Turbulent times in the diocese of London Bishop Fallon and his French-Canadian flock, 1910-1918.

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Turbulent Times in the Diocese of London:  
Bishop Fallon and His French-Canadian Flock  
1910-1918

by

Jack D. Cerillon

A thesis  
submitted to the  
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
through the Department of History  
in Partial Fulfillment of the  
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To Mom, Dad, Brenda, Leanne, Dave, Ron, and Georgine.
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Introduction

For over a century, Canadians have disagreed over the issue of minority language rights. On more than one occasion, the legislatures of the various provinces have abrogated the rights of their minorities in the face of political pressure. In 1871 and later in 1890, the New Brunswick and the Manitoba legislatures withdrew the rights of the local francophone minority to French-language Roman Catholic schools. In 1912, the Ontario government of Premier James Whitney enacted similar legislation severely restricting all instruction in the French language. More recently, the province of Quebec has limited the accessibility of English language schools to immigrants whose first language is neither English nor French.

In the cases of Manitoba and Ontario, the education issue included a religious dimension. Most of the schools in question belonged to a separate school system. This reality not only gave Anglo-Protestants the impression that the French Canadians enjoyed special privileges, it also served to divide the members of the Roman church along linguistic lines.

The Catholics of Manitoba and Ontario were by no means a homogeneous cultural entity. In both provinces, the majority were either Irish or French Canadian. These two groups did not always share a common vision of the future of their schools. For the former, the issue of separate school rights implied religious instruction. The question of language was secondary. For the latter, language and religion were complementary, with each
playing an essential role in the system.

The cultural divisions in the Catholic church existed not only among the lay members but also within the upper echelons of the hierarchy. In effect, even the Bishops of different dioceses publicly disagreed on the importance of bilingual schools. Never was this more the case than in the dispute over the Ontario Schools Question. For more than a decade, prelates from across Canada argued over the reinstatement of French in the defunct bilingual schools of Ontario.

At the forefront of this debate was Michael Francis Fallon, Bishop of London, Ontario. From the advent of his reign in 1910, until the abrogation of the notorious Regulation XVII, Fallon spearheaded all opposition to bilingual education. His pressure on the Whitney government to reform the school system led to a provincial inquiry and the subsequent legislation limiting French instruction.

Bishop Fallon's outspoken stance did not endear him to his French-Canadian flock. One might suggest, rather, that his hostile attitude fuelled bitterness and led to an unprecedented display of dissent against church authority. In the span of eight years, from 1910 to 1918, the Catholic church of the diocese of London experienced a period of turbulence and confrontation which approached a schism. Tensions reached a climax in 1917 when the parishioners in Ford City rioted in protest against the Bishop's appointment of an anti-nationalist priest as their new pastor. Only the intervention of Rome
finally succeeded in quelling a year-long church boycott which followed the riot.

To understand better the problems which developed into a diocesan conflict, one must examine the history of the Catholic community of southwestern Ontario. Prior to doing so, however, it is necessary to provide some insight on the works consulted in this research endeavour.

The archival collections of the Centre de recherche des civilisations canadiennes-françaises are of capital importance. The letters of Reverend Lucien Beaudoin, the pastor of Ford City, offer interesting information on the role of local nationalists in the province-wide struggle against Regulation XVII. In addition, the oral interviews of various elderly parishioners and priests add a dimension not captured in the penury of works which currently exist on this subject.

With respect to secondary sources, Robert Choquette's *Language and Religion* offers the most thorough account of the cultural-linguistic battles which divided the Catholic church of Ontario. Michael Fitzpatrick's work on Bishop Fallon serves as a significant study on the role of the cleric in the introduction of Regulation XVII. Marcel Dagenais' study on the longstanding issue of bilingual education in Ontario sheds light on the Bishop's positive contributions to the existing educational system. Lastly, Michael Power's essay on the Ford City Riot provides the groundwork for further inquiry into the explosive climax of the conflict between Irish and French elements in the
Diocese of London.

Periodicals round out the sources consulted by the author. Issues of the Windsor *Evening Record* chronicle the initial signs of trouble in the diocese with the arrival of Monsignor Fallon to the See of London. This local daily newspaper also detailed the ensuing debate and conflict over bilingual education. To illustrate the francophone interpretation of the events, several weekly newspapers were available. Of greatest import were *Le Progres*, *Le Clairon*, and *La Defense*. Each of these newspapers existed at different times and treated contemporary issues of controversy relating to the conflict between the Bishop and the local French Canadian population. The editorials they presented, although frequently very nationalistic in their tone, delivered some surprisingly candid remarks on the state of local nationalism.

While many works have been written concerning the Ontario Schools Question, few have looked closely at the situation in southwestern Ontario. This development is significant for a number of reasons. First, the school legislation was in many ways a reaction to the recent arrival of a massive influx of francophones to northern and eastern Ontario. To combat what was seen as an invasion of a foreign presence, a number of groups lobbied for a reform of the existing education system which purportedly allowed for unilingual French language schools. Unlike these recently-established communities in Prescott and Russell counties and in northern Ontario, the francophones of
Essex and Kent counties belonged to communities with a long tradition. In fact, the latter could trace their heritage back to the establishment of the French colonial fort of Detroit in 1701. For most of them, southwestern Ontario was the only home they had ever known.

The existence of French language instruction in Ontario proved to be nearly as old as this first European settlement in the province. It is probable that some children received the rudiments of an education in the home. A small number perhaps, even benefited from an education offered by the Jesuit missionary priests in the church presbytery.23

Some historians suggest that Saint Anne's school in Detroit opened itself to a number of Canadian border students from the south shore of the French colony (present day Windsor).24 For certain nationalists, this offers an important precedent for the history of francophone education in Ontario.25 However, no known documentary proof legitimates their claims.

When French forces capitulated at Montreal in 1760, the future of the colony on the shores of the Detroit river fell into the hands of the British conqueror. M. de Vaudreuil, Canada's last French colonial governor, wrote the following communique to Sieur de Bellestre, ordering the commander of French forces at Detroit to hand over their arms peacefully. De Vaudreuil noted:

Je vous apprends, Monsieur, que j'ai été dans la nécessité de capituler hier à l'armée de général Amherst... à des conditions très avantageuses pour les colons et particulièrement pour les habitants de Détroit... En effet, ils conservent le libre exercice de leur religion et sont maintenus en la possession de
leurs biens-muebles et de leurs pelleteries."
While de Vaudreuil's correspondence makes mention of religious freedoms, he makes no allusion whatsoever to education.

There is no known documentation to substantiate claims that the Huron mission set up by Reverend Pierre Potier in 1767 provided any form of instruction aside from catechizing the "heathens". Nevertheless, the Jesuit tradition of education leads us to believe that the priest may have initiated some form of teaching program. The first concrete evidence appears only after Potier's departure.

Following the Seven Years War, Pontiac's uprising and the American Revolution, a generation of local colonists endured an era of ignorance." For most families on the Detroit river, the desire to educate their children translated into an expensive sojourn at a convent or seminary in Montreal or Quebec. Given economic hardships, such plans were deemed an unnecessary luxury. Assumption's missionary priest, Abbe Francois Xavier Dufaux, lamented this deprivation,

"il n'y a qu'eux seuls [les Anglais] qui aient le gout de faire instruire leurs enfants et qui puissent le faire."

In a letter to the Archbishop of Quebec, Dufaux assessed the reason for the lack of instruction among the local colonists.

Les meilleurs habitants qui etoit en etat de se preter a quelques bonnes oeuvres il y a trois ou quatre ans, n'ont pas seulement une piastre devant eux..."

Historian Arthur Godbout illustrates that for some colonists, financial hardship rather than apathy accounted for
the absence of any French educational institutions at Assumption
à la pointe de Montreal, or Sandwich to the English settlers. He
quotes Abbe Dufaux’s letter to support his assertion.

Tous les habitants conviennent de la nécessité et de l’avantage de donner de l’éducation à leurs enfants.

In light of this situation, the French priests at Assumption opened the presbytery to instruct a number of local boys themselves. In 1782, Governor Haldimand considered the weight of the situation and promised Abbé Dufaux that he would send a certified school master to teach the boys. In addition, he pledged to seek out several nuns from Montreal to organize a class for girls.

After four years of waiting, Mgr Hubert, Bishop of Quebec, persuaded two young girls by the names of Ademard and Papineau to move to Assumption. Here in 1786, the women began the first truly authentic French school on the Canadian shore of the Detroit river. Abbé Dufaux defrayed the cost of the school and the teachers’ residence. According to historian Ernest Lajeunesse, the school opened with 13 students in all; eight borders and five day students. The founding of this school preceded the creation of the province of Upper Canada in 1791.

Although few quarrels broke out among the divergent groups over the issue of education in the Detroit region during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, other disputes did occur. In the early 1790’s, Lieutenant Governor John Simcoe was forced to intervene to solve a dispute at Assumption parish over the use by a prominent parishioner (M. François Bab) of a church seat
traditionally reserved for the monarch's representative in the province. On that occasion the angry congregation pulled the bench from it bolts and hurled it out of the church in protest.

A more serious incident involved Abbé Dufaux who found himself at odds with some parish "malcontents" and his English neighbours. It took the good will testimony in 1789 of Judge William Dummer Powell to Monsignor Hubert to disavow the priest from accusations of disloyalty to the Crown.

In 1794, Lord Dorchester, upon the request of Lieutenant Governor John G. Simcoe, pressured Bishop Hubert to send to Rivière aux raisins (Munroe, Michigan) "un prêtre dont la loyauté fut à l'épreuve du moindre doute, et qui put rappeler au peuple ses obligations morales et l'instruire de ses devoirs envers le Roi." As a result, Irish-born Father Edmund Burke, an ardent monarchist, installed himself in the Western District as Vicar General of Upper Canada.

Reverend Dufaux found life under Burke's authority difficult. On September 9, 1795 he wrote,

Il n'est pas possible de s'imager jusqu'à quel point Mr. Burke a trouble nos paroisses... Il met le trouble partout; il ne se fait aucun scrupul [sic] de s'absenter de sa paroisse des deux ou trois dimanches de suite, pareillement dans les fêtes de la toussaints [sic], des mors [sic]. de l'assention [sic]. Bien d'autres choses que je[sic] veux pas dire qui donnent occasion à une infinité de médiscences publiques. Je ne vois presque personne qui ne parle contre lui. Ne croyez pas monseigneur que ce soit par jalousie ni par vengeance contre lui que je parle ainsi de lui, mais plutôt parce que ce sont des choses publiques et je crois devoir en informer votre grandeur.'

Burke, who learned of the criticism, sent the following message
Si Monseigneur voulait bien m'envoyait[sic] deux missionnaires... et retirer l'Abbé Dufaux, je placerai deux prêtres à l'Assomption, et deux à Détroit.  

This misunderstanding dissipated with the unexpected demise of Abbé Dufaux in September 1796.

The constitutional acts of 1791 and 1840 made no references to the language of instruction in the schools of the province. When Egerton Ryerson took the position of Chief Superintendent of the schools of the province, he expressed no opposition to the notion of French language instruction. On April 5, 1851, in a memorial addressed to the Essex County Board of Public Instruction, the Sandwich township school trustees requested permission to engage the services of Mr. Gigon as a teacher. The man in question, although a certified teacher, was unilingual French. Consequently, the Essex County Board of Examiners declined to grant him a certificate of qualification.

The Sandwich trustees appealed to their local superintendent who conveyed their grievances to the Provincial Council of Public Instruction. At its meeting of April 25 1851, the members discussed the issue of language of instruction. They agreed to add the following clause to the qualification guidelines for school teachers.

In regard to teachers of French and German, that a knowledge of French or German grammar be substituted for a knowledge of English grammar, and that the certificate of the teacher be expressly limited accordingly.  

Once this had been accomplished, the Council informed the
County Boards of Canada West that no guidelines in the School Act could prevent the engagement of a qualified teacher. J. George Hodgins, Deputy to the Superintendent of Education wrote Mr. McMullin, Chief Inspector of Essex County, clarifying the stance expressed by the Council on the Gigon affair.

Mr. Gigon having complied with these conditions, as intimated in a letter I have received from the secretary of the County Board, the Council of Public Instruction for Upper Canada has sanctioned a liberal construction of the programme for the examination and classification of teachers, making the term "English" contoversible with the term "French", where it applies, and when applied to French candidates for the examination by the County Board. The examination should of course be limited to teaching in the French language."

This measure by Ryerson and his colleagues served as a precedent for the recognition of French as a legal language of instruction.

While education matters appeared to be working well, religious matters were not. In 1856, Rome established the Diocese of London and appointed Pierre Adolphe Pinsonneault as the first bishop. Pinsonneault’s lack of sound judgement and natural proclivity for the French-speaking element of the faithful inevitably created some misunderstandings.

In January 1858, Bishop Pinsonneault initiated proceedings to transfer the see (administrative centre) of the diocese from English-speaking London to the predominantly French-Canadian town of Sandwich. It soon became clear that the Bishop only got along well with those priests he imported from France and the United States. Unfortunately, when in 1863 the Ordinary found himself at loggerheads with the new Irish superior of Assumption college,
Father Cannon of the Benedictine order, he requested Cannon's removal.

According to historian John O'Farrell, Bishop Pierre Adolphus Pinsonneault had the makings of a great man and a great bishop. The tragedy was that his diocese should have been the difficult pioneer diocese of London. He was fitted by traditional environment, temperament, and training to reign over an old well-established French diocese in the grand manner of a French seigneur of the old school.

Monsignor Pinsonneault's episcopate holds significance for it serves as a precursor for later quarrels which erupted among clerics of different national origins. His Irish successor, Bishop John Walsh, settled the inter-ethnic bickering and returned the see of the diocese to London.

After several years of relative tranquillity, conditions in the 1880's began to threaten the existence of the bilingual schools. From the 1860's onwards, a steady stream of French Canadians migrated across the Ottawa River from Quebec in search of land and prosperity in Ontario. The swelling number of French-speaking Catholics in the province alarmed some established anglophone communities.

English-speaking towns such as Hawkesbury had reason to be concerned. Many of their schools, previously unilingually English, were slowly being transformed into bilingual schools as a result of the rising French-Canadian population and the departure of the English teachers. Furthermore, several of the newly-constructed schools ignored the English language completely. The English-speaking members of the community demanded some form of redress from the Ontario government. Some
organizations went so far as to clamour for the abolition of all French language instruction.\textsuperscript{11}

Beginning in 1885, the Ministry of Education initiated a series of legislative restrictions. The Public School Act required that all teachers display an adequate knowledge of the English language.

In addition to the examination conducted in the French and German language, every candidate for a teacher's certificate shall be required to pass such examinations in French grammar and in translation from French or German into English, as may be prescribed by the Board of Examination.\textsuperscript{12}

The 1885 legislation prescribed two hours of English each week during the first four years of school, and four hours a week during the last four years of school.

In 1890, the Ministry took its restrictions a step further. On February 10, it reduced the role of French instruction to its simplest possible expression. Article 2 of the 1890 Regulation specified that

\begin{quote}
It shall be the duty of the teacher to conduct every exercise and recitation from the textbooks prescribed for the public schools in the English language and all communications between teacher and pupil in regard to matters of discipline and in the management of the school shall be in English.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

The 1890 report of the Chief Inspector of Schools, D. McDiarmid, illustrated a gradual improvement of the state of education in the bilingual schools, and general satisfaction overall. In spite of this, the provincial government remained firm in its intentions to insure the gradual replacement of French by English as the language of instruction. This approach would drive a
wedge between Irish- and French-Canadian Catholics.

When in 1890, Ontario’s Liberal government sought further restrictions on French language instruction to insure a proper and adequate knowledge of English for all children, the opposition Conservatives demanded more. The party leader, Mr. Meredith, called for the abolition of both French language education and the entire system of separate schools. The local press was quick to react. Le Progrès condemned the francophobia which had come to reign over reason in the opposition benches of the legislature. The newspaper’s editor, Gaspard Picaud, a liberal member of the provincial assembly from 1887 to 1891 wrote,

Il me semble que le chef de l’opposition...aurait dû s’élève au dessus de ces mesquines questions de religion, de langue et de nationalité; mais malheureusement son discours sur l’adresse (du trône) n’a été qu’une ...nouvelle affirmation de l’opinion qu’il a soutenu depuis un an sur la question des écoles publiques, dans lesquelles la langue française est enseignée.

Il s’est prononcé contre l’enseignement du français dans les écoles, et a même exprimé son opposition au système des écoles séparées. Ces écoles séparées sont garanties par l’acte de la confédération et aucun gouvernement provincial ne peut les supprimer."

This newspaper further emphasized the growing opposition to bilingual schools by publishing a resume of a proposal made by Mr. Craig, a Conservative MPP.

Si l’inspection se faisait plus correctement un pareil état de choses s’améliorerait, mais le gouvernement Mowat par condescendance pour les Français la fait faire avec mollesse et irrégularité. On ne devrait tout au plus enseigner le français qu’une heure par jour et l’enseignement de l’anglais ne devrait pas
être limité.
On devrait également voir à supprimer les livres français qui retardent à l'anglification. Si les écoles françaises refusent les livres anglais, qu'elles soient privées des bénéfices de la législation scolaire.
Il désire voir bientôt le jour où toutes les écoles seront anglaises.28

Mr. Craig's speech raised the spectre of the inevitable abolition of all French schools. The provocative nature of this newspaper's resume clearly aimed at rousing the nationalistic anger of the local French-Canadian population.

One week after publishing this article, Le Progrès issued this assessment of Mr. Craig's stance.

M. Craig et lesiens veulent procéder par la persécution et la violence; s'ils réussissaient, notre pays deviendrait un véritable enfer. Le Canada, en tant que la Confédération, n'a qu'un quart de siècle d'existence et le tiers de sa population est français. Une dirait le million et quart de Français de Québec et les centaines de mille (sic) des provinces maritimes s'ils apprennent qu'ici on bafoue la minorité. La situation serait désastreuse...

Le bill de M. Craig doit être rejeté; il est une menace pour la paix générale et une injustice pour les Canadiens-français. Ceux-ci ont toujours été aussi loyaux que les Anglais...29

Mr. Craig's proposal stirred a certain degree of opposition in Essex county. While the legislature did adopt some new language restrictions, they never really enforced them.

A decade later the issue of language resurfaced in Windsor on a different plane, that of religion. It was not unprecedented for Irish and French-Canadian Catholics to bicker over this subject. In 1899, the francophones of Windsor appealed to London for more French at St. Alphonsus parish. In a letter
appearing in *Le Progrès*, Gaspard Pacaud condemned the systematic exclusion of French from church services. He called for a parish meeting to settle the issue.

On March 24, 1899, the parish's francophones assembled to object to the lack of French at the various masses. The local media covered the event:

Il y avait au delà de 200 personnes réunies dans la salle St. Alphonse de cette ville [Windsor] dimanche dernier, pour protester contre l'indifférence de notre clerge à l'égard des Canadiens-français. À la messe de 7:30, l'on fait les annonces en anglais et en français et un petit sermon en français. À la messe de 9'hrs pas de français à la grand'messe non plus.

M. Gaspard Pacaud, le Président de la Société Saint-Jean Baptiste dit que nous ne voulions pas de séparation, je crois qu'il fait erreur. M. Simon Gignac vint ensuite et fut applaudi (sic) à outrance quand il dit: "Les Canadiens-français, s'ils veulent entendre du français, il faut qu'ils se lèvent de bonne heure, pendant que les Anglais peuvent se lever quand ils veulent."

Fred Mailloux ...appuya surtout à la négligence de l'enseignement du français dans nos écoles, et que dans une paroisse moitié française et moitié anglaise, nous avions trois prêtres Irlandais.

le Révd Père Flannery nous conseilla d'attendre que le nouvel évêque soit nommé et alors de lui présenter nos griefs, et qu'il était certain que justice nous serait rendue."

*Le Progrès* noted the grumblings of Mr. Mailloux over the inadequacy of French language instruction in the school. The newspaper seemed to imply Irish culpability for the problem.

The *Canadien* parishioners of St. Alphonsus, following the advice of the pastor, chose to await the appointment of a new Bishop of London to present their grievances. Gaspard Pacaud, representing the malcontents, offered a petition signed by the
heads of 200 families to the newly-invested bishop, Monsignor John McEvoy. The document outlined several points of contention:

Il nous est souverainement regrettable d’avoir à vous dire Monseigneur que depuis longtemps, les catholiques Canadiens-français de Windsor n’entendent plus cette langue qui s’est identifiée à leur religion; on y a substitué la langue anglaise qu’ils n’ont appris qu’au contacte des affaires et à laquelle ils ne peuvent donner ce cachet de mystique grandeur, qu’ils doivent trouver dans la langue qui leur exprime les sublimes enseignements de leur foi. Il y a ici Monseigneur, un danger sérieux pour l’efficacité de l’avenir religieux des Canadiens-français de Windsor.

...Monseigneur, il suffit de jeter un regard sur l’histoire de cette paroisse, pour bien comprendre la gravité de la situation actuelle. La magnifique temple, dont nous sommes très fiers, est un monument érigé presque exclusivement par les Canadiens-français. M. Daniel Goyeau en donna d’abord le terrain puis M. Vital Quellette versa une somme de $3000 pour aider à la construction auxquelles vinrent se joindre les grosses souscriptions de Daniel Goyeau, Alex B. Marentette, etc....

Monseigneur, en présence de ces faits, les Canadiens-français se demandent avec raison, de quel droit on vient chasser l’usage de leur langue d’un temple qu’ils ont bâti presque seuls...? Il est vrai qu’il y a une instruction en français à la messe de 8 heures; mais est-ce que les Canadiens-français doivent être privés d’entendre la grand’Messe? Pourquoi leur langue, n’est-elle pas sur le même pied que la langue anglaise?

... Peut-être pour la première fois dans l’histoire de cette paroisse, sommes-nous actuellement privés même d’un seul prêtre de notre nationalité, nous considérons que la présence au milieu de nous d’un prêtre de notre nationalité serait dans l’intérêt de notre religion.

Monseigneur, nous avons entendu dire que la langue française ne pouvait marcher de pair avec la langue anglaise, que la chose était impossible... Mais, s’il en était ainsi, au point de vue de Votre Grandeur, il ne nous resterait plus qu’à demander la permission de se séparer. Les Irlandais pourront acheter nos intérêts dans l’église actuelle, ou nous acheterons les leurs.
the French Canadians towards their Irish counterparts. The issue of language during the Sunday sermon and the nationality of each priest was gradually moving into the forefront. The divisiveness which this produced led some parishioners to suggest an ethnic separation with the creation of "national" parishes.

After lengthy consideration, the new bishop responded to the demands made by the French Canadians of St. Alphonsus parish. Monsignor McEvay appointed a Canadien to serve as the new pastor of the church. Local churchgoers were pleased with the announcement. On January 17, 1901, Le Progrès declared

Le nouveau curé de la paroisse catholique de Windsor, le Rev. J. Edouard Meunier et ses assistants RR. PP. Downey et Hogan nous arrivent.

...le rêve depuis longtemps choyé d'entendre le français comme l'anglais, et de posséder d'éloquents interprètes de la parole de Dieu est enfin sur le point de se réaliser: dimanche prochain commencera la réalisation de cet espoir par l'entrée en fonction de nos nouveaux prêtres."

Although the parishioners of St. Alphonsus hoped the situation would improve, there was little change.

While the first decade of the twentieth century was relatively peaceful in terms of both language and religion, latent problems remained. Bishop McEvay avoided controversy with his diverse flock, and hence eschewed any undesirable confrontations with his French-Canadian coreligionists. The arrival of Michael Francis Fallon as his successor in 1909 would signal the end of an era of peace and conciliation.

The reasons for the inter-cultural troubles which erupted in the Diocese of London are numerous. First, the population of
Essex and Kent counties was urbanizing rapidly. The establishment of Hiram Walker's Distillery in 1858, and the appearance of the Ford assembly plant in 1904 had spawned a rapid migration of young farmers to the border cities of Walkerville, Windsor and Sandwich. In the span of twenty years, the county of Essex went from a predominantly rural to a predominantly urban society. (See Appendix A)

This migration was significant for it brought many local French Canadians into daily contact with the anglophone majority for the very first time. Unlike life on the family farm, the language of the factories of Walkerville and Windsor was English. In similar fashion the Catholic churches of Windsor obliged French Canadians to coexist with their English-speaking correligionists. Such was not the case for the homogeneous rural francophone parishes. For the recent migrants to the border cities, the constant interaction between the French- and English-speaking members of the community was new. The reluctance to adjust to these changes in lifestyle created misunderstandings, fuelled prejudice, and became a source of growing friction.

While many French Canadians may have seen this change in lifestyle as undesirable, the economic benefits of the factory and life in the city were difficult to resist. As a result of this move however, they now had to share both their school and their church. Moreover, most Canadiens now resided in neighbourhoods with significant numbers of non-Catholics. The adjustment was understandably difficult for Irish and French
Canadian alike. The spectre of mixed Protestant-Catholic marriages only contributed to this sense of anxiety.

A small French-Canadian intellectual elite attempted to combat the effects of these various changes. This clique, composed primarily of priests and professionals, continuously reminded the people of their duty to uphold both their religion and language. Among their leading members was Reverend Joseph Lucien Alexandre Beaudoin.

Reverend Beaudoin was born on January 12, 1861, at Saint-Roch de l’Achigan, in Assomption County, Quebec. Having completed his studies at the Collège de l’Assomption, he was ordained a priest on December 8, 1886. After serving two years as a professor at his alma mater, Beaudoin became the chaplain of a New York City school, where he remained until 1891. In that year, the Bishop of London, Ontario invited Reverend Beaudoin to take over the young parish of Notre Dame du Lac (Our Lady of the Lake), located in Sandwich East on the outskirts of Walkerville (present day Windsor).

Aside from religion, the French language and education became Beaudoin’s all-consuming passions. Over the span of his 25 years of service at Our Lady of the Lake Parish, he built three schools, largely with his own money. In addition, Beaudoin taught his English-speaking nuns the foundation of French language and composition in the sacristy of his church. When a fire destroyed the original church edifice on Holy Saturday in 1907, Beaudoin lost no time in raising the funds necessary for
its reconstruction which builders completed in 1908.

With regards to education, this nationalistic priest made regular rounds of his schools to catechize the children in the French language. It was not uncommon for Beaudoin to pull the ear of an absent-minded altar boy to admonish him for using the English language at church. "In a more serious note, Beaudoin also served as president of Walkerville's Roman Catholic Separate School Board. By the time Monsignor Fallon became Bishop of London, Father Beaudoin had earned a solid reputation as a leading defender of Catholic education rights and bilingual schools in Essex County. His stature and stubbornness would prove to be a serious challenge for the new bishop.

Reverend Beaudoin was not alone in his struggle to defend the system of bilingual schools. Several other priests, most notably, Monsignor J. Édouard Meunier of Windsor, and Fathers Alfred Emery of Paincourt, Napoléon Saint-Cyr of Stoney Point, Pierre L'Heureux of Belle River, Pierre Langlois of Tecumseh and Joseph Loiselle of River Canard all spoke out in support of a bilingual program of instruction. Their stance inevitably placed them on a collision course with the new Bishop of London, Monsignor Michael Francis Fallon, who was an avowed opponent of bilingual education.

This work is not designed to judge the merits or weaknesses of bilingual education in Ontario. Rather, it is a study of the conflict which erupted within the Catholic church over the issue. The vastness of this task shall necessarily limit this inquiry
to those francophone communities located in Essex and Kent counties. In addition, due to the restriction of accessibility to the Fallon papers, this work will concentrate on the francophone perspective of the events which developed over an eight-year period from 1910 to 1918. In the process, several issues deserve investigation. For instance, why did local francophones rise up on several different occasions to express their opposition to their bishop? What role did Bishop Fallon play in fanning the fires of discontent within the diocese? How did incidents degenerate to such an extent as to explode into a violent confrontation at Ford City (now part of Windsor) on September 8, 1917? To what extent did church officials in Rome get involved in the dispute between Monsignor Fallon and the local French-Canadian population? All of these queries warrant elucidation.

Throughout the period in question, a sentiment of defensiveness pervaded the francophone community. The loss of their schools in 1912 left a wound that only time could heal. The reaction of the local elite and the response of the Bishop to the opposition hardly facilitated an atmosphere of reconciliation. The pressing tensions of urbanization and the struggle between French Canadian and Irish correligionists were phenomena previously unknown to most local Catholics. The riot at Ford City and the events which followed were merely a reaction to this radical change in the institutions and lifestyle or status quo of the French Canadians of southwestern Ontario.
1. Please note that all general references to nationalism or local nationalism shall pertain to French-Canadian nationalism.


3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.


6. Sister Mary Rosalita, Education in Detroit Prior to 1850, (Lansing: Michigan Historical Commission, 1929), p.21. The author suggests that while education continued on the American side of the colony of Detroit, the Canadian side remained deprived.


8. Ibid., also quoted in Godbout, Origine, p.49.


10. Letter, Governor Haldimand to Abbé Dufaux, c.1782, as quoted in Godbout, Origine, p.50.


12. Ibid.


14. Governor John G. Simcoe to Mgr Hubert, Archives de l'Archèvèché de Quèbec, 1794.

15. Abbé Dufaux to Mgr Hubert, Archives de l'Archèvèché de Quèbec, F.U. v.116.

16. Rev. Burke to Mgr Hubert, Archives de l'Archèvèché de Quèbec, C.1796.

17. C. R. Sissons, Bilingual Schools in Ontario, (Toronto:J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1917), p.22. See also Chad Gaffield, Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict. (Kingston: McGill-

18. Ibid., p.22.


21. For more information on the demographic forces influencing the province's introduction of language restrictions with respect to education see Gaffield, Language, Religion, and Cultural Conflict.


23. Ibid., p.6.


25. Ibid., 17 avril 1890, p.2.

26. Ibid., 24 avril 1890, p.2.

27. Ibid., 24 mai 1890, p.2.

28. Ibid., 21 septembre 1899, p.2

29. Ibid., 17 janvier 1901, p.2.

30. See Ibid., 15 septembre, 1901, p.2.


32. Ibid; see also Mary Brogan, Our Lady of the Rosary Parish 100th Anniversary (Windsor, 1984), p.11.
From his appointment as Bishop of London in 1909 until his death in 1931, Monsignor Michael Francis Fallon was a man of controversy. Although he expressed a great pride in his Irish heritage, he was also an ardent supporter of the British Empire. Like Reverend Beaudoin, Fallon was a strong believer in the merits of a good education. While he advocated that children receive their daily instruction either in English or in French, he became an outspoken opponent of the inadequacies of the bilingual school system. His concern over the question of Catholic education in Ontario and especially in his diocese compelled him to call for the abolition of the bilingual schools. In the process, he influenced new laws governing French language instruction. Although he spoke French fluently, the Bishop would become the arch-enemy of French-Canadian nationalists everywhere.

Michael Fallon was born on May 13, 1867 in Kingston, Canada West. From an early age, he suffered from diabetes. In spite of this, Fallon went on to the University of Ottawa, where he became an active member of the rugby team, and took an interest in drama, debating, and journalistic efforts. Upon graduation, Fallon went to the Netherlands and eventually to Rome where in 1894, he was ordained a priest of the Oblate order. Earlier that same year, he received a doctorate in Divinity at the Gregorian college in Rome.¹

Upon ordination, Fallon was summoned to Ottawa to teach English literature at his alma mater. In 1896, he was elevated to
Vice Rector. By 1898, this rising star was serving as professor, coach of the University rugby team, and pastor of St. Joseph's church, the city's largest English Catholic parish. Then almost overnight, young Fallon's promising future crumbled.

In early 1898, the University of Ottawa saw an important administrative change. Reverend Father Constantineau, a French Canadian, replaced Reverend Fr. McGuckin as rector of the institution. Shortly thereafter, Fallon lost his position as Vice Rector. He remained undaunted, however, and continued to give public lectures, aside from his duties as professor.

The final blow to Reverend Fallon's pride came on June 10, 1901. On that day, Reverend Charles Tatin of the Oblate Order transferred the priest to a parish in Buffalo, New York. According to Fallon, the move was not a promotion to Superior as some French Canadians suggested, but rather a conspiracy. Reverend Tatin's direction was a command for me. I did not willingly accept it. I told him plainly that I considered it unfair for myself and a mistake in policy, but that of course it was my duty to obey and that I would obey without further question. While personally not displeased to get away from the friction that existed in Ottawa, it was then, and it has always been a cause of sorrow to me that I was not permitted to carry on my work...

My removal in 1898 as Vice Rector of Ottawa University, and my subsequent removal in 1901 as pastor of St. Joseph's Church was the result of a deliberate conspiracy... Reverend Tatin told me himself in Buffalo in 1904 that it was the same hostile influence which prevented me from being named rector of the Ottawa University after the fire.

In October 1901, a group of twenty-four Irishmen sent a petition to Archbishop Duhamel criticizing the University of Ottawa's discrimination against anglophone Catholics. Lamenting
Ottawa’s discrimination against anglophone Catholics. Lamenting the shortage of professors who spoke English as their mother tongue, these disgruntled followers protested Fallon’s transfer. In addition, two of them pledged to make an annual donation of $5000 if Fallon were appointed Rector. Archbishop Duhamel dismissed the accusations of discrimination, and refused to entertain the demands of the petitioners.⁷

Archbishop Thomas Duhamel subsequently had harsh comments for Reverend Fallon and his supporters for all the "trouble" they had brought the archdiocese. Duhamel asserted that these difficulties continued to persist even after the departure of the priest. In effect, the Archbishop criticized Fallon for his failure to intervene and discourage the parishioners of St. Joseph’s Church from protesting against his transfer. He wrote, "le Réverend Père aurait pu empêcher le mouvement si peu catholique de ses paroissiens; il n’avait pour cela qu’un mot à dire...Il ne l’a pas dit".⁸

On St. Patrick’s Day, 1902, Reverend Fallon returned to Ottawa without the consent of the Archbishop to deliver a lecture on Daniel O’Connor, an Irish patriot. During his discourse, Fallon deplored the discriminatory laws of Ireland which had driven many into exile. He exclaimed, "Let me tell you that it’s a horrible thing to exile a people or even an individual." One journalist remarked that the audience quickly understood this personal allusion to Fallon’s own exile, and supported him with prolonged applause.⁹ The Archbishop later learned of this event,
much to his chagrin.

Archbishop Duhamel suspected Fallon of partaking in the unannounced and unauthorized founding of a journal entitled The Union. Although the paper was subtitled an "Independent Catholic Weekly", the Archbishop discounted the official claims that the word "independent" merely symbolized the lack of attachment to any political party. He insisted rather that

sa première manière de montrer son indépendance fut de se passer de l'approbation de l'Ordinaire [Duhamel]. Ni le Père Fallon, ni les rédacteurs n'ont fait aucune démarche auprès de l'Evêque d'Ottawa pour au moins lui annoncer qu'un tel journal allait être fonde."

Duhamel went on to criticize one of the editors as having been the principal writer of a defunct newspaper which had frequently attacked religious teaching orders. The archbishop's comments on the University of Ottawa controversy put the blame on a small band of Irish nationalist agitators.

Maintenant il est facile de voir comment on se préparait à faire vibrer la corde nationale pour réussir à faire de l'Université d'Ottawa non pas simplement une université de langue anglaise, mais une université exclusivement irlandaise. Je regrette de dire que certains hommes font passer leurs intérêts propres avant ceux des âmes, les intérêts, mal entendus, de leur race, avant ceux de l'église."

It is ironic to note that Michael Fallon would echo this very sentiment against the French Canadians a decade later in a speech concerning the Ontario schools controversy.

Much of the background of the later conflict surrounding the Ontario Schools Question finds its roots in a national rivalry which developed within the Catholic church. French Canadians, fuelled by their ultramontanist missionary zeal to christianize
North America, came to associate their language as that rampart which protected their catholicism from Anglo-Saxon protestantism. This association came to be interpreted as a chauvinistic sentiment towards Canada's anglophone Catholics, who were at the turn of the century, largely of Irish descent. For some French-Canadian nationalists, the Irish could only be looked upon as second class members of the church.

Partly out of this resentment to French-Canadian chauvinism and partly inspired by their own national pride, the Irish sought to assert their own place within the church hierarchy. The ongoing struggle for Irish dominion status prompted this spirit. In a period of growing nationalist fever in Europe and elsewhere, Canada's Catholic Church was experiencing a similar problem. The end result in both cases was the outbreak of hostilities on a wide scale.

With the appointment of Monsignor Fallon as Bishop of London in the Autumn of 1909, few Ontarians were prepared for the string of events that would exacerbate latent hostilities between French and Irish Catholics. In January 1910, French Canadians across Ontario gathered in Ottawa for the first province-wide congress on bilingual education. This event, which preceded Fallon's consecration as bishop by a few weeks, added fuel to the smouldering embers of cultural antagonism.

Among the 1200 delegates who attended the French-Canadian Education Congress were 81 representatives from Essex and Kent Counties. This fact was significant for these delegates included
a respectable number of professionals, (Sévrin Ducharme) and priests (including Fathers Beaudoin, Langlois and Meunier). There were standard bearers for every French enclave in Essex and Kent Counties."

The French Canadian Congress set out as its principle objective to secure

la juste revendication de tous les droits des Canadiens français d’Ontario et l’infatigable surveillance de leurs intérêts."

Feeling confident of their growing numerical importance in Ontario, the congress passed a series of aggressive resolutions. Among those requests put forth were motions declaring that all primary schools where the majority of the children were from French homes should officially be declared bilingual schools. Secondly, they requested that in all classes where twenty-five per cent of the pupils were French, the trustees require that instruction be given in French reading, spelling and composition. In addition, the Congress resolved that French should be legally recognized in bilingual schools as a language of instruction and discipline. The delegates also asked for the authorization of a series of readers and textbooks in their mother language. As well they clamoured for a system of bilingual secondary schools. Lastly, the Congress requested that high school entrance examinations be modified so that the standard on English subjects be lowered for students from the bilingual school system. The Congress delegates later conveyed these demands to Premier James Whitney for his consideration. Unbeknownst to the delegates,
their resolutions were to provoke the wrath of a formidable adversary.

On May 22, 1910, scarcely a month after his consecration, the newly invested Bishop Fallon, while on a visit to Sarnia, requested through Reverend Father Kennedy, an interview with William Hanna. Hanna was secretary to the Ontario Minister of Public Instruction, Dr. R.A. Pyne. In a letter to his superior, Mr. Hanna outlined his conversation with the Bishop.

Bishop Fallon said he would like to see me personally on a matter of great concern to this section of the province. This arranged, he proceeded at once to review the whole question of bilingual teaching in the schools.

...the question was one of great practical importance, in fact, he regarded it as dominating all questions so far as the welfare of the people of his diocese was concerned. He has not come to his conclusion suddenly but he had determined so far as in him lay to wipe out every vestige of bilingual teachings in the public schools of this Diocese.

...he was assured that in certain sections of the County of Essex, there were children going in the public schools who could not speak English and this after three generations of their forefathers in that County...."We are an English speaking province on an English speaking continent, where the boys and girls going out to fight the battle of life must be equipped first with English...if on top of that they are able to learn French or Italian or Pole (sic), or any other language, all well and good, but the grounding in English was absolutely essential." 

These views, expressed by Bishop Fallon, were to be repeated again and again during his twenty-two year episcopal reign. They would disturb and upset many French Canadians during that period. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the above conversation with Mr. Hanna was held in private. Henry Maisonville, a civil servant in Toronto with family ties to Essex County's French
Canadian community, leaked the document to the press following consultation with his parish priest, Reverend Lucien Beaudoin. Perhaps the most damaging portion of the Hanna-Pyne letter involved the following paragraph.

I mentioned to him (the Bishop) that, as I understand it in these localities where the French were numerous and spoke the French language, it was thought desirable that the teacher in such a public school would be better able to lead the children from the French to the English language. His reply was that this was a fallacy, that if true theoretically, that this was never honestly carried out, that the argument for the necessity of the French teacher in French localities was the argument of the clerical agitator or the political agitator, and shaking his big arm and fist at me, he said, 'the clerical agitator I pledge myself to take care of, but the political agitator, I have no control over..."\n
Fallon's pledge would be prophetic. As time would illustrate, the Bishop handled all those diocesan clerics who opposed him with a heavy hand.

Hanna's letter also reflected the fact that Fallon honestly believed that he was working in the best interests of the local French-Canadian community. The bishop was convinced he recognized the concerns of the mainstream French-Canadian viewpoint in Essex and Kent Counties. He went on to say that the French teacher had been forced onto these sections "in spite of the wishes of the parents and against the interests of the pupils..."\n
This belief lent credence to later suspicions that the Bishop purposely forbade French instruction in the schools for the "good" of the parishioners.

Fallon's opinions on the status of bilingual schools left a strong impression on Mr. Hanna. In concluding his letter
to Dr. Pyne, he alluded to the veiled threat which the Bishop voiced if the status quo were upheld.

...there is no doubt about it, he is a wonderfully strong character and is very much in earnest on this question as I could not but be impressed with the idea that on what may happen in this connection will turn his whole support or opposition throughout the diocese.

In June 1910, Bishop Fallon summoned all of his priests to assemble for the ecclesiastical retreat. Holding the weekend of reflection at Sandwich, near Windsor, he delivered an unexpected speech on Saturday, 14 July 1910. The Reverend Father Lucien Alexandre Beaudoin of Ford City, secretly took notes of the discourse. The Bishop declared,

First, I warn you to have nothing to do with the newspapers. I have suffered a great deal recently, following the appearance of articles in the newspapers of Detroit and Windsor. I will set the tone in this diocese and not the reporters nor the laymen, nor the priests, nor even the bishops, I alone will run this diocese.

I am opposed to bilingual schools because they cannot give an appropriate education to our needs. There is a conspiracy against Separate Schools...our enemies seeing the division that exists over the bilingual schools will use it to weaken our cause and take away our schools.

Fallon’s stance did have some pedagogical justification. According to historian Margaret Prang, Fallon believed that the bilingual schools were “pedagogically unsound, resulting in inadequate training in both languages...encouraging incompetence, giving a prize to hypocrisy, and breeding ignorance.” In the province of Ontario, the English-French schools lacked qualified teachers. Very often these teachers held only third class teaching certificates. Provincial standards required second
class certificates. Many children suffered unfairly because of this, and never received an adequate education in either French or English. In effect, most students received only rudimentary writing skills, while others remained altogether illiterate.

In spite of these shortcomings, the poor quality of education was not a phenomenon known exclusively to bilingual schools. In fact, a penury of certified teachers plagued many English language schools as well. Monsignor Fallon deplored all cases where children were deprived of a good education. The Bishop’s personal secretary, Monsignor Mahoney, recalled,

Fallon’s "attack" on these schools was not confined only to the French. The Sacred Heart nuns had a system of education of their own, by which they prepared young ladies to make a good marriage. Fallon told them to change their system of education. The nuns refused to follow his order. Fallon brought a group of religious to London, the Ursulines from Chatham, to teach. He was following the same principle that the English nuns were not properly preparing the English girls with the proper education needed at that time. This was a similar situation with the bilingual issue in Essex County.¹

Fallon dealt firmly with both English and French-Canadian nuns who stubbornly opposed his initiatives to improve educational standards.

During the annual retreat of the clergy, Bishop Fallon denied the French-Canadian assertion of language as a pillar of the faith.

I do not admit to the principle that to lose one’s language is to lose one’s faith. Look at the Germans, they kept their language but lost their faith. The Irish lost their language, but thank goodness, they kept their faith. Teach your children one language only, be it English or French.²
Although this proposal may have seemed sensible to English-speaking Ontarians, it disregarded the social reality for local French Canadians. For them, English was a necessity in the rapidly urbanizing society of the early twentieth century. Nevertheless, they felt a longing to maintain their cultural heritage in an area whose French-speaking roots dated back to 1701.

Aside from his opposition to the bilingual school system, Bishop Fallon suspected the French language colleges of Montreal of promoting nationalist indoctrination. Fearing the effects that these schools were purportedly having on his local French Canadian clergy, he ordered all future vocations to frequent his diocesan schools. He told his priests,

"Sandwich college is my diocesan college... I ask you to support this college by sending your children there; I will choose with preference for the priesthood those subjects from that institution."

Fallon's decision to discriminate against seminarians (mostly Canadiens) who received their collegial education from schools outside the diocese led to accusations that he was anti-French.

Fallon concluded his retreat lecture by laying down the law to his priests in threatening fashion. All priests of the diocese of London were to obey the Bishop's point of view without question.

"There are my principles... You are free to accept them in theory, but you must observe them in practice, whether they please you or not. My motto is Justitia et Pax. There is not a man on Earth who desires peace more than I, and to obtain
it, one must be armed for war, and if there's war, I will be the conqueror. The events which followed this episode more resembled a reign of belligerence than a reign of peace.

To attribute Fallon's opposition to bilingual schools to a simple expression of cultural chauvinism would be grossly inaccurate. In effect, his motives were pragmatic. In a letter to Monsignor Peregrini Stagni, the Apostolic Delegate to Canada, Fallon offered his views:

The Catholics of Ontario received their schools from the good nature of their Protestant neighbours, and even though we have the right to Catholic schools in virtue of the constitution, everyone knows that the Parliament of Ontario could, without infringing in the least on our constitutional rights, put us in the impossibility of maintaining our schools.

The bishop believed that the sheer existence of bilingual schools, which were stigmatized for the poor quality of education they purportedly offered, jeopardized the entire system of limited state funding for Catholic separate schools.

It is significant to note that Fallon was not alone in his opposition to bilingual schools. The perceived danger facing Catholic education became the object of discussion at a meeting of the anglophone Bishops of Ontario on August 15, 1910. Archbishop Mgr. Gauthier raised the question of the peril facing separate schools. The general consensus was that the bilingual schools were inefficient. The discredit of their condition, it was feared, would serve as an argument against the entire system of Catholic schools as it had in Manitoba twenty years earlier.

Out of a sense of urgency, and in response to the
Association Canadienne-française d'éducation d'Ontario (ACFFO) congress which had asserted that French Canadians had a right to bilingual schools, the bishops unanimously adopted the following resolution.

We express fear for the future of our system of Catholic education in Ontario, because of the agitation which reached its point of culmination in the French-Canadian Congress held in Ottawa in January 1910; [We resolve] that his Lordship Monsignor the Bishop of London be delegated by the assembly to meet Mr. James Whitney, Premier of Ontario to make him aware of our complete opposition to the demands of the Congress with respect to education.

Archbishop C.H. Gauthier of Kingston was the signatory of the above resolution. Fallon used this document to prove to the Vatican's Apostolic Delegate in Ottawa that his fellow bishops supported his views on bilingual education in Ontario.

In 1913, Fallon wrote in his defense,

I wish to make clear the fact that, in my attitude concerning the bilingual schools, I was only the representative and the delegate of the bishops of Ontario. When in the month of October 1910, these things became public, I bore the weight of the misunderstandings and abuse, without revealing the fact that my colleagues were in union with me on this affair.

While the bishops supported Fallon's stance on the schools question, their silence portrayed their brother as the sole instigator.

Fallon wasted no time in presenting the bishops' resolutions to Premier Whitney, in hopes of reforming an outdated system of education.

The 16 August 1910, I presented the deliberation taken by the bishops at Kingston to Mr. James Whitney, prime minister of Ontario: and following the
instructions of my colleagues, I sent a written resume of remarks by Mr. James Whitney to his Lordship Monsignor Stagni.  

This action set in motion the movement to legislate severe restrictions on the use of French in the schools of the province. It also encouraged the growing cultural rift within the Catholic Church of Ontario.

As news gradually spread of Monsignor Fallon’s opposition to bilingual schools, a new dilemma arose. With summer ebbing away, Essex County’s French Canadians prepared for the new school year. They met an unexpected change in the curriculum. In three diocesan schools — St. Edward’s of Walkerville, Notre Dame of Ford City and Belle River’s Catholic school — the sisters no longer taught in French.

On 2 September, 1910, Reverend Mother Superior Vincent of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Walkerville reportedly stated that she had received orders from the Right Reverend Monsignor Fallon of London as well as the Reverend Mother Superior Mother Angèle of the mother house in London, to teach no longer a single word of French in these schools, regardless of the standing education law.10 News of this controversial order quickly became publicized in a number of newspapers and sworn testimonials. Bad publicity concerning Bishop Fallon and the education issue multiplied.

Fallon’s stance on bilingual education proved to be a serious point of contention for French Canadians. The Quebec press quickly focussed its attention on Bishop Fallon’s alleged
opposition to French instruction. Citing a school board member from Our Lady of the Lake parish, Walkerville (later Ford City), La Patrie of Montreal wrote of the alleged orders to ban French instruction altogether.

Je crains que Mgr. Fallon ne puisse se disculper de l'accusation qui pèse sur lui d'avoir défendu l'usage du français dans les écoles de son diocèse. L'édit de l'Evêque a créé du trouble dans toutes les écoles séparées du Comté d'Essex.\textsuperscript{27}

Fallon and others would later argue that Beaudoin was the author of these press leaks.

On 20 September, 1910, Monsignor Fallon responded to accusations that he had forbidden the usage of French in the schools. In short, his communiqué to the newspapers denied that he had made any such interdiction.

I have never issued, nor caused to be issued, directly or indirectly, verbally, by writing, or in any other way, any order or mandate or even expression of opinion concerning the teaching of French or of any other language in accordance with the laws of the Province of Ontario.\textsuperscript{28}

The Bishop appeared to justify himself, yet this statement was in open contradiction to comments made by the Mother Superior of the Saint Joseph Sisters in London. Some local French Canadians felt compelled to respond. Essex County's ACFED officials pointed out

...que veut dire à London l'ordre de n'enseigner qu'une seule langue, sinon de n'enseigner que l'anglais.\textsuperscript{29}

An assembly of the regional Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society at Tecumseh on 25 September 1910, debated a resolution to petition Church authorities in Rome. In another resolution, the Society
accused the Bishop of extremism and injustice towards the local communities. Both resolutions met opposition from two very prominent members of the Society. Father Beaudoin recounted the incident:

Le Père (Pierre) Langlois et (Gaspard) Pacaud (former MPP and school board member) de Windsor, réunis en comité avec les représentants de l'Association Saint-Jean Baptiste y furent opposés. Ils considèrent que Mgr. Fallon ayant lancé sur les journaux une lettre où il se déclara innocent... il fallait mieux attendre. Tout de même, l'assemblée de Técumseh a fait un bien injure à la cause canadienne.  

The efforts by nationalists to appeal to the Roman courts of the Church against Monsignor Fallon were temporarily set back.

Although the move to forward a petition to Rome was scuttled, publicity of this assembly illustrated a growing sense of opposition to the Bishop. As a consequence, the St. Jean Baptiste society and the French-Canadian community came to be looked upon with increasing suspicion. For some Catholics, the loyalty of the Canadien to the church was now questionable. The gesture by Reverend Langlois and Gaspard Pacaud was designed to dispel such thoughts.

These efforts at moderation came undone five days later when Reverend Father Lucien Beaudoin reopened the issue in a sworn declaration. Beaudoin was admittedly upset over the decision of the St. Jean Baptiste committee. After all, it was his separate school which fell victim to the Bishop's intervention. He felt the petition ought to have been passed and forwarded to Rome. As a result of his own strong convictions, he outlined the following position:
Que la Réverende Mère Supérieure des Soeurs de Saint-Joseph de cette paroisse, Mère Vincent vint à la résidence du Curé soussigné (Beaudoin) se plaindre le 24 septembre 1910, de la lettre de Mgr. M.F. Fallon, Evêque de London, dans laquelle il déclarait qu'il n'avait jamais donné ordres de ne plus enseigner la langue française dans les écoles de son diocèse.

Qu'à la retraite annuelle des Soeurs de Saint-Joseph, dit la Réverende Mère Vincent, Mgr. Fallon fit venir les Religieuses pour leur commander de ne plus enseigner la langue française.

...Que la question en litige, après la lettre ouverte de Monseigneur M.F. Fallon laissait passer les Soeurs de Saint-Joseph pour des menteurs aux yeux du public et des syndics d'école.??

This declaration sought to reestablish the Mother Superior's reputation. In addition, it succeeded in embarrassing the Bishop.

The strong language of Beaudoin's testimonial is significant, for it reveals his intense animosity for the Bishop. Nevertheless, Beaudoin's conviction that Fallon was not being completely honest with the public emanates from his personal conversations with Reverend Mother Vincent. There is no evidence to suggest that Reverend Beaudoin ever personally heard Fallon voice opposition to instruction of the French language.

On October 2, 1910, Father Beaudoin journeyed to Stoney Point, for the annual visit of Bishop Fallon to that parish. After singing the high mass, Beaudoin assisted at the parish's confirmation ceremonies. Much to the priest's surprise, Fallon delivered a sermon before the parishioners and their children criticizing the Catholics of Walkerville (then part of Beaudoin's parish) for their defense of the bilingual school system. Beaudoin recounted the incident in a letter.
[The Bishop declared] "Je suis contre les écoles bilingues. Elles ne font que des ignora...s de race inférieure. L'article publié par un syndic de Walkerville [as cited earlier from La Patrie] est faux. Je n'ai jamais défendu le français. Il y a à Walkerville une grande manufacture de whiskey et de boissons alcooliques, cause de l'indépendance, il y a aussi une nouvelle manufacture de calomnies et d'insulteurs publics."

Levant son poing dans ma direction il continua: "Le curé de Walkerville que tous ici, vous voyez présent devra répéter mes paroles à ses paroissiens demain aux messes du dimanche." Je n'ai pas dit un mot.\footnote{94}

It was at this time that Mgr. Fallon came to openly accuse Reverend Beaudoin of being a leading agitator of nationalist sentiment against church authority.

Reverend Beaudoin raised the subject of the sermon to Bishop Fallon later that day. He recounted in a letter,

"Monseigneur, dis-je, je vous demande deux minutes. La question se râne à ceci. Les soeurs prétendaient et assuraient que l'ordre a été donné par Votre Grandeur à Walkerville et Belle-Rivière, vous vous prétendez le contraire. Pourquoi ne pas régler immédiatement la question. Le public dit qu'il y a un menteur ou des menteurs, pardonnez-moi l'expression. 

"Non, dit-il, il faudra que chaque Supérieure me rende compte de chaque assertion faite." La Soeur Supérieure de Walkerville à qui j'ai rapporté mon entrevue dit qu'il a certainement donné l'ordre et il ne peut sortir indemne de cette difficulté.\footnote{95}

Fallon's reluctance to approach the Mother Superior amounted, in Beaudoin's judgement, to an admission of guilt on the Bishop's behalf.

Although Beaudoin was convinced, as were the Superiors of the Saint Joseph Sisters, that Fallon forbade all French instruction, it is quite likely that there was a misinterpretation. For example, Beaudoin refers to the Hanna-
Pyne letter in his correspondence in the following manner.

"Avez-vous lu le fameux écrit ou rapport d'Hanna ou il me dit que Mgr. Fallon demandait l'abolition de la langue française?"

In actuality, the Hanna-Pyne letter never once makes direct mention of banning all French instruction from the schools.

A number of reasons for the misinterpretation of the Bishop's orders are possible. First, for a proud French Canadian like Father Beaudoin, initiatives to phase out the bilingual school system amounted for all intents and purposes to an end to instruction in the French language. Also, many of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, upon receiving Fallon's orders to follow the letter of the law and cease the practice of bilingual instruction, may have stopped teaching French all together. Lastly, it is plausible that Fallon may have instructed the Sisters to teach only in English to the students. In this fashion, he would have insinuated that French no longer be taught, or that it be severely restricted. In 1920, a Commission of Inquiry conducted by the Holy Roman Rota (the Church's highest court) found no evidence to prove that Bishop Fallon had prohibited the use of the French language. It attributed the assertions by the Sisters to a misunderstanding.

In light of the trouble occurring in Walkerville and Ford City, the French-Canadian community of Windsor appealed to the Roman Catholic School Board to honour its longstanding commitment to the bilingual schools.

In petitioning your Board for French in the
schools, we are not animated by a spirit of narrow selfishness, nor are we moved by a desire to place ourselves in opposition to our civil authorities. We are acting merely in the interest of our people's greatest good, religious and material."

While speaking on the importance of retaining their language for material well-being, the petitioners placed emphasis on language as a precept to remaining faithful to the Church. They added the following comments at a meeting of the Board:

The French child naturally learns prayers from his mother. The child looks upon his mother as the acme of perfection, whose word and teaching should be followed implicitly...Now what a transformation comes over that child when he enters the school for the first time, to find the way his mother has taught him his prayers is not good, he has now to say them in another language. One can easily imagine the effect on the child's mind. He first loses (sic) respect for his mother's teaching, next comes contempt for things at home, then disobedience, then the usual list of crimes that follow as a natural consequence.

Such a petition illustrated the fears of most French-Canadian families of an education system which portrayed their heritage in such a negative fashion. For them, the denigration of French in the classroom (as practiced by some teachers) jeopardized their whole system of morals and traditions. French-Canadian parents resented the anglicization of their children because it created linguistic barriers and sharp differences of opinion concerning heritage.

Concerns over the future of the local French-Canadian community preoccupied Reverend Lucien Beaudoin. For years, the pastor of Our Lady of the Lake Parish visited his local schools on a routine basis to teach Catechism. With the advent of Bishop Fallon and the striking reduction or elimination of French from
the various schools, Beaudoin began a daily visit to the schools to teach Catechism in French. In 1910, the student body of these parish schools, was still overwhelmingly French Canadian, and would remain that way until after the death of Reverend Beaudoin.

Beaudoin felt that any efforts to assert the local population’s education “rights” required leadership. As a driving force in reawakening local nationalist sentiment, he updated his parishioners from the pulpit on the activities of the French Canadian Education Association of Ontario (ACFED) and the Saint-Jean Baptiste Society. In addition he encouraged the faithful to subscribe to Quebec newspapers and send their children to the seminary of Montreal. Beaudoin’s principal errors were to encourage his parishioners to educate their children outside the diocese, and to ignore Fallon’s order to have nothing to do with the newspapers.1

Bishop Fallon expressed his suspicions in writing on October 3, 1910. In a letter to Rev. Beaudoin, he made the following accusations:

The enclosed extract from La Patrie contains certain alleged statistics that have been collected by you and that have been in constant use by you for some time past. Even if they were true— and they are not true— I desire to point out that they do not concern you. You are at present pastor of Walkerville. If you desire to retain this position or any other, I invite you to mind your own business. I shall take care of the interests of the diocese.

Is it true that on a recent occasion you interfered with the action of a sister in your school in connection with the saying of Prayers? And if it is true, will you tell me on what authority you so acted?"
Beaudoin responded to Fallon’s allegations, stating that he had nothing to do with the provision of statistics to La Patrie or with any newspapers in general. His answer to Fallon’s charges of interference concerning school prayer was forceful. He argued

Que mon école est bilingue, que je suis surintendant de l'école de la part de la loi, que je suis curé et que c'est mon devoir de faire réciter les prières en français dans une école composé de 95% de Canadiens-français."

For Beaudoin, his role as pastor and superintendent of the local school board sanctioned him to intervene when the Sisters began conducting all prayers in English to a classroom of French Canadians in what was supposed to be a bilingual school.

On October 17, 1910, in an interview with the press, Bishop Fallon criticized the poor quality of education provided in the bilingual schools of Essex and Kent counties.

French Canadian parishes of Belle River, Big Point (Grande Pointe), French Settlement, McGregor, Ruscomb, Staples, Stoney Point, Paincourt and Tilbury with separate schools and upwards of 2000 on the rolls passed a total of 10 pupils at the recent entrance examinations. It is from some of these parishes that the loudest noise comes regarding my insistence that these conditions are a disgrace.

Is it any wonder I should raise my voice on behalf of all the children who live in what might be called the bilingual belt of my diocese? And is it not malicious that for so doing I should be charged with hostility to the French language and to the interests of the French Canadian people? In the schools that are inflicted on these children, neither English nor French is properly taught or decently spoken. The regulations of the Education Department are in many instances utterly disregarded. Because of the conditions... children are either not sent to school at all or are withdrawn in the face of difficulties.

Now the fault is not with the children nor with
to the teachers, it is with the system and it is against the system and the threatened extension of it, that I protest. I base my protest on the rights of children to an education that will give them a standing in the community in which they are to live, and that will open up to them the avenues of success. As things stand now these children will either remain where they are and then continue to be as they are or they will move to Quebec to be classed as renegades because they do not know French, or they will go elsewhere to be hewers of wood and drawers of water because they do not know English."

Rev. Beaudoin disagreed strongly with Fallon's comments. In a confidential letter to his friend Reverend C. Charlebois of Ottawa, he wrote,

...le comté d'Essex peut figurer avec avantage avec beaucoup d'autres comtés. Orford par exemple, près de London passait d'après les rapports officiels il y a quelques années comme le comté où l'on faisait le plus de fautes d'orthographe. Je crois que l'on va lui répondre sur toute la ligne d'idées. C'est extraordinaire comment il se fait que cet évêque consacré le 25 avril sache le 21 mai suivant que nous sommes les ignorants."

The pastor of Our Lady of the Lake Parish was not alone in his criticism of Bishop Fallon. His reputation at stake, Mr. David Chenay, the longtime bilingual school inspector of northern Essex sought to dispel the "myths" propagated by the Bishop of London. The Evening Record took account of the inspector's remarks.

Mr. Chenay has had 35 years' experience in the system as a teacher and inspector and he claims to have a better knowledge of the conditions than many of those who would have them returned out of existence. He does not assert that the bilingual system of education is by any means perfect; he admits that it has flaws, but he contends that they are defects which arise from certain conditions among their deficient organization. "The conditions", he said, "have been unfairly stated by Bishop Fallon and unduly exaggerated. The Bishop has not had time to inquire fully into these things personally. I believe those who gave him the information upon which he bases his attack are sincere,
but they have not been at the pains to get to the bottom of the matter. The charge as to illiteracy is particularly exaggerated. I am sorry to have to acknowledge that there is a lot of illiteracy among our French people, but I cannot say that the system or the teaching of French is the cause. The causes I think are two. One is the indifference of many of our French people in poor circumstances. There is a fair number who take a deep interest in education, but there is a larger number who are apathetic. Another cause, I think is the difficulty of the task set upon our French children in learning the English language.

It is claimed that English is not taught enough in our schools, but I do not think that claim is justified. Along the river front the French schools are just as good as the English schools in our neighbourhood. I have no hesitation in saying that our best French schools will compare favourably with the best English schools. The fact is that our bilingual schools are becoming largely English. In this district, I do not think there are more than six departments in which French is taught more than English. At Belle River, very little French is taught, except in the case of young children, and that is a purely French village. I claim that if you make a fair allowance for the indifference of the French people and for the difficulty which confronts the French children in trying to learn English, the education in our bilingual schools is as good as in any English school in the county districts. I also think that Bishop Fallon lays too much stress on the number of pupils who fail to pass entrance examinations. To begin with, I do not admit that his figures are correct. But my belief is that the entrance examinations are the ruination of many of our schools for the reasons that the teacher devotes so much attention to the few pupils who are preparing for the examination that she has to neglect the others. Frequently children are sent up by their parents before they are ripe, which explains why so many of them fail. The entrance examination is a pretty stiff one, and it is not reasonable to expect that children of ten, eleven, twelve or thirteen years can be prepared in a short time.

Another reason why the proportion of failures is so large is that the children are so often kept from school to work in the garden or on the farm. In some districts any excuse is good enough for the absence of the pupils. Bishop Fallon would have you believe that the failures to pass the entrance examinations are
confined to the French schools. Why I could take you
to an English school seven miles from here where three
teachers with normal school certificates are employed,
and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in ten
years only one pupil of that school has passed. I do
not say it is the fault of the teachers. They do their
best under the circumstances, but I simply point out
that there is a school where not a word of French is
taught."

While Chenay did dispel the misconception promoted by
Monsignor Fallon, his defense is by no means excessively
nationalistic in tone. In effect, Chenay reveals his own
awareness of serious shortcomings within the system, most notably
the problems of illiteracy, parental apathy and a lack of school
attendance. His comments are significant for they offer a first
hand perspective by a school official who probably knew the
situation of Essex County's bilingual education program better
than anyone else, namely Bishop Michael Fallon. While Fallon
felt urgent changes were needed to improve standards, Mr. Chenay
thought otherwise.

The Evening Record offered this assessment:

Naturally Mr. Chenay is disposed to defend the
bilingual schools of Essex, but in his deliverance he
is fair and moderate, taking the ground that Bishop
Fallon has exaggerated the condition, although
ascribing this not to hostility but to misinformation
or deficient information on the part of those who
communicated their impressions to him."

To settle this publicized dispute over bilingual education,
Premier Whitney issued a decision. On November 2, the leader of
Ontario's Conservative government called for a full public
inquiry. He commissioned Dr. F. W. Merchant, provincial
inspector of public and separate schools to undertake the
operation and report his findings.

Fallon’s newspaper interview did not provoke a reaction from Premier Whitney and Chenay alone; it also caught the attention of Reverend Beaudoin. Indeed, the Bishop had openly made reference to a certain French priest of Essex who was responsible for agitation against him. Beaudoin remarked:

_L'opinion publique dit que c'est moi. Cependant, j'ai en ma possession deux lettres de Mgr. Langevin établissant mon innocence. Je ne mentionnerai jamais son nom. Je m'attends à être attaqué par Fallon. Je nierai tout catégoriquement et je demanderai un procès canonique._

_Il n'y a qu'un procès à Rome pour nous débarrasser de ce maniaque._

While Beaudoin’s letter serves to absolve him of some of the guilt of leaking damaging information to the press on events in the diocese, it also serves as evidence that he was indeed an accomplice to the fact.

Father Beaudoin’s letter also betrays a fear and abhorrence of the new Bishop. Over the span of months, the pastor’s stand on bilingual schools had become so firm, he found himself at irreconcilable odds with the Bishop. The sudden fear of possible reprisals soon became reality, as Beaudoin would spend most of the final seven years of his life in a struggle against Mgr. Fallon.

With growing rumors of a rift between Fallon and his priests, Church officials in London knew they had to take action immediately. During the week of October 17, the Bishop did something extraordinary. He sought out his priests to have them sign a collective letter in support of him. With his reputation...
reestablished, Fallon blamed the growing trouble in the diocese on the publication of the Hanna-Pyne letter, which publicized the Bishop’s views on bilingual schools. In a communiqué to the press, Fallon stated:

To intimidate me and make me pass for a liar, the Hanna Memorandum was published. I do not follow this document in its peregrinations. Let it suffice to say that it was stolen by an officer from the Department of Public Works and that it was given to a priest of this diocese, that in his turn gave it to an ecclesiastical dignitary.¶

Fallon accused Henri Maisonville of Our Lady of the Lake Parish of stealing the letter in question. Maisonville was a civil servant working for Joseph Reaume, the Minister of Public Works in Toronto. The belligerant bishop asserted that it was Maisonville who leaked the letter to the press, upon the advice of Reverend Father Beaudoin.

Mr. Maisonville discounted some of these accusations. He offered his own version of the incident.

Que j’ai reçu comme secrétaire politique et particulier une copie d’un document signée par l’Hon. M. Hanna, le secrétaire provincial.

Que ce document était le résumé de l’entrevue à Sarnia entre Monseigneur Fallon et l’Honorable M. Hanna;

Que ce document a été livré à la publicité indirectement par moi, mais contrairement à ma volonté.¶

By late 1910, it was clear that there was a growing conflict in the Diocese of London. The year 1911 would only intensify the antagonisms between the two groups.

On January 3, 1911, Lucien Beaudoin learned some disturbing news. Given its serious implications, he relayed it to the
Apostolic Delegate of Canada, the Vatican's representative to the Dominion.

Il y a quelques mois Mgr. Fallon visitait soit l'école catholique, soit des personnes engagées dans des mariages mixtes [English-French] ou autres de ma paroisse, et cela sans visiter le curé. J'ai découvert que le but de ces visites était de diviser ma paroisse.

Ces gens ou familles demeurent à proximité de mon église. Les plus éloignés sont à une quinzaine d'heures de marche et ils sont peu nombreux.

...L'église ne se remplit jamais. Elle fut bâtie pour l'avenir.¹³

Reverend Beaudoin was upset that Fallon had made plans to divide his parish, Notre Dame du Lac, without consulting him.

The pastor of Our Lady of the Lake also referred to his twenty years of service and his various accomplishments during this period. Most notable among these were the construction of three parish schools, one of which was designed specifically for the children of mixed English–French marriages. In addition, Beaudoin recalled the precarious financial situation of his parish. Our Lady of the Lake Parish had yet to repay two principal debts. First, there was the bill concerning the construction of a new church following a fire in 1907. Second, the parish was shouldering the mortgage on St. Edward’s School in Walkerville, built in 1905. According to Beaudoin any division would not only strip him of his wealthiest parishioners, it would place St. Edward’s School under the jurisdiction of a new parish.¹⁴

Va-t-on m'enlever tout Walkerville et me laisser avec la population ouvrière pauvre qui m'arrive des campagnes voisines? L'Eglise mère se verra-t-elle grevée de la dette de Walkerville?¹⁵
The division of Our Lady of the Lake represented a threat to the already unstable financial state of the parish. Indeed the Church was still able to take on several hundred new parishioners before reaching its capacity.

Beaudoin also voiced concerns for the linguistic character of the new church.

La population catholique de Walkerville compte 500 à 550 âmes dont 85% sont des Canadiens-français. Je serai bien surpris que l'on y nommait un prêtre de langue française aux idées ardemment catholiques qui ne chercheront pas à anglifier (sic) nos nationaux. 🇨🇦

Given Fallon’s antagonism towards French Canadian nationalism, it was not surprising for Beaudoin to doubt the Bishop’s commitment to the majority of Walkerville’s Catholics.

In Beaudoin’s view, all arguments made for the division of the parish were unjustified. The uncooperative priest undertook a parish census to prove his point. Out of 408 families, at least 2000 parishioners were French Canadian, compared to only 350 who spoke English. 🇨🇦 For him, this hardly justified the creation of an English-speaking parish in Walkerville. Official census statistics reveal that Beaudoin’s assertions were somewhat exaggerated. [Refer to Appendix D]

In the spring of 1911, Beaudoin’s suspicions were confirmed. In Walkerville, diocesan officials circulated a petition to determine whether or not to establish an English language parish. In despair Beaudoin sought legal advice. He questioned the reasoning behind the project for such a parish.

Walkerville se compose de 500 catholiques dont 400 de langue française... Mgr Fallon vient visiter et dit-
on dîner chez Mme Walker avec le Père Downey. Tout est bien arrangé pour la nouvelle église. J’ai bâti une nouvelle école au prix de $9000. Rien n’a été payé. Walkerville est la meilleure partie de ma paroisse. Je vais me trouver réduit à revoir quelques centaines de dollars.

Mgr. Fallon a-t-il le droit de créer des paroisses en mettant en danger les autres?

Father Beaudoin and his colleagues in the local ACFEO decided that they had to awaken the local population. The fate of their culture appeared to lie in London and the legislative halls of Toronto. Very quickly however, local organizers came to realize the size of their task.

Il est difficile pour des gens peu instruits et ne connaissant pas le rouage de la diplomatie de faire réussir une cause quelconque.

The nationalists agreed that a successful awareness campaign would take time.

In an unrelated dispute Beaudoin wrote of a disagreement between Bishop Fallon and Monsignor J. Edouard Meunier of St. Alphonsus Parish, Windsor. Before Fallon’s appointment to the See of London, and during the inter-regnum, Meunier served as presiding officer of the Diocese. During this period, Meunier promised a contract for St. Alphonsus’ school in Windsor to the bilingual teaching order of the Holy Names Sisters. This same order began a normal school for the training of bilingual teachers in 1908.

Upon his appointment as Bishop, Monsignor Fallon cancelled the verbal agreement over the Catholic school in Windsor and had the normal school closed. He argued that the nuns were not running a teacher’s college, but rather a Victorian finishing
school for girls. The Bishop opted for his Diocesan teaching order, the Ursuline sisters to replace the Holy Names Sisters, under the pretext that the latter’s mother house was in Montreal and not London. The move infuriated several French-Canadian priests. By early July 1911, Fallon and Meunier were on the verge of a dramatic confrontation. Beaudoin wrote of the two,


Mgr. Fallon veut à tout prix bâtir un couvent d’Ursulines en opposition aux Soeurs de Jésus-Marie. (Holy Names)

The battle over a convent and the issue of bilingual teaching would be a source of constant infighting for decades to come.

Amidst an atmosphere of hostility and suspicion, the priests of the diocese assembled with their Bishop for the July 13 retreat weekend. On July 14, in the Chapel of Assumption College, in Sandwich, Bishop Fallon spoke before his diocesan priests. According to Father Beaudoin, he addressed the problems of his first year with surprising candour.

Trop de discussions animées, de critiques acerbes, et d’attaques personnelles, ont été publiés pour que j’endure plus longtemps.

Je déclare que chaque phrase, chaque mot, chaque syllabe de ma conférence de l’année dernière sont vrais...

Lorsque je parlais des dangers que courait l’existence même de nos écoles séparées, je ne faisais que dévoiler une partie de ce que je savais. Voici toute l’histoire.

Deux ans avant ma consécration, donc depuis trois ans, le gouvernement de cette province d’Ontario avait été sollicité par les Evêques de passer une loi concernant les taxes qui devaient être payées aux écoles séparées par les compagnies d’utilités publiques.

Le gouvernement semblait favorable, lorsqu’un
certain congrès, tenu à Ottawa, par les Canadiens français, en janvier 1910, est venu ruiner toute espérance de succès.

Provoqué par ce congrès, le gouvernement retire ses promesses, ce qui appert par une lettre adressée aux Evêques. Donc, c'est la faute des Canadiens français si la loi n'est pas aujourd'hui en vigueur.  

Fallon had made his opinions clear. French-Canadian agitation for extended rights, had done harm to the separate schools of Ontario. As a result of their grumblings, the Ontario government reversed its decision to legislate a bill favouring separate school funding through a public utilities tax.

The Bishop did not limit his attacks to the French Canadian Congress. He also criticized the recent appearance of mass petitions questioning the Ordinary's integrity. In so doing, he did not hesitate to point out the troublemaker.

...imaginez-vous que les gens de la paroisse de Tecumseh envoient un télégramme, approuvant l'attitude [of the anti Fallon newspapers] des gens d'Ottawa. Cette approbation ne souffrit aucune protestation, soit publique, soit privée de la part du pasteur déloyal [Rev. Pierre Langlois] qui est ici à présent.

The French newspaper in question, had begun to speculate on the anticipated departure of Bishop Fallon from the diocese. Langlois, a proponent of this position said nothing to dispel the rumours. Hence, Fallon sought to kill these murmurs by speaking out.

Monsignor Fallon also criticized the efforts of some diocesan priests to raise money from the pulpit for the bilingual cause. He condemned their audacity for announcing and circulating an ACFEO pamphlet which solicited $25 a year subscriptions from various parishes. "Malheur au curé qui
prendra, pour favoriser ce mouvement un revenu appartenant à 
l'Eglise", the Bishop proclaimed. He then added "On doit prêcher 
l'Evangile dans l'Eglise, rien autre chose (sic)."

In concluding his address to the priests on retreat, Fallon 
issued a final warning.

Now I will say no more. If you want to keep your 
parishes, beware. Mind your own affairs, otherwise I 
will take care of you.

I am ready to bury the war hatchet...I am 
forgetting everything up to this date. But if you want 
war, I will undertake one, and I will certainly come 
out the conqueror."

In principle, Fallon had absolved his priests of their 
wrongdoings against him. This applied most especially to his 
French-Canadian pastors, to whom he addressed this message. 
Nonetheless, these final comments signified the likelihood of a 
more serious conflict between the Bishop and his French Canadian 
flock. The saga of diocesan discord was only beginning.


3. Choquette, Language and Religion, p.16


5. Duhamel to Ledowchowski, CRCCF, 1903.


15. Hanna to Pyne, ibid.

16. Father Beaudoin and Monsignor Meunier drafted a text sent to Cardinal Delai, Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation in Rome to inform him of Bishop Fallon's retreat speech. See L.A. Beaudoin to His Eminence Cardinal DeLai, 1p.


20. Resume, ibid.


22. Resume, ibid.

Reverend Beaudoin criticized the Bishop's order that all future priests receive their collegial formation at Sandwich. He listed his reasons in a letter to his confidant, Reverend Charles Charlebois.

Quant au Collège de sandwich, il faut savoir qu'il n'est pas affilié à aucune université. C'est pourquoi bon nombre de jeunes gens passés par le Collège et n'étant pas appelés à l'état ecclésiastique se sont trouvés dans l'impossibilité d'entrer dans les professions libérales. C'est ce qui explique que nous avons si peu d'hommes instruits et si peu de dirigeants dans le diocèse de London.


23. Resume, ibid.


26. Defense, Fallon to Stagni, May 1913. On January 24, 1917, Fallon reiterated the argument that he
was merely a representative of Ontario's Bishops.

The Most Rev. C.H. Gauthier then Archbishop of Kingston, called a meeting of the Bishops of the ecclesiastical provinces of Kingston and Toronto at Kingston, August 15, 1910. His Grace, who presided over the meeting introduced the question of the danger that threatened our schools. The matter was thoroughly discussed and the following resolution was unanimously adopted.


27. Defense, Fallon to Stagni, May 1913.

28. Sworn testimony of Sandwich East School (later Ford City) Syndics, Alex Saint-Louis, Marc Bontront et al., 2 September 1910; also sworn testimony of Walkerville School Syndics, Oscar Duquette, Ferdinand Desmarais et al., Walderville Ont, 20 September 1910, 1p.; See also La Patrie.


31. ACFEO Report, P37/8/3. The ACFEO also added that while on the diocesan retreat on July 14, 1910, Bishop Fallon made the following statement: "I am opposed to bilingual schools because they cannot give an education appropriate to our requirements." Quoted in same report.


35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Such an interpretation is made by the ACFEO in one of its reports on the Schools Question, CRCCF, P37/8/3.


40. Ibid.


49. Resume of M.F. Fallon's retreat speech as recorded by L.A. Beaudoin, 13 July 1911, P37/8/4.


51. L.A. Beaudoin to Mgr. Stagni, Apostolic Delegate to Canada, 3 Jan 1911, 4p. CRCCF.


53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.


56. Ibid.

58. Ibid.


62. Resume of M.F. Fallor's retreat speech as recorded by L.A. Beaudoin, 13 July, 1911, P37/8/4. Proof that Beaudoin was behind publicizing Fallon's speech on the retreat is revealed in a letter to his confidant and ACFED guide Rev. C. Charlebois 17 July, 1911.


63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.
Chapter Two
Trouble in Walkerville

With the annual retreat over, a brief period of peace set in. Unfortunately, it could hardly last. As summer once again came to a close, the emotional climate of the Catholic parishes of Essex county heated up considerably. The issue of bilingual schools would not go away.

In August 1911, the parishioners of St. Alphonsus parish petitioned for the reinstatement of the Holy Names Sisters as the teaching order in their schools. A year earlier, the Bishop had ordered the Ursuline Sisters to replace the Holy Names order, on the pretext that diocesan nuns would be given preference whenever the education situation warranted it. The people were incensed at the decision. They protested, "Que ces religieuses (Holy Names) ont ete subsequemment remplacees par des maitresses laiques ignorant le francais..."¹ The parents of the schoolchildren complained that not only were the Ursuline teachers sparse in number, but their support staff of recently hired lay teachers were grossly incompetent in the French language.²

Monsignor Fallon's retreat speech hardly stemmed the movement to mobilize the local French-Canadian community. With aid from Ottawa's French-Canadian elite, leaders from Essex and Kent Counties drafted petitions for use by the local parishes. The Association Canadienne Francaise de l'Ontario and its educational sister organization offered a readily available source of legal and political advice to emerging leaders of the
local nationalist drive against Monsignor Fallon.

Ottawa's first intervention took place in the summer of 1911. At St. Alphonsus parish, members of the congregation drafted a petition requesting more French at Immaculate Conception. When months passed without a reply from the Bishop, Jules Tremblay, secretary of the ACFED in Ottawa offered them counsel:

...il faudra envoyer une délégation auprès de Mgr. Fallon et lui présenter vos demandes verbalement cette fois.

S'il refuse de vous voir, vous aurez gagné un bon point auprès du Délégué [Apostolic Delegate to Canada]...

Le fait que certains Canadiens français comprennent mieux l'anglais que le français, et ils ne sont pas en majorité, n'est pas une raison pour donner exclusivement de l'anglais que les Canadiens-français refusent de se laisser angliciser...

Most letters emanating from Ottawa were laced with emotion. Nevertheless, they did offer some sound advice, and did serve as a form of morale booster for local organizers.

During that same summer, French Canadians at Immaculate Conception of Windsor, disseminated a petition similar to the one circulating at St. Alphonsus. Upon learning of this development, Father Downey, the parish priest, sought to respond to the accusations noted therein. He chose high mass on Sunday, 29 October, 1911, to which he invited the entire French-Canadian congregation. After examining the petition, he declared that fifty names listed were behind on their tithing. They had only to pay and they would have all the French they desired.

Downey's sermon gained notoriety for other reasons. He accused
four French Canadian priests of interfering in his parish matters.

...le Réverend M. Downey censura vigoureusement les curés canadiens-français de Walkerville, Técumseh, Belle Rivière et Pointe-aux-Roches [Stoney Point], qu'il accuse de se mêler de la présente difficulté; il déclara ne pas comprendre leur conduite en présence du serment qu'ils avaient dû prêter lorsqu'ils avaient été ordonnés prêtres.

The rift between some Irish and French-Canadian priests was widening. The statements made by Reverend Downey illustrated the growing misunderstanding.

The events of January 1912 hardly helped to calm the perturbation. Based on his own judgement, Monsignor Fallon responded to a petition signed by only 35 people, by moving to create the English-only parish of St. Anne's of Walkerville. This action infuriated the local French Canadian population for two reasons. First, a series of petitions signed by hundreds of French Canadians asking for more French at Sunday services at the churches of Windsor failed to receive any recognition whatsoever from the Bishop. Hence, the paltry number of signatures on the Walkerville petition did not seem to justify Fallon's decision. Second, parishioners saw the division as a reprisal against their pastor for his intervention in the school's issue. Indeed, after months of anxious speculation over the division of Reverend Beaudoin's parish, the fear had become reality. The nationalistic pastor vowed to fight the decision.

On January 2, His Excellency Monsignor Fallon wrote to Reverend Robert, appointing him as pastor of the new parish of

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St. Anne's of Walkerville. Perhaps sensing the trouble that his
decision would provoke, he outlined the following counsel:

It is quite possible for one reason or another
that some Catholics living within the limits of the
municipality of Walkerville may desire to still retain
their affiliation with, and or perform their religious
duties in the Church of Our Lady of the Lake, Sandwich
East. I direct that the freedom of choice of such
people be not interfered with and I am sure that you
will find no difficulty in abiding this direction."

In spite of this openness by the Bishop towards the free choice
of the parishioners of Walkerville, Fr. Beaudoin was severely
shaken by the division. Mgr. Fallon had made no mention of his
plans to the priest in question.

According to the Bishop, the division of the parish was
motivated by rising land prices. Monsignor Fallon feared that
the U.S. Steel Company's plans to build a factory in Walkerville
would spawn a flurry of real estate speculation. Hence, he chose
to move quietly, purchasing the land without notifying Beaudoin."

Only days after the appointment of Reverend Robert as pastor
of St. Anne's parish, Reverend Beaudoin outlined his plan of
attack. By January 6, Beaudoin had served notice to the Bishop
of his intention to challenge the decision in court. Despite his
boldness, Beaudoin expressed grave concern:

"Tout est bien commencé. Avis donné à l'Évêque.
Documents envoyés à Mgr. Gignac. Je suis la
victime que Fallon réclame...Je ne garde aucun document
chez moi de peur de me les faire voler...prez pour
moi, j'en ai besoin."

The antipathy between Beaudoin and Fallon would persist until the
death of the former.

Fr. Beaudoin was to find some solace in the friendship and
legal expertise of Reverend Joseph Gignac of Quebec City. Gignac wrote to Beaudoin’s confidant Reverend C. Charlebois:

l’Association (the ACFEO) doit l’aider puisque la division est un acte de représailles, très probablement.10

Gignac counselled Charlebois to employ the ACFEO in its request that the Apostolic Delegate to Canada intervene and postpone the division. In a letter to Fr. Beaudoin, the Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Peregrini Stagni opted for a conciliatory approach.

J’espère que la chose pourra se règler à l’amiable, s’il y a lieu une division...Toutefois, avant de prendre la voie contentieuse, épuisez tous les moyens possibles pour arriver à une entente avec Sa Grandeur.11

In Stagni’s view, Beaudoin should not have consulted his lawyer so quickly without first attempting to arrange an acceptable understanding with the Bishop.

Stagni added however, that he would not intervene, even if the final outcome of the misunderstanding should prove unsatisfactory for Beaudoin.

Si vous croyiez après tout, lesé dans vos droits, et vous auriez l’intention de provoquer un jugement définitif, il me semble que ce n’est pas à moi que vous devez adresser, mais à Rome directement, à la Sacree Congrégation du Concile, soit à la Rote.12

Despite his hands-off approach, Stagni attempted to reassure Beaudoin, stating that it was not clear that Monsignor Fallon even intended to undertake the division.13

On Sunday January 25, 1912, Stagni’s words of encouragement rang hollow. That day, the pastor of the new parish of St. Anne’s said his first mass in St. Edward’s School in
Walkerville. Fr. Robert spoke only in English during his sermon and the weekly announcements, and conducted the rest of the mass in Latin. Beaudoin recounted the incident as he heard it from a Walkerville parishioner:

Il [Rev. Robert] dit ouvertement qu’il ne parlera pas un seul mot de français ou n’enseigne (sic) le catéchisme dans cette langue. 90% des enfants sont canadiens-français. D’autant plus que les Irlandais ou familles mixtes montées contre les Canadiens disent ouvertement que l’école [leur] appartient, quoiqu’ils n’aient jamais payé un sou pour cette école et que je reste avec la dette à payer, j’ai cru qu’il fallait mieux attendre. 14

Beaudoin’s most legitimate legal grievance lay with the issue of St. Edward’s school and the debt he still owed. With the parishioners of St. Anne’s now claiming the school as their own, the conflict could only worsen.

While tensions ran high between Beaudoin and Fallon, three French-Canadian priests launched a new offensive, targeting as their rival, Reverend Downey of Windsor. In a petition to Monsignor Stagni, on January 30, 1912, Reverends Beaudoin, Pierre Langlois and Napoleon Saint-Cyr demanded justice for Downey’s attack on their reputation during his October 29 sermon. The three condemned the defamatory remarks, most notably allegations that they were ignoring their consecration oaths as priests through their involvement in the schools dispute. In retribution, they demanded the right from Stagni to seek reparations for the damage rendered to their reputations. 15 The case was referred to the Bishop who refused to sanction the request.

In February, 1912, Father Gignac advised Beaudoin to refer
his case against the Bishop to Rome. He encouraged Beaudoin to instruct the parishioners to continue to go to Our Lady of the lake until the question of St. Anne's Parish of Walkerville was resolved. Gignac noted that Bishop Fallon's letter to Reverend Robert made it easier for the faithful of Walkerville to go to Our Lady of the Lake. 

On February 15, 1912, Father Beaudoin took Father Gignac's advice. He issued a sworn testimonial, petitioning that the division of the parish as an act of injustice. In this declaration he mandated Count Vincenzo Sacconi of Rome to serve as his legal representative to the Vatican court. 

Five days later, on February 20, the parishioners of Our lady of the lake, (residents of Walkerville and the newly formed municipality of Ford City, formerly Sandwich East), voiced their support for Beaudoin. In a petition, they declared their opposition to the foundation of St. Anne's Parish. They suggested that any new parish be built closer to Windsor than to Sandwich East.

In the midst of these activities, Father Beaudoin prepared for the Congress of the French Canadian Educational Association of Ontario to be held in Ottawa. After combing the local population for delegates, he gave this assessment:

"Quant au Congrès (ACFEO)... Nos gens d'Essex ont besoin d'être réveillés. Ils ont besoin d'informations. Ce n'est qu'après une visite de toutes les paroisses que l'on pourrait obtenir une représentation convenable."

In Beaudoin's eyes, the French Canadians of Essex were slumbering
in apathy on the road to passive assimilation. Local organizers would have to rely on Ottawa to launch an "information" campaign.

Aware of the Bishop's suspicion of his activities, Fr. Beaudoin forwarded all of his personal correspondence to Fr. Charles Charlebois of Ottawa. He made his reasons for the move clear. Had his personal papers fallen into the wrong hands in his parish, the consequences would have been disastrous.10

As the struggle over the issue of education divided the clergy, the provincial chief inspector of schools, Dr. Merchant, tendered his report on the state of the bilingual schools of Ontario. The report did recognize certain flaws within the system, especially inefficiency, which were contributing to the overall rate of illiteracy. Merchant stated,

Labour conditions in Essex and Kent are somewhat exceptional. A large portion of the land in the French Canadian settlements is given up to market gardening or to the raising of crops such as tomatoes, corn and sugar beets which require a great amount of individual labour in planting, care and harvesting. Children are required to do a considerable share of this work. The canning factories in the river front towns also employ a large number of children during the busy season. Many of these children, I am informed are below the legal age.11

The Merchant Report illustrated that the bilingual education problem was not one of sheer pedagogical inferiority. The high rate of truancy was also a factor. Indeed, these findings echoed David Chenay's remarks on the subject. Instead of advocating the abolition of the system, as Fallon had, Dr. Merchant recommended a better training program for teachers as a longterm solution.

In June 1912, the Whitney government, having received a
second mandate from the people of Ontario, issued a new education law. Circular of Instructions Number 17, or Regulation 17 set down new standards for the "inefficient" bilingual schools of the province. The new laws restricted the use of French as the medium of instruction and communication to Form 1, or the first two years of school. Some provisions were also made for teaching French as a subject, but only to those students whose parents specifically requested it. (See Appendix E) All French-Canadian children were to receive improved English language instruction. Many people believed Bishop Fallon to be behind the new laws.

As has been noted, Monsignor Fallon introduced change in the bilingual schools of the Diocese prior to the advent of Regulation XVII. The replacement of the Holy Names Sisters by the Ursuline order in the Catholic bilingual schools, signalled a serious setback to this educational system. With local School board elections pending the area's French language weekly newspaper, Le Progrès had the following comments.

Il se présente des aujourd'hui une question qui devrait faire ouvrir les yeux aux supporteurs (sic) des écoles séparées. Comme on le sait, nos écoles furent d'abord sous la charge des religieuses de l'Académie Ste-Marie. Ces bonnes soeurs donnaient pleine et entière satisfaction et étaient occupées à former le nombre nécessaire d'institutrices qualifiées pour enseigner dans les écoles bilingues, lorsque Sa Grandeur Mgr. Fallon leur défendit d'enseigner plus longtemps dans nos écoles... ces bonnes soeurs durent se soumettre. Alors, Sa Grandeur nous imposa les Soeurs Ursulines de Catham. Pour employer ces soeurs qui n'avaient pas de couvent ici, il a fallu louer deux maisons et les meubler. Aujourd'hui, les supporteurs des écoles séparées paient 65 de loyer.

Mais les Réverendes Soeurs désirent se bâtir un couvent... Elles demandent à cette fin que nos syndics
In the eyes of Le Progrès' editors, Aurèle and Gaspard Pacaud, arguments against the imposition of the Ursuline sisters in the bilingual schools could be made on the simple issue of cost effectiveness. Since the Ursulines had no permanent residence in Windsor, the construction of a convent would have to be undertaken. Such expenses were levied in the annual school tax. Salaries rose by 25%. The French press criticized the changes. Indeed, this issue coupled with the question of language as well, fuelled opposition to the Bishop's education policy.

In Walkerville, the Separate School syndics, under pressure from the public, sought to remedy the "English only" situation of St. Edward's school. In a public meeting, the board introduced motions to teach prayers and Catechism in French. In addition, the board resolved that it no longer required the services of Fr. Robert, who had been teaching catechism to the children in English only.

Reverend Beaudoin helped to spearhead organized popular resistance to those school inspectors attempting to enforce the
new laws under Regulation XVII. This effort resembled similar projects which occurred in Eastern Ontario and the Sudbury region. However, Beaudoin foresaw obstacles:

Il ne sera pas aussi facile pour nous de faire opposition ouverte et obtenir la sortie des élèves que dans l'Est d'Ontario. D'abord il nous faut instruire les gens. La visite de M. Grenon (of the ACFEO), sera très utile. Nos gens sont dans leurs champs de tomates et de blé d'inde. C'est pourquoi je crois que le mois de novembre sera le temps propice."

Beaudoin proved to be an important advisor to officials at the ACFEO headquarters in Ottawa. The organization's plans to send its chief secretary, Mr. Alexandre Grenon, to southwestern Ontario illustrated a commitment to this area's francophones.

As a leader of nationalist forces in Essex, Beaudoin outlined the different measures which he undertook in the crusade against Regulation XVII. In a letter to his confidant Fr. Charlebois, he wrote

J'ai envoye aux principaux chefs de paroisse le mot d'ordre d'agir. A Windsor, Gaspard Pacaud, président du Separate School Board, détenant une position du gouvernement ne pourra rien faire...

Les instituteurs réunis en convention scolaire à Sandwich ont protesté et sont bien décidés à enseigner le français envers et contre tous.

Mes Canadiens de la ville de Walkerville ont tous signé et signifié aux religieuses d'enseigner en français. Les syndics de Sandwich East No. 2, ont aussi fait la même chose."

While speaking in encouraging terms of the protest movement, Beaudoin noted that political reasons inhibited stronger leadership from such prominent figures as Gaspard Pacaud, who were too ambitious to accept such a mantle.

Local priests such as Fr. Beaudoin sounded out the need for
strong local leadership while admitting their own impotence.

L'opposition va devenir générale dans quelques temps, mais il faut quelqu'un pour le remuer. Vous comprenez qu'il faut être très prudent, car ma cause pendant a Rome sera plaide au mois de novembre prochain..."

Beaudoin's hands were bound, for he had already received warning on retreat by Bishop Fallon about any public disobedience concerning the public episcopal stance on bilingual schools. In addition to these problems, the pastor of Our Lady of the Lake was still awaiting the court case involving the division of his parish. Any public agitation might have jeopardized his case against the Bishop. However, as president of the local ACFEO, he had a responsibility to speak out on behalf of French Canadians and their educational concerns. Father Beaudoin was caught in a trap.

In careful fashion, Beaudoin chose to take a more discreet yet persistent approach to the schools issue. First, he began to visit his parish schools daily, in order to teach catechism to the children in French. In addition, he organized a youth club of men and women to help with catechism instruction on Sundays.

Beaudoin's primary dilemma concerned the Sisters of St. Joseph, the teaching order in his parish school. The Sisters at St. Edward School had stopped all instruction in the French language, claiming that to do otherwise would result in disobedience to the bishop." As president of Walkerville's Roman Catholic Separate School Board, and financier of St. Edward's School, Beaudoin contemplated his options. He suggested closing this school, since his parish was still
financing it, in order to supply Notre Dame School of Ford City with additional bilingual teachers. However, he feared that the St. Joseph sisters at Notre Dame School might create further problems. In effect, if the Board expelled the Walkerville Sisters, the Mother House might withdraw them from Notre Dame and thus trigger a full blown school crisis. 127

The nationalists faced a serious obstacle in mobilizing the population against the threat to the bilingual schools. The people were uninformed, and hence apathetic to any gesture of protest. Several prominent French Canadians sought to change that. These people, led by such figures as Severin Ducharme, Euclide Jacques and Marc Bonriont believed that they could best transmit their message through the medium of the press.

Local communities were already provided with a weekly newspaper in their language, Le Progrès. This journal, established in 1881, lacked the nationalistic zeal which was demanded by a small band of well read local Canadiens. One might attribute this situation to Gaspard Piacaud, President of the Windsor Roman Catholic School Board and the newspaper’s editor. Rumours were afloat that he was contemplating a bid for the federal Liberal nomination in his constituency. For Piacaud, as for other politicians, any firm stance on the schools question by a French Canadian would not have been politically astute. On October 23, 1912, the ACFEO appealed to Piacaud’s close friend, Alfred Saint-Onge, to intervene and convince the former to speak out on behalf of the French element.
L'Association d'Éducation a besoin actuellement de l'aide et de l'influence du journal Le Progrès. Les anciens du comté de Simcoe se demandent comment il se fasse que le rédacteur de ce journal, un canadien français qui en plus d'une circonstance s'est fait le défenseur de nos droits se retranche à l'heure actuelle derrière un silence inexplicable et semble vouloir ignorer les nombreuses difficultés suscitées par le gouvernement contre l'enseignement bilingue.

The silence of Le Progrès at the height of the assault on the long established bilingual schools of Essex and Kent Counties astounded ACFEO officials in Ottawa and elsewhere.

Mr. C.S.O. Boudreault, president of the Simcoe section of the ACFEO, appealed to Euclide Jacques, head of Windsor's local ACFEO chapter, to approach Mr. Pacaud. The Association was very anxious to publish articles concerning bilingual education in Le Progrès. "It was more interested however in converting the newspaper to the cause.

Vous pourriez peut-être nous dire sans trop de trouble ce qui empêche ce journal de prendre une attitude déterminée dans la campagne actuelle et quels moyens il faudrait prendre pour le décider à se rendre utile à l'occurrence. Nous trouvons étrange que Le Progrès, trouvant son existence dans une population dont le développement et le patriotisme ne sont plus à mettre en doute, hésite à faire son devoir et à défendre les plus chers intérêts de ses abonnés.

On November 4, 1912, Euclide Jacques provided at least a partial explanation for the weak position of Le Progrès.

In your letter dated October 23, I wish to state that the "Rédacteur" (Editor) of Le Progrès Mr. Aurel Pacaud as far as I know would be only too willing to take an active part to defend French Canadians in Windsor, but sorry to say that Le Progrès have (sic) very little circulation in Windsor, in fact, I do not think there are more than a dozen people who receive Le Progrès in Windsor, therefore you can judge for yourself that it will not be of any use whatsoever.
If one looks at Mr. Jacques's comments, it is easy to understand that *Le Progrès* was in serious decline by 1912. In the heat of the schools debate, it failed to play a role in rallying local French Canadians behind a nationalist banner.

In 1913, another French language weekly newspaper saw its debut. *Le Clairon* made a brief appearance from 1913 to 1914. It proved to be a tool of those very elements which protested the School legislation, while lobbying *Le Progrès* to support its cause. It ceased publication after only a few months.

Aside from the absence of a nationalist newspaper, the Canadien community of Essex and Kent counties suffered from divisions. Jacques wrote,

> Regarding our situation here in the City of Windsor, about bilingual schools we are in a peculiar position. We hold meetings about every two or three weeks in the parish of Immaculate Conception Church, but we do not make very much progress because it is a very difficult matter on account of the parish priest who is always working against us, and there is always a number of our French Canadians who stand by him... however, most of the intelligent French Canadians of the Immaculate Conception parish are with us..." 

Divisions among local francophones found their root in each individual's commitment to the church. For nationalistic elements, language and faith were intertwined, and hence, inseparable. For others, molded by the Irish clergy and some of their French-Canadian colleagues, loyalty to the Church superseded linguistic concerns.

The dichotomy within the Catholic community found its reflection in the Windsor Separate School Board's initial failure to come to a consensus over the controversial Regulation XVII.
The minutes of the Board recount the situation.

On the 20th of October last we had a meeting at which the members of the Separate School Board were present. The meeting was for the purpose of protesting against the present law, but after quite a deliberation from the president of the school board, M. Gaspard Pacaud, it was decided to wait for a few more weeks as the president said that the inspector was coming to Windsor to inspect the schools, therefore we consented to wait to see what would be the results. The impasse between English-speaking and French-speaking Catholic school board members in Windsor reflected a similar difficulty which occurred in Ottawa at the same time. On one side, the English element sought to obey the law, so as not to risk losing the limited state support given to its schools. On the other side, French Canadians resented the limitation of French instruction in the Catholic schools they had established 130 years earlier. For them, a fundamental change in the method of instruction for French Canadian children was at issue.

In the fall of 1912, ACFEO headquarters in Ottawa dispatched its chief secretary, Alexandre Grenon to the southwestern corner of Ontario. During this tour, Grenon met with leading Canadiens, including a number of nationalist priests. This trip had one mission in mind: to organize and coordinate local protests with those occurring provincewide. It was never truly effective however, given the distance between the bloc of francophones in the Ottawa valley, and the local pockets in Essex and Kent.

On October 1, 1912, six priests from the diocese of London, Monsignor J.E. Meunier, Fathers L. Beaudoin, A.D. Emery, P. Langlois, P. L'Heureux, and N.D. Saint-Cyr petitioned the Consistorial Secretary in Rome, Gaetano Cardinal De Lai. They
criticized a new tax levied on parishes by Monsignor Fallon.

Noting that the diocese of 60,000 was divided into sixty parishes and missions and that none was very wealthy, the petitioners appealed to the Consistorial to intervene in order to reduce the amount of "cathedral subsidies" in London, which they qualified as unjust, excessive, and oppressive. They asked that a new Fallon tax called the "Good Works Fund" be abolished and that provision for its purposes be made through normal taxation. Finally, they requested that the building of a Diocesan Seminary, announced by Fallon be deferred and that the Toronto Seminary be encouraged since it was built to serve the entire Province and was already sufficiently endowed. This petition was yet another challenge to episcopal authority.

It illustrated the growing effort of the Bishop to control the education of his future diocesan priests.

Bishop Fallon ignored requests made by both the parishioners and the priests. It is likely that he was preoccupied with the court case which had ensued between Father Beaudoin and himself before Rome. In February 1913, the French Canadians of Windsor, tired of fighting for more French in their churches appealed to Monsignor Stagni for the establishment of two French language parishes in the city of Windsor. The same petition accused the priests at Immaculate Conception of attempting to anglicize the congregation.

For Rome this was the last straw. Cardinal De Laí advised him (Fallon) to an important American diocese, because of the constant trouble in London, and sustained opposition to him in Canada. Fallon refused to move. The effect of this letter from Cardinal DeLaí illustrated Rome's lack of confidence in the pastoral abilities of Monsignor Fallon.

2. Ibid.


N.B. Tremblay notes the existence of a number of anglicized French Canadians at St. Alphonsus Parish. Census statistics offer no information on the proportion of Essex County's French Canadians who could not speak French or those who spoke better English than French. Very frequently, anglophones had French Canadian names, and conversely, many francophones had British names.


5. Ibid.


12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.


19. Ibid.


25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid. At this time in the Border Cities, Beaudoin remarked the scarcity of qualified bilingual lay teachers. Hence, the withdrawal of the St. Joseph Sisters from Notre Dame School, in Ford City would represent the likely introduction of unilingual English lay teachers.


32. Ibid.


34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.


Chapter Three
The First Confrontation
1913-1914

As the dispute between Bishop Fallon and Father Beaudoin intensified, neither clergy nor congregation was left untouched. Matters worsened when Fallon sought to strengthen his case in Rome by sending a highly controversial letter to the Sacred Consistorial Congregation.

The Reverend L.A. Beaudoin, the plaintiff in the cause is a troublemaking riest. For the past two years, he has done all in his power to undermine or prevent episcopal action, both in his parish and in other parts of the diocese of London... The abbe Beaudoin is incompetent in the English language; several English-speaking Catholics are already lost because of him; several others are just as threatened...'

The potential damage of this letter was immeasurable.

Unbeknownst to Fallon, a scattering of priests rallied behind Beaudoin to discount the accusations and attest to the character of the beleaguered pastor. On March 20, 1913, they signed a petition in Beaudoin's favour, which they forwarded to Rome. They outlined the following assertions:

Que Monsieur l'abbé L.A. Beaudoin, curé de Notre Dame du Lac, Walkerville, travaille depuis plus de vingt ans dans le diocèse de London.
Que ses confrères le connaissent comme un prêtre pieux, zélé, obéissant, devoué aux biens spirituels de tous les fidèles confiés à ses soins, quelle que soit leur langue.
Qu'il est contre la vérité et la justice de dire qu'il n'est pas COMPÉTENT pour exercer le ministère parmi les catholiques de langue anglaise, attendu qu'il sait très bien l'anglais.
Que pendant son long ministère paroissial, la seule direction épiscopale à laquelle l'abbé Beaudoin se soit opposé est celle de Monseigneur M.F. Fallon, l'évêque actuel, défendant d'enseigner la langue française aux enfants des Canadiens-français, et de
The accusations contained within were twofold: first, the petition accused Fallon of having forbidden French instruction in the schools; second, it alleged that the bishop had forbidden priests from preaching in French to French Canadians. This position openly contradicted Fallon's public denial of identical claims made two years earlier.

It appeared that the French-Canadian nationalism of a few priests was at the root of the problem in the Diocese. However, such an assertion, while holding some truth, would be an oversimplification, since the petition in Beaudoin's favour was also signed by three Irish clergymen, Reverend Fathers Corcoran, Quinlan and Mugan. Moreover, Bishop Fallon's style of leadership and strong convictions on education left little room for compromise. He could tolerate no opposition from his priests. As bishop, Fallon could demand their strict obedience to his stance on education by invoking church law. Diagonally opposed attitudes on language issues made conflict inevitable.

Bishop Fallon's problems were not limited to a few French-Canadian priests. In effect, when his reign began, in 1910, he became embroiled in a conflict with a Dutch priest, Reverend Philip J. Gnam, pastor of Wyoming, Petrolia and Oil Springs, in Lambton County. Reverend Gnam had been pastor in this region for over 25 years when Fallon abruptly transferred him to London. Local French Canadians took great interest in the accusations that Gnam made against Fallon in his lawsuit to seek damages.
The plaintiff (Rev. Gnam) has built up large and thriving congregations and erected handsome and commodious churches and administered to the spiritual wants and necessities of his different congregations to the entire satisfaction of them all without fault or complaint by anyone until the installation of the defendant as Bishop of the said diocese.

On or about the 10th of September the defendant falsely and maliciously conspired with two or three troublesome members of the Church at Wyoming to dispossess the plaintiff of his rights as parish priest and without any regard of the plaintiff's rights or the canonical law of the Church or the decree of Maxima Curia well understood by both plaintiff and defendant falsely and maliciously caused the plaintiff to be suspended, and deprived of his rights as such parish priest and entered into a campaign of libel and slander against the plaintiff and falsely and maliciously circulated the report that the plaintiff was about to take unto himself a wife and generally warning the people not to associate with him, and tried to demean him among his fellows by attacking his character as a christian and a gentleman.

On the 20th day of November, 1910 at the Village of Wyoming at the Church of the Holy Rosary, the defendant falsely and maliciously made a violent attack upon the plaintiff before a large congregation, in which he accused the plaintiff of being a disobedient priest and opposed to the Church and compared him to John Knox, Luther and Calvin, and cautioned the people not to countenance him or associate with him and that he was going to degrade the Church by taking unto himself a wife, when the said statements were false and untrue.

The plaintiff further charges that on the 20th day of November, 1910, the defendant with violence put the plaintiff out of the said Church of the Holy Rosary and refused the plaintiff the right of divine service in the said Church and previously to the said vicious act by the defendant, in the said church, the plaintiff charges and the fact is that he threatened to take the plaintiff by the back of the neck and physically throw him from the rectory in which he the plaintiff was then living and has at various other times shown acts of hatred and malice, to the plaintiff to wit: at his palace at the City of London, he the said defendant using an oath, unbecoming a christian or a gentleman and as an insult calling him a dutchman, made threats against the plaintiff.
Reverend Gnam accused his Ordinary of wilfully violating the canonical law of the church for he had failed to give the priest two warnings before suspending him. He also asserted that Fallon breached the law by appointing diocesan examiners unilaterally without consultation of the Diocesan Synod. 

The examiners appointed were known to be biased against Father Gnam. In his attempt to remove Gnam from his Church in Wyoming, Fallon took recourse in a Toronto divisional court. 

Somewhat unexpectedly, the court ruled that Gnam was within his rights in remaining at the Wyoming parish. Gnam subsequently sued Fallon for $100,000 in damages and won.

On April 6, 1913, two days before the trial was scheduled to begin between Fallon and Gnam, the former received an important letter from Cardinal De Lai in Rome. In light of all the petitions emanating from Windsor, as well as the publicity of the Gnam case, De Lai felt something had to be done. Accordingly, he sent the following message:

To remedy this state of affairs, the Holy Father thinks it wise to transfer Your Greatness to another see (more important) in the United States."  

De Lai pointed out that the Holy Father believed the protests and the cases against the Bishop would disappear as a result. Indeed the suggestion took into account Fallon's American citizenship.

Fallon refused to consider transferring to another diocese. Such a move would have represented little more than an avowal of failure by him. Instead, he outlined the reasons for his stand on the bilingual schools question in a letter to Canada's
apostolic delegate. Indeed, he saw this public stance as the principal reason for the actual misunderstanding. This issue had been a particularly controversial point among Fallon’s critics within the church.

The bishops of Ontario, guardians of the interests of Catholic education, clearly foresaw that the system of Catholic schools was in danger and we had to avoid another campaign against our schools; we had to demonstrate clearly to the government that the cause of separate schools was one thing, and the French language essentially another.10

For Bishop Fallon, the importance of the Catholic education system far surpassed the linguistic interests of the French-Canadian minority.

The outspoken Bishop would not allow his reputation to be tarnished by ecclesiastical officials, especially over the issue of bilingual schools. When De Lai and Stagni suggested that he accept a transfer, Fallon refused to take the burden of the blame upon himself alone.

...in my attitude concerning bilingual schools, I was only the representative and the delegate of the Bishops of Ontario. When in the month of October 1910, these things became public, I bore the weight of the abuse, without revealing the fact that my colleagues were in union with me on this affair. I am completely disposed to bear this weight, but I am not disposed to see myself compromised before the Holy See as if I was the only one responsible; and I insist that my rights and my character as bishop who works for his brother bishops and in their name, be reasonably safeguarded and I insist as well that the other bishops of Ontario share with me the praise and the blame, according to the case.11

Bishop Fallon felt betrayed by the silence of his brother bishops, during his hour of need. Indeed, their actions left him to serve as a convenient scapegoat.
The struggle in Windsor against the Bishop drove a wedge between Irish- and French-Canadian Catholics. The latter appealed to Rome for the establishment of "national" churches. They blamed the Bishop and the local pastors for ignoring the spiritual needs of their community.

Nous les soussignés, paroissiens des deux églises catholiques de la ville de Windsor, Diocèse de London, exposons humblement à Votre Excellence (P.F. Stagni) que le temps est venu d'établir des églises et pour les Irlandais, et pour les Canadiens français de la ville de Windsor. Nous craignons que les persécutions acharnées faites à notre langue et à nos écoles soient au désavantage de l'église catholique.

Nous demandons avec instance au Représentant du Grand Pontife Pie X de vouloir bien nous écouter et de prendre en sérièuse considération notre requête. 17

This series of petitions only caused further embarrassment to the Bishop. The constant complaints from these communities across Essex County illustrated that serious problems continued to prevail.

One of the biggest thorns in Fallon's side was of course Abbe Beaudoin. At Ford City, he led the local school board in affirming the parishioners' traditional right to instruction in French. This position met stubborn opposition.

...by reason of a resolution passed by the Board of Trustees of Ford requesting that instruction be given to teachers to teach the French language in accordance to regulations of the Education Department in St. Edward's School.

...such instructions were given to Sr. Irene while acting as principal-teacher of said school, but in reply stated that it would be impossible for the teachers to comply with such a request owing to the orders received by his Lordship the Bishop of London to the contrary. 13

This denial did not discourage the school trustees. Just one
week after being turned down, they wrote to Mother Celestine, Superior of the St. Joseph Sisters. In their letter, they requested bilingual teachers for the teaching of French grammar, composition and catechism. Mother Celestine granted their request for bilingual teachers in all classes at Notre Dame School alone. This was just one example of Beaudoin's crusade to reinstate French instruction.

In July 1913, Bishop Fallon set sail for Rome to defend his case against Reverend Beaudoin over the division of Our Lady of the Lake Parish. Before his departure, he sought out the support of his diocesan priests. During the annual ecclesiastical retreat of the diocese, held in June, Monsignor Fallon had his Irish priests sign a testimony listing all the good works that the Bishop had undertaken. For one nationalistic French-Canadian cleric, the Bishop's methods were rather suspicious.

Pour obtenir ces signatures, l'on a dû recourir aux prières, aux menaces, et à de faux prétextes de sorte que ces requêtes sont loin de donner le vrai sentiment du clergé et du peuple chrétien à l'égard de leur Evêque.

For the second time, Bishop Fallon required his priests to sign a letter of support in his favour.

On December 12, 1913, in a strongly worded letter, Reverend Father Beaudoin denied claims made by the Bishop to the Roman Court that he was not competent to minister to his English-speaking flock. He added, "Les catholiques sont en grande majorité de langue française. Une vingtaine de personnes plus ou
moins compromis par des mariages mixtes veulent une église, dit-on". Beaudoin complained that this element built their own church without paying their share of the existing debt on the recently reconstructed church of Our Lady of the Lake. Worse yet, they took over St. Edward’s School in Walkerville, occupying its rooms, while persisting after 18 months to rely on Ford City’s parish school board to pay the bills.  

What probably annoyed Beaudoin most however was Father Robert, the new pastor in Walkerville, who had begun a door-to-door campaign to attract Catholics to his parish. Beaudoin saw this as an attempt to convince French Canadians to abandon their language. Although he was excessive in his claims against this movement, he did protest with some justification. St. Anne’s Parish of Walkerville was the first totally English-language church in the Border Cities, despite the fact that the congregation was overwhelmingly French. For a nationalist like Beaudoin, this was unacceptable. Indeed the priest attributed his opposition to Robert’s campaign as the reason for Monsignor Fallon’s accusations that he was a “troublemaker”.

Beaudoin voiced his opinion on the Walkerville church situation in defense of his former parishioners:

Le soussigné [Beaudoin] sent le besoin de protester qu’il n’est nullement opposé à ce que les catholiques de langue anglaise soient desservis par des prêtres de leur langue et de leur nationalité, mais il prétend que les Catholiques de langue française qui sont dans leur pays, qui forment la très grande majorité de la population (catholique) de Walkerville, ont devant l’église catholique les mêmes droits que les Catholiques de langue anglaise, allemande, italienne, polonaise, etc... S’ils ont manifesté leur opposition
Beaudoin like many other French Canadians questioned Fallon's apparent lack of concern for the ministry of this flock in their own language. The formation of St. Anne's church created bitterness for it was seen as being the direct result of a petition from the anglophone Catholic minority. It appeared suspicious that a single petition of only 35 names requesting an English speaking parish received such quick action. In contrast, numerous petitions and requests for more French at various parishes fell on deaf ears, despite the hundreds of signatures attached.

Among the most scathing criticisms levelled against the unsympathetic Bishop were those which involved his verbal attacks on local priests. During the turbulent first decade of Fallon's episcopate, the Bishop openly criticized several priests before their own parishioners. Beaudoin referred to himself and his brother priests as he sought relief from this situation:

Que Mgr Fallon cesse de tyranniser ses prêtres dans ses lettres, dans ses sermons ou discours. Il ne peut les rencontrer sans les insulter.  

The dissent promoted by Reverend Beaudoin continued on into the following year. Defending what he believed to be the inherent rights of his people, he raised controversy in January 1914, for a declaration criticizing Fallon's public stance on French instruction in the schools. In fact, he went even further. Referring to the Bishop's verbal assault on the members
of the Walkerville School Board during the ecclesiastical retreat, Beaudoin prompted the Board members to take their case to Rome for damages. Finally, in light of the desperate situation developing, a more radical petition was drawn up.

le 3 mars dernier, il y a eu à Ford City la réunion annuelle des Sociétés Saint-Jean Baptiste d’Essex Nord et Sud. Un document secret fut signé et envoyé au Délégué et à l’abbé J.N. Gignac. On y expose tous nos griefs et l’on finit par demander la division du Diocèse.\[233\]

By petitioning the Apostolic Delegate to divide the diocese, the leaders of southwestern Ontario’s francophone communities were in essence demanding the removal of Bishop Fallon as their spiritual leader.

That very same week, the French Canadians in Tecumseh who were resisting Regulation XVII, suffered a significant setback. For a year, the Tecumseh bilingual school had followed a provincewide trend in opposing the entry of any Protestant anglophone inspector. On each occasion, the children left the school in protest of the Ontario legislation on French instruction. This day in March however, Reverend Pierre Langlois was betrayed by one of the members of his very own school board.

... one of our school board members from town took it on himself to admit the infamous protestant inspector Ingall into the school, even accompanying him and prevent the students to leave (sic) the school in protest... the damage is done.\[243\]

The local French language newspaper, Le Clairon, had harsh words for those Canadiens who were soft on the question of bilingual education.

C’est ici une obligation rigoureuse pour les
Canadiens-français d'élever leurs enfants dans la pratique de leur foi et dans la connaissance de leur langue. Ceux qui faillissent à ce devoir sont traitres à l'église et à la race."

The very same newspaper trumpeted the departure of the children from the school in Paincourt, Kent County, on Friday October 17, 1913. On that occasion, the children, as elsewhere in Ontario, left the classrooms upon learning of the expected arrival of the local Protestant school inspector. Le Clairon recounted the incident:

"Vendredi, un peu avant neuf heures, l'inspecteur protestant fit son apparition à l'école séparée de la paroisse de Paincourt. En le voyant arriver les enfants allèrent s'informer à qui de droit de ce qu'ils devaient faire. On leur répondit d'obéir aux ordres de leurs parents.
- Ils nous ont dit de sortir, firent-ils.
- Et bien, sortez.
- Nous ne le pouvons pas, nous sommes dehors.
- Vous êtes dehors, vous n'avez qu'à y rester.

Les enfants n'hésitèrent pas à mettre en pratique l'avis de leurs parents. Ils passèrent l'avant-midi à jouer dans la cour et à chanter à pleins poumons, "O Canada" en attendant le départ de l'intrus.

L'inspecteur protestant retourna en disant: "Boys and girls, I am sorry for you."
... L'inspecteur protestant n'a rien à voir dans nos écoles. Il fait perdre du temps à nos enfants, nous protestons là contre.

Qu'on nous laisse en paix."

Le Clairon attributed part of the existing problem in the schools to the population of the area. It asserted that local French Canadians had no one to blame but themselves for the deteriorating situation.

"L'apathie, la jalousie, et la légèreté ne sont pas nos moindres défauts. Nous en avons d'autres encore, mais ceux-là sont reconnus pour nous faire plus de mal.
que tous les ennemis de l'extérieur. Il est étonnant qu'en connaissant si bien ces débâcles, nous nous en corrigeons si peu.

Les parents qui permettent à leurs enfants de parler habituellement anglais au foyer font preuve d'une mollesse impardonnable.\textsuperscript{27}

In Ford City, Beaudoin foresaw impending trouble for the area's priests. He wrote, "Il faut s'armer de courage et d'énergie pour vivre dans le diocèse de London. Il semble que les difficultés vont en augmentant."\textsuperscript{29}

In the autumn of 1913, while on a visit to Rome, Bishop Fallon learned of the letter that a number of Beaudoin's colleagues had signed on the latter's behalf for the Roman courts. Consequently, on February 23, 1914, the Ordinary sent one of the signatories, Reverend Loiselle of River Canard, (Loiselleville), the following ultimatum.

In March 1913, you signed the following document which contains two accusations against your bishop:

a) That he forbade teaching French to French-Canadian children.
b) That he forbade preaching in French to Catholics of that nationality.

You will be good enough to furnish me with proofs of the above accusations before the 10th of March.\textsuperscript{29}

Bishop Fallon posted similar letters to the Rt. Reverend Meunier, the Reverends P. Langlois, A.D. Emery, Theo Martin, L. Landreville, P. l'Heureux, and N.D. Saint-Cyr.

After deliberating together, this band of renegade priests decided to withhold all information from the Bishop. Each man sent a letter similar in tone to that of Reverend Loiselle.

...avant de vous donner les explications demandées, Votre Grandeur trouvera sage, sans doute, que je lui
demande une copie de cette lettre, certifiée par la personne ou le tribunal qui en possède la copie originale. 30

In bold fashion, the priests sought to determine the actual provenance of that incriminating correspondence which their Bishop had recently acquired. It appeared quite irregular that the initial declaration in Beaudoin's favour, which was confidential in nature and destined exclusively for the judge of the Holy Roman Rota, could have fallen into the hands of the plaintiff, Monsignor Fallon.

At the beginning of April, Fallon proceeded to take legal action against the signatories. Instead of responding to the priests' request to provide certified copies of the petition to Rome, he established a Diocesan tribunal in order to clear his name. In each summons, Fallon issued these accusations:

That on or about the 20 March, 1913, the defendant signed a declaration which falsely/maliciously states that the Bishop forbade French language instruction to French Canadian children and to preaching (sig) in French to that nationality... The plaintiff denies these accusations and made every effort to obtain proof— but to no avail.

...The Plaintiff alleges false charges were maliciously attempted to mislead the Holy See and to grievously injure the Bishop. 31

Shortly thereafter, the priests received the following letter from the Diocesan Officialty or tribunal, as presided over by Fallon's close friend, Reverend Denis O'Connor. In this correspondence, each signatory was summoned to appear at Saint Mary's Rectory in London. There they would be expected to substantiate the two charges in the said petition. 32

On the day and the hour given, each of the priests appeared
before the tribunal. The Officialty consisted of five members: The Reverends J.A. Hanlon, F.X. Laurendeau, P.J. McEwen, D. Foster, and D.O'Connor all appointed by the Bishop. Much to the signatories' surprise however, there had been an unexpected last-minute addition to the Officialty. The plaintiff, Bishop Fallon, sat not only as the aggrieved, but presided equally as judge and prosecutor.

Monsignor Meunier of Saint Alphonsus' Parish in Windsor was the first of the defendants to appear before the court. His signature on the petition had been especially damaging to the Bishop given his long held-stature within the Diocese. Indeed, Meunier had served as Diocesan Administrator, or acting Bishop prior to the appointment of Fallon to the bishopric of London.

After listening to the accusations made against him, Meunier stood to read a declaration of exception against the court on the grounds that the Beaudoin-Fallon dispute was still before the Roman courts. Fallon objected to this and was sustained by the tribunal. Upon this, Meunier quit the deliberations room. In response, Bishop Fallon ran after him and uttered a threat of suspension declaring Meunier in contempt of court.

For two hours, the tribunal subjected Meunier to a barrage of attacks. It was only after this that the court permitted Meunier to read his letter of exception. Upon seeing the trouble he had brought down upon himself, and noting that he was obviously outnumbered, the elderly prelate mumbled in regret of the petition, "I am sorry for it". The Bishop and the tribunal
accepted this as a retraction.\textsuperscript{29}

Reverend Joseph A. Loiselle was the second priest to appear before the tribunal on Friday, May 8. After hearing the accusations made against him, Loiselle requested permission to read a short note he had prepared to present to the court. After some deliberation, the jurors consented. The accused then read a double exception to the court: the first relating to the incompetence of the tribunal; and the other of suspicion of the partiality of the judges.\textsuperscript{30} For Loiselle, it appeared such a case should be put before the court in Rome, which was currently deliberating on the Beaudoin-Fallon dispute. In his eyes, the petition found its reasoning in this original dispute which awaited Rome's decision. Hence, interference from the Bishop rendered the tribunal incompetent, since a higher judiciary was treating his case. Loiselle elaborated on this:

\begin{quote}
Je J.A. Loiselle, curé de la Rivière-aux-canards, dans le diocèse de London, declare que cette officialité, que je refuse péremptoirement de justifier le témoignage que j'ai rendu en faveur de l'abbé Beaudoin dans la cause actuellement devant la Sainte Rote Romaine jusqu'à ce que jugement soit prononcé par ce tribunal, dans la dite cause. De plus, je recuse absolument la compétence du tribunal devant lequel j'ai l'honneur de comparaître en ce moment, et je ne consentirai à répondre que devant un juge supérieure à mon Ordinaire et à ses représentants.\textsuperscript{31}
\end{quote}

Loiselle felt it was ludicrous that the Bishop, whether through himself or through an Officiality (court) that he personally appointed, could establish a tribunal to disculpate himself. This would have to be decided by a superior court of the Church.\textsuperscript{32}

Upon completing his verbal objections to the tribunal,
Loiselle left the room. Monsignor Fallon, taken by surprise, arose and voiced a series of threats to no avail. Reaching Loiselle at the bottom of the stairs, Fallon issued a sentence of suspension. He then drew up a notice and had Loiselle sign it. It read,

For refusing to justify or retract your declaration that I had forbidden the teaching of French to the children of French Canadians and that I had forbidden preaching in French to Catholics of that nationality, as well as for contempt of the Diocesan Officialty, I hereby remove you from your priestly faculties until such time as you comply with the conditions above disobeyed."

This suspension proved that Fallon sat both as plaintiff and judge in his own case. Loiselle considered Fallon’s judgement to be unfair, and in effect an obstacle in the path of justice.

La simple perspective d’être molestée à cause de son témoignage, voilà surement un grave obstacle à la bonne administration de la justice... C’est pourquoi intimider un témoin, avant qu’il donne son témoignage, ou le molester après l’exercice de ses pénibles fonctions, est un acte que l’on peut qualifier de contrer à la morale sociale; ce serait fermer la bouche par la violence à des hommes qui sont obligés en conscience de parler et de témoigner."

Loiselle contested the reasoning behind his suspension as being merely a reprisal for his testimony on behalf of the good character of Reverend Lucien Beaudoin. He saw the suspension as an act of violence by the bishop to silence all supporters of Reverend Beaudoin. Surprisingly, Fallon like Beaudoin had sought out the support of his diocesan priests in the very same case while forwarding accusations against the priest which were equally libellous. In effect, the Bishop made claims that Beaudoin was incompetent in the English language, when in
actuality three anglophone clergymen contested these allegations."

Loiselle looked back on the suspension with a feeling of profound bitterness.

Ainsi après 22 ans de travail au service de l'Eglise et des âmes pour avoir accompli un devoir de justice envers un confrère pour avoir contribué à éclairer un tribunal ecclésiatiq, je suis frappé de censure."

The humiliation of suspension for a Catholic priest in 1914 was immense. For Loiselle the situation was even worse. Just a few short hours after receiving his sentence, someone leaked a communiqué to the Associated Press. The newspapers broadcast the scandal of Loiselle's suspension nationwide."

The parishioners of River Canard responded to the suspension of Reverend Loiselle with shock and indignation. A band of his followers held an assembly which all male heads of families attended. Here the parishioners decided to organize resistance against the arrival of Loiselle's temporary replacement, as appointed by the Bishop. As his last official act, the outgoing pastor intervened and directed his followers to keep the peace and prevent any hostile demonstration.

Loiselle would not be alone in suffering the wrath of the Bishop's judgement. The third priest to appear before the tribunal, Reverend Pierre L'Heureux of Belle River, experienced a similar fate. Like Loiselle, L'Heureux read a declaration of double exception of incompetence and suspicion against the tribunal before which he stood. In response, Mgr. Fallon
suspended the priest.

The Diocesan Tribunal subsequently called on Reverend Napoleon D. Saint-Cyr of Annunciation Parish, Stoney Point to appear to face charges. In parallel fashion to his unfortunate colleagues, the elderly cure offered the same reasoning for his refusal to cooperate with the tribunal. At this point, Monsignor Fallon lifted his head and stated "I will chase you from this diocese." Fallon made good on his threat a few months later.³⁴ (In 1920, the supreme court of the Church, the Holy Roman Rota declared that although Fallon was within his rights to establish a Diocesan tribunal and reprimand his priests, it added that the priests' objections to his role as a judge on that tribunal were equally legitimate).³⁴

After issuing two suspensions and humbling a top diocesan official, Monsignor Fallon restrained himself for the moment from further controversy. Fortunately for the other priests summoned before the court, the Bishop took no measures against them. Those priests would face Fallon's judgement on a more propitious occasion.

During the months of May and June, 1914, the Bishop of London made his confirmation rounds of Essex and Kent counties. Through these events he found it timely to deal with his dissenting priests. While he delivered his sermons at their very own parishes, he exploited the opportunity to attack them before their parishioners. He denounced them as slanderers. Whole congregations watched in shock and disbelief as their long time
pastors were referred to as liars." At one church, Fallon even offered $25000 to anyone who could prove that he was anti-French. Fallon's brash approach created waves in the French-Canadian communities of Essex and Kent.

In the two parishes where Bishop Fallon had suspended the priests, something unexpected occurred. While arriving for confirmation ceremonies at River Canard and later at Belle River, the Bishop found himself confronted by hundreds of irate parishioners. Spokesmen came forward and demanded that the Bishop lift his censor on their priests. Taken aback, the Bishop had Fathers Loiselle and l'Heureux sign a retraction couched in the following terms:

"Je...cure de cette paroisse, déclare qu'en signant cette déclaration en faveur de l'abbé Beaudoin, je n'ai pas voulu accuser mon Evêque d'avoir défendu l'enseignement de la langue française aux enfants des Canadiens-français, ni la prédication en français aux catholiques de cette nationalité."

The popular manifestation of the parishioners of Belle River and River Canard against the Bishop and in favour of their local pastors foreshadowed a future crisis. Although Bishop Fallon reinstated the priests as a conciliatory gesture, it was clearly becoming apparent that Monsignor Fallon was losing the confidence of his French-Canadian flock. This incident illustrated that Fallon's controversial leadership could provoke massive manifestations of public protest against him.

The most dramatic ordeal to strike any of the renegade priests in 1914 occurred during the annual ecclesiastical retreat. Two months after the incidents surrounding the Diocesan
tribunal suspensions, the priests of London descended upon Sandwich for the annual retreat of the clergy at the local college. At Assumption college, the Bishop released the last of his fury on the signatories of the 1913 "anti-Fallon" declaration. Reverend Beaudoin assessed the events of the 1914 ecclesiastical retreat in the following manner: "C'est la plus terrible des retraites que nous ayons eu depuis 1910."

Beaudoin recalled that the Bishop, in his Saturday lecture, singled out and criticized those priests who were opposed to him. The Bishop then directed his threats towards the pastor of Our Lady of the Lake. "L'évêque a annoncé qu'il ferait un nouveau procès aux prêtres et qu'il me réserverait pour le dessert."\(^\text{50}\)

While Beaudoin was reprimanded before his peers, a more ominous fate awaited Reverend Napoleon Saint-Cyr of Stoney Point. On this retreat, the Bishop summoned Saint-Cyr to his quarters. There, before Rev. D. Forster and Rev. Denis O'Connor, Fallon gave Saint-Cyr notice of his dismissal. The pastor had three weeks to pack his bags and leave the diocese.\(^\text{50}\) This was justifiable, reasoned the Bishop, for the "troublemaking" sixty-five-year-old pastor had never been properly incardinated (legally recognized or admitted) in writing into the London diocese. After 22 years of service at the Parish of the Annunciation, Saint-Cyr had nowhere to turn. His diocese of origin in Nicolet, Quebec, refused to take him back.

The whole dilemma dated back to 1892, when, by the common
consent of Monsignor Elphège Gravel, the Bishop of Nicolet, and of Monsignor Denis O’Connor, Bishop of London, Reverend Saint-Cyr established himself permanently in O’Connor’s diocese. Following the papal decree A Primis of 20 July 1898, St-Cyr claimed Monsignor O’Connor had verbally informed him that he had been tacitly incardinized into the diocese of London. St-Cyr added that O’Connor’s successor, Monsignor P.F. Mc Evay, repeated his predecessor’s assurances.

Upon his expulsion, Saint-Cyr travelled from Montreal throughout Quebec and eventually to the small town of Alfred, Ontario on the Ottawa River. Reverend Saint-Cyr lived off the financial assistance of his parishioners and his brother priests, most especially Pierre Langlois of Tecumseh. He appealed to Rome through the Sacred Congregation to determine to which Bishop he belonged (London or Nicolet since both disowned him). Secondly, he requested reinstatement as pastor of Stoney Point. In addition, St-Cyr appealed for remuneration from the Ecclesiastical Trust of the Diocese of London for his annual contribution to the pension program. He suggested the sum of $300 a year as an adequate stipend.

To defend the sincerity of his belief that he belonged to the diocese, Saint-Cyr referred to his life insurance policy:

le 29 avril 1908, il (Saint-Cyr) prit une police d’assurance de $2000.00 sur sa vie payable à sa mort à The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation of London, c’est à dire à Monseigneur M.F. Fallon qui le met aujourd’hui dans le chemin, il a déjà versé $895.20 en primes d’assurance. S’il ne s’était pas cru du diocèse de London, lui qui est sans ressources et ne comptait que sur la caisse de retraite, il n’aurait pas pris
telle assurance.

As far as Reverend Saint-Cyr was concerned, he had belonged to the diocese since his earliest days as pastor in Stoney Point.

Upon his expulsion, Saint-Cyr departed immediately for Nicolet to see Monsignor Brunault, Bishop of the said diocese. Brunault explained that Saint-Cyr no longer belonged to his diocese. Consequently, the priest returned to London.

On July 19, 1914, Saint-Cyr recounted his interview with the Bishop of Nicolet to Monsignor Fallon. He pleaded with his superior to come to a friendly solution. The bishop refused. Saint-Cyr recorded his tête à tête with Fallon.

(Fallon) - Vous êtes un étranger; je vous traite comme un étranger; le droit canon est formel sur votre cas. Vous n'avez jamais été incardine et par conséquent, vous ne m'appartenez pas. Il se leva, me signifiant que je devais me retirer.
(Saint-Cyr) Comme je restais, il revint et je lui dis:
-Que vais-je faire?
(Fallon) - Ce que vous voudrez.
(Saint-Cyr) - Monseigneur, j'ai mes deux soeurs avec moi, qui sont très âgées et dont je suis le seul soutien. Je n'ai pas fait d'epargnes.

(Fallon) - Vous avez eu tort, dit-il. D'ailleurs cela ne me regarde pas. Il y a longtemps que je vous avertis; vous deviez prendre vos précautions.

(Saint-Cyr) - Je ne les ai pas prises; je ne pensais jamais que les choses tourneraient ainsi.

(Fallon) - Tant pis pour vous, dit-il. Il se retira.

Comme je ne partais pas, il revint et se mit à argumenter en sa faveur, accusant les prêtres canadiens-français de soulever leurs paroissiens contre l'Evêque, de chercher à détruire la religion et l'autorité de l'Evêque, de ne pas écrire sur des journaux soi-disant catholiques pour contredire les accusations qu'ils portaient contre lui.

(Fallon) - Sortez, dit-il.

J'étais très ému et je ne pouvais m'empêcher de
pleurer. Mais Monseigneur, que vais-je faire? Que vont devenir mes deux soeurs? Vous ne me reconnaisserez pas pour votre sujet; Monseigneur de Nicolet non plus. Où me conseillez-vous d'aller?

(Fallon) Cela ne me regarde pas, dit-il. Allez où vous voudrez; consultez vos avocats; vous avez le Délegué Apostolique, la Consistoriale; portez votre cause devant eux.

(Saint-Cyr) Je lui dis, Monseigneur, c'est justement ce que je ne veux pas faire; j'ai horreur des procès. N'y aurait-il pas moyen de s'entendre? Je suis prêt à tout faire pour éviter un procès.

(Fallon) C'est trop tard, me dit-il, ma résolution est inébranlable. Je ne vous reconnais pas pour mon sujet; jamais je ne vous donnerai de l'emploi dans le diocèse; jamais vous ne retournerez dans votre paroisse.

Il se retira, disant partez, mais sortez donc; je vais vous faire chasser.

Je n'osais encore, craignant que mes sanglots que je ne pouvais retenir, n'attirassent l'attention des voisins, tous protestants.

Il rentra disant: Que fakes-vous ici? Allez-vous en! Je suis chez moi ici."

Reverend Saint-Cyr's highly emotional account of his final interview with the Bishop illustrates the anger of Bishop Fallon and its potential consequences.

Just three days after Saint-Cyr's expulsion, the parishioners of Stoney Point rallied behind their forlorn pastor. In a petition signed by 393 followers, the congregation expressed its disappointment and regret. They recalled that during his twenty years of service, Saint-Cyr had not only built the church and the rectory, but had endeavoured to insure a quality education for their children. It was their expressed hope that he might return to his beloved parish. "

On one side of this struggle the Bishop and his followers opposed bilingual schools and expected all Catholics to comply
with this stance. They saw the future of the Catholic school system at stake. On the other side was a cultural community adjusting to the difficult transition from rural to urban life, facing the loss of its traditional institutions of church and school. When members of the latter faction led by Father Beaudoin refused to submit peacefully, they found themselves at odds with episcopal authority.

The controversy over the Bishop's Diocesan Tribunal would linger for years to come. The failure of Rome to come to a quick decision on the Fallon-Beaudoin struggle (a result of distance and the lengthy delay of the bureaucratic process) left this ulcer to fester and flare up from time to time. Rome's effort to transfer Fallon indicated its growing concern for the divisions which had appeared since his advent in 1910. The consequences of the failure of this policy contributed to further strife. A new clash between Beaudoin and Fallon now seemed inevitable.
1. Bishop Fallon to the Holy Roman Rota, as quoted in letter, N.D. Saint-Cyr to Pope Pius X, Aug. 8, 1914.

2. The declaration to Rome was signed by Mgr. J.E. Meunier, Fr.s Pierre Langlois, P. L'Heureux, J.A. Loiselle, N.D. Saint-Cyr, A. D. Emery, Théo Martin and L. Landreville. This declaration in favour of Beaudoin was also supported by three anglophone clergymen: Fr.s P. Quinlan of Strathroy, P. Corcoran of St. James Church Walkerville, and Rev. Jason Milligan (sic - Mugan) of St Michael's Church in Ridgetown.


4. A number of letters to Reverend Charlebois and Reverend Gnam from Reverend Beaudoin sought out supplementary information on the trial, especially the damaging accusations against Fallon. Gnam won his civil case against Fallon.


6. Ibid.


8. Ibid.


11. Ibid.


13. Oath sworn at Walkerville, 25 June 1913, by Ferdinand Desmarais, Gilbert Forton, and Oscar Duquette before Charles Montreuil, ACFEO.

14. A.J. Lassaline, Secretary, Ford City Roman Catholic School Board to Mother Celestine, July 4, 1913.
15. Mother Célestine to A. J. Lassaline and Ford Separate School Board, July 9 1913, CRCCF.


17. Ibid.

18. Sworn declaration, Lucien Alexandre Beaudoin, 12 Dec. 1913, Ford City, CRCCF.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

   Allegations that Fallon openly chastised priests in their own parishes is confirmed by a number of elderly parishioners from various parishes.
   Interview, Agnes Marleau Buckley, Oct.19, 1987, Windsor.
   Interview, Claire Janisse, Oct.17, 1987, Windsor.
   Interview, Hazel Lauzon Delorme, Nov.8, 1987, Windsor.


24. Ibid., also referred to in Denis Rocheleau, local ACFEO President, Tecumseh, to A. Charron, Mar. 8, 1914, CRCCF.


26. Le Clairon, 23 Octobre 1913, p.1


31. Statement of Claim, Bishop M.F. Fallon, April 2, 1914, in Ibid.
32. D. O'Connor, President and F.X. Laurendeau, Secretary to Rev. J.A. Loiselle, April 1914, quoted in Ibid.

33. Loiselle to Stagni, op.cit.


35. Ibid.

36. Loiselle to Stagni, May 13, 1914.

37. Ibid. Loiselle later defended his objections. First he questioned the fact that there were four Irishmen on the tribunal and only one Frenchman. He spoke with disdain for the domination of the Bishop over them: "...les pauvres juges avaient l'apparence de cinq écoliers agissant sous la fêrule d'un maitre d'école." J.A. Loiselle to P.F. Stagni, 12 May 1914, p.12, CRCCF, P37/8/7.

38. "Cause des cures...", pp. 4, 8. "C'est un principe de droit naturel, maintenu et sanctionné par toutes les législations divine et humaine que personne ne peut être juge dans sa propre cause..." in J.A. Loiselle to P.F. Stagni, 12 mai 1914.


40. Loiselle to Stagni, May 12, 1914.

41. Loiselle expressed frustration at the decision of the Bishop. He asked how it was that after all his years as a priest he was now being punished. "S'il m'était permis de faire entendre une plainte ce serait celle-ci: sur ma vie de prêtre on a imprimé une tâche, une censure canonique et une censure suppose un grave délit, un crime. Quel a été mon crime, mon délit? Rendre justice à un confrère, et refuser de me soumettre à des procédés illégaux..." Loiselle to Stagni, May 12, 1914.

42. These men were: The Reverend Fathers P. Quinlan, P. Corcoran, and Jason Mugan. Petition to Cardinal De Lai, CRCCF, P37/8/6.

43. Loiselle to Stagni, May 12, 1914.

44. "Cause des cures...", p.4.


49. "Cause des curés...", p. 8

50. "Cause des curés...", p. 9

51. L.A. Beaudoin to Alex Grenon, Secretary of the ACFED, 2p., 16 July 1914, CRCCF, C2/93/10.

52. Ibid.

53. Napoleon D. Saint-Cyr to the Holy Father, Benedict XV, 8 August, 1914.

54. This decree called upon all bishops to take legal church measures to recognize all parish priests whose origins and formation lie outside of the diocese in question.

55. Saint-Cyr to Benedict XV.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.


60. Petition, Parishioners of Stoney Point to Benedict XV, July, 1913, CRCCF, P37/B/7.
Chapter Four
The Second Confrontation:
The Fallon-Beaudoin Showdown

Bishop Fallon's heavy hand in the affair with his rebellious priests did little to soften the resolve of many French Canadians to push for greater linguistic rights within the school system. With respect to the individual churches, the parishes sided with their pastors against the Bishop. The controversy over the suspensions of Fathers Loiselle and L'Heureux, along with the expulsion of Father Saint-Cyr, had struck a nationalist chord even among the more apathetic elements of the francophone community. Fallon's crusade against the bilingual schools deteriorated into a series of personal attacks on several long established parish priests. By 1915, tension was shifting from River Canard, Belle River and Stoney Point to Tecumseh and Ford City.

Shortly after the unforgettable ecclesiastical retreat of July 1914, agitation against Monsignor Fallon resurfaced. Given the public criticism and disgrace which the Bishop had levelled against Reverend Pierre Langlois, the congregation of St. Anne's in Tecumseh rose to their pastor's defense. The parishioners drew up and signed a petition which they sent to Monsignor P.F. Stagni, the Apostolic Delegate to Canada. In so doing, they not only intended to inform the Vatican of their wholehearted support for Langlois, but they sought equally to acquaint church officials with the campaign of threats and defamation being undertaken by the Bishop.
Despite the threats of punishment for his signature to the Beaudoin petition, Reverend Langlois swore yet another declaration. This testimony reiterated the earlier assertions he had voiced against his superior.

Que je tiens de la bouche même de Mère Annonciation de la Communauté des Ursulines que Sa Grandeur Monseigneur M.F. Fallon dans l'été 1910, a défendu d'enseigner le français dans l'école de Térimseh.\textsuperscript{16}

The stubborn persistence of Langlois in his accusations against the Bishop raises questions as to the truthfulness of charges and denials on both accounts. Like Father Beaudoin, Langlois heard this news directly from the Mother Superior of the local teaching order of nuns. On both occasions they understood a common message: that French should no longer be used as a language of instruction in the school. The same holds true for accounts made by the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Belle River. It is obvious then that the Bishop did intend to intervene and restructure his bilingual schools, whatever the ultimate goal might be. Nevertheless, the Sisters, in their own stubborn fashion, were reluctant to accept any of the Bishop's proposed reforms in a domain which they saw as their exclusive concern.

While this dispute seemed unresolvable, it appeared another was drawing toward its end. After a long awaited trial, the Holy Roman Rota rendered its decision on the Fallon-Beaudoin case. On August 5, 1914, the courts arrived at a decision regarding the division of Our Lady of the Lake Parish. The Holy Roman Rota upheld Bishop Fallon's right to divide the parish.\textsuperscript{17} However, the court also ordered the Bishop to pay a series of indemnities
to Reverend Beaudoin. St. Anne's Parish of Walkerville was
condemned to assume the $6350.00 debt contracted by Our Lady of
the Lake for the construction of St. Edward's School, Walkerville
(paid for largely by Beaudoin's personal savings in 1905). The
same church was directed to pay $273.65 in interest on the debt
as well as $510.00 in tithes from Walkerville parishioners in
arrears concerning the 1908 construction of the new Our Lady of
the Lake Church."

The decision infuriated Bishop Fallon. It would seem that
he considered this part of the judgement as an embarrassment to
his person and to the office of the Bishop. Hence the
belligerent bishop chose not to acquiesce. Rather, he opted to
appeal the decision.

The pope, Benedict XV, decided to defer the entire case to
the Canadian Apostolic Delegate, P.F. Stagni. Vincent Sacconi,
Beaudoin's legal representative in Rome wrote:

"tenant compte que le Délégué n'a pas de
jurisdiction...j'avais demandé au Pape de déferer cette
carce à la Rote. Mais le pape a préféré donner au
délégué la juridiction pour le mettre en mesure de
inguer cette affaire en forme strictement judiciaire."

The Pope, thinking it best to transport the case to Canada,
entrusted the Apostolic Delegate to Canada, Monsignor P.F. Stagni
with the jurisdiction necessary to arrive at a just solution.
Such plans never came to be.

On December 2, Monsignor Sacconi notified Monsignor Stagni
of his new responsibilities. In unexpected fashion, however,
Stagni refused to accept this task. "Le Délégué Apostolique

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vient d'errer qu'il n'entend pas s'occuper du procès que le Pape lui avait confié." Stagni's refusal left the issue with the Roman courts.

While local resistance leaders waited for Rome's decision, they relied on Ottawa for guidance in the struggle to reinstate their language in the schools. This reliance led to significant interference from ACFEO headquarters in the nation's capital. The organization's chief secretary, Alexandre Grenon, forwarded a series of questionnaires and petition formulas to Reverends Beaudoin, Loiselle, Langlois and A.D. Emery of Paincourt. Provincial organization leaders relied upon these men to advance the names of the key regional ACFEO members across the county, to provide the Ottawa bureau with a series of local surveys.

On July 22, Grenon dispatched the following responsibilities to the presidents of the individual locals.

1. The choice that you must make to give your children good teachers.
2. The protection that you must offer them, so that they have the required strength and authority for their position.
3. The encouragement that you must give them so that they attach themselves increasingly to their vocation and that they may become true patriots.
4. The advice that you owe them, so that they keep always in focus, and cultivate a true Christian spirit of the children... That at the same time they feed their patriotism and national pride.

The ACFEO, heavily reliant on Abbe Beaudoin for his promotional work for the French language, lauded him for his commitments. Over the years he had gathered used books from Ottawa and Quebec to distribute to his following. Beaudoin also worked to impress on all pastors the importance of directing
their young people towards the University of Ottawa. 10

In the winter of 1915, Alexandre Grenon met with Mr. Morrison, parliamentary secretary for agriculture in Eastern Ontario. During their conversation, Morrison brought up the issue of the bilingual schools.

The bilingual school is in very bad shape. Bishop Fallon has come to Toronto two weeks ago and got an interview with Grant (assistant to the Minister of Education), which interview seems to have changed the ideas of the Minister of Education entirely; although he was in favour of giving justice to the French Canadians until now, his dispositions now seem very different. 11

Grenon's letter truly emphasized the perception French Canadians had towards the negative influence dispensed by Monsignor Fallon.

Grenon discussed the arguments made by Fallon as reported by Morrison during their discussion.

Morrison m'a laissé entendre que le gouvernement croyait faire plaisir au Pape en faisant la volonté de Fallon.
La principale objection au règlement de cette question semblait être Fallon. 11

Grenon's words seemed to sum up the conviction of the Franco-Ontarian intelligentsia towards the school question. The main obstacle to the bilingual school system was Michael Francis Fallon.

While Grenon continued the organization and direction of the struggle against the school law, Bishop Fallon publicly denied the existence of any such agitation. It is ironic to note that Fallon was prompted to speak out on the subject by comments made by an anglo-Montrealer in the Quebec Legislative Assembly. In a letter to John C. Caine, the aforementioned member, Fallon
replied:

I am not aware of any "School Agitation" now going on in Ontario...certain dignitaries have undertaken to arouse an agitation in Quebec that will force Ontario to deal with the imaginary conditions above referred to...

The charge that I am hostile to French Canadians is too grotesque to deserve notice. That I have stood strongly for the efficiency of public education...I hold rather a credit than a blame. That I shall not be intimidated by pestilent nationalism I have already publicly demonstrated.

That I regard the much discussed Regulation XVII as eminently fair and just, I have already stated publicly and privately and am prepared to do so again, should the occasion require it."

Some French-speaking clergy secretly applauded Fallon's opinions. His comments had reawakened the Canadien spirit in many and hence produced a positive outcome. Reverend Gurotte, one of Beaudoin's brother priests from Quebec argued:

Pourquoi ne pas dire que c'est l'attaque brutale de Monseigneur Fallon contre le français qui a réveillé les énergies endormies, qui a déchainé toutes nos forces nationales?...Il aurait mieux fait d'endormir les Canadiens français par le chloroforme des paroles moelleuses et procédés douceureuses(sic)?"

In short, what the priest appeared to be saying to Beaudoin in this letter was simply this: Bishop Fallon served as a catalyst in reigniting the flame of French Canadian nationalism in southwestern Ontario.

On February 2, 1915, after four and a half years of threats, Reverend Beaudoin and Monsignor Fallon had a turbulent confrontational discussion in Windsor, Ontario. Reverend Beaudoin recorded his account of the one hour session at St. Alphonse Rectory.

... without telling him that I had a copy of the Rota's
judgement, I asked him (Fallon) who would pay the debt of St. Edward’s school and the fees that we incurred daily while waiting for the 1915 school tax. He answered that he would pay nothing and that he had nothing to do with that school.

Well then, Monsignor, I said, this school presently costs Our Lady of the Lake more than five hundred dollars!

(Fallon) Who promised to take money from the Episcopal corporation for school ends?
(Beaudoin) It was Monsignor McEvoy who was charged with providing a Catholic education to poor children.
(Fallon) I do not believe in a school system where the priest and bishop must remain silent.
(Beaudoin) Monsignor, you want the disappearance of this school. Well, the Canadiens are going to rise up in numbers to protest in order to conserve Catholic education for their children."

The discussion gravitated inevitably from the issue of St. Edward’s school to the more contentious question involving the division of Reverend Beaudoin’s parish.

(Beaudoin) The French Canadians represent the majority of the Catholic population of Walkerville. They are going to ask for French sermons in the (St. Anne’s) church, and instruction of French catechism in the school. And yet it appears that of the two teaching sisters from St. Edward’s school, one is of German nationality and the other of Irish nationality. Neither one nor the other speaks French, even though they both can write it correctly. Therefore, Monsignor, how do you want the French Canadian children, deprived of French at church and at school to learn their catechism and their faith?

I protest with all my strength, and the French-Canadians are going to protest until justice is done to them.
(Fallon) It’s none of your business. Reverend Blair is parish priest of Walkerville and you will have to stay in your limits.

This was the first part of the tête-à-tête between Beaudoin and Fallon. At this point the Bishop asked Father Blair to leave the room in order to speak privately with his rebellious priest.

(Fallon) I intend to have you stand before the
Officialty [Diocesan Court] very shortly. You will have to prove
1. the assertion and the document that you had your fellow priests sign.
2. that I persecuted the French Canadian priests. In fact, I only regret one thing, and that is not having suspended ten of you at the start of the trouble.
3. that I made trips to Toronto to ask for the abolition of the French language.

I must tell you that Reverend Emery of Paincourt has been summoned to appear before the Officialty on February 10. 

Bishop Fallon informed Beaudoin that Reverend Langlois of Tecumseh was also expected to appear before the tribunal on February 2. As for Reverend Beaudoin, he apparently stood firm in the face of the Bishop’s assault. He declined to recognize the authority of the officialty in the case still pending in Rome.

(Beaudoin) ...I told the Bishop I had nothing to say, that his Officialty would get nothing from me, since we would appeal to the Apostolic Delegate.

(Fallon) You are the leader of this agitation. You are the one who caused all this trouble. I hold you responsible, and I will put you in your place.

(Beaudoin) Monsignor, the Canadien priests are respectful and obedient. They were only fulfilling their duties. To be good Catholics and good French Canadians. There is our ambition. For that, we must learn catechism in our mother language, we must study the history of the French and the founders of our country. We must save our schools, group into parishes and hear the word of God in our language.

(Fallon) What have I done against the Canadien? What have I done against the priests?

(Beaudoin) Monsignor, allow me to give you a single example. Father Contois died. He was one of ours. Your Lordship went to celebrate the funeral and delivered the eulogy. You took the occasion to satisfy your hatred and vengeance by attacking from beginning to end the French Canadian priests and the pastor of Our Lady of the Lake.
Is there anything in the world that is more scandalous or more humiliating? As well, the Canadiens expressed their discontent at the exit of the church with bitter words and criticism towards Your Lordship.

(Fallon) But I have never done anything against you. I have always admired you because of your works.

(Beaudoin) Monsignor, I object to that: I know that contrary to the truth and the witness of the Reverend Oblate Fathers, you have sought to make me pass for an ungrateful son, a cruel man, etc...

You knew it was false, but for you the arguments are sound. I declare your conduct has been ignoble and undignified, and that a Bishop must respect the secrets and hardships of every family, in addition to the fact that I am in a position to say that the letter received by Your Lordship was never written by my mother.

Monsignor, we are going to continue to struggle against the lies and the embarrassments that they aim at us. I see piercing on the horizon the dawn of a new era where we will have peace and justice.

(Fallon) I am the Bishop of the diocese. I am to rule everyone of you. You rely on Rome. Of course they give justice, but Rome is so far away.

(Beaudoin) Monsignor, I leave you without hate nor a spirit of vengence, but you may be sure that I will continue for the revindication of our rights in Ontario..."

Beaudoin added in concluding his letter, "Well, the battle has begun, it will not be surprising if all three of us (Beaudoin, Langlois, and Emery) are suspended." ¹³

This encounter as seen through the eyes of Reverend Beaudoin is undoubtedly subjective in nature. Nevertheless, it illustrates the conflict which existed between these two influential church figures. It is indeed ironic that these two men, both strong proponents of Catholic education, would find themselves on opposite sides of the spectrum over the issue of bilingual instruction.
The intensity of Reverend Beaudoin's indignation towards the tactics orchestrated by his superior is quite evident. Beaudoin's reference to his mother, related to an incident mentioned by Fallon in a letter to Monsignor P. F. Stagni in 1910. In that correspondence, the Bishop informed the Apostolic Delegate of a dispute involving Father Beaudoin and his mother over financial support. Fallon claimed that Beaudoin was unwilling to provide the elderly woman with the assistance she desperately needed.

...the Reverend L.A. Beaudoin, is at this moment threatened with a suit in the civil courts by his own mother for depriving her of the means of living by unjustly retaining her share of his father's estate.\(^{19}\)

The publicity of this family matter, whether truthful or not, could have proven effective in discrediting a highly respected adversary like Lucien Beaudoin.

On February 16, Bishop Fallon fired the first shot in his battle to frighten Reverend Beaudoin into submission. In a letter, Fallon outlined his charges against the pastor. First he suggested that Beaudoin had induced a number of his fellow priests to sign the controversial declaration.\(^{20}\) Second, he argued that all claims that the Bishop had forbidden French instruction to children of that nationality were false. Fallon then condemned any notions that his visits to Toronto were designed to ask for the abolition of the French language.\(^{21}\)

Perhaps what perturbed Fallon most about Reverend Beaudoin was his defiant attitude. The Bishop wrote,

On the said date, February 1, 1915, you refused to retract the charges you had made, contenting yourself with saying, "I will die by my affirmations."\(^{22}\)
In reply to Fallon's ultimatum that he would place the entire matter before his Diocesan Tribunal, Beaudoin stated obstinately, "I will be mum before your tribunal." 

The Bishop, forgetting his own past agitation during his Ottawa days, presented the following terms to Beaudoin.

Wherefore I the undersigned Bishop of London, do by these present letters require and exact of you, Reverend L.A. Beaudoin, that within fifteen days from this date you do furnish me in writing with satisfactory and substantial proofs of the accusations aforesaid against me, or present me in writing with a complete and unconditional retraction of them and a humble apology for having made and circulated them. Failing which I shall be regretfully obliged to place that matter before the Diocesan Tribunal for judicial and canonical action.  

Reverend Beaudoin's ordeal through the following months would leave his parishioners with bitter memories not soon to be forgotten.

One likely reason for Fallon's persecution of Beaudoin related to bad publicity. There is little doubt that Father Beaudoin wrote a series of articles on the French-Canadian situation in the Diocese of London for such French language newspapers as Le Droit, Le Devoir, and La Patrie. The negative comments directed towards the Bishop's person naturally incensed Fallon. Naturally, Fallon determined to clear his name in light of these attacks.

Reverend Beaudoin reacted to Fallon's terms by recalling the Sacred Consistorial Congregation's appointment of a Special Commissary. Rome armed this Commissary with ample powers to determine whether Beaudoin had maliciously or falsely accused
the Bishop. The Consistorial Congregation granted a special mandate to His Excellency Monsignor P.F. Stagni, the Apostolic Delegate to Canada (Unbeknownst to both parties, Stagni subsequently refused to accept the mandate). Beaudoin then informed the Bishop that his threatening letter was being forwarded to Stagni.

Beaudoin noted that the Holy See had suspended the Bishop's jurisdiction in their dispute by referring the case to the tribunal of the Apostolic Delegate. He wrote to Fallon,

Il est évident que je manquerais gravement de respect à l'autorité souveraine de l'Église si j'allais maintenant au tribunal diocésain dont vous me menaciez. Les explications que vous demandez dans votre lettre, je vous donnerai complètes devant le tribunal romain que mon procureur annonce et dont Votre Grandeur doit savoir probablement la formation.

Beaudoin's argument that his appearance before Fallon's tribunal equated with disobedience to Rome further embittered the relationship between the two men. Indeed, Monsignor Fallon's personal secretary, Monsignor Mahoney claimed that the Bishop did not learn of Rome's decision until a much later date.

As the Fallon-Beaudoin conflict once again came to a boil, another point of contention resurfaced. The issue of St. Anne's parish of Walkerville had been judged as a legitimate division of Beaudoin's parish in August 1914. Until this time Fallon remained open to those Catholics who chose to frequent their old parish of Our Lady of the Lake. When a second decision was brought down in February 1915, following Fallon's initial appeal, the air of relative tolerance evaporated.

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In February 1915, Bishop Fallon addressed a letter to the Catholics of Walkerville. Citing the decision in his favour by the Holy Roman Rota concerning the parish division, he gave notice that Reverend Beaudoìn would no longer have any jurisdiction over Walkerville's Catholics.

To rally support to St. Anne's church, the new pastor, Reverend Blair went on a door-to-door campaign. By visiting the French Canadian families, he invoked the "definitive" sentence of the Rota to force them to attend St. Anne's. Much to the dismay of a significant number of these parishioners, Blair ignored the French language and proved to be incapable of serving the congregation in their mother tongue. 

In Beaudoìn's eyes, the Bishop clearly turned a blind eye to the makeup of the congregation. With some estimates placing the French-Canadian element at 85% of the parish (census reports place the Canadien population at 70%)⁵⁹, there was little doubt as to the cultural and ethnic makeup of the community. However, one of the Bishop's closest associates countered these claims arguing in fact that "a large number of English people requested an English parish."⁶⁰⁶¹ Whatever the truth of the matter, Fallon's appointment did nothing to dispel suspicions of his alleged anti-French-Canadian bias.

Fallon's creation of this first English language parish in Walkerville was significant in two ways. First, although he boasted that he had never once deprived any of the Canadien parishes of the use of their language, he did initiate a
programme of containment. In his twenty-two year reign as bishop, not a single new French language parish was created in the border cities. In light of the birthrate of the local community, the needs of this population could not be forever satisfied by a limited number of churches. Indeed, several parishes, most notably St. Clair, St. Anne’s of Walkerville, and St. Rose were all designated as English language parishes, even though the vast majority of their founding parishioners were French Canadian."

A second point of significance in the parish division relates to the impression it left upon the congregation of Our Lady of the Lake. Undoubtedly attached to their pastor of twenty-three years, the parishioners saw the division as a direct affront to Beaudoin. The Bishop’s refusal to embrace the entire decision of the Roman courts only annoyed them further. In effect, the court not only ordered that the division of the parish was justified, it ordered the Bishop to remunerate Our Lady of the Lake to the sum of $7000 for the loss of St. Edward’s School in Walkerville. Fallon refused to pay. For the parish, it appeared the Bishop was openly defying Rome. In fact, Fallon only accepted that part of the decision which went in his favour. This issue would later resurface during one of the worst crises ever endured by the diocese of London.

As weeks passed, the Fallon-Beaudoin feud remained unresolved. Fallon continued to pursue legal proceedings against his adversary. Discounting Beaudoin’s legal recourse to
the Holy Roman Rota, the Bishop wrote

...I do not recognize any authority whatever in "Comte Sacconi". All ecclesiastical tribunals rest on the same foundation, viz.: the authority of the church. And to establish my case against you, I lay my complaint before the Diocesan tribunal as Canon Law directs."

Three weeks after receiving this letter, the Diocesan tribunal of London forwarded a set of demands. First, Beaudoin was to retract unconditionally all statements he had made that Fallon forbade instruction in French. Second, he was to admit that this was not the first occasion on which he had opposed Episcopal direction. Third, he was instructed to write to the priests whom he had induced to sign a declaration in his favour, acknowledging his inability to prove his accusations and requesting their permission to withdraw them (in fact, Fallon asserted that none of the signatories had even read the document in question). Fourth, he was to withdraw the charge and apologize to the plaintiff for accusing him of visiting Toronto for the purpose of abolishing use of the French language. Fifth the tribunal called upon Beaudoin to apologize for referring to the Bishop as an oppressor of the French Canadians. Sixth, Beaudoin was to pay all court expenses incurred in connection with the trials involving himself and the Bishop. Lastly, the Diocesan tribunal gave Beaudoin ten days from the date of judgement to comply with these terms."

If Beaudoin had conceded to the list of demands put forward by the Bishop's appointed tribunal, he would have admitted sole responsibility for all the troubles mentioned. In this case
however, the tribunal, appointed by Monsignor Fallon alone, also decided, to no one's surprise in the Bishop's favour. While most of the details surrounding this ultimatum put forward were to be forgotten, two items of importance would be remembered. First, parishioners noted a sudden change in the health of Reverend Beaudoin. Second, the secretary of the tribunal, Reverend Francois Xavier Laurendeau, would be labelled a French Canadian turncoat, and a "henchman" of Bishop Fallon.

On April 9, the date on which he received the ultimatum, Beaudoin responded to the demands put forth by the Diocesan tribunal. The beleaguered pastor objected first to the nomination process for the judges, who were appointed by the plaintiff in the said case, Monsignor M.F. Fallon. Second, Beaudoin objected to the tribunal on the grounds of incompetence, since the whole case involving Bishop Fallon and himself was to be judged by the Holy See.\textsuperscript{171}

Pressure mounted on Beaudoin to break down and retract his statements before the fateful tenth day of April 19. If he resisted, Beaudoin would likely face the Bishop's Diocesan tribunal which meant that suspension was a serious possibility. Then, on the ninth day, Reverend Beaudoin received news in a telegram from his friend Reverend Joseph Gignac of Quebec City.

Sacconi [Beaudoin's lawyer in Rome] cabled me yesterday that the Roman tribunal just sent new decree forbidding Monsignor [Fallon] any new measure against you or friend [A.O. Emery or P. Langlois] as you enjoy both its protection. For God's sake keep firm you and friend as future justice and truth rest on you both, don't sign or retract anything.\textsuperscript{172}
Rome ordered a halt to any further "abuses" of episcopal authority against Reverend Beaudoin which might have some effect on the outcome of the case in Rome. Beaudoin was now protected from his bishop.

On the next day, April 19, 1915, Beaudoin wrote to Reverend Denis O'Connor of the Diocesan Tribunal. In his letter he made reference to the papal intervention:

Je récuse l'Officialité de London comme incompétente parce que Sa Sainteté Benoît XV par un réécrit pontifical, a déféré ma cause et celle de mes confrères au Tribunal de la S. Rote romaine. Il serait donc injurieux au Saint-Siège qu'un tribunal inférieure fut saisi de cette même cause pour la connaître et la juger."

The worst moments of the five year conflict between the pastor of Our Lady of the Lake and his Ordinary had now passed. Nevertheless, it is significant to note that it took direct intervention from Rome at the eleventh hour to spare Reverend Beaudoin from an arbitrary form of justice. This final battle between Beaudoin and Bishop Fallon was a draw. A period of uneasy peace began, only to be shattered in one of the worst scandals ever to shake the Diocese of London.

2. Ibid; Reverend Langlois’ testimony is attached to the said petition.


4. Ibid.


8. Documentation on Essex County is scattered with some areas neglected. Information begins around 1909 for the various towns.


11. Conversation of Morrison with Grenon, in a letter of Alex Grenon to Pere C. Charlebois, CRCCF, C2/211/1.

12. Ibid.


16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.


21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.


26. Ibid., see also La Patrie, "Monseigneur Fallon est condamné à Rome", 20 février, 1915.


28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.


33. Interview with Monsignor Mahoney, in Dagenais, p.208.

34. Please note that there are no reliable sources that shed light on the actual number of francophones as opposed to those French Canadians who had been assimilated into the English speaking society. Refer to Appendix D.


36. Interview with Monsignor Mahoney, in Dagenais, p.208.


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Chapter Five
A Thousand Days of Peace

From May 1915 to August 1917, the French Canadians of Essex County experienced a period of relative peace with their Bishop. Although the number of disputes diminished significantly with the intervention from Rome, the grassroots agitation continued. The arena of activity was not limited to Ford City.

In Stoney Point, parishioners had yet to dispel the vivid memories of the ordeal experienced by their forlorn pastor Reverend St. Cyr. Since his expulsion, the parishioners had hardened their resolve to maintain their language. In addition, the congregation forwarded monies to St. Cyr for his relief much to the dismay of Monsignor Fallon.¹

In Paincourt, French Canadians were led by a dynamic nationalist, Reverend Alfred David Emery. Under his direction, this parish successfully defied the Protestant chief inspector's entry into the bilingual school for seven years until 1919.² Throughout this time however, parishioners advised their priest to stay clear of this struggle. The recent examples of Reverend St. Cyr and others gave them serious reason for concern.

In 1914, Fr. Emery launched a youth group known as the "Cercle des jeunes" in which older students taught catechism in French to their younger schoolmates. As well, Emery helped to organize a "Cercle agricole". This cooperative, run chiefly by the younger members of the parish, sought to disprove the arguments of their English neighbours that they were inferior farmers.³
Perhaps Emery’s most exceptional accomplishment involved his campaign for the propagation of French language books and parish bulletins. Emery believed that reading represented the key in the struggle against anglicization. After receiving initial support from the ACFEO through the donation of books and old parish bulletins, magazines and brochures, Reverend Emery began a major project for the region’s French Canadians. He began to write, edit and print a local bulletin free of charge.

Depuis longtemps nous sentons le besoin de répandre la bonne lecture parmi nos gens et après plusieurs essais nous avons trouvé que le meilleur moyen d'instruire et rendre nos gens meilleur par la lecture, c'est le bulletin paroissial, pour la bonne raison que nous le distribuons gratis; s'il nous fallait demander quelque aumône nous n'aurions presque personne pour le lire; alors nous faisions des sacrifices pour forcer en quelque sorte les gens à lire français...Nos gens sont si anglicisés."

Emery’s words expressed a preoccupation shared by his fellow priest, Reverend Beaudoin of Ford City. The French Canadians of the southwestern peninsula were on the path to cultural assimilation.

In spite of this gloomy picture, Emery’s project was blossoming into a modest success. By the autumn of 1915, his bulletin’s circulation had vastly expanded.

Le Bulletin que je publie actuellement est répandu déjà dans neuf paroisses, et nous tachons de le répandre dans toutes les paroisses du diocèse de London; nous en publions actuellement 1900 copies. Il faut bien savoir que j'ai commencé avec 200 copies seulement."

As has been noted, Reverend Beaudoin, like Emery showed a concern for the education of the francophone children of the
diocese. Both men requested and received shipments of French language books from Ottawa. In parallel fashion both encountered considerable apathy. Reverend Emery wrote

Il est bien malheureux qu'un grand nombre de mes gens ne veulent pas comprendre le sérieux de notre cause; ils n'y voient que de la politique...et le curé en souffre.
Mes efforts sont surtout dirigés vers la jeune génération, et encore qu'elle est ingrate."

Father Emery attributed some of the apathy to outright discouragement. A local French language newspaper, Le Clairon, founded in September of 1913 to speak out for the rights of the habitants, fell into decline because of financial difficulty. Its début, which coincided with the official introduction of the infamous Regulation XVII, held great promise. For many, this newspaper had symbolized the hopes that the local population could be united.

Malheureusement, un trop grand nombre préfèrent se ranger du côté des hôteliers, que de dire un mot, ou de faire quoi que ce soit contre le gouvernement. De plus, l'affaire du Clairon a tout gâté les gens, ils ont perdu confiance; vu que le Droit [of Ottawa] avait promis de remplacer le Clairon et que la chose a été discontinuée, je sais que l'œuvre de la bonne presse ne prendra pas. La seule chose que je crois possible maintenant, ce serait d'envoyer le Droit hebdomadaire aux lecteurs du Clairon pour quelques mois."

Over the two years of relative calm, the drive to establish another local French language newspaper would resurface. It would take a group of professionals from Quebec and Eastern Ontario, and a major clash with the bishop to get the printing presses rolling once again.

In January 1917, when a small group of local professionals
introduced a new scheme for the foundation of a weekly newspaper they received an enthusiastic response. Before the annual meeting of the regional chapter of the Saint-Jean Baptiste society, Dr. Damien Saint-Pierre a recent arrival from Cornwall, delivered a vision-inspiring address.

...pour assurer la survivance de notre nationalité dans ce coin-ci de la province d'Ontario deux choses s'imposent surtout : l'établissement d'un Collège classique bilingue, et la fondation d'un journal de langue française."

This speech signalled the speedy rise to prominence of a relatively unknown pediatrician in the local community. St. Pierre would prove instrumental in the establishment of a French language newspaper a year later.

Another figure of importance in the newspaper movement was a lawyer, Joseph de Grandpré. Originally from the province of Quebec, de Grandpré manifested the same nationalist fervour as his colleague, Dr. St. Pierre. De Grandpré and St. Pierre appealed to French language circles in Ottawa for assistance in launching their project. The two received the reassurance of full support from the ACFEO. "Vous pouvez compter à l'avance sur notre absolument dévouement envers cette entreprise essentiel à la survivance des nôtres dans cette partie de la province."

De Grandpré admitted to the ACFEO in Ottawa that the necessary help for the newspaper would not be found in the Essex County area. This community, isolated from the Franco-Ontarian cultural fervour of Ottawa, proved unable to manifest the nationalist spirit which was sweeping eastern Ontario. In
effect, local French Canadians were largely discouraged. De Grandpré attributed this situation to their "deformed mentality" as shaped by the Anglo-Saxon ambiance of the region and the temptation of American wealth, as well as the long period of isolation from the rest of French Canada.\textsuperscript{11}

Another reason for the widespread French Canadian discouragement in Essex and Kent counties related to the financial disaster of \textit{Le Clairon}. This weekly newspaper shone as a beacon of light in the political shadows cast by Regulation XVII. Unfortunately, local professionals who invested significant sums in the enterprise were bitterly disappointed by its bankruptcy. As a result, few expected even the most patriotic of Canadiens to jump into yet another journalistic venture. In May 1917, de Grandpré provided this assessment:

\begin{quote}
...Dans cette malheureuse affaire du \textit{Clairon}, plusieurs de nos meilleurs Canadiens de Windsor, toujours les mêmes d'ailleurs à payer leur bourse pour les intérêts de la race, ont perdu des sommes considérables...ils ne se laisseront pas de si tôt prendre les doigts dans ce qu'ils craignent être un guêpier comme le premier.\textsuperscript{12}
\end{quote}

While past financial supporters of \textit{Le Clairon} expressed scepticism, others simply could not afford to help launch a newspaper. Even the local Saint-Jean Baptiste societies were unable to contribute owing to their own financial difficulties.\textsuperscript{12}

Aside from financial problems, de Grandpré and St.Pierre encountered other tribulations. Only one printer in the Windsor area would consider undertaking the printing and distribution of the newspaper. The Seguin Brothers appeared willing to publish
the newspaper, but refused to guarantee that having once initiated publication, they would be able to maintain it on a weekly basis. The company complained that it would probably have to increase the size of its staff and expand operations.  

De Grandpre was reluctant to initiate an entreprise that might face interruption at any given date. He regarded the potential consequences for his people to be calamitous.

Et si pour l'une quelconque de ces raisons, nous devions suspendre notre publication, c'en serait peut-être fini pour jamais, un pareil échec venant surtout après celui du Clairon.  

The fear of bankruptcy, so justified by the failure of the Clairon, inhibited any new venture from attracting the needed support from the more affluent members of the area's French-speaking community. The financial uncertainty that beset de Grandpre and his colleagues was likely the reason for the postponement of the publication. Nevertheless, other problems related to this issue had yet to be resolved with their allies in Ottawa. For example, given the lack of experience of de Grandpré, St.Pierre and the latter's brother-in-law, Dr. Gustave Larasse of Tecumseh, these men requested a newspaper 'representative' from Ottawa's French language daily, Le Droit. In addition, this triumvirate requested that Le Droit pay the salary of the representative as well as the printing cost of the newspaper. While these requests were exacting enough, the future editors expected more:

Et pour que le journal ait bien une couleur locale et qu'il puisse être considéré par les Canadiens de Kent et d'Essex comme leur journal, il serait important
qu'il fut publié sous un nom distinct du Droit de même
que pour qu'il puisse faire une lutte réellement
efficace il serait nécessaire que les articles de
rédaction soient faits ici et soient soumis avant
publication à un bureau de censeurs locaux. 17

In short, de Grandpré and his colleagues intended to maintain
complete autonomy in the editorial domain, while expecting Le
Droit in Ottawa to finance their projects. This approach
strained local relations with the Ottawa paper and the ACFEO.
Neither organization showed much interest in funding a newspaper
which offered nothing in return for their assistance. It would
take a serious local crisis to facilitate a more co-operative
attitude between the two sides.

The worsening illness of Reverend Lucien Beaudoin of Ford
City served as a harbinger of future troubles. Dependant on
crutches and a wheel chair, the pastor continued to say his daily
mass and make the rounds of the parish. Throughout this ordeal,
and throughout the bitter battle with Monsignor Fallon, Beaudoin
persevered in his efforts to unite the French Canadians of Essex.
In light of the dichotomy which appeared between the Association
on the one hand and de Grandpré and Saint-Pierre on the other,
Beaudoin sought a road of conciliation. The patriot priest was
insistent, for he lamented the apathy which persisted among the
county's French-speaking population. In his last letter to the
ACFEO, he wrote,

N'allez pas croire que les Canadiens d'Essex sont
contre l'Association. Ce qui manque, comme un peu
partout, dans Essex et Kent, c'est la cohésion des
Canadiens-français. Grand nombre sont indifférents.
Grand nombre ne connaissent rien de la question
ontarienne, beaucoup ont peur, et plusieurs qui ont

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While many francophones remained ignorant of the education law, still others were afraid of challenging the Bishop in any fashion. Indeed, from the French-Canadian Catholic of 1917, one would have expected little more than strict obedience. With a renegade pastor like Beaudoin however, dissent was encouraged on linguistic and cultural grounds. Beaudoin reminded his following of the recently issued Papal letter to the Ontario bishops (1916) relating to the schools question. In this letter, Benedict XV defended the right of linguistic minorities to instruction and catechism in their mother tongue.17

On September 8, 1916, Pope Benedict issued the encyclical Commissio divinitus to the archbishops and bishops of Canada. The document sought to settle the discord between Irish and French factions within the Catholic church. To appear balanced, the pontiff weighed both viewpoints. With respect to the French Canadians, he wrote:

They wish... that priests should be appointed to the churches in due proportion to the number of Catholics of both languages, in such ways that in places where the French-Canadians form a majority, a priest of their language and race should be selected and that in parishes where they are in a certain number, French should be used in preaching and in the exercise of other sacred offices in the same way as English and finally they desire that in the separate schools, the children should be more fully and suitably taught the French language after their own manner.80
While weighing the grievances of the French, the Pope also considered the concerns expressed by anglophones from areas where they formed a clear majority of the general population. He wrote:

It is added that too often the French-Canadian priests are deficient in their knowledge of English, or speak it imperfectly, or neglect it out of preference for their own tongue, and thus their ministry is of little efficacy or unequal to local exigencies. Then as regards separate schools, it is pointed out that if the French were taught in the manner claimed by French-Canadians, it would be greatly detrimental to the proper teaching of English which is the language of the province, and prejudicial to the parents who would be obliged either to provide at their own expense that which is wanting in order that their children should be thoroughly and completely instructed in the English language, or else to abandon Catholic schools and send their sons to the public or neutral schools, which would be totally wrong. Finally, it is contended that this system of education may provoke the ill-will of the state authorities against the separate schools on the ground that they prove inadequate to the needs of public welfare, and thus endanger the benefit of the law authorizing Catholics to have their own separate schools.*

The Holy Father lamented the divisiveness of the dispute concerning Catholic education. He urged his bishops to "make every effort in peace and charity to restore agreement and concord amongst the faithful."**

In light of the opinions held by opposing factions in the church, the Pope recommended a spirit of conciliation. He then proceeded to discuss the question of bilingual schools in Ontario.

Nobody can deny that the civil government of Ontario has the right to exact that children should learn English in the schools and likewise that the Catholics of Ontario legitimately require that it should be perfectly taught... Nor, on the other hand, is there
any reason to contest the right of the French-Canadians living in the province to claim, in a suitable way however, that French should be taught in the schools attended by a certain number of their children; nor are they indeed to be blamed for upholding what is so dear to them.

Nevertheless, let the Catholics of the Dominion remember that the one thing of supreme importance above all others is to have Catholic schools and not to imperil their existence.

How these two requirements are to be met, namely a thorough knowledge of English and an equitable teaching of French for French-Canadian children, it is obvious that in the case of schools subject to the public administration, the matter cannot be dealt with independently of the government. But this does not prevent the bishops in their earnest care for the salvation of souls, from exerting their utmost activity to make counsels of moderation prevail with a view to obtaining that what is fair and just should be granted on both sides. 

Many French Canadians subsequently took solace in the notion that the Holy Father had spoken out in their defense. Unfortunately for them, Bishop Fallon did not interpret the papal letter in the same fashion as his flock.

On January 24, 1917, the Bishops of Ontario met in Ottawa to discuss the Papal letter. According to Michael Fitzpatrick, the controversial figure sought to defend himself before his peers by dismissing accusations that he was anti-French Canadian. He offered two arguments for his previous positions on bilingual education.

A

That the French-Canadian Catholics have no lawful cause for complaint against the education laws and regulations of the Province of Ontario in so far as the French language is concerned.

B

That the religious and educational needs of French Canadian Catholics in Ontario are far more generously
provided for by the Holy See, by their bishops and by
the civil government than are the religious and
educational needs of Catholics of English speech in
many portions of Canada where French Canadian bishops
exercise or have recently exercised ecclesiastical authority.  

Fallon's remarks against the French-Canadian clergy seemed to
stray completely from the spirit of charity and peace urged by
Pope Benedict. He relayed this information to the public via the
columns of the Catholic Record. In Fallon's opinion the Pope's
encyclical had discredited the unlawful French Canadian
agitation. Moreover, the Bishop argued "that any action of ours
that would in the public mind be judged as sympathetic with the
dying agitation would go far to nullify the good effect of the
papal letter."

Fallon's statement left an impression that he would do
nothing in response to the calls made by the Pope for moderation.
For the Bishop, the Papal letter had sanctioned his previous
actions as gestures of "paternal concord and charity."

It is highly improbable that the French Canadians of the diocese
shared the Bishop's interpretation.

Aside from the apathy in the local parishes over the
education issue, the phenomenon of urbanization preoccupied
Reverend Beaudoin. The migration of farmers from the
countryside in search of employment in the growing auto industry
fuelled population expansion in the border city area. In
Beaudoin's parish alone, there came a massive influx of French
Canadian families from eastern Ontario, as witnessed in the case
of Dr. St. Pierre. He wrote of the changes:
In a decade, Our Lady of the Lake underwent dramatic change. First in 1912, a substantial number of French Canadians were cut off from the parish with the creation of St. Anne’s Walkerville. Then, almost simultaneously, a stream of non-francophone immigrants began to settle in Ford City. Romanians, Russians, Serbians and Ukrainians all began to move into this increasingly urbanized and working class society. Although a number of traditional family farms remained in the hands of older French Canadians, the smokestacks of the Ford factory now overlooked their fields and orchards.

Homogeneous Canadien neighbourhoods felt the invasion of a foreign presence. Local merchants relied more and more often on English as the common medium of communication to serve their recently arrived clienteles. Even the Ford Motor Company initiated an English language program for its immigrant employees. After only two decades the predominantly francophone population of Sandwich East found itself to be in the minority in Ford City. (See Appendix B) Few people doubted that significant changes were taking place in the Border Cities.

The "war to end all wars" helped to precipitate many local changes. The growth in industry and the gradual influx of rural
families and immigrants into the area to find work transformed the border towns into a single sprawling metropolis. Worse yet for the traditional population, the war itself was further dividing French and English Canadians. The cries for conscription among imperialist-minded English Canadians created a great deal of anxiety for French Canadians. The emotional divisions over this issue added salt to the wounds of the recent schools controversy in Ontario. Local francophones were on the defensive on several fronts.

In the midst of crisis, the francophone congregation of Our Lady of the Lake had always turned to their pastor Lucien Beaudoin for guidance. Now their spiritual and nationalist leader of 25 years was a broken man. Crippled by tuberculosis, publicly humiliated by his Bishop, and no longer able to carry his heavy responsibilities, Father Beaudoin departed for medical treatment at a Montreal hospital in June of 1917.\textsuperscript{20} Just as the country was approaching one of its worst crises, so too was the parish of Our Lady of the Lake. For Ford City’s Catholics, a leadership vacuum only aggravated the situation. When Father Beaudoin died on August 18, 1917, the emotional state of the parish was a powderkeg. The stage was set for the most scandalous incident in the history of the Diocese of London.
1. Father Saint-Cyr wrote many of his parishioners soliciting donations to sustain himself. Fallon told Saint-Cyr to put an end to this practice. Napoléon Saint-Cyr to Benedict XV, 8 August, 1914. C2/156/6.


4. A.D. Emery to Alexandre Grenon, Secretary ACFEO, Ottawa, 15 November 1915, 2p., CRCCF, C2/211/1.

5. Ibid.


7. Emery to Grenon, 16 December, 1915.

8. Ibid.


10. Alex Grenon to Joseph de Grandpré, 1p., CRCCF, C2/94/6.


12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.


21. Ibid., p.146.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., p.150.

25. Ibid., p.151.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.


29. In Beaudoin’s place, Monsignor Fallon appointed Father Joseph Emery to serve as the pastor’s temporary assistant.
Chapter Six
The Road to Armageddon

Just as Sir Wilfrid Laurier was elaborating on his conscription stand in his effort to maintain Liberal party unity nationally, the parishioners of Our Lady of the Lake were on the verge of making their own fateful decision. On Wednesday August 22, 1917, a number of diocesan clerics conducted a funeral mass for Father Beaudoin at l'Assomption Quebec. That same morning, the Reverend Denis O'Connor, now vicar-general of the Diocese of London sung a requiem high mass at Our Lady of the Lake. To the surprise of the parishioners, another priest accompanied Reverend O'Connor to the Church.

Just before the mass, a number of parishioners learned that Monsignor Fallon had appointed the Reverend François Laurendeau as their new pastor. Almost immediately word spread from parishioner to parishioner of his identity. Many of these people, still grieving the loss of their curé of 25 years, were shocked to learn the news. The public indignation was widespread. Their new pastor, Father Laurendeau, was indeed the very same man who had sat on the Diocesan tribunal which had suspended three priests and expelled another from the diocese. Even more serious however, was Laurendeau’s involvement in the string of suspension threats issued against Father Beaudoin which had left the latter a broken man.¹

Immediately following the funeral mass, the parishioners rushed over to the presbytery behind the church and formed a human blockade before its entrance. Their numbers easily filled
the gallery and steps as well as the grounds in front. They rendered impossible any access by Laurendeau and O'Connor to the presbytery.

A few of the rebels seized the priests' suitcases and belongings which they had found in the rectory and hurled them into the street. As the clergy left the church it was quickly locked and blockaded by the parishioners. When the priests approached the presbytery one protestor uttered, "You can't go in there." One of the parishioners declared that nobody would be granted access to the presbytery but Reverend Joseph Emery. Emery had been administering the church in Beaudoin's absence.

The priests, barred from the rectory, were forced to change their vestments outside. Once this was accomplished, they departed for Windsor. Father Laurendeau quartered with Father Downey at St. Alphonse parish. The long standoff had begun.

A reporter from the Windsor Evening Record recounted his interview with the leaders of the blockade.

Reporter: "What is the objection to Fr. Laurendeau?"
Guard: "Well we understand he is opposed to teaching French in the schools."

The dissidents also blamed Reverend Laurendeau for the suspension of a number of French Canadian priests in 1914. With some difficulty, they attributed his role as secretary to Bishop Fallon's Diocesan Tribunal as incriminating evidence.

Father Laurendeau spoke out against the accusations that he was against the French-Canadians:

Personally, I am not anxious to remain. I came here in obedience to my bishop. What they say about me
is unfair and untrue. I cannot think that the statements made against me are the sentiment of the parish. I have always been absolutely fair."

As to his connections to the suspension of the French priests, Father Laurendeau responded:

"On the other hand, in my private capacity, I tried to save them and restore harmony."

Whatever intentions the incoming pastor had held during the trial of the priests, he was unable to convince the parishioners of his alleged sincerity.

Some parishioners tied Father Laurendeau's appointment to the unresolved dispute involving the 1912 division of Our Lady of the Lake Parish. One parishioner stated that the unpaid $7000 debt owed for the construction of St. Edward's School lay at the heart of the reasons for the nomination.

A school trustee stated that Fr. Laurendeau was getting his reward for favouring the Bishop and if he were allowed to succeed Fr. Beaudoin, the award would likely be dropped."

Comments such as these greatly distressed the new pastor. In his remarks to the Record, he denied rumours that he was Irish, and emphasized his French-Canadian heritage. Laurendeau was born near the town of Chatham; indeed, his mother could not even speak English.

In light of this stressful situation, Father Laurendeau declared:

"I think the people in Ford might have given me a chance so that they know my sentiments...I can go back to my own parish, it is a better one than this."

As a result of the protest of the parishioners, Father Laurendeau
revealed great reluctance in accepting the Bishop’s appointment.

On the evening of Wednesday August 22, 1200 parishioners assembled to adopt a number of resolutions. First they demanded a priest who was not merely French Canadian in name, but a pastor animated by the same mentality and aspiring to the same ideal as the majority of parishioners. In short they sought a man who would serve as a protector—a man who would carry on the works of the late Reverend Lucien Beaudoin. The parishioners claimed that Fr. Laurenseau’s past acts rendered him incapable of handling such a task. His presence would be a constant source of friction for the parishioners. Consequently, the protestors petitioned the Bishop to appoint a priest capable of fulfilling the desired tasks in the best interests of the parish."

The assembled parishioners addressed other matters as well. First, they selected a committee to coordinate and organize the resistance. They elected Stanislas Janisse, a founder of the parish whose roots in the county dated back to the French colonial period, to serve as president. They chose Alexandre Beausoleil as secretary. After selecting the remainder of the executive, the parishioners designated Dr. Damien Saint-Pierre as official spokesman."

As one of their first acts, the committee established a picket schedule of three eight-hour daily shifts which they assigned to all adult volunteers of the parish. That first day, fifty men and thirty women mounted guard around the rectory. For these people, a whole way of life was changing. Their
longtime protector, Father Beaudoin, was gone. From the pulpit he had sensitized them to the injustices of the school law. It was only through his type of zealous leadership that the people could insure their cultural survival. In their view, Father Laurendeau would be unable to offer such assurances. This was just one of the reasons for the blockade and the list of resolutions protesting the priest's appointment. Indeed one parishioner insisted: "sa nomination serait la continuation du système d'anglicisation et de persécution introduit par Sa Grandeur Mgr Fallon." 

The parishioners were not satisfied in forwarding their resolutions to the Bishop and to the Apostolic Delegate in Ottawa. They chose to make their feelings known publicly in the Evening Record as well. This decision could only have embarrassed and angered Bishop Fallon. The infuriated Ordinary struck back. On August 25, the same newspaper published Fallon's response on the front page.

Your extraordinary letter of yesterday, and the still more extraordinary resolution which accompanies it, detailing without apparent shame the scandalous proceedings of yourself and your associates around the church and presbytery of Our Lady of the Lake, Ford City on the 2nd, inst., reach me on the eve of my departure from London to meet an engagement long-since arranged. Fortunately however, the subject of your communication lends itself easily to an immediate, definite and final reply, as news of your indefensible and uncatholic action came to me through the columns of the daily press before I was favoured with your letter; you will not find it amiss that I should make use of the same valuable avenue of publicity to set forth some fundamental facts and truths that have been publicly flouted.

The Reverend François Xavier Laurendeau has been
named by competent ecclesiastical authority pastor of the parish of Our Lady of the Lake, Ford City, pastor of that parish he shall remain: on that point you and your associates may set your minds at ease. He is now occupied in winding up his affairs in the parish of which until recently he was officially in charge. When that task is accomplished, he will proceed to Ford City. There the management of the property in the episcopal corporation will devolve upon him, and in the discharge of that duty he will have the support of the provisions of the civil law. Mob rule can meet with no support from either church or state.

The spiritual interests of the parish of Our Lady of the Lake will be confided likewise to Reverend Father Laurendeau. Of his competence from every point of view to fulfill the onerous obligations of this portion of his charge, there can be no manner of doubt, and I bespeak for him as broad a measure of sympathy on the part of his parishioners as he is assured of support on the part of his bishop.

I believe such mainly because I wish to believe it, that the scandalous trouble which exists in Ford City and which is so disdifying to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, is the result of the efforts of some local malcontents aided and abetted by a few imported agitators. If however, in this belief I am mistaken, and it should appear that any considerable portion of the parish prefers to follow rebellious leaders, then it shall be my duty to adopt such further measures as will effectively protect episcopal authority and emphatically establish Catholic principles of Church government."

Bishop Fallon's letter offered one unequivocal message to the parishioners of Our Lady of the Lake. The blockade they were upholding was illegal, and therefore they must submit before the authority of their Bishop. For Fallon, the blockade was a legal question, in which he was certainly on the side of justice. His appointment of Father Laurendeau was indisputably within his power as Bishop. Therefore, any opposition to such an exercise of authority was to be considered unlawful.

The Catholic Record, official news organ of the Diocese of
London, echoed the Bishop's point of view. The blockade was a serious challenge to the legal authority of the church.

There is not a Catholic anywhere who will not recognize that the ill-advised conduct of the Ford parishioners is subversive of the very basic principle of Catholic Church government. There is only one possible outcome. ¹``

Neither the Catholic Record nor the Bishop addressed the pastoral issue of the appointment of Laurendeau. This would become the argument of the parish dissidents.

The committee of parishioners replied to Fallon in daring fashion. Their letter revealed a bold defiance of the Bishop by recalling his controversial past. Once again, the war of words found a stage in the columns of the Evening Record:

Permit this committee Monseigneur, to intimate at the outset that we are pleased to note your reference to "a failure on the part of the congregation to submit to authority". Frankly, we had long ago almost entertained the thought that the word submission in church matters had gone out of usage in the London diocese. This disappearance strangely enough synchronizes with your advent to the See of London of any discord between diocesan and bishop that gave cause for scandal. Are we to surmise therefrom that your predecessors were not inspired with that same zeal for the spiritual welfare of the flock, entrusted to their care, as that zeal with which you are fired? or must we take the alternative thought that after all this discord is due solely to you? Since you are the new element in this diocese we are wont to hold you responsible for all our worries and vicissitudes. Without giving this circumstance importance of evidence, the question naturally obtrudes upon us. Were you not expelled from the diocese of Ottawa, bag and baggage? Try as we may we cannot come close to the belief that you were the unwilling martyr which you pictured yourself on that occasion...

...There is another side to the question of submission to authority, which we might mention to our mutual understanding and profit we hope. We have long held the idea that your respect for higher authority could
only be construed in a pickian (Pickwickian) sense...

We cannot help but notice with what promptness you responded to the decrees of the higher ecclesiastical tribunals of the mother church, which had to affirm one judgement four times in awarding an allowance to the lamented Father St.Cyr whom you deprived of a parish after he had served his Maker as pastor of the flock for twenty years, which allowance is still unpaid.

We have also marvelled at the scrupulous haste with which you complied with the repeated decision of the higher ecclesiastical courts in the actions instigated against you by Father L.A. Beaudoin of cherished memory to us, when an award of $7000 was entered against you---a claim this congregation shall expect its future pastor to collect from episcopal authority.

We are also inspired by the loftiness of the example, in your course of relentless frightfulness against Monseigneur J.Edouard Meunier, also of cherished memory to us, the sanctity of whose grave you did not hesitate to invade. "De mortuis nil nisi bonum" is still a golden principle in Ford, Ontario.

We will make but scant reference to that manifest punctiliousness on your part in the observance of the Windsor school entente, which had existed for so long as a gentlemen's agreement, that it had taken the sanctity of a solemn contract, and which you, in the manner of another exalted personage treat as a scrap of paper.

Again does it not appear to you that many of your troubles are of your own making?

We humbly submit that we have at all times endeavoured to show that submission which a bishop may expect of his flock and also to higher ecclesiastical authority of Rome, but to ask us to second the course which you have taken since your elevation to the See of London is beyond our power.

In closing may we be permitted to say that we have no quarrels and want none with our fellow citizens of whatever race or creed, and we hope that we may again be indulged in the affirmation that no collective misunderstandings among groups ever existed until your advent to the bishopric of London diocese. 15

The parishioners' response to Monsignor Fallon is
significant more for the feelings it betrayed than the content. By August 1917, many local French Canadians had come to view their Bishop as the personification of the growing threat against their cultural life. To hear him command therefore that they quickly submit to his authority thus appeared ludicrous. In effect, their argument that the Bishop himself had set an example of disobedience for them to follow was not without some merit. It was very difficult indeed for Fallon to expect his flock from Our Lady of the Lake to obey him when he himself continued to disobey the high courts of the Roman church in their order that he repay $7000 to that same parish.

While the letter did not address the legality of the church blockade, it did reveal a palpable bitterness which could no longer be suppressed. In actuality, many of the parishioners were hardly concerned with the legality of their stand. It was a gesture of objection towards the perceived tyranny of their bishop. Many parents openly believed the growing disrespect of their children found its seeds in Regulation XVII and the renunciation of French in the schools by certain English-speaking teachers.

Other parishioners, like Dr. St. Pierre, blamed Fallon for the premature death of the Reverend Beaudoin at age 55. One elderly parishioner recalls the consensus among many adults that Beaudoin died of a "broken heart" following a series of threats and public humiliation by his Bishop. The Evening Record took note of the link between Father Beaudoin's death and the language issue.
Some members of the church claim that worry over various disputes and conflicts over the teaching of French cut short the lives of Fr. Beaudoin, Fr. St. Cyr and Monsignor Meunier.

They coupled the death of Fr. St. Cyr with that of their beloved pastor, who they said "had been worried into the grave." Then they recalled the sudden end of Monsignor Meunier while on a trip to Tecumseh, and they felt convinced his end was hastened by the bilingual troubles and the attitude of the bishop.

Fr. Beaudoin was a man of simple piety and laboured hard for the comfort of his parishioners. He never spared himself. Calls were answered and attended to at all hours of the night. It was a heavy strain on his health. On top of that was the dispute with the bishop on the division of the parish and school matters."

The circulation of this reasoning had a psychological effect on some local French Canadians. The defenders of language and tradition came to be looked upon as martyrs. The threat to French-Canadian values became a more simplistic and singular element, for it came to be personified in Bishop Fallon almost exclusively.

The emotional explosiveness of the language issue could hardly be contained by arguments in favour of the Bishop's legal authority. A conciliatory gesture might have averted the pending disaster. Unfortunately, Monsignor Fallon, provoked a sensitive population by sticking to principle and standing by his appointment of Laurendeau. There could be no compromise.

On August 26, Monsignor Fallon departed for Baltimore and West Virginia to conduct a series of clerical retreats. On September 1, he sent a pastoral letter to Father Joseph Emery, Fr. Beaudoin's temporary replacement at Our Lady of the Lake Parish. Fallon had Father Emery read out its contents to the
parishioners from the pulpit on Sunday, September 2. The Bishop put forth this long-distance ultimatum:

Unless opposition to the appointment of Reverend F.X. Laurendeau as parish priest is immediately withdrawn, the priest actually on duty at the parish, Fr. Emery, will be withdrawn and the church ordered closed. 14

While tension increased between Bishop’s sympathizers and the French-Canadian majority, the blockade stood firm.

Four days earlier, on August 29, in a mass meeting held in the basement of Our Lady of the Lake Church, Dr. Damien St. Pierre made the following declaration on behalf of the parishioners:

...ce n’est pas à l’église catholique que les paroissiens de Notre Dame du Lac font la lutte... C’est contre un système néfaste qui tend à écraser les aspirations d’un peuple, à éliminer les prêtres canadiens-français, pour les remplacer par des prêtres de langue anglaise. 15

While the parishioners sought to appear loyal to the Catholic church, they claimed to fear the loss of their French Canadian priests.

The blockade surrounding the church of Ford City was quite extraordinary. Given the era in which it occurred, the summer of 1917, it was unheard of for a group of French-Canadian parishioners to revolt openly against their pastor and their Bishop. In effect, the simple act of disobedience went counter to the nature and tradition of practicing Catholics. However this was not an ordinary situation. The blockade which began on August 22, was the result of a seven-year long feud between Father Beaudoin and Monsignor Fallon. Laurendeau’s admitted
reluctance to take up his appointment reflected his sense of the lingering resentment among the parishioners.

The implications of leading such a blockade were not lost on Stanislas Janisse and Dr. Damien Saint-Pierre. Fearing reprisals for their behaviour, the French-Canadian leaders resorted to a series of code names and coded messages in their correspondence. All of the leaders were aware of the risks involved in their subversive activity. The Church could have intervened at any time to excommunicate those who had turned to excessive forms of disobedience.

The actual reasons for the persistence of the parishioners in the light of possible excommunication may never be clear. However, the emotional atmosphere which loomed over the church grounds must certainly have been a factor. Moreover, to add to the anxiety, the federal parliament was in the midst of a very divisive debate over the issue of conscription. On August 28, during the actual church blockade, the Military Service Act had received royal assent. In the height of their own local crisis, Ford City’s French Canadians were witnessing yet another crisis in the Borden government’s legislation. The animosity between local English- and French-speaking parishioners reached dangerous new levels. Worse yet, Bishop Fallon had pronounced a stand in favour of conscription.

While conscription was in no way a direct cause of the events which followed, it did nothing to enhance the situation, and most likely fuelled a growing mistrust between anglophones
and francophones. More pressing for local dissident leaders was Fallon’s threat to close the church and withdraw the vicar, Reverend Emery. Dr. Saint-Pierre, overworked and preoccupied, began to question the whole rebellion. No one knew exactly what to do if Fallon acted on his threat.  

The committee resolved to hold an open meeting in the parish hall to discuss their response to the Bishop. They informed the crowded hall of parishioners that they would consult them on any future action which would be governed by a decision of the majority. Following a show of hands, the committee determined to “fight the battle to the finish and to make the principles of justice, right and charity prevail.”  

On September 5, Reverend Gnam of Wyoming, Ontario, and former adversary of Monsignor Fallon, paid a secret visit to Ford City. He brought with him a number of documents to aid the local cause. The rebels hoped for a case outside of the domain of the diocesan tribunal to vindicate their late pastor. Gnam felt the documents he held would strengthen the rebels’ case by recalling Fallon’s controversial past.

While the dissident leaders worried about the pending legal battles, the average parishioner concerned himself with his turn at standing guard at the church. Marc Bontron, a local school board representative and leading member of the rebellion, wrote the following account of the routine activities which occurred during the blockade itself:

You could write a short story on the fact that a significant number of women pass their days on the
porch of the presbytery on guard while knitting or embroidering. At night, the men have a corps of guards in the basement of the church with a sentinel holding the outside grounds. Each time the bell rings for a baptism or other event, a mob of men arrive in their shirt sleeves, in the belief that the enemy has come. The guards are fed at the expense of the parishioners in the basement.

All suspicious looking characters who approach the church or the presbytery are considered as spies and must undergo a thorough but polite interrogation.

[Adolphe] Beausoleil is the ground leader. He is so committed to his work and absorbed by his responsibilities that he is going to lose his name. He is greatly discouraged by Fallon and finds it strange that he leaves his children [diocesans] to go take care of the people of Baltimore.

We have seen Father "Dolores" [Reverend Pierre Langlois] and he seems to be wholeheartedly with us in his silence.

As a result of this movement, and thanks to his honesty and his never ending devotion, [Joseph] de Grandpré is making himself a very enviable reputation. As we write this letter, he has fallen asleep from exhaustion in his chair next to us."

While it is significant to note the suspicion present among the parishioners, this was to be expected by a population on the alert for a move by Church officials. What is surprising to note is the important role played by the women of the parish in the guard mounted before the presbytery of the church.

This letter also illustrates the inordinate amount of time that the leaders of the blockade were forced to sacrifice for its effectiveness. Indeed, their task was not simply to organize a schedule for the shifts assigned to the various volunteers. Their role included raising funds at the mass meetings, as well as soliciting food from the families to feed the men and women who participated actively in the guard. In addition, the rebel leaders issued a series of communiqués to the press to inform the
population at large of the reasons for their audacious stance.

The Evening Record illustrated the growing disillusionment
of the French Canadians with the leadership of their Bishop. In
its weekly French language column of Wednesday, September 5, the
columnist severely criticized the See of London for its handling
of the standoff at Our Lady of the Lake:

I know of the imbroglio what I have read, and
that is enough for me to believe that the attitude
taken by my compatriots of this parish is significant
of all the great evolutions that the morgue, pride and
abuse have brought about.

Because a power exists is it necessary to exercise
it with arrogance and in an arbitrary manner,
especially in religious matters, and when this religion
is that of the humble child of Bethlehem, of he who
wanted to live in poverty and die in humiliation and
pain through love for those he sought to save?

Was it in the choice of his apostles who were
supposed to throw themselves into the crowds to sow the
faith, that Jesus Christ called the potentates of the
world to go crush the masses with the weight of their
authority in order to teach the doctrine of believe or
die?

What responsibility for those charged by God with
a great mission, who ruin the success of this mission
through the insubordination of a proud and arrogant
nature and who refuse to follow the example of the
Master.

This local columnist argued that Bishop Fallon was neglecting his
role as a pastor with his confrontational approach to his flock.

On September 6, the parish committee notified Bishop Fallon
of their intention to petition Rome on their plight. According
to local historian Michael Power, their motives were twofold.
First they sought to go beyond the Bishop’s authority and thwart
all efforts to quash the uprising on the diocesan level. They
also believed that such a tactic would prevent the Bishop from
withdrawing Father Emery and closing the church until a decision
had been rendered by the courts.\textsuperscript{58}m

It is significant to note however that the rebels received this legal counsel from the Archbishop of Quebec, Monsignor Joseph Hallé. Hallé, in a conversation with Reverend Charles Charlebois, (an ACFO official in Ottawa and old friend of Father Beaudoin with close contacts to Dr. Saint-Pierre) instructed him to forward the following letter of protest to Monsignor Fallon of London.

Nous avons l'honneur de vous avertir par les présentes, que nous portons la cause de la nomination de M. l'abbé F.X. Laurendeau comme curé de la paroisse de Notre Dame du Lac, Ford City à Rome.
C'est par le Souverain Pontife que nous allons la faire juger.\textsuperscript{77}

Hallé's discreet intervention revealed nonetheless the rift which existed between French and Irish components of the Catholic Church in Canada.

On September 6, having read the parish committee’s August 26 letter to the newspaper, Bishop Fallon demanded a complete retraction. He accused Stanislas Janisse and the other committee members of making libellous remarks against him. Fallon subsequently cabled his vicar-general Denis O'Connor from Baltimore and had him contact the firm of McKillop, Murphy and Gunn to undertake proceedings on the Ordinary's behalf.\textsuperscript{29}

On September 7, with the overall situation worsening, the rebels expected a putsch by officials to take back the church. Marc Bonfrere wrote the following récit of the events of that day:

I want to retrace for you in a few words the
situation here over the past two weeks. Our affairs are more and more complicated and it seems that the enemy, led by Caesar [Fallon] seeks to make a desperate attempt to regain the upper hand.

Fallon has sent spies to see if the parishioners’ feelings have changed.

This morning an Irish spy, by the name of Captain Manly, who protested his love for the French Canadians and his veneration for our race came to see Mr. de Grandpre to tell him that it would be wise to end the scandal.

He said that it was impossible to prevent [Laurendeau] from entering the presbytery. "What would you do, for example, if he presented himself with police officers?"

"We would do what we would have to do," answered de Grandpre, "but rest assured he will not enter".

Then speaking of the civil suit, he said it was impossible to go all the way in this affair, because of the scandal...

"Would you be ready", suggested Captain Manly, "to accept and receive Laurendeau, while waiting for the issue to be decided in Rome, if Fallon consented to abandon his civil suit?" The answer was negative.

Then he let it be understood that the visit of Laurendeau would not be delayed. In the interval, Vir [Dr. Saint-Pierre] was called to the telephone by a representative of the Detroit Journal informing him of a message emanating from London warning them of the pending visit of Laurendeau to Ford, with the intention of installing him definitively in time for the Sunday services.

The alarm was given [the bells were sounded] and in a few minutes the church grounds were well flanked. In the afternoon, the same Captain Manly came to the rectory and asked the guards if they did not want to let Laurendeau enter. The answer was the same as that given in the morning.

Some time later, after the departure of Captain Manly, [Fathers] Downey and Laurendeau arrived in their car facing the church, but, as the grounds were securely guarded, they passed only to return a few moments later before continuing their drive.

As you can see, they have not stopped in their attempts to install Fallon’s elected one against the will of the parishioners.

It is useless to tell you that the guard is solid and that it would take violence for this man to settle into the rectory.”

The “peace initiative” made by Captain Manly had the adverse
result of increasing the suspicions of the parishioners. The passing visit of Fathers Laurendeau and Downey on the Friday afternoon only confirmed the fears of the parishioners that the pastor would be installed by force. By inspecting the church grounds and yet refraining from discourse with the guards, Fathers Laurendeau and Downey only fuelled suspicions. A confrontation between the clerics and the parishioners was now inevitable. Bonrout's assertion that "it would take violence for this man to settle into the rectory" would ring true just hours later. Even the reporter covering the trouble at Our Lady of the Lake for the Evening Record foresaw the likelihood of a clash. He wrote,

"Fr. Laurendeau may visit the church on Sunday morning and some interesting developments are expected."

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   Dr. St. Pierre denied rumours that the committee's objections were based on grounds Laurendeau could not speak French. (He could speak fluently). St. Pierre declared, "This has never been stated in speeches or resolutions. Our objection to Father Laurendeau is on the ground that he is not in sympathy with the majority of the parishioners and has shown this in various ways in the past few years."
   Quoted in Evening Record, Thursday, September 6, 1917.


5. Evening Record, August 23, 1917, p.3.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.


12. "La question de Ford City", ACFEO circular, 7 pp., Ottawa 1918, CRCCF, P37/8/11-13. Probable author was Dr. Damien Saint-Pierre.


15. Evening Record, 27 August 1917.


23. Marc Bontront to Father C. Charlebois, 5 September 1917, 3pp., CRCCF, C2/201/1.

24. Marc Bontront and Dr. D. Saint-Pierre to Fr. Charles Charlebois, 5 September 1917, 3p., CRCCF, C2/201/1. Translation from the original French text.


27. Reverend Charlebois to Joseph de Grandpre, 2p., 3 September 1917, CRCCF, C2/201/1.

28. Power, p.18, see also *Evening Record*, September 7, p.7.

29. Marc Bontront to Reverend Charles Charlebois, 7 September 1917, CRCCF, C2/201/1. Translation from the French text.

Chapter Seven
The Ford City Riot

The atmosphere in Ford City was tense on the morning of Saturday September 8, 1917. At nine o’clock the relief shift came to replace the night guardsmen at Our Lady of the Lake Church. The women installed themselves on the veranda of the presbytery in their chairs and set about their knitting. The men paced the grounds, smoking their cigarettes and discussing Friday’s events. Everyone was on the alert.

At about 1:30 p.m., Dr. Saint-Pierre sped up in his car and informed those standing guard outside the church, about nine or ten people, that the police were coming to take possession of the rectory by force if necessary. At that point, the doctor’s father, Adolphus Saint-Pierre, who was perched in the belfry, began to ring the bells. Almost immediately, parishioners from all corners of Ford City gathered on the grounds."

At 2:15 p.m., four police officers arrived at the church. Upon seeing the crowd assembled however, the police turned back. At 3:00 p.m., twelve police officers returned, accompanying Father Laurendeau and Monsignor Denis O’Connor, Vicar General of the London diocese."'

The London Advertiser gave the following account of the events.

Amid a shower of bricks, stones, chairs, shovels and other missiles thrown by ‘conscientious objectors’ of Our Lady of the Lake, Ford, Reverend Father Francois Xavier Laurendeau, assisted by fourteen (sic-twelve) police officers took possession of the church presbytery late Saturday afternoon."

The Advertiser’s account of the incident is well documented, but
it lacked the front-page attention awarded by the Windsor Evening Record.

Aside from a few minor omissions, the most thorough account of the Ford City riot is found on the front page of the September 10, 1917 issue of the Evening Record. The reporter compared the riot to a war, in this colourful depiction.

Wars abroad were temporarily eclipsed Saturday by a miniature war in the Ford City Parish of Our Lady of the Lake when, acting under orders from the Attorney General, the Essex County, Walkerville, Ford City and several provincial officers hacked their way through a crowd of 3000 people and forced an entrance to the church and presbytery for the new rector, Reverend Francis Xavier Laurendieau, whom Bishop M.F. Fallon sent from London to succeed the late Father Beaudoin.

The war had all the thrills and frills on a modified scale of a real war: its flags, cheers, tears, bloodshed, heroism, devotion, sacrifice, Amazonian legions, romance and desperate resistance waged by the parishioners against the ruthless efficiency of the police authorities. Nine men were arrested but subsequently released, a score of people were injured, some seriously, and after the riot act was read by Mayor Montreuil, the military authorities were asked to take charge and the parish is now policed by an augmented squad of military police under the charge of Major Baron Osborne of London.

...The storm broke about three o'clock when Dr. Saint-Pierre, leader of the insurgent parishioners, drove up at high speed in his automobile to state that he had heard the police were coming with Father Laurendieau.

A dozen men were on guard, smoking and chatting quietly, but the ringing of the church bells in violent notes of alarm summoned the entire parish within a few minutes. The police used their billies freely in forring a path through the crowd, a phalanx surrounding Fr. Laurendieau and Fr. O'Connor, vicar-general of London diocese. Several officers also drew their revolvers but no shots were fired. The arrest of four or five men after a short swift struggle in which both police and insurgents suffered broken heads constituted the first advance for the attacking party.
William la Supernent, inside guardsman was first arrested when the police entered the church before the arrival of Fr. Laurendeau. Next in the encounter on the presbytery lawn, Charles Reneau, Jules Bruitineau, M. Bontront, and one or two others were taken prisoners. This left the presbytery verandah held by Dr. St. Pierre and an excited throng of women and children, and after an address by Father Laurendeau interrupted by shrill cries of derision, criticisms of his course when connected with a court of inquiry into the conduct of the former priest of the parish four (sic—three years) years earlier, and a refusal to accept his proffers of peace, the police desisted from a futile attempt to dislodge a huddled mass of women and children pressed about the main door in utter disregard for their own safety, [and] effected an entrance through a side door. Dr. St. Pierre continued to address the crowd from time to time and a few minutes later was handcuffed and taken to Walkerville jail; his last counsel to his forces being to attend masses on Sunday but to walk out in protest if Fr. Laurendeau officiated.

With the police in control of the church building, M. Bontront, by a rear exit rescued a French tricolor from the church basement and amid the most enthusiastic cheers unfurled it from the presbytery verandah. Dr. St. Pierre, after commenting on the tricolor as always an emblem of liberty, said it was to the British flag that on this occasion the Ford City parishioners would turn for vindication.

Languishing in the jail until about 6:30 o’clock, “the prisoners of war” sang the Marseillaise, inspiring to noisy, threatening clamor a throng of a thousand men who recongregated there after Mayor Montreuil read the riot act on the church property.

Among the casualties was Mme Leon Pnupard, 43 Maisonville Road, white-haired and 72 years old, who received a severe cut over her left temple from a police billy. With the blood flecking her white hair with crimson marks, the aged lady refused to leave the front line but remained until the battle was over. An attempt of the police to dislodge the women and children from the verandah was frustrated by the women kneeling and praying for the protection of the presbytery.

Others most seriously hurt were Provincial Detective James Smith, who suffered a severe scalp wound inflicted by a brick; Charles Reneau and Jules Bruitineau, both arrested and sustaining face and head

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cuts and bruises from police "billies"; Mlle Florence Trepanier, leg badly hurt by a brick thrown from the crowd. Twelve or fifteen others, mostly women claimed to have suffered more or less severe injuries through being hustled over chairs, down steps and over verandah railings by police.

Mme John Mousseau, forced backwards and forwards between the police and the crowd was finally thrown face downward on the presbytery steps and was severely bruised...

...Mme A. Bourdon complained that besides being crushed in the hustling by the police, an officer had threatened her unnecessarily with a revolver held to her face."

The Evening Record did not hesitate to emphasize the important role that the women of the parish played in the riot.

Emulating the example of their Russian prototypes, "The Regiment of Death", women participants in the rioting at Ford City Saturday afternoon put up the stoutest resistance of anybody. When the "show" began most of the men who had done a lot of talking and appeared to be very ferocious failed to produce the fighting goods. The arrest of the leaders and the show of revolvers took the pep out of the "first wave", but the women, "Mon Dieu", they pitched in with tigirish vim and determination.

Armed with broomsticks and clubs, one group of women numbering perhaps a dozen, guarded the rear door. A larger group occupied the verandah as a second line of defense and a third aggregation (of men and women) occupied the inside of the residence where the last stand was made.

One old lady, Mrs. Poupard was in the thick of the fighting at the presbytery and sustained rather serious injuries. Detective Sergeant William Reid of the Windsor force was attacked and had some exciting moments.

After the side door was smashed in and the women driven out they collected on the verandah and taunted the officers. There were jeers and mocking groans when Fr. O'Connor would appear outside the presbytery to confer with the police.

When Mayor Montreuil appeared with a copy of the
statutes and began reading the riot act some of the women shouted out: "En français".

They wanted him to read it in French and interrupted him several times...After four or five attempts to proceed in English the mayor stopped and addressed the women in French, explaining the nature of the law, after which he read the act in English, but scarcely anyone could hear him, although the meaning of the riot act soon became known to the greater part of those present.

This quieted the storm somewhat, but a dozen or more women collected on the front steps and began reciting prayers. One young woman with a flushed face, radiant like a Joan of Arc, intoned the chant and the others joined in with responses.

This so annoyed Fr. O'Connor that he came out and told the officers to drive them away. A Windsor policeman stepped over and rather leisurely on his unpleasant task and ordered the women to desist, but they only moved a few steps towards the sidewalk and resumed their prayers with fanatical zeal. The riot itself, despite its many turns, lasted only about fifteen to twenty minutes."

As the dust from the standoff settled the reporters counted the casualties. Among the parishioners, the police arrested nine men. Pierre Lariviere and Alfred Trudel were arrested before Laurendeau's entrance into the presbytery, on the charge of resisting the police officers. Jules Brutinet, Charles Renaud and Dr. Saint-Pierre were held on similar charges following the priest's entry of the rectory."

The arrest of Marc Bonrонт was the most peculiar charge. Before the entrance of Father Laurendeau and Monsignor O'Connor into the rectory, Bonront stood some distance from the disturbance in the crowd. The accused claimed to remain calm throughout the incident, abstaining from violence. Then,
fifteen minutes after the entry of the rectory, police apprehended Bontront and read him his rights and escorted him to the jail.10 (Three weeks later, Bontront was suspended from his position as a police constable). All of the prisoners were incarcerated for about two hours.

Several of the injured were elderly women. One case in particular involved Héloïse Rondeau, 74 years of age, who recounted her misfortune following the riot.

J'étais assise à ce moment sur la galerie en face de la porte principale d'entrée, et je fus renversée par terre et frappée à coup de bâton par un des dits policiers.11

Mme Rondeau, who was probably encouraged to testify by leaders of the riot, served the interests of their legal and media campaigns against the Bishop. Mrs. Aglaé Poupart also buttressed the case of the parishioners by offering a damaging assessment of the situation.

je n'ai jamais dans ma vie vu ou entendu parler des choses qui m'ont aussi profondément scandalisée.12

The shock of the parishioners would best be exploited by the Committee through the words of the elderly Héloïse Rondeau.

Je suis âgée de soixante-quatorze ans, et je n'ai jamais vu ni entendu parler dans ma vie de choses aussi révolventes que celles qui se sont passées dans la circonstance en question; c'est la première fois que je voyais un Curé s'emparer d'une paroisse par la violence et par le bâton des policiers.13

Church officials and police authorities felt the tension over the nomination of Laurendeau would hardly dissipate with his installation. In light of the violence which broke out, civil authorities summoned reinforced protection for the church.
...After the crowd had dispersed, the police received information that more trouble might be expected Saturday night, and Lieutenant Colonel S.C. Robinson, commanding the 21st Essex Regiment was appealed to. After long distance communication with headquarters at London, it was decided to detail 50 men to do duty in the vicinity of the church and these arrived from Windsor soon after 4 o'clock but found little to do. Major Osborne arrived this (Monday) morning and took charge of the detail."

A second squad of troops stood guard to protect Dr. Saint-Pierre's residence from any retaliatory assault by Irish Catholics. The troops remained stationed until Monday afternoon, September 10.

On Sunday morning, Fr. Laurendeau said mass for a handful of churchgoers. That evening, the other parishioners assembled by the thousands at the farm of Theodore Pratt.¹⁶ French Canadians from all parts of the county braved a cold drizzling rain and piercing wind to hear various speakers criticize and belittle the Bishop and his followers. Aside from the diatribe not unlike that of a political rally, the Committee of Parishioners also issued an official statement to the press.

On the very day of the funeral of our beloved pastor, Fr. L.A. Beaudoin, His Lordship Monseigneur M.F. Fallon selected as a successor, Fr. Laurendeau, one who had played an important role in that series of incidents which resulted in the premature death of Father L.A. Beaudoin.

Against this selection, which has been deemed not in the interest of the parish, the Congregation of Our Lady of the Lake Church has been aroused to an expression of spontaneous indignation, of which this gathering is but a respectful, but energetic manifestation.¹⁶

The Vicar-General, Denis O'Connor was just as quick in sharing his opinions of the riot. O'Connor attributed the riot
to a band of outsiders whom he openly pointed out.

I am fully satisfied that all the trouble at Ford City is due to the activities of outsiders. Every possible means to settle the matter amicably was used. The three ringleaders are Dr. Saint-Pierre, who came there two years ago from Quebec, M. de Grandpré of Windsor and formerly of Quebec, and Henry Maisonville, whose previous record is known."

It took less than 24 hours for the trio of troublemakers to respond. The following appeared in the September 11 issue of the Evening Record.

You have raised the question of origin of the three persons whom you hold responsible for all the disaffection...

Pardon us, when we say that Dr. St. Pierre was born near Cornwall, which also enjoys the distinction of being the birthplace of Monseigneur Fallon. Dr. St. Pierre has spent all his life in Ontario, with the exception of such time as he spent at study in the province of Quebec-Montreal to be exact-which is also the place where you [O'Connor] acquired your theological education. For over three years, Dr. St. Pierre has been practicing in the parish of Our Lady of the Lake.

Mr. Joseph de Grandpré came to Windsor from the district of Ottawa, and has been in the County of Essex for two years. Mr. Maisonville has, with the exception of five years, spent in Toronto, always lived within two miles of Ford City.

So we are not outsiders."

It is indeed an oversimplification to attribute the riot to a small band of outsiders who succeeded in exciting an otherwise docile population. In the rebels' eyes, they were no more outsiders than Monsignor Fallon and Monsignor O'Connor. In short, the motives for the riot can be found in the bitter feud which existed between long-time pastor Lucien Beaudoin and the Bishop of London. The appointment of Reverend Laurendeau on the very day of Beaudoin's funeral ignited an emotional powderkeg.

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For the rebels, the blame for the riot lay in the hands of ecclesiastical authorities in London. O'Connor represented the real troublemaker. Indeed, O'Connor openly admitted to the London Advertiser that he intended to use the police to install Father Laurendeau in the rectory.

Father O'Connor ... went down to Ford City on Friday, and anticipating trouble, made arrangements to meet it.

"I got in touch with Crown Attorney Rodd on Friday afternoon" he said, "and was promised all protection necessary. In his office, I met Provincial Officers Hanna and Smith. On Saturday afternoon at two o'clock, the police were to go to Ford. I met Father Laurendeau on his arrival at 2:40. It seems that there was a prearranged signal to call out the crowd. The church bell was to be rung at Ford City and as soon as we started, it rang and a great crowd collected in a short time. I had asked the police to look after the bell, but someone got into the church before they did and rang it. The first arrest followed this, the man being held on a charge of arresting [resisting] an officer." 19

O'Connor's comments revealed the important role of the police in the incidents of September 8. Some assert that it was in fact the police who set off the riot by drawing their billy clubs upon seeing that the protesting parishioners had blocked the path to the presbytery. When the people saw that the police intended to use force, the peaceful resistance degenerated into a violent manifestation.

The leading rebels, resentful of O'Connor's accusations that a small band of malcontents were responsible for all of the trouble, issued the following comments,

We note from the Windsor Record of this evening a telegraphic despatch from London wherein you do us the honour of being the ringleaders who are able to gather crowds from 1200 to 3000 by mere organizing genius and
forensic ability. We have already stated that you overwhelm us with a tribute of which we are undeserving and which modesty likewise forbids us accepting. We submit that this generosity to us is "eminently unfair" to Bishop Fallon, whose actions at Wyoming as well as at Ford have made it an easy matter to assemble crowds in protest against his erratic actions...

We also note your statement that Fr. Laurendeau’s friends fear for his life. Assuming that we have that magnetic influence over the people of Ford which you assure us that we possess, we will undertake individually and collectively to assure you that no harm whatsoever will befall Father Laurendeau other than the incidental ennuis of being left alone...

We share with you the idea that the rioting is due to outsiders. In fact upon reading your statement in the London Advertiser of Monday we note that you had been instrumental in preparing the stage for the deplorable occurrence of Saturday afternoon, which had been prearranged on Friday.

Now Monseigneur, do you not think that these elaborate plans provoked the riot?

The protesting parishioners were convinced that O’Connor’s plans to take the presbytery by using the police had caused the ensuing violence.

In assessing responsibility for the riot, one must not negate the important leadership role of such figures as Dr. St. Pierre, de Grandpré, Bontrant and Maisonneuve. (Maisonneuve, who probably resented his dismissal in 1910 from the Ministry of Public Works for publicizing the Hanna-Pyne letter, sought to excite the growing opposition to the Bishop). In addition, the relatively long duration of the blockade from August 22 to September 8 required organization and direction. These five men, along with the members of the parish’s executive committee arranged schedules, issued public statements, organized meetings,
and supplied the blockade guards with donations of food.

Although leadership was important, the organizers needed legitimate issues of popular discontent to appeal to the people. Given the past incidents relating to the schools, and the suspension and public humiliation of their priests since the advent of Fallon's episcopate, the task was not difficult. Fallon, while certainly not the sole cause of the violence, did acquire the personification of all that was anti-French. The nationalists exploited this image to its fullest.

The "trio of troublemakers" triumphed at the solid turnout at the Sunday evening assembly of September 9. They wrote of this incident,

Now, let us say in closing that the meeting of Sunday last, there gathered despite a rain at 7:30 o'clock a crowd which assumed the enormous proportions of 3000 people to protest against the forcible entry of Father Laurendeau....

...there would have been a much more formidable gathering to condemn the clubbing of women and children who were offering Monseigneur Fallon a respectful resistance...

You can club the people off church property, but you cannot club that submission to episcopal authority that is so essential in a diocese for its welfare, into the hearts of the congregation.

In the immediate aftermath of the incident at Our Lady of the Lake, the local French-Canadian population determined to overturn Laurendeau's appointment.

On the following Sunday, September 16, Fr. Laurendeau spoke out against the rebels from the pulpit. His voice, which echoed through the near empty church, accused a small clique of agitators for the trouble. Indeed, the rebels had left him in a
rather embarrassing situation. Since the riot, only a handful of parishioners were attending mass. The majority had chosen to boycott all services where the pastor officiated. This boycott continued for an entire year.

Laurendeau condemned the dissident leaders' call for the boycott. According to Dr. St. Pierre, he declared:

Prier pour la conversion des quelques agitateurs qui causent le scandale dans la paroisse. Ce sont des lâches. Ils ont peur de venir à moi. Qu'ils m'invitent et j'irai à eux.™

Learning of Laurendeau's sermon, Dr. Saint-Pierre telephoned the priest and invited him to speak to a parish assembly to be held that Sunday afternoon. Saint-Pierre added that in this manner, Laurendeau could speak directly to the parishioners instead of the empty church pews.™ After a long pause, the forlorn pastor agreed, on the condition that St. Pierre and his colleagues do all in their power to save the priest from insult.™

The three-hour ordeal took place at 3 p.m. on the farm of Theodore Pratt. Given the ideal weather on that last Sunday afternoon of the summer of 1917, attendance at the meeting approached five thousand. Dr. Saint-Pierre moved to the centre of the crude podium and invited the anxious audience to listen respectfully to the guest speaker.

Father Laurendeau, upon a brief introductory statement, argued that in all circumstances he had acted in obedience to his Bishop. This admission referred to the time when he had accepted the Bishop's invitation to serve as secretary to the Diocesan Officialty in 1914 as well as to his acquiescence to the
pastorate of Ford City in 1917. Laurendeau conceded that the Officialty had acted illegally in the case of the suspended priests, but noted that all legal proceedings came to a halt when Rome spoke out against the tribunal. This admission was met with taunts from the crowd. One parishioner cried out,

Comme ça, si Rome n’était pas intervenu, vous seriez encore à piétiner sur les Canayens (Canadiens)!”

These remarks visibly embarrassed the priest. As each minute passed, it became more evident that Laurendeau had erred in accepting Dr. Saint-Pierre’s invitation.

Laurendeau brought more trouble upon himself by inviting the crowd to question him. Almost immediately the meeting became a forum for accusations and insults. Dr. St. Pierre recounted the incident.

Au moment où Laurendeau parle du scandale disant, “Savez-vous qui est le responsable de ce scandale?” (voulant nous indiquer), la foule criait à pleins poumons, “C’est Fallon! Fallon! Fallon!”

Un autre paroissien lui demanda, “Entrerez-vous au ciel avec vos bâtons?” Un autre s’écria: “Notre Seigneur, a-t-il envoyé ses apôtres évangéliser avec des bâtons répandus de sang?” Notre homme (Laurendeau) était coulé!”

It was obvious in the words of the crowd that the key figure to blame for the riot was Bishop Fallon. Overwhelmingly outnumbered, Laurendeau was helpless before their bitter cries.

In light of the growing unrest, Dr. Saint-Pierre took up the speaker’s position. The pediatrician supported the crowd’s grievances and delivered the following address.

On crie au scandale aujourd’hui, mais on ne criait pas scandale quand [Les Réverends Pères] Meunier et
For Saint-Pierre, the scandal for the church did not rest solely on the incidents of the riot, as ecclesiastical officials asserted, but equally in the suspensions and public ridicule of four respected longtime pastors of Essex County.

The controversial doctor questioned the concern of the Bishop in the whole affair. He suggested that Monsignor Fallon had his priorities mixed up.

...s'il y a du scandale dans la paroisse, comment se fait-il que Fallon reste à Baltimore pour prêcher une retraite. S'il a tant soif d'amener des âmes au zèle etc., pourquoi ne vient-il pas voir ses 30000 ouailles qui souffrent après la justice et la paix qu'ils n'ont jamais vu depuis le commencement de son règne?

In addition to these remarks, St. Pierre criticized Laurendeau for obeying the Bishop in his acceptance to serve on a tribunal he knew to be illegally formed. The dissident doctor charged that Laurendeau was only bound to obedience in reasonable and legitimate situations. By serving as an "instrument of Fallon's systematic persecution of the French-Canadian priests", Laurendeau gave parishioners reason to fear the new pastor.

...nous avions raison de craindre qu'il [Laurendeau] continuât à en agir de même si nous lui permettions de rester Curé de Ford City.

Indeed, many townspeople feared Laurendeau would serve as a mere puppet of the Bishop in local affairs.

Fear of the implications of Laurendeau's appointment spawned
a series of petitions, signed by French Canadians across Essex and Kent Counties. Organizers held assemblies in Ford City on the 16 September, Tecumseh on the 23 September, and Stoney Point on the 30 September. The resolutions resembled those supported in Tecumseh at an open air meeting.

We, the French-speaking Catholics of the diocese of London, united in general assembly, assure the parishioners of Ford City of our complete sympathy, and protest against Reverend Laurendeau and the undignified manner in which he took possession of the church and rectory.

The aim of these mass demonstrations was simple: present a show of solidarity among the Diocese’s French Canadians in favour of Ford City’s parishioners.

At the Stoney Point assembly, the crowd supported those persons charged in connection with precipitating the riot at Our Lady of the Lake Church.

...the residents of the Counties of Essex and Kent in open meeting assembled resolves that a humble petition be sent to the Hon. J.B. Lucas, Attorney General of the Province of Ontario, requesting that he direct a free, careful, thorough and impartial inquiry be made into incidents leading to the alleged riot, that responsibility may be fixed upon the person or persons at fault.

Almost immediately after the riot, Joseph de Grandpré, Damien Saint-Pierre, Henri Maisonville, and Marc Bontront suspected a conspiracy behind the arrests.

Henri Maisonville requested an inquiry into the events which had occurred on 8 September 1917. If there had been a conspiracy to provoke the riot and bring about the arrest of certain persons targetted in advance, those involved in the conspiracy, would be
subject to terms of seven to 14 years in prison. Much of the suspicion centered in the reluctance of anyone to take responsibility for ordering a dispatch of police to the Church on the fateful day.

The Mayor, Charles Montreuil claims to have acted upon the instruction of the Crown Attorney. The Crown Attorney alleged to have received orders from the Solicitor General. However, the Attorney General Lucas denied ever issuing any such instruction. The Vicar-General Denis O'Connor declared that he insured the intervention of Crown authorities along with the municipal and provincial police, as well as the militia on the eve of the incident. Dr. Saint-Pierre alleged that Crown Attorney Rodd admitted to him that he had given the police the order to take the grounds. Ironically, Saint-Pierre pointed out, when police were notified about a tumultuous illegal assembly at the church, there was no such occurrence. The dissident added that in reality the crowd assembled only when the parishioners learned the police were coming. In similar fashion, he noted that the riot did not occur until after the police arrived on the church grounds with Father Laurendeau. While church officials did not necessarily advocate the use of violence in securing the presbytery, the police, in the midst of the frenzied atmosphere, chose to take out there billy clubs for protection. This precipitated into a riot.

On September 22, the Catholic Record ran a full length article on its front page making known its disapproval of the
conduct of Ford City's Catholics. The newspaper specifically lamented the disrespectful nature of a series of letters written by the Parish Committee to Bishop Fallon.

If they had occasion to rebuke publicly a sexton or a janitor, they could not have spoken more contemptuously to him than the way they spoke to their Bishop. The situation is intolerable; and no one who knows the first principles of the Catholic religion can justify it.

The Record also criticized the attitude of several French language newspapers, in their accounts of the situation in Ford City. These reports were deemed as sympathetic to rebellion against authority. The Catholic Record forecast a certain schism if such attitudes prevailed.

The illegality of the parishioners' actions were highlighted in this journal's weekly edition.

The fundamental error of the Ford City parishioners is that their stand amounts to a claim to change the Constitution of the Catholic Church. That has been tried many times on a larger scale now; and on a bigger battlefield than Ford City. The issue is not between Ford City Parish and Bishop Fallon; it is not alleged that he is not the Bishop of London; it is not alleged that the Bishop of London has full power from the Holy See of Rome, to fill the parishes of the diocese of London as to him seems best; not as seems best to the parishioners who have nothing whatsoever to say in the matter. It is not disputed that the man he sent there is a Catholic priest. There is therefore no question between Bishop Fallon and the parishioners of Ford City. They defy him; that is all; and that raises a question between them and the Church. They claim the right to veto the Bishop's appointment. They must recede from that position or go out of the Church. They know that too; they do not question it. The least informed amongst them knows that there is no other alternative; unless the Bishop yields. And they must know in their hearts that the Bishop cannot yield. If he did yield to defiance and to force; if he did surrender his right of appointment to the veto of a parish meeting, what then? Can men consider themselves
Catholics at heart and tolerate the thought of a Catholic Bishop down in the dust before a parish meeting and in a matter where he has indisputably acted within his authority?

If the French Canadians of Ford City care as much for their school cause as they say they do— they had better not incur the risk of associating it with rebellion and schism. If they are as much in earnest about the interests of the Catholic religion as they profess to be, they had better pause and consider how it would affect the interests of religion if they could put a Catholic Bishop on his back in the dust at the feet of a parish meeting.

We address these remarks not only to the Catholics of Ford City, but to all French-Canadians... It is a time for plain speaking. Why do not our French friends speak up?

The Catholic Record illustrated that the riot and blockade were illegal responses to ecclesiastical authority. Monsignor Fallon, pushed into a corner by the parishioners was forced to act or risk seeing his authority compromised.

While the parishioners may have had their grievances against the Bishop, their aggressive actions forced him to deal with a very difficult situation. The rebels' use of force in the seizure of the church and organization of the blockade warranted a response from the Bishop. For Church officials in London, the issue of the Bishop's authority was being challenged in revolutionary fashion. Monsignor Fallon felt he had little option other than to restore order.

Once the initial storm over the riot had settled, leaders of the boycott in Ford City decided to organize a petition against the Bishop to be sent directly to the Pope. Officials in Ottawa warned Bontront, Saint-Pierre, and de Grandpré of the
seriousness of their plans.

Ne passez pas votre discours à aucun représentant de journal... A la suite de ce discours, vous pourriez peut-être faire présenter la résolution contre Monseigneur Fallon. Faites-la présenter, proposer et seconder par les maires et les vieux des environs de Pointe-aux-roches.  

These resolutions were presented at the mass meeting of Pointe-aux-roches (Stoney Point) on September 30.

On the day of the meeting in Stoney Point, the leaders of the manifestation faced a crowd of 6000, in spite of the wind and rain. Joseph de Grandpré delivered the opening address, outlining the reasons behind the protest. Speaking in English he stated:

As you know we are in the midst of a revolution in church matters, which does not mean we are revolutionaries, nor rebels, nor even malcontents as some have called us. I would say that we are simply constructive critics. It is high time that constructive criticism were advanced in the London diocese that we may drive out the abuse, the sham and the hypocrisy that have been fostered since the advent of Bishop Fallon... we have taken the only course left open... proving to Rome we no longer have any confidence in that Bishop... how painful it is to wage open warfare upon a bishop, nevertheless, it is the only course left to us. He has thrown down the gage of battle and his challenge has been accepted. We are firmly convinced that we are fighting for a just cause and our sole aim is the restoration of peace within the diocese.

One of the chief grievances to which we hold is that systematic hectoring of certain priests which Bishop Fallon adopted in his early days of his career and which has resulted in the premature deaths of Father Ladouceur, Monseigneur Meunier, Father Saint-Cyr, and Father Beaudoin. Each of these four were subjected to humiliation and abuse which even the stoutest hearts could hardly bear...

Of Father Beaudoin, let it suffice to say that he incurred the ill will of Bishop Fallon. Father Beaudoin appealed to Rome for redress. On each
occasion he triumphed. Here comes the grievance which the people hold against Fr. Laurendeau, who is a French Canadian like ourselves. Fr. Laurendeau was secretary of an ecclesiastical court which Bishop Fallon, contrary to practice in both ecclesiastical and civil courts, organized to try Father Beaudoin. Fr. Beaudoin refused to appear. He served notice upon the court and upon the Bishop that it was sitting irregularly, since the very matters with which it was called to deal were actually under consideration by a Roman church tribunal. Bishop Fallon, understand this well, was not only the plaintiff, but also the prosecutor and the court itself you might say. Rome interposed an injunction against the court's proceeding further, and then and then only, did the Bishop, did Father Laurendeau, deem it the part of wisdom, deem it the part of justice to desist. For this reason, the people of Ford want none of Father Laurendeau."

Mr. de Grandpré's speech then shifted from the issue of Laurendeau to one of strict legal consequence.

In the eyes of this lawyer, the incident at Our Lady of the Lake Church was the direct result of a conspiracy. De Grandpré suggested that church officials prearranged the arrest of Dr. Saint-Pierre and Marc Bonront. He argued:

We have charged in the press that there was a prearranged plot—hatched the day before to encompass the arrest of Dr. Saint-Pierre, Marc Bonront and myself... and perhaps others. In this connection, two of the three were actually arrested. As to myself, I was marked for arrest at noon, for participating in a riot which did not occur until 3:00, notwithstanding the fact that I was not there until after 5:00.

Immediately thereafter I made a formal demand on the government for a free and impartial public inquiry. I charged that certain persons were guilty of practicing "the gentle art of conspiracy...I believe we are going to have that inquiry because the honour of the Crown is involved. Mr. Rodd [the Crown Attorney] was given a copy of the charges I made against him as early as September 11."

One could hardly doubt the impact of de Grandpré's allegations. As far as the dissident leaders were concerned, the arrests
effected on the afternoon of September 8 were the result of a prearranged plot. The veracity of such claims would never be fully investigated.

While parishioners attempted to incite civil action against the Bishop they also considered an ecclesiastical solution. Dr. Saint-Pierre and his colleagues informed Rome of local discontent with the situation at Our Lady of the Lake Church. In a petition to the Pope, the parishioners outlined the following grievances.

La nomination de sa Grandeur Monseigneur M.F. Fallon au siège de London a marqué le commencement de l’ère des dissensions qui ont créé un malaise profond dans le diocèse et dans la province; sous le couvert de protestations sympathiques en faveur des Canadiens-français, Sa Grandeur a inauguré une campagne contre leur langue et leur clergé...

Les prêtres de langue française qui ont voulu défendre les droits naturels qu’ont les parents de faire enseigner leur langue dans les écoles qu’ils soutiennent de leurs deniers...ont été l’objet depuis sept ans d’injustes vexations...

Le jour même ou notre vénéré pasteur, l’abbé L.A. Beaudoin, recevait sa sépulture, Sa Grandeur nommait pour le remplacer, un prêtre qui est notoirement connu dans le diocèse comme un des plus fervents disciples de l’évêque dans son œuvre contre les catholiques de langue française.

Contre cette nomination, qui était jugée injurieuse à la paroisse, la congrégation s’est soulevée dans un mouvement spontané d’indignation.

La congrégation de Notre Dame du Lac de Ford City en appelle de cette nomination au tribunal de Votre Sainteté.3

The petition of the parishioners coupled with an appeal to Rome to decide the case ended the first month of the standoff with the Bishop. Over the next few months, the assemblies ceased as the cold weather descended on the region. Public
manifestations had peaked with the Tecumseh meeting which attracted an estimated 10,000 people. Now, as the initial fervour of the parishioners and community at large subsided, new problems arose. The wait for a ruling from Rome on Laurendeau’s appointment as parish priest would take months. Dissident leaders would have to keep the parish in a fever pitch or risk seeing the boycott of Our Lady of the Lake Parish collapse.

Dr. Saint-Pierre remained optimistic about the prospects of maintaining the blockade throughout the cold of winter. He did concede however that some defections were already occurring.

"Le mouvement de blocus ou de vide autour de l’abbé Laurendeau se tient encore très bien... un très grand nombre de familles n’iront pas à l’Église, même si la résistance devait durer tout l’hiver. Quant aux définitions, je crois qu’elles ne seraient pas nombreuses. En effet, nous avons préparé nos gens à la dernière assemblée à s’attendre à ce que le cas ne soit pas réglé avant plusieurs semaines voire même plusieurs mois."

While dissident leaders prepared their followers for the long winter wait for Rome’s decision, there were some things for which they themselves were not prepared.

Most parishioners opted to go to mass in Walkerville and Windsor throughout the winter months. Some families even ventured as far as St. Joachim Parish in Detroit via the river ferry." Nevertheless, Reverend Laurendeau continued to say mass in the near empty church of Our Lady of the Lake.

The winter of 1917-1918 proved to be a difficult test for the French-Canadian nationalists of Ford City. The days of Beaudoin’s strong leadership had ended. Dr. Saint-Pierre’s
relatively brief residence in the parish hardly gave him the stature and respect that Beaudoin had earned over twenty-five years as pastor. The ability of the nationalists to lead the congregation had diminished considerably. Moreover, Fallon's public refusal to withdraw Laurendeau only discouraged the parishioners. The people grew impatient waiting for Rome's decision. The leaders themselves began to show signs of growing concern and fatigue. The blockade was doomed to fail.


6. Also quoted by Heloise Rondeau, in testimony, 10 Oct. 1917, before J. deGrandpré.


11. Sworn testimony, Héloïse Rondeau, 10 October 1917, Ford City, before J. de Grandpré, CRCCF.

12. Sworn testimony, Aglae Poupart and Rose Mousseau, before J. de Grandpré, Notary Public, 10 October 1917, Ford City, CRCCF.


22. Dr. Saint-Pierre to Albert Foisy, editor of *Le Droit* 16 September, 1917, CRCCF, C2/201/1.

23. Marc Bontront and Dr. Saint-Pierre to Albert Foisy (of *Le Droit*), 16 September 1917, CRCCF, C2/201/1; published in *Le Droit*, 18 September 1917.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Petition, F. Desmarais, F. Jacques proposed, supported by Severin Ducharme and T. Belanger, 23 September, 1917, at Tecumseh, CRCCF, C2/201/1, in both English and French versions.

33. Ibid.

34. M. Bontront, Dr. St. Pierre to A. Foisy, 16 September 1917, CRCCF, C2/201/1; see also *Le Droit*, 18 September 1917, p.8.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.


38. Ibid.

39. Letter, Reverend Charlebois (Elieude) to Dr. Saint-Pierre (Vir) undated correspondence, c. September 24-28, 1917, CRCCF, C2/201/1. Charlebois counselled Saint-Pierre and the rebels throughout the Church blockade and later boycott. Information concerning Fallon's civil suit against the parishioners was transmitted to
Ottawa, and advice was subsequently given to Ford's rebels:

Que Saint-Pierre et de Grandpré nous avertissent avant de sommer les témoins, si Fallon continue ses poursuites pour libelle au civil. C'est important...Envoyez nous copie de tout ce que vous recevrez concernant cette poursuite, pour que nous puissions vous aider dans votre défense.

40. Speech delivered by Joseph D. de Grandpré at Stoney Point Ontario, September 30, 1917, CRCCF, C2/201/1, original text in English.

41. Ibid. It is possible that the text was read in English as well as in French for media purposes. CRCCF, C2/201/1.


The leading dissidents had their attorney draw up this statement.

It is asserted that the Bishop and Vicar-General of the diocese and the local Crown Attorney, Mr. Rodd, influenced to some extent by political motives, decided to deal harshly with the French parishioners, and more especially to cause the arrest of certain individuals, including Dr. St. Pierre, who were considered to be the leaders of the demonstration.


43. Petition, Our Lady of the Lake Parishioners to Pope Benedict XV, c. September-October, 1917, 1p., CRCCF, C2/201/2.

44. Dr. St. Pierre to Rev. Charlebois, November 18, 1917, CRCCF, C2/201/2.

Chapter Eight
The Armistice

With the controversy over the Ford City riot still fresh in the minds of Catholic officials in Rome, Bishop Fallon sought a way in which to exonerate himself. The publicity of the media campaign waged by the French Canadians in the newspapers had portrayed him in an embarrassing light. To counter the negative press, Fallon felt it necessary to call an ecclesiastical conference in London immediately. On October 25, the priests of the diocese assembled. For a small band of francophone pastors, another confrontation awaited them. Reverend Alfred David Emery of Paincourt, one of the signatories of the 1913 Beaudoin petition, recorded the events of that tumultuous meeting.

On October 25, we had the most destructive ecclesiastical conference I have ever known. Monsignor Fallon, seeking to justify himself before the eyes of the public, and of Rome, had prepared resolutions condemning the trouble in Ford City, trouble we all deplore...

Monsignor Fallon announced to us that he had nothing to do with this subject and that we were "perfectly free" to sign or not and that he would absent himself from the conference to leave us free to discuss the causes of all this trouble and the decisions to be taken. Since this comedy was prepared in advance, one of the most anglicizing priests, Reverend Forster of Ridgetown, proposed that Monsignor remain present. We took a vote and the majority requested that Monsignor remain present.

The resolutions were read... since many of the priests were not signing, Monsignor Fallon stood up and showing us his closed fist he told us in an enraged voice that could be heard at a distance: "Remember that you are with your Bishop or against your Bishop, that you are with the Church or against the Church."

This was just another sign that we were "perfectly free" to vote yes or no... several priests signed,
their spirit dead, rather than face his vindictive anger...

Four priests did not sign for reasons known to them alone. Once again, Monsignor Fallon stood, more enraged than ever, saying: "Those who have signed the resolutions, God will bless them, but those who have not signed them, God will punish them."

Seeing that all had not worked as expected, Father Forster of Ridgetown requested that a second resolution be passed, seconded by Brady of Wallaceburg, in which all the signatories commit to condemning... the four priests who had not signed the resolutions, and that this resolution be published in the press.

Father Cote of Sandwich requested the withdrawal of this motion, and after discussion, the Bishop said perhaps it would be better not to publish it; however, the next day, the newspapers announced this incident with bitter irony. ¹

Emery argued that signing the resolution would only encourage the Bishop to continue "mistreating" his pastors. As well, he opposed Fallon's efforts to undermine the bilingual schools and the suspensions of Fathers Loiselle and L'Heureux.² Emery also resented his own appearance before the Diocesan Tribunal, and his subsequent humiliation by Monsignor Fallon before his own parishioners.

En conscience je ne puis pas approuver Mgr Fallon de m'avoir forcé à comparaître devant son tribunal et de m'y avoir insulté injustement. Jamais je ne l'apprôverai d'être venu me traiter de menteur public dans mon église, en présence des enfants de confirmation et des paroissiens lors de sa visite de confirmation de 1915.³

While Emery found it impossible to support the Fallon resolution, forty-four diocesan priests did sign. This was the third time that the Bishop had had to seek out the support of his clergy to repair his tattered image before the eyes of Rome. As
retribution for their refusal to sign the declaration, the four French-Canadian priests were publicly criticized in the press.4

Dr. Saint-Pierre offered this assessment of the diocesan resolution.

le certificat de confiance de la part de son clergé ne peut pas effacer les basses intrigues de Monseigneur Fallon auprès du gouvernement et auprès des pires ennemis de l'Église; ce certificat ne peut pas couvrir les sentiments qui se manifestent de la part des fidèles qui préfèrent laisser la voiture de l'Évêque en panne dans une ornière de chemin, que de lui aider à sortir de ce mauvais pas ou encore, qui s'informent si ce serait pâché de le jeter dans la rivière pour se débarrasser à tout jamais d'un persécuteur aussi sordide et tyrannique que lui.5

Saint-Pierre's comments are enlightening for they recall two incidents where local French Canadians revealed their contempt for the Bishop.

The milder of the two incidents referred to by Saint-Pierre concerned the 1914 manifestation in River Canard (Loiselleville). This demonstration against Monsignor Fallon's decision to suspend the parish priest Father Loiselle, prompted the Bishop to reconsider and subsequently reinstate the dissenting cleric to his priestly functions. The morning after the confrontation, in the midst of a pouring rain, the Bishop's automobile, carrying him from River Canard to McGregor, went out of control and slid into a ditch. The chauffeur sought the help of the nearest farmer, Mr. Bissonnette to help free the automobile. Thinking to impress the farmer, he declared "C'est la voiture de Mgr Fallon.6" At the mention of Fallon's name, the farmer's charitable mood suddenly changed. He snapped,
La voiture de Fallon est dans la boue?
Qu'elle reste dans la boue! C'est tout ce que mérite
son maître pour la misère faite à nos curés canadiens-
français...?

According to local French-Canadian legend, the Bishop’s
automobile still lies in a ditch somewhere between River Canard
and McGregor.

The second incident mentioned in Saint-Pierre’s letter had
far greater implications. In the winter of 1915 or 1916, local
French Canadians considered dealing with the Bishop once and for
all. According to Gaston Saint-Pierre, the son of the infamous
riot leader, local figures prearranged an automobile accident
involving the Bishop. The plan included a man who volunteered to
chauffeur the Bishop to River Canard. During the shuttle the
driver was to veer into the icy river on a suicide mission to
kill Monsignor Fallon. Alas for the leaders of the plot, the
chauffeur lost his nerve and scuttled the plan.\(^7\)

Although not nearly as sinister, the Ford City parishioners’
strategy in their war against the Bishop ran into difficulties
as well. On January 11, 1918, a provincial inquiry investigating
the events leading up to and including the riot delivered its
findings. The secretary to the Attorney General of Ontario put
an end to the hopes of a formal investigation by the province.

Referring to your letter of the 3d instant and
earlier petitions and requests for enquiry into certain
disturbances at Ford on September 23\(^{sic-8}\) last, I am
instructed by the Attorney General to say that J.W.
Mallon, Inspector of Legal Offices duly made an
investigation of all the circumstances leading to the
above disturbances, and advises that there does not
appear to have been any conspiracy or wrong conduct on
the part of the Crown Officials concerned...he does not
think any good purpose could be served by a formal investigation."

Although there was fear of what decision might come from Rome, rebel leaders had hoped a civil suit would place them on an equal footing with the Bishop. Now any hope of receiving reparations for damages seemed unrealistic.

Just two days after learning that their conspiracy hypothesis would not receive an investigation from the provincial authorities, more discouraging news arrived. Monsignor Stagni, Rome's Apostolic Delegate to Canada, turned down their request to sue Monsignor Fallon in civil court.

...il est de mon devoir de vous rappeler à vous catholiques, que les causes du clergé sont réservées à l'autorité ecclésiastique, et que celles des évêques surtout sont du ressort exclusif du Saint-Siège de façon qu'il convient à tout catholique de s'abstenir autant que possible de poursuivre devant les tribunaux civils un membre du clergé.10

In response to Stagni's letter, Saint-Pierre and de Grandpre questioned the double standard in effect. They stated

quand il s'agit d'obtenir réparation pour les torts causés par des évêques ou des prêtres à la personne, nous croyons que les tribunaux sont en ce cas absolument impuissants à accorder justice pleine et entière.

Par contre, Mgr Fallon lui-même vient justement d'intenter contre quelques-uns d'entre nous des procédures injustes et vexatoires devant les Cours civiles, et nous comprendrions difficilement pourquoi nous n'aurions pas le droit d'avoir recours nous aussi aux mêmes procédés.11

The parishioners questioned the Bishop's right to pursue them for damages in civil court when they did not enjoy the same privilege.

Monsignor Stagni offered the following response to their
letter of complaint.

En réponse, il est mon devoir de vous dire que je n'ai pas le pouvoir de vous accorder l'autorisation pour intenter des poursuites contre Sa Grandeur, l'évêque de London devant les tribunaux, pouvoir réservé d'une manière toute spéciale au Saint-Siège. 

Stagni's remarks completely discouraged the dissidents for they were already too aware of the slow process of decision-making in the Church courts. The Ford City parishioners would not tolerate the prospects of beginning yet another lawsuit against the bishop when the first had yet to be decided.

On yet another battleground, the rebels were also facing losses. The effectiveness of the boycott was losing its vigour with every passing week. The neutrality of some parishioners had a demoralizing effect on others, including the leading dissenters.

...il est important plus que jamais pour nous de continuer la lutte avec encore plus d'ardeur que jamais, et commencent à nous "achaler" de nouveau tous les jours pour du nouveau, et que l'assistance [à l'église] d'aujourd'hui était encore plus nombreuse que les dimanches précédents à Ford, il faudra tenir une assemblée immédiatement après le premier de l'an.

Even a simple assembly to rally support for the boycotting parishioners failed to attract interest. By mid-January 1918, rebel leaders began to express a growing concern over the number of boycotters who were returning to Our Lady of the Lake.

Il faisait très beau aujourd'hui, moins froid que la semaine dernière, et cependant on m'affirme de source certaine qu'à la grande messe il y avait plus de monde que d'ordinaire. Il n'y a pas de doute que la patience de certains de nos canadiens (Canadiens) s'épuise déjà.

Assurément, il nous faudrait des nouvelles de Rome aussitôt que possible pour rassurer ces pauvres gens
Dr. Saint-Pierre attributed these defections to two factors: the length of the wait for a decision from Rome, and the absence of a local nationalist French language newspaper.¹⁰

Fear of the potential consequences of boycotting mass at their parish assured that there was always a small band of loyal or at least pliable worshippers at Father Laurendeau’s services. The apathy of some and growing suspicion among others that the boycott would effect little change also contributed to the swelling number of "turncoats".

One might also trace the decline of the boycott to the fact that the area’s francophone community lacked a unifying voice. Although the English language daily newspaper of Windsor had a French column once a week, it hardly reflected the ideas espoused by Dr. Saint-Pierre and his colleagues. Leading parishioners from Ford, Tecumseh and Windsor recognized the essential role a newspaper could play. Indeed, talk of reviving *Le Clairon* had been one of the principal issues of discussion in the January 1917 Congress of the Saint-Jean Baptiste Society in Windsor. With nationalist sentiment at a fever pitch following the Ford City riot, the atmosphere was ideal for the christening of a new francophone weekly.

In November 1917, a number of prominent professionals, most notably Dr. Saint-Pierre, Joseph de Grandpré and Dr. Gustave Lacasse of Tecumseh (future Senator and brother-in-law of Dr.
Saint-Pierre) met to launch the enterprise. From the very start however, there were problems. None of the three men in question had any journalistic experience. Consequently they requested and received assistance from their colleagues at Le Droit in Ottawa.

During that same month, the founders of the newspaper sought to give the journal a fitting name. All agreed that Le Clairon would only recall the bitter failure of the earlier enterprise. Since the new journal would set out to defend the rights of the local francophone community, the triumvirate settled for the name La Défense.

In its first issue, La Défense gave an emotional outline of the role it intended to play in the francophone community. Assessing both the national issue of conscription and the local religious and educational struggle, it wrote:

La période actuelle est une des plus graves que le Canada ait à traverser depuis la Conquête. Le pays est menacé dans son existence nationale. Jamais la haine et les préjugés à l'endroit des minorités ne sont manifestés avec autant de violence. Pour nous, Canadiens-français de Kent et d'Essex, isolés comme nous le sommes en milieu de gens qui, trompés par des journaux préjugés, ne comprennent guère pour la plupart, nos aspirations et notre mentalité, nous avons besoin de nous unir, de nous sentir un peu les coudes, pour résister à cette tourmente de fanatisme surchauffé et bien souvent irraisonné contre l'élément catholique et français. 

In this article, La Défense declared its intention to defend the local community from the perceived onslaught of anti-French, anti-Catholic forces.

Throughout its two-year run, La Défense illustrated a nationalist approach never again rivalled by other local
newspapers. Its language was highly emotional and focused primarily on two issues: education and religion.

Perhaps one of the most interesting articles to appear in La Défense was an editorial concerning the boycott by the parishioners of Our Lady of the Lake Church, Ford City. This editorial, reminded the people of the reasons for the trouble and the resistance manifested against Father Laurendeau.

...M. Laurendeau est bien installé à Ford contre le désir ardent de tous les paroissiens, ou au moins de la grande majorité...

La majorité de la paroisse comprend qu’il est très important de faire le vide autour de l’abbé Laurendeau qui est entré dans le presbytère en se servant de la force brutale et en ne se faisant pas de scrupule de marcher dans le sang des paroissiens.

Ces mêmes paroissiens ont encore présent à la mémoire les persécutions et les ennuis de toutes sortes qu’eût à subir durant les sept dernières années feu l’abbé Beaudoin, leur père. Ils se rappellent également que l’abbé Laurendeau a servi d’instrument servile aux mains de son supérieure pour sommer ses confrères de langue française dans la sacerdoce devant l’Officialité diocésaine. Il est certain que M. Laurendeau ne pourrait jamais gagné la confiance, et l’amour de ses paroissiens.17

Two weeks after the publication of these remarks, the parish committee sought to clarify the situation involving the riot at Ford City. Discounting the Catholic Record’s claims that the riot was a simple protest against their new pastor they issued the following position to La Défense.

Ce n’est pas, comme on a tenté de le faire croire, contre un homme que les gens de Ford se sont soulevés, mais contre un système, un plan savamment combiné d’anglicisation à outrance.

Les paroissiens de Ford City ont eu connaissance de la détermination bien arrêtée chez Mgr Fallon des
mai 1910, quelques jours après son sacré, "de faire disparaître jusqu'aux traces mêmes de l'enseignement bilingue dans son diocèse." Ils ont constaté et souffert ensuite d'une manière particulière la mise à exécution de cet engagement par le règlement 17, si fortement approuvé par Mgr l'Evêque de London dans sa lettre à M. Kaine.

Ils ont vu ensuite une division malheureuse se faire dans le clergé du diocèse deux camps se former: celui qui voulait conserver la langue française aux Canadiens-français, et ceux qui voulaient la leur enlever.

Exaspérés par tant d'injustice et de persécutions, et voyant leurs craintes se réaliser, les paroissiens de Ford City, n’y purent plus tenir, et organisèrent la résistance. Ils refusèrent de donner leur confiance à un homme [Laurendeau] qui avait été l'instrument docile entre les mains du chef du système de persécution contre les prêtres canadiens-français, et en particulier contre leur curé, le cher Père Beaudoin. Ils ne voulaient pas que la victime fut remplacée dans leur coeur par un des instruments serviles du système d’anglicisation...

l’indignation [de la paroisse] fut poussée à son paroxysme quand ils virent un prêtre du camp opposé, le jour même des funérailles du Père Beaudoin- s'asseyer dans le fauteuil de ce bon père, en disant avec une satisfaction mal déguisée- de manière à être entendu à ceux qui l’accompagnaient: "Nous sommes maintenant chez nous ici."

Telles sont les causes de l'incident de Ford City. En les lisant, on verra facilement où sont les vrais coupables, il deviendra facile de distribuer les responsabilités et de comprendre que les Canadiens-français résistent non à l'autorité, non à l'Eglise mais à un système opposé à l'esprit de l'Eglise qu'aux directions des Souverains Pontifes."

The parishioners argued that a series of troubles had led to the shameful incident of September 8, 1917. In recalling Fallon's efforts to abolish the bilingual school system, his verbal support for Regulation XVII, his reprimand of various francophone priests and his pastorally insensitive choice of Beaudoin's
successor, the parishioners concluded that the Bishop was to blame for the explosion of hostilities.

In the Spring of 1918, another dilemma confronted the parishioners of Our Lady of the Lake. Reverend Jean Durand, a renegade priest from a schismatic Catholic sect rented a hall on Drouillard Road in Ford City. On May 5, he celebrated his first mass attracting a handful of French-Canadian parishioners who were still boycotting Our Lady of the Lake.

Durand's appearance on the scene was very disturbing for the rebel leaders. The priest in question had defied the authority of the Bishop of Chicago. Worse yet, he swore his allegiance to the Bishop of Utrecht, Holland, who had broken ranks with the Pope. Dr. Saint-Pierre and his colleagues feared any association of the parishioners with this priest would do their cause irreparable damage. With the help of the women of the parish, Saint-Pierre conducted a door-to-door campaign to warn the congregation of the dangers that this priest was posing.

This campaign revealed some rather disconcerting news. At each house the answer was the same: "Puisque le Pape ne veut pas nous enlever Laurendeau, c'est parce qu'il ne s'occupe pas de nous et par conséquent il est bien indifférent à ce que nous pourrions faire en matière religieuse." The comments of the parishioners betrayed a sense of frustration with the wait for a decision from Rome.

Other problems hampered the boycott. Confusion reigned over whether the parishioners had to fulfill their religious
obligations of Holy Week and Easter at their proper church. The end result struck a severe blow to the morale of the boycotters. On a brief visit to Windsor, Alex Grenon offered this pessimistic assessment of the Ford City situation.

Les choses ne vont pas très bien à Ford. Un bon nombre de personnes retournent à l'église. Le jour de Pâques on nous dit que l'Eglise est remplie et que c'était la même chose à l'office du vendredi saint. Mon Dieu que c'est donc difficile de faire entendre raison à nos canadiens. Ils se disent lassés d'attendre, que nous n'obtiendrons rien, malgré tout ce qu'on peut leur dire... Ces défections découragent les chefs.232

The growing attendance at Our Lady of the Lake illustrated the increasing disillusionment of the average parishioner with the cause espoused by the leaders of the boycott.

One might attribute part of the return of the parishioners to Father Laurendeau. His gentle approach, following the initial confrontation, served slowly to dispel the fears of the parishioners. Contrary to the claims of some, he provided a short sermon in both French and English at all masses. By visiting the parish schools on a regular basis, he won over the love of the children. Only time and patience would lead to his reconciliation with the majority of adult parishioners.233

For those adults who could not bring themselves to receive the sacraments from Laurendeau, Reverend Father Joseph Emery, the assistant, filled a necessary ministry. The boycotters turned to Emery in the event of a funeral or a pre-scheduled wedding ceremony. Nevertheless, the leaders of the boycott began to suspect the junior priest of lobbying support for the new pastor
of Ford City. In spite of this, as long as Emery remained, the dissenters had the opportunity to attend the occasional mass at their own church.

In June 1918, Monsignor Fallon brought an end to this convenient arrangement. The bishop promoted Emery to head the parish in Grande Pointe in Kent County. Fallon chose not to fill the vacancy created at Ford by Emery's departure. This decision left Fr. Laurendeau alone to minister to his congregation and removed the opportunity to receive the sacraments from another parish priest. This incident signalled yet another setback for the boycott.

On Sunday June 16, 1918, a number of Ford parishioners opted to go to a Syrian Rite mass held in the basement of Immaculate Conception Church in Windsor. Many Ford Catholics had been worshipping there since Laurendeau's appointment as pastor. On this Sunday however, there would be problems.

Just prior to the mass, the new pastor, Fr. Robert, entered the basement and ordered all French Canadians present to leave the premises. The Syrian mass, conducted by Fr. Armaly, would not begin until their departure. The people refused to move, and one (Dr. Saint-Pierre) argued that they had the right to attend mass where they pleased.

Realizing that his orders were not producing the desired effect, Fr. Robert summoned the police. The officers ordered the French Canadians to leave or face arrest for trespassing. Following the boycotters' expulsion, the officers guarded the
church doors to prevent their reentry. The implications of this incident were heavy. From this point onwards, those who boycotted Our Lady of the Lake would not be welcomed at neighbouring churches. While many parishioners opted to return to their church and accept the sacraments from Laurendeau, a substantial number continued to slip into the other parishes when possible. A third faction chose to stop attending mass altogether rather than receive the sacraments from Laurendeau. On June 7, 1918, the Consistorial Congregation in Rome issued the following decision concerning the Ford City boycott. The Congregation gave Monsignor Fallon the responsibility for delivering the news to the parishioners in question. After some reflection, the bishop had the decree read on Sunday, October 13 in all the Roman Catholic churches of the border cities:

In view of the fact that several petitions have been sent before the Apostolic See for the purpose of having Francois Xavier Laurendeau, priest, removed from the parish of Ford City, and that various motives were alleged to bring about such removal, their eminences, the fathers of the Sacred Congregation, by order of our Holy Father, having in full assembly examined the case and maturely weighed everything, decided and decreed that no account could be taken of the aforesaid petitions, and that Father Laurendeau, priest, must be retained in charge of the parish. The Roman court ordered the parishioners to cease all opposition to Reverend Laurendeau and to offer him obedience. Perhaps the most intimidating portion of the decree related to the authority granted to the Bishop to enforce Rome's decision:
It will be the duty of the Right Reverend Bishop of London to make these things known officially to the faithful of the parish of Ford City and authorization is granted him to repress those who resist according to the tenor of the sacred canons.\textsuperscript{227}

In short, the parishioners had to consider Rome’s decision binding or face reprisals from the Bishop.

Monsignor Fallon issued a statement to the Catholics of the Border Cities on the decision and had it distributed in circulars to all parishioners following the Sunday services of October 23. Fallon wrote:

In fulfillment of the duty therein imposed upon me, I thereby communicate to you a decree of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation.

For the moment, I refrain from comment on it. Its terms are clear, precise and definite. They call for prompt acceptance and entire obedience from those "who wish to act as becomes Catholics and who fear the just judgements of God and of the Church." I have the fullest confidence that those among you to whom the decree may apply will observe its directions to the full, both in the letter and in the spirit.\textsuperscript{228}

As a direct consequence of the decree, the parishioners were obliged to comply with the Bishop’s appointment of Launendoeu and return to the parish or face likely excommunication.\textsuperscript{229}

Local francophone reaction to the decision was mixed. In the French column of \textit{The Border Cities Star}, Gaspard Pacaud, using the pseudonym "Jean Baptiste" offered the following point of view:

Il y en a qui sont grandement étonnés de cette décision. Je ne le suis pas.

...Dans le cas de la cure de Notre Dame du Lac, on n’a pas été à Rome plaider l’incompétence du titulaire envoyé de décréter et de condamner cette incompétence. On alla à Rome plutôt pour demander la ratification d’une action prise que pour solliciter une action à prendre.
...En prenant l'attitude qu'ils prirent, les fidèles de la paroisse de Notre Dame du Lac assumèrent une responsabilité à laquelle ils n’avaient aucun droit. Ils se constituèrent en tribunal, rendirent jugement, prononcèrent et exécutèrent la sentence, puis s'adressèrent à Rome pour mettre son sceau sur cette usurpation de pouvoir.

Est-ce que Rome pouvait permettre cette méthode de procédure?

Je puis concevoir la chaleur du sentiment intime qui se développe au contact de ce qu'on croit être la raillerie de la tyrannie, mais c'est là l'épreuve qui se dresse devant toute grande revendication. La maîtrise de soi-même en tout et partout, est toujours essentiel à tout succès, car avec elle, il est toujours facile de demeurer dans les sereines régions de ses prérogatives et de reconnaître même au prix d'un sacrifice d'une injustice subi si nécessaire, la suprématie des pouvoirs des gouvernements de l'État et de l'Église.

For Paraud, as for many French Canadians, opposition to Ford City’s new pastor had been stretched beyond acceptable limits. The blockade, rent and subsequent year-long boycott had embarrassed many who felt more peaceful measures would have had greater success. The public manifestations had only worsened the situation by keeping the misunderstanding out in the open. Paraud, like others, illustrated that the boycotters had gone against the authority of the church.

Not everyone shared Paraud’s viewpoint on the inevitability of the decision from Rome nor the judgmental attitude he espoused towards the church dissenters. The rebels expressed their opinion of the decree in the pages of La Défense.

Nous sommes certains que Rome s’est occupée de notre cause, comme nous le lui avions demandé, qu'elle a soigneusement examiné nos motifs, et qu'elle est par conséquent parfaitement au courant de notre situation...
Nous n'avons pas gagné, il est vrai, mais nous avons fait avancer une cause plus importante: celle de faire connaître aux plus hautes autorités de l'église, la vraie situation dans laquelle nous sommes obliges de vivre. Ce seul fait devrait suffire à nous combler de joie.\footnote{31}

While accepting defeat in their cause against Reverend Laurendeau and Bishop Fallon, the leaders of the boycott also had reason to take satisfaction. In effect, they consoled themselves with the idea that Rome was aware of the difficult situation which French Canadians were enduring under the reign of Monsignor Fallon.

With respect to the Congregation's order that parishioners cease the boycott, the nationalists appeared ready to submit. Their language suggested that the time for obedience had arrived.

L'attitude que nos compatriotes de Ford City doivent adopter est tracée depuis longtemps. Dans leur recours à Rome, ils ont dit en toute lettre au Saint Père:

"La congrégation religieuse de Notre Dame du Lac, de Ford City en appelle de cette nomination au tribunal de Votre Sainteté et proteste qu'elle accepte avec respect et obéissance les décisions qu'Elle portera."

Nous en appelons au Saint Père. Nous pouvions gagner, nous pouvions aussi ne pas gagner et nous disions que nous accepterions l'une ou l'autre alternative avec respect et obéissance. Nous avons donné notre parole solennelle. L'heure est maintenant arrivée de tenir notre parole et nous ne croyons pas que nos compatriotes hésiteront un seul moment à lui faire honneur.\footnote{32}

Recalling the promise the petitioners had made to Rome in appeal on the Laurendeau case to accept whatever the final decision might be, La Défense now called on the people to keep their pledge.

Ford City's parishioners assembled on Saturday afternoon, October 20, to determine their plan of action in light of Rome's
decision. There were few options. The people had to return to the Church and accept Laurendeau, if they were to prove they were faithful Catholics.

Tel que promis à l'assemblée tenue la veille sur l'avenue Belle Isle, à Ford City, par leur président M. S. Janisse, les membres du comité exécutif des paroissiens de Notre Dame du Lac de Ford City ainsi que M. le docteur Saint-Pierre se sont fait un devoir de se rendre à l'église paroissiale dès le lendemain matin, pour assister à la grand'messe. Avant la messe, le docteur Saint-Pierre se rendit auprès de M. l'abbé Laurendeau, à la sacristie et se faisant l'interprète dudit comité il le pria de bien vouloir annoncer au prêche que le comité des paroissiens de Notre Dame du Lac exhortait tous les paroissiens à revenir à leur église afin de prouver par cette action leur soumission complète à la volonté de Rome.

M. l'abbé Laurendeau acquiesça avec plaisir à la demande du Docteur et fit part aux fidèles de la décision et de l'invitation du comité des paroissiens."

As a result of this mass meeting, the parishioners decided to return to Our Lady of the Lake Parish. The next day, Sunday, October 21, Dr. Saint-Pierre took up his pew at church for the high mass, as did hundreds of others disgruntled parishioners. The moment for reconciliation had come. Upon the urging of Dr. Saint-Pierre just prior to mass, Fr. Laurendeau read a communiqué issued by the parish committee. The pastor notified the congregation of the committee's call for all the Catholics of Ford City to obey the decree from Rome. The ordeal had finally drawn to a peaceful conclusion.

There were other reasons for ending the church boycott. During the summer and autumn of 1918, the local area was hit by a wave of smallpox. Dr. Damien Saint-Pierre realized the danger
this disease posed to his followers. Hence, he could hardly have encouraged the boycotters to continue to frequent other churches at the risk of contracting the malady.

While Monsignor Fallon publicly triumphed with the Court’s decree and the boycotters’ submission, privately he suffered humiliation. The writers of La Défense told French-Canadians that they could take solace in the fact that Rome was aware of their suffering. Indeed, so preoccupied were officials in Rome with the never-ending flow of petitions and trouble from the Diocese of London, that Cardinal DeLai called upon Monsignor Fallon to resign as bishop. He wrote, "If you are persecuted in one city, flee to another."³⁴

The letter in question severely criticized the Bishop’s past conduct. DeLai reprimanded Fallon for trying several priests through his Diocesan Tribunal in May 1914, when a court decision from the Rota concerning the case was still pending. In addition, he recalled the trouble Fallon had caused in calling for the abolition of bilingual schools, criticizing him for taking any initiative at all on such an emotional issue.³⁵

With respect to the incidents at Ford City, DeLai did not dispute the legitimacy of Laurendeau’s appointment as pastor. However, he did condemn the violent fashion in which the priest was installed. He attributed the Bishop’s trouble to his improper means of carrying out decisions.

It is always a question of the way you do things...It would be best (and this is an order from the Sacred Congregation) that in the future you act with more consideration and moderation, that you speak
more guardedly, and that you write more carefully.²⁶

De Lai's warning to the bishop did not bring about the desired resignation. However, it did bring about a quieter, less belligerent reign of leadership in the Diocese of London.

The change in style of leadership in London was subtle rather than dramatic. Fallon illustrated this new approach in his communiqué to Ford City's parishioners following the decree from the Sacred Consistorial Congregation. In this circular, the bishop opted to refrain from comment on the contents of the decree, passing up the opportunity to sow further bitterness. To aid matters, Monsignor Fallon quietly dropped his lawsuit against the parish committee. This approach was wise, for it made it easier for the parishioners to return to Our Lady of the Lake.

It is also important to mention that DeLai's letter placed restrictions on Fallon's ability to act. Although the decree from Rome had publicly granted the Bishop the power to excommunicate, the Cardinal instructed him to refrain from exercising this power before first consulting Rome. Hence, while Rome publicly supported Monsignor Fallon, in private it expressed serious concerns over the current troubles in the London diocese. Fortunately for the bishop and the diocese, this correspondence remained private. As a result, the francophones never had occasion to exploit this message. Tension among the parishioners eventually dissipated and one of the most scandalous episodes in local church history faded into memory.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.


5. Dr. Damien Saint-Pierre to A. Foisy, editor of *Le Droit*, 7 November 1917, 8p., CRCCF, C2/201/1.


7. Ibid.

8. Interview, Dr. and Mrs. Gaston Saint-Pierre, August 24, 1988, Orléans, Ontario; Interview, Robert Gauthier, former bilingual school inspector of Essex County, Ottawa, Ontario, August 26, 1988.

9. N. Currey, Private Secretary to the Attorney General, to Adolphe Reausoleil, Secretary of the Parish Committee, Ford, Ontario, 11 January 1918, 2p., CRCCF.


13. Vir (Dr. Saint-Pierre) to Junior (Alex Grenon) 23 December 1917, 2p., CRCCF, C2/201/2.

14. Dr. Saint-Pierre to Alex Grenon, 20 Jan. 1918, CRCCF, C2/222/2, 1p.

15. Ibid.


18. Ibid, 28 mars, 1918.

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21. Ibid.

22. A. Grenon in Ford City to "Elieude" (Rev. Charlebois), in Ottawa, 4 April 1918, 2pp., CRCCF, C2/222/3.


26. Border Cities Star, 15 October 1918, p. 5; see also Decision of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, CRCCF, C2/201/3; and La Defense, 25 October, 1918, p. 1.


28. Border Cities Star, October 15, 1918; La Défense, October 25, 1918; CRCCF, C2/201/3.


30. Border Cities Star, October 17, 1918, p.3, "Colonne française".

31. La Defense, 18 octobre, 1918, p.1.


36. Choquette, pp.152-153; also Delai to Fallon, June 7, 1918.
Conclusion

For over one hundred and twenty years, prior to the arrival of Bishop Fallon to the diocese of London, the French-speaking inhabitants of Essex and Kent counties had enjoyed their own French language schools. During this period, there was a series of ethnic, religious and linguistic conflicts which erupted sporadically to shake the population from its peaceful coexistence. While some of these disagreements did sow discord, none had posed a serious threat to the cultural survival of the Canadien.

The beginning of the twentieth century brought dramatic change to the Windsor area. Industrial development blossomed with the establishment of the Ford Motor Company in Sandwich East in 1904. This automobile plant spawned many feeder industries, created rapid growth, and in turn attracted thousands of agricultural workers from rural Essex. Many migrants to the city were in fact French Canadians who were unaccustomed to the English-speaking ways of Windsor. These new arrivals chose to settle in or around what was to become Ford City.

In its initial stages of growth, the community which was to become Ford City had consisted primarily of French-Canadian farmers. After 1904, these farmers watched as neighbours slowly sold off their land to accommodate the wave of workers hired by the new Ford Motor Company. The increase in housing construction and the easy access to employment attracted not only the French-Canadian farmer, but a mixture of Irish, Romanian, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish and other eastern European immigrants. This
influx of ethnic groups changed the cultural and linguistic makeup of the community. In effect, by 1931, the French-Canadian element no longer constituted a majority of the population of Ford City. (See Appendix C).

The flow of immigrants into the area of Ford City occurred over a twenty-year period. Hence while changes were being introduced, they seemed to come almost imperceptibly. Even the schools had begun to adapt to the changes: English slowly came to dominate the curriculum within the bilingual schools. This process of gradual change did not produce a panic. The arrival of Bishop Fallon in 1910 did.

Fallon's determination to improve the state of education in the Catholic schools of his diocese threatened the interests of several teaching orders. The Bishop relieved English-and French-speaking religious orders alike from their teaching duties for refusing to improve their standards. However, it was Fallon's verbal opposition to the bilingual school system and his intervention into the teaching practices at Walkerville, Ford City and Belle River that set off the crisis.

While Fallon publicly condemned the quality of instruction offered by these schools, he did not suggest that improving the training of bilingual teachers was the solution. Rather, he advocated abolishing the system altogether. He argued that children should receive their daily education in only one language, be it either English or French, but never both. His closure of the new bilingual teachers' college in Windsor in
1910, just one year after its opening attested to the seriousness of his intentions. This decision frightened many French Canadians who opposed a radical change to their traditional lifestyle. The Hanna-Pyne correspondence appeared to serve as further evidence of the bishop's secret agenda to abolish the cherished bilingual schools. Moreover, Fallon's initiatives in 1910 to change the status of these schools came a full two years before the introduction of provincial legislation treating this very subject, the notorious Regulation XVII.

Fallon provided some justification for his opposition to the bilingual school system. In short, he argued that these schools did not provide students with an education attuned to the demands of a rapidly industrializing society and economy. He also pointed out that the rate of illiteracy in the French-English schools was alarming. In addition, he accused these schools of not giving the children an adequate knowledge of the English language, essential to success in the province of Ontario. Lastly, Fallon feared that the aggressive resolutions adopted by the French-Canadian Education Association's 1910 congress in Ottawa would provoke a negative reaction from the Protestant majority. The Bishop saw this nationalist movement as a danger to the future of the entire Roman Catholic separate school system of Ontario. Hence, to keep the Church's schools from harm, Fallon pushed for serious reforms.

While Fallon's intentions to improve the lot of the average French Canadian may have been sincere, his arguments against the
bilingual schools were riddled with serious weaknesses. The school inspector for Essex North, David Chenay countered claims that the system was to blame for the high rate of illiteracy among the French-Canadian children. He argued that the alarming rate of truancy was in fact the primary cause, and this could be attributed to the child's role on the family farm at harvest time. The Merchant Report of 1912 supported this assertion.

The Bishop himself could not have purported to be an expert on the state of bilingual education in Essex County. In fact, he had been in London for scarcely a month when he began his campaign against the schools. At this stage he had not even visited the majority of the schools in the system. In contrast, the school inspector, David Chenay, had been active in the separate school system of the County for over forty years.

By opposing Fallon's stance on bilingual education, the French-Canadian priests of the Diocese made the task of governing church affairs more difficult. Indeed, a number of them openly worked for the Bishop's removal. Their agitation, inspired by nationalist concerns, publicly embarrassed the Bishop in the press. Fallon's reaction to this rebellion hardly helped matters. His division of the parish of Our Lady of the Lake in 1912 set off a conflict which would last more than a decade.

The court battle over the parish division and the financial losses incurred by the victimized pastor, Reverend Lucien Beaudnin, became a struggle which engulfed the entire clerical corps of the diocese. Priests took sides in this conflict,
with a majority supporting the Bishop. Nevertheless, in 1913, ten priests, including three Irishmen, signed a petition denouncing accusations made by Fallon that Reverend Beaudoin was incompetent in the English language.

The implications of this petition were wide in their scope. Indeed, the petition in question accused the Bishop of forbidding the use of the French language in the instruction of French-Canadian children at school, and in preaching before French Canadians at church. While the Bishop had denied such accusations three years earlier, the priests had now reiterated these claims, thus implying that Fallon had lied.

When in 1914, the Bishop learned of the said petition the tragedy unfolded. Monsignor Fallon sought to end the agitation and clear his name. His suspension of two priests, expulsion of a third, and verbal campaign against the remainder sowed great discontent in the French-Canadian parishes of Essex and Kent counties. When parishioners at River Canard and Belle River rose in protest against the Bishop on his confirmation visits to their parishes, Fallon failed to see the danger of implementing draconian change without regard for the fears of the people.

The Bishop illustrated his complete inability to conciliate a population in emotional turmoil by continuing a policy of reprimanding his rivals after Fr. Beaudoin’s death. Rather than seeking to present a gesture of pastoral goodwill to the parishioners of Our Lady of the Lake, Fallon chose the only French-Canadian priest that the congregation could not accept.
Reverend Laurendeau's earlier participation on the Diocesan Tribunal which suspended three priests, and threatened to suspend the late Father Beaudoin, naturally fuelled the suspicions of the parishioners towards the appointee's sincerity. Nevertheless, there remains some doubt as to whether the parishioners would have accepted any other appointment made by Fallon.

On the opposite side, the leaders of the blockade, riot and boycott which erupted must share some of the blame for the incidents of discord. Doctor Saint-Pierre, Joseph de Grandpre and Marc Bontron took matters into their own hands when they incited the parishioners to block Fr. Laurendeau's entrance to the Rectory following the requiem funeral mass of Fr. Beaudoin on August 22, 1917. By seizing control of the church lands and using force in their opposition, they divided the French-Canadian community and subsequently lost their credibility as peaceful conscientious objectors before the eyes of the media and Rome.

While Bishop Fallon did provoke a great deal of the trouble which resulted in the riot at Ford City, other factors must be considered. The national dispute over conscription had already poisoned the atmosphere. In addition, the forces of change brought about by urbanization had contributed to a feeling of insecurity. On a more personal level, the provincial education legislation divided families. As a result of their school experience, children no longer desired to use the French language with their parents. A generation gap was forming. Many parents resented the changes. Most of them blamed the bishop for
the troubling situation. Agitation by local and imported nationalists merely added fuel to the fires of discontent.

The whole phenomenon of urbanization removed many French Canadians from their isolated rural existence, and exposed them to the English-speaking ways of the city. By 1921, the overwhelming majority would live in urban areas. Life in the city called into question traditional values, including the usefulness of the French language. The changes were too great for some to handle. It is significant to note that some of the fiercest resistance during the Ford City riot came from elderly women. For them, the adjustment to a changing society would have been most difficult. When one adds the tension created by the Bishop to the overall equation, it is easier to understand the reasons for the riot.

The death of the Reverend Lucien Beaudoin in 1917 signalled the end of an era. Fr. Beaudoin had represented the typical French-Canadian country pastor who linked language to the survival of one's faith. His replacement, Fr. Laurendeau, appeared too tied to the Bishop to present a reassuring image. Laurendeau's participation on the tribunal which suspended three priests, added to the fear of change. For the parishioners, a radical alteration of the status quo was taking its course. Only a show of force could halt the rate of its progress.

The lasting effects of the Ford City Riot on the local area are difficult to determine. There is little doubt that the papal decree embittered a number of parishioners. One might even
attribute the growing apathy and resistance to further nationalist endeavours as a result of the final decision from Rome. Many local parishioners believed that Rome would always support the Bishop before the congregations.

While most of the boycotters returned to Our Lady of the Lake, some never got over the harsh police action used to end the blockade. Although Reverend Laurendeau made amends with the congregation, Monsignor Fallon did not. The strong animosity towards the Bishop would never really dissipate.

It is possible that Monsignor Fallon’s lifelong bout with diabetes was responsible for his temperamental disposition. Confined to a spartan diet and deprived of the benefits of insulin which modern medicine would later develop, the Bishop’s radical mood swings at the most inappropriate times may very well have been a side effect of the disease. This hypothesis however, is difficult to prove.

In short, Monsignor Fallon served as a catalyst for the troubles which erupted in Essex and Kent counties. By vocally coming out in opposition to bilingual schools and by crushing his clerical adversaries, he infuriated even the most passive members of the community. French-Canadian nationalists in Ottawa secretly applauded Fallon for his outspokenness. They attributed the reawakening of local nationalism to the bishop’s brash nature and diplomatic ineptitude.

Fallon provided nationalist leaders with the tool they needed: a target. Indeed, the bishop became the personification
of all that was anti-French. Although this image simplified a series of sociological problems plaguing rural French-Canadian society, nationalists effectively exploited it to unite the people in their opposition to the school legislation.

In the end, the nationalists succeeded in sensitizing Quebec society to their plight, leading to the subsequent boycott of products from Ontario. This maneuver spurred outcries from Ontario’s business community. The formation of the Unity League, a group of influential Canadian anglophones committed to national reconciliation following World War I placed further pressure on the provincial government. This movement sponsored conferences and lectures which criticized the injustices of the education laws and advocated their removal. In 1925, in the midst of this outpouring of sympathy for the Franco-Ontarian cause, the Ministry of Education launched a new inquiry. The Merchant-Cote-Scott Report of 1927 detailed the significant improvement of English language skills among French-speaking students. It advocated a loosening of restrictions on the instruction of French, and contributed to the eventual abrogation of Regulation XVII in 1927. A long struggle had ended.

In 1931, after a lengthy battle with diabetes, the controversial Bishop of London died. His funeral brought a sigh of relief from local churchgoers. However, his style of leadership continues to evoke passion. Indeed, at the mention of the name Michael Francis Fallon, elderly French Canadians still divulge an anger rarely surpassed.
Appendix A

Urbanization in Essex and Kent Counties

1891-1921

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>1891</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex North</td>
<td>18 054</td>
<td>13 469</td>
<td>17 385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex South</td>
<td>16 789</td>
<td>7233</td>
<td>17 725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>37 137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>1921</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex(1)</td>
<td>33 433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>33 144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Beginning in 1921, the census takers began to classify Essex county as a single district as opposed to the previous classification of Essex North and Essex South.

Statistics drawn from the Report on the Census of Canada, 1901, v.I, Table IV; 1911, v.I, Table IX; and 1921, v.I Table XX.
Appendix B
Rural-Urban Distribution of the French-Canadian Population in Essex County 1901-1921(1) Total French Canadian/Total Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amherstburg</td>
<td>Anderdon</td>
<td>1349/2071</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belle River</td>
<td>482/607</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand. W.</td>
<td>Colchester N.</td>
<td>612/2145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maidstone</td>
<td>901/3117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich</td>
<td>Malden</td>
<td>591/1489</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkerville</td>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>1422/2625</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>Sandwich E.</td>
<td>2306/2794</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sandwich S.</td>
<td>398/1710</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tilbury N.</td>
<td>1768/2192</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tilbury W.</td>
<td>596/2209</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5915/20 158</strong></td>
<td><strong>10 333/20 959</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1911

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amherstburg</td>
<td>Anderdon</td>
<td>1304/1981</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belle River</td>
<td>462/520</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich W.</td>
<td>Colchester N.</td>
<td>557/1892</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maidstone</td>
<td>793/2788</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich</td>
<td>Malden</td>
<td>537/1371</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>1322/2231</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkerville</td>
<td>Sandwich E.(2)</td>
<td>3014/4195</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sandwich S. 359/1608
Tilbury N. 1765/2075
Tilbury W. 477/1744

Total 8990/29 224

1921

Urban
Amherstburg 779/2769
Ford City 2661/5870
Riverside 671/1155
Sandwich 1485/4415

Rural
Anderdon 1202/1967
Belle River 508/608
Colchester N. 542/1729
Malden 501/1370
Rochester 1272/2082
Sandwich E. 1062/1713
Sandwich S. 318/1548
Tecumseh 844/978

Total 15 688/64 457

8345/18 401

(1) Includes only those areas where the concentration of French Canadians exceeded 300. N.B. These statistics do not indicate the mother tongue of the respondents to the census. Some French Canadians spoke only English.

(2) For 1911, rural-urban classification is difficult. That portion of Sandwich East which was to become Ford City in 1912 was rapidly urbanizing. In contrast, the area of Tecumseh remained an agricultural community.

### Appendix C
Proportion of People of French Origin in Comparison to the Population of Essex County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town/Township</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1901</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anderdon</td>
<td>1202/1967</td>
<td>1304/1981</td>
<td>1349/2071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colchester N.</td>
<td>542/1729</td>
<td>557/1892</td>
<td>612/2145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidstone</td>
<td>709/2432</td>
<td>793/2788</td>
<td>901/3117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malden</td>
<td>501/1370</td>
<td>537/1371</td>
<td>591/1489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>1272/2082</td>
<td>1322/2231</td>
<td>1422/2425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand. East*</td>
<td>1062/1713</td>
<td>3014/4195</td>
<td>2306/2794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand. West</td>
<td>2443/4598</td>
<td>2306/3231</td>
<td>2055/2738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand. South</td>
<td>318/1548</td>
<td>359/1608</td>
<td>398/1710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilbury</td>
<td>408/550</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilbury No.</td>
<td>1604/1858</td>
<td>1765/2075</td>
<td>1768/2192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilbury W.</td>
<td>375/1568</td>
<td>477/1744</td>
<td>596/2209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amherstburg</td>
<td>779/2769</td>
<td>862/2560</td>
<td>711/2222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belle River</td>
<td>508/608</td>
<td>462/520</td>
<td>482/607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford City</td>
<td>2641/5870</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside</td>
<td>671/1155</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich</td>
<td>1495/4415</td>
<td>1139/2302</td>
<td>714/1450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tecumseh</td>
<td>844/978</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkerville</td>
<td>756/7059</td>
<td>570/3302</td>
<td>302/1595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>6883/38 591</td>
<td>4113/17 829</td>
<td>2133/12 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex County</td>
<td>26 017/102 575</td>
<td>20 733/67 547</td>
<td>17 385/58 744</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The township of Sandwich East was divided into four municipal entities beginning in 1912: Ford City, Riverside, Tecumseh, and the remainder of Sandwich East.

Appendix D
Proportion of Roman Catholics in Walkerville and Sandwich East 1901-1921

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town/Township</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1901</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walkerville</td>
<td>1293/7059</td>
<td>769/3302</td>
<td>495/1595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(756)</td>
<td>(570)</td>
<td>(302)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich E.</td>
<td>1195/1713</td>
<td>3374/4195</td>
<td>2480/2794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1062)</td>
<td>(3014)</td>
<td>(2306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford City</td>
<td>3371/5870</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2661)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside</td>
<td>727/1155</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(671)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tecumseh</td>
<td>917/978</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(844)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers in parentheses represent the French-Canadian population.

Appendix E

Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation XVII

English-French Public and Roman Catholic Separate Schools

3. Subject, in the case of each school, to the direction and approval of the Supervising Inspector, the following modifications shall also be made in the course of study of the Public and Separate Schools.

The Use of French for Instruction and Communication

(1) Where necessary in the case of French-speaking pupils, French may be used as the language of instruction and communication; but such use of French shall not be continued beyond Form I, who owing to previous defective training, are unable to speak and understand the English language.

Special Course in English for French-Speaking Pupils.

(2) In the case of French-speaking pupils who are unable to speak and understand the English language well enough for the purposes of instruction and communication, the following provision is hereby made:

a) As soon as the pupil enters the school he shall begin the study and the use of the English language.

b) As soon as the pupil has acquired sufficient facility in the use of the English language he shall take up in that language the course of study as prescribed for the Public and Separate Schools.

French as a Subject of Study in Public and Separate Schools.

4. For the school year of 1912-1913, in schools where French has hitherto been a subject of study, the Public or the Separate School Board, as the case may be, may provide, under the following conditions, for instruction in French Reading, Grammar and Composition in Forms I to IV in addition to the subjects prescribed for the Public and Separate Schools:

(1) Such instruction in French may be taken only by pupils whose parents or guardians direct that they shall do so.

(2) Such instruction in French shall not interfere with the adequacy of the instruction in English, and the provision for such instruction in French in the time-table of the school shall be subject to the approval and direction of the Supervising Inspector and shall not in any day exceed one hour in each classroom.

225
(3) Where, as permitted above for the school year 1912-1913, French is a subject of study in a Public or a Separate School, the textbooks in use during the school year of 1911-1912, in French Reading, Grammar, and Composition shall remain authorized for use during the School year of 1912-1913.
Appendix F
Letters

April, 1914

Mr. Telesphore Grenier

Dear Sir,

The uncertainty regarding your vocation to the Holy Priesthood of which there was question during the years you spent in the Grand Seminary, Montreal has not disappeared.

I am therefore, unable to continue you as a seminarian in St. Peter's seminary, London, or adopt you for this diocese.

Yours faithfully in Xto,

+ M.F. Fallon
Bishop of London

Cher Petit Père Emery

31 juillet, 1917

...le Reverend Père Beaudoin souffre de la phlébite à la jambe gauche. Il souffre aussi du défaut aux muscles et nerfs moteurs des deux jambes et quelque chose du côté de la vessie.

Il est plein de courage.

Le surmenage est la cause de tout le mal. On n'a pas de difficulte à lui faire suivre les traitements. On l'a échappé à terre trois fois! Donnez-en connaissance au cher Dr. Saint-Pierre.

Rev. L. C.

The Reverend J.E. Emery
Ford City, Ontario

Aug. 20, 1917

Dear Reverend Father,

The death of Rev. Father Beaudoin makes a vacancy in the parish of Notre Dame du Lac, Ford. You will remain there until a new pastor is appointed. As custodian of the interests of the parish, you will permit nobody to remove anything from the premises, church, presbytery, etc., until the vacancy is filled. Unless otherwise notified by me, you will remain assistant at Ford City.

Yours faithfully in Xto,
+ M.F. Fallon
Bp. of London

227
Reverend Joseph Emery                                August 29, 1917
Notre Dame du Lac Parish                                Ford City, Ontario
Dear Reverend Father,

I receive your letter on my return from Chatham yesterday. I readily appreciate your difficulties about the locks and the names, in fact I foresaw them, and shall not insist. I wanted the names in case we might have to get an injunction against the blockaders. A list would have to be complete in order to be of any use. But we can readily handle the situation without an injunction, so we’ll let the list go.

If it could be done, I should be glad if you would have some of the loyal members of the parish visit the malcontents in their homes and try to reason with them. Ordinarily, men are not amenable to reason when in a crowd, but they are if talked to privately.

Very sincerely,

Denis O’Connor

Rev. Joseph Emery

Dear Rev. Father,

I am glad you saw your way clear to signing the statement which was adopted yesterday by the priests. The Catholic Church and the Catholic faith are in jeopardy. Without regard to any personal interest, let us strive to strengthen the faith in our people and to destroy whatever might affect it injuriously.

Yours faithfully in Xtn,
+ M.F. Fallon
Bp. of London

(letters graciously provided by M. A. Emery).
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