

COMPETING EXPRESSIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM AND OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE IN THE SAINT JOHN POLICE FORCE, 1910–1920

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Abstract

In the early twentieth century, policing was an immature occupation dominated by chiefs who fought to maintain control during an era of rapid change. By contrast, politicians and civic innovators sought to mould police forces in their vision, often against the wishes of the chief. As a result, rank-and-file police officers were confined to an ancillary role, their identity largely denuded. The unionization of regular police officers was a response to these conditions. This article analyzes the Saint John Police Force between 1910 and 1920 to explore how these tensions were inscribed on a Maritime city.

Résumé

Au début du XXe siècle, les services de police représentaient une jeune profession dominée par des chefs qui se battaient pour garder la maîtrise à une époque de changements rapides. En revanche, les politiciens et les innovateurs municipaux cherchaient à les façonner selon leur vision, et ce, souvent contre la volonté du chef. Par conséquent, des policiers ordinaires ont été limités à un rôle secondaire, leur identité étant en grande partie dénaturée. La syndicalisation de ces derniers a été une réponse à ces conditions. Dans le présent article, on analyse la force policière de Saint John entre 1910 et 1920 afin de voir comment de telles tensions ont été observées dans une ville des Maritimes.

Introduction

This article explores competing expressions of professionalism as they were experienced during the struggle for control over the Saint John Police Force between 1910 and 1920, the culmination of which saw the formation of Canada's first police union. During this decade, the steady rise of police unionism saw regular police officers fight against established patterns of control. Their response was the taproot of modern police unionism, a powerful force that redistributed power in the administration of policing at a time when society itself was being reordered. The period between 1910 and 1920 is used as temporal frame because of its importance from both a global and local perspective. For example, the First World War catalyzed fundamental shifts in the political, economic, and cultural axes of power on which Western society had previously been ordered. Indeed, Francis Fukuyama has shown how the onrush of modernity and the horror of the war reshaped Western society in ways that would have been unthinkable when the Saint John Police Force was formed in 1849 (1992, 5–9).

In addition to the global force of the war reaching Saint John, which was typified by rumours of an impending German naval attack in August 1914 (Windsor, Milner, and Sarty, 2016, 26), local changes were wrought through the adoption of commission-style government in 1912. As a widely disputed and contentious reform that was deliberated in cities across North America (Nelles and

Armstrong, 1976, 57–58), this structural shift in civic governance reconfigured the relationship between the police force and common council. Moreover, while the police force was struggling to adapt to the operational demands of war on the home front and the growing threat of union activity, it was also encumbered by a decade of internal strife. This was most acute in the administrative wrangling between the office of the chief of police and the commissioner of public safety, a position created upon the adoption of commission government. This was the context in which police officers in Saint John fought against an urban establishment that had previously treated them as disposable cogs in the wheel.

Ultimately, while local issues tended to shape the initial organization stage (Marquis, 1993, 116) this struggle was undertaken on a national level and became symptomatic of the question of who would speak for the profession. Indeed, Gregory Kealey has shown that police unionism was part of a national and international labour movement, one that shifted in tone from the caution and respectability of the late nineteenth century to the “clarion cry for change” that cost Canada 3,491,843 worker days in the crescendo of 1919 (1984, 12–16). Furthermore, Kealey argued that “World War One, a profoundly national experience for Canadians, helped provide part of the cement for this nascent working-class response” (1984, 15). Episodes such as the Winnipeg general strike and earlier police strikes in 1918 in Toronto and Montreal underscored how Canadian police were willing to take serious action to force their objectives and challenge the traditional power of the chief and political oversight (Marquis, 1993, 118).

As a lens on shifting perceptions in the occupational and professional identity of Canadian policing during the early decades of the twentieth century, this research supplements the historiography on policing, urban administration, and Atlantic Canada. Official records of the Saint John common council provide the backbone of this analysis and demonstrate how contested managerial oversight of the police force was a critical factor in determining the outcome of this important dispute. In this context, the battle for control of the Saint John Police Force between 1910 and 1920 is crucial to understanding how the average police officer began to shape their own occupational culture and conditions of employment.

Police Work and Mechanisms of Control in the City of Saint John

The day-to-day work of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century urban police officers was dominated by rudimentary concerns. It largely consisted of dealing with minor assaults, public drunkenness, and shifting along vagrants who were considered a blight on urban streets that were being reconceived as spaces of leisure and economic potential. Nicholas Kenny’s perceptive article on the introduction of streetlights and other technology in turn-of-the-century Montreal and Brussels is a case in point. Kenny explained how “Modern urbanism strove to evacuate the city of impracticality and fear, removing the obstacles obscuring its security and efficiency” (2017, 108). As an instrument of urban order, the police played a central role in removing those obstacles. Indeed, Steven Maynard artfully demonstrated that in Toronto, the introduction of streetlights and, later, flashlights for police officers contributed to the city’s early twentieth-century moral crusade against public displays of sexuality, especially those of gay men (1994, 222–232). Likewise, in his analysis of vagrancy and the law in Calgary between 1900 and 1914, David Bright argued that the 1892 introduction of vagrancy to the Criminal Code was designed to entrap the socially disenfranchised who were subsisting on petty crime. Further, Bright argued that police manipulated the vagrancy provision as a method of prosecuting labour radicals in 1912 (1995, 51).

Despite this trend, the literature has also shown that police performed a critical and eclectic social service function, one that constituted a “web of police legitimation” (Marquis, 1992, 357) that was probably more important than their crime-fighting image (Marquis, 1987, 96). In addition, Marquis has demonstrated that conventional readings of police as either acolytes of law and order or domestic missionaries bent on bringing “urban discipline” to the working class must be balanced against their functional role in the community. In fact, their flexible approach to policing working-class leisure activities helped to legitimate their office (Marquis, 1986, 58–59). Furthermore, Marquis has argued that police officers of the early twentieth century occupied an ambiguous class position. As working-class aspirants to an emerging middle class characterized by property ownership and the security of a pension, police officers embraced new opportunities in the increasingly class-fluid societies of the modern age (Marquis, 1987, 260). On the other hand, police officers typified the roughness and masculinity of their professional culture and indulged in the sporting pursuits and leisure activities of the working man (271). These tensions were evident in the policing of liquor laws. In nineteenth-century Saint John, for example, police did not uniformly enforce liquor laws in blue-collar neighbourhoods, and were skeptical of suggestions that moral reform could be achieved through coercive legislation (Marquis, 1986, 67–68).

Still, chiefs of police were often selected for their military bearing, and they were expected to instill obedience and hierarchical subservience. Indeed, the paramilitary model adopted from the Royal Irish Constabulary informed the policing systems of the RCMP, Ontario Provincial Police, Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, and the Sûreté du Québec (Marquis, 1987, 88). Furthermore, in his work on police unionism in Toronto in the early twentieth century, which is analogous to this study, Marquis explored how rank-and-file members chafed against a department built on authoritarian and paternalistic management that was rooted in admiration for the British Army (1989, 111). As a result, police forces were organized along the lines of internal control, political patronage, and religious affiliation, although this was much less pronounced than in the United States, where police forces were often treated as pawns of the “machine politics” on which the country had been structured (Fogelson, 1997, 44). Nevertheless, Canadian police forces of this era were relatively simple organizations that sought to balance the competing demands of order maintenance, favoured by civic sponsors and moral reformers, and social service, necessitated by their role as the earliest providers of basic welfare (McCulloch 1990).

In addition to grappling with fundamental changes to the physical geography and emotional atmosphere of urban environments, the evolving class consciousness of the average police officer, and its community welfare function, policing was also adapting to the demands of professionalism. In his work on law and order in Hamilton, Ontario, between 1816 and 1970, John Weaver argued that changes and improvements to the administration of justice typified the “theme of evolving professionalization and centralization” (1995, 9). Likewise, David Walcott showed that the population explosion and concomitant social dislocation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries catalyzed a push to reform outmoded systems of urban management, the adoption of commission government being a product of this trend. Larger and more diverse urban populations presaged an increase in crime rates that stimulated a “gradual, painful process of professionalization” that embraced the business model of corporate America and transformed the administration of policing (Walcott, 2005, 5).

In his analysis of the Halifax police between 1918 and 1935, Michael Boudreau posited that although the Halifax police were no more than a quasi-professional entity, they nevertheless embraced changes that rationalized, professionalized, and bureaucratized the nature of their work (2012, 40). These changes were implemented through the introduction of much better training, a commitment to police science as an agent of modernity, an underlying philosophical commitment to the betterment of

society, and, crucially, the establishment of policing as a viable career choice (Walker, 1977, 40). The efforts of the police unionization movement were congruent with this last objective, where better pay, improved working conditions, resistance to authoritarian management, and the provision of pensions supported a burgeoning sense of professionalization among the rank and file. Moreover, because they operated at the nexus of rapidly professionalizing urban administrations and their citizens, police forces were frequently the vehicle by which reform was sought and contested, the pattern of which is explicated through the following analysis.

To contextualize why competing expressions of nascent professionalism in the Saint John Police Force during this decade were so disputed, certain observations are necessary. First, since the inception of the force in 1849, political oversight was complicated: for example, council controlled the size of the department and wages, but power to appoint the chief remained with the provincial government. This cleaved the autonomy between two authorities and complicated the resolution of future tensions. Second, in 1901 the provincial Board of Public Safety drafted a set of regulations for the “General Government of the Police Force of the City of Saint John,” among which pay, hiring conditions, and a restriction on the maximum number of police officers to a seemingly arbitrary thirty-five men were the most contentious. Importantly, and confusingly, caveats were inserted that granted authority to both the chief of police and common council. For example, point seven asserted that “Members of the Force are to obey at all times to conform to and obey all orders promulgated from time to time by the Chief of Police which are not inconsistent herewith.” On the other hand, point eight stated “These orders and regulations may be changed from time to time at the will and pleasure of the Common council” (Wallace et al., 1991, 25). Thus, the Board of Public Safety crafted an incoherent set of orders and regulations intended to bureaucratize and rationalize the administration of the police force without conferring the power or clarity required to do so. Subsequent conflict between the office of the chief, common council, the commissioner of public safety, and the regular members of the police force was inevitably difficult to reconcile.

Decisions made in the two preceding decades continued to impact the period between 1910 and 1920, and many of council’s choices around this time created a ripple effect. For example, their refusal to grant sick pay in accordance with a Board of Public Safety recommendation inspired the incorporation of a Police Relief Association in March 1900. With twenty-nine founding members, the fund collected monthly dues that were used to support disabled officers when they were unable to work (Wallace et al., 1991, 25). The establishment of the Police Relief Association was an important moment in the history of the Saint John Police Force as it represented a collective expression of occupational solidarity that resisted external interference.

The Office of the Chief of Police and Managerial Control

The office of the chief of police is an obvious site of power in the administration of policing. That power has never been unalloyed, however, and it has traditionally been accountable to political leadership. Between 1910 and 1920, policing in Saint John was overseen by three chiefs of police: Walker Clark, David Simpson, and John Smith, although Smith’s tenure is not discussed here. He was appointed in 1919 after the major issues discussed in this article had been settled.

When Chief Clark took office on 23 May 1890, he was perceived as something of a reformer. Indeed, on his first night as chief, Clark gathered his men to stress the importance of dress and

deportment. He ordered each officer to keep a daily log of his activity, and advised that, pending the approval of common council, they would soon be governed by the police manual he had written. This last point would be an ongoing bone of contention, and the failure of council to approve his manual undermined his mandate for the duration of his administration (Wallace et al., 1991, 26).

In addition, adequate staffing was a sustained concern. Clark complained to council in early 1911 that the police force was worse off numerically than in 1890 and that “The City requires better police protection than is now afforded; the requirements are much too great for the present Force to adequately handle” (*Annual Report of the Chief of Police*, January 1911). It was not just Clark making these requests: on 12 September 1910, a member of the public wrote an exasperated letter to the common council imploring that he be allowed to employ a police officer at his own expense. While the name on the letter is unclear, the message is not: “The present Police Force...do not seem capable whether by reason of small number of them or otherwise to protect property in North Street in the City of Saint John...I am writing to ask for liberty to appoint someone at my own expense to...protect my property on that street” (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, February 1911). Complaints of this nature about urban policing were not uncommon. In turn-of-the-century Montreal, the business community suggested that the police force was so small and ineffective that they would settle for the installation of a streetlight to inhibit unruly behaviour (Kenny, 2017, 102).

In concert with concerns about manpower, “efficiency” was synonymous with urban reform during Clark’s tenure, and an important precept to which he was exposed at the 1910 Annual Convention of the Chief Constables Association of Canada, hosted in Vancouver. Tellingly, Clark used his annual report for 1910 to highlight the session on “The Most Efficient Way of Running a Police Department.” This suggests that his approach was consistent with, or drawn from, his peers at the highest level of Canadian policing. For example, he reasoned that the addition of a “Police Signal System and Patrol Wagon Service as most essential for the welfare and efficiency” of the department. Clark made similar requests in his reports for 1912 and 1913, when he argued that the police department would benefit from the introduction of new technologies such as signal boxes, telephones, automobiles, fingerprinting, and electrification, which in general saw a wide range of applications and were often cited as a means of achieving new levels of professionalism (see Rawling, 1988; Douthit, 1977; Marquis, 1994; and Bright, 2005).

While these suggestions for improving police response capabilities seemed logical, especially as they were being implemented across North America, Clark did not provide evidence that supported his request, even though such evidence was available. Famous police chief and early police reformer August Vollmer, for example, in 1906 convinced the town of Berkeley, California, to install the first red light alarm system in North America (Oliver, 2017, 181). Further, in 1913, Winnipeg invested in the Siemen’s alarm-telephone system, and by the early 1920s, Vancouver’s signal system was dealing with 200,000 calls per year (Marquis, 1993, 168). These advances vastly reduced officer response times and represented a technological leap in rapid-response policing. Surprisingly, Clark’s arguments for adopting new technologies were disconnected from examples he could have used to bolster his case.

Clark’s somewhat opaque missives continued along this trajectory. In his report for 1913, he wrote that every patrol box “is in a sense an officer on guard,” and that installing these boxes would improve police coverage of a growing city. Although he did not buttress his reports with compelling evidence, Clark’s perceptions were not out of step with evolutions in law enforcement; in fact, the exact claims that were made about the efficacy of patrol boxes were made about streetlights, the introduction

of which produced the maxim that “a good streetlamp was the equivalent of an extra police officer in action” (Kenny, 2017, 102). No doubt Clark was envious of Moncton, which by 1908 had secured a patrol wagon, new uniforms, and updated equipment for its police force.

To his credit, Clark’s complaints are reflected in how the literature has encapsulated the themes and objectives of twentieth-century police professionalism, namely, freedom from political interference; adequate staffing, wages, and equipment; and an occupational reflex to insulate policing from external criticism (Marquis, 1995, 489). By the end of 1913, however, Clark’s frustration with council motivated him to side with his critics, of whom he remarked: “The citizens are calling day and night for police protection, and I am not in a position to give them what they reasonably ask for and expect” (*Annual Report of the Chief of Police*, 1913).

These inherent contradictions and potentially irresolvable demands informed Clark’s leadership during the street railwaymen’s strike in the summer of 1914. When, after two relatively quiet days, a crowd of four thousand joined company workers in protest, two streetcars were overturned and destroyed, every window in the traction company’s office was smashed, and protestors poured cement into a dynamo, which cut power to the city and plunged it into darkness (Babcock, 1982, 13). Although strikes by street railway workers were not uncommon during this period, and featured prominently in labour action across Canada (Kealey, 1984, 30–31), this was a genuine shock that generated howls of protest from the city’s newspapers. They opined that the “veneer of civilization” had been stripped away to reveal the “primitive savagery” and “unbridled passions” of the populace; further, financial losses were over fifteen thousand dollars (Babcock, 1982, 3). Later, the *Daily Telegraph’s* front page ran the accusatory headline that the police “Made No Serious Attempt At Preserving the Peace” (24 July 1919). Of the police response, Babcock has argued that the “handful of police on duty seemed unable or unwilling to maintain control” (17). Likewise, Ned Slader, who was employed as chief of the Saint John Police Force between 1930 and 1941, observed in his memoirs that “The police were powerless....Two were thrown through plate glass windows and all more or less mauled” (1973, 45).

For his part, Clark defended himself on two occasions. First, during the aftermath of the strike, in his interview with the *Telegraph*, Clark explained that initially he reached out to both “Col. MacLean” and the sheriff but was unable to locate them. In what one can only presume was a last resort, Clark contacted Lieutenant Stetham at the local armoury and requested the assistance of the dragoons, the deployment of whom Babcock called “one of the more-foolhardy cavalry charges in the annals of Canadian military history” (1982, 17). In addition, Clark also defended his decision not to attend the scene, arguing that he could not give instructions from the eye of the storm. Lastly, he asserted in his interview in the *Telegraph* that “I am satisfied that everything was done that could be done” (24 July 1919).

Clark’s second act of self-preservation took place in the pages of his annual report for 1914, where he called the riot a “regrettable incident” and argued that the event was neither predictable nor preventable. Second, he argued that the number of men at his disposal was “entirely inadequate for such a crisis.” Clark concluded in strident fashion: “I greatly deplore the disgraceful results....At the same time I attach no blame to myself or the officers under me.” In his immediate and subsequent responses to the strike, Clark was repeating the same arguments that had shaped his annual reports in the previous years. Perhaps he had not changed, but the world had certainly changed around him.

In his understandable disappointment and frustration between 1910 and 1914, which crystalized with the disastrous police response to the street railwaymen's strike, Clark was grappling with complexities that were common to police chiefs across North America. On the one hand, he was a leader of men and an internal disciplinarian tasked with running an efficient force. On the other hand, he was subservient to his political sponsors for the support he needed to meet public expectations. Accordingly, this informed his professional ethos, which was essentially committed to an unchanging template of reforms from a specific occupational context: an operational manual, a pension for long-serving members, a police signal system and other technologies, and additional manpower to police the city with greater efficiency and efficacy.

In his final report for 1914, shortly before he was forced to resign in January 1915, Clark supplemented his usual concerns with commentary on "juvenile offenders." From Clark's perspective juvenile criminality was "the most sinister" danger to society. As with many police chiefs of this era, Clark blamed a lack of parental supervision and "lenient courts" for the exploits of "lawless youth." Indeed, the punishment and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders was a central question of the reform era, especially following the introduction of the *Juvenile Delinquents Act* of 1908). The basic premise of the act, and several provincial statutes that predated it, was to regularize the state's approach to young offenders and standardize the path they followed when they entered the justice system, usually with a view to protecting youth from adult criminals, and funnelling youth to reformatories rather than to jail. This process involved the establishment of juvenile courts, the introduction of which "has been heralded as one of the most notable innovations of the progressive era" (Boudreau, 2012, 60).

Although juvenile court was conceived as a site of universal social progress, the moral framework of the era dictated that gender mattered. For example, Boudreau has shown that the "boy problem" as constructed in early twentieth-century Halifax was predicated on the assumption that men would determine the future of the nation (Boudreau, 2010, 130). By contrast, the sexuality of girls was often criminalized, largely on the belief that "deviant" women would not make good mothers or raise productive families (Sangster, 2001, 166). Further, in her work on rape and heterosexual conflict in Ontario between 1880–1929, Karen Dubinsky argued that boys and girls were treated differently when they testified as victims, and that female testimony had to fit "rigidly circumscribed boundaries of victimhood" (1993, 57). As such, the differential treatment of boys and girls before the juvenile courts reinforced the gender roles of Canadian society. More attention and energy was directed towards boys, whose future was integrated with the perceived productivity of future societies. Girls, on the other hand, were bound by a set of moral expectations that identified the nuclear family as the only context in which female expressions of sexuality would be tolerated. Deviations from the norm, especially the youthful misadventures of unruly boys and the sexual "misconduct" of girls, brought youth into contact with the juvenile court system, conflated morality with the law, and folded police into a broader network of social control.

Incoming Chief David Simpson, an outsider previously employed in Edmonton as the head of detectives, vociferously condemned how the justice system pandered to young offenders. In his report for 1915, Simpson argued that given the high rate of recidivism, the courts should "make them fear the result of their crimes and give adequate punishment as a preventative." Simpson was born in Scotland and had been employed in policing since 1869 when he took his first job as a constable with the Kilmarnock Police Force. Before emigrating to Canada, he also worked for another Scottish police force and as a constable in England where, intriguingly, he was employed in 1895 as a bodyguard for ex-Emperor Wilhelm II of Germany on occasion of his visit to the Earl of Lonsdale. Simpson was thirty-

five when he emigrated in 1904, so perhaps his punitive stance was informed by his experiences in the UK. Unfortunately, further details of Simpson's personal history are unknown.

Nevertheless, Simpson's rhetoric concerning juvenile crime escalated during his time as chief. In his report for 1916, he wrote that juvenile offenders "obtain their liberty much too easily" and that "the increase of Juvenile crime is attributed to this feeling of immunity from corporal punishment." Moreover, he defended policing against the pitfalls of rehabilitating criminal youth, asserting that "Police officers have increasingly difficult tasks in holding down all forms of disorder on account of contempt for the law and its agents engendered by this atmosphere of feebleness in its enforcements." Furthermore, Simpson was extremely critical of the judges who "lavish a few soft words on these young criminals and thieves that infest our Police Courts is only, in my experience, adding fuel to the fires that are already fast covering the whole Dominion" (*Annual Report of the Chief Constable* for the year ending 1916).

By 1918, Simpson appeared positively irate at the increase in juvenile crime. He chastised the justice system for "coddling" young offenders and asserted that "the real deterrent, apart from committal to an Industrial or Reformatory school...is whipping." The absence of a juvenile court for Saint John was also concerning to some outside the justice system, although those organizations lobbied mayor and council from a very different perspective. On 21 November 1919, for example, the Board of Trade submitted a letter endorsing the St. John City and County Children's Aid Society, which pressed the authorities to establish a juvenile court (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 24 November 1919). Likewise, on 13 January 1920 the St. John Woman's Council submitted a letter stating that "the problem of handling the delicate subject of Juvenile Courts is one that has long confronted...those who are interested in the future citizenship of Canada." They concluded, "We owe it to the children and ourselves to spare them to the memory and disgrace of a public police court experience which so often gives the final urge to a downward course" (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 13 January 1920).

Simpson, on the other hand, lamented the attitude of the public in general. His solution? "What I advocate for the City of St. John is a Naval Training Ship." Although the chief's approach was out of step with many trends at the time, he was not alone. In fact, he was advocating for a justice model also under review in Calgary, where a fluid and transient population spawned an underclass Police Chief Thomas Mackie belittled as "worthless loafers" (Bright, 1995, 37). There, prison farms and chain gangs were proposed as sufficiently punitive, morally corrective, and an economic benefit through free labour. While none of these proposals was successfully implemented, they spoke to a facet of policing that, while disputed in some quarters, Simpson clearly embraced: punishment over rehabilitation. Simpson's views on this issue opposed the stance of the St. John Woman's Council and Board of Trade, both of which were invested in the reform logic of rehabilitation. Boudreau has characterized the dichotomous nature of these positions as the tension between classic conceptions of punishment as a natural component of liberal "law-and-order" policing, and the progressive desire to identify and treat the social factors that produced crime (2012, 38).

In contrast to Simpson's uncomplicated view of juvenile delinquency, the literature has explored how crime, gender, and race intersected with systems of order. In her seminal work on moral reform in English Canada between 1885 and 1925, Mariana Valverde associated organizations like the Woman's Council and Children's Aid Society to a "subclass in social reform...composed mostly of professionals and charity workers, who acted partly to uphold the specific interests and perspectives of their

professions but who were also connected to the large bourgeois culture of which they formed a part” (2008, 16). Likewise, Amanda Glasbeek has shown how the women’s court in reform-era Toronto between 1913 and 1934 was fraught with multiple tendencies that intersected and competed with the hegemonic structures of Canadian society. For example, the women’s court harnessed middle-class feminism to disrupt the patriarchy, but in doing so, simultaneously reinforced normative visions of productive, nuclear Canadian families that were grounded on the work of white, heterosexual women who met the gender expectations of dominant society (2009, 180). This, in turn, helped to produce a gendered and racialized notion of citizenship, the full benefits of which were predicated on conforming to social and legal expectations around female behaviour (172). Indeed, Lesley Erickson has shown how the policing of prostitution in the Canadian West during the era of white settlement, although often incomplete and contested, was designed to preserve the spatial and colonial hierarchies of nation building (2012, 112). Finally, Sangster has argued that the sexual regulation of First Nations women was “fundamentally shaped by the social construction of ‘race’ through the law and by the politics of colonialism” (2001, 191). As such, while the primary documents pertaining to this article do not suggest that police chiefs and council administrators were consciously thinking about race and gender, police forces were deeply connected to structures of power that shaped Canadian society.

Although Simpson, like most police leaders of his day, showed no obvious awareness of these moral ambiguities, he thanked the Children’s Aid Society for their “work of paramount importance...involving the conditions of about five hundred children” (*Annual Report of the Chief Constable* for the year ending 1916). For a city of approximately sixty thousand people, this was a not insubstantial figure. Moreover, it demonstrates how the traditional social service function of the police remained important during an era of progressive reform that was intended to bureaucratize and standardize programs of social improvement. Simpson’s professionalism in this context, while firmly rooted in an occupational reflex to condemn and punish transgressors, was softened by his recognition that caring for children was a valuable aspect of early twentieth-century policing.

Like Clark, Simpson consistently expressed his concerns about manpower. In his annual report for 1915 Simpson argued that with conditions “very much different to any other time in the history of the city, [and] with the extra duties which have fallen upon the police on account of the present European crisis...the Force is numerically weak to the extent of at least fifteen men.” Critically, however, and in contrast to Clark, Simpson stressed that the police force had to improve the *quality* of recruits. He argued that where policing was an onerous occupation demanding greater “physical fitness, endurance, courage and general ability than is expected from the average artisan...it is desirable to attract the very best material.” In sum, he stressed that “I am compelled to point out that with the present rate of pay and conditions it is impossible to get men eligible for the police force” (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 2 June 1915).

In general, Simpson’s reports were significantly more comprehensive than Clark’s. Accordingly, his professional vision was communicated more consistently and his complaints to council were better grounded in evidence to support his argument. For example, on 23 April 1915, Simpson, representing both the office of the chief of police and the regular members, submitted to council a lengthy document outlining his “desire to bring about a much needed improvement in pay and hours...which will have a lasting and beneficial duty” (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 2 June 1915). This observation was based on research showing that his officers were paid much less than similar police forces around Canada. Simpson also referenced the war and increased cost of living as factors necessitating a raise. Moreover, he demonstrated his international perspective by referencing the

Metropolitan Police of London. There, he contested, additional hiring and increased pay rendered them “materially augmented to cope with war conditions.” He lamented that despite the “many important additional duties” associated with policing during the war, “in this city, no such provision has been made” (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 2 June 1915).

In contrast to Clark, who seemed relatively pleased with the officers at his disposal and deflected any blame for poor performance onto council, Simpson believed that fully reformed and professionalized policing could only be achieved through the recruitment of better staff. Simpson’s reports also touched on other common interests of the progressive police chief. For example, he lamented the absence of a telephone system for the Western Division, which had been relying upon the good grace of the local druggist for access to a telephone in this location (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 2 June 1915); he lauded new technology; he argued that “Motor Patrol and Automobile are very much needed”; he appended to his report for 1917 an entire supplement on the need for traffic police, along with handy hints for all road users and a statistical analysis of how car ownership in New Brunswick had increased from fourteen in 1910 to seven thousand in 1917; and he shared his desire to “uplift the force to a higher state of efficiency.”

Simpson’s conceptions of police management were defined by three central concerns. First was his scathing indictment of a justice system that he believed was failing both the youth of Saint John and the guardians tasked with curtailing their delinquent behaviours. Second were his opinions on police reform and staffing requirements, augmented by examples from other jurisdictions. As discussed, Simpson was certain that the war had further impaired his ability to upgrade the force. Third was his recommendation that pay and working conditions must improve to attract better-quality applicants. As such, Simpson’s articulation of professional concerns was better formulated and more comprehensive than Clark’s. Although both men expressed ideas for reform that echoed rank-and-file concerns, Clark supported their objectives and sought improvements intended to uplift the existing administration. Simpson, by contrast, was interested in improving pay and conditions only to attract a better class of recruit to gradually replace incumbent staff.

Harry R. McLellan and Civic Professionalism, 1911–1918

At the outset of 1911, Saint John common council comprised Mayor James Frink (who served from 1910 to 1916) and seventeen aldermen elected from the city’s wards. As aldermen were responsible directly to their wards—on average, 3,151 people, according to the 1911 census—some argued that the wards were rife with corruption. Ian McKay has characterized the wards as “havens of bosses and liquor sellers,” and they were also criticized for being inefficient, as too many opinions led to muddled decision making (1993, 200). Commission-style government was advocated as a solution to these issues on the basis that it was inherently more efficient and potentially less corrupt: just the mayor and four commissioners would enjoy executive power (Nelles and Armstrong, 1976, 54). When this change was adopted following a plebiscite that drew widespread support from both business leaders and the working class (Wallace et al., 1991, 95–96), incoming commissioners were entrusted with uncommon autonomy over city affairs.

Although candidates did not run for a specific commission, McLellan made it clear that, despite his inexperience, he was interested in the demanding office of public safety, responsible for police, fire, lighting, market, and public buildings. The bellicose newcomer was successful, and on the morning of 7

May 1912, sworn into office as the new commissioner of public safety (Wallace et al., 1991, 95–96). McLellan was a native son of the city, small business owner, and member of the Masonic lodge. Commentators observed that he possessed an “enterprising and energetic spirit” that drove him to a resounding electoral victory. McLellan was installed on a four-year term, which was the term of office for all commissioners when the new system was implemented.

McLellan’s success gave him significant power over the police; this proved ominous for Clark, who had been chief for twenty-two years and was one of the “old guard” whose career was nearing its conclusion. Indeed, almost immediately after taking office, McLellan began a review of the police force: his program of “rigid economy” was largely directed at the chief himself. McLellan argued in his report for 1912 that he was motivated by a “sincere desire to make any improvements necessary for the efficiency and welfare of the department.” Furthermore, he warned that the purpose of his investigation was to determine whether a “system prevailed in the direction of the department, as would commend itself as being conducive to the necessary standard of efficiency required by such a department.” As a businessman before his move into politics, it was unsurprising that he placed so much value on efficiency. McLellan’s plan to eradicate waste in the administration of public monies led to a protracted campaign of investigations, recriminations, and finally Clark’s resignation in January 1915. In a clear attempt to establish control over the police force, McLellan sought and was granted authority by council to investigate the department.

The allegations flowing from McLellan’s first investigation were an embarrassment to Clark’s regime. McLellan’s more memorable accusations were punctuated with claims “that the men were absolutely ignorant of rules and regulations”; and “that the Chief exhibited an utter lack of knowledge regarding the actions of the members of his force” (Wallace et al., 1991, 103–104). In his first annual report to common council for 1912, which was separate from his formal investigation but included reference to its findings, McLellan concluded that “It would not do for me to attempt...to make suggestions for the improvement of the Police Department, as they would be so numerous that it would make a very lengthy compilation” (*Report of the Commissioner of Public Safety*, 1913). Among McLellan’s proposed remedies was “a complete reorganization of the department.” Such reorganization would not come easily, if ever, and the impasse was ugly and entrenched. In fact, the battle rumbled, bitterly and in public, between May 1912 and January 1915. For example, the 18 November 1913 issue of the *Saint John Standard* salaciously gave a blow-by-blow account of Chief Clark’s response to accusations of corruption that ran over three pages.

In contrast to Clark, however, McLellan did attempt to establish what his investigation meant for policing in Saint John; for example, “the capacity of the force for the prevention and detection of crime” (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 11 November 1912). Furthermore, his investigation focused on a set of organizational values and individual skills that revealed his conception of professional conduct: he contended that hiring standards were far too low, extending to a cursory examination of the candidates’ physical standing only; that the oft-requested police manual embedded in all of Clark’s reports was only a modification of the 1892 original, “too lengthy and bulky for practical use”; that patrolmen had very little training and a concomitant lack of job knowledge; that patrolmen had an “infinitesimal” amount of confidence in their superior officers; that officers were blind to the performance of their subordinates; and that by failing to remedy these matters, the chief was ignorant of his force (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 11 November 1912). McLellan’s opinions suggest that by the standards of a modernized, evolving, or progressive police force in the era of early professionalism, he considered the Saint John police woefully deficient.

Appended to the formal report was a final statement, handwritten and initialled by McLellan, obviously added to the typed document sometime after the original was completed. It made dark allusions that the broken relationship between patrolmen and their superiors had caused “espionage among members of the department.” Although he failed to clarify what constituted such espionage, McLellan argued that the police failed to exercise “their power and ability in the pursuit of criminals and others who violate crime regulations” (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 11 November 1912). All told, McLellan pathologized a police force in desperate need of widespread reform. The question is, What solutions did he propose?

While the recommendations that followed his first investigation were rather vague and preliminary, his address to the eighth annual convention of the Union of New Brunswick Municipalities in Moncton, in October 1913, was a treatise on police administration. He espoused a comprehensive manifesto for the conduct of police officers and argued that the chief should be the central example and arbiter for these standards, and that his subordinates must be governed by “the two capital D’s in police work—Discipline and Discretion” (Wallace et al., *The Clark Years*, 1991, 111). Michael Davis has observed that police forces have long considered obedience an important facet of pseudo-military virtue that helps define their operations (2002, 175). In Moncton, McLellan argued that “Police officers should be impressed with the necessity of absolute obedience to all who are placed in authority over them, and the rigid observance of every regulation made for their general conduct.” This he considered “essential to the existence of an efficient police force.” Furthermore, he stressed that standardized policing regulations were “necessary for the purpose of ensuring uniformity in discipline, action, conduct, and appearance” (Wallace et al., 1991, 113–115).

With respect to discretion, McLellan asserted that if any police officer “oversteps the legal boundary in the slightest degree he is then answerable to the law.” In contrast, he linked the topic of police vigilance to the objective of preventing rather than prosecuting crime: “The police officer who keeps his beat free from crime deserves more credit than the man who only counts up the number of convictions he had obtained for offences committed within it” (Wallace et al., 1991, 111). Accountability was not universal in the blue-collar world of early twentieth-century policing; when Vollmer was contemplating his offer to become Berkeley (California) Town Marshall in 1905, his family reminded him that policing—and, by extension, police officers themselves—were a social disgrace (Oliver, 2017, 140). While McLellan clearly shared this sentiment and laid the blame squarely at Clark’s door, his proposed remedies were consistent with the era. If his commitment to standardization through regulation was a common trope of progressive reform, however, his musings on obedience suggest a militarized approach to police administration that clashed with his more liberal ideas on leadership and discretion.

It appears that McLellan was attempting to reconcile the business world to which he was accustomed with the rule-driven hierarchies that structured policing. To some extent the position he took was deeply ironic, especially as he was seemingly untroubled by paradoxes in his personal approach. On the one hand, he witheringly characterized Clark “as autocratic as the Czar of Russia” (Wallace et al., 1991, 108). On the other hand, once he had rid himself of Clark, he argued that as commissioner for public safety he was solely responsible for the administration of policing in Saint John.

Evidence of McLellan’s growing political bravado was clear in the case of Sgt. William Finley, a member of the old guard hired in 1892 who was dismissed in early 1915 by the new chief on McLellan’s request. When news of Finley’s dismissal reached the communities of Carleton and North End, where he

had worked with distinction, a delegation of religious leaders and businessmen called on the chief to ask for an explanation. Newly appointed chief, Simpson, meekly deferred to McLellan and argued that as he was only recently arrived, the commissioner was better positioned to respond. McLellan arrogantly rejected the delegation's questions by asserting, "I don't care. I am going to run the police department. I am at the head of it and I am going to run it" (Wallace et al., 1992, 13). In asserting his authority in such a bombastic fashion, McLellan drove an agenda that was grounded in the hardening stance of his political office.

During his campaign for re-election in the spring of 1916, which also included a plebiscite on commission government itself, McLellan defended the system against rumblings that it "promoted oligarchy or constituted an unrepresentative system." Of course, his defence of the system was essentially a defence of himself. He further argued that "upon that issue [the retention of commissioners] rests the determination of whether this city is to go forward or backward" (Wallace et al., 1992, 26–29). By associating his candidacy with the values of progress and reform, McLellan asked voters to endorse his vision of modern civic professionalism. Ultimately, his success on election night contributed to the "reaffirmation of Saint John's political system" and "ratified McLellan's control over the police force" (Wallace et al., 1992, 13).

From the early years of his tenure, McLellan had taken a serious interest in both the office of the chief and of the rank-and-file members working the streets, even if that put him in a difficult position with council. This was evidenced in late 1912, when, during the fallout of the Clark investigation, he claimed that "You cannot secure brains or brawn without paying for it." Furthermore, he anticipated Simpson's later comments on the need for good men, arguing that "If you wish to make your police department efficient you must make the remuneration from the position worthy of the seeking of such applicants as you think necessary to make up such a force" (Wallace et al., 1991, 107–108).

McLellan's support for increasing wages to attract better candidates highlighted two facets of his approach to police management. First, he manipulated this situation to argue that although a raise in pay was essential, Clark was incapable of managing the department and therefore any increase to wages hinged on Clark's dismissal. Second, McLellan's manipulation of the issue underlined how his reform agenda began to shift and crystalize over his long campaign against Clark: from the generally coherent and reasonable expectations he articulated in Moncton, to the politically motivated entrenchment that defined his tenure following Clark's departure. This strategy enabled him to absorb the authority inherent in the military model of policing, and, after mobilizing council against Clark and running him out of office, assume the mantle usually reserved for the chief himself.

All told, McLellan's complicated and controversial pursuit of reform was much better aligned to that of Simpson, with whom he shared a commitment to upgrade policing. As discussed, however, this was very much conceived as reform from above with McLellan calling the shots. When his personal autonomy and the authority of local government were jeopardized by the threat of unionized police in 1918, he rejected their proposal on the basis that unionization was inimical to managerial oversight (Wallace et al., 1992, 14). The rank and file, who in establishing their identity recognized that social and political conditions were receptive to the organization of a police union, committed the ultimate subversion of the commissioner's credo: disobedience.

The Saint John Police Protective Association and the Battle for Unionization

The road to unionization was paved gradually in the years leading to the battles of 1918–1919. In early December 1913, the regular officers of the Saint John police lobbied council for an increase in pay to offset inflationary pressure on wages. They argued that it had become “very hard to meet the necessities of life and to keep up a respectable appearance on our present salary” (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 17 December 1913). This was a direct echo of a submission made in December 1909, when they likewise advised council of their financial plight. Poor wages and an inability to get ahead had been plaguing the Saint John police for many years; as far back as the dysfunctional watch of 1842, the guardians had been struggling to make ends meet. T.W. Acheson observed that chaotic city administration forced the watchmen into a hand-to-mouth existence; when the city fell into financial arrears and simply stopped paying them, “their families were reduced to the verge of starvation” (1985, 223).

Over seventy years later, the policemen of Saint John were embroiled in a new crisis. The tenuousness of their employment was obvious in their entreaty to council in December 1913, when they did “humbly pray for your favorable consideration [to] grant us this small favor, which we so sadly stand in need of before Christmas” (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 17 December 1913). In contrast to Simpson and McLellan, who believed that wage increases would attract better candidates and lift the overall standards of policing, regular cops were simply concerned with staying out of poverty. As discussed above, the tacit approval of the wage increase that followed this submission was manipulated by McLellan to make it contingent on Clark’s removal from office. The patrolmen were hence used as pawns in the power struggle between the commissioner and the chief of police. Their concerns were attenuated by political chaos, and this inhibited the power of their voice.

Turmoil returned in early 1915, shortly after Simpson’s appointment as chief when McLellan was asserting his authority. Turnover during the year was huge: thirty-four constables were appointed, seventeen resigned, and fifteen were dismissed (*Annual Report of the Chief of Police* for the year ending 1914). Further, between early February and late April, twenty-one special officers in plain clothes were hired to augment a regular force that was weakened by constant changes. Although a small number of this group were eventually hired as permanent members, they were poorly received by the community. The injection of so many outsiders must have destabilized the solidarity that had accumulated in the rank and file. This was especially true when McLellan, and to a lesser extent Simpson, oversaw a series of transfers and demotions that precipitated the resignation of various “old stalwarts” (Wallace et al., 1992, 10–12). Only three years later, however, the situation was drastically changed.

In September 1918, more than half of the Saint John Police Force began the process of formal organization as a union affiliated to the Trades and Labor Congress (TLC) of Canada. When McLellan and Simpson heard of their activities—conducted as the Saint John Police Protective Association—the administrators asserted that union affiliation was incompatible with policing. Likewise, William S. Fielding, Liberal MP, premier of Nova Scotia between 1884 and 1896, and editor of the *Montreal Journal of Commerce*, called the police union a “very dangerous movement,” and that the reasons “against an affiliation of a police force...with a trade union...are so clear that it is not easy to see how thoughtful people can view such a movement with approval” (Wallace et al., 1992, 10–12). Furthermore, Canada’s police leaders were steadfastly against police unionization. At the annual CCAC convention of 1919, Attorney General J.R. Boyle of Alberta compared police strikes to military mutinies and suggested that disobedient police were a threat to democracy (Marquis, 1993, 120).

Events further afield suggested that Fielding's and Boyle's concerns would go unheeded. Toronto police, responding to the results of a commission that castigated their conduct during a riot against immigrant businesses, announced their union in October 1918. A four-day strike soon followed, and police in Montreal struck in December that year. Thus, police in Saint John were not acting in isolation but as part of a wider labour movement that included police as a particularly controversial element. In this context, and under threat of termination within forty-eight hours, the rank and file did not back down. In an important first expression of occupational identity through unionization, more than two dozen officers appended their signature to a letter submitted to Simpson on 12 September.

The document served two purposes. Firstly, it established that the men were committed to affiliating with the TLC and that their resolve would not be easily broken. Indeed, they asserted, "We have, sir, acted cautiously in arriving at our decision and have deliberated seriously upon the result of our action." They acknowledged the inflammatory potential of their actions and offered an olive branch: "We know, sir, that our position is so exacting that we will willingly submit to the heads of our department the constitution by-laws, rules and regulations governing our organization and if there be therein anything that might be reasonably construed by such heads as conflicting with the proper discharge our duties as police constables we are prepared to submit to a proper adjustment of the objectionable provisions" (Wallace et al., 1992, 107–108). In addition to encouraging discourse with council, it is clear the patrolmen sought to influence the context of future discussions by using *their* mandate as the basis of that process. These statements underline that they understood the gravity of their position, the probable ramifications of maintaining their stance, and the necessity of promoting an agenda on their own terms if they were to achieve anything meaningful.

Secondly, and crucially, the letter shows how the men perceived their craft: unionization would challenge the established rhythms of police management. For example, they were "firm in our attitude that we will always regulate our conduct in all matters with regard that we are a body of men sworn to perform properly the functions of the office of police constables." Moreover, they appealed to the interests of progressive reform, arguing that "We are simply taking steps to organize ourselves...towards bettering the efficiency of the department.", Echoing McLellan's Moncton speech, they were at pains to communicate that "We are ever ready to obey just, fair and reasonable commands of our superior officers so as to preserve law and order in the community." Finally, they assured management that "We realize to the fullest extent that at all times our first duty is the protection of citizens and their property, irrespective of class" (Wallace et al., 1992, 108–109).

As a set of collective values, the patrolmen's letter conformed to the broad consensus on police professionalism of this era—organized, obedient, efficient, rule-governed within the existing hierarchy, and anchored to public service. While their conception of reform may not have differed fundamentally from that of general police reform, unionization was an existential threat to the established administration of policing. Accordingly, they were fired upon failing to withdraw and the battle entered its critical phase. A telegram of support from their peers in Hamilton, who were simultaneously embroiled in their own push to unionize, reminded the dismissed officers that they were part of a wider movement. Their hastily assembled replacements were drawn in part by a simple advertisement in the *Saint John Standard*: "Wanted for police service immediately. Thirty men, ages twenty-five to forty....Send applications with copies of three testimonials to the undersigned. D.W. Simpson. Chief Constable" (21 September 1918).

When common council finally agreed to meet with a delegation of the local TLC in mid-September 1918 to discuss the ongoing furor, Commissioner Hilyard asserted, “This was not a labour question, for a police force was more of a military than a civil organization” (Wallace et al., *The Simpson Years*, 1992, 108). By contrast, Commissioner Fred Fisher tabled a motion that McLellan be relieved of his position, arguing that the police force should be allowed to organize and affiliate with the TLC. Fisher, however, was alone in his dissent and council endorsed McLellan’s argument that a unionized police force was an undemocratic subversion of civic oversight. A surprisingly neutral Board of Trade—as a business institution they were seldom pro-labour—suggested that the police be given a hearing before a conciliation board. This powerful body could have worked against the police, but, recognizing the seriousness of the dispute, they displaced their responsibility onto a third party and as such maintained a middle ground between council and the police association.

The city’s other unions were upset by treatment of the police, arguing that “The charter for the police hangs on the wall....If it is pulled down other charters might be hauled off” (Wallace et al., 1992, 108). The Labour Council formed a committee comprising delegates from each sector of the local union movement and tabled a motion that called on the city to reinstate the dismissed policemen within twenty-four hours. After the motion was rejected, the labour groups formed a second committee to activate a recall election and dethrone McLellan and Hilyard, whose anti-police union stance had come to define their administrations. Indeed, McLellan was vilified by his opponents as “the Kaiser of St. John” who should be replaced by someone more sympathetic to the labour movement (Wallace et al., 1992, 107–11).

One of McLellan’s responses was to pursue an increase in police wages “motivated solely by a desire to afford the citizens of St. John the necessary amount of police protection they were entitled to.” He also suggested that the police force suffered by failing to retain good men, arguing that “The employee of any civic department cannot be expected to pursue a philanthropic course towards the city.” Although McLellan was no doubt motivated by self-preservation and the expedient demands of the situation, his support for appropriate pay and the value of efficiency were congruent with his earlier expressions of reform. He argued that “In order to secure a maximum of efficiency in police work, it is necessary that the members of the department are interested in their work and realize that brain as well as manual labour must be performed” (Wallace et al., 1992, 111–112).

His opponents were unimpressed. John Thornton (manager of Consumers Cordage Co. Ltd.) and John B. Jones (registrar of births, deaths, and marriages) commenced their campaign by arguing that McLellan had treated the police “as slaves...humiliated by the Commissioner on many occasions.” The public meeting at which McLellan made his final pitch to the electorate was also notable for his incendiary comment about Joseph Dryden, an antagonistic member of the crowd of whom he stated: “There is one: it’s a pity the Germans didn’t get more like him” (*Daily Telegraph and Sun*, 28 December 1918). As the turmoil of the recall election and newspaper coverage of the tempestuous meeting reverberated around Saint John, the fired patrolmen were effectively sidelined until the recall vote.

The recall vote was essentially a referendum on whether to endorse the sitting commissioner or replace him with his opponent. McLellan’s final hurrah as commissioner was his “stump speech” at the Imperial Theatre a few days before the vote. McLellan was unbowed: “Understand me well—I have no brief against labor but in this issue I have and am still objecting to the principle of members of a police force being affiliated with trade and labor unions.” He also addressed rumours that if he and Hilyard were re-elected, organized labour would conduct a general strike in solidarity with the unofficial police

union. To this he responded, "I cannot credit such nonsense," and urged the electorate to perceive the "clumsy and transparent" strategies of labour that he suggested had engineered an artificial crisis on the coattails of the police association (*Saint John Standard*, 28 December 1918).

The voting public was unmoved. McLellan and Hilyard were defeated in the recall election held on December 30, and incoming Commissioner of Public Safety John Thornton reinstated the dismissed men several days later (Wallace et al., 1992, 118). The electorate had signalled that they wanted council and its commissioners to reconsider their position on the policing crisis. It was therefore unsurprising when, on 7 January 1919, council passed a resolution to place the matter before the federal Department of Labour. Council also asked for a conciliation board under the *Industrial Disputes Investigations Act* to "settle the question at issue between the City and Police Association" (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 7 January 1919).

The report of the Board of Conciliation and Investigation, certified in Ottawa on 24 February, was a victory for the police association, albeit with conditions. The board recommended that the "Police Protective Association of St. John be permitted to retain the Charter which has been issued to it by the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada by which they are affiliated with therewith" (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 18 March 1919). This recommendation was qualified by instruction that the constitution and bylaws of the association be drafted and approved by a joint committee consisting of the association and council to guard against any "conflict with their duties as policemen." Further recommendations were made to "revise and amend the manual of rules and regulations for the government of the Police Department of the City of Saint John" and to reimburse the dismissed policemen for the period of their forced absence from work (*Minutes of the Common Council of Saint John*, 18 March 1919). Notwithstanding a delay as council stalled on implementing the board's decision, many of the recommendations were adopted into the "Constitution and Laws of the St. John Policemen's Federal Protective Association" (Wallace et al., 1992, 132).

Despite earlier submissions to council that implored them to consider the livability of wages and general conditions of the job, this document was the first formally endorsed expression of the occupational identity and internal standards of rank-and-file police officers in Saint John. As such it represents a carefully crafted sense of how the rank and file perceived themselves in relation to the broader development of professionalized policing in the early twentieth century. The objectives of the Association were stated in two parts: "To bring the Police Department to a higher standard of efficiency" and "To get better working conditions for its members and to see that all brother officers get just and fair treatment." The first of these was consistent with the general progressive ideals supported by Simpson and McLellan, both of whom had departed the city at this point. The second suggested a newly emboldened rank and file who would resist autocratic pressure from above and seek improvements from the ground up. By defining their working conditions, the rank and file determined the shape of their practice.

Although the joint committee included the caveat that their recommendations were subject to sanction by the chief of police and commissioner of public safety, the following conditions were established: promotion based on seniority from within the ranks; a formal grievance procedure administered by a Board of Conciliation; modern equipment for all members; relief from traffic duty for at least one hour per day; sick pay for officers whether injured on or off duty; and fourteen days' vacation for those having served at least one year (Wallace et al., 1992, 136–137). Organization as an affiliated union enabled the rank and file to assert their autonomy and pursue their interests inside a legal

framework. It also stated that no strike “sympathetic or otherwise shall be resorted to under any circumstances provided both parties comply with the provisions of these sections” (Wallace et al., 1992, 137). The constitution of the rank and file thus standardized future relationships with management and council, and guarded them against the worst excesses of those administrations.

Conclusion

North American policing in the early twentieth century was an immature occupation. The professional ideologies of Chiefs Clark and Simpson, Commissioner McLellan, and the rank-and-file police officers of Saint John represented increasingly contested views on the future of law enforcement. In the early years of building occupational identity and establishing modern administrative practices in predominantly urban settings, police services were affected by the inherent tension between military-style control, burgeoning unionism, and rapidly expanding but often incoherent progressive reform. These tensions can be observed in how the chiefs, McLellan, and the rank and file expressed deeply related but critically distinct conceptions of nascent professionalism.

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