

A Temperate Province? Evidence from Lower Canadian General Store Account Books, 1830-1857

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Article abstract

Alcoholic consumption was unproblematic and supposedly widespread in the Canadas in the early years of the nineteenth century, until temperance movements sought to eradicate it through moral suasion, shaming and regulations in the second quarter of the century. In Lower Canada, the 1849-1850 temperance crusade spearheaded by father Chiniquy, with the support of religious and lay authorities would have led to a rapid collapse in the importation, production and sale of alcohol and the closing of numerous taverns. Evidence from country general store account books suggest that Lower Canadians were already moderate drinkers at the beginning of the century and that their consumption was already declining before Chiniquy launched his crusade, and his success would have been due to minds already half made. On the other hand, the availability of other stimulant beverages, such as coffee or tea does not seem to have played a role.

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Abstract

Alcoholic consumption was unproblematic and supposedly widespread in the Canadas in the early years of the nineteenth century, until temperance movements sought to eradicate it through moral suasion, shaming and regulations in the second quarter of the century. In Lower Canada, the 1849-1850 temperance crusade spearheaded by father Chiniquy, with the support of religious and lay authorities would have led to a rapid collapse in the importation, production and sale of alcohol and the closing of numerous taverns. Evidence from country general store account books suggest that Lower Canadians were already moderate drinkers at the beginning of the century and that their consumption was already declining before Chiniquy launched his crusade, and his success would have been due to minds already half made. On the other hand, the availability of other stimulant beverages, such as coffee or tea does not seem to have played a role.

Résumé

Au début du dix-neuvième siècle, la consommation des boissons alcoolisées est supposée avoir été fréquente au Canada et n'avoir pas posé de problème jusqu'à l'apparition des mouvements de tempérance, qui cherchèrent à l'éliminer par la propagande, l'embarras public et es règlementations. Au Bas Canada, la croisade de tempérance de l'abbé Chiniquy en 1849-50, avec l'appui des autorités religieuses et laïques, aurait entraîné un effondrement rapide de l'importation, de la production et de la vente des alcools ainsi que la fermeture de nombreuses tavernes. Les livres de compte des magasins généraux ruraux, où on pouvait acheter de l'alcool par contre indiquent que les Bas-Canadiens étaient déjà des buveurs modérés au début du siècle et que leur consommation était déjà en déclin quand Chiniquy lança sa croisade, dont le succès fut peut-être dû à un terrain particulièrement réceptif. Par contre, la disponibilité d'autres boissons stimulantes, comme e café et le thé, ne semble pas avoir eu d'impact.

Consuming alcohol was unproblematic in British North America in the early years of the nineteenth century. Alcoholic beverages were then simultaneously medicine, tonics, stimulants, and even food, to the point employers were routinely providing them to their workers. They were also a necessary part of male sociability; no work party could take place without an abundant supply.¹ Regular drinking was thus socially acceptable — if not desirable for health reasons — occasional inebriety was cause for mirth; only habitual drunkenness, especially if it interfered with one's ability to earn a living or led to regularly disturbing the peace, was condemned.² Drinking was also facilitated by the expansion of domestic brewing and distilling, and by improved distribution coupled with significant drops in the price of drinks. Montréal in particular emerged as an important distilling center.³ By the 1840s, British North Americans could easily gain access to — and afford — alcoholic beverages.⁴

Attitudes changed in the second quarter of the century. Temperance movements appeared in the 1830s and 1840s, first in the Maritimes, then in Upper Canada, and finally Lower Canada. Initially merely advocating moderation and avoidance of hard liquor, they quickly promoted total abstinence and described alcohol as an addictive drug.⁵ Although recognizing that hard evidence is lacking, Craig Heron concluded it was highly plausible that temperance was a response to increased consumption — and widespread drunkenness. Doug McCalla's analysis of buying patterns and quantities purchased at general stores in the 1810s and 1820s, however, led him to doubt that Upper Canadians were perpetually under the influence. Although customers could also have bought alcohol at stores for which he does not have the books or consumed it at a tavern, not to mention be given some at work, McCalla found his data difficult to reconcile with the figures of 4 gallon per person per year of alcohol at full strength previous scholars had put forward.⁶ He wondered "how close these stories [from account books] came to the kind of systematic, constant drinking that standard stories suggest."⁷ On the other hand, the quantities he calculated can easily be reconciled with the controlled drinking patterns described by Julia Roberts.⁸

Temperance advocates garnered growing numbers of followers not only among evangelical Protestants (like Methodists), but also among Catholic French Canadians, and Lower Canada is supposed to have followed a path similar to the other province.⁹ There, the moral and reform impulses behind the temperance movements appealed to secular and religious reformers alike. In the 1840s, men like Judge Mondelet (a Rouge) and Monsignor Bourget, bishop of Montréal, reached similar conclusions: drinking threatened French Canadian “survivance.”¹⁰ Temperance made impressive, and in some instances, lasting progress in the second half of the 1840s, especially after Father Chiniquy launched his crusade in 1849.¹¹ By 1849/50, when this crusade was at its peak, importations of alcoholic beverages sank to their lowest level in a decade and domestic production similarly crashed. Taverns closed one after the other in the wake of Chiniquy’s passage and half the population of the province was nominally at least committed to temperance.¹² Abstinence, however, had greater appeal in rural than urban areas — and in Québec City than in Montréal. Chiniquy’s inappropriate interest in persons of the opposite sex led to his forced removal to Illinois in 1851 (and eventually to his leaving the Church).¹³ The very top-down nature of this movement can also explain why many a teetotaler relapsed after the end of his crusade. Nonetheless, not all taverns reopened; some parishes remained firmly committed to abstinence, helped by legislation passed in 1850 which made the securing of a licence to sell alcohol more difficult and more expensive.¹⁴ Frontal opposition to alcoholic consumption may not have been the only reason for its decline. Jan Noel suggested that one reason alcohol had been popular was the lack of alternatives, and that the growing availability of tea and other stimulant beverages like coffee and chocolate facilitated the progress of temperance.¹⁵

The big picture is clear — but rather coarse grained, and both McCalla and Robert’s work question conventional understanding of alcohol consumption in Upper Canada. One may then wonder whether Lower Canadians had been as heavy drinkers as temperance advocates claimed they were — a claim echoed

by the historical literature — or, were they more moderate consumers, like Upper Canadians, who were also supposed to have been heavy imbibers? Had they been frightened into temperance by fiery crusaders and hectoring priests? Or, had they already begun to question their drinking habits when Father Chiniquy rode into their village? Did stimulating beverages (tea, coffee, and chocolate) really become alternatives to alcohol?

General stores were one of the places where one could buy alcohol, and they were more numerous than taverns.¹⁶ As McCalla's study has shown, their account books, when they have survived, can provide us with a fine-grained picture of the purchases of various beverages as well as of the impact of cultural and regulatory changes on alcohol consumption. The books kept on the one hand by Amable Morin (1830–1847), general merchant at Saint-Roch-des-Aulnaies, and on the other by first Jean Villiers and later his son Francois-Xavier de Villiers¹⁷ (1830 to 1852 and beyond) at Lotbinière are also difficult to reconcile with widespread alcoholism. They document a decline in the sale of alcohol from 1830 as well as its complete absence from 1850 onwards, a shift that closely parallels rising negative attitudes towards heavy drinking, but nonetheless predates the Chiniquy crusade and the new regulatory regime.¹⁸ On the other hand, the shift towards sobriety does not seem to have been hastened by the greater availability of non-alcoholic beverages. Tea drinking remained limited in the two regions, despite a significant drop in price. It was also limited among the mostly British clients of Duncan Dewar as well as Blanchard and Wales, merchants in St. Andrew East (now Saint-André-d'Argenteuil, north-west of Montréal) between 1840 and 1857. Heavily alcoholised patent medicines were not a substitute either — they were not sold in those stores; the most frequently sold medicinal products were laxatives, like castor oil. Villiers did not even sell any medicine in 1830. There were no druggists in any of the seigneuries where those stores were located.

The communities served by those various store keepers were small ones at the time the men were plying their trade. Saint-Roch-des-Aulnaies in l'Islet county had 2,454 inhabitants

in 1825, 2,654 in 1831, 2,685 in 1842 and 2,930 in 1851; the Villiers's store drew the bulk of his clientele from Lotbinière and Saint-Jean-Deschaillons immediately to the west; they had respectively 2,256 and 617 inhabitants in 1825, 2,508 and 809 in 1831, and 3,578 and 1,757 inhabitants in 1851. In 1842, there were 3,545 inhabitants in the Argenteuil seigneurie and 1,219 in Chatham, to the east, from which Dewar was drawing a considerable proportion of his clientele. By 1851, the population of the seigneurie numbered 4,450, and the one of Chatham, 3,167. Saint-Roch, Lotbinière, and Saint-Jean-Deschaillons were massively rural — and almost everyone who was not a professional, a village craftsperson or a river pilot (*navigateurs*), was listed as a farmer or day labourer in the census. Saint-Roch and Lotbinière farmers sold part of their production in Québec City — where Amable Morin was also getting most of his supplies.¹⁹ The Argenteuil seigneurie was different. By 1842, one third of the population reported an occupation other than farming to the census taker, and St-Andrew was already a considerable village.²⁰

Store account books (day books and ledgers) owe their existence to the chronic specie shortage which affected eighteenth and early-nineteenth century North America, and forced customers and merchants to rely on book credit to do business.²¹ Account holders were normally heads of households; family members (wife, children), but also servants debited the common household account.²² Purchases, but also payments (in cash, financial instruments, kind, labour, and transfers onto someone else's account) were also put on account as they occurred, and the books can be extremely detailed, indicating who bought what in what amount at what price and on what date (payments and other transactions are recorded in similar details). Day books, like the name indicates were a chronological record of day-to-day operations; store keepers then transcribed those transactions in their ledgers, organized by account holders' names and then by dates. Account books are therefore a good source to find out what was available where and when as well as what goods appeared or disappeared from the shelves and when.

They have some limitations, however, when it comes to uncovering consumption patterns. For a start, not all purchases were put on account — an unknown number were paid on the spot — or partly paid (identifiable in the account book by the entry “remainder on ...” followed by an amount). If order books or inventories had survived, we may have been able to estimate the importance of unrecorded purchases, but none are available for the stores under consideration. However, purchases and payments sometimes coincided, which means that purchases were not necessarily unrecorded when they were paid at that point, and unrecorded ones therefore may not have been numerous.²³ It was also assumed here that no category of goods was more (or less) likely to be fully paid at the time of purchase and go unrecorded than any other, and therefore that the distribution of goods on account reflected the distribution of all goods purchased.

In addition, storekeepers rarely enjoyed a monopoly in their community — and their customers were not bound to the ones serving their parish or township. For instance, there were 11 general stores in Argenteuil, and six in Chatham according to the 1842 census. Lotbinière had an innkeeper, two merchants, and a *négociant*; there were no merchants yet in Saint-Jean. There were six merchants and one innkeeper in Saint-Roch in 1831. (The numbers are rather impressive when put in relation to the size of the different populations). Customers, however, may not have taken much advantage of this situation, if St-Andrew was typical. Blanchard and Wales and Duncan Dewar only had 58 account holders in common in 1840 (one-third of Blanchard and Wales’ customers and 15 percent of Dewar’s). Moreover, two-thirds of those common account holders made the bulk of their aggregate purchases at one of the two stores (at least 75 percent of the aggregate purchases were at one store, and the rest at the other, and eight of them made none at the other store; they only made payments.). Then, as now, people appear to have had a favorite store.

Were those stores typical of country ones? The ones used here are very similar in many ways — the number of account

holders fall within a narrow range and they all sold the same categories of goods in roughly the same proportions (see tables I and II). There are differences, but it is not difficult to think of credible explanations for them. The St-Andrew stores were the closest to Montréal and served a population more dependent on markets for its means of support and the necessities of life. Unsurprisingly, their customers spent more on the average, especially on foodstuff such as bread, ham, or cheese; those two stores offered a broader variety of individual goods than the two others, and new products were more likely to appear here first. The Morin store at Saint-Roch was at the opposite end of the spectrum: it was more distant from a metropolitan area, sold a narrower range of goods, almost no foodstuff, and the average value of its customers' account was the lowest. The Villiers store was located half-way between the three others and between two urban centers. Initially (1830), it resembled Morin's (limited range of goods, low average account value); from 1840 on, it began to resemble the St-Andrew stores (the range of goods widened, and the average value of the accounts rose). The stores' offering an increasing variety of individual articles reflected broad changes in the colonial economies (more factory-made goods available in particular). Otherwise, however, they seem to have been rather impervious to the economic circumstances of the moment. Economic downturns were not sufficient for people to alter their buying habits, as Desrosiers had already discovered in the case of Saint-Hyacinthe at the very end of the eighteenth century.²⁴

Account books are therefore imperfect sources — but no more than, let us say, a corpus of correspondence by middling people, whose completeness cannot be ascertained either, and whose representativity cannot be statistically ascertained, or even post-mortem inventories which can suffer from the same shortcoming. Although account books yield a lot of numbers, they do not lend themselves to the creation of the kind of series favoured by economic or social-science historians, and elaborate statistical analysis would make the data look more precise than it really is. However, numbers can be the basis for qualitative analysis, and the trends one can uncover are suggestive.

Regulating Alcohol

Village stores, inns, and taverns could provide the local population with alcoholic — or as they were called then — intoxicating beverages, provided they had a licence. Regulations concerning the sale of alcohol became increasingly restrictive in the first half of the nineteenth century. Until mid-century, 35 Geo. III, c. 8 (1795) formed the basis of the regulations for the sale of alcoholic beverages in Lower Canada.²⁵ This statute provided for the granting of licence to various categories of traders and spelled out under what conditions one could sell wine and spirituous liquors in the province. Tavern keepers and those who sold alcohol in quantities under three gallons at a time had to secure an annual licence costing two pounds.²⁶ Tavern keepers had to provide a certificate from three “respectable householders,” one of which had to be from the Churchwarden, certificate that indicated the applicant was “a fit and proper person” to keep a public house. They also had to post a £10 bond and provide two sureties posting a £5 bond each. Merchants, storekeepers, or traders could only sell spirituous liquors to be carried away and not drunk on the premises. The act was amended in 1829 and 1832 (2 William IV, c. 18-19). The 1829 act gave a panel composed of the senior justice of the peace, the senior militia officer, and the senior church warden the responsibility of fixing the number of such licences they deemed necessary for their parish. The value of the bonds was raised to £40 for tavern keepers and £20. Licences had to be read at the church door after mass before taking effect. The 1832 legislation closed some perceived loopholes. The existing regulations were consolidated with minor additions in a single statute in 1836 (6 William IV, c. XIV).²⁷

Regulations were tightened by ordinances of the Special Council in 1839 and 1840. In 1839, the power to issue licences was transferred to the governor — the responsibilities of tavern keepers were spelled out, and the facilities they had to provide travellers specified (2 Vict, c. 14). In 1840, grocers and storekeepers who did not hold a licence to keep a house of public entertainments were prohibited from retailing wine and other

spirituous beverages in quantities under three half-pints at one time (trois *demi-chopines* bas-canadiennes, equivalent to 0.75 imperial quart).²⁸ The new regulations clearly distinguished between tavern keepers and storekeepers (whereas earlier ones lumped them together), prohibited the latter from selling by small measure, and raised the fees of those who sold in quantities under three gallons to the same level as those selling in quantities up to 20 gallons.²⁹

All those were repealed in 1850 and replaced by an “Act for the suppression of intemperance,” which made obtaining a licence more difficult, significantly raised the qualifications, and stiffened the penalties for selling without one or in lesser amount than permitted. It also made tavern keepers responsible for the consequences of their customers’ inebriety. Applicants now needed to first secure a certificate from the above described panel, upon presentation of a requisition signed by the majority of the municipal electors that a tavern was necessary in the place where they intended to keep one. They also had to proffer a certificate of good reputation from two justices of the peace or 10 municipal electors that they enjoyed “an unblemished reputation and is not addicted to drink.” They had to prove ownership of unencumbered real property worth at least £150, provide a £400-pound bond as well as two sureties in the sum of £200. The licence was issued by the governor or his delegate. Tavern keepers who allowed individuals to lose their time or money at the tavern could be obliged to compensate the said individual’s family for the loss; they were also liable if one of their patrons came to some bad end less than six hours after they had provided him with liquor. Temperance hotels, allowed to sell ready-to-consume temperance drinks, defined as “tea, coffee, chocolate, spruce beer, ginger beer, the juice of oranges, lemons or limes, lemonade, raspberry vinegar or sarsaparilla,” were subjected to much lighter regulations: a certificate signed by four electors and £100 worth of property were sufficient to obtain a licence — which cost only 20 shillings (£1). Traders and merchants who did not have a tavern licence could not sell intoxicating liquors in quantities under five gallons, “unless the customer has a cer-

tificate from a physician, priest or minister stating it is needed as a remedy”.³⁰

Regulations clearly revealed a shift in attitude on the part of the governing élites. The late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century regulations seemed primarily concerned with raising money through licences, and not with changing drinking habits, a conclusion Heron had already reached.³¹ In the 1830s and 1840s, however, the intent was clearly to restrict the sale of alcohol by small measure, through limiting the number of taverns, narrowing the eligibility to obtain a licence, and taking their issuance away from the local authorities. The 1850 statute reinforced those measures, and for the first time tried to address the consequences of inebriety by holding tavern keepers responsible for the behaviour of drinkers. They were also surprisingly restrictive as to who could sell temperance drinks, which were reserved to temperance hotels, tavern keepers, and apothecaries. Storekeepers could not sell them (but could sell loose tea, coffee beans, and solid chocolate).

Although storekeepers could obtain licence to sell alcohol, not all did, even before regulations were tightened. There are only four sales of alcohol in the 1819–1826 Villiers memorandum book (the book is rather messy and most individual entries are not unambiguously dated). An unnamed individual who operated a store in l’Islet County between 1832 and 1838, and who may have shared customers with Amable Morin, did not sell any at all.³² According to the census aggregate tables, only four of the five Saint-Roch storekeepers and a single Lotbinière one sold intoxicating liquors in 1831.³³ Blanchard and Wales and Duncan Dewar at St-Andrew similarly never sold but token amounts of alcohol between 1834 and 1857. Morin and Villiers, on the other hand, sold alcoholic beverages, but in diminishing quantities, and this before the Chiquiquy crusade.

Alcohol Sales at Morin and (de) Villiers

At the beginning of the period of observation (1830), when regulations were just beginning to tighten, alcohol was purchased

by a majority of customers at both stores (almost three-quarters at Villiers and slightly fewer than half at Morin), and alcohol represented a significant proportion of the stores' total revenues (one-third at Villiers; one-quarter at Morin). (See Table III.)³⁴ The preferred drink was, by far, rum at both places (more than 90 percent of the volume retailed), followed by wine, and occasional sales of brandy and esprit de rum (a much pricier item). Rum retailed for 15 cents for a Lower Canadian *pinte* and wine for 17 to 18 cents per *pinte* at both places. Only Morin sold any brandy — to two people (40 cents per *pinte* or 30 cents per bottle).³⁵ Whisky and beer were nowhere to be seen, despite the existence of breweries and distilleries in Lower Canada.

The average yearly quantities per purchasers, although not negligible, were not particularly high: 18.5 Lower Canadian *pintes* at Villiers and 24 *pintes* (6 gallons) at Morin, and two-third of the customers bought 12 *pintes* or less (see Figure 1).³⁶ Assuming a minimum of two drinkers per account holder's household (husband and wife), this corresponded to a consumption of one cup per person per week, or one shot-glass a day at Morin — and less at Villiers. If there were more drinkers in the household, or if it provided rum to its workers or occasional help, this amount per person would be even less. We have no way of knowing, of course, whether the storekeepers' clients purchased additional quantities elsewhere, or frequented the taverns. However, requests in the *donation entre vifs*³⁷, drawn by Morin in his capacity as *notaire*, suggest that the store purchases corresponded to what most people consumed. From the 1810s to the late 1830s, about half the elderly requested rum as part of their pension; a few also asked for wine. The modal (most common) quantity of rum requested was 12 pots (six gallons) for a couple, which happens to be the average quantity calculated above. If those people did not also go and drink at the tavern, their consumption would have been within nineteenth-century — and even twenty-first-century — acceptable limits.³⁸

Most customers purchased alcohol in relatively small amounts each time (see Figure 2), but almost never below the legal limit of three *demiards*. At both stores, the mode and median

quantities were both four *pintes* (a gallon) per visit. Eight people, however, purchased more than 10 gallons at once at Morin, including the priest, Mr Brodeur, who bought 27 gallons of *esprit de rum* in December. This was his only purchase of drinks in the whole year. M. Davelui, priest at Lotbinière, bought a total of 27.5 gallons of rum, but spread the purchases over the whole year. Only one person bought 10 gallons or more at Villiers; he did it five times, and four times over three weeks in October, for a total of 100 gallons of rum. The October purchases may have been to provide for a work party.

Purchases were seasonal. Summer and fall collective work parties, like barn-raising, harvesting, and slaughtering are often considered pretexts for large-scale consumption of alcohol.³⁹ Here, however, most purchases occurred in the winter months, especially in December and January (see figures 3a, b, c, and d). Rum and other spirits were widely considered good medicine to ward off or cure various winter ailments; they were also necessary ingredients of end-of-year festivities (between Christmas and Epiphany) and of *Jours Gras*, the ten days before Lent.⁴⁰ Customers' yearly averages may then have been moderate, but this may hide binge drinking around New Year, which would have led observers to conclude that intoxicating drinks were a problem. Indeed, according to the yearly vicars' reports to the bishops, chronic alcoholism was rare, but overindulgence on special occasions was fairly common.⁴¹

The next twenty years witnessed significant changes, suggesting a shift to a less casual attitude towards drinking which parallels shifts in attitude among the élite. At Lotbinière, the proportion of customers buying alcohol dropped from three-quarters in 1830 to two-thirds by 1840, and then to one-half by 1845. The yearly quantities per purchasing account holder first increased (to 24 *pintes* per account holder) before dropping down to 12 *pintes* in 1845 — and by then, alcohol accounted for only 6.8 percent of all purchases (in dollars) as opposed to 33 percent in 1830. At Morin's, the proportion of account holders buying alcohol remained stable until 1840, but they were buying less overall, an average of 10.6 *pintes* per customer, and less per visit

(mode two *pintes* and median 2.5 *pintes*). Alcohol consequently accounted for a lesser proportion of the store's income (18.1 percent instead of 24 percent).

Declines in purchases may have been a consequence of rising prices. Most alcohol prices were significantly higher in 1840, with the exception of rum at Villers', which still sold for 16 cents for a *pinte*. Wine at Villiers' now cost 26 cents a *pinte*. He still did not sell brandy. At Morin's, rum went up to 20 cents per *pinte*, wine to 26 to 28 cents per *pinte*, and brandy to 43 to 45 cents per *pinte*. Morin was offering a cheaper alternative to his clients: whisky, at 14 cents per *pinte*, but it had very few takers. A small number of his customers were also buying the newly available brandy (30 cents) or esprit de rum (29 cents). Consuming alcohol for the sake of being tipsy was then clearly not the goal. If it had, Morin's customers would have switched from rum to whisky and disdained brandy and wine. Beer was still absent from both stores. Morin was also retailing in very small measure (less than half a *pinte*), which he did not do previously — and which was prohibited by the new regulations introduced that year. The only men of the cloth to buy alcohol in 1840 were M. Begin, *économiste* of the Collège de la Pocatière who twice bought 3 demiards (0.75 *pinte*) of rum in 1840, and Monsignor Faucher at Lotbinière, who purchased a total of 3.5 gallons over the year. (None bought alcohol afterwards).

On the surface, 1847 seems a continuation of the trend began after 1830: Fewer customers buying alcohol (about one-third at both stores), and buyers spent less on alcohol as well, although the average amount per purchaser increased slightly at Morin's. More significant was the seasonal distribution: sales of alcohol collapsed at mid-year (see Figure 4). Morin only sold small amounts to a limited number of customers in the second half of the year, except in December, when he sold 245 gallons of various beverages to a George Gagnon. The same phenomenon, less the bulk sale at year's end also occurred at Villiers'.

The reason for this collapse had little to do with temperance. The notarial profession was reorganized in July 1847; the statute specified the nature of their training, required the passing

of a qualifying examination, organized a *chambre des notaires* (a self-governing and self-policing board), stipulated how notarial documents had to be preserved and prohibited *notaires* from being also merchants, traders, or manufacturers⁴². *Notaires* who were at the time engaged in any of those activities were given six months (until January 1848) to decide which one they would continue; this gave those wanting to remain *notaire* time to wind down their business in an orderly fashion. The prohibition of trade was repealed in 1852, because it was causing undue hardships on *notaires* practicing in distant places, such as a Côte-du-Sud.⁴³

Amable Morin and F-X de Villiers chose to remain *notaires* and transferred their mercantile activity to another family member. Morin's books end in January 1848, and the store appears to have been taken over by one — or several — of his Pelletier nephews.⁴⁴ The 1851 census lists him as a *notaire* and postmaster, and so does Lovett's *Canada Directory* for 1851⁴⁵. His successor did not take a licence to retail alcohol, and he sold his stock to someone who likely had one.

The Villiers store did not close either. Like the Morin-Pelletier clan, the Villiers family shifted the store to another member to circumvent the prohibition — in this case, the father. Lovett's 1857 directory lists François-Xavier as a *notaire* — and a J. Villiers as general store keeper. Jean, however, may have merely been a front. Lovett's 1851 directory identifies François-Xavier de Villiers as "general store and notary public" and there is no mention of Jean. Jean Villiers then likely pretended to have taken back his store — but his son played a sufficiently visible role in the business to mislead Lovett's informants. In 1857, Lovett's was still behind the times, as the charade was no longer necessary, and François-Xavier could have been listed as both *notaire* and merchant. This is how he is identified in the 1861 census (he is missing, alongside a few other village élites, from the 1851 census). But if *notaires* had six months to take their decision and dispose of their business, why did they stop immediately to sell alcohol? There is nothing in the act that says they had to do so. However, the governor, under whose authority the liquor licences were issued, may have revoked the ones of the *notaires* right away.⁴⁶

Regulatory changes reflected the élites' changing attitude towards the consumption of alcohol — and it is worth noting that no priest, *notaire*, physician, or other member of the local professional class purchased alcohol at either store after 1840. If the respectable classes drank, they were indulging discreetly and did not get their liquor from the local store, where the purchases would have been known to all. The professional François-Xavier de Villiers, who had added a particle to his father's name, never sold alcohol again, except in small amounts to occasional customers (probably the ones who had a note from the priest or the doctor). One would assume he was respectable enough — and high enough on the village social hierarchy — to get a licence if he wanted one. Selling alcohol then may not have meshed with his understanding of respectability.

The new laws, however, were not prohibitionist. Rum, wines, and other alcoholic beverages were still available, albeit from fewer outlets, and by the mid-1840s, the prices were back to 1830 levels.⁴⁷ People could have continued to imbibe as in the past — but they did not. The proportion of account holders who bought alcohol declined steadily and significantly; so did the amount they bought per purchase, and their total yearly purchase⁴⁸. The trend was also reflected in the *Donations entre vifs* at Morin's office, which almost never included alcoholic beverages in the 1840s and 1850s. Drinking was less and less an unproblematic routine activity, and increasingly something to engage in with caution. Was it the result of the new regulatory regime, of temperance crusades, or of steady disparagement of the practice by priests from the pulpit and in the street, and the at least apparent sobriety of the local notables? Or, of the habitants independently coming to the conclusion that rum could be too much of a good thing, a new way of thinking merely reinforced by the élites? One cannot tell for sure — but Saint-Roch and Lotbinière residents were clearly rethinking their drinking habits in the 1830s and particularly in the 1840s. By the time Chiniquy launched his crusade in 1849, his audience was prepared to listen, and this could explain its rapid and impressive success. The ground had been prepared for more than a decade.

Tea and Other Non-Intoxicating Beverages

Was this shift away from alcohol facilitated by the availability of non-intoxicating beverages, such as tea or coffee? Not really. Alternatives did not displace alcohol as they were not widely consumed in the first half of the century — but the new-found reluctance to drink may have encouraged people to turn to other beverages, especially as their prices dropped after the middle of the century.

Dewar's British customers were surprisingly not great tea drinkers: only 29 percent of his account holders bought any in 1840, and 30 percent in 1857. The quantities they purchased would not have allowed heavy consumption: 1.9 lb in 1840 rising to 4.2 lb in 1857.⁴⁹ (See Figure 5.) The same happened at Blanchard and Wales in 1840: 43 percent of their British account holders bought an average of 1.9 lb of tea.⁵⁰ Only one customer bought coffee (once, 1 lb)⁵¹. As Dewar was offering a broad selection of teas, and country merchants were supplied by a relatively limited number of importers in Montréal, it is doubtful customers purchased little tea at those two stores because they all flocked to another whose selection, quality, or prices they preferred. Dewar seems to have been as good a country tea dealer as one could expect.

In 1830 and in 1840, French Canadians rarely purchased tea, and this was true even of those who lived alongside the British, and had access to a wide variety at different prices.⁵² In all years, fewer than 10 percent of Morin's customers bought tea, coffee, or chocolate, and the quantities of tea purchased were low, although they more than doubled over the period (0.53 lb per purchaser in 1830 and 1.36 lb in 1847).⁵³ At Villiers', the proportion of customers buying those items steadily increased, to one-third of the account holders in 1857; average quantities of tea, however, remained fairly stable until 1857 when they rose to 1.25 lb.

Living cheek to jowl with the British could accelerate the process. Dewar initially had few French customers (4.3 percent in 1840 rising to 19 percent in 1857). At first, they showed limited interest in tea (only 2 purchased 3.2 lb between them in 1840). Purchases then increased, to reach almost British levels: 26 percent of customers bought an average of 3.8 lb in 1857. It

is at Blanchard and Wales that one finds the higher percentage of tea drinker at the earliest date. 37 percent of their French customers bought tea in 1840, but still less than their British neighbours (1.2 lb). Interestingly, Blanchard and Wales served a less homogeneous clientele: one third of their account holders were French. Physical proximity and social interaction appear to have played a role into encouraging French Canadians to drink. More people were thus buying tea — and the occasional pound of coffee or “brick” of chocolate by mid-century⁵⁴, and the gap between French Canadians and British immigrants and their descendants narrowed considerably.

Conclusion

If the clientele of those four stores are representative of the whole province, French Canadians became more temperate in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. And although they were admonished to do so from the pulpit, the rapidity with which they reduced their purchases of alcohol suggests they were coming to similar conclusions as their élite about the use of alcohol. And they may not have been heavy drinkers to start with. The account books do not give the impression that the Lower Canadian countryside had been awash with alcohol when the élite decided its consumption was a problem which called for strict regulations. Not all stores sold alcohol even when licences were still relatively easy to obtain, and this despite the fact alcohol represented a significant proportion of the gross income of the stores that retailed it. Not everybody bought alcohol either, and those who did purchased relatively small quantities. Even if one assumes non-buyers purchased their rum at another store, there is no particular reason to think they would have been different from the customers buying at Morin or Villiers. The seasonality of purchases indicates rum was a winter drink, consumed for health and social reasons, but not the inevitable component of summer and fall work parties. New Year’s parties could be occasions for abuse, and this unseemly behaviour may have become less and less socially acceptable. At Saint-Roch, the elderly were

following the trend, and no longer requiring alcoholic beverages as part of their pension in kind.

Stimulating beverages (tea, and very occasionally coffee, and chocolate) were not an alternative to alcohol. Surprisingly, British immigrants do not appear to have been heavy tea drinkers. The majority of Blanchard and Wales' and Dewar's British customers did not even buy any, and when they did, not in amounts that could provide a cup a day for all household members. French Canadians bought even less, although their consumption slowly crept up. Temperate customers may have turned to tea when they stopped drinking alcoholic beverages — but the timing does not suggest that the search for an alternative was a factor. On the other hand, the price of tea significantly dropped between 1830 and 1840, when it averaged 80 cents per lb., and the 1850s, when it retailed for an average of 54 cents per lb.⁵⁵ Tea gained in popularity, not when alcohol fell into disfavour, but when it became more affordable. And even in 1857, tea purchases were far from ubiquitous, and much fewer people bought it than used to purchase alcohol. The consumption of the one does not seem to have affected the consumption of the other.

How do our Lower Canadian customers compare with their Upper Canadian counterparts? They bought more alcohol. In 1828/29, three-quarters of the Yonge Mills store accounts analyzed by Doug McCalla included alcohol, the same proportion as at Villiers.⁵⁶ The amounts purchased were, however, significantly lower (14.8 quarts) and represented only 14 percent of the value of all purchases. Only one-third of the Upper Canadian customers bought two gallons of alcohol per month or more.⁵⁷ At Morin and Villiers, most customers bought one gallon per purchase (modal value). But even the higher level of purchases of the French Canadian is not sufficient to believe their attitude towards alcohol, and their drinking habits, were qualitatively different from the ones of the other province. McCalla's conclusion appears equally applicable here: there had been "room for choice, moderation and even abstinence among stories of alcohol in settlement society."⁵⁸

Customers in the two provinces nonetheless differed in their choice of drink. Upper Canadian customers massively shifted

from rum to the lower priced whisky between 1808/09 and 1828/29, a shift facilitated by the spread of distilling in the province. The growth of distilling does not seem to have had the same impact in Lower Canada — our customers remained faithful to the pricier rum until the end, suggesting their tastes were rather conservative. And one wonders who consumed the product of the breweries which were supposed to multiply in this period. It seems hard to believe that store keepers who sold imported alcoholic beverages, and even tried whisky, would not have retailed beer as well if their customers were interested.

Moderation in drinking does not appear to have been a consequence of the availability of alternative drinks in Upper Canada either. Upper Canadians drank more tea than even British Lower Canadians at the beginning of the century: two-thirds of the Yonge Mill store customers bought tea in 1828/29 — but only half the customers in the 1861 samples. The quantities were not large (2 lb per customers at Yonge Mills, rising to 6 to 9 lb at the 1861 stores, not enough for frequent drinking during the day). More importantly, those who bought large amounts of alcohol also bought tea.⁵⁹

French Canadians may have been less temperate than Upper Canadians, but not by much. Like Upper Canadians — and like their *élite* — they may have sufficiently questioned the wisdom of drinking significant amounts of intoxicating beverages that their purchases at the general stores noticeably dropped even before the Chiniquy crusade and the introduction of new and restrictive licencing conditions. Tea, this quintessential British beverage was consumed by much fewer people, and in lesser amount, than one would have expected, even among recent British immigrants. High prices may have initially discouraged its consumption, as the latter increased as the former dropped. As far as French Canadians were concerned, the more likely they were to interact with British Lower Canadians, the more likely they were to drink it. But at the end of the period of observation, it still did not enjoy the popularity alcohol had had in 1830. Fewer people bought tea than had ever bought alcohol.

Table I - Characteristics of the clientele, Morin, Villiers, Blanchard, and Wales and Dewar stores

	Morin 1830	Morin 1840	Morin 1847
Number of account holders	300	408	402
Total value of purchases	2060	2227	2246
Average \$ per account holder	6.87	5.46	5.59

	Villiers 1830	Villiers 1840	Villiers 1845	Villiers 1847	Villiers 1852	Villiers 1857	Villiers 1862
Number of account holders	194	384	368	371	250	324	394
Total value of purchases	1180	4907	3578.78	3116	1789	3308	4508
Average \$ per account holder	6.08	12.78	9.72	8.4	7.16	10.21	11.44

	B&W 1840	Dewar 1840	Dewar 1852	Dewar 1857
Number of account holders	150	378	474	402
Total value of purchases	1963	4285	5069	4468
Average \$ per account holder	13.09	11.34	10.69	11.11

Table II - Leading categories of goods sold at Morin, Villiers, Blanchard, and Wales and Dewar stores, 1830-1857

M30	M40	M47	V30	V40	V52	V57	V62	B&W40	D40	D52	D57
alcohol	fabric	fabric	alcohol	fabric	fabric	fabric	fabric	food	fabric	food	food
fabric	alcohol	household	fabric	alcohol	household	maintenance	household	fabric	food	fabric	fabric
household	metal	food	household	household	food	food	food	household	clothing	leather	clothing
clothing	household	alcohol	clothing	clothing	clothing	household	maintenance	leather	household	clothing	leather
maintenance	leather	metal	tobacco	notions	maintenance	clothing	clothing	clothing	maintenance	hides	household

The categories are: building, clothing, country products, culture, leisure and religion, fabric, fodder, food, hardware, hand tools, horse related items, household, hunting and fishing, hygiene, metal, maintenance, medicinal, notions, textile production, tobacco, pipes and matches, wood, and finally miscellaneous; Dewar opened a tannery in the early 1850s, which explains the prominence of hides and leather in the later years.

Table III - Alcohol purchases, Morin, 1830-1847, and Villiers, 1830-1857

	M 1830	M 1840	M 1847	V 1830	V 1840	V 1845	V 1847	V 1852	V 1857
Total value alcohol, in \$	483	402	226	393	1042	242.24	118	1.1	2
Alcohol as % of value of purchases	23.4	18.1	10.1	33.3	21.2	6.8	3.8	0.1	0.1
Number buying alcohol	139	189	141	142	254	155	111	4	7
% buying alcohol	46.3	46.3	35.1	73.2	66.1	42.1	29.9	1.6	2.2
average \$ alcohol/buyer	3.47	2.13	1.6	2.77	4.1	1.56	1.06	0.28	0.29
Total volume of alcohol, in <i>pintes</i>	3338	2010	1706	2627	6199	1887	871	3.6	4.5
Average <i>pinte</i> / buyer	24	10.6	12.1	18.5	24.4	12.2	7.8	0.9	0.6

A TEMPERATE PROVINCE? EVIDENCE FROM LOWER
CANADIAN GENERAL STORE ACCOUNT BOOKS, 1830–1857

Figure 1:
Average amount of alcohol purchased in *pintes*, by
account holder, Morin and Villiers, 1830 to 1857

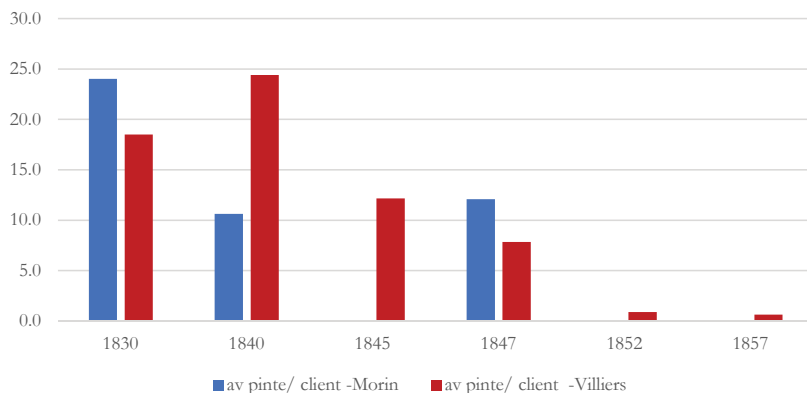


Figure 2: Distribution of yearly quantities at
Morin and Villiers, in *pintes*, 1830 to 1845

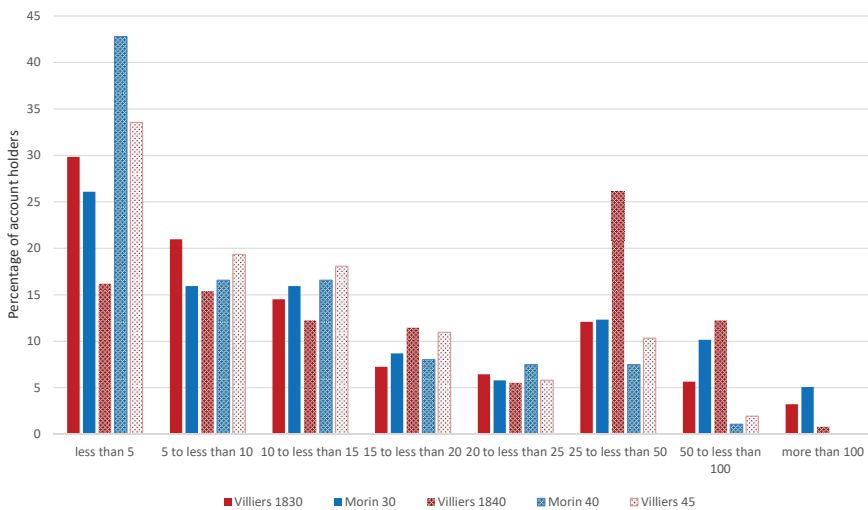


Figure 3: Seasonality of purchases, Morin and Villiers, 1830 and 1840

Figure 3a: Morin 1830

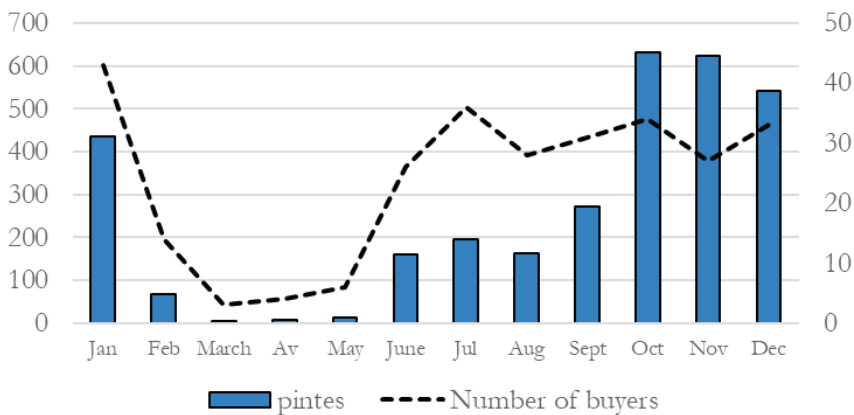


Figure 3c: Morin 1840

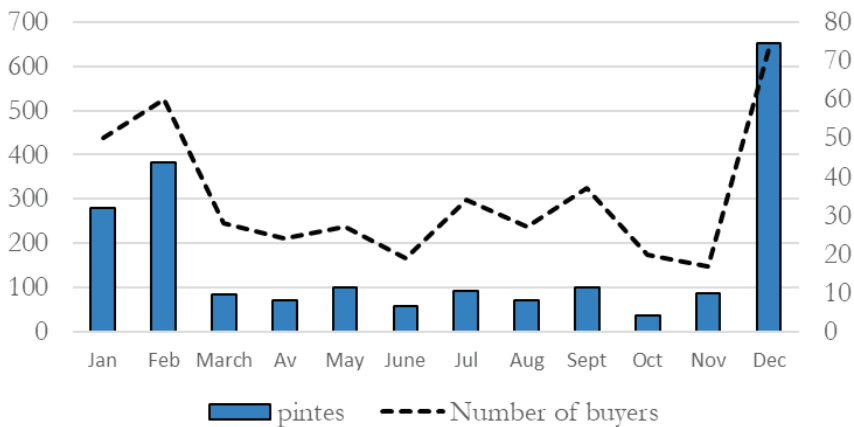


Figure 3: Seasonality of purchases, Morin and Villiers,
 1830 and 1840

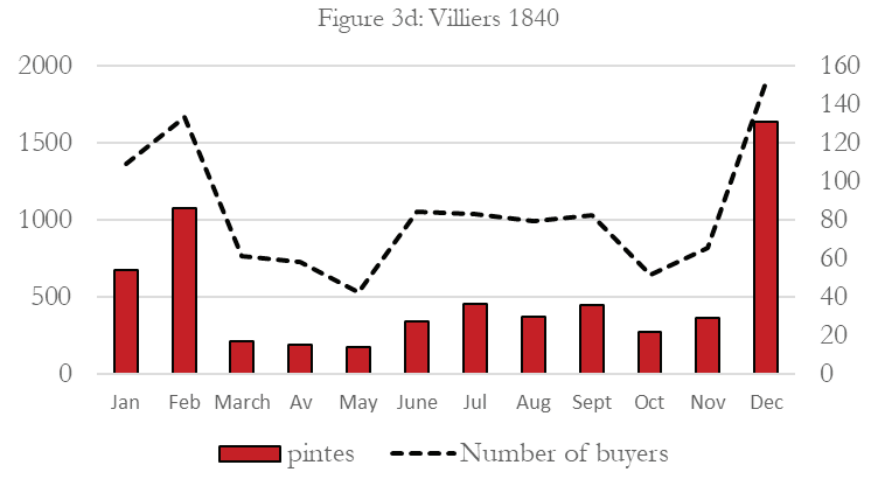
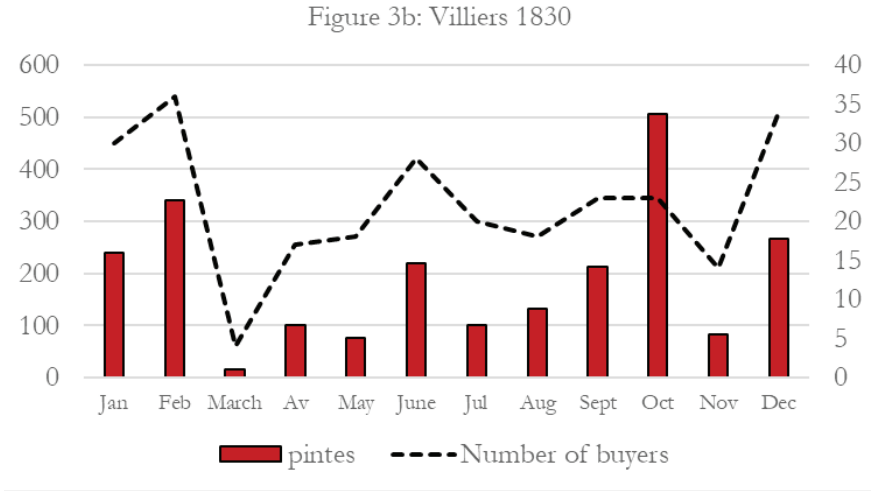


Figure 4: Monthly purchases - 1847, in *pintes* (Morin December excluded)

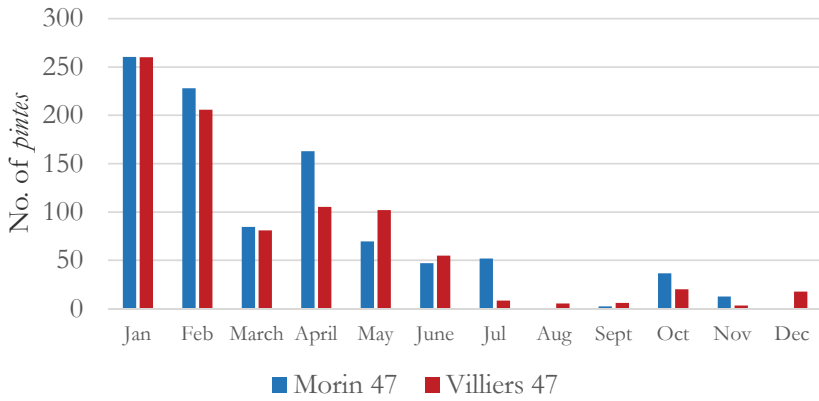
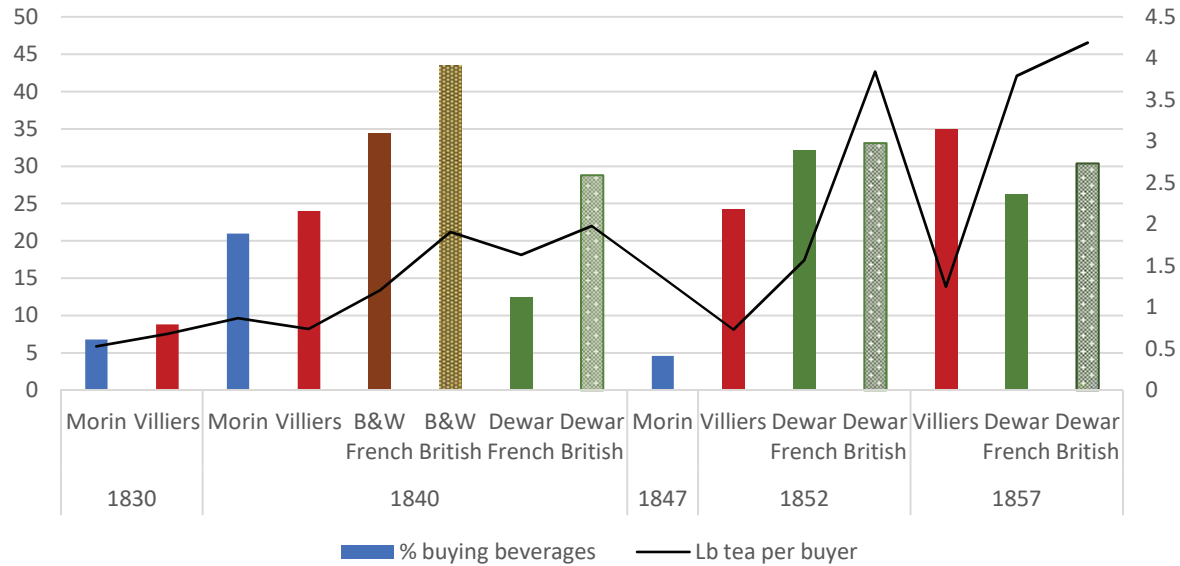


Figure 5: Tea purchases, Morin, Villiers, Blanchard and Wales, and Dewar stores, 1830-1857



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Endnotes

- 1 Craig Heron, *Booze, a Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003), 30; Douglas McCalla, *Consumers in the Bush, Shopping in Rural Upper Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens's University Press, 2105), 73.
- 2 Julia Roberts, *In Mixed Company: Taverns and Public Life in Upper Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), chapter 3: "Regulation and ritual in everyday public life," 77–100.
- 3 Jan Noel, *Canada Dry: Temperance Crusades before Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 57, 156.
- 4 Heron, *Booze*, 29-30 and 49.
- 5 Heron, *Booze*, 21, 51-2.
- 6 Larkin, *Reshaping Everyday Life*, 286 cited by McCalla, *Consumers in the Bush*, 73.
- 7 McCalla, *Consumers in the Bush*, 78.
- 8 Robert, *In Mixed Company*, 77–100.
- 9 Jan Noel, "Dry Patriotism: The Chiniquy Crusade," in *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, ed. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983), 29–30; Reginal Smart and Alan Ogbourne, *Northern Spirit: Drinking in Canada, Then and Now* (Addiction Research Foundation of Ontario, 1986), 17–20; Heron, *Booze*, 53–5, 61.
- 10 Noel, *Canada Dry*, 142, 153, 157; "Dry Patriotism," 29, 31, 33–4.
- 11 Noel, "Dry Patriotism," 29, 32, 35–7.
- 12 "By 1850, 400 000 teetotallers, which amounted to nearly half the population of Canada East and a clear majority of the francophone population, had been won." Noel, "Dry Patriotism," 39.
- 13 Yves Roby, "Chiniquy," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/chiniquy_charles_12E.html, viewed 6 October 2018; Marcel Trudel, *Chiniquy: prêtre catholique, minisre presbytérien* (Trois Rivières, Qc.: Éditions du bien public, 1954), 126–35; Mary Ann Poutaten, "Due Attention Has Been Paid to All rules: Women, Tavern Licences and Social Regulations in Montreal, 1840-1860", *Histoire sociale / Social History* 50, no. 101 (May / mai 2017): 59–60.

- 14 Noel, “Dry Patriotism,” 41; Frank Abbott, *The Body or the Soul? Religion and Culture in a Quebec Parish, 1736-1901* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2016), 211–218.
- 15 Noel, *Canada Dry*, 222; Heron, *Booze*, 82; this assumption is also noted by Douglas McCalla in *Consumers in the Bush*, 74.
- 16 In all the communities studied here, taverns/inns and stores were the only places where one could get alcoholic beverages. There were no druggists, (who may have sold them as medicine). There were no breweries or distilleries either, which anyway were not allowed to retail.
- 17 The father was Jean Villers or Villiers (spelling varies with the sources) — the son added a particle to his name and he and his descendants are de Villiers.
- 18 The account books used here are: Amable Morin, day book, 1830, 1840 and 1847, Archives de la Côte-du-Sud et du Collège Sainte-Anne de la Pocatière; Villiers ledgers, 1830, 1840, 1845, 1847, 1852 and 1857, Archives du Québec à Québec, P677, Fond famille François-Xavier de Villiers; For tea consumption, I also used Duncan Dewar day book, 1840, 1852 and 1857, and Blanchard and Wales Ledger, 1840, Saint-André d’Argenteuil, Qc. Carillon Museum (neither store sold alcohol). Some limited use has been made of the Villiers memorandum book for 1819-1826 and of the account book kept by Benoit Roy-Lauzier at Saint-Roch in 1809. (Amable Morin had married his widow). The locations were chosen for me by the existence of those books, whose survival rate is very low. As much as possible, I selected the same years among the different surviving books. Morin ceased to be a merchant early in 1848, hence the choice of 1847 for his end of his series. All transactions were transcribed in an Excel worksheet for each selected year, Villiers opened a new ledger at the beginning of every year, which compiled the transactions of each account holder, in alphabetical order of first name. He tallied debits and credits at the end of the year, something the other merchants never did. I also transcribed the debits at the opening and at the end of year settlements and the purchases of alcohol at Villiers for 1845 and 1847. Those two years were added later when it became clear something was happening in the 1840s. Such quick calculations are however not possible with Morin’s daybooks, as they run continuously and do not include periodic tallies.
- 19 Roland Martin, *Amable Morin, Notaire de chez nous* (La Pocatière, QC: Société historique de la Côte-du-Sud, 1976).
- 20 Library and Archives of Canada, Census of Lower Canada/Canada East on line, 1830, 1842 and 1851.
- 21 The British North American colonies were not allowed to mint before Confederation, and Britain never sent enough coins; the lack of small denomination copper coins — the ones needed for most store purchases

— was particularly acute. Specie shortage was therefore not seasonal, but chronic. A.B. McCullough, *Money and Exchange in Canada to 1900* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1984), 110–2; E.P. Neufeld, *Money and Banking in Canada*, (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1964); Angela Redish, “Why Was Specie Scarce in Colonial Economies? An Analysis of the Canadian Currency, 1796-1830,” *Journal of Economic History* 44, no. 3 (1984): 713–728. For the use of cash at country stores, see B. Craig, “Soldier les comptes: les sources de crédits dans les magasins généraux ruraux de l’est canadien au milieu du XIXe siècle,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, no. 1 (2003): 23–47.

- 22 I nonetheless found a few married women and female servants who had their own account. Female school teachers also had accounts in their name.
- 23 For instance on 14 January, 1840, Louis Roy bought half a pound of tea (40 cents) at Morin and gave him 30 shillings (\$6); on 3 February, Louis Sénéchal spend \$1.30 on rum and 40 cents on oil and paid on the spot with a bushel and one pot of peas valued at \$1.70; on the 29 of the same month, Noël Gagnon bought tobacco, cotton, a shawl, and a *pinte* of rum totalling 77 cents and paid the full amount in cash; on 22 June, the wife of Michel Gagnon purchased six handkerchiefs and five ounce of indigo (\$4.55) and paid the whole amount with 10 yards of country fabric; in October, Marceline Gervais purchased \$1.23 worth of fabric and notions and handed the store keeper cash in the exact amount.
- 24 *Desrosiers*, Claude, “Un aperçu des *habitudes de consommation* de la clientèle de Joseph Cartier, marchand général à *Saint-Hyacinthe* à la fin du XVIII^e siècle,” *Historical Papers/Communications historiques* 19, no. 1 (1984): 91–110; “La clientèle d’un marchand général rural à la fin du XVIII^e siècle; analyse des comportements de consommation,” in *Sociétés villageoises et rapports villes-campagnes au Québec et en France de l’Ouest, XVII^e-XX^e siècles*, ed. François Lebrun et Normand Séguin (Montréal and Paris: Presses de l’Université de Montréal/Éditions de l’EHESS, 1986), 151–158.

The Blanchard and Wales store is interesting on this account. In 1837, 1838, 1839 and 1840, one third of their account holders were French Canadians, from the eastern part of the seigneurie and from Deux Montagnes, in particular Saint Benoit. In 1837, 1839 and 1840, those were responsible for one third of the values of the purchases on account — but 52 percent in 1838. Deux Montagnes was one of the epicentres of the Rebellions, Saint Benoit was burned to the ground in December of 1837, and yet, within a year, French Canadians purchases were back to pre-Rebellion levels. One would have expected that the complete destruction of several villages would have had more lasting effects.

- 25 35 Geo. III c. 8 (1795) – “An Act for granting to His Majesty Duties on Licences to Hawkers, Pedlars and petty Chapmen, and for regulating their trade; and for granting additional duties on licences to persons for keeping houses of Public Entertainment, or for retailing Wine, Brandy, Rum or other Spirituous Liquors in this Province, and for regulating the same”.
- 26 By that time, the British North American colonies were using the Halifax pound, referred to as pound currency. Unless otherwise noted, all references to pounds, shillings and pence are to amounts in pound currency.
- 27 9 Geo. IV c.7-8 (1829) – “An Act further to regulate Persons who keep Houses of Public Entertainment, and retail Spirituous Liquors, and for other purposes”; 2 Will. IV c. 18-19 (1832) – “An Act to amend a certain Act passed in the first year of his Majesty’s Reign, for regulating Tavern Keepers”; 6 Will. IV c. 14 (1836) – “An Act for the further regulation of Taverns and Tavern-Keepers, and for other purposes therewith connected”.
- 28 The French Canadian *pinte* was the equivalent of the British quart, and was worth 2 *chopines*, 4 *demiards*, or 8 *roquilles*. The *chopine* was then the equivalent of the British pint.
- 29 2 Vict. c. 14 (1839) – “An Ordinance to amend a certain Act therein mentioned, and to provide for the better regulation of Taverns and Tavern keepers”; 3&4 Vict. c. 42 (1840)- “An Ordinance to repeal in part, and to amend to render permanent as amended, a certain Ordinance therein mentioned, relative to Taverns and tavern Keepers, and to make further provisions relative to the same subjects”; 4 Vict. c. 28 (1840) – “An ordinance to amend the Law relative to the granting of Licences to keep houses of public entertainment”.
- 30 13&14 Vict. C. 27 (1850) – “An Act for the suppression of Intemperance”. Those regulations were further tightened the following year by 14&15 Vict. c. 100.
- 31 Heron, *Booze*, 53.
- 32 Archives de la Côte du Sud et du Collège de Sainte Anne de la Pocatière, Fond Morin-Pelletier, unlabelled book, 1832–38.
- 33 Appendix to the Journal of the House of Assembly of Lower Canada, 1832 (XLI session). In addition, there were two taverns in Saint Roch, one in Lotbinière and one in Saint-Jean-Deschaillon.
- 34 By comparison, one of Morin’s predecessor, Benoit Roy-Lauzier had sold alcohol to 60 percent of his 83 clients in 1809, and those purchases accounted for a quarter of all the merchandises bought at his store. Rum then sold for 35 to 40 cents a *pinte*, and wine for 40 to 50 cents. Archives de la Cote du Sud et du collège de Sainte-Anne de la Pocatière, Roy-Lauzier account book, 1808-1810.

- 35 To contextualize, day labourers in Saint-Roch were paid 1s 8d a day or 33 cents according to the 1830 census; One could get 1 lb of tobacco, 1 lb of pepper and one *pinte* of vinegar for 20 cents, and 1 *pinte* of molasses for 15 cents at Morin that year.
- 36 Roy-Lauzier's customers had bought an average of 6.6 French Canadian *pintes* of rum, and 6 additionally purchased just under a *pinte* of wine. This reinforces the argument that alcohol consumption was indeed going up, as prices were dropping.
- 37 When an old farming couple wished to retire, they often handed over the farm to a child — or other person — in exchange for a room, various services like laundry and being taken to church every Sunday, and a pension in kind. This one covered food, clothing, wood and candles, and another necessary consumable. The quantities of each food item, article of clothing, cords of wood etc. were stipulated in the contracts at Morin. Food (and drink) quantities per person varied little from one contract to the next. BanQ Vieux Montreal, Greffes de Me Morin, M352-159-166, 1818-1854. Unfortunately, the *donations* at Villiers do not itemize the goods that had to be provided to the old couple, replaced by “room and board and all necessary care”.
- 38 Roberts, *In Mixed Company*, 89–91.
- 39 McCalla, *Consumers in the Bush*, 73, 75; Heron, *Booze*, 32, 41-52.
- 40 Abbott, *The Body or the Soul?* 205.
- 41 Abbott, *The Body or the Soul?* 218
- 42 10&11 Vict. c. 21(28 July 1847) – “An Act for the organization of the Notarial Profession in that part of this Province called Lower Canada”; the act was amended in 1849, 1850, and 1851
- 43 16 Vict. c. 215 (1853) - “An Act to establish a Board of Notaries for the Districts of Kamouraska and Gaspée, and further to amend the Act for the organization of the Notarial Profession in Lower Canada”.
- 44 One of Morin's sisters, Marie Celeste, had married Jean Noël Pelletier in 1799. In 1851, according to the census, Morin's household also included 25-year-old Guillaume Pelletier, listed as merchant, as well as a store clerk. The 1851 Lovett's directory lists two merchants called Pelletier: Alfred and Denis. The Morin papers have come to us through the descendants of one of his Pelletier nephews (communication from the archivist of the Archives de la Côte-du-Sud).
- 45 J. Lovett. *The Canada Directory for 1851* (Montreal, 1851).
- 46 However, I did not find anything to that effect in the papers of the executive council.
- 47 In 1845, Villiers sold rum for 13 cents a *pinte*, wine for 20 cents, and esprit de rum for 26 cents.

A TEMPERATE PROVINCE? EVIDENCE FROM LOWER
CANADIAN GENERAL STORE ACCOUNT BOOKS, 1830–1857

- 48 A comparison between the purchases in the first half of 1847 and the first half of 1840 at Morin, and of 1845 at Villiers shows that the downwards trend continued till the two stores stopped retailing alcohol.
- 49 4.2 lb is the equivalent of about 600 standard twenty-first-century tea bags.
- 50 Carillon Museum, Saint-André d'Argenteuil, QC., Blanchard and Wales Ledger, 1840.
- 51 Only half of their 58 common customers bought tea at both stores; 15 bought tea only at Dewar's, and 20 only at Blanchard and Wales's. The three biggest buyers (6, 7, and 8.25 lb respectively) did all their tea purchase at one store. The other common customers did not purchase any.
- 52 Prices ranged from 47cents/lb for Bohea and \$1.00/lb for Old Hyson in 1840. Dewar was selling Black, Green and Mixed tea as well as Bohea, Souchong, Hyson, Young Hyson, Old Hyson and Twankay. Morin and Villiers only sold generic "tea".
- 53 In Saint-Roch, requests for tea appear in the *donations entre vifs* in the 1830s — they never exceed 2 lb per year for a couple.
- 54 A brick of chocolate weighed $\frac{1}{4}$ lb.
- 55 In 1857, black, green, and generic tea sold for 40 to 60 cents per lb.; Young Hyson dropped from 80 to 67 cents per lb; Old Hyson to 60 cents, and Twankay from 90 to 50 cents.
- 56 None of the stores sampled by McCalla sold alcohol in the 1850s and 1860s; the new regulations obviously acted as a deterrent in Upper as well as Lower Canada.
- 57 McCalla, *Consumers in the Bush*, 76, 174.
- 58 McCalla, *Consumers in the bush*, 78.
- 59 McCalla, *Consumers in the Bush*, 78.