

In The Dust You Will Prevail:  
The Mobilization of Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and  
St. Francis Xavier Universities, 1914-1918

by

Scott Matheson

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■+■  
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Scott Matheson  
Fredericton, NB  
September 2010

## **Abstract**

In The Dust You Will Prevail:

The Mobilization of Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and  
St. Francis Xavier Universities, 1914-1918

By Scott Matheson

For Canada's post-secondary institutions, the First World War precipitated great change and upheaval. In Maritime Canada, the effects of the war were keenly felt at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities. The campuses were witness to extreme patriotism, the enlistment of students and faculty, the founding of contingents of the Canadian Officer Training Corps, the conscription crisis, French-English tensions, the Halifax Explosion, influenza, and the raising of university sponsored hospital units for service overseas. Meanwhile, the female students present at each institution carried on with their education amidst the turmoil. Some enjoyed a newfound freedom and rose to become student leaders in the absence of their male counterparts. Moreover, each university's perspective was different largely due to the religious orientations of the institutions. By the time the armistice was declared on November 11, 1918, the face of each university had changed irrevocably. Yet, in the dust and chaos of war, they had prevailed.

September 2010

For The Students of  
Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier,  
Past, Present, and Future

## Introduction

At the May 1918 commencement exercises of Mount St. Bernard College in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, the affiliated ladies' college of St. Francis Xavier University, graduating student Leona Hennessey spoke of the changes wrought by the war: "this awful world-war has revolutionized practically everything."<sup>1</sup> Although she was referring specifically to the transformation taking place amongst Maritime women as a result of the First World War, her statement was also true in a wider sense. The twentieth century was one of unprecedented human violence and cruelty, and yet its victories, failures, atrocities, and triumphs inevitably helped to define the world that carried forward into the twenty-first century. The First World War has often been described as one of the critical events in Canada's advancement towards true nationhood. Pronouncements about Canada coming of age on Vimy Ridge and emerging into adulthood at the signing of the Treaty of Versailles as a separate signatory abound.<sup>2</sup> Canada's contribution to the war in Europe was significant and has affected Canadian society ever since. But while the war raged in Europe, a different sort of battle was being waged at home in Canada. These were the struggles of the mind and emotions, of relationships and hardships, of exuberant youth and experienced maturity. While those who went overseas during the Great War fought in

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<sup>1</sup> Leona Hennessey, "Woman in Industry," *The Memorare* (December 1918): 2. St. Francis Xavier University Archives (StFXUA). Student magazines and local newspapers are key sources in this thesis. It should be recognized however, that while such sources do offer useful insight into the era, they do not always represent the views of the entire population they claim to represent.

<sup>2</sup> See Terry Copp, "The Military Effort, 1914-1918," in David MacKenzie, ed., *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 57-58; J.L. Granatstein, "Conscription in the Great War," in MacKenzie, *Canada and the First World War*, 70; Margaret MacMillan, "Canada and the Peace Settlements," in MacKenzie, *Canada and the First World War*, 379-402; Jonathan F. Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), 233, for a few examples.



physically violent conflicts, those who remained on the home front, even if only briefly, were engaged in a different sort of battle. The war brought about a societal transformation and to Leona Hennessey and many other Maritimers, it appeared as though everything changed.

Dalhousie University was established in 1818 by its namesake George Ramsay, the Earl of Dalhousie.<sup>3</sup> Lord Dalhousie's college was modelled after Edinburgh University and open "to all occupations and to all sects of Religion restricted to such branches only as are applicable to our present state."<sup>4</sup> The institution adopted the Scottish educational practice of focusing more on philosophy and science than the classics.<sup>5</sup> Religion was another tradition inherited from the Scottish model. Although technically secular, Dalhousie had a strong Presbyterian flavour beginning with Lord Dalhousie's appointment of the minister of St. Matthew's Presbyterian church in Halifax to the Board of Trustees.<sup>6</sup> Later, the Board of Governors ruled that while Dalhousie was open to students of all denominations, the professors had to be Presbyterian.<sup>7</sup>

Acadia University was founded in Wolfville, Nova Scotia in 1838 as Queen's College by the Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society.<sup>8</sup> Taking its name from the Acadian people, the campus was built only kilometres away from the former Acadian settlement at Grand Pré. Acadia was established as an institution of higher learning

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<sup>3</sup> P. B. Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1 (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 16.

<sup>4</sup> Nova Scotia Executive Council Minutes, December 11 1817, RG I, vol. 193, 195-8, Public Archives of Nova Scotia (PANS), in Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 19.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>7</sup> John G. Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 16.

<sup>8</sup> Ronald Stewart Longley, *Acadia University, 1838-1938* (Kentville: Kentville Publishing Company, 1939), 7. The name of the college was officially changed from Queen's College to Acadia on March 10, 1841 (36).

offering an education in the Liberal Arts for the Baptists of Nova Scotia and the Maritimes. When the college doors opened, students received an education that included the classics, rhetoric, logic, mathematics, and natural philosophy.<sup>9</sup> Acadia was designed to be the Baptist answer to the exclusivity of the Anglican King's College at Windsor and the predominantly Presbyterian Dalhousie University at Halifax. No religious tests were required of any of the students, staff, or faculty at Acadia.<sup>10</sup>

The Mount Allison Wesleyan Academy was established at Sackville, New Brunswick in 1843.<sup>11</sup> Four years prior, on May 30, 1839, Charles Frederick Allison, a Sackville merchant, had offered to purchase land and erect buildings at his own expense in Sackville so the youth of the Maritime provinces – from the elementary to post-secondary level – could receive a religiously-based education. From the outset, the academy, and later the university, were designed to serve the Methodists of the greater Maritime region. Its geographic location was well-suited for this purpose as the New Brunswick institution was only kilometres away from the Nova Scotia border and the Cape Jourimain crossing to Prince Edward Island. Nevertheless, Allison prescribed that attendance was not to be restricted to Methodists.<sup>12</sup> Just as Lord Dalhousie modeled “his” college after Edinburgh University, Mount Allison took its inspiration from the Wesleyan schools of England, in particular Kingswood School.<sup>13</sup> The curriculum at Mount Allison was very similar to Acadia's and included “a good English education,” classics, mathematics, natural philosophy, astronomy, and chemistry amongst other subjects.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>11</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 1, vii.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 5.

St. Francis Xavier University was founded in July 1853 in the village of Arichat, Richmond County, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Colin F. MacKinnon, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Arichat.<sup>15</sup> In 1855, the college was moved from Arichat to its permanent home in Antigonish.<sup>16</sup> The institution was founded to provide higher education to the Catholics of largely Scottish Highland descent of the diocese, which came to be known as the Diocese of Antigonish in 1886. The university “symbolized ... [the] rising standard of economic and social maturity” of the Highland Catholics of eastern Nova Scotia.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, it marked a turning point for them as a people, as the doors of higher education opened to them directly. The language of instruction however, was English, not Gaelic – the native language of many of the first students. In this “foreign” language – the language of commerce, politics, and the professions – students received a classical education in subjects ranging from Latin and religious instruction to mathematics, natural philosophy, and the sciences.<sup>18</sup>

From the time of their founding, the four institutions enjoyed modest success. Enrolments slowly increased, programs were expanded, infrastructure was improved, and women were eventually admitted. Nevertheless, this embryonic period was characterized by many obstacles and hurdles that caused great consternation and sometimes even hardships at the universities. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the institutions had grown to become established and respected educational institutions of the Maritimes provinces. Each university’s character and philosophy was shaped during the early years however the First World War precipitated an unprecedented amount of change in a condensed period of time.

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<sup>15</sup> James D. Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1996), 16.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 31-32.

In the first years of the twentieth century, few in Maritime Canada anticipated the approaching cataclysm. Of more immediate concern to most Maritimers were the economic uncertainties of an era when late nineteenth-century industrialization was faltering and the shifting balance of power in the Canadian federation promised little relief through federal policies.<sup>19</sup> Change, however, was rapidly unleashed with the outbreak of war in August 1914. Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities were caught up in the cross-currents. These institutions were crucibles of change during the war and in its immediate aftermath. Simultaneously, they were contemporary microcosms of greater Maritime society and independent organisms effecting change around the world. This thesis will explore the impact of the war not only upon the four institutions, but also upon the individuals who studied and worked there. Furthermore, an analysis of each university's impact on the wider Maritime community will be provided. Each institution was affected by the war, but in turn, each university also affected its surrounding environment. Reference to Maritime and Canadian society during this critical period with reference to reactions to the war, enlistment, the role of religion, and the experiences of women will serve to place the war-story of Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier in a larger context.

With some areas of the Maritime provinces experiencing a period of prosperity, the early twentieth century brought expansion and ever increasing enrolments to each institution. Acadia enjoyed record enrolments year after year, with an all-time high of 230 by 1910.<sup>20</sup> This spurred the building of seven new buildings between 1908

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<sup>19</sup> T. W. Acheson, "The National Policy and the Industrialization of the Maritimes, 1880-1910" *Acadiensis* 1:2 (Spring 1972): 3-28. See also, E. R. Forbes, "Misguided Symmetry: The Destruction of Regional Transportation Policy for the Maritimes," in David Jay Bercuson, ed., *Canada and the Burden of Unity* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977) and E. R. Forbes, *The Maritime Rights Movement, 1919-1927: A Study in Canadian Regionalism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979).

<sup>20</sup> Barry M. Moody, "Esther Clark Goes to College," *Atlantis* 20:1 (Fall 1995): 39.

and 1915.<sup>21</sup> At Dalhousie, the four-acre Carleton campus was found wanting and the university searched in earnest for Halifax real estate on which the college could expand. In 1909, the city offered a three acre block on Morris Street, which subsequently became known as the Sexton campus.<sup>22</sup> The search for land did not end there and in 1911, Dalhousie purchased the Studley estate for \$50,000.<sup>23</sup> Thus, Dalhousie began operating on three campuses and built six new buildings between 1909 and 1915 on the new Sexton and Studley campuses to meet student demand.<sup>24</sup> At St. Francis Xavier University between 1900 and 1914 enrolments increased just over 100% from less than 100 in 1900 to 218 in 1914.<sup>25</sup> This resulted in the construction of the MacNeil Science Hall in 1910, Somers Chapel in 1911, and a new residence, Mockler Hall, in 1915.<sup>26</sup> Mount Allison also experienced an upswing in its student body with 678 students in attendance during the 1910-1911 academic year at the academy, ladies' college, and university.<sup>27</sup> Between 1905 and 1909 the university population increased from 118 to 150.<sup>28</sup> The expansionist period at Mount Allison, however, was slightly earlier and coincided with the beginning of renewed economic prosperity in the Maritimes towards the end of the nineteenth century, which saw its zenith in the early 1910s. Regardless, in the 1890s and first years of the twentieth century several new buildings were constructed by the university and the ladies' college at Mount Allison including the Owens Museum of Fine Arts – the oldest

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<sup>21</sup> Barry M. Moody, "Acadia and the Great War," in Paul Axelrod and John G. Reid, eds., *Youth, University and Canadian Society* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 143.

<sup>22</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 196.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 201.

<sup>24</sup> "The Buildings of Dalhousie University: An Illustrated History," Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections, <http://www.library.dal.ca/duasc/buildings/index.htm> (accessed January 27, 2010).

<sup>25</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 157.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 144-146.

<sup>27</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 1, 244.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

university art gallery in Canada.<sup>29</sup> In 1910, Hart Hall and Fawcett Hall were completed with the financial assistance of Jairus Hart and Charles W. Fawcett.<sup>30</sup> Infrastructure expansion at Mount Allison largely ended by 1911 as the college began to experience financial troubles. Nevertheless, the administration of Mount Allison remained enthusiastic: "... do not despair ... educationally everything is going splendidly."<sup>31</sup> Indeed, as the guns of August began to be heard across the Atlantic, Maritimers and their universities remained optimistic about the future. Little did they realize that they were about to live through one of the watershed events of history – an event that would define Canada, the Maritimes, their universities, and their lives.

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<sup>29</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 1, 200.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 246-247.

<sup>31</sup> Borden to Archibald, March 31 1914, Archibald Papers, 5501/5/6, Mount Allison University Archives (MAA) in Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 1, 286.

## Chapter One

### Reactions to the War

*We have now entered upon the fourth month of the giant world conflict; we have lived through the three bloodiest months known in the world's history. When the awful carnage will cease, no one can foretell. What powers may yet be involved, we know not. Our finer sentiments are so shocked by the magnitude of the conflict that we no longer become much disturbed by the entrance of a new belligerent. The label "European War" has become too small for the reality. It is now called "The World War" or "The Great War." One can only wish that it could be called for all time "The Last War."<sup>1</sup>*

In September 1914, the students of Canada's universities returned to their college halls with the words of war on their tongues. "Teutonic aggression!" "Poor Belgium!" "The evil Hun!" "Damn the Kaiser and God Save the King!" For the students of Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities the start of the 1914-1915 academic year was unlike any before it. The outbreak of war in Europe during the summer gripped the attention of the young Dominion and Canadians suddenly found themselves at war with Germany in defence of the British Empire. A "noble," "righteous," and "sacred" mission it might be, but it was one that fundamentally and instantly changed the way of life for Canadians from coast to coast. Besides enlistments for overseas service, Maritimers found themselves on the front line as ports and industrial centres supported the war effort and breathed new life into the wavering Maritime economy and the livelihoods of so many workers – at least for the time being.

The October 1914 issue of *The Argosy*, the student magazine at Mount Allison, reported to the student body on how the "act of a deranged schoolboy in far-off

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<sup>1</sup> "The War," *The Xaverian* (November 1914): 33-34. StFXUA.

Sarajevo [has] made the pretext for a war which is now devastating Europe and causing great suffering to untold millions." This precipitated some of the "most eventful [weeks] in the history of our Empire."<sup>2</sup> One student at Acadia expressed their position on the war in verse offering a poem titled "Pan-Germanism" in the first issue of the student magazine, the *Acadia Athenaeum*, for 1914-1915:

Since Teutons first united  
'Neath Bismarck's iron hand;  
Since Prussia became leader;  
Of that warlike German band;  
Since Wilhelm has been Kaiser,  
Teuton visions have been grand, –  
For Pan-Germanic visions  
Have swept throughout the land  
...<sup>3</sup>

The student magazine of Dalhousie, the *Dalhousie Gazette*, also weighed in on the outbreak of war, albeit in a sardonic tone whilst attempting to explain the causes of the war to its readers – that is, the failure of Serbia to "accept the demands of Austria-Hungary."<sup>4</sup> The *Gazette* also mentioned the sailing of the first contingent "of 32,000 men to support the Motherland in this gigantic conflict. And in that contingent, Dalhousie has her representatives, not only graduates but also undergraduates."<sup>5</sup> Similarly, *The Argosy* noted "the absence of at least three students who, in the ordinary course of events, would have been prominent members of our student body."<sup>6</sup> At Mount St. Bernard College, the ladies' college just up the hill from St. Francis Xavier,<sup>7</sup> the students' interpretation of the war was not put into print until December 1914 in

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<sup>2</sup> "Editorial," *The Argosy* (October 1914): 44. Mount Allison University Archives (MAA).

<sup>3</sup> "Pan-Germanism," *Acadia Athenaeum* (November 1914): 5. Acadia University Archives (AUA).

<sup>4</sup> *Dalhousie Gazette* (October 12, 1914): 2. Dalhousie University Archives (DUA).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> "Editorial," *The Argosy* (October 1914): 44. MAA.

<sup>7</sup> Today, Mount St. Bernard College, or The Mount, is part of St. Francis Xavier University. Mount St. Bernard was officially annexed by StFX in June 2001 although it has been affiliated with StFX since 1894.



the first issue of *The Memorare*. In the issue, there were only two pieces concerned with the war – an article by Marie Marguerite Paoli of the class of 1917 entitled “An Incident of the Great War”<sup>8</sup> and a poem by Mother St. Leonard entitled “Our Empire’s Strength.”<sup>9</sup> “An Incident of the Great War” was a powerful narrative about a nun encountering a dying French officer on the field of battle. The Sister recognizes the major as the individual who had “insultingly ejected her and her religious companions from their peaceful convent into the streets of Paris.”<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, she has the dying man brought to the hospital where the doctor informs her that the man will die despite her ministrations. The major briefly comes to and asks the Sister to forgive him for what he did to her a year before. She forgives him and the man asks for a priest. The priest comes, and happens to be a Trappist monk – one of six monks who had come from Canada to France.<sup>11</sup> The priest is the major’s brother, and there is a final family reunion and repentance prior to the officer’s passing. While the narrative was presumably fiction, there is reason to believe that Paoli was inspired by her surroundings. In Tracadie, Nova Scotia, an Acadian community just outside Antigonish, there was a Trappist monastery with twenty members in 1914.<sup>12</sup> Coincidentally, six members of the community – three priests and three brothers – left the monastery in the fall of 1914 for France.<sup>13</sup> While there is no proof that Marie Marguerite Paoli took her inspiration directly from these individuals, it seems likely due

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<sup>8</sup> “An Incident of the Great War,” *The Memorare* (December 1914): 11-13. StFXUA.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-23.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>12</sup> John R. Macdonald, *Catholics of the Diocese of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, And The War: 1914-1919 with Nominal Enlistment Rolls by Parishes* (Antigonish: St. Francis Xavier University Press, 1919), 40.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

to the unique nature of the narrative and proximity of the monastery to Antigonish and Mount St. Bernard.

The first issues of the *Acadia Athenaeum*, the *Dalhousie Gazette*, *The Argosy*, *The Xaverian*, and *The Memorare* from the 1914-1915 academic year all mirror the local newspapers of the region. The issues of *The Acadian* of Wolfville from the first months of the war were notably patriotic and supported the war despite the “consequent horrors [of war] and its destruction of life and property.”<sup>14</sup> Moreover, *The Acadian* placed the blame for the war squarely on Germany for “rejecting the request made by the British government” to respect the neutrality of Belgium.<sup>15</sup> In Antigonish, *The Casket*, the weekly Catholic newspaper of the town, also felt that the war was a just cause and noted, “The war lord of Germany, Emperor William, appears war mad. His course seems unreasonable, insane, for surely he cannot expect to be victorious against all Europe.”<sup>16</sup> In Sackville, New Brunswick, both town newspapers, the *Sackville Post* and the *Sackville Tribune*, stressed German atrocities in Belgium<sup>17</sup> and that “Britain Wars Only For Freedom.”<sup>18</sup> Halifax papers such as the *Herald* were even more inundated with war news and were at least as jingoistic in tone as rural newspapers of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

There was one notable exception, however, where the subject matter in a student newspaper departed from the typical articles found in the local newspapers. In the November 4 issue of the *Dalhousie Gazette*, “The Apathetic Man” by Frank D.

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<sup>14</sup> “Editorial Notes,” *The Acadian* (August 7, 1914): 2. AUA.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> “Europe at War,” *The Casket* (August 6, 1914). StFXUA.

<sup>17</sup> “German Atrocities,” *Sackville Post* (September 15, 1914). MAA.

<sup>18</sup> “Britain Wars Only For Freedom,” *Sackville Tribune* (September 14, 1914): 1. MAA.

Graham took a different approach from contemporary articles in the multitude of Halifax papers:

What fools these mortals be! Can we deny it? Look how we struggle and strive and kill. Look at the fruit of our war. Thousands of dripping, bloody messes that once were men made in the image of God. In the image of God – what a mockery! Images of God and we blot out each other's lives. For what? In fine, merely for possessions. As if it were the key to Heaven we fight and tear and murder for this or that piece of ground and it becomes a burden, a care, a problem on him who finally acquires it. Of what consequence is it whether we struggle to retain or strive to obtain? Dogs that we are, we growl over our bones, considering not at all that we are all already full and fat and favored.<sup>19</sup>

The article continued by providing a strong critique of the war and arguing against the formation of the Dalhousie Canadian Officer Training Corps (COTC). In a footnote to the article, Graham stated, "I write this as a Britisher. Mutatis mutandis, it applies equally well to the Germans."<sup>20</sup> The local Halifax papers, however, saw Graham as anything but a loyal British subject. The *Halifax Herald* printed a truncated version of the article in its November 10 issue and demanded in the subtitle that the "Anti-British Article in the Dalhousie Gazette ... Should Be Immediately Repudiated and Denounced By the Faculty, the Governors, and the Loyal Students."<sup>21</sup> The November 11 issue of the *Acadian Recorder* reprinted an abridged version of Graham's article and proclaimed, "It is disjointed, illogical, impertinent and written in a style of school-boy sententiousness, and is in itself unworthy of attention."<sup>22</sup> Two days later Dalhousie President Arthur Stanley MacKenzie responded to the fracas in the *Herald*:

To the Editor of The Halifax Herald:

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<sup>19</sup> Frank D. Graham, "The Apathetic Man," *Dalhousie Gazette* (November 4, 1914): 3. DUA.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> "Anti-British Article in Dalhousie Gazette," *The Halifax Herald* (November 10, 1914): 2. PANS.

<sup>22</sup> "Neither timely nor sensible," *Acadian Recorder* (November 11, 1914). PANS.

Sir, - In response to inquiries will you allow me to state thru the columns of your paper, on behalf of the senate of Dalhousie university, that the "Dalhousie Gazette" is the organ of the student body and is published under the direction of the council of the students, and that as is the policy of most universities, the senate does not exercise supervision over the contents of the paper.

A. Stanley MacKenzie  
President of the University.<sup>23</sup>

Frank Graham's view of the war clearly differed from the accepted patriotic view of the conflict as expressed in newspapers such as the *Halifax Herald* and even in other issues of the *Dalhousie Gazette*. Indeed, the *Gazette* was ultimately unsympathetic to Graham's views but felt that the *Herald* was overly critical.<sup>24</sup>

Religion, in addition to the propaganda articles in the newspapers of the Maritimes, also greatly affected the way Canadians reacted to and dealt with the war.

As J.M. Bliss writes,

the Canadian community was profoundly Christian before and during World War I, it is [therefore] highly questionable whether its citizens could have endured the emotional nightmare of war without the sustaining belief that God was on their side, that their loved ones were only doing their duty to God and their country, and that death, when it came, was only *The Beautiful Thing That Has Happened to Our Boys*.<sup>25</sup>

Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier each had a different denominational affiliation which caused each institution and its students, staff, and faculty to react to the conflict in a slightly different fashion. Mount Allison, in particular, found itself in a difficult situation because of the strength of pacifism

<sup>23</sup> "The Dalhousie Gazette Not Supervised By Senate," *The Halifax Herald* (November 13, 1914): 10. PANS.

<sup>24</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 224.

Frank Graham's name is not listed on the Dalhousie Roll of Honour for having served in the Great War. A search of Library and Archives Canada "Soldiers of the First World War - CEF" online database also does not produce any results for a Frank D. Graham. It remains unclear whether Graham served in the war.

<sup>25</sup> J. M. Bliss, "The Methodist Church and World War I," *Canadian Historical Review* 49:3 (September 1968): 219-220. *The Beautiful Thing That Has Happened to Our Boys* is a book by Charles Allen that was available for fifty cents from the Methodist Church publishing house featuring various "war-time messages."

among Methodists. In the tradition of Methodist pacifism, “war was criminal and un-Christian” as a true Christian was supposed to love one’s enemy.<sup>26</sup> As Bliss noted, Methodists could only fight a holy war.<sup>27</sup> At Mount Allison, as elsewhere in Canada, the war was quickly couched in terms that permitted Methodists to consider the Great War as a fight against a German anti-Christ, a battle in the eternal war between good and evil, and to see allied soldiers as instruments of God.<sup>28</sup> Ultimately, the war was a “defensive struggle against the might of Prussian militarism.”<sup>29</sup> Precedents were established earlier in the century. In 1902, the Methodist Church of Canada condoned the South African War on the grounds that it was being waged for freedom and just and honest government – not for greed or conquest.<sup>30</sup> Subsequently, the church supported every British war leading up to the First World War including the opium wars.<sup>31</sup> Thus, “[the Methodist] church’s tradition of pacifist statement has to be measured against its proclaimed support of ... war.”<sup>32</sup> Two of the most vocal supporters of Methodist participation were Dr. W.B. Creighton, editor of the *Christian Guardian*, and Dr. Samuel Dwight Chown, the Methodist Church’s general superintendent. In mid-September of 1914, with the conflict just over a month old, Chown published an open letter in the *Christian Guardian* urging “loyal ... and true” Methodists to enlist in the Canadian army to fight in the “just, honorable and necessary” war.<sup>33</sup> This letter was reprinted in the *Wesleyan* – the Methodist paper of

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 216.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 217.

<sup>29</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 4.

<sup>30</sup> Bliss, “The Methodist Church and World War I,” 214.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> *Christian Guardian*, (September 16, 1914), in Bliss, “The Methodist Church and World War I,” 215.

the Maritimes. The *Wesleyan* generally mirrored the *Christian Guardian*, although in some of its issues during the summer of 1914, the *Wesleyan's* tone conveyed a general disdain for the European conflict and the "fire which has been so long smouldering."<sup>34</sup> The tone changed noticeably once Britain and Canada entered into the fray in August. In the August 12 issue of the *Wesleyan* the article "A Sane Opinion" featured H.G. Wells' reprinted analysis of the conflict. Under the heading "A RIGHTEOUS WAR" Wells proclaimed that "never was war so righteous as the war against Germany now; never has any State in the world clamored for punishment."<sup>35</sup> Two months later, the *Wesleyan* reprinted "An English Peace Message From the Religious Society of Friends" from the *Boston Congregationalist* on its front page. Quakerism arguably held the ideal of pacifism even higher than Methodism, yet the letter stated,

We recognize that our Government has made most strenuous efforts to preserve peace and has entered in the war under a grave sense of duty to a smaller state [Belgium] towards which we have moral and treaty obligations. While, as a society, we stand firmly to the belief that the method of force is no solution of any question, we hold that the present moment is not one for criticism, but for devoted service to our nation.<sup>36</sup>

For the December issue of *The Argosy*, Professor W.M. Tweedie was approached by the student newspaper to contribute an article on "Germany and the War" due to his "acquaintance with Germany."<sup>37</sup> Having formed strong friendships while studying in Heidelberg in the 1880s that would survive both World Wars, Tweedie, like Wells, did not condemn the German citizenry.<sup>38</sup> For Wells, it was important to remember that, "Europe's quarrel is with Germany as a State, not the German people; with the system,

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<sup>34</sup> "Teuton and Slav," *Wesleyan* (July 29, 1914). PANS.

<sup>35</sup> "A Sane Opinion," *Wesleyan* (August 12, 1914). PANS.

<sup>36</sup> "An English Peace Message From the Religious Society of Friends," *Wesleyan* (October 14, 1914). PANS.

<sup>37</sup> W. M. Tweedie, "Germany and the War," *The Argosy* (December 1914): 152. MAA.

<sup>38</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 4.

not with the race.”<sup>39</sup> Tweedie placed the blame on the “Prussian War-Lord” Kaiser Wilhelm and emphasized the “Prussian military spirit” of Germany.<sup>40</sup> “The war ... is being waged,” according to Tweedie, “to obtain dominion for Germany and German ideals. [...] [H]uman freedom is at stake.”<sup>41</sup>

The reactions of Dalhousie and Mount Allison to the outbreak of war in Europe, generally progressed along predictable lines with Frank D. Graham’s article in the *Dalhousie Gazette* and the “traditional” pacific Methodist orientation of Mount Allison proving to be only minor hurdles to the institutions pledging their support to the war effort. Nevertheless, military recruiters took a “cautious attitude” when working on the Mount Allison campus as they realized that there were “mixed feelings” amongst some Allisonians – particularly the faculty.<sup>42</sup> At Acadia, there does not appear to have been any strong anti-war sentiment. On the evening of October 24, a lecture was given by Professor N.C. Hannay at Acadia’s College Hall on the war and its causes. According to the report on the lecture in the November 1914 issue of the *Athenaeum*, the causes of the war were three-fold: the German desire for additional colonies, the aspiration for the supremacy of German “*Kultur*” in the world, and ultimately Germany’s decision to “realize her aspirations by the power of the sword.”<sup>43</sup> The lecture was well attended due to the “deep interest taken ... by both townspeople and students.”<sup>44</sup> The same issue of the *Athenaeum* also noted that twenty-two “Acadia men” had already left for the front in addition to six others joining the McGill Regiment.<sup>45</sup> One of the first to

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<sup>39</sup> “A Sane Opinion,” *Wesleyan* (August 12, 1914). PANS.

<sup>40</sup> Tweedie, “Germany and the War,” 154-155.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

<sup>42</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 16.

<sup>43</sup> “Lecture on ‘The European War,’” *Acadia Athenaeum* (November 1914): 27. AUA.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> “Acadia and the War,” *Acadia Athenaeum* (November 1914): 34. AUA.

leave for the war was Milton F. Gregg who distinguished himself in the war, being awarded the Military Cross twice in addition to the Victoria Cross.

Amongst female students at the post-secondary level, literary writing was consistently one of the preferred forms by which they came to terms with the war. At Mount St. Bernard College, the student magazine, *The Memorare*, featured many examples of writing concerned with war-time themes. The same also holds true for some of the female students at Acadia. In the December issue of *The Athenaeum*, one of Esther I. Clark's earliest publications is found. Clark attended Acadia University from 1912 to 1916<sup>46</sup> and went on to become a notable author and scholar receiving the Order of Canada in 1990. Her short essay in the *Athenaeum*, "A Contrast," illustrates college life in Wolfville in the late autumn – an image that even a current student of Acadia could relate to:

Twilight is deepening into darkness. A light fall of snow lies on the ground. The air is crisp and clear. To the northward stands Blomidon, a dark, dark blue. [...]

The street lights twinkle among the leafless trees. [...] Students pass along, some hurrying, some loitering, some just coming from class with an armful of books, some returning from a walk. [...]<sup>47</sup>

This idealized vision of Wolfville and Acadia is juxtaposed with that of the University of Louvain, which was destroyed during the German invasion of Belgium:

But over there in Louvain stands the dismantled walls of a University. Fire and shell have done their deadly work. Where hundreds of young men formerly pursued their studies in lecture-room and library, now the rain beats down and the snow drifts in. In the various colleges where the students once lived, now the wind dislodges the crumbling mortar and hurls it rattling down upon the stones below. And those students, where are they? Some are on the battleline fighting for their country; others help to care for the sick and wounded; the bones of many, alas! are whitening on the fields

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<sup>46</sup> Moody, "Esther Clark Goes to College," 39.

<sup>47</sup> Esther I. Clark, "A Contrast," *Acadia Athenaeum* (December 1914): 70. AUA.



of Belgium or heaped together in an unknown grave. So not life, but death, goes on at Louvain.<sup>48</sup>

In "Esther Clark Goes to College," Barry Moody clearly demonstrates Clark's love of the "college life," utilizing her collection of letters home to Fredericton as his key source. This love of Acadia enabled her to sympathize strongly with the students of Louvain as it would be almost unimaginable to Clark for Acadia to be destroyed in a similar fashion, depriving Clark and her schoolmates of the joys of higher education. Indeed, for Clark, it was a near-catastrophe when it was proposed that she and other upper-year female students would have to find accommodations off-campus, thus depriving them of the intimate on-campus lifestyle.<sup>49</sup> To be deprived of Acadia completely would have been unthinkable.

In the autumn of 1914, for most of the students at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier, the terrible reality of the war in Europe had not yet struck home. The war was an academic and intellectual exercise that gave many students the chance to stretch their rhetorical muscle in their college magazine. After all, the war was "over there" – even the German Zeppelins could not reach Maritime Canada.<sup>50</sup> Some students did enlist in the fall of 1914 and their absence was noted on their respective campuses. Nevertheless, their departure did not significantly affect the overall enrolment figures and was more of a novelty than a foreshadowing of what was to come. Students cheered their compatriots as they marched off to war much as they would urge on their football or hockey team on the field or in the rink. Many of the students' articles in their respective papers are sophomoric in their understanding of the war. This naiveté was not only limited to college campuses; in many respects it

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Moody, "Esther Clark Goes to College," 43-44. Fortunately for Clark and her classmates a new women's residence was built instead of forcing some students off-campus.

<sup>50</sup> The spectre of U-Boat warfare had also not yet been realized.

was representative of Canadian society as a whole at this time.<sup>51</sup> Esther Clark's essay, "A Contrast," in the *Athenaeum* is unique as it shows a level of sympathy for those suffering in the time of war almost unheard of except amongst other female students such as those at Mount St. Bernard College. Yet, Esther Clark was a unique individual in her own right and proved to be anything but "average" during her lifetime.

There was no discernible difference in reactions to the war between freshmen and women, sophomores, juniors, and seniors at each of the four universities. Granted, the silence of the lower classes may be indicative of an overwhelmingly powerful voice of the upper-classes. Indeed, it was the men and women of the upper-classes who ran and contributed to the student magazine, were prominent individuals and leaders in college clubs and sports teams, and were looked up to by the younger students.<sup>52</sup> Esther Clark was entering into her third year of study at Acadia when "A Contrast" was published. Mount St. Bernard student Marie Marguerite Paoli, author of the aforementioned "An Incident of the Great War," was in her second year of study.

There also does not appear to be any difference amongst the students at the four universities in terms of how their socio-economic background affected their view of the war. Granted, most of the individuals who attended university during this period came from families of generally middle class origin with some students belonging to significant minorities of working-class and upper-middle class families.<sup>53</sup> Consequently, many of the young men and women who attended Acadia, Dalhousie,

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<sup>51</sup> See Ian Hugh MacLean Miller, *Our Glory & Our Grief: Torontonians and the Great War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) and Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

<sup>52</sup> See Keith Walden, "Hazes, Hustles, Scraps, and Stunts: Initiations at the University of Toronto, 1880-1925" in Axelrod and Reid, *Youth, University and Canadian Society*, 94-121 for a discussion on student hierarchies during this period.

<sup>53</sup> For example see John G. Reid, "The Education of Women at Mount Allison, 1854-1914" *Acadiensis* 12:2 (Spring 1983): 23-24. See also, Judith Fingard, "College, Career, and Community: Dalhousie Coeds, 1881-1921" in Axelrod and Reid, eds., *Youth, University and Canadian Society*, 26-50.

Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier had much in common in terms of their upbringing. At Acadia for the 1914-15 academic year, a man in the arts or science program could expect to pay between \$46.50 and \$54.50 a year in tuition plus lab fees if he was in the science program. A woman could expect to pay between \$44.00 and \$52.00 plus lab fees if applicable.<sup>54</sup> At Dalhousie, students could pay between \$25 and \$60 in tuition depending on what type of courses they chose. Courses with a laboratory or drafting component were notably more expensive.<sup>55</sup> Mount Allison University students paid approximately \$45.50 a year.<sup>56</sup> The cost of tuition at St. Francis Xavier was \$55.00 a year plus fees for the use of laboratories.<sup>57</sup> Students staying in residence at any of the universities could expect to pay between \$100 and \$200 a year for room and board. Thus, there was a significant cost to sending a son or daughter to university. Esther Clark's first letter home from Acadia on October 4, 1912, requested that her father settle her tuition bill of \$26.50 with the university.<sup>58</sup>

At the start of the First World War, there were approximately one million people living in the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island.<sup>59</sup> This was a diverse population consisting of "English and French, Protestant and Catholic,

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<sup>54</sup> Acadia University Academic Calendar (1914-1915): 30. AUA. This calculation is based upon a student undertaking a standard workload of 15-19 units during the academic year as defined by the Calendar. Charges for exams and graduation have been excluded. The difference in cost between male and female students was because women were charged \$3.00 instead of \$5.50 for athletic fees and the use of the gymnasium.

<sup>55</sup> Dalhousie University Academic Calendar (1914-1915): 52. DUA. This calculation is based upon a student undertaking a standard workload of 5 courses during the academic year as defined by the Calendar. Students taking less than four courses a year are charged more per course.

<sup>56</sup> Mount Allison University Academic Calendar (1914-1915): 18. MAA. This calculation is based upon a student undertaking a standard workload of 5 courses during the academic year as defined by the Calendar. Depending on the courses a particular student chose, they could expect to pay less or more than \$45.50 as some courses differ from the \$8 a course standard fee.

<sup>57</sup> St. Francis Xavier University Academic Calendar (1914-1915): 12. StFXUA.

<sup>58</sup> Moody, "Esther Clark Goes to College," 39.

<sup>59</sup> David MacKenzie, "Eastern Approaches: Maritime Canada and Newfoundland," in MacKenzie, *Canada and the First World War*, 351.

White and Black, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, men and women, farmers, fishers, workers, managers, and many more.”<sup>60</sup> In the Maritimes, as Ian McKay writes,

apart from a few eccentrics, almost everybody ... supported the Empire in its struggle against the Germans. Certainly, in August 1914 there were no important dissenters. Most Maritimers were intensely loyal to a Britain they identified with Christianity, civilization, and progress; for them, loyalty to King and Empire overshadowed loyalty to Canada or to the region.<sup>61</sup>

Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities supported the war effort wholeheartedly despite religious hurdles and student disapproval amongst a very select group. Indeed, students like Frank D. Graham were eccentric in the sense that their outlook on war did not conform to the societal norms of the day. Perhaps Graham was ahead of the times – views such as the ones he expressed would garner much attention in the post-Second World War era. Graham, however, brought to light an issue that would be present throughout the war – the role of Canadian Officer Training Corps contingents on university campuses. All four universities had a COTC contingent. While some were extraordinarily successful, others, like Acadia’s contingent, were forced to disband because many students preferred to enlist directly for service overseas.<sup>62</sup> Conversely, as the war continued on into 1915, enlistment in the COTC became a sort of rite of passage for many male students at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier. It offered students the chance to learn the requisite skills they would need in the military should, usually when, they enlisted in the regular forces. The COTC was a stepping stone for many young men from the

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ian McKay, “The 1910s: The Stillborn Triumph of Progressive Reform,” in E. R. Forbes and D. A. Muike, eds., *The Atlantic Provinces in Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 203.

<sup>62</sup> Assistant Adjutant General in-command, Administration, 6<sup>th</sup> Division to A. B. Balcom Esq., Chairman of Military Committee, Wolfville, N.S., March 9 1916, 1900.010, Box 8, President George Barton Cutten Papers. AUA.

naiveté of civilian life to the dirt and death of the trenches. For others, the COTC was just the first round of their military training – the second would begin when they joined their university unit.

## Chapter Two

### Enlistment, the Canadian Officer Training Corps and University Units

*Halifax, November 11 - The drilling of the Dalhousie training corps went on yesterday very briskly in the afternoon various classes paraded at the South End rink and went thru the preliminary exercises under Major W. E. Thompson and Instructor Sergeant Graham. The Pine Hill company mustered sixty strong and made fine appearance reflect the highest credit on the "school of the prophets." Following them the arts company paraded, and tho they numbered only thirty-five, they went thru the exercises in a way that won the instant praise of Major Thompson and the instructor. The reason they were not larger in numbers was that the engineering, law, medicine and theological companies all took some from the men who are in the arts class. Another thing was that the college football team was in Antigonish. When it returns the football men will join the company.<sup>1</sup>*

Exactly four years after Haligonians read about the successes of the Dalhousie Canadian Officer Training Corps (COTC), peace descended on the world ending one of the bloodiest conflicts in history. In 1914, Canada had a population of approximately 7.8 million.<sup>2</sup> Through the course of the war, more than 600,000 Canadians enlisted.<sup>3</sup> Approximately 65,000 gave their lives.<sup>4</sup> Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities each contributed significantly to the war effort in terms of enlistment numbers. More than 482 from Acadia enlisted and some 59 individuals

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<sup>1</sup> "The Dalhousie Men Training Well," *Halifax Herald* (November 11, 1914). PANS.

<sup>2</sup> "Estimated Populations of Canada, 1605 to Present," Statistics Canada, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/98-187-x/4151287-eng.htm> (accessed March 5, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> J. L. Granatstein, "Conscription in the Great War," 62.

<sup>4</sup> Annual Report, 2008-2009, Commonwealth War Graves Commission, <http://www.cwgc.org/admin/files/AR2009Service%20to%20Address.pdf>, 52 (accessed March 5, 2010).

were killed.<sup>5</sup> Over 579 Dalhousians enlisted with roughly 62 losing their lives.<sup>6</sup> More than 464 Allisonians enlisted in addition to eleven nurses and twenty-eight men who volunteered but were rejected for medical reasons.<sup>7</sup> Fifty individuals from Mount Allison were killed in action, died in training, or were missing as of December 1918.<sup>8</sup> At St. Francis Xavier University, approximately 340 students and alumni “joined the colours” – 34 were killed or reported missing.<sup>9</sup> While students at some of the universities, such as Milton F. Gregg, enlisted directly in the regular forces in the autumn of 1914, many students joined their university’s contingent of the Canadian Officer Training Corps (COTC) as a stepping stone to overseas service.

The Officer Training Corps movement preceded the war and was originally a British invention. In Britain and later in Canada, the OTCs grew into a sort of “militarist version of Boy Scouts for grown up boys.”<sup>10</sup> In 1912, Sam Hughes, the Canadian Minister of Militia, conceived of a plan whereby the Department of Militia and Defence would offer Canadian university students elementary military training in a

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<sup>5</sup> “Roll of Honor,” *Acadia Athenaeum* (June 1919). AUA. The editors of the *Athenaeum* themselves admit that the list is incomplete; however, the June 1919 list is the last of the published rolls of honour. M. S. Hunt in *Nova Scotia’s Part in the Great War* reports that “between six and seven hundred Acadia men and women enlisted” (280). This figure seems rather high, but may have been calculated using different criteria. The program for the 2009 Remembrance Day service at Acadia University, published by the Royal Canadian Legion, lists only thirty-six names of those from Acadia University who died in the First World War.

<sup>6</sup> Roll of Honour - For the President., Dalhousie Alumni Association fonds, UA-32, Box 1, Folder 7, DUA. M. S. Hunt in *Nova Scotia’s Part in the Great War* reports that 580 Dalhousians enlisted with 67 losing their lives. (287) Waite notes that 567 Dalhousians enlisted. (225).

<sup>7</sup> “The College Honor Roll,” *The Argosy* (December 1918). MAA.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Macdonald, *Catholics of the Diocese of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, And The War: 1914-1919*, 179-188. James Cameron in *For The People* also uses these figures. M. S. Hunt in *Nova Scotia’s Part in the Great War* reports that more than 350 Xaverians enlisted and 33 were killed or died on active service. (294)

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Weber, “British Universities in the First World War,” in Trude Maurer, ed., *Kollegen-Kommilitonen-Kämpfer: Europäische Universitäten im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2006), 78.

Canadianized scheme of the British OTC.<sup>11</sup> Several contingents were started and by June 1914, 59,000 men from universities and the surrounding communities were receiving military training on a regular basis.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, prior to the war there was no COTC contingent at St. Francis Xavier University or any of the other three universities; however, there was an Antigonish County artillery company that fit loosely within the scheme of the COTC, and St. Francis Xavier contributed a platoon to the company. A graduate of St. Francis Xavier and future Premier of Nova Scotia, Angus L. Macdonald, noted on his Officers' Declaration Paper that he was a member of the Antigonish County COTC contingent, although later he would be one of the instructional officers with the StFX contingent.<sup>13</sup>

By November 1914, Dalhousie's COTC contingent consisted of eight companies.<sup>14</sup> Each company consisted theoretically of 59 members, although in practice its roll would fluctuate. The companies were divided by faculty into law, arts and science, medicine, engineering, Pine Hill (theology), and alumni. In addition, two companies of bankers were created since approximately one hundred individuals expressed an interest in a bankers' company. In total, 246 Dalhousie students and 190 alumni and bankers were enlisted in the Dalhousie COTC as of November 14, 1914.<sup>15</sup> The companies trained each afternoon and evening one at a time, at the South End rink under the direction of Major W. E. Thompson and Instructor Sergeant Graham.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 224.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Angus Lewis Macdonald Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6702 - 23, Library and Archives Canada (LAC). An Officer's Declaration Paper was the form that prospective officers completed upon enlisting in the regular forces. It is akin to the attestation paper of enlisted men and non-commissioned officers.

<sup>14</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 224.

<sup>15</sup> "Dalhousie's Training Corps and the Men Enrolled at the Armouries" *Halifax Herald* (November 1914). PANS.

<sup>16</sup> "The Dalhousie Training Corps Has Got To Work," *Halifax Herald* (November 10, 1914). PANS.



At Acadia, by October 1914, many felt that the university should also raise a COTC contingent. In November, with Dalhousie's companies already parading daily, male students at Acadia were finally provided with the same opportunity.<sup>17</sup> The December 1914 issue of the *Athenaeum* reported:

Following the program of Maj.-Gen. Sam. Hughes and the example of other Canadian Colleges, over a hundred men of Acadia have applied to the proper military authorities for the establishment of an Officers' Training Corps at Acadia. We are hoping to have enough students and professors to make two companies. The faculty has intimated that units [i.e. academic credits] will be offered for this work during the second term.<sup>18</sup>

The January 1915 issue subsequently reported that over the Christmas holiday more than twenty men remained in Wolfville to "take advantage of the special course in connection with the Officers' Training Corps" facilitated by Sergeant-Major Long of Gaspereaux.<sup>19</sup> In February, 70 more men from both the university and the academy enrolled in the Acadia COTC.<sup>20</sup> On the 16<sup>th</sup>, the students who trained throughout the Christmas holiday were inspected by a Lt. Col. Thompson who gave a "very encouraging" report and informed the young men that "by Canadian law [you] are all members of the Canadian Militia, and on that account, ... ought ... to take our part in the Empire's defense."<sup>21</sup>

The Mount Allison COTC contingent was officially established on April 1, 1915.<sup>22</sup> This, however, was the culmination of a largely student-led initiative that began at a

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<sup>17</sup> Moody, "Acadia and the Great War," 148. According to M. S. Hunt in *Nova Scotia's Part in the Great War* there was already a branch of the COTC at Acadia when the war broke out.

<sup>18</sup> "Officers' Training Corps," *Acadia Athenaeum* (December 1914): 92. AUA.

<sup>19</sup> "Editorial," *Acadia Athenaeum* (January 1915): 161. AUA.

<sup>20</sup> "Officers' Training Corps," *Acadia Athenaeum* (February 1915): 223-224.

<sup>21</sup> "Military Drill," *Acadia Athenaeum* (March 1915): 288. AUA.

<sup>22</sup> W.A. Morrison, "Mount Allison C.O.T.C.," manuscript, n.d., 1. MAA. As discussed below, although officially established in April 1915, the Mount Allison COTC contingent was operational in late January 1915.

student general meeting in the autumn of 1914 where the formation of a contingent of the COTC was unanimously called for. *The Argosy* fully endorsed the decision but expressed a regret that Mount Allison was not leading the way in the COTC movement as training had already begun at Dalhousie as well as at more westerly institutions such as the University of New Brunswick, Queen's, and the University of Toronto.<sup>23</sup> The Board of Regents subsequently approved the students' request to raise a COTC contingent at Mount Allison.<sup>24</sup> On January 22, 1915, the training of 140 cadets began on campus in the Lingley Hall Gymnasium.<sup>25</sup> The fall of 1914 was not the first time that discussions concerning a Mount Allison COTC contingent were held. While the student general meeting marks the first instance of strong student support for the movement at Mount Allison, W.A. Morrison, historian of the Mount Allison COTC, states that the earliest instance of such discussions at Mount Allison can be found in the minutes of the Executive Committee of the University Board of Regents from November 28, 1913. On this day, university president Bryon Crane Borden presented an offer on behalf of the federal government regarding a drill hall.<sup>26</sup> The offer was likely the standard offer made by the Department of Militia to all universities should they decide to raise a contingent of the COTC:

The Dominion Government, as represented by the Department of Militia and Defense, will contribute towards the construction of any Drill Hall by a University or College, one half the cost of the building, and will keep the said building in repair, heat and light it, and provide for the caretaking thereof, conditional on the property (building and site) being vested in the Crown free of all debt.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> "Editorial," *The Argosy* (November 1914): 116-117. MAA.

<sup>24</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 5.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Morrison, "Mount Allison C.O.T.C.," 2.

<sup>27</sup> "The Canadian Universities Regiment," G 5/9/12414-12421, President MacPherson's Papers. StFXUA.

Subsequently, President Borden was authorized by the board to negotiate the leasing of one of the university's major buildings, Lingley Hall. On December 26, Borden was asked by the board to meet with Sam Hughes to discuss "the necessity of securing the establishment of an Officer Training Corps" at Mount Allison. In May 1914, Borden also met with a military officer in Sackville to discuss the uses of Lingley Hall. Later that month the board formally discussed plans to equip Lingley Hall as a gymnasium and a drill hall for a potential COTC contingent.<sup>28</sup> Eight months later, in January 1915 with both the support of the student body and the Board of Regents, Mount Allison had an operational COTC contingent under the command of Professors Frank E. Wheelock and James McKee and Captain Allison Borden, a Mount Allison graduate of 1903 and a regular army officer.<sup>29</sup>

Of the four universities under consideration, St. Francis Xavier was the last to form a COTC contingent on its campus. Prior to the war a contingent of the COTC was established in Antigonish County that included a St. Francis Xavier platoon within the company. On February 3, 1915, the university was visited by Lt. Col. W.E. Thompson seeking to encourage the formation of a contingent of the COTC on campus.<sup>30</sup> According to *The Casket*, the students expressed "great enthusiasm" and sixty-three students agreed to join.<sup>31</sup> Perhaps surprisingly, the formation of a StFX COTC contingent was the source of anxiety for some Xaverians, and perhaps their parents, to such a degree that *The Casket* felt it necessary to assure them of the voluntary and militia-based aspects of the COTC:

Whilst no compulsion of any sort will be brought to bear on any student to join the proposed Corps, it is practically certain that an

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<sup>28</sup> Morrison, "Mount Allison C.O.T.C.," 2.

<sup>29</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 5.

<sup>30</sup> "Officers' Training Corps for St. Francis Xavier's" *The Casket* (February 4, 1915): 8. StFXUA.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

effective unit will be formed. No obligation to join the regular army or to go on active services will be incurred by those who join the Corps. The object of the Faculty is to afford students an opportunity of gaining knowledge of the means of defence to be used should their country be attacked by any hostile power. All that members of the Corps will be required to do will be to attend diligently and assiduously to the drills and lectures to be given by the instructor.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, Lt. Col. Thompson's aforementioned speech to the Acadia COTC on February 16, 1915 shows that parents had reason to be concerned. To compound matters, at each university with a COTC unit there was considerable peer pressure to join the university's contingent, while resisting such pressure "would have made students social outcasts in a culture in which team spirit, loyalty and honour were paramount."<sup>33</sup> Students at St. Francis Xavier, as elsewhere, also saw the connection between enlistment in the COTC and service overseas – much to their excitement and the chagrin of their parents. The April 1915 issue of *The Xaverian* noted that,

the British Universities point with pride to their greatly reduced attendance and the Canadian [sic] Universities can well afford to do likewise. Already many of St. Francis Xavier's sons are in active service and the advent of the Officer's Training Corps here will doubtless help to swell the number.<sup>34</sup>

Yet the anonymous author also anticipated that "our 'unreturning brave' ... [would be] be reckoned by thousands and tens of thousands."<sup>35</sup>

Despite the recognition of the tremendous loss of life in the war, the St. Francis Xavier contingent of the COTC was formed with great fanfare in the summer of 1915. At StFX, just as at the other institutions with a COTC contingent, a Military Committee was struck as per the regulations of the Canadian Universities Regiment – the unit to which all of the COTC contingents technically belonged. The Military Committees

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Weber, "British Universities in the First World War," 78.

<sup>34</sup> "Canada And The War," *The Xaverian* (April 1915): 22-23. StFXUA.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

comprised the university president, two or more “members” of the university with one assuming the duty of commanding the unit, a representative of the general staff (a regular army officer) and a secretary who doubled as the adjutant of the contingent.<sup>36</sup> At StFX, the committee included the Very Rev. H.P. MacPherson, D.D., the President of the university; Professor H.R.W. Smith; A.L. McDonald, Esq., BA; and Professor H.R. Howard, who performed the role of secretary for the committee. H.R.W. Smith was the commanding officer of the StFX contingent with the rank of captain. A.L. McDonald was commissioned as a lieutenant. D.J. MacGillivray was also a lieutenant in the contingent.<sup>37</sup> The objective of the StFX and all other COTC contingents was “to provide students ... with a standardized measure of elementary military training with a view to their eventually applying for commissions in the Active Militia.”<sup>38</sup> Each member of a COTC contingent was supposed to be given “a free issue of uniform arms, accoutrements and personal equipment” including, “1 rifle complete, 1 waist belt, 1 ammunition pouch, 1 bayonet with scabbard, 1 rifle sling, Clothing - Infantry Pattern, 1 serge frock, 1 pr. [pair] serge trousers, 1 great coat, 1 forage cap, N.P. [no pattern], [and] 1 suit service clothing.” Moreover, when going into the field for additional training each member received, “1 haversack, 1 water bottle, with strap, and 1 mess tin.” Nevertheless, as Morrison writes, uniforms were not always available to be issued to COTC contingents and at Mount Allison, cadets only received rifles, belts, and bayonets.<sup>39</sup> Each year the cadet had to render himself “efficient” by attending no fewer

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<sup>36</sup> “The Canadian Universities Regiment,” G 5/9/12414-12421, President MacPherson’s Papers. StFXUA. There does not appear to have been a representative of the general staff on the Military Committee at StFX. Captain Allison Borden at Mount Allison worked in this capacity. The rest of the original Mount Allison Military Committee consisted of President Borden and Professors Hunton, Tweedie, Wheelock, and McKee. (Morrison, “Mount Allison C.O.T.C.,” 13)

<sup>37</sup> St. Francis Xavier University Academic Calendar (1915-1916): 78-79. StFXUA. “A. L. McDonald” is believed to be Angus L. Macdonald.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Morrison, “Mount Allison C.O.T.C.,” 13.

than 25 instructional parades of at least 45 minutes duration in addition to “musketry” training. New recruits had to attend approximately forty parades.<sup>40</sup> Students were issued 100 rounds annually for their .303 Ross rifles.<sup>41</sup>

In accordance with militia training regulations, the members of the COTC also had to attend an annual training camp in the field, at which they earned the same rate of pay as regular militia officers of the same rank. In addition to the practical training, cadets received theoretical training similar to the Militia Staff Course.<sup>42</sup> After proving their readiness, COTC cadets underwent examinations for proficiency certificates, which were held bi-annually in March and November and consisted of written and practical / oral components.<sup>43</sup> If the individual passed his Certificate “A”, he was entitled to a grant of \$5.00 and qualified for promotion to lieutenant in the Militia with the post-nominals C.U.R. (Canadian Universities Regiment).<sup>44</sup> Subsequently, if he passed Certificate “B”, he received an additional \$10.00 and qualified for promotion to Captain in the Militia. Finally, “on being gazetted to the Militia, and undertaking to serve three trainings [sic],” he would receive an additional grant of \$20.00<sup>45</sup> and other so-called “various advantages.”<sup>46</sup>

The examination for Certificate A was designed to test a cadet’s proficiency as a section and platoon commander. The written examination for Certificate A consisted of two papers “to test whether candidates have such a knowledge of the action of the other arms as would be necessary for the efficient performance of their work as

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<sup>40</sup> “The Canadian Universities Regiment,” G 5/9/12414-12421, President MacPherson’s Papers. StFXUA.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> “Regulations for the Canadian Officers Training Corps, 1916,” Box 9, President Cutten’s Papers. AUA.

<sup>44</sup> “The Canadian Universities Regiment,” G 5/9/12414-12421, President MacPherson’s Papers. StFXUA.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> St. Francis Xavier University Academic Calendar (1915-1916): 78-79. StFXUA.

section commanders in the field” and “to test whether candidates have a good working knowledge of the duties of a platoon commander both regimental and in the field.”<sup>47</sup> The oral and practical examination consisted of three sections: squad and company drill, the tactical handling of a platoon, and rifle familiarity. As W.A. Morrison notes, shooting practice was quite popular amongst many of the cadets. At Mount Allison, a section of the residence basement served as the official rifle range. Nevertheless, some cadets preferred to use the residence hallways as their ranges with full water pitchers as their targets. After an incident where one student stepped out of his room at the wrong time and narrowly missed being shot, the student council forbade the discharging of firearms in the corridors.<sup>48</sup>

The examination for Certificate B was designed to determine whether a cadet could be a satisfactory company commander. The written examination for Certificate B consisted of three separate papers on tactics, military law, and organization and administration. The oral and practical exam consisted of two sections. For the “Company in battalion” section, the cadet was required to know “what the close order formations of a battalion are, and how to command a company as part of a battalion.” For the second part, the cadet was presented with a tactical problem similar to the one in the first paper of the written exam where he would have to command a company in the field as if part of a battalion.<sup>49</sup>

It is difficult to determine how many students at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier actually followed through with the examinations for their qualification certificates. We can reasonably speculate that many chose to forgo such lengthy terms with their university’s COTC contingent in favour of enlisting in the

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<sup>47</sup> “Regulations for the Canadian Officers Training Corps, 1916,” Box 9, President Cutten’s Papers. AUA.

<sup>48</sup> Morrison, “Mount Allison C.O.T.C.,” 14. Students could of course still store their rifles in their rooms.

<sup>49</sup> “Regulations for the Canadian Officers Training Corps, 1916,” Box 9, President Cutten’s Papers. AUA.

regular forces. Indeed, as W.A. Morrison writes, "At the commencement of the 1915-16 academic year, COTC virtually had to begin anew. The majority of the officers had enlisted."<sup>50</sup> Morrison also notes a "wholesale enlistment trend" amongst many of the cadets in the Mount Allison COTC in the fall of 1915 with several joining the 85<sup>th</sup> Battalion commanded by their former COTC staff officer, Allison Borden, in addition to the No. 7 Stationary Hospital Unit – Dalhousie University.<sup>51</sup> Acadia's contingent was eventually forced to disband in early 1916 because many students preferred to enlist directly for service overseas and there simply were not enough young men to maintain Acadia's COTC.<sup>52</sup>

St. Francis Xavier experienced a similar trend. On November 26, 1915, the commanding officer of the StFX contingent, Captain H.R.W. Smith, departed Antigonish having received a commission in the British Expeditionary Force.<sup>53</sup> It was with "genuine regret" that the students and faculty of the university saw Capt. Smith leave.<sup>54</sup> Stephen McEachren, president of the Arts class of 1916, addressed Captain Smith on behalf of the student body at the farewell gathering. In the speech, McEachren described how everyone at StFX was going to miss a professor who, "had won a place in our hearts that would be hard to fill."<sup>55</sup> McEachren placed the departure of Captain Smith in the larger context of imperial struggle and the laying down of the pen by academics in favour of the sword.<sup>56</sup> Hoping that the Allies would

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<sup>50</sup> Morrison, "Mount Allison C.O.T.C.," 20.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Assistant Adjutant General in-command, Administration, 6<sup>th</sup> Division to A. B. Balcom Esq., Chairman of Military Committee, Wolfville, N.S., March 9 1916, 1900.010, Box 8, President George Barton Cutten Papers. AUA.

<sup>53</sup> "Farewell," *The Xaverian* (December 1915): 41. StFXUA.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.



come to a swift victory with Captain Smith's aid, the students proclaimed that they hoped to see Professor Smith back at StFX in September 1916. Finally, Captain Smith was given parting gifts – a thermos bottle from the students of Mount St. Bernard, "gold by the faculty," and a travelling bag by some StFX students.<sup>57</sup> The whole event concluded with "a prolonged burst of applause and college yells."<sup>58</sup> Evidently, the students of StFX thought a great deal of their COTC Commanding Officer – it is likely that Captain Smith served as a mentor to many of the cadets in both military and academic matters. President MacPherson's papers, however, provide a different side to the story. In a letter from Smith to President MacPherson from the summer prior to the jubilant send off, Smith offered his resignation:

Just lately many things have combined to make me think that my duty is to join the colours. [...] The principal reasons for my decision are (1) the knowledge that short height is no longer a bar (2) the example of all my male acquaintances & relations (3) [snubs] I have received or imagined I have received from my parents (4) L[ord] Kitchener's latest speech.<sup>59</sup>

Kitchener's speech was delivered at the Guildhall on July 9, 1915 and dealt with the British Registration Bill – a precursor to the British Military Service Act of 1916.<sup>60</sup> The same speech also spawned a recruitment poster which featured the steely gaze of Kitchener himself and the caption,

LORD KITCHENER  
SAYS: –  
'Men, Materials & Money are the immediate necessities. ...  
Does the call of duty  
find no response in you

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> H. R. W. Smith to MacPherson, July 14, 1915, G 5/9/11117-11118, President MacPherson's Papers. StFXUA.

<sup>60</sup> Edwin Sharpe Grew, *Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener: His Life and Work for the Empire*, vol. 3 (London: Gresham Publishing Company, 1916), 116.

until reinforced –  
 let us rather say  
 superseded –  
 by the call of compulsion?  
 ENLIST TO-DAY.<sup>61</sup>

President MacPherson's response to Smith's letter shows that he was clearly agitated by the matter:

Dear Mr. Smith,

I received your letter of July 14<sup>th</sup> yesterday evening. I was very glad to hear from you.

Your letter however gave me a shock. No one who knows you will doubt that you are acting from a sense of duty and I believe that you will not attribute any unworthy motives to one who takes a view of the matter different from yours. I take the liberty therefore of submitting a few considerations which perhaps did not occur to you. First, there are other ways of serving the Empire besides fighting in the field. It is not desirable that everybody should enlist. Hitherto the difficulty has been not to get men in sufficiently large numbers but to equip those who had enlisted. Moreover, there are plenty of men to join the colours whose services in other occupations will not be missed. Such is not your case. You occupy a position where you can exert a great influence for good on a body of young men who in years to come will be of great service to the country. Your departure would prove a distinct loss. There is no one in sight who can fill your position as you do, nor is there any prospect of getting one this year. The loss of a capable professor affects not only his own department but the whole institution of which he is an integral part. Again, the C.O.T.C cannot be made a success here without your services. Candidly I believe that you would be doing more good by staying here where your services are much needed than you would by joining the colours. Plenty of men are available whose services are not essential.

With all possible respect for your feelings I would ask you to consider whether it would not be your duty, under the circumstances, to take a step which would impair the usefulness of an institution whose power for doing good in this important part of the Empire is sure to be very considerable.

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<sup>61</sup> "Lord Kitchener Says: Enlist To-day, 1915," National Army Museum, <http://prints.national-army-museum.ac.uk/image.php?id=378934> (accessed March 11, 2010).

I am writing this with other worries on my mi[nd (letter damaged)] and under interruptions and I am not able to say half of wh[at (letter damaged)] I should like. If you have not changed your mind, and I hop[e] you have, will you kindly call on Rev. Dr. Foley, St. Mary's [letter damaged] and talk the matter over with him. He is a very fine man and and has good common sense. Things can be presented so much better in conversation.

I thank you very much for the kind words you have said of the College. Of course we all have the highest esteem for you. It could not be otherwise.

With kindest regards,  
Yours faithfully,  
[H. P. MacPherson].<sup>62</sup>

The enlistment of students at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier caused significant hardship for the universities as it caused enrolments to decline and as the students departed, their tuition dollars left with them. At each campus, there were many instances of professors, such as Smith at StFX, who left. The above example illustrates that hardship caused by professors who enlisted and how their absence changed the dynamic of the college. While the students cheered Captain Smith's enlistment, the faculty's gift of gold was undoubtedly given with at least a little chagrin.

The changes in enrolment numbers between the 1914 and 1919 at each institution are illustrated in Figure 2.1.<sup>63</sup> The chart demonstrates the general trend of declining enrolment numbers and shows the similarities between Acadia, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier in terms of institutional size. Moreover, Dalhousie was

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<sup>62</sup> MacPherson to H. R. W. Smith, July 14, 1915, G 5/9/11119, President MacPherson's Papers. StFXUA.

<sup>63</sup> Acadia University, Dalhousie University, Mount Allison University, and St. Francis Xavier University Academic Calendars (1913-1914, 1914-1915, 1915-1916, 1916-1917, 1917-1918, 1918-1919, 1919-1920). AUA, DUA, MAA, StFXUA. Total number of students includes students in all programs at both the undergraduate and graduate level. "Special students" are also included where applicable. See Appendix A, Table 1 - University Enrolments for the exact enrolment figures.

clearly the exception as its enrolment numbers, while matching the same trend as the other schools, were always significantly greater. The number of students graduating each year was also significantly affected by the war as Figure 2.2 demonstrates.<sup>64</sup> It is also clear that once the universities began to recover from the wartime drop in enrolments it still took Acadia and Dalhousie several years to return their programs to their pre-war status. Throughout the lists of students in each institution's academic calendar, additional information is offered concerning the number of students attending each college. At Acadia, the calendar noted that of the 213 students in attendance for the 1915-1916 academic year, 58 enlisted during the school year.<sup>65</sup> That same year, 52 of the 202 individuals enrolled at Mount Allison enlisted for service. Four others volunteered but were rejected.<sup>66</sup> During the 1916-1917 year, 19 enlisted for service overseas while Mount Allison was in session.<sup>67</sup> On February 26, 1915, a special convocation was held at Dalhousie, conferring Bachelor of Arts degrees upon twelve Dalhousians – five of whom received their degree in absentia.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, on December 23, 1916, seven individuals were awarded their Doctor of Medicine and Master of Surgery degrees early.<sup>69</sup> In both instances, these special convocations took place to enable the students to enlist for service overseas as soon as possible. Indeed, all seven physicians who graduated in December 1916 served in the Canadian Army

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid. Honorary degrees have been excluded from this calculation. Information on the number of StFX graduates in 1919 is not available.

<sup>65</sup> Acadia University Academic Calendar (1916-1917), 97-103. AUA.

<sup>66</sup> Mount Allison University Academic Calendar (1916-1917), 100-105. MAA

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. (1917-1918), 99-103.

<sup>68</sup> Dalhousie University Academic Calendar (1915-1916), 131. DUA.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. (1917-1918), 135.

Figure 2.1 University Enrolments

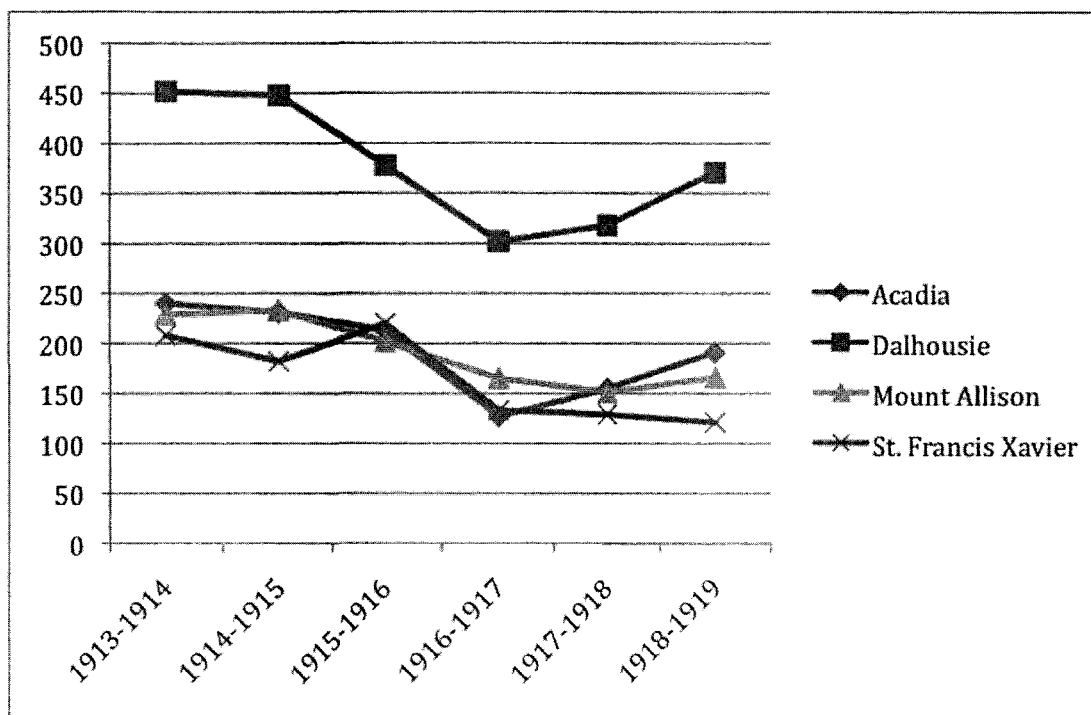
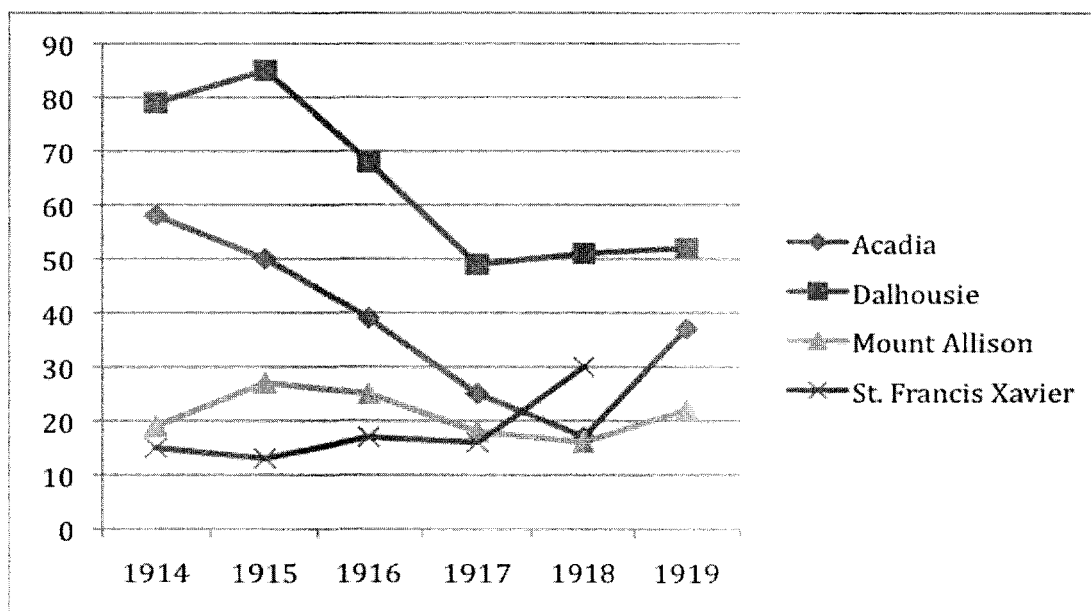


Figure 2.2 Number of Graduates



Medical Corps.<sup>70</sup> One year prior to this ad hoc graduation ceremony, the No. 7 Stationary Hospital Unit – Dalhousie University was preparing to sail to England onboard the HM Troopship *Metagama* with other graduates of the Dalhousie medical school aboard.<sup>71</sup>

As early as September 1914, Dalhousie University offered the government the necessary personnel to form a Casualty Clearing Station.<sup>72</sup> The offer was twice declined – once in the fall of 1914 and again in the spring of 1915 – on the grounds that Casualty Clearing Stations were not needed.<sup>73</sup> On August 13, 1915, a delegation from Dalhousie went to Ottawa to offer a Stationary Hospital for service.<sup>74</sup> This was accepted and on September 27, 1915, the official organizational order was received.<sup>75</sup> The October 27, 1915 issue of the *Gazette*, reported on this news with excitement:

Word has been received from Ottawa authorizing the formation of a Dalhousie Stationary Hospital of four hundred beds for service abroad. Probably not very many of the students at Dalhousie last year were aware that the forming of this unit was much mooted then. The first movement towards some such thing came from the fifth year Medical students of last year who desired to form an Ambulance Corps to go with the second contingent. ... The Corps

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<sup>70</sup> Donald St. Clair Campbell Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1428-31, LAC; John George Duncan Campbell Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1444-29, LAC; John Angus Davies Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2348-53, LAC; Dexter Scott McCurdy Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6682-26, LAC; Kenneth Grant Mahabir Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 5842-39, LAC; Douglas William Zwicker Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 10684-38, LAC. Zwicker's paper is not available for viewing; however, he is listed as a Captain - the honorary rank assigned to all physicians in the CAMC. Wilfred Murray MacDonald's Officers' Declaration Paper is not available; however he is listed on the Dalhousie Roll of Honour for having served in the CAMC. The Roll of Honour also confirms Zwicker's service in the CAMC (Roll of Honour - For the President., Dalhousie Alumni Association fonds, UA-32, Box 1, Folder 7, DUA).

<sup>71</sup> Joseph Hayes, "Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War," in M. S. Hunt, ed., *Nova Scotia's Part in the Great War* (Halifax: The Nova Scotia Veteran Publishing Co., 1920), 190.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 188-189.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

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

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

did not materialize, however, as it did not fit in with anything the government required.

...

With such a spirit abroad among the students it was not long before the idea of a Dalhousie Stationary Hospital came to the front. Its leaders were the doctors of the Medical Faculty.<sup>76</sup>

The article explained the bureaucracy that President MacKenzie had to contend with in order to have Dalhousie's offer accepted and also noted that "the lot fell upon" Dr. John Stewart as Commanding Officer.<sup>77</sup> According to Joseph Hayes, who was the medical officer of the 85<sup>th</sup> Battalion Nova Scotia Highlanders and also served as the Commanding Officer of the No. 2 Stationary Hospital Unit,<sup>78</sup> "when it came to the selection of a Commanding Officer [for the Dalhousie unit] everybody turned instinctively to that great outstanding factotum in Medicine and Surgery in Nova Scotia, Dr. John Stewart, whose name inspired enthusiasm, confidence and respect."<sup>79</sup> At sixty-seven years of age, it is difficult to imagine Col. Stewart being permitted to serve. Yet the 6'0", 176 lb man – born in Block River, Cape Breton on July 3, 1848<sup>80</sup> – had "magnificent qualities of body as well as mind and character" and "set the pace on ... route marches [so that even] the youngest and most athletic had to let himself out."<sup>81</sup>

McGill University was the first university to answer the call of the Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC) and formed the No. 3 General Hospital in early 1915,

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<sup>76</sup> "Our Stationary Hospital – Dr. John Stewart, In Command," *Dalhousie Gazette* (October 27, 1915): 1. DUA.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Hayes, "Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War," 176.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 189.

<sup>80</sup> John Stewart Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9316-2. LAC.

<sup>81</sup> Hayes, "Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War," 190. Hayes may be guilty of exaggeration here. Nevertheless, for a sixty-seven year old man to serve on active duty during the war, he would have had to be in fine physical condition in addition to being an excellent physician.

although they had offered to raise such a unit as early as the autumn of 1914.<sup>82</sup>

Indeed, a notable portion of the CAMC hospital units were raised by universities across Canada including the No. 4 Canadian General Hospital – University of Toronto, No. 5 Canadian Stationary Hospital – Queen’s University (later, No. 7 Canadian General Hospital), No. 7 Stationary Hospital – Dalhousie University, No. 8 Stationary Hospital – University of Saskatchewan, No. 8 General Hospital – Laval University, No. 9 Stationary – St. Francis Xavier University, and No. 10 Stationary Hospital – University of Western Ontario.<sup>83</sup> Similarly to McGill University’s No. 3 General Hospital, Dalhousie raised its unit from the students and faculty of its medical program while nursing sisters were recruited from Victoria General Hospital in Halifax and St. Joseph’s Hospital in Glace Bay.<sup>84</sup> Twelve medical officers and 27 nursing sisters were required; however, 30 doctors and 80 nurses applied.<sup>85</sup> Preference was given to alumni and those with connections to the university. While undergoing training, the Unit was billeted in the old Medical College building on the corner of Robie and College Streets and messing arrangements were made at the Maritime Business College.<sup>86</sup> At last, on December 31, 1915 the Unit departed Halifax with great fanfare as its members traveled to Saint John by train where it eventually boarded HM Troopship *Metagama*.<sup>87</sup> The No. 7 Stationary Hospital sailed for Plymouth, England on New Year’s Day 1916.<sup>88</sup> Upon arriving in England, Col. Stewart was given command of the Shorncliffe Military Hospital and the 40 subsidiary hospitals in the Dover area with the Dalhousie Unit

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<sup>82</sup> David B. Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit (St. Francis Xavier University), 1916-1919* (unpublished manuscript, 1990), 7. StFXUA.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Hayes, “Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War,” 190.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 189.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 190-191.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 191.



serving as the nucleus.<sup>89</sup> On June 18, 1916, the Unit was deployed to France where it took over the Hôtel des Émigrants (800 beds) at Le Havre from No. 2 Imperial General Hospital in addition to erecting a 400 bed tented hospital six miles from Le Havre at Harfleur.<sup>90</sup> On December 31, 1916, one year after the Unit left Halifax, the hospital at La Havre was handed back to the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) and the Unit was reunited at the Harfleur hospital.<sup>91</sup> In May, it was relieved in Harfleur by the 40<sup>th</sup> Stationary Hospital, RAMC, and proceeded forward to man the hospital at Arques, a suburb of St. Omer, which was 30 miles from the trenches.<sup>92</sup> In Arques, the Unit was extremely busy and received British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, Indian, and Portuguese wounded. To compound matters, German aircraft frequently bombed the St. Omer area in the summer of 1917 although the Dalhousie Unit was not hit.<sup>93</sup> On March 7, 1918 Col. Stewart was recalled to England to serve as a surgical consultant and the command of the unit fell to E.V. Hogan, the second-in-command of the Unit.<sup>94</sup> In April, due to the German spring offensive, all hospitals in the St. Omer area were forced to withdraw. On the 18<sup>th</sup>, the Unit left for Étaples.<sup>95</sup> Unfortunately, the Dalhousie Unit was also exposed there and on May 18 Privates F.W. Laidlaw and Takanayagi were killed, and Lt. Col. Hogan and Private W.G. O'Tulle were wounded in a German aerial bombing raid.<sup>96</sup> The Unit then moved to Rouen and its personnel were split up to reinforce other hospitals. In September 1918, the Dalhousie Unit was reassembled and ordered to take over a hospital of 1,000 beds at Camiers that was

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 192.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 193.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 196-197.

formerly occupied by No. 42 British Stationary Hospital.<sup>97</sup> According to Joseph Hayes, "a special Canadian Hospital was to be establish at Camiers ... and the patients were all Canadian."<sup>98</sup> While no inkling is provided by Hayes as to what made the hospital so "special," the Unit's war diary explains that it was a hospital specifically for treating venereal diseases. Apparently, the officers of the Unit were not informed of what type of hospital it was to operate until already on location in Camiers: "[Sunday, September 22, 1918]: Busy today getting our stores and equipment moved out to Camiers by lorry. We understand that we are to run a VENEREAL HOSPITAL!"<sup>99</sup>

The Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) had the highest number of STD cases of all the Allies. In 1915, 28.7% of the total number of Canadian men serving overseas received treatment for some sort of venereal disease. This contrasts sharply with Britain – 5%, Australia – 13 to 14.5%, and New Zealand – 13%.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, in February and March 1919, the Canadian Corps still "had the highest incidence of venereal disease among comparable formations in the field."<sup>101</sup> As a result, Sir Arthur Currie ordered that any soldier suffering from a venereal disease was not permitted to return to Canada and demobilized until all traces of the disease had disappeared.<sup>102</sup> Afflicted troops were further punished and received only half-pay during their period of hospitalization and had to perform manual labour. If the disease was incurable, the soldier was ineligible for a government disability pension as the condition was considered self-inflicted. The Canadian Corps previously attempted to educate its men

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 197.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Stationary Hospital War Diary (September 22, 1918), RG9, Militia and Defence, Series III-D-3, Volume 5034, Reel T-10923 File: 847, Access code: 90, LAC.

<sup>100</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 31.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

of the dangers of so-called weak morals; however, sexual impulses coupled with the hardships of soldiering often won out. Condoms, or “prophylactic tubes,” were not distributed in the CEF as they were alleged to “weaken morale.”<sup>103</sup> In contrast, the New Zealand Expeditionary Force provided condoms, chemical prophylactics, and regular medical inspections to its troops.<sup>104</sup> At any rate, the “secret plague”<sup>105</sup> kept the Dalhousie Unit extraordinarily busy until it was ordered to relinquish the Camiers hospital on February 8, 1919 to No. 9 Stationary Hospital – St. Francis Xavier, and to return to Canada.<sup>106</sup> On April 23, 1919, the Dalhousie Unit arrived in Halifax onboard the *Belgic* and was “greeted by a people proud of their noble sons returned with the laurels of victory.”<sup>107</sup> During the Dalhousie Unit’s tenure overseas, it treated approximately 60,000 individuals – 10,000 in England and 50,000 in France.<sup>108</sup> By the time the No. 7 Stationary Hospital returned to Halifax, its personnel had nearly completely changed. There were a few, such as Lt. Col. Hogan, who remained but for the most part the unit that left Halifax on December 31, 1915 and returned in April 1919 was completely different and its personnel had little connection to Dalhousie University.

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Stationary Hospital War Diary (February 6, 1919), RG9, Militia and Defence, Series III-D-3, Volume 5034, Reel T-10923 File : 849 , Access code: 90, LAC; and Hayes, “Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War,” 197.

<sup>107</sup> Hayes, “Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War,” 198.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 197.

Like Dalhousie, St. Francis Xavier University also raised a Stationary Hospital Unit, which served overseas.<sup>109</sup> The creation of St. Francis Xavier's No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit was equally challenging. In fact, it followed a circuitous route from inception to realization. The Unit did not lead the way but followed the path forged by earlier hospital units such as the No. 7 Stationary Hospital. Following the Dalhousie model, in the fall of 1915, St. Francis Xavier's president Rev. Dr. Hugh P. MacPherson and the StFX Board of Governors offered the government a medical unit for service overseas.<sup>110</sup> According to Joseph Hayes, St. Francis Xavier College,

with characteristic enterprise ... decided, as the War went on, that it should stand side by side with other Universities of Canada in direct representation.... This [a medical unit] seemed the most fitting service for a great Christian and humanitarian institution...<sup>111</sup>

The Canadian government, however, did not immediately accept St. Francis Xavier's offer of a stationary hospital unit. StFX, like Dalhousie, also met bureaucratic resistance. President MacPherson was compelled to intercede directly and wrote to Senator A.B. Crosby in an effort to get a response from the Minister of Militia, the infamous Sir Sam Hughes:

Dear Mr. Crosby,

The authorities and friends of the University of St. Francis Xavier's wish to have the privilege of raising a stationary hospital unit for Overseas service. As I understand you are leaving for Ottawa on Saturday, may I trouble you to take this matter up with the Minister of Militia.

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<sup>109</sup> For a more in-depth analysis of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit - St. Francis Xavier University please see Chapter 2 in Scott Matheson, "Whatsoever Things Are True: St. Francis Xavier University During the Great War," BA Thesis, St. Francis Xavier University, 2009, StFXUA; and David B. Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit (St. Francis Xavier University), 1916-1919* (unpublished manuscript, 1990), StFXUA.

<sup>110</sup> Hayes, "Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War," 201.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

We feel that it is only fitting that we, the foremost institution for English-speaking Catholics in Canada, should take our place with the other great colleges that have sent Units to the front. We are prepared to begin mobilizing at Antigonish immediately.

I need not assure you that we shall greatly appreciate your assistance in securing from the Government the authorization of a St. Francis Xavier's Hospital Unit.

Yours very truly,  
[Rev. Dr. H. P. MacPherson]  
President,  
University of St. Francis Xavier  
Antigonish, N.S.<sup>112</sup>

On January 24, Prime Minister Borden intervened and wrote a letter in support of a StFX unit to Hughes.<sup>113</sup> Finally, on February 1, 1916 the authorization was received to begin forming the unit.<sup>114</sup> By this time, Dalhousie's No. 7 Stationary Hospital Unit had been in England a month. As on the sports field, StFX's No. 9, would have to race to catch up.

On February 14, 1916, the Xaverian community learned that the No. 9 Stationary Hospital unit was to be raised by StFX.<sup>115</sup> The April issue of *The Xaverian* trumpeted the news in an article by Private "Rumble" of the class of 1916:

The news was greeted with much enthusiasm, for there is not a student of British birth in these college halls, who does not feel that he has a part to play in the dreadful tragedy which is being staged on the blood-drenched fields of Europe. As a result of this intense feeling in favor of [a] St. F. X. Unit many students closed their books and abandoned their scholastic pursuits for a calling which they believe to be nobler and more befitting at the present time.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> MacPherson to Crosby, January 20, 1916, G 5/9/2348, President MacPherson's Papers, StFXUA.

<sup>113</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 10.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> "The St. F. X. Stationary Hospital Unit," *The Xaverian* (April 1916): 45. StFXUA.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

The students seemed to have agreed with following the path of their beloved COTC Commanding Officer, Captain H.R.W. Smith. Moreover, the eagerness Xaverians previously applied to their lives at StFX came to be applied in their new lives in the army. As Private "Rumble" explained, competition was a common facet within the daily routine of the unit whether it was physical drill or stretcher drill.<sup>117</sup> At dismissal at 5 p.m., no matter how "sick, sore, tired or weary" or generally poor their day had been, the members of the unit were always ready to shout:

Rumble, Bumble, Hallo-Baloo  
Whistle Thistle Boo-Kazoo  
Rixi Raxi Maxi Rah  
No. 9 Stationary Sis Boom Bah  
St. F. X. St. F. X. Rah, Rah, Rah.<sup>118</sup>

The unit's cheer illustrates the keenness of the Xaverians and their kinship with No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit. This devotion was needed as the StFX Unit had one unique hurdle to overcome that many of the other Canadian universities forming hospital units did not have to contend with – St. Francis Xavier did not have a medical program or faculty. Indeed, for this reason the creation of a StFX Stationary Hospital unit was not an obvious choice for the institution. Yet, the small college was exceedingly ambitious and from the outset, according to James Cameron, President MacPherson and Vice President J.J. Tompkins were enthusiastic about StFX having its own hospital unit.<sup>119</sup> MacPherson "thought it fitting that St. F.X., as the 'foremost institution for English-speaking Catholics in Canada,' should, along with other 'great colleges,' send a unit to the front."<sup>120</sup> Tompkins was pleased that StFX would receive such publicity at

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 161.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

no cost to the university as the Canadian government funded the project.<sup>121</sup>

Moreover, some felt that having a Catholic hospital unit would help protect young Catholic boys spread throughout the Canadian army.<sup>122</sup>

To complete the Unit's complement of twelve doctors, thirty-five nursing sisters, two administrative lieutenants, and 125 men including non-commissioned officers, StFX called upon its alumni – men who had obtained their undergraduate degree at StFX and went on to medical schools elsewhere.<sup>123</sup> As Private "Rumble" put it, "St. Francis Xavier's [sic] volunteered to send a unit consisting of her sons, who have gained a high place in the practice of surgery."<sup>124</sup> As a result, applications from graduates across Canada were received requesting a commission with the StFX Unit.<sup>125</sup> As for the enlisted men, StFX students were given preference and the ranks were quickly filled. Indeed, so many applications were received that, like the Dalhousie Unit, the StFX Unit had to turn people away.<sup>126</sup>

On February 10, 1916, at the behest of the university, Major Dr. Roderick Campbell McLeod was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel and appointed as the first Commanding Officer of No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit.<sup>127</sup> McLeod was born on June 20, 1867<sup>128</sup> in Dunvegan, Inverness County, Cape Breton.<sup>129</sup> A graduate of Pictou

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> "The St. F. X. Stationary Hospital Unit," *The Xaverian* (April 1916): 45. StFXUA.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 11.

<sup>128</sup> Roderick Campbell McLeod, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7094-11, LAC. Both Hogan and James Cameron (*For The People*) incorrectly state McLeod's year of birth as 1865. Consequently, he would have been 49, not 51, when he became the OC No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit.

<sup>129</sup> Canadian Expeditionary Force No. 9 Stationary Hospital Nominal Roll of Officers, Nursing Sisters, Non-Commission Officers and Men, 91-29-264, StFXUA.

Academy, StFX, and the University of New York Medical School, McLeod had a reputation as a skilful medical practitioner in North Sydney.<sup>130</sup> The approval of his appointment to command of the unit was easily granted on February 26, 1917<sup>131</sup> as Dr. McLeod had already enlisted with the CEF and was awaiting an overseas posting.<sup>132</sup> The news of his appointment was “hailed with universal satisfaction,” as he was “a man of a most genial personality and beloved by all who knew him.”<sup>133</sup>

On March 6, 1916,<sup>134</sup> Captain John Stuart Carruthers, who was born in Pictou and lived in Halifax,<sup>135</sup> was promoted to Major and was appointed as Senior Major and second-in-command. Interestingly, Major Carruthers originated the concept of universities forming hospital units.<sup>136</sup> The scheme was promulgated via his father-in-law, Senator A.B. Crosby of Halifax, and brought to the attention of the Minister of Militia, Sam Hughes, and Prime Minister Borden.<sup>137</sup> McLeod and Carruthers proceeded to Antigonish soon after Carruthers’ appointment to set up the unit. Nevertheless, the Lieutenant-Colonel and Major were unable to satisfactorily establish the unit within a sufficient period of time as by March 31, the Adjutant-General had written twice asking for news.<sup>138</sup> Consequently, on April 13, Dr. Henry Ernest Kendall was assigned

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<sup>130</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 11.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Hayes, “Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War,” 202.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 11.

<sup>135</sup> John Stuart Carruthers, Officers’ Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1530 - 18, Library and Archives Canada.

<sup>136</sup> MacPherson to Senator A. B. Crosby, 9 May 1916, RG 5/9/15761-3, President MacPhersons Papers, StFXUA, in Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 159. Both MacPherson and Cameron misspell Major Carruthers’ middle name as “Stewart.” See John Stuart Carruthers Officers’ Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1530 - 18, LAC.

<sup>137</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 159.

<sup>138</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 11.



to the StFX Unit with a commission as a major and the post of second-in-command.<sup>139</sup> Major Carruthers was transferred to the post of adjutant while maintaining his rank.<sup>140</sup> The fallout from this change in the nascent unit's officer cadre had mixed consequences. The formation of the unit was completed with the help of Major Kendall, although Senator Crosby vociferously disagreed with the change in writing to President MacPherson on May 8, 1916 to express his "great disappointment" and asking for assurance that the appointment was not the result of "any conniving of Colonel McLeod" but at the behest of MacPherson.<sup>141</sup> The Reverend Doctor responded the following day:

To explain matters right I must go back to the time of your first visit here. At that time things did not look bright for the Unit, and you talked very plainly to both Dr. McLeod and Dr. Carruthers. I remember you impressed upon them and all of us that your work for the unit was done wholly in the interest of the College and not in the interest of Dr. McLeod or Carruthers or any one else belonging to the Unit. Further, you told me in their presence that I was to recommend such appointments as I saw fit and that you would not stand for anything else.<sup>142</sup>

MacPherson continued to explain that the arrangement of McLeod and Carruthers as first and second-in-command was one that would not work and that either "a change had to be made or the Unit would never be formed."<sup>143</sup>

Major Kendall was born in Sydney, Cape Breton on April 29, 1864.<sup>144</sup> He was not a graduate of St. Francis Xavier, but had earned his Bachelor of Arts degree at Mount Allison. Thereafter, he pursued his medical training at McGill University and at

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Crosby to MacPherson, May 8, 1916, in Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 12.

<sup>142</sup> MacPherson to Crosby, May 9, 1916, in Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 12.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Henry Ernest Kendall, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 5076 - 19, LAC.

Bellevue Hospital, New York. Prior to the war, he practised medicine mostly in Sydney; however, he had a short stint as a practitioner in St. John's, Newfoundland, and as the Provincial Medical Registrar of Nova Scotia.<sup>145</sup> Kendall was MacPherson's choice for the new second-in-command and Carruthers volunteered to step down while McLeod accepted the appointment although he "did not advocate his [Kendall's] appointment."<sup>146</sup> Kendall was an interesting choice, as he was not only a Mount Allison alumnus but also a Methodist.<sup>147</sup> Nevertheless, he came highly recommended to MacPherson as an individual who would be a good intermediary between McLeod and Carruthers in addition to being a renowned surgeon and having an amicable personality.<sup>148</sup> Moreover, it was believed that Major Kendall would do his best to see that the Unit was successful.<sup>149</sup> Indeed, there appears to have been great thought put into the selection of the other officers of the unit. An analysis of the "No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit's Nominal Roll of Officers, Nursing Sisters, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men" in conjunction with the various Officers' Declaration Papers, indicates there was an equal number of Roman Catholic and Protestant officers when the unit was

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<sup>145</sup> *Halifax Herald*, November 19, 1942 and *Chronicle-Herald* September 3, 1949 in Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 18.

<sup>146</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit (St. Francis Xavier University)*, 1916-1919, 12.

<sup>147</sup> Henry Ernest Kendall, Officers' Declaration Paper, LAC.

<sup>148</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 12.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

first conceived.<sup>150</sup> Of the Protestants, five were Presbyterian, one Baptist, and one Methodist.<sup>151</sup> Notably, the original sixteen officers of No. 7 Stationary Hospital – Dalhousie University were overwhelmingly Presbyterian both further confirming the Presbyterian quality of Dalhousie University and the careful selection of the officers for the StFX Unit in an effort to maintain some sort of religious equilibrium in the unit. Lt. Col. John Stewart was one of ten Presbyterians in the Dalhousie Unit. Second-in-command Major Edward V. Hogan was the only Roman Catholic. In addition, there were four Methodists, one Anglican, and one Baptist.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Canadian Expeditionary Force No. 9 Stationary Hospital Nominal Roll of Officers, Nursing Sisters, Non-Commission Officers and Men, 91-29-264, StFXUA; and associated Officers' Declaration Papers, LAC: Thomas Alphonsus Lebbetter, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 5494 - 41; James Arthur McCourt, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6661 - 15; John Ignatius O'Connell, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7411 - 14; Lorne Joseph Violette, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9960 - 19; Alexander Rae Campbell, Attestation Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1419 - 53; Lambert Douglas Densmore, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2760-25; James Fraser Ellis, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2884 - 37; Kenneth Angus MacCuish, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6674 - 15; Albert Hugh MacKinnon, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6997 - 10; Jonathan Locke Johnston, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 4887 - 6; Frank Leo Fry, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 3324 - 48.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Hayes, "Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War," 191 (list of personnel); and associated Officers' Declaration Papers, LAC: John Stewart, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9316 - 2; Leonard M. Murray, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6535 - 40; Murdock A. MacAulay, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6585 - 6; Victor N. MacKay, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6938 - 4; Kenneth A. MacKenzie, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6978 - 25; Edward K. Maclellan, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7059 - 39; Samuel J. MacLennan, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7069 - 46; Donald A. MacLeod, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7077 - 2; James A. Murray, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6531 - 1; John Rankine, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 8096 - 33; Frank V. Woodbury, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 10547 - 38; Karl F Woodbury, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 10547 - 45; Walter Taylor, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9550 - 60; Edward V. Hogan, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 4421 - 52; Samuel R. Balcom, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 382 - 24; Matron Laura Hubley, Officers' Declaration Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 4571 - 27.

In 1916, President MacPherson agreed to hold graduation early so that members of the senior class could enlist in the hospital unit, degree in hand, should they desire.<sup>153</sup> Consequently, 60 StFX students enlisted in the unit.<sup>154</sup> The students, however, were not accepted into the Unit unless they had received parental consent to enlist.<sup>155</sup> In early May, the Unit quit the grounds of their alma mater and proceeded to Halifax to continue training.<sup>156</sup> The No. 9 Stationary Hospital was fittingly quartered in the old Dalhousie Medical Building where the Dalhousie Unit had also been billeted while undergoing its preparations for deployment overseas.<sup>157</sup> On June 19, 1916 the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit, St. Francis Xavier, embarked on the SS *Missanabie* for England.<sup>158</sup> The Unit arrived in Liverpool on June 28, 1916 along with the 77<sup>th</sup> Battalion (CEF), No. 4 Casualty Clearing Station, and a Mobile Veterinary Section.<sup>159</sup> Although the Unit was initially divided upon arrival in England to reinforce other hospital units, on September 17, 1916 the unit was reformed and ordered to take over the 700 bed Bramshott Military Hospital on October 1 under the same type of scheme as No. 7 Stationary Hospital had taken command of the Shorncliffe Military Hospital.<sup>160</sup> The winter of 1917 would "tax the capacity of the hospital to the utmost, as well as the endurance of the Staff, owing to a very severe outbreak of influenza in the Bramshott area."<sup>161</sup> The Unit was further challenged in January with the death of its "beloved"

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> *Halifax Morning Chronicle*, June 14, 1916 in Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital*, 13.

<sup>155</sup> Correspondence of President MacPherson, April 7, 1916 in Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 13.

<sup>156</sup> Oswin MacDonald, "St. Francis Xavier Hospital Unit - No. 9 Stationary Hospital," in Macdonald, *Catholics of the Diocese of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, And The War: 1914-1919*, 55.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 16.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>161</sup> Hayes, "Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War," 204.

Commanding Officer Lieutenant-Colonel Roderick McLeod, less than a year after the Unit was formed.<sup>162</sup> The cause was anthrax, to which he succumbed on January 4, 1917 after a brief illness.<sup>163</sup> According to the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, McLeod contracted the infection from a contaminated shaving brush through a small razor abrasion on his face.<sup>164</sup> McLeod was "laid to rest in the little Catholic churchyard adjoining the picturesque village of Greyshott, where a simple cross marks the grave of a good and noble man, who gave his life for the love of humanity."<sup>165</sup> With the death of McLeod, "the men lost not only an efficient and conscientious commander, but a friend and counsellor as well."<sup>166</sup>

With McLeod's death, Major Kendall became the acting commanding officer of the Unit. Since he was a Mount Allison alumnus and a Methodist, his permanent appointment to the post of commanding officer and requisite promotion to Lieutenant-Colonel was not immediately confirmed. According to David Hogan, the Minister of Militia, Sir Sam Hughes, was asked to decide the matter. In turn, President MacPherson was consulted and he approved Kendall as the new commanding officer

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>163</sup> MacDonald, "St. Francis Xavier Hospital Unit - No. 9 Stationary Hospital," 56 and Hayes, "Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War," 205. Oswin MacDonald states the date of death as January 7. Cameron and Hogan both determine the date to be January 4, which is also the same date noted by Hayes.

<sup>164</sup> Obituary, *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 1917, 7:264, in Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 17.

According to Hogan, "This was a distinctly unusual and unpleasant way of dying. This is an infectious [disease] caused by BACILLUS ANTHRACIS treatable by antibiotics. Though quite common among animals, especially cattle and sheep, it was relatively rare in a man at this time. Most who contracted the disease had occupational contact with animals or animal products. The severity of the disease varied markedly. The Lieut.-Col. presumably developed a malignant pustule at the site of inoculation, his face. This would be accompanied by extensive edema and swelling of nearby lymph nodes. He would have had a high fever. Treatment at this time would have been aimed at draining and sterilizing the site of inoculation. ... All papers in his possession at the time of his death were destroyed owing to the fact that ... [he] died of anthrax." (Kendall to Officer in Charge of Canadian War Records, May 24, 1917)

<sup>165</sup> Oswin MacDonald, "St. Francis Xavier Hospital Unit - No. 9 Stationary Hospital," 56.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit.<sup>167</sup> This put a Protestant Allisonian in command of a predominantly Catholic unit sponsored by a Catholic university. MacPherson's confirmation of Kendall as the new commanding officer was perhaps an echo of what was going on back home in Antigonish where the Catholics and Protestants of the town and county were working together to support the war effort including organizing a local chapter of the Canadian Patriotic Fund.<sup>168</sup> Moreover, incidents of this nature were not isolated. As previously mentioned, on March 7, 1918 Major E.V. Hogan, a Catholic, was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel and given command of the No. 7 Stationary Hospital after Col. Stewart was recalled to England.<sup>169</sup> This put a Catholic in command of a predominantly Protestant / Presbyterian unit representing a Presbyterian university. Indeed, there was a noted cross-pollination as students from Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier served in both the Dalhousie and StFX Hospital Units.

In October 1917, while still stationed at the Bramshott Military Hospital, the No. 9 Stationary Hospital was briefly disbanded and renamed the No. 12 General Hospital. This caused much consternation back in Antigonish and President MacPherson vehemently blamed Lt. Col. Kendall for the British High Command's decision.<sup>170</sup> Nevertheless, on November 3 the decision was reversed as the High Command accepted the offer of the No. 8, No. 9, and No. 10 Canadian Stationary Hospitals for service in France. The Unit was immediately reconstituted although many of its personnel were newcomers. Lt. Col. Kendall had the distinction of being the only

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<sup>167</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 18.

<sup>168</sup> Charles Gordon Brewer, "The Diocese of Antigonish and World War I," MA Thesis, University of New Brunswick, April 1975, 20.

<sup>169</sup> Hayes, "Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War," 196.

<sup>170</sup> MacPherson to Kendall, November 24, 1917, in Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 20.

original officer who came over with the StFX Unit.<sup>171</sup> Only eight per cent of the officers (one out of thirteen), forty per cent of the nursing sisters (twelve out of thirty), and forty-six per cent of the other ranks (fifty-five out of 120) were original members of the Unit.<sup>172</sup> Moreover, only twenty-six of the 133 men (officers, NCOs and enlisted men) listed “student” as their occupation.<sup>173</sup> While “student” was certainly the single most common occupation of the Unit’s members, a far greater proportion were *not* students and had few ties to StFX. The Unit departed Bramshott on December 4, 1917 and arrived in France the following day. Travelling by rail, truck, and ambulance, the Unit arrived at its post in Longuenesse, a village less than a mile from St. Omer, on December 12.<sup>174</sup> There it was put to work doing what it could to help wounded Allied soldiers.

In April 1918, the No. 9 Stationary Hospital, along with all other hospitals in the St. Omer region, including the Dalhousie Unit, was withdrawn to Étaples due to the German offensive.<sup>175</sup> In Étaples, the Unit was ordered to open a venereal hospital.<sup>176</sup> During the remainder of the spring and into the summer the StFX Unit made preparations to open a venereal hospital, both in terms of infrastructure and the instruction of its doctors. Nevertheless, the military seemingly forgot about the StFX Unit during the summer of 1918 and its members pursued such diversions as tennis, growing potatoes, playing baseball, route marching, and physical training.<sup>177</sup> The spring and summer of 1918, however, was far from carefree. On the night of May 18,

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<sup>171</sup> 9th Canadian Stationary Hospital War Diary (November 22, 1917).

<sup>172</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 28.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>174</sup> 9th Canadian Stationary Hospital War Diary (December 12, 1917).

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, April 16, 1918.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, April 19 and 20, 1918.

<sup>177</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 27.

the StFX Unit was bombed by German aircraft killing Sergeants Taylor and McMillan and wounding twelve other ranks.<sup>178</sup> Eight marquee tents were destroyed and many others were “riddled” with splinters.<sup>179</sup> Fortunately, the hospital did not have any patients at the time of the bombing.

On August 28, 1918, Lt. Col. Kendall was recalled to England and Major Ronald St. John Macdonald assumed command of the Unit as he was “the most senior graduate [of StFX] available capable of commanding the unit.”<sup>180</sup> Macdonald was one of the first of five Canadian doctors to go overseas when the war broke out and proved to be the most popular commanding officer of the Unit. On September 7, 1918 Macdonald was ordered to move the StFX Unit from Étaples to Camiers<sup>181</sup> and establish a 400-bed venereal hospital.<sup>182</sup> Once again however, the impetus for opening such a hospital was lost and the StFX unit was shuffled around Camiers and Étaples, receiving no patients during the last months of 1918. In early February 1919, Macdonald, now a Lieutenant-Colonel, received word that the StFX Unit was to take over from the No. 7 Stationary Hospital at Camiers by February 8.<sup>183</sup> When the StFX Unit relieved the Dalhousie Unit, the hospital had 320 patients suffering from syphilis and 620 suffering from gonorrhoea.<sup>184</sup> For the rest of February and the month of March, the Unit was extraordinarily busy. At times, over 1,000 patients were in their care with approximately 190 patients assigned to each doctor. The ministrations of the

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<sup>178</sup> 9th Canadian Stationary Hospital War Diary (May 19, 1918).

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Letter, Major-General Director of Medical Services, Canadian Contingents to Argyll House, July 30, 1918 in Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 27.

<sup>181</sup> 9th Canadian Stationary Hospital War Diary (September 7, 1918).

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., September 10, 1918.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., February 6, 1919.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., February 8, 1919. Interestingly, at the time of handover Captain D. W. N. Zwicker was one of the medical officers with the StFX Unit. Zwicker was one of the seven Dalhousians who graduated in December 1916.



doctors were clearly greatly appreciated as indicated by this letter from soldier 718075 to his doctor:

Dear Capt. Elkerton: -

Excuse my taking the liberty of addressing you in this form but I am writing these few lines purely personal.

I wish to thank you for the kind consideration and splendid treatment I received at your hands while I was marked "Urethritis". I had had V.D.G. [gonorrhoea] before but for reasons I do not wish to state. I cannot explain, I was on a relapse when you took my case in hand and by your splendid efforts I can now say I am a pure man once more.

My purpose in writing this is in the fact that most men consider it your duty as a Doctor, but I think a word of praise will assist you to carry on with your utmost zeal to exterminate this awful disease.

Once again I wish to thank you for your goodwill while at work, not only for myself but I speak on behalf of some of my friends.

Hoping you will excuse this composition and get the sentiments.

Yours thankfully,  
Sgd. [Signed] -----  
718075.<sup>185</sup>

At long last, on May 21, 1919, the StFX Unit discharged its last patient and instructions were received to close the hospital.<sup>186</sup> On May 30, the Unit left Camiers early in the morning and arrived back in England late that evening.<sup>187</sup> After demobilizing at Witley, No. 9 Canadian Stationary Hospital Unit - St. Francis Xavier University embarked aboard the S.S. *Olympic* on July 2, 1919 from Southampton

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., March 31, 1919.

Soldier 718075's name was Edwin Alfred Jackson and he was originally from London, England. Born on August 31, 1895, Driver Jackson's civilian trade was "labourer." He enlisted on July 31, 1915 making him a month shy of twenty years of age although his papers state him as twenty years of age at the time of enlistment. He enlisted with the 79<sup>th</sup> Battalion CEF out of Grandview, Manitoba although it appears that he was later transferred to the 187<sup>th</sup> Battalion. He was 5'7" tall with a "ruddy" complexion, grey-brown eyes, and auburn hair. He was a Anglican. (Edwin Alfred Jackson (718075), Attestation Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 4742 - 41, LAC.)

<sup>186</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Stationary Hospital War Diary (May 21, 1919).

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., May 30, 1919.

destined for Halifax.<sup>188</sup> Nineteen officers and 130 men proceeded with the Unit back to Canada with other officers being ordered to stay in England and posted to various hospitals.<sup>189</sup> The Unit was joined on the *Olympic* by No. 7 Canadian General Hospital – Queen’s University and No. 4 Canadian General Hospital – University of Toronto.<sup>190</sup> At 6:00 p.m. on July 8, the *Olympic* docked in Halifax and the StFX Unit was met by Vice President Tompkins and other university representatives.<sup>191</sup> Tompkins invited the officers, NCOs, and men to a reception banquet at the Green Lantern and was joined by local dignitaries including Lieutenant-Governor Grant, Col. John Stewart, and Lt. Col. E.V. Hogan.<sup>192</sup> The following day,<sup>193</sup> the StFX Unit was officially disbanded after 1,240 days of active service.<sup>194</sup>

The StFX Unit was not really a university unit or a functioning stationary hospital during much of its existence.<sup>195</sup> Nevertheless, bearing the name of St. Francis Xavier University, it was recognized as performing its duties admirably.<sup>196</sup> In addition, the Unit did its duty as a venereal hospital satisfactorily despite being associated with a Catholic college and the “distasteful” nature of the assignment.<sup>197</sup> The Unit was perhaps too ambitious in that StFX did not have a medical faculty nor a large student body to recruit from. Overall, however, the Unit was a success, albeit one that was

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., July 1, 1919.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Hayes, “Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War,” 209.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> February 15, 1916 to July 9, 1919 equals 1240 days.

<sup>195</sup> Hogan, *The History of the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit*, 41; and Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 163.

<sup>196</sup> See 9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Stationary Hospital War Diary and Hayes, “Nova Scotia Medical Services in the Great War,” 210.

<sup>197</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 163.

caught up in the usual bureaucracy and politics of the Canadian Army and the CAMC. In the end, No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit served its purpose, by contributing directly to the war effort and by effectively raising the university's public profile.

Military service, in one form or another, was the most common and most profound reaction to the First World War by the students, staff, and faculty of Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities. Some, like Milton F. Gregg, answered the "call of duty" almost immediately in the early fall of 1914. Others preferred to remain at university, yet, still devoted themselves wholeheartedly to training with their university's COTC contingent. The Acadia students who stayed in Wolfville during the Christmas holidays of 1914 were clearly dedicated to their military training. The COTC contingents were largely successful on each campus and undoubtedly helped push more than one student out of his dormitory room and into the khaki of the regular army. Nevertheless, their impact and importance generally waned during the later years of the war due to war-weariness and their membership tended to be limited to those who were underage or physically unfit for overseas service. The COTC contingents of Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and StFX operated for the duration of the war, unlike that of Acadia. Mount Allison's contingent carried on until 1927 and was reinstated in 1938.<sup>198</sup> Other students decided to serve not on the firing line, but in various support units. Students and alumni from Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier served in the No. 7 Stationary Hospital Unit – Dalhousie University and the No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit – St. Francis Xavier University. The university units, for their part, contributed significantly to the overall war effort providing medical care for tens of thousands of Allied soldiers. Moreover, the Hospital Units were a means for each of Dalhousie and St. Francis Xavier to contribute directly

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<sup>198</sup> Morrison, "Mount Allison C.O.T.C.," 35.

as an institution. Having Xaverians and Dalhousians enlist in the CEF was a source of pride, but having a direct impact on the war was even more significant.

Each institution was severely affected by the absence of many of its students and faculty. Financial hardship was experienced at each university as a result of the exodus. In many ways, the loss of such a significant portion of the student body, and their tuition dollars was bittersweet. High enlistment numbers from one's institution demonstrated the loyal, patriotic, and Christian qualities of the university. Yet, this came at a cost. None of the universities wavered despite the damage they were self-inflicting by encouraging their young men to join up. Religion played a significant roll in this process. Maritime society and the environment at each school, even Dalhousie, had strong religious overtones. Indeed, at Acadia, as elsewhere, there was a "melding of classroom, Christianity, and khaki" that encouraged the enlistment of students.<sup>199</sup> Yet, because of the unique religious orientation of each institution, religion played a slightly different role on each stage.

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<sup>199</sup> Moody, "Acadia and the Great War," 151.

## Chapter Three

### The Role of Religion

*I am just in receipt of a circular, such as is being sent to all of our ministers by the authorities at Mt. Allison. This circular is a call for each man to become a recruiting agent for the institutions. From my last summer's experience I can testify as to the pivotal success that was attained last summer was due to the helpful interest of the ministers in charge of the various circuits. I also found instances in which men thought that nothing could be done to help secure students, but when once a real effort was made they were amazed at the results. The minister in charge is the important factor in this effort. [...] Having some knowledge of the splendid assistance our ministers have rendered this work, may I be allow to suggest that we again unite in an effort to supply each institution at Mt. Allison with generous classes for 1916-17.*

—B.J. Porter, Parrsboro NS.<sup>1</sup>

The First World War has been called by many different names: The Great War, The War to End All Wars, The Kaiser's War, and The War in Europe. One historian, examining the role of the Church of England, termed it "The Last Crusade."<sup>2</sup> For many Canadians, the war was indeed a modern crusade with all of the associated religious trappings. The conflict was a "Christian Endeavour, a call to Service to Empire and the Christian civilization for which many felt it proudly stood."<sup>3</sup> The rhetoric of the period referred to God as part of the war, the British Empire as a vehicle for righteousness, and that the good Christian soldiers, martyred on the battlefields of France and Belgium, were fighting for the future and a "regenerated and peaceful" world would result from the struggle.<sup>4</sup> Ironically, the Germans also felt that they were fighting to save

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<sup>1</sup> "Recruiting for Mt. Allison," *The Wesleyan* (May 24, 1916). PANS.

<sup>2</sup> Albert Marrin, *The Last Crusade: The Church of England in the First World War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1974).

<sup>3</sup> Murray E. Angus, "Living in the 'World of the Tiger': The Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in Nova Scotia and the Great War, 1914-1918" MA Thesis, Dalhousie University, 1993, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

civilization.<sup>5</sup> In 1914, Canadians, according to Donald Creighton, made up “a Christian, or, at least, a Church-going society.”<sup>6</sup> In 1911, Nova Scotia had a population of 492,338, New Brunswick 351,889, and Prince Edward Island 93,728.<sup>7</sup> Table 3.1 provides an analysis of the populations of the five most numerous denominations in the Maritime provinces in 1911.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 3.1:**  
**Populations of Major Religious Denominations in the Maritime Provinces, 1911**

	Anglicans	Baptists	Methodists	Presbyterians	Roman Catholics
<b>New Brunswick</b>	42,864 (12.2%)	82,106 (23.3%)	34,558 (9.8%)	39,207 (11.1%)	144,889 (41.2%)
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	75,315 (15.3%)	83,854 (17.0%)	57,606 (11.7%)	109,560 (22.3%)	144,991 (29.4%)
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	4,939 (5.3%)	5,372 (5.7%)	12,209 (13.0%)	27,509 (29.3%)	41,994 (44.8%)

Overall, Nova Scotia was predominantly Protestant, but Roman Catholicism was the single most numerous denomination. The same was also true in Prince Edward Island. New Brunswick’s population was more evenly matched in terms of Protestant and Catholic populations, although Catholicism again outnumbered any single Protestant group.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 91. The belt buckles of the German soldiers included the inscription *Gott Mit Uns* (God With Us).

<sup>6</sup> Donald Creighton, *Canada’s First Century, 1867-1967* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1970), 134.

<sup>7</sup> Fifth Census of Canada, 1911, vol. 2, (Ottawa: Census and Statistics Office, 1912), 2-3.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. For a more in-depth analysis, please see Tables 3, 4, and 5 in Appendix A which analyzes the denominational concentration by district (county).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities, each with its own unique religious orientation, worked to serve its “niche market” of students from all over the Maritimes: Acadia the Baptists, Dalhousie the Presbyterians, Mount Allison the Methodists, and St. Francis Xavier the Catholics.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, this scheme was not mutually exclusive and there were many exceptions. Indeed, one did not have to practice a specific religion to attend any of the four institutions. Dalhousie in particular tended to favour a secular approach when recruiting students in accordance with its non-denominational constitution. Even so, students of a particular religious background often sought to attend “their” university and thus the student populations reflected the original religious orientation of the schools. In some cases, the local population reinforced the religious background of the institution. In the case of Acadia, Kings County was predominantly Baptist.<sup>11</sup> Antigonish County, the home of St. Francis Xavier, was overwhelmingly Catholic.<sup>12</sup> Westmorland County, New Brunswick was predominantly Protestant, but also featured a large Catholic population.<sup>13</sup> In neighbouring Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, there was a fairly equal distribution of religious denominations; however, Methodism was the most popular overall, which coincided with Mount Allison’s affiliation.<sup>14</sup> Halifax County was generally split between Catholicism and Anglicanism, with Presbyterianism forming a

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<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that St. Francis Xavier was not the only college during this period devoted to the post-secondary education of Catholics – other institutions included Saint Mary’s College in Halifax, and St. Dunstan’s College in Charlottetown.

<sup>11</sup> See Table 4 in Appendix A.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> See Table 3 in Appendix A.

<sup>14</sup> See Table 4 in Appendix A.

small minority.<sup>15</sup> Many Dalhousie students came from the nearby and predominantly Presbyterian counties of Hants, Colchester, and Pictou.<sup>16</sup>

At Acadia University, as Barry Moody argues, the congruent culture and atmosphere of the institution and the Maritime Baptist Churches had a great effect on the student body in the first decades of the twentieth century.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the university's "pervasive evangelical ethos ... exerted a profound influence on its students" and an emphasis on Christian service permeated student life.<sup>18</sup> A belief in the importance of service to others existed amongst the Baptist community long before the Social Gospel movement came to the fore and the evangelical and revivalist traditions of the Baptists were some of the building blocks on which the movement was created.<sup>19</sup> At Acadia, from the 1890s on, students witnessed, learned, and participated in Christianity becoming an increasingly social religion concerned with the general well-being of humanity.<sup>20</sup> This outlook on Christianity was subsequently put to the test in the times of war in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The initial reactions to the outbreak of war in Europe in August 1914 by the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces were largely influenced by the precedent set by the South African War fought between 1899 and 1902. Unlike in the case of the Methodists, pacifism was not a traditional belief amongst the Baptist community; yet, many Baptists were unconvinced that the use of force was the proper course of action

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Barry M. Moody, "Educating for War and Peace at Acadia University: The Generation of 1914," unpublished paper, 2010, 2. I would like to thank Dr. Moody for sending me a copy of his forthcoming paper and permitting me to utilize it here as a source.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.



in the Transvaal.<sup>21</sup> As a result, they became increasingly perturbed by the concept of a "just war" and were largely sympathetic towards the Afrikaners.<sup>22</sup> A line of differentiation was drawn however, between the people and their leader, Paul Kruger. Just as many Maritimers later viewed the German people as victims and the Kaiser as the true enemy during the Great War, Maritime Baptists tended to blame Kruger for the South African War.<sup>23</sup>

Despite being "somewhat uncomfortable with imperialism and war" the Baptists supported the war in the Transvaal, although not without vocal criticism of the self-evident imperialistic nature of the conflict.<sup>24</sup> The community never came to a collective resolution concerning its stance on the war before it ended. In the years leading up to the outbreak of the First World War, the Social Gospel movement gathered momentum and students at Acadia became increasingly engaged in social service which in turn reinforced their personal commitment to Christ. The YMCA address at the convocation of 1914 encouraged "young men to go forth and right the wrong" as a means of gaining fellowship with the "Son of God, for Christ ever stands by the side of every wounded man."<sup>25</sup> The convocation issue of the *Athenaeum* also featured an essay by a recent graduate, J.T. Mosher, entitled, "Canada's Duty to the Empire," which won a prize of \$30 offered by the St. Catherine's Chapter of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire.<sup>26</sup> The essay had several key themes and the influence of the Social Gospel is evident. Mosher argued that Canada had a duty to

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> "Report on the YMCA address at convocation by the Rev. J. H. McDonald" *Acadia Athenaeum* (June 1914): 557-8 in Moody, "Educating for War and Peace at Acadia University," 12.

<sup>26</sup> J. T. Mosher, "Canada's Duty to the Empire," *Acadia Athenaeum* (June 1914): 608.

the British Empire; however, Canada's "duty to England, as head of the Empire must supersede her duties to the [other] colonies."<sup>27</sup> Reflecting the ideal of improvement and progress, Mosher argued that "Canada can in no way better contribute to the strength of the Empire than by self-improvement. She must remove or remedy all obstacles to her progress and cultivate only those things that tend towards development."<sup>28</sup>

By Mosher's account, the way to a better future was through education, the enfranchisement of women granted by non-militant means, the end to electoral corruption, and strict immigration laws to "prevent ... our virile northern race ... [from being] polluted by mixture with inferior blood."<sup>29</sup> Of the immigrants who were permitted to enter Canada, Mosher suggested that education and religion be used as the key tools of assimilation: "They must *know* Canada, her glorious history and traditions, her present freedom and the certainty of her future greatness. Religion lifts them out of their degradation and sin, into a noble and pure life, so that they who, regarded as immigrants, are an honor to their adopted country."<sup>30</sup> It is clear that for J.T. Mosher a distinct Canadian identity did exist, defined in both imperial and racial terms. This reinforces Moody's conclusion that while the Baptists of the Maritimes were proud members of the British Empire, in the early twentieth century there was "an observable and growing awareness of being Canadian."<sup>31</sup> This sense of being Canadian *and* a subject of the British Empire helped to shape Baptist sentiments and thus the views of Acadia. Moody correctly argues however, that "commitment to Christian service [and]

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 609.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 610-611.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 611.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Moody, "Educating for War and Peace at Acadia University," 6.

striving toward world improvement ... more than any other factor ... mold[ed] Acadia attitudes toward war and peace, and led to the high rates of enlistment and commitment during the conflict.”<sup>32</sup>

Not everyone agreed with J.T. Mosher’s racially-based definition of what it meant to be Canadian. As Calvin Ruck writes, “at the outbreak of World War One in 1914, Black Canadians were also caught up in the patriotic fervor of [the] conflict.”<sup>33</sup> Large numbers of Black Canadian volunteered for service across Canada but were turned away because of racist notions of the conflict being a “white man’s war” and there was no desire amongst some for a “checker board army.”<sup>34</sup> Similarly, the Canadian government was initially hesitant to recruit aboriginal men and their enlistment was prohibited.<sup>35</sup> Yet, large numbers of aboriginal soldiers were eventually permitted to serve, many of them in combat battalions where they distinguished themselves.<sup>36</sup> There were no all-aboriginal units, but the 52<sup>nd</sup>, 107<sup>th</sup>, and 114<sup>th</sup> Battalions all featured large concentrations of aboriginal soldiers.<sup>37</sup> In the Maritimes, as P. Whitney Lackenbauer writes, “Nearly half of eligible Mi’kmaq and Maliseet men in Atlantic Canada enlisted. Every eligible male from the Mi’kmaq reserve near Sydney, Nova Scotia, volunteered. New Brunswick bands sent 62 out of 116 eligible males to the front, and 30 of 64 eligible PEI Indians joined.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>33</sup> Calvin W. Ruck, *Canada’s Black Battalion: No. 2 Construction 1916-1920* (Halifax: The Society for the Protection and Preservation of Black Culture in Nova Scotia, 1986), 6.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>35</sup> P. Whitney Lackenbauer, John Moses, R. Scott Sheffield, and Maxime Gohier, *A Commemorative History of Aboriginal People in the Canadian Military* (Ottawa: Directorate of History and Heritage, Department of National Defence, 2010), 119.

<sup>36</sup> Ruck, *Canada’s Black Battalion: No. 2 Construction 1916-1920*, 81.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 125

Calvin Ruck has shown that of all the minority groups who served in the CEF, Blacks seemed to have experienced the most problems when trying to enlist.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, Black Canadians felt that it was their wartime right and responsibility to serve their country and “were not prepared to meekly accept a policy, official or unofficial, that humiliated, emasculated, insulted and rejected them on racial grounds.”<sup>40</sup> With the authorization of the No. 2 Construction Battalion on July 5, 1916 an avenue was opened for Blacks to serve in large numbers in the CEF.<sup>41</sup> It was the first and only Black Battalion in Canadian military history and was headquartered in Pictou, Nova Scotia.<sup>42</sup> Men from across Canada and the United States served in the No. 2 Construction Battalion. Moreover, the Unit’s chaplain, Hon. Captain William Andrew White, a Black Baptist Minister from Truro, was the only Black commissioned officer in all the British forces during the war.<sup>43</sup> After the war, many “felt the call to Christian leadership” and became pastors and deacons.<sup>44</sup> It is likely that this duty to Christian service was part of the reason why those in the No. 2 Construction Battalion felt compelled to serve in the first place – just like their white, Christian brothers throughout the Maritimes and at Acadia University.

During the war, the unique religious character of the Maritime Baptists and Acadia University was employed to further the interests of the war.<sup>45</sup> The war came to be seen as a means to change the world for the better and thus the conflict was, in part, an extension of social service work. Recruitment at Acadia made use of the

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<sup>39</sup> Ruck, *Canada's Black Battalion: No. 2 Construction 1916-1920*, 81.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 & 82.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 22. Capt. White was born in Williamsburg, Virginia.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>45</sup> Moody, “Educating for War and Peace at Acadia University,” 22.

persuasive qualities of evangelicalism and jingoism and enjoyed great success.<sup>46</sup> The university's president, George B. Cutten was deeply involved in recruitment efforts and was appointed chief recruiting officer for Nova Scotia.<sup>47</sup> Starting in February 1916, Cutten took several consecutive leaves of absence from his presidential duties so that he could focus on war work.<sup>48</sup> Much to the chagrin of the Board of Governors, "Cutten's almost total commitment to the war seriously undermined Acadia's ability to cope with the crisis she faced" during the First World War.<sup>49</sup> Cutten presided over the 1916 convocation not in his customary academic robes, but the khaki of an army uniform and was summarily dubbed "Fighting George Cutten."<sup>50</sup> While students from Acadia enlisted for overseas service, the number of casualties increased. The students who remained at Acadia, however, seemed to be able to come to terms with the conflict and the destruction it wrought because the war was being fought for the noble cause of social change. Victory would precipitate the end to many of the social ills that plagued Canada and the world and a new world order would be ushered in with the help of the soldiers recruited from Acadia's classrooms.

The contrast with other institutions was pronounced. As Barry Moody writes, "No ambivalence, public or private, concerning student enlistment and training is observable at Acadia as it was at Mount Allison University."<sup>51</sup> While Mount Allison may have projected a certain sense of ambivalence, the university did support the war effort and enlistments, as demonstrated previously, were relatively equal to those of both Acadia and St. Francis Xavier. The pacifistic tradition of Methodism seemed to

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>48</sup> Moody, "Acadia and the Great War," 144.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Moody, "Educating for War and Peace at Acadia University," 21.

<sup>51</sup> Moody, "Acadia and the Great War," 144.

have little significant impact on Mount Allison's views and contributions to the war effort. All faculties at the university were negatively affected by student enlistment – even the faculty of theology. In his annual report for 1915-1916, Dean of Theology Howard Sprague noted that the number of students in his program had decreased from 26 to 14 (46%) due to enlistment.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, the Methodist Church supported and took an active role in recruiting. Approximately 500 of its own ministers and students from across Canada enlisted by the end of the war.<sup>53</sup> Of the clergy who served, 90% did so as combatants.<sup>54</sup> Norman Coll was one of the "Probationer for the Ministry" students in the faculty of theology at Mount Allison, who on his third try finally managed to enlist in the army.<sup>55</sup> Coll started at Mount Allison in 1913 working towards a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Certificate in Theology.<sup>56</sup> In the summer of 1914, while at home in Sydney Mines, Cape Breton, he made his first attempt to enlist, but was rejected by the 7<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battery since he wore glasses.<sup>57</sup> He returned to Sackville in the autumn, where he joined the Mount Allison COTC and qualified as a second lieutenant having completed his Certificate A.<sup>58</sup> In the summer of 1915 he once again tried to enlist, this time in the 85<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Nova Scotia Highlanders, but he was turned away again due to his poor eyesight.<sup>59</sup> For the 1915-1916 year, Coll completed his first probationary year as a minister in Cape North, Cape Breton and Five Islands near Parrsboro.<sup>60</sup> He returned to Mount Allison in the fall of 1916 and

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<sup>52</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 18.

<sup>53</sup> Bliss, "The Methodist Church and World War I," 217.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Norman Coll, "This is My Story" File 9417/5, 9 & 13. MAA.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12.

commenced his third year of study. In the spring, he was finally able to enlist despite his bad eyesight:

So in March 1917 seven of us from Mount A. enlisted and I soon got my first stripe. My rejection because of eyesight and glasses was overcome. The Canadian Army at last had opticians in the Medical Corps.

However I still was uncertain – until one of our Mount A. recruits, Jim Calkin, assured me that his Dad, who was the medical doctor for the college, would get me through. The day came. I entered Dr. Calkin's office. He said "I'll be back in a few minutes" and left. In front of me was the Eye Test Chart. I memorized it.

Dr. Calkin came in. "Now Coll – see what you can do." I began and kept on until he said "Hell – you haven't got to be that good!" Evidently I had memorized too much!<sup>61</sup>

Coll's attestation paper confirms his poor eyesight and even provides his prescription thus illustrating that recruitment standards had been relaxed by the spring of 1917 in an effort to increase enlistments. Despite Norman Coll's need for glasses, Dr. Calkin rated him as fit for service.<sup>62</sup> For the majority of his time overseas, Coll served as an artillery signaller.<sup>63</sup> In July 1918, German aircraft carrying mustard gas bombs attacked Coll's signal station and he was severely wounded.<sup>64</sup> Despite not being completely healed, Coll nevertheless served with the Canadian Corps during the Hundred Days Campaign due to the need for men.<sup>65</sup> On April 30, 1919 he was demobilized and returned home to Cape Breton. In September 1919, he returned to Mount Allison where he graduated the next spring with a Bachelor of Arts in Honours Philosophy. He was ordained in June 1922 and ministered across the Maritimes, New England, and eventually settled in Ottawa, Ontario.<sup>66</sup> He also served as a chaplain overseas for six

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>62</sup> Norman Coll Attestation Paper, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1864 - 24, LAC.

<sup>63</sup> Coll, "This is My Story," 14.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

years during the Second World War. Norman Coll passed away in Ottawa in December 1990.<sup>67</sup>

In Norman Coll's short autobiography there is no hint of any hesitation stemming from the moral implications of the war. In fact, for someone who went to university to become a Methodist minister and later enjoyed a successful career as a minister, his account of his younger years and his war experience is notably devoid of religious content beyond his probationary service and the church service he attended the Sunday before being gassed. Nevertheless, his persistent and ultimately successful efforts to enlist showed his clear belief that it was the right thing to do.

Not all Canadians were as eager as Norman Coll to enlist. By early 1917 the situation in France had grown desperate and Prime Minister Borden was pressured by British Prime Minister Lloyd George for more men. Voluntary enlistments had slowed to a trickle and were not sufficient to replace the vast number of casualties suffered every day at the front. After visiting the men of the Canadian Corps in France, Borden felt compelled to create a wartime coalition government that would invoke conscription. As a result, all of Canada entered into a quagmire of debate on the union government and, by extension, conscription.<sup>68</sup> At Acadia University, support for the union government and conscription was so strong that they were not even debatable topics.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, President Cutten and other members of the Acadia community spearheaded the movement to have Borden run in the King's constituency.<sup>70</sup> According to Barry Moody, "the concept of "non-partisan" government, committed to

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>68</sup> See Granatstein, "Conscription in the Great War" for a thorough discussion of the conscription crisis.

<sup>69</sup> Moody, "Acadia and the Great War," 147.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.



total victory, had a powerful appeal to the university community and its supporters."<sup>71</sup> Even the Acadia Theological Club pledged its support for the union government.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, in contrast with McMaster University, Acadia's sister college in Ontario, anti-Catholic sentiment was not the driving force behind Acadia's adamant support for conscription.<sup>73</sup>

The Methodist Church also supported the union government and conscription. In fact, Methodist church leaders began to call for conscription in the autumn of 1916.<sup>74</sup> In June 1917, every Methodist conference resolved in favour of the union government.<sup>75</sup> *The Wesleyan*, as the voice of the Methodist church leaders of the Maritimes, was also supportive. In the May 23, 1917 issue, an article on the front page attempted to explain the situation and the need for conscription:

Sir Robert Borden has signalized his return from the Imperial Council by announcing that Conscription will be employed in Canada to raise an additional 50,000 or perhaps 100,000 troops for overseas service. That there is a natural national sentiment against conscription there can be no doubt and under anything but extraordinary circumstances it would not be tolerated for a minute, but we do not live in ordinary times, or even moderately critical times. We live in a time when the very foundations of human liberty are being jeopardized, and desperate causes need desperate remedies. Sir Robert Borden was opposed to conscription not too long ago. His consultation with the leaders of the Empire has caused a change in his views. Voluntary enlistment has not secured the quota of soldiers Canada was supposed to contribute to the service of Empire. Had Quebec enlisted as many, in proportion, as the other parts of Canada, the full quota would have been secured. We have noted an extract from the Ottawa paper suggesting that Quebec should be exempted from the provisions of the Conscription Act. We hope no such idea will be entertained. If it should be, the measure should be voted down. Let it be the whole

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Bliss, "The Methodist Church and World War I," 220.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

Dominion or no part of it. As the particulars of the Bill have not yet been announced it would be premature to pass judgement upon it. We must take it for granted that every care will be used to make its provisions equitable to all portions of the Dominion, and all classes of people.<sup>76</sup>

The anti-Quebec sentiment is palpable in this example. Many Anglo-Canadians felt that Quebecers were not “doing their part” since, according to a War Office study, only 1.4% of French Canadians joined up.<sup>77</sup> Amongst the leaders of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches, a general animosity towards “slackers or frivolous and sinful people” fueled their pro-conscription attitude.<sup>78</sup> In the December 12, 1917 issue of *The Wesleyan*, Superintendent Chown wrote on the importance of supporting the union government and conscription: “This is a redemptive war, and its success depends entirely upon the height of sacrifice to which our people can ascend ... He who fears to express his convictions at this hour is akin to the slacker who would like to do his duty but fears it may cost him something.”<sup>79</sup> Mount Allison University generally followed the lead of the Methodist Church in this regard, although the matter was not discussed in the *Argosy*. Articles concerning the conscription crisis did feature prominently in the *Sackville Post* and *Sackville Tribune*, but they offer little insight on the university’s views. For President Borden and the Board of Regents, the introduction of conscription for nineteen-year-olds in early 1918 caused some considerable consternation from an administrative perspective and the closing of some departments in an effort to save money was briefly considered.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> “Conscription,” *The Wesleyan* (May 23, 1917): 1. PANS.

<sup>77</sup> Granatstein, “Conscription in the Great War,” 65.

<sup>78</sup> Angus, “Living in the ‘World of the Tiger,’” 135.

<sup>79</sup> *The Wesleyan* (December 12, 1917), in Angus, “Living in the ‘World of the Tiger,’” 136-137.

<sup>80</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 11-12.

In the Maritimes, the Presbyterians' position towards union government and conscription was largely the same as that of their Methodist cousins. Like *The Wesleyan*, the *Presbyterian Witness* championed conscription. In the April 21, 1917 issue, its editor, Dr. George S. Carson, attacked "slackers" in an even harsher tone than that of Dr. Chown:

we have the cowards and the slackers, the young men who hang around the street corners and attend the movie theatres ... we have the brave boys who have heard the call of Country and of God. ... What place is there for slackers or pleasure seekers ... in a world so full of suffering?<sup>81</sup>

Dr. Carson's vehemence was not surprising since his son was one of the "brave boys" who enlisted voluntarily and paid the ultimate price. Interestingly, a year earlier, the *Presbyterian Witness* had been opposed to conscription:

We think the Premier [Borden] is to be commended for the extreme caution of his reply to this delegation [in saying that so far there is no lack of volunteers]. We believe that to a very large proportion of the people of Canada it is a doubtful question whether conscription is either a wise or a necessary measure at the present time. The strongest argument in its favor is that it might operate to secure for military service a class of shirkers whose services are least needed for carrying on the business of industries of the Dominion; but unfortunately this consideration comes too late, as already so many of the latter class have enlisted for overseas service. The work of discrimination between those who ought to be pressed into military service and those who might be regarded as entitled to remain at home would be by no means easy.<sup>82</sup>

The position of the *Presbyterian Witness* changed in the fall of 1916 when the paper reported favourably on the National Service Campaign.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> *Presbyterian Witness* (April 21, 1917), in Angus, "Living in the 'World of the Tiger,'" 136.

<sup>82</sup> "Conscription in Canada," *Presbyterian Witness* (April 22, 1916). PANS.

<sup>83</sup> "Registration for National Service," *Presbyterian Witness* (October 21, 1916) and "The National Service Campaign," *Presbyterian Witness* (November 4, 1916). PANS.

Presbyterians supported the war-effort wholeheartedly, and couched the war in many of the same religious contexts as the Methodists. Presbyterians from the Maritimes continued to constitute the vast majority of the student body at Dalhousie University during this period, and all the professors were Presbyterian as per the requirement of the Board of Governors. It was true that the college was not a Presbyterian institution in the same sense that Acadia was Baptist, Mount Allison was Methodist, and St. Francis Xavier was Catholic. While Dalhousie educated and employed many Presbyterians, it was a secular institution – or at least as secular as a college could be in early twentieth century Canada. Prominent Presbyterians sat on the Board of Governors, but the Presbyterian Church did not have any official control over the university as, for example, the Maritime Baptists had over Acadia. Consequently, the role of religion at Dalhousie on an institutional scale during the First World War was considerably diminished compared to the other institutions under consideration. Yet, the impact of religion on the individual Dalhousians was at least equal to that at Acadia, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier. The YMCA and YWCA were very active at Dalhousie during this period, just as at the other institutions. In addition, war-themed articles of a religious nature were common in the *Dalhousie Gazette*:

There is a vastly greater war on in the world; that between righteousness and evil. In the work of reconstruction – not the cities and industry and commerce, but of character and right relations between men and nations, – what is our part? Shall we use the physical lives that others are buying for us, and the possibilities of spiritual life that Jesus bought for us, for selfish purposes? Or for the good of others, the prevention of future war, and the establishment of permanent peace, shall we not dedicate our lives under Christ for service?<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> "The Challenge of the Conference – What Is It?," *Dalhousie Gazette* (February 25, 1918): 1. DUA.

As at Acadia and Mount Allison, conscription appears to have been supported at Dalhousie and there is little evidence that the matter was even open for debate. One article in the *Gazette* from early 1917, however, offers a “hearty and cordial invitation” to those who have not “yet” enlisted and wish to join the Student Volunteer Band to “go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”<sup>85</sup> The Student Volunteer Band, according to their article, believed that there was worthwhile war-work to be done at home to ensure that “we are living lives worthy of [the] sacrifice” of “our friends and loved ones [who] are so cheerfully laying their lives on the altar of sacrifice in order that the principles of liberty, righteousness, and truth may not be violated.”<sup>86</sup> Evidently, the Social Gospel had a strong impact on Presbyterian Dalhousians and worked to shape many individuals’ outlook on the war and their decisions on how to best serve God, their King, and their country.

Meanwhile, at St. Francis Xavier University, conscription did cause some consternation. The Bishop of the Diocese of Antigonish and Chancellor of St. Francis Xavier University, James Morrison, had hoped that conscription would never be necessary, although, when the time came he supported the measure as a means to end the bloodshed.<sup>87</sup> Previously, Bishop Morrison had also supported National Service Registration:

Speaking of the great danger with which the Empire was confronted, he said it was the duty of all to give the authorities hearty support in their every undertaking to preserve the Empire, and urged his hearers to promptly fill in and forward the cards to the Director-General of the National Service.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> “Have You Enlisted?” *Dalhousie Gazette* (February 26, 1917): 9-10. DUA.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> Brewer, “The Diocese of Antigonish and World War I,” 52.

<sup>88</sup> *The Casket* (January 4, 1917). StFXUA.

The Catholic weekly newspaper of Antigonish, *The Casket*, was also notably pro-conscription, but stressed that conscription should not be an issue threatening Canadian unity, as it was simply the duty of all able Canadian men.<sup>89</sup> As Charles Brewer states in "The Diocese of Antigonish and World War I," "[*The Casket*] argued that it would be senseless to win the war against the enemy, but lose our own country by increasing hatred and prejudice."<sup>90</sup> Indeed, the situation was complicated in the Diocese of Antigonish by the presence of an Acadian population who accounted for approximately a quarter of the Catholics in the diocese.<sup>91</sup> At the outbreak of war, the entire Acadian population including its leadership, the *élite*, supported the war effort.<sup>92</sup> As Philippe Doucet writes, "this apparent unanimity disappeared, however, as soon as the question of compulsory military service was raised."<sup>93</sup> Subsequently, the vast majority of Acadians vehemently resisted conscription while many of the *élite* continued to support the measure.<sup>94</sup>

St. Francis Xavier University, its president, vice president, and chancellor were all keenly aware of the strained relationship between English and French Canada, in the context of which the French-English relationship in the diocese required tending. This tension arose, at least in part, out of the pre-war milieu in which one of the main concerns of the Acadian leadership was the Acadianization of the Catholic Church.<sup>95</sup> In this regard, the Acadian community had achieved two key "victories" just prior to the

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<sup>89</sup> Brewer, "The Diocese of Antigonish and World War I," 55.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 164. There were about 23,400 Acadians out of a total of 92,800 Catholics in the diocese in the later war years.

<sup>92</sup> Philippe Doucet, "Politics and the Acadians," in Jean Daigle, ed., *Acadia of the Maritimes* (Moncton: Chaire d'études acadiennes, Université de Moncton, 1995), 307.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 306.

war with the appointment of an Acadian, Mgr Édouard LeBlanc, to the episcopal see of Saint John, New Brunswick in 1912 and Moncton obtaining its first Acadian parish in 1914.<sup>96</sup> Thus, by the autumn of 1914, the Acadians were “more confident of their strength as a group, ... [and] were able to demonstrate a greater degree of independence and maturity.”<sup>97</sup>

In the Diocese of Antigonish, the job of improving relations with the Acadians fell to J.J. Tompkins, the vice president of St. Francis Xavier, who had taught in the Acadian town of Chéticamp, Cape Breton, as a young man and “had a special sensitivity for the plight of minorities.”<sup>98</sup> Tompkins felt StFX should make the effort to improve the education status of the local Acadians to repair the French-English relationship in the region. Acadians had always attended StFX in small numbers, but Tompkins wanted to expand Acadian participation: “Come to our college and learn the best English and Science we can give you. That you may feel we are not trying to rob you of your language or traditions, we shall provide suitable and satisfactory instruction in French language and literature.”<sup>99</sup> To meet this goal, Tompkins endeavoured to have a chair in French endowed at StFX. Tompkins recognized however, that in the lean war years external funding would have to be secured if his vision was to be realized. Consequently, Tompkins approached the philanthropic Carnegie Corporation of New York. Thanks largely to Tompkins’s efforts, in November 1919 the Carnegie Corporation offered \$50,000 to endow a French chair and provide four bursaries if StFX also raised \$50,000 for scholarships and a lectureship in

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 164.

<sup>99</sup> Tompkins to James Bertram, October 29, 1919, RG 6/5/32, Vice-President Tompkins’s Papers, StFXUA, in Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 165.

education.<sup>100</sup> In 1921, the university hired René Gautheron, a graduate of the University of Paris and a former professor of French at the University of Montreal 1912-1919.<sup>101</sup> According to one professor, Tompkins's efforts seemed to create a "bonne entente" between the Acadians and English-Catholics of the diocese.<sup>102</sup> Nevertheless, the move to improve relations with the Acadians of eastern Nova Scotia left many of the local Gaels disheartened. Indeed, *The Casket* asserted that StFX was "lifting ... the Gaul above the Gael."<sup>103</sup> The Antigonish Highland Society was incensed by the matter and strove to underscore "the importance of the "Highland element" in the founding and developing of St.FX."<sup>104</sup> The Society did not want any other nationality to take precedence at StFX. While it was not possible to affect any immediate change in the latter years of the war, by 1919, a class in Gaelic was once again being offered at StFX after a seven year hiatus.<sup>105</sup> In 1920, the Highland Society donated \$100 to the class.<sup>106</sup> In 1921, a recurrent Gaelic column appeared in *The Casket* and the first Gaelic article appeared in *The Xaverian*.<sup>107</sup>

Not all students at St. Francis Xavier and Mount St. Bernard however, agreed with their Bishop and his stance on conscription. Mary Cameron, a Mount St. Bernard student of the class of 1918, expressed her views in the December 1917 issue of *The Memorare*:

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<sup>100</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 165.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> *The Casket* (May 7, 1925): 2, in Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 165.

<sup>104</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 166.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid. Gaelic had been offered previously at StFX from 1890-1891, 1894-1900, 1902-1912.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> James D. Cameron, "The University Contribution to Canadian Multiculturalism: A Case Study of St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia," *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society* 8 (2005): 118 and Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 166.



Conscription convinces us, perhaps more effectively than anything else, of our proximity to the World War. Startling instances have from time to time warned us of our danger. Numberless lives have been taken, ships have been sunk, etc. And in the meantime thousands of volunteers have been leaving Canada, their departure signifying that a great work was to be done in another clime. Many, [sic] of them will never return, but the task is not yet accomplished. The country is now called upon to give much more than it can well spare. In a word, it is for us "the beginning of the end."

But unpleasant as Conscription is in theory and practice, we may note that it is a superb illustration of the power of authority. [...] And authority is a condition to progress.<sup>108</sup>

Cameron's views of conscription are ambivalent to a certain extent. She was wary of the implications of instituting conscription and did not necessarily see conscription as an essential measure to win the war. She did, however, approve of what conscription meant on a larger, more philosophical, scale equating increased government power and authority with progress. On the other hand, almost a year earlier, Sara Cameron made clear her views of conscription in Britain in the February 1916 issue:

It seems clear that an army composed of men who became soldiers from choice should be of infinitely greater value in a crisis than one made up in part of men forced into the ranks. The perverse and mutinous element inevitably found in armies raised by conscription would tend to the disruption rather than to the consolidation of an empire.<sup>109</sup>

She was likely not alone in her views, but neither was Morrison. According to Jonathan Vance, "there were few stauncher supporters of the war than Canada's clergy. For them, the atrocities committed by the enemy demanded that the Allied nations become agents of divine retribution, cleansing the earth of those who defiled Christendom with their crimes."<sup>110</sup> Bishop Morrison received praise for his "unabashed

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<sup>108</sup> Mary Cameron, "Conscription," *The Memorare* (December 1917): 27-28. StFXUA.

<sup>109</sup> Sara Cameron, "The Consolidation of the British Empire," *The Memorare* (February 1916): 32. StFXUA.

<sup>110</sup> Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War*, 35.

patriotism" from Canada's Catholic leaders, including Archbishop of Toronto Neil McNeil, an "export" of Antigonish.<sup>111</sup> As Peter Ludlow notes, however, while Morrison willingly played the role of an "Empire Bishop," he was also cognizant of the delicate position in which the Acadians in the diocese were placed.<sup>112</sup> Nevertheless, Morrison encouraged enlistments and at the completion of the war, the Diocese of Antigonish had sent more than 4,500 Catholic men and women into the fray including five priests as chaplains, 23 medical doctors, and 35 nursing sisters.<sup>113</sup> Indeed, Morrison had felt compelled to ensure that the religious needs of the Catholic men and women of the CEF were met. Accordingly, Morrison took the most direct avenue available and strove to send as many priests from the diocese to France while ensuring the spiritual needs of the people at home were met. As a result, "for Catholic recruits the most poignant visible reminder of the Catholic faith during the war was the presence of the Catholic chaplain."<sup>114</sup> Morrison's ministrations in this regard were complicated due to the politics of the CEF as Duff Crerar mentions in "Bellicose Priests: The Wars of the Canadian Catholic Chaplains 1914-1919." In one instance, Bishop Morrison complained to Prime Minister Borden about the posting away of the Gaelic-speaking priests he had hand-picked for the Nova Scotians of the 25<sup>th</sup> Battalion.<sup>115</sup> This brand of leadership was welcomed by the Catholic leadership throughout the Dominion as it came at a time when "Canadian Imperial nationalists had reason to doubt the levels of loyalty of

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<sup>111</sup> Mark McGowan, "The Maritimes Region and the Building of a Canadian Church: The Case of the Diocese of Antigonish after Confederation," Canadian Catholic Historical Association *Historical Studies*, 70 (2004): 53.

<sup>112</sup> Peter Ludlow, "Cautious but Willing": Archbishop James Morrison, Fourth Bishop of Antigonish, MA Thesis, Saint Mary's University, 2004, 64.

<sup>113</sup> McGowan, "The Maritimes Region and the Building of a Canadian Church," 52.

<sup>114</sup> Mark McGowan, "Harvesting the Red Vineyard: Catholic Religious Culture in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919," Canadian Catholic Historical Association *Historical Studies* 64 (1998): 52.

<sup>115</sup> Duff Crerar, "Bellicose Priests: The Wars of the Canadian Catholic Chaplains 1914-1919," Canadian Catholic Historical Association *History Studies*, 58 (1991): 31.

Catholics in Quebec, in some Ukrainian settlements, and among a pocket of sympathizers with the Irish nationalist Sinn Fein Party.”<sup>116</sup>

Like the Protestants of the Maritimes, the Catholics emerged from the war with a new social consciousness. Protestant efforts were funnelled through the Social Gospel movement, which enjoyed considerable success – especially on the prohibition front.<sup>117</sup> As the Social Gospel was gathering momentum amongst Protestant communities, before, during, and after the war, amongst the Catholics of Canada the notion of extension work grew in paralleled prominence. Extension work in Antigonish County and eastern Nova Scotia grew in part from the Catholic Church Extension Society, which was founded in Toronto in 1908 by Archbishop McNeil.<sup>118</sup> The aim of the society was to bring financial assistance to Canada’s home missions, recruit clergy for the Canadian West, and to instil an English-speaking Catholic presence among the “new” Catholic immigrants.<sup>119</sup> Extension was seen as a means by which the Canadian Catholic network and all of the links contained therein could grow and expand, thus linking Catholics from coast to coast to coast.<sup>120</sup> The Diocese of Antigonish became one of the most vocal proponents of Extension and by the 1920s, the people of the region were reaping the rewards of the movement.<sup>121</sup> St. Francis Xavier University became the centre of this work with Vice President Tompkins leading the efforts with the encouragement of Bishop Morrison and President MacPherson. As Mark McGowan writes, the transmission of ideas was crucial to the Canadian Catholic

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<sup>116</sup> Mark McGowan, “The Maritimes Region and the Building of a Canadian Church,” 53.

<sup>117</sup> See E. R. Forbes, “Prohibition and the Social Gospel in Nova Scotia” *Acadiensis* 1:1 (Autumn 1971): 11-30.

<sup>118</sup> McGowan, “The Maritimes Region and the Building of a Canadian Church,” 57.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

network, and StFX was the hub as it provided a “locus for theological and intellectual formation.”<sup>122</sup>

In his sermon on November 11, 1918, Bishop Morrison indicated that higher education was to be the way of the future for the diocese:

We must attend to industrial and commercial progress, but most of all to that educational progress, which is necessary in this community. In the war it was the man of education who was qualified to take public and onerous positions and see them through successfully. Higher education is absolutely necessary. Perhaps we do not realize how much there is in our favor here. The rest of Canada is talking of us, but we seldom talk of ourselves. Let us realize what we have in our University, and support it and have its best results brought forth in the rising generations.<sup>123</sup>

Indeed, in the summer of 1920, economic depression began in Maritime Canada and would continue for a generation.<sup>124</sup> Morrison believed that the problems of the diocese could be rectified through education and StFX “was the tool through which society’s ills could be cured.”<sup>125</sup> For the men returning to the diocese from the trenches of Europe, the economic problems of the region again became pre-eminent.<sup>126</sup> Many of the local leaders expressed alarm as the economic and political clout of the Maritimes was slowly being whittled away and calls were made for “Maritime Rights” within the federation. With the Canadian financial centres consolidating in Montreal and Toronto and large increases to the freight-rates, Tompkins argued that, “[i]ndustrially and financially we are living under a

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>123</sup> Macdonald, *Catholics of the Diocese of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, And The War: 1914-1919*, 10.

<sup>124</sup> John G. Reid, *Six Crucial Decades: Times of Change in the History of the Maritimes* (Halifax: Nimbus, 1987): 161.

<sup>125</sup> Ludlow, “Cautious but Willing,” 90.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 81.

despotism.”<sup>127</sup> In this vein, Tompkins believed the environment in eastern Nova Scotia was ripe for change as did President MacPherson who believed that the people had “been shaken from their lethargy, backwardness, and isolation by the war.”<sup>128</sup> St. Francis Xavier was also forced to become “less of an ‘isolated academic eminence’” and began to address the issues plaguing the diocese and the region as a whole.<sup>129</sup> In January 1921, the first People’s School was convened with fifty-two students in attendance.<sup>130</sup> The purpose of the school was “to bring knowledge to the people.”<sup>131</sup> Morrison wrote the foreword in the booklet issued to the People’s School students: “Present economic conditions are bringing about a great social awakening among all class of the people, one symptom of which is the hunger for useful and practical knowledge on the part of so many of the young and middle aged adult population.”<sup>132</sup> The People’s School was so successful that it was run once more the following year at StFX and again in 1923 and 1924 in Glace Bay, Cape Breton.<sup>133</sup> Morrison believed that one of the key functions of St. Francis Xavier University was to provide an education to the Catholics of eastern Nova Scotia who would otherwise have no access to such opportunities.<sup>134</sup> Through this education, the people could better themselves and their societal station. With the success of the People’s Schools, it was unclear how best to proceed with extension work and there were differing opinions on the matter. According to Ludlow, it was at this juncture that the schism began to form between

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<sup>127</sup> Tompkins, manuscript, no date, MG 10-2, 1a, (f6), Tompkins Personal Papers, Beaton Institute, Sydney, NS in Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 167.

<sup>128</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 167.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. 196.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 171.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> *The People’s School booklet*, January to March 1921 in Ludlow, “Cautious but Willing,” 94.

<sup>133</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 171.

<sup>134</sup> Ludlow, “Cautious but Willing,” 94-95.

Morrison and Tompkins.<sup>135</sup> To be sure, they believed in many of the same goals; however, they disagreed on how best to achieve them. Thus, the 1920s was a decade embroiled in debate not only at St. Francis Xavier, but also at Acadia, Dalhousie, and Mount Allison as the Carnegie Corporation's proposed federation of Maritime universities caused much consternation amongst university administrators and further compounded existing problems.<sup>136</sup>

This was the milieu that veterans returned to. Some who had abandoned their studies in order to enlist returned to their respective campuses. The Conference of Canadian Universities, with the noted exception of Acadia, urged the federal government to pay the tuition of all men whose education was interrupted by the war and their subsequent enlistment.<sup>137</sup> This proposal included those who had planned to attend university during the war years but had never been able to do so because they chose to enlist instead. The government initially offered loans to disabled veterans only. These loans were later extended to all veterans whose studies had been interrupted but nothing was ever offered to those who entered university for the first time upon returning home to Canada.<sup>138</sup> At Dalhousie, students whose studies had been delayed by anything more than a year were provided a different sort of compensation. A year was deducted from the arts program for veteran students,

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>136</sup> An extensive discussion of university federation will not be offered here. However, see Longley, *Acadia University, 1838-1938*, Chapter 9; Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, Chapter 10; Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, Chapters 8 & 9; Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, Chapter 9 for a thorough analysis of university federation from each institution's perspective.

<sup>137</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 239-240.

<sup>138</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 27.

whereas veteran law students could forego the preliminary year of arts training. No such deductions were made to the medical program.<sup>139</sup>

Enrolments returned to pre-war levels and exceeded them. In 1919, enrolment at Acadia reached 334, which was 100 greater than in 1914.<sup>140</sup> That same year, Dalhousie claimed the largest enrolment in its history at 622 – double the enrolment of 1918.<sup>141</sup> Mount Allison had 186 students enrolled in the 1919-20 academic year, which was 65 more than the previous year and 29 more than in 1913-14.<sup>142</sup> At St. Francis Xavier, enrolment rose from 121 in 1918 to 225 in 1921.<sup>143</sup> In addition, women were now a significant minority on each campus. Due in part to the changing enrolment numbers, the character of each campus was transformed during the war and continued its evolution in the immediate post-war years as a result of the influx of veteran students. The war had altered the perspectives of many of the returned soldiers and this had a noteworthy impact on Maritime campuses. For some, the trauma of the war presented a significant hurdle in the transition to the peaceful life of a student. As one veteran student at Mount Allison wrote in 1920, “this experience of seeing things in the raw has caused men to shun the vain pretence and narrow-mindedness so common in everyday life.”<sup>144</sup> At St. Francis Xavier, the administration permitted returned soldiers to board off campus so that they could enjoy greater freedom.<sup>145</sup> Nevertheless, as Cameron writes, “students appeared less acquiescent and

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<sup>139</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 240.

<sup>140</sup> Longley, *Acadia University, 1838-1938*, 121.

<sup>141</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 240.

<sup>142</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 439.

<sup>143</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 174.

<sup>144</sup> R.M. Palmer, *Mount Allison Record* (March 1920): 34-36 in Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 27.

<sup>145</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 174.

more ready to register complaints.”<sup>146</sup> One student in particular championed student participation in the university’s academic and disciplinary administration decades before advocacy for student empowerment became a popular cause.<sup>147</sup> When the entire senior class threatened to leave StFX in the winter of 1922 due to the expulsion of a particular student, the college authorities were forced to acquiesce and reinstate the student.<sup>148</sup> Moreover, hazing reappeared on campus after several years hiatus despite one faculty member’s opinion that the practice was “degrading, unjust, and un-Christian.”<sup>149</sup> In terms of academics, however, returned soldiers at universities across Canada were regarded as serious students and generally worked to achieve a high academic standard.<sup>150</sup> Most wished to complete their education as quickly as possible and carry on with life in an effort to make up for lost time. In terms of religion, some veteran students developed an intense scrutiny of organized religion and banded together in what came to be known as the Student Christian Movement to promote the ideals of Christian socialism – “the belief that Christianity, shorn of arid theological disputes, had a great message for postwar mankind: the principles of the Sermon on the Mount.”<sup>151</sup> The Student Christian Movement provided an avenue for veteran students to express their spirituality outside the strict structures of organized religion while working to improve the world in the manner they thought best.

Understanding the effect that religion had on Maritimers during the First World War is essential to comprehending how the students, staff, and faculty at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities functioned on a daily

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> *Xaverian* (March 1920): 25-27 in Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 174.

<sup>150</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 27.

<sup>151</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 251.



basis. Religion permeated every aspect of life and it was often enhanced and reinforced at denominational institutions such as Acadia, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier. Religion played a significant role at each institution influencing how students, faculty members, and administrators reacted to the war and what actions they took in response. The denominational affiliations of Acadia, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier make the impact of religion easier to discern, but Dalhousians were no less affected by the words of their minister or by the enlistment propaganda that made effective use of Christian themes. For many Christians, the Great War was a holy war against everything that was wrong with the world personified by Imperial Germany. Indeed, even after the armistice was signed, religion continued to have a pronounced impact on each institution especially as the universities of the Maritimes grappled with the Carnegie Corporation's proposal of university federation. Religion was at the core of the university federation debate and was particularly significant at St. Francis Xavier University. For St. Francis Xavier, as a Catholic institution, the key question, and the one posed to the Congregation of Seminaries and Universities, was "Whether the plan of forming a Federation of all the Colleges both Catholic and non-Catholic into one non-denominational University can be approved, permitted or tolerated?"<sup>152</sup> With Dalhousie University at the core of the federation scheme its status as a "supposedly undenominational but mainly Presbyterian"<sup>153</sup> institution caused some consternation for Morrison and other Catholic educators as they feared that their "distinctive and cherished Catholic approach to education would be co-opted by association with Dalhousie and other Protestant colleges."<sup>154</sup> Even still, at Acadia University the

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<sup>152</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 192.

<sup>153</sup> Bishop Morrison to Most Rev. Peter Di Maria, September 24, 1925, letter # 12529, Bishop Morrison Papers, Antigonish Diocesan Archives in Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 195.

<sup>154</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 195.

reactions of its Baptist constituency to the university's initial pro-federation stance was worrisome for the administrators.<sup>155</sup> At Mount Allison, as John Reid writes, "the two issues of university federation and church union were bound up together."<sup>156</sup> President Trueman was cognizant of Presbyterian Dalhousie College potentially swallowing the Methodist qualities and characteristics of Mount Allison just as many Methodists were concerned about the degree of assimilation that would take place in a United Church of Canada.<sup>157</sup>

The First World War accelerated an evolutionary process that was taking place in the various religious denominations of Maritime Canada prior to the outbreak of war. The Social Gospel of the Protestants and the various extension work endeavours of the Catholics were a progressive movement to change the way Christians looked at helping each other and bettering their society. This new perspective helped to define the war years and had a great impact on what took place in the Maritimes in the 1920s and 30s. Tompkins saw university federation as a means to educate Maritime Catholics at a higher standard while freeing the StFX campus in Antigonish for use as a People's School so that people from all classes could improve their lives. For Tompkins, this was a non-Marxian solution to the economic problems of the region.<sup>158</sup> Morrison, on the other hand, was not unprogressive. He believed in many of the same ideals as Tompkins. Yet, he felt that maintaining St. Francis Xavier as the "heart" of the diocese in Antigonish was the best way to help his flock. Ultimately, the chief concern was money. The war had financially devastated each Maritime university, and had promulgated a regional depression. In effect, the whole university federation debate

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<sup>155</sup> Reid, "Mount Allison College: The Reluctant University," 36.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>158</sup> John G. Reid, "Health, Education, Economy: Philanthropic Foundations in the Atlantic Region in the 1920s and 1930s" *Acadiensis* 14:1 (Autumn 1984): 76.

began because the Carnegie Corporation was being inundated with requests for funding from war-weakened institutions. Things may have progressed down a very different path had there been no war. Indeed, Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities exist as they do today largely because of the First World War.

## Chapter Four

### The Experiences of Women

*Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, [1916] was recruiting day in Wolfville. [...] Capt. Cutten addressed his remarks to the ladies in the audience. He said that they have to bear the sorrow of this war and must of necessity be as courageous as the men at the front. They must not hinder the men from enlisting, but rather help and encourage them to go. Women must assume many of the burdens formerly borne by men and in this way can do much to bring about the successful issue of the war.<sup>1</sup>*

In 1872, Mount Allison College became the first institution in Canada to admit women to university degree programs.<sup>2</sup> This decision was largely based upon the high standing and academic success of the Mount Allison Ladies' College and the influence of several American colleges including the Wesleyan University in Connecticut and Cornell University, which admitted women in 1871 and 1872 respectively.<sup>3</sup> Three years later in 1875, Grace Annie Lockhart became the first woman to earn a bachelor's degree in the British Empire.<sup>4</sup> Due south from Sackville and across Cape Chignecto in Wolfville, the Acadia Seminary was built on the campus of Acadia College in 1879 to provide a separate dormitory and classrooms for female students.<sup>5</sup> Several years later, the senior students of the Seminary petitioned President Sawyer to attend classes at the college.<sup>6</sup> Sawyer permitted them to do so, but warned that they must not consider

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<sup>1</sup> "Recruiting Sunday," *Acadia Athenaeum* (April 1916): 400. AUA.

<sup>2</sup> John G. Reid, "The Education of Women at Mount Allison, 1854-1914," *Acadiensis* 12:2 (Spring 1983): 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Margaret Conrad, Elizabeth Rice and Patricia Townsend, *Women at Acadia University: The First Fifty Years, 1884-1934* (Kentville: Kentville Publishing, 1984), 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

themselves students of Acadia College.<sup>7</sup> When Clara Belle Marshall won top honours in History in her second year, however, Sawyer's warning became moot – the college could not deny Marshall the degree which she had earned.<sup>8</sup> In 1884, Marshall became the first female graduate of Acadia University.<sup>9</sup> The following year, Margaret Florence Newcombe became Dalhousie University's first woman graduate.<sup>10</sup> Dalhousie admitted its first female students in 1881 after being lobbied by people throughout the college community including male students, senior administrators, and professors.<sup>11</sup> St. Francis Xavier University was the last of the four institutions under consideration to grant a degree to a woman. Nevertheless, in 1897 St. Bernard's Ladies' Academy, in affiliation with StFX, became the first Catholic institution in North America to confer a Bachelor of Arts degree on a woman.<sup>12</sup> Three years prior, the Academy, which was later renamed Mount St. Bernard College, officially became affiliated with the university and informal co-educational classes by StFX professors, with male StFX students in attendance, began shortly thereafter.<sup>13</sup> It was not until 1899 that another North American Catholic institution followed in St. Francis Xavier's footsteps and granted a BA to a woman.<sup>14</sup>

According to one historian, the "flood gates" of co-education in Maritime Canada did not open until the last decade of the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup> From 1900 onwards, the trickle – if not yet a full torrent – became irrepressible. At Mount Allison,

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 133.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 131-132.

<sup>12</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 97,

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>15</sup> Conrad, *Women at Acadia University*, 5.

it was not until 1882 that Harriet Starr Stewart became the second female university graduate in Canada and the first to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree.<sup>16</sup> During the 1880s, only three other women graduated from Mount Allison.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, from 1891 to 1900, there were 31 women graduates.<sup>18</sup> By the 1910-11 academic year, women constituted over one-quarter of the student population at Mount Allison accounting for 41 of the 155 students.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, at Acadia prior to 1893, only four other women followed Clara Marshall's example and earned degrees.<sup>20</sup> By 1913, however, women comprised just under a quarter of the student body at Acadia.<sup>21</sup> At Dalhousie, from 1881-92 to 1900-01, 392 women attended the university constituting 23% of the student body.<sup>22</sup> At St. Francis Xavier University, female enrolments were lower. Eighteen women attended the university during the 1910-11 academic year out of a total student body of 132 (14%).<sup>23</sup> It is likely, however, that enrolments at Mount St. Bernard College contributed many more women to the female population of the campus.

Remarkable academic success and the force of numbers precipitated great change in the educational status of women in Maritime Canada in the first fourteen years of the twentieth century. The outbreak of the First World War, however, expedited the evolution of the place of women on the university campuses of Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier. The war offered new opportunities and new challenges to women at each institution. For example, at Acadia during the

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<sup>16</sup> Reid, "The Education of Women at Mount Allison, 1854-1914," 27.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Conrad, *Women at Acadia University*, 5.

<sup>22</sup> Fingard, "College, Career, and Community: Dalhousie Coeds, 1881-1921," 26.

<sup>23</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 393.

First World War, writes Margaret Conrad, “women dominated the campus, outnumbering men, winning almost all of the academic awards and presiding over campus activities.”<sup>24</sup>

At Acadia, the outbreak of war coincided with the opening of Whitman Hall, which later became colloquially known as Tully Tavern, as the first female residence at Acadia.<sup>25</sup> According to Barry Moody, the new residence and the war itself brought the already close-knit female community at Acadia into closer physical and emotional proximity.<sup>26</sup> Even prior to the war, the female students at Acadia enjoyed an intimate way of life that was further strengthened by the homosocial clubs and activities of the university including the Propylaem Society and the YWCA.<sup>27</sup> The closeness of the female students at Acadia was not unique, but was an extension of Victorian norms of female socialization.<sup>28</sup> As Carroll Smith-Rosenberg writes in “The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth Century America,” the friends that young women made at school were extremely important to their social growth and maturation:

Young girls helped each other overcome homesickness and endure the crises of adolescence. They gossiped about beaux, incorporated each other into their own kinship systems, and attended and gave teas and balls together. Older girls in boarding school “adopted” younger ones, who called them “Mother.”<sup>29</sup>

While Smith-Rosenberg referred to young American women of the late nineteenth-century, the statement appears to be equally relevant to female students at Acadia

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<sup>24</sup> Conrad, *Women at Acadia University*, 5.

<sup>25</sup> Moody, “Acadia and the Great War,” 156.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Moody, “Esther Clark Goes to College,” 43.

<sup>28</sup> Moody, “Acadia and the Great War,” 156.

<sup>29</sup> Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, “The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth Century America,” *Signs* 1:1 (Autumn 1975): 19.

during the Great War. Indeed, the atmosphere described in Esther Clark's letters home, as analyzed by Barry Moody, illustrate a very similar dynamic amongst female students at Acadia.<sup>30</sup>

Furthermore, with the sudden decline in the number of male students at Acadia due to enlistment, female relationships became even more meaningful.<sup>31</sup> The void created by absent male family members, friends, and acquaintances was immediately filled by fellow female students creating a much needed support network.<sup>32</sup> To a degree, women also replaced men as romantic companions and "an undeniably romantic and even sensual note frequently marked [some] female relations."<sup>33</sup> Indeed, Moody offers an example from the diary of an anonymous Acadia student which expounds the intense jealousy felt when another female student became close with the diarist's best friend:

I was absurdly jealous, but by that time I cared for her so devotedly that I was incapable of rational judgement where she was concerned ... My love for her was of an intensity that I could not control, and I went home possessed by very stormy emotions ... the change in her was like a knife in my heart.<sup>34</sup>

The situation was similar but markedly different on a few points at Dalhousie University. According to Judith Fingard, the experiences of female students before, during, and after the First World War were shaped by three major influences: "the intensification of women's activities in their own separate sphere; the eagerly pursued religious experiences of Bible study, the Student Volunteer Movement, and the Student Christian Movement, and ... the war."<sup>35</sup> The biggest difference between

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<sup>30</sup> Moody, "Esther Clark Goes to College," 43.

<sup>31</sup> Moody, "Acadia and the Great War," 156.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual," 24.

<sup>34</sup> Moody, "Acadia and the Great War," 156.

<sup>35</sup> Fingard, "College, Career, and Community: Dalhousie Coeds, 1881-1921," 38.



Dalhousie and Acadia was the absence at Dalhousie of a women's residence until Shirreff Hall was opened in 1923. As a result, women attending Dalhousie prior to 1923 lived at home if they were from Halifax, or roomed in one of the many boarding houses available to young women in the city. Thus, socialization amongst female students at Dalhousie was constrained by the lack of a women's residence – an element that Esther Clark believed was essential to college life. Indeed, when rumours circulated in 1914 that upper-year students at Acadia were going to have to live off campus, Clark exclaimed to her father, "It will just mean that we will miss half the college life."<sup>36</sup>

With the increasing female student population at Dalhousie during the end of the nineteenth century, some women became increasingly aware of their exclusion from the university societies run by male students.<sup>37</sup> Thus, in 1899 a group of women formed the Delta Gamma society, which was not exclusive like a fraternity but still maintained some of the traditional trappings such as an autumn initiation of new students, called freshettes, by the society members.<sup>38</sup> The society was also concerned with social, intellectual, and political matters.<sup>39</sup> Debating was an important activity of the Delta Gamma society with topics ranging from "It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all" to "Women should receive equal wages with men for equal work performed."<sup>40</sup> The debates of the Delta Gamma society precipitated female participation in faculty and inter-faculty debates during the war and the founding of a formal women's intercollegiate debating team after the war.<sup>41</sup> Bible study,

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<sup>36</sup> Esther Clark to father, March 1914, in Moody, "Esther Clark Goes to College," 43.

<sup>37</sup> Fingard, "College, Career, and Community: Dalhousie Coeds, 1881-1921," 38.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 39.

participation in the YWCA, and later the Student Christian Movement, was also an important part of the lives of Dalhousie's female students. As Fingard writes, "one of the most striking phenomena of college life during and after the war was the preoccupation of many Protestant students with interpreting and promoting the Bible."<sup>42</sup> Women were also active in mixed societies and college activities such as the college paper, the *Dalhousie Gazette*. Their role in mixed societies became more pronounced later in the war as the absence of their male counterparts produced vacancies in many of the leadership roles on campus. Indeed, by the 1917-1918 academic year, women accounted for almost 40% of the student body.<sup>43</sup> As at Acadia, older students at Dalhousie often endeavoured to help and provide a support network of sorts for the first and second year students. Sometimes, however, it appears that this relationship was not totally amicable. A glimpse into this unique kinship between some Dalhousie women is provided in the December 15, 1917 issue of the *Gazette* in a sardonic article offering advice to the new female students at Dalhousie on how they should behave:

ADVICE TO NEW DAL. GIRLS.  
(Contributed by those who are more experienced.)

1. Always wear a slightly patronising expression. Doubtless it will be hard, but the college term is only seven months.
2. Endeavour to be "nice" to the Seniors and Juniors. Poor dears! They will appreciate your condescension.
3. Remember that the old girls love to hear the sound of your gentle voices while you are doing your Latin and French in the waiting room. It is instructive as well as pleasing.
4. Do not forget that the Faculty set apart the Library for audible conversation.
5. Waste no time at the Bulletin Board. The Posting of Notices has lapsed into mere tradition. You will find many interesting archives [sic] affixed thereto.

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

6. Never hold a door open for anyone, least of all for a Professor or an upper class girl. It isn't done in advanced circles.
7. Always remind the professors that; "They only are wise who know that they know nothing."
8. It is not comme if [sic] faut to attend the meetings of the Y. W. or Delta Gamma.
9. Lastly, make it plain to everyone that you confer an incalculable honour upon Dal. by your presence.<sup>44</sup>

It is likely that the article was written by one or several third- or fourth-year women and is a statement of the nine most troubling and annoying acts and behaviors of first year female students at Dalhousie. Evidently, the bond of Dalhousie's coeds was complicated and varied. While they may have been friendly and supported one another most of the time, inter-class relationships remained complex.

Dalhousie was also unique in that it did not have a constituent ladies' college on its campus. By 1914, Acadia, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier each admitted women into their university programs and also had significant populations of women on their campuses at the Acadia Seminary, Mount Allison Ladies' College, and Mount St. Bernard College. These separate educational institutions were later fully incorporated into their parent institution, but the coexistence of both women's colleges and coeducational universities on the same campus at this time marked an important transitory period. Dalhousie never had to make this transition. In addition to Dalhousie, young women of the Halifax area had many options if they wished to pursue post-secondary education, including attending Mount St. Vincent Academy in Bedford if they were Catholic, or going away to school at Acadia or Mount Allison if they were Protestant. Nevertheless, a unique relationship existed between Dalhousie and Mount St. Vincent Academy with the Dalhousie Senate approving a program on April 9, 1914 whereby Mount St. Vincent would offer young women the first two years

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<sup>44</sup> "Advice to New Dal. Girls," *The Dalhousie Gazette* (December 15, 1917): 2. DUA.

of a university degree after which they would then go to Dalhousie to complete the requisite third and fourth years of study.<sup>45</sup> The war delayed enacting the plan until September 1916 when the Dalhousie Board of Governors authorized Mount St. Vincent to begin offering first and second year courses on a year-by-year basis.<sup>46</sup> In return, Mount St. Vincent paid Dalhousie \$2,500 a year to fund the final two years of education on the Dalhousie campus. This agreement lasted until 1925 when Mount St. Vincent was incorporated as a college.<sup>47</sup>

It appears that the residential nature of Acadia, Mount Allison, St. Francis Xavier, moulded the social structures of the female students who attended these institutions. At Mount Allison, the atmosphere and sense of community enjoyed by the female students was very similar to Acadia's. Moreover, the importance of societies such as the YWCA was a continuing trend at Mount Allison, with the 1914 welcoming article from the ladies' college in the *Argosy* noting, "The Y.W.C.A. has already gained the interest and support of all the girls, by its earnest mid-week and Sunday evening services."<sup>48</sup> Indeed, societies were seen by the women at Mount Allison as essential elements of college life: "We cordially welcome the new girls who have joined our ranks for the first term, and we hope that Mount Allison may indeed be your second home. Join the college societies girls, and enter into the college spirit, for it is only by doing so that you will get the most out of your life here."<sup>49</sup> The women who attended the university during this period however, did not have a separate residence as did the

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<sup>45</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 232.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 233.

<sup>48</sup> "Ladies' College Notes," *The Argosy* (October 1914): 48. MAA.

<sup>49</sup> "Ladies' College," *The Argosy* (January 1915): 247. MAA.

women at Acadia. Instead, they were housed with the ladies' college students.<sup>50</sup> This resulted in a unique dynamic forming between the college women and those who attended the university. At first, the female university students enjoyed some special privileges that the college students did not. This was unacceptable to some of the pupils at the ladies' college as some "were just as mature as those taking university studies" – especially those who were in such college programs as "Fine Arts, Music, and Business."<sup>51</sup> As a result, the university students were moved to their own separate part of the ladies' college building, but this "did not work too well."<sup>52</sup> Finally, in 1920, the Ford Hotel was leased by the university to become the first women's residence and was the first to be named Allison Hall.<sup>53</sup> It is interesting to note that the struggle for who had more privileges, and ultimately who had more freedom, was the key point of contention in this conflict between the college and university women. Indeed, as John Reid writes, "for the women students [in the spring of 1915], one of the most recent effects of the war had been a retrenchment of their already limited freedoms."<sup>54</sup> Evidently, the faculty of the ladies' college was concerned about "the existing conditions in Amherst, resulting from the presence there of a large number of soldiers."<sup>55</sup> As a result, from April 1915 onwards, no ladies' college student was permitted to visit Amherst unless chaperoned by a teacher, and weekend visits were strictly forbidden.<sup>56</sup> The women's students' council also voted to apply the same

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<sup>50</sup> Raymond Clare Archibald, *Historical Notes on the Education of Women at Mount Allison 1854-1954* (Sackville: The Centennial Committee, Mount Allison University, 1954), 8.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 6.

<sup>55</sup> Minutes of student council (women), April 13, 1915, Trueman memorabilia, 7722/4/2, MAA, in Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 6

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

restrictions to female university students, although it is significant that the ladies' college students had the rule imposed upon them while the university women willingly imposed the limitation upon themselves.<sup>57</sup>

While the war reduced liberties for women in some respects at Mount Allison, in other areas of college life newfound freedoms were earned. Aida McAnn of Moncton, Marguerite Jonah of Sussex, and Helen Plummer of Hartland were the valedictorians of the classes of 1916, 1917, and 1918 respectively.<sup>58</sup> In addition, on March 30, 1917, a women's debating team from Mount Allison defeated a team from Dalhousie – likely members of the aforementioned Delta Gamma society – in the first women's intercollegiate debate held in the Maritimes.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, eleven Mount Allison women served as nurses during the war.<sup>60</sup> These were not just the achievements of young, upper-class women whose fathers had provided them with every educational opportunity their whole lives. On the contrary, at Mount Allison, many of the young women were from modest backgrounds where their parents often had to make sacrifices to send their daughters to post-secondary education. As John Reid noted, from 1870 to 1911, students at the ladies' college tended to come from rural areas or small towns and their fathers were often employed as retail or wholesale merchants, farmers, or business owners and managers in the industrial and commercial sectors of the economy.<sup>61</sup> Some women came from urban areas where their fathers worked as professionals, but by the same token, some of the students' fathers worked as fishermen or in the coal mines.<sup>62</sup> Thus, the ladies' college was by no

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 10.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> "The College Honor Roll," *The Argosy* (December 1918). MAA.

<sup>61</sup> Reid, "The Education of Women at Mount Allison, 1854-1914," 23-24.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 24.

means a finishing school for the rich elite of Halifax and Saint John.<sup>63</sup> The trend was slightly different for the female students at the university, but many still came from rural areas and were the daughters of farmers. Indeed, between 1903-1909 eighty-nine women attended Mount Allison University – 23 were the daughters of professionals, clergy, and government officials while 30 were the daughters of businessmen, merchants, commercial travellers, farmers, and non-manual workers.<sup>64</sup> It is highly likely that this trend extended to both male and female students at Acadia, Dalhousie, and St. Francis Xavier Universities throughout the 1910s. At St. Francis Xavier there were individuals such as Angus L. Macdonald who attended St. Francis Xavier intermittently between 1909 and 1914 due to inadequate finances to fund his education.<sup>65</sup> Lucy Maud Montgomery, author of *Anne of Green Gables*, was only able to afford one year at Dalhousie during the 1895-96 academic year.<sup>66</sup> There were individuals from upper and upper-middle class origins such as Esther Clark at Acadia whose father was a prominent Fredericton businessman and later became Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, but they were by no means the norm.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, expectations regarding social class can be deceiving – especially in the Maritimes. Just because one attended university in the Maritimes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not mean that he or she was from the city, rich, and only pursuing education in an effort to refine oneself.

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 25. Please see the full table (Table III) for additional information. The background of the remaining 36 individuals, as John Reid notes, is unknown due to the student not being from the Maritimes, their father being deceased, an inability to identify their father, or no data being available.

<sup>65</sup> Stephen T. Henderson, *Angus L. Macdonald: A Provincial Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 13-14.

<sup>66</sup> Fingard, "College, Career, and Community: Dalhousie Coeds, 1881-1921," 27.

<sup>67</sup> Moody, "Esther Clark Goes to College," 40.

At Mount St. Bernard College in Antigonish, the social dynamic of its pupils was as complex as at any other institution. Just like the women who attended Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, those who attended Mount St. Bernard as well as St. Francis Xavier were moulded by their socio-economic background, their religion, and their parents.<sup>68</sup> These forces shaped an acceptable form of behaviour that was to be followed by all – or at least by those who wish to be accepted into the community. An article in the February 1917 *Memorare* by senior student Gertrude Boyd delineates in a similar fashion to the “Advice to New Dal. Girls” article in the *Gazette* a code of conduct for young women at Mount St. Bernard – albeit in a more earnest tone:

#### The Popular College Girl.

The Popular College Girl! Yes, she is the one I mean to discuss in this sketch, for I am convinced that her acquaintance will prove beneficial to every one of us. This generous, broad-minded, jolly girl takes everything and everybody as they come, and spends no time pining over the adverse fates that might have turned the wheel-of-fortune at another angle.

The popular girl is unobtrusive [sic]. For, though always to the front where co-operation with teachers or companions is required, she is wise enough to see where people can get along without her, and refrains from meddling. Oh! most certainly she gets into scrapes – more than any of the other girls, perhaps, but her frankness and good-will always bring her out even, for she disarms justice by her readiness to acknowledge any short-comings, and thoughtlessness of conduct. Generous to a fault, she would not stoop to entertain feelings of “spite” and is ever ready to forgive and forget. She is never behind in any sport and is willing to do her bit without waiting to be invited. Moreover, when there is a question of giving some less fortunate companion a little pleasure, she is first to proffer her services. Last but not least, she can take a good practical joke, and then she knows how to play one back.

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<sup>68</sup> Women who attended St. Francis Xavier boarded at Mount St. Bernard in an arrangement similar to the one that existed at Mount Allison. When they went to class they were accompanied by sisters from the Congrégation de Notre-Dame. (Cameron 467)



So here's to the Popular College Girl who is good and bad in spots but always looks for the good spots in everybody else and ignores the bad ones!<sup>69</sup>

This article, which was placed next to columns on "The Submarine Peril" and "Air-Craft in the Present War", clearly denoted a behavioural expectation for the women at Mount St. Bernard. Perhaps it was written as a reminder or, alternatively, as a polite complaint. Upon closer inspection, there are hints of possible sources of contention in the social structure of Mount St. Bernard as a result of the war. Boyd plainly dislikes women who "pine over the adverse fates" and those who do not give "some less fortunate companion a little pleasure." Indeed, a fellow student might have been pining over the absence of a loved one fighting overseas or mourning the loss of a family member in the war and in need of "a little pleasure." Boyd was also tacitly providing evidence of a social support network that existed at Mount St. Bernard – a network that was very similar to the ones that existed at Acadia, Dalhousie, and Mount Allison. She was certainly suggesting that the "popular girl" was one who would be there for others and help them ease their worries or support them through the grieving process. In a much earlier issue of *The Memorare*, additional evidence is provided telling of the lengths that some women went to in an effort to ensure the emotional well-being of their classmates:

During Commencement week much ingenuity had been resorted to, that all newspapers might be kept out of Anna [Murphy]'s reach, and that no unguarded word might come to her ears of the holocaust of Canadians on the field of battle. Two weeks previous, a letter from her brother written in the trenches told of his nearness to the German lines and of the occasional "taking off" of a comrade by a stray bullet or the bursting of shrapnel.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Gertrude Boyd, "The Popular College Girl," *The Memorare* (February 1917): 38-39. StFXUA.

<sup>70</sup> "News From The Front," *The Memorare* (June 1915): 27. StFXUA.

This strong belief in service to others, which has obvious Christian roots, was truly put to the test during the war at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier just as it was across the country. Not only were individuals forced to help extended family, friends, neighbours, classmates, and acquaintances, but also, complete strangers who lived miles away. Indeed, December 1917 and the following winter of 1918 was the most trying period of the war for those who lived in Halifax and the surrounding area.

Around 8:45 AM on Thursday, December 6, 1917 catastrophe struck in Halifax as the French steamship *Mont Blanc*, carrying a load of munitions, collided with the Norwegian steamer *Imo* in Halifax harbour.<sup>71</sup> A fire ensued, igniting the *Mont Blanc's* cargo. Approximately 2,000 people were killed by the explosion and in the subsequent tidal wave.<sup>72</sup> Thousands more were injured, especially by flying glass. Roughly 10,000 were left homeless as a brutal blizzard descended upon Halifax that afternoon and evening.<sup>73</sup> Dalhousie physicist Howard Bronson had been working in the physics laboratory in the new Science Building and had felt the whole building shake at 9:05 AM.<sup>74</sup> He later calculated that the total energy of the explosion was  $10^{11}$  x 8.7 kg.metres.<sup>75</sup> Both male and female students from Dalhousie volunteered their services almost immediately after the disaster:

Dalhousians did not lag in these efforts to lift the city from the abyss into which it had been hurled. In any place where relief work was progressing, the hospitals, the bread lines, the clothing depots, students were to be found. The Medicals did strenuous work in dressing wounds and at the hospitals, a task which still continues.

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<sup>71</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 236.

<sup>72</sup> MacKenzie, "Eastern Approaches: Maritime Canada and Newfoundland," 365.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 236.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

[...] Dalhousie has every reason to be proud that her children did not falter in the crisis.<sup>76</sup>

Dalhousie's female students especially distinguished themselves, warranting a separate article on the front page of the *Gazette* about their contributions:

Dalhousie girls responded nobly and promptly to the call for voluntary helpers. The day of the explosion many of them went directly to the hospitals, emergency and permanent, where, among the horrible confusion and sickening scenes, they did what they could towards assisting the doctors. Others helped in distributing food and clothing, or in house to house visiting.

[...]

Perhaps the most interesting achievement was that of Margaret Wright and Mabel White. After the explosion they went to Rockhead prison, which was in a state of terrible confusion. Although it was in the devastated area, they remained there until Saturday with no relief. With them were the Misses Josephine and Helen Crichton. These four girls had complete charge of the prison for two days and nights.<sup>77</sup>

Fortunately, casualties at Dalhousie were fairly light with only two students being seriously wounded with one young man by the name of "Hamilton" losing an eye and a young woman, "Miss Gunn", receiving wounds to her hands and face.<sup>78</sup> Many of Dalhousie's buildings did not fare so well, sustaining what President MacKenzie estimated to be \$10,000 of damage in total with the new Science Building, where Dr. Bronson had been working, accounting for \$4,000 of that sum.<sup>79</sup> On December 11, 1917, MacKenzie telegraphed the Carnegie Corporation of New York asking for the financial assistance necessary to repair the Science Building.<sup>80</sup> The Carnegie Corporation responded by offering to pay for all necessary repairs to Dalhousie's

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<sup>76</sup> "Relief Work Among Collegians," *The Dalhousie Gazette* (January 29, 1918): 1. DUA.

<sup>77</sup> "Relief Work Among the Women," *The Dalhousie Gazette* (January 29, 1918): 1. DUA.

<sup>78</sup> "Casualties at Dalhousie," *The Dalhousie Gazette* (January 29, 1918): 1. DUA.

<sup>79</sup> Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, vol. 1, 238.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

buildings.<sup>81</sup> The true cost of repairs was well over \$20,000, but the Carnegie Corporation still paid.<sup>82</sup>

In Antigonish, on December 6, students at St. Francis Xavier and Mount St. Bernard heard a rumble and felt their buildings shake without knowing the cause. When they learned of the tragedy in Halifax they made preparations to receive some of the wounded and homeless, although the blizzard hindered rail transportation between Truro and Antigonish.<sup>83</sup> Hilda Meagher, a Mount St. Bernard student, reported on the “Halifax Disaster” in the February 1918 issue of *The Memorare* – the first issue after the explosion. The article is reprinted in full below to show the heartache and anxiety felt by the students of Mount St Bernard and StFX. The religious undertones are evident and there is a definite tenor of anger in regards to what took place:

On December 6<sup>th</sup> the startling news of the Halifax disaster was flashed upon us, like a bolt from the blue. Following the first announcement came many other rumors as to the nature of the explosion and the number of lives lost, until our minds were crowded with all sorts of dreadful imaginings; but no conception could be formed more terrible than the appalling reality.

Our immediate thought was for the welfare of the relatives and friends of our number whose homes were in the ill-fated city. In anxious suspense, since telegraph communication was cut off, the slow-coming missive was awaited which would dispel our doubts, and many a heartfelt prayer of gratitude was breathed as the good news was heard of the safety of this or that loved one.

Alas for the enormous number of innocent lives so ruthlessly hurled to their doom without a moment's [sic] warning! Considering the incident, the more skeptical might perhaps be inclined to inquire why such things are allowed to happen -

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University*, 463.

incomprehensible indeed are the ways of Providence and we must be resigned to the inevitable.

To relieve the suffering and destitute was the next earnest consideration. With this in view both teachers and students set to work and plied the needle with willing hands, the law of charity permitting the good work to be carried on during the following Holy day and Sunday. All else was forgotten. The one idea uppermost was to help the sufferers.

However trifling our part may be, yet we feel grateful for the opportunity of having at least a small share in the great relief work.<sup>84</sup>

The Halifax Explosion appears to have had a lesser impact on Acadia and Mount Allison. News of the event is absent from both the *Athenaeum* and the *Argosy*. Nevertheless, at Acadia, President Cutten was seconded once again in 1918 from his presidential duties to work as Director of Rehabilitation for the Halifax Relief Commission.<sup>85</sup> The Halifax Explosion brought the violence and death of the war in Europe to the home front. The disaster was not only a key event for Maritime and Canadian society, but also, for women. It marked a clear, albeit temporary, break from the traditional separate spheres model. If women – young women at that – could contribute so much in a time of crisis, perhaps the male-dominated society had underestimated its female counterparts.

Mount Allison suffered a different sort of hardship in 1918, as it appears to have been the hardest hit of the four institutions in the influenza epidemic that swept Canada. The students of Mount Allison Ladies' College suffered the most due to their overcrowded residence.<sup>86</sup> On October 11, 1918, the public schools of Sackville closed because of the epidemic and the ladies' college was forced to quarantine some of its

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<sup>84</sup> Hilda Meagher, "The Halifax Disaster," *The Memorare* (February 1918): 24.

<sup>85</sup> Longley, *Acadia University, 1838-1938*, 121.

<sup>86</sup> Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 2, 21.

students who had become ill.<sup>87</sup> On October 23, the college was also forced to close.<sup>88</sup> The university however, was relatively unaffected and there were only a few mild cases at the academy.<sup>89</sup> Influenza also hit St. Francis Xavier but its impact there was relatively mild:

The epidemic popularly known as the Spanish "Flu" caused much consternation on its first visit to the town and college. Reports of "Flu" cases from other parts were very alarming and proper precautions were therefore taken here.

The first few cases among the students caused some uneasiness. However with disinfectants and fumigation the "Flu" made an unceremonious exit.<sup>90</sup>

Amidst the hysteria of the influenza epidemic sweeping the Maritimes, the Great War at last came to its bloody conclusion on November 11, 1918. As David MacKenzie writes, "the war ended almost as unexpectedly as it had begun, and the people of Atlantic Canada and Newfoundland were hardly prepared for the peace, even though they had been longing for it for years."<sup>91</sup> The peace precipitated great change across the Maritimes. The end of the war was not only an end to the killing on the fields of France, but also, an end to wartime production, war work, and wartime jobs – ultimately an end to the wartime prosperity that had been enjoyed in Maritime Canada. This prosperity had taken many forms, not the least of which was the employment of women in previously male-dominated roles out of wartime necessity. This unprecedented change to the avenues of employment open to women did not go unnoticed by female post-secondary students in the Maritimes as the aforementioned debate topics of Dalhousie's Delta Gamma society show. The first

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> "Influenza," *The Xaverian* (December 1918): 52.

<sup>91</sup> MacKenzie, "Eastern Approaches: Maritime Canada and Newfoundland," 369.

peacetime issue of Mount St. Bernard's *The Memorare* carried an essay that was delivered previously by Leona Hennessey at the commencement exercises of May 1918. Titled "Woman in Industry," the essay discussed the shift that took place as a result of the war forcing women out of their homes and into the workplace as the men vacated their positions to serve: "This awful world-war has revolutionized practically everything; but nothing so much as the sphere of Woman's activities."<sup>92</sup> According to Hennessey, the movement of women into traditional male roles was out of necessity and "woman's patriotism caused her to come forward."<sup>93</sup> She also noted that it was "regrettable [sic] ... that women have been obliged to leave their own special work" but acknowledged the "practically unlimited field in the industrial world [that] has been opened up before us [women]."<sup>94</sup> Hennessey recommended that technical education was the way in which women could improve their role in the working world suggesting that occupations such as journalist, translator, "draftsman", civil servant, physicist, chemist, and statistician were well-suited for women.<sup>95</sup> More important to Hennessey was the new opportunity provided to women by being given the federal vote:

Since the economic status of woman has undergone so complete a change, a voice in the making of laws which so closely concern her is no longer a matter of sentiment alone. ... It consequently becomes a serious social and civic obligation for women to make a careful study of the industrial evils, which can be cured by legislation and to give their support to the measures brought forward for their removal. Perhaps the best way for women to cure these evils would be to use their influence so that men may get a proper living wage, and thus make it unnecessary for women and children to work in shops and factories.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Leona Hennessey, "Woman in Industry," *The Memorare* (December 1918): 2. StFXUA.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 3.

Indeed, while Hennessey saw the many benefits to women that the war brought about, she was concerned about the far reaching consequences of this change. The latter part of her essay reiterated that women's place in the industrial world was just a temporary wartime necessity as "their weaker muscular power and more delicately balanced mental machinery unfit them [sic] for the heavier toils of industrial life...."<sup>97</sup> By the same token, women were encouraged by this literary denigration of their abilities to consider "careers" that would not be detrimental to their "womanliness" such as teaching, nursing, and housecraft.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, women who took jobs in industry were blamed by Hennessey for the disintegration of family affection, the breaking up of the home, and the "canker of society - divorce."<sup>99</sup> Hennessey concluded proclaiming her ultimately conventional vision for women's rightful place in society in the future:

When peace dawns once more upon earth, may we not cherish the hope that the society which shall survive this fearful carnage, may enthrone woman anew as queen of the home where her sceptre will be adorned not by woman's rights but by woman's privileged, and where she will rule within "four walls" a sphere as wide as the universe.<sup>100</sup>

Opinions on women's proper "sphere" in the post-war world varied across the Maritimes. Undoubtedly some men and women agreed with Hennessey. Others entertained a slightly different outlook such as one Acadia student writing in the *Athenaeum*:

Woman for a generation has sought her place in the world – man on the other hand has opposed her, demanding that 'she make good' while relentlessly denying her the opportunity. In the face of unwarranted opposition she has conquered the stage; held her own in the world of letters and marked progress in the field of science.

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.



War necessity proved her golden opportunity – it has given her day, the chance she sought came upon its declaration; loyally she answered that challenge; glorious has been her success.<sup>101</sup>

Regardless of the differing opinions concerning the “proper sphere” for women, it was recognized and agreed upon that the war had been a significant catalyst for change and it would be extremely difficult to return to a status quo ante bellum situation. Hennessey acknowledged this shift, but nevertheless formulated the opinion that everything should be done to return women to the home.

At first, there was a return to pre-war living and in the immediate post-war era women tended to work as domestic servants, teachers, and as factory workers continuing to earn less than their male counterparts.<sup>102</sup> Not everything was a return to “normalcy,” however, as the war had precipitated one major change for women across Canada and that could not be reversed. Women now had the federal vote and in 1918, 1919, and 1922, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island followed suit respectively.<sup>103</sup> Almost immediately, there were complaints that women were not using the franchise effectively but as Ian McKay writes, “the boundaries of so fundamental a category as citizenship had changed; and in this instance civil society would not return to its prewar pattern.”<sup>104</sup> At Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier, male students started to return in significant numbers in 1918. Throughout 1919 the male-female ratio of students slowly reverted to the pre-war dominance of males, with the men reassuming many of their expected leadership roles on campus. There were many issues with reintegrating student veterans into the

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<sup>101</sup> *Acadia Athenaeum* (January 1917): 84 in Tammy Lynn Pettigrew, “Womanly in Their Strength: The Woman Graduates of Acadia University in 1916,” BA Thesis, Acadia University, 1994, 49.

<sup>102</sup> MacKenzie, “Eastern Approaches: Maritime Canada and Newfoundland,” 369.

<sup>103</sup> McKay, “The 1910s: The Stillborn Triumph of Progressive Reform,” 223-224.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

campus communities and all four institutions gave them a wide berth granting privileges they would not have had before the war. While many of the female students were relegated to their separate sphere it was not forgotten that young women had been valedictorians and had effectively led mixed societies on the campuses. Moreover, the number of female students continued to increase, which resulted in an increasingly equal male-female ratio.

The female students at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities and their affiliated institutions struggled together through the hardship and weariness of the war. The social support networks and special relationships that were formed were essential for these women to handle and come to terms with the emotional stress of the war while continuing to study. The terrible tragedy of the Great War offered new opportunities for many women across Canada including the young women attending college and university in the Maritimes. The war offered new challenges and the young women discovered that they could meet these crises head-on and succeed despite the fact that they were part of the so-called “weaker sex.” Women dominated, albeit to varying degrees, the campus scenes of Maritime colleges during the war fighting their own battles to show what they could do and ultimately pave the way for the future.

## Conclusion

The First World War brought about substantial changes at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities. Some changes were specific to the war years, while others had lasting results. The war presented a complex dilemma for the students, staff, and faculty of each university. For many, the war generated an increased awareness of being Canadian and a part of the British Empire. This precipitated similar reactions to the war amongst each of the four campus communities. The patriotic fervour that swept the Maritimes was palpable on the campuses in Wolfville, Halifax, Sackville, and Antigonish. Indeed, many of the reactions and attitudes towards the war were extensions of what was taking place outside the walls of the universities. The war also offered the opportunity for adventure and service. Not surprisingly, the most salient reaction to the war amongst male students was to leave their studies and enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Student enlistment severely affected enrolment numbers at each university. In turn, low enrolments impacted the financial stability of all the institutions, though in varying degrees. Faculty enlistments decapitated academic departments and even COTC contingents. Dalhousie and St. Francis Xavier Universities each raised a Stationary Hospital Unit that served in France during the war. Dalhousie raised No. 7 Stationary Hospital from its medical faculty, medical students, and non-medical students. St. Francis Xavier raised No. 9 Stationary Hospital Unit from alumni doctors and its undergraduate student body. This was a remarkable accomplishment for a university with no medical faculty. Interestingly, for a time, a graduate of Mount Allison served as the commanding officer of the StFX Unit. Furthermore, students from Mount Allison and Acadia served in both the StFX and Dalhousie Hospital Units. The No. 7 and No. 9

Stationary Hospital Units were disbanded at the end of the war, but they continued to symbolize the patriotism and dedication of their namesakes for many years. The Canadian Officer Training Corps did not operate on such a large scale again until the Second World War; however, some contingents, such as Mount Allison's, continued to parade well into the 1920s. The Mount Allison COTC contingent was only finally disbanded as late as 1968.<sup>1</sup>

Religion was a critical component of Maritime society in the early twentieth century and it played a significant role in shaping the philosophy that permeated the region throughout the war. Religion did not hinder Maritime acceptance and support for the war, but it did affect the nuances of this acceptance and support. For the Baptist and Methodist communities, the South African War set a precedent, which made the war in Europe acceptable from a religious perspective. Moreover, the "pervasive evangelical ethos" that existed at Acadia was utilized to bolster recruitment efforts.<sup>2</sup> Recruitment at Mount Allison was also strong despite the Methodist orientation of the university. In fact, the trend of declining student enrolments due to enlistments was the same at Mount Allison as it was at each of the three other institutions under consideration. Even amongst Mount Allison theology students, there does not appear to have been any significant uneasiness about the war. At Dalhousie, the nondenominational nature of the university makes the wartime religious situation more difficult to discern. Nevertheless, students at Dalhousie were very similar to other Protestant students at Acadia and Mount Allison. The YM/YWCA was a popular society at Dalhousie as it was at Acadia and Mount Allison. In addition, Bible study was a common facet of students' lives. The Catholic nature of St. Francis

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<sup>1</sup> W.A. Morrison, "Mount Allison COTC," *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* (March 12, 1974). Morrison's Research Papers.

<sup>2</sup> Moody, "Educating for War and Peace at Acadia University: The Generation of 1914," 8.

Xavier University separated its experience somewhat from the three Protestant colleges. Nevertheless, the importance of Christian themes seems to have permeated the Maritimes. Conscription was more or less a non-issue at Acadia, Dalhousie, and Mount Allison, but at St. Francis Xavier a concern about the sensibilities of local Acadians and their position on conscription prompted the university administration to take action. Besides having a chair in French language studies endowed, St. Francis Xavier actively pursued extension work in the Diocese of Antigonish in an effort to improve people's lives. Indeed, despite the Protestant-Catholic divide, strong belief in Christian service was a common theme at each university. At the Protestant institutions, the impact of the Social Gospel was evident, while for Catholic St. Francis Xavier, the same ideals led to university extension work. The war thus fuelled a desire to improve the quality of life for Maritimers.

The experiences of women at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier during the First World War are of particular interest not only because they were notably different from that of their male counterparts, but also because they paved the way for future social changes. The female students came to terms with the war in their own unique way largely because their experiences related to the war were so different from those of the male students. Enlisting and fighting in France was just not an option. Some Maritime women did serve overseas in various capacities, particularly in nursing, but the women in Wolfville, Halifax, Sackville, and Antigonish generally carried on with life and their studies to the best of their abilities. Prior to the war, social support networks existed amongst female students; however, the war strengthened this relationship and brought it to a new level as female companions filled the voids left by absent male classmates. Homosocial relations varied between the universities largely due to the differences in the living arrangements for female students on each

campus. The war offered women at each institution new opportunities as the male students vacated campus leadership roles and women were selected to be valedictorians of co-educational classes. Moreover, women became increasingly dominant at each university as enrolments of female students continued to rise and male students continued to leave or forgo post-secondary study in favour of military service. At the end of the war, many women acknowledged that the wartime changes were a temporary wartime necessity. They also recognized, however, that the war provided them with the opportunity to show the wider community that their abilities did extend beyond the household.

The First World War changed each university's mentality. This change was forced upon the students, faculty, and administration of each institution out of necessity simply because the pre-war ethos was unsustainable. With declining enrolments it did not make sense to continue expanding campus infrastructure and programs, although some universities managed to do so if the necessary funds were already in place before the war. Had Archduke Franz Ferdinand not been assassinated in Sarajevo it is likely that Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities would be very different today, if they even existed at all. While a great deal of change took place between 1914-1918, the aftereffects of the war also sustained the metamorphosis. Between veteran students returning to campus, the university federation movement, continued efforts in Christian service, particularly at St. Francis Xavier, and economic depression, the 1920s were in many ways just as tumultuous in Maritime Canada as the 1910s had been.

The study of four of Maritime Canada's universities during the First World War provides insights on the socio-cultural changes that took place in the region during one of the most significant decades in the twentieth century. Many of these changes

continue to impact the lives of Canadians today. The wartime histories of Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities offer a unique perspective which not only contributes to the historiography of Maritime Canada, but also, further expands the Home Front literature of Canada during the First World War. Moreover, the history of education in Canada and the individual narratives of each institution are further expanded by this comparative case study. The history of Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier from 1914 to 1918 does fit into Canada's military historiography, particularly where the COTC and university units are concerned. Yet, in many ways the military history of the First World War serves as a backdrop to highlight the more localized socio-cultural developments in Wolfville, Halifax, Sackville, and Antigonish. This brand of socio-cultural history provides a powerful insight into the trials and tribulations experienced at each of the four universities. The ordinary people who studied and worked at Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier were forced to contend with the extraordinary circumstances brought about by the war. The universities survived the war because they were able to adapt and learn from the experience. Some students and faculty were not so lucky. In the end, Leona Hennessey was right – the war revolutionized practically everything and Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier Universities emerged from the “revolution” strengthened and with an even greater sense of purpose. Through the dust, chaos, and instability of the war, they prevailed.

## Appendix A



**Table 1 - University Enrollments**

University	1913-1914	1914-1915	1915-1916	1916-1917	1917-1918	1918-1919
Acadia	240	231	213	127	155	191
Dalhousie	452	448	378	302	318	371
Mount Allison	229	233	202	165	151	166
St. Francis Xavier	208	182	220	133	129	121

Source: Acadia University, Dalhousie University, Mount Allison University, and St. Francis Xavier University Academic Calendars (1913-1914, 1914-1915, 1915-1916, 1916-1917, 1917-1918, 1918-1919, 1919-1920). AUA, DUA, MAA, StFXUA. Total number of students includes students in all programs at both the undergraduate and graduate level. "Special students" are also included where applicable.

**Table 2 - Number of Graduates**

University	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919
Acadia	58	50	39	25	17	37
Dalhousie	79	85	68	49	51	52
Mount Allison	19	27	25	18	16	22
St. Francis Xavier	15	13	17	16	30	N/A

Source: Acadia University, Dalhousie University, Mount Allison University, and St. Francis Xavier University Academic Calendars (1913-1914, 1914-1915, 1915-1916, 1916-1917, 1917-1918, 1918-1919, 1919-1920). AUA, DUA, MAA, StFXUA. Information on the number of StFX graduates in 1919 is not available.

Table 3: Populations of Major Religious Denominations in New Brunswick by Districts, 1911

County	Population of District	Anglicans	Baptists	Methodists	Presbyterians	Roman Catholics
Carleton	21,446	2,331	11,487	2,939	1,843	2,424
Charlotte	21,147	3,643	6,928	3,221	2,956	2,262
Gloucester	32,662	871	51	497	1,044	30,148
Kent	24,376	875	540	772	2,827	19,172
Kings & Albert	30,285	6,059	13,935	4,213	2,712	2,939
Northumberland	31,194	2,608	1,751	1,878	8,258	16,298
Restigouche	15,687	1,174	481	454	3,266	10,205
St. John City & County	53,572	12,446	10,765	7,075	5,952	15,426
Sunbury & Queens	17,116	2,625	9,076	2,221	1,223	1,759
Victoria & Madawaska	28,222	2,099	3,454	461	1,237	20,428
Westmorland	44,621	2,545	12,442	5,982	3,099	19,914
York	31,561	5,588	11,196	4,842	4,790	3,914
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>351,889</b>	<b>42,864</b>	<b>82,106</b>	<b>34,558</b>	<b>39,207</b>	<b>144,889</b>

Source: Fifth Census of Canada, 1911, vol. 2. Ottawa: Census and Statistics Office, 1912, 18-25.

Table 4: Populations of Major Religious Denominations in Nova Scotia by Districts, 1911

County	Population of District	Anglicans	Baptists	Methodists	Presbyterians	Roman Catholics
Annapolis	18,581	3,356	10,033	3,396	644	637
Antigonish	11,962	246	192	103	1,105	10,306
Cape Breton North & Victoria	29,888	2,996	830	2,056	12,313	11,202
Cape Breton South	53,352	5,612	1,884	3,456	14,859	26,208
Colchester	23,664	2,177	3,919	2,486	13,610	943
Cumberland	40,543	4,750	9,213	11,185	7,941	6,333
Digby	20,167	1,014	6,005	1,555	134	10,454
Guyborough	17,048	3,575	3,816	2,156	1,955	5,474
Halifax City & County	80,257	26,143	7,028	7,063	11,407	27,027
Hants	19,703	3,631	3,722	4,218	5,742	1,050
Inverness	25,571	201	487	474	6,729	17,019
Kings	21,780	2,980	11,609	3,371	1,499	1,255
Lunenburg*	33,260	10,489	5,670	5,713	3,620	507
Pictou	25,858	2,554	1,054	2,449	23,755	5,603

County	Population of District	Anglicans	Baptists	Methodists	Presbyterians	Roman Catholics
Richmond	13,273	395	88	262	2,652	9,836
Shelburne & Queens	24,211	4,476	9,513	5,619	1,143	733
Yarmouth	23,220	720	8,791	2,044	452	10,344
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>492,338</b>	<b>75,315</b>	<b>83,854</b>	<b>57,606</b>	<b>109,560</b>	<b>144,991</b>

\*Lutherans account for 6,641 of the population of Lunenburg Co.

Source: *Fifth Census of Canada, 1911*, vol. 2. Ottawa: Census and Statistics Office, 1912, 24-43.

Table 5: Populations of Major Religious Denominations in Prince Edward Island by Districts, 1911

County	Population of District	Anglicans	Baptists	Methodists	Presbyterians	Roman Catholics
Kings	22,636	323	1,472	1,546	7,151	11,532
Prince	32,779	2,086	1,677	4,642	7,172	16,780
Queen	38,313	2,530	2,223	6,021	13,186	13,682
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>93,728</b>	<b>4,939</b>	<b>5,372</b>	<b>12,209</b>	<b>27,509</b>	<b>41,994</b>

Source: Fifth Census of Canada, 1911, vol. 2. Ottawa: Census and Statistics Office, 1912, 84-87.

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