

CLASS AND CONGREGATION:  
SOCIAL RELATIONS IN TWO ST. JOHN'S,  
NEWFOUNDLAND, ANGLICAN PARISHES, 1877-1909

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**CLASS AND CONGREGATION: SOCIAL RELATIONS IN TWO  
ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND, ANGLICAN PARISHES, 1877-1909**

by

**Laura Bonnie Colleen Morgan**

A thesis submitted to the  
School of Graduate Studies  
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St. John's

Newfoundland



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## **ABSTRACT**

St. Mary's Anglican church was located in the working-class West End of St. John's, Newfoundland, and St. Thomas's in the upper and middle-class East End. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, St. Mary's parishioners and congregation shared skilled working-class experience and contacts. In contrast, while St. Thomas's parishioners were mainly working class, the congregation was dominated by the bourgeoisie. Secular class differences shaped church developments, and affected parishioners' experience of Victorian and Edwardian Anglicanism. St. Mary's lay administration included church wardens and a skilled working and lower middle-class vestry. There was no vestry at St. Thomas's, and the church wardens were secularly powerful men. St. Mary's lay administration was more democratic, whereas St. Thomas's operated on a system of personal authority. St. Mary's and St. Thomas's systems of financing were similar, but St. Mary's was more aware of the financial difficulties its parishioners could face. It designed a system to accommodate irregular incomes, and encouraged donations from every member of the community. At St. Thomas's, rectors emphasised large personal donations from the wealthy. Theologically, St. Mary's was High Church, and St. Thomas's Low. St. Thomas's was more affected by Ritualism, a liturgical and architectural revival associated with middle-class consumerism. St. Mary's congregation was less interested in making their church into a "fashionable" place of worship. Instead, the use of locally built items and hand-made gifts showed an aesthetic rooted in community and craft pride. At St. Thomas's, Victorian bourgeois ideology,

which included female domesticity, shaped parish poor relief. Efforts to help the poor at St. Mary's were more communal, with less attention to judging the "deservedness" of needy parishioners. Likewise, the most successful voluntary associations at St. Thomas's were those with a prescriptive mandate, especially promoting the bourgeois ideals of True Womanhood and Christian Gentlemen. At St. Mary's, voluntary associations were community-based and fraternal. In St. John's, early feminism was centred in East End society, and the activities of St. Thomas's women showed this influence. At St. Mary's, women had limited parochial power and were less recognized for their contributions.

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

In English Canada, the place of religion in social history has only recently come to prominence.<sup>1</sup> In Great Britain, James Obelkevich, a member of the History Workshop, identified the importance of such studies in the mid-1970s. He believed that every aspect of religion had "a social context and a social resonance", and that religious institutions developed according to their specific social context.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, R.Q. Gray and Stephen Yeo believed that the study of religious activities helped historians understand more general features of 19th-century society and social relations.<sup>3</sup> Built on these premises, this study focuses on the way social relations of class and gender affected men's and women's experiences of religious institutions in late 19th and early 20th-century St. John's, Newfoundland. It also examines the way these social relations shaped organized religious institutions.

Gregory S. Kealey has recently written that English Canadian social historians need to consider questions of power relations and the development of other classes and

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<sup>1</sup> See Mark G. McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister: Some Reflections on Developments in the Study of Religion in Canada, 1980-1990," International Journal of Canadian Studies 1-2 (1990), pp. 175-202.

<sup>2</sup> James Obelkevich, Religion and Rural Society: South Lindsey 1825-1875 (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. viii, ix-x.

<sup>3</sup> R.Q. Gray, "Religion, Culture, and Social Class in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Edinburgh," in Geoffrey Crossick (ed.), The Lower Middle Class in Britain 1870-1914 (London: Croom Helm, 1977), p. 141; Stephen Yeo, Religion and Voluntary Organizations in Crisis (London: Croom Helm, 1976), p. 179.

"class elements" alongside their studies of working-class agency and class conflict.<sup>4</sup> With this in mind, this study considers the experiences of, and connections between, people from a wide variety of socioeconomic backgrounds as they came together in a organized religious community. Power relations are considered in light of Gramsci's argument that dominant classes (who are not necessarily the capitalist class) retain power mainly through ideological hegemony, and that the church was a key institution in that process.<sup>5</sup> While the moral codes and "respectability" associated with Victorian Christianity were part of the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie, this study also considers Geoffrey Crossick's view that such hegemony affected every member of society – not just the working class – with its ideology of behavioural expectations.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, this investigation shows that a skilled working-class cultural hegemony can exist in a setting where they, rather than the bourgeoisie, are the dominant social presence.

The case studies are the Anglican parishes of St. Mary's (also known as St. Mary the Virgin) and St. Thomas's for the period from 1877, when both were made

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<sup>4</sup> Gregory S. Kealey, "Class in English-Canadian Historical Writing: Neither Privatizing, Nor Sundering," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 27, 2 (Summer 1992), p. 126.

<sup>5</sup> Lynne Sorrel Marks, "Ladies, Loafers, Knights, and 'Lasses'": the Social Dimensions of Religion and Leisure in Late Nineteenth Century Small Town Ontario," Ph.D. thesis, York University, 1992, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Gray, "Religion, Culture, and Social Class," pp. 136, 140, 149. Gray argued, for example, that members of the lower middle classes helped diffuse the cultural products of the bourgeoisie in their efforts to imitate a middle and upper-class lifestyle.

independent parishes of the Diocese of Newfoundland, to the first decade of the 20th century.<sup>7</sup> In the period under investigation, St. Mary's Church stood on the southside of St. John's harbour and served the West End Anglican community.<sup>8</sup> Geographically, the parish included the South Side, the district from Long Bridge (which joined the north and south sides of the harbour) east to Springdale Street, and the area west of the Long Bridge, including Mundy Pond, Topsail, Heavy Tree, and Brookfield Roads. St. Thomas's, at the corner of Military and King's Bridge Roads, served the East End. Its parish boundaries were King's Road, Cochrane Street, and the junction of Portugal Cove and Torbay Roads, including the district known as George's Town (south of Forest and east of King's Bridge Roads, including the Battery), Quidi Vidi Village, and the settled area around the Virginia River and White Hills.<sup>9</sup> While the centrally located Cathedral parish and its mission church (later St. Michael and All Angels) were an important part

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<sup>7</sup> Both churches underwent major renovations during this decade: St. Thomas's in 1904 and St. Mary's in 1909. The time frame was based on the activity surrounding these projects.

<sup>8</sup> In the 1960s the southside St. Mary's was demolished as part of a harbour development project and a new church was opened on Craigmillar Avenue. Church of St. Mary the Virgin, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1859-1984: 125 Years of Service (St. John's: the Church, 1986), pp. 50-2; Helen Porter, Below the Bridge: Memories of the South Side of St. John's (St. John's: Breakwater, 1979), p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Along with those in the parish church, services were held by St. Thomas's clergy in Christ Church, Quidi Vidi, and in the school chapel at Virginia. As well, families and individuals from such areas as Maxse Street, Barnes, Monkstown, and Rennie's Mill Roads were members of St. Thomas's congregation, despite the official parish boundaries. At St. Mary's, services were offered at the school chapel in Brookfield. "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Oct. 1901); "St. Mary the Virgin," Diocesan Magazine (Apr. 1913); Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Women's Mission Association Minute Book, 9 Feb. 1880.

of the St. John's Anglican community, St. Mary's and St. Thomas's were selected because of the potential for comparison suggested by the socioeconomic profile of the city.

Throughout most of the period St. John's, like the rest of the colony, was in economic depression. This culminated in the financial crisis of 1895. The island's fishing economy, which had its commercial base in St. John's, depended on international market conditions for its well being, and this led to unstable population figures and steady out-migration from 1846 until 1900. There was some recovery around the turn of the century, mainly due to increased manufacturing, public works projects, and railway-related jobs. Greater employment opportunities meant a population increase from 24, 823 in 1891 to 34, 113 in 1911.<sup>10</sup>

Increased manufacturing was part of the Newfoundland government's endorsement of industrialization. Goods produced by St. John's artisans in small shops during the 1870s were replaced by 1914 with those manufactured in larger, merchant-funded factories or those imported from industrial centres elsewhere.<sup>11</sup> This change affected the character of the St. John's secondary labour force, and could be seen

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<sup>10</sup> Jessie Chisholm, "Organizing on the Waterfront: the St. John's Longshoremen's Protective Union (L.S.P.U.), 1890-1914," *Labour/Le Travail* 26 (Fall 1990), p. 45; Melvin Baker, "The Government of St. John's, Newfoundland, 1800-1921," Ph.D. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1980, pp. 315-6, 394.

<sup>11</sup> John Lawrence Joy, "The Growth and Development of Trades and Manufacturing in St. John's, 1870-1914," M.A. thesis, Memorial University, 1977, pp. ii, 13-14; Baker, "Government of St. John's," p. 180; David Alexander, "Newfoundland's Traditional Economy and Development to 1934," in James Hiller and Peter Neary (eds), *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp. 26-7.

especially in the declining importance of fishing-related trades. The percentage of such workers as coopers, sailmakers, and blockmakers declined from 35.5 per cent of the labour force in 1871 to 19 per cent by 1890, and 14.5 per cent by 1911.<sup>12</sup> In general, the number of St. John's families and individuals employed in the primary sector sharply decreased after 1874. In that year 60 per cent of workers farmed or fished. By 1884 the proportion was 24 per cent, and by 1901 3.5 per cent.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, the number of secondary workers grew from 34 per cent in 1874 to 60 per cent in 1884, and reached 74.5 per cent by 1901. The service sector was also growing rapidly, -- from 5.5 per cent of workers in 1874 to 22 per cent by 1901. This sector included merchants, professionals, clerical, and government employees.<sup>14</sup> Most secondary manufacturing produced consumer goods for the domestic market, rather than for export.<sup>15</sup> While there was mechanization of trades after 1870, St. John's did not experience the kind of industrialization associated with cities such as Pittsburgh, Hamilton, and Manchester. Instead, it remained a primarily commercial and administrative town, ultimately dependent on the island's fishing economy.

With commercial, institutional, and economic development St. John's had become

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<sup>12</sup> Joy, "Growth and Development," p. 6. I have rounded figures from secondary sources to the nearest half percentage point.

<sup>13</sup> Baker, "Government of St. John's," p. 396.

<sup>14</sup> Baker, "Government of St. John's," p. 396.

<sup>15</sup> Joy, "Growth and Development," p. 7.



more socially divided by the 1890s, and there was a growing class consciousness among citizens.<sup>16</sup> By the early 20th century the city was experiencing increased working-class militancy and strike action.<sup>17</sup> In 1897, unions organized St. John's' first Labour Day Parade.<sup>18</sup> The city was also becoming more divided by social and economic differences between the East and West Ends. In 1891 and 1901 around 70 per cent of its clergy and teachers, and around 90 per cent of its doctors and lawyers, lived in the East End. There were nearly equal numbers of traders and merchants in 1891, but by 1901 82.5 per cent were in the East End. While almost 70 per cent of office and shop workers lived in the East End in 1891, by 1901 there were equal numbers in both parts of the city. Almost all government employees lived in the East End, although the total declined from 84 per cent in 1891 to 68 per cent in 1901. By 1901 there were slightly more mechanics, or artisans, in the West End. It also had 90 per cent of the city's factory and workshop employees. While the West End was home to most members of the working class, the

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<sup>16</sup> Peter Pope, St. John's Harbour Area Archaeological Potential (Torbay, NF: Past Present, Historic Sites and Material Culture Consulting, 1991), pp. 17-8. In a letter to the Evening Herald in 1890 a working-class writer complained that the Board of Works was made up entirely of the "upper crust". Likewise, Mrs. G. Walsh complained that while she was required to display a quarantine sign when her servant was suspected of having diphtheria, the same was not true for "certain gentlemen" whose servants were also removed. Evening Herald, 5 Feb. 1890, 3 Mar. 1890.

<sup>17</sup> Chisholm, "Organizing on the Waterfront," p. 173.

<sup>18</sup> Bill Gillespie, A Class Act: An Illustrated History of the Labour Movement in Newfoundland and Labrador (St. John's: Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour, 1986), p. 22.

East End contained the "bulk of wealth, culture, and refinement" in the city.<sup>19</sup>

St. Mary's was located in the industrial, working-class district of St. John's and St. Thomas's in the wealthy, middle and upper-class one. Worshippers standing on the steps of St. Thomas's could survey Government House and its grounds, while the Colonial Building, seat of government, was only a short walk away. Standing nearby were some of the finest, most substantial private homes in the colony. In contrast, worshippers at the door of St. Mary's breathed air scented by cod liver and seal oil factories. The view was of cooperages, the dry dock, and piers where north-side merchant firms unloaded, stored and loaded their fish, coal and salt. Also nearby were the gas works, and later, the railway yards.<sup>20</sup>

East and West End differences, along with growing class awareness in St. John's, are at the heart of this study. At St. Thomas's, a congregation dominated by a commercial and political elite created a church shaped by middle-class Victorian values despite the high number of working-class Anglican families and individuals (many of them unskilled) in the parish. St. Thomas's represents one church's experience of increased power and influence for those families and individuals who already enjoyed considerable secular control. At St. Mary's, the congregation was mainly families and individuals of a "middling" status: skilled workers (many of them self-employed) and the

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<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Oliver, "The Rebuilding of St. John's after the Great Fire of 1892: A Study in Urban Morphogenesis," M.A. thesis, Memorial University, 1983, p. 63. Statistics from Appendix A, pp. 223-6.

<sup>20</sup> Joy, "Growth and Development," p. 75; Baker, "Government of St. John's," p. 179

lower middle class. It represents a church where working-class culture was a major influence, especially community sharing, craft pride, and fraternalism.

Chapters One and Two provide the historiographic and methodological background for the study, while Chapter Three establishes the class character of St. Mary's and St. Thomas's churches. Chapters Four and Five discuss institutional aspects of the churches: lay administration, financing, liturgy, architecture, and church decoration. Chapters Six and Seven look at social relations as manifested in parochial systems of poor relief and church-sponsored voluntary associations. In the process it becomes clear that class-based secular values and ideals of gender roles could have a crucial effect on the development of religious institutions at the community level, and that understanding this can lead to enhanced knowledge of a church and the community in which it functioned.

## Chapter Two

### Beyond Institutions and Clerical Elites: Putting Social History into the Study of Newfoundland's Religious Past

The historiography of religion in 19th-century Newfoundland is characterized by an overwhelming tendency to focus on institutional developments and clerical leadership. This is seen in both devotional, pietistic treatments (in which authors wrote from a faith perspective to laud a particular denomination), and in more scholarly work. This chapter examines the existing literature in order to show on a denominational and thematic basis that while such studies are valuable, there is a need to move beyond this narrow, elitist focus. One option for change is being offered by social historians of religion, who consider the impact of ordinary believers on the history of a church, and try to understand the people in the pews as well as those who stood at the altar or in the pulpit.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will discuss literature about the Salvation Army, Presbyterianism, Methodism, the Church of England, and Roman Catholicism in 19th-century Newfoundland, as well as works dealing with denominational education, religion and politics, and religious associations. There is discussion of major themes and approaches, as well as suggestions for future research.

The written history of the Salvation Army in 19th-century Newfoundland is especially dominated by devotionism and institutionally focused accounts. Two

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<sup>1</sup> These divisions and themes were developed in relation to the Canadian historiography in Mark McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister," pp. 175-202.

biographies of John and Blanche Read, who were early Salvationist missionaries to Newfoundland, are hagiographic descriptions, and recently published centennial volumes are celebrations of the Salvationist movement.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, R.G. Moyles sympathetically reviewed the establishment of the Army, and emphasised the enthusiasm and high numbers of devotees which made Newfoundland Salvationism unique in Canada.<sup>3</sup> While there is little discussion of the 19th century in Hewitt Boyd Saunders's thesis on Salvation Army schools, he did consider problems such as social acceptance, financing, and teacher recruitment stemming from the denominational education system.<sup>4</sup> It is clear that more critical research is needed, and Lynne Marks's work on Salvationism in Ontario can serve as an excellent model.<sup>5</sup>

Several of the early pietistic narratives of Methodism in Newfoundland were part of regional, national and international overviews.<sup>6</sup> Newfoundland became a district in

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<sup>2</sup> Blanche Read, Life of John Read (Toronto: Salvation Army Printing and Publishing, [1899]); The Lady with the Other Lamp (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1919); A Hundred Anthems Rise: Reflections on the St. John's No. 1 Corps (St. John's: Salvation Army Temple Corps, 1986); His Promises are Sure: A Century of Salvation, St. John's No. 2 Corps, 1888-1988 (St. John's: Creative, 1988); and Pathway of Duty: A Hundred Years Journey, Dildo-New Harbour Corps, 1893-1993 (St. John's: Jespersen, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> R.G. Moyles, The Blood and Fire in Canada: A History of the Salvation Army in the Dominion, 1882-1976 (Toronto: P. Martin Associates, 1977), pp. 79-87.

<sup>4</sup> Hewitt Boyd Saunders, "The Origin and Development of Salvation Army Schools in Newfoundland," M.Ed. thesis, Acadia, 1975, pp. 2-3.

<sup>5</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," passim.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Thomas Watson Smith, History of the Methodist Church within the Territories Embraced in the Late Conference of Eastern British America (Halifax: Methodist

the Eastern British America Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1855, and a conference of the Methodist Church of Canada in 1884. Strengthening this union may have been one reason why these historians often stressed connections between Newfoundland and Canadian Methodism.<sup>7</sup> In general, these accounts centred around a patronizing description of Laurence Coughlan's ministry to a backward and amoral population, praised the dedicated laity who kept Methodism alive, and emphasized William Black's visit in 1791, which initiated a widespread revival. Stress was placed on Newfoundland as the first Methodist mission in North America and as an enthusiastic stronghold of the international Church.<sup>8</sup> In general, these accounts were based on William Wilson's Newfoundland and its Missionaries, which was the first volume to deal exclusively with Newfoundland Methodism.<sup>9</sup> Later, J.W. Nichols published an equally

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Book Room, 1877, 1890); The Centenary of Methodism in Eastern British America, 1782-1882 ([1882]); John J. Colter, Methodism: its Divisions and Unions and its Missions (Toronto: Ryerson Press, [1924]); A.B. Hyde, The Story of Methodism throughout the World (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1894); D.W. Johnson, History of Methodism in Eastern British America (Sackville, N.B.: Tribune Printing, n.d.); Alexander Sutherland, The Methodist Church and Missions in Canada and Newfoundland (Toronto: Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, 19--).

<sup>7</sup> Naboth Winsor, "Methodism in Newfoundland, 1855-1884," M.A. thesis, Memorial University, 1970, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Centenary of Methodism, pp. 40-2; Colter, Methodism: its Divisions and Unions, pp. 76, 81-2; Hyde, Story of Methodism, p. 870; Smith, History of the Methodist Church, pp. 45-59, 276. These themes were repeated in a more recent work: Arthur Betts, Bishop Black and his Preachers (Sackville, N.B.: Tribune Press, 1976).

<sup>9</sup> William Wilson, Newfoundland and its Missionaries (Cambridge, Mass.: Dakin and Metcalf, 1866).

uncritical and biographical celebration of Methodism in St. John's.<sup>10</sup>

Theses by Jacob Parsons and Naboth Winsor represent scholarly consideration of Newfoundland Methodism.<sup>11</sup> Both are examples of the thin line that can exist between traditional, devotional history and critical, scholarly enquiry. Parsons described the Methodist establishment, organization, missions, and education, concluding that Methodism "did more for moulding character and defining values [among the early settlers of Newfoundland] than any other single institution".<sup>12</sup> Winsor too was overtly sympathetic, and focused on institutional developments without considering Methodism within the larger framework of British North America and Great Britain. He also downplayed Methodist involvement in politics and denominational rivalries.<sup>13</sup> Winsor's church histories are as uncritical and devotional as those published by his fellow cleric, Charles Lench, over two generations before.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> J.W. Nichols, A Century of Methodism in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1815-1915 (St. John's: Dicks, 1915).

<sup>11</sup> Jacob Parsons, "The Origin and Growth of Newfoundland Methodism, 1765-1855," M.A. thesis, Memorial University, 1964; Winsor, "Methodism in Newfoundland," passim.

<sup>12</sup> Parsons, "Origin and Growth," p. 150.

<sup>13</sup> Winsor, "Methodism in Newfoundland," pp. 110, 17-8. See also Winsor's Hearts Strangely Warmed: A History of Methodism in Newfoundland 1765-1925 (Gander: BSC Printers, 1982).

<sup>14</sup> See Naboth Winsor, "By Their Works": A History of the Wesleyville Congregation, Methodist Church, 1874-1925, United Church, 1925-1974 (s.l.: s.n., 1976); Resounding God's Praises on Islands, in Coves: A History of the Methodist Church, 1862-1925 and the United Church 1925-1990, in settlements from Greenspond to Deadman's Bay, except

It was David Pitt's study of Gower Street United (formerly Methodist) Church, that first demonstrated the potential for a more analytical, congregationally-focused Newfoundland church history.<sup>15</sup> Pitt thought of a church "as a composite human being, a living organism with a life of its own", and examined Gower Street United as a congregation "set in the changing milieu of nearly two centuries of history."<sup>16</sup> Pitt set a new standard for writing church history by breaking the pattern of institutional narrative that paid little or no attention to the people who sat in the pews or the surroundings in which a congregation existed. Unfortunately, few local church historians have followed his lead.

Similarly, questions asked in Herbert A. Batstone's 1967 thesis could inspire new

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Wesleyville, Newfoundland (Wesleyville, NF: the author, 1990); and Naboth and Mildred Gough Winsor, A Pilgrimage of Faith: A History of the Methodist Church, 1814-1925 and the United Church, 1925-1990, Elliston, Newfoundland (Wesleyville, NF: Naboth Winsor, 1990). Lench's work includes: An Account of the Rise and Progress of Methodism on the Grand Bank and Fortune Circuits from 1816 to 1916 (s.l.: Barnes, 1916); The History of the Rise and Progress of Methodism on the Western Bay Circuit (Western Bay: s.n., 1912); A Souvenir of the Brigus Methodist Jubilee of the opening of the Church, 1875-1925 (s.l.: s.n., 1925); The Story of Methodism in Bonavista (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1985), 1st ed. 1919. See also W. Eugene Mercer, Centennial Souvenir: The United Church of Canada, Twillingate, Newfoundland: A Centenary of Methodism in Twillingate and Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland, 1831-1931 (Twillingate, NF: Office of the Twillingate Sun, [1933]).

<sup>15</sup> David G. Pitt, Windows of Agates: The Life and Times of Gower Street United (formerly Methodist) Church in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1815-1990 (St. John's: Jespersen, 1990). 1st ed. 1966.

<sup>16</sup> Pitt, Windows, p. 7. See also David G. and Marion Pitt, Goodly Heritage: A Centennial History of the Congregation of Wesley United (formerly Alexander Street Methodist) Church, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1884-1984 (St. John's: Jespersen, 1984). For a similar approach see George Story, George Street United Church, 1873: One Hundred Years of Service (St. John's: the Church, 1973).



and exciting studies of religion in Newfoundland.<sup>17</sup> Batstone considered Methodist theology as promoted by a clerical elite, but also attempted to understand how that theology interacted with the belief systems of outport Newfoundlanders.<sup>18</sup> While he may have been mistaken in assuming all "common" Newfoundlanders embraced Methodism, and while he failed to consider differences in men's and women's experience (and therefore how gender roles could shape belief systems), Batstone anticipated themes that English Canadian social historians of religion are calling for in the 1990s. These include considering religion as a social variable, investigating the relationship between religion and popular culture, and examining the nature of symbolic universes and practices -- how ordinary people viewed reality when wearing glasses tinted by the teachings of a particular religion or denomination.<sup>19</sup>

Scholarly work on 19th-century Newfoundland Methodism by Hans Rollmann was included in the recently published Contribution of Methodism to Atlantic Canada.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Herbert A. Batstone, "Methodism in Newfoundland: A Study of its Social Impact," M.T.S. thesis, McGill University, 1967.

<sup>18</sup> He considered, for example, how work that included daily confrontation with death at sea and the necessity of killing other living creatures shaped Newfoundlanders' religion. Batstone, "Methodism in Newfoundland," pp. 104-6.

<sup>19</sup> McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister," pp. 175-85.

<sup>20</sup> Hans Rollmann, "Laurence Coughlan and the Origins of Methodism in Newfoundland," in Charles Scobie and John Webster Grant (eds.), The Contribution of Methodism to Atlantic Canada (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992). For theories about Newfoundland Methodism see Parsons, "Origin and Growth," pp. 146-7; and Smith, History of the Methodist Church, pp. 352, 418-24. Smith was the only pietistic historian to record the break between Coughlan and Wesley.

Rollmann challenged many assumptions from the devotional literature, including the idea that Newfoundland Methodism, because it was different from that on the mainland, was at an earlier stage of development or was shaped by close ties to Great Britain. Instead, Rollman suggested that the Methodism originally introduced to Newfoundland was influenced more by the English Methodist George Whitefield than by John Wesley, and that this resulted in a Newfoundland church that was fundamentally different from that in the rest of British North America. The smooth passing of ideology and liturgy from Wesley to Coughlan to Newfoundlanders on the north side of Conception Bay was also questioned in works by Patrick O'Flaherty and Arthur Kewley. The latter also argued that the role of William Black in the Newfoundland Methodist revival was greatly exaggerated.<sup>21</sup> While this work is valuable and enlightening, there is a potential to move beyond clerics and other elites. Pitt and Batstone provide some inspiration; more can be found in recent work on 19th-century Methodism by Maritime historians.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Patrick O'Flaherty, "Laurence Coughlan," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography V, and Arthur Kewley, "The First Fifty Years of Methodism in Newfoundland, 1765-1815: Was it Authentic Methodism?," Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society XIX, 1-2 (Mar.-June 1977), pp. 7, 18. Another important recent essay was David G. Pitt, "Methodism and E.J. Pratt: A Study of the Methodist Background of a Canadian Poet and its Influence on his Life and Work," in Scobie and Grant (eds.), Contribution of Methodism, p. 218.

<sup>22</sup> For example, T.W. Acheson, "Methodism and the Problem of Methodist Identity in Nineteenth-Century New Brunswick," and Allen B. Robertson, "'Give All You Can': Methodist and Charitable Causes in Nineteenth-Century Nova Scotia," in Scobie and Grant (eds.), Contribution of Methodism; and Hannah M. Lane, "Wife, Mother, Sister, Friend: Methodist Women in St. Stephen, New Brunswick, 1861-1881," in Janet Guildford and Suzanne Morton (eds.), Separate Spheres: Women's Worlds in the 19th-century Maritimes (Fredericton, NB: Acadiensis Press, 1994).

Although the Presbyterian Church in Newfoundland officially joined with the Canadian Church in 1895, national histories of this denomination have only mentioned Newfoundland in passing.<sup>23</sup> At the same time, besides short parish pieces by antiquarians such as R.C. Smith and Arminius Young, there are few local histories of the Presbyterian Church. There are two full-length works on city churches.<sup>24</sup> That on St. Andrew's Church is straight-forward, institutional history, and although the authors included more general information on Presbyterianism in Newfoundland, many of their interpretations were challenged in Wilfred Moncrieff's more critical work.<sup>25</sup> In contrast, the history of St. David's Church (originally a Dissenters' meeting house) was written by a Bicentennial History Committee that included scholars such as A.A. den Otter and Susan McCorquadae. With attention to context and "church as congregation" (rather than "church as building") approach, this book can be ranked with Pitt's Windows of Agates

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<sup>23</sup> See John Thomas McNeill, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1875-1925 (Toronto: General Board, Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1925); and the more recent John S. Moir, Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (Toronto: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1987).

<sup>24</sup> R.C. Smith, "St. Andrew's Church," Newfoundland Quarterly 4, 4 (Mar. 1905): 2-3; Arminius Young, "The Churches of St. John's: the Kirk," Atlantic Guardian 4, 3 (Dec. 1947): 14; R. Duder (ed.), St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1842-1942 (St. John's: s.n., 1942?); and St. David's Presbyterian Church. Bicentennial History Committee, The Dissenting Church of Christ at St. John's (St. John's: the Church, 1975?).

<sup>25</sup> For example, Moncrieff argued that Presbyterian missions to Newfoundland outposts and towns failed because of isolation and low levels of Scottish emigration, whereas the authors of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church blamed neglectful church government. Compare W.M. Moncrieff, A History of the Presbyterian Church in Newfoundland, 1842-1967 (St. John's: s.n., 1970), pp. 3-5, with St. Andrew's, pp. 8-9.

as a model for church history. Also of value is J.S.S. Armour's thesis on Dissent in St. John's.<sup>26</sup>

In general, scholarly research into Presbyterianism in Canada has been neglected.<sup>27</sup> A November 1994 conference on "The Contribution of Presbyterianism to Atlantic Canada" helped remedy some of this neglect. There was only one paper dealing with Newfoundland on the program, and judging from its title, and the author's other work, the paper was institutional. Other presentations dealt with themes such as the relationship of the church to literature, culture, and social action. There were also critical analyses of missions, theology, and liturgy.<sup>28</sup>

The Church of England was the official church of the British Empire and missionary work was often part of a wider imperial enterprise. Therefore, the earliest written histories of this denomination in Newfoundland were part of general colonial

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<sup>26</sup> J.S.S. Armour, "Religious Dissent in St. John's, 1775-1815," M.A. thesis, Memorial University, 1988. Armour discussed the early union of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Methodists in common worship at St. John's, a characteristic of Dissent he considered unique to Newfoundland. Armour also examined the impact of the Napoleonic Wars on religious developments, the struggle for religious freedom for Dissenters as led by John Jones, and compared developments in Newfoundland with those in the rest of the North Atlantic world.

<sup>27</sup> Terrence Murphy, "The Religious History of Atlantic Canada: The State of the Art," *Acadiensis* XV, 1 (Autumn 1985), p. 157.

<sup>28</sup> "The Contribution of Presbyterianism to Atlantic Canada," [Program of the Conference, 1994].

treatments.<sup>29</sup> In these works, the dominant theme was the self-sacrificing missionary, who braved "severe climate, ... barren land, and extreme poverty" on the island.<sup>30</sup>

Regional works by John Lantry, Thomas Akins, Charles Mockridge, O.R. Rowley, and more recently, Thomas Millman, echoed this pious institutional and biographical focus.<sup>31</sup> These themes were also part of Newfoundland monographs by F.M. Buffett and John Alfred Meaden, as well as most Anglican parish histories.<sup>32</sup> All dealt uncritically with

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<sup>29</sup> For example, James Stewart Murray Anderson, The History of the Church of England, in the Colonies and Foreign Dependencies of the British Empire, 3 vol. (London: F. and J. Rivington, 1845-1856; and Work in the Colonies: Some Account of the Missionary Operations of the Church of England in connection with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (London: Griffith and Farran, 1865).

<sup>30</sup> Work in the Colonies, p. 71.

<sup>31</sup> John Lantry, History of the Church in Eastern Canada and Newfoundland (London: Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, 1892); Thomas B. Akins, A Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Church of England in the British North American Provinces (Halifax: W. Cunnebell, 1849); Charles H. Mockridge, The Bishops of the Church of England in Canada and Newfoundland (Toronto: F.N.W. Brown, 1896); O.R. Rowley, The Anglican Episcopate of Canada and Newfoundland (Milwaukee: Morehouse, 1928); and Thomas R. Millman, Atlantic Canada to 1900: A History of the Anglican Church (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1983).

<sup>32</sup> F.M. Buffett, The Story of the Church in Newfoundland (Toronto: General Board of Religious Education, 1939); John Alfred Meaden, The Anglican Church in Newfoundland (Toronto: Canadian Church Historical Society, 1960. Parish histories include All Saints Anglican Church, Pouch Cove, Newfoundland, 100th Anniversary (Pouch Cove?: the Church?, c. 1982); Thomas G. Ford, Short History of St. Paul's, Harbour Grace (Harbour Grace: Standard Printing, 1936); History of St. Paul's Church, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland (Harbour Grace: Stone Fabric Repair Committee, 1978); Edith M. Manuel, St. Peter's Anglican Church, Twillingate, 125-year History, 1845-1970 (St. John's: Creative, 1983); St. Stephen's Anglican Church, Salvage, Newfoundland, 1865-1990 (Gander: Printmaster, 1990); William White, History of the Town and Parish of Trinity (Trinity: s.n., 1938); Naboth Winsor, The Church between the Tickle: A History of St. James' Anglican Church, Pool's Island, Bonavista Bay (s.l.: the author, 1988) and Through Peril, Toil, and

church establishment and the lives of prominent missionaries and clergy.<sup>33</sup>

Buffett's The Story of the Church in Newfoundland can serve as an example of this approach. Written for the centenary of the Church in Newfoundland, and primarily based on 19th-century missionary accounts (especially that of Edward Wix) and papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the book was intended as a source of "inspiration and encouragement" to readers. Buffett presented the familiar themes of degenerate Newfoundlanders and saintly missionaries, while also discussing Anglican expansion, construction of the Cathedral, and the establishment of schools. Buffett assigned primary importance to Bishop Edward Feild for shaping the Church of England in Newfoundland: a theme that has dominated the more critical historiography.<sup>34</sup>

There are several full-length biographies of Feild, ranging from the near-hagiographic works of Henry William Tucker and Edgar House, to the scholarly

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Pain: the Story of the first 100 years of the Church of England in the northern settlements of Greenspond Mission, Bonavista Bay (s.l.: the author, 1981).

<sup>33</sup> Two of the better parish histories are Portugal Cove Parish History: St. Bartholomew, St. Peter, and St. Lawrence (St. John's: Jespersion, 1990) and Joyce Nevitt, St. Michael and All Angels, 1885-1985 (St. John's: Jespersion, 1985). Neither is scholarly, but both considered the parishes in light of broader social and religious developments.

<sup>34</sup> Buffett, Story of the Church, pp. 7-8, 37-76. Likewise, histories of Queen's Theological College are in an institutional and pietistic style. Joseph James Curling and Charles Knapp's Historical Notes Concerning Queen's College, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1842-1897 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1898) and John Alfred Meaden's More Historical Notes (St. John's: s.n., 1979) are examples. Meaden, former Anglican bishop of Newfoundland, overtly stated his intention to "look with reverence to the record," p. 7.

inquiries pioneered by Frederick Jones.<sup>35</sup> While sympathetic to Feild, Jones asked new questions about the degree to which the bishop influenced Newfoundland politics and society, the nature of his conflicts with other church leaders, and the tension between Tractarian and Evangelical factions of the Newfoundland church that arose from his episcopate. Jones argued that Feild was primarily responsible for the denominational education system, in that the bishop decided that Newfoundlanders were inherently divided by religion and needed a system of education that took this into account.<sup>36</sup> Following on Jones's conclusions, Edward Lear attempted to discover early influences that shaped Feild's interest in education.<sup>37</sup>

The study of the establishment of the denominational education system is a major part of the historiography of religion in 19th-century Newfoundland, with thematic emphasis on whether or not widespread sectarianism was the reason for the system. Vincent Burke argued that there was inherent denominationalism in Newfoundland

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<sup>35</sup> Henry William Tucker, Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of Edward Feild, D.D., bishop of Newfoundland, 1844-1876 (London: W.W. Gardiner, 1879); Edgar House, Edward Feild: the Man and his Legacy (St. John's: Jespersion, 1987); Frederick Jones, "Bishop Feild, A Study in Politics and Religion in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland," Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge, 1971. Jones's other work on Feild includes: "The Early Opposition to Bishop Feild of Newfoundland," Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Association XVI, 2 (June 1974), pp. 30-41; Edward Feild, bishop of Newfoundland, 1844-1876 (St. John's: Newfoundland Historical Society, 1976); "The Making of a Colonial Bishop," Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society XV, 1 (Mar. 1973), pp. 2-13.

<sup>36</sup> Jones, "A Study in Politics," pp. iii-v, 336.

<sup>37</sup> Edward James Lear, "Edward Feild (1801-1876) Ecclesiastic and Educator: His Influence on the Development of Denominational Education in Newfoundland," M.Ed. thesis, Bishop's University, 1986.

society, which caused the secular education system legislated in 1836 to be replaced by a church-centred, but state-controlled, system by 1874.<sup>38</sup> This thesis was widely circulated by Frederick Rowe, who wrote that economic, religious, racial, and geographic factors, because of their "unusual intensity", predetermined the form of the education system.<sup>39</sup>

This predeterminism was rejected by Phillip McCann, who instead introduced the role of politics, economics, class and gender relations in shaping the denominational education system. With a more critical approach than earlier writers, McCann argued that there were alternatives to the denominational system, and tried to understand what motivations and influences lay behind its adoption and implementation.<sup>40</sup> He concluded that a combination of Protestant rivalries and pervasive anti-Catholicism caused Protestant elites in Newfoundland to undermine the non-denominational system before it had a chance to work.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Vincent Burke, "The History of Catholic Education in Newfoundland, the oldest British Colony," LL.D. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1914.

<sup>39</sup> Frederick Rowe, The Development of Education in Newfoundland (Toronto: Ryerson, 1964), pp. 2-3. The "inevitability of denominationalism" argument can also be seen in Rowe's A History of Education in Newfoundland (Toronto: Ryerson, 1952), and G.A. Frecker, "The Origins of the Confessional School System in Newfoundland," Canadian Church Historical Association Study Sessions 38 (1971), p. 10.

<sup>40</sup> Phillip McCann, "The Politics of Denominational Education in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland," in William McKim (ed.), The Vexed Question: Denominational Education in a Secular Age (St. John's: Breakwater, 1988), and "The 'No-Popery' Crusade and the Newfoundland School System, 1836-1874," Canadian Catholic Historical Association Historical Studies (1991).

<sup>41</sup> McCann, "Politics," p. 31, and "No-Popery," p. 97. See also Frederick Jones, "Religion, Education and Politics in Newfoundland, 1836-1875," Journal of the Canadian Church



McCann also presented a new interpretation of the Newfoundland School Society (later the Colonial and Continental Church Society), and its role in the development of education.<sup>42</sup> Challenging several uncritical, celebratory histories written for the Society's centenary in 1923, and rejecting the picture of pietistic altruism, McCann identified an imperialistic and economic motivation for the merchants and members of the British government who supported the Society: education was a way to socialize children into loyalty to the Empire and acceptance of their position in a merchant-dominated society.<sup>43</sup>

Another aspect of the religious history of 19th-century Newfoundland that has been subjected to considerable scholarly analysis is the involvement of the churches, and

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Historical Society XII, 4 (Dec. 1970), pp. 84-73; and Llewellyn Parsons, "Political Involvement in Education in Newfoundland, 1832-1876," (Lecture to the Newfoundland Historical Society, 1975). This analysis of religion, politics, and education in the 19th century was expanded to include questions of class (merchant versus fisher) and gender (women excluded from the mainstream of education, either as teachers or students) in McCann's "Class, Gender, and Religion in Newfoundland Education, 1836-1901," (typescript, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University, 1988).

<sup>42</sup> Phillip McCann, "The Newfoundland School Society 1823-1855: Missionary Enterprise or Cultural Imperialism?", in J.A. Mangan (ed.), "Benefits Bestowed?": Education and British Imperialism (New York: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 95-103.

<sup>43</sup> See George Henry Bolt, The Codner Centenary or the Performance of a Vow: A Short Review of the Rise and Progress of the Colonial and Continental Church Society (1823-1923) (s.l.: s.n., 1924?). This contained themes seen in the other centenary volumes: Samuel Codner, Newfoundland merchant, started a society to educate the poor of Newfoundland after his prayers to survive a stormy transatlantic crossing were answered, and this organization then evolved into a world-wide missionary enterprise, pp. 1-2. See also "Work of the Colonial and Continental Church Society in Newfoundland," in General Notes about the British Empire (s.l.: s.n., 1922) and Our Beginnings 1823-1923: Being a Short Sketch of the History of the Colonial and Continental Church Society (London: the Society, 1923) and H.A. Seegmiller, "The Colonial and Continental Church Society in Eastern Canada," D.D. thesis, Huron College, 1966.

especially the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops, in political affairs. Political historians have recognized the impact of religious differences on the Newfoundland experience.<sup>44</sup> It is important to note that this focus on politics is consistent with historiography in English Canada, where until the late 1980s historians of religion felt that focusing on politics was the only way their work could earn academic respectability.<sup>45</sup>

An example of the focus on politics is Frederick Jones' overview of religious history from 1830 to 1875. Jones attributed the sectarian conflicts of the 19th century to outside influences, such as Bishop Michael Fleming's Ultramontaniam and Bishop Edward Feild's Tractarianism. Jones also stressed the importance of religion in shaping Newfoundland society along politically conservative, nationalistic, and sectarian lines.<sup>46</sup> In contrast, Raymond J. Lahey demonstrated that the idea that Newfoundland society was

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<sup>44</sup> While discussions of sectarianism can be seen in general political histories of Newfoundland, only works that place religion at the centre of the analysis are considered here. For insight into the sectarian politics of the 19th century see, for example, Mildred Howard, *The Harbour Grace Affray* (Newfoundland: City Printers, 1989?) and J.K. Hiller, "The 1855 election in Bonavista Bay: An Anglican Perspective," *Newfoundland Studies* 5, 1 (1989), pp. 59-76.

<sup>45</sup> See William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989) and the review by Elwood Jones in *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Association* XXXII, 1 (Apr. 1990), p. 18. This contrasts with the French Canadian tradition, where the social history of religion is a respected and long-standing area of study. McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister," pp. 182-6.

<sup>46</sup> Frederick Jones, "The Church in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland," *Bulletin of Canadian Studies* V, 1 (Apr. 1981), pp. 25, 27, 38.

free of sectarian animosity prior to the 1832 election campaign was an oversimplification, and suggested that the campaign's sectarian nature was the culmination of a Roman Catholic crusade for full civil rights.<sup>47</sup>

Lahey has also challenged Jones's portrayal of 19th-century sectarian conflicts as peculiar to Newfoundland, and like McCann, has placed them in context.<sup>48</sup> Newfoundland was unique only in that the Church of England had tried to establish itself as the official church in a place where only a minority of the population were Anglican; and there was no system of local government that could serve as a forum for Catholic grievances.<sup>49</sup>

These authors are included in recent anthologies on the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Canada. Both Creed and Culture and Religion and Identity deal with the relationship between religion and ethnicity, and place religious developments in a broader historical context. These works show how scholarly interest in the study of English-speaking Roman Catholics has grown during the past decade, and how studies of anti-Catholicism, or women's roles in shaping religious traditions, have a place alongside

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<sup>47</sup> Raymond J. Lahey, "Religion and Politics in Newfoundland: the Antecedents of the General Election of 1832," (typescript, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University, 1979).

<sup>48</sup> Raymond J. Lahey, "Catholicism and Colonial Policy in Newfoundland, 1779-1845," in Terrence Murphy and Gerald Stortz (eds.), Creed and Culture: The Place of English-Speaking Catholics in Canadian Society, 1750-1930 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).

<sup>49</sup> Lahey, "Catholicism and Colonial Policy," pp. 49-50, 68.

more traditional institutional history.<sup>50</sup> Terrence Murphy's article on trusteeship in Creed and Culture was one of the first pieces of 19th-century Newfoundland religious historiography to redirect attention from political biography and institutional development towards congregational experiences and the socioeconomic implications of religious belief.<sup>51</sup>

Most scholarly research into the Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland thus far, however, has dealt with Catholic emancipation and church establishment. Many of these studies were published for the church's bicentenary in 1984, including biographical works by Cyril Byrne and Raymond Lahey, and Hans Rollmann's research into Catholic emancipation.<sup>52</sup> Rollmann challenged the idea that Governor John Campbell's grant of religious freedom to all denominations was a personal act of generosity.<sup>53</sup> Instead,

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<sup>50</sup> Compare, in Creed and Culture, essays by Bryan Clarke, Robert Choquette, and Murray Nicholson.

<sup>51</sup> Terrence Murphy, "Trusteeship in Atlantic Canada: the Struggle for Leadership among the Irish Catholics of Halifax, St. John's, and Saint John, 1780-1850," in Murphy and Stortz (eds.), Creed and Culture.

<sup>52</sup> Cyril J. Byrne, Gentlemen-Bishops and Faction Fighters (St. John's: Jespersen, 1984); and Raymond J. Lahey, James Louis O'Donel in Newfoundland, 1784-1807: the Establishment of the Roman Catholic Church (St. John's: Newfoundland Historical Society, 1984). Like Jones's work on Feild, Byrne and Lahey wrote sympathetic biographies without slipping into devotional hagiography. For a supplement to Byrne see Hans Rollmann, "Gentlemen-Bishops and Faction Fighters: Additional Letters pertaining to Newfoundland Catholicism, from the Franciscan Library at Killiney (Ireland)," Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society XXX, 1 (Apr. 1988), pp. 3-19.

<sup>53</sup> Hans Rollmann, "John Jones, James O'Donel, and the Question of Religious Tolerance in Eighteenth-century Newfoundland: A Correspondence," Newfoundland Quarterly LXXX, 2 (Summer 1984); and "Richard Edwards, John Campbell, and the Proclamation of Religious

Rollmann considered such influences as a growing Irish population in Newfoundland, relaxation of the English penal laws in 1778, and changes in British North American attitudes towards Roman Catholics.

While there is a considerable body of scholarly literature on the history of the Roman Catholic Church in 19th-century Newfoundland, there are also a large number of traditional, devotional works. Examples of the latter are R.J. Connolly's parish histories of Harbour Grace.<sup>54</sup> Likewise, Paul O'Neill's general history of the Church in Newfoundland is an example of uncritical ecclesiastical history.<sup>55</sup> Another example is a

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Liberty in Eighteenth-century Newfoundland," Newfoundland Quarterly LXXX, 3 (Fall 1984). Much of Rollmann's excellent scholarship falls outside the scope of this essay, including his research into the 18th century and his work on Moravian Missions in Labrador.

<sup>54</sup> Connolly's work includes A History of the Roman Catholic Church in Harbour Grace (St. John's: Creative, 1986); The Roman Catholic Church in Harbour Grace (Harbour Grace: the author, 1984); and "The Faith of our Fathers with Particular Reference to Harbour Grace" (manuscript, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University, 1982). For similar parish studies see: Michael Brosnan, Pioneer History of St. George's Diocese, Newfoundland (Newfoundland: Western Publishing, 1948); Gilbert E. Higgins, A Short History of St. Stephen's Parish, Stephenville, Newfoundland, October 2, 1874 - October 2, 1974 (s.l.: s.n., 1974); "History of the Church in Trepassey" (manuscript, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University, 198-7); Our People, Our Church: Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, Harbour Main, Newfoundland, 1857-1983 (Harbour Main: J. Glavine, 1983); Frank Galgay (ed.), A Pilgrimage of Faith: A History of the Southern Shore from Bay Bulls to St. Shott's (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1983); Frances Marshall, The South Coast Pioneers: 150 Years in the Growth of St. Patrick's Parish, Burin, Newfoundland, 1833-1983 (St. John's: Creative, 1984); and Richard C. Singleton (ed.), St. Patrick's Church, One Hundred Years, 1881-1981 (St. John's: the Church, 1981).

<sup>55</sup> Paul O'Neill, Upon this Rock: The Story of the Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland and Labrador (St. John's: Breakwater, 1984. O'Neill gave more attention to the mythical voyage of St. Brendan than to the episcopate of John Thomas Mullock (who is considered by some to be one of the most powerful figures of the 19th century), and included a glossy

work celebrating the centenary of the Basilica, in which the authors made an effort to place events in a wider social and political context, but generally wrote with the overt denominational bias typical of pietistic historiography.<sup>56</sup> The same is true for Michael Francis Howley's famous Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland. While this was a pioneering and comprehensive study, the future archbishop wrote in a very devotional style and interpreted events to suit his own purposes.<sup>57</sup>

The histories of religious associations in 19th-century Newfoundland display the same characteristics as the literature on individual denominations. There are a number of uncritical narrative accounts of the establishment and operation of the societies, usually published as part of jubilee or centenary celebrations, with few scholarly items to balance the scale.<sup>58</sup> As well, most of the scholarly work emphasised the role of such associations

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photo spread of the 1984 papal visit.

<sup>56</sup> The Centenary of the Basilica-Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1855-1955 (St. John's: Centenary Souvenir Book Editorial Board, 1956?).

<sup>57</sup> Michael Francis Howley, Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland (Boston: Doyle and Whittle, 1888). For example, Howley wrote at a time when the Church was asserting its independence and strength. Therefore, he interpreted Bishop Scallan's tolerant attitudes toward Protestants as the result of a brain disease that "greatly impaired his reason.", p. 246.

<sup>58</sup> See for example, Benevolent Irish Society, Centenary Volume, Benevolent Irish Society, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1806-1906 (Cork: Guy and Co., [1906?]); L.L. Hodder, Brief History of the Society of United Fishermen, 1873-1973 (Newfoundland: the Society, 1973); Loyal Orange Association of Newfoundland, Souvenir Booklet of the 100th Anniversary of Orangeism in Newfoundland (St. John's: the Association, 1963); St. John's Total Abstinence and Benefit Society, Jubilee Volume, 1858-1908 (St. John's: Chronicle Print, [1908]); and Star of the Sea Association, Placentia, 100 years, 1876-1976 (Placentia: the Association?, 1976).

in educational developments or their place in political events.<sup>59</sup> For example, Elinor Senior explored the Orange Order's appeal in Newfoundland and the extent to which it was an arm of Protestant political power.<sup>60</sup> In contrast, Cecil Houston and William Smith noted that Newfoundland Orangeism was unique in Canada, in that the Order became extremely popular and powerful despite low numbers of Irish and Scottish Protestant immigrants. While they reiterated the "tradition of divisiveness" view of Newfoundland, the authors emphasized that the social functions of the Order outweighed the political in most outposts, and that therein lay its appeal.<sup>61</sup> Smith and Houston showed how religious associations could affect or reflect social relationships, an approach that other church historians could take.<sup>62</sup>

Similarly, the potential for new and scholarly inquiry into women's religious organizations in Newfoundland was seen in a piece by Pauline Bradbrook, who

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<sup>59</sup> Examples of an educational focus include Michael L. Crumlish, "The Christian Brothers: A Factor in the Development of Education in Newfoundland," M.A. thesis, Notre Dame, 1932; Augusta Ford, "The Sisters of Mercy in Newfoundland: Their Contribution to Business Education," M.Ed. thesis, Memorial University, 1981; and N.A. Veitch, "The Contribution of the Benevolent Irish Society to Education in Newfoundland from 1823-1875," M.Ed. thesis, St. Francis Xavier University, 1972.

<sup>60</sup> Elinor Kyte Senior, "The Origin and Political Activities of the Orange Order in Newfoundland, 1863-1890," M.A. thesis, Memorial University, 1959.

<sup>61</sup> Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smith, The Sash Canada Wore: A Historical Geography of the Orange Order in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980). With consideration of the cultural and social aspects of the Order, Houston and Smith's work is a useful companion to Senior's political and institutional emphasis.

<sup>62</sup> McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister," p. 184.

considered her study of the Church of England Women's Association as a starting point for critical assessment of Newfoundland women's roles within churches and the impact of such involvement on female lives. While she asked more questions than she provided answers, Bradbrook can be praised for bringing this area of research, which is slowly getting recognition in the rest of Canada, into the sphere of Newfoundland religious studies.<sup>63</sup> In general, work on female organizations in Newfoundland suffers from the same lack of criticism and singular attention to institutional developments that plagues most of the literature. Mary James Dinn's work on the Presentation Sisters and Williamina Hogan's on the Sisters of Mercy, for example, contrasts with Marta Danylewycz's work on Quebec nuns, in which she showed how scholarly consideration of female religious orders is central to the social history of women in Canada.<sup>64</sup> Danylewycz was a pioneer of such work, however, as an institutional and devotional style is typical in the historiography of religious orders.<sup>65</sup>

The historiography of religion in 19th-century Newfoundland, whether scholarly

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<sup>63</sup> Pauline Bradbrook, "A Brief Account of the Church of England Women's Association in Newfoundland," Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Association 28, 2 (1986), pp. 92-93. See Ruth Compton Brouwer, "Transcending the "Unacknowledged Quarantine": Putting Religion into English-Canadian Women's History," Journal of Canadian Studies 27, 3 (1992), pp. 47-61; and McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister," p. 183.

<sup>64</sup> Mary James Dinn, Foundation of the Presentation Congregation in Newfoundland (s.l.: s.n., 1975); Williamina Hogan, Pathways of Mercy in Newfoundland (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1986); and Marta Danylewycz, Taking the Veil: An Alternative to Marriage, Motherhood, and Spinsterhood in Quebec, 1840-1920 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987).

<sup>65</sup> McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister," p. 183.



or pietistic, is characterized by institutional and elitist perspectives. This is not untypical, however. Scholars throughout the entire English-speaking western world have traditionally focused on the intellectual and high institutional aspects of religious history. Examples include the British historian Owen Chadwick, and the American Perry Miller.<sup>66</sup> Since the 1970s, however, American religious historians have started to explore such themes as pluralism and voluntarism, which show the variety of American religious experience and the importance of looking at the history of the ordinary believer. American historians also began considering the religious experiences of females, immigrants, and black slaves, as well as of those people living in the south and the frontier west.<sup>67</sup> In the 1990s, this work has evolved into the "new" American religious history, which focuses on such themes as popular belief and behaviour, lay leadership and the history of congregations.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> For an overview of this tradition in the British historiography see J.N. Morris, Religion and Urban Change: Croydon, 1840-1914 (Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer, 1992), pp. 4-12. For the United States see Judith Wellman, "In Retrospect: Crossing over Cross: Whitney Cross's Burned-Over District as Social History," Reviews in American History, 17, 1 (1989), pp. 159-162. Wellman argued that Cross was one of the first historians to consider religious developments within the social and economic framework of a particular region, that while he focused on intellectual developments, he also employed community-level data, and related socioeconomic circumstances to patterns of personal religiosity.

<sup>67</sup> Stephen J. Stein, "Upside Down and Outside In: A New Look at American Religious History," American Quarterly, 38, 4 (1986), pp. 692-7; and M.D. Kaplanoff, "Chosen People," Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 35, 1 (1984), pp. 125-7.

<sup>68</sup> Philip R. Vandermeer and Robert P. Swierenga (eds.), in Belief and Behaviour: Essays in the New Religious History (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991), pp. 6-7.

In English Canada, the study of elite religious thought and how it inspired widespread movements of revivalism and secularization in the 19th century has continued into the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>69</sup> While such work is important in understanding the history of theology, and how social change and new ideas, such as Darwinism and biblical criticism, affected the religious thought that may have trickled down to the lay believer, it does not directly consider questions about lay spirituality or the workings of local congregations. As in the United States, since the start of the 1990s there has been an increasing move towards studying the way in which class, ethnicity, and gender can affect organized religion and personal spirituality.<sup>70</sup>

In contrast, British social historians have been considering questions of social class and its effect on religion since the late 1950s, when E.R. Wickham first challenged the idea that Victorian England was a homogeneously religious society. He demonstrated, instead, how the practice of religion in 19th-century England was a middle and upper-class phenomenon, and that the working classes were alienated from the

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<sup>69</sup> See David B. Marshall, "Canadian Historians, Secularism and the Problem of the Nineteenth Century," Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Historical Papers, 1993-1994. Examples include Carl Berger, Ramsay Cook, Michael Gauvreau, David Marshall, A.B. McKillop, Margaret Van Die, and William Westfall.

<sup>70</sup> Marshall, "Canadian Historians," p. 68; and McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister," pp. 175-202. Examples of this new focus include Brian Clarke, Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-1895 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993); Doris Mary O'Dell, "The Class Character of Church Participation in late nineteenth-century Belleville, Ontario", Ph.D. thesis, Queen's University, 1990; Murphy, "Trusteeism," *passim*; and Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," *passim*.

churches through the processes of urbanization and industrialization.<sup>71</sup> In recent years this concept of working-class secularism has been challenged as a gross oversimplification. Scholars such as Hugh McLeod are not only considering alternative expressions of religiosity, such as private devotions, but are also taking into account variations of wealth and status within classes and how these variations affected church participation.<sup>72</sup>

To summarize, in English Canada since the early 1990s calls have been made for a shift in the historiography of religion to social and cultural questions, using such variables as gender and class, as can be seen in the British and French Canadian literature.<sup>73</sup> A new type of social religious historiography is developing throughout North America, and work on Newfoundland can be part of this evolving paradigm. In terms of 19th-century history, scholars such as McCann and Murphy have already contributed to this change, while others such as Pitt and Batstone have hinted at the potential for new studies and approaches. Gerald Pocius has looked at the expression of popular religion in Newfoundland interior decoration, and Philip Smith has studied 19th-

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<sup>71</sup> E.R. Wickham, Church and People in an Industrial City (London: Lutterworth, 1957). This same idea can be seen in K.S. Inglis, Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England (London: Routledge, 1963). For an overview of the English literature, see Hugh McLeod, Religion and Irreligion in Victorian England: How Secular was the Working Class? (Bangor, Gwynedd: Headstart History, 1993), pp. 1-4.

<sup>72</sup> McLeod, Religion and Irreligion, p. 31.

<sup>73</sup> See McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister," p. 184; and Michael Gauvreau, "Beyond the Halfway House: Evangelicalism and the Shaping of English Canadian Culture," Acadiensis XX, 2 (Spring 1991), pp. 158-159.

century contact between Methodist missionaries and Beothuks.<sup>74</sup> Each piece is an example of the type of work that can be done on the history of religion in Newfoundland, once the move away from a narrow institutional and clerical focus is made. This thesis will be another step in bringing the "new" religious history into the study of Newfoundland's past.

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<sup>74</sup> Gerald Pocius, "Holy Pictures in Newfoundland Houses: Visual Codes for Secular and Supernatural Relationships," in Peter Narvaez and Martin Laba (eds.), Media Sense: The Folklore-Popular Culture Continuum (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1985), and Philip E.L. Smith, "Beothucks and Methodists," Acadiensis XVI, 1 (Aut. 1986), pp. 118-135.

### Chapter Three

#### "Rich Man in his Castle": Establishing Social Classes for Victorian and Edwardian St. John's

The rich man in his castle,  
The poor man at his gate,  
God made them, high or lowly,  
And ordered their estate.

Hymns Ancient and Modern (1861)

In the late 1960s, historians of 19th-century English Canada began to establish the importance of using social class as a variable when examining the past, and by the 1980s this approach had become an accepted part of the historical scholarship. Works by Gregory S. Kealey and Brian Palmer on the urban-industrial working classes of Toronto and Hamilton, Ontario, focusing on class culture and consciousness among skilled workers, are excellent examples of the new approach. However, until the late 1980s little work had been done on establishing the size and composition of social classes.<sup>1</sup> English-Canadian social historians may have been influenced by E.P. Thompson's view that social "classes" are not so much static analytical categories as the results of dynamic relationships, unique to each time and place.<sup>2</sup>

Michael Katz was one of the earliest social historians to try to establish a class

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<sup>1</sup> David Gagan, "Class and Society in Victorian English Canada: A Historiographical Reassessment," British Journal of Canadian Studies, 4, 1 (1989), pp. 74-5, 83.

<sup>2</sup> E.P. Thompson, Making of the English Working Class (New York: Vintage, 1963), pp. 7-11.

structure for Victorian English Canada.<sup>3</sup> In The People of Hamilton, Canada West, Katz presented a five-part class division: entrepreneurial, middle, artisanal, working poor, and permanent poor. He considered factors such as mobility, property, power, household composition, and education in this structure, which he later abandoned for a two-part division of working class and business class, based on more strict Marxist definitions of relation to the means of production. In this second phase, Katz saw class as an analytical category for historians rather than a model of empirical social organization, and dealt with questions of social stratification by allowing internal divisions within each class. He remained unclear, however, about the place of artisans and agricultural workers.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, other English-Canadian social historians rejected the idea of "classes" entirely, preferring the terms "status" or "rank". Peter Ward, for example, wrote that the idea of classes implied strict social categories, and that such departmentalism did not reflect the ambiguity of 19th-century social divisions.<sup>5</sup>

Social historians of religion have tended to use fairly refined class models that go beyond the basic economic separation of business class and working class to consider

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<sup>3</sup> Michael B. Katz, The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth Century City (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975).

<sup>4</sup> Gagan, "Class and Society," p. 75; and Michael B. Katz, Michael J. Doucet, and Mark J. Stern, The Social Organization of Early Industrial Capitalism (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 38-9, 44-6.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Ward, Courtship, Love, and Marriage in Nineteenth-Century English Canada (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), pp. 7-8.

qualitative distinctions such as influence and status in the community.<sup>6</sup> Recent works by English Canadian scholars show that they have accepted Katz's idea of real class divisions, but that they also pay attention to the influence of property and family connections.<sup>7</sup> This results in more complicated class structures that can deal with such distinctions, while maintaining basic economic divisions.

This approach to class structures, as well as the idea of using occupational data as the fundamental means of classification, is adopted in this effort to establish a class structure for late 19th and early 20th-century St. John's. O'Dell and Marks, for example, used occupational data as the primary means to establish social hierarchies in their studies of class and religion in 19th-century Ontario.<sup>8</sup> Both supplemented basic occupational information with data on personal wealth and property. While using North American and British models, the local circumstances of St. John's, especially its maritime character, have been considered here. This has involved appropriate modifications to systems designed to analyze the industrial towns of Europe and mainland North America. The social structure adopted is a six-part division composed of ruling class, middle class proper, lower middle class, independent producing class, skilled and unskilled working classes. While the classes are distinct economic categories, defined by criteria given below, there is always potential for

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<sup>6</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character", pp. 40-41. See Hugh McLeod, Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City (London: Croom Helm, 1974), pp. 2-3, 6, 11-2; and McLeod, Religion and Irreligion, p. 55.

<sup>7</sup> See O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 40-1; and Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 578-80.

<sup>8</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," p. 40; Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," p. 581.

shading between groups.

The ruling, or upper, class is at the top of the social scale. In Marxist terms, this class controls the means of production.<sup>9</sup> Its members own most of the strategic capital in a society, and are linked by a common interest, ideology, and way of life based on high levels of wealth, prestige, and influence.<sup>10</sup> In St. John's at the end of the 19th century, such an elite was composed almost entirely of merchants and their families.<sup>11</sup> It also contained those who directed society through political institutions, such as members of the House of Assembly, as well as high-ranking government officials and leading professionals. The upper class of Victorian St. John's was composed of powerful commercial and political elites, with a considerable overlap between the two interests.

"Middle class proper" is a term borrowed from British historiography. In St. John's, this group included manufacturers (not merchants with investment in manufacturing concerns, who were included in the upper class), lesser professionals, and selected supervisory employees (especially upper-level management). Also included were a small

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<sup>9</sup> Katz, Doucet, and Stern, Social Organization, pp. 44-6.

<sup>10</sup> R.Q. Gray, "Religion, Culture, and Social Class," p. 135; O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 40, 46.

<sup>11</sup> Sociologists have recognized the importance of kinship networks in upper-class maintenance of wealth and exercise of power. In this study, occupational designations were compromised when the individual was a member of an upper-class family. Most of these cases involved junior family members who worked in the family firm at occupations that would normally place them in the commercial lower middle class (such as clerks or accountants). Instead, such characters were included in the upper class. See J. Scott, The Upper Class: Property and Privilege in Britain (London: Macmillan, 1982).



number of families involved in joint craft/commercial activities in which a specific skill was combined with smaller-scale mercantile operations, such as a blockmaker/hardware merchant.<sup>12</sup> There was considerable potential for overlap between the ruling class and middle class proper, – both had a high degree of autonomy, education, income, social status, and potential for advancement. Information on kinship, and degree of influence and wealth, was therefore an important part of classification.

St. John's was the administrative and financial capital of Newfoundland. It was a city built on government, trade, and commerce, with a growing population to support small businesses. Each of these factors encouraged the growth of a large and functionally diverse lower middle class.<sup>13</sup> The nature of this class, and even its being considered a class at all, is a matter of debate. Katz has argued that this group is a part of the business class, based on interests and aspirations, whereas Herbert Gutman considered that its members are best considered with the working class, based on social origins.<sup>14</sup>

This thesis accepts British historians' arguments for the existence of a separate lower middle class that is part of neither the working class nor the established bourgeoisie. R.Q.

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<sup>12</sup> For the artisan-to-merchant pattern of business development in early 19th-century St. John's see Sean Cadigan, "Artisans in a Merchant Town: St. John's, Newfoundland, 1775-1816," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* (1993), pp. 95-119.

<sup>13</sup> Gray, "Religion, Culture and Social Class," p. 135; Geoffrey Crossick, "The Emergence of the Lower Middle Class in Britain: A Discussion," in Geoffrey Crossick (ed.), *The Lower Middle Class in Britain 1870-1914* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), p. 19.

<sup>14</sup> Katz, Doucet, and Stern, *Social Organization*, pp. 44-6; O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 46-7.

Gray argued that white-collar workers such as clerks and teachers had a clear sense of being separate from, and superior to, manual workers. In economic terms, such workers could not be considered proletarians on the basis that they did not directly produce surplus value with their labour. At the same time, McLeod argued that lower levels of income and status excluded shopkeepers, accountants, and bank tellers from the established middle and upper classes.<sup>15</sup>

The lower middle class can be subdivided into two parts. The first is the classic petty bourgeoisie of shopkeepers and other small business owners. The second group is composed of white-collared, salaried workers such as clerks and shop assistants, who often acted in the interest of their employers or represented them in the workplace. On the basis of this definition, Eric Sager classified master mariners and sea captains as part of the lower middle class. While at sea, he argued, a captain was foreman of a crew producing value for the owners, and on occasion even could be part owner of the ship.<sup>16</sup> The lower middle class was a distinctive element of late-19th and early 20th-century St. John's society, and included those who exercised proprietary, supervisory, and commercial functions on both sea and land, as well as lesser government officials and professionals.

The independent producer class is an intermediate socioeconomic category between

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<sup>15</sup> Crossick, "Emergence of the Lower Middle Class," p. 13-5; Gray, "Religion, Culture, and Social Class," p. 151; Hugh McLeod, "White Collar Values and the Role of Religion," in Geoffrey Crossick (ed.), The Lower Middle Class in Britain 1870-1914 (London: Croom Helm, 1977), pp. 61-3.

<sup>16</sup> Eric W. Sager, Seafaring Labour: the Merchant Marine of Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), pp. 105-10.

the lower middle class and the skilled working class.<sup>17</sup> This class includes farming and fishing households, as well as self-employed artisans.<sup>18</sup> In this study, any skilled worker who owned a shop at an address distinct from his or her home address was considered an independent producer. While this method may result in underrepresentation, as artisans who worked at their home address were not included, to assume all artisans not listed with a place of work were independent could result in overrepresentation. Therefore, a decision was made to choose the more conservative option. Independent producers combined manual labour with their own capital; they owned their means of production and sold a product rather than their labour. They had more property and autonomy than members of the skilled working class, but had little influence outside their own businesses.<sup>19</sup> They were less economically secure than members of the lower middle class, and are thought to have had fewer connections with the established bourgeoisie.<sup>20</sup> Being an independent artisan was necessary in order to develop joint craft/commercial businesses.

The skilled working class consisted of artisans who worked manually for wages, and their families.<sup>21</sup> This class can be subdivided into "sweated trades" such as tailoring, boot

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<sup>17</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 578-80.

<sup>18</sup> For farming and fishing as independent production see Sager, *Seafaring Labour*, p. 162. The Philadelphia "Five Cities" Project considered self-employed artisans as an intermediary between skilled workers and the middle class, Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," p. 581.

<sup>19</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," p. 47.

<sup>20</sup> Crossick, "Emergence of the Lower Middle Class," pp. 34-5.

<sup>21</sup> Katz, Doucet, Stern, *Social Organization*, pp. 44-6.

and furniture making, and a "labour aristocracy" of workers who apprenticed into such occupations as bookbinding, printing, and coopering.<sup>22</sup> As an adjustment to the maritime character of St. John's, seamen are included in the skilled working class, again following Sager.<sup>23</sup> In the period under investigation St. John's was experiencing an increase in industrial activity, and for this reason skilled workers were subdivided into traditional crafts, such as carpentry and painting, and "new" technical trades such as engineering in order to consider the impact of industrialization on the East and West End Anglican communities.

At the bottom of the social scale was the unskilled working class. This group had high rates of job insecurity and poverty, and included such occupations as labourers, teamsters, and service workers. While unskilled transportation workers are part of this class, an argument could be made for including some carters and teamsters as independent proprietors rather than unskilled workers, since carting and farming often went hand-in-hand. As well, some capital investment was needed to obtain the necessary livestock and vehicle.

This class structure forms the basis for analysis in the rest of the thesis. Each family or individual person appearing in the records for St. Mary's or St. Thomas's was assigned a class designation based on the information available concerning occupation, influence, property, and kinship. Some would consider sorting individuals in such a way to be reductionist, even ahistorical. I consider such categorization to be a necessary part of

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<sup>22</sup> McLeod, Class and Religion, pp. 2-3, 6.

<sup>23</sup> Sager, Seafaring Labour, p. 110.

understanding how the relationships between individuals can be shaped by socioeconomic variables. Social history involves dealing with hundreds, or even thousands, of names and situations. Trying to understand patterns in terms of every unique case, rather than on a more general social level, would be a huge and difficult task, more anarchic than analytical.

Family status is based on information available for heads of households, who, more often than not, were male. As Marks stated in her study of Salvationists, this is not meant to reinforce patriarchal structures, but simply recognizes that men had more economic options and were regarded as "head of the family" during the period under investigation.<sup>24</sup> Legally and economically, late 19th-century St. John's was "a man's world", and society perceived family status in terms of the successes and failures of male heads of household.

The absence of nominal census data for 19th-century Newfoundland means that attempting a social history project for the period is a challenge to the researcher's creativity. Recent English Canadian, American, and British religious historiography suggested other methodologies. New studies of congregations and lay religiosity often promote the use of statistical evidence from parish registers.<sup>25</sup> Practitioners of the "new" religious history consider that church registers contain more accurate statistical evidence than that available in official, published records; and because they contain information on the age, address, occupation, literacy, and family connections of parishioners, such registers allow the

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<sup>24</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," p. 583.

<sup>25</sup> McLeod, *Religion and Irreligion*, pp. 31, 55; Morris, *Religion and Urban Change*, p. 13; McGowan, "Coming out of the Cloister," p. 183; O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 3-4, 7; Vandermeer and Swierenga, *Belief and Behaviour*, pp. 1-6.

construction of detailed congregational profiles.<sup>26</sup>

As a first step towards understanding the socioeconomic status of late 19th and early 20th-century parishioners from St. Mary's and St. Thomas's churches, I concentrated on the occupational information provided in the two churches' baptismal registers for the years 1880 through 1905. This exercise was designed to get a sense of parish demographics that would include even the nominally Christian, not just active church members or supporters. While baptismal registers are a somewhat faulty source, in that they only contain the names of child-bearing individuals and families, it was felt that they were the best choice for the task at hand. Each entry in a baptismal register represents a household or family unit, and unlike marriage registers, the vast majority of names are for families actually resident in the parish. Death registers do not provide occupational information.

The second stage in the project was to use lists of subscribers to the General Church Fund (an annual, voluntary collection for basic parish expenses), available for each parish at the diocesan synod archives, to compile a demographic profile of the congregations (families and individuals who were active in, and financial supporters of, the church), as opposed to the parishioners (Anglican families and individuals resident in the parish, but who could be marginal to the church community) of St. Mary's and St. Thomas's. To allow

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<sup>26</sup> Nigel Yates, "Urban Church Attendance and the Use of Statistical Evidence," in Derek Baker (ed.), *The Church in Town and Countryside* (Oxford: Ecclesiastical History Society, 1979), p. 398. Even for historians uninterested in religious questions, parish registers provide valuable demographic information. For Newfoundland, this fact was attested in Patricia Thornton, "Newfoundland's Frontier Demographic Experience: the World We Have Not Lost," *Newfoundland Studies* 1, 2 (1985), p. 144.

for comparison, only lists from 1880 to 1905 were used. Protestant denominations such as Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists produce membership rolls, but Anglican and Roman Catholic lists of financial contributors are considered particularly useful in discovering who were most likely the church-going members of the parish.<sup>27</sup> As well, these lists correct some of the gender and stage-of-life imbalances that are inherent in baptismal registers. A third stage of analysis used the names of parish officers and members of voluntary organizations to establish a demographic profile of church leadership. The final result is a tripartite reproduction of church membership for each parish: the nominally Christian families; church-supporting, and probably church-going families; and families who produced active, dedicated church leaders. The findings will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

When classifying subscribers and parish leaders, I have used the occupational and property information for heads of households provided in the St. John's city directories. Directories were also used to confirm and supplement occupational information in baptismal registers. While some scholars have doubted the reliability and accuracy of such directories, most agree they are acceptable when other sources of information are limited, as was the case for St. John's.<sup>28</sup> The limitations of directories, especially in terms of lower social class families, were apparent; and in some years I was left with a fairly substantial "unknown" category. However, directories do provide information that goes beyond simple occupational

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<sup>27</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 573-5.

<sup>28</sup> Gareth Shaw, "Nineteenth Century Directories as Sources in Canadian Social History," *Archivaria* 14 (Summer 1982), pp. 107-8.

designations such as "shoemaker" to indicate whether or not an individual was self-employed, owned a business and employed others, or worked for wages at, for example, the Newfoundland Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company. In the absence of census material, therefore, directories were crucial in discovering differences in socioeconomic status among families that would not have been visible using church registers and records alone.

In The Social Organization of Early Industrial Capitalism, Katz, Doucet, and Stern identified basic elements in the 19th-century urban social structure, two of which were: the existence of a clear class structure based in capitalist social and economic relations, and a fundamental inequality between persons living within that class structure.<sup>29</sup> This chapter has presented a class structure adopted for, and adapted to, the society of late 19th and early 20th-century St. John's. The next chapter will offer a class-based profile of St. Mary's and St. Thomas's congregations based on this structure. The rest of the thesis will concentrate on social inequality, and how it could affect individual experiences of organized religion and the institutional development of a church.

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<sup>29</sup> Katz, Doucet, and Stern, Social Organization, pp. 3-4.



## Chapter Four

### Upper-Class East End; Working-Class West End: the Social Status of Parishioners and Congregations at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's Churches, 1880-1905

This chapter provides comparative class profiles of St. Mary's and St. Thomas's churches, using the social scale and methodology outlined in Chapter Two. Data on parishioners (based on baptismal registers) and members of the congregation (based on financial records) are discussed in terms of more general census information about St. John's East and West, and conclusions are made about the relative working-class or middle-class character of each parish. The analysis also takes into account ideas about how social class affected church participation, as presented in the historiography of Victorian religion. The findings presented below will show that authors such as Jeffrey Cox and Hugh McLeod were correct in rejecting the idea of late 19th-century, church-centred religious activity being limited to the middle and upper classes.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the idea that Anglican churches were necessarily the realm of the upper classes, while the lower classes occupied nonconformist chapels, is called into question.<sup>2</sup>

A major difference between St. Mary's and St. Thomas's churches was that the latter had more upper-class families among its parishioners and congregation. As

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey Cox, English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth, 1870-1930 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 61; McLeod, "White Collar Values," pp. 64-7.

<sup>2</sup> Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 104.

illustrated in Table One, during the years sampled there was only one elite baptism at St. Mary's, involving a member of government's family in 1880. In contrast, at St. Thomas's the number of baptisms for children born to upper-class households grew from 6 per cent in 1880 to a high of 11.5 per cent in 1895. While the number of upper-class baptisms declined to 5 per cent by 1905, it was clear from the sample that the East End parish had a constant proportion of ruling-class families (averaging at around 8 per cent) whereas the West End parish did not. In terms of subscribers, St. Mary's had a higher, albeit declining, percentage of upper-class supporters than baptismal register evidence alone would have suggested. After a high of 12.5 per cent in 1880, the numbers dropped to around 5.5 per cent for 1890 to 1900, and then fell to 3 per cent in 1905. (See Table Two) However, even at their highest point, the figures for St. Mary's were lower than those seen at St. Thomas's. In that parish, during the 1880s around 26 per cent of subscribers were from a primarily commercial upper class. This dropped to 16 per cent in the 1890s, and remained close to that level until 1905. As with baptismal registers, the stability of upper-class subscribers at St. Thomas's contrasted with a decline at St. Mary's.

The gap between the numbers of upper-class subscribers and upper-class parishioners in both parishes suggests several demographic possibilities. First of all, it appeared that St. Mary's parish had an older upper-class population that was not reproducing itself, and that the West End was not attracting new upper-class Anglican

Table 1: Upper-Class Baptisms, 1880-1905

Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	1	0	0	0	0	0
St. Mary's %	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
St. Thomas's #	6	8	7	9	5	4
St. Thomas's %	6.0	9.0	9.5	11.5	7.0	5.0

Table 2: Upper-Class Subscriptions, 1880-1905

Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	8	5	5	3	3	4
St. Mary's %	12.5	12.0	5.5	6.0	5.0	3.0
St. Thomas's #	37	43	30	30	35	44
St. Thomas's %	25.5	27.0	16.0	16.0	15.5	16.5

families. This meant that the class was losing its place in the parish hierarchy. In contrast, while the number of upper-class baptisms was declining at St. Thomas's, the number of upper-class subscribers remained relatively stable. Increasing use of birth control might explain the drop in baptisms, but the upper-class presence at St. Thomas's remained strong. This suggests the existence of a dynamic class membership that was attracting new families to fill the vacancies produced by aging and a lower birth rate: the East End as the preferred upper-class neighbourhood was clearly being established. Finally, the overrepresentation of upper class subscribers in comparison to the general

parish population at both St. Mary's and St. Thomas's supports the idea of a Victorian social elite's concern for church attendance and organized religion. For the ruling class, religious activity was part of the social obligations arising from their position, and formed part of the "respectability" needed to support the exercise of power and influence in a broader social sphere.<sup>3</sup>

When one looks at the overall distribution of subscribers in both parishes, it becomes apparent that the upper-class presence at St. Thomas's was stronger than that at St. Mary's. In the former, the highest proportion of subscribers in the 1880s was from the upper class, and despite the comparatively low upper-class population in the parish, it remained numerically among the top three subscribing classes. At St. Mary's, upper-class subscribers did not constitute such a large overall percentage of church supporters. In terms of both parish and congregation, then, St. Thomas's had a stronger and more stable upper-class population. This becomes even more important when one realizes that almost every head of household from this class seen at St. Thomas's, while enjoying wealth derived from commercial and professional activities, was also a former, current, or future member of the Legislative Council. There were several premiers.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> McLeod, "White Collar Values," p. 67; Davidoff and Hall, Family Fortunes, pp. 106, 73.

<sup>4</sup> Family names included Winter, Monroe, Outerbridge, Alderdice, Rendell, Carter, and Harvey. Information on the political activity of individual heads of households was obtained from the Dictionary of Newfoundland and Labrador Biography (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications, 1990).

As was to be expected from the literature on Victorian religion, in both parishes there was also an overrepresentation of middle-class proper subscribers in relation to the general parish population. However, the differences between St. Mary's and St. Thomas's were not so marked as was the case for upper-class families. At St. Mary's the number of middle-class proper baptisms grew from 2 per cent to 6 per cent between 1880 and 1890, dropped to 3.5 per cent in 1895, and disappeared completely at the end of the study period. (See Table Three) The figures at St. Thomas's held more steady at around 3 per cent of total baptisms, except for the 1890s when there was only one middle-class proper baptism in the sample. Both parishes had a low number of families from this class, but as was the case with the upper class, St. Mary's totals were declining while St. Thomas's were more stable.

In terms of subscribers, St. Thomas's figures indicated a constant segment of middle-class proper parishioners, standing at around the 10 per cent mark, as illustrated in Table Four. At St. Mary's, the number of subscribers from this class ranged erratically from 2.5 to 12.5 per cent without any clear growth or decline. This is consistent with the fact that in the late 19th century the West End did not have the financial, cultural,

Table 3: Middle-Class Proper Baptisms, 1880-1905

Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	1	2	3	2	1	0
St. Mary's %	2.0	4.5	6.0	3.5	3.0	0.0
St. Thomas's #	3	3	0	1	3	2
St. Thomas's %	3.0	3.5	0.0	1.5	4.0	2.5

Table 4: Middle-Class Proper Subscriptions, 1880-1905

Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	6	1	3	3	7	8
St. Mary's %	9.5	2.5	3.5	6.0	12.0	6.0
St. Thomas's #	15	15	22	20	21	26
St. Thomas's %	10.5	9.5	12.0	10.5	9.5	9.5

educational, medical or legal institutions of the East End.<sup>5</sup> When one looked at the middle class proper in terms of economic sector, this idea became even more clear. Most heads of household for this class at St. Mary's were manufacturers or owners of joint craft-commercial businesses. At St. Thomas's, this group was mainly composed of families headed by professionals, as well as those holding government and supervisory positions. The East End, middle-class proper Anglican community, then, was one built

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<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Oliver, "The Rebuilding of St. John's after the Great Fire of 1892: A Study in Urban Morphogenesis," M.A. thesis, Memorial University, 1983, pp. 63-4.

on education, administration, and commerce. The West End community, although financially successful, had its roots firmly placed in a working-class or industrial base.

As seen in Table Five, St. Mary's had higher numbers of lower middle-class baptisms. However, except for 1895 and 1900, when a 10.5 per cent gap opened, there were no great numeric differences between the parishes. In contrast to the middle-class proper case, St. Mary's appeared to have had more overall stability of lower middle class families than St. Thomas's. In the latter parish, after a steady decline in the 1880s and 1890s, the lower middle-class population appeared to take a major jump at the turn of the century. Most of this growth at St. Thomas's was in white-collar commercial and sea-related jobs, and could be linked to the post-1895 recovery of the capitalist class in St. John's. At St. Mary's, there was a similar late 19th-century decline in the proprietary and commercial lower middle-class, followed by a recovery in which the class took on a mainly commercial face. This type of change in a lower middle-class population has been linked to industrial urban development: not only does the demand for clerical workers increase in such a setting, but the growth of department stores meant the displacement of small storekeepers and their replacement with a new white-collar sales force.<sup>6</sup> In St. John's, the loss of small businesses after the 1894 bank crash might also have been a factor in this change. However, for most of the period under investigation,

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<sup>6</sup> Crossick, "Emergence of the Lower Middle Class," pp. 15-6; Gray, "Religion, Culture, and Social Class," p. 135.

Table 5: Lower Middle-Class Baptisms, 1880-1905						
Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	9	5	7	10	3	8
St. Mary's %	17.5	11.0	14.5	16.5	8.5	14.5
St. Thomas's #	14	8	6	4	13	10
St. Thomas's %	13.5	9.0	8.5	5.0	18.0	13.0

the lower middle class at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's was generally a mixed commercial and proprietary group.

The data on lower middle-class subscribers showed that at St. Thomas's church supporters from that class were mainly from white-collar, commercial occupations. At St. Mary's, supporters were a mixed proprietary and commercial group until the turn of the century, when it became mainly commercial in character. This is interesting considering the literature on lower middle-class religious behaviour. This class has been described as one very concerned with ideas of respectability and its own place in the social hierarchy. Members of the lower middle class were faced with the dilemma of needing to project middle-class standards of appearance, manners, and lifestyle because of their work in offices, banks, and shops, while often only earning a working-class level salary.<sup>7</sup> This led to a great concern with the respectability associated with church

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<sup>7</sup> McLeod, "White Collar Values," pp. 61-3.



attendance and religious activity. This idea was supported by the profile of lower middle-class subscribers at St. Thomas's, who were mainly white-collar commercial employees. At St. Mary's, though, the proprietary lower middle class, who are seen as having more working-class contacts, was an important group of subscribers.<sup>8</sup>

In both parishes the overrepresentation of lower middle-class subscribers, when compared to general parish figures, supported the idea of this group's efforts to maintain its respectability through organized religion. Whereas members of the upper class and middle class proper could maintain their place in the social hierarchy through wealth, education, or political power, as well as through religious activity, the lower middle class had few options besides a church-based drive for respectability.<sup>9</sup> In almost every year sampled, in both parishes, the highest percentage of subscribers were from the lower middle class. The numbers were highest at St. Mary's, where the proportion of lower middle-class subscribers grew steadily from 20.5 per cent in 1880 to 46 per cent in 1900, with a decline in 1905. (See Table Six) Starting from an equitable 21.5 per cent in 1880, St. Thomas's lower middle class averaged 29.5 per cent of total subscribers for the remainder of the period.

According to the baptismal and subscription information from St. Thomas's and

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<sup>8</sup> Crossick, "Emergence of the Lower Middle Class," p. 35; McLeod, "White Collar Values."

<sup>9</sup> Crossick, "Emergence of the Lower Middle Class," pp. 25-6, 30-1; McLeod, "White Collar Values."

St. Mary's, the independent producer class was a socioeconomic group on a slight, but

Table 6: Lower Middle-Class Subscriptions, 1880-1905						
Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	17	15	34	20	27	42
St. Mary's %	20.5	36.5	38.0	39.0	46.0	32.0
St. Thomas's #	31	43	58	51	76	75
St. Thomas's %	21.5	27.0	31.0	27.5	34.0	28.0

steady, decline from the 1880s onward. (See Tables Seven and Eight) At St. Mary's, the sample of baptisms showed that the number of independent-producer families, while jumping to around 30 per cent of total child-bearing population in 1895 and 1900, was on a slight decline overall (from 15.5 per cent in 1880 to 12.5 per cent in 1905). At St. Thomas's, the first three years sampled showed fluctuations around the 22 per cent mark, with a similar pattern around the 14 per cent mark from 1895 to 1905. With the exception of 1900 figures (and 1885, to a lesser degree) the number of independent-producer families at both parishes was close throughout the period. In 1880, most members of this class at St. Thomas's were fishing families. From 1885 to 1890 there was a nearly equal mix of farming and fishing families, and by the end of the period there were more farming families than fishing and crafts combined. This shows a change in economic activity in the East End. Fishing families lived mainly around Signal Hill

Table 7: Independent Producing-Class Baptisms, 1880-1905						
Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	8	13	9	10	11	7
St. Mary's %	15.5	29.0	18.5	16.5	31.5	12.5
St. Thomas's #	22	15	16	11	5	11
St. Thomas's %	21.5	17.0	22.0	14.5	7.0	14.5

Table 8: Independent Producing-Class Subscriptions, 1880-1905						
Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	9	9	13	10	5	11
St. Mary's %	14.0	22.0	14.5	19.5	8.5	8.5
St. Thomas's #	14	12	12	21	9	15
St. Thomas's %	9.5	7.5	6.5	11.0	4.0	5.5

Road and in Quidi Vidi Village, with many of the farming families settled around the White Hills and along Logy Bay Road. At St. Mary's there were higher numbers of independent artisans among the sample, and while the pattern in that parish was similar to that in St. Thomas's, there was more numeric equality between farming, fishing, and artisan families after 1890. In the West End, while there appeared to be no cluster of fishing families in any particular location, most of the farming families were located along Topsail and Brookfield Roads, and in areas (such as Heavy Tree Road) that are now part of Mount Pearl.

At St. Mary's the numbers of independent-producer subscribers were usually consistent with baptismal register figures, without many large gaps to suggest over, or under interest in organized religion. Wavering from around 20 per cent to 14 per cent of total subscribers in the 1880s and 1890s, the figures at St. Mary's dropped to a steady 8.5 per cent early in the 20th century. At St. Thomas's the percentages were more stable, with an overall slight decline from 9.5 per cent in 1880 to 5.5 per cent in 1905. An important difference between the parishes was seen in the underrepresentation of independent producers in the subscribers list at St. Thomas's. While this is consistent with the idea that members of the working class were generally less interested in organized religion than their middle and upper-class counterparts, the figures at St. Mary's do not support this idea. Furthermore, for every year sampled, the highest proportion of independent-producer subscribers at St. Mary's were artisans, whereas St. Thomas's had a more equal distribution. The independent craft producers of the West End parish appear to have been key in the higher representation of this class among subscribers, leading to the conclusion that working with one's hands did not necessarily lead to disinterest in, or alienation from, the established churches.<sup>10</sup>

It is important to note that in both parishes the majority of baptisms were

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<sup>10</sup> Victorian working-class secularization was central to arguments presented in Inglis, Churches and the Working Class; McLeod, Class and Religion; and Wickham, Church and People.

performed for working-class households. However, a major difference in the demographic profile of the two parishes is revealed when one distinguishes between the skilled and unskilled. Based on information from baptismal registers, and illustrated in Table Nine, families headed by skilled workers made up a considerable part of the total population in both parishes. St. Mary's had consistently higher numbers of skilled working-class baptisms, ranging from 26.5 to 45 per cent for the years sampled, and showed a slight growth trend. In contrast, the skilled working-class population of St. Thomas's parish was declining, and ranged throughout the period from 26 to 38 per cent. The numbers of subscribers showed that the skilled working class was somewhat underrepresented, indicating a generally lower level of church support than was seen in the middle and upper classes. However, as seen in Table Ten, in both parishes the number of skilled working-class subscribers was growing, with St. Mary's recording higher numbers (17 per cent in 1880 to 30 per cent in 1905) than St. Thomas's (12.5 per cent to 20 per cent). As well, the proportion of skilled working-class subscribers, especially at St. Mary's, was far from insignificant. To be sure, fewer skilled working-class families appeared to support the church than were resident in the parish, but a considerable number of such families were financial backers of organized religion.

The skilled working-class supporters of St. Mary's parish mainly worked in traditional crafts such as carpentry and shoemaking, with an increase in the number of technical craft workers (such as engineers and machinists) after 1890. The same was true

at St. Thomas's, although after 1895 the East End parish had higher numbers of technical

Table 9: Skilled Working-Class Baptisms, 1880-1905

Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	18	12	22	23	15	23
St. Mary's %	34.5	26.5	45.0	38.5	43.0	41.0
St. Thomas's #	27	33	21	25	23	20
St. Thomas's %	26.0	38.0	29.0	32.5	31.5	26.0

Table 10: Skilled Working-Class Subscriptions, 1880-1905

Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	11	8	22	12	11	39
St. Mary's %	17.0	19.5	24.5	23.5	18.5	30.0
St. Thomas's #	18	16	31	35	50	54
St. Thomas's %	12.5	10.0	16.5	18.5	22.5	20.0

skilled workers than the West End. There were higher numbers of sea-related skilled workers supporting St. Thomas's parish, although St. Mary's seemed to have had more workers from marine trades.<sup>11</sup> In both, there was an increase in skilled workers employed in the transportation sector during the early 1900s, mainly due to the railway

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<sup>11</sup> The presence of families headed by seaman on subscriber lists calls into question Sager's conviction that sailors were not churchgoers, but embraced more animistic beliefs. Sager, *Seafaring Labour*, p. 241.

and the introduction of street cars. At St. Thomas's, changes in the economy of the East End were seen in declining numbers of skilled marine workers and the growth of those employed in technical trades.

In both parishes a large portion of baptisms were performed for unskilled working-class families. (See Table Eleven) In contrast to the case with skilled workers, St. Thomas's had higher numbers of unskilled workers than St. Mary's: growing from 19.5 per cent in 1885 to 39 per cent in 1905, with an average of around 30 per cent for all years sampled. At St. Mary's, the number of baptisms for unskilled working families declined from 24.5 per cent in 1885 to 14.5 per cent in 1900, with a 10 per cent jump at the end of period. In general, the unskilled workers at St. Thomas's were not employed at specific jobs (for example, their occupations were recorded as "labourer"), although there were growing numbers of unskilled transportation workers such as carters and teamsters. At St. Mary's, unskilled workers living in the parish were generally unspecified as well.

The figures for unskilled working-class subscribers highlighted an important division in the working class, and revealed interesting ideas about the place of unskilled workers in each parish. As illustrated in Table Twelve, at St. Mary's unskilled workers are more underrepresented than skilled workers. Despite a growth trend, even at its highest point (16 per cent) the number of unskilled working-class subscribers did not reach the lowest totals for skilled workers (17 per cent). At St. Thomas's, the unskilled

working families were more underrepresented than the skilled, but in the period 1880 to 1890, there is no great difference in the numbers of skilled or unskilled subscribers. This

Table 11: Unskilled Working-Class Baptisms, 1880-1905						
Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	10	11	8	13	5	14
St. Mary's %	19.0	24.5	16.5	21.5	14.5	25.0
St. Thomas's #	30	17	21	25	22	30
St. Thomas's %	29.0	19.5	29.0	32.5	30.0	39.0

Table 12: Unskilled Working-Class Subscriptions, 1880-1905						
Year	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905
St. Mary's #	1	1	9	3	5	21
St. Mary's %	1.5	2.5	10.0	6.0	8.5	16.0
St. Thomas's #	13	16	24	16	24	19
St. Thomas's %	9.0	10.0	13.0	8.5	11.0	7.0

changes after 1895, not so much because the number of unskilled workers supporting the church declined, but because the number of skilled workers grew. At the same time, even though the unskilled working-class population of the parish was growing, the number of subscribers of this class remained fairly constant. This suggested a decline in unskilled working-class support for the parish, in comparison with a growth at St. Mary's. This, in combination with the data on skilled working families, suggested that



St. Mary's parish was developing an increasingly working-class congregation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, whereas the figures at St. Thomas's suggested a growth in skilled working-class members of the congregation, but a decrease in unskilled despite an apparent growing number of families of that class in the parish. In general, the unskilled working-class subscribers to both parishes were a mix of those working in specified and unspecified occupations. St. Thomas's, though, reported more unskilled transportation workers.

These figures for the working class suggest that while members of this class showed less financial support than the middle or upper classes, there was a core of working-class supporters in each parish.<sup>12</sup> In general, skilled workers were more likely to be church subscribers than the unskilled, but one cannot assume that this was more a function of disinterest or secularization than a simple financial decision. Each parish recorded anonymously donations less than the amount required from a full member of the congregation (for example, two dollars per annum to vote at an annual meeting or hold a parochial office), and these totals probably represent donations from members of the unskilled (or skilled) working class.<sup>13</sup> This is supported by the fact that St. Thomas's, with a higher unskilled worker population than St. Mary's, recorded a much higher level

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<sup>12</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character", pp. 306-18.

<sup>13</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," p. 56.

of donations of this type.

While McLeod has argued that the working class was not as secular as earlier historians assumed, he also stated that their religious activity was not necessarily church-based. Instead he paid attention to such ideas as the transmission of doctrine, and sacred images within the home.<sup>14</sup> Some have argued that the more prosperous members of the working class made up these active church (as opposed to nonconformist chapel) families, and that this represented a deliberate embracing of middle-class ideology as part of an effort to rise socially.<sup>15</sup> Others see church attendance at religious services as part of the working class's own spiritual and social activities, arguing that the artisan elite, in particular, was attracted to church-based moral crusades, such as temperance, on the basis of their own ethic of independence and self-help.<sup>16</sup>

In summary, there emerged from this sample a picture of two coexistent Anglican parishes that shared the same diocese and city, but which had very different populations and congregations. St. Thomas's had more parishioners and subscribers from the upper

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<sup>14</sup> McLeod, Religion and Irreligion, pp. 31, 55.

<sup>15</sup> McLeod, Class and Religion, pp. 282-3; J.N. Morris, Religion and Urban Change: Croydon, 1840-1914, p. 8; MacLaren, Religion and Social Class, p. 158.

<sup>16</sup> Gerald Wayne Olsen, "From Parish to Palace: Working-Class Influences on Anglican Temperance Movements, 1835-1914," Journal of Ecclesiastical History 40, 2 (Apr. 1989), p. 246; Geoffrey Crossick, An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society: Kentish London, 1840-1880 (London: Croom Helm, 1978).

class, and while both had small middle-class proper populations, that at St. Thomas's was more stable, and contained higher numbers from the established professions; those at St. Mary's had their roots in industrial or working-class activities. The lower middle class provided the most subscribers to both parishes for nearly every year sampled. The St. Mary's sample, mainly from the proprietary lower middle class, had slightly higher numbers and more stability. In general, subscribers of this class at St. Thomas's were employed mainly in white-collar, commercial jobs. For the upper class and middle classes, the numbers of subscribers in each parish were higher than the population figures.

The numbers of resident independent-producer families were slightly declining in both parishes, and figures for subscriptions tended to follow this trend. There were higher numbers at St. Mary's, mainly on the strength of independent-artisan subscriptions. Both parishes appear to have had largely working-class populations, but St. Mary's had a larger, and growing, skilled working-class population whereas St. Thomas's had an increasingly larger unskilled population. In both parishes, fewer working-class families, especially the unskilled, subscribed to the churches than were resident in the parish. However, while there were more skilled working-class subscribers at St. Mary's, the totals were growing in both. In contrast, the numbers for unskilled working-class subscribers were only growing at St. Mary's. At St. Thomas's, despite the higher unskilled population, such subscriptions were declining.

St. Thomas's parish, then, was more socially stratified than St. Mary's. It had higher numbers from the elite and from the unskilled. The parish population was rooted in established administrative, commercial, and financial institutions. It was a population consistent with a district that housed the seat of government, and contained the "bulk of wealth, culture, and refinement" in the city.<sup>17</sup> These findings correspond with the socioeconomic structure of St. John's in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The censuses of 1891, 1901, and 1911 demonstrated that St. John's East, despite having only a slightly higher population, had consistently higher numbers of clergy, teachers, doctors, lawyers, civil servants and office workers than St. John's West. The church registers and census reports agree that the percentage of artisans (classed as "mechanics" in the census) was nearly equal in both districts.<sup>18</sup>

Census data shows that the West End was home to most factory and workshop employees.<sup>19</sup> It was a mainly working-class district during the period under investigation, and in St. Mary's parish, the breakdown of class groupings into economic sectors confirmed this appraisal. Middle-class families often had artisan roots, or closer ties to the working class (such as more proprietors than white-collar employees among

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<sup>17</sup> Oliver, "Rebuilding," p. 63.

<sup>18</sup> Oliver, "Rebuilding", pp. 63-4, Appendix A; Census of Newfoundland, 1891, 1901, 1911.

<sup>19</sup> Oliver, "Rebuilding", pp. 63-4, Appendix A.

the lower middle class). There were more artisans among the independent producers, and more skilled workers, than at St. Thomas's.

The population of St. Mary's was more socially homogenous than that of St. Thomas's, and shared working-class experience and contacts. The population of the parish was mainly skilled workers, independent producers, and members of the lower middle class. St. Thomas's was more socially stratified, but there were stronger bourgeois ties than at St. Mary's, especially within the large lower middle class population. This, combined with the established nature of the East End and the presence of political and economic elites within the parish, meant that the influence of middle-class ideology and norms would be stronger at St. Thomas's than they were at St. Mary's. Such ideas were part of the political culture of the city: in 1887 a letter from a West End artisan printed in the Times condemned the East End population for electing exclusively professional, upper-class representatives to the House of Assembly.<sup>20</sup> The notion that such ideas could also shape the experience of institutionalized religion forms the basis of this thesis. The next section will explore the institutional development of St. Mary's and St. Thomas's to see how, and to what extent, each church was affected by the socioeconomic characteristics of its parishioners and congregation.

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<sup>20</sup> Under "No Lawyer Need Apply", "A Mechanic" to editor of Times, 14 Sept. 1887; and "Mechanic" to editor of the Times, 28 Sept. 1887.

## Chapter Five

### "Men of Property": Social Class, Gender, and Power in Parish Administration and Financing

Take my silver and my gold,  
Not a mite would I withhold;  
Take my intellect, and use  
Every power as thou shalt choose.

The fourth verse of Frances Ridley Havergal's 1874 hymn "Take my life, and let it be", shows the author's vision of the power of the human mind and how it could benefit the church. From a late 20th-century perspective, one can also see in that verse another vision of power, -- the power held by wealthy parishioners on whom churches depended for survival, and by lay leaders who dedicated their time and intellect to parish administration. In Church of England parishes, official authority lay with the clergy who locally represented the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The rector and curate were also chief parish representatives in dealings with diocesan authorities.<sup>1</sup> Clergy had to consider the needs of the congregation, which were usually communicated to him by parishioners elected or appointed to lay administrative offices and parochial committees. Wealthy members of a congregation could also exercise considerable influence. For some clergymen, ties with powerful parishioners were a welcome by-product of pastoral duties. For others, such ties may have been unwelcome, but were seen as necessary for financial survival.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Joanna B. Gillespie, "American Sunday Schools," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 59, 1 (1990), p. 108; Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organizations*, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 157-62.

This chapter looks at the distribution of power in St. Thomas's and St. Mary's parishes as demonstrated in the systems of lay administration and financing that each established and maintained. All positions of formal parochial authority were held by men (as was typical of late Victorian and Edwardian society), but women, either independently or as members of families, were an important part of the financial picture. This analysis is based on lists of lay officers and committee members which show who held positions of official influence in the two parishes, and examines how the power structure was affected by the demographics and the social composition of each congregation.

In his evaluation of the 1851 British religious census, Horace Mann concluded that class divisions were a major reason for working-class disinterest in organized religion. He argued that the reproduction of social inequalities within churches, such as hierarchically arranged rented pews, helped contribute to this alienation. He also believed that secular class divisions meant that each class made a deliberate choice not to worship with people that they perceived as being of a different socioeconomic status.<sup>3</sup> As demonstrated earlier, the stereotype of working-class rejection of organized religion has been rejected by recent social historians, and evidence from St. Thomas's and St. Mary's shows that while working-class parishioners were less likely to be Church Fund subscribers than their upper and middle-class counterparts, a considerable number of families headed by skilled workers made financial contributions.

Similarly, historians of lay leadership in churches have tended to accept the idea

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<sup>3</sup> McLeod, *Religion and Irreligion*, pp. 13-4.

of general upper and middle-class dominance. Katz, Doucet, and Stern argued that members of the business class governed all major activities in late 19th-century Hamilton, Ontario.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, O'Dell explained that those individuals who were used to power in the secular sphere felt that holding positions of church leadership was another way to strengthen their public positions and share in the cultural hegemony of the community. While working-class people were present in every parish, and were often church supporters, they had little say in parish organization and development. Organized religious settings were therefore one of the strongholds of middle-class hegemony: a place where bourgeois power and control were less likely to be challenged than in secular politics or work places. At the same time, she showed that in parishes where there were few members of the elite, members of the lower middle and working classes had more say in lay administration.<sup>5</sup>

This idea was also part of Marks' evaluation of church leadership. While she argued that working-class people were generally reluctant to attend established churches, dominated as they were by middle class personnel, beliefs, and norms, she also believed that members of the working class could sometimes hold positions of leadership. The availability of such positions of power varied according to denomination -- Anglicans were especially subject to middle-class dominance of lay offices -- and the degree of urbanization in the parish. Marks discovered that in smaller towns, members of the upper and middle classes were less likely to dominate church leadership than in larger

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<sup>4</sup> Katz, Doucet, and Stern, *Social Organization*, p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 159-62, 306-18.



centres, and that the line between middle and working classes was less distinct, especially for parishioners with strong community roots.<sup>6</sup>

A similar interpretation is seen in the British literature. McLeod concluded that many members of the working and lower middle classes saw society in relatively local terms, and shared a general experience of subordination, dependence, and denial of initiative in the work place. He believed that for such people, holding parish offices such as church warden offered an opportunity to exercise authority, attain local status and recognition, as well as a way to make some significant contribution to the life of the community.<sup>7</sup> Crossick added that such leadership opportunities usually occurred in districts where there was no resident bourgeoisie, or in working-class neighbourhoods where members of the lower middle class were considered the local elite.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, some members of the British ruling classes had a preference for more localized systems of influence and control, and often exercised their power through a network of leadership in local institutions, – including parish churches.<sup>9</sup> Both the English Canadian and British historiographies stress the importance of particular settings and circumstances in shaping the character of parochial lay leadership, and this emphasis is reinforced by information on the office-holders and committee members who helped manage St. Mary's and St. Thomas's parishes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

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<sup>6</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 44-5, 124-5.

<sup>7</sup> McLeod, "White Collar Values," pp. 63, 67.

<sup>8</sup> Crossick, "Emergence of the Lower Middle Class," pp. 13-5.

<sup>9</sup> Gray, "Religion, Culture, and Social Class," pp. 135-6.

### Lay Administration

While the rector was officially at the top of parish hierarchy, there was a system of voluntary lay administrative positions designed to assist the rector, as well as to represent parishioners. The church wardens and the select vestry were responsible for church property, and for the business and financial affairs of the parish. Two church wardens were appointed annually: the rector's warden (selected by the rector) and the people's warden (selected by the congregation). The select vestry was a collective body of parishioners (along with the wardens) who were also elected annually by the congregation. Besides helping with the day-to-day running of the parish, these lay administrators were also responsible for appointing a parish rector from candidates suggested by the bishop, even though their choice was subject to episcopal approval.<sup>10</sup> In order to be eligible for election to the select vestry or to become a church warden, a parishioner had to be male, 18 years of age or older, give at least \$2 per annum in dues for two consecutive years, and be a regular communicant. These criteria applied to other lay parish offices, except for lay representatives to the Diocesan Synod. To hold this position, a parishioner had to make an annual donation of at least \$4 to the church.<sup>11</sup>

On the surface, St. Thomas's and St. Mary's had similar systems of administration based on church wardens and the annual parish meeting. Throughout the entire period, annual meetings were usually held during Easter Week. Church accounts were

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<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth A. Livingstone (ed.), The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 111, 537; International Dictionary of the Christian Church (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1979), pp. 228-9, 1016.

<sup>11</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Parochial Circular (St. John's: the parish, 1889).

presented, outstanding business discussed, and wardens selected. The cemetery committee or burial board members, auditors of church accounts, representatives to Synod, and the sexton (who was responsible for the physical maintenance of church property) were also selected at this time; and, if necessary, special committees were formed. While lists of those parishioners who attended St. Mary's meetings are available in the vestry minute book, official reports from St. Thomas's only contained comments on attendance such as "good", "few" or "fair". Those members of the congregation who attended such meetings were seen by St. Thomas's rector as "men who take deep interest in the welfare and progress of the parish", and only male names appeared on the attendance lists at St. Mary's. Parochial lay administration, practically as well as officially, was a male domain.<sup>12</sup> At St. Mary's, additional meetings of parishioners were held throughout the year to discuss issues such as church debt or any substantial work that needed to be done on church property.<sup>13</sup> In both, emergency parish meetings would be held at times of crisis, such as the death of a rector or a member of the rector's family.

One important difference in parish administration was that St. Mary's had a select vestry whereas St. Thomas's did not. At St. Mary's, the select vestry was made up of six members until 1888, when it was enlarged to eight. This group met four times each year

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<sup>12</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 1 June 1868; "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1889) and (May 1910); "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1889), (June 1890), (May 1895), (May 1900), (May 1901), and (May 1902). A person could be elected to a parochial office or appointed to a committee in absentia, so the names of appointees could not be used to gauge attendance at St. Thomas's.

<sup>13</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, *passim*.

to discuss church business. To prevent domination by any one group, St. Mary's established a rule that half of the select vestry members must retire each year, although they could stand for re-election. Senior members of the select vestry were required to retire before junior ones.<sup>14</sup> Rotation of lay administrative positions has been seen as either a sign of a parish's need to honour prominent members systematically, or as a manifestation of cooperative ideals. In both cases, which could easily coexist, there was a clear ethic of shared leadership.<sup>15</sup> Even without such rules, this ethic was an inherent part of the select vestry system, as it prevented the triumvirate of rector and wardens from dominating the parish, as happened at St. Thomas's.

The original St. Thomas's church building included a vestry room, and the early administration included a lay committee of management. By 1849 the positions of lay management in the congregation had been reduced to two appointed church wardens, and after 1877, an elected people's warden and appointed rector's warden were the only permanent positions of lay administration.<sup>16</sup> On occasion, temporary lay committees were formed to deal with specific problems, such as church repairs or outstanding debts. The power of these committees was limited not only by their transient nature, but also by

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<sup>14</sup> For example, if A, B, and C were elected in 1881, and D, E, and F in 1882, at the 1883 annual meeting A, B, and C would retire. Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, Easter 1872, 24 Apr. 1888, 28 Apr. 1897.

<sup>15</sup> For cooperative ideal see Joan R. Gundersen, "The Local Parish as Female Institution: the Experience of All Saints Episcopal Church in Frontier Minnesota," *Church History* 55, 3 (Sept. 1986), p. 321; and for principle of acknowledgement see O'Dell, "Class Character," p. 132.

<sup>16</sup> Rendell and Knight, *History of St. Thomas's Church*, pp. 13-17.

the fact they answered to the wardens and rector, one of whom was usually included in the membership. This system did not please Rector Arthur Wood, who in 1890 raised the issue of electing a select vestry at the annual Easter meeting, arguing that he would like to have a selected body of men that he could regularly consult with on parish affairs. Members of the congregation flatly rejected this suggestion, and it was not until 25 years later, during the rectorship of Edgar Jones, that a select vestry was established.<sup>17</sup> Throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, those members of the congregation who attended annual meetings considered personal authority a more effective means of administration than working communally, and accepted a lay administration that was dominated by the upper class. In contrast, St. Mary's provided the opportunity for a variety of members to provide regular assistance, and suggestions, to the rector. An examination of the actual personnel who held lay administrative positions at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's, as compiled from the vestry minute book and Diocesan Magazine, showed the degree to which this potential was realized.

Table 13 shows that in St. Mary's parish the lower middle class was clearly growing in influence. Between 1877 and 1904 the percentage of parish officers from this class rose from 36.5 per cent to 61 per cent. Between 1877 and 1884, the upper, middle class proper, independent producing, and skilled working classes all shared an average of around 13.5 per cent of parish offices. Between 1885 and 1894 the middle class proper and the skilled working class held a stronger share of parochial lay offices, with 23.5 and

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<sup>17</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's: the Easter Meeting," Diocesan Magazine (June 1890); Rendell and Knight, History of St. Thomas's Church, p. 75.

20 per cent respectively. The skilled working class share continued to grow between 1895 and 1904, but at 23 per cent it was a distant second behind the now dominant lower

Table 13: St. Mary's: Lay Administration by Class, 1877-1904						
Years	1877-84		1885-94		1895-1904	
Class	#	%	#	%	#	%
Upper	15	13.0	6	4.0	8	5.0
Middle Proper	14	12.0	34	23.5	7	4.0
Lower Middle	42	36.5	61	42.0	101	61.0
Independent Producing	16	14.0	15	10.5	8	5.0
Skilled Working	18	15.5	29	20.0	38	23.0
Unskilled Working	1	1.0	0	0.0	2	1.0
Unknown	9	8.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Total	115	100.0	145	100.0	165	100.0

middle class. For upper-class lay administrators, the total was consistent with figures for subscribers to the General Church Fund, showing a decline from around 13 per cent in the 1880s to around 4.5 per cent for the rest of the period. The percentages for independent-producing and skilled working-class parish leaders were only slightly lower than the figures for church subscribers. The lower middle class was increasingly overrepresented.

The figures for attendance at church meetings provided information on those members who were actively interested in parish affairs. From 1877 to 1884, parishioners of the skilled working class were the largest presence at parish meetings, at 31 per cent (See Table 14). This was followed by 23 per cent for members of the lower middle class,

and an average of around 12.5 per cent each for the independent producing class, upper class, and middle class proper. Between 1885 and 1894, totals for the skilled working class (38.5 per cent) and lower middle class (36 per cent) were nearly equal, while third

Table 14: St. Mary's Parish Meetings: Attendance by Class, 1877-1904						
Years	1877-84		1885-94		1895-1904	
Class	#	%	#	%	#	%
Upper	22	11.0	12	3.0	3	1.0
Middle Proper	32	15.5	50	13.0	34	8.5
Lower Middle	47	23.0	137	36.0	176	45.0
Independent Producing	23	11.0	24	6.5	44	11.0
Skilled Working	64	31.0	146	38.5	94	24.0
Unskilled Working	7	3.5	6	1.5	33	8.5
Unknown	10	5.0	5	1.5	8	2.0
Total	205	100.0	380	100.0	392	100.0

place went to members of the middle class proper, who made up 13 per cent of parishioners in attendance. By the last decade of the period, the lower middle class was clearly leading with 45 per cent of the total. This was followed by 24 per cent for the skilled working class and around 9 per cent each for the middle class proper, independent producing, and unskilled working classes.

The overall picture suggests a decline in upper-class presence, which is consistent with general parish demographics, as well as diminished middle-class proper and skilled working-class representation. While members of the skilled working class were more likely to attend parish meetings than to hold office before 1895, after that time the

likelihood of holding office was consistent with interest in parish affairs as expressed in the attendance figures. In contrast, the upper-class, and especially lower middle-class, parishioners who attended parish meetings were increasingly likely to be parish officers as well. For members of the independent producing class, attendance at meetings held fairly steady at around 11 per cent throughout the entire period. At the same time, the number of parish officers of this class was declining. In summary, members of the skilled working and lower middle classes were the most likely to be lay officers and participants in meetings to discuss parish affairs, although at various times throughout the period other classes were a significant presence in parish administration.<sup>18</sup>

At St. Thomas's the picture was very different, as well as more clear-cut. As illustrated in Table 15, in the period 1889 to 1908 the lay administration was overwhelmingly dominated by members of the upper class.<sup>19</sup> Between 1889 and 1898 this class held 75.5 per cent of parish offices, growing to 78.5 per cent between 1899 and 1908. Similarly, the distribution of remaining positions in the lay administration changed

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<sup>18</sup> This analysis of lay administration provided interesting information on marine trades and church involvement. Sager argued that master mariner families sought a respected social position, and used involvement in churches to accomplish this, but the nature of seafaring meant that holding positions of lay administration was difficult. A case at St. Mary's showed Captain F.H. Axford retiring from his position of people's warden "on account of his occupation being likely to take him away from St. John's frequently and for long periods." The same situation would also apply to involvement in church-sponsored voluntary associations. It seems that the quest for church-based "respectability" in families headed by sailors and master mariners fell to the women and children who remained in port. Sager, *Seafaring Labour*, pp. 241, 137; Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 1 May 1891, 2 Feb. 1897.

<sup>19</sup> Complete lists of parish officers and committee members were not available for St. Thomas's before 1889.



little in twenty years: the middle class proper and lower middle class each held around 6.5 per cent of offices, and the independent producing and skilled working classes held between 1.5 and 2 per cent. Members of the unskilled working class held around 6 per

Table 15: St. Thomas's Lay Administration by Class, 1889-1908				
Year	1889-98		1899-1908	
Class	#	%	#	%
Upper	114	75.5	110	78.5
Middle Proper	11	7.5	8	5.5
Lower Middle	9	6.0	10	7.0
Independent Producing	3	2.0	1	1.0
Skilled Working	5	3.5	2	1.5
Unskilled Working	9	6.0	8	5.5
Unknown	0	0.0	1	1.0
Total	151	100.5	140	100.0

cent of offices and lay committee positions, which was slightly lower than the totals for middle-class parishioners, despite their being a much larger part of the parish population. There are no lists of those attending parish meetings available for St. Thomas's, but subscription lists show that while the upper class was over represented in terms of parish offices, the other classes were under represented. The gap between total class percentages for subscribers and parish officers was stable for members of the middle class proper, but it was growing for members of the lower middle and skilled working classes. For independent producers and members of the unskilled working class, the gap was declining. Nevertheless, St. Thomas's parish administration was clearly dominated

by elite members of the congregation.

These figures for lay leadership, coupled with the findings about the general class composition of the congregations, highlight the importance of considering specific parish situations when discussing the demographics of church administration. Information from St. Thomas's and St. Mary's parishes showed that generalizations about Anglican leanings towards bourgeois leadership, or presumptions about unavoidable middle-class hegemony in churches, are simply incorrect. The socially stratified parish of St. Thomas's, with its predominantly upper and middle-class congregation, allowed members of these classes who were powerful in secular society to dominate parish leadership.<sup>20</sup> At St. Mary's the distribution of lay leadership positions was more consistent with congregational demographics, although the growing influence of the lower middle class supports the idea of members of this class being regarded as, and acting as, surrogate elites in communities without a strong middle and upper-class presence.

Both churches had a high number of lower class parishioners, but it was only at St. Mary's that such people held a considerable percentage of lay leadership positions. This shows the degree to which local circumstances at the neighbourhood level could shape class experience. The sharing of power between working and lower middle-class parishioners at St. Mary's also demonstrates that the West End of St. John's, especially in the last decades of the 19th century, had more of a small-town, community feeling than

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<sup>20</sup> Parish officers at St. Thomas's included politically powerful men such as Augustus W. Harvey, George Skelton, Robert Watson, and James Spearman Winter. "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1904), "Death of Sir James S Winter, K.C.M.G., K.C.," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1911).

the more urban East End. This appeared to have changed with the growth of industrial development in the West End, for after 1900, the lower middle class began to dominate St. Mary's parish lay administration.

These findings supplement those of O'Dell and Marks. O'Dell argued that 19th-century churches were an effective outlet for the exercise of class power: the middle and upper classes controlled the leadership of congregations and therefore affected the running of a church in a way that the working class never could.<sup>21</sup> While St. Thomas's fits this model, the St. Mary's case shows that members of the working class could, and did, take a substantial part in parish leadership when circumstances allowed, as Marks has suggested. These samples support the idea that in congregations without a clearly delineated upper class, or with a strong community character, members of "inferior" status were able to achieve and maintain leadership positions that may have been unavailable in another parish or in secular politics.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, the large number of lower middle class persons active in parish leadership at St. Mary's supports Katz's concept of the business class as an aspiring elite. Members of the lower middle class often fulfilled a need for respect, and respectability, through church-based activities.

At the same time, St. Thomas's showed a taste for local influence among the

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<sup>21</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 3-4.

<sup>22</sup> O'Dell suggested that members of the working class who felt their opportunities to hold church leadership positions were limited would sometimes switch parishes or churches. O'Dell, "Class Character," p. 133. Likewise, members of the elite class, or those who aspired to it, may have moved to a more elite-dominated, prestigious parish.

Anglican East End elite.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the way in which the congregation consistently re-elected the same people reveals the network of monopoly, stability, and influence that characterized that parish's system of lay administration.<sup>24</sup> Finally, the way in which members of the upper class dominated leadership positions showed that in the East End parish there was little recognition of the willingness -- and ability -- of lower-class members of the congregation to take an active part in church administration.<sup>25</sup>

### **Parish Financing**

A fundamental part of church administration was developing and directing effective means of parish financing. A parish could not function without money, despite the church's overt disinterest in the material world. This contradiction was shown in two Diocesan Magazine articles by the rector of St. Thomas's, Arthur Wood. The first, written in 1892 stated that:

The soul of a Christian ought to be able to rise above mere finance and money -- Christian teaching, Christian sympathy and advice, Christian prayers ought to be employed by every one of us for the good of his neighbour.<sup>26</sup>

Two years later, in a clear, yet understandable, contradiction to every sentiment expressed in the earlier piece, he wrote:

A man will find money for tobacco, amusements, luxuries..., but not religion. He

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<sup>23</sup> Katz, Stern, Doucet, Social Organization, pp. 44-6.

<sup>24</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1895), (May 1898), (June 1908), and (May 1910).

<sup>25</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 159-62.

<sup>26</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1892).

feels someone else should pay for that....It would be only just if such a man were set aside by his fellow-worshippers, and told that since he will not pay his share, he cannot be allowed to steal it.<sup>27</sup>

Most money was raised through a combination of pew rents, freewill offerings using envelopes labelled with the donor's name, church collections, annual solicitation for the General Church Fund, personal donations, and organized fund raising.<sup>28</sup> Church membership carried with it financial responsibilities and pressures – the amount of one's donation was public knowledge whether published or not, and anonymous donations were quickly identified in parish scuttlebutt.<sup>29</sup> The congregational and parochial demographics of St. Mary's and St. Thomas's have indicated that the latter had the financial advantage of being the spiritual home of some of the most influential and wealthy families in St. John's, while at St. Mary's the congregation was primarily made up of families of a "middling" status, – skilled working, independent producing, and lower middle classes. Differences in the level of disposable income meant contrasting approaches to financing.

One method of Victorian church financing that has received considerable attention is pew rents. O'Dell argued that the practice of renting pews was clear evidence of the class character of church participation. A monetary value was assigned to each pew, with the most prominent or well-situated seats being the most valuable. Any

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<sup>27</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," *Diocesan Magazine* (Nov. 1894).

<sup>28</sup> Organized fund raising was mainly the domain of voluntary associations, and will be discussed in later chapters.

<sup>29</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," p. 178.

member of the congregation who wanted to rent a sitting would apply to the church wardens, with the most wealthy or influential parishioners ending up in the most expensive seats. In this way, distinctions of social status from the secular realm were reproduced within the body of the church. Some free seats were available for visitors or poorer members of the congregation, and the percentage of such pews was a good indicator of the balance between status consciousness and democracy in a parish.<sup>30</sup> The impact of pew rents on less wealthy parishioners was discussed in Inglis, for example, who argued that the use of pew rents in British churches contributed to low attendance among members of the working class.<sup>31</sup>

When St. Mary's church was built in the late 1850s, two-thirds of the sittings were assigned a rental value, while one-third were free. There was no disagreement about these percentages, but some dispute arose in the building committee about the use of doors on rented pews. Some members wanted them, and others argued that such doors were noisy, disruptive, and designed for "private accommodation and distinction" rather than "general edification, and the Glory of God." Moreover, pew doors were being removed from churches in England, and should not be part of a new church building in Newfoundland. Diplomatically, the committee decided that the use of doors was a matter of preference for each individual pew holder.<sup>32</sup> However, efforts to accommodate the needs of pew holders eventually became a financial thorn in the side of parish

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<sup>30</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 173, 176.

<sup>31</sup> Inglis, Churches and the Working-Classes, pp. 48-9.

<sup>32</sup> Church of St. Mary the Virgin, p. 19.

administrators.

In April 1880, in an effort to increase revenues, the wardens and vestry at St. Mary's decided to rearrange all vacant sittings so that those of each class were placed together and made available for potential tenants. Members of the congregation sitting in free pews, and who could afford it, were asked to pay rent. Members were also informed that they should not occupy more rented sittings than they were willing to pay for.<sup>33</sup> Two years later, pew rents were still a major issue at vestry meetings. The large amount of money owed by pew renters was blamed on the church wardens, who were said to be too lenient, and the vestry agreed that the quarterly rent payments should be strictly enforced. If the renter had not paid within six months of receiving a bill the sitting was to be let to another. Though Newfoundland was in the grips of economic depression, St. Mary's established a new lay officer whose sole job was to collect pew rents, receiving a five percent commission.<sup>34</sup>

At the 1889 St. Mary's annual meeting, "some plain words were spoken of those members of the congregation who occupy seats -- not free seats -- without paying for them".<sup>35</sup> However, to offset pew-rent delinquency, the select vestry and church wardens suggested an alternative method of systematic fund raising. The meeting agreed, and

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<sup>33</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 16 Apr. 1880, 23 Apr. 1880.

<sup>34</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 25 Apr. 1882, 3 May 1884, 27 Aug. 1890.

<sup>35</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1889).

starting in 1890 the envelope system was used as a primary means of fund raising.<sup>36</sup>

The envelope method was increasingly popular in many parishes at the end of the 19th century. While the publication of donors' names and amounts still provided a means for parishioners to express their status, the envelope system was a more group-oriented approach to financial support than the use of pew rents.<sup>37</sup> Members of the congregation pledged the amount they felt they could give to the church during each fiscal year. Each parishioner then submitted this amount to the church bit by bit during the year, using envelopes labelled with his or her name or a number. While a pledge was required, church administrators were flexible about members meeting their goals, and stated that "if [a parishioner] cannot do what he intended, let him do what he can," showing an awareness of personal financial difficulties.<sup>38</sup> As well, the envelope method eliminated time consuming and awkward door-to-door canvassing, and was considered more accommodating than the old method of annually collecting subscriptions.<sup>39</sup> In an October 1889 parochial circular, the St. Mary's church wardens wrote that the envelope system allowed for a more free-will approach to church support, and was good for poor as well as rich, since donations were given piecemeal in an amount, and at a time, when

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<sup>36</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 24 Sept. 1889. The envelope system was used occasionally for special collections before the official adoption in 1889, so the congregation was familiar with the nature of this method of collection. See Vestry Minute Book, Easter 1877, 25 Apr. 1882, 29 Apr. 1884. Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Parochial Circular (St. John's: the church?, 1889).

<sup>37</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. 140-2.

<sup>38</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1889).

<sup>39</sup> Collecting for the church was referred to as "a not always pleasant task" by St. Mary's rector Camplin Cogan. "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Oct 1906).



the parishioner could afford it. The earlier system involved collecting a single lump sum once per year. The wardens also stated that if this new method was not successful, the parish would have to return to the old annual collection system to meet expenses.<sup>40</sup>

As was the case at St. Mary's, at St. Thomas's the original means of systematically fund raising in the parish was a combination of pew rents and voluntary subscriptions.<sup>41</sup> To save expense and time, members of the congregation were asked to forward their rents to the rector's warden (usually a merchant) at his place of business.<sup>42</sup> As was the case in the West End, parishioners were often in arrears for their pew rents, but instead of creating a new, paid lay officer to collect these debts, in 1891 C.A.M. Pinsent and "other gentlemen" at the Easter meeting volunteered to solicit pew holders for their rents.<sup>43</sup> St. Thomas's was like St. Mary's in that both parishes used envelopes for special collections, and by 1896 St. Thomas's was also using envelopes to collect church dues instead of going door-to-door. However, the envelopes were used to collect an annual lump sum payment in November, rather than being part of an instalment plan.<sup>44</sup> An envelope system like that established at St. Mary's in 1889 was not instituted at St. Thomas's until

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<sup>40</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Parochial Circular; "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1889).

<sup>41</sup> Barnes, "Old Garrison," p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> Two examples of this practice were seen in relation to wardens Thomas Winter and J.W. West. "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1891), (May 1893).

<sup>43</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1891).

<sup>44</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1891) and (Nov. 1896).

World War One.<sup>45</sup> Lay administrators were less aware than those in the West End of the financial difficulties that some poor families and individuals could face in coming up with surplus cash, or did not understand such parishioners' hesitancy to part with cash when a possible six months of winter lay ahead of them.

The assumption that members of St. Thomas's congregation were able, if not willing, to give substantial personal gifts of cash to the church was also seen in rectors' calls for increased financial support. Instead of instigating a system to accommodate piecemeal donations by parishioners of any financial circumstance, in a Diocesan Magazine article specifically mentioning "our leading parishioners", St. Thomas's rector Arthur Wood lamented that "we churchmen have not yet learned the duty and great pleasure of giving."<sup>46</sup> While he wanted all members of the congregation to make contributions to the church, Wood also reflected that, with some "noble exceptions", "it often happens that while those of small means give liberally, those who have power to give, part with their wealth with a very bad grace."<sup>47</sup> Both of these calls for increased donations came in 1896, and while the clergy at St. Thomas's were sympathetic to the financial difficulties caused by the 1894 bank crash, in November 1895 they clearly stated that while most parishioners had not recovered from their financial losses, there were some who were much better off than they had been at the start of the year, and had

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<sup>45</sup> Rendell and Knight, History of St. Thomas's Church, p. 49.

<sup>46</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1896).

<sup>47</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1896).

little excuse for failing to donate to the Church Fund.<sup>48</sup>

Annual gifts of cash and substantial personal donations from well-to-do parishioners were an effective means of church financing in the East End. In 1903, for example, a gift of \$800 from an "anonymous gentleman" removed the remaining debt from the construction of Canon Wood Hall, and in 1904 five members of the congregation -- Henry A. Bowring, A.J. Harvey, W.C. Job, George Knowling, and Marmaduke Winter -- wrote to the rector's warden to tell him that the rector's stipend ought to be increased by \$250, and if the congregation did not agree to this they would each increase their personal dues by \$50 to cover the raise.<sup>49</sup> In the mid-1890s the parish also received substantial gifts from Harriet Gill, who left a legacy of \$1500 in 1893, and from Barbara Rendell, who was a "major contributor" towards replacing books in the Sunday School in 1896.<sup>50</sup> While upper-class members of the St. Mary's congregation, such as Lewis and Peter George Tessier, offered substantial monetary gifts, the low number of such parishioners at St. Mary's meant that it was impossible for administrators to rely on such a means of support.<sup>51</sup>

After 1900, some clergy in Newfoundland began to oppose pew rents as a means of parish financing. F.W. Colley, for example, wrote in the Diocesan Magazine that

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<sup>48</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1895) and (Nov. 1895).

<sup>49</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1903); A.J. Harvey to F.E. Rendell, St. John's, April 6, 1904, St. Thomas's Parish Archives.

<sup>50</sup> Diocesan Synod Archives, Synod Executive Committee Minute Book, 11 Dec. 1893; "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1894) and (July 1896).

<sup>51</sup> Times, 7 June 1884; Church of St. Mary the Virgin, p. 35.

while the idea of a family pew was good, a church also needed to offer a place to the poor and the aged. In the Newfoundland church, he wrote, nothing should be heard about renting or selling pews to individuals.<sup>52</sup> Despite this, St. Mary's and St. Thomas's churches continued to collect pew rents well into the 20th century. However, both parishes recognized that the income generated by pew rents was insufficient. While St. Thomas's upper-class leadership pushed for increased personal donations from the wealthy members of the parish, at St. Mary's a system of financial support designed to accommodate parishioners with limited or irregular incomes was established by a skilled-working and lower middle-class leadership for a congregation made up largely of families and individuals of that same "middling" status. In this way, St. Mary's was consistent with a late 19th century, post-industrial capitalism trend in church support identified by Yeo, who argued that while large donations from the local elite were important in the period between 1850 and 1890, from 1890 until 1914 more general systems of financing were needed as the number of upper-class families and individuals in local settings decreased.<sup>53</sup> At St. Thomas's, however, the pattern of reliance on upper-class donations continued.

A comparison of the amounts of personal donations to the General Church Fund by parishioners at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's in the years 1880 to 1905 echoes this pattern, and highlights other effects of social class on church financing. In 1880 and 1886, very few members of St. Mary's congregation who donated to the Church Fund

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<sup>52</sup> [F.W. Colley], "Pew-Holders," *Diocesan Magazine* (Apr. 1909).

<sup>53</sup> Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organizations*, p. 147.

gave only the basic 10s required to hold lay offices or vote at parish meetings. Most donations were in the £1-£2 range. At St. Thomas's, for the same years, the highest number of donations were the basic 10s contributions, but at St. Thomas's there were more donations over £10 than at St. Mary's. This pattern was consistent with the socially stratified nature of the East End parish. Likewise, in 1890 and 1895 the percentage of basic \$2 donations at St. Thomas's was 45.5 and 48 per cent, respectively, while at St. Mary's the number of basic contributions were 16.5 and 13 per cent. However, this gap had closed by 1905. (See Tables 16 and 17) For donations in the \$2.50 to \$5.50 range, (with the exception of 1890 when St. Mary's had 45 per cent versus St. Thomas's 25 per

Table 16: St. Mary's: Contributions to the General Church Fund by Amount, 1890-1905								
	1890		1895		1900		1905	
Dollars	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2.00	14	16.5	7	13.0	12	20.5	38	29.0
2.50-5.50	38	45.0	16	30.0	21	35.5	47	36.0
6-10.50	14	16.5	16	30.0	14	23.5	27	20.5
11-15.50	6	7.0	6	11.5	3	5.0	8	6.0
16-20.50	8	9.5	3	5.5	4	6.5	8	6.0
21-50.50	4	4.5	5	9.5	5	8.5	3	2.0
51-75.50	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
76-99.50	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
+100.00	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	85	100.0	53	99.5	59	99.5	131	99.5

cent (both parishes had a nearly equal percentage of contributors. In 1895 and 1900 St. Mary's led in donations in the \$6 to \$10.50 range, and had more donations in the \$11 to

\$20.50 range. There were no great differences in the number of \$21 to \$50.50 donations, but whereas St. Mary's rarely had a donation over \$50, St. Thomas's had donations up to, and over the \$100 mark.<sup>54</sup> Finally, St. Thomas's had a much higher number of donations under the basic 10s or \$2 mark throughout the entire period, possibly reflecting the number of unskilled working-class parishioners.

While St. Thomas's had some very liberal upper-class donors, the members of St. Mary's congregation seem to have been more generous overall. This can be seen

Table 17: St. Thomas's: Contributions to the General Church Fund by Amount, 1890-1905								
	1890		1895		1900		1905	
Dollars	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2.00	85	45.5	97	48.0	77	35.5	80	29.5
2.50-5.50	47	25.0	57	28.0	79	36.0	108	40.0
6-10.50	27	14.5	23	11.5	35	16.0	51	19.0
11-15.50	8	4.5	6	3.0	2	1.0	4	1.5
16-20.50	15	8.0	0	0.0	4	2.0	2	0.5
21-50.50	2	1.0	18	9.0	15	7.0	15	5.5
51-75.50	2	1.0	1	0.5	4	2.0	7	2.5
76-99.50	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
+100.00	1	0.5	0	0.0	2	1.0	3	1.0
Total	187	100.0	202	100.0	218	100.5	270	99.5

especially in the middle range of contributions from 1890 to 1905. It seems that while the upper-class presence at St. Thomas's ensured some substantial donations, it may have

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<sup>54</sup> With the exception of 1895, when the bank crash put a damper on some East End Anglican merchants' charitable impulses.

also served as a disincentive for lower-class members. They may have felt that the burden of church financial support should fall on families such as the Winters, Goodridges, and Knowlings, rather than on those of more limited means. At St. Mary's, the same community sense that marked the lay administration and financial system may have encouraged a general willingness to support the church.

It is also interesting to see that after 1890 female parishioners made up a considerable proportion of independent donors to the Church Fund in both parishes. At St. Thomas's, the number of female donors ranged from 7 to 8 per cent in 1890, 1895, and 1900, but rose to 11.5 per cent in 1905. At St. Mary's the numbers were slightly higher or equal, with the exception of 1900 when 17 per cent of the donations at St. Mary's came from married (possibly widowed) and single women. As well, women were consistently in the top five single donations to St. Mary's Church Fund -- this despite the fact that no woman was allowed to hold a lay office or vote at the annual vestry meetings, a privilege that may have encouraged male members of the congregation to push their donations over the \$2 mark. While the St. Thomas's example showed how money equalled administrative power and influence for men, the same did not apply to the female donors of the West End.

This evidence on subscribers opposes Marks' conviction that women's lack of access to money was the main reason they formed sewing associations and organized socials in order to support the church.<sup>55</sup> It is clear that some women did not have a problem securing cash for their own use -- especially those who were unmarried or

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<sup>55</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," p. 166.

widowed. This was reinforced by the large cash gifts that women such as Harriet Gill and Barbara Rendell made to St. Thomas's in the 1890s.

O'Dell wrote that "the role of men of property in churches is at the heart of the matter of the exercise of power there."<sup>56</sup> Information on the distribution of lay offices at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's churches, as well as the different approaches to increasing parish revenues developed in each parish, shows that, to a certain extent, this is an accurate evaluation. Men held lay power, despite the generous financial contributions of female parishioners. The situation at St. Thomas's in the late 19th century especially supports O'Dell's evaluation. Upper-class members of the congregation dominated lay offices, and the style of parish financing was clearly informed by minds with little insight into the problems that could affect working-class members. There was no effort to accommodate irregular incomes, as was the case at St. Mary's, and parish leadership emphasized personal donations from the wealthy rather than more general, communal fund raising. Likewise, the St. Mary's lay leadership was more communal, democratic, and representative than that seen at St. Thomas's. This reinforces O'Dell's idea that for members of the working class, belonging to a large, prestigious church such as St. Thomas's meant limited opportunities for leadership and parochial power. However, in a smaller, neighbourhood congregation such as St. Mary's, such ambitions could be fulfilled.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," p. 158.

<sup>57</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," p. 133. O'Dell wrote that members of the working class sometimes moved to neighbourhood churches in order to have more access to leadership positions. In my research I rarely saw a St. Thomas's family or individual transfer to St.



Working-class families were active financial supporters of the two parishes under investigation, albeit to a lesser extent than the middle and upper classes. It is also clear that while the upper class dominated lay leadership and shaped the system of financing at St. Thomas's, the socioeconomic nature of the West End Anglican community meant the lower middle and working classes were very influential at St. Mary's. The remaining chapters will discuss other aspects of Victorian and Edwardian Anglican church life -- liturgy and church interior decoration, poor relief, and voluntary associations -- to see other ways in which social relations shaped religious institutions.

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Mary's. There was, however, some traffic in the opposite direction, especially for members of the middle class. This showed the attraction of being associated with a prestigious, or "monied" church. For the East End working class, there may have been some element of pride in being a member of St. Thomas's parish, even if opportunities for leadership were limited.

## Chapter Six

### "Members of the Church will ... be Well Pleased": Theology, Secular Aesthetics, and the Ordering of Public Worship, Church Architecture, and Interior Design

The prelate hath pronounced in Jesu's Name  
The words of Consecration, and before  
This Mystery we silently adore:  
And kneeling here among us if we claim  
Feild, Spencer, Bridge, in spirit, who shall blame?<sup>1</sup>

The references to Edward Feild, Aubrey George Spencer, and Thomas F.H. Bridge in the first lines of Robert Gear MacDonald's sonnet, written for the 1905 rededication of the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, illustrate the theological differences that characterized the Church of England in Newfoundland. Feild was the well-known Tractarian bishop; Spencer, his Low Church predecessor. Bridge, who was the evangelical Anglican chaplain to Governor Thomas Cochrane and Spencer's principal assistant, was one of the best-known clergymen in the colony and Feild's chief rival for the episcopal appointment in 1844.<sup>2</sup> MacDonald was a prominent parishioner and historian of St. Thomas's Church, and was certainly aware of its history as a Low Church stronghold during Feild's episcopate, when many churches, including St. Mary's, were established (or reformed) according to the bishop's High Church image.

The importance of divisions between the proponents of High and Low Church

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Gear MacDonald, "The First Eucharist", *Newfoundland Quarterly* (Dec. 1905), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> "Thomas F.H. Bridge," *DCB VIII*.

theology in Newfoundland Anglicanism was established in the work of Frederick Jones, but little scholarly attention has been paid to how these differences affected individual parishes.<sup>3</sup> Some English church historians have argued that theological disputes were not a major factor in parish development, even in liturgical matters, when compared to the particular circumstances of the parish and its parishioners.<sup>4</sup> An examination of the liturgical practices and preferences for church design and decoration at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's churches during the late 19th and early 20th centuries suggests that while both churches maintained their theological heritage in terms of basic services, the social class of the members of the congregation, and parochial lay leaders, played an important role in shaping liturgical and architectural developments.

Established in the late 1850s under Feild's guidance, St. Mary's church was High Anglican. This is not to be confused with Tractarianism, a specific form of High Anglicanism developed by the Oxford Movement, although the two terms (erroneously) are often used interchangeably. High Church Anglicanism was associated with liturgical commitment to ritual, music, and the sacraments. It also inspired a particular type of church architecture, Gothic Revival, which was promoted by ecclesiologists in the 19th century to accommodate an altar-centred liturgy. The architecture of High Church buildings featured cleared chancels and sanctuaries with raised altars. To make the altar

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Jones, "Bishop Feild," *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> David Englander, "The Word and the World: Evangelicalism in the Victorian City," in Gerald Parsons (ed.), Religion in Victorian Britain, vol. 2 (New York: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 20-2, 25-6.

even more central, as well as visible from the nave, ecclesiologists moved pulpits and lecterns to the sides of the chancel entrance. To emphasize the clear division between people and priest, High Church architects added a chancel screen or raised the chancel several steps above the nave. As well, pews were low, open, and faced the altar, while the font stood near the door.<sup>5</sup> Edward Botwood, rector of St. Mary's from 1867 to 1900, was theologically High Church.<sup>6</sup>

In contrast, St. Thomas's Church was built in the 1830s under the guidance of the Low Church Edward Wix, and under its first incumbent, Charles Blackman, became a refuge for Anglican opponents of Feild.<sup>7</sup> Low Church Anglicans, sometimes called evangelical Anglicans, promoted a less formal liturgy than that offered by the High Church, and placed emphasis on preaching and prayer, rather than performance of the sacraments.<sup>8</sup> Architecturally, Low Church buildings were centred on a commanding pulpit rather than the altar, and often had galleries in which worshippers could sit or

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<sup>5</sup> Joan R. Gundersen, "Rural Gothic: Episcopal Churches on the Minnesota Frontier," Minnesota History 50, 7 (Fall 1987), p. 261. Sometimes a litany desk was used in a High Church to replace the Low Church's reading pew. G.W.O. Addleshaw and Frederick Eichells, The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship: An Inquiry into the Arrangements for Public Worship in the Church of England from the Reformation to the Present Day (London: Faber and Faber, [1948]), pp. 205-8.

<sup>6</sup> For Botwood's obituary see Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1901).

<sup>7</sup> "Charles Blackman," DCB VIII; "Edward Wix," DCB IX.

<sup>8</sup> Gerald Parsons, "Reform, Ritual, and Realignment: The Experience of Victorian Anglicanism," in Gerald Parsons (ed.), Religion in Victorian Britain: Traditions (New York: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 34-5.

stand. A modest communion table, rather than an altar, was used to administer the Eucharist, and a reading pew, rather than a lectern, was used to read scripture.<sup>9</sup>

When one examines the types of services that were offered at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's, there is clear evidence that each maintained the liturgical tradition on which it was founded. At St. Mary's, Holy Eucharist was offered at 8 am every Sunday and on saints' days, except the first and third Sundays of the month, when it was offered at 11 am. Early in the 20th century, when the Church of England approved independent services of Holy Eucharist, this changed to every first and third Sunday at noon.<sup>10</sup> Other Sunday services were at 3:30 pm (which included Holy Baptism) and Evensong at 6:30 pm. St. Mary's offered daily Matins at 9 am.<sup>11</sup> By 1910, this had changed to a daily

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<sup>9</sup> Gundersen, "Rural Gothic," p. 260; Paul F.M. Zahl, "Where did all the Galleries Go?: Pre-Tractarian Interiors in Relation to the Decade of Evangelism," Anglican and Episcopal History 60, 2 (June 1991), p. 165. Along with High and Low Church divisions, Anglo-Catholicism developed as a faction of the Anglican Church in the late 19th century. Generally seen as attempting to reach the masses, Anglo-Catholics often established parochial missions in urban working-class districts. In St. John's, the Cathedral parish established such a mission on Springdale Street in 1885. This mission evolved into the parish of St. Michael and All Angels, which remains an Anglo-Catholic stronghold. Anglo-Catholicism, along with other Protestant revivals, is also associated with the lower middle class. Parsons, for example, wrote that such church reform efforts were mainly supported by "draper's assistants of the Y.M.C.A. ... [who were] uncertain about their identity, caught between rich and poor, longing for upward social mobility". Gerald Parsons, "Emotion and Piety: Revivalism and Ritualism in Victorian Christianity," in Gerald Parsons (ed.) Religion in Victorian Britain, pp. 227, 231-2; Joyce Nevitt, St. Michael and All Angels, 1885-1985 (St. John's: Jespersen, 1985).

<sup>10</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1889) and (Oct. 1910).

<sup>11</sup> On Wednesdays, Fridays, and saints' days it was performed at 10:30 am.

Matins at 8 am, and Holy Baptism became available at Matins on saints' days.<sup>12</sup> In the 1880s, Evensong with sermon was offered every Wednesday at 7:30 pm, but this changed to Fridays in the mid 1890s, probably an effort to encourage members of the working classes to attend the service, as Botwood considered this time slot suitable for workers who finished their day at 6 pm.<sup>13</sup> However, by 1902 the weeknight Evensong had returned to Wednesdays.<sup>14</sup>

There was a clear liturgical emphasis on the sacraments, and especially Holy Communion, at St. Mary's Church. In contrast, at St. Thomas's, Holy Communion was only offered twice a month in the 1880s and 1890s, -- at 8 am on the first Sunday and at noon on the third Sunday, as well as at chief festivals. By 1910, however, St. Thomas's was offering Communion at least once a week.<sup>15</sup> Sunday services included Matins at 11 am, and afternoon service at 3:30 pm, and Evensong at 6:30 pm. Holy Baptism and churchings were held at the Sunday afternoon service, except for the third Sunday of the month when there was a special children's service.<sup>16</sup> Churchings also took place at Evensong (with sermon) on Fridays at 7:30 pm, -- perhaps for the same reasons

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<sup>12</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1889), (Oct. 1906), and (Oct. 1910).

<sup>13</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1889), (Dec. 1889), (Jan. 1896).

<sup>14</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Oct. 1902).

<sup>15</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1889) and (Oct. 1910). The weekly Eucharist was at noon on the third Sunday of the month, and at 8 am every other week.

<sup>16</sup> Churchings were services for women who had recently given birth.

suggested by Botwood. During Advent and Lent, a weekly Evensong with meditation (often organized around a sermon series) was added on Wednesdays at 7:30 pm. Daily Morning Prayer was held at 8 am, and during Holy Week, meditation was also added to this service.<sup>17</sup> This program of services emphasized a personal and pietistic religion, in keeping with the Low Church tradition, as did the prominent place of sermons. The Low Church tradition at St. Thomas's could even be seen in the themes of articles published in that parish's column in the Diocesan Magazine. These included sermons as the essential element of public worship, the family as the chief medium for teaching religion to children, and the importance of daily personal prayer.<sup>18</sup>

In the 19th century a liturgical revival began in the Anglican church that affected the form of worship in most parishes, despite High or Low allegiances. This movement, called Ritualism, grew from the High Church architectural and liturgical tradition: especially the promotion of choral services, increased use of music, choir stalls, and robed choirs. Ritualists also promoted the use of lighted candles, flowers, altar frontals, side chapels and stained glass in an effort to enhance the experience of Anglican worship.<sup>19</sup> It is important to note that this movement focused on material and aesthetic

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<sup>17</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1889), (Feb. 1901), (Mar. 1902), (Mar. 1903), (Apr. 1903), (Oct. 1910), and (Dec. 1910).

<sup>18</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Oct. 1889), (Apr. 1890), and (Sept. 1890). The fact that sermons from St. Thomas's were frequently published in the Magazine also showed that this form of religious instruction was a key element of Anglican services in the East End.

<sup>19</sup> Parsons, "Reform, Revival, and Realignment," pp. 30-4.

changes, rather than on theological issues.<sup>20</sup> Even though Ritualism had High Church roots, Low Church parishes were affected by this revival, and by the early 20th century many Low Church parishes had accepted changes in the style of Anglican worship and the architectural setting for services.<sup>21</sup> Historians of Anglicanism agree that the acceptance of Ritualism was a function of a late Victorian change in secular aesthetics, and especially the growth of an increasingly consumption-minded middle class.

### **Church Music**

The increasing importance of music, and especially choral music, in Anglican church services in the late 19th century was one aspect of the liturgical developments resulting from changes in secular aesthetics. Whether or not parishes were High or Low, rectors and congregations began to accept choirs as a necessary part of Sunday services, and, when financial resources were available, spent considerable amounts of money on organs and organists. The growing taste for professional musical performances led to an increased appreciation of sacred music, and to some members of the middle-class, having a well-developed program of liturgical music became a way of displaying social status.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Parsons "Reform, Ritual, and Realignment," p. 35; John Shelton Reed, "'A Female Movement': the Feminization of Nineteenth-Century Anglo-Catholicism," Anglican and Episcopal History 57, 2 (June 1988), pp. 199-200.

<sup>21</sup> Englander, "The Word and the World," pp. 20-2, 25-6.

<sup>22</sup> Nicholas Temperley, The Music of the English Parish Church, v. 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 276-7, 284-6.



Despite differences in theological traditions, congregations at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's sang from the traditional Low Church collection Church Hymns, rather than the High Church's Sarum Hymnal, or the more theologically neutral Hymns Ancient and Modern.<sup>23</sup> This choice was probably based on the fact that Church Hymns contained tunes as well as the words to hymns and, being a publication of Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, was cheaper and more readily available.<sup>24</sup> The congregations in both parishes resisted the introduction of surpliced choirs, often associated with the Low Church tradition. At the same time, however, both congregations supported the use of sacred music and the development of choral services, movements often associated with the High Church. This mix of traditions supports Temperley's argument that so far as music was concerned rivalries between High and Low Church were usually irrelevant.<sup>25</sup> Temperley holds that forms of parochial worship evolved according to local circumstances, albeit within the spread of Ritualism, and that its shape was largely determined by the tastes of the Victorian middle class.

The use of organs, music, and hymn-singing was accepted by both Low and High Church Anglicans: the former because it encouraged congregational participation, and

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<sup>23</sup> Rendell and Knight, History of St. Thomas's Church, p. 46; Church of St. Mary the Virgin, pp. 35-6; Temperley, Music of the English Parish Church, pp. 297-8.

<sup>24</sup> Donald Frederick Cook, "A Survey of Hymnody in the Church of England in Eastern Canada," M.S.M. thesis, Union Theological Seminary, 1965, pp. 50-2.

<sup>25</sup> Temperley, Music of the English Parish Church, p. 268.

the latter because it added to the beauty of worship.<sup>26</sup> Evidence from St. Mary's and St. Thomas's shows that choirs and music were an important part of services in both churches. One can see that Anglican worshippers, regardless of whether they lived in the East or West End, shared an aesthetic appreciation for sacred music. However, there was a clear difference in the intensity and timing of each church's adoption of a liturgy shaped by Ritualism. In the East End, St. Thomas's bourgeois-dominated congregation was the first to cultivate sacred parish music as performance, and, starting in the 1880s, church members were willing, and able, to direct large amounts of financial resources towards this end. This difference can be seen by comparing each parish's approach to the purchasing of organs and the hiring of church musicians.

At St. Mary's, an harmonium organ was used from 1873 to 1892, when a pipe organ was installed. Both instruments were given by Botwood. The first he obtained for £2 on a trip to England, and the second he presented to the parish in memory of his first wife.<sup>27</sup> The pipe organ, which required hand-blowing, was used until 1938.<sup>28</sup>

At St. Thomas's an organ was installed in 1860, much earlier, to replace the barrel organ that had been used from the time the church was built.<sup>29</sup> In the late 1870s the

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<sup>26</sup> Parsons, "Reform, Revival, and Realignment," pp. 48-9.

<sup>27</sup> Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 1859-1984, pp. 108-9.

<sup>28</sup> Church of St. Mary the Virgin, pp. 35-6.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Gear MacDonald, "The Centenary of St. Thomas's Church, St. John's," Newfoundland Quarterly 36, 2 (Oct. 1936), pp. 32-3.

congregation began fund raising for a new instrument. A large portion of the £600 needed was raised by the Women's Association, and in 1881 a new organ was installed.<sup>30</sup> By the early 20th century, however, the need for a new organ was "becoming more apparent".<sup>31</sup> After several years of fund raising, in 1909 a new organ was ordered from Conacher and Company, Huddersfield, England, at a cost of almost \$6700.<sup>32</sup> Over half of this total was raised through events organized by middle and upper-class parish women, while most of the rest came from personal donations: including \$1000 worth of gifts from George J. Rendell, Edgar R. Bowring, William C. Job, Marmaduke G. Winter, Alan F. Goodridge and Sons, George Knowling, George J. Carter, and Alick J. Harvey.<sup>33</sup> The new organ, one of the finest in the city, was dedicated in the summer of 1909 at an Evensong followed by a recital of sacred music featuring prominent city organists.<sup>34</sup>

A similar pattern can be seen when one compares the musicians and choir directors at each church. At St. Mary's, Henrietta Louise Ellis was organist from 1880 until her marriage in 1891 to the curate, John Rouse, and William Winsborrow served as precentor -- the director of choral and congregational singing -- from 1875. The

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<sup>30</sup> Evening Mercury, 8 Feb. 1882.

<sup>31</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Oct. 1906).

<sup>32</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1907) and (May 1909). By way of comparison, the new organ bought for St. Mary's thirty years later only cost \$2600. Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 1859-1894, p. 110.

<sup>33</sup> St. Thomas's Parish, "Organ Fund," 1909.

<sup>34</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Aug. 1909).

presence of a precentor shows how participation, more so than performance, was an important goal at St. Mary's. Parish historians noted that hearty congregational singing, typical of evangelical traditions, was one of the characteristic features of the church's services at the turn of the century despite its High Church origins.<sup>35</sup> After Ellis and Rouse left the parish in 1891, George Brown Lloyd, a postal clerk, offered his services as organist and choirmaster for a year while the church advertised the position in local papers. In 1893 he was appointed to the post at a salary of \$80, and remained church organist until his retirement in 1930.<sup>36</sup>

Concurrently, at St. Thomas's lawyer William M. Clapp served as organist and, after 1898 when he replaced J.W. James, choir director. He retired in 1906. The congregation's taste for well-performed music led to the purchase of an outstanding pipe organ in 1909; this may have been encouraged by Herbert William Stirling L.L.C.M., hired as church organist in 1906. Educated at the Royal College of Music in London, England, a teacher at Bishop Spencer and Bishop Feild colleges, and from 1900 the organist at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, he was considered one of St. John's finest performers. His association with St. Thomas's was cemented by his marriage in 1899 to parishioner Mina Louise Simms, whose parents, Julia and Dr. William Cawley Simms,

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<sup>35</sup> Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 1859-1984, pp. 108-9; Temperley, Music of the English Parish Church, pp. 207-9.

<sup>36</sup> Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 1859-1984, pp. 108-9; Church of St. Mary the Virgin, pp. 35-6; Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 17 Apr. 1891, 24 Apr. 1891, 4 May 1893, 6 Oct. 1896.

were long-standing and active members of the congregation. Stirling was organist at St. Thomas's until his death in November, 1956. Five years later, parishioners dedicated a window overlooking the pipe organ in memory of the Stirlings' service to the church.<sup>37</sup>

### Choral Services

Rector Arthur Wood was a great impetus for liturgical revival and the aesthetic improvement of services at St. Thomas's. After a visit to Canada and the United States in 1893, Wood called for improved music, a robed choir, and occasional choral services in the evening. Wood stressed that singing was an effective form of praise, and that the choir was there to lead congregational singing, not to substitute for it.<sup>38</sup> He decided that the Toronto Canticle and Chant Book would now be used, a collection available at the S.P.C.K. Depot on Water Street. He also ordered a hymn and canticle board. In July 1894, the congregation was also asked to buy a Cathedral Psalter, so that they could participate in choral services, the first of which had been held on the previous Easter Sunday.<sup>39</sup> These changes were not accepted unquestioningly. The congregation, just as much or more than the clergy, determined the shape that St. Thomas's liturgy would take.

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<sup>37</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1889), (Oct. 1898), (June 1906), and (July 1906); St. Thomas's Church, The Order of Service for the Dedication of a Stained Glass Window in Memory of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert W. Stirling .... July 2, 1961 (St. John's, the Church, 1961?).

<sup>38</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1893) and (Mar. 1894).

<sup>39</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1893), (Feb. 1894), (Mar. 1894), (July 1894).

The issue of music was discussed at the St. Thomas's annual parish meeting in April 1895. While some members of the congregation disliked the changes that had taken place, others wanted an increase in the number of choral services and more music in the liturgy. Those at the meeting decided to maintain the status quo, but during the next decade choral services, including a choral Eucharist, became a popular and frequent feature. This increased emphasis on music was also encouraged by the curate, Henry Dunfield, who performed the clergy's part in choral services with what was reported as "the finest tenor voice in Newfoundland".<sup>40</sup> More telling, though, was Wood's comment that the "service of song is perhaps the highest and the most heavenly form of all," and that choral services at St. Thomas's were "enjoyed by a considerable and increasing number of our leading church people."<sup>41</sup> The choral services were also starting to be publicized in the local press.<sup>42</sup>

Choral services were accepted at St. Thomas's because the tastes of the middle and upper-class members of the congregation allowed it. But at the same April 1895 meeting, parishioners rejected the use of surplices by the choir, even though the clergy

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<sup>40</sup> Rendell and Knight, St. Thomas' Church, p. 46, "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1895).

<sup>41</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1895).

<sup>42</sup> A choral service at St. Thomas's was advertised in the Evening Herald, 1 June 1895. A choral service performed at Christmas also received press attention, Evening Herald, 30 Dec. 1895.

supported it.<sup>43</sup> Likewise, the congregation rejected the clergy's request to wear surplices while preaching, instead of the Low Church tradition of wearing a black preaching gown. A surpliced choir and a surplice in the pulpit, accepted parts of Ritualism, did not appear at St. Thomas's until the First World War.<sup>44</sup> Choral services were part of Ritualism and promoted by the clergy, but other aspects of the movement were rejected -- only that part which appealed to a Victorian bourgeois taste for performance was accepted by the East End congregation.<sup>45</sup>

At St. Mary's, the choir was an important and appreciated part of services during the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>46</sup> In the early 20th century, however, a few members of the congregation began to express dissatisfaction with church music, and some thought was put to hiring a separate choir director to assist Lloyd. In 1902, the new rector, Camplin Cogan, formerly curate at St. Thomas's, was appointed choirmaster. Under his leadership, an effort was made to change the place and quality of liturgical music at St. Mary's.<sup>47</sup> Starting in 1903, Cogan began to develop a place for music in services at St.

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<sup>43</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1895).

<sup>44</sup> Rendell and Knight, History of St. Thomas's, p. 18.

<sup>45</sup> Addleshaw and Eitchells, Architectural Setting, pp. 213-7; Parsons, "Reform, Revival, and Realignment," pp. 49-50.

<sup>46</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 30 Apr. 1888, 3 May 1889. In 1895, for example, the choir was thanked for adding to the "success and pleasure" of the annual Masonic service, held that year on the South Side. Evening Herald, 7 Feb. 1895.

<sup>47</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 21 Apr. 1903.

Mary's that was consciously, and openly, modelled on St. Thomas's. In that year the cantata "Nativity of Christ", which had been performed at St. Thomas's in 1901, was sung at the Christmas Eve services.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, at the 1904 Easter services, one of Stainer's Anthems was performed.<sup>49</sup> The use of anthems and choral singing in Christmas services continued throughout the decade, even after Cogan had left.<sup>50</sup>

With the new emphasis on choral performance, the issue of surplices was raised at the 1904 annual parish meeting by the rector's warden, Peter F. LeMessurier. The matter was delayed for several years, but in April 1906 a motion in favour of a surpliced choir was passed by a vote of 18 to 12 at the annual meeting.<sup>51</sup> Surplices did not appear until 1919, about the same time they were accepted at St. Thomas's.<sup>52</sup>

### **Architecture and Interior Decoration**

Church architecture and interior decoration also had a significance that went beyond theological symbolism and function. John Webster Grant separated economic

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<sup>48</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1903); "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Feb. 1902).

<sup>49</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1904).

<sup>50</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Feb. 1903), (Dec. 1906), (Feb. 1907), (Feb. 1909), (Feb. 1910), and (Dec. 1910).

<sup>51</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 21 Apr. 1904, 28 Apr. 1905, 18 Apr. 1906, 26 Apr. 1906.

<sup>52</sup> Church of St. Mary the Virgin, pp. 35-6.



and spiritual concerns in church architecture, but this may not have been the case.<sup>53</sup> Marks has argued that the construction of large, impressive churches was usually part a congregation's search for respectability. The middle and upper classes built increasingly large and elegantly decorated homes in an effort to display their taste and status, and for similar reasons, this impulse was directed towards parish churches.<sup>54</sup> Inglis, however, has argued that church building and improvement was part of the late Victorian churches' effort to improve the spiritual life of a parish, and to strengthen the neighbourhood presence of a church, especially in cases of denominational rivalry.<sup>55</sup> Whatever the motivation, improving a parish church put financial pressure on the congregation. It also placed power in the hands of the more wealthy members.<sup>56</sup> Gundersen has shown that the particular pattern of church building and improvement depended on the circumstances of individual parishes.<sup>57</sup>

When we compare the efforts to improve St. Mary's and St. Thomas's churches, it is clear that middle and upper-class aesthetics, Ritualism (itself a middle-class phenomenon) and practical space concerns combined to inspire major renovation

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<sup>53</sup> John Webster Grant, A Profusion of Spires: Religion in 19th Century Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), p. 222.

<sup>54</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 134-7.

<sup>55</sup> Inglis, Churches and the Working Class, pp. 30-3.

<sup>56</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 138-9, 144-5.

<sup>57</sup> Gundersen, "Rural Gothic," pp. 259-60.

projects at St. Thomas's. In contrast, St. Mary's church was repaired several times in the late 19th century, but did not undergo a major renovation until 1909. Even then, the basic plan was not altered, but simply expanded to increase the number of sittings in the nave. In terms of interior decoration, the place of middle and upper-class aesthetics at St. Thomas's was clearly shown, especially during the 1903 renovation. At St. Mary's, a different aesthetic, which was rooted in craft pride and community, was shown in the choice of interior finishes.

The original St. Thomas's church was built by a local contractor, Patrick Kough, in 1836.<sup>58</sup> It was built in the Low Church tradition, with galleries at the sides and ends. In the words of Frederick Jones, St. Thomas's "was clearly intended to be a preaching house."<sup>59</sup> In 1851 wings were added to the north and south sides, after a wind storm had shifted the church from its foundation.<sup>60</sup> The first major renovation was in 1874, at which time the nave was enlarged from 300 to 900 seats.<sup>61</sup> In keeping with the influence of Ritualism, St. Thomas's was given a more High Church appearance. The east, north, and south galleries were removed, a chancel was added, and the organ was removed from the east gallery and placed on the ground floor.<sup>62</sup> Other changes included adding centre

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<sup>58</sup> Barnes, "Old Garrison Church," p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> "Edward Wix," DCB IX.

<sup>60</sup> MacDonald, "Centenary of St. Thomas's Church," p. 32.

<sup>61</sup> Times, 2 Jan. 1875.

<sup>62</sup> LeMessurier, Church of St. Thomas, p. 16.

and side aisles, side windows of ground glass, and a stained-glass chancel window.<sup>63</sup> In 1882-3, the chancel was lengthened. A vestry room and organ chamber were built to allow extra sittings in the nave.<sup>64</sup>

Another extensive renovation occurred in 1903.<sup>65</sup> Once again the chancel was enlarged, room was provided for an impressive pipe organ, and the seating capacity was raised to 1300.<sup>66</sup> At the same time, new chancel furniture, built by J. Wippel and Co. of Exeter, England, was installed. The St. Thomas's Women's Association raised enough money to buy a carved oak pulpit, and an anonymous parishioner donated a brass eagle lectern.<sup>67</sup> A new font of carved Caen stone, with a clustered Devonshire marble shaft, was also shipped from England.<sup>68</sup>

Over the next decade, the Young Ladies' Guild (picking up on the example set by

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<sup>63</sup> Times, 2 Jan. 1875.

<sup>64</sup> LeMessurier, Church of St. Thomas, p. 16; Rendell and Knight, History of St. Thomas's Church, p. 23.

<sup>65</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1903). Construction was carried out by the firm of Davey and Co. at a cost of \$4650 dollars, "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (July 1903) and (May 1904).

<sup>66</sup> Rendell and Knight, History of St. Thomas's Church, p. 23.

<sup>67</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1904), (Feb. 1904), (July 1904), and (Aug. 1904). To middle-class Victorians, anonymity was considered a key part of doing good works. At St. Thomas's other anonymous gifts to the church included a set of folio prayer books and a silver chalice and paten. "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1900) and (Oct. 1901).

<sup>68</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1904).

the Women's Association) raised enough money to put railing on the lectern to match that already in place on the pulpit steps. Other furniture was imported for the chancel, including a carved oak panel, communion rail, and four clergy stalls (dedicated to the memory of Dunfield), and choir stalls financed through the joint efforts of the Young Ladies' Guild and the Women's Association. In 1845 Bishop Feild had ordered the removal of the wood and marble Holy Table from St. Thomas's, and the congregation refused. Still loyal to their Low Church heritage, in 1912 the congregation placed a new Communion Table (not an altar) in the chancel.<sup>69</sup> Likewise, when new chancel carpeting and a cloth for the Holy Table were bought in 1894, the design was the same as that already in place, but in a much better quality material. While remaining loyal to tradition, the congregation's perceived need for improvements was ever present. The relationship between such changes and the social status of the congregation could be seen in Arthur Wood's comment that superior textiles were "more worthy of our parish church," and that "members of the church generally will, we think, be well pleased."<sup>70</sup> Ritualism could evolve within High or Low Church traditions, and it seems that aesthetics rather than theology, were uppermost in the minds of the parish leaders who organized St. Thomas's renovations.

The idea that churches needed to be at least as fine as the homes of the

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<sup>69</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Apr. 1912), (Oct. 1912), (Feb. 1913), and (Aug. 1913); Barnes, "Old Garrison Church," p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Aug. 1894).

parishioners who used them was expressed clearly by Bishop Feild when plans for a new church in the West End were discussed. Keeping in mind the backdrop of the Southside Hills, Feild's Lenten Pastoral Letter of 1857 stated that the new church should be:

Externally, not only simple, but severe in style, to suit the locality, but there must be no nakedness or shabbiness within, nothing to shame us by the contrast to our own more comfortable and comely houses.<sup>71</sup>

St. Mary's church met Feild's requirements for modesty and austerity. The architect was the Rev. William Grey, who Feild brought over from England and made incumbent at Portugal Cove for the life of the project. True to Feild's High Church sympathies, Grey's design was in the first pointed, or Early English style of Gothic architecture, with a low tower, narrow windows, and of stone construction. When it was completed in 1859 the church had a chancel, south transept, and a nave seating 400 persons. It was built by Richard Harvey, a West End contractor and member of the building committee whose family became, and remained, members of St. Mary's congregation. In 1959, James H. Harvey, an 84-year old descendent of Richard Harvey, was given a prominent part in the ground-breaking ceremony for the new St. Mary's.<sup>72</sup>

In contrast to St. Thomas's, at St. Mary's it was maintenance, rather than expansion, which was the central issue of the late 19th century. Portions of coping stone fell off the church during the summer of 1889, the tower needed repairs in 1895, and

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<sup>71</sup> Letter reprinted in Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 1859-1984, pp. 17-8.

<sup>72</sup> Daily News, 24 Dec. 1962; Church of St. Mary the Virgin, pp. 1, 14.

more repairs were needed in 1900.<sup>73</sup> The population of the parish tripled between 1859 and the early 20th century, however, and in 1909 the congregation decided to enlarge the church as a Jubilee project. Parishioner William Churchill, then Superintendent of Public Works, designed, drew, and oversaw the project free of charge, while the actual construction was carried out by the firm of Davey Bros. Upon completion in 1911, the enlargement added 250 sittings to St. Mary's, at a cost of over \$13,000. Nicholas Cousens, managing director of Cousens Cooperage, gave \$1000 to the project, but most of the rest came from parish fund raising. The success of these efforts, despite the small size and relatively limited financial resources of the congregation, was shown by August 1912, when only \$1650 debt on the extension remained.<sup>74</sup>

William Churchill's donation of his skills to the church enlargement project was just one example of this kind of contribution by parishioners at St. Mary's. When a steam heating system was installed in the church in 1891, two engineers from the congregation, Thomas Cornick and Allen Ellis, supervised and, later, inspected the work.<sup>75</sup> In addition, the place of artisans and a skilled-craft culture among members of the congregation influenced interior decoration. Until Isabel Botwood (formerly Winter)

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<sup>73</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1899) and (Dec. 1900); Church of St. Mary the Virgin, p. 36.

<sup>74</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1909), (July 1911), and (Aug. 1912); Evening Herald, 14 June 1911.

<sup>75</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 7 Apr. 1891, 26 Apr. 1894, 8 Apr. 1901.

donated a brass eagle lectern as a memorial to her husband in 1903, the church used one made of oak, built and donated by carpenter James Furniss, a member of the congregation.<sup>76</sup> In December 1903 a Mr. Cookesley donated a "very handsome" font cover which he had made. Cogan reported that "we value it the more."<sup>77</sup> Likewise, in 1910 Frederick Bursell, an undertaker, donated a wooden chest to hold chancel frontals.<sup>78</sup> The same year, while St. Thomas's was bringing in furnishings from England, St. Mary's installed a font built by local mason James MacIntyre, Cogan declaring that "for design and workmanship it equals if not surpasses any of its kind imported."<sup>79</sup> Some items were imported, such as the chancel carpet and the white altar frontal, paid for by the Men's Bible Class and Women's Association respectively, but there was clearly still a place for locally-built, and parishioner-crafted items.<sup>80</sup> At St. Thomas's, the only similar case was during Christmas 1895, when part of the church decorations included a series of illuminated texts painted by parishioner George Udle, that were temporarily placed around the chancel, doors and other parts of the church.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Sept. 1903); Church of St. Mary the Virgin, p. 21.

<sup>77</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1903).

<sup>78</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Feb. 1910).

<sup>79</sup> "St. Mary the Virgin, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1911).

<sup>80</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Feb. 1910).

<sup>81</sup> Evening Herald, 30 Dec. 1895.

When it came to church interior decoration, therefore, a clear difference in aesthetics existed between the East and West End churches. At St. Thomas's, middle-class Victorian consumerism was an important influence. While bringing in high-quality furniture from England had an air of anglophilia about it, such choices were mainly based on the wealth, status, and tastes of the upper-class members of the congregation. In contrast, the congregation and parish leaders at St. Mary's demonstrated an aesthetic more rooted in working-class craft pride.

At the same time, members of both congregations, either as individuals, families, or as part of associations, presented gifts of decorative items to their churches. After the turn of the century, the number of gifts increased at St. Mary's. In addition to the lectern given by Isabel Botwood, the Men's Bible Class presented a brass pulpit desk, the Young Women's Bible Class gave brass rods and fittings for the chancel, and the Sanctuary Guild donated a table lectern. It was 1924 before the Women's Association raised money for a new pulpit, a project that was given high priority at St. Thomas's.<sup>82</sup> As well, a number of lower middle-class and middle-class proper families presented gifts in memory of relatives. These included service books, alms bags, and light fixtures.<sup>83</sup> At

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<sup>82</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1904), (Dec. 1910), and (Dec. 1912); Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 1859-1984, p. 24.

<sup>83</sup> See for example, "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Sept. 1902), (Dec. 1903), (Feb. 1910), (Dec. 1911) and (Dec. 1912).



St. Thomas's, such gifts tended to come from upper-class members of the parish.<sup>84</sup> This reinforces the argument that in parishes where there was no clear elite group to fill positions, the middle and lower middle classes took on many of the roles usually reserved for members of the upper class.

One final issue needs to be discussed. John Shelton Reed has associated the growth of Ritualism (and Anglo-Catholicism) in the Church of England with middle-class women in particular, arguing that female parishioners of that status were most active in decorating chancels with flowers and embroidered items, such as bookmarks, kneelers, mats, hangings, altar cloths, and carpets. He argued that such gifts were usually hand-made by the donors, in a style considered fashionable for contemporary domestic interiors.<sup>85</sup> At St. Thomas's, middle and upper-class women raised much of the money used to furnish and renovate the church, but there are few reports of gifts in kind from individual females. Neither did they have the power independently to select finishes or furnishings. In 1883 the Misses LeGallais, formerly in charge of Jersey Lodge (later Bishop Spencer College), presented a set of hand-worked silk and wool kneeling rugs to

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<sup>84</sup> See for example, "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1901) and (Nov. 1904).

<sup>85</sup> Reed, "A Female Movement," pp. 206-8. Reed argued that middle-class women were attracted to Anglo-Catholicism because it revived confession and female religious orders within the Anglican Church, and in this way challenged Victorian middle-class family ideology and made women independent persons before God within the respectable cape of religion. To Reed, Anglo-Catholicism promoted women's rights while it offered an alternative to feminism for the more conservative middle-class women of the late 19th century.

the church, and in 1897 Elizabeth Harvey, wife of A.W. Harvey, presented a set of embroidered book markers. In the case of the former, the item was clearly made by the donors, but in the latter, the markers were probably purchased.<sup>86</sup> The same situation was seen at St. Mary's, although there were many more gifts of textiles from individual parish women. In general, these donors were married women from lower-middle, middle-class proper, and upper-class families. In one case a single, lower middle-class woman presented a cloth for the credence table, and once a skilled-working class woman presented a set of kneelers.<sup>87</sup>

This evidence, along with other examples discussed in this chapter, calls into question Reed's conclusion. While they were active agents in the process of church improvement and renovation, women were in no way the "ringleaders" of Ritualism in either parish. In any case, Reed's argument is generally weak: he did not use evidence from women themselves, but relied on male opponents of Anglo-Catholicism. Likewise, he argued that men were generally not interested in Ritualism. These two approaches make an uneasy combination, since one can wonder where the theological dispute ends and the misogyny of the source begins in such quotations as the following, attributed to a young, Victorian curate:

The Ritual movement is a lay movement; but it is more than that; it is a female movement .... The Ritualistic clergyman is led, or rather misled, by a few ladies,

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<sup>86</sup> Times, 6 June 1883; "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (July 1897).

<sup>87</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1889), (Feb. 1900), (Sept. 1902), and (Sept. 1905).

who have the time and taste for ornamental work, for embroidering coloured stoles, chasubles, etc., and they allow themselves no rest until they have persuaded him to wear these things....<sup>88</sup>

While the decoration of 19th-century churches is sometimes taken as evidence of the "feminization" of religion, changes such as those seen in the interior of St. Thomas's were bourgeois, rather than feminine.<sup>89</sup>

There is no doubt that St. Mary's Church was established in the High Church Anglican tradition, and St. Thomas's in the Low. This was seen in the original architecture of the two buildings, as well as in the basic program of services that each offered throughout the late-19th and early-20th centuries. The use of music and choirs in Anglican services, specific to neither High nor Low traditions by the mid-19th century, was also present in each church.

The effect of congregational social class on the material aspects of worship, as separate from theological traditions, was seen in the growth of Ritualism in the Church of England. Ritualism was associated with middle-class aesthetics and ambitions: improving the quality of worship in, and appearance of, one's parish church was part of a middle-class need to display taste and status, and to assert the congregation's place in the community. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, St. Thomas's middle and upper-class congregational leaders accepted and encouraged many of the activities associated

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<sup>88</sup> Reed, "A Female Movement," pp. 200-1, 203, 238.

<sup>89</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 155-9.

with Ritualism, including the performance of choral services, the purchase of increasingly superior organs, and the employment of a professional musician as organist and choir director. The congregation also financed improvements in church fabric and furnishings, improvements that displayed a middle-class consumer ethic of quality. At St. Mary's, there was no drive for professional-quality sacred music in parish church services. Choral services were only introduced when the former curate of St. Thomas's was made rector in 1902, but the congregation accepted the change. In terms of interior decoration, at St. Mary's the use of locally built items and hand-made gifts from members of the congregation demonstrated an aesthetic rooted in community and craft pride, as associated with skilled-working and proprietary lower middle-class cultures.<sup>90</sup>

These findings suggest several conclusions about the nature of social relations in Anglican St. John's. First of all, in opposition to Reed's argument, Ritualism and church improvement were not gender-specific activities. As demonstrated at St. Thomas's, upper and middle-class members of the congregation, irrespective of being male or female, together supported and encouraged changes in liturgy and interior finishes. In this case, relations of class outweighed those of gender. The pattern of architectural and interior improvements at St. Thomas's also supported R.Q. Gray's argument that parish churches, according to the needs of the dominant class in the community, were often

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<sup>90</sup> Gregory S. Kealey, Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism 1867-1892 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 85. Crossick and Haupt, Shopkeepers and Master Artisans, p. 19.

shaped into something quite different from that envisioned by their founders.<sup>91</sup> The changes at St. Thomas's reflected the evolution of a consciously upper and middle-class proper population in St. John's, as well as the growth of homogenously upper-class neighbourhoods. Temperley has shown that in the late 19th century many English city churches, especially those located in upper and middle-class districts, were no longer regarded as neighbourhood churches. Instead, upper-class congregational leaders moulded them into "fashionable" places of worship designed to attract upper-class families from all over the city, either as Sunday visitors or permanent residents.<sup>92</sup> This may have been a motivation for changes at St. Thomas's, as the parish demographics show a growing upper and middle-class proper presence in the East End Anglican population.

At St. Thomas's, despite their high numbers, the working classes had little say in shaping the liturgical forms and appearance of their parish church. This angered and frustrated some working-class members of the congregation. J.J. Coaker, who was employed as a joiner, wrote to people's warden R.F. Goodridge to complain about some specific liturgical changes that had occurred at St. Thomas's. Coaker stated that the practice of standing when the choir and clergy entered the church was started by students from Bishop Feild College under instruction from a teacher there, and named the ringleaders: each the son of a prominent middle-class parishioner. Coaker wrote that

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<sup>91</sup> Gray, "Religion, Culture, and Social Class," pp. 143-5.

<sup>92</sup> Temperley, *Music of English Parish Church*, pp. 283-4.

there was "nothing left" of the "old St. Thomas's", and if this new practice "is not stopped I and my family will leave the English Church of our Fathers ... I know lots of others will do the same." Showing his respect for the democratic process, Coaker told Goodridge that such changes needed to be approved by a vote of parishioners at the Easter Meeting, not by a group of boys who "don't pay church dues".<sup>93</sup> This letter calls into question O'Dell's argument that organized religion was an area in which the working classes were least likely to challenge the hegemony of the bourgeoisie. Instead, the evidence from St. Thomas's shows the strength of bourgeois hegemony and control, rather than working-class indifference.

Likewise, evidence from St. Mary's on church furnishings calls into question O'Dell's conclusion that the working classes had little influence on the form of church life.<sup>94</sup> As well, liturgical and architectural developments at St. Mary's highlighted the relationship between the skilled working and lower middle classes. Geoffrey Crossick suggested that for lower middle-class families who had advanced from a skilled working-class background (as the demographic evidence from St. Mary's suggested was the case for most lower middle-class families in that parish), two cultural options were demonstrated. First, the new members of the lower middle class could continue to associate themselves with working-class values. Secondly, they could work towards

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<sup>93</sup> Parish of St. Thomas's Archives. J.J. Coaker to [R.F.] Goodridge, St. John's, undated. Goodridge was people's warden from 1909 to 1912. Coaker's name appeared on subscriber lists after 1896.

<sup>94</sup> O'Dell, "Class Character," pp. i, 306-18.

further social advancement and acceptance by embracing middle class patterns of behaviour.<sup>95</sup>

At St. Mary's, church leaders were a mix of skilled working and lower middle classes, and the church was located in a mainly working-class setting. For these reasons, perhaps, the lower middle-class members chose Crossick's first option, and did not launch a program of improvements equal to that pursued at St. Thomas's, despite the fact that St. Mary's had closer theological ties to Ritualism because of its High Church heritage. In this way the social status of St. Mary's and St. Thomas's congregations, and their internal class relationships, outweighed theological concerns and played a major role in shaping the liturgical development and setting for worship in each church.

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<sup>95</sup> Crossick, "Emergence of the Lower Middle Class," pp. 34-5.

## Chapter Seven

### "Succour the Lowly": Comparing Parochial Approaches to Poor Relief

Go, succour the lowly, o'erburdened with woe;  
Take heed that in secret your alms ye bestow;  
Be kind to the wayward, the erring restore,  
And God will reward you -- remember the poor!

Times (St. John's), December 22, 1886

When the editor of the Times and General Commercial Gazette printed this verse during the 1886 Christmas season, he chose one that summarized many contemporary attitudes towards poor relief. The first two lines stress the appropriateness of anonymity; the third emphasizes that the poor were responsible for their own poverty and required the guidance of their "betters", and the fourth promises a spiritual benefit.

Any study of class relations and religion requires attention to poor relief. Victorian churches and their congregations were primary agents of charity, and poor relief not only facilitated contact between parishioners of varying economic ranks, but became a forum in which donors' and recipients' attitudes towards each other could be expressed. This chapter will discuss the class-based character of Victorian poor relief efforts, and how the systems of charity at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's parishes fit into this picture. It will also discuss the churches' emergency response to the hardship suffered by many parishioners following the bank crash of December 1894. Central to the discussion is Cox's idea that church relief workers were not necessarily from the



middle and upper classes, and that social control only became a function of religious philanthropy when a distinction was made between the deserving and the undeserving poor, as was typical of the Victorian bourgeoisie.<sup>1</sup> In this way, differences in the class character of parishes involved in poor relief efforts becomes central in understanding why particular systems were put in place and how this in turn could affect class relations.

In general, social historians of the 19th century have interpreted poor relief as evidence of paternalistic class relations between the upper and the lower socioeconomic orders.<sup>2</sup> In his discussion of charity in eastern American cities, for example, Cumbler compares larger centres, where mainly middle-class philanthropists tried to restore the small community ideal of charity, and smaller cities where upper-class, industrial elites used poor relief as a way to control and organize the surplus labour force.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Judith Fingard's discussion of poor relief in 19th-century Atlantic Canada provides insight into how secular efforts to help the poor could be used in the interest of the ruling and middle classes. Employment relief, such as road building, could help all members of society, and also (unlike gratuitous alms) help instill thrift or self-reliance, -- virtues the middle-class considered absent from the poor. She also interpreted condemnation of begging as part of the middle-class effort to keep control of the poor relief process out of

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<sup>1</sup> Cox, *English Churches*, pp. 88-9.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of paternalism see Bryan Palmer, *Working-Class Experience* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1983, 1992 rev. ed.), p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> John T. Cumbler, "The Politics of Charity: Gender and Class in Late Nineteenth Century Charity Policy," *Journal of Social History* 14, 1 (1980), pp. 101-2.

the hands of those in need.<sup>4</sup>

In other British North American provinces, churches officially had little to do with poor relief. In Ontario and New Brunswick, for example, municipalities had primary responsibility for administering (and shaping) poor relief.<sup>5</sup> Private citizens could be motivated to support charities by their religious beliefs, and sometimes established church-based philanthropic associations. Those who established these associations usually wanted to offer relief, but also sought to "improve" the moral, social, and physical lives of the poor.<sup>6</sup> These efforts expressed the increased sympathy and sensitivity towards the poor felt by many members of the middle and upper classes in the late 19th century, and many well-to-do citizens became actively involved in what they understood to be the best means of alleviating, and preventing, pauperism.<sup>7</sup>

Clergymen were part of this effort. At the highest levels, amid their concern about changes in ritual and the challenge of secular thought, theologians and ecclesiastical leaders encouraged the churches to reach the working classes.<sup>8</sup> Poor relief

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<sup>4</sup> Judith Fingard, "The Relief of the Unemployed Poor in Saint John, Halifax, and St. John's, 1815-1860," in P.A. Buckner and David Frank (eds.), Atlantic Canada Before Confederation: The Acadiensis Reader, Volume One (Fredericton, NB: Acadiensis Press, 1985), pp. 196, 198-200.

<sup>5</sup> James M. Whalen, "Social Welfare in New Brunswick, 1784-1900," Acadiensis 2, 1 (Aut. 1972), pp. 54-64; and Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 131-2.

<sup>6</sup> Fingard, "Relief of the Unemployed Poor," pp. 193-4.

<sup>7</sup> Helmstadter and Phillips, Religion in Victorian Society, pp. 413-4.

<sup>8</sup> Inglis, Churches and the Working Classes, pp. 21-3; Cox, English Churches, pp. 88-9, 182.

was increasingly seen as a link between charity, church work and civic duty. This is seen in a sermon, "The Art of Giving", delivered by Arthur Wood at St. Thomas's in 1889:

[A person] lives in society, he depends for comfort and safety upon society, he earns his living chiefly by means of those about him, and consequently he has a duty to perform to his neighbour, as well as to himself.<sup>9</sup>

While this sermon hinted at ideas of social justice, Victorian clergy did not consider social reform as their primary mandate. This is understandable, if one considers that they lived in a society where one person's poverty was considered an inevitable by-product of another's prosperity.<sup>10</sup> While Christian Socialists tried to understand the economic reasons for poverty and argued that charity was not an adequate solution, the vast majority of Anglican clergy considered that their job was developing moral character, rather than fighting for improved living conditions or economic equality.<sup>11</sup>

The majority of clergy, and most members of the middle and upper classes,

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<sup>9</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's: The Art of Giving," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1889).

<sup>10</sup> Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 2, p. 270; Bowen, Idea of the Victorian Church, p. 242.

<sup>11</sup> Inglis, Churches and the Working Classes, p. 253; Bowen, Idea of the Victorian Church, p. 245. George Bolt, later rector of St. Mary's, presented a paper "Christian Socialism in Reference to Newfoundland" at the 1896 Diocesan Synod. Bolt claimed to agree with the broad principles of Christian Socialism, which he interpreted as "not equal position for all, but equal consideration for all," and wanted to dispel the idea that the teachings of Christian Socialism could not apply to Newfoundland. Bolt discussed such topics as dignity of labour, educational opportunities for all, the truck system, honesty in dealing with Government monies, and female employment in the Labrador fishery. Bolt claimed to be neither for nor against Christian Socialism, and the piece is interesting for the way he tried to reconcile his West End, working-class background with the middle-class teachings of his church. G.H. Bolt, "Christian Socialism in Reference to Newfoundland," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1896).

agreed that poverty was not only inevitable, but a function of morality. The methods developed for helping the parish poor reflected both of these perceived characteristics, and took two basic forms: direct relief and indirect relief. Both involved critical evaluation and judgement of the poor by bourgeois standards. Direct relief was primarily administered by the clergy and church wardens, with the assistance of district visitors who assessed the penury and "deservedness" of poor families. Indirect relief combined charity with a crusade for moral reformation, and at St. Thomas's was very much a middle and upper-class female enterprise. Discussion of indirect relief in that parish presents an opportunity to consider the implications of combined class and gender relations for church-based charity.<sup>12</sup>

### **Direct Relief**

Direct poor relief involved the distribution of food, clothing, fuel, and food. Typically, the choice of which families would receive such relief was made by the rector on the basis of his own visitation or on that of district visitors. These were volunteers, usually middle-class women, who went to the homes of poor families to assess the level of need, and to gather other pertinent information.<sup>13</sup> Rectors, perhaps naively, considered

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<sup>12</sup> For a study of Newfoundland women's construction of relations of class and gender through their involvement in an organization designed "for the 'betterment' of families and the beautification of homes" see Linda Cullum, "Under Construction: Women, the Jubilee Guilds, and Commission Government in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1935-41," M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1992.

<sup>13</sup> Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, vol. 2, p. 256; Heeney, *Women's Movement*, pp. 19-32.

district visitation an excellent way to bridge the social and physical gaps between the various members of their congregations, and to minimize the barriers of status and wealth.<sup>14</sup> At St. Thomas's parish, where the population was socially stratified and contained a substantial middle and upper-class element, the use of district visiting was wholeheartedly embraced:

[Such visits form a] connection between the various classes of society found in almost every parish ... [and create a] feeling of good will among the people generally.... A cheery word here, a portion of scripture and a prayer beside some sick-bed there, a gentle reminder perhaps of some church or school, or even home duty half forgotten, wholly neglected, but for which reminder the listener is thankful, -- these and such acts of Christian friendship are of great value.<sup>15</sup>

Such an idyllic description does not realistically account for the response of the poor to district visitation, which was a standard activity of all 19th-century relief agencies.<sup>16</sup> The poor were not always thankful for these visits, no matter how grateful they might have been for financial assistance. The goods offered were necessary for survival, but the offer of middle-class advice may have produced more indignity than gratitude.<sup>17</sup> James Overton has written that when the Charity Organization Bureau was set up in St. John's in 1925, clients objected to having their characters and private affairs

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<sup>14</sup> Cox, English Churches, pp. 64-5, 182.

<sup>15</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Apr. 1896).

<sup>16</sup> Fingard, "Relief of Unemployed Poor," p. 197; and Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 2, p. 256.

<sup>17</sup> Clark, Churchmen and the Condition of England, p. 186.

placed under the investigation of bourgeois administrators.<sup>18</sup> In 1896 over half of the district visitors in St. Thomas's parish were either middle class proper or upper class.<sup>19</sup> In all likelihood, the Anglican poor of the East End felt the same way about late-19th century, church-sponsored inquiries as they did about early 20th-century, non-denominational ones.

There are no references to a district visitation system at St. Mary's. While a district visitors' book exists for the late 1860s, entries suggest that the rector took primary responsibility for this work without recruiting "respectable" members of the congregation.<sup>20</sup> This may explain the seemingly autonomous clerical control of the relief process seen during Botwood's rectorship, and revealed in a 1886 public letter in which he referred to those in need at St. Mary's as "my poor."<sup>21</sup> While equally paternalistic, the

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<sup>18</sup> James Overton, "Self-Help, Charity, and Individual Responsibility: The Political Economy of Social Policy in Newfoundland in the 1920s," in James Hiller and Peter Neary (eds.), Twentieth-Century Newfoundland: Explorations (St. John's: Breakwater, 1994), pp. 80, 114.

<sup>19</sup> Of the sixteen district visitors named, five were upper class and four were middle class proper. A further four were lower middle class, and there was one from the independent producing class. Two were unidentifiable. "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Apr. 1896).

<sup>20</sup> This source revealed some of the major concerns for a Victorian parish priest. There were frequent references to families being "careless" (that is, failing to attend church), comments on use of alcohol, and condemnation of child-bearing by unmarried women. Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, District Visitors Book, 1867.

<sup>21</sup> Edward Botwood to editor, Times, 21 Apr. 1886. Botwood's empathy for the financial circumstances of his parishioners after the bank crash was shown in a letter to the Evening Herald in which he complained that the admission fee of 25 cents charged by a visiting missionary lecturer was "too high for most of our people." He wanted the price reduced to 5 or 10 cents. Edward Botwood to editor, Evening Herald, 5 July 1895.

situation at St. Mary's only involved the rector, whose very job involved caring for his parishioners in such a way, while St. Thomas's parish activities fit the model of middle-class social control efforts.

While the parishes had different ways of deciding which families required or deserved assistance, both distributed similar types of relief. One Church of England tradition, carried on by all three St. John's parishes, was gifts of beef and bread to the poor on Christmas Eve.<sup>22</sup> In 1877, for example, St. Thomas's parish distributed bread and beef to 65 households, of which 32 were headed by widows.<sup>23</sup> This type of Christmas gift was also seen in secular settings, and continued into the 20th century in the practice of some employers providing a Christmas turkey to their workers. A gift of beef to the workers at J. and W. Stewart in 1883, reported in a St. John's newspaper, showed the conscious paternalism of the act:

Such acts of generosity ... are calculated to raise a man in the estimation of the public and make him respected and beloved by his employees, as it shows that he is not unmindful of their work and does not forget them during the festive season.<sup>24</sup>

Mariana Valverde was correct to state that charity often involved investigation of the poor by church volunteers, but the St. Mary's and St. Thomas's examples show that

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<sup>22</sup> *Times*, 22 Dec. 1877, 24 Dec. 1881.

<sup>23</sup> *Times*, 29 Dec. 1877.

<sup>24</sup> *Times*, 26 Dec. 1883.

charity was not always given in kind, as she contended.<sup>25</sup> While providing goods was typical of indirect poor relief, both parishes distributed more cash than they did coal or groceries. At St. Mary's throughout the 1890s, most relief was in the form of unspecified alms.<sup>26</sup> This changed after 1900, when most relief was given as coal and "casual" relief was substantially reduced. This was perhaps due to Botwood's death. At St. Thomas's in 1889 over \$200 in cash was distributed as direct poor relief, compared with \$138 worth of coal.<sup>27</sup>

There were differences, however, in the amount of direct poor relief in each parish and in the way they raised donations to the Poor Fund. The combination of a larger population and a higher number of unskilled working families (who may have had a tenuous financial existence) meant that St. Thomas's had the higher annual expenditure on direct poor relief. In 1889 St. Thomas's distributed \$375 in charity, compared to \$190 at St. Mary's. In 1897, it was \$380 at St. Thomas's, and \$145 at St. Mary's. The amount of charity distributed at St. Mary's fluctuated much more than at St. Thomas's, indicating a population more sensitive to the fluctuations of the colonial economy. For example, in the winter of 1896 St. Thomas's distributed \$345 in relief, its average amount for the 1890s, while at St. Mary's the amount of relief jumped to \$265, compared to around \$145

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<sup>25</sup> Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), p. 46.

<sup>26</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 1857-84, and 1885-1945.

<sup>27</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," *Diocesan Magazine* (Apr. 1889).



in 1894 and 1897.<sup>28</sup>

This money was raised in various ways. Both churches had special collections for the poor at Christmas and Easter, and during other services throughout the year.<sup>29</sup> Both raised money for direct poor relief through concerts and private donations, but the relative strength of each activity differed.

In the West End, concerts were a popular way of raising money to help the poor. In April 1886, for example, the Avalon Minstrel Troupe performed in St. Mary's Hall and donated one-third of their profit to the church's poor fund.<sup>30</sup> St. Thomas's also held concerts, but they seemed to be less important.<sup>31</sup> This became especially apparent after the bank crash, when St. Mary's sponsored a winter series of weekly concerts to raise money for the poor. Members of the congregation performed songs and "farces" (short comic skits with titles such as "The Tramp versus Female Vanity" and "Matrimony") designed to raise the spirits of the audience. The admission price of five cents was one-quarter of that usually charged for such shows, which indicates that the organizers were taking into account the general financial hardship of the time, and allowing those who

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<sup>28</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book; "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1889), (May 1896), and (May 1897).

<sup>29</sup> Times, 26 Dec 1883; "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1901).

<sup>30</sup> Times, 31 Mar. 1886, 21 Apr. 1886.

<sup>31</sup> Evening Herald, 7 Apr. 1890.

wanted to help the poor to do so on small scale.<sup>32</sup> The use of low-admission concerts stressed the volume, rather than the amount, of individual donations. This initiative was supplemented by special donations from the government and the "Knowing Relief Fund", a charity set up by merchant George Knowling in 1896 to counterbalance the lack of casual work on the streets of St. John's.<sup>33</sup> As well, Botwood distributed \$300 of his own money to the needy.<sup>34</sup>

At St. Thomas's, special donations by prominent parishioners played a much more important role in the fund raising process. After the 1892 Fire, in which 950 parishioners lost their homes and belongings, the church supplied food, clothing, and shelter to those who needed it. Much of the money was raised by Augustus W. Harvey and James Spearman Winter, who were in England at the time of the fire and could solicit funds from contacts there.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, the rector and wardens administered the Rolls Trust Fund, a charity set up by Susan Rolls in 1896.<sup>36</sup> There was widespread financial hardship throughout the parish after the bank crash, but personal donations from wealthy

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<sup>32</sup> Evening Herald, 23 Jan. 1895, 31 Jan. 1895, 6 Feb. 1895, 14 Feb. 1895, 20 Feb. 1895, 27 Feb. 1895, 6 Mar. 1895. The series probably ended at the start of the Lenten season.

<sup>33</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1895); Rice, "St. Thomas Church," p. 12.

<sup>34</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1896).

<sup>35</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1892) and (May 1893); Rice, "St. Thomas Church," p. 10.

<sup>36</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1895); Rice, "St. Thomas's Church," p. 12.

parishioners were much more important than at St. Mary's.<sup>37</sup> At the same time, the high number of unskilled transportation workers in St. Thomas's parish proved beneficial when many of them hauled relief goods bought with upper-class donations free of charge.<sup>38</sup> Despite their own hardships, members of the lower classes wanted to help those whom they felt were in worse financial straits -- altruism was not limited to the upper and middle classes.

The effect of the bank crash on St. Thomas's deserves mention, since many leading parishioners (including the rector's warden) were implicated in the ensuing accusations and investigations. The status and wealth of members of the congregation affected every aspect of parish life. Rector Henry Dunfield knew this, and actively cultivated middle and upper-class contacts. While he could not help but be aware of the financial suffering caused by the crash, he carefully defended the politicians and merchants that other commentators considered responsible for the crisis:

It is hard to believe that men in public places, who have always been trusted as men of integrity, and have hitherto maintained their good name, should now be found to have been wilfully wrecking the public credit.<sup>39</sup>

Dunfield asked readers to be more sympathetic, and to try to cultivate better opinions of the colonial leadership. In the midst of major relief efforts, he decided to stand firmly in the corner of his upper-class parishioners.

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<sup>37</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Feb. 1895).

<sup>38</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1895).

<sup>39</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1895).

### **Indirect Relief**

Indirect relief especially shows the impact of middle-class Victorian ideas. In Canada and Great Britain, philanthropists believed that the best way to fight poverty was to teach the poor to be thrifty and self-reliant.<sup>40</sup> Being poor was thought to be the result of personal mismanagement or sin, rather than social or economic disadvantage.<sup>41</sup> Indirect relief focused on self-help and education rather than the distribution of alms, and was considered more effective than visitation by those who worried that their charitable efforts were falling into the hands of mendicant poor.<sup>42</sup> It was also considered an excellent way to discourage a group that especially concerned the middle class: those poor who they believed were abusing charities by making a career of soliciting hand-outs.<sup>43</sup>

In 19th-century St. John's these relief systems were generally run by, and aimed at, females: the Dorcas and St. Vincent de Paul societies were active poor relief organizations run by women, and the Church of England also sponsored female indirect

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<sup>40</sup> Valverde, *Age of Light*, p. 159; Clark, *Churchmen and the Condition of England*, p. 183; Cox, *English Churches*, p. 74.

<sup>41</sup> Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, v.2, p. 277.

<sup>42</sup> Cox, *English Churches*, p. 66.

<sup>43</sup> Clark, *Churchmen and the Condition of England*, p. 270.

poor relief organizations in the 1860s.<sup>44</sup> One of the major forms of indirect relief was the clothing, boot, or coal clubs, sometimes referred to as thrift societies.<sup>45</sup> Mainly coordinated by middle-class women, who believed that such clubs encouraged thrift and industriousness among the poor, they functioned by imposing middle-class values on the working classes and unemployed.<sup>46</sup> Before concentrating on the place of such clubs at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's after 1877, it is necessary to show the tradition of Anglican indirect poor relief efforts in St. John's from which the parochial organizations grew.

One such organization was the St. John's Industrial Society. A mixed Protestant association, the stated object of the Society was "the encouragement of poor women to help themselves and their families, by giving them work, and paying them with the garments they make."<sup>47</sup> The organizers decided which poor women among the applicants were "deserving", and coordinated the distribution of work, usually the plain sewing of household linen and underclothing, to those selected. The items were generally sold publicly, although the Society did fill special orders, and organizers distributed the profits among the work women in the form of food and clothing. Other monies raised were used to sponsor "Bible-women" and to help the sick or invalid poor. In 1877, the

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<sup>44</sup> Times, 11 Feb. 1880, 8 Oct. 1881, 13 Oct. 1883, 2 Nov 1887.

<sup>45</sup> Cox, English Churches, p. 74.

<sup>46</sup> Helmstadter and Phillips, Religion in Victorian Society, p. 212, 318.

<sup>47</sup> Times, 1 Dec. 1877.

Society employed 80 women in this manner.<sup>48</sup>

Another, solely Anglican, organization of this type was the St. John's Self-Assisting Clothing Society, which started its efforts to "encourage frugality and economy" among the poor in 1855.<sup>49</sup> It followed the model of clothing clubs organized in Great Britain: money was collected from the poor on an instalment basis for a set period of time, the total was augmented by a middle or upper-class sponsor, and the grand total returned to the depositor as a clothing ticket that could be exchanged for predetermined items in a store selected by the organizers. This approach was considered especially effective in helping the poor; not only did the process teach thrift, but the use of tickets prevented the money from being "wasted" or squandered on "light, useless finery."<sup>50</sup> These clubs appear to have been popular with the poor: in 1879 the Society had twice as many depositors as subscribers, and claimed that it had to turn away some poor families.<sup>51</sup>

By 1879 the St. John's Self-Assisting Clothing Society was dominated by women from the Cathedral parish. In contrast, St. Thomas's only provided seven subscribers. These were the wives of rector Thomas Martyn Wood and curate Arthur C.F. Wood, along with five women whose family names revealed their status: Harvey, Grieve,

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<sup>48</sup> Times, 1 Dec. 1877, 10 Apr. 1878.

<sup>49</sup> Times, 3 May 1879.

<sup>50</sup> Clark, Churchmen and the Condition of England, pp. 183, 186.

<sup>51</sup> Times, 3 May 1879.

LeMessurier, Winter, and Robinson. At St. Mary's only Botwood and a lone male subscriber appeared on the list.<sup>52</sup> The same year, independent clothing clubs appeared at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's, perhaps in an effort to encourage interest.

The St. Mary's Clothing Club attracted more interest within the congregation than had the Self-Assisting Clothing Society, but still remained a relatively small organization. To be a member, a woman from a needy family was required to make weekly donations to the club, of whatever amount she was able to spare, between May and December. At the end of the saving period a dollar was added and a ticket for clothing issued. In 1888, 23 women were members of this club, and saved an average of \$3 each. Comparative figures for 1888 show that the St. Mary's Clothing Club operated on an account of around \$35, while the Cathedral Club's budget was over \$575.<sup>53</sup>

At St. Thomas's the distribution of indirect poor relief and moral reform through such clubs became a major parish enterprise. The club also displayed many of the characteristics of middle-class, Protestant women's organizations in North America, including an awareness of being women helping women.<sup>54</sup> Hallie Wood, the wife of rector Arthur Wood, had been an officer of the St. John's Industrial Society and a member of the Self-Assisting Clothing Society, and on the basis of this experience she

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<sup>52</sup> *Times*, 3 May 1879.

<sup>53</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," *Diocesan Magazine* (Mar. 1889) and (Sept. 1889).

<sup>54</sup> See as an example Christina Simmons, "'Helping the Poorer Sisters': The Women of the Just Mission, Halifax, 1905-1945," *Acadiensis* 14, 1 (Aut. 1984), pp. 3-27.

became the founding president of the St. Thomas's Women's Association in 1879.<sup>55</sup> The mandate and activities of this organization showed that its members not only embraced middle-class ideas of morally reforming the poor to be thrifty and self-reliant, but also accepted the middle-class Victorian idea of women being the "moral guardians" of their families within the home.

The officer lists for the years 1890 to 1904 indicate that this organization was very much a bourgeois enterprise. (See Table 18) The executive, as well as committee membership, was dominated by the wives and daughters of upper and middle-class families headed by merchants, professionals such as barristers and physicians, and white-collar business employees such as accountants and clerks.<sup>56</sup> In the early 1890s upper, middle-class proper and lower middle-class women each held around 30 per cent of association offices. In the decade from 1895 to 1904, the number of lower middle-class officers increased steadily, reaching 44 per cent in the early 20th century, while the number of upper-class officers decreased to 20 per cent and the middle class proper officers fluctuated between 21.5 and 26.5 per cents.

The stated mandate of the Association was "to give sisterly help ... to some of the poorer members of the congregation", while also providing Association members with a

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<sup>55</sup> Times, 1 Dec. 1877, 3 May 1879.

<sup>56</sup> Lists of officers were printed annually in the Diocesan Magazine.



chance to socialize with each other on a regular basis.<sup>37</sup> A description of the

Table 18: St. Thomas's Women's Association: Officers by Class, 1890-1904						
Years	1890-4		1895-9		1900-4	
Class	#	%	#	%	#	%
Upper	20	28.0	17	22.5	13	20.5
Middle Proper	22	30.5	16	21.5	17	26.5
Lower Middle	20	28.0	28	37.5	28	44.0
Independent Producer	1	1.5	6	8.0	0	0.0
Skilled Working	2	3.0	5	6.5	2	3.0
Unskilled Working	3	4.0	2	2.5	4	6.5
Unknown	4	5.5	1	1.5	0	0.0
Total	72	100.5	75	100.0	64	100.0

Association's activities published in 1893 showed the degree to which its indirect poor relief efforts fitted into the prevailing middle-class ideology surrounding poverty. While direct charity was suitable for old or sick members of a parish, the article stated, teaching thrift was "the divine method" of relieving poverty, since "thousands of dollars are wasted annually in St. John's, even among the poorer people, through leakage of the cents". The Association selected which poor people were eligible for help. Those chosen were required to deposit up to five cents per week for a year. At the end of the year the amount saved was supplemented by a donation, usually a dollar, from a

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<sup>37</sup> "St. Thomas's Women's Association," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1889) and "St. Thomas's: St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1892).

wealthier member of the congregation. From this money a ticket, or "gift certificate", redeemable at stores chosen by the secretary, was issued for items such as boots, blankets, or coal.<sup>58</sup>

The system of visitation used by the Association to decide which poor families deserved financial assistance focused on the domestic abilities of their lower-class "sisters". This can be seen in Hallie Wood's 1889 assessment of working-class households:

When one considers all the varied work that the wife of the ordinary working man has to get through in the course of a week, one wonders how it can be accomplished. And consider that one moderately-sized room does duty for parlour, kitchen, wash-house, nursery, and all. It is pleasant to think how general is the case that this parlour-kitchen is quite presentable, fit to receive anybody who may come into it.<sup>59</sup>

For middle-class women like Wood and the members of the St. Thomas's Association, women's work outside the home was invisible and irrelevant. By using such a measure as a woman's housekeeping ability to determine whether or not a family was "deserving" suggests that the bourgeois women of the Association considered a woman's maintenance of the domestic sphere as an indicator of the respectability of an entire family. Women in the home working as moralizing agents was a key component of 19th-century separate spheres ideology, and the Association's approach to helping the poor showed that the middle-class Victorian women of St. Thomas's parish thoroughly embraced the domestic

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<sup>58</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's: Helping the Poor," Diocesan Magazine (Feb. 1893).

<sup>59</sup> "St. Thomas's Women's Association," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1889).

ideals inherent in the concept. Separate spheres has been interpreted by Marxist historians as an ideology of the dominant classes, and looking at how St Thomas's Women's Association tried to impose this vision of a universal womanhood anchored in domesticity onto women of a different socioeconomic status showed the intertwining of class and gender relations in the East End parish.<sup>60</sup>

For the congregation at St. Thomas's, bourgeois ideology, which included views on appropriate female roles, was a clear part of the mandate behind their direct and indirect poor relief efforts.<sup>61</sup> In this way, they were typical of Victorian philanthropists and characteristic of 19th-century poor relief. Direct relief was financed by private donations from wealthy parishioners, whose interests were placed above those of the poor after the 1894 bank crash. Similarly, the major indirect poor relief effort was dominated by members of the upper and middle classes. While designed to ease the physical pain of poverty, which they no doubt did, it is easy to see the glare of middle-class power shining through the altruistic surface of these efforts.

Middle-class dispensers of relief judged who among the poor were "deserving", and in the case of "self-help", determined which values should be cultivated in the lower orders. These values were ones that members of the middle class considered themselves

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<sup>60</sup> Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *Journal of American History* 75, 1 (June 1988), p. 14; Nancy A. Hewitt, "Beyond the Search for Sisterhood: American Women's History in the 1980s," *Social History* 10, 3 (1985), p. 36.

<sup>61</sup> "St. Thomas's Women's Association," *Diocesan Magazine* (June 1894).

to possess: thrift, self-discipline, industriousness, and, in the case of women, domesticity. Placing such controls on poor relief provided comforts to philanthropists that went beyond hopes for a heavenly reward. Through use of tickets and gifts in kind, the middle class appropriated lower-class spending power into their own hands, and prevented worries about their alms being spent on items deemed inappropriate, -- especially "unsuitable finery." While such philanthropists wanted the poor to have the same values as themselves, they did not want the poor to have the same clothing or standard of living. By banning lower-class participation in a middle-class way of life, even if it only involved censoring ribbons for gingham, and by forcing middle-class values (including respect for authority) upon the lower orders, preservation of the status quo could be ensured.<sup>62</sup>

At St. Mary's, poor relief efforts did not fit so easily into the bourgeois model.

The congregation's enthusiasm for the clothing club established in 1879 was lukewarm, and reports from the parish and church accounts show that such forms of relief did not

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<sup>62</sup> This evidence forces a modification of Overton's argument that post-World War One philanthropists in St. John's, in response to working-class collective efforts such as the Fisherman's Protective Union, were more utilitarian than their pre-War counterparts. Overton contended that in the 19th century the bourgeoisie practised charity for religious reasons only (giving alms was seen as an expression of Christianity and as a "ticket" into the afterlife) and therefore donations to the poor were indiscriminate. At least among members of the Church of England, ideas of self-help, individual responsibility for poverty, and promotion of interaction between the classes as a response to poverty could be seen from the 1850s onward. While Overton was right in seeing a utilitarian approach to social problems in the middle-class philanthropists of the 1920s, it may be more accurate to consider this attitude as a continuation of late nineteenth-century St. John's bourgeois culture rather than as a response to twentieth-century working-class collectivism. Overton, "Self-Help," pp. 80, 95, 97, 114.

become a mainstay of parish activity.<sup>63</sup> In general, the distribution of relief at St. Mary's was placed in the hands of the rector, but special fund raising for poor relief (as seen after the bank crash) took on a communal character that was quite different from the situation at St. Thomas's. The use of locally-organized entertainments, featuring performances from members of the congregation and with a very low admission price, gave St. Mary's fund raising efforts the air of a workers' friendly society social.<sup>64</sup>

The Anglican philanthropists of the West End may not have had the economic resources of those in the East End, but they clearly displayed a charitable impulse and found a way to fill it within their own means and outside the social control mandate seen in so many Victorian charities. At St. Mary's, "self-help" and "self-reliance" were not preached by bourgeois reformers, but lived as part of skilled working-class and proprietary, lower middle-class culture.<sup>65</sup> While St. Mary's and St. Thomas's parochial poor relief efforts shared the same general Victorian and Edwardian view of charity, differences in each parish's approach to poor relief show how the socioeconomic

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<sup>63</sup> In the discussion of parochial voluntary associations, we will see that the women of St. Mary's congregation embraced a different type of parish organization, -- one that had less focus on local, class-based social control.

<sup>64</sup> For descriptions of entertainments at working-class clubs see T.G. Ashplant, "London Working Men's Clubs, 1875-1914," in Eileen Yeo and Stephen Yeo (eds.), Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590-1914: Explorations in the History of Labour and Leisure (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1981), pp. 243-8.

<sup>65</sup> Bryan Palmer, A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979), p. 240; Crossick and Haupt (eds.), Shopkeepers and Master Artisans, p. 9.

circumstances affected philanthropy.

## Chapter Eight

### "Not ... an Effeminate Sort of Thing": Class, Gender, and Church-Sponsored Voluntary Associations

Church-sponsored voluntary associations were an important part of late 19th-century organized religion. Many clergymen promoted these organizations in an effort to increase the number of regular churchgoers and communicants. Parochial voluntary associations were part of general missionary enterprise, and were designed to exercise moral influence over their members, as well as to provide outreach services to parishioners who did not meet the Victorian middle-class definition of "respectability".<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, church-sponsored voluntary associations were popular among parishioners, and involvement in their activities was important for people of various socioeconomic circumstances. Victorian middle-class people tended to be most interested in organizations with a social reform mandate.<sup>2</sup> The lower middle class was active especially in common-interest organizations (such as church-sponsored temperance groups), while members of the proprietary lower middle class enjoyed social clubs and charitable associations.<sup>3</sup> Community-based organizations, such as mutual or friendly societies, were popular with members of the working class.<sup>4</sup> The social life of

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<sup>1</sup> Cox, *English Churches*, p. 83; Valverde, *Age of Light*, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> McLeod, *Class and Religion*, pp. 14-5. See Chapter Six.

<sup>3</sup> Crossick, "Emergence of the Lower Middle Class," pp. 27-8; Crossick and Haupt (eds.) *Shopkeepers and Master Artisans*, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Crossick, "Emergence of the Lower Middle Class," pp. 27-8.

the labour aristocracy was especially centred around formal associations.<sup>5</sup> While they valued independence and self-help, skilled workers showed little interest in church-based associations with a moral reform mandate.<sup>6</sup>

This chapter will examine some of the major gender-specific, church-sponsored associations at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's. Inspired by Marks, it focuses on class and gender relations among their members, although with less attention to age and marital status. Secular social relations are shown to have shaped the activities, leadership, and membership of these organizations.<sup>7</sup>

### **Men's Associations**

English Canadian historians Kealey and Palmer have identified class ties within 19th-century fraternal orders and examined the way membership encouraged class consciousness, while Marks has focused on the gendered aspect of fraternal orders. As argued by Mary Ann Clawson in Constructing Brotherhood, Marks concluded that such associations championed masculinity more than they fostered class identity.<sup>8</sup> Using American examples, Clawson showed that fraternities promoted fellowship between men regardless of class status, but were, nonetheless, subject to internal class conflict. In

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<sup>5</sup> Yeo, Religion and Voluntary Organizations, p. 216; McLeod, Class and Religion, pp. 11-2.

<sup>6</sup> Morris, Religion and Urban Change, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 115-6, 254.

<sup>8</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 255-7.



addition, fraternalism mainly attracted skilled workers and proprietors, and maintained close ties with artisanal identity and its male-centred culture. Fraternities rejected the middle-class Victorian view of women as the moral and spiritual guides of men, a cornerstone of True Womanhood ideology, and promoted male autonomy.<sup>9</sup>

Membership in a fraternal organization was an essential part of being a "respectable" man. Just as they promoted True Womanhood, the Victorian bourgeoisie painted a picture of the Christian Gentleman whose life was a balance of business achievement, social sensitivity, and dedication to church and family. Involvement in secular or church-sponsored self-improvement societies was part of this role.<sup>10</sup> Feminist historians such as Joanne Meyerowitz argue that True Womanhood was an integral part of Victorian middle-class ideology, rather than a reflection of social reality, and the same can apply to the Christian Gentleman ideal.<sup>11</sup>

The ideal of the Christian Gentleman was promoted by Victorian churches as part of "muscular Christianity", and the Church of England in Newfoundland was no

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<sup>9</sup> Mary Ann Clawson, Constructing Brotherhood: Class, Gender, and Fraternalism (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 6-7, 14-7.

<sup>10</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 25-6, 266-7, 286, 296-7.

<sup>11</sup> Joanne Meyerowitz, "American Women's History: The Fall of Women's Culture," Canadian Review of American Studies (Special Issue 1992 - Part One), pp. 27, 30-1. See also Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "Postmodern Patchwork: Some Recent Trends in the Writing of Women's History in Canada," Canadian Historical Review 72, 4 (1992), pp. 456-8, 467; Kerber "Separate Spheres," p. 28; Janet Guildford and Suzanne Morton (eds.) Separate Spheres: Women's Worlds in the 19th-Century Maritimes (Fredericton, NB: Acadiensis Press, 1994), pp. 9-10.

exception to this general trend.<sup>12</sup> The clergy at St. Thomas's were major promoters.

Rector Arthur Wood wrote:

How many appear to think that the work of Religion and the Gospel should be left chiefly to Clergymen, aided it may be by a few women! How few seem to realize that the great work of the Church of Christ is a work to be done by men!

Explaining that Christ's apostles were laymen, and that male members of the congregation should make a stronger personal, emotional commitment to church work based on this example, Wood concluded:

In all this we must have the strength, and the practical wisdom and business capacity, of Christian Men. Religion among us must not be an effeminate sort of thing: we must not be content with milk instead of solid meat, well enough perhaps for those who like it, but not enough to satisfy the wants of men.<sup>13</sup>

While not misogynistic, Wood portrayed women as second-rate parishioners and church workers. He believed that the "strength of a church or congregation resides largely in the young men", and that males should be at the forefront of all parish work.<sup>14</sup>

The clergy at St. Thomas's encouraged the establishment of several men's associations in the parish. The Brotherhood of St. Andrew, an American organization designed as a mission of men to men, was conceived as a means for laymen to involve themselves in spiritual works without leaving their chosen career. At the same time, its

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<sup>12</sup> Gail Bederman, "'The Women Have Had Charge of the Church Work Long Enough': The Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911-12 and the Masculinization of Middle-Class Protestantism," *American Quarterly* 41, 3 (Sept. 1980), pp. 434-5.

<sup>13</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's: Work for Men in the Church," *Diocesan Magazine* (May 1889).

<sup>14</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's: Our Young Men," *Diocesan Magazine* (Feb. 1896).

outreach programs encouraged church involvement and "respectable" behaviour among members of the working class and poor.<sup>15</sup> Though John Rouse wrote about the Brotherhood in an 1892 letter to the Diocesan Magazine from Chicago, Illinois, the first effort to organize a Newfoundland branch began at St. Thomas's after Arthur Wood's 1893 visit to Canada and the United States.<sup>16</sup> Several years earlier, Wood had expressed concern about the "good deal of beer drinking ... among the older lads" of St. John's, and he saw the Brotherhood as a means for "young tradesmen" to socialize apart from saloons and "bad company".<sup>17</sup>

A decade later interest in the Brotherhood had declined. By 1903 members no longer visited outport vessels moored at the docks to distribute reading material and to encourage crews to attend church by offering a seat in the family pew.<sup>18</sup> While the clergy regretted the lack of welcome offered to Anglican crewmen, the Brotherhood may not have liked to encourage contact between lower-class strangers and their own families.<sup>19</sup> Officially, political rivalry among members led to the decline. While Rendell

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<sup>15</sup> Inglis, Churches and the Working Classes, pp. 42-3.

<sup>16</sup> "Our American Letter," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1892); "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1893); Rendell and Knight, History of St. Thomas's Church, p. 48.

<sup>17</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1890) and (May 1893).

<sup>18</sup> Members of St. Thomas's branch of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew took as their mission area ships docked from the foot of McBride's Hill east. "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1898) and (July 1901).

<sup>19</sup> "Cohesion," Diocesan Magazine (July 1903).

and Knight wrote that "it is difficult to imagine why its non-party association could be suspected of having for its object any other than what appears on its face", one can see the opportunity to campaign for outport votes while ostensibly acting for the church.<sup>20</sup>

The new rector Edgar Jones, appointed in 1915 and fresh from the United States, revived the Brotherhood in 1916.<sup>21</sup> A St. Mary's branch was not established until 1927.<sup>22</sup>

A more successful men's organization was the Church Lads Brigade (C.L.B.). Like the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, the C.L.B. was part of "muscular Christianity". Organized along pseudo-military lines, its stated purpose was

the advancement of Christ's Kingdom among lads of all classes, the promotion of reverence, discipline, and self-respect, all that tends towards true Christian manliness.<sup>23</sup>

The C.L.B. was more prescriptive than the Brotherhood: it openly aimed for physical, mental, and moral improvement. In addition, its paramilitary structure meant that the mostly upper and middle-class leadership could hold clear positions of authority over the rank-and-file. British in origin, the C.L.B. had imperial connotations. Governor Terrence O'Brien and medical missionary Wilfred Grenfell supported the C.L.B., and leaders promoted the Avalon Battalion of the Newfoundland regiment, founded in 1892,

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<sup>20</sup> Rendell and Knight, *History of St. Thomas's Church*, p. 48.

<sup>21</sup> Rendell and Knight, *History of St. Thomas's Church*, p. 48.

<sup>22</sup> *Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 1859-1984*, p. 97.

<sup>23</sup> B.E.S. Dunfield, "The Church Lads Brigade," *Newfoundland Quarterly* 11, 1 (July 1911), pp. 7-8.

as the first established in the overseas empire.<sup>24</sup> The large crowds that attended annual C.L.B. services attested to its popularity at St. Thomas's.<sup>25</sup> In contrast, the St. Mary's Company, established by Botwood in 1896 and administered by the Cathedral Company, had disbanded by 1902. While some boys from St. Mary's remained involved in the C.L.B., it was several decades later before a strong company was formed.<sup>26</sup>

At St. Mary's, the men's organization was ideologically more fraternalistic than prescriptive. Established in June 1891 with a membership of 40, the St. Mary's Association's aim was "deepening the interest of the members of St. Mary's Congregation in the affairs of their church".<sup>27</sup> The Association was open to any male over 15 years of age who could pay the monthly subscription of 10¢.<sup>28</sup> While there are no attendance rolls, officer lists indicate that Association leaders were mainly lower middle class. Of the 13 founding officers, three were middle class proper, seven were white-collar lower middle class, and three were either independent or skilled working-class coopers. Totals

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<sup>24</sup> For Grenfell's promotion of the ideas of muscular Christianity see Ronald Rompkey, Grenfell of Labrador: A Biography (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

<sup>25</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1907), (Nov. 1908), (Oct. 1912).

<sup>26</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1907); Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 1859-1984, 87. For the popularity of the C.L.B. on the South Side in the mid-20th century, see Porter, Below the Bridge, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Vestry Minute Book, 8 May 1891; "St. Mary's Association," Diocesan Magazine (Oct. 1891).

<sup>28</sup> "St. Mary's Association," Diocesan Magazine (Oct. 1891); "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Aug. 1893). After a discussion at the first meeting, members decided not to admit women.

for 1893 and 1894 show one middle class proper, 15 lower middle class (only one was not a clerk or accountant), 8 coopers, and one unskilled worker.<sup>29</sup> The place of coopers is interesting when one considers John Joy's assessment that they were probably the best organized and most vocal labour group in St. John's.<sup>30</sup>

The activities and mandate of the Association suggest an interest in respectability and upward mobility often associated with the lower middle class. The St. Mary's Association was typical of the literary and debating societies popular among the Victorian lower middle class.<sup>31</sup> A description in the Diocesan Magazine stated that "the tone of the Association is high ... it aims at the improvement of the mind by debate and conversation, and presents to its members the means of innocent and rational amusement."<sup>32</sup> The Association's rooms (including a library) were open three nights per week for the use of members, and bi-monthly debates were held on a variety of subjects. In addition, the Association wanted to establish a night school in the West End, although there was no record of it ever getting under weigh.<sup>33</sup> This idea may have come from the

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<sup>29</sup> "St. Mary's Association," Diocesan Magazine (Oct. 1891); "St. Mary's Parochial Association," Diocesan Magazine (Aug. 1893), and "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Aug. 1894).

<sup>30</sup> Joy, "Growth and Development," p. 104.

<sup>31</sup> Cox, English Churches, p. 84.

<sup>32</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Aug. 1893).

<sup>33</sup> "St. Mary's Association," Diocesan Magazine (Oct. 1891); "St. Mary's Parochial Association," Diocesan Magazine (Apr. 1893).

skilled working-class members of the Association, as efforts towards self-improvement were typical of 19th-century artisanal culture.<sup>34</sup> At St. Thomas's, a similar society for social and instructive work, as well as parish promotion, was not established until the Llewellyn Club was founded in 1915.<sup>35</sup>

The St. Mary's Parochial Association's name suggests its deep roots in the West End Anglican community, giving it a local flavour typical of artisanal organizations. The way in which the Association rotated its officers from year to year also suggested that the organization had a cooperative ideal.<sup>36</sup> This contrasted with the idea of earned advancement to long-term positions of authority associated with the military structure of the Church Lads Brigade. As was the case with parish lay administration and financing, the relatively homogenous nature of the congregation's social status at St. Mary's, as well as members' possible experience in non-parochial fraternities and unions, may have encouraged a more democratic approach.

When Camplin Cogan became rector of St. Mary's in 1902, he instituted several new male organizations in the parish.<sup>37</sup> One of these, the Young Men's Club, was a classic example of the Anglican church-sponsored "working-lad's" institute, designed by

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<sup>34</sup> Delves, "Popular Recreation," p. 95.

<sup>35</sup> Parish of St. Thomas, Constitution and Rules of the Llewellyn Club of St. Thomas's Church (St. John's: Times Print, Dec. 1915).

<sup>36</sup> Gundersen, "Local Parish," p. 321.

<sup>37</sup> Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 1859-1984, p. 85.

Victorian middle-class sponsors to offer a place of "respectable" leisure to lower-class adolescents.<sup>38</sup> At St. Mary's, the club room, which was located in the parish hall, was stocked with cards, tables, games, a gramophone and records, as well as sporting equipment.<sup>39</sup> Cogan's institution of this type of club in the working-class West End, given his middle-class background and experience in the East End, was not surprising.<sup>40</sup> Equally unsurprising was the reforming, prescriptive nature of this organization, which was established from above by a newcomer to the parish, which contrasted with the fraternalism and self-help of the mens' association organized by members of the congregation itself.

Cogan also introduced the Men's Bible Class to St. Mary's. Given the Low Church origins of St. Thomas's church, it is not surprising that the East End parish had strong men's and women's bible classes during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These bible classes were educational, usually consisting of discussions and lectures about scripture or more specific matters of church doctrine. The place of sexual divisions in the organization of these classes was clear: the rector's wife (or another prominent, religiously devoted woman from the congregation) taught the female class, while the

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<sup>38</sup> Cox, *English Churches*, p. 82; Delves, "Popular Recreation and Social Conflict," p. 103.

<sup>39</sup> *Church of St. Mary the Virgin*, pp. 37-8.

<sup>40</sup> St. Thomas's was planning a young men's club of this sort by 1897, and it was in place while Cogan was curate. "St. Thomas's, St. John's," *Diocesan Magazine* (June 1897) and (Feb. 1900)



rector or curate had charge of the males.<sup>41</sup> There was a clear sense of gender difference in the interpretation and understanding of scripture. As well, in the 1880s the Men's Bible Class met Sunday mornings at 10, while the women's class met at 2:30 on Sunday afternoons.<sup>42</sup> The latter time slot was chosen, perhaps, to coincide with Sunday school, under the assumption that women would be the ones bringing children to the sessions. By the early 20th century, the Men's Bible Class at St. Thomas's had taken on a more prominent and associational face, and began sponsoring entertainments and teas.<sup>43</sup> While a bible class was held on Friday evenings at St. Mary's church during the late 1880s, it was Cogan who introduced the associational, and sexually specific, version of the Bible Class that had developed at St. Thomas's.<sup>44</sup> The immediate acceptance of this association in the West End was perhaps due to the tradition of fraternal organizations in the parish, as this organization had an educational and sociable, rather than prescriptive, mandate.

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<sup>41</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1899), (Nov. 1902), (Nov. 1903), (Dec. 1905).

<sup>42</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1889).

<sup>43</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Feb. 1905) and (Apr. 1906).

<sup>44</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1889); Church of St. Mary the Virgin, p. 37.

### Women's Organizations

Female organizations have been a major focus of Canadian and American historians' work on 19th and early 20th-century women's religious involvement.<sup>45</sup> Many of these historians, such as Canadian Wendy Mitchinson, argued that women's involvement in such organizations was a "stepping stone" to feminist thought and action.<sup>46</sup> The idea of women being universally, and inherently, religious was also an important part of the woman's culture school of feminist historiography.<sup>47</sup> While more recent historians of women have amended these interpretations by considering the class, ethnic, or geographic differences in women's experiences, the bulk of the literature on women's religious activities continues to deal with church-sponsored organizations. More traditional feminist themes persist in newer work. Brian Heeney, for example, described how high numbers of female parishioners attended services and that these women were the chief source of voluntary labour in many Anglican parishes. He considered that while there were religious motives for this activity, women were also

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<sup>45</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 22-4.

<sup>46</sup> Wendy Mitchinson, "The WCTU: 'For God, Home and Native Land': A Study in Nineteenth-Century Feminism," in Linda Kealey (ed.), A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s (Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1979), p. 152.

<sup>47</sup> See for example Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," in Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985); and Margaret Conrad, "'Sundays Always Make Me Think of Home': Time and Place in Canadian Women's History," in Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman (eds.), Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History (Toronto: Copp, Clark, Pitman, 1985).

looking for a diversion outside the home, — that involvement in church organizations was part of the growth of feminist thought. Heeney based his conclusions on the older literature of woman's culture and separate spheres, and did not consider differences in women's experience.<sup>48</sup>

While much of the literature of women's religious experience has focused on the middle class, McLeod's work has shown that the idea of 19th-century women being more active in religious organizations than men was just as, if not even more, true for the working class.<sup>49</sup> At the same time, Marks discussed whether or not women's religious organizations were mainly middle class. She found that while working-class women were often Sunday School teachers and rank-and-file members of voluntary organizations, leadership positions were dominated by the middle class. In the towns Marks studied only one quarter of Anglican women's organization officers were from the working class. Marks speculated that this lack of involvement by members of the working class could have been due to social or cultural barriers, or more practical problems of insufficient finances, responsibility for wage work, or not having a servant to help with housework or care for small children.<sup>50</sup> For most women, as well as men, involvement in church-sponsored voluntary organizations required money and leisure time as much as spiritual commitment.

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<sup>48</sup> Heeney, Women's Movement, pp. 5-9, 19-32.

<sup>49</sup> McLeod, Religion and Irreligion, p. 48.

<sup>50</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 160-75.

Middle-class women had the free time and resources to be central figures in the female suffrage movement. In Newfoundland, demands for suffrage began in the 1880s and 1890s, and Margot Duley has placed the roots of this feminism in women's work in church-sponsored organizations: especially the Women's Christian Temperance Union. She also traced the development of Newfoundland feminism through a wave of secular, female-sponsored organizations established by members of the St. John's elite in the early 1900s (such as the 1909 Ladies' Reading Room), and in the distaff feminism associated with World War One. Many of the prominent women who led the Women's Patriotic Association were members of St. Thomas's congregation.<sup>51</sup> Another important Anglican, church-related connection to Newfoundland feminism was the experiences of Armine Gosling. Gosling wrote in 1912 that she first began to question and challenge the limitations that society placed on women and the undervaluation of women's work after her experience raising money for the restoration of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist after the 1892 Great Fire. She felt that while women were responsible for raising half of the money for this project, they received only token recognition.<sup>52</sup> Gosling's commentary could have applied equally to the experience of Anglican women over 35 years earlier, when their total contribution of £3200, by far the largest donation to the

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<sup>51</sup> Margot Duley, Where Once Our Mothers Stood We Stand: Women's Suffrage in Newfoundland, 1890-1925 (Charlottetown, PEI: Gynergy Books, 1993), pp. 24, 39-44, 53, 59-60. Known locally as the "Old Garrison Church", St. Thomas' became a headquarters of the St. John's home front.

<sup>52</sup> Duley, Where Once Our Mothers Stood, p. 45.

Cathedral Completion Fund, received little appreciation from church officials.<sup>53</sup>

Gosling's comment showed that women who were active in fund raising for their parish or church were proud of their accomplishments, but at the same time could feel that their efforts were overlooked simply on the basis of sex. "Muscular Christianity", with its overt devaluation of women, must have only reinforced the frustration of female members of congregations who gave much of their time, and personal or family resources, to the church. While some members of the clergy, such as William Pilot, publicly recognized that women's work in the church was often "overlooked or undervalued," most often the Anglican church officially portrayed women according to the ideology of True Womanhood.<sup>54</sup> Examples of this include a speech by Bishop Jones at the Atheneum in 1879:

His excellency's ... repeated eulogies of the fair sex solicited much applause, and he wound up by drawing a moral, which he assured his hearer that he himself has found unailing, that faith in woman was a sure sheet anchor in those rough trials of life which the sterner sex are called on to face<sup>55</sup>

Likewise, the idea that women's place in the church should complement the "male

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<sup>53</sup> Times, 27 May 1885, 3 June 1885.

<sup>54</sup> William Pilot, "Women's Work," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1902). Pilot asked all rectors and missionaries in Newfoundland to answer a questionnaire on female activity in their districts. If this project was completed and the documents extant, it would provide excellent insight into religion in late 19th-century rural women's lives. For the portrayal of women in church literature see Samuel J. Thomas, "Catholic Journalists and the Ideal Woman in late Victorian America," International Journal of Women's Studies 4, 1 (Jan.-Feb. 1981), pp. 89-100.

<sup>55</sup> Times, 1 Mar. 1879.

Christian construct of pious submission and isolated domesticity" characterized a poem printed in the Diocesan Magazine in 1897.<sup>56</sup> Entitled "Dorcas", this poem was declared especially suited to women's work in the church by the editor and rector of St. Thomas's, Henry Dunfield. Note the images of patriarchy, home, gentleness and self-sacrificing obedience, as well as the emotionalism associated with women and the sexual division of labour.

If I might guess, then guess I would:  
Amid the gathered folk  
This gentle Dorcas one day stood,  
And heard what Jesus spoke.

She saw the woven seamless coat --  
Half envious for His sake;  
"Oh, happy hands," she said, "that wrought  
That honoured thing to make!"

Her eyes with longing tears grow dim:  
She never can come nigh  
To work one service poor for Him  
For whom she glad would die.

But hark! He speaks a mighty word:  
She harkens now indeed.  
"When did we see Thee naked, Lord,  
"and clothed Thee in Thy need?"

The King shall answer, "Inasmuch  
"As to My brothers ye  
did it -- even to the least of such --  
Ye did it unto me."

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<sup>56</sup> Smith-Rosenberg, Disorderly Conduct, p. 32.

Home, home she went, and plied the loom,  
 And Jesus' poor arrayed.  
 She died -- they wept about the room,  
 And showed the coats she made.<sup>57</sup>

This poem also emphasised women's work in poor relief efforts, which was a central goal in many female, church-sponsored organizations.

According to their mandates and activities, church-sponsored women's organizations have been classified into two basic types: the ladies' aid (or auxiliary) and the women's missionary association.<sup>58</sup> For women in both types, their major source of power was the church's reliance on financial contributions that the association could make as a result of fund raising efforts.<sup>59</sup> The primary women's organizations at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's were each one of these two types. The St. Thomas's Women's Association fit the ladies' auxiliary type of organization. By definition, the members of ladies' aids were especially concerned with raising money for local families and schools, and to help with parish expenses. They were also motivated by a need for fellowship, and developed a feeling of identity and belonging in the parish structure. As well, ladies' aids had considerable parochial power, chiefly based on the strength of their financial contributions to the church, and while they often had a poor relief mandate, their main activity was in the area of church building and improvement. Female parishioners at St.

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<sup>57</sup> Dr. George McDonald, "Dorcas," *Diocesan Magazine* (Mar. 1897).

<sup>58</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 146-54.

<sup>59</sup> Gundersen, "Local Parish as Female Institution," p. 317.

Mary's organized a Women's Home Missionary Association. Unlike the ladies' aids, the money raised by the missionary association was directed to the mission field, rather than spent in the parish, and was usually handed over to a higher ecclesiastical authority. While they had control of the fund raising process, the women in missionary associations did not have control of spending, and this limited their sense of power.<sup>60</sup>

The upper and middle-class nature of the St. Thomas's Women's Association was established in Chapter Six, during the discussion of the organization's poor relief efforts. As well, the Association's interest in bourgeois-influenced church renovation and decoration was discussed in Chapter Four. As Table Seventeen, Chapter Seven demonstrated, the St. Thomas's Women's Association was dominated by middle and upper-class women in the period 1890 to 1904. In the five years between 1890 and 1894, 86.5 per cent of the office holders and committee members of the Association were upper, middle, or lower middle class. From 1895 to 1899 the total was 81.5 per cent, and from 1900 to 1904, 91 per cent. While the number of upper-class women was decreasing, possibly due to interest in secular feminist activities, the lower middle class element was steadily growing. This is consistent with that group's special interest in church-related activities.

The St. Thomas's Women's Association fit the definition of women's auxiliaries.

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<sup>60</sup> Barbara Brown Zikmund, "Women's Organizations: Centres of Denominational Loyalty and Expressions of Christian Unity," in Jackson W. Carroll and Wade Clarke Roof (eds.), Beyond Establishment: Protestant Identity in a Post-Protestant Age (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), pp. 116-38; Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 146-54.



Parish poor relief was an important aspect of their work, and the women carried out a major church fund raising mandate. Most of the money raised was through the sale of "useful and fancy goods, very much of it the work of their own hands", and most funds were donated by the women to pay off church debts incurred by the male administration.<sup>61</sup> In addition, the St. Thomas's Women's Association had a social function. In 1894 Association president Hallie Wood wrote that the "opportunities given to members of the parish, who otherwise would seldom or never see each other, to meet in friendly intercourse have been most valuable," and encouraged parish women of "whatever social grade" to join with the already 50 members of the Association.<sup>62</sup> While officially classless, the Association, like the fraternities described by Clawson, may not have been so functionally. The leaders' condescending attitude toward working-class and poor women, and the prescriptive moral reform agenda that accompanied their poor relief efforts, indicated that the Association was very much a bourgeois enterprise.<sup>63</sup> While working-class women may have joined the Association, the power and influence clearly laid with the middle and upper-class leadership.

The St. Thomas's example provides an opportunity to question whether the

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<sup>61</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's: St. Thomas's Women's Association," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1889). In September 1890 the Association held a fancy sale to raise money for a new school room in the East End. See Evening Herald, 6 Feb. 1890, 10 Mar. 1890, 12 June 1890; Colonist, 9 June 1890. For examples of Association funds being donated towards church debts see "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1890) and (Jan. 1892).

<sup>62</sup> "St. Thomas's Women's Association," Diocesan Magazine (June 1894).

<sup>63</sup> See Chapter Seven.

mainly middle-class women involved in such associations were empowered in the parish structure because of their financial contributions to the church. The women perceived themselves as working towards Christian, benevolent goals to benefit the congregation and the church at large. Hallie Wood wrote that "women have always proved themselves willing and devoted servants of Christ, and the work of our society ... is worthy of all praise."<sup>64</sup> Likewise, Wood's husband, as rector of the parish, considered the Association's help in paying off the church's debts as "a plain proof, if one were wanted, of the practical benefit of such organizations."<sup>65</sup> Some difficulty arose in the parish, however, when the Women's Association decided on their own initiative to begin fund raising for a new parish hall, rather than continuing to give their profits to the church wardens for parish debts. While some unnamed members of the congregation disagreed with this change, in a January 1892 article in the Diocesan Magazine, Arthur Wood defended the women's decision in diplomatic and practical terms:

Volunteer workers must be permitted, to a large extent, to choose their own object, provided it does not conflict with the welfare of the parish generally ... [when the rooms open] the ladies who are now aiming to provide the cost ... will probably be commended by the Parish, not only for their zeal, industry, and perseverance, but also for their prudential foresight, in securing beforehand the cost of the building; contrary to the usual custom of entering upon expenditure first, and meeting the expense as best we can afterwards.<sup>66</sup>

By 1894 the Association had raised \$2000 towards this goal, and Arthur Wood agreed to

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<sup>64</sup> "St. Thomas's Women's Association," Diocesan Magazine (June 1894).

<sup>65</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1889).

<sup>66</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1892).

bring the matter of a new parish building "in a more formal manner before the congregation".<sup>67</sup> The financial crisis that followed the Newfoundland bank crash delayed the project somewhat, and the Association was forced to make an emergency loan to the church wardens to cover that year's basic church expenses.<sup>68</sup> By 1896 the project was back on track, and a committee of male parishioners was formed to look into acquiring a site for the building.<sup>69</sup> Construction began in April 1898, and Canon Wood Hall (named in memory of Arthur Wood, who died in 1897) opened on 19 April 1899.<sup>70</sup>

In general, St. Thomas's congregation and clergy credited the Women's Association with the original idea for a new hall, and recognized that the Association did most of the fund raising. New rector Henry Dunfield even asked their consent to name the building after Wood.<sup>71</sup> Bishop Jones, however, announced at the opening of a major fund raising event that "whatever comfort and efficiency may be lent to the future working of the parish [because of this building], will be largely owing to [Reverend Wood's] fostering care and foresight". This may have stuck a little in the throats of Association members, despite their affection for Wood's memory.<sup>72</sup> Later, at the

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<sup>67</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1894).

<sup>68</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (June 1895).

<sup>69</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (May 1896).

<sup>70</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Apr. 1898), (Apr. 1899), and (June 1899).

<sup>71</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1897).

<sup>72</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1897).

building's opening, Jones acknowledged the women's efforts as fund raisers, but gave less credit to their initiative and independence in the face of early objections to the project.<sup>73</sup>

If the women of St. Thomas's Association were empowered in any way by their fund raising capabilities, it was not in a way that officially strengthened their place in the diocesan church. It needs to be remembered that during the entire life of this project, muscular Christianity was being promoted among Newfoundland Anglicans, and, despite his support for the Women's Association's decision to independently raise funds for a new parish building, in the 1890s Wood was also writing in the Diocesan Magazine that the "great work" of the church could only be done by men. Many members of the Association must have shared Armine Gosling's frustration and become increasingly sympathetic to feminism.

In the West End, the situation was somewhat different. Edward Botwood was one of the first Anglican clergy in Newfoundland to publicize the need for members of the church in St. John's to support financially home missions in the outports and Labrador. To this end he organized the Women's Home Missionary Association in 1879, a group that in its first year enrolled 400 members. The local press recognized St. Mary's women as the most active supporters of this project, but credited this to Botwood's

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<sup>73</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Oct. 1899).

influence.<sup>74</sup> From 1880 to 1890, for example, St. Mary's W.H.M.A. gave nearly \$2500 to the Diocesan Synod for home missions, compared to \$2200 from St. Thomas's and \$2800 from the much larger Cathedral parish.<sup>75</sup> Parishioners at St. Thomas's, especially, seemed to have little interest in home missions. The rector encouraged more concern for this cause, and in the early 1900s he asked that a donation for home missions be included in the St. Thomas's Women's Association's budget. Interest in home missions grew after 1905, but throughout most of the period under investigation, support for this cause was much more central to women's fund raising in the West End than in the East.<sup>76</sup>

St. Mary's women organized an independent W.H.M.A. and auxiliary Sewing Circle in February 1880. The primary object was to raise money for home missions through the sale of work by Sewing Circle members, holding sociables, and by collecting donations from parishioners. From the start, the Association was careful to say that members of St. Thomas's or the Cathedral parish should not be approached for donations. Each member was also given responsibility for recruiting other women to the Association. Besides being a member of St. Mary's congregation, any woman wanting to

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<sup>74</sup> Times, 2 May 1888; Edward Botwood, "Women's Home Missionary Association," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1889).

<sup>75</sup> "Women's Home Missionary Association," Diocesan Magazine (July 1890).

<sup>76</sup> "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1898), (Mar. 1900), (Dec. 1900), (Jan. 1902), (Mar. 1904), (Mar. 1905), (Apr. 1906), (Mar. 1907), (May 1908), and (Apr. 1910).

join the Association was required to pay a very low 5s in annual dues.<sup>77</sup>

Information on the socioeconomic status of women who attended meetings of the St. Mary's Missionary Association between 1880 and 1899 is summarized in Table 19.

Table 19: St. Mary's Women's Home Missionary Association Meetings: Attendance by Class, 1880-99								
Year	1880-84		1885-89		1890-94		1895-99	
Class	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Upper	19	13.5	1	1.5	2	3.0	2	2.5
Middle Proper	16	11.5	5	7.5	4	6.5	6	8.0
Lower Middle	39	27.5	22	33.5	18	29.0	23	31.0
Indep. Producing	21	15.0	11	16.5	11	17.5	15	20.5
Skilled Working	41	29.0	26	39.5	23	37.0	26	35.0
Unsk. Working	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.0	0	0.0
Unknown	6	4.0	1	1.5	1	1.5	2	2.5
Total	142	100.5	66	100.0	62	99.5	74	99.5

One can see that the majority of women who attended meetings were from the lower middle, independent producing, and skilled working classes. Consistently, the highest numbers were for skilled working-class women, although the overall percentages slightly decreased from 39.5 per cent in the period 1885-9 to 35 per cent in 1895-9. The second highest numbers were for lower middle-class women, but unlike the case of the skilled

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<sup>77</sup> Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Women's Missionary Association Minute Book, 9 Feb. 1880, 11 Jan. 1881, 7 Apr. 1881.

working class, these percentages were increasing. In 1880-4, 27.5 per cent of women attending Association meetings were lower middle class. This rose to 31 per cent in 1895-9, with a high of 33.5 per cent in 1885-9. The number of women from independent-producing families was also growing: from 15 per cent in 1880-4 to 20.5 per cent in 1895-9. The numbers of upper-class and middle-class proper women who attended meetings declined throughout the period, and for the former, this was in line with declining numbers in the congregation generally. The same was true for the lower middle class, albeit in terms of a growth trend. The growth of independent producing-class women's interest in the Association came in spite of a variable presence in the congregation, and the skilled working class decline was also not echoed in congregational demographics. This suggested that other factors may be relevant. For example, many of the skilled working-class women in the Association were older, married women at the time the Association was founded, and the decline over 20 years may have been directly related to their decreasing ability to attend meetings. In contrast, many of the women from independent-producing families joining the Association were young and single, and although some of them lived on farms in the western outskirts of the parish, this did not prevent their attendance at what must have been a welcome social gathering.<sup>78</sup>

Interesting points about class power in a specifically female organization arise

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<sup>78</sup> Gundersen argued that living outside town prevented many women from becoming involved in voluntary associations. Gundersen, "Local Parish as Female Institution," p. 313.

when one looks at the pattern of office holders and committee members for the period 1880-1904. Traditionally, the president of parochial women's organizations was the rector's wife, but because Botwood was a widower for most of the time under investigation, this position fell to other women in the congregation. Mrs. Maria Rouse, who ran a stationary shop and S.P.C.K. depot on Water Street, and was the widow of Anglican clergyman Oliver Rouse, was president of the Association from 1880 until 1897, when Botwood remarried. Other presidents, either of the Association or the auxiliary Sewing Circle, -- Mrs. Anne Tessier, Mrs. Nicholas Cousens, and Miss Elizabeth Browning -- were all from upper and middle-class proper families. However, the degree of responsibility in the office was not related directly to the class status of the woman holding it. Skilled working-class women were just as likely to be vice-presidents as their lower middle-class counterparts. At the same time, the overall figures for officers suggested that middle-class women, especially those of the lower middle class, had considerable, and growing power within the Association.

As was the case with attendance figures, the number of upper-class officers in the St. Mary's W.H.M.A. was in decline throughout the period. As shown in Table 20, the number of upper-class officers decreased from 17.5 per cent in 1880-4 to 1 per cent in 1900-4, with the sharpest decline occurring in 1885-9. In general, when compared to the attendance figures, this class was slightly overrepresented. On the other hand, the percentage of middle-class proper officers was usually double that of the attendance figures, -- ranging from 22 to 13 per cent. For the lower middle class, the number of



officers was higher, but not as disproportionate as for the middle class proper. For this group, the number of officers was usually around six percentage points higher than the number of members at meetings, and was growing steadily from 24 per cent in 1880-4 to 44 per cent in 1900-4. The number of officers from independent-producing families was also growing in proportion with the membership figures. Likewise, officers from skilled

Table 20: St. Mary's Women's Home Missionary Association:  
Officers by Class, 1880-1904

Year	1880-84		1885-89		1890-94		1895-99		1900-04	
Class	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Upper	11	17.5	5	7.0	8	6.0	2	1.5	1	1.0
Middle Proper	14	22.0	14	19.0	17	13.0	20	16.5	16	18.0
Lower Middle	15	24.0	30	40.5	44	34.0	44	36.0	39	44.0
Indep. Prod.	6	9.5	6	8.0	20	15.5	29	23.5	18	20.0
Sk. Working	15	24.0	19	25.5	38	29.0	27	22.0	11	12.5
Unsk. Work.	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Unknown	2	3.0	0	0.0	1	1.0	1	1.0	4	4.5
Total	63	100.0	74	100.0	130	100.0	123	100.5	89	100.0

working-class families began declining from a high of 29 per cent in 1890-4 to 12.5 per cent in 1900-4. Except for 1890-4, unskilled working-class women were completely absent from the Association as either members or officers. During the first years of the Association's life, offices were nearly evenly distributed between upper-class, middle-

class proper, lower middle-class, and skilled working-class women. After 1885, members of the lower middle class increasingly began to hold the highest number of leadership positions, although women from other classes (with the exception of the upper and unskilled working) also maintained a substantial number of Association offices. This contrasted with the pattern of overwhelming upper and middle-class leadership in the St. Thomas's Women's Association.

While the 19th-century "ladies' aid" type of organization was considered to be more fertile ground than missionary associations for the development of independence and empowerment of female members, the women of St. Mary's congregation appeared to have just as strong a sense of themselves as individuals as those of St. Thomas's. It is true that St. Mary's women's association did not have the same financial presence in the parish as was seen in the East End; neither did they determine their own fund raising mandates. From the start, the St. Mary's association gave any money they raised to the Diocesan Synod as support for missionary efforts in Random Sound, Trinity Bay.<sup>79</sup> Members of St. Mary's women's association demonstrated a different type of independence, especially after the mid-1880s. In contrast to St. Thomas's, the president or some other officer, rather than the rector, chaired annual meetings of the Association. Likewise, the women served as auditors of their own accounts. At the same time, entries in the minute book showed that officers and members used their own given names, such as Eliza Brown or Sophia Bendle, rather than the standard practice seen in the official

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<sup>79</sup> St. Mary's Women's Missionary Association Minute Book, 11 Jan. 1881, 7 Apr. 1881.

church sources of referring to women in terms of their husbands.<sup>80</sup> As well, the West End association did not have as strong a social component as that in the East End. In the early 20th century, Sewing Circle members met with the president only once a month to turn in their completed work (or cash if they had sold the item) and to pick up new supplies.<sup>81</sup>

In the 1880s and 1890s, members of the St. Mary's W.H.M.A. often held sales of goods in their own homes, rather than dedicating much time and effort to organizing large-scale fancy fairs, as was seen at St. Thomas's. This arrangement may have been a reflection of the lesser amount of leisure time that was available to the women at St. Mary's, when compared to the upper and middle-class women at St. Thomas's. A member's desire to make a significant personal contribution to the mission fund, despite limited financial means, may have also played a role. Finally, such neighbourhood sales show a community-oriented approach to fund raising, in contrast with St. Thomas's Women's Association sales, which were often advertised city-wide.<sup>82</sup> However, when the middle-class component increased after 1900, the St. Mary's association held more large-

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<sup>80</sup> St. Mary's Women's Missionary Association, Minute Book, 9 Apr. 1886, 21 Apr. 1891, 26 Apr. 1892, 27 Apr. 1893, 24 Apr. 1894, 30 Apr. 1896, 26 Jan. 1897, 27 Jan. 1898. For female auditors see entries for 18 Apr. 1882, 19 Apr. 1883, 23 Apr. 1884; and "St. Mary's Branch of the Women's Home Missionary Association," Diocesan Magazine (June 1891), (June 1896), (Mar. 1897), and (Mar. 1898).

<sup>81</sup> St. Mary's Women's Missionary Association Minute Book, 18 Jan. 1901.

<sup>82</sup> St. Mary's Women's Missionary Association Minute Book, 23 Apr. 1884, 29 Apr. 1890, 24 Apr. 1894, 27 Jan. 1899; Times, 2 Feb. 1884.

scale fancy sales.<sup>83</sup>

This pattern of independence at St. Mary's changed somewhat after Camplin Cogan began his term as rector in 1902. He began to chair Association meetings, and the practice of listing the names of all members in attendance stopped. He also insisted that all officers meet with him four times each year to discuss Association business. Early in his career Cogan had been missionary in White Bay, and in 1906 he called a special meeting of the Association to tell the women of his special interest in that mission and to ask if all money they raised could be directed exclusively to that part of the island. Members in attendance agreed to this change. Finally, after 1902 the rector, rather than members, began auditing the Association's books – a practice that had been abandoned for 30 years.<sup>84</sup> The replacement of male authority over their organization may have provoked resentment among the women at St. Mary's, especially since it came (perhaps not coincidentally) during a time when feminist ideas were starting to circulate in St. John's, especially among the elite women of the East End where Cogan served as curate.

In the early 20th century, a general trend towards more centrally controlled voluntary organizations began in the Church of England in Newfoundland. Two of these new bodies were the Church of England Women's Association (C.E.W.A., later Anglican

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<sup>83</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Mar. 1902) and (Aug. 1909).

<sup>84</sup> St. Mary's Women's Missionary Association Minute Book, 27 Jan. 1903, 2 Feb. [1904]. 10 July 1906; "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Jan. 1889) and (May 1911).

Church Women, or A.C.W.), and the Church of England Men's Society (C.E.M.S.).<sup>85</sup> In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most associations at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's, with the exception of the C.L.B., were parochially insular. While there were more voluntary associations in the parishes than discussed here, the ones chosen effectively portray how class and gender relations could affect church-sponsored organizations in parishes with different demographic profiles.<sup>86</sup>

At St. Thomas's, the upper and middle-class dominated parish was a centre for the promotion of "muscular Christianity" and Victorian ideals of "Christian Gentlemen" and "True Womanhood." The most successful parochial associations, both for males and females, were those with a prescriptive mandate of improving members of the working-class and poor. Along with the organizations discussed here, St. Thomas's had a very strong branch of the prescriptive Church of England Temperance Society. In contrast, St. Mary's branch struggled to attract members despite the fact that Botwood was a leading proponent of the work.<sup>87</sup> In terms of leadership, the military authority of the C.L.B. was accepted, and the upper and middle-class dominated officer lists of the St.

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<sup>85</sup> "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Nov. 1912), and "An Instructive Page for Men on the C.E.M.S.," Diocesan Magazine (Dec. 1908).

<sup>86</sup> Other organizations include the St. Mary's Young Ladies' Sewing Circle and the St. Thomas's Cricket Club, Evening Herald 6 May 1890, "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (July 1909).

<sup>87</sup> Helmstadter and Phillips (eds.), Religion in Victorian Society, pp. 317-8; "St. Thomas's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Feb. 1889); "St. Mary's, St. John's," Diocesan Magazine (Apr. 1899).

Thomas's Women's Association showed that class power could be just as strong inside a church-sponsored, female organization as in the secular male-dominated society. At the same time, the Women's Association's financial strength (as well as their awareness of a growing feminist movement in St. John's) gave them some degree of independence and power in the parish, even if this was not recognized by higher ecclesiastical authorities.

At St. Mary's, the more socially homogenous parish with its strong working-class tradition, was less taken with prescriptive organizations. Instead, the locally organized, masculine St. Mary's Parochial Association had a mandate of self-help and improvement typical of both lower middle and working-class fraternal organizations. At the same time, the working-class nature of the West End led Camplin Cogan to institute a prescriptive Young Men's Club in the parish very soon after his appointment as rector. This action on Cogan's part was an interesting example of a middle-class church authority's perception of what was suitable, and necessary, in a working-class parish. Like the St. Mary's Parochial Association, the St. Mary's W.H.M.A. had a more representative leadership than was seen at St. Thomas's, although the lower middle class was clearly a dominant force in both. This supports the idea of this class having the strongest interest in church-sponsored voluntary associations, as well as the idea that in a parish without a clear upper or middle-class proper element, members of the lower middle class assumed the primary leadership role in male and female organizations.

While women in the West End missionary association displayed a clear sense of self-awareness and acted independently within the organization, they did not have the

same level of parochial power as the women at St. Thomas's. Most early feminists were members of the upper and middle classes, and women in the East End organization may have been inspired by the emerging female suffrage movement. In contrast, Clawson has described artisanal culture as a male culture, and the working-class nature of the West End may have influenced the women of St. Mary's parish to be a somewhat more conservative group in terms of female independence and power. At St. Thomas's, the assertion of female power may have inspired that parish's clergy affection for "muscular Christianity," as Ann Douglas argued that clerical perceptions of "feminized" congregations were often directly related to women's assertion of power through parochial organizations.<sup>88</sup>

Lack of leisure time to devote to associational life, as well as little financial power in the parish, most affected the unskilled working class. In both parishes, male and female members of this class were conspicuous in their absence from voluntary associations. This shows that statements about working-class parishioners lacking the ability to become involved in voluntary associations, either because of material need or insufficient leisure time, were only partially true.<sup>89</sup> The case at St. Mary's showed that, given certain circumstances, members of the skilled working class were actively involved in church associations. Unskilled working-class families, however, seemed most limited by their socioeconomic status.

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<sup>88</sup> Gundersen, "Local Parish as Female Institution," p. 321.

<sup>89</sup> Delves, "Popular Recreation and Class Conflict," p. 101.

Marks's observation that 19th-century, male voluntary organizations in small-town Ontario focused mainly on self-improvement, while women's concentrated on fund raising, applied to the associations at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's.<sup>90</sup> Equally correct was Clawson's assertion that the context of social networks in which a voluntary organization emerged played a major role in shaping its structure and mandate.<sup>91</sup>

At St. Thomas's and St. Mary's the socioeconomic circumstances of parishioners created a system of class and gender relations that was reflected in voluntary organizations. The socially stratified, bourgeois-dominated East End parish favoured prescriptive organizations with clear systems of authority. Upper and middle-class parish leaders promoted idealized gender roles, while at the same time women of this status were more willing to assert their independence from male authority than their lower middle and working-class counterparts at St. Mary's. In the West End, the parish was more socially homogenous, and the fraternal nature of the primary male voluntary association organized there reflected this pooling of lower middle, independent producing, and skilled working-class influences. As well, the leadership of male and female organizations at St. Mary's was more representative than at St. Thomas's, where elite elements clearly held control.

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<sup>90</sup> Marks, "Ladies, Loafers," pp. 146-54.

<sup>91</sup> Clawson, Construction Brotherhood, pp. 6-7.



## Chapter Nine

### Conclusion

In Victorian and Edwardian St. John's, citizens were aware of the differences in social class that marked their relations with each other and characterized the East and West End districts of the city. Beyond its secular relevance, class shaped men's and women's experiences of organized religion: social relations affected the form of a person's involvement in a church, as well as the opportunity for such activity. The social class of parishioners, whether of the general population or of lay leaders, also influenced the institutional development of churches. This is clearly seen in the histories of St. Mary's and St. Thomas's Anglican churches.

The population of St. Mary's, which was located in the West End, was more socially homogenous than St. Thomas's. Most parishioners shared working-class experience and contacts. St. Thomas's parish, in the East End, was more socially stratified than St. Mary's, with higher numbers from the elite and from the unskilled. Its population was rooted in administrative, commercial, and financial institutions, and had strong bourgeois ties. This, combined with the established nature of the East End and the presence of political and economic elites in the parish, meant that the influence of Victorian middle-class ideology and norms was stronger at St. Thomas's than at St. Mary's. At St. Mary's, skilled working-class culture and a sense of community most influenced parish developments.

It is wrong to assume that late Victorian and Edwardian Anglican churches were

necessarily dominated by the bourgeoisie, or that middle-class hegemony in churches was unavoidable. At St. Thomas's upper and middle-class men who were powerful in secular society also dominated parish lay administration, but at St. Mary's the distribution of lay leaders was more consistent with congregational demographics. In the East End parish upper-class influence shaped lay administration, and there was little recognition of the willingness or ability of lower-class members of the congregation to take an active part in church leadership. At St. Mary's, members of the skilled working and lower middle classes had more access to lay parochial power. Members of the lower classes could, and did, take an active role in lay administration when local circumstances allowed. While lay power sharing at St. Mary's showed cooperative ideals, lower middle class dominance after 1900 suggests that members of this class were especially ambitious for the respect, and respectability, attained through involvement in organized religion. It may also reflect a change in social relations stemming from industrialization. The erosion of craft skills may have led members of the skilled working class to devalue themselves, and to relinquish their place as community leaders to the newly emerging West End white-collar labour force.

At St. Thomas's, upper and middle-class lay administrators promoted a style of financing that emphasized generous personal gifts to the church, while St. Mary's used a system designed to encourage piecemeal donations (given at a time and in an amount determined by the donor) from every member of the congregation. This accommodation for irregular incomes, and recognition of the parish "community", led to generous

contributions from parishioners of varying statuses. At St. Thomas's the upper-class presence discouraged similar lower-class donations. While the St. Thomas's example showed how money equalled parochial power and influence for men, the same did not apply to women. This was especially apparent at St. Mary's, where female parishioners made some of the most substantial annual gifts.

Theologically, St. Mary's was High Church and St. Thomas's Low Church. While each parish remained loyal to its traditions, there were changes in the material aspects of worship. At St. Thomas's, middle and upper-class parishioners embraced Ritualism, and sponsored changes in music, architecture, and interior decoration which displayed a bourgeois consumer ethic of quality. Upper and middle-class parishioners' enthusiasm for church improvement was an effort to transform St. Thomas's into a fashionable place of worship that would attract "better" Anglican families into what was becoming the consciously elite neighbourhood of St. John's, -- a transformation that did not please lower-class members of the congregation. At St. Mary's, there was less enthusiasm for Ritualism and church improvements. Instead, the use of locally built items and handmade gifts from members of the congregation demonstrated an aesthetic rooted in community and craft pride, as associated with skilled working and proprietary lower middle-class cultures. Finally, while some have argued that Ritualism and Victorian interest in church interior decoration were specifically female activities, at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's male and female alike were concerned with church fabric and liturgical developments.

At St. Thomas's, Victorian bourgeois ideology, which included views on appropriate female roles, was a clear part of the mandate behind direct and indirect poor relief efforts. Female members of the middle and upper-classes distributed parochial charity to the "deserving" poor, and used self-help programs to cultivate what were considered bourgeois values among members of the lower classes. These values included thrift, self-discipline, and, in the case of women, domesticity. At St. Mary's, poor relief efforts did not fit so easily into the bourgeois model. The congregation's enthusiasm for self-help programs was lukewarm, and responsibility for distributing poor relief was mainly in the hands of the rector. Following the 1894 bank crash, male and female members of the congregation organized and performed in local entertainments, to which very low admission prices were charged, in order to raise money for poor relief. Although St. Mary's did not have the economic resources of St. Thomas's, parishioners found a way to financially help their neighbours (and boost community morale) that was within their own means and outside the social control mandate seen in so many Victorian charities. At St. Mary's, "self-help" and "self-reliance" were not preached by bourgeois reformers, but lived as part of skilled working-class and proprietary, lower middle-class culture.

Differences in social relations at St. Mary's and St. Thomas's also shaped parochial voluntary organizations. St. Thomas's favoured prescriptive organizations led by the upper and middle classes, in which they promoted the bourgeois, Victorian ideologies of "Christian Gentlemen" and "True Womanhood". St. Mary's organizations

had more representative leadership, and were community-based and fraternalistic rather than prescriptive. Inspired by the growing feminism of their upper and middle-class peers, as well as their own financial strength, the St. Thomas's Women's Association effectively asserted their parochial power, but for women at St. Mary's, artisanal culture (which some consider masculine culture), along with limited leisure time and resources, hindered such efforts. At the same time, the lower middle class was a growing presence in the leadership of voluntary associations at St. Mary's. This reinforces the idea of such people seeking social advancement and respect through organized religious activities, especially in churches without a strong bourgeois presence. The same was true for the skilled working class. Members of the unskilled working class, it seems, were the most alienated from church-based activities.

While the creation of social class structures based on incomes, occupations, and connections is useful for organizing large numbers of individual cases, the attitudes and experiences of these groups are not so easily standardized. Instead, one must consider local circumstances, and how social relations developed in particular neighbourhoods. Members of the emerging lower middle class at St. Mary's, for example, were closely tied to the skilled working class and enjoyed considerable community influence. At St. Thomas's the lower middle class, probably under much social pressure, was overshadowed by the same upper and middle class parishioners whom they wished to emulate. Similarly, members of the skilled working class, especially in small towns, were just as anxious for religious involvement and concerned with respectability as

members of the middle class. The St. Mary's case indicates that this applied equally to workers living in closely knit neighbourhoods within larger centres, especially those in which some artisans and their families were successful, prominent residents. At the same time, the St. Thomas's case showed how a small number of elite families and individuals could dominate a neighbourhood, and enhance their power and influence through control of local institutions.

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