



Members onboard HMCS HALIFAX take in the view of Signal Hill and Cabot Tower as the ship transits into St John's, Newfoundland after returning from Operation REASSURANCE on 11 July 2022.

Image by: Pte Connor Bennett Canadian Armed Forces

So Warm a Reception: Hybrid Warfare and the Naval Encounter at Tatamagouche

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In the village of Tatamagouche, located on the north shore of Nova Scotia, there is a cairn located off the main street beside the library. The cairn is faced with a brass plaque, which memorializes a short tactical engagement that occurred nearby in the eighteenth century.¹ Detailed analysis of the “Naval Encounter at Tatamagouche” commemorated in this monument shows that this violent, but little studied, action contains greater lessons for the profession of arms in Canada. Viewed from the tactical, strategic, and political levels of war, the naval encounter at Tatamagouche, and the 1745 Anglo-American campaign against Louisbourg of which it was part, reveals topics *du jour* at Western staff colleges.

The campaign touches on joint operations in what was, from a European perspective, ungoverned space. It saw employment of private military contractors, commercial technology modified for military use, and contracted sustainment. European countries and their colonies conducted operations with regional

allies, applying what we now call a whole-of-government approach against peer adversaries. Force structure and procurement make an appearance. In stark contrast to modern practice in the West, military leaders exercised decentralized authorities, responsibilities, and accountabilities, applying

military effects outside of traditional military domains. Control over natural resources and collective means of navigation played a role. The campaign ends with a textbook international relations *fait accompli*.² All actors blended conventional and unconventional instruments of power simultaneously, in synergistic fashion, to exploit the vulnerabilities of their adversaries and undermine their political-strategic goals.³ Both sides concealed their identities when it suited their interests, pushing the boundaries of modern ethics and legality. Despite taking place nearly 300 years ago, one could distinguish this mix of ends, ways, and means with a modern definition: hybrid warfare.⁴

The continued drawdown of the Global War on Terror, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the increased Western focus on great power competition have pushed hybrid warfare to the forefront of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) professional military education (PME). However, within CAF PME, study of hybrid warfare hinges upon case studies and methodologies from abroad; Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and others.⁵ Are there relevant Canadian examples? Could, or rather, should Canadian case studies receive greater prioritization when framing hybrid warfare in CAF PME? This narrative essay will examine these questions by guiding the reader through known events related to this naval encounter, demonstrating the relevance of modern concepts to a Canadian historical engagement and illuminating the linkages to hybrid warfare. Simply put, if the CAF wants to understand hybrid warfare, implement modernized operating concepts, and foster empathetic citizenship in its members, its PME ought to incorporate more analysis of Canadian history into its study of hybrid warfare.⁶

Such history can be hard to conceptualize for military professionals. However, if, as a mental exercise, one considers terms like “fort,” as approximating “forward operating base,” a time long ago comes into focus. Carbines become muskets; turning rotors become sails; bombs from the air become cannons from the sea. Soldiers and sailors work together not because they are mandated to, as today, but because the technology of the time allows no other way. Suddenly, the fierce contests between small units in remote corners of the globe feel more familiar.

In a sense, the story of the naval encounter at Tatamagouche began on 4 September 1742, aboard the British slave galley *Mary*, then run aground in the Gambia River in western Africa. Local inhabitants boarded the immobilized ship and freed the slaves, who then attacked their captors. Only two of the crew survived. After 27 days hidden in the wreckage, the captain and David Donahew of Massachusetts, escaped to Senegal.⁷ Donahew would return to New England, although this incident would not dissuade him from continuing his life at sea.

Two years later and an ocean away, on 23 May 1744, upon learning of the beginning of the War of the Austrian Succession in Europe, a French-Mi'kmaw force from Louisbourg destroyed the Anglo-American fishing station at Canso.⁸ France's position in Atlantic Canada was dependent on First Nations' diplomatic, economic, and military assistance, as French garrisons were too small to compete with the British alone. The Mi'kmaq consented to French assistance in checking the encroaching British, but they acted according to their interests, not as pawns to French imperial objectives.⁹ After decades of war in modern Nova Scotia against the British and their Anglo-American



(left to right) Nova Scotian Tall Ship, Bluenose II, Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) GOOSEBAY and French Ship L'Hermione sail in to Lunenburg, Nova Scotia in the early morning of July 18, 2015.

Image by: Leading Seaman Dan Bard, Formation Imaging Services Halifax

proxies, by the 1740s the Mi'kmaq had restricted most of their regular contact with the French to interactions with missionaries. Nevertheless, an influential minority faction of Mi'kmaq remained tightly linked with the French.¹⁰ The challenges of distance and decades of competition with France in the lucrative North Atlantic offshore fishery had, by the 1740s, enticed the Anglo-American fishing fleet toward less contested coastal waters. This strained the inshore fishery, the primary Mi'kmaq food source.¹¹ Anglo-American fishing infrastructure at Canso thus posed an existential threat to the Mi'kmaq: the French did not compel them to defend their resources and sovereignty.

Despite its formidable reputation, Louisbourg was more a protected commercial centre than a military fortification. The fortress served primarily as a fishing anchorage and transshipment hub between France and its colonial possessions in the western hemisphere.¹² Easily overlooked today is Louisbourg's significance to maritime navigation. Its shared latitude with French ports was of critical importance in the era before methods were developed to determine longitude.¹³ Louisbourg served as the home port of the French offshore cod fishery, then the greatest source of French income in North America.¹⁴ For these reasons, the Anglo-American colonies to the south, who did not benefit from similar geographic proximity, greatly coveted this French fortress-port.¹⁵

Concurrent to the attack on Canso, the French at Louisbourg issued letters of marque, swiftly generating combat power by converting commercial ships to privateers. French privateers immediately cleared the Anglo-American merchant fleet from shared fishing areas and shipping routes, capturing numerous prizes.¹⁶ Confusion reigned aboard the Anglo-American vessels. French merchant ships that would otherwise have been a normal presence attacked without warning. The Anglo-American colonies responded by generating privateers of their own, but it was too late. The French at Louisbourg had barred access to and denied use of the North Atlantic fishing banks. Using a blend of diplomatic, economic, and military instruments of power, the French had seized the initiative and dominated their adversaries, achieving strategic surprise in the region in a way that would not have been possible with conventional military forces alone; a practice aligned with the principles of hybrid warfare.¹⁷ This posed an existential threat to the Anglo-American colonies, which were economically dependent on free navigation of the seas.¹⁸

While preparing their response, Anglo-American leaders sent their privateers to disrupt the French and collect intelligence near Canso in the summer of 1744. Now Captain David Donahew, formerly of the slave galley *Mary*, sailed near Canso commanding the armed sloops *Resolution* (12 guns) and *Bonetta*

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(6 guns).^{*} Donahew was one of many Anglo-American privateer captains raising hell in the area, capturing numerous French ships, and attacking anything of perceived military value on shore. According to French and Anglo-American sources, Donahew, on multiple occasions of sighting Mi'kmaq on land, would fly French colours on *Resolution* and British colours on *Bonetta*, thus appearing to be a French privateer with a prize.¹⁹ Donahew would entice them onto his ship under the guise of friendly trade, then detain them and turn them over to Anglo-American authorities. Notably, Donahew captured Mi'kmaq chief Jacques Padanuques using these methods, for interrogation and ransom.²⁰ From Padanuques, the Anglo-Americans learned that a force of Mi'kmaq warriors accompanied by a missionary, Abbé Jean-Louis LeLoutre, were about to attack the British fort at Annapolis Royal.²¹ While obtained through methods of questionable legality, this early warning enabled the successful British defence of their fort during the summer of 1744.²²

The next spring, in 1745, a fleet of 51 merchant ships converted to transport troops, escorted by roughly a dozen sloops, sailed from Boston with the intention of capturing Louisbourg.²³ Sloops were privately owned and operated vessels, modified into warships, carrying 12-15 guns. A sloop's armament was less important than its speed and seaworthiness; guns could always be added later.²⁴

The Anglo-American fleet carried a militia force numbering over 4,000; most had brought their own weapons.²⁵ Their numbers included “Provincial Auxiliary Companies,” enlisted outside of the normal militia recruiting cycles and comprised of Iroquois warriors, white frontiersmen, and Anglo-American officers. Referred to as “Ranger” companies, these served as a specialized reconnaissance and, in modern parlance, unconventional

* Henceforth, any number in brackets following a ship's name indicates the number of guns onboard.

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warfare capability.²⁶ In practice, Ranger operations often included deliberate attacks against non-combatants. This large force would attack a smaller, but comparatively more professional garrison. Louisbourg's garrison totalled roughly 1,500 troops, an even mix of local militia and professional *Troupes de la Marine*. The regulars manned the fortress' considerable artillery batteries and served “outside the wire” advising, enabling, and accompanying First Nations warriors in the region. Swiss mercenaries also served inside Louisbourg, having been contracted for garrison duties to offset a lack of French troops.²⁷

Incensed with the attack on Canso, the Anglo-Americans had launched their invasion without explicit approval from London. Concerned about the Anglo-Americans' lack of military training (let alone experience with opposed amphibious operations), the Admiralty on 8 March 1745 tasked Commodore Peter Warren, Commander North American Squadron, at its winter port in the Leeward Islands,** to supplement the attack on Louisbourg.²⁸ Leading His Majesty's Ships (HMS) *Launceston* (44), *Eltham* (44), *Mermaid* (44), and *Superb* (60), Warren accompanied the Anglo-American force, providing additional naval firepower and coaching their commanders through the conduct of large scale combat operations. Warren's small fleet, subordinate commanders, and team of advisors would balance the odds of a successful campaign while maintaining the outward appearance of an Anglo-American-led campaign. This mitigated the risk of a strategic escalation in this region, which Britain could not afford: they needed to dedicate resources to the European theater of the conflict and to defence of the home isles.²⁹ The Admiralty also readied additional warships with which to reinforce Warren's squadron.

The composition of Warren's squadron warrants elaboration. The Royal Navy (RN) of 1745 was not the elite service it would be fifty years later, during the Napoleonic Wars. Senior naval

rank could be purchased, and patronage, as much as ability, influenced selection of senior leaders. More troubling were British warships. Compared to their French and Spanish rivals, British warships were smaller, overcrowded with guns, and not desperately seaworthy.³⁰ Critically, British ships could not match adversaries' weight of firepower. It was an open secret that a British warship could not take on an enemy ship of equal armament unassisted.³¹ In an effort to manage these challenges, the Admiralty imposed standards on shipbuilders by way of “establishments” that mandated the dimensions and armaments of warship classes. Between 1714 and 1744, these factors drove the RN to the conclusion that their smaller classes of warships simply could not survive in the line of battle against peer adversaries. Most affected were a class of ship known as “Fourth Rates,” which carried 40-60 guns. As a result of these trends, the Admiralty relegated most Fourth Rates to remote backwaters, such as North America. On the littoral frontiers of empire, though, their shallow draft and carriage capacity were useful during joint operations. While unsuited to fight alongside 100-gun ships, they still dominated any frigate, smuggler, privateer, or shore target. Having two decks, their extra workspace made them suitable command and control platforms.³² Other faults notwithstanding, Fourth Rates were tough, durable, numerous, and economical. In North American waters, these otherwise mediocre vessels found new life as ‘blue collar’ warships, and Warren's miniscule force would soon play an outsized role at Louisbourg. On the approach to Louisbourg, however, Anglo-American sloops would fire the first shots in anger.

The French had dispatched the 32-gun frigate *Renommée* in January 1745, as part of the normal rotation of forces at Louisbourg. Owing to ice conditions, it was unable to enter the harbour on arriving in late March, and it was therefore loitering near Canso when the lead elements of the Anglo-American fleet approached from the south.³³ Led by *Tartar* (14), several sloops broke from the amphibious convoy and engaged the much larger French frigate.³⁴ Although all French ships were renowned for their speed and fine sailing characteristics, the *Renommée* would have been hindered by doctrine and a rewards system that did not foster aggressiveness, like that of prize pay in the RN.³⁵ French preventative medical practices were inferior to the RN's, meaning higher levels of sickness among the ship's company likely reduced *Renommée's* fighting ability.³⁶ Credit must be given to the crews of the Anglo-American sloops, eager to prove themselves and spoiling for a fight. One imagines a line of amateur hockey players taking the ice against an Olympic speed skater; teamwork and energy against a magnificent individual performer. *Tartar*, ably commanded by Captain Daniel Fones, distinguished itself in the ensuing engagement, damaging the

** Modern Antigua.

Renommée and driving it back to France.³⁷ Upon *Renommée's* return, France sent the powerful battleship *Vigilant* (64) from Brest to assist the Louisbourg garrison, while preparing a large relief fleet.³⁸

The Anglo-American force made landfall on 30 April and, advised by Warren, began the siege of Louisbourg by neutralizing the artillery positions that ringed the port.³⁹ Most sloop captains, like Donahew in *Resolution*, conducted joint operations on the outskirts of Louisbourg. They transported parties of rangers and bombarded Acadian and Mi'kmaw settlements to deter potential reinforcements and isolate the garrison.⁴⁰ Others, like Fones in *Tartar*, conducted maritime interdiction missions against ships attempting to assist the garrison. Some messengers escaped the closing ring around the port, many carrying dispatches for French military elements scattered across the region. The Louisbourg garrison commander's call for help soon reached Lieutenant Paul Marin de la Malgue of the *Troupes de la Marine*, then accompanying the Mi'kmaw force besieging the British fort at Annapolis Royal.⁴¹ Marin's partner force would return to Louisbourg and counterattack the invaders.

After the failure of the Mi'kmaw attack against the fort the previous summer, the French at Louisbourg had sent professional troops to partner with the warriors.⁴² Although portrayed in Anglo-American sources as the leader of Mi'kmaq military efforts, Abbé LeLoutre's role, like that of all French missionaries, was diplomatic in nature.⁴³ The relationship between Marin and the Mi'kmaw warriors was akin to the modern concept of parallel command, based upon tactical cooperation and mutual support.⁴⁴ Marin was one of the premier frontier soldiers of the era, having served two decades in what is now Wisconsin.⁴⁵ There, he had led marines, voyageurs, and missionaries in establishing defended trading posts that advanced French interests in the region.⁴⁶ He blended diplomatic, economic, and military powers in hybrid fashion, challenging Anglo-American attribution of his activities.⁴⁷ His professional experience stood in stark contrast to that of the Anglo-American craftsmen attacking Louisbourg.

Vigilant arrived to reinforce Louisbourg on 20 May. Feigning retreat, *Mermaid* lured the pursuing battleship toward the waiting guns of *Eltham* and *Superb*, lurking in a nearby fog bank.⁴⁸ Warren defeated the powerful warship and took it as a prize; although "obsolete," when well-handled the elderly Fourth Rates still had teeth.⁴⁹ Aware that messengers had escaped Louisbourg, Warren deduced that at least one of them carried orders recalling French forces on the mainland. Given time constraints, these would most likely travel by sea. The Northumberland Strait, extending to the west, represented their most likely approach. The French relief fleet soon leaving Brest

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represented the amphibious force's most dangerous threat. Despite reinforcement by six Fourth Rates and a frigate on 27 May, Warren did not have enough ships to defend from all directions.⁵⁰ With these factors in mind, Warren consulted the Anglo-American leadership. He sent the Fourth Rates to the east and south to protect against the expected French fleet.⁵¹ Warren also detached three sloops to interdict Louisbourg's maritime line of communication to the west.⁵² It is likely not coincidence that Warren sent the promising Daniel Fones, commanding the *Tartar* and accompanied by Donahew's *Resolution* and the *Bonetta* (each carrying some rangers), to seek out the expected French reinforcements.⁵³

Much of what is known definitively regarding subsequent events is owed to Captain William Pote. He had been in command of the schooner *Montague*, contracted to carry provisions to the British fort at Annapolis Royal, then under siege by Lieutenant Marin and his allies.⁵⁴ Detained by the French and Mi'kmaw warriors on Friday 17 May 1745, Pote kept a detailed journal during his captivity. From this document, we know that upon receiving his orders from Louisbourg on 9 June, Marin gathered his forces and travelled northeast through the Bay of Fundy.⁵⁵ On Monday 10 June, Marin's force crossed the Cobequid Mountains with roughly 200 Mi'kmaw warriors and a smaller number of French *Troupes de la Marine*.⁵⁶

Having traversed the mountains, Marin and other First Nations warriors in the area, who had travelled from Quebec, began assembling in the western corner of Tatamagouche Bay for their move eastwards to relieve Louisbourg.⁵⁷ This area, referred to as Gouzar in contemporary accounts, but called McNab's Bay today, is concealed from the Northumberland Strait. Marin's force spent the next day, Tuesday, building canoes and curing meat for their upcoming operation. The following day, on Wednesday, French officers from Louisbourg arrived with updates for Marin.⁵⁸ The First Nations forces with Marin totaled roughly 700 warriors in 50 large canoes by the end of the next day, Thursday. A group of French ships, two schooners,

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two sloops, and a chaloupe (essentially a large rowboat with a sail) joined Marin, likely from nearby Ile St-Jean.^{***} The French schooners would carry the force's provisions and combat stores. The sloops would “ride shotgun,” escorting the other ships and providing naval fire support during their actions.⁵⁹ Now numbering approximately 1,200 marines, warriors, and sailors, this force could decisively tip the scales at Louisbourg in favour of the defending French.

The following day, on Friday, Marin's force departed with 50 First Nations canoes leading the five ships northeastward, paralleling the Malagash shore to their west. Most of the French *Troupes de la Marine* rode in the sailing ships, although, some rode in the canoes along with the warriors and prisoner William Pote. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the tidal conditions and the state of hydrographic mapping in the area, one or more of the French ships grounded in the soft, sandy bottom of Tatamagouche Bay. Seeing this behind them, the warriors stopped their canoes (near modern-day Malagash) and waited on shore for the French to free themselves.⁶⁰ It would prove a fateful delay.

The next morning, on Saturday, 15 June 1745, the three Anglo-American sloops commanded by Captain Daniel Fones patrolled the Northumberland Strait, searching for the expected Louisbourg relief force. At approximately 0600hrs, Fones spotted smoke to his south; one assumes it was the morning fires of the First Nations camped out awaiting their French allies.⁶¹ Considering their numbers, breakfast fires for 700 warriors would have been difficult to hide. Based on subsequent events, it would seem the Anglo-American force was to the northeast of Tatamagouche Bay at the time of sighting, with the wind at their backs.⁶² Fones took the lead with *Tartar* and *Bonetta*, with Donahew's *Resolution* in trail, protecting the rear and maintaining eyes on the strait. Sometime after *Tartar* and *Bonetta*

pushed ahead to investigate the smoke, lookouts aboard the *Resolution* spotted sails in Tatamagouche Bay.⁶³ There could have been little doubt in Fones' mind: he had found his quarry. The fight was on.

According to William Pote's journal, the warriors at Malagash moved out early that Saturday morning in their canoes, heading northeast toward the Northumberland Strait with the French ships behind in Tatamagouche Bay. It is unlikely that they were aware that the Anglo-Americans had seen their morning fires and were already moving to investigate. Pote states that the canoes left earlier based on their slower speed, however, wind and tidal conditions could also have influenced why the four French ships were behind.⁶⁴

Moving along the western shore of Tatamagouche Bay, Pote recalled in his account that the warriors spotted three sailing ships at close distance. Initially, this caused some bewilderment amongst the warriors, but, as the three ships drew closer, Pote noted that the approaching ships flew French flags.⁶⁵ Thinking that these were additional French reinforcements for Louisbourg, the warriors slowed their canoes and in a celebratory mood allowed the two leading sloops to catch up. On coming closer, Pote noted that one sloop assertively shot ahead and sailed directly into the path of the canoes, while the third manoeuvred towards Marin's element.⁶⁶ The warriors perceived a threat and turned westward towards the shore; it was too late. *Tartar* and *Bonetta*, flying French flags, bracketed the canoes at short range. The time was roughly 1000 hrs. According to Pote, “down comes ye French colors on the one side and up ye English on the other and knocked open their [gun] portes and almost in the twinkling of an eye they fired their cannon.”⁶⁷ Amongst the warriors in the canoes, Pote writes, “he was ye best man that could get ashore first.”⁶⁸ Fones' deception, likely crafted with Donahew's input, had worked.

The warriors rapidly beached their canoes and sought cover from the withering cannon and small arms fire behind a seawall along the Malagash shore. Pote noted that while no warriors were killed, they had been fixed to that position, unable to advance or withdraw. *Tartar* and *Bonetta* dropped their anchors and assumed a firing position, pinning the warriors and their French advisors ashore, separate from Marin and his four ships still in Tatamagouche Bay.⁶⁹ Marin, seeing *Tartar* and *Bonetta* firing, would probably have moved to assist but had to deal with *Resolution* moving toward his cargo-carrying ships. Then, as often happens in small, tactical engagements such as this, a twist in events came into play at the worst possible time.

At some point after *Tartar* and *Bonetta* had dropped anchors and began bombarding the warriors ashore, but before *Resolution* and Marin's four ships could enter each other's firing range, the northerly wind dropped off, leaving the sails slackened and the ships unable to move.⁷⁰ While the warriors had

*** Modern-day Prince Edward Island.



(left to right) Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) GOOSEBAY, French Ship L'Hermione and Nova Scotian Tall Ship, Bluenose II, sail in to Lunenburg, Nova Scotia in the early morning of July 18, 2015.

Image by: Leading Seaman Dan Bard, Formation Imaging Services Halifax

been fixed, the *Resolution* was now in trouble: it was facing down five ships, two of which carried guns. More troubling, all of Marin's ships carried highly experienced French marines, fully trained in boarding operations and ship-to-ship combat. Augmented by the warriors in the chaloupe, the odds of five against one were decisively in Marin's favour.⁷¹ Donahew and the *Resolution* were in an unenviable position.

From Pote's point of view, prone behind the seawall, Fones' ships *Tartar* and *Bonetta* sustained their suppressing fire, denying the warriors' ability to conduct any sort of coordinated movement with Marin. At some point shortly after the wind died, messengers travelled between the warriors ashore and Marin's ships in Tatamagouche Bay. One assumes that the chaloupe with Marin played a role in facilitating this communication. Regardless of how it came about, according to Pote, everyone crouched behind the seawall under the fire of Fones' guns became aware of Marin's intention to take the *Resolution* by boarding.⁷² After doing so, the French force would drive off *Tartar* and *Bonetta* and continue their mission to Louisbourg.

During the time in which Marin formed his plan to board the *Resolution* and communicated it to the warriors driven ashore, all he and Donahew had exchanged were insults shouted across the still waters. Donahew noted that Marin's crews taunted him by name, evidently knowing both him and the *Resolution*.⁷³ Subsequent retelling from Pote and Donahew agree that Marin soon attacked with boarding parties of French marines in rowboats, coming upon *Resolution* at roughly 1300hrs.⁷⁴

What followed must have been a frenzied exchange of fire, as the French rowed circles around the sloop attempting to board. Donahew appears to have used his shipboard weapons in a layered defence, firing 200 double-round shots (two cannonballs simultaneously) from his four-pound guns while the boarders were farthest away, followed by fifty blasts of canister shot from his three-pound guns.⁷⁵ As the boarding parties got closer, *Resolution's* crew switched to swivel guns, as vicious an anti-personnel weapon as has ever existed, and their personal weapons. Wrote Donahew later, "[A]s they come to hand we

killed but the number I know not ... my stern by force of firing down to the water's edge, the round house all to pieces, they rowing all around me ... they being a thousand in number and I but forty-odd."⁷⁶

One should perhaps consider Donahew's account with caution. He was, after all, a paramilitary officer in an auxiliary force, whose experience at arms was primarily spent attacking non-combatants: this was likely his first time facing adversaries capable of fighting back. That said, one should have little doubt as to the ferocity and credibility of the French attack on *Resolution*. The *Troupes de la Marine* were professional naval infantry; boarding operations represented their specialty. After weeks of tramping through thick forests, one can infer that Marin and his troops relished the opportunity to fight a solitary enemy ship. Under the circumstances, Donahew can be forgiven for overestimating the numbers attacking him.

The situation sat at a precarious tipping point; the warriors and their canoes scattered ashore under fire from *Tartar* and *Bonetta*, while the *Resolution*, ammunition dwindling, desperately fought off Marin's concerted effort to board. One can only imagine what was going through the minds of the principle actors. Marin was about to pull victory from the jaws of defeat. Donahew fought an increasingly desperate battle for the survival of his ship and his crew. Fones could only continue to engage the warriors on the beach as he carried the burden of command. Whatever happened next, whichever side gained the advantage, would decide the outcome of the battle. The destiny of the Louisbourg garrison hung in the balance. And then, at around 1400 hrs., the wind began to pick up, allowing the ships to manoeuvre more easily.

While it is unknown what conversations took place onboard the *Tartar* while the *Resolution* repelled boarders, by all accounts, as soon as the wind picked up, Fones was on the move. Lifting their anchors and manoeuvring out of their firing position, in what must have been a remarkable display of ship handling in such shallow water, close to shore and in light winds, *Tartar* and *Bonetta* formed up and made best speed to assist *Resolution*.⁷⁷

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At this moment, his boarding attack on *Resolution* not yet successful and *Tartar* and *Bonetta* closing into firing range, Marin would have taken stock of events. His First Nations allies had been separated from his element and scattered ashore. He had lost the advantage of force ratio in terms of ships: while he had two schooners and one chaloupe, his two armed sloops faced Fones’ three. Were this not bad enough, with the building wind from the north (as reported by Pote and Donahew), Fones held the weather advantage. This is critically important in any battle between sailing ships, especially in the open water of Tatamagouche Bay where any further contest would take place. That Marin had, the day before, grounded his ships in the bay where he would now have to fight would also have entered his mind. At its most fundamental, though, Marin’s mission was to relieve Louisbourg. This meant preserving his force and its combat stores, not seeking battle with enemy warships. He had been decisively engaged by a superior force in unfavorable conditions. With these factors in mind, Marin’s next decision seems more logical. He recalled his boarding parties, then circling *Resolution* and under fire from *Tartar* and *Bonetta*.⁷⁹

At roughly 1500hrs, the French re-embarked their marines and moved southwest into Tatamagouche Bay. Fones’ three sloops pursued, according to Donahew, “within pistol shot.”⁸⁰ It is doubtful that a fighter of Marin’s experience would have been resigned to failure at this moment. He likely saw a chance to draw the aggressive Anglo-American force ashore, where his own superior numbers could be brought to bear on ground of his choosing. As the Anglo-American sloops were hot on the heels of the retreating French ships, Donahew ran his ship aground.⁸¹ At this moment, Fones would have analyzed the situation.

Fones’ mission was to prevent the reinforcement of Louisbourg, which Marin could not do if he were hunkered down ashore 160 miles away. It is likely that Fones deduced Marin’s intentions. Had Donahew been in command, perhaps the Anglo-American force would have followed and fallen prey to Marin’s trap by attacking the French position on shore. It would seem, though, that Fones’ cooler and more professional character had prevailed as he made his decision. With the French bottled up at Gouzar, he had achieved his commander’s intent. Fones ordered *Tartar* and *Bonetta* to assist Donahew in freeing his ship from the sandy bottom, and left the French to their tactical retreat. Once complete, Fones anchored his ships in a blocking position, preventing Marin’s ships from leaving Tatamagouche Bay.⁸²

As all of this took place, Pote noted that the warriors and their French advisors had boarded their canoes with the intention of joining with Marin. They were unable to do so, however, on account of Fones’ position. The warriors’ canoes could not manoeuvre on the water without being exposed to Fones’ guns.⁸³ They elected instead to shoulder their canoes and make the long portage west to join Marin near what is now called Dewar’s Creek. The French force had beached their ships and begun construction of a deliberate fighting position. It is likely with a sense of disappointment that Marin saw that Fones and his team did not venture further into the bay. The encounter at Tatamagouche had ended. Fones’ after action report to Commodore Warren was all business: “[W]e gave them so warm a reception, killing some and wounding others.”⁸⁴

Marin spent the next day preparing his fighting position and conducting patrols in anticipation of a landing by Fones’ rangers.⁸⁵ The following day, a fourth Anglo-American sloop arrived from the east and joined Fones’ picket line in Tatamagouche Bay.⁸⁶ Fones pulled his ships out that day and resumed his sweep of the Northumberland Strait, unaware that Louisbourg had fallen just hours before.⁸⁷ Commodore Warren had enabled this by offloading guns from his vessels and siting them on high ground ashore. On 10 June (while Marin crossed the mountains), the British used them to methodically bombard Louisbourg, causing considerable damage and destroying supplies and guns. In the wake of these losses, the garrison commander sought terms of surrender.⁸⁸ By Thursday, 20 June, all of the warriors from Quebec within Marin’s force had abandoned him in frustration, returning home. Marin and his troops accompanied the Mi’kmaq warriors as they travelled back over the Cobequid Mountains to regroup.⁸⁹ The French fleet from Brest, hastily assembled and disorganized, left late and was ravaged by disease and bad weather enroute. It never arrived to relieve the garrison.⁹⁰

On 29 June, during the subsequent mopping up operations around Louisbourg, *Tartar* and *Resolution* spotted a Mi’kmaq force on shore to the west of Canso. After dismounting from *Resolution*, a force of eleven rangers led by Donahew quickly

found itself under fire and surrounded by warriors. Several rangers were able to withdraw under supporting fire from *Tartar*, but Donahew and five of his men were killed.⁹¹ Fones, on the other hand, would go on to continued success as a privateer, eventually retiring as a tavern owner. Said one senior Anglo-American officer later, “Captain Fones probably decided the fate of Louisbourg, for if this large force had fallen upon the rear of the New England soldiers and thus placed them between the fire of the two opposing forces, they would probably have had to end the siege.”⁹² Marin would continue to serve with the *Troupes de la Marine* in North America, dying in 1753 in the territory that eventually became the state of Pennsylvania.⁹³ Pote survived two years of internment, and was exchanged at Louisbourg on Friday, 14 August 1747. He noted in his journal that he had been captured on a Friday, too.⁹⁴ Promoted to Rear Admiral, Warren would serve with distinction under Admiral George Anson at the First Battle of Cape Finisterre in May 1747. The French 74-gun *Invincible*, captured by the British during the battle, would shape the next fifty years of British warship design, fleet composition, and force employment concepts.⁹⁵ Despite these innovations, and informed by lessons learned in North America, the RN would continue to design and build new classes of 50-gun Fourth Rates into the 1790s for joint operations on the empire’s maritime frontiers.⁹⁶ The American military perpetuates the lineage of the Provincial Auxiliary Companies to present date, in the form of the United States Army Rangers.

The monument to the battle in Tatamagouche attributes the Anglo-American success to Donahew:

“In this harbour Capt. David Donahew of New England with three armed vessels surprised Lieut. Paul Marin’s allied force enroute from Annapolis Royal to Louisbourg. He drove them ashore, disheartened the Canadian Indians, and prevented the French and Micmacs from reaching Louisbourg before its fall.”⁹⁷

Donahew, the former slaver, made his mark during the campaign against helpless targets by way of deception. Perhaps he is commemorated on the monument because he did not survive the conflict, and aggrandized his role in his only known account of the battle.⁹⁸ As a combat leader, the evidence suggests that Fones is owed whatever credit is due the Anglo-Americans. Most importantly, proper study of this campaign must incorporate Mi’kmaq perspectives. A wider understanding of the treaties that resulted directly from the conflicts during this period would allow for more meaningful conversations about reconciliation, commemoration, and a collaborative way forward that does justice to all participants.

“The subsequent peace and friendship treaties that followed, and the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755, separated the French from their partners in the region. Unable to leverage their allies’ diplomatic, economic, military capabilities, the French could not maintain their regional presence.”

The nearly three centuries of great power colonial competition in North America that preceded this battle did not end that summer. Despite considerable criticism from New England, in 1748, the British would return Louisbourg to the French in exchange for Madras in India, a textbook *fait accompli*.⁹⁹ This enraged many Anglo-Americans, who had provided the bulk of the troops and ships for the 1745 attack. They had suffered more losses to disease and malnutrition occupying Louisbourg than they had in capturing it, and truly desired the access to offshore fishing areas that it would have provided.¹⁰⁰ The return of Louisbourg would drive the establishment of Halifax in 1749, and the Mi’kmaq effort to destroy it immediately thereafter.¹⁰¹ That history labels that conflict as “Abbé LeLoutre’s War” speaks to the primacy of his perceived, rather than actual, role.¹⁰² The subsequent peace and friendship treaties that followed, and the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755, separated the French from their partners in the region. Unable to leverage their allies’ diplomatic, economic, and military capabilities, the French could not maintain their regional presence. The British campaign to destroy New France ensued, followed by resettlement of Nova Scotia by Anglo-American settlers.¹⁰³

All of this would factor into the complex reaction in Nova Scotia to the American War of Independence, where cultural and economic ties were undone by American privateer attacks against non-combatants. Most famous of the

responsible captains, at least among Americans, is John Paul Jones, arguably the United States Navy's founding hero.¹⁰⁴ These attacks ultimately underpinned why the Maritimes would become part of Canada in 1867, rather than "the Fourteenth Colony."¹⁰⁵ From conflict over Mi'kmaq fishing rights, to a weakening of Maritime-Canadian identity, to control over natural resources, the complex alliances and great violence of this period reverberate to present day in Atlantic Canada.

This is by far not the only region of Canada or period of its history that would benefit from analysis through the lens of hybrid warfare. Canada is dotted with monuments to violent battles rarely studied in CAF PME, in places like Beausejour, Nova Scotia, River Canard, Ontario, York Factory, Manitoba, and Duck Lake, Saskatchewan. One imagines the history of Upper and Lower Canada, the Red River Settlement,¹⁰⁶ the opening of the Canadian West,¹⁰⁷ the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Hudson's Bay Company, and others, reframed as local disputes being incited to violence, and even genocide, by external actors' interests, be they political, cultural, colonial, or commercial. Such assessments would cross diplomatic, informational, military, and economic domains. Clearly, Canadian history contains many valuable case studies through which the CAF could analyze the problem space presented by hybrid warfare.

Could the CAF better prepare for conflict and competition in the emerging space, cyber, and information domains through study of historical Canadian conflict? For example, could the potential of "letters of marque" in orbit, cyberspace, or social media be analyzed using case studies from Canadian history? From a modern standpoint, was Warren's employment of naval guns ashore in support of Anglo-American ground manoeuvre an example of 'jointness,' or of all-domain operations? Would implementation of operating concepts optimized for hybrid warfare be more feasible if our members were educated in its tenets primarily through Canadian case studies, as opposed to those of other countries?¹⁰⁸ Do these case studies offer a more immediate and relevant understanding than rote repetition of the lessons gleaned from conflicts in other parts of the world? Who do we want our "whole-of-government warfighters" to be: hardened professionals like Marin, or paramilitaries like Fones? Is the CAF prepared, as an institution, to handle characters like Donahew? Should one view Marin as an infantry officer, naval officer, or armed capitalist? Was Pote a combatant, or not? Clearly, one could analyze almost any facet of hybrid warfare, political, strategic, or tactical, through this campaign; CAF PME should examine Canadian history to find more. To this end, historians should examine this topic and assist the CAF in developing studies to contrast historical campaigns against modern doctrine.

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Viewing our history from a hybrid warfare perspective would benefit CAF members as well.¹⁰⁹ An understanding of these conflicts, and the people they impacted, would inoculate members against unwarranted nostalgia for certain figures and movements. It could build our members' empathy with marginalized populations, at home and abroad, and produce a better-rounded citizen upon transitioning after completion of service. In short, the CAF would benefit from a more holistic understanding of our country, and the fact that the battle to define Canada smouldered over centuries. Power was decentralized; settlers, traders, missionaries, soldiers, and First Nations exerted influence as they sought to define and defend their overlapping domains.¹¹⁰ With this in mind, Canada does not have a Gettysburg, a Spanish Armada, or a storming of the Bastille. Unlike many of our allies, Canadians recognize no distinct, conclusive, and violent event as the singular representation of our national identity. Canada is a unique country that developed along a unique path; this is something our PME should reflect.

The intent of this essay was to use a tactical vignette to present complex history alongside modern challenges, illustrating that the space between signifies an uncharted field of study that would benefit Canada. Viewing difficult national conversations through the lens of hybrid warfare could provide a means to understand who we are and how our nation came to be. The fruits of these efforts would strengthen CAF PME and present new models through which to frame current security challenges. For much of its history, Canada resembled many of

the distant places in which the CAF has conducted operations, such as the Balkans, Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq, the Baltics, and the Sahel. Unpacking our own history would better allow CAF members to understand our world, our profession, and, perhaps, ourselves. Given the nature of 21st century conflict, in which great powers again exploit adversaries' vulnerabilities by blending multiple instruments of power, there is value in doing so. CAF PME wisely includes 'Vimy Ridge,' but could use more 'Tatamagouche.'



Notes

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- 34 H.M. Chapin, "New England Vessels in the Expedition Against Louisbourg, 1745, Providence, Rhode Island, 1923," *Acadian-Home.org*, accessed 22 December 2021, <http://www.acadian-home.org/LouisbourgVesselsNE.html>.
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- 36 N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2004), 484.
- 37 T. Cranston, "Captain Daniel Fones: Colonial Navy Hero," *Small State-Big History*, accessed 22 December 2021, <http://smallstatebighistory.com/captain-daniel-fones-colonial-naval-hero/>. Fones had earned his sailing master's rating in 1740 at the age of 27. He had taken command of *Tartar* in June 1744. His tasks prior to the invasion had been defensive coastal patrols in home waters; he had proven a quick study under fire. Later events would suggest that the Anglo-American fleet's leadership had taken note of Fones' assertiveness in handling *Tartar* against a much more powerful adversary. H.M. Chapin, "New England Vessels in the Expedition Against Louisbourg, 1745, Providence, Rhode Island, 1923," *Acadian-Home.org*, accessed 22 December 2021, <http://www.acadian-home.org/LouisbourgVesselsNE.html>. On 16 May 1745, Warren held an orders group aboard his flagship *HMS Superbe*. In attendance were the captains of *HMS Eltham*, *HMS Launcetion*, *HMS Mermaid*, and Captain John Rous, commander of the Massachusetts snow *Shirley*, 24 guns, which acted as the close escort for the troop carriers, accompanying the landing ships to and from the beach. Daniel Fones is the only other Anglo-American attendee, of 58 other ship commanders.
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- 41 F.H. Patterson, *History of Tatamagouche Nova Scotia*, (Halifax: Royal Print and Litho Limited: 1917), 14.
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- 43 W.C. Wicken, *Encounters with Tall Sails and Tall Tales: Mi'kmaq Society, 1500-1760*, (Montreal: McGill University Department of History, 1994), 359. Accessed 6 January 2022, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/thesescanada/vol1/QMM/TC-QMM-28551.pdf>. "This middle role between the two societies was encouraged by both French and Mi'kmaq leaders. The Mi'kmaq accepted the priests because they needed someone trustworthy to mediate relations with European society. Unlike traders, farmers, and fishermen, missionaries did not pose an economic threat to Mi'kmaq society but rather assisted in overcoming spiritual and material changes stemming from European contact. French officials, on the other hand, believed that the missionaries could channel Mi'kmaq actions into ways consistent with imperial interests."
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- 48 R. Marsters, *Bold Privateers: Terror, Plunder, and Profit on Canada's Atlantic Coast*, (Halifax: Formac Publishing Company Ltd., 2004), 64.
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- 52 H.M. Chapin, *The Tartar: The Armed Sloop of the Colony of Rhode Island in King George's War*, (Providence: Society of the Colonial Wars of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1922), 36.
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- 54 W. Pote, *The Journal of Captain William Pote Jr., During His Captivity During the French and Indian War, From May, 1745, to August, 1747*, (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1896), 4.
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- 83 *Ibid.*, 45.

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