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"Il a bien merit  de la Patrie"

The 22nd Battalion and the Memory of Courcellette

Geoff Keelan

The 22nd Battalion's assault on the town of Courcellette in September 1916 was one of the few successes in the prolonged offensive known as the Battle of the Somme, 1 July to 18 November 1916. During this period British Empire troops suffered 432,000 casualties.¹ The British Fourth Army under General Sir Henry Rawlinson bore the responsibility of leading the offensive. Rawlinson was an advocate of heavy artillery bombardments and limited objectives, and his conception of the attack conflicted with the views of breakthrough-obsessed Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, commander-in-chief of the British Expeditionary Force. The result was what historian Hew Strachan described as a "plan for the battle that was fatally compromised at the tactical level."² Canada paid a heavy price for that failure.

The Canadian Corps, commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir Julian Byng, arrived on 30 August and was set to take part in the upcoming offensive in mid-September. General Sir Hubert Gough's Reserve Army assigned the Canadians to attack Courcellette to help protect the left flank of Rawlinson's Fourth Army. Leading was Major-General Sir Richard Turner's 2nd Canadian Division, whose objectives were to seize German-held territory to a depth that varied from 400 to 1000 yards. After initial success during the morning of 15 September, and amidst

Abstract: This article examines the role of the French Canadian soldiers of the 22nd Battalion and the reaction to their achievements on the battlefield (specifically at the battle of Courcellette) as well as tracing the development of the literature published by veterans after the war. The dominant narrative for French Canada's experience of the First World War focuses on the domestic experience of the province and places little emphasis on the actions and experience of its many soldiers on the Western Front. This work will offer some balance to that narrative and combat the myth of a monolithic experience for French Canadians during the Great War.

reports of disorganized German forces, Byng ordered the seizure of the village itself.³ The resulting attack, led by the 22nd Battalion, the only French-Canadian front line unit, captured the village and the Canadians received widespread praise. Field-Marshal Haig wrote that Courcellette "was a gain more considerable than any which had attended our arms in the course of a single operation since the commencement of the offensive."⁴ Still, the success of the Canadians on the Somme would be brief. Despite heavy losses they failed to take Regina Trench, and left the theatre on 10 October. David Campbell argues that this setback and the "overall dismal reputation that the Somme campaign gained" overshadowed

the successes at Courcellette, but that the victory remained an important "harbinger of greater victories to come."⁵ For the 22nd Battalion the action became much more than that.

The story of the French Canadian battalion at Courcellette was one of courage and heroism. At 1530 hours, Lieutenant-Colonel T.L. Tremblay, commander of the battalion, received word that the unit would assault the German lines at 1800 hours. As the assault began, two companies, single file and 350 yards apart, marched towards the village of Martinpuich and the "Candy Trench," with two companies following in reserve. The forward companies then swung to the left directly towards the southern edge of Courcellette. Shells and shrapnel rained down upon the beleaguered soldiers, who kept the line moving forward. By the time they had taken the entire village and established a defensive line north of it, they had captured over 300 prisoners, a 4.1-inch German gun with 1,000 rounds of ammunition, several machine guns and a large quantity of German hand grenades. Throughout the battle, there were many instances of individual courage and initiative. Lieutenant Charles Greffard, knocked unconscious for two hours by a shell, refused to stay at the dressing station and continued the attack until he was wounded in the shoulder. With that wound dressed, he returned to the battle



**CHARGE VICTORIEUSE DU 22IEME BATAILLON (CANADIENS-FRANCAIS) LIEUT-COL. T.L. TREMBLAY, COMMANDANT
by E.P. Gartlan**

until he was wounded a second time, and then reluctantly left the fight. Captain René Lefèbvre was shot through the chest but continued to wave his men forward as he died from his wounds. Lieutenant-Colonel Tremblay was also in the village itself and was buried three times by shellfire but continued to spur his men forward. He reportedly did not sleep for three days and two nights as he held the battalion headquarters in the centre of Courcelette. All told, the battalion would repel 13 German counterattacks at great loss to themselves and the enemy.⁶

For the "Vandoos," Courcelette was their first bloodletting and their first true experience of the harsh reality of attritional warfare. Of the 22 officers who entered the battle, seven were killed and eight wounded.⁷ Everything after would be compared to Courcelette and it would be one of the battalion's most revered battles. Sergeant Claudius Corneloup wrote of the "marges impérissables de Courcelette. Le 22ième d'alors marchait vers l'immortalité."⁸ "Si l'enfer est aussi abominable que ce que j'ai vu [à Courcelette], je ne souhaiterais pas à mon pire ennemi d'y aller," was how Lieutenant-Colonel Tremblay encapsulated the experience.⁹ Glory and tragedy were irrevocably intertwined at Courcelette. It was the battalion's first major victory and its first great graveyard. Veterans would reflect on the battle for decades after the war, in articles, books and at reunions. Although the 22nd Battalion would go on to fight in many more battles in the First World War, Courcelette epitomized their memory of why they fought. The bravery of the troops and the success won by their sacrifice proved the commitment and capacity of French Canadians and Quebec.

* * * * *

The Quebecois memory of the First World War in the late 20th and early 21st centuries is built



Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas-Louis Tremblay, commander of the 22nd Battalion at the Battle of Courcelette.

upon a carefully constructed story of oppression and victimization. It requires French Canadians to forget the other historical memory of the First World War, the participation and achievements of soldiers from Quebec's French-speaking majority. In this light, the record of the 22nd Battalion, the "Vandoos," came to represent the valour, honour and sacrifice of French speaking soldiers in their service to Canada and Catholicism. Though this has been largely forgotten by historians, and French Canadians themselves, literature published by veterans after the battalion returned home suggests that Quebec commemorated the soldiers of the 22nd Battalion as heroes of a victorious conflict.

That perspective has long since been overtaken by the dominant memory of French Canada's Great War, which magnifies the impact of certain events to the exclusion of all other aspects of that experience. That narrative opens with British Canada entering the war in a rush of imperial patriotic enthusiasm. In the months after August 1914, popular sentiment in Quebec, feeding off the words of Henri Bourassa, began to turn

against the distant European war. As a result, recruitment from Quebec was lower than from English Canada. Increasingly, supporters of the war attacked Henri Bourassa, defacto leader of the Quebec *nationalistes*, as the heart of this provincial revolt. As 1915 wore on his vitriolic words raised the ire of his English-speaking countrymen and helped to reinforce an image of Quebec as an anti-war province.¹⁰ Despite efforts such as the *Bonne Entente* movement in 1916,¹¹ Quebec felt isolated and persecuted by the refusal of Ontario, the largest predominantly English-speaking province, to recognize the right of French Canadians to be educated in their own language while demanding that they voluntarily fight in a war that they saw as utterly remote from their interests.¹² The only support from French Canadians came from "anglicized" French Canadians such as Sir Wilfrid Laurier or Talbot Mercer Papineau. As it became increasingly clear that the war would not end soon and that more soldiers were required, English Canadians argued that conscription would create an equality of sacrifice and participation among all. After the election of the Union government in 1917, conscription was ruthlessly enforced; and, as the war came to a close, the Francoeur motion and the Easter riots of 1918 in Quebec demonstrated the depth of betrayal felt by French Canada.¹³ Afterwards, Quebec began to reject the partnership between two languages and cultures resulting in the rise of a more defensive French Canadian nationalism.

Jonathan Vance's book *Death So Noble* is the major work on the Canadian memory of the Great War. He argues that this memory was a legacy of the late 19th century. It was, he suggests, the Victorian conceptions of sacrifice, renewal and redemption that formed the nucleus of English-speaking Canada's war memory in the 1920s and 1930s. These ideals were closely associated with the society's

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deeply embedded English Canadian Protestantism. A parallel argument can be made for French Canadians who according to Vance were unwilling to "concur [with English Canada] in the proper combination of remembering and forgetting."¹⁴ In effect, English Canadians chose to forget the dissidents and those who opposed to the war, while Quebecois chose to forget those who supported it.¹⁵ The memory of the French Canadians who supported and fought in the war developed from an entrenched conception of their history and purpose as a people deeply rooted in their cherished language and religion. Just as English Canada's Protestant faith formed the foundation of their collective remembrance, French Canadian Catholicism shaped memory in Quebec.

This theme is discussed by Elizabeth Armstrong, whose book *The Crisis of Quebec 1914-18* was published in 1937, early enough not to be entirely grounded in the anti-war narrative of French Canada that would become more fully developed starting in the 1940s. Central to her argument was the paramount role of the Church in French Canadian society. After the conquest of 1759 and the withdrawal of France from the New World, it was the Catholic Church which replaced the state as the institutional authority in the colony. The church's policy of "*survivance*" preserved Quebec's religion, culture and language as the sole bastion of French Catholicism in North America. Thus, with the increasing secularism of France after the Revolution, the Church in Quebec anxiously constructed the educational system of the province to instil the importance of religion in every French Canadian. This internalization and linking of religion with identity, Armstrong argued, formed the genesis of the French Canadian nationalism which developed before and during the First World War.¹⁶



Lieutenant Jean Brillant of the 22nd Battalion was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for his gallant actions during the Battle of Amiens, August 1918.

More recently historian Arthur Silver has further explored this idea. He argued that French Canadians not only built their identity on religion, but as a society demanded the defence of Catholicism at home and abroad. Thus French Canadians joined the Papal *Zouaves* to defend the Papacy from the Italian Revolution, supported the Catholic regime of Maximilian in Mexico, and advocated military action against the killers of Christians in China during the Boxer Rebellion.¹⁷ Upon the return of *Zouaves* to Quebec, the *Revue Canadienne* asked "why may we not believe that [French] Canada will play the same role in North America that France has played in Europe?"¹⁸ The Catholic identity fashioned in Quebec in the latter half of the nineteenth century had some similarities to that of British high imperialism in the Victorian era. Just as the English had the obligation to defend their version of civilization and its tenets, French Canada had to defend Catholicism and its ideas. This would ensure the *survivance* in the New World of their religion-based culture and of all of the values it

represented. While the large majority of French Canadians saw the First World War as a conflict that had little to do with Catholic civilization (Rome was after all resolutely neutral and sought peace not victory), a minority drew upon the old values to justify participation in a war for France and their Catholic faith.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the record of the 22nd Battalion. Their exemplary war record challenged the myth of French Canada's anti-war stance and lack of fighting spirit. They did not fight for Empire. They, like English Canadians, fought for a range of reasons: for money, for honour, for faith. The regimental motto, *je me souviens*, which became the provincial motto, reflected the policy of *survivance* and the need to remember the traditions and beliefs that made French Canada special. By war's end, the 22nd Battalion boasted two recipients of the Victoria Cross, Joseph Kaeble and Jean Brillant, the only French Canadian general on the Western Front, Thomas-Louis Tremblay, as well as numerous battle honours.

It is important to remember that the 22nd Battalion fought the iconic battle of Courcelette against the backdrop of growing tension at home. The *Bonne Entente* movement sought to muster support for the war in Quebec by countering the influence of Bourassa, but, as Desmond Morton has written, "withered into resentment and anger" remembered only as a "symbol of futile good will."¹⁹ To be fair, it was a hard battle against the oratorical talents of Bourassa, a former Liberal member of parliament and editor of the most prominent paper opposed to the war, *Le Devoir*. At the height of his powers in 1916, Bourassa's reply to Talbot Papineau's impassioned call for French Canadian participation was crushing. Papineau, American-raised but determined to be French Canadian, wrote an eloquent letter in English to Bourassa that was

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published in the Canadian and British press. Great-grandson of the famed rebel leader, Louis-Joseph Papineau, he believed himself intimately connected to his ancestral home. He wrote to Bourassa who was also a great-grandson of Papineau, declaring, "as I write, French and English-Canadians are fighting and dying side by side" and asked if "their sacrifice [would] go for nothing or [would] it not cement a foundation for a true Canadian nation..."²⁰

Bourassa spurned the efforts to rally Quebecois to enlist: "All the nations of Europe are the victims of their own mistakes, of the complacent servility with which they submitted to the dominance of all Imperialists and traders in human flesh."²¹ In this correspondence, the super nationalist, Bourassa, did battle with the anglicized patriot, Talbot Papineau; these were the polarities of the discourse about the war within Quebec mid-way through the conflict, and the advantage clearly was with Bourassa.

One writer in *Le Devoir* highlighted a fundamental difference that undermined every attempt to bring Quebec more fully into the war effort: "When an English Canadian pronounces the word patriotism, he wishes to say love of Empire, while the French-speaking Canadian, with the same word, thinks only of Canada."²² Here was the essential gap between English Quebec and French Quebec. Prime Minister Borden's declaration at the beginning of that year, 1916, that Canada would raise 500,000 men and the low recruitment numbers which followed signalled to many the coming conscription crisis.

Yet the representation of the 22nd Battalion's victory at Courcelette in the press gives a much more complex picture of opinion in Quebec.²³ The newspapers selected for the present study, the Montreal



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"All the nations of Europe are the victims of their own mistakes, of the complacent servility with which they submitted to the dominance of all Imperialists and traders in human flesh." – Henri Bourassa

Star, *La Presse*, *La Patrie*, *Le Devoir*, and *L'Action Catholique*, represent a few of the many papers published in the province but their readership included a large portion of the urban population.²⁴ All except the Montreal *Star* were French-language papers,²⁵

Certainly two of these papers offered distinct views of the battle that stood out from the others: Bourassa's *Le Devoir* and the Montreal *Star*. The *Star*, the most prominent English paper in Quebec, clearly reflected the outlook of Montreal's English population. Hugh Graham, its editor, would become Lord Atholstan in 1917, and, as his peerage suggests, he was as intense in his support of Canada's participation in the British Empire war effort as Bourassa was in his opposition. In the casualty lists the *Star* published each day, there was no mention of the particular units to which the killed and injured belonged, and thus no special emphasis on the French Canadian battalion. Indeed, the paper featured general coverage of the

war, at the expense of detailed accounts of the Canadian forces. During the fall of 1916 many of the front page headlines focused on the campaign in the Balkans, with news from Bulgaria, Romania and Greece and the fate of the Germans there. Likewise, editorials tended to address international events, and less often commented on Canadian developments. On 18 September 1916, two columns of text stretching the length of the broadsheet covered the battles of Thiepval and Courcelette, but also news from the French forces to the south, and from the Balkan front. In the account of Courcelette, the Canadians featured in only two lines: "in reaching this advanced line, our Canadian lads had a great and glorious share. They have added to the honours of Ypres, and duplicated the gallant Anzac deeds at Pozi res."²⁶

There was no particular focus on the French Canadian soldiers, much the same as in any paper in Ontario or across English Canada.

In the following days, the *Star* did make some mention of the 22nd Battalion, but only briefly in the context of more general coverage. On 19 September, for example, the paper described the "Canadians [storming] Courcelette" as coming "from Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver" as well as "others who, on the soil of France, hailed one another in the French tongue of Quebec."²⁷ In one rare direct remark, a headline in the 23 September edition proclaimed that "AFTER SOMME FIGHT FRENCH CANADIANS CLASSED WITH BEST."²⁸ Then the 22nd Battalion was not mentioned by name in the weeks after Courcelette. The paper presented the battle as one more Allied thrust towards victory and the end of the war.

Several items criticized the French Canadians of Montreal for their lack

of support for the war effort. Sergeant J. Murphy's letter to the editor on 15 September asked why men attended recruitment meetings but did not join the forces.²⁹ Another article reported a sermon by a Protestant minister in the army on the necessity of conscription to maintain the war effort: "true Nationalists are those who strive to maintain the Dominion of Canada by maintaining the Empire. Any other nationalism is a dream and fatuity."³⁰

Le Devoir, like the *Star*, offered little comment on the soldiers of the *bataillon canadien-français* who battled for Courcellette, but for nearly opposite reasons. In the days following the engagement, the paper passed on vague reports from London of the Canadians' victory, and none on the reception of the news at home. The articles that did speak well of the Canadians were those sent out by the press agencies; for example, on 21 September the same article appeared in both *Le Devoir* and *L'Action Catholique*: "Les Canadiens sont couverts d'une grande gloire."³¹ The paper's own editorial content continued to focus on the negative costs the war inflicted upon the nation. A day before the battle, Bourassa published an article entitled "La Réorganisation de L'Empire" in which he claimed that Canadians were "les complices aveugles de l'impérialisme" and they were now paying for their "complaisances passées" in blood.³²

In sharp contrast to *Le Devoir*, the other French language newspapers portrayed the war in terms of religious duty, bravery and sacrifice, and closely followed the feats of French Canada's own soldiers. Typical was the headline of *La Patrie*, the second



"As I write, French and English-Canadians are fighting and dying side by side...[would] their sacrifice go for nothing or [would] it not cement a foundation for a true Canadian nation..."? – Talbot Papineau

largest newspaper in Montreal, on 23 September: "Le Grand Courage et L'Initiative de nos Canadiens Français."³³ On 28 September the paper reported in detail a memorial to the "héros de Courcellette" that was held in the armoury of the 65th Regiment, honouring the soldiers from that militia unit that had gone overseas to serve in the 22nd Battalion and fallen taking the village. Presiding was Curé Belanger, who offered a prayer for their souls.

La Patrie delivered a stirring commentary:

Si le sort du soldat que la patrie appelle sous les armes, pour faire face à l'ennemi envahisseur et qui succombe en pleine gloire, en accomplissant son devoir sacré, est digne d'éloges et d'envie, quelle admiration enthousiaste doit soulever l'action de ceux qui volontairement volent au secours de leur patrie menacé et offrent généreusement leur vie pour elle.³⁴

These phrases evoke the same ideas and sentiments that Armstrong and Silver posit to be the basis of French Canadian nationalism and their reaction to the war. The French Canadian soldier was called forth by his homeland to accomplish his sacred duty. It was a voluntary duty not only to his native soil and to the home of his ancestors, but to his God as well. The importance attached to the voluntary nature of their service denotes the difference between 1916 and 1917. Conscription may have been on the horizon but its possibility was no secret. A Quebecois paper stressing the triumph and heroism of those who fought for Canada of their own accord would become a rare thing soon enough.

L'Action Catholique, the official newspaper of the Catholic Church in Quebec, described the soldiers of the 22nd as "hommes que vous voyez travailler sur leur ferme, dans la province de Québec, ou dans les fabriques de la Nouvelle-Angleterre."³⁵ This attitude is not surprising. Quebec's Catholic Church supported the war from the outset. Through the *L'Action Catholique* the Church urged its followers to support a just war against the evils of Germany. This was not a view

necessarily held by all the priests of small town Quebec, but it dominated the speeches and memoranda of many of its bishops.³⁶ In the aftermath of Courcellette, *L'Action Catholique* wrote of the "éloges des Canadiens-français" and their success in Europe.³⁷

La Presse was one of the battalion's most ardent supporters having championed the push for the formation of a French Canadian unit during the first weeks of the

appear on the front page, while lower ranks appeared in back pages. The paper mentioned Courcellette almost daily. The battle proved that "les volontaires canadiens...ont prouvé au monde qu'ils savent aussi bien attaquer que se défendre."³⁹ "Les Canadiens-Français Brillent au Front" was the title of an editorial on 22 September. The bravery of Quebec soldiers, argued its editors, flew in the face of certain groups that believed

assembly of the Young Conservatives, the minister repeated many familiar patriotic themes. The newspaper was also more than willing to respond to any charges concerning the adequacy of Quebec's contribution to the war effort. It argued against claims from the *Toronto Globe* that Quebec recruitment numbers were not on par with those of the English provinces. If, they argued, one examined the number of French Canadian recruits on the basis of percentage of the population, the difference between them was only 1.25 percent.⁴²

The French-language newspaper coverage from the time of the Courcellette action shows two quite different conceptions of the war. If the number of readers reflected the views of the population, then *La Presse* and its pro-war message was the most influential. However, for the majority of Canadians outside the province, it was Bourassa's stance that resonated most strongly. Both streams of thought, pro- and anti-war, would evolve in 1917 and 1918, but both streams were still clearly evident at the war's end. Bourassa and those who resisted conscription may have been louder, but they could not silence those who supported the war. Moreover, the veterans returned to Canada to tell their story.

The body of literature produced by French Canadian soldiers demonstrated that they had unique ideas about the meaning of their service to their nation and Quebec. Though forgotten after the Second World War, the voice of the 22nd Battalion's veterans was a strong one in Quebec society in the inter-war years. (In 1922 a Quebec man dynamited a war memorial in Saint-Hilaire because it was not inscribed with the names of those soldiers who had given their lives to defend the province.⁴³) Like millions of other combatants, French Canadians who returned, their loved ones, and the loved ones of the many who did not return, lived with the memory of



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Officers of the 22nd Canadian Infantry Battalion watering a horse, June 1918.

war. Jean-Pierre Gagnon's seminal work, *Le 22e bataillon (canadien-français) 1914-1919: étude socio-militaire*, describes the enthusiasm and successful fundraising that contributed to its creation. Even before the battalion's establishment, readers of *La Presse's* celebration of French Canada's military spirit and prowess could already imagine their future exploits.³⁸ By the autumn of 1916, this passion had not abated. Of all the newspapers of Quebec, it was the soldiers' most stalwart supporter. In the weeks that followed the battle, *La Presse* printed the names, pictures and homes of those who had died. Officers would often

only they were patriots.⁴⁰ One of the central points of the newspaper's coverage was that the soldiers were French speakers from Quebec. The paper was just as patriotic as any found in English Canada, a fact that it constantly sought to emphasize.

The daily reminders of French Canadian contributions to the war effort were a clear reply to those who decried Quebec's lack of commitment to the great struggle underway on the battlefields of France. "La Province de Quebec est loyale," stated a headline on 18 September for an article reporting a speech from the minister of inland revenue, Esioff-Léon Patenaude.⁴¹ Speaking at an

the sacrifice long after the armistice of 1918. They, like combatants and their families and friends in the rest of Canada and other countries, had to find meaning for their grief. The writings of the former soldiers of the 22nd Battalion reveal the same themes evident in contemporary coverage by French Canadian newspapers that supported the war effort. The veterans, by their own account, had fought for their religion, their province and their comrades.

One of the first works on the 22nd Battalion published after the war was J.A. Holland's *Les Poilus Canadiens*, which is as close as the unit got to an official history.⁴⁴ A speech given by the Bishop Camille Roy on the second anniversary of the battle of Courcellette in 1918 introduced the short account. Roy reminded his listeners that the soldiers "lutter pour la justice, lutter pour le droit des gens et pour le droit de Dieu, ce fut notre tâche historique, et c'est notre gloire, qui fut parfois douloureuse."⁴⁵ Unmistakable is the bond between the fighting in France and fighting for God. The bishop commemorated Courcellette as a victory for the province and its religious duty. That duty grew out of the Church's defence of French language and culture on an English continent: *survivance*. The main text of the book continued in much the same vein. The battle of Courcellette was a victory for the "l'élan impétueux des Canadiens français, qui balayèrent tout devant eux et brisèrent comme un fétu la résistance d'un ennemi numériquement supérieur."⁴⁶ There was no mention of discontent, or disciplinary problems, or negative sentiments towards the army, country or Empire. The book described the major battles of the battalion and concluded with a passage echoing the sentiments expressed by Bishop Roy:

La France saigne encore pour la cause de l'humanité. Elle a besoin de secours, et il ne faut pas qu'il soit

dit qu'elle a fait appel en vain aux descendants de ceux qui apportèrent il y a trois cents ans son nom, sa langue et sa religion sur les rives de la Nouvelle France.⁴⁷

This call to arms, rooted in the history of New France and the sacredness of the homeland along the shores of the St. Lawrence, expressed sentiments no different from those who fought for the British Empire and the civilization it represented. For French Canadians no less than English Canadians, conceptions of God and ancestral duty gave a purpose for those who fought and those who grieved.

The "*souvenirs et impressions*" by Arthur Lapointe, first published in 1919, reached a fourth edition in 1944, convincing evidence of its continuing popularity.⁴⁸ Lapointe enlisted in the 69th (Reserve) Battalion and then joined the 22nd in May 1917. In a prefatory note Lapointe explained that the book was his wartime journal. He observed that despite the horrible nightmares of the war he now endured, "j'ai la consolation d'avoir été utile à mon pays, et d'avoir payé ma dette de reconnaissance à la vieille France."⁴⁹ The journal made it clear that Lapointe knew why he would fight, even before entering combat: a sense of duty to Quebec's original mother country featured throughout his entries. Upon his arrival in France, he was ecstatic. "Vers une nouvelle destinée" was the title of the entry for 5 May 1917, the day of his arrival on the continent. As he and his fellow soldiers walked towards the battlefields, French children ran beside them crying, "Vive les Canadiens!", and grinned as the soldiers replied in kind, "Vive la France!"⁵⁰ For young Lapointe, the war meant defending a land that since childhood he had wished to see. He felt as strongly connected to France as he did to Canada.

The journal was also infused with Lapointe's profound Catholic faith.

During training, he often visited a Catholic church near to his camp. Every Sunday he attended mass with his comrades, a ritual that would continue throughout his service. He asked God "d'avoir pitié de moi, et de me donner le courage de supporter vaillamment toutes épreuves."⁵¹ Lapointe did not always have such an easy relationship with his faith. As the war dragged on and he repeatedly entered into the damning experience of combat, it was not nearly as comforting. He awoke to church bells on Christmas Day 1917 with his heart filled with bitterness. When, he wondered, would those bells ring for peace? Lapointe and his comrades, depressed that Christmas had dawned on them in such a horrible place, opened Christmas gifts from strangers with a heavy air, as if consoling themselves over "l'absence de leur mère."⁵² The small act of opening the package filled with common objects that had been missing for so long, a razor, cigarettes, chocolate, socks, raised Lapointe's spirits. When night fell, he entered a church and prayed at the cradle of baby Jesus, asking God to put "un peu de baume sur [son] coeur meurtri."⁵³ With a considerably calmer soul, he wrote, he returned to the military camp to sleep. These were not the words of a man whose faith was superficial or in doubt. His Catholicism was the foundation for his ability to endure the atrocities of war and continue to fight. For some soldiers of the 22nd their faith was all that kept them sane, allowing them to hold their fire when Germans surrendered instead of giving in to the urge for revenge.⁵⁴ They did not even fully reflect Quebec's Catholic *survivance*; his journals had no commentary on post-revolutionary France and its anti-religious policies. Lapointe simply believed in a God that aided him and a France that had called to him.

Perhaps the most absorbing of the three books published by

22nd Battalion veterans in 1919 was *L'Épopée du Vingt-Deuxième* by Sergeant Claudius Corneloup. He was an Alsatian who had fought with the French Foreign Legion in Tunisia, joined the 22nd Battalion in 1915 and survived all its major engagements. "Les soldats ne voient rien," he wrote, "[aveuglés], ils continuaient leur procession funèbre dans ce labyrinthe où, à chaque pas, ils heurtaient une forme écrasée qui avait été enfantée par une mère."⁵⁵ This haunting sentence is a microcosm of the entire work. The soldiers blinded themselves to their humanity, and thus willingly committed the worst of acts by taking others' lives. He did not indict the soldiers; rather he implied that their ability to press on by blocking out normal emotions was what made them heroic. This intense imagery made the soldier's experience of the war seem almost mythical in nature. "Tous ces noms illustrés et inconnus sombrés en plein champ de victoire doivent être gravés en lettres d'or sur un monument national," the book declared in its final paragraph.⁵⁶ In the end, he said, it was worth it. He believed that the burden of having survived when so many others did not had earned the veterans a place in history. The men of the Vandoos had suffered intensely on the battlefields of France and Corneloup's work endeavoured to capture their sacrifice for the people of Quebec.

Religion was not as dominant for Corneloup as it was for Lapointe or in *Les Poilus*. Still, the death of the battalion's priest, Rosaire Crochetière on 6 April 1918, moved him to write that "notre coeur se serra douloureusement dans une pénible contrainte."⁵⁷ The grief of the battalion was palatable. Corneloup did not evoke religion often throughout the work but he acknowledged its importance to the men with whom he fought. It was an important part of their daily rituals. Perhaps as a Frenchman from Alsace, he was not

as religious as his fellow combatants were. Major J.A. Filiatrault of the 22nd noted "the great influence of the clergy...The curé [is] not only the spiritual guide of the flock but also their counselor paid attention to in all difficulties. It is with this spirit that our young soldiers arrive..."⁵⁸ Corneloup's foreign birth and experience separated him from this integral part of the character of the 22nd, which was 95.5 percent Catholic.⁵⁹

For Corneloup, there was another central aspect of the unit's character that sustained its fighting power in the seemingly endless, grinding battles of the Western front. The battalion possessed a sort of tenacity that deeply impressed the veteran soldier. One of the bloodiest and most memorable battles of the war for Corneloup was the battle of Courcelette and it was clear to him that success was rooted in the great spirit of the 22nd Battalion.

La résistance ennemie fut désespérée;
la ténacité des nôtres fut sublime.
Le 22ième peut dire qu'il lutta un
contre douze. Les combats corps à
corps, à la baïonnette, au poignard,
à coups de rotin, s'amplifièrent.
Le sang coulait dans les rues. Nos
soldats s'interpellaient en français,
se battaient à la française, c'est-à-dire
d'un mordant irrésistible.⁶⁰

Between 15 and 18 September 1916 the battalion suffered 207 men killed and wounded.⁶¹ Much like the battle of Second Ypres and the enduring memory of the German gas attack there for the 1st Canadian Division, September 1916 would become a defining moment for the French Canadian battalion and the 2nd Division's 5th Brigade of which the 22nd formed a part. At Courcelette, the unit and the 5th Brigade had "une âme pour le conduire à travers de grandes et merveilleuses étapes" wrote Corneloup.⁶²

The title of the book, *L'Épopée du Vingt-Deuxième*, symbolized the ultimate purpose of Corneloup's work. The heroism of the soldiers was inherent in the "epic" tale. The soldiers, as actors in these dramatic events, became larger than life. At the end of the Courcelette battle, as the battalion's relief arrived, they asked, "comment-avez-vous fait pour attaquer avec si peu de monde?" Their answer was that "nous l'ignorons nous-mêmes."⁶³ Much as Corneloup understood of the unit's will to combat, he still found it hard to grasp. At times, he was almost at a loss for words that adequately described what occurred. His record of the 22nd Battalion's war was an attempt to come to grips with the horrors and share more than a simple narrative of the battle. Corneloup and the others who survived the bloodletting at Courcelette and the other great battles of the war could not believe their friends had died for no greater purpose than a strip of mud.

In the fall of 1920, a few weeks after the battle's fourth anniversary, *La Canadienne Revue* published an account of the battle by Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Chaballe. He fought with the regiment for the entirety of the war and his honest account underscored the extraordinary nature of their time in Europe. The *Revue's* introduction to "*Courcelette: Glorieux fait d'armes du 22ème Régiment Canadien-Français*" noted that "one factor [stood] out above all others: the battalion's spirit, its will to win."⁶⁴ Chaballe reinforced this point throughout his work. He painted a picture of brave, passionate men, who fought with an unwavering determination. The battle began, he wrote, with "three loud cheers for Canada and three even louder ones for the Province of Quebec" and then they received a blessing from their chaplain before they were "bound for Courcelette and glory."⁶⁵ The article, written for an audience that had only seen the battle through the lens of

newspaper accounts, is replete with powerful images. A dead Bavarian who lay in the middle of the road, a dog howling mournfully beside him;⁶⁶ or in the aftermath of battle realizing that "the entrance was blocked by a couple of corpses, our fallen comrades who had crawled there to die."⁶⁷ The account neither hid nor reviled the horror of their environment. So connected was the battalion to the misery of Courcellette that to condemn it denigrated the soldiers and their cause. Their shared experience bound them together as they fought for Canada and Quebec with God at their sides.

Chaballe's history entwined religion, sacrifice and bravery in a French Canadian context. The battalion did not suppress its identity for the sake of fighting smoothly within the Canadian army. When the message that Courcellette had fallen reached the 5th Brigade's headquarters, a translation was required, as an officer from the 22nd wrote it in French.⁶⁸ As Quebecois soldiers fighting under the British flag, in an English-speaking army, surely that difference was noticeable and remarked upon. Yet, that is not what its veterans remembered. While there were many instances of soldiers wronged for no cause other than they were French-Canadian,⁶⁹ the veterans mentioned here remembered most how their French Canadian ties kept them together. An unofficial motto of the battalion, Chaballe reminisced, was the French Canadian slang, "*on s'ostine*," stolen from its British original, "what we have we hold."⁷⁰ The old saying conjures up the image of the British bulldog, tenacious and immovable. Adopted – perhaps subverted – by the French Canadians, it was an odd symbol for the 22nd Battalion. Though they fought under the British flag, they took up its cause as their own, it suggests, and they would fight for it with full intensity.

The veterans' pride in their fighting prowess and resolve was

a strange juxtaposition against the developing memory of those at home who had experienced a different war. The increasingly predominant view emphasized the imposition of conscription in 1917-18 in the face of French Canada's opposition, the ultimate act of victimization at the hands of the militaristic British Empire and its English Canadian adherents. Even though the vast majority of the 22nd Battalion's members were volunteers, the accepted memory of the war seemed to be that any Quebecois fought against his will,

midst of a Second World War, the battalion's veterans met to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Courcellette. "Ils tinrent bon, jusqu'au bout!" said Colonel Henri Des Rosiers, former commanding officer of the 22nd who had become deputy minister of defence. Courcellette had proven that "l'âme des fils de la vieille France n'a pas dégénéré."⁷² The linking of the battle to France was still prevalent in their commemoration. Included in the booklet for the anniversary was Chaballe's history from 20 years before. Its moving words were



Officers of the 22nd Canadian Infantry Battalion, June 1918.

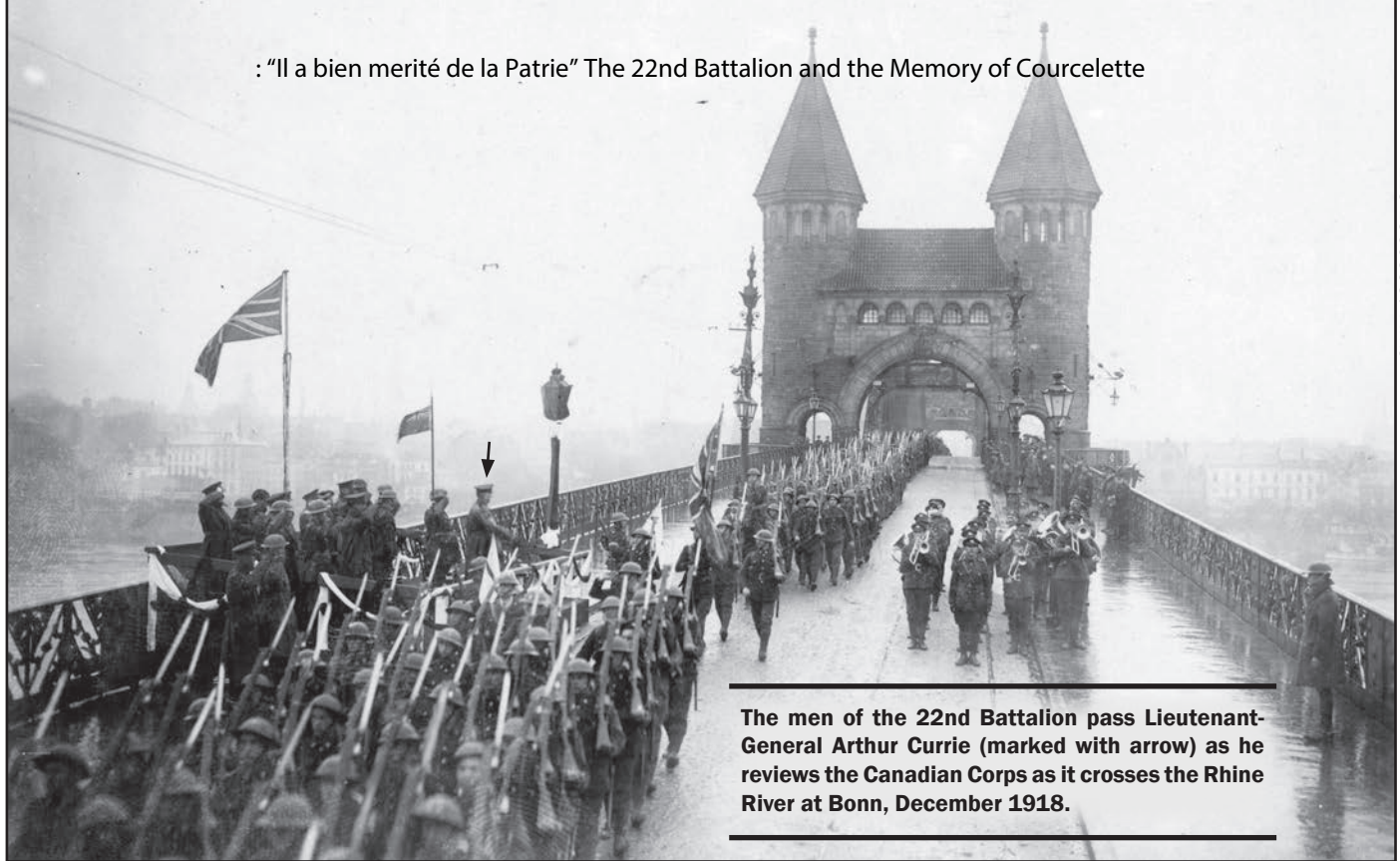
and thus no one willing to fight had been Quebecois. While Chaballe proclaimed to Colonel Tremblay after the victory of Courcellette that "the Province of Quebec could be proud of the Van Doos,"⁷¹ it was difficult to find proof of it in the years after the fact. Nevertheless, the writings of these former soldiers stood as a testament to the war they lived. They did not question their commanders or their purpose. They did not find injustice in their treatment or regret in their actions. They believed in 1916, and after the war, that they had participated in the greatest war their province and their nation had ever known; and they had served them both with honour.

The legacy of their belief would stretch well beyond the peace for which they fought. In 1941, in the

no less poignant. Tremblay, now a major-general, reminded his readers that they should "Soyons dignes du 22e!"⁷³ Remembering Courcellette had become less about the battle and more about the battalion: the men who had fought, those who had died, and those who had survived. The battle had been lifted from the profane experience of the First World War to become a sacred memory of soldiers.

Many of these soldiers' memoirs are as moving and emotional as any from English Canada. The fourth edition of Lapointe's journal was published 6 June 1944, as French Canadian soldiers once more were landing on French soil to fight for their ancestral home. In an epilogue written for the edition, Lapointe reflected on the enduring legacy of the 22nd Battalion and their

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The men of the 22nd Battalion pass Lieutenant-General Arthur Currie (marked with arrow) as he reviews the Canadian Corps as it crosses the Rhine River at Bonn, December 1918.

experience of the Great War. What he remembered the most about the end of war was the arrival of the 22nd in Quebec in the spring of 1919, "de son défilé triomphal à travers les rues de Montréal et des acclamations délirantes qui le saluèrent partout sur son passage."⁷⁴ All the horrors of war were now past and the survivors had only "joie de vivre" as they paraded in front of cheering crowds. He did not remember a bitter betrayal through conscription, or English persecution, or the soldiers as victims of grand imperial designs. Lapointe instead celebrated the victory of the soldiers with the people of Quebec. His final words to the young men of Quebec who now fought anew were "l'honneur et la liberté reflouriront en terre française et de nouveau la Grande Martyre fera rayonner le flambeau de son héroïsme et de sa culture sur un monde libéré de ses chaînes sur un monde libéré de ses chaînes."⁷⁵ Long after his generation had first shed blood in service of their country, Lapointe's message was the same.

Chaballe too wrote a stirring epitaph for his former battalion. It was 11 November and he stood

before a cenotaph, 25 years after his experience on the European battlefields. As the two minutes of silence began, he desperately tried to remember each of his friends long since gone. The moment stretched on as countless names, faces, stories, and places flashed through his mind. Then it ended – too soon for Chaballe – who could not remember them all in time.⁷⁶ It is a poignant reflection. Even the memory of those who had been there cannot do justice to what the fallen deserve. These veterans did not represent the vast majority of Quebecois, nonetheless they represented those unaffected by the decades between the wars. Those that still believed the brave and righteous soldiers of Quebec had fought for higher ideals. They may be few but historians cannot ignore the longevity of their beliefs.⁷⁷

Much as the memory of the 22nd Battalion veterans had in common with the memory of veterans from English Canada, by 1919 that memory was at odds with the narrative of Quebec's wartime experience that had become predominant in both English and French Canada. The view among many English Canadians

that French Canadians had refused to fight and had nearly rebelled against the prevailing patriotism that had carried the war to its victorious conclusion to no small extent drew on Bourassa's stand against an imperialistic war. Those who sympathized with Bourassa were more than happy to be seen as the villain in English Canada because it meant they could be the heroes in their own telling for resisting the injustices of conscription and imperialism. It was a simple history of Canada, a black and white version that did not allow for shades of grey. Nationalists among both linguistic groups in the country ignored the experience of the 22nd Battalion: a French-speaking Canadian patriot was either not truly French Canadian or not truly patriotic.

Yet the soldiers of the 22nd Battalion did not quietly disappear. They remembered their fallen comrades and the sacrifices they had made. They had fought for duty, honour and religion. They did not fight for the province that by 1917 and 1918 had come to resist the war effort. They fought for the province that was a full partner in Canadian

confederation and a continental island of its own unique culture and religion. The veterans themselves, as chief proponents of this memory, sanctified it through their writing. Justification for their voluntary participation in the war to their readers was implicit in every phrase. In the void between the dominant discourses of the war, they formed their own, not least to make the horror meaningful to themselves. As Cornéloup reminded his readers in the closing pages of his remembrance of his comrades, the French Canadian who had fought in the Great War was special; "Il a bien mérité de la Patrie."⁷⁸

Notes

1. Tim Cook, *At the Sharp End* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2007), p.521.
2. Hew Strachan, "The Battle of the Somme and British Strategy," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 21, no.1 (1998), p.93.
3. David Campbell, "A Forgotten Victory: Courcellette, 15 September 1916," *Canadian Military History* 16, no. (Spring 2007), p.40.
4. *Ibid.*, p.44.
5. *Ibid.*, p.45.
6. This account of the battle is derived from "Story of the 22nd Battalion, September 15th, 1916 the Capture of Courcellette," *Canadian Military History* 16, no.2 (Spring 2007), p.49. The account is anonymous; it was found in the George Metcalf Archival Collection without a source or date.
7. See Thomas-Louis Tremblay, *Journal de Guerre (1915-1918)*, Marcelle Cinq-Mars, ed. (Outremont, Quebec: Athena Éditions, 2006), pp.166-67. Tremblay's record differs slightly from that of Joseph Chaballe who stated that 7 officers were killed and 11 were wounded, which differs again from the document "Story of the 22nd Battalion," from the George Metcalf Archives. As well, they disagree on who exactly was wounded; see Joseph Chaballe, "Courcellette: Glorieux fait d'armes du 22ème Régiment Canadien-Français," *La Canadienne: le Magazine du Canadien Français* 2, no.3 (October, 1920) 14; "Story of the 22nd Battalion," p.56.
8. Library and Archives Canada, "We Were There: Claudius Cornéloup," 11 Nov. 2000, <<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/firstworldwar/025005-2200-e.html#e>> (accessed 7 December 2009), Letter to Henri Bourassa, French version, page 3 [translation source which was also provided reads as follows: ...the lasting glory of Courcellette. The 22nd of those days was marching towards immortality].
9. [if hell were as abominable as what I saw in Courcellette, then I would not wish my worst enemy to go there] As quoted Jean-Pierre Gagnon, *Le 22e Bataillon (canadien-français), 1914-1919: étude socio-militaire* (Ottawa: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1986), p.104. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.
10. The argument that Bourassa was against war was the construction of English Canadian commentators. For a different view, based on analysis of his writings, see Robert Rumilly, *Henri Bourassa: La Vie Publique d'un Grand Canadien* (Montreal: Éditions Chantecler, 1953); Joseph Levitt, *Henri Bourassa on Imperialism and Biculturalism, 1900-1918* (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing Company, 1970); or Réal Belanger, "Bourassa, Henri," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*.
11. Toronto businessmen began the *Bonne Entente* movement, which sought to unify the divided country by bringing together English and French Canadian community leaders. Ultimately, it failed to combat the influence of Bourassa of others opposed to the war in Quebec. See Brian Cameron, "The Bonne Entente Movement, 1916-1917: From Cooperation to Conscription," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 13, no. 2 (1978), pp.42-55; Desmond Morton, *When Your Number's Up: The Canadian Soldier in the First World War* (Toronto: Random House, 1993), pp.55-62.
12. Chief among these grievances was the enactment of Regulation 17 by the province of Ontario in 1912, which severely limited the teaching of the French language in public schools there. See Margaret Prang, "Clerics, Politicians and the Bilingual Schools Issue in Ontario, 1910-1917," *Canadian Historical Review* 41, no.4 (1960), pp.281-307; Marilyn Barker, "The Ontario Bilingual Schools Issue: Sources of Conflict," *Canadian Historical Review* 47, no.3 (1966), pp.227-248; Robert M. Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982).
13. Numerous works have dealt with the issue of conscription and its consequences in French Canada. For some of the most prominent, see Carl Berger, *Conscription 1917* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969); Jean Provencher, *Québec sous la loi des mesures de guerre 1918* (Trois-Rivières: Les éditions du Boréal Express, 1971); J.L. Granatstein and J. Mackay Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977). For a more recent overview and analysis, see Martin Auger, "On the Brink of Civil War: The Canadian Government and the Suppression of the 1918 Quebec Easter Riots," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no.4 (December 2008), pp.503-540. For an account of the Francoeur motion, see Lomer Gouin, *The True Spirit of Quebec: Sir Lomer Gouin's speech on the Francoeur Motion* (Quebec, 1918).
14. Jonathan F. Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), p.259.
15. *Ibid.* For work dealing with English Canadians against the war see Thomas Socknat, *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987); for a more focused analysis of some dissidents, see Adam Crerar, "Ontario and the Great War," in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, David Mackenzie, ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), pp.230-271.
16. Elizabeth Armstrong, *Crisis in Quebec 1914-18* (1937; repr. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), pp.46-53. It is important to note that the book is based on French language sources despite Armstrong being American.
17. A.I. Silver, *The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation 1864-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), p.224. Howard Marraro identified 135 Canadians fighting with the Papal Zouaves, see his "Canadian and American Zouaves in the Papal Army, 1868-1870," *Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report* 12 (1944-45), p.83.
18. Silver, p.233.
19. Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldier's Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004) pp.171, 277.
20. Papineau to Bourassa, R4911-0-8-E, vol.3, Talbot Mercer Papineau Fonds.
21. *Le Devoir*, 5 August 1916, p.1 (translation from English version of letter found in Talbot Mercer Papineau Fonds, vol.3; see also R8069-0-5, reel M-721, Fonds Bourassa for French version as originally published).
22. As quoted in Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), p.265.
23. Many newspapers self-censored their content for the course of the war, including *Le Devoir*, but their pages still offer some conclusions towards a French-Canadian view of the battle. For more information on censorship, see Jeff Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship during Canada's Great War* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1996).
24. The province's total population as of the 1911 census was 2,003,232. All papers were published in Montreal (estimated population of 550,000) with the exception of the *L'Action Catholique* which was published in Quebec (estimated population of 90,000). Their circulation in 1915 was: *The Star*, 106,769; *La Presse*, 117,975; *La Patrie*, 46,494; *Le Devoir*, 18,894; *L'Action Catholique*, 14,250; see McKim's *Directory of Canadian Publications*, 1915.
25. As an aside, the estimated English population of Montreal in 1915 was 25.8 percent while the French population was estimated to be 63.5 percent: Andrew Sancton, *Governing the Island of Montreal: Language differences and metropolitan politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p.27.
26. *The Montreal Star*, 18 September 1916, p.10.
27. *Ibid.*, 19 September 1916, p.1.
28. *Ibid.*, 23 September 1916, p.1.

29. Ibid., 15 September 1916, p.4.
30. Ibid., 18 September 1916, p.10.
31. *Le Devoir*, 21 September 1916, 3; *L'Action Catholique*, 21 September 1916, p.8.
32. [the blind accomplices of imperialism] [past complacencies] *Le Devoir*, 15 September 1916, p.1.
33. [The Great Courage and Initiative of our French Canadians] *La Patrie*, 16 September 1916, p.3.
34. [If the fate of the soldier whom the homeland calls to arms, to confront the invading enemy and who succumbs with great glory in accomplishing his sacred duty, is worthy of praise and envy, how great must be the admiration for those who willingly fly to the help of their threatened homeland and generously offer their life for it] Ibid., 28 September 1916, p.11.
35. [men you see working on their farms in the province of Quebec or in the factories of New England] *L'Action Catholique*, 20 September 1916, p.3.
36. For an overview of the support and dissent in Catholic Church in Quebec, see René Durocher, "Henri Bourassa, les Évêques et la guerre de 1914-1918," *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers* 6 (1971), pp.248-75. For a wider sketch of Catholicism's role in the Canadian army, though not specifically focused on French Canada by any means, see Mark G. McGowan, "Harvesting the 'Red Vineyard': Catholic Religious Culture in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919," *Catholic Canadian Historical Association Historical Studies* 64 (1998), pp.47-70. These brief articles leave many unanswered questions and much more work is required if historians are to fully understand the reasons for the Catholic clergy's support of the war than can be explored here.
37. [praises of the French Canadians] *L'Action Catholique*, 20 September 1916, p.3.
38. Gagnon, pp.38-41.
39. [the Canadian volunteers proved to the world that knew how to attack as well as they could defend] *La Presse*, 20 September 1916, p.4.
40. [The French Canadians shine on the front] Ibid., 22 September 1916, p.4.
41. Ibid., 18 September 1916, p.2.
42. Ibid., 23 September 1916, p.4.
43. Vance, p.119.
44. J.A. Holland, *Les Poilus Canadiens* (1919). *Les Poilus* has no publisher listed, but Holland's other work is *Story of the Tenth Canadian Battalion 1914-1917* (London: Canadian War Records Office, 1919). It is not known if *Les Poilus* is also from the War Records Office.
45. [fight for justice, fight for the rights of man and the right of God, it was our historic task, and it is our glory, which was sometimes painful] Holland, p.5.
46. [impetuous momentum of the French Canadians, who swept away everything before them and broke like a straw the resistance of a numerically superior enemy] Ibid., p.29.
47. [France still bleeds for the cause of humanity. She needs help and it must never be said that she appealed in vain to the descendants of those who, 300 years ago, carried her name, her language and her religion to the shores of New France] Ibid., p.43.
48. Arthur Lapointe, *Souvenirs et impressions de ma vie de soldat, 1916-1919*, 4th ed. (St. Ulric, Quebec: Le Devoir, 1944).
49. [I have the consolation of having been useful to my country, and of having paid my debt of gratitude to ancestral France] Ibid., p.9.
50. Ibid., pp.52-53.
51. [to have pity on me and to give me the courage to endure valiantly all my trials] Ibid., p.37.
52. [the absence of their mother] Ibid., p.184.
53. [a little balm on [his] bruised heart] Ibid., p.185.
54. "Story of the 22nd Battalion, September 15th, 1916 the Capture of Courcellette," p.54.
55. [The soldiers see nothing. Blind, they continue their funeral procession in this labyrinth where, at each step, they bump into a squashed form once born by a mother] Claudius Corneloup, *L'Épopée du Vingt-Deuxième* (Montreal: La Presse, 1919), p.69.
56. [All these names, illustrious and unknown, fallen on the fields of victory, must be engraved in golden letters upon a national monument] Ibid., p.150.
57. [our hearts beat sorrowfully in painful constraint] Ibid., p.115.
58. As quoted in McGowan, p.58.
59. Gagnon, p.345.
60. [The enemy resistance was desperate, the tenacity of our men was sublime, the 22nd can say that it fought one against 12. Combat intensified, hand to hand, with bayonets, with daggers, with canes. Blood flowed in the streets. Our soldiers called out in French, and fought in the French way, that is to say, with irresistible energy] Corneloup, p.55.
61. Gagnon, p.103. Gagnon states that 6 officers died, 5 were wounded; 82 men died and 114 were wounded.
62. [a soul to lead it through great and wonderful steps] Library and Archives Canada, "We Were There: Claudius Corneloup."
63. [How did you attack with so few people] [we did not know it ourselves] Corneloup, p.63.
64. Chaballe, "Courcellette: Glorieux fait d'armes du 22ème Régiment Canadien-Français," p.1. (The copy referenced here is a version translated from the original by the Department of the Secretary of State, 1980.)
65. Ibid., p.16.
66. Ibid., p.37.
67. Ibid., p.41.
68. Ibid., p.14.
69. For some discussion of disciplinary problems resulting from being French soldiers in an English army, see Gagnon, 307-308 and Maxime Dagenais, "Une Permission!...C'est Bon pour une Recrue: Discipline and Illegal Absences in the 22nd (French-Canadian) Battalion, 1915-1919," *Canadian Military History* 18, no.4 (Autumn 2009), pp.3-16.
70. Chaballe, "Courcellette," p.15.
71. Ibid., p.41.
72. [They held out until the end] [the souls of the sons of old France has not degenerated] Joseph Chaballe, *25e anniversaire de la bataille de Courcellette, 1916-1941* (Montreal, 1941), p.4.
73. [Let us be worthy of the 22nd] Ibid., p.6.
74. [its triumphal procession through the streets of Montreal and the cheering which greeted them everywhere in their path] Ibid., p.257.
75. [honour and the freedom will bloom again on French soil and again the Great Martyr will shine the torch of her heroism and her culture on a world freed of its chains] Ibid., p.259.
76. Joseph Chaballe, *Histoire du 22e bataillon canadien-français, 1914-1919* (Montreal: Les Éditions Chanteclerc Ltée, 1952), p.407.
77. One notable absence in this paper is one of the most famous veterans of the 22nd Battalion: Georges P. Vanier. Vanier, who joined the Vandoos in 1915, earned numerous decorations for courage in combat, including the Military Cross and Bar, and the Distinguished Service Order. At Chérisy he was wounded along with many other Vandoos and his right leg was amputated. Despite this grievous injury, he would have a highly successful career as a diplomat after the war that culminated in his appointment as Governor General in 1959. Vanier kept a diary while he served with the 22nd Battalion on the Western Front, but it is not included in the present paper because Vanier did not publish it himself, and in fact it did not finally appear in print until 2000: Georges P. Vanier, *Georges Vanier, soldatier la guerre letters and diaries, 1915-1919*, Deborah Cowley, ed. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2000). The difference between the audience, and the fact that Vanier himself did not publish the diary, is important. Vanier's memoirs were presented and absorbed in an era of Quebec that was changed from the world of his fellow veterans.
78. Corneloup, p.150.

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