to be one of the Empire's most important countries and that Canadians should demonstrate their commitment to the war.[182] Another piece from the Canadian War Works Fund encouraged civilian participation by discussing the life of the soldier. It mentions how the soldier is tired, alone, and away from home, and that people could donate money to make their lives more comfortable overseas by being able to play games, read, and write to his family.[183] Articles also encouraged the sale of war bonds. For example, one discussed how American tourists can help to boost Canada's economy for the war because their currency was worth 10% more. The article encouraged Canadians who received American currency to pay the premium, which means to give the extra 10% to the war effort. The article described this as their patriotic duty and to keep that 10% would mean to face punishment as it was illegal.[184] Lastly, once the Japanese joined the

[182] "Servez votre pays sur le front économique," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), January 11th, 1940.
[183] "Quelles nouvelles de chez nous?," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 20th, 1941.
[184] "Payez la prime," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 24th, 1941.

war, *Le Petit Courrier* featured a propaganda piece discussing how Canada was threatened from the Atlantic and Pacific and that more of what they called now Victory Bonds, were needed to defeat both the Germans and Japanese.[185]

These are just a few examples of the many propaganda pieces that encouraged Canadian support for the war, none of which Acadians could directly relate to. One article in *Le Petit Courrier*, however, written by the War Savings Committee to promote the sale of war savings certificates, discussed defending what was deemed most important such as religion and culture and helping the French and English, but this message too could be for all Canadians.[186] The only exception is that the propaganda and articles that appeared in *Le Petit Courrier* were written in French. Some propaganda, however, appeared in English. For example, during Canada's second war bond drive, an English propaganda piece discussed how "the heart of the Empire" is in need due to German bombings during the Battle of Britain.[187] It is no surprise that one the few pieces of English propaganda in *Le Petit Courrier* mentions the Empire whereas the multiple French ones rarely do.

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[185] "Ils menacent le Canada à l'est et à l'ouest," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), February 5th, 1942.
[186] "Certificats d'épargne," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 13th, 1940.
[187] "Canada's 2nd War Loan Swings into Action," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 5th, 1940.

Nevertheless, this is significant because it suggests that the Acadian's willingness to support the Empire was to preserve their values.

As shown briefly in the last chapter, articles and pieces of propaganda based on religion were published to encourage Acadian support, which reflected their opinion that the war could threaten it. As for other examples of articles and propaganda, an article promoting the sale of war bonds discusses how Canada is similar to a ship, rich with resources, and that those who come from a marine background such as the Acadians can understand this comparison. The article further explains how Canadians must protect this ship and that each person must play their part as if they were the ship's crew to help our allies overseas.[188] Another propaganda piece published on the May 15th issue of 1941 also mentioned the sea, specifically the Atlantic Ocean and how we should defend it against the Germans. It mentions how the British, U.S., and Canadian navies are patrolling the ocean to defend it.[189] This is significant because Acadians along the coast of Nova Scotia might have been among of the first to encounter the Germans. When the fishermen went out to sea, they would limit the lighting on their boats to prevent being spotted by German submarines, which signifies they were aware of the possibility of a German attack.[190]

Eventually, U-Boats became common in Canadian waters. The Canadian government was aware of the potential U-Boat threat even before the war began. On August 31st, 1939, the Chief on Naval Staff in Ottawa gave the Minister of National Defence a report discussing how Canadian trade would be threatened by raiders and

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[188] "Le navire de la victoire," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 22nd, 1942.
[189] "L'appel du pays," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), May 15th, 1941.
[190] Lucille d'Entremont in discussion with the author, July, 2017.

submarines specifically around the St. Lawrence River, Halifax, and Saint John, New Brunswick. As for the Canadian public, they believed their coast was a hazardous area which no enemy would dare enter, but this was far from the truth.[191] However, the Chiefs of Staff and Cabinet War Committee concluded that Germany's ability to strike the Canadian coastal waters was limited thus making their coastal defence systems adequate. Michael Hadley mentions how the press did little to inform Canadians about the Battle of the Atlantic until November 1941, when front page stories revealed that U-Boats were operating within sight of the country. Angus MacDonald, the Minister of the Navy, described two U-Boats that were seen from shore battling off Newfoundland.[192]

Canadians became more alarmed on the 13th of January 1942, by the *Montreal Gazette* story titled, "War comes to Nova Scotia: 94 Lives Believed Lost in Torpedoing off Coast." Oddly enough, no such publications appeared in *Le Petit Courrier*. U-123 under the command of Kapitänleutenant Hardegen, was the first of 12 U-Boats operating from the Newfoundland Banks to Nova Scotia in mid January 1942.[193] Hardegen's U-Boat managed to sink 9 ships and damage one from January 12th to the 21st in addition to the other U-Boats who managed to sink many as well.[194] These U-Boats shattered the idea that the war was a foreign one, making the Acadians and the rest of the Canadian public more likely to support the war.[195]

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[191] Michael L. Hadley, *U-Boats Against Canada: German Submarines in Canadian Waters* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 21.
[192] *Ibid.,* 23-24.
[193] *Ibid.,* 52.
[194] *Ibid.,* 57.
[195] *Ibid.,* 52.

There is no doubt that the U-Boats were a serious threat to the Atlantic and the Acadians may have had some anxiety towards this. For example, MP Pottier mentioned the sinking of ships from German submarines near land when demanding in Parliament for improved defences for the Atlantic coast because he believed that the Atlantic coast is threatened more than the Pacific.[196] On top of that, Pottier also demanded war risk insurance for the fishing boats in his region, which were worth about $2,000 to $3,000 because they were not insured.[197] As early as June 1940, sword fishing vessels from Pubnico, Yarmouth, Shelburne, and Lockeport, fished off George's Bank, located between Cape Cod, Massachusetts and Cape Sable, Nova Scotia and operated without light during the night to avoid U-Boat detection. When the Germans finally came in 1942 only one of the vessels, the *Lucille M.*, was sunk on the 27th of July 1942. This, however, did not stop the fishermen from going out to sea as one vessel from Pubnico named *L.G.P.* as well as others continued their seasonal runs from 1943 to 1946.[198] Lobster fishermen were also given restrictions on where they could fish during wartime. This was due to the air force who would practice firing their machine guns and do bombing runs at sea. Lobster boats fishing in the Tusket Islands region could not go as far as Gannet Rock, west of the island or Soldier's Ledge to the south. These restrictions did not stop fishermen from going out of bounds, however.[199] Events such as these suggests that Acadians did not fear U-Boats or being sunk accidently by the air force for

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[196] *Official Report of the Debates of the House of Commons Third Session-Nineteenth Parliament Vol II*, ed. Edmond Cloutier (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1942), 2104.
[197] *Official Report of the Debates of the House of Commons Third Session-Nineteenth Parliament Vol IV*, ed. Edmond Cloutier (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1942), 3927-3928.
[198] J. Donald Doucette, *The Schooner Era & Harpoon Swordfishing* (Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication, 2012), 59-60.
[199] Donald W. Jacquard, *Lobstering Southwestern Nova Scotia: 1848-2009* (Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication, 2009), 262.

that matter. The lobster fishermen were more concerned with prices, gasoline rationing, and of course, where they could and could not fish.[200]

A propaganda piece published in March 1942 discussed what could happen if the Germans occupied Nova Scotia. It said that all unions would be dissolved and forced labour would become the new norm, from which there would be little pay to live comfortably.[201] In the Netherlands, for example, while the labour unions were not dissolved, there was a supervisor appointed to each of the three national unions. The supervisor had the right to sit in on all board meetings, read their books, and attend every conference. This would be to prevent possible rebellions as the Germans saw unions as areas of dissent.[202] As for forced labour, many workers became unemployed in the Netherlands due to the lack of raw materials entering the factories. The Germans would transfer workers from "non-essential factories" and the unemployed as well to those used to produce war goods. The Dutch would hide their unemployment by not claiming their unemployment insurance and the companies they worked for would not lay them off officially. This way, they could avoid working for the Germans.[203] Unemployment was also a problem in Paris, France, which was due to many businesses and factories closing because of the war. A German report stated that the Department of

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[200] *Ibid.*, 261-263.
[201] "Ouvriers canadiens, voulez-vous rester libres?," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 5th, 1942.
[202] Cornelia Fuykschot, *Hunger in Holland: Life During the Nazi Occupation* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1995), 17.
[203] *Ibid.*, 54-55.

Seine had 83,000 people unemployed. This meant more social assistance was needed thus straining the welfare system in an already dwindling economy.[204]

In addition to unemployment, food was less abundant under occupation. In France, the Germans had taken large quantities of food away from the French in addition to buying what was available on the black market thus driving up prices. Farmers also fled, leaving their livestock to die while about 450,000 out of the 2 million prisoners sent to Germany in 1940 worked in agriculture. This led to the Germans to allow some of the prisoners to stay in France to work on the farms.[205] In Greece, the Germans lived off their land rather than having food brought in for them. They ate in their restaurants and took whatever food they wanted in addition to other goods. German supply officers were even demanding huge amounts of food. For example, 25,000 oranges, 4,500 lemons, and 100,000 cigarettes were shipped off Chios within three weeks of the occupation.[206] It is circumstances such as these which Acadians could have faced had Germany invaded and occupied Canada. Knowing that the Germans were not far from their homes would make Acadians more likely to support the war effort to protect themselves and to prevent their lives from becoming like those in France, the Netherlands, and in Greece.

Another propaganda piece discusses countryside traditions such as the gathering of people from a village to help lift the frame of a barn. The piece claims that the

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[204] Allan Mitchell, *Nazi Paris: The History of an Occupation 1940-1944* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 21.
[205] Richard Vinen, *The Unfree French: Life Under Occupation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 220.
[206] Mark Mazower, *Inside Hitler's Greece: The Experience of Occupation, 191-44* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 23-24.

Canadian government was inspired by this tradition when creating the National Finance Committee, as it calls for the nation to come together to buy war bond certificates and stamps.[207] Because the majority of Acadians lived in the countryside with few modes of transportation to the cities and towns, they too would often rely on each other to complete certain tasks such as the one described above. Hence, they could relate to this piece of propaganda and be willing to extend their loyalty from the community to the nation to aid the war effort.


LA CORVÉE PERMET DE RÉALISER LES GRANDS TRAVAUX

Nous avons une grande tâche à accomplir

ACCUEILLEZ BIEN LE REPRÉSENTANT DU COMITÉ LOCAL

Acadians traditionally relied on their families in addition to people in the community to support their livelihood, however, with the war many young and able men went overseas. There is no doubt the families hoped that their sons would return home safely, and that the War Savings Committee used this hope to promote the sale of war bonds. For example, *Le Petit Courrier* featured a propaganda piece discussing how parents watch their children grow and that before going to war they tell them "good luck, count on us to help you." The piece then asks if the parents had kept their word and that buying war bonds would give their sons ammunition, planes, and ships that would allow them to win the war thus bringing them back home.[208] Another one

[207] "La corvée permet de réaliser les grands travaux," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), August 13th, 1942.
[208] "Des garçons que nous avons vus grandir," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 30th, 1941.

discussed how families should work to understand the importance of budgeting and refraining from unnecessary purchases during times of war even though the economy has improved and both men and women are earning money.[209] Although not explicitly stated in the piece, budgeting would allow families to buy more war bonds. One advertisement did however highlight this point by discussing how families could buy all the things they wanted but instead decided to do their part like their sons who have gone overseas by saving to buy war bonds.[210] Reading these propaganda pieces would remind families about their sons overseas and make them more likely to participate in the war effort.

As for children, a piece which shows a mother with her three children discusses how Canadians should not want their children to be educated under Nazi doctrine, which the propaganda piece claims turned children into brutes. One would be able to prevent this from happening by buying war bonds.[211] Another one claimed that by buying war bonds, children would be able to have a future. It reminded the parents that they were not working hard for their own safety and security but for those of their children as well.[212] Lastly, a propaganda piece discusses the wool sock and how it is a French tradition to pass down wool socks filled with gifts. The piece mentions how it is necessary during the war to leave them empty in order to receive a greater gift; to educate our children, build the home of our dreams, and have security when we become old. All of which can be achieved if people buy war bonds which allows them to gain

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[209] "Nous ne devons pas améliorer notre train de vie quand nos soldats ont besoin d'armements," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 18th, 1942.
[210] "La Patrie lui demande le sacrifice supreme elle vous charge, vous, d'une grave responsabilité," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 8th, 1942.
[211] "Pas d'éducation nazie pour mes enfants!," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 4th, 1942.
[212] "Sauvegardons leur héritage," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 28th, 1943.

back their money plus interest over a period of time.[213] While many of these propaganda pieces and articles may not have reflected the opinions or fears of south shore Nova Scotian Acadians such as those based on religion, these were certainly some of the ways in which the government tried to encourage their support by focusing on themes of coastal defence, life under German occupation, family and community, and French traditions.

Many Acadians bought war bonds through the help of the community. 1st grade students from Lower Saulnierville used $6.25 from a lottery to buy War Savings Certificates.[214] In Wedgeport, children from the three schools bought and sold War Savings Stamps from which they raised $280, while the Saint Michael Benefit Club put forward a $1,000 for war loans, $200 worth in War Savings Certificates, and set aside $600 for other war needs.[215] Also in Wedgeport, students performed a musical to raise money for war bonds. According to the article, the room was packed. The musical was then followed by a talk given by a woman named Elie Cottreau on the purchasing of war bonds. By the 15th of January 1943, the three schools in Wedgeport had raised $270 by buying and selling war stamps.[216] During the fourth war bond drive, which began on the 26th of April 1943, the goal of Yarmouth County was to raise around $1 million, which was 40% more than the last war bond drive. The organiser for this drive was an Acadian named Allen W. d'Entremont from West Pubnico. Two other men named Alban L. Amiro and Raymond N. d'Entremont also helped to sell war bonds specifically in East

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[213] "Pensez au vieux bas de laine," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 29th, 1943.
[214] "Lower Saulnierville," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 6th, 1941.
[215] "Efforts pour la victoire," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 18th, 1943; "Pour l'effort de guerre," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 3rd, 1941.
[216] "Reunions dans l'interet des timbres d'epargne," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 4th, 1943.

and West Pubnico.[217] These are a few of the many examples present in *Le Petit Courrier*.

Acadians who were serving in the military bought war bonds, too. Charlie Muise, who was mentioned in the last chapter, bought a $50 war bond.[218] This was also the case for François Amirault from East-Pubnico, who was in the RCAF.[219] There was even a nine-year-old named Ernest Comeau from Lower Saulnierville who raised a chicken and then sold it to buy four War Savings Stamps.[220] While Acadians are known for being fishermen, it was common for Acadians to have their own personal farms as well which lessened the economic hardships of the Great Depression in the 1930s. Ernest Comeau essentially took advantage of something other ethnic groups in Nova Scotia may not have had to support the war. *Le Petit Courrier* published an article featuring A. G. L. McNaughton, the Lieutenant-General in command of the First Canadian Army in Britain, which discussed how he was pleased with the amount of war bond purchases during the third war bond drive. The Canadian Army could receive many instruments of war because of Canadian civilians, and he was hopeful that the fourth one would be just as successful. It was further mentioned that the war goods built by Canada played a major role in the defeat the Afrika Korps, which would have made Acadian civilians (and Canadians in general) proud of their efforts.[221] The article

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[217] "La campagne du 4e emprunt commence le 26," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 22rd, 1943.
[218] Charlie Muise in discussion with the author, July, 2017.
[219] François Amirault in discussion with the author, July, 2017.
[220] "Contributions bénévoles," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 17th, 1941.
[221] "Bonnes nouvelles," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 15th, 1943.

appeared just as the Allies conquered Tunisia and eliminated the last vestiges of the Axis present in North Africa.[222]

As for other forms of monetary aid, the Women's Institute (WI) in Belliveau Cove hosted a tea party and raised $16 to put towards an ambulance for the military.[223] The Federated Women's Institute of Canada (FWIC) was founded in February of 1919 in order to give rural women a voice on the national level and to better coordinate programs and projects. One of the FWIC's goals was to initiate national programs and provide resource material which is what they would have been doing in this case.[224] Lucille d'Entremont from West Pubnico, who was a member of the Women's Auxiliary (more on the Women's Auxiliary in the last chapter) for the Royal Canadian Legion in Pubnico (Branch 66), spoke about how they held banquets, socials, and a lunch every Saturday to raise money for the Auxiliary. Some of the money went towards the Legion itself to help buy supplies for the kitchen or to help families whose son(s) were overseas. She said that these events always had a high attendance, which surely benefitted the Legion greatly.[225] The Legion was created during the Unity Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba on November 25th, 1925 with the Great War Veterans Association (GWVA) to unify veterans. Their original goals were to help the war-disabled, keep the memory of Canadian sacrifices alive, and promote unity of thought and effort to form a better national consciousness.[226] The present-day Legion does much of the above, however,

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[222] Franz Kurowski, *Das Afrika Korps: Erwin Rommel and the Germans in Africa, 1941-1943*, (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2010), 230.
[223] "Anse-Des-Belliveau," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 18th, 1940.
[224] "What is W. I.?," *Federated Women's Institute of Canada*, accessed September 8th, 2017, http://fwic.ca/who-we-are/what-is-w-i/.
[225] Lucille d'Entremont in discussion with the author, July, 2017.
[226] Clifford H. Bowering, *Service: The Story of the Canadian Legion 1925-1960* (Ottawa: Dominion Command, Canadian Legion, 1960), 13-15.

they now aim to serve communities and the country as well.[227] The Legion built recreation huts in military centres where soldiers could play sports and read books. In Europe, leave centre hostels were built where soldiers, at a low cost, could eat and sleep. Travel bureaus were also opened for those who wanted to plan historical tours. These are just a few examples of what the Legion could provide because of the money raised from banquets and socials.[228]

In addition, Lucille d'Entremont and her Brother, Aldéric d'Entremont who served overseas in Europe during the war and received a Mention in Dispatch (MiD) for his bravery, each put forward $25 of their own money to buy a war bond in 1943.[229] Other women such as Célestre Joséphine LeBlanc who was both a member of Legion Branch 66 and the Ladies Auxiliary would have helped in these affairs.[230] This is significant because although the Acadians in Nova Scotia bought war bonds which would have helped the war on a national and international level, many still wanted to support their local communities by donating to the Legion since they knew some of the money would help Acadian families in need.

The Canadian Red Cross provided aid to help those affected by the war in Europe and potentially Canadians themselves if Canada was ever invaded.[231] Acadians actively supported this too. Advertisements discussed helping Canadian prisoners of war (POW) by donating money. According to some advertisements, the Germans let 2.5

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[227] "What we do," *Legion*, accessed September 11th, 2017, http://www.legion.ca/who-we-are/what-we-do.
[228] Clifford H. Bowering, *Service: The Story of the Canadian Legion 1925-1960* (Ottawa: Dominion Command, Canadian Legion, 1960), 126-127.
[229] Lucille d'Entremont in discussion with the author, July, 2017.
[230] Mary Alice LeBlanc and Célestre Joséphine LeBlanc, obituaries, LeBlanc family files, Yarmouth County Museum & Archives.
[231] "Si cela vous arrive ici," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), May 7th, 1942.

million parcels enter the POW camps, which delivered everyday items (but for the poor a luxury).[232] The parcels were packaged by volunteer women in blue smocks and were then crated and prepared for shipment by men too old to fight. They were prepared in an efficient manner to the point where a single parcel could be packaged in about 17 seconds. Red Cross parcels were considered to be one of the programs which lived up to the promise made by propaganda that women could save lives overseas through their efforts at home.[233] Aside from propaganda, the Canadian Red Cross also raised money through workplace collections, door to door canvasses as well as teas, picnics, card parties, bake sales, and other forms of social gatherings similar to the Legion.[234] With this money, things such as Red Cross lodges could be built which would act as a home away from home for sick and wounded soldiers who could still walk. Volunteers also worked at these places and would provide food, comfort, and entertainment.[235]

While most the propaganda was in English, one piece however was aimed directly at Francophone Canadians. The advertisement features a church used as a hospital, which many were during the war. It also discusses how Christians are often charitable, and to ignore what the propaganda piece labels as "devotion" would be to betray the values and ideals that belong to French and Christian culture.[236] The propaganda must have had some sort of impact as Acadians did not hesitate to donate. In Pubnico, for example, there was a party organised by a Canadian in the Royal Air Force

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[232] "Seule la croix-rouge peut y entrer," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), February 23rd, 1943.
[233] Sarah Glassford, *Mobilizing Mercy: A History of the Canadian Red Cross* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 192-193.
[234] *Ibid.*, 185.
[235] *Ibid.*, 192.
[236] "Les Canadiens français et la croix rouge," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 11th, 1943.

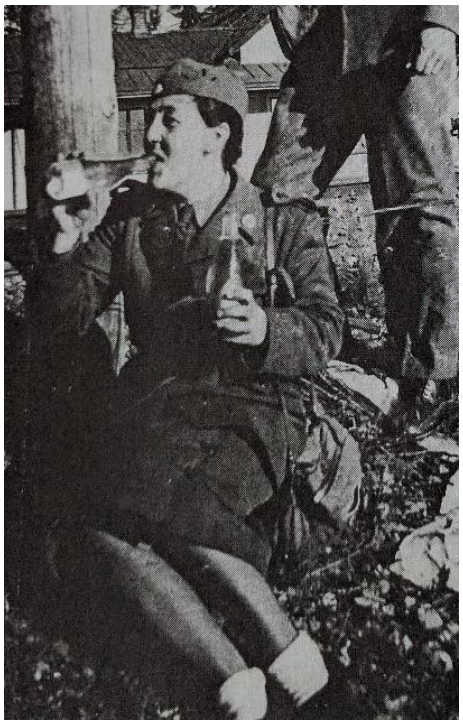
named Jock Campbell. The night was a success bringing in $40 which was given to the

Red Cross. A group of women also donated 160 pieces of clothing to the Red Cross, which would be given to the soldiers who needed them.[237] Also in Pubnico, a concert raised $79.90 for the church and the Red Cross while the church itself raised $78.05. Some of the money raised would sometimes go towards the church thus demonstrating their loyalty to the community.[238] In Pointe-de-l'Église, the Red Cross Auxiliary from the church of St. Marie managed to raise $158.40. They also made seven bed sheets, most likely to be given to hospitals.[239] The parish of Lower Saulnierville produced 224 articles of clothing for the Red Cross.[240] In Belliveau Cove, a tea party was held at a local household to raise funds as well.[241] It seems as though it was common in the Acadian villages to have concerts, parties, and collections to help raise funds for the Red Cross or for the war in general as well as having women produce clothing as there are many examples in the newspaper. All of this demonstrates how Acadians used their communities to support the war effort. Acadians schools were also active in the Junior Red Cross, an organisation created so that children could get

[237] "Soirée donnée au profit de la croix rouge," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 18th, 1943; "Pubnico Ouest fournit 160 morceaux à la croix rouge," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), February 15th, 1940.
[238] "Pubnico Ouest," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 18th, 1940; "Pubnico Ouest," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 3th, 1940.
[239] "Aide à la croix rouge," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 1st, 1943.
[240] "LR. Saulnierville," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 20th, 1940.
[241] "Anse-Des-Belliveau," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 24th, 1940.

involved in providing humanitarian aid. They did much of the same work as adults such as making garments, packing parcels, and sending monetary aid.[242] The three schools in West Pubnico each created its own organisation to partake in the program.[243] A school in Lower East Pubnico soon followed.[244] In Concession, the Junior Red Cross at the St. Joseph school made two blankets and several dishcloths.[245]

Additionally, one Acadian named Dorothea Evangeline (Pottier) Dohrmann even



served with the Red Cross in Sweden. She was born in the Acadian village of Belleville in 1899 and moved to Halifax in 1916 where she would work for the "B" Unit Military Hospital Command at Pier 2 during the First World War as the youngest member on staff. After the Halifax explosion on December 6th, 1917, she fed the wounded and made lists of those who were inside each room which were to be posted on the front door. In the 1920s, she was living in New York City where she met her husband, Hans Torsten Dohrmann from Sweden. They married on New Year's Eve in 1935 and in 1938, they moved to Malmö, Sweden. Once the Second World War began her experience working in the hospital in Halifax would prove

[242] Sarah Glassford, *Mobilizing Mercy: A History of the Canadian Red Cross* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 93.
[243] "Les écoles de Pubnico Ouest organisent la croix rouge Junior," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 21st, 1940.
[244] "La croix rouge junior organisée à Pubnico-Est," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 28th, 1940.
[245] "Concession," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 9th, 1942.

useful as she joined the Swedish Red Cross in December 1941. Here is she seen in her Swedish Red Cross uniform[246] Sweden received many refugees and POWs during the war, thus making humanitarian aid essential for the country. (Pottier) Dohrmann first worked as a stenographer before being transferred to the sanitation baths in Malmö.[247] Even after the war refugees and POWs continued to enter Malmö, many of them were sick and thin. Dohrmann met these people coming from trains, buses, and ships from which they were to be taken to the sanitation baths and quarantines before being sent to other areas to settle. Because she could speak fluent French (Pottier) Dohrmann was great with French children. For example, a group of French children were quarantined in Malmö until their health improved. During that time, she visited them, and they would often write to one another. The children even made a small book for her from birch bark. In 1948, she was honoured for her service with the Swedish Red Cross during the 17th Conference in Stockholm, Sweden. She was honoured again on December 9th, 1947 when she received a bronze plaque and again on July 15th, 1950 when she received Corporal Stripes, which remain with the family in Nova Scotia today.[248] Even though Sweden was a neutral country and Mrs. (Pottier) Dohrmann was under no obligation to serve, she did what she thought was necessary as many other Acadians did. Her service with the Swedish Red Cross demonstrates the Acadian's willingness to participate in the war even if it meant serving in a foreign country.

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[246] ATCHA photo #P2016: 33, Argyle Township Courthouse and Archives.
[247] Ruth (Pottier) Rousseau, "Dorothea Evangeline (Pottier) Dohrmann 1899-1989," *The Argus* 28, no. 2 (2016): 20-21.
[248] *Ibid.*, 22-23.

Acadians were farmers, prior to becoming fishermen, however, because their small farms were for personal use they could not provide much food for the war effort. Victory Gardens were grown across Canada from which was donated to the war effort. Empty land, such as front lawns, and flower gardens were used for agriculture, which allowed Canada to produce around 57,000 tons of vegetables by 1944.[249] While it is unknown if the Acadians participated in growing Victory Gardens, there was one piece of propaganda in *Le Petit Courrier* which promoted them. It mentioned how more food was needed for the Canadian military and that Canadians should consider growing vegetables such as carrots, onions, tomatoes, and cucumbers.[250] There was also another piece that discussed the possibility of farmers losing their farm land to the Germans while simultaneously asking people to buy war bonds to prevent this from happening.[251] Despite this however, Acadians did not show any concern for the loss of their farms as they did for their religion.

While south shore Nova Scotian Acadians may have not been able to support the war through agriculture, they were able to provide Canada with other materials. There were a few advertisements in *Le Petit Courrier* published by the National Salvage Division (NSD) calling for certain materials which could be used for the war. The NSD, according to Mosby, was created because Minister J. T. Thorson received letters from people wanting to create a voluntary salvage corps. This was already done in Great Britain, so the Department of National War Services (NWS) created the NSD in Canada

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[249] Ian Mosby, *Food will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada's Home Front* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014), 103-104.
[250] "Faites-vous un jardin victoire," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 23rd, 1942.
[251] "Récolteras-tu la tempête?," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), November 5th, 1942.

to coordinate the collection of materials needed. Communities also formed salvage committees while basic prices were set for salvage materials.[252] One of these materials was aluminum which could be used to build planes. Advertisements claimed that 7,700 aluminum utensils can be used to build one plane regardless of the utensil.[253] Other advertisements called for grease and bones to make explosives. One pound of grease has enough glycerine to fire 150 bullets from a Bren gun, whereas two pounds can produce a 20-shot round for a Spitfire plane.[254] Canadians could sell the grease and bones to their local butchers from which the money could be given to the Recovery Committee or a charity dedicated to the war. They could also be given directly to the Recovery Committee volunteers or simply leave them with their garbage.[255] Canada imported around 50% of its edible oil and fats and once the war in the Pacific began, the country's supply was cut off. This caused an extensive oil and fats collection campaign with advertisements in newspapers, radio announcements, and films as the government worried that the shortages would threaten Canada's war production.[256] Paper was also needed for the war effort in order to produce boxes to transport war goods such as grenades and parachutes. These supplies could also be given to the recovery committee.[257]

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[252] Ian Mosby, *Food will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada's Home Front* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014), 109.
[253] "7700 ustensiles = 1 avion de poursuite," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 18th, 1941.
[254] "Les graisses sont des munitions," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 17th, 1943.
[255] "Le Canada a besoin de graisse et d'os pour les explosifs," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 11th, 1943.
[256] Ian Mosby, *Food will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada's Home Front* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014), 109.
[257] "En ce moment le besoin est urgent," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 1st, 1944.

It is unknown how much south shore Nova Scotian Acadians donated to the material needs described above, however, Acadians did donate other materials. For example, Lucille d'Entremont discussed how women knitted mittens and socks for soldiers. This would have been done by the Ladies Auxiliary.[258] Marie O'Brien (whose parents are both Acadian) discussed how her mother, Willetta Amirault, received khaki coloured yarn from the WI which she would knit mittens, scarves, and socks for the soldiers.[259] Marceline d'Eon, who also was in the Women's Auxiliary, knitted as well, suggesting it was probably common thing for women to do during the war.[260] One of O'Brien's teachers, an Acadian from Quinan named Lawrence Doucette who taught at Sand Beach School, encouraged his students to save lead for the war. They would soak the paper off lead tea packages and the labels off lead toothpaste tubes and bring them to school to be donated. This also demonstrates how Acadians used their communities to support the war. Lawrence Doucette was very patriotic. He would have his students salute the flag and pledge allegiance to it and the country itself, thus demonstrating why he supported the war.[261] Even O'Brien's father, Wallace Doucette, participated in the war effort not by going overseas but by moving to Dartmouth, where he worked for customs in Halifax. More men were needed at the capital city during the war and he was selected to go. O'Brien's entire family had to leave their house in Sand Beach and move to Dartmouth thus sacrificing their entire livelihood for the war.[262] In addition to working for customs, he also was an Air Raid Warden who, during black-out practices,

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[258] Lucille d'Entremont in discussion with the author, July, 2017.
[259] Marie R. O'Brien, "About my Mother's Lifetime Part II," *The Argus* 8, no. 2 (1996): 30.
[260] Marceline d'Eon in discussion with the author, September, 2017.
[261] Marie R. O'Brien, "About my Mother's Lifetime Part II," *The Argus* 8, no. 2 (1996): 28.
[262] *Ibid.*, 30.

would go out in his uniform looking for lights.[263] This shows that Acadian civilians were willing to do what it took to help the war effort, even if it meant giving up their home.

In addition to material needs, many articles and propaganda pieces appeared in *Le Petit Courrier* to encourage rationing. An article published in July 1941 discussed how people in North America tend to waste more resources than in Europe. The article also said that by saving instead of throwing away resources for the last 10 to 15 years, Hitler and Mussolini could erect half of their armies. Meaning, Canada and the U.S. could have also built a large army with its vast resources instead of wasting them.[264] A propaganda piece was then published a week later to help explain why people should spend less during wartime. The Canadian government claims 61% of all resources for the war effort, which left 39% for civilians. Essentially, spending less would prevent the government from imposing rations on many resources or raising prices in addition to shortening the war.[265]

There was also propaganda to shame hoarders, or "amasseurs" in French. These were people who would buy products and leave them aside for future use, which according to a propaganda piece would come at a cost for the rest of the citizens as the few privileges that were left would dissipate. Not to mention the fact that hoarders would slow the production of war goods. They were portrayed as having no loyalty to the country and their fellow citizens because of their excessive consumption. People

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[263] *Ibid.*, 32.
[264] "Le gaspillage," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 17th, 1941.
[265] "Pourquoi il faut dépenser moins en temps de guerre," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 24th, 1941.

could also be fined up to $5,000 and be put in prison for hoarding.[266] Other

"L'AMASSEUR"

NOTRE ENNEMI PUBLIC No 1

Ceux qui achètent plus de produits qu'il ne leur en faut pour leurs besoins courants, de même que les marchands qui les y encouragent, entravent notre effort de guerre et sont, par conséquent, des ennemis publics.

Les citoyens loyaux ne font pas d'amas clandestins. Ils n'achètent que pour leurs besoins immédiats. Ils s'adaptent de bon gré aux conditions de vie présente, parce qu'ils comprennent que l'intérêt du pays passe en premier lieu. Ils n'essaient pas de s'arroger des privilèges aux dépens de leurs concitoyens.

Qui êtes-vous: un amasseur ou un citoyen loyal? Ralentissez-vous l'effort de guerre du Canada par des achats inconsidérés? Ou collaborez-vous avec le Gouvernement dans toute la mesure du possible, pour épargner au Canada des horreurs comme celles de Hong Kong.

Si tous les Canadiens comprennent leur devoir, il ne se fera plus d'amas clandestins. Chacun aura sa juste part des produits disponibles. Nous pourrons ainsi expédier plus d'aliments à la Grande-Bretagne. Plus de matières premières, plus de main-d'oeuvre seront affectées à la production de canons, d'avions, de chars d'assaut et autres armements dont nos forces armées ont besoin.

Dans les cas où il est recommandable que vous achetiez plus que ne l'exigent vos besoins immédiats, par exemple votre approvisionnement de charbon pour l'hiver prochain, vous en serez averti par les déclarations publiques d'administrateurs autorisés.

LA COMMISSION DES PRIX ET DU COMMERCE EN TEMPS DE GUERRE, OTTAWA, CANADA.

advertisements went as far as to call hoarders the number one enemy of the public.[267]

Oil was one of the most vital resources the government wanted people to conserve since it was needed to operate military vehicles. *Le Petit Courrier* discussed how big bomber planes flying from England to Germany would consume 3,800 gallons of gas, enough to allow a car to travel 75,000 miles. The newspaper also said that oil was needed to transport war goods overseas and how local emergency vehicles would be consuming more than the usual amount due to air raids. Because of this, people needed to consume less oil.[268] A lot of Canadians biked, walked, or car pooled due to the shortage of gas, while civilians were restricted to 545 litres of gas a year, not including those who needed vehicles to transport goods.[269]

As for food, Canada had an important role to play. It supplied Britain with meat, cheese, wheat, and butter, which could only be done successfully by changing the way Canadians consumed. The government did publish a lot of propaganda to encourage Canadians to consume less but much more was needed to make sure Canada's wartime

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[266] "Les citoyens loyaux ne font pas d'amas clandestins," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 16th, 1942.
[267] "L'amasseur notre enemi public no 1," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 30th, 1942.
[268] "L'huile et la guerre," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), August 14th, 1941.
[269] David B. Scott, *About Canada: The Home Front in the Second World War* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1995), 24.

food commitments were met. Price control along with rationing was key. Ration coupons for meat, sugar, butter, and other things were given out, which was something Canadians were not used to as during the First World War coupons were never used.[270] Before coupons, however, an honour system was in place where consumers and retailers had to ensure that they themselves would follow the rules, but this proved to be a bad practice. There were long lines, people going from store to store looking for rare goods and having to adapt to each store's informal rationing system. In February 1942, a poll on voluntary sugar rationing showed that 65% of Canadians thought that ration cards were necessary while 29% thought the honour system was working. As it turns out, the honour system failed, so by July 1942 ration coupons for sugar were now law, followed by other food coupons in the later months.[271]

While it is unknown how many Acadians supported rationing during the war, there was also a local rationing committee composed of volunteers created in February 1943 in Yarmouth County to help those who had problems adjusting and to ensure that restrictions placed on certain goods were done efficiently. That committee included two Acadians, Cyriac I. Boudreau and Mrs. Thomas Melanson.[272] Also, Marie O'Brien's mother rationed tea, sugar, and butter, while also helping to fill war packages which would contain treats and grooming supplies for the soldiers.[273] Acadians, despite not having a lot of monetary wealth, were still willing to set some of their purchased goods aside for a greater cause while those who had virtually no money at all such as in the

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[270] Ian Mosby, *Food will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada's Home Front* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014), 63.
[271] *Ibid.*, 65-66.
[272] "Un comité local de rationnement est maintenant établi," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), February 11th, 1943.
[273] Marie R. O'Brien, "About my Mother's Lifetime Part II," *The Argus* 8, no. 2 (1996): 30.

case of Marceline d'Eon's family, did what they could labour wise by joining groups such as the Women's Auxiliary.

Acadian civilians were willing to support the war effort in many ways. While some Acadians were able to purchase war bonds on their own, a large portion of them were bought through the help of the community by raising funds through the schools and churches with the help of concerts, collections, and by buying and selling War Savings Stamps. Community gatherings also helped raising money for the Red Cross in addition to schools and Acadian women from auxiliary groups, the WI, and the church coming together to knit clothing to be donated. Some Acadians hosted social gatherings at their house and with what little money was raised, it was donated to the war effort. Acadians even used their schools to gather materials for the war while others rationed and became members of rationing committees to help those in the community deal with wartime restrictions. Participating in the war effort was no doubt important to south shore Nova Scotian Acadians, however, they never forgot their communities. Money raised at their local Legions would help to keep the Legion running and help families whose son(s) where overseas while money raised at their local churches, in addition to helping the war effort, would also help to keep those churches running. All of this demonstrates that Acadians were simultaneously able to express loyalty to their local communities and to the broader war effort.

Chapter 3: Acadians in the Military

While first and second chapters have focused mostly on Acadians and their connectedness to their local communities, this chapter will focus on Acadians who left their communities to join the military. Mobilising an army was important for Canada as it was for every other country. With Germany in control of most of continental Europe by 1942, fighting was not an option but a necessity. Many recruitment posters appeared in *Le Petit Courrier* which like the propaganda pieces, carried themes that would appeal to Acadians. Despite being a small demographic in Nova Scotia, many south shore Acadians, both men and women, enlisted in all branches of the military. When in the armed forces, south shore Nova Scotian Acadians did not minimise their efforts, they volunteered to go overseas rather than wait to be conscripted under the NRMA or for overseas service. Some achieved promotions and awards for their service, and undoubtedly, all suffered. While some Acadians faced discrimination in the military for simply being Francophone, they still served in patriotic fashion until the very end of the war thus demonstrating their willingness to protect and serve the nation and Empire.

One of the first recruitment posters for the army to appear in *Le Petit Courrier* discussed the need for men to operate its many vehicles, artillery, become infantry, and serve in the medical field. It also mentioned how Canadian soldiers would be trained in Canada before going overseas, unlike during the First World War where they were trained in England. Each soldier was to be paid $1.30 a day, and if they were a skilled craftsman they would receive an extra 25 to 75 cents a day. In addition to that, they

would have a place to sleep, food, clothes, health, and dental care.[274] Other posters discussed Canada and the Empire and how it was their home which should be defended along with what they hold dear to them.[275] Ronald Cormier in, *Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*, explains how Acadians had come to depend on the English for work during the Great Depression in the 1930s. Also, Acadians would often have to learn English in order to obtain a good job and to benefit from government services.[276] Joining the military therefore would have been a logical decision for Acadians since good jobs with benefits such as those listed above were hard to come by and learning English was a fact of life. Veteran Charlie Muise from Tusket, Nova Scotia who served in Italy, France, Belgium, and Holland over a three-year period said that he joined simply because of the benefits listed above.[277]

In mid 1944, a few months before the second conscription crisis, posters started to encourage men to volunteer rather than wait for conscription to be implemented. This second conscription crisis was caused by the lack of army volunteers and a lack of recruitment from the NRMA in the summer 1944, and was prompted by higher than expected casualties in late summer and fall making the need for more Army recruits even greater.[278] In *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, Jeff Keshen explains how the Canadian public was quick to tell the difference between a conscripted soldier and one who was General Service (GS). A soldier in service was able to distinguish himself through their

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[274] "La patrie a besoin de vous tout de suite!," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), May 22nd, 1941.
[275] "Voici l'action que vous recherchez!," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), May 29th, 1941.
[276] Richard Cormier, *Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (Moncton : Les Éditions d'Acadie, 1996), 12-14.
[277] Charlie Muise in discussion with the author, July, 2017.
[278] R. MacGregor Dawson, *The Conscription Crisis of 1944* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 13.

volunteer service medal, Canada flash, and corps or regimental cap badge. Soldiers in

general service would also have a GS badge on their uniform. The government was aware of this and began to use it to their advantage by creating many posters showing the GS logo claiming those who had it were "real fighting men."[279] *Le Petit Courrier* included many of the GS posters but unlike the ones discussed before, many were aimed directly towards Francophone-Canadians. For example, one poster explained how Francophone-Canadians could choose whether they wanted to be trained in French or in English.[280] Another discussed how they would be well treated and placed in French units while also giving them the opportunity to assert their patriotism and liberate the country of their ancestors.[281] However, as highlighted in the first chapter, many Acadians were unable to train in French and join French units.

Acadians from south shore Nova Scotia were not hesitant to join the army as 106 names appeared in *Le Petit Courrier*.[282] Obituaries in various newspapers highlight

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[279] Jeff Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 23; "Voici l'insigne d'honneur du Canada," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 15th, 1944.
[280] "Voilà un bon Canadien qui n'a pas froid aux yeux!," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), June 29th, 1944.
[281] "Il voulait être soldat et nous ne l'en avons pas empêché," *Le Petit Courrier* Pubnico, Nova Scotia), July 6th, 1944.
[282] These figures taken from *Le Petit Courrier* between October 1939 and November 1946 only include those whose surnames are Acadian.

Acadians who served in the army as well. People such as Arthur J. LeBlanc, who was the vice president of the Legion in Wedgeport served in Italy, Belgium, and Holland with the Princess Louise Fusiliers (PLF) and Vernon C. LeBlanc who worked for the Department of National Defence for 33 years after the war.[283] Also in various newspapers from the Yarmouth County region, publications discussing Acadian brothers who joined the army. Three brothers from Lower Wedgeport whose surname is Boudreau each joined during a different year in the war. One was a sergeant in the army, the other a Gunner, and the last one a Lance-Bombardier.[284] Another three brothers from Abram's River who carry the surname LeBlanc, each joined a different organisation in the army as well. Archie LeBlanc was in the Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA), Arthur LeBlanc in the PLF, and Benjamin LeBlanc in the Canadian Army. Of four brothers from Little River Harbour who also carry the surname Boudreau, two found themselves in the RCA, and one each in the Forestry Corps, and the PLF.[285] Four Brothers (Deveau) from Yarmouth enlisted into the infantry and RCA while in Hectanooga, a widowed mother named Margaret Comeau had her six sons enlist.[286]

Those are just a few of the many examples of Acadians who appeared in the Yarmouth County newspapers, which demonstrates that Acadians not only enlisted in large numbers but were willing to risk losing a large portion of their family. Had this been the case, the effects would have been felt in the low populated Acadian villages. Veteran François Amirault, who joined the air force in January 1945, mentioned how in

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[283] Arthur Joseph LeBlanc and Vernon Camille LeBlanc, obituaries, LeBlanc family files, Yarmouth County Museum & Archives.
[284] Newspaper, 1942, M1994-662, Yarmouth County Museum & Archives.
[285] Newspaper, 1943, M1994-686, Yarmouth County Museum & Archives.
[286] "Brothers Who Served – WWII," *Wartime Heritage Association*, accessed March 23rd, 2018. http://www.wartimeheritage.com/whawwii/brothers_who_served_wwii.htm.

East Pubnico there were 15 men who joined the military. As a result, few young people were left in the community.[287] Even veteran Bruno Boudreau from Comeau's Hill who fought in Italy, had four brothers in service.[288] It is unknown how many returned home, if none did there would be less people to help the elderly, no one to take over the jobs of their fathers (given they were from a fishing family) or any other job in the community. The fact that many Acadians joined the military demonstrates that they were willing to sacrifice the social and economic well being of their communities for a greater cause.

Many posters encouraging people to join the RCAF appeared in *Le Petit Courrier* as well. However, none of them made a direct call to Acadians or Francophone-Canadians in general like in the GS posters. They discussed how pilots are similar to the pioneers as they have the desire to conquer and experience new places, just like the pioneers who cut down trees and built settlements in the "New World." The Acadians did this type of work when they came over from France. They also discussed how having higher education was no longer a requirement to join the RCAF, thus making it more appealing to Acadians. This, however, could apply to anyone living in a post depression world as

[287] François Amirault in discussion with the author, July, 2017.
[288] "Bruno Ralph Boudreau: Shared Memories of World War II," *Wartime Heritage Association*, accessed March 23rd, 2018. http://www.wartimeheritage.com/storyarchive2/storybrunoralphboudreau.htm.

many would have to leave school for work or because families could no longer afford education.[289]

Acadians appeared to have joined the RCAF in great numbers as *Le Petit Courrier* shows that 151 Acadians including one in the RAF enlisted.[290] This could be due to the fact that there was a recruitment bureau setup in southwest Nova Scotia from the 16th to the 20th of February 1942.[291] There was another one in October 1942 at the court house in Yarmouth.[292] Having these recruitment bureaus close to their village would have made it easier for Acadians to apply. Many snippets of Acadians joining the RCAF appeared as well. The snippets do not go into detail, they only mention the soldier's name, his family, where he is from, and where his training began. For example, Pilot Eddie Comeau from St. Bernard was sent to North Africa, where he spent some time off at the Free French base in Monastir, Tunisia.[293] It is interesting that so much focus is given to the RCAF as opposed to the army or navy. When discussing military history with Acadians in Pubnico whose fathers were Second World War veterans, they said the RCAF was seen as a "prestigious" military organisation which could be why *Le Petit Courrier* had such a great focus on it, to show that Acadians were capable of joining.[294] The snippets mention how they had to pass an exam in order to join from

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[289] "Mon garcon, voilà les pioniers d'aujourd'hui!," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 1st, 1942.
[290] These figures taken from *Le Petit Courrier* between October 1939 and November 1946 only include those whose surnames are Acadian.
[291] "La R.C.A.F. demande encore les recrues," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), February 12th, 1942.
[292] "Men! Women! Apply to the R.C.A.F. at Court house Yarmouth, October 26, 27 – 1 to 8 pm.," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), October 22nd, 1942.
[293] "L'aviateur Eddie Comeau en Afrique du Nord," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), September 16th, 1943.
[294] Bernard d'Entremont in discussion with the author, April, 2016.

which many would go to the Manning Depot in Toronto for training. However, some Acadians such as Anselme Bourque from the Pointe-du-Sault, started his training in Halifax in 1940. He was then sent to India in 1943.[295] Some of the other newspapers in Yarmouth County also showed Acadians who joined the air force. L. C. Landry was in the army for four months before joining the RCAF. He was one of three brothers who joined the Canadian military.[296]

While many of the recruitment posters in *Le Petit Courrier* were for the army and air force, none appeared for the navy. Cormier explains how the Acadians, despite having experience working on fishing boats, lacked the mechanical and technical skills that the navy wanted. Because of this, Canadians from Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta had numbers equal to those in the Maritimes in the navy. This upset people such as MP member Pottier. He said in a debate in the House of Commons in November 1941, that there should have been a program in place to allow those from smaller communities to obtain training like those in the city which would allow them to join the navy. This way, the Acadians, who lived their entire lives next to the ocean, would be able to show their true potential.[297] Despite this however, *Le Petit Courrier* shows that 72 Acadians joined the navy.[298] In addition, Bernadin d'Eon (mentioned in the first chapter) from Upper West Pubnico, one of five brothers who joined the Canadian military, was in the Royal Canadian Navy Reserve (RCNR) and was stationed

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[295] "S'enrôlent dans la R.C.A.F.," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), November 21st, 1940; "A l'Inde," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 1st, 1943.
[296] Newspaper, 1943, M1994-686, Yarmouth County Museum & Archives.
[297] Richard Cormier, *Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (Moncton : Les Éditions d'Acadie, 1996), 71.
[298] These figures taken from *Le Petit Courrier* between October 1939 and November 1946 only include those whose surnames are Acadian.

on the west coast of the country.[299] In the *Canadian Naval Chronicle*, at total of 50 Acadians (not specifically from south shore Nova Scotia) appear throughout the book in the lost at sea lists.[300] To give some examples, Acadian Joseph F. d'Entremont was lost at sea when Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Bras D'Or*, a minesweeper sunk due to a storm in the Gulf of St. Lawrence on October 19th, 1940.[301] Gerald V. d'Eon (who was mentioned in the first chapter) and Leonard P. Thibadeau were aboard the HMCS *Otter*, an armed yacht bought from the United States, which caught fire and sank off the coast of Halifax on March 26th, 1941.[302] Lastly, Leonard E. Gautier was on HMCS *Windflower*, which sunk in a collision.[303] This shows that Acadians were willing to join all branches of the military, even those which were difficult for them to join such as the navy.

Overall, it appears that Acadians joined the military in its multiple branches. A list of soldiers from the Yarmouth County Archives shows that out of all who enlisted, 51 were Acadians.[304] In addition, a memorial to the war dead in Yarmouth County has 38 Acadian names on it from the Second World War.[305] However, an up to date list brings the number to 44.[306] As for Digby County, 15 of its war dead are Acadian.[307]

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[299] Newspaper, 1943, M1994-686, Yarmouth County Museum & Archives.
[300] Fraser Mckee and Robert Darlington, *The Canadian Naval Chronicle 1939-1945* (St. Catharine ON: Vanwell Publishing Limited, 1996), 20-223.
[301] *Ibid.*, 21-22.
[302] *Ibid.*, 30-32.
[303] *Ibid.*, 42.
[304] War Records of WWI and WWII, lists, Y.M.S 15, Yarmouth County Museum & Archives.
[305] "Memorial 12011-010 Yarmouth, NS," *Veterans Affairs Canada*, accessed March 23rd, 2018. http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/national-inventory-canadian-memorials/details/487.
[306] "Yarmouth, Nova Scotia – WWII Casualties," *Wartime Heritage Association*, accessed March 23rd, 2018. http://www.wartimeheritage.com/whawwii/whawwii_casualties.htm.
[307] "WWII Casualties – Digby County, Nova Scotia," *Wartime Heritage Association*, accessed March 23rd, 2018. http://wartimeheritage.com/whaww2ns/digby_casualties_wwii.htm.

Dianne Jacquard also did some research on soldiers from Comeau's Hill and Little River Harbour who served in the First World War, Second World War, and the Korean War. She found that out of the 46 men and women who served in the Second World War, 23 had Acadian family names.[308] In the Pubnico West Legion, there is a list of all those from the region who volunteered to serve in the Second World War. On that list, there are 133 names.[309] In *Le Petit Courrier* the total number of soldiers whose surnames are Acadian is 1,010. 674 of those names are from an unknown military branch.[310] It is difficult to determine exactly at what rate south shore Nova Scotian Acadians joined the military (or Acadians in general) compared to other ethnicities in Canada. Granatstein notes that 1,1 million Canadian joined the military during the Second World War and that 150,000 of those were Francophone-Canadians, about one in seven of all enlistments. He says that even for the First World War it is difficult to determine the exact number of enlistments for each ethnicity in Canada because soldiers did not have to indicate their mother tongue and those who enlisted in a particular town or city were not necessarily from that place.[311] This is not surprising as it was only in 2017 where Martin managed to produce a solid figure (noted in the historiography) of how many Francophone-Canadians enlisted during the First World War.

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[308] Dianne Jacquard, "A Look Through Time: Military Service Comeau's Hill and Little River Harbour, Nova Scotia," *The Argus* 29, no. 4 (2017): 11-28.
[309] "Pour la patrie: Volontaires de l'Église St. Pierre Pubnico Ouest, N.S. qui se sont enrôlés dans les forces actives du Canada," list of soldiers from the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 66 (West Pubnico, Nova Scotia).
[310] These figures taken from *Le Petit Courrier* between October 1939 and November 1946 only include those whose surnames are Acadian.
[311] J. L. Granatstein, "Ethnic and Religious Enlistment in Canada During the Second World War," *Canadian Jewish Studies* 21 (2014): 175-176. https://cjs.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cjs/article/viewFile/39917/36132.

Acadian soldiers from the United States are also present in the pages of *Le Petit Courrier*. One by the name of lieutenant Roland Saulnier from New Bedford, Massachusetts, was labelled a Canadian hero despite being from the United States. He commanded Filipino troops in the Pacific, specifically in Bataan, a province in the Philippines where the Japanese attacked in December 1941. The Japanese wanted to use the Philippines as a base of operations to invade the Netherlands East Indies which was rich in oil, a resource they desperately needed.[312] Shortly after Pearl Harbor, the Japanese launched air attacks on U.S. Air Bases in the Philippines such as Clark and Nichols Field. Del Monto Field was the only field in the Philippines that could serve U.S. B-17 Bombers as it was yet to be detected. Because of this, they flew to Australia, however, two days later Del Monto was destroyed.[313] General Douglas MacArthur, who was in command of the U.S. Forces in the Philippines, ordered a withdrawal to Bataan where they would mount a defence against the Japanese, which ultimately failed.[314] Roland Saulnier was well known amongst those fighting on the front and the Japanese knew him as "lieutenant Frenchy". He acquired his fame by organising a bus convoy to bring troops to the peninsula and by taking Morong, a municipality in Bataan with troops who never experienced combat before. A few days later, he and his troops were surrounded forcing them to jump off a cliff. The Japanese launched another attack with a thousand soldiers but Saulnier and his troops, according the newspaper, killed every last one. There were other incidents where the Japanese were actively seeking Saulnier in the thick brush, but he managed to escape every time. The Japanese did come close

[312] A. Russell Buchanan, *The United States in World War II* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1964), 87.
[313] *Ibid.*, 90-92.
[314] *Ibid.*, 94.

however when he was caught off guard in a fox hole with one of his soldiers. Lastly, Saulnier was able to regain lost ground (does not specify where) and prevent other Japanese attacks with the help of barbed wire.[315] These are just a few of many examples of his heroism outlined in *Le Petit* Courrier. There was a follow up story discussing Saulnier's family background which concluded that he was born in the United States, but his family was from Quebec where many Acadians would settle after the deportation. His family history from the early 18th century to after the deportation was then discussed to solidify his identity as Acadian.[316]

In addition, a soldier named Bernard Pothier, who was originally from Wedgeport but moved to Medford Massachusetts as a child, was in a Japanese prisoner of war camp. He was sent to the Philippines as a photographer for the U.S. Air Force and when the Japanese occupied the island, he was taken prisoner. News was received that he had been in contact with the Red Cross from which he received their services.[317] A total of 16 Acadians appeared in *Le Petit Courrier* that had joined the US forces thus demonstrating that Acadians despite where they were living, did their part.[318]

Acadian women were present in the military as well. Before the Second World War, the only military organisation available to women was the Nursing Service of the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, which was part of the reserve in 1904 then to the army permanently in 1906. It was on July 2nd, 1941, when the air force became the first

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[315] "Un heros Canadien," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 12th, 1942.
[316] "Le lieutenant Roland Saulnier est d'origine Canadienne-francaise," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 26th, 1942.
[317] "Prisonnier des Japonais," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), May 27th, 1943.
[318] These figures taken from *Le Petit Courrier* between October 1939 and November 1946 only include those whose surnames are Acadian.

to recruit women under the Canadian Women's Auxiliary Air Force (CWAAF), soon changed to the RCAF (Women's Division). The Army soon followed with the creation of the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC) in August 1941 and then finally the navy in July 1942 with the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS).[319]

While there were not as many recruitment posters in *Le Petit Courrier* for women as there were for men, a few did appear in English for the RCAF. They discussed the various jobs they could have in the RCAF such as a clerk, equipment assistant, telephone operator, and many others as long as they had an eight-grade education or higher.[320] It is interesting that there were no French recruitment posters for women. Nevertheless, Acadian women served. *Le Petit Courrier* shows that 26 women became nurses or entered the Auxiliary Forces.[321] In addition, Barbara G. Doucette served in the CWAC in Ottawa at the National Research Council, which helped Canada in its industrial and technological development and to fulfill government mandates.[322] A calendar themed around the involvement of those in the Argyle region in the Second World War mentions several Acadian women who served in various parts of the military. Gladys Doucette for example, who was living in England, joined the RAF, Anna A. LeBlanc from Plymouth joined the RCAF in 1941 and was stationed in Toronto, Rivers (Manitoba) and then in Summerside. Second Lieutenant Catherine Pothier from West Pubnico, served with the United States Army Nurse Corps after

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[319] Ruth Roach Pierson, *They're Still Women After All: The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 95.
[320] "Girls! Women! Here's your chance to help Keep 'Em Flyin'," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), April 15th, 1943.
[321] These figures taken from *Le Petit Courrier* between October 1939 and November 1946 only include those whose surnames are Acadian.
[322] Barbara Gavel Doucette, obituaries, Doucette family files, Yarmouth County Museum & Archives.

graduating from the School of Nursing at the Hôtel-Dieu in Moncton, New Brunswick. She served in North Africa and then at a veteran's hospital in Massachusetts before retiring in Pubnico.[323]

It is important to mention how many of the Acadians discussed above were not conscripted soldiers. Many of the soldiers enlisted before the conscription crisis in 1944 and, because many went overseas, they were not brought in under the NRMA which was for home defence only. There was one soldier from Pubnico named John Surette who was conscripted under the NRMA on July 24th, 1942. He was then placed in a French-Canadian Battery on November 18th thus making him one of the few south shore Nova Scotian Acadians to receive some of his training in French. While he was in Canada for most of the war, he was sent overseas on October 22nd, 1943 but never saw combat.[324] Also, in the Directorate of Records of the National Defence Headquarters, it shows that in Nova Scotia, 754 of those recruited under the NRMA were French speaking (42 who only spoke French and 712 who were bilingual).[325] These numbers are significantly low considering Nova Scotia's French speaking population in 1941 was 47,053 (6,800 who only spoke French and 40,253 who were bilingual).[326] Not to mention Nova Scotia's total French speaking population between the ages of 15 and 44 was 22,973 in 1941 (1,197 who only spoke French and 21,776 who were bilingual).[327] These figures demonstrate that many Acadians were willing to take on the greater task of serving

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[323] Argyle Second World War Calendar, Argyle Township Courthouse and Archives, 2016.
[324] 1-3. John Surette, *Diary*.
[325] Directorate of Records, National Defence Headquarters, Appendix H1.
[326] *Eighth Census of Canada 1941 Vol II: Population by Local Subdivisions*, ed. Edmond Cloutier (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1944), 741
[327] *Eighth Census of Canada 1941 Vol III: Ages of the Population*, ed. Edmond Cloutier (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty and Controller of Stationery, 1946), 542.

overseas rather than solely defend their country as the NRMA recruitment numbers for French speaking Nova Scotians are low compared to the total number of French speaking Nova Scotians who were, for the most part, eligible for recruitment.

Stories about Acadian soldiers' achievements were sometimes published. For example, Evangeliste d'Eon, who used to work for *Le Petit Courrier*, was promoted to second lieutenant after 10 months of service.[328] Thomas Gaudet from Petit Rousseau was promoted lieutenant and was an instructor at Camp Borden in Ontario.[329] One notable achievement came from Aldéric d'Eon, a pilot from Yarmouth, who received the Distinguished Flying Cross. A banquet was held in his name by the Knights of Columbus in Yarmouth where the mayor of Yarmouth as well as the president of l'Université de Stainte-Anne addressed him in their speeches.[330] Another article discussed his experiences in the air force. He said the English would call him "Dionne" instead of "d'Eon," and how after finishing a series of operations he was to embark on a second round with Commander V. F. Ganderton of the "lions" which he already returned from since the article was published.[331] As for his first round, he discusses an operation over Bochum, Germany, near the Ruhr Valley where defences were strong. He and his crew managed to escape German flak guns while having to use the stars to fly back to England since their navigation system was broken.[332] Success stories such as

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[328] "Reçoit son grade de sous-lieutenant," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), December 10th, 1942.
[329] "Lieut. Thomas Gaudet," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), August 31st, 1944.
[330] "L'aviateur A. d'Eon, D. F. C. reçu officiellement," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), May 11th, 1944.
[331] No information is given as to who the lions were.
[332] "L'aviateur Aldéric d'Eon raconte ses experiences," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), December 21st, 1944.

these demonstrate that Acadian soldiers were not interested in doing the minimal amount of work. They were willing to go the extra mile to get the job done.

Acadians also suffered through great lengths in the war. Bernard Pothier, for example, who served with the U.S. Army Air Force in the Philippines but is originally from Nova Scotia, described his experience in the Bataan Death March on April 9th, 1942, which was followed by three and a half years of captivity. The Bataan Death March was when the Japanese Imperial Army decided to transfer 60,000 to 80,000 Filipino and America POWs from Saysain Point located in the municipalities of Bagac and Mariveles, Bataan to Camp O'Donnell located in Capas, Tarlac. Pothier was stationed at Clark Field when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941. Clark Field was then attacked causing the American and Filipino soldiers to retreat further into the Bataan Peninsula. Pothier described how horses were slaughtered for food and fellow soldiers began to turn on one another. After four months of fighting, the Filipino and American forces surrendered. After the surrender, he and his fellow soldiers had to walk about 65 miles to the other prison camp. During that process, many people died and if one would fall, execution would follow. Pothier even watched someone be buried alive. When they arrived at the camp, food was an issue as the rice given to the prisoners was bug infested. Pothier volunteered to help bury the dead into a bulldozed pit which gave him more food and time outdoors. He then began to work in a mine on the Japanese island of Kyushu where at night he could hear the screams of people being tortured. Finally, on August 9th, 1945, Pothier saw the mushroom cloud

from the atomic bomb that was dropped on Nagasaki which was soon followed by his liberation.[333]

Another soldier named Sergeant Benoit Doucet, from Sainte-Anne-du-Rousseau, who was part of the Essex Scottish Regiment in the Canadian Army, fought in Caen, France in July 1944. The Essex Scottish Regiment was deployed on July 5th at La Valette and pushed towards Ifs and Bourguebois Ridge where they fought from the 21st to the 22nd of July taking 281 casualties.[334] During an assault, Doucet was ordered to take out machine gun positions but half way through the objective he was hit by a shell which exploded above him. He was transported back to England by plane and spent six weeks in the hospital. He was very thankful to the Red Cross and those who have donated blood which saved his life.[335]

Lastly, Richard M. Doucette from Pinkney's Point, enlisted in the army on January 15th, 1940. He spent two and a half years in England before being sent to invade Sicily on July 19th, 1943. Afterwards he went to North Africa where he got blood poisoning and a sprained ankle and stayed there for 10 weeks. After recovery, Doucette was asked if he wanted to go back to the front line in Italy to which he said yes. Unfortunately, he was taken prisoner during at Castel di Sangro along with 20 other soldiers and was sent to a POW camp in Germany, where he worked eight to nine hours a day with very little to eat. Doucette was then able to work on a farm with two other

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[333] Mark Pothier, "A Bataan Death March Survivor Remembers: After Decades of Keeping His Story Private, My 94-year-old Uncle Tells How He Survived One of WWII's Darkest Chapters," *The Argus* 26, no. 4 (2014): 18-19.
[334] "The Essex and Kent Scottish," *ekscot.org*, accessed February 23rd, 2018. http://www.ekscot.org/index/history/concise-history/.
[335] "Le Sergent Benoit Doucet," *Le Petit Courrier* (Pubnico, Nova Scotia), March 8th, 1945.

Canadians and a Polish woman from which he got more food and water, although he had to work for longer periods. Once the Russians began advancing on the Eastern Front they were moved to another camp where he met a French man named Alfred from Boulogne-sur-Mer who helped him escape the camp. Alfred had come from the French camp to pick up a cow but instead brought Doucette with him. They put on civilian clothes and escaped through barbered wire. They met two German officers along their route but did not suspect anything before entering the French POW camp. It is there, where he waited two weeks to be freed by the Russians. One Russian told Doucette to go meet the U.S. Army at the border (does not specify where) from which he was sent home. He later found out that the war had ended three days before he was liberated.[336] These examples of persistence, though not exclusive to Acadians, can be seen as reflective of there ancestors who were deported 200 years ago. It demonstrates that Acadians are still strong in the face of adversity.

As for discrimination in the military, Bernier highlights how Canada's forces often alienated Francophone-Canadians, which dates back as early as the 1700s. Its structure generally favoured Anglo-Canadians as noted in the first chapter with the lack of French training camps.[337] Acadians had their share of discrimination in the military. While Ronald Cormier focuses on New Brunswick Acadians, their experiences are important to discuss in order to understand the types of discrimination they faced. Blair Bourgeois from Moncton mentioned how Francophone-Canadians were removed from

[336] Alice Clairmont and Richard Doucette, "Richard M. Doucette-World War II Prisoner of War," *The Argus* 16, no. 1 (2004): 27-28.
[337] Serge Bernier, "French Canadians in the Canadian Armed Forces in 1944," in *The Second Quebec Conference Revisited*, ed. David B. Woolner (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 200.

the bomber units simply for being French and that it took him five years to become an officer. Laurie Cormier also mentioned how it would take Francophone-Canadians almost double the time to be promoted in the bomber units compared to Anglo-Canadians. Joseph Bouthillier, who was in a veteran's hospital in Lancaster, New Brunswick had a nurse tell him and other veterans that "We don't want to hear any French here. You have to speak English."[338]

Even after the war, Alexandre J. Savoie who was one of the men responsible for post-war education was asked by the director of education for the Canadian Army overseas why many Acadians are still illiterate. This question, not surprisingly, enraged Savoie.[339] When interviewing south shore Nova Scotian Acadians, however, they faced no such discrimination. François Amirault, who was mentioned earlier, said that he experienced none while in the RCAF. He also said that you could not discuss topics such as religion and politics and to do so would result in dismissal from the military. This may have prevented him from experiencing discrimination. His relations between other English soldiers, whether from Canada, Britain, or the U.S. were good as well.[340] This was also the case for veterans Charlie Muise and Anselm d'Entremont. They could get along with Anglo-Canadians, U.S., and British soldiers.[341] Veteran Edward Saulnier from Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau, a tradesmen in the RCAF who spent a lot of time talking to soldiers, said the British were the friendliest out of all the soldiers.[342] Lastly,

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[338] Richard Cormier, *Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (Moncton : Les Éditions d'Acadie, 1996), 77.
[339] *Ibid.*, 76-77.
[340] François Amirault in discussion with the author, July, 2017.
[341] Charlie Muise in discussion with the author, July, 2017; Aline d'Entremont in discussion with the author, March, 2018.
[342] "Remembering the War Years," *Wartime Heritage Association*, accessed March 24th, 2018. http://www.wartimeheritage.com/storyarchive2/story_saulnier_edward.htm.

Lucille d'Entremont mentioned how there were British soldiers boarding in West Pubnico from which there were no issues between them and the locals, thus demonstrating that Acadians had no problem being part of the British Empire despite their past.[343] One Acadian named Sylvester d'Entremont, even wrote about how he was enjoying himself in the army. On the 11th of May, 1945, he writes the following, "now we are going around Holland to gather what germans there is left and are having pretty good fun, the people are so glad to see us that they almost eat us up."[344]

Despite this discrimination, Acadian soldiers demonstrated their patriotism. According to two veterans, James Hogan and Alfred B. d'Entremont, Acadians had a higher level of Canadian identity than most Quebecois. Hogan, who was an Anglo-Canadian officer from Prince Edward Island, said that Acadians were more "Canada conscious" than some of the Anglo-Canadian soldiers and especially more than those from Quebec. d'Entremont claimed that Acadians, "were true Canadians" which was due to the fact that even though they struggled to return to the Maritimes after the deportation, they were successful in doing so. He also said that if the Quebecois had been deported, they would have never returned. It is because of this difference, according to him, that the Acadians will never become separatists.[345] Additionally, veteran François Amirault said one of the reasons why he enlisted was because he was very enthusiastic about the military while veteran Bruno Boudreau said that he loved his country and believed that fighting for it was a value. Boudreau felt lucky to live in a

[343] Lucille d'Entremont in discussion with the author, July, 2017.
[344] Letter, 1945, 2005. 105, 64, West Pubnico, Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos.
[345] Helen Jean McClelland Nugent, "The Acadian Response to the Conscription Crisis of World War II" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1983), 104-105.

peaceful country such as Canada and would fight for her whenever necessary.[346] Lastly, veteran Anselm d'Entremont believed it was his duty to go to war, which is why he enlisted.[347] These reasons why south shore Nova Scotian Acadians enlisted into the military also demonstrates why Acadians were not concerned about being trained in French or having their own unit, what mattered most was getting the job done.

In April 1945, *La Voix d'Évangeline* discussed how Acadians, generally speaking, were the most patriotic group in Canada. The author, J. B. Côté, says the Acadians, out of all national groups who distinguished themselves during their support for the war, were the most "admirable." Côté goes further to say that they are the "most beautiful" example of perspicacity and loyalty in regard to Canadian unity. He then explains how if any ethnic group had a legitimate reason not to support the war, it would be the Acadians because of the mistreatment they received from the British Empire. They were willing to support the war despite their historical grievances and did so without giving it a second thought. According to him, the Acadians knew that the British (or Canadians) today have nothing in common with those who orchestrated the deportation and recognise that they are now the leaders of the free world. One thing that is rather significant in the article and reflective of the examples written above, is that the author says while the Acadians were thinking about their own survival, they also wanted

[346] François Amirault in discussion with the author, July, 2017; "Bruno Ralph Boudreau: Shared Memories of World War II," *Wartime Heritage Association*, accessed March 23rd, 2018. http://www.wartimeheritage.com/storyarchive2/storybrunoralphboudreau.htm.
[347] Aline d'Entremont in discussion with the author, March, 2018.

to protect the nation because they want to live in a free country. It is a privilege that they payed heavily for and understand it better than most Canadians due to their past.[348]

South shore Nova Scotian Acadians, both men and women, enlisted in many of the Canadian military's branches, even in those which were less likely to recruit Acadians such as the navy while others even joined the US Forces. Many opted for the most dangerous task by going overseas rather than defending their country's borders. Acadians were in no way "slackers" while in service as they achieved promotions and awards such as in the case of Aldéric d'Eon who obtained the Distinguished Flying Cross. They suffered through POW camps, life threatening injuries, and some of the war's most horrific events such as the Bataan Death March, which might be reminiscent of their ancestors who despite being deported to many different parts of the world, persevered and managed to re-establish themselves within Canada. While some Acadians faced discrimination in the military, mostly due to their language and because they were believed to be less educated, Acadian from the south shore got along with Anglo-Canadians, U.S., and even British soldiers. They demonstrated their patriotism through their willingness to serve for the nation and Empire regardless of whether or not they could be trained in French or have their own unit.

[348] "Le patriotism éclaire du peuple Acadien," *La Voix d'Évangeline* (Moncton, New Brunswick), April 26th, 1945.

Conclusion

The Second World War caused people of many different races and ethnicities to take up arms within the Empire and throughout the world. While defeating the Axis powers was certainly a common goal for the Allied countries, not everyone within those countries may have considered that the primary reason or motivation to support the war effort. The Acadians, having their way of life threatened during the Seven Years War, did what they thought was best to preserve it which was to remain neutral. During the Second World War, however, they felt that neutrality was not an option. They knew that if the Axis powers invaded their shores, their traditional way of life would have changed as well as for all of those living in North America and the Empire.

South shore Nova Scotian Acadians showed little concern over the lack of French training camps and the fact that there was no Acadian unit. The loss of their religion, on the other hand, was of great concern as it would have been taken away from them or at best, limited, as it was in German occupied countries. Acadians were concerned about their religion as shown in *Le Petit Courrier*, which made sure to inform Acadians of the religious purges in Europe. The restrictions on Catholicism placed on those living in Poland, France, Austria, and even Germany, which were documented by the newspaper were enough to convince Acadians to enlist in the military and participate on the home front. While a lot of the propaganda possessed religious themes describing the attacks on Catholicism in Europe to encourage Acadian support, Acadians were already in favour of supporting the war as opinion pieces noted Hitler's (and in the beginning Stalin's) desire to remove Catholicism from Europe long before propaganda began appearing in Le *Petit Courrier*. Civilians also thanked those who were lucky

enough to return for protecting their religion as well which demonstrates that it was not solely the newspaper that was concerned about religion during the war.

Many Acadians from south shore Nova Scotia, both men and women, and even those from outside the country and province but who had ties to the region, enlisted into the Canadian and U.S. military in its various branches and fought on various fronts. While the majority were in the army and air force, some Acadians were able to join the navy as well despite not having the necessary mechanical and technical skills for the job in addition to lacking the necessary training facilities in their region which their MP tried to acquire for them. The majority volunteered for the service rather than waiting to be conscripted under the NRMA or for overseas service from which some achieved promotions and awards while others suffered through life threatening wounds, POW camps, and even some of the war's horrific events such as the Bataan Death March. All of this demonstrates Acadian adversity during difficult times just like those Acadians who were deported during which families were separated while many acquired diseases due to malnutrition and the poor conditions aboard the crammed ships. While some Acadians, notably from New Brunswick, experienced prejudice and discrimination in the military, those from south shore Nova Scotia experienced none and were able to get along with those who oppressed them in the past. They also demonstrated their patriotism for a country which Acadians fought hard to return to and now, defend.

Acadians recognised the importance of maintaining an alliance within the nation as they called for national unity, especially between the Anglo and Francophone-Canadians. They knew that if there was a division within Canada, it would hinder their efforts to support the war. This demonstrates that not all Francophone-Canadians were

against the war as it has been often portrayed and that it is important to recognise Francophone-Canadians as having many different ethnic backgrounds so as not to conflate them in one school of political thought. It also did not bother south shore Nova Scotian Acadians to wear a uniform without any Acadian distinction on them or to be trained in French, what mattered most was getting the job done.

As for the Empire, south shore Nova Scotian Acadians wanted to support and protect it as well. They fostered good relations between the British by showing their appreciation of the Royal Family's effort to speak French while also praising Britain's success in defending their country during the Battle of Britain. Acadians also believed the Empire upheld the democratic system which the Axis wanted to tear down while defending them against the false belief that they were letting its colonies do all the hard fighting. Acadians wanted to support the Empire despite their past.

Throughout the war Acadians never forgot their tight-knit communities. Acadians from south shore Nova Scotia, regardless of where they were living, never forgot their history and heritage. They stayed connected and loyal to their communities as their stories were often featured in *Le Petit Courrier*. The fact that these communities were so small, made it easy to remember those who left while the ones who did leave, still felt that connection despite no longer living in the region. Stories of soldiers overseas were also featured, which would sometimes include stories of them meeting either their brother or a friend thus again, highlighting just how tight-knit these communities really are and how close they are to one another. This closeness transformed into comfort and support when a soldier was killed as funerals within the

communities had massive gatherings with some of the attendees being from outside the region.

Acadians did what they could to support those overseas by buying war bonds, knitting clothes for soldiers while donating them to the Red Cross, donating materials, rationing, and sometimes, even selling their own resources for the cause. While some of these things were done by individuals, Acadians were able to gather the most funds and clothes when the community came together. Schools and churches were the primary places for these things as they would host concerts and organise collections from which large sums of money were raised. Some would even open their homes to social events where money raised would be donated to the war effort. These community gatherings certainly benefitted the war effort; however, they also aided the community itself and those within them. Acadians donated to their local Legions to help Acadian families and soldiers in need as well as to help keep the Legion running while some of the money raised by collections, when not being used for the war effort, was used to support the church. As this thesis has sought to demonstrate, south shore Acadians were greatly motivated by strong community loyalties, traditions, and histories, and these factors ultimately shaped their responses to the Second World War.

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